

BLACK BOX

by  
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The ROAR of twin diesel engines as we --

FADE IN:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

A commercial FISHING TRAWLER bobs across heavy chop. More rust than boat.

QUICK CUTS --

as the European crew hoist up nets filled with their catch. Hard, beaten faces.

A SHADOW suddenly falls over the deck -- fishermen looking to the sky as a:

A BOEING 747-200B

SCREAMS overhead -- SHOOTs past them -- and HITS the water with a HUGE CRASH -- wing and the fuselage SNAPPING off and BURSTING into flames.

A massive wave swallows the plane and it sinks to:

THE OCEAN FLOOR

vomiting debris: luggage, chairs, bodies. The impact sends up a thick cloud of dust and dirt.

When the haze washes away, we see a familiar blue stripe across the plane's body -- along with the words:

"THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA"

Air Force One has just gone down.

SNAP TO --

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - MID SECTION CABIN - SAME

An underwater tomb. We swim through twisted metal, past overhead bins hanging open, to a cabin where at least THIRTY CORPSES are still in their seats, oxygen masks suspended in the murky underwater space -- to arrive at:

A WOMAN

by a window -- gorgeous face framed by floating angelic blonde hair.

A light catches her WEDDING RING -- still glistening.

SMASH TO --

BLACK. MAIN TITLES:

BLACK BOX

GO TO --

EXT. BROOKLYN - ESTABLISHING - DAY

As we SOAR over the Brooklyn Bridge to arrive atop the limestone townhouses of Park Slope -- an ALARM BLARES.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

An alarm clock reads 6:30 am. A hand soon enters frame. Snaps it off. Golden light frames:

ALEX BISHOP

34, handsome, strong and resolute. He stretches and flips over to his other side. Finds his six-year old daughter EMMA in bed beside him -- already wide-awake -- staring directly into his eyes -- excited to start the day. Cute. Precocious.

EMMA

Hi.

Alex, half-awake, can only manage a smirk.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

CLOSE ON -- A TV

as it switches on. *Carmen Sandiego*. But just as quickly it shuts back off.

Emma looks up at Alex -- disgruntled.

EMMA

Mommy says it's OK as long as I eat all my cereal.

ALEX

Sorry, sweetie. My rules today: no TV at the table.

EMMA

But it's educational.

ALEX

Write your Congressman.

He fixes her cereal and toast. Takes the seat at the breakfast nook across from her. Starts reading an online news story on his i-Pad.

We note the publication: *FOUNDATION* -- and the byline: BY ALEX BISHOP.

EMMA  
Daddy?

ALEX  
Yeah, sweetie?

EMMA  
Are you gonna lose your job?

Alex looks up.

ALEX  
What? Where'd you get that?

EMMA  
Penny's dad says journalism is a dying industry.

ALEX  
Oh and what does Penny's dad do?

EMMA  
He plays shortstop for the Mets.

ALEX  
Yeah, well, tell Penny's dad so is playing for the Mets.

Alex's phone buzzes from the other room.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
(rising; leaving)  
Finish your cereal.

And as soon as he steps out of the kitchen -- Emma switches back on the TV. Trouble-maker.

INT. FOYER - SECONDS LATER

As Alex picks his charging cell phone off a small table. Checks the display. Answers.

ALEX  
Hey Leo, what's up?  
(listens)  
No, I'm with my daughter. I told Noah I'd be in at 10. Why, what's going on?

Suddenly -- the house phone RINGS. Whatever Leo is saying we can see from Alex's side that he's agitated.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
 Wait, wait, slow down, I gotta grab  
 the house phone. Hold up a second.

Alex moves back into:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

And picks up the land line -- his back to Emma and the TV.

ALEX  
 Hello.  
 (listens)

EMMA (O.S.)  
 Daddy.

ALEX  
 No, I haven't heard from her yet.

EMMA (O.S.)  
 Daddy.

ALEX  
 No, I think I would know --

EMMA  
Dad.

Alex turns --

ALEX  
 Emma, I'm on the --

-- and stops short when he sees Emma's face: a mix of  
 confusion and fear. He follows her eye-line to:

THE TELEVISION

where we see that her program has been replaced by BREAKING  
 NEWS -- featuring a report on the Air Force One crash.

Alex is instantly GUTSTRUCK. He hangs up the phone -- in  
SHOCK. Steps closer to the television -- passing:

A PHOTOGRAPH

taped to the fridge behind him: Alex, Emma and the blonde we  
 recognize from Air Force One.

Meet LISA BISHOP, Alex's wife.

RESUME ALEX:

stunned silent -- looking at the TV -- in disbelief -- then catching his daughter's face -- eyes welling -- world SPINNING. Off which -- everything gets SPED UP -- as we SLAM TO --

A SERIES OF QUICK IMAGES:

1) PRESIDENT ALAN SINGER

boarding Air Force One -- waving to TV cameras.

COMMENTARY (V.O.)

Horrible news coming in: we have unconfirmed reports that Air Force One has crashed --

2) A FOX NEWS REPORT

featuring their chief WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT:

CORRESPONDENT

President Alan Singer along with his Chief of Staff, National Security Advisor and 43 other VIP's, were returning to Washington from Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan when --

3) A SH-60 SEAHAWK MILITARY RESCUE HELICOPTER

shooting over the Atlantic Ocean -- where a MASSIVE RESCUE/SALVAGE OPERATION is underway: dozens of NAVY and COAST GUARD vessels at the AFO crash site -- as helicopters BUZZ overhead -- draft CHURNING the water.

COMMENTARY (V.O.)

This is an unspeakable tragedy -- a very terrifying day for America, the world.

4) NBC NIGHTLY NEWS

featuring BRIAN WILLIAMS.

BRIAN WILLIAMS

Pentagon officials confirm the increased DEFCON level to 3, the highest since the September 11 attacks --

5) THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

addresses reporters from behind a podium in the Pentagon's DOD Press Office -- somber.

## SEC DEF

It's still too early to speculate as to why the plane crashed. A full scale investigation is currently underway. Rest assured, we will get answers --

## 6) UNDERWATER

we see DIVERS moving in and out of Air Force One's TAIL SECTION -- coming out with:

## THE FLIGHT DATA RECORDER

coated with heat-resistant bright orange paint for high visibility -- its underwater locator beacon still BLINKING.

## COMMENTARY (V.O.)

To say again, President Alan Singer is now confirmed dead. Per the 25th Amendment, Vice President Howard Dreyfuss has been sworn in --

## 7) THE FBI DIRECTOR

answers questions from the White House press pool.

## FBI DIRECTOR

-- no, we have no evidence to suggest we are under attack. There has been no claim, no intelligence to support a theory of terrorism --

## 8) MILITARY CRASH INVESTIGATORS

operating out of a CLASSIFIED LOCATION pour over Air Force One wreckage -- laid out before them like puzzle pieces.

## COMMENTARY (V.O.)

Three weeks since the crash of Air Force One, military investigators are still piecing together what happened that fateful day. Meanwhile, an independent, bipartisan commission is being created by congressional legislation to prepare a full and complete account of the circumstances --

## 8) THE FLIGHT DATA RECORDER

is displayed during a press conference -- bombarded with photo flashes. An ABC NEWS CORRESPONDENT reports:

## ABC NEWS

Today, the 11-person AFO Commission released de-classified portions of the flight data recorder recovered from the wreckage of Air Force One. The two voices you will hear belong to its captain, Colonel Joseph Turner and First Officer, Lt. Mitchell Hodges.

## 9) A TRANSCRIPT

appears over a still of Air Force One and a file photo of its captain, COLONEL JOSEPH TURNER, and first officer, LT. MITCHELL HODGES -- both career Air Force.

The following recording cuts in and out of STATIC and WARNING SOUNDS:

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Hydro pressure is all lost.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
We're not gonna make it.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Affirmative, I declare a full emergency.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Mayday! Air Force One. Mayday!

STATIC fills the soundtrack -- replaced by the hymn "For All the Saints" -- as we GO TO --

## 10) LISA BISHOP'S FUNERAL

Friends and family in attendance. No dry eyes. Alex sits -- holding Emma's hand -- solemn. The coffin is draped with an American flag.

COMMENTARY (V.O.)  
Two years after the crash of Air Force One, the AFO Commission prepares to release their final 600 page report on the tragedy that took 92 American lives.

## 11) AFO COMMISSION HEARING

The 11 people that make up the Air Force One (AFO) Commission stand before us. They are comprised of former Senators, Governors and Congressmen.

The chairman is the former Secretary of State, MARTIN LAUER, 50's, distinguished, and fully aware of the responsibility that has befallen his shoulders.

MARTIN LAUER

After an exhaustive two year investigation, in which we heard testimony from aviation experts and mechanical engineers from both the private and military sector, as well as representatives from the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, the Federal Aviation Administration, the FBI, CIA and the Department of Homeland Security, we are in unanimous agreement that this tragedy resulted from a succession of human and mechanical malfunction: specifically temporary inconsistency between the airspeed measurements, likely following the obstruction of the pitot tubes that led to a stall which would have made it impossible for any pilot to recover.

(beat)

I know there are those who were hoping for better answers. People to blame. Guilt to assign. I'm sorry, but this is the truth and it needs to be accepted. We will grieve --

SLAM TO --

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - MORNING

CLOSE ON -- RUNNING FEET

pounding pavement.

MARTIN LAUER (V.O.)

We will remember. We will go on.

We TILT UP -- finding Alex -- a lone figure running with the Manhattan skyline looming in the backdrop -- concentrated face barely visible underneath a grey hoodie. He's still boyish, but hardened. Haunted. SUPER:

THREE YEARS LATER

He speeds past us -- like he's being pursued -- a loud RUSH OF WIND as we SMASH TO --

A SUBWAY CAR

thundering down a dark tunnel.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Tightly crammed with morning commuters. Alex stands -- a backpack slung over his shoulder -- eyes catching:

A WOMAN

with blonde streaks in her hair -- sitting across from him. Her image triggers a memory.

*FLASHBACK --*

INT. BEDROOM - THREE YEARS EARLIER

Alex lies in bed with his wife, LISA, massaging her feet. It's a perfect Sunday morning -- the kind Alex always looked forward to.

LISA

(cooing)

Mmm....now this is what husbands are for.

ALEX

I thought it was to hunt and gather.

LISA

And give great foot massages. I'm a lucky wife.

ALEX

Good thing you reminded me. I don't even recognize you with that hair.

LISA

You don't like it? I think it makes me look blonde.

ALEX

It makes you look like you should be offering me a showcase showdown.

She playfully tries to kick him.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Okay, I'm sorry, you're beautiful, you're beautiful.

She stops. Their gazes meet. She's enamored.

LISA  
God, I love you.

*Off Alex -- smiling -- equally in love --*

RESUME PRESENT:

where we see in his current face just how lost he is without her -- still carrying the pain.

ALEX (V.O.)  
I love you too.

Then as Alex's fingers play with the wedding ring he still wears -- MUSIC BUILDS -- as we GO TO --

EXT. MEATPACKING DISTRICT - MORNING

A windy day. Camera pulls off the Hudson River -- and past various WAREHOUSES -- to pick up Alex -- making his way up a cobblestone street to a:

NARROW OFFICE BUILDING

tucked away off 10th Street -- with a construction chute running down the side -- onto scaffolding.

Alex steps to the front door and pushes the buzzer for the building's sole occupant: "FOUNDATION".

NEW ANGLE -- A CCTV CAMERA POV

staring down at Alex. He looks up. Gives a wave. *BZZZ!* The heavy front door is buzzed open and Alex enters:

INT. FOUNDATION OFFICES - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

A modern space. Exposed brick. Giant wall screens display *Foundation's* online stories -- mostly investigative political reports. A well-regarded independent news source.

Alex passes DENA, the receptionist behind her desk.

ALEX  
Hey Dena, how's your throat?

DENA  
It's getting better, thanks.

ALEX  
Red onion and raw honey always does the trick.

DENA

Tell that to my boyfriend. Says he won't kiss me now.

ALEX

Yeah well, you're too good for him anyway. See you later.

She smiles and buzzes Alex through a glass door. PRELAP:

ALEX (V.O.)

Situation is gonna get worse before it gets better, trust me.

INT. FOUNDATION - NEWSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A large open office space dotted with cubicles and lined with walls stacked with every publication imaginable.

The staff is small -- but talented. About NINE REPORTERS. And young. Median age is only 25.

Alex walks with his boss, managing director NOAH KESSLER, 40's, ex-*New York Times* editor and wise beyond his years.

NOAH

We talking Taiwan or my dating life?

ALEX

Both. Two days ago, the Chinese defense minister was killed in a car bomb outside his summer home in the Zhejiang Province.

NOAH

I hope you're not pitching me a two day old story.

ALEX

The Guoanbu identified his assassin as Chun Zhang, a Taiwanese national with ties to their security service. As a result, Beijing has positioned 1200 cruise and ballistic missiles against key Taipei targets, including military bases, TV stations and airports.

NOAH

(shaking his head no)  
The death of a high ranking Chinese official aside, this is all just posturing.

(MORE)

NOAH (CONT'D)

If Beijing ever moved on Taipei, the President would deploy the Nimitz battle group into the Taiwan Strait and the Chinese don't have anything that can take out our carriers.

ALEX

That would be true -- except for the intelligence the CIA just received indicating that the Chinese have developed a new ASBM designed specifically to target a moving aircraft carrier.

Noah pauses. The longer this conversation has gone on, the less hypothetical it seems.

NOAH

What the hell was Taiwan thinking?

Alex shrugs. Unsure.

ALEX

I just work here.

NOAH

And you're getting this from where?

ALEX

Same source as always.

NOAH

Be specific: same mystery source as always.

ALEX

In two and a half years, he hasn't steered me wrong yet.

NOAH

A man of your intelligence and grasp of international policies being led to water by someone you only communicate with through the internet, Alex.

ALEX

We work on the internet, Noah.

NOAH

You know what I mean.

ALEX  
I never quote him directly. He's  
just background.

Noah thinks. Nods. But warns:

NOAH  
Don't misspell Philippines again.

ALEX  
That was one time.

Alex leaves.

NOAH  
And have a draft on my desk by end  
of business.

ALEX  
You won't be sorry.

NOAH  
I will be if you're right.

Alex rounds a corner. Noah watches him go -- as we PRELAP:

ALEX  
Ben, Alex Bishop.

INT. FOUNDATION - ALEX'S OFFICE - LATER

START ON -- A PHOTOGRAPH

of Alex and Emma, smiling at Coney Island. A precious  
father/daughter moment.

POP WIDE --

Alex sits at his desk -- on the phone -- surrounded by stacks  
of research documents. We see he's methodically organized.

ALEX  
Whoa, whoa, don't hang up, this  
isn't about you.  
(beat)  
Well, it's a little about you. I  
got a source. Looking for a second  
one. China, Taiwan. True or false:  
China's position of their arsenal  
against Taipei: show of strength or  
strength of show?

JUMP CUT -- MOMENTS LATER

and another phone call:

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Mr. Jacobs, Alex Bishop from  
Foundation, how are you today?

JUMP CUT -- MOMENTS LATER

as Alex punches in a new phone number.

JUMP CUT -- MOMENTS LATER

and another conversation:

ALEX (CONT'D)  
I'm not looking for a hypothetical.  
I got plenty of those on my own.  
What I'm looking for is a quote  
from you, on the record: if China  
moves on Taiwan, will President  
Dreyfuss move on China, are we  
talking early stages of the next  
World War?

JUMP CUT -- MOMENTS LATER

where we see Alex typing away -- while consulting his hand-written notes. Just then -- SHELLY, a pretty co-worker, pops her head into his office.

SHELLY  
Hey. Takin' lunch orders. Chinese  
or street meat?

Alex sees it's now 12:30. He realizes he forgot something --

ALEX  
Shit.

