

VALOR

"Pilot"

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EXTENDED TEASER

1 INT. BLACK HAWK - SOMALIA - NIGHT

IN DARKNESS: the chuck-chuck-chuck of a helicopter rotor.

FADE IN on the green-lit cockpit of a Black Hawk, a high-tech galaxy of glowing screens and gauges. In the pilot seats are NORA MADANI (20s, intense, cleancut, not a hair out of place) and pilot-in-command LELAND GALLO (early-to-mid 30s, scruffy, hipster meets flyboy). They're wearing Night Vision goggles to navigate the pitch-black sky.

A CHYRON appears: Golis Mountains, Somalia.

The CAMERA SWOOPS to the back, where we find crew chief JIMMY KAM, 30s, hunched in the open door, manning a mounted machine gun. Behind him are RICHARD (C.I.A. Officer, 30s) and THREE DELTA FORCE a.k.a. CAG OPERATORS (there's only one whose name we need to know: "CRANK" HENDRIX, 30s). Like the pilots, they're all wearing helmets with headsets. With the deafening noise of the rotors, it's the only way to talk. *[In other words, all dialogue in this scene is over intercom.]*

At the moment, no one's speaking. But we can feel the tension in the air. The anticipation of an operation that's about to click into high gear. Then Gallo says into his headset --

GALLO
Are you living?

JIMMY
Yes.

GALLO
Have you ever dated Taylor Swift?

JIMMY
Yes. Though that doesn't narrow it down much.

GALLO
Okay... three more questions. Help me out here, Madani.

Nora is eyeing a map on the console. She doesn't look up.

NORA
He's Jake Gyllenhaal, sir.

JIMMY
He meant help with a question!

GALLO
You hate fun, huh?

NORA (CONT'D)

And we just hit Checkpoint 7.
That's two minutes to the L.Z.

GALLO

Jimbo, let the customers know.

Jimmy (nickname "Jimbo") holds up two fingers to C.I.A. Officer Richard.

JIMMY

Two minutes.

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD

(to the CAG Operators)

Touchdown in two, gentlemen.

Seems that Richard's the one running this operation. (And if you're wondering why we're not using his surname: C.I.A. Officers have a policy of only ever providing first names.) Up in front, the pilots are getting a burst of RADIO CHATTER.

GALLO

Command's barking in my ear. You have the controls.

NORA

(confirmation procedure)

I have the controls.

Gallo gets on the radio while Nora pilots. It's a delicate process of careful movements: one hand on the cyclic stick, one on the collective, each foot on an anti-torque pedal.

GALLO

(into radio)

Two minutes out from the L.Z.
Everything looks clear.

It's now that we notice something on the console in front of Nora: a good luck charm. It's a tiny, worn wooden TOY. Meantime, C.I.A. Officer Richard calls to Nora over intercom.

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD

Hey pilot. You're the first Special Ops chick I ever met, so I gotta to ask. How do you control yourself around so many hot sweaty men?

He said it for the benefit of the CAGs and gets a few chuckles. Nora responds, bone-dry, through her headset.

NORA
The only hard part's the smell.
(glancing out the window)
Visual on the L.Z.

JIMMY
Clear to land!

GALLO
I have controls.

NORA
You have controls.

Gallo begins the descent. The CAGs prepare for action, checking that their weapons are locked and loaded.

2 **OMITTED**

3 **OMITTED**

4 **EXT. MOUNTAIN PLATEAU - SOMALIA - NIGHT**

The Black Hawk touches ground. Richard and the CAGs pile out. They run to the house, kick through the door, rush inside.

5 **INT. BLACK HAWK - SOMALIA - NIGHT**

Nora, Gallo and Jimmy wait in the helo.

JIMMY
They've gone silent.

It's true. They can no longer hear the others' radio chatter.

NORA
They went internal coms. Shut us
out.

GALLO
They can do what they want, we're
just taxi drivers. Right Jimmy?

JIMMY
(explaining to Nora)
That's what Jess tells the kid when
he asks what I do.

He glances at a picture taped to the wall. A PHOTO OF HIS WIFE AND SON. This is his good luck charm.

NORA
He just had a birthday, right?

JIMMY
Yep, seven years old. Big fan of
twenty questions, by the way. I'll
tell him to steer clear of you.

Nora cracks a smile at that. Right then, Gallo sees Richard and the CAGs emerge from the house. They're dragging a TALL PRISONER, hood over his head, hands bound behind his back.

GALLO
They have the package.

Suddenly, a pair of headlights slices their faces.

A PICKUP TRUCK roars out of the dark. Inside are FIVE SOMALI INSURGENTS with a mounted machine gun and AK-47s.

NORA

Technical! 11 o'clock!

JIMMY

I've got no visual on the technical!

All hell breaks loose. The Somalis start firing. Jimmy finally gets visual on them, and blasts at them from the Black Hawk door. Richard and the CAGs sprint toward the helo... and one of the CAGs is hit by Somali fire. He drops.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Man down!

GALLO

(to Nora)

You fly! I'm on radio!

Nora starts flipping switches on the console, preparing to take off as soon as the others are back in the helo. Gallo unbuckles his harness and swings around in his seat to get a better view of the outside. He SHOUTS into his radio.

GALLO (CONT'D)

This is Darkhorse, we're in a TIC,
1 technical, 6 tangos, wounded CAG!

Meanwhile, Richard and the others get the Prisoner and the injured CAG into the Black Hawk.

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD

Go! Go!

GALLO

(into radio)

Up with four and one!

Nora pulls up on the collective stick and the helo lifts off. The Somalis keep shooting at them, round after round. *Nora gets hit.* A bullet pierces her right leg. She CRIES OUT in pain and for a moment loses control of the helo.

It banks sharply until Gallo takes over.

GALLO (CONT'D)

I have the controls.

In back, the injured CAG Operator is in a rapidly growing pool of blood. Everyone is yelling into the radio at once.

CRANK

He needs a tourniquet!

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD

Secure the prisoner!

GALLO
Madani's been hit!

JIMMY
They've got an R.P.G.!

5A **EXT. SOMALI MOUNTAINS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

Down below, one of the Somalis is taking aim with a shoulder-fired rocket launcher. He FIRES.

5B **INT. BLACK HAWK - SOMALIA - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

In the cacophony, Gallo didn't hear Jimmy's shouted warning.

JIMMY R.P.G., four o'clock! GALLO What??

Nora heard it. And despite her wound, she grabs the cyclic.

NORA
Everyone brace.

She turns, but too late. The rocket hits them and everything shakes like it's the end of the world and we SMASH TO --

6 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - FORT BENNING ARMY BASE - MORNING** *

CHYRON: One month later.

Early morning light streams through the window. Nora's eyes snap open. She's in bed in her meticulously neat B.O.Q. (Bachelor Officers Quarters) apartment. It's 5:30 AM. She glances at the bed beside her. She expects someone there, but it's empty. As Nora slips out of the sheets, we see her bare leg... and we see the newly-healed BULLET SCAR on it. *

She reaches over to the bedside table, opens the drawer and takes out a BOTTLE OF PRESCRIPTION PAINKILLERS. She pops one. As she does, we notice something else on the bedside table: the worn wooden toy we first saw on the helo console. *

Nora gets up off the bed and heads out, passing by her closet on the way. Inside we see a DRUM KIT, surrounded by makeshift soundproofing. Now she goes into...

7 **INT. KITCHEN - NORA'S APARTMENT - ARMY BASE - MORNING**

Nora's boyfriend IAN PORTER, 20s, is in a camo uniform, finishing a cup of coffee.

NORA
You're up early.

IAN
I have a briefing at 0630. Gotta swing by my place first. *

NORA

My other boyfriend always stays for
breakfast.

IAN

My other girlfriend always *makes* me
breakfast.

He goes to her: kisses her. For a moment, things start to get heated. He's the one who breaks it. Steps back, looks at her.

IAN (CONT'D)

So, first day back. You okay?

NORA

Yeah, I'm good.

But she doesn't meet his eyes. She's unsettled. Ian sees that. He thinks he knows what's on her mind.

IAN

Hey. You and Gallo did everything
you could. You followed procedure,
you tried to find the others...

NORA

I said I'm good. Okay?

She says it with a smile, trying to ease his concerns about her. Ian doesn't push the point.

IAN

I'll see you at formation.

He gives her a peck goodbye, then goes. Once the door closes behind him, Nora's smile fades. Everything *isn't* okay with her. But exactly what's weighing on her -- we don't yet know.

8

INT. GALLO'S HOUSE - OFF BASE - EARLY MORNING

The polar opposite of Nora's tidy home: a cluttered mess of a place. DRIVING E.D.M. blasts from a stereo.

