

NO WAY BACK

A sequel to NO WAY OUT (1987)

Written by

RODERIC ANTHONY WADDS

April 2026

2804 VIA MAGIA
CARLSBAD, CA 92010
619-313-0070
RWADDS@GMAIL.COM

FARRELL (V.O.)

The Soviet Union died in 1991. My handlers vanished. No more dead drops. No more coded shortwave. No more purpose. I was a soldier with no army, a spy with no country.

BEAT.

FARRELL (V.O.)

So I did the only thing I knew how to do. I kept pretending.

4

EXT. GEORGETOWN STREETS - MORNING

4

Farrell walks. No cane, no shuffle, purposeful strides. He wears a dark overcoat, wool scarf. He looks like every other retired Washington power broker taking his morning constitutional.

He stops at a newsstand. Buys the Post and the Financial Times. Nods to the VENDOR, who knows him by name.

VENDOR

Morning, Mr. Reed. Cold one today.

FARRELL

They're all cold ones at my age, Ray.

The Vendor laughs. Farrell moves on. His eyes, though, they're working. Checking reflections in shop windows. Noting the parked cars. Old tradecraft, muscle memory that never fades.

5

INT. CAFÉ MILANO - GEORGETOWN - MORNING

5

Upscale. The kind of place where lobbyists and former cabinet secretaries eat eggs. Farrell takes his usual table in the back corner, wall behind him, clear sightline to both exits.

A WAITER brings coffee without being asked.

Farrell opens the Post. Below the fold: a photo of the RUSSIAN PRESIDENT, VIKTOR PETROV (70s, sharp-featured, cold intelligent eyes) at a diplomatic summit.

Farrell stares at the photo. A flicker of something crosses his face, not quite a smile. Recognition. History.

His burner phone BUZZES. A text message. Unknown number. He reads it:

INSERT, PHONE SCREEN: "Old friend. I will be in your city next week. Dinner? Like the old days. - V"

Farrell sets down the phone. For the first time, something unreadable passes behind his eyes. Not fear. Not excitement. Something older than both.

FARRELL (V.O.)

Viktor and I go back to 1982.
Before he was president. Before I
was a ghost. We were young men in a
world that was about to change, and
neither of us knew it.

He types back a single character: '-' indicating affirmative.

Farrell stares at the photo of VIKTOR in the Post. His eyes go distant. The cafe noise fades...

MATCH CUT TO:

6

**EXT. KGB TRAINING COMPOUND - LENINGRAD - DAY (1982) -
FLASHBACK**

6

SUPER: KGB RED BANNER INSTITUTE, LENINGRAD - WINTER 1982

A brutal obstacle course in a frozen forest clearing. Barbed wire, ice-covered walls, mud that's frozen into jagged ridges. Snow drives sideways.

A class of twenty KGB cadets runs the course. They're exhausted, soaked, half-frozen. INSTRUCTORS in heavy coats shout from the sidelines, stopwatches in hand.

YOUNG YURI (23, lean, watchful, the young man who will become Tom Farrell) scrambles over a timber wall. He's fast, efficient, good at this. He drops to the other side and hits the ground hard, his ankle turns on the frozen mud. He goes down.

YOUNG VIKTOR PETROV (early 20's, sharp-eyed, already carrying himself like someone who expects to matter) is three meters behind. He could pass Yuri. Improve his own ranking. That's what they're trained to do, individual scores, individual survival.

Instead, Viktor grabs Yuri's arm and hauls him to his feet. They run together.

INSTRUCTOR

(in Russian, subtitled
throughout)

(MORE)

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)

VIKTOR! Leave him! This is not a team exercise!

VIKTOR ignores him. He and Yuri cross the finish line together, dead last. The Instructor gets in VIKTOR's face.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)

You just cost yourself three ranks. Was it worth it?

YOUNG PETROV

He's the best one here. You know it. I know it. Losing him on a training course would be a waste of Soviet resources, Comrade Instructor.

The Instructor stares him down. Then moves on. Yuri and VIKTOR exchange a look, the beginning of something. Not friendship, exactly. Not yet. Something rarer in this place: trust.

Sequence of flashbacks.

7

INT. KGB ACADEMY - CLASSROOM - DAY (1982) - FLASHBACK

7

A spartan room. Cadets sit at wooden desks. An INSTRUCTOR stands before a chalkboard covered in English phrases, American slang, cultural references. Training the illegals to pass as Americans. All instruction is in English. Perfect unaccented American English.

INSTRUCTOR

You are at a cocktail party in Washington. Someone asks where you went to school. What do you say?

Yuri answers in flawless, unaccented American English, startlingly different from the Russian he spoke moments ago.

YOUNG YURI

(in perfect unaccented American English)
Annapolis. Class of '83. Go Navy.

A few cadets shift uncomfortably. The transformation is uncanny. VIKTOR, sitting two rows back, watches with something like admiration, and something like sadness. His friend is disappearing into someone else right before his eyes.

8 **INT. KGB ACADEMY - HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT HALL - DAY (1982) - 8**
FLASHBACK

Cadets spar on mats. Brutal, efficient, Sambo. No pads, no mercy.

Yuri fights a LARGER CADET. Takes a hard hit to the ribs. Goes down. Gets up. Takes another. Gets up again. The Larger Cadet is stronger, but Yuri is relentless, absorbing punishment until he finds an opening, then ending it with a chokehold that comes from nowhere.

The Larger Cadet taps out. Yuri releases him and stands, breathing hard, blood on his lip.

VIKTOR, waiting for his own bout, catches Yuri's eye. Gives him the smallest nod. Respect.

9 **EXT. KGB ACADEMY ROOFTOP - LENINGRAD - NIGHT (1982) - 9**
FLASHBACK

Later. The training day is over. Snow falls over the brutalist dormitory. Grey concrete against a black sky. The kind of cold that gets into your bones and stays.

On the roof: YURI and VIKTOR in heavy coats, breath visible in the freezing air. They pass a bottle of stolen vodka between them. Yuri's ankle is wrapped. VIKTOR has a bruise darkening under his eye from his own sparring bout.

Below them, the lights of Leningrad. The Neva frozen solid. A city that looks like it was built to endure suffering.

YOUNG PETROV

(in Russian, subtitled
throughout)

They posted the assignments. I saw
your name.

Yuri takes a long pull from the bottle. Doesn't answer right away.

YOUNG YURI

America.

YOUNG PETROV

America. The great enemy. You
should be proud. They only send the
best.

YOUNG YURI

They send the ones they can afford
to lose.

VIKTOR studies his friend. This is not bravado. This is fear.

YOUNG PETROV

What's wrong?

YOUNG YURI

I've never been outside Leningrad, Viktor. I've never seen the ocean. And they want me to go to a country I've only read about in briefing books and become a person who doesn't exist. An American. With an American name, American memories, an American life. They want me to forget who I am.

He takes another drink. His hands are shaking, and not from the cold.

YOUNG YURI (CONT'D)

I'm afraid.

A long silence. The snow falls. VIKTOR takes the bottle, drinks, then looks out over the city.

YOUNG PETROV

Fear is just the mind rehearsing. It runs through every terrible thing that could happen so you're ready when it does. That's all it is. A rehearsal.

YOUNG YURI

What if the rehearsal never ends?

VIKTOR looks at him. No easy answer for that one. He hands the bottle back.

YOUNG PETROV

Then you drink more vodka.

Yuri laughs. A real laugh, young, unguarded, the kind of laugh that Tom Farrell and Thomas Reed will never make. VIKTOR laughs too.

They sit together in the cold. Two young men on the edge of the beginning of their lives. Below them, Leningrad hums in the dark. Neither of them knows what's coming. Neither of them knows this is the last honest moment they'll share for more than four decades.

YOUNG PETROV (CONT'D)

Promise me something.

YOUNG YURI

What?

YOUNG PETROV

Whatever they turn you into over there, whatever name they give you, remember this. Right now. The roof. The vodka. Remember that someone knew who you really were.

Yuri holds his gaze. Nods.

YOUNG YURI

I'll remember.

They clink the bottle against the concrete ledge. A toast to nothing. A toast to everything.

HOLD on Young Yuri's face, open, unmasked, afraid but alive. The last time this face will exist.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CAFÉ MILANO - GEORGETOWN - MORNING

Farrell's face. Seventy-five. In the cafe. The same eyes, fifty years later, behind fifty years of walls. The memory fading. The mask back in place.

He folds the newspaper. Leaves a twenty on the table. Walks out into the Georgetown morning.

10

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - LANGLEY - SAME MORNING

10

A windowless conference room. Fluorescent lights. The seal on the wall.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CLAIRE ASHFORD (50s, razor-sharp, the kind of woman who climbed through the Agency when it still didn't want her) stands before a screen showing a SURVEILLANCE PHOTO of Farrell walking in Georgetown.

Seated around the table: three SENIOR ANALYSTS and JAMES DALTON (40s, ex-military bearing, counterintelligence). Dalton looks hungry.

ASHFORD

Gentlemen, meet Thomas Reed. Defense consultant. Lives in Georgetown. Golfs at Congressional. Donates to the Smithsonian. Votes in every election.

She clicks. A second photo appears, a YOUNG Tom Farrell in Navy dress whites. 1987.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

His real name is Tom Farrell.
Former Navy lieutenant commander.
In 1987 he was at the center of a national security incident involving the murder of a civilian named Susan Atwell and a cover-up that reached the Secretary of Defense.

DALTON

The Brice scandal. I studied it at the Farm. Farrell was the investigator who,

ASHFORD

Who was also the suspect. Yes. What they didn't teach you at the Farm is the rest.

DALTON

Wait, the case study at the Farm ends with Pritchard's suicide and Brice's arrest. The file says Farrell was cleared of suspicion. Disappeared from the Navy. End of story. Are you telling me the file is incomplete?

ASHFORD

I'm telling you the file is a fairy tale.

She clicks again. A grainy KGB file photo. Cyrillic text. A young man's face, unmistakably Farrell.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

His real name, his birth name, is Yuri. Recruited as a child. Inserted into the United States as a teenager. Deep-cover illegal. KGB First Chief Directorate.

Silence in the room. Dalton leans forward. Studying the photo. The young face in the KGB file and the old man in the surveillance shot, the same eyes, fifty years apart.

DALTON

Farrell was the mole. He was the real Yuri.

(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)

The one Pritchard fabricated to cover Brice's murder, except he wasn't fabricated at all. He was real. And we let him walk.

ASHFORD

We didn't let him walk. We kept him on a leash.

DALTON

We've known about this for nearly forty years and he's still walking around Georgetown buying newspapers? We have a confirmed KGB illegal, First Chief Directorate, the most dangerous penetration program the Soviets ever ran, and the institutional decision was to let him live a comfortable retirement in a Georgetown townhouse?

ASHFORD

He was useful. After the Soviet Union collapsed, certain people decided a known Russian asset living freely in Washington was more valuable watched than imprisoned. A honeypot we controlled. For decades, anyone the Russians sent to contact him walked straight into our surveillance.

DALTON

And what about accountability? What about the oath he swore when he put on a Navy uniform? He penetrated the Pentagon. He had access to classified defense intelligence for years. People died because of operations he may have compromised. And we just, we just kept him as a pet?

Ashford lets him finish. She's heard this speech before. From younger officers who still believe the system works the way the textbooks say it does.

ASHFORD

Intelligence isn't about accountability, James. It's about leverage. Farrell gave us more value as a free man than he ever would have in a cell.

(MORE)

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

That was the calculation. You can disagree with it. You don't get to undo it.

DALTON

So what changed?

Ashford pulls up the same photo Farrell saw in the Post, VIKTOR.

ASHFORD

This changed. The Russian president is coming to Washington next week. Unofficial visit. Back-channel diplomacy. And we have intercepts confirming that he personally requested a private dinner with Thomas Reed.

She lets that land.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

The President of Russia is having dinner with a man we know to be a former KGB illegal. In our capital. And we don't know why.

DALTON

Maybe they're just old friends.

ASHFORD

(ice cold)

In this business, there's no such thing.

DALTON

With respect, ma'am, there is. These are two men who knew each other before either of them became what they became. Petrov was nobody in 1982. Farrell was nobody. If the relationship predates both of their careers, then the intelligence value of this dinner might be zero. It might just be two old men having wine.

ASHFORD

And you're willing to stake national security on that assessment?

