

DEARBORN

Written by

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FADE IN

SERIES OF SHOTS:

-- The long side of a yellow and black school bus passes left to right: DEARBORN CHARTER ACADEMY.

-- The back side of a school bus, ambers and reds flashing

-- Kids laughing and running away from the bus

-- The deployed stop sign -- flashing red

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: THE WHEELS ON THE BUS GO ROUND AND ROUND

EXT. RAMADI - DAY

The soft blue-black night yields to a rising sun, revealing a drone's-eye view of Ramadi -- a desperate grid of taupe-on-tan buildings in crumbles from bombings separated by pock-marked streets.

SUPER: IRAQ 2008

From overhead, a large institutional building, still intact.

A few blocks away, two silhouettes break out of the shadows of a rooftop.

THE MEN look at the building through binoculars.

STREET LEVEL

Al-Qaeda soldiers with rifles push a wheeled weapon through the double doors of the building. They pass a sign in Arabic.

SUPER: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

An old Toyota pick-up drives up the sidewalk to the door, circles, and backs-up near the door.

The driver and passenger exit and start unloading mortars and rifles into the school.

THE ROOFTOP

JOHN STINGER (38) and DAN WINSLOW (42) put down their binoculars and look to the sky.

John checks his watch.

JOHN

This is not good. Where's the drone?

Daylight comes on fast -- more people at the school -- Dan returns to the BINOCS:

Kids, parents, and teachers are arriving. They ignore the soldiers in their midst.

DAN

We've got people. Kids. School is starting.

John picks up his radio.

JOHN

Pipehitters Two to Base.

BASE (V.O.)

Base go for Two.

Dan sees more people enter the school. He looks to the sky and to his watch.

JOHN

Need to abort SCHOOLMASTER. We missed the window, students inbound.

BASE (V.O.)

Negative. SCHOOLMASTER is in route and can't be recalled.

Dan and John share a look.

BASE (V.O.)

Two, did you copy that last?

Dan and John streak down the stairs and jump into their truck. They tear down a side street -

Blow through an intersection -

And scream up the sidewalk toward the school entrance -

They shoot into the air, blow the horn, and start yelling in Arabic.

The truck slides to a stop and the men run toward the school entrance. A MOTHER holding an INFANT is exiting the school with her husband, VAGHID (33).

JOHN
 (screaming in Arabic)
 Evacuate! Evacuate!

The couple runs toward Dan and John, then VAGHID turns to go back.

BEEP-BEEP-BEEP. The missile strikes.

John turns to shield the mom and infant and is blown to the ground.

Dan and the father are blown backwards.

Facedown in the sand, John's eyes open -

Vaghid kicks John away from his wife.

VAGHID
 (in Arabic)
 Murderer! My Ali! You killed my
 first born! My dear born Ali!

On the ground, John doesn't resist.

Vaghid spits on John and then falls to his knees in hysterics. He prays in Arabic. Vaghid's wife and baby embrace him.

INT. OPERATIONS BASE - DAY

White boards, televisions, and computer monitors line the wall. A table with an interactive map sits in the center of the room. RICK AND TJ (38), stand with their hands on the table.

CIA Operative, ANGELA RODRIGUEZ, 46, runs the show.

John and Dan EXPLODE into the room, still dirty and blood covered.

TJ and Rick restrain John to keep him from Angela.

JOHN
 Damn you! This is not how we do
 things! We don't kill women and
 children!

Angela slowly sips from her CIA coffee cup. We see John anew -- in this light the scar down one eye and his scraggly beard make him look like a fierce Viking warrior.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Don't you get it? This puts it ALL at risk! All the sacrifices, all the injuries, all the medals for valor -- it's all rendered worthless by you!

ANGELA

Soldier! Pull yourself together. You know that war has a cost and sometimes it includes civilian casualties.

Dan slumps his gear on the table and takes a seat. John is still straining against TJ and Rick.

JOHN

That's crap! We run clean missions! I ran clean missions! Navy SEALs do not do this!

ANGELA

You're not a SEAL anymore. The CIA is different and you know that.

He reduces his push and his team lets him go. John juts his finger into her personal space.

JOHN

You need a new name -- there's nothing intelligent about any of this!

John does rabbit ears with his fingers to air-quote "intelligent."

JOHN (CONT'D)

This makes us just like the enemy -- savages willing to do anything to win -- it writes their recruitment video for them!

Angela takes another slow draw of coffee. Her SLURP is exaggerated and her eyes blank behind the cup.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How smart is that?

ANGELA

Those weapons, those soldiers nesting in that school would have killed our men and women in uniform -- your brothers and sisters!

John slams down his M-5, unpacking his gear.

JOHN

Maybe. Maybe we waited until dark
and then had trigger-happy-Jack
blow them up from Dallas.

Angela turns and starts to walk out of the room.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Do you even see these people as
humans? Do you? I have a wife and
an infant son just about the same
age as the two I was knocked to the
ground with. If I was the dad, and
I wasn't radicalized before, I sure
as hell would be now!

Angela cuts her eyes and shakes her head and is gone -- out
the door.

John makes eye contact with TJ -- then Rick -- then Dan. They
continue changing out of their gear.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Fellas, this is it for me. My last
tour in theater with the CIA.

DAN

Blackwater?

JOHN

Negative. I'm gonna find something
in the private sector.

TJ

Brother, there ain't a civilian job
for trigger pullers.

RICK

Unless you want to be somebody's
pet SEAL for corporate show-and-
tell.

JOHN

I'll figure it out.

Dan slams down his gloves.

DAN

This mission grind too much sand in
your panties? SEALs don't quit,
brother.

John studies Dan hard.

DAN (CONT'D)

Truth is, making it in the real world with our skill set and our age is damn near impossible.

JOHN

Our old Commander will still let me take the transition and interview prep classes.

DAN

The Garanimals for adults? -- How to match suit jackets and slacks? You are a warrior, and that's the truth. Have a beer, sleep it off, get back on the battlefield, die with your boots on.

John unlaces and removes his boots with a thud.

JOHN

You think I don't know the truth? I know the damn truth! I know there's no use for me in the outside world. Taking a person's life, even on the battlefield, has to be for a higher good -- don't make it easy -- not easy to do -- not easy to live with -- but a necessary evil. And, that's who I am -- willing to be violent to protect what our Nation represents.

John's face twists and reddens. He looks up and locks eyes with Dan.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Now, I'm shot up, held together with titanium, missing an eye, and a kidney, so the military peddles me to the CIA and we do this? This ain't what we represent.

DAN

No, but it's the gig. This is exactly what you signed-up for -- you know any NFL running backs our age?

John shakes his head.

JOHN

They get paid enough to retire -- I still have to work.

(lays his pistol on the table)

But, you're right -- and it's not just us or pro athletes -- I don't know what they expect us to do until we reach 70.

DAN

We do important work here. It matters, it makes a difference.

JOHN

There's no honor in what happened today -- it puts the wrong kind of blood on my hands. The kind that won't wash off.

John breaks his pistol down for cleaning.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

It's a beautiful day in Washington D.C. -- the verdant green lawns pays off a majestic elevation of the White House against a cobalt sky.

SUPER: 15 YEARS LATER

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

President Rebecca Wallace (65) sits behind her desk and is joined by Angela and Dan, now in business suits, and VERONICA HALL (35), the President's Press Secretary.

PRESIDENT WALLACE

Dearborn, Michigan.

ANGELA

Dearborn?

She exchanges glances with Dan.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

The Muslim epicenter of America?

PRESIDENT WALLACE

Yes. Ford Performing Arts Center.
We'll draw people from Dearborn and
Detroit -- both experiencing
economic rebirths --

HALL

Perfect for announcing our school
safety platform - a mix of students
in attendance from area schools.

ANGELA

Madam President, we'll begin
preparations immediately, but as
you know, there are challenging
neighborhoods in both Dearborn and
Detroit.

PRESIDENT WALLACE

The restorative value of community
and culture are essential elements
in healing our youth.

HALL

Two weeks.

Hall stands and walks to the door, Angela and Dan follow.

IN THE HALLWAY

Angela and Dan walk down the hallway.

DAN

Short lead time --

ANGELA

Situation normal --

He grabs her sleeve so they stop for a second.

DAN

John Stinger's in Dearborn -

ANGELA

No way. Not him.

They face one another.

DAN

He runs a security company there,
lots of work with hostage rescue
teams in law enforcement.

She breaks eye contact to look back at the door to the Oval Office.

She turns back to Dan looking like she just swallowed a bitter pill.

ANGELA

Fine -- get in touch -- eyes and ears only -- we need his knowledge of the landscape, but that's it.

She turns to keep leaving, a few steps ahead of Dan to avoid more discussion.

INT. THE BAR ROOM OF HOMETOWN HEROES - DAY

A combination of neon beer signs and military posters frame a u-shaped wooden bar. The bar is hemmed in green-padded kneelers with brass hardware.

A poster featuring a red stop sign dominates a central post with an old-fashioned telephone --

IT READS: STOP, WE'LL CALL YOU A CAB.

John picks at a basket of fries and sorts his mail. He opens a 9 x 12 manila envelope and pulls out the contents.

INSERT: DIVORCE FINAL DECREE

RED (60), a very large bartender with a white beard. He would pass for Santa Claus if he wasn't so damn tall and fit. Red sees the paper and puts a shot glass upside down in front of John.

RED

To your freedom --

JOHN

I think you mean poverty.

Red points to a military poster -- FREEDOM ISN'T FREE.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I already paid that tab.

John's phone vibrates and lights up.

INSERT: JANA: MEET ME AT SCHOOL, HARRY IN TROUBLE, ALREADY

John reaches for his wallet and selects one, then another, card and lays it on the bar.

Red runs it.

RED
Declined. Wanna try another?

John picks over his cards again.

RED (CONT'D)
Master chief, this one's on me.
Tell Jana she has to leave you
enough cabbage for beer.

JOHN
Thanks, Red, I'll catch you up.

John slides the papers back in the envelope and heads for the door. His phone vibrates and glows again. He looks at it and tips his head upward.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

A dreary institutional office -- mismatched, hand-me-down furniture -- flickering fluorescent lights -- bad student art everywhere.

School principal, DR. NAZA KHANI (50) sits behind her desk. JANA STINGER (42) and HARRY STINGER (16) sit in guest chairs.

The door opens and John joins them. Khani's eyes widen. John smiles and nods.

JOHN
Sorry, got here as quick as I
could.

KHANI
Mr. Stinger, I was just telling
your wife...

JOHN
(interecting)
My ex-wife...

Jana cuts her eyes at him,

JOHN (CONT'D)
What? Our divorce might be part of
the problem.

Khani continues.

KHANI

I was saying that we have a zero tolerance for fighting and violence, so I have no choice but to suspend Harry for three days.

Harry looks down at his shoes.

JOHN

Son, what do you say to Dr. Khani?

HARRY

I'm sorry, Dr. Khani.

JANA

We don't condone violence either.

She whacks Harry on the back of his neck.

KHANI

Look, I know it's difficult to adjust to a new school -- the boys here can be territorial -- but you have to avoid these kinds of things. The police can be called, assault charges filed, or worse, Shari'a Law. Do you understand?

HARRY

Yes ma'am.

Dr. Khani stands and extends her hand to Jana. John shakes it and hangs on two shakes too many. Jana rolls her eyes and heads out the door.

EXT. SCHOOL ENTRY WAY -- CONTINUOUS

Vaghid and Tarek are walking into the school and pass the Stingers as they leave.

VAGHID

(into cellphone)

I'm at the school now -- Tarek was in another fight -- these American kids still bully Muslims

John studies Vaghid. As they pass one another, John stops and turns to look back. His family stops, too.

JANA

What now?

JOHN
Nothing. I thought I knew that guy.

JANA
I know it's a bad time, but you're
late on child support already.
(they resume walking)
That can't be a habit. I count on
that money.

John puts his hand on Harry's shoulder as they walk.

JOHN
Son, what were you thinking?

HARRY
These big guys were picking on some
nerds, so I asked them to knock it
off. The biggest one, Tarek, threw
a punch and we got into it.

JANA
(to John)
This is all your fault.

John gives her a look.

JANA (CONT'D)
The fighting solves everything
shirts, all the SEAL crap, the war
movies -- PATTON every year!

At their car, Harry gets in on his side. John opens the
driver's door for Jana and she gets in.

JANA (CONT'D)
The check?

JOHN
(to himself)
Shari'a Law?

John closes the door and walks away.

EXT. A REMOTE CLEARING IN A WOODED AREA - NIGHT

SUPER: US/CANADIAN BORDER

A full moon lights two vans parked in a clearing. The back
doors are opened. One van is empty and one filled with
palettes, crates, and barrels.

VAGHID stands by an open crate and holds a brick of heroin. He puts it back and gives a SHADOW a large pelican case.

