***CONFIDENTIAL***

24
FIRST LIGHT

EPISODE #1
"12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M."

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ACT ONE

BLACK:

Then the iconic 24 LOGO POPS and FRITZES to life:

CARTER'S VOICE
The following takes place between
12:00 PM and 1:00 PM.

REBECCA'S VOICE
Events occur in real time.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - VIRGINIA

What should be an average American home is now a charnel house.

A SERIES OF BOXES:

-- A WOMAN'S BODY, face down in a thickening pool of blood --

-- Her TEENAGE DAUGHTER nearby, battered, dead. Her bloody handprint on the wall --

-- Furniture overturned, books, clothes hurled about --

-- In the debris are COMBAT MEDALS, also a GROUP PHOTO of a six-man ARMY RANGER SQUAD. This is a military home.

END BOXES AND GO FULL SCREEN:

A MAN tied to a chair. He's one of the Army Rangers in the group photo. It's his house we're in, and his family that lies dead on the floor. He's been brutally tortured, his skin slashed, eyes burned away by chemicals, barely alive.

His torturer looms over him. A cold fanatic, RASHID presses the barrel of a .45 to the Ranger's forehead. The Ranger grimaces, almost welcomes what's coming.

RASHID
For Sheik Bin-Khalid.

Rashid PULLS THE TRIGGER. The BLAST TOPPLES the Ranger back over in his chair, and he CRASHES to the floor. Rashid digs out a cell phone. Dials.

RASHID (CONT'D)
(into cell)
We're finished here. He didn't have it.

ADD IN A BOX:
INT. UTILITY VAN - WASHINGTON D.C. - MOVING

MALIK is in the rear, holding a copy of the same Army Ranger group photo we saw in the trashed home.

MALIK
(into cell)
You're sure?

Rashid glances at the Ranger's murdered wife and daughter. Their wounds suggest they were also tortured.

RASHID
He would've told us.

Malik draws a SLASH MARK through the Ranger that Rashid just executed. Of the six Rangers in the squad, four have slashes.

RASHID (CONT'D)
Have you located Marcus Grimes?

Malik eyes one of the photo's two unslashed Rangers: MARCUS GRIMES.

MALIK
He wasn't in his apartment. But we have a lead. We'll get him soon.

Malik looks from Marcus to the other remaining Ranger in the photo. African-American, glowing with a sense of mission, we'll come to know him as ERIC CARTER.

MALIK (CONT'D)
You should move to your final target. Carter. He was the squad leader.

RASHID
We're leaving now. We'll be at his house in ten minutes.

Rashid hangs up, turns to two other JIHADIS. All three men are dressed as UTILITY REPAIRMEN.

RASHID (CONT'D)
(subtitled Arabic)
Let's go --

As the men exit, HOLD ON the GROUP PHOTO of the Ranger squad, and their next target, Eric Carter. Off his image:

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CARTER HOME - BEDROOM - VIRGINIA

ERIC CARTER making love to his wife, NICOLE. A young couple in their late 20's, early 30's, having uncommonly good lunch hour sex.
Finally, they collapse together, spent, and Carter rolls onto his back. They lie there breathing, sweaty. Happy. With no idea what's headed their way.

NICOLE
Wow... that was a mistake.

CARTER
How was that in any way a mistake?

NICOLE
I have to be at work in an hour, and I'm ready to go back to sleep. Least I can skip the gym today.

CARTER
Sure that's a good idea?

NICOLE
(slaps him playfully)
Watch it.

He laughs. A youthful, handsome face on a muscled frame. She glances at the clock.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Gotta go.

CARTER
You know, my shift doesn't start 'til 1:00. Why don't you call in sick?

NICOLE
I just got this job. Not gonna risk losing it.

She shrugs on a T-shirt, heads into the --

BATHROOM

Nicole fills a glass of water, takes out a blister pack of birth control pills from the medicine cabinet. She punches out the day's dosage, downs the pill, then turns to see Carter in the doorway.

CARTER
I thought you stopped taking those.

Caught, she sets the glass down.

NICOLE
I did. For a couple of weeks.

CARTER
So what's going on? You said you were ready.
NICOLE
I know...

CARTER
It's been six months, Nicole. I get it hasn't been easy. Living in hiding, changing your name --

NICOLE
Eric, I'm fine. I'm just worried you're not.

He shakes his head, knows what she's talking about.

CARTER
Come on, the guy almost sideswiped us.

NICOLE
I thought you were going to run him off the road. Scared the hell out of me.

CARTER
I overreacted. I told you I was sorry.

NICOLE
It's not just that. You're barely eating, or sleeping. You're in the garage punching that bag at three in the morning --

CARTER
What do you want from me? What do I have to say?

NICOLE
I think you still need time. You gotta get past what happened over there.

CARTER
I'm fine, Nicole. All this stuff you're talking about, it's just normal stress.

NICOLE
Normal stress. Really?

CARTER
If I was so screwed up, would I be getting a promotion next month?

NICOLE
You're changing the subject.
CARTER
And you won't admit that things are good. We have a future here. It's about time we start acting like it.

Off Nicole, hearing him but her concern undimmed...

CUT TO:

INT. TOWN CAR - MOVING

REBECCA INGRAM, 40's, blazing smart with a confident energy, rides in the back, dressed for an event, on her cell phone.

As she talks, she applies a well-known hack for minimizing the pain of high heels -- taping her third and fourth toes together. She does this on both feet while:

REBECCA
(into cell)
-- And pull hard copies of everything we put together on the Haddads. Including ground recon going back six months --

ADD IN A BOX:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - WASHINGTON D.C.

A monument to high tech. Analysts' stations are arranged in orbit around a 360 degree hub of large touchscreen displays. Everywhere, people hustling, alert and on the move.

Young comm analyst ANDY CHOU -- Asian, high strung, high achiever -- is on the phone with Rebecca.

ANDY
(into cell)
Six months?

REBECCA
Take a breath, Andy. The backups are still in my old account. You have the codes.

ANDY
I'm not stressing, it's just a lot, you know?
(checks his watch)
And aren't you supposed to be getting an award now?

REBECCA
I'm just pulling up. And on second thought -- for the ground recon, make it twelve months.
ANDY
Okay, now I'm stressing.

REBECCA
Gotta go --

She ends the call, quickly slips her shoes back on as...

EXT. U.S. CAPITOL - SOUTH ENTRANCE

The town car pulls up and a MARINE GUARD throws open the rear door. Rebecca exits and sprints up the front steps into...

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - SOUTH ENTRANCE / CORRIDOR

Waiting for her is her husband, SENATOR JOHN DONOVAN. Early 50's, easy on the eyes, a politician on the rise. They've been married ten years -- a prominent D.C. power couple.

DONOVAN
For a second I thought this was going to happen without you.

REBECCA
Sorry. I was pulling case files, lost track of time.

DONOVAN
Only you could lose track of time on a day like today.

She takes his hand, pulls him into a kiss. CYNTHIA steps up. She's Donovan's campaign director, attractive, 30's.

CYNTHIA
Senator Donovan, Ms. Ingram. They're ready for you.

They follow Cynthia down the corridor.

REBECCA
I'll need to meet you at the fundraiser.

DONOVAN
Why?

REBECCA
I have a meeting with Mullins.
(off his look)
Don't worry, I'll be there.

DONOVAN
I'm not worried... but you've been spending a lot of time at CTU.
REBECCA
John, these transition meetings are only for another week.

DONOVAN
Look, if you're having second thoughts about leaving --

REBECCA
I'm not having second thoughts.

As if to allay his lingering doubt, she stops to adjust his tie.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Honestly -- after hunting terrorists for fifteen years, the idea of being First Lady sounds pretty damn good.

DONOVAN
We're not in the White House yet.

REBECCA
You saw the polls this morning. You're in striking distance with likely voters. And this --

They enter --

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - EMANCIPATION HALL

A large gathering of SENATORS, CONGRESSMEN and high-ranking members of the INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. The MEDIA is also out in full force.

REBECCA
-- This could put you over the top. (beat)
By the way, did the Haliwells RSVP?

DONOVAN
Not yet. Thinking of phoning in a reminder.

REBECCA
Couldn't hurt. If they're at the fundraiser, other deep pockets will take notice. People with that kind of money, they move in herds.

A CONGRESSIONAL STAFFER steps up to escort Rebecca.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
(to Donovan)
C'mon --
DONOVAN
No. This is your moment, and I want it to stay that way.

