9/14/13

Anonymous Patriots

Pilot

William Blake Herron

310-913-4753

ACT I

FADE UP

EXT. LUXURY HOTEL -- DAY ESTABLISHING SHOT

A storybook palace ringed by alps.

TELETYPE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, GENEVA SWITZERLAND

INT. ELEVATOR -- DAY (SAME TIME)

A BELLHOP (39), dark hair, glasses, a weathered but handsome face, ascends with a meal cart, listens to muzak, yawns, eyes a plate of chocolate covered strawberries, steals one impetuously, pops it in his mouth...

... the lift arrives at the penthouse, doors open, he pushes the trolley briskly out to...

INT. FOYER -- PENTHOUSE -- DAY (SAME TIME)

Marble and gold leaf. TWO HULKING BODYGUARDS promptly menace toward him, GREGOR and MARCUS.

GREGOR
(Russian accent)
What's this?

BELLHOP
(German accent)
You did not request room service?
Copious apologies, Sirs.

He retreats less than manfully back toward the lift, Gregor grabs the cart, stops it abruptly, consults his cohort.

GREGOR
(in Russian, subtitled)
The Boss order this?

MARCUS
(shrugging)
You wanna be the one to send it back?

Gregor grunts his displeasure, seizes a metal detection wand, runs it over the petrified Bellhop's body, while Marcus peeks under the various meal lids. The Bellhop watches, ashen with fear...

... and yet he furtively cracks his knuckles behind his back.

Marcus comes to the last lid -- BANG AND FLASH -- rigged with a smoke cannister, clouding the room instantaneously...

The Bellhop -- our hero, JOHN CASE -- snaps into martial arts mode, uses every improvised weapon around him -- silverware, tray lids, lamps -- eliminates the bodyguards in rapid succession...

... grabs a HYPODERMIC from under the tablecloth, appropriates a FALLEN PISTOL, races into...

INT. CORRIDOR -- PENTHOUSE -- DAY (SAME TIME)

... glides stealthily, room to room, arrives at an ORNATE DOOR, braces himself, throws it open, weapon primed...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY (SAME TIME)

... surprised to find a BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN, dusky features, bound to a poster bed in her underwear, terrified. John spirits over to her, starts to remove her gag...

JOHN
(whispering)
Where is he?

... the sound of a toilet flushing, a BEHEMOTH in a plush robe exits the lavatory, spies John, halts in astonishment, then turns homicidal. John levels his pistol at the brute...

JOHN
Easy. If I were here to kill you, you'd already be dead.

The villain ignores him, pounces, John fires into his shoulder, no effect...

... the thug seizes John's gun hand, they struggle over the weapon, trade savage head butts, the pistol drops...

... John manages to stab his syringe into the creep's chest...

... which does nothing to stop two hundred and fifty pounds of muscle from tackling him through French doors...

EXT. TERRACE -- PENTHOUSE -- DAY (SAME TIME)

... and landing on him like a sack of anvils...

... the Goliath grabs John in a choke hold, things look bleak, then...

... John flips the killer over his shoulder, knees him in the gut...

... the villain lurches to his feet, hovers a moment, blinks, the drugs are finally kicking in...

... a little too quickly, his eyes roll white, he wobbles, stumbles backwards, right over the balustrade...

JOHN
Jesus!

John leaps to save him...

... catches the tail of his bathrobe...

... a moment of hope as the oaf dangles precariously...

... but then the cloth rips, gravity takes control with a vengeance...

... the thug plummets in his underwear onto the terrace below, decimating a table as an ELDERLY COUPLE eats breakfast al fresco.

John shakes his head, not good.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- PENTHOUSE -- DAY (SECONDS LATER)

John hurries back into the room, finishes removing the captive woman's gag...

JOHN
We need to go. Now.

He drapes his jacket chivalrously over her shoulders.

INT. CORRIDOR -- MOMENTS LATER

The woman, woozy, melts into John's arms as he navigates her around the prone forms of the bodyguards.

JOHN
What's your name?

OLGA
Olga. I come from Novosibirsk. I answer ad to be au pair. It was trick. They sell me to that man.

JOHN
You know his name?

OLGA
No.
(surprised)
You do not either?

JOHN
No. Just where to find him.
(off her look)
I get paid to improvise.

He guides her into...

INT. ELEVATOR -- DAY (SAME TIME)

He hits a button, they wait for the doors to close. She breaks down, sobs into his shoulder...

OLGA
I owe you my life. Who are you?

John sniffs her neck, his expression inexplicably darkens.

JOHN
An idiot.

He suddenly grabs her in an arm lock, spins her around in front of him. She panics...

JOHN
You're the one I came for.

OLGA
Please, I do not understand...

JOHN
Your perfume. Clive Christian. Two hundred grand a bottle. Not exactly the fragrance of choice for Siberian farm girls.

Olga relaxes, offers a crocodile smile, speaks with remarkably improved English, a slight British accent.

OLGA
Impressive. I'd buy you a drink if I didn't have to kill you.

Olga suddenly smashes her fist into the mirrored wall, grabs a shard, arcs it back at John's face, he catches her wrist, stops the blade less than an inch from his eye...

... the two battle in the tiny vestibule, femme fatale Olga is a stone cold killer...

... John finally knocks her out with a well-placed elbow.

INT. LOBBY -- FOUR SEASONS -- DAY (SAME TIME)

GUESTS await the elevator -- PING -- the doors open, John is alone in the lift, casually eats the last chocolate covered strawberry, everyone boggles at the war torn compartment, a mirrored panel falls down behind him...

... John blithely pushes the dinner cart into the foyer, OLGA'S HAND plops out from under the trolley top, he kicks it back under the linen before anyone notices.

EXT. AIRPORT PARKING LOT -- DAY (LATER)

A BLACK MERCEDES pulls into a slot, John hops out, clad in a tailored suit, produces a cell phone, places a SMALL ELECTRONIC DEVICE over the mouthpiece, dials...

PHONE VOICE
FBI, Geneva Office.

John speaks, his voice altered by the gadget.

JOHN
Recently, a list of every CIA asset in Yemen was sold on the black market. Track this phone's GPS chip down and you'll find the person who bought it. And be smart, don't tell your colleagues in the CIA. They've got a mole.

... he hangs up, flips open the trunk, Olga lies in the bed, bound and gagged, seething. He wipes the phone with a handkerchief, tosses it into the trunk next to her thrashing form, prepares to slam the lid...

JOHN
Oh, I almost forgot.

He pulls a DOCUMENT from his jacket pocket.

JOHN
They'll need a copy of your Swiss bank account records.

He throws the file into the trunk, closes the lid, silencing Olga's muffled howls.

EXT. AIRFIELD -- DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

John rushes up the steps to a PRIVATE PLANE, greets a fetching FLIGHT ATTENDANT, rolls up his sleeve, shows a TATTOO on his forearm -- A PYRAMID CROWNED BY AN ALL-SEEING EYE, identical to the one on the back of the dollar bill.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Welcome aboard, Sir.

INT. JET -- FLYING -- SECONDS LATER

John peers through his window, loses himself in the iridescent clouds. The attendant approaches.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Would you care for some caviar before dinner, Sir?

JOHN
Yes, please.
(beat)
And a beer.

TITLE ANONYMOUS PATRIOTS

EXT. TOWNHOUSE -- MORNING

MOVERS bustle in and out of the home, toting boxes to a truck.

INT. TOWNHOUSE -- MORNING (SAME TIME)

Intro NATALIE MACCABEE (41), brains, beauty, a cool composure that belies a restless mind, wearing a formal business suit.

A WORKER trips, drops a box, it tears open, FRAMED PHOTOS spill out, Natalie kneels to clean them up, finds an OLD WEDDING PICTURE.

TIGHTER ON THE PHOTO

Natalie and her husband, STEPHEN, bridal gown and tuxedo, standing in the middle of an AFRICAN VILLAGE, flush with youth and happiness, the LOCAL TRIBE acting as wedding party.

MAN (O.S.)
Senator Maccabee? It's time.

She dons a professional mask, slips the photo back into the ruptured box, exits...

EXT. TOWNHOUSE -- MORNING (SAME TIME)

A line of BLACK SECURITY VEHICLES awaits, a SECRET SERVICE AGENT escorts Natalie to a TOWNCAR.

Camera lingers, booms down to the doormat, a WASHINGTON POST, the headline -- 'Eckhart to Be Sworn in as President, Maccabee as V.P.', a smaller article beneath it, 'Scuffle at Geneva Four Seasons Leaves Swiss Authorities Baffled.'

