

SALVATION ROAD

Episode 101

"Accomplice"

By

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**darkness. **

Suddenly, the word "SALVATION"** **blinks on, barely

Pull out to reveal that the word is followed by another word: "THRIFT". That word lights up fine. But "SALVATION" continues to flicker like it's dying. Now we see where we are--

EXT. SALVATION THRIFT - NIGHT

Someone just turned on the sign-- the start of another night.

Camera slowly tracks backwards to reveal the building and the street. Shoppers walk past a **homeless person**, a **drug addict**, a single **welfare mom**... a tableau of urban subsistence.

The sign flickers.

The whole scene is oddly beautiful... or at least peaceful.

Then we hear a jarring CLANG! And we--

CUT TO:

INT. LOS ANGELES MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - NIGHT

A gate at the end of a sterile hallway just slammed shut and we continue tracking backwards (as if that gate just locked us in). Our beauty shot has become an "ugly" shot.

We drift (still back-tracking) through a catalogue of establishing shots blanched in overhead fluorescence: municipal hallways, processing cages and holding cells; antiseptic, cold and loud. It's like the DMV with thirty hour waits and hand cuffs.

SFX OF Gates buzzing open and ratcheting closed, doors click and slam, garbled announcements blare over bad speakers. Hand-cuffed **perps** are moved in and out, most fresh off the streets, bloody, tweaking and scared.

CholoS, gang-bangerS, white-trash meth-heads; the cast-offs of humanity stand against walls, lie on benches and droop behind shatterproof glass wondering if they'll survive until their arraignments. After hours in purgatory their booze and drugs are wearing off. Welts swell, wounds ache, broken bones throb. They spit blood, cry and pray to God, Satan and their jailors (in that order). Hell on linoleum.

Conversely: uniformed **cops** and well dressed **detectives** jibe each other as they pass, ignoring the suffering around them. This is their work place: a municipally organized bureaucracy of damnation.

Close on one bruised and scratched face as he walks down a hallway (camera still tracking backwards-- a come-hither invitation into the underworld). Steel blue eyes. Angular features, dark, shoulder-length hair. Equal parts Vigo Mortensen, Jesse James and Jesus. He's staring ahead but aware of his surroundings. He's trying to appear unafraid and with his hardened looks, he's managing all right.

This is **Eddie** **Wilkins** (26); jeans and a plaid shirt holding his induction papers in his cuffed hands. He's being led by his arresting officer, **** MCGINNIS who has ****the look of a closet white supremacist as he proudly leads his arrest

INT. L.A. MEN'S - BOOKING LAB - CONTINUOUS

A cold room full of bolted down tables. Eddie is sat down across from **** D**etective monica Hendrix** (**30s**)** ****mixed** race, her true self barricaded behind the badge on her belt. She's an armored, hard-working woman whose diligence is half confidence, half need to prove herself. She's got a well-managed imposter complex.

Monica opens Eddie's file without looking at him.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Stolen vehicle, high speed chase,
evading arrest... *resisting*
arrest. No ID?

EDDIE

I didn't resist.

MCGINNIS

Bullshit.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

No ID?

EDDIE

Nope.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

What's your name?

EDDIE

Champ.

She consults the arrest report.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
"Champ Barrow..?"

She looks at him incredulously.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
What kind of name is that?

EDDIE
I was named after a race horse.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
Can you prove it?

EDDIE
The horse?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX	MCGINNIS
Your name.	State your fucking name.

Hendrix looks at him-- "*Let me do this.*"

EDDIE
(right at McGinnis)
Champ. Barrow.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
Residence?

EDDIE
Under the Five freeway at the Two.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
Pretty clean for a homeless guy.

Eddie just stares, "*And?*"

MCGINNIS
Answer the question.

EDDIE
Is there a question?

McGinnis looms over Eddie.

MCGINNIS
Who else was in the car?

She consults the report.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

There was an accomplice? Who was with you?

EDDIE

I was alone.

MCGINNIS

That's fucking bullshit.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

EDDIE

Says here--

He's wrong.

MCGINNIS

(To Hendrix)

There was a passenger. It's possible he bailed when I lost sight--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

--You lost sight?

MCGINNIS

He took some real fast corners--

She shoots him a look-- *nice work stupid.*

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

(reading)

Evading the police; Korea Town, Kenmore, Hollywood Boulevard... who were you with?

EDDIE

I was alone.

CUT TO:

INT. SALVATION THRIFT - DAY

On screen: ****THREE WEEKS AGO ****

Eddie walks through the aisles looking at old cowboy boots.

He looks a bit more raggedy, more like a guy who's been sleeping in his truck for six months.

His eye is caught by **Arla Garret(25)**; She presents as a bad-ass, street wise, punk rocker but locked inside is a poetess with dreams of romance and luxury. She's the love child of Debbie Harry and Kurt Cobain, Jim Morrison and Salome.

She's confidant, damaged, rebellious and getting better all the time at managing the wanted and unwanted attention that her beauty brings her.

He stops and watches her. She doesn't notice him. She comes closer. He watches as she sorts through jackets. She turns, practically face to face with him.

EDDIE

You went to Van Nuys.

She glances up. Looks away. Ignores him. Keeps shopping.

EDDIE

You're Harley Garret, right? Van Nuys High?

She stops. Glares at him, trying to figure out his game.

EDDIE

You remember me? Eddie Wilkins? I played baseball...

She moves on.

EDDIE

And guitar.

ARLA

Right... I think I remember the baseball.

Mean. She walks off--

EDDIE

Yeah... I sucked at guitar. You were in the, uh... the *cheerleaders*? Right?

ARLA

Wrong. It was pep squad for about ten seconds.

She moves on.

EDDIE

I heard you went to college?

ARLA

(darkly)

Nope. Must've been someone else.

EDDIE

Oh. Me either.

ARLA
Fuck off, dude.

She's going for the doors.

EDDIE
 Whoa. Just saying hi, Harley.

ARLA
 It's Arla. Has been for a while.

EDDIE
 Sorry, I didn't mean nothing.

ARLA
 (Sarcasm)
 Well that's good because I only go
 out with drummers.

She cruises out the doors.

EXT. SALVATION THRIFT - CONTINUOUS

He follows despite the chill. She stops. Not sure what to do now. For some reason she doesn't keep walking.

EDDIE
 What do you call a drummer with no
 girlfriend?

She looks at the city and pretends to not care.

EDDIE
Homeless.

Silence. If she's amused, she's hiding it. The world passes.

ARLA
 I heard you were hooked on meth or
 some shit.

EDDIE
 Not meth.

ARLA
 (Directly)
 What were you on?

EDDIE
 (Simply)
 Heroin.

ARLA
Why not meth or something fun?

EDDIE
It was fun. For a while.

ARLA
You don't look high.

