

VILLAINS

Written by

Max Landis

5/6/2013

feel free
to
be bad

Police sirens. At first just one. But then more. Too many to count. The sounds become a blur. *

SLAM IN ON:

The face of **ABIGAIL Barnes, 25**, pretty in a subdued way.

She might even look innocent if she wasn't covered in bloody cuts and bruises. She pulls off the destroyed pieces of some kind of helmet, and tosses them aside.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

The air is clogged with smoke in Mac-Arthur park, just west of downtown Los Angeles. *

Abigail is laying flat on her back in the burning wreckage of...something. Several more big fires burn nearby.

The park looks like a war-zone.

Abigail was clearly wearing some form of high-tech armor, but it's smashed to shit now, some of it sparking, some of it melted, some of it cracked apart.

After a beat, Abigail struggles to her feet. Her ears are ringing, which makes sense, because they're bleeding.

Beyond the muted sound of sirens and fires burning, we can't hear shit. Her vision is blurry, and ours is too.

She stares at a blurry big piece of wreckage for a moment, and then turns and begins walking through

THE STREETS OF
LOS ANGELES

Limping badly, zombie-like, in a trance as she slowly sheds her armor, dropping pieces off and discarding them.

Finally, as she approaches

A HOSPITAL

She's stripped down to just the rudimentary body-suit beneath the armor, torn up and bloody. Her body is *incredible*; she's all lean muscle...

...but any notes of sexy are severely dampened by the fact that black-blue splotches polka-dot her skin, a huge red and black welt growing over her ribs, and what appear to be several **bloody holes** in her shoulder and stomach.

She goes into

THE EMERGENCY
ROOM

Leaving bloody footprints on the floor. There's still no sound as the people in the emergency room hurry out, scared. *

Abigail walks up to the emergency room counter, and stares through bloodshot eyes, one of which has swollen shut, at the terrified male nurse behind the counter. *

OUTSIDE THE
HOSPITAL

Two dozen police cars and SWAT vans roll up, screeching to a halt! K-9! Snipers! Body armor! Riot shields! A national guard armored personnel carrier! *

BACK INSIDE

She takes an EMERGENCY ADMITTANCE FORM. Picks up a pen. Tries to write; nope, it's a mess, she's shaking too bad. She chuckles to herself, noticing something in her mouth.

She spits a bloody tooth out into her hand. Stares at it. Then slaps it down on the admission form. A tooth in the center of a bloody handprint. There you go.

She slides it back to the male nurse.

Abigail turns, walking shakily, and sits down gingerly on one of the benches.

She fades in and out of consciousness, trying to stay up...

Notices something on her hand. A little red dot. A laser sight. Then another. ***DOZENS OF THEM, ALL OVER HER BODY.***

Abigail looks up, squinting, to see that **THE ENTIRE EMERGENCY ROOM IS FILLED WITH POLICE, SWAT AND NATIONAL GUARD, WITH ALL MANNER OF FIREARMS POINTED AT HER.**

Very weakly, she smiles.

ABIGAIL
...Hello boys.

SLAM TO TITLE:
VILLAINS

SLAM TO:

INT. GYM

It's a very intense circuit training class. Most of the men and women in this class are older, and Korean. They're working hard to the music, following the shouted commands of the muscular, enthusiastic instructor.

They're boxer bouncing in place, foot to foot, Looks easy, but after about thirty seconds you're really feeling it.

Abigail is sweating. BAD. She's not the Abigail we saw before, either; she's pudgy, frazzled, and having trouble keeping up with even the oldest of her Korean classmates. *

ABIGAIL

Can...we...slow down-

INSTRUCTOR

Everybody drop! Five push-ups!

Abigail drops, and does the five, slower than the rest, before jumping back to her feet, back to the bouncing-

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)

Drop! Five!

Abigail does it again, even slower this time, gets back up.

ABIGAIL

I need- just give me a-

INSTRUCTOR

Five, let's go, drop!

Abigail drops, and is able to get in about...one. She collapses onto her chest, laying flat, breathing hard.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Abigail, sitting at a corner table, now in a baggy T-shirt, still looks out of breath. Across from her, eating a muffin:

DONALD Barnes, early 50s; he's a warm person, a harmless, professorial type. He has an easy smile, that comes often. *

DONALD

You look beat to hell.

ABIGAIL

Dad!

DONALD

You do. They run you ragged in, what is it, tae-bo- *

ABIGAIL

It's muay thai.

DONALD

You get in the ring, do that- one,
two- pow!-

ABIGAIL

No, I don't spar, I just do the
training, I told you-

DONALD

Oh, right, right. Three weeks now?

ABIGAIL

Two **months**. Where do you think I
am every Wednesday?

DONALD

I don't know, out on dates? I
don't pay attention to the time you
come home, you're not 14 anymore-

*

ABIGAIL

Out on dates. Really.

DONALD

New guy every Wednesday, sure.

ABIGAIL

Wednesday is two guys.

DONALD

You start that back in Harvard?

ABIGAIL

Yeah, hump day. Obviously.

DONALD

Obviously.

There's a beat, and then Abigail laughs; Donald smiles, he
likes to see her happy.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - LATER

*

Donald and Abigail walk up the crowded street, talking.

*

DONALD

All I'm saying is if you're going
to get serious about losing weight,
once a week isn't enough. You've
gotta really commit. Treat it like
a grad paper, you need diligence-

ABIGAIL

Have you ever even worked out, it's
hard-

DONALD

I had moments of physicality in my
youth, sure-

ABIGAIL

Yeah, "moments-"

DONALD

Look, Abby, I don't even see why
you're so focused on this to begin
with. What's special about you
isn't your- you know, your abs and
your- glutes-

ABIGAIL

Dad come on-

DONALD

You have something unique, that
most people don't have. You're
brilliant, and you're, you're fun-

ABIGAIL

I'm fun? My dad is my best friend,
board-game night, I know *no one* in
the city, I'm super fun-

*
*
*

Abigail, distracted, notices a dress on a mannequin in a
window; it's a little white number with thin red stripes up
the sides; matching shoes, six inch heels. It's awesome.

She stares at it, and we realize she's looking beyond the
dress, at the perfect body of the mannequin. All the perfect
mannequin bodies.

*

A blonde walks out, with a bag; she's gorgeous. She looks
rich and happy. Abigail watches her go.

*

Donald glances up the street, and falters.

DONALD

Let's take Spring Street back home,
yeah?

*
*

ABIGAIL

What? That's like four blocks in
the wrong direction.

DONALD

Less distractions up there, c'mon-

Donald starts heading off, jokingly beckoning her to follow.

*

ABIGAIL

Dad, what're you talking abo-

The entire front of a bank up the street from them **EXPLODES INTO PURPLE FIRE**. Windows shatter as the shock-wave blasts up the block, *knocking Abigail and Donald to the ground.* *

Abigail lays there dazed; a police car blows past, and then another. She pushes herself to her feet.

Billions of bits of ash are floating through the air, and purple smoke billows out of the front of the bank. The cop cars have formed a barricade; cops are taking aim from cover. *

As people run past her to get away, Abigail, transfixed, begins to walk towards the mayhem. *

Donald, covered in his milkshake, clumsily tries to stand.

DONALD

Abigail! Get back here this instant! What are you doing!?

Abigail continues towards the police stand off, not seeming to hear him. Donald tries to follow her, but he's too dazed from the explosion.

A man has appeared at the front of the bank, your typical ski-masked bank-robber; he holds a shotgun.

POLICE OFFICER

(through megaphone)

Toss away the gun, and lay flat on your stomach, with your hands on your head.

(beat)

Toss away the gun, and-

The bank robber tosses away the shotgun, and raises his hands...

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

(through megaphone)

Nice and easy-

The bank robber yanks off his mask, revealing the smiling face of

CLARK Breadman, early 30s, stylish, handsome and carefree, laughing and smiling. The reaction is instantaneous.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

(through megaphone)

GIMMICK! HE'S A GIMMICK!

The cops drop to cover but they're a second too late; Clark leans forward and **spits a ball of purple energy out of his mouth- it strikes a cop car and BOOM-**

SENDS IT FLIPPING INTO THE AIR.

He tears off the jacket, then whips off his shirt, revealing he has some kind of rickety mechanical apparatus wrapped around his stomach...under a bullet proof vest.

Abigail stands staring, transfixed by this display of confidence and **power**.

Clark turns, and spews a blast of purple first into a nearby cop car, which **EXPLODES-**

Abigail is **YANKED OUT OF THE PATH OF SHRAPNEL** by Donald, who pulls her to a storefront where people have taken cover.

DONALD

**The hell is wrong with you, Abby,
you could've been killed-**

Abigail, still silent and transfixed, peeks her head out. The cops are in full retreat now.

CLARK

**DON'T RUN! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
WE WERE JUST GETTING STARTED!**

Clark sighs, and turns- **an RPG missile streaks down from a nearby building and hits JUST NEXT TO HIM.** The violent explosion tosses Clark like a rag doll.

DONALD

Jesus christ! ABBY GET BACK-

Abigail swats at his attempts to pull her back. Over on the building the RPG came out of, a small, white figure rappels down commando-style from an eleventh story window.

Seeing it all from Abby's perspective, it seems so distant, so larger than life but somehow perfectly real.

Clark slowly begins to recover; he's only half covered in the purple fire now, and it's sputtering out. He crawls, dazed and injured...

And notices the white-clad figure, striding purposefully towards him. It's not just clothes. It's body-armor, high-tech military grade stuff, complete with a bad-ass looking helmet. *

He's the **WHITE KNIGHT**. *

CLARK
...no...NO!

Clark **suddenly stands**, grabbing one of the dazed police officers into a choke hold, taking him hostage.

The White Knight stops. Clark's clearly lost control of the situation; his high tech device is broken and sparking badly.

CLARK (CONT'D)
JUST BACK OFF, you know I'll do it-

The White Knight draws a desert eagle and fires several times, **shooting through the police officer**, downing Clark.

Abigail flinches badly, and stifles a scream. The White Knight stands over Clark, who's helpless, and shoots him twice, killing him.

There's the sound of more sirens, and the White Knight looks up, calmly drawing out two smoke grenades, popping'n'dropping them.

Abigail stares as the figure vanishes into the smoke; seconds later there's a **SONIC BOOM** and **ARTURO Dumas**, early 50s, handsome, confident, charismatic, wearing a modified US Marshals uniform; a flak jacket, badge and blue jeans-

Drops from the sky. Okay, this guy can fly. The police reenforcements rush to meet him as he checks on an injured officer, and then look around, clearly frustrated.

ARTURO
 (yelling orders)
 Seal off this area! Don't let him
 get away this time!

Arturo, looking around, sees Abigail. For a moment, the two of them make eye contact, Abigail awed in his presence, and then Donald *yanks her away-*

SLAM TO:

INT. DONALD'S CAR - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Abigail and Donald get in, slamming the doors. They sit in absolute silence.

DONALD
What were you thinking.

Abigail starts to respond, and then just looks down. Her hands are shaking badly.

DONALD (CONT'D)

You are **my daughter**. I
am...responsible for your safety,
after your mother...And I-

*

ABIGAIL

(quietly)

Arturo Dumas was there-

*

*

*

DONALD

NOT AT THE BEGINNING he wasn't,
just those two psychos, duking it
out! Abigail, I know you've been
depressed, but that's no reason to
put yourself in danger.

*

*

*

*

*

*

Abigail's silent, looking out the window.

ABIGAIL

Can we just- go home, please?

Donald stares at her for a moment, and then starts the car.

ON THE REVVING
OF THE ENGINE WE
TRANSITION INTO

A GRAINY VIDEO

It's an uncomfortably close view of the White Knight's SWAT
helmet. He speaks in a distorted voice.

WHITE KNIGHT

For too long the cowards that
protect our society have allowed
themselves to ruled by warlords.

We slowly back out to reveal...

INT. BARNES RESIDENCE - ABIGAIL'S ROOM - NIGHT

The Barnes residence is a relatively modest middle-class two
story home in Glendale.

Abigail's room is less of a living space than it is a time
capsule; all of her decorations from grade school still adorn
the walls; boy band posters, etc.

Abigail stands in the doorway of her bathroom, in pajamas,
drying her hair, transfixed by the flatscreen on her wall.

WHITE KNIGHT (ON THE SCREEN)

Escapade is next. Don't try to
stop me.

The broadcast switches back to the anchor; it's the news.
Abigail is distracted by Donald appearing at the door.

DONALD
Abigail, I wanted to say I'm sorry-

ABIGAIL
Dad sh sh sh sh-

Abigail nods at the TV.

ANCHOR
Escapade, one of the very few
remaining gimmicked criminals whose
identity is still unknown to the
public, is a high profile target.

Escapade's "face," a helmet shown on the screen, is
fascinating to look at. It's sleek and white, textured the
same all over with tiny triangles, like a geodesic dome.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)
-wanted on continually growing
charges of murder, weapons
trafficking, robbery, grand theft
and mass property destruction since
1979-

Donald shakes his head, disgusted.

DONALD
I don't know how you can watch this
stuff-

ABIGAIL
Gimmicks are *scientists*, dad, they
were people like you and me once-

DONALD
They're goddamn thugs, geniuses
who've traded in helping society
for hurting it. That's why they
call them gimmicks; they hide
behind their technology-

ABIGAIL
Underneath it all they just want to
be recognized-

DONALD
(fiercely)
If I had to be recognized as a
crook, I'd rather not be recognized
at all.
(beat)
(MORE)

DONALD (CONT'D)

Super-criminals are still
criminals, Abigail. I'd trade
every last one of my doctorates to
be able to come home at night to
you, not be on the run for fame
and...infamy or whatever-

*
*
*

ABIGAIL

Yeah.

There's a beat, and Donald smiles.

DONALD

Look, today...I know you've been
unhappy. But I want you to know
that I'm here for you if you want
to talk.

*
*
*
*

Abigail smiles.

*

ABIGAIL

Thanks, dad. I love you.

*
*

DONALD

Try to get to bed early tonight.
Big interview tomorrow morning.

*

LATER.

Abigail's still up. Surprise surprise. She's on her bed,
staring at the screen, all the lights off.

She's watching a **late night press conference** from the
Department of Justice. Arturo Dumas at a podium; they've
just finished replaying the White Knight's video.

*
*

ARTURO

A powerful message. And one I know
a lot of people agree with. I am
forced to clarify *again* that this
man has **no affiliation** with the
LAPD, us at the Marshals or any law
enforcement agency, *anywhere*. He
is a **wanted criminal**.

Abigail notices that her hands are shaking.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I know many of you are sick and
tired of high-science crime culture
that has developed in this country,
but the White Knight is not the
answer. He is a *dangerous*
vigilante.

*
*
*
*
*
*

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

He talks about us living in fear of gimmicks, and then engages in open warfare in the streets. His confrontations with super-criminals cost more lives than they're worth, and as the United States' only metahuman police officer I swear to you he **will be brought to justice**. Thank you, please direct any further questions to the US Marshals-

*
*
*
*
*

Abigail turns off the TV and flops onto her bed. She stares around at her room. She knows it's the room of a little girl. She sighs, and rolls over.

INT. GRAD SCHOOL INTERVIEW - MORNING

The office is lavish and beautiful. The interviewer, a **PROFESSOR**, 40s, sits behind the desk, while Abigail sits, dressed nicely, across from her, looking small in the chair.

PROFESSOR

Three different engineering degrees. A double major in theoretical applied quantum physics and game theory, published papers on nanotechnology and chronological perception in the limbic portion of the brain, you've got six years of experience working at four different technology companies, leaving all of them with strong to very strong recommendations...

Abigail straightens up, waiting for the "but."

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

I guess the question I have is "why us?" You could go anywhere, any graduate or doctoral program-

ABIGAIL

This is where my father went.

PROFESSOR

Do you want to teach, like him?

ABIGAIL

No, I-

PROFESSOR

But most of your research is hypothetical. What career do you intend to pursue? After school?

ABIGAIL

Well...I mean it has to stop being hypothetical sometime, doesn't it? Otherwise why...do we bother teaching it?

The Professor falters for a moment, then laughs.

INT. BUS - LATER

Abigail sits alone, head pressed against the window. Her headphones are in, listening to a self-improvement tape; "See the you you want to be! Don't say it's you right now, it's someone better! See them on the horizon, and run to them." *

LATER.

Abigail gets off the bus, walking up

THE STREET IN
GLENDALE

She's a million miles away, walking calmly. A firetruck **BLOWS PAST**, the siren startling her.

She recovers, watching as more fire trucks pass. She sighs, (LA, oy) and keeps walking home.

But as she gets further, she notices something in the air. What is it? Millions of little white flecks, hanging in the sky. Snow?

One of them lands on her, and she wipes it into a black shmear. Ash. It's ash.

She begins to walk quicker, her heart beginning to race. Something's wrong. Something's **very** wrong.