DALTON

No. I'm saying we should consider it before we assume the worst. Because if we go in heavy and we're wrong, we burn a forty-year intelligence operation for nothing.

The room is quiet. The analysts look at Ashford. Dalton holds her gaze. He knows he's pushing it. He pushes anyway.

DALTON (CONT'D)

What's the play?

ASHFORD

We let the dinner happen. We listen. We watch. And we see which version of Tom Farrell shows up, the American or the Russian.

11 **INT. FARRELL'S GEORGETOWN TOWNHOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING** 1

Sunday dinner. The table is set for three, good china, candles, a roast that Farrell cooked himself. This is routine. This is the life Thomas Reed built.

MICHAEL REED (late 40s, broad-shouldered like his father, expensive suit loosened at the collar after a long week) sits across from Farrell. Between them: JACK REED (18, sharp, restless energy, has his grandfather's eyes without knowing what those eyes have seen).

Wine glasses. Laughter. A family.

MICHAEL

I'm just saying, Dad, you're seventy-five. The house is three floors. You've got stairs that creak louder than your knees.

FARRELL

My knees are fine.

MICHAEL

There's a place in Bethesda, fifteen minutes from us. Two bedrooms, no stairs, a garden. Jack and I could,

FARRELL

I'm not leaving this house, Michael.

Too sharp. Too final. Michael blinks. Jack looks up from his phone.

MICHAEL

Okay. Forget it. Just, forget it.

A beat. Farrell softens. Catches himself. He does this, shuts the door hard, then feels the draft.

FARRELL

I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that. I've lived in this neighborhood for forty years. I know the streets, the people. Ray at the newsstand. The waiter at Milano's who brings my coffee without asking. It's... it's mine. Do you understand?

MICHAEL

(gently)

I understand, Dad. I do.

He doesn't. Not really. But he loves his father enough to stop pushing. Jack watches the exchange, filing it away.

JACK

Grandpa, can I ask you something?

FARRELL

Always.

JACK

We're doing this thing in AP History. Cold War unit. I told Mr. Brennan my grandfather worked for the DOD in the eighties and he said I should interview you.

Farrell's fork stops mid-air. A fraction of a second. Then it continues to his mouth. Smooth. But Jack saw the hesitation.

FARRELL

What do you want to know?

JACK

What it was like. Being in the Pentagon during all that. The arms race, the paranoia. Did you ever, like, actually worry about nuclear war?

FARRELL

Every day.

JACK

Seriously?

FARRELL

You have to understand, it wasn't abstract. We had briefings. Scenarios. Response times measured in minutes. You'd sit in a room with maps of Soviet targets and American targets and realize that the distance between civilization and ash was one phone call, one button push.

Jack is riveted. Michael has heard versions of this before, but something in his father's voice tonight is different. Closer to the bone.

JACK

Did you ever meet any Russians?
Like, actual Russians?

The room shifts. Almost imperceptibly. Farrell takes a sip of wine.

FARRELL

A few. At diplomatic functions. They were people, Jack. Just people on the other side of a line someone else drew.

JACK

Did you ever think they were right?
About anything?

MICHAEL

(half-laughing)

Jack, your grandfather served his country for thirty years. I don't think he was rooting for the Soviets.

Farrell smiles. But it's the wrong smile. The one that doesn't reach his eyes.

FARRELL

Your father's right. I served my country.

The sentence hangs in the air. Perfectly true. Perfectly misleading. The question is which country.

Farrell's regular phone BUZZES on the sideboard. He glances at it. His expression doesn't change, but his hand moves to his pocket, where the burner phone sits.

MICHAEL

You need to get that?

FARRELL

It can wait.

JACK

One more question. For the paper.

FARRELL

Go ahead.

JACK

If you could go back. To the beginning of your career, knowing everything you know now, would you do it all the same way?

Silence. The candles flicker. Farrell looks at his son. His grandson. This table. This house. This life that grew out of a lie like a tree growing out of poisoned soil.

FARRELL

No.

Michael and Jack both look at him, surprised by the weight of it.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

But I'd want to end up here. At this table. With you two.

Michael reaches over and squeezes his father's arm. Jack smiles. The moment is real. The love is real. Everything underneath it is not.

12

EXT. FARRELL'S GEORGETOWN TOWNHOUSE - FRONT STEPS - LATER 12

Michael heads to his car. Jack hangs back on the front steps with Farrell. The street is quiet. Old trees, old money, old secrets.

JACK

Grandpa?

FARRELL

Yeah?

JACK

Why do you have two phones?

Farrell goes still. The streetlight catches his face. For a half-second, something ancient crosses his expression, not anger, not fear. Recognition. The feeling of a perimeter being breached.

FARRELL

One's personal. One's for consulting clients. Some of them are... particular about security.

JACK

You're retired.

FARRELL

(a beat too long)
Old habits.

Jack studies him. Not suspicious, not yet. But curious. He hugs his grandfather. Tight. Real.

JACK

Love you, Grandpa.

FARRELL

Love you too, kid.

Jack jogs to Michael's car. They pull away. Farrell watches the taillights disappear down P Street.

He stands on the steps. Alone. The mask settles back into place.

He pulls out the burner phone. Checks the text from Petrov. Reads it again: "Old friend. I will be in your city next week. Dinner? Like the old days. - V"

Sees his reply: "-" the code meaning affirmative. No further replies.

He looks back at the empty street where his son's car was. Then down at the phone. Two worlds. One man. Not enough room for both.

FARRELL (V.O.)

The hardest part was never the lying. It was how good I got at it. How real it became. Michael's first steps. Jack's first word. Birthdays. Christmases. All of it built on a foundation that would bury them if it ever cracked.

He goes inside. Closes the door. Locks it. Then the deadbolt. Then the chain. Three locks for a man with nothing to hide.

13 **INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - GEORGETOWN RESTAURANT - NIGHT** 13

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

An intimate room. Dark wood, candlelight, oil paintings. Two place settings. A bottle of Georgian wine, already open, already half gone.

FARRELL and VIKTOR PETROV sit across from each other. Two old men. Two lifetimes of secrets between them.

VIKTOR is smaller than he looks on television. But his presence fills the room. He eats slowly, deliberately, the way powerful men do when they're in no hurry.

Russian SECURITY stands outside the door. They swept the room twice. What they didn't find: the CIA listening device embedded in the crown molding, installed three days ago.

PETROV

(in Russian, subtitled)
You look old, Yuri.

FARRELL

(in Russian)
I am old. I feel old. So are you.

PETROV

Yes, but I have doctors. Entire teams of them. You have... what? American healthcare?

They both laugh. It's genuine. These two men actually like each other.

FARRELL

Why are you here, Viktor? The real reason.

VIKTOR swirls his wine. Considers.

PETROV

Do you remember Leningrad? The academy? Winter of '82? We sat on the roof of that horrible dormitory and drank stolen vodka and you told me you were afraid.

FARRELL

I was twenty-three. I was about to be sent to a country I'd never seen to become a person who didn't exist. Of course I was afraid.

PETROV

I told you: fear is just the mind rehearsing. You said: what if the rehearsal never ends?

Farrell is quiet. He remembers.

PETROV (CONT'D)

The rehearsal never ended for you, did it, YURI? Forty years in a mask. Do you even remember your own face?

FARRELL

(switching to English)
My name is Tom.

A long beat. VIKTOR studies him. Then nods slowly.

PETROV

(in English now,
accented)
Yes. I suppose it is now.

He reaches into his jacket. Farrell tenses, just slightly, barely perceptible, but it's there. Forty years of training.

VIKTOR pulls out a small LEATHER JOURNAL, weathered, old. He slides it across the table.

PETROV (CONT'D)

This belonged to General Kozlov. Your original handler. He died last month. His daughter found this in his effects. Your name is in it. Your real name. Your mission. Everything.

Farrell doesn't touch it.

PETROV (CONT'D)

There are people in Moscow who would very much like this journal to disappear. And there are people in Moscow who would very much like YOU to disappear along with it.

FARRELL

Which people?

PETROV

The kind who don't ask permission.
Not even from me.

The weight of this hangs in the air. The President of Russia just told a former spy that he can't protect him.

FARRELL

Then why come here? Why warn me?

PETROV

(quiet, honest)
Because on that rooftop in Leningrad, you were the only person who ever told me the truth. And I have not forgotten.

He stands. Buttons his jacket. The dinner is over.

PETROV (CONT'D)

Be careful, Tom. They are already here.

He leaves. The door closes.

Farrell sits alone in the candlelight, staring at the journal he still hasn't touched.

He picks up his wine glass. Raises it to his lips,

Stops.

Looks at it.

Looks at the bottle. The Georgian wine. VIKTOR's security swept the room, but who chose the wine?

He sets the glass down. Very slowly.

His hand is trembling. Just slightly.

He looks at the journal. Then picks it up. Slips it inside his overcoat as he stands.

13A

INT. GEORGETOWN TOWNHOUSE - STUDY - LATER

13A

Farrell moves through the darkened house without turning on the lights. His overcoat is still on. The leather journal is in his hand.

He knows. He's known since the wine glass. The tremor in his left hand is worse now, a low electrical hum running up the arm. Novichok, or close to it. He has minutes. Maybe less.

He sweeps a stack of papers off his desk. Sets the journal down. Clicks on a small banker's lamp, the only light in the room.

From a drawer: his phone. Not the burner. His everyday phone. He opens the camera.

He opens the journal. Cyrillic script. Kozlov's tight, precise hand. Page after page of names, covers, dates -- a forty-year ledger of ghosts.

He photographs the first page. His hand shakes. He steadies it with the other, braces his wrist against the desk. Snap. Turn. Snap. Turn.

Sweat beads on his forehead. His vision shimmers at the edges. He keeps going.

Fourteen names spread across fifty pages. Ciphared entries. Operational notes in the margins. He shoots all of it.

When he reaches the last page, he sits down hard in the desk chair. Breathes. Opens his messages.

One name. MICHAEL. He attaches the photo file. No message. Just the file. Send.

He stares at the confirmation checkmark. Not a plan. An instinct. The only hand he has left to play, and only his son holds it.

He stands. The room tilts. He catches himself on the desk.

He crosses to the bookcase. Reaches behind a row of Pushkin. A soft click. A false panel slides open. He places the journal inside and closes it.

His left leg buckles. He catches the edge of the shelf.

He needs to get to the bathroom. He needs to make a call.

14

INT. GEORGETOWN TOWNHOUSE - BATHROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT 14

Farrell half-falls through the doorway, his everyday phone clutched in one hand. He drops it on the counter, catches the sink. Holds. The porcelain is the only thing keeping him upright.

His reflection stares back at him. Grey. Sweat-slick. The left hand on the porcelain won't stop shaking now.

He pulls the burner from his coat pocket. Scrolls to a number with no name, just a string of digits he's had memorized for decades. A number he's never called. An emergency line from another life.

His vision blurs. He steadies himself against the wall.

He dials.

Three rings. A WOMAN'S VOICE answers. Young. Alert. Speaking Russian.

VOICE (O.S.)

Operator 31.

FARRELL

(in Russian, struggling)

Orion. Seven. Seven. Blue. I've been poisoned.

A pause on the line. Then:

VOICE (O.S.)

We know.

The line goes dead.

Farrell stares at the phone. We know. Not "we'll help." Not "hold on." We know.

They did this.

His legs give out. He drops to the tile floor. The burner phone skids across the bathroom.

He reaches for his regular phone on the counter. Knocks it down. Catches it. His fingers aren't working right. He manages to dial 911.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)

911, what's your emergency?

FARRELL

(barely audible)

Thomas Reed... 3214 P Street,
Georgetown... Poisoned...

The phone slips from his hand.

We HOLD on Farrell's face. On the bathroom tile. Eyes open but unfocused. The ceiling light burns above him like a white sun.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)

Sending EMS now sir.

FARRELL (V.O.)

(fading)

Forty years... For the love of country... And in the end... they kill you for who you really are.

SMASH TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: NO WAY BACK

15 **EXT. GEORGETOWN TOWNHOUSE - FRONT - MOMENTS LATER** 15

ROLL INTRO CREDITS: STARRING KEVIN COSTNER as FARRELL

Ambulance arrives FARRELL loaded on stretcher, hooked up to IV.

Rushed to hospital.

Stomach pumped.

Being worked on in emergency department.

