

THE GREY WOLF

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FADE IN:

EXT. DARK ROAD - TRIPOLI - NIGHT

From the opaque blackness, the RUMBLE of a diesel semi grows as it trundles closer. Distantly, disembodied voices yell in Arabic while many heavy treads pound the ground.

Suddenly, bright HEADLIGHTS from an unmarked, white eighteen-wheeler cut through the crackling darkness before fading away as the truck turns left, slowing.

The semi pulls up to a chain-link gate bearing an Islamic flag with a crescent moon and star. The headlights partially illuminate several heavily-armed Libyan MILITANTS.

One of the wild eyed, turbaned, bearded fanatics checks the driver and then signals to two other guards who open the gates, granting entrance to:

EXT. DOCKYARD - TRIPOLI - NIGHT (AMBIENT SOUNDS CONTINUE)

SUPER: TRIPOLI, LIBYA, JULY 4TH, 0300 HOURS

The white semi creeps into the spacious shipyard as floodlights come on, exposing the barb-wire-fenced paramilitary base of operations.

The Mediterranean Sea glistens black where a docked BULK CARRIER awaits its cargo. The faded lettering on its hull reads 'SEA WOLF' in Arabic.

Suddenly, a ship-to-shore container crane smokes to life.

MILITANT
(in Arabic)
It's here! The package has arrived! Move!

As the commotion escalates, militants hurry to the semi through rows of parked Russian-make military vehicles.

With several gunmen watching, a few men pry open the truck's container.

A LEADER steps up to inspect the shipment. He sees a shadowy hint of the tip of a missile and immediately places a call.

ISLAMIC LEADER
(into phone, heavy accent)
Tell the WOLF... it's here.

CUT TO BLACK

Aggressive PUNCHING o.s. fades in (PRE-LAP).

INT. BEDROOM, WOODNER APARTMENTS - WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY

Largely barren, sterile. Morning sun peeks around the edges of the one window covered by blinds and dull drapes.

An unmade bed sits opposite to a plain BUREAU with no mirror. The upper left drawer juts open, filled with numerous U.S. Army decorations: POW Medal, Purple Hearts, American Defense Service Medals, Distinguished Service Medals, and more. A partially covered, DATED PICTURE revealing a SEAL in uniform hides in the disarray.

In the corner of the room, LINCOLN GREY - 31, 6'3", formidable Delta Force commando - beats wrapped fists into a 100-lb bag. He's a south paw. His short black hair is clumped with sweat; an unruly black beard hides most of his face except intense blue eyes radiating palpable anger. A multitude of scars cover his conditioned upper body.

A VIBRATING on the night stand breaks Lincoln's tormented concentration. He throws a final, brutal punch.

As he bites off the hand wrap, he checks his cell. There's a text from DUTCH: "Security. Tonight." He ignores it, pockets the phone, and grabs a grey t-shirt.

As he passes the open drawer, he slams it shut, forcefully.

REPORTER (PRE-LAP)
It's a beautiful July 4th in the Capital.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - D.C. - DAY

SUPER: WASHINGTON, D.C. JULY 4TH 1000 HOURS

A REPORTER stands near trees and an ice cream stand with kids acting like monkeys behind him trying to get on camera.

REPORTER (CONT'D)
Temperatures are in the mid-80s and climbing with zero percent chance of rain.

SERIES OF SHOTS: Lots of tourists, families in the sun, outdoor entertainment, music blaring from a car stereo.

REPORTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We'll have clear skies and lower humidity tonight perfect for those fireworks...

As the Reporter's voice trails away, Lincoln comes jogging alongside the REFLECTION POOL, dodging the boisterous kids. Sweat stains his t-shirt, tacking it to his torso. Shades cover his eyes. He's the only one alone this holiday.

A MOTHER with a stroller bearing a wailing baby drops her purse, struggling to separate two fighting boys and a Lab.

Lincoln deftly snatches up the bag and hangs it on the stroller's handle. She doesn't even notice.

As he rounds a corner, his phone starts RINGING. He slows to fish it out. Abruptly, he runs into Special Agent DAVE HOLLAND aka "DUTCH" (square-jawed, ex-Army Ranger, 40).

Dutch hangs up his cell, and Lincoln's phone ceases to ring.

LINCOLN
(pissed)
You tracked my cell, Dutch?

DUTCH
Just making sure you're alive. Get in.

Lincoln looks to the curb where another Secret Service agent holds open the back door to a black Suburban. Lincoln sags.

INT./EXT. THE SUBURBAN/SEVENTH STREET - CONTINUOUS

The SUBURBAN drives along the street, headed north.

DUTCH (V.O.)
What's with the beard?

