

"NEW YORK"  
(An Eye For An Eye)

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

A LEGEND READS: OUTSKIRTS - BASRA, IRAQ 10:00PM

Several armed MEN dressed in camouflage uniforms and black ski masks, enter three Humvees. A MAN in the lead jeep barks out orders in Arabic, then places a mask over his face: REVEAL: Islamic Extremist, ABDUL SAHEED, (28). In the distance, an oil field station lights up the night sky.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

A small DESK lamp, site MAPS and weathered FURNITURE occupy this small trailer. At the desk, on the phone, REVEAL: SHANE MERCER, (35). With a penchant for danger, SHANE is a tall, handsome MAN with brown hair and deep piercing blue eyes.

On the desk in front of him, two small framed pictures; one of a beautiful WOMAN of (30), the other, a young BOY of (5) with a GIRL a few years older, by a pond. Behind SHANE, sitting on a couch, three nervous, American Male EMPLOYEES, each sporting MERCER INDUSTRIES hard hats.

SHANE

(into phone) -- then you guys need  
to send in the calvary, Hamid.  
Why not? (pause) You people reached  
out to me, I didn't ask for this!

A moment later, SHANE slams down the phone, grabs a pair of binoculars, then looks out the side window. In the distance, the fast approaching Humvees. He looks to his men.

SHANE

I hope you boys like flying.

Shane returns to his desk, dials a second number, while simultaneously retrieving a folder from inside the desk.

EXT. CITY - SAME

A LEGEND READS: NEW YORK CITY 3:00PM

MOVING IN - On New York's East Side, an inscription on the facade of a tall building reads: MERCER INDUSTRIES.

INT. MERCER INDUSTRIES - SAME

Sitting at a desk outside an office door marked, TINA MERCER ELLIS PRESIDENT, an attractive secretary, DEBBIE CURTIS (30).

DEBBIE  
 (into phone, smiling) Hi, Shane.  
 (nervous) I'll get her right away.

INT. TINA'S OFFICE - SAME

DEBBIE hurries through the large modernist office, approaches a back door, knocks, then enters.

INT. BACK ROOM - SAME

Workout equipment fills the room -- classical music plays loudly over the elaborate sound system. On the treadmill, running at a fast pace, REVEAL: (42) year old, TINA MERCER ELLIS. Dressed in black spandex shorts and a NEW YORK MET (Opera) cut off T-shirt, this blond haired, blue eyed 5'5" beauty, exhibits class and control.

Behind TINA, on the wall, a framed photo of SCARLET O'HARA from, "Gone With The Wind." Underneath the picture it reads: "Do not squander time, that is the stuff life is made of." DEBBIE gingerly lowers the music, then approaches.

TINA  
 No interruptions means just that.

DEBBIE  
 I'm sorry, Mrs. Ellis. Shane's on the phone --

TINA grabs a towel, hurries toward the front office.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

TINA pushes the speaker button on the phone. In front of her on the desk, we observe several framed FAMILY photos.

TINA  
 (into speaker phone) Shane?

INTERCUT:

SHANE  
 Tina, you need to listen to me very carefully.

A concerned, TINA places the receiver against her ear.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
 The compound's about to come under attack. I can't explain everything to you right now --

SHANE places several pages of the document into the fax, dials, then presses send.

SHANE

-- but I'm sending you a fax and you need to get it to Bill. Somebody's trying to bring us down, Tina. They want to kill Mercer Industries in Iraq.

TINA

Who does?

SHANE

I'm not sure yet? It's got something to do with oil for weapons and the insurgency here.

TINA

How do you know all this?

SHANE

Just get the fax to Bill -- tell him to find out everything he can about, Shahadah.

TINA

Shane, you're really starting to frighten me here.

SHANE

I'll be fine, sis. Listen, I gotta' go. I'm taking three men and myself out in the chopper.

Shane sets the phone down, glances at the photo of the little boy and girl on his desk. He then stares at the photo of the woman's picture. He and his men then exit.

INSIDE TINA'S OFFICE -

Echoed silence fills the air.

TINA

Shane? Shane!! (To Debbie) Check the fax and get Samir and Tammy in here right away. (off exit)

EXT. OIL FIELD STATION - SAME

SHANE orders the few security staff left out the back gate. He and the 3 American WORKERS then approaches a makeshift helipad. SHANE engages the engine on the MERCER II Chopper.

A few hundred meters away, the INSURGENT group crashes through the front gate. Removing explosives from their bags, several of the MEN approach the base of the oil containers.

Another MAN detonates a charge by an electrical pole. Moments later, the compound goes black.

Two INSURGENTS enter the field office. They quickly remove documents from the desk and the interrupted fax.

A few hundred meters away - the CHOPPER heads into the night sky. ABDUL SAHEED observes this, grabs a shoulder held MISSILE LAUNCHER, then fires the missile, hitting the back ROTOR of the Chopper, sending it spiraling out of control.

The CHOPPER crashes - into a sand dune 200 meters from the compound. The MEN on board struggle to free themselves. SHANE motions for them to run. He remains behind, his leg trapped under the wreckage. A huge EXPLOSION follows, the oil tanks in the background spewing flames into the sky.

INT. TINA'S OFFICE - SAME

The deafening sounds reverberate through the speaker phone.

EXT. OIL FIELDS - SAME

Four INSURGENT vehicles reach the crash site. The THREE workers struggle toward the top of a sand dune. As they reach the top, they are MOWED down by machine gun fire.

The INSURGENTS then approach the chopper. ABDUL SAHEED stands over, SHANE. He cocks his weapon, then knocks SHANE out with the butt end of his AK-47.

A hundred feet from the crash site, a lone INSURGENT, his face still hidden behind a ski mask, takes a knee. He reaches for his CELL phone/GPS Locator, sets it down.

EXT. NIGHT SKY - SAME

A Satellite spins. A series of pictures of Iraq appear on a screen. Pinpointing the source of the signal, the pictures then turn into REAL TIME streaming video, as our INSURGENT retrieves a small video/audio camera from inside his shirt -- pointing it at the downed CHOPPER.

LONE INSURGENT  
(English, into camera) D-A-R coming  
through on Cipher, over. Three  
dead -- (connection fails)

END TEASER:

ACT I

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Early 20th century masonry, and an array of maple and oak trees align a stretch of road marked highway 295. Several hundred meters off the lone exit marked, NSA HEADQUARTERS, we observe armed MILITARY POLICE stationed at a checkpoint.

Moving further down the exit, another checkpoint with additional armed MP'S.

Up ahead, we notice several huge satellite dishes surrounding a dull grey building. Windowless, and surrounded by a heavy forest, the mammoth structure appears ominous. Several camouflaged SNIPERS lie in wait around the perimeter.

A LEGEND READS: NSA HEADQUARTERS FT. MEAD MARYLAND

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Sitting behind his desk, finishing a call is, REVEAL: (43) year-old, LIEUTENANT COLONEL BILL ELLIS. Displaying the facial lines of life, this physically fit and impeccably dressed officer, exudes both trust and likability. Behind him on the wall, his wedding photo taken at WEST POINT.

A knock at the door and in steps, REVEAL: 2nd Lieutenant, MELISSA RENAULT. Dressed in a tight fitting uniform, this dark haired attractive woman of (38) carries a big chip on her shoulder. In her right hand, several manila files. She hands BILL the files.

MELISSA

Your wife's on two, Colonel. It sounded urgent.

BILL presses line two, picks up the phone.

BILL

(into phone) Honey, what is it?

INTERCUT:

INSIDE TINA'S OFFICE -

TINA hovers over the speaker phone. Standing across from her, head of security, REVEAL: SAMIR "SAM" ADIMEY. An articulate man of (35), SAM is of Lebanese decent.

Adjacent to him, REVEAL: REVEAL: TAMMY MERCER JACOBS. Dressed in a business suit, black shoes and hard rimmed glasses, this (30) year old is the antithesis of her sister.

TINA

Bill, there's been an attack on the field office in Basra.

BILL

An attack? When?

TINA

Just now -- a few moments ago. I just got off the phone with Shane.

BILL

Is he okay?

TINA

We're hoping he got out in time in the chopper.

A knock at BILL'S door and in steps 4 star GENERAL MICHAEL JOHNSTON, (60) -- a career man long past his prime.

BILL

(into phone) Hold on a moment, Tina. (To General) Yes, General?

GENERAL JOHNSTON

I need you in the situation room.

BILL

Right away, sir.

The GENERAL exits. BILL Looks to MELISSA. She shrugs.

BILL

(into phone) Tina, we've got an emergency here. I have to go.

TINA

More of an emergency than my brother's life?

BILL

Johnston needs me downstairs, ASAP.

TINA

Shane called frantic -- he was asking for you, Bill.

BILL

For me? Why?

TINA  
 Something about a company he  
 wanted you to look into.

BILL motions to MELISSA.

BILL  
 Give all the information to  
 Melissa. I'll look into it as  
 soon as I get back. I have to  
 go, Honey. Here she is.

