

Two Street Gangs Versus The Accused

by

Paula McColm

copyright(c)@2021paulamccolm

This screenplay cannot be used for any purpose including educational purposes without the permission of the author.
mccolmpaula@gmail.com

INT. PROBATION OFFICE IN LA - MORNING

Sitting at her desk with a plague of her name and title of Probation Officer, LOLA WRIGHT, 33, Black, gutsy with her hair combed straight back, RUSTLES with paycheck stubs and other papers handed to her by MINOR JIMENEZ, 23, bald, 5-10, slightly heavysset, in a dark blue uniform with his name tag.

LOLA WRIGHT

After I copy these verifications,
I'll go over the expiration of your
probation with you. Excuse me.

After she leaves, Minor sits staring blankly at a ton of files on her desk until she gets back from the zerox copier.

FLASHBACK - 405 FWY - END OF ARTESIA BLVD OFF-RAMP - NIGHT

COP #1, 30s, points a gun at Minor, slumped over the steering wheel of a smashed-up 2000 BLUE CAMERO, with COP #2, 40s, nearby.

SUPER: "Four Years Ago"

COP #1

Police... Get out of the car.

Minor opens his door and lands face down on the street. Cop #2 cuffs him, frisks and pulls him up, then throws him in the back of the light-barred LAPD PATROL CAR.

COP #2

You're under arrest-- You piece of
shit.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

LOLA WRIGHT

Awright, Minor, we can do this the
easy way or the hard way.

He looks at her with a furrowed brow.

LOLA WRIGHT (CON'T)

If you don't fuck up, you won't
ever have to see my face again, but
if you do and show up here again--
I will be your worst nightmare.

She hands him back his paystubs, rent receipts, signature form of a 12-step program and probation expiration form.

MINOR

You have my word, Ms Wright. I'm
sticking to my 12-step program.

LOLA WRIGHT

Don't BS me. You better stick to
what you're good at. By the size of
your paychecks-- That's fixing cars
and not stealing 'em.

MINOR

Yes, ma'am-- Thank you and Bye.

After he leaves and while walking through the probation office, he gets out his cell phone and selects: "ANNA with her Picture on his Favorites Screen". There's a response after TWO RINGS.

ANNA (V.O.)

You reached Anna. Leave a message.

BEEP.

MINOR

Listen, Anna-- Hope we're still on for tonight? Pick you up round five. I love you.

After a beat, there's a DING on his phone, and he opens a text message from Anna: "SORRY BABE AT WORK CAN'T TALK NOW & CAN'T WAIT FOR OUR BIG NITE OUT... XOXO ANNA". After reading, he closes the text with a huge smile.

MINOR

(mouths)

Thank you God.

INT. EL TEPEYAC CAFE ON EVERGREEN - EVENING

Wearing a sexy colorful costume for El Dia de los Muertos, ANNA VELASQUEZ, 19, slender with long black hair is sitting at a table with Minor, whose pecs bulge in his Lakers T-shirt. They're laughing while finishing their dinner.

ANNA

Oh, Minor, did you really think you could eat it all this time?

MINOR

Come on, Anna, have some faith in me. Mark my words, One day I'll demolish the Manuel Special Burrito and have my photo hanging up on that wall.

ANNA

I'll believe it when I see it.

LUPE, 40s, waitress, in a black skirt and white blouse, arrives swiftly to their table to clear their plates and drop off the receipt.

LUPE

All done? Well, almost I see-- I'm dying to see your face on our wall of fame someday and win the \$100 prize for eating Manuel's biggest burrito at El Tepeyac.

MINOR

Thank you, Lupe, and it's gonna happen-- You can count on it.

LUPE

Oh, I believe you Minor. I just hope it's not when I have my day off. Now, you two enjoy El Dia de los Muertos together.

MINOR / ANNA

Happy El Dia de los Muertos-

EXT. EL TEPEYAC CAFE ON EVERGREEN - CONTINUOUS

Inching closer to the front entry while standing together in a long line of customers, MARIO GUTIERREZ, 24, stocky, wavy black hair, dark complexion, wearing a BRONCO'S Football Jersey, and Angel Bernal, 22, medium-built, brown hair combed back, wearing a FUBU Sport T-shirt talk in low tones.

ANGEL

Damn, I could eat a fuckin' horse. Wish we got here sooner, but--

MARIO

Yeah, right, but shit happens--

A beat

Just watch your back next time, and keep your head down, cuz Puppet rules CINCINNATI KIDZ-- Them bangers got it out for us, Homie.

INT. EL TEPEYAC CAFE ON EVERGREEN - CONTINUOUS

While Minor heads over to the cashier to pay the bill, Anna remains at the table sipping the rest of her drink.

MINOR

Sit tight, I'll be right back, and Oh, Anna, you look amazing tonight.

ANNA

(mouths)

Thank you. I love you.

MINOR

(mouths back)

I love you.

After entering the cramped cafe, Mario and Angel are given a table then Lupe places menus down for them.

LUPE

Okay, guys, I'll give you some time to look over the menu then I'll be back to take your orders.

Angel grabs the menu and looks over it while licking his lips; Whereas, Mario can't keep his eyes off Anna, who's just a few tables down.

ANGEL

Man, I know exactly wat I want. How bout' you?

MARIO

Yeah, me, too and she's right over there--

A beat

Dawg, would I like to tap that thing.

ANGEL

(looks over)

...Wow, Go for it-

Mario gets up then takes Anna by subtle surprise as he stands above her and introduces himself.

MARIO

Hello, pretty lady-- I'm Mario, can I buy a drink for you on this special day?

ANNA

Oh, no thank you.

MARIO

(softly in her ear)

Let me guess-- How bout' a nice margarita? Cuz I know what a beautiful woman like you wants.

ANNA

Just go. I'm not interested.

Just as Anna moves back, Minor gets there and grabs Mario away from her.

MINOR

Listen up-- Do you wanna live? Then back off. Like Now, or--

Angel rushes over and stands right behind Mario.

MARIO

Or wat? Chump-

A beat

I don't see a ring on her finger.

ANGEL

(somewhat clueless)

Wat da fuck, Man?

Minor swiftly shoves Mario into Angel.

MINOR

You better hope I never see you
around my girl again-- Like I said
back off NOW before I destroy you
both.

Minor turns around and puts down a tip before taking Anna by her arm and leaving together.

The extreme silence among the customers is broken when Lupe comes over and confronts Mario and Angel.

LUPE

Awright, you fellas gonna sit down
nice-like and order something to
eat or wat?

ANGEL

Yeah, uh, you got any Pozole today?

INT. RAYMUNDO'S AUTO BODY COLLISION REPAIR SHOP - DAY

RAYMUNDO GARDEA, 65, tall and lanky, moves methodically around a BLACK SILVERADO while Minor, in a face mask, is buffing-out the late model truck with plates of "RAYS ABC".

RAYMUNDO

Good job, Minor. Hey, go ahead and
take off early today-- Goin' to the
jewelry mart? Ay, wonder why?
Buyin' a ring, maybe? Hey, but,
seriously, we're gettin' a
shit-load of cars, and I'm gonna
need you bright and early on
Monday.

While pulling down his face mask, Minor laughs it off.

MINOR

No problem. You can count on me--
Just going over to my sister's for
my niece's birthday.

Raymundo nods in approval as he walks to his office HUMMING an old standard song. Soon after, Minor cleans up then clocks out.

EXT. RAYMUNDO'S REPAIR SHOP - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

In a dark T-shirt and black jacket, Minor gets in his 1957 TWO-TONED CHEVY and drives onto the street after he waves to his boss.

EXT. CHRISTINA'S HOUSE IN BOYLE HEIGHTS - DAY

After Minor parks in the driveway and gets out of his car, his sister CHRISTINA FLORES, 28, 5'3" with an athletic build

and streaky-colored hair, sprints off the front porch to greet him with a tight embrace.

CHRISTINA

Oh, Minor, get your butt inside.
Josie has been waiting way too long
for you to get here, fool.

MINOR

Oh, My God, I can't believe she's
seven, now-- Better hurry on in,
huh?

Minor opens the metal-screened door and he follows her inside then shuts the door. POPULAR MUSIC is playing while LAUGHTER and HOOTS get louder.

EXT. PERIMETER OF HOLLENBECK PARK - BOYLE HEIGHTS - SAME DAY

While walking together on the sidewalk, Mario and Angel are confiding in one another, just as someone bent down behind a parked car across the street is scoping them out.

ANGEL

Yo, I don't know if I can hang much
longer. I'm paranoid all the time
since Puppet's coming down on us in
our own hood.

MARIO

Dude, like I said, just watch your
back. Won't be long before he's
history. So don't sweat it.
Awright--

A GUNSHOT from across the street hits Angel on his right side, than as Mario turns around and ducks down, ANOTHER SHOT hits him in the back of his head. Both have fallen to the ground as the gunman runs away. Later, SIRENS RING OUT.

INT. CHRISTINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

While the party's still going on and everybody's in the living room, Christina is standing in front of the window that faces the street. Her eyes peer out back and forth through the window as she starts to speak to herself.

CHRISTINA

Minor, where the heck did you go?
You told me you forgot something
and you'd be right back.

JOSIE (O.S.)

Mommy, when can I open some of my
presents?

CHRISTINA
(over her shoulder)
Pretty soon, sweetheart-- pretty
soon.

INT. LA POLICE STATION - GANGS SPECIAL AGENCY OFC. - DAY

Sporting a dark suit and a loosened tie, with a scar on his cheek below his left eye, DETECTIVE GEORGE RODRIGUEZ, 45, sits across the table from Angel, his right arm in a splint.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Listen Angel, we already know that you and your partner Mario are members of the Forever Boyle Avenue gang-- Don't pretend. So, you really don't know who wanted to shoot you down last Saturday?

ANGEL
Hey, Man, I wanna catch the dude just as much as you guys.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Again-- Who wants you dead?

ANGEL
(with cockiness)
Huh, wait a minute detective-- Ain't you even gonna ask me what the bastard looked like?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Right-- Sure, Bernal, go for it describe him.

ANGEL
Yeah, well I got a damn good look before he took his first shot through my arm and chest. (beat) The fucker was a heavysset bald Latino about my age, or a little older.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
What was he wearing?

ANGEL
Like I told you before, a black t-shirt with some kinda white letters and a black jacket.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Ya close enough to see any tattoos?

ANGEL
No, man, didn't see any tats... And, yeah, he was close enuf, just across the street in front of us.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

(loud and breathy)

Names-- Give me names of anyone who's threatened you or Mario lately. C'mon-- Think-

ANGEL

Dunno his name, but he was the same lil' bitch that threatened Mario and me on Dia de los Muertos when were at El Tepeyac's on Evergreen.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Ever seen him before? What was he wearing?

ANGEL

Nah, never saw him before. He was wearing a dark Lakers t-shirt and his girlfriend had on a sexy costume.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Go on-- How did he threaten you?

ANGEL

(stammers at first)

This girl was sitting alone-- So, Mario goes over to pick-up on her. Next thing ya know this dude shows up, grabs Mario and crams him into me, then yells to Mario-- You wanna live, and tells us that he'll kill us if he ever sees us around his woman again.

While standing up, Rodriguez checks his watch then walks away. He glares back at Angel over his shoulder as he opens the door.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Hang tight, Angel. I'm going to have you look at some mugshots-

INT. RAYMUNDO'S REPAIR SHOP - OFFICE - DAY

As Raymundo is walking toward his office, Detective Rodriguez is standing in the open doorway.

RAYMUNDO

Hi, what can I help you with today?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Are you Mr. Gardea, the owner?

RAYMUNDO

Yes, sir.

They walk into his office together just as Rodriguez pulls out his badge and shows it to him.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
I'm Detective Rodriguez with the
LAPD. I understand that Minor
Jimenez is one of your employees.

RAYMUNDO
Yes, he's been working here over
two years-- Detective, what's this
all about?

Rodriguez gazes out around the shop then glares back at Raymundo.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
I need you to take me to him now.
We have to question him downtown
about a recent shooting and put him
in a line-up.

RAYMUNDO
Alright, but you should know
something. Minor's one of my best
workers. My shop's been here over
thirty years and we work on up to
ten cars at a time-

A beat

C'mere Detective (pointing) He's
right over there working on that
Silverado.

INT. RAYMUNDO'S REPAIR SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Walking out of the office together, Raymundo and Detective Rodriguez approach Minor as he closes a drawer of his tool box. LOUD EQUIPMENT SOUNDS drown out their conversation. Rodriguez shows Minor his badge, he cuffs Minor, then walks him out toward the parking lot.

EXT. RAYMUNDO'S REPAIR SHOP - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

A LAPD Officer, 40, is standing on the driver's side of the patrol car and opens the back door as Rodriguez guides Minor to the door, then the officer tilts his head down at Minor.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Okay Minor, have a seat-- It's just
a short ride to the station.

MINOR
Yes, Sir.

After Minor gets in the back seat and Rodriguez closes the door, the officer gets in the driver seat and Rodriguez goes to the passenger front door and gets in.

Raymundo stands alone in the parking lot while he watches Minor being driven away out of the driveway onto the street.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. LA POLICE STATION - SURVEILLANCE LINE-UP ROOM - EVENING

Rodriguez and Angel stand behind the surveillance window as one by one five individuals walk into the Line-up room.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Okay, Angel, each man is going to be called to step forward one at a time. Now, I want you to really take your time while you look over each one, alright?

ANGEL

Yeah, sure-- No problem.

INT. LINE-UP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Under bright lighting, the Latino men in the line-up are just under six-foot tall, somewhat heavyset and bald. They're each holding a numbered card in the order of 1 through 5.

A rather loud voice comes through the audible feed from an OFFICER who's giving verbal instructions over a MIC in a separate room while everyone is spaced slightly apart and facing forward.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Okay, gentleman, please continue to stand and look forward. Now, make sure your numbered card is facing out, then I want you to keep holding it over your chest throughout this entire session.

BEAT

After the men make a few small adjustments, everyone remains quiet as one or two slightly shift their weight around.

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T

Now, please turn to your right and continue to look ahead of you.

BEAT

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T

And once again, turn to face forward (beat) Thank you, now turn to your left and look ahead of you.

BEAT

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T
Now, turn back to face forward and
continue holding the card over your
chest.

INT. SURVEILLANCE LINE-UP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The audio is now turned off to the line-up room. The only audio operating is that being piped-in and out of the Line-up surveillance room and the separate room where the officer continues to speak over the MIC.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
(looking past the glass)
Okay, officer can we proceed with
the rest of the line-up paced a
little slower as each one steps
forward.

OFFICER (O.S.)
No problem, Detective.

INT. LINE-UP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

With the audio feed turned back on in the Line-up room, the OFFICER'S VOICE can be heard loud and clear.

OFFICER (O.S.)
All right, the first man in line,
walk forward three steps, stop and
continue to look forward.

BEAT

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T
Good, now step back in line.

BEAT

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T
Okay, next man in line, please walk
forward three steps, stop and
continue to look forward.

Holding the numbered card of "2" to his chest, Minor, next in line, walks ahead and stops while continuing to look forward.

INT. SURVEILLANCE LINE-UP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANGEL
(blurts out)
Oh, shit... That's him.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
You sure?

ANGEL

I didn't wanna say anything at first, but, hey, man, there's no doubt-- That's the fuckin' bastard.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Sure, sure. Just hang tight and keep looking until we get to the end of the line-up.

The rest of the line-up continues until the man on the end steps back in the line-up with the others. The audio feed is only on between the officer and the surveillance room.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Okay, officer, have the second man step out again, and have him turn at a slower pace this time.

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T

Yes, the second man-- No problem, Detective.

INT. LINE-UP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The audio feed is resumed back into the Line-up room.

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T

The man second in line holding card number 2-- Please, step forward again and continue to look forward.

Raising his eye brows, Minor steps out, stops and looks forward as he follows the directions at a slower pace.

OFFICER (O.S.) CON'T

Now, turn to the right... Turn to your left... And turn facing forward... That's good. You can step back in line.

INT. SURVEILLANCE LINE-ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Before Minor steps back, Angel, with clenched fists, glares at Minor through the glass then SOUNDS-OFF to the rather cool detective.

ANGEL

He's gonna pay... Ya gonna lock up that fucka', right?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

(looking forward)

Thank you, officer-- that will be all tonight.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Yes, Sir. Goodnight.

BEAT

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
 (with a slow deep breath)
 It's been a long night-- Go on
 home, but stay close, and we'll
 keep you posted.

INT. LA TWIN TOWERS JAIL - VISITING AREA - DAY

Separated by a large plate glass partition, Minor, in medium-blue scrubs with the jail's logo, sits in a visiting booth that's equipped with phone receivers on each side.

Anna, wearing a floral print dress, sits leaning forward in the booth directly across from him.

MINOR
 Everything has been a surreal
 nightmare over this last week.

ANNA
 (trembled voice)
 Believe me Minor, we are all
 praying for you. Please, tell us
 what we can do?

MINOR
 Now that I plead Not Guilty at the
 arraignment, my public defender
 told me the trial might start in
 the next few days. She warned me
 that the prosecutor's a real
 hard-ass after she filed my alibi.

ANNA
 I know you said you were at
 Christina's for your niece's
 birthday that Saturday-- Don't
 worry, Minor, we'll all be by your
 side at the trial.

A SHERIFF'S OFFICER, 30's, on the inmate's visiting side,
 walks by all the inmates and LOUDLY ANNOUNCES as he passes.

SHERIFF'S OFFICER
 Visiting is over-- Time to go.

Minor places one of his palms flat on the glass in front of
 him, then Anna places her palm flat on her side of the glass
 against his palm.

MINOR
 Don't say goodbye-- I love you.

ANNA
 I love you.

INT. RUN-DOWN HOTEL ROOM IN WESTLAKE DISTRICT - DUSK

Lying on a double-bed with a gun and a LA TIMES Newspaper, JUAN DIAZ, AKA "TERMITE", 25, bald, slightly heavysset and wearing a LA CHARGER'S Football Jersey, is smoking a joint.

