

1 INT. THE STACK ARCHIVE - DAY

1

A long room of metal shelves. MAYA CHEN (30s, sharp, tired) flips through a leather-bound case journal. PAGE seventeen is missing – torn out at the gutter.

MAYA

Page seventeen.

She runs her fingers across the gutter. Photographs the gap with her phone. Pages turning. Footsteps overhead.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Just... gone.

A floor creaks above. Maya freezes. Listens. Nothing. She tucks the journal into her bag and heads for the stairs.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

2

Wide stone steps. Lawyers, plaintiffs, photographers. 4 BG commuters flow past. HENRY (60s, trench coat, eyes everywhere) waits in a column's shadow.

Maya climbs up. Pretends not to know him. She fishes a pen out of her bag – drops it.

Henry catches it. As he hands it back, a flash drive goes with it.

HENRY

low

Don't look at it here. Don't open it on your home network.

MAYA

Henry –

HENRY

I was never here.

He's already walking away. Traffic, distant siren.

CUT TO:

3 INT. RIVERSIDE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

3

Cavernous. Shipping crates stacked twelve high. Hazer atmosphere, a single bulb sways. Maya enters, flashlight beam cutting a shaft through the dust.

A FIGURE steps from the shadows. **REZA OKONKWO** (40s, magnetic, dangerous). He's holding the missing page.

REZA

You weren't supposed to find that page.

MAYA

And yet.

A long beat. He produces the page like a magician.

REZA

Walk away, Maya. One time. For me.

She stands her ground.

MAYA

Give it to me.

He steps in. **Reza shoves Maya – light, controlled**. She catches herself on a crate.

REZA

That's not how this works.

Distant ship horn. Drips. Maya turns and runs.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. HEIGHTS ROOFTOP - DAWN

4

The horizon turns pink to gold. **Maya** sits on a low wall, holding **two coffee cups**. **JONAS VEGA** (30s, **hoodie**, kind, persistent) climbs the last flight.

JONAS

You always answer at 5 a.m.?

MAYA

I always answer.

He sits. They watch the sun rise. Wind. Early traffic ten stories down.

JONAS

You don't have to do this alone.

MAYA

I never did anything alone.

JONAS

Then take the drive to Aoki. I'll go with you.

A long beat. The sun is fully up.

MAYA
quiet
... okay.

CUT TO:

5 INT. HALFMOON DINER - DAY

5

A booth by the window. 6 BG patrons in deep frame. Maya pushes pancakes around her plate. Jonas reads a newspaper.

JONAS
You okay?

MAYA
Pancakes help.

He smiles. Reaches across, takes her hand. Cutlery, low chatter.

JONAS
gentle
Two more hours and we're at the precinct. That's all.

MAYA
Two more hours.

CUT TO:

6 INT. MAYA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

6

Lamp light. Maya sits on the edge of her bed, laptop open. She plugs in the flash drive.

A folder opens – names, dates, on-screen UI graphics. She scrolls. Reza's face. Henry's. A third – a man she doesn't recognize.

MAYA
whispered
Oh my god.

She slams the laptop shut. Refrigerator hum. Keys jangle in the hall outside.

Maya kills the lamp. The room goes black.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. LOCKSMITH ALLEY - NIGHT**7**

Maya walks fast, head down, phone tight in her hand. She passes a shuttered locksmith. Skypanel haze from above. Behind her – FOOTSTEPS. Steady. Measured. She slips into a doorway. Stunt-double silhouette walks past. Maya holds her breath.

MAYA
into phone
Jonas? I think someone's following me.

The footsteps fade. Beat. She steps out, exhales. Moves.

CUT TO:

8 INT. MERCY GENERAL HOSPITAL - DAY**8**

A heart monitor BEEPS. Reza is in a bed, IV stand at his shoulder. Bruising, IV makeup on his cheekbone. NURSE PATEL (40s, scrubs) adjusts the bag.

NURSE PATEL
He's lucky to be alive.

She steps out past 2 BG nurses. From the doorway – Maya. She and Reza meet eyes.

REZA
weakly
Maya...

She doesn't move. He reaches for her. She doesn't take his hand.

MAYA
You should have walked away.

She turns. Walks out. PA announcement, distant phones.

CUT TO:

9 EXT. LINDEN PARK - DAY (FLASHBACK)**9**

Color treatment – softer, summer palette. 8 BG park-goers. A young soccer player, THE KID, kicks a soccer ball. It bounces past a jogger and lands at Maya's feet. She's reading on a bench, coffee beside her. Jonas jogs up, breathing hard.

JONAS
(MORE)

JONAS (CONT'D)
Sorry – is this yours?

MAYA
It's mine now.

She tosses it back to the kid. Jonas laughs. He sits down on the other end of the bench.

JONAS
Jonas.

MAYA
Maya.

Birds, kids playing. The kid kicks the ball off-frame. Maya watches it go.

CUT TO:

10 INT. PRECINCT 14 - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

10

Fluorescent light. Practical tungstens. Maya across the table from DET. AOKI (40s, careful). 2 BG officers visible through window.
She slides the flash drive across.

AOKI
You understand what this opens up.

MAYA
I understand what closing it cost.

A long beat. Aoki nods. Picks up the drive. HVAC hum, distant phones.

AOKI
Sit tight. This is going to take a while.

Maya nods. The interview room door clicks shut behind Aoki. Maya is alone with the silence.
She looks at the empty chair across from her. A small, exhausted smile.

FADE OUT.