

INTERCEPT

Pilot Episode: "Power"

by Ray Wright

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TEASER

We're in a speeding car --

INT. AUDI - NIGHT

SCREEEEEEEECHING out of a hard turn through an intersection where we've just cut off another car, its HORN BLARING, the car shooting past on our left as we race on in a DIZZYING RUSH of acceleration down an industrial park road.

A WOMAN of forty is driving. Terrified, in tears, she could never have imagined this moment. Beside her, a dark-haired COLLEGE KID in a hooded sweatshirt (DEVON) whips around to see if they've lost the LEXUS. No, still chasing them.

He rifles through the woman's bag. Finds her CELL PHONE. Dials 9-1-1. Hands it to her. He met her five minutes ago.

DEVON

Don't tell them I'm here.

WOMAN

(into phone)

Hello?! Hello?!...

Line connects:

911 OPERATOR

911, what is the nature of your emergency...?

WOMAN

(into phone)

I need help! Someone's trying to kill--

(sees behind her)

OH GOD, HERE HE COM--!

The Lexus RAMS them at an angle from behind. The woman SCREAMS as the Audi SWERVES out of control and JUMPS a curb. A stop sign SNAPPING in half across the hood as it --

EXT. ADJOINING LOT - CONTINUOUS

FISHTAILS onto gravel. LURCHES across RAILROAD TRACKS. And SLAMS sideways into a DRAINAGE DITCH, coming to a stop halfway under a CHAINLINK FENCE. Suddenly we're in --

INT. ESCALADE - SAME MOMENT

A third speeding car in pursuit of the other two. The tense FACES of Devon's friends KAT, GARRET and TESS, all college students, presented in a QUICK SWEEP of the interior. Garret, behind the wheel:

GARRET
Where are they?!

KAT
There!

A SWIRLING DUST CLOUD up ahead tinged red by the glow of taillights. Garret accelerates down the straightaway. Tess's gaze snaps to something on the periphery.

TESS
Guys...

A FREIGHT TRAIN tunneling out of the darkness. A long black curtain closing in front of them. Garret takes his foot off the gas.

KAT
What are you doing?! GO!!

Garret would swim with sharks for Kat. He punches the gas pedal, racing the train to the crossing.

TESS
Garret--?!

GARRET
I got it!

TESS
'You got it'?! Garret,
it's--

KAT
Faster!

GARRET
Come on come on come
on...

TESS
--It's a TRAIN!!

GARRET
WE'RE DOING THIS!!

Escalade and train converge at high speed. It's going to be close.

TESS
Oh my god...

KAT
GARRET!!!

At the last second Garret realizes they've lost and SLAMS on the brakes --

EXT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

SKIDDING twenty yards, tires painting BLACK STRIPES on the pavement --

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

They come to a JARRING STOP two feet from the speeding train, SCREAMS turning to GASPS of relief as the ROARING tonnage barely misses their front bumper.

GARRET

Holy crap!

EXT. ADJOINING LOT - SAME MOMENT

A MAN, jumping from the Lexus, menacing, an EX-CON, runs over to the Audi and --

INT. AUDI - CONTINUOUS

SMASHES out the driver window with a metal baton. The woman recoils from the imploding glass. Devon lunges across the seat, throwing wild KICKS and PUNCHES. The ex-con CATCHES Devon's foot and PULLS him out the window by his leg --

EXT. AUDI - CONTINUOUS

THROWS him down and GRABS him by the neck. Devon tries to fight but the guy's an animal -- KICKS his head against the side of the car -- once, twice -- denting the door panel --

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS - SAME MOMENT

SCRAMBLING from the Escalade into the train's HOWLING WINDSHEAR, Kat, Garret and Tess witness the brutal beating through the gaps in the cars -- STROBED VIOLENCE. Kat, who knows him best, can barely watch:

KAT

DEVON!!!!

EXT. AUDI - CONTINUOUS

YANKING Devon up from the ground like a rag doll, the ex-con SLAMS him down repeatedly on the hood: WHAM!

EX-CON

You like that?!

(WHAM!)

Hunh?!

(MORE)

EX-CON (CONT'D)

(WHAM!)

That feel good?!

(WHAM!)

Inside the car, the woman lays on the HORN, SCREAMING through the windshield:

WOMAN

Leave him alone!!!

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS - SAME MOMENT

The vicious assault continues, the image flickering like a nightmare. So frantic is Kat she almost steps into the train's path. Garret holds her back, Tess lending a hand as Kat struggles, watching in horror from the HOWLING fringe:

KAT

HE'S KILLING HIM!!!!!!

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. MONT CLAIRE COLLEGE - DAY

DRIFTING in over the rooftops of a lush private campus, past the BELL TOWER and the CHAPEL on the hill, over the quadrangle where an AMERICAN FLAG flutters on its pole, we CLOSE on a dormitory, ivied brick with hedges, CHAMBERLAIN HALL.

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY, CHAMBERLAIN HALL - DAY

GARRET, sophomore, lacrosse captain, model looks, a Senator's son, comes down the dim hall, cell phone RINGING to his ear.

LEGEND: 03 DAYS EARLIER

Devon's VOICEMAIL answers. Garret hangs up and walks on, obviously pissed. Pokes his head into the --

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM, CHAMBERLAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

-- where a cute freshman COED is loading a machine.

GARRET
Hey, y'seen Devon?

COED
Who?

GARRET
Devon my former roommate who bricked my laptop and totaled my car?

COED
Oh. No, sorry.

She's dropped a piece of laundry on the floor. Garret picks it up for her. A black lace bra. He hands it back with a smile, changing the wash setting on the machine:

GARRET
Delicates.

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY, CHAMBERLAIN HALL - DAY

Garret comes down the hall with her phone number.

As he reaches the stairs, he sees someone disappear around the corner at the far end of the hall. He stops and stares.

INT. ADJOINING HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Garret appears around the corner, investigating. It's dark, a dead end. Three unmarked METAL DOORS. No one in sight.

Garret checks the door handles one by one. They're all locked. Weird.

He's standing at the last door puzzling when he HEARS it quietly unlock from the other side. The DOOR OPENS right in front of him, hiding Garret behind it as someone peeks out...

A kid in a hooded sweatshirt exits. Closing the door, he sees Garret. Garret waves howdy. The guy staring back at him is DEVON, sophomore, quiet and complicated.

GARRET

Hey.

DEVON

Hey.

Awkward pause. Garret smiles, knows he's caught Devon red-handed. But at what?

GARRET

Traditionally we'd just skip right to terms, you know, the cost of my silence, but the thing is, I'm dying to know what's in there.

DEVON

(playing dumb)
In here?

Garret nods yep. Right in there.

DEVON

(rattles door handle)
Locked.

GARRET

I bet campus security has a key. Maybe we should call them.

DEVON

Do what you have to do, man.

Beat. Garret dials the number with a sigh like he hates to sink to this level. Devon is impassive as the line RINGS, but as soon as it's answered --

WOMAN'S VOICE

Campus police...

-- Devon SNATCHES the phone from Garret's hand and hangs it up. Garret smiles. Devon tosses him the phone. Takes a KEY from his pocket. Levels a finger at Garret.

DEVON

You tell anyone about this--

GARRET

Yeah, yeah, I know--

DEVON

No, you don't. You know nothing.

There's something unsettling about the way Devon says that, something almost threatening. Whatever Garret imagined was behind the door just got a hell of a lot more interesting.

GARRET

Open it.

Tense stare. Devon slips a key into the door.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

We're WEAVING through stacks of dusty old dorm furniture. A vinyl sofa stands upright against the wall. Devon shoves it aside revealing a SECRET DOOR. Pauses as he keys the lock.

DEVON

You'll never see the world the same way again.

The door swings wide.

INT. SECRET ROOM (LISTENING POST) - CONTINUOUS

A dark windowless room. Garret steps inside, sees something unfathomable. He stares in naked astonishment.

GARRET

Whoa...

THE ROOM IS FILLED WITH TOWERS OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.

Amplifiers. Filters. Waveform monitors. All intricately wired to a central console with headphones. Garret, speechless, walks closer, taking it in. And finally turns, with the room of technology behind him, to face its creator.

GARRET

It might be time for a new medication.

Devon surveys his handiwork as if Garret may have a point. Garret sits in the pilot seat. Eyeing the dormant stacks. Awed smile on his face.

GARRET
What does it do?

So many things. The common denominator:

DEVON
It hears.

GARRET
Hears what?

Devon hesitates. Garret swivels the chair to face him.

GARRET
Hears what?

Fuck it. Devon flips the switch. PFOOM! The stacks light up like a Vegas jackpot. TELECOMMUNICATIONS CROSSCHATTER floods the room. STUDENT VOICES overlapping to infinity. Stolen EMAILS and TEXT MESSAGES blazing across the monitors.

DEVON
Everything.

Garret, center of the envelope, looks at Devon: 'holy shit...'

