

OUTSIDE THE WIRE

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TITLES OVER:

VIDEO CHAT IMAGE of five-year-old ANTONIO "T" TORRES.

ANTONIO
I'm still coloring it in.

TORRES (O.S.)
Hold it up, let me see it. I can't
see what it is unless you hold it
up.

INT. INTERNET CAFE, CAMP VICTORY, IRAQ - CONTINUOUS

WE are with PRIVATE LAVENA TORRES, sitting alone in the dark. Her fresh, young face illuminated by the computer screen as she dips her spoon into a Ben and Gerry's mini-tub. Her son holds up the picture he's drawn: his HOME.

TORRES
That's great, Tee. Who's the purple
person, is that grandma?

ANTONIO
I put her in the kitchen.
(pointing at the
picture)
That's me in my room. I'm blue.

TORRES
Aw, Tee, that's cool, but where am
I, where's mami? You missed me out
of your picture?

He holds up another drawing, a BIG SMILEY FACE.

ANTONIO
This is you.

TORRES
But I'm just a big face. What about
the rest of me, my arms, my legs?

ANTONIO
I'll need another piece of paper for
that. What color do you want to be?

LaVena forgets herself, captivated by the image of her little boy. As he selects a colored pencil, she reaches out and touches the screen.

WE become aware of other SERVICEMEN relaxing in the Internet cafe, talking to family back home...the Stars and Stripes hanging in the corner.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
 Mom? What color?

MAMA TORRES, LaVena's mom, appears behind her grandson.

TORRES
 (in Spanish)
*Mami, he's got peanut butter all
 over the keys.*

MAMA TORRES
 (wiping his fingers)
 Ay...!

TORRES
 I love you.

MAMA TORRES
 (Spanish)
I love you, baby.

ANTONIO
 (Spanish)
 I love you, mami.

TORRES
 I'll see you on Saturday.

EXT. CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD - NIGHT

DISTANT GUNFIRE punctures the night as Torres makes her way through the maze of concrete blast walls and trailers. The M4 automatic assault rifle slung over shoulder seems impractically large against her petit frame.

She passes a fellow SOLDIER, high-fives.

SOLDIER
 I've still got your CD player.

TORRES
 You keep it.

Two PRIVATE SECURITY CONTRACTORS are smoking on the steps of her trailer; corporate clones of regular soldiers, cargo pants and branded polo shirts instead of combat fatigues.

CONTRACTOR#1
 Ten bucks and I'll let you suck my
 cock.

TORRES
(not missing a beat
or breaking her stride)
Not after it's been up his ass.

INT. TORRES'S SLEEPING QUARTERS, CAMP VICTORY - CONTINUOUS

Torres appears in the doorway. An MP (military policeman) is searching her cot. Another MP watches. Her ROOMMATE sits motionless on her cot next to a packed duffel bag.

MP#1
Torres?

TORRES
Sir?

MP#1
Hand over your weapon?

TORRES
(giving him the M4)
I don't understand.

As he disables her rifle.

MP#1
Turn and face the wall. Do you have
a cell phone?

TORRES
Why do--?

MP#1
Private Torres, do you have a cell
phone on your person?

TORRES
Yes.

MP#1
Give it to me.

She gives him her phone. He places it in a clear plastic sac that already contains some of her other personal effects.

MP#1 (CONT'D)
Hands on the wall.

The MP runs his hands around her thighs as she faces the wall.

TORRES
You find what you were looking for?

The other MP finds half a bottle of tequila in her cot.

TORRES (CONT'D)
You got to be kidding me.

MP#1
Let's go.

TORRES
I'm shipping out in the morning!

MP#1
And we've got orders.

EXT. CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD - NIGHT

The MP's hand her over to the two contractors.

TORRES
Wait. I need to speak with my CO.

MP#1
It's all taken care of.

TORRES
I'm not going anywhere until I talk to someone.

MP#1
Are you refusing an order?

She knows she's beat. The contractors leads her away.

CONTRACTOR
Everybody gets fucked by the big green dick. Guess it's just your lucky day.

They reach a black ARMORED CHEVI SUBURBAN.

CONTRACTOR (CONT'D)
Hands behind your back.

TORRES
You don't need to cuff me.

Both men pounce on her, take her to the ground.

TORRES (CONT'D)
'The fuck?!

CONTRACTOR
We got orders too.

CUT TO BLACK

A figure in the darkness, fumbling for the light switch.

Reveal...

INT. SCHMIDT'S HOUSE, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE - NIGHT

LARRY SCHMIDT perched on the edge of his bed, wincing as he kneads the back of his neck. The physic and demeanor of a long-retired boxer who kept on getting up when he should have stayed down.

He rubs his tired, life-less eyes and reaches for his glasses. The move pains him. Steels himself then gets to his feet, disappears into the bathroom, turns on the shower.

BEDSIDE TABLE

A leather bound New Testament, a bottle of prescription painkillers, and a PHOTOGRAPH: Larry as a much younger man in a Marine uniform with his WIFE and 4 year old DAUGHTER.

Nothing about Larry's home suggests their presence in his life now.

EXT. SCHMIDT'S HOUSE - DAWN

Schmidt locks the door and walks towards his pick-up truck in the driveway. He notices something sitting on the lawn: a child's FOOTBALL.

He approaches the ball, picks it up and looks over the fence.

A sharp contrast to his own orderly garden. A jungle-gym and kids toys litter the yard. He screws up his face and throws the ball over the fence.

INT. CHECK IN, AIRPORT - DAY

At a glance Schmidt fits right in. A middle-age guy visiting family or a weekend of golf with his buddies.

He misses nothing; a WOMAN furtively reaching into her handbag, a MIDDLE-EASTERN FAMILY standing in line with their suitcases, a BUSINESSMAN sending a text message on his blackberry. Innocent enough, but Schmidt is a man who takes nothing for granted. It's what sets him apart.

CHECK-IN AGENT
Traveling alone?

SCHMIDT

Yes.

The CHECK-IN AGENT hands him his boarding pass and passport.

CHECK-IN AGENT

Gate forty-three. Have a safe flight.

Schmidt walks off.

CHECK-IN AGENT (CONT'D)

(to herself)

...You're welcome.

INT. PASSENGER SECURITY SCREENING - DAY

An ALARM sounds as Schmidt steps through the METAL DETECTOR.

TSA AGENT

Remove your glasses.

He squints without them, appearing unduly mean.

INT. DEPARTURE GATE - DAY

As Schmidt disappears down the gangway.

EXT. IRAQ - DAY

Silence. Aerial shots. The horizon bisecting sky from desert. A mosaic of roads, farmland, desert and cities. A grandeur befitting the ancient title as 'The Cradle of Civilization'.

INT. AIRPLANE

A pasty-faced BUSINESSMAN mumbles a prayer as Royal Jordanian Fokker F28 makes a stomach churning spiral descent. Schmidt is fast asleep in the next seat, a wordy CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT open on his lap.

Schmidt wakes, calmly wipes the sleep from his eyes. He puts on his glasses, glances over the contract, then folds it and tucks it his jacket pocket.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)

Thank you for flying Royal Jordanian,
we hope...

EXT. BAGHDAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

As wheels kiss concrete.

EXT. TERMINAL BUILDING - DAY

Like any other except most everyone here is in uniform of one kind or another and invariably armed. Armor-plated Suburbans and Merc's, battle-ready Ford F350 pick-up trucks with 30mm rear-mounted machine guns line the curb.

A guy in a tan suit briefs a team of heavily armed 'no-shit' PRIVATE SECURITY CONTRACTORS sporting suntans and Oakleys. ERIC DUKE walks and talks like a football coach but his business isn't football, it's war.

Duke breaks away. A familiar face coming towards him--

DUKE

Larry Schmidt. 'The fuck!? Just can't keep away.

SCHMIDT

What can I say? I missed you.

DUKE

Fuck you. You look exactly the same, only older.

SCHMIDT

That suit come with a 401K?

DUKE

It's not like old times, that's for sure.

SCHMIDT

Nice of you to send the welcoming committee.

DUKE

Kieft. Get the old man up to speed.
(to Schmidt)
Don't be shy, introduce yourself, they're all good ol' boys.

Duke sets off towards the terminal building.

SCHMIDT

You'll make someone a lovely wife someday.

DUKE
Because I'm so pretty?

Like all the contractors, KIEFT, a cocky South African, could be half Schmidt's age. He leads Schmidt around to the tailgate of an F-350 pick-up.

KIEFT
'Schmidt'? What's that, German?

SCHMIDT
American.

KIEFT
You take a large?

Kieft hands Schmidt a polo shirt with a logo on the chest: FORTIS SECURITY. The same logo adorns on all the vehicles.

KIEFT (CONT'D)
S'matter, blue not your color?

Schmidt straps on a bullet-proof vest. Kieft hands him an assault rifle, an Indian made INSAS. Molded plastic, it looks and performs like a toy.

SCHMIDT
What am I supposed to do with this!?

ROLO
We don't want you to hurt yourself.

ROLO is an Australian Army reject who loves the sound of his own voice.

ROLO (CONT'D)
Don't worry, leave the heavy lifting to us.

Schmidt doesn't share their sense of humor but knows when it's polite to smile.

ROLO (CONT'D)
We'll take the scenic route, just for you. Whaddya think?

But Schmidt's attention is on Duke as he approaches the motorcade with JED CARSON, an evangelical businessman, close-cropped beard, briefcase and cowboy boots.

ROLO (CONT'D)
Alright, boys, I don't want to see any tears. No bloody whingers on my team.

Kieft lifts the tailgate revealing a sign on the rear of the truck in English and Arabic:

'KEEP BACK. LETHAL FORCE AUTHORIZED'

INT/EXT. F-350 PICK-UP, TRAVELING, ROUTE IRISH - DAY

Burnt out cars and trucks. The bland, monochrome, dusty terrain. Buildings as wretched as the poor folk who inhabit them. Whole families picking over mounds of rubbish. None of it moves Schmidt, he's seen it all before.

GRIZ is the Montana native behind the wheel. One hand on the wheel, the other pounding the HORN.

Despite the dangers, the highway is never empty. Drivers know to keep well clear but the first car that doesn't -- BAM! Griz shunts it out of the way. Hits another.

The two Suburbans travel in close formation behind.

ROLO
(into radio)
Stalled white van on the right.
Three Hadji's in dresses eye-balling
us.

CAR#2 DRIVER (O.S.)
(over radio)
Roger that.

ROLO
Fucking queers. Somebody please
shoot'em.

Griz jumps on the brakes as a beat-up old TOYOTA COROLLA foolishly cuts across in front of them.

GRIZ
Oh Lord, sweet Jesus!

ROLO
(to the Corolla driver)
MOVE IT! GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!
BLOODY PRICK!

As the COROLLA DRIVER desperately scrambles for a way out, Rolo pulls out a pistol, sticks it out of the window and puts two rounds into the Corolla.

ROLO (CONT'D)
Bury the fucker!

Griz bulldozes the Corolla off the road. Accelerates away.

ROLO (CONT'D)
 (into radio)
 Truck blocking the freeway, half a
 klick. Crossing the median now.

CAR#2 DRIVER (O.S.)
 (over radio)
 Roger that.

Griz pulls the wheel hard to the left, bouncing across the
 dirt median into the path of oncoming traffic.

GRIZ
 Jesus Christ, help us all Lord!

Ba! Ba! Ba! Ba! Ba! Ba! Ba! Ba!

KIEFT (O.S.)
 Woooo! Whoooo!

Schmidt glances over his shoulder, cursing under his breath
 as Kieft fires the 30mm rounds into the air.

GRIZ
 He gets kinda excited. Lets 'em
 know we mean business.

The convoy snakes left and right, narrowly avoiding on-coming
 vehicles. Clear of the obstruction, Griz hauls the truck
 back over the median.

ROLO
 (into radio)
 We're clear.
 (to Schmidt)
 So, what's your story cowboy? 'Way
 Duke talks, makes you sound like
 some kind of big deal.

UP AHEAD: a group of KIDS run to the edge of the freeway.
 As the convoy gets within range they hurl rocks.

ROLO (CONT'D)
 Little fuckers.

They scatter as Griz steers the truck towards them. Schmidt
 scopes the road ahead as Griz and Rolo fall about laughing.

Schmidt spots a piece of debris up ahead...

FURTHER AHEAD: a man peeking out from behind a wrecked car,
armed with an AK-47!

SCHMIDT
 I.E.D--!

BOOOOMMM! Flames and dirt blast the truck.

ROLO
(into radio)
Holy fuck! Fuck! We've been hit!

GRIZ
Jesus Christ!

CAR#2 DRIVER (O.S.)
(over radio)
GO! GO! GO!

Chaos. The Suburbans speed past unhindered. Automatic GUNFIRE everywhere as the truck slides to a stop.

Schmidt exits the vehicle, bullets PINGING all around. Takes up a defensive position, returns fire.

Kieft is out in the open, lying on the ground in a daze, having been thrown from the truck.

Schmidt - seemingly oblivious to the gunfire - calmly marches over and grabs Kieft by the collar and hauls him to shelter behind the truck.

Rolo appears at their side.

ROLO
(into radio)
BACK UP! WE NEED BACK UP! WE'RE
TAKING FIRE!

SCHMIDT
Hadji's'll be to the north, probably
two locations. Hold your position,
they won't stick around.

Schmidt snatches a smoke grenade from Rolo's webbing, pulls the pin, hurls it, then sprints laterally away from the truck.

Griz drops down next to Rolo, nursing an injured hand.

GRIZ
Where the fuck's he off to?!

SCHMIDT

shrouded by the smoke, circles the action.

ON ROLO AND GRIZ

Pinned down. Kieft fires as Rolo primes a GRENADE LAUNCHER.

SCHMIDT

gets a clear view: THREE GUNMEN crouched behind the wrecked car blasting away with AK's...

...Another behind a concrete barrier.

Schmidt brazenly strides through the smoke, carefully pinpointing his target with the INSAS.

ON THE GUNMEN

firing on Griz, Rolo and Kieft. Suddenly one gunman drops, surprising the second gunman. Schmidt advancing to his flank. Keeps coming.

The second gunman's bullets WHIZZ by, narrowly missing their target. Schmidt's don't.

The third gunman wheels around just as -- BBRRRP! -- Three rounds from the INSAS smack into his chest.

BOOOMMM!

The bodies of the dead gunmen disappear in a ball of flames.

Schmidt is knocked back on his ass.

The last gunman, the one cowering behind concrete barrier, drops his AK and runs.

Rolo emerges victorious waving the grenade launcher above his head, WHOOPING and HOLLERING like it was a rodeo show.

But Schmidt's not done. He raises his weapon, flicks a lever on the INSAS to single shot. Takes aim:

CLICK

as the weapon jams. Undeterred, he calmly releases the magazine, expels the dud bullet from the chamber. Reloads. Once again lines his target up in the cross-hairs...

CRACK!

The fleeing gunman drops like a bag of rags.

Laughter replaces the sound of gunfire.

OVERHEAD: two Fortis Security AH-6 LITTLE BIRD HELICOPTERS make an appearance.

Schmidt approaches Rolo, Griz and Keift who are howling with laughter.

ROLO
I love this guy! Got ourselves a
real Indian killer, right here!

Schmidt shoves the INSAS into Rolo's arms.

SCHMIDT
You keep it!

ROLO
Jeez, buzz-kill.

Schmidt locks Rolo with a look...then turns and walks off.

ROLO (CONT'D)
(to Kieft)
Must be on his period.

The Little Birds touch down. Heavily armed CONTRACTORS fan out and secure the area.

Schmidt squats on the ground griping the back of his neck, clearly in pain. He scans the area:

Through the smoldering remains, poor IRAQIS in traditional dress stare back at Schmidt. Defiant and proud, hate in their eyes. Definitely enemy territory.

MEDIC
You been hit?

Schmidt glances up at the young MEDIC. Shakes his head.

