

# QUIET MOUNTAIN

Episode 2 - "Palermo Protocol"

By

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SAMPLE

We hear shallow breathing. The quiet clink of chains: distorted, playing through speakers.

Words fade slowly in and out on the black screen:

**If you are a victim of human sex trafficking or have information about a potential trafficking situation, contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888.373.7778.**

Those words fade away. Then:

**If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911.**

'911' lingers on the screen before disappearing into the dark.

We see the same footage from the cold open of the first episode. The same woman chained to the ceiling.

Except this time we PULL OUT and see the video being played on a laptop inside the campy motel room from Episode 1.

LIV and HOLLOWAY watch the laptop screen. Ryba stands behind them. Liv's sitting on the edge of one of the twin beds. The POLICE OFFICER from the last episode is sitting on a chair near the door, nursing his crotch where Liv kneed him.

On screen, the figure in the white HAZMAT suit stuffs a rag in the woman's mouth.

WOMAN  
(from laptop)  
ohmigod HEL--

LIV  
Why are you showing me this?

HOLLOWAY  
(Australian accent)  
We don't have to show her the whole thing.

RYBA  
All right, turn it off.

HOLLOWAY pauses the video.

The figure in the HAZMAT suit is frozen on screen, the bands of pixels shimmering.

(CONTINUED)

LIV

No, but-- why are you showing me this?

HOLLOWAY

This video, and a dozen like it, have made their way up and down the Pacific Coast. Even towards California and parts of Canada.

(then)

Two of them have the same thing in common: they were sent from your IP address.

LIV

You're Australian.

HOLLOWAY

I--what? Yes.

LIV

Why are you Australian?

HOLLOWAY

Because I was born in Sydney.

LIV

No, I meant--

RYBA

She knows what you meant.

Beat. Ryba collects her thoughts.

RYBA

We've been onto a human sex trafficking ring for the better part of a year.

(then)

And your dad's damn near the top.

Stunned silence.

LIV

What? Who are you?

RYBA

Special Agent Amy Ryba. Call me Ryba. This is Holloway.

HOLLOWAY

Sarah is fine.

(CONTINUED)

LIV

What is this? What's happening?

HOLLOWAY

We're the "Transnational Oceania Pacific Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking Team." Catchy name, we know.

RYBA

We call it TOPSETT. We've been working with the Aussies for a while now. The FBI, the ASIO; we're all following the same signals in the dark. So we teamed up, made a task force. Two hands are better than one, right?

Beat. The adults clearly don't know how to speak to a child.

Liv is motionless, shell-shocked.

HOLLOWAY

Anyway. We got some hits on the dark web on our servers back in Melbourne and followed them Stateside.

Holloway types something. A satellite map with a blinking red dot appears on half the screen. The other half still shows the figure in the HAZMAT suit.

HOLLOWAY

We tracked it here.

LIV

That's my house.

RYBA

When we started poking around, the lights went out.

The blinking dot disappears.

RYBA (cont'd)

We were dead on arrival.

LIV

That's my *house*.

A beat.

LIV points to the figure on the screen.

(CONTINUED)

LIV

So, what, you're telling me that's my dad? That he's some sort of, of human trafficker? That's what you're saying.

RYBA

That's exactly what we're saying.

LIV

Oh.

Beat.

RYBA

(to POLICE OFFICER)

Jeff, can you give us a minute?

The officer in the corner nods, ad libs an exit.

The door closes. An atmosphere hangs in the room.

Ryba takes a seat next to Liv on the bed. Almost puts her hand on Liv's shoulder. Decides against it.

RYBA

Has he ever said or done anything that connects these dots?

LIV

I don't -- how am I supposed to...my dad...my dad isn't great. I mean he's not perfect, but he's not...

Liv looks at the masked figure on the screen. Into the plastic of the rebreather hood. It's dark.

RYBA

I know this is a lot--

LIV

This is a LOT.

RYBA

I know.

(beat)

You've heard about the women going missing recently. All over the area. Your dad going off on work trips on weekends.

(CONTINUED)

LIV  
How do you know when he--

RYBA  
We're the FBI, Liv.

LIV  
(beat)  
And you're sure its my dad?