She turns the corner, having to **JUMP OUT OF THE WAY** as a police car, shot to pieces, blows past her- *

It only makes it half a block before Arturo Dumas **DROPS OUT OF THE SKY, LANDING ON THE HOOD, HIS IMPACT CRUSHING THE ENGINE.**

There's that flying we saw before and- WHOA- apparently he's **super strong too**, as he easily **RIPS OFF THE ENTIRE TOP OF THE POLICE CAR**, exposing the White Knight inside. *

The Knight tries to shoot him with a huge magnum revolver, but Arturo **BACKHANDS HIM OUT OF THE CAR AND ACROSS THE STREET. HOLY SHIT. THE KNIGHT IS DOWN.**

Arturo looks up. For a moment he and Abigail make eye contact, then Abigail turns, rushing up the street towards- *

EXT. BARNES RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

The place is **DESTROYED**. Three massive holes have been blown through the house in different directions; fires burn out of control, undeterred by the water from the fire trucks. *

ABIGAIL

Dad. Dad! Dad!

Abigail, shrieking, runs towards the house; one of the huge holes blown through into the kitchen.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Dad! Dad?

Abigail slows, noticing something about the floor of the kitchen. It's caved in. *

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

...Dad?

Abigail looks down into the caved in portion of the floor. It's an opening into...what...an elevator...shaft of some kind...looks like it goes down for...*hundreds of feet*...

Abigail stares at it, unable to process what she's looking at. She hears a sound, and turns to see a body bag being loaded into an ambulance.

She rushes towards it.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

No- *no no wait no!* *

POLICE DETECTIVE

Abigail Barnes? ABIGAIL BARNES!

Abigail's almost to the ambulance when she's suddenly *tackled off screen by a police officer.*

Face down in the front lawn, Abigail begins screaming her heart out, her arms are pinned behind her, her wrists are zip tied together. *

Abigail notices something in the front yard. It's the helmet-mask of Escapade, the geodesic faceplate stained with blood. *

ABIGAIL

Dad! **DAD! DAD!!!**

FADE TO WHITE.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Abigail, sleep deprived, pale, and in a prison jumpsuit, sits under a harsh interrogation light.

FBI PRICK

We found a secret elevator shaft beneath your father's home. Your home. Went down forty meters to a hidden base of operations with over seventy million dollars worth of bleeding edge engineering technology. Combining this with a penetrative discovery of your father having laundered over three billion dollars in funds through various sources since 1984, and we come to one inescapable conclusion.

(beat)

How long did you know your father was the gimmicked criminal known as "Escapade?"

Abigail squints into the light, silent.

FBI PRICK (CONT'D)

Where did he keep his armor? Why did you protect him?

*
*

ABIGAIL

(barely above a whisper)

I didn't...I don't know anything.

*

The light drops, revealing a stern **FBI PRICK**, 30s. This guy is all corners.

FBI PRICK

You're aware since you've been arrested in connection with a gimmicked criminal the US Marshals can keep you here *indefinitely*. No lawyers. No defense.

(beat)

It's been three days. That can become four days. That can become four weeks. That can become *four years*. What's that big brain of yours think about that? What're all your diplomas gonna mean in prison?

*
*
*

Abigail, knowing there's no right answer, looks down, scared and lost for words.

FBI PRICK (CONT'D)

(beat)

Your father is dead. Your old life is over. Your new life is here, in this room, and an endless series of rooms like this, with me, and an endless series of men like me, asking you the same questions again and again *until you tell us what we need to know-*

*

The door opens, and **GRANT Schumacher**, late 20s, lean and spry, enters. He's wearing the same modified Marshals uniform we saw Arturo in.

FBI PRICK (CONT'D)

What the shit is this?

GRANT

You're out. We're in. Marshals are taking over.

FBI PRICK

Oh are you? Screw that, we'll pull a K-81, then no one gets her.

GRANT

You no longer have the authority to pull anything.

FBI PRICK

What, you think cause you hang out with Superman you can come in here and wave your dick in my face-

*
*

GRANT

No. I think I can wave my dick in your face because I have this.

Grant hands him a document. The FBI prick reads it, falters, and then speaks quietly.

FBI PRICK

(after a long beat)

...So that's what the President's signature looks like, huh?

GRANT

That's right. Miss Barnes?

*

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

It's a clean, mostly white and steel room, filled with computers and technology; a super high-tech engineering bay, maintained by the United States Marshals.

Abigail is brought in by Grant, who pushes her forward a little, and uncuffs her.

ABIGAIL
(confused)
...What're you-

ARTURO
Hello Abigail.

Grant quietly makes his exit as Abigail turns to see Arturo Dumas (!) leaning casually against the wall. *

But then she notices something much, much more striking. **The Escapade armor**, stood up right in the middle of the room.

She glances back to Arturo, who simply nods.

Abigail slowly walks to the armor, staring at it. She reaches out a hand, touches it gently. *

ARTURO (CONT'D)
(casually)
You gotta work out. Eat a lot of carbs. Suit burns calories like a goddamn furnace, if you're not in good shape it'll tear you to pieces. *

Arturo takes out a cigarette. He offers it to Abigail, who can't even muster a response. He lights it for himself, walking over to her.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
(beat)
...You know in 1979, when I first got the nanites injected into me, found out I could fly, incredible strength...being a cop was the last thing on my mind. Me and my best friend, he was the one invented the nanites, we started knocking over liquor stores for a grand, two grand, real small time. Kid stuff.
(beat, smokes)
I thought maybe that was what I wanted, a "life of crime." But my friend, he was the smart one...He told me "Arturo, you can either take over the world, or you can try to save it." I turned myself in. Became the world's first and only gimmicked US Marshal; a bonafide "super hero." *

Abigail looks at him; "what the hell are you talking about?"
Arturo walks around the armor, almost nostalgic.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Of course it was only a matter of time before crooks started showing up with better and better technology. With a guy as powerful as me fighting for the "good guys," there had to be an escalation on the other side. Wasn't long before it got totally out of control. Tentacles and laserbeams, sonic disruptors and jetpacks...Gimmicks.

*
*
*

Arturo laughs, smiling up at the suit.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

That's when my friend, smart guy that he was, came up with another good idea: What if there was a goon so scary, so tough, so powerful, that all the other gimmicks fell into line behind him? A kind of trojan horse who could spearhead and guide the gimmicked crime phenomena, all the while reporting back to me, in the Marshals, telling us everything we'd need to know behind the scenes to maintain the balance of power. A mole, a snitch, an informant.

*

(beat)

He put on a mask to protect his identity. One villain to rule them all.

*
*
*
*

(beat)

That was your father. The man who invented the nanites that gave me my powers. Donald Barnes. My best friend. "Escapade."

*
*
*

Abigail's whole world spins- **again**.

ABIGAIL

Wh- what...

Arturo sighs, flicking away his cigarette.

ARTURO

The Los Angeles gimmicks are planning something big. They have been for months. We think the gimmick Seth Stavros is behind it but we don't know for sure.

*
*

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

But now that the White Knight
killed Donald, we're flying blind.
That's something we simply can't
allow to happen. The gimmicks
don't know they were ever being
watched; your father was too good.
But if we go forward without him,
there's a chance we lose
everything. We need Escapade.

Abigail's hands twitch slightly at her side. Arturo looks
wistfully at the armor.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

The armor only responds to Donald's
DNA, so trying to insert an
imposter would be impossible. He
also never shared any of his
designs; the Escapade suit and the
nanites in my blood are his only
surviving work; he never showed me
how to replicate them. He was too
worried it would fall into the
wrong hands.

Arturo walks up next to the suit, touching it fondly, then
looks to Abigail, very serious.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Your father did an excellent job
hiding his identity, but the White
Knight attacked him out of costume.
This says to me that the Knight
isn't working alone; **one of the
gimmicks must've deduced his
identity. Someone with an eye to
take him out, maybe take his spot,
and leaked it to the Knight..**

(beat)

To reintegrate a new, unmasked
agent into the gimmicks would take
months, maybe years. We need
someone with an in-built attachment
to this world.

(beat)

When we pair these problems
together, a clear solution presents
itself.

Abigail looks to Arturo.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

By doing this Miss Barnes, you will not only be protecting this city, but also have the opportunity to bring your father's real killer to justice.

*
*
*
*
*
*

ABIGAIL

...I don't...I don't...

*
*

ARTURO

I'm sorry Abigail. This isn't a choice.

*
*

(beat)

You're the new mole.

Abigail stares at him. Completely blank.

INT. ARMORED CAR - DRIVING

Abigail sits on one of the benches in back, Grant sitting across from her. He's looking at her, watching, waiting.

*

GRANT

My name is Grant, Grant Schumacher-

*

Grant falls quiet, looking at her.

GRANT (CONT'D)

I...I'm sorry. About your father.

*

Abigail's just looks at him. Grant, uncomfortable, looks away. They pull up to a dingy old building in the toy district, downtown.

GRANT (CONT'D)

This is you. Most of the building's abandoned, but you've got a whole two floors to yourself, hidden elevator and-

Abigail *unlocks the door and runs out into the street!*

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - CONTINUOUS

Abigail runs fast and furious through the streets, breathing hard. She runs until she wears herself out, and turns, exhausted, into an

ALLEYWAY

Were she collapses against a wall, breathing hard. Grant catches up, easily.

*
*

GRANT

...Where were you going?

Abigail hangs her head, exhausted.

WE MOVE INTO A
SEQUENCE

Of **Escapade's lair**, the lights flickering on slowly, one by one in each room. The place is huge, but it's a mess, with peeling wallpaper, grotty and rotten. It all looks abandoned, except for the abundance of future-tech trinkets scattered here and there.

INT. **ESCAPADE'S LAIR** - WORKSHOP ROOM

Like everywhere else in the lair, the workshop room is all beat to shit; wallpaper peeling off, flickering lights...

Grant leads her in, clearly in the midst of the tour. Abigail comes in after him, setting down and unzipping the duffle she carries.

Grant looks around, not noticing Abigail undressing behind him.

GRANT

This is the workshop. Hasn't been used in a couple years, but as far as we can tell all the tech is up to date. Hell, way past date, your father was working on stuff well beyond anything available on the market. We got a car for you downstairs, not a nice one but- what are you doing?

Abigail is clicking on the Escapade armor piece by piece.

ABIGAIL

How's it work?

GRANT

Hey, we can go over that after you've had time to rest. You've just been through a major trauma, you should...come on, don't-

*

ABIGAIL

I **need** to know how it works.

Abigail doesn't respond, just finishes putting on the armor and looks at herself in a warped, time stained mirror. The suit, all black and white, is sleek and form fitting. Every time she moves, we see shocks at every joint flexing.

Grant picks up the helmet, showing it to her.

GRANT

(reluctantly)

The helmet disrupts mental chronometry. It fires low-pulse electrons into the basal ganglia, the portion of the brain that-

ABIGAIL

Controls perception of time.

Abigail turns, looking at the back.

GRANT

That's right. Slows your perception, time dilation reduced by about four hundred percent. What that means is-

ABIGAIL

Your body works four hundred times harder to match it.

GRANT

(beat)

...right. You move four times as fast. Hit four times as hard.

Abigail flexes her hand; the fists are essentially fingered brass knuckles.

GRANT (CONT'D)

The suit just protects you, stops you from hurting yourself, breaking your bones.

(beat)

Lots of stuff built in; grappling hooks, knives...The helmet was built only to respond to his DNA. Judging from what I know of the design, which admittedly isn't very much, it's rigged to explode if anyone else tries to put it on, but-

*

Abigail roughly takes the helmet from Grant. A scan-laser immediately sweeps over her from a hidden point on the textured faceplate. The back of the helmet unfolds.

She pulls it up and over her head; Grant *flinches badly* as the helmet closes instantly, crunching in on her hair.

ABIGAIL'S POV

Is now cluttered with read-outs and diagrams. The suit's onboard computer shows Grant's name, his height, his bodyweight...

GRANT (CONT'D)
...I guess that settles that.

Not only that, but it scans objects as well; everything is graphed, with its weight next to it.

GRANT (CONT'D)
What's it like in there? How does it feel-

Abigail activates the ChronoSync in the suit and suddenly everything's going *suuuuuuppper-sloooooowly*; Grant's voice stretches and deepens: "feeeeeeeeeelllllllllllll."

She swings up an arm and we see

IN NORMAL TIME

Abigail move *super-fast, punching two holes in the wall, easily flipping a heavy table of equipment and then kicking the mirror, shattering it, a blur.*

Abigail deactivates the ChronoSync, popping open the front of the helmet. She turns on Grant. It seems to finally dawn on Grant that he's essentially given the lunatics the key to the asylum.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Hey, whoa...Easy. *Easy.*

Abigail's face is set. Stone cold. She turns and stares at herself in the shattered mirror.

CLOSE ON:

A needle penetrating skin.

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - BEDROOM

The squalid little room is mostly featureless; the bed is a spartan cot.

Grant is sitting on the bed next to Abigail, now out of the armor, shirtless, injecting something into her neck.

ABIGAIL
It hurts.

GRANT
Only for a second.

Grant pulls out the needle.

ABIGAIL
Will I feel them?

GRANT
No. They're microscopic sensor
arrays; they'll will passively
connect to your optical nerve and
your inner ear, you shouldn't
notice anything.

*
*
*
*

ABIGAIL
You'll be...watching me-

GRANT
Well, they don't have broadcast
capability. I'll need to upload
the footage they capture once a
week.

*
*

ABIGAIL
They see everything I see-

GRANT
And hear everything you hear, yes,
um, ideally.

ABIGAIL
...What about my privacy?

GRANT
We're past that.

Abigail stares at him, and a flash of anger crosses her face.

*

GRANT (CONT'D)
No, Miss Barnes, I don't.
(beat)
When I was nine, both of my parents
died in a house fire. I was
adopted by Arturo when I turned
fourteen...What I'm saying is, I
know how lost you feel right now.
And...there is absolutely nothing I
can say that's going to help.
(beat)
And I really am sorry.

*

SHORTLY
THEREAFTER

Grant is kneeling in front of Abigail, who's standing up.
He's scanning all over her body with some kind of device.

ABIGAIL
Where's the White Knight?

GRANT
In lock-up, awaiting his hearing.

ABIGAIL
When's the hearing?

GRANT
The court's taking their time.
They want to do this right; they
play it wrong, it'll end up as a
complete circus.

ABIGAIL
Who else knows about me?

GRANT
Just me and Arturo. Safer that
way.

His machine beeps and a green light goes on.

GRANT (CONT'D)
All done.

ABIGAIL
What now?

GRANT
Now, I leave. You insert yourself
into Los Angeles Gimmick culture-

*

ABIGAIL
What!?! How am I supposed to

*

GRANT
The gimmicks aren't hard to find,
they leave a big footprint-

ABIGAIL
*You're going to leave me here and
I'm supposed to do this on my own?
No! I say no, I'll leave, I'll-*

GRANT
And go where, you can't hide from
Arturo, he's...Arturo-

Abigail, waking up a little, speaks hard and direct.

ABIGAIL
You can't do this to someone! I'm
just a scientist, they'll kill me-

GRANT

Hey, they were scientists too; and as far as we know, none of them knew Escapade's real name or identity, they'll probably be interested to meet you-

ABIGAIL

YOU CAN'T JUST KIDNAP ME-

GRANT

We already did, okay!? Look this wasn't my idea, this isn't my program!

(beat, trying to collect himself)

The department of justice is getting desperate. There's a general order out not to respond to gimmicked crimes. See, they find out one of these guys is robbing a bank. You send some cops; he's gonna kill those cops. So what, you send SWAT, the gimmick will kill them too. What's next? The national guard? Sure, you send the guard, there's open warfare on Hollywood Boulevard, and maybe, **maybe** you get him.

(beat)

It's cheaper and safer just to let him rob the bank. *

(beat)

And every day it gets worse. We're trying, but that's why people are getting behind the White Knight, because at least he's fighting back- *

ABIGAIL

He murdered my father.

Grant starts to respond, but then stops himself; he can't afford this philosophical debate, because he himself feels he's in the wrong.

GRANT

(gentler)

You have your orders. I'll see you in a week.

Abigail hangs her head low, miserable, deep in thought. *

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

We watch as she pokes around the place. Finds a gym, with run-down, rusted, well-worn workout equipment.

She opens a closet, finding a bunch of her father's old clothes. She pulls out an old, beat-up Pink Floyd t-shirt. Takes it down. Smells it.

FLASH TO:

Abigail, age five, is laying on a younger Donald's chest on the couch in their home. They're watching cartoons. He's wearing the shirt.

BACK TO:

Abigail laying on the cot in Escapade's hideout, holding the Pink Floyd shirt. She's watching the news on a big flatscreen.

It shows old footage of Escapade beating the crap out of people and generally being super-bad-ass.

She begins sobbing; big, heaving, piercing sounds that shake her entire body, holding the shirt up to her face.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - SUNRISE

The sun rises over the city.

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - GYM - LATER

Sun streams down through atrium windows into the dusty gym. *

Abigail enters, clearly having just woken up, slowly going over to the punching bag, wearing her dad's workout clothes. Under her arm is the Escapade Helmet.

She stares at the bag, and then hits it once, just a little jab. And then again.

She takes a breath, lifts up the helmet, looks at it, and then puts it on.

She stares at the bag for a moment, then *activates Chronosync*. *BAMBAMBAMBAMBAM*. Five hits in under a second.