Before she can protest --

DONOVAN (CONT'D)
Go. I love you.

She sees he isn't going to bend on this, turns and allows herself to be led to the dais. The SENATE MAJORITY LEADER shakes her hand, then takes the podium.

MAJORITY LEADER
Good morning. Six months ago, U.S. Special Forces launched an assault on the compound of Ibrahim Bin-Khalid, killing him and eight members of his terrorist group --

Under this, SPLIT OFF INTO BOXES:

INT. UTILITY VAN - MOVING
One of the Jihadi is driving, Rashid sitting passenger.

In the back, Jihadi 2 is fiddling with something that looks like a router with extra antennae -- a CELL PHONE JAMMER.

Rashid checks the clip in his .45. On the GPS, the van's icon closes in on its destination --

END BOXES ON:

MAJORITY LEADER
-- It's my distinct privilege to award the Congressional Medal of Honor to the woman whose tireless efforts made that possible. Former National Director of CTU, Rebecca Ingram...

APPLAUSE as the Majority Leader hands Rebecca the award. She locks eyes with Donovan, who smiles, filled with pride. Rebecca takes the podium, waits for the APPLAUSE to die down.

REBECCA (ON TV)
Thank you, Senator. This is extraordinary, and so humbling. I'd like to acknowledge the many dedicated people at CTU whose hard work made the Bin-Khalid operation a success. (beat) Most of all I'd like to recognize the Army Rangers who risked their lives to carry out this mission, and who are still in hiding, living under (MORE)
REBECCA (ON TV) (CONT'D)
the threat of retaliation. They're
the true heroes of this day --

Off this...

CUT TO:

INT. CARTER HOME - BEDROOM

Carter, one of the heroes Rebecca just referred to, finishes throwing on his work shirt, dons a SECURITY GUARD jacket.

Carter checks himself in the mirror. For a moment, his determined optimism drops away, allowing us to see a man who expected something better for his life. He girds himself for the day and heads out, to --

INT. CARTER HOME - KITCHEN

Nicole's at the counter, also dressed for work in her nurse's scrubs. She's pouring herself a cup of coffee as Carter enters. He moves to her, his tone conciliatory.

CARTER
You know, my boss said he'd let us use his cabin in River Woods. Maybe we should go up this weekend. Take time for ourselves.

NICOLE
You hate the woods.

CARTER
Guess we'll have to spend most of the time indoors.

She smiles in spite of herself.

NICOLE
Never much liked the woods either.

Though behind her smile we sense her concerns aren't going away. Now, Carter's CELL BUZZES. He checks the caller ID, answers.

CARTER
(into cell)
Carter --

ADD IN A BOX:

EXT. DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON D.C. - STREET CORNER

MARCUS GRIMES, the other Army Ranger who Malik is searching for, is at a payphone. Eyes darting, disheveled, Marcus has had a tough night. Right now, you'd take him for a street person.
MARCUS
(into phone)
It's me. Can you talk?

CARTER
Yeah, Marcus. What is it? You okay?

Nicole frowns, doesn't think much of Marcus.

MARCUS
No. I'm not okay. Bin-Khalid's people found us, Eric. They found us. I kept saying they would and I was right. Dammit --

CARTER
Whoa -- slow down. Where are you?

MARCUS
Just listen to me -- two men came to my building, asked the manager if he'd seen me, said they were police --

CARTER
Any chance they were police?

MARCUS
They asked for me by name, Eric. My new name.

This stops Carter short.

CARTER
You sure?

MARCUS
I'm not making this up. Those guys broke into my apartment and tore the place apart.
(looks around, paranoid)
You gotta call CTU, get them on this before these bastards find me --

CARTER
Marcus, you need to calm down. Get somewhere safe, and I'll deal with this --

MARCUS
Don't jerk me around. This is happening.

CARTER
Where are you? How can I reach you?

MARCUS
You can't --
CARTER
Marcus, wait --

But Marcus has hung up. Carter lowers his cell, troubled.

NICOLE
What is it now?

CARTER
He says Bin-Khalid's people found him.

NICOLE
Again?

Carter taps an APP on his phone. As he enters codes --

NICOLE (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

CARTER
Signaling the squad.

NICOLE
Tell me you're not taking Marcus seriously. How many times has he made this call?

CARTER
I'm just being safe. The guys'll text back that they're okay. Then I'll find Marcus and get him cleaned up.

NICOLE
You're not his squad leader anymore, Eric.

But Carter doesn't answer. He's staring at his phone.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
What?

CARTER
No one's responding.

NICOLE
You just sent it out.

CARTER
They just have to tap the screen to confirm.

NICOLE
Maybe they're not near their phones.
CARTER
All of them?

Hard to argue with this. She watches, growing anxious as Carter gets up and goes to the window.

CARTER'S POV - THE STREET

A GREY UTILITY VAN is parked down the block.

BACK TO SCENE

Carter HEARS a SOUND to his left. He cranes his head against the window to see TWO MEN already at the front door. Carter backs away from the window.

CARTER (CONT'D)
(to Nicole)
Get to the attic --

NICOLE
What is it?

CARTER
Do it --

Carter whips out his cell and dials 911 -- DIGITAL WHITE NOISE is all he hears.

CARTER (CONT'D)
They're jamming the signal.

He grabs Nicole by the arm and hauls her into the --

HALLWAY

At the end of the hall, a SHADOW appears on the back door window. Only seconds to move, Carter pulls Nicole into a --

SPARE BEDROOM

And yanks on the cord to a CEILING ATTIC LADDER. He unfolds the stairs.

NICOLE
Eric --

CARTER
Go -- go --

Nicole scrambles up.

CARTER (CONT'D)
No matter what happens, no matter what you hear, stay up there -- don't make a sound.
Carter quickly folds the stairs and shuts the attic door as --

THE FRONT DOOR -- is KICKED OPEN. Rashid and Jihadi 1 burst in, weapons ready --

SPARE BEDROOM -- Carter spins to a bookshelf, sweeps the books aside, revealing a GUN SAFE.

HALLWAY

WHAM -- the back door FLIES OPEN. Jihadi 2 charges in, spots Carter punching a CODE into the safe and FIRES --

-- A TASER SLAMS into Carter. He tries to fight it, but SPASMS, ultimately collapses onto the floor --

INT. CARTER HOME - ATTIC

Nicole curls in a corner, the sounds from below are horrifying.

HALLWAY

Carter still convulsing as he's dragged into the hall. Rashid trains a .45 on him.

RASHID
(subtitled in Arabic)
I’ll secure him. Search the house --

As the two Jihadis spread out --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - WASHINGTON D.C.

This sleek facility governs CTU field offices throughout the country. Note: this marks the first appearance of National CTU Headquarters in the series.

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY

Rebecca clears security, passes a PLAQUE memorializing CTU's fallen. Keen-eyed fans might pick out GEORGE MASON, MICHELLE DESSLER, EDGAR STILES -- the list goes on. Rebecca enters --

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN

People who notice Rebecca offer congratulations and casual applause. She smiles, says hellos as she approaches ANDY.

ANDY
I put the files in Mullins office. And congratulations, your speech was great. We watched it on C-SPAN.

REBECCA
Thanks, Andy.
(looks around)
Where's Bashir?

ANDY
Mullins let him go Friday, brought in someone new.
(lowers voice)
Who is so not as qualified. We're talking two-year college.

REBECCA
Why would he do that?

ANDY
I don't know. I mean -- you were tough -- honestly sometimes I wanted to bitch slap you.
(off her smile)
But you always had our backs. Since Mullins got your job... I think my days are numbered.

This as CTU Director KEITH MULLINS approaches. A decade younger than Rebecca, smart, still getting used to the crown.

MULLINS
Rebecca, congratulations. Part of me thought you'd cancel, be off celebrating.
REBECCA
Sorry to disappoint you.

She smiles. Their relationship is easy and familiar, they've known each other a long time.

MULLINS
You know how much I appreciate your help with the transition. How's John?

REBECCA
Going 24/7, I don't know how he does it.

(looks at time)
I've gotta make a fundraiser, we should get started.

As they move off, GIA STILES -- Andy's neighbor at the next station -- rolls up in her chair. Real people Brooklyn. Rough around the edges, baseball cap, doesn't give a shit. Working class, in contrast to Andy's obvious privilege.

GIA
I'm "so not qualified"? Really?
(off his embarrassment)
For your information, not everyone needs to go to Stanford.

ANDY
That -- was a private conversation. And how do you even know I went to Stanford?