CONTINUE INTRO CREDITS: (FRANK GRILLO as Dalton or Jon Bernthal as Dalton), SARAH SNOOK as Ashford, Brian Cox as Petrov, ACTORS, PRODUCERS, WRITER, DIRECTOR

CUT TO:

16 **INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - ICU - DAY** 16

SUPER: 48 HOURS LATER

Farrell lies in a hospital bed. Tubes. Monitors. The rhythmic beep of machines keeping score. He's alive, but he looks like hell, grey skin, sunken eyes, an IV drip pumping something dark into his veins.

TWO FBI AGENTS stand outside the glass partition. Hazmat protocols are in effect, yellow tape, restricted access, nurses in protective gear.

Farrell's eyes open. He takes in the room with the same scanning precision as his morning walks. Exits. Personnel. Threats.

CLAIRE ASHFORD sits in a chair beside the bed. She's been waiting.

ASHFORD

Good morning, Mr. Reed. Or should I say... Mr. Farrell or... er... Yuri?

Farrell looks at her. Decades of cover, blown in one sentence. But his face betrays nothing.

FARRELL

(hoarse)

What was it? The wine?

ASHFORD stands up and shows him her CIA credentials.

ASHFORD

A nerve agent. Modified diluted Novichok variant with a delay agent. Applied to your wine glass before dinner. The restaurant sommelier was found dead in his apartment this morning. Apparent suicide. Obviously not.

FARRELL

How am I alive?

ASHFORD

You only had one glass. And you're apparently too stubborn to die. The doctors say the dosage should have killed a man half your age.

Farrell almost smiles. Almost.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

Here's your situation. The FBI thinks you're a retired defense consultant who was targeted for poisoning. They're chasing the Russian angle, diplomatic crisis, CNN, the works. They don't know who you really are.

FARRELL

But you do.

ASHFORD

We've known for nearly forty years. We watched you. We used you. You were our pet mole, a known quantity we could monitor.

(MORE)

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

Every Russian agent who ever came to your door walked straight into our arms. You were the gift that kept on giving.

Farrell absorbs this. Forty years of looking over his shoulder, and they'd been there the whole time.

FARRELL

What do you want?

ASHFORD

The journal. PETROV gave you something at dinner. We couldn't see what it was, our camera angle was wrong. But our lip readers caught the word 'Kozlov.' General Kozlov ran the deepest penetration program the Soviets ever built. If his journal lists other illegals, sleepers who are still active, still embedded.

FARRELL

Then there are others like me. Still out there.

ASHFORD

And the people who poisoned you will do anything to keep that list buried. They will come for you and the others. You're a loose end, Tom. The only question is who cuts it first, Moscow or us.

She stands. Straightens her jacket.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

Give us the journal. Help us find the others. And maybe, maybe, I can keep the Attorney General from charging you with espionage.

FARRELL

And if I don't?

ASHFORD

Then you spend whatever's left of your life in a supermax cell. And the people on that list die in the dark, one by one, and no one will ever know they existed.

She walks to the door. Pauses.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

You have until you're discharged.
Seventy-two hours. Your phone has
my number under Ashford.

She leaves.

Farrell lies in the hospital bed. Machines beeping. The weight of two lifetimes pressing down on him.

He turns his head and looks out the window. The Washington Monument rises in the distance, white against a grey sky.

FARRELL (V.O.)

I spent my whole life looking for a way out. There was never one. And now... there's no way back either.

HOLD on his face. The face of a man who has run out of masks.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF OPENING SEQUENCE.

ACT TWO

17 **INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - ICU - NIGHT** 17

SUPER: 36 HOURS LATER

Farrell lies in bed. Eyes closed. Monitors beeping. The two FBI AGENTS stand outside the glass partition, bored, scrolling their phones. The hazmat protocols have been downgraded, no more yellow tape, but the restricted access remains.

A NURSE enters to check vitals. Farrell's eyes stay closed. She adjusts the IV drip, checks the monitors, makes notes. Leaves.

The moment the door clicks shut, Farrell's eyes open. Sharp. Clear. He's been awake for hours.

He reaches under his pillow. Pulls out his regular phone, palmed from the charging station during a shift change. On the screen: three missed calls from Michael. A text:

INSERT, PHONE: "Dad, two men came to the house asking about you. Said they were from your old consulting firm. Something feels off. Call me."

Farrell's face changes. The old man in the hospital bed vanishes.

Something else surfaces, something that's been dormant for decades. The thing Petrov saw on the obstacle course in 1982. Iron will.

He scrolls. A second text from Michael, forty minutes later:

INSERT, PHONE: "Dad they came back. Jack is here. I'm calling the police."

No more texts. That was two hours ago.

Farrell sits up. Rips the IV from his arm. Blood beads on his skin. He ignores it. Swings his legs off the bed. His body protests, the poison is still in his system, his muscles are weak, his hands tremor. He doesn't care.

FARRELL

(to himself, in Russian)

Get up.

He stands. Grabs the bed rail. Steadies himself. Looks through the glass at the two FBI agents. One is watching a basketball game on his phone. The other is getting coffee from a machine down the hall.

Farrell opens the supply cabinet by the bed. Inside: gauze, syringes, medication. He finds what he's looking for, a vial of epinephrine. Emergency cardiac stimulant. He draws 0.3 milligrams into a syringe with the practiced hand of a man who has done this before. He injects it into his thigh.

The effect is immediate. His heart rate spikes. The tremor in his hands stops. His eyes go wide, then focused. He has maybe two hours before the crash.

Enough.

18

INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - 18
CONTINUOUS

Farrell steps out of the room in a stolen orderly's scrubs, head down, pushing an empty wheelchair. His hospital bracelet is gone, transferred to the pillow under the blanket, shaped to look like a sleeping body.

The FBI agent with the coffee walks right past him. Doesn't look twice. Forty years of being invisible, the best tradecraft isn't technique, it's becoming someone people don't see.

Farrell reaches the service elevator. Presses the button. Waits. His hand is steady now. The epinephrine is singing through him like a second heartbeat.

The elevator opens. He steps in. The doors close on Tom Farrell, retired defense consultant.

When they open again in the basement, something older walks out: Yuri.

19

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - LANGLEY - OPS CENTER - SAME NIGHT 19

Ashford's phone rings. She answers. Listens. Her expression doesn't change but her hand tightens on the phone.

She hangs up. Turns to DALTON, who is reviewing surveillance reports at a workstation.

ASHFORD

Farrell's gone. Walked out of the ICU twenty minutes ago. The FBI didn't even notice until the night nurse checked his vitals and found a pillow under the blanket.

DALTON

He walked out? He was poisoned three days ago. He could barely lift his head.

ASHFORD

He was a KGB-trained illegal for thirty years. Apparently the training doesn't expire. Find him.

DALTON

Where would he go? Georgetown? The townhouse?

ASHFORD

If he's smart, yes. If he's desperate, somewhere else entirely. Pull CCTV from the hospital. Traffic cameras on 23rd Street and Washington Circle. Metro station feeds. He's seventy-five and he looks like death. He can't have gotten far.

DALTON

I'll take a team.

ASHFORD

No team. You go. Alone. This stays contained. No FBI, no Metro police, no flashing lights.

(MORE)

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

A seventy-five-year-old Russian spy loose in Washington is not a story I want on CNN tomorrow morning. You find him, you bring him to me, alive. Quietly.

Dalton grabs his jacket. Holsters his weapon. He's out the door in ten seconds.

20 **EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - LOADING DOCK - 20
SAME NIGHT**

Farrell emerges from the basement into cold night air. A loading dock behind the hospital, dumpsters, delivery trucks, a security camera he already spotted from the basement window. He walks directly under it, head tilted down, and keeps the wheelchair between himself and the lens. A ghost passing through the frame.

He ditches the wheelchair behind a linen truck. Checks the street. 23rd and I. Georgetown is fifteen blocks south. He starts walking.

21 **INT./EXT. DALTON'S CAR - MOVING - WASHINGTON D.C. - SAME 21
NIGHT**

Dalton races down the GW Parkway, phone mounted on the dash. He's running hospital CCTV on his Agency tablet, scrubbing through footage, looking for the moment Farrell disappeared.

He pulls over to give his full attention to the video.

He finds it. Basement camera, 11:23 PM. A man in orderly scrubs pushing a wheelchair. The face is turned away. Professional.

DALTON

(to himself)

Basement. He went out through the loading dock.

He pulls up the exterior camera feeds. Loading dock, 11:24 PM. A figure walks past the camera behind a wheelchair. Head angled perfectly to avoid the lens. In forty years of surveillance, the CIA never got a clean photo of Farrell doing anything suspicious. Now Dalton understands why.

He cross-references with D.C. traffic cameras. Nothing on 23rd. Nothing on Washington Circle. Then, a single frame on a red-light camera at 23rd and M. A man in scrubs crossing the street. Heading south. Toward Georgetown.

DALTON (CONT'D)
Georgetown. He's going home.

He floors it.

22 **EXT. GEORGETOWN STREETS - NIGHT**

22

Farrell moves through the same streets he walks every morning. But at night, alone, in stolen scrubs, the poison in his system, everything is different. The old trees throw shadows that move in the wind. Parked cars that could hold anyone. Every window dark and watching.

He's shaking. The epinephrine bought him clarity but the poison is still working, and his body knows it. His left leg drags slightly. His breathing is ragged. But he keeps moving.

He passes the newsstand where he buys the Post every morning. Closed. The metal shutters down. No Ray to say good morning.

He turns onto P Street. His townhouse is four blocks ahead. He just needs to get inside. The journal is in his study, hidden behind a false panel in the bookcase, a feature he built himself when he moved in, forty years ago.

A car turns onto P Street behind him. Headlights.

Farrell doesn't look back. Doesn't change pace. But his hand slips into his pocket and finds his phone. He angles the screen behind his hip, uses the reflection to check the car.

Dark sedan. Government plates. Moving slowly.

23 **INT./EXT. DALTON'S CAR - P STREET - CONTINUOUS**

23

Dalton cruises P Street. Scanning the sidewalks. The townhouse is dark, no lights, no sign of entry. He passes a man walking in scrubs. Old. Hunched. It's him.

Dalton looks at the man in his mirror. The walk is wrong. Too deliberate. A man that age, at this hour, would be shuffling. This man is placing each step like it costs him something but he's paying anyway.

He hits the brakes.

24 **EXT. P STREET - GEORGETOWN - CONTINUOUS**

24

Farrell hears the brakes. Doesn't run. Running is an admission. He turns left between two brownstones into an alley he's used a thousand times as a shortcut.

An alley Thomas Reed knows because he walks the neighborhood. An alley Yuri mapped forty years ago as an egress route.

Dalton jumps out of the car.

DALTON

Mr. Reed! Tom Farrell! Stop!

Farrell picks up the pace. The alley opens onto 31st Street. He cuts right, heading downhill toward M Street and the canal. Behind him, Dalton's footsteps. Fast. Young. Gaining.

Farrell ducks behind a row of townhouses. Through a garden gate he jimmed the lock on twenty years ago and never fixed. Into a private garden, brick patio, dormant flower beds, a wrought-iron fence along the back. He vaults it. His knees scream. His vision blurs. He lands hard on the other side and keeps moving.

Dalton reaches the garden gate. Locked. He scales it in two seconds. Drops into the garden. Sees the iron fence, the scuff marks in the dirt. He's tracking in real time, and Farrell is leaving a trail a forty-year-old in good shape can follow.

DALTON (CONT'D)

(into his phone)

He's on foot heading south from P Street toward M. Moving through private properties. He knows the neighborhood like his own house.

ASHFORD (O.S.)

He's lived there for forty years. It is his house. Stay on him.

25

EXT. M STREET - GEORGETOWN - CONTINUOUS

25

M Street. Even at midnight, there's foot traffic, bar crowds, couples walking, a group of Georgetown students spilling out of a pub. Farrell walks straight into them. Disappears into the crowd. The scrubs help now, he looks like a tired orderly, not a fugitive.

Dalton reaches M Street thirty seconds later. Scans the sidewalks. Both directions. The crowd swallows everything. He turns left, then right. Checks shop windows, doorways, the entrance to the C&O Canal towpath.

Nothing. Farrell is gone.

DALTON

(into phone)

I lost him. He went into the crowd on M Street and vanished. He's, he's good. He's really good.

ASHFORD (O.S.)

He was trained by the best program the Soviets ever built. What did you expect?

