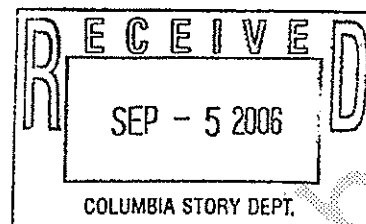


BROTHERS

by

David Benioff

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EXT. FORT MAHLUS - DAY

October in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania. A strong wind snaps the flags on their flagpoles: the Stars and Stripes; the state flag; the U.S. Army flag.

Gunfire sounds in the distance.

EXT. 50 METER RANGE - DAY

Twenty young SOLDIERS fire from the prone position with their M4 carbines.

CAPTAIN SAM CAHILL (late thirties) walks down the line behind them. A pair of binoculars hangs from his neck but he doesn't bother to check the targets: he's watching his shooters.

LIEUTENANT VINCE FREEMAN walks beside Cahill, a clipboard in his hand. They speak between bursts of fire, low enough that the enlisted men can't hear them.

There is an easy rapport between the two officers: they've been fighting together since the first Gulf War.

SAM

Ramsay closes his eyes every time he fires.

FREEMAN

Yes sir.

SAM

You try to talk him out of it?

FREEMAN

Yes sir. Says loud noises startle him.

SAM

Loud noises startle him?

FREEMAN

Yes sir.

Sam glances at his lieutenant.

SAM

So he volunteered for the Army.

Freeman shrugs. *Don't look at me.*

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM

He ever hit the target?

FREEMAN

It has happened, sir.

Sam smiles and raises his binoculars.

SAM

Citizen warriors.

FREEMAN

Yes sir.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

The privates sit on their beds with their duffel bags and their deployment gear laid out beside them.

Lieutenant Freeman stands in the center of the room, reviewing a check list.

Sam stands by the doorway, looking over his soldiers. Most of them are still teenagers, skinny boys with shaved heads.

FREEMAN

If you do not have any of the items
I call off, put your hand in the
air. Two Kevlar covers. One cap,
cold weather. Two BDU coats, cold
weather. One BDU top, cold weather.
Two BDU trousers, cold weather. One
pair boots, cold weather. Three
pair ICW gloves. One glove insert.
Two balaclavas.

Freeman looks up. He sees the general confusion. He steps over to the nearest bed, grabs a balaclava from the private's gear, and holds it in the air.

FREEMAN

Balaclava.

Sam smiles and checks his watch.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Sam and Freeman walk through the base's parking lot in their civvies. Now that they're away from their men and out of uniform their interaction is less formal: no more *sirs*.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM

Give 'em a few months over there,
they'll be okay.

FREEMAN

Long as the Taliban don't make any
loud noises.

(beat)

Tommy's out today?

SAM

I got to pick him up.

FREEMAN

He make it through okay?

Sam fishes for his car keys.

SAM

He made it through.

EXT. MAHLUS TOWNSHIP - DAY

An old Jeep Cherokee Briarwood, a '91 with wood side panels,
cruises through town, passing houses of red brick and white-
painted aluminum siding.

Almost every house has Old Glory flying from a flag mount on
the porch. Yellow ribbons are everywhere, tied around tree
branches, tacked onto the front doors, in stickers on the
rear windows of parked cars.

Mahlus hasn't changed much since the Fifties. The locals
aren't wealthy but their yards are tidy, the grass mowed, the
leaves raked.

INT. JEEP - DAY

GRACE CAHILL drives her two daughters, MAGGIE (7) and
ISABELLE (9). Isabelle sits up front with Mom. She has a big
Band-Aid on her elbow.

Grace will be lovely by the afternoon but she doesn't look
entirely awake yet.

MAGGIE

Why coconut?

GRACE

It's Uncle Tommy's favorite.

Osher

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

I hate coconut.

ISABELLE

She's not making it for you.

Maggie, irritated about the whole thing, stares out the window at the Mahlus main drag, a roadside strip that could be Anywhere, America: Dairy Queen, Wendy's, the Pep Boys...

MAGGIE

Is it his birthday?

GRACE

Nope.

MAGGIE

So why's he get a cake?

Grace hesitates as she turns into the supermarket lot.

GRACE

It's a big day.

Isabelle glances at her mother but doesn't say a word. She knows what's what, but there's no point explaining anything to Maggie.

MAGGIE

I don't remember him.

Grace waits for a car to pull out of a parking space.

GRACE

You were very little the last time
you saw him.

ISABELLE

I remember him. He gave me his
baseball glove when he went away.

Grace sighs, watching as the OLD LADY in the parking space takes forever getting her car out.

GRACE

I forgot about that. Did you ever
use it?

ISABELLE

It doesn't fit.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

GRACE

Well, it was nice of him anyway.

She peers through the windshield at the old lady, who seems unsure which way to turn the wheel.

GRACE

I think this lady's having a stroke
or something.

ISABELLE

Baseball's boring.

GRACE

I know, sweetie. Maybe don't tell
Uncle Tommy that.

EXT. MID-STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Sam parks in the lot behind the prison. The watchtower looms above the grim brick buildings.

He's driving a '68 Mustang, fully restored to its original beauty.

INT. MID-STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Sam approaches the uniformed RECEPTIONIST, who sits behind bullet-proof glass like a bank teller in a bad neighborhood.

In the background, sitting on a bench reading a magazine, TOMMY CAHILL (early thirties) looks up and sees his big brother on the far side of the glass. He grins and stands, holding a small rucksack.

Tommy hasn't shaved in a few weeks. He looks like he needs a good shower and some sleep.

SAM

(to receptionist)

I'm here for Thomas Cahill.

The receptionist nods and passes a clipboard under the glass into the deal tray. Sam signs his name to the release papers and smiles at his kid brother.

The receptionist presses a button beneath her desk, unlocking the door.

Osher

CONTINUED:

After a moment, she realizes Tommy hasn't moved. She turns and looks at him.

RECEPTIONIST

Whenever you're ready.

Tommy isn't used to being able to walk through a door without permission. He blinks and hurries through before the offer is rescinded.

The brothers embrace. They haven't been on the same side of bulletproof glass in three years.

When they step back, Sam examines his kid brother.

TOMMY

What?

SAM

(re: the beard)

You doing the Charles Manson thing?

TOMMY

(rubbing his scruff)

Pretty good, right?

SAM

Yeah, you're beautiful.

They turn and walk out of the reception area. Tommy glances back at the receptionist, gives a little wave, the last person he'll see in the prison, but she's filling out forms.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The brothers stand beside the Mustang.

TOMMY

Jesus.

(in awe of the car)

How long did that take?

SAM

Year and a half.

TOMMY

V8?

SAM

What do you think?

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY
Chrome quads?

He checks for himself, sees the dual exhaust with the four chrome pipes.

TOMMY
Goddamn.
(beat)
You do this just to piss me off?

SAM
Pretty much.

Tommy reaches for the keys.

TOMMY
Let me drive?

Sam laughs and pushes his kid brother toward the passenger side.

EXT. MAHLUS BACKROADS - DAY

The Mustang cruises down a quiet road on the outskirts of Mahlus.

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Bruce Springsteen plays. Tommy taps the windowsill to the song's beat.

TOMMY
You always drive thirty-five?

Sam smiles but doesn't say anything.

TOMMY
This car's wasted on you, you know that?

The words have no effect. Tommy's been goading Sam for thirty years. It's like the hum of an air conditioner: background noise.

Tommy stares out the window at the fringes of his hometown. A sudden realization creases his brow. He leans forward to inspect the dash.

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

What is that?

SAM

What?

TOMMY

You put in a CD player?

SAM

(defensive)

Yeah.

TOMMY

(incredulous pause)

You put a CD player in a '68 Mustang.

SAM

What's your problem?

TOMMY

What's *my* problem? It's not right. It's a 1968 vintage car. You don't put in a CD player.

SAM

It's not right, huh.

Sam is amused by Tommy's indignation, which just makes Tommy more annoyed.

TOMMY

No, it's not right.

SAM

You know so much about what's right, why'd I just pick you up from the state prison?

Tommy is silent, staring at his brother.

TOMMY

Fuck you.

(beat)

Can I smoke at least? Can I smoke in your fucking '68 Mustang that has a CD player and doesn't go faster than thirty-five?

SAM

Smoke.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

TOMMY

Thank you.

He rolls down a window and lights a cigarette.

TOMMY

So there's dinner tonight?

SAM

Last I heard, Mom couldn't decide if she should make lamb chops for you because you're out, or meat loaf for me, 'cause I'm going away in a week.

TOMMY

You're going away in a week?

(off Sam's nod)

I didn't know that.

(beat)

I don't even like lamb chops.

SAM

Her meat loaf's pretty bad, too.

TOMMY

Jesus.

At a stop sign, Sam reaches into his pocket, pulls out a business card, and hands it to Tommy. He continues driving.

SAM

There's something you might want to think about doing... I mean, when you have time.

Tommy stares at the card. A woman's name. A bank branch.

TOMMY

What is this?

SAM

It's the woman you assaulted.

TOMMY

I know that. Why are you giving me the fucking card?

SAM

She's back at her branch in Cherry Hills.

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

TOMMY

I don't give a shit. Where the hell did you get her card?

SAM

I've spoken to her a couple times.

Tommy glares at his brother in disbelief.

SAM

I was embarrassed. I apologized on your behalf. For the family. It was a couple months ago.

TOMMY

You... what? Who the fuck do you think you are?

SAM

She couldn't go to work for six months because she was afraid you'd come back. You destroyed her life. I think you could help her if you went back there--

TOMMY

What kind of crap is that? What's wrong with you, man?

SAM

It's the decent thing to do.

Tommy shakes his head and yanks hard on the hand brake.

EXT. MAHLUS BACKROADS - CONTINUOUS

The Mustang squeals to a stop. Tommy steps out of the car, grabs his rucksack from behind the seat, and walks off the road, crossing through the woods that border the town.

SAM

Hey! Come on, man, get back in the car! Tommy!

A pickup truck driving in the same direction slows down to go around Sam's Mustang. The DRIVER shouts at Sam as he passes.

DRIVER

You can't park there, asshole.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Sam locks eyes with the driver. He doesn't say a word or narrow his eyes or flip the guy off, but all the same-- the driver shuts his mouth and zooms away.

Sam turns and watches his brother stomp off into the woods.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Sam opens the front door of his house and steps inside.

SAM

Hello?

GRACE (O.S.)

We're upstairs!

Sam heads for the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Grace steps out of the bathroom, her hands wet with soap suds. Sam kisses her.

GRACE

I'm giving Maggie a bath.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Hi, Daddy!

SAM

Hey, sweetheart.

GRACE

Where's Tommy?

SAM

He'll be here. He wanted to stop and get some things.

GRACE

Izzy's elbow got scraped in gym class, we have to take off the Band-Aid to clean it, but she's scared it's gonna hurt and she wants you to do it.

SAM

Okay.

Osher

CONTINUED:

GRACE
She's in her room.

SAM
Okay.

He walks toward the girls' room.

GRACE
How is he?

Sam turns.

SAM
Tommy? He seems good.

GRACE
Is that your way of saying you have
no idea?

SAM
Uh huh.

He knocks on his daughter's door.

ISABELLE (O.S.)
Come in!

Sam winks at his wife and steps into his daughters' room.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isabelle sits on her bed, reading a book.

ISABELLE
Hi.

SAM
Hey, sweetheart. You hurt yourself?

ISABELLE
Yeah.

Sam sits down on the edge of the bed and gently takes his
daughter's arm, inspecting the Band-Aid.

ISABELLE
Is it gonna hurt?

SAM
A little bit.

Osher

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE
Wait, wait. Not yet.

She stares at the Band-Aid, terrified of the coming pain.

ISABELLE
Let's count to ten.

SAM
Okay. One, two--

ISABELLE
Slower!

SAM
One... two...

As Sam counts he looks at the wall behind Isabelle where her posters of ice skaters hang.

SAM
Three... is that a new poster?

Isabelle turns to look at the poster. With one quick motion, Sam peels the Band-Aid off Isabelle's elbow.

She yelps, more in surprise than pain.

ISABELLE
Dad! That hurt!

SAM
But you know what's nice? It's already over.

He scoops her up in his arms and carries her to the door. She clings to his neck.

SAM
Let's get Mom to clean it up.

INT. CAHILL KITCHEN - NIGHT

Grace and ELSIE CAHILL, Sam and Tommy's mother, stand by the oven. Maggie and Isabelle sit at the breakfast table, playing Connect Four with their grandfather, HANK.

The kitchen itself is unfinished, the cabinets lacking their doors, the tilework undone.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Elsie pulls a meat loaf out of the oven and rests it on the kitchen counter beside a platter of overcooked lamb chops.

ELSIE

The trick is using lots of mustard.
It keeps the meat from drying out.

Grace eyes the meat loaf. It doesn't look so tempting.

GRACE

Mustard, okay.

ELSIE

Let's just put some foil on it,
keep it warm...

She looks around for tin foil. Grace grabs a box from atop the refrigerator, tears out a sheet, and covers the plate.

ELSIE

When are you finishing the kitchen?

GRACE

Sam wanted to get it done before he
left but...

(looking around)

I don't think it's gonna happen.

ELSIE

He takes on too much. He always
has.

ISABELLE

(to Hank)

You're trapped.

Hank studies the board. He slips a black piece into its slot.

HANK

No, I'm not.

ISABELLE

Yes, you are.

She inserts a red piece and connects four diagonally.

HANK

Look at that.

ISABELLE

Fifty cents please.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

Hank reaches into his pocket and hands Isabelle two quarters.

HANK

(to Grace)

You're raising a little hustler
here.

MAGGIE

I want to play!

ISABELLE

You always lose.

MAGGIE

No, I don't. I beat Daddy.

ISABELLE

He lets you win.

MAGGIE

No, he doesn't!

Sam walks into the kitchen, wearing a Steelers cap. He goes
to the refrigerator.

MAGGIE

Daddy, Izzie says you let me win.

SAM

Never, sweetheart. You want a beer,
Dad?

MAGGIE

See!

HANK

Sure.

Sam opens two bottles of beer and hands one to his father.

GRACE

Should we go ahead and eat? He
isn't coming.

ELSIE

Of course he is. I made lamb chops.

GRACE

It's past eight already. I have to
get the kids to bed soon.

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

I might have told him the wrong time.

Grace looks at Sam. She doesn't believe him.

SAM

The girls aren't even hungry yet. Are you?

ISABELLE

Yes, I am.

MAGGIE

Me too!

Hank stands. He's a big man, still powerfully built, but his knees are bad and standing is a chore.

HANK

All right, come on. We can't let the children die of hunger just 'cause Tommy can't keep a date. He's probably already back in prison, for Christ's sake.

Grace smiles at the joke; Elsie does not. The doorbell rings.

SAM

There he is.

INT. FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Sam opens the front door. Tommy stands there, holding a pathetic bouquet of flowers.

SAM

You taking me to the prom?
(off Tommy's silence)
Look, I'm sorry. It wasn't my place.

Tommy steps inside.

TOMMY

Shithead.
(beat)
Sorry I'm late. I thought I knew a short cut.

Osher

CONTINUED:

The brothers walk toward the dining room. Elsie comes into the hallway. She smiles when she sees her baby. He gives her a hug and a kiss. She runs her hand down his bearded jaw.

ELSIE
You're so thin.

TOMMY
You kidding? I'm solid muscle.

ELSIE
You're skin and bones. It's a good thing I made so many lamb chops.

TOMMY
No way... Are we having lamb chops?!

ELSIE
Of course we are. It's your favorite.

Grace steps out of the kitchen. She smiles at Tommy but it's clear these two aren't close. He gives her a little hug and hands her the crappy bouquet.

GRACE
Thanks...

TOMMY
They're from the Shell station.

Hank limps out from the kitchen, followed by the two girls.

HANK
You pay for them?

TOMMY
Hey, Dad.

The two men shake hands. There is little warmth here.

Tommy sees the two girls staring up at him nervously. Maggie clutches some of the fabric from Hank's pants. Tommy has absolutely no idea what to say to them.

TOMMY
(to Isabelle)
Hey there, Maggie.

ISABELLE
I'm Isabelle.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

TOMMY

Right. Ouch. Bad uncle.

GRACE

Should we eat?

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

The family sits at the table, except for Elsie, who takes a photograph of the group. The platters of lamb chops, meat loaf, and boiled potatoes make the rounds.

ISABELLE

Can I please not take any potatoes?

SAM

Take two potatoes. Come on.

ISABELLE

Okay, okay.

ELSIE

It's been a long time since we all had dinner together.

TOMMY

What day are you leaving?

SAM

Tuesday.

ELSIE

I wish we had more time together.

Tommy examines the half-eaten lamb chop on his plate. He looks up and sees his father staring at him.

TOMMY

What?

HANK

Did I say something?

TOMMY

You're giving me that look.

(beat)

It's not my fault Sam's leaving.

ELSIE

No one said it was your fault.

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

He's giving me that look he always gives me. Look, I'm sorry I was away. I'm sorry he's going away--

HANK

He's going to do his job. There's a difference between rebuilding a nation and sitting in a cell.

TOMMY

Rebuilding a nation? You kidding me? All they do is run around shooting anything that moves. Didn't you guys blow up a wedding a couple weeks ago?

SAM

That was the Marines.

TOMMY

What's the difference?

SAM

I'm not in the Marines, is one difference.

ISABELLE

(angry)

They only shoot the bad guys.

TOMMY

Who tells them which ones are the bad guys?