-- and scrambles to get up -- RUSHING out.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Where we see Alex RACING up to a coffee shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Alex bombs inside, nearly out of breath. He looks around. Doesn't see what he's searching for. Then -- A HAND appears at the far end of the counter, waving at him. He crosses up to his sister-in-law:

RACHEL SADLER

25. Leather jacket. Purple streaks in her hair. Fun.

ALEX  
Hey, sorry I'm late.

RACHEL  
Please. Only 15 minutes? That practically makes you early.

LATER

the two are at a booth -- laughing -- in mid-conversation.

ALEX  
And I hope you told him to get the hell out there right?

RACHEL  
Well...eventually.

ALEX  
Rach --

RACHEL  
Hey, fuck off. Not all of us have your impossible standards Alex. Speaking of which I heard things went pretty well with Marcy. Do tell. She's a lady and won't say anything.

ALEX  
Yeah. She's sweet. Thanks for the intro.

RACHEL  
So you gonna call her?

ALEX  
It's a busy week for me.

RACHEL  
You should. She told me she thought you were cute.

ALEX  
Thought you said she didn't say anything.

RACHEL  
It was in her tone.

ALEX

Rachel, you're my sister-in-law.  
Why do you keep pressuring me to  
date?

RACHEL

Answer me this, Einstein: would you  
have ever talked to my sister if I  
didn't force you to?

ALEX

No.

RACHEL

(smiling)

Then I'm your only hope.

Alex laughs. Shakes his head. Goes back to his food. Rachel  
sees an opening.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

So Emma e-mailed me. Asked if I  
would take her to D.C. tomorrow.  
For the tribute.

ALEX

Emma has school.

RACHEL

Third grade. What she gonna miss?

ALEX

Multiplication.

RACHEL

(beat; gently)

She really wants to go, Alex.

ALEX

Let me think about it.

RACHEL

She says you already told her no.

Alex nods.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

She also says you're still having  
trouble sleeping.

ALEX

Emma says a lot. I need to do  
something about that.

RACHEL

She's worried about you. We both are.

ALEX

I'm fine. I'm sorry she's worried. I'll talk to her.

RACHEL

Maybe she's not the only one you should talk to.

ALEX

I said I'm okay, Rach. The anniversary always make it harder, you know that.

RACHEL

She was my family too, Alex. But this isn't healthy.

ALEX

Are you asking me to forget?

RACHEL

I'm asking you not to forget. We all miss her so much but what happened is now a part of you. You were a victim and you have to accept that.

Off Alex -- who we can see is having a hard time doing just that -- we GO TO --

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

As Alex and Rachel step out of the restaurant. He gives her a hug and a kiss goodbye -- as we make an ABRUPT CUT TO --

INT. ANONYMOUS ROOM - SAME

Where a TECHNICIAN lords over a room filled with monitors and keyboards, constantly humming and processing, screens bursting with code. Where the fuck are we?

FULL SCREEN -- THE MONITORS

featuring real-time video taken by security cameras and satellites all around the world -- employing facial recognition software so the minute the computers spot someone on a watch-list in the footage, they isolate them by location and display bio's, statistics and known acquaintances.

AN IMAGE OF ALEX

soon pops up -- saying goodbye to Rachel -- audio of their conversation playing over speakers.

The tech logs information -- fingers moving a mile-a-minute -- as we SNAP TO --

EXT. BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Alex hikes out of a subway station and starts walking the tree-lined block to his house. PRELAP:

ALEX (V.O.)  
Alright baby, get to bed.

INT. APARTMENT - EMMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

As Alex tucks his daughter under the covers.

ALEX  
So you know, I spoke to Aunt Rachel today. She says you e-mailed her.

EMMA  
I'm sorry.

ALEX  
Don't be sorry. She's family. But we talked about you going right --

EMMA  
(interrupting)  
Dad --

ALEX  
We did right?

Emma nods.

EMMA  
Yes.

She looks down -- forlorn.

ALEX  
And if you really wanna go...I'll call Rachel and give her the okay.

EMMA  
(lighting up)  
Thanks, dad.

ALEX  
 (hugging her)  
 I love you, Emma...and I'm sorry if  
 I ever --

Emma looks at him. Takes him off the hook.

EMMA  
 Good night, dad.

Alex smiles. God, she's her mother. Rises.

ALEX  
 Night.

On his way out -- almost a threat:

ALEX (CONT'D)  
 And you are gonna learn how to  
 multiply.

He kills the lights -- as we GO TO --

A SUBWAY CAR

shooting past us.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Alex is lucky enough to have grabbed a seat this time. He catches the rider next to him reading the AM subway paper. He can't ignore the front page:

REMEMBERING AFO -- WE WILL NEVER FORGET

Alex looks away -- as we CUT TO --

EXT. FOUNDATION OFFICES - DAY

Alex heads to work. Same routine. Just another day.

INT. FOUNDATION - ALEX'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Alex passes JEFF, his assistant, at his desk, sipping coffee.

ALEX  
 Morning.

JEFF  
 Morning. Staff meeting in five.  
 Coffee?

Alex says "no" and enters his office. Plops down. Finds:

## A MANILA ENVELOPE

resting up against his computer monitor. Blank -- except for his name typed onto a white label.

Alex takes the envelope. Wasn't expecting one. Light. Slices it open. Dumps into his palm:

## A FLASH DRIVE

Alex's eyes narrow -- curious.

JUMP CUT -- SECONDS LATER

as Alex inserts the drive into his computer.

NEW ANGLE -- THE COMPUTER MONITOR

as a file logo appears. Alex double-clicks.

## AN AUDIO FILE

starts to play over speakers.

## STATIC

at first -- Alex unsure what he's listening to -- but it soon becomes crystal clear.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Roger Andrews, this is Air Force  
One. Cruising to a final altitude  
of 35,000 feet, nothing but blue to  
Virginia.

Alex BLINKS. Holy fuck -- this is the black box recording from Air Force One.

WE PLAY THIS ENTIRE SEQUENCE ON ALEX -- RIVETED -- GOING THROUGH THE ALL EMOTIONS:

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Little wake turbulence.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Level out, it's about ten degrees  
to the right level.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Roger.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Let me get back on the DME.

The audio is suddenly filled by the shocking and sudden sound of an EXPLOSION -- BOOOOOOM!

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
What the fuck was that?

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Hydro pressure is all lost.

Another EXPLOSION -- BOOOOOOM!

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
What the hell -- ?

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Report, what's happening back there?

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
We have a fire on engine number three, we have a fire on engine number three.

COL. TURNER  
We're losing airspeed. I got no control.

An alarm SOUNDS.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Jesus, smoke in the cockpit, smoke in the cabin.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Shut down engine number two!

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
The gear won't retract!

Another EXPLOSION -- BOOOOOOM!

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
What the fuck is going on?!?!?

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
This is Air Force One, we have a code red. Request priority instructions. We are under attack. Repeat we are under attack.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
We're not gonna make it!

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Affirmative, I declare a full  
emergency.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Mayday! Air Force One. Mayday!

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
The airspeed -- the airspeed -- !

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Oh my God.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Give it all you got, give it all  
you got.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Okay!

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Set max power!

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
I can't hold it.

Dual stall warning horns BLARE.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Bring it up, BRING IT UP!!!

LT. HODGES  
HOLY SWEET JESUS!

THE SOUND OF IMPACT --

-- then CHILLING STATIC.

Alex is completely FROZEN. A statue. He can't believe his ears. Everything he was told -- everything the world believed -- was a lie and this is the proof.

A beat -- as he just sits there -- mind trying to process what he just heard -- the deafening silence shattered by:

JEFF

sticking his head in.

JEFF  
Hey. Staff meeting's starting.

Alex jumps.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Whoa. Sorry. You alright?

Alex turns back to the screen.

ALEX  
Tell them I'll be late.

JEFF  
But today there's --

Alex spins -- SNAPPING:

ALEX  
I SAID I'LL BE FUCKING LATE!

Jeff is thrown. Never seen Alex explode. He nods and quickly gets the hell out of there. Alex then reverses the recording. Wants to hear it again.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
We have a fire on engine number three, we have a fire on engine number three.

COL. TURNER  
We're losing airspeed. I got no control.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
Jesus, smoke in the cockpit, smoke in the cabin.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
Shut down engine number two!

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
The gear won't retract!

LT. HODGES (V.O.)  
What the fuck is going on?!?!

COL. TURNER (V.O.)  
This is Air Force One, we have a code red. Request instructions. We are under attack. Repeat we are under attack.

INT. ANONYMOUS ROOM - SAME

A RED ALERT FLASHES on a monitor -- as a computer picks up the Air Force One recording playing in Alex's office and matches the words from the black box transcript to an AUDIO WATCH LIST.

The Tech immediately grabs a phone.

TECHNICIAN

Sir, we have a confirmed audio hit  
off one of our watch lists.  
Recommend priority one protocols.

INT. FOUNDATION - ALEX'S OFFICE - SAME

As the black box recording ends:

LT. HODGES (V.O.)

I can't hold it.

Dual stall warning horns BLARE.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)

Bring it up, BRING IT UP!!!

LT. HODGES

HOLY SWEET JESUS!

Off which -- Alex quickly pulls out the zip-drive and pushes away from his desk -- as we QUICKLY CUT TO --

INT. FOUNDATION - BATHROOM - SECONDS LATER

Where Alex practically collapses against the sink -- throwing open the faucet.

He cups his hands. Catches water. Splashes his face. Lets it run down as he stares at his reflection. He's still completely STUNNED. Needs a moment. Gathers himself.

A beat -- then he shuts off the water -- and exits the bathroom -- everything getting SPED UP -- as we BEGIN A FAST-PACED INTERCUT WITH:

INT. A HALLWAY SOMEWHERE - INTERCUTTING

As we track the back of a MAN heading up to a door -- and swiping a key card through a scanner. A red light turns green and the door unseals. Man enters:

INT. A LOCKER ROOM SOMEWHERE - CONTINUOUS

Where SIX MEN are changing out of clothes. Ex-Jarheads. Bullet scarred military bodies. They slip on the same non-specific WHITE OVERALLS.

INT. FOUNDATION - CONFERENCE ROOM - INTERCUTTING

Where the morning staff meeting is in progress. Save Alex, all NINE EMPLOYEES are present. Noah holds court.

INT. FOUNDATION - HALLWAY - SAME

As Alex makes his way up a corridor -- heading straight for the glass conference room doors.

INT. A GARAGE SOMEWHERE - INTERCUTTING

As the six men, now all dressed in identical work uniforms, move with purpose and efficiency into a white van marked:

"PLG CARPET CLEANING"

which promptly peels out of an underground garage.

*KNOCK, KNOCK.*

INT. FOUNDATION - CONFERENCE ROOM - INTERCUTTING

As Alex opens up the door -- looking for Noah.

NOAH

Alex, perfect time, can you get the team up to speed on the situation in Taiwan --

ALEX

I need to talk to you.

NOAH

Can't it wait?

ALEX

No.

The look on Alex's face says he means it. Noah rises.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - INTERCUTTING

As the nondescript carpet van maneuvers around traffic.

INT. FOUNDATION - NOAH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Noah passes his ASSISTANT --

NOAH

Ingrid, hold my calls please.

-- and walks into his office with Alex, who shuts the door behind him.

NOAH (CONT'D)

You alright? You look like shit.

Alex holds up the zip-drive.

NOAH (CONT'D)

What's that?

ALEX

This came to me this morning in a blank envelope.

Alex breezes past his boss and plugs the zip-drive into his computer. The file pops up.

NOAH

Alex, are you sure --

ALEX

(cutting him off)  
Just listen.

Noah stops. Alex clicks on the file and the flight data recording from Air Force One plays.

Noah can't believe his ears -- taken completely aback.

NOAH

Where...did this come from?

ALEX

I told you. It was in an envelope on my desk when I got here this morning.

Noah goes back to the recording.

COL. TURNER (V.O.)

What the fuck was that?

CABIN VOICES (V.O.)

Hydro pressure is all lost.

An EXPLOSION.

LT. HODGES (V.O.)

What the hell -- ?

Alex goes to the window. Helps himself to a glass of water. Downs it all in one gulp. As he puts down the glass --

-- we see his hand is SHAKING. He takes a moment to center himself again -- then turns back to Noah -- who reacts to the sound of Air Force One CRASHING into the Atlantic Ocean.

NOAH

How do we know this is genuine?

ALEX

We don't, but if it is --

NOAH

If it is, it's evidence that someone cut the official black box recording and the leader of the free world was murdered. But if it's fake, someone is trying to hurt you. Who do you think could've sent it to you?

ALEX

I have no idea. But that's step one.

NOAH

No -- step one is taking one step back.

ALEX

I'm not gonna sit on this.

NOAH

I'm not suggesting that, but we need to know what we have here, so we know how to proceed.

ALEX

What we have is proof my wife was killed. There was obviously a bomb -  
-

NOAH

(cuts him off)

We need to be extremely careful. Now obviously, you're in an emotional state --

ALEX

This isn't about me! Don't you get it, this was planned by someone --

NOAH

-- on an extremely emotional day.

ALEX

Noah, that's bullshit and you know it.

NOAH

My point is we need to think about this objectively or not at all.

Alex stops. Calms.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Now...if this was anyone else, what  
would we do?

ALEX  
(beat)  
Verify it.

NOAH  
Exactly.

He locks eyes with him.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
And I promise you we'll get to the  
truth of this.

Alex nods. Have to do.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Now...think that Deep Throat of  
yours could've sent this to you?

ALEX  
He's never done anything like this  
before. But I'll ask.

EXT. FOUNDATION OFFICES - MOMENTS LATER

The cleaning van pulls up and stops directly in front.

INT. FOUNDATION - ALEX'S OFFICE - SAME

CLOSE ON -- ALEX'S COMPUTER

as he logs onto a message board of conspiracy theorists.  
Posts a PHOTOGRAPH of a JFK.

Waits. BZZZZ -- CUT TO --

INT. FOUNDATION - RECEPTION AREA - SAME

As one of the men in overalls is buzzed into the lobby.

DENA  
Can I help --

IN A FLASH --

The man in overalls draws a silenced Vektor R6. Dena has  
barely time to react before -- *PHFT!* -- there's a bullet  
between her eyes -- dropping her instantly.

## THE HIT SQUAD

advances inside -- military formation -- faces now COVERED behind SKI MASKS -- as:

SHELLY

comes walking into the lobby -- on her way out. She sees the men -- the masks -- the guns -- the guard.

*PHFT! PHFT!*

Bullets erase her heart and brain -- hit squad making their way further inside -- expert efficiency -- on the hunt.

INT. FOUNDATION - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As the hit team moves swiftly and quickly down the corridor.

A FOUNDATION REPORTER

steps out his office. But before he can yell --

-- there's a GLOVED HAND over his mouth -- and a BOOT to his knee -- dropping him -- while a GUNMAN stands over him and levels his gun at his face. He pulls the trigger -- *PHFT!* -- as we GO TO --

INT. FOUNDATION - ALEX'S OFFICE - SAME

Where Alex continues to refresh the message board -- waiting for a response on his post. Doesn't get one.

He then PAUSES -- when he sees:

HIS CELL PHONE

is registering NO SERVICE. His eyes narrow -- confused. He then tries the land line -- but gets met with a BUSY SIGNAL.

The phones have shut off.

Off Alex -- eyes narrowing -- curious:

INT. FOUNDATION - ANOTHER OFFICE - SAME

Another FOUNDATION EMPLOYEE is on the phone when he catches the gunmen REFLECTED in his computer screen. He reacts --

FOUNDATION EMPLOYEE

Jesus --

*PHFT! PHFT! PHFT!* Three QUICK SHOTS take him out -- employee TOPPLING OVER -- SPILLING HIS DESK -- A LOUD CRASH!

INT. FOUNDATION - ALEX'S OFFICE - SAME

The commotion causes Alex to look up. Rising -- he pockets the flash-drive and goes to the door to investigate. Immediately sees:

## SHADOWS

coming up the hall. Bodies and gun barrels. His mind zeroes in on the threat and he turns to his assistant -- oblivious in his chair.

ALEX  
Jeff, get down!