The CAMERA SWEEPS into the bedroom.

There we find Gallo having raucous sex with ANNA, 30s. He's handcuffed, she's riding him cowgirl-style.

ANNA

Say it!

GALLO

Hooah!

ANNA
(it's turning her on)
Again!

GALLO
Hooah!

Anna climaxes, rolls off. Beat.

ANNA
Is it weird I have a thing for
military calls?

GALLO
Whatever butters your biscuit.

He grins, then glances at the clock. Shocked to see the time.

GALLO (CONT'D)
Dang. I have P.T. in 15. Uncuff me?

ANNA
You've been drinking all night,
cowboy.

GALLO
Anyone can run 8 miles sober. The
real test is doing it drunk. Lock
the door when you go?

He just switched from sex mode to soldier mode in an instant.
Now uncuffed, he pulls on a running shirt and we CUT TO --

9

INT. SHADOW RAIDERS COMMAND CENTER - ARMY BASE - MORNING

A sign on the wall says: "*186th Airborne - The Shadow Raiders.*" We enter with Ian, following him past rows of ADMINISTRATIVE AIDES and over to his office. One of the Aides hands him a file: the label on it says *INTEL REPORT*.

IAN
Thank you. Anything on the M.I.A.s?

The Aide shakes his head *no*. Now COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS approaches (late 30s, commander of the Shadow Raiders). Ian stands at attention to greet him.

IAN (CONT'D)
Morning, sir.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Hooah. I wanted to check in on
Madani. How's she holding up?

IAN
About the same, sir.

Seems something significant was just conveyed between them...
we're not sure what. Now Ian holds up the intel file.

IAN (CONT'D)
And still no news on Jimmy. Or any
of the others.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
(nodding soberly)
No, Lieutenant. Not a damn thing.

Off his frustrated face...

10 **INT. JESS'S HOUSE - ARMY BASE - MORNING**

A two-bedroom ranch home on the Army base. Here we meet JESS
(late 20s, pretty, boho-hippie style). She's Jimmy's wife: we
recognize her from the photo in the Black Hawk.

JESS
C'mon! You'll miss the bus!

*

Her son MAX, 7, runs in. He wears a backpack emblazoned with
a map design, and he's belting out a song.

*

MAX
Hello my baby, hello my honey,
Hello my ragtime gal, Send me a
kiss by wire, Baby my heart's on
fire...

*
*
*
*

JESS
Little loud, sweetie. Maybe you
could try a different song today?

*
*

MAX
Or you could sing it with me like
Dad does.

JESS
Not in the mood. Let's go.

MAX
When's Dad get home from his trip?

JESS
Soon, sweetie. Soon.

It's a lie. But the truth is too much for a seven-year-old:
his father is missing in action.

11 **OMITTED**

12 **EXT. ARMY BASE - MORNING**

Nora is on her way to work, headed across the base. She's wearing her camo uniform and a maroon beret. She passes some ENLISTED MEN jogging for morning P.T. (Physical Training). They crisply salute her as they pass.

13 **EXT. SPECIAL OPS GATE - ARMY BASE - MORNING**

Nora approaches the gate to the high-security sector of the base: *the Special Ops Compound*. Maroon tarping covers the tall fence, hiding it from view of the conventional forces.

Nora flashes her P.I.V. (Personal Identity Verification) card to the M.P. positioned outside the gate. He waves her past. She then scans the card on a keypad and punches in an eight-digit code. The door clicks open. She pushes through.

13A **EXT. SPECIAL OPS GARRISON - ARMY BASE - MORNING**

Nora enters the high-tech complex of hangars, offices and tarmac that's home of the Shadow Raiders. She heads to...

14 **EXT. SPECIAL OPS FLIGHT LINE - ARMY BASE - MORNING**

The flight line is a wide stretch of runway where the unit's helicopters are "parked." The entire SHADOW RAIDERS COMPANY, numbering about 200, is assembled for morning formation.

As the camera scans the crowd, we see they're almost all male. Nora is one of only four women in the unit. We spot Ian among the company. He watches as Nora makes her way to the front, where Gallo is waiting. She salutes him.

GALLO

Last time I saw you, we both looked a lot worse.

NORA

That may be the understatement of the year, sir.

GALLO

You're good? Leg healing up?

Nora nods. Seems there's something else she wants to say to him... but before she can, the COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR shouts.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
Atten-shun! Present arms! Order
arms!

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Today we welcome back to duty
Captain Leland Gallo and Warrant
Officer Nora Madani. I have the
honor of presenting you both with
the Distinguished Flying Cross, for
valor and perseverance in the face
of extreme odds.

A GENERAL approaches and presents them with the medals.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS (CONT'D)
After your aircraft was damaged by
enemy fire, you safely evac-ed your
team before performing a high-risk
ditch maneuver. When you were then
unable to contact the others, you
deployed your wilderness survival
training until rescue was possible.
Your actions are a testament to
this unit and the entire Special
Ops community.

THE CROWD
HOOAH!

The shout sounds very impressive from 200 voices at once.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Now let's take a moment to honor
those who remain unaccounted-for.
Sergeants Hendrix, Balewa and
Dallas of the Delta Force Combined
Applications Group; O.G.A. Operator
Richard; and our Sergeant Jimmy
Kam. Our thoughts and prayers are
with them.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
Diiiiissmised!

THE CROWD
Hooah.

As the formation starts to break up, Nora turns to Gallo.

NORA
I've been trying to reach you.

Gallo glances around to make sure no one else is listening.

GALLO

It's better you don't. As long as
nothing's changed.

NORA

No. Nothing's changed, but...

GALLO

We got other things to think about, alright? They're plugging us into a training exercise this week. N.O.E. course, below treeline. Get stoked.

With that, he starts off. But Nora goes after him, keeping her voice low so no one else will hear.

NORA

Sir, the decision we made was a mistake. Ever since, it's all I can think about.

She has more to say, but she stops herself when she sees the Command Sergeant Major approaching.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

Gallo, Madani: the Colonel wants to see you in his office.

Off Nora and Gallo, wondering what this is about...

15

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - ARMY BASE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Nora and Gallo step in the door and stand at attention.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

At ease. I'll get right to it. Madani, you're being placed on administrative duty.

(to Gallo)

You'll fly with someone else for the time being.

NORA

I don't understand. You just gave me a medal...

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

You've been through a lot. A downed bird, then six days stuck in those mountains. I think a break from flying is warranted.

NORA

We *both* went through all that.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Captain Gallo has a lot more
experience with combat stress.

GALLO

With all due respect: she's squared away. There's no reason for this.

NORA

Did I not pass my psych eval? Is that what's going on?

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

No, you passed. But there were concerns. Anxiety about getting back in the cockpit. And your injury. I understand you're still in some pain.

NORA

I'm fine.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

My decision is made. We'll revisit in three months.

Gallo accepts it. But Nora doesn't. She keeps pushing.

NORA

Sir, if you would just --

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

Look. There're a lot of officers in command who think we shouldn't have opened combat positions to women. Let's not give them any fodder, alright? You have your orders.

Though he says it with a fatherly concern, the words still sting. Off Nora's face, knowing this conversation is over...

16

INT. SHADOW RAIDERS COMMAND CENTER - ARMY BASE - DAY

Nora and Gallo leave the meeting. She's crushed.

GALLO

Hey, 3 months is nothing. I've had leftovers I kept longer than that.

Nora isn't amused. And now Ian's coming over. He saw her from across the room, and he can tell she's upset.

IAN

What's going on?

NORA

I'm grounded. For three months.

IAN
Are you okay?

NORA
You know how many times you've
asked me that since I got back?

Bristling, she starts toward the exit.

IAN
Where're you going?

NORA
If I'm not flying today, there's
something else I need to do.

With that, she's gone. Leaving Ian with Gallo -- who gives him a *can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em* shrug.

17 **INT. LIVING ROOM - JESS'S HOUSE - ARMY BASE - LATER**

Jess is on the couch, staring dead-eyed at a KIDS' CARTOON on TV. Its joyful energy is in stark contrast to her grave face. The DOORBELL rings down the hall. Jess calls out.

JESS
Come in, it's open.

A moment later, Nora steps into the room. A beat while the two women look at each other. So many emotions between them.

NORA
Jess. Hi.

She goes to Jess, throws her arms around her, hugs her tight.

NORA (CONT'D)
I would've come by earlier, but I
rehabbed in Germany. I only got
back Saturday...

JESS
I know. Sit.
(gesturing to the TV)
I've been watching Max's cartoons.
Anything to distract me.

Once Nora's seated, she notices the wall opposite. There's a large unfinished MURAL on it. The outline of a world map, with only half the colors filled in.

