

CORRECTION

Written by

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INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT BATHROOM - MORNING

We open in men's bathroom that is all but empty except for a MAN in a stall humming a tune to himself. Suddenly, two people pop into the middle of the room as if appearing from thin air, shaking the room slightly.

ZARIA, 31, is dressed in a suave black suit. She is tall and built with a beauty that comes from her natural features. She has a scar that runs down the left side of her face.

Next to her is AXTON, 23, smaller, skinnier. He wears sagging shorts, a flat brim, and a graphic tee that reads "Do You Lift Bro?"

MAN (O.S.)

Hello?

ZARIA

(ignoring the voice)

Dammit, fucked up our coordinates again.

AXTON

Where are we? Is this where they store their dead?

ZARIA

This a bathroom.

(beat)

You look ridiculous.

MAN (O.S.)

I need help. There's no more toilet paper.

AXTON

(Ignoring the man)

What this? I'm fitting in.
"Cultural camouflage"

ZARIA

No one actually dresses like that here.

MAN (O.S.)

Please! I'm going to have to use my tax returns.

AXTON

(signalling to stall)

Is that something we should...

ZARIA

No.

Axton looks down at a watch on her hand. The ticker reads 11:58:11 and counting down.

AXTON

What? They only gave us twelve hours. I thought it was a full day?

ZARIA

Budget cuts.

(Beat)

We don't have time to spare. Marvin's gonna be here any second.

MAN

(coming out of stall)

A lot of help you people are.

(To Zaria)

Wait. What. Why are you in here? This is the men's bathroom!

ZARIA

Come on let's go.

Zaria grabs Axton by the shoulder and they begin to walk out of the bathroom. The man leans down to pick up a distinctive red and white bracelet from the floor.

MAN

Hey, lady. You want your bracelet?

Zaria turns around. She grabs the man by his collar and pushes him up against the wall of a stall. He drops the bracelet.

MAN

Jesus Christ. What is wrong with you people?

Zaria lets go of the man and picks the bracelet up from the floor. She turns to walk away. Axton looks at the man shaking his head.

AXTON

Bro.

CUT TO BLACK.

Title credit appear: *Correction*

FADE IN:

EXT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - EARLY AFTERNOON

Zaria and Axton walk out in heated conversation. On the other side of the street, MARVIN, 32, is dressed in a suit leaning up against the car. He's holding a large black suit case.

AXTON

Seriously, we would be in different bathrooms.

ZARIA

The past is a crazy place, kid.

MARVIN

Zaria, you're looking gorgeous as ever. It's been much too long.

ZARIA

I saw you last week.

MARVIN

It's been two years, doll.

ZARIA

How's Maria doing?

MARVIN

Maria? My wife's name is Elizabeth.

ZARIA

Oh yeah, of course.

She looks at Axton and runs her finger across her neck as if slitting her throat.

MARVIN

Axton, what the hell are you wearing?

AXTON

I'm sorry. Have we met?

MARVIN

(laughing)
This guy.

ZARIA

Marv, it's his first mission.

MARVIN

No shit. Well let me introduce myself. Marvin James Morehouse, your 21st century liaison.

(Winks)
And future friend.

ZARIA
Marv, we're on a bit of time
crunch.

MARVIN
Of course. Of course.

Marvin reaches into his bag and pulls out a manila folder and a pair of keys.

MARVIN
Here's your file. I got the Toyota
over there all ready for you. I
even set the radio to a great
oldies station. You're welcome.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

In the background, "Work" by Rhianna is playing. Zaria drives looking forward intently. Axton is humming along and bobbing his head while looking out the window onto suburban America.

AXTON
You know, my Gramps used to play
this song all the time.

ZARIA
(sarcastically)
Really?

AXTON
What was the dance she used to do?
Tinkering?

ZARIA
Twerking.

AXTON
Ah yes. You ever watch videos of
that?

ZARIA
No.
(Beat)
My husband always shows them to my
daughter all the time. She thinks
they're hilarious.

AXTON
You got a kid.

Zaria nods.

AXTON
How's that work with this job and
all?

ZARIA
It doesn't.

AXTON
What do you mean?

ZARIA
Why do you think I'm training you?
It's my last mission.

AXTON
What? I'm here for your last
hurrah. And just as we were
becoming close.

A silence lingers. Axton fidgets.

ZARIA
Why don't you just check the file
for me?

Axton pulls out the manila folder and opens it up. He begins to sift through it. We see a picture of young woman in the file.