CUT TO

CNN

Wolf Blitzer covers the inaugural, IMAGES on the big board.

WOLF
As you can see, a record-breaking crowd has turned out on this frigid inaugural morning to witness history in the making. Senator Natalie Maccabee of Wisconsin is about to be sworn in as our nation's first female Vice President.

THE CAPITOL STEPS

News camera angle on Eckhart and Natalie, arriving for the ceremony.

TIGHTER ON NATALIE

WOLF
And what an extraordinary rise this woman has had in national politics.

A CORNER BOX opens on the screen, flashing PHOTOS AND VIDEO from Natalie's past.

WOLF
The 'accidental politician' is what they're calling her here in the Beltway. Just six years ago she was running a non-profit legal aid firm in Madison, Wisconsin.

VARIOUS SHOTS -- Natalie in court with UNDER-PRIVILEGED CLIENTS.

WOLF
It was her partner and husband, Stephen Maccabee, who initially harbored Senatorial aspirations.

VIDEO CLIP -- Stephen at a fundraiser, enrapturing the audience with his corn-fed good looks and charm.

STEPHEN
My opponent may have big money and tons of political muscle, but I've got something far more intimidating, especially after she's had her morning coffee. My amazing wife, Natalie.

The crowd applauds, Stephen nods to Natalie, in the audience, smiling, embarrassed, he motions for her to join him, she complies, the good soldier.

WOLF
Close friends characterized them as the perfect power couple. Natalie had the brains, Stephen had the charisma. But then two weeks after this video was taken, tragedy struck. Natalie and Stephen were driving home from a debate when their car skidded off the road. Stephen perished in the crash.

A PRESS CONFERENCE

An emotionally cauterized Natalie, dressed in mourning, endures glaring lights, camera strobes.

NATALIE
Last week, I buried the love of my life. But I refuse to bury the dreams we shared as well. I refuse to allow the work we started to go unfinished. I refuse to break the promises we made to the voters of this state. And so I hereby announce my candidacy for the United States Senate to represent the proud people of Wisconsin.

WOLF
Few would've predicted Natalie Maccabee would win that race, much less be nominated as Vice President in the following election cycle. And yet here she stands with Chief Justice Orsini, about to assume the office just a heart beat away from the Presidency.

THE PLATFORM

Natalie waits with CHIEF JUSTICE NICHOLAS ORSINI, older than God, Einstein hair, a whimsical demeanor masking a razor sharp intellect...

INT. BATHROOM -- DAY (SAME TIME)

John, shirtless at a sink, washes out hair dye, goes from BRUNETTE TO BLONDE, removes dark contact lenses, uncovering BLUE EYES, pulls out dental appliances, reducing his cheeks, peels off a small oval of flesh-colored rubber on his forehead, unveiling a SCAR. Finally, he wipes his face with a towel, transformation complete, glides out to...

INT. JOHN'S LOFT APARTMENT -- DAY (SAME TIME)

Spartan and utilitarian -- weights, piles of books, a bed, and a punching bag. He settles on a leather couch, clicks on a TV remote, catches Natalie giving her oath, scrutinizes her, thoughtful...

THE TV

NATALIE
I, Natalie Maccabee, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic...

EXT. VICE PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT (LATER)

TELETYPE VICE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE, ONE OBSERVATORY CIRCLE

A sprawling Queen Anne mansion. Dozens of SECRET SERVICE AGENTS greet limos as they arrive, dropping off guests in evening attire.

INT. PARLOR -- V.P.'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Bristling with history and gravitas. Newly minted PRESIDENT THOMAS ECKHART, Southern, salt of the earth, regales the tony crowd, Natalie at his side.

PRESIDENT ECKHART
Congratulations, Natalie, you've survived the first and most brutal test of office -- eleven inaugural balls.
(laughter)
But all joking aside, surviving challenges is what Natalie here does best. In both her public and private lives she's overcome extraordinary obstacles with grace, courage, and honor. It's why I chose her to run with me. And it's also why, as former Vice President, I'm so proud to give her this...

Eckhart removes an ANTIQUE KEY from his pocket, eyes it, grows sentimental.

PRESIDENT ECKHART
... the key to this magnificent residence. Legend has it that George Washington presented this very article to his Vice President, John Adams. While the exact lock it opens has always been shrouded in mystery, its meaning has not.
(MORE)

PRESIDENT ECKHART (CONT'D)
It is a symbol of our nation’s unyielding strength in defeating all enemies who threaten our liberty.

Eckhart places the key in her hand, Natalie scrutinizes it, intrigued by the curious handle, engraved with the ALL-SEEING PYRAMID SYMBOL. A moment of reverie...

NATALIE
Forgive my silence. I’m just in awe that such a small object could carry the weight of so much history. I promise I will do my utmost to honor its legacy.

Applause. Natalie assays the smiling crowd, spies a MYSTERIOUS FACE at the back of the room...

... JOHN, dashing in a tux. They make eye contact, perhaps a spark of attraction. A PHOTOGRAPHER suddenly steps in front of her -- FLASH -- Natalie blinks out the fog, disappointed to find JOHN IS NOW GONE.

PRESIDENT ECKHART’S VOICE
You have a new man in your life, Natalie.

She turns, Eckhart is now accompanied by MALCOLM MILLAR, an elderly gentleman, immaculate in both dress and demeanor.

PRESIDENT ECKHART
This is Malcolm Millar, Chief Steward of the Residence. I think you’ll find him an invaluable resource during your tenure here.

Malcolm offers his hand deferentially.

MALCOLM
I look forward to serving you, Madame Vice President.

NATALIE
Call me Natalie.

MALCOLM
I can say with utter assurance that will never happen, Madame Vice President.

They trade smiles.

PRESIDENT ECKHART
You’ll find Malcolm here is a bit of a stuffed shirt when it comes to protocol.

MALCOLM
(sincere)
Thank you, Mr. President.

NATALIE
Well, my goodness, I can't ever recall having my own Chief Steward. I'm afraid you're going to have to walk me through this.

MALCOLM
I suggest we take your request literally, and begin with a brief tour of the residence.

NATALIE
Perhaps after my guests leave.

PRESIDENT ECKHART
Oh, they're all drunk as skunks, nobody'll even notice if you slip out for a bit.

... something inflexible behind Eckhart's casual suggestion. Natalie capitulates.

NATALIE
After you Malcolm.

MALCOLM
Actually, the Vice President always precedes the Chief Steward by at least a half step.

Natalie departs, arches an amused eyebrow at Eckhart over her shoulder.

INT. CORRIDOR -- NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Natalie walks with Malcolm, charmed by his quirky fastidiousness.

MALCOLM
... you will, of course, be given a generous but not indulgent stipend to redecorate as you see fit. Vice President Gore installed additional bookshelves in the library.
(the whiff of displeasure)
Vice President Quayle added a swimming pool and foosball table. If I may direct you to the door on your left please.

Natalie steps into...

INT. DRAWING ROOM -- SAME TIME

Well-appointed, a stunning CARVED FIREPLACE anchors the main wall. Natalie is immediately smitten.

MALCOLM
And this, as you can clearly surmise, is the drawing room.

NATALIE
Oh, yes, this is where I'm gonna live. It's exquisite. And look at that fireplace.

She approaches it.

MALCOLM
John Adams had it commissioned when he became Vice President.

Natalie reads an epigram carved into the mantel.

NATALIE
'Light into Darkness'. Sounds like a play on the Free Mason aphorism, 'Light out of Darkness'.

MALCOLM
(surprised)
Ah, you're familiar with the Masons.

NATALIE
Of course. They were colonial America's most powerful secret society.
(re the fireplace)
What a curious relic from our shadowy past.

Malcolm holds his silence. Natalie takes in the room.

NATALIE
My God, if these walls could talk.

MALCOLM
Actually, that one over there does on occasion.

Malcolm moves to a painting, slides it, revealing a ONE WAY MIRROR, offering a window into the ADJACENT ROOM. Natalie is scandalized.

NATALIE
Don't tell me my predecessors actually spied on their guests?

MALCOLM
(dry)
I can't comment on that.

She approaches the window.

POV NATALIE -- THROUGH GLASS

A group of POWER PLAYERS, cigars and brandy, most notably FBI DIRECTOR EDWIN STANTON (59), stocky and overbearing, and CIA DIRECTOR GRAY LAWSON (48), patrician and cool.

