THE BLACKLIST

Written by
Jon Bokenkamp

December 28, 2012

TEASER

We hear RESTLESS VOICES. Screaming children. The swell of a hundred fighting languages tells us we're stuck in line at...

INT. U.S. CUSTOMS - DAY

The place is packed. Smells like travel. Among this dizzy mob, one very composed American commands our attention. He approaches the window and opens his passport --

-- Meet RAYMOND "RED" REDDINGTON (55). Dignified. Worldly. He wears a perfectly tailored suit and carries himself with a sense of purpose.

CUSTOMS AGENT
Where you been, sir?

RED
Singapore. Business.

CUSTOMS AGENT
And where we headed?

RED
Home.

Red smiles. His confidence is magnetic. As the agent STAMPS his passport, Mel Torme's driving "*Comin' Home Baby*" sends us hurtling through:

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY

We dance through the capitol city. The National Mall. The Lincoln Memorial. The pace is energetic and bright as --

-- Red is chauffeured through the city by A MAN IN A GREY FLANNEL SUIT. Passing monuments reflect in the glass of his limo as Red rolls down the window, drinks in his hometown.

ON PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE...

Red steps from the car. Finds himself standing in the shadow of a daunting concrete structure. He looks up, delighted to see the words etched in the facade: *J. Edgar Hoover Building.*

INSIDE F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS...

Red strides through the lobby with purpose. He's been here before. Belongs here. Finds his way to a FEMALE GUARD at the security desk.

RED
Good afternoon. I'm here to see Assistant Director Harold Cooper.

GUARD
Do you have an appointment?

RED
Tell him it's Raymond Reddington.

The Guard scowls and calls upstairs. Red waits. Takes in the details around him; the bulletproof glass, the American flag, the display of the "Ten Most Wanted" on the lobby wall.

Red takes off his jacket, folds it neatly, and places it on the ground next to his briefcase.

The Female Guard listens to the voice on the other end of the line, watching Red as --

-- he lowers himself to his knees over the F.B.I. seal in the terrazzo floor. A passing AGENT sees this. Looks uneasy.

The poor Guard on the phone can hardly comprehend what she's hearing. She follows Red's eyes. Sees what Red sees. He's staring at a picture of HIS OWN FACE among...

THE TEN MOST WANTED.

Red CLASPS HIS HANDS behind his head. Closes his eyes. The Guard calls for backup, but before she can muster the words --

-- ALARMS SOUND. METAL CURTAINS drop over the windows.

The entire F.B.I. goes into 'LOCKDOWN' as F.B.I. POLICE swarm Red, WEAPONS drawn and SCREAMING into their radios.

But Red's calm. Proud perhaps. As he's thrown to the ground his expression tells us this is a day Red has anticipated for years. We DRIFT UP, over the chaos, past the American flag.

The F.B.I.'s NUMBER FOUR MOST WANTED has just surrendered.

INT. FT. MEADE / N.S.A. - SAME

A winded STAFFER rushes into a packed boardroom. Pulls aside ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF COUNTERTERRORISM, HAROLD COOPER (52). He's worn by life. A natural cynic. The Staffer whispers.

COOPER
(thunderstruck)
How is that even possible?!

INT. ROOFTOP / F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS - SAME

A Sikorsky S-76 lands and delivers Cooper who is met by AGENT DONALD RESSLER (42), square-jawed and seasoned. This job is his life. They duck the rotors, shouting over the chopper --

RESSLER
Ressler. Washington Field office. I'm the case agent on Reddington.

COOPER
When did this happen?

RESSLER
Under an hour ago.

COOPER
We confirm it's actually him?

RESSLER
It's him alright. Prints match. Tattoos. He even volunteered classified details about our Brussels mission in '08.

COOPER
What happened in Brussels?

RESSLER
Sir? We tried to kill him, sir.

INT. SECURITY NEST / F.B.I. - SAME

F.B.I. TECHs sit behind glowing control panels. Monitors cover the walls. The screens depict various angles of Red chained to the floor. Cooper nears a monitor, captivated.

COOPER
Christ, it really <u>is</u> him.

He turns to the glass and approaches Ressler. They watch Red like a fish in a jar. Even in captivity, Red carries himself with unquestionable presence.

RESSLER
Came in with a briefcase containing every alias he's ever used. Most of 'em we've never heard of.

COOPER
What's he want?

RESSLER
Don't know. Won't talk. The guy's a goddamned stone.

Cooper watches Red, unsettled, as we hear --

RESSLER (O.S.)
Raymond "Red" Reddington grew up the son of an army brat...

INT. WAR ROOM - SAME

Ressler briefs a packed room of agents, analysts and legal staffers. CLASSIFIED IMAGES fill giant monitors overhead.

RESSLER
...he attended West Point. Top of his class. By thirty he was an intelligence officer in the Army. Made Captain. Military Liaison Officer to the N.S.A.

It's a life in photos, the American Dream.

RESSLER
Then, in 1990, Reddington's headed home to see his wife and daughter for Christmas. He never arrived.

We see CRIME SCENE PHOTO of a snow covered hatchback on a desolate mountain road.

RESSLER
His vehicle was discovered along a stretch of highway thirty-three in the Allegheny Mountains. Christmas gifts for his wife and kid in the back of the car.

We see snapshots of SEARCH PARTIES and NEWSPAPER HEADLINES.

RESSLER
There were searches. Candle light vigils. No answers. This guy up and disappeared from the face of the earth...

The screens go dark, then reignite with a single surveillance photo of a GHOSTLY IMAGE; a bearded shadow of a man.

RESSLER
...until four years later when U.S. military secrets started turning up in South Asia. The leak was traced to Reddington. Turns out he was trading military strategies with New Delhi; brokering arms deals for the North Koreans. Four years after going AWOL, this decorated soldier re-emerges as an enigma.

We're struck with a barrage of CLASSIFIED PHOTOS. Red in secret meetings and exotic countries. The birth of a legend.

RESSLER
His military background would lead you to believe he's some sort of spy, but he's not. This guy's an equal opportunity offender; a "facilitator" of sorts who's built an enterprise brokering deals for fellow criminals. We know he's orchestrated the assassinations of federal inmates, laundered money for the mob, and bought judges only to have them killed. Last year, he personally negotiated a month long cease-fire between the la Familia drug cartel and the Calderon government. He has no country. No political agenda. Best we can tell Reddington's only allegiance is to the highest bidder.

AGENT
They call him something. In the papers.

RESSLER
The Concierge of Crime.

We linger on an eerie photo of Red. Eyes locked on us.

INT. SECURITY NEST - DAY

Ressler and Cooper are little more than silhouettes looking through the window, watching Red in his interrogation cell.

COOPER
Call Lab Services. Have them fit him with a VeriChip RFID tag.

RESSLER
You think he's going somewhere?

COOPER
Not on my watch.

INT. INTERROGATION CELL - DAY

Red watches ARMED AGENTS escort a DOCTOR into his cell. The Doctor loads a small CHIP, the size of a grain of rice, into a digital syringe. Injects the device into Red's shoulder.

IN THE SECURITY NEST...

A SCANNER lights up. Beeps twice.

TECH
He's on-line.

As Red's cell is vacated, the agents discuss what's next. Red rubs his shoulder. Turns to a SECURITY CAMERA --

RED
(on the monitor)
It appears someone with the authority to make decisions has arrived. Good to see you again, Agent Cooper.

-- the control room realizes Red is speaking to them through the security monitors. Cooper turns. The room falls silent.

RED
We need to move quickly and I know you have many questions, so let's begin with the most important one: why I'm here.

We INTERCUT between the agents and Red, who speaks through the camera like some Orwellian tyrant. Red stands.

RED
I'm going to help you capture a criminal you don't know exists.

RESSLER
What's he talking about?

COOPER
Turn it up.

RED
Of course, you're familiar with his crimes. Counterintelligence is monitoring his criminal enterprise through the Patriot Act, the Hague wants him for war crimes, CIA calls him the Serbian Ghost.
(flat)
I can tell you his real name is Ranko Zamani. You want him. I want him. Let's say that for the moment our interests are aligned.

Cooper can't believe what he's hearing --

COOPER
Feed this through to the Assistant A.G. of Counterterrorism.

RESSLER
Get Main Justice on the phone.

With a few keystrokes, an ANALYST brings up the dossier of RANKO ZAMANI. Classified details unfold on the monitors.

ANALYST
(off his computer)
...Ranko Sinisa Zamani. Serbian National. Educated in the U.S. Key player in the Yugoslav wars...

Zamani's a gaunt little man. Haunting eyes. He wears a rash of CHEMICAL BURNS on his neck and jaw. Red continues to fill in details about Zamani as --

-- an ANALYST beckons Cooper and shows him a classified file on his monitor. Cooper turns. Walks directly into...

RED'S INTERROGATION CELL.

RED
Agent Cooper, you're not trained in interrogation.

