

BLACK WINTER

Written by

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With thanks to Dr. Elizabeth A. Stewart

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EXT. PADDINGTON TRAIN STATION - LONDON - DAY

A TRAIN THUNDERS toward the arched station entrance.

SUPER: **Central London. December 2nd, 1987.**

INT. FRONT CARRIAGE - TRAIN - DAY

Downcast COMMUTERS fill the rammed carriage at rush hour. Personal space isn't an option. Avoiding all eye contact. Only the low DRONE of the TRAIN covers stilted silence.

A stiff BUSINESSMAN stares at a lusty YOUNG COUPLE. His face part scowl, part envy - when he's BUMPED from behind - sharply spinning around to berate the culprit --

As a SHROUDED MAN hurries through the mass - face totally hidden, wrapped in a scarf. Long winter coat. Leather gloves.

Head on a swivel, he glances back to the trailing carriage --

As TWO SUITED MEN muscle their way after him. He thrusts towards the exit --

INT. PADDINGTON - PLATFORMS - DAY

The train pulls to a stop - Shrouded Man getting off fast - scurrying forward, unwittingly moving straight into -

A big flood of SCHOOLCHILDREN - an unruly mass of CHATTERING mouths. Two TEACHERS try to corral them.

Shrouded Man weaves through the group - trying desperately to not touch a single hair on a single head --

And he flattens against the wall. Holding his breath -

As the TWO DARK SUITS hustle past. Military haircuts. Predator stances. Prowling. One holds a large suitcase.

Shrouded Man frantically scans the station --

INT. KEITH'S NEWSSTAND - DAY

A stationery and papers shop on the side of the platforms.

Pulling the scarf around his face tight, Shrouded Man plucks items off the shelves: Bubble wrap. Brown cellotape. Envelope. Lighter. And an ornamental Big Ben statuette.

INT. PUBLIC BATHROOM - DAY

The Shrouded Man dumps his items on the sink. Bending to check all the stalls are empty - he locks the bathroom door.

He stares into the mirror. Slowly unfurls the scarf -

His piercing EMERALD GREEN EYES becoming visible to the world. Wincing at the sight greeting him in the mirror:

A repugnant, barely human face. Skin covered in pus-sores.  
Constellation of black lumps erupting from his tongue.

He retches, legs buckling. Summons all his strength as he takes out the Big Ben statuette.

He rolls up one sleeve. Gripping the edge of the sink hard, knuckles white, he holds the end of the statuette -

And SLICES a DEEP WOUND into his arm.

He tears off a strip of newspaper - grimaces as he dabs his finger in blood to make RED MARKINGS on it and we SLAM TO:

INT. PLATFORMS - DAY

The man emerges, face hidden again. Under his arm is a THICK PACKAGE - envelope and brown tape is all we can make out.

As hundreds of PEOPLE teem, he cuts through the throng - moving up a steep marble staircase toward --

INT. MEMORIAL ROOM - DAY

A large hall. Against the far wall is the vast bronze GREAT WAR STATUE. A British soldier in battle gear.

The man approaches. Starts circling it - and we CUT TO:

INT. PHONEBOX - MINUTES LATER

He slots in coins, dialing. Leans on the glass for support.

MALE VOICE  
(posh English voice)  
Please leave a proper message after  
the beep.

SHROUDED MAN  
 (Russian; subtitled)  
*Black Winter is on the horizon.*  
*Paddington. Rope. Anchor. Eagle.*

He quickly hangs up, turning to reveal: the thick bundle is gone. As he scours the station, his eyes land on the:

TWO DARK SUITS - fifty metres away. They lock gazes on him:

INT. PLATFORMS - CONTINUOUS

And CHARGE toward their target --

The man bursts away, moving as fast as he can -- his entire body rejecting every step he's taking --

But he still LEAPS down to the tracks. Heading into the DARK.

EXT. DISUSED TRAIN SHEDS - DAY

Rusting old steamers and decaying carriages under a black lead roof. Through the murky gloom --

The Shrouded Man hurries, stumbles. Clutches a pillar:

SUIT #1 (O.S.)  
*Who did you call?*

Turning -- the TWO SUITS now a breath away. Inchng forward. SUIT #1 has a distinct OVAL BIRTHMARK on his cheek.

SUIT #2 grabs for him -- a tussle of limbs -- SUIT #1 yanks the scarf free -- as Shrouded Man wheezes, spraying his attacker with a vivid mist of gauzy blood.

SUIT #1 recoils in disgust -- the man yanks free, face now exposed -- lesions oozing across his neck, around his mouth.

He pulls a GREY PLASTIC BOTTLE out from his jacket.

SHROUDED MAN  
*For you. For everyone. Stay away.*

And he SQUIRTS LIGHTER FLUID all over his body.

SHROUDED MAN  
*It cannot go any further.*

In a blink -- the LIGHTER flame flickers and --

WHOOSHHHHHH - he self-immolates -- body engulfed in thick orange flames as he collapses to the ground.

Stone-faced, SUIT #2 opens the suitcase - it's lined with thick black plastic. The SUITS edge toward the smoking body.

SUIT #2  
*I'll clean this up. You have to--*

SUIT #1  
*--I know. I'm on it.*

EXT. MIDENHALL - SUFFOLK - ENGLAND - LATER THAT NIGHT

A sleepy town where stray dogs patrol quiet streets.

**SUPER: Suffolk. East England.**

INT. PUBLIC POOL - NIGHT

Amidst chipped tiles and faded paint, TWO OLD WOMEN bob around in the shallow water, gossiping. In the next lane -

A muscular SWIMMER pummels the water. As he finishes a lap, he drags himself up and out to the side -

And lays there - chest heaving, struggling for breath. Five years ago, DAVID RANGELL (30s) might have been a star athlete. But his body's only seen hard times since then.

LIFEGUARD  
I keep telling you, don't push  
yourself so hard all the time.

The teenage LIFEGUARD holds out a hand, helping David up.

DAVID  
(Philly accent)  
If I didn't you wouldn't have  
anything to do.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

David sits alone, hunched. Face etched with pain, mind fuelled by echoes of ghosts. From his locker, a PORTABLE RADIO EKES out American Armed Forces Network:

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

...And in Washington news,  
preparations continue for the  
historic weapons disarmament treaty  
signing on December 8th.

Picking up an INHALER, he shakes it, sucks in a deep breath.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

This unprecedeted signing would mark a  
major act of transparent diplomatic  
progress between Reagan and Gorbachev...

The inhaler hit settles David. He slips on a silver wedding  
ring and closes his locker.

I/E. CAR & COUNTRY LANES - NIGHT

David's car winds through English flatlands and farmhouses.  
On the tapedeck, "HOUSE OF THE RISIN' SUN" by Bob Dylan plays  
as David pulls into a quiet suburban street.

EXT. LAFFERTY STREET - NIGHT

A string of modest stuccoed row houses. David's car slows,  
cutting the lights across from a darkened home.

INT. DAVID'S CAR - NIGHT

David's gaze lingers intensely on one house - a zoetrope of  
dark memories playing on loop in his head.

He folds a bundle of Twenty Pound notes into a sheet of  
paper. Stuffs it into an envelope and gets out.

EXT. 24 LAFFERTY STREET - NIGHT

Children's playthings litter the messy yard. Moving toward  
the house, David seals the envelope. Steps to the mailbox -

He freezes - through fraying curtains, he sees a WOMAN (30s).  
She turns, appearing to make eye contact with David -

And he quickly slides the envelope into the mailbox. Gets  
back in the car and speeds off.

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Store is closing. David in checkout aisle. As a CLERK bags his groceries - David's pager BEEPS --

He checks it. Immediately grabs the bag and rushes out.

EXT. NATO MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION - NIGHT

At first glance this place looks like a public library - a cluster of squat beige buildings in five acres of fields --

But then floodlights sweep over a high perimeter of steel barbed wire - and UNIFORMED SENTRIES patrol the surroundings. There's more than just books inside this place.

**SUPER: NATO MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION**

Heightened activity tonight as David's battered Citroen rolls up. Window down. ID out. Sentries wave him in.

INT. NATO MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION [NMID] - NIGHT

David strides past walls adorned with all the leaders of the NATO Alliance. He reaches an elevator, heading down.

INT. UNDERGROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

Elevator door opens on: LUCIA MONTES, 30s. Senior Technical Analyst. Fierce eyes that don't hide her concern well.

DAVID  
Is this really a BSL-3 scenario?

MONTES  
That's why you're here.

They hurry through a maze of locked offices. Ahead of him, a set of airtight glass doors swing open as they enter --

INT. NMID - LABORATORIES - NIGHT

A warren of secure areas - biohazard warning signs on every door. Reaching an inner enclosure, Montes and David simultaneously punch in passcodes. Door opens to:

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

David moves up to the four-inch thick glass. Looking into:

INT. BIO SAFETY LEVEL THREE LABORATORY - NIGHT

Tiled walls, ceiling extraction fans - a perfectly contained and controllable environment for biosecure investigations.

In the center of the room is TERENCE LIN (20s), Junior Technician. Clad in a blue Total Encapsulation Positive Pressure Protective Suit. David presses an intercom button.

DAVID

What's with the moon suit, Terry?

Lin turns to the gallery - ivory faced, sweat POURING off him. He gestures to the corner where a TALL NAKED MAN paces.

LIN

(through a jaw-mic)

He's freaking out.

DAVID

Positive pathogenic detection?

MONTES

(re: the man)

British Airforce caught him trying to sneak on to their Alconbury Base.

DAVID

Was he carrying papers?

She palms David a few crumpled sheets; he scans.

MONTES

Those papers are incomprehensible and the guy's talking gibberish.

Could be a strike. They're quarantining Alconbury as we speak.

DAVID

Let's not crown him one of the four horsemen yet. Terry, bring him toward the glass.

Lin steps to the HISPANIC MALE - who REARS away - all wild eyes and erratic movements --

Suddenly the man lurches forward towards David - red welts and fleshy lesions cover every inch of skin below his neck.

LIN

The potential infection radius is enormous. We need an alert.

David stares at the man. On his arm, barely visible beneath the welts - the word "Challapata" tattooed in green ink.

DAVID  
I need you to show me his gums.

Lin gives his best "no fucking way" face.

DAVID  
He's not a zombie.

Lin edges closer. Nervy. Gently pulls up the man's lip, revealing a pitch black gumline. David turns to Montes.

DAVID  
Lend me a facemask?

MONTES  
Jesus, at least wait for -

But he's already entering:

INT. BIO SAFETY LEVEL LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

The access door HISSES open. With just a paper face mask clipped around his mouth, David walks in.

LIN  
Montes - open the quarantine shunt!

DAVID  
Wait a minute before you blast us.

Montes pauses behind the glass. David steps closer --

And the man goes APE SHIT -- bull rushing David and Lin - charging past them and out of the containment room.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

David scampers after the man - a piercing alarm BLEATS - as a flurry of UNIFORMED GUARDS descend - weapons drawn --

As David LEAPS and TACKLES the man. They skid to a stop.

UNIFORMED GUARD  
Step back, sir. NOW!

Guards move closer - firing positions. David turns the man over --

As Lin and Montes appear. David pins down the frantic man - checks his bloodshot eyes with a penlight.

DAVID  
(to the man; in Spanish)  
*You work with American guys in La Paz?*  
(a nervous nod)  
*That's how you got a visitation  
pass to Europe, right?*

HISPANIC MAN  
*My uncle lives in Barcelona.*

LIN  
This is not BSL-3 protocol!

UNIFORMED GUARD  
We will fire, sir. Stand down.

DAVID  
Give me a goddam minute.  
(above the noise)  
*You were just trying to get a  
flight home.*  
(gesturing at his crotch)  
*Bit embarrassed by all this.*  
*Because you weren't so careful with  
the chicas.*

The man holds David's stare - a flicker of a grin. David yanks the man to his feet - offers him to the Guards.

DAVID  
It's not contagious. And he's not a threat.

As the man is led away, David takes a quick jolt from his inhaler. Turns to Lin.

DAVID  
Hit him with broad antibiotic spectrum. Topical for the oozing ones.

LIN  
What are you talking about?

DAVID  
He's a Bolivian military ranger.  
(indicates the ID card)  
A foreign national contracted by  
the US Army. I bet he's got a US  
army waiver for international  
leave. Reckon the DEA had his unit  
clearing cocaine fields.

MONTES  
What's wrong with him?

DAVID  
Molluscum contagiosum combined with  
granuloma inguinale in the bloodstream.  
Rare, but it can happen.

LIN  
It's just STDs?

DAVID  
Causing his disorientation, fever,  
and memory loss. Terry, we need to  
get you outside this glass prison.  
Spend a little time in the field,  
you'll see all kinds of rot.

GLASTRY (O.S.)  
You're going to miss all this.

Materializing behind David is the giant frame of CHARLES GLASTRY (50s). Head of this NMID unit.

GLASTRY  
Montes, Lin - mop up time. I need a  
minute with David.

INT. NMID - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Glastry strides on under strips of fluorescent lights. He's a bull of man, a Boston brawler and Vietnam vet turned NATO manager. Proud of how far he's come and still might go.

GLASTRY  
After two years here, thought you'd  
know the difference between advising  
and action. Don't make me handcuff  
you to a desk your last week.

DAVID  
They called me in. And I've told  
you before, your team needs some  
knowhow with all their knowledge.

GLASTRY  
Want me to add belligerent as well  
as reckless to your exit interview?

DAVID  
Sure, that'll get me a promotion  
back in the States.

David's a few steps back - but Glastry pulls up.

GLASTRY  
Are you ready?

DAVID  
Cora didn't even unpack the boxes this time.

GLASTRY  
My wife never get off the plane.  
(softens slightly)  
Seven years in the field. You've earned that shitty pension.

DAVID  
I didn't get to do enough.

GLASTRY  
You're too expensive for NATO and too much of a pain in the ass for me. Home'll do you good.

A gruff smile and he goes. David watches Glastry leave - a heavy reluctance in his gaze.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - EAST ENGLAND - NIGHT

A nearly empty space. David tosses the grocery bag on the counter. Removes a jar and a soggy carton of ice cream.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

David crawls into bed - rolling over to face him is his six-months-pregnant wife, CORA (30s). Youthful beauty shaded by life's exhaustions.

DAVID  
Sorry, there was an emergency at work.

CORA  
They'll have to learn to cope without you pretty soon.

DAVID  
Don't you be giving them any tips.

They kiss, tenderly. David hands her a glass of the now liquid ice cream with spoonfuls of peanut butter.

DAVID  
Just as the lady ordered.

CORA

The craving's passed. All yours.

DAVID

I won't miss shitty British ice cream.

CORA

Or work emergencies.

David toasts to that. Drinks more. Touches her belly.

DAVID

How's he doing?

CORA

Restless. Like his dad.

DAVID

Long as he's this handsome.

With a smile, he rises, starts to undress. Sitting up, Cora looks at him with concern.

CORA

I was in town. Had to check in at the bank, make final arrangements.

DAVID

It's late.

CORA

Did you go and see her again?

David avoids Cora's gaze.

DAVID

Let's not do this tonight.

CORA

You've done plenty for them. But Luke would have wanted you to focus on your own family's future now.

She rolls over. Whatever's haunting David - he's feeling it.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF LONDON - KENSINGTON - DAY

Gothic stone spires and rain-soaked cobbled streets.

**SUPER: University of London. December 3rd. 5 Days To Signing.**

BLACKBURN (V.O.)

Creating a bacterio-viral hybrid is a frontier that hasn't been crossed.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY - DAY

Illuminated by the pale light of a slide show, PROFESSOR SIMON BLACKBURN (40s), angular in an offbeat handsome way, holds court in front of a handful of STUDENTS.

He moves close to the projected image of magnified bacteria.

BLACKBURN

Yet I've discovered this virulence-enhanced bacillus anthracis has clear structural "hooks" to permit manipulated merger.

Blackburn confident of the genius he's uttering - even though no one seems to be listening. He CLICKS to the next slide.

BLACKBURN

If such a bacterium was able to be stably wrapped around a viral load to become one compressed entity...

He CLICKS again - bringing up a hand-drawn image of a complex and unnerving microbiological structure.

BLACKBURN

You create a siamese pathogen. A combined bacterial and viral mass killer which can be aerosolized.

STUDENT

No one's actually going to bond organisms together like that.

BLACKBURN

It's pure hypothesis right now. But ever since the Greeks used biological weapons against the Trojans, governments have been complicit in undertaking scientific research in a moral vacuum for military gain. Including our own.

Just then - the sharply dressed UNIVERSITY DEAN (60s) appears at the door. Blackburn stiffens. Disdainful glance.

BLACKBURN

I've been asked to inform you that this is my last class.

(MORE)

BLACKBURN (CONT'D)

(frowns in the crowd)

With our time nigh, here's my final  
shard of wisdom: your collective  
duty is to the integrity and goals  
of science - nothing trumps that.

A LOUD BELL rings and the STUDENTS shuffle away. Blackburn  
packs up his papers. Turns - glaring at the Dean.

BLACKBURN

I don't require an escort.

EXT. GARDENS - UNIVERSITY - DAY

Blackburn and his boss stride through the manicured gardens.

BLACKBURN

You should have defended me.

DEAN

I warned you. Especially after that  
baseless Black Winter paper.

BLACKBURN

So academic freedoms aren't worth  
fighting for anymore?

DEAN

There are limits, Simon. You wrote  
an open letter to the Times accusing  
the University President of being a  
"relentlessly corrupt barbarian".

BLACKBURN

He took money from American defence  
companies to waste on vanity projects  
whilst he cut teaching budgets. I  
thought I was rather restrained.

DEAN

This place is not a safe haven for your  
unsubstantiated paranoid conjectures.

Blackburn stops dead - anxiety and anger steaming off him.

BLACKBURN

Exactly how many tailored suits did  
they bribe you with to fire me?

DEAN

(reddening)

Good luck out there, Professor.

He storms off. Blackburn left all alone. And he feels it.