DALTON

I expected a seventy-five-year-old man who was poisoned three days ago to be slower than this.

ASHFORD (O.S.)

Then you underestimated him. Don't do it again. Check his townhouse. Check the son's house in Bethesda. Check every contact we have on file then report back to me.

Dalton turns back toward his car. Stops. Something is nagging him. He turns and looks down the canal towpath. Dark. Empty. The water black and still.

He pulls out his phone. Opens the Farrell file. Michael Reed. Bethesda address. He remembers the briefing, the family Farrell built inside the legend.

If Farrell's running, he's not running away. He's running toward something.

Dalton stands on the empty sidewalk. Breathing hard. Thinking. He replays the chase in his head, the alley, the garden gate, the iron fence. Every move was precise. No hesitation. A seventy-five-year-old man running an evasion route through private property like he'd rehearsed it a thousand times.

Because he had. For forty years, Thomas Reed walked these streets and mapped every exit, every shortcut, every shadow. Not because he needed them. Because he couldn't stop. The training never turns off. It just goes quiet.

DALTON

(to himself)

Think. Think. Where does he go?

He pulls up the Farrell file on his phone. Scrolls through it. Address. Known associates. Daily routine. Family.

Family. Michael Reed, Bethesda. Jack Reed, eighteen, lives with Michael.

Dalton remembers the briefing. Ashford said Farrell had been useful, a honeypot, a surveillance magnet. But she never mentioned the family. Not once. As if the son and grandson were irrelevant. As if a man could live forty years in a country and not build something real inside the legend.

But Dalton studied the case. He read between the lines. A man who buys newspapers at the same newsstand every morning, who eats at the same cafe, who sits with his back to the wall, that's not a spy maintaining cover. That's a man who built a life. A man with something to lose.

DALTON (CONT'D)

(into phone)

He's not going to the townhouse.
He's going to Bethesda. His family.

ASHFORD (O.S.)

Why?

DALTON

Because he's not running. He ripped out an IV, dosed himself with God knows what, walked past two FBI agents, and evaded me through six blocks of Georgetown at midnight. That's not a man running away. That's a man running toward something. Something he's willing to die for. His son is in Bethesda. His grandson is in Bethesda. And he just got a text he couldn't answer.

ASHFORD (O.S.)

How do you know about a text?

DALTON

Because I would have done the same thing. First thing you do when you wake up in a hospital is check your phone. He saw something on that phone that scared him more than dying. The only thing that scares a parent more than dying is their kid in danger.

Silence on the line.

ASHFORD (O.S.)

Get to Bethesda. Now.

DALTON

Already moving.

He sprints to his car.

26

EXT. C&O CANAL TOWPATH - GEORGETOWN - CONTINUOUS

26

Farrell moves along the towpath below street level. Invisible from M Street. The canal water reflects nothing. He's been using this route for decades, a path that doesn't appear on traffic cameras, that has no streetlights, that runs parallel to everything but is seen by no one.

He stops. Leans against the stone wall. His body is failing. The epinephrine is fighting the poison and both are losing to simple physics: he is seventy-five years old and he has been running.

He checks his phone. Michael's texts. Still unanswered. Still terrifying.

The towpath connects to the Key Bridge approach. From there, Canal Road to the Clara Barton Parkway. Bethesda in twenty minutes if he can get a car.

He pushes off the wall. Keeps moving. One foot in front of the other. The way he's been doing it since Leningrad.

27

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - BETHESDA - SAME NIGHT

27

A comfortable suburban home. Family photos on the walls. Jack's lacrosse gear by the door. The life Thomas Reed's legend made possible.

Michael stands at the kitchen island, phone in hand, trying Farrell's number again. It rings and rings. Jack sits at the counter, laptop open, pretending to do homework. His leg bounces. He's scared but won't say it.

JACK

Did the police come?

MICHAEL

They took a report. Said they'd send a patrol car by later tonight.

JACK

That's it? Two guys show up at our door twice in one day asking about Grandpa and they're going to send a patrol car?

MICHAEL

What do you want me to do, Jack?

JACK

I want you to tell me why two guys with accents are looking for Grandpa the same week he ends up in the hospital with a mystery illness nobody will explain to us.

Michael doesn't have an answer. Because the truth is, he's been thinking the same thing.

MICHAEL

Your grandfather is a retired defense consultant. He had clients all over the world. Some of those relationships are complicated. That's all this is.

JACK

Dad. The hospital wouldn't let us in the room. They had FBI agents outside his door. He was in a hazmat wing. That's not complicated clients.

Michael puts his phone down. He looks at his son. Jack has his grandfather's eyes, and right now, they're doing the same thing Farrell's do: cataloging, analyzing, refusing to look away.

MICHAEL

(quiet)

I don't know, Jack. I don't know what's happening. But we're going to be fine.

The DOORBELL rings.

They both freeze. Michael looks at the clock. 11:47 PM.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Stay here.

Michael walks to the front door. Checks the peephole. A man in a dark coat. Polite smile. SERGEI VOLKOV (50s, compact, still, the kind of man who could kill you with his hands but would prefer not to make a mess).

SERGEI

(through the door, slight accent)

Mr. Reed?

(MORE)

SERGEI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry to bother you so late. My name is Peter Aronov. I'm an old friend of your father's. From his Navy days. I heard about his hospitalization and I'm very concerned.

Michael hesitates. His hand on the deadbolt.

MICHAEL

It's almost midnight.

SERGEI

I apologize. I just landed from overseas. Your father and I, we go back a long way. He would want me to check on his family.

From the kitchen, Jack watches. Something about the man's voice. The cadence. He files it away without knowing what he is filing.

MICHAEL

How did you get this address?

SERGEI

Your father gave it to me. Years ago. For emergencies.

Michael's hand tightens on the deadbolt. His father has never mentioned a Peter Aronov. Not once. In forty-eight years.

MICHAEL

I appreciate you coming by. But I'm going to have to ask you to leave. You can reach my father at the hospital during visiting hours.

A beat. Through the peephole, Michael sees the polite smile remain perfectly in place. But something behind the eyes shifts. Like a machine recalculating.

SERGEI

Mr. Reed, your father has something that belongs to my organization. A journal. Old, leather-bound. He may have brought it here for safekeeping. If I could just.

MICHAEL

I don't know anything about a journal. Good night.

SERGEI

(the mask slipping)
Mr. Reed. I strongly suggest you
open this door.

Michael steps back. He knows. In his gut, he knows this is wrong. He reaches for his phone to call 911.

The front door EXPLODES inward. The deadbolt tears from the frame. A second man, GREGOR (40s, ex-Spetsnaz, built like a wrecking ball), has put his shoulder through it.

Michael staggers back. Sergei steps inside, calm, adjusting his coat. KIRILL (30s, wiry, nervous energy) slips in behind them and immediately begins scanning the house.

GREGOR

(in Russian, to Sergei)
House is clear. Just the two of
them.

SERGEI

I did ask nicely.

KIRILL

(in Russian, moving
toward the stairs)
I'll start upstairs. Study,
bedrooms, closets.

SERGEI

(in Russian)
Quickly. And Kirill, if you find a
leather journal, you bring it to
me. You don't open it. You don't
read it. Understood?

KIRILL

(in Russian)
Understood.

Kirill disappears upstairs. Gregor shoves Michael onto the couch. Jack tries to run, Gregor catches him by the back of the shirt without even looking, sets him down next to his father like he's placing a chess piece.

GREGOR

(in English, thick
accent, to Jack)
Sit. Don't move. Don't be stupid.

28

EXT. KEY BRIDGE APPROACH - GEORGETOWN - CONTINUOUS

28

Farrell climbs up from the towpath to the street level near Key Bridge. An apartment complex parking garage sits across the road. Open entrance. No gate arm. No attendant at this hour.

He walks in. Finds a Honda Civic on the second level. Old model, easy ignition. He hot-wires it in thirty seconds, hands moving with practiced efficiency. A skill they taught at the academy in Leningrad. A skill Thomas Reed never needed.

He pulls out of the garage, turns onto Canal Road heading north. Bethesda, twenty minutes this time of night. He drives fast but controlled. No panic. Panic gets people killed.

He tries Michael's phone. No answer. Tries Jack. No answer.

His jaw tightens. He drives faster.

29

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - BETHESDA - CONTINUOUS

29

Sergei and Gregor have Michael and Jack in the living room. Michael is on the couch, blood on his lip from where Gregor hit him. Jack is next to him, terrified but holding it together. His phone is on the floor, Gregor stomped on it.

KIRILL searches the house. Opening drawers, pulling books from shelves, systematic.

SERGEI

Let me explain your situation, Mr. Reed. Your father has a journal. Leather-bound. Old. He received it recently from a mutual acquaintance. I need that journal. You are going to help me find it.

MICHAEL

I told you, I don't know about any journal. My father is in the hospital. He was poisoned. Do you know something about that?

SERGEI

Your father's medical situation is not my concern. The journal is.

JACK

We don't have it. We don't even know what you're talking about. Please. Just leave us alone.

Sergei looks at Jack. Studies him. Then turns to Michael.

SERGEI

How old is your son?

MICHAEL

Don't look at him. Don't talk to him. Don't think about him. You talk to me.

SERGEI

Your father's real name is not Thomas Reed. Your father is not American. And the men who sent me here will not stop at asking questions. Do you understand me?

Michael stares at him. The words don't compute. Jack looks at his father.

JACK

Dad? What is he talking about?

MICHAEL

He's lying. He's trying to scare us. Your grandfather is Thomas Reed. He served his country for thirty years. This man is a criminal and the police are on their way.

SERGEI

(amused)

The police. Yes. They will arrive in twelve minutes. I only need five.

He nods to Gregor. Gregor grabs Jack by the collar and drags him off the couch. Michael lunges, Gregor puts him on the floor with one hand, knee on his back.

MICHAEL

(shouting)

Get your hands off my son! GET OFF HIM!

SERGEI

Call your father. Tell him we have his grandson. Tell him we want the journal. Tell him he has till morning first light. The boy loses a finger for every ten minutes after that. And once all his fingers are gone...

He holds out a phone to Michael.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

Be convincing.

SERGEI calls KIRILL and they leave the house with JACK.

30

INT./EXT. STOLEN HONDA - MOVING - BETHESDA - SAME NIGHT

30

Farrell's phone rings. Unknown number. He answers.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

(shaking)

Dad. They took Jack. Three men, they broke in, they wanted a journal, they took him and they left me here. Dad, they said your name isn't Thomas Reed. They said you're not American. Tell me they were lying.

Farrell's knuckles go white on the steering wheel. Then his breathing slows. His voice drops into a register Michael has never heard before, flat, calm, operational.

FARRELL

Michael. Listen to me. How long ago did they leave?

MICHAEL (O.S.)

I don't, two minutes. Three. I called you the second the door closed.

FARRELL

How many vehicles? Which direction?

MICHAEL (O.S.)

One car. Dark SUV. They went north, toward the Pike, I think. Dad, what they said about you.

FARRELL

Later. Is Jack wearing the watch I gave him? The one I gave him for his eighteenth.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

(thrown)

What? Yes. He never takes it off. Why does that matter?

FARRELL

Because there is a transponder inside the case. I put it there the day I gave it to him. I can find him.

Silence on the other end. A long one. The sound of another brick coming out of the wall of Thomas Reed.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

(quiet)

You put a tracker on my son.

FARRELL

I'm sorry. I'm two minutes out. Lock the back door. Don't touch anything. Don't call the police. I am coming.

He hangs up. The Honda tears through the empty Bethesda streets.

31

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - BETHESDA - MINUTES LATER

31

The Honda skids up to the curb. Farrell is out before it stops rocking. He moves through the back garden, tries the kitchen door. Unlocked. Inside.

The house looks like a trap that has already sprung. Overturned coffee table. Broken lamp. Jack's phone in pieces on the rug. Blood on the arm of the couch, not much, but enough.

Michael is standing in the middle of it. Cut lip. Shirt torn at the collar. He is not crying. He is the particular kind of empty that comes after your understanding of the world has been rearranged in three minutes.

He sees his father and for a half-second the old reflex takes over, Dad, thank God. Then the half-second ends.

MICHAEL

They knew you. They called you by a different name.

FARRELL

I know. Later. Right now we go get your son.

Farrell walks past him to the hallway closet. Moves a stack of storage bins. Pulls up a section of floorboard Michael has never looked at twice in twenty years. Inside: a metal go-bag. Dark canvas. Unopened in a decade.