MALCOLM
... if you'd care to listen in, all you have to do is hit this button here...

NATALIE
(blanching)
... oh no, actually, I wouldn't feel right about...

... but Malcolm's already pressed the button. We hear voices over a speaker.

STANTON
(faux gracious)
... female vote? Oh, no, no, you gentlemen are selling Natalie short here. She brought more than just a skirt to Eckhart's campaign. I'm sure that dead husband of hers earned them a lot of sympathy votes as well.

Natalie chafes at the barb, listens in spite of herself...

STANTON
... on the bright side, there's only so much damage she can do. The Vice President's job is just like that key she got tonight-- purely ceremonial...

GRAY
Unless Eckhart dies.

STANTON
Which reminds me. Let's have the Secret Service double his detail.

Disparaging smirks. Natalie turns the audio button off, cold.

MALCOLM
I'm sorry you had to hear that.

NATALIE
No, you're not. You wanted me to know what I'm up against.
(off his sage look)
You know, Malcolm, I think I'm beginning to understand what a Chief Steward does.

She puts on a brave face, moves to depart.

MALCOLM
It's not true, you know.
(Natalie lingers)
Neither your job, nor the key you received are ceremonial. In fact, I can assure you that both are going to open worlds you never knew existed.

INT. FOYER -- V.P.'S RESIDENCE -- LATER

Natalie, Malcolm at her side, bids adieu to her remaining GUESTS. Justice Orsini, delightfully rumpled in an old overcoat and scarf, shakes her hand.

NATALIE
Now Justice Orsini, I can't let you go without asking you one juridical question.

ORSINI
(sparking)
Please.

NATALIE
'I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.' Why is that line in the Vice President's oath, but not the President's?

Orsini beams at her, impressed.

ORSINI
Clever girl. You know, you're the first one who's ever asked me that.
(knowing)
Welcome to the club.

He departs without answering her question. Stanton is the last in the line, inebriated, accompanied by his fashionable wife, GRACE, and daughter, MISSY (21)...

NATALIE
Ah, Edwin, looks like you're closing out the party.

STANTON
Once a Marine, always a Marine, and a Marine never abandons a bar while drinks are still being served.

Stanton notices his impatient wife and daughter.

STANTON
Oh, and I don't believe you've met my gorgeous wife and designated driver, Grace, and my obnoxiously intelligent daughter, Missy.

MISSY
(exasperated)
Dad.

NATALIE
Pleasure.

Stanton touches Natalie's arm, faux familial.

STANTON
Listen, Natalie, I wanted to tell you just how much I'm looking forward to working with you this term.

NATALIE
I completely share your sentiments.

Natalie flashes an innocent smile at Stanton. He exits with his family.

MALCOLM
Now then, why don't you go relax in the drawing room and I'll bring you a nice cup of Earl Grey.

NATALIE
Make it a brandy. It's been a long day.

MALCOLM
(knowing)
I'll bring both just in case.

INT. DRAWING ROOM -- V.P.'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Natalie relaxes in a winged-back chair, admires the fireplace mantle, suddenly her gaze locks onto a DESIGN IN THE WOODWORK, she rises, approaches it...

... intrigued to discover the ALL-SEEING PYRAMID engraved in the mahogany, a hole in the eye of the design. Mental tumblers click, she produces her key, inserts it tentatively into the hole, turns it, a metallic release, then...

... a panel opens, revealing a TUNNEL.

MALCOLM'S VOICE
Congratulations.

Natalie spins around, discovers Malcolm in the doorway.

MALCOLM
Your predecessors required far more guidance in finding the lock.

NATALIE
What is it?

MALCOLM
Indescribable.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE UP

INT. TUNNELS -- MOMENTS LATER

Malcolm, flashlight in hand, guides Natalie through a twisting subterranean labyrinth crafted of stone and timber.

NATALIE
Who in God's name built this?

MALCOLM
Anonymous patriots.
(off her look)
Ours is a nation born of unknown heroes.

NATALIE
But why?

Malcolm ignores her question...

MALCOLM
Ah, here we are at last.

He leads Natalie to an archway capped by a gilded keystone, flanked by ornamental sabers, gold leaf letters proclaim 'THE HISTORY ROOM', an ancient oak door blocks the entrance.

NATALIE
The History Room? Malcolm, how deep does this rabbit hole of yours go?

She steps forward, he grabs her elbow.

MALCOLM
Careful, one of the floor tiles there is rigged with a trap of sorts.
(off her confusion)
An early American security system to keep the unworthy from entering. For that privilege, you must first take the oath of the door.

NATALIE
The 'oath of the door?'

Malcolm shines his beam on a PLEDGE, painted on the door in gold letters. Natalie shrugs, goes along with the game.

NATALIE
'I hereby swear to protect the secrets that dwell beyond.'

MALCOLM
Now you must cut your hand on one of those sabers, and seal your oath in blood.

NATALIE
(uncomfortable)
Really?

MALCOLM
No. My apologies. Just a small joke.

NATALIE
Ah, like the trap.

She moves to step on the stone, Malcolm elegantly blocks her, kicks a rock over the tile, STEEL SPIKES suddenly drop from the arch above, then quickly spring back up to their concealed holes. Natalie looks at Malcolm, pallid.

MALCOLM
Best not to make any assumptions in the future. Proceed please.

Natalie steps over the treacherous stone, which we now see is engraved with the patriotic 'don't tread on me' rattlesnake, enters...

INT. HISTORY ROOM -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

... shrouded in TOTAL DARKNESS. The beam of Malcolm's flashlight falls on a display case, housing a DOCUMENT under glass, Natalie's breath catches...

NATALIE
I don't believe it. This is an early copy of the Constitution.

MALCOLM
Not a copy. The original. Meant for only a select group of eyes.

NATALIE
Shouldn't this be in the National Archives?

MALCOLM
Read Article II, Section 5.

NATALIE
Article II only has four sections.

Malcolm waits, expectant, Natalie glances at the document -- indeed there is a SECTION 5.

NATALIE
'An Agent of Unknown Identity is hereby authorized to serve at the discretion of the Vice President for the purpose of aiding the Republic in times of crisis.'
(amazed)
... if I'm reading this correctly, the Vice President...

MALCOLM
... is empowered to use extraordinary means during times of national emergency.
(off her look)
Didn't it always seem strange to you, that our forefathers gave the second most important job in the executive branch virtually no duties?

NATALIE
But what about this 'Agent of Unknown Identity'?

MALCOLM
To date there have been fifty-seven of them, Madame.

Malcolm hits a light switch, suddenly revealing a majestic room in all its glory, soaring ceiling, gilded woodwork, crystal chandeliers...

... and ringing the walls, the PORTRAIT OF EVERY 'AGENT X' PAST. Natalie boggles, then her eyes fall on the final painting -- our hero...

MAN'S VOICE
John Case, at your service, Madame Vice President.

Natalie pivots, startled to find John in the doorway.

INT. HISTORY ROOM -- NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

John guides Natalie past an eclectic array of DISPLAY CASES, alights in front of a box containing a pair of WOODEN TEETH.

JOHN
... this one is my favorite, a souvenir from George Washington himself. The British kidnapped him, then sent those teeth along with a taunting note. Agent number two rescued him before reveille the next morning, and nobody was the wiser.

Natalie proceeds to a cabinet full of SHIMMERING INGOTS.

NATALIE
And this?

JOHN
Ah, yes, the lost gold of the Confederacy. Agent number seventeen stole it and ended the Civil War for good.
(proud)
You see, we've always been here, an invisible hand changing the course of American history for the better...

NATALIE
... look, I get it, once upon a time we needed someone like this 'Agent of Unknown Identity'. But now we have agencies like the CIA and FBI...

JOHN
... which, with all due respect, you will find useless in certain crises...

MALCOLM
Case in point, only yesterday John apprehended a dangerous intelligence broker with a mole in the CIA. Given the leak among our own people, it would've be impossible to capture this criminal using official channels.

Natalie tries to wrap her head around their argument.

NATALIE
Maybe... I don't know... it still makes no sense. Why assign this person to the Vice President? Why not have him report directly to the President?

MALCOLM
The Founding Fathers knew that certain emergencies demand a judicious disregard for accepted legal formalities.

NATALIE
Translation, the President needs plausible deniability because you guys are running around out there breaking the law.

MALCOLM
I can't comment on that.

JOHN
I can. That's right.

NATALIE
... so basically, you want me to be 'M', so John here can play James Bond.

