

VIOLENCE OF ACTION

original screenplay

by

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One
Jay Baker
CAA

Suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it
finds a meaning, such as the meaning of a sacrifice.
- Victor Frankl

I was me, but now he's gone.
- J.H.

FADE UP ON

A DARK GRAY, WHITE CAPPED OCEAN

Snow flurries from the foggy sky. Gray clouds hang low over an infinite ocean. And we're in the middle of it, bobbing in the white capped swells, as --

We hear a pounding heartbeat, rhythmic breathing, arms cutting through the surf. We rise with the swells and see the shore a half mile away. There it is...and now it's gone again. Madness. A wave bears down on us, no choice but to go under, into the darkness, as --

FLASH TO

INT. DIVE TATTOO PARLOR - NIGHT

A sweaty ARTIST grinds a tattoo needle into a raw shoulder. The Artist's work obscured by blood, as --

An All American BOY, 14, crew cut, sits in the tattoo chair. His eyes filled with a preternatural intensity. He betrays no signs of pain.

He stares at the wall above him, every inch covered with photos of Soldiers showing off their fresh Unit tattoos, American flags, Eagles, etc. Going back decades, as --

A hard faced MAN, 35, dressed in sweat soaked Army BDUs, sits in the waiting area, engrossed in a car magazine.

The Artist grinds on the Boy's arm. Finally, he wipes the blood away, revealing a 4" by 3" American flag tattoo. Huge on the Boy's shoulder. The fresh blood seeps into the flag and drips down his arm. The Artist wipes the blood off again, motions "finished" to the Boy.

The Boy pulls a birthday card from his back pocket. It reads: **"Happy Birthday. Dad."** That's it. A cold \$20 bill lies inside. The Boy hands the \$20 to the Artist.

The Boy checks his tattoo in the mirror. Stares at the raw skin, now branded with an American flag. He sees the Man's reflection in the mirror behind him. The Man's emotionless eyes look over the Boy's tattoo --

MAN

You'll grow into it.

The Artist grabs his old camera and motions the Man and Boy together. The Man takes off his shirt.

Dog tags dangle over his scared, powerful torso. Special Forces Unit tattoos, and an American flag branded on his shoulder. Same size, same place as the Boy's.

The Man and the Boy stand side by side, each holding out his arm. Camera flashes on this image and a Polaroid spits out. The Artist hands it to the Man. The Man hands it to the Boy without even looking at it.

Artist takes a second Polaroid, then tacks it up on the wall. HOLD on the PHOTO as the image of the Man and Boy becomes clearer and clearer and clearer, until they are just two more Men on this wall of hundreds, as --

IN THE OCEAN

The Man swims towards shore. Fighting through the swells. Heartbeat racing. Labored breaths. Swimming for his life as --

A DESOLATE BEACH AT DAWN

The Man emerges from the whitewash in nothing but a pair of shorts. His coughing breaths vapor. His body steams. His eyes scan the beach tactically, as --

He staggers onto the beach. The frigid air flares the thick red scar tissue all over his body. A history of brutality carved on his powerful torso. He rubs a raw, five inch scar on his left knee. Forcing circulation.

A Unit tattoo of a devil skull on his shoulder with the words **Semper Fratres - ODA 721** around it.

A weathered American flag tattoo on his other shoulder. It's colors faded with age, a scar running through it, and now stretched over taught muscle, but it's unmistakable, the Boy is now a Man.

The Man trudges into the snowy dunegrass and drops to his knees. Coughing. He spits blood, then reaches into the grass and pulls out a beaten to shit tactical backpack. Unzips it, "JAMES REED" marked on the inside, as --

He removes running shoes from the bag. Slips them on. Pulls out a running watch and wipes the frost covered screen -- stopwatch reads 3 hours 32 minutes and counting... He straps it onto his wrist.

He pulls on a tattered sweatshirt, flips the hood over his head, and starts running down the beach. Trudging through the sand, battling his painful limp. His eyes resolute, as if he's just summoned another level of strength and will. He runs hard, disappearing into the thick, suffocating fog, as --

EXT. BLIGHTED TOWN STREET - DAWN

James' POV as he runs through a blighted town. His eyes on a constant tactical scan of the empty street. Garbage in the gutter. Shuttered stores, pawn shops, convenience stores, check cashing joints, fast food restaurants. James runs past all this and towards a --

CITY PARK

Surrounded by a chain link fence. Signs read **PARK CLOSED** and **KEEP OUT**. Rats scatter into the darkness as James approaches. Inside the park, a rusty jungle gym, and an overgrown field.

James runs hard. Face shadowed within his hood. We move closer and closer into his eyes, as we --

FLASH TO

Jarring sunlight eclipsed by the CLOSE UP of a Woman's face (BRIANNE, 25) looking right into camera. Beautiful. Angelic. Staring down at us. Her hair falls into our POV, as --

James' scared hand reaches up into frame, through her cascading hair, and caresses her face. She closes her eyes and leans into his touch, as we --

PULL BACK TO REVEAL they're lying on that very field, except the park is in full bloom. Their hands clasp tightly as they kiss, and we go --

BACK TO

James running. Beaming lights illuminate a car dealership ahead. "Sale" banners and deflated balloons whip in the wind above a lot full of gleaming, unsold cars as --

James stares at the massive American flag that towers over the dealership. As it streams in the wind he notices the flip side of the flag is a dollar bill, and on it reads --

***We Proudly Support Our Troops.
Bad Credit. No Credit. No Problem!
We will finance YOU!***

Off the AMERICAN FLAG DOLLAR BILL --

FLASH TO

A blackened, stitched up American flag hanging on a cement wall. As we pull back, we're in a --

READY ROOM

James and four COMMANDOS gear up in front of plywood lockers. The air thick with adrenaline. Sweat beads on their necks and faces as they strap on body armor and tactical vests. A-POS, O-POS, marked on their boots, shoulders, legs.

Maps, recon photos, and tactical diagrams spread out on a table. Helicopter rotors growl in the distance, as --

BACK TO

James running past weary PROTESTERS camped in front of a HOTEL. They're holding signs asking for "**healthcare**" and "**living wages**". Police rails keep them penned in. A very pregnant WOMAN holds up a sign that says "**we want fairness - stop corporate greed!**", as --

FLASH TO

A LAPTOP SCREEN. Skype. Brianne in a hospital bed, a newborn BABY in her arms. The image freezes and pixelates, then comes back to life. REVERSE to reveal we are in --

ANOTHER READY ROOM

James stares at the computer screen. Commandos gear up behind him, as --

Brianne tilts the screen so James can get a better look at his newborn SON. James transfixed by this picture of pure innocence, as --

The Commandos raise cans of Red Bull and sing to James and Brianne, a ritual they've perfected. These men brothers, as --

MIKE, 30, strong, with a leader's bearing, puts his arm around James and kisses the camera. Brianne laughs, as --

A sharp voice calls from outside. The Commandos' faces instantly shift to mission mode. James kisses his palm, touches the screen, and closes the laptop, as --

FLASH TO

James, Brianne, and their SON (JACK, 3) wait outside a small starter house. A "**For Sale**" sign on the lawn. They look at the home with wide eyed enthusiasm. *Are we really doing this?* They hold hands as a REALTOR leads them into the house, and as they walk in --

A FLASH/BANG EXPLOSION

Green NIGHT VISION POV. James and the Team burst into a home. Women and Children scream. Dogs bark. Chaos. James' POV as he moves through the smoke filled house. His weapon's laser sight beams through the smoke, as --

A Woman charges James with a butcher's knife. He double taps her. She drops. James steps over her and continues forward --

He arrives at a door. Kicks it open. Inside an Arab Man cowers in the corner, hiding among laundry. James checks his face against a photo on his wrist. Match.

James flex cuffs the Man and drags him out by his collar. The Man sees the Woman bleeding out on the floor, screams, as --

A BOY rushes out of the shadows and clutches the Man's leg. James tears the Boy off. Pushes him aside. But the Boy comes back. Won't let go. A Teammate grabs the crying Boy. Pulls him away. The Boy's screams echo, as we --

FLASH TO

BRIGHT SUNLIGHT SHIMMERING ON A LAKE. A deep blue sky above. An open camper parked on the lake's edge, as --

IN THE LAKE

James swims with a rope tied around his torso, pulling Jack, now 5, and Brianne in a rowboat. Jack's eyes thrilled as he watches his father swim. Brianne videoing the whole thing --

James swims back to the boat. Unties the rope. And holds his hands out for Jack. Jack hesitant. Scared. But Brianne encourages him and he climbs over the side of the boat and into his father's arms in the water.

Jack wraps his arms around James' neck and James swims them around. And now it's time for Jack to learn to swim. He clutches James' neck. Afraid to try.

The faith in James' eyes gives Jack strength. James holds him in the water. Ready? Jack nods a reluctant "yes", as --

James lets him go. Jack kicks and paddles. Panicked. But all of a sudden he's doing it. Treading water. Swimming. And the biggest, brightest smile blooms on Jack's face. He laughs, the purest most beautiful laugh, as --

James and Brianne lock eyes. Our son. A perfect day, as we --

FLASH TO

A FIREFIGHT. Chaos. Machine gun fire and tracers from every direction. Children crying. James and his Team are pinned behind a wall. A hooded PRISONER lies flex cuffed next to them, as --

A Blackhawk lands in a clearing about 50 yards away. Garbage and sand swirls everywhere, as --

The Team begins a tactical leapfrog towards the helo. Covering each other as they move, as --

James puts the Prisoner over his shoulder and runs. Bullets rip into the ground all around them. A bullet strikes James in his right thigh. His right leg gives out and all the weight collapses James' left knee. CRACK. James' knee buckles and they crash to the ground. Machine gun fire bearing down on them --

The Prisoner's hood has come off in the fall. His eyes terrified. He prays aloud. And in this chaotic madness, he even looks to James for help --

James lifts the Prisoner and -- pure adrenaline now -- limp/runs him into the Blackhawk, as --

A SMALL HOSPITAL ROOM

Blood stained white sheets. James in a hospital bed, his arms hooked to IV's. He lifts the bloody sheet and sees a scabbed, stapled, five inch incision wound on his knee. Protruding screws attached to steel rods. Brutal, as --

EXT. JAMES AND BRIANNE'S HOME - DAY

James struggles to get out of the car with a cane. Frustration at his body's betrayal, as --

Jack, 7, runs into James' arms. The physical contact and affection seems to jar James.

James has trouble stepping onto the porch. Brianne helps him but he insists on doing it himself, as --

INT. JAMES AND BRIANNE'S HOUSE - DAY

James limps into the house. Brianne shows him the new paint, the new couch, proud of the perfect little home she's made for them. James smiles but it's clear from his eyes that he's disconnected, withdrawn, as --

INT. MEDICAL REVIEW ROOM

James stands at attention. A thick knee brace over his uniform. "**Convalescent Leave**" stamped onto his chart. James salutes and exits, doing his best to hide his limp.

CUT TO

James repping on a leg extension machine. His scar pulls and stretches as he reps to failure. He stands. Drenched in sweat. Dizzy. Then starts jumping up onto a 3 foot bench. Up and down. Up and down. Pain burning in his eyes, as --

CUT TO

James and his Unit running a MUDDY OBSTACLE COURSE. He falls behind. Can't keep up. His knee clicking. The Unit farther and farther away, as --

FLASH TO

James and the Unit running together along a beach at dawn. Morning PT. All these Soldiers just scary strong and determined. They sprint the last hundred yards. Racing. James guts his way to the win, as --

BACK TO

THE MUDDY OBSTACLE COURSE

The Unit disappears into the forest. James steels himself and sprints desperately after them. But the clicking, the pain so brutal -- heartbeat racing -- his POV gets blurry, and then it goes to black, as --

A BLACK SCREEN

James's heartbeat races, as --

SOFT MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Wake up. Wake up.

James shoots up in bed. A hand on his arm. He GRABS it -- twists it back -- pure instinct here, as --

Jack SCREAMS. James clutching his arm. James snaps out of it and lets go --

JAMES
I'm sorry. I'm sorry --

But Jack's already in Brianne's arms. Terrified. James instinctively moves towards Jack to console him. But Jack cries out in fear. Brianne looks at his bruised arm.

James stands contrite. Frozen. No idea what to do. Brianne motions "I got this." James exits, and as he walks out --

BRIANNE (O.S.)
You can never touch Daddy when he's sleeping.

JACK (O.S.)
But I had a bad dream.

BRIANNE (O.S.)
Then you wake me up, OK?

A BLACK SCREEN

We hear a door handle click open and LIGHT beams into --

JAMES AND BRIANNE'S GARAGE

Brianne stands in the doorway and sees James lying on the cement floor. His face bearded, hair longer, time has passed. He looks at her. Their eyes meet but there's nothing left to say. James rests his head back on the cold floor, as --

JACK (O.S.)
Why does Daddy sleep on the floor?

BRIANNE (O.S.)
He's resting his back.

Brianne closes the door, leaving James in the darkness.

JACK (O.S.)
Daddy scares me.

BACK TO

James running harder now. As if trying to outrun these memories. James and Brianne's home up ahead.

James runs towards their home. Sprinting now. Heart pounding. There's the finish line. The house 40 yards away... 30... 20... 10... But he doesn't stop --

He continues past the house, a "**BANK OWNED**" sign stabbed into the dead lawn, as --

FLASH TO

James stands beside an SUV packed with boxes. He watches Jack sleep on the back seat through the window.

James catches his reflection in the SUV's window. His worn tattered Army Unit t-shirt, his hard face, creased brow, scars, tattoos, all a brutal juxtaposition to the innocent child mirrored in his reflection. James steps back from his reflection. He turns and sees --

Brianne watching him. She looks tired. The years of stress have beaten down her fresh faced optimism. And they just stand there. That long painful silence. The "see you soon" that she fears means "goodbye" --

Brianne kisses James and gets into the SUV. She makes sure Jack is strapped in. Then drives away.

James watches the SUV disappear down the road. He stands alone on the dark, suburban street. Looks at their small house and the camper trailer on blocks in the driveway.

He hits his stopwatch and starts running the other way. His knee clicking, pain in every step, but a firm resolution in his eyes, as --

BACK TO

James' eyes today. Darker and even more intense. James runs down a country road. Dense forest on both sides. He turns into the woods --

EXT. WOODS - DAY

James runs along an overgrown dirt path. Deeper into the woods. Ahead we see the camper trailer, now camo painted. James stops. Clicks his stopwatch. Done.

INT. JAMES' CAMPER TRAILER - DAY

Ascetic. Spartan. A folding card table and a chair in the kitchen area. A space heater and a pile of books next to a cot. A duffel bag of clothes. In the corner, an oxygen sleep tent lies on the floor.

Next to the sink, plastic utensils: one knife, one fork, one spoon. Three stacked cases of MREs. Pure function.

James reaches for a clipboard hanging on the door and notes his time for the day. Notice 4 months of consecutive days and times. Faster every day.

James opens the fridge. Inside are rows of pre-made drinks. He pulls out a bottle of thick clear liquid. On the bottle is written XR-349. He drinks the fluid.

James opens a cabinet revealing a medical kit and dozens of vials of prescription pills and vitamins. He takes a fistful of pills and chases them with distilled water.

He grabs a pre-loaded syringe, lifts a bit of skin off his abs and injects himself.

He removes another syringe from a separate container. Then injects it directly into the scar on his knee. He drops both syringes into a red medical waste box.

He sits on the cot and velcros his knee with an electro-stim sock. He turns the machine on and adjusts the current. His quad twitches from the current. He tears open an MRE and eats, as we --

CUT TO

James turning the oxygen pump on. Air fills the sleeping bag/tent. He gets inside. Zips it shut. Goodnight.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A motorcycle roars down the road, passing a sign:

FORT BRAGG - HOME OF THE AIRBORNE AND SPECIAL FORCES

EXT. FORT BRAGG SPECIAL FORCES ANNEX - DAY

Simple barracks and trailers surround a flagpole. The American flag presides in the deep gray sky. James gets off his motorcycle. The place almost deserted.

INT. UNIT LOCKER ROOM - DAY

James enters the empty locker room. A whiteboard on the wall reads: **GONE HUNTING! Back in 6 months**. A smiling devil skull drawn underneath.

James opens his locker and changes into his BDUs. A photo of Brianne and James taped inside the locker. Loving smiles on their faces. He closes the locker. His eyes fall on a sign above the doorway: --

*I will always place the mission first
I will never accept defeat
I will never quit
I will never leave a fallen comrade*

James slaps the sign as he exits, and we

CUT TO

TESTING SEQUENCE

JAMES SPRINTS ON A TREADMILL. A VO2 mask strapped to his face. His eyes burning with determination. Unstoppable.

CUT TO

JAMES PERFORMING RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES FOR DOCTORS. Doctors examine James' knee and shoulder. The Doctors flip through images of James' knee on an ipad, then --

- An MRI of a shoulder
- An MRI of a hand
- MRIs of his knees
- An MRI of James' chest. Scar tissue visible on the lung.

James watches the Doctors swipe through photos of his injuries. Every scar a story and here they are in brutal, vivid color.

DOCTOR
Any pain?

JAMES
No, sir.

INT. REVIEW BOARD TRAILER - DAY

James stands at attention in front of CAPTAIN, PSYCHIATRIST, Doctor, and a stern, young faced COMMANDING OFFICER, all sitting behind a table.

CAPTAIN
Sgt. Reed, I'd like to introduce
you to our new C.O. Commander
Roberts.

James shoots him a firm salute. C.O. nods but his eyes never leave James' file, as if all that matters is on screen.

From James' POV we see what he's looking at: medals, letters of commendation, operational photos, lists of tours, dozens of X-rays and medical reports. Many of the documents heavily redacted, marked "classified" --

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
Great job with the rehab.

JAMES
Thank you, sir.

DOCTOR
The repaired knee has no cartilage.
It's bone on bone. And your lung
precludes any high altitude or
underwater operations.

JAMES
I've been operational with that
lung for 5 years, sir. I'm good to
go.

CAPTAIN
The board flagged your financials.
The bankruptcy. The house.

JAMES
I was guided through that situation
by Command, sir.

CAPTAIN
Whatever happened, your tier one
clearance can't be extended and
without that, you're done with the
Unit.

Panic in James' eyes. A life being taken from him --

JAMES
I'll do whatever is necessary to
rectify the situation, sir.

COMMANDING OFFICER
Your bloodwork came back flagged
with high levels of synthetic HGH.

James looks to Captain. Captain avoids his eyes --

JAMES
I was always encouraged to do
whatever necessary to get back
online, sir.

COMMANDING OFFICER
 I have no idea what your previous
 C.O. encouraged nor do I care. I
 will not accept that in my Unit.
 (then)
 Out of respect for your years of
 service, we will not include the
 bloodwork in your discharge.
 Dismissed.

COMMANDING OFFICER closes James' file. James' heart just
 ripped out with the swipe of a pen. James stands frozen --

COMMANDING OFFICER(CONT'D)
Dismissed. Send the next one in.

Commanding Officer grabs another file from his stack --

EXT. REVIEW BOARD TRAILER - DAY

James steps out of the trailer. Spun. He notices other
 SOLDIERS waiting for their turn at review. They greet James
 but it's all muffled and distant, as --

EXT. FORT BRAGG SPECIAL FORCES ANNEX - DAY

James storms to his motorcycle, as --

CAPTAIN (O.S.)
James.

Captain approaches James and all military formalities go out
 the door now, as --

JAMES
 What the fuck?! They know who we
 are. What we do. They made us.

CAPTAIN
 We've been at this tempo for 12
 years. With the suicides. The PTSD.
 The cutbacks. They're cleaning
 house. Washing out any vets with
 problems. Your injuries, financials
 made their job easy. New C.O.
 agreed to let you finish out your
 20. Just not in the Unit.

JAMES
 Doing what?