Michael watches him do it. Another brick.

MICHAEL

(numb)

That's been in my house. How long
has that been in my house?

FARRELL

Since the week you moved in.

He opens the bag on the kitchen island. A small ruggedized laptop. A second burner phone. A sealed envelope with cash. A full tang combat knife in Kydex Sheath, black handle, worn grip. A spare magazine for a Makarov he does not yet have.

He powers the laptop. Enters a code he hasn't used since Kozlov was alive. A map of the D.C. metro blooms on the screen. One blue dot pulses steadily. Moving north-west out of Bethesda at roughly fifty miles an hour.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

(quiet)

There you are.

He picks up the knife. Snaps it out of the kydex. Pushes it back in. Out. In. Out. In. A motion from fifty years ago, fifty-five, he doesn't remember learning it. Muscle memory has a longer lease than names.

He attaches the knife onto his belt. Zips the bag. Looks up at his son.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

Get in the car.

MICHAEL

I don't know who you are right now.

FARRELL

I am the man who is going to bring
Jack home. Get in the car.

Michael gets in the car.

The Honda tears up Wisconsin Avenue. Laptop wedged against the center console, Michael staring at the blue dot. The dot moves, then slows, then stops. A rectangle on the map resolves into a cluster of low buildings off River Road. An industrial service yard. The kind of place you pick because it is nothing.

MICHAEL

They stopped. They stopped, Dad.

FARRELL

Good. Stopped means they're waiting for someone. Waiting for me.

They drive a mile in silence. Then Michael asks the question he has been holding since the kitchen.

MICHAEL

Was Mom real?

Farrell's jaw works. He keeps both hands on the wheel and both eyes on the road and he does not answer, because the answer, the full answer, belongs to a conversation they are not going to have while his grandson is sitting in a chair somewhere being watched by a man with a gun.

FARRELL

She loved you. Everything she did, every day of her life, she loved you. That part is real. Everything else, later.

Michael looks out the window. The Honda climbs the on-ramp, accelerating.

33

EXT. INDUSTRIAL SERVICE YARD - OUTSKIRTS OF ROCKVILLE - NIGHT

A dead-end road off River Road. A chain-link fence, half-collapsed. Three long, low buildings that used to be a commercial HVAC yard, now abandoned, marked for demolition. A single dark SUV parked between two of the buildings. No other cars. No streetlights. The only light comes from one window of the middle building, a cold blue generator glow.

Farrell kills the Honda's headlights a quarter-mile out. Coasts to the shoulder. Cuts the engine behind a rusted dumpster, fifty yards from the fence.

He sits for a second in the dark car. Breathing. Running the approach. Three buildings. Generator running, they cut into the grid for light. One entry from the yard side, one fire door at the rear of the middle building, loading bay at the far end. Three entry points. Three men. Math he has done before.

He pops the knife out of the Kydex. Pops it back in. Out. In. Out. In. Out. In. Thinking as he does so. A stare toward the target making the plan. He leaves the spare magazine in the bag, he doesn't have a gun yet. He will.

FARRELL

You stay in the car.

MICHAEL

Dad.

FARRELL

You stay in the car. If I am not back in ten minutes, you drive. You take this phone and you call the number in the contacts. One contact. His name is Dalton. He will come for you. You do not come looking for me. Do you understand?

MICHAEL

That's my son in there.

FARRELL

I know. He's mine too.

Farrell looks at his son. For a moment, a last moment, he is just a grandfather driving a car in the middle of the night. Then something moves across his face and the grandfather is not there anymore. Fifty years of training rising up under the skin, a muscle he hasn't used but never lost.

The eyes change. The breathing changes. The hands stop shaking.

Yuri gets out of the car.

He crosses the cracked asphalt in a crouch. No sound. Seventy-five years old, fresh off a Novichok poisoning, running on epinephrine and forty years of training. His body hurts in places he forgot existed. He keeps moving.

34

INT. WAREHOUSE - MIDDLE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

34

A stripped-out HVAC workshop. Concrete floor. A folding table under a portable work light. A few steel lockers, an overturned drum, coils of dead cable. The generator hum comes from behind a door at the back.

Jack is zip-tied to a metal folding chair in the middle of the room. Tape across his mouth. A bruise rising along his jaw where Gregor hit him in the car. His eyes are wide but not broken, he is seventeen and he is angry.

Sergei paces a slow arc around the chair, coat off, a different phone in hand. Gregor leans against a steel pillar near the front roll-up door, Makarov holstered, arms folded.

Kirill works through Jack's pockets on the table, phone already smashed left at the house, wallet fanned open, a folded hall pass from school. Nothing useful.

KIRILL

(in Russian)

Nothing. The journal wasn't at the house. Nothing on the boy either.

SERGEI

(in Russian)

Then it's at the townhouse in Georgetown. Or the old man has it with him. Either way, he's coming. He has till dawn and then we take a finger.

Jack watches them speak Russian. His face changes. The Cold War unit. His grandfather's hesitation at dinner. "Did you ever meet any Russians?" The two phones. The FBI at the hospital. Pieces clicking together through the tape.

The work light flickers. Once. Twice. Then every light in the building dies at once. The generator hum cuts out behind the back door. Total darkness with the exception of red battery powered safety lights.

Gregor pulls his weapon. Kirill freezes at the table, hand hovering over his own holster.

GREGOR

(in Russian, to Sergei)

He cut the fuel line on the generator. He's already inside the fence.

KIRILL

(in Russian, rattled)

He's supposed to be in a hospital. He was dying twelve hours ago.

SERGEI

(in Russian, calm)

He's here. Kirill, take the loading bay. Gregor, hallway. Stay tight. He's one old man.

GREGOR

(in Russian)

One old man who found us and just killed our generator in the dark. That's not an old man. That's training.

SERGEI

(in Russian)

Then treat him like training. Move.

Sergei grabs the back of Jack's chair and drags it, one-handed, into the back office. Slams the door. Puts the chair against the wall, draws his own weapon, faces the door.

35

INT. WAREHOUSE - VARIOUS - CONTINUOUS

35

Darkness. Silence. Somewhere above, the sound of a loose metal panel ticking in the wind.

Then, from the far end of the building: a bottle of diesel thrown against the steel loading-bay door. The sound of glass on metal, loud enough to wake the dead.

Kirill, already moving toward the bay, breaks into a run. Phone flashlight in one hand, Makarov in the other. He rounds a stack of pallets and sweeps the beam across the bay. Broken glass. Diesel pooling. No shooter.

KIRILL

(into his earpiece, in Russian, whispering)

Loading bay is clear. He threw a bottle from out.

He stops. The loose metal panel above him has stopped ticking. Because someone is standing on it.

He turns,

Farrell is already behind him, no flashlight, no sound, just a shadow that resolves out of the other shadows. Not a man moving, a piece of the dark deciding to have weight.

The left hand clamps over Kirill's mouth, pulls his head back. The right hand, the knife, once. A short brutal motion an instructor in Leningrad would have graded on form. No flourish. No second stroke.

He holds Kirill up through the four seconds it takes. Lowers him to the concrete. The phone flashlight rolls away. The Makarov is already in Farrell's left hand before the body stops twitching.

He wipes the blade on Kirill's jacket. Slides it back onto his belt. Checks the magazine in the Makarov. Full. Racks the slide with a motion so ingrained it is like breathing. In the dark, seventy-five doesn't matter.

In the dark, he is twenty-three again, on the obstacle course in Leningrad, and the Instructor can't see him, and Petrov is watching, and the only thing that matters is getting to the other side.

This is Yuri.

He moves toward the central corridor. Slowly. Silent. No hitch in the gait the poison should have given him. The body remembers.

In the dark by the roll-up door, Gregor listens. He heard no shot. He heard no voice in his earpiece. Which means his partner is not going to speak again.

SERGEI (O.S.)

(from the back office, in Russian, calling out)

Yuri. I know it's you. I have your grandson. Put down whatever you're holding and come into the light. We can discuss this like professionals.

Silence. Not even a footstep.

SERGEI (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You are seventy-five years old and you were poisoned not 24 hours ago. What do you think happens next?

From the black corridor between the machine bays:

FARRELL (O.S.)

(in Russian, calm)

You took my grandson. That was the mistake.

SERGEI (O.S.)

(in Russian)

Gregor. Find him.

Gregor moves into the corridor. Big. Armed. Trained. He should have the advantage in every way.

Farrell lets him pass. Steps out of a maintenance alcove behind him. The left hand goes over the mouth, the knife goes in under the ribs from behind, exactly where the Leningrad diagrams drew the red circle. Gregor tries to turn. Farrell rides him down to one knee and puts two controlled Makarov rounds into the base of his skull.

It is not action-movie choreography. It is trade-school butchery.

Fifty-year-old training coming up through the hands of a seventy-five-year-old body with no hesitation in any of the joints. Tradecraft through the pain.

Gregor drops. Farrell steps over him and keeps moving. The Makarov from Kirill in his left hand, Gregor's Makarov collected in his right. The knife is back on his belt, slick.

In the back office, Sergei hears the double tap. Then nothing. Then nothing for longer than nothing should last.

He grabs Jack by the shoulder, Jack is still zip-tied to the chair, and drags the chair in front of himself. Human shield. Aims his Makarov at the door. The red safety lights are dimming, batteries low.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

(in Russian, louder now,
less calm)

Yuri! I have him in front of me.
Any shot through this door goes
through the boy first!

Silence. Then the door to the office splinters - from a single shot to a fire extinguisher exploding - hard enough to pop the thin panel off its hinges. The cloud of dry chemical blooms into the office. A thick, blinding white fog.

Sergei fires three times at the doorway. The cloud eats the muzzle flash.

Farrell comes through low, under the chemical, under the line of fire, body remembering a hallway exercise from 1983. He takes a round across the left side, a graze, a line of red through the scrub shirt, and does not slow down.

The first Makarov is already firing. One round into Sergei's gun hand. The weapon spins away across the concrete. Sergei screams, in Russian, and clutches the wreck of his fingers against his chest.

Farrell crosses the room through the settling white dust. Kicks Sergei's gun into the corner. Puts a hand on the back of Jack's chair, turns it gently out of the line of fire, keeps his own body between Jack and Sergei. Stands over Sergei with the Makarov aimed at his forehead.

Two men from the same world. Jack, a foot away, can see his grandfather's face for the first time in this light, and his grandfather is not there. The man in the scrubs with blood on his side and a knife on his belt is someone Jack has never met.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

(in Russian, through
pain)

You're supposed to be a relic. A
name in a file.

FARRELL

(in Russian)

Who sent you?

SERGEI

You know who.

FARRELL

I want a name.

SERGEI

Directorate S. Kozlov's old
department. They're cleaning house,
Yuri. Everyone on that list. You're
just the first.

FARRELL

How many teams?

SERGEI

You think I'm the only one? There
are teams in four countries. By the
end of the week, everyone in that
journal is dead. Including you.
Including anyone who's seen what's
inside it.

The implication lands. Anyone who's seen the journal. If they
think Michael or Jack have seen it and...Petrov.

FARRELL

My son and grandson know nothing.
They've never seen the journal.
They don't know who I am.

SERGEI

(a cold smile through the
pain)

They do now.

A beat. Jack, zip-tied and bruised and two feet away from his
grandfather, watches the old man's face and sees the last
piece of Thomas Reed go out in it.

Farrell does not raise the Makarov to Sergei's head. He does
not hit him with the butt of the pistol. He holsters it in
his waistband, slow, deliberate.

Takes the knife off his belt out of the Kydex sheath. He turns Jack's chair around so he's facing away from Sergei.

FARRELL

(in Russian, flat)

Tell Kozlov I said hello.

Sergei opens his mouth to say something. Maybe a curse. Maybe a name. It doesn't matter. The knife moves once, a clinical stroke, the kind the Leningrad instructors graded on form. It is not rage. It is not vengeance. It is Yuri closing an account.

Sergei's body slumps sideways to the concrete. The dry chemical dust settles on his open eyes.

For a long second the warehouse is completely silent.

Then Farrell puts the knife back in the Kydex on his belt. Turns to Jack.

And the machine cracks. For half a second, the grandfather comes back into the body, old eyes, tired, horrified at what he has just done in front of his grandson. He cannot meet Jack's stare.