GIA
You told me two minutes after we met. And you know -- my cousin was Edgar Stiles.

ANDY
And I should know who that is?

GIA
Damn right. He worked at CTU, was one of the best. Taught me more than you ever learned at Stanford.

Unimpressed, he looks at her baseball cap and jeans.

ANDY
Except for the dress code.

She smiles, the gauntlet thrown down. A beat, then --

ANDY (CONT'D)
You get the hourlies from NSA yet?
GIA
Just now. No chatter indicating an active threat. So far, it's quiet out there.

CUT TO:

INT. CARTER HOME - ATTIC

Nicole crouched up here, truly terrified. Knows she needs a clear head, steadies her breathing. Checks her phone again, still no bars. Her mind races, looking for a move, any move.

INT. CARTER HOME - LIVING ROOM


RASHID
Where's your wife?

Carter's eyes sweep the room, taking stock.

CARTER
At work.

RASHID
Her car's in the driveway.

CARTER
A friend picked her up.

Rashid suspicious. Trying to move him off this --

CARTER (CONT'D)
I know why you're here. Just do what you have to do.

RASHID
Where's the strongbox?

A sudden shift, which takes Carter by surprise --

CARTER
What?

Rashid BACKHANDS Carter. Presses his gun to Carter's head --

RASHID
Where is it?!

CARTER
I don't know what you're talking about!
RASHID
Sheik Bin-Khalid stored his valuables in a strongbox. It was taken from his compound the night your squad came and killed him.

CARTER
Never saw anything like that.

RASHID
Your men -- Murdoch, Jackson, Geddes, and Nichols -- they didn't take it. (off Carter's look) That's right. We killed your friends. And their families.

Carter tries to lunge out of the chair, seething. Wants nothing more than to get his hands around Rashid's throat.

RASHID (CONT'D)
Which leaves you and Grimes. And you're going to tell me which one of you has the strongbox.

Rashid begins methodically BEATING THE SHIT out of Carter.

INT. CARTER HOME - ATTIC

Nicole tries to shut out the sound of her husband being beaten as she unscrews the bolts that secure an AIR DUCT to a vent in the floor. She pulls the ducting off, looks down into --

NICOLE'S POV - SPARE ROOM

Through the small vent, Nicole can see the GUN SAFE Carter was trying to get to. Unfortunately JIHADI 2 is in the room, vigorously searching. Blocking her access.

RESUME - ATTIC

Nicole moves away from the vent. Mind racing... she begins looking through the BOXES stored in the attic.

INT. CARTER HOME - LIVING ROOM

Rashid takes a break from hitting Carter, mops sweat from his brow. Blood drips down Carter's face.

RASHID
Where is it?

Carter SPITS a mouthful of his own blood into Rashid's face. Rashid backs away, wipes it off. Jihadi 1 has been searching the room in the b.g. -- Tells Rashid --

JIHADI 1
(subtitled Arabic)
Finish it. He doesn't have it.
RASHID
(subtitled Arabic)
And if you're wrong? We have to find it, or the attack can't happen...

Carter has been watching, LISTENING, following the Arabic. Rashid SMACKS Carter in the head with the gun, dazing him. Rashid digs in his bag. Pulls out a bottle of DRAIN CLEANER.

INT. CARTER HOME - ATTIC
Nicole lifts a VASE from one of the boxes. Moves across the attic, works at pulling the ducting from ANOTHER VENT.

INT. CARTER HOME - LIVING ROOM
Carter still dazed as Rashid unscrews the top of the drain cleaner. He pries one of Carter's eyes open with his dirty, callused fingers.

RASHID
Where is it?

Carter manages to focus on Rashid. Has no answer for him. Struggles futilely as --

RASHID brings the drain cleaner toward Carter's eye.

INT. CARTER HOME - ATTIC
Nicole gives up on the bolts, uses brute strength to tear the ducting off the vent. Looks down. No one in the master bedroom. She lifts the vent open and pushes the VASE out into the bedroom below, where it SHATTERS.

INT. CARTER HOME - LIVING ROOM
Rashid heard that, looks up with a start. Shouts --

RASHID
(subtitled Arabic)
The bedroom! Go!

Jihadi 1 rushes out of the room. Carter's heart races. Will they find Nicole? Desperately looking for a way out...

INT. CARTER HOME - SPARE ROOM
Jihadi 2 also heard Rashid's command, is drawn out of the room, as Nicole intended. FOLLOW HIM into --

INT. CARTER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM
Jihadis 1 and 2 meet in the bedroom, see the VASE broken on the floor. Look around, wondering as --
INT. CARTER HOME - ATTIC

Nicole moves quickly across the attic, to the access hatch to the spare room. TRIPS, goes down on one knee for a moment.

INT. CARTER HOME - LIVING ROOM

Rashid's eyes shoot to the ceiling -- he heard that!

RASHID
(subtitled Arabic)
There's someone in the attic! Get up there!

ON CARTER - shit.

IN MULTIPLE BOXES:

-- SPARE ROOM - Nicole clambers down from the access hatch. The problem is --

-- HALLWAY - Jihadis 1 and 2 move toward the spare room as --

-- SPARE ROOM - Nicole gets to the gun safe. Punches in the code, hands shaking. Gets it wrong. Tries again, as the Jihadis get closer and --

-- CARTER waits for his moment.

-- SPARE ROOM - Nicole gets the safe open. Grabs Carter's DESERT EAGLE, flicks the safety and brings it up as --

JIHADI 2 steps into the doorway! She FIRES! Is knocked off balance by the recoil from the 50 caliber round, but the shot hits Jihadi 2 in the leg. He goes down on one knee, raises his gun to fire back. Nicole recovers, fires and KEEPS FIRING, until she's out of ammo. Her aim adrenalized and wild, but one shot kills the Jihadi.

FULL SCREEN:

INT. CARTER HOME - FIRST FLOOR

Rashid distracted by the shots, backs away to just the distance Carter needs --

CARTER PUSHES OFF THE FLOOR, HARD -- the chair tilts back, the legs catch Rashid under the chin, knock him back.

The wooden chair hits the floor hard, the back breaks apart.

Carter's hands are now free, but his legs are still secured to the chair legs. Rashid gets to his feet as --

INT. CARTER HOME - SPARE ROOM

Nicole realizes she's out of ammo. There's a box of ammo in the gun safe, but she has no idea how to load the magazine.
JIHADI 1 is crouched in the hallway, out of the line of fire. Hears her ejecting the magazine. Pumps his SHOTGUN, closes in on the spare room.

INT. CARTER HOME - LIVING ROOM

Carter reaches behind him to the fireplace, THROWS THE POKER with everything he has. It hits Rashid in the face. He stumbles, blood pouring from a gash in his forehead, as --

Carter breaks the chair bottom apart, freeing his legs. He grabs the gun Rashid dropped. Rashid LUNGES at Carter, who SHOOTS AND KILLS Rashid without pausing, as he races toward the back of the house.

INT. CARTER HOME - SPARE ROOM

JIHADI 1 steps into the doorway, raises the SHOTGUN toward a helpless Nicole, pulls the trigger as --

CARTER appears behind him, FIRES!

JIHADI 1 SPINS as the shotgun goes off, so his shot is off center. Carter fires again, killing him with a head shot, rushes forward, into the spare room --

NICOLE's arm is bleeding, but the rest of the shotgun blast hit the wall next to her.

   CARTER

   Nicole!

   He grabs her -- sees her only wound is the one on her arm.

   CARTER (CONT'D)

   You hit anywhere else?

She manages to shake her head no. Trembling, in shock --

   NICOLE

   How did they find us... how?

   CARTER

   Listen to me. You did good, you saved our lives. Now we have to get out of here.

She stands there, still in shock. Carter urges her --

   CARTER (CONT'D)

   We have to go. Now.

She nods. He grabs ammo for the Desert Eagle. Reloads as we FOLLOW THEM through the ransacked house out to --
EXT. CARTER HOME

Carter edges out of the front door, gun up, in battle mode. He scans the area. Checks Rashid's VAN is empty.

CARTER
It's clear, let's go!

Nicole sprints out of the house. They get into their car, and Carter SPEEDS AWAY as we --

CUT TO:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - MULLINS' OFFICE

Rebecca reviewing CASE FILES with Mullins. She's relentless, and you get the sense she's trying his patience. Opening the next file --

REBECCA
Onto the Haddad Network...