NORA
Whoa. When did that happen?

JESS

Max is obsessed with maps these days, so Jimmy had this bright idea. He didn't get to finish before he left. And now...

She trails off. Too painful to continue the sentence.

NORA

If there's anything you need, just, please let me know.

JESS

I need answers. "Missing" isn't an answer. They won't even tell me what country it happened in.

NORA

The mission is classified.

This response triggers a burst of frustration from Jess.

JESS

Like they *all* are. Do you know what it's like to be married to someone who can't tell you where he's going, or when he'll be back?
(re: the unfinished mural)
It's like this. Half of a thing.

Nora understands that Jess is channeling her grief into anger. She wishes she knew how to ease her friend's pain.

NORA

Jess. I'm so sorry.

JESS

It's not fair. You and Gallo don't have families, why are you the ones who...
(she stops herself)
I don't mean that.

NORA

No, you're right. It isn't fair.

Survivor's Guilt is a heavy thing. It's hitting Nora hard.

18

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - ARMY BASE - LATER

Nora lets herself in. She rubs her right leg: it's aching. She grabs the bottle of pain killers, pops one. Then picks up her Flying Cross medal and looks at it for a long moment.

She tosses the medal onto the bed and goes into the closet. She sits down at the drum kit, puts on a pair of headphones. She cranks up music. It's driving rock, maybe The Black Keys. Nora picks up a pair of sticks and plays along. Her drumming is controlled, precise, aggressive. She's making a decision.

We see what follows in QUICK CUTS: Nora dials Captain Gallo on her cell phone... gets no answer...

19 **OMITTED**

20 **OMITTED**

21 **EXT. GALLO'S HOUSE - OFF BASE - LATER**

A modest house with an unmowed lawn. The only thing well-kept about the place is the Ducati motorcycle parked out front.

Nora pulls into the driveway in her well-worn pickup truck (looks like model from the early 2000s). She climbs out, knocks on the front door. After a moment, Gallo answers. He's in a T-shirt and boxers. He's surprised to see her.

GALLO

You realize this is fraternizing.
You coming here alone.

NORA

We need to talk, sir.

She pushes past him into the house.

22 **INT. KITCHEN - GALLO'S HOUSE - OFF BASE - NIGHT**

Gallo follows her in.

GALLO

Sorry for the outfit. You woke me.

NORA

It's only nine o'clock.

GALLO

I didn't get much sleep last night.

NORA

I'm having trouble sleeping too.
(sees his face, realizes)
Oh. Not what you meant.

Gallo flashes a roguish grin. Then he throws open the fridge.

GALLO
You want anything?

NORA
No.

He gets a beer for himself, cracks it open.

GALLO
I went back to the Colonel about
your desk duty situation, but he
wasn't having it.
(he shrugs, then)
You should have Ian try. The
Colonel loves his Eagle Scout ass.

NORA
I'm not here about desk duty.

Her voice is dead serious. Suddenly Gallo is worried.

GALLO
You said nothing had changed.

NORA
We got medals today. You don't feel
guilt about that?

GALLO
Sure I feel guilt. But allow me to
quote the great Justin Bieber: it's
too late now to say I'm sorry.

NORA
I don't understand how you're so
fine. We lied in our debriefs.

GALLO
We made that decision together.

NORA
If we get caught...

GALLO
That's paranoia talking. The
mission review's closed. We're good
as long as our stories matched.

NORA
I said everything we agreed on.
Richard bailed with the prisoner
and that's the last we saw of them.

GALLO

Then there's no problem.

NORA

There is for me. I want to come clean. To Ian, to the Colonel...

Gallo reacts like he just got slapped. He interrupts her.

GALLO

You're out of your mind.

NORA

There's something bigger going on here.

GALLO

We've been over this.

NORA

Richard lied about the prisoner. Why?

GALLO

Telling the truth won't help find Jimmy. It won't help *anyone*. Least of all you.

He says it with fierce certainty. But Nora's not convinced.

NORA

I joined the Army to be one of the good guys. That's not how this feels.

GALLO

People don't want boots on the ground, so this is what war is now. Covert ops. Blurred lines. *That's* what you joined.

NORA

Nice speech.

GALLO

I've been giving it to myself a lot lately. Because we have no choice. We need to keep our mouths shut.

He reaches out and touches her arm. It's the first time we've seen them touch. Beat.

NORA

You're right. And I hate it.

She's convinced now. But not one bit less unsettled.

23

INT. JESS'S HOUSE - ARMY BASE - NIGHT

A PHONE is ringing on the kitchen wall.

JESS (O.S.)
Sweetie, will you get that?

Little Max comes running in. He grabs the phone.

MAX
Hello?
(beat, he beams)
Daddy?

Jess hears it and comes racing into the room. Off her face, reeling from the fact that *her missing husband is on the phone*, we SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF EXTENDED TEASER

ACT ONE

24 **OMITTED**

25 **INT. BASEMENT - SOMALIA - DAY**

A dirt-floored basement, lit by one narrow window high on the wall. There's a man here, his hands and feet bound with zip ties. It's Crank, one of the CAG Operators. Now we hear a door open and down a concrete set of stairs come TWO CAPTORS, both Somali men. *They're dragging Jimmy.*

He's blindfolded, bound and bruised, face covered in a month of beard. The Captors shove Jimmy onto his knees, take off his blindfold, then return upstairs. The door clangs shut.

CRANK

You alright?

JIMMY

They finally decided how to use us.

He sounds dazed. Processing what just happened to him.

CRANK

What do you mean? What happened up there?

JIMMY

They shoved a sat phone into my hand and told me to dial my wife. Said they'd shoot me if I didn't.

CRANK

So you called their bluff.

Jimmy is silent. Which tells Crank all he needs to know.

CRANK (CONT'D)

A soldier's duty is resist or escape. Nothing else.

JIMMY

I wanted to hear her voice. You would've done the same.

CRANK

Dammit, man. You have no idea the mess you just started.

Off Jimmy's face, the truth of that sinking in...

26

INT. SHADOW RAIDERS COMMAND CENTER - ARMY BASE - DAY

The room is full of Shadow Raiders, including Nora and Gallo. There's a BUSTLE OF ACTIVITY as Colonel Haskins leads FIVE C.I.A. STAFFERS through the office. They look intense as hell, with expressions of stone. Their leader is the stoniest of all: THEA (late 20s, a cool-eyed doberman).

They approach the front of the room, where Ian is waiting for them. Colonel Haskins does the introductions.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Lieutenant Porter is one of our
best intel officers. He'll be your
primary liaison.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
(giving Ian a once-over)
Anyone every tell you that you look
like an action figure?

She gives an inscrutable half-smile: it's one of her things. That, and a love of putting people off their guard.

IAN
No, ma'am.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
You're adorable.

Ian doesn't know how to respond. Colonel Haskins glances at Thea's team. Is this twenty-something really the one in charge here?

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Are we waiting on anyone else from
your team?

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
No, Colonel. Buck stops with me.
Let's get started.

She heads to the front of the room. She passes by Gallo, who not-so-subtly looks her up. She meets his eyes, unflinching.

The Colonel hangs behind with Ian for a moment, to explain the presence of Thea's team.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
O.G.A. is taking lead on this. I
can't get a straight answer why.

He isn't happy about it. Now he goes to the front of the room. All fall silent. He addresses the assembled group.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS (CONT'D)
Take a seat. Last night, Jimmy Kam
called home on a scrambled sat
phone.

Ripples of shock and joy pass over the room.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS (CONT'D)
He's been captured. Along with one
of the CAG operators, Sergeant
Hendrix.

Nora and Gallo's joy curdles now, turning to concern.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS (CONT'D)
This is Thea, from O.G.A.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
(correcting him)
It's Thay-a.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Her team's gonna be embedding with
us for awhile.

Thea steps forward and takes over the briefing.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
These are the first P.O.W.s since
Bergdahl. That's not a good thing,
in case any of you are fuzzy on the
situation. Everyone from POTUS on
down has been briefed, and our
orders are keep it quiet. Media
blackout, top-level classification.
Clear? Okay, play the video.

A C.I.A. Staffer clicks a few keys on a laptop, and a video
appears on a screen at the front of the room. It's Jess.

27 **OMITTED**

28 **INT. HOLDING ROOM - ARMY BASE - DAY (RECORDED VIDEO)**

Jess faces the camera in a military holding room.

JESS
Our son answered the phone. Jimmy
asked him to put me on.

DEBRIEFER (O.S.)

And what did he say to you?

JESS

He explained what happened. There were four of them who bailed out of the Black Hawk together, him and three Delta Force guys.