EXT. BLOOMSBURY SQUARE - CENTRAL LONDON - DAY

A leafy garden square of elegant Edwardian townhouses. Blackburn glumly walks over cobbles to a small residence.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BLACKBURN'S HOUSE - DAY

Ceiling-high bookcases throwing up hundreds of books. Strewn newspapers all over. Every surface drowns in clutter. A hoarder's paradise.

Blackburn moves to the kitchen. Stares into a barren fridge. Stale fruit, petri dishes and congealed pasta.

Kicks a small dish on the floor, spooning out half the pasta for a cat. The tabby sniffs, hisses at Blackburn.

BLACKBURN  
Cook it yourself next time.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Blackburn walks in - listlessly slumps to his bed. A blinking answering machine on his bedside table. He presses PLAY:

BLACKBURN'S VOICE  
Please leave a proper message after  
the beep.

SHROUDED MAN'S VOICE  
(muffled, edgy)  
*Black Winter is on the horizon.  
Paddington. Rope. Anchor. Eagle.*

Blackburn instantly STIFFENS. Presses play again.

Listening, he stares at the machine like he's witnessed the Resurrection. Brain doing laps, computing as we CUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David and Cora are making love. Careful because she's pregnant. They finish - Cora lies back.

David rises, moves to the closet to dress. He bends, grabs a shopping bag and inspects it.

CORA

Christmas presents. We can't go  
back to Philadelphia empty-handed.

David pulls baby clothes out of the bag.

CORA

I couldn't resist.

DAVID

Thought we agreed to buy everything  
together. Once we got home.

David rummages in the closet. Looking for something.

DAVID

Guess this means I'm off the hook.

David tosses her a plastic bag. She looks inside: a big  
bundle of baby outfits for a boy.

CORA

When did you get these?

DAVID

The day we found out.

Cora smiles, softens.

CORA

I know it's hard for you to be  
leaving. I just want my husband back.

DAVID

I know. It's time.

David trying hard to believe what he just said.

INT. NMID SITUATION ROOM - DAY

SIX MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS from NATO nations and  
Montes sit around a conference table. Glastry holds court.

ANALYST #1

Some reports of unidentified civilian  
outbreaks in Indonesia. No evidence  
of infections in any NATO forces yet.

Glastry nods. Checks out a large monitor displaying a world  
map with flashing colors, dots and symbols all over: detailed  
markings of potential global infection incidents.

GLASTRY

Any follow-ups from previous intel?

ANALYST #3

A medical examiner on the island of Malta. North of Libya. We got another open call from him.

Another analyst about to speak up when David strides in.

DAVID

Open callers are quacks.

MONTES

He's done a post-mortem on an unidentified subject with "unusual skin and muscle decay".

GLASTRY

Get the autopsy report sent over. But our top priority is the latest twitchy US State Department memo. Reminding us that with Reagan's treaty signing in Washington, we're on high alert for any occurrence on major territories, here included, that they're calling "atypical".

Dismissed, the room clears except for David and Glastry.

GLASTRY

Just because you're leaving doesn't mean you can be late for briefings.

DAVID

All we ever get are scare stories and false alarms around here.

GLASTRY

But I'm going to be in this shithole long after you're gone. Try not to infect my employees with insubordination.

DAVID

Maybe I'll threaten to stay longer.

GLASTRY

In that case - tardiness bought you an overnight.

DAVID

That's an analyst's job.

GLASTRY  
It's easy. Only quacks call, right?

David left with the flashing globe for company. As we CUT TO:

INT. PADDINGTON TRAIN STATION - LATER THAT DAY

Amidst clusters of trudging TRAVELLERS, Blackburn wanders. Muttering to himself, he scours the station high and low.

A UNIFORMED POLICEMAN approaches Blackburn. Blocks his way.

POLICEMAN  
Everything alright, sir?

Blackburn is oblivious.

POLICEMAN  
You've been wandering around for twenty minutes. Is there someone we should call to come get you?

BLACKBURN  
(to himself)  
Rope, anchor, eagle. Rope, anchor -

POLICEMAN  
Rope and anchor? You with the Royal Navy, sir?

Instant light sparks in Blackburn's eyes.

BLACKBURN  
Keep up the good work.

The Policeman nonplussed as Blackburn strides off abruptly --

INT. MEMORIAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Blackburn moves to the imposing Great War Statue.

Etched around it in gold - rope and anchor entwined - the emblem of the Royal Navy with the RAF eagle in stone above.

He runs his hands over the entire memorial. Few odd looks from passersby as Blackburn circles it. He spies -

A narrow gap between statue and wall. Shoulder-width tight. He sucks in air -- squeezing his body in -- hand groping round in the dark until --

He finds a vent on the wall. Blackburn bends - straining --

And he pulls back. Looks to his hands - where he's clutching a dirt-stained packet - wrapped in brown tape. CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

All the lights are off along a linoleum corridor. Silent -

Except for the SQUEAK of Blackburn's RUBBER SOLES as he hurries along. Furtive glances as he pulls out a set of keys.

INT. BLACKBURN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

He pushes a glass door open - stops and stares at it for a beat - his name stencilled on the glass. Half scraped off.

Pulling on latex gloves and a gas mask, Blackburn delicately unwraps the package. Removing layers of airtight bubble wrap, packed densely - peeling off a final layer to reveal:

A lone scrap of newspaper. He encases it in a secure petri dish. Brings it under a powerful desk lamp for inspection. Etched in dried blood, Blackburn makes out scrawled text:

3812/2AF7 ♦♦♦

His face a churning picture: what the hell is this?

Cogs of his brain firing fast - reaching a quick decision --

INT. DEPARTMENTAL LABORATORY - SERIES OF SHOTS

- Blackburn manoeuvres newspaper fragments between two sheets of flame-retardant glass within a cellulose fiber gauge.

- He powers up a light-analysis device - and razor beams of soft white light pierce through the paper.

- Blackburn cuts a slither of the bloodied paper off, places into an aqueous spectrometer. Vigorous shaking and spinning.

INT. DEPARTMENTAL LABORATORY - LATER

Blackburn moves to an airtight MICROBIAL GLOVE BOX -

Laying the blood-marked paper inside the central chamber. Arms thrust into the chemical resistance gloves - he expertly manipulates a micro-scalpel -

As he scrapes off granules of dried blood - drops it into an airtight vial - secures and slips it into his coat pocket.

He then neatly transfers a scalpel-slice of the dried blood into a separate petri dish. Places under a high magnification microscope. He examines the specimen through the eyepiece -

He reels back - pupils a mile wide. RACING out of the room.

EXT. PARLIAMENT SQUARE - WESTMINSTER - LONDON - NIGHT

A black cab shoots past Westminster Palace. Pulling to a stop outside the Speaker Arms pub - Blackburn jumps out.

INT. SPEAKER ARMS - NIGHT

The heart of political London, a stone's throw from Parliament. A bell tells politicians when to dash back.

At the bar, GRAHAM MORRISON (40s) gulps down beer. Hounddog eyes and fading suit, he looks more like a second-rate supply teacher than the MI5 intel officer he's been since Oxford.

BLACKBURN (O.S.)  
I wasn't sure you would come.

Morrison comes face-to-face with a nervy Blackburn.

MORRISON  
You sounded more than a little agitated.

BLACKBURN  
(furtive eyes)  
Not here.

Blackburn paces off to the back room. Morrison follows.

INT. BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Empty except for a ruddy-faced BOOZER playing pool alone.

Morrison joins Blackburn at a secluded corner table.

BLACKBURN  
I need you to connect me with  
someone in your bioweapons unit.

MORRISON  
Excuse me?

BLACKBURN

You know my Black Winter thesis--

MORRISON

(stiffens)

--Christ man, not this again.

(turns to the pool player)

Jim, could you bugger off for ten?

The man skulks off. Morrison pulls Blackburn's chair close.

MORRISON

I told you about that stupid paper.

You're gonna burn all your bridges.

BLACKBURN

It's not theoretical anymore. There was  
a package left for me at Paddington.

MORRISON

And who left this mystery package?

BLACKBURN

A Russian. But what matters is its  
contents - a scrap of today's paper  
with a message drawn on it.

MORRISON

Written in invisible ink?

BLACKBURN

Dried blood. I've just started  
testing it but...

He cracks his knuckles, fidgets, nervy.

BLACKBURN

The blood sample holds a pathogen.  
I've never seen anything like it...  
I don't think it's organic.

Silence. Morrison blows out a weary sigh, shakes his head.

MORRISON

Some Soviet man leaving you  
messages? Packages hidden at a  
train station? Secret clues in  
blood? Do you hear the words coming  
out of your own mouth?

BLACKBURN

Come to my office. I'll show you.

MORRISON

You know what happens to the boy  
who cried wolf.

BLACKBURN

He gets bitten. By a big wolf.

MORRISON

I don't think you got the metaphor.

BLACKBURN

You trusted me to pull you through  
three years of college exams, I  
finally want payback. You're still  
not clever enough to argue with me.

MORRISON

And you're still an arrogant arsehole.

Blackburn's gaze resolute. Morrison tries to fight it off but  
like a parent with a troubled child, it's hard to stay firm.

BLACKBURN

Please. This wolf could be really big.

MORRISON

Fine. I'll make a call. But in the  
mean time - keep that trap shut.

INT. NMID - SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

David plays a game of solitaire. Checks the wall clock - he  
sweeps up his cards and strides out. After he exits --

The fax machine BEEPS. A transmission begins.

EXT. CARPARK - NMID - NIGHT

David reaches his car. Getting in, he reaches instinctively  
out to start the tape. As it plays, he fires up the engine --

KNOCK KNOCK on the window. He looks up - as Montes presses a  
sheet of faxed paper to the glass. Impressive-looking seal.

MONTES

Just came in. Investigation  
request. UK Government.

David eyes dance across the paper. Exhaling, he shuts off the  
car.

INT. NMID SITUATION ROOM - ONE HOUR LATER

On screen, a photo of Blackburn. David paces around Montes and a young ANALYST - Glastry holds the fax, quoting aloud:

GLASTRY

Recent erratic behavior... just been fired from his job.

MONTES

Last month the university president threatened to sue him for slander.

DAVID

Now he's claiming a potential bioterror threat entered British territory? Get a grip.

MONTES

He has degrees from Oxford University in Biochemistry and Slavic languages. Spent two years living in Leningrad.

ANALYST

(at a computer terminal)

He was recruited by the British government as a scientific advisor. Specializing in biological weapons.

GLASTRY

This alert came directly from a senior officer at MI5.

DAVID

Since when do we wipe their ass?

GLASTRY

Since Reagan and Thatcher passed off all MedInt queries on us before the treaty signing this week.

ANALYST

Professor Blackburn was also an advisor to the UN Office of Weapons Disarmament. He was removed from that post last year.

DAVID

They fired him because he talked shit about that boss too. You really think this guy's a threat?

GLASTRY

His expertise means he's under our  
remit to evaluate. He fits a profile.

DAVID

He's a screw-up trying one last  
Hail Mary by claiming he's  
discovered some viral chimera.

GLASTRY

Morrison said this professor  
specifically claimed receiving a  
bio sample from a Soviet scientist.

DAVID

I'll give him a call. Happy?  
(off Glastry's silence)  
Really want me to help him get what he  
actually wants - his name in the paper.

GLASTRY

(to Montes and Analyst)  
Give us the room.

Glastry moves to the map - finger sweeps across Europe.

GLASTRY

This could have a potential spread  
through multiple populated areas.

DAVID

We've chased vapor trails before.

GLASTRY

No one bothered to listen to von  
Pirquet in 1917 about the Chinese  
workers with a new form of flu -  
and a hundred million people died  
in a single year.

DAVID

Blackburn's a certifiable nutjob.

GLASTRY

(paternal hand on David)  
Find him in the morning and figure  
it out. Consider it your swan song.

INT. BLACKBURN'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Blackburn's fast asleep at his desk - a scrap of the bloodied  
paper scrolled up in a glass tube beside him.

**SUPER: December 4th. 4 Days To Signing.**

Reams of notes and scribbled diagrams litter the room.

RESEARCHER (O.S.)  
Professor?

Blackburn SNAPS AWAKE - lifting his head up to see a square-eyed RESEARCHER looking anxiously down at him.

RESEARCHER  
Have they reconsidered your position?

Blackburn bolts to his feet - grips the Researcher by his arm - steers them both out to the lab floor.

BLACKBURN  
Yes, yes. They came to their senses.  
(holds out the glass tube)  
Put this in the security freezer.  
Locker five.

RESEARCHER  
Sir, what's all this about?

BLACKBURN  
Part of your final assessment.

Blackburn hurriedly walks away, pushing the door --

INT. CORRIDOR - UNIVERSITY - CONTINUOUS

And heading straight into the Dean. A frosty glare.

DEAN  
Your laboratory access has already  
been revoked.

BLACKBURN  
I just came in to say goodbye to my  
research team. And to apologize to  
you for our brusque conversation  
yesterday. You didn't deserve it.

DEAN  
That's... big of you, Simon.

BLACKBURN  
It's important to focus on the  
future. Anyway - have to dash.

Blackburn strides away. A quizzical look from the Dean.

I/E. DAVID'S CAR/BLOOMSBURY SQUARE - DAY

David, wearied, waits. Rolling his wedding ring around his finger. Bob Dylan audible again. Suddenly he spies:

EXT. BLACKBURN'S HOUSE - DAY

Blackburn trudging to his door.

DAVID (O.S.)  
Mr. Blackburn?

Blackburn turns, tense, cautiously eyeing up David.

BLACKBURN  
Professor Blackburn. And you are?

DAVID  
David Rangell. Believe you're  
familiar with NMID.

Blackburn face brightens.

BLACKBURN  
I am. Only one man?

DAVID  
For now. Let's talk inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

They enter - David takes in the chaotic surroundings. Blackburn moves around - as David sizes him up.

DAVID  
You told Graham Morrison you  
received an alarming message.

BLACKBURN  
What exactly did he tell you?

DAVID  
That you were channeling some  
apocalyptic theory.

BLACKBURN  
Theory?

DAVID  
His words. You just lost another  
job, I guess he was concerned.

BLACKBURN  
We all should be.

He stops. Inspects a disordered mess of a bookshelf. Furrowed brow, wary stare, fingers one book.

BLACKBURN  
This is out of place.

DAVID  
(teasing)  
Looks like a perfect system to me.

BLACKBURN  
Everything has its proper location.  
It's been moved, someone must have -

Blackburn stops, straightens - and rushes out of the room, heading upstairs. David shakes his head - and follows.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

David enters - finds Blackburn frantically searching around and under the bed. He turns to David - pasty white pallor.

BLACKBURN  
It's gone. They took the tape.

DAVID  
"They"? So there's no tape?

Blackburn's flustered and pacing now.

DAVID  
Professor Blackburn? Do you actually have any evidence?

BLACKBURN  
At the lab.

They hold a penetrating stare. David fighting indifference.

BLACKBURN  
I am not crazy.

I/E DAVID'S CAR & STREETS - DAY

David drives through central London - now familiar Bob Dylan tunes play softly.

DAVID

You get a lot of strange men  
leaving you messages?

BLACKBURN

They didn't leave a name.

DAVID

But a man like you isn't going to  
roam around town on a crank call.

David studies Blackburn in the mirror.

BLACKBURN

I think it was Mikhail Nemskva.

DAVID

Doesn't ring a bell. Enlighten me.

Blackburn gazes out of the window. Opaque expression.

BLACKBURN

We crossed paths when I was living  
in Russia doing my doctorate  
research. We weren't close.

INT. CORRIDOR - DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY - UNIVERSITY - DAY

Blackburn leads David forward. Skittish leading skeptical.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

They find Blackburn's RESEARCHER at a data processor.

RESEARCHER

That specimen is in the freezer,  
Professor. As you requested.

Blackburn moves across to the corner. They reach the entrance  
to the HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SECURITY FREEZER - Blackburn  
frowns, bristles as he sees:

The LOCK hanging off the door, open.

INT. SECURITY FREEZER - CONTINUOUS

Blackburn enters, stopping short as David examines the door.

BLACKBURN

Why is it so warm in here?

He moves to a large stainless steel & glass freezer -  
CRUNCHING BROKEN GLASS as he steps close to Locker Five -

An empty shelf where the sample should be.

He spins, hurries back out - David scrutinizing the freezer's damaged hinges and shattered glass.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

BLACKBURN  
(shouting at Researcher)  
Have you moved it?

RESEARCHER  
Of course not.

BLACKBURN  
Who else has been in here?

RESEARCHER  
Nobody. Only me and the janitor.

Blackburn's jaw locks. Straining to keep anxiety in check.

BLACKBURN  
No staff has access to my offices,  
only me and my selected students.

DAVID  
(to Researcher; calm)  
When was he here?

RESEARCHER  
He just left a moment ago.

INT. CORRIDOR - EAST WING - UNIVERSITY - DAY

David stalks forward, scanning in both directions. He slowly eases out a hidden .9mm Beretta. Better safe than skeptical.

Tiled hallways unfurl before him. A security door up ahead - it's jimmied open - alarm wires cut. He glides through it.

Quicken his pace now toward an exit door that's slowly shutting -- and he edges out to:

EXT. UNIVERSITY CARPARK - DAY

David spies the back of a man wearing a janitorial outfit pacing across the parking lot.

DAVID

Hey pal, got a second?

The "Janitor" pauses. Turns, revealing --

BLOODSHOT EYES, RED PERFORATIONS ON HIS FACE - and a distinct OVAL BIRTHMARK on his cheek. Suit #1 from the station.

David shows his gun. Raising it up when --

WHAM! Another man TACKLES him. David's gun skitters across the concrete. A POWERFUL KICK to his ribs keeps David down.

Breathing hard and ragged, David gets to his feet. Grabs his gun - but the lot's now empty.

INT. LABORATORY - MINUTES LATER

As Blackburn inventories the Security Freezer, David appears. Gun hidden away, he projects a presence of calm.

BLACKBURN

Did you find anything?

DAVID

(protective deceit)

Nothing. But I still want to know what message made you race out into the middle of the night.