COOPER
I don't know what you think is gonna happen here, but this --

RED
I'm giving you Zamani.

COOPER
Ranko Zamani died twelve years ago. He's a non-existent threat.

RED
And you believe that?

COOPER
It's a fact. Serbian courts had him declared dead in 2008.

RED
Then a dead man just stepped off United 283 from Munich to Dulles.

Cooper's expression goes flat as we SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DULLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SAME

Agents are escorted through the terminal by airport police.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM...

POLICE annex flight manifests. Roll back security footage. Agents freeze-frame an image of a man who's little more than a twisted shadow. His eyes just catch the camera. Ranko Zamani. The Serbian Ghost.

ANALYST (O.S.)
...entered the country under the name Sacha M. Chacko.

INT. WAR ROOM / F.B.I. - SAME

Images of Zamani flip across screens as STAFF LAWYERS and ANALYSTS scramble to reconstruct what they know. Like a buzzing newsroom, the stream of incoming intel is constant.

ANALYST
Cleared customs at 10:56 AM.

ANALYST #2
Counterintelligence has financial indicators Red helped Zamani flee Cairo in February of '03 --

Ressler storms into the room, voice booming.

RESSLER
Okay, listen up, people. The lab just pulled a latent print off an airline arm rest. Nine points of comparison. Zamani's alive.
(provoked)
Number Four does not surrender to settle a score. I wanna know what these two are planning; scour every phone record, every bank account. Somebody tell me what is going on.

INT. INTERROGATION CELL / F.B.I. - MOMENTS LATER

Agent Cooper sits down across from Red. Every camera in the nest is rolling.

COOPER
You have my attention.

RED
Will you admit you were wrong?

COOPER
I was wrong.

RED
Yes, you were wrong. Certainly not the first time. Now, I'll give you Zamani, but first --

COOPER
No ‘but firsts’. You don’t decide anything. I’m in charge. All you do is talk.

RED
Agent Cooper, you’ve overestimated your authority. I don’t trust you. I don’t even like you. I said I’ll help you find Zamani, and I will, but from this point forward there’s one very important rule:
(fearless)
I only speak with Elizabeth Keen.

IN THE SECURITY NEST...

The agents blink in confusion. Glances are exchanged.

RESSLER
Who the hell is Elizabeth Keen?

So we SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DARK BEDROOM - DAWN

A golden retriever licks the face of a SLEEPING WOMAN. She pushes the dog away and squints at the blinking alarm clock. Lays back down. Suddenly JOLTS OUT OF BED as --

WOMAN
Crap. CRAP!!!

-- her dazed HUSBAND sits up on his elbows.

HUSBAND
Lizzy, what’s going on?

WOMAN
Power went out. I’M LATE.

A SERIES OF FAST CUTS ignite the day. Shower on. Toaster loaded. Steam is wiped from the bathroom mirror and we’re given our first good look at --

-- ELIZABETH KEEN (36). She’s worked out. The body of a dancer. Spirit of a fighter. Shades of a rebellious gutter punk past. Liz brushes her teeth.

LIZ
(mouth foaming)
I missed my bus, babe. I’m gonna need to take the car.

IN THE KITCHEN...

Liz quickly fumbles through the fridge. Her husband, Tom (40), stumbles into view. Tom's easy going. The emotional glue. Not so good at mornings. He hops into a leg of his pants, heart racing, as --

TOM
You can't take the car. I need the car. Field trip committee.

LIZ
We're out of milk.

TOM
I can drive you.

Liz closes the refrigerator door to find Tom standing there with TWO TOURISM BROCHURES, one in each hand.

TOM
Air and Space or the National Zoo?

Liz flicks the zoo brochure.

LIZ
Zoo's gender neutral.
(then, realizing)
Is this pee?! I'm standing in pee.

TOM
He's your dog too.

IN THE BEDROOM...

Liz yanks off her socks. Checks the time.

LIZ
(calling out / hurried)
I'm gonna smell like a urinary tract infection on my first day.

TOM (O.S.)
-- can't hear you. Remember, we have the last adoption meeting today. One-thirty.

IN THE KITCHEN...

Tom scrapes the burnt char from a piece of toast and takes a giant bite. He hands the other half to Liz who buzzes past, takes a bite, grabbing her purse as --

TOM
You heard me, right? One-thirty?

LIZ
One-thirty. Last meeting. Make or break. Don't worry about me, babe, I'll take the train from work and meet you there.

TOM
I'm in the car.

As Tom disappears into the hall, Liz tosses the burnt toast to the dog. She opens the fridge. Grabs an apple.

TOM (O.S.)
You got the keys?

LIZ
In my pocket.

TOM (O.S.)
I got your coffee.

These two are good. In locked-sync step.

OUTSIDE THEIR BROWNSTONE...

Liz vaults down the steps, apple in her teeth. She stops when she sees Tom standing by their car watching her.

LIZ
What?

TOM
You.

LIZ
I forget something?

Tom smiles, marveling.

TOM
We both woke up seven minutes ago. My shirt's on backwards and my eyes can barely focus. You're dressed, composed and as beautiful as you were the day we met.

LIZ
I'm forgetting something.

Tom pulls LIZ'S F.B.I. BADGE from behind his back. Almost forgot it. As she pockets the badge we realize LIZ IS AN F.B.I. AGENT. She steps closer. Looks into her Tom's eyes.

LIZ
You know I'm not going to let this job come between us and our family. We want a family, we're gonna have a family. Today's the day.

TOM
We can do this.

He holds her eyes.

TOM
I'm proud of you, Lizzy. You worked hard for this. Nervous?

LIZ
No. I'm good. I just don't want any more big surprises today.

Tom pulls Liz close and they KISS, but their embrace is interrupted by a low, THUNDEROUS RUMBLE. Leaves rustle. The rumbling SWELLS as they look overhead to see --

-- a HELICOPTER rising over their brownstone. POLICE CARS emerge out of nowhere. JUMP the curb. Cordon off a large area of the park across the street where the chopper lands. Agent Ressler exits, running toward Liz.

RESSLER
Agent Keen?

He flashes his BADGE. Liz blinks in disbelief.

RESSLER
Donald Ressler. Washington Field Office. I need you to come with me right away.

Liz holds out her finger, dangling the keys to Tom.

LIZ
(dumbstruck)
I don't think I'll need the car.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. HELICOPTER (MOVING) - DAY

We drift over WASHINGTON. Liz watches in total bewilderment as the city floats under her feet. Ressler hands her a set of headphones which she puts on to hear --

RESSLER
Raymond Reddington.

LIZ
Excuse me?

RESSLER
The fugitive. Number Four. How do you know each other?

She adjusts the headphones, confused.

LIZ
I'm sorry, I woke up late. Power went off. I'm a little... punchy.

RESSLER
When was your last contact?

LIZ
With... Reddington?

Ressler squints. Who else?

LIZ
What? No. Why would you think -- the man's been at large since I was in a training bra. We studied his profile at...
(re: the ground below)
Is that the White House? This is restricted airspace.

RESSLER
You never met.

LIZ
Of course, not. Most psychologists could only dream of interviewing a guy like Reddington.

RESSLER
Well, congratulations. Your dream is about to come true.

Off Liz's disbelief we JUMP TO:

INT. F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS - SAME

Liz tries to match Ressler's stride as F.B.I. POLICE escort them into the belly of the bureau.

LIZ
This must be some sort of mistake. I've never even -- I'm sorry, you said Reddington surrendered? Why?

RESSLER
We're working on that.

She stops. He turns.

LIZ
You're telling me this guy's eluded the F.B.I. for over twenty-five years, and he's suddenly decided to give himself up to chat with me?

RESSLER
Consider yourself flattered.

INT. COOPER'S OFFICE / F.B.I. - SAME

Liz sits in silence with THREE AGENTS. Ressler and Cooper enter. They've been talking. Cooper sits across from Liz.

COOPER
Harold Cooper. Assistant Director of Counterterrorism.

LIZ
Yes, sir. I know who you are, sir.

COOPER
Wanna tell us what's gong on?

Nobody notices how Liz clutches her right hand into a fist; nervously opening and closing the grip, running her fingers against the skin of her palm.

LIZ
I've been vetted by the agency like everyone else. Same background checks. Psych profiles. I'm sure OPR's trolling my digital footprint right now, and I can tell you what they'll find. Nothing. I have no history with Reddington.

Cooper watches Liz. Isn't convinced.

COOPER
They tell me today's your first day as a profiler.

LIZ
Yes. Reassigned from New York. Graduated Quantico last month.

COOPER
Congratulations.
(flat)
Profile yourself.

LIZ
Sir?

COOPER
Who are you? What does he see? Profile Elizabeth Keen.

LIZ
Oh, uhm. Well..
(uneasy)
I've been with the Bureau for four years; head of the Mobile Emergency Psych Unit in New York. Worked bank robberies, murder, extortion --

COOPER
We've read your resume.

