

**OVER BLACK**

GRANT (V.O.)

First thing they teach you, first day of training, is that any decision, in any situation, comes down to three basic options. One: what you WANT to do...

**INT. SEEDY BAR - EARLY AFTERNOON**

Four big bruisers circle a barstool, itching for a fight.

LEAD BRUISER

What you say to me?

The man he's talking to is JOHN GRANT (40s, tough, tired). He sighs into his beer, gives a scowl over his shoulder.

GRANT

I said back off.

He moves so fast, it's unreal. **SMASH!** beer into head. **CRACK!** boot to knee. **CRUNCH!** fist to face.

He lunges, but he's too exposed. Fists and feet take him down and he collapses out of sight and the screen goes

**BLACK AGAIN**

Text onscreen: LoS 23%.

GRANT (V.O.)

What you want's not always the smart choice. Then there's what you're SUPPOSED to do...

**INT. SEEDY BAR - AS BEFORE**

Four big bruisers circle the barstool.

LEAD BRUISER

What you say to me?

Grant checks under his palm: phone pod with a red "911".

GRANT

Nothing, man. We're cool. It's cool. Just enjoying my beer and--

**SLAM!** They smash his head into the bar, drag him off his stool and go to town on him, and the screen goes

**BLACK AGAIN**

Text onscreen: LoS 3%.

GRANT (V.O.)  
So yeah, that's not gonna work either. Which leads to the third option: what you SHOULD do...

**INT. SEEDY BAR - AS BEFORE**

Four big bruisers circle Grant.

LEAD BRUISER  
What you say to me?

Grant looks to his right, at the TERRIFIED WOMAN sitting there, blood on her lip. Her eyes beg for help.

HIS POV: a progress bar counting up to LoS 100%. Bingo.

He turns to face the Lead Bruiser.

GRANT  
Try me.

The Bruiser snarls and STRIKES--

--but Grant's moved, so the guy ends up decking his friend. That only makes them madder. Reckless.

Grant is like magic. He side-steps every move like he knew it was coming.

It's like savage slapstick as the bruisers accidentally take each other out.

Everyone's down but Grant and the Lead Bruiser.

Grant's eyes say: **Don't.**

The idiot charges

and trips on a stool

and **CRACKS** his head on the bar.

He lands in a heap on the ground, out cold.

ESTEVEZ (V.O.)  
Impressive. Truly.

**INT. SEEDY BAR - LATER**

Forensics drones are imaging the area. Uniforms are taking statements. DETECTIVE ESTEVEZ (40s, oldschool cop at heart) is the one stuck with Grant.

ESTEVEZ  
And so, in deciding to choose that third option -- the one you SHOULD do -- when exactly did you know two of 'em were going to end up paralyzed for life?

Grant winces, tries to deflect...

GRANT  
Well, I mean, likelihoods being what they are--

ESTEVEZ  
See, here's the problem, Grant: if I pull your data logs, am I gonna see you worked this ALL THE WAY through?

GRANT  
Well, since you legally CAN'T pull my data logs--

ESTEVEZ  
Yeah, since I can't do that, I've gotta do this the old fashioned way, and write you up for partial liability. 50%.

GRANT  
50? Come on, man. He was beating up a girl, and--

ESTEVEZ  
Yeah, that's why it's not 100.

Estevez really DOES feel bad about this, though.

ESTEVEZ (CONT'D)  
Listen. I know it's not fair, but it's only gonna get worse for you if you keep up like this. You've gotta stop seeing things in black and white.

GRANT

Trust me, when you've got a chip  
in your brain running futures,  
there's no such thing as black and  
white. Just a billion shades of  
suck.

Estevez's tablet pings. He sighs, hands it to Grant.

ESTEVEZ

Rehab verdict came in. This is  
what those shades of suck are  
costing you.

GRANT

**Sha-woh...** would it be cheaper if  
I just killed 'em?

ESTEVEZ

Don't joke about that. Never joke  
about that with a cop.