EDDIE
I'm not anymore; *Six months.*

ARLA
Where'd you do that?

EDDIE
In my truck.

ARLA
What? No shit, really?

EDDIE
Yeah. Down in Frog Town. By
the river.

ARLA
Bullshit. How did you do it?

EDDIE
I just did.

She's looking at him. Is he for real? She starts to go. He might never see her again.

EDDIE
Kid says to his father, "Daddy,
when I grow up I want to be a
drummer."

She waits... *and?*

EDDIE
Dad says, "Well, son, you can't
have it both ways."

Beat. She doesn't get it. He blew it.

Then she gets it and, though she tries to hold it in, she cracks a smile. It's the first in a long time.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX (O.S.)
Who else was in the car, Champ?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. L. A. MEN'S - BOOKING LAB - NIGHT

EDDIE

I told you, I was alone.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

What's your real name?

EDDIE

I told you that too.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

*Your father named you for a horse... *

EDDIE

He liked to bet the races.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Where's your father now?

EDDIE

Dead.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Mother?

EDDIE

Dead.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Everybody dead?

EDDIE

The horse might still be alive.

McGinnis enters with Eddie's finger-print scans.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

I got to say, *Champ*, for a guy getting arrested for the first time, you seem pretty...

EDDIE

--Sanguine?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

What?

EDDIE

Were you going to say, *sanguine*?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Where'd you go to high school?

EDDIE

I didn't.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

So no college I'm guessing.

Eddie shakes his head, looks at McGinnis who wants to beat the shit out of him.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You just sit under the Five Freeway teaching yourself S.A.T. words?

EDDIE

I read a lot. Is that a crime?

Another look at McGinnis who appears not to read a lot.

MCGINNIS

Stealing cars is.

EDDIE

What about ending a sentence with a preposition?

McGinnis belts him in the back of the head.

Hendrix puts up a hand to stop him. She stares at Eddie. Calculates her next move.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Just give us a name. Someone who can corroborate your ID.

EDDIE

(shrugs)

I got no one.

Hendrix gets up, takes the fingerprints and starts walking out through the doors toward the--

INT. L.A. MEN'S - DETECTIVE'S POOL - CONTINUOUS

It's where detectives have their desks. McGinnis follows her.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

(to Morales)

No priors, no prints on record...

She goes over to the coffee/stale donut kitchenette and pours herself a cup. There's a bulletin board: wanted posters, gang activity, sobriety counseling, time share opportunities, ski boats for sale etc...

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You buy that this kid just woke up under the freeway in clean clothes and decided to steal a car?

McGinnis leans in close.

MCGINNIS

I can get him to spill.

It's a challenge as much as an offer. If Hendrix says no, she looks weak. She hides a flicker of conflicted ethics.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

How about we start with an internet search. Work our way up to water boarding.

McGinnis shrugs.

MCGINNIS

You want me to do that?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You ready to learn to Google?

He takes the file from her--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

And let's share the prints with county and state. See if they have anything on this guy.

McGinnis nods, though he'd rather water board Eddie...

INT. CLOWN BURGER - HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Homeless people and psychopaths linger in booths. Street punks, hustlers and Scientologists stand in line.

Eddie and Arla eat burgers and fries at a table (it's an hour after they met at the thrift store).

EDDIE

You want anything else? A pie or something?

ARLA

I'm good. So, if you live in your truck, how come you have money to take me out on this swanky date?

EDDIE
You said this isn't a date.

She laughs. Then--

EDDIE
(flatly)
I stole it.

ARLA
From who?

EDDIE
Whom.

ARLA
Fuck you.

EDDIE
Guys I used to run with.

ARLA
Ooh. Mysterious. What guys? Like
the mafia? *Eddie, did you drop out
of high school and join the CIA?*

EDDIE
(laughs)
No. (Beat. He shies) No: it wasn't
like that...

She's waiting. A test to see if he can be real.

EDDIE
You want another burger
or anything?

ARLA
You already asked me that.

EDDIE
It was a cult.

ARLA
What; Like Scientology?

EDDIE
Not exactly. Mostly just misquoted
bible verses and selling heroin to
M13. It was a shit show.

He's scoring points.

EDDIE

Anyway. I decided to get clean and needed money so... I left (he's hiding the rest of the story but--) bought my truck, clothes, some books and this here happy meal.

ARLA

It's not a *happy meal*.

EDDIE

It is for me.

She just rolls her eyes.

EDDIE

What about you? You still live with your dad?

That hits a hot nerve. She stuffs it down--

ARLA

No. He's married. Re-married. Whatever.

EDDIE

He still ride his motorcycle?

ARLA

He's pretty much done with all that.

Bad memories. Eddie clocks her vibe and leaves it.

ARLA

So, this cult you were in. Were there girls in it?

EDDIE

No. All guys.

ARLA

So. Were you, like... *celibate*?

He hesitates only a minute. This answer could ruin it all.

EDDIE

Mmm... yeah.

She's intrigued and a little relieved. Here's her point:

ARLA

Me too.

WHAT?!

ARLA

Someone told me that, if you're
celibate for seven years, then
you're a virgin again. So: six
years and a few months to go.

O k a y... Eddie keeps an open mind.

EDDIE

Who said that?

ARLA

(unsure)

Jesus?

They smile at her fucked-up-kid logic and--

INT. TRUCK/EXT. HEART OF THE CITY SHELTER - LATER NIGHT

Eddie's truck pulls up to--

ARLA

This is it.

It's a shelter for runaways and teens caught up in the sex
trade; a nondescript, urban, stucco masterpiece of utilitarian
architecture.

EDDIE

(Honestly)

Looks nice.

She glares at him.

ARLA

You know what this place is?

EDDIE

Nope.

If he doesn't get it, she won't tell him. She goes--

ARLA

Bye. Thanks.

EDDIE

Okay. Bye.

She comes back-- kiss good night?

ARLA

Look. Can we just be friends? No pressure? No countdown to "the hook up."

EDDIE

I hate that expression.

ARLA

Me too.

EDDIE

(He nods agreement) *Platonic.*

ARLA

That means no sex, right?

EDDIE

Mostly it means dialogues about virtues, ethics, epistemology...

ARLA

(considers.)

Cool.

Maybe he believes himself.

ARLA

You have to go. They can't see me with you.

She turns. He starts to go but waits and watches her walk to the building. She buzzes at the gate, looks back and waves him off: "go on... scat." As she enters the gate, the motion sensor turns on bright lights that nearly blind Eddie as--

INT. LOS ANGELES MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - AS BEFORE

POP! Lights flash in Eddie's eyes. mug shots.

Close on Eddie, chin up, defiant. Sometimes Eddie is handsome and guileless, almost childlike, and other times, like now, he's stone cold and menacing, like a criminal.

McGinnis hates him... or he's jealous. He leans over and mutters something to the photographer.

