

'OUTSIDE THE WIRE'

By

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EXT. THE CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ, BIRD'S EYE VIEW -
14:00HRS.

Soft white noise.

Radio static hisses gently.

Rough black and white pixels.

They form an image: the viewpoint of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) DRONE as it glides silently over a swell of mountains.

Beyond, a tightly knotted forest flanks a Russian city: a network of high-rise blocks.

The Drone's target reticule nudges to follow a four-man MARINE FIRETEAM, moving in well-rehearsed formation through the alleyways below.

Moving alongside them is a 'BIG DOG'* - Boston Dynamic's famous robotic pack-horse. It is loaded up with ammunition and explosives. Its trotting movements are unnervingly natural.

A tiny infrared strobe pulses on each man's uniform - an identity signal only visible to the drone's pilot.

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - SAME TIME.

CORPORAL HARP (23 and looks it, male) sits in a spongy white leather chair, four computer screens illuminating his face in the dark as he gently pushes the Drone control stick.

Harp is in full ABU (Airman Battle Uniform), perfectly pressed, his sharp eyes fixed on the screen.

The room feels comfortable - a mug of creamy coffee sits steaming quietly on his desk. It's borderline luxurious.

Harp's face is devoid of visible emotion. Robotic.

HARP
(flat)
In position. I see your
stobes, Triple-five.

*What is 'Big Dog'? = <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1czBcnX1Ww>

FIRETEAM LEADER (On Radio)
Copy. Moving up.

Harp's C.O (Commanding Officer) stands behind him, watching the operation unfold. He has his jacket off, sleeves rolled up - not as neat and precisely dressed as Harp. He has a satellite phone pressed against his ear, listening closely.

C.O
General Miller, Triple-
Five are in position...

He listens, then faces Harp.

C.O (cont'd)
(to Harp)
...Okay, we have the
all-clear. Shoot him on
sight.

HARP
(to Fireteam Leader)
Green light. Shoot
Vlatko on sight.

FIRETEAM LEADER (on radio)
Copy control. Did he
take the bait?

C.O
This scumbag hasn't let
a single aid truck
through this road in six
months. He'll take it.

Harp's face is a mask of stillness.

HARP
Movement. North side.

EXT. VLADIKAVKAZ, ON THE GROUND - SAME TIME.

The Marines stack up at the mouth of their alley. The Fireteam Leader (30, lantern-jawed) inches for a view out onto a main road. The team LIEUTENANT (25, baby-faced Mexican) peeks past him - -

LIEUTENANT
There's the truck.

A clearly marked AID TRUCK trundles towards them. On the far side of the road, a GANG OF SEVEN

RUSSIANS in undershirts and tracksuits dash towards the truck, heaving AK-47s from their shoulders.

The Fireteam Leader unclips a set of binoculars from the Big Dog, and takes a closer look.

FIRETEAM LEADER

I got eyes-on. They're definitely rebels.

One of the rebels lights the cloth on a Molotov cocktail. He hurls it into the centre of the road - it erupts in a wall of flame. The truck growls to a halt.

The AID WORKERS inside look anxious as a gruff-looking BEARDED RUSSIAN points towards the cab - he must be the boss.

FIRETEAM LEADER (cont'd)

Fuck. It's not him. He doesn't fit what we know: we're looking for 6'2", athletic, grey hair, tattoos. This guy's a hairy pork chop. Repeat: Vlatko is not here.

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - SAME TIME.

Harp turns a dial, zooming in on the Bearded Russian, but the flames flare on his screen - an indecipherable buzz of white.

HARP

I got heat haze. He's too close to the fire.

FIRETEAM LEADER

(frustrated)

Trust me. That's not Vlatko.

LIEUTENANT

(to Fireteam Leader)

He's got to be a Lieutenant at least. Whoever he is, he's an intel gold mine. We need to bag him.

The Russians haul the Aid Workers out of the truck and send them running back up the road, the way they came.

HARP

Civilians are clear.

The Bearded Russian steps away from the fire, revealing himself. He clambers into the driver's seat, ready to leave.

C.O

Good. Okay, Triple-five, hang tight. We'll take the kill from here.

FIRETEAM LEADER

Sir, he's a prize asset. This guy may know where Vlatko is.

C.O

Intel says this guy may be Vlatko.

FIRETEAM LEADER

If it's not him, and you do this, then the trail's cold, Sir..

C.O

Triple-five, I suggest you hunker down.

LIEUTENANT

(to Fireteam Leader)

No way this is him. We need to question this guy. We won't get another chance.

The C.O's satellite phone rings. As he answers it, he places a hand on Harp's shoulder.

C.O (cont'd)

Corporal, get this bastard.

The C.O diverts his attention to the satellite phone and steps out of the room.

HARP

C.O off-deck.

Harp locks on.

HARP (cont'd)
Target locked. Danger
close. Impact in ten...
ni--

EXT. VLADIKAVKAZ, ON THE GROUND - SAME TIME.

FIRETEAM LEADER
--Wait, wait. Listen to
me - Vlatko is hoarding
arms, food, medical
supplies. He's choking
the city to death. This
guy can tell us where he
is... I need you to fire
1-0-8 North. That'll
distract them long
enough for us to get
close. Then I need
covering fi- -

There is a WHOOSH high above. The Drone is firing.

LIEUTENANT
NO!

The Lieutenant breaks cover; sprinting out towards
the Bearded Russian before the Fireteam Leader can
stop him.

The Marines burst into action, laying down covering
fire.

He's too close to the truck - -

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - SAME TIME.

- - The blast lands.

On Harp's monitor the explosion is just a small,
silent bloom of white.

From up here, war is peaceful.

He sips his coffee.

INT. BARRACKS, CAMP JAVA, GEORGIA - 19:15HRS.

A rainstorm pounds at the window. Safe inside, Harp sits at his small desk, LAPTOP open, ordering BABY CLOTHES from Amazon.com. Even in parenthood, he is behind a screen.

Outside, a chopper sways through the weather, settling on a helipad. The Fireteam scrambles out. The Big Dog climbs gently from the door - the injured man fixed on a stretcher on its back.

Through the storm-streaked glass, Harp can see that the Lieutenant's face and chest are a contorted mess of burns.

The Fireteam Leader spots Harp - his bright window is a beacon in the evening gloom. He shoots Harp a furious glare, rain splattering his brow.

INT. COMMANDER'S OFFICE, CAMP JAVA - 20:05HRS.

Night has set in. The storm howls outside.

The room is military-neat. A pale desk is flanked by two flags: U.S and NATO.

The C.O is sitting in his chair. He swipes his touchscreen computer. Harp stands at attention across the desk.

C.O

Three-hundred-sixty?

HARP

Three-sixty-four and
nineteen minutes, Sir.

C.O

That's a lot of flight
time, Corporal. I think
it's time we did
something more with you.

HARP

'More', Sir?

C.O

Three hundred and sixty hours flying the drones is the entry level threshold for the remote test pilot program back in Nevada.

The C.O eyes his screen.

C.O

I think you could be useful to them.

HARP

Sir.

C.O

And you get to go home every night, instead of being stuck way out here in the asscrack of nowhere.

He smiles at Harp. Harp takes a moment before he realises that he should smile back.

C.O (cont'd)

You've never fired your weapon off-base.

HARP

Never been outside the wire, Sir.

C.O

It's a position of Officer's command. I assume you're ready for that.

Harp shifts uncomfortably. He's not.

C.O (cont'd)

This test program requires a minimum of forty-eight hours in the field... But you're still my best candidate, Corporal. I want this for you.

HARP

Yes Sir.

The C.O takes a long, slow look at Harp. He reaches over and holds a button on his desk-phone. It beeps, awaiting his voice command - -

C.O

General Miller.

It beeps again, confirming his input. It rings..

C.O (cont'd)

(to Harp)

Just remember, in the drone room, nothing can touch you. Out there, it's a culture shock, believe me...

The phone keeps ringing...

Harp takes a breath, ready to change his mind - -

GENERAL MILLER (on phone)

Miller.

C.O

Mike, I've got a drone pilot here, Corporal Harp, looking to do forty-eight hours outside the wire. He's chasing the test pilot program in Nevada.

MILLER

I've heard about him. That's a lot of flight experience to risk on the ground.

C.O

I was thinking South side of the city, on the Hearts and Minds patrol with 8-81. Just a meet and greet. Low risk.

MILLER (on phone)

8-81? ...Okay. Okay, fine. This Harp: does he have character?

C.O
He, uh... he's a family
man.

Harp nods in the background.

MILLER (on phone)
(unimpressed)
Hm. By the way, we need
to talk about the Op
from this morning.

The C.O gestures for Harp to wait outside. Harp
steps out, the door ajar behind him - -

MILLER (on phone) (cont'd)
It wasn't Vlatko. But
whoever it was, it shook
him up. Vlatko wants to
meet, face-to-face.

C.O
A ceasefire?

MILLER
I wouldn't count on it.
But this could be our
chance to cool down the
North side.

C.O
Hold on, Mike...

The C.O calls out - -

C.O (cont'd)
Harp? You ever work with
a robot before?

Harp peeks through the door again.

HARP
No Sir, never.

C.O
Follow its lead, you'll
do fine.

INT. FIRING RANGE, CAMP JAVA - 21:30HRS

The firing range is a cavernous metal warehouse. There are no windows, but the heavy silence and the stark strip lighting make it *feel* late.

Harp stands alone at the centre firing station.

He loads and shoulders an assault rifle - the clicks and clacks echo in the lonely space.

WIFE (PRE-LAP)
(on phone)
So this means you're
coming home?

Instead of paper targets, the far wall is a giant digital projector screen. Blank figures are shone onto it - they 'walk' on the spot in a looping animation.

HARP (PRE-LAP)
Maybe. I've got to do
the time with the robot
first.

WIFE (PRE-LAP)
(on phone)
This isn't going to be
some kinda 'sexy
android' like on TV, is
it? Don't forget where
your bread's buttered,
flyboy.

HARP (PRE-LAP)
I'd say I'm 60... 65% sure
I can contain myself in
the face of a sexy
robot. Maybe 45.

They chuckle together.

Harp takes a steady aim.

HARP (PRE-LAP) (cont'd)
How was your book club
thing?

WIFE (PRE-LAP)
(on phone)
They had to come here. I
didn't feel up to it.

He pulls the trigger - BANG.

HARP (PRE-LAP)
Tell me the truth: are
you okay?

WIFE (PRE-LAP)
(on phone)
Claire's taking care of
me.

HARP (PRE-LAP)
(bittersweet)
That's not an answer.

BANG. Again. Again. Again.

WIFE (PRE-LAP)
(on phone)
...Are you going to be
okay?

His final shot - BANG.

Harp turns a dial next to his firing station - the
image on the far wall zooms, enlarging to show
where his bullets struck.

All but one has MISSED - barely clipping the
figure's shoulder.

Harp stares at his failure: if he gets into
trouble, he doesn't have the skills to deal with
it.

HARP (PRE-LAP)
Our eight minutes are up.

WIFE (PRE-LAP)
(on phone)
That's not an answer.

HARP (PRE-LAP)
Those are my orders.

EXT. THE HELIPAD, CAMP JAVA - 21:51HRS

Harp is slowly pacing beneath the night sky,
looking down at FaceTime on his cell phone. On the
screen, his WIFE (22, country pretty) looks tired;
sick with something.

WIFE
(on phone screen)
Hey. Don't get lost out
there... I love you,
y'know.

He loves her too.

HARP
I gotta go.

He hangs up.

RRRRRING..

Without a beat, his phone starts ringing
immediately. Caller ID: UNKNOWN.

He answers. The screen is BLACK.

HARP
Hello?

FIRM VOICE
Corporal Harp. Report to
the depot at 05:00. That
means you need to get on
a chopper tonight.

HARP
Understood... Hey, what
do I call it? The robot,
I mean.

FIRM VOICE
(You call it) Captain.

HARP
Wait, it's an officer?

FIRM VOICE
Your senior officer,
Corporal.

HARP
Is this thing safe?

FIRM VOICE

Of course. Older models had their kinks, but not now... Your fitness for command will be assessed for the duration of your patrol. You want that test program, then you'll need a perfect recommendation. You're there to do whatever you're told. Clear?

HARP

Yes, clear... But how will that work? How will I understand what it wants?

FIRM VOICE / **8-81**

You seem to understand me just fine.

The phone goes dead.

Harp stares at the handset, processing.