He kneels. Cuts the zip ties from Jack's wrists with a motion that is not clinical at all. Pulls the tape from his mouth as gently as he has ever done anything.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

(quiet, in English)

I've got you. I've got you. It's me.

Jack does not answer. He is looking at the body on the concrete and the blood on his grandfather's hands, and his face is the face of a boy who has just lost a version of his grandfather he will never get back.

36

INT. WAREHOUSE - BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

36

Jack is free of the chair but has not stood up. He is sitting on the concrete with his back against the wall, knees pulled to his chest, breathing through his mouth. He cannot look at the body on the floor. He cannot look at his grandfather, either.

Footsteps at the far end of the building. Running. A voice shouting his name.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Jack! Dad! JACK!

Michael appears in the splintered doorway. He did not stay in the car. He heard the shots, he saw Kirill's body in the bay, he followed the sound. He stops when he sees the office.

His son on the floor, alive. His father standing a step away from a dead man, blood on his hands, a Russian pistol in his belt, a folded knife back on his hip. Orderly's scrubs, blood on his side where Sergei's round grazed him. Farrell looks like hell. He looks like someone Michael has never met.

FARRELL

He's okay. He's okay. They're down.

Michael crosses the room, falls to his knees, gathers Jack against his chest. Jack lets him but does not let go of his own arms. Michael's face is a war between relief and something else, something that looks like the beginning of grief.

MICHAEL

Who are you?

FARRELL

I'm your father.

MICHAEL

My father is Thomas Reed. Retired defense consultant. Annapolis, class of '83. You just spoke Russian to those men and then you killed three of them with a knife and a gun you knew how to use. So I'm going to ask you one more time. Who are you?

Farrell looks at his son. Then at Jack, in Michael's arms, eyes locked on the body on the floor.

Farrell pulls the Makarov from his belt. Sets it on the folding table. Steps away from it. He does not set the knife down, the knife is who he just was, and pretending otherwise is a courtesy neither of them has earned. He raises his empty hands. Not in surrender. In something more personal. An offering. The most terrifying thing he has ever done, worse than Leningrad, worse than the Pentagon, worse than the poison: telling the truth.

FARRELL

My name, my real name, is Yuri. I was born in the Soviet Union. I was sent to this country when I was twenty-three years old to become an American, to join the military, to gather intelligence.

(MORE)

FARRELL (CONT'D)

Everything you know about me is true. And none of it is real.

Silence. Far off, somewhere past the fence, the first distant wail of a siren. Someone on River Road called in the gunshots.

MICHAEL

(barely a whisper)
You're a Russian spy.

FARRELL

I was. A long time ago. Before you were born. Before any of this.

MICHAEL

Is Michael Reed even my real name?

Farrell can't answer. Because the answer is no. And they both know it.

JACK

(from the floor,
shattered)

The AP History project. When I asked if you ever met any Russians. You said, you said they were just people on the other side of a line. You were one of them. The whole time.

FARRELL

Jack.

JACK

Is anything real? Any of it? The Navy stories, Annapolis? Christmas? When you said you loved us, was that part of the job too?

Farrell's face cracks. The mask, fifty years of masks, finally, completely, breaks.

FARRELL

(breaking)
You are real. Your father is real. What I feel sitting at that table with you every Sunday is the most real thing in my life. Everything else: the names, the histories, the country I was born in, I would burn all of it to keep you safe. That's what I just did. That's what I will always do.

The sirens are closer. Still a minute out. Maybe less.

Farrell turns to Michael.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

Listen to me. Both of you. More men will come. Not tonight, but soon. You are not safe yet. I am going to fix this, but right now there is a man on the way here. Not a county cop. Agency. His name is Dalton. He's been chasing me all night. You tell him everything these men did to you. Tell him nothing about me. Can you do that?

MICHAEL

You want me to lie? Now? After all of this?

FARRELL

I want you to survive. I have spent fifty years lying so that you could live the life you have. I'm asking for one more night. After that I will tell you everything. Every truth I've ever hidden. I promise you.

Michael stares at his father. The man he thought he knew. The stranger with blood on his hands and a knife on his belt and his son alive because of that knife.

MICHAEL

One night.

Farrell nods. Picks the Makarov off the table. Wipes it, once, on the hem of the scrub shirt. Moves toward the fire door at the back of the office.

JACK

Grandpa.

Farrell stops. Turns. Jack is on his feet now, unsteady, Michael's hand still on his shoulder. Tears on his face. Shaking.

JACK (CONT'D)

You said you'd do it all differently. At dinner. You said no. You meant this. All of this.

FARRELL

Yes.

JACK

But you'd still want to end up at
the table.

FARRELL

Every time.

Jack nods. It's not forgiveness. It's not understanding. But it's something. A thread that hasn't snapped yet.

Farrell slips out the fire door into the yard. The first set of headlights cuts through the fence. He's gone before the first flashlight beam hits the loading bay.

37

EXT. INDUSTRIAL SERVICE YARD - MOMENTS LATER

37

Dalton's car skids to a stop at the edge of the service yard. Three county cruisers already on scene, blocking the access road. An ambulance pulled up to the middle building. No neighbors on porches out here, just cracked asphalt, a collapsing chain-link fence, and the flat industrial darkness of everything River Road used to be.

He gets out. Hangs his credentials around his neck and proffers them to a patrol deputy. Walks toward the open roll-up door of the middle building. Inside, he can see the damage: a shattered door panel, dry chemical dust on the concrete, bullet holes in the back wall, one overturned folding chair with cut zip ties still wrapped around the arms.

Three bodies. EMTs are not rushing. Two body bags already laid out, a third being carried from the office. KIRILL in the loading bay with a knife wound under the chin and the stillness of someone who never had time to look surprised. GREGOR in the central corridor, face-down, two holes at the base of the skull and a knife wound under the ribs. SERGEI on the floor of the back office, gun hand a ruin, throat opened, dry white dust settling on open eyes.

Dalton stares. Three SVR operatives. Neutralized. By a seventy-five-year-old man who was poisoned three days ago and escaped a hospital two hours ago. This was not a firefight. This was a specialist.

He sees Michael and Jack sitting in the back of an ambulance, blankets around their shoulders. Michael has dried blood on his lip. Jack has a welt along his jaw and the thousand-yard stare of someone who has seen too much too fast.

A MONTGOMERY COUNTY DETECTIVE approaches Dalton.

DETECTIVE

You Agency?

DALTON

Yeah. What happened here?

DETECTIVE

Three men grabbed the boy out of a house in Bethesda about an hour ago. Armed. Foreign nationals from the look of it. Brought him here. The father says a fourth man arrived and took all three of them down in under two minutes. Knife and pistol. Then vanished out the back before we got here.

DALTON

The fourth man. Did they describe him?

DETECTIVE

Older guy. Seventies. Wearing hospital scrubs. They say he was the boy's grandfather.

Dalton absorbs this. In the briefing, Farrell was a name in a file. An old man buying newspapers. A relic.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

One more thing. The intruders had Makarov pistols. Russian military issue. And the kid says they were speaking Russian. What the hell is going on?

DALTON

This is a federal matter now. I need this scene secured and these two transported to an FBI facility in Virginia. No press. No reports until you hear from my office.

The Detective starts to protest. Dalton shows him a number on his phone. The Detective makes a call, listens, hangs up. His face changes. He walks away without another word.

Dalton walks to the ambulance. Looks at Michael. Michael looks back, hollow, broken, staring at the Agency badge around Dalton's neck.

MICHAEL

You know who my father is. Don't you.

DALTON

Yes.

MICHAEL

Is he going to be okay?

Dalton looks at the scene. The three body bags. The dry chemical dust. The bullet holes. And somewhere in the dark beyond the fence, a seventy-five-year-old man running on poison and adrenaline and the oldest instinct in the world.

DALTON

I think your father can take care of himself.

He starts to turn. Stops. Looks back at Michael.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Mr. Reed, Michael. I need you to understand something. Whatever you learned tonight, whatever those men told you, whatever you heard, your father left a hospital bed where he was dying to come get your son. I've been chasing him across Washington for the last two hours. He was in bad shape. Could barely walk. And he still got to this yard before I did, before the county did, before anyone. He didn't do that because of Moscow or the CIA or some operation from 1987. He did it because that's his grandson.

Michael stares at him. Jack is listening from inside the ambulance.

DALTON (CONT'D)

I study people like your father for a living. I know what a spy looks like. What he did tonight, that wasn't a spy. I don't know what to call it. But it wasn't that.

He steps away. Walks the perimeter fence, eyes scanning the dark fields beyond the yard. A hundred yards south, past the police perimeter, past the glow of the emergency lights, a figure is sitting against a section of collapsed fencing. Almost invisible.

Dalton walks toward it. Slowly. Hand on his weapon. Not because he thinks he'll need it. Because protocol says he should.

38

EXT. SERVICE YARD PERIMETER - CONTINUOUS

38

Farrell is sitting on the ground, back against the collapsed fence. The epinephrine is gone. His hands are shaking. His vision blurs. Sergei's round has left a dark wet line across his left side. He looks like what he is: a dying man who just killed three younger men to get his grandson back.

Dalton stops ten feet away. They look at each other. The man who studied the file and the man who is the file.

FARRELL

(hoarse)

You're fast. I'll give you that. I almost didn't lose you on M Street.

DALTON

You knew I was behind you the whole time?

FARRELL

Government plates. You might as well have had a siren on.

Dalton almost smiles. Doesn't.

DALTON

I should arrest you right now. Espionage. Fleeing federal custody. Grand theft auto, apparently. I've got enough to put you away without the Russian spy part.

FARRELL

You should. But you won't.

DALTON

Don't tell me what I will and won't do. You don't know me.

FARRELL

I know you chased me across Georgetown and figured out I was heading to Bethesda before I got there. I know you followed the trail from my son's house to this yard without waiting for backup. I know you walked into that building alone. And I know you just told my son that what I did tonight wasn't the work of a spy. You said that to a man you've never met about a man you're supposed to be hunting. That tells me who you are.

DALTON

You heard that? You were a hundred yards away.

FARRELL

Sound carries. And I have good ears. I had great ears, once.

DALTON

(a beat, honest)

When I studied the Brice case at the Farm, I always thought there was a piece missing. The file ends too clean. Pritchard kills himself, Brice goes down, Farrell disappears, and nobody asks where he went? A Navy officer at the center of the biggest scandal in Pentagon history just vanishes and the system shrugs? That never sat right with me.

FARRELL

You were right to question it.

DALTON

I wrote a paper about it. My instructor told me to drop it. Said the case was closed and some stones are better left unturned. I thought he was being lazy. Now I'm wondering if he was being careful.

FARRELL

Maybe both.

DALTON

I need to ask you something. And I need the truth. Not a legend, not a cover story, not whatever you think I want to hear. The truth.

FARRELL

Ask.

DALTON

Are you still working for the Russians?

Farrell looks at him. The question deserves an honest answer. He gives one.

FARRELL

The Russians just tried to kill me with a nerve agent and then sent three men to threaten my grandson. Does that sound like a functional working relationship?

DALTON

It sounds like a burned one. Burned assets are the most dangerous kind. They've got nothing to lose.

FARRELL

That's exactly right. I've got nothing to lose. Except the two people sitting in that ambulance back there. That's it. That's the whole list. Every lie I've ever told, every identity I've ever worn, it all comes down to them. I'm not working for anyone, Dalton. I'm working for my family. And right now, you're the only person who can help me keep them alive.

Dalton studies him. Twenty years of intelligence training versus a lifetime of deception. But there's something in Farrell's eyes that training can't fake, the look of a man who has stopped performing.

DALTON

You didn't call anyone. You haven't called Ashford.

FARRELL

I was about to. But you found me first. That tells me something.

DALTON

What?

FARRELL

That you didn't go to the townhouse. You came here. You figured out I was running toward my family, not away from the Agency. Which means you understand something Ashford never will.

DALTON

What's that?

FARRELL

That some people are more than
their files.

A long beat. The emergency lights pulse in the distance. Dalton looks back at the yard. At Michael and Jack in the ambulance. At the body bags being loaded into the coroner's van. Then at this old man on the ground, the KGB's greatest failure, or maybe its only success.

DALTON

Tell me what you need.

FARRELL

My family protected. New identities, witness protection, full immunity. They didn't know. They don't deserve any of this.

DALTON

And for you?

