



THE RESET

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY BY RUDI O'MEARA

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INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

A formerly ornate, now profoundly shabby hotel room.
Threadbare revival furniture. Chipped plaster moldings.
Renaissance knock-offs in gilded frames.

SUPER: HOTEL METROPOL, MOSCOW, NEAR FUTURE

The blue glow of an unseen television paints the dingy walls
with electric light as a NEWSCASTER drones on, mid-stream:

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
(English accent)
...as the new populist regime seeks
restored diplomatic relations...

Seated at a mahogany desk, a man in a crisply-pressed white
shirt pulls a handgun slide back-and-forth:

CLICK. CLICK.

A single brass casing hits a desktop with a muted PING.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
...the stakes could not be higher
for this week's peace talks...

THUD. THUD. THUD.

Disassembled pistol parts rain down onto the mahogany.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
...aimed at deescalating tensions
across all of central Europe.

The man pulls the pistol's recoil spring, lays it carefully
down next to the barrel and magazine.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
And with the radiation cloud still
plaguing eastern Poland...

Meet: RAY STILLMAN (30s) a watchful sentinel with sharp
features and a checkered past.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
...now stretching into portions of
Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania...

Ray reaches across himself, grabs a remote, aims it.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
...Croatia, Austria, Switzerland,
and the Czech--

CLICK. Off goes the television.

Ray sets the remote down, continues cleaning the gun with a silent, clinical precision.

Pianist precise fingers. Empty eyes elsewhere.

RAY (V.O.)
First thing they teach you at The Academy, on the range, is that a bullet travels twenty-six hundred feet per second in dry air.

In the distance behind him: a young woman with a river of auburn curls sits up in bed, wrapped in white sheets.

RAY (V.O.)
But the sound of gunfire only moves at eleven hundred, twenty five feet per second.

The woman behind him, NATASHA LAZAREV (30s) regards Ray with a time tested, narrow-eyed concern.

She's his peer. His better half. His reluctant protector.

RAY (V.O.)
So by the time your senses kick in, by the time your body reacts, it's already too late by half.

Natasha turns, looks to the inky black windows, lifts her wrist to check the time.

Sensing her, Ray's face shifts, hardens. His defenses go up.

RAY (V.O.)
That's why all that matters is what *might* happen. What *will* happen.
(beat)
And when.

NATASHA
(slight Russian accent)
I can always tell where you are when you're not here.
(beat)
There, then. '29. Always.

Ray's hands slow. He doesn't look back.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
She wouldn't have put you back on
her detail if she didn't know you
were 100% back in the game.

Ray just nods, doesn't reply.

Natasha, used to his stubborn, self-punishing distance,
reaches to the bench at the foot of the bed for her blouse.

And her shoulder-holster.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
Maybe this was a mistake.

She slips one sleeve on, then the other, swivels her feet to
the floor, tugs her holster with her.

RAY
What?

She waves a hand through the dead air between them.

The distance.

NATASHA
This. You and me. All of it.

As she steps into the shadows behind him, Ray calmly SLAMS
his magazine back into the grip of his gun.

CLICK.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
You'll never understand how hard it
is, rising through the ranks of the
biggest dick-swinging boys' club in
the free fucking world.

Ray looks to her dim reflection in the grime-coated windows
to his right. Nods. Can't argue that.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
You want me to have your back so
that you can have her's?

She reaches for the doorknob, grips it firmly.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
That takes trust, Ray. Trust and--

RAY
Listen--

Instead of waiting, instead of pausing, Natasha pulls the door open, looks both ways up and down the hall.

Not wanting to be spotted.

NATASHA
See ya over there. Don't be late.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

A vast, gold-gilt hall full of formally-dressed DIGNITARIES seated at gaudily decorated tables.

SUPER: PALACE OF FACETS, MOSCOW, LATER THAT NIGHT

At the center of each table: two tall dish-shaped glass centerpieces each with the American and Russian seals etched into them.

Ray, now dressed in a form-fitting black suit, meticulously weaves his way through a tangle of WAITSTAFF in starched red and white uniforms.

Behind him, we can barely make out a tall man at a lectern addressing the applauding throngs in MELLIFLUOUS RUSSIAN.

This is Russian President VICTOR TARASOV (late 50s). A peace-seeking reformer desperate for change.

TARASOV
(subtitled Russian)
*My recent talks with the duly
elected leaders of the other
nuclear powers around the world...*

Ray pauses, turns to see a bevy of NERVOUS AGENTS sweep the room, lit by the warm glow of crystal chandeliers.

Among them, Natasha (now clad in a jet-black ball gown) discretely lifts a finger to her ear, speaks into her wrist:

NATASHA (V.O.)
(over Ray's earpiece)
Comms check, over.

Ray looks to her, nods. She subtly winks back. Sorry.

As she does, we hear the VOICE of an unseen ENGLISH TRANSLATOR echo through the hall:

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR (O.S.)
...have made it clear to me that
there is a deep desire to overcome
military conflict at all costs.

Beyond Natasha, another more senior agent stands surveying the room with an icy reserve.

Meet: SPECIAL AGENT OLIVER FERRIS (late 50s) deeply lined face, thinning hair, the battered body of a former warrior.

Their boss.

OLIVER (V.O.)
(into his wrist)
Confirmed.

While Tarasov continues his REMARKS in Russian, a shambling bear of a man, ALEXEI VOLKOV (40s) steps up next to Ray.

ALEXEI
(sotto, to Ray)
Same shit Gorbachev promised over
forty years ago.

Ray EXHALES slowly.

There's only enmity between these two.

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR (O.S.)
...and to put an end to this state
of forever war once and for all.

Ray's eyes drift toward regal but not imperious middle-aged woman seated at a resplendent table opposite the lectern.

This is American President SOPHIA MORALES (early 60s)
Tarasov's hopeful partner in peace.

TARASOV
(subtitled Russian)
*Here's to a new-found and long-
lasting, spirit of cooperation...*

Morales lifts her glass.

Alexei scowls.

ALEXEI
Can't believe she still trusts you.
(beat)
After all that's *happened*.

Ray ignores this, looks to a long table full of pallid, over-stuffed RUSSIAN DIGNITARIES (60s).

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR (O.S.)
...between the Russian Federation
and the United States of America.

RAY
(sotto, to Alexei)
Which one?

ALEXEI
Need to know.

Ray stares at him, stone-faced.

Alexei caves:

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Third down. Gray suit.

Ray spies a balding man in a gray suit, VICTOR MARKOV (60s) seated at the table with one hand cupping an oversized white translation earpiece.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Markov. FSB. Psychoacoustics.

Ray rolls his eyes. *This fucking country.*

Alexei grins, looks left just as a YOUNG WAITER (20s) emerges from a curtained passageway clutching a bottle of champagne wrapped in white cloth.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
What's it say on your flimsy little
badges again?

Ray tracks Alexei's gaze from Markov to the waiter.

As if on-cue, Alexei spins to depart.

And, in the distance, Markov reaches out, subtly swivels one of the glass centerpieces on his table directly toward Ray.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Trust and confidence?

The waiter in the distance moves toward Morales' table.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
(over his shoulder)
Two things you lack in the extreme.

As Alexei disappears, Ray's eyes stay locked on the waiter.

Markov regards Ray coolly. Reptilian eyes.

TARASOV
(subtitled Russian)
The whole world is watching...

The waiter pauses, bends to refill a crystal goblet.

He's only feet away from the American President.

Ray, slowly lifts his wrist, hesitates. Concerned.

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR (O.S.)
...to see how we are going to act
in this situation.

Natasha crosses toward Ray with the same worried look.

But before he can speak, a deafening SQUALL OF SOUND
overtakes him, blots out every other voice in the room.

He lifts a hand to his head. His knees buckle.

But, by all indications, Ray is the only one who hears it.

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Gray skies. Rain slicked streets.

A curved stone wall leads to the glass and steel portico
above a grand hotel entrance.

SUPER: FOUR SEASONS, NEW YORK, TWO YEARS EARLIER

Under the portico, three limousines idle. And, next to them,
a small gaggle of PRESS and ONLOOKERS wait behind a cordon.

An entourage of stern-looking SECRET SERVICE AGENTS emerges
from a door in the stone wall. The presidential exit.

One Agent lifts his wrist, speaks:

AGENT
East exit secure.

Behind him strides a slightly younger Morales. She moves
quickly, waving to the crowd. Broad grin. Star power.

The Agents, mostly men, fan out purposefully.

One man stands out. It's Stillman again. Not a hair out of
place. Eyes of a hunter. He takes a step forward, pauses.

The same searing RINGING squelches every other sound.

It's deafening. But, again, Ray is the only one who reacts.

Ray, wincing, looks right, sees the open door to an unmarked
white van. In the van: what appears to be a NEWS CREW.

A PALE MAN wearing headphones points a small hand-held parabolic dish directly at Ray.

His resemblance to Markov is almost unmissable.

Still, the SOUND persists.

Until: POP! POP!

Two quick shots ring out. Chaos ensues.

Ray, stunned, spins left, leaps toward a balding man with a thick attaché case. But it's too late.

The man, PRESS SECRETARY CLIFTON JAMES (40s) falls forward. A single bullet to the head.

POP!

Two Agents grab Morales from behind, hustle her toward the open door to the nearest limousine.

POP!

A fourth shot WHISTLES past Ray, strikes an NYPD OFFICER. He too buckles instantly. Shot in the back.

POLICE OFFICER
I'm hit! I'm hit!

POP!

The Agent to Morales's left turns toward the gunman, takes a bullet to the chest.

The force spins him fully around. He crumples.

POP!

A sixth shot barely misses Ray. He doesn't even flinch.

THUD!

The limo door slams shut. And an unseen driver throws the car into gear, guns the gas.

As the limousine PEELS out, everything slows.

Behind Ray, another Agent rips an Uzi out of a purpose-built briefcase, yanks the stock out, scans the frantic crowd.

Ahead of Ray, people take cover, scramble for safety while yet more Agents wrestle a cold-eyed young man to the ground.

The SHOOTER disappears under a pile of wet gabardine as another NEWS CREW films the whole thing.

Ray, frozen in-place, looks right again.

The white van is gone.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray, jolted, looks to see a nearby BUSBOY (20s) standing above a dropped tray of full of broken dishes.

NATASHA
Mazel tov.

Ray, his face a tortured mask of pain and remorse, wheels around wildly. Thrown.

The DEAFENING WAIL has subsided entirely. As if it was never there in the first place.

NATASHA
(hushed)
Good luck has occurred.

Barely stifling his disorientation, Ray looks past her toward the table full of Russian dignitaries.

Markov slips his earpiece into his jacket pocket, stands.

OLIVER (V.O.)
(over Ray's radio)
Dynamo to the podium. All eyes.

Ray struggles to regain his composure, watches Markov make a beeline for the same passageway the waiter emerged from.

On his knees before him, the busboy hastily gathers plates.

NATASHA
(sotto, to Ray)
What is it?

In the distance, Morales makes her way to the stage, now only inches from the waiter.

RAY
(shaken)
I... I don't--

Ray looks back to the waiter as he moves toward Oliver.

NATASHA
Talk to me, Ray.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Move it, kid. Over.

Oliver's voice seems to force Ray back to attention.

MORALES
(from the lectern)
Mister President, I want to thank
you again for the hospitality we
have encountered at every turn
since our arrival in Moscow.

The waiter brushes past Oliver.

Ray looks to Natasha.

Her face says it all. *What's wrong? What's wrong?*

Ray thrusts a hand inside his jacket, speeds past Natasha,
weaves his way quickly through the tables.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Stillman? What are you doing?

Ray lifts his wrist, HISSES:

RAY
Playing a hunch, sir.

Perhaps sensing him, the waiter speeds back toward the same
curtained passageway he entered through.

From the lectern, Morales continues unaware:

MORALES
I know I'm not alone when I say we
stand at the precipice, on the
brink of a *momentous* decision.

Her unseen RUSSIAN TRANSLATOR continues:

RUSSIAN TRANSLATOR (O.S.)
 (subtitled Russian)
*Do we embrace peace through
 cooperation? Or do we go it alone,
 no matter the cost?*

The waiter quickly disappears through the curtains.

Ray hurries after him. Oliver BARKS:

OLIVER (V.O.)
 Stillman, stand down.

RAY
 (on the run)
 Sir, no sir. No time.

MORALES
 For I'm sure we can all agree...

CURTAINED EXIT:

Ray skids to a stop before the exit, his heart racing and his body running on pure instinct. And fear of failure.

MORALES (CONT'D)
 ...that our children and our
 children's children deserve a life
 unburdened by terror, trauma,
 suffering, and grief.

He pops his shoulder holster open, readies to draw.

Across the room, Natasha looks to Oliver, desperate.

OLIVER (V.O.)
 Stillman, hold.

MORALES
 A life, in other words, worth
 living. Together. As one.

Ray pulls his sidearm, CLICKS the slide, ducks through the curtains, races into -

PASSAGEWAY:

A gold-gilt hallway lined with rolling service carts covered in crisp white tablecloths. China. Silver. Crystal.

OLIVER (V.O.)
 That's an order, son.

A PAUNCHY WAITER drops a glistening chafing dish he's holding. Ray watches it fall:

CLANG!

And then, as if over Ray's earpiece, a MAN'S VOICE slithers in over heavy FEEDBACK:

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
(thick Russian accent)
Go ahead. Do your duty.

Ray takes off running dead-out.

Other WAITSTAFF dodge him, SCREAM, duck out of the way.

KITCHEN:

Ray rounds a corner, slides to a stop inside a massive impromptu prep kitchen.

Everyone freezes. All eyes fall to him.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
You will only fail yet again.

Ray, frantic, weaves through the crowd, gun drawn.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
You know this to be true.

On the run, Ray ducks around a tall rolling rack full of dishes under silver cloches.

In the distance: the same waiter from earlier stands with his back to us, just beyond an open window.

The curtains between he and Ray flutter slightly.

RAY
Freeze! Hands where I can--

The waiter whips around, arms up, clutching an unopened cloth-wrapped bottle of champagne.

For the briefest of seconds, he precisely resembles the shooter back in New York. Outside The Four Seasons.