EXT. FORTIS VILLA, GREEN ZONE - EVENING

Meat sizzles on the grill next to a large swimming pool. Rolo, Kieft and Griz and CONTRACTORS pound beers. Duke chews on a cigar as Schmidt sits across the table with ice-pack pressed against his neck.

DUKE
That piece of lead still giving you
problems?

SCHMIDT
It's nothing.

DUKE
You ever think about retiring?
(off Schmidt's look)
I'm serious. How long you think you
can keep doing this?

(MORE)

DUKE (CONT'D)

Fuck, I find it hard to keep up with these guys and you've got a couple of years on me.

SCHMIDT

Retire?

DUKE

Shit. What we've done, they should've crowned us as kings.

SCHMIDT

You've done well enough.

DUKE

I've done better than that and so can you. Look around. I'm living in a fucking palace. You believe this shit?

SCHMIDT

Nope.

DUKE

Two flights a day, bring you anything you want. Money, not an issue. Abu Dhabi's an hour away. Russian girls, hot like you wouldn't believe. This one chick, suck a basketball through a hose-pipe! No joke!

(re-lights his cigar)

Like the wild, wild west. It's all up for grabs. May take five, ten years, but it'll happen. Long after I'm gone there'll be streets and schools here with my name on.

SCHMIDT

You've been drinking the local water for too long, my friend.

DUKE

Tastes like bourbon.

SCHMIDT

I was born on American soil, I'll be buried in American soil.

Duke sizes him up.

DUKE

Why the hell d'ya come back here, Larry?

Schmidt unfolds his employment contract, pushes it across the table.

SCHMIDT

So my kid can collect on my life insurance.

Is he joking?

DUKE

You're so full of shit, you know that?

(picks up the contract)

...Nope, ain't like it used to be. Now we gotta look after our 'employees'.

SCHMIDT

Bull shit.

DUKE

Yeah, you're right. It's bullshit. Legal made us do it after a bunch of lawsuits from families citing the 'hostile work environment'. No joke! Some MBA up the food chain with his head up his ass worked out that it was more cost effective to drop two-hundred and fifty G's every time we lost a man--sorry--'employee', than to pay a bunch of lawyer fees on top of a million dollar suit. They don't need the publicity. Besides, makes it look like we care.

(glances over the contract)

I can't accept this.

SCHMIDT

What?

DUKE

(hands back the contract)

You're not worth shit to anyone until you sign it!

Schmidt has to smile at that.

DUKE (CONT'D)

C'mon, meet me halfway will ya? I'm just trying to help out an old friend.

Schmidt looks for a pen but Duke is right their offering his. As Schmidt signs...

DUKE (CONT'D)

So how *is* that little girl of yours?

SCHMIDT

...Sure she ain't so little anymore.

Duke's knows not to push it. The silence is broken by the sound of a distance explosion. He glances at his watch.

DUKE

Starting early tonight.

(downs his whiskey)

Well, think about what I said. You need anything, anything at all...

SCHMIDT

I made a list...

Pushes a pocket notebook across the table. Duke glances at the list, smiles.

INT. ARMORY, FORTIS VILLA - NIGHT

ABU FARIS watches as Schmidt strips down a dusty old M4 ASSAULT RIFLE. Faris is only fifteen but thinks he knows his shit.

FARIS

After-market Troy TRX thirteen inch battlerail upper, Noveske lower--

As Schmidt's eyes run down the line of rifles. Stops.

SCHMIDT

That one.

Faris hands him a second M4. Schmidt disassembles it the same way he did the first.

FARIS

What'd you want with a M4? You want a sweet carbine? I got a nice four-sixteen. Nobody runs faster than mister Heckler and Koch.

Schmidt starts to assemble the weapon using only the best parts from the two rifles.

SCHMIDT

If I wanted a four-sixteen, I would have asked for a four-sixteen.

Schmidt beholds the assembled weapon. Finally, a smile.

EXT. FORTIS VILLA, GREEN ZONE - NIGHT

Schmidt steps out, battle-ready.

Rolo and Kieft are smoking next a bullet-proof BMW SEDAN. They're jumpy as hell and look like shit. Both have forgone body armor in favor of a Keffiyeh (traditional Arabic scarf) around their shoulders.

INT/EXT. BMW, TRAVELING, GREEN ZONE - NIGHT

A ghost town. Boulevards the width of football fields. Smashed monuments. Concrete blast walls decorated with scorch marks and bullet holes. In this protected section of the city it's almost relaxed.

KIEFT

Baas? I think I'm going to park a tiger on the backseat here.

ROLO

'Fuck you are. Out the window if you have to.

KIEFT

Think I have to, baas.

Vomits out the window.

ROLO

Aww! Christ, mate! If you got any of that on the car, you're washing it down and giving it a wax first thing tomorrow. Inside and out.

KIEFT

Awww, better. Just needed to get it out.

Rolo reclines his seat, places a boot on the dash.

ROLO

I fuckin' love these cars. Run like a dream. Those krauts know how to put it together. I've got an oh-nine seven series back home. What do you drive, Schmidt?

Schmidt curses to himself, way to old for this shit.

INT/EXT. BMW - NIGHT

They draw up to heavily guarded residence. An IRAQI GUARD stops them at the gate, his Australian is better than his English.

GUARD

Ga'day mate! Where Griz?

ROLO

(pointing to his head)

He's got a...? Headache.

The guard flashes them a clueless grin as he waves them through.

ROLO (CONT'D)

Fucking idiot. What's the Arabic for 'shit-faced'?

Schmidt parks. Rolo and Kieft get out.

SCHMIDT

Zakraan.

ROLO

What?

SCHMIDT

Zakraan. Arabic for shit-faced.

ROLO

You a fucking sand-nigger now? Fuck me, Kieft, I think Schmidt's gone native!

Rolo and Kieft disappear inside the building.

Schmidt eases back in his seat. A wave of fatigue suddenly hits him. The second he closes his eyes, he's asleep.

MOMENTS LATER

He wakes with a jolt, springs for his weapon. In the mirror he sees Rolo and Kieft dump a heavy package in the trunk.

Rolo jumps in the front passenger seat and shoves a short-nose AK-47 in the footwell. Kieft gets in the back.

ROLO (CONT'D)

Chop-chop, my good man.

Schmidt starts the car.

EXT. CHECK POINT, GREEN ZONE BORDERLINE - NIGHT

Watch towers and floodlights. A series of narrow concrete chicanes, sandbags and razor wire leading to a heavily insulated gate-house. Serious shit.

Schmidt slows to a walking pace.

INT/EXT. BMW, CHECK POINT

Rolo shuffles through a handful of SECURITY PASSES as Schmidt pulls up to the barrier.

A walkie-talkie crackles with BURSTS OF CHATTER IN ARABIC.

A GUARD steps out of the shadows, surveys the vehicle, then steps back into the gate-house.

The barrier rises.

As they move off, Rolo and Kieft don their Keffiyeh's, wrapping them around their heads like bandits.

INT/EXT. BMW, TRAVELING - NIGHT

Like the baddest of bad-ass Hadji's.

INT/EXT. BMW, TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Deadly quiet. A poor neighborhood to begin with, this place has seen some heavy street fighting.

ROLO
Kill the lights.

The BMW rolls to the middle of the square. Stops. Kieft scouts the area with a night-sight: not a soul.

KIEFT
They're all indoors jerking off over
seventy-two virgins.

ROLO
Keep the engine running.

Rolo gets out with the AK. Schmidt gets out and crouches down, sweeping the vicinity with this M4.

Rolo opens the trunk, hauls out 'the package'.

'The package' has human form. A prisoner? Cuffed and gagged in tan combat fatigues? Schmidt is increasingly uncomfortable with the picture.

The trickle of water...Kieft, urinating on the other side of the car.

SCHMIDT

Hey?!

KIEFT

I couldn't hold it any longer.

Schmidt breaks with procedure and sets off after Rolo and the prisoner.

EXT. STREET

As Schmidt rounds a corner...sees Rolo as he cuts the plasticuffs and rips off the gag. The prisoner drops to his knees.

PRISONER

(almost a whisper)

Please...!

SCHMIDT

Psst!

Rolo's having trouble with the AK, it's jammed.

ROLO

Fuck!

SCHMIDT

We're sitting ducks out here.

PRISONER

....Please..?!

Schmidt moves in closer. Flicks on the LED mounted on his M4. The beam lands on...

LAVENA TORRES. Barely conscious, battered and dazed.

ROLO

Kill that fucking light! Fuck you doing?!

SCHMIDT

(flicks off the light)

'Hell's going on?!

ROLO
 Piece a shit..!
 (finally cocks the AK)
 Christ!

SCHMIDT
 That's a United States Army uniform!

ROLO
 (pointing the AK at
 Torres)
 You're a regular fucking genius!

TORRES
 No... Please...

SCHMIDT
 Whoa! Just hang on!

ROLO
 Jesus fucking Christ, Schmidt! You're
 like a whinny little girl!

Torres bolts.

ROLO (CONT'D)
 Lil' bitch!

She falls, disoriented. Picks herself up. Runs.

Rolo levels the AK at Torres.

ROLO (CONT'D)
 Fucking prick--!

--BBRRRPP!

Rolo drops like a rock as Schmidt put three rounds in him.

Kieft rounds the corner. Stops in his tracks.

KIEFT
 Fuuuuckk!

Kieft goes for his gun. Schmidt blasts the ground around
 Kieft's feet. Kieft retreats, spraying automatic gunfire in
 Schmidt's direction, then:

SILENCE...

A dog starts BARKING. First light over the city.

All around Schmidt, creeping signs of life behind the bordered-
 up windows.

Schmidt goes after Torres...

HEAD LIGHTS fall upon them as Kieft charges in the BMW.

Schmidt releases a salvo, spider-cracking the BMW's bullet-proof windshield as the car narrowly avoids them.

He grabs Torres by the collar. She swings around --BAMM!!!-- whacks him in the face with brick!

Schmidt reels back clutching his face as Torres staggers away down an

ALLEY

Schmidt pursues her...knocks her to the ground.

TORRES

Nooo! Don't--!

SCHMIDT

I'm not going to kill you!

TORRES

Don't kill me!

SCHMIDT

I need you to--

TORRES

--Please don't kill me! Please don't kill--!

He shakes her violently. Grabs her face.

SCHMIDT

LISTEN TO ME! I'm not going to kill you!

She freezes.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

But I need you to stand up. We have to get out of this area immediately. Can you do that?

Terrified, she nods her head.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Whatever happens, you stick to me.

Nods again. Schmidt squints through his glasses, trying to make out his surroundings. One lens is missing, the other is cracked.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Lets go.

As he drags her off, stepping out of the alley into...

EXT. MAIN STREET

FIGURES on the street: those bold or curious enough to see who's been shot and a couple of MILITIA MEN, one with an old Enfield rifle slung over his shoulder.

Schmidt and Torres draw attention the moment they emerge from the alley. Schmidt opens up with some automatic gunfire. Wheels around, sees...

A battered old orange TAXI unwittingly driving towards them. The DRIVER slams on the brakes.

Schmidt shoves Torres into the vehicle and yanks out the DRIVER, gets in, stomps on the gas.

Single shots from the Enfield smash into the back of the car.

They hit a junction, turn and they're clean away...

EXT. TAXI, DRIVING - DAWN

Barreling through the early morning traffic.

SCHMIDT

Get down.

Torres does so without question, burying herself in the footwell.

INT. TAXI, RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAWN

Eerily deserted. The taxi prowls a narrow back street that services this once affluent middle-class neighborhood. Now it's an open sewer.

Schmidt gazes up at the houses. Stops the car. Gets out.

RED GRAFFITI on the back gate: a message in Arabic. A warning? Schmidt curses. He scans the area through his one remaining lens, then returns to the car.

SCHMIDT

Don't move.

Schmidt disappears through the gate into the house. Torres cowers in the footwell as flies dance around her face; a mess of dirt, blood and tears.

Schmidt reappears.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Move.

Forcing her out of the car, she cries out.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Shut up!

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Surprisingly intact. The owners have left recently and in haste.

Schmidt tears off one of the boards covering the windows and scans the street through his gun sight, turning the eye-piece so he can see through it without his glasses.

Highly agitated, he wheels around, jabs the gun barrel in her face.

SCHMIDT

Who are you? Don't mess around!
Who are you?

Torres is speechless, paralyzed with fear.

A PHONE RINGS... Schmidt's.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

On the floor. Face down. Hands on
your head. Do it!

Schmidt digs around in a pocket. Answers.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM, FORTIS VILLA - DAY

Charts, maps, INTEL types on laptops. Duke is pacing the room.

DUKE

(into phone)
What the fuck happened?!

Schmidt has no answer.

DUKE (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing, Schmidt?!

SCHMIDT

You tell me.

Duke switches hands as an ASSISTANT helps him into a BULLET-PROOF VEST.

DUKE

He was supposed to transport the girl back to base. You weren't even supposed to be there. Where's the girl? Do you have the girl?

Duke sets off out of the operations room. TRAVIS WALDMAN, Fortis's resident tech-head, trails Duke with his MILITARY-GRADE IPAD.

SCHMIDT

Rolo's dead.

DUKE

I know. He fucked up. Kieft says the girl grabbed his gun, went totally fucking crazy.

SCHMIDT

I killed him.

DUKE

Well, I've got Kieft here telling me that the girl shot him. Now, who am I supposed to believe?

SCHMIDT

Who is she?

DUKE

That's not our job. Our job was to deliver--.

SCHMIDT

--When did we start killing our own? She's in an army uniform!

DUKE

Larry. Larry, this is crazy. I think there's been some kind of misunderstanding here.

SCHMIDT

It was an execution.

DUKE

Whoa! Schmidt, you're way off the mark. Look, just bring her in and we can sort this whole thing out. You're off the hook but...we need the girl.

Schmidt hangs up.

DUKE (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Duke looks to Waldman flanking him, monitoring his iPad.

WALDMAN

Got him.

EXT. FORTIS COMPOUND - DAY

Duke marches straight towards the two Little Bird helo's poised to take off from the heli-pad, fully loaded with HEAVILY ARMED CONTRACTORS.

He jumps into the nearest. Straps in. Gives the signal. The engines SCREAM...

Both Little Birds shoot vertically up into the sky, bank sharply over the compound and out over the Green Zone.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Torres is on her knees, hands behind her head. Schmidt has his weapon trained on her.

SCHMIDT

Why does someone want you dead?

Her lips move but nothing comes out.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

What's your name?

TORRES

Torres.

SCHMIDT

Torres? Torres what?

TORRES

Private LaVena Torres, E-four.

SCHMIDT

Where are you based, Private Torres?

TORRES

Camp Victory. ...Please, don't point that. My unit left today, I should have been with them. I need to use that phone, my family is going to--. I need to call--.

SCHMIDT

I need to know why someone wants you dead!

TORRES

I don't know, I don't... They came, they took me--

SCHMIDT

They? Who took you?

TORRES

You.

SCHMIDT

I took you? No! Who took you--?

TORRES

No. Contractors. Two contractors came.

SCHMIDT

'Say what it was about?

TORRES

No. Please--?

SCHMIDT

You went with them, no questions?

TORRES

I'm a private in the United States Army. I do what I'm told.

SCHMIDT

They're not army.

TORRES

They had authority.

SCHMIDT

Who's authority? Your CO?

TORRES

'Fuck do I know! You spend any time in the army? Nobody tells you shit!

SCHMIDT
You have anything to do with those
contractors before?

TORRES
Yes. No. Not those guys.

SCHMIDT
But you--?

TORRES
Two of them took me to see this guy.

SCHMIDT
A guy?

TORRES
About the circuit board architecture
for the G-1511R.

SCHMIDT
In English.

TORRES
It's a...computers thing. I'm a
Special Electronic Device Repairer.
Weapon's guidance systems.

SCHMIDT
And contractors took you there and
brought you back.

TORRES
Yes.

SCHMIDT
Like me?

TORRES
No, not as old. Same company.

She points to the Fortis Security logo on his shirt.

TORRES (CONT'D)
'Fortis'. I'm good on details.