Liz looks trapped for a moment. Uneasy silence. Then something clicks and it's as if another woman emerges --

LIZ
My colleagues call me 'sir'. They think I'm a bitch. Like most kids who raise themselves, I display narcissistic behavior. I can be withdrawn. Disconnected.

-- she speaks with complete transparency.

LIZ
Despite, or perhaps because of my past, I have a deep yearning to understand the criminal mind. I'm board certified in forensic psychology, and yet I'm under the delusion I can erase my childhood by having kids of my own. All this manifests itself in the occasional, regrettable, fit of anger.

The agents are speechless. Liz blinks. Feels naked.

COOPER
Do you find it odd Reddington surrendered himself the same day you started working as a profiler?

LIZ
It suggests he was waiting for me.

COOPER
Why you specifically?

LIZ
Because I'm new. He thinks I can be easily manipulated. Obviously, the man doesn't know me very well.

There's a strength within this woman that's undeniable.

INT. WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE / F.B.I. - SAME

Liz, Cooper and Ressler are escorted through a series of SCIF checkpoints. Through the most secure areas of the Bureau and down into...

THE HIVE.

They wind their way through a maze of monitors, techs, and control boards. This is mission control and the room from which Red is carefully monitored.

The techs and support staff FALL SILENT as Liz moves through their space. We sense their collective respect; like Romans watching a gladiator enter the Coliseum.

Cooper and Liz stop before a steel door.

COOPER
If you need anything, remember, we're right here.

This doesn't give Liz comfort. Suddenly, a chest-rattling ALARM sounds. Hydraulic locks disengage. Liz steps into...

A MASSIVE AUDITORIUM.

State of the art. Impenetrable. At the center of this dark room is a small, BULLETPROOF PRISON TUBE. Red sits alone under the hot lights. He sees Liz and he rises. Her heart pounds as she steps inside...

RED'S CONTAINMENT CELL.

RED
Agent Keen. What an honor.

He extends his hand like a boy on a date. Liz keeps her arms folded and tries to project confidence. Drags the only other chair in the cell to Red's side of the table --

LIZ
I heard you wanna talk.

-- she sits. Red is captivated. We INTERCUT with the Hive as everyone watches the monitors in silence.

LIZ
Well?

Red can't take his eyes off of Liz.

LIZ
You're the one who surrendered. Made all the demands. Asked me here. I'm here.

RED
You got rid of your highlights. Much less Baltimore. Do you get back home much?

She tries not to look surprised by this.

LIZ
Tell me about Zamani.

RED
I haven't been home in years.

Liz feigns a smile. Takes a moment. She needs to establish she's the alpha dog here.

LIZ
Your wife, Ellen, you know she lights a candle every Christmas Eve. Still mourns the day you disappeared even though she knows you're alive.
(firm)
No way you'd come back after twenty-five years, face the life you left, everyone you betrayed, in order to settle some grudge.

RED
Perhaps it's a sizable grudge.

LIZ
Why involve me? I'm nobody. First day. Nothing special about me.

RED
Oh, I think you're very special.

He says it in an weirdly erotic way. Liz flicks a glance at the agents behind the glass. Her discomfort betrays her.

RED
Within the hour, Ranko Zamani will abduct the daughter of U.S. General David Ryker. His team will use an EM pulse bomb to create a diversion and grab the girl. If you don't move quickly she will die. That's what I know.

LIZ
And how do you know this?

RED
Because I'm the one who got Zamani into the country.

LIZ
I should believe you?

RED
Of course not. I'm a criminal. Criminals are liars. Everything about me is a lie.
(then)
But if anyone can give me a second chance, it's you. The two of us have overcome so much.

Liz leans back. Doesn't like this.

RED
I mean, look at you. Abandoned by a father who was a career criminal. A mother who worked two jobs, despite her addiction, to keep you in school, out of juvenile court. You practically raised yourself. And yet here you are, about to make a name for yourself, about to catch Ranko Zamani.
(deadpan)
I'm gonna make you famous, Lizzy.

LIZ
Don't call me Lizzy.

She says it with force, but she's screaming inside.

RED
We both know the past does not equal the future. You've learned from your experiences, they've given you tremendous insight. That's why you're gonna believe me.

Off Red's lewd smile we SLAM CUT TO:

THE HIVE - SECONDS LATER

Liz BURSTS through the door. Shoulders past Cooper and goes directly to Ressler.

LIZ
What did you tell him?

RESSLER
What?! Nothing.

LIZ
Then how did he know those things? Private things? About my family?!

RESSLER
Why didn't your father's criminal record show up in your background report? You told us he --

She turns to Cooper.

LIZ
I think we should contact the SWAT commander at Quantico; roll a team to the girl's school.

RESSLER
Nonsense. He's bluffing.

LIZ
He's establishing his value.

RESSLER
I've been the field agent on this guy for eight years, trust me --

LIZ
-- and eight years got you what? You asked me here. You asked my opinion. So here it is: that girl is gonna be <u>taken</u>.

Cooper considers this. Wheels turning.

COOPER
Roll HRT to the school. Call Bolling AFB Command, patch us through to General Ryker.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - SAME

Liz steps into a stall and closes the door. Needs a minute to gather herself. She takes a few calming breaths before --

BAMM... BAMM... BAMM...

-- she SLAMS HER FIST into the wall of the stall repeatedly. Raw unchecked energy. Liz falls back. Making that habitual rolling fist; running her fingers against her palm until she grabs her phone. Dials her husband.

TOM (O.S.)
Lizzy, hey, What's going on? I've been wanting to call, but --

LIZ
I need to hear your voice.

TOM (O.S.)
What's with the helicopter?

LIZ
The helicopter was nothing. I just had an interview with -- I can't even tell you. Classified. This entire day is classified. I flew over the White House!

TOM
Over the what?!

LIZ
I'm telling you, they gave me Level Four clearance. Insane. I just interviewed the number four... I met with the Assistant Director...

TOM
Okay. Breathe. Just breathe.

LIZ
If you knew half the things --

TOM
I can't. Remember? Classified. Those things, they don't matter because you're gonna be amazing.

LIZ
Tell me I can do this.

TOM
Lizzy, when have you ever failed?

This lands with her. Calms her.

LIZ
I don't deserve you. I promise I'll make this up to you, let's take tonight and --

WHAM!!!

The stall door flies open and Liz finds herself standing face to face with Ressler, chest heaving --

RESSLER
What are you doing with that phone? We're on a SCIF floor. You can't --

LIZ
(to Tom)
Gotta go, babe.

-- she clicks the phone off.

RESSLER
You put on a great show in there. Sounded real smart. But you better pull yourself together because you just called in the calvary. HRT. SWAT. This is your show now. Your neck on the line.

He yanks a strip of toilet paper. Puts it in Liz's hand.

RESSLER
Wipe your nose. We're all waiting.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. PENTAGON - DAY

A MARINE in dress blues moves through the Defense Department headquarters, past security, and into a room full of GENERALS gathered around a table. The men turn as --

-- GENERAL DAVID RYKER stands. Ryker (50's) is a Four Star General. Distinguished. Fierce. The Marine salutes.

MARINE
Sir. We have a situation, Sir. It's about your daughter.

INT. HOLTON-ARMS PRIVATE SCHOOL - SAME

SWAT teams storm the hallways as classrooms are evacuated. Children everywhere. Teachers direct kids into --

THE PARKING LOT

-- where AGENTS pile out of suburbans and into the SEA OF CHILDREN. Pandemonium. A thousand little girls in plaid skirts and sweaters.

RESSLER
What the hell happened?

POLICE COMMANDER
Campus security freaked, saw SWAT and activated the emergency plan.

RESSLER
Where's the girl?

Agents sort through the faces as Liz searches for --

LIZ
Beth?! I'm looking for Beth Ryker!

-- a teacher rushes BETH RYKER (8) toward Liz. Beth is an angel with two missing teeth. Bright eyes. Heart pounding.

Liz takes her hand. Races toward the closest SUBURBAN. She can't find Ressler, but there's no time. A SWAT AGENT lifts the girl into the suburban and Liz dives in behind. Motions the driver.

EXT. WASHINGTON - SAME

Liz's suburban rolls through the city. We INTERCUT between the vehicles. Ressler and Liz are now separated. It wasn't planned this way, but the girl's safe. SWAT teams trail in bumper-lock.

IN LIZ'S SUBURBAN...

The little girl stares at the fully armed SWAT Agent seated across from her. His radio crackles.

RESSLER (O.S.)
Target onboard. Notify McNair.

DISPATCH (O.S.)
Copy. You have an HRT escort.

Beth's eyes well with tears as --

LIZ
Can you turn that thing off?

-- the little girl starts CRYING.

LIZ
Hey. You're okay.

BETH
Is my Daddy hurt?