The tablet refreshes, and Grant chokes.

GRANT

Hold on, WHAT? This--

ESTEVEZ

Yeah, that's your monthly payment,  
amortized over 25 years.  
Automatically deducted from your  
pension.

GRANT

That IS my pension! That's MORE  
than my pension!

Estevez takes the tablet back.

ESTEVEZ

Sorry, Grant. It's like I said: it  
ain't fair, and it's only gonna  
get worse if you don't get things  
under control.

**EXT. THE TRANSITWAY - DAY**

ROAR goes the 16-wheeler, inches from Grant as he lumbers  
along the sidewalk. He's stewing. Dreading.

This is an odd place: a residential street turned busy  
trucking route.

A tall chain-link fence separates big rigs from ruined lawns and shitty bungalows. Suburban hell meets actual hell.

As Grant heads up the walk to #214, a weathered disc on the door scans him. The door unlocks, pops open.

He knocks anyway, as he heads in.

GRANT

Tam? You here?

**INT. TAMARA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

The place is Budget Chic: what little there is, is used well. But it's dingy, and tired, and crumbling.

TAMARA (40s, relentlessly surviving) leans out the bathroom door, hair in a towel. Just out of the shower.

TAMARA

You've really gotta take your face off the lock, John. You don't live here anymore.

GRANT

Yeah, well. I just figure if I put it off enough, eventually it'll seem like a sign that we should get back together.

TAMARA

You're not funny.

GRANT

Not trying to be.

TAMARA

That only makes it worse.

She re-emerges in a robe and heads for the kitchen. Grant fills himself a coffee, hops on the counter and side-watches the TV projected on the wall.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

By all means, make yourself at home.

GRANT

Mi casa es tu casa.

TAMARA

Except it's not YOUR house anymore, remember? I pay the mortgage, you pay the alimony.

GRANT

Yeah, so, about that...

She glares.

TAMARA

What did you do.

GRANT

If I told you I was being noble, would you be less angry?

TAMARA

I don't know. YOU'VE LoS'd this whole conversation, you tell me.

GRANT

You throw less stuff at me.

TAMARA

Oh God...

She sinks into a chair. Grant winces.

GRANT

Long story short, I did the right thing, got punished for it.

TAMARA

You did the right thing.

GRANT

Yeah, I-- hold on a sec.

Something has caught Grant's eye. He nods at the TV and the volume goes up. Onscreen is SENATOR GABBY WILES (40s, a natural politician), in D.C., talking to the press.

WILES (TV)

...and no, I don't think it's overkill. These soldiers are being enhanced for extreme situations, given god-like powers, and then we're just supposed to assume they'll go back to being regular citizens when they get home?

REPORTER 1 (TV)

How do you respond to critics who say you're just using this as a distraction for failures on other fronts, like--

WILES (TV)

The commission will find out where the missing funds are, and at-- excuse me, AT THE SAME TIME, I am going to get veterans the support they deserve.

REPORTER 2 (TV)

By taking away their rights?

WILES (TV)

Listen. We give them rumblers, flack-suits and MP-12s when they ship out, but we don't let them bring that stuff home--

REPORTER 3 (TV)

Senator, what about the slush fund? Why is it taking so long to--

WILES (TV)

There's no slush fund.

REPORTER 2 (TV)

Senator! Senator! Wouldn't you say there's a big difference between confiscating a rifle and invasive brain surgery?

WILES (TV)

They knew the deal when they signed up. It would be irresponsi--

Grant waves the TV off. Stewing.

TAMARA

That new bill she's pushing--

GRANT

Yeah, I know.

TAMARA

--it's going to make it even worse for you.

GRANT

I'm hoping that scandal takes her out first.

TAMARA

John, I'm serious.

GRANT

I know. Sorry. I know.

TAMARA

If you don't get that chip out, you'll be unemployable. And I can't...

GRANT

I'm working on it. I promise.

Tamara's tablet chimes, and she looks at it, and her face drops in horror.

TAMARA

Wait, a lien on our HOUSE?

GRANT

Man, they work fast. I'm going to try to get that reversed. that's just the on-site algo number. If the girl testifies she was in danger, I might have it reduced by 50, maybe 75%.

TAMARA

That's just...

(defeated)

Maybe you should just re-enlist. Maybe that's the answer.

GRANT

Tam, listen, it's--

TAMARA

You know, as much as I hated what that job did to you, at least it had a purpose. We suffered, but we suffered for the right reasons. But this... this is just cruel. I can't keep living like this, John.

GRANT

Tamara. Please...

TAMARA

You need to make a choice. The chip goes, or I do. For real. For good. But you've gotta decide what life you wanna live.



Grant doesn't know what to say.

**EXT. RACE TRACK - DAY**

A blue sky. A dirt track. A thunderous rumble and **BOOM** a pack of racers tear past, churning up the mud.

They're all robots -- drones with round-cornered triangular wheels and lean bodies like greyhounds -- fighting to set and keep the pace.

In the stands, a few newbies stand in excitement, but the rest keep an eye on their tablets, watching the stats.

Grant has a hat on, pulled low to hide his identity. He glances at the track...

HIS POV: a little green marker flashes between all the racers, and then settles on one near the middle. LoS 98%.

He checks for snoops, then taps his tablet.

SONNY (O.S.)

Whisky sour, sir.

A drink appears over his shoulder. He waves it off.

GRANT

Not mine.

SONNY (O.S.)

You sure? It's good for takin' the edge off, after brain surgery.

Grant realizes who it is. He turns to see SONNY (50s, wise-ass wiseguy) standing there with a drink of his own.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Which I assume you've had, else you couldn't legally be engagin' in gambling activity at an establishment such as mine.

GRANT

Sonny, listen--

Sonny downs his own drink, sits behind Grant. Ominous.

SONNY

You oughta stick to the lottery, Captain.

GRANT

No point. Can't win the lottery.

SONNY

And how's that?

GRANT

Too many variables and not enough data. That abstract, I'm just another sucker hoping for rain.

Sonny shrugs, points to the track, at the robots.

SONNY

So who's gonna win?

Grant sighs.

GRANT

#12. By a tread.

Sonny nods appreciatively, taps on his tablet.

SONNY

Short on cash, are ya?

GRANT

Yeah, and I'm running out of options. Can't work, can't gamble, can't do stocks... seems like only thing I CAN do is make things worse.

Sonny shrugs:

SONNY

Well, I mean, if you're lookin', I DO have a gig coming up that--

GRANT

No. No way. I'm not stealing for you, Sonny. Ain't happening.

SONNY

If it's justice you're worried about, I can promise you he ain't no saint. Grand scheme, you'd be doin' the world a favor.

GRANT

I'll find another way. But thanks.

A bell goes as the racers cross the finish line. #12 wins. Sonny's tablet lights up with a climbing number.

SONNY

Yes! You ARE good, aren't you?

GRANT

I get a cut?

SONNY

Your cut is I don't report you for bein' here. Be thankful for that, ya big boy scout. Now go find a real job.

He claps Grant on the shoulder and leaves. Sigh.

GRANT

A real job...

**INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - DAY**

MACK (50s) is chewing a wad of nicotine gum, smiling and nodding and looking pleased with Grant.

MACK

I think that about does it. When can you start?

GRANT

Any time. Now, even.

MACK

Perfect! See, I like a man with discipline. That's a good quality you got there, Mr--

Mack's tablet lights up on his desk. He catches sight of it, and blanches.

MACK (CONT'D)

**Captain** Grant?

He looks up, smile entirely gone.

**INT. ZAZI CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY**

MR TOFF (40s) eyes Grant suspiciously from behind the blast-proof glass.

MR TOFF

You here to rob the place?

GRANT

No, sir, I just--

Toff pops the register, checks:

MR TOFF

How much'd you take, eh? How much?

Grant sighs.

**INT. MRS CHENG'S MASSAGE PARLOR - DAY**

MRS CHENG (50s) is apologetic, at least.

MRS CHENG

I'm sorry, Mr Grant, our guests just wouldn't be comfortable around someone who can read their thoughts.

GRANT

I can't... I can't read their thoughts.

Mrs Cheng is trying to communicate telepathically. It's really awkward.

**INT. BIG HARDWARE STORE - DAY**

Grant is wearing a green apron and a name tag that says "NASH", standing next to ZEKE (40s, go-getter), looking around the lumber aisle like it's the surface of Mars.

ZEKE

Now, I know this may seem alien to you, Nash, but here at Hardware Planet, we believe in HARD WORK and the BIG PICTURE. It's not just...

(notes Grant's physique)

working out and... being strong and... things.

GRANT

Yes, sir.

ZEKE

And it's not about profits, either. It's about PEOPLE. We HELP people become their BEST. So if you see someone in need...

He leans against a stack of lumber-- and it gives way, **CRASHING DOWN** and burying before he can even yelp.

Grant stares at the mess and sighs.

**INT. BIG HARDWARE STORE - BACK OFFICE - LATER**

Estevez is rubbing his face to relieve the tension.

ESTEVEZ

But REALLY?

GRANT

I swear I wasn't even looking.

ESTEVEZ

And a fake name, too. Where'd you get the ID? You know what? Don't tell me. I don't want to know.

GRANT

I swear I'm just trying to do the right thing.

ESTEVEZ

Yeah, well, you suck at it.

Estevez's tablet flashes, he looks down and UGH.

ESTEVEZ (CONT'D)

He had five kids. FIVE KIDS. I can't even... this number...

Grant looks physically pained.

**EXT. CITY STREETS - LATER**

Grant's phone pod rings. He doesn't wanna, but answers:

GRANT

Hey, so listen--

TAMARA (PHONE)

They're taking the house.

GRANT

I know, but--

TAMARA (PHONE)

They're taking the house, John. MY house. What the HELL did you do--

GRANT

I tried to make things better--

TAMARA (PHONE)  
 IT SHOWS! Just... STOP! Please!  
 Just stop!

She hangs up. Grant stares at the phone pod. Shit.

**EXT. RACE TRACK - LATER**

Grant is not happy about being here.  
 Sonny, on the other hand, is giddy.

GRANT  
 No violence?

SONNY  
 No violence.

GRANT  
 Bad guys?

SONNY  
 Very bad guys.

GRANT  
 Fine. Once. Who's the mark?

**INT. CHINATOWN INDOOR MARKET - DAY**

This place is chaos, pure chaos. Stalls on both sides of the hall, with people moving in every direction at once -- buying, selling, shouting, jostling... unpredictable.

Through the middle comes ANTON YOUK (30s, sharply-dressed sinister) with his trio of bodyguards. People move out of his way, and he doesn't break his stride.

SONNY (V.O.)  
 Anton Youk. Deals in black market  
 gems for an elite clientele. Never  
 goes nowhere without three  
 bodyguards on his tail.

Youk turns down an alley and--

**INT. CHINATOWN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

--into a tiny, dingy room. On a table sits a high-tech scanner/lamp, and what looks like a sleek toaster oven.

Youk sets a briefcase on the table, opens it.

SONNY (V.O.)  
Once a year, he gets a shipment of  
offworld diamonds--

**EXT. RACE TRACK - AS BEFORE**

GRANT  
Hold on, hold on. OFFWORLD  
diamonds? As in OFFWORLD? I  
thought this was small-time stuff.

Sonny shrugs a little.

SONNY  
I may have downplayed his  
importance somewhat.

**BACK IN THE OFFICE**

Youk is now surrounded by about 10 bodyguards, with even  
more waiting outside.

DR SINGH (60s, veteran of scumbag science) takes one of  
the diamonds from the briefcase with tweezers, and  
inspects it under the lamp/scanner.

SONNY (V.O.)  
Each diamond gets checked by this  
third-party expert, Dr Singh, who  
operates outta this hellhole in  
Chinatown...

The diamond goes in the toaster oven, which glows.

SONNY (V.O.)  
Once they're authenticated, Singh  
re-tags the radiation signature  
with a unique ID.

**BACK AT THE TRACK**

GRANT  
So they're traceable.

SONNY  
Unstealable from that moment on.  
Unless you want Youk's many and  
various compatriots bustin' down  
your door.

GRANT  
Lovely. So we're not stealing them  
AFTER the tag. How about before?

**BACK IN THE OFFICE**

REWIND TIME: the diamond comes out of the oven, into the scanner, out of the scanner, into the briefcase. Youk rewinds out of the office, back through the crowd, to the exterior doors of the market.

SONNY (V.O.)

Before Singh, they arrive in a fleet of armored cars.

OUTSIDE, Youk and his men rewind into at least six big SUVs, which then rewind away.

SONNY (V.O.)

Each one coming from a different location, on a different route.

**BACK AT THE TRACK**

A map of the area is on Sonny's tablet, with a dozen lines marking the various routes the SUVs have taken. Grant is trying to make sense of it.

GRANT

And you don't know where the origin point is? Where he actually GETS the diamonds?

SONNY

Nope. Randomly-selected, from what I hear.

GRANT

Perfect. Like a lottery.

SONNY

But listen: you get those diamonds before Singh tags 'em, and believe you me, Grant, it's BETTER than any lottery.

Grant looks at images of the market on a regular day.

GRANT

That's a really, really small window.

SONNY

But that's all you need, right? Fewer variables, LOTS of data, like you said.

Grant taps one of the stills, watches the market.



GRANT

I could use a spotter.

SONNY

You got someone you trust?

Grant considers this.

GRANT

Not really. Not for this.

He pauses on a photo of Youk. Poster boy for vicious organized crime. His guards look cruel.

He sighs, hands the tablet back to Sonny.

GRANT (CONT'D)

I dunno. I need to think about--

SONNY

Hey, listen, Captain. His next shipment comes in TOMORROW. We either do this now, or it's sayonara to moolah-moolah, you know what I'm sayin'?

Grant looks pained.

GRANT

Then I guess it's a no. Sorry, Sonny. I thought I could, but... I'll find another way.

He heads off, leaving Sonny speechless.

**INT. SHAWARMA ZONE - NIGHT**

Dingy, dingy, dingy. Grant reaches the counter, squints at the distorting menu screens. The "employee" is a stationary robot with an order screen for a body.

GRANT

Combo 5. Extra sauce. To go.

The screen updates, and offers a circle for a fingerprint. Grant scans his thumb absentmindedly when BZZZT! The screen flashes red.

ORDERBOT

Transaction declined. Account overdrawn. NSF fee applied.

Grant is mortified. He skulks away.

**EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT**

Grant reaches into a garbage can, comes out with a half-eaten burger. Checks briefly, then eats. Ew.

**INT. TAMARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Tamara is at her computer, scrolling through bank records. It's a lot of red.

Her phone rings. She taps it on.

TAMARA

I can't do this right now, John.

GRANT (PHONE)

You can sell my medals. The ones from--

TAMARA

I have.

**GRANT**

is shocked by that.

GRANT

Oh. Uh. OK, so--

TAMARA (PHONE)

Listen, I have to go.

GRANT

No no, wait. I just...

**TAMARA**

is having a nervous breakdown.

TAMARA

You're not a soldier, John. But you've still got a chip. So what the hell does that make you?

**GRANT**

looks down at his phone pod. Disconnected.

He throws the rest of the burger away, taps the pod.

GRANT

I'm in. What time tomorrow?

**EXT. OUTSIDE CHINATOWN MARKET - DAY**

The fleet of SUVs skid to a stop. Doors open. Men get out. Then and only then: Youk emerges.

**INT. CHINATOWN INDOOR MARKET - DAY**

Grant is on the far end of the market, watching. The front doors haven't opened yet. The market is busy.

GRANT'S POV: causal lines, ID markers and LoS numbers draw and re-draw as he takes things in:

- the old woman running the produce stand
- the guy with two full shopping bags
- the businessman walking along, eating a hot pastry
- the mother tending to her fussy baby in a stroller
- the competing fishmongers across from each other, arguing loudly
- the teenage girls gossiping over bubble tea
- the guy on a ladder, fixing the hanging lights
- a grandfather with a walker, trying to read a menu

And then, just beyond all that, the doors open, revealing Youk and his men.

Grant's eyes narrow.

GRANT  
(to self)  
Sorry, everyone.

Youk starts forward. The crowd parts as usual.

Grant arrives at the old woman's stall.

He nudges a cabbage in the pile, then walks away.

The old woman has no idea that anything's--

Whoa! The entire pile tumbles out, spilling all over the floor. The old woman shrieks--

--and the guy with the two shopping bags hears it, drops his bags and runs to stop the cabbage avalanche.

(but he left his bags in the middle of the road)

And the pastry-eating businessman is oblivious.

So he trips, and his pastry goes flying--

--and lands on the mother's head with a **SPLAT**. WTF?

Her toddler bursts into laughter!

At the side of the market, Grant moves deliberately, eyes on his prize. The world is his Rube Goldberg machine.

The fishmongers shout at each other as Grant passes by--

--and he tugs at the bow on the older fishmonger's apron. Just a little. Unnoticeable.

The other fishmonger curses which prompts a disgusted:

OLDER FISHMONGER

Feh!

He turns away, but the bow on his apron catches on the edge of a display--

--which rotates a trolley--

--which knocks into the counter--

--which wobbles a tank of live crabs JUST ENOUGH

--that they tip over and spray across the floor.

The water and crabs rush up toward the teenage girls, who shriek and scurry away--

--and bump into a ladder--

--the ladder of the guy hanging the lights.

It tumbles away beneath him--

--but he grabs the lights just in time!

Youk is almost at his destination. His guards are starting to notice the commotion.

Grant pauses; something's caught his eye:

HIS POV: one of the guards is marked yellow. ANOMALY.

Grant watches for a moment as the other guards fan out, but that one... he sneezes, looks wretched. He checks the coast is clear and swigs from some cold medicine.

GRANT  
(to self)  
Your cold better not mess with my  
numbers...

Grant slips into the crowd.

The mother with the stroller is at the washroom.  
She opens the door with one hand.

**PING!** The hanging lights come loose and--

--WHOOOOA the ladder guy falls and--

--**WOMP!** hits the door.

The lights land in the younger fishmonger's tank and--

--**CRACKLE POP POP POP!**

--tiny explosions burst all the way down the line!

Youk jerks backward in surprise--

--and stumbles into the walker of the very old man,

--taking them all down in a heap.

The briefcase tumbles out of Youk's hand--

--and straight into Grant's.

Nice.

He takes a winding route to the door,

magically JUST out of view of each of Youk's men

("ACHOO!")

as they race to the scene of the crime.

Grant arrives at the exit, takes a step to the side as  
two more guards rush in, and then heads out--

**EXT. OUTSIDE CHINATOWN MARKET - CONTINUOUS**

--straight between the parked SUVs, pivoting on his heel  
like he's doing a strange dance...

...and walking across the busy street like he knows  
exactly how to avoid the traffic.

Because he does.

And he's damn good at it.

**EXT. RACE TRACK - NIGHT**

Grant has a spring in his step as he slips through the gates and strolls down the empty stands toward Sonny.

GRANT

I gotta say, I didn't think I'd enjoy it, but I-- AHH!

He stumbles back -- Sonny's dead! There's a burn mark on his chest, his eyes open in shock. He's been shot.

SEEM (O.S.)

I'm so glad you enjoyed yourself, Captain Grant. It will make what comes next so much easier.

Grant turns to find two BIG THUGS with laser blasters pointed right at his head. They are not messing around.

From between them comes WINSTON SEEM (50s, like the boss of a serial killer gang). He smiles at Grant pleasantly.

SEEM (CONT'D)

Thank you for the diamonds.

A third thug takes the briefcase from Grant without trouble, because Grant is shaky.

SEEM (CONT'D)

Are you quite alright, Captain?

GRANT

Not used to surprises, is all.

SEEM

Yes, well, that DID take some planning. I'm glad the effort paid off.

GRANT'S POV: highlights on all four bogeys keep going red as the LoS re-calcs over and over between 0 and 10%.

SEEM (CONT'D)

I trust your Likelihood of Success will keep this conversation civil.

GRANT

Who are you? You're not with Youk.

SEEM

No, Mr Youk was a bountiful byproduct of our primary goal, which was to, shall we say, audition your abilities for the main event.

GRANT

What main event?

Seem gestures to the seats.

SEEM

Please, if you will.

Grant sits, reluctant, but out of options.

SEEM (CONT'D)

The day after tomorrow, at the Aurora Hotel, you will kill Senator Gabriela Wiles.

Grant looks up.

GRANT

I... what?

SEEM

I'll give you a moment to digest.

GRANT

No, I don't need to digest anything. I'm not doing it.

SEEM

But think of it, Captain. She is a woman who would take away your rights and freedoms -- the very ones you fought to protect -- without a second thought. She has BETRAYED you.

GRANT

And I'm sure that's what you'll write on my suicide note after her bodyguards take me out.

Seems laughs. Creepy, creepy laugh.

SEEM

Did you project that, just now? Or was that natural intuition?

GRANT

More like common sense.

SEEM

Charming, regardless. The fact remains: you WILL kill Senator Wiles. Given our time constraints, you are the ONLY PERSON who can accomplish this task for us.

GRANT

And since I refuse?

Seem shrugs, removes a tablet from his jacket. Turns it on, smiles like he's looking at a puppy, then turns it for Grant to see. Grant's face drops.

Onscreen is Tamara, bound and gagged, and bleeding from the forehead. Pleading for her life.

Grant leaps to his feet and the two guns on him power up.

HIS POV: LoS 0%. No hope.

Seem slides the tablet back in his pocket.

SEEM

Your abilities, astounding though they are, come with certain handicaps. For instance, based on your limited information, you cannot tell where your wife is being held right now. Or, in fact, what her fate might be in any of the multitude of projections you might make. So let me help, if I may: disobey us, and she WILL die.

Grant is simmering with fury.

SEEM (CONT'D)

Senator Wiles must be assassinated Thursday afternoon by five. No exceptions.

GRANT

It's impossible. There's too much I don't know. And even if I did, the Secret Service has got to have protocols in place to stop someone like me from sneaking past. There's just no way--



SEEM

Tsk tsk, Captain. Impossibility is a state of mind.

GRANT

No, it's got a number. And the number is zero.

SEEM

I trust you'll find a way.

GRANT

But what if I don't WANT to find a way?

Seem stands like he's a regular guy getting ready to go.

SEEM

What is it they tell you again? About the options? Ah, yes: first, what you WANT to do, which is to kill me here and now, and save the day. That will end badly for you, as I'm sure you're aware.

GRANT'S POV: LoS 2%. No, 0%.

SEEM (CONT'D)

Second, do what you are SUPPOSED to do, which I presume is to call the FBI and report a kidnapping, only to eventually discover your wife's body in a truly gruesome condition. Again, it ends badly.

Grant's fists tighten. He's barely holding back.

SEEM (CONT'D)

Which leaves us with the third option: what you WILL do. Plain and simple, Captain, you WILL kill Senator Wiles. There is no other way forward.

**EXT. THE TRANSITWAY - NIGHT**

Grant runs down the sidewalk as the trucks continue tearing past, headlights blazing.

Grant redials his phone pod:

GRANT

Come on, come ON...