MULLINS
I'm actually up to speed on the Haddads. From the point the CIA said they'd gone inactive and deserted their compound --

REBECCA
(cuts him off)
-- Which didn't make sense to me, so I requested a ground recon. It turns out they were active, they just found a way to avoid our satellite passes.

MULLINS
And that's... what I was about to say.

REBECCA
Sorry. I just want to make sure nothing's overlooked.

MULLINS
I understand. I'm on it, Rebecca.

She takes a beat, then --

REBECCA
I also noticed you made some personnel changes.

MULLINS
Where I thought better choices were available.
REBECCA
Better than Bashir? He's the expert on extremist social media --

MULLINS
Rebecca --
(gently)
You're the one who chose me as your replacement. You need to trust me to do the job.

Rebecca realizes he's right --

REBECCA
You're right. Running CTU... it's like a drug. Not easy to come down from.

He nods, gets it. Still --

MULLINS
Or maybe you're not ready to let go yet. If not, maybe you want to talk about it.

Rebecca is grateful for his sincere concern. There's real intimacy and affection between these long-time colleagues.

REBECCA
I'm fine, Keith. Really.

As he takes a measure of her sincerity --

REBECCA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Did I ever tell you the party tried getting John to run four years ago?

MULLINS
No.

REBECCA
The only reason he said no was because of me. He knew I couldn't track Bin-Khalid and work on his campaign at the same time. So I promised him, once we got Bin-Khalid, it would be his turn.

MULLINS
John's lucky to have you.

REBECCA
We're lucky to have each other.

MULLINS
He'll make a great President.
REBECCA
And you’ll make a great Director.

Rebecca’s phone RINGS. She frowns at the CODE NAME on the caller ID --

REBECCA (CONT’D)
Sorry, I need to take this.

MULLINS
No worries, I’ll catch up on calls.

Rebecca exits Mullins’ office into --

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY

Once out of earshot, Rebecca answers --

REBECCA
(into phone)
Carter?

ADD IN A BOX:

EXT. VIRGINIA ROADS / INT. CARTER'S CAR - MOVING

Carter driving fast, running an anti-surveillance routine, checking his mirrors. Talking fast, adrenalized:

CARTER
(into phone)
We're blown -- the whole squad.

REBECCA
What?

CARTER
Bin-Khalid's people know who we are -- our new names. Three of them just broke into our house.

REBECCA
My God...

CARTER
They're dead. But they said they'd killed Murdoch, Jackson, Geddes, and Nichols. And their families --

A beat as Carter controls his emotions. Nicole, up front in the car with Carter, also registers this.

CARTER (CONT'D)
-- I tried to reach them, no one responded... I think it all just happened. Marcus and I are the only ones left.
A beat, Rebecca's mind racing.

REBECCA
Your wife, is she okay?

CARTER
Yes -- but you need to know -- this isn't about revenge.

REBECCA
What do you mean?

CARTER
They're looking for a strongbox they think one of us stole from Bin-Khalid's compound.
(beat)
And I overheard them say -- if they don't find it, an attack can't happen.

Rebecca reacts, mind racing --

REBECCA
What kind of attack?

CARTER
That's all they said. But the answer's in that strongbox. And Marcus has to be the one who took it.

REBECCA
Why would he do that?

Carter hesitates, then --

CARTER
The war was really messing up his head. I thought I could pull him through... told myself he'd be okay on the Bin-Khalid op, long as I had his back...
(realizing the enormity)
I was wrong.

REBECCA
Do you know where he is?

CARTER
No. He's paranoid, lives off the grid. But I'll send you the payphone he called me from. CTU can find him that way.

She looks each way, then --

REBECCA
I can't use CTU for this...
CARTER
Why not?

REBECCA
Besides me, only three people had
access to your squad's new identities.
The Directors of CIA and NSA...

She LOOKS AT MULLINS through the glass wall of his office.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
And as of three weeks ago, Keith
Mullins. He was my number two, now
he's Director of CTU.

CARTER
You think he gave us up?

Rebecca shakes her head, mourning the thought --

REBECCA
It would explain the timing -- why
this is happening now. But I hope
to God it's not him.

CARTER
But you can't take the chance if it
is.

REBECCA
No... So if I find Marcus, I'll
need someone to bring him in... and
everyone here reports to Mullins
now.

(beat)
Carter, you're the only one I can
trust.

Carter sees Nicole looking at him, following his side of
this.

CARTER
I'll do it. But first I need to get
Nicole somewhere safe.

Relieved, Rebecca tells him --

REBECCA
I wish I could help. But the police
and FBI -- the safe houses --
everything's on the same network Bin-
Khalid's people compromised. If Nicole
shows up anywhere in the system,
they can get to her.

Which gives Carter pause for a moment. Then --
CARTER
Call me when you find Marcus. And
I'll bring him in.

FULL SCREEN:

Carter ends the call. Sees Nicole looking at him.

CARTER (CONT'D)
I'm just going to get Marcus. And
hopefully this strongbox.

NICOLE
While the people who came to kill us
are trying to do exactly the same
thing. This isn't your job.

CARTER
Nicole, there may be an attack. I
have to do what I can.

Said as a deep truth, a creed. Then he checks his mirrors
and busts a U-TURN.

NICOLE
Where are we going?

CARTER
I'm taking you to a safe house.
(beat)
Rebecca arranged it.

As we wonder why Carter lied...

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - MULLINS' OFFICE

Rebecca steps back into Mullins' office. He's just finished
a call.

MULLINS
Everything okay?

Looking at him with new eyes --

REBECCA
Something came up. With John's
campaign. Is there an office I can
use to make calls?

MULLINS
There's still that empty one in
operations.

REBECCA
Thanks.

Off Mullins, watching her go --
INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM

A dozen CTU analysts in a meeting led by an ALPHA NERD.

ALPHA NERD
Instead of letting NSA pre-parse the data, I want us to begin analyzing the raw streams.

Andy is furiously taking notes. Looks over to Gia, sees she's taking no notes, looks vaguely bored. He shakes his head to himself. His phone vibrates, he steps away to answer:

ANDY
(whispers into phone)
Rebecca?

BOX WITH:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY

Rebecca making her way to the office Mullins mentioned.

REBECCA
(into phone)
I need to see you right away. But no one else can know.

He wonders at the urgency in Rebecca's voice.

ANDY
I'm in a meeting, if I leave now, people are going to ask why. What's going on?

REBECCA
Just get out of there as soon as you can. I need your help finding someone.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN D.C. - RAILWAY

An unused railway right-of-way. Marcus looks around, nerves fed by paranoia and substances. Pulls up on a chain that dangles down into a DRAIN.

At the end of the chain is a DINGED AND DIRTY STRONGBOX. Marcus quickly checks the contents: foreign cash, a baggie with two or three DIAMONDS, and who knows what else. He slides it into his backpack. Then climbs up and out of the right-of-way as --

INT. STRIP CLUB - STAGE

A bass-heavy song ends as a stripper, JENNIFER, slides down the pole one last time. Her body is oiled and taut, her face is lined from drugs and hard living.
She moves to an area right off the stage. Is reaching for a robe when she hears her PHONE RINGING in the pocket. As she answers it, she sees she's missed multiple calls.

JENNIFER
(into phone)
Hello?

ADD IN A BOX:

EXT. DOWNTOWN D.C. STREET

Marcus at a payphone near the railway right-of-way, the BACKPACK with the strongbox slung over his shoulder. Coiled and tense, but relieved she picked up.

MARCUS
(into phone)
Where've you been? You know how many times I've called?

She's used to having to calm him --

JENNIFER
I told you, I'm working the lunch shift today --

MARCUS
-- We need to get out of town.

JENNIFER
(sighs)
Why this time?

MARCUS
Jen, this is real -- they found me -- talked to Pete at the apartment. If we don't leave, we're dead.

JENNIFER
Marcus, come on...

MARCUS
I just got the box, I'll meet you at Union Station. Downstairs, in the old waiting room. Train to Chicago leaves in forty.

Off her hesitation --

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Jen, I'm leaving. And I want you to be with me. Please, just be there, okay?

JENNIFER
Okay...
STAY WITH MARCUS

As he hangs up, relieved she agreed. Looks around. Then puts his head down and walks quickly away. Then, GO BACK TO:

BACKSTAGE AT THE STRIP CLUB

Jennifer throws on a jacket. She heads for the employee entrance, passing the MANAGER.

    MANAGER
    Where do you think you're going?

    JENNIFER
    Something came up.