Schmidt hands her his Thuraya satellite phone: a test.

SCHMIDT
Make your call.

TORRES
I can't with that in my face.

Schmidt keeps the M4 pointed at her head. She takes the phone, dials a number.

He snatches it back, puts it on speaker-phone, watches her like a hawk as the phone starts to ring at the other end.

SCHMIDT

Anything happen, you open your mouth,
you're dead.

She returns his stare; betrayed, defiant...

...But who is she kidding? She's not that tough. With every ring, the expectation of someone answering increases. Her eyes well up...tears trickle down her cheeks... Someone picks up, her face crumples.

ANTONIO (O.S.)

Hola. ...Hello?

For that moment she is lost in the sound of her sons voice. Schmidt is stunned.

MAMA TORRES (O.S.)

(Spanish: in background)
Who is it?

ANTONIO (O.S.)

Hello? Hello?
(Spanish: to Mama)
I don't know. They're not speaking.

She gazes up at Schmidt, pleading. Utterly shamed, he softens his stance. Hangs his head.

TORRES

...It's mommy.

ANTONIO (O.S.)

Mami! I did another drawing--.

Schmidt turns off the speaker and gives her the phone. Turned inside out she just listens, composing herself, giving no hint to her son that anything is wrong.

TORRES

Tee? I have to say something and I don't want you to be upset. You have to listen, I'm not going to be home tomorrow, I...I have to go on a...mission, a secret mission...

She doesn't notice when Schmidt flicks on the safety catch, or lowers his rifle, or even when he gets up and goes to the

WINDOW

and surveys the area through his one good lens:

A couple of TEENAGE BOYS are picking through the rubble of a house that's taken a direct hit.

THROUGH HIS RIFLE SIGHT: One boys finds a soccer ball. He holds it up above his head, showing it to the other boy.

INT. FLYING, LITTLE BIRD HELO - DAY

Like a roller-coaster. Waldman's eyes are locked onto his computer screen: LIVE SATELLITE MAP of the area. MARKERS pin-point the helo's closing on Schmidt's position.

INT. HOUSE

Schmidt scans the roof line. Sees something...

THROUGH HIS RIFLE SIGHT: a Little Bird helo hanging low over the roofs.

He sweeps across the roof line, spots a figure with a rifle.

TORRES ON THE PHONE

TORRES

--I don't know, soon. Be brave.

SCHMIDT

Hang up.

TORRES

I have to go now.

Schmidt grabs the phone. Rips out the battery. Un-holsters his pistol.

SCHMIDT

Did the army teach you how to use one of these?

She takes the gun.

EXT. RECREATIONAL PARK - DAY

The first of the Little Bird helo's kiss the ground. Armed and armored contractors hit the floor running...

...Fan out.

...Take up positions.

A SLIDE and JUNGLE-GYM is the only evidence that this was once a kids playground.

The first Little bird shoots back up into the air... to be replaced by the second, the one carrying Duke.

Duke jumps off, directing his men. Someone hands him a Heckler and Koch MP5 SUB MACHINE GUN. Gone is 'everyone's best friend' in a suit. Duke is a man who leads from the front and, like Schmidt, knows how to get the job done.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM, HOUSE

Schmidt peeps through a crack in the boards, sees...

EXT. RECREATIONAL PARK

Duke and his men closing the net. Waldman points to the house where Schmidt and Torres are holed up.

EXT. HOUSE, FRONT SIDE

Duke marches straight towards the house, signaling to his men that he'll handle this alone.

DUKE
Schmidt?! I'm coming in!

Bold as brass, up to the front door --BAM!-- Kicks it in.

INT. HOUSE

Duke stands in the middle of the living room. Contractors filter into the house. Schmidt and Torres nowhere in sight.

DUKE
...Mutha fuckers!

A CAR STARTS. Duke moves to the window, catches:

Two silhouettes speeding off in the orange taxi.

DUKE (CONT'D)
GET THE CAR!

EXT. HOUSE

The CONTRACTOR on the roof opens up on the orange taxi.

ON DUKE

Running around the side of the house...

EXT. BACK STREET

Duke rounds a corner, sees the taxi barrel-assing down the street away from him, kicking up trash and dirt in its wake.

Duke stops. Opens up with the MP5...a blistering attack!

The taxi keeps going...

The MP5 keeps spitting out lead until the magazine is spent.

The taxi keeps rolling...rolling...to a stop.

Duke discards the MP5, un-holsters a GLOCK, set-off...

EXT. CAR, BACK STREET

Crazed with bullets.

Duke approaches with caution, Glock firmly pointed at the TWO BODIES slumped in the front seats.

His team approaches, weapons at the ready.

Duke crabs around to the front of the car. His expression and demeanor shift. Lowers the Glock.

THE FRONTS SEATS: a tapestry of blood and body parts belonging to the two teenage boys, the black and white patchwork pattern on the soccer ball the most recognizable element in this tableau.

DUKE

Let's get the fuck out of here.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Seemingly empty. A NOISE.

UPSTAIRS

The barrel of the M4 pokes out from the ATTIC HATCH...

Schmidt follows his weapon. Lands hard on the floor.

KITCHEN

Schmidt enters.

SCHMIDT

It's safe.

Torres crawls out from under the kitchen sink holding Schmidt's 9mm pistol. He helps her to her feet.

LIVING ROOM

Schmidt wraps the strap of his M4 around his wrist. Lies down on the sofa.

TORRES

Now what?

SCHMIDT

Sleep.

TORRES

Sleep?!

SCHMIDT

I need to think. Don't do anything stupid.

Torres slides her back down the wall until she's crouching on the floor, clasping the 9mm, utterly exhausted.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Anyone comes through the door, shoot 'em.

INT. SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING, WASHINGTON DC - NIGHT

WE move down the line of COMMITTEE MEMBERS, senators from both sides of the house...

SENATOR (O.S.)

In light of recent scandals involving the business practices of Titan Global Holdings--

...to the SENATOR heading the proceedings, a silver-haired career politician well-versed in the theater of power...

SENATOR (CONT'D)

--I would like to reiterate the Department's commitment to a strong and vigorous enforcement of the War Profiteering Act--

...WE take in the row of EXECUTES and LEGAL TEAM from Titan Holding Group sitting opposite, feeling the heat...

SENATOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 --And has made the investigation and
 prosecution of procurement fraud in
 Iraq a priority--

...WE move through the public gallery, past JOURNALISTS and
 AIDES bored by out of their minds, to an ambitious young man
 in a suit, avidly following every word:

TOM PALMISIANO

SENATOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 --To ensure the protection of our
 troops abroad and the tax-payers at
 home.

Palmisiano checks his phone.

INT. CORRIDOR, SENATE BUILDING - NIGHT

A lone figure: Palmisiano on his phone.

PALMISIANO
 You've got to be shitting me! I've
 got the Honorable Clifton Shawver,
 United States Senator from Ohio, up
 our butts, doing his damndest to
bar TGH from bidding for a defense
contract EVER AGAIN--!!!

INT. JED CARSON'S OFFICE, TGH VILLA, GREEN ZONE - DAY

Palmisiano continues on the speaker:

PALMISIANO (O.S.)
 --'The fuck you doing? Sitting on
 your asses eating olives!? TGH flew
 you halfway around the world to bury
 the problem not have it blow up in
 our faces!

Jed Carson, the businessman we first saw at the airport,
 sits behind his desk. Duke is on his feet opposite.

CARSON
 This is a war zone. Nothing ever--

PALMISIANO (O.S.)
 Er, hello! The war is over! This
 is the fucking reconstruction! This
 stays in the sandbox or we're--

CARSON

Tom? ...Tom? Having a hard time hearing...the satellite must be...

(hangs up)

...Circling Ur-anus.

(to Duke)

Fucking lobbyists. It's just an abstraction to them.

The problem weighs heavy on his mind as he glances over a Torres's report.

CARSON (CONT'D)

Who the hell is this guy Schmidt?

DUKE

He's a good worker. Set in his ways. Nothing remarkable about his career until he stepped in front of a bullet meant for someone else back in ninety-four. Nearly killed him. Should've gotten out then, but guys like Schmidt don't make for good husbands and fathers. They keep coming back and eventually go home in a body bag. Marine. He does what a good Marine does. He does what he's told.

CARSON

Until this morning.

DUKE

Twenty-four hours they'll be floating face-down in the Tigris or turn up in a video on the Internet.

CARSON

A man doesn't step in front of a bullet because he's been ordered to. He does it because he thinks it's the right thing to do.

DUKE

This is the most dangerous city on the planet. Ain't nowhere to run, except straight into a thousand miles of desert. They're already dead.

CARSON

You don't want to underestimate a situation until you've got it beat.

EXT. TGH VILLA - DAY

Duke exits the building -- the same heavily guarded residence where Schmidt, Rolo and Kieft collected Torres the night before. He and Waldman walk to their Suburban.

WALDMAN

It's a private residence registered under the targets name. Boyle Heights, east Los Angeles. Place is nearly as fucked-up as this hole. Beaner gang-bangers instead of Hadji's. Call ended ninety seconds before we crashed into the house.

DUKE

Wily old bastard. Must have still been in there.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

SCHMIDT'S POV: SHADOWS, light dancing on a wall....Coheres into the form of a

WOMAN

Head to toe in black. A hajib. Is he dreaming?

He fumbles for his glasses, alerting the woman. Grabs his weapon, blindly points it her.

TORRES

No! It's me!

Schmidt squints, barely able to see two feet in front of his nose without his glasses.

Torres comes closer, coming into focus. Dressed in the hajib, with her caramel skin and dark eyes she can pass as a local woman.

TORRES (CONT'D)

...It's me.

SCHMIDT

How long was I out?

TORRES

Thirty minutes.

SCHMIDT

We have to leave.

Gropes around for his glasses. They fall apart in his hands.

TORRES

Try these.

She gives him a pair of women's bright red plastic glasses. He puts them on.

TORRES (CONT'D)

I found them upstairs.

Schmidt gazes around the room, testing the glasses. He looks ridiculous but they solve the problem.

TORRES (CONT'D)

Who lived here?

SCHMIDT

A friend.

TORRES

(holds out a photo)

This them?

A PHOTO of an Iraqi man, his wife and three children in happier times. Schmidt nods. Torres stares at the picture, contemplating their fate.

SCHMIDT

Probably rival militia moving in.
All these houses have been tagged.
We need to go.

TORRES

Found you some clothes too.

Schmidt strips-off his bullet-proof vest.

SCHMIDT

Put this on.

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

Schmidt marches along with his M4 concealed in a roll of carpet wearing dirty-white track pants tied with his leather belt, a hoody and plastic flip-flops. Torres walks next to him wrapped in the black hajib.

SCHMIDT

Walk behind me.

Torres falls in behind.

TORRES
Where are we going?

SCHMIDT
Don't speak unless I ask you a question. Keep your voice down and your answers short.

TORRES
Where are we going?

SCHMIDT
I ask the questions.

Torres stops.

TORRES
Fuck this! I'm not--!

SCHMIDT
--You wanna see your little boy again?! Until I know exactly what color of shit you got yourself into, we trust no one and you do exactly as I say. You speak English, look at someone the wrong, we're dead! Got it?!

(she's still got some fight in her)

You got it?! Because I can put a bullet in your head right here and just walk away.

She gets its. They move off.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
...The guy that you met? The meeting?

TORRES
It was in this big mansion in the Green Zone. Like Beverly Hills. Never gave me his name.

SCHMIDT
What'd he look like?

TORRES
Five-ten, one-seventy in good shape, early-fifties, small beard, green eyes. Cowboy boots.

SCHMIDT
Name of the company?

TORRES
TGH. Can't miss it. All over
everything, even the circuit boards.

SCHMIDT
Sssh!

The path intersects with a...

EXT. STREET

Schmidt scans the area, orientating himself. Cars, buses,
trucks on the street. People trudging along on foot.

Schmidt sets off, head bowed.

SCHMIDT
(soto voce)
Stay close. Eyes down.

Torres looks out from behind the veil:

ORDINARY PEOPLE, wary, fearful faces going about their
everyday business. Children begging alongside old men with
missing limbs. It's hard not to stare. Under the hajib
she's invisible to them.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
Talk.

TORRES
He wanted to know about the G-1511R.

SCHMIDT
What about it?

TORRES
It's fucked. There's an inherent
problem with the fault tolerant
architecture. Under certain
circumstances the G-1511R will replace
the target location for the current
location. I've had guidance systems
in my hand that were involved with
blue-on-blue incidents--

SCHMIDT
Again, like I'm five years old.

TORRES
American soldiers killed because of
faulty equipment.

(MORE)

TORRES (CONT'D)

If your weapons targeting software swaps the firing coordinates for the target coordinates, you press that button --BOOM!-- You're gone. You name any helicopter, ground attack vehicle, all fitted with the G-1511R.

SCHMIDT

And you figured it was the G-...?

TORRES

G-1511R, yes sir. Twenty-four seven, it's all I do. I don't know much, but I know that mutha inside and out, upside-down and back-to-front. And I told 'em, I kept telling 'em, but they kept coming back with 'human error'.

SCHMIDT

Someone didn't like what you were saying?

TORRES

Guess not. I thought they just didn't believe someone like me could work it out.

SCHMIDT

But not the TGH guy?

Schmidt notices an improvised ROADBLOCK up ahead. POLICEMEN stopping and aggressively searching cars. A shakedown.

TORRES

No, he was all over it. Thought he was gonna give me a medal. You know the rest. ...Where we going?

SCHMIDT

To see a friend.

Schmidt crosses the road.

ROADBLOCK

A BEARDED POLICEMAN notices Schmidt and Torres.

BEARDED POLICEMAN

(in Arabic)

Hey! You there! Where are you going?
Hey you!

Schmidt raises his arm, placating the policeman as they keep walking.

SCHMIDT
(in Arabic)
God be praised!

BEARDED POLICEMAN
(in Arabic)
Hey! Don't walk away, we want to talk to you!

SCHMIDT
(in Arabic)
God is great!

The policeman takes his AK-47 off his shoulder.

BEARDED POLICEMAN
(in Arabic)
In the name of God, stop and talk to your brothers!

Schmidt pulls his M4 out of the carpet roll...

RELEASES A SALVO.

Policemen dive for cover as panicked cars CRASH into each other.

TORRES
They were police?

SCHMIDT
Doesn't mean anything.

EXT. SERIES OF SIDE STREETS

KIDS dancing around pools of sewage as Schmidt and Torres run past. PEOPLE sheepishly avoiding eye contact but are otherwise unfazed by the gunman running through their neighborhood.

Every street looks pretty much like the one before. Schmidt scans the area for something familiar. Doesn't find it.

They push on, rounding a corner they run into...

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET

A GANG OF MILITIA MEN, armed to the teeth!

Everyone starts SHOUTING at once. The militia men swarm around.

Schmidt carefully surrenders his weapon as the men prod and poke with their rifle barrels.

SCHMIDT
(aside: to Torres)
Don't say a word, keep your eyes on
the ground.

Schmidt notices more MILITIA MEN posted on the roofs of adjacent houses. An urban stronghold?

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
(shouting)
HAKIM AL-ASAADI!? HAKIM AL-ASAADI!?
(rips off his hoody)
AMERICAN! AMERICAN! HAKIM AL-
ASAADI!?

Has he lost his mind? His words seem to confuse and enrage in equal measure.

One of the GUNMEN suddenly grabs Torres. Schmidt shoves the man back. The guy goes ape-shit, SCREAMING EXPLETIVES in his native tongue. Forces Schmidt to his knees at gun point.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
HAKIM AL-ASAADI! SADEEQY! SADEEQY!

VOICE (O.S.)
(in Arabic)
STOP!

The men part.

MIDO, their young leader, steps forward with his arm raised, the fate of his captives in his hands. When he opens his mouth, the Queens English comes out.

MIDO
Who are you? Why have you come here?

SCHMIDT
I've come to see Hakim al-Asaadi.

MIDO
Then I'm afraid your journey has
been a waste. Hakim al-Asaadi is
dead.