EXT. MONT CLAIRE COLLEGE - DAY

Frat boys play frisbee on the mall. Coeds reading, sunning themselves. Devon and Garret crossing the lawn.

GARRET
Forget the moral implications for a second, forget those, do you have any idea what would happen if--?

DEVON
Felony wiretapping. 7-year maximum sentence. \$20,000 fine. Invasion of privacy. Class B misdemeanor. 5-year maximum sentence. \$15,000 fine. Banned from computer use during probation. Additional jail time at the judge's discretion. Data piracy, bandwidth theft, ID cloning...
(looks at Garret)
Yeah. We can't get caught.

GARRET
Uh uh. Wrong. There is no 'we' here. There's you and a really bad idea with your fingerprints all over it. Dev, what the hell were you thinking?

DEVON

Imagine you're me for a second--

GARRET

No thanks.

DEVON

--You're sitting there, ten thousand dollar check in your hand, ten grand, free money --

GARRET

Grant money.

DEVON

Grant money -- are you gonna run some timid polling experiment your advisor rammed down your throat or do something a little more creative?

GARRET

You're spying on people.

DEVON

Actually I prefer the term 'radical transparency.'

GARRET

You're out of your freakin' mind. Seriously, Dev. College is too much for some people. Academically, socially, they can't handle it. You're one of them. You cracked, man, really, get some help.

Garret turns and walks away.

DEVON

She likes you.

Garret turns back, stares. Devon nods yep.

GARRET

Who?

Devon says nothing. He comes up the steps into the student union. Garret curses under his breath. Goes after him.

INT. STUDENT UNION - MOMENTS LATER

THRONGS of STUDENTS. Devon walking through. Garret catches up, matching his stride.

DEVON

Amanda Halstead.

GARRET

Shut up.

DEVON

Thinks you're smart. Funny. Killer in lacrosse shorts. Isn't looking for anything serious, but who is. Age difference is a little awkward for her, but she'll work with it. Saw you on the climbing wall last week, Tuesday, 3:24 pm, said to herself, quote: Yummy.

(grabs campus newspaper without stopping)

But that was last week. You're blowing it, she's bored. She gave you a look at some party Thursday night...?

GARRET

Fabian's? That wasn't a look, it--

DEVON

It was a look. You choked.

(stops at a KIOSK to buy a soda)

Know what a social bank account is?

GARRET

Social bank account?

DEVON

(to KIOSK CLERK, paying & leaving)

Thanks.

(continuing to Garret)

'Social bank account' attempts to describe our sphere of influence. Think of it as your perceived value index. We make deposits and withdrawals into this account as we would any other. Actually we don't, they do.

(indicates their peers)

Amanda Halstead's a senior. She's smoking hot and she's only slept with two guys. That's a blue chip stock right there. You're a sophomore. Captain of the lacrosse team -- okay, that helps. Your dad's loaded -- DING! -- Deposit. But you're also superficial and you get around -- BAAMP! -- Withdrawal. See how it works?

(MORE)

DEVON (CONT'D)

Bottom line: you don't have her market value. Last week you were up, you were young, you were hot, now you're looking like a bad investment. She rolled the dice and she got burned. Frankly, she's embarrassed.

GARRET

She's embarr--?

DEVON

For you. Embarrassed for you.

Devon cuts out a SIDE EXIT, Garret following at his heels.

EXT. STUDENT UNION - CONTINUOUS

As they come down the outside steps:

GARRET

You're full of crap. Amanda Halstead--

DEVON

It's all on tape. Timecoded and catalogued.

Garret is speechless. The BELL TOWER TOLLS. Devon sips his soda, quietly surveying campus, its de facto king.

DEVON

I know things about this school that would blow your mind. Student-teacher hook-ups. Player-coach hook-ups. Midnight rendezvous in chem lab. Menage a trios in the teachers' lounge. Alumni swingers clubs. Black leather barbecues. Sorority house lesbian sex.

GARRET

(in awe)
Sorority house les--

DEVON

Okay, I'm kidding about that one, but the rest is true. I know things that could end careers, end marriages, maybe even end lives. Things I honestly wish I didn't. About everyone. Even you.

GARRET

What are you talking about?

Devon just shrugs, walking away.

DEVON

So. Is it me? Or is it we?

INT. DEVON'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Devon enters. Drops his bag on the floor. End of the day. Takes another soda from the mini-fridge. Pops the top, swigs.

It's a typical dorm room but conspicuously absent personal touches, the room of someone who doesn't plan on being around too long.

Devon drops his cell phone into the charger and taps his answering machine. A MESSAGE plays from his mother who is CRYING and might be drunk:

DEVON'S MOTHER

Hi Dev, it's me, um... I, um... Sorry to call like this, I... I just... I need to tell you... what your father said today... he's such a... He told me-- he said he's selling the maple cabinet... The one in the hallway-- it's not even his, it's not his to sell, we bought it togeth--

Cut off as Devon hits ERASE. He drinks his soda. Expressionless. Staring out at campus.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. HILLTOP COMMONS - DUSK

Coming through the a la carte line, Devon meets up with KAT. Fun-loving, free-spirited, the prettiest, coolest girl on campus. Beneath their casual repartee is a deep connection we will better understand as we learn their history.

KAT
Hey Dev, waddup?

DEVON
Hey Kat.

KAT
(hugs him)
How was break?

DEVON
Joyous. What's going on?

KAT
Nada. Hey, so I need some advice...
(opens course catalogue)
Sociology 101 with Professor Volkel
or Poly-Sci 201 with Professor Gillis?

DEVON
Poly-Sci 205 with Professor Mazzie.
Same credit hours minus the term
paper.

KAT
Cool. Wait. 205 has a prereq.

DEVON
Which he'll waive if you demonstrate
a 'passion for the subject'.

KAT
Ew.

DEVON
I know.

KAT
How do I do that?

Devon unbuttons Kat's shirt one button: cleavage.

DEVON
Lonely lonely man.

KAT
I thought he was married?

DEVON
Exactly.

Kat nods ah, crosses her arms to maximize the effect.

KAT
I'm passionate about political
science.

She flicks her tongue like a snake to seal the deal. They
both crack up.

DEVON
Dial back the tongue and we're good.

LATER, as they sit eating. Kat reads his silence.

KAT
You okay? You seem a little...

DEVON
I'm great. Really.

It's a convincing denial. But Kat knows him too well.

KAT
I'm just going to keep bugging you
until you tell me so you might as
well tell me now.

Devon pauses, confesses.

DEVON
I think I screwed up.

KAT
Big?
(he nods)
Show me.

DEVON
I can't, the whole thing could just--

He makes an explosion sound. Mushroom cloud.

KAT
Oh, you're protecting me?

DEVON
I'm protecting both of us.

ON KAT, wondering what the hell he's hiding...

INT. BATHROOM, CHAMBERLAIN HALL - NIGHT

Devon, in a deliberately campy Star Wars pajama robe, brushes his teeth in the common-area bathroom. A GUY gargling beside him spits and then says:

GUY
(Darth Vader voice)
Luke, I am your father.

DEVON
(deadpan)
That's funny, I've never heard that before.

GUY
(Yoda voice)
Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering it does.

DEVON
Awesome, really, so good.

The guy slugs Devon in the arm, heads for the exit.

DEVON
By the way, don't worry, it's a simple procedure.

GUY
(turns, smile fading)
What...?

DEVON
You know... The 'lazy cousin'?
(gestures below waist)
The 'missing twin'?

GUY
(aghast)
How do you--?

DEVON
I know everything, Jake. Yeah, sort of your worst case scenario.

The guy exits, freaked out.

Alone, Devon shakes a pill from a prescription med bottle. Zolof. Downs it with a handful of water. Looks at himself in the mirror. And draws X's across his eyes in the condensation with his finger.

INT. HALLWAY, CHAMBERLAIN HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Devon, robed, wearing flip flops, comes down the hallway to his room. Garret is leaning against the door.

GARRET

We.

INT. LISTENING POST - NIGHT

Devon, in the pilot seat, tape cued, finger on the button, pauses before he presses play. A final warning:

DEVON

It's a drug. Once you start, you can't stop.

GARRET

Play it.

Devon hits play and we hear a PRIVATE CELL PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO COLLEGE GIRLS:

RANDOM GIRL

Did you go to Fabian's?

AMANDA HALSTEAD

Yeah, for a little a bit. Garret was there.

RANDOM GIRL

He's so climbable.

AMANDA HALSTEAD

Is he? I keep giving him looks and he just ignores me.

RANDOM GIRL

He's a jock, maybe you're being too subtle.

AMANDA HALSTEAD

I'm like three feet away, staring at him, how is that subtle?

RANDOM GIRL

Maybe he's gay.

AMANDA HALSTEAD

Oh my god, I can totally see that--

GARRET

*(listens, mortified)
What?*

AMANDA HALSTEAD

--One of those really hot guys who come out after college.

RANDOM GIRL

(masculine voice)

'You can sleep with me, but don't touch my face...'