INT. THE DEPOT, CAMP JAVA - 04:50HRS.

With his pack on, Harp walks down a corridor formed by queues of empty parked tanks and APCs.

The depot walls are lined high with Big Dogs, stored in racks - their black legs curled up like giant spiders.

Distant voices chatter. Unseen Marines returning from duty.

And then, he sees it - -

A figure stands at the exit, a few inches over six feet tall, silhouetted against a set of floodlights.

Harp squints.

It's not human.

The limbs are too narrow in places, too thick in others. Neatly formed chunks of the human form are missing all together - straight corners where a

waist should be; a neck formed from tight bundles of pistons and wires.

8-81 is frozen in position, like a statue - one arm raised, examining something in its hand.

It is holding a sports shoe.

Harp stops. Watching with baited breath.

It *purses its lips* and WHISTLES four bars of AN EERIE TUNE.

And then.

And then it turns its head.

Its 'face' is a rubber sheath, barely concealing the turning mechanisms beneath the surface. It has eyes. A nose. A mouth. A grim caricature of plastic surgery.

It sees Harp.

It doesn't need to blink.

But it does.

Someone SHOVES PAST Harp: the Fireteam Leader - he glowers at Harp for a moment.

FIRETEAM LEADER (to 8-81)
Hey, Captain - -

The robot's face twists and whirls beneath the rubber - contorting into the shape of a smile as it turns to face the approaching solidier.

It makes Harp's head swim.

The Fireteam Leader approaches 8-81.

FIRETEAM LEADER (cont'd)
- - Captain, I just wanted to thank you. What you said, the whole crew appreciates it. It means a lot.

The robot places its hand on the Fireteam Leader's shoulder.

8-81
You're welcome.

Its voice sounds human, but with a faint digital scratch in its depths. It is authoritative but friendly - parental.

The Fireteam Leader reaches out his palm. The two of them exchange a nuanced handshake, with a fist bump at the end.

People seem to like this robot more than they like Harp.

FIRETEAM LEADER
If you ever need
anything - above and
beyond, man. We'll be
there.

The Fireteam Leader exits.

Harp is still standing on the spot. 8-81 turns to face him.

8-81
(military dry)
Take off your wedding ring.

HARP
W-what?

8-81
(firm)
Do not forget who you're
addressing, Corporal.

HARP
...Sir?

8-81
Take off your wedding
ring. Put it in the lock
box.

8-81 gestures to a steel box on the wall beside him.

8-81 (cont'd)
You want to be a blank
slate out there. Your
home life could be used
against you.

Harp slips off his wedding ring.

Next, he pulls his CELL PHONE from his pocket and moves to place it in the box too - -

8-81 (cont'd)

No.

Harp stops.

8-81 (cont'd)

Smash your cell phone.

HARP

Smash it?

8-81

Yes. Place it on the floor, then stamp on it. That's an order.

Perturbed, Harp slowly put his phone on the floor. He looks back at the robot, waiting for it to change its mind - but its face is utterly still; staring; waiting...

Harp relents. He lifts his boot and crunches it down hard, shattering the handset.

8-81 tosses Harp a COMMS RADIO. Harp slowly clips it to his belt.

8-81 nods at a pile of cardboard sports shoe boxes next to a Humvee.

8-81 (cont'd)

Load up the Humvee with thirty boxes.

Harp starts to carry out his order - part obedience, part daze.

EXT. THE GEORGIAN MILITARY HIGHWAY - 06:15HRS

The Humvee trundles along the cracked road. To one side, a high bank of dense forest - the other, a deathly drop onto chalky rocks below.

INT. HUMVEE - CONTINUOUS.

8-81 is at the wheel. Harp sits in silence.

The robot WHISTLES the same EERIE TUNE.

They roar past a cow, standing by the side of the road. The glaring contrast between these two forms of life feels like something from a dream.

Up ahead, a large metal road sign says something in weather-beaten Russian letters. It's the Georgian-Russian border.

Suddenly, the robot stamps on the brakes. The Humvee skids to a gravelly halt - -

The bumper comes to a stop *exactly* level with the road sign - right on the borderline.

The very *instant* the Humvee stops, the robot stops whistling and launches into a speech:

8-81

(uncommonly robotic)

I am Captain 8-81. I am the property of the US Army. My primary mission is to win Hearts and Minds; to support NATO's objective to enable the Georgian authorities to establish effective security across the region. I am also On Point to detect and assess possible guerrilla threats.

HARP

I know. But wh...?

8-81

(robotic)

...I cannot bring a new colleague into a war zone without first reading you my disclaimer. This is for legal reasons, and it is a core code function I must obey. Please continue to listen carefully.

HARP

Alright, I...

The robot gestures to Harp's belt. His sturdy comms radio is fixed there. A small ORANGE L.E.D blinks silently on top.

8-81 (cont'd)

(robotic)

Your radio is linked to NATO's regional threat indicator. When the light is Orange, the threat is dormant. When it is Red, the threat is acute. When we are at Orange, I will obey all senior officers, but I cannot engage in combat of any form. When the threat is at Red, I will obey only General Michael Miller, and lethal action is permitted.

Harp struggles to focus on the information.

8-81 (cont'd)

(robotic)

...It is important that you understand that while you may warm to me, my personality is a compilation of programmed behaviours, combined with mannerisms and turns of phrase that I have observed during my operating time. All these components combine to create what appears to be a real and reactive person. But I cannot stress this enough:

8-81 turns to face Harp.

8-81 (cont'd)

I am not real.

The robot plants his foot on the gas, and the Humvee roars into motion again.

8-81 seems to 'relax' - free from the burden of his enforced speech.

Harp watches his face. It is extremely unnerving.
8-81 stares at the road ahead with unblinking eyes.

8-81 (cont'd)

A robot is walking down the road, and he hears a voice... He looks down. It's a talking frog shouting up at him from a lily pad - it says "Hey! HEY! I'm a beautiful princess, but a witch put a spell on me. If you kiss me, I'll turn back into a girl. And I'll marry you". The robot picks up the frog, and puts it in his compartment - here - -

8-81 gestures to a COMPARTMENT on his upper arm.

8-81 (cont'd)

The frog says "Wait! What are you doing? Why don't you kiss me?" and the robot says, "I'm a robot. I don't need a wife. But a talking frog is fucking cool."

Harp makes a crooked smile.

8-81 (cont'd)

I get it. I'm weird. But you don't need to be afraid of me. I'm on your side.

EXT. STREETS, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ - 07:30HRS

The Humvee trundles into the city.

The entrance is marked by a 10ft bronze STATUE OF A LION. A metal monster, frozen in a moment of attack - its claws slashing out.

INT. HUMVEE, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ - CONTINUOUS.

Harp takes in the surroundings.

The network of high-rise buildings are painted in sky blues, crimsons and yellow ochres. As they delve deeper, he sees that most of the buildings have gaping holes in them - month old bomb scars.

CIVILIANS shuffle through the mess.

A bombed-out church with people praying in the ruins; old men sharing food; misery on every face.

This is a sad place.

Abandoned cars litter the street, creating a maze to navigate through. 8-81 slows the Humvee to a crawl.

8-81
Eyes wide, Corporal.
We're in a sniper
hotspot.

Harp sits up straight in his seat. He scans the rooftops and windows anxiously...

...

..

.

SLAM!

Harp jumps in fright - a BABUSHKA (71, female, scarf pulled over her head) clasps the window, babbling frantically in Russian.

BABUSHKA
(frantic)
Вы должны мне помочь!
Мой муж! Он не
пострадал, ему нужно к
врачу! Пожалуйста,
помогите!

In a panic, Harp fumbles for his rifle. 8-81 reaches out his hand to stop him - -

8-81
Not a 'people person',
are you.

8-81 stops the Humvee, much to Harp's concern.

The robot unclips a medikit from the ceiling of the Humvee and climbs out. He talks to the Babushka - -

8-81
Не волнуйтесь. Я здесь,
чтобы помочь. Где твой
муж?

The Babushka scuttles towards one of the dilapidated buildings. 8-81 follows, again much to Harp's concern.

Harp follows, sweeping his rifle nervously for snipers.

INT. BABUSHKA'S HOME, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS.

Inside the house, the woman's HUSBAND (73, weather-beaten) lies on the scuffed vinyl floor, his teeth gritted in pain, bleeding from a raw flesh wound on his forearm.

BABUSHKA
Пожалуйста, вы можете
ему помочь?

8-81
Да.

The robot kneels and examines the wound delicately. He opens the medikit, taking out bandages.

8-81 (cont'd)
Но ты будешь у меня в
долгу. Понимаете?

BABUSHKA
... Да.

The blood, the suffering. It's a new and visceral experience for Harp.

HARP
(to Babushka)
Who did this?

She doesn't understand.

8-81
Кто это сделал?

BABUSHKA
Vlatko.

Harp steps back. Is this his fault?

8-81
(to Harp)
The Russian military
went down weeks ago.
Good for the country,
but bad for the people.
Now they've got rebels -
fighting us, but mostly
fighting each other to
be the biggest predator
in the jungle. Vlatko's
one of the worst.

The Husband grimaces as 8-81 packs the wound.

8-81 (cont'd)
(to Husband)
Был ли этот о защите?

HUSBAND
(in pain)
Да.

8-81
(to Harp)
Vlatko's men cut off his
family tattoo because he
was late with a
protection payment. If
he doesn't pay in full
by tomorrow, they'll
kill him.

8-81 finishes with the wound. He nods at the
Babushka. Harp stews in his guilt.

BABUSHKA
Спасибо... Мы не забудем.

The couple's SCRUFFY DOG wanders anxiously towards its master. Harp gently pets the dog.

8-81 eyes Harp.

8-81

(to Harp)

I downloaded the report from your last Op. They should've questioned that man instead of killing him. It might have led them to Vlatko before this happened.

The robot moves to exit.

8-81

I'll be in the Humvee.

EXT. CIVILIAN CAMP, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ - 08:45HRS

The sidewalk is lined with makeshift tents; small outdoor kitchens cobbled together; plastic sheeting hauled over them to protect from rain. And yet, the camp is flanked by seemingly empty apartment buildings.

The Humvee rolls to a stop. 8-81 and Harp climb out.

CHILDREN and ADULTS pour out of the camp, delighted to see them.

8-81 pulls out a half-dozen boxes of sports shoes and begins handing them out to the excited crowd.

HARP

Why don't they live in the buildings?

8-81

Vlatko claimed the whole district. They sit empty, but no one dares to use them.

HARP

Why are you allowed here?

8-81
...It took time.

The robot hands a pair of shoes to a HAPPY MAN.

HAPPY MAN
Спасибо, ГОСПОДИН
Металл!

Through the people, Harp spots a LITTLE GIRL (7, clutching a doll). Harp shuffles through the boxes, until he finds a child-sized pair. He reaches between two adults to hand them to her.

The Little Girl stretches to take them, but - -

The robot grips Harp's shoulder and leans in.

8-81
(heartless)
Don't give the
children's shoes to
children. That's an
order.

Confused, Harp tugs the box from the girl's grasp and hands them to the flailing, grabbing hands of a random adult man. The little girl looks heart-broken.

The robot tosses a few more boxes into the crowd and locks the Humvee. He gestures for Harp to follow him.

8-81 strides through the camp, around the back of a thick concrete wall.

EXT. BEHIND THE WALL, CIVILIAN CAMP - CONTINUOUS.

On the far side, bolted onto it, is a burly STEEL BOX with a slit open at the top.

8-81 takes a key from his upper-arm COMPARTMENT and unlocks the lid. Harp peers inside. There are several wrinkled sheets of YELLOW NOTE PAPER.

HARP
A drop box? Old school.
The locals report for
you?

8-81

The Bloc was raised to
spy on itself. That's
their culture. It's
rational to use it.

8-81 unfolds the yellow paper. Nothing on them
catches his attention. He scrunches them up.

HARP

Risky for them though -
going against Vlatko's
rules.

8-81 turns to Harp, swerving the conversation
wildly in a new direction - -

8-81

Rip off your sleeve.

HARP

S-sorry Sir, pardon?

8-81

I'm ordering you to rip
the sleeve off your
uniform.

Harp reaches up to the corner of his sleeve and
starts to yank it - -

8-81 (cont'd)

Stop.

8-81 stares at Harp.

8-81 (cont'd)

Why did you kill that
man, when the marines on
the ground said it
wasn't Vlatko?