SCHMIDT
I think you're full of shit.

MIDO

I killed him myself. Hakim al-Asaadi was a traitor to his country and his creator.

SCHMIDT

Then you can rot in hell! Fuck you!
FUCK ALL OF YOU!

A rifle butt slams into his head.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Hakim al-Asaadi could have deserted his country but he chose to stay! If he died, he died with honor and with the blessings of his creator!

Mido's men may not understand English but they get the gist loud and clear. Nervous looks. Tense moments...

MIDO

Crikey! You sound just like him. You must be either crazy or indeed a friend of my fathers!

Suddenly Mido finds it all very funny. Schmidt glances at Torres. They are safe...for now.

INT. AL-ASAADI'S HOUSE - DAY

An oasis of calm in this once opulent home now in need of basic repairs. Chinks of sunlight penetrate into the dark and gloomy interior.

HAKIM AL-ASAADI cuts a majestic, patriarchal figure as his HOUSE BOY pours tea for Schmidt and himself.

Schmidt respectfully observes this ritual as well as the ARMED GUARDS strapped with bandoleers in the shadows. Torres sits off to the side as is expected of a woman in a hajib.

AL-ASAADI

One of the few indulgences I have left, Mr. Schmidt. A simple pleasure made all the greater from being shared. Visits from friends are rare these days and very welcome.

Al-Asaadi passes Schmidt a cup of tea.

SCHMIDT

Much appreciated. Please forgive my appearance.

AL-ASAADI

Please...I do not need to know the reason why or how you come to me. All I need know is that you come as a friend in need and, as a good Arab should, I am obliged to assist you in anyway I can.

ON TORRES

Adjusts her gaze...down a corridor to the KITCHEN, glimpses:

Al-Asaadi's WIFE and two DAUGHTERS unveiled and carefree preparing food.

ON SCHMIDT AND AL-ASAADI

SCHMIDT

Thank you.

AL-ASAADI

That you turn to *me* for help means that you have turned against your masters, am I correct?

SCHMIDT

Something like that.

AL-ASAADI

In which case my assistance, by necessity, can at best only be ...deficient. My influence is limited to these three city blocks. My position is weak and reliant on the very people that you now seek sanctuary from. If I help you, I create enemies I cannot afford. My people think of me as a father. They are loyal. They would, everyone of them, sacrifice their own lives to spare mine. They look to me for protection...a way out of this madness. You have to understand, I am hostage to my responsibilities.

SCHMIDT

We need to get out of the country.

AL-ASAADI

Jordan is your only hope but, alas, I doubt it is even that. The road to Amman is passable at his time but you would need protection.

(MORE)

AL-ASAADI (CONT'D)

That kind of fire-power is only effective if it is visible, and visibility is perhaps not an asset here. Going unnoticed would be best but road blocks are everywhere. One street is at war with the next. Every thug with a grudge and an AK-47 is out to get whatever they can. And you, an American... At best you'd be shot on the spot, at worst traded-up, end up in the hands of Al Qaeda, and...

Al-Asaadi makes a vague throat-cutting gesture. Takes a sip of tea.

AL-ASAADI (CONT'D)

Hopeless.

Al-Asaadi's girls make themselves heard in the kitchen.

AL-ASAADI (CONT'D)

Do you have daughters, Mr. Schmidt?
I worry about them.

SCHMIDT

I have a daughter.

TORRES (O.S.)

JESUS H. CHRIST!

All eyes turn to Torres, now on her feet. Panicked guards cock their weapons.

TORRES (CONT'D)

This is getting us nowhere!

AL-ASAADI

ENOUGH!

More GUNMEN rush in.

AL-ASAADI (CONT'D)

(in Arabic: to the
guards)

It's okay! It's okay!

(to Schmidt)

Who is this woman?

SCHMIDT

(to Torres)

I told you to--!

TORRES

--I'm not going to sit here and take this shit! Drinking tea! This is getting us nowhere.

SCHMIDT

Zip it!

AL-ASAADI

An American also?!

TORRES

You're like a couple of old women!
Please, someone just shoot me now!

Stunned silence. Torres just pissed all over everyone's cultural sensitivities. Al-Asaadi turns to Schmidt. Surprises him with a broad grin:

AL-ASAADI

She has spirit! Like my second wife.

TORRES

My five year old boy has more balls than any man here.

GUARD

(in Arabic)

Shall I waste these idiots, boss?

AL-ASAADI

(in Arabic)

No. It's okay.

He reconsiders the problem. Torres looks to him, nothing but hope. Her eyes fall on Schmidt, he's mightily pissed.

AL-ASAADI (CONT'D)

...I have a nephew. He's young, stupid, but knows his way around. He can get you across the city and maybe he knows a way to get you out to Jordan. But he'll want money. He only ever does anything for money.

SCHMIDT

I've got money.

AL-ASAADI

Maybe two thousand dollars? A twenty minute car ride can now take half a day.

SCHMIDT

If that's what it takes.

Al-Asaadi takes out his cell phone, puts in a call.
 ...Negotiates in Arabic, becoming exasperated.

AL-ASAADI
 (to Schmidt,
 embarrassed)
 He won't do it for less than three.

Schmidt nods. Schmidt and Torres barely able to look at each other. Al-Asaadi returns.

AL-ASAADI (CONT'D)
 It is done. I think it is suicide
 but...it is in the hands of God.
 (frowns at Schmidt's
 clothes)
 If you are going to meet your maker,
 I think maybe you should not be
 looking like a clown, yes?

EXT. ROOFTOP, AL-ASAADI'S COMPOUND - DAY

A ROOFTOP GUARD signals to someone below as a car, a tired old RED OPAL, approaches.

INT. ENTRANCE, AL-ASAADI'S HOUSE - DAY

Al-Asaadi's daughters make last minute adjustments to Torres hajib. Schmidt's exchanged his hoody for one of Al-Asaadi's old business suits and a Keffiyeh. The pants are a little large so Schmidt his own belt to keep them up.

SCHMIDT
 You know anything about a company
 called TGH?

AL-ASAADI
 Titan Global Holdings. You have been
 away too long, my friend. Everyone
 knows that name. They are here to
 reconstruct my country. Billions of
 your tax dollars.
 (throws his hands in
 the air and laughs)
 As you can see for yourself, is a
 joke.

Word comes through that it is time to step out. Torres thanks and says goodbye to the girls.

EXT. AL-ASAADI'S COMPOUND - DAY

GUARDS nervously scan the area for possible attackers as Al-Asaadi leads Schmidt and Torres out of his house.

Mido greets them. Returns Schmidt's M4.

MIDO
Please, no offense.

SCHMIDT
None taken.

AT THE GATE

A young guy stands next to the red Opal. With his Ed Hardy T, Mohamad 'JAZZY' Jamil is the closest thing to a western metrosexual as you'll ever see in Iraq. He gets a cool response from his uncle and cousin.

AL-ASAADI
(shaking Schmidt's
hand)
Farewell my friend. May God look
upon you with good grace.

Jazzy holds the door open.

JAZZY
(MTV English)
Whatsup, Holmes?! You're in the
back. She rides shotgun with me.

Schmidt shoots him a look, then at the back seats. The seat has been pulled back revealing a coffin-size compartment.

SCHMIDT
'Hell I am.

JAZZY
What the fuck, man!? You wanna do
this or not? Anyone take two looks
at you, we are all dead.

Schmidt sizes him up. Looks across to Torres. Climbs in the compartment, lays next to his M4.

JAZZY (CONT'D)
Wait, you forget something..?

SCHMIDT
When the job's done. ...You wanna
do this or not?

Torres gets in the passenger seat. Jazzy closes the back seat, sealing Schmidt in the compartment. Sneering at Al-Asaadi and Mido's disapproving looks, he jumps behind the wheel.

JAZZY

You guys need to get out a bit more.

Drives off.

INT. OPAL, TRAVELING - DAY

JAZZY

Fuck them. So fucking old school.

(he catches her smile)

What's your name?

(she looks away)

Is best I don't know.

They hit a main road. Transportation that spans two millennia; donkeys pulling carts vying with battered old Toyotas.

He drives one hand on the wheel the other massaging the horn, strictly observing the 'anything goes' road code. Torres can't help herself, she's enthralled by the display of human ingenuity on show around her.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

How you like Baghdad?

He catches her eye...just for a second.

She stiffens, noticing for the first time that they are in a line of cars approaching a ROAD BLOCK. The very same road block Schmidt was so keen to avoid.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

Chill sista. Ya man Jazzy here has got his hands on the wheel.

(catches himself)

Shit, I told you my name. Great!

Now I to have to put cap in you.

His joke falls flat. Tries to reassure her.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

...These guys, is no problem.

The bearded policeman spots the red Opal as they edge forward. No escape now.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

(Arabic)
Hey, brother.

BEARDED POLICEMAN

(Arabic)
Papers.

Torres remains motionless as the policeman examines their papers, feeling his eyes on the side of her face.

JAZZY

(Arabic)
Something going on over on Hiafa
Street. This is the only way around.
(lights a Gauloises)
I should've dropped my cousin at my
uncles two hours ago. I'm going to
get shit for this.
(coughs)
I don't really smoke. I liberated
them from a Frenchman in the name of
Iraq! Maybe you can use them.

The policeman takes the packet of cigarettes, returns the papers and waves them through.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

Leave it to Jazzy. I am like a ghost
flying through Baghdad.
(to Schmidt)
Hey, old man! You still there?
Kick back. Relax. Take it eeeasy.
(to Torres)
So, where you from? New York? L.A?
...Miami?

He stares at her expectantly.

TORRES

...L.A.

JAZZY

L.A? L.A! That's my people! Snoop
Dogg, 2Pac...
(fingers a 'W' sign)
Wess-side!

TORRES

You're one crazy dude.

JAZZY

(singing Snoop's
'Crazy')
'These streets beeee...Crazy!
(MORE)

JAZZY (CONT'D)

...From Hollywood to South Central'
I have a cousin in Miami, puts me
onto all the good stuff: MF Doom,
Young Jeezy, DMX. That shit is dope!
You ever been to Miami Beach, girl?

TORRES

You are trippin' me out.

JAZZY

I love America. I get enough money
I get out of here. Bye bye. Auf
Wiedersehen. Maybe I come visit
you.

She eases back.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

You have a husband?
(off her look)
...You sexy lady.

TORRES

You got x-ray vision?

JAZZY

I can see your eyes. I see into
your heart, into your soul...

TORRES

Yeah, those Miami chikitas are gonna
love you. You keep your eyes on the
road and we'll be good.

EXT. OPAL, TRAVELING - DAY

The Opal cruises alongside a concrete blast wall that seems
to go on forever.

The further along they go, the signs of life falls away, the
buildings increasingly derelict.

INT. OPAL, TRAVELING

Jazzy opens the glove box and pulls out a piece of green
RIBBON and two dog-eared pictures: TWO HOLY MEN, portrait of
the IMAM ALI and a photo of the fiery cleric MUQTADA AL-SADR.

He sticks the pictures on the dashboard, ties the green ribbon
around the gear-stick and slips a couple of heavy SILVER
RINGS on his fingers. Praying under his breath, his mood
darkening.

UP AHEAD: armed MILITIA MEN in black manning a road block.

TORRES

...Who are they?

JAZZY

Sssh!

He pushes the cassette in the player, cranks up the volume: the droning wail of a SHIA RELIGIOUS SONG.

As they draw closer, these men appear more sinister, masks concealing their faces, fingers on triggers.

THE ROAD BLOCK

Three militia men prowl around the car as it comes to a halt. Maybe ten others watch from a distance.

Jazzy switches the music off.

One of the men approaches. Only his eyes are visible through a dark-blue Keffiyeh: he's shockingly young and fierce, the same photo of Muqtada al-Sadr hanging from a lanyard around his neck like a back-stage pass to a rock concert.

He simply paces back and forth. Intimidating as fuck.

She flinches as the back door behind her suddenly opens, as another militia man pokes around with in the back the barrel of his gun.

YOUNG MILITIA MAN

(Arabic)

What is your tribal name?

JAZZY

(Arabic)

Al Hussein.

As two more militia men search the trunk.

YOUNG MILITIA MAN

(Arabic)

Get out.

JAZZY

(Arabic)

My brother?

The gunman presses a gun against Jazzy's head. Opens the door with his spare hand.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

(Arabic)

*What do you want with me? I am a
good Shia...*

Jazzy slowly gets out of the car, instinctively placing his hands on his head.

The young militia man leans in over the drivers seat. Notices the pictures of the holy men...the green ribbon...and Torres, staring rigidly at her knees she catches a glimpse of the heavy silver rings on his fingers, just like Jazzy's.

YOUNG MILITIA MAN

(Arabic)

*Do not cast your eyes upon me, woman!
(sees her exotic face)
Where are you from?*

MILITIA MAN (O.S.)

(in Arabic)

What's this?!

Her eyes clenched shut...the militia man searching the back seat finds *something*.

ON HER EYES AS WE HEAR:

The other gang members gather around. A big commotion...a heated argument in Arabic.

Jazzy pleading...crying...being slapped about his head and pushed around...slammed against the car.

A rifle is cocked...more fierce argument, then..?

A final verdict. Punchy...sharp...damning words from the young militia man...but no gunfire.

The back door is kicked shut. The truck slammed down. Jazzy gets back in the car. Torres doesn't dare look.

As they pull away she turns to him. He has a cut above one eye, clearly shaken...crying...whimpering...

...Or Laughing?

He's fucking LAUGHING!

JAZZY

(Arabic: quoting Qur'an)

*'Satan excites hatred between you
with intoxicants and hinders you
from the remembrance of Allah and
from prayer:*

(MORE)

JAZZY (CONT'D)

(English)

Will ye not then abstain?'!!!

Is he loco? She searches his face for the answer as he removes the silver rings and pictures of the holy men.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

Fuck them! Fuck their false prophets.
They have only one prophet: my friend,
Johnny Walker!

Pulls a bottle of JOHNNY WALKER WHISKEY from under his seat.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

They are damned! By their own hand,
they are damned!

(pops the cork, chugs)

They want to search my car...they
find only the truth that lives in
their souls!

TORRES

Fuck, man! They were gonna wax us!

JAZZY

God finds work for me to do, so I am
alive. They want Johnny Walker more
than they want my life! They get to
keep Johnny Walker, I get to keep my
life. I think it is fair.

TORRES

(Spanish)

This is totally fucked!

(English)

I don't want to die in your little
holy war!

JAZZY

When it is *your* time, it is *your*
time. Nothing can change that.
(takes another swig)

EXT. JAZZY'S HOUSE - EVENING

STREET KIDS are playing, blocking their path as Jazzy pulls
up into his drive.

JAZZY

(Arabic)

Hey!

Jazzy flies out of his car, engaging them in an imaginary gun fight.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

(Arabic)

Bam! Bam! Bam! You're all dead!

(hands out sweets)

Anyone come by?

The kids shake their heads and run off. Jazzy opens the large garage doors, gets back in the car and drives in.

INT. GARAGE

He closes the garage doors behind the car. Torres gets out.

JAZZY

Home again, home again, jiggy-jig!

Schmidt rattles the latch on the backseat compartment.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

Patience my friend, patience.

Torres goes to release Schmidt. She turns around to find

A PISTOL IN HER FACE.

Jazzy motions her to step back, away from the car. Schmidt sits up, Jazzy's pistol now in his face.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

Hands. Slowly.

Schmidt raises them above his head.

JAZZY (CONT'D)

Out.

As he steps out of the car:

SCHMIDT

The money's in a body belt around my waist.

Schmidt slowly lifts his shirt. A BODY BELT is strapped to his stomach. He carefully unfastens it.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Five thousand. Cash. Twenty dollar bills.

Torres makes a move. Jazzy turns the gun on her. She freezes.

TORRES

What are you doing? Just take the money!

He trains the gun back on Schmidt.

SCHMIDT

That's not enough, is it?

TORRES

That was the deal!