The LOWER THIRD HEADLINE on the first page reads: "Double Shooting of Two Gang Members in Hollenbeck Park".

TERMITE

(on the cell phone)

Yo, Puppet-- Just saw the Times, looks like da lil' bitch, Bernal's still alive, and Gutierrez's in a coma-- Ay, but not to sweat, some other chump's takin' the heat.

A beat

TERMITE (CON'T)

Awright, out for now-

He hangs up, takes another hit, exhales, then scratches the right side of his neck that has a TATTOO of letters, "C K".

INT. USC SURGICAL ICU - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Lying in a bed on a ventilator and connected to a cardiac monitor with several intravenous infusions, Mario is unconscious with his scalp wrapped in gauze-bandage.

Away from the foot of the bed, JULIE BULLA, 28, attractive with mid-length light brown hair, green eyes and dressed in a brown dress suit, is conversing with DR CURTIS LI, 39, wearing a white lab coat with NEUROLOGY stitched in blue above his left pocket.

JULIE BULLA

Here's my card Dr Li, and thank you for meeting with me today. I'm the public defender representing the defendant in the case related to the shooting that took place on November seventh.

DR LI

No problem. You know, if he had been shot in the back of his head with a higher caliber weapon, this patient wouldn't be alive.

JULIE BULLA

I understand. When do you think he will be able to wake up and talk?

DR LI

As of now, we've been able to reduce the high level of

(MORE)

DR LI (cont'd)
intracranial pressure with surgery,
medication and a medically-induced
coma.

JULIE BULLA
How long are you going to keep
Mario in a coma?

DR LI
Possibly three weeks or until he
becomes stable. Excuse me, but I'm
needed in surgery, soon-

Dr Li walks away into the hall and Julie steps closer to
Mario's side. Looking down at him, she SOFTLY SPEAKS to him-

JULIE BULLA
Mario, I believe you can hear me...
Please tell us who did this to you-

DR LI (O.S.)
Ms Bulla--

She leaves the room as Dr Li starts to walk down the hall.

INT. CORRIDOR OF ICU - CONTINUOUS

JULIE BULLA
Yes, Dr Li, and I appreciate all of
your time. Would you please contact
me and Detective Rodriguez when
he's conscious?

DR LI
Sure, I have your cards.

He rushes ahead of her toward the automatic exit doors.

INT. LA TWIN TOWERS JAIL - COUNSEL ROOM - DAY

Julie Bulla sits with a thick file in front of her on the
table and a worn leather brief case is on the floor leaned
up against an empty chair. A tall OFFICER, 40's, escorts
Minor through the door and pulls out a chair across on the
other side of the table for Minor to sit in.

OFFICER
(to Ms Bulla)
Good morning.

JULIE BULLA
Good morning and thank you,
Officer.

He nods to her then closes the door as he leaves. He remains
a few feet outside and is visible through the wall window
partition.

MS BULLA (CON'T)

Hi, Minor... Now, let's get down to business. We've got a lot to cover since the arraignment.

MINOR

Let's do it, Ms Bulla, but first off-- Do you know the actual date of the trial?

JULIE BULLA

Okay, Minor, I know that things have been moving really fast since you were placed here after the line-up, but just recently I was notified that the trial will begin Tuesday morning right after this weekend.

MINOR

My God, after this weekend-- That soon? Excuse me, but how the hell...

JULIE BULLA

Now, listen, that means we have to go over everything that happened in your life, starting with the day of the shooting and anything you can remember before or after that day--

He lowers his head and rubs his forehead back and forth, then lifts up his head and looks directly into her eyes as she opens the file.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)

--Why? Because whatever occurred in and around that time will most likely provide us with some kind of significance in proving your innocence.

MINOR

Okay, I got it-- So, where do you want me to start?

JULIE BULLA

Well, let's start with the restaurant; the place that you said you saw Angel and his partner, Mario for the first time. You were with your girlfriend, right?

MINOR

(eyes moisten)

Anna, yes, I was with Anna...

INT. LA TWIN TOWERS JAIL - ACCESS AREA BY COUNSEL ROOM -
CONTINUOUS

The officer looks into the counsel room through the surveillance window then checks his watch followed by POV through the window of Minor talking to Ms Bulla (MOS) as she's taking notes and pulling out papers from her file.

INT. OB/GYN MEDICAL OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY

A NURSE, 30s, in pastel scrubs behind the reception counter, walks toward Anna, on the other side, and hands her a bottle of prenatal vitamins with a double sided-instruction form.

NURSE

Sorry to keep you waiting, it's been so busy today... And congratulations, Anna-- Dr. De Silva wrote down your estimated date of delivery on the instruction sheet and wants you back for your check-up in one month, Okay?

Nodding in agreement with a slightly forced smile, Anna slowly backs away. While leaving, she looks with widened-eyes at two women in their late pregnancy that are sitting calmly in the waiting room next to a table full of parenting magazines.

INT. SALON MEDUSA - DAY - LATER

Christina's standing over her CLIENT, 40s, wearing a black drape sitting in a salon chair of the mirrored-station.

While blow drying her client's tinted-hair with a styling brush, Christina looks over to Anna that's rushing toward her from the propped-open glass door.

CHRISTINA

Hi, Anna, you Okay? Did you want a trim today?

ANNA

Christina, I have to talk to you.

CHRISTINA

What? Huh, can't really hear you, sweetie. Just have a seat and--

ANNA

No, Christina, now... I have to talk to you, now-

CHRISTINA

What?

ANNA

(loud and forceful)
God damn it... I'm pregnant.

CHRISTINA
 (under her breath)
 Oh, Fuck-

Christina turns off the blow-dryer and quickly removes the drape from her client.

CLIENT
 (to Anna)
 Congratulations, and I'm so happy
 for you.

CHRISTINA
 (to her client)
 All done and no charge. You have a
 nice day, my friend.

In a flash, Christina pulls Anna toward the back which is away from the other stylist and customer in the salon.

Anna tears up while Christina holds her hand and slowly strokes Anna's long hair with her other hand.

ANNA
 Christina, I can't have this baby
 by myself. What am I going to do?

CHRISTINA
 Now, now... You won't be alone.
 That's not gonna happen. Look at
 me-- You love Minor?

ANNA
 Of course, I do.

CHRISTINA
 And I know Minor loves you. Do you
 know how much he loves you?

ANNA
 I know he loves me, but how can I
 tell him anything, now? I can't
 believe what's happening... It's
 all too crazy.

CHRISTINA
 Are you going to tell him?

ANNA
 Hell No... I can't, not now. I just
 found out today-- You're the only
 one that knows.

CHRISTINA
 Yeah, me and that lady with the
 tinted hair-- Don't worry. Hey,
 trust me, Anna. We're family now,
 and I'll be here for you and the
 (MORE)

CHRISTINA (cont'd)
 baby every step of the way. We
 must have faith and believe that
 Minor will be cleared and set free.

ANNA
 I believe you Christina, but we
 can't tell Minor, not now.

CHRISTINA
 So be it. We won't-- I promise.

INT. LA TWIN TOWERS JAIL - INMATES' ASSEMBLY ROOM - MORNING

A PRIEST, mid-40s, with gray hair on his temples, stands in front of TEN INMATES that are seated within three short rows of plastic-molded chairs. With his head bowed, Minor's holding a thin-paper prayer book during the priest's sermon.

PRIEST
 In the days when Christ was in the
 flesh, he offered prayers, and
 supplications with loud cries and
 tears to the one who was able to
 save him from death, and was heard
 because of his reverence. Son
 though he was, he learned obedience
 from what he suffered; and when he
 was made perfect, he became the
 source of eternal salvation for all
 who obey him. This is word of the
 Lord.

MINOR / INMATES
 (somewhat in unison)
 Thanks be to God.

An INMATE, 20s, with a silver front tooth, turns his head and PURSES his lips at Minor, sitting in the row just behind him. Minor shows no expression as the Mass continues.

INT. LA TWIN TOWERS JAIL - INMATES LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

It's after chow time in the POD and most of the inmates are sitting at some of the several bolted down circular stainless-steel tables with attached circular stools.

The T.V.'s on while Minor's talking on a pay-styled phone which is arranged in a series of four other phones fixed onto a circular kiosk off to the back.

MINOR
 I just wanted to let you know that
 the trial starts on Tuesday at ten
 o'clock in the morning.

CHRISTINA (V.O.)
 Oh my God, so soon-- I will be
 there. How you holding up there?

MINOR

Thanks, Christina, and it's no picnic, but my public defender's pulling for me-- Listen, I wanna know if you've seen Anna, lately?

CHRISTINA (V.O.)

Yes, she came over to my salon and don't worry-- She's doing okay.

MINOR

You sure? I miss her so much. I don't want to lose her. I know this can't be easy on her.

CHRISTINA (V.O.)

I can tell you this-- Anna loves you, Minor, and she's on your side. For God's sakes, we're all on your side... I am and Mama, too. You got that?

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

(loudly piped-in)

Lock it down. Time for head count.

MINOR

Hey, I gotta go-- Give Josie a kiss for me. I love you.

CHRISTINA (V.O.)

I will, and I love you, too. Bye.

Minor hangs up then makes his way through a cluster of NOISY INMATES as he walks toward his cell door.

EXT. CHRISTINA'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DUSK

After Detective Rodriguez KNOCKS on the door, Christina opens the front door and SPEAKS through the screened door.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

I'm looking for Mrs. Christina Flores.

CHRISTINA

Yes, I'm Mrs. Flores.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Hello, Mrs. Flores. I'm Detective George Rodriguez from the LAPD in charge of the case involving your brother, Minor Jimenez. I hope I haven't disturbed you.

CHRISTINA

No, of course not.

After she opens the screen door, he shows her his badge then places it back inside his coat.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
I'm here to ask you a few questions
that we hope you may be able to
answer for us.

CHRISTINA
Please, come inside detective.

INT. CHRISTINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Once inside Rodriguez stands close to an end table with a
FRAMED PICTURE of Christina with her husband in military
uniform. Christina clears the coffee table of crayons.

CHRISTINA
May I offer you an iced tea or
glass of water, detective?

RODRIGUEZ
Oh, no, thank you.

CHRISTINA
Then please, have a seat.

Just then, Christina's mother IRENE JIMENEZ, 50, small built
at 4-11, with short curly black hair and nicely dressed in a
skirt and blouse, enters cautiously into the living room.

MRS JIMENEZ
Christina, is everything all right?

CHRISTINA
Yes, Mama (beat) Oh, this is
Detective Rodriguez. He's working
on Minor's case and he's just goin'
to ask me a few questions.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Hello, Mrs. Jimenez.

MRS JIMENEZ
Hello, detective.

CHRISTINA
(to her mother)
Everything's fine-- Will you please
watch Josie in her room, so we can
talk?

Her mother looks at her and slowly nods as Christina gently
guides her by the arm away from the living room. Christina
then sits on the couch next to the Detective in an armchair.

CHRISTINA
Okay, Detective what would you like
to know?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Were you with your brother Minor at anytime on Saturday, November seventh?

CHRISTINA

Yes, he was here at my house for my daughter's birthday party.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Now, Mrs Vargas, I want you to please carefully think back starting with the time he first came over to your home that day.

She takes in a deep breath, leans back on the couch, and closes her eyes as she slowly speaks while Rodriguez pulls out a small tablet and pen.

INT. LA PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT - FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - DAY

CHRISTOPHER FITZGERALD, 41, dark blond hair with chiseled god-like features, in a three piece suit walks through the door of his office and sits behind the oak-wood desk, while a built-in shelf lined with law books serves as a backdrop.

FITZGERALD

Hey there, my trusty associate. Well, Brian, tell me, what do we have so far on Minor Jimenez?

With a prepared open brief in his lap, BRIAN ECKERLING, 34, tall, tanned with thick light brown hair, rambles off the details as if he were reading from a compiled grocery list.

BRIAN

23, grew up in East LA, was picked-up for a felony evasion with a car theft and blew a .08 at the scene. After convicted, he did a year at LA county jail. Also, he just got released from a three year probation. Been working at a car repair shop and living on his own for the past two or three years. I'm still working on whether he's been involved in any gangs.

FITZGERALD

Not bad-- We can have our detectives check into any possible gang affiliations. So, what we need is a slam dunk in this trial. How about going over his alibi again-- Are there any holes in his statement that will allow me to nail this guy?

BRIAN

Yes, the statement of his sister taken by the LAPD detective shows a notable discrepancy from his alibi.

FITZGERALD

Go on...

BRIAN

She said he left her house for almost two hours, essentially around the time frame of the shooting.

Leaning forward with his arms and elbows pressed onto the top of his desk, Fitzgerald boasts with an upturned grin.

FITZGERALD

Good job... knew his alibi was bogus. Let's dig deeper into that.

EXT. STREET CORNER OF BOYLE AVE AND WHITTIER BLVD - EVENING

Walking from RAMIREZ LIQUOR, Angel is headed toward a 1965 metal-fake blue lowered 2-DOOR CHEVY IMPALA parked on the street. He opens the door and hands over a bag of booze to his older brother in the back seat, TRINI, 24, laughs a lot.

TRINI (O.S.)

Dude, hope you got the Cuervo Gold-

ANGEL

Stop with the shit and move over.

INT. 1965 CHEVY IMPALA - ON THE MOVE - CONTINUOUS

A COOL HOMIE, 20s, wearing a black knitted head-beanie in the front passenger seat, readjusts his seat after having lifted it up for Angel.

After Angel gets in the back seat, the DRIVER, 20s, donning heavy gold chains around his neck and wrist, pulls into the street while a continuous loop of LOW RIDER BY WAR plays.

DRIVER

(to Angel)

Was Ramirez's son behind the counter?

ANGEL

Yeah, he was cool and didn't give me any mouth this time.

DRIVER

Good. That's the way I like it. So, hey, how you been since wat happened to you over there at Hollenbeck?

ANGEL

Shit, man, I don't even know where to start... All I know is the lil' bitch that did this to me is locked up where he belongs.

COOL HOMIE

Dude, that's not wat he asked for-- How U doin', is wat he asked.

TRINI (O.S.)

Go on tell him-- Ha, I know ya still hurt.

ANGEL

(to Trini)

I got your Cuervo didn't I-- So, shut-up.

TRINI

(almost humble)

Awright.

DRIVER

Heard you took one in the chest.

ANGEL

That's right but it went through my right arm first. At least I can breathe awright-- Since they took that enormous hose out of my chest.

DRIVER

That's fucked up.

COOL HOMIE

No shit-

A beat

So, who da hell's this lil' bitch that fucked you up?

TRINI

Tell him, Bro-

ANGEL

His name's Jimenez, some heavy-set bald mother-fucka, sitting in Twin Towers as we speak.

COOL HOMIE

You sure he's the one?

Angel looks over and reaches for the bottle of tequila that Trini's holding as he responds back to Cool Homie.

ANGEL

No doubt-

A beat

ANGEL (CON'T)
 (to Trini)
 Hey, genius, pass me the tequila
 and quit bogartin'-

EXT. WHITTIER BLVD - 1965 CHEVY IMPALA MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Cool Homie sticks his head partially out of his open window and SHOUTS OUT to a couple of women dressed in short dresses that are walking alongside of them on the sidewalk.

COOL HOMIE
 Hey, pretty mamas, wanna take a
 little trip with me?

A beat

COOL HOMIE
 C'mon, hop in. Anytime, how bout'--

There are a series of HONKS coming from the cars behind them as the driver has slowed down to a near stop in an attempt to connect with the hot chicks, who have shrugged them off.

COOL HOMIE
 (to driver)
 Fuck it, Dawg-- Just keep goin'-

EXT. ST. MARY'S CHURCH - DAY

Church Bells RING for each hour of the ten o'clock hour while up to TEN people randomly pass through the archway of the open double-doors leading into the Spanish-style church.

A couple of cars stop in front and drop off passengers before driving away.

INT. ST. MARY'S CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

In front of the STATUE OF MARY, Mrs Jimenez is kneeled down inside one of the pews in the front row. After she completes the sign of the cross, she sits back down next to Christina in the pew.

AVE MARIA gradually fades on the organ as FATHER GUILLERMO, 54, and an ALTAR BOY, early teens, holding a large brass crucifix, proceed to the altar. Facing the congregation, Father bows then completes the sign of the cross.

CHRISTINA
 (whispering)
 Oh, Mama, God is on our side. He's
 always been there for us. Even in
 our darkest hour--

A beat She places her hand over her mother's hand.

CHRISTINA (CON'T)

Remember?

MRS JIMENEZ

I know Christina. I always taught you and Minor that.

A beat

Shh-- I must talk to Father after mass, all right?

CHRISTINA

Yes, Mommy, we will.

EXT. ST. MARY'S CHURCH - DAY - LATER CONTINUOUS

After Mass, Father Guillermo stands just outside the large double-door opening and gives brief blessings to those passing out of the church.

Mrs Jimenez and Christina are nearly the last ones to leave and Father stays longer to listen to their pleas.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Mrs Jimenez may God bless you and your family.

MRS JIMENEZ

Oh, Father, please pray for me and my family, especially for my son, Minor. He is in such a terrible place and in need of God's help.

CHRISTINA

Yes, Father Guillermo, please pray for my baby brother (a beat) Mommy, you stay with father, and I will go get the car.

Christina gives her mother a quick kiss then tears up as she rushes away around the side of the church. All church members have now left as Father remains with Mrs. Jimenez.

FATHER GUILLERMO

I know you are a woman of God and that your faith will see you through these troubled times.

MRS JIMENEZ

Oh, Father Guillermo, our family has had troubles for some time now. Minor hasn't been given the love and forgiveness from his own father in such a long time.

FATHER GUILLERMO

I will go see Minor, soon, and we will pray together, again. May God be with you.