AMANDA HALSTEAD

Wait, is that you or him?

RANDOM GIRL

(laughs)

Him! Did you just call me husky?!

AMANDA HALSTEAD

I'm just kidding...

RANDOM GIRL

Such a bitch. Bye, I'm hanging up now.

(in the same sentence)

By the way, according to Jenny Sands: definitely - not - gay.

GARRET

(under his breath)

Soooo not gay.

AMANDA HALSTEAD

He went out with Jenny Sands?

RANDOM GIRL

I wouldn't exactly call it 'going out.' Remember that rain delay at Slamfest--?

AMANDA HALSTEAD

Super-gross-tent-village-sex, got it, thanks. Is that all anybody does now is hook up? I mean, where can it go after that? If night one is crazy hot sex in a phone booth, what's night two?

RANDOM GIRL

Crazy hot sex in a limo?

AMANDA HALSTEAD

Right, but what if you actually like him? God, I just want to be asked out on a normal date, I want that awkward first kiss, I want flowers. Am I a freak?

RANDOM GIRL

Not a freak, just a little old fashioned maybe.

AMANDA HALSTEAD

Fine, whatever. I'd do anything for a guy like that--

Devon stops the tape, master of ceremony.

DEVON

More?

Garret nods. In shock. The listening post's full potential sinking in. Last traces of guilt fading, he slides into the co-pilot seat.

GARRET

She say anything else?

Devon nods oh yes, starts cueing another tape.

DEVON

People are talking. All the time.
What are they saying? Don't you
wanna know? We're not hurting
anybody, we're just...
(as he presses PLAY)
... Listening.

INT. SCHOOL PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Devon sits in silence opposite school psychiatrist, DR. NEIL JAFFEY. Forties, laid back, who tries to break the ice with:

DR. JAFFEY

It can just be a conversation.

DEVON

What do you want me to say?

Dr Jaffey studies him for a moment, seeing past the hooded sweatshirt and torn jeans.

DR. JAFFEY

How smart are you, Devon? I think
you're smart. I think you're very
smart.

Devon says nothing. Jaffey's onto him.

DR. JAFFEY

It's all just a little too easy for
you, isn't it?

(MORE)

DR. JAFFEY (CONT'D)

Cruised through high school barely breaking a sweat -- 4.0, destroyed the SAT. Get to college, same deal. A's across the board. Academic scholarship. And half your teachers have never even seen you in class. You don't engage because you don't have to. But there's one subject you can't figure out and that's --

DEVON

(rolls eyes)
Devon Polcheck.

DR. JAFFEY

That's right.

DEVON

You know what'd be a primo trust builder? If you didn't talk to me like some LD kid who can't see where you're going with this crap.

DR. JAFFEY

Fine, let me be blunt. This school has made an investment in you, Devon. With it comes expectations. You're not meeting them.

DEVON

What are you talking about? I'm the best student you've ever had.

DR. JAFFEY

You could be; you're phoning it in. You need to become part of this community, you need to start connecting--

DEVON

Who are you people? You float a couple dollars my way you think you can start mandating my personal life?

DR. JAFFEY

Believe it or not, we're trying to help.

(then)

Tell me about Kat Vanderlee.

DEVON

What about her?

DR. JAFFEY

I noticed that you went to the same high school.

DEVON

Don't go there.

Jaffey has clearly struck a nerve. Devon is ready to walk.

DR. JAFFEY

Devon, really, the danger for you is what happens if you don't start letting people in.

INT. DEVON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Middle of the night, Devon lies on his bed, staring at the ceiling as he LISTENS to people go by on the sidewalk under his window. Carefree conversation. LAUGHTER. Party MUSIC PULSING somewhere in the night.

A world he lives in but isn't a part of.

INT. CHAMBERLAIN HALL - DAY

Devon knocks on a door. Kat answers.

DEVON

Okay. Come on.

INT. RON'S ELECTRONICS SHOP - DAY

Shelves of secondhand junk recede into shadow. A hole-in-the-wall surplus store for audiophiles and electronics geeks. A figure comes out of the back room into the light, the owner, RON, dropping a FEEDHORN ANTENNA on the counter in front of Kat and Devon. Devon grabs it and turns to go --

DEVON

Put it on my tab.

Ron catches him by the antenna cord, reels him back in.

RON

Hundred bucks.

Devon drops five crumpled twenties on the counter and then stuffs the feedhorn into his backpack.

RON

What are you doing with all this stuff anyway?

DEVON

Don't badger the clientele, Ron.

At the exit, Devon stops and takes something from a shelf.
A TASER GUN.

DEVON
How many volts does it take to stop
a human heart?

RON
You tell me.

KAT
Fifty.

RON
Underwater?

KAT
Fifteen.

RON
Spandex bodysuit?

DEVON
One. Bullet.

EXT. STREET NEAR CAMPUS - SUNDOWN

Kat and Devon ride their bikes down a quiet college-town street. Feedhorn antenna sticking out of his backpack.

EXT. FIELD - DUSK

Wading through a field at dusk, tall grass SWISHING past us. Kat and Devon's POV. They reach a clearing and look up at something, quietly studying it.

A 100-FOOT DISH ANTENNA towers above the treeline. Rusty. Abandoned. Casualty of budget cuts ten years before.

EXT. DISH ANTENNA - MOMENTS LATER

Devon and Kat, in its pool of shadow, trade their sneakers for climbing shoes. Together, they scale the rusty latticework.

DEVON
Be careful.

Just then Devon slips. Kat catches his hand.

KAT
You were saying?

Devon eyes the fall, phew. Higher, balancing heel-to-toe, Devon takes teetering steps out the support arm to the dish's focal point. An old feedhorn antenna mounted there.

DEVON

Go.

Kat swings the new one out to him on a rope. Devon catches it. Turns screws. Twists wires. Makes the swap. Shaking a can of spray paint, he begins painting it, rust-red, to camouflage the upgrade.

KAT

Does it actually work?

Devon meets her gaze with a smile. From a distance we see the old dish silhouetted against the dimming sky with two small figures at the center like insects in a spider's web.

INT. LISTENING POST - DAY

Kat takes in the madman's den of illicit electronics. She is calm. It's not in her nature to panic. She turns to Devon, half laughing.

KAT

Oh my god...

DEVON

You're taking this really well.

KAT

What-- what is this thing exactly?

DEVON

A listening post. The NSA has them all over the country. Every phone call you make, every email you send goes through at least one of them. If you live at Mont Claire College, now it goes through two...

KAT

Okay. But. You're not the NSA.

DEVON

Yeah, well...
(sits in pilot seat)
...I built one.

Flips the switch. PFOOOM! Kat is enveloped in the UNIVERSE OF SOUND. Amazed. After a moment, her face darkens.

KAT

Who else knows about this?

DEVON
 Just you. And Garret.
 (off her reaction)
 Don't worry. He won't tell anyone.

KAT
 Garret Carmichael? Are you kidding?
 The guy's a sieve. He never stops
 talking.

Quiet for a moment, Devon suddenly heads for the door, Kat right behind him.

INT. CORRIDOR, CHAMBERLAIN HALL - DAY

Kat and Devon hurry down the hall, looking for Garret. Kat knocks on his door. No answer. They move on.

DEVON
 (to a RANDOM GUY)
 Seen Garret?
 (to another in b.g.)
 Hey, Curtis, you seen Garret?

Both guys shrug nope. Kat and Devon turn the corner, passing a group of GIRLS gossiping in the hall.

KAT
 Anybody seen Garret Carmichael?

RANDOM GIRL
 Umm, I think I saw him in the cluster.

Devon and Kat head for the stairs.

INT. COMPUTER CLUSTER, CHAMBERLAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Devon and Kat burst in, interrupting a suspicious conversation between Garret and the girl working the help desk -- Asian, glasses, Garret's tutor -- a pretty young techie named TESS.

GARRET	TESS
Hey...	Hey guys.

Garret and Tess both look guilty. Devon glares, knowing.

DEVON
 You told her.

GARRET
 Dev, I...

DEVON

(angry)
No, it's cool. Why do you care,
right? I'm the one going to jail if
we get caught. *'Hey everybody, Devon
built a listening post in the
basement, woohooo!'*

GARRET

Dev, I didn't tell her, you just
did.

Hold on Devon. Oh shit. He and Kat look to Tess who smiles
quietly back at them, brow arched with intrigue.

TESS

You should probably shut that.

The door. Devon closes it. Tess drums her fingers on the
table, enjoying her moment of power.

TESS

I heard 'listen' and I heard 'post'
and I do believe I heard 'basement.'

INT. LISTENING POST - DAY

Tess walks among the stacks, scrutinizing Devon's creation
from a technical standpoint.

TESS

Radiowave receivers. Digital amps.
Microprocessor array: *crunch, crunch,
crunch.* And all the data you collect,
you're storing...
(a bank of hard drives)
Hundred terabytes?

DEVON

Petabyte.

TESS

(laughs)
That's just wrong. What are you
tethering to?