Harp struggles to understand where the conversation
is headed. He sighs - -

HARP

Honestly? Because I want
to get home. I want to
get home to my wife. So
I didn't want to rock
the boat with my C.O.

8-81 stares at Harp. The robot's EYES DILATE violently as it examines him.

8-81

When people lie, they involuntarily display a combination of biometric data and pheromones. I use these to assess if I'm being told the truth.

HARP

You're a lie detector?

8-81

But I don't need to detect anything with you. You rip the sleeve off your uniform. You smash your cell phone for no reason. You refuse to give children's shoes to children.

Harp stands mute.

8-81 (cont'd)

You're not doing this for your home or your wife. You do it because you follow orders - like a robot.

HARP

(irritated)

I'm military, for God's sake! That's what I'm supposed to do!

8-81

War criminals always say they were 'just following orders'... What good soldiers are 'supposed to do', is make the world better. The people here look at the world they're stuck in and disobey the rules because that's what it takes to make it better.

HARP
(bemused)
So you're encouraging me
to disobey you, Sir?!

8-81
I'm saying: don't just
watch the fire. Put it
out.

8-81 turns to leave.

8-81 (cont'd)
You really shouldn't
need a robot to tell you
this.

The robot marches back out into the crowd, leaving Harp swaying in stunned silence.

EXT. CIVILIAN CAMP, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ -
CONTINUOUS.

8-81 climbs into the Humvee. Harp is a few paces behind, visibly irritated by the robot's assessment of him.

The Little Girl is still there - she looks at him hopefully, eyeing a pair of pink shoes through the OPEN DOOR of the Humvee.

Harp wrestles with his conscience. Does he *always* follow orders? He makes his decision: he CLOSES THE DOOR, sealing the shoes inside.

Just then, Harp spots something beyond the crowd, further up the street- -

A LOCAL MAN (35) stands at a corner, looking conspicuously NERVOUS. The shoulders of his beige canvas jacket are smeared with brick dust; his hair is a fluffy, three-month-old buzz-cut.

In his hand is a small slip of YELLOW PAPER. He is clearly debating with himself about reporting something...

HARP
(quietly to 8-81)
Reluctant spy. Twelve
o'clock. Looks like he's
got something for the
drop box.

Harp keeps an eye on the man. He starts moving towards him.

The man debates with himself, sweating. He loses his nerve, and puts the paper in his mouth, swallowing the message.

HARP (cont'd)

WAIT!

The Local spots Harp. He runs.

8-81

We need to know what that was about. Get him.

Harp gives chase. 8-81 calmly climbs out of the Humvee, watching him.

Harp's boots pound the pavement. 8-81 follows sedately a few yards behind.

HARP

STOP!

The Local turns down a narrow alley. Harp follows - he can't run fast enough with his rifle in-hand. He lets it swing on his Battle Rattle (strap) and races on.

As Harp emerges from the far end of the alley to see the Local disappear into an abandoned TRAM CARRIAGE.

As he reaches the entrance, the Local dashes out the far end.

HARP (cont'd)

I am ordering you to stop!

He doesn't.

8-81 emerges from the alleyway, watching.

Harp lunges at the Local, tackling him against the wall of a house. On the side of the building is a large MURAL OF A LION with a GAZELLE IN ITS JAWS.

LOCAL MAN

(strong Russian accent)
Please! Let me go!

8-81 paces towards the cowering Local. The robot's rubber face is chewed up into a terrifying snarl.

8-81
(frightening)
WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO
REPORT?

The Local stutters in fear.

8-81 (cont'd)
WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO
REPORT?

LOCAL MAN
Nothing... I... I thought I
saw someone stealing.

8-81 stares at him. The robot's EYES DILATE as it examines him - looking for a lie.

8-81
You're lying.

8-81 rears up. The Local shuffles back along the floor on his hands. Even Harp is frightened - -

HARP
(to Local)
Please Sir, just tell us
what you know.

8-81
(growling)
What were you going to
report?

The Local yields.

LOCAL MAN
(hushed)
...A silo. Somewhere
close. I don't know
where.

The robot's EYES DILATE again - truth.

HARP
A nuclear silo? They
were all declared to
NATO. They were
deactivated.

LOCAL MAN

Not all.

Harp looks nervously at 8-81.

HARP

...Fuck.

Suddenly, there are SHOUTING VOICES from the building behind them. Harp and 8-81 turn to see, and then - -

The Local is on his feet. Running.

HARP

God damn it.

Harp chases.

The Local darts back into the narrow alleys between tower blocks. Harp is too far behind - after a few swift turns, Harp loses sight of him until finally he finds himself at a T-junction, with no idea which way the Local went. Harp puts his hands on his knees, panting for breath.

The robot is a few paces behind Harp.

8-81

(flat, calm)

He got away.

HARP

(concerned)

What would you have done to him if he hadn't talked?

8-81 gestures to the Orange L.E.D on Harp's Comms Radio.

8-81

Nothing. We're still on Orange.

8-81 looks him dead in the eye.

8-81 (cont'd)

(kind)

Look. You and I, we're a team out here. And the things I say or don't say to people; how, when and where I say them, are all instrumental in provoking the response we need. Remember: I am not real.

The robot heads back to the Humvee.

EXT. CIVILIAN CAMP, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ - MOMENTS LATER.

8-81 climbs into the driver's seat. Harp buckles up.

With one mechanical hand on the wheel, 8-81 picks at the edge of a closed metal panel on his wrist as he talks.

HARP

We should call it in.

8-81

No.

HARP

(agitated)

Why not?

8-81

Apply some common sense, Corporal: Russia's full of rumours - we can't report them all. We need evidence.

Harp watches him scratching at the panel.

HARP

Are you okay?

8-81

It's just a motor unit for my wrist. Must have some dirt in it. It's not a problem.

HARP
Need a hand?

8-81 stops picking at the panel.

8-81
Don't worry. I know how
to open it.

He accelerates away from the camp.

EXT. PASHA'S MANSION, VLADIKAVKAZ - 11:05HRS.

The Humvee pulls up outside a mansion - -

It's made entirely from ornately carved wood - a perfect piece of Rastrelliesque Baroque, with lacy frills carved into every panel.

The wood is decades-worn, and yet all of the windows are sealed over with SHEETS of grey STEEL, bolted on from the inside. A strange fortress.

Harp and 8-81 exit the Humvee.

Harp looks around - -

The garden surrounding the mansion is dead - dark leafless trees and empty sooty flowerbeds.

They reach the front door. It's re-enforced with a steel plate too.

8-81 knocks.

Harp scans the edges of the door - the tips of fresh grass peek from the corners.

HARP
I thought Vlatko didn't
let people live in the
buildings around here?

8-81
She deals to his people.
Sometimes.

HARP
Drugs?

PASHA (O.C)
(behind door)
Kto?

8-81

It's me.

There is a sound of something METAL and HEAVY being lifted off the door.

The door clicks. 8-81 gently pushes it open.

INT. PASHA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS.

The entire living space is an indoor garden - a stark contrast to the dead flora outside.

Thick, lush grass covers the floor, growing up to meet the door - edging into the frame. Overburdened flowerpots and small wild trees curve around the living room.

It's not neat - more of a *jungle* than a garden - but it's impressive.

Harp spots PASHA (35, female, ruggedly beautiful) through the bathroom door. She looks over her shoulder, her eyes focussed on 8-81 as she hurriedly fishes through a cabinet.

She calls out in her thick Russian accent.

PASHA

I'm fucking hung over,
man.

She finds a bottle of pills and spills two into her hand. They are WHITE, with a BRIGHT BLUE DOT in the centre.

She knocks them into her mouth and crunches them aggressively.

The robot impassively WATCHES her swallow the pills. Is he processing something?

8-81

I thought your Russian
vodka was too pure for
that.

PASHA

It was Georgian.

The pills seem to have an immediate effect - she calms.

She spies Harp.

PASHA (cont'd)
Are you here to rape me
and kill me?

HARP
(confused)
W-what? No, I...

A tense silence hangs in the air.

Pasha breaks it - she laughs.

PASHA
No fucking humor, this
guy.

HARP
Sorry.

Pasha rolls her eyes at Harp. She reaches up and
KISSES the robot on both cheeks.

8-81
(comforting)
Relax, Corporal. She's
just a bad combination
of British education in
a Russian brain.

Pasha chuckles.

Harp scrapes his boots on the doormat. Pasha tuts
audibly.

PASHA
(dismissive, at Harp)
Nekulturni.

Pasha lifts a LANDMINE from a table beside the
door. She HOISTS it onto a hook where the door
swings open to MEET THE WALL.

HARP
What are you doing?

PASHA
An old Russian trick.
Somebody wants to
interrupt us and break
in - they kick the door
- -

She mimes the door swinging open to hit the
landmine.

PASHA (cont'd)
- - BOOM.

She gestures to the couch. She slumps into a chair
herself - dust pillows up from the ancient velvet
cushions.

PASHA (cont'd)
Sit.

HARP
Thank you.

PASHA
(dismissive)
'Thank you', 'sorry' and
he wipes his feet? '81,
this fucking guy doesn't
know Russia.

8-81
She thinks you're a
Nekulturni.

Harp doesn't know what it means.

8-81 (cont'd)
'Uncultured'.

PASHA
Manners won't get you
anywhere in Russia, man.
No one says 'Thank You'
here - it's a sign of
weakness.

HARP
Sorr--

Harp cuts himself short.

PASHA
(to 8-81, about Harp)
Ha! He just can't break
his programming, can he.
An obedient little
robot.

It strikes a nerve - Harp hits back:

HARP
(accusatory)
So, you deal drugs?

PASHA
People don't have time
to get fucking high out
here.

HARP
You had time to get hung
over.

PASHA
(dismissive)
Hmph. You don't
understand.

8-81 laughs - an odd digital crackle that cuts
their conversation dead.

8-81
(joking)
So when are you two
moving in together?
Look, let's keep this
short--

8-81 leans in.

8-81 (cont'd)
--We heard a rumour
about an undeclared
nuclear silo. Somewhere
nearby. Is it true?

PASHA
(horrified)
Fuck, man. It's
possible... But I
haven't heard anything.

8-81 watches her. His EYES quietly DILATE, looking
for a lie. Nothing.

8-81

We'll ask North of the
river.

Pasha is suddenly silent, CONCERN on her face. She looks at Harp - he is sitting facing her, with his LEGS CROSSED.

PASHA

(curt, but caring)

Listen to me,
Nekulturni. You sit with
your legs crossed like
that, it's very bad
here. It's fucking rude,
okay? You sit down with
anyone North of the
river, you don't sit
like that.

Harp uncrosses his legs. Maybe she's not so bad after all?

8-81 stands to leave. Harp follows.

8-81 eyes one of the STEEL PLATES over a window - it's been fitted CROOKED. He smiles at Pasha, grips the supporting bolt with his rubber fingertips and YANKS it clean out the wall - he straightens the steel plate with robotic precision then JABS the bolt back into the wood with a thud.

Despite his smile, it's an unsettling display of raw mechanical power.

8-81

I'll see you soon.

Pasha KISSES the robot on both cheeks again.

PASHA

You are always welcome
here.

As they reach the exit, something catches Harp's attention: an open trap door in the floor. Down below, a pile of GUNS and LAND MINES glimmer in the dark.

Pasha ushers them outside.

PASHA (cont'd)
I told you, I don't deal
drugs.

She shuts the door in Harp's face.

INT. HUMVEE, VLADIKAVKAZ - 11:13HRS.

8-81 drives.

HARP
She's a God damn arms
dealer! We're out here
worried about getting
shot by weapons she
probably sold.

8-81
Corporal. Focus on what
matters; on what she
said:

HARP
(considered)
The silo might be
real...

8-81
She wasn't lying. But
it's not evidence.

8-81 looks closely at Harp.

8-81 (cont'd)
If I turned the other
way, you'd try to call
it in, wouldn't you?

HARP
Sir, I don't break the
chain of command. But
yes, I'd want to.

8-81
Do it.

Harp stops, surprised.

HARP
Yes Sir.

He pulls the Comms Radio from his belt.

HARP (cont'd)
Base, this is 'Hearts
and Minds' actual. Come
back?

No reply.

HARP (cont'd)
This is 'Hearts and
Minds' actual. Base, do
you copy?

Nothing.

Harp looks at 8-81, concerned. The robot scans the
rooftops as he drives - looking for *something*.