BILL hands the phone to MELISSA, moves to exit.

MELISSA  
 Your tie.

BILL stops a moment, looks down at his tie, fiddles with it.  
 MELISSA approaches, fixes it for him. She then adjusts his  
 jacket -- smiling at him.

MELISSA  
 That's much better.

BILL exits. MELISSA then retrieves the phone.

MELISSA  
 (into phone) Mrs. Ellis, this  
 is Lieutenant Raunault. How  
 can I help you?

TINA holds a moment, then hangs up the phone. DEBBIE then  
 hands her several pages from the fax. She glances at the  
 pages, then hands them to SAM.

TINA  
 Find out everything you can  
 on this one, Sam.

SAM looks down at the pages. On them, distorted BANK ROUTING  
 numbers, Arabic lettering, encrypted codes, etc.. SAM stares  
 at the top of one page -- the letterhead reads: "Shahadah."

SAMIR  
 (to himself) Shahadah.

TINA  
 Sam?

SAMIR  
 The company's name, Shahadah.  
 It's origin is Arabic. It  
 means, "An Eye For An Eye."

TINA reflects a moment, then --

TINA  
I want a list of everyone  
with an ax to grind against  
Mercer Iraq. (off Sam's nod)

TINA retrieves a remote control, turns to CNN on the TV  
MONITOR against the far wall. She looks toward DEBBIE.

TINA  
In a few minutes that switchboard  
will be lit up like a Christmas  
tree. Nobody gets through to  
me, understand?

DEBBIE  
Yes, ma'am.

TAMMY  
What can I do?

TINA  
Help Debbie filter the calls.

DEBBIE exits. TAMMY follows.

TINA  
And Tammy? Let's keep mom  
out of this until we find  
out what happened.

INT. OUTER OFFICE - SAME

TAMMY joins DEBBIE and two SECRETARIES at the front desk.  
She then reaches into her purse, grabbing her cell phone.

INT. NSA SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Inundated with TV monitors, video feeds, and an array of  
advanced technology equipment, this room monitors U.S. Covert  
operations around the globe.

Gathering around a large glass table, BILL, GENERAL JOHNSTON  
and several other NSA AGENTS. GENERAL JOHNSTON glances  
toward, REVEAL: (35) AGENT ANTHONY JACOBS -- eager to please.

AGENT JACOBS  
-- GPS fix on the location is  
active. Audio and video feeds  
from our agent on site, still a  
no go, sir.

AGENT JACOBS begins passing out information to BILL and the other OFFICERS.

AGENT JACOBS  
You gentlemen are now receiving  
everything we have up to date  
on Mercer.

AGENT JACOBS glances back toward the GENERAL.

AGENT JACOBS  
Sorry, General.

Shocked, BILL moves in toward the General.

BILL  
Something you wanted to tell  
me, sir?

JOHNSTON opens a file, removes a picture, then continues.

GENERAL JOHNSTON  
His name is Abdul Saheed. He's new  
on the scene, but very dangerous.  
He and his cohorts have been  
stealing oil from Mercer to arm  
their insurgency. Our agent on the  
inside reached out to your brother-  
in-law a few months back. I didn't  
involve you then because it was a  
simple fact finding mission. But  
now with our security breached,  
things have changed.

GENERAL JOHNSTON slides a series of photos onto a projector.

GENERAL JOHNSTON  
This is a video still of the  
explosion. (second picture) The  
chopper, Shane and his men escaped  
in. (third picture) And this one.

BILL looks at a photo of the chopper crash landed.

AGENT JACOBS  
We lost the video feed after this.

BILL  
Anything on audio? (pause) General?

GENERAL JOHNSTON  
(struggles) Three dead. Then the  
transmission ended.

AGENT JACOBS presses on his ear piece.

AGENT JACOBS  
We're online again, sir -- audio  
only.

GENERAL JOHNSTON  
Put on the big screen, AJ. (turns  
to Bill) It's all yours, Colonel.

BILL nods to a second TECHNICIAN, TOMMY, (20's). A moment  
later an audio feed is accompanied by --

EXT. BASRA IRAQ - NIGHT

GLOBAL positioning images of a small village town on the  
outskirts of Basra, appear on the BIG SCREEN.

EXT. VILLAGE - SAME

The CAMERA in the sky edges in on a small brick and mortar  
hut. Surrounding the antiquated building, several heavily  
armed INSURGENTS. BILL studies the infrared night video,  
then reaches for an audio button on the counsel.

BILL  
Where's our audio inside, Tommy?

TOMMY  
Comint available -- switching to  
it now, sir.

Suddenly, the sounds of a MAN yelling in Arabic can be heard  
over the video.

BILL  
(into counsel mic) I need an Arabic  
translator in here right away!

BILL glances toward TOMMY.

TOMMY  
Still negative on the video feed,  
sir.

Entering the room, REVEAL: (27) year old, CONNOR MERCER. He  
is a tall, lanky man, with dark hair, brown eyes and glasses.

BILL  
Grab a headset, Connor --

CONNOR grabs a headset. On the screen, we still see only the  
outside of the adobe building in Basra.

AGENT MERCER (INTERPRETING)

You come to our country, to not  
help us, but to steal from us, to  
kill our brothers, rape our culture  
-- all in name of democracy!!!--

The sounds of a MAN being beat reverberate through the  
situation room.

BILL

Tommy --

TOMMY

Video feed up, sir.

INSIDE THE BUILDING -

The video, edgy and full of movement, shows ABDUL SAHEED  
striking the bare back of a blindfolded MAN. The HOSTAGE is  
affixed tightly to an old 1950's school chair. SAHEED then  
lowers the stick in his right hand, calms a moment, then  
motions to speak. CONNOR is poised to interpret, but is not  
needed, as SAHEED begins speaking in broken English.

ABDUL SAHEED

-- the information you faxed --  
(grabs documents) from where  
did you get it?

HOSTAGE

(slurred speech,) Fed Ex --

The beating continues.

ABDUL SAHEED

You work for U.S. Government.  
CIA? CIA? No, you are NSA.

HOSTAGE

I'm a civilian --

ABDUL SAHEED

You lie!

SAHEED slaps the hostage across the face, removing his  
blindfold. It reveals, SHANE. CONNOR looks on in horror at  
his brother -- BILL more knowingly. SAHEED then presses a  
pistol up against SHANE's right temple.

ABDUL SAHEED

Today you die, infidel.

SHANE

Today, tomorrow -- you can't  
kill me twice, pal. (smiles)

ABDUL SAHEED

Was it funny so, when your  
wife die in explosion meant  
for you? (off grin)

SHANE

You, son-of-a-bitch!!

SHANE leaps at him, chair and all. He is knocked to the ground with the butt end of SAHEED's pistol. SAHEED cocks the weapon, glares at a defiant, SHANE, who spits in his face. Suddenly our video feed scrambles. This is followed by the sound of a round being fired.

A clearly affected situation room grows numb, as the video feed goes blank. On the audio, the sounds of MEN laughing and speaking in Arabic. Before CONNOR can move to interpret, the audio runs silent.

INT. BUILDING - SAME

Several MUSLIM MEN, each dressed in traditional white clothing, kneel on the dilapidated wooden floor inside a small room. The MAN out in front chants in Arabic -- the OTHERS, bow their heads in prayer.

In an adjacent room, other MEN sift through a plethora of cell phones, lap tops, etc.. -- while still another Arabic MAN, early (20's), handles materials consistent with a small bomb. Several knapsacks lay on the floor in front of him.

EXT. FARM - AFTERNOON

A LEGEND READS: LANGFORD, NY

A small, quaint town in upstate New York. Traveling to the east several miles, we observe writing on a large ARC Post that reads: LANGFORD FARMS.

EXT. FARM - SAME

The sprawling 1,000 acre farm is active with CATTLE and HORSES. MIGRANT workers wind up their day, picking, strawberries, tomatoes and beans at various locations.

Traveling slightly to the east, we pass several well manicured cabins, before coming to rest on the main house -- a SPRAWLING 21 room, Georgian type white mansion. Large white pillars decorate the front structure.

INT. MANSION - SAME

Renaissance art work, period piece furniture and plank floors decorate this stately mansion. On the cell phone in the foyer, the live in maid, REVEAL: MARGARET SLATER (60). Originally from England, MARGARET still carries the accent.

MARGARET

(into phone) -- your mother's out in the field, dear? How are things in New York? (pause) Oh, my. I'll retrieve her presently.

MARGARET grabs a set of keys off the table and quickly exits.

EXT. MANSION - SAME

MARGARET enters a 57 Ford Pickup, then hurries down the winding dirt road in front of the mansion.

On her right, she passes by a a large built in pool, a tennis court and makeshift baseball field. Two dozen or so CHILDREN enjoy the venues. Behind the diamond, a large HELICOPTER sits atop a brick landing area. The chopper reads: MERCER ONE.

