

SAND DOGS

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November 6, 2009

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OVER BLACK

The stuttering THUD of helicopter blades accompanied by the high pitched DRONE of an engine.

We see a cluster of PIXELS fill the screen.

Flickering in black and white is a helicopter's AERIAL VIEW - 200 feet up - with an INFRARED overlay. A string of data coordinates scroll along the lower edge of the frame, next to HEBREW text.

ON SCREEN: Security vehicles with white ARABIC numbers on their roofs kick up dust as they screech to a halt between boxy, flat-topped apartment buildings.

ARABIC VOICE (O.S.)
(Filtered)
Repeat. Ten-double zero. We have an officer down!

Bursts of GUNFIRE streak from the rooftop of an 8-story building block. Bullets PELT the ground in a spray of dust.

The monitor image pans over to reveal a lone DARK FIGURE pacing on the roof.

ISRAELI PILOT (O.S.)
(Filtered)
Visual on Ten-29. Permission for IAF 23 to fire?

AMERICAN VOICE (O.S.)
(Filtered)
Negative. Palestinian Authority Police jurisdiction. Observe and report only.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - RIMAL APT COMPLEX - GAZA CITY - SIMULTANEOUS

A row of armed PALESTINIAN POLICE OFFICERS in dark green uniforms run up against a side wall.

A YOUNG OFFICER peers around the corner at the courtyard: his PARTNER writhes on the ground, wounded - and fully exposed. The young officer hesitates. Scared.

CUT TO:

INT. CONTROL VAN - RIMAL APT. COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

A make-shift surveillance vehicle. Painted-over windows. Improvised technology. Three people in headsets hunch in front of monitors. In the center - hemmed in by his Palestinian colleagues - is a lone American, GRANT MATHESON - 40s, his former varsity physique soft around the edges from 20-plus years of drinking. He barks into his headset.

GRANT

What the fuck is he waiting for?
Go! Go! Go!

A voice in Arabic translates as we -

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - RIMAL APT. COMPLEX - GAZA CITY - CONTINUOUS

Officer #1 rushes out to retrieve his partner under a hail of BULLET FIRE from atop the building.

INT. 2ND FLOOR STAIRWELL - RIMAL APT. COMPLEX - SIMULTANEOUS

A wiry Palestinian woman, 25, in a yellow printed tunic, holding her baby peers into the hallway.

WOMAN

What is happening?

A dozen ARMED OFFICERS storm their way up the stairwell. She SCREAMS.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - SIMULTANEOUS

As Officer #1 drags his partner around the corner, his left shoulder EXPLODES in a gunshot.

EXT. CITY ROOFTOPS - GAZA CITY - DAY - HELICOPTER AERIAL VIEW

VOICE (O.S.)

Second offer down. Ten double-zero.

The blurry black figure stops firing. He turns and disappears behind a gray block of pixels on the roof.

PILOT (O.S.)

(Filtered)

Subject is entering the North stairwell. Negative on visual.

PRE-LAP: The sound of BANGING.

INT. 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY - RIMAL APT. COMPLEX

We're up close with THE SHOOTER: young eyes behind a ski mask, in a red Manchester United soccer shirt and jeans. He clutches a Kalashnikov as he BANGS on locked doors, one after another.

No one answers.

He hears the POUNDING of boots approaching in the stairwell.

Desperate, he selects a random door. Apartment 501. He SHOTS open the lock - SPARKS SPLINTER - and RAMS it open.

INT. APT 501 - 5TH FLOOR - SIMULTANEOUS

A half-finished cup of tea sits next to cereal bowls with milk on the table.

A FAMILY OF FIVE huddles in the corner of their kitchen as the door BURSTS open. They're terrified. Heaving. Shaking.

The YOUNGEST BOY breaks off from the family, runs into the coat closet and HIDES.

INT. 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY - RIMAL APT. COMPLEX

The officers move swiftly down the hallway, their boots CLATTERING on the concrete. The LEAD OFFICER spots the gunshot-splintered lock on Apartment 501.

The clatter stops. They congregate outside the door.

INT. APT 501 - SIMULTANEOUS

The man stands there, with the family huddled around him like a shield. The youngest girl begins to WAIL.

SHOOTER
(in Arabic)
Quiet!

He grabs her tight in front of him, smothering her mouth with his forearm.

EXT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Lead Officer lifts up three fingers silently. We can just about hear the TINNY sound of the American barking orders through his headset.

GRANT

Hold! Hold! Check for -

The man flicks his earpiece out. He counts down. 3 - 2 - 1 -

CRAAACK! They BURST into the apartment and -

A STORM OF GUNFIRE. FLASHES. BULLET CASINGS FALL TO THE FLOOR.

TINKLE. TINKLE. SILENCE.

It's all over in seconds.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - RIMAL APT COMPLEX - LATER

We pull out, high above, and survey the aftermath. The two wounded officers are carried on stretchers across the courtyard into an ambulance.

A SECOND AMBULANCE, C105, also branded with a red crescent moon and star, SCREECHES to halt, kicking up dirt.

From the cloud of dust emerge: RAND DAVID-MAYER - 25, American, clean-cut, in medical uniform, with fresh sutures on his brow - and SIMON RUSSELL (nicknamed STRIKER - we'll find out why later) - late 30s, British, rumped, unshaven.

PRELAP:

POLICE OFFICER'S RADIO (O.S.)

(Filtered)

We're clear for medics.

INT. 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY - RIMAL APT COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Rand and Striker pass body bags being carried out: two larger ones and a very small one - as Grant curses out the Lead Officer down the hallway.

Bloody boot-prints lead away from the front door to a red-faced Palestinian officer trying to hide his tears. He mumbles something to Striker as he walks by.

INT. APT 501 - RIMAL APT COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

A man in a red Manchester United T-shirt is slumped in a crumpled heap against the wall. A young girl is held frozen, trapped in an arm lock in front of him. The Shooter makes WHEEZING, CHOKING noises. He has been shot multiple times in the chest.

The girl is silent. Cold. Her hair is matted red.

Rand tries not to wretch.

The CORONER'S MEN extract the body of the girl from the man's grip.

Striker gestures for Rand to come closer.

STRIKER

Look, you can see the cerebellum.

Rand hesitates. Striker looks at him like he's a pussy.

Rand peers around the head of the girl, pulling her hair aside. There's a 4 inch exit wound in the skull. And surely enough, there it is: the pink, cauliflower-like mass of brain, that Rand had only seen in the pages of books.

Striker shifts to the face and shines a penlight into the girl's lifeless eyes.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

See that?

Rand notices tiny red pinpoint contusions in the girl's conjunctiva.

RAND

Petechiae. Consistent with asphyxiation.

Striker nods with approval. He looks to the red-faced officer.

STRIKER

It wasn't the bullet that did it.

The girl is taken away and ZIPPED into a small body bag.

Striker squats near The Shooter examining the bandana that wraps Arabic lettering around his face.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Gaza Martyrs Brigade.

Rand and Striker exchange a look. Striker pulls up the cloth to look at his face. He's a young kid. Probably 16.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You know who lives next door in
502?

Rand shrugs.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
An 85 year-old spinster. But he
happened to pick a family of four.
That's chance for you.

Rand and Striker stare at the killer for the briefest of moments, taking in the senselessness of it all, before they both snap back into auto-pilot paramedic mode.

Rand does some quick tests. He lifts the man's hand to take a pulse. The man's right hand is open and bleeding at the knuckles where the police have smashed the gun out of it - the left hand remains clenched shut, in a fist. There's a weak pulse.

RAND
Some sort of motor deficiency.
Muscle spasm? Paralysis?

STRIKER
Check his pupils.

A flashlight illuminates the irises of the killer. Rand tries not to look for very long, as if something might still be lurking there. The dark blot contracts.

RAND
There's brain activity.

LEAD OFFICER
Make sure he survives. We'll need
him for interrogation.

Rand intubates the man and covers his mouth with a manual ventilator bag. He's quick, efficient.

Rand assists Striker as they carefully lift the blood-soaked man onto an unfolded stretcher.