JAZZY

Do not speak!
(to Schmidt)
On the ground. Face down.

Schmidt gets on his knees.

SCHMIDT

We're his ticket out of here.

JAZZY

Quiet! Face down!

SCHMIDT

(not moving)
What's the going rate for an American these days? Twenty?

JAZZY

No, only fifteen. But I have two Americans. Plus your five right here. I maybe clear Thirty-five thousand U.S.

TORRES

¿ Estás fumando Crack?

SCHMIDT

Chump change. How much you think it costs to live in Miami? You're going to spend half of it getting there. You can't afford a beach view so you're gonna end up in the barrio like some balsero living on beans and rice. What about a car? It's not going to be a Lexus, is it. No little chikita for you, my friend.

JAZZY

Stop talking!

SCHMIDT

What you should do is pick up that money and get the hell out.

JAZZY

Who the fuck--?!

SCHMIDT

Hey, I'm just trying to be reasonable here. That's good advice.

JAZZY

Shut the fuck up or I kill you now.

SCHMIDT

Kill me?! You're not going to kill me. You can't.

Jazzy steadies the gun. Schmidt remains steadfast.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

We're only worth fifteen alive. No good to anyone dead. Just more meat for the dogs and rats.

JAZZY

Then I make her work for the rest. Ten dollars to fuck her in the ass, come in her mouth.

SCHMIDT

Ten bucks? That's a lot of come she's going to have to swallow.

JAZZY

If she was white I could get twenty.

CRACK!!!

Jazzy falls back holding his abdomen, staring in shock.

Torres's has Schmidt's pistol in her hands, barrel smoking. She's kept it hidden under her hajib the whole time.

Schmidt snatches Jazzy's gun.

SCHMIDT

What were you waiting for?

TORRES

I didn't want to kill him.

Schmidt disappears through a door leading into the house.

Torres moves closer to Jazzy. A crimson stain expands out across his shirt, his hands soaked in his own blood.

His pain gets the better of the shock. He cries out, cursing in Arabic. Starts to cry. It's hard to watch but she can't take her eyes off of him.

Schmidt returns with a cushion. Goes straight to Jazzy, presses the cushion hard against his face. Jazzy resists.

SCHMIDT

Get his legs!

TORRES

Shit!

SCHMIDT

Hold his legs!

She grabs them, one breaks free and smacks her in the face.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Hold him down!

Forced to double her efforts, as Jazzy finally gives up the fight, his life slips away.

Schmidt goes through Jazzy's pockets. Finds his CELL PHONE.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

'When it's your time, it's your time.'

Schmidt doesn't waste any time. He inspects a couple of GASOLINE CANS stacked against the wall. Shakes one.

Torres remains rooted to the spot.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Get some rest. We leave at first light.

TORRES

Fuck, man...

SCHMIDT

What's the matter? You're a alive, aren't you?

TORRES

...Who are you?

Schmidt opens one of the gasoline cans. Sniffs.

TORRES (CONT'D)

I never killed anyone before.

She throws up.

SCHMIDT

How the hell does someone like you
end up in the army? You thought it
was going to be some kind of summer
camp? For Christ sake, you've got a
kid, what are you doing in Iraq?

He just doesn't get it. Hard-wired for death, he just stares
at her as she sobs into her hands like a little girl.

Then, something about this image cuts through his armor to
his soul. He reaches out, awkwardly places his hand on her
shoulder and is surprised by the power of this simple gesture
to alter her mood.

TORRES

I'm sorry. I'm not very good at
this. I just want to go home.
Please, I just want to go home.

Schmidt gently takes her hand, places Jazzy's cell phone in
her palm.

SCHMIDT

Keep it short. Remove the battery
when you're done.

Torres looks up at him. He turns away, awkward.

INT. JAZZY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Torres composes herself. Carefully punches in a number.
Puts the phone to her ear.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TORRES HOUSE, EAST LOS ANGELES - DAY

Mama Torres picks up.

MAMA TORRES

Hola?

TORRES

Mami--.

MAMA TORRES

(Spanish)

Ay, baby! Are you ok? Where--?

TORRES

(Spanish)

--I'm ok. Mami, I need you to listen to me. I need you to go to Silvia's--

MAMA TORRES

(Spanish)

--Vena, why--?

TORRES

(Spanish)

Mami! Please, listen. Listen, I don't have time. Just do as I ask. You have to go stay with Silvia. Just for a while.

MAMA TORRES

(Spanish)

Baby, what is--.

TORRES

(Spanish)

I can't. Do it now, okay Mami? Promise me you will.

MAMA TORRES

(Spanish)

I'm worried.

TORRES

(Spanish)

Promise, Mami.

MAMA TORRES

(Spanish)

Ok, baby. I love you.

TORRES

(Spanish)

I love you too, Mami. Put Tee on.

ANTONIO

Mommy, Justin hit me at school.

TORRES

(shifting tone)

Hi, little man.

IN THE KITCHEN

Schmidt applies an ice pack to his neck. The relief is immediate. He catches pieces of Torres's conversation, an intimacy between parent and child that gets his attention.

TORRES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 --Well, did you tell Mrs. Kanter?
 What did she say? ...Uh-huh. Ok,
 well if he does it again, you hit
 him back so he knows Antonio Torres
 is not going to take that. ...I
 miss you too, baby.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM, FORTIS VILLA - DAWN

Waldman looks up from his iPad as Duke enters.

WALDMAN
 We've had a second transmission going
 to the targets home in Los Angeles.
 They're still in Baghdad.

DUKE
 Where?

WALDMAN
 Trying to get a fix...
 (checks his screen)
 They're on the move. Tracking...

DUKE
 When did this happen?

WALDMAN
 23:32

DUKE
 What?! You've waited six hours--?

WALDMAN
 The phone only became active again
 two minutes ago.

DUKE
 Somebody get a tap on that line in
 L.A. C'mon folks, can we start using
 our brains?! I need hear every word
 spoken over that line, *as it happens!*

WALDMAN
 Got a fix!

WALDMAN'S SCREEN: live MAP of Baghdad and a TELEPHONE NUMBER.

Duke's phone RINGS. He recognizes the number. But from
 where? He glances back at Waldman's screen: same number

Signals Waldman. Answers.

DUKE

Schmidt.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT/EXT. OPAL, TRAVELING - DAWN

SCHMIDT

We're on the Al Rashid bridge heading west, so don't bother asking Waldman.

Schmidt and Torres are driving over a bridge that spans the magnificent TIGRES RIVER.

DUKE

Something I can help you with, Schmidt?

SCHMIDT

Tell me about Titan Global Holdings.

DUKE

Well, it's no secret. It's a publicly listed company on the Stock Exchange, annual turnover of nearly eight billion dollars. You can't really miss it.

SCHMIDT

Well, that may be but do they list 'killing American soldiers' as part of their business profile?

DUKE

Nobody's going to buy it.

SCHMIDT

Sure they will. Young mom joins the army, fights for her country, her beliefs, finds out that TGH is knowingly supplying faulty equipment. I'd want to hear what she had to say, probably believe her too. What do you think?

DUKE

It's a great story. Too bad you're not going to get to tell it.

SCHMIDT

I thought you'd say something like that.

DUKE

You just don't get it. There's a much bigger game in play here. So you get out of Iraq, then what? As soon as you surface, you're out in the open. Who can you trust? Nobody gives a fuck about you or your girlfriend? They can spin it whatever way they want.

SCHMIDT

You fucker. We're supposed to be the good guys.

DUKE

(LAUGHING)

Hey, you might get your wish and go down as an American hero. But bet your bottom dollar they'll be no talk of Titan Global Holdings. LaVena Torres will just be another casualty killed in the line of duty. It's not too late, Schmidt.

SCHMIDT

Yes it is.

Hangs up.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM, FORTIS VILLA

WALDMAN

They're heading to Jordan.

DUKE

Son of a bitch. Alright, saddle-up.

INT/EXT. OPAL, TRAVELING

Schmidt throws the phone out of the window...

...Into the back of a WHITE PICK-UP TRUCK stacked with household things, driving in the lane next to them...

As it passes underneath a road sign: 'AMMAN 804 KM'

Schmidt exits the freeway.

TORRES

I thought the plan was Jordan?

SCHMIDT

No. Damascus.

TORRES
Damascus? Where the hell is that?

SCHMIDT
Syria.

TORRES
What's in Syria?

SCHMIDT
A friend.

TORRES
For a guy with zero social skills
you sure got a lot of friends.

EXT. TORRES HOUSE, EAST LOS ANGELES - DAY

A CROWN VICTORIA saloon car pulls up. TWO GUYS get out,
white on rice, could be Feds.

FIRST GUY stays at the gate. SECOND GUY approaches Torres's
door. Everyone lives on top of each other in this poor
Hispanic neighborhood.

INT. TORRES HOUSE, EAST LOS ANGELES

Mama Torres is busy packing things into a bag when the
doorbell RINGS. She looks to Tee, puts her finger against
her lips.

Peers around the door...

SILHOUETTE OF A MAN through the front door glass.

EXT. TORRES HOUSE, EAST LOS ANGELES

The guy knocks again.

CHOLO walks across the street with his tats and white T,
staring hard at the guy at the gate. Parks his ass on the
hood of the Crown Vic, folds his arms.

CHOLO
Nobody home.

The two guys ignore cholo and head back to their car.

CHOLO (CONT'D)
Walk away.

FIRST GUY
 (in cholo's face)
 Little fuck!

Second guy restrains his buddy as he notices...

Almost every stoop has a cholo in white T staring back at them. Some concealing their weapons, some not so shy.

CHOLO
 Leave the keys.

They know they're beat. Cholo watches as they walk off down the street.

EXT. HIGHWAY, ROAD TO JORDAN - DAY

Traffic stopped in both directions. A Fortis Littlebird and two armored trucks parked in the middle of the freeway. CONTRACTORS form a perimeter around the WHITE PICK-UP TRUCK.

The DRIVER, cuffed and on his knees, his family's possessions dumped on the freeway. His distraught WIFE and CHILDREN watch helplessly from a distance.

Duke stares out at the horizon: nothing but desert.

KEIFT (O.S.)
 Hey!

Kieft stands up in the back of the pick-up, JAZZY'S CELL PHONE in his raised hand.

Duke makes a call.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TERMINAL BUILDING, AIRPORT

Jed Carson answers.

DUKE
 I'm afraid we've lost them.

CARSON
 Afraid? Damn right you should be afraid. You told me they wouldn't make it twenty-four hours, now how am I supposed to believe anything that comes out of your mouth?

DUKE
 They're still a long way from home.

CARSON

You want to play with the big boys,
Duke, you play by big boys rules.
This thing stays in the sandbox.
I'll be landing in Washington in
eighteen hours. I want to hear
good news when I get there.

EXT. HIGHWAY, ROAD TO JORDAN

Duke hangs up and storms off towards the helo. His men follow, abandoning the driver and the chaos they've created.

INT/EXT. OPAL, TRAVELING - DAY

Locked in traffic. Cars, buses and trucks on all sides, a MAN ON A BICYCLE with a toilet strapped on the back.

TORRES

Is he crazy?

Schmidt massages the back of his neck, relieving the pain.

SCHMIDT

(off her look)
Drink your water.

TORRES

Tastes funny.

SCHMIDT

Do it anyway! Dehydration will kill
you just as easily as a bullet.

She drinks but makes a show of her dislike. Schmidt winces.

TORRES

You hurt?

SCHMIDT

(gritting his teeth)
No.

A gap opens up in front of them. Schmidt accelerates but another vehicle gets there first.

Torres leans across and pounds her fist on the HORN.

TORRES

Métetelo por el culo!
(off Schmidt's look)
That's how they drive here! With
the horn!

SCHMIDT
They're not doing the driving, I am!

TORRES
Holy Moses, you not in the army
anymore so chill out.

Hits the HORN again, this time for the hell of it.

SCHMIDT
...I was never in the army.

TORRES
Bullshit. You learn all this in the
boy scouts?

SCHMIDT
Marines.

TORRES
Oh, excuse me! *The Marines*. That
why you're such a hard-on, because
I'm army?

SCHMIDT
Only reason you're alive is because
you're army.

TORRES
My recruiter said nobody in
maintenance sees any action.
(voice of her recruiter)
'You'll never go to Iraq, see dead
bodies and shit, get your ass blown
up...'

SCHMIDT
...He *lied*!

TORRES
...He *lied*!

The old military joke brings smiles to their faces, a shared
experience. They've virtually come to a standstill.

TORRES (CONT'D)
We're not getting out of here alive.

SCHMIDT
The traffic can be hell but it won't
kill you. Unless you hit an I.E.D.

She looks at him, is he joking?

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
'Chill out'.

TORRES

That what they teach you in the
Marines? If you'd joined the army
you'd know how to take care of
business.

Rising to the challenge, Schmidt drops a gear.

SCHMIDT

That so?!

Jumps on the gas --BAM!-- As he plows into the car in front.

Slams the gear stick into reverse...

Lurches backwards --BAM!-- Into the truck behind. Pounds
on the HORN.

Hits the gas --BAM!-- Into the car in front!

ABUSE comes from all directions. Schmidt returns with a
string of EXPLETIVES in Arabic.

Torres CHEERS him on as they force their way through: Schmidt
and Torres against the world!

His bumper catches on another vehicle...gone!

The wing mirror...gone!

He crashes and scrapes the Opal, like it's a demolition derby,
until it finds the edge of the road...plows over

THE MEDIAN

HITS THE BRAKES HARD as a US ARMY HUMVEE cuts across their
path like a locomotive...

ONE...

TWO...

...THREE JUGGERNAUTS follow in close formation behind.

A Couple of ARMORED HUMVEES bring up the rear.

Schmidt and Torres regain their composure. Schmidt grits
his teeth. Slams the car into gear. Turns the wheel and
accelerates off in pursuit of the convoy.

TORRES

GO ARMY!!! Where are your Marines
when you need them?! GO ARMY!

ON THE REAR HUMVEE

The spooked REAR GUNNER, alerted by the erratic movement of the Opal, swings his .50 Cal M2 machine gun around.

ON SCHMIDT AND TORRES

TORRES (CONT'D)

Conyo!

Schmidt eases off the accelerator and waves their hands in the air...maintaining their distance behind the convoy.

INT/EXT. OPAL, ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS - DAY

As they pass underneath a sign: 'DAMASCUS 698 KM'

LATER

On the outskirts of the city they pass a MILE LONG LINE OF CARS waiting for gas.

LATER

In the farmlands, as they speed past a DUST-BOWL VILLAGE...

...Kids in rags begging at the edge of the road...an old man leading a emaciated donkey carrying salvaged car parts.

LATER

Schmidt glances across to Torres, curled up asleep, like a child without a care in the world.

INT. OPAL, ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS - DUSK

UP AHEAD: the army convoy silhouetted by the setting sun.

Lush palm groves to the right, desert to the left...an open sky, burnt amber to a deep blue, the first stars to shine... The simplicity and beauty is awe inspiring.

The CRACKLE of gunfire.

TORRES

(ducking down)

Shit!

GREEN TRACER BULLETS shoot like fireworks into the palm groves as the Humvee gunners open up.

SCHMIDT

They're not interested in us.

TORRES
Do they know that?

SCHMIDT
You never been outside the wire?

TORRES
Nope. And that's the way I like it.

SCHMIDT
What did you think you were signing
up for?

TORRES
Medical for my family, credit towards
college. You lose your seven-fifty
an hour job at Burger King, where
d'you go? Army looked like a good
thing, Disneyland with benefits.
Said I'd learn a skill. 'Anything
but computers, I hate computers'.
So what'd they do? Computers! Turns
out I'm shit-hot.
(turning gloomy)
I just want to see my boy again,
that's all. You can keep the rest.
...You got family?

SCHMIDT
No.

TORRES
Never married?

SCHMIDT
...Divorced.

TORRES
Kids?

SCHMIDT
No. ...Yes, a daughter. Stacey.

TORRES
Well, that's family.

SCHMIDT
We're not that close. Got a family
of her own, she's--

TORRES
--You're a granddaddy?!