PHOTOGRAPHER

(to Eddie)

Shirt off.

Eddie glares coldly at McGinnis as he begins to undress. McGinnis watches the show...

INT. L. A. MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - OFFICES -**

Hendrix knocks on the door jam of her Supervisor's office.
Lt. Ray Thomas** **is a level headed, African American (more on him in series). He looks up over his glasses.

LT. THOMAS

What's up?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

We're getting pictures on the white guy McGinnis brought in, "Champ Barrow."

LT. THOMAS

Got to be a made up name.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Yeah, but we got nothing else. He's a ghost.

LT. THOMAS

Issue his summons and move on.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Seriously? Grand theft auto?

LT. THOMAS

Issue the summons. Let the judge have him.

She steps in.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

There's something about this kid. He's smart and... hiding something. He just feels like--

LT. THOMAS

--"feels like?"

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

He says he lives under the freeway but he's wearing a clean shirt from The Gap, he's got an A.P. vocabulary and he doesn't smell like piss--

LT. THOMAS

Good will. Dollar showers at the shelter... There's kids with college degrees living on the board walk-- it's the economy. (Meeting over) Pictures, prints and a summons. We need the beds.

She hesitates, then folds up her tent and goes.

****EXT. L.A. RIVER - DAY ****

Eddie is in the back of his truck reading a second hand copy of Kafka's The Castle. The pick-up is covered with a cap and lined with a futon. books are stacked neatly around him, notes sticking out of the pages. Milk crates serve as storage for his few items of clothing, neatly folded. There's candles, notebooks, photos of Bukowsky, JOYCE, Melville. It's very clean and spare and orderly, like a five foot by eight foot monastery. For all his outlaw edge, he's kind of a nerd.

He sits up when he hears someone outside. He peeks through the home-made curtain and sees--

OUTSIDE THE TRUCK

Arla walking cautiously toward the truck. She's unsure if she should be here. Unsure if he's crazy. Unsure about everything she's doing. Yet she warily approaches.

The gate opens, it's Eddie. He looks at her just as warily.

ARLA

Hi.

EDDIE

Hi.

ARLA

Well... you didn't lie about where you live.

She takes a look around. The area is a mini rust-belt of light industrial buildings and old junk yards. The truck is parked in front of a dilapidated, overgrown, WAREHOUSE. There's a rusted FOR RENT sign amidst the vines.

ARLA

You want to take me to the beach?

EDDIE

Beach?

ARLA

I haven't been to the beach since senior year.

She holds up a credit card.

ARLA
I'll pay for gas.

EDDIE
Where'd you find that?

ARLA
It's mine. My dad covers
expenses... so long as I stay at
the shelter. Nice huh?

EDDIE
Which beach?

Int. Men's corrections - photography room.

FLASH of mug shots. Hendrix watches. She clocks Eddie's
tattoos: A rattlesnake wound around his neck, like a necklace
or a noose. Beneath his throat, *its mouth bites its tail.*

Below is a nasty BATON SHAPED WELT. She hates to see that.

McGinnis joins her.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
Did you contact county and state?

MCGINNIS
They were useless, as usual.

They look at Eddie and see his back: the snake winds around a
large crucifix. Below that, in block letters: "BUYER BEWARE."

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
Let's send what we got to
the feds.

Off McGinnis: *That's unusual.*

PRELAP: WAVES

****EXT. CRYSTAL COVE - DAY ****

The glittering Pacific stretches to the horizon, the breakers
gallop in the sunset, their manes blown back by the breeze.

Eddie and Arla walk along. No Shoes, wind tugging their
clothes. Eddie has doffed his usual plaid shirt for a white
shirt that glows in the sunlight. For the first time, we're
someplace truly beautiful.

This isn't a *montage* but more of a DREAM. We see and hear the
action in facets; V.O., then dialogue, then voice again.

It's a memory that might be lost forever.

Flash on the sun through Eddie's shirt: his tattoo shows through the white fabric.

ARLA
Must've hurt.

EDDIE
Never felt a thing. What hurts is having it removed.

ARLA
Don't. I like it.

LAter: Water's edge. She's looking out, struggling in her mind, deciding how much to tell him...

ARLA
So... you going to ask about the celibacy thing?

EDDIE
What's up with the celibacy thing?

She takes a breath. Looks right into his eyes.

ARLA
After high school, I got mixed up with this guy... and I guess I was a bit out of my mind. And (beat) I did a porno.

No reaction.

ARLA
A few.

He's listening.

ARLA
I was "searching."

She looks away. The wind blows her hair...

ARLA
Actually that's bullshit. I knew what I was doing. I guess I wanted to. Who knows? I was scratching some itch or something... and the guy, my boyfriend, whatever he was, he fucking saw *me coming*, *boy.* I don't tell people this. That's a lie. I tell the people at Heart of the City, I have to.

(MORE)

ARLA (CONT'D)
 Three times a week-- *what the fuck*
are you smiling about?!

EDDIE
 Am I smiling?

ARLA
 Don't make fun of me.

EDDIE
 (dead serious)
 I'm not, Arla. I don't know why
 I'm smiling. I guess I always
 thought you were this perfect,
 pep-squad girl who no one could
 talk to back then.

ARLA
 You could have talked to me.

EDDIE
 Maybe I didn't want to.

Ouch.

EDDIE
 But I do now.

Corny but she likes it.

ARLA
 You're not creeped out?

EDDIE
 Me? Fuck, I spent three years in a
cult. Takes a lot to creep me out.
 It's nice not to be the only one
 who did stupid shit.

She doesn't know if she should smile or not. They walk on,
 glance at each other. a storm of birds flies in the sunset.

INT. EDDIE'S TRUCK/EXT. MINI-MART - NIGHT

The truck is parked outside a mini-mart. Arla's waiting. She
 keeps looking... a little anxious. What's going on?

Then Eddie comes out, walking quickly, a bag in his hands. Did
 he rob this place? He gets in, hands her the bag.

EDDIE
 I got mango. I wasn't sure what
 you liked.

Excited like it's drugs, she pulls out a VAPE.

ARLA
My favorite!

EDDIE
Really?

ARLA
No.

She VAPES UP as he drives. Offers it to him. He hesitates.

ARLA
It's just vape, dude! You'll still
be clean. Come on, all the cool
kids are doing it.

He takes a hit. Coughs. She laughs. He drives on. Throughout,
she's vaping and glancing at her phone (GPS)--

ARLA
Go left up here. So, you were
telling me about the cult?

EDDIE
Right. Well, I didn't want to do
shit for them anymore. I realized
that, not so deep down, I was
getting used.

ARLA
'Know that feeling. Go right.

EDDIE
It was all just about money and
greed in the end. The leader,
turns out, was just trying to get
guys like me to do his gnarly
shit.

ARLA
Like what?