Grace is irritated with Tommy for upsetting her daughter. She gives him a look before speaking to Isabelle.

GRACE

They only shoot the bad guys.

Sam dishes out more green beans for Maggie, who makes a face.

SAM

Maybe we get lucky and don't shoot anybody.

INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Sam drives Tommy through the quiet streets of Mahlus.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM

You're welcome to stay with us, you know. The sofa bed's pretty comfortable.

TOMMY

Yeah, I don't think so, man. Don't think Grace would like it too much.

(beat)

Mom's starting to look old.

SAM

Is she?

The brothers travel in silence for a moment, listening to the music on the anachronistic CD player.

SAM

So what about you? Any plans?

TOMMY

Wow, you waited four hours to ask me. I think that's a record.

SAM

Remember Jonas, played ball with me in high school? He's got a demo crew. Said he can use a man.

TOMMY

Jonas... the fullback? He was kind of a douchebag, wasn't he?

SAM

Yeah, he's offering you a job, you know? You don't want it, don't take it.

TOMMY

All right, man, take it easy. I'll figure it out.

The muscles in Sam's jaw work as he watches the road. For a few seconds he says nothing.

TOMMY

What?

SAM

Just... can you try to stay out of trouble for the next six months?

(MORE)

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (cont'd)

It would be nice to see you when I
get home.

Tommy watches the road unrolling before them in the
headlights. He's not angry at his brother or mocking him or
anything but stating the facts:

TOMMY

Six months is a long time.

INT. PHELAN'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Tommy steps inside the warm, buttery light of the bar.
Phelan's has been serving the drinkers of Mahlus for forty
years. The walls are covered with photographs of the Mahlus
High football teams, of uniformed locals who have died in
overseas conflicts, of regional celebrities.

A roar of welcome rises when everyone sees Tommy. He's been
away a long time and the BAR PATRONS are happy to see him.

He smiles and begins shaking hands, happy to be home.

EXT. FORT MAHLUS - DAWN

Two PRIVATES unfold the American flag, hook it to the flag
pole pulleys, and slowly raise it.

The fort's BUGLER wipes his trumpet's mouthpiece and plays.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

Sam and Lt. Freeman stand in front of the enlisted men.

SAM

We leave in twenty-four hours. This
will be the last time I talk to you
on American soil.

Sam speaks with calm, assured cadences.

The boys staring up at him are painfully young. They must be
deeply nervous about what lies ahead, but they listen to
their commander with the faith a devout congregation bestows
on a beloved pastor.

SAM

I know some of you think we're
going to a different world
tomorrow.

(MORE)

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM (cont'd)

Well, Lieutenant Freeman and I have served two tours over there, and let me assure you, the sun still rises in the east, water still runs downhill, and you're just as ugly in Afghanistan as you are here.

The soldiers' young faces are scribbled with acne, a few of them chew nervously on their fingernails, but they smile.

SAM

We've been there and back and so will you. Keep your weapons clean, follow your orders, and do not forget that everywhere you walk you represent our country. That flag on your shoulder says you are an American soldier-- that is an honor and that is a responsibility.

(beat)

If any of you have any doubt about whether we're doing the right thing, wait till you're standing there. 'Cause people can talk about it all they want on the TV, it don't mean shit till you're in the middle of it. And I promise you...

Sam makes eye contact with several of his men.

SAM

We're doing the right thing.

INT. PHELAN'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

Tommy, sitting at a corner table with a group of drunk friends (A.J., OWEN, and SWEENEY), lurches to his feet.

TOMMY

My round!

SWEENEY

Wait a second... What have you done with Tommy Cahill?

OWEN

Hey, hey, don't give him second thoughts. I been waiting my whole life for Tommy to buy a round.

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

You're all sluts and ingrates and
it's your luck I don't drink alone.

He weaves through the crowd, somewhat graceful despite the
many drinks in his belly.

At the bar he sees a fetching young BRUNETTE with blue eyes.
He slides up to her and smiles. It's not much of a move but
his smile is tough to beat.

TOMMY

Have you missed me?

BRUNETTE

Have you been away?

TOMMY

I've been away a long time. And
it's been lonesome.

BRUNETTE

It's been *lonesome*? What are you, a
country singer?

TOMMY

No. I'd like to be a country
singer. But I can't sing.

BRUNETTE

You're not so country, either.

TOMMY

I own a cowboy hat, though. I
think.

BOYFRIEND (O.S.)

Is there a reason you're talking to
my girlfriend?

Tommy turns. The brunette's BOYFRIEND is shorter than Tommy
but built like a weight-lifter.

TOMMY

She was between me and the
bartender.

BOYFRIEND

Well, now she's not.

TOMMY

Is that your scary face?

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

BOYFRIEND

What?

Tommy twists his own features into an exaggerated scowl.

TOMMY

Grr...

The brunette tugs on her boyfriend's arm.

BRUNETTE

Nick...

BOYFRIEND

Just walk away, man.

TOMMY

I'm where I want to be. You walk away.

BARTENDER

Tommy.

Tommy turns and sees the bartender gesturing with his thumb.

BARTENDER

I want you out of here.

Tommy can't even believe what a betrayal this is.

TOMMY

You kidding me? You've known me my whole life.

BARTENDER

That's why I'm asking you to leave.

For a moment Tommy considers escalating this thing to a whole new level, but fuck it, no one's on his side, not even his friends, who have stayed seated at their corner table.

TOMMY

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Everyone watches him walk away. He stops at the door and points at the brunette.

TOMMY

Despite everything, I'm pretty sure you like me.

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

He heads out into the cold night. The brunette shrugs, glances at her boyfriend, and sips her beer.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Isabelle and Maggie sit on either side of Sam on the sofa, watching an animated movie on the television.

SAM

I think it's about that time...

MAGGIE

You said we could stay up late with you tonight!

SAM

This is the latest you've ever stayed up.

MAGGIE

Uh uh. Mom let me stay up till midnight on New Year's Eve when you were in Ireland.

ISABELLE

He was in Iraq. And you fell asleep at eleven.

MAGGIE

Is it gonna be cold there?

SAM

In Afghanistan? Pretty cold.

MAGGIE

Will you be home for my birthday?

SAM

Of course I will, sweetheart. Give me a kiss and then we're going to bed.

Maggie hugs him and kisses him. He reaches for Isabelle.

ISABELLE

Don't--

SAM

Izzie--

Osher

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

Just leave. I don't care.

SAM

Give me a hug.

ISABELLE

No.

SAM

A kiss on the cheek?

ISABELLE

I want to watch the movie.

SAM

Two kisses on the cheek?

ISABELLE

Just go.

SAM

Three kisses?

He starts to tickle her. She pushes his hands away but she's having a hard time maintaining her scowl.

SAM

A hundred?

Sam growls like a caged bear as he tickles his daughter. She laughs, fighting back, and Maggie comes to the rescue, jumping on Sam's back.

SAM

Two against one!

MAGGIE

Get him!

The girls are taking him down. It's a safe bet no one's falling asleep for a while.

SAM

Ouch. Not there. Not fair.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sam walks into the bathroom and finds Grace brushing her teeth. A little radio on the counter plays Springsteen.

Osher

CONTINUED:

He's holding a photograph, which he shows her.

SAM

Can I take this with me?

Grace, toothbrush in the corner of her mouth, squints at the picture.

GRACE

Tha wuh?

SAM

I have no idea what you just said.

She pulls the toothbrush out of her mouth.

GRACE

You want that one?

SAM

Yeah. Why not?

GRACE

I'm a big fattie.

Sam looks down at the photograph.

SAM

You're not fat. You're pregnant with Maggie.

GRACE

I'm fat with Maggie.

SAM

I like it.

He puts it aside. As she finishes brushing her teeth, he stands behind her, runs his hands under her shirt, up the skin of her back, holds her breasts in his palms.

She turns toward him, sticks out her tongue, white with Crest. Sam grins and kisses her.

Grace tosses the toothbrush into the sink and puts her hands on her husband, pulling off his shirt.

*Working all day in my daddy's garage
Driving all night chasing some mirage
Pretty soon little girl I'm gonna take charge.*

Osher

EXT. ROADS OF AFGHANISTAN - DAY

A U.S. Army convoy hurtles down the newly paved highway.

*Mister I ain't a boy, no I'm a man
And I believe in a promised land.*

Sam sits in the passenger seat of a Humvee, staring across the arid landscape at the distant, snow-capped mountains.

EXT. ARMY BASE - DAY

The vehicles of the convoy negotiate the tortuous anti-car bomber entrance to the sprawling base.

SOLDIERS wearing full body armor and sunglasses, manning heavy machine guns mounted behind walls of sandbags, watch the newcomers with no expression and no sign of welcome.

EXT. HELIPAD - DAY

A Blackhawk lands. Sam stands at a safe distance, the wind from the rotor blades fanning his hair.

MAJOR CAVAZOS steps off the helicopter, followed by several AIDES. He sees Sam waiting for him, grins, and beckons for the younger officer to join him.

Cavazos and Sam talk as they walk, voices raised over the roar of the helicopter.

SAM

Thought you were out of here.

CAVAZOS

Two more days. Could have used you in the football game last week. Those cocksuckers from Bagram humiliated us.

SAM

What's going on? Hofstrom said you needed to see me?

CAVAZOS

Parker's team got ambushed out in the boonies a few hours ago. They were digging a well for the locals.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM
Casualties?

CAVAZOS
Couple injured, nothing too bad.
But a man got left behind. Radar
technician named Joe Willis.

Cavazos hands Sam a photograph of a young soldier with a
brush cut and a goofy, country boy smile.

CAVAZOS
Kid can barely wipe his ass on his
own. I already got some fuck from
the AP calling to see if we got a
POW situation.

SAM
Do we?

CAVAZOS
Not yet. Get your men settled. If
we don't find him by sundown, I'm
sending you out there.

Sam nods. Cavazos slaps him on the shoulder.

CAVAZOS
Welcome home.

EXT. WATCHTOWER - LATER

Sam paces along the parapet of the high tower, passing
sentries with binoculars who watch over the hills and ridges
abutting the base.

He's carrying a satellite phone and he's trying to find the
spot with the best connection.

INT. MALL - DAY

Grace stands in front of a plate glass shop window, staring
at a bald mannequin in an expensive outfit. The mannequin
stares back, painted blue eyes behind long lashes.

A sign on the window says EVERYTHING MUST GO!

Isabelle stands beside her mother. Maggie wears a candy
bracelet; she sloppily tries to chew one of the candies off
while asking questions.

Osher

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

Why is she bald?

GRACE

Hm?

Maggie points at the bald mannequin.

GRACE

I don't know, sweetheart.

Grace reaches into her handbag, pulls out a tissue, and wipes the pink sugar off Maggie's chin. Grace's cell phone buzzes.

GRACE

Hello?

SAM (O.S.)

Hey. Can you hear me?

GRACE

Hey! Is that you?

She gestures for Isabelle to hold Maggie's hand, which the older sister reluctantly does.

Grace steps a few feet away, covering her free ear to hear better.

GRACE

Baby?

EXT. WATCHTOWER - DAY

Frustrated, Sam hurries over to the far side of the tower.

SAM

Can you hear me?

GRACE (O.S.)

Barely.

SAM

It's a terrible connection.

INT. MALL - DAY

GRACE

Just tell me you love me. Tell me you miss me.

Osher

EXT. WATCHTOWER - DAY

SAM
With all the new nurses here? Are
you crazy?

INT. MALL - DAY

Grace keeps an eye on the girls, who already seem to be
arguing about something.

GRACE
I can't really hear you, baby.

EXT. WATCHTOWER - DAY

SAM
I love you. Can you hear me? I love
you.

INT. MALL - DAY

Grace's getting nothing but digital distortion on the line.

GRACE
Baby doll? Baby?

EXT. WATCHTOWER - DAY

The connection is lost. Sam shakes his head, listening for
another moment on the satellite phone before giving up.

SENTRY
We love you, too, Captain.

Sam feints a right cross at the grinning young sentry and
heads down the tower stairs.

EXT. SKIES OF AFGHANISTAN - DUSK

A Blackhawk flies through the darkening sky, running lights
extinguished for maximum stealth.

Osher

INT. BLACKHAWK - DUSK

The cabin is lit only by the muted red night lights.

Sam and Lieutenant Freeman sit with a squad of twelve young SOLDIERS. Some of the men are visibly nervous, others appear relaxed, a few are cocky.

Sam studies the photograph of Joe Willis.

MORELLA

There must be some hookers around.
I can't not fuck for six months
just 'cause they're Muslims.

FREEMAN

Morella...

MORELLA

That's, like, prejudiced.

FREEMAN

Morella. You don't quit the redneck
talk, hookers gonna be the least of
your problems.

MORELLA

Redneck? I grew up twenty minutes
from the City.

FREEMAN

That's redneck to me. Shut your
mouth.

MORELLA

I'm just saying... you officers are
all married, it's easy for you.

FREEMAN

You wanted hookers, you should have
joined the Navy.

Sam smiles at this, slipping the photograph of Willis back
into a pocket of his jacket.

A flash of intense light and an eardrum-shattering explosion.

The Blackhawk lurches to the side as smoke begins to fill the
cabin.

Osher

CONTINUED:

The soldiers all look to Sam. Sam and Freeman look into the cockpit, where the pilots are desperately trying to keep the bird aloft while radioing for help.

PILOT

We're hit! Taking RPG fire!

CO-PILOT

Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! Witchdoctor
8 going down! Witchdoctor 8 going
down!

The helicopter enters into a sickening plunge. Most of the soldiers have their eyes closed, gripping the bench beneath them as the Blackhawk plummets.

Sam looks through the cockpit's windshield as the dark hillside rushes up to meet them.

EXT. SKIES OF AFGHANISTAN - DUSK

Viewed from far away, the spectacle has a strange, solemn beauty. The burning helicopter silently tumbles from the evening sky.

The Blackhawk smashes into the ground, rotor blades scything the rocks and shattering. The fuel tank explodes, sending flaming gouts of fuel into the air.

The helicopter burns on the hillside, a bonfire of mangled steel. No one inside could have survived.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Grace lies in the bathtub. Her eyes are closed and steam rises from the water. She opens her eyes when she hears the doorbell.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Isabelle and Maggie run to the front door. Isabelle gets on her tip-toes and looks through the peep hole.

ISABELLE

Who is it?

SANDERSON (O.S.)

It's, ah, Lieutenant Sanderson and
Lieutenant Davis.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Isabelle opens the door. SANDERSON and DAVIS stand with their hats in their hands.

ISABELLE
What do you want?

SANDERSON
Is your mother home?

ISABELLE
She's in the bath.

Grace appears, wearing a bathrobe, her hair tied back with a rubber band.

She sees the officers and she knows.

She baits the girls gently toward the living room.

GRACE
Izzie, you and Maggie go to the
living room. You can watch TV.

Isabelle understands that something is not right. Maggie, of course, is oblivious.

MAGGIE
I thought we're not allowed to
watch after eight.

GRACE
Tonight it's okay.
(nodding to Isabelle)
Go ahead, sweetie.

Isabelle takes Maggie by the hand and leads her out of sight.

Grace turns and faces the officers. She would rather not exist than stand here at this moment, but she faces the officers and waits.

Sanderson opens his mouth to speak, but this is difficult. Maybe he's never done it before. He takes a deep breath.

Grace watches the young officer and waits for him to find the right words.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Grace lies on the sofa with her girls. On the television, a cartoon princess runs through a cartoon forest.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Maggie sleeps, her head in Grace's lap. Isabelle still watches the television but her eyelids are getting heavy.

Grace plays with Maggie's hair.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - LATER

The girls sleep in their beds. Grace sits on the floor beside Isabelle's bed, her back against the night table.

Headlights splash through the bedroom curtains. Grace slowly looks toward the window as she hears the car pulling into the driveway.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - NIGHT

Tommy has parked the '68 Mustang. He lurches out of the car, empties an ashtray full of cigarette butts in a bush, and replaces the ashtray in the car door.

He walks toward the garage, holding the car keys.

Grace opens the front door. Tommy stops in mid-stride, caught in the act. For a second he considers making a run for it, but then he holds up his hands and gives his best smile.

TOMMY

Okay, okay, I know.

Grace stares at him in disbelief.

TOMMY

Ah, he said it was okay, he said if I wanted to borrow it--

He walks over to Grace, still grinning.

TOMMY

You don't want the battery going dead, so-- I think one of the turn signals is broken. I could test it, if you want.

GRACE

Are you drunk? Are you driving around drunk in our car?

TOMMY

Okay, let's not-- Don't make this into a big thing.

(MORE)

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY (cont'd)

(beat)

What are you doing up?

GRACE

Did you talk to your mom and dad?

Tommy makes a face.

TOMMY

Uh, not since I dropped out of high school. But that was a really good chat. That one went really well.

He sees that Grace is still staring at him.

TOMMY

Hey, hold on, hold on. Sam pretty much lent me the car. Okay? So don't stand there giving me that pissed-off look.

He looks around the driveway.

TOMMY

Now I got to get home, 'cause you'll notice, you'll notice I dropped the car off at your place, even though now I got to... I'll just walk. It's only a couple miles.

GRACE

Sam's dead.

Tommy looks at her. The sentence she just spoke makes no sense in the context of their conversation. He waits for her to admit that she just made a very bad joke.

Finally it becomes clear that Grace will say no such thing. For the first time he notices that her eyes are red-rimmed and glassy.

TOMMY

What?

GRACE

They crashed.

Grace watches him. Maybe she's curious to see how someone else will react to these words she heard a few hours ago.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

TOMMY

Wait...