As they carry The Shooter out. Rand spots a row of sandals arranged along the wall near the front door peppered with bullet casings.

Something is not right.

RAND
Did you say a family of four?

He pauses.

Striker looks at him and sees what Rand sees: a worn black pair of men's loafers, a larger pair of women's sandals and THREE pairs of little sandals.

That's FIVE.

Striker freezes for a moment. They lower the stretcher.

STRIKER
Everybody quiet.

He stands in the middle of the room, listening.

He slowly walks across the apartment, his eyes trailing a spray of bullet-holes across the wall and across the closet door.

Striker opens the closet open to reveal:

A 5 YEAR-OLD BOY, hiding between coats. Unconscious.

He has been hit by an errant bullet in his side.

But he's still breathing.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Who fucking prepped this place?

CUT TO:

**INT. RED CRESCENT AMBULANCE C105 - COURTYARD - RIMAL APT
COMPLEX - LATER**

WADI, 47, a lanky Palestinian Authority Police Officer, helps Rand mount The Shooter's stretcher into the ambulance. Striker lays the boy down on the other side of his family's killer.

As STRIKER starts to drive, Rand rapidly runs an IV line into the boy's arm, pushing saline and morphine into his veins. Wadi grabs onto the handrail, getting his balance.

Rand turns a dial on the wall connected to a transparent tube and places an oxygen mask over the boy.

RAND
The kid's stable.

He does the same for the Shooter.

The ambulance jounces as Rand begins to cut away the Shooter's T-shirt and the leg of his jeans to treat the multiple gunshot wounds.

Underneath the blood-darkened denim, he finds something curious - another layer: a thick, blood-soaked green cloth, wrapped tightly around the man's thigh. The blood looks like black ink against the green fabric.

The Shooter spasms for a moment. His blood pressure is falling.

Rand stops. The man's arm is flexing, involuntarily, perhaps. His left fist - still clenched shut - shudders violently.

Rand pushes it back down, suppressing the convulsion and tries to strap the man's fist underneath the stretcher belt - but he feels something catch in his grip.

He slowly turns the man's hand in his.

There's a WIRE running from his closed fist down into his sleeve...

...and down into the wrapping around his thigh.

Rand freezes. His composure evaporates.

It's an IED.

Rand keeps his hand firmly gripped around the man's fist. He looks up to Striker in the driver's seat.

RAND (CONT'D)
Striker. Stop the bus.

Rand begins to hyperventilate. He can't help it.

STRIKER
What? You need to throw up already?

Unknowing, he chuckles.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
That's a record. You've been here, what, 48 hours?

RAND
Stop the bus. I'm serious.

Rand begins to shake.

RAND (CONT'D)
He has a wire.

Striker turns around. In a second, the situation lands on his face.

STRIKER
Rand, listen to me. Just...keep him stable. Could be a pressure trigger. Hold his fist closed.

Officer Wadi puts the pieces together, terrified.

OFFICER WADI
Stop the vehicle! Now!

Striker keeps driving.

STRIKER
We're in a densely populated area.

He passes a market. Beads of sweat bloom across Rand's forehead.

OFFICER WADI
I need to call for back-up. Let me off!

No one responds. Rand's hands are becoming slick with perspiration. He's watching the systolic of the man fall.

The Shooter's body shudders.

OFFICER WADI (CONT'D)
I have a family. I need to get out!

Officer Wadi aims his gun at the Shooter's head.

OFFICER WADI (CONT'D)
Move!

RAND
Listen, his hand has reflexed shut - him staying alive is the only thing keeping us from being spread all over the road.

Wadi shifts his handgun to Striker.

OFFICER WADI
I'm ordering you stop the vehicle.

Striker doesn't flinch.

OFFICER WADI (CONT'D)
Now!

He cocks the handgun -

But the traffic stops the vehicle for him. It's a red light.

Cars idle in front of them and behind them. No one has pulled over for the ambulance. That's Gaza for you.

Striker BLARES the SIREN, honks the HORN and FLASHES his lights but there's no room to squeeze by. A sea of people in vehicles all around them, stopped in traffic.

Striker grabs the radio.

STRIKER

Dispatch, this is C105, we have a
Ten-99. I need a bomb Squad. Gaza
Old Quarter. On Juffair. Ten-99.
Now!

A white-frosted little girl in the backseat of the car in front stares at Striker through the rear window. She hides her head behind the seat and pops back up again as if to engage Striker in a game.

Rand glances out through the rear doors as women in abayas cross past the back of ambulance holding plastic bags of groceries; chatting; holding their children; haggling over prices.

The world is oblivious to how close they are to being obliterated. Possibly seconds away.

The traffic light seems to spend an eternity on red. Wadi reaches for the rear door of the ambulance...

OFFICER WADI

I'm sorry. I have a family.

...and LEAPS OUT into the street.

RAND

Take the kid!

But he's gone, leaving the wounded boy and the ambulance's doors open to the road.

The bustling COMMOTION of the market spills into the tense silence of the ambulance.

The light turns green.

Striker accelerates out of the busy district, the open rear doors FLAPPING about.

Medication bottles and plastic syringes fall off shelves and roll past Rand's feet off the back of the ambulance as the vehicle TEARS through the streets.

But the Shooter's fingers begin to twitch. He's fading. Fast.

RAND (CONT'D)

Striker, stop the bus, take the boy
and get out of here.

STRIKER

No.

RAND

I'm going to let go and try to run
for it. But I need you as far away
as possible, in case -

STRIKER

We're going to get you out of this.

RAND

If anything happens, call my
parents.

STRIKER

You think I'm going to let you
wreck my ambulance again?

RAND

Call them. Their number is on my
form at the clinic. Tell them I'm
sorry I was such a fuck up.

Striker drives into an empty lot. He stops the ambulance
carefully.

STRIKER

I'm not leaving you with this
motherfucker.

Striker jumps through the back doors.

Rand smiles, sweat - or are they tears? - streaming down his
face.

Striker slowly puts his hands around Rand's.

He whispers, gripping tight.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Let me take it. You take the boy.

RAND

No.

STRIKER

Don't worry. I have it, just slip your hands out. We're going to be okay.

Rand looks at Striker. For the first time, Striker's eyes are clear as he looks straight back at him. Not red, not bloodshot, but calm.

RAND

Okay, boss.

They stand there over the body, hands clasped together, almost like they're in prayer.

Just then: the approaching DRONE of heavy engines, SIRENS and tires CRUNCHING over gravel.

EXT. EMPTY LOT - OLD QUARTER - GAZA CITY - HIGH ANGLE

Military vehicles pull in around the parked ambulance in a 100 foot ring. A man in a heavy kevlar suit lumbers towards the ambulance's open doors.

The BOMB SQUAD has arrived.

INT. AMBULANCE - SIMULTANEOUS

STRIKER

Now light me a cigarette while I wait for these fuckers to get me out of this.

Rand smiles.

CUT TO:

TITLE: THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY

EXT. OVERHEAD - DELTA CHECKPOINT - NAHAL 'OZ CROSSING, ISRAEL - MORNING

We pan down from jet trails in the sky.

Loud Jordanian pop music. Men and women's voices argue on Arabic talk radio. The news crackles in Hebrew.

A dozen clashing radio stations BLARE out of -

Cars, jeeps and scooters - a row of them - idling in front of stubborn gray slabs of concrete three stories high, thorned with razor wire. Solid. Impenetrable. Like a dam.

ISRAELI SOLDIERS - barely out of their teens and armed with assault rifles - pace around a TAXI waiting at the base of the wall.

**EXT. BASE OF THE WALL - DELTA CHECKPOINT - NAHAL 'OZ
CROSSING, ISRAEL - CONTINUOUS**

Inside the taxi, RAND - here, dressed like a tourist and without the scruff that belies his boyish good-looks. He sits next to a duffle bag, shirt-unbuttoned, sweating, looking out at:

A row of PEDESTRIANS fenced off in a cage leading to an 8-foot metal turnstile. Rand's taxi driver, ADMON, balding, 50, yells out the car window in Hebrew.

ADMON
What's the hold up?