DEVON

(deliberately vague)
Off site.

TESS

Yeah, no kidding, the room's
concrete...
(suddenly realizes)
The dish?!

Devon shrugs as if it's self-evident. Tess winces with a kind of admiration, sits at the console. A million disembodied VOICES crackle over the speakers. Tess's face darkens a little as she listens.

DEVON

I know, I know, I'm 'spying on people', oh, the moral conundrum...

TESS

I don't care about that, it's just -- there aren't this many people on campus.

KAT

She's right.

Kat was thinking the very same thing. Devon steps closer. There's a breadth to the signal that wasn't there before. The voices of students mixed with those of the outside world.

DEVON

We upgraded the antenna today, it must be picking up stuff off-campus.

Devon sweeps the channels. The VOICES seem infinite. CB radios. Air traffic controllers. Raw CHATTER on a POLICE FREQUENCY, a high-speed pursuit:

POLICE FREQUENCY

*SUSPECT TURNING LEFT ON BELMONT --
DISPATCH, THIS IS 324, REQUESTING
BACK-UP...*

DISPATCH

ROGER 324, BACKUP ON ITS WAY.

GARRET

The hell did you tap into?

Devon keeps turning. Hits the cell phone frequencies. The area codes of INTERCEPTED CALLS scrolling in frenetic columns on a monitor.

TESS

619 is San Diego. 415 is Frisco.
206 -- where's 206?

GARRET

Seattle...

(stunned, realizing)

Dev, you've got the whole West Coast here.

Devon smiles but it's smile that hides shock and a hint of fear. Kat hears something in the CASCADING FLOW OF VOICES.

KAT

What was that? Go back. Two guys...
 (as Devon turns dial)
 The other way... Bit more... There!

TWO MALE VOICES arguing amid the chaos. Devon tweaks the knobs, isolates the signal. Filters. Enhances. Hits record.

MAN #1

HOW GODDAMN DIFFICULT IS THIS?!

MAN #2

YOU WANT TO KNOW?! 'CAUSE I'LL TELL
 YA-- !

MAN #1

PUSHING BACK THE DATE EVERY GODDAMN
 WEEK!

MAN #2

--DO IT YOURSELF IT'S SO EASY! DO
 IT YOURSELF, HOW 'BOUT THAT?! YEAH,
 NOW HE SHUTS HIS MOUTH!

MAN #1

TWENTY GRAND FOR WHAT?! A HEADACHE!

MAN #2

LISTEN TO ME!

MAN #1

--EVERY GODDAMN EXCUSE IN THE BOOK!

MAN #2

SHUT UP AND LISTEN! SOME THINGS YOU
 CAN UNDO, THIS, THIS YOU CAN'T UNDO,
 OKAY, MOTHER OF YOUR KIDS? THIS IS
 REAL AND THERE'S GONNA BE
 REPERCUSSIONS, SO I NEED TO KNOW
 YOU'RE A HUNDRED PERCENT BEFORE--

MAN #1

I'M TWO HUNDRED PERCENT! I'M FOUR
 HUNDRED! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE
 TO SAY IT?! I WANT HER GONE! I
WANT HER DEAD! I WANT YOU TO KILL
HER!

MAN #2

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, CALM DOWN,
 THAT'S ALL I NEEDED TO HEAR. I'LL
 TAKE CARE OF IT.

MAN #1

WHEN?!

MAN #2

FRIDAY. DON'T CALL THIS NUMBER AGAIN.

MAN #1

YOU CALLED ME, MAN!

CLICK. Devon scribbles down the PHONE NUMBER before it disappears. The others trade looks of disbelief.

GARRET

Was that...?

Devon turns in his chair, nods, haunted.

DEVON

Guy killing his wife.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP - DAY

24-hour student hangout. Bohemian dude making hummus wraps behind the counter. The Grateful Dead's 'Truckin' plays on a jukebox. Devon, Kat, Garret and Tess sit in a private booth, weighing their predicament.

DEVON

We have two options. Do nothing or do something. And the first one isn't really an option.

GARRET

Option three. Call the police.

KAT

'Hi, we just happened to be monitoring private telephone calls from the basement of our dorm'?

GARRET

An anonymous tip.

DEVON

Oh please. Nothing's anonymous anymore.

TESS

What's the number?

Devon slides the slip of paper across the table. Tess opens her laptop and does a REVERSE DIRECTORY SEARCH. The result:

NO ENTRIES FOUND.

TESS

Unlisted.

Devon picks up the paper, eyeing the number for a moment.

DEVON

What's 916?

KAT

Sacramento.

Devon thinks for a moment. Gets up and walks out. The others left to wonder.

GARRET

Dev?

INT. STUDENT UNION - MOMENTS LATER

Kat, Garret and Tess exit, looking for Devon. There he is across the foyer at the PHARMACY/KIOSK, buying something.

EXT. STUDENT UNION - MOMENTS LATER

Exiting into light rain, Devon tears open a DISPOSABLE CELL PHONE, his purchase, powering it on as the others catch up.

KAT

(as Devon dials the
number on the paper)

What are you doing?

DEVON

Calling.

Devon brings the phone to his ear.

FIRST RING - He goes down the steps, away from the group of students smoking outside the door.

SECOND RING - Turns into a vacant outdoor eating area.

THIRD RING - Sits down under a table umbrella, the rain pattering softly on the canvas.

FOURTH RING:

WOMAN'S VOICE

Doctor's exchange.

Devon is thrown for a second.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Hello? Doctor's exchange.

DEVON

I'm sorry, what number have I reached?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Exchange for doctors Webber, Deroche,
and McCanley.

DEVON

What's the practice?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Sierra Neurology. Did you want to
leave a message?

DEVON

No, thank you.

Hangs up. Tosses the phone in the trash. Lifts his gaze to Kat and the others who have come to stand under the umbrella.

DEVON

He's a doctor.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

A CURSOR types 'Sierra Neurology Sacramento' into GOOGLE SEARCH. Clicks the search button. Clicks the link. A website for SIERRA VALLEY NEUROLOGICAL ASSOCIATES opens. Pulling back, we see Devon at a computer in the library cluster. Kat, Tess and Garret looking on. Devon clicks STAFF which opens a page with PHOTOS OF THREE DOCTORS.

TESS

Scratch McCanley.

A woman. The other two are men. DR. GARY WEBBER and DR. CHARLES DEROCHE. Forties. Respectable. Consummate professionals in their white coats. Devon pulls his chair back for some perspective. Kat and the others looking on.

DEVON

Well, which one of these fine upstanding citizens just hired a hitman?

And as they scrutinize the FACES...

CUT TO:

NETDETECTIVE.COM. Devon types WEBBER, GARY M.D., SACRAMENTO, CA into the search field. Hits enter and gets a detailed list of public records data.

DEVON

Dr. Gary Webber. Last known address:
991 Primrose Way. Spouse: Alison
Webber, age 41. Children: Eric and
Kimberly Webber, age 7 and 9.

Kat, on the computer beside him, searches NETDETECTIVE for DEROCHE, CHARLES, M.D.

KAT

Dr. Charles Deroche. Last known
address: 812 Sandburg Drive. Spouse:
Pamela Deroche, age 39. Children:
Ryan, age 14, and Casey, age 10.

Tess, meanwhile, googles ALISON WEBBER SACRAMENTO on her laptop and, in a new browser tab, googles PAMELA DEROCHE SACRAMENTO, toggling between the SEARCH RESULTS.

TESS

A hundred Alison Webbers and not one
 Pamela Deroche. Hm. This could
 take a while.

DEVON

We don't have a while. Where are
 you going?

GARRET

(putting on his coat)
 I have a game.

Devon, Kat and Tess trade looks.

GARRET

What?

KAT

A game?

GARRET

A game, yeah, I'm the captain.
 (off their looks)
 What? What am I supposed to do?

TESS

Blow it off.

GARRET

And tell them what?

KAT

You could say you pulled your groin,
 you wouldn't actually be lying.

GARRET

(zipping his coat)
 You know what? This isn't my problem.

DEVON

Wow. Careful, man, your soul is
 showing.

GARRET

Go to hell.

KAT

Garret, they're going to kill her.

GARRET

Yeah, and I said we should call the
 police.

DEVON

Then I guess your conscience is clear,
isn't it?

GARRET

Listening to a phone call doesn't
make me responsible.

TESS

Actually, it kinda does.

GARRET

No, it doesn't. We weren't even
supposed to hear it.

DEVON

But we did!

Garret deliberates for a moment.

GARRET

I gotta go.

He walks. Kat, Devon and Tess watch him go. Then, redoubling
their efforts:

DEVON

You guys take Webber, I'll take
Deroche. We need to find everything
we can.

INT. DEVON'S DORM ROOM - LATER

Devon, Kat and Tess. He's sitting on his bed. Kat lying on
the floor. Tess sitting at the desk. All working on laptops.

KAT

Thought of something. Why don't we
leave a message?

DEVON

For which one?