MALCOLM
(edged)
Yes, with the caveat that when John 'plays' Bond, there's a very real chance he won't finish the game.

Natalie softens.

NATALIE
This is very gray territory, Malcolm.

MALCOLM
Rest assured, John serves, or doesn't serve, at your discretion.

JOHN
But if you should need me, then all you have to do is use your key. The fireplace lock is wired to contact me when opened.

NATALIE
And what if I do send John here out on some kind of an assignment? What keeps him from crossing the line?

MALCOLM
(serious)
You do, Madame.

CUT TO

EXT. WHITE HOUSE -- MORNING

An OLD SCHOOL BUS, 'The Girls Club of Cincinnati' written on the side, chugs through the gates, young faces pressed to the windows in awe.

INT. RECEPTION HALL -- WHITE HOUSE -- MORNING

Natalie addresses the excited group of pre-adolescent girls.

NATALIE
Embrace the challenges that you face, for they will only make you stronger for the tasks ahead...

THE PHOTO OP -- MOMENTS LATER

The girls wait patiently in a queue as Natalie knocks off a portrait with each.

NATALIE
Thank you so much for coming...
(next girl)
Thank you so much for coming...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. SITUATION ROOM -- WHITE HOUSE -- MORNING

TELETYPE SITUATION ROOM, WHITE HOUSE

Eckhart, Natalie, and the President's inner circle sit in the darkened room, listening to Stanton give a presentation.

STANTON
... for months we've suspected there's a new player in the private intelligence black market. Now we have her in custody, Olga Yelena Petrovka.

IMAGES OF OLGA flash on the video screen.

STANTON
Born in Kiev, 1982, recruited as a contortionist for the Moscow Circus in 1996. In 2007 she meets Army Intelligence Officer General Andrei Rokov at a private Kremlin party and becomes his mistress. The two reportedly share an active and aberrant sex life. In 2012, Rokov suddenly dies of a heart attack, despite passing his last physical with flying colors. A year later Olga uses Rokov's connections and opens her own consulting firm, International Business Solutions, which is little more than a front to buy and sell private intelligence on the black market. Her client roster could double for our terrorist state watch list.

ECKHART
Excellent work.

STANTON
Thank you, Sir. Just hard work and shoe leather.

Eckhart shoots Natalie a furtive look.

ECKHART
Any idea what she's been selling?

STANTON
I'll have a better idea of that after we're done interrogating her.

Natalie doesn't like Stanton's evasiveness, uses the insight John gave her in the History Room.

NATALIE
Any of this brokered intelligence originate from a U.S. source?

Stanton blind-sided, looks like he's chewing glass.

STANTON
It appears Ms. Petrovka sold a list of our assets in Yemen to Russian Intelligence.

CIA Director Gray Lawson, whom we met back at the residence, perks up, angry.

GRAY
That's the first I've heard of this. Why wasn't I told?

STANTON
We wanted confirmation before we cried wolf.

ECKHART
Given that the list originated inside the CIA, shouldn't we also be investigating the possibility of a mole in the Agency at the same time?

GRAY
Absolutely. I'll make this a top priority.

Stanton bites his tongue, throws a scathing look at Natalie.

INT. CORRIDOR -- OUTSIDE SITUATION ROOM -- MORNING (LATER)

The group exits, post meeting, Stanton chases Natalie down...

STANTON
May I have a quick word with you, Madame Vice President?

Natalie stops in an alcove to accommodate him, impatient. They speak in whispers, maintaining placid expressions for any onlookers despite the heated exchange...

NATALIE
(short)
What is it, Edwin?

STANTON
You think I'm a total goddamned idiot?

NATALIE
Come again?

STANTON
Of course I know we've got a mole in the CIA.

NATALIE
Then why didn't you say so in the meeting?

STANTON
Because then we'd have to let Gray open an official inquiry, which would give the mole ample warning to cover his tracks. And even if by some miracle Gray finds the Judas at his table, you think he'll ever tell us? His only priority in life is to cover his own ass. So thanks, Natalie, your first day in office and you let a traitor get away.

Natalie feels the ground get marshy under her feet.

NATALIE
What about the President? Don't you think he'd want to know a problem existed?

STANTON
I think he'd rather know a problem was solved.

Stanton fumes off, Natalie mulls his unsettling words.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Sleazy. Gregor, Marcus, and KOLYA (the behemoth John battled in the penthouse), watch TV, taut with anticipation. A CELL RINGS from the nightstand, the group comes alive, Marcus pounces on it, checks the LED.

MARCUS
Finally, our friend from the CIA.
(answers)
Talk.

MAN'S VOICE
(creepy whisper)
They're taking Olga to FBI headquarters.

Dial tone. Marcus turns to his cohorts, ominous.

MARCUS
We're going to America.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

FADE UP

EXT. WHITE HOUSE -- GATES -- NIGHT

A BLACK SUV pulls out...

INT. SUV -- SAME TIME

Natalie sits in the rear, peers through a rain speckled window, decompresses from her first day. She suddenly rouses, speaks to the TWO SECRET SERVICE AGENTS in the front seat.

NATALIE
I'm sorry, you just missed the turn off to the Residence.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
We have orders to take you to another location first, Madame.

NATALIE
From whom?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
We're not at liberty to answer that, Ma'am.

NATALIE
(intrigued)
That would mean the President.

EXT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS -- NIGHT

TELETYPE DULLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, WASHINGTON D.C.

Kolya, Gregor, and Marcus exit the terminal, incognito, peer around, spy a BLACK LIMO with one way glass, the limo flashes its headlights.

INT. LIMO -- MOMENTS LATER

The three thugs slip into the vehicle, discover a well-dressed older gentleman, exuding a Mephistophelean charm -- ANTON MARKOV. They speak in Russian with subtitles.

ANTON
Any problems getting through customs?

KOLYA
No. Thank you for the plane and passports.
(MORE)

KOLYA (CONT'D)
(quick)
We're going to need a few more things as well. Guns, vehicles.

ANTON
Anything I can do to help. Olga's a very dear friend.

KOLYA
What about the target?

ANTON
I have the surveillance you requested right here.

Anton snaps his fingers patronizingly at his bodyguard, LEV, who swallows his indignation, produces a MANILA ENVELOPE, hands it to Kolya.

Kolya opens it, pulls out various photographs taken with a long lens -- STANTON, at his house, jogging, on his way to work, and with his FAMILY, wife Grace, daughter Missy.

INT. SUV -- DRIVING -- LATE NIGHT

A storm rages outside Natalie's window. She tries to conceal her discomfiture at the mystery ride. The car comes to a stop in front of a TOWNHOUSE.

AGENT
We're here, ma'am.

EXT. STOOP -- TOWNHOUSE -- LATE NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Natalie hovers under a dripping umbrella, rings the bell, anxious. Several beats, then the door opens, revealing CHIEF JUSTICE ORSINI.

ORSINI
Madame Vice President, please, come in.

Natalie opens her mouth to respond, but Orsini is already gone.

INT. STUDY -- TOWNHOUSE -- LATE NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Orsini leads her into the cluttered, but homey space, plops into a worn lazy-boy, a tea service steams atop an ottoman.

ORSINI
Have a seat, please, I hope you like Girl Scout Cookies. I'm positively addicted to the little mint devils.

NATALIE
I'm sorry, Justice Orsini...

ORSINI
(interrupting)
Do sit down...

Natalie complies out of politesse...

NATALIE
I think there was some sort of mix-up...

ORSINI
You assumed you were meeting President Eckhart, yes? I'm afraid he won't be coming. In fact, he will never acknowledge the existence of Section 5 to you. Ever. And you must never bring it up with him, either, no matter how desperately you may desire to do so.

NATALIE
(unsettled)
And how do you know about Section 5?

ORSINI
One of the privileges of being Chief Justice of the United States of America. I am the protector and guardian of every statute and law that governs our Republic. As for Section 5, I'm here to let you know it is a legal and vital part of our Constitution, designed by our Forefathers to protect us in extraordinary circumstances...

NATALIE
... 'against all enemies foreign and domestic'.

ORSINI
Precisely. Now you truly understand your oath. And why you are alone in bearing its responsibilities.

NATALIE
But what about you, Malcolm and John?

ORSINI
They serve. I observe. But you lead.

Natalie processes the implication.

ORSINI
If it's any comfort, you should know lesser men in your position have risen to far greater acts of patriotism.