The pedestrian at the front of the line - a WOMAN in a hijab and dark jeans - won't let go of her CAMERA. She is SLAMMED in the shoulder with a rifle. Her scarf comes undone revealing her BLONDE HAIR. This is IRIS BERINGER, 33, German, the kind of woman who likes to put up a fight, especially when she can't use her sex appeal.

Hesitant at first, Rand jumps out of his idling taxi to help. He runs over to the soldier. BAD idea.

CUT TO:

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - SPACEMAKER - DELTA CHECKPOINT -
MOMENTS LATER**

Rand sits at a table illuminated by harsh fluorescent tubes, one of which blinks incessantly.

An oscillating fan in the corner intermittently is aimed at CAPTAIN LIOR - a portly, middle-aged man in an olive green Israeli Defence Force (IDF) uniform.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE MACHINERY OF A HIGH-TECH ID CARD MACHINE (VISUAL ONLY)

Rollers suck in a rectangle of blue plastic --

CAPTAIN LIOR (V.O.)
You were two seconds away from
causing an international incident.

A silver-brown data strip is rolled onto the card ---

RAND (V.O.)
I was trying to prevent the young
lady from getting hurt.

A laser etches a hologram into the plastic -

CAPTAIN LIOR (V.O.)
There are rules, Mr. David-Mayer.
Hamas is targeting photographers,
so you need clearance from the
Ministry of Information. No
clearance. No pictures. It's for
her own protection.

RAND (V.O.)
Of course.

A tiny nozzle, sweeps back-and-forth across the surface of
the card, creating an image - a FACE ---

CAPTAIN LIOR (V.O.)
You're here getting an EMT
certification from the Red Cross?

RAND (V.O.)
I guess that's what it says on the
form. What's this?

The nozzle prints a birth date: "7-11-80", a country of
origin "USA" and a stream of digits --

CAPTAIN LIOR (V.O.)
It's a waiver. To ensure that you
are aware of the all the risks and
that you, your family or your State
Department will not hold Israel
accountable if you are shot or
bombed or otherwise injured.

A wafer-thin sheet of acrylic FUSES to the surface of the
card.

CAPTAIN LIOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This is a big liability for us
especially with someone like you.

The ID card - with Rand's photo - pops out of the machine.

CUT TO:

INT. SPACEMAKER - DELTA CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

Captain Lior hands Rand his shiny new BLUE transit ID.

CAPTAIN LIOR (CONT'D)
Once you cross, we will treat you
like any other Palestinian. Your
connections are useless beyond this
point. Don't try any stunts.

EXT. DELTA CHECKPOINT - NAHAL 'OZ CROSSING, ISRAEL - LATER

A mirror sweeps under a vehicle.

The mud-encrusted axle of a car reflects into it.

Sand-caked fingernails examine Rand's shiny blue ID in the sunlight. The hologram morphs over his boyish face.

The trunk slams shut.

CHECKPOINT SOLDIER
Clear!

The soldier BANGS on the side of the taxi as his PARTNER hands the transit ID through the rear window to Rand.

Sitting beside him is Iris - even with the sunburn, the unkempt hair, the unsmiling poker face, she's still astonishingly beautiful - her hardened eyes hide something soulful.

RAND
I got your film back.

She takes the spool from Rand without saying thanks.

RAND (CONT'D)
What's it for?

IRIS
A photo essay. On Palestinian
Christians for National Geographic.

The soldiers step aside as the sliding steel door in the wall GRINDS open, SHUDDERING on its tracks, REVEALING --

GAZA, PALESTINE - CONTINUOUS

The light is the same, but the world is completely different.

INT./EXT. TAXI - HIGHWAY 25

Angry graffiti and half-torn photos of men and women plaster the other side of the giant wall - a massive collage of graduation pictures and family portraits - posters of the missing and the dead. Iris CLICKS.

Rand catches the last sliver of Israel disappear as the metal gate BOOM shut behind them, when -

THUD - he is thrown to the right side of the taxi, his body SLAMS against the door. Iris tumbles into him. The taxi SKIDS and swerves as a battered pick-up loaded with young PALESTINIAN MEN speeds by, horn BLARING, flatbed CLANGING.

The taxi driver curses out the window as Rand and Iris awkwardly EXTRICATE themselves from one another.

RAND

You ok?

A long, awkward silence. Two suppressed smiles. The tension palpable as Iris lets her guard down for just a moment -

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ROOM 32 - DIPLOMAT HOTEL

Two tangled bodies slam against the yellowing wallpaper, still prying one another out of their sweaty clothes. Hands through hair. Snapping buttons. Bumping teeth.

And before they realize it, they're naked. They pause. Iris and Rand look at one another - and for a moment, contemplate the bizarreness of the situation - before continuing to devour each other, laughing.

INT. ROOM 32 - DIPLOMAT HOTEL - MORNING

Light filters through the yellow curtains. A woman's shoulder rests in frame. A hand reaches over.

RAND

I'm late.

IRIS

So go.

RAND
When do I see you again?

IRIS
I was horny. We fucked. That was it.

RAND
Is that how you greet all the new guys?

IRIS
Just the pretty ones.

RAND
Thanks.

She starts to collect her clothes, throwing the hotel soap on the bedside into her bag. Coming across the roll of film Rand retrieved for her -

IRIS
I didn't need you to save me.

She UNFURLS it - EXPOSING it to the light.

IRIS (CONT'D)
It's a dummy roll. A decoy.

She hunts down her left sneaker. Flipping out her swiss army knife, she plies the SOLE from it, revealing - in a space CARVED into the rubber - three hidden rolls of film.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Learned that trick from a bodyguard in Kosovo.

Rand is speechless.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Later, rookie.

And with that, she's gone, leaving Rand blindsided.

INT. DIPLOMAT HOTEL - MINUTES LATER

A squat, 1960's-style building clad in time-blackened limestone slabs and fat pillars wrapped in what look like little blue swimming pool tiles. At some point, this was a decent hotel.

The lobby consists of a television playing CNN, encircled by a few fraying red and yellow arm chairs from the '70s.

The RECEPTIONIST, a creaky Filipino man, fills out some paperwork as Rand impatiently taps against the chipped formica counter.

RECEPTIONIST

Your taxi will be here in a minute.

GRANT MATHESON - the American we met earlier in the make-shift surveillance vehicle - comes up alongside Rand. He tries to strike up a conversation.

GRANT

What are you in for?

RAND

Red Crescent. I'm a trainee medic.

GRANT

Wait.

He pauses for a moment, picking up the accent.

GRANT (CONT'D)

New York?

RAND

Yes.

GRANT

No fucking way! I'm from Brooklyn. Former NYPD. Now I'm a consultant for the State Department. We're trying to train the Palestinian Police farce.

RAND

Farce?

GRANT

Their motto: shoot first, look later. Wouldn't survive a day in NYC without a lawsuit.

They shake hands.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Grant Matheson.

RAND

Rand David-Mayer.

GRANT

David-Mayer like the Lester David-Mayer?

RAND
Yes.

GRANT
No kidding.

An awkward moment.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Trauma junkie, eh?

RAND
I guess I'll find out.

GRANT
Trying for med school?

RAND
Trying.

GRANT
I'm sure your Dad could pull some strings, eh?

The comment drops like a lead balloon. Rand doesn't respond.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Well, no kind of experience like Palestine. It's a shit show, alright.

The taxi horn BLARES outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. RED CRESCENT CLINIC/ HABARA ELEMENTARY - DAYR AL BALAH - GAZA - LATER

A man in a green jumpsuit scrapes the carcass of a dead animal into a bag. It looks like the corpse of a dog.

Rand steps out of the taxi. In front of him:

A utilitarian, single-story building with a slightly whimsical 1970's Corbusier look. The walls are white-washed concrete with rusty pink and baby blue metal shapes on the window railings. A faded and pock-marked Mickey and Minnie Mouse fresco out front.

The building is actually an old, bombed out elementary school, reclaimed as a medical clinic.

CUT TO:

INT. NONDESCRIPT OFFICE - RED CRESCENT CLINIC

A camera FLASH goes off.

Rand stands in front of a white wall. He blinks.

Rand's thumb in an inkpad.