The SHADOW opens and closes the case. It's full of cash. The SHADOW hands Vaghid a set of keys.

SHADOW
(feminine voice)
Burn it when you're done.

She walks into the woods and disappears.

MEN move materials from one van to another. Snow falls and breath is visible.

Three guys struggle with a 50-gallon drum while Vaghid looks over a manifest. His eyes widen on the drum.

VAGHID
Careful. If you drop that and it
spills, we are all dead in a matter
of minutes.

He motions and a fourth man stabilizes the effort.

INT. MERCEDES WORK VAN

In the back of the empty van, the men drop the drum too hard and each grimace. They aren't men yet, but fresh-faced boys -- teenagers -- TAREK (16), Vaghid's son, CHELEM (16), MUSTAPHA (17), and ZAFIR (18).

They roll the drum into place and ratchet it down. An older Arab, BRAHIM, applies a label: NON-POTABLE WATER.

He notices moisture on his hands and wipes them on his pants.

Vaghid sticks his head in:

VAGHID
Let's go, let's go, get the other
drum and the palette of crates,
we're running out of time.

EXT./INT. THE VAN

The van travels down a remote but straight road surrounded by woods on both sides. Through the windshield, Vaghid drives and Tarek rides shotgun. In the back a black curtain hides the contents of the van.

Tarek looks over the map.

TAREK

About two miles ahead is the border.

Vaghid checks his mirrors -- nothing.

TAREK (CONT'D)

Are you sure there won't be any guards?

Headlights appear in the side view mirror. Vaghid watches them approach fast.

TAREK (CONT'D)

Who is that?

VAGHID

Nobody, don't worry.

Police lights explode in the night and light up the mirror.

Tarek puts down his map and pulls up an AK-47.

VAGHID (CONT'D)

Put that away! Sit there and shut up. Not one word. Not one action. Hand me my name badge and get your school backpack.

Tarek does as he's told, then pretends to be asleep. Vaghid pins a name tag on his work shirt: CARL.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - NIGHT

The police car sits behind the van, lights dancing. Two CANADIAN MOUNTIES get out and approach the van. Their flashlights shine down the sides of the van. One officer stays behind at the passenger rear, the other approaches the driver's door.

Vaghid has both hands on the steering wheel. A bead of sweat rolls down the right side of his forehead.

The MOUNTIE knocks on the window with his flashlight. Vaghid rolls it down.

MOUNTIE

Good morning, sir. It's kind of early to be on the road, where are you headed?

VAGHID
Sault Saint Marie - Lake Superior
University.

The Mountie flashes his light on Tarek who pretends to wake up.

MOUNTIE
What's your business there?

VAGHID
I'm an electrician, and have a
project at the University.

MOUNTIE
What about him?

VAGHID
He's my son, I'm teaching him the
trade.

Tarek yawns and covers his mouth.

MOUNTIE
Papers.

Vaghid pulls them from the center console and hands them to the Mountie. The Mountie heads back to his car.

INSIDE THE VAN

Vaghid reaches for a pistol in the door pocket.

VAGHID
(over his shoulder)
Be ready. If I shoot you'll only
have a few seconds to open the
doors and shoot the other officer.

Tarek vomits in the floorboard.

VAGHID (CONT'D)
Roll your window down a little, but
don't put your arm out.

Vaghid stares at the side view mirror.

VAGHID (CONT'D)
Quickly, pass up some paper towels.

Blue paper towels emerge from the black curtain.

VAGHID (CONT'D)

Tarek, put this over your mess.

Vaghid looks at his watch and releases the safety from his handgun.

VAGHID (CONT'D)

This is taking too long. Be ready to act for Allah.

OUTSIDE THE VAN

The two Mounties exit the car and approach the van as before. The Mountie comes back to the driver's side holding the papers and Vaghid rolls down his window.

The smell takes the Mountie by surprise.

VAGHID

I'm sorry, my son has a nervous stomach, he's never been pulled over before.

The Mountie shines the light on him, then the floor, then back on Vaghid.

He hands Vaghid the papers.

MOUNTIE

Sorry for the delay, we're having a computer glitch and can't pull up your records.

Vaghid makes direct eye contact with the Mountie.

MOUNTIE (CONT'D)

We're looking for drug runners, but they're American's so apologies for the stop. Good luck with your project.

The Mountie turns and walks away. Vaghid lets out a sigh and takes a few deep breaths. Then, the blinker lights up and he pulls the van back on the road.

INT. HOMETOWN HEROES - DAY

John sits at the bar flipping a round coaster like it's a giant quarter. Three empty beer bottles sit in front of him.

Dan enters and takes a quick survey -- not many here -- he sees John at the bar and takes the seat next to him. He holds up two fingers to Red and points to him and John.

John looks over.

DAN
Hey friend, thought I might find you here.

JOHN
Wondered if I'd see you with the President coming and all.

Red delivers two frosted pints of Pabst Blue Ribbon.

DAN
Yeah, we're starting our advance work. How are things? Business, Jana, Harry?

JOHN
Divorced, defiant teenager, in the tank -- situation normal...

DAN
Sorry dude, I didn't know.

John takes a drink of beer and closes his eyes for longer than a blink.

JOHN
And you?

DAN
Everything's great -- the farm in Culpeper is shaping up -- you need to come visit.

John tips his beer glass to Dan's in a congratulatory cheers.

DAN (CONT'D)
We need your help on this Presidential visit. Sparrow work, easy paycheck.

JOHN
Angela still in charge?

Dan nods and shrugs his shoulders.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I don't trust her. I'll pass.

DAN

Come on, man, you could use a boost, we could use some eyes on the ground -- you'd hardly ever see her.

JOHN

Not just her -- look around -- our government takes better care of junkies in the street than its veterans -- no interest in helping them out anymore.

Dan finishes his beer. He pulls out his business card and leaves it on the bar -- not in front of John, just on the bar.

DAN

We always said we fought for each other, not the government. I'm asking you to work for your brothers, for me.

John studies his friend, but remains silent.

Dan slaps John on the shoulder.

DAN (CONT'D)

Love ya, brother.

He leaves and John doesn't move -- until he hears the door close -- then he slams his hand down hard on the bar -- WHACK! -- and kicks over his chair.

Nobody flinches or takes notice. Red pours a whiskey.

RED

When you're behind the eight ball, you gotta put a lot of spin on the cue.

John knocks it back, picks up his chair and stands with both hands on the bar shaking his head.

EXT. DEARBORN CHARTER ACADEMY -- DAY

John pulls up to the school in his 1972 Ford pickup truck to let Harry off for school. Two police cars and a fire truck with lights flashing and sirens wailing arrive at the same time.

John sees Dr. Khani and gets out with Harry. They reach Khani before the first responders.

JOHN
What's going on?

DR. KHANI
A medical issue with a staff member
(to Harry)
Don't be late for homeroom.

The police officers reach her -- John hangs back.

KHANI
(to the officers)
He's in the back, we found him
slumped over the wheel of his bus
this morning, the bus still running
--

She starts to cry. John motions the officers on with a nod.

JOHN
Fellas, let's give her a minute,
she'll join you in the back.

One turns and motions to the fire rescue team with their
trauma bag, and they all hustle off.

John puts his hand on her shoulder.

JOHN (CONT'D)
These things happen, tough to lose
a friend and co-worker.

KHANI
The community already thinks the
school is unsafe, all this will
really stoke the rumor fires.

JOHN
Don't worry about them.

KHANI
I have to -- they want me out and
this could be the excuse they're
waiting for --

JOHN
They can't blame you for a medical
issue --

KHANI

You don't understand how people work -- they're not rational -- they don't have compassion or understanding -- they have their agenda and that's all.

She's stopped crying, wipes her eyes and gets her game face back.

KHANI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for dumping on you like that --

She starts to leave and join the police.

JOHN

Hey -- just a sec --

She stops and he hands her a business card. She reads it.

INSERT: SEAL OF SECURITY, JOHN STINGER, RETIRED NAVY SEAL

JOHN (CONT'D)

Let me do a threat assessment for the school -- put the community's mind at ease.

She scans his eyes.

KHANI

Can you start today?

JOHN

Right now if you want.

She nods him to join her.

EXT. BUS LOT - CONTINUOUS

The bus is taped off with police tape. The paramedics have a body on a gurney.

John takes a look before they zip the body bag closed. It's Brahim from the Canadian trip, but John focuses on the dried foam around his mouth and beard.

He takes a step back, eyes wide, looks around -- first responders have gloves and masks on -- standard protection, no HAZMAT suits.

He casually guides Khani away from the scene.

JOHN

Get back to running the school and getting a notice out to your community. Let the pros handle this -- looks like the poor guy had a heart attack or stroke or something.

She agrees and goes back inside. John grabs a police SERGEANT and gives him his card.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm consulting with the school on security, will you reach out if anything weird comes up?

SERGEANT

Sure, nothing suspicious at the moment, though.

John shakes the man's hand in thanks.

INT. HOMETOWN HEROES -- DAY

Red sits a salad in front of John to go with his large ice water.

JOHN

(to himself)
that felt like an ambulance-chasing attorney...

Red gives him a look, but knows a private conversation when he sees it.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(still muttering)
At least you're not charging --
like I can afford not too --

He starts in on his salad. His phone vibrates and lights up -- incoming text.

PHONE: JANA -- CHILD SUPPORT? TODAY!

He give his phone a spin and takes another forkful of salad. He chews it slowly, then picks up his phone and dials a number.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

JOHN (CONT'D)

Hey Dan, you still need a sparrow?

DAN

Heck yeah, buddy -- was hoping you'd call.

JOHN

Well, my business is down, but my bills are up -- I need to be practical, and the truth is, well, I could use the work.

DAN

You'll love our OPS center -- it's the old barred-up laundromat a few blocks from you. Classic dump in the center of everything. Be there at nine tonight, we'll bring you up to speed.

BACK TO BAR

John hangs up. He pushes his salad away, centers his ice water on the coaster in front of him, and sucks his teeth.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

As advertised, the laundromat is a heap. Cinder block walls with peeling paint and stains, iron bars over plywood over windows.

John drives past it and parks up the street and around a corner. He walks back to the building.

The street is empty of other people and traffic. John walks to the back, dips behind a hanging piece of black plastic and disappears inside.

INT. LAUNDROMAT COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

TJ, RICK, and DAN are standing around a central planning table. Flat screen monitors and white boards adorn the walls, laptops sit open on the table.

There's a brief team reunion when John walks in.

TJ

Jesus, what happened to you?

TJ and John embrace in a hug.

JOHN

Ask your ex-wife.

After a few back slaps, John moves on to Rick.

RICK

Rip Van Winkle back from a deep
sleep, welcome back.

Dan smiles and takes a sip of coffee.

JOHN

Great to see you guys again, even
if it means working for Angela.

Angela turns the corner.

ANGELA

Good to see you, too.

John extends his hand for a shake, and Angela takes it.

JOHN

Ma'am.

Dan passes out folders to everyone and pulls up an image of the Dearborn airport and the Ford Center for the Performing Arts. He gets right to it.

DAN

The President will land here at an
undetermined time and transit to
the Ford Center for a one hour
speech and photo op, then it's back
to the bird and airborne.

The men each sort through their paper work -- prints of possible routes.

DAN (CONT'D)

Teams are here working with law
enforcement on standard protocol --
possible routes, emergency exits,
danger spots, dangerous people.

He passes John a list.

DAN (CONT'D)

John lives here. He's part of the
community. He'll be our sparrow
listening to the scuttlebutt,
watching for new players, asking
opinions, the usual.

He passes Rick a piece of paper.

DAN (CONT'D)
 Rick's busting sniper nests --
 walking all three routes making
 sure nobody has access to the spots
 you'd want. Then, pick your own
 spot at the venue.

They all turn to look at one of the monitors -- it shows
 where the President will stand to address the crowd.

DAN (CONT'D)
 We'll need eyes and field of fire
 front and back on this swath of
 real estate.

Dan points to TJ, who is clicking away at a laptop.

DAN (CONT'D)
 TJ's running surveillance --
 electronic and human teams.

Angela takes over by stepping forward. Dan takes a seat. Her
 address is to the team, but her eyes are on John.

ANGELA
 Be invisible. This is not Ramadi,
 Mogadishu, or Kandahar, over?

The men nod -- got it.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 We follow the rules of law and
 don't push the limits.

FLASH: John replays the dad in Iraq knocking him to the
 ground in slow motion and spitting on him -- and matches it
 the dad on the cell phone outside of the school.

BACK TO THE BRIEFING

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 John? Are you with us?

John straightens up.

JOHN
 Yes, ma'am.

ANGELA
 Looked like you were dreaming about
 washing your hamster, we need your
 full attention, soldier.

JOHN

You have it, I'm good -- be
invisible, obey the law, don't push
-- got it.

She walks to him and looks at him sideways.