EDDIE
Robbing and stealing. Money for
Jesus, baby. Fucking shit show.

ARLA
Like: *people*?

EDDIE
Mostly houses, banks, pharmacies.
Fucking dentists office once.
That's when I realized I was done.

ARLA
(interested)
You robbed banks?

EDDIE
A few.

ARLA
You ever get caught?

EDDIE
Nope. I was too good at it. But
like I say, I quit while I was
ahead. Never again.

ARLA
Take a right.

She's soaking this all in. Takes a hit--

EDDIE
What about you? Did you lose
your dad?

ARLA
Kinda.

EDDIE
What happened?

ARLA
I got robbed.

EDDIE
Really? By who?

ARLA
Whom.

EDDIE
Actually it's "who".

She punches him in the rib.

ARLA
My dad's new wife. Go left.

He obeys. Listening.

ARLA

She convinced the judge that I was unfit to manage my mom's life insurance and so, off I went to Heart of the Street Shelter for hustlers, runaways, teen hookers and girls who's boyfriends video taped them in bed. Left up here.

EDDIE

She took your money?

ARLA

Yup.

EDDIE

Didn't your dad do anything?

ARLA

Oh he sure did. He got clean and sober and sat there in the glow of her blonde fucking halo.

EDDIE

That's awful.

ARLA

I was fucking loaded at the time.

EDDIE

How much did they take?

ARLA

A million dollars.

Holy shit.

ARLA

Turn here.

He reels as they park. Her eyes are locked on *something* across the street. Eddie follows her look, POV:

EXT. THE GLASS CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

It's ***a modern mega church*. Arla's eyes soak it in, half wonder, half disgust.

EDDIE

What is this place?

Suddenly she crouches deep under the dashboard.

A shiny, well-dressed family just came out of the building. The **father** and **mother** are coiffed and bejeweled.

The **son** (20) is preppy and handsome, the **daughter** (18) is conventionally pretty. They are about to get into their Rolls Royce when the father is approached by a **fan**.

Eddie watches Arla who is near tears as the well-dressed "Dad" across the street puts his hands on the fan's head and says a prayer over the guy. Obviously, the dad is the *mega-preacher*. They get in their Rolls Royce and drive off.

EDDIE

You okay?

She isn't but won't show any tears. He understands now--

EDDIE

This is why you wanted a ride to the O.C.?

ARLA

Can we go now?

PRELAP: CLANG!

INT. L. A. MEN'S - BOOKING LAB - DAY

Hendrix glances at her computer screen. His mug shots. She clicks on one of him shirtless. His muscular torso, the rattlesnake tattoo. His ice blue eyes...

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You got a girlfriend?

Eddie shakes his head.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You got to have a girl somewhere.

EDDIE

Nope. No one.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

I'll make you a deal. You cooperate, and I'll issue your summons to appear, and you can go.

EDDIE

I am cooperating.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Who's your dealer?

EDDIE

What?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Who do you buy from? We can go ask him what your name is.

EDDIE

I'm clean.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Homeless under a freeway stealing cars and you *don't use*.

EDDIE

Nope.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Alcohol?

EDDIE

Nope.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Well! You're the first homeless guy I've ever met who doesn't have a chemical dependency problem.

EDDIE

Congratulations. Can I go now?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

I want a blood sample.

EDDIE

So you can run DNA?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Is that a problem... *Champ*?

EDDIE

Can I refuse?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You afraid of needles?

He smiles to himself, "you have no idea..."

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You can volunteer and be out on bond. Or I can I can keep you for up to 21 days.

EDDIE

That's not true. You have to allow me the earliest--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You're withholding your identity.
For all I know, you're on a
terrorist watch list. This could
be a case for the NSA. Or ICE. De
donde eres, hombre?

Eddie squirms a bit.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You want to make a phone call?
Who'd you like to call? Just give
me a number.

INT. HEART OF THE CITY SHELTER - DAY

Arla is at the pay-phone (no cell phones allowed). She has her credit card in hand, just typed in the number. Waits.

ARLA

Yeah, hi. Hello. Arla Garrett. So,
I tried to use my card today at
the CVS, and they said it's been
cancelled? What? Why? How come?

Her face tells us enough-- *she's been cut off*.

ARLA

Well that's fuckin stupid--! All I
did was buy gas-- Hello? Hello?

PRELAP SOUNDS OF A BUS HISSING...

EXT. THE GLASS CHAPEL - DAY

A bus comes to a stop and Arla steps off. She takes in the mega church, the manicured lawns, the sparkling tall windows. She's actually never stepped foot in here before so she walks as if in a mine field. She hesitates at the big doors. She tries one. It's locked. Tries another. Locked. Goes around the side and finds a little door that's open.

INT. THE GLASS CHAPEL, SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS

Big glass windows surround the sanctuary of this mega church. At one end is a huge depiction of a handsome, blue eyed Jesus. He's resolute and menacing as he leads a multitude out of a dark valley. In his fist, he holds a gleaming, white cross. His halo is vaguely red white and blue-ish.

The stage/altar is flanked by lights and cameras and above it are neon words in a kind of arched rainbow: "Acceptance" "Forgiveness" "Salvation" "Redemption"

The place is dead silent as Arla enters.

ARLA
I'm hooommme.

Nothing. Then a door opens near the stage and in comes
**security guard. **

ARLA
Hi. Is Dale here? The
Reverend? Dale?

The guard goes back to get Dale but, instead, **BEVERLY** (40s) appears. She's blonde and pretty and intelligent. Her hair and nails and teeth gleam and her fit, erect frame holds her chin high. She's not Tammy Faye Baker, this is the O.C., she's elegant and stylish and ruthless and cunning; the power behind the power. She takes one look at Arla and arms herself with a "compassionate warrior's" face--

BEVERLY
Well hello, Arla.

ARLA
Hello Beverly.

BEVERLY
Have you left the shelter?

ARLA
I tunneled my way out. Is my
father here?

BEVERLY
What do you need?

ARLA
I want to talk to my dad.

BEVERLY
He's not here.

ARLA
Why the fuck is my credit card
shut off?

Beverly is a cool rock.

BEVERLY
Well: as I understand it, there
was an agreement which you
violated--

ARLA

Well it wasn't exactly an
"agreement"--

BEVERLY

And it didn't include trips with
strangers and it didn't include
purchases at liquor stores--

ARLA

I bought a *vape*! And it wasn't a
"trip", we went to *the beach*.

BEVERLY

You knew the rules.

Arla realizes something.

ARLA

It's because I came here, isn't
it? Because I came to the O.C.?
What are you afraid of, Beverly?

BEVERLY

Honey we're not afraid of you.
We're afraid *for* you.

ARLA

You're terrified. Guilty
conscience?

BEVERLY

Your father believes that, until
you are-- *clean*-- and move on with
your life, then you can't be
trusted to be here.