A hand presses his fingers onto a red and white form.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - RED CRESCENT CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

An old classroom with wooden benches and lockers. Everything is small and low, designed for 10 year-olds. There's a blackboard on the wall with a weekly duty schedule and a list of names - one of them is Rand's.

NADIA CHABBANI, 33, an attractive Lebanese woman with a tightly-wound pony tail and French-tinged accent hands him a thick photocopied guide book.

NADIA

This is your lifeline. It's got a list of precautions and phone numbers for foreigners, social protocol, regulations, that sort of thing. And you'll need this -

She pulls out a green bullet-proof flak vest from a metal cabinet.

There's a large red cross taped to the back of the vest in red masking tape. It looks less like a logo and more like a target.

NADIA (CONT'D)

You're with bus number 108 in the bay. We hooked you up with Striker since he speaks English too. He'll be signing the ledger for your certification.

She starts to leave and then stops and turns.

NADIA (CONT'D)

Don't let him get to you.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - RED CRESCENT CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

A baby's CRY percolates through the dirty white-tiled walls.

Rand takes off his watch and winds it ten hours forward.

He hunches to see himself in the kids-height mirror, straightening his new uniform - black slacks, white shirt, a Red Crescent band on the sleeve. He clips his Red Crescent ID, complete with photo and thumbprint, to his pocket.

EXT. AMBULANCE BAY - RED CRESCENT CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

Two medics, KHALEED, 23, shaved head and RAFIQ, 35, short, with a goatee, slouch in yellowed plastic chairs watching a nubile young woman gyrate in an Egyptian pop video.

A cat stops in its tracks as Rand scans the semi-enclosed loading dock.

Three relatively modern ambulances - all donated by different European nations. Their Red Cross signs have been painted over with the *Red Crescent* logo but the inverted Dutch, French and German lettering are still visible underneath.

One of the vehicles has its rear doors open -

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - AMBULANCE BAY - RED CRESCENT CLINIC

A needle pierces the rubber cap of a small jar containing a clear liquid marked "Insulin".

We pull back. A man's puffy eyes are focused intently on his task. Crow's feet show years of wear. He kneels on the floor of the ambulance, a lit cigarette in his mouth.

He glances up at the clean-cut American in the doorway.

This man - *we encountered him earlier at the building shooting* - is the chain-smoker known as STRIKER from the box of Lucky Strikes permanently affixed inside his shirt pocket.

He returns his attention to the drooping Palestinian woman of 55 in front of him, slipping out the needle and swabbing her arm with an alcohol wipe.

As the woman hobbles away, Rand extends his hand out to the gruff, unshaven man in front of him.

RAND

Striker, yes? I'm your new partner,
Rand.

He notices that Striker's eyes are red. Like he's high, but not on life.

STRIKER

My new partner was supposed to be
here 15 minutes ago.

Striker takes off his rubber gloves and puts them, together
with the empty glass jar, in Rand's hand.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Incinerator bin's over there.

Suddenly, a jerry-rigged loudspeaker in the corner of the
ambulance bay SQUAWKS to life:

FEMALE VOICE

Attention. C-108. Urgent dispatch.
We have a Ten-56A. Khan Yunis. 55
Budaiya Road.

Striker quickly shuts the interior cabinets.

The speaker SQUAWKS again.

Striker SLAMS the rear ambulance doors, the large painted
crescent and the ambulance number stopping inches from Rand's
face.

STRIKER (O.S.)

Why are you just standing there?
You want me to run you over?
Because I will.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - AMBULANCE BAY - MOMENTS LATER

A large crack spiderwebs across the windshield from the
passenger side. It's from a rock or maybe a bullet.

Striker huffs as Rand scrambles into the passenger seat,
fumbling to put on his flak jacket and seat belt.

STRIKER

They taught you what the 'E' stands
for in E.M.T., right?

A/C roaring, Striker turns on the siren, hits the accelerator
and SQUEALS through the rusty gate into the street.

INT./EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - ROAD - DAYR AL BALAH - CONTINUOUS

They drive in silence as Striker chain smokes with one arm
dangling out the window.

STRIKER
Pass me that tape.

Striker gestures to the area between the seats. Rand shuffles through several cassette tapes stacked between empty water bottles, papers and a bedpan used as an ash-tray.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
The red one.

Rand pulls out a red tape scrawled "POWERSLAVE."

Striker pops the tape in, hits PLAY. The tape HISSES. The music starts with vaguely Egyptian rock chords...

RAND
So how long have you been here?
...but then the electric guitars hit...its IRON MAIDEN.

RAND (CONT'D)
I had one of these albums when I
was a kid - the one with the zombie-
Abruptly - Striker clicks off the cassette.

STRIKER
If you're going to keep
interrupting my music, why don't
you sing me a song.
Rand looks at Striker to make sure he's being serious. He is.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Yeah, go ahead. What music do you
like?

Rand struggles desperately to think of some music he might have in common with Striker.

RAND
Um, I like hard rock, like AC/DC...

STRIKER
What about show tunes?

RAND
Sure.

STRIKER
Like what?

RAND
 Um, my mother used to sing me
 "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" when I
 was a kid.

Striker slips into what seems like reverie.

STRIKER
 Sing it for me now. Go on, just
 like your mother used to.

Rand hesitates, embarrassed.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
 I've got your ledger right here.
 "Communication skills." Don't make
 me give you a zero.

Striker's not kidding. This is a test. Rand clears his throat-

RAND
 "Somewhere over the rainbow, way up
 high..."

STRIKER
 C'mon, louder! Like you really mean
 it!

Striker flips on the loudspeaker with the back of his hand.

RAND
 "There's a land that I heard of
 once in a lullaby..."

Unbeknownst to Rand, his little musical revue is being
 broadcast, not only back to the clinic but to the entire
 world outside.

RAND (CONT'D)
 "Some-where over the rain-bow,
 skies are blue..."

His shaking voice blasts out of the loudspeakers, drifting
 over arid, dusty streets that have barely ever seen rain, let
 alone a rainbow.

RAND (CONT'D)
 "And the dreams that you dare to
 dream, really do come true..."

Outside, a group of Palestinian police officers laugh from
 behind a roadblock, a kid stops to stare, a woman shakes her
 head. It dawns on Rand, but noting Striker's amusement, he
 ploughs ahead with his song -

As abruptly as he started - Striker flips off the mic.

STRIKER
Karaoke's over, kid.

He ejects the red tape, flips it over and pops it back in.

Iron Maiden once again BANGS through the speakers. No one speaks.

Striker nods towards the passing wreckage of a bombed-out building collapsed in on itself, it's lobby now a garden of weeds.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You've got to be able to come home
from a place like that, after an
attack, and be able to wipe off
whatever the fuck's on your boots
without a second thought. You ready
for that?

Rand ponders the notion.

RAND
I don't know.

STRIKER
You 'don't know'?

A beat.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Then get the fuck out of my
ambulance.

He literally stops the ambulance - right there - in the middle of the road.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Get out.

A stand-off. Rand doesn't budge.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Good. Then say "Yes, Boss." And
start by taking that thing off -
you look like a tourist.

Rand looks at his flak jacket.

RAND
This? It's a precaution.

STRIKER

It shows people you're afraid of them.

Striker looks directly at Rand.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

They're military issue. People kill for them. What do you think is more valuable to a jihadi? Your life or your flak jacket?

RAND

What did you do with yours?

STRIKER

I sold it. And bought something much more handy. Look under your seat.

Rand runs his hand along the underside of the seat. Velcroed, underneath is cold metal. He pulls it out - a HANDLE.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

It's a modified 9 millimeter Soviet pistol.

Striker un-velcroes something from under his seat. It's the CHAMBER.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Breaks away into two halves with just a pin.

He snaps the pistol together in an instant, grinning.

RAND

We're an aid vehicle. We can't carry weapons.

STRIKER

Yeah? Let the guy sitting in Geneva who typed that up come tell that to me in person.

He snatches Rand's protocol handbook and FRISBEES it out the window.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Lesson number one: You aren't a real medic until you learn to fuck the rules. You got to make some hard choices. Take some risks. Live on the edge.