Up ahead, a half-mile or so, two older WOMEN walk a winding road -- coffees in hand. REVEAL: MARY MERCER. At (62), dressed in jeans and a T-shirt, this SALLY FIELD type beauty commands attention.

Adjacent to her, her friend of 45 years, MONNIE GEIGER (61). MONNIE, a lifelong resident of Langford, owns the local bed and breakfast. Sporting red short hair and freckles -- this salt of the earth woman emits warmth.

MONNIE

-- Remember the long walks we used to take down this road?

MARY

(smiles) What were they -- two, three miles?

MONNIE

At least. (pause) You to see, Tom. And yours truly to meet up with Ronnie.

A yellow BUS passes by, its markings read: "Our Lady of Victory Services." The male DRIVER waves to MARY out the side window.

DRIVER

Good afternoon, Mrs. Mercer.

MARY

Hi, Frank. (waves back)

The WOMEN continue on. Up ahead around the turn, a breathtaking man made pond. MONNIE sees it, stops.

MONNIE

Oh my goodness!

MARY

What? (off embarrassed look) What?

MONNIE points toward the pond. Both women start laughing.

MONNIE

-- you should have seen the look on your face when Ronnie and I jumped into the water stark naked.

MARY

Well, how old were we then?  
Eleven, twelve at the most.

MONNIE

Try more like sixteen. (laughs uncontrollably) You made -- you made -- (finally) you made Tom swim in his blue jeans while you hid behind that oak tree. (points)  
Look, it's still there.

Both women continue laughing, then sit on an old bench off to the side of the road.

MONNIE

It's great having you back, Mary.  
Hopefully, this time it's for good.  
(pause) Is it?

MARY

(pause) It's certainly a relief not having all that responsibility at Mercer. (pause) Tom really loves it here. And I know we both enjoy our time with the Grand kids. (pause)  
I'm only sorry I didn't spend more time here with my own children.

MONNIE

You and Tom were building an international business. (off look) Mary, your kids turned out fine.

MARY

You really think so? (Off nod) I am very proud of them --

MARY holds a moment, then looks away.

MONNIE

What is it?

MARY

(pause) For the longest time now, I've had this terrible feeling about letting Shane go back and run things in Iraq.

MONNIE

Did you have a choice? He'll be fine, Mary -- really.

MARY smiles. She and MONNIE then begin their return trip.

Suddenly, the FORD turns the bend, stopping quickly in front of them. MARGARET exits the truck, approaches MARY, hands the cell to her.

MARGARET

Tammy Lynn from New York, mum.

MARY quickly takes the cell phone.

MARY

(into cell) Tammy, it's mom. What's wrong? (pause) Is your brother okay? (pause) Oh my God. We'll be there as soon as we can.

MARY closes the cell, stares ahead.

MONNIE

What happened, Mary?

MARY

Tom. I need Tom.

MARY begins shaking, then notices a large tractor approaching in the distance. She drops the cell phone, then begins running toward the tractor.

MARY  
(screaming) Tom! Tom!

She dredges through the dirt, falling twice on her way toward the tractor. She finally reaches the side window, still calling frantically to the man inside. The man quickly shuts down the motor and exits through the side door. REVEAL: TOM MERCER (65). Sporting a gentle grey beard with hair to match, this 6'0" physically fit man rushes to his wife.

MARY  
Tom! There's been an explosion --  
oh my God, Tom --

MARY continues to shake. TOM grabs his wife by the shoulders.

TOM  
Calm down, Mary. Calm down and  
take a breath.

Taking several breaths, MARY begins to calm.

TOM  
Now, what is it?

MARY  
The plant in Basra's been attacked.  
There was a huge explosion --

TOM  
(pause, fearful) Shane?

MARY  
They think he may have gotten out  
in the chopper. We need to get to  
New York right away.

Stepping down from the tractor, REVEAL: (17) year old, LAURA ELLIS. Dressed in blue overalls and work boots, this Tom-Boyish brown haired, dark eyed teenager approaches.

LAURA  
Is everything okay, Grandma?

MARY  
(calmly) Your grandfather and I  
need to get to New York right away.  
(pause) Your Uncle Shane was  
involved in an accident.

LAURA  
Is he okay?

MARY

We don't know yet, sweetheart.

LAURA

I'm coming with you.

The three make their way through the field and toward the Pickup. LAURA slides an arm around MARY'S waist. They enter the truck, pass by the chopper, then make a B-line toward the main house.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Huddled around the table are; TINA, TAMMY, SAMIR and DEBBIE. A SPEAKER PHONE at the center of the table is their focus.

INTERCUT:

INSIDE BILL'S OFFICE -

He is on the phone. MELISSA looks on.

Bill

(into phone) -- thank God he's still alive, Tina. And that's all I can tell you.

TINA

What do you mean that's all you can tell me?

BILL glances toward MELISSA.

MELISSA

The press just got on scene.

BILL

(pause, into phone) Shane's chopper was shot down outside the compound. Three employees were killed. Your brother survived the crash, but was taken hostage.

TINA

By whom?

BILL

I'll be on the next flight home.

BILL hangs up the phone, glances toward MELISSA.

INSIDE TINA'S OFFICE-

TINA turns to the group. All look to CNN on the TV MONITOR. Images of the explosion in Basra begin filtering in.

TINA

We'll need a statement for release immediately.

TAMMY

You want me to run point?

TINA

This one may be a smidgen over your head.

TAMMY

But not over yours?

TINA

Now's not the time, Tammy.

TAMMY

It's never the time, Tina.

TINA lashes out at her sister.

TINA

Our brother's most likely being held by a group of religious zealots using God, or Allah, or whatever the hell they believe in, to further their cause of hate. One misstatement from our camp and Sane is dead. You want that responsibility, Tammy?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

And what responsibility is that, ladies?

Entering the room, TOM and MARY. TINA approaches her mother.

TINA

Extremists blew up our facility outside Basra. But you probably already knew that. (glares at Tammy)

MARY

And further word on your brother? Tina, what happened to my son?

TINA  
 (struggles) Shane was kidnapped  
 by the attackers. That's all  
 we know so far.

Reentering the office is DEBBIE.

DEBBIE  
 CNN's looking for a statement.

TINA grabs several notes off her desk, then proceeds toward  
 the exit. Her path is interrupted by MARY.

MARY  
 Educate me on the particulars.  
 I'll take care of the press.

TINA  
 Mom, one wrong comment could cost  
 Shane his life.

MARY  
 Exactly.

TINA and MARY sit on a small couch by the exit. TINA jots  
 down several notes for her mother. Before she can finish  
 however, the office door is flung open. With REPORTERS at  
 the ready, MARY grabs the notes and exits. TOM follows.

TINA WITH TAMMY -

TINA  
 You called her didn't you? I could  
 have handled everything just fine.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A number of REPORTERS have made their way into the large  
 conference area. Attempting to hide her anxiety, MARY  
 approaches the podium. She sets a note pad on the podium,  
 then begins.

MARY  
 At approximately 10:00 PM Iraqi  
 time, there was an accident and  
 subsequent explosion at our energy  
 facility outside Basra. As you can  
 all imagine, my family and I are  
 deeply concerned for the safety of  
 our employees there. (pause) I  
 will take one or two questions.

Raising his hand, then standing is New York Times investigative reporter, JIM RUFFIN (28).

MALE REPORTER

Mrs. Mercer, Jim Ruffin, investigative reporter with the Times. My sources have it at three Mercer employees dead. Do you confirm that, ma'am.

MARY

(taken aback, then) I'm unaware of any fatalities at this point, Mr. Ruffin.

A female REPORTER stands.

FEMALE REPORTER

Ashlee Jenkins, CNN. Rumor has it the explosion was a deliberate attack by Islamic Extremists. Would you care to comment on that, Mrs. Mercer?

MARY MERCER shoots a look through her daughter.

MARY

(scolding) Rumor has it, Ms. Jenkins? Next question.

JIM RUFFIN

Mrs. Mercer? Can we assume from your appearance here today, that you're back at the Mercer helm?

MARY

(pause) Thank you all for coming.

MARY MERCER quickly exits. TAMMY follows. The REPORTERS begin to disperse.

JIM RUFFIN

Mr. Mercer? Your old rival, Taylor Richards said today and I quote; "I don't see how Mercer Energy can survive this latest tragedy." Would you care to comment?

TOM MERCER

Mercer Industries will come through this latest setback, as it did after the accident in 2001.

(MORE)

TOM MERCER (cont'd)

We will be bigger, better and stronger. I'd suggest, Mr. Richards do his research, and focus on his own bottom line.

TOM exits. JIM RUFFIN approaches TINA.

JIM RUFFIN

Tina? A statement regarding your mother's return?

TINA

No comment.

TINA exits --

INT. OFFICE - SAME

And is immediately confronted by her mother. TAMMY, DEBBIE, SAMIR and TOM look on.

MARY

How the hell did the press get that information before you?

TINA remains silent. TAMMY approaches.

TAMMY

Bill told us of the three deaths a little over an hour ago.