(almost angry now)

...what are you telling me?

GRACE

He's dead, Tommy.

(beat)

Do you want to come in?

TOMMY

No... I don't want to come in.

(beat)

What is this? I come here to drop off...

(beat)

Why didn't you call me? Why didn't anyone call me?

GRACE

We've been trying to reach you all night.

Tommy stares at her for another long beat.

He turns and walks away. At the end of the driveway he turns and hurls the car keys at Grace. She flinches and they hit the wall beside her.

Tommy walks off into the night.

EXT. HANK AND ELSIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tommy stands on the sidewalk, staring at the little house with aluminum siding where he grew up. Inside the lights are blazing.

Tommy seems undecided whether or not he wants to be here. Finally he walks up the brick path to the front porch.

EXT. HANK AND ELSIE'S PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Hank opens the door and looks at his son. He holds a glass of whiskey on ice. It's not his first.

HANK

Tommy... Come in.

Osher

INT. HANK AND ELSIE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hank retakes his seat at the kitchen table. The newspaper is splashed open and Hank resumes his reading, taking frequent slugs from his drink.

Elsie, spooning rounds of cookie dough onto a buttered aluminum sheet, looks up and sees her son watching her.

ELSIE
Hi, Tommy.

TOMMY
Hi, Mom.
(beat)
What are you doing?

ELSIE
Making cookies. Chocolate chip.

TOMMY
It's four in the morning.

ELSIE
I know, but I've been meaning to
make cookies for the girls forever,
so I thought, well, why not now?

TOMMY
Mom...

ELSIE
Yes, sweetheart?

Tommy watches his mother form perfect little spheres of cookie dough, which she carefully spaces on the sheet.

TOMMY
Sam's dead.

Elsie nods. Her eyes fill with tears.

ELSIE
Yes, he is.

Tommy walks over to her and gathers her in his arms. She cries softly, her eyes clenched shut, as Tommy holds her.

Hank stands and leaves the room with his drink.

Osher

INT. CAHILL HOUSE - DAY

Grace, wearing a dark, simple dress, roams through the house, straightening furniture and picking up stray crayons. She's getting the place ready for guests.

GRACE

Izzy!

She heads toward her daughters' room, stopping to scoop a pair of bumblebee-striped ear muffs off the floor.

GRACE

Isabelle! Maggie! You girls ready?

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace walks into their bedroom. She stops when she sees Isabelle lying in bed, reading a paperback novel, wearing her jeans and a hooded sweatshirt.

GRACE

Where's your dress?

Isabelle never looks up from her book.

ISABELLE

It's ugly.

Grace examines her daughter for a second. She walks over to the closet, pulls out the dress, and tosses it on Isabelle.

GRACE

(stern)

Put it on. We have to go.

ISABELLE

I don't want to.

Mother and daughter stare at each other. Maggie sits down on the bed beside her big sister. She's already wearing her little black-and-white dress.

MAGGIE

Then I don't want to wear mine,
either. It's itchy.

Grace stares down at her two rebellious daughters. After a moment the stern expression fades from her face.

Osher

CONTINUED:

She sits on the bed, touches Isabelle's cheek and gently pulls the girl to her. At first Isabelle is reluctant to sit up.

GRACE

Come here.

Isabelle allows Grace to pull her close, to kiss her and stroke her hair.

MAGGIE

Is Daddy really dead like your mom
and dad?

GRACE

Yes.

Maggie plays with the folds in the bedspread.

MAGGIE

I don't want to wear this crappy
dress.

Grace smiles, still holding Isabelle.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The small church is filled with Sam's FRIENDS and FAMILY, singing the old hymn as sunlight streams through the tall windows. Half the attendees are Army men in uniform.

*Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,
The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

Isabelle and Maggie, wearing sweatshirts and jeans, sit on either side of Grace. Isabelle sobs and Grace turns to her, kissing her hair, whispering in her ear.

Beside Maggie, Hank sits with Elsie, holding her hand very tight, singing the words, a great weariness behind his eyes.

Tommy sits on the other side of Elsie. He wears a tie, though he's made a mess of the knot. He looks as though he hasn't slept since hearing the news.

Maggie climbs into Hank's lap and he musses the girl's hair.

Osher

CONTINUED:

*Come not in terrors, as the King of Kings,
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings,
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea.
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.*

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Grace walks out of the church with Elsie, the two women holding hands. Other mourners stream out behind them.

CAVAZOS

Grace...
(to Elsie)
Mrs. Cahill.

Elsie smiles at the major but she doesn't recognize him and she doesn't really want to speak with him. She gathers the girls and walks toward the parking lot with them.

GRACE

Hey.

Cavazos manages to maintain eye contact with Grace for about two seconds before he focuses on the pavement by his feet. He's a war-hardened veteran but this is not in his skill set.

CAVAZOS

He was the best officer I had. Just
a fine, fine soldier.
(awkward beat)
And I want you to know, if there's
anything I can do...

Grace nods. Both of them know it's a pointless offer but it's part of the funeral etiquette.

Grace watches the mourners heading to their cars. Cavazos stands beside her, stiff and silent.

GRACE

I knew this could happen. I mean,
we talked about it. You know, what
to do... money and stuff.

CAVAZOS

You should be getting the death
gratuity in a couple weeks.

She shakes her head, eyes closed, trying to dispel the words.

Osher

CONTINUED:

CAVAZOS

It's the, uh, the technical term
for it... Pretty stupid way of
putting it, you're right.

GRACE

No, it's... we talked about it. And
you think about it, all the time.
It's just...

(looking into his eyes)

I don't believe he's dead. I can't
feel it. Don't you think I'd feel
it if he were dead?

Grace searches Cavazos' face for some kind of answer.

CAVAZOS

The bodies were...

He stops, realizing what he's about to say.

CAVAZOS

They did the DNA tests. Every man
on that chopper is gone.

Grace looks away.

GRACE

You start thinking, if you worry
about something enough, it won't
happen. 'Cause the bad things that
happen, they always surprise you,
don't they? So I worried about it
every hour, every minute, and look
where we are. It still happened.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Hank walks toward his car, sipping whiskey from his hip
flask. Elsie and the girls follow behind.

Hank pulls out his keys and opens the back door.

HANK

Get in, girls.

Tommy has been walking behind everyone else, but he's seen
his father drinking.

TOMMY

Why don't you let me drive.

Osher

CONTINUED:

HANK
Why should you?

TOMMY
Come on, Dad.

HANK
Girls!

The girls pile into the backseat. Hank closes the door. Tommy reaches for the keys and Hank pushes his hand away.

TOMMY
Dad...

HANK
When did you become so responsible?

ELSIE
Let Tommy drive.

HANK
(to Tommy)
Tell you what, why don't you find yourself a job, make some money, and buy your own car. All right? And you can drive it whenever the hell you want.

TOMMY
Can't you stop being an asshole for one day?

Hank steps closer to Tommy, eyes fierce with anger. For a moment it seems the confrontation might get physical.

Elsie takes her husband's arm and tries to tug him away.

ELSIE
Hank...

Never taking his eyes off Tommy, Hank points at the church.

HANK
You hear those men in there talking about your brother? Did you? Who the hell's gonna stand up for you when you're dead?

TOMMY
I don't know, Dad.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

HANK

Yeah, you don't know. Nobody knows.

Tommy nods. Perhaps he wants to say something in reply, but instead he turns and walks away.

ELSIE

Tommy! Tommy!

Tommy is not coming back. Elsie wheels on her husband.

ELSIE

What is wrong with you?

HANK

He's out of prison two weeks and he's giving me a lecture?

ELSIE

Give me the keys.

HANK

Don't you start on me--

ELSIE

Give me the goddamn keys.

We've never seen this look on Elsie's face before. Maybe Hank hasn't, either. He hands over the keys and turns away from her, muttering to himself.

HANK

What the hell is wrong with everybody.

He opens the backseat.

HANK

Come on, scoot over, make room for Grandpa.

Elsie watches him close the door. Grace has walked up to the passenger door. The two women exchange a look.

EXT. MAHLUS ROAD - DAY

A long line of cars drives slowly to the graveyard, their headlights on in the sunshine. The other cars on the road pull over, respectfully, to let the funeral procession pass.

Osher

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

The crowd of MOURNERS encircles a flag-draped casket waiting to be interred. The Army HONOR GUARD stands at attention while an ARMY CHAPLAIN reads the benediction.

ARMY CHAPLAIN

Blessed are the pure in heart, for
they shall see God.

Maggie sees a beetle crawling through the grass near her feet. She tries to stomp it. Isabelle gives her a look and Maggie gives up, watching the lucky beetle make its escape.

ARMY CHAPLAIN

Blessed are the peacemakers, for
they shall be called the sons of
God.

The dozens of gathered soldiers stand with heads bowed, listening to the ancient blessing.

ARMY CHAPLAIN

Blessed are those who are
persecuted because of
righteousness, for theirs is the
kingdom of heaven.

Grace stands beside her daughters, with Hank and Elsie close by. Tommy is nowhere in sight.

The chaplain closes his Bible and nods to the NCOIC (non-commissioned officer in charge) who presents arms.

The seven members of the honor guard raise their rifles in unison and fire three volleys.

Following the last volley, the BUGLER begins playing taps. Two members of the honor guard carefully remove Old Glory from the casket and fold it with great precision.

When the flag is properly folded, the NCOIC hands it to the chaplain, who in turn hands it to Grace.

She nods in thanks. Everyone gathered around the grave watches Grace now, and she looks down at the flag, unsure what to do with it.

Osher

INT. PHELAN'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Tommy walks into the bar (the same one he was thrown out of a few nights ago). The place is empty now, early in the afternoon, save for a MIDDLE-AGED DRINKER doing a crossword.

The bartender from the earlier scene dries glasses with a dish towel. He gives Tommy a look.

Tommy throws up his hands in surrender.

TOMMY

Either you let me back or I got to
start drinking at the fucking
yuppie bar in the mall.

The bartender gives the smallest possible smile. He sets a clean glass down on the bar. Tommy sits and the bartender pours him a glass of good bourbon.

BARTENDER

On the house.

Tommy's just happy to be welcome again; he wasn't expecting free liquor.

BARTENDER

I'm sorry about your brother.

Tommy nods and studies the bourbon, no longer so excited about the prospect of drinking it.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

The mourners walk to the parking lot. Hank stops in the middle of the cemetery and stares back at his son's grave.

A solitary SOLDIER in dress uniform stands at attention, per Army ritual, as the GRAVEDIGGERS shovel dirt into the grave.

Hank looks at the lone sentry for a long count before turning away.

EXT. HILLSIDE, AFGHANISTAN - NIGHT

The wreckage of the Blackhawk burns, lighting the hillside. Only moments have passed since the helicopter hit the ground.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Ammunition inside the Blackhawk begins cooking off, crackling like popcorn in the microwave.

The force of the impact has thrown Sam's body clear of the crash site. He lies in a gully, thirty feet from the helicopter, bleeding from a nasty head wound.

The barrel of an AK-47 prods him in the ribcage.

TALIBAN FIGHTERS surround the fallen American, murmuring to each other in Pashtu. Most look to be about twenty years old, their beards still sparse and patchy.

The oldest of the fighters, KOUSHAN (40) kneels beside Sam and slaps his face. Sam reacts to the blow-- he's unconscious but very much alive.

The fighters murmur with excitement. This has been a wildly successful night. They've shot down an American chopper and captured an American officer.

They pat him down, quickly stripping him of his combat knife, his canteen, and all other personal items, including the photo of Joe Willis and the pregnant shot of Grace.

Four of the fighters grab Sam by the arms and legs and haul him roughly to the bed of a pickup truck.

EXT. DIRT ROAD, AFGHANISTAN - DAWN

The pickup truck rumbles down a road that's little more than a goat path through the scrub brush and scree.

Sam sits in the back, hands lashed together, watched carefully by four young fighters. He has regained consciousness and blinks with pain at each jolt in the road.

Blood still leaks from the gash in his scalp, dripping down the side of his face.

One of the young Taliban fighters gestures at Sam and says something in Pashtu. Whatever he said must have been funny; the other fighters laugh at their captive.

Sam watches as the day's first light brightens the eastern horizon.

Osher

EXT. GUERILLA CAMP - DAWN

The fighters drive into the camp, shouting and brandishing their rifles. They are greeted by more comrades, who gather around the truck, staring at the prisoner with a mix of curiosity, anger, and contempt.

Sam is shoved out of the truck and led to a squat cinderblock bunker with a corrugated steel roof.

INT. BUNKER - DAWN

The Taliban men push Sam into this dirt-floored cell, close the door and bolt it from the outside.

He looks around, eyes adjusting to the dim light dribbling in through gaps between the roof and the walls.

Only after a few seconds does Sam realize he's not alone in the cell. A very pale, very young American soldier sits in the corner, arms wrapped around his knees, shivering.

Sam walks closer and crouches beside the other prisoner. He recognizes the boy's face.

SAM
Joe Willis?

The soldier stares up at Sam, plainly terrified. He has not had a sip of water in over a day; his lips are dry and cracked. After a moment's hesitation, he nods.

SAM
I'm Captain Sam Cahill.
(slow smile)
I'm here to get you out.

If Sam hoped the kid would respond to the attempt at humor, he was overly optimistic. He studies the boy's bruised face.

SAM
Are you okay? Did they hurt you?

Willis lowers his head. His eyes are swollen and red from crying. He looks more like a terrified child than a trained soldier.

Sam takes all this in. Whatever lies ahead, Joe Willis will not be much help, but Sam gives a brave smile and puts his hand on the boy's shoulder.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM

You're not alone anymore.

Willis gives a very small nod. Sam sits beside Willis, back against the wall. The prisoners' breath rises in vapors in the cold morning air.

INT. CAHILL HOUSE - NIGHT

Grace irons Maggie's itchy black-and-white dress. When she's done she folds it neatly and pulls another item from the basket of clean laundry. It's one of Sam's dress shirts.

She hesitates when she realizes what she's holding. After a moment she lays the shirt down on the board and begins ironing it.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Grace lies in bed with her sleeping daughters on either side of her. The television is on with the sound muted.

The TV's blue light plays across her face, but Grace isn't watching the movie. Her mind is thousands of miles away.

INT. YUPPIE BAR - NIGHT

Tommy sits at one end of the bar. He is deep in his cups.

Unlike Phelan's, the yuppie bar has no sawdust on the floor, no names gouged into the veneer walls, and no pickled eggs for sale. On the plus side, no one here knows Tommy's name.

Two MEN Tommy's age sit near him. Both wear untucked, striped dress shirts and Diesel jeans. Both have a bit too much gel in their hair.

They could be lawyers or car salesmen or executives. Whatever it is, they both have jobs and they're annoying Tommy.

Eventually the men realize that Tommy is staring at them. The bolder of the two stares back for a few seconds.

TOMMY

Say something.

After a tense beat, the two men stand and walk away. Tommy stares after them, still surly, disappointed that nothing has happened. He has a long night ahead of him and nothing to do.

CONTINUED:

He reaches for his cell phone.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The phone rings and Grace reaches around a sleeping Maggie to get it. She keeps her voice low so as not to wake the girls.

GRACE

Hello?

INTERCUT between bedroom and bar.

TOMMY

Hey. It's Tommy. Sorry, I know it's like one in the morning.

Grace glances at the clock.

GRACE

It's three.

TOMMY

What?

GRACE

It's three in the morning.

TOMMY

So I had a few beers and it turns out this is like the world's most expensive beer or something 'cause now they're saying I owe forty bucks.

Grace stares at the television screen. This is not what she needs right now.

TOMMY

Hello?

GRACE

Where are you?

Grace listens for another moment and hangs up the phone. She kisses Isabelle's hair. The girl opens her eyes, groggy and disoriented.

GRACE

Sweetheart, I have to go somewhere for a minute. Take Maggie to the bathroom if she wakes up, okay?

Osher

CONTINUED:

Isabelle nods and falls back asleep instantly.

INT. YUPPIE BAR - NIGHT

Grace enters. It's closing time and almost everyone has cleared out. She hears Tommy before she sees him.

TOMMY (O.C.)

You're just grumpy 'cause you got
the world's biggest nose.

As Grace approaches, Tommy is leaning across the bar, trying to grab the bartender's nose. It may not be the world's biggest, but it's up there.

The bartender (let's call him THE NOSE) is intensely unamused.

Tommy sees Grace.

TOMMY

Hey, Grace! Say hello to the Nose.
The Nose has closed the bar.

GRACE

How much does he owe you?

THE NOSE

Forty. And two broken glasses.

Grace is angry with Tommy and she's exhausted. At the same time, she can't take her eyes off the bartender's nose.

GRACE

(reaching into handbag)

Okay, so you want to say fifty?

She hands over the money, trying very hard not to stare.

THE NOSE

Get him out of here before I call
the police.

TOMMY

Relax! Women think big noses are
sexy. Right?

GRACE

Yes. No, I mean-- come on.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Grace is trying to get Tommy moving toward the door. She's trying not to insult the bartender. She's trying not to laugh. She's failing on all counts.

TOMMY

I think it's sexy.

THE NOSE

That's enough of that.

TOMMY

Are you gonna sneeze on us now?

THE NOSE

If you come here again, I'm calling the police.

TOMMY

Let me touch it.

Tommy reaches across the bar. The bartender leans back to avoid his grasping hand.

Grace drags Tommy toward the door.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

Grace drives while Tommy smokes. She's still laughing.

GRACE

You're such an idiot.