Striker gestures to a duct-taped patch in the side door.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You see that? That's how the last
one went.

Rand runs his hand across it. There's torn metal underneath.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Now, he was a good medic.

RAND
The last one?

STRIKER
Yeah. Bullet. Popliteal artery.

RAND
Who shot him?

STRIKER
Israeli, Palestinian, it doesn't
matter once the bullet is in you.

Striker snickers.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Although, if you actually look at
the bullet, it's usually Russian or
American.

RAND
Arterial trauma? Did he survive?

STRIKER
Nope. Took me four fucking hours to
clean up the mess.

Striker impulsively hits the accelerator.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Take off your seat belt.

RAND
Why?

STRIKER
What? You scared?

RAND
No.

Rand UNCLICKS.

STRIKER
You ready to roll?

RAND
Yes, boss.

Striker turns the ambulance to the left slightly and then a SHARP right, like the ambulance is out of control.

And then he JERKS the wheel into a HARD LEFT.

The tires SCREECH. Two of them LIFT OFF THE ASPHALT. Bottles and equipment CLINK and CLANG in the back. Rubber BURNS.

Rand almost smashes his head on the glass. He grabs onto the armrest.

The ambulance TIPS further. It leans over almost 45 degrees. This is insane.

Striker LAUGHS. He kisses his hand and stretches it out the window, reaching for the asphalt as the vehicle totters...

And for a second, Striker drives on two wheels before the ambulance THUDS back flat again.

It's an impressive, reckless stunt. Rand is stunned.

Striker
Scared now?

Rand, gripping the safety handle above him, fumbles to get his seat belt back on.

Smoke curls out of Striker's nostrils.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Want out yet?

RAND
You're not getting rid of me that easily.

Striker snorts. He stubs his cigarette out into a steel bedpan between the seats.

STRIKER
Look, this is the one moment of the day before everything goes to shit. Let me enjoy the rest if it.

He turns up the music ear-piercingly LOUD.

The ambulance drives on, BLARING the song "Powerslave." Rand looks out as the barren Palestinian landscape slides past his window.

INT./EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - BUDAIYA ROAD - KHAN YUNIS - LATER

The ambulance jerks up to the gate of a white 3-story concrete apartment building with a semi-enclosed courtyard. Clothes hang from wrought iron balcony railings. A/C units drip condensate down the walls in green and brown streaks.

STRIKER

This is a Ten-56 "A". You know what that is?

Rand shakes his head.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Suicide attempt. In progress. Could get messy.

CUT TO:

INT. APT 3 - APT BLOCK - 55 BUDAIYA RD - KHAN YUNIS - MINUTES LATER

GABRIEL, 13, brandishes a butcher's knife. Swinging it wildly in the center of the living room.

GABRIEL

Get away from me!

He SWIPES at Rand, barely missing.

RAND

Shouldn't we call a psychologist?

STRIKER

You think we have shrinks on call?
You're it. Go.

Rand steps forward cautiously, just out of swinging distance.

RAND

Hi, I'm Rand. What's your name.

GABRIEL

Gabriel.

RAND

That's a nice name. Like the Angel.

JAFFER

Fuck you.

RAND

Okay, Gabriel, I need you to put
down the knife so we can talk.

Gabriel SPITS on his face.

Rand is repulsed, the phlegm dripping off his eyebrow.

STRIKER

I'll radio the coroner - you want
to get some towels?

Rand turns back to the kid, wiping his face with his sleeve.

RAND

Listen -

GABRIEL

Please go!

STRIKER

Gabriel, just do it. We've got
people waiting for us who actually
want to live. Just. Do it.

GABRIEL

Fine.

He pushes the knife against his wrist. His MOTHER SCREAMS.

RAND

(Whispering to Striker)
What are you doing?
(To Gabriel)
Hey! Don't listen to him!

STRIKER

Don't do it like that, kid.
Everyone always cuts perpendicular
to the wrist. But nine times out of
ten that'll just cause some
scarring and make a big mess. And I
just cleaned the ambulance so help
me out a bit.

Gabriel looks at him confused. The PARENTS, shocked.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Look, if you do it properly, the
two of us can go home because
picking up the dead is the
coroner's job. But if you fuck it
up, you're stuck with us. So I just
want you to do it right.

He draws a line up his arm with his finger.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
The artery is here. Gimme that -
let me show you.

Gabriel holds steady with the knife, not about to let it go.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You know what? Use this. Much
cleaner.

He pulls out his PISTOL from his belt and demonstrates that
it has a couple of bullets in the chamber.

Striker places the nozzle against his temple.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You don't want to do it like
this...

Gabriel's FATHER starts YELLING in Arabic.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Because if you're anything like me,
you've got a pretty thick skull and
the bullet will probably get lodged
in your brain and then you'll be a
vegetable. The most effective way
is like this.

He sticks the gun in his mouth aimed upwards.

RAND
Striker!

Striker PULLS THE TRIGGER. CLICK!

STRIKER
That way it goes straight through
the cerebellum.

He holds out the gun.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Here, take it. This will be much
easier. Trust me.

RAND
Gabriel, don't!

The kid moves over to Striker to get the gun.

But Striker uses the opportunity to - LUNGE at Gabriel and
GRAB HIM in a HEAD LOCK.

GABRIEL
Ooww!

The gun falls to the floor. Rand grabs it!

The mother SHRIEKS.

Striker plies the knife out of Gabriel's hand.

STRIKER
You're about the age my son would
have been. Be thankful you're
alive.

Striker holds the struggling, thrashing kid. As the boy's
shirt loosens, he notices a set of bruises and belt lashes on
his back and neck.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Where'd you get those from?

The kid slackens. He doesn't answer. His father looks away.

RAND
(to the parents)
Get these sharp objects out of the
house. You have to monitor him at
all times!

STRIKER
And you'll need this.

FATHER
What?

BLAM! He socks the Father in the face. The man reels, nose
bleeding.

STRIKER
Don't you ever hit him again.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - KHAN YUNIS - LATER

Striker nurses a broken lip.

RAND
You gave a kid a loaded weapon.

STRIKER
Yeah, and nice talk you were giving him. That was really doing the trick.

RAND
What's with your death wish?

STRIKER
It's the only thing that'll keep you alive here.

They drive in silence. The radio beeps.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You want to Ten-20 us?

RAND
Okay.

He picks up the radio. But Striker smacks it out of his hand.

STRIKER
Lesson number two: never give anyone more information than they need. You never know who the fuck is tuned in, whether it's a trigger-happy IDF chopper or some crazy maniac craving a morphine fix.

Striker grabs the radio.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
C-108 here. Ten-56A diffused. Ten-20-ing for second stop.

DISPATCH (O.S.)
(Filtered)
Copy, C108. Over.

STRIKER
Besides, dispatch doesn't need to know where we are all the time.

CUT TO:

EXT. KHAJOOR BUILDING - KHAN YUNIS, GAZA - LATER

Several neighbors and children stand watching from their balconies.

INT. KHAJOOR BUILDING - KHAN YUNIS, GAZA

SAMI, a middle-aged man who is sweating profusely, leads them up a flight of stairs.

They stop at Number 31, a door with an embroidered Qu'ranic verse outside:

"God has ordained everything to a divine plan and only God can accomplish it. 65: 2-3"

Striker shakes his head and starts to open the apartment door when -

Suddenly heavy-set woman, HAFIDA, SCREAMING in Arabic SLAMS hard on the other side.

HAFIDA (O.S.)
(in Arabic)
No! No! No! They cannot see her!

She bolts the chain to the other side of the door.

SAMI
(in Arabic)
Hafida, hush! Everyone can hear you! Open the door!

HAFIDA
Go away! Please leave us! We don't need any help.

STRIKER
Move away from the door, madam.

Both Striker and Sami PUSH their weight against the door.

The door doesn't budge.

Rand puts down the folding stretcher and joins them.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
One-two-three -

All three SLAM into the door.

The chain BREAKS OFF and the door SWINGS open, revealing -

INT. APT 31 - CONTINUOUS

A modestly appointed family drawing room lit with fluorescent tube lights. A large picture of the Qab'aa hangs above souvenir monuments in a glass case.