Blackburn weighing up how much to disclose.

BLACKBURN

Mikhail referenced Black Winter. It's the title of a paper I wrote for the British government. It proposed -

DAVID

(reciting from memory)

That scientists were on the verge of creating bioengineered population-decimating creations. And that they would be high in demand from state and non-state groups with genocidal intent.

(Blackburn stiffens)

I'm paid to do my homework on people making such claims.

BLACKBURN

It was a warning, not a claim.

DAVID

Run any tests on the sample?

BLACKBURN

Nothing conclusive. I thought you  
didn't believe me.

DAVID

I'm still an agnostic. I'll be  
back. Anyone else calls you, try  
and get a name this time.

David strides away. As the door swings shut behind him -

Blackburn reaches into his pocket. Removes the airtight vial  
containing the backup fragment of Mikhail's blood.

BLACKBURN

(to the Researcher)

How long until we can undertake a  
live subject test in the enclosure?

RESEARCHER

Is that part of my final grade too?

INT. DAVID'S CAR - DAY

David - car phone to his ear. Downtown London screams by.

INT. GLASTRY'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

Surrounded by a seemingly infinite pile of medical  
intelligence reports, Glastry growls into the phone.

GLASTRY

Anything going with Blackburn?

DAVID

I need you to pull some info from UK  
Border Control. Subject is Dr.  
Mikhail N-E-M-S-K-V-A. Cross check  
all Soviet area passport holders  
entering England with any flags.

Glastry writes the name down.

DAVID

I might have to bring him in.

GLASTRY

Well we got a stack of intel to  
assess here. Start explaining what -

But David's already hung up as we CUT TO:

INT. PADDINGTON TRAIN STATION - TERRACE - DAY

David peers down on the concourse from on high. The crowds scurrying around like insects - breathing the air in innocent obliviousness as they go about their lives.

INT. MEMORIAL ROOM - DAY

Two OLD WAR VETS stand by the bronze statue. Laying a bouquet of red poppies down. From across the room -

David watches from afar like a circling eagle, taking it all in. When the Vets move away, he approaches.

He finds the narrow passage around the back. Leans in - shining a key-flashlight into the darkness. Spies the air vent. Just like Blackburn described.

INT. PADDINGTON TRANSPORT POLICE - OFFICE - DAY

In one corner, David leans over the desk of the STATION SERGEANT who squints at a Commodore computer.

STATION SERGEANT  
A few muggings last week. Handful of pickpockets. A kid lost his parents. That's about it. Pretty safe here.

DAVID  
Great, thanks for your time. The American Tourist Board likes to be thorough.

David starts to head off.

STATION SERGEANT  
We did have a fire in shed fourteen.  
(David turns back)  
I reckon it was a bunch of kids messing about with a tramp.

DAVID  
There was a body?

STATION SERGEANT  
Just a pile of burnt clothes.

INT. DISUSED TRAIN SHED - DAY

David clambered across the debris, follows the Sergeant.

They reach the same pillar where Mikhail stopped. On the floor - the scorched outline of ashy material.

David crouches - back to his escort. He uses a pen to pick at the debris. Finds a CHARRED LATEX GLOVE. Leaning closer -

STATION SERGEANT  
Is this relevant for your report?

David runs his hands across the scorched ground - stops, as his fingers feel a lump. Pulling up a handful of earth -

He stares at a blackened TOOTH. Discreetly pocketing it.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY - UNIVERSITY - DAY

David paces forward. Ears spark to a LOUD COMMOTION at the end of the hallway. He breaks into a SPRINT.

INT. EXPERIMENTAL ENCLOSURE - DAY

Glass skylights span above airtight HABITAT REPLICATION CHAMBERS on either side of a metal walkway. David enters -

Hit by ANGRY VOICES. Puts a hand on his holster. Ahead:

The Dean pounds on one of the enclosures. A CAMPUS SECURITY GUARD flanks him. CHIRPS into a radio. David nears, spying -

BLACKBURN inside the ENCLOSURE -- industrial containment suit covering him head to toe. An AEROSOL CAN in his hand.

DEAN  
(pushing the intercom)  
Simon, open this door!

Blackburn opens a portal on the side of the enclosure and pulls a GREY CHIMP into the room.

Security Guard fumbles with a ring of keys. Finds the right one - slipping it into the lock when --

David SEIZES the Guard's hand, iron grip and steely gaze.

DAVID  
Your brain's the muscle to use here.

DEAN  
I don't know who the hell you are but Blackburn's conducting an unauthorized experiment on university property.

David presses the intercom:

DAVID  
Everything OK in there?

Blackburn ignores - SPRAYS the air with a puff of aerosol.

The chimp ambles toward the glass. Sniffing the air. Nothing.

Suddenly all eyes on the chimp, inches from the glass now - as its face twitches - twitches more. Black eyes widen -

AND IT HOWLS. Primeval. Chilling. Mouth FROTHING - lesions ERUPTING - wildly THRASHING -

Blackburn dives into the containment portal as the Chimp obliterates the enclosure. Desperate for air.

Emergency SHUNT blasts safety rain down as they all watch in shock - and the chimp COLLAPSES in a corroded heap.

David turns to the Dean with conviction:

DAVID  
Shut the entire facility down now.  
This is a national security matter.  
I'll have a containment unit come  
get the animal.  
(hands the Dean a card)  
Complain to them.

Perplexed, the Dean and Security Guard pace away --

As Blackburn emerges. Pulls off his protective mask.

BLACKBURN  
The chimp had an inoperable brain tumor.

DAVID  
Did you reconstitute the pathogen?

BLACKBURN  
From a fragment of the dried blood.  
It's like nothing I've ever seen  
before. Extreme covalent bond  
structure but the sample had a  
reverse catalyst applied. I just  
sped its uptake up for testing.

Blackburn removes off his suit. Covered in sweat.

DAVID  
Run that by me again.

BLACKBURN

I believe Mikhail smuggled a slowed down version of that pathogen inside his body. He wanted to show me that someone's trying to create the most lethal biological weapon ever designed.

Blackburn strides briskly away as David digests.

INT. BLACKBURN'S OFFICE - DAY

Blackburn moves behind his cluttered desk. David SLAMS the door behind them.

DAVID

You do NOT hide evidence from me. If that had gotten airborne -

BLACKBURN

You think I'm ignorant of its potential? It's my lab, my specimen.

DAVID

Anybody can pull that stunt, you really think you're so special?

Blackburn picks up a file off his desk. Opens it.

BLACKBURN

David Gregory Rangell. West Point graduate. A decade of field work for the CIA, plenty of blank years - I'm sure spent protecting our "freedom". Congressional Medal of Honor for an operation against the Soviets you led on the Afghan border three years ago. Details completely redacted.

David tenses, his jaw locked steel-tight. Fists curled.

BLACKBURN

Last two years at NMID. On your request.  
(lowers the file)

I do my homework too. Morrison's not my only friend in high places. Your resume suggests you're a patriot.  
So. Am. I.

Blackburn thrusts something into David's hand. David reads:  
3812/2AF7 ♦■♦ copied onto a sheet of paper.

BLACKBURN

This is what Mikhail marked down. I  
don't recognize the code.

David's PAGER BEEPS. Checks it. Picks up the phone, dials.

DAVID

(into phone)

You have something?

INT. NMID - SITUATION ROOM - SAME

ANALYSTS buzzing around. Glastry stares at a monitor on the wall - a blown up image of the Shrouded Man: MIKHAIL NEMSKVA, his sharp green eyes recognizable from the station.

GLASTRY

Passport Control at Heathrow has a Dr.  
Mikhail Nemskva arriving yesterday.

INTERCUT:

DAVID

Why the hell wasn't he flagged?

GLASTRY

He's unknown to us. And there's no  
record of his leaving the country  
subsequently. Listed his occupation -

DAVID

Let me guess: virologist.

(staring at Blackburn)

I'm transporting two specimens for  
testing. Animal cadaver and human dental.

An ANALYST hands Glastry a printout. Reads - face going grey.

GLASTRY

We've got a bigger problem.

INT. BLACKBURN'S OFFICE - DAY

We're on David's face - the wheels spinning fast over what Glastry is relaying. David hangs up. Blackburn's quizzical.

DAVID

Congratulations, you're my new shadow.

EXT. CHELSEA MORGUE - WEST LONDON - EVENING

Down an innocuous sidestreet, stained-glass windows and whitewash walls disguise a chamber of the freshly dead.

INT. COLD CHAMBER - MORGUE - EVENING

Fluorescent lights flicker. The door of the chamber swings open - a mousey PATHOLOGIST (late 20s) leads Blackburn and David inside. Nostrils flare at the smell.

BLACKBURN

You're new here?

PATHOLOGIST

Dr. Thompson's latest recruit.

(shy glance at Blackburn)

I took one of your classes at Oxford as an undergrad years ago. Your book "Chaos and Virology" made quite an impact.

DAVID

He'll autograph a copy later.

Where's the body?

The Pathologist pulls a body tray out - peels back the thick black cover --

Revealing BOILS, LESIONS and BLOTCHES over an entire body.

PATHOLOGIST

Subject collapsed in the street earlier today. Was brought to Charing Cross. Dead in minutes.

BLACKBURN

May I see your blood draw?

The Pathologist moves to a side table. As she and Blackburn review blood samples - David examines the dead man. His body a landscape of cellular destruction. He inspects closer -

Wedged on the man's fleshy, swollen hand - a ring with the silver crest of a THREE-HEADED TIGER and CYRILLIC TEXT.

David straightens - haunted look in his eyes as he now notices the distinct OVAL BIRTHMARK of SUIT #1.

DAVID

Have you taken his prints?

The Pathologist nods, passes her file over.

DAVID  
Did anyone else see this yet?  
(she shakes her head)  
Fax these over for me.

He scrawls Glastry's name and details on top - as Blackburn rises from examining the blood samples. A grim rictus.

BLACKBURN  
It's the same unique pathogenic structure as Mikhail's blood sample.

DAVID  
I need you to cremate this body right now.

PATHOLOGIST  
That's not protocol--

DAVID  
--In ten minutes this place is going to be crawling with hazmat suits. In ten minutes and five seconds you'll be dragged into quarantine. Your cooperation right now will make sure that stay will be a short one. Clear?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

David hustles to his car - Blackburn hurrying to keep up.

BLACKBURN  
You recognized him.

DAVID  
Soviet military.

BLACKBURN  
(edgy)  
I should be going home.

DAVID  
You think that book is the only thing they touched in your house?

Blackburn sighs - good point.

EXT. M11 MOTORWAY - NIGHT

The car speeds along, northbound, past a sign for Suffolk.

INT. DAVID'S CAR - NIGHT

Blackburn spots the sign, anxiously looks over to David.

BLACKBURN  
Where exactly are you taking me?

No response - David turns on the tape player. Bob Dylan sings, loudly. Blackburn reaches to switch it off -

BLACKBURN  
Why are we listening to this  
terrible country music again?

David grips Blackburn's wrist - firmly pulls it back.

DAVID  
It's folk, not country.  
(eyes back on the road)  
And it stays on.

David drives, silent. Blackburn hides his curiosity.

EXT. NMID - NIGHT

They walk to the building. Blackburn soaks in the security, the barbed wire, the whole setup.

INT. HALLWAY - NMID - NIGHT

They stride through, passing through a set of airtight security doors. Blackburn wide-eyed as they proceed into:

INT. NMID SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

David hovers as Glastry addresses Blackburn.

GLASTRY  
How well did you know this Mikhail?

BLACKBURN  
Hardly at all. I told your colleague.

GLASTRY  
Why do you think he came to you then?

BLACKBURN  
He knew of my work. My expertise.

GLASTRY  
And your phone number too.

BLACKBURN

You're questioning me? You realize I  
brought this to your attention.

David gestures to Glastry - cool it.

DAVID

What about the morgue subject?

GLASTRY

You were right, Soviet Armed Forces.  
Airborne Weapons Division. He was  
part of a special unit under the  
command of General Leonid Vernyov.

Glastry slides a 8x12 photo across the table - showing the hawkish GENERAL VERNYOV (50s). Full uniform, serious stripes.

GLASTRY

A leading military scientist. We haven't  
got any intel on recent activity.

DAVID

Established a connection to Mikhail?

GLASTRY

No, we don't have employment records  
for every Soviet citizen.

David's exasperated as the phone rings. Glastry answers.

GLASTRY

You're ready for us?

#### INT. BIO-SAFETY LEVEL LAB - NIGHT

Inside a secure autopsy room, Montes labors intently - the others crowd around - clad in biohazard suits.

Laid out on a metal table - the autopsied MONKEY from Blackburn's lab, under close examination.

MONTES

We've only had a few hours. But on preliminary review - the structure of the pathogen is... unusual. No matches yet. Strands of variola major confirmed. With traces of yersinia pestis. Plague-causing agent. It might purely be a naturally occurring disease.

BLACKBURN

No, this is not some exotic flu  
you've bumbled across.

MONTES

We haven't definitively verified -

BLACKBURN

No, this is a engineered siamese  
contagion. Nature has limits where man  
does not.

MONTES

No one's produced a live example.

GLASTRY

Professor, who would even be  
capable of the science behind this?

BLACKBURN

Apart from me? Is that what you mean?

DAVID

It's a niche skillset.

BLACKBURN

Call Riggs at MIT maybe, or Kohler  
at Cambridge. I wouldn't know. After  
Richard Toksin at Harvard died, even  
fewer capable candidates exist.

(anxious suddenly)

If one man could insulate it inside  
his body over national borders - it  
could decimate the world's population  
through undetected carriers in days.

(glaring at Glastry)

Why haven't you tracked Mikhail down yet?

Glastry glances to David - he doesn't know?

GLASTRY

He's dead. We used dental records from  
his medical with the UN to confirm.

Blackburn's countenance dims as this news hits him.

DAVID

(to Glastry)

A word. Outside.

David exits. Glastry leaves Montes with a tense Blackburn.

MONTES

Charles and David both understand  
the realities we're dealing with.

BLACKBURN

Rangell doesn't care enough to understand.

MONTES

David cares too much.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

DAVID

We need to locate the source.

GLASTRY

This still could all be a ploy.  
Make the West react before the  
treaty signing, they gain leverage.

DAVID

Or this could be foreplay for a Soviet  
operation on Western soil.

GLASTRY

What if we raise alarms and you're  
wrong? Forget your rosy homecoming,  
the CIA will chain you up.

DAVID

So don't tell them yet.

GLASTRY

An undeclared incursion isn't  
getting me a promotion.

DAVID

Keep it off the books until I trace  
the origin point of the pathogen.  
One investigator. One technical  
adviser. I need three days.

Glastry eyes David. Unflinching determination pulses off him.

GLASTRY

You don't need to do this.

DAVID

This is why you hired me. This is  
why I'm here.

INT. NMID SITUATION ROOM - ONE HOUR LATER

Jacket off, Blackburn's chewing his fingernails as David and Glastry re-enter.

BLACKBURN  
I assumed you'd left me.

Glastry tosses an envelope at him. He opens it - finding plane tickets to Moscow. Blackburn drops them like hot coals.

GLASTRY  
You're the only person who's observed the original sample microscopically.

BLACKBURN  
Send me a scan - I'd be happy to review it for you.

GLASTRY  
We could be dealing with violations of numerous international agreements. And be facing an imminent global threat. We have a very small window.

DAVID  
(pressing)  
Mikhail contacted you personally. You're part of this. And you came to us.

BLACKBURN  
You're suggesting precisely what?

GLASTRY  
Determine the who, what and why. Finding a pathogenic match should answer all those questions. We need to know if the Soviets are acting in good faith before the treaty.

All eyes on Blackburn. He stands, grabbing his jacket.

BLACKBURN  
I'd like to be taken home now.

He storms out. David moves to the door, back to Glastry.

DAVID  
I'll get him in. You make sure no one knows we're out there.

I/E CAR & MOTORWAY - NIGHT

Zooming past fields, Blackburn stares out in rigid silence. David presses play - Dylan sings "In My Time of Dying".

BLACKBURN

You like anyone else besides this man?  
(no response from David)  
We do have radio in this country.

Suddenly David cuts across lanes, takes a sharp turn.

DAVID

I need to make a quick stop.

EXT. 24 LAFFERTY STREET - NIGHT

The car idles outside. Through the front window, we spy the WOMAN and TWO KIDS eating dinner, watching a grainy TV.

INT. DAVID'S CAR - NIGHT

David stares intently at the house. Blackburn squirms.

BLACKBURN

Do you know these people?

David grips the steering wheel. Breathes out slowly.

DAVID

Luke loved Dylan. He was a hippy kid from the Village. Told me I had to 'hear Bob' to get him. All I 'hear' is a whiny voice and a shitty guitar. But at least I'm listening.

(staring inside the house)

He was my partner for a decade. The best man at my wedding. A good husband and a better father.

(deep well of hurt here)

He died during an operation on the Soviet border. I was running point.

(to Blackburn)

There's a chance this whole thing is real. I've made my decision. You need to choose. Do something about all your fears and theories -

(opens Blackburn's door)

Or get the hell out of my car.

Blackburn thinks, his analytic brain firing 500mph.

BLACKBURN

I'm no good in a crisis.

DAVID

In your paper, you wrote: when we  
can no longer trust, all that is  
left is to verify.

BLACKBURN

Reagan stole my line.

DAVID

You know how Black Winter starts.  
And how it might end.

Blackburn stares at the open door - then back to David.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cora stands at the window as Blackburn sits in the car.  
Behind her, David rummages in a closet, filling a duffel.

CORA

And it's only the two of you?

DAVID

I'll be back in a few days.

CORA

Why do you always operate under the  
best case scenario?

DAVID

What exactly does that mean?

CORA

It forces me to operate under the  
worst. You said no more trips after  
Afghanistan. And we've been stuck in  
England for over two years. You won't  
bring Luke back by doing this.

(piercing his armor)

I will be in Philadelphia for  
Christmas. With or without you.

Weight of that will linger. She approaches David - holds out  
a new inhaler for him. He takes her hand.