The men are seated in the back. Lincoln's voice is deadpan.

LINCOLN
The Unit's sending me to Iran. I'm infiltrating the Islamic State.

DUTCH
Seriously?

LINCOLN
No.

Glaring behind his shades, Dutch hands over a folder.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
What's this?

DUTCH
We've got high-profile Russians in tonight. Need people who can speak the language. I thought you might be useful. For once.

LINCOLN
I'm touched. But--
(tosses back the folder)

DUTCH
You do realize refusal to cooperate with Secret Service on a national security matter is a federal offense?

LINCOLN
I'll keep that in mind.

DUTCH
(thrusting back folder)
Not asking. You've got fifteen minutes.

LINCOLN
Fine. But this is the last damn time.

The Suburban pulls in to the Woodner Apartments and parks.

Lincoln gets out of the SUV. Dutch tips down his shades, peering at Lincoln, and gestures vaguely to the beard.

DUTCH
And make sure you shave that... thing.

EXT. HARBOR - ISTANBUL - NIGHT

SUPER: ISTANBUL, TURKEY 1800 HOURS

A pristine GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER - new, cutting-edge - is docked in a quiet part of the harbor. Its crew is absent.

Next to the cruiser, the bulk carrier from Tripoli (Sea Wolf) boasts quiet, tense activity.

LIBYAN ISLAMIC MILITANTS, masked, begin to open the unmarked shipping container.

EXT. RUSSO'S ESTATE - WASHINGTON, D.C. - EVENING

SUPER: WASHINGTON, D.C. 1900 HOURS

Luxury vehicles clog the curb of the exclusive neighborhood street. Gates to a grand spread on the Potomac stand open.

A convoy of sedans pull up one by one to the estate. Media cluster around to capture the arrival of REMIZOV INTERNATIONAL (RI) executives, fresh from Moscow.

A LIMO draws up, and all attention converges upon it.

Lincoln - now fully-shaved, suited, and wearing reflective shades - steps up and opens the door.

SERGEI REMIZOV alights - early 50's, darkly handsome, black-haired, president and CEO of RI. Media activity crescendos, focused on the ex-KGB oligarch, attesting to his political capital and popularity.

He offers his hand to his platinum blonde Austrian secretary, AMELIA STRAUSS (36) who emerges from the limo in a sexy, champagne-colored gown.

Graciously acknowledging everyone with a smile and wave, Sergei walks Amelia through the cordoned-off media by the Secret Service-guarded gates. He takes no questions.

Lincoln steps back onto the sidewalk as the limo drives away. He pulls out his earpiece, heads towards the Potomac.

EXT. GARDEN PARTY, RUSSO'S ESTATE - EVENING

Grounds are elaborate and spacious, well-kept, decorated beautifully in patriotic fare. Many well-dressed guests mingle - a mixture of Russians, investors, diplomats, and other members of Washington's elite.

A grand piano and instruments sit on the stage, waiting to be played. Uniformed waitstaff man buffet tables and open bars. Secret Service keep vigilant guard.

Off to the side, Sergei converses in his usual cultured accent with U.S. SENATOR CHARLES RUSSO - 54, prominent, handsome statesman.

SERGEI

Congratulations, Charles. You've earned my unbridled pity. Senator and interim Russian ambassador? I don't know how you survive.

Charles clinks glasses with Sergei, grinning.

CHARLES

I live on a jet, pop antacids like Tic-Tacs, and spend nights with Secret Service instead of my wife. So, not all bad.

SERGEI

Any chance of reprieve?

CHARLES

Not yet. I know now's not the time to have less American presence in Russia, but if the State Department thinks I can sustain this act, they're out of their damn minds. You know, when Moscow found out you were going to be here tonight, my Twitter followers got hacked and I was besieged by death threats.

SERGEI

Join the club, Charles.

EXT. POTOMAC, WEST END OF ESTATE - SUNSET

Lincoln reaches the tree-lined bank of the Potomac. Noise from the party faintly fills the b.g.

He pulls off his glasses, revealing the deep exhaustion in his eyes as he stares across the sunset waters.

Feeling a VIBRATION, he takes out his cell, calls voicemail.

REBECCA (V.O.) (VOICEMAIL)
 (British accent)
 Lincoln? It's been too long. I was hoping to wish you happy birthday and tell you I love you. I'm getting on the jet now, but I'll be back in London tonight if you--

He hangs up. His chest swells as he gazes across the river, dull pain and bitterness etched on his face.

Suddenly, a branch SNAPS behind him, arresting his attention. He jerks around sharply, alert.