POP! POP!

The sound of GUNFIRE rattles Ray. But it not of the now. It's purely a figment. Of the past.

The world tilts on its axis. Ray's hands tremble.

WAITER
 (subtitled Russian)
The fuck is this?

The curtains briefly obscure the waiter's face again.

Ray charges at the waiter, lifts his pistol, SMASHES it butt-end first into his temple full-force.

The blow sends him reeling, unconscious, to the ground where he lands with a heavy CRASH.

Broken glass flies every which way as Ray, stunned, notices that that the man at his feet now in no way resembles the shooter in New York.

The shooter he failed to stop.

OLIVER (PRE-LAP)
 He was fucking one of us!

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, ANTEROOM - LATER

Oliver paces inside a cramped anteroom jammed full of surveillance equipment.

An impromptu command and control center.

OLIVER
 A member of Tarasov's fucking detail! Ilyin, Vladimir. Lieutenant Colonel. Former FSB. Then Wagner. Then back again.
 (beat)
 Vetted and approved. Not some hayseed, fly by the seat of his pants, hair-trigger--

RAY
 Sir, I just--

OLIVER
 What the *hell* is wrong with you, kid? I give you a second shot, a chance to make good, and this is the way you repay me?

RAY
 I swear I saw--

Oliver lifts a hand to shut him up.

OLIVER
Thank fucking GOD POTUS didn't see
you or it'd be my ass *and* yours.

Ray looks to the floor, humiliated.

Unable to explain.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
If she hadn't *demanded* to have you
back on her detail, if she didn't
have faith in you after you fucking
froze in New York, you'd be up to
your eyeballs in serial numbers on
fake fucking bills back in D.C. for
the duration. You hear me?

Ray nods, saying nothing.

Oliver, exasperated, softens slightly.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
It's natural, kid. You hesitate
once, you overcompensate the next
go-around until you shake the speed
wobbles. Happens to all of us.

Oliver steps up, places a meaty palm on his shoulder.

Fatherly.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
But this time, right now? The
stakes are just too fucking high.

Ray nods again.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
You gotta get your shit back
together, kid. Pronto. Or else.

Oliver gives his shoulder a firm squeeze, turns to go.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Get some rest. Alone. I need you
and the whole team two hundred
percent on-point tomorrow, yeah?

Ray looks up just as Oliver pushes open a thick wooden door
to another dimly-lit hallway covered in ominous frescoes.

In the distance behind him, Markov stands chatting with
another RUSSIAN DELEGATE in an ill-fitting blue suit.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
And be sure to swap out your
earpiece before we hit the Square.

Markov turns, looks Ray in the eyes over Oliver's shoulder.
Pure silent menace.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Control says they kept dropping
your signal. Too much feedback from
all the fucking gold.

RAY
(eyes on Markov)
Yessir.

KA-THUMP.

Oliver pulls the door shut behind himself.

NATASHA (PRE-LAP)
As Comrade Lenin used to say...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Back in the same hotel room from earlier, Natasha crosses her stockinged feet on the edge of the desk across from Ray.

SUPER: HOTEL METROPOL, MOSCOW, EARLY THE NEXT MORNING

She carries a silver cigarette case in one hand and has a half-smoked cigarette dangling from her lips.

NATASHA
*There are decades where nothing
happens...*

Ray, again, meticulously cleans his sidearm looking like he hasn't slept a wink.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
...and weeks where decades happen.

She takes a draw from her cigarette, doffs ash into a tray on the desk, picks up a small hand-held radio.

Beyond them both, the sun is just rising. Bright blue sky.

RAY
I could swear I saw him before. In
New York. Outside the...

She CLICKS on the radio. "WATCHING THE WHEELS" by John Lennon and Yoko Ono kicks in, mid-stream.

NATASHA

Who?

RAY

Markov. The former FSB turncoat
Alexei's been tracking.

NATASHA

Talk about turncoats.

Ray reaches across the table for a bottle of vodka, takes a prodigious pull. Medicine.

RAY

And that waiter. He seemed so...

He cuts himself off, walls himself off.

RAY (CONT'D)

Never mind.

Natasha frowns, lowers her feet to the floor, leans in closer. Not for a kiss, just to look him in the eyes.

NATASHA

I'm telling you. Ease up. You were
just doing your job.

He takes another gulp, sets the bottle down, gets back to the task at hand.

RAY

Tell that to Oliver.

Natasha pulls on her blouse, buttons it quickly.

RAY (CONT'D)

And *Comrade* Lenin didn't actually
say that. Marx did.

Ray, with the same speed and precision, reassembles his cleaned weapon. Like he's done it a zillion times.

RAY (CONT'D)

Cribbed it from the Bible.

Natasha turns back around, grabs her coat, stabs the cigarette out.

NATASHA
It's been two years, Ray. Don't you
think it's time to--

Ray lifts a hand, cuts her off.

RAY
Oliver said it himself. I fucking
froze. You know it. He knows it.
Even she knows it.

NATASHA
You *hesitated*.

RAY
Same damn thing.

Ray reaches out, nudges the folded cleaning cloth on the
desk before him a tenth of an inch. Like he can't help it.

Like he's compelled.

Natasha just watches him. Her face shifts slowly from
compassionate concern to burgeoning doubt.

Worry that he, that they, might be a liability.

NATASHA
He seemed so what?

Ray doesn't respond.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
The waiter.

Still nothing from Ray. Just stony silence.

She bites her lip, looks away. Deep in thought.

NATASHA
You're trying too hard, Ray.
(off his look)
Just let it go already.

RAY
That's what the vodka's for.

This is not the response she's looking for.

INT. SPASO HOUSE, BRIEFING ROOM - MORNING

An ornate former ballroom inside the recently reclaimed
American Ambassador's residence.

A handful of similarly-clad AGENTS cluster around a long conference table clutching steaming mugs of shitty coffee.

All of them regard Ray warily. Like he's a loose cannon. A liability. An unwanted variable.

Oliver stands at the head of the table. His shoulder holster juts from his jacket.

OLIVER

Snipers from both sides will be arrayed all along the Square as discussed. We'll all be sharing the same frequency, so keep the chitchat to a minimum.

He side-eyes Ray briefly. Ray looks away.

Seated opposite Ray, Natasha lets her eyes linger on Ray moment too long. Concerned again. Almost suspicious.

He studiously ignores her.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Then it's back here for dinner with Mister and Misses Tarasov. Same start time as last night at the Palace. Any questions?

Not a one.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Alright, dismissed.

Everyone stands, moves toward the ornate double doors.

Oliver immediately veers toward Ray.

RAY

Sir?

Oliver wags his head. *Hang back.*

Across the room, Natasha pauses briefly. Then she speeds back up, threads into the crowd of exiting officers.

Behind Oliver, another set of doors open.

In walks Alexei.

Ray GROANS.

RAY (CONT'D)

The fuck is he doing here?

Alexei thrusts Ray an earpiece with a clear curlicue cord running down to a black box about the size of a matchbox.

ALEXEI
Special replacement from Special
Activities Center.

Ray snatches away the device as Natasha disappears through the doors behind him.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
No more feedback.

Ray's face says it all. *Fuck off.*

OLIVER
And no more nonsense. Especially
while we're on the Square.

Alexei leans in toward Ray.

ALEXEI
(hushed)
Apparently, everyone deserves a
second chance.

This stings. And Ray can't hide it.

Alexei spins on his heels, turns to go.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Do svidaniya!

Oliver reaches across himself to the conference table, grabs a crystal bowl full of red, white and blue jellybeans.

He shakes the bowl toward Ray. In it, beans CLINK.

OLIVER
Damn things must be leftovers from
Reagan's trip back in eighty-eight.

Wry smile.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Sorry I flew off the handle.

Ray pockets the earpiece, grabs a blue jellybean.

RAY
You didn't, sir. You were right.

OLIVER
Just keep your head down. Stay
focused. Don't let 'em fuck with
your head.

Ray narrows his eyes.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
And pretty soon we'll all be able
to tell our grand kids we where
here when it happened.

Oliver scoops out a red, nips it between his teeth.

RAY
Sir?

OLIVER
When that dyed-in-the-wool hawk
Morales put the world back on the
path to peace for good.

Oliver grabs another handful of beans, dumps them into his
jacket pocket, shoots Ray a sly wink.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I remember when collaborator used
to be a dirty word. Well, maybe we
all ought to give it a shot every
now and again, yeah?

Oliver heads for the doors Alexei just exited through.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
But, for both our sakes, consider
the *ramifications* of fraternizing
with fellow agents.
(beat)
With local ties.

THUMP. Oliver slams the doors behind himself.

OLIVER (O.S.)
(through the door)
Cleaner that way. For you both.

Ray flicks the jellybean into his mouth, chews.

RAY
She was born in Brooklyn.

He reaches down, anxiously tugs at his tie.

Can't help himself. Still a bundle of raw nerves.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Amid the MUFFLED CLAPPING of a small crowd of RUSSIAN CITIZENS, a cluster of twenty plus slow-moving DIGNITARIES crosses the tree-lined square.

The sky above is cloudless and blue.

In the distance, a line of Arus Senate armored limousines idle flanked on both sides by troop transport trucks and various military support vehicles.

And in front of them all sits a hulking mobile command and control vehicle (or MC2V).

Satellite dishes dot the roof of the MC2V.

Slowly, the dignitaries make their way toward the vehicles as a Mil Mi-8 twin-turbine helicopter WHOOSHES overhead.

En route to The Kremlin.

At the center the pack, Tarasov walks shoulder-to-shoulder with Morales. He looks ecstatic. Thrilled.

A man full of purpose, brimming with pride.

Between them, their TRANSLATORS (both bald, one with a thick mustache and one with a scraggly beard) do everything they can to keep up.

And, on opposite sides of entourage: Ray and Natasha scan every person, every detail. On high alert.

Oliver follows them keeping a wary watch.

Behind him: stately Palaces upon which unseen Russian and American snipers track every step.

Glints of light bounce off the lenses of rooftop binoculars and rifle sights with every steady stride.

Eventually, the pack slows at a cluster of VACATIONERS gathered around a YOUNG GIRL (10) in a floral dress.

Ever the charmer, Morales makes a beeline for the girl, pauses, reaches out a hand.

Ray lifts his watch. In the date window: the number 31.

Over Ray's earpiece, OLIVER'S VOICE crackles:

OLIVER (V.O.)
Dynamo hold.

MORALES
 (to the girl)
 Well, hello there.

The young girl reaches up, shakes Morales's hand, eyes averted to the cobbles.

Ray lowers his wrist, looks past the young girl and is shocked to see a familiar face amongst the vacationers.

It's the waiter again.

AKA: VLADIMIR ILYIIN (30s) an undercover member of Tarasov's personal security detail.

OLIVER (V.O.)
 Steady.

Everyone stops.

For the briefest of seconds, the skies above go gray. The cobbles, once dry, are suddenly rain-slicked.

Just like in New York.

Tarasov BELLOWS something we can't quite make out to the Girl in Russian.

The sound rouses Ray.

The sky turns instantly back to bright blue.

Ilyin, wearing a light beige suit, has a reflex camera slung around his neck.

He nods discretely toward Ray. *Fuck you, Yankee hothead.*

His eyes, like Ray's, are cold. The eyes of a hunter.

More BANTER in Russian is drowned out by another brief moment of BUZZING FEEDBACK over Ray's earpiece. Then:

OLIVER (V.O.)
 Clear lines of sight, over.

One of the translators MUTTERS something to Morales.

She smiles, nods.

MORALES
 We're taking a little time off too.

Ray shakes his head, moves right, tries to clear his mind.

A nearby PRESIDENTIAL PHOTOGRAPHER (mid-50s) stumbles into his path, blocks his way.

PRESIDENTIAL PHOTOGRAPHER
Can't--

Ray steadies him, pulls him aside, ducks past him.

As he moves, Ray's eyes are on a small portable radio dangling next to the camera at Ilyin's chest.

It's old-school. Something from the 60s. Outdated. Strange.

TARASOV
(subtitled Russian)
*What do you think of Madame
President's visit?*

The Young Girl STUTTERS nervously.

Tarasov surges toward her, runs a hand over the top of her head as if to calm her, draw her out.

Everyone tenses.

TARASOV (CONT'D)
(subtitled Russian)
Is it good?

The young girl looks up.

YOUNG GIRL
(subtitled Russian)
*It is good that Madame President
has come.*

Ray locks eyes with Ilyin again. The men are mirror images. Hunter and hunted. Symmetrical adversaries.

On Ilyin's face, a hint of a black eye seems to have been clumsily covered up. Where Ray cold-cocked him.

Tarasov's VOICE briefly breaks through the tension:

TARASOV
(subtitled Russian)
I could not agree more.

Ilyin, as if commanded remotely, lifts his hands to the camera, slowly pulls the lens cap.

RAY
(anxious)
Control?

Oliver CHIMES IN calmly:

OLIVER (V.O.)
Easy-breezy, now.

Natasha looks to Ray, then to Ilyin, then back. Her face says it all: *What the fuck are you--*

Morales' translator WHISPERS into her ear. She smiles.

MORALES
Exactly. We're here to talk to each other instead of *about* each other for a change.

Ilyin lifts the camera higher, one finger on the release.

CLACK. CLACK. CLACK.

The sound of Morales' photographer's DSLR FIRING momentarily snags Ray's ear, catches his attention. He turns.

More STATIC over his earpiece. Everything slows down.

Ray looks back to Ilyin as he closes his blackened eye, looks through the viewfinder with the other.

With the lens cap off, we notice that that where there would normally be glass, there's nothing but a matte black plate with two circular cutouts in it.

Barrels.

Ray rakes in a breath.

Everything speeds back up.

All instinct, Ray thrusts a hand into his jacket, dashes through the crowd toward Morales.

OLIVER (V.O.)
(over the earpiece)
I said hold. Stand your--

RAY
Shooter! Shooter! Shooter!

BANG. BANG.

Ilyin hits the shutter, fires twice.

Ray LEAPS into the breach, arms thrust forward. But it's too late. Milliseconds too late.

The first bullet hits Morales just left of her sternum. The force spins her slightly.