KAT

Either. We recognize the voice, we
know it's him, we don't, we know
it's the other guy.

DEVON

Do it.

Kat jumps up, opening a second disposable cell phone.

KAT

Where'd Deroche go to school?

Devon crosses to the wall on which they've posted photos and records -- the beginning of an INTELLIGENCE COLLAGE.

DEVON
Carnegie Mellon undergrad, Duke
Medical, residency at Johns Hopkins.

Kat and Tess join him there. And as Kat's finger dials the number, we're hearing it RING over --

EXT. LACROSSE FIELD - DAY

Garret, helmeted, in the heat of battle, gets a pass and dodges two defenders. Over this:

WOMAN'S VOICE
Doctor's exchange.

KAT (O.S.)
Hi, I'd like to leave a message for
Dr Deroche. This is Sasha from the
Duke alumni magazine. We'd like to
interview him for an upcoming article
on successful grads...

Pulling back, we see Kat, Devon and Tess on the sideline watching the game, Kat on her cell phone.

KAT
Wonderful. He can reach me at 860-
512-7846. Thanks.

She hangs up. Trades looks with Devon.

DEVON
What if he doesn't call back?

KAT
He will.

DEVON
Who says?

KAT
Narcissism.

On field, Garret takes a hard tackle and, in mid-air like Bobby Orr, fires a shot at the goal and SCORES! The sidelines go nuts. Garret tumbles up onto his feet, heroic, big smile, gorgeous kid, taking a victory lap in his grass-stained uniform. The girls cannot help but stare.

And for just a second we see Devon's envy.

EXT. LACROSSE FIELD - LATER

Devon, Kat and Tess walking with Garret after the game.

GARRET

Where are we?

DEVON

Undefeated, capt'n. Booyah.

TESS

(off Garret's look)

Still looking. We left a message.

GARRET

Let's find her.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Panorama of the buildings along the mall, students on the sidewalks, the American flag swaying in a breeze.

DEVON (V.O.)

An accountant named Pamela Deroche comes up in the directory of a Hayman & Dumphries Financial Group in Sacramento. Just sent you guys a jpeg...

Devon is seen in CLOSE-UP against a blue sky. Sitting outdoors somewhere at a high vantage point.

DEVON

...She left the company two years ago. I tried to find out where she went. Nobody would talk to me.

INTERCUT KAT, at her desk in her dorm room, various web searches ongoing, as the EMPLOYEE PHOTO of PAMELA DEROCHE comes up on her laptop. Talking over Skype Mobile:

TESS (V.O.)

...Where are we with Alison Webber?

KAT

Narrowed it down to three: dental hygienist, high school guidance counselor, commercial realtor...

INTERCUT GARRET, exiting class, walking down a busy corridor wearing a bluetooth headset.

KAT (V.O.)
 ... Right age, right area code,
 doesn't mean they're the right Allison
 Webber. Realtor's the only picture
 I could find.

The PHOTO comes up on Garret's iPhone.

GARRET
 I got a Karen Webber listed as a
 spouse on a DMV accident report in
 2001--
 (to random guy he
 passes)
 What's going on, man.
 (continuing)
 --Webber was driving, she was the
 passenger.

TESS (V.O.)
He's divorced.

DEVON (V.O.)
 Is he offing his new wife or his ex?

GARRET
 She's already dead. Obit's online.
 Died unexpectedly. Survived by her
 husband and two children...

The OBITUARY comes up on Devon's computer screen as an email
 attachment. KAREN WEBBER. Mother of two. Sadly missed.

GARRET (V.O.)
 ...I don't know if it was the accident
 or what. Or if the accident was
 even an accident.

KAT (V.O.)
 God, that's creepy.

WIDESHOT reveals where Devon is -- sitting on a crossbar of
 the DISH ANTENNA, fifty feet up, with a photo of Webber's
 dead wife on his laptop.

DEVON
 We're getting ahead of ourselves.
 Webber's wife died and he remarried,
 that's all we know.
 (checks watch)
 It's Friday in six hours. We're
 running out of time.

INT. LISTENING POST - NIGHT

The electric green WAVEFORM OF A HUMAN VOICE blooms angrily on the waveform monitor:

MAN #1
 HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO SAY IT?!
I WANT HER GONE! I WANT HER DEAD!
I WANT YOU TO KILL HER!

It REWINDS and plays again as we PAN ACROSS PHOTOS of DRS. WEBBER AND DEROCHE taped to the wall with PHOTOS of PAMELA DEROCHE and one of ALISON WEBBER (drawn with a question mark) along with snippets of personal information gathered online -- a completed INTELLIGENCE COLLAGE, their first but not their last. Pulling back, we find the foursome studying the doctors' photos, trying to match voices to faces:

MAN #1
...I WANT HER GONE! I WANT HER DEAD!
I WANT YOU TO KILL HER!

Devon stops the tape. The verdict:

GARRET
 Could be either one.

KAT
 Well, can we all agree whichever one it is he's not kidding?

All agree. Tess, at the collage, has a sudden epiphany.

TESS
 Wait wait wait...

DEVON
 What?

Tess steps to the console and REWINDS the tape, hits PLAY:

MAN #2
SHUT UP AND LISTEN! SOME THINGS YOU
CAN UNDO, THIS, THIS YOU CAN'T UNDO,
OKAY, MOTHER OF YOUR KIDS? THIS IS
REAL AND THERE'S GONNA BE--

STOPS the tape. Holds up Karen Webber's obituary.

TESS
 Webber's first wife is dead. Allison Webber isn't the mother of his kids. Which means...

DEVON

It's Deroche.

TESS

Has to be.

Eureka. Devon spins to the keyboard, punches up the info.

GOOGLE-EARTH ZOOMS IN on the state of California, the city of Sacramento, a riverside neighborhood, a residential street, a specific HOUSE. 812 Sandburg Drive. Roof. Chimney. Two cars in the driveway. The miracle of technology.

DEVON (O.S.)

That's their house.

Eerie. The home of a killer and his future victim. Devon tears opens a new DISPOSABLE CELL PHONE.

DEVON

What's the number?

KAT

916-244-7865.

DEVON

Here we go.

Dials the number. We hear it RINGING over the image of their house on the computer. And a WOMAN answers:

MRS DEROCHE (V.O.)

Hello?

Devon holds an electronic gadget over the phone's mouthpiece, disguising his voice:

DEVON

(electronic baritone)

Mrs. Deroche?

MRS DEROCHE (V.O.)

Yes?

Devon misses a beat, not sure what to say.

DEVON

(electronic baritone)

Are you alone?

CLICK. DIAL TONE.

GARRET

'Are you alone?' Really?

Devon redials. Kat takes the voice disguiser from him.

KAT
Just talk to her.

Line RINGS. Is answered:

MRS DEROCHE (V.O.)
Hello?

DEVON
Don't hang up. Please. This isn't
a prank. I need to talk to you.

MRS DEROCHE (V.O.)
Who is this?

DEVON
You don't know us but we're friends.
(then)
What I'm going to say is probably
going to be hard for you to believe,
but it's the absolute truth. Ma'am,
your husband. He hired someone to
kill you.

There's a silence.

DEVON
Mrs Deroche...?

MRS DEROCHE (V.O.)
Why are you doing this?! You think
this is funny?! Do you?! Calling
and harassing people?!

DEVON
You have to listen, I'm not--

MRS DEROCHE (V.O.)
GO TO HELL!

CLICK. DIAL TONE.

KAT
Let me try.

Devon gives Kat the phone. She dials. BUSY SIGNAL.

KAT
Off the hook.

Kat hangs up. Garret brings the voice disguiser to his mouth:

GARRET
 (electronic baritone)
 Hellooooo Baaaaaby.

EXT. CAMPUS CHAPEL - NIGHT

Devon, Kat and company sit on the steps of the campus chapel.

KAT
 We can try again in the morning.

GARRET
 (electronic baritone)
 Anybody want to get a slice at
 Moretti's?

Devon grabs the voice disguiser from Garret, throws it in
 the bushes. And after a pause:

DEVON
We have to go.

GARRET
 (astonished pause)
 Where? To Sacramento?
 (to Kat and Tess)
 He's kidding, right?
 (to Devon)
 You're kidding, right?

Devon returns a flat stare.

GARRET
 Nothing's gonna happen till tomorrow.

KAT
 It is tomorrow.

Kat flashes her cell phone -- 12:03 am.

GARRET
 Okay, just-- just walk me through
 this-- you're gonna go to Sacramento,
 ring this lady's doorbell and tell
 her her husband put a hit on her?

DEVON
 Something like that.

GARRET
 What if he answers?

DEVON
 Awkward.

GARRET

Try suicidal. This guy's a sociopath. How are we-- Look, all we did was listen to a phone call. That's it. One call. We don't know these people.

TESS

We don't have to know her to help.

GARRET

I'm not going to Sacramento.

DEVON

Only your conscience takes roadtrips, huh, Gare?