CAPTAIN
 Light duty.
 (off James' disbelief)
 Fuck 'em.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
 With your rep every private's gonna
 be hitting on you the second you
 walk off this base. And if you need
 any help --

JAMES
 You want to help me? Get me back
 where I belong. With the Unit.
 Downrange.

CAPTAIN
 That's not gonna happen. I'm sorry.

INT. MILITARY OUTPROCESSING OFFICES - DAY

James sits across from a fresh, overfed SOLDIER working a
 computer --

FRESH SOLDIER
 A lot of you guys coming through
 here lately.

James silent --

FRESH SOLDIER (CONT'D)
 I petitioned for SF. Any advice?

James silent --

FRESH SOLDIER (CONT'D)
 You going private? Guys like you
 make serious bank out there.

James silent --

FRESH SOLDIER (CONT'D (CONT'D))
 Per your request all of your
 pension and benefits will be
 directed to your wife Brianne, at
 this address here in Texas.

He shows James the printout for confirmation. James signs --

FRESH SOLDIER (CONT'D)
 Congratulations. You're officially
 a civilian.

Fresh Soldier hands James a folder of documents and a
 pamphlet, *"Adjusting to Civilian Life"*, as --

EXT. BASE PARADE GROUND - DUSK

James walks across the parade ground in his civilian clothes,
 a backpack of gear over his shoulder, oblivious to the
 pelting rain.

A platoon of hungry eyed, young SOLDIERS run towards him. James nods in respect, but they don't notice him.

The base's loudspeakers come to life as "RETREAT" plays. Two Soldiers lower the flag from the towering flagpole --

The Platoon stops running and faces the flag in salute --

James doesn't stop. Keeps walking. A rage in his eyes, then he sees the Soldiers standing at firm attention, watching the flag being lowered. James keeps walking. But something inside him compels him to stop. He faces the flag and stands in firm salute, as --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

James' motorcycle roars down the dark two lane road. Backpack tight to his body. His headlight the only illumination on the dark road ahead.

JAMES' POV -- We're inside his helmet -- claustrophobic POV -- looking out at the road ahead.

A truck passes in the opposite direction. Windsheared water SLAMS into James' visor. And then it's back to darkness save for James' lone headlight, as we --

FLASH TO

A lifeless WOMAN, 35, in a hospital bed. Pale. Gaunt. Eyes vacant. Tubes in her arms. Heart monitor beeping along, as --

James, 14, watches her. Alone in this antiseptic room. Taking all this in. His eyes begging her to wake up as --

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

James, 14, stands alone beside a casket. Numb. A handful of MOURNERS surround. James' Father not among them. The PRIEST says his blessing but it's all a mumbled blur.

The Priest hands James a shovel. James tosses dirt onto the casket, and as it lands, we go --

BACK TO

James' POV OF THE ROAD. James now in the oncoming lane. A truck's headlights bearing down on him. But James doesn't swerve. At peace with this mortal danger, until --

The truck's horn BLARES. James snaps out of it. His motorcycle ROARS as he swerves out of the way, just missing the truck. The bike skids out but he recovers and pulls to the side of the road.

James takes off his helmet. Eyes confused. The rain coming down hard on him. He holds out his hands. They tremble.

He looks at them as if they belonged to somebody else. Fuck it. He resets. Puts his helmet back on, as --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

James rides through the rain.

INT. JAMES' CAMPER TRAILER - NIGHT

James drops his pack. Takes the place in. Rain pelts the plastic roof. The oxygen tent, the weights, the medical supplies. He sees everything with new eyes. *What now?*

INT. JAMES'S CAMPER - NIGHT

James lies on his cot. Sleep not coming. Silence. Solitude. Nothingness. He shakes out two Ambien. Swallows them dry. Then closes his eyes, as --

GO TO BLACK

The rain gets louder and louder and louder, as --

WE'RE IN A DARK, ROUGH SEA

James fights through the swells. A rope tied around his chest, pulling an inflatable life raft behind him. The raft is taken by a wave and pulls James under, as --

INT. JAMES' CAMPER - NIGHT

James shoots up in bed. His hands trembling. He stands. Steadies himself against the wall. Then instinctively puts on his running gear, as --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

James exits his camper, hits his stopwatch, and starts running hard. Knee clicking with every step. A faraway look in his eyes. And then the strangest thing -- he stops -- and just stands there staring down the dark road. He turns and walks back toward his camper, as --

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

James rides his motorcycle. Rucksack secured to his back.

EXT. CITY ROAD - NIGHT

A "**SELF STORAGE**" sign rises above a massive bunker of a building. James pulls his motorcycle into the lot.

EXT. SELF STORAGE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

James uses his key to open the main door and descends into the lower level. As he gets to the bottom his boots step into six inches of fetid water. The place flooded.

James sloshes down the dimly lit hallway, past dozens of padlocked storage rooms.

NT. STORAGE BIN - NIGHT

James enters a 10 x 10 cell of a storage room. He's about to switch on the light but the water under his feet gives him pause. Fuck it. He flips the switch and the fluorescent light flickers to life, illuminating --

File cabinets, lawn furniture, a tricycle, stuffed animals, suitcases, and a dozen cardboard boxes, half of them sitting in the pooled water.

James empties his rucksack on the table; personal mission gear (holsters, tactical belts, gloves, BDUs, etc.) All of it weathered and beaten. He reaches into the bottom and pulls out the discharge certificate. Tosses it on the pile. He looks around as if taking inventory of his life.

James grabs a laptop case off a shelf and slides it into his backpack. What he came for. His eyes clearly avoiding things. He starts out but one box catches his eye; **"Important Documents and Photos"**. It stops him.

He lifts it out of the water and puts it on the table. He flips open his knife and cuts through the packing tape. James reaches inside and pulls out PHOTOS of --

- Brianne in a wedding dress, walking down the aisle. Beaming.

- James and Mike (who we recognize as the Commando leader of the Unit) standing side by side in tuxedos. Mike clearly James' best man.

- Baby Jack in his crib. Perfect innocence.

James digs deeper and pulls out a shoe box. Inside we see a bunch of medals and patches: Ranger, Airborne, Purple Hearts, Silver Star, chest racks of medals, dog tags. Under these are more photos:

- James, Mike, and other Commandos on horseback on snow capped mountains. Bearded and dressed in indigenous Afghan clothing. Weapons slung over their shoulders.

- James and Mike in full combat load and sunglasses, standing under Saddam's iconic crossed swords in Baghdad.

- James at a ceremony, a General pinning medals on his chest.

- James and Mike outside a tattoo parlor, sleeves rolled up, displaying their fresh, bloody, **"Semper Fratres - ODA 721"** tattoos.

James reaches into the box and pulls out a yellowed with age envelope. He pulls an official letter out. We see the words "WARD OF THE STATE" typed on paper, as we --

FLASH TO

A HOME FOR BOYS

Young James, 15, fresh flag tattoo on his arm, carries a blanket, sheets, and towel, down a long row of cots. Suspicious eyes from the other BOYS as they check him out. He stares back at each one with Man's eyes.

He passes a Big Kid and as he does, Big Kid trips James --

James stumbles, drops his stuff, and like lightning, CRACKS Big Kid in the nose -- pounces on him, now it's a hurricane of punches. Blood everywhere. James' rage pouring out through his fists, as --

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

James and a dozen disinterested KIDS listen to a TEACHER prattle on, as --

Two hard faced SOLDIERS in Class A Army uniforms stand at the classroom door.

EXT. HOME FOR BOYS HALLWAY - DAY

The Soldiers tower above James. They take a knee and talk to him. Clearly trying to comfort him, but James numb to whatever they're saying. They hand James an envelope that reads "*Just in Case*". They stand and salute him, as --

BACK TO THE STORAGE ROOM

James opens the yellowed with age envelope and pulls out a will and a notarized letter. On it, "*I hereby authorize my son, James Reed, to join the Army at the age of 17...*"

INT. JAMES' TRAILER - NIGHT

James plugs a USB internet stick into the laptop. Logs into his email. Screen says: "Welcome Back, James!"

James' inbox filled with unread emails dating back 3 months. James scans them: "Cheap Drugs", "Penis Enlargement", "Refinance you home", "Repair your Credit", "Have you been injured in an accident"...

James opens an email from the Army. Some form letter -- "*adjusting to civilian life can be challenging but there are techniques...*" He deletes it.

James scrolls through a bunch of emails from **Dyncorp, Force Protection, Xe Services, Executive Protection**, etc. He clicks on one of them:

Congratulations on your years of service. There are many exciting opportunities for someone with your unique skill set and vast experience in the private sector...

James deletes it. Keeps scrolling through. Then sees a few emails from Mike. He clicks on one --

Are you OK? Nobody knows where you are. Heard about the discharge. Worried. Adjusting to the real world isn't easy. Please call. Let me know you're OK.

James clicks on the next one --

Mason had an accident. Services are Friday after Thanksgiving at Rosewood Memorial in Virginia Beach. You know the place. We've been there too many times. I'm worried about you. Please call.

CUT TO

A RAIN STAINED, OFFICIAL ARMY PHOTO OF MASON, 32. Medals and ribbon racks pinned to his chest. American flag as the backdrop, as --

EXT. CEMETARY - DAWN

James stands before Mason's mud caked, green marble headstone. The photo rests on top. James wipes the photo clean with his sleeve. Mason so strong in the photo. Impossible to reconcile the photo of him with the grave.

James takes off his sweatshirt and starts wiping the mud off the headstone. Revealing:

**Mason Barber
1977-2012
Unites States Army
Special Forces
Beloved Father and Husband**

James wipes harder and harder, lost in motion, releasing anger with every swipe, until it's so polished that his reflection emerges in the marble. Lost in this, until --

He sees a figure moving towards him in the tombstone's reflection. James turns and faces --

MIKE walking towards him. They greet each other with a deep fraternal hug.

MIKE
Sorry I couldn't get a hold of you.

JAMES
You think they'd take better care
of it. How'd it happen?

MIKE
He was walking on the beach after
the hurricane...

FLASH TO

MASON, 32, walks along a desolate beach. Storm waves rolling
in. He stares at them. His face tormented. Then Mason walks
straight into the angry surf --

MIKE (V.O.)
*He was "swept up by a wave".
Drowned.*

Mason swims out. And it's clear, he's not coming back --

BACK TO SCENE

MIKE
He was jammed up financially. Jenny
overextended their credit cards
while he was deployed. Every time
he'd get home it was worse. His
back never got better after the
helo crash. Popping vics like
candy. Pain turned the toughest guy
I ever knew into a zombie. Army
only gave him 25 percent disability
on discharge. Went twelve rounds
with the VA, but all that red tape,
it's like they want you to give up.
So he "drowns". An "accident".
Jenny and the kids get the
insurance. Full reset for them, and
they'll never have to know the
truth.

JAMES
Supposed to be painless.

MIKE
I hope it was. I was worried about
you. Heard about the discharge. And
the house.

JAMES
Brianne's father got sick. Needed
surgery and he'd lost his
insurance. So we refi'd the house
to get cash out for his operations
and that just blew us out. Just
couldn't catch up.

MIKE
Things OK with you two?

JAMES
They moved back to Texas.

And that's that.

MIKE
Come over for dinner.

JAMES
Got a long ride back.

MIKE
What's the rush?

JAMES
I'm just not good around people
right now.

MIKE
It's not "people". It's me. And my
family is your family.
(then)
And it's an order.

Mike's sincerity impossible to resist, as --

EXT. SUBURBAN TRACT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

James' motorcycle follows Mike's SUV into a generic tract development. Every house looks the same. Lawns decorated with Christmas lights and ornaments.

EXT. MIKE'S HOME - NIGHT

Mike pulls into a driveway. James parks next to him. Takes the house in. A fireplace's warm glow radiates from within. A handicap ramp leads up to the side door.

INT. MIKE'S HOME - NIGHT

Mike and James enter the foyer. This is a home. Family portraits, photos of school plays, soccer games, camping trips... CHRISTINE, 33, greets James with a big hug --

CHRISTINE
We were worried about you. How are
Brianne and Jack?

JAMES
Good.

CHRISTINE
We miss them. Come visit anytime.
We've got plenty of room.

JAMES

OK.

CHRISTINE

I hope you're hungry.

Christine calls the children for dinner. Kelly, 14, comes bounding in. Mike Jr., 12, hobbles into the room, leaning heavily on forearm crutches. His underdeveloped legs wobbly, but his eyes light up when he sees James. The Children hug "Uncle" James. James uncomfortable with the intimacy but does his best to cover, as --

INT. MIKE'S DINNING ROOM - NIGHT

Everybody around the table. James seated between Kelly and Mike Jr. Mike motions for everybody to join hands. The Children take James' hands. They all bow their heads in prayer. James watches them, lost in some existential fog.

MIKE

Dear Lord. We thank you for this meal and for blessing us with such a wonderful family. And we thank you for bringing "Uncle" James back safely from downrange. Amen.

And now it's pass the vegetables, how was school, how was practice, a familial intimacy so foreign to James. He retreats into himself. Their words mumble into a din, as --

INT. MIKE'S HOME - BASEMENT - NIGHT

James walks into Mike's basement office. Desk, phone lines, computer, big flat screen TV, couch.

James' eyes drawn to a wall of framed photos. Many we've already seen in James' collection, except here they're framed and proudly displayed. They cover an entire wall. James in many of them.

ANGLE ON PHOTOS of Mike, James, Mason and others in various uniforms and combat situations. On tarmacs. On horses in Afghanistan. What's obvious from these photos is a sense of family. Tribe. Brotherhood. Of us against the world, as --

Mike walks down and hands James a shot and a beer --

MIKE

Mason.

JAMES

Mason. Rest in peace, brother.

They clink glasses and shoot --

JAMES (CONT'D)
How's the shoulder?

MIKE
You mean the shoulder, the knee,
the wrists, the hip, the neck? Fuck
it. We knew what we signed up for.

They stand in front of the photo of James, Mike, Mason, and
two others outside the tattoo parlor, showing off their newly
branded "**Semper Fratres - ODA 721**" tattoos --

JAMES
We're the only ones left.

MIKE
So we look out for each other. You
can't disappear like that, no
matter what you're feeling.

JAMES
I needed to focus.

MIKE
You needed to disappear. If things
get rough, I'm here. We take care
of each other. Semper Fratres,
brother. We fucking branded
ourselves.

Mike pours shots. They shoot. Chase with beer. Then sit on
the couch. Sportscenter on TV. The booze loosening them both.

ON TV, the NEWS ANCHOR goes over the details of a baseball
player's new contract. 10 years, \$300 million --

MIKE (CONT'D)
For hitting a baseball. This guy
gets popped for HGH, blow, lies
about it, and still gets his money.

James sees the anger in Mike's eyes. It's not about this --

JAMES
Mike Jr.'s toughing it out.

MIKE
He's a tough kid.

JAMES
I bet he beats it.

MIKE
There's no beating it. It's
degenerative. 90% chance they're
gonna have to amputate both legs
from the knees down.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)
I think about all that shit we put
into our bodies to stay online, and
if I didn't cause this.

JAMES
There's no quit in his DNA. That's
for sure.

MIKE
How are you doing?

JAMES
All good.

James takes a big pull of his beer --

MIKE
No. Really. How are you doing?

James looks at Mike. This is not a perfunctory question...

JAMES
What do you look forward to?

MIKE
What do you mean?

JAMES
You know, wake up in the morning
and... What do you look forward to?

MIKE
Spending time with my family.
Watching my kids grow up. Giving
them all the things I didn't have.
Starting a business. Finally
cashing in on all the work I've put
in. Moving into a bigger house. The
American Dream, brother. Why?

JAMES
I don't know. I wake up and...
Nothing makes sense anymore.

MIKE
Go back to your family.

JAMES
They deserve better.

MIKE
So give them better.

JAMES
I need to get back on my feet
first.

MIKE

So what's your plan?

JAMES

Don't know. Never thought I'd make it out alive.

MIKE

When I got out I'd get up, take the kids to school, do the whole dad/husband thing, but the only thing I looked forward to was taking those sleeping pills and checking out. You need to find something that means something to you.

JAMES

Some privates contacted me.

MIKE

Everybody's gonna want you. And you deserve a payday after all you've given. I did a few cowboy tours in the Sandbox. Paid for this house. But running convoys through Indian Country, babysitting corporates, it's nothing like what we were doing. There's no honor.

JAMES

What are you doing now?

MIKE

I'm doing what we did with the Unit, except now --

JAMES

Agency.

Mike smiles --

JAMES (CONT'D)

Can you get me in?

MIKE

You're a hero. The President shook your hand.

JAMES

He shakes a lot of hands.

MIKE

The money's not close to what the privates pay.

JAMES
I don't care.

MIKE
I'll talk to the man. Let's get you
something to look forward to.

Mike pulls cushions off the couch. Unfolds the couch bed --

JAMES
I'm gonna head back. No traffic
this late. I can fly home.

MIKE
If we do this, I'm gonna need you
in one piece.

Mike lays a sheet down. James grabs the other side of the
sheet and helps Mike make the bed, as we --

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. FOGGY WOODS - NIGHT

James stands in a dense fog, shivering from the cold.

JACK (O.S.)
Daddy?

Jack's cries echo. James' eyes search desperately, as --

JACK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Daddy? Daddy?!

Jack's cries just heartbreaking. James sprints through the
fog, towards the cries. But he can't find him. His heart
racing. Pounding. The pounding louder and louder, as if his
heart might just explode, as --

MIKE'S BASEMENT

James opens his eyes. *Where am I?* He sees the wall of Unit
photos. Comforting. But the pounding continues. It's coming
from upstairs, as --

MIKE'S KITCHEN

James watches Mike coaching his son through a workout on his
crutches. Mike so patient and loving with his Son. James
captivated by their interaction, as --

Mike Jr. moves down the hall. Getting better, faster on the
crutches. He keeps looking to his father for approval --

MIKE JR.
I'm getting stronger, hooah?

MIKE
Hooah, buddy. You sure are. Get
ready for school.

Mike Jr. moves back down the hallway. It's a struggle. Mike watches him with pained eyes. James sides up to him, as --

MIKE (CONT'D)
I made that call. Get ready. Stay
ready.

Their eyes lock in understanding, as we --

CUT TO

SHAKY HOME VIDEO FOOTAGE of James pulling the row boat in the lake. Jack in the foreground of the shot, watching his father swim. He turns and looks back at the camera, his smile and the sunlight off the water so bright the lens flares.

Brianne moves towards Jack and takes a selfie of the two of them, James behind them in the water. Jack and Brianne laugh and cheer James on. The video freezes and the cheering stops. Complete silence now, as --

INT. JAMES'S TRAILER - NIGHT

James stares at the frozen, ethereal image of Brianne and Jack on his computer. A world away from here, as we --

CUT TO

A DARK PARKING LOT

James rides past some shitty 24 hour gym. A handful of PEOPLE inside working out at zombie hour. James rides to the dark edge of the lot. Sides up to an SUV. Gets into the passenger side, as --

INSIDE THE SUV

James brother shakes with a thickly muscled MAN. Military tattoos, scars, and stretch marks on his juiced arms.

The Man unzips a duffel bag full of pharmaceuticals. Pulls out a few different boxes. Shows them to James.

"Testosterone Cypionate", "Toradol", "Deca Durobolin", etc. Which one? James motions "all of them". The Man gives him a look, "you sure?" James hands him cash and stuffs the boxes into his pack. They brother shake and James is out, as we --

CUT TO

- James injecting himself
- James sprinting in waist deep surf

- James squatting and pressing impossibly heavy weights

And there's a profound sense of danger here. A do-or-die desperation in his eyes as he pushes himself beyond reason. The pain a refuge from his thoughts, as we --

CUT TO

James lying on the floor, his knee and shoulder hooked up to the electro stim machine. His hair longer. Face bearded. He closes his eyes, as we --

FLASH TO

EXT. CORPORATE CAMPUS - DAY

James walks into an anonymous corporate building.