MARY

Is that true?

TINA

I didn't have time to bring you up to speed.

TOM

Let's calm down here, people.

TINA

(to mom) I'm sorry.

MARY and TINA separate. TINA moves toward the wet bar.

TINA

Anybody want anything?

After no response, Tina pours herself a glass of Avian.

TINA

Why don't we all go over to Sutton Place. I'll have Debbie call ahead and have some food delivered. Bill's coming in -- I think Kathleen's around, and Julie's stopping by after her late class.

TOM

That's a good idea, sweetheart.

All look to MARY.

MARY

Fine.

TOM

(to Tammy) You'd better give Peter a call.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

A LEGEND READS: BROOKLYN, NY

A late model Mercedes passes by the front of the school. Gangsta' Rap music emits from inside the vehicle. The DRIVER looks to an American flag waving from its mast in front of the school. Behind the flag, a sign reads: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. Elementary School. The MERCEDES continues on, it's music replaced by children singing inside the school.

INT. CLASSROOM - SAME

With the piano playing in the background, a classroom full of third graders do their best with the song.

CLASS

-- from sea to shinning sea!

At the piano, REVEAL: JULIE MERCER (24). With long brown hair and brown eyes, this young lady exudes style and grace.

JULIE

Welcome, everyone.

She turns, pulls down a world map, hen addresses the class.

JULIE

Today, we're going to learn about the middle-east and Iraq. Can anybody point to it on the map?

Several of the kids raise their hands. JULIE calls on,  
REVEAL: (8) year old, African/American, LOUIS JOHNSON.

JULIE

Louis?

LOUIS approaches the map, places his index finger on Iraq.

JULIE

Very good. And who can tell us why  
it's important to learn about Iraq?

LOUIS standing in front of JULIE, raises his hand.

JULIE

Yes, Louis?

LOUIS

Because lots of our soldiers are  
there -- (proudly) including my  
brothers, Nick and Tramone.

JULIE

And we're praying for the safe  
return of all our soldiers,  
aren't we, class?

CLASS

Yes, Miss Mercer.

JULIE reaches for a book, raises it shoulder level.

JULIE

Okay guys, open your geography  
books to page three, please?

JULIE walks to a row of windows. She opens one, then moves  
toward a second -- as a cold chill rushes through her body.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

SUTTON PLACE: A gated, upscale community on New York's lower east side. Dozens of elaborately decorated Brownstone buildings occupy this city within a city. One building overshadows the rest. We MOVE IN on the PENTHOUSE floor through the clear glass windows.

INT. DINING ROOM - SAME

MERCER family members help themselves to the buffet dinner. One man in particular stands out, REVEAL: PETER JACOBS, (35). Dressed in a conservative business suit, this 5'8" dark haired lawyer downs another scotch. Approaching him, plate of food in hand, a concerned, TAMMY.

TAMMY

I brought you --

PETER

(speech slightly slurred) Tammy,  
I'm fine. I've only had three.  
(pause) Four now.

Defiant, PETER pours himself another -- finishes it quickly. Sitting on two couches and deep in conversation are; TINA, BILL, MARY and TOM.

MARY

-- is there anything else you  
can tell us, Bill?

BILL

(pause) We'll do all we can to  
get him out. I promise.

MARY

Thank you.

Entering the apartment is JULIE. She immediately moves toward her mother, hugs her.

JULIE

Any news on Uncle Shane?

TINA

Nothing yet, sweetheart.

She kisses her dad, then moves toward MARY.

MARY  
And how is my beautiful  
granddaughter?

JULIE  
Fine, Grandma.

LAURA joins them. MARY hugs them both.

MARY  
Look at these two. A future  
doctor of medicine and an educator  
of our youth. Well done, ladies.

TINA glares at her mom.

MARY  
Where's Kathleen?

LAURA  
She's out with some of her friends.

A buzz at the door. SAMIR enters, laptop in hand. He  
approaches TINA -- whispers something in her ear.

TINA  
(to daughters, smiling) Why don't  
you girls go get something to eat.

They exit. PETER and TAMMY join the group, as SAMIR places  
his laptop on the coffee table, hits play. Appearing on the  
screen, the aftermath of the explosion in Basra.

SAMIR  
One of our security team shot this  
at first light. (to Tina) And that  
company, Shahadah -- definitely a  
shell -- originated in Syria.  
That's all I got so far. (looks to  
Mary & Tom) We're all praying for  
your son's safe return.

TINA  
Thanks, Sam. Why don't --

PETER  
(under his breath, loudly) You  
ask me, he had no business  
being there in the first place.

TAMMY nudges him.

TINA  
What did you say?

PETER  
(defensive) Nothing.

TINA  
What did you say, Peter?!

PETER  
(snaps) I said, your brother had no business being there in the first place. (Pause) I'm sorry, I didn't mean that.

TINA  
My brother had every right to be there. (pause) How dare you.

PETER  
(pause) You're right, how dare me.

PETER downs his drink, then trips on the rug.

PETER  
I'd better go.

He exits. TAMMY with her sister.

TAMMY  
You didn't have to embarrass him like that.

TINA  
He brought it upon himself. (pause) Your husband has a serious problem, Tammy. I suggest the two of you deal with it before he finds himself out of a job.

MARY  
The last time I checked, your father and I were still running things around here. (To Tammy) We'll discuss this in the morning.

TAMMY storms out. A livid, TINA with her mother.

TINA  
You always preached, "family comes first." No one messes with a Mercer."

MARY

Peter's family too, Tina. (pause)  
Let's focus on your brother.

TINA

I am.

TINA exits into the other room. MARY looks to her husband.

MARY

I think I need some fresh air.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

TOM and MARY exit the gated community and begin walking down Manhattan's lower east side. To their left, a series of fruit and vegetable stands. A Seedy looking MAN places a peanut under one of three cups positioned on a makeshift gambling table. Several night JOGGERS pass by.

MARY

-- this city's always been so  
vibrant, so full of life. Do  
you miss it, Tom?

TOM stops by the fruit stand.

TOM

I'm a simple man, blessed with  
a few ideas, and a brilliant  
wife to market them.

MARY smiles, then kisses her husband. TOM then hands several tomatoes to the GROCER, who weighs them. TOM pays the man. He and MARY then continue on. MARY slides her arm inside her husband's.

MARY

Remember when you brought all  
that food to my house for two  
straight months?

TOM

You were fourteen years old --  
raising five siblings almost  
entirely by yourself. It was  
the least I could do. Plus, it  
gave me an excuse to see you.

A NEW YORK TIME'S truck stops nearby, delivering the morning paper to a news stand. MARY glances at the front page, it reads: AMERICAN GI DEATHS IN IRAQ TOP 5,000. TOM motions to buy the paper. MARY shakes her head no.

MARY

What's happening to our world, Tom?  
Things used to be so much simpler.  
Now, there's just so much hate.

They begin walking back toward Sutton place.

MARY

You think we'll get our son back?

TOM

(grabs her) Whatever it takes,  
whatever it costs, we'll get  
him back. I promise.

MARY looks out toward the city, then back to TOM.

MARY

We'll need to spend more time at  
Mercer. (off his look)

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

TINA sits in a chair, in front of a mirror removing her  
makeup. BILL returns from the bathroom. Holding a document  
in her left hand, TINA continues her tirade.

TINA

-- our stock's down 40%. The board  
is going to be all over my ass  
tomorrow. And now my mother  
suddenly decides she wants to run  
things again? I don't think so.  
(throws compact down)

BILL moves toward his wife.

BILL

Tina, you've done a yeoman's job  
with Mercer --

TINA

But you think my mother's right  
in coming back.

BILL

I didn't say that.

TINA

Either you're for me or against me.

BILL

I won't even dignify that comment.

TINA

Or inform me of my own brother's clandestine activities with the NSA? (pause) Why didn't you tell me, Bill?

BILL

Because I didn't even know. And even if I did --

TINA

You couldn't tell me anyway. It's "top secret," I know.

BILL

You and your mother need to back off on this one.

TINA

You know me, Bill. It's not my nature. (pause) I will find out everything -- one way or the other.

BILL moves to the wet bar, pours himself a drink.

BILL

We think Shane stumbled onto information that may identify an active terrorist cell here in the states.

TINA

Then get him out of there, Bill -- now!

BILL

We're working on it. (off look) It's not that easy.

TINA

And the fax my brother sent -- are you working on that, too? Or did you give that one to Melissa?

BILL

(terse) Stop beating a dead horse, Tina. There's nothing going on between the two of us.

TINA

Maybe not from your end.

TINA continues with brushing her hair.

BILL

You're being ridiculous again.

TINA

Women know women, Bill. And I don't trust that woman.

BILL exits into the bathroom. TINA glares into the mirror, then glances toward a framed picture on her dresser top. It's the same picture of the little boy and girl by the pond, SHANE had on his desk. TINA grabs the photo. A moment later, tears begin to well up in her eyes.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

The hip, young CROWD is grinding to the sounds of a provocative JZ song.