DAVID

I will be on that plane home.

He hugs her deeply. Zips his bag, walking out as we CUT TO:

EXT. MOSCOW - DAY

WIDE over the city of rich history inching to modernity. WHOOSH of a plane descending over Red Square in hazy sun.

**SUPER: Moscow. December 5th. 3 Days To Signing.**

INT. SHEREMETYEVO AIRPORT - MOSCOW - DAY

David and Blackburn stroll through the run-down terminal. Walls in more shades of beige than you've ever seen.

Behind them, carrying their bags, is VORODIN ABELEV (50s). Thick frame, charcoal hair. Seasoned covert handler.

Blackburn glances back, edgy. As the trio exit the terminal -  
A man watches them. Wolfish face as he tracks them. He'll be in and out of view throughout - he's their SHADOW (40s).

EXT. DOWNTOWN MOSCOW - DAY

Fur-coated crowds snake out of the ornate GUM department store. Packs of children in Russian Orthodox church outfits throng the pavements. Soldiers parade down broad avenues.

And overlooking all, if you know what to look for - the omnipresent AGENTS of the KGB.

I/E. CAR - DAY

Vorodin steers a silver GAZ VOLGA. David scans passing cars as Blackburn eats in the sights.

VORODIN  
Been a long time.

DAVID  
Focus on the road.

VORODIN  
I thought you got sick of the Russians.

DAVID  
I'm not here for my health. Just  
keep quiet and drive.

BLACKBURN  
How exactly do you know each other?

VORODIN

I helped him in Afghanistan. At least he can breathe easier here.

Vorodin laughs throatily - but there's a flash of anger in David's expression. Blackburn gazes at the parading soldiers.

BLACKBURN

Quite the show of force.

VORODIN

Show is the word.

DAVID

(not buying it)

If Gorbachev's piloting a dying empire, we can all sleep easy I guess.

VORODIN

Perhaps. But aging hardliners may act boldly when they see their own myths evaporating.

Suddenly Vorodin yanks the wheel hard, changing lanes.

VORODIN

Just precaution, lose tail. KGB would watch ants if they thought they'd talk.

EXT. HOTEL CAPASIBA - DAY

A three-storey dump. Walls daubed in anti-Leninist graffiti.

David grabs the bags - Blackburn takes in the surroundings.

DAVID

It's exactly where a cheap academic would crash. Let's get inside.

INT. CORRIDOR - HOTEL CAPASIBA - DAY

Vorodin leads the way, gripping a sturdy briefcase. Reaches a corner room - unlocks the door - shepherding them inside -

BLACKBURN

Excuse me, but I'd like a single room. A little privacy please.

VORODIN

Wrong country, tovarishch.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Blackburn spies threadbare mattresses and shabby decor.

Vorodin cracks open his case. Pulls out TWO SETS of HEADPHONES, each attached to a small GREY BOX with a BLUE DIAL. He passes a pair to David.

DAVID

(strangely loud)

So, Professor, what's the title of your paper for the conference?

David and Vorodin roam around the room. Spinning the dial.

BLACKBURN

Sorry, what are you -

DAVID

Agrobacterium analysis, right?

(steps whisper close)

Bug checking. Play along.

BLACKBURN

(shouting)

Indeed - I'm fascinated in applying Fibonacci sequencing to agrobacteria separations.

Vorodin pulls off his headphones - thumbs up. All clear.

DAVID

Did Glastry brief you on the recon?

VORODIN

I went to Mikhail Nemskva's address earlier today. Made domestic entry.

DAVID

What about the wife?

Pulls out a laminated ID card for a dark-haired woman. David passes the card to Blackburn. His gaze lingers on her photo.

VORODIN

Anna Nemskva. Doctor. She's missing few days too.

DAVID

What's this "zabytay" mean?

BLACKBURN

A clinic. I think I recall Anna worked there.

EXT. HOTEL CAPASIBA - DAY

Vorodin pulls the car around front - David and Blackburn slipping in the backseat. As the car speeds off and away -

A dark car idles across the street. Stepping out - the SHADOW from the airport. Making his way into the hotel.

EXT. NOVOARBATSKY BRIDGE - DAY

Three T-72 OBYEKT TANKS rumble along a bridge span, over the Moskva River and towards the huge steel-framed Hotel Ukraina.

Near the riverbank, Vorodin's car parked discreetly.

INT. CAR - DAY

David reviews the bridge scene through binoculars.

DAVID

What kind of doctor is she, the lady in the lake?

VORODIN

The gleaming hospitals and finest American drugs are only for the elites. This is for the bottom of the barrel go.

Stone-faced, David turns to Blackburn.

DAVID

You should stay with Vorodin.

BLACKBURN

Dr. Nemskva doesn't know you. And you don't even speak the language.

VORODIN

You two tough guys are going to walk right in and start asking questions?

David studies Blackburn for a beat. Turns to Vorodin.

DAVID

It's your lucky day. Get undressed.

EXT. PEBBLED SHORE - NOVOARBATSKY BRIDGE - DAY

Under the bridge, a strip of rocky sand in looming shadows. Growing out of the HEAVY RUMBLE of traffic overhead we hear --

The HUM of a HUDDLED MASS of PEOPLE. And now we see -

HUNDREDS of PATIENTS gathered in a long line. Gaunt frames, hollow cheeks. Sickness in all shapes and sizes.

The queue snakes its way into the bridge's gloomy archways.

Keeping his head low, Blackburn moves along the shale ground. Worried eyes flick around. He holds David by the elbow - his "patient" in Vorodin's ratty outfit. Suddenly -

A HAND grabs Blackburn by the wrist. The yellow skin and skeletal fingers of an ELDERLY MAN. Moaning, mouthing words -

David deftly eases the man's fingers free, gently pulling Blackburn on. Heading past the line and toward -

INT. ARCHES - DAY

The line stretches into the dark - illuminated only by some halogen lamps. More SICK PEOPLE fill the chamber.

David, alert, inspects every passing female staff member.

STERN NURSE (O.S.)  
Muy nuzhdayemsya vas seychas!

A portly NURSE blocks them - barking at Blackburn. David tries to shuffle them back and out of there.

BLACKBURN  
(in Russian)  
*My friend was told to see -*

STERN NURSE  
*I'll take him. We have eight cases  
of nasal discharge and throat pain.*

She moves to David, taking him firmly by the arm. Blackburn shakes his head, gripping David's other arm.

STERN NURSE  
*Go help. I have him.*

BLACKBURN  
*I'm sorry, I'm not a doctor. Dr  
Nemskva told us she would see him  
today. His lungs are badly damaged.*

STERN NURSE  
*Anna's not been in for days. Perhaps  
she is today, we're busy. Wait here.*

The Nurse marches off. Blackburn and David lean against the stone wall - the SOUNDS and STENCH of disease all around.

BLACKBURN  
What century are we in?

David silences him with a shut-your-mouth glare just as -  
A slender blonde approaches. Frazzled. Stethoscope in hand.

YULIA  
You are looking for Anna?

BLACKBURN  
*My friend was told Dr. Nemskva is  
working at this clinic. She would  
see him personally.*

YULIA  
*She is dealing with our  
pharmaceutical delivery.*  
(taking David's arm; to  
Blackburn:)  
*I will show you.*

David motions for Blackburn to stay as he is led away by YULIA. Blackburn stifles anxiety.

INT. BRIDGE VAULTS - DAY

Yulia guides David down toward the edge of the arches - brick vaults on either side - stray HOMELESS and clustered SICK.

David feels tightness in his lungs in the claustrophobic space as Yulia slows - reaches an iron door.

YULIA  
We park the truck outside here.  
Keeps our drug deliveries out of  
sight of hungry eyes. Anna's there.

Yulia beckons David forward.

INT. ARCHES - SAME

Blackburn hovers - sensing eyes on him. Self-consciousness getting the better of him - he starts to move back outside -

A WEEPING MOTHER rears up in front of him. Yanking his arm -

Lying on the ground - the shrunken skin and bones of her SON. Blackburn searches for the Nurse - but there's 50 sick to every helper. The Mother's quivering pleas pierce him.

BLACKBURN  
*Let's have a quick look.*

INT. BRIDGE VAULTS - SAME

David pushes the door open, stepping out onto:

EXT. WATERSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Mud and rocks. Water laps close as David takes a few steps forward - sees the bridge far down the riverside - no sight of any trucks - and David's sensing trouble when --

CLICK - A GUN AT THE BACK OF HIS HEAD - A SUITED MAN emerging from the dark --

Only a split second for David's instincts to kick in: he spins, twists away --

The Man fires a SILENCED WALther PPK at him --

PFFT. PFFT -- the bullets nearly GRAZING him. He SLIDES down to the floor, rolling away -

And SPRINGS BACK UP -- charging the man. Ramming his shoulder into the man's solar plexus. Knocking him clear off his feet.

They grapple. Blows to the head. Bloodied, David gropes the ground, finding a rock and breathlessly grabs it --

CRACK! David SLAMS the rock into the man's head - who staggers back as David releases like a coiled snake -

HAMMERING into the man - a BLOODY WHIRL OF BLOWS and --

SMASH. David buries the rock into his attacker's temple.

David crawls to the dead body - searches his pockets. Finds nothing. He turns, stares at the terrified, wide-eyed Yulia.

YULIA  
Please. They paid me. I don't work here. I don't even know this Anna.

DAVID  
Don't tell me what you don't know.

YULIA

They said if anyone came asking for  
Anna Nemskva, I was to bring them here.  
They threaten my family. Please.

David approaches - pats her down. Gestures her to get on her knees. David drags the man's body into the shadows. Gun pointed at Yulia - her eyes snap shut in fear. One beat, two - She opens them -- and David is gone.

INT. ARCHES - DAY

Blackburn leans over the young boy. Runs his hand across the boy's neck - who grimaces.

Blackburn adjusts the boy's position - checking his scrawny back with close inspection. Listens to his chest.

He takes a pen from his jacket - takes the mother's hand - scribbles Cyrillic letters, a prescription.

BLACKBURN

*He has diphtheria. He'll need this.*

Just then the Nurse moves towards them. Closing on Blackburn -

As a HAND slips under his arm - pulling him up - it's David. Blood spattered all over. David bundles him away fast.

INT. CAR - DAY

The doors open - Blackburn shoved in the back. David slides into the front. Vorodin takes one look -

And speeds them all off. David cranes behind - scanning --

BLACKBURN

*(cold sweat edgy)*

Did you meet her? Did you see Anna?

David trying to calm labored breathing, adrenaline coursing - he glances at the mirror, wiping blood. Off Blackburn's look:

DAVID

It's not mine. Whoever killed  
Mikhail was watching that place.

I/E CAR & HIGHWAY - DAY

Vorodin speeds up, smoothly moving through lanes - then eases off the gas. Edging to the far lane --

Sharp turn, and he pulls up. Eyes locked onto the rearview mirror. A ten count.

VORODIN

We might have a tail. Brown Volga.

DAVID

Circle back to the hotel and wait.  
I'll go on foot, lure them through

the park and try to get a visual.

(to Blackburn)

Unless you want a vacation in Siberia,  
do exactly what Vorodin says.

Blackburn nervously glances at their driver, unconvinced.

VORODIN

I'm Ukrainian. You can trust me.

EXT. ROAD - LOSINY OSTROV PARK - EAST ENTRANCE - DAY

The car pulls up beside the forest green of Moscow's Moose Island. It stops - sitting there for an eternal moment -

And David sprints out. Leaping the metal boundary fence - off into the woods. The car races away.

EXT. LOSINY OSTROV PARK - DAY

David at a jog - setting off through dense trees.

But he quickly circles back around - heading for the boundary fence. Squeezing past nettled thickets -

And he's at the side of the road he just left -

Watching as a dark brown VOLGA turns onto the street. Slows to an idle - the silhouette of the driver just visible.

In a flash - David muscles through evergreen copses along the fence - hurdling the fence to the car --

INT. BROWN VOLGA - DAY

As the PASSENGER WINDOW SHATTERS -- David's elbow crashing inside -- yanking the door open -- GUN RAISED ON:

A RAVEN-HAIRED WOMAN. Trembling.

David grabs her wrist - dawning recognition:

DAVID  
And I thought we were hunting you, Anna.

Exhaustion and jittery fear cover the delicate face of ANNA NEMSKVA (30s). David lowers the gun.

DAVID  
Move over. I'm driving.

INT. BROWN VOLGA - DAY - LATER

David behind the wheel. Hyper alert.

ANNA  
Did Mikhail come to you?  
(he nods)  
Where is he now?

Soft words:

DAVID  
Let's get you somewhere safe.

INT. HOTEL CAPASIBA ROOM - DAY

David leads Anna inside - finding Blackburn nervously pacing the room. Anna and Blackburn lock gazes.

DAVID  
Anna, this is Professor -

ANNA  
Simon? What are you doing here?

DAVID  
You two know each other?

ANNA  
Of course. We were engaged.

Like a bomb going off. Long godawful pause as David glares at Blackburn.

ANNA  
(to Blackburn; fierce)  
You were the person in England  
Mikhail was going to see?

BLACKBURN

Didn't he tell you why he was going?

ANNA

No, he wanted to protect me. He must have been desperate to go to you.

DAVID

Wait up a second...You two were engaged?

BLACKBURN

It was a long time ago.

DAVID

Jesus. Anna - did Mikhail tell you who he was working for?

ANNA

He moved to a new role few months ago but I don't know what. He is a secretive man in secret world.

DAVID

You are his wife - it's your job to know his secrets. Where did--

ANNA

Enough! No more questions, I want to speak with my husband.

David adopts a measured tone.

DAVID

Mikhail was transporting a highly lethal pathogen to London.

BLACKBURN

He administered it to himself. The dose was... fatal.

A powerful tide of realization - grief - anguish - strikes her. Taken with aching silence.

BLACKBURN

I'm sorry, Anna. But we need to know where Mikhail was -

She backs away - moves to the bathroom - locks herself in. Blackburn puts his ear to the door.

BLACKBURN

Anna, we don't have much time.

Low sobs emit. It's clear that she's not coming out anytime soon. Blackburn turns around -

Hand at his throat as David angrily pins him to wall.

DAVID  
You knew all about Mikhail.

BLACKBURN  
Take your hands off me!

DAVID  
Keep lying to me and she'll have a dead almost-husband as well.

BLACKBURN  
I never lied.

David releases Blackburn. Blackburn rubs his neck.

DAVID  
Compromise my operation again and so help me god, your next paper will be published posthumously.

BLACKBURN  
How dare you! You need me, remember? My background gets me deported here - yours gets you killed.

Blackburn storms out the room. David left with the echo of Anna's sobbing.

INT. CORRIDOR - NMID - ENGLAND - NIGHT

Glastry powers down the hall, entering:

INT. GLASTRY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Stops short when he finds the reptilian MATTHEW LYTON (40s) - CIA's London Bureau Chief - perched on his desk.

LYTON  
Evening, Charlie. Cozy base you boys have here in the countryside.

GLASTRY  
Far enough from London to avoid prying eyes. On the whole.

Glastry moves behind his desk. Positional jousting.

LYTON  
How's Karen?

GLASTRY  
Back in Chicago. Last I heard. Is  
there some intel you need? We have  
phones.

LYTON  
I'm looking for David Rangell.

Glastry nods. A poker player with years of training.

LYTON  
Is he around tonight?

GLASTRY  
Sick leave. Highly contagious.

LYTON  
I really hope David's not got into  
anything too serious.

GLASTRY  
What do you need?

We sense Lyton's bullshit detector is finely tuned, but he's not ready to front up. Moving to the door.

LYTON  
In case you forgot, DC has asked me  
to remind you to share any verified  
intel that might affect our dealings  
with the Soviets before the treaty.

GLASTRY  
NATO doesn't work for the CIA.

LYTON  
We don't want any crossed-wires.

Lyton walks out. Glastry festering on what that was about.

INT. BASEMENT BAR - HOTEL CAPASIBA - MOSCOW - NIGHT

It's late, the BARTENDER is closing up. David enters, scanning the dingy space. In the dim light, David spies a solitary figure sat in the corner.

INT. BASEMENT BAR/PIANO - NIGHT

Blackburn tinkers at the piano. David arrives with drinks.

DAVID

I got you the house vodka.

BLACKBURN

I'd like an apology.

DAVID

Take the drink. Quit while you're behind.

David slides down alongside Blackburn.

DAVID

I need to know enough to protect you.

BLACKBURN

I didn't believe my personal history was relevant. And I said it was a mistake to bring me.

DAVID

Jury's still out. But whatever happened between you two... it needs to be locked away.

Blackburn downs the drink.

BLACKBURN

We met. We fell in love. We got engaged. Anna asked me to stay. I chose my work. So she chose Mikhail.

(weakening)

I've been trying to "lock it away" for years. Then Mikhail called.

David alert to Blackburn's pain. But no time to soothe.

DAVID

Our only focus right now is getting Anna to help figure this all out.

BLACKBURN

I doubt she'll listen to me.

DAVID

Better to listen to her.

(drinks, stands)

Take your time. But make it quick.

INT. BALCONY - HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

David stands with a SATPHONE, hushed.

CORA (V.O.)

Hello?

DAVID

Did I wake you?

CORA (V.O.)

I'm up. But still in bed.

DAVID

Wish we there together. You doing okay?

CORA (V.O.)

I've got the final scan today. Did  
you want to wish him good luck?

The sound of RUSTLING SHEETS as Cora lowers the phone to her belly. David listens intently. Hesitant though.

DAVID

Hey buddy. Your mom and I can't  
wait to meet you.

CORA (V.O.)

He heard you. He's kicking.

David stares out over the city and its endless uncertainties.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bathroom door CREAKS open. Blackburn slumped against it. Anna emerges. She takes in Blackburn's snoring form -

Locking eyes with David. A black case under his arm. He places a finger to his lips - gestures Anna to the door.

EXT. KHIMKI - OUTSKIRTS OF MOSCOW - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

Planes ROAR low over this barely populated industrial suburb.