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

They got surrounded and there was a fire fight. Two got killed. Then Jimmy and Sergeant Hendrix ran out of ammunition. They got...

(collects herself, then)

They were beaten unconscious and captured.

DEBRIEFER (O.S.)

Did your husband mention a man named Richard? Or the prisoner they had in custody?

JESS

He said they were still in the helicopter when he bailed.

DEBRIEFER (O.S.)

What else did Jimmy tell you?

JESS

There are demands. Fifty ISIS prisoners in exchange for the two of them. Then the line went dead.

The video freeze-frames. BACK TO --

29

INT. SHADOW RAIDERS COMMAND CENTER - ARMY BASE - DAY

Nora and Gallo stare at the screen, trying to process all of this. Meantime, C.I.A. Officer Thea clicks a few buttons on the laptop and Jess disappears, replaced by a map of Somalia.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

We believe they're in the Golis Mountains, held by one of the Al Shabaab factions that've flipped to ISIS. Our best guess is it's the group led by this man.

On the screen: an image of a fierce-eyed man in his late 30s.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA (CONT'D)

Khalid Samatar. Also known as "The Surgeon." I won't get into why.

GALLO

'Scuse me. Your best guess? That's all you've got?

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

It's Captain Gallo, right? And Ms. Madani. The Ones Who Made It Back.

Gallo meets her ice-cold gaze.

GALLO

We did what we were trained to do.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

I know, I read your debriefs. And I wouldn't be here if you hadn't crashed your helo.

(back to business)

Now: we expect that when Samatar's people make contact again, it'll be through an intermediary. This first volley was more about theatrics than anything.

She clicks to a new image on-screen: C.I.A. Officer Richard.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA (CONT'D)

As for Richard and the prisoner... Mrs. Kam's account corroborates the one we already have. They evac'd the Black Hawk after the others, and continue to be M.I.A.

Richard is one of the Agency's most valued officers. The search for him is ongoing.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

But *our* focus is on the ones we know're alive. We've been told a prisoner exchange is off the table. So the only way they get out is we break them out. We're assembling a team to plan and execute a rescue mission. O.G.A. on logistics, CAGs doing the door-kicking, us providing transpo. Gallo, Suarez, Sood, Nilsson: you'll be flying. Porter, DeWaal, Branch: TacOps. Green and Madani: you'll handle flight planning.

Nora looks far from happy about her assignment.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

The projected mission scope is months, not weeks. We have to find them first. But make no mistake: we'll get them back. Until then, you're stuck with us.

Another patented Thea half-smile. And off the screen, now with images of Jimmy and Crank's faces...

30

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - ARMY BASE - LATER

The Colonel looks up as Nora bursts in.

NORA

Sir, you have to let me fly this mission.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

You're grounded, Madani.

NORA

I know those mountains. I studied them like crazy before we went in. Not only that. Captain Gallo and I have been paired up for a year. You put him with someone else, no way he flies as well.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

He'll adapt. I already have this O.G.A. kid up my ass, I don't need you in there too.

But Nora is not giving up.

NORA

The psychologist said I'm fine to fly. I don't understand why you won't accept that.

The Colonel is tired of this argument. So he blurts out...

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

Because Lieutenant Porter asked me not to.

NORA

(stunned)

What? Why would he do that?

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

He knows you better than anyone. And he doesn't think you're squared away.

This infuriates Nora, but she's not going to let the Colonel see that. Very calmly, she says...

NORA

Sir, we all know how you got your Silver Star. Fire fight in Falluja, you went back for an injured soldier who got left behind.

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)
I'm asking you to let me do the
same thing.

This has its intended effect. The Colonel softens. A little.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
You'd need to prove you're up to
it.

NORA
However you want.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Alright. You'll fly the Nap-of-the-
Earth exercise on Thursday, but
you'll do it as pilot-in-command.
Captain Gallo won't touch the
controls unless you choke.

Nora doesn't like the sound of that. But she doesn't say it.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS (CONT'D)
You've never done below treeline on
your own, have you?

NORA
No, sir.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Then you better start practicing.

Nora doesn't feel anywhere close to confident about the test
she's been given. But she knows it's her only shot.

As we hold on her face, we hear SOUND PRELAP.

IAN (O.S.)
I can explain...

31 **EXT. SHADOW RAIDERS CENTRAL COMMAND - ARMY BASE - MINUTES LATER**

Nora and Ian are on the lawn in front of HQ, in a heated
argument. They're keeping their voices low so no one
overhears them. But it's clear Nora is pissed.

NORA
You went around my back.

IAN
I tried to talk to you about it.
You wouldn't.

NORA
Because I'm fine.

IAN
You think I don't notice you taking those pills?

NORA
The doctor said "as needed". And I'd never do it when I'm flying.

IAN
Nora...

NORA
When I joined this unit, I knew I'd have to work twice as hard to prove myself to them. I'm fine with that. But to you, too? That's messed up.

IAN
(maddeningly cool)
Okay, you need to calm down.

NORA
Or maybe you could try *not* being calm. FOR ONCE EVER.

IAN
I almost lost you over there. I don't want you getting in the cockpit if you're not ready.

NORA
I'm going back for Jimmy. Nothing's getting in the way of that.

With that, she storms off across the lawn.

32

INT. HANGAR EQUIPMENT ROOM - ARMY BASE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Nora is suiting up to fly. It'll be her first time in the cockpit since the mission in Somalia.

She straps on her flight vest and pulls on her helmet.

Then she goes to close her locker. *As she does, she glimpses the bottle of painkillers in her bag inside.* Pauses.

She doesn't take one.

Just slams shut the locker, heads out.

33 **EXT. SPECIAL OPS FLIGHT LINE - ARMY BASE - DAY**

Nora crosses the tarmac to the line of Black Hawks. Gallo is waiting for her, leaning against one of the helos.

GALLO

I don't know how you changed the Colonel's mind, but I'm impressed. You ready for your practice run?

NORA

Yes, sir. We're taking Adele?

It's the nickname of the Black Hawk that Gallo's leaning on. He pats its metal flank affectionately and they climb in.

34 **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

Gallo and Nora snap into their seatbelt harnesses. Gallo starts checklist procedures as Nora digs in her flight vest, takes out the wooden toy and sets it on the console. But then, as Nora starts to turn on the radio, Gallo stops her.

GALLO

Hold up. Before they can hear us...

NORA

Yeah?

Gallo's face is serious. Troubled.

GALLO

It isn't normal for O.G.A. to sweep in like this. There *is* something bigger going on here. If we're gonna get Jimmy out safe, we need to know what.

NORA

So you agree with me now.

GALLO

Don't rub it in.

NORA

The first step is ID-ing the prisoner we had that night.

GALLO

I've got a friend who can help. I'm on it, soon as we're done here.

Nora nods. Now, conversation done, she turns on the radio.

NORA
 Renegade One-Two. Adele's ready to
 roll in the deep.

She fires up the engines. As the rotor comes to life, we hear the deafening chuck-chuck-chuck. Nora reaches for the cyclic stick. *Her hand is shaking, just a little.* Gallo notices.

GALLO
 You nervous?

NORA
 No sir.

But she's lying.

35 **EXT. SPECIAL OPS FLIGHT LINE - ARMY BASE - DAY**

The Black Hawk lifts up off the tarmac. Like a brutally graceful metal bird, it soars into the sky.

36 **INT. BLACK HAWK - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Nora operates the controls, Gallo is beside her.

GALLO
 I couldn't get us clearance for the
 actual course today. But this'll do
 for practice.

He points out the window. Down below, we see a housing development. A cul-de-sac with rows of white houses.

NORA
 How'd you get permission for
 residential?

GALLO
 It's empty. The developer went
 belly up, never finished.

Nora tilts the cyclic stick forward and begins to descend.

37 **EXT. DESERTED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - DAY**

An eerily empty street, lines of unfinished homes with yards that never got planted.

The Black Hawk approaches.

38 **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

They're about a hundred feet off the ground now.

GALLO

Bring her below the roofs, then
shoot down the line. 120 knots.

Nora nods. She lowers the Black Hawk until they're hovering ten feet off the street, a canyon of houses on either side. Then she pulls up on the collective control, and the helo rushes between the houses.

Nora is nervous; we see it in her face. And we see her wince whenever she uses her right leg on the anti-torque pedal.

GALLO (CONT'D)

You're drifting down, watch that.

Nora adjusts the collective. But not quickly enough...

...Because they're approaching the tall line of trees at the end of the street. Moving at a terrifying speed. They're going to slam right into them.

GALLO (CONT'D)

Trees, Madani! You need to pull up
NOW!