TOMMY

I mean, but that was a huge nose, wasn't it? You have to admit, that was... I mean, that was up there with the great ones.

Tommy stares into the Pennsylvania night.

TOMMY

When we were kids, Sam beat up everyone I pissed off. He wasn't even that big but he could take anyone.

GRACE

Yeah, well, maybe he should have let them beat you up. I'm sure you deserved it.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Tommy nods, exhaling twin plumes of smoke from his nostrils. Grace glances at him and then back to the road. They pull up to a red stoplight.

TOMMY

I never fucking missed anyone before.

(beat)

I really miss him. I really do. I mean... my stomach hurts whenever I think about it.

(beat)

God, what a shitty world this is.

GRACE

Don't say that.

TOMMY

Why not? All the assholes walking around and Sam's dead?

Grace stares out the windshield. Several seconds pass.

TOMMY

Green light.

Grace begins to sob, resting her head on the rim of the steering wheel.

Tommy watches her. He has no idea what to do.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tommy lies face down on the sofa in Sam and Grace's living room. He still wears his clothes from the previous night and he's drooled a little on the cushion.

The girls are shrieking with laughter in the kitchen and the noise wakes him. He lifts his head, disoriented and hungover, shielding his eyes from the sunlight flooding the room.

ISABELLE (O.S.)

Oh no, I dropped it! I'll make another one...

Tommy sits up, wipes his mouth, looks around. He looks like a man with a bad headache.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Try again.

Osher

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE (O.S.)
You have to do it like this.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The girls are making pancakes. Isabelle tosses them into the air and catches them in a big pan. Several misses lie smushed on the floor. Maggie stirs batter in a bowl. Gobs of pancake mix are splattered everywhere.

Tommy wanders in, rubbing the sleep out of his eyes.

MAGGIE
Hi! Why are you sleeping here?

Isabelle drops another one. She peels it off the floor and replaces it in the pan.

ISABELLE
It's hard to catch them.

Tommy opens the refrigerator and looks inside. Isabelle sidles up to him and whispers:

ISABELLE
We're making pancakes for Mom so she won't be so sad.

MAGGIE
It's because our Dad is dead.

ISABELLE
He knows. He's his brother.

Tommy pulls the milk out of the refrigerator and drinks.

MAGGIE
No drinking from the carton!

TOMMY
Shut up and make your pancakes.

The girls are not remotely offended by their grumpy uncle. Isabelle offers him the pan.

ISABELLE
Want one?

TOMMY
I don't like pancakes.

Osher

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

Our pancakes are the best.

TOMMY

Eat your own crap.

He takes another slurp from the carton as Grace enters. She looks tired, too, but a whole lot better than Tommy. She takes in the disaster area of her kitchen.

MAGGIE

Hi, Mommy.

GRACE

Sweetie, is that pan hot?

ISABELLE

Uh huh. We're making pancakes.

GRACE

Okay, but you have to be careful with that...

Meanwhile, Hank is sneaking up to the kitchen window. Tommy sees him coming before anyone else. He says nothing.

Hank presses his palms against the glass and makes a monster face. Maggie turns, sees him, and screams with delight.

MAGGIE

Grandpa!

The girls run to the kitchen door, open it, and let their grandfather inside.

As they hug him, Hank notices that Tommy's in the kitchen. He seems surprised and a little annoyed to find his son here.

GRACE

Hey, Pop.

She kisses her father-in-law's cheek.

HANK

Hiya, sweetie.

GRACE

Come on, girls, let's get the table set.

She leads the girls into the dining room with a stack of plates and flatware.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

Hank and Tommy are alone now. Each seems uncomfortable in the other man's presence.

Tommy lights a cigarette, maybe just to give himself something to do.

HANK

Hey.

TOMMY

Hey.

Another awkward silence.

HANK

You having pancakes?

TOMMY

No. You hungry? I think there's one on the shelf there.

HANK

No, thanks. Listen...

(searching for words)

I was a little stupid the other day.

(already getting annoyed)

But I was okay to drive.

TOMMY

We were both a little...

Hank nods, grateful he doesn't have to explain anymore, grateful that he doesn't need to make a formal apology.

HANK

Okay. It was good to talk about things, anyway.

(looking around kitchen)

She make any coffee?

TOMMY

Dad...

Hank stops his search and looks at his son.

TOMMY

I know Sam was always better at things than me. Football, stuff like that.

Hank smiles, proud at the memory of Sam's achievements.

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

HANK

He was a great quarterback, wasn't he? That game against Easton he threw for--

TOMMY

Four hundred and twenty yards, I know.

HANK

Four hundred and twenty yards. Still the school record.

(beat)

You could have been great, too. You had the talent. But you always gave up. Sam never gave up.

Tommy taps off the ash on the edge of the kitchen sink.

TOMMY

I just said it, right? I just admitted that he was better at everything. But... the thing is, he's gone. And it isn't my fault. I wish it wasn't true, I wish--

HANK

Well, that's the way it is.
(turning away from Tommy)
Isn't there any coffee?

TOMMY

Jesus, Dad--

HANK

(increasingly heated)

Don't start on me like your mother, you hear? You can't whine about something that's over. I just want some peace and quiet, understand? I don't want to listen to anymore bullshit!

Tommy smokes his cigarette, not looking at his father.

HANK

You really want to do something helpful, you can start by fixing up this kitchen. It looks awful.

Osher

CONTINUED: (4)

Hank studies his son's face. We get the sense that the older man regrets yelling at his son, regrets his harsh words, but something about Tommy seems to infuriate him.

He pats Tommy's cheek, not so gently, and walks away.

Tommy's alone now, leaning against the kitchen counter. He glances around at the unpainted walls and the exposed wiring.

EXT. BUNKER - DAY

Snow has come in the night, dusting the mud huts and the bunker. Two GUERILLAS sit in the flatbed of one of the pickup trucks, playing a game of *panjpar*, AK-47s by their sides.

INT. BUNKER - DAY

Joe Willis sits in the corner where he always sits, shivering. He looks dehydrated, exhausted, and broken.

Sam paces the cell, looking for any weakness in the walls, any chance of escape.

He has performed the same search a hundred times before, with no success, but the search itself gives him something to do, a way to resist his helplessness.

He glances down at the young soldier, who has begun to cry quietly in the corner. There is compassion in Sam's face, but disgust, also. Joe Willis' weakness is a disease and Sam doesn't want to catch it.

Sam sits, back against the wall. He hears Joe whimpering.

SAM

Joe.

Joe looks at him.

SAM

Stop crying. All you're doing is
wasting body fluid.

Joe closes his eyes, tries to pull himself together. It's not working.

JOE

You think they'll come get us?

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM

Of course they will. There's a thousand men looking for us.

JOE

Why don't they come, then?

SAM

They're coming. Try to stay with me here. When they come they're coming in hard, everything's gonna happen real fast, and we better be ready.

Joe listens to Sam's words and looks at Sam's face, but he doesn't seem to believe anything he hears. Sam decides to try a different tack.

SAM

Tell me about your wife.

JOE

Cassie?

SAM

You have more than one?

JOE

(almost a smile)

She's got her driver's test coming up. She's gonna fail. She already failed three times.

SAM

Didn't you teach her?

JOE

I try, but she's always daydreaming, running through stop signs. Girl's a menace.

SAM

What about Joe Junior?

JOE

(beaming)

He looks like her. Cassie's got these weird little thumbs, like lollypops. And so does Joe.

Sam smiles and looks away, thinking about his own family. Joe's smile begins to slip and he starts to cry again.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE

I should be with them. I should be
with them right now.

SAM

Hey.

He sits up and goes over to Joe, crouching so his face is
close to the weeping young soldier's.

SAM

Look at me. Joe? Look at me. We'll
get out of here. I promise you.

Joe searches Sam's eyes, desperate to believe him.

JOE

You don't think we're gonna die?

SAM

Yes. I do. But not here.

Joe laughs a little, the tears still streaming down his face.
Sam puts his arm around the kid, holds him close.

SAM

We're gonna make it. You hear me?
We're gonna make it.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - LATER

A contractor's pickup truck pulls up to the curb. Four men
step out of the extended cab: Tommy, A.J., Owen, and Sweeney.

Tommy's friends wear paint-splattered overalls. A.J. carries
a ladder; Sweeney holds a power drill in one hand and a tool
box in the other. Owen's got the case of Milwaukee's Best.

INT. GIRLS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace cleans the girls' room, picking up scattered toys and
books. When she hears rough laughter outside she goes to the
window and watches the workmen with a perplexed expression.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The men examine the room with critical eyes.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SWEENEY

Your brother try to do this
himself?

TOMMY

Guess so, yeah.

SWEENEY

Well... he was a hell of a football
player. But he didn't know shit
about drywall.

Grace enters the kitchen. The men, busy laying down tarps,
don't notice her in the doorway for a moment.

TOMMY

Hey! Uh, Grace, this is A.J., Owen,
and... fuck, Sweeney, I don't even
know your first name.

SWEENEY

Yeah, there's a reason for that.
(to Grace)
Nice to meet you.

TOMMY

We're gonna do a little, you know,
what do you call it?

A.J.

We're gonna build you a proper
kitchen.

GRACE

Wow. Really?

The men are already getting into their work. This is
obviously what they do for a living, and, judging from their
brisk, efficient manner, they do it well.

Grace watches them for a moment, still a little mystified by
the whole thing.

GRACE

Anybody want some coffee?

SWEENEY

Nah, thanks. Maybe a beer.

OWEN

Let's start with beers.

Osher

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

Grace sits in her Jeep, in a long line of parked mothers. The rain has started and the waiting cars have their headlights turned on, windshield wipers beating.

The CHILDREN coming out of the school, looked after by several TEACHERS, rush to the waiting cars.

Isabelle and Maggie come down the steps, both wearing yellow rain slickers. Isabelle holds her younger sister's hand. She carefully leads her down the slick steps.

INT. JEEP - CONTINUOUS

Grace watches her daughters approaching the Jeep. She smiles but there are tears in her eyes.

INT. CAHILL HOUSE - DUSK

Grace and her daughters return, carrying plastic bags filled with groceries. When the girls hear the sounds of male laughter, they rush into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The girls stare up at the big men, intimidated.

The kitchen is beginning to look like it belongs in a model home. The kitchen table is covered with empty cans of beer.

Tommy stands on a ladder, painting a wall. A.J. attaches hinges for the cabinet doors with a power drill.

ISABELLE

Can I help?

Tommy looks down at her. The power drill is loud.

TOMMY

What?

ISABELLE

Can I help?

TOMMY

Why don't you go watch TV.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SWEENEY

Read a book, you mean.

TOMMY

Yeah, read a book.

ISABELLE

Please?

A.J.

You insured, kid?

TOMMY

Okay, get up here.

He steps down from the ladder and helps Isabelle climb it, keeping his hands beside her to make sure she doesn't slip.

Unfortunately he forgets to move the can of paint, which rests on the uppermost rung. In her excitement, Isabelle knocks the can over, spilling all the white paint onto Owen, who lies on his stomach on the kitchen floor, grouting the tiles.

He scrambles to his feet, his jeans and shirt drenched with paint.

OWEN

Shit! What are you doing?

Isabelle stares at him in horror. Tommy scoops her off the ladder before she can do any more damage. The other men take a time out to drink from their cans of beers.

SWEENEY

How ya doin' there, whitey?

OWEN

Fuck you. I bought these jeans two days ago.

ISABELLE

I'm sorry.

Grace walks into the kitchen. She sees Owen and has to bite her lip to keep from laughing.

OWEN

Where's the bathroom?

GRACE

Just wait here a minute.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

She hurries out. Owen stares down at his ruined clothes.

OWEN

Goddamn...

TOMMY

It mostly missed you, I think.

OWEN

You kidding me? I'm covered in it.

TOMMY

Nah, you can barely see it.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grace opens the closet door and looks through Sam's hanging shirts. She runs her hand down one of the sleeves, lost for a moment.

Finally she grabs all of the shirts and yanks them off the bar, hangers and all.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Isabelle has been banished. Tommy, A.J., and Sweeney sit around the table, drinking beer.

Owen stands in the middle of the kitchen, stripped down to his boxers and his tube socks. He has a big belly, a hairy back, and a Devil Girl tattoo on his shoulder.

OWEN

What the hell you looking at?

TOMMY

You have a lovely body, Owen.

OWEN

Eat me.

SWEENEY

Do you work out?

TOMMY

Your socks are pretty cool, too.

OWEN

You're so fucking funny.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Grace walks into the kitchen, carrying a large bundle of Sam's clothes.

GRACE

Here you go. I think they'll fit you.

Tommy sees Sam's clothes. His grin fades.

OWEN

All I need is a t-shirt and some pants.

She hands him the bundle.

GRACE

Take it all.

OWEN

I don't need all that.

GRACE

There's more.

She walks out of the kitchen again.

OWEN

You don't have to do that.

(to Tommy)

She doesn't have to give me all that.

He lays the clothes down on the kitchen table and starts sorting through them.

Tommy stands beside Owen and looks through his brother's shirts and pants, feeling the fabric.

None of the men are laughing anymore.

TOMMY

Why don't you take it all?

OWEN

Tommy, it's--

TOMMY

No, please, take it.

OWEN

I don't have to bring it back?

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

SWEENEY

Jesus, are you listening? Take the clothes.

OWEN

Okay, I'm just asking.

TOMMY

Why don't we call it a day.

SWEENEY

You got it.

He and A.J. stand, grabbing the remaining beers.

A.J.

Start up again tomorrow morning?

TOMMY

Yeah. Yeah. Thanks, fellas.

His friends slap his shoulder as they walk out of the kitchen, leaving him alone at the table.

INT. BUNKER - DAY

Joe Willis sleeps on his side, curled up like a small child. Sam stands near the door. We hear shouted commands in Pashtu and footsteps approaching the bunker.

SAM

Joe.

(beat)

Joe!

The private hasn't had a real sleep in days; he blinks now, staring up at Sam with groggy eyes. No help whatsoever.

The door swings open and four armed GUERILLAS storm into the room. Two grab Sam and push him toward the door. The other two haul Joe off the ground and shove him out behind Sam.

EXT. GUERILLA CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Prodded with the muzzles of AK-47s, Sam and Joe walk toward a pickup truck parked on the edge of the camp.

Sam looks around, trying to gauge the faces of his captors, trying to suss out the situation.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Joe is certain that they are walking towards their execution. At one point he falls to the ground, trembling, shaking his head furiously.

JOE
Don't... please...

One of the guerillas seizes him by the scruff of the neck and forces him back to his feet. Another gives him a kick in the backside. They're all laughing at Joe now, calling him names in Pashtu.

There is a distinction in the way the captors treat their captives. Sam is a hated enemy, but there is a modicum of respect for his stoic behavior-- he might be a soldier in the Devil's Army, but at least he is a man.

Joe Willis, on the other hand, elicits nothing but disgust from the Pashtuns. He cries like a child; he soils himself in his terror. His cowardice is considered a disgrace by the Taliban fighters.

Koushan, the commander, waits for the Americans beside the pickup truck. Six other fighters, some carrying Kalashnikovs, others bearing stolen American M-4s, surround the captives.

Koushan studies the American soldiers for a moment. He barks an order in Pashtu. One of the younger guerillas, MURAD, translates into English.

MURAD
Show us how to arm this.

In the back of the pickup truck, Sam sees an American SMAW (Shoulder-launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon) in a desert camo carrying case. Joe sees it, too. Neither man moves.

Koushan glares at his hostages. He pulls out a revolver and walks over to Joe, repeating his command.

MURAD
Show us how to arm this!

Koushan jam his gun into Joe's head.

JOE
I don't know how.

Koushan yells in Pashtu and Joe stammers his defense, trying to plead his case.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE

I swear to God I don't know how. I
never fired one of them.

MURAD

Don't lie to us.

The other guerillas are screaming at Joe now, taunting him,
laughing at his terror.

JOE

Please...

Koushan is tired of the excuses. He levels the pistol.

SAM

I know how to do it.

The Pashtuns turn and examine Sam.

SAM

Let him go and I'll show you.

Koushan stares into Sam's eyes. Koushan has been fighting in
the hills ever since the Russians were the invaders; he is no
man's fool and he suspects everyone and everything.

SAM

Let him go and I'll show you.

Koushan smiles, his teeth stained green from chewing *naswar*.
He holds the gun firmly against Joe's temple and waits.

Sam has no bargaining leverage. He hesitates for a beat.
Finally he walks to the truck, opens the case, and removes
the SMAW.

It's a fearsome looking weapon, capable of flattening a house
with a single shell.

With a series of quick, practiced motions, Sam arms it.

Koushan, still holding the gun to Joe's head, says something
to Murad.

MURAD

Show us again. Slowly this time.

SAM

Let him go.

(wary beat)

And give him water. He needs water.

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

Koushan seems almost amused by Sam's demands. We hear the words "Coca-Cola" in his Pashtu response.

MURAD

And maybe you'd like a nice cold
Coca-Cola? Some air conditioning,
perhaps, for your room?

Sam and Koushan watch each other, neither man blinking.

SAM

Get him some water.

Koushan considers for another beat before holstering his pistol and issuing a command. One of his fighters unscrews a canteen and hands it to Joe.

Joe stares at the canteen, too scared to take any action without permission. Sam nods at him. Joe drinks deeply.

He attempts to hand the canteen to Sam but Koushan raises his arm, blocking the handoff. Koushan gestures at the SMAW.

Sam surveys the group of fighters arrayed around him. The young men watch him, fingers on the triggers of their rifles.

Sam demonstrates, slowly this time, how to arm the device.