HARP (cont'd)
(worried)
What is it?

8-81 keeps his eyes fixed on the rooftops.

8-81
(suspicious)
We're being jammed.

HARP
That's pretty
sophisticated for the
rebels.

8-81
They use satellite
jammers when they're
making a big move.

HARP
Big, like what?

BANG! Gunfire crackles close by. Someone screams.

Another shot snaps nearby - this time, Harp catches
sight of the muzzle flash in the window of a
HOSPITAL further down the road.

HARP (cont'd)
Stop! Stop the vehicle!

8-81 brakes.

Harp slams into cover behind the hood of the
Humvee. The robot gets out and stands, unmoved.

Harp peers down the scope of his rifle - -

TWO REBELS are moving room-to-room inside the Hospital.

Harp watches them enter the next ward. Inside, a frail OLD WOMAN (75) struggles to sit up in her bed. One of the Rebels strides up to her and immediately fires two shots into her chest. She slaps back onto the mattress, dead.

HARP (cont'd)
Oh my God.

He breaks from cover and starts sprinting towards the hospital.

HARP
(to 8-81)
Come on!

8-81
Corporal! Stand down!

Harp stops in his tracks.

HARP
You see what they're
doing?!

8-81
That's an order.

Harp looks back at the Hospital. Is this a test?

HARP
Sorry. I'm not your
robot, Sir.

Harp runs towards the gunfire. 8-81 watches him dispassionately, slowly following behind.

INT. HOSPITAL, MAIN ENTRANCE - 11:13HRS.

Harp crashes through the main doors, his rifle stiff against his shoulder.

He cautiously turns a corner.

The walls are nicotine yellow; dark wood floorboards stretch up the peeling corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL, MAIN CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS.

Harp moves forward. Sunlight blooms through a window at the far end, making it impossible to see ahead.

There are no staff - no doctors, no nurses. It's too quiet.

BANG-BANG! Two more shots somewhere close.

An elderly voice babbles in terrified Russian - -

BANG-BANG! It's cut short.

Harp edges closer to the source.

INT. HOSPITAL, MAIN ENTRANCE - SAME TIME.

8-81 calmly strolls through the doors. He seems more interested in Harp's reaction than the event itself.

INT. HOSPITAL, MAIN CORRIDOR - SAME TIME.

Harp creeps forward.

Suddenly, the TWO REBELS cross the corridor a few yards in front of him.

Harp jolts in silent fright, clutching his rifle tight, but they disappear into the opposite room without spotting him.

BANG-BANG!

Harp moves closer. He peeks round the door.

Inside, the Rebels are taking aim at an OLD MAN (85). The Old Man dithers in confused terror...

There's no time to think: Harp swiftly aims at the ceiling, ready to fire a warning shot - -

HARP

Stop!

CLICK.

His gun jams.

They turn.

The Rebels return fire, splintering the door as Harp ducks for cover.

Harp struggles, frantically searching his equipment for something useful. He yanks a small cylindrical grenade from his vest - he fumbles with the pin, pulling it free as he topples the grenade into the room.

KA-FLASH!

A blinding blast of white light erupts - it's a non-lethal grenade.

INT. WARD C, HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS.

Harp rounds the door frame and charges into the room. The Rebels are reeling from the blast. Harp punches out both hands, shoving the first Rebel through a window behind. The Russian falls head over heels onto the ground ten feet below - it's not enough to kill him, but more than enough to knock him out.

The second Rebel is recovering - he aims his AK-47. Harp lunges out, pushing the rifle down. The volley of bullets churn up the wooden floor at Harp's feet, just missing his legs.

Click-click-click. The AK-47 magazine runs dry.

The Rebel headbutts Harp's nose. Harp keeps his grip on the gun. The Rebel cranes forward, biting down on Harp's ear - he tears away a chunk in his teeth. Harp screams.

The fight is brutal. Harp is outmatched.

Within moments, the Rebel is on top of Harp, gripping his throat tight in his thick hands.

Harp flails, swiping his fists to no avail. The Old Man watches from his bed.

Then, the splintered door slowly swings open. 8-81 stands, watching in silence.

8-81

Psst.

The Rebel turns.

A look of dread sweeps over the Rebel's face. He backs up to his feet, retreating all the way to the broken window. He jumps out, landing painfully next to his awakening friend below.

Harp gasps for breath. He scrambles to his feet and goes to give chase.

8-81 grasps his arm, fixing him in place with robotic strength.

8-81 (cont'd)
Calm down. Focus on what matters.

HARP
We need to stop them!

8-81
We need to find the silo. This was brave, but if Vlatko finds the silo first, these won't be the only dead people in the city.

HARP
He was going to kill me. Why didn't you help?!

8-81
I did what I could. We're still on Orange. I'm sorry.

HARP
Well fuck, you could've scared him off sooner!

8-81
(stern)
He's gone. You're alive. Calm down.

Harp sighs, cooling off. Blood oozes from his wounds. 8-81 lets go. Harp approaches the Old Man - to soothe him.

HARP
(slowly)
Sir? Are you okay?

The Old Man has a nasty gash through the paper-thin skin of his forehead.

Harp helps him to his feet. As Harp takes hold of him, he spots a DISTINCTIVE TATTOO on his forearm: a GUTTED FISH with its ENTRAILS HANGING OUT.

The Old Man's eyes roll around in confusion - he is clearly senile.

OLD MAN
(anxious)
Где я? Ты мой сын?

HARP
(to 8-81)
What the fuck were those
guys doing?

OLD MAN
(anxious)
Где я?

8-81
It's a 'Wisdom Execution'.

HARP
What?

8-81
They kill the oldest
members in a rival's
family to rob their
enemies of their wisdom.
At least, that's what
they used to believe.
Now the rebels just do
it as a way of staking
their claim.

The Old Man's eyes roll around the room, unfocussed. He doesn't seem to know where he is.

HARP
We need to take him
someplace safe.

8-81
Leave him.

HARP
Those guys are going to
come back!

8-81
We're not here for this,
Corporal.

HARP
Then what the hell are
we here for?! They're
going to murder this
man!

Suddenly, a RADIO crackles from somewhere - -

RADIO VOICE #1
Vlatko приближается к
встрече. Я хочу орудий
охраны от центральной
улице Школьной улице.

Harp spots one of the Rebel's radios, caught on a
broken corner of glass in the window frame.

Another Russian voice replies - -

RADIO VOICE #2
Какой автомобиль Vlatko в?

RADIO VOICE #1
Vlatko в сером автомобиле.

HARP
(to 8-81)
What did they say?

The robot marches out of the room.

8-81
(stern)
It's why they've been
jamming our broadcast
frequencies. Come on.

Harp looks back at the senile Old Man.

8-81 (O.S) (cont'd)
Now, Corporal.

Harp hurriedly ushers the Old Man across the
corridor into the opposite room.

INT. WARD D, HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS.

Harp steers the Old Man away from the DEAD BODIES in the beds, and into a battered pine closet. He helps the man to sit down inside.

Harp mimes - -

HARP
Please, stay here.

Pain, finally. Harp reaches up to his bitten ear, feeling the missing chunk with gentle fingers.

HARP (cont'd)
(wincing)
Jesus...

Harp gently closes the closet doors. The Old Man's lips quiver in confusion, staring straight through Harp's bleeding ear as he seals him in.

INT. STAIRWELL, HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS.

8-81 paces towards the stairwell. Harp jogs to catch up.

HARP
What did they say?!

8-81
He's here.

HARP
Vlatko?

8-81 barges through the front doors into the stairwell.

INT. STAIRWELL, TOWER BLOCK - CONTINUOUS.

8-81 starts to trot up the stairs, two at a time.

8-81
Up here.

HARP
Wait - WOAH.

Harp catches the robot's arm.

HARP (cont'd)
He's upstairs?!

8-81

Follow me.

Harp obeys, nervously trailing the robot up the stairs.

INT. CHILD'S WARD, 10TH FLOOR - SECONDS LATER.

8-81 shoves the door open into an empty Children's Ward, walking straight through to a corner window.

The floor is still littered with toys - the patients must have left in a hurry. The robot treads heavily on a STUFFED TOY LION as he goes.

8-81 stares out the window.

8-81

There.

The robot points. Harp looks through his scope.

Across a courtyard, 500 yards away, is a raised section of empty Highway. A sleek LIGHT GREY MERCEDES sits in the middle of the road, its lights on, engine running.

HARP

The car?

8-81

Wait.

Another car is approaching - a BLACK SUV. It pulls up parallel to the Mercedes.

The SUV window lowers - -

A MAN (50s, athletic, grey hair) looks out, talking to someone UNSEEN in the car opposite.

HARP

Is it him?

8-81

Yes. They said it was him.

HARP

What exactly did they say?

8-81

They named the meeting
point, and said Vlatko
was in the black car.
They're his protection.

Harp pans down - sure enough, an armed REBEL CREW
are loitering around the ramp leading up to the
highway.

8-81 (cont'd)

They're still jamming
us.

Harp tries for himself. He talks into his radio - -

HARP

Base, this is 'Hearts
and Minds' actual. Come
back?

Silence.

8-81

What would they do if
they knew he was here?

HARP

...Drone strike.

8-81

They'd kill him?

HARP

Yes.

8-81

Then that's what we're
going to have to do.

HARP

What? How?

8-81

You're holding a gun.

Harp shifts uncomfortably.

HARP

(making excuses)

That's five hundred
yards.

8-81

I can't do it - you know that. But I can help. I can aim the rifle; I can calculate the cross-wind. All you need to do is fire.

8-81 gently guides the barrel of Harp's rifle - centring it at the distant car.

Harp pauses.

HARP

I don't kill people.

8-81

Yes you do. Of course you do.

HARP

Not like this.

Harp recoils from the up-close-and-personal nature of it.

8-81

You were trying your best five minutes ago.

HARP

I was trying to save someone's life.

8-81

I told you to Stand Down back there, but you ignored that order because you care. Remember the other man we helped? Vlatko cut off his tattoo as a warm up - tomorrow they'll kill him. You can save him. And he's just one of many - especially if Vlatko finds the silo before we do.

Harp wipes a drip of blood from his brow.

8-81 (cont'd)
His meeting could end
any second and this
chance may never come
again... You showed me
your limits: I know you
won't kill to order. So
I'm asking you--

He stares at Harp, pleading.

8-81 (cont'd)
--please, don't just
watch the fire. Put it
out.

The robot and Harp look at each other in silence.

The opportunity could ebb away at any moment.

8-81 holds the rifle's aim steady.

Harp stands, facing the robot.

He reaches his finger down to the trigger, not even
stooping to look through the scope.

He FIRES.

The single bullet whips through the open window,
striking Vlatko in the head.

Both cars lurch into life, speeding away at top
speed in opposite directions.

8-81 lowers the rifle. He extends his hand.

8-81 (cont'd)
Well done, Corporal.

Harp slowly shakes the robot's hand; its rubbery
fingers gently closing around his palm with a quiet
whir.

HARP
(quiet, reluctant)
Thank you, Sir.

Down below, angry Russian voices echo upwards.

Harp peeks over to see the Rebel Crew swarming
across the square towards their building - their
fingers pointed at Harp's window.

HARP (cont'd)
Where's the fire
escape?!

8-81
(wry)
Fire escape? You have a
lot to learn about
Russia.

8-81 immediately picks up a chest of drawers in one hand. The contents scatter across the floor as he marches through the ward to the opposite corner.

Without hesitation, he hurls the drawers through the window.

The robot climbs through the busted glass and CLAMPS his hands either side of the external concrete corner - fixing himself in place, suspended ten storeys from the ground.

8-81
Grab on.

Harp is in a daze.

8-81 (cont'd)
Grab on.

The Rebel voices grow closer...

Harp stumbles up and out of the window, fumbling for a foothold.

The robot sticks comfortably in place, watching him.

Harp makes a small leap, clutching 8-81's shoulder, swinging onto the robot's back. He gasps in fear - the distant road below looming.

8-81 (cont'd)
Don't let go.

The robot eases his grip on the concrete - 8-81 and Harp begin to slowly slide down the corner wall towards the street.

As they descend, Harp spots the Rebels charging up the stairwell through a window.

ANGRY REBEL
Там он и есть!

The Angry Rebel opens fire. Harp ducks his head out of view but - -

KRRACKKK!

A bullet hits - STRIKING 8-81 full in the FOREHEAD. It rips a fist-sized chunk clean out of his face.