She looks at her knuckles; they're bruised and bloody.

She steps back, taking a breath, and then *BAMBAMBAMBAMBAM-*

SLAM TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - COFFEE SHOP - LATER

Abigail, looking like an absolute mess, her eyes heavily bagged, skin pallid, hair frizzed and crazy looking, sits drinking tea on an outdoor patio.

Her knuckles are wrapped in bloodstained gauze.

A group of **YUPPIE CHICKS** is nearby, talking and laughing loudly. *

SEXY YUPPIE CHICK

That's what I'm saying, right? Is that if you're going major in PR, at least have the decency to like, try to get a job, or at least look like you're going to get one, not just marry the first baller you come across-

*

SEXY YUPPIE FRIEND

Hahaha "baller" Angela you're such a bitch-

SEXY YUPPIE CHICK

No I'm being serious, she could've just saved time and been a cheerleader, right? Am I right-

Abigail **abruptly stands up and flips her table.** Everyone in the restaurant stops dead.

Abigail picks up her tea, and leaves.

EXT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - ROOF

Abigail sits, drinking her tea alone near the ledge of the building. This is more her speed right now.

She scoots closer to the edge. Closer. Dangles one leg off. Then the other.

God, she isn't going to jump, is she?

Abigail takes her tea and drops it, watching as it falls twenty stories to the ground. She ponders this, in silence-

*

A HELICOPTER BLOWS PAST OVERHEAD! Startled, Abigail **FALLS OFF THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING,** just barely catching herself. *

She's slipping- SLIPPING- no, she pulls herself back up onto the roof, exhausted, breathing hard. Another helicopter passes...

*

And then another. *And now two more, three. Abigail looks further downtown; where helicopters are **swarming** over Union Station!*

*

Abigail stares at the mayhem, her face set.

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - MOMENTS LATER

The big wall TV is on as Abigail passes back and forth in front of it, getting ready.

It's a news broadcast, showing the train yards at downtown's Union Station.

NEWSCASTER

You can see here emergency response vehicles are arriving in mass to Los Angeles' Union Station, with reports of gimmicked criminals on the scene attempting-

We see a single train car **GO FLIPPING INTO THE AIR**, soaring over the police cars skidding up to the station and **crashing down into the street.**

CARTER Black, 30s, appears, riding on the roof of a cargo train as it departs the station. He's handsome in a doucheway, with an irresistible asshole charisma that hits you like a tidal wave.

*

*

But what's really striking isn't the Armani suit; it's the sleek piece of technology he wears over it; cybernetic tendrils of razorwire swarm as tentacles all around him like a nest of venomous snakes.

It's *incredible*. Cops open fire, but the tendrils organically move to block the shots.

CARTER

WHAT NOW BITCHES, I'M ON A TRAIN!
CHOO-CHOO!

VINCENT Prosser, early 30s, pale and freckle-faced with a shock of red hair, pops out from behind Carter's swarm. He wears a bullet proof vest over a wannabe-stylish Ecko Red outfit.

His arms are concealed inside of bulky, rapidly rotating futuristic gunbarrels.

VINCENT

Andale andale, arriba arriba!

Vincent **OPENS FIRE WITH HIS ARM-CANNONS, DESTROYING COP CARS LEFT AND RIGHT-**

Abigail clicks off the TV; **she's in the full Escapade armor!** *
The helmet's facemask clicks closed over her face.

Okay. *HERE WE GO.*

SLAM TO:

Abigail, in a Mazda Miata, sitting in downtown traffic at a red light, behind the wheel in the full Escapade armor. The newscaster on the radio is freaking out.

RADIO NEWS

The train is picking up speed, headed east as police struggle to establish roadblocks before they can leave the train yard, but the situation is escalating quicker than they can-

Abigail looks over to the car next to her, where a little nerd girl is staring at her from the backseat. The light's still red. *

FUCK THIS!

Abigail *slams on the gas and swerves around traffic, running the red light-*

-activating Chronosync as she does-

-allowing her to navigate the cross traffic, cars missing her Miata by MILIMETERS-

And then she's off! WE ARE BREAKING LAWS HERE PEOPLE!

WE FOLLOW
ABIGAIL AS

She speeds wildly through downtown, the first casualty of her career in supervillainy being *every single traffic law.* *

EXT. TRAINYARDS - CONTINUOUS

A rushed police blockade of three cars blocks the furthest east entrance to the trainyards. They wave at Abigail's Miata as it hurtles towards them, "Stop! Stop!"-

But are forced to **dive out of the way** as Abigail crashes through, dropping down into the train yards.

Two cop cars **burst out after her, sirens blaring!** *

Abigail swerves and screeches through the obstacle course of trains and cargo containers in the yard, finally coming out alongside the train the gimmicks are riding on, out ahead of the police!

*
*
*

Up on the top of the train, Carter, pops out his cell phone.

CARTER
Morgan, you got it yet?

Cops open fire on him; there's a SWAT team making their way up the top of the train from the back. Carter drops, using his barbwire tentacles to make an improvised barrier.

*
*

Vincent tries to return fire with his big arm guns, but the shots go wild. Carter notices Abigail's car coming up alongside of the train.

*

CARTER (CONT'D)
Vince, look!

VINCENT
...Is that Escapade?

CARTER
I think so.

*

VINCENT
...Why's he in a Miata?

*

One of the SWAT team members notices Abigail driving alongside the train, turns and *opens fire!*

Abigail swerves wildly and **hits a rail tie!** The Miata *flips into the air-*

*

Abigail *activates Chronosync MID-FLIP and time... slows... down...*

*

She opens her car-door, climbs out onto the side of the car *mid-flip*, and **leaps to the train-**

She lands hard and clumsy, clicking off Chronosync...

The Miata **CRASHES TO THE GROUND BEHIND HER as** THE SWAT TEAM TURNS AND SPRAYS HER WITH BULLETS! The armor protects her, but Abigail is flung backward by the impacts, *right off the side of the train-*

*
*
*

Where someone catches her arm seconds before impact! She dangles there, and looks up to see

*

HERMAN
You ain't Escapade.

HERMAN Stoltz, 40s, weathered and blue collar, stands over her; he has an integrity and maturity these other guys don't, but also seems slightly harder edged.

Herman's gimmick reflects its DIY origins. It's a rickety, homemade looking vest, with tons of exposed wiring and circuitry that runs up and down his arms, along with a heavy weather hood that comes up over his head. *

Herman pulls her up onto the side of the train, both of them pressed against the cargo car. *

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Stay here.

One of the SWAT guys leans over from about then and *OPENS FIRE-*

But Herman *grabs his ankle and yanks him off the train!* He lands WHAM on the ground, rolling away.

The other SWAT guys up top refocus their attack on Herman and Abigail, and Herman pulls her further into the train for shelter, when suddenly-

SNAKES OF BARBWIRE ARE EVERYWHERE AMONGST THE SWAT TEAM, flinging them off the train left and right! They don't stand a chance.

CARTER

HAHAHAHA! EXCUUSE ME, ASSHOLES!

VINCENT

Yeah you show'em Carter!

CARTER

I am **showing** them! They are **seeing** this!

A police helicopter swings low over the train, and Vincent takes some potshots at it with his arm cannons; it backs off.

VINCENT

YO DAWG WHERE YOU GOIN? Come back, let me get your badge number so I can go to your house and bang your wife! *

Herman rolls his eyes, annoyed by the macho posturing. *

HERMAN

Come on.

Herman boosts Abigail up to the roof of the train to join the other gimmicks, then climbs up himself.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Morgan, you got it hooked up?

Further up the train stands

MORGAN Hardaway, late 20s, black, looking super hip-hop fashionable in suspenders and a bow-tie. He's got what looks like a little backpack on, which is heavily wired into thin tubes that run up his arms.

Morgan seems more poised than his compatriots, but only barely. Less Ice Cube, more Kanye West.

He throws up a thumbs up.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Okay people, let's move!

*

Herman grabs Abigail by the arm and the four of them hurriedly walk up the train towards the cargo-car Morgan stands on.

More cop cars are swarming onto the trackyard from all directions; it's clear they're going to try to block or derail the train somehow.

VINCENT
What's up with Escapa-

HERMAN
This ain't Escapade.

CARTER
Aw hey, yeah, this dude's way shorter, who the f-

Bullets start bouncing off the train all around them; the cops are opening fire from different points in the yard. A sniper fires a large caliber round, which **SMASHES INTO ABIGAIL'S HELMET**, flooring her.

VINCENT
BOOM! BANG! KAPOW!

*

Vincent spins and begins firing almost at random with the arm cannons, setting off *massive explosions throughout the yard*. The gimmicks run up the train towards Morgan, but Abigail is *left behind*, dazed, trying to get up.

As the gimmicks approach the cargo container Morgan stands on, a **flyng hummer-limousine (!)**, its wheels replaced with harrier-style jets, swings low over the train.

*

*

HERMAN
Activate the magnets.

With a loud hum, electromagnets *explode into life!* The gimmicks have set up some kind of weird device along the sides of the cargo container and-

Yes-

It lifts off, separating from the rest of the train with them still standing on it.

The gull-wing doors on the sides of the limo pop open, and Vincent jumps in, followed by Carter, then Morgan. Herman, however, waits, looking back to Escapade, who's still dazed on the ground. *

He seems to argue with himself for a moment, then:

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Hey, Fakescapade! Last call!

Abigail finally struggles to her feet, seeing the train car begin to take off, and *activates Chronosync!*

She makes a mad dash up the train, reaching the car and leaping to it like a grasshopper, just barely making the twenty foot jump, exhausted from the run! *

She stumbles, right up to the edge almost falling off; by now they're almost seventy feet in the air. *

Herman grabs Abigail by the arm and *pulls her into*

INT. SKY-LIMO - CONTINUOUS

Abigail stumbles in, Herman slamming the door behind them-

BARBWARE IS SUDDENLY ALL OVER ABIGAIL, pinning her down. She looks up to see one of Vincent's arm cannons in her face.

HERMAN
Hey, whoa guys, whoa!

MORGAN
Tell him to lose the mask.

CARTER
Yeah this ain't trick-r-treat. *

HERMAN
Just back off a second- *

VINCENT
What's your problem, Herman? You
said it yourself, that's not
Escapade- *

HERMAN

Of course it's not, if it was you
three idiots would be dead by now.

(beat, then to Abigail)

They got you by the balls. Lose
the helmet.

*

Abigail realizes she's checkmated, and after a moment,
deactivates the facemask of the helmet, revealing her, red-
faced and breathing hard.

Carter lets out a squawking laugh.

CARTER

Hahaha, check it out, bro! Polly
Pocket!

VINCENT

Morgan, dust her!

*

MORGAN

Sorry cookie, no hitch-hikers.

*

*

Morgan raises a hand, and electricity crackles around his
fingers when-

Herman's cell phone rings.

HERMAN

Hold up.
(he checks it)
It's Seth.

He answers it.

*

HERMAN (CONT'D)

(after listening)

Right.

Herman hangs up.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

(turns to Abigail)

Looks like he wants to meet you.

SLAM TO:

INT. DINGY ELEVATOR

Carter, Vincent, Morgan and Herman are standing around
Abigail in a dingy elevator, going up; Herman's got her
helmet under his arm.

VINCENT

Youngest person ever to receive the MacArthur Genius Grant. Youngest ever graduate from Yale. Seth is seriously serious, man.

HERMAN

You've got your head seriously up his ass is what's serious.

Carter laughs. Abigail's just quiet.

CARTER

Still nothing to say?

*
*

MORGAN

I like this chick, she's like gangsta Helen Keller.

Abigail, seeming to come out of her daze a little bit, looks to Carter.

ABIGAIL

Carter.

CARTER

Yeah?

ABIGAIL

Your name is Carter Black. You won the Nobel Prize.

Carter laughs self consciously, and Vincent and Morgan react like she just landed a huge slam in a rap battle.

CARTER

Yeah. That was before I had swag.

*

Vincent chuckles, and he and Carter bump fists.

INT. DINGY BASKETBALL COURT - MOMENTS LATER

There's a repetitive "WHUMPhudWHUMP" sound.

Abigail is marched in by the gimmicks seeing

SETH Stavros, early 30s, standing on the far end of the court, bouncing a basketball against the wall. On the last bounce, Seth flicks a finger at the incoming ball, and a bizarre thing happens:

A thin spike suddenly rockets up from the floor of the court, loudly *popping the basketball!*

It stays there, a new sort of sculpture in the room; the spike is clearly made of the same hardwood as the floor, but stretched...deformed...

Welcome to the terrifying world of matter manipulation.

SETH

Hi. I'm Seth.

Abigail just stares at him.

SETH (CONT'D)

Okay, rude.

Like the rest of the gimmicks, there's an awkwardness to him, a sense of wrongness; **these are academics posturing as playboys, geeks who've killed their way into the cool kids club...**

...but they'll never really belong, and Seth is the only one who seems to have embraced this. Under an ocean of arrogance, there's tragedy here.

He walks towards her, calmly.

SETH (CONT'D)

Where's the real Escapade?

ABIGAIL

Dead.

The three mouthy gimmicks react loudly (Herman of course remains silent), clearly shocked, but Seth shuts them up just by raising a hand.

He's right next to Abigail now. He grinds his teeth for a moment, thinking.

SETH

That college professor. The one the White Knight killed that they're trying to get the news not to talk about.

(beat)

They've already wiped everything about him online. Such a blatant move, so typical of Arturo.

ABIGAIL

...Yes.

SETH

(grinds)
Daughter?

ABIGAIL

...Yes.

SETH

But you didn't know.

ABIGAIL

No.

Seth grinds his teeth again, thinking.

SETH

They wouldn't believe that.
Something's wrong.

Seth gestures gently with a finger, and a spike rises rapidly from the floor, right up to the soft flesh where Abigail's jaw meets her neck, pressing in, dimpling the skin.

Abigail doesn't move, just stands very still, stoic, meeting Seth's gaze.

SETH (CONT'D)

How'd you get away from the FBI?

ABIGAIL

I didn't "get away," they let me go-

SETH

Bullshit.

ABIGAIL

-it's not, they said they'd be
watching me and-

SETH

Who says Arturo Dumas himself
didn't pull you out? Didn't
promise you some kind of exemption,
amnesty from-

ABIGAIL

They're scared of you.

SETH

I'm sorry what?

ABIGAIL

They were worried you'd all come
looking for me, that you'd break me
out-

SETH

So I'm just supposed to believe you found your father's suit on your own, on the floor or something? Come on, is that the best you got?

*

A drop of blood runs down the spike at her neck.

ABIGAIL

*You honestly think I think I'm smarter than **you**? You think I don't watch the news? You think, what, I'm going to walk into a confrontation with the most dangerous man alive with a secret to keep? With a lie to tell?*

(beat, swallows)

You must think I'm the bravest girl in the world.

There's a beat, and then...

SETH

(laughs)

Touche.

(beat)

You know, it's funny. If I extend that spike one more foot, it'll cut through the soft tissue at the bottom of your jaw, through the bottom of your mouth, through your tongue, up through the roof of your mouth, through your skull, into the meat of your brain and then, pop, out the top.

(smiles)

Your head will look like a pretty little cocktail olive.

Seth grins.

SETH (CONT'D)

So what I'm saying is you should really think about your answer to this next question: Why are you here?

There's a beat.

ABIGAIL

Because I want revenge. I want to kill the man who killed my father. And to do that, I need to become one of you.

SETH
One of you?

ABIGAIL
One of the bad guys.

SETH
Ooh. Ooh ooh ooh. Me likey.

Seth sucks his spike back into the floor.

SETH (CONT'D)
Herman, take her home.

INT. HERMAN'S VAN - DOWNTOWN LA - SUNSET

A police helicopter blows past overhead. Herman drives along in a dingy old van, Abigail sitting shotgun.

HERMAN
You're quiet.

ABIGAIL
Why didn't Seth come to train robbery?

HERMAN
Ha. Seth's a strategy guy. Those spikes of his are probably the most dangerous gimmick on the west coast, and he never uses them in public. Thinks he's a "kingpin."

ABIGAIL
(beat)
Why did you wait for me?

HERMAN
Hah! ...Oh, kid.

They stop at a light. A cop car pulls up alongside them. Herman sees Abigail staring at it (she's still in the armor) and rolls up her window as she slouches down in her seat.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
I don't have a degree. I'm not an egghead, I was a convict. Had the idea for my gimmick in prison; built the prototypes out of pieces of microwaves, air conditioning units, televisions...

(beat)
And I used'em to break out of prison.

(MORE)

HERMAN (CONT'D)

I had two months to go, *two months!*
But I'd seen all the gimmicks
living it up on TV...

He laughs; a sour sound.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

I coulda gotten out and got a
patent. Made a billion dollars. I
find out I'm some kinda engineering
genius, and...I blew it. Can't see
my wife, or my kid. Worrying the
cops are gonna finally come after
me day and night.

(beat)

So when I see someone looks like
they need helping out, I help'em
out.

They pull over.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Is this you?

Abigail looks up at the building. Her "lair."

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - MOMENTS LATER

Abigail enters, and slumps down against the wall, breathing
hard. She stares down at the helmet in her lap.