The second bullet lands in the crook of her right arm, shreds her sleeve, kicks out a fine pink mist.

Chaos erupts.

Ilyin drops the camera, grabs the radio, presses a button.

From high and far off, SNIPER ROUNDS take down Tarasov, his Translator, and three others.

Bullets TUMBLE and WHISTLE through the air.

From the line of vehicles, a single troop transport truck speeds across the cobbles toward the dignitaries.

Ray, on one knee, pulls his sidearm, fires once:

BANG!

The bullet barely misses the petrified Young Girl, clips Ilyin in the shoulder.

But he doesn't fall.

Instead, he looks toward Ray, disappointed.

RAY

Drop your weapon! Drop your--

The armored vehicle SCREECHES to a stop behind Ilyin.

A door RUMBLES open. Inside: a single RUSSIAN SOLDIER.

And Markov.

He points a hand-held transmission dish directly at Ray.

Another massive TORRENT OF SOUND overcomes Ray. He buckles.

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Gray skies. Rain slicked streets.

BANG!

The PRESS SECRETARY falls.

BANG!

Another shot rings out. But Ray doesn't budge, can't react.

Frozen. Paralyzed by a TEMPEST OF NOISE.

Over his shoulder, the door to the white van SLAMS shut.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

The Russian Soldier LEAPS out of the vehicle, YANKS Ilyin with him up and into the transport, SLAMS the door shut.

The THUNDEROUS ROAR suddenly ceases.

OLIVER (V.O.)
(barely audible)
Dynamo down! Repeat, Dynamo down!

More sniper rounds THUD and PING into the vehicle's shell.

But they barely make an impression. The steel is too thick.

Ray fires for the tires: BANG. BANG. BANG.

To no avail. The bulletproof vehicle PEELS out, bathing the stunned survivors in a cloud of blue smoke.

Ray, eyes narrow slits, spins.

In the distance, various MINISTERS and JOURNALISTS run back toward the Palace for cover.

Rooftop snipers take them down one by one.

Ray looks right just as the the rest of the troop transports flanking the limos speed away.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Hold your fire! Hold your--

Stunned but uninjured, Natasha turns, holsters her weapon, rushes toward Dynamo.

She and Tarasov lie on the cobbles (Morales on her back, Tarasov on his chest) surrounded by armed agents.

Both are slowly bleeding out.

NATASHA
(into her wrist)
We need transport ASAP!

INT. LIMOUSINE - MOMENTS LATER

In the back of one of the limousines, Ray cradles the President in his arms while central Moscow whips by.

Over the HOWL of the engine, sirens BLARE.

MORALES

(weak)

And everything was going so well.

She looks to Ray. Her blouse and his shirt are both bathed in blood. Her blood.

Natasha quickly RIPS open Morales's jacket, finds a small wound oozing blood.

MORALES (CONT'D)

Strange. I didn't even feel it at all. Just like... last time.

Ray nods, doing his best to stem the tidal wave of self-recrimination building inside himself.

RAY

I'm sorry ma'am. I'm so--

MORALES (CONT'D)

The Russian President?

NATASHA

We don't know yet. We don't--

Natasha CUTS away Morales's sleeve, quickly applies pressure, RIPS a packet of sulfa powder open with her teeth, dumps it into the chest wound.

Anyone else would scream bloody murder. But, instead, Morales just keeps staring up at Ray while Natasha tries to staunch the bleeding.

It just won't stop.

MORALES

You did all that you could.

Ray bites his lip.

Natasha looks to him. *We're losing her...*

RAY

No. No, I--

MORALES

Shhh.

The unseen driver SQUEALS through a long bend as car horns BELLOW and WHINE.

MORALES (CONT'D)

Thought that camera looked funny.

A faint COUGH overtakes her. Blood runs from the corner of her mouth. Her face, normally tan, is ghostly white.

NATASHA

Ma'am, please try not to...

MORALES

Doubtless?

NATASHA

He's safe, ma'am. The First Gentleman is safe.

INT. CENTRAL MOSCOW HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

Who knows how much later, Ray and Natasha pace amongst a handful of their fellow agents. She smokes nervously.

NATASHA

(sotto)

What do you mean you *fucking* saw him? Where?

RAY

At the... I was trying to tell you.

Ray's eyes are glued to the pale green floor.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Who was he?

RAY

Ilyin, Vladimir. From her detail. Vetted. Approved.

(beat)

Last night. At the Palace. I could've stopped him. Could have...

Ray looks away. Outside the windows, the blue sky has faded to a lifeless pale gray.

RAY (CONT'D)

Fuck.

NATASHA

Stop.

Ray's dead eyes dart to nearby wall clock.

RAY

And that sonofabitch. Markov. I swear I've seen him too.

Ray lowers his voice, leans in close.

RAY (CONT'D)

In New York.

Natasha's face blanches. Again a blend of concern and worry.

NATASHA

What?

Ray gestures. *Keep it down.*

RAY

(hushed)

I heard the same sound then.

NATASHA

Sound? What sound?

Ray walls back up.

RAY

The fuck is taking so long?! We gotta get wheels-up and out.

Natasha, regarding Ray cautiously, crushes her cigarette out in a standing ashtray.

RAY (CONT'D)

For all we know, this could be a *fucking* coup.

She leans closer, urgently WHISPERS.

NATASHA

What do you mean... sound?

In the distance, a pair of doors open. Every head swivels.

It's Oliver in the doorway. His arms are crossed. And his face says it all.

We lost her. She's gone.

Oliver looks to Ray, nods gravely. There are no words.

OLIVER
The oath has already been
administered.

A collective GASP goes up from all assembled.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Sparrow is ordering all diplomatic
staff, the entire embassy, on lock
down ASAP. Essential staff out now.

Heavily-armed MPs stream in from behind him.

Oliver strides forward. Even he has blood on his hands.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Armed convoys will escort you in
waves to The Metropol for
individual interrogation. Until
then, not a word to anyone.

Oliver pauses.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Tarasov's dead. Half of his cabinet
too. No one's taken responsibility.
But, a team of commandos, either
Russian Army or former Wagner, have
stormed our radar station at Varda.
Destroyed it. More troops are
massing on the Kola peninsula for a
possible land invasion of Finland.
And NATO P-8s have spotted a fleet
of Russian nuclear subs leaving
Murmansk in an awful goddamn hurry.
(beat)
So much for world peace. Could very
well be all-out war. Again.

Natasha takes an instinctive half step back from Ray. He
doesn't notice. His mind is elsewhere. Reeling.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Thankfully, Sobolevsky's in the
clear. And we've got open lines of
communication with him and what's
left of his staff. Joint Chiefs
have upped readiness to Defcon 3.
(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)
(deep breath)
Either this is a stunt pulled by a
bunch of mercenary wing nuts pissed
about the nuclear draw down, or
it's a full-on attempt at fuckin'
overthrow. Another revolution,
Trotsky style.

Oliver steps between Ray and Natasha. Ray looks away.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
First plane's wheels-up from
Sheremetyevo at 0800.

Oliver places a hand on Ray's shoulder again. Ray finally
looks to him, brimming with guilt.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
(toward Ray)
We need to get to the bottom of who
the *fuck* was behind this.
(beat)
Now.

Oliver grips Ray's shoulder.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Dismissed.

Everyone nods, trudges toward the pack of MPs by the doors.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
(gravely)
Donnovan wants a word.

Ray nods.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Don't make me regret covering your
ass last fucking time.

INT. HOSPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver rushes Ray into a drab, dimly-lit conference room.

RAY
Here?! You've gotta be--

Oliver SLAMS the door shut behind them.

OLIVER
Agent Stillman, I presume you know
Station Chief Donovan.

Ray looks to see a tall, trim man with a coiffed mane of bright white hair seated at the far end of the table.

This is CIA Station Chief JACK DONNOVAN (late 40s).

DONNOVAN
Who the *fuck* was he?

Alexei from earlier stands right behind him, arms crossed.

RAY
(to Oliver, re: Alexei)
Get him OUT of here! He's a fucking
mole playing both sides against the
middle!

Donnovan abruptly stands.

DONNOVAN
Sit!

Ray looks to Oliver. He nods, pulls out a chair.

RAY
Yessir.
(beat)
As if every inch of this shithole
isn't already bugged to the nth.

Donnovan stays standing.

DONNOVAN
Who was he?

RAY
You tell me.

DONNOVAN
Unless you wanna be dragged outta
here in manacles, I suggest you--

RAY
(toward Oliver)
Sir, all I know is he was part of
his detail. Approved and confirmed.
Just like you. Like me.

Donnovan reaches a hand into his jacket, produces a small hand-held recorder, SLAMS it onto the table, presses play.

Over the recorder, a MAN'S VOICE in speaks in heavily-accented English:

MAN'S VOICE (RECORDED)
(thick Russian accent)
Go ahead. Do your duty.

Ray's face falls, white as a sheet.

RAY
I swear, I--

MAN'S VOICE (RECORDED)
You will only fail yet again.

Ray tries to stand. Oliver presses him back down firmly.

MAN'S VOICE (RECORDED)
You know this to be true.

Donnovan violently hits pause.

DONNOVAN
Don't make me ask you again.

RAY
Sir, I'm telling you--

OLIVER
Why was Markov in the transport?

Ray points to Alexei.

RAY
Fucking ask him!

Oliver spins Ray's chair around.

OLIVER
So help me God.

ALEXEI
(calmly)
Arrest him.

RAY
Don't tell me you're gonna listen
to this fucking two-timer!

ALEXEI
Liaison.

Donnovan snatches up the recorder, pockets it.

DONNOVAN
(to Ray)
Pack your things.

RAY

Sir, CIA has no jurisdiction over--

Donnovan turns to depart, all-business.

DONNOVAN (CONT'D)

(to Oliver)

Expect a full inquiry. And I want his discharge papers in-hand by the time we touch down at Andrews.

Together, he and Alexei head for the door.

DONNOVAN (CONT'D)

(to Ray)

You could've stopped this goddamn zealot, whoever the *fuck* he was.

(beat)

Again!

BANG!

Donnovan slams the door behind himself.

Oliver lets go of Ray's chair, steps back, SIGHS.

OLIVER

One last rodeo and they put you out to pasture for good.

Ray swivels slowly around toward him.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Used to think I'd sooner die than give up this game. But the rules keep changing. The players keep switching sides. I just can't keep up any longer. Can't track it.

RAY

Sir?

OLIVER

(way too calm)

How's your golf game, kid?

Ray loudly SCREECHES his chair out, stands.

RAY

Sir, you *have* to believe me--

Oliver, oddly resigned, turns to go.

OLIVER
Because I think we're *both* about to
have a lot of time on our hands.

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - EVENING

Two burly MPs rush Ray through the once palatial lobby of the Hotel Metropol.

In the distance, Natasha stands amid a cluster of other agents. At their feet: hastily packed rolling bags.

Oddly, Alexei is amongst them. Right next to Natasha.

NATASHA
(to Alexei)
I don't know what to believe. I'm
worried he's spinning out. Fixated
on New York.

Alexei just nods.

ALEXEI
(subtitled Russian)
*This is why field agents shouldn't
fraternize, yes? Don't let him take
you down with him.*

Ray looks to them both. He wants to call out. Tell her everything. But he's there.

She nods slowly. *It's gonna be--*

One of the MPs grabs Ray by the arm, hustles him toward a bank of elevators.

Natasha and Alexei just watch him go.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
(back to English)
Donnovan wants him out by the time
you're back in DC.

He steps slowly away, sans suitcase.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
(subtitled Russian)
But you didn't hear it from me.

INT. HOTEL, ELEVATOR CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Ray reaches out, stabs the call button just as another pair of gold doors RUMBLE open.

Out steps Markov.

Neither MP clocks him. Why would they?

But, as Markov calmly strides back toward the lobby, Ray locks him in his furious gaze.

DING.

The doors before him glide open.

One of the MPs reaches out, gestures for Ray to enter.

But, instead, Ray STABS a hand into his jacket, FLICKS open his holster, SPINS.

Everything slows down.

As both MPs struggle to react, Ray lifts his sidearm, CHARGES across the marble toward Markov.

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - SAME TIME

Markov stops dead, turns.

His face exudes an eerie, imperious calm.

Ray skids to a stop, takes aim, grips the trigger.

Everything speeds back up.

RAY

Who the fuck are you?

Behind Ray, both MPs level their pistols.

MP

Drop your weapon!

MARKOV

(thick Russian accent)

Your comrade in arms, of course.
You know that.

His voice is instantly familiar. The same voice from his earpiece in the palace, from Donovan's recording.

Ray's face blanches.

In the distance, Natasha slowly spins toward the scene.

BANG. BANG.

Two shots ring out. But they're not from Ray's gun.

The first bullet hits Ray between the shoulder blades, pierces his chest.

NATASHA

No!

The second bullet grazes Ray's thigh, catches his femoral artery, kicks out a thick mist of blood and fabric.

He briefly spies Alexei halfway across the lobby with a genuine look of shock affixed to his face.

He did not see that coming.

And Markov, unmoved, just stares as Ray, still gripping his sidearm but, again, not having fired a shot, falls.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray, rocked, finds himself standing again inside the vast Palace from the night before.

Directly ahead of him: the same busboy standing above the same dropped tray of now broken dishes.

NATASHA

Mazel tov.

Natasha pauses. Same black ball gown.

RAY

The ffffff...

NATASHA

Good luck has occurred.

In a daze, Ray pads his chest, looks to his right leg. No blood. No powder burns.

No bullet wounds.

Ray looks frantically past Natasha toward the table full of Russian dignitaries.

There he is again: Markov.

OLIVER (V.O.)

(over Ray's earpiece)

Dynamo to the podium. All eyes.

Ray swiftly whips around to see his President, now very much alive again, stepping toward the stage.

RAY

Oh my god.

He cannot believe his eyes.

NATASHA

(sotto)

What is it?

Ray turns again, looks past her toward Markov as he stands, slips his translation earpiece into his pocket.

RAY

You.

Ray THRUSTS a hand into his jacket, grabs his sidearm, charges past Natasha.

NATASHA

Ray?

Beyond Natasha, Ilyin - the shooter - brushes past Oliver, tracks Ray with his dead eyes.