CUT TO

INT. BASEMENT INTERROGATION ROOM -- FBI HEADQUARTERS -- NIGHT

Olga, seated, handcuffed, stares at the wall clock, waiting. The door flies open, into the room struts SPECIAL AGENT TROY PRITCHETT, Napoleonic in both stature and demeanor, accompanied by an entourage of Agents.

PRITCHETT
Ah, Ms. Petrovka, I'm Special Agent Pritchett, I'm in charge of your case.

OLGA
Thank God, you can get me a smoke.

Olga's imperious attitude takes Pritchett by surprise, he immediately tries to reassert control.

PRITCHETT
Later. Maybe.

OLGA
But I see the pack right there bulging in your coat pocket.

PRITCHETT
I said later.

OLGA
(condescending)
I'm afraid you don't understand. You wouldn't like me very much without a cigarette. I get impatient.

PRITCHETT
No, you don't understand. You belong to me now, Olga. You smoke when I say you smoke.

OLGA
You're quite rude. Where's the delightful gentleman who captured me? I'd prefer to deal with him.

PRITCHETT
He won't be joining us.

OLGA
Why not?

PRITCHETT
That's not your concern.

OLGA
Do you even know who he is?

PRITCHETT
(exasperated)
I'll tell you what I do know. I know you're never gonna get that cigarette if you don't shut-up and let me ask the questions.

Olga leans back, lips sealed, stares daggers at him. Pritchett is pleased.

PRITCHETT
We'll start with your mole in the CIA. I want a name.

Olga remains defiantly mute. Pritchett glowers at her, pulls out the CIGARETTE BOX, lights up right in front of her, savors the smoke, smug. Olga smiles.

PRITCHETT
Oh, you like this, huh? You like watching me smoke?

OLGA
Actually, it's thoroughly aggravating.

PRITCHETT
Then why are you smiling?

OLGA
I know something you don't know.

PRITCHETT
Really, what's that?

OLGA
I'm double jointed.

... Olga's shoulder suddenly pops, allowing her to somersault forward off her chair...

... she sweeps out Pritchett's feet, seizes him in a choke hold with her legs, cigarettes and matches spill onto the floor. Agents immediately level pistols at her head.

Olga ignores them, picks up Pritchett's fallen cigarette with her cuffed hands, slips it between her lips, inhales, Nirvana. She turns to the agents, innocent.

OLGA
(matter of fact)
I warned him I get irritable.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Olga surreptitiously PALMS A MATCH off the floor.

EXT. LIBRARY -- GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY -- LATE NIGHT

Missy, Stanton's daughter, exits the building, makes her way through the darkened campus, senses she's being followed, pivots, sees a SINISTER FORM emerge from the gloom, GREGOR. She quickens her pace, he quickens his pace. Missy panics, dashes around a building...

EXT. FOOTPATH -- GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY -- SAME TIME

... runs right into a LARGE MAN, a moment of terror, then she realizes she just collided with a SECURITY GUARD.

MISSY
Thank God, there's a creepy guy chasing me.

Gregor rounds the corner.

MISSY
Him! That's the him!

SECURITY GUARD
Hey, buddy, can I see some I.D. please?

Gregor calmly strolls up to them, whips out a gun, shoots the security guard point blank. He grabs Missy, muffles her scream with his hand. A VAN screeches up behind them, driven by Kolya, Marcus jumps out, helps Gregor drag Missy into the darkened hold.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

A CRACK OF LIGHTNING

CU NATALIE

Eyes closed, a serene moment as rain dapples her skin.

MAN'S VOICE
Natalie! Natalie!

She awakens, tries to sit up, a tendril of blood snakes down her forehead, camera rotates to reveal...

EXT. BACKROAD -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Natalie lies in the pit of a ditch, thrown through the windshield of the burning, inverted SEDAN in front of her. Stephen calls to her from the driver's side.

STEPHEN
Natalie! Are you alright?

NATALIE
I think so.

She struggles to her feet, rushes to...

THE SEDAN

Stephen is upside down, flames dance from the hood.

NATALIE
Don't worry, I'll pull you out. Here, give me your hand.

Natalie reaches in, takes his hand, tries to extricate him with all her might...

STEPHEN
It's no use. My legs are pinned.

NATALIE
Hold on, honey, we can do this...

... she tries again, futile.

STEPHEN
You gotta leave me, Natalie.

He releases her hand, she immediately grabs his wrist. The fire crawls closer to their arms.

STEPHEN
Let go, Natalie!

NATALIE
No!

STEPHEN
Let go!

NATALIE
No!

A tongue of flame shoots into the compartment, consuming camera...

CRASH TO

Natalie jolts awake from the nightmare...

INT. BEDROOM -- V. P. RESIDENCE -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

... collects herself, realizes someone is knocking on her door. She grabs a robe...

... opens the port. Malcom is waiting, robe and slippers.

MALCOLM
My apologies for awakening you Madame Vice President, but you've been summoned to the White House.

CRASH TO

VIDEO OF MISSY

... speaking to camera, kneeling, hands taped behind her back, gasping between tears...

MISSY
... if Olga Petrovka isn't released by midnight they're gonna kill me. And if you send anyone to rescue me, they say they'll shoot me on the spot... Whatever happens, I love you and mom so much...

Gregor, head out of frame, steps forward, slaps her hard across the face, the tape ends, video snow. Pull rapidly back to reveal...

INT. SITUATION ROOM -- WHITE HOUSE -- DAWN (SAME TIME)

Natalie, President Eckhart, Stanton, and the CABINET, grave expressions.

GRAY
Obviously, we're dealing with an exceptionally sophisticated crew. They hacked into the university security office and erased all surveillance camera footage from its mainframe.

NATALIE
What about tracing the server they sent the tape from?

GRAY
Cyber teams at all our divisions, military and civilian, are working on that now. Unfortunately they covered their trail with intelligence grade encryption...

Stanton, emotionally cauterized, yet remarkably poised.

STANTON
Clearly, the only real hope for saving my daughter by midnight is to hand over Olga...

Uncomfortable looks. Eckhart, guilt-ridden, delivers the hard news...

ECKHART
Edwin...

STANTON
(interrupting)
... which we can never do. The United States government doesn't negotiate with terrorists.

A poignant silence. Natalie is moved by Stanton's altruism.

ECKHART
Don't give up hope. You know that everyone in this room will do whatever is in their power to get Missy back.

Eckhart floats a subtle, yet calculated look at Natalie.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

John brutalizes his punching bag with martial strikes, venting his frustration, a warrior without a war.

He finishes, exhausted, pulls off his shirt, revealing a patchwork of knife scars and bullet wounds. He stretches, in pain, past his prime...

... then he moves to a kitchen cabinet, opens it, rows of prescription bottles and vitamins, he starts swallowing pills, half dead...

... his cell suddenly rings on the counter, the light returns to his eyes, he sprints over to it, sees 'M' on the LED, answers, breathless.

JOHN
What is it, Malcolm?

INTERCUT MALCOLM'S OFFICE AT THE RESIDENCE

MALCOLM
A storm. The worst in years.

Camera rotates to show he's peering at his laptop, watching Natalie's conference in the situation room via a hidden surveillance camera.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE SITUATION ROOM -- NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Natalie and the team exit, morose. She watches Stanton drift numbly out a door to the GARDENS.

EXT. GARDENS -- WEST WING -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Stanton, emotionless, peers into the evening fog. Natalie appears quietly at his side, waits, and then...

STANTON
It's my fault. My choices in life. My choices are going to kill my daughter.

NATALIE
No, Edwin. It was other people's choices. And, on my honor, we're going to make them pay. We're in this together.

INT. CORRIDOR -- WHITE HOUSE -- SAME TIME

Natalie steps out of the cold, lost in turbulent thought, walking slowly... then faster... FASTER...

INT. FOYER -- VICE PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Natalie bursts into the home, Malcolm greets her, expectant.

MALCOLM
... good evening, Madame...

NATALIE
(resolute)
We're in play.

INT. DRAWING ROOM -- V.P.'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Natalie jams the pyramid key into the mantel lock, turns it...

INT. ROOM -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Barren, unfinished. The door flies open, Marcus carries a terrified Missy into the space, tosses her roughly onto the floor, promptly leaves, locks the door.

Missy tries to compose herself, assays the spare room, spots a massive wall-sized window, fogged by the winter cold outside, she wipes away some of the condensation, chagrined to see a hundred foot drop below.

A moment of despair, then an idea, she writes 'HELP' in big letters on the glass, then shuts drapes to hide her message.

CRASH TO

INT. HISTORY ROOM -- NIGHT

Natalie and Malcolm enter, not a soul.