**SUPER: December 6th. 2 Days To Signing.**

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MORNING

An empty wasteland of discarded timber and mud. A black car squirms towards a husk of an abandoned building.

INT. TOWER BLOCK - MORNING

David pushes past plastic sheeting into a dank space - leading Anna to the stairway - cautiously, she follows him.

EXT. ROOFTOP - MORNING

Moscow spreads across the horizon. Vistas of Stalinist grandeur haunted by ghostly whispers. One foot in a troubled past, one foot scrabbling towards an uncertain future.

DAVID

There are millions of your people waking up out there. Millions more across the country.

ANNA

I do not need geography lessons.

DAVID

This whole city's population would be decimated if that pathogen was released in the air. Same for Berlin, London, New York. Mikhail understood that.

ANNA

He is a good man... He was.

DAVID

So help me find out why he was so afraid. I'm certain he wanted a reaction before the treaty is signed in Washington.

ANNA

He was scared, that's all I know. That's all I have left of him.

David pulls out a manila envelope from the case.

DAVID

Safe passage to England. With gratitude. You don't need to do anymore than you already have.

She takes the envelope - a real opportunity being presented. Her mind a whirlpool of warring emotions.

ANNA

Mikhail wanted three daughters. He said this nation needed its women to take over - centuries of man's rule just brought us suffering. He tried to speak up and he's gone. Why would I help strangers when I couldn't even help him myself?

DAVID

Blackburn's not a stranger.

ANNA

The Simon I knew would never have braved coming back here.

(staring at him)

The sound your chest's making, maybe you shouldn't be here either.

Silence. From his pocket, David takes out his inhaler.

DAVID

Morphine. It takes the edge off my fried lungs. Daily reminder of a battle against your country that my government maintains we weren't actually involved in.

(beat)

I was a good soldier, head down type. But one sunny day a Russian plane drops chemical gas on the village I'm hiding out in. My partner goes in - tries to save as many as he could. I hesitated. I survived. And I got a medal.

(feeling this)

We've both lost someone. Men who tried to make the world safer. Don't let them die in vain.

Anna contemplating. And caving...

ANNA

The man who recruited Mikhail for his role. He came to our apartment once.

(beat)

Fedorov. Dr. Victor Fedorov.

EXT. REAR EXIT - HOTEL CAPASIBA - DAY

Emerging, Blackburn shields his bloodshot eyes from the light. Unkempt hair, shirt untucked, unshaven face.

He holds a sketched map. Checking it, he moves off.

EXT. DOROGOMILOVSKY MARKET - DAY

CROWDS throng the stalls of Moscow's largest farmers market - where demand for food always outweighs supply. It's risky turf - don't make eyes with anyone, they won't bother you.

Blackburn snakes through people.

Suddenly he's surrounded by TEENS with wheelbarrows loaded with piles of dirty fresh produce. DESPERATE SHOPPERS flock after the new deliveries. Blackburn squirms free of the mass -

Spying a covered alley out of the main thoroughfare.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

A deserted cobbled street. Blackburn makes his way to David's idling car halfway down.

INT. CAR - DAY

Anna at the wheel beside David as Blackburn gets in.

BLACKBURN

Why didn't Vorodin pick me up?

DAVID

He called in sick. And I wanted to see if you were followed. Looks like no one took the bait.

Blackburn about to retort but his eyes land on Anna. He hasn't got the right words for her yet.

DAVID

Mikhail was recruited for a specialist role by Dr. Victor Fedorov.

BLACKBURN

I know of him - Head of Advanced Biological Research for the Party. He gave a speech at a UN conference in Geneva I attended. Part of the Soviet PR machine - big smile as he lies to your face about his real work. High opinion of himself.

DAVID

I know a few scientists like that.

BLACKBURN

You're not thinking of actually  
approaching him?

DAVID

Not exactly.

David holds up a large stack of SOVIET NEWSPAPERS.

DAVID

Pick one.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

David and Blackburn step out as the car drives off - David carries a small leather carryall.

He leads them to a small door - a plethora of thick black wires running above. Quick scan around, all clear - as David forces the door open, ushering Blackburn inside fast.

INT. MOSCOW DISTRICT C TELEPHONE EXCHANGE - DAY

Takes a second to adjust - and then MASSES of TELEPHONE WIRES appear bathed in dim work lights. Blackburn absorbing it all.

DAVID

All of Moscow's lines run through here. No way to trace a call.

David moves to a bulky TELEPHONE TERMINAL BOX, crouches down. Opening his carryall, he pulls out a handful of tools.

BLACKBURN

You were busy this morning.

DAVID

Some field tricks still stick.

David works with swift precise hands:

- levers the terminal box open;
- slices two wires with a Stanley knife;
- entwines a copper wire around one of the lines;
- connects the copper wire to a phone handset joined to a second terminal box; and he turns back to Blackburn.

DAVID

We only get one shot.

Handing Blackburn the phone, David taps at the terminal, beeping out TONES. Blackburn holds his breath as we CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - ADVANCED BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - DAY

A PHONE RINGS on a small desk. A SECRETARY answers swiftly.

SECRETARY  
*Dr. Fedorov's office...Please hold.*

Placing the phone down, she stands, moves quickly to:

INT. FEDOROV'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Rich mahogany, ornate mirrors and a framed self-portrait of the white-haired DR. VICTOR FEDOROV (50s), a Communist with a taste for refined materialism.

The Secretary approaches. Leans in to whisper in Fedorov's ear. The slightest nod, a hint of a smile - and he picks up.

FEDOROV  
(into phone)  
Eto ne ochen' udobno.

INTERCUT:

BLACKBURN  
(clipped Russian)  
*Apologies for interrupting,  
comrade. This is Gregori Yasin at  
Za Rubezhom, the foreign press  
review paper.*

FEDOROV  
*I don't need a subscription.*

BLACKBURN  
*Of course not, sir. I am calling to  
ask for an interview. We wish your  
unrivalled expertise on scientific  
developments relating to the pending  
disarmament treaty.*

FEDOROV  
*I can give you a few words.*

BLACKBURN  
*This is for a front cover.*

FEDOROV  
*I can make time next week.*

BLACKBURN

*I realize you are a busy man. But  
we go to print tomorrow. Could you  
possibly squeeze me in tonight?*

Blackburn glances nervously at David. Fedorov considers - preening himself in one of his many mirrors.

FEDOROV

*If it helps educate the nation. The  
bar on Pyatnitsky Lane where the  
scientists frequent. Yellow sign.  
Eight o'clock.*

INT. MOSCOW DISTRICT C TELEPHONE EXCHANGE - END INTERCUT

BLACKBURN

*Most appreciated.*

Exhaling, he hands the receiver to David - who cuts the wire.

DAVID

*Let's hope he bought it.*

EXT. DRUZHBA BAR - NIGHT

Epic in its seediness, this place looks like a Bolshoi brothel with its faded yellow neon sign. Mangy dogs rifle through garbage bins outside. But inside:

INT. DRUZHBA BAR - NIGHT

An Aladdin's cave of "Sovietana" memorabilia covers the walls - ancient dirt on the floor - traditional Polka music BLARES.

It's Moscow's hidden hedonistic gem for scientists, an old "ryumochnaya" - where social ladders are shoved aside as workers rub elbows with beer-swilling government officials.

In the main room, David hovers near the entrance - flanked by vodka-sated patrons at high tables. Eyes flick to -

Blackburn and Anna - standing in a far corner amongst the heaving sweaty crowd. Both focused on the door.

BLACKBURN

*You're certain he won't remember you?*

ANNA

*He only has eyes for himself.*

Riotous SINGING fires up, DANCING COUPLES gyrate around. Blackburn and Anna squeezed closer together. Blackburn wants to say something, anything--

And just then - the door swings open:

In strides FEDOROV. He strong-arms his way to the bar --

Both Blackburn and Anna light up in recognition. Knowing looks exchanged between all three. David and Anna move off, disappearing into the back of the bar. Go time for Blackburn.

BAR

Fedorov clicks his fingers at the barman. As he checks himself out in the mirror behind -

He's BUMPED from the side - red wine spilling all over his white shirt. Fedorov reels, spinning to berate the culprit --

But BLACKBURN moves on without stopping, merging into the crowd and snaking away.

Drawing a few snickers, Fedorov moves toward:

INT. NARROW PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Walls adorned with posters glorifying Sputnik and other Soviet innovations. Fedorov heads for the men's room -

Sees a crude sign: "Ne Po Zakonu"; Out of Order. About to rage -

When Anna steps out of the neighboring Ladies room. Briefest of eye contact. Looks to the sign then to his soaked shirt.

ANNA  
*All yours if you're desperate.*

A demure smile as she holds the door open. He nods, pushes the door and enters. The door swings shut --

And Anna pulls the unscrewed handle off the door. Walks away.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Fedorov's footsteps echo around the walls. He moves to the row of stalls. Prods the first door open, empty. Unzips -

DAVID (O.S.)  
Dr. Fedorov, let's be quick.

Fedorov turns, confused - facing David and a raised gun. He stares at David intently - and then SMILES EXCITEDLY.

FEDOROV  
(crisp English)  
I've been waiting for you for weeks.

WHAT? David steps close to Fedorov, boring into him.

DAVID  
Don't play games when a gun's involved.

FEDOROV  
Your people said it would be  
unannounced and unexpected.  
(off David's bewilderment)  
My extraction. You're with the CIA, yes?

INT. BACK BAR - SAME

Blackburn nurses a glass, moves past inebriated workers, seeking out a safe corner. Checks his watch -

TOKSIN (O.S.)  
Simon Blackburn?

Blackburn whirls around to see:

Black beard, silver-rimmed spectacles, distinct BRONZE MEDAL on his lapel - this is DR. RICHARD TOKSIN (60s).

Blackburn shakes his hand with undisguised shock.

BLACKBURN  
Dr. Toksin? What a surprise.

TOKSIN  
And I thought I was the most savvy scientific thinker on the premises.

BLACKBURN  
It's been years, I... Excuse me, I'm sorry to be blunt, but I heard you'd died.

TOKSIN  
(laughing)  
Leaving America isn't dying. Shall we get a drink?

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

David and Fedorov are squeezed into a cubicle.

FEDOROV

So you are not here to help me?

DAVID

I told you, I'm not with the CIA.

FEDOROV

What the hell do you want?

DAVID

I want information on Mikhail  
Nemskva. You recruited recently him  
for a military post.

FEDOROV

I recruit hundreds. And what's that  
got to do with me?

DAVID

It might keep a bullet out your  
head. Focus. Mikhail Nemskva.

FEDOROV

Mudak! I say nothing more to you.

Fedorov bustles toward the door as --

Someone KNOCKS. KNOCKS again. David moves to Fedorov - GRABS  
him, thrusting him up against the wall. David holds his hand  
up - not a sound - as the footsteps recede.

DAVID

Tell me what you're offering the  
CIA for defection.

FEDOROV

You can do nothing to me.

DAVID

Even Gorbachev doesn't look kindly  
on informers selling out his  
country. Right now I'm the only hope  
you have of keeping your cover.

Fedorov anxiously calculates. David's iron glare sealing it.

FEDOROV

I will show you. Get me out of here.

INT. BAR - SAME

Blackburn glances nervously round as Toksin beckons a barman.

BLACKBURN

What's brought you to Moscow?

TOKSIN

I was asked to advise on a project.  
I couldn't miss a chance to bring  
our nations closer.

BLACKBURN

(pointing at his lapel)  
Is that how you got the medal?

TOKSIN

It was my son's from serving with the  
Seals in Grenada. Mr. Reagan's  
posthumous gift for my boy's service.

Toksin goes silent - sips his drink, lost for a second then:

TOKSIN

And you? Just passing through?

BLACKBURN

Here to see an old friend.

TOKSIN

Anyone I might know?

Just then a slender arm slips through Blackburn's - a hand  
softly takes his face - and lips lock. His eyes widen as Anna  
ends the kiss. Sends a jolt through Blackburn.

ANNA

Here's where you're hiding. And  
you're making new friends I see.

BLACKBURN

Anna, meet Dr. Toksin. The finest  
biochemist I've ever encountered.

Toksin awkwardly shakes hands. Finishes his drink.

TOKSIN

I must leave you two lovebirds. But  
Simon, I wouldn't linger too long in  
Russia. It isn't good for romance.

Toksin exits. Blackburn chews on pieces he can't puzzle out.

ANNA

We shouldn't be talking to anyone.

As the music stirs, she pulls him into a dance. They sashay  
across the room. Their bodies are close. Anna whispers.

ANNA

Did you see Mikhail before he died?

BLACKBURN

No. I'm sorry. Truly.

ANNA

He always respected your work.

(genuine)

I'm glad he knew he could go to you.

BLACKBURN

I would like to think the hatchet was  
buried.

ANNA

He only ever cared about keeping me  
safe. It's why I loved him.

BLACKBURN

(quieter)

It sounds like he was worthy of you.

Their eyes meet - as Blackburn spies David - gesturing at  
them to exit. Blackburn pulls apart.

BLACKBURN

We have to go.

EXT. PYATNITSKY LANE - NIGHT

David crosses the street hurriedly, heading for the car. Digs  
for his keys - failing to notice:

The Shadow striding away down the street, pulling a fur hat  
low. Quick look back - as David's car pulls away.

EXT. DRUZHBA BAR - EXIT - NIGHT

David rolls up - Anna, Fedorov and Blackburn wait. David pops  
open the trunk, gestures at Fedorov to get in.

DAVID

You want the ex-fil or not?

I/E CAR & MOSCOW STREETS - NIGHT

David speeds skillfully through dimly lit streets and down  
dark alleys. Turns left. Right. Slows. Speeds up. Circles  
back. Running a skilful Surveillance Detection Route -

As his passengers clench and stay tight-lipped - ignoring the muffled sounds of Fedorov GRUMBLING from the trunk.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

David's gaze is unwavering. Alert. Checks his mirrors.

DAVID  
Where to now?

FEDOROV (O.S.)  
Lubyanka Square.

EXT. LUBYANKA SQUARE - NIGHT

Flickering neon lights barely illuminate a quiet cobbled space. On the corner sits the entrance to a metro station.

The car slows to a gentle stop.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

David looks around. A ten count - not a soul in sight.

BLACKBURN  
Where exactly is this man taking us?

FEDOROV (O.S.)  
Down. We all go down.

INT. UNDERPASS - NIGHT

Not a soul in sight as they hurry past black stone walls and a "Pop Goes the West" mural along the metro underpass.

Fedorov leads the group down a long flight of stone steps.

ANNA  
The metro is very exposed.

Halfway down the steps Fedorov stops dead - at an Emergency Exit door with coded lock. Punching in a series of numbers -

FEDOROV  
Not using that metro.

INT. FREIGHT FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Revealing a long dark corridor - a single red lightbulb shines above the locked gates of a large freight elevator.

As they near, Fedorov pulls off his jacket - wraps it around his hand and stretches up to unscrew the bulb. Total black.

DAVID

I'm not a guy to put in the dark.

Suddenly the elevator doors PING open - a shaft of light as Fedorov twists the specially crafted bulb filament as a key.

FEDOROV

The truth is ahead. Come.

INT. FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT

All four squeezed in as they DESCEND. DEEP DEEP DEEP DOWN --

David sensing the claustrophobia of the unknown. As the elevator creaks, we're heading 600 feet below ground level.

INT. METRO-2 SUBWAY TUNNELS - NIGHT

The elevator doors open. They all stare out into the gloom -

THICK WIRES and METAL PIPES run along the walls of a LARGE SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL - running as far as the eye can see.

FEDOROV

Welcome to Metro Two.

ANNA

This place is a Stalinist myth,  
told to scare children.

FEDOROV

As any microbiologist can tell you -  
plenty of realities exist that we  
cannot always easily see.

David traverses forward - spying MORE TUNNELS linking the central artery. Dust is EVERYWHERE. He turns to Fedorov.

DAVID

These old tunnels aren't sufficient  
actionable intel for the CIA to  
broker a deal for you.

FEDOROV  
(moving forward)  
You want more?

INT. MAINTENANCE AREA - METRO-2 - NIGHT

They all clamber down a cramped walkway amid the smell of damp decay. Storage alcoves appear on both sides -

Revealing a RUSTING 1950s PT-76 TANK in one - a huge EMPTY AK-47 WEAPON RACK in another - with space for thousands of assault rifles. A nuclear fallout army's wet dream.

FEDOROV  
Try not to breathe in too much air.  
Lingering irritants.

Fedorov directs them all ahead. David pushes hard at a thick steel door, stubborn but it gives --

INT. ABANDONED CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Where three layers of dust-coated plastic sheets hide --

A CAVERNOUS SPACE. Fedorov's flashlight sweeps up and around -

A HUGE LABORATORY. Filled with a cornucopia of GARGANTUAN EXPERIMENTAL MACHINERY: THIRTY FOOT HIGH STEEL VATS; HIGH PRESSURE COMPRESSION PISTONS; GLASS TESTING ENCLOSURES.

Blackburn moves into the space, engrossed with machinery capable of unimaginable creations.

BLACKBURN  
(in awed disbelief)  
Scatter suspension apparatus for  
industrial scale aerosolization.

DAVID  
It wasn't built to bake cookies.

FEDOROV  
It creates weaponized pathogens  
with immense potency. I helped  
design it.

BLACKBURN  
It's a doomsday factory.

FEDOROV  
But our government couldn't afford  
to keep it functional.

BLACKBURN

Mikhail Nemskva brought evidence of a live creation to London. It was highly functional bioengineering.

FEDOROV

Impossible. I know the details of all the facilities across the nation. That is my ticket out. This is what your CIA wants. And nowhere produces such kinds of pathogens. This Mikhail is a deceitful traitor.

Anna storms to Fedorov, SLAPS him. David pulls her away.

DAVID

How are you so certain no one's developing usable weapons?

FEDOROV

We are not crazy people. No more than your leaders and their nuclear arsenal. So far but no further.

A SCRAPING sound draws David's attention - Blackburn clawing at a strip of metal on the wall - removes layers of dirt -

Revealing an etching of a series of numbers and letters.

