# Operation Shadowfall

B Alan Bourgeois · Opening excerpt · 1 of 2

The Capitol lights flickered faintly through the thick D.C. fog, casting ghostly shadows against the towering structures of power that had once felt like home to Michael Carter. From his luxurious Georgetown townhouse, he could still see the grandeur of the city he had once helped shape. He poured himself a generous glass of bourbon, the amber liquid catching the dim light of his chandelier. The solitude that had once been a refuge now felt suffocating. Since his security detail had been pulled—a direct consequence of the president's sweeping revenge—Carter found himself constantly looking over his shoulder.

He swirled the drink slowly, watching the ice melt and dilute its strength. Strength—something he once had in abundance, back when he was National Security Advisor and whispers of his influence carried weight in the Oval Office. Now, he was nothing more than a relic of an administration that had fallen out of favor, a scapegoat sacrificed in the president’s quest for absolute control. He could still hear the president's words the day he was dismissed, spoken with the cold precision of a man who never forgot a slight.

"Enjoy your retirement, Mike. You earned it."

# Reading sample — continued



Carter snorted bitterly at the memory. Retirement, indeed. In the months since, he'd watched former allies turn their backs on him, some out of self-preservation, others out of loyalty to the new regime. The airwaves were filled with talking heads dissecting his career, branding him a traitor, a liability. He took a long sip, letting the warmth dull the bitter taste of regret.

The townhouse was eerily quiet, the only sound the occasional ticking of the antique grandfather clock in the corner. That’s why the noise outside caught his attention. A low, persistent hum drifted through the double-paned glass of his living room window—an oddity at this height. The streets below were usually a distant murmur, muffled by the city's density. Not this. This was different.

Carter frowned, placing the glass down on the mahogany bar cart. He moved cautiously across the plush carpet, his slippered feet making no sound. The hum grew louder, vibrating through the thick fog like a ghostly whisper. Helicopter, maybe? He pressed a hand against the cold glass, peering into the mist. Nothing but shadows and the occasional dim glow of passing traffic below.