On top of one of the bars, three young WOMEN sensually dance to the rhythm of the music. One of the GIRLS, a PARIS HILTON type, takes over the festivities. Egging on the MALE onlookers, she performs several very seductive moves, then with continued prodding, flips up her skimpy T-shirt, revealing her breasts.

The CROWD erupts with excitement. One of the drunk male PATRONS joins the girl atop the bar. He reaches over, grabs her butt and is immediately knocked backward onto the floor. Our GIRL shouts out to the crowd, grabs a shot of Tequila off the bar and downs it.

She then jumps down from the bar, approaches the drunk PATRON who attempted to accost her. She grabs the man by the shirt, then kisses him very passionately. Our GIRL then looks to her watch, it reads: 1:45AM. She glances toward the MAN.

GIRL

Gotta go.

REVEAL: KATHLEEN ELLIS, a (20) YEAR-OLD gorgeous blond beauty. KATHLEEN approaches two other young beautiful GIRLS. Moments later, the three SOCIALITES exit the club.

EXT. CLUB - SAME

The three GIRLS enter a Limo parked in front of the New York night club.

INT. LIMO - SAME

The girls crank up the music in the back of the limo. One of the girl's lites up a joint, passes it to KATHLEEN, who smokes it, that cranks up the music even louder.

EXT. MIDTOWN MANHATTAN - MORNING

Scores of New York's faithful hustle their way to work. INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER, JIM RUFFIN waits patiently outside a mid-town office building.

Moments later, a Limo stops in front of the building. A MAN exits. Dressed in an expensive European business suit, REVEAL: TAYLOR RICHARDS, (64). A tall man at 6'1", TAYLOR, still in good shape, exudes the brashness and arrogance of his distinct German dialect. RUFFIN approaches.

JIM RUFFIN

Mr. Richards? Jim Ruffin, investigative reporter with the Times?

TAYLOR RICHARDS

A response from my rival, Mr. Ruffin?

JIM RUFFIN

I'm paraphrasing of course. (Off nod) He said -- (looks at notes) Mercer Industries will recover fully from this latest setback -- just as it did after the accident in 2001.

A beautiful WOMAN of (30) exits the Limo. Dressed in a conservative business suit, she stands behind TAYLOR.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

Accident, Mr. Ruffin? (pause) Criminal negligence, sir. Mr. Mercer and his son should have been incarcerated after the explosion.

TAYLOR and his associate enter the building. RUFFIN quickly jots down several notes.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

SAMIR works the computer on his desk. Several google searches later, he is at an Islamic Partisan website. Switching his computer to Arabic, he begins typing.

INT. NSA OFFICE - DAY

CONNOR MERCER plugs in the word, Shahadah. Several moments later, dozens of e-mail addresses and web sites appear in Arabic on the computer screen. He glances at BILL.

AGENT MERCER

-- we're cross matching the word, Shahadah with known terrorist cells. I'm checking all e-mails, instant messages, and V.O.I.P transmissions. We're getting my brother back, Bill. (off nod)

GENERAL JOHNSTON approaches -- pulls BILL off to the side.

GENERAL JOHNSTON

Orders just came in from upstairs. The extraction has been postponed.

BILL

What?

GENERAL JOHNSTON

Domet' believes he can still get the names and location of Saheed's active cell here in the states.

BILL

Mike, Wade Domet' is a rogue agent who has always been long on stupidity and short on results.

GENERAL JOHNSTON

Stupid or not, the boys upstairs gave him the green light on this one. Apparently, there's been a large increase in chatter over the past several days.

A look of anguish covers BILL'S face.

EXT. SMALL TOWN IRAQ - DAWN

A new location and a SERIES of dilapidated buildings on the outskirts of Basra. Dozens of STREET MERCHANTS sell their wares in the open market place.

INT. ADOBE HOUSE - SAME

A simple wooden table and chairs occupies this two room dwelling. Sitting at the table, ABDUL SAHEED. Two heavily armed INSURGENTS stand behind him.

ABDUL SAHEED

(Arabic, subtitles)) We must find out what the American knows before we can move forward.

The SECOND INSURGENT removes an antiquated electric torture box complete with two extending wires.

ABDUL SAHEED approaches a beaten SHANE. Half naked, and affixed to a wooden table, SAHEED attaches two wires extending from a wooden box to SHANE's two Big Toes.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(Broken English) American torture  
-- Abu Ghraib.

SHANE  
I saw the movie. The bad guy  
dies in the end.

SAHEED motions to the SECOND INSURGENT, who turns the hand crank on the wooden box, sending a jolt of electricity through SHANE'S body. SHANE reacts, his body convulsing.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(broken English) NSA? Who is  
traitor among my people. His  
name -- and you go free.

SHANE remains defiant. SAHEED glances toward the SECOND INSURGENT. A second charge sends SHANE into further convulsions. SAHEED raises the voltage, then shocks SHANE himself. SHANE cries out, then passes out from the pain.

SECOND INSURGENT  
(Arabic, subtitles) He is no use  
to us dead, Saheed.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(Arabic, subtitles) Nor is he of  
value to us alive and quiet.

SECOND INSURGENT  
(Arabic, subtitles) He knows  
nothing of your plans in America.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(Arabic, subtitles) Would you  
pledge your life and your family's  
on the American's knowledge?  
(off look)

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Sitting behind her desk, TINA scrolls down an address book on her cell. Entering the office with a box of files is DEBBIE.

DEBBIE  
Here are the files you asked for?

TINA  
Just set them down on the floor  
anywhere, Debbie. Thanks.

DEBBIE puts them down, exits. TINA dials the phone.

TINA  
(into phone) Senator Michalski,  
please? (pause) Tina Mercer Ellis.

INTERCUT:

Sitting at his desk, (58) year old, SENATOR JOHN MICHALSKI.  
The gold plated desk tag reads: CHAIRMAN OF THE INTELLIGENCE  
COMMITTEE.

SENATOR MICHALSKI  
(into phone) Tina, dear. How are  
you?

TINA  
Fine, Senator, and you?

SENATOR MICHALSKI  
What can I do for you?

TINA hits play on the DVD remote.

TINA  
I'm sure by now you've been given  
the rundown on my brother, sir.

SENATOR MICHALSKI  
I've been brought up to speed on  
the situation.

TINA  
Senator, I'd appreciate anything  
you can do to help bring about  
his safe return.

On the DVD we observe the senator walking into a small hotel  
room. A blond girl of around 18 stands there dressed in only  
red panties and a a bra.

SENATOR MICHALSKI  
Your family and I go back a long  
way, Tina. Rest assured, I'll  
do everything I can.

On the screen, we now observe the young WOMAN and the SENATOR being joined by a second WOMAN.

TINA

I know you will, sir. And in the meantime, I'll be sending you a little DVD thank you card. What happens in Vegas, Senator --

SENATOR MICHALSKI

No need for the card, Tina. I already got it.

The Senator slams down the phone. Sitting across from him is MARY. On the desk in front of the senator, a DVD disc. He grabs it.

SENATOR MICHALSKI

(angry) This is something I expected from your daughter -- but not you.

MARY

Who do you think taught her?

MARY stands.

MARY

You'll get the other copies when my son is returned safely.

SENATOR MICHALSKI

What if something goes wrong?

MARY

Your people put Shane in harm's way. And your people better get him out.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

A makeshift jail cell -- dark, cold. Light emanating from the night's full moon enters through a small window in the wall.

SHANE, shackled to a pole, sits adjacent to a large puddle.

Entering through the steel door is our SECOND INSURGENT. He approaches SHANE, lifts him off the floor. The SECOND INSURGENT then slams him hard against the wall and begins beating him -- all the while screaming in Arabic.

AT THE DOOR - SAHEED smiles, then exits.

The SECOND INSURGENT continues berating SHANE in ARABIC. Suddenly, the screaming stops. The SECOND INSURGENT looks to SHANE, then hands him some food from his pocket.

SECOND INSURGENT  
(English) Eat it -- you'll  
need your strength.

A stunned, SHANE looks to his CAPTOR.

SHANE  
You're, American?

SECOND INSURGENT  
NSA Special Agent Wade Domet'.  
(pause) AKA, Hamid.

SHANE  
(sarcastic) Just the guy I needed  
to see.

AGENT DOMET' removes a small camera with audio hookup from inside his shirt -- places it onto the bed. AGENT DOMET' then retrieves his cell, hands it to SHANE.

AGENT DOMET'/HAMID  
(whispers) Just listen. (opens it)

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Hey, big brother -- we're gonna get  
you out of there real soon --

INTERCUT:

INSIDE NSA HEADQUARTERS -

CONNOR and BILL are surrounded by several NSA and CIA AGENTS.

AGENT MERCER  
(into speaker phone) -- the man  
you're with -- work with him,  
tell him everything you know.

AGENT DOMET' closes the cell, then turns off the video/audio camera inside his shirt.