CLOSE ON:
KNUCKLES
CRACKING

INT. HOLDING CELL - MORNING

The White Knight, in prison scrubs, sits alone in his cell,
stretching.

His name is **CHARLES MICHAEL LEE**.

Out of his armor he's almost even more frightening. Short
cropped blonde hair. Cold blue eyes. Severe, chiseled
features. He could pass for Captain America if there wasn't
something...off about him. Something dark and vicious.

He's doing headstand push-ups.

Grant appears at the bars.

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE
Hello *sidekick*.

Grant remains silent, and Charles stands up, stretching.

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE (CONT'D)

You come for some...what,
mentoring? Wanna know how a real
man solves his problems, solves the
problems of his society?

Grant smiles slightly.

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE (CONT'D)

I see what's goin' on in your head,
buddy. You...you wanna **be** me.
See, no matter what kinda fancy
gadgets you marshals get, you still
gotta follow your rules, and the
gimmicks don't.

(smiles)

That's why I'm a man of the people.
That's why I won't go to trial.
You pigs are gonna let me walk
right out of here, you pus-

*
*

*

GRANT

I came to let you know your trial's
been pushed up. Two weeks.

Charles goes silent.

GRANT (CONT'D)

That is...if a gimmick doesn't come
in here and **get you** first.

Grant winks, and walks out. Charles hisses, anger flooding
into him.

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE

**LET'EM TRY! LET'EM GO AHEAD AND
TRY!**

SLAM TO BACK.

EXT. GRIFFITH PARK HIKING TRAIL - MORNING

It's at least a week later. Abigail is jogging with Herman,
lagging behind him. They're both wearing hoodies and
sunglasses; they look like celebrities going incognito.

ABIGAIL

Herman, come on!

HERMAN

You come on! Catch up!

ABIGAIL
I'm trying!

HERMAN
See, your problem is-

Herman takes a break, breathing hard, and after a moment Abigail catches up.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
You spend all your energy sprinting at the beginning; every day the same with you.

ABIGAIL
And what am I supposed to do? You just start going and then you're gone.

*
*
*

HERMAN
C'mon Abby, you play chess. Never just rush in. Don't let me determine your pace, right? You gotta see where you're going before you go there. Then see your next move after that. Two moves ahead, *always, at least.*

*
*
*

Herman's cell phone rings. He answers it.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Got it.

He hangs up.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Seth's guy. Says we're on a job up north today.

ABIGAIL
Wait...we?

INT. EIGHTEEN WHEELER TRAILER

The trailer is mostly dark, and we can hear the rattling of the big rig. Abigail, in the Escapade suit, is up front. Herman, in his gimmicked rig, stands with her.

Further up in the trailer, are **MINNIE**, early 30s, who would be plain-jane without all the crazy make-up and hair extensions (and the fact that she's wearing some kind of shawl that looks like a disco-ball)...

...and **ERNEST**, 30s, who looks like a redneck who won the lottery. He wears a bizarre, tight-fitting helmet with what looks like a radio dish built into the back.

Morgan's there too. He looks bummed out and nervous.

ABIGAIL

Where are we going?

Minnie laughs. Ernest shushes her.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

What is it? A bank, or-

Minnie laughs.

MINNIE

Honey, what we want, they don't keep in **banks**.

HERMAN

Alright people listen up! Private security is gonna be all over us the minute we're through the gates. Ernest, Minnie, that's you. We go straight to the Corsica building, Morgan will blow out the front, I storm the lobby and then Abigail makes a run to the vault.

(to Abigail)

There are seven automated vault doors that will be closing from the moment we enter the building. Abigail, your job is to get there, get in, and blow the failsafes. Should be a panel by the door.

ABIGAIL

What's in the vault?

MORGAN

You don't need to know.

ABIGAIL

But I mean we should at least-

ERNEST

We're metropolitan gods, baby. We got all the plan we need.

There's a huge **CRASH! and the truck JERKS, knocking Abigail to the ground.**

HERMAN

There's the gates.

The truck screeches to a stop, and immediately we can hear alarms going off.

ERNEST
Chatter says we're surrounded.

HERMAN
Cut their communications.

Ernest hits a button on a wrist control pad.

ERNEST
Done. They're breaching the door.

MORGAN
Here we go.

The doors at the back of the truck **EXPLODE OPEN**, and Morgan and Minnie start to stand up, Herman moves back but *Abigail activates the ChronoSync...*

Suddenly it's a tableau, everything moving at a snail's crawl. She notices something floating in the air.

It's a grenade. She looks outside, to see...

EXT. BRADLEY INDUSTRIAL PARK - MIDDAY - CONTINUOUS

It's a super high-tech microchip factory in Silicon Valley; a factory building, an office park, etc.

The truck has crashed through the front gates, and is now *surrounded* by private security with semiautomatic weapons.

Abigail snatches the grenade out of the air and hurls it back towards the security.

They've all started to react to her now, in slo-mo, and she *attacks*, punching and kicking the security down left and right as they ever so slowly try to fire on her.

Her body's working hard, and she's started to sweat, but man she is actually *PLOWING THROUGH THESE GUYS until-*

BOOM.

She forgot all about the grenade! The blast **FLOORS HER VIOLENTLY**. Abigail, dazed, shuts off the Chronosync, and the world is suddenly *A DEAFENING MESS OF GUNFIRE AND ANARCHY*.

Herman *yanks* Abigail to her feet, just in time to see Minnie activate something on that discoball shawl of hers-

BLINDING BALLS OF LIGHT EXPLODE OUT OF IT IN ALL DIRECTIONS, BURSTING APART LIKE CONCUSSIVE FIREWORKS! The private security is scattered like ants in a storm!

HERMAN

With me.

Herman pulls Abigail along; they're following Morgan, running from cover to cover, headed towards the **CORSICA** building, which looks to be the office plaza.

But the massive glass front lobby is abruptly blocked by a **HUGE STORM SHUTTER.**

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Morgan!

Morgan blasts a hole through the storm shutters with his entropy emitters; Herman pulls two canisters of some kind off his belt, activates them, and rolls them into the hole, spitting bright white gas.

Gunfire comes spraying out; Herman pulls Abigail to cover.

ABIGAIL

What's-

HERMAN

The canisters flood the room with a hyper-plasmic ionized gas.

ABIGAIL

(in awe)

An indoor lightning storm?

HERMAN

That's right. Then my rig let's me control air currents, temperature, and, if necessary...I can zap you.

ABIGAIL

That's incredible.

HERMAN

Yeah yeah.

Herman pulls sick-looking goggles down over his eyes, and pulls Abigail out of cover and into-

INT. CORISCA BUILDING - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

It's like being inside a cloud; we can't see *anything* other than Herman, out ahead of Abigail. He activates his arm rigs and **THE MIST TURNS INTO A STORM, THE CLOUDS GOING BLACK.**

Lightning flashes in the clouds, rain pouring down, the wind blowing, electricity crackling. Herman pulls Abigail close.

HERMAN
 DOWN THE HALLWAY, RIGHT, LEFT,
 RIGHT, THROUGH THE CLOSING DOORS,
 SMASH THE DOOR TO THE ELEVATOR
 SHAFT, DROP DOWN TO THE BOTTOM,
 THROUGH THE SIX VAULT DOORS BEFORE
 THEY CLOSE, HIT THE FAILSAFE, THE
 CODE IS 1205A356X, GOT THAT?

ABIGAIL
 I- I-

HERMAN
 120-

ABIGAIL
 1205A356X-

HERMAN
 GOOD! GO WHEN IT'S CLEAR.

Herman raises his arms like an orchestra conductor, and the clouds suddenly *RISE*, exposing a bunch of dazed and disoriented security troops-

HERMAN SWINGS HIS ARMS AND HALF OF THEM ARE SENT FLIPPING BACKWARDS BY A BLAST OF WIND! SWINGS AGAIN AND THE REST ARE WIPED OUT BY AN ARC OF LIGHTNING!

HERMAN (CONT'D)
 IT'S CLEAR, GO!

Abigail activates the ChronoSync, but we're not in it this time; we can barely catch up as she

-TAKES OFF down the hallway, right, left, smashes a security guard out of the way and DIVES THROUGH HEAVY STEEL DOORS JUST AS THEY CLOSE-

-to a heavy elevator door, which she SMASHES THROUGH-

-sending her into a FREEFALL DOWN AN ELEVATOR SHAFT, but with the slowed reaction time she's able to MONKEY DOWN OFF THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND-

-SMASH THROUGH THE DOOR TO THE NEXT FLOOR-

INT. CORSICA BUILDING - VAULT FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

It's a long thin hallway, lights flashing red, with six huge steel doors of different types **ALREADY nearly closed.**

Abigail stares at them through the Chronosync. She's sweaty, panting hard, but-

SHE RUNS DUCKS DIVES AND JUMPS THROUGH THE DOORS, CLEARING EVERY ONE BY MERE MILLIMETERS, FINALLY DIVING INTO

INT. CORSICA BUILDING - THE VAULT - CONTINUOUS

A super-cooled vault filled with steel shelves, used for storing delicate technology and microchips...

Abigail, rolls in, springs to her feet and slaps the green override button, the keypad comes up *she enters the code blindingly fast-*

And then collapses, exhausted. She lays there, panting hard, and then lets out a brief, pained laugh.

EXT. CORSICA BUILDING - MINUTES LATER

The security, having regrouped, is rapidly surrounding the building. Up the road, we can see police cars racing to the complex-

Minnie comes ***charging out of the lobby, blasting her fireworks, Morgan behind her, splashing out entropy waves left and right, then Ernest...***

Who unstraps his big backpack device and sets it down.

MORGAN
Come on, come on!

Morgan, Minnie and Ernest hook themselves up to the backpack with steel cables on belay harnesses.

ERNEST
It's set!

Herman ***bursts out of the cloudy lobby***, holding a briefcase, pulling Abigail behind him with the other hand; she's stumbling, exhausted.

Herman hooks her into the backpack.

HERMAN
LIGHT IT UP!

Ernest nods, and presses a button-

THE BACKPACK ROCKETS INTO THE SKY ON BLUE-FLAME THRUSTERS, YANKING ALL THE GIMMICKS UP WITH IT, THEY-

GO HIGHER AND
HIGHER

Before it explodes into a auto-helicopter, pulling them along as Ernest steers it with a joy stick.

Abigail, breathing hard, looks down at the drop beneath her. Herman pulls down his hood, enjoying the wind.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
(yelling over the air)
Congratulations Abigail! You just penetrated one of the most advanced security systems in the world.

ABIGAIL
It was...easy!

HERMAN
Ha!

Ernest outright cracks up, and Minnie just shrugs. Morgan looks up at the briefcase, pleased.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - CLIFFSIDE - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Up on a high, dangerous road in the Hollywood Hills, the gimmicks have rendezvous'd with Seth, who is looking in the briefcase. *

He closes it, and gives Herman a hard look, before smiling at the rest of the gimmicks.

SETH
Very nicely done, people.
(looks to Abigail)
Good job on the vault, Ms. Barnes. *

MOMENTS LATER *

Herman and Abigail are looking out on the city. *

HERMAN
You impressed him today, that's good. He's testing you, seeing how far he can push. *

ABIGAIL
Why? I mean, aren't we on the same team? *

HERMAN
Team? HA. Team. Gimmicks, by definition, are out for themselves. *

(MORE) *

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Otherwise they'd be donating those
big brains to the betterment of
society, not blowin' shit up.

*
*
*

Abigail laughs.

*

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Hey you laugh but it ain't funny.
We've had stuff go wrong. For a
while there was even the rumor
there was a snitch.

*
*
*
*
*

Abigail's quiet.

*

HERMAN (CONT'D)

That's why you gotta follow the
motto. DTA. Don't Trust Anybody.

*
*
*

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - GYM - LATER

Abigail is working out, with the helmet on. Crunches, push
ups, hitting the bag, all at 4x normal human capabilities.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT - LATER

It's a little hole in the wall mexican food place. Abigail,
in a hoodie and sunglasses, is eating alone, watching a news
report on TV.

It shows footage of Escapade *beating the snot out of all the
security troops.*

*

GRANT

We didn't release your identity.

Abigail jumps, startled. Grant is sitting across from her.

GRANT (CONT'D)

But you must've assumed that by
now. You go out in public enough,
don't you.

Abigail peeks under the table. Grant has the sensor uploader
device set up; it's already going.

*

ABIGAIL

You can't- Seth must have people
watching-

GRANT

If someone was watching I wouldn't
be here. Stay calm.
(glances at the TV)
(MORE)

*

Blue (mm/dd/yyyy)

51.

GRANT (CONT'D)

You saw a lot of people die. You okay?

ABIGAIL

I'm fine.

GRANT

Are you?

Abigail's quiet.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Did you see what was stolen-

ABIGAIL

Where's the White Knight?

GRANT (CONT'D)

Abig-

ABIGAIL

Where's the White Knight?

GRANT

...The White Knight situation is more complicated than we originally imagined. We've found evidence that he has funding. A major cash flow towards equipment, plus someone has to have ratted out your father's identity to him-

ABIGAIL

Who.

Grant's quiet. Abigail stares a hole through him.

GRANT

There are theories. Either a gimmick or some, some corporate interest-

(stops himself)

I think we're getting close.

*
*
*

ABIGAIL

How close.

GRANT

I'm not going to reveal details of an ongoing investigation-

ABIGAIL

Why not?

GRANT

Because you're a criminal-

ABIGAIL

Because you forced me to become
one. Where's the White Knight...or
am I too dangerous?

There's a tense silence. Abigail smirks. Grant falters,
realizing she's flirting.

Grant can't help but laugh.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

That thing Seth had us steal from
the tech company. What was it?

*
*

GRANT

I don't know. Arturo's been saying
that Seth is building something
important, but he's tightlipped
about what it is.

ABIGAIL

Even to you?

GRANT

Even to me.

Under the table, the machine beeps.

GRANT (CONT'D)

I'll see you next-

ABIGAIL

What, you're not gonna eat?

Grant looks at her very cynically.

EXT. RUNYON CANYON - LATER

Abigail is running, in the zone, thinking. She stops, out of
breath, and checks her heart rate, pacing herself.

*

ARTURO

Miss Barnes.

Abigail looks up to see Arturo sitting somewhat whimsically
in a tree. Abigail looks around, shocked; there's no one
here to see this.

Arturo seems to think for a moment, and then...

*

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Charles Michael Lee is being held
in a detainment center uptown.
Grant is transporting him for his
trial tomorrow morning;

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

we figure it'll be safer than
trying to do it in the city.

ABIGAIL

(beat)

Why are you telling me this?

ARTURO

Grant said you wanted to know.

ABIGAIL

But he said-

ARTURO

Grant's by the book. But me...I
wrote the book.

(beat)

Maybe you and I might have some
things in common. Maybe I'm also
of the opinion that the White
Knight going to trial might not be
the best idea. Maybe when someone
kills my best friend, it might piss
me off a little. Maybe more than a
little.

(beat)

Of course, that's just between you
and me.

ABIGAIL

What about-

ARTURO

The sensor arrays in your blood?
I'm emitting a pulse that'll wipe
this from the datastream. Grant's
a good cop, he doesn't need to
know.

ABIGAIL

(beat)

You don't sound like a good cop.

ARTURO

I don't have to be a good cop.

(smiles)

I'm the best cop.

Abigail smiles. Arturo's kinda awesome.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - - PLAYGROUND - SUNSET

Herman and Abigail are sitting on a big play-structure
outside the elementary school, in their hoodies.

Herman is watching through binoculars as an elementary school play is being performed on stage, some kind of fruits and vegetables dance currently being performed.

HERMAN

Check her out, she's the pumpkin.

Abigail sees Herman's daughter through the binoculars, dancing on stage in a pumpkin suit, and smiles.

ABIGAIL

I like her dance.

Herman beckons back the binoculars, smiling. *

HERMAN

Yeah, look at that pumpkin. She's really feeling it, you can tell. *

Abigail laughs, but then turns solemn, watching him.

ABIGAIL

Why can't you go in?

HERMAN

You kiddin? I'm a criminal, I'm worse then a criminal, I'm a goddamn...celebrity. *

ABIGAIL

So? Carter, Seth, all those guys seem to do whatever they want-

HERMAN

Exactly, they do whatever *they* want. They don't care how they affect everyone else. Well I do. I would never expose her to that, I could never do that to my family.

There's a beat, Abigail quietly looking down.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Aw shit Abby, I didn't mean- *

ABIGAIL

No, it's fine. It's fine.
(beat)
I need to talk to Seth.

Herman looks surprised.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - LATER

This is the absolute upper-crust of dance joints; super fancy, the hottest women alive wandering around, dozens of scary looking criminal types of all shapes and sizes drinking and having fun.