## THE GUNMEN

come running up -- spraying shots -- Alex DIVING -- TACKLING Jeff to the carpet -- bullets whizzing overhead.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Jeff, are you --

He looks down. FREEZES. Jeff is DEAD -- body riddled -- his blood now all over Alex's clothes.

Alex -- adrenaline-pumping -- shit, shit -- looks over. Sees the gunmen moving up the corridor.

NOAH (O.S.)  
Alex?

He turns. Sees:

## NOAH

at the other end of the hall -- turning straight into the gunmen's path -- then stopping short -- fixed when he sees the hit squad leveling guns.

ALEX  
NOAH -- RUN!!!!

But it's too late. *PHFT! PHFT! PHFT!* Noah is SHREDDED right in front of Alex's eyes.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
NO!!!

Bullets fly back in Alex's direction -- but he quickly DUCKS behind a desk. The gunmen come for him. He's running out of time. He looks for options. Spies:

## THE FIRE EXIT

directly across the hallway from where he's sitting. It's a suicide run -- but he has no choice. Then as the gunmen swing around to take him out --

-- Alex BOLTS -- bullets chasing -- as he BOMBS across the hall -- through the emergency door -- alarm WAILING -- lights STROBING.

CUT TO --

INT. FOUNDATION - VARIOUS - SAME

Where we see members of the hit squad systematically and mercilessly eliminating the other *Foundation* employees -- as we RETURN TO --

INT. STAIRWELL - SAME

As Alex goes TEARING DOWN the steps -- heart about to EXPLODE -- stopping fast when he sees:

ENERGY SAVING LIGHTS

starting to SWITCH ON from below -- followed by FOOTFALLS coming up from beneath him.

Alex quickly PIVOTS -- charging BACK UP the steps -- two at a time -- racing for his life -- camera just trying to keep up -  
- HAND-HELD MADNESS as:

THE SHOOTERS

OPEN FIRE -- bullets RICOCHETTING. Then barking into their comm links:

GUNMAN

He's heading to the roof -- he's heading to the roof!

RESUME ALEX:

sprinting -- slipping -- pushing himself up -- charging ahead.

NEW ANGLE -- ONE OF THE GUNMEN

EXPLODING out of another stairwell door -- one floor beneath Alex. He gives chase -- GAINING -- as Alex reaches the ROOF ACCESS DOOR and --

EXT. FOUNDATION OFFICES - ROOF - CONTINUOUS

-- BURSTS outside! -- moving to shut the door when:

WHAM! The gunmen THROWS all his weight into the door -- KNOCKING Alex down to the gravel.

The shooter RACES onto the roof -- but Alex acts fast and grabs a handful of gravel -- THROWING it into the gunman's face before he can fire.

He SCREAMS in agony. Alex gets up -- CHARGES. The gunman SLAMS back up against the door -- SHUTTING it -- before back-up can arrive.

The gunman drops his weapon. Alex picks it up. BELTS the gunman across the face with it -- PISTOL-WHIPPING him.

#### BULLETS

suddenly RIP through the access door -- causing Alex to RACE AWAY to the roof's edge -- where he SKIDS to a stop. Looks down. Sees:

#### THE CONSTRUCTION CHUTE

going down the side of the building.

He turns back around as the gunmen charge onto the roof and -- fuck he's gotta do it -- makes the quick HAIL MARY MOVE to --

-- LEAP OFF THE BUILDING -- INTO THE CHUTE -- SQUEEZING THROUGH IT -- DROPPING AND SHOOTING ALL THE WAY DOWN TO:

#### THE SCAFFOLDING BELOW

where he vomits out the bottom with a loud CRASH -- impact knocking the wind out of him. He GASPS.

#### BACK ON THE ROOF:

one of the gunmen gets on his comm. Relays Alex's location.

#### RESUME ALEX:

as he somehow gains the strength to roll off the scaffolding and into the alley -- body ACHING -- but he's gotta move -- stumbling back onto:

#### EXT. MEATPACKING DISTRICT - SAME

Where he goes CHARGING away from the *Foundation* offices. A beat later --

#### THE GUNMEN

exit the front doors -- into their awaiting van -- ROARING after him -- as we SLAM TO --

INT. ANONYMOUS ROOM - SAME

Where the tech hacks into *Foundation's* close circuit SECURITY SYSTEM. Accesses the VIDEO FEED. Pulls up the footage of the gunmen shooting up the office -- and ERASES IT.

Off which -- we hear a loud SCREECH -- as we GO FAST TO --

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - SAME

As the van does a hair-pin turn around the corner -- gunning after:

ALEX

running in front of it -- arms pumping -- cutting back onto the sidewalk -- into a CROWD -- SLAMMING into bodies like a pinball -- soon spying:

A GROUP OF NYPD COPS

standing near their cruiser. Van still on his ass -- about to run him down -- Alex quickly CUTS LEFT -- making a beeline for the cops -- SCREAMING:

ALEX  
HEY! OVER HERE! HELP!

The cops turn in his direction. See Alex. The blood. The gun. Instantly draw Glockes -- YELLING:

COPS  
GUN!/GET ON THE GROUND!/DOWN NOW!

Alex stops -- throwing up his arms.

Cops RUSH him fast -- hurling him down -- planting his face into pavement -- the cleaning van DRIVING on -- out of view.

Then off Alex -- WINCING -- the sound of handcuffs RATCHETING -- we GO TO --

INT. A DIFFERENT HALLWAY SOMEWHERE - NIGHT

Where we see a MAN IN A SUIT walking -- Harvard and American flag pins glistening.

INTERCUT:

EXT. SKIES ABOVE AMERICA - SAME

As a Lear Jet slices through dark crowds.

INT. A DIFFERENT HALLWAY SOMEWHERE - INTERCUTTING

As the man in the suit's phone rings. He stops. This is THOMAS QUAYLE. 40's. Close-cropped grey-hair.

QUAYLE

Quayle.

RICHTER (V.O.)

Our world is getting smaller by the second. Tell me you have a plan in place to contain the damage.

INT. LEAR JET - INTERCUTTING

Where we meet DAN RICHTER, 60's with snowy-white hair. More on him to come.

QUAYLE

I thought you never wanted to know specifics, Dan.

RICHTER

Cut the shit, Tom. People are gonna start asking questions and I'm not gonna have the answers. How the fuck did the recording get out?

QUAYLE

We're still looking into it.

RICHTER

Well why you're looking into it, are we exposed or not?

QUAYLE

We're still contained.

RICHTER

This is a fucking disaster.

QUAYLE

No, a disaster is what happens if you don't do what we pay you to do -  
- which is not to worry about me.

*CLICK.* Quayle hangs up.

END INTERCUT.

-- as MORTON, Quayle's number 2, crosses up to him.

QUAYLE (CONT'D)

Get me today's roll call for the 22nd precinct in Manhattan. I want personal, professional and financial records. Do it well, do it now.

MORTON

Yes, sir.

Off which -- we GO TO --

EXT. 22nd PRECINCT - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

Establishing.

INT. 22nd PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Alex sits in a seat -- despondent -- cuffed. He hears something. Looks up. Soon -- the door UNLOCKS and swings open. In walks Alex's lawyer and friend, MICHAEL ARNOLD.

To the GUARD:

MICHAEL

(re: cuffs)

Are those necessary?

GUARD

That's for you to prove counselor.

The guard leaves. Closes the heavy steel door behind him. Michael looks back to Alex.

MICHAEL

You alright? How's your --

ALEX

(cutting him off)

Is Noah --

Michael nods.

MICHAEL

They all are.

Alex can't believe it -- head spinning.

ALEX

Jesus Christ.

MICHAEL

Tell me what's going on.

Alex hesitates.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Hey man, I can't help you if I  
don't know your side.

ALEX  
(looking up; incredulous)  
My side?

MICHAEL  
What happened at your office?

ALEX  
What are they saying happened?

MICHAEL  
They don't know, but there are nine  
people dead and a preliminary  
ballistics report matches one of  
the slugs to the gun you were  
carrying when you were arrested --

Alex is about to faint.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
-- plus the blood on your shirt  
that matches one of the victims.

ALEX  
I didn't kill anyone, Mike. You've  
known me since college. Noah, Jeff,  
Shelly, Dena -- I worked with them  
for years. They were my family.

MICHAEL  
I understand, but I need more from  
you if I'm gonna do my job.

Alex debates. How much can he involve Michael? A beat -- then  
he shakes his head.

ALEX  
Not yet.

MICHAEL  
Alex --

ALEX  
-- But you need to do me a favor.  
When I was arrested, the police  
took a zip drive from my back  
pocket. Can you get it back for me?

MICHAEL  
Why, what's on it?

ALEX  
Can you do that for me?

MICHAEL  
(beat)  
I'll look into it.

Alex nods. Thanks.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You'll be arraigned in the morning.  
What are you gonna do about Emma?

Alex pauses. Shit, he forgot all about Emma.

ALEX  
Umm, it's fine. She's with Lisa's  
sister.

MICHAEL  
Alex, I just need to ask. Given  
that today is...well today, is  
there any chance --

ALEX  
What, that I snapped? That I killed  
my friends and co-workers because I  
lost my wife three years ago?

MICHAEL  
Had to ask.

ALEX  
No. You didn't.

Michael nods. Okay.

MICHAEL  
Sit tight. We'll get through this.

He rises. Leaves. Alex watches him go.

INT. 22nd PRECINCT - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Exiting -- Michael flags down a passing LIEUTENANT.

MICHAEL  
'Scuse me, Lieutenant.

The lieutenant stops. Michael hands over his card.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'm Michael Arnold. I'm representing Alex Bishop. I was wondering if was at all possible to get a look at his personal belongings.

LIEUTENANT

Would if you could, but someone from the FBI picked up his stuff an hour ago.

As Michael reacts -- the lieutenant walks away. Off which -- music starts to BUILD -- as we GO TO --

INT. 22nd PRECINCT - MOTOR POOL - DAY

As a handcuffed Alex is led to an awaiting Crown Victoria by two seasoned NYPD DETECTIVES.

They put him in the backseat and shut the door. Seconds later, the Crown Vic peels out of the garage.

SNAP TO --

EXT. MANHATTAN - DAY

GOD'S POV over the city. We just make out the Crown Victoria driving down an avenue.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA - DAY

Alex sits quietly in the back -- eyes out the window -- mind exhausted -- body still aching.

INT. ANONYMOUS ROOM - SAME

Where the technician is keeping track of the unmarked car with the use of several traffic cams.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - SAME

As the Crown Victoria drives past -- entering lower Manhattan.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA - SAME

As Alex notices the car breezing past New York City Criminal Court -- home to Central Booking.

He turns back to the two detectives -- up front -- silent.

ALEX

Where are you taking me?

They don't respond. Alex looks up. Sees they are taking him across the nearby BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

This isn't right.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Where are we going?

Again -- no response. Alex is getting increasingly nervous. That's when he sees:

THE CARPET CLEANING VAN

reflected in the front mirror. He whips around. Sees the white van driving up behind them.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Shit -- fuck.

He whips back forward. The cops have no reaction.

Alex knows they're in on it -- and immediately starts SCRAMBLING -- trying to slip the cuffs from his back -- under his feet -- Detective #1 the first to take notice -- YELLING:

DETECTIVE #1  
HEY! PUT YOUR FUCKING LEGS DOWN!

Alex doesn't listen -- getting his hands in front of him.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - SAME

As the white van ROARS UP --

INT. CROWN VICTORIA - SAME

-- Alex pivots around in his seat -- and starts KICKING out the window.

DETECTIVE #1  
HEY!

Detective #1 goes for his Glock as --

-- SMASH! -- Alex BREAKS the glass -- wind RUSHING IN!

DETECTIVE #2

cranks the wheel --

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - SAME

-- causing the Crown Victoria to swerve wildly into another lane --

INT. CROWN VICTORIA - SAME

-- THROWING Alex across the back of the car as --

*BANG!*

Detective #1 discharges his gun -- bullet just missing Alex -- who quickly crawls back over to the busted window and reaches out --

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - SAME

-- throwing open the door. He's about to jump out when --

*VROOOOSH!* -- the white van BULLETS FORWARD -- nearly taking Alex's head -- EXPLODING the door to Crown Victoria CLEAN OFF.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA - SAME

Alex JUMPS BACK -- FUCK THAT WAS CLOSE!

Detective #1 AIMS again -- about to fire. Alex -- zero choice --

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - SAME

-- LEAPS out of the moving car -- HITTING the ground at 45 mph -- SMACKING HARD against pavement -- into a ROLL. He just settles when:

HEADLIGHT BEAMS

hit him in the face. He looks up.

TRAFFIC

is ROARING UP toward him -- and he quickly ROLLS out of the way as --

-- the white van SKIDS to a stop. REVERSES at TOP-SPEED.

Alex pushes himself up off the ground. Has to out run the van -- about to take him out when -- he HOPS onto the hood of an oncoming truck -- CLIMBING onto the roof -- just as --

-- the van CRASHES into the truck -- SLAMMING into the front bumper -- glass SHATTERING -- metal SMASHING.

But Alex can't stop now -- has to keep going -- rolling off the truck -- back onto the bridge -- leaving a PILE-UP behind him -- running for his life -- sweat pouring -- living a NIGHTMARE -- the sound suddenly DROPPING OUT -- replaced by:

MORTON (V.O.)  
Alexander R. Bishop.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY

FULL SCREEN -- A COMPUTER MONITOR

featuring rotating images from every milestone in Alex's life: childhood in San Francisco; high school graduation; college admission; grad school studies; wedding to Lisa; Emma's baptism; Lisa's funeral.

POP WIDE --

as Morton brings Quayle up to speed on their target. We now notice more TECHNICIANS filling up the quiet space behind them -- working diligently at their posts.

MORTON

Age 34. Parents are Professor Peter and Lenore Bishop, San Francisco. Graduated top of his class, Yale. Post grad Columbia School of Journalism. Stints at the *Star Ledger*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*. Worked last five years as a political writer for *Foundation*. Online awards for breaking news, general excellence in journalism, online topical reporting. Finances are good, not great. \$50,000 life insurance from his wife's death, set up in a trust for his daughter. Got \$12,250.01 in a checking account. 2nd mortgage on his Park Slope brownstone.

QUAYLE

So we know everything about him, but we don't know how the fuck he got away from us?

Silence from the team.

QUAYLE (CONT'D)

Any record of any service?  
Military, police, fucking dog  
watcher?

MORTON

None on file.  
(beat)  
He's just a reporter.

QUAYLE

Who was able to evade two of my teams. Let me see the psych work-up.

MORTON

(to a Tech)

Can we have the subject's psych profile please?

A TECH pulls up a PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE on Alex.

MORTON (CONT'D)

Since the crash, Bishop's been one of 33 individuals we've had under permanent audio and visual surveillance: home, office, gym, phones, email. Psych-ops flagged him following an incident at a town hall meeting three years ago.

NEW ANGLE -- A MONITOR

Hand-held video footage appears of a haggard and wild-looking Alex raging at an AIR FORCE SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR at a town hall meeting.

ALEX

Telling us what? You're not telling us anything! How did this happen?! These things don't just happen!

The image freezes as Alex is man-handled and taken down forcibly by SECURITY.

RESUME:

MORTON

On the drive home, he got snagged for a DUI. Blew a .22. Judge gave him probation. First offense. But he quickly cleaned himself up for the sake of his 7 year-old daughter. Went back to work. Never mentioned the crash again. Dr. Gillings diagnosed him with acute clinical depression and survivors guilt. He's never fully accepted his wife's death.

QUAYLE

And he won't now. He's gonna see this through to the end.

MORTON

There's state and federal warrants out for his arrest. There's no way out for him.

QUAYLE

I don't care. I want full containment and exposure protocols in place. Activate the asset.

Morton nods --

MORTON

Yes, sir.

-- and grabs a phone -- as we GO TO --

INT. ONE BEDROOM RENTAL - DAY

Cheap as they come. Walls lined with water stains and cigarette burns.