LIZ
Oh, no. Your Daddy's fine. We're on our way to see him right now.
(searching)
Hey, your name's Beth, right? I'm Beth. Elizabeth. My friends call me Liz.

BETH
My Daddy has a pin like that.

She's looking at the AMERICAN FLAG PIN on Liz's lapel --

LIZ
I bet Daddy has lots of medals.

-- Liz sees the caravan is crossing the Potomac. They pass over the massive WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE, escaping Washington.

LIZ
To get a pin like this you gotta be really brave, like your Dad. Like <u>you</u> were back there.

Liz removes the pin from her lapel and pins it on Beth's sweater. Beth touches the pin. It reflects the sunlight. She forgets her tears as --

-- Beth looks at her own CHARM BRACELET. Kiddie jewelry. A trinket from a gum ball machine. She takes it off and starts to clip it around Liz's wrist.

LIZ
Oh, you don't have to give me...
(smiles)
Thank you. It's beautiful.

BETH
It's a charm bracelet. It's got little animals.

Beth leans into Liz. Feeling safe now. Liz puts her arm around the girl. She's got a way of putting kids at ease.

LIZ
You're safe with me.

Liz spots a few tail lights ahead --

LIZ
(into her radio)
What's going on up ahead?

RESSLER (O.S.)
Accident. Dispatch is re-routing.

Liz eyes the accident as their suburban slows. Ressler gets out, talks with an officer, but Liz senses something. Eerie silence. She considers their stalled caravan as she looks in the rearview mirror to see --

-- the bridge lights and traffic signals FLICKERING OUT. One by one, the power outage races toward them like a tidal wave.

LIZ
It's happening...
(into her radio)
IT'S HAPPENING!

The entire bridge LURCHES. Cars SHAKE. Ressler looks down to see the steel plates between his feet open up --

RESSLER
The bridge. Turn around. GO!

-- THE DRAWBRIDGE HAS BEEN ACTIVATED.

We INTERCUT among the caravan. Vehicles jockeying to perform three point turns as the bridge begins to incline. Liz's suburban is sideways in the road when she looks up to see --

-- A GARBAGE TRUCK barreling toward them.

LIZ
GET DOWN.

Liz covers Beth with her body as the garbage truck SLAMS into the driver-side of their suburban. GLASS SPRAYS. The driver is killed on impact as the suburban is SHOVED toward --

-- THE RISING GAP IN THE BRIDGE and across the interlocking seam. Gears turn. The traffic decks RISE UP to a FIFTEEN PERCENT INCLINE. A man leaps from his car before it falls through the widening gap into the Potomac below.

Now TWENTY PERCENT. Rising. Liz realizes her suburban is now on the OTHER SIDE of the traffic deck. The gap in the drawbridge has effectively separated Liz and Beth from the rest of the caravan. At TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT --

-- cars begin to scoot. SLIDING downward. Liz looks to see a TEAM OF MASKED KIDNAPPERS racing up the traffic deck toward her. Past her car. They race to the apex of the bridge and anchor GRAPPLING HOOKS into the steel decking.

THIRTY PERCENT. Pedestrians tumble down the traffic deck. Agents scramble to no avail. The Kidnappers drop back down toward Liz on RAPPELLING LINES, scooting with the car. One Kidnapper takes out a gun and --

KA-BAMM

-- SHOOTS THROUGH THE WINDOW. Kills Liz's SWAT Agent. Blood spray hits Liz. Beth SCREAMS. Liz tumbles and lands against the windshield. Loses her gun. The door above them opens to reveal a MASKED KIDNAPPER.

LIZ
Take my hand, Beth. Stay with me.

The Kidnapper climbs into the car. Reaching for Beth. Liz swats at him as he GRABS THE LITTLE GIRL. She reaches out --

LIZ
BETH. TAKE MY HAND.

-- they lock eyes. FORTY PERCENT. The girl grabs Liz's hand but suddenly the suburban falls. Liz goes with it. As the car falls away, the Kidnapper's left holding Beth, dangling from the rappelling line as --

-- Liz's car ROLLS TWICE. Lands hard. The Kidnappers holding Beth climb up toward the apex of the bridge which is now fully open. Below --

ON THE POTOMAC

-- a SPEEDBOAT arrives. The Kidnappers rappel down, girl in hand, into the boat. As they speed away Liz opens her eyes. Her world slips into focus. She reaches out. Lying among the splintered glass she finds... BETH'S CHARM BRACELET.

INT. F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Liz sits on a bench in a hallway. A small bandage covering a split in her brow. She holds Beth's charm bracelet like a rosary. Stares ahead, unblinking, eyes locked on the silent image of --

-- General Ryker who can be seen through the glass wall of Cooper's office. Ryker is SCREAMING at Cooper and Ressler. Eviscerating the agents. Tears well in Liz's eyes as she watches, heavy with guilt. She knows she may have cost the General's daughter her life.

Liz is watching this verbal brawl when her phone vibrates. She looks down. Six missed calls. Realizing the time as --

LIZ
(panicked)
Tom. My God. I meant to call.

-- we INTERCUT with Tom. Pacing nervously. Sneaking a call in the hallway outside their ADOPTION AGENCY.

TOM
Are you close? What's going on?

LIZ
I'm stuck here.

TOM
Stuck?! You're kidding, right?
Everyone's waiting.

LIZ
I'm the worst. I'm so sorry. It's just, Tom, this crazy day --

Ressler KNOCKS on the glass. Waves Liz into the office for her ass chewing. She holds up a finger, asking the General and the others wait, juggling Tom as --

TOM
(soft / compassionate)
Lizzy, babe, if this is too much... we don't have to do this. We can start a family next year -- I can tell these people right now. But if we're gonna go through with this we gotta do it together. I can't do it alone, Lizzy. I need to know you're one-hundred percent.

Liz looks at the waiting General. Turns her back on him. Her priorities suddenly slip into focus.

LIZ
I'm one hundred percent.

TOM
You say that, but...

LIZ
Tom. Our family. It's all that matters.

She's speaking from the heart. He smiles.

TOM
I believe you.

CASE AGENT (O.S.)
Mr. Keen? Is your wife coming?

Tom whips around. Greets the CASE AGENT with a big, warm smile and an extended hand as --

TOM
(to Liz / tender)
Let me handle this.

LIZ
Good luck, babe. Love you.

-- Liz hangs up. Smiles to herself. She loses herself in the warmth of Tom when General Ryker comes storming out of the office. Moving down the hallway.

LIZ
Sir?

The General turns to Liz.

LIZ
I want to personally tell you how sorry I am for your daughter's --

GENERAL RYKER
(seething)
You're not just out of a job. I'm gonna see to it the D.O.J. files charges. Criminal negligence. You better beg God my girl comes home alive because this thing's coming down on you, sweetheart.

Ryker marches off down the hallway.

LIZ
(calling out)
I'm gonna get her back.

As the General disappears, Liz plops down onto the bench. Feeling helpless. She looks at BETH'S CHARM BRACELET and clips it back around her wrist. Considers the tiny animals. She then opens her hand and we reveal --

-- a BURN SCAR on the inside of Liz's palm. It crawls up her wrist and into her sleeve like a some twisted, blooming vine. Liz makes a loose fist. Runs her fingertips over the uneven SCAR TISSUE; that habitual rolling motion.

We leave Liz there. Wrestling with some distant memory.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. RED'S HOLDING CHAMBER - SAME

An Interrogator from the High-Value Interrogation Team sits across from Red. They've been at this for hours.

INTERROGATOR
Is the girl dead?

Red's silent. Eyes locked on the Interrogator.

INTERROGATOR
Is that why we haven't heard from the abductors? No demands? What other reason would there be?
(inflamed)
It's been four hours. You think we're gonna overlook the fact you turned yourself in the exact same day this thing went down?

IN THE HIVE...

Cooper sees they're getting nowhere. Knocks on the glass.

COOPER
Kill the cameras. Everyone out.

CUT TO:

GENERAL RYKER. Chest full of medals. He sits down before Red who is not intimidated whatsoever.

GENERAL RYKER
The US Government doesn't negotiate with terrorists. But I'm not the government. I'm here as a father.

Red blinks at the General's medals as if they're meaningless.

GENERAL RYKER
Is this about immunity? You want your crimes forgiven? I'm personal friends with the Attorney General. There are things you've done that I can make people forget.

Silence. The General EXPLODES.

GENERAL RYKER
ANSWER ME! This is a my baby's life we're talking about. Your people haven't made one demand!

RED
I already told you people how this works. You wanna talk? Go get Elizabeth Keen.

The General stares daggers.

INT. THE HIVE - DAY

Liz does a walk of shame. Past Cooper. Past Ryker. All eyes are on Red's 'chosen one' as she makes her way into...

RED'S HOLDING CHAMBER.

Red extends his hand. Liz keeps her arms folded. He sees Liz is wearing the CHARM BRACELET Beth gave her; the one with the tiny plastic animals.