Abigail enters, dressed conservatively but in all black, pushing through the crowd. She sees Carter at the bar; he waves excitedly. *

CARTER
Hey! Over here! *

She approaches; there's some creepy scary looking douche over on Carter's right, looking annoyed by him. *

Carter is a little drunk, with a gorgeous model in a near-headlock on his right. Abigail looks at him like "ugh." *

CARTER (CONT'D)
This is Genevive, Genevive say hi. *

GENEVIVE
I'mmm gonna get more drinks. *

She doddles off. *

CARTER
You see that chick? I used to be invisible to chicks like that...back at MIT! Nanotechnology, they didn't give a shit, I had dandruff, man! But now- *

One of Carter's razorwire tentacles suddenly whips out, sending the guy who was giving him hate-face *flying across the club*. People applaud. *

CARTER (CONT'D)
Now, people *respect me, babe*. And the chicks? It's like moths to a flame. *

Indeed, women around him seem impressed/interested. *

CARTER (CONT'D)
Bein' a villain is a damn good time. You're already fittin' right in. *

Abigail looks at him. This pathetic, powerful, tragic, terrifying man so symbolic of the "gimmick" culture. She hates it...but she gets it. *

ABIGAIL
I need to talk to Seth.

*
*

Carter looks up, nervous.

*

MOMENTS LATER

*

Seth is over in a corner booth with a few gorgeous heavily tatted stripper types.

*

SETH
Absolutely not.

ABIGAIL
Why? The White Knight is vulnerable, if we all work together-

*

SETH
First of all, I question your intel, here-

ABIGAIL
I told you, I intercepted a transmission on my headset-

*

SETH
Even if you did, even if this is the cleanest job in the world, we cannot afford to attack the White Knight tomorrow-

ABIGAIL
Why?

SETH
Because that's an **act of war**, Abigail, and we're not ready for that, not yet. The idea, **my idea**, of us gimmicks all working together is still new-

*
*

ABIGAIL
But he's alone, he's unarmed-

SETH
And surrounded by heavily armed marshals and SWAT in the middle of a city. You're thinking like *him*.

*
*

ABIGAIL
No, I'm-

SETH
Barnes you're still new to this. We'll get the Knight...*in time*.
(MORE)

SETH (CONT'D)

We got a big job coming up, Sapphire Lake. After that, it's all gonna change. But if you want to keep your head above water, *don't dive into **this**.*

(beat)

You got me?

Abigail, bristling, nods.

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - GYM - LATER

Herman has on punch pads, and is sparring with Abigail.

HERMAN

One two five.

Abigail throws a combo of punches; jab straight uppercut. She's a little out of breath, sweaty. We can notice here that she's lost more than a little weight.

ABIGAIL

Are you going to come with me tomorrow?

As they talk, Abigail punches.

HERMAN

One three one five. Hell no. And if I were you, I wouldn't go at all. Just listen to Seth.

ABIGAIL

He treats you like crap.

HERMAN

He treats everyone like crap. The man is a capr- whatchucallit, a capricious psychopath. *Two five two.* But he's a genius, and if he says no...

ABIGAIL

Why would he want to protect the Knight?

HERMAN

Protect him? *One five three.* It ain't about that. If anything he's protecting YOU-

ABIGAIL

If I let this pass me by I-

*

*

*

*

*

HERMAN

Three three four five one. You can try if you want, but I won't be surprised when you end up dead or in jail, and I won't come lookin' for you neither.

*

ABIGAIL

I thought we were friends.

*

HERMAN

We are friends. But I see that look on your face like you're deadset to be stupid, and I'm not in the business of helpin' people dig their own graves.. *One four five three two one three four two.*

Abigail throws out the flurry of punches, breathing hard, and Herman smiles.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Bad-ass.

(beat)

...It'd be a shame to waste all this training on a suicide mission.

*

*

Abigail stands sweating, thinking, looking at him.

EXT. DETENTION CENTER - DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAWN

Grant stands alone on the steps, smoking an electronic cigarette. He's clearly nervous, but the street is empty, and quiet.

Up the street, we can see the distant approach of an armored column; seven police cars around an armored truck.

GRANT

Okay okay.

He glances back at the detention center. There's a loud buzzer from behind him, and Charles Michael Lee, manacled at the wrists and ankles, is marched out, flanked on all sides by a SWAT team.

Out ahead of them is a marshal with **cool futuristic goggles on**, as well as a **shoulder mounted plasma cannon**.

*

GOGGLES

Marshal Schumacher, are we clear.

GRANT

We're in the pipe. Let's go.

The marshals walked Charles down the steps; he's got a hangdog look of defeat on his face, his eyes turned down. It doesn't suit him.

The police caravan pulls up and we

SLAM TO:

The inside of the armored truck as it rattles along. Grant sits with all the SWAT, opposite Charles, staring at him. Charles continues to look mopey.

Grant goes up to the window to the driver; Goggles sits shotgun.

GRANT (CONT'D)

We still clear?

DRIVER

Lookin' good. Halfway there.

GRANT

Looks like you might live to see your trial after all, Charlie.

Charles Michael Lee's expression has changed. He's smiling. Behind his back, his electronic handcuffs buzz, and...

...unlock!? But he remains perfectly still.

GOGGLES

I'm getting something from the back car.

FLASH TO:

The boots of the Escapade suit *pounding the asphalt-*

WIDE TO REVEAL

Abigail is **SPRINTING UP THE STREET**, running *super fast courtesy of Chronosync*, but we periodically move in to slow motion to watch highlights as she-

SMASHES the driver's side window on a cop car, yanking the driver out and throwing him aside before shoving the steering wheel sending it-

CRASHING into one of the other cars, she rolls and *hooks her hands into the spinning hubcap of another cop car, RIPPING THE WHEEL OFF-*

And **HURLING IT THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD OF THE REMAINING cop car!**

We jump back into real time to watch as *ALL FOUR CARS* go **SMASHING INTO EACH OTHER, HOLY SHIT.**

Four down, three to go.

GRANT

*Shit, shit- bit the gas and CALL
FOR BACK UP!*

GOGGLES

I got this.

As Abigail comes racing around the truck towards the three cars out in front, Goggles leans out the passenger side window.

Inside the Escapade helmet, a read-out pops up: INFRARED TARGETING DETECTED.

Abigail turns up the Chronosync and *leaps onto the back of one of the cars-*

Goggles *fires the shoulder cannon- A BLAST OF ENERGY HOOTS OUT!* *
*

Abigail leaps to the next car- Goggles fires again - Abigail leaps to the last car- he fires again-

We slam back to real-time, as Goggle's three shots **STRIKE THE THREE COP CARS, blowing them in half!**

GRANT

Christ **STOP SHOOTING STOP SHOOTING!**

GOGGLES

SHIT! Goddamn gimmick shit never works for us! *
*

Abigail flips off wreckage of the final car, landing in the middle of the street *DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THEM.* *
*

Grant sees her.

GRANT

(furious)

Escapade.

Abigail *runs straight towards the armored truck, and then, seconds before it hits her, she drops into a baseball slide, going under the truck-*

-popping hooks out of her suit's wrists and gutting the undercarriage of the truck as she glides beneath it!

She pops out the back, and flips into a standing position as the truck, now without an axle or suspension, goes veering to the right-

-inside, Charles Michael Lee shows a toothy smile-

As the truck goes violently crashing into a hardware store shop front!

Abigail, unable to control her momentum, rolls violently; she's still new to this, and she goes out of control crashing into a curb.

She lays there for a moment, dazed, and then starts to get up, looking to the armored truck-

Where we can hear gunfire from inside!

*

There's a beat, and then **GRANT IS SENT CRASHING OUT THE BACK DOORS, ON FIRE FROM A PLASMA BOLT!**

Another **BOOM** of the plasma cannon from the front of the truck!

ABIGAIL

No, no no no!

Abigail rushes past Grant, who's rolling frantically trying to put the fires out, to the van.

The SWAT team and Goggles are all **dead**. The whole front of the truck is blown out; Goggles' namesake and plasma cannon are missing.

Abigail rushes through the truck, out into

INT. HARDWARE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Which isn't open yet, mostly dark. She activates the night vision on the helmet, moving through the aisles, ready for a fight...

There's a noise from behind her, and she **activates Chronosync, spinning around!** ...Here in slow motion, it's eerily quiet...and there's nothing...

Abigail notices a shadow on her shoulder.

She turns, seeing it a second too late: **A SLEDGE HAMMER COMING SWINGING IN, SHE TRIES TO DODGE, TOO LATE-**

WHAM.

Abigail is **smashed off her feet**, Chronosync deactivating.

Charles Michael Lee stalks around her, smiling.

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE
Hello Abigail.

She activates Chronosync and tries to- **TOO LATE, ANOTHER SMASH FROM THE SLEDGEHAMMER, SWUNG LIKE A GOLF-CLUB, RIGHT IN THE HEAD, WHAMMO.** *

Abigail drops, dazed, and Charles **BRINGS THE SLEDGEHAMMER UP AND AROUND BAM STRAIGHT ONTO THE FACE OF THE ESCAPEE HELMET, CRACKING IT.** *

He tosses aside the sledgehammer, then the goggles. He smiles, raising a crowbar. *

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE (CONT'D)
You know, originally the plan was to get you when I got your father. But you were late coming home. *

He hooks the crowbar under the jaw of the helmet, and begins violently prying, *BENDING BACK ABIGAIL'S NECK...this is BAD.* *

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE (CONT'D)
Late for your own goddamn funeral.

The helmet is **wrenched off**, and Abigail's bruised, dazed face is exposed. Charles roughly pokes at her with the crowbar.

CHARLES MICHAEL LEE (CONT'D)
Kid, you had no idea what you did here today. But you certainly did make my life a hell of a lot easier-

Charles raises the crowbar- **HERMAN TACKLES CHARLES OFF HER!** *

Herman isn't any kind of match for the White Knight, though; Charles easily judo flips him **HARD into the floor**, and then suddenly **THE AIR IS FILLED WITH BULLETS!** *

The two men dive for cover! Grant, recovered, and entered the fray, blasting at them with an assault rifle! *

Herman grabs Abigail, dragging her to cover.

HERMAN
Come on kid, let's get the hell outta here!

Abigail's still dazed as Grant advances into the store.

ABIGAIL
It's Grant...I know him, I know him-

HERMAN
(staring at Abigail)
What?

Grant, hearing movement, resumes his assault. Herman's startled out of his reverie, and grabs Abigail, dragging her towards a back door. *

Charles Michael Lee returns fire with the high tech shoulder cannon, but then ducks into a side room.

Grant races after him, kicking open the door...

...But he's gone, out a tiny ventilation window.

GRANT
Shit. *SHIT! SHIT!*

IN HERMAN'S VAN

Herman is racing away from the scene of the crime, cop cars blowing past him, sirens blaring. Abigail's sitting shotgun, out of it, staring at him sadly.

ABIGAIL
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

HERMAN
STUPID move kid. *REAL* stupid.

ABIGAIL
.....You came.

HERMAN
Yeah, well I'm *STUPID* too.

Herman pauses, looking in the rear view mirror.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
What was that, like twenty US Marshals? Jesus christ, kid. You're an animal.

Abigail, leaning her head against the window, closes her eyes.

EXT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - ROOF - SUNSET

Abigail sits watching the sun set in the distance, over the Pacific. She's holding her father's Pink Floyd shirt to her chest, and an ice-pack to her head.

There's a noise from behind her, and she quickly stands, finding herself face to face with Grant. She hides the shirt behind her back.

GRANT

Are you **insane**? Do you have any idea what you've just done?

Abigail's quiet for a moment, then:

ABIGAIL

I want to talk to Arturo.

GRANT

You want to- *is that a joke? Nine men are DEAD because of you-*

ABIGAIL

Hey **I** didn't kill **ANYONE-**

GRANT

You set loose the Knight-

ABIGAIL

No, okay, I crashed the truck but I didn't set him free. That was something else, or am I supposed to believe **those handcuffs just fell off of him in the crash?**

Grant falters.

GRANT

There was a malfunction, we don't know what caused that yet, I thought-

ABIGAIL

What, that I did it? Why would I want him up and running around!?

GRANT

How the hell did you even know when we were transferring him?

ABIGAIL

What you should be worried about is that **ONE OF YOUR PEOPLE** sabotaged those handcuffs-

*

GRANT

No, **no way!** **Okay, okay**, who else did you tell about the transfer? You think Herman showed up out of the goodness of his heart?

ABIGAIL

Herman's a good person-

GRANT

A good- HA! It was a gimmick, I guarantee you that, letting you be the fall guy.

Now it's Abigail who falters.

FLASH TO:

Seth, in his booth, drinking with the girls. Shit...is it possible that he...

BACK TO:

GRANT (CONT'D)

You went off the rails in a major way, and now the White Knight is loose in the city. And what the hell can you give me, what's supposed to make *that* better? Tell me you have something, anything.

*

ABIGAIL

...I don't- I... Sapphire Lake.

GRANT

Sapphire Lake?

ABIGAIL

Some kind of big job Seth mentioned. He said that after Sapphire Lake everything was gonna change.

*

Grant's quiet. "Sapphire Lake" clearly struck a nerve.

*

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

What does that mean, do you know? I tried to look it up but-

GRANT

Nothing. I...I have to think.

*

INT. ESCAPEDE'S LAIR - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Abigail is furiously working out in the helmet; we see her doing all sorts of really intense stuff, bicycle crunches, squats, pull ups, chin ups, squats with an eighty pound dumb bell on her shoulders...

As she works out, a news report plays on TV.

NEWSCASTER

The White Knight is now believed to be again at large in Los Angeles.

(MORE)

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

It is not known at this time why the gimmicked criminal Escapade would free the vigilante.

Speculation is running rampant that Escapade has entered into some kind of deal with the White Knight to-

*
*

Abigail *flings a freeweight into the TV, destroying it.* He takes off the helmet, and crouches in the center of the room, sweating, breathing hard.

ABIGAIL

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

Abigail sits there rocking in silence for a moment, and then *screams again-*

SLAM TO:

EXT. DESERT - MORNING

Herman and Abigail, in their gimmicks, Abigail with no helmet, are standing by Herman's van, parked out in the middle of the desert out past Joshua Tree, the Salton Sea, Ragland, somewhere like that. Flat dirt in all directions.

Abigail is clearly only just waking up now.

*

HERMAN

You slept the whole drive out.

*

ABIGAIL

I didn't sleep much last night.

*

*

HERMAN

The White Knight thing...it isn't your fault-

*

*

*

ABIGAIL

Yes it is.

*

*

There's a beat, Herman quiet.

*

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Thank you, by the way.

HERMAN

For what?

ABIGAIL

For saving my life.

Herman falters, unsure how to react.

A Hummer HX rolls up behind them, and Carter hops out the driver's side, Vincent, with Minnie following a moment after.

VINCENT
HEYYY GIRLLL

CARTER
Nice job on the Knight, *idiot*. I'm amazed Seth even wanted you to come out on this.

MINNIE
I'm glad the Knight's free; I hope you're the first one he comes after.

HERMAN
Hey, easy.

MINNIE
Easy!? This bitch-

There's a distant humming.

VINCENT
What is that? You hear that-

SOMETHING STREAKS TO A HALT behind all of them, startling everybody but Minnie.

It looks like a big torpedo with rollerblade wheels along the bottom. The top pops open, revealing Ernest at the wheel. The gimmicks all applaud appreciatively.

ERNEST
Aw, bless you.

HERMAN
All right everybody listen up. Our target today is Naval Air Weapons Saphire Lake.

All of the gimmicks except Herman instantly react, all negative.

VINCENT
Whoa whoa whoa, that's a military base-

ERNEST
Like hell I'm drivin' into that-

HERMAN (CONT'D)
You guys done?

CARTER

Hey, Herman, we know you got great big testeclees or what have you, but I feel like there's a legitimate gripe here. I'm a supersonic level fifty bad-ass, and even I don't know that I really wanna face down with Uncle Sam.

*
*

MINNIE

You can't possibly expect us to go up against the army, Seth would never want that.

Abigail, realizing she's maybe let the cat out of the bag to Grant, touches Herman's sleeve.

*
*

ABIGAIL

Herman, I don't think it's safe, I mean I really don't-

SETH (O.S.)

Really, Abigail?

The gimmicks all turn, startled. Seth stands nearby. Where the hell did he come from?

SETH (CONT'D)

You really wanna back out on this **after you disobeyed a direct order, and in doing so, freed the goddamn White Knight?** Is that the relationship you want to have with me?

*

Abigail's silent.

SETH (CONT'D)

Anyone else?

*

The gimmicks fall quiet.

SETH (CONT'D)

The objective we're after is tagged by infrared. It's out of its vault on a C-10 cargo plane on the runway, headed for a high security research center in Hawaii. Now as some of you know, today's target is of extremely high importance to me.

(beat)

What you didn't know is that I will be coming with you.

Every single gimmick reacts; Herman's reluctant, Vincent whoops happily, and Carter and Ernest applaud.

*

MINNIE

I'm sorry, but it's still an army base. How are we going to get in? They don't exactly have a doorbell.

SETH

Shock and awe, Minnie. Shock and awe, every day.

EXT. NAWS SAPHIRE LAKE - GUARD TOWER

The guard tower is at the perimeter of the military base. We can see several hangars and warehouses in the interior, along with three long military runways, criss-crossing each other in a giant triangle.