Proceeding into the thick of trees to investigate, he catches a blur of a silvery HUSKY and a streak of a girl in lavender, running away from him.

He watches their carefree departure for a pensive moment before replacing his earpiece and heading to the party.

EXT. GARDEN PARTY - CONTINUOUS

Sergei and Charles continue talking over drinks.

SERGEI
 I tell you, Charles, the Kremlin's isolationist agenda is going to cripple Russia's economy.

CHARLES
 I agree. Increasing defense expenditure while eliminating exports? Unsustainable. They gotta work around sanctions somehow.

SERGEI
 Yes, but their solution has become my problem. The other day, Putin and the Minister of Defence invited me for breakfast. And you know what they want? Two dozen warships with back-end funding. They intimated that RI might suffer unfavorably should I refuse.

CHARLES
 You didn't say yes, did you?

SERGEI
 We're all ex-KGB villains; I'm hardly cowed. Besides, my naval division can't stomach the cost right now.

Sergei takes a sip of his wine.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

Then, I have Poroshenko asking me to bail out Ukraine's aerospace industry and the Chechen President pressuring me to sell them my newest Orion fighter. But he knows how I feel about his sympathies.

CHARLES

And you think I've got a juggling act. What're you gonna do?

SERGEI

As an olive branch to Putin, RI will develop a more efficient supercarrier than the monstrosity Moscow plans to build. If I deliver a cutting edge vessel, the Kremlin may forgive my... indiscretion.

CHARLES

(lowering his voice)

So. How's the new cruiser we contracted? I'm looking forward to seeing it.

Sergei deflates and seems genuinely perturbed.

SERGEI

I'm afraid she's gone dark in the Black Sea. We're not yet sure what happened. My securities director is ready to cry foul, but I prefer to withhold opinion until we've ruled out a technical issue.

Just then, ELISE RUSSO materializes in a lavender dress - 24, beautiful, tanned brunette with brown eyes like her dad. With her is the family's Husky, TOLSTOY.

CHARLES

(gesturing her over)

Sweetheart, over here.

Elise, looking flushed and bright-eyed, gives him a hug.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

What in the world've you been doing?

ELISE

Oh, just playing with Tolstoy.

CHARLES

And torturing Secret Service again, no doubt.

(to Sergei)

You remember Elise, don't you?

SERGEI

Of course.

(kisses her hand)

My, my you've grown.

(MORE)

SERGEI (CONT'D)

Last I saw you, you were this high and corrupting my innocent angels.

ELISE

You can't corrupt what isn't corruptible.

SERGEI

Amazing. You haven't changed a bit.

Charles gives her an affectionate squeeze, grinning.

ELISE

And how are your daughters doing, Mr. Remizov?

CHARLES

I'm sorry sweetheart, think you could get me a refill?

ELISE

Oh sure, Daddy. I'll be right back.

Charles waits for her to walk away with Tolstoy following.

CHARLES

I apologize, Sergei. She doesn't know.

Sergei forces a tight smile, hiding familiar pain.

EXT. BULK CARRIER - ISTANBUL, TURKEY - NIGHT

The crate has been unpacked, revealing an Iskander missile system. It's online and ready for launch.

LIBYAN 1 (SUBTITLE)

(speaking Arabic)

Radio the WOLF.

EXT. GARDEN PARTY - NIGHT

Charles stands at the podium, speaking into a mic. His voice booms through the PA system.

CHARLES

Laura and I are blessed to have you all here with us tonight.

LAURA (49), Charles' sophisticated wife, plucks at her pearl necklace, smiling at Charles, standing next to Elise who looks at her father like he's her hero.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

And we're especially thrilled that our friends here from Moscow are proving that Americans and Russians can get along. Well, at least with a little beer and vodka.

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

(pauses for laughter)

So it is my pleasure to welcome the newest member of the US Council for International Business, my good friend and the president of Remizov International: Sergei Remizov.

Warm applause. Sergei shakes Charles' hand, taking the podium.

ALONG PERIMETER

A RUSSIAN BUSINESSMAN approaches Lincoln.

RUSSIAN BUSINESSMAN

(in halting English)

Excuse me. Where may I find restroom?

LINCOLN

(speaking perfect Russian)

Right this way, sir.

The Russian lights up, surprised, and follows Lincoln.

PODIUM

SERGEI

Thank you, Senator. It is a great honor to be here. Over twenty years ago, as many of you know, I was expelled from the KGB. It was, quite frankly, a nightmare from which I didn't think I would ever recover. A British friend of mine helped bring me out of my rather pathetic wallowing. He told me I could either live my days in silence or let the wolves hear me howl.

(pauses)

Well, I didn't have the faintest idea what he was talking about.