NATALIE
Where's John?

MALCOLM
Probably in the Strategy Room.

Malcolm slides open a WALL PANEL, revealing...

INT. STRATEGY ROOM -- SAME TIME

Jaw dropping, state of the art, high tech communication equipment, computers, a wall of plasma screens, Missy's abduction video plays on the center LED.

John sits at a computer, working intensely, notices Malcolm and Natalie, immediately comes to attention, rising to his feet...

JOHN
Ah, Madame Vice President...

Natalie notices he's changed his look -- dark hair and contact lenses.

NATALIE
You've altered your appearance.

JOHN
I wanted to be ready. We don't have much time to rescue Director Stanton's daughter.

NATALIE
(reeling)
How do you know the mission? I just summoned you...

JOHN
(tactful)
Yes, correct, well, we kind of have a camera in the White House situation room.

NATALIE
What?!

MALCOLM
Technically, it's the NSA's camera. We just tap into it, courtesy of a friend.

NATALIE
(dry)
Oh, well, that makes it okay, then.

JOHN
Madame Vice President, I know you have a million questions right now, but given our time pressure perhaps we should answer them on the fly.

John motions to a throne-like chair at the head of the table.

THE STRATEGY ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Everyone seated, John and Malcolm brief Natalie.

JOHN
Olga's men knew when and where to kidnap Stanton's daughter. They had vehicles, they had weapons...

NATALIE
Which means they had outside help from someone local.

JOHN
Exactly. Assuming Olga's contacts were most likely Russian, we went through the FBI and CIA's databases looking for known or suspected Eastern European criminals in the D.C. area...

NATALIE
... courtesy of your 'friends' inside those agencies...

MALCOLM
We're a small hand with long fingers...

JOHN
Roughly two hundred names popped up. Which we then cross-referenced against known associates of Olga's. It was a fishing trip, but we caught ourselves a Beluga whale...

John types on a keyboard, a SURVEILLANCE IMAGE OF ANTON appears on the big screen.

JOHN
Russian billionaire Anton Markov.

MALCOLM
In Russian, 'billionaire' means 'friend of Putin.'

JOHN
The CIA snapped this surveillance photo of him last year.

A NEW IMAGE on the screen, Anton on his yacht in the Mediterranean, oiling the back of a SEDUCTIVE WOMAN in a bikini -- OLGA.

JOHN
He's here in D.C. buying high end real estate. Probably as fronts to launder drugs and arms money.

NATALIE
And you think he can lead us to Missy?

JOHN
Or at least Olga's men.

NATALIE
So why don't we plug the FBI into this Markov guy?

JOHN
They've got nothing on him, he'll never talk. I can be far more persuasive.

John falls silent, waits for Natalie's pronouncement...

NATALIE
I want to personally sign off on each and every step of this operation. And I want the power to abort at any time, no argument, no hesitation.

JOHN
(relieved)
Of course, Madame Vice President.

MOMENTS LATER

John and Malcolm at computers, scrolling through telephone numbers on an NSA database.

MALCOLM
Can't find Markov's cell, but I've found his chauffeur's.

JOHN
Tracking the GPS location.

John glances over his shoulder through the doorway, spies Natalie pacing anxiously in the adjacent History Room.

INT. HISTORY ROOM -- SAME TIME

Natalie, a moment of reverie, senses something, turns, finds John watching her from the doorway, compassionate. She offers a brave face.

NATALIE
I didn't exactly sign up for this.

JOHN
No one does. It's the type of job that finds you.

NATALIE
So, if it's not a secret, how were you 'found'?

JOHN
(cool)
I used to run black ops for the CIA.

NATALIE
You didn't enjoy it?

JOHN
For awhile, until my superiors asked me to do something I couldn't quite stomach.

NATALIE
So they fired you.

JOHN
Interestingly enough, no, they sent me out on another mission. Which promptly went sideways, and I ended up in a North Korean prison accused of espionage.

NATALIE
You think maybe you were set up by your own people?

JOHN
The thought crossed my mind.

NATALIE
How'd you escape?

JOHN
One night, I'm in my cell, and these hands shake me awake. At first I think it's the guards rousing me for more fun and games, but then I see my predecessor...
(nods at a portrait)
... standing over me.

NATALIE
He rescued you...

JOHN
... he recruited me. Evidently they'd been watching me for years. I finally passed the test.

NATALIE
Because you didn't let the enemy break you?

JOHN
Not the enemy. My superiors.

Natalie, impressed, a new level of understanding. Malcolm strides into the room, excited.

MALCOLM
The GPS search on the chauffeur's cell paid off. We've got his location.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB -- NIGHT

Trendy, velvet rope. Anton swaggers out with his bodyguard LEV, they hop into the rear of his LIMO.

INT. LIMO -- SAME TIME

... and startle to find John waiting, wearing a hoodie, gun trained.

JOHN
Have a seat, guys.

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

FADE UP

INT. LIMO -- SAME TIME

The villains settle cautiously across from John, Anton glances at the front seat, sees his DRIVER slumped, unconscious.

ANTON
What happened to my chauffeur?

JOHN
He's taking a nap.

ANTON
Who are you?

JOHN
A friend of Missy Stanton's. I'd like to know where Olga's people are keeping her.

ANTON
(deadpan)
Olga who?

John picks up an ATTACHE CASE at his feet, tosses it roughly to Anton.

JOHN
Open it.

Anton lifts the lid, revealing PILES OF GREENBACKS.

JOHN
You're looking at a million dollars.

ANTON
(scoffs)
I'm worth quite a bit more.

JOHN
The offer's not for you. It's for him.

John turns to a gobsmacked Lev.

ANTON
(imperious)
Don't listen to him.

Lev eyes the money avariciously. Anton begins to panic.

ANTON
I'll double his offer.

JOHN
Then he'll put a bullet in the back of your head for betraying him. To be honest, Lev, just the fact you're thinking about this right now has made Anton here doubt your loyalty. You really trust him to trust you?

ANTON
If you tell him the address, he'll probably just shoot you, you idiot.

JOHN
If you don't tell me, I'll definitely shoot you.

ANTON
I swear to God, Lev, if you do this I'll find you and peel your skin like an orange...

John levels the gun at Anton.

JOHN
This is between Lev and me now.
(back to the bodyguard)
Going once, twice...

LEV
Seventeen thirty-four Holston Street.

John looks to Anton for reaction. Was that relief?

JOHN
(pleased)
Just so you know, Lev, I'm taking Anton here with me. If you're lying, I'm gonna let him go. That gives you less than half an hour to get away before Anton and his dogs find you. So lemme ask you again. What's the address?

Lev grins ruefully.

LEV
Sorry. I meant to say eighty-nine Jefferson Boulevard.

JOHN
One last thing. Mind knocking your boss out for me?

Anton opens his mouth to protest, too late, Lev nonchalantly swings his elbow into the mobster's face.

INT. BASEMENT -- FBI HEADQUARTERS -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Stanton, Pritchett, and several AGENTS stride down the passage, gallows expressions, arrive at Olga's cell.

STANTON
I want to talk to her alone.

PRITCHETT
(uneasy)
I can't recommend that, Sir...

Stanton gives him a withering look, Pritchett nods, an Agent unlocks the door, Stanton steps into...

INT. OLGA'S CELL -- SAME TIME

Olga sprawls over an institutional bed like the Queen of Sheba.

OLGA
(gloating)
Ah, yes, Mr. Stanton, I knew you would wait until the last possible minute to cut a deal.

STANTON
(acid)
I don't cut deals with trash like you.

Olga's confidence morphs to contempt.

OLGA
Then why'd you come here?

STANTON
To look you in the eye myself. To tell you, I will never, ever let you go. In fact, I'm going to make sure you don't get the death penalty, because I want you alive for a long, long time. I want you to see yourself grow old and ugly in this windowless box. I want you to suffer every second of every minute of every day, year after endless year. I'm gonna make you feel the flames of damnation long before you burn in Hell.

Stanton, satisfied, knocks to be let out...

OLGA
Your Hell doesn't frighten me, Mr. Stanton. I'm quite fond of fire.

Something in her voice rattles Stanton, he covers his discomfort with an admonishing look, exits. Olga peers through the observation window, watches Stanton leave, calculating, then produces the PILFERED MATCH.

She takes a roll of toilet paper, lights it, tosses it casually on her bed.

INT. ANTON'S LIMO/EXT. STREET -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

John slaloms the gargantuan vehicle through traffic.