SCHMIDT
Is that so strange?

TORRES

You're one kick-ass granddad. How many?

SCHMIDT

How many what?

TORRES

Grand kids you got?

SCHMIDT

I don't know. We're not that kind of family.

TORRES

Sounds like no family at all.

SCHMIDT

(pointedly)

That boy of yours have a father?

She checks herself, measures her response.

TORRES

Best mistake I ever made. Yes, I was young and stupid, I'll give you that, but what's your excuse? If you're not fightin' to make something better for yourself, your family, what are you fighting for?

Schmidt's eyes remain fixed on the road. When she starts to think he didn't hear her question, he speaks:

SCHMIDT

Say you get out of this, what are you going to tell your son?

Now Torres has no answer.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

There's a part of you that never comes home. How can you tell them? You want to protect them from what you've seen, what you've done. You bury it. Pretty soon you've dug yourself so deep there's no way out and you're counting the days before you have to head out again. Your unit, the corps, the job, that's your family.

(turns to her)

You make it home, don't you ever come back.

TORRES

...That it?

Having bared his soul, he looks at her with dagger eyes.

TORRES (CONT'D)

That's some lame-ass excuse you got there.

SCHMIDT

I'm not cryin' about it.

TORRES

When I brought my boy into the world, I made a pact between me and God. He never chose to come into this world, he never chose his parents or anything. But you and me, we got a choice. You think picking up a gun is easier than picking up the phone, then you'd better toughen up. Yeah, he's got a father. He's dead. No good to anyone if you're dead. I got to do it all on my own.

SCHMIDT

(sarcastic)

Yeah, life sucks.

TORRES

Fuck you!

SCHMIDT

Fuck me? You'd be dead if I wasn't here doing my job!

TORRES

Sure. The big hero. You totally fucked it up, you fucked it up, man! Your job was to kill me! You don't get me out of here, you'll just be an old guy who made a bad career move and ended up dead! ...Fuck you.

The leaden air between them is suddenly punctured by the engine as it starts to SPLUTTER.

TORRES (CONT'D)

(Spanish)

What the fuck!?

The army convoy up ahead disappears into the night as engine dies and the Opal crawls to a standstill.

Schmidt grabs his rifle and gets out.

EXT. OPAL, ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

Schmidt walks around the car, kneels next to the gas tank. Feels underneath. Sniffs his fingers.

INT. OPAL, ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

Schmidt returns.

SCHMIDT

Lets go.

TORRES

Where?

SCHMIDT

Bullet hole in the gas tank. It's less than a hundred klicks to the border. Grab all the water you can carry.

EXT. ROAD TO DAMASCUS - NIGHT

Torres catches up to Schmidt as he strides along.

TORRES

Wouldn't it be better to start in the morning?

SCHMIDT

Five minutes after the sun breaks the horizon it's going to be a hundred and ten degrees and we'll be visible from ten miles.

INT. WALDMAN'S ROOM, FORTIS VILLA - NIGHT

An ARCHIVE NEWSPAPER fills Waldman's IPAD SCREEN. An OLD PICTURE from the O.J Trial, headline: '*HOME FREE*'

Scrolls down the page. A headline at the bottom of the page:

'*U.S. DIPLOMAT SAVED BY SECURITY GUARD*'

He pastes the headline into a fresh GOOGLE SEARCH...

A PAGE OF RESULTS...CLICKS ONE...

ARCHIVE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

'*Terrorist attack on junior U.S. diplomat, John Farnsworth... peace mission to Algeria...Body guard, Larry Schmidt... critically wounded...*'

A PHOTO: Schmidt, much younger but distinguished by his glasses, lying wounded on the ground.

Waldman's interest intensifies as he pastes the name 'JOHN FARNSWORTH' into a new search...

A PAGE OF RESULTS...CLICKS the top entry...

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT WEBSITE

A PHOTO OF FARNSWORTH: late 40's, intelligent, dedicated public servant.

HIS TITLE: '*United States Ambassador, Syria.*' Waldman's struck gold. Reaches for his phone, dials...

WALDMAN
(into phone)
They're heading to Syria!

EXT. ROAD TO DAMASCUS - DAWN

Schmidt marches, scanning the terrain ahead. Desert wherever he looks except for a SMALL MOUND OF ROCKS in the distance.

Torres stumbles, falls.

TORRES
I can't. I need to stop.

He helps her to her feet, catches...

THE SUN BREAKING OVER THE HORIZON BEHIND THEM

Something else on the horizon, a pair of HEADLIGHTS.

TORRES (CONT'D)
...What?

Now she sees them too.

As he marches, making a mental calculation: the rocks...the rapidly approaching vehicle...the rocks. No time.

He looks back, peers THROUGH THE SIGHT: a PICK-UP TRUCK, traveling at speed...as it nears...

A second vehicle emerges behind the first, a BONGO MINIVAN. Figures standing in the back of the pick-up come into focus:

ARAB MILITIA MEN with AK's and RPG's.

Schmidt stops, lowers his weapon, his mind racing, scouring the terrain for an exit strategy. Finds none.

TORRES (CONT'D)

Who are they? Who are they?!

SCHMIDT

...The bad guys.

Schmidt pulls off his headdress. Wipes his face with it.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

I'm sorry... Take off the head gear, give me the nine millimeter. They find you wearing that, they're not going to be pleased. Blasphemous.

Torres strips-off her black hajib. Returns his pistol.

TORRES

That it? Just gonna give up?

SCHMIDT

We're not done yet.

The masked faces of the men are now clearly visible. The vehicles maintain their speed as they approach but alter their course...

Arcing around Schmidt and Torres, encircling them.

Dust quickly fills the air.

Schmidt crabs around Torres, shielding her with his body but it's futile.

One of the bad guys jumps out of the truck, approaches...

More BAD GUYS, ten or fifteen, follow suit. Hopelessly outnumbered. Even with Schmidt's weapon at point blank range, they display no fear whatsoever.

Two bad guys go right up to Schmidt and take his rifle, his pistol. Humiliated, impotent, he hangs his head.

One grabs Torres by the arm. Schmidt reacts and is smashed in the face with a rifle, shattering his red-plastic glasses.

TORRES

NO!!!!

She breaks free. Rushes to him. Struggling to hold him up as he drops to his knees. It's pitiful. An old man, half-blind, unable to defend himself.

Torres is dragged away kicking and screaming as Schmidt takes a beating. Someone throws a hood over her head then bundles her into the back of the Bongo minivan.

INT. BRICK FACTORY FURNACE - DAY

A dark chamber.

Schmidt cries out as he's hoisted up, hands bound behind his back: a textbook stress position.

The bad guys stand around a table. Their eyes light up when they discover Schmidt's body belt and the cash.

Torres is on the floor, hands bound behind her. One of the bad guys removes her hood. She GASPS. It's heartbreaking, a man like Schmidt reduced to this shit state. They lock eyes...is this how it ends?

BAD GUY#1

(Arabic)

*What kind of men send their women to
battle for them!*

Schmidt's feet are kicked out from under him. Agony.

Unbearable. She looks anywhere but at Schmidt: the brick tomb-like interior, the deep coffin-size OVENS embedded in the walls...Schmidt's SMASHED SATELLITE PHONE on a table.

Schmidt suddenly explodes with rage, kicks the table over, sending the phone and dollar bills into the air.

Pandemonium. Bad guys scramble after the bills. Torres throws herself on the floor, kicking up sand.

Their leader, NUR AL-DIN, is enraged. Slaps his men with the side of his machete, bringing them to order.

AL-DIN

(Arabic)

You fools! He is the devil!

(grabbing Schmidt)

*I will not stand for this! I will
take his life so he can return to
hell!*

Al-Din yanks Schmidt's head back and presses the machete against his throat. Schmidt struggles, head butts Al-Din.

AL-DIN (CONT'D)

(Arabic)

Hold him!

Men grab Schmidt's legs and arms. Al-Din once again and places the blade against his throat.

TORRES

No!!! No!!!

More men restrain her.

TORRES (CONT'D)

C.I.A! C.I.A! He's C.I.A!

Everyone stops, falls silent. Did her ruse pay off? Al-Din stares at Torres...at Schmidt.

AL-DIN

C.I.A?

Everyone present is familiar with the acronym and the power of its evocation. Al-Din mutters to himself...throws down the machete, disgusted.

AL-DIN (CONT'D)

(Arabic)

Get a message to the general management. And get this woman out of my sight, she is poison to my eyes.

EXT. BRICK FACTORY - DAY

The midday sun hits her like a punch in the face as she's dragged out.

What is this place? Palettes loaded with clay bricks. Chimney stacks, twenty or so, rising up out of brick furnaces identical to the one she just left. They've been firing bricks on this site in much the same way for thousands of years.

INT. BRICK WORKERS HOUSE - DAY

Torres is hauled through the door. An OLD WOMAN is bent over a wood-burning stove, her GRANDSON turns the dial on a radio.

BAD GUY#1

(Arabic)

Turn that off!

He hits the radio with the butt of his rifle then shoves Torres into a small storeroom.

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She falls on the dirt floor as the door is bolted behind her. The old woman gives the men a tongue lashing as they depart.

Torres wastes no time. Crouching on the floor she loops her feet through her arms so her hands are in front of her. She shakes herself...Schmidt's satellite phone falls out of the bottom of her pants.

The battery is missing and the screen is cracked. She casts her eyes around. ...Bingo!

A BROKEN TRANSISTOR RADIO parked with some other junk.

Hands still bound, she pulls radio apart and locates a tiny ELECTRICAL TRANSFORMER. Using her teeth she strips some of the wires then carefully binds the parts together.

Not bad. She wires her improvised transformer onto the back of Schmidt's phone. Everything she needs except...?

Casting her eyes around again, she locates an electrical cable running along one of the roof beams. It comes away easily in her hand.

She steadies herself...then touches the wires: nothing!

Her bubble burst, she slouches down on the ground, tears welling up, utterly defeated.

INT/EXT. NISSAN, DRIVING - DAY

AHMAD AL-ZARQAWI travels in the passenger seat. His thuggish, sturdy frame and unkempt beard at odds with the leather briefcase resting on his knees.

Al-Zarqawi, his DRIVER and BODYGUARD, head towards the thin skeins of smoke rising from the chimneys in the distance. There is the only car on the road.

EXT. BRICK FACTORY - DAY

The Nissan pulls off the main highway into the grid of smaller lanes around the brick furnaces.

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE - DAY

Torres peers through the keyhole as the old woman and her grandson go about their business. She hears a CAR APPROACHING and shifts to a crack in the masonry that affords a view of...

...The Nissan as it parks near the truck and minivan. Al-Zarqawi steps out carrying his briefcase. Al-Din greets him with deference and awe.

INT. BRICK FACTORY FURNACE

Al-Zarqawi's face darkens on seeing Schmidt.

AL-ZARQAWI

(Arabic)

What is this?! Is this how you treat our guests? Get him a chair!

Al-Din's men scramble for a chair as others release Schmidt from the stress position and tie him to the chair.

Al-Zarqawi lays his briefcase on the table and approaches Schmidt, crouching down next to him. Schmidt lifts his eyes to meet al-Zarqawi's...a flash of recognition.

AL-ZARQAWI (CONT'D)

You know who I am? Then you know your fate. What is your name?

SCHMIDT

Schmidt.

AL-ZARQAWI

(perfect German)

Schmidt ist ein deutscher Name.
Sind Sie Deutscher?

SCHMIDT

American.

AL-ZARQAWI

You are a long way from home. What are you doing here?

SCHMIDT

My job.

AL-ZARQAWI

And what is that?

Schmidt hangs his head.

AL-ZARQAWI (CONT'D)

No matter.
 (gets up, opens his
 briefcase)
 We have time--
 (pulls out a POWER
 DRILL)
 --To get to know each other.

The drill comes to life...then promptly runs out of power.

AL-ZARQAWI (CONT'D)

Do not worry, I have a spare.

Al-Zarqawi replaces the battery, approaches Schmidt, presses the trigger then...drives the drill into Schmidt thigh!

Schmidt SCREAMS in agony.

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

Torres flinches as Schmidt's screams carry over.

INT. BRICK FACTORY FURNACE

But, again, the drill runs out of juice.

AL-ZARQAWI

(Arabic)
*Get me some power! I need power
 now!*

Al-Din's men jump to the task as al-Zarqawi storms out.

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

Torres watches al-Zarqawi exit the furnace with Al-Din.

AL-ZARQAWI

(Arabic)
Show me the other one.

She hides the phone and struggles to get her legs back through her arms. Just in time...as the door opens.

Al-Zarqawi looks her up and down.

AL-ZARQAWI (CONT'D)

(Arabic)
Is she American also?

EXT. BRICK FACTORY

One of Al-Din's men pours gasoline into a small GENERATOR.

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

Al-Zarqawi hears the GENERATOR start up.

AL-ZARQAWI

(Arabic)

Him first.

As soon as the door is bolted, Torres wriggles her legs though her arms once more...

Retrieves the phone and her improvised transformer...
Picks up the electric cable...

JUMPS, as this time the current bites.

Carefully wires the transformer to the cable...

Connects the transformer to Schmidt's phone...

THE PHONE...LIGHTS UP!!!!

Now, as delicately as she can, she dials a number...

As she presses 'SEND'....WE SHOOT UP INTO THE SKY to a...

BIRDS-EYE VIEW of the brick factory and surrounding desert...
Following the signal THROUGH THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE to a

COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE

orbiting over the middle east. ...WE plunge back to earth...spanning the globe, diving into the SHADOW OF THE SUN...NIGHT TIME IN NORTH AMERICA...THE WEST COAST... THROUGH THE ATMOSPHERE...GLITTERING LIGHTS OF LOS ANGELES...into...

INT. TORRES HOUSE, EAST LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

The house is empty. The PHONE... RINGS... as WE travel from the wall-mounted phone... to the REFRIGERATOR DOOR...
PHOTOGRAPHS: a snapshot of the Torres family, as the ANSWER MACHINE kicks in:

ANTONIO (O.S.)

(Spanish)

Nobody's home right now--

OVER PHOTOS: LaVena Torres in her uniform hugging little Tee...little Tee a couple years younger...old pictures of younger Mama Torres with a six year old LaVena and her FATHER...

ANTONIO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(Spanish)
--So leave a message!

TORRES (O.S.)
(Spanglish, faltering)
...Hi baby, it's mommy. I want you to know how much I love you. ...And, wherever you are, just know that I'm there with you, every step of the way, in your heart and--

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM, FORTIS VILLA - DAY

Duke eavesdrops, listening through headphones.

TORRES (O.S.)
--Nobody can take that away from you, ever.

Waldman and the rest of the team are also listening.

DUKE
(to Waldman)
We got a fix on this yet?

Duke gazes at this screen: a live satellite MAP OF IRAQ, a FLASHING MARKER near border with Syria.

TORRES (O.S.)
...And for anyone else out there listening: go *fuck* yourselves!

She hangs up. Duke chuckles to himself, the girl has balls.

DUKE
(to Waldman)
Ok, call it in.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW, IRAQ/SYRIA BORDER - DAY

SATELLITE IMAGES ON A COMPUTER MONITOR: The Western desert.

TARGET ANALYST #1 (O.S.)
...Two. Zero. One. Nine west.

The image SPINS AROUND, ZOOMS IN...Nothing there, except..?

TARGET ANALYST #2 (O.S.)
 What's the intel? A safe house?

Box-shaped buildings, smoking chimneys...except one.

TARGET ANALYST #1(O.S.)
 Looks like a brick factory, confirm.

ZOOMING CLOSER....now WE see the vehicles...

TARGET ANALYST #1 (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Wait. I've got three vehicles. A truck, car and Bongo minivan. And no smoke on that stack. Requesting AWT, they're not baking bricks down there. Lets take a look.

TARGET ANALYST #2 (O.S.)
 Roger that. Dispatching AWT.

INT. BRICK FACTORY FURNACE

A RED LIGHT on the drill charger FLASHES as it charges.