Polite chuckles ripple, and Sergei smiles.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

But eventually, I figured it out.

BACK PATIO

Lincoln gestures for the Russian businessman to enter the house via the French doors.

INT. RUSSO'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Huge and luxurious. Lincoln stands in a hallway near the bathroom, waiting for the Russian guest.

SERGEI (V.O.)

With his help, I started a small shipping company, never imagining that it would grow into a multi-industry conglomerate...

Tolstoy appears and trots up to Lincoln, wagging his tail.

Lincoln removes his shades and hunkers down to rub the dog who seems to take to Lincoln immediately.

SERGEI (V.O.)

...And I certainly never anticipated standing here in D.C., marking the official expansion of RI into the United States...

EXT. BULK CARRIER - ISTANBUL, TURKEY - NIGHT

The militants await a signal.

SERGEI (V.O.)

I've learned that we all have a choice no matter our station. Though not everyone is in a position to incite change, each of us can do something...

A militant has his hand on the launch controls--coordinates locked into the digital system.

EXT. GARDEN PARTY - CONTINUOUS

There is conviction on Sergei's face and in his voice.

SERGEI

My hope is that RI, in conjunction with our new American partners will help spearhead better economic and political ties between our two nations...

EXT. BULK CARRIER - ISTANBUL, TURKEY - CONTINUOUS

The radio crackles. Finally, a Russian voice emits overlapping Sergei's speech:

SERGEI (V.O.)
Tonight is more than a
celebration of freedom...

RUSSIAN (V.O.)
(Russian accent)
On my mark...

EXT. BRIDGE, SUBMARINE - CONTINUOUS

A man speaks into a radio, only his mouth and the stars on the lapel of his Russian naval uniform are visible.

EXT. U.S.S. HOUSTON, BLACK SEA - CONTINUOUS

THE CHAFF

Shoots out into the black night and sheers into the path of the incoming missile.

THE MISSILE

Latches onto the chaff's heat signature and follows it away from the Houston.

EXT. H.M.S. INFINITY, BLACK SEA - CONTINUOUS

But the chaff's direction takes the missile within range of the HMS INFINITY.

The missile locks onto the huge thermal signature of the world's second largest supercarrier--

IMPACT!!!!

INT. U.S.S. HOUSTON, BLACK SEA - CONTINUOUS

The CAPTAIN is now in the Bridge with several officers, all scrambling to figure out where the missile came from. Everyone talks at once, frantic. When suddenly--

ALARM KLAXONS start WAILING.

The radar shows another red dot in the middle of the screen.

CAPTAIN
Brace for impact!!

EXT. SKY OVER POTOMAC - WASHINGTON, D.C. - EVENING

FIREWORKS explode over the Potomac, bursting with color and crackling the muggy air. They shimmer in the dark waters.

EXT. GARDEN PARTY, RUSSO'S ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

A live jazz quartet on stage now performs with Elise at the piano singing. Charles and Laura dance amidst other couples, enjoying a rare moment.

CHARLES
This was a good idea, skipping the White House festivities. I should consult you more often. Since you're free and all.

LAURA

That's what you think. I'll be sending you my bill shortly.

CHARLES

And how much of a deficit do I have?

LAURA

Let's put it this way. You haven't reimbursed me for the last five trips you made to Moscow.

CHARLES

Ooh, that deep, huh? Well then. Better make a deposit.

He stops dancing and grabs her hand, feeling too good to let this moment pass. She giggles as he leads her away.

FRONT LAWN

Music filters dimly in the b.g. Lincoln plays fetch with Tolstoy, throwing him a stick by the light of several glowing lamp posts. He seems happy.

Fireworks in the distance pop and crackle but don't seem to bother the dog.

GARDEN PARTY

Sergei sits at a table, pensive as he watches Elise at the piano and listens to her singing.

Amelia comes to join him, sinking gracefully into an adjacent chair. She speaks with a lyrical Austrian accent.

AMELIA

She's very talented.
(off Sergei's silence)
Can I get you anything?

He glances at his devoted secretary.

SERGEI

No thank you, Mia. I'm--

His cell suddenly VIBRATES. He answers in Russian.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

Yes?

INT. BEDROOM, RUSSO'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Charles kisses Laura on the bed passionately. But then--

His phone RINGS. Angry, Laura pulls away.

LAURA

You said you turned that thing off.

CHARLES

(gets his phone)

I'm sorry, honey.

(answering, into phone)

Talk to me... I'll be right there.

Laura looks at him like she knows what he's going to say. Disappointment and angry tears fill her eyes. She gets up.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Laura, please.

But she slams the door on her way out. He sighs. Duty calls.