ARLA

Clean!? I am clean!

BEVERLY

Not in your heart.

ARLA

Don't fucking "Jesus-talk" at me.
I just want to see my dad.

Beverly literally steps into Arla's face, blocking her.

BEVERLY

We wish we could help you, Arla.
We really do. But we can't help
you if you're going keep breaking
our trust.

Arla shoves past Beverly but Beverly is strong enough to resist.

ARLA
DAD? Daddy?

Security Guard reappears.

BEVERLY
You need to leave now.

ARLA
Or what? You'll have me arrested?

Beverly holds her ground. The guard awaits commands.

ARLA
You'd love that wouldn't you? So:
what? I get my credit card back
when I accept Jesus?

Beverly's smile is gone. Nose to nose, out come the talons--

BEVERLY
(close)
Oh honey. You could never
convince me.

Arla wants to claw Beverly's eyes from her face.

ARLA
Tell my dad that his dye job looks
like shit.

With her middle finger erect, Arla back pedals away. A defiant, tough-chick exit.

EXT. GLASS CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

But once outside, she's holding in a sea of tears as she rummages in her purse for change for the bus.

INT. GLASS CHAPEL, OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Back inside, Beverly enters the back offices.

Standing just inside the door is REV. DALE GARRETT, Arla's dad. He's a cleaned up, ex-biker with tattoo-removal scars on his neck and old tracks on his arms and blonde, surfer hair groomed for his new job. He's undeniably handsome and charismatic and (as we'll see) a very convincing preacher.

DALE
You did good, baby.

BEVERLY
But next time you talk to her.

DALE
I will.

They head back to work--

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Eddie is startled awake by a sound. It's Arla, crawling in through the back. She kneels next to his futon.

ARLA
Will you show me how?

He sits up and looks in her eyes.

ARLA
Will you show me how to rob
a bank?

They're alone. He's half naked in his bed. She's vulnerable.

EDDIE
Bank's don't have a million
dollars sitting in their drawers.

ARLA
They got enough to hire a lawyer?

He considers. Something in him is coming alive--

EDDIE
They might.

ARLA
So: will you show me?

EDDIE
No. (Beat) We'll do it together.

ARLA
(amazed)
I thought you were done with
all that.

His honest eyes betray him-- *he'll do anything for her.* He breaks into a huge, slightly *mischievous* smile.

And with that, our heros just made their pact.

What now? Kiss? Fuck?

A beat and, finally, she puts her hand out. *They shake hands.*

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Whap! A door crunches open letting a slice of light into the murky, dusty WAREHOUSE. It's an old, abandoned wood shop full of rusting machinery and iron shavings and cobwebs.

Eddie enters, knows his way around, Arla hesitates by the door as he replaces the big combination lock on the hasp.

EDDIE

I've been using the bathroom for a month.

ARLA

Did you pick the lock?

EDDIE

No, they gave me the combination.

ARLA

Why would they do that?

EDDIE

I called and said I want to rent the place.

ARLA

You lied?

EDDIE

No. It's a pretty cool space, don't you think?

She glances around the gloom and dust... it might take some convincing.

JUMP CUT TO:

He's at an old chalkboard where the workers once tracked jobs and kept schedules. He diagrams (in medias res)--

EDDIE

So: you're here, across the street. Once I go in--

ARLA
 (interrupting)
 --What if you get caught?

EDDIE
 (simply)
 Run.

ARLA
 (beat. Nods.)
 I can do that.

EDDIE
 (resuming)
 So: in the highly unlikely event
 that I *don't* get caught, you come
 back here and wait.

ARLA
 And you come with the money.

EDDIE
 That's right.

ARLA
 How do I know you'll show?

EDDIE
 (WTF?)
 Well. Arla. I could have robbed
 banks any time I wanted. I'm only
 doing this for--

ARLA
 Me?

EDDIE
 You need money.

She scans him. Finally asks the obvious.

ARLA
 You're into me.

EDDIE
 (Honestly--)
 Yes.

ARLA
 But I told you-- we're not going
 there. It's not going to happen.

EDDIE
 I heard you.

She grabs her bag. This was a mistake.

EDDIE

So what? I like you Arla.
Obviously. But I heard you. That's
what platonic means. It just
doesn't mean that I'll lie.

ARLA

You never do, do you?

EDDIE

Only to cops.

Beat. She comes back.

EDDIE

We good?

ARLA

Good.

EDDIE

So: once you see me come out--

ARLA

I head here.
(looks around)
And find a nice clean place
to wait...

Off their excited, nervous looks we--

CUT TO:

INT. L.A. MEN'S - BOOKING LAB - DAY

EDDIE

I get a lawyer, right?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Absolutely. You get a P.D. on
Monday... or Tuesday... or
Wednesday.

Eddie looks away as if listening to the waves...

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Unless you have money for bond.
But that means you have to make a
phone call. Who you going to call,
Champ?

Hendrix takes a frustrated breath.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

You know what--

She slams the file closed.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

I'm through trying to help you.

She gets up to go.

EDDIE

You're trying to help me?

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

I could have you transferred to county. There's a bus at dawn.

That's a BIG threat. Eddie hides his fear.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Tell me the truth.

EDDIE

I did. I told you, I--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Yeah, *you live by the river.*

He looks at her with something approaching pity. Then speaks very honestly and simply, reiterating his story.

EDDIE

I'm a homeless, ex-junkie. I saw something I knew I couldn't have and I took it. You ever do that?

That touches a nerve.

EDDIE

I'm not hiding anything, Monica.

She's momentarily at sea. Eddie isn't exactly being seductive, he's just staring at her with his eyes.

Monica doesn't get lots of honesty in this place, let alone heart melting looks from beautiful men... She shakes it off.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

No one's coming for you, Champ. So I'll keep you as long as it takes.

She goes. Off his look. *Is Arla coming for me?*

INT. L. A. MEN'S - HALLWAYS - NIGHT

In extreme SLO MO, we follow over Eddie's shoulder, his hands cuffed, carrying his manila folder as **guard #1** leads him down the hallway to hell. He passes other perps, more bloody, broken, walking dead. At the end of the hall are big ugly doors to the true lock up. Eddie steels himself as--

INT. L. A. MEN'S - CAFETERIA - NIGHT

The big ugly doors BUZZ. guard #1 leads Eddie into the worst room on earth. We see now that this is actually a cafeteria that's been "re-purposed" as housing for 50 men-- the definition of *overcrowding*.

Guard #1 leads him to a bunk and leaves. Eddie sits. Then looks up at the barred windows. He's totally alone. The sounds of buzzing, howling, crying, and shouting as--

EXT. SALVATION THRIFT - NIGHT

close on the broken, flickering sign again: ***"Salvation" ***

***This is the continuation of our opening tableau**.** *The front of the store is exactly as it was.

Only now Eddie's truck is parked out front.