AGENT DOMET'/HAMID  
Listen closely, we don't have  
much time. Saheed found out  
you were working with us.

SHANE  
How?

AGENT DOMET' /HAMID

I don't know -- but that's not important right now. Saheed's planning an attack in the states. I know most of the players, but what I don't have yet is the location. I'm close, real close --

SHANE

(realizing) Right. And you want me to take a few more ass whippings to buy you some extra time.

AGENT DOMET' /HAMID

24 hours -- 48, Max.

Suddenly, the sounds of the key entering the door rings out. DOMET' glances toward SHANE.

SHANE

Lower the juice next time?

AGENT DOMET' /HAMID

(off nod, then) Close your eyes.

DOMET begins berating SHANE, then grabs him around the neck. A moment later, DOMET gingerly lowers an unconscious SHANE to the floor. SAHEED enters, looks to DOMET' /HAMID.

AGENT DOMET' /HAMID

(Arabic, subtitles) Two days, and I will have the information you need.

ABDUL SAHEED

(Arabic, subtitles) One day, Hamid. Then the American dies, information or not. (off look)

END OF ACT 11

ACT III

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

Several of the "POWERS THAT BE" (7 MEN, 3 WOMEN) sit around a large table. All the necessary accoutrements, notebooks, over head projector, etc.. fill the room.

At the head of the table, a confident, TINA spars with the MAN leading the power point display on the large flat screen TV. REVEAL, ADDISON CARMICHAEL, (45). A "Boys Club" type, ADDISON, handsome, powerful and intelligent, is dressed in an ARMANI suit. He looks to the screen, as TINA continues.

TINA

We're talking damage control here, Mr. Carmichael, not charts and numbers.

MARY stands outside the board room, listens in. DEBBIE hands a file to TINA. She glances through it quickly, then looks up.

TINA

Now, our oil reserves outside of Basra can meet the demand for at least ninety days.

A female BOARD MEMBER -- (50's) responds.

FEMALE BOARD MEMBER

And after that, Mrs. Ellis?

TINA

After that, Mrs. Johnson we'll draw from our other location in the region until we rebuild.

MRS. JOHNSON

And how long do you anticipate the rebuild taking?

TINA

Six months -- a year tops.

ADDISON CARMICHAEL

This is Mercer Middle East's second major catastrophe in less than a decade. This company will not survive a third.

TINA

Mercer Middle East contracts have made us a top fortune 500 company. A company that currently enjoys a 15 to 1 asset to debt ratio.

ADDISON CARMICHAEL

I suspect your numbers will change. Rumor has it, R.E.& D just underbid us, securing two new government contracts in Tekrit and Falujah.

TINA

Mr. Richards can't sustain losing 50 million dollars per contract.

ADDISON CARMICHAEL

It's all about image, Mrs. Ellis.

MARY steps in.

MARY

No, Mr. Carmichael, it's all about smart business sense. And my daughter appears to be the only person in this room who has any.

MARY shuts off the projector, turns on the lights, addresses the group.

MARY

The Mercer family will not be intimidated by terrorists, or succumb to unscrupulous characters with a vendetta against our good name. We will rebuild in Iraq. And we will secure the next government contract. Mr. Richards is going to regret the day he ever messed with a Mercer.

MARY turns, exits. TINA storms out after her.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

TINA stops her mother's progress.

TINA

You had no right to do that to me.

MARY

You were losing them in there.

MARY begins walking down the hallway. TINA keeps with her.

TINA  
I was doing fine.

MARY  
Either you're for us or against us,  
Tina. There is no in-between. I  
took a side, yours.

TINA grabs her mother's shoulder.

TINA  
I'm the CEO of this company.

MARY  
And I am this company.

Off to the right, in an office, TOM is with PETER and TAMMY.  
MARY stops at the door, looks to TINA.

MARY  
We'll discuss this later.

MARY opens the glass door, joins the meeting. TINA follows.

INT. SIDE OFFICE - SAME

An irate, TINA approaches TAMMY.

TINA  
You called this meeting without me?

TOM  
No, I did.

TINA  
Dad --

TOM  
Tammy and Peter can handle this  
just fine.

TOM glances toward PETER, nods. PETER removes several  
documents from his briefcase, places them on the desk.

PETER  
(to Tina) Your father asked me to  
compile a list of his and your  
mom's personal assets -- and then  
ascertain how much of those assets  
could be turned into immediate  
cash.

TINA

Money isn't the issue here, dad.  
These people are religious  
extremists. To them, money is  
an evil -- it's their Satan.

TOM

Money is always the issue. Those  
men have a cause -- just or not,  
they believe themselves to be  
right. And the more money you  
have at your disposal, the more  
right you can be. (looks to Peter)

PETER

15 million in 48 hours.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP NYC - DAY

CLOSE ON - a picture of KATHLEEN flashing the audience at a  
local nightclub. PULLING BACK - we observe, JULIE staring at  
a photo of her sister in a local high society paper. She  
closes the paper, sets it down, then glares across the table  
at KATHLEEN. Adjacent to KATHLEEN sits LAURA.

JULIE

-- mom's going to hit the roof when  
she sees this.

LAURA

And dad's gonna' ground you for  
life.

KATHLEEN plays with the whip cream on top of her hot  
chocolate.

KATHLEEN

So I flashed my tits in a bar one  
night -- what's the big deal? Look  
what it did for, Paris Hilton.

JULIE

We're not even going there.

KATHLEEN

Who says they're even gonna see  
this anyway? (grabs paper) True  
life -- this is just some local  
rag wanting to be a real newspaper.

JULIE

Why do you always make light of  
your indiscretions?

KATHLEEN

Why do you always use words nobody normal understands.

LAURA

I understand it.

KATHLEEN

My point exactly. (pause) You guys need to lighten up and relax a little. Maybe smoke a joint -- or get hooked up with a Palate's class or something.

JULIE

We don't need your advice on anything right now.

KATHLEEN stands to exit.

KATHLEEN

Suit yourselves, bitches. I'm just the messed up middle child with the psychological disorder.

KATHLEEN lights up a cigarette.

LAURA

This is not a joke, Kathleen.

KATHLEEN

The whole world's a joke. Yeah, that's what makes it easier to deal. Peace out.

She exits, then stops and turns back.

KATHLEEN

Hey, for what it's worth, I'm worried about Uncle Shane, too.

KATHLEEN exits. LAURA looks to her sister.

LAURA

Do you think Uncle Shane's okay, Jul?

A concerned, JULIE grabs her sister's hand.

JULIE

I hope so.

EXT. IRAQ - DUSK

A LEGEND READS: GREEN ZONE IRAQ PRESENT DAY

From high above the war torn safe zone, we observe sand bag barricades and dozens of American military SOLDIERS guarding a quartered off section of the city.

Check points, armed SOLDIERS, metal detectors, and a host of other deterrents serve as a warning. Iraqi SOLDIERS stand side-by-side with their American Counterparts.

INT. HOTEL BASEMENT - SAME

Several CIA AGENTS, military MEN and NSA AGENTS study the video on screen.

INSERT: Footage of SHANE MERCER being delivered to his present location. The video shows armed GUARDS surrounding the perimeter. A SPECIAL OPS OFFICER, early (30's), hangs up the phone, addresses his men.

SPECIAL OPS OFFICER

Gentlemen, we've been cleared to go in. (pause, pulls down map) Thirty special ops, along with 10 Civi-Iraqis in country should cover our flank. (looks to watch) C.S.S. E.L.T. will be on the ground in five minutes. He'll coordinate the logistics. (pause) Any questions?

The MEN stare in at the map -- several of them attempting to conceal their apprehension.

INT. BUILDING - SAME

Several Muslim MEN enter the small room we saw earlier. Prayer begins, as off in a side room, that same MAN we observed earlier, (Arabic, early'20's) continues his careful creation of several bombs. Their destination, several suicide vests and backpacks scattered about the floor.

INT. SUTTON PLACE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sitting at the dining room table -- LAURA, JULIE, KATHLEEN, and TOM. All are working on their appetizers and salads. Entering from the kitchen, pots in hand, MARY and MARGARET. They set the two pots down. MARY lifts off one cover, then the other revealing, pot roast and mashed potatoes.

MARY

I hope you kids like it.

LAURA  
It smells great, grandma.

TOM begins cutting slices, as MARY notices TINA and SAMIR entering the apartment.

MARY  
I used to make this for my brother and sisters when I was just about your age, Laura. (pause) I think I may have been a few years younger. Enjoy.

The group digs in. MARY approaches TINA.

MARY  
Any word?

TINA  
Bill called. He said they were going in to get Shane.

An awkward moment between the two, then --

MARY  
(to Tina, Samir) You two must be starving?

SAMIR joins the family at the table. MARY with TINA.

MARY  
Apparently, the Senator came through for us.

TINA smiles, joins her family at the dinner table. MARY approaches TOM, whispers in his ear.

LAURA  
Mom, grandma used to make this for her family when she was younger than me.

TINA  
Your grandmother was certainly quite the cook, Laura. (off look) How was school today, Julie?