EXT. RUSSO'S ESTATE, FRONT LAWN - CONTINUOUS

Lincoln throws the stick again just as phones start RINGING (b.g.) from the party, competing with the live band until the music stops altogether.

Tolstoy BARKS, runs back to Lincoln who bends to calm him.

But then, his cell VIBRATES. He pulls it out. ID reads DEMPSEY, and he knows that something is terribly wrong.

INT. SITUATION ROOM, WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

The National Security Council gathers around the conference table with the strained PRESIDENT (50). Tensions are high. Charles is present for his Eurasian expertise. APNSA RHONDA GUINSLER (45) speaks her mind, seated by the president.

RHONDA

Mr. President, we have to be diplomatic.
Get an OSCE team to investigate first, then
we can start pointing fingers.

Highly-decorated NSC Advisor, General BEN BAKER, agrees, New Yorker brogue issuing out of the side of his mouth.

BAKER

Oh come on! OSCE's been Moscow-biased since Putin ceased Crimea. I for one am not willing to plug my head in the sand and pretend Russia had nothin' to do with this. The Houston's sinking. Servicemen and women are dead. This is an act of aggression that demands an equal and opposite response. No more pussyfootin' around.

CHARLES

But General, if we approach this antagonistically, Putin will come across the victim. He's winning the Information War, and even with the Brits taking a hit, NATO will think twice before launching an offensive.

The DCIA TIM CHAVES, a Portuguese-American, raises his pen.

CHAVES

But Senator, surely you must agree that diplomacy and sanctions are not working.

Secretary of Defense PAT DEMPSEY, a grey-haired Army general with an iron rod for a spine, takes up Chaves' thread.

DEMPSEY

Ukraine is a neuralgic issue for Moscow. And the Houston's been conducting SIGINT surveillance on the Black Sea Fleet, why? To make sure they don't advance on Ukraine's coast. They already grabbed Crimea, and if we don't subvert their ongoing attempts, this'll keep escalating.

PRESIDENT

So then what can we do that's both proactive and moderating?

DEMPSEY

The DCIA and I have already discussed this.
(to Chaves)
And we're in agreement that the solution cannot be conventional.

CHAVES

Exactly. A counterinsurgency. Covert.

CHARLES

And who could pull that off, Tim? Our soldiers aren't Slavic. They won't blend.

CHAVES

There's an underground paramilitary group in that region which has the manpower, equipment, and intelligence capabilities to conduct large-scale ops.

RHONDA

Please tell me you're not talking about Krasnyy Krug.

CHAVES

What's your beef, Rhonda? Their operatives are fully competent and have provided us with valuable intel on former Soviet States for years.

RHONDA

Mr. President, with all due respect they're a bunch of government rejects whose leader calls himself the Devil.

CHAVES

Give me a break! It's D'yavol, and that's just an unfounded rumor.

RHONDA

I don't care what it is. Our association with them is a mark against the United States and should it come to light, it will only weaken our global position--

DEMPSEY

Rhonda, I'm not suggesting we do this without an American presence on the ground.

RHONDA

Ha! You think that will be enough?

DEMPSEY

Absolutely. And I've already taken the liberty of summoning someone.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

Secret Service escorts Lincoln down the hall. He's tie-less, jacket-less, and wearing a whole lot of attitude, unhappy to be there. He's met by a dour WH NURSE.

WH NURSE

(thrusts him a water bottle)
I'm going to need a urine sample.
(walks away briskly)

Lincoln gives her a cockeyed 'happy 4th to you too' look.

DEMPSEY (PRE-LAP)

Major Grey, as I'm sure you've read--

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

Lincoln stands in front of the entire National Security Council. He exhibits no signs of strain or nerves, capable of operating in the spotlight as all Delta commandos can.

DEMPSEY (CONT'D)

--the USS Houston's radar detected an incoming missile at approximately 2100 hours. It was successfully decoyed, but then locked onto the thermal signature of British supercarrier, the HMS Infinity.

(MORE)

DEMPSEY (CONT'D)

A second missile impacted the Houston's starboard moments later, disabling comms and causing catastrophic damage.

(sets down paper)

Now, if you would, give us your thoughts on the situation.

Dempsey presses a button on a remote which activates a digital screen displaying an interactive regional map of the Mediterranean, Black, and Azov Seas. Then, he sits back, while many eyes peruse copies of Lincoln's service history.

Lincoln looks around at the leaders, takes an intensely-pressured moment to think, then steps up to the huge touchscreen, quickly marking the locations of the USS Houston and HMS Infinity with a stylus (he's left-handed).