INTERCUT THE STRATEGY ROOM

MALCOLM
Thirty minutes to midnight, John.

JOHN
I'm close.

The sound of an ALARM takes us to...

INT. BASEMENT -- FBI HEADQUARTERS -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Pritchett and several AGENTS, running...

PRITCHETT
Hurry! Olga's cell is wired to unlock thirty seconds after the fire alarm goes off! Goddamned safety precaution.

They pull out their guns, burst through a door into...

INT. CELL BLOCK -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Filled with smoke, zero visibility, Pritchett trips over something, lands hard on the ground, loses his weapon, finds himself face to face with...

... the body of a SECURITY GUARD, neck twisted at a grotesque angle, no gun in his holster...

OLGA'S VOICE
Don't move.

Her silhouette emerges from the miasma, gun poised, an agent aims at her...

... she drills a bullet into his forehead, trains her pistol at Pritchett and the remaining Agent.

OLGA
(to the Agent)
What size are you?

AGENT
(scared, confused)
Forty long.

Olga turns to Pritchett.

OLGA
You?

PRITCHETT
(baffled)
Thirty-eight regular.

Olga shoots the other Agent, looks coolly at Pritchett.

OLGA
Strip.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Abandoned. The limo arrives, comes to a hard stop. John leaps out, pulls SLEEK BINOCULARS out of his pocket, spies around a corner...

POV JOHN -- THROUGH BINOCULARS

A CONSTRUCTION SITE, a SIX STORY BUILDING, partially built floors, exposed gridwork, surrounded by a HIGH SECURITY FENCE, a sign -- 'ANOTHER QUALITY JOB DONE BY SATURN DEVELOPMENT, INC.'

JOHN
(over earbuds)
Check out this company, Saturn Development.

THE STRATEGY ROOM

MALCOLM
(typing)
Copy that.

The big board, Anton's picture flashes up on a website.

NATALIE
Surprise, surprise, Anton owns it.

POV JOHN -- THROUGH BINOCULARS

... a THUG at the site gate, GREGOR.

JOHN
(over earbuds)
So good news and bad news. Good news, I see one of Olga's men guarding the building. We found the girl.

THE STRATEGY ROOM

NATALIE
... and the bad news?

POV JOHN -- THROUGH BINOCULARS

... focusing on ANOTHER SIGN out front...

JOHN
It's the site of the future Russian Embassy.

THE STRATEGY ROOM

NATALIE
(rueful)
... and protected under diplomatic statute.

THE STREET

John, gears turning, checks his watch, 11:40, returns to the limo, throws open the TRUNK, revealing Anton and his driver, bound and gagged, seething.

EXT. FBI HEADQUARTERS -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Bedlam, FIRE TRUCKS and EMERGENCY WORKERS. EMPLOYEES flow out of the building, camera finds Olga in the crowd, clad in Pritchett's suit, she casually proceeds on her way.

CRASH TO

A SURVEILLANCE CAMERA

... observing the front gate of the construction site...

INT. SECURITY TRAILER -- CONSTRUCTION SITE -- SAME TIME

The camera feed is one of many on a bank of monitors. A GOON watches the images intently as THREE ARMED SUITS play a raucous card game and drink beer.

GOON
Anton's limo just arrived.

Sure enough, we see the limo on the gate monitor, the silhouette of Anton and his driver visible through the vehicle's windows.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Gregor opens the GATE, allows the limo to drive inside, it comes to a stop. Gregor opens the door for Anton, stunned to see...

The Russian glaring back him, restrained, grunting in frustration under his gag...

Gregor feels a gun pressed discretely into his back, John, clad in the Chauffeur's uniform.

INT. SECURITY TRAILER -- SAME TIME

The door opens, Gregor steps in with John close behind.

GOON
(Russian, subtitled)
Why are you back? Your shift isn't over, yet.

Before Gregor can answer, John slams the butt of his pistol into the back of his head. One down.

The goon lunges from his chair, John slips his punch, slams the brute's head into his knee. Three left...

... ALL OF WHOM look up from their game, react...

John kicks the card table into one guy's stomach, knocking him against the wall, blocks and counters a strike, taking out another villain, ducks and sweeps the next thug, slams a metal chair on his head...

BLAM! A bullet nicks John's cheek, he turns to see killer number one, back on his feet, pistol in hand...

... John skirts a follow-up shot, seizes his opponent's gun hand, grabs a beer bottle, jabs him in the throat with the bottle neck, smashes it on his head.

Four unconscious men. John takes a beat, tears off the chauffeur's coat, revealing a Kevlar vest, a BLACK HOODIE underneath. Quickly sits at...

THE MONITORS -- SECURITY TRAILER

... pulls a SMALL FLASH DRIVE from his pocket, slips it into the keyboard. A downloading bar appears, rapidly dumps a program...

JOHN
You getting this Malcolm?

THE STRATEGY ROOM

All of the site surveillance camera feeds appear in a grid on the big board.

MALCOLM
Got it.
(off Natalie's look)
We just downloaded a backdoor into their security system. We own it now.

THE MONITORS -- SECURITY TRAILER

He assays the various security feeds, feral intensity.

JOHN
I see one of Olga's men on the sixth floor. Another in the east corridor. But where's the girl?

John checks his watch again, 11:55, worried, lasers back on the monitors, and then he sees it...

... 'HELP' written on one of the windows. He smiles.

JOHN
Good girl.

He pulls the black hoodie over his head, wraps a scarf over his face, reaches into his pocket, pulls out a NIGHT VISION HEADSET AND VIDEO FEED.

INT. ROOM -- BUILDING -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Missy checks her watch, frightened. The door lock suddenly gives, Marcus piles into the room, roiled, starts laying a BLUE PLASTIC TARP on the floor.

MISSY
What's going on?

MARCUS
Your father has less than three minutes to prove he loves you.

CRASH TO

A GREEN NIGHT VISION POV, running up a darkened stairwell.

INT. STAIRWELL -- BUILDING -- SAME TIME

John races up the steps, wearing the headset...

THE STRATEGY ROOM -- SAME TIME

Natalie and Malcolm view his headset feed on the big board...

THE STAIRWELL -- SAME TIME

John makes it to a NEW LANDING. Suddenly a door opens, a GUARD emerges, immediately spots John, raises a pistol, John kicks the door shut, slamming his wrist in the jamb, the creep loses his weapon...

... the door bounces back open, John hauls him into the stairwell, takes him out in the blink of an eye, tosses him into a corner, conceals him behind a panel of sheet rock.

INT. ROOM -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Marcus finishes laying out the tarp, glances at his watch, resigned.

MARCUS
Midnight.

He drags Missy onto the tarp, forces her to her knees, execution style, jams the butt of the pistol into the back of her skull.

MARCUS
Don’t move.

CU MISSY

She squeezes her eyes closed, sobbing, a taut beat, then a crackling sound, she opens her lids, perplexed...

Marcus’ body collapses next to her, spasmodic, METAL PRONGS in his neck, wires extending to the taser in John’s hand...

He joins her from the doorway, quickly removes his Kevlar vest, speaks in an urgent whisper...

JOHN
Put this on.

MISSY
Who are you?

JOHN
Your best chance of getting out of here alive.

INT. CORRIDOR -- SAME TIME

John guides Missy, now wearing the vest, quickly toward the elevators, hears a toilet flush, bad deja vu...

... he spins around, just in time to see Kolya exit a BATHROOM at the other end of the space.

... Kolya immediately clocks his old adversary, sprints toward John and Missy, clipping off rounds with a semi-automatic pistol...

John returns fire, out-gunned, hauls Missy to...

THE ELEVATOR BANK

Pulls her into the relative safety of the lift alcove. Hits the call button. Kolya accelerates, screaming, seconds from tearing John and Missy to shreds.

THE STRATEGY ROOM -- SAME TIME

Natalie's eyes flit to the other surveillance boxes on the big screen. Her face pales.

NATALIE
John, you have a problem...!

THE ELEVATOR BANK -- SAME TIME

PING! The lift opens. Olga is waiting.

END OF ACT V

ACT VI

INT. ELEVATOR BANK -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Reprise Olga's unexpected arrival. A millisecond of mutual astonishment...

She raises her purloined pistol...

John grabs Olga's arm, swings her in front of him as a human shield, just as Kolya arrives...

... the killer spots Olga's peril, trains his gun on Missy, stand-off...

OLGA
(to John, flirtatious)
Mr. Bellhop, you're back. I'd recognize that firm grip of yours anywhere.