FARRELL

I have a journal. Fourteen names. Russian illegals still embedded in this country. Moscow is hunting them right now. I'll give you the journal. I'll help you find every one of them. But I need to talk to Ashford. Face to face. At a safe house. And I need you in the room.

DALTON

Why me?

FARRELL

Because you asked the right question in that briefing. "Maybe they're just old friends." Everyone else in that room saw assets and operations. You saw people. I need someone in that room who sees people.

Dalton stares at him. The man who studied the Brice scandal at the Farm is standing in front of the scandal itself, and it's not what the textbook said.

DALTON

I'll call Ashford. Get you to a safe house. But the journal comes with you. And if you're playing me,

FARRELL

I spent fifty years playing people.
I'm done.

Dalton offers his hand. Farrell takes it. Dalton pulls him to his feet. For a moment they stand face to face, the young officer and the old spy.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

You remind me of someone I knew. A long time ago. He was the only person who ever told me the truth.

DALTON

Who?

FARRELL

An old friend.

Dalton leads him to his car. Farrell gets in. They pull away from the shoulder, past the county perimeter, into the dark.

Behind them, the emergency lights of the service yard grow smaller. Dalton points the car west, toward Arlington and the safe house that is waiting for them. From the passenger seat, Farrell tells him to turn around.

INT./EXT. DALTON'S CAR - RIVER ROAD - BEFORE DAWN

Dalton's eyes flick across. Farrell is sunk into the seat, one hand pressed to his side where Sergei's round opened him up. The blood on the scrub shirt is not spreading as fast as it was. That is not a good sign.

DALTON

Arlington is twenty minutes. You need a doctor before you need a debrief.

FARRELL

Georgetown first. The journal isn't at the safe house. The journal is in my study on P Street, behind a panel in the bookcase I built myself forty years ago. If I walk into a room with Claire Ashford and I don't have it on the table, we don't have a conversation. We have an execution.

DALTON

Your townhouse has been tossed twice tonight.

(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)

Once by me, once by the SVR. There could still be eyes on it.

FARRELL

Then let's not take too long.

Dalton checks his mirror. Cuts the wheel hard. The car U-turns across the empty pre-dawn lanes and points back toward the river. The Capitol dome is a small pale shape on the horizon.

They drive in silence. Dalton's hand strays to the console, fumbling for the cup holder in the dark. He brushes a button. The radio clicks on, mid-broadcast.

RADIO ANCHOR (V.O.)

...interrupting our regular programming with breaking news from Moscow. The Kremlin has confirmed within the last hour that the President of the Russian Federation, Viktor Petrov, has died. State media is reporting that Petrov suffered a fatal heart attack aboard his official aircraft during the return flight from Washington. He was seventy-five. Foreign capitals are--

Dalton stabs the button. The radio cuts. He glances across the cabin.

Farrell hasn't moved. He's looking at the road. After a long moment, he closes his eyes. Just for a beat. Opens them again.

DALTON

Was he the friend?

Farrell doesn't answer. The first wash of gray creeps along the eastern horizon. Dalton drives.

INT. FARRELL'S TOWNHOUSE - GEORGETOWN - BEFORE DAWN

The garden gate is unlatched. The kitchen door frame is split at the deadbolt, professionally, without noise. Dalton goes in first, weapon up, sweeping corners with years of experience. Farrell follows, one hand braced on the doorframe, the other still pressed to his side.

Inside, the house has been searched. Not wrecked, searched. Drawers open but not upended. Books pulled from shelves and stacked on the floor in methodical piles.

Cushions lifted from the couch and leaned neatly against the wall. The work of men who knew what they were looking for and believed it was in this room.

Farrell moves through his own living room like a visitor at a museum. Every surface, every corner, he has touched ten thousand times. The coffee mug from yesterday morning still on the end table. The Post folded open to the obituary page. A life paused mid-sentence.

DALTON

(quiet, at the base of
the stairs)

Clear down here. How long do you
need?

FARRELL

Ninety seconds.

He walks into the study. Two walls of books, most of them on the floor now in those methodical stacks. A Directorate S team, precise to the end. They pulled every volume, checked every spine, and missed the only one that mattered.

Farrell crosses to a section of shelving that is still full, a row of Russian-language volumes on the top shelf, high enough that a search team in a hurry sees them as ornament. Tolstoy. Gogol. Chekhov. Pushkin. He reaches up and takes down a slim hardback: Pushkin's *EVGENY ONEGIN*, in the original Russian. The book Kozlov pressed into his hands on a platform at the Leningrad station in 1982 and told him was the only book a man needed.

Forty-four years of false bookshelves later, it still is.

Behind where the Pushkin stood, a seam in the back panel of the shelf. He presses. A catch releases. A narrow section of the bookcase slides back and sideways into a recess he built with his own hands the week he moved in.

Inside the compartment: a Soviet passport in a name no one is supposed to know. A small pistol wrapped in oiled cloth, never fired on American soil. An envelope of cash in euros and Swiss francs. A photograph in a plain frame, a young woman on a beach in a country neither Michael nor Jack have ever been to. And the leather journal. Kozlov's hand on the cover. The thing that put every piece of tonight into motion.

Farrell takes the journal. Nothing else. He looks at the photograph for one long second and does not touch it. Closes the panel. Slides the Pushkin back into its slot, spine flush with the others, as if that still matters.

At the study door, he stops. Looks back at the room saying goodbye. The shelves. The desk. The window that frames a patch of garden he has watched every morning for four decades. The room where Thomas Reed, piece by piece, became real.

DALTON (O.S.)

(from the hall, not
pushing)

Take a minute.

FARRELL

There is no minute to take. Thomas Reed doesn't live here anymore.

He crosses the hall. At the front door he pauses once more, the brass bowl on the entry table where he has dropped his keys every night for forty years. The umbrella in the stand. The photograph of a woman on the wall who was not Susan Atwell. The woman he married as Thomas Reed. The mother of the son he is about to lose all over again.

He does not drop his keys in the bowl. He walks past it and out into the garden, the journal in one hand, the dawn beginning to lift over P Street behind him.

Now the road to Arlington. The road to the safe house. The road to whatever comes next.

FARRELL (V.O.)

On that rooftop, Petrov told me to remember who I really was. I thought I'd forgotten. Turns out I hadn't. I was never Yuri. I was never Tom Farrell. I was never Thomas Reed. I was always just a father trying to protect his family. Everything else was the rehearsal.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

39

INT. CIA SAFE HOUSE - ARLINGTON - BEFORE DAWN

39

A nondescript ranch house on a quiet street. Blinds drawn. Two AGENCY SECURITY outside. Inside it looks like a suburban dentist's office, beige carpet, bad art, the stale air of a place no one actually lives in.

Farrell sits at a kitchen table. He's been cleaned up, fresh clothes, bandaged arm, but the poison is still eating him. His hands shake when he forgets to control them. A half-drunk cup of black coffee. On the table in front of him: Kozlov's leather journal, open.

ASHFORD and DALTON sit across from him. Ashford is composed. Dalton leans forward, a legal pad full of notes. Between them: a digital recorder. Red light blinking.

DALTON

You've had the journal for four days. How much have you read?

FARRELL

All of it. Most of it's in cipher, Kozlov's personal system. Military codes layered over a book cipher keyed to Pushkin's "Eugene Onegin." I learned it forty years ago. Took me two days to remember.

DALTON

How many names?

FARRELL

Fourteen. Fourteen illegals placed between 1975 and 1989. My cohort came before that, off the books. Kozlov never wrote us down. Most of these are retired, dormant, living ordinary lives. Some are dead. But at least six are active, or were when Kozlov last updated the journal. And three of them are in positions that would make your head spin.

Dalton looks at Ashford. She meets his gaze evenly.

ASHFORD

What kind of positions?

FARRELL

Government. Defense. Intelligence.

The word "intelligence" lands in the room like a stone in still water. Farrell is watching Ashford when he says it. The slightest flicker crosses her face. Not panic. Recognition. A chess player seeing the board shift.

DALTON

Jesus. Are you saying there are active Russian illegals inside U.S. intelligence agencies?

FARRELL

I'm saying Kozlov ran the deepest penetration program in Soviet history. And some of his best work outlived him.

ASHFORD

We need to move quickly. Dalton, I want you to coordinate with the Bureau. Set up a joint task force, secure compartmented, need-to-know. No one outside this room sees the journal until I authorize it.

DALTON

Shouldn't we loop in the Director? If there are illegals inside the Agency,

ASHFORD

(sharp)

If there are illegals inside the Agency, then anyone we loop in is potentially compromised. We run this tight until we know who's clean. That's counterintelligence 101, James. You learned it at the Farm.

Dalton nods. It's a good argument.

Farrell turns a page in the journal. His eyes move down the Cyrillic text. Then stop. He doesn't react. Fifty years of training. But something in his body changes, a stillness that wasn't there before. He turns the page casually. Takes a sip of coffee.

FARRELL

What about my family? Where are Michael and Jack?

ASHFORD

FBI has them at a secure location in Virginia. They're safe.

FARRELL

I want them moved to Marshals Service. Witness protection. New names, new city. That was the deal.

ASHFORD

The deal is in process. These things take time. Dalton, I want you to handle the family transfer personally. Drive to the FBI safe house, verify they're secure, begin the WITSEC paperwork. I'll stay here and continue the debrief.

Farrell sets down his coffee cup. Slowly.

FARRELL

No.

ASHFORD

Excuse me?

FARRELL

Dalton stays. You go.

The room temperature drops ten degrees. Ashford looks at Farrell. Farrell looks back. For the first time, they're not playing roles. They're reading each other.

ASHFORD

I'm running this operation, Tom. I decide the assignments.

FARRELL

You're running this operation. And you want the only other person who's seen this journal out of the room. Leaving you alone with me. And the journal.

Dalton looks between them. He doesn't understand yet. But he feels it, the air in the room has changed from debrief to something else entirely.

DALTON

What's going on?

FARRELL

Tell him, Claire. Or should I say, Katya?

The name detonates in the room. Ashford doesn't move. Doesn't blink. Thirty years of training holds.

ASHFORD

I don't know what you're talking about.

FARRELL

Page ninety-three. Kozlov writes about the new generation, the illegals placed in the late eighties. Smarter legends, better tradecraft, designed to fix the mistakes they made with us. With me. One name stands out. A girl recruited in Leningrad, inserted under a fabricated Foreign Service background. Georgetown education. Trajectory: intelligence community. Codename: Nightingale.

He turns the journal to face Dalton.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

Birth name: Katya. Kozlov trained her personally. His best student. He writes that she was everything I wasn't, disciplined, focused, incapable of the one weakness that nearly destroyed me.

DALTON

What weakness?

FARRELL

Becoming the person I was pretending to be.

Farrell looks at Ashford.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

You never lost the thread, did you, Katya? You climbed through the Agency, took every clearance, shaped every blind spot, and stayed Russian underneath the whole time. Kozlov's masterpiece.

Silence. Dalton's hand moves to his sidearm. He doesn't draw it. But it's there.

DALTON

Deputy Director?

Ashford is perfectly still. Looking at Farrell. Two illegals. Same program. Two generations. The old guard and the new.

And then something extraordinary happens. The mask, the Claire Ashford mask, thirty years in the wearing, comes off. Not theatrically. Not in defeat. In relief. Like a woman taking off shoes that have been too tight for decades.

ASHFORD

(in Russian, quietly)
You always were the clever one,
Yuri. Kozlov said so. Right before
he told me you were also the weak
one.

DALTON

(hand on weapon)
Oh my God.

ASHFORD

(switching to English,
the accent unchanged,
she's that good)
Relax James. You are my protégé.
If I wanted you dead, you'd have
been dead years ago. I've had a
dozen opportunities. You're are
valuable to me, hence you live.

DALTON

You're a Russian agent. You're,
you're the Deputy Director of the
CIA and you're a Russian.

ASHFORD

I'm exactly what I was trained to
be. The only difference between me
and him is that I didn't forget
which side I was on.

Dalton's face changes. The full shape of it is finally
landing on him, not "Ashford is a mole," but something
bigger, worse, older.

DALTON

(quiet)
Wait. The honeypot. Every Russian
agent who walked up to Farrell's
door for forty years, we logged
them, we surveilled them, we rolled
them up. You signed off on every
one of those files. You briefed the
Director on the wins.