FEDOROV

Facility identification. Every military base has one.

David pulls out the scrap of newspaper with Mikhail's message on it - holds out 3812/2AF7 ♦■♦ for Fedorov.

DAVID

Is this one you know?

FEDOROV

(nods, nervous)

I don't know the symbols - but the code is for Vector Base.

DAVID

Dig deep - did you place Mikhail there?

FEDOROV

Perhaps. They needed specialist virologists there. General Vernyov ran it.

(name rivets David's attention)  
It was shut down five months ago.

ANNA

Mikhail didn't stop working there.

FEDOROV

Many military veterans like Vernyov  
fear the loss of their positions  
when Western-appeasing diplomats  
take over the Party. They are doing  
whatever they can to retain power.

DAVID

Operating without central oversight.

FEDOROV

Vernyov's brilliance gave him free  
license to conduct his own research.  
But he started to freak out when  
feared he might lose funding and  
operational control with a reformer  
like Gorbachev in charge. So he  
stopped towing the line.

A SCUTTLING SOUND makes them all jump. Stop. Freeze --

As the SHINING EYES of a big feral animal lingers - before  
padding away into the expanse of darkness.

DAVID

Act like prey, you get predators.  
Let's get out of here.

EXT. LUBYANKA UNDERPASS - NIGHT

Anna walks in angry silence beside Fedorov to the car. A  
short distance back, David huddles with Blackburn.

BLACKBURN

We have to report the site. No god  
can help us if they're producing  
Mikhail's pathogen on this scale.

DAVID

Fedorov would deny it all if we  
risked his defection.

BLACKBURN

It's evidence of Soviet non-  
compliance with international  
agreements. It's our duty to -

DAVID

Any alarm now will kill the treaty  
and knock international relations  
back to the Bay of Pigs.

Blackburn's hyper-analytic brain spinning over options.  
Fedorov reaches the car. David motions him back.

DAVID

One last thing - what made them  
shut Vernyov's facility down?

FEDOROV

I know just whispers.

DAVID

No one's listening but us.

FEDOROV

I heard he'd tried to make foreign  
contacts. To offer them his "work".

DAVID

Give us 18 hours silence. After  
that, report a suspicious approach  
you experienced at the bar. That'll  
cover your absence. Keep it cloudy.

FEDOROV

What about my ex-fil?

DAVID

Still on. You have my word.  
(hands him the car keys)  
It'll be safer for you to get out  
of here alone. We'll walk.

Fedorov nods - gets in. He turns the ignition. It SPUTTERS as  
David, Anna and Blackburn move off towards the metro.

BLACKBURN

Eighteen hours for what?

DAVID

What we always needed - verification.

We hear a CLICKING from the engine. David glances back --

BOOM - a fireball ERUPTS from under the car and CONSUMES it -

As MASSIVE BLOWBACK KNOCKS THE GROUP OFF THEIR FEET - twisted  
metal and glass showering down.

Stunned, David pulls himself to his feet. Blackburn helps up Anna - cuts and bruises but alive. They all stare at the fiery husk where Fedorov is. Or was - he's toast now.

David hustles them away from the burning car.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

David urgently draws from his inhaler. Tries to process.

DAVID

That was a sunrise bomb. Intended to go off the second time you start the car, ensure you're far away from whereever it was planted.

The weight of that pulls like an anchor on them all.

DAVID

We've been compromised. I've got to put you both somewhere secure.

BLACKBURN

Where are you going?

DAVID

To practice my bedside manner.

EXT. GLASTRY'S OFFICE - LONDON - NIGHT

Papers piled everywhere - heightened activity as the Washington summit is looming. Glastry enters with Montes.

MONTES

CIA wants to know who we're sending as our representatives for the signing.

GLASTRY

They have my list already.

MONTES

Lyton called up from London again. He's asking about Rangell's "travel schedule".

GLASTRY

What did you tell him?

MONTES

Nothing. Rangell's not reported back so... I don't know anything.

Streak of worry pulses through Glastry.

GLASTRY

If Lyton or anyone from the CIA  
calls back, you don't breathe  
without telling me. And put me on  
that plane to Washington - we've  
only got 48 hours until Reagan  
shakes Gorbachev's hand and tells  
everyone the world's getting safer.  
I might have to burst the bubble.

EXT. PEROVO COMPOUND - SOUTHERN MOSCOW - NIGHT

A walled enclosure of upscale housing blocks where Russians  
and Westerners live side by side. Lurking in the shadows -  
David peers up. Watching the entrance gates --

And he spies VORODIN entering, shopping bags in hand.

INT. VORODIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Two young BOYS race past Vorodin as he pours a whiskey.

VORODIN

*Slow down kids. Think mama needs a  
hand with the groceries.*

The DOORBELL rings. The older boy dashes off to answer.  
Vorodin bends to grab a stray toy left along the way.

DAVID (O.S.)

How are you feeling?

Vorodin spins - David tussling his son's hair - smile laced  
with a hint of malice evident only to Vorodin. Vorodin pales.

As Vorodin's WIFE walks in the room. Surprised by the guest.

DAVID

You must be the beauty your husband  
mentioned. I'm David.

VORODIN'S WIFE

I'm sorry, Vorodin didn't say  
anything about company.

DAVID

He didn't? After all we've nearly  
died through together.

Vorodin smiles uneasily.

VORODIN'S WIFE  
I was just serving dinner, would  
you care to stay?

DAVID  
I won't interrupt a family night.  
Just need a minute of your  
husband's time.

David beckons Vorodin out who follows David down the hall.

VORODIN  
(thin whisper)  
Have you lost your mind?

DAVID  
Years ago. You know that.

David twists Vorodin's wrist and PUSHES him out into:

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

DAVID  
Why'd you burn us?

VORODIN  
What are you talking about?

David twists deeper, SHOVING Vorodin up against the wall.

DAVID  
Someone rigged the car - and now  
the only lead we have is dead.

Vorodin pushes David away, trying to move back inside - but  
David SLAMS the gun into Vorodin's stomach.

VORODIN  
I was given an order to pull out.

DAVID  
You were given a kill code.

VORODIN  
Niet - no. I received a formal  
memo. Concerned another covert  
operation in the city. I was  
requested to remain off field  
today. That's all I did.

(draws himself up, trying  
to bare some teeth)  
I don't work just for you.

(MORE)

VORODIN (CONT'D)  
And you're off the books - I  
couldn't get dragged into the  
crossfire.

DAVID  
Didn't flap those gums to anyone else?

VORODIN  
No. I was home.  
(quiet)  
All those years together. You know me.

DAVID  
Yeah, I do. You were always a coward.  
Ducking the swinging axe so it hit  
the next guy. Now you're a liability.

Vorodin braces but David hands him a written sheet of paper.

VORODIN  
(glancing at the paper)  
This list will take days to sort.

DAVID  
You have until seven am. Or I make  
an anonymous call to Directorate K  
and get you fingered as a traitor to  
the Soviet state.

VORODIN  
David, please. My wife. My boys.

DAVID  
You're doing this to protect them.

David releases him - pats his pockets, takes out keys.

DAVID  
I need your car. Mine's on fire.

EXT. SVOBODA HOSTEL - EAST MOSCOW - NIGHT

A ramshackle pit of a place in a grubby, quiet neighborhood.  
Nobody's asking any searching questions here.

BLACKBURN (V.O.)  
We need to get out of the city.

INT. ROOM - SVOBODA HOSTEL - NIGHT

Mildew ceilings, stained sheets and moldy carpet. Blackburn  
and Anna eye David as he addresses them.

DAVID

Vernyov clearly doesn't want anyone to follow Mikhail's trail.

BLACKBURN

Evidently - he blew up our car! There have to be limits on risk.

DAVID

I can call Glastry. Get an extraction for both of you.

ANNA

No. My fate is with Mikhail. I stay.

She and David lock gazes. No moving her. Blackburn takes David by the elbow - leads him to a private corner.

BLACKBURN

"The most successful man in life is the man with the best information".

DAVID

I don't need one of your lectures.

BLACKBURN

It's Disraeli. The point is: do we know enough not to jeopardize ourselves?

DAVID

They can sign all the treaties they want. But we both know the damage that this pathogen could unleash in the wrong hands.

BLACKBURN

But where's this all going to end?

DAVID

I'd rather risk going too far to find out how deep this goes.

Blackburn's eyes find the floor - weighing potential costs to profound benefits. Finally raises his gaze - lingers on Anna.

BLACKBURN

I wanted to be a doctor when I was a kid. To save lives. Then I thought my research could help even more people. Now I think I just wanted to believe that.

(he focuses sharp on David)

You can inform your boss we're going to be here a little longer.

INT. NMID SITUATION ROOM - ENGLAND - NIGHT

Glastry's been here all night. Caffeinated jitters. He chews a cigarette. His PHONE rings, answers straight away.

INT. SVOBODA HOSTEL - BATHROOM - SAME

David holds the satphone, sits on the edge of a filthy tub.

DAVID

I haven't had a lot of time for calls.

INTERCUT:

GLASTRY

No, you've been too busy setting alerts off all over the city. Vorodin updated me. Do you have any idea the shit you're stepping in?

DAVID

This is still Russia, still the KGB.

GLASTRY

Do you have a confirmed source for the pathogen? A testable sample?

David stares at his reflection - careful what you say.

DAVID

We have actionable intelligence. It requires a final investigation.

GLASTRY

That's not good enough. It's over.

DAVID

We're piecing the chain together.

GLASTRY

You can't put civilians at any further risk. I'm on a plane to DC tomorrow - and I'm pulling you out.

DAVID

We need proof of the bigger picture.

GLASTRY

No, you need to be smart. It's two days until the treaty, you're risking it.

DAVID

I'm enforcing it.

GLASTRY  
Follow my orders.

DAVID  
You picked the wrong guy for that.

David hangs up. Glastry left with the dial tone lingering - then HURLS his phone across the room.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A long empty stretch of road curving through vast evergreen forests. Birdsong and wind whistling in the silence --

As a deep RUMBLE fills the air. Building in intensity as -

A TANKER TRUCK hurtles by. Massive cylindrical gas tank on its bed. As it WHOOSHES by --

A four-wheeled BDRM-2 ARMORED PATROL JEEP races behind.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF BEREZNIKI - YAROSLAVL REGION - DAY

On the horizon - the town of Berezniki, one of the USSR's key manufacturing hubs for many decades. Over twenty huge INDUSTRIAL FACTORIES are visible in the distance.

**SUPER: Berezniki. Central USSR. December 7th. 1 Day To Signing.**

The two vehicles pound on, chewing up tarmac - suddenly they slow - pulling sharply off the road - into the woods.

EXT. WOODLAND - DAY

The tanker truck grinds through the birch forest - the Jeep staying close behind - both slow to a halt in a clearing.

Vorodin clammers down from the tanker - as David, Blackburn and Anna exit the Jeep.

VORODIN  
Eleven thousand gallons of petroleum.

DAVID  
It's overkill.

VORODIN  
But these are Russians, harder to scare. Give the signal, it all blows.

(MORE)

VORODIN (CONT'D)  
(points to the Jeep)  
Your gear is in the trunk. Official  
Soviet military equipment. Updated  
and issued in the last three months  
after Chernobyl. All kosher.

Blackburn pulls out a camo Mission Oriented Protective  
Posture [MOPP] Radiation Bodysuit. Ultimate toxic safety.

BLACKBURN  
We're crossing the rubicon now.

EXT. BEREZNIKI - DAY

The armored Jeep speeds through the town. Up ahead, a cluster  
of CHEMICAL PLANTS and entrances to MINING REFINERIES.

INT. JEEP - DAY

Anna behind the wheel. David by her side as Blackburn scans  
the town. All dressed in MOPP suits.

BLACKBURN  
One containment breach in any  
biosafety unit round here and all  
these people would die in minutes.

DAVID  
Sure shows a lack of concern. And  
it's a great cover.  
(gestures to Anna)  
It's the last facility on the left.

And Anna turns down a long gravel path towards -

EXT. FACILITY 3812/2AF7 - SECURITY BARRIER - DAY

A metal gate and a low white sign reading "MEDIKAMENT".

A TRIO of GUARDS stand sentry to the entrance gates. Engaged  
in a game of Durak, cards being flipped idly --

As the Jeep rolls into view at breakneck speed. The HEAD  
GUARD bounds up - barking orders at his underlings.

INT. JEEP - CONTINUOUS

David turns the radio on. Simple CLICK CLICK transmission.  
Signal sent - just as they all pull on protective facemasks --

I/E SECURITY BARRIER & JEEP - CONTINUOUS

The vehicle rolls to a stop - the Guards raise AK-47s as Anna lowers the window. Itchy trigger fingers.

The HEAD GUARD sees HAZARD WARNING signs stencilled all across the side and bumper. Raises his hand for caution.

ANNA

*There's been an accident nearby. We need to check onsite radiation levels.*

HEAD GUARD

*What's happened?*

ANNA

*The details are classified. We're checking air levels to determine drift direction. It's urgent.*

A pointed look. The guards exchange anxious glances.

HEAD GUARD

*All orders come through the General. You must wait for -*

BOOM! A VIOLENT ROAR SMACKS through the air -- thick BLACK SMOKE billows above the trees from the woodland.

ANNA

*We need to get inside. If we wait, you all risk exposure.*

Enough to strike fear into these three - and the Head Guard signals to raise the security gate.

EXT. GROUNDS - FACILITY 3812/2AF7 - DAY

A six acre plot of scrubland with a small lake at the rear.

Inside a wire perimeter - a collection of fifteen TWO-STORY WAREHOUSES. Nondescript and identical.

Our team unpacks GEIGER-MUELLER COUNTERS, SODIUM IODIDE DETECTORS and a CR-39 RADON DETECTOR from the trunk.

Two guards approach - Blackburn holds out facemasks.

BLACKBURN

*As a precaution.*

The guards eagerly pull on the masks. Led by a WEASELY GUARD, David and Blackburn move to the warehouses - Anna stays put by the Jeep with a nervy YOUNG GUARD.

EXT. WAREHOUSES - DAY

Passing the first row of buildings, Blackburn yields the radon detector with feigned expertise. David scans the area.

WEASELY GUARD  
*Shouldn't we all be evacuating?*

BLACKBURN  
*No need to be rash and interrupt  
the good work being done here.*

They reach the next row of identikit buildings -

Blackburn stops dead. Eyes latched to the far left - to the unique domed roof of one of the warehouses - and the fifteen foot wide FILTRATION EXTRACTOR leading out to the sky.

Blackburn moves to a huge INCINERATOR FAN on the side of the building, churning metal blades. A look to David.

BLACKBURN  
*We need to inspect exhaust systems.*

WEASELY GUARD  
*There's no building access without  
authorization.*

BLACKBURN  
*If you will just let us enter...*

WEASELY GUARD  
*I will have to get permission--*

SLAM - David CRACKS him across the temple with the titanium Geiger counter. David drags his prone body out of sight.

BLACKBURN  
What happened to in and out?

DAVID  
Needed the "in" done faster.

EXT. REAR - WAREHOUSE - DAY

David and Blackburn creep down the back. Another massive INCINERATOR FAN churns out air.

BLACKBURN

That's a serious airlock filtration system. If something is being worked on, it's inside here.

David moves to the fan -- head bobbing in beat to the rhythm of the spinning blades -- inches closer --

And he JAMS the Geiger machine in between the blades. It GROANS - CREAKS - but holds. One beat..two beats..and CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

A rifle-wielding TALL GUARD and a LAB COATED TECHNICIAN stride down a narrow concrete corridor.

They reach a locked door - the Tall Guard pulls out a stack of keys, unlocks and they enter:

INT. INCINERATOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where RED LIGHTS FLASH around the space. The Technician moves to a control panel. Checks readings.

LAB COATED TECHNICIAN

*There's an exterior obstruction. We need to restore fan function immediately.*

He gestures to an Emergency Exit door, triple-bolted shut. The Tall Guard unlocks each, shunting the stiff door open -

EXT. REAR EXIT - CONTINUOUS

The Guard steps out onto a tall set of steps --

And he STUMBLES, TRIPS - launching head first down fifteen hard stone steps. Collapses at the bottom.

The Technician bugs out - attention drawn to a thin wire strung across the doorway - he bends to inspect it -

DAVID (O.S.)

I'd prefer not to hurt you.

The Technician stares up at TWO FIGURES in MOPP BODYSUITS.

INT. INCINERATOR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Blackburn urgently changes into the Technician's labcoat.

BLACKBURN

There's a fine line between daring  
and foolhardy.

But no time to ponder as David grabs the Guard's weapon and gags the Technician. Manoeuvres him to the door.

DAVID

Tell him to show us the labs.

INT. HALLWAYS - WAREHOUSE - DAY

Low ceiling. Linoleum floors. Whitewashed limestone walls.

David prods the Technician - now masked head to toe in the bodysuit - Blackburn close behind. Dark corridors spiral out - each turn leads to uncertainty.

The Technician nods to a narrow corridor. David edges around -

A long row of jet-black doors. In dim light, David makes out -

■♦□ etched on the first door. On the subsequent doors - further coded symbols. As they reach the far end:

❖■❖ -- written in silver stencil. Blackburn pulls out Mikhail's message - it's the same symbol.

Suddenly VOICES echo. Coming closer in their direction. Blackburn jabs the Technician, who shakes his head -- no access for this door.

FOOTSTEPS audible - as David grabs the gun and pushes it into the Technician's temple. Crazed look. A nerve-wracking beat -

And the Technician pulls out a key card, swipes it. A BEEP as the door slides open and they disappear inside.

EXT. GROUNDS - SAME

Anna checks her watch. Glances to the warehouses.

The Guard's RADIO CRACKLES - he picks it up. Listens.

ANNA

*Is there a problem?*

As a CARGO TRUCK rumbles past - METAL-BARRED CONTAINER on its bed - THICK CANVAS covering - it heads toward the warehouse.