GARRET

(laughs)

My conscience? From a guy who spent ten grand to steal people's email?

(stands up, separating)

You guys are nuts. I'm not going.

KAT

Yeah, we got that the first time.

DEVON

I don't know if we can help her or not, but if we don't try, this is definitely gonna happen. And I definitely can't live with that.

KAT

I'm in.

TESS

I'm in.

They stand to go. Devon puts something in Garret's hand as they set off without him.

DEVON

Hang onto this for me, will ya?

Devon and the girls jog off into the night. Garret, alone by the chapel, looks at what's in his hand. A PHOTO of MRS. DEROCHE. He gives it a long hard stare. Crumples it in his fist and goes after them.

GARRET

You guys suck.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A curve of guardrail as a BLACK ESCALADE speeds past.

INT. GARRET'S ESCALADE - NIGHT

Garret driving. Kat, shotgun, keys the address into the navigation system. Devon and Tess in the back.

KAT
Hundred and twenty miles.

DEVON
I'll pay for the ticket.

GARRET
You guys heard that.

Garret floors it. VROOM!

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Escalade doing a hundred, weaving around slower cars.

INT. ESCALADE - NIGHT

Halfway to Sacramento, Tess remembers something.

TESS
Damn.
(off their looks)
Paper tomorrow. Whatever. Screw
it.

DEVON
What subject?

TESS
Nietzsche.

DEVON
What about him?

TESS
Just... Nietzsche.

Devon grabs Tess's laptop and starts typing. Tess looks on, dumbfounded, reading aloud as Devon writes:

TESS
One of the most celebrated and
provocative thinkers of the 19th
(MORE)

TESS (CONT'D)

Century, Frederick Nietzsche's genius lay not in his creation of a unifying philosophy of his own, but in his surgical, often scathing dissection of the philosophies of others...

GARRET

(shakes his head)
Kid is sick.

Kat turns around in her seat to watch.

KAT

Go, baby, go.

Devon's fingers dance across the keys in the back seat of the speeding Escalade.

EXT. SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

The skyline shimmers.

EXT. HIGHWAY EXIT - NIGHT

The Escalade races down a highway off-ramp.

EXT. ESCALADE - NIGHT

Reflections of the city play across the glossy black Escalade as it cruises down a series of CITY STREETS.

INT. ESCALADE - NIGHT

Driving through a quiet residential neighborhood. On the navigation system, the LOCATOR ARROW approaches its target. They slow to a crawl. Scanning the houses.

NAV SYSTEM

Your destination is on the left.
You have reached your destination.

There it is...

THE DEROCHE HOUSE. 812 Sandburg Drive. All the lights are off. A Mercedes SUV and an Audi A4 in the driveway. Garret stops out in front.

DEVON

Not here.

Garret reverses into the shadows, parking along the curb. Turns off the engine. They eye the house. Four college kids on their first stakeout.

GARRET

Now what?

DEVON

Which car's his?

Tess flips through a folder: the intelligence collage now an INTELLIGENCE DOSSIER. Finds a DMV receipt.

TESS

The Mercedes.

Devon opens his door, gets out.

KAT

What are you doing?

Devon closes the door without reply. They watch him go up the street.

EXT. DEROCHE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Devon comes up the driveway to the Mercedes. Squats at the rear tire. Uncaps the valve stem and deflates the tire until it's sitting on the rim. Heads back to the Escalade.

INT. ESCALADE - NIGHT

Gets back in. Garret, Kat and Tess puzzled.

KAT

What'd you do?

DEVON

Let the air out of his tire.

GARRET

Why?

DEVON

(shrugs)

'Cause he's a dick.

EXT. DEROCHE HOUSE - MORNING

A PAPERBOY rides past on a bike. Tosses the Daily on the front walk. Pedals past the Escalade.

INT. ESCALADE - MORNING

Devon watches him go by. The others have nodded off. Devon's line of sight on the paperboy finds the Escalade's side mirror in which he sees Kat in the passenger seat. He watches her sleep for a moment. And if we haven't sensed it already it's clear his feelings for her go well beyond friendship.

As if sensing his gaze, she stirs, stretching:

KAT
What time is it?

DEVON
(looking back at house)
Get down.

The front door of the house just opened. They both duck, peering out over the dash as DR CHARLES DEROCHE comes down the steps to get the paper.

KAT
Kinda weird to see him, isn't it?

Devon nods yeah. PAMELA DEROCHE exits behind him, dressed for work. Deroche hands her the paper. Kisses her goodbye. She gets in her Audi. Devon nudges Tess, Kate nudges Garret.

DEVON
We're moving.

Garret groggily starts the engine, pulls out after the Audi.

GARRET
Best night of sleep ever.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

The Escalade follows the Audi down the highway -- Mrs Deroche's morning commute.

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Tailing their target at rush hour. Garret working a kink out of his neck as he drives.

TESS
I don't get it. Why not just divorce?

DEVON
Too messy.

TESS
Murder isn't?

KAT
Not if you pay someone to do it for you.

An old piece-of-shit TAURUS angles into their lane, cutting them off, putting itself between the Audi and Escalade.

TESS
That was nice.

KAT
(to Garret)
You're gonna take that? From a used
Taurus?

Garret steps on the gas. Passes. Cuts into the lane in front of the Taurus, tailing the Audi again. Devon and the girls watch the Taurus out the back window.

TESS
Is he tailing her or is he just a
California driver?

GARRET
(to Taurus)
Your move, pal.

DEVON
Here he comes.

The Taurus swerves out and accelerates, trying to pass again. Garret denies it, accelerating to match its speed. The DRIVER lays on the horn and flips him off. Garret smiles and waves hi. The Taurus brakes hard, veers back in behind them.

GARRET
(eyeing rear view)
It's a jungle, baby.

KAT
She's getting off!

The Audi, changing lanes, takes the next exit.

GARRET
Hold on...

Garret turns hard, SWERVING across three lanes of rush hour traffic. Makes the exit by a whisker.

EXT. SACRAMENTO TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Commuter rail station. Mrs Deroche crosses the parking lot toward the platform. We see the Escalade parking in the b.g., Devon and friends jumping out to follow her on foot.

EXT. SACRAMENTO STATION HOUSE - MORNING

Mrs Deroche flashes a commuter's pass and goes through onto the platform. Devon swipes his debit card at the automated teller, buying four tickets.

INT. TRAIN - MORNING

Mrs Deroche reads the paper as she rides. Devon and friends sit just across the aisle, scanning the FACES of the other commuters.

INT. SACRAMENTO DOWNTOWN STATION - MORNING

The capital at rush hour. Mrs Deroche gets off the train and heads up the platform. Right behind her we find Devon, Kat, Tess and Garret, weaving through the foot traffic.

GARRET

Still don't get what we're doing here.

DEVON

If you're asking if I have a plan...
No.

EXT. SIDEWALK, DOWNTOWN SACRAMENTO - MORNING

Waiting with her on the corner until the light changes and then crossing the street in lockstep, they follow Mrs Deroche down a city sidewalk into the banking district. Where she enters a FINANCIAL TOWER.

INT. LOBBY, FINANCIAL TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Devon and friends step into the REVOLVING DOOR right behind her, but as it comes around they see the SECURITY GUARDS in the lobby --

DEVON

Keep going.

-- and do a full revolution --

EXT. FINANCIAL TOWER - MORNING

-- exiting back onto the sidewalk. They watch through the window as Mrs Deroche steps into an elevator across the lobby and is gone. Devon steps back to read the name on the tower's plate-glass facade: EPSTEIN & PLATT, LTD.

DEVON

I know where she works.

INT. COFFEE SHOP / CAFE - DAY

Epstein & Platt website on a laptop screen. Kat has pulled up an employee directory. And found Pamela Deroche.

KAT

Senior accountant Pamela Deroche
brings fifteen years of risk
management expertise to our domestic
accounts division...

They're in a cafe across the street. Sitting in a row of
window seats facing the tower, drinking coffee and eating
bagels on stakeout.

A cell phone RINGS. They all reach. It's Kat's. But not
her personal cell. The pre-paid disposable. She digs it
from her bag. Blanches at the caller ID:

SIERRA NEUROLOG.

KAT

Oh my god, it's him.

RING. RING. She stares, not knowing what to do.

DEVON

Answer.

KAT

(into phone)
Hello?

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

Is that Sasha?

KAT

Yes, it is.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

This is Dr Deroche, I received a
message to call you --

KAT

Oh hi, thanks for getting back to
me.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

You're with the alumni magazine?

KAT

I am, that's right.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

Then why are you calling from 860?
That's Connecticut.

Moment of panic. Kat covers well.

KAT

That's my cell number, I'm from
Hartford.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

Oh I see. Well, how can I help you,
Sasha?

KAT

I'm doing an article and your name
was on my list and, I, um... would
you mind if I sent you a brief
questionnaire to fill out?

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

I thought this was an interview.

KAT

More of a written interview.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

All right. You need my address?