LINCOLN

The only fighters within range were Russian MiG's and Ukraine SU-25s on standard patrol routes. But since our Combat Air Patrol failed to detect the missiles, I'm inclined to believe we're dealing with surface-to-surface ballistics with firing ranges of up to 400 kilometers.

He draws a large circle roughly indicating a 400-km radius around the Houston/Infinity.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Given the region, these were definitely Russian make. But the actual party responsible could be pro-Moscow separatists, terrorists, or a combination.

The NSC watches and listens intently. Rhonda, however, seems to have a personal hang-up against Lincoln.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Since the Houston confirmed the direction of the first missile's path with time to deploy countermeasures, Istanbul is the farthest it could've originated.

(marks the Bosphorus Strait)

It's a good distance from Russia and accessible to Islamic terrorists around the Mediterranean and Caucasus.

Lincoln looks over his markings on the screen thus far.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

As for the second missile, the Houston's failure to detect its approach implies it was a different kind of warhead, most likely a Sizzler. Subsonic approach, supersonic sprint to impact, and capable of sharp maneuvers. But with an effective range of only 300 kilometers--

(MORE)

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
 (draws smaller circle)
 --we can exclude the Mediterranean region.

By their looks, most of the council is in subtle agreement. Baker glances at Pat, communicating his silent approval. The President seems pleased as well.

DEMPSEY
 (pride in his voice)
 That'll be sufficient, Major. Please step outside.

Lincoln promptly walks out. The door clicks shut behind him.

The President, flipping through Lincoln's file once more, looks up and swings his gaze around the room.

PRESIDENT
 So. How do you all feel?

CHAVES
 He's worked with us on several high-risk CIA counterterrorism ops... I'm a yes.

CHARLES
 What about regional politics? Does he have it down?

DEMPSEY
 He's spent years in Russia and the Middle East. He's the best we have for this scenario.

PRESIDENT
 Rhonda?

RHONDA
 Fine. But no diplomatic cover. If he's caught or exposed, he's disavow him.

CHAVES
 But he'll need full authorization to act on behalf of U.S. interests.

PRESIDENT
 Granted. Everyone else in agreement?
 (general nods all around)
 Then, let's make it happen.

EXT. DULLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

A beautiful Airbus A380 with the signature trademark of AIRFRANCE takes off perfectly into the clear night sky.

INT. AIRFRANCE AIRBUS A380 - 35,000 FEET - NIGHT

Amidst the gentle hum of jet engines, most passengers sleep comfortably in the dimly lit cabin. In contrast, Lincoln works with renewed purpose and vigor in his window seat with his overhead light on.

He reads in a memorandum: "President of RI, Sergei Remizov, reported missing prototype guided missile cruiser".

On his laptop, he pulls up the website for REMIZOV INTERNATIONAL. The home page impresses with a black and silver interactive globe; numerous gold dots indicate worldwide locations, signifying the vastness of the MNC.

The RECENT NEWS section reveals: 4 JULY RI announces U.S. expansion. 25 JUNE New nanoSIM card to be released in CIS countries. 20 JUNE - RI outbids Grant & Knightley for German photovoltaic company. 12 JUNE RI unveils first Volk-class guided missile cruiser; U.S. contracts 10 NATO six.

Lincoln focuses on "MISSILE CRUISER" and then "U.S. CONTRACTS". In contemplation, he looks out of the window.

Next, he selects 'BUSINESS DIVISIONS' and then 'NAUTICAL', which populates the content area of the website with attractive images of warships and submarines. Front and center is a glossy, high-res picture of the cutting-edge missile cruiser in question.

Lincoln clicks the thumbnail. Once again, the page changes showing a variety of showy media materials, including an interactive map of Ukraine. The map claims "100% MADE IN UKRAINE" and displays all branches involved in the production process.

He zooms into the coastal region and notes that there are three major sites. From west to east: Odessa, Sevastopol, and Novoazovsk. He focuses on the last.

INT. SUBMARINE BASE, KK HQ - NOVOAZOVSK, UKRAINE - DAY

SUPER: KRASNYY KRUG OPERATIONS BASE, UKRAINE COAST

A wide canal of jade water flows through a dank underground tunnel. Recessed platform lights illuminate Black Akula-class and Lada-class Russian submarines.

A soldier in fatigues appears from the left, following the stream. The moving water and lighting play eerily on the soldier's Slavic face. A tattoo peeks out of the collar of his uniform--the MARK of D'YAVOL: a double-headed eagle encircled by vipers.

The soldier reaches a set of thick steel doors and opens one. METALLIC ACTIVITY, VOICES, and natural daylight flood.