A **SNIPER** walks the edge of the tower, looking out over the desert. There's a hum in the distance and the sniper, looks up, listening.

He looks to his **COMPATRIOT**, who nods: "Yeah, I hear it."

SHHHHHHHHHWABOOOOOOOM!

It happens so fast it's completely disorienting; Ernest's Torpedo-Beast-Machine comes **STREAKING OUT OF THE DESERT AT AN IMPOSSIBLE SPEED-**

-AND CRASHES STRAIGHT THROUGH THE OUTER WALLS before *stopping on a dime* in the center of the entrance pavilion.

The snipers, shocked, try to raise their weapons, they're each impaled by a spike from the ground before they can do anything.

A split second later, we see guards on a tower in the distance get the same treatment.

MEANWHILE, IN
THE TORPEDO

Everyone's lined up ready to go as the torpedo pops open.

SETH

Everybody out, head for hangar gamma.

Everyone starts to unload.

HERMAN

We're outdoors, Seth you know I'm useless outdoors-

SETH

Just outdoors, Herman?

Abigail pushes past them, and steps out onto

THE TARMAC

Where Ernie, Vincent, Minnie and Carter stand frozen, staring at...

Forty eight United States Marines brandishing M-16s, standing amongst five massive M-1 Abrams Tanks and Humvees with mounted miniguns.

They're completely surrounded.

CARTER

This is baaaaa-yud.

Abigail, panicking, breathing hard, looks to Seth as he steps out. Seth seems more annoyed than afraid.

MARINE SERGEANT

GIMMICKED CRIMINALS! SET DOWN YOUR WEAPONS AND LAY FACE DOWN ON THE PAVEMENT AND YOU WILL NOT BE HARMED.

SETH

Mm. They knew we were coming.
(yells to the military)
United States Marines! Set down your weapons and lay face down on the pavement or you'll blah blah yada yada-

A symphony of guns cocking.

MARINE SERGEANT

*You have five seconds to comply!
Five! Four! Three-*

Seth laughs and ***swings his arm at the troops- DOZENS OF SPIKES ROCKET UP FROM THE TARMAC, IMPALING MARINES, Their guns going off wildly-***

One of the tanks fires and the shell is ***INSTANTANEOUSLY BLOCKED*** by a wall of spikes! He flings up an arm and a wave of spikes rolls wildly through the Marines, popping the tires on all of the hummers.

(Yeah wow Seth's gimmick is NUTS.)

Seth raises both hands and wall-like clusters rise up all around them.

SETH

Cover.

The gimmicks dive to cover behind different clusters as the marines *return fire, the world suddenly a warzone!* *

Abigail finds herself pinned down next to Carter by minigun fire. She activates the Chronosync and tries to get out, but has to *scramble backwards* when two minguns open up.

She's scared. You would be too, it's terrifying.

CARTER

Don't, don't even try it! Shit!

Herman, ducked down in the Torpedo, covers his head as bullets plink off all around him.

SETH

VINCE, MINNIE, RETURN FIRE!

MINNIE

What are you *insane!?*

SETH

I'll cover you! GO!

Minnie takes a deep breath, and stands up, firing her scarf-plasma-cannon at the tanks! The marines and gunners try to return fire, but Seth effortlessly raises spikes both offensively and defensively, saving their asses.

As Vincent and Minnie duel the tanks, a massive C-5 Galaxy cargo plane begins rumbling down the tarmac, pulling up its ramp as it goes.

HERMAN

Shit that's the plane!

SETH

Already leaving. They were ready, this was a set-up. *

HERMAN

I got it.

Herman takes off from cover as bullets and explosives rain down around him.

SETH

Idiot.

(yelling)

Vincent! Eliminate that plane!

Herman jumps up onto the ramp of the cargo plane, pulling himself in as it's closing, as Vincent raises his gauss guns.

CARTER

Wait! Seth, what about Herman!?

SETH
What about Herman?

INSIDE THE PLANE

Through the clutter of big cargo containers, Herman finds himself **HEAD TO HEAD WITH A TROOP OF NAVY SEALS.**

Herman shouts in surprise and dives behind some big steel cargo containers, which are **swiss-cheesed with bullets.**

HERMAN
(into his comm)
Goddamn it I'm pinned down, the whole plane's filled with- ah- Navy Seals!

ON THE TARMAC

The plane starts picking up speed.

SETH
Vincent shoot that damn plane!

There's an explosion mere feet away; the marines are recovering.

VINCENT
But what about Herman!?

SETH
DO IT NOW VINCENT!

ABIGAIL
(hard)
No.

Vincent, Seth and Carter all turn to Abigail, confused, as she stands, activating the Chronosync...

And **TAKES OFF RUNNING.** The minigunners that had her pinned down try to shoot her, but they can't aim quickly enough-

VINCENT
Holy shit! GO MAMA GO!

Abigail, forcing herself into a full on sprint, *is now pulling about fifty miles an hour, closing rapidly on the cargo plane.*

INSIDE THE PLANE

Herman, pinned down by gunfire, draws out two of his storm grenades.

HERMAN

Why not.

He pops them, and the plane's belly *rapidly* fills with cloud gas.

ON THE TARMAC

The plane is reaching the end of the tarmac; it slowly starts to take off-

Abigail leaps, popping small, hooked climbing-axes out of the wrists of the suit, digging them into the side of the plane, then swings and kicks her crampons in as well (apparently the suit has those)-

THE PLANE TAKES OFF, RAPIDLY GAINING ALTITUDE! The wind out here is deafening, but **inside the suit...**

It's silent. Abigail notices dozens of readings on the heads-up display, showing her rising velocity and altitude.

Everything moves at a crawl; Chronosync working its magic.

She takes a moment, planning her next move, and then slowly, methodically, begins ***climbing up the side of the plane.***

On the ground, Carter watches, shocked.

CARTER

Hot damn. I didn't even know it could do that.

ERNEST

She's like a little monkey! Some kinda...demon spider-monkey!

SETH

Looks like Barnes is out of her shell.

THE PLANE IS
RISING

Abigail climbs methodically; she's nearly to the wing when **A BLAST OF LIGHTNING EXPLODES OUT FROM THE INSIDE OF THE PLANE, STRIKING ONE OF THE ENGINES AND BLOWING IT OUT!**

Herman's hard at work being an idiot in there.

The plane ***banks WILDLY to right***; Abigail is suddenly standing upright, and she takes the opportunity to *run up the side of the plane, which is now bleeding Herman's ionized gas.*

There's another thunderclap, and the interior of the plane crackles with violent electricity!

Something inside breaks, and the plane, spinning slowly on its axis, begins to head *STRAIGHT UP*.

DOWN ON THE
GROUND

Carter, Minnie, Ernest and Vincent watch the plane as it rapidly ascends, twirling chaotically as it goes up.

VINCENT

That shit ***banana. Big yellow
banana.***

*
*

Marines open fire on them, with Minnie, Ernest and Vincent firing back. Reinforcements on the way. TONS OF THEM.

SETH

Time for us to leave. Go. ***NOW.***

ON THE PLANE

Abigail has worked her way to the cockpit, where she can see the pilots frantically working to get the plane back under control. She ***punches out the windshield, grabs one of them and yanks him out-***

-pulling his parachute and sending him sailing away from the plane-

The other pilot draws a glock and begins firing at her, but all the wind blasting through makes aiming impossible, and she *rips him out of his seat*, tossing him out the windshield.

Abigail drops into

INT. CARGO PLANE - ***IT'S FREAKING VERTICAL*** - CONTINUOUS

Abigail falls through the cockpit, and kicks the door open, falling into the

BELLY

Which is a *stormy chaos*. Abigail catches herself; it's an obstacle course of flipped crates, absolute anarchy. Plus, did I mention the whole thing is ***SPINNING LIKE A GRAVITRON!***

We can faintly see the bright white crackling of Herman's gauntlets through the mist down below but-

A Navy Seal tackles her from behind! She breaks his nose and spins into- ANOTHER NAVY SEAL, ducks under him, jab RIGHT HOOK he's down and goes flying out of the hole in the side-

She drops to where Herman's taken cover, dodging blasts of gunfire from the remaining Seals.

HERMAN
Abigail? What're you doing up here-

ABIGAIL
DO YOU HAVE THE OBJECTIVE?

HERMAN
Yeah, but Abigail-

Abigail grabs Herman and, using Chronosync strength and speed, **drags him up to the big hole out to the wing.**

The engines on the cargo plane *CUT OUT*, and it slows, and begins to **DROP OUT OF THE SKY.**

The remaining Navy Seals start bailing left and right, as Abigail pulls Herman out onto the wing.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
OH GOD OH JESUS CHRIST-

ABIGAIL
BLOW THE WING OFF!

HERMAN
ARE YOU INSANE-

ABIGAIL
TRUST ME! BLOW THE WING OFF!

*

Herman stares at the expressionless face of the Escapade suit, and waves an arm-

CRACKOOM! THE WING IS BLOWN OFF WITH BOTH OF THEM ON IT!

Abigail wraps her body over Herman's, pinning him down and locking her hooks into the wing as it spins away from the exploding body of the plane!

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
POP GRENADES!

HERMAN
SHIT SHIT SHIT-

ABIGAIL
NOW! ALL OF THEM!

Herman does as he's told and the entire wing is **engulfed in cloud fog, PLUMMETING DOWN FROM THE SKY LIKE A MISTY COMET TWISTING AND SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL.**

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
STRAIGHTEN US OUT!

Herman uses the fact that they're surrounded by his mist to cause ***gale force winds*** to level the wing out; Abigail, still holding him down, stands, ***riding it like a giant surfboard.***

They're dropping diagonally now, the wing serving as a glider. ONLY FIVE HUNDRED FEET TO GO!

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

SNOW!

HERMAN

WHERE!?

ABIGAIL

EVERYWHERE!

Herman, realizing what she means, swings both his arms in and-

WIDE SHOT...

The entire wing is ***ENGULFED INTO A GIANT SNOWBALL SECONDS BEFORE SMASHING DOWN INTO THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT, BOUNCING DOWN THE SIDE OF A HUGE ROCK FORMATION BEFORE EXPLODING INTO A POWDERY MESS.***

Hold a beat.

A scorpion crawls past, and then ***ABIGAIL BURSTS OUT OF THE SNOW***, pulling Herman with her. She immediately loses balance and both of them go tumbling down the rest of the rock formation, ow ow ow ow ow, before hitting the desert floor.

Abigail, laying facedown, deactivates her helmet, panting. Herman, also near hyperventilation, sits up, yanking off his weather-hood.

He takes a long look back at the giant snowball, the wrecked wing, and then, behind him, the C-10 cargo plane comes ***CRASHING DOWN IN THE DISTANCE, KABOOM!***

Herman reaches into his chest rig, and pulls out a thin platinum box, opening it and checking the contents.

HERMAN

Ha. Got 'em.

Abigail slowly pushes herself up onto her elbows, then straightens, staggering over towards Herman.

ABIGAIL

You started a storm...inside the plane....

HERMAN

Not my brightest moment, no.

Herman again looks back at the wing and the snowball.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

You just pulled the most impressive thing I've ever seen, Abby.

Abigail sort of laughs, but then turns and vomits, completely physically exhausted, collapsing into Herman's arms.

He rubs her back and laughs.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

You upchuck more than your fair share, anybody ever tell you that?

EXT. WING CRASH SITE - THAT NIGHT

*

The area is cordoned off by the military; they're documenting everything. Grant is looking through a special pair of goggles. It digitally charts out the whole arc of descent of the wing.

GRANT

Abigail. Holy hell.

EXT. PENTHOUSE - BALCONY

Seth stands out on the balcony of a fancy penthouse loft in downtown, sipping a mimosa. Abigail enters slowly from behind him, noticing a table set up with a meal already laid out.

*

*

Abigail's a little dressed up, but clearly nervous.

*

SETH

Sit down. Relax.

*

*

Abigail haltingly goes to the table, trying to look natural. She sits down.

*

*

SETH (CONT'D)

Eat.

*

*

Abigail hesitantly picks up her fork, starting to take a bite-

*

A spike ROCKETS UP FROM THE TABLE, cracking the plate in half, knocking the fork out of Abigail's hand and going RIGHT UP TO HER EYE, the tip pressed against her left tearduct-

*

*

*

Before she can jerk backwards **ANOTHER SPIKE EXPLODES OUT OF THE BACK OF HER CHAIR, the point pricking her in the back of the neck- SHIT! TRAPPED!**

*

*

*

SETH (CONT'D)

Don't move. Don't. Even. Blink.

Abigail sits there in terror. Seth casually tosses away the mimosa; it shatters, and Abigail flinches against the spikes as Seth walks inside, smiling.

SETH (CONT'D)

You're slower without the suit.

Abigail shudders as Seth moves around her, talking to her.

SETH (CONT'D)

They knew we were coming today. I thought, how is this possible, and then it occurred to me, I had a perfect grasp on every element *except you*. You don't run with our pack. You're new to the fold. Hell at the end of the day there's no way we can be sure you're even Escapade's real daughter, is there?

Abigail's silent.

SETH (CONT'D)

Escapade always hid behind a mask. Who says this...you aren't just another mask yourself?

(beat)

I'd been having a lot of thoughts lately. After you freed the Knight. That maybe it was time for Escapade to become Deadscapade

(beat)

But then you pulled that stunt with the plane. Ho-lee-shit.

The spikes retract, and Abigail gasps, breathing hard. Seth plops down across from her, starting to eat casually like nothing really scary just happened.

SETH (CONT'D)

Did you do that for Herman or did you do that for me?

ABIGAIL

I did it because I wanted to. I'm doing the best I can. If you don't want to trust me, then kill me. You make it sound like that would be no big deal, so-

SETH

I like to know exactly what I'm doing before I do it.

(MORE)

SETH (CONT'D)

You're a chess player, I'd think you'd appreciate that. If I'm going to take a piece off the board, I want to be sure it's the right move.

*
*

ABIGAIL

You told me you weren't afraid of me.

SETH

Ha! I'm not. You're a kitten. What I'm scared of is a leak. Without one, we're a conglomerated group of the most dangerous, brilliant minds in the world. With one, we're a bunch of blowhards, ripe for the picking, or killing, to be less artistic with the phraseology.

(beat)

And we **do** have a leak.

*

Abigail clenches and unclenches her fist.

ABIGAIL

...Did you tell the White Knight to kill my father?

Seth looks at her evenly.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

You said he "hid" behind a mask. Did you not trust him? Did you think he was the leak? Did you use the Knight to kill him-

*
*
*
*
*

SETH

(loooooong beat)

Nope.

(beat)

But if I did, would you really want to confront me about it without that nifty little armor of yours?

*

Abigail squeezes her fist tightly, trying to calm down. Seth sighs, looking out at the city; it's tense, is he going to turn to attack her, or-

*

Seth turns...He's crying.

SETH (CONT'D)

You know, your dad...
(collects himself)
(MORE)

SETH (CONT'D)

When you were running on that tarmac, trying to catch the plane, you looked just like him.

(beat)

He was...You know, I'm a crook, I'm a murderer, yeah, but he had a code, you know? He had...He had ideas. He had ideals.

Abigail looks at Seth, almost for the first time. He seems vulnerable; the brilliant scientist shining through the punk-rock criminal.

SETH (CONT'D)

He always believed in us, as scientists. I mean he was a coldblooded killer, the guy was an animal, but there was always...There was always something else there, something bigger. I think he thought, at the end of all this, "superheroes and supervillains," the gimmicks, Arturo Dumas, all the technology and innovation...I think he thought it was all gonna balance out, you know?

(beat, laughs sadly)

It's not gonna be me, who changes it...I thought it was gonna be him, but now, I don't know.

Abigail stands next to him, quiet, thinking.

ABIGAIL

So what's next?

SETH

Next? ...Ha. Near the end, your father had an idea for a machine. Something that would help us solve one of our big problems, but then...I don't know.

Seth smiles at her.

SETH (CONT'D)

He would've been proud of you today.

Abigail smiles.

SETH (CONT'D)

When I was young, I used to get bullied. You did too, I bet.

Abigail looks down, self-conscious.

*

SETH (CONT'D)

*

Well look at us today, Escapade.

*

(smiles)

*

We're the bullies now.

*

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Abigail, in her **celebrity incognito** outfit, walks up the street after dinner, clearly deep in thought-

WHOOSH SHE IS ROCKETED UP TO A

ROOFTOP

Where she's dropped gently, landing in a roll. She stands, looking around, and sees Arturo floating above her.

ARTURO

The items you stole from Sapphire Lake were supercooled refabricating quadcore processors. They're used in nuclear missiles to control guidance systems-

ABIGAIL

Are you *kidding me right now*-

ARTURO

You've just destroyed four hundred million dollars worth of military hardware *you ease up the tone*.

*

Abigail goes quiet, intimidated by Arturo.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

(beat)

No one mentioned *why* they wanted the quadcores?