MRS JIMENEZ

Thank you and bless you, Father.

FATHER GUILLERMO

I see Christina coming now. Peace
be with you, Mrs Jimenez.

Christina pulls up her CAR in front of the church and her mother walks toward the curb as Father Guillermo waves bye.

INT. LA TWIN TOWERS JAIL - COUNSEL ROOM - DAY

Ms Bulla and Minor are sitting across from each other while a sheriff deputy stands guard in the access area just beyond the glass partition wall.

JULIE BULLA

I thought it best we meet to go
over what will be happening at the
trial tomorrow.

MINOR

I'm all ears, Ms Bulla.

JULIE BULLA

The jury's been selected and will
be seated first before the Judge
arrives. The prosecutor and his
associate will be at the table next
to us while we'll remain at our
table until the court's adjourned.

MINOR

Will my family be able to be there?

MS BULLA

Yes, of course. I spoke to your
sister and mother and assured them
that they can sit somewhere behind
us. (beat) Minor, the main thing I
want to stress to you is that I am
on your side. There will be opening
statements by the prosecutor and my
me-- You must believe that I'm
going to do everything in my power
to defend you.

MINOR

You've done this before, right?

JULIE BULLA

(blushes slightly)

Twice before, and I won those cases
right here in LA-- where I grew up.

MINOR

I thought you were from up north in
the Bay Area.

JULIE BULLA

I went to Law School there at Stanford, but my family and friends are all here in a part of LA not too far from where you live.

MINOR

Okay, I believe you've got what it takes. I just don't want to spend the rest of my life in prison.

JULIE BULLA

Like I said Minor, I'm going to do everything in my power to make sure that doesn't happen.

The GUARD, 30s, opens the door and addresses Ms Bulla as he LOWERS THE SOUND coming from his hand-radio.

GUARD

Excuse me, but I gotta get him back to main circulation now.

JULIE BULLA

Is there a problem, officer?

GUARD

Not really, following a routine order just given out-- Sorry, Let's go Jimenez.

JULIE BULLA

(to Minor)

See you tomorrow, Minor.

MINOR

Okay, thank you, Ms. Bulla.

INT. LA SUPERIOR COURT BUILDING - CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

Chris Fitzgerald, in a three piece suit sits along his associate Brian at the table to the right side of the wood-paneled courtroom. While Minor and Ms Bulla, in a brown dress suit, sit at the table on the left.

Through an open door on the left, the TWELVE JURY MEMBERS enter to take their seats in the raised jury box. A 20-something stenographer pulls at her dress before she sits in front of her machine.

Anna, Christina and Mrs Jimenez are seated in the front row behind Minor, while Angel sits just behind the prosecutor.

The BAILIFF, 50, faces nearly FIFTEEN others seated in the courtroom as JUDGE HONORARY LAURA ELLIOTT, 47, mid-length blond hair, enters and sits at the raised court bench desk.

BAILIFF

All rise... Presiding Honorary
Judge Laura Elliott of Los Angeles
Superior Court.

All rise during her entry and remain standing until she sits down and adjusts the MIC on the desk stand in front of her.

She looks over the court case legal document on her desk then STRIKES the gavel three times before calling out.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Criminal courtroom of Los Angeles
Superior Court come to order for
the trial of the attempted murder
of Angel Bernal and Mario Gutierrez
vs. the alleged-accused Minor
Jimenez. With the occurrence
reported as taken place on November
seventh at approximately 3:40 in
the afternoon at Hollenbeck Park in
Los Angeles, California (beat) With
both counsels present in court--

She looks up briefly toward the two counsels that remain standing behind their tables.

JUDGE ELLIOTT (CON'T)

--Julie Bulla, public defender
assigned to the defendant and
Christopher Fitzgerald, attorney
for the prosecution. If there are
no pending issues, we will proceed
with opening statements from both
counsels, starting with the
prosecution.

JULIE BULLA

No pending issues, Your Honor.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

No pending issues, Your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Very well, Mr. Fitzgerald you may
begin with your opening statement
for the prosecution to the court
and jury.

Julie Bulla sits down as Chris Fitzgerald walks closer to the jury. He nods and makes direct eye contact as he speaks.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Thank you, Your Honor. Ladies and
gentlemen of the jury... It is for
the safety and well-being of all
living in our great city of Los
Angeles that I as prosecutor am

(MORE)

CHRIS FITZGERALD (cont'd)
 here today for this senseless act
 of violence that occurred in and
 around a public park, where many
 families and their children gather
 together. None of us can rest
 easily until those that choose to
 attack anyone with firearms are
 rightfully placed behind bars, away
 from people that deserve to live in
 a safe community without the fear
 of leaving their homes on any given
 day. Through testimonies by the
 witnesses...

Fitzgerald looks directly at Angel in the first row.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
 And most importantly, by the
 victim, it will be greatly apparent
 that the defendant, Minor Jimenez
 is guilty as charged for the
 attempted murder of Mario Gutierrez
 and Angel Bernal. Please, listen
 carefully to all the evidence as
 I'm sure you will make the right
 decision when it comes time to
 place your verdict-- Thank you,
 members of the jury and the court;
 thank you, Your Honor.

After leaving the ledge of the jury box. He walks slowly
 back behind his table before sitting down.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
 Thank you, Mr Fitzgerald. Ms Bulla
 would you please give your opening
 statement for the defense to the
 court and members of the jury.

Ms Bulla pats Minor's thigh under the table before she rises
 with her direct response to the Judge, followed by walking
 near the jury box.

JULIE BULLA
 Yes, and thank you, Your Honor.
 (beat) Ladies and gentlemen of the
 jury, I'm sure that the prosecution
 would like you to believe that the
 accused is guilty of two counts of
 attempted murder even before all of
 the evidence has been fully
 presented and weighed here in this
 court of justice.

She looks at Minor, whose gaze shifts from the jury to her.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)

-- As Minor Jimenez's defending attorney, I am here to prove that, in fact, Mr. Jimenez is an innocent man and that he's been falsely accused of the charges placed against him. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, before you place your final verdict, I must implore that all of you keep an open-mind as the evidence in its entirety unfolds through the duration of this trial. Thank you, members of the jury, members of the court and thank you, Your Honor.

Ms Bulla, now behind her table, bows her head slightly toward the jury while she stands beside Minor with her hand over his right shoulder.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Thank you, Ms Bulla-- for your opening statement for the defense and once again, thank you, Mr Fitzgerald for your opening statement for the prosecution. Both of your statements have now been heard, accepted and recorded here in the Criminal Courtroom of Los Angeles Superior Court--

Each counsel remains standing and looking directly at the judge at this point, as others in the court are sitting forward in their seats.

JUDGE ELLIOTT (CON'T)

We will reconvene with further court case proceedings this Friday at Ten A.M.-- With the presented list of witnesses having been noted. Court is adjourned.

She STRIKES the gavel twice before rising to depart. Others in the court are speaking among each other as the Bailiff escorts the jury members out of the court.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

(to Brian)

Another Slam Dunk case under our belts, soon--

A beat

Hey, Brian, check it out, and take a good look over there at Jimenez--
What a piece of work-

Minor turns to look at Anna then gestures to her with his hand over his heart before a Deputy comes to take him by his other arm. Through her tears, Anna gives him a gentle smile.

BULLA
 (with a subdued voice)
 Minor-

A beat

We WILL fight this together...

He nods his head at Ms Bulla before being taken away.

INT. COURTROOM CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

After entering the hall from the courtroom, Julie Bulla walks briskly to catch up with Mrs. Jimenez, Christina and Anna while they're walking several feet away.

JULIE BULLA
 Hello-- Christina, Mrs. Jimenez.
 Please, can we talk over here for a
 few minutes.

She guides them to a bench positioned against a wall. Most of the court has emptied out of the hall by now.

CHRISTINA
 Oh, yes, of course, Ms Bulla-- And
 this is Minor's girlfriend, Anna.

JULIE BULLA
 (to Anna)
 Oh, it's so nice to finally meet
 you, Anna.

ANNA
 Thank you, Ms. Bulla, and I want
 you to know it means so much to us
 that you are fighting for Minor.

JULIE BULLA
 (standing over them)
 I'm glad I'm able to confide in
 you, now-- I know this is not easy
 for any of you, but I want you to
 know I'm here to answer any
 concerns you have, day or night.

CHRISTINA
 Ms Bulla, our main concern is, will
 you be able to prove that Minor is
 innocent. We just can't bear to
 see him locked up.

JULIE BULLA
 Listen, I'm not going to sugar-coat
 the situation. Today was the first
 day of the trial and you heard the
 opening statements from me and from
 the prosecutor. Mr. Fitzgerald is
 what you call, a Hard-Ass. He has a
 (MORE)

JULIE BULLA (cont'd)
high rate of conviction wins under his belt, and this is just another trial that he wants to turn into an open and shut case.

MRS. JIMENEZ
Oh, please, Ms Bulla-- You are not going to let that happen... Not to my son.

CHRISTINA
(holding onto her)
Of course not, Mama. We need to keep listening to what Minor's lawyer has to say--

JULIE BULLA
Mrs. Jimenez, that's the last thing I want to happen to your son. I'm here to tell you that I'll be doing everything in my power to bring forth the evidence needed to clear Minor and to bring him back home to all of you... But I need your help.

ANNA
Please, tell us-- What can we do?

JULIE BULLA
I know Christina and Mrs Jimenez have my card, but I also want you to have my card, Anna. If any of you has anything, I don't care how small, pop-up in your mind that might have some significant bearing to Minor's case (beat) Please, please, call me, Okay?

They all stand up as Ms Bulla hands her card to Anna.

CHRISTINA
So, what's next? The trial continues this Friday, right?

JULIE BULLA
That's right, a list of witnesses was submitted to the Judge and we will start placing witnesses on the stand to testify on Friday morning.

CHRISTINA
Thank you, and we'll be there.

JULIE BULLA
That's good. Minor needs your support and we will see you, soon.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Criminal courtroom of Los Angeles Superior Court come to order for the continuation of the trial of the attempted murder of Angel Bernal and Mario Gutierrez vs. the alleged-accused Minor Jimenez.

She looks up briefly toward the two counsels that remain standing behind their tables.

JUDGE ELLIOTT (CON'T)

Noted that both counsels are present in court, and if there are no pending issues, we will proceed by calling the first witness listed to the stand to be sworn in.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

No pending issues, Your Honor.

JULIE BULLA

No pending issues, Your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Very well, Mr Fitzgerald, we will begin with swearing in your first witness for examination.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, Your Honor, I wish to call Detective George Rodriguez of the LAPD as my first witness.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Bailiff, please call forth the first witness.

BAILIFF

Detective George Rodriguez please step forward to the witness stand.

Detective Rodriguez, dressed in a brown suit and tie, swiftly steps forward to the stand. While the Bailiff holds a bible, he directs the following protocol to the detective:

BAILIFF

Are you Detective George Rodriguez?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, I am.

BAILIFF

Raise your right hand and place your other hand on the bible.

He places his hand on the bible and raises his right hand.

BAILIFF

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in this court of law so help you, God?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, I do.

BAILIFF

You may be seated.

The Bailiff leaves his side, and as Detective Rodriguez sits in the witness box next to an adjusted MIC, Fitzgerald approaches within a fairly close distance in front of him.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Detective Rodriguez can you please tell the court and the jury about your position in the LAPD and how long you have been employed there?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

I am a detective with the LAPD and I have been working as a special agent in the Gangs Division for the past fifteen years. I began working as a police officer five years before becoming a detective.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Now, Detective, you have been assigned by the LAPD to investigate the case involving the shooting of Mario Gutierrez and Angel Bernal that took place at Hollenbeck Park on November seventh-- Is that correct?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, that is correct.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

As Detective and special agent in the Gangs Division, did you determine the accused Minor Jimenez as being the key suspect through your investigation? If so-- Why?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, it was determined that Minor Jimenez, the accused become the prime suspect in the shooting through the questioning of the victim, Angel Bernal as the sole witness, and by Mr Bernal's positive identification of Minor Jimenez in his mugshot, and in a

(MORE)

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ (cont'd)
line-up-- It's unclear at this time
whether the case is gang-related.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
I have no further questions, Your
Honor. The prosecution rests.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Thank you, Mr. Fitzgerald. Ms
Bulla, do you wish to cross-examine
the witness for the defense.

Ms Bulla rises from her seat as Mr. Fitzgerald returns to
his table.

JULIE BULLA
Yes, Your Honor. I would like to
cross-examine the witness.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Please, proceed Ms Bulla.

JULIE BULLA
Thank you, Your Honor.

A beat. Walking toward Det. Rodriguez, Ms Bulla tilts her
head toward the jury then to the witness while speaking.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)
Detective Rodriguez, may I be so
bold as to ask you how old you are?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
I'm 45 years old.

JULIE BULLA
And did you grow up here in Los
Angeles?

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Objection on the grounds of
relevancy, Your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Counsel, where are you going with
this inquiry?

JULIE BULLA
Your Honor, I'm simply attempting
to establish a baseline as to the
witness's expertise dealing with
his specialty related to the
numerous gangs of Los Angeles.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Objection over-ruled. You may
proceed.

JULIE BULLA

Detective, did you grow up in Los Angeles?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, I grew up in East LA.

JULIE BULLA

I would imagine that you know of just about all the gangs that are in operation here in our great city. About how many gangs are there and for about how long have they been in existence-- Detective?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

More or less 450 the last 50 years.

JULIE BULLA

My, those are astounding numbers. I don't mean to dispute your statistical knowledge, detective; but do you happen to know if the key witness and victim of the shooting, Angel Bernal has any affiliation with a gang?

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Objection, leading the witness-- Your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

You don't have to answer that Detective Rodriguez (beat) Counsel for the defense, can you show probable cause for your question?

JULIE BULLA

Yes, Your Honor, I can. Please allow me to continue.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Objection over-ruled on the basis that the defense has logical probable cause-- May I remind you counsel that you are treading on shallow waters right now.

JULIE BULLA

Thank you, Your Honor-- Detective, please give us your expert opinion on whether or not the key eye-witness, Angel Bernal is in a gang?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

I cannot fully answer that question since any affiliation with gang activity in regards to the victim
(MORE)

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ (cont'd)
has not been verified and remains
under LAPD's investigation.

JULIE BULLA
Thank you, Detective and no further
questions-- the defense rests.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
You may step down, Detective

After the detective steps down, Judge Elliott picks up the
gavel while announcing--

JUDGE ELLIOTT
We will adjourn for a brief recess
of one hour and reconvene court to
resume with testimony from a
witness of the defense.

She STRIKES the gavel three times before rising to leave.

Minor turns around to see Christina and his mother sitting
together then looks around the back with a puzzled look.

MINOR
Where's Anna?

CHRISTINA
Oh, she just went to the restroom.

MINOR
What? Is she all right?

CHRISTINA
Yes, it's just a little hot in
here. We'll all be back soon--
Don't worry.

While looking back, Ms Bulla notices Dr Li just entering
through the court's double door.

JULIE BULLA
Minor, I'll see you back here after
the recess-- You all right?

MINOR
Yeah, sure-- no problem.

Ms Bulla meets Dr. Li in the back then they walk out into
the hall together.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

JULIE BULLA
Dr Li, I'm so glad you're here--
There's a brief recess before the
trial starts back up again.

DR LI

I wasn't sure I could make it, but I will be due back in surgery in about three hours.

JULIE BULLA

I'm sure we'll be able to free you up quite some time before then. See you back in one hour, Okay?

DR LI

Sounds good-- I'll just go out to get some air until then.

They part ways for now, he heads to the elevator and she goes to the nearby women's restroom.

Anna, looking very pale, comes out of the restroom as Ms Bulla walks toward her.

JULIE BULLA

Hi Anna-- You feeling all right?

ANNA

Oh, Hi, Ms Bulla. I'm okay. It's just a little warm in there and I had to freshen up.

Down the hall near the courtroom doors, there's a LOUD VOICE coming from Chris Fitzgerald, who's in front of Detective Rodriguez and A WOMAN, 65, with glasses and gray hair.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

(to the woman)

Excuse me, ma'am-- I'm sorry but you better stop speaking to the detective, right now...

WOMAN

I'm afraid I don't know what you're talking about--

Ms Bulla steps away from Anna to get closer to the woman next to Mr. Fitzgerald.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Listen, I know that you're one of the jurors for the trial that's going on in that courtroom--

JULIE BULLA

Is there a problem here?

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, obviously, this juror from the trial has been talking with Detective Rodriguez, a witness.

JULIE BULLA
(somewhat taken back)
Oh, boy... Listen ma'am, let's get
you back to the juror's room and--

WOMAN
Oh, I'm so sorry if I did anything
wrong. I didn't--

JULIE BULLA
Ah, don't worry and we'll take care
of matters after the court recess.

Ms Bulla takes her by the arm and as she guides her back
through the courtroom door she nods to Fitzgerald then gives
a wink to Rodriguez.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
(to Fitzgerald)
All she said was she respects
detectives for all our service.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
How freaking nice-- You know the
rules, Rodriguez-

While walking away toward the elevator, Rodriguez looks down
at his watch.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Yeah-- You don't need to remind me.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

Both counsels are standing at the bench speaking with the
judge while the rest of the court and the jurors are in
their seats. Soon after, the counsels walk back to sit
behind their tables.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
It was just brought to my attention
by both counsels that there was an
incident that occurred during our
short recess which involved one of
our jurors. Mr. Fitzgerald would
you please relay to the court what
happened at that time?

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Yes, Your Honor-- Shortly after
recess was called, I saw and
overheard juror seven speaking to
the witness, Detective Rodriguez,
in the hall outside of courtroom
doors. What I overheard was brief
in nature. I immediately
interrupted the juror and
instructed her to stop talking to
Detective Rodriguez.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Thank you, Mr. Fitzgerald. Ms Bulla, I understand you were also present. Would you please tell us what occurred?