AXTON
Madelyn Greene. Twenty-six. The
charge is the future murder of six
people. Damn.

ZARIA
Is that it? There's usually more
detail.

AXTON
That's all it says.

ZARIA
You ready, kid, first correction?

AXTON
(unconvincing)
Yeah. I'm ready.

Axton turns his head and continues to look out the window with a solemn look.

EXT. MADELYN'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Zaria and Axton pull in down the street from an apartment complex. They have both changed into all black clothing, and file up the street slowly. Zaria picks the lock to Madelyn's apartment.

INT. MADELYN'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON.

The living room is standard. There's a couch, a couple chairs, and a television. Zaria goes straight behind the couch and takes a position behind it.

ZARIA

All right here should be perfect.

Axton walks around the room studying all of Madelyn's pictures and knickknacks. He stops at a photograph of her family. It's Madelyn with her two parents.

ZARIA

(under her breath)

Hey, get over here.

Axton continues to stare into the photograph.

ZARIA

Kid.

Axton puts down the frame slowly and makes his way over behind the couch. He pulls out his gun, with a silencer attached to the barrel.

ZARIA

Okay, when she walks through the door, you put three in the chest. Don't go for any of this one shot, head shot bull shit. Remember that. Three right down the middle.

Axton nods his head slowly.

INT. MADELYN'S APARTMENT - TWO HOURS LATER

Zaria yawns and then checks her watch: 6:23:15 and counting.

Just then, they begin to hear feet walking up the stairs.

ZARIA

Remember, three down the middle.

Axton's hands begins to shake. The footsteps are getting closer and closer.

AXTON
I...I can't do it.

ZARIA
What?

AXTON
I can't. Here you take it.

Axton tries to hand Zaria the gun.

ZARIA
No, it has to be you.

Someone begins to fiddle with the lock.

AXTON
I'm not.

Zaria grabs the gun and points it at the door. Then, after a moment of hesitation, she pulls back.

ZARIA
Come on, get down.

Zaria grabs Axton and pulls him down behind the couch.

The doors opens and in walks MADELYN, 26. She has dirty blonde hair and is dressed in a maintenance uniform of some kind. She's talking loudly on her phone.

MADELYN
....I'm not gonna lie, it felt good to do some killing. I was hesitant at first, but after the first couple, you just really find your groove...

Madelyn leaves the room.

Zaria looks at Axton and motions towards Madelyn with the gun.

AXTON
(mouthing)
I can't.

Zaria shakes her head disapprovingly. They hear Madelyn's bedroom door close and they slowly tip toe their way over to the door lead by Zaria.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Zaria and Axton sit at a booth in an old, classical looking diner. Around them, families are eating, couples are dating, and the mood is just generally happy. Axton scribbles aimlessly on a napkin. They sit in front of empty plates. Zaria looks down at her watch: 2:45:11 and counting.

AXTON

One thing I gotta say about the past. There's nothing quite like the taste of real meat. Protein bars are fine and everything. I get the argument that they save our ecosystem or whatever but...

ZARIA

Look,

(Beat)

Time is winding down. Sooner or later, you're just gonna have to go through with it.

AXTON

(Looking up from drawing)

I want to. I really do. I thought I could handle it, but she's got a family. I don't know, she's still innocent.

ZARIA

Kid, she's not innocent. Do you hear the stuff she saying? Did you read her file?

AXTON

I know, but I'm just not sure it's our place.

ZARIA

It's our job.

AXTON

If you're so morally in support of it, why can't you just shoot her and we'll be done with it?

ZARIA

They won't let me go, until you've proven you're capable of a correction.

AXTON
Come on. You could do it, and say I
did. Everyone's happy.

ZARIA
They'll know.

AXTON
Bull shit.

ZARIA
You see that shiny new watch they
gave you?

Zaria points to her head.

ZARIA (CONT'D)
Memories. It records everything you
do in the past.

AXTON
There's no way.

ZARIA
Don't believe me? Let me see your
hand.

Zaria grabs Axton's hands and places it over her watch. She closes her eyes. Axton looks at her with amusement. Suddenly, he feels something.

AXTON
What the...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT - UNKNOWN TIME

A VICTIM lies on the ground, writhing in pain. His leg is bleeding from a gunshot wound. ZARIA stands over the victim, hold a gun pointed at his head. She's drenched in sweat and possibly tears. To her left, an AGENT walks back and forth, yelling something inaudible. Zaria closes her eyes. She fires the gun.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - NIGHT

The WAITRESS comes over to the table. Zaria continues to stare at a now mortified Axton.