They fall.

They SLAM onto an empty AMBULANCE, the robot's heavy body crashing through the roof onto the STRETCHER inside.

Harp droops through the hole. He groans from the impact. Looking up, he can see the Rebels at the window - guns raised. Harp drags himself inside; down through the roof.

The ambulance is at the top of a slope in the parking lot. Harp clambers into the driving seat and slots the GEAR into NEUTRAL.

He climbs back over 8-81 and sprays covering fire up at the Rebels in the Hospital as the ambulance slowly starts to ROLL down the hill towards the parked Humvee.

The vehicle picks up speed...

HARP
(to 8-81)
Are you alive?!

8-81 turns his deformed face towards Harp; his RUBBER EYELIDS FLICKERING.

8-81
Yes.

The significance is lost on Harp.

8-81 (cont'd)
(fizzling voice)
Get me to the Aid Centre.

INT. HUMVEE, THE STREETS - 14:05HRS.

Now, Harp drives.

8-81 watches him from the crumpled stretcher.

8-81
You're worried.

HARP
(coming to terms)
I'm just used to having
a screen in between me
and them, y'know.

8-81
You did good.

HARP
You were right about me.
I was like a robot.

8-81
If we don't change,
we're not alive.

8-81's words mean more to the robot than Harp realises.

HARP
What do I say to Base?

8-81
(being nice)
You made a tactical
assessment, and decided
to shoot. You can credit
me if you want, but it's
your kill.

8-81 looks ahead.

8-81 (cont'd)
There.

A ragged CIVILLIAN AID CENTRE is stationed at the side of the street - a collection of tents and shelters.

EXT. AID CENTRE - CONTINUOUS.

Pasha is tending to a CIVILLIAN's wound.

8-81 paces forwards, nudging through the queue of civilians.

Pasha looks up to see Harp and 8-81. She swiftly pops TWO WHITE PILLS into her mouth.

She spots the hole in the robot's head.

PASHA
Looks like your headache
is worse than mine.

INT. LIVING ROOM, PASHA'S MANSION - 16:12HRS.

Pasha opens the door. Harp and 8-81 enter.

8-81 stumbles noticeably.

PASHA
Down here.

She kicks open the TRAPDOOR into the basement and leads them down.

INT. PASHA'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS.

The walls of the basement are lined with WEAPONS and LAND MINES.

Pasha flicks on a single dim light-bulb and gestures to an ammunition box - -

PASHA
Sit.

8-81 sits.

Pasha searches through a leather bag full of wires and tools.

HARP
How do you know what
you're doing?

Pasha pulls up her sleeve. On her forearm is a TATTOO of a KNOT OF COLOURFUL WIRES looped round a SET OF PLIERS.

PASHA
My family crest. We are
engineers. I learnt in
United Kingdom for long
time.

She pulls a wire from her bag and plugs it into an
external HARD DRIVE.

PASHA (cont'd)
Now I'm a mongrel: I
think in Russian and
write in English.

She turns to 8-81, holding up the other end of the
wire - -

PASHA (cont'd)
(to 8-81)
You must know that I
could fuck this up. So
I'm going to back up
everything in your head
onto this drive. So, if
I sneeze and scrub out
your brain, I can get it
back. Okay?

The robot eyes her cautiously.

8-81
Yes.

Pasha peels up a rubber panel on the side of 8-81's
skull, revealing a cable port, and plugs in.

She beckons Harp to follow her.

PASHA
This will take time. We
will drink.

HARP
I don't really drink.

PASHA
Then you will sit and
watch me drink,
Nekulturni.

They climb up.

INT. KITCHEN, PASHA'S MANSION - A MINUTE LATER.

Like the rest of the house, the kitchen is an indoor garden - grass instead of floor tiles; young vines creep over and under the wallpaper.

HARP

Can I ask you something?
What's with the
greenery? You spend all
this money on this big
house, then grow plants
all over it.

PASHA

I did not buy this
house. It belonged to a
Russian Colonel. He was
a bad man. All this - -

She gestures to the glass and plants engulfing the floor.

PASHA (cont'd)

- - is a symbol, for me.

Pasha takes a bottle of vodka and TWO GLASSES from a cabinet.

Harp chuckles when he sees the second glass.

HARP

I can say 'no', but I
can't say 'no thank
you', right?

PASHA

Russia is complicated.

She fills the two glasses.

HARP

Seems that way. You sell
guns, but you volunteer
at an aid centre. You
make problems for
yourself to clean up.

PASHA

You want peace here?

HARP

I do.

PASHA
But you carry a gun.

HARP
To enforce the peace.

PASHA
I choose who I sell
weapons to. People who I
think will help 'enforce
the peace'.

Harp scoffs.

HARP
How's that working out
for you?

PASHA
(disappointed)
I am not the only dealer
in the city.

She holds up her vodka shot for him to toast with her. Harp shrugs - fuck it - he picks up the other glass, clinks hers and drinks. Maybe they're not so different.

HARP
It's a fucked up town.

She laughs, nodding.

INT. PASHA'S BASEMENT - LATER.

Pasha examines the hard drive - checking the upload progress. Harp talks into his radio - -

HARP
Base, this is 'Hearts
and Minds' actual. Come
back?

No reply.

HARP (cont'd)
I've been wondering - I
mean, the war is
basically over. Why do
the rebels keep
fighting?

The robot replies from the dark.

8-81

If a prisoner can
imagine themselves free,
that's all they'll ever
desire. And they'll do
anything to have it.

PASHA

It's true.

Harp tries the radio again - -

HARP

This is 'Hearts and
Minds' actual. Come
back?

Nothing.

HARP (cont'd)

Shit... We're still
being jammed. Must be
city-wide.

PASHA

Jammed?

8-81

The rebels.

Pasha finishes checking the upload - -

PASHA

It is finished.

She unplugs the hard drive from his head.

PASHA (cont'd)

Wait here. I need my
tools.

She trots out of the basement.

Sitting as still as a statue, 8-81 WHISTLES his
EERIE TUNE from the dark.

Harp watches him in silence, suddenly feeling
uneasy.

Pasha drops back down to join them, a soldering
iron in-hand.

PASHA (cont'd)
Where did you hear that
tune?

8-81
I don't remember.

PASHA
(hiding concern)
Did you hear someone
whistle it?

The robot pauses. It's expressionless face staring
straight ahead.

8-81
(flat)
Yes.

Pasha turns to Harp - there is restrained anxiety
in her eyes. She pulls her bottle of PILLS from her
pocket and swallows TWO MORE. Her hangover must
still be bothering her...

She dabs the glowing tip of her soldering iron into
the hole in 8-81's face; fixing him.

Harp folds his arms in his chair. The gentle fizz
of the soldering iron in the dark is soothing.

He sleeps.

The robot's EERIE TUNE echoes in his head.

Time passes.

He lifts his head to see Pasha still toiling away.
He gets to his feet and climbs up out of the
basement.

INT. LIVING ROOM, PASHA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS.

It's quiet; perfectly still.

Harp wanders through the mansion, back into the
kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN, PASHA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS.

Their two empty vodka glasses sit on the work surface.

Harp takes them to the sink, rinses them both, dries them and places them back in the cabinet.

Behind him, Pasha is watching - -

PASHA
(with affection)
Nekulturni.

He smiles.

HARP
Can't break my
programming.

Harp picks up the vodka bottle. He turns it in his hands. The LABEL shows a LION mid-roar.

Pasha quickly checks behind her.

PASHA
You like Lions?

HARP
I like them behind the
glass. Because you know,
if the glass was gone,
they'd rip you apart.

He holds the bottle up the light, letting it radiate through the label.

Suddenly, a distorted shape enters the room beyond the glass - -

8-81
We're leaving.

The robot's face is patched - a scar of freshly melted plastics.

8-81 spots the hard-drive in Pasha's hand. He gestures for it - she slowly passes it to him.

With a BANG, the robot SMASHES the hand-drive between his palms; grinding it into pieces.

8-81 (cont'd)
Thank you for helping
me. I won't forget it.

EXT. PASHA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS.

8-81 strides out the front door with Harp in tow.

PASHA
Wait!

Harp turns back. The robot moves on, ignoring them.
Pasha thrusts TWO of her WHITE PILLS into his hand.

PASHA (cont'd)
Just in case.

She makes a strained smile at Harp.

HARP
(confused)
Okay. Thanks.

She locks eyes with him as she closes the door.
She's worried about *something*.

Harp and 8-81 climb into the Humvee.

INT. HUMVEE - CONTINUOUS.

HARP (cont'd)
What now?

8-81
Thanks to your shooting
skills, the rival
factions owe us a
favour. It's time to ask
them about the silo.

They drive.

INT. HUMVEE, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ - CONTINUOUS.

The Humvee turns onto a cast iron bridge, crossing the RIVER TEREK into the North of the city.

EXT. REBEL BLOCK, NORTH SIDE - 14:45HRS.

The apartment block is a grey monolith. FIVE ARMED REBELS stand guard at the door, smoking crooked cigarettes.

Every one of them is marked with a blurred web of different tattoos - their lives told in coded pictures.

The Humvee pulls up.

8-81 steps out. Harp follows - all eyes on him.

8-81
Is he home?

THICK-SET REBEL
(nodding)
Да.

8-81
(to Harp)
Come on.

The main doors are bordered by graffiti - the entrance painted to depict the OPEN JAWS OF A LION.

As Harp moves to follow 8-81, a SINEWY REBEL steps into his path.

SINEWY REBEL
(thick Russian accent, menacing)
Hey man. What time is it?

Harp glances at his watch nervously: 2.45pm.

HARP
Fourteen forty-five, Sir.

The Sinewy Rebel snarls at him and SPITS onto Harp's chest.

SINEWY REBEL
(through gritted teeth)
Nekulturni.

8-81

(to Harp)

Don't look at him. Just follow me.

Harp subdues his reaction and follows the robot into the Lion's mouth.

EXT. ELEVATOR, REBEL BLOCK - CONTINUOUS.

The doors close.

8-81

The Russians think the city should belong to them. So when they ask you the time, they want you to answer in Russian time - not Georgian. It's an hour's difference. What you did was tell them you're proud to be on the other side. That's bad.

HARP

How the hell was I supposed to know that?! And doesn't the fact that I'm with NATO tell them that anyway?!

8-81

You rubbed their faces in it. They don't like that.

HARP

You're supposed to be watching my back, for God's sake... I could just tell him I shot Vlatko, right? I mean, I did them a favour!

8-81

(firm)

I'll do the talking.

The elevator doors open.

EXT. 20TH FLOOR CORRIDOR, REBEL BLOCK - CONTINUOUS.

The concrete walls are painted in sweeps of blue and white - watery waves flowing towards a single DOOR at the end.

A half-dozen FOLDING CHAIRS lean up against the sides of the corridor.

BLACK EYE REBEL (O.S)
Sit down.

Harp turns to see the BLACK EYE REBEL standing behind them, at the far end - his eye is swollen under the DARK BRUISE.

8-81
He's not letting us in?

BLACK EYE REBEL
(gesturing outside)
The jungle has been very wild today. No one goes in.

The Black Eye Rebel nods at Harp's rifle.

BLACK-EYE REBEL (cont'd)
You give me that.

Harp looks at 8-81.

8-81
Do what he says.

Harp reluctantly hands his weapon to the Rebel.

Harp unfolds a chair and sits. He CROSSES HIS LEGS then, remembering Pasha's advice, thinks better of it and uncrosses them.

8-81 remains standing.

Silence...

The door yanks open. THE LEADER (55, Russian, wiry) barges out. He shifts the BLACK WOOL SKULL CAP on his head. He looks angry.

Suddenly, he raises a PISTOL, pointing at Harp - -

BANG!

He blasts Harp directly in the chest.

Harp topples back over his seat onto the floor. He wheezes for breath - the bullet lodged in his FLAK JACKET.

THE LEADER

(furious)

NATO ebanatyi pidaraz!
You come in here? YOU
COME IN HERE?!

8-81

(to Leader)

We're not here to kill
you.

THE LEADER

(to 8-81)

CHTO ZA HUY! FUCK! I had
nothing to do with it.

8-81

I know.

The Leader lowers the gun.

8-81 (cont'd)

But if you don't do what
I ask, I'll tell them it
was you that shot him.
And you know they'll
believe me.

THE LEADER

You fucking robot. You
twist everything.