A small dog runs around, BARKING in a frenzy.

STRIKER
Always take in the surroundings,
Evaluate. Take control. Don't touch
her, she's orthodox.

Hafida, wearing a blood-stained floral tunic RUSHES Striker.

HAFIDA
(in Arabic)
You get out of my house! Get out!

Her husband restrains her.

STRIKER
(in Arabic)
Where's the patient?!

Sami slips off his shoes and pads rapidly through the room in his socks. Striker stomps through.

Rand follows more cautiously, adjusting to the space, trying not to grind dirt from his boots into the rug.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

A pile of dark red stained towels on the square-tiled floor. The grout is stained maroon, a grid of blood zig-zags out from -

A 17 year-old girl, DAREEN.

She lies on her back, moaning. Her eyes clenched in pain. The girl's tunic is sodden with blood.

An orange pan lies in a corner with bloodied dish towels, utensils and thick twisted hanger wire.

Striker pauses when he sees her. A flicker of recognition - *something*.

Striker kneels near Dareen and starts to check her vitals. She SCREAMS and writhes, not wanting to be touched by him.

He rolls out his medic bag. White rubber gloves. SNAP. SNAP. Pulse. Pupils. Breathing.

He's smooth, like clockwork.

He pulls scissors from his kit and begins to cut away her tunic. Striker pulls away the cloth. Dareen SCREAMS.

The sight of her bloodied groin is horrific.

Striker doesn't blink. Rand steps back, nauseous.

STRIKER
Prep a bandage. Vulvar trauma.
She's hemorrhaging.

He looks at Hafida, lifting up the wire.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You used this?

He snaps his fingers at Rand. But Rand is frozen.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Bandage!

Rand stares. Queasy. Nervous. Blank.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
It's in the bag!

Snapping back, Rand fumbles through his medic bag, pulling out a stream of gauze. It's a tangled mess, like him.

He hands it to Striker who glares at him.

Striker presses the bandages into place.

SAMI
You must fix her here.

Striker stands, his hands bloody, looking at Sami coolly.

STRIKER
She needs a surgeon within the next
two hours or she's gone. You
decide.

SAMI
Take her down the back stairs.
Please.

Striker gestures to Rand to help him lift up the girl.

STRIKER
Move!

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Lesson Number Three: Never bring
the family.
(MORE)

STRIKER (CONT'D)

They're always going to slow you down with their questions and constant begging. *Why aren't you going faster? What took you so long?* Your job is only to think about what to do next. Next, next, next. That's what matters.

Rand turns a dial on the wall and places an oxygen mask over Dareen. He tries to run an IV line into her but the vibrations are making it impossible.

RAND

Could you drive a little slower.

STRIKER

No!

He misses the vein once again before finally jabbing it in.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Show me the ID. What clearance does she have?

Rand holds up the ID card.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Shit. Always fucking orange. We have to try for Barzilai.

RAND

What's Barzilai?

STRIKER

The only hospital that has the equipment to save her. It's across the Wall. Let's hope your Yankee charm will get her through.

EXT. SALAHUDEEN HIGHWAY - GAZA

A pack of stray dogs BARK on the side of road as the Red Crescent ambulance SCREAMS by.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - SALAHUDEEN HIGHWAY - LATER

The blinking numbers on the monitor drift lower. Dareen's blood pressure is dangerously low.

RAND

I'm pushing fluids, but she's falling. 60 over 40.

STRIKER

Intubate.

Rand grabs the intubation gear - a clear set of tubes, a manual respiration pump and plastic connectors.

Rand tries to piece the apparatus together in the rattling ambulance. His hands are shaking too.

Dareen is on the verge of unconsciousness.

With the tube ready, he tries to open her mouth with his hands but it's clenched shut.

He tries to pry her jaw open with a wooden spatula, it doesn't budge.

RAND

Her jaw is locked!

STRIKER

Figure it out. Break her teeth if you have to.

Rummaging around, Rand grabs a small metal hammer from the tool drawer. He looks at Dareen's face.

He can't.

Rand steps back. This is too much.

He tries to pry her mouth open one more time using the spatula.

Luckily, it GIVES. The opening is just enough to get the catheter in, but Rand can't quite see the chords in the back of her throat.

He FORCES the tube in. A foot of clear tubing goes down.

He pumps the respirator bag. Dareen's stomach PUFFS UP. The systolic numbers on the monitor FALL FURTHER.

RAND

What's happening? Her stomach is inflating.

STRIKER

You sent it down the wrong pipe!
Take it out. Look closer for the trachea.

Fuck. Rand pulls out the tube.

He inserts the tube again and tries to get it down the windpipe but it won't go any further than a few inches. The numbers are still falling.

RAND

I can't do this! We're moving too much.

STRIKER

I'm driving. You have to.

RAND

Her chords have seized up.

STRIKER

Get the tube in!

RAND

They're seized shut! How do I get them open?

STRIKER

You have to figure it out!

RAND

I can't get a look at the back of her throat.

Rand looks up at the monitor. Dareen's stats are falling steeply.

RAND (CONT'D)

Striker, she's 50 over 35. She's going to asystole in a couple of minutes.

STRIKER

You're a fucking amateur.

Striker slows down the ambulance and pulls over. He moves into the back.

Rand tries to hand over the apparatus to Striker.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

You get to decide whether she lives or dies. Now put the tube in.

Striker shoves the tubes back into Rand's hands.

RAND

I'm sorry. You do it!

STRIKER
No. Get ready.

RAND
We're going to lose her.

STRIKER
Just calm the fuck down and listen
to me!

Rand takes a deep breath and positions the apparatus, ready
to push.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Now wait.

RAND
But she's going asystole. Striker
you have to do this. I can't!

STRIKER
Listen to me. Wait.

Rand looks at him like he's crazy.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Wait for the verge.

Dareen is 40 over 20. Inches away from death. Color drains
from her face.

RAND
What if I miss?

STRIKER
Hold on. Her body will start to
shut down and then -

The body heaves -

STRIKER (CONT'D)
NOW!

Dareen's throat GASPS OPEN and Rand shoves the tube in, all
the way down. He PUMPS the bag, pushing -

a RUSH of air into her lungs.

Suddenly, the numbers on the monitor pause. They go into
REVERSE.

Rand exhales, flushed. Relieved. Exhausted. Exhilarated.

Still pumping the bag, he looks up at Striker, eyes wide.

Striker looks back without even the faintest glimmer of approval. He takes over the respirator.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Now drive, you amateur.

INT./EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE GAZA CITY - MINUTES LATER

The ambulance roars through a trash-strewn street, past rickety furniture stores and fruit stands. There's too much outbound traffic.

STRIKER
What are you doing?

RAND
I'm trying to get through.

STRIKER
We're a fucking ambulance. Get on the other side of the road!

RAND
There are cars coming...

STRIKER
Get over - NOW.

Rand SWERVES across the median. The oncoming traffic is light, but no one stops or pulls over despite the WAILING SIREN and flashing lights. Vehicles simply dodge the ambulance and whizz by.

A truck screams past them, HONKING loudly, less than a foot away.

RAND
Jesus!

Rand drives by his bare knuckles. It's a roller coaster.

Three TEENAGE BOYS run carelessly across the street in front of him - Rand HONKS and SWERVES - narrowly missing them - the ambulance LURCHES to the side.

STRIKER
Are you trying to kill her?

RAND
I'm sorry!

STRIKER

Listen, if you're going more than 70 kilometers per hour, you have to keep your turn radius less than 45 degrees. Or we'll flip.

RAND

I'm trying!

STRIKER

You see that red rubber band on the steering wheel? If it's ever on top, it's too far.

RAND

Got it.

Rand looks at the red rubber band. He takes a deep breath.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - GATE A - EREZ CROSSING, GAZA - MINUTES LATER

Through the windshield, an imposing graffiti-covered wall - made of meter-wide concrete slabs - looms into view.

STRIKER

Left!

Rand turns wide, carefully. He looks back over his shoulder at Striker.

RAND

How's she doing?

STRIKER

We got an hour, maybe less.