INT. BASEMENT TESTING ROOM - DAY

- James is put through a complete physical by DOCTORS.
- James fills out financial affidavits. Form after form.
- James is hooked up to a polygraph and interviewed

INT. CORPORATE BUILDING - DAY

James is escorted into a corner office. Distant views across the Potomac to the Washington Monument and The Capitol Building. JOHN GRAY, late 50s, rises and shakes James' hand.

GRAY

It's an honor to meet you.

JAMES

Thank you, sir.

James notices PHOTOS of Gray with President Bush 1, Clinton, Bush 2, and Obama on the wall. An American flag on the wall.

GRAY

This is the last time you'll have to deal with all bureaucratic bullshit downstairs. We have to run you through a full intake. You know how it is.

JAMES

No problem, sir.

GRAY

Let's go for a walk.

INT. HALLWAY - GLOBAL FUSION CENTER - DAY

Gray and James walk past a tinted window room. Inside, a dozen ANALYSTS sit in front of multiple screen computer terminals. Working phones. Intense focus in here. The computer screens shadowed black, unreadable from outside.

GRAY
This is the Global Fusion Center.
We're hooked into NSA, CIA, and all
the privates.

EXT. CORPORATE CAMPUS PATH - DAY

James and Gray walk along a path in the woods --

GRAY
Do you know who I am?

JAMES
Everybody knows you, sir.

GRAY
I went over your tests and files.
The bankruptcy and financial issues
are a problem we need to solve if
you're to come on board. Everybody
in this Unit needs to be completely
above reproach. I can fix these
problems but I need your
permission.

JAMES
Whatever I need to do, sir.

GRAY
I'm sorry for the way you were
treated when you were discharged.
It's a disgrace. You come highly
recommended from a man I place
great confidence in. He says you're
the most capable operator he's ever
served with. That's high praise
coming from him.

JAMES
Thank you, sir.

GRAY
The injuries you sustained in the
service of your country -- it's a
miracle you're standing, much less
in the shape you're in. It's easy
for these bought and paid for
politicians to wear flag pins on
their lapels and call themselves
patriots.

(MORE)

GRAY (CONT'D)
But you've put your life on the
line repeatedly in defense of this
nation and that deserves respect.

JAMES
Thank you, sir.

GRAY
You'd be working in my Unit under
direct Presidential authority as an
independent contractor under Title
50. We're a deep black Agency
offshoot. Flexible and deniable.
Are you familiar?

JAMES
Yes, sir, I know Title 50. We
worked with those guys downrange.

GRAY
What you did in uniform was hammer
work. This is scalpel. Gloves come
off here. Is this something you're
ready to commit to?

JAMES
Absolutely, sir.

GRAY
Good.

Gray looks James dead in the eyes --

GRAY (CONT'D)
I know that look into your eyes.
I've seen it in the mirror my whole
life. It's rare. This Unit is like
a family. I expect complete loyalty
from you and you can expect the
same from me. Hooah?

JAMES
Yes, sir. Hooah, sir.

Gray shakes James' hand, as we --

CUT TO

QUICK CUTS of James' passport being stamped. Repeatedly.
Faster and faster and faster. Senegal, France, Portugal,
Costa Rica, Morocco, Switzerland, Turkey, Russia. Dates
denoting the passage of eleven months, as --

INT. JAMES' TRAILER - NIGHT

James, weeks unshaven, sleeps in the oxygen tent. His phone vibrates. SCREEN reads: **Dulles. Motel 6. #234. 4:15 am. Ready to deploy. Confirm.** James types "Confirm", as --

EXT. MOTEL 6 - NIGHT

A commercial jet THUNDERS low above and lands on the runway across the street. James climbs the stairs and walks down the exterior hallway, a backpack slung over his shoulder. He arrives at room 234. Knocks twice.

INT. ROOM 234 - NIGHT

A tired eyed MAN opens the door. James enters and raises his arms for a security check. Man security wands him.

They sit across from each other. James removes the Blackberry from his pocket. He hits a few keys and a barcode appears on screen. He shows the Man. The Man scans the barcode with his Blackberry. Both screens read: ACCEPTED

What follows is routine: James puts his phone, wallet, driver's license, passport, and credit cards into a metal box. Man closes the box and places it in his case.

MAN
Same identity you've used on the
past 4.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Folded clothes on the sink. Jeans, t-shirt, boots. An electric razor is plugged into the wall. Everything ready for James as we go to --

QUICK CUTS of --

- James shaving all the hair off his face.

- James uses the hair clippers to shave his head down to an all around short cut. Pure function, no vanity.

- James rinses off in the shower. When he comes out he sees himself in the mirror. All those scars...but he looks past them, his eyes instead focused on his Unit and American flag tattoos, deriving strength from them, as --

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

James hands the Man a laundry bag of clothes. Sits back down.

The Man removes another metal box from his case. Unlocks it and pushes to James.

James removes a new Blackberry, ipad mini, passport, wallet, itinerary, driver's license, 2 credit cards, and a stack of cash. The Man points to a duffel bag on the bed.

James stands and the Man takes a photo of him. Compares it to the passport photo. Good to go.

MAN

Flight leaves in eight hours. When you arrive, code in, and remain in position. You'll be contacted if needed.

The Man nods at James, closes his case, and exits the room.

James opens the blackout curtains, revealing the runway across the street. Dozens of commercial planes lined up on the runway, waiting to take off. The lights seem to go on forever. A whole world out there.

James whips the shades shut. Flips on the TV. Local news. Something about 19 shopping days left until Christmas, as --

INT. MALL - NIGHT

Christmas decorations and "SALE" signs in every window. A full sensorial assault of color and sound. SHOPPERS of all ages rush about.

James walks through the mall. He passes a storefront window painted with "**Layaway is back!**" Then a kiosk, "**Instant cash for your gold**".

A siren WAILS. James flinches, spins, and sees --

A phone booth CASH MACHINE with lights flashing on top. A long line of anxious SHOPPERS await their turn.

A WOMAN steps inside and the door is closed. The bell rings and dollar bills are blown inside. The Woman grabs at the air, desperately, pathetically trying to grab as many of the swirling bills as she can. The siren wails and the frustrated Woman exits with only a few bills in hand.

James passes an Armed Services Recruiting storefront. He looks at the posters advertising "*Navy, A Global Force for Good*", "*Army Strong*", "*Give Your Life Purpose*"...

Inside YOUNG MEN watch a hyperproduced recruiting film. You'd think you were watching an action movie trailer --

ON SCREEN:

- Camo faced Special Forces emerge from a murky swamp.
- Navy SEALs leaping out of an airplane in O2 masks.
- Square jawed Marines stand side by side. Brotherhood.

INT. MALL - TOY STORE - NIGHT

James enters the crowded store. PARENTS argue over a toy. James moves past them and searches. *Where to start?* Embarrassed he has no idea what to buy for his son.

INT. POST OFFICE - NIGHT

James enters the empty lobby. He places a gift wrapped package in a Priority Box. He purchases a stamp from the machine. Sticks it on the package. But before he seals it, there's the matter of the card...

James opens a generic Santa Reindeer card. Printed inside: **"Happy Holidays"**. James clicks his pen. Writes: **"Merry Christmas, Dad"**

He considers what he's written. Then squeezes in **"Love"** before **"Dad"**. Stares at it. He seals the package and drops it into the metal receptacle. The metal opening SLAMS shut and echoes, as --

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Dark cabin as most of the PASSENGERS are asleep. James in a coach aisle seat. Jeans, t-shirt, and a baseball cap on his head. Just another anonymous American tourist, as --

INT. WARSAW AIRPORT - DAY

A **"WARSAW WELCOMES YOU"** sign hangs above the baggage carousel. James' bag tumbles down. He grabs it and exits.

INT. WARSAW CHEAP HOTEL - DAY

A dump of a room. Welcome to a pre WW2 Eastern European hotel. Water stained carpet. Worn mattress. Water drips in the bathroom.

James drops his bag. Goes to the window. Checks the sight lines. Courtyard view. Laundry hangs from windows. He closes the shades.

James types on his phone: **"In Position. Room 342."** Sends. He lies back on the bed. Closes his eyes, as --

James' phone vibrates. SCREEN READS **"Room 342. 11pm. Code 64697."** Below there's a photo of a WOMAN (KATIA, 25). James studies her hard, pretty face with disciplined detachment, then deletes the message.

James closes his eyes. Deep breaths. Tactical sleep, as we --

GO TO BLACK

A KNOCK at the door...

INT. WARSAW CHEAP HOTEL - NIGHT

James' eyes snap open. He approaches the door carefully.
Stands to the side --

JAMES

Yes.

KATIA (O.S.)

64697.

James unlatches the door. Steps back. Ready, as --

Katia walks in. She locks the door behind her then stands with her arms up. Phone in hand. Messenger bag over her shoulder. She spins so James can check her out. A thick air of danger in such a confined space.

James motions for her phone. She tosses it to him. ON SCREEN: **Code 64697. Below a photo of James** (the one taken in the motel room by the Man before he left).

KATIA (CONT'D)

Are we OK?

James nods. Katia moves right to the desk. Unpacks her laptop. Starts typing. No small talk. Scary professional.

ON HER SCREEN a security challenge appears. She punches in her code, then pushes the laptop to James. James codes in. Access granted.

ON SCREEN, PHOTOS of a thin, professorial looking Middle Eastern MAN (Salim Hamdan, 40s).

KATIA (CONT'D)

Priority two tasking. Keep eyes on subject. Loose leash surveillance.

James swipes through surveillance photos of Salim --

KATIA (CONT'D)

He is a Professor Emeritus of Virology at Politechnika in Lodz. He lectures there a few times a month, but his primary focus seems to be research work which is conducted at a private laboratory 60 kilometers outside Warsaw, in Lodz.

James scrolls through street level photos of the lab. A bunker type structure in a field surrounded by forest.

JAMES

What's he working on?

KATIA
We don't know.

JAMES
How recent are these?

KATIA
Yesterday.

JAMES
So there's another asset on site?

KATIA
Yes. You'll be relieving him.

Katia scrolls through PHOTOS of a suburban home. Two cars in the driveway, jungle gym and toys in the back yard. Salim, his WIFE, and two BOYS (9 and 12) playing in the yard.

JAMES
Communication protocol?

KATIA
Encrypted bursts. No response unless tasking changes. The intel you bounce to base will be real time analyzed.

JAMES
Real time?

KATIA
Yes.

JAMES
You have my equipment list?

Katia types. ON SCREEN: An equipment list appears under the heading "Wolf-34". James looks it over. Nods. She puts a car key and an address card on the table --

KATIA
Here is a clean vehicle. You'll receive a message with a meet time and location within the hour. Equipment will be on site.

Katia packs her laptop, nods to James, and exits.

EXT. SUBTERRANEAN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

James walks through the parking lot. He arrives at a small Fiat. He unlocks the door. Gets in. Drives out.

INT. FIAT - NIGHT

James' eyes constantly check the rear view. His phone vibrates. An address and time appear ON SCREEN.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

James grabs a ticket and pulls into the parking structure. He drives down...down...down...to the lowest level. It's empty save for a few scattered dusty cars. He drives to the end and pulls into a spot. Kills the engine. Waits. Silence down here, then --

A car's tires screech and echo faintly in the distance. Louder and louder. Getting closer, as finally --

Headlights illuminate James. Car heading right for his position. James starts his car. Puts it in reverse. Ready to move, as --

The car pulls into the adjoining spot. The DRIVER (ASSET, 32) turns the car off. He looks over at James. Their eyes meet. Asset's hard face is drawn, with tired eyes. No recognition between them. Two wolves sniffing each other out here.

James can't see Asset's hands. Neither one moves. The danger palpable. Their eyes remain locked, until --

Asset gets out of his car. He moves behind James' car to the passenger door. He flashes his phone's screen for James to see. James unlocks the doors --

And Asset gets into the backseat of James' car. Slides across so he's right behind James. Tactical advantage. James doesn't turn around, watching him in the rear view. Asset looks exhausted, dehydrated, on edge, as --

ASSET

Subject is home. Asleep. You have about 3 hours until he gets up. Car is tagged to track on the ipad so you don't need to close follow. But get ready to spend a lot of time lying on frozen ground watching a whole bunch of nothing. Family man. He moves alone. No security. Works late. Comes home. Sleeps. Repeat. Whatever this fucker is up to, he's tight. This is probably just another bullshit training op to keep us sharp.

Asset hands James an ipad mini. A map on screen --

ASSET (CONT'D)
I set up here. Clean sightlines.
Good overwatch. Equipment is in my
trunk.

JAMES
Thanks.

ASSET
What's your tasking? Are you here
to take him back? Take him out?

Nothing.

ASSET (CONT'D)
They don't tell us anything, right?

JAMES
That's the point.

ASSET
What were you, Devgru? Delta?

Nothing.

ASSET (CONT'D)
How long you been in the Unit?

Nothing.

ASSET (CONT'D)
What you got back home? Family?
Girlfriend? Anything to make this
worth it?

Nothing.

ASSET (CONT'D)
Shit, bro. I've been on
surveillance alone in the fucking
woods for two weeks. Just wanted a
little conversation.

Nothing.

ASSET (CONT'D)
Key's in the car. Get the fuck out.

James locks with Asset's wild, dangerous eyes. James leaves
the key in the ignition, grabs his backpack, the ipad, and
exits --

James' eyes never stop watching Asset in the car's window
reflection. James gets into the Asset's car, as --

Asset leaps to the front seat, starts James' car and drives
out. Gone.

James gets out and opens the trunk. Inside there's a large duffel bag. He unzips the bag, inside: tactical equipment.

INT. LODZ HOTEL - NIGHT

Another dump of a room. James puts his bag down. Pulls the shades closed. Lays a towel down on the carpet.

He unzips the gear bag and lays the equipment on the towel. Everything covered in mud and grass. He examines and cleans everything. Night vision scopes, camera, cold weather camo clothes, throat mic, an ipad mini with toughskin, 3 vials of Go Pills. He could do this blindfolded.

He holds the NV SCOPE up to his eyes and turns it on. James' POV as he looks through the scope's green glow. Looks around the dark room. Adjusts the settings, as --

CROSSHAIR NIGHT VISION POV OF A QUIET SUBURBAN STREET

James' POV of the street as he scans. It's late. It's dark. Everybody asleep. No activity.

James focuses in on Salim's house. All the lights are out. Two cars in the driveway. A jungle gym. A soccer ball. A BBQ. We see a digital date stamp on the lower right corner of the scope POV: Dec. 7, 2013

REVERSE ON JAMES

Lying on the wet ground. Expertly camouflaged on the forest hill across the street. He removes the tri-scope. Wipes his eyes. Adjusts to the darkness.

KITCHEN

Lights comes on. James takes off the heat sensor and now uses a regular target scope. We see SALIM live for the first time through the scope's crosshairs.

Salim splashes water on his face. James zooms in on his tired eyes. His furrowed brow. A detached intimacy here.

Salim walks into the YARD. He lights up a cigarette and inhales furiously. Getting his fix. He looks up to make sure nobody's watching.

James clicks PHOTOS of Salim smoking. Salim buries the butt in the trash. James clicks PHOTOS of Salim coding into the security system as he walks back into the house.

Salim washes his mouth out in the kitchen then walks into the living room and stands in front of the Christmas tree. He flips on the lights. The tree glows. He stares at it. Mesmerized. He snaps out of it and turns the light off. Walks back up to bed.

James scrolls through the PHOTOS he's taken of Salim's burdened face. Close ups. As if trying to read Salim's mind. His intentions. Understand him. Each photo has a date and time stamp. He presses a button and "**Encrypting...**" appears on screen, and then "**Sending...**"

EXT. JAMES' OVERWATCH POSITION - NIGHT

James' eyes focused on Salim's house. The wind whistles. A dog barks in the distance. All these sounds magnified in the night's silence. Every sound a potential threat.

DISSOLVE TO

THE SUN RISING -- James hasn't moved. Eyes laser focused. James picks up his scope, as --

CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV OF SALIM'S HOME

We see Salim's BOYS doing homework at the kitchen table. Salim makes breakfast. Salim's Wife packs lunchboxes.

Salim places pancakes on the table. The family sits down to eat. The older Boy doing homework as he eats. He seems to ask Salim a question.

Salim looks over his work. Points to something on the page. His son seems to understand. Makes a correction. Salim nods "yes", then kisses the boy on the head.

EXT. SALIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Salim and the Children exit the house. The Children in private school uniforms. Gray pants, blazers, ties. They get into the back of the station wagon.

Salim kisses his Wife goodbye. Makes sure the Children are strapped in. Starts the car and pulls away.

James pulls out his ipad. ON SCREEN we see a red dot moving away from this position, as --

JAMES' CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV of --

EXT. PRIVATE SCHOOL - DAY

Salim stops the car in front of the school. The Boys kiss him goodbye and run into school. Salim watches them go.

Salim drives away. Driving closer and closer to our POV, looking right at us as he drives by. We see right into his eyes. An ominous intensity that belies the family man we've seen from a distance.

James waits a beat, pulls a u-turn, and follows him.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Salim exits a convenience store. A carton of cigarettes under his arm. He opens all his car's windows and lights one up as he drives away.

EXT. BIOTA LABORATORIES - DAY

Through CROSSHAIR POV we are watching the lab. 3 cars in the parking lot. One of them is Salim's. James zooms in on the other license plates. Photographs them. *"Encrypting"...*
"Sending..."

POV moves closer to the gated entrance. Just one GUARD.

DISSOLVE TO

NIGHT

The Guard still at his post. Watching a movie on his computer.

Salim exits and lights up a cigarette. Sucks it in. James zooms in on Salim's face. So much tension and stress. He tosses it, then heads back inside.

A WOMAN in a lab coat exits the building. James zooms in on her face. Click. Then on keycard ID around her neck. It bounces as she walks but James stays with it -- filming all of this -- zooming in on her name, MAGGIE BOLEVSKA, and then on the barcode.

"Encrypting", then *"Sending"...*

She gets into her car. Drives out. Waves goodbye to the Guard. The Guard checks his watch and notes his log. He picks up the phone and dials. Has a short conversation. Nods at whatever he's been told. Hangs up.

The Guard closes up his guardhouse. Locks it. Then gets into his car and leaves. Only Salim's car remains.

REVERSE ON JAMES

James' gloved hands tremble from the cold as he squeezes energy gel into his mouth. And now we're into a SURVEILLANCE SEQUENCE where we see Salim do the same thing, at the same time, every day, as QUICK CUTS --

- Salim eats dinner with his family.
- Salim tucks his boys into bed.
- Salim and his Wife go to bed.

EXT. PUBLIC PARK - NIGHT

James walks past a group of HOMELESS sleeping on an exhaust vent, and into --

INT. PUBLIC PARK RESTROOM - NIGHT

James locks the door. He takes off his clothes and wipes his body down. Dozens of welts and bug bites on his body. He squirts solution into his hands and rubs it all over the bites. He washes the grime off his face, as --

BACK TO SURVEILLANCE

- Salim makes breakfast. Salim's Wife packs lunchboxes.
- Salim and his family watch American Idol.
- Salim smoking in the middle of the night.
- Maggie exiting the lab at night.
- Salim rushing home to eat with his family.
- Salim dropping the boys off at school.

Asset was right. Nothing suspicious. A family man with a great work ethic. Date stamps on the CROSSHAIR POV denote the passing of 12 days. And through this we see James' physical condition deteriorate. Tired and dehydrated. But willing himself to complete focus, as --

- Salim drops the boys off at school.
- Salim parks in front of Credit Suisse Bank. Goes inside. Date stamp: Dec 21, 2012. Salim exits the bank and drives to the lab.
- Salim remains in the lab all night.
- Salim's family sits around the Christmas tree. Fireplace burning. The Boys open their gifts. Salim and his Wife exchange loving smiles. The warmth from within a brutal juxtaposition to James' frigid conditions --

INT. PUBLIC PARK RESTROOM - NIGHT

James wipes his body down. Paper towels black from the dirt and grime. Even more bug bites now. He rubs solution on them. Then washes his increasingly drawn face, as --

EXT. BIOTA LAB - NIGHT

An unmarked delivery truck stops at the gatehouse. The Guard checks his manifest and waves the truck through.