OLIVER (V.O.)

Stillman?

MORALES

(from the lectern)

Mister President, I want to thank you again for--

Natasha watches Ray pass.

OLIVER (V.O.)

What are you doing?

This time, Ray doesn't answer.

Instead, he lifts his weapon, takes aim at Markov's back.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

Three SUPPRESSED SHOTS ring out from across the room, where Ilyin now stands clutching a silenced pistol.

Ray, hit, staggers sideways.

Bedlam ensues.

Oliver DIVES toward the stage, DRAGS Morales to the ground.

Natasha SPINS, pulls a pistol from a calf holster, takes aim at the shooter, toward Ilyin.

THUMP.

He fells her with a single shot.

Ray, tumbling sideways, watches her fall.

RAY

Natasha!

In the distance, Markov slowly turns back around, regards the scene placidly. Like he's wholly untouchable.

Ray SMASHES into a golden column, aims for Ilyin as dignitaries scramble and SCREAM.

But before Ray can get off a round, Ilyin lowers his weapon, fires three downward kill shots.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

Oliver, Morales, Tarasov. All gone.

MARKOV

(eerily calm)

Go ahead.

Ray, bleeding out, wheels around toward him.

MARKOV (CONT'D)

Do your duty.

THUMP.

Another bullet to the chest from Ilyin.

Ray rockets backward, leaves a bloody smear, hits the byzantine mosaic stone floor hard.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray, GASPING, finds himself standing, miraculously entirely uninjured in nearly precisely the same spot.

There's the same busboy again. There's the same dropped tray of smashed dishes.

NATASHA
Mazel tov.

And there's Natasha again, very much alive.

RAY
 (under his breath)
 No, no, no.

NATASHA
 Good luck has...

Her expression shifts swiftly. *What's--*

Ray, terrified, looks past her to see Markov push out his chair, pocket his listening device, turn.

OLIVER (V.O.)
 Dynamo to the...

RAY
 Him.

Ray wheels right, sees Morales threads her way to the stage.

Ray swivels his head toward Ilyin. Then left, toward Oliver.

He too is alive.

RAY (CONT'D)
 The fuck is this?

Natasha steps closer.

NATASHA
 Talk to me, Ray.

Ray hesitates, doesn't reach for his weapon. Not yet.

OLIVER (V.O.)
 Move it, kid. Over.

Instead of charging off after Markov, Ray watches him go.

MORALES
 Mister President...

Ray looks to Ilyin, sees him brush past Oliver.

Ray's eyes dart back to Natasha.

RAY
 Whatever happens, I'm sorry.

NATASHA

For what?

RAY

Everything.

In the distance, Ilyin picks up the pace toward the curtained exit Markov just disappeared through.

MORALES

I know I'm not alone when I say...

Ilyin slips into the passageway. Ray rushes after him.

OLIVER

Stillman, stand--

Ray lifts his wrist, on the move.

RAY

Sir, no sir.

MORALES

...I'm sure we can all agree...

CURTAINED EXIT:

Ray skids to a stop, his heart racing and his mind spinning.

MORALES (CONT'D)

...that our children and our...

Ray stabs a hand inside his jacket, pulls his sidearm, ducks through the curtains and into -

PASSAGEWAY:

The same gaudy hallway lined with rolling service carts draped in white tablecloths.

OLIVER (V.O.)

That's an order, son.

The same paunchy waiter drops the same chafing dish.

Ray reflexively catches it, wordlessly hands it back, gestures for him to stay quiet.

The waiter just stares.

And then, as before: FEEDBACK.

MARKOV (V.O.)

Go ahead. Do your duty.

Ray sprints dead-ahead.

The same clusters of stunned waitstaff duck out of the way, SCREAM as he passes.

KITCHEN:

Ray, clutching his pistol, rounds a corner, slides to a stop inside the same prep kitchen.

MARKOV (V.O.)
You will only fail yet again.

Ray bobs and weaves through the crowd.

RAY
Oh, yeah? Watch me.

Ray lunges around the same rolling rack, sees Ilyin again there - standing beyond the billowing curtain.

But, as Ray takes aim: a CYCLONE OF PIERCING NOISE.

Ray, in searing pain, looks left, sees Markov angling the same parabolic transmission device directly at him.

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Gray skies. Rain slicked streets. Glitches. Pixels. Noise.

POP!

A single shot tumbles past Ray. Like a digital mirage.

THUD!

A limo door slams shut. And an unseen driver throws the car into gear, guns the gas.

The limousine PEELS out.

Ray turns, looks to the shooter.

His face is instantly familiar. Ilyin once again.

The same cold eyes. The same blank expression.

But, this time, instead of being tackled to the ground by Ray's fellow agents, he lifts his pistol, aims at Ray.

POP.

The seventh shot hits Ray in the temple.

A calmly calculated kill shot.

Ray teeters amid the chaos, falls slowly backward.

Half his skull is missing.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray, hyperventilating, finds himself standing yet again inside the very same Palace.

NATASHA

Mazel...

This time, without hesitation, Ray CHARGES at Natasha, DRAGS her with him across the room full of dignitaries.

Ahead of them: Markov hurries away.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you--

RAY

(sotto)

Find Alexei. Grill him.

NATASHA

What? No.

Ray wags his head toward Markov.

RAY

(nodding)

Him. Markov.

NATASHA

Stop it. You're--

Beyond them both: Morales steps toward the stage.

OLIVER (V.O.)

(vexed)

Dynamo to the podium. All eyes.

Ray pushes Natasha toward the main entrance, slips a hand inside his jacket for his pistol.

RAY
My room. Tonight. Metropol.
Whatever happens. Hurry.

She slows, confused.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Stillman?

MORALES
Mister President...

Instead of firing on Markov, Ray just lets him go, slows,
looks to see Ilyin brush past Oliver.

RAY
The hell are you...

OLIVER (V.O.)
Stillman, stand down.

Ray doesn't respond.

Instead, he watches as Ilyin disappears through the same
swagged curtains Markov just parted.

MORALES
...I'm sure we can all agree...

Ray finally pulls his sidearm, runs.

CURTAINED EXIT:

Seeming to count the seconds, Ray slows at the curtains.

Natasha looks back at him as she makes her way across the
room and toward the entrance.

MORALES (CONT'D)
...deserve a life unburdened by
terror, trauma, suffering, and...

Ray arms his weapon, bolts.

PASSAGEWAY:

Ray rushes into the same long hallway full of service carts.

OLIVER (V.O.)
That's an order!

The same paunchy waiter drops the chafing dish. Ray lets it
fall, kicks it away, hurries on.

Then: the same FEEDBACK.

MARKOV (V.O.)
Go ahead. Do your--

Ray lifts his wrist, BARKS:

RAY
I know who you *fucking* are,
asshole!

KITCHEN:

Ray BLASTS into the kitchen.

MARKOV (V.O.)
You will only fail yet again.

Ray CHARGES toward the same rolling cars, skids to a stop.

RAY
Not this time.

Ray LUNGES out from behind the cart, takes aim.

But, this time, no Ilyin. Just the same open window and the gauzy curtains blowing in the wind.

Ray looks left.

No Markov this time. No device. He's entirely alone. His adversaries have vanished like figments.

RAY (CONT'D)
This can't be...

Finally, it clicks. *The window!*

Ray charged toward it, ducks his head out, takes aim.

EXT. PALACE OF FACETS, FAÇADE - NIGHT

Ray sweeps his weapon down, then up.

Above, a silhouetted figure scales the exterior of the faceted white structure.

Ray fires twice: BANG. BANG.

One hit, one miss.

The second bullet ricochets across the stone just as Ilyin heaves himself up and onto the roof.

Over HEAVY STATIC:

NATASHA (V.O.)
Shots fired! Shots--

Ray SLAMS his pistol back into his holster, RIPS off his jacket, LEAPS out the window.

As he climbs from column to column, window to window, the steady FEEDBACK persists.

Over it all:

MARKOV (V.O.)
Just as his comrades abandoned him
in Lviv, so shall yours here.

Ray squints upward, lunges toward a narrow ledge, dangles precariously, pulls his body higher.

MARKOV (V.O.)
Again and again and again.

From above: the sound of FOOTFALL. But no gunfire.

MARKOV (V.O.)
Until you finally prove your worth.

Ray scrambles up a copper drain pipe, pauses, reaches his hand back, pulls his weapon again, bites down on the top of the barrel, draws a quick breath.

MARKOV (V.O.)
Once and for all.

Using all his strength, Ray HURLS himself over the ledge and onto the roof.

EXT. PALACE OF FACETS, ROOF - NIGHT

CRUNCH.

Ray lands on the gravel, spins, drops his gun, catches it with one hand, takes aim at a nearby stationery silhouette.

He seems to be clutching something at waist level. A gun?

MARKOV
(aloud)
A world with only one superpower is
tyranny. Chaos. Disorder.

Ray advances toward him, gun armed and aimed.

RAY
What do you want from me?

MARKOV
I want you to do what you were
designed to do. Destined to do.

RAY
And what's that?

MARKOV
Succeed.

We see a tiny glint of light from the clear parabolic device
in Markov's right hand.

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

POP. POP.

Gray skies. Rain slicked streets. Static. Judder. Artifacts.
The Press Secretary falls. Ray turns.

PUFF.

Another shot rings out. But this time, suppressed, from off.
Not from the past, from the now.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. PALACE OF FACETS, ROOF - NIGHT

CRUNCH.

Ray falls to his knees, drops his gun.

In the distance behind him stands Ilyin holding his same
silenced pistol.

RAY
(pained)
Wait...

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray, white as a sheet, looks to see Natasha standing before
him again in the same black ballgown.

NATASHA

...tov.

Everything's back, just as it was. Yet again.

Ray looks around, defeated and depleted. Like a caged animal that's lost the will to fight.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Good luck has--

Ray staggers toward her.

RAY

(hushed)

Meet me at Spaso. The command center. Quick as you can.

NATASHA

I'm sorry?

RAY

Just... Please.

In the distance, Markov slips his translation earpiece into his jacket, stands.

OLIVER (V.O.)

Dynamo to the podium. All eyes.

NATASHA

(a vehement hiss)

Stop. You're gonna get us both *fucking* fired.

RAY

Trust me.

Morales advances toward the stage. Ray doesn't even look.

Instead, he turns and strides swiftly toward the main entrance - toward the doors he directed Natasha toward.

OLIVER (V.O.)

Stillman? What are you doing?

Markov clocks Ray's change of plans, slows, nods to himself.

RAY

(into his wrist)

Comms failure, sir. Comms...

Ray cuts himself off, taps his ear with one hand, continues.

Behind him, Ilyin slips behind Oliver, swaps a quick nervous glance with Markov.

Markov shrugs it off, heads toward the curtained passageway as planned. As always.

MORALES

...we stand at the precipice...

Ray pushes past a pair of GUARDS, rushes out into the night.

EXT. KREMLIN - NIGHT

Like a man possessed, Ray tumbles down the stairs of the Palace and sprints across the cobbles toward a broad boulevard of BUZZING traffic.

He sees a cab, desperately hails it. But it speeds on.

RAY

C'mon. C'mon.

He turns right, keeps running, sees another cab pass and veer toward the curb.

He gallops toward it, throws open the rear door, BARKS toward the driver:

RAY (CONT'D)

(subtitled Russian)

Number ten Spasopeskovskaya Square.

I/E. CAB / MOSCOW STREETS - NIGHT

The unseen driver GRINDS the car into gear, guns the gas.

Ray, winded and thrumming with adrenalin, pulls a phone from his pocket, unlocks it, pulls up a browser, types:

MARKOV PSYCHOACOUSTICS

A whole host of search results load, including what appears to be an article from The Guardian.

Ray stabs at it, scrolls.

On-screen we see an earlier photo of a younger Markov (40s) in dark gray suit shaking the hand of a gaunt FSB Colonel in an all-black uniform and a black beret.

He and a long line of cadets stand shoulder-to-shoulder amid bombed-out urban ruins sporting scoped sniper rifles.

All of their eyes are obscured out by dark black bands. But we can still tell it's him.

Ilyin.

The caption reads:

PUTIN'S ELUSIVE PSYOPS MASTERMIND

Ray reads on, stone-faced.

EXT. SPASO HOUSE, PORTICO - NIGHT

Ray flashes his credentials to a pair of armed MPs outside the colonnaded entrance to the ambassador's residence.

One of the MPs then nods. The other reaches for the door.

RAY
Orders. From Control.

Ray pockets his credentials, speeds through the open door and into the warmly-lit entrance hall.

ENTRANCE HALL:

Moving fast, Ray veers past the winding stairs to the second floor and instead hurries down a narrow stairwell.

LOWER FLOORS:

Ray hits the base of the stairs, turns right down a dim passage lined with oil landscapes in gold frames.

DOORWAY:

Ray slows, looks both ways, swipes his badge.

BUZZ.

The door sensor flashes green and Ray steps inside.

EXT. SPASO HOUSE, COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Guiding the door closed with a muted CLICK, Ray rushes toward one of a bevy of glowing workstations, grabs a worn task chair, logs in.

The space is shockingly austere. Just a cramped, utilitarian workspace full of aging computer equipment.

Something cobbled together quickly and on a narrow budget.

Ray pulls up an old-school, shockingly rudimentary database application, pounds the keys.

Soon, all manner of sophisticated, scanned schematics for what appear to be electronic devices flash by.

Then: a series of blurry scans of Russian dossiers. Some are redacted. Most aren't.

Ray MUTTERS to himself as he CLICKS through dossier after dossier. Clipped to each document: a small cadet photo.

RAY
Lviv, Lviv, Lviv.

No one's familiar. Just blank face after blank face until:

RAY (CONT'D)
Bingo.

The dossier on-screen is all in Cyrillic. But, attached to the upper right corner is a photo of Ilyin.

Suddenly: BUZZ. CLICK.

The door whips opens and Natasha, winded, presses in.

NATASHA
Jesus, Ray. What the *fuck* are you thinking? You can't just--

Ray pushes himself back from the keyboard, points toward Ilyin's picture as if she'd somehow recognize him.

She stares, edges closer.