SAM

Take the battery...

He slides the battery into place.

SAM

Take off the protection cap... open
the sight... release the safety...

Sam stands in the middle of the Taliban camp, holding an armed, high-powered rocket launcher. A SMAW only holds one shell, but it's powerful enough to destroy a tank.

We sense that Sam is rapidly considering his options. He could easily kill a number of enemies right now. But he and Joe would die themselves within seconds...

Koushan, half-smiling, holds out his hands for the weapon.

Sam finally hands it over. A dark look crosses his face; he feels he has betrayed himself, his country.

Koushan holds the SMAW above his head, brandishing the war trophy, shouting in Pashtu. His men holler with pride.

INT. BUNKER - LATER

Sam sits with his back to the wall, holding a canteen, staring at nothing. Joe Willis sits near him.

JOE

I thought they were gonna kill us.

Sam doesn't look at him.

JOE

You saved me.

Sam still doesn't look at Joe. He speaks in a monotone, no evident emotion.

SAM

They can take out a tank now. An APC. Another helicopter.

JOE

You had to do it. They would have killed us.

Sam slowly turns his head to look at Joe. Whatever Joe sees in Sam's eyes frightens him.

EXT. MAHLUS MAIN STREET - DAY

Tommy stands on a street corner, smoking a cigarette down to the butt. He's staring at a bank across the street. He looks nervous. He throws down the cigarette, crushes it with the toe of his work boot, and crosses the street.

INT. BANK - DAY

Tommy walks inside the bank. He looks around, expecting to be accosted, but no one seems to notice him. The SECURITY GUARD, a retired cop in his fifties, doesn't even look his way. The BANK PATRONS and EMPLOYEES all go about their business as if Tommy were invisible.

A young woman, DANIELLE MANCUSO, sits at a desk reviewing some papers. She wears a gold cross on her neck.

Tommy sees her from across the room. He takes a deep breath and approaches her desk.

Danielle looks up with a smile.

Osher

CONTINUED:

DANIELLE

Hi, welcome to First National...

Her smile dissolves when she recognizes Tommy's face. She freezes, too terrified to speak or move.

TOMMY

(trying to calm her)

No, no, I'm just, I'm just here to--

DANIELLE

Please...

Tommy raises his hands.

TOMMY

I just came down to talk to you--

Danielle looks at the security guard, desperation in her eyes. She's in luck; the guard glances over and sees that the woman's on the verge of panicking.

He rushes to her desk, hand on the butt of his holstered automatic.

SECURITY GUARD

Sir, step away from the desk!

TOMMY

Hold on a second, I'm just trying to--

SECURITY GUARD

(stepping between Tommy
and Danielle)

Sir--

A second SECURITY GUARD sees the commotion and hurries over, walkie-talkie in hand. The bank patrons are watching, some a little fearful, all curious.

SECURITY GUARD

We're gonna have to ask you to step outside with us--

As the guards try to usher Tommy away from the desk, the anger builds behind his eyes, the will to violence.

TOMMY

Get your hands off me.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

SECURITY GUARD

Sir--

The guards are holding him now, trying to drag him away. Tommy wants to lash out, but he controls himself, gives it one more shot.

TOMMY

(to Danielle)

I just wanted to say I'm sorry.
That's all. I came down here to say
I'm sorry.

The security guards continue ushering Tommy toward the door. He shoves off their arms and walks on his own volition. He's halfway there when Danielle stands.

DANIELLE

Hold on.
(nodding to guards)
It's okay. Let him stay.

SECURITY GUARD #2

Ms. Mancuso--

DANIELLE

It's okay.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The new kitchen is a thing of beauty, the subway tiles perfectly laid, the paint glossy and fresh, the cabinets straight and clean. The lights are off and three candles burn on the butcher block counter top.

Grace and Tommy sit on the floor, bottles of beer beside them. Tommy rolls a neat joint.

A small boombox on the floor plays Springsteen's "The River," softly so it won't wake the girls upstairs.

TOMMY

We ended up talking almost an hour.

(beat)

She hadn't slept right in three years. Kept having these nightmares I'd come back and shoot her.

(beat)

When I told her she didn't have to be afraid anymore, that I'd never hurt her again...

(MORE)

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY (cont'd)
she started to cry. Just started
crying right there in the bank.

Grace watches Tommy, not saying a word.

TOMMY
And then she thanked me. Can you
believe that? She said she felt
like she could breathe again.
(beat)
She asked me if I wanted to open an
account.

GRACE
(laughing)
You're kidding me.

TOMMY
Swear to God.

GRACE
So what did you do?

TOMMY
So I opened an account. I have like
one hundred and twelve dollars, but
now I have a checkbook.

GRACE
I'm proud of you.

TOMMY
I know, I finally feel like a real
American. I can't wait to start
bouncing checks.

GRACE
You know what I mean.

TOMMY
Yeah... Sam wanted me to do it.

GRACE
Of course he did.

For a moment they're quiet, thinking about Sam, listening to
the music. Tommy sparks the joint.

TOMMY
I used to sit in my room late at
night, back when I was seventeen,
eighteen, just play this song over
and over again in the dark.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

GRACE

So did I.

Tommy seems genuinely surprised by this news.

TOMMY

Really?

GRACE

Why is that so shocking?

TOMMY

No, I just figured you were listening to the Go-Gos or something.

GRACE

Fuck you.

(watching Tommy inhale)

I like the Go-Gos.

(beat)

Give me that.

TOMMY

Really?

GRACE

Yeah, really, give it.

Tommy hands her the joint. Grace takes a deep hit, not some squirrely little mouth puff. She exhales three perfect rings.

Tommy's impressed.

GRACE

You think I'm such a square.

TOMMY

No.

GRACE

Yeah, you do.

TOMMY

Well, I'm starting to reassess, Snoop Dogg. You want to hand that back?

GRACE

Just because I was a cheerleader...

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

She returns the joint. Their fingers brush against each other on the handoff.

TOMMY

And you dated the quarterback.

GRACE

God, I'm such a cliché.

TOMMY

You were a little stuck up, you got to admit.

GRACE

No, see guys always think girls are stuck up if they don't talk to them. But it wasn't 'cause I was stuck up. I just didn't like you. You were always getting drunk, getting into fights.

TOMMY

Like Sam didn't get into fights?

GRACE

Not after I told him to stop.

TOMMY

Well, maybe you should've told me to stop, too.

A look passes between them. Tommy is the first to look away, raising his bottle of beer and drinking deeply.

For a moment they both listen to the song's sad harmonica. Grace's eyes go distant.

GRACE

I felt it today for the first time.

Tommy watches her but says nothing.

GRACE

I know he's gone. I know he's never coming back.

They sit alone in the candlelit kitchen as Springsteen sings.

*But I remember us riding in my brother's car
Her body tan and wet down at the reservoir
At night on them banks I'd lie awake
And pull her close just to feel each breath she'd take.*

Osher

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

The song continues to play. Sam sits with his back against the cinderblock wall, staring into nothingness.

Joe Willis sleeps, curled up like a child.

*Down to the river, my baby and I
Oh down to the river we ride.*

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Isabelle and Maggie carry a birthday cake into the dining room. Blue icing, sloppily but lovingly applied, spells "MOM."

Grace, Tommy, Hank and Elsie sit at the table. Grace smiles as her daughters sing "Happy Birthday" and present the cake.

GRACE

Thank you. Such a beautiful cake.

MAGGIE

I made it!

ISABELLE

Grandma made it.

ELSIE

We all made it together.

MAGGIE

I did the icing.

ISABELLE

That's the worst part. Blow out the candles, Mom.

MAGGIE

Make a wish!

Grace makes a wish and blows out the candles. There are too many and soon Maggie and Isabelle are helping.

Elsie starts cutting the cake while Maggie pulls out a candle and licks the stem.

GRACE

(to Tommy)

Did you tell them about your job?

Osher

CONTINUED:

ELSIE

You have a job?

TOMMY

It's kind of part time. My friend
Sweeney took me on, they're
building a few houses in Allentown.

HANK

Sweeney. He played linebacker,
didn't he? On Sam's team?

TOMMY

Yeah.

HANK

(digging into his cake)
Good player.

Isabelle whispers in Tommy's ear.

ELSIE

It's rude to whisper, sweetheart.

TOMMY

(to Isabelle)
Don't you want some cake first?

Isabelle shakes her head. Tommy puts down his fork and
stands.

ISABELLE

Come on, Mom!

Maggie is standing too, very excited.

MAGGIE

We broke something! Come look!

GRACE

(standing; playing along)
Uh oh, you broke something...

MAGGIE

I was playing with it and then I
stepped on it.

GRACE

Well, we'd better go see.

The girls lead Grace and Tommy toward the kitchen door.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

HANK

I guess I get to eat all the cake.

MAGGIE

Nooo.

ELSIE

Grandma will make sure he doesn't
touch it until you get back.

A moment later, the young people are gone. Hank and Elsie, cheerful and outgoing when the others are around, grow somber the moment they're alone, not looking at each other.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - DAY

The girls run with Grace, each daughter holding one of her hands. They lead her to the back of the garage, where Tommy stands beside a brand-new bicycle.

MAGGIE

Happy birthday!

ISABELLE

Happy birthday!

GRACE

A bicycle!

TOMMY

It was their idea.

ISABELLE

Do you like it?

GRACE

It's beautiful.

Maggie squeezes the horn.

MAGGIE

Can we have cake now?

GRACE

Of course you can.

Isabelle and Maggie run back inside.

Grace runs her hand over the painted metal.

GRACE

I haven't had a bike since tenth
grade. It looks expensive.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Tommy shrugs, happy to see that Grace likes it.

TOMMY

Sweeney gave me an advance.
(proud, despite himself)
I wrote a check for it.

GRACE

Thank you.

TOMMY

You're welcome.

Grace smiles and hugs him. Both of them seem very happy.

The hug lasts longer than expected. When they release each other, neither is smiling anymore. They are standing very close. Grace's hair has fallen over her eyes but she makes no move to push it away.

They kiss. It's a good kiss, a long kiss, and when it's over, neither of them knows what to do.

Grace smiles again, maybe to cover her panic. She turns and jogs back to the house.

Tommy stands alone, behind the garage, with the brand-new bicycle.

INT. PHELAN'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

It's a Saturday night and the place is packed with young people drinking and shouting over the music from the jukebox.

Tommy sits at the bar, downing a shot of Jameson's. Someone in the crowd bumps into his back, hard. Tommy shoves back, not even turning to see who bumped him. He gets another push in return.

The YOUNG GUYS standing behind Tommy are watching him now, waiting to see what he'll do.

Tommy stares straight ahead. He is about to turn around and start throwing punches.

But then he doesn't. He stands and walks out of the bar, never turning to look at the guys behind him.

Osher

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - DAWN

Tommy stands at the front door, holding a stack of long, lacquered shelves.

Grace opens the door, wearing sweatpants and a t-shirt.

GRACE

Hey.

TOMMY

Hey. I brought the shelves.

GRACE

Oh. What shelves?

TOMMY

We only installed half the shelves last time. So... this is the rest.

GRACE

Great. Come in.

Tommy tries to walk in the door but the shelves are longer than the width of the doorway and they bump into the lintel.

He frowns, trying to decipher this problem. Finally he turns sideways and steps inside.

INT. CAHILL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Grace watches him with a small smile as they walk to the kitchen.

GRACE

Are you hungover?

TOMMY

No, no. I'm drunk.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tommy places the shelves on the floor.

TOMMY

Where are the girls?

Osher

CONTINUED:

GRACE

They're sleeping. It's six in the morning.

TOMMY

You know what, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have kissed you.

GRACE

No, it was me--

TOMMY

It was stupid--

GRACE

Don't worry.

TOMMY

All right, yeah.

(looking at shelves)

I'll just put these up for you.

GRACE

Don't feel bad about it.

TOMMY

I don't. I mean, I do, but mainly just 'cause I want to do it again.

Tommy shakes his head, angry with himself for having said that. He picks up one of the shelves.

GRACE

It's just because we miss Sam so much.

Tommy looks at her. He says nothing.

GRACE

The others miss him, too. Of course they miss him. But--

Tommy's not entirely convinced that's the whole explanation, but he nods.

TOMMY

Yeah. No, you're right.

(beat)

I don't want to ruin anything. I just want to keep coming here.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

GRACE

You can come here all you want.
I'll give you a key.

Tommy considers this.

TOMMY

I'd rather have one for the
Mustang.

Grace laughs. Tommy begins installing the shelves as Grace watches him.

INT. BUNKER - DAY

Sam and Joe are sleeping when the Taliban fighters enter the bunker. Screaming insults, they roust the exhausted captives and haul them out the door.

EXT. GUERRILLA CAMP - DAY

Sam and Joe are forced to their knees in the dirt. Fierce-looking young men with AK-47s surround them, taunting them in Pashtu, slapping the backs of their heads.

One of the young men holds a small video camera. The red LED light is on as the camera records Sam and Joe.

Joe is even more terrified when he sees the camera. He knows what kind of videos these men shoot.

Sam's reaction, on seeing the camera, is to exhale and lower his eyes. This is the moment.

Koushan and Murad, the commander's translator, stand over the kneeling prisoners. When Koushan speaks the younger men hush.

Koushan nods and one of the men drops a three-foot length of steel pipe on the dirt in front of Sam.

Sam and Joe both stare at the pipe.

Koushan points at Sam while Murad translates and the camera man records the scene.

MURAD

This one has knowledge. We can
still use him.

(Koushan points at Joe)

(MORE)

Osher

CONTINUED:

MURAD (cont'd)

This one is nothing. A waste of food, a waste of water.

Murad nods at Sam.

MURAD

Kill him.

Sam has no visible reaction to this command. Joe stares at Murad in horror, his lower lip beginning to quiver. He turns to look at Sam, but Sam's face is unreadable.

The camera man zooms in on Joe's panic. A broken American soldier makes for good propaganda.

Joe is desperate to make eye contact with Sam.

JOE

Sam--

He reaches over to touch Sam's arm but the fighters behind him shove him to the ground.

JOE

Sam!

Koushan gives a command and two of the Taliban men grab Sam and roughly stand him up. They force the pipe into his hands.

MURAD

Do you want to live?

Joe is still on the ground, hollering, as the Taliban men kick him in the ribs and hold him down with their boot heels.

MURAD

Do you want to live?!

Sam stares at the ground. Koushan gestures, impatient.

One of the fighters punches Sam in the kidneys. He falls to his knees, gasping. They haul him to his feet again, pick up the fallen pipe, and shove it back into his grasp.

MURAD

Do it now!

Sam is not the man he was a few weeks ago. He has lost a good deal of weight. He is severely dehydrated. His confidence and authority have been stolen from him.

Still, he meets Koushan's fierce look and this time he does not lower his eyes.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam drops the pipe.

Koushan draws his revolver. He presses it against Sam's forehead and cocks the hammer.

Sam does not close his eyes. He stares back at Koushan, breathing deeply, preparing himself for the bullet.

But Koushan does not pull the trigger. Instead he watches Sam carefully, gauging the man before speaking.

MURAD

(to Sam; translating)

You have family, yes? Do you want
to see them again? Eh? Do you want
to live?

Sam can do nothing but breathe in the air and stare back at Koushan, the pistol barrel pressed to his forehead.

Koushan mutters a quiet order. Murad pulls out a photograph. It's Grace, the picture Sam took with him from Pennsylvania.

Murad holds the photograph in front of Sam's eyes, forcing Sam to look.

MURAD

This is your wife? She is beautiful
woman. Does she wait for you back
in America?

Sam clenches his eyes shut, trying to will the image of Grace from his mind. Murad sees the crack in the wall. He presses his advantage.

MURAD

Do you have children? Do they wait
for you at home?

Sam tries not to listen. His eyes are shut. His breaths are coming faster and faster, his ribcage rising and falling, the veins in his neck bulging.

MURAD

Don't you want to see them grow?

Sam's fists clench and unclench.

MURAD

Don't you want to go home?

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

Sam opens his eyes. A yell rises in his throat, half snarl, half scream, wordless fury. Koushan shouts back at him.

One of the fighters scoops the pipe off the ground and forces it into Sam's hands.

MURAD

Do it!

The Taliban men scream at Sam, a clamor of voices, their words unknown, their meaning clear.

The camera man records everything.

Sam, breathing heavily, his eyes terrible to behold, clutches the steel pipe and stares down at Joe Willis, kneeling on the ground before him.

MURAD

Now!

Joe looks up at Sam, his mouth half-open. Whatever he sees in Sam's face terrifies him.

But Joe cannot believe that Sam will hurt him. Sam was sent to rescue him. Sam is the protector. Joe tries to smile, to win back the captain's affection.

JOE

Sam--

Sam swings and the pipe cracks Joe in the upper arm. Joe screams and tumbles to the ground, his arm broken.

The Taliban men grab Joe and force him back to his knees as he continues to scream in agony.

MURAD

Again! Do it now!

Sam swings again, groaning, and again, battering Joe Willis into the dust as the Pashtuns cheer around him.

The awful sound of steel hitting flesh, breaking bone.

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

Sam sits with his back against the wall. His hands are flecked with blood. His eyes are open and he's breathing, but he gives no other sign of being alive.

Osher

CONTINUED:

For a long count there is nothing but silence and darkness.

The loud retorts of sniper fire break the quiet of the night. Panicked shouts in Pashtu soon fill the air as gunfire crackles. Grenades explode, causing the bunker to shudder.

Sam never blinks, never moves. A fierce battle rages beyond his four walls, but he seems unaware.