As Eddie and Arla exit with shopping bags...

****EXT. WILSHIRE BOULEVARD - DAY ****

Eddie and Arla stand on a busy corner in a whirlwind of traffic and people. They're stock still, watching... Eddie wears a second hand suit, trying to look nondescript but it doesn't work. These two just can't help but look amazing.

Eddie is deep in thought, his mind working. He's also *scared shit-less*. Over his shoulder is a second hand shoulder bag bearing a logo from some defunct airline, circa 1975. They look across the street and we see:

Pov: The mulholland bank.

Eddie puts on a pair of boxy sun-glasses and a trucker hat--

ARLA
(lying)
You look good.

Actually, even in this goofy outfit, *he almost does.*

His eyes are all over her. He smiles--

ARLA

What are you smiling about?

EDDIE

I can't help it.

He tears his eyes from her and starts to cross the street--

Suddenly she grabs him and pulls him back. For a second we think she's going to kiss him. But no (not yet), she's just saving him from getting *run over by a car--*

INT. MULHOLLAND BANK - CONTINUOUS

We follow Eddie entering the bank. He goes to the kiosk and feigns filling out a deposit slip. He looks up. *Rack focus:* there's Arla across the street.

EXT. ACROSS WILSHIRE BLVD. - CONTINUOUS

Arla stands looking at Eddie. Then she looks up Wilshire. Then back at Eddie. Shakes her head "*not yet*".

INT. MULHOLLAND BANK - CONTINUOUS

Eddie takes her signal. Waits. Fills out another form. He catches sight of the *FDIC plaque guaranteeing deposits...*

EXT. ACROSS WILSHIRE BLVD. - CONTINUOUS

Arla looks up the street. Clocks Three city buses coming two blocks away. She looks at Eddie. Nods: "*Now!*"

INT. MULHOLLAND BANK - CONTINUOUS

Eddie takes a breath. This is it. Turns, **and *GETS IN LINE!*

EXT. ACROSS WILSHIRE BLVD. - CONTINUOUS

Arla can barely believe her eyes. *What the fuck?*

INT. MULHOLLAND BANK - CONTINUOUS

Eddie is nervous as he steps up to the teller. He hands her a note. On it is written: "LOOK". She looks.

He lifts his shirt and there, in block letters across his abs is written, "A GUN" and an arrow pointing down to what looks like the *handle of a gun* in his belt.

The teller, startled and afraid but not too surprised, immediately hands him all the money in her drawer, including coins, just like she's trained to do.

Eddie shoves it in the shoulder bag, zips it and turns to go.

EDDIE

Thank you.

She nods, not really sure what to say. Then she takes two steps back, hands up and gets on her knees (per protocol)--

Immediately, all the other tellers (seeing) slam their drawers and drop to the floor at their stations. The managers and loan officers all dive under their desks or bolt into offices. An alarm starts to ring. Customers freeze and gasp. Eddie quickly walks to the door--

There aren't any guards to stop him. He pauses to rummage in the shoulder bag for some change.

EXT. ACROSS WILSHIRE BLVD. - CONTINUOUS

Arla wants to scream--

INT. MULHOLLAND BANK, VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

A woman entering, oblivious of what's going on, holds the door for Eddie. He exits quickly.

EDDIE

Thanks.

He bolts out onto the street.

We hear sirens wailing across Korea Town. sfx of Helicopters coming this way--

EXT. WILSHIRE BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

What is in front of every bank in the city? A ***bus stop*. This one is on the corner, just out of view of the tellers.

Eddie barely breaks stride as one of the three busses that Arla clocked, hisses open its loving doors. He jogs up the steps, drops his coins in the slot, and heads to a seat--

The cops swarm up and close off the street. A helicopter hovers, pedestrians and motorists are all stopped, detained, no one leaves the area--

Except a big, smelly city bus blocking the front of the bank.

As **cops** cordon off the block, shotguns ready, one **cop** literally waves the driver of the bus to move on.

...And Eddie watches from his seat as the bus drifts through the roadblock. Eddie actually catches eyes with the cop--

Cop's POV: Everyone on a bus looks like a fucking criminal...

INT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

The door scrapes open and Arla enters. She's out of breath and scared. Then her eyes fall on:

One of the little, old offices has been cleaned up and there's a cot and a sleeping bag and a lamp and a chair. A heroic attempt at making it nice for her. Eddie's doing. She takes it in. Not bad. It's actually sweet...

Just then, Eddie bombs in, out of breath and carrying the shoulder bag full of money. Their eyes meet.

Eddie drops the bag on a table--

ARLA

Holy shit!

Eddie is hyperventilating like he's high.

ARLA

I can not fucking believe that just happened!

EDDIE

(giddy)

I believe it--

ARLA

Show me!

He opens the bag.

ARLA

Wait. We should celebrate.

She glances into a dilapidated old office. Goes in, rummages and, sure enough, in a desk drawer, finds an ancient bottle of Jim Beam.

ARLA

This shit never goes bad, right?

EDDIE

No, it's like formaldehyde.

She finds some old Dixie cups next to a dried up water cooler, cracks the rusty top and pours whiskey. They toast.

EDDIE

To...

ARLA

A life of crime and delinquency?

He raises his glass to that! She drinks. But he *sets his down*. They turn to the money on the table and--

Quick cuts as they count and she drinks. They're like kids sorting candy on Halloween. But suddenly she stops. Scowls--

ARLA

This is only like six thousand?
And... *a few hundred!?*

Beat. Eddie shrugs.

EDDIE

I think that's actually pretty good for one teller.

ARLA

It's not enough to get a lawyer.

She backs off.

ARLA

Sorry: thank you. *This is awesome.*
I just meant...

EDDIE

We can do it again. There's lots of banks.

ARLA

What if we go in together, we can
hit more tellers--

EDDIE

No. Guys get caught taking too
much time. And teams are easier to
catch. The cops will play teams
off each other. It's better like
this.

ARLA

Okay.

She's staring at him.

EDDIE

What?

She lets through just flicker of vulnerability--

ARLA

Team?

EDDIE

I hope so...

She likes that word. Smiles. Awkward... she turns to the stack
of money and starts counting--

ARLA

(happy again)

It is a *LOT* of money.

She counts. Eddie takes a few hundreds--

EDDIE

I'll go grab food.

He steps out.

EDDIE

What do you like to eat?

ARLA

(hint of apology)

Anything but clown burger.

Huh. Who knew? He goes.

CUT TO:

INT. L. A. MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - OFFICES - NIGHT

Hendrix takes one last look at the photos of Eddie on her laptop. His muscular torso with the rattlesnake tattoo. She lingers on him in his boxers. Lt. Ray Thomas walks over.

LT. THOMAS

You're spending a lot of time
staring at that perp in his
undies.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Fuck off.