RED
Nice bobble. Reminds me of my daughter. She loved jewelry --

LIZ
Where's the girl?

RED
-- you women and your jewelry.

LIZ
It's been four hours.

RED
I told you Zamani would take her. Told you that's all I knew. It's in your hands now.

He notices the way Liz is nervously opening and closing her fist, running her fingers against the skin of her palm --

RED
Why do you do that?

-- she places her hand in her lap.

LIZ
I need your help with Zamani.

RED
How about we trade. You tell me, I tell you. Tell me about that scar on your palm. I've noticed how you hide it.

Liz swallows. Reluctant.

LIZ
There was a fire. I was fourteen.

RED
Someone tried to hurt you.

LIZ
Not exactly.

RED
But the scar, what does it remind you of? When you touch it?
(reaching out)
May I?

Liz reluctantly extends her hand. Red takes her palm, runs his fingertips over the scar tissue as if he might see into her past. It's uncomfortable. Red's thumb follows the scar up her arm, under her sleeve. He looks into her eyes.

RED
Is a child really what you want?

Liz pulls away. Stunned.

LIZ
How on earth do you know --

RED
I know it's exciting, that you've waited, but a baby can't fix what happened in the past.

She stands, indignant.

LIZ
How dare you. You lost the privilege of speaking about parenthood when you abandoned your wife and daughter on Christmas Eve. Addy, right? How old would she be now? Thirty? You don't know because you walked away, so keep the Fatherly advice to yourself.

RED
You won't find the girl until you learn to look at this differently.

LIZ
And how should I look at this?

RED
Like a criminal. It may come easier to you than you think.
(MORE)

RED (cont'd)
Shall I show you?

INT. F.B.I. / THE WAR ROOM - SAME

Liz and the other agents watch as Red walks the room eyeing the MASSIVE WALL OF CLUES. He moves with a sense of pride and curiosity. Takes in the details.

LIZ
So?

Red steps back. Considers the collage of PHOTOS and POLICE REPORTS. Silence. Then with complete confidence --

RED
Irrelevant.

-- he TEARS DOWN A MUG SHOT. Rips down a surveillance photo.

RED
Waste of time.

RESSLER
Hey, you can't just --

Red continues down the wall, pulling down precious documents, moving pieces. The analysts watch in disbelief as Red weeds out the unimportant. He grabs a surveillance photo and rips it in half; holds up the half with the image of a YOUNG SERB.

RED
Miroslav. He's more than a driver. They call him The Chemist. Weapons expert. Turned down MIT to work for al-Qaeda in South Africa.

Red pins THE CHEMIST to the wall, then grabs a photo of a GROUP OF MEN outside of bank --

RED
The German? Reinhardt? You're right that if money was involved he laundered it, but his Swiss account is a dead end. He runs everything through a former IRS man named Kagel. Works through the Caymans.
(eyes scanning)
What about the girl? What do you have on the girl and her father?

An analyst works keyboard. Images of BETH fill the screens. Beth's school portrait. Beth and her father, General Ryker.

RED
What do you see, Lizzy?

She blinks at Red. Only Tom calls her Lizzy.

LIZ
Well, the timeline would suggest a singular event. Something in DC. Not sure how the girl fits.

RED
What about the Chemist?

LIZ
Important. Well paid. What he's planning is expensive, maybe some kind of attack.

RED
You're thinking like a cop. What does a criminal see?

RESSLER
Okay, this is nonsense.

LIZ
Taking the general's daughter was risky. She's a well protected --

RED
-- she's critical to the mission.

Cooper and Ressler exchange a suspect glance as Liz scans the photos. She finds a picture of Zamani reaching into a pocket-sized CONTAINER OF PILLS.

LIZ
Zamani's sick. C.I.A. says he carries Nipah virus. Dying makes him dangerous. Nothing to lose.

RED
And the General's daughter?

LIZ
Her father, the General, spent time in Bosnia supporting NATO troops --

RED
Zamani's home turf.

LIZ
-- he came under public scrutiny when U.S. led forces bombed a suspected chemical weapons facility in the Bihac pocket region.
(MORE)

LIZ (cont'd)
Never did find proof of the weapons, but the bombing released unknown chemical agents. Poisoned the village and...
(then, realizing)
Jesus. His family.

Liz sees a photo of Zamani with his YOUNG SONS.

RED
Follow that pit in your stomach.

LIZ
Zamani's wife and sons were made sick in the bombing orchestrated by General Ryker. They died. Zamani survived. He wants revenge.
(realizing)
He hired the Chemist to build a bomb. Detonate it in DC. Has a return flight tomorrow at 10:00 AM which means it's gonna happen soon. Tomorrow morning. His dying wish.

Red guides Liz. Exhilarated. The teacher and the pupil.

RED
Why no offer to trade the girl?

LIZ
Because he needs her. Zamani lost his family, he's gonna use the General's daughter to even the score. Deliver the bomb.

The room ERUPTS into a hive of activity. Red quietly turns to Liz, an olive branch.

RED
I have an acquaintance. They call him the Innkeeper; runs a series of safe-houses. Lean on him. He'll know where to find the Chemist. Find the Chemist, you find Zamani.

LIZ
Where is this Innkeeper?

RED
If I tell you, you have to give me something in return. I need to be moved. Higher security.

LIZ
You're inside the F.B.I.

RED
My point exactly. It's not safe.

EXT. FT. MCNAIR ARMY BASE - DAY

An F.B.I. convoy escorts RED'S ARMORED TRUCK past uniformed guards and onto the historic U.S. military base on Greenleaf Point. Majestic views of the Potomac. Sprawling lawns.

INT. SUN-DIAL MOTEL - DAY

Agents pour into the tiny motel near Reagan National. They throw "THE INNKEEPER" to the ground. Hands behind his head. Boots on his neck. As the Innkeeper begs, we JUMP BACK TO:

EXT. GENERAL'S ROW / FORT MCNAIR - DAY

Red steps from his armored vehicle and takes in his new home; a breathtaking COLONIAL MANSION overlooking the Potomac. The Army owned home is not only historic, but one of the most well protected estates in all of Washington.

INSIDE RED'S HOUSE...

Agents remove the mirrors and silverware. Cameras are installed. Red admires the beautiful coffered ceilings. It's a fitting home for a military man.

INT. NEGLECTED APARTMENT / IVY CITY - DAY

SWAT TEAMS burst down the door and the inhabitants scramble. Some sort of lab. The agents push through a door into a room filled with elaborate BOMB MAKING SUPPLIES. They pull a FIGURE down from the fire escape. Hands behind the head.

EXT. SHORELINE / FT. MCNAIR - DAY

Ressler finds Liz looking out at the boat yard, drinking in the beauty of the water. A rare moment of peace.

RESSLER
They found the lab. Interrogating the Chemist as we speak.

LIZ
We have the Chemist?

RESSLER
Big fish, right? Based on what we pulled from his lab we think we've caught it in time. Shut down his operation. We're making progress.

LIZ
What about the bomb?

RESSLER
HDS is running samples. We'll have results within hours.

Liz stares out at the water. He lights a cigarette.

LIZ
I didn't choose any of this.

He doesn't believe her.

RESSLER
(feigned)
Of course not. He chose you. There's a bigger picture we're not seeing, but we will. Give it time.

LIZ
I gotta clear my head. Get out of here for a bit. Grab a shower.

RESSLER
Don't go too far.

As she walks away, he watches her go. There's not a bone in Ressler's body that trusts this woman.

INT. LIZ'S BROWNSTONE - DUSK

Liz returns home. It's like entering another world. Soft music. Candlelight. In the entry, she finds a small PINK WICKER ROCKING CHAIR stuffed with pink blankets, books and bibs. Mylar balloons proclaim, *'IT'S A GIRL!'* --

LIZ
Oh, my God. Did they say yes?!

-- in the arms of a stuffed animal Liz finds the ADOPTION PAPERWORK. Opens it. Tears standing in her eyes.

LIZ
It's OFFICIAL? How did you -- I can't believe...

Liz rounds the corner to find Tom, his back to her, seated at a beautiful candlelight dinner. There's Champagne. Flowers. Her shoulders drop as Liz sits down and looks to Tom to see --

LIZ
We're gonna have a baby!

-- TOM IS DUCT TAPED TO THE CHAIR.

He's been BEATEN and TORTURED. Zip-ties on his wrists. Tape over his mouth. Pure fucking horror in his eyes.

Liz's heart stops as a DARK FIGURE reaches past her breast, into her jacket, and delicately removes her WEAPON. He's a colorless TWIG OF A MAN, chemical burns on his neck and jaw. As he sits at the table between Liz and Tom we meet --

-- RANKO ZAMANI. An anemic little ghost. Looks like he was raised in a veal cage. Zamani speaks with a thick SERBIAN ACCENT. His lungs rattle with each breath.

ZAMANI
Tom and I already have met. Been talking. Trying to figure out how you knew I was in town.