Four American Special Forces soldiers break down the door to the bunker and storm inside. Flashlights are mounted to the barrels of their M-4s. They shine their lights on Sam, approaching cautiously, searching the corners of the dark room for booby traps.

SOLDIER #1
Sir, are you able to walk?

Two of the soldiers bend down and help Sam to his feet. He shows no pleasure in his rescue, no emotion at all. The soldiers lead him out of the bunker.

INT. MOBILE ARMY HOSPITAL - DAY

Sam sleeps on a hospital bed. An IV with a fluid drip has been inserted into a vein in his arm.

LT. SCHNEIDER (O.C.)
Can you hear me?
(beat)
Can you hear me?

Sam blinks, opens his eyes, and surges forward in bed, nearly tearing the IV from his arm.

LT. SCHNEIDER
Easy, easy. You're safe.

LIEUTENANT SCHNEIDER, an Army doctor with a clipboard, puts his hand on Sam's shoulder, trying to soothe him.

LT. SCHNEIDER
You're safe.

Sam stares at the doctor, getting his bearings, before settling back in bed. He doesn't look like he feels safe.

Another officer, COLONEL ARROYO, stands behind Schneider.

Osher

CONTINUED:

LT. SCHNEIDER
Lieutenant Dan Schneider, with the
10th Mountain. How do you feel?

Sam looks around the tented hospital. WOUNDED SOLDIERS lie in other hospital beds. Most of them look to be in far worse shape than Sam.

LT. SCHNEIDER
Can you tell me your name?

Sam looks at the doctor, confused. It's as if Schneider is speaking a foreign language.

LT. SCHNEIDER
Can you tell me your name?

SAM
Captain Sam Cahill. 0419066.

Lieutenant Schneider nods, checking a box on his clipboard.

SAM
I want to speak to my wife.

Colonel Arroyo steps closer to the bed.

COLONEL ARROYO
Absolutely. We just need to ask you a few questions and I'll get you a sat phone. How did they treat you in there?

Sam hesitates.

SAM
I'm alive.

The colonel nods. He can tell Sam doesn't want to go into detail and he decides not to press the issue right now.

COLONEL ARROYO
You're gonna be headline news tomorrow. Did you have any contact with other prisoners?

Another long pause as Sam stares up at the colonel.

SAM
What do you mean?

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

COLONEL ARROYO

We think there were other prisoners
in the camp but we didn't find any.
You must have seen them?

Sam slowly shakes his head.

COLONEL ARROYO

I'm sorry we have to do this right
now, but I have some photos of men
missing in action.

He hands Sam a binder filled with Army induction photos. Sam
starts flipping through the pages.

COLONEL ARROYO

We just need to know if you've seen
any of these men.

Sam looks at the photographs.

INSERT PHOTO BINDER

The young men all look cheerful and optimistic. Most of them
are about nineteen. Sam flips through the pages.

He pauses at a photograph of Joe Willis.

END INSERT

Sam's expression does not change. He continues flipping
through the pages, reaching the end of the binder.

He hands it back to the colonel.

SAM

No. I'm sorry.

COLONEL ARROYO

You're certain you've never seen
any of these men?

Sam lies back in the bed, staring at the ceiling.

SAM

I'm sorry.

COLONEL ARROYO

All right. Well, thank you,
Captain. Get some rest. You've
earned it.

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

The officers head for the exit.

SAM
Did you find the video?

Colonel Arroyo stops and turns.

COLONEL ARROYO
What video?

Sam hesitates. The colonel watches him, forehead creased.

SAM
I thought... maybe the cockpit
video from the Blackhawk, maybe it
showed us something, who shot us
down...

COLONEL ARROYO
All the recording gear was
destroyed on impact. But we're
pretty sure the gang holding you
were the ones who shot you down. So
we got some payback.

The colonel smiles, nods, and departs with the lieutenant.

Sam lies amongst his damaged comrades, the only one awake.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - DAY

Tommy, wearing a watch cap and a hooded sweatshirt, plays
with the girls in the backyard, running with a red rubber
dodgeball as they try to tackle him.

INT. STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Grace fills out a series of government forms. Tommy and the
girls are visible beyond the window.

The phone rings.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Maggie has made herself dizzy from spinning around too much.
She topples to the grass. Tommy stands over her.

TOMMY
What's the matter, you drunk?

Osher

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE
No! You're drunk!

She jumps and grabs for the ball. Tommy lifts her and the ball into the air.

TOMMY
You look wasted to me.

INT. STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Grace picks up the cordless phone and walks toward the window so she can watch her girls.

GRACE
Hello?
(listening)
Yes, it is.

Grace knows immediately that this is something serious.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Maggie reaches for the red ball as Tommy holds it out of reach.

ISABELLE
Throw it!

MAGGIE
I want that!

TOMMY
Too bad you're a midget.

MAGGIE
I'm not a midget! Give it to me!

TOMMY
You're not a midget? So why are you so short!

MAGGIE
'Cause I'm a little girl!

ISABELLE
Throw it! Throw it, throw the ball.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Tommy cocks his throwing arm and hurls the dodgeball at Isabelle. It smacks her in the face. She clutches her nose and goes down.

Tommy runs over and crouches beside her. She looks like she might be really hurt.

TOMMY

You okay? Izzy? Let me see your face.

MAGGIE

You hit my sister!

Maggie jumps on Tommy's back.

TOMMY

Izzy?

Isabelle removes her hand from her face.

ISABELLE

Sucker!

MAGGIE

Ha ha, sucker!

ISABELLE

You're easy.

INT. STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Grace still holds the phone to her ear. We don't know if she's listening to someone or if the call is finished. After a few seconds she hangs up without saying anything.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Grace walks into the backyard. Her daughters have pulled Tommy to the ground and are stomping on him.

He sees Grace and stands, his watch cap askew on his head. The girls are still laughing and Tommy's grinning, until he sees the look on Grace's face.

TOMMY

What's wrong?

Osher

EXT. MILITARY AIRFIELD - DAY

A military jet lands on the long runway.

The weather is grim, the sky overhead darkening, a light rain falling on the tarmac.

EXT. CARGO JET - MOMENTS LATER

A stairway has been rolled up to the jet's passenger exit.

Sam, wearing his dress uniform and carrying his duffle bag, steps off the plane, accompanied by several other ARMY OFFICERS, including Major Cavazos.

INT. AIRBASE - CONTINUOUS

Grace, Tommy, Hank, Elsie, and the girls all wait for Sam in the drab airbase center, peering through a large window into the rain.

When they see Sam the girls jump up and down, pointing. Elsie clutches Hank's arm, joyful and nervous at the same time.

Grace and Tommy smile, watching the beloved figure trudge through the rain.

EXT. AIRBASE - CONTINUOUS

Sam sees his family through the window glass fifty yards away, waving at him. He smiles and waves back, but there is something missing in his face, a dullness behind his eyes.

He does his best to look the part of the homecoming hero.

INT. AIRBASE - CONTINUOUS

Isabelle and Maggie run to the sliding glass doors marked NO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONNEL BEYOND THIS POINT.

The doors slide open as Sam approaches. The girls jump on him. He drops his duffel bag and bends down to hug them.

He stands and hugs Grace, who has begun to cry. The embrace lasts a proper amount of time; when they part, Sam hugs his mother, who is also crying.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM
Hey, hey, don't cry.

ELSIE
(crying)
I'm not crying.

Sam kisses his mother's cheek and hugs his father.

SAM
Hey, Dad.

Finally he looks at Tommy, who stands to the side, a little sheepish, back to his traditional place on the fringe of the family.

Sam, now stern-faced, examines his younger brother. Tommy smiles, nervous, unsure how to act.

Sam shakes his head, gathering Tommy into a bearhug.

SAM
(to Grace)
I bet he stole the Mustang the
first night I was gone.

TOMMY
No way, man.

Grace raises her eyebrows, glancing at Tommy.

TOMMY
Wasn't till like the third night.

EXT. MAHLUS BACKROADS - DAY

The old Jeep rambles down the wet road, winding through stands of pin oak and sycamore.

INT. JEEP - DAY

Sam sits in the passenger seat, staring out the window. He wears a pleasant enough expression but he is not altogether present.

The girls are buckled up in the backseat, playing a slapping game. Grace drives. She turns to look at Sam. We get the sense that they haven't really spoken yet.

Osher

INT. CAHILL HOUSE - DAY

Isabelle and Maggie each hold one of Sam's hands as they lead him inside, followed by Grace.

ISABELLE
You have to see the kitchen, Dad.
Come on!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

ISABELLE
Look what we made for you!

Sam stands in the center of the sparkling kitchen. He doesn't seem entirely thrilled by the transformation.

SAM
Who did this?

MAGGIE
Uncle Tommy and three little pigs.

SAM
(to Grace)
Tommy did this?

GRACE
Him and some of his friends.

Sam opens one of the cabinet doors. The carpentry is flawless.

SAM
They did a good job.

GRACE
Are you hungry? Your mom brought
over about twenty pounds of food.

Sam smiles, polite but distant, and shakes his head.

SAM
No thanks.

He walks out of the kitchen and up the stairs.

ISABELLE
Where you going?

Osher

CONTINUED:

The Cahill women stare after him, confused.

ISABELLE
What's he doing?

Grace shrugs and smiles for the girls.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Sam sits down on the edge of the bed. He runs his hand over the cool, soft cotton sheets and glances around this space he used to know so well.

MAGGIE (O.C.)
What are you doing, Daddy?

Sam sees his daughters and wife standing in the doorway. He smiles, trying to seem normal, safe, the same old Dad.

SAM
I don't know. Maybe we can... let's
just lie here for a while.

He lies down in the bed, still wearing his dress uniform, his polished boots.

The girls look at him and then up at their mother.

GRACE
Come on.

She leads the girls to the bed and they all climb on, lying beside Sam.

At first it seems kind of fun, a weird slumber party. After ten seconds, though, it's boring for the girls.

ISABELLE
How long do we have to lie here?

SAM
Just a little while.

Grace, cuddled up beside Maggie, watches her husband. She won't let on in front of the girls, but she knows something is wrong.

Isabelle sits up a little. She sees that her father has already drifted off to sleep.

Osher

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE
(whisper)
Can I go watch TV?

GRACE
Just stay a little longer.

ISABELLE
Okay.

They all lie quietly on the bed, watching Sam.

MAGGIE
Is Dad dead again already?

GRACE
He's just sleeping.

ISABELLE
You can't die more than once.

MAGGIE
Yes, you can.

ISABELLE
No, you can't.

Maggie sticks her tongue out at her big sister.

The Cahill family lies in bed in the afternoon as the rain taps against the windows.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sam lies beside Grace in bed, his eyes wide open. He turns to look at her.

Maybe he wants to wake her up, to tell her something. But she's sleeping so soundly, her face smushed against the pillow, and Sam doesn't want to disturb her.

He stares up at the ceiling. The surroundings have changed, but Sam's expression is the same one he wore in the Taliban bunker.

EXT. FORT MAHLUS - DAY

Sam, in civilian clothes, parks his Mustang in the lot.

Osher

INT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

Sam walks down a long corridor with institutional linoleum on the floor.

He stops beside an open office door. Inside, Major Cavazos speaks with an AIDE.

CAVAZOS

Sam! Figured you'd be in the Bahamas by now.

SAM

Can I talk to you somewhere?

CAVAZOS

Everything okay?

Sam nods. Cavazos glances at the aide and then back to Sam.

CAVAZOS

Let's take a walk.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Sam and Cavazos walk past the base's football field. On the gridiron, a group of young RECRUITS runs sprints under the watchful eye of a SERGEANT.

CAVAZOS

What I'm trying to figure out, what do they do with your grave? Dig out the coffin, pull down the stone? Or just leave it there waiting till you croak for real?

Cavazos, grinning, sees that Sam is lost in his thoughts, not listening to the story of his own funeral.

SAM

I wasn't alone at the camp. I saw Joe Willis.

It takes Cavazos a moment to register this information. His grin slowly fades. He stops walking and Sam stops beside him.

Cavazos' tone changes abruptly, the gregarious officer speaking quietly now.

Osher

CONTINUED:

CAVAZOS

I thought you had no contact with
other prisoners?

Sam hesitates, watching the recruits with their shaved heads
sprint down the field.

Cavazos studies Sam, waiting for some kind of response.

SAM

We were in the same camp. I...

A long silence as Sam searches for the words. But there are
no words.

CAVAZOS

Sometimes it's hard to remember.

SAM

They had a video camera. They made
a tape...

CAVAZOS

What kind of tape?

SAM

Didn't they find it? When they took
the camp?

CAVAZOS

I didn't hear anything about a
tape. I can check the debriefing
reports.

Sam shakes his head.

SAM

I don't even know if... I don't
know.

CAVAZOS

Look, Sam, you were in a helicopter
crash. You had a serious head wound
that wasn't treated. You didn't get
any food. You were dehydrated and
you were waiting for these guys to
chop your head off. Things were
probably a little confusing, right?
How could they not be confusing?

Cavazos turns back to the football field.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

CAVAZOS

Take it easy. Give yourself some time. You've got four weeks of R&R, brother-- go somewhere warm, lie in the sun.

Sam looks at the major, a little confused.

CAVAZOS

You're gonna be wearing a chestful of medals pretty soon. People all over the country read about you coming home and felt proud-- we rescued one of our own, man we thought was dead. It's a great story, isn't it?

Cavazos claps Sam on the shoulder.

CAVAZOS

You ever want to come talk to me again, the door's always open.

Sam stares up at the goalposts looming above him.

EXT. ICE SKATING RINK - DAY

Grace and the girls skate with Tommy at the outdoor rink.

Sam sits on a bench just outside the rink, watching them.

Isabelle is the best skater by far. She practices her camel spins while Tommy lurches across the ice, flailing his arms and trying to stay upright.

Grace holds Maggie's hand, the two of them skating long slow loops. Grace waves to Sam. He waves back, giving her a smile. She beckons for him to join them but he stays seated, watching.

Grace has never looked more beautiful.

Tommy swoops in, out of control, grabbing Maggie under the armpits and lifting her into the air. She shrieks, delighted.

Isabelle comes to her sister's aid and pretty soon all of them have tumbled upon each other on the ice. Everyone is laughing. They look like a happy family.

Sam watches.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Tommy pushes himself back to his feet and skates to the edge of the ice, nearly falling again, toppling onto the bench beside Sam.

TOMMY

I'm better than I thought.

He pants, out of breath, slouched on the bench. For a moment they watch the girls skating in the sunshine.

SAM

Thank you for taking care of them.

(beat)

I didn't expect that.

TOMMY

Of course, man.

SAM

I mean it. I'm proud of you.

Tommy nods, watching the girls.

TOMMY

It suddenly makes sense, right?

Sam watches Tommy watching the girls. He leans forward.

SAM

Let me ask you something. Maybe it sounds a little weird.

(beat)

Did you fuck her?

Tommy, ambushed, tries to laugh at the question, but Sam's staring right at him, waiting for an answer.

TOMMY

What?

SAM

Grace.

He glances at his wife, carving figure eights hand in hand with Maggie, lovely and serene and unaware of the conversation unfolding thirty feet away.

SAM

I can forgive you. I just want to know.

(beat)

You thought I was dead.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

TOMMY

But, we didn't... I mean, of course not. What the hell you asking me?

SAM

I can forgive you.

TOMMY

We didn't do anything. Why you asking me that?

SAM

You look like a couple teenagers in love.

TOMMY

Come on. You used to be pissed off 'cause I couldn't stand her. Now I figured out how cool she is, what you've always been telling me, and you're angry about that, too?

SAM

Do I look angry?

TOMMY

I don't know what you... just don't say things like that.

Sam shrugs, watching his wife.

TOMMY

She's way too old for me, anyway.

Sam smiles but his eyes are still dull and joyless.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Sam, Grace and the girls eat dinner.

ISABELLE

Leonard is stupid but Brian is nice. He never hits people.

GRACE

(dishing out stringbeans)
Well, that *is* nice.

ISABELLE

I mean, he hits the boys but not the girls.

(MORE)

Osher

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE (cont'd)
He's the best at math and he's got
a dog with big ears. I can't
remember it's name.

MAGGIE
Elephant?

The comment is so silly and out of nowhere, Grace can't help laughing. Isabelle starts laughing, too.

Sam stares at them, looking from face to face, completely mystified by their laughter. He sits in brooding silence amongst these people who have become strangers to him.

SAM
An elephant is not a dog.

The Cahill women stop laughing and stare at him. The sentence is innocuous but anger lurks behind the words.

MAGGIE
I *know* it's not a dog.

SAM
Then why'd you say it?

MAGGIE
(starting to get scared)
I was joking.

GRACE
(touching his arm)
Sam--

SAM
Why is it funny?

GRACE
Sweetheart, relax--

She's trying to stroke his arm, to soothe him. Sam pulls his arm away from her and slams his fist down on his plate, shattering it. He stands and storms away from the table, heading for the staircase and the bedroom.

The girls sit in terrified silence. Grace is frightened, too, but she hides it well, looking at each of her daughters.

GRACE
It's all right. Don't be afraid.

Osher

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

Grace gets ready for bed, removing her gold necklace. Sam stands in the doorway to the bathroom, watching her.

SAM

They like Tommy a lot, don't they?

GRACE

Yes.

She sits on the bed and pulls off her pants.

SAM

He said he slept here.

GRACE

He slept over a few times.

SAM

Did he sleep in here?

Grace looks up at her husband.

GRACE

Of course not.