HOLLOWAY  
The videos are routed straight  
through Hill House. It's got to  
be--

LIV  
Wait-- "Hill House?" That's what  
you guys call it?

Ryba shoots Holloway a look.

HOLLOWAY  
Oh. Sorry. It's just a dumb  
nickname we came up with.

LIV  
The FBI has a nickname for my *home*.

Holloway fumbles up a lie.

HOLLOWAY  
Y'know, because it's spooooky.  
oooo.

Liv turns and looks right at RYBA.

LIV  
That's not why, is it?

Ryba thinks. Decides to tell the truth.

RYBA  
We call it that because when people  
go in they don't come out.

Liv doesn't say anything.

HOLLOWAY  
Amy--

RYBA  
She has a right to know.  
(to Liv)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RYBA (cont'd)  
So he's never done anything  
suspicious?

LIV  
No. Well, not really.

RYBA  
"Not really"?

LIV  
He's just a very private person.

HOLLOWAY  
Liv--

LIV  
If you know so much why don't you  
go arrest him then?

HOLLOWAY  
What?

LIV  
Why don't you go arrest him?

RYBA  
It's not that simple.

LIV  
It's what?

RYBA  
We've got to catch him in the act.

LIV  
In the act? Why? If what you're  
saying is true, you've got enough  
evidence for whatever.

RYBA  
Right now its a lost radio signal  
and a couple of videos. But that's  
just a drop in the bucket compared  
to what you'll be able to find.

Liv's ears prick.

LIV  
What "I'll be able to find?"

(CONTINUED)

RYBA  
We don't have enough information,  
and we need more.

LIV  
No way.

HOLLOWAY  
Liv--

LIV  
No way.

RYBA  
You're already on the inside. We  
couldn't ask for a better cover.

LIV  
No way. I'm 16. 17. There's no way  
this is legal. Just send in a SWAT  
team or a--

HOLLOWAY  
There are lives at stake. We can't  
just go in like cowboys.

RYBA  
If he knows we're coming it's  
already too late. He'll scrub  
everything.

LIV  
Well, I don't know, what about--

RYBA  
Everything, Liv. Do you understand  
what I'm saying?

Liv understands perfectly.

Ryba takes a seat next to Liv.

RYBA (cont'd)  
There's no one else. No one can get  
this close to him, not ever. But  
now we have you.

(beat)  
Look. Ask yourself: could we be  
right?

(re: figure on screen)  
Could that man, doing those things,  
be your dad?

LIV stares into the screen like the dying embers of a fire.  
(CONTINUED)



RYBA (cont'd)

If any part of you thinks there's a chance that it is, you'll help us. You'd have to.

Liv doesn't talk.

For a long moment.

LIV

There's...There's this guy that comes around sometimes and hangs out with my dad in his RV.

RYBA

Ok. Good.

HOLLOWAY

Who is he?

LIV

I don't know. It might just be a friend.

RYBA

Your dad's got a lot of friends does he?

LIV

I don't know. The guy brought a cooler with him last time. I don't even know why I'm telling you this.

RYBA

No, no. This is good.

Ryba nods to Holloway. Holloway gets up and hands Liv a USB.

LIV

What is this?

HOLLOWAY

If you find something in the RV, put it on there. We'll need all we can get.

LIV

In the RV? Are you crazy? Hold on, I told you about the guy but I don't know about--

(CONTINUED)

RYBA

I know. I know. Just--hold onto it, okay? If you find something, take a picture and put it on the jump drive. You mom has a Pamper Party on Wednesday.

LIV

How do you--

RYBA

(come on)

Liv.

(then)

Just--think about it. Bring the USB with you--you'll know what to do with it then.

Liv looks down at the USB in her palm.

3 **EXT. LIV'S HOUSE. EARLY MORNING.**

3

4 AM. The sun wants to come up but we can't see it yet.

The driveway to Liv's house. The gate is open.

A police car pulls up to the gateway. Liv gets out, says something to the officer inside.

Gets her bike off the back of the car and walks up the hill.

She looks at the RV. Passes it quickly.

She looks at her house, somehow darker now.

Then a light in the kitchen snaps on.