ANGELA

I wasn't sure about bringing you on
-- been a while -- you've been
doing mostly hostage rescue
training at prisons -- that's
pretty aggressive.

John locks eye contact, but is expressionless.

JOHN

Yes. Different deal.

ANGELA

You can't confuse this
reconnaissance role with your past.
No action. None. Just watch,
report. Roger?

JOHN

Roger. Don't worry about me, ma'am.
I understand -- sparrow support,
eyes and ears, only.

Angela looks over at Dan. He's doodling and never even looks
up.

EXT. DEARBORN CHARTER ACADEMY -- DAY

John and Dr. Khani walk the perimeter of the Dearborn
Academy. He carries a clipboard and small camera.

Along the backside, he points to a door that is barely ajar.
They walk up to it and find a small rock keeping it from
latching.

JOHN

This is probably not a big risk,
but in today's world -- if someone
is looking for a way in, this will
do it.

Khani points to the keypad.

KHANI

I guess it's too much to swipe your
key card?

JOHN

Probably just a habit -- someone stepping out to make a call or have a smoke.

He snaps a photo, moves the rock, and closes the door. They keep walking.

FRONT OF SCHOOL

They make it around to the front entry of the school.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Law enforcement response time is key -- and they get here in under two minutes. They also train in the school over the summer, so they can move through it pretty fast.

KHANI

It just seems like we should do something besides hide.

JOHN

Active shooters at schools are opportunistic cowards who go blind with adrenaline -- they're looking for easy targets -- if you can keep them in empty corridors until the police arrive, you've saved lives.

KHANI

It's just all so terrible -- I hate to even train the kids on it because they shouldn't have to think about it.

John points to a row of ground level classrooms with windows open to the outside. Kids and teachers are visible inside.

JOHN

This is probably the worst problem -
- a shooter doesn't have to get into the school if they can just shoot through the windows from here.

KHANI

Great.

JOHN

You have to know what a terrorist wants -- to inflict harm, yes, but to terrify an entire population through one act is more damaging -- attacking a school is one of the most terrifying acts that can be done -- it terrifies the whole nation.

KHANI

You're not making me feel better.

JOHN

It's a very rare event -- statistically improbable --

KHANI

But when it happens, everyone panics --

JOHN

Right -- we all feel the blinding anguish of those directly hurt -- and feel like all schools are under imminent threat of attack -- despite their safeness.

The office SECRETARY comes out to get Khani's attention.

SECRETARY

Dr. Khani, we have two students waiting for you in your office.

Dr. Khani waves at him to signal she's wrapping things up.

JOHN

I'm not saying it right, it's a complicated and dreary thing, maybe we can get dinner and --

She cuts him off.

DR. KHANI

I can't. I mean, no. It's just uh --

JOHN

You don't need an excuse -- it was just dinner.

She looks away from him and speaks to the school.

DR. KHANI

I'm flattered. I'm interested. But, you're a parent, a vendor, and an American -- my community wouldn't support any of that.

JOHN

My bad, I didn't think it through. I get it. I just thought I felt a current between us.

DR. KHANI

I feel it, too -- maybe if I get driven out by Shari'a Law --

She musters a HALF LAUGH.

JOHN

That's the second time you've brought that up -- must be a real problem.

DR. KHANI

It's a game-changer for girls in the community, and if it gains enough traction, they'd move me along. I'd move me along.

JOHN

So there's a big push.

DR. KHANI

Most families are opposed to it, but they are terrified of the fundamentalists behind it.

JOHN

Guess there's all shades of terror in our world today.

Khani starts toward the door to get back to work.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'll have an easy-to-implement plan to improve safety -- but you kinda got me pulling for Shari'a Law.

She slaps him in the gut and goes inside. He snaps one more picture of the building entrance.

The bell RINGS and kids pour out of school. John stands still so they can flow around him. He's looking for Harry.

Harry catches his eye and waves. He brings over three friends, HAMAL, SABURO, and FAHIM.

HARRY

Hey dad, these are my friends I was telling you about -- Hamal, Saburo, and Fahim.

JOHN

Men.

HARRY

We were hoping you'd teach us all a little something to help us against the Muslim Mafia.

JOHN

The Muslim Mafia?

HAMAL

It's what Tarek calls his gang.

SABURO

They say they're radicalized jihadists, but they mainly terrorize nerds like us.

FAHIM

My dad says their dads sell drugs to gangs in Detroit.

They start walking toward the parking lot.

JOHN

Gees, fellas -- if any of that is true, you just need to stay away from them -- far away.

HAMAL

We try, but we go to the same school.

They make it to John's truck.

JOHN

(to Harry)

Your mom would take visitation away from me if she found out I was teaching you and your friends to fight.

SABURO

Self-defense, Mr. Stinger, we don't want to fight, heck no.

Harry and John get in the truck.

HARRY

I don't tell mom everything.

JOHN

I'll think about it, fellas.

Hamal puts his little fist out for a "bro knock." John smiles and gives them each a fist bump.

EXT. RUSSIAN RESTAURANT - DAY

SUPER: WASHINGTON D.C.

A two-story turn of the century brick building sits squeezed between two larger Federalist-styled mid-rise towers. Store front windows feature curtains and a name in gold paint: MARI VANNA

INT. MARI VANNA - CONTINUOUS

A rustic-chic interior of exposed brick walls and white-washed wooded chairs and accents combine with light wood table tops and contemporary glass chandeliers to create a glowing ambiance of white and gold.

A small Russian flag hangs behind the bar and artifacts from the Russian Orthodox tradition are tastefully sprinkled about.

The restaurant is closed, but two people sit face-to-face at a back table.

IVAN GORKOVSKI (50) pours himself and his guest a shot of vodka. A waiter appears and clears their plates, disappears. POV rotates, Ivan and Angela Rodriguez clink their vodkas together and drink them.

Ivan reaches across the table for Angela's hand. She looks him in the eyes and smiles.

He slips a small vial in her hand like a perfume sample. Her smile drops.

IVAN

It's the same nerve agent you gave
Vaghid in Canada.

She slips the vial in her purse.

ANGELA

And?

IVAN

If Vaghid fails, in the chaos that follows, expose it to the President.

ANGELA

Won't it kill me, too?

Ivan looks away and back, then fakes a smile.

IVAN

Better to make sure Vaghid succeeds.

Angela has a drink of water.

IVAN (CONT'D)

Either way, the President dies and it looks like Muslim fanatics did it.

From the storefront, the two patrons in the rear stand, and kiss each other on both cheeks like old friends.

EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

A cheap 1950's roadside motel converted into studio apartments -- iron bars everywhere -- windows, in-wall heat pump, doors. The rooms enclose a central courtyard.

The courtyard itself is grassy, mowed, but with a few bare spots.

John stands in a quadrant and is circled by Harry, Hamal, Saburo, and Fahim.

He looks them over -- small-framed, sweet-faced Arab boys with dark hair and scared eyes. And Harry -- a foot taller and broader, but with a similar complexion and eyes.

JOHN

Teams need nicknames. Tell us something about you and let's see what we can come up with.

HAMAL

Well, I was born, I was born, when I was born, well, I was born with only one testicle.

The boys fall out of rank laughing. John starts laughing, too. It doesn't bother Hamal, he's cracking up, too.

JOHN

Forget it, let's just go with...

He goes around the circle, Harry, Saburo, Fahim, and Hamal

JOHN (CONT'D)

Hollywood, Don Juan, Chief, and One Nut.

Each boy seems pleased with his nickname.

JOHN (CONT'D)

First rule of self-defense is simple -- run.

The boys shrivel their faces and shake their heads "no."

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm serious boys, they teach it to SEALS, too -- run first, fight last.

He motions Harry to stand in front of him, then gets in a more balanced stance himself.

JOHN (CONT'D)

But, if you have to fight, remember these three things: surprise, speed, and violence of action. Now get in a stance like mine and repeat what I just said.

The boys each set their feet about shoulder width apart, bend slightly at the knees, put one foot slightly in front of the other.

BOYS

Surprise, speed, violence of action.

John holds up two fingers.

JOHN

Second rule is, there is no fair fight. If you have to fight, anything goes, got it?

HAMAL

So, we can bite?

SABURO
And kick them in the nuts?

John nods his approval.

JOHN
Here's two defensive stances. The
one I'm in now with my hands out
like this --

He holds his hands out like he's trying to stop or slow down
an attack.

Then he crosses his left arm across his waist and rests his
other hand on his chin, like he's rubbing his beard.

JOHN (CONT'D)
And this one, we call the thinking
man --

The boys match his thinking man stance.

JOHN (CONT'D)
What's important about these
stances?

FAHIM
They're for kicking ass and taking
names?

John laughs.

JOHN
No, they're obviously defensive --
if you're in a fight there are
consequences, and if it comes to
it, you want witnesses to say you
were not in a threatening position.

Hamal gut checks Fahim with a quick slap.

FAHIM
Got it.

John nods Harry to stand in front of him.

JOHN
Watch --

From the thinking man pose, John hammers his hand down in
slow motion to Harry's collar bone.

He does it again lightning fast but without striking his son.

JOHN (CONT'D)

The collar bone is the weakest in the body, only seven pounds of pressure and it snaps.

John grabs his collarbone in fake agony and exposes his face and side to the boys.

JOHN (CONT'D)

When that snaps, it hurts like hell and your opponent is going to collapse toward the pain, plus they won't be able to use that arm.

John returns to his thinking man pose.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What do you do now?

SABURO

Break the other one! Fast!

John cuts his eyes at Saburo.

JOHN

No, now you run. You've stopped the threat, time to go.

John grabs his son and gives him a hug, then puts him in a headlock.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Look fellas -- your families love you and their families love them --
(messes up Harry's hair)
If you keep hurting them after the threat is over, then you will get in trouble. Big time.

He gently pushes Harry back into place.

EXT./INT. VAGHID'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Vaghid sits around a table with Tarek, Mustapha, Zarif, and Chelem.

An over-sized map includes the school on one end of the map and the Ford Performing Arts Center on the other.

Routes are highlighted in yellow going away from the school. Other routes are highlighted in blue going from the school to the Ford Center.

Vaghid taps on the Ford Center.

VAGHID

It is here, men, that we will have
revenge for the killing of your
brothers and cousins, my first
born, my dear born Ali.

Tarek stares at his father, the others fixate on the map.

INT. LAUNDROMAT COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

John, TJ, and Rick are at the command center, Dan is on the
speaker phone.

JOHN

I'm not hearing anything.

DAN (V.O.)

(thru speaker phone)

You're hitting all the places at
various times?

Rick cleans his sniper rifle.

JOHN

Roger. No sudden changes in
conversation, odd looks, nothing.

DAN (V.O.)

TJ, how about electronic
surveillance?

John holds up his finger to inject.

JOHN

There is one odd thing.

DAN (V.O.)

Yeah?

John fidgets.

JOHN

So, my kid gets in this fight at
school -- I get called in to pick
him up.

Rick never looks up, but says --

RICK

Fighting solves everything.

JOHN
 So, the principal warns us about
 law enforcement or Shari'a Law,
 which I thought was weird -

DAN (V.O.)
 Muslim epicenter of America -

JOHN
 When we left, though, I bumped into
 the dad and the other kid, and
 thought he looked familiar -

TJ grabs the coffee pot and tops everyone off.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 It connected a few days later -
 (he takes a fresh drink)
 I think it's the dad of the family
 at the school bombing in Iraq.

That gets Rick's attention.

INT. CIA CONFERENCE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Dan sits at a conference table and stares at the speaker
 phone in silence.

JOHN (V.O.)
 You still there?

DAN
 Yeah, just thinking a minute.

He stands.

DAN (CONT'D)
 Listen, don't bring this up to
 Angela, okay? If this is the same
 guy, he's off limits.

BACK TO LAUNDROMAT

JOHN
 There's more --
 (he pauses to give Dan a
 chance to interrupt)
 So I ask Harry what caused the
 fight and he tells me a gang of
 kids were picking on some nerds.

He looks over to TJ

JOHN (CONT'D)
No big deal right? I let it go.

Looks back at the phone.

JOHN (CONT'D)
A week later, a few of these nerds
are asking me to teach them self-
defense -- from the Muslim Mafia.

Rick shoots a hoop with a balled up paper towel.

DAN (V.O.)
Muslim Mafia?

JOHN
Teenagers claiming to be jihadists
harassing other kids.

DAN (V.O.)
And?

JOHN
Maybe selling drugs.

DAN
(irritated)
And?

John holds his hands up in question to Rick and TJ -- why
doesn't Dan get it?

JOHN
What if they ARE radicalized?

DAN (V.O.)
Jesus, John - not a word to Angela.

JOHN
Think about it -- it would be
genius -- we can't infiltrate a
teenage terrorist cell -- they
don't even talk to adults -- plus,
laws shield anything they do --

TJ throws his partner a lifeline.