Guard makes a call, and Salim and Maggie exit the lab. Anticipation on their faces.

Driver lowers four cages filled with crying, barking dogs. Driver and his Partner wheel the cages into the lab. Salim and Maggie follow them in. James snaps images. Click. Dec 26, 2012. *"Encrypting..."*, then *"Sending..."*

A few moments later the Driver and his Partner exit the lab, get into the truck, and drive away.

EXT. SALIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Salim making dinner. Again. But tonight he's in a suit and tie and seems to be rushing. He efforts a smile for the boys as he serves them.

Salim's wife appears in a beautiful dress. Her hair done, makeup, but she seems anxious, as --

OUTSIDE

A GIRL on a bicycle rides up to the house. Leans her bicycle against the bushes. Knocks on the door --

CROSSHAIR POV of the Girl. Click. Freeze.

Salim opens the door for her. He motions her in. Hurry. Closes the door behind her. Baby-sitter? Salim seems to be giving the girl instructions, as --

OUTSIDE

A black Mercedes stops in front of Salim's house. CROSSHAIR POV of the license plate. Click.

Salim and his Wife walk towards the idling Mercedes.

A DRIVER opens the back door and an impeccably dressed MAN greets Salim and his Wife. A congratulatory vibe here. The Man's enthusiasm striking.

He motions for Salim and his Wife to get into the car. They get in. The Man turns and we finally get a close look at his face. Click. Gotcha. He gets into the back and Driver closes the door. The Mercedes pulls away.

"Encrypting...", then *"Sending..."*

James puts the devices down and wipes his face. He picks the scope up and goes back over the photos. Thinking. Trying to make sense of this, as --

A light blinks on his ipad. He checks the screen:

Leave post. Clean wipe. RV. 4am. Location #732.

He clicks on the location coordinates. An address appears. James types "**Confirm**" as, --

EXT. HOUSING PROJECTS - NIGHT

James drives through a rough part of town. A cluster of monochromatic low income housing buildings rise out of the slums. Laundry hanging from windows the only color.

Graffiti. Trash in the streets. Disenfranchised IMMIGRANTS live here. Arabs. Africans. Hard faced KIDS play soccer in the middle of the street.

YOUNG MEN sit on benches in front of garbage can fires. Killing time. A pervasive hopelessness hangs in the air.

Brightly lit billboards above them advertise gleaming TVs and appliances that these people could never afford.

James drives the car into the adjacent parking lot.

EXT. HOUSING PROJECTS PARKING LOT - NIGHT

James passes a couple of vans with their doors open. Mattresses inside. Sad quarters.

James drives to the far end of the lot. Pulls up right next to an overflowing dumpster. He rolls the windows down and turns the car off. He wipes down the interior.

He puts on a baseball cap, leaves the key in the ignition, gets out, and walks away. Backpack of gear slung over his shoulder.

EXT. LODZ MAIN STREET - NIGHT

James exits a metro station onto a loud, crowded street. He's immediately jarred sensorial overload. Restaurants, shops, and bars filled with PEOPLE. Competing music pumps from every direction. SALESMEN beg him into their shops, as --

EXT. LODZ RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

James turns the corner and the cacophony drifts away. He walks down the empty sidestreet. He reflexively checks his six in cars' mirrors. Nobody following.

EXT. LODZ RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

James stands outside a dark building. A security code required for entry. James types on his phone. Waits. A few moments later his phone vibrates. ON SCREEN: 4-5-3-2

James punches in the code and the large wooden door clicks open.

INT. BUILDING COURTYARD - NIGHT

James walks through a cobblestone courtyard and up the dark stairwell.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT

James stands in a dim hallway outside an apartment door. Types on his phone. Waits. The door cracks open.

INT. SAFE HOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

James walks in. Closes the door behind him. He moves into the darkness. His hands reaching out as he walks into a thick black curtain. He pushes through it and into --

AN UNFINISHED, UNFURNISHED APARTMENT

Renovations underway. Blackout curtains over the windows. Portable lights hang from pipes. Two folding tables set up in the middle of the room. Laptops, stripped weapons, mission gear, MREs, medkits, etc.

Mike steps out of the shadows and lowers his pistol --

JAMES

I guess this isn't a training op.

MIKE

No, it's not. You look wasted, brother. Let's get you on an IV. Gonna need you fresh. You good? Any injuries?

JAMES

All good.

Mike motions to Katia, who's already prepping an IV --

JAMES (CONT'D)

What's the mission?

MIKE

Waiting on tasking. But we're on standby for tonight. Full brief when Carlos gets here from Paris.

Mike hands James a vial of Ambien --

JAMES

Gotta clean my gear first.

Mike grabs James' backpack --

MIKE

Rest. I'll clean your gear.

James walks to the corner of the apartment. Katia ready to inject James. James takes the needle and IV from her --

JAMES

I got it.

James flexes his arm, finds the vein, and injects. He wraps tape around his arm, securing the IV. He hangs the bag on the lamp. Sits on the creaky mattress.

James pops the Ambien and tears open an MRE. Eats. Pure function. He finishes and lies back on the mattress. Rusty water drips on him. He slides over a few inches and out of the drops' way. He rests his head down and watches Mike meticulously cleaning his gear. James just can't keep his eyes open and as they close, we go to --

BLACKNESS

Surf crashes. Wind howls. And now we're in --

A DARK OCEAN

White caps roll over deep swells. James swims with Jack on his back, clutching his neck desperately. James fights through these impossible swells. But going where? No land, no lights, nothing, as --

A rogue wave crashes on them. And suddenly Jack is gone. James spins in the water. Searching desperately. Nothing.

JAMES

Jack!

James fights through the waves. Searching. Flailing, as --

MIKE (O.C.)

James. James!

SAFE HOUSE

James GRABS Mike's arm with frightening violence. He twists Mike back and pulls him to the ground.

MIKE

It's me.

James snaps out. Eyes wild. CARLOS' knee on James' chest, holding him down. James sees blood all over his arms and hands from the torn out IVs --

CARLOS

You OK, bro?

James' eyes meet Carlos'. No judgement. Pure understanding.

JAMES

Sorry.

Carlos moves off James --

MIKE

James, this is Carlos. Carlos was Devgru.

(they nod in respect)
You were thrashing in your sleep.
Tore your IVs right out.

Mike wipes James' arm with alcohol. Puts a new IV in --

MIKE (CONT'D)

Tonight's a go. Priority one.

JAMES

Priority one?

MIKE

Mission brief in an hour.

INT. SAFE HOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

No running water here. James pours bottled water over his head. Wipes his body with a towel. He wipes forcefully, as if trying to clean himself of these visions.

James puts a thermometer in his mouth. Beep. He checks it: 102. He clears it.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Carlos, James, Katia, and Mike stand around the table.

They study surveillance photos of the lab and maps. Mission gear spread out on the table. NV scopes, pistols, midgets, tactical harnesses wired with lipstick cameras, small charge kits, bio-masks, mini oxygen tanks, flexcuffs, earmuffs --

Mike pulls up photos of Salim on an ipad --

MIKE

Here's what we know. Born in Syria. Educated in France and in the US. MIT. Harvard Med. Graduates and receives a Federal research grant to study synthetic influenza vaccines. 6 years at MIT teaching and researching. But his grant was not extended and his residence visa revoked. He and his family were forced to leave the US. They settled here in Poland where he's continuing his research.

Mike swipes through photos of Salim's home --

MIKE (CONT'D)

The FBI interviewed him 6 times over the course of 16 months and recommended the Agency keep eyes on him. That put him on our Red List. Intel suggests he's been radicalized.

Mike swipes through photos of the lab --

MIKE (CONT'D)

They can't worm into his system because there are no lines. Place is completely secure. We have no idea what's in there or what he's up to. He's an expert in virology, so let your imagination go from there.

Mike tosses keycards on the table for everybody --

MIKE (CONT'D)

Base made these from surveillance photos. We infiltrate the lab. Gather hard intel and bounce it back for real time analysis. Should be easy in. If not, we go in hard.

JAMES

Time on target?

MIKE

Four minutes to secure the facility.

CARLOS

Depending on the system and security, ten to twelve minutes to drain the information.

JAMES

Why can't we just pull the drives?

MIKE

No residual presence. We don't take anything out unless we have to. Once base receives our intel. They analyze and make their call. 30 minutes on target. Tops.

Mike points to the map --

MIKE (CONT'D)

Backtrack exfil through the woods. Same way we came in.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)
RV with Kat here. And then it's
right to the airport.

JAMES
And if the subjects are in the lab?

MIKE
Tranquilize. No marks. No bruises.
Since we're in an ally nation and
our presence is not approved, we
are fully black. No drone
overwatch. No emergency exfil.
We're on our own.

Carlos and James nod. The usual, as --

KATIA
Plane will be ready at location
Alpha. If there are any problems,
splinter up. Train out of Poland.
Fly home with current passports.

MIKE
Everybody good?

Nods all around --

MIKE (CONT'D)
We all know what one motivated bad
guy can do so let's cowboy up, get
this done, and get home to our
families.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike and James eat MREs on the floor in the corner of the
apartment. Reflexively trading their contents --

MIKE
How long you been having these
dreams?

JAMES
It's just the Ambien.

MIKE
How long?

JAMES
Since the discharge.

MIKE
You were calling for Jack. You need
to go home. To your family.

JAMES
They left for a reason.

MIKE
You didn't give them a choice. When
we get back, go home, make that
your mission.

The way Mike says this, it's what James needed to hear. A
flicker of hope blooms in James' eyes, as --

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Katia drives. James, Mike, and Carlos gear up in the back.
Lipstick cameras attached to each man's shoulder harnesses.
Their faces blacked out. Equipment check. No words necessary.

MIKE
Go live.

Everybody flips their cameras on. Mike types on a laptop. ON
LAPTOP SCREEN we see 3 different CAMERA POVs --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Katia slows the van. The door slides open and the three of
them leap out and dash into the woods. Katia continues down
the road. This never happened.

EXT. WOODS EDGE CLEARING - NIGHT

The Team lies on their stomachs looking down at the lab.
SCOPE POV of the Guard at his post, then of Salim and
Maggie's cars in the lot.

James checks his watch. 11:37am

They wait and watch... And wait... And watch...

The Guard watches a movie on his computer.

Mike checks his watch: 12:05

Maggie and Salim exit. Talking. He walks to her car. She gets
in. Drives off.

Salim lights up a cigarette and talks to the Guard.

Guard turns everything off. Locks up the guardhouse. Guard
gets into his car. Drives away.

Salim smokes. Watches the Guard go. A deep inhale as he
stares into the darkness. Then it's as if he gets an idea. He
tosses the cigarette and heads back into the lab.

MIKE
Shit. Hold position.

Mike types on his phone. Waits for a response --

Mike's phone blinks. He checks it --

MIKE (CONT'D)
Green light.

EXT. BIOTECA LAB - CLEARING - NIGHT

Three shadowed figures run down the hill and across the clearing.

EXT. BIOTA LAB - NIGHT

The Team takes position against the lab's wall. Mike removes a keycard from around his neck. Makes eye contact with Carlos and James. They all put bio masks over their faces. Ready.

Mike swipes the card. Green light. The Team enters.

INT. BIOTA LAB - NIGHT

Fluorescent lights illuminate the antiseptic clean lab. The Team sweeps through, covering each other in perfectly choreographed movements as they move towards a --

SECURITY DOOR

Mike swipes his keycard. Green light. They're in, as --

INT. BIOTA LAB STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The Team moves down the stairs. Down three landings. They arrive at a security door. Only way in.

LOWER LEVEL SECURITY DOOR

There's a window. They can see the lab inside. Mike makes eye contact with the others. Ready. He swipes the card. Green light. The door opens and the Team bursts into --

INT. BIOTA LAB - MAIN RESEARCH CENTER - NIGHT

The heart of the lab. The Team moves down a hallway, past a dozen cages filled with dogs in various stages of degeneration. Some are emaciated, some with large patches of hair missing, some morbidly obese to bursting. Those dogs with enough energy start barking --

The Team moves deeper into the room, carefully, as --

The door behind them clicks open --

Carlos spins. Rushes back, as --

Guard enters carrying bags of takeout food. He sees Carlos, drops the bags, his greasy hands reach for his gun as --

Carlos sweep kicks his legs out from under him. The Guard hits the floor. Carlos on him in a flash. One arm around his neck, another over his mouth. Muzzling him --

Carlos gags him and whips a hood over his head. Flex cuffs his hands. Earmuffs over his head. Blackout.

James and Mike wait for Carlos to finish. Carlos drags the Guard across the tile floor towards James and Mike.

Mike nods to James. Go. James turns the corner --

And sees Salim working at a computer station at the far end of the lab --

Dogs in even more shocking stages of degeneration are sealed into tented cages. Brutal. The dogs see the Team and wimper --

Salim spins in his chair --

James sprints across the room --

Salim reaches for an emergency alarm --

James gets to him before he can punch it --

Salim opens his mouth to scream but James' powerful hand is already around his throat, suppressing any sound.

James spins Salim into an impossible hold. James tapes his mouth shut. Salim's eyes terrified. James flex cuffs his hands behind his back, earmuffs over his ears, and a hood over his head.

Salim quivers. Urine pools at his feet. No trace of compassion in James' eyes. Professional brutality.

JAMES

Clear.

Mike and Carlos move into the main room. Carlos drags the Guard. Mike checks an air quality monitor. Good to go. They remove their bio-masks.

And now the Team gets to work. No words necessary. Everybody knows what to do. Carlos pulls equipment from his bag, hooks cables to the back of the of the computer --

Mike removes a mini laptop from his pack. Carlos tosses Mike the other ends of the cables. Mike hooks them to the computer. Mike types --

MIKE

Ready to upload.

CARLOS

I need 5.

James drags the Guard and Salim into the back room. Stands over them, immune to their muffled moans. His eyes laser on the security camera's POV of the outside entrance --

JAMES

Clear up top.

Mike opens Salim's briefcase. Two memory sticks. An ipad. He puts the memory stick into his USB and transfers everything. Plugs the ipad in, does the same. Plugs the cell phone in and copies everything. Then returns everything to their place.

Mike checks his watch --

CARLOS

I'm in. Downloading.

Mike watches the information appear on his laptop screen. Formulas. DNA diagrams. Numbers...

MIKE

Get visuals of everything.

James trains his camera on the dogs, on their medical charts, everything that could be of use to intel.

Mike works the computer. All James' POV images appear on his screen, as --

Mike's phone blinks. He checks it and whatever he sees gives him pause. Mike responds to the message. A few moments later the phone blinks. He types a response. Doesn't seem to like the order he's just received, as --

MIKE (CONT'D)

Get Salim.

James and Carlos surprised. James lifts Salim into a chair and pulls off his earmuffs, hood, and gag --

Salim eyes widen at the sight of these black clad figures. Faces covered with Baklavas. Only their intense eyes visible. He sees the cables hooked to his hard drives.

Shocking to see Salim live in front of us. He's thin, slight, doesn't look threatening at all. A humanity that was not evident in the surveillance --

SALIM

Who are you?

MIKE

You need to answer some questions.

SALIM

Americans. You're here to steal my work --

James puts his strong hand on Salim's neck. Reminding him of the danger. Salim looks back at James. Their eyes meet. James' eyes emotionless. Pure mission --

MIKE

Who has access to the lab?

SALIM

Only I have access. It's a private--

MIKE

What about Maggie Bolevska?

SALIM

How do you -- Yes. She has access.

MIKE

Who is she?

SALIM

My research assistant.

MIKE

Who else knows about the specifics of your work?

SALIM

Nobody.

MIKE

What about your benefactor, Mr. Ojjeh?

SALIM

He knows what I'm working on. But he's not a scientist.

MIKE

Explain what you're working on here?

Rage in Salim's eyes, as --

JAMES

You get up every morning and make your boys pancakes. You help your youngest with his math homework. You sneak out of the house every night, usually about 3 am, to smoke. You drive your children to the American School every morning. After you drop them off, you stop at the gas station and purchase cigarettes, then you come right here. Once an hour you walk outside and smoke. Lately you've been staying almost around the clock.

MIKE

There's a team one block from your family right now, waiting on my command. If you cooperate, no harm will come to them. If you don't, there's no limit to what we're authorized to do.

Salim struggles. James grips his neck. Hard. Settling him --

SALIM

I'm working on a synthetic influenza vaccine.

Mike reads off his phone --

MIKE

Where do you backup your work?

SALIM

In these computers, and in my head. There are no lines running out of here for good reason. Thieves. My work was already stolen from me once in America. If this is about money, I can arrange money for you. We can do that right now. Promise you won't harm my family.

Mike's phone blinks. He checks the message. Mike signals something to James --

James whips a hood over Salim's head, then earmuffs over his ears --

MIKE

Base wants us to walk the drive in. Get him out of here.

James drags Salim into the office. Closes the door.

Mike hooks a mini super drive to his computer. Loads it. Then unhooks the drive and puts it into an SSE packet. Seals it. He shows it to James and Carlos, and places it in his pack.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Prepare for a Code X.

CARLOS

All the way?

MIKE

All the way. Industrial accident. He had a heart attack and burned in the fire.

Mike shows James and Carlos the message. Confirmed --

Carlos rushes to the engine room. Rigs the Canisters --

Mike pulls syringes from his pack. Hands one to James --

MIKE (CONT'D)

CX-14. New paralyzing agent.
They'll still be breathing. So as
the fire spreads, they die from
smoke inhalation. Traceless. Cut
the cuffs. Remove the hoods. We
were never here.

JAMES

Roger that.

Mike kneels on the Guard's arm and plunges the syringe
between his fingers. The Guard quickly motionless.

James takes his loaded syringe into --

SALIM'S OFFICE

Salim on the floor. Hands cuffed behind his back. Must have
thrashed himself off the chair. Earmuffs off his head.
James approaches him, as --

SALIM

What are you doing? Please, sir,
please. You've made a mistake. I am
a man of science. I have a family.
What's happening?

James preps the needle. Pure mission in his eyes --

SALIM (CONT'D)

I hear you. What's happening? What
are you doing?!

James kneels on Salim's chest, holding him down. Salim
screams -- James grabs his arm, twists it back. Salim
squirms, but James just too strong as he plunges the dose
between his fingers. James holds him down until the dose
takes affect and Salim goes limp. Paralyzed.

James slices the flex cuffs off him. Salim's arms flop. James
pulls the hood off his head. And now their eyes meet. Salim
paralyzed, but his eyes very much alive. Staring right at
James. Pleading.

James turns away, grabs the hood, the cuffs, and walks out --

LAB MAIN ROOM

Carlos waits by the engine room. Ready to set it off --

Mike looks to James. James nods "it's done" --

James, Mike, and Carlos put their masks on. Mike gives Carlos a hand signal, as --

Carlos depresses a button. Flames engulf the engine room. The dogs bark furiously. Banging in their cages.

The smoke reaches Salim. He breathes it in. Coughs. Helpless. Desperately trying to breathe as flames and acrid smoke engulf the room.

EXT. BIOTA LAB - NIGHT

The Team exits the lab. The silence eerie out here, especially given what's happening below. Mike types on his phone, then the Team dashes across the clearing, up the hill, and ghosts into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Team runs through the forest, as --

BOOM! The lab explodes. Flames shoot high into the moonless sky. The Team keeps running, backlit by the fire's light.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The road visible 50 yards ahead. Mike raises a fist. The Team drops to the ground. Mike types on his phone. They wait, as --

Sirens wail. Emergency vehicles approaching --

Mike watches his phone's screen. Waiting for a response --

Carlos and James' eyes scanning. Ready for anything, as --

Mike's phone blinks. He holds up two fingers, *"two minutes"* --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Headlights approach. It's Katia's van. She pulls to the side as emergency vehicles SCREAM past her --

Once they've passed Mike pumps his fist, *"go"* --

Carlos leads. Then Mike. Then James. Tactical distance between them. Covering each other. Carlos slides the van's door open, as --

FIVE MASKED MEN leap out. Weapons trained on the Team. Carlos backtracks -- firing as he does. The MEN fire back. Silenced machine gun fire rips trees apart. Spikes of bark flying all around James and Mike, as --

Mike and James hit the ground -- firing back with their sidearms -- but no match for the machine guns, as --

Carlos is hit. Falls to the ground. He rolls -- bleeding badly -- but no quit -- he fires back -- slowing them, as --
The masked Men move forward tactically --

MIKE

Bag!