    MANAGER
    There's three hours left on your shift.

She ignores him, pushes the door open and exits into --

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND STRIP CLUB

She walks quickly toward her car. Fishes for her keys...

THEN -- A HAND CLAMPS OVER HER MOUTH, and one of Malik's men drags her, struggling, into --

INT. UTILITY VAN

Malik slides the van door closed. Gets in her face.

    MALIK
    Where's your boyfriend? Where's Grimes?

Off Jennifer's terror...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN

Andy exits his meeting, crosses CTU. Looking each way as he approaches --

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Rebecca at her desk, working at her laptop.

ON HER LAPTOP SCREEN -- A LOCAL NEWSCAST LIVE STREAM. POLICE VEHICLES clustered at a SUBURBAN HOUSE (the home of the Ranger we saw Rashid execute in the opening of Act One).

Rebecca looks up as Andy walks in. Worried as always --

ANDY
What did I do, am I in trouble?

REBECCA
Close the door. What I'm going to tell you can't leave this room.

Andy shuts the door behind him.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
There's been an attack against the Army Rangers who killed Bin-Khalid. I just confirmed that four of them are dead. Their families, too.

It's a moment before Andy can respond.

ANDY
Does Mullins know?

REBECCA
Only Director-level personnel had access to the squad's identities. Including me -- and Keith.

ANDY
Wait -- are you saying...? What are you saying?

REBECCA
I'm saying it's possible Keith gave up the Rangers. So we need to do this in secret.

ANDY
Do what in secret?
REBECCA
I need dedicated satellite and traffic camera recon. Independent and undetectable by anyone in CTU, and ready to work in ten minutes. Can you do that?

ANDY
Yeah. But --

REBECCA
What?

ANDY
What if you're wrong about this?

REBECCA
I'm not. And what happened to those Rangers, it's just the start of something worse. There's some kind of attack coming --

CUT TO:

INSIDE A HALLWAY LOCKER

-- As it's opened to REVEAL high school junior AMIRA DUDAYEV. Sexy, a couple of tattoos and piercings. She shoves a couple of books into her locker and shuts it.

INT. MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY

Between periods. KIDS moving up and down the hall. Amira turns to see DREW PHELPS approaching. He's the last person she wants to engage with.

DREW
Did you get my texts?

AMIRA
All sixteen of them, yes.

DREW
You need to talk to me. I'm worried about you --

AMIRA
I told you to leave me alone. Stop calling me, stop texting me and stop following me.

She starts to move past him, but he blocks her way.

DREW
Amira -- wait --

AMIRA
Get out of my way --
She tries to get around him, but he grabs her arm and yanks her back --

AMIRA (CONT'D)

Let me go!

HARRIS (O.S.)

That's enough!

Drew turns to see MR. HARRIS, a paunchy mid-thirties chemistry teacher, standing in a classroom doorway. Amira hurries off down the hall. Drew watches after her, frustrated. Starts after her --

HARRIS (CONT'D)

Hang on, Drew. In here.

Harris motions Drew into the empty classroom. Drew doesn't move.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

Now.

Drew reluctantly obeys.

INT. MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM

Harris shuts the door.

HARRIS

I don't care what's going on, you don't get physical. Understand?

Drew nods, sullen.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

Now talk to me.

DREW

It's between us.

HARRIS

Not after what I just saw. (beat)

Drew?

Drew hesitates --

DREW

It's... I saw something on her texts.

HARRIS

You looked at her texts? Why?

DREW

I just... I was upset. (MORE)
DREW (CONT'D)
I asked her if she ever wanted to be, you know, more than just a study partner... and she said no...

HARRIS
And you wanted to see if she was with someone else.

DREW
Yeah. But it's not that...

HARRIS
Then what?

DREW
The things she was texting... It was like, terrorist stuff.

Harris reacts.

HARRIS
Terrorist?

DREW
She was talking to someone about the Koran, about how America's evil, how the people around her are evil, and how she's ready to prove herself.

HARRIS
Prove herself how?

DREW
It sounded like she was planning to do something violent. Here. At school.

Harris is silent. These are things that always happen somewhere else.

DREW (CONT'D)
I think it's why she came here from Chechnya, with her brother. To do this.

HARRIS
Drew -- do you understand how serious this is, what you're telling me?

DREW
Of course, that's why I was trying to talk to her.

Harris thinks for a moment.

HARRIS
Just stay away from her, okay? Don't contact her in any way.
DREW
What are you gonna do?

HARRIS
I have to follow policy. I'm going to talk to the principal.

DREW
Amira will know I told you.

HARRIS
There's nothing I can do about that. If you're right about her, someone has to intervene, now.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. OUTSKIRTS

Carter speeds through a neighborhood crushed by poverty, scores of chain link fences and boarded-up windows.

INT. CARTER'S CAR - MOVING

Nicole checks the bandage on her wound, begins taking notice where they are.

NICOLE
Where are we going?

CARTER
Need to make a stop.

Carter turns into the driveway of --

EXT. ISAAC'S COMPOUND - COUNT HOUSE

A neighborhood house turned into a stronghold. Thick bars on the windows, mounted SECURITY CAMERAS.

Two GANGBANGERS guard the front gate. Massive, muscled men with prison tats, clearly carrying. As Carter drives up, their hands flash to their sides, ready for business.

IN THE CAR

Nicole realizes exactly where they are now.

NICOLE
Eric -- ?

Carter gestures for her to wait, then rolls down the window. The Gangbanger sees Eric. With stunned recognition:

GANGBANGER
Damn.

CARTER
Troy. I'm here to see my brother.
The Gangbanger glances at the house with dread. Then to Carter:

**GANGBANGER**
You *sure* about that?

**CARTER**
Open the gate. Tell him I'm here.

The Gangbanger reluctantly signals to the other one, then gets on his WALKIE. As the second Gangbanger starts rolling back the gate --

**NICOLE**
Eric, what are you doing?

**CARTER**
Getting you safe.

**NICOLE**
You said Rebecca was arranging something.

**CARTER**
I know what I said.

With the gate open, Carter starts to pull forward.

**NICOLE**
Hell no, Eric -- stop the car --

Nicole starts to open the car door, but Carter grabs her by the arm and holds her.

**CARTER**
Nicole --

But she wrenches free and scrambles out of the car --

**EXT. ISAAC'S COUNT HOUSE**

Nicole heads for the gate. Carter climbs out, circles around and intercepts her.

**CARTER**
Listen to me, I can't take you to the police or the FBI, Bin-Khalid's people are in their systems --

**NICOLE**
-- You lied to me --

**CARTER**
-- I knew this is how you'd react.

**NICOLE**
Because it's crazy!

(MORE)
NICOLE (CONT'D)
(to the Gangbanger)
Troy, open the gate --

The Gangbanger doesn't move. Carter grabs her shoulders.

CARTER
This is the only thing that makes sense. Isaac's not on anyone's books. He's got guns. He's got men. He can protect you, Nicole. You'll be safe.

NICOLE
And what about you? What's Isaac going to do when he sees you?

He's about to respond when they HEAR a DOOR OPEN and SHUT. Carter turns to see his older brother ISAAC standing on the front stoop, gazing at Carter in amazement. The clear leader of this crew, Isaac is flanked by two other GANGBANGERS.

Carter signals Nicole to stay put. Steps toward Isaac, who doesn't move. These two haven't seen each other in a long time. Carter stops before his older brother. A silent standoff.

CARTER
Isaac.

His expression cold, Isaac takes in the dried blood on Carter's face and clothes. Glances over at Nicole, sees her bandaged arm.

ISAAC
Someone's had a rough morning. The hell you doing here?

CARTER
I need your help.

ISAAC
My help.

CARTER
What I did in the service, it's coming back around. People are trying to kill me.

ISAAC
What's that gotta do with me?

CARTER
I have to try and stop them. But not unless Nicole is safe. I need you to protect her.

ISAAC
So go ask your government.
CARTER
I can't.

ISAAC
Why not?

CARTER
Because someone in the government's working with the terrorists.

Isaac laughs.

ISAAC
I've been telling you your whole life, you can only trust your own. Look at you now.

CARTER
Are you going to take care of Nicole or not?

Isaac descends the stoop, gets in Carter's face.

ISAAC
You show up like this? After you stole my girl and went off to play Boy Scout? What I should do -- bury your ass right here and now.

Carter holds Isaac's look.

CARTER
If you won't do it for me, do it for Nicole.