SAM

You could have fallen in love.

GRACE

No, we couldn't have.

SAM

You thought I was dead.

(moving closer to her)

The two of you look good together.

Grace tries to play it as a joke. She punches his leg.

GRACE

Stop it.

Sam watches her remove her earrings.

He grabs her arm and holds it very tight, hurting her.

SAM

Did you fuck him?

Osher

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Sam... stop it.

She's afraid now but she smiles at him, her eyes filled with love, with sympathy, as she tries to calm him.

GRACE

Sam...

SAM

You fucked him.

GRACE

Nothing happened.

(beat)

We kissed. We were confused.

SAM

What else?

GRACE

That's it.

He grabs her throat. Sam is very fast, very strong; as his fingers tighten, true terror surfaces in Grace's eyes.

GRACE

Let go...

He forces her onto her back on the bed.

GRACE

(gasping for breath)

Let me go... let me go...

He could end her so easily. Another twenty seconds would do it.

He releases her, staring down with no pity as she gasps on the bed. Grace kicks at him, sobbing.

GRACE

What the hell is wrong with you?

Sam ignores her. He walks out of the room.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Maggie sleeps but Isabelle is awake. She hears her father going down the stairs, hears the front door slam behind him.

Osher

CONTINUED:

She gets out of bed and goes to the window, watches her father get into his Mustang and peel out of the driveway.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

Sam walks on the frozen mud on the bank of the Mahlus River. Every now and then headlights flash by as a car crosses a bridge in the distance, but it's 2 AM on a cold winter's night and few people are out.

He seems to be looking for something and finally he finds it: the battered steel lid of a trash can hanging from the branch of an old, thick-trunked pin oak.

Sam gathers a handful of stones from the riverside and walks twenty paces from the hanging lid.

He turns, gauges the distance by moonlight, and begins hurling rocks at the target.

Thwang! The first one connects. *Thwang!* The second as well.

High school was twenty years ago, a different lifetime, but Sam can still throw, the rocks whistling through the air.

Thwang! Thwang! Thwang!

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - MORNING

The girls sit crosslegged in the backyard, facing each other. Isabelle carefully paints Maggie's face, making her kid sister look like an Apache warrior.

Sam walks up the back path behind the garage. He watches his daughters, unnoticed for a time. He is exhausted, his pants and jacket dirty from sitting by the river all night.

Isabelle sees him first. She stares at him, not saying a word, the paints now forgotten by her feet.

Maggie turns to look at whatever has distracted Isabelle.

Both girls stand, staring at their father. Maggie steps behind Isabelle, frightened.

The girls' fear wounds Sam.

SAM
Don't be afraid of me.

Osher

CONTINUED:

He walks over to the girls, attempting a tired smile, desperate not to scare them.

SAM
(to Maggie)
Look at you, you're a brave, you
can't be afraid of me.
(beat)
You know what a brave is?

Maggie has no idea.

ISABELLE
A Native American warrior.

SAM
Yeah, a Native American warrior.

Sam crouches down so he's closer to the girls' eye level.

SAM
Don't be afraid of me. Okay?

The girls say nothing. They don't look as nervous as they did a minute ago, but they're not carefree, either.

SAM
I'm sorry I shouted and did all
those silly things. But I love you.
Both of you. Very much.

Sam sees the tears in Isabelle's eyes. He gathers her in his arms, stroking her hair.

SAM
Don't be sad. Don't cry. Don't cry,
sweetheart.

He lets go of his daughter, smiles at her, smiles at Maggie.

SAM
You know this one? Why did the girl
blush when she opened the
refrigerator?

ISABELLE
She saw the salad dressing.

MAGGIE
She saw the salad dressing.

SAM
I told you that one?

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

MAGGIE

A thousand times.

SAM

Really? A thousand times?

He stands straight, still smiling but awkward, not sure what else to say.

He turns and looks toward the house. Grace stands inside the sliding glass door to the kitchen, staring at him.

Sam walks toward the house. He stops a few feet from the glass door. Grace makes no move to open the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sam sits on the sofa, watching an old movie. Grace comes downstairs. She sits beside her husband.

GRACE

We have to talk about this.

(beat)

Can't you tell me what happened?

SAM

Nothing happened.

GRACE

Sam.

Sam changes the channel. A downhill skier slashes through the snow on a mountainside in Switzerland.

GRACE

Can't you tell me something? Not all of it but something?

Grace picks up the remote and mutes the television.

GRACE

Tell me.

SAM

There's nothing to tell.

(staring at TV)

I sat in a dark room, thinking. I thought about you. About the time we broke up. I drove over to your apartment to apologize.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Grace smiles, remembering.

SAM

But you wouldn't let me in.

Sam picks up the remote and turns up the volume.

TELEVISION ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Mueller wins! Mueller wins!

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Grace sleeps, curled up tightly beneath the covers. Sam sits on the edge of the bed, staring at his hands.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

The Mustang is parked in front of a drab apartment complex.

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Sam sits in the driver's seat, wearing his dress uniform. Music plays quietly on the CD player. He taps nervously on the steering wheel, not really keeping the beat. Finally he takes a deep breath and gets out.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

The door swings open. CASSIE (20) smiles at Sam. With her nose ring and black eyeliner, she looks a little Goth-- and not at all the kind of wife you'd picture for Joe Willis.

She has a sweet smile, though, and she shows it to Sam.

CASSIE

Hey. Come in.

Sam steps inside the apartment. Cassie offers her hand and he shakes it.

CASSIE

Cassie.

SAM

Sam.

CASSIE

You want some coffee or something?

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM

Sure.

Cassie leads Sam toward the kitchenette, essentially a nook alongside one wall of the living room.

CASSIE

And of course, the second I said that, I realize I don't have any coffee. It sounds good to offer it, right?

SAM

That's okay.

CASSIE

Apple juice? I have lots of apple juice.

SAM

Sure.

CASSIE

Thanks for calling first. If you just showed up at the door with that uniform on, I'd probably have a heart attack.

Sam nods. He seems uncomfortable and his awkwardness makes Cassie nervous.

CASSIE

But there's no news, right?

SAM

(hesitating)

No. I'm sorry. No news.

CASSIE

Don't be sorry. As long as we don't hear anything, there's still hope.

Cassie opens the refrigerator door, pulls out a family-size bottle of apple juice, and pours two glasses.

Sam looks around the apartment. The place is low rent but there's something warm about it, framed family photographs hanging on all the walls.

Sam looks at a wedding picture of Cassie-- looking thinner and far happier-- and Joe Willis. Cassie sees Sam examining the picture.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

CASSIE

Look at that goofball. Can you believe that's the man I love?

A baby cries out from the other room. Sam turns at the noise, startled, a haunted look in his eyes.

CASSIE

Sorry... give me one minute.

Cassie hurries into the bedroom, leaving Sam alone. The baby's crying seems almost more than he can bear.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Cassie and Sam now sit at the little table by the kitchenette. Cassie holds Joe Junior, a six-month-old. The baby stares at Sam with huge blue eyes.

CASSIE

It's nice of you guys to check up on me. Some of the wives came by the first few months, but... I don't know. I think it was too depressing for them.

Sam looks away from the baby's searching blue eyes.

SAM

I saw Joe over there.

CASSIE

You saw him?

SAM

We were in the same camp.

CASSIE

But why... why didn't he come home with you?

Sam hesitates, already feeling guilty for the lie he's about to tell.

SAM

He was moved to another camp.

Cassie searches Sam's face, anxious for every shred of news about her husband.

Osher

CONTINUED:

CASSIE

But he's alive? He's alive, he's
definitely alive?

Sam is in too deep to pull out now, but this deceit does not
come naturally for him. If Cassie were not so desperate to
hear good news she would see how tortured Sam appears.

SAM

When he... he was moved to another
camp, but the last time I saw him,
he was fine.

(beat)

He's gonna make it.

Joe Junior smiles at Sam and kicks his little legs.

CASSIE

Shh, it's okay, sweetie. Daddy's
coming home soon.

SAM

He told me about you. About Joe
Junior, too. He told me you were
taking your driver's test.

CASSIE

I failed.

SAM

He said you would.

CASSIE

Oh, God. I hit the other cars when
I was parallel parking. I mean,
both of them. The one in front *and*
the one in back.

SAM

He told me about your thumbs.

Cassie, shy, hides away her lollipop thumbs.

CASSIE

Joe Junior's got 'em, too.

SAM

He told me he was gonna teach Joe
Junior how to throw a football
someday.

Cassie seems to think this is funny.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

CASSIE

He said that?

SAM

Yeah... I'm pretty sure.

CASSIE

He was selling you one, there.
Joe's not much of an athlete.

SAM

(nodding at the baby)
Maybe I'll teach him. When he's old
enough.

CASSIE

(to her baby)
How's that sound, angel? Captain
Cahill's gonna teach you how to
throw a ball?

She looks up at Sam, smiling brightly though her eyes are
full of tears.

CASSIE

We'll have you over as soon as Joe
gets home. We'll have a big party.

Sam can do nothing but smile back.

EXT. MAHLUS STREET - NIGHT

It's four in the morning and the town is asleep. The
clapboard houses are bunched together, shoulder to shoulder,
fronted with their narrow lawns of frozen grass.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Grace sits up in bed. She's alone. She hears a strange sound
from somewhere within the house.

INT. STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Grace walks down the stairs, uneasy.

Osher

INT. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grace steps into the dining room and stops when she sees Sam sitting at the table, facing away from her. He doesn't know she's watching him.

He has a newspaper in front of him but he's not reading it. He tears one of the pages into smaller and smaller strips, concentrating on the task with no sign of emotion.

Grace stands in the doorway to the dining room, watching her husband shred the paper.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - DAY

A beautiful winter afternoon. The MAILMAN stuffs a few envelopes and flyers into the Cahill mailbox.

Grace pulls up in her old Jeep. She and Maggie get out and start unloading grocery bags.

GRACE
(to mailman)
Hey, Michael.

MAILMAN
Hey there.

MAGGIE
It's my birthday!

MAILMAN
Happy birthday!

Grace sees Sam through the dining room window. He sits at the table, staring right back at her through the glass.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie's birthday party is in full swing. She opens presents on the floor, tearing off wrapping paper in her fury to find out what she's gotten.

MAGGIE
I knew it! I knew it!

Hank and Elsie sit nearby, pleased to see she likes the doll they got her. Isabelle looks a little annoyed about Maggie's pile of toys. She goes over to the TV set and turns it on.

Osher

CONTINUED:

The doorbell rings and Grace goes to get it. Sam watches her walk toward the front door.

INT. FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Grace opens the door. Tommy and CARLA (24) stand there, both of them laughing, both of them a little drunk.

Carla is blonde and pretty, wearing a coat with a fake fur collar and holding a wrapped present.

GRACE

Hi.

TOMMY

Hey, so, Carla, this is Grace, my brother's wife.

The women smile at each other and shake hands, though Grace doesn't seem particularly excited to meet the woman.

CARLA

Hi.

GRACE

Come in. We're all in the living room.

Tommy helps Carla out of her coat as Grace returns to the living room.

CARLA

This is crazy.

TOMMY

No...

CARLA

You're crazy.

She kisses him and they start laughing midway through the kiss. She backs away from him and inspects herself in the hallway mirror.

CARLA

Do I look okay?

TOMMY

A lot better than that.
(taking her hand)
Come on in.

Osher

CONTINUED:

CARLA
This is crazy.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tommy leads Carla into the living room. Everyone looks up, a little surprised to see the newcomer.

TOMMY
Carla, this is my Mom and Dad.

Carla, nervous, giggles and waves.

CARLA
Hi.

TOMMY
This is my brother, Sam.

Carla shakes Sam's hand.

TOMMY
That's Isabelle watching TV over there, which I'm pretty sure is against the rules, and this is Maggie, the birthday girl.

CARLA
Ah ha.

Carla hands Maggie the wrapped present she brought. Maggie tears into it.

GRACE
What do you say, Maggie?

MAGGIE
Thank you!

Carla smiles at her and looks at the adults.

CARLA
Wow, this all... we just met. Like an hour ago.

Carla and Tommy start laughing again.

Hank seems pleased by the pretty new arrival.

Osher

CONTINUED:

HANK

Well, it's good to have you here.
Welcome!

He raises his glass in salute and drinks. Elsie smiles at Carla, too, though she can't muster quite as much enthusiasm as Hank.

CARLA

(whisper; to Tommy)
Where's the bathroom?

TOMMY

(poking her)
Jesus, again? You got the smallest
bladder in town.

CARLA

(laughing)
Leave me alone!

GRACE

Here, let me show you.

She leads Carla out of the living room.

When Grace and Carla are gone, Tommy sits down beside Maggie and watches her unwrap the present.

TOMMY

It's a little kit, see. You can
make bead necklaces and bracelets
and stuff.

MAGGIE

Wow.

TOMMY

Carla picked it out.

Sam, standing on the side of the room, watches his daughter playing with Tommy.

ELSIE

Where did you meet her?

TOMMY

You know, doing some research at
the library.

Elsie and Hank seem impressed by this.

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

TOMMY

At a bar, Mom. Where do you think?

ELSIE

Oh. Well, I don't know.

HANK

Ha. Good catch.

ELSIE

She seems...

Elsie pauses, trying to find the right words.

SAM

She seems very nice.

ELSIE

Lovely. She seems like a lovely girl. And it was nice of her to bring a present for Maggie.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

The table looks quite festive, with candles burning and platters of food. The adults are in the middle of an argument. Maggie marches her new doll across the tabletop.

HANK

Today people need therapy when they stub their toes. These men are soldiers. They're trained for it.

SAM

(to Maggie; sharp)
Put the doll away.

CARLA

Maybe they're not trained to see people get shot.

GRACE

What do you think they trained for?

CARLA

Yes, but...

Grace stares at Carla, waiting for an answer. Tommy looks at Grace, curious about the sharp tone. Sam sits quietly, showing no sign of interest in the conversation.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Isabelle is sick of watching her kid sister play with her new doll; she tries to grab it away but Maggie holds on.

SAM
(raising his voice)
Stop it, Isabelle. Eat your dinner.

Grace tries to head off Sam's rising temper by speaking softly to Maggie and taking away the doll.

ISABELLE
(pushing back her chair)
I'm not hungry. I want to watch TV.

SAM
Eat your dinner.

Isabelle stands and walks away, heading for the living room. Sam stands, crosses the room, grabs Isabelle by the arm and drags her back to the table.

GRACE
Just eat your dinner, honey.

ISABELLE
(beginning to cry)
Maggie got everything! She got the best doll!

ELSIE
It's Maggie's birthday, darling.

ISABELLE
I didn't get what I wanted on my birthday!

Sam forces Isabelle back into her seat.

SAM
Eat your dinner.

ISABELLE
You don't decide shit around here!
Couldn't you just stay dead?

The table goes silent. Sam returns to his own seat, ignoring his daughter. For a long beat nobody speaks.

GRACE
Izzy...

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

ISABELLE

(to Sam)

Why are you taking it out on me?
You're just mad 'cause Mom would
rather have sex with Uncle Tommy
than you.

Grace stares at Isabelle. She cannot believe those words just
left her daughter's mouth.

GRACE

Why would you say a thing like
that?

ISABELLE

You and Uncle Tommy have sex all
the time.

GRACE

That's enough.

Hank looks at Tommy. So does Carla. Sam watches his daughter
carefully, gauging her words, before looking at Grace.

GRACE

She has no idea what she's saying.
(uncomfortable beat)
This is insane. She's just upset.

Isabelle, crying, hurries away from the table. This time no
one stops her.

There is a very long, very awkward silence.

SAM

You're studying to be a nurse,
Carla?

CARLA

... uh huh.
(standing)
I should go. I'm supposed to meet
some friends.

SAM

Stay. Please. It's Maggie's
birthday.

Carla hesitates, but Sam is not asking. She sits.

ELSIE

I was an RN for twenty years.

Osher

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maggie sits upright on her bed. Isabelle lies in her own bed, eyes red from crying.

MAGGIE

Mom! Mom!

ISABELLE

Shut up!

MAGGIE

MOM!

Grace walks into the room. Isabelle closes her eyes and pretends to be asleep.

GRACE

(to Maggie)

Why aren't you asleep?

MAGGIE

I can't sleep.

She thumps her doll against the covers.

MAGGIE

That was the worst birthday of my entire life.

Grace crosses to Maggie's bed. Maggie finally lies down.

GRACE

We'll have a new one. I promise.

Grace kisses her daughter goodnight and walks over to Isabelle's bed. She sits beside her, stroking the girl's face, speaking softly.

GRACE

Why did you say those things?

Tears run down Isabelle's face.

ISABELLE

I don't like Dad. I'd rather have Uncle Tommy around instead of Dad.

MAGGIE

Me too.

Osher

CONTINUED:

GRACE
Dad will be himself again soon.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sam sits alone at the kitchen table. A half-drunk bottle of bourbon waits beside a glass.

Sam pours himself a large glass and downs it. His fingers tap the tabletop as he stares into the bottle.

He pours another glass, finishes it, pours another. He kills the bottle quickly.

He continues to drum the tabletop with his fingertips, staring into space.

He stands. Once he is on his feet he hesitates, as if he hadn't planned this far ahead.

He looks around the stylish, immaculate kitchen, at the lacquered cabinetry, at the glass and subway tile and stainless steel.

He opens the flatware drawer, stares at the forks and knives.