Carlos heaves his backpack towards Mike and James. It lands in the bushes --

Mike dashes for the pack. James covers him --

Mike grabs Carlos' pack. Secure, as --

Carlos drags himself behind a tree. Bleeding badly. But he keeps firing. Covering Mike and James --

James ready to dash to Carlos, as --

A perfect headshot takes Carlos out. One of the Men puts Carlos' over his shoulder and runs him back to the van, as --

James and Mike's eyes meet. Time to move. They work an IAD. One fires as the other runs into the woods. Leapfrogging each other with covering fire --

James lays down covering fire for Mike. Mike sprints farther into the woods, as --

He's hit. The impact spins him and he tumbles to the ground --

James fires, covering Mike as he drags himself behind a tree. Once there, Mike reloads -- hands bloody -- and lays down covering fire for James to come meet him --

James sprints low. Gets to Mike. Mike bleeding hard.

JAMES

Can you move?

MIKE

Can't feel my legs.

James reloads -- hands Mike his gun -- then lobes something in the Masked Men's direction, as --

FLASH -- **BANG!** A massive concussion blast --

James lifts Mike over his shoulder and runs. Mike double fists fires back, upside down over James' shoulder, as --

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

James sprints them deeper into the dark woods. Every step a leap of faith in this darkness. Getting away, as --

James' foot steps in a hole -- CRACK -- his knee buckles and they crash to the frozen ground. James suppresses a scream. Eyes ablaze in pain, as --

James steels himself and -- pure adrenaline now -- lifts Mike, and limp/runs them away.

EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT

They dead end at a river's frozen edge. Trapped. James scans for another way. Heartbeat racing, he listens -- hears twigs snapping. Voices. The river's running water and his heartbeat make it hard to be sure --

James carries Mike into the water, breaking through the thin ice, and swims them across.

James slides them into the tall dense weeds. James' eyes scan across the river. Nothing but trees --

James reloads. Last clip. Shit. James digs his hand into the muck and spreads it all over Mike's face, and then his own. Their faces blacked out now, as --

Across the river, flashlight beams bouncing everywhere. Searching, as --

James hears voices from above them. On this side. Shit --

James spots a DRAINAGE PIPE about thirty yards down river. James grabs Mike around the neck and swims them out into the current. James' eyes never leave the Figures across the way -- ready to fire -- as the current takes them towards the --

DRAINAGE PIPE

A rusty grating covers the entrance. James grabs it. Stopping them. Both shivering badly now. James signals to Mike. Hold. Takes a deep breath, and goes --

UNDERWATER

James pulls the grating. Trying to loosen it. It opens a few inches. Then James loses his grip and it snaps back --

James pulls again. Everything he's got. The rusty metal tears into his hand but he doesn't let go. Opening it. He raises a fist out of the water, signaling Mike, as --

Mike takes a deep breath and slips inside. Now he holds it open as James surfaces --

ON THE SURFACE

James' eyes scan for any sign of compromise. Nothing. James submerges --

UNDERWATER

Mike struggles to keep it open. James slips in. Grabs Mike --

INSIDE THE DRAINAGE PIPE

James swims Mike up the pipe, swimming up into complete darkness. They reach an air pocket and catch their breaths.

James removes a mini flashlight from his pouch. Flashes it into Mike's dilated eyes. Not good.

James puts the light in his mouth, illuminating the way ahead. He grabs Mike's collar and swims them up the pipe, the water level decreasing, until --

They reach dry ground in a clearing where pipes intersect.

INT. DRAINAGE PIPE CAVE/CLEARING

Silence in here save for their labored breathing and water dripping in the distance.

James unstraps his backpack. Opens it. Grabs some glow sticks. He cracks them and the cave lights up --

James looks at his bloody hands. Cut from the grating. Checks the cut on his leg. OK. Good for now. Down to business --

He stands but his knee buckles. Fuck. James crawls to Mike. Checks his pulse --

MIKE

Is the package secure?

JAMES

-- We need to stabilize you --

MIKE

-- Give me my pack --

Mike's orders clear. James hands Mike his pack --

Mike unzips it. The drive still sealed in its pouch. He zips it back up. Momentary relief on Mike's face until biology supercedes. Shivering from blood loss and cold --

MIKE (CONT'D)

How bad?

JAMES

You lost a lot of blood.

MIKE

You. Your knee.

JAMES
Don't know.

James puts the flashlight in his mouth and opens Mike's soaked TAC jacket. Rips open his Dri-fit shirt. Blood everywhere. James wipes it away, revealing Mike's Semper Fratres tattoo and tattoos of the names of his wife and children. And there's the entry wound on Mike's clavicle.

James reaches under Mike, searching for an exit wound --

JAMES (CONT'D)
In and out.

James pulls the Blowout Kit from his leg pocket. Tears open the Quikclot. Lifts Mike and rubs the powder on Mike's exit wound. Puts a bandage on it, then lays Mike down --

MIKE
What do we have left?

JAMES
One clip.

MIKE
Fuck. Encryption on our comms is bulletproof but they had our air.

JAMES
Katia?

MIKE
No chance. Her family lives in the States. She'd never risk them. Did Salim have overwatch? Did we miss something?

JAMES
Nothing I saw.

Mike shivers violently. Thoughts racing. "Mission first", even now --

JAMES (CONT'D)
Deep breaths. Keep that BP down.

James takes a pre-loaded syringe from the blowout kit. Mike stops him --

MIKE
No. I need to stay clear.

Mike's eyes fading. Blood loss taking its toll --

MIKE (CONT'D)
Assume we're completely compromised. On our own.

Mike's eyes, "is this it?" James helpless, then an idea --

JAMES
Confirm A-pos.

MIKE
-- You know my --

JAMES
-- Confirm --

MIKE
Confirm.

James removes a rubber tube and empty IV bag from his blowout kit. He pierces a vein and inserts a catheter, filling the empty IV packet with his blood --

MIKE (CONT'D)
No. One of us has to walk it in.

JAMES
You need blood or you'll die. I'm
not leaving you behind.

James flexes, rushing more blood into the bag. Mike grabs James' arm. Hard --

MIKE
My family. There are accounts. In
my basement safe. Make sure...

JAMES
It's done. Hang tight, brother.
Breathe.

James' blood fills the IV bag. James ties it off. Seals it. James pierces Mike's vein and inserts a catheter. He connects his blood filled IV bag, sending his blood into Mike --

James lifts Mike's head, puts his backpack under it. James tears open an energy gel packet. Squeezes it into Mike's mouth --

James checks Mike's pulse. Starts filling a second IV bag with his blood. He chambers a round in his Sig, then looks down at his leg. Pants bulging from his knee's swelling.

James slides his pants down. Agony as he squeezes them past his knee. His compression shorts impossibly tight around his knee.

James flips open his knife and cuts the compression shorts. Stares at his swollen, football sized dislocated knee. The swelling so bad he can't bend it. James purely clinical as he considers options.

He grabs a lighter from the E-kit and holds it under the knife until the blade glows orange. He slices into the swelling. Blood and Synovial fluid bleed out.

James squeezes the knee, draining the fluid out. And he now gets a better look at the dislocated knee. James unfazed. Clinical, as --

James tries to pop it back in. Impossible. He tries again and heaves from the pain. James' face pale from fever, pain, and blood loss --

James ties off the second bag of his blood. Then hooks it into Mike's catheter, as --

A sound in the distance. James grabs the Sig. Listens. Nothing. Adrenaline fading. Not sure what's real or imagined. James fights to keep his eyes open, as we go to --

BLACKNESS

Wind howls through the tunnels. Water drips in the distance --

MIKE (O.C.)
Knee's dislocated, brother.

James opens his eyes. Sees Mike examining his bruised black, dislocated knee --

MIKE (CONT'D)
You drained it?

JAMES
Had to. It was like a football.
It's torn.

MIKE
How the fuck did you carry me out?

James sits up. Gets himself ready to go --

JAMES
What's the plan?

MIKE
Get the drive to base. No idea
what's out there. Assume we're
being hunted. Trash all our comm
gear. We need to call in from a
safe phone.

Mike takes his Dri-fit shirt off. Tears it into strips. Wraps the strips around James' knee. Fashioning a brace. Tightens it. Mike's blood rings out all over James' leg.

Mike helps James up. James stands. Then puts pressure on his bad leg. Impossible. James dry heaves from the pain --

JAMES
I'm down. You take it in.

MIKE
We go together.

JAMES
I'll compromise the mission.

Off Mike's difficulty with this --

JAMES (CONT'D)
Bad guy was up to some evil shit.
We got him. Get it home.

MIKE
I'll make contact. Then come back.

JAMES
I can make it out. I'll shoot it
up. Move in the dark, burrow in the
light.

MIKE
You sure?

JAMES
Mission first.

MIKE
I'll head to Warsaw. Make contact.
Hand this off. We meet in 48 hours.
Hotel Salvina. I'll get everything
we need. Passports. Credit. Exfil
plan. Hooah?

JAMES
Hooah.

MIKE
Stay off the grid. No contact. 48
hours.

JAMES
48 hours.

James and Mike set the timers on their watches. And now
there's a moment between them. They may never see each other
again. Both injured and out of it. But they're used to
operating like this. No words necessary.

Mike slings the pack on his back, ready to go, as --

JAMES (CONT'D)
Wait.
(re: his knee)
Can't do it myself.

Mike reticent. But James' resolve undeniable --

Mike unwraps the improvised brace. Takes James' leg in his hands. James nods DO IT, as --

CRACK! Mike TWISTS James' knee back into place. James' can't suppress a PRIMAL SCREAM, as we --

GO TO BLACK

James' SCREAM ECHOES, as we --

FLASH TO

BRIANNE and JACK in their kitchen. Brianne making pancakes. Jack stands on a chair at her side, helping her. The table set for two, as --

Brianne and Jack hear something, turn and look right into camera, eyes terrified. Brianne wraps Jack in her arms and they back into the corner, as --

James stands in the kitchen. Confused. He looks down at his arms, his hands, his legs, expecting blood or worse. But there's nothing. He turns to the mirror, expecting a monstrosity, but no, it's just him, as --

INSIDE THE CAVE

James snaps awake. His arms shiver from the cold and the fever. Fuck. He banishes these visions. OK. Reset, as --

Faded glow sticks barely illuminate the cave. He looks at his leg. Mike must have elevated it on his backpack after he popped the knee. It's wrapped in strips of Mike's shirt.

James looks around the cave: discarded IV bags lined with blood, catheters, squeezed out energy gel packs. Empty MREs.

James checks his watch. Timer counting down. 42 hours... He grabs an MRE, tears it open and eats. He shakes out 2 Go Pills. Swallows them. Good to go.

He grabs a preloaded syringe from the blowout kit and plunges it into his knee. He lifts himself up, steadying himself against the wall. Here we go --

He puts pressure on the leg. Excruciating. But there's no choice. And now it's just pure will, as --

INT. DRAINAGE PIPE - NIGHT

James shimmies down the drainage pipe and into the fetid water. And then it's time to take a deep breath and go completely --

UNDERWATER

James swims down the pipe, into the pitch black. Stroking forward, farther down into the obscurity, through garbage and who knows what else, until --

He arrives at the grating, where the pipe runs out into the river.

James pushes against the grating. Nothing. He flips and kicks it with his good leg. It moves a little. Fuck. And now he's running out of air. He holds the edge of the pipe with both arms and KICKS the grating with BOTH LEGS.

Once... Twice... Three times... *Who knows what damage he's doing to his knee?* One more kick and it loosens. He flips, pushes through it, and swims out into --

THE RIVER

Where he remains submerged. Disciplined, despite his desperate need for air. He surfaces slowly into the amber light. Eyes everywhere as he swims into the frozen, muddy --

HIGH GRASS

James stays low in the muck. Paints his face with mud. Stares out into the forest. Waiting for darkness.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

James limps through the dense part of the forest. Sweating from the fever and the pain. He checks his watch. 31 hours...

DISSOLVE TO

The SUN COMING UP. James still walking. Checks his watch. 28 hours. He stops. Looks around. He seems lost. A flicker of panic in his eyes. He spins around. *Which way?* The sun rising in the wrong direction. *Has he gotten lost in the dark?*

DIZZY POV now. The trees blend into each other. The sky lightening. Dawn. James' eyes snap focus and search for --

A large dense bush. There. James slides under the bush, burrowing into the small, dark space.

INSIDE THE BUSH

James smooths the dirt out behind him. Leaving no trace. Dark in here save for a few daggers of light.

James elevates his leg on a stump and rests his head on his pack. Pistol in hand. He closes his eyes, as --

Voices. Getting closer. James's eyes open, zero to sixty in a flash. He looks through the bush --

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The forest's dense canopy blocks the sun's rays. Only a few shafts of light stab through, blinding James from this position. He can hear people approaching but can't see them. *Speaking German? Polish?*

A MAN (30s) and a BOY (10) walk towards James' position. They're wearing bright orange hunting apparel. The Man holds his rifle like a pro. The Boy at his side --

James readies his pistol --

They stop 25 feet from James. The Man kneels and zips the Boy's jacket up. Speaks to him. A gentle tone to his voice. He points into the woods, showing the Boy where to look.

They sit on a felled tree. The Man stares into the woods --

James motionless. Ready. Time seems to stand still, as --

The Man sees something ahead. He points. His son follows his direction and sees --

A DEER

The Father hands his Son the rifle. Helps him get it into position. The rifle huge and heavy in the Boy's hands. He looks through the scope. Father steps back, leaving the boy alone with the rifle...

The Boy aims... Aims... Aims... As the magnificent deer grazes obliviously. The Boy's finger on the trigger --

The Boy's arms start to tremble. The Father moves forward. Sees tears streaming down the Boy's face --

Father takes the rifle and kneels in front of the Boy. The Boy can't meet his Father's eyes. Ashamed. The Father wipes the tears from the Boy's face. Kisses him. It's OK.

Father ejects the two cartridges. They fall to the ground. The deer hears them. Dashes off.

Father takes the Boy's hand and they walk back. The Boy stops and runs back towards James' position. Right at him. Shit. James ready for anything, as --

The Boy picks up one of the discarded cartridges, then runs back to his Father. They walk away. Hand in hand. Disappearing into the blinding sunlight.

James slithers out of the bush. His clothes torn, filthy, and blood stained. Can't walk into the city like this.

James picks up the other discarded cartridge. Studies it. Moved. He pockets the cartridge and follows the Man and Boy out into the light.

EXT. WOODS' EDGE - DAY

Father and Boy walk through a field towards a small town ahead. James follows their lead out of the wilderness.

EXT. SMALL TOWN RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

James watches the Father and Boy enter a modest house. James remains across the street, in the bushes. Waiting for darkness. He checks his watch. 22 hours...

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

James enters the garage. He opens cabinets. Searching. Canned food. Old magazines. Shit. He opens a trunk full of clothes. Jeans, thermals, socks, etc. He stuffs what he needs into his pack, leaves some cash on the workbench, and exits.

EXT. SALVINA HOTEL - WARSAW - NIGHT

James across the street from the hotel. He steps into a phone booth. Inserts a prepaid phone card and dials.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Hotel Salvina.

JAMES
Good evening. Can you please
connect me with Scott Murphy?

A long pause. Typing. Then --

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Certainly. Please hold.

Click. Phone rings. And rings. And rings. No answer --

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm sorry but there's no answer.
Would you like to leave a message?

JAMES
My name is Chris Wolf. Did he leave
me a message?

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Oh, yes. He has left your name on
the room. There's a key waiting for
you.

JAMES
Thank you.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

James walks up to the counter. Hiding his limp as best he can. The RECEPTIONIST smiles at him --

RECEPTIONIST
Good evening.

JAMES
Hi there. I'm Chris Wolf.

James hands her his passport. She makes a copy of it. Hands it back with a keycard --

RECEPTIONIST
Room 603. Enjoy your stay.

JAMES
Thank you.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

James walks down the empty hallway. Arrives at room 603. A "DO NOT DISTURB" sign hangs from the doorknob.

INT. ROOM 603 - NIGHT

James enters the room. Locks the door. Shades drawn to blackout. The TV is on. James flips on the lights. Takes the room in --

Two queen beds. One's been slept in. On the other is a neoprene knee brace, a tube of cream, bandages, a vial of antibiotics, and a Medkit.

On the table are boxes of cereal, bottles of water, energy bars, and a note: *"Meet set. Out to make handoff. Safe here. Back 6am."*

James checks his watch 3:22am...

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

James slips into the bath. Rests his gun on the tub's ledge. All the grime, dirt, and dried blood comes off, turning the water a murky pink. James soaps up and cleans his wounds.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

James lays towels down on the carpet and lowers himself onto them. His damaged leg out flat. Time to go to work.

James peels the scab off his knee and squeezes fluid from the knee with clinical dispassion. He pours alcohol on the wound.

James removes a needle and thread from the Medkit. He holds the needle under the lighter. Sterilizing it.

He pierces the needle through the scarred skin over and over. Stitching himself back together.

James lies on the fresh bed. Pistol at his side. He elevates his knee with pillows. He checks the vial of pills Mike left him. On it Mike's written: "2 every 6 hours". James swallows 2. He checks his watch 4:37 am.

James flips channels. Infomercials in Polish. Selling "miracles". Same bullshit happens here too, as --

A KNOCK at the door. James grabs the pistol. Stands to the side of the door. Another knock, then --

A keycard slides into the door. Click. The door opens and catches on the safety hook. BANG.

MAID (POLISH)(O.S.)
Room service.

James peeks through the crack. Sees a cart of cleaning supplies and a MAID. Waiting.

JAMES (POLISH)
No, thank you.

The Maid makes notation on her log, then moves on.

James locks the door. Checks his watch 8:37 am.

He peeks behind the blackout curtains. The light blinding. Outside, the city in full mid-day action. Traffic. Crowded sidewalks. People going about their lives. James closes the curtains. Considers what to do.

He picks up the phone --

JAMES (CONT'D)
Good morning. Are there any
messages for me?

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
No messages, sir.

JAMES
Thank you.

James hangs up. Thinks. Shit.

James grabs the wall and does a couple of deep knee bends. The sutured skin stretches and pulls. James pulls the neoprene sleeve over his knee, grabs his pack, exits.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

James walks away from the hotel.

EXT. STREET - PHONE KIOSK - NIGHT

James purchases 3 prepaid phones. Puts 2 in his backpack. One in his pocket.

INT. WARSZAWA CENTRALNA - TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

James walks into the large open train station. Rush hour energy as COMMUTERS bump their way through the crowd, darting for their trains.

James moves towards a waiting area where dozens of Commuters are seated, seeking out an area with the most cellular traffic. Commuters on cell phones, texting, watching news on ipads, everybody in their own world.

James stands in the corner. His back to a wall. Perfect field of vision. James dials on his prepaid. As it rings, his eyes on a constant tactical scan, as --

CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)
Code in, please.

JAMES
Wolf-34.

CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)
Continue.

JAMES
662-577

CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)
Hold.

A set of clicks and beeps. A few long seconds. James' eyes everywhere, as --

GRAY (O.S.)
This is Gray.

James was not expecting Gray --

JAMES
Yes, sir. I'm on a burner. Not secure.

GRAY (O.S.)
Go.

JAMES
We were ambushed at our exfil. Wolf 12 down. Wolf 44 and I made it out. He was mobile. I was not. We separated so he could walk it in.