Isaac glances over to Nicole, who has been watching their exchange. There's a history between them. To Carter:

ISAAC
I can get behind that.

CARTER
No one can know where she is. These people after me, they're serious.

ISAAC
So am I. You won't need to worry about her.

Carter's cell phone BUZZES. He steps away, answers --

CARTER
(into cell)
Carter --

ADD IN A BOX:
INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Rebecca on her cell.

REBECCA
(into cell)
Marcus called you from a payphone in
downtown D.C., corner of Church and
Newberry. We're going to try and
track him forward from there.

ON REBECCA'S LAPTOP: a SATELLITE VIEW of Marcus making his
earlier call on the payphone.

ADD IN ANOTHER BOX:

Andy at his station, his monitor mirroring Rebecca's. Gia
works nearby, unaware of what Andy's up to.

CARTER
Got it. I'll head toward the city.

REBECCA
I'll contact you as soon as we catch
up with Marcus.

STAY WITH CARTER as he hangs up. He moves to Nicole.

CARTER
Nicole --

NICOLE
I know. You need to do this.

She's looking at him, as if seeing him for the first time.
Then pulls him into an embrace.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
Be careful, Eric.

CARTER
I will. I love you.

They separate. After a nod to Isaac, Carter moves to the car
and climbs in. The gate is pulled aside, and Carter backs
the car out.

OFF CARTER'S POV --

Nicole watching him, strangely resolved. As the gate closes
on her...

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - ANDY'S STATION

Andy at his station, tracking Grimes' progress via satellite.

ANDY
(whispers into headset)
D.C. has overlapping satellite coverage -- so I can reconstruct Grimes' route in 4-D.

Andy clicks, and the image of MARCUS BECOMES THREE DIMENSIONAL. He's able to ROTATE AROUND MARCUS to view him from other angles. As he steps through frames, following Grimes...

ANDY (CONT'D)
Grimes boarded the number 13 bus about five minutes ago. Heading east, toward Union Station.

ADD IN A BOX:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Rebecca follows this on her screen, MIRRORED with Andy's.

REBECCA
And you're sure no one here can detect what we're doing?

ANDY
Of course. I wrote the countermeasure myself.

Rebecca is on headset with Andy, and on her cell with Carter --

REBECCA
(into phone)
He just got on a bus headed for Union Station. How far are you?

INT. CARTER'S CAR - MOVING

Carter driving, Downtown D.C. in the approaching distance.

CARTER
Less than fifteen.

Hold on Carter, intense and focused, then --

FULL SCREEN: with Rebecca, as she checks her watch, realizes what she has to do. Dials her cell.
REBECCA
Hi. It's me.

ADD IN A BOX:

INT. LIMOUSINE - MOVING

Donovan in the back of a limo, sitting opposite Cynthia.

DONOVAN
Hi, hon. We're heading over now. Cynthia just got a last-minute confirmation from the Haliwells.

REBECCA
John, listen --
(beat)
I'm sorry, but there's a situation at CTU. I can't make the fundraiser.

He frowns --

DONOVAN
Why? What's going on?

REBECCA
I can't explain now. But when I can, I promise you'll understand.

He absorbs this as she shifts into problem solving mode --

REBECCA (CONT'D)
I know you built your speech around me getting the medal, but you can use the Boston speech instead. "Give into fear, and we give into our enemies..."

DONOVAN
I'm not worried about my speech, I'm worried about you.

REBECCA
I'm okay. I love you. I'll call later.

FULL SCREEN:

Resume with Donovan as the call ends. He looks up, sees Cynthia has followed all of this.

CYNTHIA
I'll let the staffers know.
(beat)
But some of the donors are going to be very disappointed.
DONOVAN
Then I'll have to be even more charming than usual.

Donovan trying to make light of this, but to Cynthia, the calculus is clear.

CYNTHIA
I'm saying, it may affect their contributions. We need every dollar if we're going to pull off Iowa.

DONOVAN
If Rebecca can't make it, it's for a good reason.

Which ends the conversation. But it's clear from his expression he's worried, too.

INT. MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - LIBRARY COMPUTER LAB

A LIBRARIAN lectures Mr. Harris' class -- who sit in front of computers. Mr. Harris watches, off to the side.

LIBRARIAN
Google doesn't qualify as research. The internet is full of as much bad information as good...

Amira in the back row, gets a TEXT, the message simply, "Now." She checks no one's looking, then slides out of her chair.

LIBRARY AISLES

Amira turns this way and that, heading deeper into the aisles of books, until she reaches a darkened nook and faces --

HARRIS

Who must have slipped away, too.

AMIRA
What's going on?

HARRIS
I pulled Drew aside after what happened. (beat) Amira, he read our texts.

AMIRA
What?

HARRIS
He knows you're planning an attack at the school with someone -- doesn't know it's me.
AMIRA
So what did you tell him?

HARRIS
That I'd take it to the principal, to buy us time... But the point is he knows...

Harris worried, nervous. But Amira is calm, her mind already working on a solution.

AMIRA
Okay... I'm going to see him next period... I'll tell him I want to talk. Somewhere away from school, alone.

HARRIS
And then what?

AMIRA
We'll deal with it.

The reality of what she's saying hits Harris hard.

HARRIS
Amira, I don't know...

AMIRA
If you can't, my brother will. But I'd rather he didn't know about it.

She sees Harris is still anxious. Puts her hand on his arm, keeps her eyes fixed on his.

AMIRA (CONT'D)
David... it's just Drew. If you're having trouble with that...

HARRIS
I just -- hadn't prepared myself.

She moves closer, kisses him tenderly, working her power over him. Quietly, their faces inches apart --

AMIRA
I need to know when the time comes, I can count on you.

He looks into her eyes --

HARRIS
I won't disappoint you.

She smiles, presses herself against him. This time the kiss is passionate. Off Harris, thoroughly fallen...

CUT TO:
INT. ISAAC'S COUNT HOUSE - MAIN ROOM

Currency counting machines, ingredients to cut drugs. Smoke hangs in the air, ARMED MEN watch a game in the next room while others count and shrink wrap stacks of cash. Isaac walks through this, on the phone --

    ISAAC
    (into phone)
    Tell him he does business here, he tows the line -- my line. That he gets one mistake, and he just made it.

Isaac ends the call. Enters --

INT. ISAAC'S COUNT HOUSE - SPARE ROOM

Nicole has been set up in a sparsely furnished room -- bed, bathroom, TV. She looks up as Isaac enters.

    ISAAC
    (re: her bandaged arm)
    That hurt? Want something for it?

    NICOLE
    Nothing you have here, Isaac.

    ISAAC
    I meant Tylenol. But okay.

He's about to leave, she stops him --

    NICOLE
    I'm sorry. I appreciate you taking me in.

    ISAAC
    Even though this is the last place you want to be.

    NICOLE
    It's not that...

    ISAAC
    Then what?

    NICOLE
    Trust me, you don't want to hear it.

The way she says that, he realizes --

    ISAAC
    Cause it's about you and Eric.
    (off her nod)
    Nicole -- it's okay. You and me, that's water under the bridge.
Which surprises her. Skeptical --

NICOLE

Really?

ISAAC

I say what I mean.

She hesitates... but her need to talk wins out.

NICOLE

Eric... hasn't been right since he got back. I thought it was because of what he went through over there, like some kind of PTSD.

A beat.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

But when he killed those men who came after us... I understood. It's not PTSD. He misses it. What he did this morning, what he's doing now... It's what he needs.

(beat)

The life he says he wants with me, it'll never be enough for him.

A woman facing the end of her marriage. Isaac not comfortable with all this emotion. The best he can do is --

ISAAC

All I can tell you is -- Eric was fine here, working for me. He took off cause of you. Cause he wanted you to have something better.

(beat)

And that part I get.

He says that with his eyes on Nicole, and you realize his feelings for her are still there. But then, his blinged-out girlfriend AISHA appears in the doorway.

AISHA

Royo's men called. They're on their way.

Aisha's talking to Isaac, but she stares at Nicole. Who stares right back. Bad blood here.

ISAAC

(to Nicole)

Check on you later.

Isaac exits --
INT. ISAAC'S COUNT HOUSE - MAIN ROOM

Isaac moves toward the main room with Aisha. Before she can say anything --

ISAAC
Eric asked me to keep her safe.

AISHA
Bet he didn't have to ask you twice.

ISAAC
Aisha -- she's my brother's wife.

AISHA
Like that would stop you starting up with her again.

ISAAC
Don't get crazy.