KAT

No, we have it, thanks.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

(shifting tone)
What year are you?

KAT

(thrown for a moment)
Sophomore...

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

Sasha the sophomore. Mmm. So, how
do you 'like it', Sasha?

KAT

Like...?

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

(laughs)
Duke, what do you think?

KAT

Oh it's great. I love it. Yeah.
Go Blue Devils. So I'll get that in
the mail to you.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

Okay.

KAT

Bye.

DOCTOR DEROCHE (V.O.)

Bye Sasha.

Kat hangs up and makes a face.

KAT

Super creepy.

Just then, out the window, we see Mrs Deroche exit the building, heads off down the sidewalk.

TESS

Where's she going?

DEVON

Too early for lunch.

They grab their things and scramble for the exit.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

They follow her down a series of SIDEWALKS to the WATERFRONT.

EXT. SACRAMENTO WATERFRONT - DAY

Stop at a crosswalk, blocked by traffic as Mrs Deroche walks on. Garret spots someone on the other side of the street, crossing to follow Mrs Deroche. A MAN IN A BLACK OVERCOAT AND WRAP-AROUND SUNGLASSES.

GARRET

Check it out. Guy with the shades.

They all see him now.

DEVON

Let's go.

Devon and friends cross against the light, nearly getting hit by a taxi that SLAMS on its brakes and then its HORN.

They never look back, gazes fixed on the man in the black overcoat as he closes steadily on Mrs Deroche from behind. Stone-faced. Hands in his pockets.

EXT. RIVERFRONT PROMENADE - DAY

Mrs Deroche walks the scenic promenade. Tourists taking in the sights. The man in the overcoat continuing his advance. Devon and friends playing catch up. Hearts pounding.

TESS

What do we do?

DEVON

Stay close.

Their best option for now. Mrs Deroche stops at the rail. Stands quietly eyeing the river. Solitary, tragic. The man in the black overcoat twenty yards away and closing. Devon and friends coming up behind him at a jog, weaving between tourists like undercover cops.

GARRET

He won't do anything, there's too many people.

A question not a certainty. And now they're running. Because the man is nearly upon Mrs Deroche. Moving with purpose.

KAT

It's happening!

DEVON

Godammit.

And they've misjudged. They can't get there fast enough. The man in the black overcoat comes right up behind her and hooks his arm around her neck.

Devon, Kat, Garret and Tess are in full flight. Closing fast on the killer. And just as Devon is about to scream bloody murder, Mrs Deroche turns with a smile and the assassin's stranglehold becomes a lover's intimate embrace.

Devon and friends skid to a stop. Dumbfounded. Watching them kiss.

GARRET

Go Mrs D.

CUT TO:

Mrs Deroche and her LOVER walk along the promenade, hand in hand. Devon and friends following a few steps behind.

GARRET

So much for our innocent victim.

KAT

How so?

GARRET

Come on, she's cheating.

TESS

You don't know the circumstances.

GARRET

The circumstances are she's doing
the horizontal mambo with Tommy
Trenchcoat.

KAT

You're a pig.

They lean on the rail feigning interest in the river as Mrs
Deroche and her lover reverse direction and walk past them.

KAT

Infidelity doesn't justify murder.

DEVON

Apparently for some people it does.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DUSK

Worried expressions as they sit in the same window seats
watching the financial tower at dusk.

TESS

Maybe we missed her. Maybe there's
another way out.

GARRET

Maybe the guy he hired works in the
same building.

Ominous thought. Devon checks his watch. Eyes the tower
again. He stands. Hands them his cell phone, keys, wallet.

KAT

What are you doing?

DEVON

Recon.

GARRET

Dev--

DEVON

We haven't seen her in six hours.
Something's wrong.

EXT. FINANCIAL TOWER - DUSK

Devon jogs across the street. Comes up the sidewalk to the
revolving door. Sees the security guards at their post.
Continues past, heading for the alley.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Comes down the alley to the PARKING GARAGE ENTRANCE. When the booth attendant turns to let a car out, Devon slips in unnoticed.

INT. CORRIDOR, FINANCIAL TOWER - MOMENTS LATER

Devon walks down a quiet carpeted corridor. Looks behind him to make sure he's not being followed. Fails to notice the closed-circuit camera.

INT. 1ST FLOOR LOBBY - DUSK

SECURITY GUARD sitting at the front desk.

SECURITY GUARD #1

Vic.

The other guard comes over. On the MONITOR, we see Devon, in his hooded sweatshirt, disappearing through a fire exit. The guards head for the elevator.

SECURITY GUARD #2

(into walkie-talkie)

Leo, we got an unidentified male on level B.

INT. COMMON AREA BY ELEVATORS, 2ND FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Devon runs his finger down an EMPLOYEE DIRECTORY on the wall, stopping on Epstein & Platt, Ltd., 1200.

He presses the elevator call button. Steps in. As the doors close, the elevator beside it opens with a DING to the reveal the security guards. They exit, see the other elevator ascending -- 9, 10, 11, 12.

SECURITY GUARD #1

Leo, he's on twelve.

And as they get back in the elevator and follow it up...

INT. 12TH FLOOR - SAME MOMENT

Devon exits the elevator. Scans the adjoining corridors. Executive suites ad infinitum. Brass letters on the wall: EPSTEIN & PLATT, Ltd. They have the entire floor.

Behind him, we see the elevator floor indicator silently climbing toward 12. Stopping. DING. The doors open. The security guards step out. Devon spins and sees them.

SECURITY GUARD #2

Hey!

Devon BOLTS.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Running for his life down the quiet carpeted corridor of Epstein & Platt. Weaving through startled MEN IN BUSINESS SUITS. The corridor widens to a COMMON AREA of cubicles. Devon jogs through like a rat in a maze, looking for an exit.

Sees the security guards coming. Sees an exit on the opposite side. Runs for it. Blasts through -- WHAM!

INT. FIRE STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Flies down the stairs, almost falling. The security guards chasing him down, shouting into walkie-talkies. Devon reaches the next floor, crashes out the exit --

INT. 9TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Slows to a brisk walk, hoping not to draw attention to himself as he crosses an INSURANCE OFFICE. He comes through an OFFICE PARTY, drawing baffled looks from the staff. A humorless MANAGER approaches.

MANAGER

Excuse me, can I help you?

Devon runs for the EXIT.

INT. FIRE STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

WHAM! Runs down more flights of fire stairs. Down down down in a dizzying spiral to the SECOND FLOOR, where he crashes through the EXIT --

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

And runs to the next corner where he gets TACKLED by a SECURITY GUARD. SLAMMED to the floor and pinned, the wind knocked out of him.

SECURITY GUARD #3

STAY DOWN! YOU STAY DOWN!!

Devon GASPS for air, flat on his back. The security guard on top:

SECURITY GUARD #3

(into walkie-talkie)

Got him!

FADE TO BACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - DUSK

Devon sits before the austere HEAD OF SECURITY.

HEAD OF SECURITY
How'd you get in the building?

DEVON
Parking garage.

HEAD OF SECURITY
Why?

DEVON
My father works here. I wanted to
talk to him.

HEAD OF SECURITY
What's his name? Your father?

DEVON
Guess.

HEAD OF SECURITY
Don't have to, cause you're gonna
tell me.

DEVON
Nope.

HEAD OF SECURITY
Sure you are.

DEVON
I'M SURE AS HELL NOT!!!

Devon SCREAMS this. An explosive reaction that comes out of
nowhere. The head of security is taken aback. He shifts
tone, sensing a family crisis.

HEAD OF SECURITY
Couldn't call him? Your dad.

DEVON
He doesn't take my calls.

His lies merging with fundamental truths.

HEAD OF SECURITY
What'd you want to talk to him about?

Devon stares at the floor. Raw with emotion. Real emotion.

DEVON
 He's selling the maple cabinet. He
 took it with him. It's not his to
 sell. They bought it together...

Devon looks at him, soul bared.

DEVON
 ... It's not his to sell.

EXT. FINANCIAL TOWER - NIGHT

Devon walks out of the building. Pauses to compose himself
 before he crosses the street.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Kat and the others converge on Devon as he walks in.

GARRET
 Where the hell happened?! We've
 been sitting here two hours!

DEVON
 I got caught.

TESS
 Holy sh--

KAT
 Guys!

Across the street, Mrs Deroche exits the building. They
 grab their stuff and run out.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Nerve-racking ride home. Packed with commuters. Mrs Deroche
 stands holding a handle. Pulling back, we see Devon, Kat,
 Garret and Tess standing in a tight CIRCLE around her --
 guardians. Watching for her killer.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM, SACRAMENTO STATION - NIGHT

They follow Mrs Deroche down the platform --

EXT. PARKING LOT, SACRAMENTO STATION - NIGHT

-- out the station into the parking lot. Mrs Deroche heading
 for her Audi.

DEVON
 Get the car.

TESS
Where are you going?

DEVON
We can't let her go home.

Garret and the girls run for the Escalade. Devon jogs after Mrs Deroche. Catches up halfway across the parking lot.