TJ
That's a good point -- how many
fresh faced, Arab-looking teenagers
are we cranking out of the agency?

RICK
Not - a - damn - one.

BACK TO DAN

DAN

Sounds like we're in violent agreement -- we can't touch kids -- we cannot, must not, approach this man or his kid -- hands-off, over?

BACK TO LAUNDROMAT

JOHN

One last thing, then I'll let it go --

John scribbles a note on a post-it as he talks:

INSERT: First name Tarek, 16, Dearborn Academy, need dad's name and address.

JOHN (CONT'D)

-- an Arab bus driver keels over of a heart attack at the school -- mouth ringed in dried foam --

TJ

Like a nerve agent or chemical exposure?

John nods, eyes wide.

DAN (V.O.)

And, law enforcement said?

JOHN

Natural causes, nothing suspicious--

DAN (V.O.)

TJ, Rick -- you guys got anything to add to our visit to fantasy island tonight?

TJ gets the hint and leans in to the phone.

TJ

We're good, boss.

DIALTONE -- Dan disconnected.

John takes a draw of coffee.

JOHN

That went well -

TJ and Rick CRACK-UP.

RICK

Bring that kind of stuff up to us first, we would've warned you.

TJ

The old, I'd rather be whacking tangos Dan has mellowed -- different mission mind set.

John pours out his coffee and rinses his glass. He catches TJ's eyes and motions him to follow him to the door.

At the door, he hands TJ the note.

JOHN

Gotta get you guys down to Red's for a beer -- the dude is straight out of central casting for a Viking Berserker -- you have to meet him.

TJ pockets the note naturally and closes the door as John leaves.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE -- DAY

John and Dr. Khani each hold a copy of his report, opened to the last page.

JOHN

That's my 21 Ways to Improve Security -- simple, affordable, doable.

Dr. Khani nods her head and smiles. She puts her copy down and leans forward.

DR. KHANI

I'm impressed -- and grateful. I can't wait to share this with my community, thank you.

John shifts his weight, uncomfortably.

DR. KHANI (CONT'D)

Not a good idea?

JOHN

Well, when you tell the community, you also tell the bad guys -- best to convert this into a less detailed version.

She considers his point and nods.

DR. KHANI
Suggestions?

JOHN
Top line stuff -- hired an expert,
conducted an audit, very thorough,
school is safe, working on a few
things we can improve upon, had
coffee with the expert -- you know,
just the important parts.

Dr. Khani blushes, laughs a little, and looks away.

DR. KHANI
I do feel safer knowing what we
need to work on.

He nods her on to the coffee part.

She doesn't take the bait and instead stands.

JOHN
I'm not a vendor any more.

She points to the door.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Jana has custody of Harry, so I'm
not technically a parent.

She rolls her eyes, smiles, and points again.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'm still American, but I know a
place where no one will --

She playfully stomps her foot and points.

He opens the door to leave. Gets half way out, then leans
back in --

JOHN (CONT'D)
About forgot a real question.

DR. KHANI
The answer is still no.

JOHN
Seriously, I forgot the name of the
parents of the boy Harry got into
it with.

She pulls her head back a touch in surprise. He notices.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I was thinking about getting the boys together to make sure everything is okay -- and stays that way.

She fidgets with her hands.

DR. KHANI

I wouldn't do that -- just let it be -- I'm sure all will be fine.

JOHN

You sure? A little beer therapy, a hand shake, the boys understand --

DR. KHANI

His dad is, well, he's bad news -- definitely no beer -- a real traditionalist.

She looks out her window, then back at him, and grimaces, shaking her head "no."

INT. HOMETOWN HEROES -- DAY

The bar is empty except for John on one side and Red on the other. John picks at a burger. Three empty beer bottles pollute his space.

TJ comes in carrying a file folder. John turns and nods him over.

JOHN

Red, I wanted TJ to meet you -- he's an old team mate of mine in town for a bit.

RED

Cheers, first one's on me, TJ.

TJ

PBR -- good to know you, Red, sorry you have to put up with this stale fart.

JOHN

Clear these dead soldiers, will ya -
- people will think I'm a drunk.

RED

And you're not?

TJ has a seat. Red returns with a beer, clears John's empties and makes himself scarce.

TJ
You were right, on both counts --
that's the dad and Red is a
Beserker.

JOHN
I'll get him our hat.

John is wearing a simple ball cap, with the word BESERKER embroidered on it.

TJ
His name is Vaghid. The CIA gave
him a settlement and relocated him
to America. He's been in Dearborn
for thirteen years.

John looks at the photo and kills his beer.

JOHN
You can blow-up a bridge, then
rebuild it. You can destroy a town
and rebuild it. But, when you take
a life, then what?

TJ hands him a photo of Tarek.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I guess that's it, you gotta live
for the son that's still alive.

TJ
Until, the President comes to town.
Then, maybe, maybe you see an
opportunity...

JOHN
Maybe.

TJ
No matter what, this guy is off
limits. You know that. Stay away
from him and his family, they've
suffered enough.

John flips the coaster again and nods.

EXT. VAGHID'S HOUSE -- DAY

A middle-class neighborhood with tree-lined streets and sidewalks. It's early Spring so there's no snow on the ground, but few leaves on the trees, either.

John is parked in a van with RED'S PLUMBING painted on the side. He's at a cross street within line of sight of Vaghid's house, a bland Colonial with a short driveway to a garage facing the road.

The garage door opens -- Vaghid and his wife back out of the driveway in a late model Volvo and head down the street.

John waits -- he looks up and down the street -- nobody.

He drives around the block, then pulls into Vaghid's driveway.

He gets out in a work shirt with the name RED embroidered on it, opens the back door, and grabs a tool box.

He goes to the back door and knocks.

No answer.

He knocks again.

No answer.

He picks the lock and let's himself in.

INT. VAGHID'S HOUSE -- DAY

The interior is drab, but clean. The house hasn't been updated since the 1970s, the furnishings were selected by price, not style, and show 15-years of wear.

John goes straight to the kitchen and finds the door to the basement.

BASEMENT

The basement is partially finished with fake-wood paneling and drop-ceiling tiles sectioning off two rooms.

The rest is open with a poured concrete floor with drains, painted concrete block walls, and the ceiling crammed with electrical, plumbing, and heating ducts.

Overhead fluorescent tube lighting flickers on with the flip of a single switch.

JOHN
(to himself)
Bingo.

Two six-foot folding tables are lined-up end-to-end and contain a makeshift chemistry lab set-up.

John uses his cell phone to take pictures:

- a long shot of the whole set-up
- bunsen burners with large beakers
- cylinders and connecting glassware
- vial files containing vials

JOHN (CONT'D)
What are you up to, Vaghid?

John looks at his watch

INSERT: 2:50 P.M.

He moves quickly and silently through the basement.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Where's the laptop?

He finds an old roll top desk and slides open the drawer. MAPS. One by one he takes a photo.

- Dearborn Charter Academy and surrounding area
- Highlighted routes connected to the school
- Neighborhoods with X's highlighted to the east

His watch vibrates. He puts everything back and turns to leave. His eyes find a photograph and he picks it up.

PHOTO Vaghid, his wife, their infant, their six-year-old son, ALI, a happy family portrait.

John slams his eyes closed.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Dammit Vaghid. That was not
supposed to happen. I'm sorry.

He puts the photo back, but places it face-down.

EXT. VAGHID'S HOUSE -- DAY

The Red's Plumbing van backs out of the driveway and pulls away as a school bus approaches and stops in front of the house.

Tarek gets off the bus and watches the van leave.

INT. LAUNDROMAT COMMAND CENTER - DAY

There's a checklist on the marker board with several line items crossed through. A conference phone sits in the center of a table. John, Rick, and TJ stand around the table with coffee cups.

JOHN

I'm not overhearing anything at the usual places.

DAN (O.S.)

(speaker phone)

You've been in all the bars on the list?

JOHN

Roger. But here's what I have discovered.

TJ loads a photo of Vaghid onto a projector.

TJ

You guys seeing this image?

INT. CIA CONFERENCE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A small conference room with a laptop and conference phone on the table and a projector hanging from the ceiling. DAN and ANGELA stand on either side of the table and look at the screen.

Dan's head drops on seeing the photo -- don't go there, John.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE TWO OPS CENTERS

LANGLEY

Vaghid's image is on their screen, too.

ANGELA

We got it, who is he?

JOHN (O.C.)
 (speaker)
 Vaghid Al-Mufti. He's an Iraqi
 living in Dearborn. I bumped into
 him at my son's school.

ANGELA
 And?

JOHN (O.C.)
 (speaker)
 I recognized him as the father Dan
 and I encountered at the school
 bombing back in Iraq.

Dan stands closer to get a better look. He acts surprised.

DAN
 Damn. That's him. What's he doing
 in Dearborn?

TJ (O.C.)
 (speaker)
 Part of the settlement the CIA
 offered him back in 2003 was
 relocation in America -- we put
 most of them in Dearborn.

ANGELA
 You gotta be kidding me.

Angela turns her back to the image.

TJ (O.C.)
 (speaker)
 I double checked it, ma'am.

She cuts a look at the phone.

ANGELA
 John, tell me you didn't confront
 this man and his family.

JOHN (O.C.)
 (speaker)
 Not directly.

ANGELA
 Jesus, John, what does that mean?

DEARBORN

John stands with one arm crossed and his other hand resting
 on his chin -- the standing thinker pose again.

JOHN

Well, I ran a bit of surveillance
on him, and then entered his house
when he wasn't there.

LANGELY

Angela slowly closes her eyes -- Dan holds his hands out to
her -- wait.

DEARBORN

TJ loads other images.

They pop up on the screen

-- a photo of a crude chemistry lab in a basement

-- a map of the school district

-- street routes highlighted

-- photos of stacks of cash.

ANGELA (O.C.)

(speaker)

I can't believe this.

John and TJ give each other a fist bump and nods of approval.

LANGLEY

Angela leans into the phone.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

This is exactly the kind of
reckless, cowboy crap I was worried
about.

Dan's head snaps from the screen to Angela.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

You used our authority, our time,
our resources to stalk this man
whose life we ruined more than a
decade ago. Then, you broke into
his house to gather artifacts that
could be his kid's lab set and
bicycle routes to school?!?

DEARBORN

John's head rocks back in shock.

JOHN

Wait just a minute -- I didn't give you an analysis yet -- I just showed you what I found, and it's a hell of a lot more concerning than anything else that's turned up!

They look at the speaker phone.

It's silent.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's not just the lab, the cash, and the maps.

The speaker phone. Still silent.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Vaghid's son runs a gang called the Muslim Mafia.

TJ loads a photo -- Tarek and his boys on Instagram.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I created a counter intel team of my son and his friends -- the Mafia is bad news -- they vandalize surrounding neighborhoods -- beat up and extort kids in school -- and are said to be selling heroin to a network that extends to West Virginia.

The phone.

ANGELA (O.C.)

(speaker)

My God, you recruited kids to be your spies?

LANGLEY

ANGELA (CONT'D)

You know this kind of guy is untouchable. We made amends -- provided restitution --relocated him -- paid for grief counseling --

JOHN (O.C.)

(speaker)

You also know there are no coincidences like this -- him, me, the President, Dearborn -- this is a problem and you know it!

Angela paces and checks Dan's eyes. She looks again at the last image on the screen.

JOHN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

(speaker)

In Iraq, you would be scrambling a drone to launch a Hellfire missile into this place as soon as enough people showed up to run up the tally.

ANGELA

We're not in Iraq anymore, John. I'm pulling your contract. Thanks for your help, but you're done. Dan will fly in tomorrow.

This time, their phone is silent.

JOHN (O.C.)

(speaker)

You're making a mistake...

ANGELA

The mistake was thinking you could still tell the difference between a real and an imaginary threat after fifteen years. I'm sorry, John. Leave this family alone and stand down.

DEARBORN

John throws his coffee cup in the sink and it shatters.

EXT. VAGHID'S HOUSE -- DAY

John sits in his truck just up the block from Vaghid's house.

Watching.

Waiting.

Talking to himself.

JOHN

Trust your gut on this one, Johnny.

He looks at his watch

INSERT: 2:05.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 What is she up to?

A light breeze moves the leaves and causes the filtering sunlight to sparkle.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 I'd be waiting on hellfires if this
 was Iraq --
 (mocking Angela's voice)
 -- this is not Iraq, John.

He checks the rearview, then opens the door and gets out.

UP AHEAD HE SEES Tarek and his team turn the corner, walking toward him.

He gets back in his truck -- watches.

The boys are different today -- no playful back and forth -- body language of dread, slower pace.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 What's a matter boys, no prom
 dates?

They reach the sidewalk to Vaghid's house, and the door opens. Vaghid steps out, hurriedly motions them on, checks up and down the block.

Tarek is the last one in, he too, turns and looks up and down the street -- his shirt rides up and reveals a GUN tucked into his waistband.