GRAY (O.S.)
*He made contact but never made it
 in. Assume you're totally
 compromised. What's your location?*

JAMES
 Warsaw Central Station.

GRAY (O.S.)
*Scrambling an exfil team. Move
 towards the river. Call back in 15.*

Click. James sets his timer. Scans the crowd. All the faces threatening. He slips the burner into a garbage can. Exits.

EXT. METRO STATION - STREET - NIGHT

James turns the corner onto a side street. He expertly checks his six using car sideviews and storefront windows.

EXT. RIVERFRONT - BRIDGE - NIGHT

James walks across the bridge. He stops in the center. Perfect vantage point. Nobody following him. Nobody ahead.

A OLD MAN riding a bicycle comes towards him. He stares at James. Their eyes lock. James ready for anything. But the Old Man just passes him and continues across --

James looks at the river below. Ice formations floating. Drainage pipes pump water into the murky river --

James turns on the second prepaid phone. He starts walking and dials --

CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)
Code in, please.

JAMES
 Wolf-34.

CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)
Continue.

JAMES
 662-577

CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)
Hold.

GRAY (O.S.)
What's your position?

JAMES
 Poniatowski Bridge. East side.

GRAY (O.S.)
*A green Audi en route. 20 minutes
 out. License plate UB-634.*

Click. James checks his watch 1:12am.

James throws the phone into the river. It bounces off an ice formation, then sinks into the water.

James reaches the east side of the bridge. Eyes everywhere.

A car approaches. It stops in front of a building a block away. A Man gets out. The car drives off.

The Man lights a cigarette and strolls towards the riverbank. But there's something suspicious about him, his walk, his bearing, hand in his pocket --

And now, from the other direction, a Woman with a dog walks towards the riverbank --

From James' POV, she and the Man seem to be triangulating James' position. Squeezing him. James walks away, onto --

THE BRIDGE

Away from the Man and the Woman. James walks across. Stops in the middle. Leans on the rail. Casual. Looks down at the drainage pipes pouring who knows what into the river. Then looks back at --

The Woman picking up after her dog --

The Man texting on his phone --

James looks the other way. Nothing. James checks his watch 1:21am. An eternity.

The Woman and her dog walk back from where they came --

The Man still texting --

James looks the other way and sees two MEN walking across the bridge. Arguing. In their own world. James looks away. Starts back to the side he came from, but --

The texting Man is now walking across the bridge. Hands in his pockets. Eyes locked on James. Closing in --

Trapped. James curses himself. He dials his last cell --

CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)
Code in, please.

JAMES
 Wolf-34.

Continue. CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)

662-577 JAMES

Hold. CLINICAL VOICE (O.S.)

8 minutes out. GRAY (O.S.)

JAMES
Ambushed. On the move. Your lines
are compromised. I was tracked.
Will call in when safe.

The Men closing in --

James sees the car idling on one side --

The Woman and her dog on the other side, eyes on James --

James throws the phone into the river --

All three Men run at him. Hard. Fast. Guns drawn. Their
predatory eyes locked on him, as --

James tightens the backpack to his body, dashes to the rail,
and leaps over the edge, and into --

THE RIVER

James crashes through the ice and into the river's darkness.
He dives deep --

UNDERWATER

We're WITH JAMES here as he swims. We HEAR two splashes
behind him. Two Men chasing --

James surfaces for breath. Sees the car on the bridge. Two
Men get out and see where James is going. They run across to
meet him on the other side --

James swims hard through the murky water --

James arrives at the stone quai. Two Men running towards him.
He looks back and sees the swimming Men closing in. James
trapped. He takes a deep breath and dives --

UNDERWATER

James swims under the bridge, towards the drainage pipes --

RIVER DRAINAGE PIPE

James swims up the pipe. Propelling himself through the darkness. His heart racing. Desperate for air. *How much farther?* He swims harder into the blackness. His hands push up. Searching for a pocket of air. Nothing.

James pushes -- nothing left -- choking -- he kicks and kicks -- driving forward -- he sees a faint light above -- kicks harder -- but his POV going black -- passing out, as --

SEWER TUNNEL

James comes up for air. Breathless. Choking. Dizzy POV, as he looks around the cavernous tunnel. A sewer system built two centuries ago. Lights 30 feet barely illuminate the tunnel that seems to go on forever. Thick roots grow along the stone walls.

James pulls himself out of the water. Limpes down the tunnel, knocking lights out as he goes, leaving darkness in his wake.

James stops. Listens. It's hard to hear anything above his racing heartbeat, then --

James hears voices and scraping footsteps from the darkness behind him. Getting closer. He keeps moving. Arrives at a --

TUNNEL INTERSECTION

James sides up to a wall. Waits in the darkness. Gun in hand. Flashlights beam all around him. Closer and closer.

James throws a rock down the tunnel. Sound echoes. The Men run in that direction, as --

The First Man passes James. Then the Second.

James pounces on the Second. Tackles him to the ground. Pounds his face into the stone. Punches his kidneys. Just destroying him, as --

The second Man hears the fight. Spins. Flashes his light on James. Lifts his pistol --

James rolls off the bloody, semi-conscious first Man and fires first -- hits the Man in the knee. The Man fires back as he falls. Misses, as --

James charges him. And a frightening rage radiates from James as he flips the Man and puts him into an impossible choke hold. He tightens. Hard --

James rolls him for better leverage but the Man HAMMERS his fist down on James' knee. James can't help but loosen his grip. The Man slips out --

And now they're into a brutal grappling fight on the icy stone. Hands around throats. Fingers in eyes. Two pitbulls fighting for their lives, as --

A knife is snapped open. Man stabs James in the gut. And it's as if the pain only strengthens James. He grabs the Man's arm. Spins him. Tears his shoulder out. The Man screams, as --

James grabs the Man around his neck. Drives his knee into his back. The Man inches from death and he knows it --

JAMES

Who do you work for?

MAN

Fich dich!

JAMES

Who do you work for!?

Nothing. James pulls his head back hard, to the edge --

JAMES (CONT'D)

Who sent you?

MAN

Verpiss dich!

JAMES

You want to die?

MAN

Yes.

James breaks his neck. Lets him drop to the ground.

James checks his stab wound. His hand bloody. Fuck. Silence in the cavern save for James' breath and racing heartbeat.

James opens the Man's TAC jacket. Waterproof pockets. Pulls out an iphone. Cash. Credit cards. Passport. He tosses it all. Shoves his limp body into the sewer, as --

James hears moaning breaths from the darkness. He grabs the flashlight and shines it on --

The first Man. His head bleeding, his face lacerated. He tries to get up, collapses, tries again, collapses again. James approaches him. The Man lunges for his gun, as --

James crushes his hand with his boot. Kicks the gun into the sewer. James flex cuffs his arms behind his back --

James opens the Man's TAC jacket. Checking the inside pockets. 2 iphones. Dollars. Euros. 2 different sets of identification.

James unzips the inner chest pocket. Pulls out a photo. James' bloody hands smear the image. He wipes the blood off and shines the light on it --

The PHOTO is a family portrait of the Man standing proudly in US Marine dress blues, a pretty young Wife and two little Girls at his side. An American flag as the backdrop.

JAMES
What's your name?

ERIC
Eric...

JAMES
You're a Marine?

ERIC
Was. Recon.

JAMES
Why are you hunting me?

ERIC
Job. Orders.

JAMES
From who?

Eric fading. Confused --

JAMES (CONT'D)
Orders from who?!

ERIC
Private. Out of Berlin.

JAMES
You're Recon. What the fuck are you doing out here?

ERIC
Needed the money.

Eric coughs up blood. James lifts Eric's shirt. Massive internal bleeding has formed a balloon of blood in his abdomen. Eric looks down at his stomach. Just a matter of time and they both know it --

JAMES
What was your intel?

ERIC
Terror threat. In possession of bio-terror agent.

JAMES
Did your Unit ambush my teammate?

ERIC
First team got him. Got the package.

JAMES
They killed him?

ERIC
Yes.

JAMES
Then why are you hunting me?

ERIC
No loose ends.

James grabs Eric's phone. Scrolls through the messages:

- **Target acquired. Train station. Moving. Take alive.**
- **Target on the move. Will call back with location in 20.**
- **Target at Poniatowski Bridge. Move in. Take alive.**

ERIC (CONT'D)
I did it for my family...

James cuts the cuffs off Eric. Eric motions for the phone --
James hands it to him -- No service down here --

ERIC (CONT'D)
When you get up top code in "Coyote down". That's the kill code.
They'll stop hunting you.
(then)
The picture. Please...

James hands Eric the photo. Eric stares at it. Disgusted, he can't reconcile the honor bound man in the photo with who he's become. He covers his face with his thumb, so all he sees are his Wife and Daughters. He tears up, then turns the photo over. Shows James a number and code on the back --

ERIC (CONT'D)
Recon safe house. Help you disappear. You can never go home.
They know who you are. Your family.
They won't stop.

JAMES
Who?

ERIC
I don't know...

Life draining out of Eric. His eyes locked on the photo --

ERIC (CONT'D)
I did this for them. So we could
have more...

Eric laughs at the absurdity. Looks down at his ballooned
stomach --

ERIC (CONT'D)
Where do you think we go?

JAMES
I don't know.

ERIC
Can't be worse than this...

We hear a knife snap open. James flinches. But Eric plunges
it into his own stomach. Blood pours out of him. Relief on
Eric's face. Peace...

ERIC (CONT'D)
All the pain's gone...

Eric squeezes James' hand in solidarity, then goes limp.

James picks up the photo. Looks at Eric in his Marine blues,
at his young, patriotic eyes, then at the bloody heap on the
sewer ground. Impossible to reconcile.

James takes Eric's TAC jacket and moves down the tunnel, as --

INT. UNDERGROUND STAIRWELL - NIGHT

James climbs a long steel staircase. He gets to the top. A
yellow light illuminates a steel door. James lifts his wet,
bloody shirt. Checks the knife wound. Bleeding, but it can
wait. He cracks the door open and slips out into --

INT. METRO STATION - NIGHT

James at the end of a long Metro platform. A few PEOPLE
scattered about the station, waiting for their train. Nobody
notices James. He sits on a bench and turns on Eric's phone.
Codes in --

ON THE PHONE'S SCREEN the cursor lingers...

James considering. Can I trust him? Then he looks at Eric's
photo. Those eyes. That flag. James types the kill code:

"Coyote down" He sends it. Waits. A message comes in --

"Did he have a backup package?"

"No"

"Mission complete" And that's that.

James removes the battery and the SIM from the phone. Breaks the SIM in half. Tosses the pieces onto the tracks.

A train's light appears down the tunnel. James waits for it to get close and he tosses the phone onto the tracks.

PASSENGERS get off the train and head for the exits. James falls in with them. A few notice the blood and his torn clothes, but they're used to it, just another homeless, as --

INT. INTERNET CAFE - NIGHT

James Googles "Maggie Bolevska". Her photo appears on screen. Young, pretty, with intelligent eyes. James clicks through her schooling, her awards etc. Not what he's looking for. He types in "address". Hits enter. And there it is...

EXT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

James checks the list of apartments. Bolevska - 4B. He looks up to the fourth floor. Sees an apartment with lights on.

The thick wooden door has a code access panel. James pushes. No go. Shit. He notices the adjoining building's door is open.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

James stands at the edge of the roof. The city's lights seem to go on forever. Maggie's building's roof is about ten feet across and one floor lower.

James runs to the edge -- LEAPS across the divide -- crash rolls on the building's roof, as --

EXT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rhythmic soft Electronica plays, muffled from within. James tries the door. Unlocked. He pushes the door open and enters.

INT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

He closes the door behind him. A shower is running. Music coming from the bathroom. James takes the apartment in:

An unmade Futon bed. Small kitchen. Stacks of medical books piled next to a computer station desk. An organized mess.

The computer in screensaver mode, streaming photos of Maggie and her FAMILY, her FRIENDS, BOYFRIEND, at the zoo, in NYC, in Paris, graduating -- a full life moving across the screen.

Steam billows from under the bathroom door. James enters --

THE BATHROOM

Steam filled. Music louder in here. James whips the curtain open. Ready to strike, as --

Maggie lies dead in the bathtub. Wrists slit. Body marbled white and blue. A razor blade caught in the drain. James turns the shower off. Maggie's lifeless eyes stare at him.

MAGGIE'S APARTMENT

James looks over the work on her desk. Papers. Books. Notecards. A book proposal title page: **"Experimental Adaptation of Influenza" by Maggie Bolveska.**

James types on her computer and the photos disappear. He checks her drive. Empty.

He grabs her cell phone. Checks the call log. Empty.

James turns the music off and opens the window, letting the freezing air blow in. He backs out of the apartment, checking everything, and as he's about to exit --

The screensaver comes back on. A photo of Maggie and her Boyfriend attaching a lock to the railing on the Pont des Arts in Paris. Beaming smiles on their faces, as --

SCOPE POV OF SALIM'S HOME - DAWN

Salim's Wife prepares breakfast while the older Son prepares their lunchboxes. The younger Son at the table finishing his homework.

EXT. WOODS - DAWN

James lies under a bush. Scope to his eyes, as --

EXT. SALIM'S HOME - DAWN

Salim's wife and the Children, dressed in jackets and ties, get into the car. They drive away. James starts his stopwatch, and he moves down the hill and across the street.

INT. SALIM'S HOME - BACK DOOR - DAY

James breaks into Salim's home. Rushes to the alarm. Punches in the code. Green light.

INT. SALIM'S HOME - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

James descends into the basement. Looks like a crime scene. Computer's hard drives pulled. Terminals remain open. File cabinets open and emptied.

The wall lined with diplomas and awards. MIT. Harvard. Photos with dignitaries. James heads back upstairs.

INT. SALIM'S HOME - BOYS ROOM - DAY

James searches the boys' bedroom. Beds made. Toys neatly put away on shelves. Xbox games. Framed photos of the family together. James can't help but linger on Salim's face, as --

INT. SALIM'S HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

James searches the master bedroom. TV. Books. Photographs. He checks inside the night tables. Under the bed. Searching for something he doesn't find, as --

Salim's car pulls into the driveway. Salim's Wife gets out --

James rushes downstairs. Hides behind the door, as --

The front door opens. She punches the security code, as --

James grabs her. Covers her mouth with his forearm and puts her in a headlock with his other arm. She bites him. He pushes her down on her stomach and flex cuffs her hands --

James' forearm bleeds from her bite --

JAMES

If you struggle you'll only hurt yourself. Nod if you understand.

She nods --

JAMES (CONT'D)

I'm not here to hurt you. I'm here to ask you questions. If you're honest, I disappear. Understand?

She nods. He lifts her up --

JAMES (CONT'D)

We're going downstairs. Move.

James walks her downstairs --

INT. SALIM'S HOME - BASEMENT

James sits her in Salim's office chair --

JAMES

What happened down here?

SALIM'S WIFE

The day after the fire. They came and took everything.

JAMES

Who?

SALIM'S WIFE
National Police.

JAMES
What was your husband working on?

SALIM'S WIFE
A synthetic influenza immunization.
He was a virologist.

JAMES
People have died over this. Why?

SALIM'S WIFE
His work was dangerous to many
people.

JAMES
Dangerous to who?

SALIM'S WIFE
Pharmaceutical companies.
Governments. Companies that had
approached him to come work for
them. To sell them his work. He
refused.

JAMES
Why wouldn't he sell?

SALIM'S WIFE
He was afraid they would compromise
his work. But he knew they'd come
back. He knew they'd send thieves.

JAMES
If he knew they were coming, he had
to secure his work somewhere else.
Where?

Salim's Wife says nothing. She's clearly hiding something.
James rips off her blindfold. She keeps her eyes closed --

JAMES (CONT'D)
There's nothing I won't do. Do you
understand? Look at me!

She opens. Looks into James' searing, merciless eyes --

JAMES (CONT'D)
Here's what's going to happen.
You're going to tell me where he
stored his backup or I'm going to
slit your wrists and let you bleed
out on this floor.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)
Your boys will come home from
school, find you here, and spend
the rest of their lives wondering
how you could have abandoned them.
I've orphaned children before. I'll
do it again.

Salim's Wife stares at the monster before her. Measuring him.
She remains defiant. James pulls out a razor blade. Grabs her
arm. Presses the blade into her skin, as --

SALIM'S WIFE
No! Stop. Please. There's a safe
deposit box.

JAMES
Where?

SALIM'S WIFE
Credit Suisse.

INT. SALIM'S CAR - DAY

James drives. Salim's Wife in the passenger seat.

EXT. CREDIT SUISSE - DAY

James parks. Salim's Wife gets out and walks into the bank.
James checks his rear views. Then back to the bank.

Salim's Wife exits the bank holding a bag. She walks to the
car. Gets in. Hands James the bag. James drives away.

EXT. PARK - DAY

James looks through the bag: documents, wills, cash, stock
certificates, birth certificates, a pocket drive, and a DVD.
James takes the drive and the DVD --

JAMES
Is this it?

SALIM'S WIFE
Yes. I don't know what's on the
DVD.

JAMES
If we find out there's more, we'll
come for the three of you. You'll
never be safe. Do you understand?

SALIM'S WIFE
That's everything. All we have.

James holds the pocket drive. So small in his hands --

JAMES
Why would you risk your life for
this?

SALIM'S WIFE
Because that's all he left us. I've
got two boys to raise. What you
have in your hands was for our
future. Their future. He told me I
could always sell it.

James keeps the drive and the DVD, hands her the bag with
everything else. She gets out, clutching the bag tight.

James drives away. He sees her in his rear view, sobbing.
Then he catches a glimpse of his own rabid eyes, as --

INT. SUBTERRANEAN PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

James pulls Salim's car into a stall.

INT. SALIM'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

James puts the drive into an SSE pouch. Seals it. Then zips
it into his jacket's inside pocket, as --

EXT. WARSAW STREET - PAYPHONE - NIGHT

James holds Eric's photo. Turns it over. There's the number
and code. Inserts a prepaid phone card. Dials. It rings --

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Yes.

JAMES
Recon. 6-22-34. Mayday.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Location?

JAMES
Warsaw.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Alone?

JAMES
Yes.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Injured?

JAMES
Mobile.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
What's your mission?

JAMES
Natsec priority one. On the run.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Hold please.

Click. James on hold. *Are they tracking him?* His eyes everywhere, checking all the faces in the square, then --

MALE VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*3 am tomorrow night. GPS
coordinates 14.96871, 51.15063*

James writes them down on the back of Eric's photo --

JAMES
Confirm 14.968, 51.150.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Confirmed. Stay in the shadows.

INT. SUBTERRANEAN GARAGE - NIGHT

James walks through the garage towards the motorcycle area. He looks past all the nice ones. Notices a dusty one with a big engine. Perfect.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

James rides with traffic. Constantly checking his rear views.

EXT. TRUCK STOP/GAS STATION - NIGHT

James hands the sleepy Attendant some cash and motions for a prepaid phone and a GPS, as --

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

James drives on through the night.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - NIGHT

James rides through a medieval town. Stores shuttered. Everybody asleep.

EXT. LUSH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

James rides down a dark country road. On one side is dense forest, on the other overgrown, neglected fields.

James pulls onto the grass. Checks the GPS. Seems to be about 2 miles from the RV. He walks the motorcycle into the woods. Lays it down in the thick brush. Camouflages it with foliage. Marks his position on the GPS.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

He walks on the forest side of the road. Hugging the treeline. His knee clicking badly. James checks the GPS. Getting closer. Checks his watch. 2:53am, as --

James hears something. A voice? He looks across the road at the tall grass undulating in the wind. Exhaustion finally pulling him down, as --

JACK (V.O.)

Daddy?

James freezes. Scans the tall grass. Eyes like lasers. Willing himself to see through them, until finally he sees --

A GLOW OF LIGHT deep within. James captivated by the light. And it's as if it's pulling him in, as --

BRIANNE (V.O.)

James.