She panics. Rushes to the basement door on the side of the house.

4 **INT. BASEMENT. CONTINUOUS.**

4

She hears the wood groaning above her as she slips back into the basement. She drops her bike in the same pile of dust GREG put it in the day before.

She barely makes it to the cot on the other side of the room when the door to the basement opens.

Greg stomps down a few of the stairs. He's wearing camo and combat boots.

(CONTINUED)

LIV

Dad?

Greg stands at the bottom of the stairs, inscrutable.

Liv, on the cot.

LIV

(quietly)

Sir?

Greg still doesn't say anything, just stands there.

Finally, he moves. Walks towards Liv. Stands over her, casting a big shadow.

Then he sits on the cot next to Liv. The springs inside the rusty frame squawk. She makes herself small next to him.

GREG

I...Your mother has advised me that I might have been having a bad day yesterday and I might've taken it out on you a little bit.

Liv doesn't respond.

GREG (cont'd)

Of course, I still have to enforce family rules. We can't have madness descending on the house.

(then)

So I'm gonna give you a chance to... absolve your sins, as it were. Join me and Leon on a little outing, you get to go back to school and keep your bike. How's that sound?

Beat.

LIV

(quietly)

What do you want me to do?

Greg looks at her, surprised almost. He clicks his tongue.

GREG

Not even as much as a "Thank you, sir."

(CONTINUED)

LIV  
I just want to--

GREG  
Maybe this isn't gonna work out. I think--

LIV  
No. Wait. Sorry, sir. Thank you sir.

Greg looks at her for a long time, his face in shadow.

GREG  
Of course, sweetie. Anything for you.

The hand on her knee again. She wants to scream.

Greg stands.

GREG (cont'd)  
Let's go.

LIV  
Now?

5 **EXT. FOREST. MORNING.**

5

Early morning in a dry forest.

A tiny deer blind hidden in weeds.

6 **INT. DEER BLIND. CONTINUOUS.**

6

Greg, Liv, and Leon inside. All wearing camo. A duffel bag in the corner. Greg crouches around his hunting rifle. A camera hangs on a strap around his neck. He blows on his cup of coffee.

Liv's holding the thermos.

Glaring at him.

Greg's eyes scan the forest outside the blind. Leon does the same on the other side of the blind, facing the opposite direction.

Greg takes a sip of coffee.

(CONTINUED)

GREG  
(to Leon)  
Anything?

LEON  
No sir.

GREG  
Keep watching.

A beat.

Liv's phone vibrates. She checks it.

It's another call from Zoe. Looks like Liv has missed more than a few calls from her.

GREG (cont'd)  
Turn that off. You'll ruin the shot.

Liv declines the call and puts it back in her pocket.

They wait and watch. Then:

LEON  
I think I see something.

GREG  
Where?

Greg joins Leon on the other side of the blind.

LEON  
Like right over there.

Leon points at a bush that is decidedly *not* moving.

GREG  
Are you sure?

LEON  
I swear.

GREG  
Okay. Here.

Greg takes the camera from around his neck and passes it to Leon.

GREG (cont'd)  
When you see it, just point and shoot. Mash the button. I want to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GREG (cont'd)  
get it but I know you can't do it  
in one. That's okay.

Leon nods.

Greg thumps his hand on Leon's chest.

GREG (cont'd)  
Good boy.

Greg and Leon watch the trees.

The wind blows.

Nothing.

GREG (cont'd)  
If you're pulling my leg--

LEON  
I swear it was right there--

Liv's phone goes off again.

Greg spins around.

GREG  
(to Liv)  
What did I say?

A twig snaps out of Greg's side of the blind.

Greg whips his head around and sees--

A buck. Not big, not small.

Greg moves and levels the rifle at the deer.

Leon's still looking out of his side of the blind.

GREG (cont'd)  
Anytime now, Leon.

LEON  
Wait. There--

GREG  
Leon. Now.

The buck raises its head and stares right at GREG.

It makes to run.

(CONTINUED)

Greg shoots it in the heart.

Leon flinches at the sound of the rifle.

The buck slumps to the ground.

Stunned silence.