Al-Zarqawi examines Schmidt's body-belt. Al-Din is alarmed, something is missing: Schmidt's phone.

AL-ZARQAWI
 (Arabic)
This everything?

AL-DIN
 (Arabic: lying)
Yes. Everything.

Al-Zarqawi finds something inside the body-belt:

An old PHOTOGRAPH, the one of SCHMIDT WITH HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER that he keeps beside his bed at home.

AL-ZARQAWI
 (Arabic)
Beware that your tongue doesn't cut your neck.

Al-Zarqawi approaches Schmidt, fascinated by the picture.

AL-ZARQAWI (CONT'D)
 Your family? An old photograph, and yet you keep it with you.
 (glances at Schmidt's hand)
 No ring.

(MORE)

AL-ZARQAWI (CONT'D)

Divorce is a disease of the infidel,
 but your daughter...a union of blood
 can never be undone. I had a
 daughter. She was martyred with her
 mother, but I do not hold onto their
 memory. I celebrate their deaths
 because they are in paradise. But
 you, you carry this with you. Why?
 There is unfinished business here...

(stares at the picture)

She must be, what, twenty-five now?

You are not C.I.A., I know this.

(holds up photo as
 evidence)

But who are you?

The red light on the charger switches to a solid GREEN.

Al-Zarqawi unfastens the drill from the charger, testing its
 power. Schmidt braces himself as al-Zarqawi approaches,
 hovering over him before...

...Pushing the drill into Schmidt's shoulder!

Schmidt's face contorts with unimaginable pain as he releases
 a PRIMAL SCREAM.

EXT. MARINE BARRACKS - FLASHBACK - DAY

His SCREAM carries over...

FRAGMENTED MEMORY:

His daughter, STACEY, as a young girl, squeezes past her
 MOTHER and runs out of the front door towards...

Schmidt, a young man in his prime of his life wearing his
 Marine uniform and a huge grin. He drops his bags, drops to
 his knees, catches her in his strong arms.

Feigning defeat, he falls back onto the lawn with her on top
 of him. He kisses her rosy cheeks. She grabs his nose, his
 chin, with her tiny hands, absolutely delighted to be reunited
 with her dad.

They turn it into a game of chase where, inevitably, Schmidt
 loses and his little girl ends up in his loving embrace.
 This is side of Schmidt we've never seen...until now.

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

Torres's SCREAM replaces Schmidt's SCREAM. A gesture born of solidarity and utter powerlessness.

INT. BRICK FACTORY FURNACE

Her SCREAM carries over...and snaps Schmidt into the present.

SCHMIDT

'Hell you doing to her?!

Al-Zarqawi is also concerned. He did not authorize her torture.

AL-ZARQAWI

(Arabic, to Al-Din)

Go shut her up!

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

Torres is like a wild animal, tearing the place apart, SHOUTING at the top of her lungs.

The door opens, Al-Din fills the door-frame. He LAUGHS at her as she points skyward like a terrifying shaman.

TORRES

The Americans will come and destroy
this place!!!

(looks to the old
woman)

Run! Ulooj! Tarateer! Go now!!!

(miming the raining
down of

bombs...explosions)

...BOOMMMMM!!!

Al-Din cracks her with the butt of his AK and slams the door.

INT. BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

The old woman is totally spooked.

OLD WOMAN

(local Arab dialect)

*What have you done!? She has cast a
spell on my house!*

Al-Din slaps her. Her grandson steps up, but that's not why Al-Din stops.

Al-Din listens...casting his eyes up...rage turning to fear.

Now the old woman and the grandson hear it too.

INT. APACHE HELICOPTER - DAY

B&W TADS P.O.V (Target Acquisition Designation Sight): Moving towards the chimney stacks of the brick factory about a mile head....

HOTEL TWO-SIX (O.S.)
Crazy Horse One-Eight, Crazy Horse
One-Eight.

CRAZY HORSE ONE-EIGHT (O.S.)
Hotel Six-Two, I have visual on
target.

WE circle around the brick factory keeping the target, the smoke-less chimney, in the CROSS-HAIRS.

CRAZY HORSE ONE-EIGHT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Bunch of vehicles down there. SUV,
uh, Bongo truck. ...Wait. I've got
individuals with weapons.

Al-Din emerging from the house carrying his AK. Hostile MILITIA MEN come into view, one with an RPG.

CRAZY HORSE ONE-EIGHT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
P.R.G! Hotel Two-Six, permission to
engage.

HOTEL TWO-SIX (O.S.)
Roger that. You are free to engage.
Over.

Two figures, old woman and grandson, flee from the house.

CRAZY HORSE ONE-EIGHT (O.S.)
I have two birds. Engaging.

Al-Din raises his AK...

EXT. BRICK FACTORY

The old woman and grandson run for their lives. Al-Din opens up with his AK. Cuts them both down.

ALL HELL BREAKS LOSE

As Al-Din is shredded by 30mm cannon fire.

Total confusion. Bad guys running everywhere, terrified... firing their weapons at god-knows-what.

LEAD RAINS DOWN as if from the gods, the Apache out of sight and range. The car and trucks buck and dance around under the strafing.

BODIES...BODY PARTS everywhere.

BRICK PILES explode, peppering anyone left standing with lethal shards.

One of Al-Din's men is cut to pieces as he foolishly tries to launch an RPG.

Another bad guy runs for the Bongo truck. He and the truck are sucked up in a cloud of dust and flames.

INT. STOREROOM, BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

Torres curls up on the ground as bullets and splintered brick ricochet inches above her head.

EXT. BRICK FACTORY

Al-Zarqawi step out the furnace, grabs an AK47 and runs towards the house, paying no heed as his driver is cut down next to him.

INT. BRICK WORKERS HOUSE

Al-Zarqawi charges in, sees...

The storeroom door barely hanging from its hinges. Torres looks up as al-Zarqawi takes aim, but...

Another burst of gunfire riddles the house. Al-Zarqawi drops down dead.

INT. APACHE HELICOPTER

TADS P.O.V: A black figure, Torres, sprints towards the furnace.

As 30mm canon opens up on her.

EXT. BRICK FACTORY

Torres dives through the furnace entrance as bullets chew up the walls and ground around her.

INT. APACHE HELICOPTER

TADS P.O.V: as the gunship fires on the furnace.

Keeps firing....Short deadly bursts...

The chimney stack buckles...falls...

EXT. BRICK FACTORY

Dust settles on the ground. Smoke rises into the sky. All signs of life smudged out.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. BRICK FACTORY FURNACE - DAY

COUGHS and SPLUTTERS as Torres scrambles around, desperately pushing bricks away, fighting for air...

A SHAFT OF LIGHT suddenly penetrates into the darkness, revealing Torres cocooned in one of the oven chambers deep within the furnace.

She kicks through to what was previously the base of the chimney, now exposed to daylight.

She clears the area of bricks then reaches back into the chamber. With all her might she hauls Schmidt out into the open.

TORRES
C'mon, move your ass!

She drags him over the rim of the chimney base...flops down next to him.

TORRES (CONT'D)
Where are we going? Hey?! Which way is Syria!?
(shakes him)
Which way?!

Schmidt lifts his head, wavering in and out of focus, gazing up at the sun...then to desert stretching off to the horizon in the west.

TORRES (CONT'D)
Ok, then no time to be sitting on our asses!

Even with Torres carrying most of his weight, Schmidt can barely put one foot in front of the other. She looks around for something to assist her, sees

A BRICK CART

EXT. WESTERN DESERT - DAY

Step by step Torres hauls the brick cart carrying Schmidt, mumbling a CHILDREN'S RHYME to herself.

TORRES

(Spanish)

*They put me in an oven,
in an oven I baked.
And when mother open the door,
I quickly jumped out....*

*They can run, run, run.
Run, and run behind me.
But no matter how fast they run,
They will never catch me...*

She stops momentarily. Only the sun and horizon in front of them as she continues on her path.

TORRES (CONT'D)

*...I am a gingerbread boy,
for my mouth I have honey,
for eyes I have raisins,
and with them I can see...*

EXT. BRICK FACTORY - DAY

Two Fortis Littlebirds parked nearby.

Duke surveys the area as his men sift through what remains: the scorched, mashed-up metal hulk of the bongo truck, charred bodies.

A FORTIS CONTRACTOR stands over a body wrapped in a black hajib, flips it over with his boot: the old woman. She's still alive but not for long.

Kieft pokes around in the bongo truck, pushes a charred body out the way and picks something out of the soot:

Schmidt's M4 rifle, warped from the explosive heat.

Duke climbs over a pile of smashed bricks. Stoops down. Peers into the oven chamber that saved Torres and Schmidt.

Kieft appears with Schmidt's M4, offers up the weapon.

Duke stares at it but it's not enough to convince him of Schmidt's demise.

He turns his gaze out across the desert towards the sun, now hanging low in the sky in the west. Out-foxed once again.

EXT. WESTERN DESERT - DAY

As Torres heaves the cart up the side of a small SAND BERM.

TORRES
(reciting the rhyme)
*...But no matter how fast they run,
They will never catch me.*

One of the wheels gives way, spilling Schmidt onto the sand.

TORRES (CONT'D)
I ain't got time for your bullshit,
Schmidt!

Reaching under his arms she pulls him to his feet.

TORRES (CONT'D)
Shift your ass, soldier! We're not
done yet. No siree!

Schmidt grits his teeth, forcing himself forward as they hobble to the top of the berm.

TORRES (CONT'D)
Call yourself a Marine?! Move it!
You're a fucking disgrace! Move!
Move! Move! ...That's it.

AT THE TOP

A victory of sorts. The sand berm stretches north and south as far as the eye can see: THE IRAQI/SYRIAN BORDER!

With renewed energy they stumble down the other side.

Torres suddenly becomes aware of a figure heading towards them....

A YOUNG BOY..? A trick of the light? Silhouetted by the setting sun, it's hard to know. But the boy is not alone...

He's surround by GOATS, feeding on desert shrubs.

Schmidt collapses at the boys feet. The boy offers them his plastic water bottle. Torres put it to Schmidt's lips then takes some for herself, chugging it down greedily.

SCHMIDT

Slowly...

She shares it with him once again, each sip reviving his spirits.

Schmidt props himself up, starts to un-loop his belt from his pants. Torres drinks, watching...what the hell he is up to?

Taking the buckle, he proceeds to split the belt down the seam. The boy's and Torres' eyes widen as

GOLD SOVEREIGNS

fall into Schmidt's lap. This old dog still has a trick or two up his sleeve!

INT. HOTEL ROOM, AFAMIA HOTEL, DAMASCUS, SYRIA - DAY

NEW PAIR OF GLASSES

as Schmidt snaps on a set of CLIP-ON SHADES. Someone's done a good job of cleaning him up but he still looks like he's been hit by a bus.

He reacts as Torres saunters out of the bathroom, her hair in a towel, wearing only shorts and a tight little wife-beater. She flops on the bed next to Schmidt's, switches the TV on and flicks through the channels (re-runs of American shows).

TORRES

(off his disapproval)

What?

He reaches for a WALKING STICK, a move that pains him.

TORRES (CONT'D)

(getting up)

I'm coming with you.

SCHMIDT

No.

TORRES

You're kidding! After everything--

SCHMIDT

--It'd be pretty stupid to drop the ball now.

She watches him struggle to his feet.

TORRES

Wait. You've got to change your shirt.

SCHMIDT

Huh?

TORRES

(taking it off)
It's got blood on it.

SCHMIDT

It's fine.

TORRES

Can you just let me do this for you?

He sits back down and lets her remove his shirt. She peels back his shoulder dressing, it's soaked in blood. As she re-dresses his wound:

TORRES (CONT'D)

You need a doctor.

SCHMIDT

Just do what you can.

TORRES

...You trust him?

SCHMIDT

I've got a piece of lead right in here that was meant for him.
(points to his neck)
I trust him. He's one of the good guys.

TORRES

Like you.

SCHMIDT

Yes, like me.

Schmidt steadies himself with the walking stick as he gets to his feet. Torres helps him into a fresh shirt with a colorful, garish print that brings a smile to her face.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

What now?

TORRES

You look like you're on vacation.

SCHMIDT

Good.

Schmidt picks up a baseball cap, puts it on.

TORRES
This room is driving me crazy.

SCHMIDT
Well, watch TV. Isn't that what you
kids like to do?

TORRES
(picks up the remote)
Fine.

SCHMIDT
Lock the door and don't let anyone
in. And put some clothes on.

TORRES
Why? I ain't going anywhere.

SCHMIDT
Do it anyway.

He moves to the door.

TORRES
Hey.
(he glances back)
Don't leave me here.

SCHMIDT
I'm coming back.

TORRES
We're not home yet.

SCHMIDT
I'm coming back. Lock the door.

He closes the door and she locks it behind him.

EXT. AFAMIA HOTEL, DAMASCUS - DAY

A group of middle-aged American TOURISTS crowd the sidewalk. Their modern TOUR BUS almost fills the narrow street in this the old part of town.

Looking like of one them, Schmidt emerges from the back of the group to flag down a TAXI with his walking stick. One pulls over, he gets in.

INT. TAXI

As the TAXI DRIVER pulls away from the curb.

SCHMIDT
...American embassy.

LATER

As the taxi approaches the embassy gate.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
Pull over.

UP AHEAD: a line of PEOPLE waiting to be let into the embassy, armed GUARDS at the gate.

EXT. STREET, EMBASSY GATE

Schmidt gets out of the taxi.

As the taxi pulls away he cautiously makes his way towards the entrance, watching the street as he goes.

EXT. GATE-HOUSE, AMERICAN EMBASSY

A STREET VENDOR frying food provides cover as he makes a final visual sweep then fixes his gaze on his goal. He Steps off the sidewalk heading towards the gate.

A car breaks hard and BLASTS its horn as it nearly knocks him down. Schmidt raises his stick aggressively as the DRIVER curses him out.

Now everyone's eyes are on Schmidt. One of the guards steps towards him.

EMBASSY GUARD
Sir, are you ok?

Schmidt stares at the guy, notices the logo on his dark blue shirt. He can't believe it: 'Fortis Security'

EMBASSY GUARD (CONT'D)
Sir? Sir, can I help you?

SCHMIDT
(backing away)
No.

He turns and hastily walks away.

After a few paces he catches sight of A BLACK ARMORED SUBURBAN heading down the street towards the embassy. Instinctively he turns away.

As it passes and turns into the embassy he catches a glimpse of the guy in the front passenger seat: it's Kieft.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Schmidt wanders in deep thought, unaware of his surroundings.

His eyes fall onto a SIGN displaying international calling rates outside an Internet cafe packed with STUDENTS and BACKPACKERS.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, AMERICAN EMBASSY - DAY

An EMBASSY STAFFER leads Duke through the doors. Waldman and Kieft two steps behind. Numerous meetings are taking place at once. Center amongst the ADVISORS and EMBASSY STAFFERS, projecting a calm authority is

AMBASSADOR JOHN FARNSWORTH.

Farnsworth wraps up his discussion, gets to his feet and is led by his AIDE towards the door.

EMBASSY STAFFER
John, this is Eric Duke of Fortis Security.

Farnsworth shakes Duke's hand.

FARNSWORTH
Your boys are doing a great job.

DUKE
I'll personally be escorting you over the next few days to see if there's anyway we can improve on our service.

FARNSWORTH
I like that. It's my experience that you have to maintain a close relationship to the front line.

As Farnsworth is whisked out of the room, Duke's phone BUZZES. An unidentified number. He answers.

DUKE
Duke.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. INTERNET CAFE, DAMASCUS - DAY

Schmidt, ensconced in one of the many TELEPHONE BOOTHS.

SCHMIDT
How'd you like my old friend John
Farnsworth?

DUKE
Schmidt.

Duke's eyes catch Waldman and Kieft.

SCHMIDT
We go way back, nearly twenty years.
Can't wait to see him.

DUKE
Ambassador Farnsworth is a busy man.
I don't think you're going to get to
meet with him.