Realizes who it is.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Sorry Lieutenant.

LT. THOMAS

This the guy with the snakes?

She scrolls to a new photo: the BUYER BEWARE tattoo but most of the frame is filled by Eddie's ass.

LT. THOMAS

Quit and go home, Monica. He'll be
here in the morning. You can strip
search him.

INT. WAREHOUSE, OFFICE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Arla wakes up. Something's wrong... she goes to the window and looks out. *The truck is gone.* FUCK. She looks for the shoulder bag. *IT'S GONE.* She panics. *Looks around; there it is, under the table--* she grabs it, unzips it -- all the money is there. What's going on?

Then there's a flashing at the windows, the room is flooded with light. She freezes. Then the light blinks on and off.

She creeps to the window, peeks out.

Arla's POV: a gleaming silver dodge Challenger is parked outside. At the wheel, in his boxy sunglasses, is Eddie.

EXT/INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

She comes out, amazed. Plays it cool--

ARLA
What: they didn't have white?

EDDIE
(smile)
Want to go for a ride?

ARLA
You stole me a fucking car?

EDDIE
You said you wanted to celebrate.

She gets in and notices the remnants of a sales sticker and, in the back seat, a pile of 30 or 40 key fobs (one of them is working). She is truly touched and a little freaked out.

ARLA
(playfully)
I'm still not going to sleep with you.

EDDIE
Should have got a white one.

He pulls out and--

INT./EXT. CHALLENGER/STREETS OF L.A. - CONTINUOUS

Eddie and Arla happily cruise in the Challenger. Sun roof open, tunes on the radio. It's a beautiful night--

Suddenly they pass an Lapd cruiser. She ducks down.

It's McGinnis. (SLO MO) he eyes the Challenger as it passes, notices the Dealer plates and the shreds of the price sticker and Eddie's crazy sunglasses at night--

Back in the Challenger:

EDDIE
Shit...

Eddie calmly drives past. McGinnis isn't following. Eddie and Arla watch in the mirrors, growing more hopeful with every turn of their wheels.

Then the cruiser *pulls a U-turn* in the middle of the street.

EDDIE	ARLA
(sotto)	(re the cop)
Fuck.	Asshole.

Eddie turns onto a side street, keeping it slow.

INT./EXT. CAR/STREETS OF HOLLYWOOD - CONTINUOUS

A few more slow turns, another alley, back in traffic. Eddie is watching the rear view. McGinnis is losing them, traffic getting between. Then red and blues bloom.

ARLA

Oh shit...

As McGinnis speeds up, Eddie starts to hand Arla his wallet, his rings, his necklace.

ARLA

Fuck, Eddie--

EDDIE

It's going to be all right.

She takes his things as he floors it--

INT./EXT. CHALLENGER/HOLLYWOOD BLVD. - CONTINUOUS

They take a couple more turns, using corners--

ARLA

Are they still back there?

Eddie looks, maybe they lost them.

But the cruiser rounds the corner, gaining--

ARLA

We got to bail.

Eddie glances in the mirror. Considers.

EDDIE

You jump, I'll keep them going.

Cold beat. He waits for her decision.

ARLA

Fuck. Alright. You lose this asshole, okay?

The right decision but it suddenly feels very bad. Eddie looks at her. *Will he ever see her again?*

EDDIE

I will.

Their joy ride just turned tragic.

Another corner and he screeches up to a curb, she opens her door and jumps out-- no time for anything but a weak--

ARLA

Bye Eddie.

To make this moment even worse, we're on Hollywood Boulevard--
She disappears into the throng of **tourists** and **weirdos** dressed
as super heroes.

Eddie floors it and the cruiser shrieks after just as (SFX
police chopper) the Challenger is lit by a sun gun.

FLARE OUT TO:

INT. L. A. MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY, CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Bright lights illuminate the cafeteria. Eddie lies on a cot.
Around him, guys tweak, sleep, sit lost.

GUARD #1 approaches.

GUARD #1

Get up.

EDDIE

What?

GUARD #1

CUFF. UP.

Eddie stands, turns and offers his hands for cuffs.

EDDIE

Where am I going?

EXT. AMERICAN VALUE MOTEL - NIGHT

Arla flies in the door, closes it, doesn't turn on lights.

She takes the place in: Eddie's jacket on a chair, a couple of
his books on the bedside table, the white shirt hanging--

What should she do? A momentary struggle in her head, she
hears a chopper overhead somewhere, it spooks her enough to--

She grabs clothes and stuffs a suitcase; grabs her makeup, her
toothpaste -- *everything*, LIKE SHE'S NOT COMING BACK.

LASTLY she grabs the shoulder bag full of cash, zips it and
she's gone--

INT. LOS ANGELES MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - PRE DAWN

Release vestibule: Eddie, in cuffs, waits at a gate while guard #1 opens a manila envelope and flips through papers and, one by one, passing them under a bar-code scanner--

It's a lot of papers... might take forever. Eddie is scared. No idea what's happening.

A big gate (one of several) just unlocked. Eddie can see one of those horrible, black SHERIFF'S BUSSES waiting in the portico outside. It's like the raft across the River Styx.

GUARD #1
Step through.

Eddie, hesitates, then steps...

He's in a sort of cage between worlds. One more gate to go.

GUARD #1
Turn around.

Eddie, scared, turns his back. He's UN-CUFFED--

GUARD #1
Sign here.

Eddie signs. The next gate buzzes. The bus hisses.

GUARD #1
Step through.

Before stepping through the last gate, Eddie looks down at the papers in his hands: DISCHARGE FORMS... SUMMONS TO APPEAR... RECEIPT OF BOND...

WHAT?

He looks up. The gate hisses open but it's *not the one that leads to the bus*. It leads to a side door.

GUARD #1
Go on.

The door clicks open. Eddie steps through and, amazingly, *he's OUT*.

EXT. LOS ANGELES MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - NIGHT

In the pre-dawn light, bleakly colored by the halogens surrounding the building, Eddie steps out onto Bauchet Street with nothing but a manila envelope to show for his troubles.

He looks around, still not knowing why or how...

Then his eyes land on the best thing he's ever seen--

Arla is across the street hidden in a shadow.

She's *barely recognizable, dressed conservatively and proper, (even a blonde wig) a little like her **step-mother** only sexier. *It's a disguise, we'll find out why in a minute--

Eddie wants to run to her. But she shakes her head "no" almost imperceptibly. He glances up.

Angle on the CC cameras that surround L.A. Men's. *Watching.*

She looks left, telegraphing him to *meet her around the corner. *They have good communication skills.

EXT. STREET - MINUTES LATER

A few blocks away, Eddie comes around a corner and finds her.

EDDIE

You came for me.

ARLA

We're a team.

Smiles, nerves... *platonic...*

The shoulder bag is empty.