GREG (cont'd)

Leon.

LEON

I really for real thought there was something out this way--

GREG

You had one job.

LEON

I thought it might be a--

GREG

Might be what, exactly? A Sasquatch? A Bigfoot?

Leon averts his eyes.

LEON

Nothing. Sorry sir.

GREG

Yeah.

Greg stares at Leon.

He grunts, rises, and grabs his duffel bag. Then he's on his way out of the blind.

He's fuming.

7

**EXT. FOREST. CONTINUOUS.**

7

Greg's bag hits the ground with a thud. The dead deer, a few yards away.

Greg silently walks towards the deer.

Liv and Leon hang back. Watching, waiting.

LEON

(panicking)

Liv. I didn't think we'd actually catch anything. Liv. LIV.

(CONTINUED)

Leon looks at Liv, eyes wide.

Greg gets down on a knee in front of the dead animal. Blood pools around his boots.

Leon takes a tiny step forward.

LEON (cont'd)  
...dad?

Greg doesn't turn around.

LEON (cont'd)  
Dad, I'm sorry.

GREG  
Come here, boy.

Leon flinches and looks to Liv for help.

GREG  
Do not make me ask twice.

Beat. Leon walks over.

He's next to Greg. Greg still doesn't look up.

LEON  
Sir?

GREG  
That won't happen again.

LEON  
No, sir.

Greg puts a hand on Leon's shoulder and squeezes.

GREG  
I'd hate to see you do that again.

Leon swallows hard.

LEON  
I promise. I swear.

Greg leans in almost too close and looks into Leon's eyes for a long, intense beat.

GREG  
Good. Then there's no problem.

Greg pulls Leon in front of him, pointing his son at the dead animal.

(CONTINUED)



GREG  
Look at it.

LEON  
I don't want to.

GREG  
Look at it. Take the picture.

LEON  
Dad, please--

GREG  
Take the goddamn picture, Leon.

Leon snaps a shot of the deer, his eyes screwed shut.

GREG  
Good boy. Now get out of here.

Greg pushes Leon away. Leon stumbles to the ground.

Liv runs to hold Leon, to make sure her boy is okay.

They embrace. She brushes dirt off of his hands. Brushes his hair out of his eyes. They don't speak.

GREG (O.S.)  
Liv, hand me my knife. The big one.

Liv looks at Greg's bag on the forest floor. Sees the hunting knife poking out of it.

She sets her jaw.

LIV  
Yes, sir.

She walks to the bag, methodical, somnambulistic. Bends down, picks up the knife.

She approaches Greg. He doesn't look back. He just holds out his hand.

GREG  
Well?

Liv looks down at the knife for a second.

The weight of it feels good in her hand.

Then she slowly slides the blade into Greg's back, not violent, just one steady push.

(CONTINUED)

Greg yelps and his hands scrape around the blade, but Liv just keeps pushing until she punctures a lung.

He collapses, wheezing, the knife stuck just above his shoulder blade.

Liv stands and watches. Blood pools around her boots.

GREG (O.S.)

Liv.

Liv snaps out of it.

Greg's still there, holding his hand out. No sign of bloodshed other than that of the dead animal.

Liv looks at Leon. She looks at the clean blade in her hand.

She hands Greg the knife.

He takes it. Grunts as he jams the knife into the animal. He splits open the deer's belly, its guts spilling out like turned milk.

She watches her father skin the animal. The clinical violence of his movements; the way he slides the knife into soft skin.

She watches, taking notes.

For future reference.

8 **INT. YMCA LOCKER ROOM. DAY.**

8

Liv slams her locker shut with jarring bang.

She hurries out of the locker room in a red lifeguard swimsuit, complete with a white cross on the front. She secures her swimming cap as she exits.

9 **INT. COMMUNITY POOL. CONTINUOUS.**

9

A few kids in the shallow end. A few people swimming laps in the deep end. A seniors' water aerobics class with bad music and a too-happy INSTRUCTOR. Not the nicest community pool, but hey, it's free.

Zoe's on top of the lifeguard stand in a red swimsuit identical to Liv's.

Liv's walking the perimeter of the pool when Zoe spots her.

(CONTINUED)