YAHGER

lies in bed -- staring up at the ceiling. Ex-Special Forces. Half moons under his eyes. Hasn't slept in days.

A baby is crying in the adjacent room. He doesn't stir. Numb.

A CELL PHONE

buzzes on a dresser. His eyes shift. A beat -- and he rises. Checks the display and pockets the phone.

JUMP CUT -- SECONDS LATER

as Yahger pops up a prescription medicine bottle. Dumps some Zoloft. Swallows.

JUMP CUT -- SECONDS LATER

as Yahger produces a SIG .40 Cal. Racks the slide. Press checks the chamber. Slips it behind his back -- under his shirt. Exits.

There will be no evidence he was ever there.

GO TO --

EXT. GARAGE - NIGHT

A low-rent maintenance shop in Queens. Tomb-like silence. We see the back door has been BUSTED OPEN.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Where we find Alex, lit by moon shadow, rummaging through a row of open employee LOCKERS.

QUICK CUTS --

as he finds an extra set of clothes. Slips them on. Locates a wallet. Some bills. Then a phone. We hear it DIALING -- as we GO TO --

EXT. WASHINGTON DC - NIGHT

A starry night. Peaceful. We PAN DOWN from the Washington Monument to find Rachel walking with Emma -- her phone ringing. She doesn't recognize the number. Answers.

RACHEL

Hello?

INTERCUT:

EXT. GARAGE - NIGHT

As Alex talks -- tucked behind the garage -- away from the road and any person/camera.

ALEX

Rachel, it's me, how's Emma?

RACHEL

She's fine. What phone is this?

ALEX

It doesn't matter. Look --

RACHEL

I gotta say I thought you'd be calling us every hour on the hour --

ALEX

Rachel, I need you to shut up.  
They're gonna be listening to this call.

Rachel quiets -- now worried.

RACHEL

What are you talking about, who?

INT. ANONYMOUS ROOM - SAME

Where the technician is indeed monitoring their conversation -- along with stress levels.

RESUME ALEX/RACHEL INTERCUT:

ALEX

Doesn't matter. I need you to do something for me. It's extremely important. I need you to take Emma and disappear until you hear from me. You understand? Disappear. I don't wanna know where you're going, but don't use your credit card or anything with your name on it. Can you do that for me?

RACHEL

Alex, what the hell is --

ALEX

Please. I don't have much time. I need to know you and Emma are safe.

RACHEL

Okay, you're freaking me out now.

ALEX

Rachel, promise.

Beat.

RACHEL

Okay.

Alex exhales -- relieved.

ALEX

Let me talk to Emma.

Rachel hands the phone to Emma.

EMMA

Hello.

ALEX

Emma, hey, how are you?

EMMA

What's going on? Aunt Rachel's scared.

ALEX

I know, but everything's okay, baby. I just want you to know how much I love you. No matter what you hear, you have to believe that. Do you believe that?

Emma is thrown -- but still:

EMMA

Yes.

Alex smiles.

ALEX

I love you, baby. Be a good girl  
and I'll talk to you real soon.

Alex hangs up.

END INTERCUT.

Alex then quickly turns the phone over -- pops out the battery -- and throws it into his pocket.

We then hear the sound of an AIRPLANE ENGINE ROAR -- as we GO TO --

EXT. AIRPORT MOTEL - NIGHT

Establishing. Located right by JFK. Seedy as hell.

INT. AIRPORT MOTEL - NIGHT

START ON -- A TELEVISION

tuned to the news -- re-broadcasting footage of the AIR FORCE ONE CRASH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE in Washington, DC -- earlier that day.

PRESIDENT HOWARD DREYFUSS

reads from the Bible -- as images of make-shift memorials and photos of President Singer dissolve into each other.

PRESIDENT DREYFUSS

"God is our refuge and strength. He dwells in his city, does marvelous things and says, be still and know that I am God."

POP WIDE --

and we see Alex checking in -- paying cash to the pimply-faced NIGHT CLERK. As he preps a key -- the sound of names being read draws Alex's attention back to the TV -- where:

FAMILY MEMBERS

of crash victims are taking turns at a podium -- reading aloud the names of the victims.

FAMILY MEMBERS  
 ...Kimberly Cullen, Paul Mitchell,  
 Lisa Bishop, Jordan Mallah...

Off Alex -- reacting to his wife's name -- shaken -- GO TO --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Alex steps inside. Stains you can and can't see.

JUMP CUT -- SECONDS LATER

as Alex crashes -- lays his head down on the bed -- in badly  
 need of sleep. As his eyes close --

FLASH CUT TO --

TURQUOISE OCEAN

stretching to the horizon.

RESUME ALEX:

eyes fluttering under their lids.

RESUME OCEAN:

as we PULL BACK TO REVEAL we're inside:

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - MID SECTION CABIN - DREAM SEQUENCE

*Alex stares out the window -- at the endless expanse of water  
 thousands of feet below -- then turns to the woman in the  
 seat beside him:*

*LISA*

*who smiles sweetly at him -- before taking his hand in her's.  
 Alex smiles back -- then stares ahead -- at:*

*THE PRESIDENTIAL SEAL*

*on the wall in front of him.*

*POP WIDE --*

*The cabin is filled with VIP's: donors, State Department  
 officials.*

*Suddenly -- TURBULENCE. Then a DING -- and the seat belt sign  
 LIGHTS UP. Alex -- tensing up -- turns to Lisa -- who looks  
 back in his direction as --*

*-- BOOM! AN EXPLOSION LIGHTS UP THE SIDE OF HER FACE!*

Alex just has enough time to react before --

-- AIR FORCE ONE DROPS TWO HUNDRED FEET!

ALEX AND LISA GRIP THEIR SEATS -- EVERYONE SCREAMING NOW --  
ENGINES WHINING -- OXYGEN MASKS SWINGING WILDLY -- THEN --

-- ANOTHER EXPLOSION! -- AIR FORCE ONE RIPPING APART -- AS WE  
SLAM BACK TO --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - PRESENT

As Alex BOLTS AWAKE -- sweating -- disoriented. A beat -- as  
he calms himself -- heart POUNDING. He sits back up --  
shutting his eyes -- stabilizing himself. Another beat --  
then he looks up -- calmer -- to:

THE STOLEN CELL PHONE

resting on the dresser.

INT. AIRPORT MOTEL - SAME

Where the night clerk sits at his post, flipping through a  
community college Chemistry book, not paying attention to the  
TV, still on, still playing the news -- now featuring:

A NBC 4 REPORT

on Alex's escape from the Brooklyn Bridge -- complete with  
MUG SHOT and COMMENTARY:

COMMENTARY

...suspect identified as Alex  
Bishop escaped from custody earlier  
today. Bishop, whose wife Lisa, was  
a translator for the State  
Department, died during the Air  
Force One crash three years ago and  
sources tell us the anniversary may  
have caused some sort of psychotic  
breakdown. If you see Bishop --

Clerk looks up and immediately recognize the man in the mug  
shot as the guest in room 224.

RESUME ALEX:

as he pulls out the cell phone battery from his pocket and  
plugs it back in -- beginning a FAST-PACED INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. HIGHWAY - INTERCUTTING

As a fleet of POLICE CRUISERS and a SWAT VAN ROAR BY.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - INTERCUTTING

As Alex logs onto the conspiracy theory message board we saw him post on at *Foundation*. Sees someone has replied to his message with an image of:

SOVIET PREMIER NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV

Alex then takes the phone and puts it up to the mirror -- revealing an ENCRYPTED MESSAGE hidden in Khrushchev's face.

EXT. AIRPORT MOTEL - INTERCUTTING

As the cop cars THUNDER UP -- SCREECHING to a stop -- police EXPLODING out -- RUSHING inside.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - INTERCUTTING

As Alex writes down the message:

BARTHOLDI PARK -- 2 PM

He pockets the paper and unplugs the battery again -- as we GO TO --

INT. AIRPORT MOTEL - HALLWAY - INTERCUTTING

As a SWAT TEAM charges down the hall -- an imposing moving force -- cutting straight up to Alex's room -- TEAM LEADER giving the nod to one of his men -- who SWINGS a SLEDGE HAMMER and --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- *WHAM!* -- the door EXPLODES off its hinges. Wood SPLINTERS! SWAT STAMPEDES inside but -- Alex is GONE. Off which -- we GO TO --

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

As an Amtrak train ROCKETS by.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN - DAY

An exhausted Alex sits by the window -- head resting against the glass -- but he can't afford sleep. Not now.

INT. QUAYLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Where wall monitors display every news broadcast from around the world -- majority of which are devoting coverage to the escalating situation between China and Taiwan -- as well as America's possible involvement in the conflict. We get a sampling:

CNN

...on the orders of President Dreyfuss, the Nimitz battle group just left the Japanese port of Yokosuka on Tokyo Bay -- en route to Taiwan -- despite repeated warnings from Beijing that they will attack anyone who interferes with this "internal security operation".

We see Quayle takes little notice of the coverage. As if he was already aware of what was going to be covered.

Soon -- Morton enters.

MORTON

Sir, we have an update on Bishop.

Quayle looks up from his desk.

QUAYLE

Where's the asset?

MORTON

En route. One hour out.

Quayle nods and rises -- as we GO TO --

EXT. WASHINGTON DC - DAY

FLYING over our nation's capital -- before arriving:

EXT. BARTHOLDI PARK - DAY

Across from Independence Avenue -- dotted with people. Alex comes walking up -- eyes on the lookout -- checking faces.

But he's not sure what he's looking for -- and hopes he'll know when he sees it.

Soon -- he makes his way over to:

THE BARTHOLDI FOUNTAIN

and sits down. Waits. Seconds tick by like minutes. He feels exposed. Is this a set up? Unsure. He continues scanning people. All he sees is danger lurking.

HIS POV SNAPS AROUND:

a LOCAL reaching into his pocket -- for a GUN? No -- just a PHONE. Then -- a VENDOR locking eyes with him -- then turning away -- giving change to a CUSTOMER.

A DRUNK

can be heard slurring words -- STUMBLING nearby. Alex avoids eye contact. Looks back to his watch and sees it's 2:02. Is his contact going to show?

Unsure. Just then --

A MAN IN A RAINCOAT

approaches -- coming straight at Alex. Could be him.

No. He cuts right at the fountain -- going to meet his GIRLFRIEND. They walk off together.

Alex -- shit -- looks back at his watch. 2:05. Looks back up. That's when he sees:

HIS FACE ON THE COVER OF *USA TODAY*

and he rises -- heading over to a NEWSSTAND to pick up a copy. He quickly flips through it. The story pegs him as a crazed employee who shot up his own office.

Alex is STUNNED -- reading over phrases like "mental breakdown" and "accusations of plagiarism".

Fuck he thinks -- they're not just trying to kill me -- they're trying to kill my reputation.

He quickly puts the paper down -- turning to see:

TWO DC COPS

on patrol -- and Alex immediately freezes. Fuck. He turns his back to them.

Shit -- can't stay out in the open like this. A beat -- then he makes the call --

-- to start walking calmly away from the park -- when:

*CLICK!* A SPRINGFIELD ARMORY XD

appears in his back -- a voice WHISPERING:

VOICE

Walk forward, eyes ahead, don't  
turn around.

Alex nods. Starts forward. Tries to get a look at the person holding him at gunpoint -- but can't. Gets led down a:

TUNNEL

where the voice stops Alex.

VOICE (CONT'D)

Turn around.

We assume the voice belongs to Yahger but when Alex turns around he comes face to face with:

ERIC BRYANT

30's. Steel-jawed. All-business. He pats Alex down -- looking for bugs. Doesn't find any. He tucks his gun behind his back.

BRYANT

I honestly figured this for a fool's errand. I didn't think you'd be alive today.

ALEX

Who are you?

BRYANT

Frank Church. Fidel Castro. Ronald Reagan. Nikita Khrushchev.

Alex reacts. They're the names of all the people his source has hidden messages in.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

You're a desperate man coming to me.

ALEX

I had no choice. I need your help.

BRYANT

Not with this.

ALEX

Please. You have to. I have no where else to go.

Bryant considers Alex -- then:

BRYANT

What do you know? Start at the beginning. Give me all the details. Leave nothing out.

ALEX

(recapping)

Alright...when I showed up for work yesterday, there was a manila folder on my desk.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

Had my name on it. When I opened it up there was a flash drive inside. I played it and it was the black box recording from Air Force One.

BRYANT

What did it say?

ALEX

It said there were explosions. That it wasn't an accident. The plane was taken down.

BRYANT

You're suggesting that the United States government covered up the murder of their own Commander-in-Chief?

ALEX

Who else has power like that?

Bryant pauses -- thinking -- then:

BRYANT

And you have no idea who sent it to you?

ALEX

I thought maybe you might've.

BRYANT

No.

(beat)

Who else knows about this?

ALEX

Besides you? No one.

BRYANT

You didn't tell anyone else?

ALEX

Anyone I told is dead.

Just then --

THE DRUNK

from before comes stumbling up the tunnel. Bryant takes Alex by the arm and starts moving him out.

BRYANT  
We gotta move. They know you're  
here.

ALEX  
What?

BRYANT  
Just keep walking.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - SAME

Quayle lords over several technicians -- watching screens of uplinked videos and satellite imagery of Bartholdi Park. We see Bryant leading Alex away on one of the screens as --

EXT. BARTHOLDI PARK - SAME

-- the drunk catches up them -- still on the move.

DRUNK  
Hey young man, can I get some  
change?

BRYANT  
Fuck off.

DRUNK  
Come on man, one lousy dollar.

BRYANT  
I said --

IN A FLASH --

The drunk is SOBER -- LASHING OUT -- KICKING out the back of Bryant's knee -- KNOCKING him to the ground -- STOMPING on his face -- SLAMMING his head against the concrete -- DRAWING a Smith & Wesson Model 442 Airweight -- and STICKING it in Alex's face.

Meet ROBERT HIRSCH -- 50's -- gray hair -- face like a worn suitcase -- been everywhere.

Alex is completely MYSTIFIED. Hirsch speaks with a slight BOSTON IRISH ACCENT.

HIRSCH  
He was right about one thing.

Hirsch then leans down -- exposing:

A HIDDEN COMM LINK

under Bryant's shirt. He rips it loose.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
We gotta keep moving.

He then pockets his gun -- replacing it with a phone. Snaps a picture of Bryant's face -- as we GO TO --

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - SAME

As the room reacts to Hirsch's introduction -- everyone ACTIVATING -- trying to regain control:

TECH  
He's getting help, he's getting help!

QUAYLE  
Alpha, beta teams, move in.

MORTON  
Yahger, you are a go. I repeat, you're a go.

EXT. BARTHOLDI PARK - SAME

As a GRAB TEAM EXPLODES out of twin black vans -- concealing guns and fanning out.

Chief among them -- the asset we recognize as:

YAHGER

leading the squad.

INT. TUNNEL - SAME

Hirsch is walking ahead -- when Alex reaches down and draws Bryant's Springfield Armory XD. COCKS the trigger.

ALEX  
Who the fuck are you?

Hirsch turns.

HIRSCH  
I'm the one you've been dealing with for the last three years.

ALEX  
He said the same thing. How do I know I can trust you?

HIRSCH  
You don't.

ALEX  
 Then why should I?

HIRSCH  
 I'm not asking you to.

ALEX  
 Then why'd you come here?

HIRSCH  
 I needed to know what they knew  
 about me.

ALEX  
 Who?

Hirsch pauses -- hearing something. He then turns and walks  
 away -- without answering.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
WHO!?!

Still no answer. Alex runs up to him. Throws his hand onto  
 Hirsch's shoulder.

Bad move.

Hirsch GRABS Alex's hand -- CRANKS it back -- *CRACK!* -- SPINS  
 and -- *WHACK!* -- BELTS Alex across the face -- dropping him  
 like a hot plate -- before continuing on -- not skipping a  
 beat -- slipping Bryant's comm into his ear -- and exiting  
 the tunnel.

