

SERIES OVERVIEW

ZERO MARGIN

A Three-Season Prestige Espionage Drama

Three seasons. Eight episodes per season. Character driven. Globally scalable.

The mission worked. The system did not.

Based on the literary trilogy by Daniel Strade. Published by Coby Press. zeromargin.net

THE HOOK

On the morning of October 7, 2023, a long-running operative wakes in London to an alert that destroys his cover. He has been running a deep-civilian asset network for twenty-three years. The work was supposed to be over. The network was supposed to be dismantled. Both assumptions are wrong.

A successful operation in September 2024 reactivates the architecture his network was built on. By the time the consequences are visible, the people who built the system have become its targets.

The mission worked. The system did not.

MARKET POSITIONING

Zero Margin sits in the premium contemporary geopolitical lane occupied by *Slow Horses*, *The Night Manager*, *Tehran*, *Fauda*, and *The Americans*. Its institutional density and generational arc move closer to *Succession*. Its psychological weight is closer to *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*.

This is not procedural espionage. It is institutional decision-making at national security scale, told through the people who carry the consequences.

COMMERCIAL VIABILITY

- / Three completed novels. Multi-season architecture already designed.
- / Built to scale internationally. No reliance on action spectacle or VFX-heavy set pieces.
- / Prestige casting opportunity across three generational tiers.
- / Politically relevant without being partisan.
- / High tension driven by dialogue, surveillance, and strategic maneuvering.
- / Global appeal across United States, European, and Middle Eastern markets.

tone and visual language

Visually grounded. Muted palettes shifting from steel blue in Season One to sepia in Season Two to deep red in Season Three. No spectacle dependency.

Tension built through:

- / Authorization meetings.
- / Intelligence briefings.
- / Civilian-cover networks under operational stress.
- / Diplomatic corridors.
- / Controlled silence.

Pacing closer to *The Americans*. Atmosphere closer to *Sicario*. Density closer to *Tinker Tailor*.

SEASON ONE

ZERO MARGIN

The Cost of Cover.

Avi Stern, a senior operative running deep-civilian assets out of London, is forced back into active service when the events of October 7, 2023 reactivate a network he believed had been dismantled. His cover, his marriage, and his twenty-three-year separation from operational life all collapse over the course of seventy-two hours.

Mid-season turn: the network is not dormant. It has been preserved by handlers who never got the order to stand down.

Finale: Avi understands that he is now operational again whether he consents or not.

Season One ends with institutional reactivation and personal fracture.

VISUAL PALETTE: STEEL BLUE. INSTITUTIONAL. COLD PRECISION.

SEASON TWO

THE BARISTA

Civilian Cover.

Andreas Dimitriou owns thirty-three cafés across thirteen countries. Six years ago he believed he had walked away from operational life. In September 2024, the café network becomes the communications backbone for a single decisive operation. Andreas discovers he never walked away. He just stopped paying attention.

Mid-season turn: the operation succeeds. The cost is absorbed quietly. Andreas realizes the network was never his to retire.

Season Two expands geographic scale while tightening operational stakes. The narrative moves through Vienna, Athens, Beirut, and Damascus.

VISUAL PALETTE: SEPIA. ATMOSPHERIC. MORAL AMBIGUITY.

SEASON THREE

BLACK DOCTRINE

The Inheritance.

Rachel Stern, Avi's wife and a former operative herself, is eleven months into therapy and trying to live a civilian life. In a routine logistics audit at her corporate role in Canary Wharf, she finds the operational signatures of a network she helped dismantle eighteen years ago. The architecture has rebuilt its own logic. A transit node sits six hundred meters from where her daughter catches the school bus.

The operation that succeeded in Season Two has produced a doctrine. The doctrine requires the network to remain active. The network now extends into the lives of the people who built it.

Season Three delivers ideological confrontation, not action spectacle. The trilogy ends as a completed arc with optional expansion.

VISUAL PALETTE: DEEP RED. IDEOLOGICAL. INSTITUTIONAL FRACTURE.

CASTING ARCHETYPES

This is a casting-forward property. Each lead requires intellectual authority before physicality.

AVI STERN. AGE 45 TO 55.

Controlled intensity. Moral weight. Intellectual authority. Avi must read as competent first, conflicted second.

Reference range: John Krasinski. Oscar Isaac. Matthew Rhys. Mark Strong. Liev Schreiber.

RACHEL STERN. AGE 40 TO 50.

Sharp. Emotionally intelligent. Morally observant. Rachel reads as a woman who left the work and is being forced to re-enter it.

Reference range: Carrie Coon. Naomi Watts. Cate Blanchett. Kelly Macdonald.

ANDREAS DIMITRIOU. AGE 60 TO 70.

Quiet competence. The architecture of a man who built something that cannot now be dismantled. Andreas reads as the last institutional memory of an operational era.

Reference range: Stellan Skarsgård. Brendan Gleeson. Bill Nighy. Tchéky Karyo.