JULIE  
Great. The kids had a lot of fun.

TINA  
Laura, I spoke with Dean Ruskin this afternoon.

LAURA

Did he say I could stay?

TINA

He's having all your assignments sent here. He gave you two weeks. I'm sure we'll have Uncle Shane home by then.

LAURA

Wonderful.

TINA reaches for her briefcase, places it on the table, then begins eating. KATHLEEN stares at her. TINA glares back.

KATHLEEN

Don't you want to ask me how my day went?

TINA begins cutting the remaining pot roast.

TINA

Well, I'm certain there's no mystery there. You got up at what -- two, maybe three o'clock this afternoon?

KATHLEEN

I got up at 11:00 AM -- thank you very much.

TINA

No kidding, that early? (pause) Then what'd you do, Kathleen? Go shopping -- maybe grab a coffee down at Starbuck's before your afternoon nap?

MARY

Tina.

TINA

Please stay out of this, mom.

MARY moves to respond, TOM interjects.

TOM

Mary. (off silence)

TINA

My daughter can take an afternoon nap -- you'll get no argument from me there.

(MORE)

TINA (cont'd)  
 I'm more interested in what young,  
 Kathleen does during her evenings.  
 (pause) Honey?

KATHLEEN  
 (Off look) You saw it.

TINA reaches in her briefcase.

TINA  
 Imagine my embarrassment, when the  
 person who handed it to me was  
 Addison Carmichael.

TINA places the newspaper clipping down on the table.  
 Embarrassed, KATHLEEN immediately reaches for it -- her  
 efforts thwarted by TINA, who grabs her daughter's hand.

TINA  
 It stays right there!

After a short struggle, TINA slaps her daughter across the  
 face. All look on in horror.

TINA  
 You seem to be the exhibitionist  
 in the family -- exhibit!!

KATHLEEN storms off. JULIE follows, as TINA takes the  
 picture, begins ripping it into little pieces.

MARY  
 How dare you embarrass your child  
 like that!

TINA  
 Oh, now you're a sudden authority  
 on disciplining children as well?  
 (pause) I think not, mother.

TINA stands, carving knife in hand.

MARY  
 I did the best I could under the  
 circumstances.

TINA  
 What circumstances? You worked 80  
 hours a week and left me home alone  
 to raise Shane.

MARY  
 You had Margaret.

TINA

It wasn't the same!

MARY

Your father and I worked our tails off -- built the business from scratch, so you and your kids could have all of this.

TINA

And was it worth it, mom?

MARY

Don't blame me for your problems. This is one lady who doesn't play that game. Not me. Not anymore.

MARY exits. LAURA begins crying, as TINA continues ripping the picture to shreds.

EXT. CITY STREETS IRAQ - DAWN

Three HUMVEE VEHICLES carrying 21 MEN quickly make their way through the downtrodden section of town. MUSLIM looksee BOYS observe the route, relaying the information via cell phones.

The small CONVOY approaches a narrow street. With the building containing SHANE MERCER dead ahead, the vehicles stop abruptly. The SOLDIERS exit.

Suddenly, dozens of old FORD trucks equipped with machine guns in their beds, surround the SOLDIERS. A gun battle erupts. Several of the SOLDIERS are wounded, a number of the INSURGENTS killed. The attack force enters the building.

INT. BUILDING - SAME

The attack force searches several of the empty rooms. The LEAD SOLDIER glances toward a corner in one room. A ticking sound is accompanied by a visual of a makeshift (IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE) IED.

LEAD SOLDIER

Let's move! Go, go, go --

Suddenly, a large explosion implodes the antiquated facility. The MEN barely escape with their lives.

ACT IV

INT. METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE BALLROOM - NIGHT

Dozens of NEW YORK'S social ELITE have gathered at this black tie affair. Standing at the podium, dressed in a gorgeous black evening gown is TINA. She looks down at her speech, continues.

TINA

-- tonight, through your generosity, we as a collective group have raised nearly five million dollars for Children's Hospital in the greater Tri-State area. (tentative applause) As a cancer survivor myself, although it be as an adult, I am familiar with the highs and lows one goes through from diagnosis through treatment. And to know any child should have to go through that breaks my heart. Hopefully, what we've done here this evening will make a few childrens' journeys a bit more tolerable. Thank you all for coming.

TINA steps down from the podium, receiving a standing ovation. At her table, she receives a hug from JULIE.

JULIE

That was beautiful, mom.

TOM

Great speech, Tina. (hugs her)

TINA

I have a wonderful speech writer.

TINA smiles at her daughter, then is approached by MARY. An awkward moment between the two. Standing face-to-face, the silence is deafening. Finally --

MARY

You look like a young version of me up there.

TINA

It always comes back to you.

MARY

I didn't mean it that way. (pause)  
Tina, I'm very proud of you --

Another awkward exchange of emotions and then --

MARY

-- and I'm sorry about yesterday.

TINA

Thanks, mom.

TINA and MARY move to hug but can't. A moment later, TAYLOR RICHARDS approaches -- extending his hand to TINA.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

Powerful speech, Mrs. Ellis. (hands her check) If I can be of further assistance to your foundation -- please, call on me anytime. (looks to Tom) Tom, Mary.

TAYLOR walks away and is immediately swarmed by the press.

MARY

(to Tina ) Who invited him?

TINA

I don't know.

MARY

He's nothing but show.

TAYLOR RICHARDS continues with his interviews, while the SERVERS bring the main course to the tables.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

TINA and her family are having dessert. TINA checks a text message on her phone.

MARY

What is it, Tina?

TINA

Sam's got more information on, Shahadah. Would you mind?

MARY

Laura's fine with us. Go.

TINA excuses herself, heads toward the hallway. TAYLOR RICHARDS cuts short an interview, then approaches.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

Mrs. Ellis.

TINA

I'm in a hurry, Mr. Richards --  
what do you want?

TAYLOR RICHARDS

I'm concerned about the recent  
drop in Mercer stock. And I'd  
like to know what you intend on  
doing about it?

TINA

It's none of your business.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

As a stockholder in the company,  
although it be minor, I believe  
it is my business.

TINA

Take it up at the annual meeting.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

Why do you despise me so?

Observing the two of them from his table, is TOM.

TINA

Because you're evil, vindictive,  
and you'll stop at nothing to  
get what you want.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

When you point a finger at  
someone, there are always four  
pointing back at you.

TINA glances around, the two of them are alone.

TINA

(flips him her middle finger)  
You know, you're absolutely  
right. Good night.

TINA exits. TAYLOR makes his way toward the outside terrace.

EXT. TERRACE - SAME

The view of midtown Manhattan is breathtaking. TAYLOR lights  
a cigar. A FIGURE taps him on the shoulder.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Attacking the competition in  
public now, Taylor?

TAYLOR turns. Standing in front of him, drinks in hand, is  
TOM. He hands one to TAYLOR.

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
The New York press is spin city.  
Words taken out of context. You  
know that, Tom.

TOM  
And that exchange between you and  
my daughter a few moments ago?

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
Healthy competition among two  
competitors.

TOM sets down his drink, moves toward TAYLOR.

TOM  
Does that competition involve  
taking a one-hundred million  
dollar hit to drive Mercer out  
of business?

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
Last time I checked, we still lived  
in a free and capitalist society.

TOM  
Your bitterness is clouding your  
judgement.

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
Then perhaps a little clarity is in  
order.

TOM removes a cigarette from a case, lights it.

TOM  
It was an accident, Taylor. And in  
your heart, I know you know that.

TAYLOR downs his drink, glares back at TOM.

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
I know that my wife stares at the  
front door for hours. I know that  
my son, and only child is dead!

(MORE)

TAYLOR RICHARDS (cont'd)

And I further know that my boy is  
dead because of your negligence.

TAYLOR grabs another drink off a tray, downs that.

TOM

Your son was the subcontractor on  
the build out. The pressure valves  
he sold us were substandard -- not  
in accordance with government specs  
-- and that's what caused the  
explosion.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

You say.

TOM

I'm sorry for your loss. But  
it was neither mine, nor my  
son, Shane's fault.

TOM turns to exit.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

I do hope he returns safely.

TOM

(spins) Excuse me?

TAYLOR RICHARDS

Your son. No father should have to  
endure the loss I have.

TOM

Shane's leading the cleanup in  
Basra. Why would I have to worry  
about his returning home safely?

TAYLOR RICHARDS

Basra is a very dangerous place  
these days -- especially for  
American Energy companies.

TOM puts out his cigarette, approaches TAYLOR.

TOM

Do you have information on who may  
have been behind the attack?

TAYLOR RICHARDS

I hear things -- nothing definite.

TAYLOR smirks. TOM gets in TAYLOR'S face.

TOM

Anything happens to my son, I'm  
holding you personally responsible.

TAYLOR RICHARDS

As I should hold you responsible.