ABIGAIL

I told you already, *no one but Seth seems to know anything*. He has a plan but we only hear parts of it. He knows there's a mole, you'll see that in the upload. And by the way, there's no way *any* of the gimmicks could be behind the White Knight; they *protect each other*, *they're family*-

*

ARTURO

Snap out of it. These men are thieves and murderers. You're forgetting your role in this-

ABIGAIL

What the hell was that ambush at Sapphire Lake, all it did was get more people killed-

ARTURO

Sapphire Lake is a military installation, that was practically an act of war-

ABIGAIL

I was there, I could've been killed!

ARTURO

But you weren't. You need to get out of your head and see the big picture. Your father would be disgusted to see you sympathizing with these scum bags.

Abigail's silent, shut down.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I have faith in you, Abigail. I have faith in you to make the right choices. Grant will be by to upload you later tonight.

ABIGAIL

No! Wait, don't leave I'm not- I'm not done...

Arturo's gone. Abigail looks around the skyscraper rooftop.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

How the hell am I supposed to get down!?

*

INT. ART GALLERY OPENING - AROUND MIDNIGHT

It's a swanky art gallery in downtown. Morgan is drinking wine and laughing it up, posing for pictures. Vincent's nearby, looking bored. He's staring at some art, not really getting it, double fisting wine.

Someone blows an airhorn. Everyone in the gallery stops, looking out the floor to ceiling glass windows.

The White Knight stands there, in full body armor. He drops the airhorn, and raises a massive tommy-gun.

MORGAN

VINCENT-

The White Knight opens fire, shattering the window, as Morgan to fire back with his entropy-blasters, but it's too late; he's sprayed by dozens of bullets, taken down with several innocent art patrons. *

Vincent jumps up, Gauss Gun deployed, searching frantically for the White Knight. He's already gone.

Morgan is dead.

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - WORKSHOP ROOM

Abigail is working on her armor, make some sort of tweak. A pan reveals that she's being uploaded.

Grant is sitting with the machine, looking grim. Abigail looks ready for a fight as well. Finally...

GRANT

How was dinner? Seemed...intimate.

ABIGAIL

Oh, are you jealous?

GRANT

Is that a joke?

ABIGAIL

Morgan died tonight. No comment on that-

GRANT

You committed an act of high-treason yesterday and you're going to get on my ass- *

ABIGAIL

I am directly in the line of fire, there was a *tank* shooting at me- *

GRANT

Your survival is your *own responsibility*. Arturo's words, not mine.

Abigail's demeanor changes. She hardens; the chill is palpable.

ABIGAIL

Is that how you see me?
Expendable?

GRANT

*We cannot have gimmicks brawling
with the United States Military,
Barnes-*

ABIGAIL

So what, you and your BOSS decided
that it'd be okay to **LET ME WALK
INTO AN AMBUSH? YOU GOT PEOPLE
KILLED, IDIOT, YOU FORCED OUR HAND!
IT COULD'VE BEEN EASY, THAT WAS
YOUR FAULT!**

GRANT

That's enough, you're out of line-

*

ABIGAIL

Oh I'm sorry am I **out of line?** How
about when I blew up that cargo
plane, was that *out of line?*
I have been *fighting for my life*
out there, AS YOUR PAWN, and you're
going to talk down to me like I'm
an angsty teenager-

GRANT

Why are you defending them?

ABIGAIL

*Because at least they don't treat
me like shit! At least they
respect me, at least I'm more than
a goddamn digital camera to them,
you're just another bully, you
don't even care if I live or die-*

*

GRANT

I understand that you're in a
difficult position, but you've done
nothing but complicated your own
problems since this started-

ABIGAIL

YOU PUT ME HERE, YOU. *I was forced
into this-*

GRANT

No, **your father did this to you,** by
*leaving you in the dark, you want
somebody to blame BLAME HIM-*

Abigail slaps Grant across the face.

ABIGAIL

Get out.

GRANT

Abigail-

Abigail tries to slap him again. He catches her arm, and she struggles against him for a moment, then stops. They stand there like that, Grant holding her wrist.

There's an electricity, here. Are they going to kiss, or-

ABIGAIL

Take your goddamn hand off of me.

Grant, stunned at her intensity, lets her go, turning to leave.

*

MOMENTS LATER

*

Abigail is **beating the shit out of the punching bag**, pacing back and forth, then picks up a free-weight and *chucks it into the wall-mirror, shattering it.*

*

*

*

MOMENTS LATER

Abigail picks up a buzzer in the bathroom, and, after a moment of deliberation, begins shaving the sides of her head into a mohawk.

MOMENTS LATER

Abigail, looking like a punk-rock goddess with her new shaved sides, stands over the featureless Escapade helmet with a pressurized paint-gun, drinking Tequila from the bottle. She does a few quick swoops, short, controlled movements, and then steps back, admiring her handiwork.

She's painted a face onto the faceplate; a simple "Frowny Face," with X's for eyes. It's **so** bad-ass.

She smiles, takes another swig of the tequila, and then **hurls the bottle into the wall, shattering it.**

*

SLAM TO BLACK.

TITLE: TWO
MONTHS LATER

INT. DEBRIEFING ROOM

The room is featureless. Grant sits alone under a light.

ARTURO

Three weeks and no upload. What's the story, marshal.

GRANT

Barnes become...difficult, sir.

ARTURO

"Difficult." How so.

GRANT

Like...**difficult**.

CUE: The Death Grips, "I've Seen Footage."

*

SLAM INTO A
MONTAGE OF

The New Abigail.

Jogging through the downtown wearing a tiny sports bra and butthuggers, downing shots with Carter, Vincent and Herman in amazing bars, clubs, working on the suit in the workshop, working out, the weights are bigger now and so are the lean tendons in her arms-

*Mixing this with kicking the shit out of cops, private security forces, criminals, **EVERYBODY**. She's done some modifications to the suit, beyond the x_x frowny face.*

Black racing stripes. It looks like a goddamn sports car.

SHE FINISHES HER
SUNRISE RUN

At the crest of the hill over historic MacArthur park at the edge of downtown Los Angeles.

Sweat streaks down her new, toned body. She pours some water on her head, and, after a moment, Herman catches up to her, breathing hard.

He laughs, exhausted, and she hugs him. Student has become master.

SLAM IN ON:

It's the fashion shop we saw Abigail looking into at the beginning of the movie; that little sexy dress-

Escapade walks in. All of the sexy girls panic, terrified of her, rushing out, screaming.

Abigail, in the armor, calmly walks over to the mannequin **AND PUNCHES ITS HEAD OFF-**

Pulling the dress off for herself. She walks out, carrying it, pausing only to give a cowering model a disdainful look.

INT. ESCAPADE'S LAIR - LATER

Abigail is trying on the dress in the mirror, checking out her new body. She gives herself some "sexy" looks, but can't quiite get comfortable with it...

...After all that, she's still Abigail. But man, whoa momma.

Her cell phone rings. SETH.

CUT MUSIC.

*

EXT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

It's a big warehouse in East LA, right on the edge of the city. Abigail, in her armor, prowls on a roof nearby, watching different cars pull up.

She sees Carter arrive. Then Vincent. Then other gimmicks she doesn't realize...then Minnie, and finally, Herman.

Herman falters at the door, and then turns and slowly looks up at Abigail. He nods over at an alley.

IN THE ALLEY...

Abigail and Herman are having a quick heads-up.

ABIGAIL

You know what this is about?

HERMAN

No idea. Doesn't make sense for us all to be gathered in one place like this, feels dangerous.

ABIGAIL

A trap?

HERMAN

Only if Seth doesn't show.

ABIGAIL

And if he does?

HERMAN

Maybe even then. Keep your eyes open Abby. I've got a bad vibe.

ABIGAIL

You get vibes?

HERMAN

...There anything you want to tell me?

There's a beat.

*

ABIGAIL

Nah. You'd know by now.

*

*

INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Abigail and Herman enter, to find themselves among many other gimmicks; all of the ones we've met so far, plus a few more.

In the center of the warehouse, a there's something big concealed under a tarp.

ABIGAIL

Stay close.

HERMAN

Yeah yeah, you're telling me.

The gimmicks talk amongst themselves, nervously.

CARTER

Hey, Escapade. Come hang with us at the cool kids' table.

Abigail doesn't react.

VINCENT

Aw, you're no fun.

Vincent and Carter exchange a nervous look.

SETH

Hi kids.

Everyone gets quiet. Seth's up on a catwalk high above them. He summons up hundreds of spikes, creating a staircase that he walks down casually.

SETH (CONT'D)

Have time for a little science experiment?

HERMAN

Seth, what is this all this, it ain't safe for us to be together like this-

SETH

It's a necessary risk.

CARTER

Seth, c'mon, a warehouse downtown?

VINCENT

Yeah man, I feel like some mustache twirling shit is going down-

CARTER

Tyin' bitches to train tracks and shit.

ERNEST

Arrrrghh we are the ministry of evilll-

The gimmicks laugh. Seth doesn't.

SETH

It's a bit corny, I know. But sometimes, substance over style.

Seth pulls the tarp off the big object; it's some kind of massive device, with sensor array on top.

He presses some buttons, and it hums to life.

MINNIE

What is that thing?

SETH

You could call it a lie detector. Or a bug zapper. It emits low frequency sound waves; so low that they're completely undetectable by the human ear.

Abigail shifts uncomfortably. Inside the suit, we see a boy temperature reading rise slightly.

SETH (CONT'D)

As you know, for years the west coast gimmicks have had two major problems. Arturo Dumas, the gimmicked marshal golden boy, and of course, an information leak that has plagued our efforts to reach our full potential.

(beat)

That of course being the new aristocracy. The new ruling class. We are better and smarter than the laws that hold us back, and it's time we proved that.

Abigail sways in place. Herman looks to her, trying to hide concern.

SETH (CONT'D)

For the last few months, I've had you gathering pieces for something big. But it's built to go after something very, very small.

(grinds teeth)

See I theorize our friend Arturo's spectacular abilities come from nanites, microscopic organisms in his blood. The sonic vibrations coming off the big guy behind me are of my own design, specifically designed to *overheat* micro-technology.

(smiles)

Turn this on in the vicinity of the esteemed Marshal, and **his blood will boil in his veins.**

Abigail falters, stumbling, and Herman supports her quickly.

HERMAN

What's up kid?

Abigail shakes it off, trying to focus. Her body temperature read out is up to 103. Shit. She's sweating all over.

SETH

Of course, there is a secondary use for the device, addressing the second problem. The mole. The leak. The snitch.

(smiles)

It's my hypothesis that the mole would be using a passive version of this nanotech, as a method of recording our actions. Bloodborne sensor arrays connected to the senses.

(beat)

If this proves true, then I'd say one of us is probably getting very, very hot under the collar right about now.

The gimmicks all begin looking at one another. Abigail struggles against the heat from inside her, trapped in the armor...gritting her teeth....104...105...

Abigail forces herself to stand up straight, pulling away from Herman. Her legs are shaking, but she pulls it together, refusing to fall.

Seth notices her, and smiles.

*

*
*
*
*

SETH (CONT'D)
 ...Of course...I could be wrong...

Herman looks to Abigail.

HERMAN
 (quietly)
 Yeah, you're okay. You're okay.

Abigail, *drenched with sweat* inside the armor, can't stand anymore. The high pitched whine of the machine, the overpowering heat...

Abigail begins to fall forward (OH NO!) ***just as all the gimmicks are distracted by a noise from outside.***

Herman catches her, looking around nervously. Seth is staring right at Abigail.

SETH
I knew it.

No one else notices; they're too concerned with the sound.

CARTER
 What is that? A helicopt-

THE CEILING AND WALLS ARE SHREDDED BY MINIGUN FIRE! A DOZEN GIMMICKS ARE DEAD IN SECONDS!

Herman yanks Abigail to cover, and ***MISSILE COMES ZIPPING IN, ANNIHILATING THE NANITE MACHINE!***

The explosion floors Seth, and now ***more MINIGUN FIRE RIPS THE PLACE TO TATTERS!***

We can see the attacker through destroyed structure now...*It's an Apache assault chopper, armed to the teeth, with The White Knight visible in the cockpit!*

CARTER (CONT'D)
SHIT MAN, RUN!

The gimmicks activate their various technologies, fleeing. Abigail sees her body temperature slowly dropping, and pulls herself to her feet.

Herman pulls at her, but then they're ***SEPARATED BY A STREAM OF GATTLING GUN FIRE!***

ABIGAIL
 Go.

HERMAN
 What?

ABIGAIL

Get out of here-

HERMAN

But the Knight-

ABIGAIL

I'll take care of it.

Abigail turns, looking at the helicopter as it banks around to take another strafing run. Herman flees, and Abigail *steps out into the line of fire, ready to take the chopper HEAD ON-*

SPIKES ERUPT FROM ALL AROUND HER! Abigail activates Chronosync, *dodging, rolling and diving* her way through Seth's onslaught.

Seth, for his part, is still downed; he's dragged himself to cover behind the wreckage of his machine, and his waving his arms like a mad orchestra conductor!

SHIT SHE'S BEING ATTACKED FROM BOTH SIDES-

*

As Abigail frantically navigates the *exploding floor of targeted spikes*, charging towards Seth, the White Knight *opens fire again from the helicopter!*

Abigail *pounces at Seth*, but is caught by a **WEB OF SPIKES** launched up from the floor!

The White Knight opens fire on Abigail, but she writhes in Chronosync, dodging the bullets, allowing the Knight to accidentally shoot her free.

Abigail **launches at Seth, kicking him in the face!**

She's about to attack again, when she sees he's covered in blood; he must've been very badly hit in the initial onslaught.

Seth can't stand. He's on his way out. Abigail stands over him as the Knight's helicopter banks around for another strike.

*

*

*

SETH

I knew it had to be you. I was so dumb, I thought: no way it'll be something that obvious, no way-

The helicopter opens fire again, and Abigail drags Seth deeper into cover.

SETH (CONT'D)

Why'd you do it, Abigail? Were you in on it the whole time?

(MORE)

SETH (CONT'D)

Are you really his daughter? I
thought you were one of us.

*
*

Abigail peeks around from cover, trying to figure out how to
get out from where they're pinned. Seth watches her, and
realizes.

*
*

SETH (CONT'D)

...You are his daughter. Revenge.
You wanted the Knight?

Abigail looks to Seth. He laughs, coughing.

SETH (CONT'D)

Fuck it.

*

Seth waves an arm, and **dozens of spikes launch up out of the
ground, creating an improvised ramp up to the Apache.**

SETH (CONT'D)

Go get him.

Abigail takes one last look at Seth, and then *activates
Chronosync and SPRINTS UP THE RAMP OF SPIKES, LEAPING ONTO
THE COCKPIT OF THE HELICOPTER.*

The Knight, startled, **yanks back on the joystick**, and we
careen up into

THE SKY

*Where we twist and spin out of control over Los Angeles,
Abigail hanging on like a cat on a curtain. The Knight
begins firing the guns at random, but Abigail ignores it-*

-activates Chronosync-

**And begins beating her fist on the cockpit, cracking it! She
straddles across the nose of the helicopter, pounding away-**

The Knight draws out a huge revolver, aiming it **DIRECTLY INTO
HER FACE AND FIRES-** *Abigail's got no time to dodge as the
bullet bursts through the cockpit and strikes the front of
her helmet*

Abigail is **MOMENTARILY KNOCKED INTO A STANDING POSITION-**

*-INTO THE PATH OF THE BLADES, the blade of the helicopter
whizzing in towards her face-*

-she activates Chronosync and ducks just in time!

She's off balance and *tumbles off*, catching herself on one of
the arsenal wings of the Apache at the last moment, **dangling**
next to a gattling gun as they twirl over Wilshire boulevard.

He begins rocking the helicopter violently, trying to shake her off, and then starts firing the guns-

Abigail seizes her opportunity! Using Chronosync strength, she grabs the gattling gun and wrenches it inward, CAUSING IT TO FIRE DIRECTLY INTO THE SIDE OF THE HELICOPTER.

The subsequent EXPLOSION sends the chopper crashing towards the ground, out of control! It **SMASHES INTO A HILL AT THE EDGE OF**

MACARTHUR PARK

Rolling down in a mess of smoke and fire before *crashing to a stop* next to the water.

Abigail is thrown clean off, smacking violently into the ground.

Pained, she slowly pushes to her feet to see the White Knight climbing free of the wrecked cockpit. Abigail **screams** and activates Chronosync, *charging him!*

The Knight raises his huge Cobra Python revolver and shoots Abigail one- two- three times-

One of them hits right in the *MOUTH OF THE HELMET*, denting it inward- OW!-

BUT SHE TAKES THE HITS, KICKS THE GUN OUT OF HIS HANDS-

AND PROCEEDS TO BEAT THE EVERLIVING SHIT OUT OF HIM. The dazed Knight is no match for the newly bad-ass Chronosync Abigail; he's caught in a tornado of punches and kicks, knocked down to his hands and knees, *fuck yeah.*

*

He tries to crawl away, and Abigail kicks him over, then **wrenches one of the helicopter blades free of the smashed rotor! OKAY HERE WE GO OFF WITH HIS HEAD.**

The Knight stares up at her, and starts laughing.

WHITE KNIGHT

What're you gonna do? Kill me?

ABIGAIL

Yes.

WHITE KNIGHT

And what's that gonna accomplish, huh? He's still gonna get you in the end. We're just pieces to him. You think he cares if I die? I'm just a cog in a machine. Just like you.