On the right side of the windshield, the walls slide past, covered with anti-Israeli and Palestinian Liberation Front inscriptions.

Bouncing over a small rise, the menacing barbed wire and concrete barricades of the Erez Crossing Gate come into view.

Between him and the gate is a long line of idling cars.

He SLAMS on the brakes.

Striker looks up from Dareen.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Jump the line! Do it!

Rand hastily pulls onto the edge of the road, rolling past the line of vehicles.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Drive!

Rand speeds up, WEAVING through a maze of stopped cars and concrete barriers.

Less than thirty meters from the gate, an Israeli Defense Force (IDF) soldier, SAMUEL - not more than 20, dressed in an olive green uniform, clutching an assault rifle - steps out to block his path.

RAND

What if they don't let us through?

STRIKER

Don't worry. I give this guy Moshe his painkillers. He has a thing for oxycodone.

Rand pulls up to the soldier and rolls down his window.

RAND

Sir -

SAMUEL

ID, please.

STRIKER

(to Rand)

In the visor.

He flips down the visor and sees Striker's ID wedged into the elastic holding strap next to a picture of:

A smiling YOUNG BOY, 6, with a GERMAN SHEPHERD PUPPY.

The resemblance between the boy's face and Striker's ID photo is unmistakable.

He presents his and Striker's IDs to the soldier.

Samuel swishes a blue UV flashlight over the cards to illuminate the embedded hologram.

He examines them for a moment, taking his time.

SAMUEL

And your patient?

Rand produces Dareen's orange ID.

Without even touching it, the soldier shakes his head.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
No blue, no pass.

RAND
Officer, she's critical.

STRIKER
Go get Moshe.

Striker sticks his head into the front of the ambulance. He's cool and calm.

SAMUEL
There's no Moshe today.

STRIKER
Moshe knows me and he can tell you -

SAMUEL
Moshe was reassigned. Please do a U-turn.

Striker looks winded.

STRIKER
What?

Samuel BANGS his hand on the hood.

SAMUEL
Turn around now.

STRIKER
(to Rand)
Get us out of here.

RAND
(to Samuel)
Look, we have a young girl with internal bleeding. We have less than an hour of blood left.

Samuel looks at Rand sternly.

SAMUEL
Listen, no orange IDs. Don't make my supervisor come over. Turn around. Or step outside.

Striker RAPS on the roof of the back of the ambulance.

STRIKER
(to Rand)
Forget it. Let's go!

Noticing the situation, another older, armed IDF SOLDIER,
swaggers out of the guard post.

SOLDIER
Get out of the vehicle!

RAND
Sir, listen, I'm an American.
Please, she's critical.

Samuel LOWERS his gun to firing position -

STRIKER
Officer, my apologies, we're
leaving!
(to Rand)
Drive! Who the fuck do you think
you are: Rambo Junior?

Rand snatches back the IDs and rolls up the window. He turns
the ambulance around.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You think they'll hesitate to put a
bullet through your head?

EXT. EREZ CROSSING - GAZA SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Rand drives the ambulance back down the row of cars.

RAND
What do we do now?

Striker looks at the blood bag - it's three-quarters empty.

STRIKER
Now we take her to the clinic and
watch her die. And I eat my lunch.

RAND
Isn't there somewhere else we can
take her?

Rand stares ahead, already exhausted.

STRIKER
The nearest place this side of the
wall is an M.S.F. tent an hour
away.

(MORE)

STRIKER (CONT'D)

They don't have the doctors or equipment to save her. She'll be there for a couple hours, drain a couple blood packs and then she'll asystole. That's how it's going to happen.

Striker is still pumping away at the respirator bag.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

The first one's hard but you'll get over it. They tell you all this crap about how you can feel the soul leaving the body when someone passes, but you don't. It's a lie. There's nothing. People close their eyes and they get cold. That's it.

(a beat)

Lesson Number Four: A good medic doesn't get too attached to his patients.

Rand, angry and frustrated, shakes his head.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Don't forget we're just flesh and bone and genes. We're born, we grow, we fuck, we die. Don't ever pretend there's anything more. Gets in the way of proper judgment.

Striker looks at the Dareen's body on the stretcher.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Barzilai in Ashkelon is the only place with a surgery equipped for something like this.

RAND

There's got to be a way of getting around them.

STRIKER

Not with an orange ID.

Striker gives him a look as if he's about to say something but stops himself.

RAND

What?

STRIKER

Forget it. Let's head back to the clinic.

RAND
No, tell me.

STRIKER
There is a man I used to know in
Rafah, near the Egyptian border.
But I don't think it's safe for
you.

RAND
What does he do?

STRIKER
He has some unofficial connections
at the IDF - under the table.

RAND
Whatever it takes.

Rand looks at Striker, there's a spark in his eyes.

RAND (CONT'D)
Let's do it.

Striker stubs out his cigarette against the wall.

STRIKER
You're the boss.

CUT TO:

**INT./EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - OUTSKIRTS OF RAFAH/ NEAR EGYPTIAN
BORDER - GAZA**

The landscape changes as the ambulance peels down the road.
Paved roads give way to asphalt shredded by tank treads.

The ambulance passes shuttered stores; decapitated minarets;
abandoned construction projects; burned out carcasses of
vehicles left in the street.

STRIKER
Don't come here alone unless you
want to be next week's propaganda.

INT./EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - RAFAH/ NEAR EGYPTIAN BORDER - GAZA

A dozen stray dogs start to BARK at the ambulance as it
enters a run-down housing compound.

A rusty Toyota pick-up transporting refrigerators rattles
past them.

The walls are covered with graffiti: "Fatah is Fraud" and "End Zionist Oppression."

Images of masked martyrs silk-screened onto green and red fabrics hang over balconies and boundary walls.

A YOUNG BOY wearing a skullcap is tying down one of these banners with sand-filled plastic bottles.

EXT. HYDER'S COMPOUND - RAFAH - CONTINUOUS

Rand hesitantly gets out of the vehicle, following Striker. He cautiously surveys the area.

A group of TEENS kicking around their football in the dirt stop to stare at the American. Rand tries not to make eye contact.

In front of them: A large bungalow sits amidst a cluster of dusty tented structures. Outside are TWO GUARDS, with keffiyehs wrapped around their heads - a pair of Kalashnikovs in their shadows.

Striker nods to the guards. They seem to recognize him.

The guards look Rand up and down.

STRIKER
(in Arabic)
He is a friend.

They FRISK both of them. GUARD #1 swipes an old airport wand in front of and behind them. It BEEPS at Rand's belt buckle.

The guard looks at it more closely. It's a designer belt. Calvin Klein. Shiny. New.

He makes a gesture for Rand to remove it.

Rand looks at Striker. Striker shrugs. He unbuckles and hands the belt over. The guard confiscates it.

GUARD
Yalla! Go!

The gates open.

INT. HYDER'S BUNGALOW - MOMENTS LATER

Rand and Striker follow a few paces behind a bespectacled man, ISMAIL - 40, with the quiet demeanor of an academic.

They pass a small line of people in the vestibule, waiting for goods and supplies. It's clear that Hyder is the local Godfather.

STRIKER
(whispering to Rand)
Ismail is the Number Two here.

Rand spies a boy, JAMIL, 7, peering out of an archway. He has his fingers in his mouth, the other on the trigger of an orange plastic pistol. He looks directly at Rand. The boy grins and pulls the trigger - CLICK! He giggles.

A severe-looking MAN, 50, in an immaculately pressed cream dishdasha appears from around the corner and scoops up the BOY. This is HYDER MALIKI.

HYDER
(to Striker)
Salaam! Welcome, welcome.

Hyder and Striker kiss each other on both cheeks.

HYDER (CONT'D)
You should have told me you were bringing guests.

He gives Rand a look down.

HYDER (CONT'D)
This is the new one?

INT. LIVING ROOM - HYDER'S BUNGALOW - MOMENTS LATER

A well appointed drawing room, garishly furnished.

HYDER
Chai? Pepsi?

STRIKER
No, Hyder, we're in a rush.

HYDER
You don't visit me for so long and straight to business!