RAY
This is going to sound fucking crazy. I know it won't make a lick of sense. But, by this time tomorrow, Dynamo will be dead. Assassinated in broad daylight in the middle of Red Square by this man. Ilyin. Vladimir.

Natasha does a slow, deeply dubiousdouble-take.

RAY (CONT'D)
He's there now. At the Palace. With Markov, the one Alexei--

NATASHA
Ray? Ray.

Ray turns back toward the screen. *No time to explain.*

RAY
I've tried everything. Nothing ever works. Every single fucking...

He trails off, knows it sounds insane.

RAY (CONT'D)
I've seen them before. Both of them. Markov and Ilyin. In New York. When...

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

POP. POP.

Gray skies. Rain slicked streets. Digital distortions. Snow.
END FLASHBACK.

EXT. SPASO HOUSE, COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Ray clutches his head like it's about to explode.

Natasha reaches for the back of a chair, pulls it closer.

NATASHA
We've been over this and over this, Ray. It wasn't your--

RAY
(pained)
When it happened, I heard a sound. A terrible sound. The same sound I heard tonight. That I'll hear tomorrow on the Square.

Natasha wants to sit, to help. But she hesitates. Doesn't.

RAY (CONT'D)
Every time it takes me back. There, then. Just like you said. Over and over again. So many times now, I think I've lost count.

She just stares at him blankly, questioning her own exposure. Her own vulnerability.

NATASHA
You heard a 'sound' in New York. And you didn't report it?

Ray's eyes wash over the dossier. In the lower left corner, there's a small circular stamped insignia.

But it's in Cyrillic, too. Ray can't read it.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Fuck, Ray. Oliver already questions my loyalties twenty times a day. Don't make me part to... What is this? Insubordination? Lying? A fucking cover-up?

Ray just stares at the screen.

RAY

Every single time, there's nothing I can do to change the outcome. It happens. I fuck it up. I die. Bang, it starts all over again.

Natasha, spinning out, lets her eyes drift to the dossier.

RAY (CONT'D)

I need your... help. To figure this out. Stop it from happening again. Keep Dynamo safe. Keep you safe. End it finally. Once and for all.

Natasha EXHALES slowly, steps closer, reaches out to the screen, pinch-zooms in on the seal.

NATASHA

My parents fled this country under the cover of darkness before the last regime fell.

Ray leans forward, squints.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Your country, my home, gave me a chance to prove my loyalty.

RAY (CONT'D)

What does that say?

NATASHA

Don't fuck this up for me.

RAY

What does it--

NATASHA

Project Pendulum.

RAY
What's that?

Natasha grabs seat, YANKS away the keyboard, types.

NATASHA
How the hell am I supposed to know?

A quick series of mostly redacted files in both English and Russian tick by one after the other.

Natasha pauses on one, reads.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
(under her breath)
Fuck me.

Ray scans the intro to the report. His face falls.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
*Microwave Attack Definitive Source
of Mystery Illnesses Suffered by
Diplomats and...*

Natasha looks to Ray.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
...spies in Havana.

Ray reaches for screen, scrolls.

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

POP.

Ray spins, falls slowly to the rain slicked street.

RAY (V.O.)
*Focused microwaves targeted at the
the auditory cortex can be
perceived as sounds. Loud noises,
ringing, buzzing...*

As his knees hit the asphalt, there again is the white van.

And Markov again, angling the device toward Ray.

RAY (V.O.)
Comprehensible speech.

In the van, Markov looks to Ray. His lips don't move.

MARKOV (V.O.)
 (thick Russian accent)
 Do your duty.

Ray falls dead-eyed sideways, a single bullet to the brain.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. SPASO HOUSE, COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

While Ray, rocked, continues clutching his head, Natasha leans closer to the screen, READS ALOUD:

NATASHA
*Embassy staff reported fatigue,
 vomiting, blurred vision,
 blinding headaches.*

RAY
 (distantly)
An altered sense of time.

Natasha looks from the glowing screen toward Ray.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
 Havana Syndrome.

RAY
 (to himself)
 They're fucking with my memory.
 Observing what happens. But why?

Natasha, anxious, CLICKS to close the report, types, pulls up another partially redacted dossier.

This one has Ray's cadet photo clipped to it.

And the same seal in the lower left corner.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
*17 June 2027. Test subject appears
 sufficiently receptive to remote
 suggestion at a distance of more
 than a hundred and fifty...*

She trails off, finally clocking the date.

I/E. LIMOUSINE/MANHATTAN - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Now it's Ray in the back of a limousine, bleeding out.

But, instead of being attended to by Natasha, Oliver clutches him tightly.

His face is uncharacteristically riddled with fear.

OLIVER
We're *fucking* losing him!

Oliver's pressed white shirt is saturated with Ray's blood.
The blood of his once promising young protégé.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Goddammit, if we don't get him back
to Langley ASAP--

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. SPASO HOUSE, COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Natasha still stares into the blue glow of the monitor.

NATASHA
June seventeenth.

Ray nods slowly.

RAY
New York.

NATASHA
(reading again)
*The joint task force recommends
further experiments with both...*

Ray STABS a trembling hand out, cuts the power.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
...candidates.

The screen goes black.

RAY
We gotta get out of here. Bag
Alexei. Shake him down. Now.

Ray leaps to his feet.

Natasha just sits there, reeling.

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - NIGHT

Ray and Natasha speed through the formerly opulent lobby of
the Metropol again.

Ray's eyes nervously scan every passing stranger for any
sign of Markov.

But, by all indications, the coast is clear.

Natasha takes a bend, ushers Ray with her toward the amber light glowing from the hotel's once grand bar.

RAY

How do you know he's...

NATASHA

Vodka's the best lie detector.

Ray nods as he spies Alexei hunched over frosty glass at the far end of the mostly empty bar.

Alexei swivels his head slightly, tracks the two of them as they veer toward a more discrete table with three threadbare velvet lounge chairs.

INT. HOTEL, BAR - LATER

Bleary-eyed, Alexei pours more vodka from a clear decanter tucked into a silver bucket full of chipped ice.

ALEXEI

Same thing your team did way back in '65. The so-called Moscow Signal. Staff at the U.S. Embassy started coming down with all sorts of unexplained symptoms. Bleeding ears and eyes. Crippling anxiety. An inability to focus.

Alexei lifts his glass, takes a greedy gulp.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)

Doctors showed up, took blood samples. All CIA. Each one. Told staff they were searching for exposure to some sort of virus. A big lie. A cover story for a US investigation on the effects of microwave radiation on human subjects.

RAY

But why? To do what?

Alexei smiles, SLURS:

ALEXEI

Influence the behavior of key diplomats. Shape their thoughts. Control their actions.

NATASHA
That's not possible.

Alexei shrugs.

ALEXEI
Catching them in a kind of psychic feedback chamber. Hallucinating or being neurologically manipulated to repeat the same actions while the big brains watched. A programmed simulation. Like déjà vu over and over again. But where the outcome could be *optimized*. Shaped by observation. Changed.

Alexei downs the last of his vodka, shrugs.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
CIA lost funding. DARPA took over. The whole thing got swept under the rug. Everyone went back to their business like nothing happened. Chalked it up to Cold War tin hat paranoia. Fake news.

Alexei smiles slyly, looks to Natasha.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
(subtitled Russian)
Why do you ask?

Ray sits forward, turns deadly serious.

RAY
(to Alexei)
I've heard it. It's happened to me. First in New York. Then now. Here. Markov and Ilyin...

Mention of Markov and Ilyin sobers Alexei up instantly.

ALEXEI
Where exactly?

RAY
Tonight. At the Palace. Tomorrow. On the Square. Where Ilyin will successfully assassinate Tarasov and Morales.

Natasha spins.

NATASHA
Wait. What?! Both?

Ray nods gravely.

Alexei narrows his glazed eyes.

ALEXEI
(to Natasha)
You knew about this?

NATASHA
No. No, I--

RAY
I've seen it. I will happen. Unless
we find some way to stop it.

Alexei leans forward toward Ray as Natasha's mind races.

ALEXEI
Turning your failure into a weapon.
Your trauma. That's interesting.

Alexei looks to Natasha.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
(subtitled Russian)
*Fraternization, insubordination,
and treason?*

NATASHA
I don't... This isn't--

ALEXEI
(quoting)
*Luck would not happen without
misfortune's help.*

Alexei stands.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
(back to Ray)
For the record, I still think
Oliver should never have covered
for your sorry ass.

He turns to depart.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
But, come. I have an idea.

INT. SPASO HOUSE, BRIEFING ROOM - MORNING

Back again inside the second floor ballroom inside the Ambassador's residence, Oliver briefs the same collection of Secret Service agents.

OLIVER
Snipers from both sides will be
arrayed all along the Square as
discussed.

Ray and Natasha, tired, share a brief conspiratorial look.

Her's is halfhearted still. Like she still can't believe Ray completely. Like she's questioning her own complicity.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
We'll all be sharing the same
frequency, so keep the chitchat to
a minimum.

He eyes Ray briefly. Ray nods.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Then it's back here for dinner with
Mister and Misses Tarasov. Same
start time as last night at the
Palace. Any questions?

No hands go up.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Alright, dismissed.

Everyone stands, moves toward doors.

Oliver veers toward Ray as before, wags his head. *Hang back.*

Behind Oliver, another pair of doors open.

Alexei enters, veers toward Ray with the same replacement earpiece, thrusts it his way.

ALEXEI
(practiced)
Special replacement from Special
Activities Center.

His eyes are bloodshot but thrumming with anticipation.

Ray takes the device, palms it as Natasha disappears.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
No more feedback.

OLIVER
And no more nonsense. Especially
while we're on the Square.

Alexei leans in toward Ray.

ALEXEI
Everyone deserves a second chance.
This alters Ray's countenance, softens him slightly.
Alexei spins on his heels, turns to go.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Do svidaniya.

Oliver reaches for the same a crystal bowl of jellybeans,
jostles it toward Ray.

OLIVER
Damn things must be leftovers from
Reagan's trip back in eighty-eight.
(beat)
The hell happened last night?

Ray pockets the new earpiece.

RAY
Comms failure. My earpiece--

OLIVER
Yeah, well. Just stay focused, kid.
Don't let 'em fuck with your head.

Ray cants his head at this. *Why would you say that?*

OLIVER (CONT'D)
And pretty soon we'll all be able
to tell our grand kids we where
here when it...

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

The entire entourage steps into the sunlight and out onto
the cobbles, moving en masse across the square.

After a few strides, Ray veers left.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Stillman?

Ray yanks out his old earpiece, tosses it, pulls in the new
one that Alexei just handed him, stabs it into one ear.

Behind him, Natasha slows, lifts her wrist.

NATASHA (V.O.)
(deeply nervous)
Four minutes. Mark.

Ray, on the run with his pistol drawn, BARKS back:

RAY
Confirmed.

Ray thunders up the stone stairs, past a pair of bewildered GUARDS, throws open a pair of gilded doors, rushes into -

INT. KREMLIN GRAND PALACE, GROUND FLOOR - DAY

Ray SKIDS to a stop on the mirror-polished mosaic floor of a vast, bright white palace entrance.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
(over Ray's earpiece)
Stairs. Dead ahead.

Ray SPRINTS past another pair of RUSSIAN SOLDIERS toward a pair of mirrored doors, throws them open.

RAY
Secret Service.

Ray SURGES through the doors, starts climbing.

EXT. KREMLIN GRAND PALACE, ROOF - DAY

Gulping down air, Ray BURSTS through another pair of doors and TUMBLES back out into the daylight, gun drawn.

In the distance: a lone sniper team (one SPOTTER with a matte green scope and one SHOOTER laying prone).

Both are clad in black tactical gear. Bullet-proof vests with POLICE patches across the back.

Americans.

NATASHA (V.O.)
Three minutes.

Ray rushes toward the men in black, barely able to speak:

RAY
Presidential detail!

The spotter wheels around toward Ray.

The sniper stays prone.

RAY (CONT'D)
Move!

SPOTTER
The fuck?

Ray falls to the gravel, wrestles the rifle away.

RAY
Distance?

ALEXEI (V.O.)
Three hundred seventy five yards.

SNIPER
That wasn't in the--

Ray steadies the gun, swivels left, lowers one eye to the scope, tries to calm his chest.

RAY
Wind speed?

EXT. KREMLIN GRAND PALACE, ROOF - RAY'S POV

Though the rifle scope, we see the entourage slow before the cluster of tourists once again.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
Eight point five. North northeast.

The cross-hairs whip side-to-side, then up and down.
Jittery. Unstable.

NATASHA (V.O.)
Two minutes.

Through the scope, we catch sight of Ilyin as he slowly lifts his hands toward the camera.

RAY (V.O.)
The camera. It's a gun.

DEEP BREATH. DEEP BREATH.

RAY (CONT'D)
Two rounds.

NATASHA (V.O.)
Are fucking nuts?!

Tarasov surges toward the Young Girl, runs her hand over the Girl's head as if to calm her.

We can't see her face. Or Morales's.

DEEP BREATH. DEEP BREATH.

RAY (V.O.)
The radio...

SPOTTER (V.O.)
Control says stand down.

RAY (V.O.)
It's some sort of transponder. To
signal the transport.

SPOTTER (V.O.)
He says now.

We hear Ray DRAW another long, slow, deep breath.

He EXHALES quietly.

SNIPER (V.O.)
Negative, sir. He won't...

The cross-hairs steady on Ilyin's chest, just right of the old-school portable radio.

RAY (V.O.)
What is that fucking thing?

SNIPER (V.O.)
Command orders you to--

RAY (V.O.)
Sorry, Oliver.

NATASHA (V.O.)
Ray?

RAY
I have him.

Ilyin slowly lifts the camera to his eye.

Ray squeezes off a single round: BANG.

The bullet hits Ilyin just right of the radio.

He drops the camera. The crowd scurries, hits the deck.

The troop transport speeds toward the crowd as the rest of the support vehicles depart.

Through the scope, Ilyin looks up, directly at us.

His face seems again to silently beg Ray to finish the task at hand, to succeed.

RAY (V.O.)
That's right you sonofabitch.

Ilyin's right hand jolts upward, grips the radio as blood blooms through his shirt.