Liz looks to Tom. There's blood matted in his hair. The vessels of one eye have ruptured.

ZAMANI
I tell him you took the General's daughter minutes before I was going to. Forced me to re-think things, which I did quite well, I think.

Zamani serves himself a slice of fish --

ZAMANI
But then your people come for my Chemist friend.

-- pours himself a glass of Champagne and takes a drink.

ZAMANI
I was finished with the Chemist, so you save me a payment for services. For that, I thank you. But it did make me wonder what else you know.
(pointed)
What else do you know?

LIZ
I don't -- Tom, please...

Zamani takes a bite, chewing through heavy, hoarse breaths.

ZAMANI
Over here. I ask question. What else do you know about my plan?

LIZ
An attack... uhm, a bomb maybe. We're not sure, we don't know --

Zamani stands. Pours Liz a glass of Champagne.

LIZ
-- we only knew about the girl. Everything else... speculation.
(through tears)
Tom, babe, it's gonna be okay --

SPLOOSH -- Zamani buries his STEAK KNIFE in the meat of Tom's thigh. Tom let's out a MUFFLED SCREAM.

ZAMANI
What. Else. Do you know?

LIZ
(frantic / sobbing)
I swear... nothing...

Zamani holds his chest. Removes a POCKET-SIZED CONTAINER of pills from his jacket and puts one on his tongue. Chases it with Champagne. As he does, we see --

-- a penny-sized TATTOO on the back of Zamani's hand. It's the SILHOUETTE OF A SUNBURST; jagged rays reaching out from the center, violently whipping about.

ZAMANI
You are not as smart as Reddington says. My friend, he was always so obsessed with you. Not sure why.
(taunting)
What I have planned will make for many casualties. Chemical agents, no? What you call... biblical. So now you have choice: stop me now and save many Americans... or save only one. What do you choose?

Zamani yanks the knife from Tom's thigh and PLUNGES IT INTO TOM'S ABDOMEN. He turns the knife, DRAGS IT to his sternum. Liz SCREAMS. She LEAPS UP as --

-- Zamani leaves. Liz chases, but stutter-steps back to Tom. Can't have both. She runs to Tom. Holds him. Dials 911 as Zamani vanishes. Blood everywhere. Phone ringing.

LIZ
Hold on, babe. You're gonna be fine. We're gonna get you help.

EMERGENCY OPERATOR (O.S.)
911. What's your emergency?

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Doors FLY OPEN. Medics swarm. Hospital staffers rush to transport Tom out of the ambulance as --

WHAM!!!

-- we BURST THROUGH emergency room doors. Down a hall. Liz runs alongside Tom's gurney, covered in smeared blood. Tom's drifting in and out of consciousness. Voices fading until...

INT. HOSPITAL / WAITING ROOM - LATER

POLICE interview Liz. There's no sound. All she can hear is their surreal murmur, as if underwater. Liz looks up to find Ressler entering the ER. He approaches, arms open, and Liz collapses into him.

LATER...

Liz sits with Ressler. Trying to process. Still numb.

RESSLER
The Chemist. We lost him. Hung himself just over an hour ago.
(pressing)
I totally understand, and we don't have to talk about this if you can't, but it's critical that you tell me anything Zamani may have said. Did you learn anything?

LIZ
(elsewhere)
It's biological.

RESSLER
The bomb? He said that?

LIZ
He said it's gonna be biblical.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Tom lies in a hospital bed. Tubes and wires protruding from his chest. Liz sits beside Tom. Holding his hand. Watching machines breathe for the man she loves.

LIZ
Babe... if you can hear me... you can't let this happen. Not today. This was supposed to be a happy day. The beginning...
(MORE)

LIZ (cont'd)
(scared / searching)
You're the one good thing in my life. I don't know how it works without you. Don't leave me alone.

We leave her, praying over her dying husband.

EXT. LIZ'S CAR (PARKED) - NIGHT

It's raining now. Liz sits in her car. Hiding from the world and sobbing. Her emotions swelling inside until --

-- Liz repeatedly POUNDS THE STEERING WHEEL in a violent outburst. The surge of pure rage CATAPULTS us to:

INT. RED'S HOUSE / FT. MCNAIR - NIGHT

We follow Liz down a corridor. Fueled by anger. Fearless.

IN THE STUDY...

Red stands. Liz is on fire. A boiling pot of crazy.

LIZ
Did you send him? Are you the one who did this?

RED
Lizzy, what's [wrong] --

LIZ
Don't call me Lizzy, goddamnit. He was in my house. My husband's on a ventilator because Zamani came --

Red face goes blank.

RED
Tell me what happened.

LIZ
Don't play stupid. You're the only thing connecting us. He told me that you've talked to him about me.

RED
Liz, you have to tell me what happened. What did you see?

LIZ
What did I... I saw the love of my life being tortured. Disemboweled.

RED
No, what did you see?

LIZ
Stop acting like we're some kind of team. I don't know you. I didn't ask for any of --

RED
This is bigger than us, Liz. We're at the center of something that you can't possibly understand.

LIZ
Goddamnit, I want the truth!

RED
Honestly?! The truth? The truth is Zamani did you a favor, Lizzy.

Suddenly, Liz pulls THE PEN from her pocket --

STABS RED IN THE NECK

-- spins around and traps him in a military choke-hold.

LIZ
I told you not to call me Lizzy.

She holds her thumb over the bloody PUNCTURE WOUND in Red's neck. His breathing quickens. His eyes bulge.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Now, you were in the army, so you know from training I just punched a hole in your carotid. The artery will likely vasospasm; reduce its own flow. Best chance, one minute before you pass out. So here's how it works, asshole...
(fearless)
You tell me how I find Zamani and make this right, or I let you die right here. Understand?

RED
Yes, but...

Red gasps for breath, clinging to life.

RED
...if you let me die, you'll never learn the truth about your husband.

LIZ
You know nothing about my husband.

Red allows a faint little smile. Strangely, Liz is the one who now looks trapped. Wheels turning. She has no choice but to call --

LIZ
GUARD, I NEED A MEDIC!

Red falls to the floor. Guards rush in as Liz collapses next to Red trying to stop the bleeding. She barks orders. Blood everywhere. We jump from the chaotic frenzy to:

EXT. FT. MCNAIR - LATER

It's quiet. The silence is jarring. Liz stands with Ressler and Cooper outside the house. Liz is still shaky.

RESSLER
Why would he try to kill himself?

LIZ
Why's he doing any of this? It happened. I can't explain.

RESSLER
Your back was conveniently toward the camera, so the footage is inconclusive, but you know what I think? I think you're lying. You've lost your objectivity --

LIZ
Objectivity? What do you expect?

COOPER
Liz, calm down.

LIZ
My husband was stabbed. He's on life support. I have a house full of beat cops waiting for my statement.

COOPER
Liz, this is about your safety. The last thing I want is you in the same room with this guy.

LIZ
(realizing)
Don't push me out of this.

COOPER
Liz. It's not a request. Go home.

Liz turns, defeated. As she walks away they watch her go.

RESSLER
(mistrustful)
Doesn't feel right. There's something she's not telling us.

INT. LIZ AND TOM'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Liz sits in a fog, doing another round of interviews with the POLICE. There's no sound. Only a dull BUZZING SOUND. Liz watches the detectives comb through her life. They collect samples. Take pictures. But Liz can't take her eyes off of Tom's DRIED-BLACK BLOOD in the carpet.

LATER...

After the police are gone. Liz is on her hands and knees scrubbing the blood out of the carpet with a bucket and brush. As she does the BUZZING SOUND swells, mimicking her rising frustration.

The harder she scrubs the more helpless Liz feels. She is completely powerless. Finally, Liz THROWS the brush across the room. Bloody water splatters the wall as we CUT TO:

INT. WALTER REED MEDICAL CENTER - DAWN

We follow Liz down a long, narrow hallway. She flashes her badge. Moves past security. Finds Ressler who is speaking with another agent outside Red's room.

RESSLER
Can't go in. He's with the Nurse.
(then)
You shouldn't even be here.

LIZ
I know. I was out of line before, but I can't just sit at home and wait while there's a chemical...

Liz trails off as the MALE NURSE exits Red's room. Pushes his cart past. She waits until the Nurse is out of earshot.

LIZ
This isn't just about me and Tom. That weapon is going to detonate. We still don't know where. Red is willing to talk to me. Please. Give me ten minutes.

Reluctant, Ressler nods. Allows Liz past. But as Liz steps into RED'S ROOM she sees the bed is EMPTY. The window OPEN. Her entire world seems to slow down and Liz realizes...

Red is <u>GONE</u>.

