

DEAD HAND

By James Leach

Genre: Cold War Thriller / Espionage

Logline: *A Soviet colonel who helped create the USSR's secret doomsday system must stop a rogue general from turning the ultimate nuclear deterrent into a weapon capable of igniting World War III.*

Synopsis

At the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union secretly develops Perimeter, a doomsday system designed to guarantee nuclear retaliation even if the country's leadership is destroyed. Colonel Dmitri Yarynich, a radio specialist involved in its development, understands better than anyone the danger of placing nuclear Armageddon in the hands of an automated system.

Years later, Dmitri remains haunted by the death of his wife, Veata, following a biological weapons accident at a secret Soviet facility. The tragedy also destroyed his relationship with his daughter, Zina, who grew up believing her father abandoned her and may have been responsible for her mother's death.

Behind the scenes, General Anatoly Koslov, a ruthless Soviet hardliner with ties to Chechen militants, has his own plans for Perimeter. Bitter toward the Soviet leadership and convinced that Russia has betrayed him, Koslov conspires with his foster brother, Ludmil Sokolov, to seize control of the system and manipulate the nuclear balance of power.

As Koslov's conspiracy grows, American intelligence begins detecting clues through espionage operations and mysterious transmissions associated with UVB-76, the Soviet shortwave station known as "The Buzzer." CIA operatives race to determine what Koslov is planning before Perimeter can be activated.

Dmitri becomes the key to stopping him.

Koslov's men abduct Zina and use her to force Dmitri into the hidden Dead Hand command facility. There, decades of deception finally unravel. Zina learns that her father did not cause her mother's death and that Koslov has manipulated their family for years. She also discovers that Ludmil murdered her closest friend.

Koslov forces Dmitri to provide the codes necessary to activate Perimeter. The system comes alive, triggering a sequence that can no longer be stopped.

Two missiles launch from the Soviet facility.

American early-warning systems detect them, placing military commands on alert as analysts scramble to determine whether the launches signal the beginning of a Soviet nuclear strike. But the trajectories reveal something unexpected: the missiles are not headed toward the United States.

Dmitri had secretly altered critical targeting information within the system, ensuring that if Koslov ever attempted to use Perimeter for his own purposes, the weapon would not produce the global war he intended.

CIA forces close on the compound as Koslov's conspiracy collapses. Ludmil and his men are killed, and Zina confronts Koslov over the deaths of her mother and friend. When Koslov dismisses her mother as nothing more than collateral damage, Zina kills him.

With Koslov dead and the immediate threat contained, Dmitri and Zina are extracted by American intelligence. Their ordeal finally exposes the truth that had separated them for years, allowing father and daughter to reconcile.

Granted asylum in the United States, they leave the Soviet Union carrying something potentially more dangerous to Moscow than any weapon: proof of the secrets the Soviet government insists do not exist.

Perimeter.

Dead Hand.

And the evidence needed to expose them to the world.