JULIE BULLA

Yes, Your Honor. I overheard Mr. Fitzgerald in a rather loud voice telling juror seven to stop talking to Detective Rodriguez. She appeared a little startled. After Mr Fitzgerald interrupted the juror, who briefly spoke to the detective, she attempted to apologize. I did not hear or see the detective speak at any time.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Thank you both for bringing this matter to the attention of the court. I must remind all members of the jury that it is never permissible to speak with any of the witnesses during the full duration of this trial because the selection of the jurors becomes greatly comprised. Reselection or mistrial can be the end result--

Judge Elliott looks directly at juror seven, who has removed her glasses to wipe her eyes with a tissue.

JULIE BULLA

Your Honor, may I please be allowed to speak on this matter?

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Yes, continue Ms Bulla.

JULIE BULLA

I have spoken to Mr Jimenez on what occurred in the hall in which myself and Mr Fitzgerald witnessed, and we feel that the juror's brief comment to Detective Rodriguez was innocent in nature. At this point, we believe resorting to reselection of the jury won't be necessary.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Very well, if you and the defendant have discussed this situation in full, then I will accept your decision-- And of course, I must allow Mr Fitzgerald to voice any further input on this matter.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, Your Honor, if the defense willingly accepts this matter as closed with no further need for intervention, then I've no further input other than I concur that the juror's brief remark to the detective was innocent in nature.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

After receiving dual acceptance on this issue reported by both counsels, I will deem this matter involving juror seven as resolved and closed (beat) We will now proceed with this trial by calling the next witness, who is Dr. Curtis Li. Ms Bulla are you ready to call your witness to the stand to testify?

JULIE BULLA

Yes, Your Honor. I wish to call Dr. Curtis Li to the stand.

BAILIFF

Dr. Curtis Li please come to the witness stand to be sworn for testimony.

After Dr. Li arrives at the stand, the bailiff swears him in then the doctor sits in the witness stand.

JULIE BULLA

Doctor will you please state your full name, your title and the medical facility you practice at.

DR. LI

My name is Dr. Curtis Li. I'm a neurologist and surgeon at USC Medical and have been in practice there for ten years.

JULIE BULLA

And Mario Gutierrez, the victim of the shooting on November seventh, has been under your care in the ICU-- Is that correct?

DR. LI

Yes, that is correct.

JULIE BULLA

Dr. Li would you please state the condition of Mario Gutierrez since he was shot in the back of his head and while he's been under your care at USC Medical Center?

DR. LI

He's unconscious and in critical condition that requires close surveillance. I performed a craniotomy shortly after he was admitted to remove the bullet from the parietal-occipital area and to evacuate the subdural hematoma.

As Angel sits in a second row seat behind the prosecution's table, his eyes mist-up and his lower lip quivers.

JULIE BULLA

Are his vital signs stabilizing? Do you expect him to recover after he becomes conscious?

DR. LI

His pupils are equal and reactive to light now, but his vital signs remain touch and go. To reduce the energy requirements of the brain, which in turn reduces blood flow and intracranial pressure, recently he's receiving a continuous IV infusion of Propofol, a form of anesthetic sedation-- We may need to keep him in this induced-coma up to three weeks. Mario's consciousness could return with some deficits in his speech and vision if the tissue damage remains compromised.

JULIE BULLA

Thank you, Dr. Li. No further questions. The defense rests.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Thank you, Ms Bulla. Does the prosecution wish to cross-examine the witness?

Mr. Fitzgerald stands up while looking directly at Dr. Li.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

You may proceed.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Thank you, Your Honor.

A beat. He walks up to the witness stand and faces him.

CHRIS FITZGERALD (CON'T)

Dr. Li, during your ten years of practice at USC Medical Center have you dealt with many other cases such as that of Mr Gutierrez?

DR. LI

Yes, I have.

CHRIS FITZGERALD (CON'T)

Can you give us an estimate of the number of cases-- over a hundred or less than that?

DR. LI

I have treated well-over a hundred patients involving gunshot wounds to the head.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Dr. Li can you give us another estimate of those you've treated with similar gunshot wounds such as that your patient Mario Gutierrez-- How many patients have survived following surgery and treatment over the last several years?

DR. LI

Every patient is different in response to medical and surgical intervention, but I have documented most of my cases through our system known as Utilization Review. The patient survival rate has been noted as high as 50% over the last 5-10 years.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

And of the 50% of patients that survive-- Do they recover back to normal lives without, as you mentioned earlier, so-called physical deficits?

DR. LI

Again, every patient responds differently, but yes, many that survive may have residual deficits in vision, speech or possibly paralysis of part of the body.

Fitzgerald looks directly at the jury and then at Minor as he continues with his next question.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

And would it be safe to say that your patient Mario Gutierrez may
(MORE)

CHRIS FITZGERALD (cont'd)
have only a fifty percent chance of
living and might possibly die?

JULIE BULLA
Objection, Your Honor. Counsel is
leading the witness through
speculation.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Overruled. Strike counsel's last
question to the witness.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Thank you, Dr. Li.

A beat

No further questions, Your Honor.
The prosecution rests.

Minor has beads of sweat on his face while he grips his
chair as Mr. Fitzgerald returns to his table and as Dr. Li
steps down from the stand.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
We shall end this court session
with the testimony of the witness
for the prosecution. Mr Fitzgerald
please call your next witness to
the stand.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Your Honor, I wish to call Angel
Bernal to testify on the stand.

Angel Bernal enters the witness stand after being sworn in
by the bailiff. Fitzgerald looks all around the court before
he begins to question Angel.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Mr Bernal would you please state if
you were shot on November seventh
in the Hollenbeck Park area.

ANGEL
Yes, I was shot in Hollenbeck Park
on November seventh.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Can you identify the gunman if he
were here in front of you?

ANGEL
Yes, I can.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Is the gunman here in this
courtroom?

ANGEL

Yes, he is.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Will you please identify the gunman by pointing him out and describing what he is wearing?

Angel turns his head toward Minor and points to Minor.

ANGEL

He is right over there wearing a white shirt sitting next to his public defender.

Minor glares back at him as Angel turns his head back.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Let it be recorded by the court that the witness has identified the defendant, Minor Jimenez, who is seated next to Julie Bulla, his defense attorney.

A beat

I have no more questions Your Honor. The prosecution rests.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Yes, the identified is noted. Thank you, Mr Fitzgerald-

A beat

Ms Bulla do you wish to cross-examine the witness?

JULIE BULLA

(stands up)

No, Your Honor, but I ask to reserve the right to call the witness back to the stand at a later date.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Very well, counselor-- Mr. Bernal, you may step down.

A beat

Court will reconvene next week on Tuesday morning at ten o'clock, and I move that court be adjourned after all members of the jury are removed from the court.

Both Julie Bulla and Minor bow their heads as Angel holds his head high and passes by them.

MINOR
 (to Ms Bulla)
 Wat the fuck-- Am I doomed or wat?

JULIE BULLA
 Believe me, Minor, we will see this
 through together in the next phase.

MINOR
 Yeah, whatever you say, Ms Bulla--
 My life is in your hands.

A beat

Why didn't you grill that guy on
 the stand?

JULIE BULLA
 The time is not right-- Please
 believe me as I gather more proof,
 I will call him back on the stand.

The gavel STRIKES three times before the courtroom begins to
 empty out.

INT. HOME OF MR. AND MRS. JIMENEZ - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In front of a BLARING TV SET, sits ERNESTO JIMENEZ, 53, in a
 worn-out lazy boy with a copy of the LA Times in his lap.

MR JIMENEZ
 I can't believe he is my son.. Now
 that he's up for attempted murder.
 Why couldn't he go into the
 military like me and Christina's
 husband, who's serving over six
 years now... But no, instead he
 started stealing cars at eighteen.

MRS JIMENEZ
 He's OUR son-- Ernesto can't you
 believe that Minor had nothing to
 do with what he's been accused of?

MR JIMENEZ
 All I know is I can't hold my head
 up anywhere I go now that his name
 is all over the papers. Where did I
 go wrong with that boy?

MRS JIMENEZ
 Maybe if you used the belt less and
 gave me more of your love, things
 would be a lot different.

MR JIMENEZ
 What are you saying? If I didn't
 use discipline to make a man out of
 him in a town full of hoods-- How
 different would it have turned out?

MRS JIMENEZ

Right... You didn't have to beat the tar out of him for something like not rolling up a watering hose to your regulations when he was ten years old.

MR JIMENEZ

Oh, yeah, I remember you told me that you would kill me if I laid another hand on him back then. Please, don't remind me-

MRS JIMENEZ

This time is no different... Don't deny your son now because he really could use our support when he needs us the most.

MR JIMENEZ

Yeah, right... I've heard enough, I'm tired, just go get me another cold beer out of the mini frig-

She turns away from him, rips off her apron then stomps out of the room.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - THE WITNESS STAND - DAY

JULIE BULLA

Mr. Gardea, you mentioned that Minor Jimenez has been employed at your auto body repair shop for nearly three years-- Would you please describe to us his character as your employee?

RAYMUNDO

Of course-- I first met Minor about three years ago while I was at a Car Show. I was impressed with the 64' Impala that he restored and with his Can-Do attitude from the get go. I told him if he needed a job to come by my shop. A week later I hired him and he's turned out to be the best employee I've had in years. Hey, I can see how they're trying to paint an ugly picture of him-- Sure, he did something stupid over four years ago. Hell, I went through similar pitfalls before I learned from my mistakes. In fact, in his 12-step program, Minor has the same sponsor I had years ago. Minor would never resort to the violence that he's been accused of today. He's

(MORE)

RAYMUNDO (cont'd)
disciplined and has excellent work
ethics. He'd have too much to
lose... He's gained much respect
from his family and friends.

Fitzgerald rolls his eyes, shakes his head and SIGHS.

JULIE BULLA
And Mr Gardea, since Minor has been
working at your shop have you ever
seen him become violent while
interacting with you, the other
employees or any of the customers?

RAYMUNDO
No, I have never seen him angry or
violent since I've known him. And
he's always been very agreeable
with the customers and the other
guys on the job.

JULIE BULLA
No more questions Your Honor. The
defense rests.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Thank you counselor. Mr Fitzgerald
do you wish to cross-examine?

CHRIS FITZGERALD
(remains at his desk)
Yes, Your Honor--

A beat

Mr. Gardea, How long has your shop
been in operation?

RAYMUNDO
I'm proud to say for thirty years.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Well, now, have you ever hired an
ex-con before to work on your cars?

RAYMUNDO
As a matter of fact I have on a few
rare occasions.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Were you aware that Mr. Jimenez had
been arrested for a car theft with
a DUI after a high speed pursuit by
police about four years ago?

RAYMUNDO
I always run a background check on
all new hires-- Yes, I was aware.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

And you hired him regardless of his criminal record?

RAYMUNDO

That's right-- When you've been in business as long as I have, you sometimes have to go with your gut feeling before judging a human being. Minor and I came to an understanding that as long as he's working for me, he'd have to keep on attending his 12-step program. So that's the story in a nut-shell.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

No more questions, Your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Thank you Mr. Gardea, you may step down.

A beat

Ms Bulla, I have the defendant, Minor Jimenez listed as the last witness for today's trial. I think it best that we take a ten minute recess before continuing.

JULIE BULLA

Yes, Your Honor, agreed. I choose to remain in court to consult with Mr. Jimenez until court is resumed.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Very well, the bailiff will also remain here until we reconvene.

A beat

Court is adjourned for a ten minute recess.

As the jury and members of the court depart, Ms Bulla places a legal pad in front of them and writes: "Stay Cool" then points it out to Minor before speaking in low tones.

JULIE BULLA

Minor, we need to go over our Q and A before you're called up there.

MINOR

Ms Bulla, no offense, but I'm ready to give them my side of the story.

JULIE BULLA

Just remember what I told you earlier, this prosecutor is known for his dog-eat-dog approach, so

(MORE)

JULIE BULLA (cont'd)
 he'll try to break you. He's also
 out to be the next DA.

MINOR
 I can see that he would love to
 convict me for murder-- I think
 he's actually banking on Gutierrez
 not making it out alive.

JULIE BULLA
 Please put that out of your head,
 right now-- Just stay focused. When
 Mario comes out of this and
 possibly becomes a viable witness
 is what we should be hoping for at
 this point.

A beat

Okay Minor, here's your Saint
 Christopher metal that you asked me
 to bring to you today.

He holds on to the metal after she passes it to him under
 the table.

Minor keeps his head bowed in silence as Judge Elliott and
 the others begin to enter the court.

SMASH CUT TO:

MINOR ON THE STAND WITH HIS PUBLIC DEFENDER MONTAGE--

JULIE BULLA
 Mr Jimenez, did you shoot Angel
 Bernal and Mario Gutierrez on
 November seventh between 3:30 and
 four o'clock in the afternoon?

In the first row seat behind the defense table, Mrs Jimenez
 holds onto a rosary while tears run down her cheeks.

MINOR JIMENEZ
 No, I did not.

JULIE BULLA
 Are you in a gang or have you ever
 been in a gang?

INSERT - THE SERENITY PRAYER ON THE COVER OF A 12-STEP BOOK

Raymundo has the book in his lap with his finger under the
 word, "Courage" in the Inscription that reads, "God Grant Me
 The Serenity To Accept The Things I Cannot Change, The
 Courage To Change The Things I Can, And The Wisdom To Know
 The Difference".

MINOR JIMENEZ

No, I am not in a gang and I never have been in a gang-- My Dad made sure of that when I was growing up.

SMASH CUT TO:

HARD-ASS PROSECUTOR'S CROSS-EXAM MONTAGE --

BACK TO THE COURT STAND

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Were you at your sister, Christina Vargas's home in Boyle Heights on November seventh from 2:30 in the afternoon until 6:30 in the evening? Answer yes or no.

MINOR

Yes.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

In detective Rodriguez's report your sister confirmed you were there, but that you left at 3:00 then you returned at 4:30. Can you explain your whereabouts during that time.

MINOR

I drove to Little Tokyo to pick out a present for my niece's birthday from a street vendor.

INSERT - SAINT CHRISTOPHER METAL

On his lap, Minor touches the metal in his right open palm.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Sounds sweet-- Can anyone verify that? Do you have a receipt with a stamped date and time to prove it?

MINOR

No, I don't know the vendor and I didn't get a receipt.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Well, Mr Jimenez, I'm trying to do the math as to why you were gone over that period of time just to purchase a gift.

A beat

Uh, let's see, I understand Christina Vargas's home is located less than a mile from Hollenbeck park and that Little Tokyo is about
(MORE)

CHRIS FITZGERALD (cont'd)
a fifteen minute drive from her
house-- Is that right?

MINOR
Yes, more or less.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Okay, for the benefit of the doubt,
let's say it took you a little more
time to park-- Still, I find it
hard to believe that it took you
over an hour and a half just to buy
a gift-- But I believe that would
give you more than ample time to
swing by the park to shoot the two
victims and make it back to the
house party.

JULIE BULLA
I object Your Honor. Counsel is
using speculation as a means of
placing the defendant at the scene
of the crime.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
I withdraw the question, Your
Honor-- But, isn't it true Mr.
Jimenez that, in fact, you
threatened both Mario Gutierrez and
Angel Bernal with their lives
openly in a local restaurant just
less than a week before the
shooting took place. Answer the
question-- Yes or no?

END OF TESTIMONY MONTAGE

INT. TWIN TOWERS JAIL - VISITING AREA - DAY

Father Guillermo sits at a booth as Minor arrives to meet
with him on the other side of the clear partition. Each one
picks up a phone receiver with a brief exchange of smiles.

FATHER GUILLERMO
Hello Minor, how are you?

MINOR
Hello Father, thank you for coming
and I'm doing okay, or as well as
can be expected under these
circumstances.

FATHER GUILLERMO
Oh, Minor, how long have I known
you now?

MINOR

Oh, Father G, since my First Holy Communion.

FATHER GUILLERMO

You always were a resilient lad. Your family is very concerned over what you are going through, and I had to come see you to listen to your hopes and fears.

MINOR

Father, I appreciate all your thoughts and prayers and for being in the court the other day.

FATHER GUILLERMO

I know that this is the biggest life hurdle that you are going through, right now... Please know that I'm here if you need me to pray with you.

MINOR

Yes, Father... Could you please quote something from the bible that will offer me some strength.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Let us bow our heads and close our eyes to pray together--

A beat

From the Holy Scripture of Second Corinthians in the New Testament-- Our Lord's message to the faithful: In the time of meeting with our greatest adversities, He will not give us more than we can bear-- We pray this together for your son, Minor, follower of Jesus Christ. Please provide him with Your strength during this time while his faith is being challenged by wrong-doers. O Dear Lord, we believe that You will not allow him to experience trials and tribulations beyond what he can bear. We pray this, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

After opening their eyes, both maintain a brief moment of silence together.

MINOR

Thank you, Father.

FATHER GUILLERMO

God bless you, Minor and know that our thoughts and prayers will be with you.

A beat

Listen, on a lighter note before I leave-- Is Raymundo's shop in the same spot it's been for 30 years?

MINOR

Yes, It sure is.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Think I need to pay him a visit. A couple of young boys crashed their skateboards into the back fender of our car parked near the rectory.

MINOR

Oh, go on over, Father-- He'll take good care of you, there.

FATHER GUILLERMO

I'm sure he will.

EXT. RAYMUNDO'S CAR REPAIR SHOP - DAY

Father parks his 2001 BLACK HONDA ACCORD in the parking lot of the shop as Raymundo is standing just outside the garage opening. While getting out of his car, he waves to Raymundo then they meet together.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Hello, Mr Gardea, I'm looking for an estimate on a fender-bender.

RAYMUNDO

You came to the right place, Father. Let's take a look.

They walk to the driver's side rear fender to check it out.

RAYMUNDO (CON'T)

Let me guess? Someone in a bad mood took a hammer to it.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Not quite-- A couple of hyperactive skateboarders got off track.