AISHA
Don't get distracted. The buy with Royo -- it doesn't go down right, you're out of business. Might as well put the bullet in your own head.

ISAAC
Just get the money ready. And you don't tell anyone about her being here. Understand?

AISHA
Who am I going to tell?

Said with attitude. He grabs her arm, gets right in her face, and for the first time, true menace in his eyes.

ISAAC
She's under my protection, Aisha. Tell me you understand.

AISHA
I understand.

Off Aisha, a testament to displeasure --

CUT TO:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - ANDY'S STATION

Andy rotates the 4-D imagery of Marcus. Whispers into his headset --

ANDY
Grimes just got off the bus, he's headed into Union Station.
(MORE)
ANDY (CONT'D)
He really does seem paranoid. Keeps looking around.

ADD IN A BOX:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Rebecca follows this on her screen --

REBECCA
(into headset)
Except he actually is being watched.
(into cell)
Carter, he just entered Union Station.

ADD IN A BOX:

INT. CARTER'S CAR - MOVING

Carter makes a turn, altering his route.

CARTER
I'm two blocks away. Can you track him inside?

REBECCA
We'll hack their cameras.

RESUME FULL SCREEN:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - ANDY'S STATION

Andy sees Gia coming his way. He stands and turns to face her, his body blocking his screen.

GIA
Check it out -- this is crazy.

ANDY
What?

GIA
Rebecca Ingram is running a classified stream through the office she's using.

Andy tries really hard not to react.

ANDY
Really? How -- would you know that?

GIA
She's trying to conceal it. But she's using a countermeasure that's real grade school.
ANDY
Grade school?

GIA
Yeah, I'm running my own sigma code, that saw right through it. She's accessing intel she doesn't have clearance for.

Andy doesn't know if he's more panicked, or insulted. She misreads his reaction.

GIA (CONT'D)

ANDY
Hold on -- I'm sure there's an explanation.

GIA
She can tell it to Mullins.

As she moves away to make the call, Andy sits and whispers into his headset --

ANDY
Rebecca, you get all that? I have to pull the plug.

ADD IN A BOX:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Rebecca looking at the mirror of Andy's screen -- which now shows a dozen surveillance cam views of Union Station.

REBECCA
Not until we locate Grimes.

Andy sees Mullins, troubled, move toward Rebecca's office.

ANDY
Here comes Mullins.

REBECCA
Just find him.
(into phone)
Carter?

ADD IN A BOX:

EXT. / INT. UNION STATION

Carter runs into the station, phone to his ear. He moves through the main area, looking around. It's a big place, with dozens of hallways and trackways.
CARTER
I'm here. You have anything?

REBECCA
We're still looking. I'll call you as soon as I have him --

FULL SCREEN as she ends the call, shuts down her screens as:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Mullins enters and doesn't waste any time.

MULLINS
Rebecca, I just got a report you're on our system.

Rebecca hesitates, then confesses --

REBECCA
It was an emergency -- I needed to crunch polling data for John.

MULLINS
Polling data.

REBECCA
Analyzing public databases -- nothing classified -- for an ad buy. That I needed to get done right away.

It doesn't work --

MULLINS
Rebecca, please. My analyst says you're accessing Metro-area satellites. What are you doing, running some kind of op?
(often her silence)
Rebecca, talk to me.

A beat, then --

REBECCA
I can't. But I have to finish this. Please, just leave this alone.

Mullins shakes his head, baffled at this --

MULLINS
I can't, you don't have clearance anymore. I have to shut you down. You'd do the same.

He turns to lift the phone from the wall. Rebecca takes a STUN GUN out of her bag and jams it into Mullins' neck.
He spasms, drops the phone -- stumbles back into her, grabs her blouse -- this is messy -- she keeps the stun gun pressed into him until he goes down, unconscious.

She takes a breath. Sees Mullins ripped her blouse on the way down, but that's the least of her problems. Off Rebecca, mind racing.

INT. UNION STATION

A beat of Carter moving, searching. Frustrated he's not finding Grimes, when his cell rings --

    CARTER
    Yeah?

REBECCA

Has her screens back up, delivers what she must have just got from Andy --

    REBECCA
    Marcus took the northwest stairs down to the lower level. No cameras down there.

    CARTER
    On it.

Carter ends the call and makes his way to the stairs...

INT. UNION STATION - STAIRWAY / LOWER LEVEL

Carter comes down into a little-used, not renovated level of the old station. He doesn't know who or what he'll be facing, holds his Desert Eagle at his side, calls out --

    CARTER
    Marcus, it's Carter. I know you're here. We have to talk.

No answer. Carter moves forward, searching.

EXT. UNION STATION

Malik's utility van pulls up across from the station.

INT. UTILITY VAN

Malik and his two men arm up with machine pistols. Jennifer's body is wrapped in a tarp in back. Malik getting bad news from some kind of off screen handler --

    MALIK
    (into cell)
    Yes, I understand... We're at the station now. We'll get it done.
Malik ends the call, tells his men --

MALIK (CONT'D)
Rashid is dead, and Carter is missing. We have to assume we've been compromised.

His men nod, sobered. But know what's at stake. Malik slides the van door open. Sees a PATROLMAN talking to a PARKING CONTROL OFFICER. Motions for his men to wait, as we --

INT. UNION STATION - LOWER LEVEL

Carter nudges open the men's room door, calls inside --

CARTER
Marcus. Come on, man.

Carter hears something behind him, spins, gun up. Sees MARCUS at the other end of the hallway.

MARCUS
What are you doing here? How'd you find me?

Moving toward Marcus --

CARTER
Where is it?

MARCUS
What?

CARTER
The strongbox you stole the night of the raid!

MARCUS
What are you talking about?

Carter reaches Marcus, who has backed up into the wall.

CARTER
You know what I'm talking about. The rest of the squad's dead -- their wives and kids, too. Bin-Khalid's people killed them looking for it.

MARCUS
No...

CARTER
Tell me where it is.

Marcus won't meet Carter's eyes... but knows he has no choice:
MARCUS
In my backpack! There was money and some diamonds, but there's hardly anything left. It was Bin-Khalid's stash.

CARTER
And you decided it belonged to you?

MARCUS
You know what that war did to me. I was owed.

CARTER
You were owed? Marcus, you taking that, it's why everyone's dead!

What?

Carter controls his anger --

CARTER
There's something in there. That Bin-Khalid's people need for an attack. Give it to me. Now.

Carter grabs the backpack from Marcus. Pulls out his cell.

MARCUS
Who are you calling?

CARTER
Ingram -- we need to get this to her as soon as --

When Carter tries to make the call, he hears DIGITAL WHITE NOISE, like when his phone was jammed earlier. He realizes --

CARTER (CONT'D)
They're here. Come on --

Carter grabs a stunned Marcus. They run as Malik and his two Jihadis appear at the end of the hallway. They fire MACHINE PISTOLS as Carter dives with Marcus around a corner. AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE chews the walls. Malik realizes --

MALIK
He's with Carter...

AROUND THE CORNER

Carter hands the backpack to Marcus, freeing his hands to fire around the corner, trying to buy time.

CARTER
Who knew you were here?
MARCUS
Just Jennifer -- my girlfriend.

You see Grimes realize what must have happened to her. The hallway ends at a locked door. Carter shoots the lock, drags Marcus in with him, as Malik and his men fire.

INT. UNION STATION - STAIRWAY / UTILITY TUNNEL

A stairway leads down to a UTILITY TUNNEL. TRAINS RUMBLE nearby. Carter sees the FAINT GLOW OF SUNLIGHT in the distance. Running toward the light --

CARTER
Come on!

They run -- Marcus breathless, the tunnel curving. MALIK AND HIS MEN burst out into the tunnel, see Carter and Marcus disappear around the curve. They pursue as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Rebecca opens the door to let Andy in --

ANDY
I can't get away for long. What do you need, what happened with --

He sees Mullins lying unconscious, arms and legs restrained with electrical cords. Andy is rendered speechless.

REBECCA
He was going to detain me and stop what we're doing. I couldn't let that happen.

Andy's eyes go big, he's freaking out --

ANDY
I'm going to spend the rest of my life in supermax.

REBECCA
Stop, that's not going to happen.

ANDY
Why not?

REBECCA
As soon as Carter gets his hands on Marcus Grimes and the strongbox, we'll have what we need to prove our case.

(beat)
If Mullins isn't the leak, he'll understand. If he is, he's the one going to supermax.