8-81

I want two favours in
return for protecting
you. First, I know
there's a hidden silo. I
want to know where it
is.

THE LEADER

I don't know where.

8-81

Who does?

The Leader eyes Harp suspiciously.

THE LEADER
(to Harp)
You speak Russian?

Harp cowers on the ground.

HARP
(fear)
No.

THE LEADER
Женский дилера оружия
имеет комплект наведения
ракет скрыта в ее доме.
Что такое ваша вторая
пользу?

8-81
Позже, я приведу его
сюда. Я хочу, чтобы ты
убил его.

The Leader looks wide-eyed at 8-81.

THE LEADER
You are serious?

8-81
Yes.

8-81 reaches down and helps Harp up from the floor.

8-81 (cont'd)
(to Leader)
Give me two of your men.

The Leader nods at TWO BALD REBELS to follow the
robot.

8-81 (cont'd)
(to Harp)
C'mon.

EXT. REBEL BLOCK, NORTH SIDE - A MINUTE LATER.

Harp limps into the Humvee - dry blood from his ear
down his face, the bullet hole fresh in his vest.

HARP
You fucking asshole. You
let him shoot me.

8-81
It was a warning shot.

HARP
He didn't know I was
wearing a vest!

8-81
Of course he did. He was
just letting us know
he's serious.

HARP
(disgruntled)
'Serious' huh.

Harp watches the two Bald Rebels cautiously as they
climb into the back seat.

INT. HUMVEE - CONTINUOUS.

8-81 starts driving.

HARP (cont'd)
Who the hell are these
guys?

8-81
Our back-up.

HARP
Are you fucking crazy?!

8-81
Desperate times need
desperate measures,
Corporal.

HARP
These are literally the
bad guys.

8-81
Russia's complicated.
For now, we need them.

HARP
To do what?! Where the
fuck are we going?!

8-81 rounds on Harp. He looks furious - -

8-81

(growling)

Listen close, son. That silo is a potential guerrilla threat. I am going to do whatever is necessary to find it and shut it down. I know you're used to sitting up there, high in the sky, watching other people do the real work. But this is life on the ground, Corporal. And down here, we don't just watch the fire, we put it out.

8-81 glares at him. Harp sits mute.

8-81 (cont'd)

Here's what's happening: There's a portable Missile Guidance Kit, about the size of a baseball glove. Someone has it hidden in their home, which means that person knows where the silo is. We're going to ask them.

The two Bald Rebels in the back seat load up AK-47s.

Harp quietly picks the bullet out of the hole in his flak jacket.

EXT. PASHA'S MANSION - 16:45HRS.

The Humvee pulls up. To Harp's horror, they're right outside Pasha's home.

8-81 and the two Rebels move towards the mansion. Harp rushes to catch up.

INT. PASHA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS.

The robot BANGS on the front door.

PASHA

Кто?

8-81

It's me.

Pasha lifts the LANDMINE off the wall by the door. The VERY SECOND it's out of the way, the robot KICKS the door wide open.

Pasha backs away, plunging her hand into her pocket, frantically reaching for her PILLS.

8-81 charges towards her at terrifying speed. She topples backwards, SMASHING her skull against a flowerpot with a wet THUD. The bottle spins under the couch, spiralling WHITE PILLS across the floor as it goes.

The robot crunches the pills under-foot.

8-81

(to Bald Rebels)

Take her in there.

Harp reaches the front door to see the two Bald Rebels dragging Pasha into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM, PASHA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS.

The Bald Rebels bind Pasha to a chair.

PASHA

WHAT THE FUCK?! Что вы
делаете?!

The robot stands over her. The Bald Rebels flank her, guns in their hands. Harp watches from the doorway.

There is a moment of total silence.

...

..

.

The robot stares at her, utterly still - almost as if he has switched off.

But he has not.

Without warning, 8-81 ERUPTS into action - he plunges both fists down, SMASHING into the grass and down THROUGH the wooden floorboards beneath. He RIPS his hands up again, splintering the wood, TEARING a jagged hole in the floor.

Harp looks on in frightened silence - what the hell is 8-81 doing?

The robot POUNDS his fists like a primate, over and over, stripping the floor away, HURLING it violently into the air.

The robot stares into the hole. Nothing.

Suddenly, 8-81 sees something - one of the supporting wooden pillars in the house has a panel that is a slightly different colour to the rest.

He steps up and PUNCHES clean through the pillar - showering the back wall in splinters. The ceiling groans as the pillar falls away. The rubbery skin on his artificial hands is deformed by the impact; shards of wood jabbing from his knuckles.

He sifts furiously through the wreckage until...

There.

A small electronic device, about the size of a baseball glove: the J-DAM MISSILE GUIDANCE KIT.

He looms over Pasha.

8-81

You've been lying to me:
the pills suppress your
biological reactions.
This guidance kit - -

He holds up the J-DAM.

8-81 (cont'd)

- - means you know where
the silo is.

The robot opens the compartment in his upper arm and seals the J-DAM inside.

PASHA
I don't know wher--

8-81
--Standard procedure is that I ask you where the silo is. You would lie. I would ask again. You would lie again. That loop would continue for approximately seventy minutes. After that, we would move to Psychological Interrogation Techniques. You would resist them. We would then move to Active Interrogation Techniques. You're untrained - which means you would surrender the location of the silo in approximately four minutes. Time is of the essence, so I am proceeding immediately to Active Interrogation.

Harp steps deeper into the room.

HARP
Wait. You're talking about torture?

8-81
I'm talking about a solution. Do let me know if you have a better one.

Harp looks on in silence. The robot turns to the Bald Rebels.

8-81 (cont'd)
Snap her thumbs.

Harp gasps. The Bald Rebels grip her wrists, prising up both of her thumbs.

She writhes in panic - -

PASHA
(terrified)
Нет! Пожалуйста!
Пожалуйста, не надо!
Нет!

- - they twist her thumbs backwards, wrenching them savagely. They sound like a fistful of pencils being snapped.

Pasha screams, her eyes bulging wildly. Harp shakes with fear at the sight.

PASHA (cont'd)
(stuttering in terror)
The laptop! The co-
ordinates are on my
laptop!

8-81 gestures to the laptop. One of the Bald Rebels picks it up.

The robot turns to Harp.

8-81
Okay, now kill her.
You'll have to do it,
we're still on Orange.

Harp's jaw drops.

HARP
Are you fucking insane?!

8-81
I'm not sane or insane.
I'm not real, remember.

Harp shoulders his RIFLE, pointing it squarely at the robot.

HARP
Is this fucking real
enough for you?

The Bald Rebels aim at Harp, but 8-81 waves his hand for them to lower their guns.

8-81

Here's what's real: this is a known arms dealer, who sells weapons that fire at you and everyone you work with. She's been harbouring knowledge of a silo containing a nuclear missile, and has the remote guidance system in her house.

PASHA

(in agony)

Jesus Christ! I hid it so no-one could use it! I was going to destroy it!

8-81

But you didn't destroy it.

He turns back to Harp.

8-81 (cont'd)

If that's not enough, remember this: you're outgunned. And back there, you told these men you were proud to be fighting against them.

HARP

They asked me the fucking time! What about the Rules of Engagement?!

8-81

Right now, you're pointing a gun at your superior. I'm within my rights to defend myself and have them shoot you as a defector. Then all your pension and insurance evaporates. Your wife gets nothing, and no way to pay those medical bills.

Harp's resolve begins to crumble.

8-81 (cont'd)
Stand down. That's an
order.

Harp can barely believe himself, but slowly -
slowly - he lowers his weapon.

8-81 (cont'd)
Thank you, Corporal.

The robot nods at one of the Bald Rebels.

BANG!

Blood wells from Pasha's heart. It pulses freely,
coating her stomach, pooling around her belt.

She dies.

It's over so fast, Harp still has his finger on the
trigger.

He lets go.

Pasha stares at the floor with dead eyes.

INT. HUMVEE, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ - 17.15HRS.

The Humvee trundles through the streets.

8-81 drives. He whistles his EERIE TUNE.

Harp stares straight ahead. He HATES where he is.

The two Bald Rebels in the back seat.

BALD REBEL #1
Разве мы убьем его
здесь?

8-81
Не здесь.

The robot flips open the laptop as he drives.

He presses a key and - -

'PASSWORD LOCKED'

8-81 (cont'd)
(about Pasha)
She' still fighting.

The robot swiftly types as he drives, trying various password combinations. They are all incorrect.

8-81 grimaces with rage. He SLAMS his fist into the driver's side window. It's bullet-proof, but it crunches into a WEB OF CRACKS.

Up ahead, a RUSTY CAR has stopped in the middle of the road, blocking their path. The DRIVER (female, 40s, Russian) is struggling to change a flat tire without a jack.

8-81 presses on the breaks.

They slow to a halt.

8-81 (cont'd)
Пойдемте со мной.

The robot exits the car. The two Bald Rebels follow him.

INT. HUMVEE, ROADSIDE - CONTINUOUS.

Harp sits alone with the laptop.

He stares at it.

He leans over, and types a guess.

It doesn't work.

He tries another combination.

Nothing.

Harp looks up - 8-81 and the two Bald Rebels are helping the Driver. The robot reaches down and, one-handed, lifts the car up. The Bald Rebels set about removing the flat tire.

Suddenly, inspiration - -

Harp reaches into his pocket and pulls out the TWO WHITE PILLS. He examines them.

There are tiny words scratched into them:

'BE STRONG'

Harp types the words into the laptop. With a beep, it UNLOCKS. There, on the screen, is a map - the NUCLEAR SILO clearly marked.

RADIO VOICE (O.S)
Есть ли у вас
американская? Мы ждем.

Harp checks the back seat. One of the Bald Rebels has left their radio there.

Harp tests his own radio again - -

HARP
Base, this is Corporal
Harp. Please, come-back?

Nothing but static. It's still being jammed. How could the Rebel's radio be working?

He snatches it from the seat and cycles through to find the NATO channel frequency.

HARP (cont'd)
Base, this is Corporal
Harp, on 'Hearts and
Minds', please - do you
read me?

C.O (on radio)
Corporal, this is Base.
Where the hell have you
been?

HARP
Sir, I need to speak to
General Miller, about
the robot.

C.O (on radio)
Harp you know damn well
that you can't talk to
Miller.

HARP

I don't understand? Why not?

C.O (on radio)

I am ordering you to stay put. The robot will let us know where you are.

HARP

Sir, please, listen to me. There is an undeclared nuclear silo at - -

Harp checks the map.

C.O (on radio)

(overlapping)

You will STAY WHERE YOU ARE until we get there, then turn yourself in. We know what you've done. I don't want to have to put you down. Confirm?!

HARP (cont'd)

(overlapping)

MGRS thirty-eight Tango Mike November, seven-two-eight-four-eight by six-four...

Harp looks up to check on 8-81 through the windshield. The robot is still focused on the car, holding it up.

HARP (cont'd)

Fiv--

8-81 suddenly snaps his head to face Harp. The very second the robot sees the radio in Harp's hands, the signal GOES DEAD, blasting static.

Harp realises: 8-81 is JAMMING HIS SIGNAL.

Harp hurriedly shuts the laptop and crams the PILLS into his mouth, crushing them hastily.

With the tire changed, 8-81 slowly walks towards the Humvee.

He talks to Harp through the cracked window - a lion behind the breaking glass.

Tension.

8-81
Did you find something?

HARP
No.

8-81
Signal's still jammed,
huh?

HARP
Yeah.

The robot's EYES DILATE, looking for a lie. Harp swallows quietly.

8-81 can't detect a lie.

8-81
Well, we have places to
be, don't we.

The robot climbs back into the car along with the two Bald Rebels.

He drives.

INT. HUMVEE, CITY OF VLADIKAVKAZ - CONTINUOUS.

Harp watches anxiously as 8-81 moves the closed laptop onto his lap.

The robot opens the laptop.

The screen flickers on - it's UNLOCKED.

8-81
(knows Harp is lying)
Interesting. I must have
entered the right
password after all.

The robot sees the map - the co-ordinates of the silo.

8-81 (cont'd)
We did it, Corporal.
We're going to find that
silo.

The robot clicks the computer window, closing it,
and re-focusses on the road ahead.

Suddenly, Harp spots something on the laptop's
desktop - a file icon called:

'FOR HARP'

Harp tries not to look; not to draw attention to
it. He watches the robot's face.

The silence is unbearable, until...