RAYMUNDO

(chuckles)

Makes sense. Well, it shouldn't cost much-- When do you want it back?

FATHER GUILLERMO

Uh, I could spare it for a week.

RAYMUNDO

That's no problem, and we can have it back to you before then if you want to bring it back tomorrow--

A beat

So, Father, are you sure I can't help you with something else?

FATHER GUILLERMO

From what I've seen, you have been of tremendous help to the Jimenez family, and I hope we can discuss more helpful things that we could accomplish together-- But, first things first. Let's see you perform a little tender loving care on old Bessie here, Okay?

RAYMUNDO

(with a sly grin)

I catch your drift, and no problem, Father-- Just stop by tomorrow.

He slips into his car, shuts the door then speaks through the open window before driving away.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Yes, I knew we could count on you. See you tomorrow, Raymundo.

EXT. LA SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE - PARKING LOT - DAY

Holding onto her bulky briefcase, Julie Bulla is walking toward her car alongside a fellow outspoken attorney, STEPHANIE LOFTIN, 33, carrying a box of files.

STEPHANIE

Listen Julie, I think you're really taking this case way too seriously.

JULIE BULLA

I can't help it-- I thought I'd die the other day in court when he told me... Whatever you say-- My life is in your hands.

STEPHANIE

Go on really? Well, he's not too off-- Why do you think they call it the Practice of Law. We keep at it until hopefully we get it right.

A beat, Stephanie gets out her keys and unlocks the trunk of her LATE-MODEL RED LEXUS then places the file box inside.

STEPHANIE

You know what you need?

JULIE BULLA

What counselor?

STEPHANIE

A good lay-- And don't gimme that innocent look-

JULIE BULLA

Oh, come on...

STEPHANIE

I mean it. Get out there and have some fun for a change. Look, I know your ten-year reunion was postponed and got rescheduled.

JULIE BULLA

So what?

STEPHANIE

Would be a great place to pick-up on one of your old flames. Who knows, you might even get lucky-

JULIE BULLA

Yeah, right. I gotta get going-

Stephanie slams down the trunk and gives her the "peace out sign" as Julie heads away.

INT. CHRISTINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Christina rushes in to pick up the phone after it RINGS.

CHRISTINA

Hello (a beat) Oh, Hi, Father.

FATHER (O.S.)

Christina, I hate to bother you this evening, but I need to ask a favor of you.

CHRISTINA

Oh sure, what is it?

FATHER (O.S.)

Well, my car just got repaired and I can't seem to find anyone available to give me a lift to pick it up tomorrow at the shop.

A beat

I wasn't sure if you or your mother would be willing to drop me off if you're not too busy?

CHRISTINA

Oh, Father, I sure would if I could, but we've been non-stop at our Hair Salon due to the holidays.

FATHER (O.S.)

I hear you-- Same here at the Church-- Is your mother or father doing anything tomorrow?

CHRISTINA

Oh, my mother doesn't really drive anymore, but wait, I'm sure My Dad can help you out. He's usually free in the morning. I'll give you a call back after I check with him, Okay, Father?

FATHER (O.S.)

That would be great. Thank you and bye for now.

CHRISTINA

Bye, Father.

She hangs up, starts dialing and waits as the phone RINGS.

INT. 2010 WHITE FORD BRONCO CAR - MOVING - DAY

Ernesto Jimenez is driving Father Guillermo in his BRONCO en route to Raymundo's Repair Shop.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Can't tell you how much I appreciate you giving me a lift to the shop today.

MR JIMENEZ

Oh, don't worry about it, Father. So, how much farther to make a right, did you say?

FATHER GUILLERMO

Oh, yes, let me see-- We're getting close. Okay, now, don't turn at this light, but at the next light make a right then you can't miss it-- His shop will be just a couple of driveways down on the right.

MR JIMENEZ

Hope they took good care of your car for you.

FATHER GUILLERMO

Oh, sure, he's one of the best in town when it comes to body repair.

MR JIMENEZ

Is this it?

They are right in front of the driveway to Raymundo's Shop.
Father responds with vigor to Ernesto

FATHER GUILLERMO

This is it. Just pull in, and would
you mind accompanying me into the
office if you have a few minutes?

Ernesto nods in agreement as he parks in the lot, then they
both get out and walk to the office.

INT. RAYMUNDO'S REPAIR SHOP - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Raymundo's standing at his desk talking on the phone with a
customer. He waves as Father walks in with Ernesto.

While they're waiting for him to finish his call, Ernesto
looks around then stares up at a FRAMED PHOTO of a young man
in an Army uniform with a SMALL PLAQUE on the wall.

RAYMUNDO

Yes, sir and I look forward to
seeing you. Oh, by the way, we're
open till six o'clock-- Bye now.

A beat. After he hangs up, Raymundo's all smiles.

RAYMUNDO (CON'T)

Hello, Father... Happy to see you
again and how are you?

FATHER GUILLERMO

I'm just fine, Raymundo and guess
you know why I'm here, right?

RAYMUNDO

Of course, your vehicle is ready
and waiting for pick-up. Want to
check her out?

FATHER GUILLERMO

Sure, sure, but first I want to
introduce you to an old friend--
This is Ernesto Jimenez and Ernesto
this is Raymundo Gardea.

RAYMUNDO

Nice to meet you, Ernesto-

A beat, he looks again at the FRAMED PHOTO overhead and
points to it, then speaks directly to Raymundo.

MR JIMENEZ

Is that a portrait of your son?

RAYMUNDO

Yes, it is.

MR JIMENEZ

I knew your son, Private Ruben Gardea while he served in our squad in Iraq. He was a fine young man and brave soldier. I'm so sorry for your loss.

Ernesto removes his Army Baseball cap from his head.

RAYMUNDO

Thank you for your condolences. He used to write to me about how he respected you as his superior. I gotta say that I think of Ruben as though he's still here.

BETO, 30, in work uniform, comes in to address his boss.

BETO

Excuse me, Raymundo. Did you want me to drive Father's car out, now.

RAYMUNDO

Yes, Beto-- Just park it in front of the lot, please.

A beat

Father, I'll be glad to walk you out to inspect your Honda, Okay?

FATHER GUILLERMO

Sure, I'll meet you over there.

After Beto and Father leave, there's a brief interaction between Raymundo and Ernesto.

ERNESTO

I had no idea that Ruben was your son, until stepping in here today.

RAYMUNDO

And I had no idea that Minor was your son until a year or so after I hired him.

A beat

We must remain strong for both of our sons, don't you agree?

Ernesto puts his cap on his head and agrees with a NOD.

INT. ROOM AT HOTEL FIGUEROA - NIGHT

Julie dressed in a slinky red dress, jolts into her hotel room that could pass for a movie set out of Casablanca. She quickly switches on some of the electronic candles then

slides the red, white and blue Yearbook: GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL BULLDOGS on the circular table next to a wing-chair.

After a KNOCK on the door, she pushes her Rolodex labeled LEGAL BEAGLE CONTACTS behind the bedside table phone, then opens the door to MIKE FAIRCLOTH, 28, buff, six foot tall with dark brown hair, and sporting a tailored suit and tie.

JULIE BULLA

Oh, Hi Mike-- So glad you made it.
Come on in.

With a boyish smile, he slightly bows his head as he enters.

MIKE

Hi, Julie. Wow-- It's been a while.
Nice room.

She puts her hands in his as he lightly kisses her cheek.

JULIE BULLA

Oh, and thanks for coming up to
sign my Yearbook.

After closing the door, she takes him by his arm and guides him to the circular table.

MIKE

I feel so weird about not writing
something back when we graduated.

JULIE BULLA

No foul on your part, Mike. It was
me that graduated early and
took-off to Northern Cal for
college-- Remember?

He NODS and opens the Yearbook to the CLASS OF SENIORS then flips a few more pages to HER PORTRAIT.

MIKE

That's right. It was New Years. You
know you broke my heart back then.

She whisks up the Yearbook to her chest then janks him by the arm as they bounce seated together on the side of the bed.

JULIE BULLA

Whoa, now, you and I should play a
little game of catch-up.

MIKE

Okay, why not-- But, first, please
excuse me while I use the restroom.

He rises up and looks into her eyes for a few moments.

JULIE BULLA
Of course, be my guest.

MIKE
Be right back. I promise.

When he closes the door, Julie turns on PANDORA MUSIC and adjusts the dimmer knob lower. She pauses and tilts her head to one side when MOANING SOUNDS comes from the bathroom.

After a beat, Mike opens the door then heads back to sit next to her on the side of the bed. She hands him a glass of wine, and with her glass of wine gestures a toast before each taking a sip.

JULIE BULLA
To our graduating class of Garfield
High and to love, life and success.

MIKE
Very well said-

A beat

Now, I know you became a lawyer,
right?

JULIE BULLA
Yes-- See the Rolodex over there...
That's been my significant other
for some time-- And I hear you've
been very successful running your
family's contractor's business-

He puts his glass of wine on the table then stares down at his Dad's MASONIC TIE-CLIP as she places her glass down too.

She moves closer to him and starts touching his chest.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)
Oh, Mike, you must know how much
you turn me on-

While kissing him she moves her hand down to his crotch, then as she begins to rub his erecting penis, he quickly lets out a LOUD MOAN, clenches up and pulls away from her.

MIKE
Hey, I'm sorry-- I can't. Believe
me, YOU are amazing-- It's just...
I had a circumcision two weeks ago.

JULIE BULLA
What? Oh, Wow-- Why Now?

MIKE
(rolling his eyes)
Hey, if I were a Fairstein instead
of a Faircloth, none of this would
be happening.

She looks at him open-mouthed as he slowly speaks.

MIKE (CON'T)

My Dad died a month ago from Cancer that spread to his liver. His doctor told us that because Dad was uncircumcised and a smoker, he was predisposed to Penile Cancer. My Mom begged me to get circumcised. It's been pretty tough seeing her so down.

A beat, his eyes began to mist-up.

JULIE BULLA

Jesus, Mike. She's right-- You're her only son and she loves you.

MIKE

I had to do it for her and my Dad. Julie, you're irresistible, but my doctor said No S-E-X for six weeks.

JULIE BULLA

I'm so sorry and you must know I've always loved you- (lightens up)
Say, I'm starved... Want a taco?

MIKE

Sure, the rubber chicken from our reunion didn't go down very well.

She stumbles toward the phone then dials room service.

JULIE BULLA

Hi, can you please bring up two of your tacos to my room?

A beat

Oh, yes, one soft and one hard--

After she hangs up, they exchange a smile with one another.

INT. DR DE SILVA'S OFFICE - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Anna's in a patient gown lying on a exam table as DR DE SILVA, 45, with jet-black hair, is at her side.

DR DE SILVA

Anna, I'm glad you came in after you reported that you've had some spotting of blood... For how many days now?

ANNA

About two days.

DR DE SILVA

And you said it was very light in color and not bright red?

ANNA

Yes, doctor, It's pinkish-red and just a few spots here and there.

DR DE SILVA

I must ask you if you've been under much emotional stress lately--

ANNA

Doctor you know that I'm not married--

DR DE SILVA

Are you in a relationship with the father? How do you both feel about the baby?

ANNA

He doesn't know that I'm pregnant. I couldn't tell him--

DR DE SILVA

Anna, I need to ask you, why?

She begins to cry and is unable to speak. He comes a little closer to hold her hand as she starts to open up.

ANNA

I love him and I know that he loves me, but everything has changed since he was arrested--

DR DE SILVA

Oh, Anna, I'm sorry. What was he arrested for?

ANNA

I still can't believe it, but he was accused of shooting two men-- And I know he didn't; he would never do such a thing.

DR DE SILVA

Anna, Do you want to have this baby?

ANNA

(bawling to no end)

Yes, yes-- I want our baby.

Dr De Silva holds her by the shoulders for a beat then opens the door to call in NURSE JUDY, 40, with light brown hair in a floral scrub top, who's just down the hall.

DR. DE SILVA

Judy, Please come in here, now-

The Nurse arrives, walks over to Anna then helps her turn onto her side as HER CRYING LESSENS.

DR DE SILVA

Anna, please know that we need to watch your condition closely, right now. Sometimes light bleeding can happen early in pregnancy, but just to be on the safe side, I want you to go on bed rest.

A beat

Is anyone here with you, today?

ANNA

Yes, Minor's sister, Christina.

NURSE JUDY

She's in the waiting room, Doctor.

DR DE SILVA

Please go bring her in, Judy.

Judy leaves and until she arrives back with Christina, he's at the counter writing out his doctor's orders.

CHRISTINA

Hello, doctor is Anna going to be all right?

DR DE SILVA

Yes and No... I want Anna to stay on bed rest for a week while we monitor her light spotting. Can you or anyone in the family help in her care right now?

CHRISTINA

Yes, I will stay with her and watch over her.

DR DE SILVA

I'm going to order a visiting nurse to come out for home health visits to monitor her condition.

He turns to his nurse and hands her his orders.

DR DE SILVA (CON'T)

Judy, please go over all the instructions with both Anna and Christina and get their address info before they drive home.

NURSE JUDY

Yes, Dr. De Silva-- I will.

DR DE SILVA
 (to Christina and Anna)
 Family support is most important.
 (beat) Anna, I believe you will
 find a way to work through this,
 but you must stay in bed for now.

CHRISTINA / ANNA
 Thank you, Dr. De Silva--

He pats Anna's hand and nods to Christina before leaving.

INT. LOBBY OF HOTEL FIGUEROA - DAY

After Julie checks-out with the Clerk at the counter, she walks away with her rolling carry-on bag through the Spanish-style lobby.

INT. CHRISTINA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Anna is lying propped-up in bed as she just finishes dialing the phone number on Julie Bulla's card. Julie answers her cell phone after TWO RINGS.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

JULIE BULLA
 Hello?

ANNA
 Hello, Ms Bulla, this is Anna Velasquez, Minor's girlfriend.

JULIE BULLA
 Oh, Hello, Anna-- How are you?

She sits in an over-stuffed chair next to a huge potted Palm and places the carry-on bag next to her on the Persian rug.

ANNA
 Ms Bulla, I've been very worried about Minor. I know that you are doing everything you can to defend him, but I had to call you--

JULIE BULLA
 Okay, take a few deep breaths and try to tell me what's on your mind--

ANNA
 (in a trembled voice)
 I just can't hide it from him anymore-- and when you gave me your card you told me to call you if anything pops up and uh, well--

JULIE BULLA

Anna, let's take this one step at a time... What is it that you're worried about? And what is it that you've been hiding from Minor?

ANNA

Remember when you saw me coming out of the restroom a while back--

JULIE BULLA

Yes, and you looked very pale that day-- I remember.

ANNA

Well, I was having morning sickness. I haven't been able to tell Minor that I'm pregnant because of his trial just starting. I just didn't know how--

JULIE BULLA

Oh, Anna, I understand, but please tell me if you're alright? Have you been seen by a doctor?

ANNA

That's why I'm calling you now-- I left the doctor's office and he ordered me to stay on bed rest right now because I had a little blood spotting lately-- So, I'm staying at Christina's this week.

JULIE BULLA

Okay, now listen-- Minor is very strong and the truth shouldn't be hidden from him anymore because he loves you very much. I can meet with him soon to break the news to him-- But you must rest and you shouldn't get stressed-out.

ANNA

I know you're right. I'm so sorry about having to call you like this.

JULIE BULLA

I'm glad you turned to me. Thank goodness that Christina is there with you-- We'll stay in close touch from here on out-- and I'll call both you and Christina soon.

ANNA

Thank you, Ms Bulla

JULIE BULLA

You're welcome, Anna-- Bye for now.

ANNA

Bye.

After Julie hangs-up, she gets up and walks out to the pool.

EXT. POOL-SIDE PATIO BAR OF HOTEL FIGUEROA - DAY

Julie plops down in a soft leather chair in the shade and dials on her cell phone then Stephanie answers.

STEPHANIE (V.O)

Hello?

JULIE BULLA

Hi Stephanie--

STEPHANIE (V.O)

Well, well-- I'm guessing you got lucky this weekend.

JULIE BULLA

Oh, that-- All I can say is that it turned out to be an interesting evening, with no foul or no harm.

STEPHANIE (V.O)

So, that means that you still need to get laid, right?

JULIE BULLA

Oh, yeah, eventually--

A beat as they both exchange CHUCKLES.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)

Listen, are you anywhere near Hotel Figueroa, right now?

STEPHANIE (V.O)

Well, just so happens I'm not too far from there-- What's up?

JULIE BULLA

How about joining me for a drink? I could use some sound advice about this case, that's turning into a handful. Uh, by the way, do you still occasionally assist with legal cases on a pro-bono basis?

STEPHANIE (V.O)

Hey, do the bartenders over there still serve up a mean Bloody Mary?

JULIE BULLA

Is the Pope Italian?

STEPHANIE (V.O)

I'll be right over--

Julie hangs-up then waves a server to her table.

INT. USC MEDICAL CENTER - ICU PATIENT ROOM - DAY

A RELIEF STAFF RN, 25, in blue scrubs, walks into Mario's room and presses the CODE BLUE ALARM BUTTON above the head of his bed. The cardiac monitor wavelength displays Ventricular Tachycardia at a rate of 250.

She checks for a pulse then yells out into the hall. The CHARGE NURSE, 35, wearing a white lab coat rolls the Crash Cart into the room as other staff members also respond.

RELIEF RN

Code Blue room six--

OVERHEAD ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Code Blue Surgical ICU -- Code Blue Surgical ICU.

In one minute an INTERN, 25, and SURGICAL RESIDENT, 30, also run in the room. Orders are given as the patient's assessment is rambled off by the Charge Nurse.

RESIDENT

Nurse, give me a general assessment

CHARGE NURSE

Mario Gutierrez, 24, went into V Tach with no pulse. Patient's been on the vent then placed on continuous IV propofol nearly three weeks ago. Evacuation of subdural hematoma by Neurosurgeon Dr. Li was on November seventh post gunshot wound to the head.