Andy doesn't know what to say.

ANDY
People will start wondering where he is.

REBECCA
Then we better hurry. I managed to tie him up. But I need your help dragging him into the closet.

ANDY
Oh God.

REBECCA
Come on, before he wakes up.
Off this --

INT. UNION STATION - UTILITY TUNNEL

Carter and Marcus reach the end of the utility tunnel, and run out into --

EXT. H STREET CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The H STREET SPUR UNDER CONSTRUCTION. The road is below grade, in a cut -- the construction site is a pit with high sloping walls. No easy way out and no cover, except for a --

STACK OF CONCRETE PIPES

Enormous 15-foot diameter concrete pipe segments, piled high. Carter shouts to Marcus --

CARTER
Break left, I'll cover you!

They run for the stack of concrete segments. Marcus takes cover behind the stack as --

CARTER hits the dirt in front of the stack. Checks his mag -- SIX ROUNDS LEFT -- then eases himself up on his elbows. Lines up -- then FIRES as Malik and his two men burst out of the tunnel into the sunlight.

Carter hits one Jihadi CENTER MASS. The man staggers but is protected by his body armor. Which forces Carter to fire again. A head shot puts the man down.

Malik and his remaining Jihadi, fall back as Carter crawls --

BEHIND THE STACK OF CONCRETE PIPES

Carter joins Marcus, tells him --

CARTER (CONT'D)
I nailed one of them, but I've only got three rounds left.

Mind racing, Carter gestures INSIDE A CONCRETE PIPE.

CARTER (CONT'D)
Get in there -- and try not to get shot.

MARCUS
I didn't know any of this was going to happen.

CARTER
Get in.

Marcus crawls into the pipe in the other stack. Carter tosses in a wedge of brush, which Marcus uses to cover himself.
Then Carter turns to the stack of pipes that's giving them cover. Wedges a foot between two pipes, and CLIMBS. Gets to the top of the stack and risks a look over --

MALIK AND THE REMAINING JIHADI

Are moving forward, warily. Have covered half the distance toward the pipes. They SPRAY FIRE at Carter when he appears.

Carter ducks back down. Aims his Desert Eagle at one of the METAL CABLES that holds the stack together at each end. He FIRES at one of the cables, cutting it in two.

He fires at the cable securing the other end of the stack. Has to expend another bullet to sever it. The PIPE jostles a little, now precariously balanced at the top of the stack.

Carter puts his back against the pipe and SHOVES. Keeps SHOVING until the TOP PIPE starts to roll forward and --

THE CONCRETE PIPE ROLLS OFF THE STACK

And hits the ground. The 15-FOOT WIDE AND THIRTY-FOOT LONG pipe segment rolls toward --

MALIK AND THE REMAINING JIHADI -- Reverse course but continue to fire as --

CARTER jumps down from the stack, and runs behind the rolling pipe, using it as cover to get closer to them.

The JIHADI TRIPS. The pipe catches up and rolls over him. Crushes him with a sickly CRUNCH, as --

THE PIPE ROLLS TO A STOP

Malik is distracted by this long enough for Carter to swing around the side of the pipe and levels his gun --

CARTER

Throw down your weapon.

Carter has Malik lined up in his sights. Would rather take him alive -- but Malik has no intention of that. Malik swings his machine pistol at Carter, who has no choice. FIRES his last shot, hitting Malik square in the forehead.

ON CARTER

As he lowers his gun. And now we see Nicole was right. He's no longer a man with an unrewarding job, staring at himself in a mirror. He's a warrior, not rejoicing in his victory, but completed by it. It's what he lives for.

Dusty and spent, he makes his way over to --

MARCUS' HIDING PLACE
Carter pulls the brush out of the pipe where he hid Marcus --

CARTER (CONT'D)
They're all down. Come on, let's --

Marcus is gone. Along with the backpack.

CARTER (CONT'D)
Marcus?

He turns, looking in all directions -- eyes settling on footprints in one of the sloping dirt walls. Marcus must have used all the distraction to climb out. As Carter SHOUTS IN UTTER FRUSTRATION --

CARTER (CONT'D)
MARCUS!!!!!!

No answer. Carter digs out his cell, dials.

CARTER (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Rebecca. We've got a problem.

SHRINK TO BOXES

EXT. D.C. STREET

Grimes moving under the cover of trees, making sure no one can track him from above. Spots a CAB and hails it.

INT. MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - LIBRARY COMPUTER LAB

Drew is at a workstation when a nearby STUDENT passes him a folded note. Drew opens it: "TALK AT LUNCH?" Drew sees Amira sitting across the room. She offers him a conciliatory smile. He smiles back.

INT. MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - CORRIDOR

Harris moves down a school corridor, a messenger bag over his shoulder. He checks to see no one's watching. Then heads down a flight of stairs.

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Rebecca and Andy drag the unconscious Mullins over to the storage closet.

INT. LIMOUSINE

Donovan on his way to the fundraiser. Looks out the window, concerned.

INT. ISAAC'S COUNT HOUSE - SPARE ROOM

Nicole lies back on the bed. Thinking about her future with Carter... or if there is one.
EXT. H STREET CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Carter climbs out of the construction site to the street.
Looks each way for Grimes, but he's nowhere to be seen. As --

FULL SCREEN:

INT. CAB - MOVING

Grimes in the back seat, opens the strongbox on his lap, so
the DRIVER can't see. Searches for what he now knows must be
hidden.

He pushes aside the stacks of foreign currency, notices a
SEAM on the bottom of the box. Pries away a FALSE BOTTOM of
sheet metal.

And under it, finds a MICRO SD card.

Grimes spots the driver's cell phone lying on the dash.

        MARCUS
        I'll buy your phone from you.

        CAB DRIVER
        What? It's not for sale.

        MARCUS
        Thousand dollars.

Grimes pushes the money through the slot to the cab driver,
who examines the money, then passes the phone back to Grimes.

Grimes opens the back of the phone, slides the Micro SD card
into an expansion slot. As he opens the file on the card.

INT. CTU HEADQUARTERS - REBECCA'S TEMPORARY OFFICE

Andy is back looking for Grimes as Rebecca reports --

        REBECCA
        (into cell)
        We're still going through camera
        feeds. But so far, there's no sign
        of Grimes.

INTERCUT:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. STREET

Carter on the other end of the call.

        CARTER
        Son of a bitch.

Carter hangs up. Is about to resume what we know is a futile
search when his CELL RINGS.
CARTER (CONT'D)  
(into cell)  
Carter.

**ADD IN A BOX:**

**EXT. TRAFFIC UNDERPASS**

Grimes is out of the cab and now taking cover below an underpass. On the phone he bought from the cab driver --

**MARCUS**  
I found what was in the strongbox.

**CARTER**  
Marcus, where are you?

**MARCUS**  
It's a list of sleeper cells. Names and numbers, codes to activate them. Bin-Khalid recruited them -- can't believe how many. Lot of 'em are Americans. They're in place, Eric, ready to strike, targets all over the country. These codes go out, they all launch their attacks. Waves of them, with no way to stop it. People will die. A lot of people.

**CARTER**  
Tell me where you are. Now.

**MARCUS**  
The government wants this list, they're going to have to pay.

**CARTER**  
The longer that list is out there, the better the chance Bin-Khalid's people will get their hands on it.

**MARCUS**  
Just talk to Rebecca Ingram. Get me what I need.

**CARTER**  
Marcus, wait -- I'm your friend, always looked out for you. Please, don't do this --

But Marcus hangs up. Off Carter, SLAMMED by the call --

**INT. MARSHALL HIGH SCHOOL - BASEMENT / UTILITY ROOM**

Harris unlocks an old, unused UTILITY ROOM. In the back of the room, Harris slides back a tarp from the bottom shelf, REVEALING a WEAPONS CACHE: KALASHNIKOVs, an M-4 RIFLE, two REPEATER GUNS, 30 BORE PISTOLS...
Harris removes a pair of HOMEMADE PIPE BOMBS from his messenger bag. Gingerly adds them to the cache.

**SHRINK DOWN TO A BOX and OTHER BOXES appear alongside...**

**OTHER AMERICANS.** All throughout the country, from all walks of life. Some LONE WOLVES, some with their families or co-workers, all ready to strike when the code is given.

**THE BOXES MULTIPLY** until they fill the screen, the most boxes ever seen on 24, **BOXES UPON BOXES**, until we can't count them all, and they're too small to make out.

OFF this chilling tableau...

END OF SHOW