

Scene: The Neighborhood BBQ (Final Version)

Logline: At a friendly neighborhood barbecue, a quiet, unassuming new resident reveals a hidden, sinister purpose, marking the first infiltration of a deeper conspiracy.

Characters:

- **ELIAS** (38): The team lead. Cover as a mild-mannered, friendly, but slightly quiet new neighbor.
- **"JOSHAWA LE'CLAIR"** (32): The charismatic infiltrator. His VSI connection is unknown to the audience. Cover as the friendly, outgoing new guy from Quebec.
- **MAYA** (26): The tech and surveillance expert. Her VSI connection is unknown to the audience. Cover as a shy, introverted young mom.
- **DAVE** (40s): A neighborhood resident, frustrated and economically anxious. A primary target.
- **SARAH** (30s): Another young mom from the neighborhood, friendly and talkative.
- **Other Dads, Moms, and Kids:** Background characters establishing a normal, suburban atmosphere.

Setting:

The immaculate backyard of Elias's modest suburban home in a new Alberta subdivision. It's a bright, sunny Saturday afternoon. This scene occurs on the same night Sandra Warren receives the call to activate the contract.

(SCENE START)

EXT. ELIAS'S BACKYARD - DAY

The scene is a postcard of Canadian normalcy, almost too perfect. The lawn is immaculate, a vibrant green carpet. A sprinkler CLICKS a steady, hypnotic rhythm, watering a small, well-tended garden bursting with cherry tomatoes and bell peppers. The bright, sunny air hangs thick with the smell of burgers sizzling on a top-of-the-line propane grill.

A half-dozen families from the neighborhood are milling about, drinking beer from cans, their laughter easy and genuine. Kids shriek with pure delight as they chase each other through the sprinkler's cool arc. This is a "welcome to the neighborhood" BBQ, a gesture of friendship for the three new families that have recently moved in.

"JOSHAWA LE'CLAIR" (32) is holding court, the very picture of the life of the party. He's leaning against the deck railing, a can of Coors Light in hand, acting just a little bit tipsy. He's not sloppy, just relaxed enough that his charm feels effortless. He's telling a story to a group of other DADS, who are roaring with laughter.

<center>JOSHAWA</center> > (With a slight, charming slur) > Okay, so, I'm at the hardware stores, right? And I asks the guy where I can find a 'robinet.' And he just stares at me. A complete blank look. I'm doing the hand motions, you knows? Twisting, making water sounds... nothings. Finally, I just says, 'the water thingy for the sink?' and his whole face lights up. 'Oh, a *faucet*! Aisle seven.' I swears, I thought he was going to offer me a beer right then and there for finally speaking English.

The dads howl. Joshawa takes a proud sip of his beer. He seems like a genuinely friendly guy, completely unconnected to anyone else.

Nearby, MAYA (26) sits on a patio chair, quietly picking at a paper plate of pasta salad. She seems shy, introverted, deep in a quiet conversation with another young mom, SARAH. Maya lets Sarah lead, occasionally nodding and offering a small, practiced smile.

<center>SARAH</center> > ...so the waitlist for the good daycare near the community league is just insane. Is your little one starting school this year?

<center>MAYA</center> > (She gives that practiced, slightly sad smile) > Oh, um, no. He's with his dad this weekend. It's just... better for him to have the stability, you know? With the move and everything.

Sarah nods sympathetically, her expression softening.

<center>SARAH</center> > Oh, of course. That's tough. Well, when you are ready, I can give you the name of a great consultant. She works miracles.

Maya gives a grateful, quiet smile. She is the picture of a normal young mom making small talk.

At the grill, ELIAS (38), in a plain t-shirt and jeans, looks every bit the part of the friendly, slightly quiet new neighbor. He expertly flips a row of burgers, his movements economical and precise, a stark contrast to Joshawa's boisterous energy.

DAVE (40s), another neighbor, holding an empty can of beer, wanders over to the grill.

<center>DAVE</center> > Lookin' good, Elias. Don't burn 'em now.

<center>ELIAS</center> > (He offers a soft, disarming smile) > The key is patience, Dave. A lesson I'm still trying to learn.

<center>DAVE</center> > (Sighs, shaking his head) > Tell me about it. Got my carbon tax rebate. Fifty-three bucks. Barely covers the gas to get to the job I don't have anymore. Fifty-three dollars to heat the house I'm about to lose. Meanwhile, they're sending billions back east for God knows what.

Elias chuckles sympathetically. He doesn't say anything overtly political. He just gives a quiet, knowing nod. It's a gesture of pure validation. Dave, feeling heard, gives him a friendly pat on the shoulder and wanders off to get another beer.

Alone at the grill, Elias flips a final burger. He then pulls his phone from his pocket, a natural, modern motion. He squints at the screen, as if checking a recipe or a timer for the grill. He then places the phone, screen-down, on the polished stainless-steel side-table of the BBQ.

THE FINAL SHOT OF THE EPISODE:

CAMERA PUSHES IN SLOWLY on the reflective metal of the grill's side-table. The idyllic, sun-drenched BBQ—the world behind Elias—is reflected on its surface in BEAUTIFUL SLOW MOTION. We see kids running, Dave laughing with Joshawa, Maya chatting with Sarah. A perfect, innocent scene.

Then, the CAMERA PUNCHES IN, focusing tightly on the reflection of the phone's screen on that same metal surface. And the world in the reflection explodes into slow motion.

It's not a recipe. It's the stark, black VSI AEGIS INTERFACE.

Text flashes across the screen at an impossible speed:

TARGETS ACQUIRED: SUBURBAN_GRID_AB4.

A list of names scrolls upwards at a nearly illegible speed, a blur of text you would have to pause frame-by-frame to read. We might catch glimpses: DAVE HENDERSON... SARAH JENKINS... MIKE ABERNATHY... The list contains the names of every adult guest at the party. Elias's, Maya's, and Joshawa's names are conspicuously absent.

INITIATING BATCH PROFILE SCULPTING...

What follows is a dizzying, split-second visual of Aegis hijacking the digital lives of everyone on the list simultaneously. A chaotic montage of app icons flashes across the screen—multiple Facebook, YouTube, and Spotify icons flickering at once. We see dozens of "likes" appearing on secessionist pages across multiple profiles, YouTube subscriptions being added en masse, and podcast queues for multiple users being instantly filled with the same VSI-approved, anti-Ottawa content.

The entire hack takes maybe three seconds of screen time.

The Aegis interface flashes one final message:

BATCH SCULPTING COMPLETE. 14 ASSETS. ASSET CULTIVATION PHASE INITIATED.

The phone's screen goes dark.

BACK TO SLOW MOTION: We stay on the shot of the side-table. Elias's hand enters the frame and picks up the phone. He pockets it without looking at it. He turns and, with his tongs, calmly places a perfectly cooked burger on a bun. His expression is neutral, friendly. The perfect new neighbor.

In the background, out of focus, Maya and Joshawa continue to laugh and talk with the other families, completely oblivious.

FADE TO BLACK.

(END OF EPISODE)