But instead of pulling up -- *Nora freezes*. For a split second, but it'd be long enough to cause disaster if Gallo didn't take over the controls. He jerks back on the cyclic and they bank up sharply. Just making it over the trees. Skimming the branches.

GALLO (CONT'D)

You almost killed us both.

Nora is shaken. Furious at herself, too. SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO39 **INT. BLACK HAWK - SOMALIA - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

One month earlier: the mission that started it all, right after the rocket hit them. Everything in the Black Hawk is shaking, and steaming hot hydraulic fluid gushes everywhere.

On Nora's leg, where she was shot, a blood stain grows. She ignores the pain, focused on helping fly the damaged helo.

NORA

We lost Engine 2!

Jimmy responds on intercom from the back, where he's huddled with C.I.A. Officer Richard, the three CAG Operators (one of them wounded) and the hooded Prisoner.

JIMMY

Confirmed. Fire on Engine 2!

Flames are springing from the side of the helo. Jimmy grabs an extinguisher, starts blasting at them. And up in front --

GALLO

She's shaking like crazy. We're gonna have to bring her down.

NORA

We need to get as far from the tangos as possible.

GALLO

We're not making it much farther. Find us someplace safe. All I see is rocks down there.

NORA

(scanning the map)
There's a lake. West Southwest, two clicks.

Gallo turns the bird and starts heading that way.

NORA (CONT'D)

We have to evac the others before we ditch. Too dangerous otherwise.

Gallo nods, then addresses the passengers over intercom.

GALLO

Listen up. We're gonna bring her to a hover over the water.

(MORE)

GALLO (CONT'D)

You'll all bail, then we'll get as far from you as we can. Thirty seconds out.

Nora grabs the wooden toy off the console, puts it in her flight vest. She's not leaving it behind.

In back, Jimmy tears the photo of Jess and Max off the wall. He's not leaving that. Meanwhile, Richard grabs the Prisoner, jerking the hooded man up by his tied hands. Nora sees this.

NORA

He'll drown with that hood on.

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD

It's not coming off.

Gallo wrestles the controls to bring the Black Hawk down toward the lake.

40 **EXT. LAKE - SOMALIA - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

The Black Hawk hovers over the lake in the darkness.

41 **INT. BLACK HAWK - SOMALIA - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

Jimmy throws open the side door.

JIMMY

Go go go!

The CAGs bail into the rushing water, one after another. Then Jimmy goes. Richard is last -- he's about to jump out with the Prisoner when the helicopter VIOLENTLY BUCKS.

Richard and the Prisoner go toppling back into the bird. Richard rolls to one side, The Prisoner to the other. He slams into the back of Nora's seat.

Meanwhile, Gallo struggles to steady the helo and guide it across the lake, as far from the others as he can. Until...

GALLO

I'm losing the controls! We're going down!

Nora looks at the Prisoner, with that hood over his head. She makes a decision: she won't let him drown. She reaches for his hood. Richard sees and shouts --

RICHARD

Hey! HEY!

But from where he is, Richard can't stop her. Nora tears off the hood. Now we see the Prisoner's face. He doesn't look Somali at all. He's a clean-shaven white guy with duct tape over his mouth.

On his chest, exposed by his half-open shirt, is a TATTOO. A skull with wings and the number 802. Nora stares.

GALLO

This is it!

We hold on Gallo's face as the Black Hawk goes crashing into the water. SMASH TO --

42 **OMITTED**

43 **OMITTED**

44 **INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - PERSONNEL CENTER - ARMY BASE - MORNING**

On Gallo's face. He was spacing out... remembering. He shakes it out of his mind.

As he does, the camera pulls back and we see he's in the office where Army personnel records are stored, seated at a table covered in folders. He glances up as Nora enters.

NORA

Morning. Sorry I'm late.

GALLO

You look thrilled to be awake.

NORA

I slept like crap.

GALLO

I bet. All that guilt over nearly killing us yesterday.

He's teasing her, but she doesn't find it funny. At all.

NORA

I'm going to hit the simulator hard between now and the flight test. I'll be ready.

Someone steps in: Anna. (From Gallo's bed in the Teaser.) She's a civilian employee here. Carrying more folders.

ANNA

Here're some more.

GALLO

This is my friend Anna. She's getting us all the records for the 802.

ANNA

Hope you find whatever you're looking for, cowboy.

She goes, but not before giving Gallo a coquettish smile.

NORA

How exactly do you know her?

GALLO

We go out now and then. She's into some kinky stuff. Loves handcuffs.

NORA

I did not need to know that.

Gallo smiles, shrugs. Nora turns her attention to the stack of printouts. On the top page is a *skull with wings and the number 802*. It's one of the symbols of the 802nd Infantry.

*

NORA (CONT'D)

This is the tattoo I saw.
(looks over at Gallo)
They told us we were targeting a Somali national that night.

*
*
*
*
*

GALLO

Instead we got an American soldier. Doesn't make sense to me either.

*
*
*

NORA

Let's find his face.

*

As they start poring through the files, CUT TO --

45

INT. THEA'S OFFICE - ARMY BASE - DAY

Thea and her C.I.A. Staffers have colonized this room as their temporary office. At the moment, they're using it to meet with Colonel Haskins and Ian.

On the screen at the front is a map of Somalia, with a small section highlighted.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

Our sources are pointing us here,
saying to look for walled
compounds. But satellites are
obscured by storms and our
surveillance flights are grounded.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

And why is that?

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
These mountains are in an
autonomous region of Somalia.
Called Puntland.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
I'm aware.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
Right, so maybe you can guess why
they'd be pissed that a Black Hawk
crashed in their borders... on a
mission they'd never heard about.
They've retaliated by closing their
air space to us.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
We got in without them knowing
before, we can do it again.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
No. State Department says we're
playing ball.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Why??

Ian chimes in now, guessing at the answer.

IAN
Oil, sir. There's a lot of it in
Puntland. And a lot of U.S. firms
who'd like to drill it.

Thea glares at Ian. She does not appreciate the interjection.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Don't tell me we're risking
American lives because of some oil
reserves.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
It's hardly the first time.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
This is what happens when civilian
agencies run military ops. Bolo'd
from the start.

He's done with this meeting. He gets up, storms out. Beat.

Thea turns to Ian, with that inscrutable half-smile of hers.

THEA
 "Bolo'd." I assume that's some sort
 of Army slang?
 (before Ian can respond)
 I can guess what it means. Let's
 continue.

And as the meeting goes on, we CUT TO --

46 **INT. BASEMENT - SOMALIA - NIGHT**

Halfway across the world, Jimmy and Crank huddle in the dark.

CRANK
 Hey rotor-head. You awake?
 (off a grunted response)
 I want you to think. What'd you
 hear when you were upstairs?

JIMMY
 I don't know. Men's voices.

CRANK
 How many?

JIMMY
 Hard to say. Four or five.

CRANK
 Anything else?

JIMMY
 A call to prayer. From outside.

CRANK
 So we're near a village. That's
 good. What direction was the sound?

JIMMY
 To the right... maybe ten feet from
 the top of the stairs. There was a
 breeze from that way too.

CRANK
 That's an exit.
 (a plan is taking shape)
 This is where we should do it,
 before they move us again. We get
 our hands free, we'll have surprise
 on our side. Overpower them, take
 their weapons, fight our way out.

Jimmy can't believe he's hearing this.

JIMMY
No way that'll work. We'll get
ourselves killed.

CRANK
You'd rather sit here and wait til
they cut our heads off?

JIMMY
(he's utterly overwhelmed)
I don't know... I don't know.

CRANK
We have a shot. We gotta take it.

Off Jimmy's blindfolded face, so unsure what to do, CUT TO --

47 **INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - PERSONNEL CENTER - ARMY BASE - DAY**

Nora and Gallo continue digging through personnel files. Her
PHONE VIBRATES. She glances down to see who's texted her.

NORA
It's Jess.

GALLO
Go. I'll keep looking. If I get
bored, I'll take a handcuff break.

He flashes a grin: he said that to mess with her. Nora rolls
her eyes and goes. Gallo starts on another stack of papers.

48 **EXT. PARADE GROUNDS - ARMY BASE - DAY**

A company of ENLISTED SOLDIERS practice maneuvers out on the
lawn, marching in careful sync beneath a giant American flag.
Jess is watching from a set of bleachers off to the side.
That's where Nora finds her.

JESS
I like watching drills. Something
calming about it.

NORA
(she understands)
Yeah. Order.

JESS
Never been my strong suit. Jimmy
and I were dating three months when
I got pregnant.
(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

Then, suddenly, I'm an Army Wife. I had no idea what I was getting into.

NORA

You never told me that.

JESS

I'm not proud of it.