SCHMIDT
When I say I'm going to do something,
I do it.

Schmidt hangs up and scowls at a BACKPACKER crowding him.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
Do you mind?

The backpacker scrams. Schmidt reaches into his pocket for something:

His old family PHOTO, miraculously still in his possession.

He flattens it out, wipes the blood off. Stares at the image his daughter, Stacey.

Flips it over: a TELEPHONE NUMBER with an 8-6-5 area code written on the back.

He punches the number into the handset.

After a couple of RINGS it switches to answer machine:

STACEY (O.S.)
Hi, this is Stacey. Leave a message
and a number and I'll call you back.

BEEP...

Schmidt sighs, about to hang-up, then:

SCHMIDT
Stacey. It's Larry, your father...

INT. RECEPTION, AFAMIA HOTEL - EVENING

Schmidt enters.

DESK CLERK
(Syrian accent)
Hello. Did you have any luck finding
your bags?

The MUTED TV behind the CLERK is tuned to AL JAZEERA NEWS.
ENGLISH SUBTITLES run along the bottom of the screen.

SCHMIDT
No...no, in fact I just went to the
Embassy to see about getting new
passports.

The NEWS REPORT catches his eye: peace talks in Damascus
between Syria and Israel, brokered by the United States...

NEWS ANCHOR
(subtitles on TV)
*...If the Israeli delegation thinks
al-Ahmed is stalling, then this could
be a headache for US Ambassador
Farnsworth.*

DESK CLERK
You and your daughter will be staying
another night?

Schmidt is captivated as Farnsworth appears on screen...

NEWS ANCHOR
(Subtitles on TV)
--Talks continue tomorrow.

SCHMIDT
What? ...Yes.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, AFAMIA HOTEL - DAY

Schmidt steps through the door. Torres is fully dressed,
ready to roll.

TORRES
What happened? Are we going?

SCHMIDT
No. Er, yes. Tomorrow.

TORRES
You're lying. Why tomorrow? What
are we waiting for?

SCHMIDT
It's not that simple.

TORRES
I just want to go home!

SCHMIDT
Just calm down, we're--

TORRES
--What's wrong?

SCHMIDT
Nothing's wrong.

TORRES
When do we go in?

SCHMIDT
Tomorrow.

TORRES
When tomorrow?

SCHMIDT
In the morning. ...He's going to
call me.

TORRES
Call here, the hotel?

SCHMIDT
No, I mean, I have to call him.
(off her look)
You have to trust me.

TORRES
Wha--?

SCHMIDT
--You have to trust me. Just one
more day.

TORRES
You promise?

SCHMIDT

Yes, I promise. I promise I'm going
to get you home.

Crestfallen, she parks herself on her bed and picks up the remote.

Schmidt sits on the edge of his bed with his back to her. He removes his glasses, rubs his tired eyes. As he stares out through the balcony doors, the mournful CALL TO EVENING PRAYER strikes up across the old city...

As if summoning him to fulfill his own deeply personal mission. The tension in his face melts away, his eyes focus on a point way, way off in the distance...

EXT. AMERICAN EMBASSY, DAMASCUS - DAWN

It's a beautiful morning. Sprinklers water the lawns around the grounds. The heavy gates at the entrance are drawn back. The DAY SHIFT replaces the NIGHT SHIFT.

EXT. AFAMIA HOTEL, DAMASCUS, SYRIA - DAY

Schmidt steps out, surveys the street then hails a taxi.

A TAXI pulls over. Schmidt opens the door then signals.

Torres steps out of the hotel in a sun hat and shades and jumps in the back of the car.

INT. TAXI

Schmidt jumps in after her. The car pulls away.

TAXI DRIVER

(Syria accent)

You want to see museum? Market?

SCHMIDT

Al Mansour Street.

(to Torres)

Wind your window up.

INT. FARNSWORTH'S OFFICE, AMERICAN EMBASSY - DAY

Farnsworth slips on his jacket as he dictates notes to his SECRETARY, pauses to add cream to his coffee at the breakfast cart.

FARNSWORTH
 (dictating)
 --It's not something we can ignore.
 Faced with the uncertainty of--

An EMBASSY STAFFER enters with Duke.

FARNSWORTH (CONT'D)
 Good morning. ...Breakfast?

DUKE
 No thank you, sir.

FARNSWORTH
 (continuing dictating)
 Faced with the uncertainty of...

EXT. AL MANSOUR STREET, DAMASCUS - DAY

The taxi pulls over. Schmidt steps out, casts his eyes around, then Torres gets out.

Together they walk down the street, then disappears down a narrow lane into...

INT. COVERED MARKET

Just like any of the western TOURISTS exploring the souq, except they show no interest in the stalls.

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY - DAY

Farnsworth strolls along the corridor chatting with his aide. Duke in front of him, Kieft and Waldman at the rear.

WALDMAN
 (into radio)
 Coming down.

INT. COVERED MARKET

Schmidt and Torres exit the other end of the market...

Enter a walk-through tunnel...

Emerge into...

EXT. CAFE-LINED STREET

Schmidt gazes one way, then the other. He takes in the STREET VENDORS lining the curb with their sweet-smell foods, a group of TOURISTS following their GUIDE, a TELEPHONE KIOSK.

SCHMIDT

Over here.

Schmidt leads her to one of the cafes. A table open to the street.

TORRES

(looking around)

I'm not getting a good feeling.

SCHMIDT

Hard to kill someone in public space without it being a big deal.

TORRES

Great. Now what?

SCHMIDT

We wait.

He's on edge, uncertain. She's never seen him like this.

TORRES

That's the plan?

SCHMIDT

For now.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT, AMERICAN EMBASSY

Two armored Suburban's are waiting, a team of SECURITY CONTRACTORS attached to each.

Duke, Kieft and Waldman escort Farnsworth and his aide towards the waiting vehicles.

Duke opens the door of the REAR VEHICLE for Farnsworth. Jumps in after him. Keift gets in the front passenger seat of the LEAD VEHICLE.

The Suburbans pull away. Drive up the ramp into daylight.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Schmidt keeps glancing at the road over Torres's shoulder.

TORRES
Did he recognize you?

SCHMIDT
What?

TORRES
The ambassador dude, Farnsworth.
When you met him yesterday.

SCHMIDT
Sure.

TORRES
Kind of a surprised, I bet. Walk
straight out of the sandbox and
through his front door.

SCHMIDT
Yeah.

TORRES
Like, fuck..?!

Her cursing gets his attention.

SCHMIDT
You should order something.

TORRES
You want to eat? Now?

SCHMIDT
This might take a while.

She looks at him quizzically as he fiddles with the clip-on shades fastened to his glasses. Maybe it's the aroma wafting over from the street vendors, but food suddenly sounds like a good idea.

TORRES
(picks up menu)
Y'know what's crazy? I grew up on
rice and beans--yeah, big surprise--
wanted anything but rice and beans.
But right now I'd die for a big bowl
of rice and beans, like mami used to
make us. Sundays she'd get up early
and be cooking. I'd wake up, the
whole house would smell of *sofritos*.
In your clothes, in your hair.

She glances over to him, sees a patch of blood seeping through his shirt.

TORRES (CONT'D)
That dressing needs changing, you're
bleeding again.

He doesn't hear her, his eyes are fixed on the Suburbans
turning out of the embassy gates and heading there way.

TORRES (CONT'D)
(re menu)
What is this stuff? You ever tasted
any of this shit?

SCHMIDT
(getting to his feet)
I'm going to call him, there's a pay
phone over there.

Schmidt moves with singular purpose towards the phone kiosk.

Torres looks up. Strange. He's left his baseball cap and
clip-on shades on the table.

Suddenly, fear grips her. She turns, sees the

BLACK SUBURBANS.

Sensing their presence, Schmidt glances back but continues
on his path.

Suddenly Schmidt EXPLODES WITH RAGE, altering his course,
charging like a bull into a vendors stall, sending the cart
and boiling oil into the road.

As the oil ignites, FLAMES jump up at the lead Suburban.

INT. LEAD SUBURBAN

Kieft's eyes are out on stalks as the Suburban powers through.

INT. REAR SUBURBAN

As the vehicle breaks to avoid the vendors cart. Duke
struggling to grasp the situation.

EXT. CAFE-LINED STREET

As everyone dives for cover, Schmidt darts out between the
vehicles, braces himself as

BAMMMM!!!

THE REAR SUBURBAN PLOWS STRAIGHT INTO HIM.

INT. REAR SUBURBAN

Schmidt bounces up onto the hood, his body obliterating the view before gravity takes it down.

SCHMIDT
FARNSWORTH!!!

Duke and Farnsworth cannot believe their eyes: the unmistakable face of Schmidt as he desperately clings to the windshield wipers.

FARNSWORTH
Larry Schmidt???

DUKE
Schmidt! Stop the car!

FARNSWORTH
Stop the car!

The Suburban breaks sharply.

Schmidt flies off the hood, disappears from view.

EXT. CAFE-LINED STREET

Pandemonium.

Torres is knocked off her feet as PEOPLE flee the scene.

Duke leaps out of the Suburban in a blind rage, gun in hand.

Keift in the lead vehicle mounts the curb and spins around.

INT. REAR SUBURBAN

Farnsworth follows Duke out the door.

DRIVER
Sir, stay in the car!

But Farnsworth is already off and running.

DRIVER (CONT'D)
Fuck!

The driver draws his pistol and goes after him.

EXT. CAFE-LINED STREET

Contractors run around like headless chickens with their weapons drawn. Duke's gone against all Standard Operational Procedures, so now some contractors move to PROTECT FARNSWORTH while others work to SECURE THE AREA.

Kieft leaps out of his Suburban, his rifle aimed at Schmidt lying inert in the middle of the street.

SCHMIDT'S P.O.V:

A fractured world, barely audible. Vague shapes and forms. Muffled shouts and screams.

His hand comes into focus, drenched in blood. Raises his head. His glasses, broken and bent out of shape, hanging off his face.

One of the dark shapes looms closer, comes into focus...

It's Duke, his pistol aimed straight at him.

FARNSWORTH (O.S.)
STOP! Hold your fire!

Farnsworth pushes past Duke and goes to aid Schmidt.

FARNSWORTH (CONT'D)
Get some help here! Medic!
(to Schmidt)
'Hell you doing, Schmidt?!
(to Duke)
Get some help!

It takes a moment for Farnsworth to realize that Duke and Kieft remain with their weapons levelled.

Cleared of people, only the security contractors remain. Farnsworth's driver glances over, nervous, confused. Farnsworth glares back.

FARNSWORTH (CONT'D)
Get on that radio! We need an
ambulance. NOW!

The driver breaks away, speaks into his radio.

The other contractors take reassurance from his lead, confident that chain of command has been re-established.

TORRES (O.S.)
Nooo! Don't kill him!

As Torres comes running down the street towards them. A CONTRACTOR grabs her as she tries to break through.

TORRES (CONT'D)
Don't kill him! Please, don't..!

Schmidt responds to her voice, locking eyes with Farnsworth.

FARNSWORTH
Let her through!

She pushes through, disregarding her own safety. Duke steps back, re-trains his weapon on her as she crouches down next to Schmidt.

TORRES
GET SOME HELP HERE! WE NEED HELP!

Kieft looks to Duke for leadership but sees a man increasingly isolated.

TORRES (CONT'D)
(to Schmidt)
Don't go dying on me now! You can't,
we're not home yet.

Schmidt gazes up at her and Farnsworth as WE hear SIRENS approaching. He's smiling.

Farnsworth leans in as Schmidt tries to speak.

SCHMIDT
...Don't let her out of your sight.

Farnsworth struggles to piece it together. Schmidt grips his friends arms.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
Keep her safe.

Farnsworth nods, trusting Schmidt implicitly.

The tables turned, Kieft weighs his options...

Re-trains his rifle onto Duke:

DUKE
You little fuck!

KIEFT
Drop your weapon. Drop it!

DUKE
You the boss now, eh?
(MORE)

DUKE (CONT'D)

The big guy with your finger on the trigger? You don't have the balls.

Duke suddenly becomes aware that the other contractors have followed Kieft's lead, aiming their weapons at him.

KIEFT

DROP IT!

Game over. Duke drop his pistol.

Everything now seems to move like clockwork. Contractors take Duke to the ground...

PARAMEDICS rush in...

WE pull away, rising up over the scene.

INT. TORRES HOUSE, EAST LOS ANGELES - DAY

Antonio has his face pressed against the window. Suddenly he lights up.

As he runs to the door:

ANTONIO

She's here! Grandma!

EXT. TORRES HOUSE, EAST LOS ANGELES

The dark grey town car attracts curious looks from the NEIGHBORS. Their hostile gaze turns to pride as one of their own, Private LaVena Torres, steps out of the car wearing a fresh army uniform.

Torres rushes to her front door as the two MP's escorting her wait at the car.

Antonio is already out the door and flying into her arms.

ANTONIO

Mom!!!

She holds him tightly, overwhelmed with joy, smothering him with her love.

TORRES

I missed you so much!

INT. RECEPTION, PALMISIANO'S OFFICES, WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

FBI AGENTS swoop in. The RECEPTIONIST picks up the phone but freezes when she sees their badges.

INT. PALMISIANO'S OFFICES, WASHINGTON D.C.

Shocked OFFICE WORKERS get to their feet as FBI agents sweep through the cubicles.

Palmisiano is shredding documents as the agents break into his OFFICE. He raises his hands on seeing their drawn guns.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB GOLF COURSE - DAY

FBI agents stream onto the green, interrupting Jed Carson's game of golf. His fellow GOLFERS are surprised and slightly outraged by their appearance, but Carson is not.

EXT. TITAN HOLDINGS GROUP HQ - DAY

NEWS CREWS representing all the major networks broadcast from the steps of an imposing corporate office building.

REPORTERS corner THG EMPLOYEES as they enter the building.

FADE TO BLACK:

A door opens, revealing...

EXT. SCHMIDT'S HOUSE - DAY

LaVena Torres and Antonio standing on the door step as STACEY, Schmidt's daughter, greets them.

STACEY

Hi!

A moment. They've each heard so much about each other but this is the first time they've actually met.

STACEY (CONT'D)

I'm Stacey. This must be Antonio.
Come on in!

INT. SCHMIDT'S HOUSE

As Stacey leads them through the house:

STACEY

...I keep reminding him what the doctor said, but does he listen?

TORRES

No, of course not!

STACEY

Since they bolted him back together he thinks he's invincible.

As they step out into...

EXT. BACK YARD, SCHMIDT'S HOUSE

It's Fourth of July, flags everywhere.

Torres takes in the scene: Stacey's husband, DANNY, at the grill with his eldest DAUGHTER.

STACEY

Danny, this is LaVena Torres.

DANNY

We've heard a lot about you. All over the news.

Torres casts her eyes across the garden. Sees Schmidt.

She watches as he throws a football to one of his two GRANDCHILDREN, leaning heavily on his stick as he tries to keep up with them. Same old Schmidt, but now playfully messing around.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN (V.O. PRELAP)

The chair will now call Private First Class LaVena Torres.

Schmidt turns and sees her. They share a look, then he raises his hand, taps his forehead in a little salute. She returns the gesture, one war veteran to another.

INT. SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING, WASHINGTON DC - DAY

Torres's FOOTSTEPS on the marble floor echo through the cavernous committee room, a step up in magnitude from the committee hearing we previously saw.

Every seat is taken. The air heavy with anticipation.

All eyes are on Torres as she walks tall down the isle in her pristine army dress uniform.

She remains poised, staring straight ahead as PHOTOGRAPHERS capture every step and gesture.

She comes to a halt in front of the CHAIRMAN and COMMITTEE MEMBERS, twelve in all, gazing down at her.

To her right sits a team of ARMY LAWYERS and ADVISERS. To her left, the team of LAWYERS from TOP EXECUTIVES from TGH already looking defeated.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Thank you Private Torres for appearing before the committee today.

TORRES

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Please raise your right hand.

(she does so)

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give this committee is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

TORRES

I do.