ABIGAIL

Who? Who are you talking about-

The Knight laughs, pulling off his helmet and spitting out blood. He starts fiddling with something at his waist, but Abigail doesn't notice.

WHITE KNIGHT

You dumb *bitch*. How do you think I got all these weapons? *

(coughs)

How do you think *I knew who your father was*? What, did he have you thinking I was working for a gimmick? How *stupid* are you? I'm just a marine who believes in my country...that's why...he chose me... *

Abigail blinks, horrified, realizing.

ABIGAIL

Arturo.

WHITE KNIGHT

See? It's bigger than you. You could kill me a hundred times...and you'd still never have...revenge...

The White Knight taps something on his vest; it's a little communicator device, with a blinking green light.

WHITE KNIGHT (CONT'D)

And now he knows you know...see? You're dead. Even if you win...you still lose...

The White Knight, laughing, dies. The hand at his waist releases the trigger pin of- *SOMETHING OH NO-*

ABIGAIL ACTIVATES CHRONOSYNC BUT IT'S TOO LATE! SHE WATCHES AS THE WHITE KNIGHT BLOSSOMS INTO AN IMPOSSIBLY BRIGHT EXPLOSION IN SLOW MOTION-

SLAM IN ON:

...

Abigail is laying flat on her back in the burning wreckage of her armor, some of it sparking, some of it melting, some it cracked apart.

After a beat, Abigail struggles to her feet. Beyond the muted sound of sirens and fires burning, we can't hear shit. Things come in and out of focus.

She stares at a blurry wreckage of the White Knight's Apache, and then turns and begins walking through

THE STREETS OF
LOS ANGELES

Limping badly, zombie-like, in a trance as she slowly sheds her destroyed armor.

Finally, as she approaches

A HOSPITAL

She's stripped down to just her undergarments.

Black-blue splotches polka-dot her skin, a huge red and black welt growing over her ribs, and cuts bleed all over from the explosion.

She goes into

THE EMERGENCY
ROOM

Leaving bloody footprints on the floor, Abigail walks up to the counter, and stares through bloodshot eyes, at the terrified male nurse.

OUTSIDE THE
HOSPITAL

Two dozen police cars and SWAT vans roll up, screeching to a halt, etc, etc, etc. You remember this.

BACK INSIDE

She takes an EMERGENCY ADMITTANCE FORM. Picks up a pen; nope, shaking too bad. Tooth, slap, slide.

Abigail turns, walking shakily, and sits down gingerly on one of the benches. She fades in and out of consciousness, trying to stay up...

A laser sight. ***DOZENS OF THEM, ALL OVER HER BODY.***

Abigail looks up, squinting, to see that **THE ENTIRE EMERGENCY ROOM IS FILLED WITH POLICE, SWAT AND NATIONAL GUARD, WITH ALL MANNER OF FIREARMS POINTED AT HER.**

ABIGAIL
...Hello boys.

Abigail tilts her head back, and lets it all slip away.

FADE TO WHITE.

EXT. ABIGAIL'S DREAM

Abigail, age 5, is being coaxed by a younger Donald to go onto the play structure, and have fun with the other kids.

She tentatively does, and we see her have a little fun, dreamlike, before she falls and hurts her knee.

Bloodied, she returns to her father, who comforts her. He sticks a band-aid on her knee. It's all white, featuring...

Yep, there it is. The X_X frowny face.

SLAM TO MODERN
ABIGAIL

She's on a gurney being rapidly wheeled through hallways, Grant at her side. There's a SWAT team moving with them.

From here on in, everything is a **fast, frenetic blur**. We're on a rollercoaster, and we're not getting off.

GRANT

Abigail can you hear me? It's going to be alright, Arturo's on his way.

*

Abigail moans in protest.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Try to stay still, it looks like you've got broken ribs, we-

ABIGAIL

Grant- I need to tell you-

*

Grant checks his earpiece.

GRANT

Yes Arturo, I've got her right here, we-

ABIGAIL

Grant...Grant...

Grant looks up, and throws up the all-stop hand signal to the SWAT team. Up ahead in the hallway, fog is flooding out from under a few of the doors, clouding the hallway.

Or...no, not fog...**CLOUDS**.

*

GRANT

Shit.

A BLAST OF LIGHTNING SHOOTS OUT FROM THE MIRE, ARCING BETWEEN EVERY MEMBER OF THE SWAT TEAM BEFORE BLASTING GRANT BACKWARDS!

Abigail, dazed and bewildered, looks up just in time to see Herman, in his full gimmick suit, burst out of the fog, running and stepping over the downed SWAT to pull her off the gurney, to her feet. *

HERMAN

Can you walk?

ABIGAIL

Herman we've got to get out of here-

HERMAN

Yeah that's the plan, babe-

Herman begins quickly walking her through the hallways, finally reaching an elevator. Herman presses the button, and they begin to descend.

ABIGAIL

(dazed)

Arturo, Arturo was behind the White Knight-

HERMAN

You're not thinking straight. We'll get you out of here, then we'll talk; I'm sick of always saving your ass. *

ABIGAIL

Herman it isn't safe for you here-

HERMAN

Very considerate of you to say so. Now there's a ton of cops out there; I think we can fight our way out, but you're gonna need this.

Herman raises the burnt and fucked up Escapade helmet. Abigail takes it hesitantly, putting it on.

ABIGAIL

Herman-

HERMAN

It's gonna be okay babe, just stay with me.

The elevator dings, and they step out into

INT. HOSPITAL - THE AMBULANCE BAY - CONTINUOUS

Upon their exit, everyone in the bay, lined with dozens of ambulances and emergency vehicles, scatters. Herman walks Abigail rapidly out, making their way towards an ambulance-

*

ARTURO COMES CRASHING DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF IN FRONT OF THEM IN A SHOWER OF DUST AND RUBBLE.

Herman stops dead in his tracks. Arturo brushes some concrete off his shoulder.

ARTURO

Herman Stoltz.

HERMAN

I...uh...shit...Listen, Mr. Dumas,
we- we surrender, we don't want to-

ARTURO

I'm afraid we're past that, Herman.

HERMAN

Past that? What the hell are you-

Arturo raises a high tech pistol and shoots Herman in the chest three times. He falls backwards, dragging Abigail down with him.

Arturo frowns at his own gun.

ARTURO

Haven't discharged my weapon in
fifteen years. You win some, you
lose some.

Herman lays choking on his own blood, Abigail *screaming and trying to help him.*

HERMAN

Abigail- why did- why did he-
(gagging)
He's supposed to be...the good
guy...

*

*

*

Herman dies.

Arturo stands over Abigail and Herman's body, holstering his gun, looking down at them sadly, then looks up, hearing a noise.

*

Grant stands at the exit to the hospital, staring at him.

GRANT

Jesus christ...Arturo.

*

ABIGAIL

*He was behind the Knight! He was
the Knight's contact!*

GRANT

What- what's she talking about-

ARTURO

Let's all just take a breath here-

GRANT

I just saw you kill a man in cold
blood I have absolutely all the
breath I need.

Arturo looks down at Abigail, then at Grant. We can feel him
pondering: what's easier, talking or killing them both?

ARTURO

The White Knight was a means to an
end. A wrecking ball I could point
at the things that needed knocking
down-

GRANT

Why Donald Barnes?

ARTURO

Donald was a smart man, and a brave
man. He was my best friend. But
in the end, he simply couldn't
reconcile real life with his absurd
fantasy of a world protected by
"super heroes."

Arturo laughs sadly.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

It's all gone too far, any sane
person can see that; gimmicks
roaming the streets, science
fiction as reality. I made a call.
I created The White Knight to end
this.

Grant slowly begins to move towards Arturo, gradually placing
himself between Arturo and Abigail.

GRANT

*The White Knight killed innocent
people, he killed cops!*

ARTURO

You sound like Donald, now; "ooh,
it's murder, they're brilliant
minds." Nonsense.

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

It had gone on long enough. I came to Donald and asked him to help me exterminate the threat. Kill all the gimmicks. Make an example of these fools once and for all. He said it was "wrong." "Heartless." "Fascist," HA! Said he would stop me if I tried. This was a problem.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

(beat)

He got in my way, and I removed the obstacle-

GRANT

REMOVED THE OBSTACLE!? You **murdered** your best friend!

ARTURO

HEY. This is society's war for normalcy, for sanity. For a hundred years, these heavily armed lunatics have been waging a war not just on bank vaults, but on the American way of life. There's only room on earth for **one superhuman**, and you're looking at him.

*
*
*
*

(beat)

You are *not an idiot*, Grant. You understand me, and you agree.

There's a beat.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I said, *you agree*.

Grant stares at him.

GRANT

Arturo Dumas, I am putting you under arrest for the murder of Herman Stoltz, in connection with conspiracy to commit over the three dozen homicides in collusion with Charles Michael Lee, The White Knight-

ARTURO

Ahahaha, you're kidding-

GRANT

I'm afraid not, sir. You have the right to remain silent, anything you say can be used against you in a court of-

*
*
*
*

ARTURO

No but Grant, really.

GRANT

Really, sir.

The two of them stare at each other, dead even. Good cop
versus bad cop. *

Grant reaches down to his holster, trying to draw his gun.
Arturo **BACKHANDS GRANT ACROSS THE ENTIRE GARAGE INTO THE SIDE
OF AN AMBULANCE.**

Good, bad, Arturo's the one with the super-powers. He sighs,
shaking his head. *

ARTURO

What was the point of that, huh?
WHAT DID THAT PROVE? WHAT DID THAT
FIX, GRANT? WHO DID YOU HELP,
NOBODY.

(turning)

Now, Abigail...

Abigail's gone. Herman's body lies dead, but without his
Weather-Rig. All his fog-grenades are missing too. *

ARTURO (CONT'D)

...Abigail?

He looks around. The garage seems empty, just him and the
ambulances.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

You can't get out of here. The
building is surrounded.

There's a sound from over to his left, and he turns to see a
cloud-grenade pouring out mist. Another hiss from behind
him; another grenade. And another. And another.

We watch as Abigail creeps along behind the rows of
ambulances; she's put on the helmet, and is wearing the
weather rig over her hospital gown.

She looks **insane.**

ARTURO (CONT'D)

How do you think I knew to send the
White Knight when all the gimmicks
were gathered, Miss Barnes? A
little piece of information you
might like to know: those sensors
in your blood; they're directly
connected to the nanites in mine
via wireless uplink. *

(laughs)

The uploads were just for the
records. *

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

For months, I've been able to look through your eyes *whenever I want*.

Ew...That came out creepy. What a *monster*.

*

The ambulance she's hiding behind is suddenly *LIFTED INTO THE AIR!* Arturo tosses it aside casually, mist now swirling around his ankles.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

So hiding is a waste of time.

Abigail *activates Chronosync* and scrambles under the nearest ambulance, hurrying down the row back out of sight, but then has to deactivate it, gasping in pain...

...Her legs and hands are *covered* in road rash.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Ha! Silly kid. You can't use Chronosync without the suit, you'll tear your body apart. I suppose at this juncture it's a bit of a moot point; you're dying today, here, there's no escaping it.

Arturo notices Abigail sneaking away, easily picks up an ambulance and **CHUCKS IT AT HER**.

Abigail activates Chronosync to dodge it, but hurts herself in the process, falling to the ground, getting up to find Arturo *RIGHT NEXT TO HER*.

ARTURO GRABS HER BY THE THROAT

AND TEARS OFF THE ESCAPE HELMET, CRUNCHING IT IN HIS HAND.

As cloud mist swirls around them Arturo lifts her into the air.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

That's ENOUGH, little girl.

Electricity crackles in the mist around them.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

What's...what's-

ABIGAIL

Fuck you.

Abigail spits in his face, swings her arm and-

A BLAST OF LIGHTNING NAILS BOTH OF THEM, EXPLODING HERMAN'S RIG AND THROWING THEM BOTH IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS.

SLAM TO:

Abigail's fading in and out of consciousness. The Weather-Rig is sparking and destroy, and she shrugs it off.

Arturo's right near by, barely able to stand, electricity crackling all over him. Abigail quickly drags herself to his dropped gun...

...And pulls herself up to her feet, raising it to Arturo's head. Arturo tries to stand up, but electricity crackles and he falls back down.

ARTURO

What'd...what'd you do to me...

ABIGAIL

The nanites in your blood couldn't take the surge of electricity. They're overloaded, resetting; now you're *just another asshole with a badge.*

*
*

Arturo tries to take off, but only succeeds in flipping himself into the air.

He crashes to the ground, agonizingly hard. Abigail stands over him. In frustration, he punches the asphalt. It cracks, but only a little bit.

ARTURO

What're you waiting for. Do it. Kill the world's only "super hero," it'll be better off without me.

*

He punches the ground again. It cracks a little more. The nanites inside of him are reactivating.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

At the end of the day, maybe it's the best case scenario. No more cops and robbers, no more heroes and villains. Just human nature.

He punches the ground again: this time it *really cracks*. Abigail is frozen in place. She's not a killer, not like this; she can't pull the trigger.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Oh well. You had your chance. In the end, I guess you're just as weak as *your father-*

*

Arturo **LUNGES AT HER!** HE THROWS A HUGE, SUPER FAST HAYMAKER PUNCH-

Abigail ducks under it.

Arturo falters, and then THROWS THREE MORE HUGE SUPERSTRONG SUPERSPEED PUNCHES-

She dodges. Without the helmet.

*

Arturo falters, staring at her, furious and...scared.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
That's impossible.

Arturo **TAKES ANOTHER SWING-**

ABIGAIL SHOTS HIM DEAD.

Abigail stands over Arturo's fallen body, the gun smoking in her hand. Grant, pulling himself to his feet, staggers over to her.

GRANT
Abigail...are you...is he...
(horrified)
Oh god...

Grant pulls it together.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Listen, we can fix this. It's going to be okay, we have files, we have classified files, we can clear your name, we can-

ABIGAIL
No.

GRANT
What?

ABIGAIL
No.

Grant looks at her, confused. Abigail leans in, and kisses him gently on the lips.

GRANT
I don't understa-

Abigail takes a step back and **SHOTS GRANT IN THE SHOULDER.**

He collapses, gasping in pain, clutching his shoulder.

ABIGAIL

No, Grant.
 (beat)
 I'm the bad guy.

The ever approaching sirens are close now, and the doors of the hospital **BURST OPEN**, dozens of SWAT troopers and police officers flooding in.

Grant flops back down on his back, staring at the ceiling.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

The entire hospital staff is evacuating as more cops and helicopters rush to the scene, people running in all directions.

One of the nurses, in green scrubs, breaks away from the crowd.

She pauses, looking back at the hospital...

It's Abigail. She turns and vanishes into the dark stairway down to a metro station.

FADE TO BLACK. *

HOLD ON BLACK. *

SLAM IN ON: *

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Abigail stands alone, on the edge, looking down over the city.

The new Escapade suit is entirely matte-black, except of course the white X_X face spray-stenciled onto the face of the helmet.

Grant appears in the shadows behind her, his arm in a sling. *

GRANT
 So...black, huh?

ABIGAIL
 (turning)
 I'm in mourning.

GRANT
 (long beat)
 Is this going to be a fight? *

ABIGAIL

Not yet.

*

GRANT

You're the most wanted person in the world. How the hell do you think we're supposed work together now-

ABIGAIL

There'll be a backlash to the massacre of the LA gimmicks. Seattle. San Francisco. San Diego. Maybe even Chicago, New York, Japan, London. Super-criminals all over the world becoming more aggressive. Somebody has to control it.

*
*
*
*

Abigail tosses him a high tech syringe; he barely catches it.

*

GRANT

...What-

*
*

ABIGAIL

Nanites. Like the ones my father made for Arturo. I cracked the formula months ago. There's enough for one person.

*
*
*
*
*

Grant stares at the syringe in his hand. We can feel his brain going a million miles a minute.

*
*

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

I trust you. You trust me. Prove you're a better man that the one who came before you.

*
*
*
*

Grant, in shock, nods, as Abigail turns, headed towards the edge of the roof.

*
*

GRANT

...How- how will I see you again?

*

ABIGAIL

You will.

*

Abigail puts on the helmet, the faceplate still open. Arturo speaks up.

*
*

GRANT

You have most of the Los Angeles gimmicks' technology in your hands now. You really ought to turn it over to the marshals.

ABIGAIL
(after a beat, coldly)
You really ought to come try and
take it.

Grant takes a step forward, speaking harder. *

GRANT
What I'm saying is, you have an **out**
here. You got your revenge. You
don't have to go on being Escapade.

Abigail laughs a very real laugh as she steps up onto the
ledge of the building.

ABIGAIL
Don't you get it yet, Marshal? *

(beat)

I **am** Escapade.

The faceplate slams shut.

Grant, watching her go, blows her a kiss. Abigail, without
looking back, reaches up and snatches it out of the air. And
slaps it onto her ass, *before diving off the ledge.*

Grant rushes to the edge, only to watch Escapade come
streaking up past him.

She's installed a jet pack. Holy shit.

SLAM TO BLACK.

THE END.