(beat, then)

I need to ask you something. What's O.G.A.?

NORA

"Other Government Agency." It's a euphemism we use.

JESS

For what?

NORA

For the C.I.A.

It takes Jess a moment to process that. She's shaken.

JESS

They made me sign something, saying I can't tell anyone Jimmy's been captured. Not even my son.

NORA

Right now, Jimmy's a lot more valuable alive. If this leaks, that situation gets less stable.

JESS

(cynically)

Right. And a prisoner exchange isn't good P.R. either.

NORA
We're going to get him out.

JESS
How?

NORA
That's classified.

JESS
This is insane. I can't talk to anyone, I can't *know* anything, I just have to sit and wait?? Please, tell me where he is. At least tell me that.

NORA
I can't.

JESS
(bitter sarcasm)
Because it's your *duty*. And that's more important than anything else.

NORA
Yes.

JESS
I can't understand living like that.

NORA
It's how Jimmy lives too.

JESS
Yeah, and I've never understood it.

She spits out the words. Beat. Just the sounds of the drills. Jess calms. Then she makes a confession.

JESS (CONT'D)
I was cheating on him, Nora.
Thinking about leaving him, too.
But now? All I want is a chance to try again.

Nora is hit hard by this. She has no idea what to say, so she says nothing. Jess turns to her, eyes pleading.

JESS (CONT'D)
Just promise you'll do everything you can.

NORA

I'm going to get myself on the team that goes in... and we will get him out. But you need to promise me something too. You won't give up.

Jess nods, wishing she knew how to do that.

Somewhere in the distance, there's the sound of a CANNON. It's time for the daily Retreat Ceremony. Every soldier out in the field abruptly stops and turns to salute the flag. Nora does as duty requires: she stands and salutes too.

As for Jess, she just stays sitting.

49

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - PERSONNEL CENTER - ARMY BASE - DAY

Gallo is still going through photos. He flips a new page and sees it: *the face of the prisoner from that night in Somalia*. He reads the print below the image. His eyes go wide.

GALLO

Son of a bitch.

He pulls out his phone, snaps photos of the file, then gets up and hurries out the door. Determination on his face.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

50 **OMITTED**

51 **OMITTED**

52 **INT. HALLWAY - ARMY BASE - DAY**

Gallo hurries down the hall, a man on the mission. He passes SEVERAL OTHER Shadow Raiders, chatting, then arrives at a door marked SIMULATOR ROOM. Just as Nora steps out of it.

GALLO
I thought you'd be here. How'd it go?

NORA
Much better today.

It's a lie, but Gallo doesn't know that. Besides, he has other things on his mind. He doesn't want the others to hear.

GALLO
Let's walk.

As they head off down the hall, away from the others...

GALLO (CONT'D)
I found our guy. But we can't talk about it here.
(passing a slip of paper)
Meet me at this address, 2100.

NORA
I thought I was the paranoid one.

Gallo answers that with a rueful smile. And as they reach a fork in the hallway, Gallo peels off.

Nora pockets the slip of paper and heads the other way. We follow her down the hall until she comes across... Ian.

He's about to step into the briefing room. He stops and their eyes meet. It's a tense moment, given their argument the other day.

But there are other people around, so neither says a word. Nora just keeps walking, and Ian goes into...

53 **OMITTED**

54 **INT. THEA'S OFFICE - ARMY BASE - DAY**

C.I.A. Officer Thea looks up from her laptop as Ian steps in.

 IAN

 Do you have a moment?

She gives him a cold smile.

 C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

 For you, Lieutenant? Always.

 IAN

 I did some research. Puntland is starting an Anti-Terror Unit. It was one of their president's campaign promises.

 C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

 It's a joke. Poor training, no resources.

 IAN

 Exactly. We can help them look better. Do the rescue op as a joint mission; let them take credit for saving two Americans. It'd be a big incentive to reopen their air space.

Thea is impressed, despite herself.

 C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

 Adorable *and* smart. It's a good idea.

 IAN

 The Colonel thought so too.

 C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

 Well, then. I'll run it by State.
 (as Ian turns to go)
 Before you go. I understand that you and Ms. Madani are a couple.

Ian wasn't expecting that.

 IAN

 That's right.

 C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

 For how long?

IAN

Two years. We met in the 101st. When I put in a packet for Special Ops, she did too. They'd just started taking female pilots.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

(nods, then)

And tell me, what're your thoughts on Captain Gallo?

IAN

Not sure what you mean, ma'am.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

They went through a lot together. That can create intense feelings.

IAN

He's her commanding officer. The rules around that are very clear.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

One last thing. Monday evening, she left the base alone. Stayed out several hours.

IAN

You're checking the exit logs?

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

We're running a deep-black operation; I'm doing my due diligence. Any idea where she went?

Beat. And then, although he has no idea, Ian covers for Nora.

IAN

I believe she went to a movie, ma'am. I could ask her which one.

He meets Thea's eyes, unflinching. He may be the one person in the world who's capable of being just as cool and controlled as she is.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

Thank you, Lieutenant. No need.

Her parting look to Ian is somewhere between threatening and flirtatious. He can't tell which.

56 **OMITTED**

57 **OMITTED**

58 **OMITTED**

59 **INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - THAT NIGHT**

Nora nudges open the door and steps into an otherworldly environment: the kitchen of an abandoned house, lit eerily by car headlights from outside.

There are holes in the walls and sections of the ceiling are crumbling away. The marble counter is cracking, and the sleek modern appliances are covered in layers of dust and dirt.

Gallo is standing inside, waiting for her, nursing a beer.

NORA

This neighborhood was creepy enough when we were flying through it. But *this* is next level.

GALLO

Hey, it's secure. We can't be too careful.

(gesturing around)

I figure this was the model home. They just left it all behind.

NORA

It reminds me of...

GALLO

A war zone, I know. Want a beer?

NORA

I don't drink.

Gallo thinks he detects a smugness in her voice.

GALLO

Question. Do you and Ian have contests to see who can get the stick furthest up their ass?

NORA

Just show me what you found.

Gallo hands her his phone -- the photos of the personnel file (with the Prisoner's face) are on the screen.

GALLO

802nd infantry, 4th brigade. Listed
as killed in action in 2014.

Nora stares at the man's face, stunned. Trying to process.

NORA

That's impossible. We saw him alive
a month ago.

GALLO

We've stumbled onto something here.
No idea what it means.

NORA

We should bring it to the Colonel.

GALLO

And say what? "We saw a dead guy in
Somalia. And by the way, we lied in
our debriefs." No. We can't do
anything until we have a lot more.

Nora knows he's right. Makes her feel even more overwhelmed.

NORA

I don't know how to keep this up.
I've told so many lies I've lost
count. My flying's gone to hell
too.

GALLO

You said it went well today.

NORA

Another lie.
(beat, then)
I thought I was stronger than this.

GALLO

You know what your problem is?

NORA

Can't wait for you to tell me.

GALLO

You're too hard on yourself. Duty
is not the opposite of weakness.

NORA

No, it's the cure for weakness.

GALLO

Wow. That's bleak.

NORA

I like structure, okay? Rules.
There was a time I didn't have
that. And it was bad.

GALLO

Thus the not drinking.
(off her nod)
You're aware there are other ways
to blow off steam.

NORA

Like kinky sex with admins.

GALLO

Don't knock it til you try it.

NORA

I'll stick with drumming.

GALLO

Drumming? You? Not seeing it.

NORA

My I.P. at Rucker said drums are a
lot like flying helos. Hands and
feet working separately. So I
bought a kit.

An impish smile spreads across Gallo's face.

GALLO

If you like banging on stuff, I've
got just the thing. The reason I
started coming to this place.

Gallo picks up a PIECE OF METAL PIPE from the corner of the
room. He winds up the pipe like a bat, and slams it into the
fridge. Adding a new dent to its already-cratered surface.

GALLO (CONT'D)

Sometimes it just feels good to hit
something.

He beats the fridge again and again with the pipe. Nora
stares. What he's doing is a little crazy. And she's
realizing something about him.

NORA

You act like nothing shakes you.
But you're a mess.

GALLO
Wanna try?

NORA
Why not.

She accepts the pipe.

GALLO
This wall's one of my favorites.
Very satisfying. Go wild, baby.

Nora takes a swing at the wall. The pipe CRASHES through, creating a new hole. She laughs. That was actually fun. She keeps swinging, pounding away chunks of wallboard.

GALLO (CONT'D)
Hooah! You show that wall!

Nora is really getting into it now. She turns the pipe on a metal wall stud, starts wailing on it. Denting it more with each blow. She's letting out all her anger, her fear, her frustration. Going nuts on that wall stud. And now tears are starting to come too.. she's breaking down...