WAITRESS
Ummm, will that be all for y'all
tonight?

Zaria opens her eyes and smiles at her.

ZARIA
We'll have the check.

WAITRESS
Honey, I just wanted to say, I love
that bracelet.
(Signals to Zaria's
bracelet)

Axton is staring forward with his mouth open.

WAITRESS
(Distracted)
I love the colors.

ZARIA
Well thank you. I'm sure my
grandmother would have loved to
hear it.

WAITRESS
(motioning to Axton)
Is he okay?

ZARIA
He just zones out from time to
time. He's one of those deep
thinkers.

The waitress nods and walks away. Axton remains shell
shocked.

AXTON
What the fuck?

ZARIA
What?

AXTON
Shit, man, you're just gonna dump
all that on me.

ZARIA
It's all right, kid.

AXTON
No, it's not.

ZARIA
Here, let me see this.

Zaria reaches across the table and picks up the napkin Axton was drawing on. It's a picture of Zaria.

ZARIA
Hey, is this me?

Axton nods his head.

ZARIA
This is really good.

AXTON
Thanks.
(Beat)
You know, that's actually kind of
what I was supposed to do.

ZARIA
Napkin doodling?

AXTON
No. Art, animation actually. I was
all signed up for school.

ZARIA
What happened?

AXTON
Let's just say my father, the
Colonel, wanted me to do something
"worthwhile." I guess that's what
murdering people means.

ZARIA
It's not murder.

AXTON
Whatever helps you sleep.
(beat)
What do your parents think of all
this? Their daughter the assassin.

ZARIA
They don't know.

AXTON
Really? What, do you tell everyone
you're an insurance adjustor at
Thanksgiving dinner?

ZARIA

Well they're dead.

(beat)

They passed when I was still a kid. I can't say I've really had to bullshit my way through a holiday meal, or really had one for that matter.

AXTON

The orphaned assassin with a troubled childhood. I see where your dark side comes from. No wonder you've got quite the reputation around the department.

ZARIA

This is a serious job. Some people in the department, they don't understand.

AXTON

If I can be real for second, I don't think people understand you. Hey, you gotta lighten up a little bit. We're walking around in the 2010s for Christ's sake.

ZARIA

Can I be real with you for a second, because after today, we'll probably never see each other again.

(beat)

My husband is leaving me. He's going to take my daughter with him, and she will not grow up without her mother. Right now, your pansy ass is standing between me and my kid. So no, I won't lighten up. It's time for you to grow a fucking pair because we're running out of time. Am I clear?

Axton nods his head slowly. The waitress walks up uncomfortably. She slides the check between the two of them, making eye contact with neither.

WAITRESS

I'll just leave this right here.

INT. MADELYN'S LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Zaria and Axton pick the lock on the front door of the apartment and slowly sneak their way through the living room.

INT. MADELYN'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Madelyn is fast asleep in her bed snoring at moderate volume. Zaria and Axton walk up to the bed. Zaria motions to Axton, who pulls out his gun slowly.

Axton keeps it pointed at her head as his hands shake again. Zaria is staring him down, waiting impatiently for his action.

Axton closes his eyes. His fingers begin to curl around the trigger when he SNEEZES.

The world stops in motion. Zaria and Axton freeze. A stillness lingers in the air, as their eyes slowly move to Madelyn. Zaria and Axton exchange looks. Then they turn their attention to Madelyn. Her eyes creep open. Zaria and Axton come into focus.

MADELYN

What the...

Axton knocks her in the head with the butt of his gun and knocks her out. He stands there looking over her body.

ZARIA

Okay, finish it.

AXTON

No, I need to talk to her.

ZARIA

Are you kidding me?

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Axton drags an unconscious Madelyn into the room as Zaria walks behind disapprovingly. She looks at her watch, 18:12 and counting.

Axton ties Madelyn up as Zaria looks on. He uses sheets found in the house to tie up her hands, her body around the chair, and put a gag over her mouth. Axton backs up.

AXTON

Okay what now?

ZARIA

It's your show, big man, and you're running low on time.

AXTON

She's still passed out.

ZARIA

You could, I don't know, wake her up?

Axton goes over and begins to slap her face gently muttering "wake up." This goes on for a couple second until Zaria gets annoyed. She walks into the kitchen, fills up a cup of water, and strolls back.

Zaria walks up behind the passed out Madelyn and dumps it on her face. She bolts awake. She tries to scream, but it's muted by the gag.