INT. HOMETOWN HEROES BAR -- NIGHT

The bar is nearly empty, only John sits at the bar. Red is restocking bottles of beer.

John flips a coaster and stares off into space. It has the red stop printed on it and carries the STOP, WE'LL CALL YOU A CAB message of the poster.

JOHN
 (to himself)
 Calling only makes you look
 crazier.

John maintains his dead, distant stare.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Been reading the signs all wrong. I
jumped to conclusions, saw
connections that weren't there.

He drains what remains of his beer, and Red grabs and refills
the glass without asking.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That's it. I'm done. The one thing
I was good at -- no, great at --
and I can't even do that anymore.

Jana storms through the door -- Red moves to intercept.

JANA

You have enough money to get drunk,
but can't send me money to raise
Harry!

John stares at the spinning coaster. Red blocks her progress.

RED

He's on the house, Jana -- he's
spending my money, not yours.

She leans around Red with an accusatory finger point.

JANA

I bet -- you guys always take up
for each other -- but it's your
kids who pay the price!

Red steps in the direction of her lean. His eyes plead and
connect with Jana.

JANA (CONT'D)

Oh, you don't know, do you?
Something happened to Iron John in
Iraq and he never came back.

She leans the other way -- tiny against the Red wall.

JANA (CONT'D)

(to John)

He'll never come back! And you'll
never be repaid, Red, never!

Red uses his body position to start backing her out the door.

JANA (CONT'D)

(to John)

What happened to you? What won't
you talk about?

RED

Don't come back before the first of the month -- he'll pay you then.

John still spins his coaster -- what to do?

Red comes over and gives him a back slap. It breaks his concentration. Red moves back behind the bar.

RED (CONT'D)

She's a real buzz saw, no wonder it didn't work.

JOHN

She's right, I have lost it.

RED

Bollocks! Warriors never lose it.

John's eyes are red and tired -- they well up, but don't spill.

JOHN

It's not the grisly shit we did -- we had to do --

Red hears this from dozens of guys, but listens each time.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We wore the white hats -- it was all done on the side of good.

RED

There is evil in the world. Pure evil most refuse to accept. Guys like us stood up to it and knocked it down.

John downs a big gulp of beer.

RED (CONT'D)

When nobody else would -- that's what trigger pullers do -- don't lose sight of that, Johnny.

John's eyes slowly move from outer space to the head of his beer, to Red's steely eyes.

JOHN

Until we don't.

Red just stares back, expressionless.

JOHN (CONT'D)
It hit me like an RPG strikes a
Humvee -- the CIA was just like the
bad guys --

Red LAUGHS.

RED
That's your problem? Your work with
the Agency?

John nods.

RED (CONT'D)
Screw them -- just a bunch of
pencil pushing schemers that think
they can manipulate change by
pitting factions against factions.

JOHN
Well, when it hit me, my whole
career sifted through my hands like
the sand I was standing on.

Red sits down a new beer.

JOHN (CONT'D)
And, I can't find a new one.
Nothing works. She's right, I
didn't come back.

Red pours himself a shot of Jameson and knocks it back.

RED
Master Chief, there's no civilian
work for guys like us, no work for
any man over 50 any more.

Red leans over the bar.

RED (CONT'D)
You fought evil as a SEAL -- did
some nasty amoral chit -- you took
a stand against evil when you
bailed on the CIA -- and if some
jackass walked in right now with a
gun to rob this place, I know
exactly what you'd do.

John holds his beer up in an imaginary toast and takes
another sip.

RED (CONT'D)

Look, even the sometimes misguided things the CIA tries is in the direction of good -- doesn't always work out, but sometimes it does, and when it does, evil goes down again.

Red pours two shots this time and sits one in front of John. He doesn't wait for John before he knocks his back.

RED (CONT'D)

Now quit your bitching -- warriors don't win by over thinking, we win by over acting.

Red turns and goes to the back. John takes out his phone.

INSERT: Rough fingers unlock the home screen, hits the message icon, types DAN in the TO field, then types -- FALSE FLAG -- ANGELA'S -- ONLY THING THAT MAKES SENSE.

He hits the SEND button.

EXT. THE TOMBS, GEORGETOWN - DAY

A Federalist-style brick town home from the 1800s on the outside -- a tastefully done restaurant and bar on the inside -- in the heart of Georgetown.

INT. THE TOMBS, GEORGETOWN - DAY

The Tombs interior is decorated like the hangout for the Georgetown rowing club -- numbered paddles fan out around the fireplace -- rowing hulls hang from the rafters.

Dan and Angela sit in a booth encased by two antique doors that intend to provide compartmentalized privacy. Georgetown memorabilia and an old lamp light adorn the wall.

Dan is finishing a rare burger and fries, Angela a salad with salmon. He checks his watch. Angela notices without appearing to notice.

ANGELA

You good on time?

DAN

Yes, about an hour before I need to be at Dulles.

She gives the waiter the check sign with her finger.

DAN (CONT'D)
I guess you were right about John.

Angela keeps chewing.

DAN (CONT'D)
But, maybe you were hasty in your
decision --

She stops mid-chew to make eye contact. The waiter drops off the check -- she looks him off, then slowly returns to her salad.

DAN (CONT'D)
He was checking things off our list
and looking into something that
popped up, I don't see the real
harm in that.

She puts her fork down, has a slow drink of water, then really locks eyes with Dan. Her speech is quiet, but strained.

ANGELA
The harm? You don't see the harm?

She pushes her salad away and drops a credit card on the bill.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
So the government investigates a
Muslim casualty of war just because
the President is coming to town,
and you don't see any harm?

DAN
Well, if the media --

ANGELA
The media would paint it as the
worst example of profiling and
harassment in history --

Another sip of water. The waiter drops off the slip and a pen. She waits and watches him move out of ear shot.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
They'd dig up photos of the family,
the boy, the blown-up school --
(she is pissed)
(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

They'd interview the crying mom,
the dad, all dead inside, they'd
even harass the son that lived --
"do you have survivor's guilt" --
it'd be a real show.

Dan wipes his mouth and slams his linen napkin on the table.
Angela's face is red with outrage.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

So they'd dig a little deeper --
and find out that we hired a washed-
up clown who just happened to be
the guy who blew up the school --

DAN

Relax, I get it, that assumes --

ANGELA

It assumes that I don't know where
they sell tar and feathers these
days, but I'm damn sure somebody
else does.

She signs the bill, applying more pressure than necessary.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

You don't see the harm -- Jesus,
Dan, maybe you've lost it, too?

Dan leans in.

DAN

Maybe. Maybe we'd jump on anyone
else with what John found and at
least detain them until the
President was gone.

She stares in disbelief.

Dan looks left and right, then leans in further.

DAN (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Could this be a false flag mission?

She throws her napkin on the table, and LAUGHS.

ANGELA

No such thing, that's the BS of
conspiracy theorists --

DAN

Except for the one's we've done all over the world, as have the Russians and the Chinese, you know, ones you've helped plan --

ANGELA

Not in our own damn country, Dan -- for America, not against America --

DAN

It's not always so clear --

ANGELA

Maybe not to you -- look, tell me now if you can't -- or won't -- go to Dearborn, call off your barking dog and follow orders.

She stands -- he stands -- he's taller, but she's the boss.

EXT. VAGHID'S HOUSE -- DAY

John's sits in his truck watching Vaghid's house. He peels more paper off a pack of Roloids and eats another. Chew - chew - chew - a slug of Gatorade.

ON VAGHID'S HOUSE -- nothing. Not even a breeze.

John looks at his watch -- 2:15 P.M.

JOHN

(to himself)

Screw it.

He hastily gets out of the truck and gets one step toward the house when he sees movement -- teens coming down the sidewalk.

He stops and gets back in his truck.

The teens are pushing each other around and making lots of noise -- normal.

John slams his hands against the steering wheel.

As the kids approach the house, Vaghid opens the front door and hurries them along.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Dad was never happy to see me when I left school early...

John turns the key and slowly cruises away.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL, WASHINGTON D.C. -- DAY

The Washington Monument towers in the background and people crowd this section of sidewalk.

Angela reaches into a small bag and spreads feed out for pigeons. Ivan joins her with his own bag of feed.

ANGELA

John has Dan thinking this might be
a false flag mission.

Ivan's hand stops rustling for seed in his bag, then continues, spreading a wide arc about. Pigeons swarm the food.

IVAN

I do enjoy the doves -- I think
it's because they make me think I'm
feeding symbols of peace and love.
They're messengers who carry my
hopes on their wings.

Angela drops another hand full of seed, her last, and turns her bag upside down to empty its contents.

IVAN (CONT'D)

I'm sure they hear your message,
too.

Angela folds her bag, pockets it, and walks off. Ivan continues to feed the birds.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT COMMAND CENTER - DAY

A blacked out Yukon stops outside the crumbling laundromat. Dan gets out of the back seat, reaches in and pulls out a backpack. He slings it over one shoulder, and wheels a carry-on into the closed and barred building.

INT. LAUNDROMAT COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Dan's gear is stowed on his cot and the men are gathered around the white board.

TJ

I'm just saying Angela was too hard
on John - we still need him.

DAN
(to Rick)
You too?

RICK
No way John has lost it - if he
senses something it up, we better
check it out.

TJ
And, even if he is wrong, he needs
to get his full contract price --
he didn't do anything to deserve
having his gig pulled.

Dan pulls out his cell phone and brings up John's text. He
hands the phone to TJ.

TJ reads the screen and passes it to Rick.

DAN
Could somebody be running a dark
OPs that John stumbled upon?

TJ
That seems less likely than this
dad being hellbent on revenge.

RICK
We've served with Angela a long
time. Never once struck me as a
traitor. Ambitious, yes, but she's
sacrificed as much as any of us for
our country.

DAN
Angela thinks John's suffering from
PTSD and needs to be checked into
the VA.

TJ
Hey, they didn't have a thing back
in the day did they?

Dan shrugs his shoulders.

INT. VAGHID'S BASEMENT LAB -- DAY

Vaghid is dressed in traditional Iraqi dress. CHELEM,
MUSTAPHA, TAREK, and ZAFIR stand single file in a line.

Vaghid picks something up off a table and stops in front of
Chelem. They lock eyes.

VAGHID

Shalom. Allah sees you.

Vaghid holds up the item. It's a suicide vest. He hands it over to Chelem.

Chelem threads his arms through the vest.

CHELEM

It's heavy.

Vaghid is in front of Mustapha.

VAGHID

Shalom. Allah sees you.

Vaghid holds up another vest.

Tarek tries to keep his gaze straight ahead, but cuts his eyes to watch Mustapha don the vest. He swallows hard.

EXT. DEARBORN CHARTER ACADEMY -- DAY

It's daybreak and John waits in his truck at the school. He pours the last drop of coffee from a large thermos.

HE LOOKS -- at the large gap in the locked gate safeguarding the buses.

JOHN

(to himself)

Missed that, didn't you buddy?

A car pulls up and parks -- it's Dr. Khani. She gets out and starts toward the school entrance.

John intercepts -- her eyes light up. John notices and smiles.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It hit me in the shower -- I forgot to consider the actual school buses in my security assessment --

He points to the glaring gap in the gate.

KHANI

They're not really part of our physical security.

JOHN

Not technically, but I got to thinking about it, and each bus and each route could be very vulnerable.

KHANI

Are you sure you're not making up excuses just to see me again?

Khani's not great at flirting, but her eye brows arc in a playful and questioning way --

JOHN

Well, to be honest, I'm a bit embarrassed that I missed the detail on the buses.

Her eyes and smile drops back to normal.

AT THE GATE: STAN walks over, unlocks the chains, and pushes the gates to their open position.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Maybe I could have a quick chat with the dispatcher?

Khani waves and calls out to Stan.

KHANI

Morning Stan, hold on a minute, I want to introduce you to someone.

Stan heads in their direction.

EXT. BUS LOT - CONTINUOUS

STAN (50) walks the lot with John. School buses are parked tightly together.

STAN

Each morning we go over 45 items on the bus from stem to stern. Here's a list --

(hands John a check list)

We're looking for safety, but also vandalism or worse.

JOHN

Worse?

STAN
Something weird, a transponder, a
bomb, sabotage.

JOHN
Show me what you mean.

Stan takes him to the rear axle, pulls out a flash light and gets down on the ground.

STAN
From here, we're able to see most
of the underside of the bus --
we're checking the chassis, the
drive line, the brakes and wheel
wells of the other side.

Stan gets up, and walks to the rear of the bus and crouches back down. Johns stoops down with him.

STAN (CONT'D)
Here, we're looking at the
differential, the chassis, the
exhaust, cross supports.

They get up and continue around. They don't stop at the other side of the rear axle --

STAN (CONT'D)
We'd repeat our under carriage
inspection here, looking at the
other side --

And stops at the battery box under the driver's window, where he goes down again.