GALLO (CONT'D)
Okay, now you're freaking me out.

But she keeps going. He lunges forward, grabs her, stops her.

Then, suddenly, they're kissing. The craziness of all this, the secrets they share, the electricity of the moment, it's taken over. It's frenzied and it's hot.

Gallo lifts Nora up onto the counter. She kisses his neck, he starts undoing her pants... then Nora comes to her senses.

NORA
We could be courtmartialed for
this.

Gallo steps away. Beat.

GALLO
We already have secrets. What's one
more?

NORA
No.

GALLO
You can't tell me you don't want
this too.

NORA

Duty is the cure for weakness. Sir.

With that one word, *sir*, Nora reminds him that he's her commanding officer and anything more is not an option. They stand there, facing each other. Both wanting more, but knowing they can't.

60

INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - ARMY BASE - LATER THAT NIGHT

The sound of keys in the door, then Nora steps in. She's shocked to find Ian sitting at her kitchen table.

NORA

What're you doing here?

IAN

I came by to talk about something.
Didn't expect you'd be out til two.

NORA

You could've called first.

IAN

My other girlfriend likes when I
surprise her.

He means it as a joke, an attempt at their regular banter. Little does he know, it resonates very differently now.

IAN (CONT'D)

You're not going to tell me where
you were?

NORA

I was driving. To clear my head.

IAN

The other night too?
(off Nora's confused look)
O.G.A. has their eye on you. That's
what I came to say. Any idea why?

This rattles Nora. She tries to hide from him just how much.

NORA

Look, I'm tired, I have my flight
test tomorrow...

IAN

I work in intelligence. It's my job to know when someone's hiding something. And you are. Ever since you got back. You can tell me.

For a moment, it seems like she actually might. Then...

NORA

There's nothing to tell.

Ian doesn't believe her. And now, for the first time, we see him lose his temper. It's like a switch just got thrown.

IAN

You're tired of me being calm??
Fine. YOU NEED TO CHOOSE. Start trusting me, or we're done. Let me know when you decide.

His anger is intense and explosive. Clearly he's got a lot of it bottled up inside. He goes, SLAMMING SHUT the door behind him. Leaving Nora alone and reeling.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

61 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - ARMY BASE - THE NEXT MORNING**

Nora's alarm clock goes off. 5 AM. She climbs out of bed, goes into the closet and sits down at her drum kit. But this time, rather than trying to contain her emotions through her playing, she lets them out. She pounds away like mad.

The SOUND OF HER DRUMMING underscores a series of QUICK CUTS: Nora getting dressed, collecting herself for this all-important test. Then she grabs her wooden toy and tucks it into her pocket...

Which is when she notices her hands. *They're shaking like mad.* She makes a decision. Grabs her bottle of pain killers.

She dumps out a pill on the dresser and uses the pill bottle to crush it. She scrapes the powder into a line...

AND SHE RAILS IT. That'll calm her nerves.

62 **OMITTED**

63 **OMITTED**

64 **OMITTED**

65 **OMITTED**

66 **EXT. SPECIAL OPS FLIGHT LINE - ARMY BASE - LATER**

Nora strides across the tarmac to a group that's clustered by the Black Hawks. FOUR SHADOW RAIDERS PILOTS are there, along with Gallo, Colonel Haskins and Ian.

 COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
I hope you'll make us both proud
today.

 NORA
I plan to, sir.

Now her eyes meet Ian's. It's awkward between them, after last night. Gallo sees the look. He wonders about it as he and Nora climb into one of the Black Hawks and the other pilots climb into theirs.

67 **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

Nora and Gallo buckle into their harnesses and begin checklist procedures. As they do, he asks her...

GALLO

Are we good?

She understands what he's asking. He wants to be sure she didn't tell Ian what happened between them last night.

NORA

All squared away.

She reaches into her flight vest, takes out the Hawkman toy, sets it on the console. Then she switches on the engines.

68 **EXT. SPECIAL OPS FLIGHT LINE - ARMY BASE - DAY**

Three Black Hawks, including Nora and Gallo's, take off. They rise in formation and soar into the sky. MEANWHILE --

69 **INT. BASEMENT - SOMALIA - EVENING**

Jimmy and Crank sit, hands and feet bound, trying to get some sleep. They're awakened when the DOOR CLANGS OPEN.

In come the two Somali Captors, bearing trays of food. They're followed by a third man. We recognize him from the picture in the intel briefing. This is THE SURGEON.

He points to Crank and instructs his comrades in Arabic.

THE SURGEON

This one first.

Captor 1 holds his AK-47 on Crank while Captor 2 unbinds his wrists. Then the Captor places the tray of food on the floor in front of Crank. It's gray-looking chicken in sludgy sauce. Crank digs in, ravenously.

Meantime, Jimmy addresses the captors in halting Arabic.

JIMMY

*I read somewhere that you think
music is an insult to God. Is that
true?*

The Surgeon exchanges a look with the other Captors: he's impressed the hostage speaks Arabic. But he doesn't respond. So Jimmy launches into a song, at the top of his lungs.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Hello my baby, hello my honey,
Hello my ragtime gal, Send me a
kiss by wire, Baby, my heart's on
fire...

*
*
*
*

THE SURGEON

Shut him up.

Captor 1 goes to Jimmy, tries to shove a rag into his mouth.
But Jimmy struggles fiercely, singing even louder as he does.

JIMMY

If you refuse me, honey you lose
me, Then you'll be left alone, oh
baby, telephone and tell me
I'm your own...

*
*
*
*
*

The Surgeon takes things into his own hands. He PISTOL WHIPS
Jimmy in the face. Jimmy goes down, and the Captors pounce on
him. Hitting Jimmy again and again and again. Brutally.

While the others are distracted, *Crank pulls one of the small
bones from the chicken and palms it.* BACK TO --

70

INT. NORA & GALLO'S BLACK HAWK - DAY

Through the windshield, trees stretch into the distance: a
state forest. The two other Black Hawks are in front, headed
that way. Nora and Gallo are the last in line.

Gallo gestures to the Hawkman toy on the console.

GALLO

I think it's time you told me. What
is that thing?

NORA

It was a gift. My first deployment,
from this little Afghan girl. She
said until me, she didn't know
women could be soldiers.

GALLO

And now it's your rabbit's foot.

NORA

Kept me alive so far.

Out through the windshield, we can see the other Black Hawks
descending into a dry river gully in the forest below.

GALLO

Let's hope that doesn't change
today. Here we go.

Nora tilts the cyclic and they descend too... below the tree
line... until they're just a few feet above the river bed.

70A **EXT. RIVER GULLY - DAY**

They start speeding through the perilously narrow gully, trees on both sides, in line with the other helicopters. It's a precise, dangerous maneuver. A few feet in either direction and the rotors would hit a tree, spelling disaster.

70B **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

Nora's calm and controlled as she flies the dangerous course.

NORA

Do me a favor. Stop shadowing.

Gallo looks down at his hands. He *is* "shadowing", moving his hands over his controls as she moves hers. He stops. CUT TO --

71 **INT. SPECIAL OPS HANGAR - ARMY BASE - DAY**

C.I.A. Officer Thea enters, beelines to Ian and the Colonel.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

We just got word from State. Your bright idea worked, Lieutenant. The air space is open again, and we'll do this as a joint mission with the local unit.

IAN

I'm glad to hear it.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

We also got our operation codename. *Perseus*. Has a ring to it, don't you think?

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

Let me guess. Your choice.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA

(coolly)

I know you don't like me, Colonel. But I assure you nothing's getting "bolo'd". I'm here to bring those men back.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS

Yeah. I'd just like to know what *else* you're here for.

Thea doesn't answer that. Just smiles, inscrutable as ever...

72 **EXT. RIVER GULLY - DAY**

The line of Black Hawks continues through the test course.

72A **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

Nora is carefully navigating the last section of gully.

 GALLO
 You're almost through.

Nora nods, concentrating as she flies. Then Gallo shouts...

 GALLO (CONT'D)
 Heads up! Branch at one o'clock...

Before he even finishes, she's calmly dodged it. Now they're speeding toward a bend in the river. The end of the course. Nora pulls back the cyclic and the helo rises into the sky.

 GALLO (CONT'D)
 You did it, Madani.

 NORA
 Hooah!

She grins. Until, suddenly, the sound in the cockpit changes.

 NORA (CONT'D)
 Sounds like we lost an engine.

 GALLO
 Confirmed. Engine 2 out.

The helo convulses. Then engine sound cuts out completely.

 NORA
 We just lost them both.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

73 **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

Right where we left off, inside the Black Hawk cockpit.