It's as though he can't control his body, his moments are stiff, awkward. Like a puppet on strings.

The armored transport SCREECHES to a stop behind him. The door RUMBLES open.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
Stillman?

There's Markov once again.

NATASHA (V.O.)
Ray? What's your call?

Markov levels the transmission dish directly our way.

An ear-splitting SQUALL overcomes every other sound.

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Gray skies. Rain slicked streets. Tessellated polygons.

POP. POP.

Ray turns, looks to the van. It dissolves, shakes, reforms.

NATASHA (PRE-LAP)
Ray!

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. KREMLIN GRAND PALACE, ROOF - DAY

Ray, his ears bleeding, tumbles away from the sniper rifle in a stricken daze.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
He's going for the radio.

The spotter next to Ray angles his binoculars down toward the transport:

SPOTTER
The fuck is--

A BRIGHT WHITE FLASH fills the screen.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray stumbles forward toward Natasha back inside the same golden Palace yet again.

At his feet: the same busboy.

NATASHA
Mazel...

RAY
Spaso. Now.

EXT. SPASO HOUSE, COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

We're back to the command center.

Ray paces furiously behind Natasha. His partially blacked-out dossier glows on the screen before her.

NATASHA
A tactical nuclear weapon buried in the middle of Red Square? Are you *fucking* insane?!

RAY
I just... Yes. That's what is looked like. The radio is a transponder. And a detonator. If he fails, he blows the Square. Everyone loses but *fucking* Markov.

NATASHA
But that doesn't make any sense. Why would Markov...

She trails off, stands, looks to Ray like he's the ticking time bomb. Like he's the vector.

The one to be dealt with, taken down.

INT. HOTEL, BAR - LATER

Alexei narrows his bleary eyes.

ALEXEI
Mutually assured destruction.

RAY
Exactly.

NATASHA
That's madness. Insanity. With the world on the brink of total--

RAY
(still to Alexei)
You said it. Last time...

ALEXEI
Last time?

Ray ignores this.

RAY
They've weaponized my failure. My trauma. My grief. Why? There's gotta be a fucking...

Ray trails off, a realization slowly dawning.

RAY (CONT'D)
What if they're using it? To make sure I fail again. Freeze again.

Natasha stares at him icily, almost as if forming a plan to somehow guard against the contagion of his seeming lunacy.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Ray charges toward Morales. Tarasov, startled, stumbles away. Everyone else freezes.

RAY
(to Morales)
Get down! Get down!

Agents from both sides draw guns, wheel around wildly.

RAY (CONT'D)
I have to get you out of--

OLIVER (V.O.)
Stillman?!

In the distance, The armored vehicle SCREECHES to a halt.
The door RIPS open again, just like it always does.

Amid the scrum, Markov angles the device toward Ray.

Sonic chaos.

Ray falls backward, away from a stunned Morales.

BANG. BANG.

Two shots from Ilyin. Down goes Dynamo.

Natasha just watches.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Dynamo down! Repeat, Dynamo--

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Ray, desperate, RUSHES toward Morales just at the entire
entourage hits the Square.

RAY
Madam President! I need you to come
with me *right* now. Please, you're
in grave--

Yet another wave of FEEDBACK.

Ray winces. Natasha stares.

RAY (CONT'D)
(on his knees)
It's a... trap.

Morales look past Ray, toward Oliver.

Oliver lifts his wrist.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Easy-breezy, now.

Oliver gestures toward another pair of agents.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Get him out of here.

Behind him, Natasha's face hardens.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Ray pulls his pistol, fires rapidly:

BANG. BANG. BANG.

The bullets WHISTLE past Young Girl, THUD into Ilyin's chest. Three direct hits, but he doesn't fall.

Instead, he looks directly to Ray again.

Deep condescension.

The armored vehicle SCREECHES to a halt behind him. The door RIPS open. And there's Markov once again.

Ray aims for him. But it's too late.

An ear-splitting TUMULT OF GRINDING overcomes him.

The soldier pulls Ilyin in, SLAMS the door.

Ray crumples to the cobbles in excruciating pain.

Natasha's hand drifts toward her sidearm.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Dynamo down! Repeat, Dynamo--

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

Back in the armored limousine, Ray cradles the President in his arms while central Moscow bleeds by.

By the look in his eyes we can tell: this is the thousandth time he's been here/done this.

MORALES
And everything was going so well.

She looks to Ray. Her blouse and his shirt are both bathed in her blood as they always are.

Failure.

No matter what he does, nothing ever affects the outcome.

It's inevitable.

While she frantically works at staunching Morales' wounds, Natasha's eyes are affixed still to Ray.

Her face says it all. *This is your fault.*

INT. HOTEL, LOBBY - EVENING

As the same burly MPs rush Ray through the Metropol lobby, Ray (his eyes ringed in black and his face entirely devoid of emotion) spies Markov exiting the same elevator.

Looking like he's playing out the same scenario on eternal repeat, Ray slips a hand inside his jacket, pulls his weapon, spins.

INT. HOTEL, ELEVATOR CORRIDOR - EVENING

Markov smiles, ominously calm.

Without even looking, Ray grips the trigger.

BANG. BANG. Two shots from across the lobby.

As he falls, Ray looks to the MPs. Neither of them have drawn their weapons.

Instead, Natasha stands at the center of the lobby just ahead of Alexei, clutching her smoking sidearm.

NATASHA

I'm sorry, Ray.

Alexei, stunned, just watches as Ray, on his knees, dabs at his white shirt with bloody fingers before crumpling sideways to the cold marble.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray, a ghost of his former self, stands staring blankly at the same poor busboy gathering up broken dishes.

NATASHA

...tov.

Ray's shoulders slump. *Here we go again.*

EXT. SPASO HOUSE, COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Back to the command center.

This time though, Ray just sits there staring into the distance as Natasha furiously scrolls.

NATASHA

That doesn't make any fucking...

Ray SIGHS heavily.

A man trapped in his own unending trauma.

Natasha spins around to face him.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Wait.

She reaches out, grabs him by the knees, forcefully spins him around to face her.

The blue light of the monitor paints her fine features.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Ray.

For a second, it's almost as if we can hear "WATCHING THE WHEELS" kick in again. From another place. Another time.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Maybe you *can't* fix this. Maybe you're not *supposed* to. And they know it. They're banking on it, exploiting it.

Ray stares at her blankly. *It's over. There's no way out.*

NATASHA (CONT'D)

But maybe we can. Us, not you. All three of us. Together.

(off his look)

You said it yourself. You need my help. Our help. But then you take fucking charge like a fucking dude. Trying to fix what you messed up. But, if this is right, if what you're saying is true, none of this was your fucking fault in the first place. Maybe they *stopped* you. Intentionally. Kept you from doing your fucking job. And maybe that's exactly what's happening right now. Like you said, over and over again.

She turns away from him, stands, reaches to switch the computer off.

But as she does, her arm brushes the mouse and the document on-screen scrolls to a page featuring a grainy photo of her.

Ray doesn't clock it. Only she does.

CLICK. Off goes the computer.

Natasha does her best to mask her shock. Veil her fear.
Forge the same distance that Ray does.

Wall herself off.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
You didn't freeze, Ray. They *made*
you fail. You and you alone. But
not us, Ray. Not us.

She turns, heads for the door. Summons all her nerve.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
Trust and confidence, babe. Trust
and fucking confidence.

INT. HOTEL, BAR - LATER

Alexei narrows his bleary eyes, grins ear-to-ear.

ALEXEI
Interesting.

NATASHA
(to Alexei, hushed)
We swap headsets. You take the
roof, the snipers.
(to Ray, quietly)
You and I switch places. I take the
shooter. You cover Dynamo. If
Markov shows...

Ray GROANS. *It's not gonna...*

NATASHA (CONT'D)
(still to Ray)
When Markov shows, just let him try
to fuck you up again. Take you back
there. Let it happen. Don't fight
it. Give in.
(back to Alexei)
As soon as the transport stops,
once the door opens, you take
Markov from above.

ALEXEI
And the detonator?

NATASHA
I'll make sure buddy boy doesn't do
anything stupid, yeah?

Natasha looks back to Ray.

His eyes are still elsewhere. Just gone.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Ray, listen to me. I want to believe you. But doing the same fucking thing, over and over again and expecting a different result? That's the definition of crazy. The literal definition.

Natasha lifts her wrist, looks to her watch.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Try and get some sleep. We got this. We can do this. As a team.

Alexei lifts his nearly empty decanter, gulps it down.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Natasha and Ray track the same cluster of men in suits as they cross the tree-lined square.

As it always is, the sky above is cloudless and blue.

Ray is wearing his new earpiece, tuned to a shared channel with only Natasha and Alexei.

NATASHA

(into her wrist)

How do they work? Microwaves.

ALEXEI (V.O.)

Metal reflects. Water absorbs.

NATASHA

No, I mean...

The same helicopter ROARS by overhead.

ALEXEI (V.O.)

DOD started using them to disperse crowds. Protestors. With focused noise, induced hallucinations. The originals devices were huge. But now they fit in the palm of your hand. Apparently.

Ray slows, lifts his watch. In the date window: 31.

His eyes drift past Tarasov and Morales, toward the long line of idling limousines and troop transports.

RAY
 (into his wrist)
 What was your remit? Why were you
 tailing Markov?

Down the square, there's the same hulking MC2V.

On its roof: an array of COMSAT beacons and dishes.

EXT. KREMLIN GRAND PALACE, ROOF - DAY

Alexei lies prone with one eye to the scope of a sniper rifle. Two men in black uniforms are sprawled unconscious on the rooftop next to him.

ALEXEI
 Simply mirror his movements.

He takes a long, deep breath. Exhales slowly.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
 There are concerns on both sides
 about his... *allegiances*.

RAY (V.O.)
 (over his earpiece)
 What's that supposed to--

ALEXEI
 (calmly)
 I'm not working both sides against
 the middle, my friend. I'm working
 both sides against the extremes.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Natasha and Ray cross paths, moving swiftly toward opposite sides of the pack.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
 Only hardliners on both sides stand
 to gain if the peace process breaks
 down. If it doesn't even begin.
 (beat)
 Oliver. Markov. They're the old
 order. Using you to prevent peace.
 To stop progress. Kill the only two
 leaders who have a real shot at
 ending the violence.

Ray's eyes are still glued to the MC2V in the distance. One of the dishes on its roof seems to be angled down toward the Square instead of the sky.

Directly at Ilyin.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
Think about it. The joint
commission? Both candidates?

Ray slows momentarily, putting two and two together.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
DOD and DARPA weren't working
together. CIA and FSB were.

NATASHA (V.O.)
But that doesn't make any--

RAY
Shit.

Natasha looks his way.

In the distance behind them all, Oliver lifts his wrists,
BARKS something we can't hear into it.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, ANTEROOM - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Oliver silently rips Ray a new one inside the cramped
anteroom jammed full of surveillance equipment back inside
the Palace of Facets.

A seeming eternity ago.

RAY (PRE-LAP)
One of us.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Ray picks up the pace again, eyes dead ahead again.

RAY
He said Ilyin was one of ours.

Oliver speaks silently into his wrist again.

Everybody slows.

Ray finally sees him: Ilyin.

As he always does, he stands with the camera and detonator
slung around his neck directly behind the young girl.

Natasha looks to him, then back to Ray. They're on opposite
sides of the tightly packed cluster of dignitaries.

Ilyin slowly lifts his hands to the camera.

RAY (CONT'D)

Steady.

Ilyin wordlessly removes the lens cap.

NATASHA (V.O.)

(over Ray's earpiece)

Clear line of sight?

ALEXEI (V.O.)

Confirmed.

Ilyin closes one eye, looks into the viewfinder.

Ray thrusts a hand into his jacket, HISSES into his wrist:

RAY

Now.

Together, Ray and Natasha draw, sprint toward Ilyin.

NATASHA

Shooter. Shooter. Shooter.

Ray SMASHES his way through the crowd as Ilyin, grips the release, presses down.

RAY

Outta my way! Outta my--

BANG! BANG!

Ilyin fires twice.

Ray LEAPS toward Morales.

But it's too late.

The first bullet hits Natasha just above her collarbone.

The impact jolts her backward.

The second round catches her in the chest. A direct hit.

Bedlam ensues.

Natasha's gun discharges twice as she falls. The first bullet ricochets off the cobbles, hits one of the tourists.

The second bullet grazes the Morales' photographer.

Ray pivots, LUNGES past the falling photographer, wraps his arms around Natasha, pulls her to the ground.

Ilyin drops the camera, reaches for the radio/detonator.

From far off, SNIPER ROUNDS take down Morales, Tarasov, the Translators, and four others.

Bullets WHISPER and WHINE through the air.

Where are they coming from?

Covering Natasha with his body, Ray rolls onto his side, fires once from an odd angle:

BANG.

The bullet barely misses the young girl, clips Ilyin in the shoulder yet again, knocks his hands from the detonator.

But, again, he doesn't fall. Instead, he looks to Ray with hauntingly empty eyes. *Surely you can do better than--*

The armored transport SCREECHES to a stop behind him.

Markov angles the dish toward Ray. A SWIRLING TEMPEST OF NOISE blots out every other sound.

EXT. HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL EXIT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Gray skies. Rain slicked streets. Shimmering digital haze.

PRE-LAP: TTTTTHHH-UMPPP.

The GALE OF SOUND abruptly ceases.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

Ray, stunned, looks to see Markov's contorted body blasted backward against the interior wall of the armored transport.

The hand-held dish sits on the floor beside him. And a single high-caliber bullet hole oozes blood from the center of his pale forehead.

The Russian soldier YANKS Ilyin into the transport.

For a fraction of a second, Ray just stares.

Then, as the door RUMBLES closed, he empties his clip into the van in a desperate bid to finally take Ilyin out.

BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG. CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

The vehicle PEELS out, bathing Ray and Natasha in smoke.

In the distance, the ministers and journalists run toward the Palace. Rooftop snipers take them out one-by-one.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
That is not me. I swear!

Ray drops his pistol, gently turns Natasha over in his arms. Blood runs from her lips.

RAY
No, no, no.

Natasha strains to force a smile.