INT. LOADING DOCK, SUBMARINE BASE - CONTINUOUS

The noise nearly deafens in this wide, cement space. Wide, loading dock doors stand open to the Sea of Azov, providing a beautiful, warm view of the glittering, silver waters in the afternoon sunshine with a family of SWANS swimming.

Several GAZ military transport vehicles sit back-to-back waiting. Roughly three hundred KRASNYY KRUG operatives in field uniforms with the Russian Ground Forces insignia prepare for the counterinsurgency op.

COLONEL KRIS HANDEL (mid-40's, hard-headed ex-STASI) is in conference with a middle-aged Spaniard - brilliant but mildly eccentric RAFAEL "RAFE" MACHADO (worked for IMF and was a professor at ETH Zurich). Rafe is in cargo shorts and sandals with his long grey-streaked hair in a ponytail.

Kris and Rafe debate over a souped-up, custom laptop sitting on the hood of a GAZ Volk. Six ranking officers look on in stoic silence, including MIKHAIL FEDEROV (29, burly, former GRU spetsnaz sniper; the Mark of D'yavol is on his forearm).

KRIS

(German accent)

I don't want your theories, Rafe. You said you could guarantee--

Rafe rips off his wire-rim glasses, annoyed with Germans.

RAFE

(vague Spanish accent)

Kris. You asked for a fool-proof analysis.

(gestures to computer)

If they cross at all, they'll take this interstate. Comprendes?

KRIS

And if you're wrong?

RAFE

But I never am.

Kris narrows his eyes, disgruntled, and then continues.

KRIS

Mikhail!

Mikhail draws closer to the hood of the Volk.

KRIS (CONT'D)

(pointing on screen)

This is the road I want your team to cover. In case there is a convoy, post lookouts here and here.

MIKHAIL
 (speaks with minimal accent)
 Not a problem.

KRIS
 (to group)
 Now. Satellite imagery indicates armories
 in these locations.
 (points to display)
 We will be disarming separatists and all
 Russian-supplied tanks and machinery only.
 (points to three of the men)
 Verchenko, Molotov, and Borodin. Your teams
 will take the region of Luhansk. While the
 rest, including myself, will cover Donetsk.
 Rafe will man base command. In the event of
 a military response from Russia, we pull
 out immediately. Remember this is a forty-
 eight-hour job. No heroics. Understand?

No one speaks, comprehension on their disciplined faces.

KRIS (CONT'D)
 Good.
 (shuts laptop)
 Has anyone seen Natalia?

NATALIA (O.S.)
 I'm right here.

All the men turn and find NATALIA DIAGHILEVA - petite, black-haired, cold, only 23 - standing in Mikhail's large shadow. Her straight hair is purposely combed over one side of her face to hide long scars which stretch from her cheek to her neck. She'd be a flawless beauty otherwise.

KRIS
 You're with me. I need you to coordinate
 communication in the truck.

She offers no response, but Mikhail senses her discomfit and nudges her encouragingly. She doesn't acknowledge him.

KRIS (CONT'D)
 Alright. Dismissed.

EXT. KYIV INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

SUPER: KIEV INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, UKRAINE

A smaller AIRFRANCE flight comes in for a landing to Kyiv's bright, sunny airport hub. A sky blue Ukrainian flag waves.

INT. KYIV INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Cold, vigilant airport security, everyone converses in Russian or Ukrainian. Border customs personnel examine Lincoln thoroughly.

At baggage claim, Lincoln picks up his checked duffel, rips off the tags, and then stows it in a rented airport locker.

Donning his shades, he exits into the blinding afternoon.

EXT. E50 HIGHWAY - EVENING

Lincoln zooms down a long stretch of highway in a rental. The sun sinks below the horizon as he heads into darkness.

EXT. IZMAILOVSKY MOTEL/E50 HIGHWAY - DONETSK - NIGHT

Finally, several hours of driving brings Lincoln to a motel on the western outskirts of Donetsk. It's dark and mostly deserted. He parks and then starts out on foot with nothing.

EXT. SHELLED SUBURB - DONETSK - NIGHT

Many civilians plow through the remains of their homes. Small fires, mild chaos. Lots of distress.

Lincoln jogs through and finds several dead separatists amidst rubble. One soldier, approximately his size, is fully-equipped including an AK-74U. Lincoln hefts him out of view.

LATER

Lincoln emerges, fully outfitted, dressed in the DPR uniform. He peers through the sights of the AK, checks the magazine, and then continues at a clip.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD, DONETSK - NIGHT

Small homes, closely-spaced, sense of community.

Lincoln arrives just as a rocket careens out of the ashy sky and CRATERS in the near distance! The impact rumbles and vibrates through his feet.