Off Alex -- bleeding -- trying to get this head around what's  
 happening -- GO TO --

EXT. BARTHOLDI PARK - SAME

As Yahger's team continues the hunt -- searching for Alex. A  
 moment later --

-- Alex comes rushing out of the tunnel -- head whipping in  
 every direction -- looking for Hirsch -- FREEZING when he  
 sees:

YAHGER AND THE GRAB TEAM

heading toward him.

He spins back around -- scanning -- then through the crowd:

HIRSCH

calmly exiting the park -- hands in his pockets.

Alex pauses -- thinking -- grab team advancing on every side of him.

He forms a fast plan -- pulls out Bryant's gun and -- *BANG!*  
*BANG!* -- OPENS FIRE INTO THE AIR.

INSTANT PANIC! HAND-HELD MAYHEM!

PEOPLE SCATTER -- a STAMPEDE cutting in front of Alex and the grab team -- giving Alex the opening to TAKE OFF -- BOOKING through the park -- in pursuit of Hirsch -- throwing people aside -- grab team RACING after him -- but Alex isn't stopping -- reaching:

THE PARKING LOT

where Hirsch climbs into a SUV and PEELS AWAY. Seconds later -  
-

ALEX

comes running up -- just missing him. He turns. Sees another MAN about to get into an Audi nearby.

Alex crosses over to him -- aiming his gun -- SCREAMING at the driver to:

ALEX  
GET AWAY, GET AWAY!

VERY FAST -- Alex YANKS the driver away from the Audi -- HOPS inside -- SLAMS the door -- HITS the gas -- and SPEEDS AWAY as:

YAHGER AND THE GRAB TEAM

run up -- take aim -- and lay down some fire -- bullets --

INT. AUDI - SAME

-- SHATTERING the rear windows -- raining in glass -- Alex DUCKING -- turning the wheel -- CUTTING onto --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - CONTINUOUS

-- a busy street -- SLAMMING into an oncoming car -- but NOT STOPPING -- TEARING OFF -- THUNDERING after Hirsch's SUV.

INT. SUV - SAME

As Hirsch switches gears -- twisting the wheel --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- making a tight turn -- tires *SCREEEEEEEECHING*.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Wind whipping -- Alex takes the same corner --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- as TWO POLICE CRUISERS explode out of a side street -- joining the pursuit -- cutting into the lane behind Alex.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Alex -- driving on pure instinct -- catches the cruisers in the rear-view -- bubble lights spinning.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

As one of the cop cars pulls alongside Alex --

INT. AUDI - SAME

-- who CRANKS the wheel -- and --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- RAMS the cruiser hard -- sending it CRASHING head-on into a hydrant -- BUSTING the engine -- taking it out of the chase.

INT. HIRSCH'S SUV - SAME

Cars FLYING up in the windshield -- Hirsch swerves to avoid multiple collisions -- blowing past other cars -- trying to shake Alex off --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- but he's GUNNING for him -- the second cruiser still on his ass until --

INT. AUDI - SAME

-- Alex switches gears -- seeing a traffic light up ahead switch to RED. He SLAMS HARDER on the gas and --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- EXPLODES through the intersection -- narrowly dodging a crash -- the cop car unable to do the same -- getting CLIPPED in the side -- sending it SPINNING out of control.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Alex continues to race forward -- gaining ground on Hirsch.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

As Alex RAMS into the back of the SUV --

INT. SUV - SAME

-- JOLTING Hirsch -- who loses control of the wheel -- swerving wildly -- before steadying the ride.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Alex FLOORS it again --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- SMASHING into the SUV -- harder -- sending the two cars veering toward an UNDERPASS --

INT. SUV - SAME

Hirsch tries to spin the wheel --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- but it's too late -- Alex sending Hirsch's car CRASHING into a stone barrier --

INT. SUV - SAME

As the AIR BAG DEPLOYS -- catching Hirsch's face --

INT. AUDI - SAME

-- while Alex's head SNAPS forward -- neck nearly breaking.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SECONDS LATER

Then with cars still ZIPPING by -- a POLICE HELICOPTER now BUZZING overhead -- Alex and Hirsch both STORM out of their cars -- up to each other -- SCREAMING:

HIRSCH	ALEX
What the fuck do you think --	I want answers Goddammit!

ALEX  
Who killed my wife? Who's behind  
this!?! TELL ME!

Hirsch pauses -- seeing Alex's intensity -- the fire in his  
eyes -- then calming:

HIRSCH  
I don't know.

ALEX  
But you can find out. You always  
have information for me and I need  
to know --

HIRSCH  
But I don't wanna know.

ALEX  
What the fuck does that mean?

HIRSCH  
It means this time is different and  
you should turn yourself in and  
accept whatever you get cause it's  
better than going up against  
whoever it is that is after you  
now.

ALEX  
I got a daughter -- I can't turn  
myself in. I have to find out what  
to happened to my wife!

HIRSCH  
Why? It won't bring her back.

ALEX  
That's not the point.

HIRSCH  
It is the point. And as soon as you  
realize that, the better off both  
of us will be -- because right now  
you're a threat to everyone you  
know.

NEW ANGLE -- THE GRAB TEAM VAN

roaring down the street -- in and out of traffic -- moments  
from them.

RESUME:

ALEX  
I can't drop this.

HIRSCH  
Then I'm sorry.

ALEX  
Fuck sorry. You've helped me  
before.

HIRSCH  
Anonymously.

ALEX  
I can't do this on my own!

HIRSCH  
I don't get involved!

ALEX  
Then why show up at all?

HIRSCH  
I told you: to know what they know  
about me. Now that I do, I'm gone  
for good.

He heads back to his car.

ALEX  
You're a fucking coward you know  
that.

Hirsch ignores him.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
When did you ever fight for  
anything, huh?

But that strikes a deep nerve -- and he charges back over to  
Alex -- right in his face -- spitting:

HIRSCH  
Hey fuck you! You don't know shit  
about me. You just sit in your  
fucking office and wait for people  
like me to tell you when to take a  
piss. People like me who risk their  
lives for you, this country and if  
Lisa wasn't your wife --

ALEX  
Wait, you knew my wife?

Hirsch quiets -- revealing too much. Alex presses:

ALEX (CONT'D)  
How did you know my wife?

He's about to say when --

ONE OF THE GRAB TEAM VANS

appears. They have to move fast.

HIRSCH  
 Get in the car.

Alex and Hirsch quickly get back in the Audi -- Hirsch now taking the wheel -- PEELING AWAY -- the grab team van in fast pursuit -- following them back onto:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Where the van TEARS after the Audi -- EXPLODING through traffic -- ROARING UP -- SLAMMING into the back of the Audi --

INT. AUDI - SAME

-- ROCKING Hirsch and Alex -- who spin to escape a car approaching in the window.

Slicing through traffic:

HIRSCH  
 Look through the glove box.

Alex does. Finds a map.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
 Find me a route.

INT. VAN - SAME

As Yahger locks and loads an IMI Uzi.

INT. AUDI - SAME

As Hirsch -- twisting the wheel -- confesses:

HIRSCH  
 I used to work with Lisa.

ALEX  
 At the State Department?

He shakes his head.

HIRSCH  
 Lisa didn't work for the State  
 Department.  
 (turns to Alex)  
 She was CIA.

Alex is floored. Just then --

-- BULLETS START WHIZZING BY THEIR HEADS!

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

As Yahger unloads the IMI Uzi out the window -- SHREDDING the  
 back of the Audi --

INT. AUDI - SAME

-- causing Alex and Hirsch to DUCK -- rounds FLYING -- glass  
 SHATTERING all around them -- sending fragments SPRAYING.

ALEX  
 TURN RIGHT HERE, TURN RIGHT!

Hirsch does --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- hoping the curb -- screaming down another street -- the  
 van matching the same move -- gunmen still FIRING.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Going 50 -- 60 -- 70 mph -- Hirsch creates an opening between  
 two cars -- SPEEDING AHEAD -- the van not skipping a beat --  
 Hirsch not able to shake them -- until he sees --

UP AHEAD --

A CONSTRUCTION SITE

and he spins the wheel -- driving straight for it --

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - CONTINUOUS

-- the van right on his ass -- breakneck pace -- when --

INT. AUDI - SAME

-- Hirsch makes a last second turn -- just cutting around:

A TRAILER

which the van is unable to avoid -- CRASHING right into it as  
 the Audi SPEEDS ON --

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME

-- exiting the construction site -- and back onto:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

Where it disappears around a corner.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME

As the second grab team van arrives -- gunmen from the crashed car jumping out --

INT. VAN - SAME

-- Yahger activates an explosive device hidden inside the car. Steps out --

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME

-- and jumps into the second van -- doors sliding shut -- as it RACES OFF -- leaving the other car behind.

A beat later --

-- BOOOOOOM! -- the first van EXPLODES -- INCINERATING any evidence of who or what was inside it. Off which -- we QUICKLY SMASH BACK TO --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

Where the Audi hasn't slowed at all -- still hauling ass. Right behind them --

THE SECOND VAN

careens around a corner -- ROARING UP.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Alex calls out directions --

ALEX  
Left, take a left!

Hirsch spins the wheel -- as the Audi takes MORE GUNFIRE.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - SAME

Where Quayle and his team continue to monitor the chase.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

The Audi cuts around the car in front of them -- shaving off side-mirrors -- the van still eating up road -- closing.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Hirsch continues to drive focused -- but urgent:

HIRSCH  
Where am I going?

ALEX  
(consulting the map)  
Take the next right, then another right.

HIRSCH  
What?

ALEX  
Trust me.

Hirsch comes up to the first right --

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

-- and makes the sudden fast turn -- van SCREECHING to copy. Off which -- we SMASH TO --

A NEARBY TRAIN CROSSING

and the Audi speeding toward the tracks --

-- just as a TRAIN comes roaring down them. They have to time this just right.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Hirsch switches gears. DROPS the hammer.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - SAME

And BLOWS through the crossing -- just clearing the train one second before it would OBLITERATE IT -- ROARING AHEAD -- leaving:

YAHGER'S VAN

behind. No choice but to stop. Out of the chase.

INT. AUDI - SAME

Alex looks back ahead -- rattled -- as we RETURN TO --

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY

Where Quayle is LIVID.

QUAYLE

I want every feed in and around the park pulled. Scrub every image for Bishop's source. I want a face, a name and everything he's done from birth til right now. Get on it!

The team hurries -- carrying out Quayle's orders -- as we GO TO --

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER - NIGHT

A complete dump. We see the Audi parked in front. PRELAP:

HIRSCH (V.O.)

I grew up south side of Boston.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Populated by TRUCKERS -- downing coffee. Alex and Hirsch are at a table together. Patsy Cline plays over the jukebox.

HIRSCH

Little punk kid. Not much of a future. Nickel and dime robberies by the time I was 10, graduating to armored cars and banks by 19. No way I wasn't gonna end up dead or in jail -- but then one night, me and my friends decided to hit up a vault, completely ignoring every rule I set up for myself. Ended up tripping an alarm. Three friends I was with went down for it. I somehow got out. Ran like hell. Didn't stop. Ended up all the way in the Army, if you could fuckin' believe it. Wasn't long before the agency noticed I was talented. Pulled me out. Drew me in. Trained me in ways you couldn't imagine. Then non-official cover posts in Beirut, Berlin, Damascus, Rome. They moved me around every four years before finally dry-docking me in New York.

ALEX

Tell me about Lisa.

HIRSCH

Before I left the agency, Lisa worked for me at the Shop. I was her handler.

ALEX

The Shop, what's that?

HIRSCH

It was the CIA's Systems Procurement Group. We'd figured out ways to access high security installations: military bases, embassies, intelligence hubs. Then we'd break-in. Plant surveillance. Crack firewalls. Vaults. Obtain codes. Your wife was a chief analyst. As good as they come.

(means it)

I liked her a great deal.

Hirsch sees that Alex is having a hard time with this.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

She never told you because she wanted to protect you and Emma -- but she never did anything more than the planning.

That seems to take the sting out -- but only slightly.

ALEX

The people who killed her took everything away from me. The black box is the key to bringing them down.

HIRSCH

You'll never get it -- if it even still exists.

ALEX

But maybe if I find out who sent it to me.

HIRSCH

If whoever gave it to you wanted you to know who it was from, believe me you'd know. Shit, they're probably just as scared as you are. If more so.

ALEX

And you?

HIRSCH

I already told you. I don't do this anymore -- and you should quit while you're alive.

ALEX

You don't have a choice anymore. You can't just disappear. They're gonna come after you now too.

HIRSCH

I'll take my chances.

Beat.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

Alex just looks at him -- shaking his head.

ALEX

Don't apologize to me. 92 people died and you knew the truth and chose to ignore it.

With that -- Alex rises -- and leaves in a huff.

Off Hirsch -- those words starting to resonate -- we GO TO --

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Where we see Alex hiking -- cars ZOOMING past -- splashing mud. He tries to flag one down. No takers -- until:

THE AUDI

comes pulling up. Slows. Alex stops. Hirsch swings the door open. Waits.

Alex considers Hirsch -- sees he's serious -- then climbs into the passenger seat. He shuts the door and Hirsch pulls away -- as we CUT TO --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Where we reunite with the asset we remember as:

YAHGER

on his knees -- praying -- before looking over to the bed where his gun is resting on a white hotel towel -- just cleaned. He picks it up -- and SLAMS home a magazine -- as we GO TO --

EXT. INDUSTRIAL PARK - NIGHT

Parallel to railroad tracks -- a series of WAREHOUSES. The Audi comes driving up -- pulling into one of the warehouses -- stopping inside:

AN INDUSTRIAL ELEVATOR

which it rides up to:

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A large industrial space -- filled with electronic equipment and rows and rows of file cabinets. Alex steps out of the car -- following Hirsch up to his work space -- which also includes a cot.

ALEX

This your home?

HIRSCH

One of them.

ALEX

How many places you got?

HIRSCH

(plopping down at his desk)

Not counting two private storage lockers, three switch-out cars and four different sets of Go-Bags in bus stations and airports -- seven. You can never be too careful when it comes to information or an exit.

ALEX

Three days ago I'd say you were paranoid.

HIRSCH

When I left the agency, I went into private security. Just made enough cash to disappear last year.

ALEX

Why'd you wanna disappear so badly?

HIRSCH

Cause after 20 years of intelligence work, you get a real good look at humanity's dark side.

(MORE)

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

You see what we're really capable of and once you do, it's best to avoid it as much as possible.

ALEX

Doesn't exactly track with you feeding me intel.

HIRSCH

I suppose it doesn't, but you have to be loyal to something.

ALEX

The truth?

HIRSCH

Your wife.

Alex stops. Hirsch sees the look.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

Easy sport, I'm old enough to be her father. She was my protégé, that's all.

Under this -- Hirsch plugs his camera phone into a computer. Pulls up the photo he took of Bryant. Starts running facial recognition software on the image.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

Someone looking after Emma?

ALEX

(distracted)

Huh?

HIRSCH

Is someone with your daughter?

Alex nods.

ALEX

Lisa's sister. Rachel. I told her to go into hiding. I don't know where.

Hirsch nods.

HIRSCH

(re: the photo)

Look, this could take a moment. In the meantime, let's worry about you. Go to the closet. Help yourself to some new clothes.

(MORE)

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
In the bathroom, under the sink,  
there's some hair dye. We gotta  
change your whole appearance.

Alex nods -- heads away.

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Alex steps inside -- carrying a new set of clothes. He shuts  
the door behind him.

Looks in the mirror. Almost doesn't recognize the reflection:  
all cut up -- disheveled -- exhausted.

He splashes his face with water -- trying to rouse himself.  
He then ducks down -- opening up the cabinet beneath the  
sink. Finds the bottle of hair dye.

As he grabs it -- he pauses -- mind racing -- eyes narrowing.  
A memory triggers.