He yanks the drawer out past its stops and hurls it against the wall, the flatware clattering onto the floor.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace and her daughters hear the noise. The girls are immediately afraid. So is Grace, but after a second she runs for the door.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sam destroys the kitchen. He tears the cabinet doors off their hinges; he sweeps glass containers off the kitchen counter; he shatters every dish within reach.

Grace comes down the stairs and into the kitchen. She watches her husband with horror.

GRACE
Sam...

Osher

CONTINUED:

He does not hear her or does not care. In his fury he tears the cabinets off the wall. His hands bleed from shards of broken glass but he does not notice.

He stops, panting, eyeing the destruction around him. Grace sees a chance to intervene.

GRACE

Sam...

Sam looks at her. There is no love in his eyes.

SAM

Get out of my way.

He walks past her, shoving her to the floor.

The girls have snuck downstairs. They stand together at the edge of the kitchen, hand in hand, terrified.

ISABELLE

Mom!

MAGGIE

Mommy!

GRACE

Go up to your room! Now!

The girls run. Sam sees them running away, eyes tracking them the way a predator tracks its prey.

He resumes his rampage, upending the kitchen table, kicking over the garbage can, throwing a bottle through the window.

Grace gets to her feet. Sam advances on her. She backs away slowly, still trying to reason with him.

GRACE

Sam... please.

Sam grabs her by the arms and shouts at her, his face red, the veins in his neck bulging.

SAM

DO YOU KNOW WHAT I DID? DO YOU KNOW
WHAT I DID TO BE WITH YOU?

He throws her to the floor and towers over her, fists clenched.

SAM

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING! I'M
GONNA FUCKING KILL YOU!

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

Grace, crying hysterically now, tries to shield her face from the blows she's expecting.

SAM
SHOULD I KILL YOU? SHOULD I FUCKING
KILL YOU?

Sam lurches away from her, picks up a chair and begins slamming it into the wall.

Grace stumbles to her feet. She grabs her cellphone off the kitchen counter and runs upstairs.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace runs into the girls' room, slams the door and locks it. She sits with her back against the door, sobbing. She struggles to dial a number on her cell phone, her fingers slipping off the keys.

Isabelle and Maggie sit together on one bed. Isabelle has her arms around her younger sister. Both cry hysterically.

Their father's rampage continues downstairs.

SAM (O.S.)
I'm gonna kill you! I'm gonna kill
all of you!

GRACE
(on phone; sobbing)
Tommy! Sam's going to kill us! He's
going to kill us!
(listening)
Hurry! Please hurry!

Grace looks at her crying daughters.

GRACE
Come over here. Come over here.

The girls get down from the bed and huddle up next to their mother. Grace dials 911.

GRACE
I need the police!

Osher

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sam paces through the living room, sweeping family photographs off the shelves, yanking a plugged-in lamp from its socket and hurling it against the wall.

He stares up toward the second floor, where his family hides, as he shouts.

SAM
I'M GONNA KILL YOU! I'M GONNA KILL
YOU ALL!

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace dresses Maggie rapidly, pulling a sweatshirt over her head. In her haste she hurts the girl, who shrieks in pain and terror.

GRACE
I'm sorry. I'm sorry, sweetheart.

Isabelle dresses herself, pulling on her winter boots.

SAM (O.S.)
I'm going to kill you!

Grace holds her sobbing daughters against her chest, leaning against the bedroom door, listening to the noises outside the room, making sure Sam's still downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sam stalks through the rooms of his house. His face is savage; blood drips from his torn knuckles. He has stopped shouting for the moment, but there is something even more menacing about his appearance now, his silence.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - NIGHT

A banged-up Ford brakes in front of the house. Tommy jumps out of the car. Maybe he borrowed it. Maybe he stole it. He runs to the front door.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Tommy walks inside. He looks at the destruction around him.

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

Grace? Grace?

He walks farther into the house. We don't know how much time has passed. We don't know what he'll find.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tommy walks into the demolished kitchen. Several of the lights have been smashed, leaving the room in jagged angles of light and darkness.

Sam stands by the sliding glass door, breathing heavily, staring at Tommy.

Tommy sees the blood dripping from Sam's hands. He tries to figure out how to play this situation.

SAM

I always looked out for you.

TOMMY

What the hell are you doing?

GRACE (O.S.)

Tommy!

Tommy turns and sees Grace coming down the stairs, holding Maggie against her chest, holding Isabelle's hand.

TOMMY

Go to the car!

Sam walks forward, peering around Tommy, who blocks his path.

SAM

(yelling at Grace)

Go back to your room!

Tommy tries to push Sam back.

TOMMY

Stop it.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Grace leads the girls to the front door.

SAM

Go back to your room!

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

Stop!

Sam pivots, hitting Tommy with a powerful right cross to the nose. Tommy goes down hard, already bleeding.

SAM

(to Grace)

Get back in your room!

The girls are screaming, panicked, as Grace races with them to the front door, grabbing her car keys off the console.

Sam advances on them but Tommy manages to scramble to his feet and jump on Sam's back.

Sam lowers his shoulder and tosses Tommy to the floor.

Grace and the girls run out the front door.

Sam is on top of Tommy, punching his kid brother in the face.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

Grace turns the ignition key and revs the cold engine. Isabelle sits in the back and buckles in her sister.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - NIGHT

The Jeep pulls out of the driveway.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Tommy manages to wriggle free, his face battered from Sam's fists.

Sam grabs his little brother in a choke hold. His forearm, pressed tight against Tommy's windpipe, begins cutting off oxygen to the brain.

TOMMY

(struggling)

Sam... Sam...

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Two squad cars pull up in front of the house, sirens wailing.

Osher

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

SAM

Did you call the cops?

Tommy struggles for breath. Sam releases the choke hold, hauling Tommy to his feet by his jacket collar and slamming him against the wall. Tommy falls against the console table, breaking it, dropping to the floor a third time.

SAM

You called the cops?

He grabs Tommy by the collar again. This time Tommy seizes one of the legs of the broken table. As Sam pulls him up, Tommy cracks Sam in the head with the table leg.

The blow would knock most men unconscious. Sam seems momentarily dazed but doesn't fall.

TOMMY

(shouting)

Of course I didn't call the cops!
You fucking idiot!

Tommy walks out the front door.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy steps into the spotlights from the police cruisers. His face is puffy and bleeding from several scrapes.

He puts his hands in the air as he walks forward.

TOMMY

Everything's all right.

COP #1

Stop right there!

COP #2

Do not move! Sir! Do not
move!

Four OFFICERS have their automatics trained on Tommy. He's still walking forward, trying to play it off as no big deal.

TOMMY

Nothing happened. We got in a
fight.

Osher

CONTINUED:

Two cops grab Tommy and wrestle him to the ground. They search him for weapons while the other two cops keep their guns trained on Tommy.

TOMMY

Take it easy! Okay? I'm not resisting.

COP #1

Stay down!

Their attention on Tommy, nobody notices Sam walk out the front door. Casual and quiet, he walks right up to one of the cops kneeling on Tommy and snatches the officer's gun from his holster.

The officer wheels around.

COP #2

He's got my gun!

Sam points the automatic at the man's face.

The other three cops level their guns at Sam.

COP #1

Drop it!

COP #3

Drop the gun! Drop the fucking gun!

Sam holds the pistol in two hands, shifting his aim from one cop to another.

A third police cruiser turns the corner and stops in front of the house. Two more OFFICERS step out of the car, guns drawn.

All three squad cars have their spotlights trained on the front path. The strobe lights revolve, casting red and blue light on the action.

SAM

(to cops)

You want me to drop it? Shoot me.

Tommy, sitting upright now, holds up his hands.

TOMMY

Sam. Don't.

COP #1

Drop it!

Osher

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM
Come on!

COP #3
Drop the fucking gun!

SAM
Shoot me!

The cops keep shouting at Sam to drop the gun. Tommy stands slowly, holding one palm toward the cops and one toward Sam.

TOMMY
(to cops)
Shut up!

In the chaos, Tommy's voice has more authority than anyone else's. The cops stop shouting.

SAM
Come on! You'll get a promotion!

Tommy turns to his older brother.

TOMMY
Sam... drop the gun.

SAM
Who the fuck are you?

TOMMY
Sam... Sam... for me? Please.

SAM
Shoot me!

Tommy walks toward Sam, very slowly, his palms up.

TOMMY
Sam...

SAM
Come on! Shoot me!

TOMMY
Sam...

Slowly, making no sudden movements, Tommy reaches out.

Sam's eyes still flicker from officer to officer. His finger is still on the trigger.

Osher

CONTINUED: (3)

Tommy puts his hand on the gun barrel.

The brothers make eye contact.

Tommy pulls the gun away from Sam.

COP #1	COP #3
Put the gun down!	Drop it!

Tommy drops the gun and raises his hands in the air.

COP #1	COP #3
On the ground, both of you!	On the ground!

Tommy gets down on his knees, hands still in the air. He stares up at his brother.

Sam smiles at the cops. He is very far beyond caring whether they shoot and their guns hold no fear for him.

COP #1

Get down!

TOMMY

Sam, get down.

COP #4

Down! Down, get the fuck down!

COP #5

Get down! Face down on the ground!

TOMMY

Sam... I've been fucking up a lot longer than you. Okay? I'm better at it. So would you listen to me? This is not the way it ends.

(beat)

I can't lose you twice. I can't do it, man. You make me go to another funeral, I swear to God...

Sam seems to be listening now, the manic look fading from his eyes.

TOMMY

Come on, Sam. Don't leave me alone with Dad again. He starts talking about how you threw for 410 yards against Easton, I don't know what I'll do.

Osher

CONTINUED: (4)

SAM
(almost a whisper)
420 yards.

Tommy nods. He knew the right number all along.

TOMMY
Please, Sam...

Sam takes a deep breath. He glances at the cops, their
automatics still pointed at his head. He looks back at Tommy.

Finally Sam surrenders. He lies face down in the dead grass.

The officers hustle over and cuff Tommy and Sam, using force,
knees in the back.

COP #1
Don't you fucking move.

Sam lies very still, his face strobe-lit, showing no pain as
the officer yanks his arms back and cuffs his wrists.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

In daylight the full extent of the destruction is visible.
That one man could do so much damage is remarkable-- the once
pristine kitchen looks like a bomb hit it.

Grace sits with her back against the wall in a corner of the
room. She hears the front door open and close and looks up.

Tommy walks into the kitchen, still wearing the clothes he
wore the night before, his face bruised. Grace smiles at him.

TOMMY
Hi.

GRACE
Hi.

Tommy surveys the damage.

TOMMY
Fuck.

He turns one of the upended chairs rightside up.

Osher

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

He'll get off lightly. He's never
been in trouble before and he's got
a bag full of medals.

Grace says nothing. Tommy looks around.

TOMMY

I guess he didn't like the new
kitchen.

Grace laughs. She's been crying all night and laughter feels
good.

TOMMY

Let's clean this up.

GRACE

Yeah.

She stands. Tommy tries to right another chair but one of the
legs is twisted and the chair topples over. Tommy grabs it.

TOMMY

I'm gonna start a trash pile
outside.

Grace nods. She gets a box of garbage bags out from under the
sink, opens one, and begins dumping debris into the bag.

EXT. CAHILL HOUSE - NIGHT

A large pile of broken shelves, cabinet doors, and other
debris sits near the garage door, the white lacquer
shimmering in the security floodlight.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

All of the debris has been swept away and carried off. Tommy,
using a power drill, reattaches one of the cabinet hinges.

He turns off the drill. He hears the sound of running water
upstairs.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace stands in the shower, letting the hot water wash the
dust off her body. Her arms are bruised where Sam grabbed
her.

Osher

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tommy knows that Grace is in the shower. He stands in the silent kitchen, listening to the water run.

He makes his decision. He heads for the stairs.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The water runs off Grace's back as she scrubs herself.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tommy stands outside the bathroom door. He raises his hand to knock, pauses, lowers his hand.

He rests his head against the door.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace turns, the water beating down on her. She hears Tommy. She waits, watching the door.

INT. HALLWAY/STAIRCASE/FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Tommy walks away from the bathroom door. He hurries down the stairs, grabs his jacket from a hook in the foyer, and walks out the front door.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

The battered trash can lid hangs from the tree branch, swaying in the wind. Springsteen's "Atlantic City" plays over the entire montage.

*Well now, everything dies, baby, that's a fact,
But maybe everything that dies someday comes back.*

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

The goalposts on the football field rise toward the moon.

*Put your makeup on, fix your hair up pretty
And meet me tonight in Atlantic City.*

Osher

EXT. MAHLUS STREET - NIGHT

The porch lights burn up and down the street. The American flags hang from their mounts, canvas snapping with the gusts.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Grace walks into the house. Maggie sleeps on her shoulder. Isabelle walks beside her.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grace tucks Maggie, sleeping soundly, into her bed. Isabelle has already crawled into her own bed. Grace kisses her on the cheek. She walks out of the room, leaving the door ajar.

*Now our luck may have died and our love may be cold,
But with you forever I'll stay.*

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

Grace lies awake in the dark, staring at the ceiling.

*We're goin' out where the sands turnin' to gold,
Put on your stockings, baby, 'cause the night's getting cold.*

EXT. ARMY BASE - DAWN

The sun rises over the eastern hills of Afghanistan.

In the guardtower, AMERICAN SOLDIERS scan the horizon with their binoculars.

EXT. GUERILLA CAMP - DAWN

The Taliban camp is a deserted ruin. All the bodies have been carted away but the wreckage remains: the burnt-out shells of two pickup trucks; the mud huts with their walls perforated with hundreds of bullet holes; brass cartridge casings glittering on the ground.

*And everything dies, baby, that's a fact,
But maybe everything that dies someday comes back*

One of the mud huts only has a single wall still standing; on the dirt floor of this demolished site we go...

Osher

CONTINUED:

CLOSE on the rubble. Half-hidden amidst the remnants of the broken walls lies the handheld video camera, the same one we saw before, shattered by shrapnel, the magnetic tape of the exposed cassette decomposing in the sun.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Summer has come to western Pennsylvania. Tommy kneels on the roof of a new house, stapling sheets of tar paper to the plywood with a staple gun.

*Put your makeup on, fix your hair up pretty
And meet me tonight in Atlantic City.*

He stands, wiping the sweat from his face with the back of his hand. Thirty feet above the street, under the sprawling blue sky, he looks over the wooden frames of the half-completed houses in the sub-development.

EXT. ROUTE 202 - DAY

The Jeep Cherokee rolls past endless fields of corn.

INT. JEEP - DAY

Grace drives, alone in the car. The radio plays. She passes by a roadside stand selling *Farm-Fresh Corn! Farm-Fresh Tomatoes! Farm-Fresh Onions!*

*Meet me tonight in Atlantic City,
Meet me tonight in Atlantic City...*

EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

The minimum security prison looks more like a community college. A chain link fence surrounds a complex of red brick buildings, but there is no sign of razor wire, guard towers, or armed sentries.

EXT. PLAYING FIELD - DAY

The PRISONERS enjoy their recreation time in the sunshine. These are not hardcore convicts with sleeves of tattoos. Most of the men have been sentenced for non-violent crimes.

Sam throws a football to KENDRICK (40), who makes the catch and grins.

Osher

CONTINUED:

KENDRICK

That's a tight spiral.

Kendrick throws the ball back but he's not much of a quarterback; the ball wobbles in flight like a wounded duck.

KENDRICK

I've been throwing a football since I was a kid and I still don't know what I'm doing.

SAM

You want to spread your fingers over the laces a little more.

Sam demonstrates a proper grip.

SAM

Keep your feet right under your hips... cock the ball... uncoil your hips... follow through.

Sam throws another perfect spiral.

TRUSTEE (O.S.)

Cahill!

Sam turns and sees the elderly TRUSTEE calling for him from the front of the administration building.

TRUSTEE

You got a visitor.

Grace steps out of the building behind the trustee.

Grace smiles. She looks at her husband, standing twenty yards away in the bright sunshine, a football in his hand. From this distance he looks like he's eighteen again.

Sam stares back at her, too stunned to move for a second. He flips the ball to Kendrick.

SAM

Pick it up tomorrow?

KENDRICK

You got it, man.

Sam walks to his wife.

Osher

EXT. PRISON GROUNDS - DAY

Sam and Grace walk beside the fence that circles the prison. They are shy around each other, awkward.

GRACE

It doesn't look so bad here.

Sam nods, looking around the yard before glancing at her.

SAM

You cut your hair?

GRACE

Yeah. You like it?

SAM

You look good.

GRACE

Thanks.

She hands him a large envelope.

GRACE

This is from the girls.

Sam examines the envelope but does not open it.

SAM

How are they?

GRACE

(hesitates)

They're fine.

SAM

Mom and Dad?

Grace slows and finally stops. Sam, still looking at the envelope, doesn't notice for a few strides.

GRACE

Sam.

He turns and looks at her.

GRACE

I want to know what happened.

Osher

CONTINUED:

SAM

No, you don't.

Sam walks over to the bleachers that overlook the playing field. He sits on the lowest bench.

After a moment, Grace follows and sits beside him. She watches him and he stares at the grass by his feet.

GRACE

I've loved you since I was sixteen years old, Sam Cahill. Do you know that?

Sam cannot look at her.

GRACE

But if you don't tell me what happened, you'll never see me again.

SAM

(quiet)

I can't.

GRACE

Yes, you can.

Sam shakes his head and begins to cry. He hasn't cried since he was eight years old and he tries to keep it together, but it's no good, he can't stop it now.

Grace hesitates for a moment but she cannot hold herself back. She puts her arms around him.

Sam cries in his wife's embrace.

SAM

He had a little boy.

Osher