RESIDENT

Call Dr. Li stat. Continue chest compressions and O2 ventilation via Ambu bag-- BP? Intracranial pressure?

RELIEF NURSE

40 systolic, ICP within normal past 24 hours.

RESIDENT

Turn off IV Propofol. Stop compressions, check for pulse.

RELIEF NURSE

No pulse

RESIDENT

Continue CPR-- Charge defibrillator to 300 Watt/sec. Any meds given?

CHARGE RN
 IV bolus of Lidocaine with
 Lidocaine IV drip started-- A
 Dopamine IV drip just started.

The Respiratory Therapist drew blood from patient's arterial line. Intern applied gel pads to chest for defibrillation.

RESIDENT
 Give a milligram of Epi now then
 two amps of IV Bicarb. Get an
 Arterial Blood gas stat and a full
 chemistry panel with a CBC--

A beat. defibrillator is fully charged and ready.

RESIDENT
 Stop CPR, remove O2-- All clear
 from the bed.

Everyone steps back from the bed. Relief Nurse delivers the charge to his chest then checks for pulse. She shakes her head NO. Cardiac wavelength changes to Ventricular Fib.

RESIDENT
 Give another milligram of
 Epinephrine and continue CPR. Give
 another bolus of Lidocaine and up
 the IV drip to 60 cc an hour.
 Titrate the dopamine to bring up
 his BP. Up the charge to 360
 Watt/sec.

A beat
 All Clear... Defib at 360, Now-

MONTAGE OF MARIO'S NEAR-DEATH DREAM:

Bird's eye view of Mario looking down on his body as the health team continue resuscitation efforts with SOUNDS OF: beeping alarms and the doctor and nurse dialogue becoming more echo-like then discernible.

Mario floats through the ceiling away from the ICU room and is now walking through a darkened tunnel-like space that becomes more lit as he walks forward. As Mario turns his head, he looks at Angel, who is walking alongside him.

MARIO
 Angel, what are we doing here?

ANGEL
 I dunno, Mario-- I think I really
 fucked up-

MARIO
 What do you mean?

Angel is no longer by his side. Mario walks closer to the light-bursting in front of him as HIS FATHER, who died three years ago at the age of 44, appears to him.

MARIO
Pop? Is that you?

MARIO FATHER
Mario, I miss you-- Go back and do what is right, my son-

MARIO
Don't go, Pop--

Mario is gradually being pulled back then quickly comes to a halt as a LATINO SOLDIER resembling Private Gardea appears.

MARIO
Who are you?

LATINO SOLDIER
It doesn't matter, Mario-- I fought for freedom and we need you to fight for justice. Go back and do the right thing for our brother.

END OF MONTAGE OF MARIO'S NEAR-DEATH DREAM - BACK TO SCENE:

INT. USC MEDICAL CENTER - ICU PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

RESIDENT
Give him Calcium Chloride IV push, run in IV fluids-- Hang a liter of Ringers and Stop CPR--

INTERN
He's in Bradycardia

A beat. The Intern places his fingers over Mario's neck.

INTERN (CON'T)
I feel a pulse--

CROSS FADE TO:

INT. TRINI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Several empty beer bottles are scattered on the floor as Trini, wearing a wife-beater shirt, stumbles in from the hall while yelling out to Cool Homie, who's asleep on a worn crush-velvet sofa.

TRINI
Hey, wake the fuck up... Help--

COOL HOMIE
(just roused)
Wat the hell?

TRINI

Call 911-- It's Angel, I don't
think he's breathin'

INT. TRINI'S BACK BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

After Cool Homie jumps up and runs into the back bedroom, he get down on the floor next to Angel. He vigorously SHAKES AND SLAPS him several times. Angel remains limp and unresponsive as Homie SHOUTS OUT-

COOL HOMIE

Angel, Wake Up-- Come on, wake up-

Cool Homie rips off his head-beanie then presses his ear against Angel's chest. He delivers a FORCEFUL POUND with his fist onto Angel's chest.

COOL HOMIE

I said wake the fuck up--

He gives Angel a couple of deep mouth-to-mouth breaths then HITS his chest again.

TRINI

(dials on his cell)

I'm calling 911-- Oh, God, lil'
bro, wat kinda shit did you score?

COOL HOMIE

...And ya better get rid of any
fuckin' stash ya got here--

911 DISPATCH (O.S.)

911, what's your emergency?

INT. LA TWIN TOWERS JAIL - COUNSEL ROOM - DAY

Minor is sitting across from both Julie Bulla and Stephanie Loftin as the Guard, who observes through the glass partition in the wall, stands nearby in the access area.

MINOR

So, Ms Loftin, you say you want to
help Ms Bulla in my case-- Well,
how will you be able to clear me?

STEPHANIE

Minor, I'd like nothing more than
to see you cleared, but I'm here
to make myself available to help
your attorney with necessary checks
and balances-- in order to help
your case, more or less, so that
nothing gets overlooked.

JULIE BULLA

Listen, this won't break our lawyer-client privilege-- That is to say that our communications will remain confidential and not leave this room. It's so I'm better able to provide candid advice and effective representation. I hope that makes sense to you, Minor--

He leans back in his chair and shifts his eyes on them.

MINOR

Yeah, I guess-- Sort of like two heads are better than one?

STEPHANIE

Mr. Jimenez, I'm glad we're starting to see more eye to eye, and that's a very good way of expressing it.

JULIE BULLA

Minor, one of our big hurdles is dealing with your alibi-- The prosecution did their homework and was very close to ripping your alibi apart on the stand.

MINOR

Yeah, I know that, and I got really upset when you didn't try to do the same to Angel Bernal when he was on the stand.

STEPHANIE

We ALL need to be on the same page before you ever get back on the stand to testify, and before we cross-examine Mr. Bernal, who's the only the eyewitness at this point.

JULIE BULLA

So, is it agreed that Ms Loftin will assist me in representing you?

MINOR

Yes, you both have my consent.

STEPHANIE

Thank you, Minor. We'll stand by you to clear you as innocent.

She stands to extend her hand to Minor and he stands to shake her hand. After they both sit back down, Julie CLEARS HER THROAT briefly before speaking.

JULIE BULLA

Minor, there is something that your family has confided in me to talk to you about. It's a very personal matter that Anna has asked me to discuss with you--

MINOR

Anna, asked you to talk to me about something? What is it-- Honestly, I've been worried about her lately.

JULIE BULLA

There's no easy way to tell you this, but Anna is pregnant and she's been very hesitant about telling you because of the trial.

MINOR

Oh my God, really? Please tell me that she's not going to get an abortion--

JULIE BULLA

No, she's not-- She loves you, but she was told by her doctor to take it easy for a while, and that's why she won't be coming to your trial for now.

He gets up and paces back and forth a few times, Julie rises up and gestures for him to sit back down as the Guard in the access area steps forward and peers through the glass.

MINOR

Wow, this is unbelievable, how the hell did this--

JULIE BULLA

Please sit down. I know this is something both of you must not have planned out-- Just so you know, her IUD was removed, and she's staying at your sister's house right now... She'll be okay.

MINOR

(after slow breaths)

Thank God-- I think this is all I can take-in for today, Ms Bulla.

GUARD, 40, Opens the door and pokes his head in.

GUARD

Everything okay, here?

A beat. After Julie looks down and sees a message from Dr. Li on her SILENCED cell phone, she looks up at the Guard.

JULIE BULLA

Thank you officer and our session
was just ending.

GUARD

Fine-- Let's go Jimenez.

MINOR

Sure, no problem. Bye, Ms Loftin
and Ms Bulla.

STEPHANIE / JULIE BULLA

Bye Minor.

After Minor is escorted out of the room by the guard. Julie
picks up her phone to return the missed call from Dr. Li.

STEPHANIE

Well, that went as well as can be
expected--

JULIE BULLA

I'm calling back Dr. Li-- He just
left me a message.

A beat.

Hello, Dr. Li, this is Julie
Bulla-- Sorry I missed your call.

DR LI (O.S.)

Hello, Ms Bulla-- I think it best
to get right to the point. Mario
Gutierrez went into cardiac arrest,
and we nearly lost him.

JULIE BULLA

Oh, my God, I thought he was
stabilizing-- When did this happen?

DR LI (O.S.)

Just today and he was improving,
but there was an ICU nurse that
turned off his alarms before
leaving her post for a break.
Another nurse came in when he was
in cardiac arrest, most likely
brought on by hypoxia.

JULIE BULLA

Oh, I can't believe it-- I hope
that nurse was fired.

DR LI (O.S.)

Well, she won't be able to work
here again-- but due to nursing
shortages, I don't think her
license will be fully revoked.

(MORE)

DR LI (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Incentlly, the family is
 considering changing his Code
 status to No Code if his overall
 condition doesn't improve.

JULIE BULLA
 You mean NO more resuscitation?

DR LI (O.S.)
 His older sister is acting as head
 of the family and seeking power of
 attorney to make that decision.

JULIE BULLA
 Detective Rodriguez notified yet?

DR LI (O.S.)
 Yes, he's on his way over to review
 the situation.

JULIE BULLA
 Thank you Dr. Li-- I appreciate you
 keeping us updated.

DR LI (O.S.)
 No problem-- I know this is a real
 game changer for everyone. Good
 luck with this case in court.

She hangs up in a daze and looks at a frowning Stephanie.

STEPHANIE
 Sounds like things have taken a bad
 turn at the hospital--

JULIE BULLA
 Affirmative-- Mario's condition has
 just gone south. I've got to get in
 touch with Rodriguez by tonight.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

Court has just come to order and Judge Elliott is addressing
 both counselors, while Stephanie sits next to Minor with her
 briefs on the desk in front of her.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
 Are there any pending issues before
 we proceed with this trial?

JULIE BULLA
 Your Honor, may I please be allowed
 to approach the bench?

JUDGE ELLIOTT
 Ms Bulla, do you have any pending
 issues?

JULIE BULLA

Yes, your Honor-- I have critical changes to report to you related to this case.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Please come forward.

After Ms Bulla walks to the bench, Judge Elliott leans forward over her desk.

JULIE BULLA

Your Honor, there's a major change in the condition of Mario Gutierrez that needs to be addressed.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Are you the only one aware of this change? Is Mr Fitzgerald aware?

JULIE BULLA

Your Honor, I'm fairly sure that the prosecution also has some knowledge of the recent situation.

A beat.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Mr. Fitzgerald would you please approach the bench?

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, Your Honor.

The judge and both attorneys have formed a huddle with one another as they start consultation; Meanwhile, everyone in the court waits it out with bated breath.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

All right counselors, what's this critical issue?

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Honestly, your Honor, I was just made aware that Mario Gutierrez had a critical change in his condition which Detective Rodriguez has notified me of.

JULIE BULLA

Yes, Your Honor, my witness Dr. Li called and gave me a full medical account of Mr Gutierrez. He went into cardiac arrest and was resuscitated. He also remains a patient on the ventilator in ICU.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Since this issue we're discussing is a new development, I believe today's court proceedings will have to be postponed until the necessary witnesses will be in attendance at our next session-- Can we concur on my proposal as the plan of action?

JULIE BULLA

Yes, Your Honor.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, your Honor, but may I interject that if Mr Gutierrez does not survive, the conviction will change to one count of murder in addition to an attempted murder.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Mr Fitzgerald, I'm sure you know I am aware, and we will cross that bridge only if we come to it--

A beat

Thank you both and you may return to your tables while I prepare to make an announcement to the court.

JULIE BULLA / CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, Your Honor.

All are seated as Judge Elliott STRIKES her gavel while scattered speaking is going on in the court.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Order in the court. I must address to members of the court that both counselors have brought to my attention a new development related to the victim Mario Gutierrez and his condition, which requires further assessment and investigation. We will reconvene this trial and its proceedings after the list of necessary witnesses is made available-- Until that date, court is adjourned.

She STRIKES the gavel three times and looks sternly at both Ms Bulla and Mr Fitzgerald before rising up to leave.

Ms Bulla and her associate speak hurriedly with Minor before he is taken away by the officer who's soon to arrive.

JULIE BULLA

I'm not going to lie to you Minor--
The odds have been stacking up

(MORE)

JULIE BULLA (cont'd)
against you during these court
proceedings, but we do have one
last hope.

MINOR
I don't see how it can get much
worse-- Go on, give it to me-

JULIE BULLA
Mario Gutierrez has been taken out
of the induced coma-- Dr Li
informed me that his level of
consciousness is improving
somewhat, but he's still unable to
verbalize anything. If he does
start to speak again, there's a
good chance that he'll identify the
real gunman.

MINOR
Time's not been on my side. How
long can we wait for a miracle?

JULIE BULLA
It's a Hail Mary, but Detective
Rodriguez is ready and waiting for
that day at the hospital when
Mario's able to cooperate with
finding the SOB that shot him down.

MINOR
Wow, I know a Hi-tech dude from LA
City College who's been working
with video transmissions in legal
cases when a witness isn't able to
be in court. His name is Roberts.
We should look him up.

STEPHANIE
Great idea. I can follow-up on that
and check on the court's capability
to arrange for such a set-up before
the next court session.

JULIE BULLA
Super, we'll be on it, and I've
heard of such set-ups being allowed
in unusual court cases.

The officer comes forward then begins to escort Minor away
as Julie and Stephanie stand by his stand.

INT. USC MEDICAL CENTER - ER - NIGHT

Angel is on a respirator and being cared for by the ER team.
DR RAVELO, 35, talks to Trini about his brother's prognosis.

DR RAVELO

Angel's toxicology report showed high levels of Fentanyl in his blood stream while his EEG shows very little brain activity.

TRINI

I don't want to see my brother like this, doctor-- Just take him off that breathing machine right now, if he's gonna be a vegetable for the rest of his life-

DR RAVELO

Are you his only living relative?

TRINI

Yeah, that's right-- it's just him and me.

DR RAVELO

We're going to transfer him to our medical ICU for now and someone from the nursing team will speak with you later.

TRINI

For God's sake, let him go-

Trini curls up in a chair in the corner of the room while he HITS his head with his fists. The doctor leaves then an Orderly comes into the room to escort him back into the crowded ER waiting room next to Cool Homie, on his cell.

INT. ER WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

COOL HOMIE

(on his cell)

Hey, gotta go, call you later-

TRINI

For fuck sake-- He ain't ever coming back.

COOL HOMIE

Dawg, that's fucked-up-

TRINI

I gotta get out of here for a while- Is Driver around?

COOL HOMIE

Yeah, man, he's on his way. Ay and don't worry-- He cleared out your place, so I'll put you up, awright?

TRINI

Where the hell did Angel pick up that shit that took him out?

After Homie stands up and takes Trini by the arm, they walk toward the exit.

COOL HOMIE
C'mon... Tell ya one thing, pretty
sure I know the dude-

TRINI
Who?

COOL HOMIE
You know who... Termite.

INT. LA PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT - FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - DAY

Behind his desk, Chris Fitzgerald POUNDS his fists down at random as he RAISES HIS VOICE to his associate Brian, who's making calls on his cell phone.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
I can't believe it-- What the hell
do you mean that Angel Bernal is
nowhere to be found?

BRIAN
Just that-- I've called his number,
there's no answer.. I checked out
the address he lives at with his
brother-- It's empty.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
We can't lose track of our key
witness for this case. For God's
sakes, get hold of Detective
Rodriguez right away-- And who the
hell is his brother?

BRIAN
His older brother is Trinidad.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Well, go and get on it, Now.

BRIAN
(on his cell)
Hello, I'd like to speak to
Detective Rodriguez please-

A beat. Brian gets up and walks toward the door.

BRIAN (CON'T)
This is attorney Brian Eckerling
from the prosecutor's office.

A beat.

Can you have him call me as soon as
he's available? It's urgent-

INT. USC SURGICAL ICU - DAY

Detective Rodriguez stands next to a CHARGE RN as he looks into the wall window where Mario remains in his ICU bed.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

So, how's Mr Gutierrez doing since the cardiac arrest?

CHARGE RN

Well, Since Dr Li ordered to keep him off the IV propofol, he's responding to painful stimuli and his intracranial pressure and heart rate have been normal.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

I see you still have him on the respirator-- Any chance he'll be breathing on his own?

CHARGE RN

We're in the process of weaning him off the ventilator, but time will tell as we keep checking his arterial blood gases.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Thank you nurse, you've been of great help and please call me for updates as he improves, OK?

CHARGE RN

Of course, detective. We have your information. By the way, you mentioned something about placing a police officer outside his door?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

The department is working on it, but I'll keep your supervisor posted if we get the green light. You have a good day now.

CHARGE RN

Thanks-- You too.

He walks down the hall then out the double door exit.

INT. LA CITY COLLEGE FILM AND VIDEO CHECK-OUT ROOM - DAY

NICK ROBERTS, 23, is checking out video equipment to Rocky, a student, as Stephanie walks in.

NICK

There you go Rocky-- The equipment is due back in two days.

The student nods as he leaves his student ID on the counter right before taking a Sony PD 150 Video Camera. Stephanie then steps up to the counter.

NICK

Hi, how can I help you?

STEPHANIE

Hi there, you Nick Roberts?

He gives a quick nod to her.

STEPHANIE (CON'T)

Listen, I'm not a student but I was referred to you by Minor Jimenez.

NICK

Oh, yeah, I haven't seen him in a while-- How is he?

STEPHANIE

Well, it's kinda of a long story. You got a minute?

NICK

Sure-

STEPHANIE

I'm representing him in a legal case, and we are in need of someone who knows about video transmissions for court cases when the witness is unable to be in court to testify.

NICK

Yes, I've assisted in such cases. How soon do you need my help.

STEPHANIE

It could be as soon as next week. Can our legal team count on you?

NICK

Of course, I'm there, especially if it's going to help Minor out.

STEPHANIE

Here's my card, so when can we discuss the in's and out's with you in detail?