ANNA

*Nothing should be coming in.*

YOUNG GUARD

*The General has ordered it through.*

As it flashes past - Anna spies a HUMAN HAND grip the bars.

INT. LAB - SAME

David shoves the Technician down - shuts the door, turns to -

A row of TEN TALL GLASS CONTAINERS. Filled with eerie blue FORMALDEHYDE - and inside each of them:

The chilling sight of a DEAD MONKEY frozen in a death rictus - each more ravaged by disease than the one before it.

Blackburn drawn hypnotically to them. Moves along the line.

BLACKBURN

Look at the corporeal damage progression.

Blackburn spies a cluster of high magnification microscopes in a secure chamber - pathogen samples under review.

He hurries over, pressing his eye to a microscope. Then another. And another. Awed panic etched in his expression.

BLACKBURN

They've been combining numerous strands of bacterial diseases with the most contagious viruses - plague, smallpox, perhaps even ebola. They've reconfigured the entire cellular structure.

(awed)

It's our extinction.

DAVID

Gotta admire the Devil's ingenuity.

BEEP - someone codes in from outside. The Technician BANGS the door hard. David races over - levels him into silence --

As Blackburn rushes to the door - tangles with an entering lab-coated MAN. They tumble inside. Awkward flails -

Blackburn flips over the lab-coated Man, ready to swing -- but he STOPS - trying to compute as he stares down at --

TOKSIN. In the flesh. David grabs Toksin by the neck, yanks him to his feet.

TOKSIN

(nodding to David)

Simon, I assume this imprudent individual is responsible for your suicide mission.

BLACKBURN

(worked up)

You're working with Vernyov. That's the new project.

DAVID

(incredulous)

Do you know every fucking person in Russia?

BLACKBURN

Remember when I said Richard Toksin was one of a handful of people who could be capable of reconstituting the pathogen...

DAVID

I remember you saying he was dead.

TOKSIN

You have no idea what you've both done. Listen to me this time - or you'll compromise the entire operation.

Blighted by confusion, David tightens his grip when -

RING RING - amidst the clutter, a telephone sounds out loud.

TOKSIN

I need to answer that phone.

BLACKBURN

You helped them produce a stable weaponized strand.

TOKSIN

That's Vernyov calling. He's waiting. And if I don't answer, his men will come get me.

DAVID

I've got you now. And I need to know what operation you're talking about?

TOKSIN

The only official operation the American government is running here!

A second to let that sink in.

TOKSIN

Everything will be out of my control if I don't answer that phone. Your questions aren't my priority - our lives are.

The phone still RINGS LOUD - David and Toksin in a standoff -- David lets him go. Toksin steps forward - answering.

TOKSIN

Da... Khorosho, ya nakhozhus' na svoyem puti.

Toksin hangs up, starts for the door. David levels his gun.

TOKSIN

You shoot me and we are all dead.

DAVID

If I let you go, maybe it's just us who'll do the dying.

TOKSIN

Your choice. But make it now.

Blackburn takes a long look at Toksin. Gestures to David to lower the gun -- and Toksin quickly disappears.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - CARGO ENTRANCE - DAY

At the front of the warehouse, the cargo truck reverses into a large delivery bay. A conveyor belt leads inside.

FIFTEEN GUARDS stand ready. As the truck comes to a halt -

The guards move in unison, unlocking doors and pulling up the shutter. The first pair of guards step onto the truck --

And lead out a GREY-HAIRED MAN. One of TEN ELDERLY MEN cowering inside the truck. Eyes blinking at the daylight.

As the guards usher the men inside - a uniformed figure steps into the light - GENERAL LEONID VERNYOV.

GENERAL VERNYOV

(to the nearest guard)

*Prepare for the final test.*

INT. TOKSIN'S LAB - SAME

David listens hard at the door. Spins around to Blackburn.

DAVID  
You saw him at the bar?

BLACKBURN  
The mission, Anna, I was... I  
missed the connection at the time.

DAVID  
Smart guys can sure act dumb.  
(forcing calm)  
Tell me everything.

BLACKBURN  
He was an acclaimed virologist,  
working at the cutting edge of  
pathogenic hybrid models. Three  
years ago, after his son was killed  
in action, he left his post at  
Harvard. I had heard he'd died too.

DAVID  
He sure seems capable of resurrection.

EXT. GROUNDS - SAME

The Young Guard eyes Anna impatiently.

YOUNG GUARD  
*Your team's taking its time.*

The Guard picks up his radio.

ANNA  
*They are likely briefing the  
General. You don't want to disrupt.*

He hesitates, uncertain of protocol. He makes a decision:

YOUNG GUARD  
(into radio)  
*Report - come back.*

INT. TEST CHAMBER - DAY

A large empty hall - like a cramped locker room shower.

BEWILDERED FACES as the Elderly Men are led into the tiled  
hall. They shuffle in.

Observing the scene through a 2-way mirror -

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

VERNYOV looks on impassively. Flanked by three of his GUARDS.

Behind him, a pair of TECHNICIANS work in silence - preparing two silver BIOHAZARD AEROSOL CONTAINERS for insertion into a GAS DISPERSAL UNIT: a sophisticated sprinkler system.

GENERAL VERNYOV

*How long until we are ready?*

LEAD TECHNICIAN

*Three minutes.*

Vernyov glances back at the coordinated movements of his technical helpers. Furrowed brow as --

Toksin walks in - nod to his technicians - and he joins Vernyov. INSTANT INTENSE REACTION as he stares through the glass into the Test Chamber - trying to hide his reaction.

TOKSIN

*What is this?*

GENERAL VERNYOV

*As you requested - final test subjects.*

TOKSIN

*I wanted more chimpanzees.*

GENERAL VERNYOV

*I determined that our buyers would prefer evidence of the efficiency of our creation on a true subject.*

Toksin moves to the desk where the biohazard containers are being prepared.

TOKSIN

*I request we postpone testing for a day. I want to run the equations again, verify stability issues.*

GENERAL VERNYOV

*You've had months.*

TOKSIN

*Then one more day won't matter.*

The General turns - fixing Toksin with a watchful gaze.

GENERAL VERNYOV  
(in crisp English)  
The meeting is pending. No more  
delays. No more excuses. Prepare one  
for the test and one for travel.

Toksin holds Vernyov's glare. About to speak out when --

The bloodied WEASELY GUARD staggers into the room. Vernyov  
clocks him. Instantly moves to an ALARM and we SLAM TO:

INT. TOKSIN'S LAB - DAY

Where Blackburn and David react to the SCREECHING ALARM.

DAVID  
I should have shot him.

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS echo from outside through the ear-splitting  
alarm. David cracks the door open:

Down the corridor, ARMED GUARDS check inside every office.

TIGHT on David. Moment of decision - he can't vacillate now.

DAVID  
They'll connect a guy like you to  
Toksin in a second. Just stay put.

David palms Blackburn his gun - drags him to the back of the  
room, hiding him behind the glass containers - and David  
bolts out the door.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Two guards shove David inside - no one sees Toksin flinch.

David catches sight of the Test Chamber and its occupants.

GENERAL VERNYOV  
Who sent you?

DAVID  
I got lost on the tour.

GENERAL VERNYOV  
An American. Full of bravado and  
misguided loyalty to their nation.

DAVID  
I'm no more loyal to state orders than  
you. You're doing this for fun?

GENERAL VERNYOV

I only want your American dream -  
my fair share of the pie.

DAVID

There are smarter ways to make a buck.

GENERAL VERNYOV

My clients have sufficient money  
and significant imagination.

DAVID

But not the most reliable I'd guess.  
Let me take it off your hands.

GENERAL VERNYOV

I don't make deals with dead men.  
(to Toksin; in Russian)  
*Is it ready?*

Toksin looks to a technician - who slides one biohazard container into the dispersal unit - handing the other container to Vernyov. He smiles, gestures to his guards -

And they grab the technicians and Toksin roughly.

GENERAL VERNYOV

(to Toksin, with edge)

Perhaps this man is not here  
because of you. But perhaps he is.  
And your work for me is done now.

Vernyov marches out with the biohazard container case - as Toksin, David and the technicians are forcibly dragged into:

INT. TEST CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

David wrestles with the guard - but a GUT PUNCH floors him.

The gaggle of elderly men cower as these others are thrust into the shadowy space.

And the doors are BOLTED SHUT.

David stands, heart pounding, breath shallow. Searching the space. He stops - eyes locked up to the ceiling -

Where INDUSTRIAL SHOWERHEADS hang down.

INT. TOKSIN'S LAB - SAME

Blackburn crouches hidden in the corner of the room. His eyes drawn to Toksin's experiments. These simian victims are the harbingers of immense carnage.

He's lost in tumbling thoughts, a life spent on the edges of the action. Living in his head, where he's been for years.

And now he moves. Grabs a hazmat suit and slips out the door.

EXT. HALLWAYS - DAY

Face obscured, Blackburn creeps through twisting tunnels. Stairs up and down, doors all over - he pulls up short -

As down the corridor, General Vernyov and his entourage head for the cargo exit. Blackburn tracks them.

Meters away from them - Vernyov looks back --

Blackburn flattens against the wall. An eternal second before he hustles back into the depths of the warehouse.

EXT. GROUNDS - DAY

Two black UAZ-452 UTILITY TRUCKS drive away from the warehouse, heading for the exit gates - Vernyov in the lead, the remaining guards behind - speeding through the grounds -

Nobody spying the Young Guard knocked unconscious on the floor - and Anna nowhere in sight.

INT. TEST CHAMBER - DAY

David and Toksin examine the pipes and showerheads running along the ceiling.

TOKSIN

Each sprinkler has its own separate channel. They were designed to withstand internal influence of any kind.

DAVID

What about the central flow? There's gotta be an emergency shutdown?

TOKSIN

Nothing in here is supposed to survive a biohazard test.

As a DEEP THRUM fills the room - sounds of the PIPES above WARMING up - a groaning kaddish of imminent eradication.

David moves back to the bolted entrance - fingers claw at the smooth door for any way to open it as --

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Blackburn inches inside the empty room - a second to look around - take in the equipment, realize it's deserted -

SUDDENLY A FIST SMACKS against the test chamber window -

Blackburn pulls off his gasmask -- staring at David behind the glass -- mouth silently moving -- beseeching eyes.

Blackburn hustles to the control panels. Urgently tries to make sense of it and find a turn-off switch --

FISTS POUNDING away on the door -- seconds from gas release --

Blackburn turns to the door - padlocked shut - slams his foot on it, but it won't budge. Gestures for David to back away -

As he aims the gun at the lock. Hand shaking, finger tenses --

BLAM. BLAM. BLAM. Not very accurate - but the last shot obliterates the lock -- Blackburn pulls the chain free -

INT. TEST HALL - CONTINUOUS

David bursts out - grabbing Blackburn's gasmask -

DAVID  
Set triage up outside, go!

And David races back inside -- harries the elderly men out of the room --

Toksin helps others to evacuate the room - most stumble out -

But a TRIO of MEN stay frozen in the corner --

AS A FINE MIST starts to SPRAY down from the sprinklers --

David races to one man, using the gasmask to protect -- once the man's out and safe -- David dashes back in -- a daisy chain of endurance as David shepherds another out of the lab.

One last man is frozen static as the gas seeps down -

And Toksin carries him out, protecting the man's airways - but FULLY EXPOSING HIMSELF.

EXT. CARGO ENTRANCE - DAY

The pack of men lurch out into fresh air - coughing, heaving, gasping for gulps of clean air.

David leads his man out - both wheezing - and Blackburn scrambles over. Can't hide his concern.

BLACKBURN

We need to expel all the air in  
your lungs right away to be safe.

He reaches into David's pocket - pulls out the inhaler - deftly reassembles it to form an DIY intubator.

Blackburn lays the elderly man down - helps him clear out his lungs. As the man retches, Blackburn repeats the cleanse for David. Pain burning through every breath he takes.

Just then Toksin staggers out - his sacrifice evident as he lowers the last man to the ground.

A ROARING ENGINE draws near - the Jeep barrels into view, Anna sprinting out to them. Instinctively into medical mode.

ANNA

The local hospital has an emergency  
team. I will stay and coordinate.

Blackburn starts to shake his head --

ANNA

There is no time. Others will come.

BLACKBURN

I can protect you.  
(firm)  
Come with us.

ANNA

I can't. This country is still ours  
to rebuild. Now please go, before  
it's too late.  
(embracing him)  
You are not the man I left many  
years ago... You are the man I  
always hoped you could be.

She kisses Blackburn on the cheek. She extends her hand - David takes it. And she hurries off -

As Blackburn and David carry an ailing Toksin to the car.

EXT. BACKSTREETS - BEREZNIKI - DAY

As the Jeep drives out of town, SIRENS and FLASHING LIGHTS of AMBULANCES appear in the rearview - heading to the facility.

A horde of MILITARY VEHICLES in their wake.

INT. JEEP - DAY

David accelerates away fast - Blackburn examining a prostrate Toksin in the backseat. His skin starting to blister, eyes crimson red raw. Blackburn grimaces.

DAVID

We need to get somewhere safe and call Glastry. Tell him we lost Vernyov -

Toksin grabs David's wrist. Pulls him in close.

TOKSIN

(rasping)

I know a secure place.

Racked by a shuddering cough, Toksin whispers to David. Trust borne by Toksin's self-sacrifice - David listens.

EXT. MOSCOW - VESHKI DISTRICT - LATER

The Jeep pulls to a stop on a quiet street - empty grey buildings and crumbling graffitied walls.

They get out - Toksin's weight shouldered by David and Blackburn. They arrive at an apartment building - looks like it's been deserted for years.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Six stories high. They trudge up stairs to the top floor.

INT. SIXTH FLOOR - NIGHT

Only one door up here - David leads them toward it.

Toksin shakily pulls a chain from round his neck - TWO SPECIALLY CUT KEYS attached. David helps him slip both into dual locks - they turn them in sync -

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Pitch black - David takes a step inside --

As a SPOTLIGHT goes on - an American-made BREN TEN .40 pistol in their faces - as the SHADOW steps out of the dark -

SHADOW  
(American accent)  
Not a word.

His lupine glare takes the trio in - gestures them inside - bolts the locks shut - quick physical inspection of Toksin.

SHADOW  
How long was he exposed?

BLACKBURN  
One minute. Maybe more.

The man bears Toksin further inside - the others follow.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Shadow pushes the door open - two twin beds in a cramped space. Hung up all around the bed: photos of a young man in military uniform on graduation day - hugging Toksin.

Shadow sets Toksin down on one bed.

SHADOW  
(to Toksin; firm)  
Where is the meeting?  
(only getting moaning)  
Did Vernyov confirm a location?

Shadow shakes Toksin roughly. David yanks him free as --

Toksin RETCHES, dark bile spewing out of him. Shadow reels back - pulling a protective mask over Toksin.

From beneath the bed, he pulls out a medical kit - takes out a hypodermic needle and a vial - David grabs his arm.

SHADOW  
(terse)  
Morphine. It's all we can do.

He injects Toksin. As Toksin's body softens - Shadow pulls the others out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As the door shuts, David pins Shadow against the wall -

And the Shadow propels him away - expertly defusing his force - stripping his weapon - taking David down to the floor. Recognition and realization striking David hard.

DAVID  
You're with the Agency.

SHADOW  
And you're not anymore, Rangell.  
(resolute)  
You compromised my mission by going to Fedorov. I made a tough call.

DAVID  
You tried to kill us, save the euphemism.

SHADOW  
We've both studied the same CIA field manual. You know the rules. If the Russians caught you, Toksin could have been exposed.

He eyeballs the heavily breathing David.

SHADOW  
I had no choice.

Extends his hand to David.

SHADOW  
(introducing himself)  
George Welch. Under different circumstances, I'm a good guy.

DAVID  
Yeah, you seem like a real sweetheart.

WELCH [SHADOW]  
(helps David up)  
We can play nice and apportion blame later. But we only have 14 hours until the treaty signing.

WELCH strides down the hall. Opens a coded door.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

David enters - staring all around the room -

Multiple monitors; detailed maps of the region; blueprints of Vernyov's facility; covert photos of David, Blackburn, Anna – at every place they've been.

WELCH

Breathing a word of anything you are now told will qualify you as enemies of the American government.

(lets that linger)

Select intelligence operatives have suspected the existence of a Soviet biological weapon program for some years. Ever since the Svedlorsk incident in '79 - a suspected weaponized anthrax outbreak. But there was never sufficient proof to encroach upon Soviet central military research and deal with the diplomatic implications.

BLACKBURN

It's not "research" - General Vernyov has a usable pathogen.

WELCH

Vernyov hasn't been under Soviet government command for months. This whole country's on the brink of bankruptcy. You know what the biggest lesson the Soviet people have learned from the West so far? Monetize your assets.

DAVID

So Vernyov's a mercenary?

WELCH

He's just a salesman playing the market.

BLACKBURN

But he needed technical expertise to complete a stable bioweapon.

Welch nods. A lot to stomach.

WELCH

Toksin posed as a defector. His cover took a year for me to create.

BLACKBURN

He's a scientist, not an agent.

WELCH

He came to us. Richard volunteered after his son died. He wanted to serve his country. And he was only there to oversee Vernyov, keep me informed.

DAVID

(the bigger picture)

It's not really about Vernyov, is it? You planted Toksin to help catch your real target - the buyer.

WELCH

Genuine buyers needed genuine product. We needed the face to face meet to confirm their identity.

Blackburn erupts - can't believe what he's hearing.

BLACKBURN

You let Mikhail smuggle it out. Deadly, highly contagious, with no vaccine and no containment plan.

WELCH

He wasn't supposed to be stupid enough to inject himself.

BLACKBURN

You could have intercepted him.

WELCH

It was judged that we needed more pressure on Vernyov to speed up arrangements for meeting with the proposed buyers. Mikhail's flight aided that process.

DAVID

So you wanted Mikhail to reach London?

WELCH

Vernyov sensed external forces sniffing around and moved to meet his buyer sooner. It worked.

David stares around all this intel.

DAVID

This isn't the way to play if you truly care about who wins.