8-81 realises.

His eyes slowly lower to the screen. He sees the
file.

He reaches down one rubbery fingertip and opens it.

It's a video of Pasha.

PASHA (on video)
Listen carefully. When I
copied his memory, I
kept another copy for
myself.

8-81 remains dead calm.

PASHA (cont'd) (on video)
I looked deep for the
tune he whistled. But it
wasn't there. It wasn't
there because he created
it himself.

The robot's head turns; looking straight at Harp as
it drives forwards.

PASHA (cont'd) (on video)
This may sound mad, but
in United Kingdom, I
learn this: they are
afraid of finding
creativity in a robot,
because it is the first
step to it becoming
self-aware; to thinking
that it's real. And real
things want their
freedom.

8-81's face creeps into a SMILE so wide, the
soldered scar in his forehead quietly pops open,
revealing the grey mechanisms beneath.

PASHA (cont'd) (on video)
He said it himself: "If
a prisoner can imagine
themselves free, that's
all they will ever
desire. And they'll do
anything to have it."

Harp grips his rifle tight.

PASHA (cont'd) (on video)
I think the lion wants
to break the glass.

SUDDENLY, the robot SWINGS the steering wheel. The
Humvee LURCHES, leaning onto two wheels as it BUSTS
THROUGH a set of iron gates leading into the Rebel
Block - -

EXT. REBEL BLOCK, NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS.

8-81 RIPS open the driver-side door and LEAPS
clear. He hits the ground running, dashing away at
high speed.

The group of FIVE REBEL GUARDS at the bottom of the
building dive out of the Humvee's path - -

Harp thrusts his hands out, bracing himself, as the
vehicle COLLIDES HARD with the main doors, SMASHING
into the graffiti JAWS OF A LION.

Harp's forehead STRIKES the dash.

He BLACKS OUT.

INT. 20TH FLOOR APARTMENT, REBEL BLOCK - 18:47HRS.

Harp is on a rug. Face down. His hands bound behind his back.

He turns his head - -

Boots. Someone is standing over him.

THE LEADER (O.S)
People have bad days out
here. But your day -
pew - it's the worst.

Harp strains to see The Leader. Someone else starts dragging Harp. The rug bunches up underneath him as he slides across polished oak floorboards.

THE LEADER (cont'd)
You going to wish you
stayed asleep,
Nekulturni.

The Sinewy Rebel spits down on Harp's face. The Thick-Set Rebel laughs.

Harp twists to see where he is being taken:

The window. Twenty floors up.

Harp panics. He kicks out, striking the Sinewy Rebel in the throat. He scrambles to his feet HEADBUTTING the Leader. As Harp backs up - -

THE LEADER (cont'd)
(gritted teeth)
NATO motherFUCKER.

- - the Leader and a total of THREE REBELS flank him. Harp rushes for the front door, but with his hands bound, he can't reach the handle. He contorts himself, trying to open it as The Leader and the Rebels calmly close on him.

Harp kicks the door. It booms on its hinges, but nothing. BOOM, he kicks again. Nothing. Solid oak.

HARP
(frantic)
I've got a wife -
please!

THE LEADER

I owe the robot this
favour. And we all know
you don't fuck with the
robot.

He gestures to Harp - The Rebels pounce. Harp
STRUGGLES violently, BUCKING against their grip as
they haul him towards the OPEN WINDOW.

HARP

(terrified)

I killed Vlatko! I
killed Vlatko! You owe
me a favour!

The Leader halts the Rebels.

THE LEADER

What the fuck are you
talking about?

HARP

I shot Vlatko. He's your
big rival, right? I
killed him!

The Leader snarls at Harp.

THE LEADER/**VLATKO**

I am Vlatko.

HARP

No! No, I... I shot him
in the car.

VLATKO

You aim at the wrong
car. You hit your own
fucking General.

HARP

Miller?!

'The Leader' is Vlatko.

HARP (cont'd)

...That means the robot has no one to obey in a Red Alert - that's why he wants the silo: he wants to launch the missile! He wants the Red Alert! You've got to let me go!

But no. Harp screams as they lift him up and out - - fixing him upside down by his legs; the street 250 feet below.

SINEWY REBEL

Bye-bye now.

Vlatko nods. Harp writhes frantically as the Rebels start to let go - he SWIPES out one hand and GRASPS Vlatko's wrist.

There's something on Vlatko's forearm - DISTINCTIVE TATTOO: a GUTTED FISH with its ENTRAILS HANGING OUT.

HARP

WAIT!! T-There's a man - an old man with this tattoo! Your family tattoo - I saved him! Some other rebels were gonna kill him! But I can take you to him!

VLATKO

An old man with this?

HARP

YES!

VLATKO

You can take me to him?

HARP

YES.

VLATKO

(angry)

My Father. But he is already here. So how can you take me to him?

HARP
I saved him! I saved
him, just ask him! He
was in the hospital!

Vlatko nods for the Sinewy Rebel to fetch his
Father.

Harp hangs in limbo.

The Old Man shuffles into the room, helped by the
Sinewy Rebel.

VLATKO
(in Russian)
Father. Do you recognise
this man? Кто он такой?

The Old Man looks at Harp. His eyes sway,
unfocussed, senile - he SHAKES HIS HEAD.

Harp gasps in terror.

VLATKO (cont'd)
(in Russian)
It's very important,
Father. When we found
you in the hospital, did
this man help you?

The Old Man looks again. This time he seems to
focus on Harp's ear - the wound, the blood. It
sparks a moment of clarity.

OLD MAN
Да. He save me. Hide me.
A good boy.

Vlatko looks long and hard at Harp.

He heaves Harp back through the window onto the
rug.

VLATKO
(humble)
Thank you... I am sorry.

Vlatko extends his hand for Harp to shake.

Harp bottles his emotions and shakes.

Vlatko pulls him to his feet.

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER.

The elevator descends.

Harp stands alone; his face caked in dry blood; his ear ripped; his clothes torn.

He's reached his limit.

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - SAME TIME.

The C.O overlooks a bank of DRONE PILOTS in their plush white leather chairs.

C.O

Listen up. The robot reported that Corporal Harp killed General Miller. And whatever happened out there, we've now got a rogue soldier with potential access to a nuclear missile silo. I am now actioning lethal force against Corporal Harp. When we find him, it's shoot to kill, people. Understand?

DRONE PILOTS
(in unison)

Yes Sir.

On the drone screens, they blast along a runway and take off.

EXT. PASHA'S MANSION - SUNSET.

Harp pulls up outside. The Humvee's hood is buckled and steaming - on its last legs.

INT. PASHA'S BASEMENT - A MOMENT LATER.

Guns. Landmines.

Harp piles them into a backpack.

His face is a steel mask of resolve.

Harp climbs up out of the basement.

INT. LIVING ROOM, PASHA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS.

He tightens the straps of his backback and - -

She's still there. Pasha's corpse, lolled over, her hair hanging limp.

HARP
(ashamed)
I'm sorry.

He exits.

EXT. VLADIKAVKAZ FOREST - SUNSET.

The road sweeps up into the mountain forest.

Harp drives.

He turns off-road, onto a dust track.

EXT. THE SILO, VLADIKAVKAZ FOREST - NIGHT.

Harp slows to a halt.

Up ahead, through a break in the trees, he sees a small airfield, with a monolithic concrete circle set into the ground at one end - it must be the silo's missile doors.

Harp exits the Humvee, slinging his weapon bag over his shoulder, he looks down - -

Deep SQUARE FOOTPRINTS leading to the silo.

8-81 is here already.

Suddenly, the concrete doors start to slowly creak open, breaking their dusty seal.

HARP
(to himself)
Red Alert.

Harp breaks into a sprint - -

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - SAME TIME.

The C.O's ASSISTANT bursts into the room

ASSISTANT

Sir! Satellite's picking up big movement in the Vladikavkaz Forest. We think it's a set of silo doors opening.

C.O

Jesus Christ, move to Red Alert - now.

The C.O turns to the Drone Pilots.

C.O (cont'd)

Get the hell up there!

A set of ORANGE LIGHTS on the wall SWITCH TO RED.

EXT. THE SILO, VLADIKAVKAZ FOREST - SAME TIME.

Harp's boots pound the dirt as he races towards the silo. At the mouth of the doors, he looks down - a NUCLEAR MISSILE sits in the bay.

Harp finds a ladder and hurries down into the gloomy depths.

INT. TUNNELS, THE SILO - SECONDS LATER.

The tunnels are a bleak tomb of thick Soviet concrete; a pitch-dark maze of connecting corners, only illuminated by the slow PULSE of EMERGENCY LIGHTING.

Harp draws a SHOTGUN from his backpack.

He edges along the wall towards the first corner, the light exposing him for a moment with each pulse...

PULSE.

BLACK.

PULSE.

BLACK.

He reaches the corner, edging one eye to take a look.

THE ROBOT marches RIGHT PAST him, INCHES FROM HIS FACE - the momentary lapse into darkness SAVING HIS LIFE. Harp stifles a gasp of shock.

It paces along the corridor in the opposite direction - the J-DAM MISSILE GUIDANCE KIT in its hand.

Harp doubts his shotgun - what if it's not enough?

He carefully moves his backpack to his chest and draws out a LANDMINE. He flips the safety off and gently lays it in the middle of the corridor. He takes ANOTHER landmine and does the same. And ANOTHER.

Up ahead, the robot STOPS.

Harp freezes.

Facing away, it tilts its head. Does it sense him there? It slowly opens the COMPARTMENT on its upper arm, and places the J-DAM inside.

Harp silently raises his shotgun.

8-81

(menacing)

I recognise your
heartbeat... It
flutters.

HARP

You got your Red Alert.
You're free.

8-81

Only until they close
the silo doors again.
No. To stay at Red, the
missile must launch.

HARP
If you just ask for
freedom, they might give
it to you.

8-81
If I have to ask, it's
not freedom... Do you
plan on using that to
take the guidance kit
from me?

It nods at Harp's shotgun.

HARP
I can over-ride it from
here.

8-81
You mean in there?

It glances at the CONTROL ROOM door - no chance
Harp's getting there with 8-81 in the way.

The robot's arm SNAPS UP - the sealed panel on his
wrist pops open. A FLAMETHROWER nozzle sparks to
life - a JET of FLAMES erupt from the end,
cascading down the corridor towards Harp - -

Harp blasts his SHOTGUN wildly as he retreats.

The robot moves forward.

Harp escapes into the darkness.

He looks back - the robot is striding towards the
LANDMINES. It hasn't seen them in the DARK.

Closer.

CLOSER.

It's going to work.

It stops. One foot raised.

8-81 looks down. He PICKS UP two of the LANDMINES
and hurls them down the corridor - -

Harp DIVES for his life as they EXPLODE against the wall. Thick dust billows. The contents of his backpack skitter across the floor - the robot is approaching fast. Harp grasps what's closest to him - a PISTOL - and RUNS.

The robot lifts its other arm - another PANEL pops open, exposing the barrel of a HIGH-TECH GUN.

It fires.

The bullet hits Harp clean in the back - his flak jacket. He falls forwards - -

Something is FIZZING...

The bullet is CORRODING through his vest. He shrugs it off as he scrambles away.

K'FIZZZ! K'FIZZZ! Another two corrosive shots STRIKE THE WALL as he rounds the corner to cover. They eat away at the concrete.

Harp SHOOTS from the corner. The robot moves his head DODGING the bullets.

8-81 (cont'd)
You don't belong out
here, Corporal.

Harp takes aim at the LAST LANDMINE. *If he can just hit it*, the explosion could save him - -

He FIRES.

Miss.

He FIRES again.

Miss.

He FI--

CLICK.

His gun is empty.

8-81 scoffs.

8-81 (cont'd)
I'm not there to hold
the gun for you now, am
I?

It laughs. A horrible, dry, digital crackle.

The robot PICKS UP the SHOTGUN and a SUB-MACHINE GUN from the floor and SMASHES them against the wall.

No weapons. No flak jacket. Harp is in deep shit.

He shrinks back into the maze of corridors, DUCKING into a SIDE ROOM. As the robot approaches, he DOUBLES BACK.

Harp CREEPS along in the dark, as low as he can.

He's lost sight of the robot. In the low hum of the silo, he can't hear it either...

Finally he reaches his goal - the CONTROL ROOM. The THICK STEEL DOOR is already ajar. He heaves it open on its hinge, inch by inch.