STAN (CONT'D)
This gives us the best view of the
driveline and under carriage.

Back on their feet and at the front of the bus, John looks up on the building and the corners of the fencing -- no video cameras.

Drivers are engaged in various stages of their pre-trip check. John watches.

JOHN
What if a driver takes a mental
turn and does something to his own
bus?

Stan looks around.

STAN

These drivers pass a state and federal background test each year, the DOT physical includes a mental health assessment, plus random drug and alcohol tests -- they're solid.

JOHN

But, what if?

STAN

I suppose it could be bad. Their driving history goes back a decade -
- mental illness like what you're talking about shows somewhere.

John points at the gate.

JOHN

That stay open all the time?

STAN

Gets closed and padlocked at night, but open all day -- the buses come and go all the time.

JOHN

Can you show me the routes?

Stan gives a nod and they head off toward the building. Two Muslim drivers, FAROOQ (42) and UMAR (43), come out the door and walk toward their buses

JOHN (CONT'D)

Morning, fellas.

John sticks his hand out to shake but UMAR doesn't take it.

UMAR

(in Arabic)

Move you stupid pig.

FAROOQ spits and side-steps John.

JOHN

(in Arabic)

May Allah have mercy on you and bless you.

Both men stop and look at John, then move on.

STAN

I hate it when they speak chipmunk to each other, what did they say?

JOHN

He called me a pig and I asked
Allah to have mercy on him.

STAN

See? That's what I figured --
they're talking trash and hiding it
behind their language.

Stan keys the code and holds the door open for John.

INT. TRANSPORTATION OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Stan and John enter a small interior office with two
mismatched desks and equally mismatched computer monitors.

Stan takes a seat and pulls up their routing software. John
looks over his shoulder.

STAN

The Charter Academy has five
routes. This one is route 42.

Little circles travel from the bus barn along roads and end
at the school. It reverses in the afternoon, starting at the
school, proceeding along the route, and ending at the bus
barn.

FLASH -- John recalls the highlighted routes he saw in
Vaghid's house.

JOHN

Who has access to these routes and
how often do they change?

STAN

All drivers and assistants, plus we
publish them online for parents to
see. We try not to change them
except between school years.

JOHN

Can I get a copy of the routes for
the Academy to study?

Stan gets up and grabs a Master Route Book. He hands it to
John.

STAN

Routes 40 through 45...

He points to the copy machine.

EXT. DEARBORN CHARTER ACADEMY -- CONTINUOUS

Dr. Khani and John exit the school building into the entry way courtyard. They only take a few steps away from the door.

JOHN

I'll bring an addendum to my report next week.

KHANI

You could always email it.

John holds out his hand for a thank you handshake, and Khani reciprocates --

JOHN

I do like having a reason to see you - I'm still interested in lunch or dinner -

Khani's eyes and smile widen and say yes.

KHANI

I can't do that, John.

They're eyes are locked together.

JOHN

Hope you don't mind my persistence, I'll let it go --

KHANI

I don't mind -- but with the push of Shari'a Law in the community, I'm barely holding on here.

He reaches into his pocket for his wallet and pulls out a business card.

He holds it up, reads it, and places his thumb by the address line, then gives it to her.

JOHN

No worries. My card, in case a security matter comes up.

John turns to walk away.

KHANI

I think I already have one.

He looks back...

JOHN

It's updated -- working from a home
office now -- same number though --

He keeps walking to the parking lot. She looks at the card
and watches him go.

Five, six, seven steps away -- he looks back. She's still
there and smiles.

EXT./INT. POSH HOOKAH BAR -- DAY

SUPER: THE DAY BEFORE THE PRESIDENT ARRIVES

A ratty hookah bar with promotions poorly painted on its
glass storefront sits empty in a nondescript strip shopping
center.

Vaghid enters and takes a seat next to a woman in full burka
at the bar.

There is no server and Vaghid looks straight ahead.

VAGHID

We need to cancel the mission.

The audience recognizes the voice and eyes of the woman.

ANGELA

It's too late.

VAGHID

Someone has been in my house,
they're on to me.

Angela turns and makes direct eye contact.

ANGELA

You're being paranoid. I would know
if someone had been in your house.

VAGHID

They turned down the photo of my
family with Ali.

ANGELA

Probably your wife, or it just fell
over. Everything -- stays -- as --
planned.

Vaghid searches her dark and cold eyes.

EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

John's place looks sketchy at night -- the iron work, poor lighting, rotting BBQ grills by front doors --

INT. KHANI'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Behind the wheel, Khani holds up the business card and looks at the place.

KHANI
(to herself)
Bad idea, Dr. Khani. Put the car in
reverse and drive home.

She turns the car off, looks both ways -- nobody -- rearview mirror -- nothing -- grabs two containers of Chinese take out and gets out of the car.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

John's apartment is spartan, but tidy. A single bed, crisply made, a chair and vintage writing desk, an original credenza, a flat screen TV, a small round table with two chairs, a tiny kitchenette -- dishes drying in a rack.

He's in a chair, working on his laptop.

EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

KHANI stands in front of the door -- 103 -- and a peep sight.

KHANI
(under her breath)
Suite 103... right.

She KNOCKS.

John opens the door in jeans and a T-shirt.

JOHN
Dr. Khani? You alright?

She lifts up the Chinese boxes --

KHANI
I guess I changed my mind about
dinner...

John stands back to welcome her in. He checks the neighborhood to -- left and right -- nobody -- and closes the door.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

They sit at the round table, Chinese boxes open, food transferred out on plates and mostly gone.

Two empty bottles of Budweiser, plus two nearly fresh ones crowd the table space.

John expertly deploys his chopsticks. She uses a fork.

JOHN
Delicious -- really good.

KHANI
Thanks for being a sport and letting me barge in unannounced.

JOHN
Of course, it's a nice surprise to have company with dinner, Dr. Khani.

KHANI
Naza.

JOHN
Naza?

KHANI
My first name.

John tips his beer in her direction.

KHANI (CONT'D)
I'm a bundle of nerves --
(she puts her fork down)
I've never done anything like this before --

JOHN
Hey, don't worry, it's just dinner.

KHANI
(rolls her eyes)
Not this, meeting the President.
(she tosses a balled-up napkin at him)
I've never met a President --

John LAUGHS. He gets up and pulls a trunk from under his bed. He flips through a few photos, finds the one he wants and hands it to her.

INSERT: PHOTO OF JOHN WITH PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

JOHN

Relax -- be yourself -- it's only like five seconds.

She takes and studies the photo.

KHANI

You met President Bush?

JOHN

Sort of. In another chapter, I was on his protective detail.

KHANI

You protected the President?
(hands him back the photo)
And now you live in Dearborn?

JOHN

I used to be important --
(shrugs his shoulders)
-- things change

He stands to clear his plate, stops --

JOHN (CONT'D)

The photo op for the President is much more important to her than you, you know that right?

KHANI

Doesn't feel that way.

He sits back down.

JOHN

She needs to be seen with an educated Iraqi-American leading a safe, diverse school in a predominantly Muslim community --

KHANI

Ohh... She's using us --

JOHN

No, not that far, it's just calculated, selected for optics -- I'm not saying it right.

He reaches out and grabs her hand.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I don't mean to diminish your experience in meeting the President, I'm trying to say you can relax because you are of equal importance to her.

He does clear his plate this time, and she joins him at the tiny sink.

KHANI

I get that. That's part of what makes me nervous -- what if something goes wrong?

He washes the plates one-by-one and his hand slows on hearing this.

JOHN

What do you mean?

KHANI

It's dangerous for the President to visit a place with pockets of Shari'a Law.

He rinses and stacks the plates, dries his hands and turns to her.

JOHN

Have you heard something?

KHANI

Not really, but I deal with a few fanatics. I mean, they hate me because I'm a woman, but at least I'm a Muslim. They really hate our President.

JOHN

Advance teams have been here for weeks. She'll be safe.

KHANI

It's all so distortive -- if something does go wrong, people blame all Muslims -- nobody sees inside my school to see how patriotic and caring we are.

She starts to cry.

KHANI (CONT'D)

You see, don't you?

John puts his arms around her.

JOHN

I do. But, I've been on the
battlefield, I've seen the best and
worst of people -- on both sides.

She pushes back and searches his face and eyes. Scars, an unkempt beard, fierce but kind eyes.

KHANI

Can I ask you something personal?

John shrugs.

KHANI (CONT'D)

Why didn't things work with your
wife, was it cultural?

John steps away and grabs her beer, hands it to her, gets his and they sit -- her in the living room chair, him on the edge of his bed.

JOHN

Sort of. She married a SEAL. She
hated the life, but loved the idea.

Khani takes a drink.

KHANI

She always feared for your safety?

JOHN

Hardly. Our life insurance and
military benefits would take care
of her and Harry if something
happened.

(John scans the room for
words)

She pretended to hate my
deployments -- time away from her --
but did nothing but complain when I
was stateside --

Khani studies his face. He can't look at her.

JOHN (CONT'D)

She loved the parties and being able to quietly tell people that I was a SEAL -- people respected that, she respected that, people respected her.

He points to the scar across his eye.

JOHN (CONT'D)

When I came to after the parachute accident that nearly killed me, her first words were -

(makes rabbits ears with fingers)

Don't worry, hon, they said you'll heal and still be in the teams.

He takes a tug on his beer.

JOHN (CONT'D)

When the kidney was shot out, it was, "TJ said you gotta deploy before the records show you're down to one kidney."

KHANI

Wow.

JOHN

It's not just her. We call them Frog Hogs -- women who love SEALs.

KHANI

Like the debs in An Officer and a Gentlemen?

JOHN

Yes, anyway -- the records caught up, I was medically discharged and joined the CIA -- not great, but she was okay with that.

KHANI

What happened?

John is silent. His eyes well, but hold the tears. He goes back to the trunk and rifles around until he brings out a box of medals.

He selects the Bronze Star with V for Valor and hands it to her.

JOHN

You're one of three civilians to ever see that.

She turns it over in her hands.

JOHN (CONT'D)

SEAL missions are classified and our awards happen in private ceremonies. We don't talk about our deeds. But, valor is important to us. That is the difference.

Khani hands the medal back.

KHANI

It's amazing John, I don't know what to say.

John puts the medal back in the box.

JOHN

The CIA is less concerned with valor. I stopped accepting tours of duty with them after a particularly bad mission.

KHANI

What's done in war is forgivable.

JOHN

Maybe, but after that I was no longer a SEAL, no longer in the CIA, and the battlefield shifted to my marriage.

(makes eye contact)

It wasn't cultural. It was opportunistic.

KHANI

I'm sorry I asked -- I like you, really like you -- but I didn't want to invest my full heart if our cultural differences make us impossible.

John stands, grabs her hand, and pulls her up to be face-to-face.

JOHN

They'll make it difficult, but not impossible.

Second-by-second their heads gently inch together until their mouths meet in a delicate kiss, and another.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Dan is locking up the back exit from the command center. He ducks from under the black plastic and walks to the sidewalk.

UP AHEAD he see a garbage truck lumbering down the road, stopping and starting to gather trash.

He starts across the street -- SNAP! -- SNAP! -- the first bullet missed, but the second one strikes his knee and he stumbles in the middle of the road.

The garbage truck speeds up and runs him down, then stops.

The men hanging from the back, pick him up and put him in the truck. They SLAP the side of the truck and it carries on.

EXT. ADJACENT ROOFTOP -- CONTINUOUS

Pigeons roost in a rooftop birdhouse.

Ivan casually disassembles his sniper's rifle and puts it in a gear bag.

He pulls out a small paper bag and spreads seed into the bottom of the birdhouse, then returns it to the gear bag.

The sun is starting to rise.

EXT. TARMAC DEARBORN AIRPORT -- DAY

AirForce One waits on a deserted runway, stairs down.

The Presidential motorcade is lined up -- agents scurry about.

President Wallace and Press Secretary Hall are greeted by Agent Angela Rodriguez.

She opens the door to the limo.

ANGELA

Welcome to Dearborn, Madam
President --
(a subtle nod)

Secretary Hall.

Angela is the last to get in and closes the door.

EXT. DEARBORN CHARTER ACADEMY -- SIMULTANEOUS

A column of school buses parked nose to tail crowd the bus lane in front of the school.

Rows of frenetic students vibrate in otherwise orderly lines. Teachers with clipboards walk up and down interacting with students

Dr. Khani stands at the door of the first bus giving kids high fives, fist bumps, and shoulder taps as they enter.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

John's bed is made, he's showered and dressed. One hand lifts a cup of coffee and the other holds a note.

INSERT: THANK YOU FOR SHARING DINNER -- AND DESSERT -- NAZA

John's RING TONE: ENTER SANDMAN. He puts the note down and grabs his phone.

INSERT: TJ

He tosses the phone on his bed.