NATASHA
Well, that's not what I expected.

Ray holds her tight. Won't let go.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
At all.

She COUGHS. Her sidearm falls from her fingers.

RAY
(into his wrist)
We need transport ASAP!

Behind him, Morales and Tarasov lie on the cobbles surrounded by frantic agents.

A mirror-like slick of blood envelops them both as one of the waiting limousines speeds their direction.

NATASHA
(weak)
Metal.

Behind them, the armored limousine SQUEALS to a stop.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
Reflects.
(gasp)
Water absorbs.

Out-of-focus figures rush Morales into the limo.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
(over Ray's earpiece)
Stillman? Get out of there.

Natasha reaches a bloody hand up, touches Ray's cheek.

NATASHA
I'm sorry. I should've... I
should've trusted you.

ALEXEI (V.O.)
NOW!

INT. HOSPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Oliver SHOVES Ray into the same drab, dimly-lit conference room inside the Moscow Hospital.

RAY
You damn well know who the fuck he
is. Both of you!

Ray's white shirt is saturated with dried blood. Not Morales' blood, not his President's blood.

Natasha's blood.

RAY
Tell me you're not running him,
running Ilyin, just like Markov's
fucking running me.

OLIVER
Running?

Oliver SLAMS the door. Donovan stands. Alexei just watches.

DONNOVAN
Sit!

RAY
(still to Oliver)
You said it yourself. He's one of
us. I wanna fucking know why!

Oliver looks to Ray's blood-stained shirt.

OLIVER
Listen, I'm sorry, son. I'm sorry
about Agent Lazarev. But--

Ray LUNGES at him, SHOVES his mentor backward.

RAY
She's dead because of you! All of
them are! Their blood is on your
hands. I deserve to know why!

Oliver, stricken, looks to Donovan. Donovan nods.

OLIVER
It's over, kid. There's no way to
win. No way to--

Ray, in a fury, reaches inside his bloody jacket, WHIPS out his pistol, turns, levels it at Donovan's head.

RAY
Why would CIA and FSB want Tarasov
and Morales dead?

DONNOVAN
Agent Stillman...

Ray's hand trembles.

RAY
The truth. Now!

Alexei slowly steps forward, puts himself between them, directly in the line of fire.

ALEXEI
(calmly)
Elements within both agencies, both
governments, are using you. Both of
you. You and Ilyin. To run every
possible scenario. Every variable.
In order to ensure that both
leaders are taken off the
chessboard. For good.

Ray's gun wavers between Alexei and Donovan.

Oliver just stands, feet frozen to the ground, his face a studied mask of plausible deniability.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Peace isn't profitable.

Alexei lifts his hands, edges closer.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Stasis is stagnation. Just like
Markov said. A world with only one
superpower is tyranny. Disorder.

Sweat beads on Ray's forehead as he tightens his grip, takes a slow step sideways.

OLIVER
You didn't fail in New York, kid.
You took him down. Like a pro.

Ray's hand shakes.

RAY
You're lying.

OLIVER
You and you alone.

RAY
I froze. I failed.

DONNOVAN
You took a bullet. To the brain.

RAY
Stop.

DONNOVAN
You're not even here right now.
You've *never* been here.

RAY
I don't... That can't--

OLIVER
Induced coma. Walter Reed.

DONNOVAN
Our AI, their neurotech, your
savior complex and tragically low
self-esteem. We couldn't have found
a better candidate if we'd tried.

RAY
That's not...

OLIVER
Please, Ray. We just needed to make
sure it couldn't happen again. No
one acting alone could save her
again. Either of them. The world
needs this, Ray. It's the only way.

Ray looks to Alexei, then back to Donovan.

DONNOVAN
Now, put the gun down.

Alexei nods slowly. *You know it's true.*

The two men are no longer enemies, no longer rivals. They're on the same side now. Inextricably bound.

ALEXEI

The MC2V. The dish angled down. On the roof. It's how they control him. The same way they control you.

Ray's face shifts. *Of course.*

He instantly lifts the barrel of his gun to his own temple.

RAY

(to himself)

Please be there. Please be--

OLIVER

Wait!

Ray pulls the trigger.

PRE-LAP: SMASH!

Fine China hits cold stone.

INT. PALACE OF FACETS, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Ray trips sideways, sees the busboy down on his knees again, spins, catches sight of Natasha.

Alive and well.

NATASHA

Mazel tov.

Ray can't believe his eyes, charges toward her.

RAY

You're alive! It *fucking* worked!

NATASHA

Of course I am. The fff--

RAY

Doesn't matter. Doesn't matter.

Ray looks ahead, sees Markov stand, head for the passageway.

OLIVER (V.O.)

Dynamo to the podium. All eyes.

RAY
 (sotto, to Natasha)
 The bar. Metropol. Fast as you can.
 Tell Oliver your transponder's on
 the blink again.

NATASHA
 Again?

RAY
 Find Alexei.

NATASHA
 You hate that two-timing--

RAY
 Shhh.

Ray looks right, sees Morales (also very much alive again)
 quickly make her way toward the stage.

OLIVER (V.O.)
 Move it, kid. Over.

Ray looks left, sees Oliver only feet away from Ilyin.

His face hardens. He lifts his wrist.

RAY
 (bitterly)
 Sir, yes sir.

Ray flips his wrist over. There again in the date window:
the number 30. The day before Red Square.

RAY (CONT'D)
 (back to Natasha)
 You were right. I can't do this
 alone. No one can.

MORALES
 (from the lectern)
 ...I want to thank you again...

RAY
 Act don't react.

Natasha screws up her face. *What?!*

Ray presses past Natasha, trying to recall every detail from
 his first go-around.

RAY (CONT'D)
 Together.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Stillman? What are you doing?

Ray lifts his wrist, smiles.

RAY
Playing a hunch, sir.

MORALES
...on the brink of a momentous...

Ray slows, doesn't reach for his sidearm. Seems to be counting every step, every inch.

RUSSIAN TRANSLATOR (O.S.)
(subtitled Russian)
*...or do we go it alone, no matter
the cost?*

Ilyin disappears into the passageway like clockwork.

Ray pauses, waits. Natasha hesitates.

MORALES
...I'm sure we can all agree...

CURTAINED EXIT:

As Morales continues her REMARKS, Ray can't even hear them. All he hears is his chest steadily rising and falling.

Rising and falling.

Waiting for the right moment.

In the distance, Natasha looks to Oliver, confused.

Ray smiles.

MORALES
(muffled)
A life, in other words, worth
living.

Still not drawing his weapon, Ray takes his cue, ducks through the curtains, steps into -

PASSAGEWAY:

The same gold-gilt hall lined with service carts.

OLIVER (V.O.)
That's an order, son.

Ray looks to the paunchy waiter, reaches out just in time to catch the silver chafing dish, smiles.

Shhh...

But, this time, instead of handing it back, Ray clutches it by its handle like a shield.

A metal shield.

Over his earpiece, the ever-present WAVE OF FEEDBACK.

Then, as always, Markov's VOICE:

MARKOV (V.O.)
Go ahead. Do your duty.

Instead of running, Ray walks, speaks calmly into his wrist:

RAY
(subtitled Russian)
I'm trying.

Passing waitstaff regard him curiously as he steps toward the kitchen. This time: no screaming, no dodging.

KITCHEN:

No one freezes. Everyone goes about their business.

MARKOV (V.O.)
You will only fail yet again.

RAY
(subtitled Russian)
Yeah, that is the idea, isn't it?

Ray spies the same rolling rack full of dishes.

Beyond it: the same open window.

And Ilyin, swapping bottles, entirely unaware of Ray's steady, almost lulling advance.

The curtains between them flutter as ever.

RAY (CONT'D)
(back to English)
But, somehow, this time, I'm not so sure. Not sure in the slightest.

Ray pushes his way past the rolling rack, still hasn't reached for his gun.

All he has in his hand is the silver cloche.

RAY (CONT'D)
(toward Ilyin)
Sucks, doesn't it?

Ilyin wheels around. Ray smiles.

To his left, there's Markov again - angling the transmission device directly at Ilyin.

RAY (CONT'D)
Never getting to choose.

Markov turns, points the device at Ray.

Ray lifts the cloche, angles it at Markov.

No sound. No grinding.

No rain slicked streets or gray skies.

Metal reflects.

Behind Ray, Ilyin buckles slightly. Like a puppet whose strings have been unceremoniously cut.

He drops the champagne bottle.

SMASH!

Glass goes flying. But we stay here for a change.

In the moment, in the now.

RAY (CONT'D)
Used to think all that mattered was
what *might* happen. Not what is
happening. Right now.

He advances toward Markov.

Markov, in a panic, toggles the device back toward Ilyin.

Ilyin, like Ray always used to, buckles in pain.

Ray continues his steady advance.

RAY (CONT'D)
But guess what?

MARKOV
(flawless English)
Stop. Reset.

RAY
Nobody knows what will happen.

MARKOV
Reboot the--

RAY
Or when.

BANG!

He smashes the cloche into Markov's face.

The man flies backward, hits the ground with a meaty THUD.

Everyone else in the room just stares as the device previously in Markov's hand skitters across the floor.

Ray turns, drops the cloche, stares into the startled and bloodshot eyes of his seeming lifelong adversary.

RAY (CONT'D)
See you tomorrow.

Without another word, Ray spins on his heels and ambles calmly back through the kitchen and into the night.

RAY (CONT'D)
Don't be late.

NATASHA (PRE-LAP)
Wait, wait. What?

INT. HOTEL, BAR - LATER

All three of them sit again clustered tightly around the same table inside the dimly-lit bar.

NATASHA
That doesn't make any *fucking* sense. A coma? Please.

Alexei blinks his bleary eyes, runs a hand over his stubble.

ALEXEI
And I said what again?

RAY
Will say, tomorrow. Unless we pull this off. Unless this works.

Alexei and Natasha stare at him blankly.

RAY (CONT'D)
(paraphrasing Alexei)
Peace isn't profitable. A world
with one superpower is stasis,
stagnation.

Alexei narrows his eyes. Natasha grabs his decanter of
vodka, downs it.

RAY (CONT'D)
You said, say, will say in front of
Donnovan himself that there are
factions inside each agency, inside
CIA and FSB, that are actively
running every possible scenario
using me and that fucker Ilyin to
make sure Morales and Tarasov both
get taken off the board. For good.

Ray looks to a passing HOSTESS, orders another round.

Natasha reaches inside her blazer, pulls her silver
cigarette case, cracks it, nervously draws a cigarette out.

RAY (CONT'D)
I don't know how they're doing it,
fucking microwaves or with me stuck
at fucking Walter Reed--

NATASHA
Ray, baby...

RAY
All I know is it's on us, all three
of us, to show them it can be done.

NATASHA
What can be done?

RAY
We can save Dynamo. And Tarasov.
And both of their...

Ray cuts himself off, spies Markov crossing the lobby.

With a black eye.

RAY (CONT'D)
Here's how we do it...

EXT. RED SQUARE - DAY

The same cluster of Dignitaries emerges from the Palace and
crosses Red Square.

The sky above, as it's always been, is brilliantly blue.

Ray lifts his wrist, looks to his watch.

In the date window yet again: 31.

Ray lowers his wrist, draws a breath.

The same helicopter with the glass canopy WHOOSHES overhead.

The same limos idle in the distance. The same mobile command vehicle sits with the dish angled down, not to the sky.

At the center of the pack, Morales and Tarasov walk like leaders completely oblivious of their potential fates.

On opposite sides of the slow-moving cluster, Ray and Oliver walk. Protégé and fallen mentor.

Ray lifts his wrist again, speaks into it:

RAY
Status check. Over.

Oliver doesn't react in the slightest. He can't hear a syllable from Ray's headset.

Just as before.

EXT. KREMLIN GRAND PALACE, ROOF - DAY

Natasha bursts through a door to the roof of the Palace flanked by a ARMY STRIKE TEAM armed to the teeth.

Up ahead: a RUSSIAN SPOTTER kneels, eyes trained to a scope. Next to him, a RUSSIAN SNIPER lies prone.

Natasha rushes toward them, pistol drawn:

NATASHA
Secret Service! Stand down!

The spotter spins toward her. The sniper stays prone.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
Presidential detail. You're under arrest!

RUSSIAN SPOTTER
(subtitled Russian)
What the hell is this?!

Natasha grips the trigger on her pistol as the strike team surges past her, weapons trained on the sniper.

AMERICAN SOLDIER
Hands where I can see them.

The sniper rolls over onto his back, arms to the sky.

RUSSIAN SNIPER
(in English)
We have orders...

NATASHA
(in subtitled Russian)
I said stand down, now.

The sniper pushes himself slowly to his feet.

The AMERICAN SOLDIER grabs him by his wrists, spins him back around, shoves him face-down onto the rooftop.

Natasha lifts her wrist.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
Final sniper team neutralized.
Repeat: final sniper team--

EXT. RED SQUARE - SAME TIME

The entourage veers toward the same gaggle of vacationers.

Ray looks to Oliver. Oliver mutters something into his wrist. Ray can't hear it.

EXT. RED SQUARE, MOTORCADE - SAME TIME

Having split from the pack, Alexei rushes toward the long line of limos flanked by troop transports.

A young RUSSIAN PRIVATE (20s) lifts a hand.

Alexei flashes him his credentials, swerves toward the MC2V, raps his meaty palm on the steel door. KNOCK. KNOCK.

The door RUMBLES open.

ALEXEI
(subtitled Russian)
Change of plans.

He leaps in, slides the door shut: BANG.

Draws a silenced pistol.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

He deftly dispatches everyone on-board.

Along one wall of the van: a sophisticated control panel full of glowing screens and blinking buttons and dials.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Sorry not sorry.

He roughly shoves the slumped body of a young technician to the floor and assumes his seat at the panel.

EXT. RED SQUARE - SAME TIME

Ray slows, looks forward.

There's Ilyin again. Waiting. Frozen. Unable to move.

Tarasov slows, points toward a distant tower, leans in toward Morales, says something we can't hear.

The entire entourage pauses.

In the distance, we can see Natasha speeding back across the Square. She has one hand inside her coat.

Ray looks to Oliver. Oliver's face stiffens.