James crosses the road towards the voices and the light, as --

A truck's headlights bear down on him. James snaps to. Ducks into the bushes, as --

The truck THUNDERS by. James looks back into the tall grass. Nothing but darkness. *What's happening to me?*

James checks the GPS. Eighth of a mile to go. Starts walking. Heartbeat racing. Shallow breaths. Sweating. It all becomes a cacophony of pain, as ---

James hears something behind him. He whirls, as --

Headlights illuminate him. James caught in a car's lights. Face gaunt. Eyes wild. And from the darkness within the car --

VIRGIL

Are you lost?

James looks into the car and sees VIRGIL, 50s, strong, with a distinct military bearing. Scars on his neck. A Glock in his hand. Night Vision around his neck --

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

Hand me your backpack.

JAMES

Can't. Natsec materials.

VIRGIL

You called me. Price of admission.

James tosses Virgil his pack. Virgil motions him in. James gets into the car --

INT. VIRGIL'S CAR - NIGHT

Virgil holds up a wand metal detector --

VIRGIL
Palms on the ceiling, please.

James does as told. Virgil wands James. Beep...

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Take it all out. Slowly.

James pulls out his knife, prepaid phone, pistol, and the GPS. Virgil grabs the GPS and phone. Disables them both.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Keep the weapons. Toss the rest.

James tosses the tech into the woods, and as he does --

Virgil plunges a syringe into James' shoulder. James fights, but Virgil's strong arms hold James off until the injection takes effect. And as James fades out, we --

GO TO BLACK

We hear the beeping of a heart monitor. Heartbeat racing. Dangerously fast. And then it begins to slow... Finally settling at about 50bpm, as --

INT. VIRGIL'S HOUSE - MEDICAL ROOM - NIGHT

James lies up on a cot. IV in each arm. Sensors on his chest. His hands and feet bound to the metal frame. Bandages on his abdominal stab wound and knee.

The heart monitor beeps away. Next to it is a laptop with a computer image of his heart beating. James struggles to free himself, as --

VIRGIL (O.S.)
No need to fight.

Virgil unbinds James' arms and legs --

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
You were thrashing. Didn't want you to hurt yourself.

JAMES
Where's my bag?

Virgil points to the bedside. The contents of his pack laid out on the table. Passport. Cash. Knife. Pistol. Go Pills, and the SSE pouch. James grabs it. Still sealed --

VIRGIL
Was that your mission?

JAMES
Is my mission. Magnetized SSE
pouch. Has to be opened in a magnet
box or everything gets erased.

VIRGIL
Never seen one of those.

JAMES
What are you putting in me?

VIRGIL
Antibiotic drip. And three IV bags
so far. You were at 103. Got you
down to 100.

JAMES
Why the needle back there?

VIRGIL
Because you needed it and you
wouldn't have trusted me. I saw you
were sick and didn't think it could
wait. You can let go now. This is a
safe place. I'm one of you.

James' eyes take the place in. Small X-ray machine. EKG. A
fully stocked cabinet of medical supplies --

JAMES
Hell of a set up here.

VIRGIL
It's been a while since one of
you've come through. But I'm always
ready. You got lucky with the stab.
One inch to the right and youd've
bled out. Your knee's another
story. I cleaned it. Sewed it back
up. Looks like you tore the ACL.
Don't know how you walked on it.
Then there's your heart...

JAMES
What about it?

VIRGIL
You had a heart attack. Probably
just charged right through it.

Virgil points to the laptop image of James' heart --

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
See how this area is discolored.
It's dead tissue.

James stands. But has to grab the wall to keep from falling --

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
You have an infection and your
heart --

JAMES
Looks like it's beating to me.

VIRGIL
You need to rest.

JAMES
I'm on a priority one mission. I
need a clean passport to get me
back. How long will that take?

VIRGIL
Back where?

JAMES
Home.

Virgil looks at James with compassionate eyes --

VIRGIL
My mission here is to help you
start over. I can give you papers.
Contacts. Funds. And a safe place
to relocate. India. Australia.
When people come to me it's not to
go home, it's to move on.

JAMES
I'm on a priority one tasking.

VIRGIL
The world will go on.

James looks at him as if he's insane --

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
You're injured. Sick. And in
tremendous pain. You're not
thinking clearly.

JAMES
I'm trained beyond that. Either
help me or get out of my way.

James yanks the IVs out. Staggers to the table. Packs his
bag. Arms bleeding. Hands trembling. He has to grab the table
to keep from collapsing --

VIRGIL
I'll need 24 hours to get you a
passport.

James considers. He looks down at his scared, bandaged body,
at the heart monitor, and temperature reading. 101.

JAMES
OK.

James sits on the table. Virgil wipes the blood from James'
arms. Puts the IVs back in.

INT. VIRGIL'S HOUSE - MEDICAL ROOM - NIGHT

Virgil hands James a plate of food. Sits at the table beside
the cot with his own plate. Virgil's arms tattooed, scared --

VIRGIL
Your tattoo. ODA 721. Looked your
Unit up. Tip of the spear runners.

JAMES
Mike and I got this when we were on
cool down in the Philippines. They
killed him.

VIRGIL
You feel responsible?

JAMES
I couldn't walk. He had to go out
alone. He was my brother and I let
him die.

VIRGIL
I've been there. I'm sorry.

JAMES
The one who told me about you, I
killed him. He was a Marine with a
family, and I killed him.

James shows Virgil Eric's photo --

VIRGIL
You did what you had to do.

JAMES
He didn't even know who he was
working for.

VIRGIL
They train us to fight for them,
kill for them, run their errands,
and once they're done with us we're
on our own. That's why I'm here.

JAMES

Whatever company he was working for took my entire Unit out. He gave me their kill code before he died.

VIRGIL

So he freed you. You're dead to them. It's over.

JAMES

Now I have the advantage. I just need clean ID to get me home.

VIRGIL

Do you have a family to go back to?

JAMES

A wife and a son. You?

VIRGIL

I had a wife and two girls. But I got caught in a bad spot. Like you. And I couldn't go back. Too dangerous for them.

JAMES

How long you been out here?

VIRGIL

16 years.

JAMES

Do you ever feel like reaching out?

VIRGIL

I don't feel anything anymore.

James silent.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

I understand the drive to complete your mission. I was you. But the code they instill in us serves them, not us. How many priority one taskings? How many missions? How many kills? How much death? How much pain? And for what? Life just goes on.

JAMES

I'll complete my mission or die trying.

VIRGIL

Roger that.

Virgil hooks up 2 fresh IVs --

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

I'm going out to meet my contact
for your passport. There's a fully
encrypted computer in the basement.
Don't email anybody. Remember,
you're dead. Back in 3 hours.

Virgil exits. James sets the timer on his watch. He stares at the computer image of his damaged heart. Fuck. James closes his eyes. Forces tactical sleep, as --

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

James walks through the tall grass. He can't see above it, where he's going, but he still moves forward. The thick blades of grass slide along his body, as --

He sees Brianne and Jack in the distance. They're walking in their own light, along an American suburban street, away from James. James calls out, but they don't hear him. He screams. Nothing. They keep walking hand in hand, as --

The EKG beeps faster --

James runs towards them. Sprinting through the dark, infinite grass -- faster and faster -- the blades of grass slice into his skin like razors -- and the faster he runs, the faster they recede --

The EKG beeping impossibly fast now. Heart POUNDING, as --

James collapses to his knees. He watches them walk away. Getting smaller and smaller. He'll never catch them. His arms, face, and neck bleeding from the cuts, as --

The EKG flatlines. Beeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep --

INT. VIRGIL'S MEDICAL AREA - NIGHT

James rips the sensors off his chest. Pulls out the IVs. Stuffs all his things into his pack. Rushes outside --

EXT. VIRGIL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

James body steams in the frigid air. He secures the pack tight over his shoulders as he forces deep breaths. He checks his watch. 4 hours have elapsed.

He looks out at the trees, their massive branches camouflaging everything from above. No moonlight shines through. The house's lights barely bleed into the woods.

INT. VIRGIL'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Elaborate computer set up. High tech printer. Satellite hookup. 6 cots folded up in the corner.

On the desk a notecard reads "James". Under the notecard are 2 credit cards ready to be pressed.

James notices a wall of 30 or so photographs tacked to the wall. Soldiers who have passed through. First names only marked under each of them.

CLOSE ON THE PHOTOS of the Soldiers. Their faces tired, strained, gaunt. Their haunted, purgatorial eyes captivating.

James stares at these photos. Trying to make sense of all of this. *How many of us are out there?*

James sits at the computer --

ON SCREEN

James Googles "Biota Laboratory". Hits "news". We see the words "industrial accident", "no survivors", "important work destroyed" etc. PHOTOS of the lab's rubble. Men in biohazard suits collecting remains.

James clicks on Salim's name. Reads about him. His stellar record. Awards. Grants. A genius. A PHOTO of him smiling in an immaculate laboratory.

James inserts the DVD --

ON SCREEN

Salim stares right into camera. Dark circles under his eyes. And what follows is pure honesty --

SALIM

If you're watching this, then I'm no longer with you. I tried my best to love you. I'm sorry if my work ever made you feel second. You were too young to understand, but by the time you watch this I hope that you will. I wish I could have left you with a larger inheritance but I hope you will see that there's more to this world than material wealth. As I record this I'm close to completing what I've dedicated my life to. I hope you're proud of what I've done. My intention is to give this vaccine to the world, as a gift. An act of humanity in a greedy, inhumane world --

James ejects the DVD. Salim so convincing. James resets. *Not my mission.*

James' fingers linger over the keyboard. Considering. He types "Facebook". Searches for "Brienne Reed". Her profile PHOTO comes up. A bright photo of Brienne and Jack smiling.

James clicks on the photo but can't get in. "*Brienne only shares information with friends...*" James stares at the photo. A million miles away, as --

Beep. James checks his watch. 6 hours elapsed...

James shifts into damage control. Opens all the closets. Medical supplies. Canned food. Survivalist supplies.

He grabs his old passport, his old credit cards, the cash, GPS, the DVD and zips it all into his pack.

INT. VIRGIL'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - DAWN

James looks out the window at the dirt path leading out. Darkness save for a few shafts of light spearing through the dense canopy above.

VIRGIL'S BATHROOM

James opens the medicine cabinet. Sees prescription vials for Vicodin, Effexor, and Abilify. The anti-depressants give James pause. He pockets the Vicodins, as --

VIRGIL'S BEDROOM

A bed so tightly made you could bounce a quarter off it. James opens the drawers. T-shirts, underwear, and socks folded with military precision.

On the night-table a Vietnam era K-bar. Vials of Ambien and Xanax.

James opens the drawer. Finds a well read Bible. He lifts the Bible and finds a Sig-226 and 2 clips. James grabs it all --

MEDICAL AREA

James slips his knee brace back on. He opens the cabinets. He grabs a handful of syringes and a few vials of Toradol. He loads one up and injects it into his knee.

BACK DOOR

James looks out the back window. Scanning. He opens the door and dashes out --

EXT. VIRGIL'S HOUSE - DAWN

James dashes into the darkness of the woods. He takes a triangulated position -- the house to his left, the path to his right.

From here he can surveil both and he has a clear way out. He camouflages himself and lies on his stomach. Eyes focused on the driveway.

DISSOLVE TO

More light stabbing through the trees. The midday sun above. James remains motionless. Eyes forward.

DISSOLVE TO

DARKNESS

James still in position. His eyes tired. He swallows some Vicodins and Go Pills. Checks his watch: 12 hours...

Branches snap. Sounds coming from the darkness. Closer and closer. James blinks. Trying to see, as --

4 MEN approach the house with tactical precision. NV on their faces. Weapons ready. No words. Hand signals. Pros. They split. 2 to the front door. 2 to the back, as --

FLASH - BANG! Massive concussion blasts from within. The Men burst inside and move through the house. James spots them clearing the house through the windows.

They exit the house. Two of them holding duffel bags full of whatever they gathered from within. We hear them speaking what sounds like German? Russian?

Two go back inside. A minute later they come out. And all 4 of them move back from where they came, as --

FLAMES rise within the house. Quickly engulfing it --

James stays low. Watches the Men move back from where they came, disappearing into the darkness, as --

BOOM! An explosion collapses the roof and sends a massive ball of flame into the trees above --

James stays tight to the ground. Making sure they're gone. But the fire creeps closer. The flames rising, as --

James backs away from the house. His eyes on a tactical sweep, but the flames so hot, he turns, and is startled by his own Shadow. Raises his gun on it. Jesus. Frayed nerves. James limps away, as --

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

James lifts the motorcycle out of the brush.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

James' motorcycle follows the winding country road. His headlight the only illumination in this endless darkness --

*FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
Flight 332 for Washington, Dulles
will begin boarding in just a few
minutes.*

Suddenly we're jarred out of the darkness and into the fluorescent light of an --

AIRPORT

James stands before a self ticketing kiosk. It's prompting him to swipe his credit card. James holds the card. Considering... This is it... He's about to announce himself.

James swipes his credit card. ON SCREEN we see "**confirming reservation...**" and the spinning wheel... Spinning... Spinning... James looks around. Moment of truth. Spinning... Spinning... And finally --

"Reservation Confirmed". A boarding pass spits out of the machine. James grabs his papers and walks towards the gates. He knows he's just announced himself. His eyes everywhere, but there are no alarms, nobody coming. He gets in line with everybody else. Just another weary traveller, as --

INT. DULLES AIRPORT - GATE - DAY

James walks off the jetway and into the boarding area. His eyes scan the waiting faces, but they all look past him. James alternately relieved and discouraged as he makes his way through the throng of Passengers.

INT. DULLES AIRPORT - CUSTOMS

James gets into the long Customs line. Here we go, as we --

CUT TO

CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV - DAY

A bright sunny day. Jack on a bicycle. His face anxious. Brianne gives him a push. Runs at his side, balancing him. He starts pedaling. Wobbly at first, but he pushes, pedaling harder and harder, a very serious look on his face, an intensity we recognize, and he quickly pulls away from Brianne. She stops and watches him go, as --

Jack rides directly towards the SCOPE POV. CLOSE on his thrilled, smiling face, as --

SCOPE POV reads: 82 yards to target. Brianne and Jack are being watched, as --

INT. DULLES AIRPORT - CUSTOMS - DAY

CUSTOMS AGENT motions for James to come forward. James hands him his passport. Agent looks at James, then at the passport, then back at James. Scans the passport --

CUSTOMS AGENT
Nice trip to Poland?

JAMES
Yes, sir.

CUSTOMS AGENT
Cold?

JAMES
Very.

Beep. Customs Agent hands James back his passport, as --

CUSTOMS AGENT
Welcome home.

INT. AIRPORT GARAGE - NIGHT

James sees his motorcycle right where he left it. He reaches into the exhaust and pulls out the key. Rides out.

INT. UNIT STORAGE BIN - NIGHT

James codes the door and enters the 5 x 5 room. Metal shelves line the walls. On them are laptops, cell phones, duffel bags, weapon cases.

James turns on a laptop and a satellite modem device. Types in a numeric address that takes him to a black page with two lines: "Name" and "Code". James codes in. Then the screen prompts him to place his 3 middle fingers on the touchpad. Computer scans them: "ACCESS DENIED"

James repeats the steps. "ACCESS DENIED". And now the screen goes gray. The computer frozen. James' mind racing, as --

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

James flies down the highway.

EXT. CORPORATE PLAZA - NIGHT

James stops at the edge of the empty parking lot. Remains in the shadows. Considering...

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE BUILDING - LOBBY

James enters the lobby. It's empty. Abandoned. No security. Nothing. Cables dangle from the ceiling where security cameras hung. James moves through the lobby and towards --

THE GLOBAL FUSION CENTER

Deserted. Computers and tech gone. Only hundreds of sliced up cables and overturned desks and chairs remain.

GRAY'S OFFICE

James pushes the door open. All that's left is torn carpet and the outlines of the framed photos he had on the wall. James looks out the window at the Capitol Building and Washington Monument lit up in the distance.

EXT. WOODS - DIRT PATH - DAWN

James rides the motorcycle down a narrow dirt path. He stops. Turns the bike off. Rests it against a tree.

EXT. JAMES' TRAILER - DAWN

James approaches his trailer tactically. Gun ready.

INT. JAMES'S TRAILER - DAWN

James enters. Shades drawn to black. Dead silence within. James flips on a light. Electro-stim machine. Oxygen tent. Plastic utensils. Home. Just as he left it. He unzips his pack. Removes the SSE pouch. Holds it. *Now what?*

EXT. JAMES'S TRAILER - DAY

James lifts the wet tarp off a beaten down Jeep.

EXT. GAS STATION/CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

James fills four 5 gallon drums with gasoline. He tops off the cans and straps them into the back of his Jeep.

EXT. JAMES' TRAILER - DAWN

James finishes pouring all the gas into the camper's external generator tank. He walks towards the front door, and sees --

An ENVELOPE taped to the door. James pulls his gun and spins. Scans the woods. Nothing but trees --

James grabs the envelope. Opens it. A typed note reads:

If you want answers. Tomorrow night. 313 Indian Field Road. Greenwich, Conn. Matthew Lampert. Once you've seen what you need to see, contact me at (703) 777-2132. A Brother.

INT. JAMES' TRAILER - DAY

James Googles "Matthew Lampert". We see "American businessman", "Philanthropist", "Chairman and CEO of Freedom Hedge Fund", "\$6 Billion fund". "11th largest fund in the world" James scrolls through photos of Lampert.

James does a Google Earth search of the address. There it is. A fucking mansion. James studies the sprawling property as --

CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV - DAY

Brianne sands the outside of a small house under a merciless Texas sun. Sanding layers of old paint off the siding. It's all over her sweaty arms. Jack hands her a wet towel, and she wipes the paint off herself, as --

SCOPE POV reads: 47 yards to target

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

James rides his motorcycle on a country road. Passes a sign: **Welcome to Greenwich, Connecticut.**

EXT. GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT - NIGHT

Supermansions lie beyond impeccably manicured hedges and lawns. One bigger than the next. Security gates manned by Guards. It's as if we've entered a different world, some kind of modern day Versailles.

EXT. INDIAN FIELD ROAD - NIGHT

James rides past even more obscene supermansions and arrives at what seems like the biggest yet. A massive gate protects it. He stops in the shadows, as --

An Aston Vanquish pulls up to the gate. GUARDS check the list. Gates open. The Aston roars inside. James notes the security cameras and sensors. Rides off.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

James pulls his bike into the woods. Camouflages it, as --

EXT. WATER'S EDGE - NIGHT

SCOPE POV of the MANSION from across the bay. Distance reads 1.14 miles. We see 7 MEN being serviced by 20 or so STAFF. James scans the grounds. Horse stables. Outdoor pool. Indoor pool. Eight car garage. Tennis court. Security patrols on the edges of the property.

EXT. WATER - NIGHT

James swims towards the house.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

James sides up to the Yacht. Holds onto the ladder. Remains in the water. In the shadows. He lifts his scope, as --

SCOPE POV of the GROUNDS: Security GUARDS patrol the edges of the property.

SCOPE POV of the DINNER PARTY: Cigars, tans, and smiles. Massive heaters glow above them. James scans the faces. There's Lampert at the head of the table. The other FACES unfamiliar but all glow with that unmistakable sheen of prosperity, as --

A beautiful WOMAN and three CHILDREN walk out. The Children kiss Lampert, say goodnight to the others and go back into the house.

James scans the property, as --

A BUTLER leads a MAN out to the party. Lampert rises, the rest of the men follow. They all start clapping.

SCOPE POV of the Man walking towards the party. Backlit, we can't make out his face, until --

MIKE steps out of the shadows and into the party's glow. His arm in a sling. He's greeted like a conquering hero.

The Waiters bring out Champagne. Time for a toast. Mike tells them a story. Everybody impressed with whatever Mike's saying. Handshakes. Backslaps. Mike's a made man now. And then it's more Champagne and cigars, as

James remains in the shadowy water. Freezing. Watching all of this. Trying to make sense of it.