DEVON
Mrs Deroche...?
(didn't hear him)
PAMELA DEROCHE!

She turns at the sound of her name, stares at him.

DEVON
Mrs Deroche?

She's scared. Kid in a hooded sweatshirt.

MRS DEROCHE
Yes...?

Devon lowers his hood to reveal his face. Ten yards between them.

DEVON
You can't go home.

MRS DEROCHE
Sorry?

DEVON
You can't go home, it's not safe.

MRS DEROCHE
Who are you?

DEVON
(stepping closer)
Your husband hired someone to kill you.

MRS DEROCHE
Stay away from me!
(he stops)
Who are you?!

DEVON
I don't have time to explain--

MRS DEROCHE
You're the one who called. It was you. Get away from me.

DEVON
Please, you have to--

MRS DEROCHE
GET AWAY FROM ME!

She turns and heads for her car. Visibly shaken. And from behind we hear:

DR. DEROCHE ON TAPE
I WANT HER GONE! I WANT HER DEAD!
I WANT YOU TO KILL HER!

Mrs Deroche stops dead in her tracks. Turns slowly to Devon. MICROCASSETTE PLAYER in his hand. He rewinds, plays it again.

DR. DEROCHE ON TAPE
I WANT HER GONE! I WANT HER DEAD!
I WANT YOU TO KILL HER!

Rewinds it again. Slides the player to her across the pavement. She stares at it for a moment then picks it up and plays it for herself.

DR. DEROCHE ON TAPE
I WANT HER GONE! I WANT HER DEAD!
I WANT YOU TO KILL HER!

She stops the tape. She's trembling.

DEVON
He knows.

She meet eyes with Devon, scared, confused.

MRS DEROCHE
Who are you?

DEVON
Nobody.

Mrs Deroche looks around as if wondering where to go. She covers her mouth, overcome. Devon walks closer. She backs away, raising a hand.

MRS DEROCHE
Please... please just...

She heads toward her car. Devon, watching her, spots a LEXUS idling in the back row. A DARK FIGURE behind the wheel.

DEVON
WAIT!

His voice is lost in the ROAR OF THE ENGINE as the HITMAN guns it and goes speeding toward Mrs Deroche.

She looks up, frozen in terror, at the car that will end her life. Just before IMPACT, Devon knocks her out of the way against the Audi. The hitman whips the Lexus around and comes back to try again.

DEVON

Get in!

They jump in the Audi.

INT. DEROCHE AUDI - CONTINUOUS

Mrs Deroche starts it. Peels out of the lot. The Lexus in hot pursuit.

INT. ESCALADE - SAME MOMENT

Garret and the girls, fifty yards back, struggle to keep up.

KAT

Stay with them!

GARRET

I'm trying!

He runs a red light and accelerates, swerving through traffic.

INT. DEROCHE AUDI - SAME MOMENT

Devon looks back at the Lexus chasing them. He rifles through her bag, digs out her cell phone. Dials 911. Hands it to her. And we've dovetailed with the opening scene:

DEVON

Don't tell them I'm here.

MRS DEROCHE

(into phone)

Hello?! Hello?!?

INT. ESCALADE - SAME MOMENT

We witness the chase this time from Garret and the girls' POV, Audi pursued by Lexus pursued by Escalade. Garret turns a corner and suddenly they're gone. Dark road ahead.

GARRET

Where are they?!

KAT

There!

A SWIRLING DUST CLOUD up ahead tinged red by the glow of taillights. Garret accelerates down the straightaway.

TESS

Guys...

A FREIGHT TRAIN tunneling out of the darkness. Garret takes his foot off the gas.

KAT

What are you doing?! GO!!

Garret punches it.

INT. DEROCHE AUDI - SAME MOMENT

Devon and Mrs Deroche, moments after impact, the Audi pinned halfway under a chainlink fence in a drainage ditch. Devon, turning, sees the HITMAN exit the Lexus.

DEVON

Lock the doors!

Running to the Audi, the hitman pulls out a metal baton --

EXT. FREIGHT TRAIN - SAME MOMENT

POV OF THE TRAIN: speeding down the tracks with the Escalade, off to the left, racing it to the crossing. Converging toward impact. The train blasts its HORN --

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Garret JAMS on the brakes. And we hear the TIRES LOCK UP. We're inside the Escalade this time, watching through the windshield as the train comes right at us.

The girls SCREAMING as they SKID toward it. GASPING in relief as they STOP just shy --

INT. DEROCHE AUDI - SAME MOMENT

SMASH! The hitman shatters the driver window with a metal baton. Mrs Deroche recoils. Devon lunges across the seat, throwing wild KICKS and PUNCHES. The hitman CATCHES Devon's foot and PULLS him out the window by his leg --

EXT. DEROCHE AUDI - CONTINUOUS

THROWS him to the ground. KICKS HIS HEAD against the door of the car -- once, twice -- denting it as --

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS - CONTINUOUS

Kat, Garret and Tess Jump from the Escalade, watching the brutal beating through the passing cars.

KAT

DEVON!!!!

EXT. DEROCHE AUDI - CONTINUOUS

Mrs Deroche's POV: as the hitman SLAMS Devon down on the hood again and again. She lays on the HORN.

MRS DEROCHE

LEAVE HIM ALONE!!!

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS - CONTINUOUS

Garret and Tess grab Kat, holding her back as they watch in horror from the howling fringe:

KAT

HE'S KILLING HIM!!!

EXT. DEROCHE AUDI - CONTINUOUS

The hitman PITCHES Devon across the hood where he falls in a heap on the other side of the car. Dazed, bleeding, Devon tries to stand but his legs give out.

The hitman DRAWS A KNIFE and comes around the side of the car. Devon crawls along the muddy ditch trying to get away, but the chainlink fence stops him.

He turns onto his back as the hitman closes in. Trapped. The hitman drops to one knee, grabs Devon by the scalp.

Devon, fumbling at his coat, pulls something from his pocket and fires it: A TASER GUN!

FWWISSHHT! THE ELECTRODE DARTS HIT THE GUY IN THE THROAT. He goes down GROANING and CONTORTING in pain.

Mrs Deroche stumbles through the muddy spillwater to Devon. The train passes. Tess and Kat come running across the tracks, Garret bringing up the rear in the Escalade.

Devon climbs wearily to his feet, hands Mrs Deroche the Taser, the wires still embedded in the hitman's neck.

DEVON

He tries to get up juice him.

Garret, Tess and Kat help Devon to the Escalade.

EXT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

They load Devon in the back seat. SIRENS approaching in the distance.

GARRET

We gotta blaze.

Kat and Tess jump in. Garret spins the tires.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Midnight. The Escalade goes past.

INT. ESCALADE - NIGHT

Riding home in exhausted silence. We survey the faces of the four friends, ending on Devon who is slumped in the back seat, wind blowing on his bruised, bloody face.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

EXT. MONT CLAIRE CAMPUS - DAY

Typical day. Students to-ing and fro-ing across campus.

INT. LISTENING POST - DAY

ON A TV: A REPORTER is live outside a MEDICAL BUILDING as an embedded VIDEO CLIP, from earlier that morning, shows POLICE leading a handcuffed DR CHARLES DEROCHE to a cruiser.

NEWS REPORTER

Arrested this morning for solicitation of murder, Dr Charles Deroche, a prominent Sacramento physician, allegedly hired a former patient to murder his wife...

TV TURNS OFF. Reflected in the black screen are the faces of Devon, Kat, Tess and Garret. Assembled in the listening post the morning after. Devon turns and takes in his creation, sober, deciding its fate.

DEVON

I never should have built it. But it's built. I don't see how shutting it down now helps anybody.
(looks at them)
I'm gonna keep listening.

He drops THREE KEYS on the console. One for each of them.

DEVON

You guys have to decide for yourselves.

Garret, Kat and Tess. One by one, they reach for the keys.

INT. STUDENT UNION - DAY

Devon and Garret walking to class. Life returning to normal. Devon slows, indicates someone down the hall. AMANDA HALSTEAD, senior, drop dead gorgeous, reading a posting on a community bulletin board.

DEVON

Amanda Halstead.

GARRET

I'm going in. How do I look?

DEVON

Empty-handed.

A beat and then Garret realizes what he means. He sets off.

GARRET

It's gonna be a good year.

Detouring toward the KIOSK, Garret buys a single RED ROSE. We witness the final exchange from DEVON's POV:

Amanda turning to see the rose. Garret saying something charming. Amanda nodding, laughing. The two of them talking at close range in the student union.

As Devon turns and walks on alone...

EXT. MONT CLAIRE COLLEGE - DAY

The BELL TOWER TOLLS in the distance. We're looking out through an ivied stone arch at the campus. And we see Devon walking alone across the open mall like some sort of underlord in his hooded sweatshirt.

EXT. DISH ANTENNA - DAY

The old antenna. Abandoned in a field off campus. VOICES overlapping to infinity.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE