

EXT. BUSY STREET, BRAZZAVILLE, CONGO AFRICA. AFTERNOON

Super: Brazzaville, Congo, Africa

Low rise, shabby looking concrete buildings line the streets. It's not third world in this area, but definitely not first world either. People mill around outside the buildings going about their day, some sit on boxes, others in doorways.

NICOLE WEST (28), average height, long blonde hair and tight grip on a hand gun, rounds the corner of one building and races through a crowded street. She's running from someone or something and she's in a hurry.

Around her, people stop to watch her race past. A group of THREE GUNMEN with guns round the same corner and the people in the street scatter in every direction, desperate to get away. Their movements almost like a well-practiced routine.

Nicole disappears around another corner and the group of gunmen follow her, ignoring the people around them and their fear.

EXT. DEAD END STREET, BRAZZAVILLE, CONGO AFRICA. AFTERNOON

As she rounds the corner, Nicole realises that it is a dead end and slows her pace. In front of her at the far end of the street is a stack of crates against a building wall. She races towards them and dives behind them for protection.

The group of gunmen round the corner behind her, just seeing her disappear behind the crates. They raise their weapons at the crates and move slowly into the middle of the street.

Trapped, Nicole looks around for any kind of escape from her position, but there isn't one.

GUNMAN 1

No where to go. Might as well
surrender.

The group gain on her and she engages the gun, ready to lean out and shoot if she needs to.

GUNMAN 2

(Australian accent)

Where are they? Give them up and we
can all walk away. We will kill you
if you don't.

NICOLE

You won't kill me. Those aren't
your orders.

Gunman 1 nods to Gunman 3 and he fires a single bullet in Nicole's direction and it blasts through a weak spot of the crate, hitting her in the left shoulder. She falls forward against the wall and cries out in pain.

GUNMAN 1

Our orders are retrieval at any cost.

She pushes herself back and breathes through the pain. Her expression hardens and she steadies her shaking hands. Nicole swings around the side of crate and fires her gun, taking out Gunman 2.

Both Gunmen 1 and 3 fire at her again and she pulls back behind the crate, taking a deep breath leaning around the other side to fire again. This time she kills Gunman 3, first crippling him with a bullet in his leg and then a kill shot in the chest as he drops to his knees.

In her distraction, Nicole doesn't notice Gunman 1 rounding the side of the crate. As she pulls back to her safe position, with her gun lying across her lap, she notices him and freezes. He points his gun at her and she looks up at him, breathing deeply.

Then she fires one bullet into his ankle. He cries out in pain and drops to the ground. The reaction causes his gun to fire and bullets narrowly miss Nicole. She gets to her knees and fires at him again until he is dead.

Taking a moment to pull herself together, Nicole hoists herself to her feet using the crate to lean on. She turns slowly to lean forward on it, favouring her wounded shoulder. It's bleeding heavily and desperately needs medical attention.

As she looks up she sees 2 HEAVILY ARMED POLICE OFFICERS move quickly into the street, guns raised and ready to take anyone down who might challenge them. They take in the three dead bodies in front of them and advance on her slowly.

Nicole reaches across the crate as best she can and places her gun far away from her. As she pulls back she raises her right arm in surrender. One of the police officers motions with his gun for Nicole to step out from behind the crate and she complies, moving slowly.

As she steps clear of the crates and the dead body next to her, Nicole begins to sway unsteadily. Her eyes roll back in her head and she collapses to the ground, weakened from blood loss. The police officers advance on her quickly and one stands on alert incase she is faking while the other bends down and rolls her on to her back. She's unconscious.

EXT. POLLSMOOR PRISON, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA. DAY

Super: Pollsmoor Prison, Cape Town, South Africa

The Administration building stands tall and foreboding. Outside the gates a black diplomatic car with Australian flags sits, waiting. Behind it is a black four wheel drive, also with flags.

Nicole, looking a little worse for wear, exits the building slowly accompanied by a heavily armed GUARD. She looks around nervously before spotting the diplomatic cars.

The doors of both cars open and out of the first comes a DIPLOMATIC AID (30s), male, and out of the second three heavily armed BODY GUARDS.

The PRISON GUARD escorting Nicole nods to the diplomatic aid as the body guards approach and surround her, weapons raised away from her, ready for anything. Nicole moves toward the Diplomatic Aid quickly. He takes off his sunglasses and raises an eyebrow at her. He doesn't look impressed.

DIPLOMATIC AID

Finally! I've been waiting for two hours!

NICOLE

I've been waiting two years.

Nicole stops at the car and looks back at the prison. She smiles slightly in relief before getting in. The body guards get in the second car.

EXT. ASIS CAR. MORNING

Super: New South Wales, Australia

A black, unmarked sedan drives along a quiet country road. The surrounding area is just fields and trees as far as they eye can see, farm and bush land.

This is country NSW, Australia.

INT. ASIS CAR. MORNING

Nicole sits quietly in the back of a car, watching the fields roll past and taking in the serenity of it. She looks up as they pass a big green road sign: 40km to Tamlee. She leans back in her seat and exhales a breath.

JOHN GEARING (30s), the driver and a fellow agent assigned to escort her, looks up in the rear view mirror directly at her.

GEARING

You okay?

Nicole just looks up, meeting his eyes, and give him the best smile she can muster. He just nods in response and turns his eyes back to the road.

EXT. NICOLE'S HOUSE. MORNING

The car pulls up outside of a two story brick house. It's a typical country town street, lined with houses of all shapes and sizes, with cars in the driveways and large trees lining the sidewalk.

Both Nicole and Gearing exit the car. Gearing pops the trunk and pulls Nicole's bag out, handing it to her. She pulls the strap over her shoulder and steps toward the house.

GEARING

Same as you remember it?

NICOLE

Yeah.

Nicole stops and looks over the front of the house and her attention is immediately drawn to the left, to her neighbour's house.

In the window, looking back at her is OLIVER RYAN (28), tall and well built, with short brown hair. As soon as he makes eye contact with Nicole, he steps away from the window and the curtain falls back into place.

Gearing steps up behind Nicole, having seen the movement next door and looks at her curiously.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

(sarcastically, under her
breath)

Great!

Nicole pushes forward toward the front door, Gearing trailing close behind her.

EXT. HIDEOUT. MORNING

An old, but well kept single story, weatherboard house stands a little off the road. The neighbouring houses are a respectable distance away, without isolating the house altogether.

The garden looks neglected as though the house hasn't been lived in for a while, or the occupants simply don't care.

INT. HIDEOUT - KITCHEN. MORNING

ESTIANE NIVIDA (mid 30s), white male South African, lightly tanned and intimidating, looks down on a family of four.

The family - ANGELA (58), JACK (60), LISA (36) and BILLY (6) - are tied up and gagged. Jack's face is a bit banged up, with his lip and nose bleeding and bruises starting to form on his cheek.

Estiane's men, VIKTOR (German), MARCO (Italian), CHRIS (American), ANDRE (French) and HANS (Norwegian), all in their mid 20s to early 30s, occupy themselves with various tasks around the room.

Viktor and Chris have town plans open on the table in front of them, Marco leans back against the wall with a gun slung around his body, Andre has a laptop open with a jewellery website open on the screen and Hans is cleaning a gun.

As Estiane moves closer to the family, they shift backwards a little. Estiane kneels down in front of Lisa and leans in close to her face.

ESTIANE

Where's the girl?

Lisa looks up at him defiantly, clearly going into protective mother mode. She remains silent, but stares him down. Estiane growls at her and stands abruptly, striding into the adjoining room.

INT. NICOLE'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY. MORNING

The front door swings open. Nicole and Gearing enter and stop dead in their tracks. The house is destroyed.

Furniture is turned over, items have been knocked off shelves. It's clearly been ransacked - someone was looking for something.

There's also silence. The house is empty.

Nicole starts to move further into the house, but Gearing puts a hand on her arm to stop her. She looks like she is about to protest when he puts a finger to his lips in a sign to stay silent and stationary.

Gearing pulls out his hand gun from his hip holster and starts to take a couple of steps further into the house. Near the stairs off to the right, Gearing stops and motions downward.

Nicole approaches slowly and sees that there are bloody paw prints. She bends down to touch them with a look of dread on her face.

Gearing moves into the adjoining lounge room and returns a few moments later, shaking his head to Nicole and then ascending the stairs, disappearing onto the top level of the house.

Nicole stands and moves over to survey the state of the lounge with an apprehensive expression and turns with a questioning look to Gearing as he descends the stairs again.

GEARING

It's empty. I'm going to go call it in. HQ should know about this right away.

Nicole nods and Gearing moves to the door.

GEARING (CONT'D)

Don't touch anything. In fact don't even move.

Nicole looks at him apprehensively but nods and he exits the entryway.

EXT. NICOLE'S HOUSE. MORNING

Gearing crosses the front lawn toward the car and nervously surveys the surrounding area, gun concealed under his jacket.

When he reaches the car he takes another look around before he swings the door open and sits down in the driver's seat, leaving the door open.

INT. CAR. MORNING

Gearing reaches for the radio attached to his dashboard as a bullet pierces through his windshield and hits him directly in his chest. He immediately slumps back in his seat, dead.

A second bullet pierces through the windshield and takes out the radio, exploding it into pieces across the front seats of the car and Gearing's body.

The windshield is left with a couple of small bullet holes and a few cracks but the glass isn't shattered.

INT. NICOLE'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY. MORNING

Nicole sits on the stairs and impatiently looks at her watch. She lets out a groan of frustration and stands, tired of waiting, and crosses to the front door. She pulls it open and moves outside.

EXT. NICOLE'S HOUSE. MORNING

Nicole crosses the front yard toward the car. She's agitated.

NICOLE

Gearing, what's taking so long?!

Nicole stops suddenly as she takes in the sight of Gearing's unmoving body. Flying into a panic she pulls open the passenger door and leans into the car, kneeling on the seat.

INT. CAR. MORNING

Nicole presses her fingers to Gearing's pulse points to check if he is dead.

She looks around the inside of the car and notices the bullet holes in the windshield and the remains of the radio scattered across the dashboard.

Suddenly shots start flying at her, seemingly out of nowhere. Nicole ducks in vain to get away from them, grabbing Gearing's concealed gun and pulling away from the car.

EXT. CAR. MORNING

Nicole kicks the door closed before taking off toward the house again. As she barrels toward the house, and throws herself inside kicking the front door closed behind her.

EXT. ROOFTOP. MORNING

A sniper rifle is set up on a roof a few streets over from Nicole's house. Behind it is a person, a woman with dark brown hair and a black beanie. From behind the eye piece the woman's cheek rises with a smile.

INT. NICOLE'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY. MORNING

As Nicole catches her breath, she lets go of Gearing's gun and tries to push herself up onto her hands and knees.

Nicole looks up to see a hand reaching out to her and she looks up further in surprise to see Oliver standing over her.

NICOLE

Oliver?

OLIVER

Come with me.

She ignores him and stands, grabbing the gun again and heading towards the stairs. She has blood smeared on her face and arm from her contact with Gearing's body.

She disappears up to the second level and Oliver watches her go for a moment before following her.

INT. NICOLE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING. MORNING

Nicole stands on the landing as Oliver comes up behind her. They both look around at the devastation of the overturned room. It's not much better than the rooms downstairs.

From their vantage point, they can see into each of the bedrooms and the chaos that awaits them there too, when they eventually have a chance to clear everything up.

Nicole shivers and turns toward the master bedroom, makes her way inside. Oliver follows her closely.

INT. NICOLE'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM. MORNING

Nicole moves quickly toward the window that faces the front of the house. Oliver hangs back for a moment, surveying the mess of the room, before moving to the window as well.

The room has been trashed, making Oliver and Nicole step awkwardly over fallen objects so as not to disturb the crime scene. The bed has been stripped and items broken on the dresser. The drawers have been torn to pieces and contents strewn across the room.

OLIVER

Anything?

NICOLE

No.

OLIVER

You can't stay here. It's not safe for you anymore.

NICOLE

I have to do something about Gearing's body.

OLIVER

We will, but not right now. From this angle he looks like he's just sitting in the car. We can see to him later. He's not going anywhere.

Oliver turns and leaves the room. Nicole watches him go, takes one last look out the window and following after him with a deep sigh.

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM. MORNING

Oliver steps into the room and Nicole follows hesitantly.

The room is nicely decorated and modern. There are a lot of pictures on the walls of his family and various sports teams of Tamlee High School, with him as their coach.

There is also a Diploma of Education hanging on the wall. Clearly he is a PE teacher.

OLIVER
Are you okay?

Nicole looks up at him and her expression hardens.

NICOLE
What do you care?

Oliver sighs and lets it slide. Obviously he knows what she's angry about.

OLIVER
I've been waiting for you to come home. Your family were abducted yesterday. I can only assume that it had something to do with you.

NICOLE
And why would you assume that?

OLIVER
Your parents told me that you were released last week and then this happens-

He takes a moment before continuing. He doesn't want it to seem like he's accusing her.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
All I'm saying is in my mind, it was too well timed to be a coincidence.

NICOLE
Did you see what happened?

OLIVER
No, but I heard it. All I saw was them being hauled out of the house and thrown into a black van. The only one who managed to hide was Amy. She's pretty traumatised. Do you know who did this?

NICOLE
I could guess. And I know what they want. Where is she?

Oliver points down the hall and Nicole rushes toward the spare room.

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - SPARE ROOM. DAY

The door flies open and Nicole rushes into a dimly lit room.

AMY (9) looks up suddenly from where she is seated on the bed. Nicole rushes toward Amy and Amy reaches for her. She sweeps Amy into a hug and holds her tight.

Nicole pulls back after a long moment and inspects Amy to make sure she is unharmed, then pulls her back into another hug.

Oliver enters and leans in the door frame, watching them.

OLIVER

I found her hiding in the hall
cupboard.

Nicole nods and releases Amy, sitting up on the bed next to her and putting an arm around her. Amy leans into Nicole's side.

Oliver moves further into the room and indicates to the blood on Nicole's arm and face.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Are you hurt?

NICOLE

No, it's not my blood.

OLIVER

I can help. You can trust me.

NICOLE

Last time I trusted you, it didn't
end well. I don't need your help.

Oliver lets out a frustrated groan and stands up.

OLIVER

Suit yourself.

He storms out of the room and shuts the door behind him.

Nicole gets up and goes to the mirror on the far wall. She tries to wipe away the blood but only ends up smearing what is still wet more. The dried blood doesn't budge from her skin. Nicole sighs in frustration.

Amy sits on the bed and watches Nicole sadly. Nicole looks back at her over her shoulder and gives Amy a sad smile.

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM. MORNING

Oliver is sitting on the lounge with a tablet in front of him. He is flipping across the screen as if he is reading something and turning the pages.