WELCH

If terrorists get this kind of weapon  
- the threat to global security would  
be unprecedented.

DAVID

You should have brought me in.

WELCH

I tried to get you to back off.

DAVID

(seething)

You tried to delete us.

WELCH

Would you have stopped if I'd asked  
nicely? An operation, I might add,  
with no proper oversight. I was  
instructed to keep the Vernyov  
situation between me and Toksin. By.  
Any. Means. Necessary.

DAVID

You keep all your secrets,  
violating the rights of our people,  
their people - and risk even bigger  
fuckups. You don't care who dies,  
as long as you win your phony wars.

WELCH

You jeopardized this operation by  
trying to be a hero, not me.

They square up - Blackburn pulls apart the charged pair.

BLACKBURN

Why aren't you tracking Vernyov now?

WELCH

Toksin was supposed to join Vernyov  
at the buyer meeting. The case  
wasn't supposed to leave his sight.

A beat.

BLACKBURN

Do you have any adrenaline in that kit?

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mouth and nose protected, Blackburn leans down to a static  
Toksin. His gloved hands gently turn Toksin towards him -

Contagion engulfs Toksin. He's barely conscious now - mumbling incoherently to himself. Only a matter of time.

Blackburn takes a small drug vial from the medical kit - and injects Toksin with a clean syringe.

A long beat - then a surge of energy rushes through Toksin - jolting him awake and cogent. He stares around all the photos of his son - tears streaking his bloodshot eyes:

BLACKBURN

Richard, who's Vernyov meeting with?

Toksin gets a moment of mindful clarity.

TOKSIN

He never said.

BLACKBURN

Do you have any idea where Vernyov's going?

TOKSIN

No, no... Just the sample run.

Toksin drifts off - Blackburn grips him firmly by the jaw, compels Toksin's fading attention.

TOKSIN

He brought a sample to show his buyer. Infected a local man they captured. That was three weeks ago.

BLACKBURN

Where was this? Richard?

TOKSIN

(hazy with pain, fading)  
By the sea... Malta.

This strikes David - a memory dislodging. About to move when:

Toksin seizes Blackburn's arm. Pulls him close, gestures under the bed. Blackburn leans down, pulling out a small black box.

Opening it to find a primitive GPS tracking device.

TOKSIN (CONT'D)

Find him.

As Toksin collapses in a fit of coughs - pushing Blackburn away. Gripping a photo of his son to his chest.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT

David puts the box on the table. Inspects it.

WELCH

A tracker, two mile range. Toksin must have managed to plant it on the case.

DAVID

It's useless unless you know approximately where it is...

David strides to the phone - Welch grabs it away.

WELCH

No information leaves here. We can't afford any more leaks.

DAVID

I think a rogue Soviet general attempting to sell biological weapons to an unidentified party on the eve of the biggest security treaty is worth the call.

Welch sizes it up - steps back as David dials -

INT. MONTES' OFFICE - NMID - ENGLAND - SAME

Montes is almost out the door after a long day - the PHONE RINGS just a second too soon for her to ignore.

MONTES

Medical Intelligence.

DAVID (V.O.)

I need you to access the case reports.

INTERCUT:

MONTES

David? Glastry told me to--

DAVID

--Please. Just log in.

Montes moves behind her desk to her computer.

DAVID

Remember that unidentified cause of death call two weeks ago?

Montes types in - eyes flick across results on the screen.

MONTES

Have a few possible cases.

DAVID

Look up Malta. Autopsy report said body found in water. Facial lesions and blisters.

MONTES

(reading off screen)

Port of Valetta. East coast. Body found burned in a small cove there. You advised me not to follow up.

DAVID

A lesson there for later. Put Glastry on.

MONTES

I can't - he's on his way to DC. You kept us in the dark so he's going to halt the treaty signing.

DAVID

Slow him down. And send me all the intel on Malta.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - LATER

David and Welch examine a detailed map of Malta laid out on the table. Marking water routes, flight paths, roads.

BLACKBURN

Isn't it time to call in more forces? Surround the whole area?

DAVID

Vernyov would sense wide coverage.

WELCH

We can't have him freak out. Not in possession of what he has.

DAVID

Can the Agency arrange transport?

(Welch nods)

Time to ramble and gamble.

EXT. MALTA - ESTABLISHING

We speed over a deep-azure seascape into lush, undulating terrain topped with olive bushes and palm trees.

**SUPER: Malta. Mediterranean Sea. 1400 GMT. December 8th**

Just green canopy and more cliffs on the horizon. A single narrow asphalt road curves through the mountains down to:

EXT. VALLETTA - DAY

A small town awash in pale limestone and gothic architecture. Medieval apartment blocks framed around a dusty central square. Narrow gashes for streets. Into this still quiet:

A SEDAN careens into view. Fishtailing wildly.

EXT./INT. STREETS & SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

David grips the wheel. Blackburn in the backseat. Welch rides shotgun - the black box in his lap. Green lined screen.

WELCH

Got nothing yet. This might be the wrong side of the island.

DAVID

Montes' intel says this coast.

BLACKBURN

What if Vernyov isn't even in Malta?

WELCH

Then it won't matter how good this proximity tracker is.

The Sedan powers onto a main throughway along the glistening water. Hope fading with every passing minute.

BLACKBURN

There's no signal, we're too late.

DAVID HONKS - skidding past cars and trucks at 100 mph as David blows through intersections - cresting over a hill -

The Sedan rumbles into a crowded bazaar -- DEMOLISHING wooden stalls and SCATTERING people --

BEEP - a faint red dot appears on the black box screen.

WELCH

Northwest of here.

The red dot FLASHES again as the box BEEPS LOUDER --

A fork in the road -- David BLASTS through a storefront to keep the direction -- gets another LOUDER BEEP. Drives FAST.

EXT. MARSAMXETT HARBOR - MINUTES LATER

Welch checks the box as David scans a bustling marina -- So many tightly compact buildings. So many PEOPLE.

BLACKBURN  
We've just got a smaller haystack now.

David glances around - like a bloodhound, he stalks toward:

EXT. CITADEL - DAY

An old Baroque fort in serious disrepair - stain-glass windows smashed in, terra-cotta walls chipped away. It sits on a jut of land in the Mediterranean Sea, water on all sides.

David reaches a barricaded gate. Single visible entrance.

DAVID  
I may not be in the CIA any more,  
but this place looks as good as any  
for a handover.

Welch scans to the citadel grounds - numerous boarded up buildings, hiding places and gaping windows abounding.

WELCH  
You may be right. But we have no exit plan, no interior schematics, no surveillance. There could be a shooter in any window. We need to wait.

David peers over the sea wall. Waves CRASH against it.

DAVID  
When no better options present themselves, you're entitled to follow an uncertain course of action. It's in the field manual.  
(off Welch's look)  
I'll go around. You hold strong.

Welch nods as David hands Blackburn a SIG SAUER handgun.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Shoot anyone who comes this way.

BLACKBURN

You're both insane. But if that pathogen changes hands, everything's cooked anyway.

And with that David DIVES --

Over the sea wall and PLUNGES into the murky water below.

EXT. CITADEL - WATER - DAY

David swims powerfully against the tide. Current eddying around jagged rocks. He's sucking in water - chest heaving -

And he reaches the far side -- pulls himself up to the boat hatch. Through a rusted metal grate David spies:

TWO SMALL WATERCRAFTS. Tethered inside the fortress. Twenty foot high barrier between David and getting inside -

So David takes a deep breath and DIVES DEEP --

Following the line of the metal grate underwater --

Discovers a BENT BACK SECTION in the metal. Tries to squeeze in - getting stuck as water crashes overhead -

Out of air, David forces every bit of strength into TWISTING the section open - finally SQUIRMING through. Bolts to the surface - GASPING. No time to rest as he springs up and into:

INT. CITADEL - DAY

Spears of light crisscross over a large dusty space. Pigeons and seagulls have laced this place with shit and debris.

David silently powers up a staircase onto a long hallway.

Inching forward - the sound of TINNY VOICES radiates. Gun out, he tracks their origin. Makes his way towards:

INT. ARTILLERY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Oak and silver panelled chamber. Cannons long since removed.

David hugs a wall - voices getting LOUDER with each step.

He scours the room - finds a concealed vantage point. David inches over, curves cautiously round and sees --

VERNYOV. In the center of a small group of ARMED GUARDS. And in heated discussion with Vernyov, only his back visible -

THE BUYER. David gets a fleeting look at him - as Vernyov brings forward the aluminum pathogen container.

IT'S GOING DOWN RIGHT NOW. David raises his gun, safety off. A step forward - and his foot CRUNCHES GRAVEL -

SPOOKING VERNYOV'S GUARDS! In a beat David aims - but before he can pull the trigger -

BLAM BLAM BLAM - shots erupt in a DEAFENING ECHO - the Buyer goes down in a heap. Vernyov and his men in total panic --

David desperately tries to locate the unseen SHOOTER -

BLAM. BLAM. Frantic chaos as VERNYOV'S MEN spray bullets, turning limestone into confetti - but they're ALL TAKEN OUT - killed by precision shooting from high above -

As Vernyov flees out a side exit - David scrambles after.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

David in urgent pursuit - locking onto Vernyov tearing into:

INT. ATRIUM - CONTINUOUS

David sprints after Vernyov into a cavernous space. Light creeps in from the bulwarks. Slits of the sea are visible.

Vernyov catapults forward - David aims - and FIRES two warning shots - forcing Vernyov to stop.

DAVID

Put the case and gun on the ground!

Vernyov turns round to face David. Tosses his gun down.

VERNYOV

We can make a deal. If you protect me.

David paces closer to Vernyov, cautious steps.

VERNYOV (CONT'D)

A man like me, with my knowledge,  
would be very valuable to your side.

DAVID

Shut up and put the case down NOW!

David moves into a shaft of light. Vernyov lowers the case -  
AND A BULLET WHIZZES MILLIMETERS PAST VERNYOV'S HEAD --

As a FIGURE moves into the light - David spins on a dime and  
FIRES TWICE - dropping the SHOOTER in the entryway. Cold.

David rushes over - kicking a DRAGUNOV .442 sniper rifle away -  
the man bleeding hard, arm torn open by David's bullets.

VERNYOV  
Just kill him.

David points his gun at Vernyov who's staggered to his feet.  
Turning back to the Shooter, David notices his bloodied arm -  
a SPETSNAZ [RUSSIAN SPECIAL FORCES] tattoo visible.

DAVID  
You're Russian government.

SHOOTER  
(in thick Russian accent)  
We both are here for same reason.

VERNYOV  
(re: Shooter)  
This man is the very infection your  
people have been fighting for decades.

SHOOTER  
Our leader wants this crazy man destroyed.

VERNYOV  
(to David, edgy)  
You can have the case. You think  
it's the only one? You think I'm the  
only one? Your people need me to  
stop a tide. I know all the rats.

David's caught between them - unsure who to trust - Vernyov  
edging closer - a whisper away from his own gun.

VERNYOV (CONT'D)  
Let's start by taking this one out.

Vernyov springs for his gun - levels it at the Shooter --

BLAM. BLAM. BLAM. BLAM. David unloads on Vernyov - as the  
Shooter pulls a concealed pistol. Both men firing as one -

And Vernyov drops, crumples in a pool of crimson.

Shooter struggles to his feet - and FIRES two more shots into  
Vernyov. Spits at his lifeless body -

As WELCH and BLACKBURN scramble inside - guns raised -  
Shooter instantly raising his weapon too --

DAVID  
Don't shoot! Everybody.

Cagey looks all around - guns still raised. Welch spies Vernyov's lifeless body.

DAVID  
Let's not light more fires.

David picks up the case - all eyes on him.

SHOOTER  
That must be returned to us.

WELCH  
The CIA's gonna disagree.

DAVID  
The case was destroyed in the firefight.  
That's what we're going to say.

SHOOTER  
My orders are to retain it.

BLACKBURN  
Enough! What scientist in any country  
wouldn't give to have that pathogen  
under their microscope. But men can't  
be trusted with this power.

(takes the case off David)  
And I will make sure it is properly  
disposed of at a UN facility.

Solemn looks exchanged - they're just people right now,  
finally seeing the right way forward. David faces Shooter.

DAVID  
Less is the only way forward.  
Weapon by weapon. Tell your bosses.

Shooter nods warily, backs away - slipping out the room.

DAVID  
There's one last thing.

INT. ARTILLERY ROOM - DAY

Blackburn stays in the corner, dead guards' bodies all around - as David and Welch lean over the dead body of the BUYER. David reaches into his jacket - pulling out a wallet.

He flicks through - staring down the Arabic text and flag-embossed ID of a SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE AGENT.

And Welch pockets it. Fixes David with rigid conviction.

WELCH  
You'll say nothing about this.

DAVID  
The ID alone is enough to keep the CIA busy through another Cold War.

WELCH  
That's not important. What's really important is that you never saw anything. The buyer, this ID - it doesn't exist.

DAVID  
Deal. It's not my war anymore.

David turns to Blackburn.

BLACKBURN  
It's past ten am in Washington.

DAVID  
They're signing within the hour.  
(to Welch)  
Better make the call to your boss.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - WASHINGTON DC - ESTABLISHING

A crisp winter's day - fresh snow scattered all over.

**SUPER: Washington DC. 1030 EST. December 8th 1987.**

EXT. WHITE HOUSE SECURITY ENTRANCE - DAY

A busy line of STAFF and GUESTS pass through the rigmarole of heightened security screenings. Midway down the line -

GLASTRY checks his watch, subtle betrayal of his nervy angst.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN - DAY

A throng of journalists huddle in the cold. Preparations underway for a major press conference announcing the signing of the disarmament treaty. Watching this from inside -

INT. HALLWAY - WHITE HOUSE EAST WING - DAY

Glastry, pacing alone in a quiet corridor. Adjusting his tie when a WHITE HOUSE ASSISTANT (20s) approaches.

ASSISTANT

Mr. Glastry? You've asked for a meeting with Secretary Shultz?

GLASTRY

I need five minutes.

ASSISTANT

He's exceptionally busy, the Soviet delegation are on their way -

GLASTRY

He'll want to hear from me.

Granite force in Glastry's tone impacts the Assistant. Gestures for Glastry to follow him.

Moving into the East Wing warren, the Assistant stops outside a thick wooden door. Glastry opens it, stepping inside:

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

And coming face-to-face with Matthew Lyton.

LYTON

Thanks Tom, I've got it from here.

The Assistant shuts the door behind him. Glastry glowers.

GLASTRY

What the hell are you doing?

LYTON

Stopping you from making a fool of yourself. Your boy Rangell's been trying to reach you.

(Glastry stiffens)

It seems he's lent a hand cleaning up one of my operations.

GLASTRY

We should be talking to the Secretary of State.

LYTON

The treaty's going ahead.

GLASTRY

When the Soviets might have been cheating on  
bioweapons conventions for years?

LYTON

Speculation. But Reagan needs to  
proceed. The world needs this.

GLASTRY

Trust today and risk big tomorrow.

LYTON

Probably. But right now we smile and  
see history being made.

He exits. Glastry hovers. Shake of the head as we FADE TO:

EXT. 24 LAFFERTY STREET - ENGLAND - TWO DAYS LATER

David walks towards the house. Stepping over strewn toys, he  
pulls out a full envelope. He strides past the mailbox -

And knocks on the door. He waits for what feels an eternity -

Then it opens. The woman we've glimpsed before, LUKE'S WIDOW,  
stares out at David. A moment as she contemplates -

Before she embraces him deeply. We feel his relief.

LUKE'S WIDOW

It's good to see you, David.

David offers her the envelope. She takes it.

DAVID

I'm leaving today. It won't be  
goodbye.

LUKE'S WIDOW

No. Of course not.

The noise of raucous CHILDREN rolls out from behind her.

LUKE'S WIDOW

Have you got a few minutes? The  
kids would love to see you.

David takes a step inside - a step away from burden of guilt.

DAVID

I'd like that. Been too long.

EXT. HEATHROW AIRPORT - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Crisp December skies filled with jets coming and going.

INT. BAR - INTERNATIONAL DEPARTURES - DAY

Blackburn nurses a drink. Watches a BLARING TV showing footage of Reagan speaking side by side with Gorbachev.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

President Reagan's comments marking the treaty signed a few days ago. It was many years in the making, and it seems to represent a major step forward in warming the Cold War.

Blackburn reaches for a bowl of peanuts -

DAVID (O.S.)

Given the assorted bacteria in those, I'd stick to the alcohol.

David warmly clasps Blackburn's hand. Cora by his side.

BLACKBURN

You must be the infinitely tolerant Cora.

CORA

You have no idea. But we're heading home for the holidays, I'm happy.

BLACKBURN

You wouldn't want your son born in this place.

CORA

He'll be a wanderer like his dad.

BLACKBURN

Have you got a name yet? David Junior has a certain ring to it.

CORA

Think we're going to call him Luke.

(kissing David)

See you at the gate. It was very nice to meet you, Simon.

She leaves them.

DAVID

Found anyone stupid enough to hire you yet?

BLACKBURN

I've made a few calls. Thinking  
about a nice quiet teaching job.

DAVID

I'm sure the government or the UN  
will come calling soon enough. We  
only stopped the one breach.

BLACKBURN

You think our governments would listen?

DAVID

Not without a push. The world needs  
pain in the asses like you on this.

He reaches into his bag - hands Blackburn a wrapped box.

BLACKBURN

Another mysterious package?

DAVID

It's infectious, that's for sure.

They trade a final look. And with that, David walks away.  
Joining Cora by the departure gate. They link hands.

Blackburn tears the package open, stares at a vinyl of  
Dylan's "New Morning". A wry smile - as Dylan's melodious  
track plays and we FADE OUT.

SUPER:

*The true extent of the Soviet biological weapons program was  
not discovered until after the collapse of the Soviet Union.*

*It took revelations from Russian President Boris Yeltsin to  
President George H.W. Bush for the truth to begin to emerge.*

*Today, the threat from an engineered biological weapons  
attacks remains. It should not be ignored...*