

VESPUCCI — SERIES 1 — SEASON 4, EPISODE 1 — EARLY SCENE

INT. VSI LOS ANGELES HQ – SANDRA'S EXECUTIVE BALCONY – EARLY EVENING

The skyline glows with post-storm clarity. The sea beyond downtown is visible. The balcony is minimalist—plants, table, built-in heat lamps, two chairs. Sandra is crosslegged in one, exhaling a steady plume of smoke. Her laptop glows on her lap, screen open. Wind moves her hair slightly. Calm. Content.

Benji slides the glass door open behind her.

BENJI

You smoked and didn't eat?

SANDRA

Mhm. It was one of those days where food would have felt like a *distraction*.

BENJI *(heading outside with a bag in hand)*

Alright, well, call me a distraction then. I brought that mushroom rice bowl you like. It's hot and not poisoned.

SANDRA *(not looking at him)*

Appreciated. Was it the kind of day where ten minutes off guarantees you miss four fires?

BENJI

You missed three proxy escalations, a digital detonation test, and Kalen from Aegis Cohesion had a... *moment*.

Sandra finally turns, still holding her joint between two fingers. She sits and pulls the laptop closer. Her eyes scan a memo on screen. Viewers see the bold subject line for half a second:

"URGENT SO FUCKING URGERNT OH MY GOD"

She skims it in silence, brows mildly lifted. Her face betrays nothing. Then—

SANDRA *(casually, like reading a shipping notification)*

Oh! Aegis already scared the tea-drinkers off. They won't be joining.

BENJI *(setting down food)*

God bless. That poor kid's gonna need six weeks of analog therapy and a hug from the microwave burrito he forgot in the breakroom.

SANDRA *(amused)*

Tell HR to let him cry in analog. It's the only kind that works.

She takes a bite. Pause.

SANDRA *(surprised)*

...This is good. Did you make it?

BENJI *(mock offended)*

Excuse you, I *procured* it. I am a logistics professional, not a line cook. But I told the girl at the counter you hadn't eaten in 26 hours and she double-wrapped it like it was going into orbit.

Sandra chuckles—barely audible, but real. Benji leans back in the chair opposite her, watching the skyline.

BENJI

Anything else blow up while you were out here pretending you don't run civilization?

SANDRA *(smiling faintly)*

Just the usual. Empires, democracies, the occasional intern's sense of security.

SANDRA *(amused)*

Get the poor kid a new burrito. The good kind from that place we like.

BENJI

And you're still standing. Damn. Well sitting, but you get the point.

They sit together. Nothing urgent. Just the wind, the data glow, and the aftertaste of control.

SANDRA *(smiling faintly, fighting laughter while eating)*

Get the fucking burrito, Benji.

BENJI *(in a playful, faux-reprimanding tone)*

If you say so, Ms. Warren.