Liz steps back into the hall. Sees the MALE NURSE who just left Red's room. He steps into the elevator. As he locks eyes with Liz, we recognize the Nurse as Red's chauffeur from the opening scene: THE MAN IN THE GREY FLANNEL SUIT. Liz steps toward him, dizzy with fear, but the elevator doors close and we JUMP TO:

INT. PUBLIC BATHROOM - UNKNOWN

Red cuts into his shoulder with a surgical scalpel. He opens the muscle with the tip of the blade. Digs out the tiny RFID microchip. He uses the tip of the knife to hold the chip up to the light. Admires the device. The sound of an oncoming whistle tells us we're...

INT. UNION STATION - SAME

Red shoulders his way through the Rotunda. He's now wearing a stolen topcoat and fedora. He finds a table outside a busy coffee shop and sits down next to a thin, HUNCHED FIGURE. As the man turns, we reveal it's Zamani. The two men hug.

RED
It's good to see you, old friend.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. UNION STATION - SAME

Zamani sits with Red, genuinely humbled.

ZAMANI
Face to face. What an honor.

RED
I felt it was important to handle these final details myself.

Red hands Zamani a PASSPORT and TRAVEL DOCUMENTS.

RED
How did things go with Agent Keen?

ZAMANI
Paid her a visit like you asked.

RED
And Tom? The Husband?

ZAMANI
Like you asked. Small price to pay for getting me out of the country.

INT. WALTER REED MEDICAL CENTER - SAME

The hospital is in lock-down. F.B.I. response teams are in full force. Ressler hangs up his phone, turns to Cooper.

RESSLER
You do realize this is exactly what he wanted?! To get here. Where security's weak. We played right into his hand.

LIZ
Why escape? He just surrendered?

RESSLER
Who knows?! This guy has a plan and he's played us at every turn.

A breathless TECH bursts into the room, chest heaving.

TECH
We were able to remotely reactivate the chip. He's at Columbus Circle.

COOPER
My God. Union Station.

LIZ
Wait. No. If Red pulled the chip he would have destroyed --

COOPER
I need you to stay here.

LIZ
Red is smarter than this.

The agents race out, leaving Liz, as we JUMP BACK TO:

INT. UNION STATION - SAME

Red sits with Zamani, inspecting his eyes.

RED
Word is you have big plans.

Zamani shrugs.

RED
Tell me one thing: the General's daughter. Why take such a risk?

ZAMANI
This is about so much more than one girl; it's about the children. All of them. The ones who will grow up with my memory living inside them, as I've lived with the memory your country gave me...

Zamani holds his chest. Shallow breaths. He reaches into his jacket and removes his pocket-sized CONTAINER OF PILLS. As he takes one out. Places it on his tongue.

ZAMANI
I'm giving their plague back to them. Giving it to their children. In sixty years they'll be talking about this day, about my legacy.

RED
We should all be so fortunate.

Red stands as F.B.I. AGENTS STORM THE ROTUNDA --

-- RESSLER leads the charge, pushing through the crowd. In his earpiece, he's guided by a TECH in a surveillance van, but when he arrives at the table Red and Zamani are gone.

TECH (O.S.)
Up ahead. Fifty yards.

Ressler moves toward Red. Toward the trains. Red quickly opens his phone and dials as we INTERCUT with Liz inside --

RED'S HOSPITAL ROOM

-- her CELL RINGS. Liz answers.

RED (O.S.)
There's a wrinkle. Zamani wants more than the General's daughter.

LIZ
(perplexed)
Red?! Where are -- how did you...

She steps away from the room. Away from the police.

RED (O.S.)
He's after children.

LIZ
You son of a bitch, if you think I'm not gonna hunt you down and --

RED (O.S.)
We don't have time. I need you to set aside your anger. Listen to me. I think between the two of us there may be an answer.

Liz bursts through the doors and steps --

OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL.

-- scans the parking lot. Eyes searching. Halfway expecting to find Red watching her.

RED (O.S.)
I need you to tell me what Zamani said. Think back. What happened in your house? What did you see?

Liz tries to remember, her world SPINNING.

LIZ
He, uhm, he asked about the girl... and about the Chemist...

IMAGES FLIP THROUGH LIZ'S MEMORY. We see FLASHES of the confrontation. Of Zamani torturing Tom --

RED (O.S.)
What did you see? At your house?

-- the dizzy assault of MEMORIES take Liz to:

INT. LIZ'S BROWNSTONE - (**FLASHBACK**)

We remember Zamani standing over Tom. He opens his container of pills and places one on his tongue. As he does we see the penny-sized TATTOO on the back of Zamani's hand --

LIZ (O.S.)
There was a tattoo.

-- it's the SILHOUETTE OF A SUNBURST; jagged rays reaching out from the center, violently whipping about.

RED (O.S.)
Zamani's Serbian Orthodox. He wouldn't tattoo himself. Body modification is a desecration.

LIZ (O.S.)
I know what I saw. This mark, I've seen it before --

RED (O.S.)
It wasn't a tattoo.

ON LIZ (**PRESENT**)

As she wrestles with a memory. Thinking back.

RED (O.S.)
Where did you see it, Lizzy?

INT. LIZ'S BROWNSTONE (**FLASHBACK**)

Liz remembers her frantic morning. Being late. Tom holding the TWO TOURISM BROCHURES for his field trip.

TOM
Air and Space or the National Zoo?

Liz flicks the zoo brochure. We see the same SUNBURST IMAGE in the brochure. The logo for the Smithsonian National Zoo.

LIZ (O.S.)
It wasn't a tattoo...
(realizing)
...it was a stamp.

BACK TO LIZ (**PRESENT**)

LIZ
He's gonna bomb the National Zoo.

INT. UNION STATION - SAME

Ressler shadows Red through the station. But as the train pulls away, Ressler sees the platform is empty.

RESSLER
Where did he go?

TECH (O.S.)
In front of you. Twenty yards.

RESSLER
There's nobody.

Ressler sees the TUNNEL and jumps down onto THE TRACKS.

INT. LIZ'S CAR (MOVING) - SAME

Liz weaves through traffic. Cell phone to her ear.

LIZ
(on the phone)
Assistant Director Harold Cooper.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
What's your clearance code?

LIZ
I don't... I'm not sure... it's my first day and they haven't issued --

OPERATOR
Without a clearance code I can't --

Liz hangs up. Dials Ressler. She's sent to voice mail.

LIZ
(on the phone)
Ressler, call me. The zoo. Zamani's gonna hit the <u>zoo</u>.

INT. UNION STATION - SAME

Agents shove through the station. Searching for the bomb. Cooper grabs a little girl with a backpack and turns her around. It's not Beth. He searches the crowd as --

-- another agent sees a GIRL. Whips her around. Again, not Beth. It's a frantic search. Backpacks. Dark haired little girls. A needle in a haystack.

EXT. THE NATIONAL ZOO - SAME

The hand of a child is STAMPED at the entry. The <u>same</u> PENNY-SIZED TATTOO Liz saw on Zamani's hand: an ADMISSION STAMP.

INSIDE THE ZOO...

Liz pushes past families. Children everywhere. She spots BETH SITTING ON A BENCH. The little girl looks terrified.

LIZ
Beth, remember me? Are you alone?

BETH
He said to wait here for my Daddy.

Liz sees Beth's BACKPACK and carefully unzips it to reveal --

THE BOMB.

It's a marvel of molded plastic and parallel circuitry. A digital countdown reads "00:03 MIN / 00:13 SEC". Liz takes a heart pounding breath. Reaches for the shoulder strap.

BETH
(through tears)
He said not to take it off...

Beth unzips her sweater to reveal a TANGLE OF WIRES wrapped around her torso. The backpack is booby trapped. Slowly, Liz reaches out. Her phone RINGS. She JUMPS. Answers.

RED (O.S.)
Whatever you do, don't touch it.

LIZ
There's less than three minutes. I gotta evacuate... call the bomb --

RED (O.S.)
Your people will never be there in time. My friend. He's on his way.

LIZ
Your friend? What [friend] --

The call disconnects as we're HURLED BACK TO:

INT. SUBWAY TUNNELS - SAME

A flashlight beam dances in the dark as Ressler chases Red INTO THE TUNNELS. Something falls from Red's pocket before Red slows down. Slump shouldered. Out of breath.

RESSLER
Hands in the air.

Ressler trains his WEAPON on Red. Picks up the small tin canister Red dropped as THE LIGHT OF A TRAIN illuminates the tunnel. Reveals it's not Red he's been chasing but Zamani. He clutches his chest. Lungs failing.

RESSLER
GET OFF THE TRACK.

Ressler steps closer. The TRAIN is almost upon them.

ZAMANI
Tell the General his girl was an "unfortunate civilian casualty".

He opens his arms as --

THE TRAIN EVISCERATES ZAMANI.

Ressler ducks into the nearby alcove. Inches from the train. As it passes, he opens Zamani's medicine canister and dumps the contents into his palm. Among the pills he finds --

RESSLER
Son of a bitch.

-- the blood crusted RFID CHIP Red carved from his shoulder.