Buzzing and unable to help himself, he runs towards the destruction.

Turning down the street, he sees that the rocket hit a steepled church, setting the building on fire.

Neighboring civilians flock around the church, trying frenetically to put out the towering flames.

A hysteric older woman spots Lincoln, believes he's a DPR soldier, and rushes over, waving her arms wildly. (NOTE: *italic dialogue in Russian with subtitles*)

OLD WOMAN

*You must help! There are refugees staying
in the church. Children are there! Please!*

His gaze vaults between the rapidly growing flames and the woman. He can't say no. He dumps his gear and runs over.

EXT. BURNING CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Lincoln quickly surveys the situation and sees the front entrance completely destroyed and overwhelmed by fire. He yells to those around him, getting their attention.

LINCOLN

Does anyone have an axe?!

UKRAINIAN MAN

Yes! Yes!

The man runs off while Lincoln quickly sweeps the area.

A teenager stands too close to the fire, using a home-sized extinguisher. Lincoln jogs over, yanks her back, and grabs the useless extinguisher, tossing it aside.

LINCOLN

Get back!

Just then, windows BLOW OUT! Shards of glass spray towards them. Lincoln instinctively shields her with his body, taking the brunt of it. She looks at him through a haze.

But the man returns with an axe, and Lincoln takes it.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Where are the refugees?

UKRAINIAN MAN

They're in the basement, I think.

Suddenly, a beam in the front of the building caves with a loud CRACK, rendering the entrance unbreachable.

LINCOLN

Are there any other entrances?

UKRAINIAN MAN

Yes. Back that way.

Lincoln rushes off as the man and girl head to safety.

BACK OF THE CHURCH

The flames haven't damaged the structure yet. Lincoln tests the door with the back of his hand. It's cool, but locked.

Quickly, Lincoln breaks the knob with the butt of the axe, kicks in the door, breaths deeply, and then enters.

INT. BURNING CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The hellish flames glow brightly, swaying like molten wraiths. Faint calls of help emanate from around a corner.

Swiftly, he locates an open door to the basement, goes down through the smoke, closing the door behind him.

INT. BASEMENT, BURNING CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Thirty scared, crying kids and a few women lie on makeshift beds spread throughout the unfinished space. A baby WAILS weakly beside its silent, frightened mother.

Lincoln takes in the task before him in one sweep. He spies a rectangular narrow window at the top of the wall that forms part of the exterior of the church.

He cuts through the matrix of huddled, whimpering children, who stare at him in scared shock, to reach the window. But it's shut tight. After some persuasive muscling, it opens.

Overgrown grass covers the aperture. He sticks a hand out and starts clearing it away, yelling in Russian as he does.

LINCOLN

Hey! Over here! Over here!

Outside, several come and kneel by the opening, agitated.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

I'm going to pass the children through!

His booming voice causes the whining and whimpering to increase as he starts picking up kids one-by-one.

The smoke builds.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD, DONETSK - CONTINUOUS

Four military transport vehicles rumble slowly through the neighborhood - the ones from the Krasnyy Krug sub base.

INT. BASEMENT, BURNING CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The children are more than half out, but Lincoln's getting tired. Everyone coughs, even him. Oxygen grows scarce.

Just as he goes for the baby whose cries have gotten louder, he sees flames descending the staircase. Panic illuminates his eyes as the orange-black figures dance ever closer. The sight spurs him to speed up. He reaches for the baby.

MOTHER

No! Don't take my child! Please!!

LINCOLN

(touches her shoulder)
It'll be alright.

The MOTHER calms enough to relinquish hold of her child though she still cries fervently.

Lincoln takes the baby with care and quickly passes the child through the window.

Mentally beginning to struggle, he picks up an eight-year-old GIRL with dark hair who gives him a tight, grateful hug.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

The KK line of military SUV's pass within sight of the fire.

INT. LEAD VEHICLE, KRASNYY KRUG MOTORCADE - CONTINUOUS

Kris is in the front passenger seat, Natalia in the middle, and a young, fair-haired Slav SERGEANT LASENKO drives.

LASENKO

(gesturing)
Colonel, looks like another rocket strike.

Kris examines the furnace of a building, scowling.

KRIS

Ignore it. Move on.

Suddenly, the GIRL who hugged Lincoln rushes into the road, forcing Lasenko to brake hard. They brace themselves.

NATALIA

Oh, my God!

An older woman runs after the girl, scolding her. She tries to pull her away. Kris stares pensively at the child. The girl fights off the woman, yelling at the windshield.

NATALIA (CONT'D)

(grips Kris' arm)
Kris! Do something!

KRIS

Lasenko? Go ask her what the trouble is.