TOM reaches back, delivers a punch to TAYLOR'S jaw -- sending him hard to the ground. A small group gathers, as TOM exits. TAYLOR grabs his jaw, looks to the MAN helping him up with bewilderment.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

TINA and SAMIR sit across from the computer screen. On it, routing numbers, files, banking information.

SAMIR

-- I've traced one of the routing numbers to a wire transfer at a Bank Of America in California. The person pulling Shahadah's purse strings resides somewhere here in the states. I'm just not sure where yet -- or who's in charge.

TINA

How'd you break the codes so fast?

SAMIR

I understand their thought processes -- and the language. (pause) This is one time where being Arabic in America helps.

SAMIR continues. TINA reaches for a file.

TINA

Sam, our oil reserve figures in Basra don't add up. I want you to look into it -- right after we get Shane back.

She places the folder in front of him, then moves to exit.

INT. NSA HEADQUATERS - NIGHT

CONNOR works tirelessly on his computer. His screen contains figures and wording in Arabic similar to that of Samir's.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

TAMMY serves her husband dinner at the dining room table.

PETER

-- she's jealous of you. Of what the two of us have together.

TAMMY

And what exactly is that again, Peter? You coming in at all hours, and expecting a hot meal on the table?

PETER

I was working on Mercer.

TAMMY

(calmly) Fine.

TAMMY places the plate on the table, moves to exit, then stops and turns.

PETER

What? (pause) What?

TAMMY

I want to have a baby, Peter.

PETER

Again with this!

PETER rises, takes his dinner and drink to the couch. He flips on the TV to ESPN. TAMMY quickly turns it off.

PETER

You agreed we'd wait! You said it yourself, we'd wait until I got more established with the company.

TAMMY

You're senior legal counsel at Mercer.

PETER

Only until your sister takes over everything.

TAMMY

Tina's controlling, but she's fair. You do your job, you won't have any problems with her.

PETER

So now I'm incompetent?

TAMMY

I didn't say that.

PETER flips back on the TV. TAMMY turns to exit, stopping at the door. She looks to her husband, her voice drowned out by the football game on TV.

TAMMY

I'm thirty years old. I've been married for five years now. And I will have a baby.

PETER feigns hearing her, waves, then returns to the game.

EXT. GREEN ZONE - IRAQ - MORNING

Several serious looking MEN head into one of the buildings.

INT. BUILDING - SAME

The small team enters an office.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

Several of the MEN sit at a table viewing several computer screens. The SPECIAL OPS OFFICER we observed earlier enters, slamming several folders onto the desk in front of him.

SPECIAL OPS OFFICER

We got a breach, gentlemen.  
Classified info' being disseminated  
to the enemy. (pause) Ideas?

The room is filled with government MEN, some dressed in uniforms, others in street clothes, etc...

PLAINCLOTHES MALE

Iraqi double agent, sir. Give us  
time, we'll sniff him out.

SPECIAL OPS OFFICER

Negative on that. We're going back  
in.

PLAINCLOTHES MALE

Without closing the breach? (Off  
nod) Why, sir?

SPECIAL OPS OFFICER

It may save a lot of heartache for  
the 300 million back in the states.

The SPECIAL OPS OFFICER pulls down a new map from the wall.

## SPECIAL OPS OFFICER

Study it closely. And this time, OPSEC is with our ELT, and the men in this room only. Our Iraqi counterparts will be sitting this one out -- understood?

The MEN nod.

## INT. OFFICE - DAY

CHAGAL, MONET, and several other impressionistic artists decorate the office walls. A South African Mahogany wood desk occupies the room's center. It's owner, TAYLOR RICHARDS enjoys a manicure in a recliner chair off to the desk's left.

TAYLOR glances toward a bulletin board in the corner of the room. He dismisses the MANICURIST, approaches the board.

On it, several white 3x5 index cards with notes on upcoming government and civilian energy bid contracts. Also on the board, in green -- the TWO recent government contract bids won. TAYLOR repositions his victories, answers his cell.

## TAYLOR RICHARDS

(into cell) Yes? (Pause) Excellent. Anything else? (Pause) The money has been wired into the specified account. (pause) No, I'll take care of the photos myself.

He closes his cell, looks back at the board, smiles.

## INT. NSA HEADQUARTERS - DUSK

BILL and CONNOR listen to audio information from Basra.

## INT. SAFEWAY HOUSE - 2:00AM

SAHEED sits at a table in a small, makeshift hideout. In his right hand, AGENT WADE DOMET'S small camera and audio device. Bound, gagged and nearly beaten to death, AGENT DOMET' slouches in a chair -- the fight in him all but gone. SAHEED places the camera down, it's lens facing AGENT DOMET'. He sits next to DOMET', then begins speaking into the lens.

## ABDUL SAHEED

(broken English) CIA, NSA -- listen to me! Your man -- he and others will die soon.

INT. NSA HEADQUARTERS - SAME

Several other AGENTS have now gathered around the video monitor. GENERAL JOHNSTON joins them.

GENERAL JOHNSTON  
What do we have?

BILL points to the screen.

GENERAL JOHNSTON  
Damn it!

INT. SAFEWAY HOUSE SAME

ABDUL SAHEED continues on screen.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(Arabic/Broken-English) Americans,  
listen -- Islam is only true  
religion of Allah. We shall  
wipe Israel off planet.

SAHEED makes his way toward the back window. He removes the Islamic flag serving as a makeshift curtain, then places it over, AGENT DOMET'S shoulders. SAHEED then cocks his 9mm glock, pointing it at the AGENT'S head.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(into camera) And so it is written.

SAHEED pulls the trigger, killing AGENT DOMET instantly. He then flings down the video device, along with DOMET'S cell phone -- shooting several rounds into them.

INT. NSA HEADQUATERS - SAME

The screen goes white noise, as the AGENTS look on in disbelief. CONNOR glances toward, BILL -- both looks saying it all.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL - a truly magnificent site in its own right. Dozens of PARISHIONERS and TOURISTS look around in wonder at the artistic accomplishments on the walls and ceiling. Sitting in one of the pews, staring at a statue of the VIRGIN MARY, is MARY MERCER. She breaks down in tears.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

TAYLOR RICHARDS is on his cell.

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
-- speak Arabic.

INTERCUT:

INSIDE THE BASEMENT - of another safeway house location is,  
ABDUL SAHEED.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(into cell Arabic, subtitles) We  
have a problem. (Pause) Shane  
Mercer -- I believe he knows of  
Shahadah and your funding.

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
(Arabic, subtitles) Did you  
question him?

ABDUL SAHEED  
(Arabic, subtitles) Many times.

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
(Arabic, subtitles) What did he  
say?

ABDUL SAHEED  
(Arabic, subtitles) Nothing --

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
(Arabic, subtitles) You know what  
the trouble with you people with  
causes is -- you're all paranoid.

ABDUL SAHEED  
(Arabic, subtitles) The American --  
he will confess all he knows. Or  
he will die.

TAYLOR RICHARDS  
(Arabic, subtitles) He stays alive,  
you hear me? I need him. He  
stays alive or your funding  
stops my friend -- all of it.

TAYLOR closes his cell, then looks to a series of photos of  
MERCER marked OIL DRUMS being loaded onto trucks by several  
armed and hooded INSURGENTS. TAYLOR then removes a business  
card from his desk, it reads: JIM RUFFIN, "New York Times."

INSIDE THE BASEMENT -

SAHEED approaches a tied up, SHANE.

ABDUL SAHEED  
 (Broken English) You live another  
 day, American.

Off SHANE'S look of relief.

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

New York Times reporter, JIM RUFFIN opens an envelop addressed to him. There is no stamp or return address. Inside the envelope, he removes several of the oil drum photos we observed in TAYLOR RICHARD'S office.

EXT. NEWS STAND - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

A New York Times truck delivers the morning paper to that same news stand we observed earlier. The lead article reads: MERCER MIDDLE EAST IN BED WITH TERRORISTS??? The Byline reads: Oil for weapons tied to U.S. Company.

INT. BUILDING - MORNING

The same building we've seen the Muslim MEN gathering for prayer. The process continues -- as several MEN dressed in MUSLIM garb pray out loud on the hard floor. Our ARABIC MAN is his 20's, places two wrapped sandwiches inside the top of a school nap sack book bag. He closes it, then exits the building through the back door.

EXT. BUILDING - SAME

Our ARABIC MAN walks from the building onto the sidewalk, and then down the street. Off to his left, we see the BROOKLYN BRIDGE. To his right, MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. Grammar school.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING

PARENTS drop off STUDENTS at the front door of the elementary school. JULIE stands on the front steps greeting the parents and young students.

Suddenly, our ARABIC MAN can be seen walking very briskly toward the school. The MAN approaches, removes the backpack from his shoulder and calls out to a student behind JULIE.

A young, MUSLIM STUDENT from JULIE'S class, stops, retrieves the bookbag from the ARABIC MAN. He kisses the girl on the cheek, smiles at JULIE, then exits. The bell sounds. JULIE and her STUDENTS enter the building.

THE END