And then it's over. Everybody gets up. Starts out. Lampert and Mike head into the house, as --

James glides silently towards the shore -- belly crawls onto the beach -- and continues his crawl up the lawn...

INT. LAMPERT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

James enters the office. Mud caked and soaked, dripping on the marble floor.

Lampert's back is turned as he rants at somebody on the phone. A a blur of moving numbers on Bloomberg monitors in front of him --

We see Guards patrolling on the security monitors. On the wall are photos of him with the Clintons, Bush 1 and 2, Obama, Putin, LeBron James, Lance Armstrong, Bono...

James stands and waits. The foul, low tide smell coming off him reaches Lampert. He turns. Sees James. Lampert initially shocked, then he covers. Hangs up --

JAMES

Don't bother with a panic button.
I'll snap your neck before anybody
gets close.

LAMPERT
Can I get you a towel? Some dry
clothes?

JAMES
You know who I am?

LAMPERT
I do. I see you're not resting in
peace.

Lampert's eyes peek at the Guards on his monitors --

JAMES
They don't know I'm here. Where's
Mike?

LAMPERT
He left with the others.

JAMES
What the hell was he doing here?

Lampert smirks at James' naivete --

LAMPERT
You don't know who I am, do you?

JAMES
Only what I've read.

LAMPERT
Then you don't know anything.

JAMES
Why don't you tell me?

It's not a question. And Lampert not one to take orders.
Ever. But something in James' eyes and bearing --

LAMPERT
I suppose you deserve some answers.
I run a hedge fund and we have an
especially large position in
Pharmex, which is in third stage
trials on a new flu symptom drug.
FDA approval is imminent, and it's
gonna be a blockbuster. Over 2
billion dollars in development
costs so far. We received intel
that Salim was working on a
synthetic vaccine that would have
submarined our drug. I couldn't
allow that to happen.

JAMES
So you blackmailed Mike.

LAMPERT

Mike came to me. Wanted investors for his own private intel shop. I told him my problem and he offered me a solution.

JAMES

Salim was never a terror threat.

LAMPERT

He was a threat to our investment.

JAMES

We killed Salim under your orders?

LAMPERT

That was Mike's call. I think he was trying to impress me.

JAMES

So Mike contacted you from Warsaw.

LAMPERT

I had a plane waiting for him.

JAMES

What did he get out of this?

LAMPERT

Ten million dollars and a partner in his new company.

Lampert amused at the confused rage in James' eyes --

LAMPERT (CONT'D)

Welcome to the real world. Ambition and desperation are the mothers of betrayal. I see it every day.

JAMES

I killed an innocent man. People died. Lives ruined. For your fucking profits.

LAMPERT

Forgive my insensitivity, but you've done quite a bit of killing over the years, haven't you?

JAMES

I operated under orders. Protecting national security.

LAMPERT

And what do you think you did here? My interests "national security" are one and the same.

(MORE)

LAMPERT (CONT'D)

My fund manages teacher pensions in California and Texas, police pensions in seven states, municipal pensions in five cities. The retirements of a great many people depend upon my success. If our drug gets trumped plants close. Research jobs. Gone. Manufacturing jobs. Gone. Salesmen. Out of work. This mission protected about 1,800 American jobs. If you extrapolate, that's about 9,000 lives you've protected.

JAMES

Once you and Mike had what you wanted, you sent a kill team after me.

LAMPERT

That's something you'll have to take up with Gray.

JAMES

Gray?

LAMPERT

You don't know anything, do you? Talk to him. This is as far as I go. He's a very dangerous man. Even to me.

(then)

Let's get down to the real reason you're here. I assume you've prepared some kind of blackmail offer whereby if anything happens to you or your family, troublesome information will be released about me. Give me your account information and let's do this deal.

JAMES

I'm not for sale.

LAMPERT

Everybody's for sale. I've seen your financials. Moral high ground is real estate you can't afford, pal. Don't let some bullshit Bushido soldier's code get in the way of what you need. I'll give you the same thing I gave Mike. Ten million. What other options do you have? No money. No credit. High school education. Broken down body. You're a perishable commodity.

JAMES
I'm not worried about myself.

LAMPERT
Then consider your wife and little boy. Their security.

JAMES
You threatening my family?

LAMPERT
No more than you're threatening me.

Stalemate. Lampert's devious eyes calculating. Clearly threatened by James' recalcitrance. James stares him down. Disgusted. Fuck you. He starts out, as --

LAMPERT (CONT'D)
Your friend got his American Dream, don't you want yours?

JAMES
I lived mine.

And he's out, leaving who knows what danger in his wake --

EXT. LAMPERT'S MANSION GATES - NIGHT

James hobbles down the long, cobblestone driveway. He looks up at the beautifully illuminated trees, and at a spotlight American flag whipping in the wind.

James approaches the towering gates...and they sweep open for him. James limps through. They close right behind him. The Guards' eyes all over James as he moves down the dark road.

EXT. BRIANNE'S HOME - NIGHT

CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV of BRIANNE and JACK through a window. Jack is drawing. Brianne prepares dinner. Stills are taken. Freezing images of each of them, as --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

James rides past a sign that says "Thank you for Visiting Greenwich". As soon as he crosses the town line, the road goes from perfectly flat to cracked and pot-holed.

EXT. AVENUE CONNECTICUT - NIGHT

James rides along a blighted commercial avenue. Fast food joints on every corner. Laundromats. Liquor stores. Homeless sleeping on benches, as --

EXT. GAS STATION/CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

James fills his tank. A warm neon sign in the window glows "LOTTO! YOU CAN'T WIN IF YOU DON'T PLAY". A line of PEOPLE stand in the cold, waiting to buy their tickets.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

James flies down the highway. A lone figure tucked tight on his motorcycle. On through the night, as --

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE - WASHINGTON, DC - DAWN

James rides past the White House, and continues up the empty avenue towards the Capitol Building. He rides past it, into East DC, and it's as if he's crossed some kind of DMZ as the neighborhood turns rough, all night bodegas, Payday Advance stores, all this in the gleaming Capitol Building's shadow.

EXT. D STREET - DAWN

James stops his bike in front of some anonymous apartment complex. He texts: "HERE"

James stays on his bike. Eyes scanning. Ready to fly, as --

Gray exits the elevator. Sees James. Walks towards him. James' eyes scan the area. *Is this a trap?*

GRAY
I'm alone. Unarmed.

Gray opens his coat. Turns around --

GRAY (CONT'D)
I assume you have questions for me.
Why don't you come upstairs?

Something so decent and paternal about him. An honesty that can't be quantified, as --

INT. GRAY'S APARTMENT - DAWN

Gray opens the door and motions for James to enter. James scans for an ambush. Nothing. He steps inside. Gray closes the door, as --

James slams Gray against the wall. Flex cuffs him. Gray doesn't resist, as if expecting this. James puts him on the floor, draws his gun, and clears the one bedroom apartment --

Bookshelves three deep with history books line the walls. A simple bedroom. Photos of Children growing up, through college. Little League, graduations, weddings. Gray oddly absent in all of them.

Another wall is covered with framed American flags. Each has a brass plate below it; *Panama 1989, Desert Storm 1991, Somalia 1993, Camp Rhino Afg 2004, Firebase Razorback 2008, FOB Blackjack 2010*. Unit photos beside each of them.

One of the photos is of ODA 721. James, Mike, Mason, and 3 others in full combat load. *Camp Lightning 2011*.

James points the gun at Gray's head --

JAMES

How long 'til the kill team gets here?

GRAY

There's nobody coming.

James' tired eyes read Gray's impossible poker face. He keeps the gun on Gray. Ready for anything --

GRAY (CONT'D)

I've been tracking you ever since you got home. I sent you to Lampert. If I wanted you eliminated, you wouldn't be here.

JAMES

You sent them after me downrange.

GRAY

I had no choice. I assumed you were with Mike. We intercepted his comms to Lampert from the lab. Once he went rogue, I had to close the entire operation down.

James' wild eyes everywhere. Windows. Terrace. Peephole --

JAMES

Why should I trust you now?

GRAY

Because you want to. You came here. Why?

JAMES

To complete my mission.

James tosses the SSE pouch and DVD at Gray --

GRAY

I'm sorry I doubted you.

JAMES

So you and Lampert are in business together?

GRAY

Lampert provided our Unit with operational funds for 6 years. He was our primary benefactor until recent events severed our relationship. He requested direct action on Salim. I said no. Mike saw an opportunity to make a name for himself and did just that.

JAMES

I thought I was serving my country.

GRAY

You were.

JAMES

I served Lampert.

GRAY

In order to serve our country the way we do, we have to serve people like him. Democracy to the highest bidder. It's the ugly reality. This is a deep black Unit. No official budget, no books, no limiting oversight. The orders come from that big White House down the street. The way we remain black is by self funding. We do this is by allying ourselves with wealthy individuals who need our help. And in exchange we get operational funds. In today's climate, it's the only way to get the dirty, necessary jobs done.

JAMES

You killed Virgil.

GRAY

No.

FLASH TO

INT. VIRGIL'S CAR - NIGHT

Virgil speeding. He sees a car following him. Closing in. Virgil cranks the wheel and jumps the car into a field. Speeds through the field, kicking up dirt, just destroying his car. The pursuing car follows him into the field. Both cars banging through the uneven field.

Virgil sees the pursuing car's damage. A twinkle in his eye as he floors it. Pulls away from the chasing car. Then he cranks the wheel and pulls the e-brake -- his car skids out 90 degrees -- the pursuing car SLAMS into Virgil's. T-bones it -- both cars tangled, smoking, as --

Four MEN get out of the now totalled pursuit car. Weapons trained on Virgil. Virgil bleeding badly. But he smiles to himself -- mission accomplished -- then he raises a gun to his head. Peace, finally, as --

BACK TO SCENE

GRAY
Virgil bought you time. Protected you.

JAMES
And Mike?

GRAY
He made a strong play. And now he has a powerful ally. I was ordered to stand down.

All this just inconceivable to James --

JAMES
Why didn't you tell me how it worked?

GRAY
Because I needed you pure.

JAMES
How many missions like this?

GRAY
Of your eleven taskings, only two were pure corporate.

James tormented. Crestfallen. The end of innocence.

GRAY (CONT'D)
Do you want to meet the President? Talking to him may assuage your conscience.

JAMES
I've met the President.

GRAY
Not this one.

JAMES
What's the difference?

Point made. James' adrenaline fading. Drained. And it finally becomes clear that nobody's coming --

JAMES (CONT'D)
This your safe house?

GRAY

This is my home. Two divorces. 5
kids through college. All on 36
years of government salary. But I'm
not complaining. It's all I need.

(then)

Let's get you fixed up and back
downrange. Where you belong.

James looks at the framed photos of Gray's Children. Sees his
reflection in a photo of a BOY in a Yankees uniform --

GRAY (CONT'D)

Day comes for all of us when we
look in the mirror and don't see
what we want to see, we see who we
are. You were born to do this.

James stares off. A faraway look in his eyes --

GRAY (CONT'D)

It's the same thing you were doing
in uniform.

JAMES

Doesn't feel the same.

GRAY

You need to come to terms with the
fact that we live in a world of
compromise.

JAMES

It's not a world I can live in.

GRAY

You don't have a choice.

James snaps open his knife, cuts the cuffs off Gray --

JAMES

We all have that choice.

James walks out the door and down the long hallway, as --

GRAY (O.S.)

Careful out there, son.

CUT TO

A CHILD'S PAINTING of a larger than life soldier. It reads
"**Daddy**". Water stained, the colors run into each other. A
hand reaches down and lifts it, revealing --

EXT. CEMETARY - DAWN

A headstone. Small American flags on sticks flap in the wind. Dead flowers litter the area --

JAMES REED
SFC
US Army Special Forces
1979-2013
Silver Star
Purple Heart
Beloved Father and Husband

And that's it. Life reduced to a few lines. James holds Jack's painting. The paint bleeds onto his hands, as --

WE HEAR CHILDREN PLAYING. BEAUTIFUL LAUGHTER, AS --

CUT TO

A BRIGHT, CHILD PAINTED **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** SIGN hanging on a house's door. PULL BACK TO REVEAL --

EXT. MIKE'S HOME - DUSK

A Jumper in the yard. CHILDREN laughing and playing inside. Others running around. A CLOWN makes balloon animals, as --

Mike's Son sits in his wheelchair. Balloons tied to it. A birthday hat on his head, as --

Mike and Christine bring out a birthday cake and EVERYBODY sings to Mike's Son --

James watches all of this from the wet, thorny bushes across the street.

EXT. WOODS - DAWN

James walks through the foggy woods. He hears footsteps. Heavy breathing. Somebody running towards him, as --

Mike emerges from the fog. On his morning run. James steps into the path. Mike stops. Reflexively reaches into his sweats but stops short of drawing. Mike reads James' eyes --

MIKE
Lampert told me to expect you.

JAMES
He protects his assets. You run with a gun now?

MIKE
Why didn't you call?

JAMES
Why didn't you tell me?

MIKE
Because I couldn't afford to blow this. And I knew you wouldn't understand.

JAMES
You left me behind.

MIKE
You were combat ineffective and I needed to complete my mission. I knew you'd make it back.
(off James' glare)
We won. You won. Don't you see? Brianne and Jack got your insurance. Lampert made you a life changing offer. Take it. Go home to your family. And let's start this company. Together.

James stares at Mike. Impossible to reconcile the man before him with his best friend, his "brother" --

JAMES
What the fuck happened to you?

MIKE
What happened? I got tired of running errands for billionaires. Risking my life, my family's future, for what? To line their pockets. "National security" is a big rock they hide a lot of dirty shit under. They used us.

JAMES
And you used me.

MIKE
You came to me. You wanted in.

JAMES
Not like this. And you know it.

MIKE
I have a family to provide for. A son who's going to lose both legs from the knees down. Who's going to need special care for the rest of his fucking life. So, yeah, I did what I had to do to secure my family's future. I took my shot. Just like everybody else. And here's some advice: Do the same thing. Get selfish. Get yours.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)
'Cause that's the American way.
That's what we've been defending
our whole lives. 'Cause as soon as
soon as you're no longer useful,
they'll cut you loose and never
look back.

JAMES
Just like you.

And there's nothing left to say --

MIKE
What are you thinking? You gonna
out this? Blow the whistle? You
think anybody cares?

JAMES
I don't know what I'm gonna do.

Edgy silence metastasizes between them...

Mike reaches for his gun, as --

James rushes Mike. Punches the gun away. And now we're into a
savage fight. No mercy, no limits, as --

Mike kicks James' bad knee. CRACK. James falls to the dirt.
Mike snaps open a knife. Thrusts it into James' stomach --

James flips Mike to the ground. They grapple. Desperate,
merciless, brutal blows. Mike scrambles away and grabs the
gun -- he raises it -- James dead to rights, as --

BANG!

The tree behind Mike splinters and splatters with blood. Mike
collapses. On instinct, James covers Mike. Scans the forest --

MIKE
One of yours?

JAMES
No. Stay low.

James puts his knee on Mike's wound -- keeping pressure on it
as he reaches for Mike's gun --

MIKE
Fuck. How bad?

James tears open Mike's jacket. Shot in the sternum. James
presses on the wound. Trying to staunch the bleeding but the
blood keeps pumping. James's eyes everywhere, as --

Mike fading out. James drops the gun and puts both hands on
the wound. Hard pressure. Blood pumps through his fingers --

MIKE (CONT'D)

Fuck...

Mike goes limp. James desperately pumps his chest. But he's gone. His dead eyes stare vacantly into the sky.

James stands. His knees wobbly. He drops his gun. Holds his arms out and waits for the kill shot. Welcoming it...

But it doesn't come. James' dead eyes search for the sniper. Nothing but trees. Then --

ASSET step out from behind a tree 30 yards away. Sniper rifle in hand. Their eyes meet. Asset takes his rifle apart, his eyes never leaving James'. He puts the parts into his pack. Done. Asset nods at James. Respect. Then dashes off.

James dials Mike's phone. 911. Drops it. Limpes away, as we --

CUT TO

CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV - NIGHT

Brianne and Jack eat dinner on a folding card table. A look inside the house reveals stacked moving boxes and more temporary furniture. But there's an undeniable warmth here. This is a home.

Jack grabs some papers from his little backpack. Anxious to show them to Brianne. We see they're paintings he did at school. She musses his hair and kisses him, as --

SCOPE POV reads: 9 yards to target

EXT. TRUCK REST STOP - DAY

James pulls his motorcycle to the back.

INT. REST STOP BATHROOM - DAY

James bolts the steel door. The floor soaked with filthy water. James stands in front of the dirty, greasy mirror. He wipes the dirt off the mirror so he can see his reflection.

James pulls a bandage and a razor blade out of his pack. He peels his bloody shirt off. Bruises all over his torso, and a still bleeding stab wound in his ribs. He watches the blood drip down his torso and into the foul water he's standing in.

And now he does something we've never seen him do. He takes a deep look into himself. Caught in a moment he's been avoiding his entire life. He can't escape himself now. His eyes burn with confusion and self hatred.

James' eyes drawn to his Semper Fratres tattoo. He lets the white bandage drop into the water and brings the razor blade up to the tattoo. Cuts into his arm, into the tattoo, slicing away at it until there's nothing left.

He stares at his sliced up shoulder. Blood streams down his arm. He grabs his own neck. His thick carotid artery pulsing. He brings the razor up. His eyes resolved, until --

He sees the weathered, scared American flag tattoo on his other shoulder. It stops him, but then a scary resolution sets on his face, and he lifts the razor up, as --

A BRIGHT SUN shocks us out of the darkness --

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - SCHOOL - DAY

CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV of Brianne standing with other PARENTS. Something is said and everybody laughs. Brianne's face open and serene, a long way from where we last saw her. New friends. A new life, as --

CROSSHAIR SCOPE POV of Jack walking out of school with his FRIENDS. He takes Brianne's hand and pulls her towards the ice cream truck. They each get one, then start walking down the block. Closer and closer to the SCOPE POV --

And now the POV shifts from SCOPE POV to a DIRECT EYE POV through a CAR'S TINTED WINDSHIELD, as --

Jack explains something to Brianne. Beautiful, innocent, enthusiasm on his face, as we REVERSE ON --

JAMES' pained, purgatorial eyes in the rear view mirror. Nature's impulse pulling him towards them, but something much stronger keeping him away. A man at war with himself. A fugitive tear rolls down his face, as he comes to his painful conclusion --

GRAY (O.S.)
*Day comes for all of us when we
 look in the mirror and don't see
 what we want to see, we see who we
 are.*

James starts the car. Pulls a U-turn. And drives away. Brianne and Jack get smaller and smaller and smaller in the rear view mirror, until finally, they're gone.

EXT. DESOLATE INDUSTRIAL BEACH - PRE-DAWN

An industrial port beach. Neon billboards glow in the pre-dawn light. Massive tankers moored. Pipelines snake into the ocean. Factories pump smoke into the sky. Oil rigs dot the horizon.

James stands on the beach. Bearded. His hair longer. He stares out at the rough, black sea.

We see more raw, thick, healing scars all over his body. His Unit tattoo now nothing but a web of scar tissue. And as the camera moves around him we see that the faded, scared, American flag tattoo remains.

The sun crests the horizon behind him and casts his Shadow into the oil slicked ocean. He stares at his towering Shadow, leading his way. He steps into it, wading through thick seaweed and swirling trash, as --

A rusty can of Coke bumps into his leg. He grabs it. "**A product of the USA**" written on it. James tosses it aside and continues farther into the surf.

He starts swimming. Hard. With purpose. With mission. A tall wave bears down on him. He dives under it and continues out to sea. Powering through the swells. Swimming out farther and farther. Madness, as --

Over the sound of rough surf and wind, a phone rings...

GRAY (O.S.)

Yes?

JAMES (O.S.)

I want back in.

GRAY (O.S.)

Welcome home.

James continues out farther and farther. A lone swimmer fighting through this rough, infinite, black sea.

FADE TO BLACK