ARLA

We're out of money.

EDDIE

We'll get more.

ARLA

Where?

EDDIE

I know a place...

He goes to walk on but she grabs him and pulls him back. It's like when she stopped him from crossing the street--

But this time, she holds him and they kiss. *Fuck "platonic"*

This is their first kiss but we don't see it in sepia, 70s, sun-flared loveliness. Instead, we cut to a LONG SHOT: Eddie and Arla together in the middle of the city, the last thing growing amidst the sprawl.

We leave them making out warmly as the first light of dawn glimmers over the buildings, it's the last moment of quiet before the madness of another L.A. Day...

INT. LOS ANGELES MEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - MORNING

We're back in the underworld; the start of another day. Camera pushes forward (opposite of all those reverse tracking shots at the top) as we drift through scenes of cops greeting each other, pouring coffee, downing aspirin and Alka-seltzer to ward off hangovers. Doors slam, gates buzz horribly, announcements blare over loudspeakers. It never ends.

We pick up Detective Hendrix arriving for work. She powers up her computer, takes off her jacket, drops her handbag in her desk drawer and locks it (workplace theft even here).

She grabs her empty coffee cup as the screen lights up. She scrolls past rosters etc.,

Lands on Eddie's mug shots, his blue eyes, his thick arms, his... she's lingering again. Shakes it off, back to work.

She scrolls down and reads the night sheets; sees *something*. Her face falls off her skull.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

(Sotto)

Fuck...

She smacks the "print" key as she jumps up and we follow her out. She crashes through more doors, down hallways of glorious fluorescence and antiseptic white.

She slams through the last door and into--

INT. L.A. MEN'S - SECTIONING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

This is where the public meets the underworld. It's where you come to pay fines, bonds, bail and to receive loved ones who are lucky enough to get out or dare to hope they will.

On the other side of the bulletproof glass are families lined up waiting; wives, children, some men. Mostly African American and Latino, all looking worried and hopeful, clutching papers and court orders and money orders and cash.

On this side of the glass are the clerks (all races and colors, mostly women with amazing hair and nails). They're trying to explain the labyrinthine bureaucracy to people who don't speak English, sending dejected families back to the drawing boards, sometimes stamping papers and taking money.

CITY CLERKS

(FOLEY hubbub/improv)

I'm sorry ma'am, you have to take this back to the Court Clerk... ..once you get this notarized, then you come back here so someone can... Do you have your ID? ...I need the pink copy. Do you have the pink copy? ...Do you speak English? ...I know that, sir, I am aware this is your third try...

Hendrix storms in, grabs her print-out from a printer and--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Monroe-- what the fuck is this?

Monroe is a sharp dressed, very efficient black man. The ruler of this fiefdom. She shoves the document at him.

MONROE

(Unfazed)

Discharge forms. Someone bonded him out at *five twenty eight AM*. Says right there.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Who? Who got him out?

He flips through the papers like a kindergarten teacher.

MONROE

Margaret Davidson. A lady from his church?

SLAM TO:

INT. L.A. MEN'S - SECTIONING ROOM - THE NIGHT BEFORE

*Arla,** in her conservative get up, is smiling and charming the **night worker,** a droopy guy with no life. Over her shoulder is the BAG OF MONEY.*

ARLA

*Like a lot of guys, he came to us
for help and... well, this is how
we help!*

*Her shirt is open down to there, her smile is bright, her eyes
make the guy want to hang himself... He stamps the release
forms.*

INT. L. A. MEN'S - SECTIONING ROOM - CURRENT TIME

DETECTIVE HENDRIX	MONROE
Who was she?! Do	Check the night
you have	tapes-- yeah, she
pictures? An ID?	gave a driver's
	license--

He's pointing to the forms, a driver's license number--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX
What was the name of the church?

Monroe flips papers again, a little less condescending now,
fearing his department might have fucked up.

MONROE
(reading)
Salvation Road...

Hendrix feels cold hands on her soul.

INT. L. A. MEN'S - DETECTIVE'S POOL - MOMENTS LATER

Hendrix bursts in and, needing a fix, grabs her coffee cup and
goes to the kitchen-ette.

Her eyes drift across the bulletin board that she's been
staring at for months. *Faces of gang-bangers... a dead Jane
Doe... invitation to AA... sexual harassment awareness... *and
then her eye hitches on *something:*

She sets down her coffee and pushes aside a pamphlet for
Racial Sensitivity in the Workplace and we PUSH IN very close
on A BRAND NEW wanted poster:

Grainy bank surveillance photos depicting an unidentified
robber in a cheap suit and boxy glasses. We push in closer and
closer and finally see what has stopped Monica's heart:

Peeking out from the collar of his jacket is the head of a
rattlesnake biting its tail.

She can't breathe.

Above the pictures, we see, in big letters:

Fbi** **

Wanted for bank robbery ** **

the rattlesnake bandit...

And below, descriptions and instructions but that's all lost as she rips the poster off the wall and runs to

Her computer where she hits keys, calling up a Google page. Her reaction is like the one you have in the instant between a nuclear explosion and your face melting off your skull.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Jesus...

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Monica bombs past naked and half dressed cops until she finds McGinnis suiting up for his shift. She flourishes the papers.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Champ Barrow?! Next time you do a search, try *scrolling down*-

She shoves a printout in front of him--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Champ Barrow was Clyde's real name. As in Bonnie and--

Blank stare.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

The perp with the snakes? He's wanted by the FBI. The *rattle snake bandit*. He and his accomplice robbed the Mulholland Bank last Monday.

MCGINNIS

So that's good, right? We go charge him.

She shoves the discharge papers at McGinnis--

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Some woman from his "*church*" bailed him out at five thirty this morning.

Long pause. McGinnis reads the discharge papers as Hendrix just waits for him to realize--

MCGINNIS

His accomplice is female...

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Fucking brilliant.

MCGINNIS

You missed it too *Detective*.

DETECTIVE HENDRIX

Get dressed and meet me at my desk. I have to notify the FBI and then, *both of us* will go eat shit from Thomas.

She turns and, like a colt cutting through a herd of bulls, fords the crowd of half dressed cops.

INT./EXT. CAR/GLASS CHAPEL - NIGHT

Close on: dealer plates from arcadia Dodge Dealership of Irvine. Now up on the rest of the car: It's another, brand new Dodge Challenger. *Stolen. This one is **white.*

INT. WHITE CHALLENGER - CONTINUOUS

Eddie and Arla sit in silence staring ahead at *something*.

EDDIE

More money. Less security...

Reverse angle, **** we see what they see: The glass chapel ****

We push forward and float past our heroes, through the windshield, across the parking lot toward the glass chapel.

It's dark, no service tonight. But as we press ever closer, one word is coming into focus through the darkened windows--

One neon word over the altar: *"salvation**"*

END OF PILOT