AXTON

Calm down. Please, calm down. If I take that thing off your mouth will you promise not to scream?

Madelyn nods her head excessively.

ZARIA

Promise?

Zaria reveals the gun in belt. Madelyn nods slowly. Axton walks over and takes off the gag. Madelyn takes a few deep breaths to calm herself down.

AXTON

I need to ask you a couple questions.

MADELYN

What do you want?

AXTON

We're here to help.

MADELYN

This is helping?

AXTON

Have you ever had any homicidal thoughts or tendencies?

MADELYN

What?

AXTON

Sorry, do ever just feel to need to kill someone?

MADELYN

No, of course not.

AXTON

(To Zaria)

See?

ZARIA

Hold up. She literally said she enjoyed killing earlier.

MADELYN

I'm an exterminator. And wait, how did you know that? Are you people from the NSA?

AXTON

An exterminator. Shit, we're dealing with an assassin?

MADELYN

Bugs, you idiot. I kill bugs.

ZARIA

All right, enough chit chat. Let's do this quickly. I don't like leaving blood stains in the carpet.

Madelyn freezes up as her face drops.

AXTON

Stop. I'm not done with her.

MADELYN

Who sent you? Look I promise I think you have the wrong person.

AXTON

You just need to talk to me. Please, just make your case to me that you aren't who they say you are.

MADELYN

Who?

AXTON

(Looks at Zaria)

Look, I didn't want to have to do this, but...

(beat)
We're from the future.

Axton waits for a second of anticipation. Then, Madelyn breaks into tears.

MADELYN
You people are insane.

ZARIA
Okay, this jokes is running old,
kid.

AXTON
Can I speak to you for a second?
Privately.

Axton pulls Zaria into the next room. We can hear their conversations, but we stay focused on Madelyn. She begins to loosen her hand ties.

ZARIA (O.S.)
What?

AXTON (O.S.)
You're not making this easy.

ZARIA (O.S.)
Look, kid, you got less than five
minutes, or I'll have no choice,
but to finish this myself. Nobody
is gonna be happy with that.

AXTON (O.S.)
You make me nervous. You make her
nervous.

ZARIA (O.S.)
Fine. I'll leave you alone.

Madelyn has untied her right hand. She slips it into her pocket and dials 911.

Axton walks back into the room.

AXTON
What are you doing? Drop that.

Madelyn drops the phone, but it's already been called.

VOICE OPERATOR
(faintly)
911, what is your emergency?

Axton stomps on the phone.

AXTON

Fuck.

INT. BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Zaria walks aimlessly into the room, checking her watch frequently. She begins to float around the room looking at the walls, full of movie and music posters. She goes over to the dresser and begins to go through the things on the top shelf. She reaches a locket with a picture of Madelyn as child. She pauses and ponders it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Axton paces back and forth neurotically. Madelyn is completely shaken up.

AXTON

Why would you do that? Why? Why are you doing this to me?

MADELYN

Please, just leave. They're going to be here any minute.

AXTON

You don't understand. If we get caught... If we kill a cop...

(beat)

My dad is going to be so pissed.

INT. BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

A now concerned Zaria puts down the locket and moves to the jewelry box. She slowly opens it up and looks inside.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE NIGHT

A police car pulls into the apartment complex and parks. A POLICE OFFICER gets out of his car, with a flashlight and begins to make his way up to the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Axton crouches in front of Madelyn, who is still tied to chair.

AXTON
You're innocent, right?

MADELYN
Yes.

AXTON
You wouldn't kill anyone.

MADELYN
No.

There is knock at the door.

INT. BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Zaria, hands shaking, lifts a red and white bracelet out of the jewelry book with symbols and markings on it. On her wrist, the same bracelet, but much older.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Axton stands, his gun pointed at Madelyn, his eyes welling up.

POLICE (O.S.)
I'm not gonna ask again! Open this door!

AXTON
I'm sorry.

INT. BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Zaria throws down the necklace and bolts from the room. We follow her down the hallway into the...

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Zaria runs into to room just in time to see Axton pull the trigger. Madelyn falls back with a thud. Axton looks over to Zaria, who lingers for a second, and then vanishes.

The police officer kicks open the door and points his gun at Axton.

POLICE
Drop your weapon.

Axton drops the gun and throws his hands behind his head. We see his watch. :03, :02, :01. The watch hits zero and Axton vanishes.

Left in the room is the just the officer, looking at the empty crime scene.

FADE TO BLACK.