FLASH TO --

INT. BATHROOM - THREE YEARS AGO

*Where Alex watches his wife dying her hair blonde in the  
bathroom sink.*

RESUME PRESENT:

as Alex realizes something -- his jaw tightening. Off which --  
we RETURN TO --

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - SECONDS LATER

As Hirsch continues to run facial recognition software on  
Bryant's photo -- looking for a match against several  
intelligence databases -- when:

ALEX

comes storming up -- face tight -- looking like he's about to  
blow up. Hirsch turns around in his chair --

HIRSCH  
Hey, we almost --

-- and *WHAM!* -- Alex BELTS Hirsch across the face with a  
closed fist -- knocking him off his chair.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
What the fuck!?!

ALEX

Lisa wasn't an analyst. She didn't do research. She was an operative, wasn't she?

Hirsch is silent -- Alex now EXPLODING:

ALEX (CONT'D)

WASN'T SHE!?!

Hirsch spits blood from his cut lip -- and looks up at Alex.

HIRSCH

She ran missions, yeah. When I left she was heading her own office, reporting directly to the director.

ALEX

And the President?

Hirsch nods. Explains what she was really doing on Air Force One. Alex looks furious -- prompting Hirsch to ask:

HIRSCH

You mad cause I didn't tell you or cause she didn't?

ALEX

We never kept secrets. I thought I knew everything about her, but now...

HIRSCH

Your wife loved you. Talked about you and Emma all the time. She was truly special, Alex. And no matter who she was, she was that. Don't forget: you saw the real her. Everyone else, including me, saw the lie.

Alex pauses -- Hirsch's words resonating with him. A moment of silence passes -- then:

THE FACIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

gets a hit -- matching Bryant's picture against a database. But Alex doesn't break from Hirsch.

ALEX

I'm sorry.

Hirsch nods -- conceding.

HIRSCH  
 Got a good right there.  
 (beat; back to serious)  
 Don't fucking do it again.

Alex smirks. Offers a hand. Hirsch takes it. Tension buried.

Hirsch then sits back down and looks to the monitor -- where a classified bio of ERIC BRYANT appears.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
 Let see who we got.  
 (reading)  
 Bryant, Eric, R. Enlisted Army at  
 18. Ranger school, sniper school.  
 Four years as Delta. Special  
 Forces. Three tours in Iraq,  
 Afghanistan. Dishonorably  
 discharged a year ago. Punched out  
 his CO.

ALEX  
 So he's no longer government.

HIRSCH  
 Or he's not officially. Let's see  
 who's paying his bills.

Hirsch types some commands -- breaking through firewalls and pulling up:

BRYANT'S FINANCIAL RECORDS

and looking them over we see an entry for a company called:

ALEX  
 The Straton Group. Never heard of  
 them.

Hirsch pulls up the company website. Reads the official description:

HIRSCH  
 The Straton Group pioneers  
 technology and solutions to combat  
 global risks faced by the national  
 security community.

ALEX  
 Can you get us a board of  
 directors?

Hirsch types again. Pulls up a list of board member names. Alex recognizes one immediately:

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Martin Lauer.

Hirsch pulls up Lauer's profile. We immediately remember him:

HIRSCH  
From the AFO Commission.

Alex nods. Jesus. Off which -- music SPIKES -- as we GO FAST TO --

EXT. LAWRENCE, KANSAS - DAY

Shooting over America's heartland -- nothing but golden fields -- until a building complex comes into view:

EXT. THE STRATON GROUP HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Comprised of several structures -- sprawling and imposing. Looks like the main hub for any Fortune 500 company.

AN AMERICAN FLAG

flaps proudly in the breeze -- atop a pole.

RECEPTIONIST (V.O.)  
Good afternoon, the Straton Group.  
How may I direct your call?

EXT. VIRGINIA HIGHWAY - SAME

As a Mercedes town car drives past.

INT. MERCEDES TOWN CAR - SAME

Where the man we remember -- DAN RICHTER -- sits -- on a secure phone.

INT. THE STRATON GROUP HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Where we find Quayle sitting at the head of a large glass conference table -- BOARD MEMBERS on either side -- listening to an EMPLOYEE give a FINANCIAL PRESENTATION at the head of the room.

EMPLOYEE  
By positioning our accounts across these seven companies, re-distributing them into several off-shore accounts, we will effectively be --

Quayle's SECRETARY crosses up to her boss -- handing him a phone.

SECRETARY

The call you were waiting for sir.

Quayle nods -- taking the phone -- heading over to a window.

QUAYLE

This is Quayle.

INTERCUT RICHTER:

RICHTER

Time to get your fucking house in order, Tom.

QUAYLE

Everything is under control.

RICHTER

Not on my end.

QUAYLE

Then that's your problem.

RICHTER

My problem is your problem. Don't forget who your biggest customer is. I'm starting to hear things.

QUAYLE

What kind of things?

RICHTER

Hearings. Investigations.

QUAYLE

Just whispers.

RICHTER

No, yesterday it was whispers. Today they're talking into bullhorns. Where are we with Bishop?

QUAYLE

Closing the net.

RICHTER

And this new player, Hirsch?

QUAYLE

Him too.

RICHTER

Get this done.

Richter hangs up.

END INTERCUT.

EXT. SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

As Richter's car pulls up to a security arm -- a UNIFORMED GUARD approaching his window -- opening.

GUARD  
Good morning, Director.

Richter nods -- and the arm gets raised -- car driving up to:

CIA HEADQUARTERS

in Langley, Virginia.

Off Richter -- face softening -- conflicted -- we --

RESUME QUAYLE:

as he turns back to his board -- returning to business. CUT TO --

EXT. PRIVATE SOCIAL CLUB - DAY

An upscale, old money posh establishment.

INT. PRIVATE SOCIAL CLUB - DAY

WE TRACK a WAITER -- as he moves across a polished marble floor -- past plumes of cigar smoke -- to:

MARTIN LAUER

former Secretary of State and head of the AFO Commission. The waiter hands him a note.

INT. PRIVATE SOCIAL CLUB - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

As Lauer makes his way down a carpeted hall -- GO TO --

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY

As a tech turns to Morton:

TECH  
Sir, we have movement on  
surveillance subject 26-B. Do you  
want to send a shadow?

Morton pulls up the identity of subject 26-B and when he sees it's Lauer --

MORTON  
Where's Yahger right now?

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

As Yahger's phone BUZZES. He looks over from his bed.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - DAY

As a BMW drives past -- HEAVY RAIN splashing the Potomac River beyond.

INT. BMW - SAME

Where we see Lauer behind the wheel -- through windshield wipers -- looking nervous.

EXT. NATIONAL HARBOR - MARYLAND - DAY

Establishing: a waterfront district -- south of the capital. Lauer comes walking up -- holding an umbrella -- approaching:

THE AWAKENING

a 70 foot statue comprised of five aluminum pieces buried in the ground -- giving the appearance of an afflicted man attempting to free himself from the Earth.

VOICE  
Hello, Mr. Secretary.

Lauer turns. Finds:

ALEX

also holding an umbrella -- with his hair now dyed DARKER.

ALEX  
Know who I am?

Lauer nods.

MARTIN LAUER  
You're the wanted man.

ALEX  
I wanna know about the Straton Group.

MARTIN LAUER  
I'm sure there's literature you could download.

ALEX

I wanna know what they don't publicize -- like crashing Air Force One.

MARTIN LAUER

And you're here for what? A confession? What do you expect to accomplish today?

ALEX

I'm gonna burn them to the ground.

MARTIN LAUER

Please. You're standing in quicksand, trying to push up the air. You need a better plan.

Alex takes out a pre-paid cell phone. Dials.

MARTIN LAUER (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

ALEX

Introducing you to the better plan.

Lauer's eyes narrow -- waiting. What's Alex's play here? A beat -- then someone answers the call.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Me. I'm with him right now. You where you're supposed to be?

(beat; nods)

Hold on.

He hands the phone to Lauer -- who puts it to his ear. We hear Hirsch's voice.

HIRSCH (V.O.)

Your wife is very beautiful. It's understandable then why she chooses to keep the blinds up in the master bedroom...which just happens to allow for perfect line of sight.

Lauer's eyes widen. Alex shows no emotion.

EXT. BUILDING - ROOF TOP - SAME

Where we see Hirsch staring through the Leupold Mark 4 scope of a NEMESIS ARMS VANQUISH SNIPER RIFLE.

HIRSCH  
 (into an ear piece)  
 At this range, it'll take half-a-second to take her head clean off.

RESUME ALEX AND LAUER:

Lauer reacts -- lowering the phone -- then hanging up and dialing his wife.

MARTIN LAUER  
 Melissa, where are you right now?

MELISSA (V.O.)  
 I'm at home.

MARTIN LAUER  
Where at home?

MELISSA (V.O.)  
 In the bedroom, why?

Lauer hangs up. Looks at Alex.

MARTIN LAUER  
 You're no killer.

ALEX  
 Not according to the people you work for. Now who would you rather protect: them or Melissa?

Lauer pauses -- then lowers his guard:

MARTIN LAUER  
 You and your wife are so much alike.

ALEX  
 (blinks)  
 What are you talking about?

MARTIN LAUER  
 You have to realize what you're up against here. They will go the distance to protect their interests. Air Force One, Taiwan --

ALEX  
 Wait, what do you mean, Taiwan?

MARTIN LAUER  
 You really think what's happening isn't by design -- their design?  
 (MORE)

MARTIN LAUER (CONT'D)

For three years they've been  
positioning China to invade Taiwan,  
forcing our military to inter --

*PHFT!*

A bullet RIPS through the top of Lauer's umbrella and through his head -- spraying blood -- SCARY AND FAST.

Alex -- shit -- as Lauer collapses instantly to the ground.

Then just as fast -- a second round slices through Alex's umbrella -- GRAZING his cheek -- knocking him to the ground.

*PHFT!*

A third bullet hits Alex in the leg.

He SCREAMS and SCRAMBLES -- SCURRYING behind the Awakening statue -- a fourth bullet striking the aluminium hand as he DUCKS behind it -- *PING!*

NEW ANGLE -- ALEX'S LEG

gushing blood.

Alex acts quickly -- pulling off his belt -- and tying it around his thigh -- creating a tourniquet -- YELLING from the pain.

NEW ANGLE -- SNIPER SCOPE POV

cross-hairs searching for Alex's head -- unable to see him behind the statue.

RESUME ALEX:

trapped -- looking out -- seeing Lauer's dead body sprawled across the ground -- blood and brain matter mixing with the rain.

INT. BUILDING - EMPTY FLOOR - SAME

Perched at a window overlooking the harbor is:

YAHGER

aiming an Olympic Arms K23B rifle.

RESUME SNIPER SCOPE POV:

as Alex's profile suddenly appears in the cross-hairs. Easy kill shot.

Yahger starts to pull back on the trigger -- about to take out Alex when --

*PHFT!*

HIS HEAD EXPLODES -- BULLET PIERCING HIS TEMPLE!

What the fuck just happened?

SMASH TO --

NEW ANGLE -- HIRSCH

looking up from his rifle -- having just taken Yahger out.

POP WIDE --

and WE REVEAL that the roof top we saw Hirsch on earlier is actually at the Harbour -- NOT across the street from Lauer's wife.

RESUME ALEX:

pelted with rain -- bleeding -- but alive.

EXT. NATIONAL HARBOR - ROOFTOP - SAME

QUICK CUTS --

as Hirsch systematically breaks down the sniper rifle into WEAPON PIECES -- barrel, receiver, butt stock, scope -- and zips them up into a TACTICAL BACKPACK -- throwing it over his shoulder -- and disappearing down a fire escape.

EXT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

Establishing. Eerily quiet. We see the lights suddenly SHUT OFF and --

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

-- *BOOM!* -- the door EXPLODES OPEN! A HIT SQUAD BURSTS IN -- wearing GT-14 NIGHT VISION MONOCULARS and carrying silenced Zastava M21A assault rifles.

They're looking for Alex and Hirsch -- but the office is DESERTED -- and upon closer inspection --

-- all the COMPUTER HARD DRIVES have been removed -- files EMPTIED -- and the monitors, tables and chairs soaked with Clorox. Off which -- we GO TO --

EXT. GEORGETOWN APARTMENT - NIGHT

A nondescript APARTMENT COMPLEX for rentals only.

INT. HIRSCH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bare. No photos or art. Not even a TV. Just supplies, a stack of books, a table and a few chairs.

QUICK CUTS --

as Alex lies down onto a table -- belt removed from around his thigh -- his pant leg cut open -- revealing the bullet wound -- still bleeding.

Hirsch prepares SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS to remove the slug. Snapping on a pair of gloves -- he gets to work -- dousing the wound with alcohol.

Alex winces -- and just starts talking to get his mind off the pain:

ALEX

So you believe him? Lauer?

Hirsch wipes excess blood away from the wound with a cloth.

HIRSCH

I'm starting to think that Straton will do anything to protect their interests.

Hirsch then takes some forceps:

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

This may hurt.

Alex nods and steadies himself. Hirsch probes the wound with the forceps. Alex fights through the pain:

ALEX

Lauer says they're manipulating the United States into a conflict with China. President Singer would've never authorized such an action. He said as much in his UN speech two weeks before he died.

HIRSCH

But Dreyfuss?

ALEX

(gritting)

Yesterday, he ordered the Nimitz battle group into the Taiwan Strait. In 24 hours we could be at war thanks to Straton.

HIRSCH

Old story. Don't like the king's rule. Just replace the king.

Hirsch then starts fishing around for the bullet with the forceps.

ALEX

Think my wife knew about Straton? Is that what Lauer meant what he said we were alike?

HIRSCH

It's possible. But any secrets she had about them died with her.

Finally -- there! -- Hirsch gets a handle on the slug and with a sharp tug -- yanks it clean out.

Alex exhales -- sweating.

Hirsch then drops the bullet into a nearby jar. *CLINK*. Turns back to his patient.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

What do we you wanna do now?

ALEX

You mean after I pass out?

Hirsch nods.

ALEX (CONT'D)

My wife, the country, they deserve answers, not more lies. I wanna bring the whole fucking company down.

HIRSCH

You can barely stand up.

ALEX

Somebody has to.

The two lock eyes. Truth to that. If not them -- who?

Off which -- music BUILDS -- everything SPEEDING UP -- as we SLAM TO --

A DIGITAL LOCK

as Hirsch attaches an electronic code breaker to it. Starts downloading numerical code possibilities until the correct four digit pin is entered. The lock UNSEALS -- and Hirsch slips inside:

INT. OFFICE SOMEWHERE - NIGHT

Completely empty. Lit by moon shadow. Hirsch beelines over to a computer terminal and switches it on. Gets met by a STRATON GROUP screen-saver.

He's just broken into their Washington DC branch office. As he types -- he gets met by a series of FIREWALLS -- which he expertly BYPASSES.

EXT. THE STRATON GROUP - D.C. BRANCH - SAME

Where we see a public works van parked in the adjacent alley.

INT. VAN - SAME

Where Alex is keeping his eyes on a computer monitor -- which is synced into Hirsch's screen -- so Alex sees everything that Hirsch decrypts.

INT. THE STRATON GROUP - D.C. BRANCH - OFFICE - SAME

As Hirsch cracks the final firewall -- gaining access to protected Straton files. Into a hidden comm:

HIRSCH

Alright, we're in. If they're good  
we got two minutes before they'll  
detect the breach.

INT. ANONYMOUS ROOM - SAME

Where the technician starts to run a company-wide security check of its systems.

RESUME ALEX AND HIRSCH:

as they pour over a LIST OF CORPORATE OFFICERS:

HIRSCH

Jesus, more people work here with  
code word clearance than at the  
Pentagon.

(MORE)

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

They're paying out to three former CIA station heads, a FBI director, a four star general, a Department of Homeland Security chief. They got informers in every branch of government.

RESUME TECHNICIAN:

continuing his search for any cracks in their security.

RESUME ALEX AND HIRSCH:

as they come up on the company's financial information.

ALEX

According to this, Straton just moved \$50 billion to off-shore accounts.

HIRSCH

What the hell are they spending \$50 billion on?