INT./EXT. SCHOOL BUS -- DAY

Drone POV -- a convoy of five buses travel down a main road.

INSIDE -- Muslim kids sing the refrain from America the Beautiful.

KIDS
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

MANHOLE POV -- the undercarriage of bus one -- RED LIGHT FLASHES by --

Bus two -- RED LIGHT AND DEVICE --

Bus three -- RED LIGHT --

Bus four -- RED LIGHT --

Bus five -- THEY'RE BOMBS ALRIGHT!

RING TONE: ENTER SANDMAN

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

John grabs his phone.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

JOHN

Teeg -- what do you want, I'm off
to a good start today ...

TJ

Let me change that for you. The
dead bus driver?

JOHN

Yeah?

TJ

Just popped up as Al-Qaeda.

JOHN

What are you telling me for?

TJ

Angela dismissed it; Dan's not
picking up.

JOHN

Dude, I got canned, remember?

TJ

I need you to check this out.

JOHN

Check what out? You know the dead
guy's Al-Qaeda, you told your boss,
she don't care, what do you want me
to do?

TJ

Suppose you were right -- Vaghid,
the teens -- they're up to
something -- a dead bus driver is
Al-Qaeda -- how easy is it to use
school buses to deliver a bomb?

John is silent on his end.

TJ (CONT'D)

They're delivering kids from Dearborn and Detroit to see the President in school buses -- how easy is it to compromise a school bus?!?

JOHN

Easier than a sailor on leave. But, I'm out -- dude if I show up anywhere poking around they can arrest me for trespassing or whatever.

TJ

I never pulled your credentials -- quit wasting time and check out those damn buses! That's all I'm --

JOHN

-- Call you back.

BACK TO JOHN'S APARTMENT

John hangs up and pulls out his trunk, selects a file folder and spreads the bus routes out on his table.

FLASH -- he recalls their routes from Vaghid's house -- they deviate and all head east.

He grabs them and his keys and runs out, practically ripping the door off it's hinges.

He's surprised by an equally powerful force -- THUG ONE -- that tackles him back into his apartment. Surprise, speed, violence of action.

THUG TWO has a hood over his head and his hands zippered tied before his head can bounce off the floor a second time.

INT. SCHOOL BUS -- SIMULTANEOUS

Harry and Saburo sit behind Dr. Khani, who is right behind the bus driver. She's watching the kids through the wide mirror in front of the driver.

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE BUS

POV pivots to be under the bus where Harry sits --

A red light flashes near the fuel tank.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

John sits on the floor propped against his couch, head covered, hands and feet tied.

THUG ONE and TWO wear traditional Iraqi clothes, have olive complexion and full black beards, but they are Americans.

THUG ONE

We're messengers here to remind you
that you agreed to stand down.

They each pull on ski masks to cover their faces, and then take John's hood off.

His face is beat-up and bleeding.

THUG ONE (CONT'D)

We're authorized to make it so you
can't stand at all, over?

John nods faintly.

Thug Two takes out two photos and puts them in John's lap.

INSERT: One of Dr. Khani and him at the door to his apartment last night, the other of her leaving this morning.

THUG TWO

Picture the headline that goes with
these two photos --

John searches their eyes -- not bluffing.

THUG ONE

-- not that headline, you have to
be more creative -- we're thinking,
Principal moonlights as escort to
ex-military men --

Thug One looks to Thug Two and cocks his head in question.

THUG ONE (CONT'D)

(to Thug Two)
-- Remind me how Shari'a Law deals
with that?

Thug Two puts the hood back on John and kicks him hard on the chin -- John's head snaps back, then falls forward, limp.

EXT. STREETS OF DEARBORN - DAY

The Presidential Motorcade streams down streets emptied just for them. Local Law Enforcement squad cars and fire trucks block intersections with lights flashing.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Still slumped against the couch, a violent twitch jars life back into John's body.

He draws his legs up and pushes himself up against the couch.

Once upright, he feels his way to the kitchen, counts down two drawers, pulls it open, goes up on his toes and feels around inside the drawer, until he finds a knife.

John squats and uses the knife to cut the ties on his feet, then he holds the knife between his ankles and works his hand ties up and down on the blade.

It takes some effort, but he breaks through. He removes the hood from his head and catches a glance of himself in a mirror.

JOHN
(to himself)
You've looked better, old man.

He reaches back under his bed and pulls out a small gun safe, scans his hand, opens the safe, and tucks the Glock Model 19 in his waist band. On standing he sees the only photo on his wall -- Harry.

FLASH -- JOHN REMEMBERS -- Back in Iraq, John is stunned and on the ground. He watches Vaghid and his wife on their knees hysterical.

HE FOCUSES ON VAGHID -- Vaghid prays in Arabic -- Allah, give me the opportunity to take his sons, the sons of all infidels, their dear borns.

BACK TO THE APARTMENT

JOHN (CONT'D)
(in prayer)
Not my boy, God. Your heavy hand
may be deserved, but not against my
child, any child.

He moves fast to the door, but stops this time.

He looks through the peep hole. Then pulls the curtains aside and peeks out the window -- nobody there.

His eye lands on a white ball cap with a gold trident embroidered on it -- that'll do -- he dons it and leaves.

INT. JOHN'S CAR -- DAY

He barrels down the main road, bobbing in and out of traffic.

He calls a number...

INTERCUT

JOHN (CONT'D)
(aloud)
Come on Jana, pick...

JANA
I hope you're calling about...

JOHN
Harry, I'm calling about Harry --
did he go to school today?

JANA
Of course, he gets to meet the
President, but I wanna --

He hangs up. And calls another number.

INT. SCHOOL BUS -- DAY

Dr. Khani still sits behind the driver watching what kids she can see in the mirror.

They sing loudly --

KIDS
This land is your land, this land
is my land, from California to New
York Island...

INSERT -- HER PHONE RINGS AND FLASHES -- JOHN

She covers her ears from the singing, and misses John's call.

EXT. BUS LOT - CONTINUOUS

John tears through the school zone and into the bus parking lot. He skids to a stop and is out of his car and running toward the only school bus left in the lot.

STAN and MECHANICS come out of the building to investigate the squealing tires.

John dives under the bus from the front and pulls himself along by the chassis rails --

Engine -- front axle -- exhaust -- retarder -- back axle -- nothing.

He drops himself to the pavement and breathes a sigh of relief -- then notices a faint red strobe reflecting against the stainless muffler.

He changes position and sees it, tucked tight against the fuel tank -- a BOMB with a CANISTER attached to it.

He studies it -- just a second though -- then grabs it -- and breaks the magnetic force holding it in place.

John scrambles from under the bus, looks around and runs to a stack of used tires in the far corner of the lot. He puts the bomb in the tires.

EXT. FORD CENTER -- SIMULTANEOUS

Buses fill a parking lot and kids unload to form streams that flow toward a roped off section of the lot.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMO -- SIMULTANEOUS

The President practices her delivery to Hall and Angela.

PRESIDENT WALLACE

My new school safety executive
order cuts the red tape so diverse
communities like yours can keep
your learning environments safe

Angela nods her head in agreement. When the President glances down at her notes, Angela checks her watch.

EXT. BUS LOT - CONTINUOUS

Stan and the mechanics are gathered with John. John is on the phone.

INTERCUT

TJ

It's cell-phone activated, so I
wouldn't go near it -- clear the
area --

JOHN
Angela and Dan?

TJ
Negative. Comms are down -- signals
are being jammed, but we're working
on it.

JOHN
Dispatch shows the buses at the
venue -- chain reaction plus the
diesel fuel -- could be huge.

TJ
Who do you think has the trigger?

JOHN
I'm on it -- just a mile down the
road.

BACK TO BUS LOT

John runs to the bus he cleared, finds the keys, and lurches
out of the parking lot.

INT. VAGHID'S HOUSE BASEMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Vaghid is in his lab with two other MEN watching TV coverage
of the Presidential motorcade.

His WIFE delivers hot tea, then disappears back up the
stairs.

Beside the TV are two police scanners.

INSERT: ONE SCANNER IS TUNED TO THE SCHOOL BUS CHANNEL

Two AK-47s lean against the wall.

EXT. FORD CENTER PARKING LOT -- SIMULTANEOUS

A parking lot of tightly parked buses.

Dearborn Academy buses are land-locked by other buses.

Their drivers stand around smoking, drinking coffee, and
talking to one another.

STAN (V.O.)
(over the bus radios)
All buses return to base.

The drivers freeze for a moment, look around -- no way out -- and turn to their radios.

INT. VAGHID'S HOUSE BASEMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Vaghid mutes the TV. The scanner tuned to the bus channel explodes with chaos -- requests for repeats, questions, denials -- all at once.

Vaghid pulls out a pistol and chambers a round, the men pick-up their assault rifles.

All three head upstairs.

LIVING ROOM

WHAM! John's bus crashes through the picture window of the living room -- glass and debris go every where --

The men pop out of the stairway shooting at the bus -- but John is already out -- moving and shooting --

The men shield and push Vaghid out the back door -- jumping through the clutter of the crash, John gets the right angle --

POP-POP -- POP-POP -- the guards fall -- but Vaghid is already outside and running to his car --

John pushes by the bodies at the door, and gets a bad shot off toward Vaghid -- it catches him in the arm and a cell phone goes spinning on the driveway --

OUTSIDE BACK YARD/DRIVEWAY

Vaghid never slows -- jumps in his car and speeds out of his driveway in reverse -- CRASH -- John shoots out a side window -- but Vaghid speeds away -- John grabs the phone --

BACK INSIDE

Breathing hard, sweaty, and dirty, John turns back to his bus -- Vaghid's WIFE peeps around the corner --

John's reflexes are quick -- his gun is back to eye level and on her in a flash --

JOHN
(in Arabic)
Where are Tarek and his friends?

She stands motionless, then she removes her veil and reveals her face.

WIFE
 (in Arabic)
 I remember you.

John doesn't have time for a reunion.

JOHN
 (in Arabic)
 Tarek, where is Tarek?

WIFE
 You saved me and Tarek.

A tear streams down her face.

JOHN
 (in Arabic)
 Let me do that again, where is
 Tarek right now?

WIFE
 (in Arabic)
 At school.

John gets back on the bus.

EXT. FORD CENTER -- SIMULTANEOUS

A mob of students fill-in a standing room only space where
 the Presidential motorcade will arrive.

Tarek, Mustapha, Zarif, and Chelem spread out and push their
 way toward the front --

EXT DEARBORN STREETS -- SIMULTANEOUS

John's bus, crashed-in, shot-up, and steaming, is several bus
 lengths behind Vaghid's car -- and not closing ground --

VAGHID DRIVING -- steering with a combination of his arm and
 knees, he's on speaker phone -- we don't hear him, but he's
 shouting and spittle flies as his eyes alternate between the
 road ahead and the rearview mirror --

JOHN DRIVING -- wrong vehicle for a chase -- a slight hill
 and he's losing ground --

A CITY BUS is parked on a side street, it's banner says, OUT
 OF SERVICE -- ABDUL, the driver, puts down his cell phone --
 Vaghid's car passes by --

JOHN DRIVING -- the bus is floored -- up ahead, Vaghid takes a hard right -- he'll never make the turn -- the CITY BUS out of the corner of his eye -- tries to T-Bone him, but misses on the timing --

ABDUL DRIVING -- the city bus has a bit more power -- after missing the T-Bone, Abdul BANGS his bus into the side of John's --

JOHN -- reacting -- what the hell? -- he draws his PISTOL from his waistband -- SLAM! -- the buses collide --

UP AHEAD -- AN INTERSECTION with a red light -- people crossing -- a mom with a baby carriage --

BLAM! -- BLAM! -- BLAM! -- the CITY BUS -- right beside him -- glass shattering from the shots --

JOHN -- STANDS ON THE BRAKES -- the CITY BUS scrapes past taking side mirrors with it -- Abdul's face goes by in a blur -- who the hell is that guy? --

THE SCHOOL BUS -- HARD RIGHT -- as soon as the CITY BUS clears -- it takes a side street --

BAD CHOICE -- INTERSECTION with more people crossing --

JOHN -- turns on all the lights and lays on the HORN -- people scurry -- he won't make the turn -- blasts through the intersection -- cars SQUEAL AND PEEL to avoid collision --

NOWHERE TO GO -- John floors it -- bounces over the curb and cuts through a PARK -- BUMS launch from a bench just in time --

ABDUL -- TRACKS John's bus bounding through the park -- RIGHT TURN and he'll catch him on the other side --

JOHN -- pedal down -- head on a swivel -- where is that guy -- up ahead a FOUR LANE -- slows down to make the turn --

TRAFFIC is light, but he still SMASHES a car when he enters the road -- knocks into oncoming traffic and triggers a pile-up -- SORRY! -- pedal down --

ABDUL -- right on time -- he BLASTS into the back of John's bus -- he sits inches from the front bumper -- doesn't care --

JOHN -- fights for control of his bus -- BANGS into the car in front of him, sending it off to the right and into a telephone pole --

BLAM! -- BLAM! -- BLAM! -- the rear glass shatters in John's bus -- the mirror above his head disintegrates -- John DUCKS --
- bullets riddle the seats and roof --

UP AHEAD -- TWO CHOICES -- on ramp to expressway or plow through stopped traffic at a red light -- ON RAMP --

JOHN -- shoots ahead -- a slight down hill slope helps him build speed and pull away -- he slings the bus around traffic --

ABDUL -- matches him move for move -- gaining --

JOHN -- needs more speed -- spots a WORK VAN up ahead --

ABDUL -- pulls along side, starts banging against his target --

WORK VAN -- imminent and slow, blocking John's lane --

JOHN -- BRAKES HARD to avoid impact -- turns into the rear quarter panel of the CITY BUS hard and precisely --

CITY BUS -- first veers left into John's lane -- John hits the GAS to give it a nudge -- it teeters, then surrenders to a full barrel roll --

JOHN
(to himself)
Allah Akbar, ass wipe.