GALLO
Confirmed. Both engines are dead.

NORA
How's that possible? The crew chief checked everything this morning.

GALLO
Main R.P.M. is dropping.

NORA
Try to restart with A.P.U.

GALLO
No. We have to initiate autorotation. We're losing altitude.

It's true, they've started to drop. For a second, we wonder is Nora going to freeze up again? But she doesn't.

NORA
Yes sir.

She takes control, talking herself through the procedure.

NORA (CONT'D)
Reducing collective... R.P.M. rising... eighty... eighty-five...

73A **EXT. SKY - DAY**

The helo is in free fall, rotor speed increasing...

73B **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

But it's not increasing quickly enough.

GALLO
Not enough. You need to get the air speed up.

Nora pushes the cyclic stick forward to increase speed. Which creates air flow to raise the rotors' R.P.M., which in turn gives Nora more control of the helicopter's movement.

NORA

R.P.M. at a hundred percent. And...
we're sixty feet off the deck.
Cyclic back, lever up, pedal in...

As Nora does this, it rapidly decelerates the helo...

73C **EXT. FIELD - DAY**

BOOM. The Black Hawk hits ground with a bump that shakes the whole thing. It's a hard landing, but a safe one.

73D **INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY**

All is calm now. And, without the engines, silent.

GALLO

Congratulations. Now you've passed
my test, too.

NORA

What?

GALLO

I shut off the engines.

NORA

Why would you do that??

GALLO

I needed to be sure you could hold
up under pressure. Last time, you
froze.

Anger flashes in Nora's eyes. She switches off the radio. No one at base can hear them now. Then she turns on him, fuming.

NORA

Never pull anything like that
again, understand? I need to be
able to trust you.

GALLO

Whoa, it was just a training
exercise...

NORA

Ian told me that O.G.A.'s been
watching me. Probably you too. If
we can't trust each other, we can't
trust anyone.

Gallo is hit hard by this. He looks over at Nora, sees how rattled she is too.

He reaches over, places his hand on hers.

They clasp hands for a long moment, there in the cockpit. Two people with a connection that no one else in the world shares. Neither saying a word.

The moment passes. Because, of course, there's a job to do. Duty to uphold. Nora clicks back on the radio.

NORA (CONT'D)
Renegade One-Two, returning to
base.

She fires up the engines.

73E **EXT. FIELD - DAY**

The Black Hawk's rotors spin to life and it lifts off.

74 **INT. SPECIAL OPS HANGAR - ARMY BASE - LATER**

Colonel Haskins is in the hangar with Ian, C.I.A. Officer Thea, and the other pilots. All are waiting for Gallo and Nora to return. Finally, they come striding in the doors.

COLONEL ROBERT HASKINS
Nice work, soldier.

He shakes her hand warmly. He really is glad she passed.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA
Yes, congratulations.

She offers her hand. Nora shakes it, trying to hide how wary she is of this woman who's been "keeping an eye" on her.

C.I.A. OFFICER THEA (CONT'D)
I'm looking forward to working
together, Ms. Madani. Welcome to
Operation Perseus.

She flashes one of her half-smiles before heading off. Leaving Nora utterly unsure what to make of the exchange.

Nora turns and heads across the hangar.

Ian goes after her, catches up.

IAN
 Hey. I'm proud of you.
 (as she starts to speak)
 It's okay. We don't have to talk
 about that now.

NORA
 No, I want to tell you the truth.

Ian steels himself. He has no idea what he's about to hear.

NORA (CONT'D)
 I've been visiting Captain Gallo
 outside of work. I know that's not
 kosher... but he's been struggling
 with what we went through over
 there. And he doesn't have anyone
 else to talk to.

So she's chosen to tell Ian yet another lie. He buys it.

IAN
 Thank you for telling me.

For a moment -- just a fleeting one -- Nora's eyes meet
 Gallo's, far across the hangar.

Then she and Ian head off together. We hold on Gallo's face
 as he watches them go. He's telling himself it doesn't bother
 him to see Nora and Ian together. But it does.

Music begins on the soundtrack: DRUMMING. Driving, insistent.
 This launches us into a MONTAGE...

75 **OMITTED**

76 **INT. JESS'S HOUSE - ARMY BASE - THAT NIGHT**

Jess is in the room with the half-finished mural, laying down
 sheets of newspaper.

In the corner is a stack of paint cans.

MAX
 Mom, what're you doing?

JESS
 We can't just give up, right? We've
 gotta finish it, for when Dad gets
 home.

Mother and son stand there together, looking at the mural.

77 **INT. BASEMENT - SOMALIA - DAY**

Jimmy and Crank, in the dirt-floored basement. Jimmy's face is swollen and caked in blood, the result of his beating.

As for Crank: behind his back, his hands are working. He's using the TINY CHICKEN BONE to pry open the catch on the zip tie around his wrists. Finally, success.

JIMMY

You got it?

Crank shakes off the zip tie, then tears off his blindfold.

CRANK

Your turn.

He uses the bone to start prying open Jimmy's zip tie.

CRANK (CONT'D)

This is it, rotor-head. We're all in now.

He sounds almost gleeful about it, hungry for a fight. As for Jimmy, his face tells the opposite story. He's terrified.

78 **EXT. GALLO'S HOUSE - OFF BASE - NIGHT**

Gallo is arriving home on his motorcycle. He's surprised to find a car in the driveway. He peers in the window. It's Anna. She looks troubled.

ANNA

Someone came by my office today, asking what records you looked at. What've you gotten yourself into?

Now Gallo is troubled too. Off his face...

79 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - ARMY BASE - NIGHT**

Nora lies in bed with Ian. He's asleep but she's wide awake. We PUSH IN on Nora's face as the drumming stops. SMASH TO --

80 **EXT. LAKE BANK - SOMALI MOUNTAINS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

Back to the night the Black Hawk went down. The helicopter is sinking into the dark lake. Nora and Gallo drag themselves up out of the water and onto the bank. They pull the Prisoner out after them. Richard is nowhere to be seen.

NORA
 (re: the Prisoner)
 He's not breathing, sir.

GALLO
 We have to get his hands free.

Nora pulls a knife from her flight vest and cuts the binding on the Prisoner's hands. They roll him onto his back and Gallo starts giving chest compressions. After a moment, the Prisoner coughs up a stream of water and vomit. That's when they hear a voice behind them.

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD
 You should've let him drown.

They turn to see Richard, also dripping wet. He has his M9 handgun aimed at Gallo, who's between him and the Prisoner.

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD (CONT'D)
 Now you've seen him, we have a problem. Step away, Captain.

Gallo and Nora realize: Richard intends to kill the Prisoner. And at that moment, the man starts to speak.

PRISONER
 Please... I'm an American citizen... Don't let him do this...

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD
 (to Gallo)
 Move or I will shoot through you.

There's venom in his voice. He's serious about the threat.

PRISONER
 His name is Richard Lasky, he's the one who sent me here...

Gallo is frozen, unsure what to do. This Prisoner is pleading for his life and there's a battle-mad frenzy in Richard's eyes. Can Gallo really just let him execute this man?

Richard isn't waiting to find out.

C.I.A. OFFICER RICHARD
 I told you to move.

He's pulling the trigger. He's going to shoot Gallo.

We hear a GUN SHOT. But it's Richard who sinks to the ground. Nora did it. She shot him with the handgun from her flight vest. To save Gallo's life.

The second Richard is down, the Prisoner scrambles to his feet and sprints into the dark woods. Gallo runs after him.

Nora stays there, the weight of what she did hitting her. She goes to Richard, feels his pulse. Time is moving strangely now... slowly... it could be a ten seconds or ten minutes before Gallo is behind her again. Without the Prisoner.

GALLO

It's pitch black. I lost him out there.

Nora's eyes are on Richard. The truth is still sinking in.

NORA

He's dead.

Off Nora's face...

81 **INT. NORA'S APARTMENT - ARMY BASE - NIGHT**

It's very late now. Nora sits on the edge of her bed. Though Ian sleeps soundly, she can't. Not with a memory like this.

She holds the Hawkman toy, clutching it in her fingers as if hanging on for dear life. And now, we go into SPLIT SCREEN...

82 **SPLIT - INT. NORA'S APARTMENT / INT. GALLO'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Gallo can't sleep either. He stands at the window of his kitchen, a beer bottle in his hand, gazing out. The sun is just beginning to rise.

CHYRON: Operation Perseus, Day 1.

Nora gets up off the bed. Then both she and Gallo -- in their separate spaces -- walk out of frame. They're miles apart, yet struggling with the same heavy secret. SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF THE PILOT EPISODE OF "VALOR"