Alex pauses -- realizing:

ALEX

Us.

Hirsch's eyes narrow -- lost. Alex explains:

ALEX (CONT'D)

If China goes to war with America, Beijing would have to devalue their currency to be able to afford it. Which would give Straton the ability to buy back America's debt. They would control our entire nation's currency.

The full weight of this hits Hirsch:

HIRSCH

Jesus.

RESUME TECHNICIAN:

as his program is about to locate Hirsch's breach:

RESUME ALEX AND HIRSCH:

as they pull up more records -- finding an entry for:

ALEX  
Iron Mountain, what's that?

HIRSCH  
It's a high security storage facility in Pennsylvania. If Moses was looking for a place to store the 10 Commandments, he'd do it there -- it's one of the most secure locations in the world.

ALEX  
Straton has a vault there.

Hirsch accesses a manifest.

HIRSCH  
Holding one 18X18 steel reinforced case.  
(beat; realizing)  
Holy shit.

Only one thing it could be:

ALEX  
It's the black box.

HIRSCH  
By why not just destroy it?

ALEX  
These things are doused in jet fuel, shot out of cannons, dropped 20,000 feet out of the air. They're built so you can't destroy them.

HIRSCH  
But if you can pull the data, you can erase the data. Fine, you keep the smoking gun, but you can at least wipe off your prints.

Alex pauses -- thinking -- then a lightbulb goes off:

ALEX  
They're still gonna use it.

Hirsch raises an eyebrow.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
It's the ultimate insurance. Think about it. Last minute, cooler heads prevail. China backs off.  
(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Conflict averted. Straton's on the  
hook for billions.

HIRSCH  
(finishing the thought)  
Unless Straton had a guaranteed way  
to force America into war.

ALEX  
By planting evidence suggesting Air  
Force One wasn't an accident.

HIRSCH  
But an act of foreign terrorism.

And as this all comes together --

ALEX  
Jesus Christ.

-- an ALARM SOUNDS -- JOLTING Alex.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Shit.

ON HIRSCH'S SCREEN --

we see a SECURITY ALERT FLASH -- and the files are INSTANTLY  
DELETED from both computers.

Alex tries to stop them from erasing -- but it's no use.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Fuck, fuck.  
(into his comm)  
Hirsch, get the fuck out of there  
now!

INT. THE STRATON GROUP - D.C. BRANCH - OFFICE - SAME

Too late. Hirsch hits the floor as -- *BAM!* -- the door KICKS  
IN -- GUNMEN STORMING INSIDE -- ANNOUNCING THEMSELVES WITH  
CONTROLLED BURSTS FROM H&K MACHINE GUNS -- DESTROYING  
EVERYTHING IN THEIR PATH -- INCLUDING COMPUTERS AND WINDOWS:  
*RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!*

Bullets whizzing by -- Hirsch draws his Glock. Fires back.

*BANG! BANG!*

Two gunmen go down -- the third ducking back -- as Hirsch  
lays down more cover fire -- RISING -- and rushing out  
another door -- as we RETURN TO --

INT. VAN - SAME

As Alex LEAPS behind the wheel -- throws on the ignition and PEELS AWAY.

IN THE WINDSHIELD -- A STRATON GUARD

steps out of a side door -- in front of the van -- about to level his machine gun and FIRE when --

-- Alex HITS the gas -- SLAMMING into the guard -- SPINNING him like a top -- and THUNDERING around the corner and back in front as --

EXT. THE STRATON GROUP - D.C. BRANCH - SAME

-- Hirsch EXPLODES out of an access door -- just as the van SCREECHES to a stop in front of him.

STRATON GUARDS

soon come rushing up -- firing -- as Alex LEAPS out the front door -- laying down cover rounds from a Sig -- trading bullets with the guards while SCREAMING at Hirsch to:

ALEX  
Get in the van!

Hirsch -- also firing -- jumps into the passenger seat. Then as the guards DUCK BACK -- Alex -- still firing -- climbs back into the van --

INT. VAN - SAME

-- drops the hammer -- and SPEEDS OFF --

EXT. THE STRATON GROUP - D.C. BRANCH - SAME

-- bullets chasing them -- but they're GONE -- around a corner. GO TO --

EXT. LAWRENCE, KANSAS - NIGHT

SILENTLY SAILING over corn fields at night -- nothing but black -- until we arrive at the Straton Group Headquarters.

A TOWN CAR

pulls up in front. Quayle steps out and heads inside.

INT. THE STRATON GROUP HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

As Quayle makes his way up to a sealed door -- placing his hand onto a scanner -- which then unlocks the magnetic seal and allows him access to:

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Which EXPLODES WITH SOUND -- from techs SCRAMBLING -- trying to get a handle on the DC security breach.

Entering with full authority:

QUAYLE

Alright, it's been twenty minutes,  
what do we know?

But no one answers -- still buzzing -- working. Quayle heads over to a computer terminal -- and RIPS it right out of the desk -- HURLING the machine across the room -- where it SLAMS against the wall -- SILENCING THE ROOM.

QUAYLE (CONT'D)

What. Do. We. Know?

Morton steps up.

MORTON

We know Bishop and Hirsch gained access to our protected server for 117 seconds.

QUAYLE

And in that time saw what?

MORTON

We don't know.

QUAYLE

You don't know or I don't wanna know?

MORTON

We don't know. It could've been any number of things: office extensions, petty cash receipts --

QUAYLE

Classified intelligence files, eyes only DOD briefing books.

MORTON

We should know more in an hour.

QUAYLE

An hour?

TECH (O.S.)

(chiming in)

Iron Mountain.

Quayle -- whipping around when he hears that:

QUAYLE

What?

A TECH sits nervously -- now on the spot.

TECH

I think they know we're a tenant.

Quayle's jaw tightens. Fuck.

HIRSCH (V.O.)

Iron Mountain.

INT. HIRSCH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Where we see Hirsch showing Alex images on his computer of:

IRON MOUNTAIN

a heavily fortified storage facility in Pennsylvania. Over the following -- we see images of what he's describing rotate on the computer screen:

HIRSCH

The main archive facility is 22 stories underground. Taking up 145 acres of a 1,000-acre limestone mine -- with corridors stretching for miles -- making it a giant rock maze -- protected by former Special Forces, motion sensors that'll pick up anything bigger than a beaver, biometric scanners and key-cards. The FBI and the Social Security Administration have offices inside and it's also where our government keeps the wreckage of Flight 93. Got its own sewage system, electricity and fire department. If the black box is being housed inside, I don't see a way to get it.

ALEX

Well, somebody did. Someone sent me a copy of the recording.

HIRSCH

Only Straton's top brass has access to their vault. Wanna ask them one by one who sent it to you?

Alex knows that's not an option. A beat -- as he thinks. This is what he's best at -- coming up with scenarios -- but nothing is coming to him.

ALEX

(exasperated)

Shit.

Alex rises from his seat and crosses the room -- up to the window. Stares out -- lost.

Hirsch turns to stare at his back. Another beat -- then:

ALEX (CONT'D)

What's today, Tuesday?

HIRSCH

Wednesday, I think.

Alex pauses.

ALEX

Emma has ballet today. They're practicing for their recital next week.

A beat -- then Alex turns around -- face full of resolve and commitment. He crosses up to Hirsch.

ALEX (CONT'D)

The black box is what we need to end this. You and my wife used to break into places. You and I are going to break into this one.

And we can see he means it. Off which -- music BUILDS -- as we SMASH TO --

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

As the camera ZOOMS over western Pennsylvania -- above a cow pasture -- to a high chain-link fence topped with razor wire.

Beyond it -- a private road disappears into a cliff face that's sealed off by a heavy steel gate -- controlled by motion sensors and GUARDS with semi-automatic machine pistols.

This is IRON MOUNTAIN.

NEW ANGLE -- AN EMERGENCY VENTILATION GRATE

located outside the first security checkpoint. Welded shut.

HIRSCH

unzips a TACTICAL BACKPACK. Draws from it: a WELDING TORCH. IGNITES it -- *FWOOM!*

ALEX

looks on as *KA-CHING* -- Hirsch finishes the weld and the grate OPENS -- Alex shining a flashlight into the:

UNDERGROUND VENTILATION TUNNEL

now exposed below -- a tight, narrow space.

INT. TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

As Alex and Hirsch -- both wearing dark overalls -- squeeze their way through the tube -- a gruelling three mile crawl on their backs -- noses touching the tunnel ceiling -- barely able to breathe. Suddenly --

Alex STOPS. Sees:

A MOTION SENSOR

embedded in the tunnel wall. To Hirsch -- whispering:

ALEX  
Motion sensor.

Hirsch STOPS. Alex hands him a tiny aerosol can. Hirsch aims and sprays the sensor -- covering it with a thin coat of transparent, oily mist.

Done. Hirsch nods.

HIRSCH  
Let's go.

They continue to snake up the shaft -- as we GO TO --

EXT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

As a BLACK SUBURBAN drives up the private road -- to the steel security gate.

TWO IRON MOUNTAIN GUARDS approach. The car windows lower to reveal:

QUAYLE

sitting in the back -- along with Morton and THREE STRATON SECURITY MEN -- dressed in black suits.

GUARD

Good morning, gentlemen. I need ID's and social security numbers for each individual please.

As the guards collect ID's from Quayle and his team -- we RETURN TO --

INT. TUNNEL - SAME

Where Alex and Hirsch -- grunting -- continue to torture themselves -- straining to make it down this tube -- as we GO BACK TO --

EXT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - SAME

As the lead guard confirms everyone's identities --

GUARD

Enjoy your visit.

-- giving a wave to a:

GUARD TOWER

where the GATE GUARD presses a button -- opening up the giant sliding entry gate.

The Suburban drives ahead -- into the mouth of the mountain -- music DRIVING US -- as we CUT TO --

INT. TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

As Hirsch stops -- reaching another GRATE at the end of the tube -- and uses the can again -- spraying mist to reveal:

SENSOR BEAMS

criss-crossing the grate.

Hirsch then moves his backpack around to the front -- unzips a pocket -- and pulls out:

TINY REFRACTING MIRRORS

which he carefully uses to disarm the beams.

Satisfied -- he drills out the vent screws -- allowing him and Alex to drop into:

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - AIR PURIFICATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Filled with large air purifying machines -- constantly WHIRRING.

Alex and Hirsch make a beeline to the far wall -- Hirsch drawing an electrical masonry saw from his bag. He starts cutting into the wall -- as we GO TO --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - RECEIVING AREA - SAME

A massive underground space -- forged out of a limestone mine. Rocks for ceiling and walls. LOADERS haul steel containment crates around on forklifts. With armed SENTRIES looking on -- Quayle and his team wait by their car for:

RICHARD MOORE

to arrive. An Iron Mountain executive vice-president.

MOORE

Mr. Quayle? Richard Moore. Welcome to Iron Mountain. This way please.

He leads Quayle and his team into an awaiting HUMVEE which then drives down one of four separate rock-lined passageways.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - AIR PURIFICATION ROOM - SAME

Alex looks over his shoulder -- as Hirsch finishes his work, cutting a hole into the next room.

HIRSCH

Got it.

The two step into:

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CIRCUITRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Full of plugs, lights and servers. Hirsch reaches up to the ceiling and pushes away a panel -- exposing the security system's main inbound and outbound wires.

IN QUICK CUTS --

Hirsch produces a small cutting tool and uses it to strip the plastic coating off -- exposing the copper wiring beneath.

He then clips a new, pre-cut piece of wire between the inbound and outbound cables -- taking all the facility's sensors out of the loop.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - MOORE'S OFFICE - SAME

As Moore directs Quayle to a BIOMETRIC PALM PRINT SCANNER. Quayle puts his hand down and the machine reads it. Confirms his identity.

MOORE

Excellent. Now if you wish we can proceed to the vault --

Quayle and his men are led out.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CIRCUITRY ROOM - SAME

VERY FAST --

Hirsch pops open a utility box. Connects a clip to a pair of wires -- attaching it to a military laptop.

With a few keystrokes -- he hacks into the Iron Mountain vault roster. Finds the vault owned by the Straton Group.

HIRSCH

Vault 2-25, North Corridor C.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SAME

As a Humvee transporting Quayle and his team journeys down a dark passageway -- a CATACOMB of winding rock corridors.

RESUME ALEX AND HIRSCH:

as they quickly remove their overalls to reveal they're wearing Iron Mountain uniforms underneath. SLAM FAST TO --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Alex and Hirsch discretely make their way down a corridor -- bags in hand -- looking like maintenance workers -- and up to a secure door -- Alex positioning himself in front of Hirsch -- so no one can see him --

-- slipping in a custom-made laser-cut SKELETON KEY -- with encrypted diodes -- into the lock. Turns. CRACK -- the door opens. Alex and Hirsch slip inside -- as a:

SECURITY TEAM

drives past on a Humvee -- just missing them.

Off which -- we GO TO --

A VAULT

built into a rock wall. We're now:

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - NORTH CORRIDOR C - MOMENTS LATER

A private corridor. Alex and Hirsch step up to the imposing steel door.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SECURITY OFFICE - SAME

Where we see a BANK OF VIDEO MONITORS. One of them shows North Corridor C -- but Alex and Hirsch aren't in the image -- having looped the feed earlier.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - NORTH CORRIDOR C - SAME

QUICK CUTS --

as Alex and Hirsch drop their bags -- unzipping them to reveal SAFE CRACKING GEAR.

HIRSCH

then clamps a drill to the vault. And with that --

WHHHHHZZZZRRRRNNNN!!! -- Hirsch starts CUTTING into the steel vault door -- as we GO TO --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SECURITY OFFICE - SAME

Where the guards are still oblivious.

RESUME CORRIDOR:

The drilling stops. Hirsch feeds a scope into the hole he just drilled.

A tiny LCD screen attached to the cable shows the inner mechanisms of the SAFE LOCK.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CIRCUITRY ROOM - SAME

As the door to the room opens -- a SECURITY OFFICER stepping inside -- seeing the open ceiling panel and the re-configured wires.

He instantly gets on his walkie-talkie -- as we GO FAST BACK TO --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - NORTH CORRIDOR C - SAME

FULL SCREEN -- THE INTERIOR OF THE VAULT LOCK

as the gears start to move and lock into place.

Alex looks down at Hirsch's LCD monitor -- which shows the notches lining up.

Suddenly -- AN ALARM SOUNDS!!!!

Alex and Hirsch look up -- shit! -- as we SLAM TO --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SECURITY OFFICE - SAME

As guards MOBILIZE -- grabbing Colt AR-15 Law Enforcement Carbines -- RUSHING OUT -- as we RETURN TO --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - NORTH CORRIDOR C - SAME

Where Alex and Hirsch speed up their efforts. Seconds later -- the vault's inner mechanisms start to *UNCLICK*.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CORRIDOR - SAME

As a fleet of Humvees ROAR PAST.

RESUME ALEX AND HIRSCH:

as Hirsch grips the wheel bolt and spins it until it STOPS and the vault door CLUNKS OPEN -- Alex looking inside but --

-- IT'S EMPTY!!!!!!

Nothing but rock and an empty floor -- where the black box recording was once kept.

Alex's jaw DROPS -- REELING -- FUCK! -- Quayle beat them to it. Just then --

-- the Humvees can be heard roaring up the corridor -- Hirsch whipping over to Alex. Have to get the fuck out of there now.

HIRSCH

Alex!

RESUME HUMVEES:

speeding up.

RESUME ALEX AND HIRSCH:

now hauling ass -- RUNNING down the corridor -- disappearing down a tunnel of BLACKNESS when --

-- FLASHLIGHT BEAMS draw down on them -- Alex and Hirsch looking up -- seeing:

ANOTHER HUMVEE

roaring up -- Alex and Hirsch quickly PIVOTING around -- SPRINTING AWAY -- Humvee CATCHING UP -- about to run them down when -- they quickly TURN RIGHT -- CUTTING DOWN another corridor.