JOHN slips his bus further right and exits as the CITY BUS rolls and ignites.

EXT. FORD CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

Tarek, Mustapha, Zafir, and Chelem are now at the front of the roped-off standing area.

Tarek is on the left -- Mustapha and Zafir are in the center closest to the Presidential podium -- Chelem is on the far right.

The Presidential motorcade pulls through the reception area -- two black SUVs, then one LIMO, another SUV, the second LIMO stops directly behind the podium.

ROOFTOP -- a SNIPER scans the crowd through his scope -- a sea of happy, excited kids waving little flags on sticks -- he moves from behind the scope -- it's RICK.

RICK
 (into radio)
 Sniper one, clear.

INSIDE THE LIMO

President Wallace and Secretary Hall sit patiently. Rodriguez scans the crowd and presses her earpiece to hear better. She subconsciously nods with each "all clear."

ANGELA
 Madam President, we have the all
 clear.

President Wallace nods.

OUTSIDE THE LIMO -- Secret Service members open the doors to the LIMO and all three women get out, the President is last.

When she emerges, the crowd ERUPTS in cheers -- she waves and smiles then approaches the line of kids.

SNIPER -- scans -- nothing -- wait, why is that one kid not bouncing up and down with a crazy grin on his face -- lingers -- moves on --

WALLACE -- she's shaking hands with both hands -- high-fiving kids -- knuckle bumps Saburo -- with Harry right behind him -- her smile is genuine -- this is her element --

AT THE PODIUM -- Wallace gives two thumbs-up to the kids, and then holds her hands out to calm them down

PRESIDENT WALLACE
 Thank you. Thank you.
 (waits)
 Great to be with the youth of
 America -- you are the future!

Bad move -- a second round of CHEERS.

SNIPER -- scans -- no threats, happy kids -- where's that one
 --

PRESIDENT WALLACE (CONT'D)
 I'm pleased to be here today --
 with America's youth -- to say your
 safety matters most in our country -
 -

The wind picks up and ripples the skirt of the podium.

SNIPER -- there he is -- still glum -- the wind blows open his jacket to reveal a SUICIDE VEST -- he follows the kid's arm to his hand -- he's holding something --

RICK

Kid in a vest, abort, I say again,
abort!

Angela's hand goes to her ear. She and other agents move toward the President.

SNIPER -- trained on Chelem.

RICK'S RADIO (V.O.)

(an unknown supervisor)

Take the shot if you're sure -- but
be damn sure or we'll all fry.

The wind dies down -- the jacket closes -- surely not, not a kid -- the wind whips again and there it is -- a suicide vest -- then another kid's head gets in the way -- come on, move --

THE PODIUM -- Angela approaches and whispers in the President's ear. The President nods, but keeps talking and smiling --

SNIPER -- the other kid moves -- SNAP! -- Chelem's shoulder explodes -- blood sprays all over surrounding kids -- Chelem falls to the ground -- SCREAMS ERUPT and kids start hauling ass in panic --

THE PODIUM -- Secret Service agents draw weapons and dart to the President -- two go to the LIMO and open the doors -- Angela and ANOTHER go to the President --

ANGELA turns her gun on the President and fires twice -- she sees the President spin -- then the gun barrel of the OTHER AGENT flashes at her --

Angela drops and OTHER AGENTS tackle the President into the LIMO -- the LIMO SCREAMS away -- Secretary Hall is frozen, unable to process what has happened.

The kids and teachers are scrambling in all directions -- they want out -- it seems like the Vegas shooting all over again -- they don't want to be fish in a barrel --

PARKING LOT ENTRANCE

John's bus -- what's left of it -- careens into the parking lot -- every light flashing -- horn honking -- a smoldering mess -- he's headed for the clear fire lane up front --

JOHN -- BRAKES! -- a tidal wave of screaming kids spills out into the fire lane and stops him in his tracks -- not good --

John jumps out of the bus and starts moving upstream -- to his right he sees Vaghid doing the same thing -- he changes course to intercept --

THE PODIUM -- not all the kids scatter -- Harry, Hamal, Saburo, and Fahim are looking around to try and process what's happening --

MUSTAPHA holds his ground, spins and sees Chelem in a puddle of blood on the ground -- he spins again -- Zafir is frozen -- spins again -- Tarek is grabbing someone --

HARRY sees Mustapha spinning -- he sees the vest -- and beelines right to him -- SLAM! -- a textbook tackle -- on the ground he hammer chops Mustapha's right collar bone -- Mustapha drops his detonator -- Harry hammers his other collar bone --

HAMAL AND SABURO watch Harry strike, then turn to see ZAFIR -- He's still frozen in shock when Hamal and Saburo take him down -- Hamal lashes out with a lightning fast punch to the throat -- Zafir can't breathe and drops his detonator --

SNIPER -- Rick watches through his scope and sees two other kids go down -- he scans for other threats -- finds Tarek holding a hostage -- it's Dr. Khani --

RICK
(into radio)
Kid with a hostage, moving toward
podium

TAREK grabbed the first person he could -- Dr. Khani -- chaos has him confused -- everyone has run away from him leaving them alone by the podium --

Harry and his friends start to turn toward Tarek, but Cops grab them and drag them away.

TAREK
(to Dr. Khani)
Don't struggle -- I'll blow us up --
I just need a minute to think --

Khani is terrified -- she has trouble speaking.

DR. KHANI
You don't have to do this --

Tarek digs his fingers into her throat

TAREK

Shut-up!

A perimeter has formed at what people think is a safe distance -- older kids, law enforcement, remaining agents --

Tarek looks up and sees lots of long rifles trained on him from rooftops -- this is not how it was supposed to go --

THE PERIMETER -- John breaks through with Vaghid at gun point.

VAGHID

(to Tarek)

Do it! Send us to Allah!

JOHN

Wait -- I was there the day your brother died --

John starts gesturing with his gun.

VAGHID

Honor Allah and send us to see your brother again!

JOHN

I killed him -- but, I saved you and your mother --

Vaghid looks at John -- he hadn't recognized him before.

VAGHID

It is him! He is the one!

John's gun is now pointing at Tarek to emphasize John's argument --

JOHN

You -- you don't deserve to be sacrificed like this by your father --

SNIPER - Rick has Tarek in his cross hairs -- Tarek spins and puts Dr. Khani in the shot --

VAGHID

Be strong for your brother! You can restore justice right here, right now!

JOHN

There is no honor in killing
innocent people -- there was no
honor in killing your brother -- it
was a mistake --

Tarek spins again -- if he stands still someone may take a
shot at him --

TAREK'S HAND -- holding the detonator, his whole hands shakes
-- he's trying to will his thumb down, but his thumb refuses -
-

John's gun is still waving toward Tarek --

JOHN (CONT'D)

Let's trade -- let Dr. Khani go,
then you get me and your father --
all three of us can stand before
God and answer

VAGHID

Ali would have done it by now!
Tarek -- do it!

Tarek's eyes lock with Vaghid's and well-up -- it's always
been about Ali -- he drops his head --

BLAM! -- BLAM! -- John shoots Tarek in his shoulder holding
the detonator it goes sliding across the concrete -- at the
same time Rick shoots Vaghid.

Tarek pushes Dr. Khani away as he falls -- she takes off
running toward John -- Tarek falls to one knee and watches
his father's body slump to the ground -- the detonator spins
just short of Vaghid --

Dr. Khani reaches John, they turn and run together -- the
folks making the perimeter also turn to run --

Wobbling on one knee, crying, and defeated -- Tarek falls
over --

With one last surge, Vaghid grabs the detonator and pushes
the plunger -- the FORCE and SOUND are immense --

John shields Dr. Khani and they are blown to the ground.

Smoke and dust roil in the air.

The sediment is slow to settle and reveals John and Dr. Khani
face-to-face, eye-to-eye on the ground.

John's blinking fast trying to clear his vision, But Dr. Khani stares blankly ahead -- his eyes grow in panic -- and then she slowly closes and re-opens her eyes.

John closes his eyes in relief and cups her face in his hand. He kisses her forehead.

INT. OVAL OFFICE -- DAY

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

President Wallace stands before a small group of people. Her arm is in a sling.

TJ, Rick and John are lined up in their dress white uniforms with chests full of secretly awarded medals and their Tridents. A large, framed photo of Dan, also in his dress whites, is on an easel.

Dr. Khani and Secretary Hall (unscathed) stand to one side.

Hall joins the President in front of John. As she passes the other men, they each wear a new medal.

She drapes a medal over his head. She stands back so the President alone faces John.

PRESIDENT WALLACE

And finally, today, I take pride in presenting the The Distinguished Intelligence Cross to John A. Stinger, United States Navy, retired, for voluntary acts of courage performed under hazardous conditions rendered with distinction under threat of grave risk. John's courageous and selfless heroism, exceptional professional skill, and utmost devotion to duty reflected great credit upon him and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Central Intelligence Agency and the United States Naval Service.

John shakes her hand.

JOHN

Thank you, Madam President.

Dr. Khani cries over a quivering chin.

THE BUFFET TABLE

A small spread of anchor-shaped cookies with blue and gold icing have the men gathered around drinking coffee for a brief moment with the President.

Wallace addresses John with Dr. Khani by his side.

PRESIDENT WALLACE

I know you're getting more media attention than you want, but I personally credit you with saving my life and the lives of thousands of children.

John just nods.

JOHN

My honor to be of service.

PRESIDENT WALLACE

Still no chance you'll join my security detail? It's very rare to tell the President "no."

JOHN

Yes, ma'am. I mean, no, ma'am. Ma'am, I mean to say that I'm hanging up my spurs. This mission introduced me to my love and I'm in no hurry to have the next mission drive her away.

President Wallace lifts her coffee cup to John and Dr. Khani, but TJ and Rick are already vectoring in on them.

TJ slaps John on the back.

TJ

Until we need him again.

John cracks a smile and gives his teammate a subtle nod.

EXT. DEARBORN CHARTER ACADEMY -- DAY

SUPER: FOUR WEEKS LATER

John stands out front with other parents -- lots of them -- as the bell rings and kids flow out of the building and dart off in various directions.

A small bevy of feeding doves take flight to avoid the stampede.

Buses are lined up, but most children pass them by.

JOHN WATCHES -- happy faces, laughing, talking, carefree -- it makes him smile.

Harry and his friends finally walk from the building -- a new air of confidence surrounds them --

JOHN
(calling out)
Take your time, don't hurry on my account.

They do take their time -- laughing and pushing on each other.

John sees Dr. Khani across the way talking to students -- they wave at each other.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Hey fellas, how was school today?

HAMAL
Boring, you know, the usual.

JOHN
Oh yeah? Sounds like things are getting back to normal, then.

HARRY
In some ways. In other ways, things will never be the same.

Saburo squeezes in.

SABURO
And that's a good thing, Mr. John, none of us want to be who we used to be.

JOHN
Good philosophy, men -- who needs a ride?

THE BOYS
We're good -- walking home today.

John straightens the bill of Harry's hat.

JOHN
Kids still not riding the buses?

HARRY
Not many, but some.

The crowd is clearing out already, John gives Harry a nod in the direction of the truck.

JOHN

Meet you at the truck, I want to talk to Naza a minute.

Dr. Khani and John walk toward one another, but stop at a professional distance.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Any special dinner requests, Dr. Khani?

DR KHANI

I don't know, not really.

JOHN

Good day?

DR KHANI

It was fine. Not back to normal, but closer every day -- you dropping Harry off at Jana's or is she coming over to get him?

JOHN

I'll drop him off after I pick-up the groceries.

She grabs one of his hands.

DR KHANI

In that case, skip the store -- I'll pick up some Chinese -- see you around five.

She kisses him on the cheek and spins to go back into school, the line of buses pull out of the lot.

FADE TO BLACK