Ray reaches down, flicks a button on his receiver, looks to the motorcade, sees the dish atop the MC2V rotate.

Over his shoulder, Ilyin bites his lip, seemingly in pain.

Ahead of Ray, Tarasov lifts his arms, turns, as if he's explaining the whole history of the Kremlin to Morales.

Beyond them, Oliver's wary eyes are on Ray, not Dynamo.

Natasha rejoins the pack, veers close to Ray, discretely palms him her cigarette case.

He grips it in one hand, angled down to the cobbles.

Tarasov guides Morales toward the Vacationers.

MORALES
Well, hello there.

The young girl reaches up, shakes Morales's hand.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Steady.

Everyone freezes.

Ray BOLTS toward Morales. Natasha draws her sidearm, swings it momentarily between Ray and Ilyin, Ray and Ilyin.

RAY
Shooter. Shooter. Shooter.

Total anarchy ensues.

Jolted as if from a dream, Ilyin reaches for the camera.

RAY (CONT'D)
Don't you *fucking* do it!

Ray grabs a stunned Morales, charges with her directly toward her reluctant assassin as Natasha readies to fire.

But not at Ilyin. At Ray again.

Then, out of nowhere: MACHINE GUN FIRE.

Bullets strafe the cobbles, send both Ray and Natasha lurching. There's no cover. None.

SCREECH!

The armored transport SQUEALS to a halt. The door SMASHES open. There's a stunned Markov, clutching the device.

Same black eye as before.

He angles the device at Ray as a single bullet grazes the Russian President's upper arm.

Natasha, frozen, whips her gun between targets.

But, instead of firing at Markov, Ray lifts the cigarette case, angles it toward the transport.

He and Ilyin are face-to-face. But the shooter's expression has shifted. No longer blank. No longer in pain.

Ray YANKS the radio/detonator from his neck.

RAY
Gotcha.

As bullets TUMBLE and WHINE all around them, Ilyin locks eyes with Ray, looks like a sleepwalker stunned awake.

ILYIN
(subtitled Russian)
What are you doing h--

THUMP.

A single sniper round from high up and further down the Palace roof hits Ilyin just right of the sternum.

The force sends his body backward toward the stunned Russian Soldier frozen next to Markov inside the transport.

Both men are convulsing. In paroxysms of pain from the dish angled directly toward them from the roof of the MC2V.

It's working.

RAY
(to Dynamo)
In. In!

As the rest of the entourage scatters amid more incoming SNIPER FIRE, Natasha rushes Tarasov, bleeding, around the front of the vehicle.

The windscreen is down, latched to the hood.

Natasha fires twice toward the DRIVER:

BANG! BANG!

The driver slumps sideways.

Ray pulls Markov from the hold, casts him roughly to the cobbles still clutching the device.

But, just as he's about to reach for the soldier: WHOOSH!

A single shoulder-fired rocket STREAKS down from the Palace rooftop, toward the transport.

Ray sees it, veers left.

RAY (CONT'D)
INCOMING!

The rocket hits the transport broadside.

KA-BOOM!

The blast blows the vehicle into the air.

As it tumbles in the air like a toy, the blast wave knocks Ray and Natasha nearly off their feet.

In the distance, now outside the MC2V and returning fire at the gathering bevy of RUSSIAN REBELS, Alexei SHOUTS:

ALEXEI
This way! This way!

His ears ringing and his face burnt, Ray pulls Dynamo back to her feet.

RAY
Are you okay? Are you--

MORALES
Yes. YES!

Ray sees more ARMED TROOPS advancing on Alexei, lifts his pistol, fires quickly:

BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG.

Three fall. The rest scatter.

Alexei grabs a rifle, ducks for cover behind the MC2V.

ALEXEI
(toward Ray)
The limousines. Hurry!

Ray looks to Natasha. She nods.

And, together, they sprint dead-out toward the long line of idling cars, firing at anything that moves. Then:

BOOM. BOOM. BOOM. BOOM. BOOM.

RPGs fired from the rooftops explode beneath each limousine in rapid succession, sending each car hurtling end-over-end into the air like dominoes.

Ray skids to a stop. A bullet catches him in the leg.

More GUNFIRE. More SNIPER ROUNDS.

RAY
Shit. I'm--

Natahsa grabs him, TUGS him and Dynamo with her and Tarasov toward momentary safety next to Alexei.

NATASHA
I'm sorry, Ray. I almost--

Bullets THUD and PING into and off of the armored van.

Alexei leans around the edge, empties the clip of his scavenged AK-47:

RATA-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!

ALEXEI
The Mi-8. The helicopter.

He ditches the clip, swaps in a second, looks to Ray.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Tell me you can fly.

I/E. MOBILE COMMAND VEHICLE / RED SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Now at the wheel, Alexei pilots the armored MC2V through a swarm of gunfire coming from literally everywhere.

In the back, Natasha tends to Tarasov's shoulder while Ray wraps his own thigh with an improvised tourniquet.

RAY
(to Morales)
The First Gentleman should be safe.
He always is. But we need to get
you to Spaso House. Now.
(to Tarasov)
Both of you. This is not a stunt.
Not a drill. This may be a full-on
coup orchestrated by officials at
the highest levels.
(back to Morales)
Of both governments.

Alexei BASHES the vehicle through a pair of steel bollards, sending it SCREECHING across the cobbles.

Through the blacked-out windows: smoke and tracers. Evidence of an on-going, heavy firefight.

Ahead: vividly-colored ornate palaces and churches bleed by.

ALEXEI
Hold on. This is going to be--

SMASH. SMASH. SMASH.

He careens the van through a low pedestrian tunnel beneath an imposing red brick tower amid a shower of sparks.

All of the equipment on the roof goes flying.

SCREECH.

Alexei sends the vehicle into a long controlled left hand skid. Then he guns it directly toward a cluster of heavily-armed KREMLIN GUARDS.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

The windscreen spiders with each high-caliber round. But it doesn't shatter.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

He takes each guard down one-by-one. Mows them over.

As their bodies SMACK against the grill, we catch a quick glimpse of a helipad in the distance.

On it sits the twin-turbine helicopter from before.

Miraculously, it's unguarded. For the moment.

EXT. RED SQUARE - SAME TIME

As wounded dignitaries claw their way back across the cobbles amid a scene of total carnage, Markov rolls over onto his back, covered in blood.

The hand-held microwave gun sits on the ground beside him.

MARKOV
(quoting, pained)
*Now conscience wakes despair. Wakes
the bitter memory.*

He pushes himself slowly to his feet, bends to grip the gun.

MARKOV (CONT'D)
Of what was.

I/E. HELICOPTER / KREMLIN - CONTINUOUS

Ray, pale with the blood loss, scans the massive bank of controls in Cyrillic before him like an archeologist studying the Rosetta Stone.

Buckling in next to him, Natasha does a quick double-take.

Through the nearly all-glass canopy, six or seven ARMED SOLDIERS rapidly ready a rocket launcher.

WHOMP. WHOMP. WHOMP. WHOMP.

The rotors spin-up.

The soldiers take aim.

NATASHA
No time like the present, Ray.

Ray reaches to a panel overhead, gives the twin throttles a heavy heave forward.

And the helicopter lurches, nose-down, just barely off the ground and toward the Russian soldiers.

WHOOSH.

The rocket fires, streaks dead-on toward them.

Ray banks hard right, barely misses a turret on the nearest section of the Kremlin wall.

KA-BOOM!

The rocket hits a nearby Palace, blows a massive hole into it as Ray ducks the hulking craft back down the other side of the wall and toward the ring road adjacent the river.

BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG.

Automatic weapons fire from a pair of Zodiacs on the river ricochets off the glass canopy, barely missing Dynamo.

Ray banks again, heads north. Away from the river.

ALEXEI

But, Spaso House is that--

THUD.

A single round rips through the steel behind Alexei, shreds his jump seat, and sends tattered bits of his jacket flying.

Blood blossoms across his chest.

Ray looks back, sees it.

RAY

I'm gonna get you outta here. I'm gonna get all of you--

Ray jolts backward, wincing.

Below: the carnage of Red Square.

And Markov standing amidst it all, brandishing the device.

NATASHA

Ray? RAY!

Ray, unable to control his body, slumps forward.

The helicopter falls into a steep nosedive.

ALEXEI

Pull up! Pull up!

Natasha grips her controls, strains with all her might.

Through the glass floor, she can see Markov there on the ground, angling the gun toward her partner.

NATASHA
 (back to Alexei)
 Markov?

Alexei, in pain, strains to get a view.

ALEXEI
 Yes!

TARASOV
 (fading, in Russian)
What is happening?!

MORALES
 Don't worry, Victor. They're my
 detail. I trust them with my--

Morales braces as Natasha throws the helicopter into a steep banking turn and guns the throttle.

She's headed directly toward Markov.

PING. PING. PING.

More sniper rounds from the Palace rooftop ricochet off the fuselage and pierce the glass canopy.

Natasha flicks the trigger guard on the flight stick with her thumb, takes aim at Markov.

ALEXEI
 I don't think--

WHIR. WHIR. WHIR.

Both chain guns blast a fiery corridor around Markov, spraying high-caliber rounds to his left and right but missing him completely.

ALEXEI
 Too low. Too low!

NATASHA
 Fuck's sake.

Natasha arcs skyward.

Ray, his ears and eyes bleeding, lurches backward.

ALEXEI
 Water!

Natasha bends south, still taking too much fire.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Metal reflects. Water absorbs!

That's when she sees it again.

The river.

Avoiding the two gunboats, Natasha STREAKS over a small park, toward a wider section of slow-moving water.

NATASHA
(toward Ray)
This better *fucking* work!

She SLAMS the buckle on his harness restraint with the butt of her fist. And it falls away, undone.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
(back, to Alexei)
Little help.

His chest now covered in blood, Alexei snakes his hand forward, throws Ray's glass cockpit door open.

ALEXEI
(toward Ray)
Never say I didn't do anything nice
for you.

Natasha wavers briefly, uncertain. She looks to Ray.

NATASHA
See you over there.

Her voice breaks:

NATASHA (CONT'D)
Don't be late.

And, with that, Natasha BANKS hard left.

Ray's body falls from the speeding craft like a rag doll, hits the water below with a heavy SLAP!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Ray JOLTS awake inside the same dimly-lit hotel room from before. Natasha lies with one arm draped over his chest.

NATASHA
I can always tell where you are
when you're not here.

Ray blinks, disoriented.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
There, then. '29. Always.

Ray looks quickly to the nightstand, sees his watch.

He snatches it up, turns it over in his hand, afraid to look. But then he slips his thumb from the crystal face.

In the date window: a number. The number one.

A new day dawning. The next day. At last.

An almost imperceptible spasm of laughter ripples Ray.

He slips the watch back onto the nightstand and threads his arm around Natasha's.

A huge, contented grin dawns across his face - precisely like the sun slowly rising just outside.

RAY
Not this time, babe.

He lifts her arm to his lips, kisses it gently.

RAY (CONT'D)
Not this--

PRE-LAP: BING. BING. BING. Some sort of urgent ALARM.

NATASHA (PRE-LAP)
Help. Help! Somebody help!

CUT TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK: **LOOP 49: FAILED**

FLASH TO:

INT. RECOVERY ROOM, LANGLEY - DAY

A disheveled Natasha grips Ray's hand bedside as all manner of telemetry devices HOWL and BUZZ.

NATASHA
Stay here. Stay here. Stay--

A UNIFORMED NURSE (40s) rushes into the room, sprints past Natasha toward the cluster of equipment on rolling silver stands across from Ray's high-tech gurney.

NATASHA (CONT'D)
He just... He opened his eyes. I saw it. I--

The nurse rapidly stabs at buttons and dials, urgently trying to silence the flurry of alarms.

On one screen: his EKG. An erratic heart rate.

Huge spikes, deep valleys.

The nurse grabs a small electronic device clipped to her scrubs, CLICKS a button, SPEAKS into it:

NURSE
I need 50cc of Methylphenidate
STAT. Room 211. Repeat, 50cc...

From the gurney, Ray (gaunt, pale, and unshaven) slowly opens his eyes again, gazes beatifically up at Natasha.

Looks like there's nowhere else in the world he'd rather be than right here, right now, looking at her.

The love of his life.

NATASHA
Ray? Ray!

Natasha collapses down onto him, buries her face into his chest as the nurse simply watches, amazed.

Another EMT in matching scrubs RUSHES into the room with a silver tray. On the tray: a tiny vial and a large syringe.

The nurse waves him off. *It's okay...*

NURSE
Well, hello Agent Stillman.

As Natasha silently SOBS, her arms clutching Ray's bony shoulders tightly, the nurse silences the last alarm, step up to the gurney, regards Ray like the miracle he is.

NURSE (CONT'D)
We've been waiting for you.

As we slowly PULL BACK, Natasha looks up, kisses Ray gently on the forehead, pulls herself closer.

Won't let go.

NURSE (CONT'D)
For a very long time.

High up on the wall opposite Ray's gurney, a thin television FLASHES images of Red Square.

Armed soldiers everywhere. Bright orange shell casing cones. Smoldering vehicles. Flashing red and blue lights.

And, for the briefest of seconds, Alexei himself guiding a Oliver across the cobbles. Handcuffed.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
(from the television)
...crisis was averted late tonight
as an elite team of security
professionals from both the Secret
Service, CIA, and FSB foiled an
apparent assassination attempt
targeting both the US President and
the newly-elected, reform-oriented
President of the Russian
Federation.

Ray's glassy, sunken eyes drift from Natasha's to the screen while the nurse pads the blankets for his remote.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
The two had just wrapped up a weeks
long, historic set of high-level
peace negotiations aimed at finally
restoring normalized diplomatic
relations and radically reducing
both country's nuclear stockpiles
amid a growing global rejection of
what some have come to dub a never-
ending state of--

CLICK.

The nurse finally finds the remote, kills the television.

Welcome, soothing silence. For once.

Ray swivels his gaze back toward Natasha, grins broadly.

She cannot believe her eyes.

RAY
(hoarse)
As Comrade Lenin used to say...

CUT TO BLACK.

ROLL END CREDITS --

To "ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER" by The Fixx.

THE END