EXT. NATIONAL ZOO - SAME

Liz is on the phone, calling for backup, when she glances at the timer on the bomb. "01 MIN / 00:16 SEC". Their fate is all but sealed. Liz looks to Beth. Behind her, she sees --

-- a UKRAINIAN MAN WITH A DUFFLE BAG emerge through the sea of kids. He's bald. Blond eyebrows. Looks like a thumb. The Ukrainian sits on the bench next to Beth and removes a TOOL KIT from his bag.

LIZ
Who are you? What are you doing?

The Ukrainian barks at Liz in Slavic as he cuts open Beth's backpack with a pair of surgical scissors.

LIZ
I don't know what you're saying.

He motions for them to be still. Liz holds Beth. Watches in disbelief as the Ukrainian works to dismantle the bomb. Beth tries not to move, but she can't help it. The Ukrainian is frantic. Screaming. Confusion in a foreign language. Beth cries as Liz sees --

-- "00:32 SEC". This is it. She finds Beth's eyes.

LIZ
You know, I was really scared once, too. I was all alone, but I had a secret weapon to help me. My Daddy gave it to me. You wanna see my secret weapon?

Beth quivers. Nods yes. Liz slowly, gently, opens her palm to reveal her BURN SCAR.

LIZ
I never show this to anybody. It's super special. Like magic.

BETH
What does it do?

Liz is soft and calm. Pure motherly instinct.

LIZ
Any time I feel scared or afraid I touch it... and it makes all the bad things go away, makes me brave. Do you want to see if it can make you brave?

Beth nods. Places her palm in Liz's palm. As she does, Liz wraps her free arm around the girl and closes her eyes. The SOUND EVAPORATES. Tranquil silence. It's as if the entire world falls away, nothing else matters, until --

UKRAINIAN
<u>ÚZASNY</u>!!!

-- Liz's eyes POP OPEN. The Ukrainian throws his arms around Liz, talking a mile a minute. Kiss her square on the mouth.

LIZ
Did you stop it?

He removes the bomb from the backpack. The countdown clock is stopped at "00:12 SEC". A collective exhale as --

LIZ
HE <u>STOPPED</u> IT.

-- the Ukrainian places the device in his duffle bag.

LIZ
What? Wait. What are you...

RED (O.S.)
Consider the device his payment.

The Ukrainian turns to see RED approaching through the crowd. They embrace. The Ukrainian picks Red up in a full-on bear hug. He then turns and zips his bag, blows Liz a kiss, and saunters off into the zoo with a bomb in his duffle bag.

LIZ
What the -- WAIT! He can't... that's a biological weapon.

RED
He's fascinated with the things. Has more use for it than I do.
(to Beth)
Run along, now. Daddy's here.

Beth whips around to see GENERAL RYKER running toward them. With RESSLER. Surrounded by agents. Beth grabs Liz's hand. Looks at the scar. It really is magic. As the AGENTS rush in, Red lowers himself to his knees, hands behind his head.

LIZ
I'm gonna ask you again. I deserve the truth. Did you send Zamani to kill my husband?

RED
We're going to make a great team.

F.B.I. AGENTS storm Red. Guns drawn. Ressler takes him down but Red's eyes never leave Liz. He smiles as if she has just passed some strange, perverted test.

BETH (O.S.)
DADDY!

General Ryker lowers himself to his knee and Beth jumps into her father's arms. As they embrace, Ryker smiles to Liz.

GENERAL RYKER
Thank you.

A weight is lifted. Liz's shoulder's drop. We HEAR:

COOPER (O.S.)
Who. Is. The Ukrainian?

RED (O.S.)
His name slips my memory.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM / F.B.I. - DAY

A review is underway. Red sits across from Liz, Cooper, Ressler and a team of D.O.J. LIAISONS. Tempers run hot.

COOPER
You gave away a biological weapon.

RED
So the bomb is gone. It didn't detonate. The girl's safe. Zamani is dead. Frankly, I think all this worked out swimmingly.

RESSLER
(livid)
This was never about Zamani. You surrendered and infiltrated the F.B.I. to get at our intelligence. To get that weapon.

RED
Agent Ressler, are you suggesting I would surrender myself and use your resources to hunt down Zamani and settle a score? Steal a biological weapon? That all of this is part of a some larger plot?
(flat)
I think it's more likely I tried to help in good faith, but had to finish the job on my own because you were too goddamned stupid.

Ressler stands, livid.

COOPER
I think we're finished.

RED
This was fun. Let's do it again.

Cooper closes his notebook. Meeting over. But as the agents begin to gather their things, Red remains seated.

RED
No, really. Let's do it again. You do understand, Zamani was only the first.

COOPER
First what?

RED
Name. On the Blacklist.

Cooper looks confused. Throws Liz a glance.

COOPER
What's... the Blacklist?

RED
It's why we're all here, of course. My wish list. A list of names I've been cultivating for over twenty-five years; politicians, mobsters, hackers and spies.

RESSLER
We have our own list.

RED
Please, Agent Ressler, we all know your "Top Ten" is little more than a publicity campaign. Junior high bullies at best. I'm talking about the criminals who matter. The men I've spent my life protecting -- ones you can't find because you don't know they exist. Zamani was a small fish. I'm Ahab. But if you want the whales on my list, you gotta play by my rules.

Cooper sits, intrigued. Liz lingers.

RED
One: I never stay in the same location two nights in a row. Two: I want security. I've already vetted a list of twenty-four Secret Service agents, pick two from my list. Three: I want an RFID tag imbedded in my neck -- not that garbage from VeriChip you stuck in my arm, I want the DARPA tested, fully encrypted, 8-millimeter tag. Four: whatever I tell you falls under an immunity package that I negotiate myself. And finally... most importantly...
(flat)
I speak only with Elizabeth Keen.

The room turns to Liz in the doorway, but she is gone.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Cooper stands with Liz outside Tom's room.

COOPER
...do you understand? We have one of the most dangerous criminals in the history of this agency in our possession.
(MORE)

COOPER (cont'd)
Imagine what he could provide -- the kind of access the F.B.I., C.I.A., N.S.A. could only dream of. Liz the deal's in place, but he'll only talk to you.

LIZ
Then maybe you should have checked with me before you cut the deal.

Liz walks off. Has a dying husband to tend too.

INT. LIZ AND TOM'S BROWNSTONE - SAME

Liz is on her hands and knees trying to scrub Tom's blood out of the carpet. She sits back. Looks at the mess. She wants this hideous reminder out of her life for good so we CUT TO:

LATER...

The furniture is shoved aside and Liz is ripping back the carpet with a claw hammer. Going mad. She pulls back a swath, but stops when she sees --

-- a series of CUTS IN THE SUB-FLOOR. Boards that have been removed and replaced. It's a HIDING PLACE. She uses the hammer to pry up the boards to reveal a LARGE DUFFLE BAG.

AT THE KITCHEN TABLE...

Liz sits in silence staring at the bag. Heart in her throat. She finally finds the courage to unzip the bag to discover --

-- BUNDLES OF CASH. Lots of them. Several hundred thousand dollars worth. Liz sits thunderstruck. She reaches into the side pocket of the duffle bag where she finds --

-- a BUL M-5 PISTOL. She holds the gun in her fist. A sick, drunken feeling washes over Liz as she reaches back into the pocket and removes a bundle of --

-- PASSPORTS. Twelve of them. Each with a different name and nationality. Each one with a PHOTO OF HER HUSBAND TOM. Liz trembles. Red was right. The man she has come to love is an imposter. That eerie, drunken feeling carries us to:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The tubes are gone, but Tom is still unconscious. Liz sits at his side. Betrayed. Considering the man she thought she loved.

TOM (O.S.)
Was I dreaming?

Liz blinks up. Sees Tom staring up at her. She looks into the gaze of this imposter, totally paralyzed.

LIZ
Dreaming about what?

TOM
Are we really gonna have a baby?

Everything Liz is holding inside begins to crumble. The tears come fast. Her world spinning. She fakes a smile and clutches her right hand into a fist; nervously running her fingers against the skin of her palm until we JUMP TO:

INT. BLACK-SITE PRISON - UNKNOWN

ARMED SOLDIERS escort Liz through a series of security check points. Into a the bowels of an anonymous ship. She carries herself with a sense of purpose. A fire in her belly. Liz is shown through a doorway and into...

A PRISON CELL.

Red steps forward. Out of the shadows. That soft smile.

RED
You've discovered something about your beloved husband, haven't you Lizzy?

She SNAPS back --

LIZ
My name's Liz, not Lizzy. To you I'm Agent Keen. Now, let me tell you how this is gonna work: I ask the questions. You answer. Screw with me and I walk. Starting right now, there are no more games, no more secrets...
(fearless)
I want the <u>truth</u>.

RED
I'm here to help you find it.

She stares at Red. Into the unknown.

LIZ
Tell me about this Blacklist.

CUT TO BLACK.

<u>THE END</u>