JOHN
Trust me, you wanna come out of this thing alive, tell your boy to put his gun down.

OLGA
Certainly.
(Russian, subtitled)
He won't shoot me, I'm too valuable alive. Kill him, you idiot.

Kolya aims at John...

John clips off a round milliseconds before him, nips the goon's shoulder...

... which sends Kolya's shot wide, hitting Missy instead, smack in the Kevlar vest, jolting her back...

... she rallies, flees for her life down the corridor...

Olga sees her window, arcs her head back into John's face, dazing him, she bolts...

Kolya pins John down from behind a forklift. Now what does he do?

JOHN
Madame, what's the primary objective -- capturing Olga or saving the girl?

THE STRATEGY ROOM

Malcolm looks to Natalie.

NATALIE
(resolute)
The girl. Save the girl, John.

THE ELEVATOR BANK -- ALCOVE

John tries to bolt after Missy. Kolya nixes that idea with a blistering fusillade. John thinks, glances up, spies a grid ceiling -- squares of foam tile suspended several feet below the real ceiling to allow for electrical work.

BEHIND THE FORKLIFT

Kolya, impatient, keeps his weapon trained on the alcove. Nothing. He rises, stalks cautiously toward...

THE ALCOVE

... leaps around the edge of it, no John. A moment of confusion, then he looks up, one of the ceiling squares has been pushed aside...

Suddenly, John crashes down through another foam ceiling tile behind Kolya, slams the butt of his gun into the back of Kolya's head. Lights out.

THE CORRIDOR

Missy scrambles toward a FIRE ESCAPE EXIT, stops in her tracks, conceals herself behind the door jamb just as...

... a BALD THUG makes his way up the stairs, passes within inches of her without knowing it. Suddenly, a hand muffles her mouth from behind, pulls her close... John.

INT. RAW SPACE -- SECONDS LATER

Open walls, wind-whipped. John hurries Missy into the room, guides her to the edge of the landing, a hundred foot drop below, motions to a LOADING PLATFORM, floating in the air five feet away, suspended by a steel cable.

He hurdles across the perilous fall, lands on the platform, reaches a hand out to Missy.

JOHN
Jump.
(off her hesitation)
I won't let you go.

The surety in his eyes mutes her fear, she braces, leaps, not far enough...

John grabs a chain with one hand, dives out into the void, catches her wrist with his free hand, pulls them both up to the platform. He nods to her -- you're safe -- then hits a button, the platform lowers...

DESCENDING

Missy holds tight to John, staring at the vertiginous drop below, terrified.

JOHN
Don't look down. Look at me.
(she does)
You're safe now.

She calms.

CUT TO

The platform touches ground, John takes her hand...

JOHN
C'mon.

EXT. GATES -- CONSTRUCTION SITE -- NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

John dashes up with Missy, locks eyes with her...

JOHN
FBI Headquarters is just past the park, you know how to get there?

MISSY
Yes, my father works there.

JOHN
Run to your dad.

MISSY
Thank you.

He smiles, watches her run away from the nightmare, then he turns back to the building.

JOHN
(into headset)
Where's Olga?

THE STRATEGY ROOM -- SAME TIME

Malcolm peers at a surveillance camera feed of the roof.

MALCOLM
At the helipad atop the building.

CUT TO

INT. STAIRWELL -- SAME TIME

John hurdles up the steps, man on fire.

CUT TO

EXT. HELIPAD -- NIGHT (SAME TIME)

Olga and the BALD THUG, waiting, he points to the sky behind her.

BALD THUG
(Russian, subtitled)
There it is!

She turns to look -- a HELICOPTER rapidly approaches the helipad, less than a minute away. She's home free, but then...

... she hears a thud behind her, Olga whips around, the Bald Thug lies unconscious at John's feet.

JOHN
(Russian, subtitled)
You know, you raise the concept of high maintenance to a whole new level.

OLGA
Mr. Bellhop. Can't stay away from me, can you? But you know, if you want me, you're going to have to earn me.

Olga suddenly leaps off the helipad onto...

THE GRIDWORK

... the unfinished portion of the building, a lattice of steel frame, over a hundred foot drop. Olga moves nimbly across the beams, circus training evident. John crawls out after her...

THE STRATEGY ROOM -- SAME TIME

NATALIE
(watching John's feed)
Careful John, this is her element.

THE GRIDWORK - SAME TIME

Olga launches into a vicious martial attack, enjoying her upper hand, the luminous icons of our democracy in background, Capitol Building, White House, Washington Monument...

THE STRATEGY ROOM

Natalie and Malcolm sit frozen, watching the heart-stopping battle via John's headset camera...

NATALIE
We have to help him.

MALCOLM
(gallows)
If only we could, Madame.

THE GRIDWORK

Olga toys with John, feinting, bobbing back and forth, John nearly falls...

Olga sees her moment, kicks him in the gut, he trips backwards, plummets, grabs the beam, hugs it, legs kicking air. Olga slowly strolls toward him, arrogant, game over.

THE STRATEGY ROOM

Natalie, scanning the entire big board, relentless, a taut beat, then...

NATALIE
(ramping)
Wait. The surveillance camera, number seven. The bottom corner.

MALCOLM
Zooming in.

We stay on Natalie and Malcolm, tense.

NATALIE
Is that what I think it is...?

MALCOLM
(excited)
... yes.

Their expressions morph from despair to hope.

NATALIE
John, let go!

THE GRIDWORK -- SAME TIME

John hears her over his earbuds...

JOHN
(gasping, incredulous)
You want me to let go?!

Olga thinks he's talking to her.

OLGA
No, don't let go. Not yet. Not without one last souvenir.

NATALIE'S VOICE
(over earbuds)
Trust me, John.

Olga leans down, kisses John. He seizes the opportunity, releases the beam, grabs her, down they both go...

FALLING

... locked in an embrace, a small eternity, and then, out of nowhere...

A SAFETY NET

... John and Olga trampoline to a stop, John hugs her in the spoon position -- an amorous tableau if it weren't for his arm wrapped around her throat.

JOHN
You know, I think we should take a break and hurt other people for awhile.

Olga watches, desolate, as her helicopter whirs around, disappears into the night time sky.

THE STRATEGY ROOM -- SAME TIME

Natalie closes her eyes, takes a moment to absorb her relief. Malcolm admires her composure.

NATALIE
Is it always like this?

MALCOLM
(dry)
On a good day.

Warm smiles.

EXT. FBI HEADQUARTERS -- NIGHT (LATER)

AGENTS swarm Anton's limo, parked out front, throw open the doors -- Olga, Anton, and the driver await inside, all neatly tied up.

EXT. STANTON'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Stanton and his wife rush out of the home to greet an FBI vehicle. Missy steps from the rear, melts into her father's arms. Rack focus to a sedan down the block.

INT. SEDAN -- SAME TIME

Natalie and a bandaged John sit in the front seat, observing the poignant reunion from afar. They exchange a tacit look of pride.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO

INT. RECEPTION HALL -- WHITE HOUSE -- DAY

Natalie addresses a LARGE CROWD, a banner behind her -- The Consortium for International Peace.

NATALIE
Mahatma Gandhi wisely once said, 'an eye for and eye only makes the whole world blind.'
(chuckles from the crowd)
And that is why groups like yours are so vitally important -- to foster peace in a world with more than its share of one-eyed men.

Applause.

INT. TUNNEL -- NIGHT

Darkness, then the beam of a flashlight. John and Natalie crystallize out of the murk...

NATALIE
You swore this was only going to take fifteen minutes.

JOHN
I lied. Here we go.

He leads her to a primitive, dumbwaiter-like contraption, shines the light up its cabled gear work to a strangulated vertical tunnel, leading to more darkness.

NATALIE
This better be worth it.

JOHN
Oh, it is.
(off her look)
I swear.

John smiles, guileful. Natalie scowls, hops in.

INT. CHAMBER -- NIGHT

A plate slides open on the wall, John steps out, helps Natalie into the room, guides her to one of many observation windows, her distemper turns to amazement -- an awe-inspiring panorama, high above the city.

NATALIE
We can't be where I think we are.

JOHN
One of the perks of the job. I like to come up here after the really hard days. This view makes it all worth it.

They lean closer, spellbound by the breathtaking Capitol below, illuminated in all its glory...

REVERSE ON THEIR FACES

Camera slowly glides back, revealing John and Natalie are peering out of the pyramid's eye, high atop the WASHINGTON MONUMENT.

FIN *