NICK

My day off is tomorrow-- is that soon enough for you?

STEPHANIE

Yes, thank you Nick, and let's do it tomorrow. How about in the morning at my office?

Nick nods in agreement as he looks at her card again.

INT. LA POLICE DEPARTMENT - OFFICE OF DET. RODRIGUEZ - DAY

Brian Eckerling is standing next to Detective Rodriguez, who's going through his file cabinet while he's being hounded by Brian.

BRIAN

Detective, what the hell's going on with Angel Bernal? He's nowhere to be found. Can't you give us any information on his whereabouts?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Really haven't kept tabs on him lately. I know he was staying with his brother. Did you try calling him? You guys should have his address.

BRIAN

Yeah, no answers-- We looked around and the place has been vacated. Better get an APB out on him-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

We'll check it out. For now, we're keeping close tabs on Gutierrez and his condition, so you and Fitzgerald will have to hang tight.

He SLAMS the file drawer shut then heads out of his office.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

The courtroom is in full attendance as Judge Elliott has called the court to order.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Any pending issues before we begin with court proceedings?

JULIE BULLA

Your Honor, Detective Rodriguez is not here. He is in the ICU room of Mr. Gutierrez, as we speak. Your Honor due to the current situation I would like to make a proposal since we are nearing the phase of closing arguments soon.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

What are you proposing, Ms Bulla?

JULIE BULLA

I propose we arrange for video transmission through our technology
(MORE)

JULIE BULLA (cont'd)
department, in order to present the
improving condition of Mario
Gutierrez AND his possible
testimony to members of the court.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
Your Honor, I object-- Is there
even such a reliable means of
something of this nature to be
allowed in our court? It could
takes weeks for such transmission
to be approved.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Well, Ms Bulla, please enlightens
us as to how and when such an
arrangement can be implemented
before I sustain the prosecution's
objection.

JULIE BULLA
Your Honor there is such an
approved system in place that has
been in use throughout several
courts over the last five years.
Our technology department just
needs YOUR approval before it can
be instituted-- And can be started
as soon as today through their
assigned outsourced technicians.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Under these unusual conditions
related to this court trial, I will
approve your proposal today,
counselor. Mr Fitzgerald your
objection is overruled.

JULIE BULLA
Thank you, your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
We will reconvene this trial as
soon as the court is fully equipped
for video transmission from the ICU
room of Mr Mario Gutierrez. Court
is adjourned until further notice
of that date.

JUROR SEVEN, 65, SPEAKS IN HUSHED-TONES to a jury member
next to her as all the members are being escorted away.

JUROR SEVEN
Oh, My-- This is one heck of a
trial. Who knows what's going to
happen next-

BAILIFF

Come along, and NO talking, please.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

Nick Roberts, dressed like a geek squad guru from Best Buy, repositions a Wide Screen TV, with an image of Mario Gutierrez sitting up in his ICU bed, to face the court.

Mario's eyes are open with his left hand on a bible held by a Sheriff Deputy, 30s, who stands off to his side.

JULIE BULLA

Mario, Do you remember being shot
on November seventh?

ON THE COURTROOM TV SCREEN

Mario NODS Yes.

JULIE BULLA

Do you know who shot you?

ON COURTROOM TV SCREEN

While Nodding YES again, Mario struggles to speak--

MARIO

Te - ter - ter - mye - ite...

JULIE BULLA

Mario, are you trying to tell us
the name of the person that shot
you?

ON COURTROOM TV SCREEN

MARIO

Yee - Aaah...

When the screen turns black and the AUDIO CUTS-OUT, Nick Roberts rushes to adjust the settings, with no improvement. Everyone TALKS IN HUSHED-TONES among each other, then Fitzgerald stands up with his fists clenched on his desk.

CHRIS FITGERALD

Your Honor, I object, on the
grounds that his testimony can't
possibly be submitted-

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Overruled-- I call for an hour
recess before we reconvene.

The judge STRIKES the gavel three times while the voice level of the courtroom increases.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Court has been reconvened after a lengthy recess.

JULIE BULLA

Your Honor, I'd like to call
Detective Rodriguez back to the
witness stand.

Detective Rodriguez swiftly comes to the stand.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Detective, I must remind you that
you are still under oath.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, Your Honor.

As he sits in the witness box, Ms Bulla's eyes meet with
Minor's intense stare before she focuses on the detective.

JULIE BULLA

Detective, were you in the ICU room
with Mario Gutierrez moments ago
today as he testified under oath?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, I was.

JULIE BULLA

Will you please give us your
opinion of his testimony, and
whether you were able to question
him further?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

In my opinion, Mario Gutierrez is
now considered a credible
eyewitness. His testimony is
crucial to this case. I questioned
him further-- When I showed him
mugshots, he identified Juan Diaz
AKA Termite, a gang member of the
Cincinnati Street Kidz, as the
gunman.

JULIE BULLA

Are there other clues or motives
that lead you to believe that Juan
Diaz attempted to murder Mario and
his partner Angel.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Mario pointed to a tattoo with the
letters C K on the right side of
Diaz's neck in his mugshot, and he
wrote the same letters on a drawing
of a shirt when asked what the

(MORE)

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ (cont'd)
 suspect was wearing... These are
 gang related signs affiliated with
 the Cincinnati Street Kidz of Boyle
 Heights. My gut tells me the motive
 stems from gang rivalry revenge
 against members of the Forever
 Boyle Avenue gang.

JULIE BULLA
 Thank you, Detective. No further
 questions, and at this point in
 time, I will make my request to
 call Angel Bernal back to the
 witness stand as soon as possible,
 Your Honor.

Before Detective Rodriguez is asked to step down from the
 stand, he faces the judge to speak.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
 Excuse me, Your Honor, but we
 haven't been able to locate Angel
 Bernal lately, and an All Points
 Bulletin was just put out for him.

Fitzgerald and Brian look up at the judge as though their
 tails are between their legs; Whereas, at the defense table,
 Ms Bulla, Minor and Stephanie look as surprised as hell.

INT. LA POLICE DEPARTMENT - OFFICE OF DET. RODRIGUEZ - DAY

Detective Rodriguez receives a copy of the APB report on his
 desk with the whereabouts of Angel Bernal as the missing
 person of interest. He grabs his coat and is about to rush
 out of his office while dialing on his cell phone before
 speaking to Fitzgerald's Receptionist on the other line.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
 Hi, Chris Fitzgerald please (beat)
 This is Detective Rodriguez-- Would
 you please have him call me as soon
 as possible, it's urgent-- He has
 my number-

Before hanging up he slips in additional input.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ (CON'T)
 -Or have his associate Brian call
 me, OK? (beat) Thank you.

INT. USC MEDICAL ICU - DAY

Detective Rodriguez is standing next to Angel's PRIMARY
 NURSE, 30, in light blue scrubs, near the counter in front
 of several cardiac monitors.

PRIMARY NURSE

His brother Trini was here yesterday and he appears to be the only next of kin listed on our Kardex.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

We are going to need to talk to him. Do you expect him to be back?

PRIMARY NURSE

I'll have to refer to our charge nurse if you want more information, detective. She'll be back in the unit in about an hour.

There's a RING on his cell phone. He silences it then excuses himself out of the unit.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Thank you, nurse and I'll return soon to speak to her.

PRIMARY NURSE

Ok, no problem.

As he leaves the ICU, Detective Rodriguez looks down at his cell phone and returns the missed call to Brian.

INT. ICU WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Hi, Brian, it's Detective Rodriguez. Thought you should know that we located Angel Bernal.

BRIAN (V.O)

No shit, really? Where?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

He's just down the hall from Mario Gutierrez here at the USC Medical ICU-- And he's in real bad shape.

BRIAN (V.O.)

What do you mean?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

He's been diagnosed as clinically brain dead due to an overdose.

BRIAN (V.O.)

How the hell did that happen?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Don't know, but we need to figure out how to get hold of his brother, Trini in order to question him-- that could take a while.

BRIAN (V.O.)

Thanks detective - this changes everything. Surely, we'll know more sooner or later.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

No doubt, keep you posted as I believe his hospital bed may turn into a stake-out to locate his brother.

BRIAN (V.O.)

Yeah, he's another person of interest, now-- Chris isn't going to believe this one.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Gotta go-

BRIAN (V.O.)

Okay-

INT. WESTLAKE DISTRICT - A SEEDY HOTEL - NIGHT

Termite walks past the lobby then upstairs to his room on the second floor. After opening the door, he walks past a couple of .38 SPECIAL GUNS on top of a chest of drawers, then to the window and looks down into the street below.

He turns and walks over to STROKE THE ASS of his girlfriend, LYDIA, 18, slumbered in bed wearing a black bra and panties from Victoria Secret.

TERMITE

Hey Mama, I missed you like you can't believe.

LYDIA

Mmmm, where'd you go?

TERMITE

Just out to do wat I do- Ya know how I have ta hustle so we can have our fun together-

He lays down a LINE OF COKE on a small mirror on top of the end table and SNORTS UP with a straw.

LYDIA

Ohhh, let's do it before we go out tonight.

He pulls off his jacket and black Calvin Klein T-shirt. After dropping his jeans, a TATTOO above his pubic area is revealed that has the text of: "LOVE MUSCLE" with an arrow pointed downward. Without hesitation, he mounts on top of her... LOUD MOANS from both of them quickly follow after the bed frame KNOCKS back and forth against the wall.

LOUD VOICE (O.S.)
 (with a banging fist)
 Hey-- Knock it off over there--

Termite lifts up his head then looks over to the guns on top of the chest of drawers. Lydia pulls him down as she comes.

INT. USC MEDICAL ICU - NIGHT

Undercover Officer, CRYSTAL KENDAL, 35, Black, in a navy-colored smock pushes a housekeeping cart past Angel's patient room. Before entering a staff restroom, she parks the cart nearby.

INT. STAFF RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

OFFICER KENDAL
 (on her cell phone)
 Officer Kendal here and there's no sign of Trini Bernal, yet. No telling if he'll show.

A beat. She momentarily FLUSHES the toilet and TURNS ON THE FAUCET before she finishes her call.

OFFICER KENDAL
 Yes, sir, I'll alert you the minute he appears... Out for now.

INT. OFFICE OF DET. RODRIGUEZ - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The ON-DUTY OFFICER, 45, enters through the door to report the undercover operation in progress.

ON-DUTY OFFICER
 Detective, thought you should know the latest from our undercover officer over at the USC ICU,

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
 Yes, how's it going since this morning-- Any luck?

ON-DUTY OFFICER
 No sir, no sign of Trini Bernal, not yet.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
 Alright, we'll give it another day or so in hopes that he shows-- Thanks, officer.

ON-DUTY OFFICER
 No problem, good night.

INT. PATROL CAR - MOVING - NEXT DAY

Detective Rodriguez is in the passenger side as an LAPD OFFICER, 40, is driving with the SIREN and LIGHTBAR

activated, then they park near the ER Entry. The Officer's communicating with Officer Kendal as he opens his door.

LAPD OFFICER

Okay, Kendal, just keep Trini Bernal detained. We're coming up through the ER right now.

INT. USC ER AND MEDICAL CENTER CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Detective Rodriguez and the LAPD Officer rush through and are given no flack by medical staff that are present as Rodriguez flashes his badge before getting in an open elevator door.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Let's go-

After they both enter the elevator, the officer reaches over to push a button then the door closes.

INT. USC MEDICAL ICU - AN ENCLOSED ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Officer Kendal is standing over Trini, who is sitting slumped over in a chair. The door is partially open as Rodriguez rushes in with his badge still in his hand, while the LAPD officer stands near the doorway.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Trini Bernal, I'm detective Rodriguez from LAPD-- How you doing?

TRINI

C'mon, detective, does it have to be like this-- Ya gonna interrogate me, just for seeing my brother before they pull the plug?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Nah, nah, Trini-- It's nothing like that. Believe me, we just want to get to the bottom of why your only brother ended up like this. Someone's behind it, and I think you know who it is-

TRINI

(tears running down)
Wats it to you, he's my brother, so why should you care. You think I wanna put my life on the line for you? Just so you can get a promotion for solving this case.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Listen, nobody's going to twist your arm here, but you must know
(MORE)

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ (cont'd)
 that the head gang members behind
 this will be coming after you
 next-- As Angel's brother you need
 our protection because most likely
 you're on their hit list.

TRINI
 Shit, you don't think I know that,
 so wat the fuck's your plan?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
 Help us find these bastards and
 we'll set you up with the U.S.
 Marshal in their Witness Protection
 Program. They've had a 100%
 success rate of protecting 9,000
 witnesses and 10,000 of their
 family members for 50 years.

TRINI
 Let me go back in to say goodbye to
 my baby brother first, detective
 then we can talk, awright-

A beat. Trini wipes away the tears then glares up at him.

TRINI
 I just signed-off for the doctors
 to take him off that breathing
 machine-- But first they need to
 figure out when they'll take his
 eyes... I wanna donate his corneas.
 If somebody can see again then
 maybe his death won't be in vain.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
 Officer Kendal, please take him
 over to his brother. I'll go out to
 talk to Angel's nurse.

OFFICER KENDAL
 Yes, detective (a beat) Come on
 Trini, let me take you to your
 brother, now.

Detective Rodriguez opens the door wider then SPEAKS QUIETLY
 to the LAPD Officer near the doorway as Trini stands up and
 is slowly led out of the room by Officer Kendal.

LAPD OFFICER
 Okay, detective I'll watch over
 them closely.

INT. MEDICAL ICU IN ANGEL'S PATIENT ROOM - DAY CONTINUOUS

Trini is kneeled over Angel in his bed with ANGEL'S NURSE,
 30, in blue scrubs, and the detective in the room. A
 Respiratory Therapist, in a white lab coat, turns off the

alarms on the ventilator and Angel's nurse turns off all the alarms on the overhead wavelength monitor.

ANGEL'S NURSE

(touching his back)

Trini, we are going to turn off the respirator, so Angel will only be receiving a low amount of oxygen, right now.

TRINI

(his gaze on Angel)

I know, I know-- Hey, Angel, I'm here-- It's Trini, I'm not leaving you, baby brother-

The wavelengths on the monitor change in rhythm and rate over the course of minutes as Angel's respirations cease. After he's in asystole, the nurse feels for a pulse then she bends down to hold Trini's hand before speaking.

ANGEL'S NURSE

He's gone-- I'm so sorry, Trini-

Trini UNCONTROLLABLY BAWLS his eyes out while still positioned over Angel's body. Detective Rodriguez BOWS his head while the two officers watch through the wall window.

TRINI

My God-- No, no, you're gone-- I can't believe you're gone-

INT. LA PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT - FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A LOUD heated argument is going on between Detective Rodriguez and Chris Fitzgerald. Both are standing face to face as it gets LOUDER.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Come on Rodriguez, you want me to call on the U.S. Marshal to have Angel Bernal's brother receive protection just so he can discredit my only credible witness's sworn testimony-- You out of your mind?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Listen, Fitzgerald, I know you want to win another case so you can move up the ladder, but hey, sometimes what appears to be the truth on the front end doesn't always pan out in the end.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

What the hell does that mean? Get real-- This theory of yours about Angel being manipulated by rival
(MORE)

CHRIS FITZGERALD (cont'd)
gang members is way up in the air.
Now, that Angel's dead from an
overdose, and believe me, it looks
pretty accidental, you want me to
throw out his signed sworn
affidavit and court testimony-

He shakes his head at Rodriguez then loosens his tie.

CHRIS FITZGERALD (CON'T)
Not gonna happen, not on my watch--
You got that-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Alright, alright, but I will
continue my investigation because
this case is beginning to open up
more and more as we speak-

CHRIS FITZGERALD
And Mario Gutierrez can't be
trusted, not only can anyone
decipher his speech-- He's got a
record longer than the LA River.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
While we're working on leads to
locate Diaz, as a probable suspect,
I'm trying to get Trini Bernal to
agree to a polygraph-

As Rodriguez starts to bow out of the office, Fitzgerald
starts to place a call on his desk phone.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
You better inform me if and when
that's on the schedule, detective-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Sure thing, no problem. Bye.

CHRIS FITZGERALD
(on his phone)
Hi, Brian, I need you to do some
ground work with the U.S. Marshal

A beat.

Rodriguez, is in the middle of
screwing up things-- He's
requesting to place Bernal's
brother in the Protective Witness
Program as an informant (a beat)
That's right-

INT. OFFICE OF DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ - DAY

Trini and Rodriguez sit in chairs next to one another on the other side of his desk. The sun shines brightly through the venetian-blinds of the window in front of them.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Okay, Trini, this is how it works--
In order for us to give you
protection through the U.S.
Marshal, we gotta have you agree to
a polygraph, but I want you to know
that I believe you've been honest
with me.

TRINI

Yeah, man, this is never gonna end
till these fuck faces get put away.
Can you promise me you'll do that?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

If we arrest him and get him
convicted, I will work closely to
have him prosecuted to the fullest
extent of the law, but for starters
we need some leads on where we can
find Termite-- do you know where he
hangs out?

TRINI

I can tell you this, he's a Nomad
and nobody really knows where he is
any day of the week-- But I do know
that he checks into lots of hotels.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

How about we begin with a list of
some of those hotels? What
district is his favorite?

TRINI

Uhh, try the Westlake district
first. I know he does a lot of drug
runs from there.

Clouds moving in cut out the sun through the window then it starts to RAIN. Rodriguez gets up and walks to the window.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Looks like the storm's coming like
they reported today-

INT. JUDGE'S COURT CHAMBERS - DAY

After Judge Elliott, who's seated behind her huge oak desk, is handed a form by Detective Rodriguez, she looks it over.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Judge Elliott, this is the signed
sworn affidavit by Trinidad Bernal.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
All right detective, I suppose
you'll be requesting a warrant in
the near future.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Yes, we're planning a stake-out
close to an area where the suspect
has been reported as frequenting.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Good Luck, Detective Rodriguez and
I'll await your call in the
meanwhile.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Thank you, Judge Elliott.