ASHFORD

(almost bored)
I signed off on every one of them
because I told Moscow which ones
were already burned. You only ever
caught the men I sent you to catch.

DALTON

You were running the honeypot from both sides.

FARRELL

(to Ashford, in Russian)
Every man who ever came to my door thinking I was his contact. You gave him to the Americans the same week you gave me to him. The gift that kept on giving was giving to both sides.

ASHFORD

(in Russian)
You were always the gift, Yuri.
Forty years of wrapping paper.

She nods at Farrell. The contempt is genuine.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

You built a family, Yuri. You coached Little League. You fell in love with the legend and forgot the mission. Kozlov was ashamed of you. He wrote about it, the great disappointment. His best American student, seduced by America.

FARRELL

Or maybe I just woke up.

ASHFORD

You fell asleep. There's a difference.

She stands. Slowly. Dalton's hand tightens on his weapon.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

Here's how this ends. You give me the journal. I walk out of this house. I disappear, new legend, new country, thirty years of intelligence product delivered to Moscow as a parting gift. You tell the Agency whatever you want. By the time they verify any of it, I'll be vapor.

FARRELL

And if I don't?

ASHFORD

Then I use the dead man's switch I built into Agency systems twelve years ago. Every covert officer in the field, station chiefs, NOCs, deep covers in six countries, their identities go to Russian intelligence. Chinese intelligence. Iranian intelligence. Hundreds of American agents exposed in one keystroke. The worst intelligence catastrophe in the history of the United States.

The room goes cold.

DALTON

You're bluffing.

ASHFORD

I'm the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I have access to every database, every server, every classified network in this building. I've had access for fifteen years. Do you really think I didn't plan for this day?

She reaches into her jacket. Dalton draws his weapon. Points it at her.

DALTON

Hands where I can see them. Now.

ASHFORD

(to Dalton, almost kind)
James. You're a good officer. You're also out of your depth. The dead man's switch is tied to a biometric check-in. If I don't authenticate within the next forty-one minutes, the upload begins automatically. Shooting me doesn't stop it. Arresting me doesn't stop it. Only I stop it.

She pulls out a phone. Shows them the screen. A countdown timer: 40:47. 40:46. 40:45.

ASHFORD (CONT'D)

The journal. Now. And I walk out.
Or every American spy on the planet
dies in the dark because you
couldn't let go of a dead man's
diary.

Farrell looks at the journal. At Dalton. At Ashford. The
countdown ticks.

FARRELL

Can I ask you something, Katya?

ASHFORD

Make it quick.

FARRELL

In thirty years, all the holidays,
the promotions, the Agency
Christmas parties, the colleagues
who became friends, the people who
trusted you, was there ever a
moment when the mask started to
feel like a face?

Ashford stares at him. Something flickers behind her eyes.
Not much. Not enough.

ASHFORD

No.

FARRELL

I feel sorry for you.

ASHFORD

The journal, Yuri. Thirty-eight
minutes.

FARRELL

You're not getting the journal.

He picks it up. Holds it.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

Because here's what Kozlov's
masterpiece didn't account for. You
spent thirty years climbing the
ladder. You know every system,
every protocol, every failsafe. But
you don't know the one thing that
would have told you this was
already over.

ASHFORD

And what's that?

FARRELL

I made copies.

Beat.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

The night Petrov handed it to me. Before the poison put me down. I got home, sat at my desk, and photographed every page with my phone. Sent the file to three people before I hit the bathroom floor. A journalist at the Post. A Senate Intelligence Committee staffer. And Michael.

Ashford's composure cracks. For the first time, real fear in her eyes.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

Michael doesn't read Cyrillic. The journalist doesn't have the cipher key. But the Senate staffer has access to NSA linguists who do. If I don't call her by 6 AM with a code phrase, she opens the file. Every name. Every cover. Including yours.

ASHFORD

(the control slipping)

You're bluffing. You were half-dead on the floor of your own house. You couldn't have,

FARRELL

I held a phone steady through the first wave of Novichok long enough to shoot fifty pages and hit send. Then I walked past two FBI agents in stolen scrubs, hot-wired a car, tracked my grandson across three jurisdictions, and put down three SVR operatives in an abandoned service yard before the county got a car on scene. And you think I couldn't brace my wrist on a desk?

Ashford looks at the countdown on her phone. 34:12. She looks at Farrell. She looks at Dalton, weapon drawn, blocking the door.

She's trapped. The new generation, cornered by the old.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

Here's my offer. You authenticate the dead man's switch. You stand it down. Then you sit in that chair and you tell Dalton everything. Every operation you've compromised, every agent you've burned, every piece of intelligence you've passed to Moscow for thirty years. You do that, and the copies stay sealed. Your name stays out of the press. You get a cell, not a headline.

ASHFORD

A cell. For the rest of my life.

FARRELL

Welcome to my world.

Ashford stands at the center of the room. The countdown ticks. Dalton's weapon steady. Farrell watching from the chair, the journal in his lap, the old man who was supposed to be a relic.

ASHFORD

(in Russian, almost to herself)

Kozlov was wrong about you.

FARRELL

(in Russian)

He was wrong about both of us.

Ashford looks at the countdown. 31:08. She picks up the phone. Places her thumb on the biometric sensor. The timer stops. Resets. The screen goes dark.

She sets the phone on the table. Sits down. Folds her hands. The Deputy Director of the CIA. Katya from Leningrad.

ASHFORD

(in English, to Dalton)

Turn on the recorder, James. This is going to take a while.

Dalton looks at Farrell. Farrell nods. Dalton presses record.

The first gray light over the Potomac. Farrell steps onto the porch.

Behind him through the window, Ashford sits at the table, talking into the recorder. Dalton listens, taking notes. Methodical. The eyes of the story, finally seeing the whole picture.

Farrell leans against the railing. His hands are shaking again, the epinephrine is long gone, the poison still in his blood. He doesn't try to hide it.

Dalton steps outside. Closes the door behind him.

DALTON

She's talking. It's... it's everything. Station chiefs she burned. Operations she compromised. She's been passing intelligence to Moscow for thirty years. Right under our noses. Right under mine.

A beat. Dalton looks out at the gray light over the Potomac. When he speaks again it is not operational.

DALTON (CONT'D)

She recruited me out of the Army. She mentored me. She signed off on my clearance. Every case I've ever run, every promotion, every piece of tradecraft I was proud of learning, she saw all of it. I sat across from her at the Christmas party eight weeks ago. I asked her advice on a joint op with the Bureau. She helped me draft the memo.

He looks at his hands. They are not shaking. That almost makes it worse.

DALTON (CONT'D)

My whole career. I modeled it on hers.

FARRELL

Don't blame yourself. That's the whole point of the program. You're not supposed to see us.

DALTON

Did you really send copies to a Senate staffer?

Farrell smiles. The real smile. The one that reaches his eyes.

FARRELL

I sent photos to Michael. That part was true. The rest? No. I was dying on my own floor. I had the strength for one send before the lights went out.

DALTON

You bluffed her.

FARRELL

The new generation, beaten by the old one's last trick.

DALTON

What happens to you now?

FARRELL

That's up to people above your pay grade. And mine.

DALTON

For what it's worth, what you did tonight. For your family. At that service yard. That wasn't a Russian spy. That was a father.

FARRELL

Maybe that's all I ever was. Just took me fifty years to figure it out.

They stand in the early light. Two men who have no reason to trust each other and no choice but to try.

DALTON

I'll make sure they know you cooperated. The journal, the debrief, Ashford, all of it. I'll push for immunity. I can't promise anything, but,

FARRELL

Don't worry about me. Protect my family. That's all I've ever wanted. It's the only real thing I've ever done.

41

INT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - VIRGINIA - MORNING

41

A different safe house. Nicer than the CIA one, someone thought to put out fresh coffee and bagels. Small kindnesses for people whose world just ended.

Michael sits at a table. He hasn't slept. His face has the hollowed look of a man trying to rebuild his entire understanding of reality with no blueprints. Jack is curled on a couch across the room, earbuds in, staring at nothing.

The door opens. Farrell steps in. Escorted by two agents who wait outside.

Michael looks up. Sees his father. The man he's known for forty-eight years. The stranger he met last night.

Neither of them speaks. The silence has the weight of decades.

Jack pulls out his earbuds. Sits up. Watches.

FARRELL

I promised you the truth. All of it. I'm here to keep that promise.

MICHAEL

I've been sitting here all night trying to figure out which parts of my childhood were real and which parts were your cover story. I can't tell. That's the worst part. I can't tell.

FARRELL

Then let me tell you. All of it. From the beginning. From Leningrad.

He sits down across from Michael. Jack moves from the couch to the table. Three generations of a family built on a lie, sitting down to hear the truth for the first time.

FARRELL (CONT'D)

My name is Yuri. I was born in Leningrad in 1959. When I was fifteen years old, a man from the KGB came to my school and told me I had been chosen for a great honor. I was going to serve the motherland in a way no one would ever know about. I was going to become someone else.

Michael listens. Jack listens. Farrell talks. The sun moves across the floor of the safe house. Hours pass.

FARRELL (V.O.)

I told them everything. The academy. Petrov. The Pentagon. Susan.

(MORE)

FARRELL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The names they gave me and the name I lost. I told them about the night their mother asked me where I was really from and I looked her in the eye and lied. I told them about watching Michael take his first steps and thinking: he will never know who his father is. I told them about Jack's first word, "Papa", and how it broke something inside me that never healed.

The sun is low now. Late afternoon. Farrell has been talking for hours. His voice is hoarse. His hands have stopped shaking, not from medicine. From finally putting it all down.

FARRELL

That's all of it. Every lie. Every truth. Everything I am.

Silence. Michael stares at the table. Jack wipes his eyes.

MICHAEL

What happens now?

FARRELL

They're going to give you new names. New city. New start. The Marshals will protect you. You'll be safe.

MICHAEL

New names. Again. More lies.

FARRELL

This time you get to choose them. That's the difference.

MICHAEL

And you?

FARRELL

I don't know. Prison, maybe. Or maybe they still need me. There are fourteen names in that journal. Fourteen people living the life I lived. Moscow is hunting them. Someone has to find them first.

JACK

Will we see you again?

Farrell looks at his grandson. The boy with his eyes. The boy who asked the right questions at the dinner table and noticed the two phones and recorded the man at the door. The boy who, in another life, in another country, would have made one hell of an intelligence officer.

FARRELL

I don't know that either.

JACK

Grandpa.

FARRELL

Yeah?

JACK

The rehearsal. Petrov's thing. Fear is just the mind rehearsing. You said: what if the rehearsal never ends?

FARRELL

I remember.

JACK

I think it just did.

Farrell's face. The mask is gone. All of them are gone. This is the face Petrov asked him to remember on the rooftop in Leningrad. Not Tom Farrell. Not Thomas Reed. Not Yuri. Just a man. A father. Sitting at a table with the only people who matter.

He reaches across the table. Takes Michael's hand. Michael doesn't pull away. Jack puts his hand on top.

Three hands. Three names that are about to change. One family that won't.

42

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - AERIAL - DUSK

42

The Capitol dome glows gold in the last light. The monuments. The reflecting pool. A city built on secrets.

We drift over Georgetown. The quiet streets. The townhouse on P Street, dark now. Empty.

FARRELL (V.O.)

They asked me once, in Leningrad, what I was willing to give up for the mission. I said: everything. I was twenty-three. I didn't know what everything meant.

The aerial drifts north. Over the Potomac. Over Virginia. The landscape opening up, leaving the city behind.

FARRELL (V.O.)

Now I do. Everything means Sunday dinners and school plays and the sound of your grandson laughing in the next room. Everything means a name, not the one they gave you, the one you earned. The one someone calls you when they love you.

We find Farrell. Walking alone down a country road. No overcoat. No wool scarf. Just a man walking. The sun is setting behind him.

FARRELL (V.O.)

There was never a way out. Viktor was right about that. And there's no way back, not to Leningrad, not to the Pentagon, not to the life I built on P Street. But maybe, for the first time, there's a way forward.

He walks. The road stretches ahead. Empty. Open. No shadows to check. No reflections to scan. No parked cars to note.

Just the road.

FARRELL (V.O.)

My name is Tom. Not because they gave it to me. Because I chose it. And for the first time in my life, no one is watching.

HOLD on his back as he walks into the fading light. Growing smaller. A man finally, truly alone. And finally, truly free.

SMASH TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: NO WAY BACK

THE END