The Humvee BLOWS PAST -- thisclose to clipping them.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - ANOTHER CORRIDOR - SAME

HAND-HELD CRAZINESS -- as Alex and Hirsch -- arms pumping -- dash down the corridor.

MORE GUARDS

come rounding a corner ahead of them -- taking aim -- Alex and Hirsch quickly THROWING THEMSELVES through a side access door -- entering:

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - STAIRWELL - SAME

Where they go TEARING UP several stories -- tripping several more MOTION SENSORS along the way -- ALARMS BLARING -- but they don't stop -- can't stop -- RUNNING for their lives -- as we GO TO --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SECURITY OFFICE - SAME

Where security monitors Alex and Hirsch on one of the screens -- relaying their position -- watching them throw open another set of doors -- as we SLAM TO --

EXT. IRON MOUNTAIN - PRIVATE ROAD - SAME

As Quayle's black Suburban drives past -- away from the facility -- kicking up gravel.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CORRIDOR - SAME

As two SECURITY GUARDS are about to hop into their Humvees when --

-- *CLICK! CLICK!*

Alex and Hirsch whip around each side -- aiming Glockes at the guards.

RESUME PRIVATE ROAD:

as the Suburban continues away from Iron Mountain.

INT. SUBURBAN - SAME

CLOSE ON -- A STEEL CRATE

in the back -- strapped down: THE BLACK BOX.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CORRIDOR - SAME

As Alex hops behind the wheel of the Humvee -- turning the ignition --

-- Hirsch cuffs the two guards together -- about to join Alex when --

-- *RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!* -- BULLETS START RAINING IN -- THE BACK OF THE CAR GETTING RIDDLED -- ALEX AND HIRSCH BOTH DUCKING DOWN -- SPARKS FLYING!

MORE GUARDS

start running up behind them -- unloading -- Hirsch spinning around -- RETURNING FIRE -- trying to keep them off -- yelling back over to Alex -- SCREAMING at him to:

HIRSCH

GO! GO!

Alex looks back to him -- you sure?

HIRSCH (CONT'D)

NOW!

*BANG! BANG! BANG!* Hirsch continues to fire back --

INT. HUMVEE - SAME

-- Alex dropping the hammer -- ROARING AWAY -- looking in the rear-view at:

HIRSCH

trading rounds -- then taking a bullet -- DROPPING -- Alex unsure of his condition -- his image DISAPPEARING as the Humvee SPEEDS ON.

Alex -- fuck! -- whips his head back up -- jaw tightening.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CORRIDOR - SAME

As the Humvee THUNDERS BY --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SECURITY OFFICE - SAME

-- officers direct security teams to take up positions --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - CORRIDOR - SAME

-- OPENING FIRE on the Humvee as it speeds past -- bullets TEARING into metal -- sending up SPARKS -- but Alex doesn't slow -- finding another gear -- TWISTING down another rock pathway -- still taking heavy rounds -- then HOOKING around a third corridor.

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - RECEIVING AREA - SAME

As the MAIN PERIMETER GATE starts to CLOSE.

INT. HUMVEE - SAME

As Alex looks up -- sees the gate ahead -- about to trap him inside the facility. He SLAMS harder on the gas and --

INT. IRON MOUNTAIN - RECEIVING AREA - SAME

-- SQUEEZES right through the gate -- metal SHAVING as it SHOOTS --

EXT. IRON MOUNTAIN - SAME

-- OUTSIDE -- ROARING AWAY -- guards still firing -- but the Humvee out drives the bullets -- DISAPPEARING.

Off which -- we GO TO --

EXT. BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

Small town, USA. Strictly blue collar. Quiet streets. Almost empty.

A POLICE CRUISER

drives past us -- on patrol. Passes:

ALEX

stepping out of shadows -- looking worse for wear. A hunted man -- with no black box -- and no more options.

Off which -- we PRELAP:

ALEX (V.O.)  
How is she?

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL - NIGHT

Where we find Rachel -- on a pay-phone -- Lisa asleep on a cot in the room behind her.

RACHEL  
Sleeping. Scared.

EXT. BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA STREET - SAME

Alex -- on a pay-phone:

ALEX  
I'm sorry.

INTERCUT:

RACHEL  
What about you?

Alex is silent -- spirit crushed.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Alex?

A beat -- then:

ALEX  
Rach, what if I told you, an American company was involved in the crash of Air Force One? That they did it because President Singer would never go along with a plan to attack China.

A long pause -- then:

RACHEL  
Are you asking me as your brother-in-law or as a journalist?

ALEX  
A journalist.

RACHEL  
Is this a theory of yours?

ALEX  
It was.

RACHEL  
Do you have evidence?

ALEX  
No.

RACHEL  
Then as your sister-in-law I would say forget it.

ALEX

Thought you told me not to forget.

RACHEL

I told you I was worried about you and now I'm even more so. Four days ago, we're talking about you not calling my friend back and now you're saying my sister was murdered. That the tribute me and your six year-old daughter attended without you was based on a lie.

ALEX

I know -- which is all the more reason to find an end to this. I just don't know what it is.

RACHEL

Then let me tell you what I know: your daughter cries out for you, the police and the FBI think you're a killer, and I had to go into hiding.

ALEX

I know...and if there was another way out I would take it. But I have to see this through to the end or else me, you, Emma, will never be safe -- and Lisa would've died for nothing.

RACHEL

But you already said -- you have nothing. Now just please come home.

ALEX

I can't come home. I need infor --

Alex pauses -- like a bolt of lightning just hit him.

RACHEL

Alex?

Silence -- Alex's mind playing something over and over.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Alex?

ALEX

I gotta go.

RACHEL  
What? Alex, wait --

But he doesn't -- hanging up -- exiting -- as we GO TO --

INT. INTERNET CAFE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON -- A STOLEN CREDIT CARD

as Alex swipes it -- purchasing internet minutes -- MUSIC  
DRIVING US -- as we INTERCUT --

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

As a bus drives by -- spewing black smoke into the sky.

RESUME ALEX:

at the internet cafe -- face bathed in the blue glow of his  
monitor -- furiously looking up his late wife's financial  
records.

INT. BUS - INTERCUTTING

Alex sits in the back -- quiet -- determined to see this  
through -- music CONTINUING.

INT. INTERNET CAFE - INTERCUTTING

Where we see Alex continuing to comb through any and all of  
his wife's online activities -- seeing that she rented a  
storage facility outside Virginia in her father's name three  
years earlier.

GO BACK TO --

THE BUS

as it blows past:

EXT. STORAGE FACILITY - NIGHT

Massive. Rows of containers.

NEW ANGLE -- ALEX

as he walks up to one of the units -- aims his gun and --  
*BANG!* -- blows the lock off -- and heaves open the roll-up  
metal door.

It SLIDES UP -- Alex looking inside -- but we don't get to  
see what he sees.

And off Alex -- we CUT TO --

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Outside an affluent home in the posh Bethesda, Maryland suburb of Washington, DC. A car pulls into the driveway. Parks.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

The front door opens up. The man we recognize as:

CIA DIRECTOR DAN RICHTER

steps inside -- briefcase in hand -- shutting the door behind him. He starts to make his way toward the stairs when --

-- a light switches on the adjacent study -- revealing:

ALEX

waiting for him -- gun in his lap.

Richter doesn't seem surprised.

RICHTER

I was wondering how long it would take you to get to me.

ALEX

You could've made it easier...by giving me the recording in person.

RICHTER

That would've defeated the purpose.

He drops his coat and enters:

INT. STUDY - CONTINUOUS

RICHTER

How'd you find my home?

ALEX

Lisa told me where it was.

Alex produces a thick file folder -- dropping it onto Richter's desk.

ALEX (CONT'D)

She had files on all of you.

RICHTER

I know. She was a good agent.

ALEX

Who found out what the Straton Group was all about. How in the beginning, the company was just doing black ops for the CIA before pushing their own agenda.

(beat)

And how you wanted to bring them down just as much as she did. Even while you took a salary.

Richter nods.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You just didn't have her courage.

RICHTER

I'm not going to apologize for wanting to stay alive. You see the lengths they go to.

ALEX

So you gave me the black box tape, praying on the memory of my wife, knowing I'd run the story and bring them down -- while you remained anonymous.

Another nod.

ALEX (CONT'D)

But why now? Why wait so long?

Richter pauses -- then sets his briefcase onto the desk and pops it open -- drawing:

A CLASSIFIED INTELLIGENCE REPORT

on the Chinese military. Hands it to Alex.

RICHTER

Chinese military is better equipped than we thought -- their anti-carrier arsenal far more advanced than the DOD or even Straton anticipated.

Alex flips through the report -- filled with missile schematics marked with top secret clearance tags -- taking in all the information.

RICHTER (CONT'D)

The war would be more deadly and expensive than we could conceive of.

(beat; confessing)

It's just too much blood.

Alex looks up -- full of emotion.

ALEX

It's already been too much blood.

Richter's silent. Alex then rises -- moving past him -- to the door.

RICHTER

What are you gonna do now?

Alex stops -- turning back -- while reaching into his pocket and drawing:

A TAPE RECORDER

which has been running the whole time.

ALEX

I'm gonna play my own recording.

With that -- he goes to walk to the door when --

-- THE LIGHTS SHUT OUT -- PLUNGING THE HOUSE INTO TOTAL DARKNESS.

Alex and Richter both react -- thrown. Alex then looks through the front door window.

NEW ANGLE -- ALEX'S POV

the rest of the neighborhood lights are ON.

RESUME:

Alex -- fuck -- knows something is about to happen. Then he catches:

MOVEMENT

outside -- BODIES RUSHING past windows -- deadly silent. Alex whips back to:

RICHTER

who has a knee on the floor -- spinning open the combination lock to a safe -- unlocking the door -- reaching in and pulling out:

A STEYR M9A1

He press checks the chamber -- readying himself -- as Alex looks around for options.

JUMP CUT -- SECONDS LATER

as the front door lock gets picked. Silently swings open.

A THREE MAN STRATON HIT SQUAD

slides inside -- wearing night vision goggles and carrying silenced assault rifles.

The shooters separate -- splitting up -- taking different sections of the house.

NEW ANGLE -- ALEX

hiding inside a closet -- listening to the gunmen advancing. His heart PUMPS. He holds his breath.

If he makes a sound -- he's dead.

RESUME GUNMEN:

as they continue their hunt -- guns leveled -- fucking terrifying.

RESUME ALEX:

as he quietly backs away from the door -- foot kicking:

AN EMERGENCY SURVIVAL KIT

on the floor. He ducks down. Flips open the lid. Finds:

A FLARE

RESUME THE THREE GUNMEN:

still on the move -- searching.

GUNMAN #1

reaches the front hallway closet -- where Alex is hiding. He stops.

GUNMAN #2

heads for the kitchen.

GUNMAN #3

goes upstairs.

RESUME:

Gunman #1 swings open the closet door. Suddenly --

RICHTER

steps out from behind shadows. *BANG! BANG!* Fires two rounds.  
Kills GUNMAN #2

Everything that happens now -- happens fast:

Alex LIGHTS the flare -- SHOVING it into Gunman #1's face.  
His entire field of vision gets BURNED. He HOWLS -- BLINDED.

Gunman #3 turns. Fires back at Richter -- *RAT-TAT-TAT* -- as  
Richter gets off three more shots -- hitting Gunman #3 in the  
chest and head -- DROPPING him as --

ALEX

seizes the moment and TACKLES Gunman #1 -- RAMMING him up  
against the wall -- SLAMMING him to the ground -- then  
KICKING him in the ribs before -- *WHACK!* -- CRACKING his boot  
against his head -- rendering him unconscious.

Alex then picks up the shooter's fallen gun and looks over to  
Richter -- stepping back into the hallway -- back to the open  
front door.

*BANG!*

A bullet spins him around.

*BANG! BANG!*

Richter gets tagged twice in the chest -- DROPPING TO REVEAL:

QUAYLE

behind him -- in the doorway -- smoking gun in hand.

Alex and Quayle then lock eyes. There's a small beat between  
them -- a look of recognition.

Quayle then makes a move to fire.

*RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!*

Alex UNLOADS into Quayle -- ripping him to shreds. He hits the floor -- riddled.

A beat -- as Alex just stands there -- heart still beating out of his chest -- then he slowly steps forward -- over pools of blood -- past dead bodies -- to stand over Quayle's corpse -- looking down at his wife's killer.

Suddenly -- the house gets flooded by SPINNING RED AND BLUE LIGHTS -- as MARYLAND POLICE storm inside -- ordering Alex to drop his gun -- which he does -- everything SLOWING DOWN -- as we PRELAP:

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)  
Breaking news tonight --

CUT TO --

A CNN NEWS REPORT

detailing the end of the Straton Group and their agenda for a American/Chinese war.

CNN REPORTER  
-- FBI officials have raided the home office of the Straton Group, a private security firm, based in Lawrence, Kansas --

INT. THE STRATON GROUP HEADQUARTERS - VARIOUS - DAY

In which we see FBI AGENTS -- some in windbreakers -- others in SWAT gear -- STORMING the Straton Group lobby, hallways and offices.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)  
-- seizing computers and files, and arresting several corporate officers --

NEW ANGLE -- MORTON

being taken down and cuffed by federal officers.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)  
-- on charges ranging to public corruption, conspiracy, murder and terrorism.

CUT TO --

INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - DAY

As President Dreyfuss takes the podium.

PRESIDENT DREYFUSS

Good afternoon. I'll keep this brief as I know everyone has questions and I will do my best to add truth to rumor. To start with, yes, the FBI has seized what preliminary tests confirm is the actual flight data recording from Air Force One which seems to drastically contradict the original investigation findings that President Singer's plane crashed strictly due to mechanical and human error.

CUT TO --

INT. FBI HOLDING CELL - DAY

Where we find Alex -- sitting in a steel chair -- eyes on the floor.

PRESIDENT DREYFUSS (V.O.)

Rest assured, this President and this government, will do everything within our considerable power to bring justice to the guilty and right this horrific wrong.

Alex looks up -- as the door swings open and:

EMMA

come running inside -- Alex jumping off his chair -- HUGGING his daughter -- SQUEEZING her tight -- then looking up and seeing:

RACHEL

smiling from the doorway.

PRESIDENT DREYFUSS (V.O.)

The memories of the fallen will be avenged. They have not died in vain.

Off Alex -- overwhelmed -- DISSOLVE TO --

A BOUQUET OF RED ROSES

passing several headstones. We're now:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A beautiful sunny day. WE FOLLOW Alex -- as he makes his way across the cemetery -- to his wife's headstone.

He takes a moment -- looking at the words "DEVOTED MOTHER AND WIFE" -- before:

ALEX  
So they finally let you out, huh?

Alex turns -- finding:

ROBERT HIRSCH

walking up -- right arm in a sling -- left hand holding flowers.

HIRSCH  
Funny how a call from the Attorney General will do that for you.

Alex smiles.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
You did her proud, Alex.

ALEX  
Thank you for everything.

HIRSCH  
My pleasure.

Hirsch bends down -- and lays his flowers at Lisa's headstone. Rises.

ALEX  
So what are you gonna do now?

HIRSCH  
Thinking about getting my old job back actually.

We see Alex is happy to hear that.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
Seems there's still a lot of good fights to be had.

Alex nods.

HIRSCH (CONT'D)  
You take care.

With that -- Hirsch turns and walks away. Alex watches him go -- then looks back to Lisa's headstone.

A beat -- as he shuts his eyes -- remembering. FLASH TO --

INT. BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

*Where we see Alex and Lisa together -- on that perfect Sunday morning -- laughing in bed -- in love.*

RESUME PRESENT:

as Alex opens his eyes --

-- and smiles -- her memory no longer haunting him.

He then rests the roses down -- and kisses the top of her headstone -- before turning around -- heading out of the cemetery --

-- and into an awaiting car -- where:

EMMA

turns to him in the passenger seat.

ALEX

Ready to go home?

She nods. Alex smiles. The car pulls away. MUSIC BUILDS -- as we SMASH TO --

BLACK.