INT. WESTLAKE DISTRICT - A SEEDY HOTEL - DAY

In plain clothes, Rodriguez walks into the hotel and
approaches the CLERK, 50, with glasses, reading a book
behind the counter.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Is the manager available?

CLERK
Yes, he's in his office, down the
hall.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Thanks-

The Clerk goes back to reading his book as Rodriguez walks
down the hall and KNOCKS on the Manager's door. The MANAGER,
50, of short-stature and balding, opens the door.

MANAGER
Yes, who are you?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
I'm detective Rodriguez, LAPD. I
have a few questions I hope you can
answer.

He strokes his fingers through his thinned-out hair and lets
Rodriguez into the office after he looks at his badge.

INT. HOTEL MANAGER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MANAGER
Oh, yeah, is this about the gun
shots heard here the other night?
(MORE)

MANAGER (cont'd)

Listen, we're keeping an eye out in case that customer shows up, again.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

(with raised brows)

Say, can you describe the individual or do you have his name?

MANAGER

You must know, detective that in this part of town, there are many that don't use their real name.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Where exactly were the shots heard? Any bullet holes in the hotel?

MANAGER

It was in one of the rooms on the second floor. I'll take you up there now if you like.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Sure, let's go- But first, can anybody give a description?

MANAGER

Sure, our clerk said the guy who was in that room was a bald Latino with a bunch of tattoos. Kinda the usual around here.

Rodriguez eyes widen as they leave the office to head down the hall together.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The manager points to a bullet hole in the wall above the bed as Rodriguez looks long and hard at it.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Can you open up the next room?

The manager pulls out the keys from his pants-pocket then walks toward the door.

MANAGER

Sure, follow me-

Rodriguez follows him to the room next door. After the manager unlocks the door, he opens it for Rodriguez.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HOTEL ROOM NEXT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Rodriguez steps into the room and goes directly to the bullet hole in the wall then looks downward to follow an invisible trail that leads to A BULLET on the carpet below. He stares at it, bends down to look closer then stands up.

MANAGER

Did you find something?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes. (beat) I'm going to have to ask you to close off these two rooms for a while, okay?

MANAGER

Sure, I guess so-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Thanks, and please, keep quiet about this for now-- We don't want to create any disturbances with your business as usual-

A beat.

I'll be calling up another officer to help gather up some of this evidence, soon-

MANAGER

Whatever you say, detective.

INT. LAW OFFICE OF STEPHANIE LOFTIN - NIGHT

Stephanie and Julie are sitting on a leather couch sipping on white wine.

STEPHANIE

Listen Julie, I know you asked me to give you some of my expertise assistance in this case, but I must tell you what you really need is an over-all makeover in order to win back your client's freedom-

JULIE BULLA

(a little buzzed)

Oh, yeah, then go ahead and enlighten me with your magic plan-- Pray, tell, if you please-

STEPHANIE

This is no joke-- you've got to stop getting behind the eight ball and put more spin in your serve when you get up to present your evidence.

JULIE BULLA

What evidence?

STEPHANIE

That's what I mean-- You better get the hell out there and shake it up to gather whatever evidence you can

(MORE)

STEPHANIE (cont'd)
then fiercely present it before
Hard-Ass Fitzgerald does-

JULIE BULLA
All I got is Mario Gutierrez waking
up out of coma land and-

STEPHANIE
And yeah, do you really think
anybody is going to consider him a
credible witness? He can barely
speak and probably can't even read
or write.

A beat.

STEPHANIE
Please move on-- You should be
sticking like glue to Detective
Rodriguez-- I'm sure he's out there
right now looking for other leads
or suspects. How about Angel, now
that he's MIA? I'm sure that's not
sitting well with the prosecution-

JULIE BULLA
God damn it, I know you're right.
I've gotta get Rodriguez to give me
more of the inside info of what's
really going on out there.

Stephanie fills up their glasses then takes Julie's hand.

STEPHANIE
Also, we are going to get you into
a more dress for success wardrobe--
And oh, don't forget- You still
need to get laid.

INT. OFFICE OF DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ - DAY

Detective Rodriguez is at his desk as Julie walks in.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Oh, Hi, Ms Bulla-- What can I do
for you? Sorry, but I'm swamped and
was just on my way out. Can't
really talk-

JULIE BULLA
Well, heard you're really hard at
work with our case. You must be
building up a ton of leads by now.
Can you please share any
information about Angel Bernal? Has
he been located yet?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

As a matter of fact, Angel Bernal was brought in to USC ER with an overdose of opioids and his brother consented to have him taken off life support-- It's tragic, there was nothing they could do, he was brain dead.

JULIE BULLA

Oh, My God-- Do you think it was a suicide or accidental?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

It could be any number of things, but I'm questioning his brother, who happens to be cooperating right now. Hopefully we can get to the bottom of it, soon.

JULIE BULLA

Please contact me about anything of significance. I know you have to work closely with prosecution, but I know you have your gut instinct and you must know I have mine.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Okay, Ms. Bulla. By the way, I'm sure you know that Mario was placed in a step-down critical care unit. Maybe his mental status will continue to improve over time.

JULIE BULLA

That's what I heard, and I know it will take more rehab before his speech returns. Thank you, detective. I don't want to keep you and good luck.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yes, I must get going now, thanks.

INT. LA POLICE DEPARTMENT - POLYGRAPH TESTING ROOM - DAY

Trini is HOOKED UP TO A POLYGRAPH MACHINE while he is seated next to the Technician who's performing the test as Rodriguez poses questions from his list.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Are you Trini Bernal?

TRINI

Yes-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Who is your only brother?

TRINI

Angel Bernal-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Were you told by your brother Angel Bernal that Termite or rather Juan Diaz shot him and Mario Gutierrez on November seventh?

TRINI

Yes-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Did your brother tell you that he lied in court about Minor Jimenez shooting him and Mario because he didn't want Termite or anyone from his gang coming back to kill him?

TRINI

Yes-

INT. POLYGRAPH SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chris Fitzgerald and his associate Brian is standing next to the two-way glass mirror partition staring at Trini as the polygraph machine is stopped by the technician.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Well, I guess we'll get the results in due time-

BRIAN

Yeah, I suppose Rodriguez really bit his teeth into this one.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

What do you mean?

BRIAN

He's working on some leads to bring in this so-called Termite.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

(stamps his foot down)

For Christ's sake-- What the hell is he up to next?

EXT. WESTLAKE DISTRICT STREET NEAR THE SEEDY HOTEL - NIGHT

Wearing a CHARGER'S football Jersey, Termite walks down the street then opens the door and enters the hotel. Across the street, Detective Rodriguez and AN UNDERCOVER OFFICER, 35, are in a parked RENTED FOUR-DOOR SEDAN with tinted windows.

INT. RENTED FOUR-DOOR SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

That's him, Juan Diaz--

He opens his door then after directing his partner, he begins to walk across the street toward the hotel entry.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Come over after you connect with
backup-

UNDERCOVER OFFICER
I'm on it, right now-

INT. HALLWAY NEAR ROOM 28 - CONTINUOUS

Rodriguez tails Termite up to the second floor. After a couple of police officers come upstairs with Rodriguez's partner, Rodriguez KNOCKS on the door as the others file in.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Police-- Open the door-

When there's no response, Rodriguez TURNS the knob then KICKS open the door. Termite FIRES A SHOT through the doorway as Rodriguez stands away from the door then SHOUTS-

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Give it up, Diaz-- We've got a
warrant for your arrest. Don't be
stupid. Throw out your weapon then
put your hands up, and nobody has
to get hurt.

A gun comes flying out past the doorway. Another officer in bullet proof protection with his gun pointed forward cautiously scopes through the door.

INT. ROOM 28 - CONTINUOUS

Termite, with his hands fully raised, is covered by the armed officer, as Termite's forced face down to the floor then CUFFED AND FRISKS by the other officer.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ
Juan Diaz, you're under arrest for
the attempted murder of Mario
Gutierrez and Angel Bernal... You
have the right to remain silence--

While Rodriguez continues with the Miranda Rights, the officer frisking Termite, pulls out a large bag of white pills and a packet of white powder tucked under his clothes.

UNDERCOVER OFFICER
(to the officer)
Get that shit secured for
evidence--

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

Judge Elliott makes her announcement to the court and jury members while Chris Fitzgerald and his associate along with

Julie Bulla, Minor and Stephanie are seated at their tables.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

The time has arrived in which both legal counselors will present their closing statements to all of you--

The spectators in the court include Minor's family Christina, Mrs Jimenez and Raymundo, Minor's boss, who are all seated behind the defense table in the first row.

JUDGE ELLIOTT (CON'T)

Members of the Jury, you have been presented all of the existing evidence related to this case. You also heard the testimonies from the witnesses that both the defense and the prosecution brought forward for examination and cross examination. We will now listen to the closing statements of the trial in which the defendant, Minor Jimenez has been accused of attempted murder of Mario Gutierrez and Angel Bernal--

A beat. Judge Elliott turns her head to face Fitzgerald.

JUDGE ELLIOTT (CON'T)

We will begin with the prosecution. Mr Fitzgerald, would you please proceed with your closing statement?

Fitzgerald stands then walks forward.

CHRIS FITZGERALD

Yes, thank you, Your Honor--

A beat. He walks up to the jury box to address each member.

CHRIS FITZGERALD (CON'T)

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have been presented with a simple fact during this trial-- Two men, both Mario Gutierrez and Angel Bernal were shot down by a gunman. The defendant, Minor Jimenez, was allegedly accused of the shooting of both victims. Now, the time has come to review the facts that have been presented to you during this trial. Forget about what you've seen on TV, and in the movies... Fact, Angel Bernal, one of the victims, gave a sworn eyewitness account on the stand that the defendant shot him, then fled the scene...

Fitzgerald lifts up his right arm as he raises his voice.

CHRIS FITZGERALD (CON'T)

Fact, Detective Rodriguez arrested Minor Jimenez and placed him in a line-up where Angel Bernal again confirmed that Minor Jimenez was the gunman... Fact, Minor Jimenez, was in a public restaurant where he openly threatened both of the victims with their lives during a fight just days prior to the shooting. And on the actual day and time of the shooting Mr. Jimenez was unable to confirm his true whereabouts during his testimony on the stand-

Fitzgerald looks over the jury then points to Julie Bulla and Minor, who's holding onto a ST CHRISTOPHER METAL.

CHRIS FITZGERALD (CON'T)

And what has the defense provided as facts? Well, they brought forward last minute surprise witnesses to confuse you in an attempt to distract you from arriving at a decisive verdict. The condition of Mario Gutierrez continues to hang by a thread in the critical care unit. His testimony by a poorly transmitted video should have been thrown out of court. You saw how he could barely communicate. He's not a credible witness and who knows if he'll ever be able to testify due to the sustained injury to his brain. Using Trini Bernal, as a witness that has recently been brought forward to discredit his recently deceased brother Angel, is nothing but a cheap trick to get the defendant off the hook. Both Mario Gutierrez and Trini Bernal have long criminal records-- Whereas, Angel Bernal had no history of breaking the law. I implore that each of you take a close look at the credibility of the witnesses, and to search your conscience about whose testimony you should honestly trust as you collectively determine your verdict.

Fitzgerald glares at Minor and walks back to his table.

CHRIS FITZGERALD (CON'T)

Thank you, members of the jury for your dedication- and thank you, Your Honor.

The Judge addresses Ms Bulla after Fitzgerald sits down.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Thank you, Mr Fitzgerald. Ms Bulla would you please proceed with your Closing Statement for the defense?

Julie Bulla, in a VERSACE blue dress-suit, stands up then walks forward to the jury box after responding to the judge.

JULIE BULLA

Yes, and thank you, Your Honor- Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, there is no doubt that all of you have demonstrated a great deal of dedication through your valued service during this highly volatile attempted murder trial-- AND, now, it's time to get down to the brass tacks or, rather, the Meat and Potatoes of this entire trial. You just heard the prosecution re-hashing the initial phase of the trial, which concentrated on one victim's sworn testimony and an insufficient alibi provided by my defendant, Minor Jimenez-- All the while as the other victim, Mario Gutierrez remained unresponsive in an ICU bed. Please, bear with me as I recap with each of you the tremendous amount of evidence presented in this court through the in-depth investigation by Detective Rodriguez and the LAPD since then.

Julie Bulla gains the attention of the jurors, the prosecution and her client-- She happens to be on a roll as Detective Rodriguez, in the back row, looks at his watch.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)

All of you viewed the video transmitted testimony of Mario Gutierrez as he regained consciousness from his hospital bed-- That was not staged, and he was not coaxed. And Detective Rodriguez testified that he questioned him further to determine a possible suspect other than the alleged, Minor Jimenez.

A beat. Julie takes a long pause as she bows her head in silence then closes in looking at each of the jury members.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)

Next, the other suspect being Juan Diaz was determined through his mugshot and the gang-related tattoo as pointed out by Mr Gutierrez. Secondly, Angel Bernal, the initial sole eyewitness is now deceased due to a drug overdose. Now, through a polygraph test, it has been confirmed that his only brother Trinidad Bernal came forward to confirm that his brother confessed to him that Angel had lied about Minor Jimenez being the gunman-- Why did his younger brother lie in court? Because he feared for his life, and because if he told the truth, the rival gang members would make sure he'd never squeal or utter another word again-- Please, rest your minds, because Juan Diaz is now in custody thanks to the LAPD and Detective Rodriguez. Also, during Termite's arrest, two .38 special guns that were in his possession and the bullets fired by him were recovered as evidence. Both of the victims just so happened to have been shot with bullets from a .38 special gun. Whether Angel's death was a suicide, an accidental overdose or an actual homicide is questionable at this point, because this investigation remains ongoing. Just let me leave you with this-- The drug Fentanyl which showed up in Angel's toxicology report before his death, was also the drug seized in a sizable quantity in the possession of the suspect, Juan Diaz during his arrest.

A beat. Julie Bulla steps away then stands behind Minor.

JULIE BULLA (CON'T)

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury as you weigh all of the evidence brought forward and you decide your verdict-- I urge you please not to conclude this trial with the possibility of mistaken identity that could lead to the conviction of an innocent man. Thank you, members of the jury and thank you, Your Honor.

JUDGE ELLIOTT

Thank you, Ms Bulla-- Members of the jury, you have heard the closing statements from the prosecution and the defense. At this time the jury will be allowed to deliberate over the next two weeks. This court trial will reconvene when the verdict has been reached and the pending trial session is scheduled for their announcement.

The Judge STRIKES the gavel three times before she rises up.

JUDGE ELLIOTT (CON'T)

Court is adjourned-

INT. LA SUPERIOR COURT BUILDING - DAY

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER IN THE JURY DELIBERATION ROOM

HEAD MARINE JUROR, 40, clean-cut, and the other jurors are sitting around a table in a room with tall grimy windows.

MARINE JUROR

Well, I believe that we can't place a verdict of Not Guilty until it's unanimous-

Everyone looks over to A SCHOOLTEACHER JUROR, 29, petite, in a conservative dress, seated by AN OLDER WOMAN JUROR, 65.

SCHOOLTEACHER JUROR

I really don't know whether he did it or not, but something tells me, he's guilty-

OLDER WOMAN JUROR

But why? Is it because you were convinced by the prosecutor that he did it from the start?

SCHOOLTEACHER JUROR

Well, yes, maybe so-

OLDER WOMAN JUROR

I know all of you thought I screwed up when I did something stupid and spoke to a witness a while back, and gosh, I felt so ashamed. I just believe in my heart and my head that this detective really knows his stuff. My God, with all the evidence that he recovered, I can't help but be convinced that Minor Jimenez is innocent-

INT. CRIMINAL COURTROOM - DAY

All of the jurors have been seated in the jury box and after Judge Elliott has called the court to order, she speaks to the members of the jury.

JUDGE ELLIOTT
Members of the jury have you
reached a verdict?

The head juror, rises to his feet.

HEAD MARINE JUROR
We have, Your Honor (beat) We find
the defendant, Minor Jimenez Not
Guilty-

THE COURTROOM BURSTS INTO AN UPROAR.

Julie and Minor have a huge embrace then Julie's associate rushes forward PATTING her on the back. Minor's family members hug him and hug each other.

MINOR
(to Christina)
Where's Anna? Is she okay?

CHRISTINA
(with tears)
Oh, Minor-- Yes, Anna's fine. She
wants you to know that she loves
you and that she just can't wait to
have your baby.

In the back of the courtroom, Detective Rodriguez gives a thumbs up to Julie as she looks back at him then smiles.

As Minor also looks back at the detective, he notices his Dad standing off to the side in the back row-- Minor hurries over to him.

MINOR
Dad, you're here-

MR JIMENEZ
Yes, Minor, I'm here-- How could I
not be here for the bravest son any
father on earth could ever have.

MINOR
God, how I missed you, Dad

MR JIMENEZ
Oh, my son, I missed you, too--
Please forgive me, Minor-

Minor and his father exchange a mutual sturdy hand shake then give each other an enormous long-overdue embrace. Minor's mother and Christina rush back to them, then his

mother cries and kisses Minor as he hugs her.

MINOR

I can't believe I'm really free--
Thank God, you're all here, now.
You'll never know how much your
belief in me kept me hanging on
every day-

Raymundo and Ms Bulla come forth to give Minor more hugs and pats on the back.

JULIE BULLA

We never stopped believing in you-

MINOR

I know you had my back, Ms Bulla.
Thank you with all my heart-

RAYMUNDO

Okay, enuf, now-- Minor, your
chariot awaits. I'm here to escort
you in my Silverado and deliver you
to lady Anna in-waiting, who
anticipates your presence at your
sister's home as we speak-

MINOR

All right! Just lead the way,
Raymundo-- I'm right behind you.
Let's go-

FADE TO BLACK

THE END