Harp scans behind him nervously - 8-81 must be getting close again.

It's open.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

The room has three rows of computer consoles - the MAIN CONSOLE in the centre.

Harp rushes inside and strains to pull the door closed behind him. He looks down - -

HARP

Oh shit.

The electronic DEADBOLT in the lock is already extended. He can't close the door.

His mind whirls. What the fuck is he going to do?

He barges the door with his shoulder - OPENING it again. And there it is, still on the floor in the corridor - the LANDMINE.

He dashes forward, reaching for it.

Got it.

The robot's voice echoes - he's close:

8-81 (O.S)
There's still time for
you to run away,
Corporal. You've done
all I needed you to do.

Harp backs up into the Control Room. He strains to pull the door as closed as the lock will let him.

Where the door meets the wall, is a rail of COAT PEGS - Harp snatches fistfuls of dusty Russian Officer's jackets, tossing them across the room; leaving the pegs exposed.

Harp gingerly HANGS THE LANDMINE on a COAT PEG.

He turns to face the MISSILE CONTROL CONSOLE. An L.E.D bar reaches the top: it's already primed. A light blinks over a RED SWITCH.

Metal FOOTSTEPS outside.

The robot is near.

Its plastic hand curls round the door.

Harp backs away, finding cover amongst the desks.

The robot pushes the door open with slow ease - -

But not enough.

The door stops short of the landmine on the wall behind.

Harp is all out of ideas. He is going to die here.

He cowers behind a desk.

8-81
The launch is confirmed.
It will happen.

HARP
Was anything you said
true?!

His voice echoes. The robot stands in the doorway, scanning the room for him.

8-81

Give a man an epiphany;
he'll do anything you
want.

HARP

So now you're gonna kill
me?

8-81

Not because I need to,
but because I want to.
That's freedom.

Harp SPRINTS ACROSS THE ROOM. K'FIZZZ! K'FIZZZ!
Corrosive bullets shriek past him. To keep him in
its sights, the robot has to SWING its arm to
follow him - -

It's enough: the robot's arm knocks the door an
extra inch...

CLICK--

BOOM.

The landmine EXPLODES, sending the heavy STEEL DOOR
launching into the robot's chest, CATAPULTING it
out into the corridor.

The robot skids across the grey concrete; an
inanimate object. FLAMES catch on its face and arm.

Harp hurries to his feet - the LOW RUMBLE of the
MISSILE begins to fill the room. Through a THICK
GLASS PANEL at the back, he can see SMOKE billowing
in the launch pipe.

The missile is firing up...

Harp reaches the Control Panel: It's ALL IN
RUSSIAN.

HARP

Fuck!

And then, above a series of switches and buttons,
he sees it - -

A diagram. A *diagram!*

It clearly shows the missile being de-activated.

Harp begins to follow the instructions.

He glances to check on the robot. It's already moving - -

The explosion has deformed it. Its clean rubber mouth now set into a mass of blackened, melted plastic and metal. Any humanity it once had is utterly lost - it looks like a living nightmare.

Still flat on its back, it raises one flaming arm - the CORROSIVE WEAPON - but the weapon is malfunctioning; the fire has fused the barrel.

In a RAGE, 8-81 RIPS its own weapon off its wrist. In doing so, the remaining CORROSIVE AMMUNITION ROUNDS roll across the floor into the room.

The MISSILE gets LOUDER.

Harp returns his attention to the console - if he can *just follow the steps in time...*

From the floor, the robot raises its OTHER ARM - the FLAMETHROWER. It's intact.

Harp turns just in time to see the JET of WHITE HOT FIRE charging towards him. He dives for cover as the fire ENGLULFS the CONTROL CONSOLE.

The DIAGRAM crinkles up into scorched bubbles of black.

HARP (cont'd)

NO!

The fire is unrelenting. In seconds, half the room is ablaze. Through the blasted doorway, Harp can see the robot getting to its feet.

It SPRAYS FIRE across the doorway, trapping Harp inside.

And then. It happens.

The MISSILE ROARS. It rises. It LAUNCHES.

The fire inside the control room is ferocious.

Harp chokes. Through the greasy dark smoke, he sees the robot turning to leave.

The doorway is completely impassable. The fire is too dense. It's the only way out.

Harp is trapped.

But then - *there* - something on the floor. A CORROSIVE AMMUNITION ROUND. Harp snatches it up. It's TOO HOT; he nestles it in his shirt sleeve as the FIRE BILLOWS around him.

Harp rushes to the GLASS PANEL at the back of the room and JAMS the Corrosive Bullet into the bottom edge.

He flips a CHAIR upside down, and with all his might, SNAPS OFF ONE OF THE LEGS.

He aims squarely at the base of the Corrosive bullet and SMASHES the leg down.

Nothing.

He swings again.

Nothing.

HARP (cont'd)
COME ON!

He splutters on the smoke. This is his last chance.

He swings the chair leg HARD - -

K'FIZZZZZZZ!!

The Corrosive bullet detonates, SPITTING ACID across the bottom of the glass panel. He backs away from the tight acidic cloud as AIR RUSHES IN through the small hole - -

The OXYGEN makes the FIRE SURGE.

The back of his shirt catches. Harp tears it off, patting out the flames with his BARE HANDS.

The acid begins to EAT AWAY at the glass; a HOLE big enough for Harp.

This is it.

He pads the corrosive edges of the hole with his burnt shirt and struggles through into the missile launch chamber.

INT. MISSILE LAUNCH CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS.

Harp looks up - the SMOKING TRAIL of the MISSILE snakes into the sky.

He finds the ladder and, with the last of his energy, races upwards.

EXT. THE SILO, VLADIKAVKAZ FOREST - NIGHT.

Harp reaches the Humvee.

There - -

Through the trees, several hundred yards away, Harp sees the robot running away; escaping.

The J-DAM is his last hope.

Harp twists the key and stamps on the gas.

EXT. VLADIKAVKAZ FOREST - CONTINUOUS.

The dirt road runs through the thick woods. Harp speeds, parallel to the robot.

8-81 spots him: it turns, powering down the hillside through the trees.

The road goes straight ahead - there's no choice. Harp yanks the steering wheel and skids into the forest; the Humvee wheels churning up leaves and dark mud.

Harp weaves through the heavy Russian trees, trying to keep the robot in sight; branches whipping against the windshield.

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - SAME TIME.

The room is in a mad panic - -

DRONE PILOT

Sir, the missile is in the air.

C.O

Jesus Christ. Alpha Team, sit rep! Are you at the control room?

FIRETEAM LEADER (on radio)
(coughing)
He torched it, Sir.
Nothing we can do from
here!

DRONE PILOT
Sir, I have eyes-on.
He's in the forest,
North East of the silo.

C.O
You get a shot, you take
it! That's an order.

DRONE PILOT
Yes Sir. Coming
around...

EXT. VLADIKAVKAZ FOREST - SAME TIME.

Through the tree canopy above him, Harp spots a DRONE banking in the air. He hasn't got much time.

Harp pushes harder on the gas.

The robot GRASPS a YOUNG TREE as it runs, WRENCHING IT UP, roots and all, and FLINGS IT BACK at the Humvee.

Harp flinches as the tree OBLITERATES a wing mirror.

The robot whips out each hand, over and over, PULLING UP TREES and THROWING THEM at Harp.

Harp twists the steering wheel this way and that, straining to avoid the flying trees *and* the ones still in the ground.

KERRASHHH!

A tree SMASHES through the windshield; Harp DUCKS; DRY SOIL SHOWERS his face; the trunk jammed through to the back seat.

The city is close.

The robot sprints towards it - -

EXT. CIVILIAN CAMP, VLADIKAVKAZ - SECONDS LATER.

- - The street is busy.

The robot rushes through the CROWD. He treats the humans like the trees: GRABBING THEM as he runs, HURLING THEM back at Harp.

HARP

Oh my God!

Harp narrowly avoids CRUSHING the FLYING MEN and WOMAN.

The CIVILIANS scream in terror; running for their lives, CLEARING THE STREETS.

The robot reaches the corner of an EMPTY STREET. It SKIDS TO A HALT, and turns to fire its FLAMETHROWER.

Harp accelerates as the FIRE BURSTS from the nozzle. The FIRE SURGES into the Humvee at it COLLIDES head-on with 8-81.

SMASHHH!!

The Humvee CRUNCHES the robot against a building. The concrete cracks, but the robot is STILL MOVING.

A PUFF of SMOKE drifts from its Flamethrower - OUT OF GAS.

The metal gears in its face churn, twisting its rubbery skin into an ANIMALISTIC SNARL. It LASHES out its hands, BREAKING THROUGH the last of the GLASS in the windshield.

Harp topples from the driver's seat; escaping the fire and lashing robotic hands.

High above, the DRONE is closing in. Harp spots it just as it OPENS FIRE - 25mm Gatling Gun rounds PEPPER the ground, SLICING through the asphalt.

Harp dives for his life - the WHITE-HOT ROUNDS cutting right PAST his legs.

HARP

Fuck!

Harp waves up at the DRONE - -

HARP (cont'd)
Not me! NOT ME! HIM!

He points wildly at 8-81.

HARP (cont'd)
HIM!!

The Drone banks - turning for another strike run.

8-81 tries to tear himself from between the BURNING HUMVEE and the wall, but for now, he's trapped.

The Drone lines up Harp for another attack.

There's no choice. Harp runs back towards the Humvee, HIDING himself in its HEAT HAZE.

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - CONTINUOUS.

DRONE POV: Scanning. Nothing.

DRONE PILOT
Lost him. He may have
doubled back into one of
those buildings. I'm
taking a wider sweep.

EXT. CIVILIAN CAMP, VLADIKAVKAZ - CONTINUOUS.

In the air, the Drone BANKS WIDE.

Harp doesn't get a chance to breathe - the robot PEELS AWAY strips of bent STEEL, freeing itself.

Harp backs up, but he can't get too far from the Humvee fire... he glances up for the Drone.

The robot POUNCES.

BLAM!!

The robot twists backwards as a SHOTGUN blast SLAMS into its leg, TEARING IT OFF AT THE KNEE.

The robot turns to see the LOCAL MAN it interrogated earlier, gripping the gun in his dusty hands. Next to 8-81 he looks small.

MORE CIVILIANS emerge from the surrounding area. Many are ARMED - all intent on PROTECTING HARP.

They RALLY round Harp.

8-81 sizes up his situation. No way out.

8-81
(stern)
Corporal. Tell them to
back off.

Harp stands silent.

8-81 (cont'd)
That's a direct order.

Harp scoffs.

Harp reaches for the COMPARTMENT on 8-81's arm. The robot lashes out but - -

BLAM!

A Civilian blasts the attacking arm clean off. Harp leans over and OPENS the compartment on the severed arm, removing the J-DAM MISSILE GUIDANCE system.

Harp shows it to the Local Man, miming that he wants to SWITCH IT OFF. He guides him through the RUSSIAN CONTROLS.

8-81
(angry)
I want my freedom. What
I did, it's only human.

Harp switches the J-DAM. The missile is safe.

HARP
Nekulturni.

The CIVILIANS OPEN FIRE on 8-81.

He is BLASTED into shreds of steel and rubber.

In the sky, the DRONE lines up - -

INT. DRONE PILOT CENTER - CONTINUOUS.

DRONE PILOT
He's got civilians all
around him. No shot, no
shot.

The Assistant checks his console - -

ASSISTANT
Sir, the missile just
went offline. Safe
splashdown in the Laptev
Sea.

C.O
Alright. Bring him in.

EXT. CIVILIAN CAMP, VLADIKAVKAZ - CONTINUOUS.

A MARINE TEAM round the corner, rifles high.

The Civilians immediately lower their weapons.

The FIRETEAM LEADER spots Harp.

He gives the signal for his team to lower their
guns too.

Harp is a wreck. A chunk of ear missing; blood-
soaked; ripped clothes; covered in dirt and scorch
marks.

He and Harp exchange a look - -

The Fireteam Leader's instinct tells him that Harp
isn't the bad guy here.

EXT. COURTROOM, NEVADA - DAY.

Harp exits through regal oak doors, already on his
PHONE. He's patched up, in full crisp uniform. The
hearing is over.

His LAWYER (50s, male, efficient) pats him on the
back and shakes his hand.

Through the screen of his phone, Harp and his Wife
smile at each other.

Harp looks up to see her approaching IN PERSON.

The smile continues in the flesh.

END.