Tea arrives on a plastic, patterned tray. Hyder lets Jamil off his knee and pats him away.

HYDER (CONT'D)
One sugar?

Striker nods. Hyder looks over to Rand.

RAND
No thank you.

Eyebrows raised, Striker gives Rand a silent look. Rand gets it: he gestures for a single sugar.

Hyder puts the sugar into the tea cups, but for his own he takes out a plastic container of CANDEREL, a diabetic sweetener.

STRIKER
My friend needs an ID for his patient.

HYDER
Of course, for you, anything. You have the original ID?

Rand pulls it out.

HYDER (CONT'D)
You know what they say in Arabic?
Eed wihdeh ma bit zakkif. One hand cannot clap.

He looks intensely at Rand.

HYDER (CONT'D)
You understand?

Rand is silent.

HYDER (CONT'D)
Yalla, it's time for my shot, let me give you a moment to think.

Hyder gets up and disappears into an adjacent room.

RAND
What does he mean?

STRIKER
He's going to offer you a barter, don't refuse.

RAND
What do I have to do?

STRIKER
He'll ask you to take something across.

RAND
What?

STRIKER
Not anything dangerous.
Merchandise. It's harmless. You're
just the delivery man.

RAND
I don't know, Striker.

STRIKER
I risked a lot bringing you here
because I thought you had it in
you.

Rand hesitates.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Remember, you decide if Dareen
lives or dies. Think about the
patient, not yourself.

Close on Rand. The choice burns away at him.

Taking a deep breath -- he takes the plunge.

RAND
Ok. Let's do this.

INT. HALLWAY - HYDER'S BUNGALOW - CONTINUOUS

Hyder leads Rand and Striker down a hallway. Rand glances at a woman making tea in the kitchen behind beaded curtains.

They come to a large wooden trapdoor in the floor. Hyder signals for Ismail to open it, revealing a set of stairs going down to a basement.

INT. BASEMENT - HYDER'S BUNGALOW - CONTINUOUS

At the bottom of the stairs, a sandy, cavernous room with raw concrete walls, construction-site sodium lights and a pulley hanging from the middle of the ceiling.

Two MEN, 20s - dressed much like the guards from earlier - stack various goods from a ladder in an 8-foot hole in the floor onto wooden palettes: plastic petrol containers; baby formula; A/C units; fridges; stereos.

MADE IN EGYPT is stenciled on the crates.

STRIKER
(whispering to Rand)
This our lifeline.

A narrow HALLWAY leads off to -

ANOTHER ROOM

It's a makeshift command center:

Computer monitors, scanners, printers; high-tech equipment all covered in a layer of fine tunnel dust. HEBREW voices crackle from a hacked radio frequency.

Hyder gestures for the pass from Rand and gives it to TOUFIQ.

HYDER
(smiling at Rand)
Same machines as the IDF.

Toufiq places the card on a scanner.

CLOSE on Dareen's FACE printing onto the plastic on the same ID-maker from the beginning of the film.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - HYDER'S BUNGALOW - MINUTES LATER

Rand turns the blue ID over in his hand watching the Israeli hologram morph over her face. It's perfect - a masterful replica complete with Dareen's photo and information.

Baba approaches, carrying two large cling-wrapped packets which he puts in Rand's hands - through the plastic, we can see HUNDREDS OF SMALL WHITE PILLS.

STRIKER
Who is working the Erez gate today?

Hyder pulls out a thick brown envelope and hands it to Striker.

HYDER
Jacob.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - RAFAH - MOMENTS LATER

Striker and Rand cut open the packets with a scalpel and empty the contents onto a metal tray.

Hundreds of small yellow and white pills embossed with symbols tumble out.

They both stare at them for a moment. It's MDMA. Smuggled from Egypt for Israel, the hub of the world's ecstasy market.

HYDER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Put them in medicine containers and nobody will ask any questions. You will drop them off at Zanzi-Bar in Ashkelon.

Striker begins to roll up a piece of paper into a cone.

HYDER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This man will give you a packet for Jacob for your return trip and payment for me. Then we'll get some supplies and things for the children.

Rand, conflicted, looks at Dareen on the stretcher breathing through the tubes. A tinge of blue curls around her lips.

He takes the cone and begins funneling the pills into a bottle.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - SALAHUDEEN HIGHWAY - LATER

Rand drives with Striker in the back, their fragile load jostling on the stretcher.

The ecstasy pills are neatly shelved in plain sight in orange prescription bottles.

EXT. EREZ CROSSING CHECKPOINT - MINUTES LATER

Rand approaches the drop bar.

RAND
What if they realize it's a fake? They're going to deport me and arrest you.

STRIKER
Welcome to adventure.

They pull up.

CHECKPOINT SOLDIER
IDs.

RAND
Sir, is Jacob here?

The soldier yells to a MAN in the booth.

JACOB - 32, aviator sunglasses, eating a sandwich - approaches and looks into the vehicle.

Rand hands over all three of their IDs, sandwiching Dareen's in the middle.

JACOB
(to the soldier)
Gabi, go check the back.

The assistant walks around the ambulance and opens up the rear doors.

The soldier scans their faces. Striker stands poker-faced over Dareen on the stretcher.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Papers?

Rand hands over some medical documents, the BROWN CASH ENVELOPE folded inside.

Jacob tears a corner off the envelope and fans through the bills. He puts it inside his military jacket.

GABI (O.S.)
Clear on visual. You want me to do
a manual check?

JACOB
It's okay. They're clean.

Rand smiles nervously at Jacob, resisting the urge to slam on the accelerator as the ambulance rolls across the threshold.

INT./EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - RURAL ISRAEL - LATER

Rand stares ahead. They pass olive groves and sand-blown hills as the sun sets on this biblical land.

CUT TO:

EXT. AMBULANCE BAY - BARZILAI HOSPITAL - ASHKELON, ISRAEL

Dareen is rapidly wheeled out of the ambulance and through the automatic glass doors of the hospital to safety.

For a brief moment, Striker puts his hand on Rand shoulder.

STRIKER
We did it. Your first save.

Rand shrugs it off and retreats into the ambulance.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - CONTINUOUS

Rand sits on the bench twisting the safety cap of the medicine container. CLICK...CLICK...CLICK...

For a moment he just listens to the noise, staring blankly.

Striker opens up the rear door.

STRIKER
Look, no one loses. The suppliers
are happy, the IDF gets their
share, the people who get it are
getting what they want, and we're
saving lives. It's a win-win game.
Let's go.

Close on Rand and the look in his eyes. CLICK.

EXT. ZANZI-BAR CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

A seedy combination bar-restaurant-nightclub heralded by a dirty neon sign.

Rand and Striker approach a BOUNCER outside.

STRIKER
We have a delivery for Yosef from
Hyder.

Through the crack, Rand can see restaurant tables and an older man sitting at a table eating with a family.

The man, YOSEF, comes to the door, wiping his hands on his napkin, shutting the door behind him.

YOSEF
Come.

INT. BASEMENT - ZANZI-BAR CLUB - CONTINUOUS

The brash, tacky, dirtiness of a nightclub before the lights are dimmed. An empty, scuffed dance floor. Chipped mirrors on the walls. A stage lined with red and pink neon strips.

Techno-music plays quietly.

It's early and the place is empty except for two off-duty olive-uniformed IDF OFFICERS at the bar, sitting between a rail-thin RUSSIAN GIRL and an AFRICAN GIRL, in tube tops. Neither is much older than 18. They look high.

Yosef, Rand and Striker go into a SIDE ROOM -

Rand pulls out the pill bottles.

Yosef summons an INDIAN MAN. A helper. They empty out the pills onto a steel tray. It's a weighing scale.

Yosef wets his finger on his tongue, touches a random pill and licks it.

CUT TO:

The WHIR of a mechanical CASH counter. Dollars fan through and land in a neat vertical stack in the tray.

CUT TO:

Cash is stapled into wads of equal denomination.

CUT TO:

Josef stacks the money in the bottom of a green and red Magen David Adom (*the Israeli ambulance service*) ORGAN TRANSPORTER CASE. They place packets of ice on top.

YOSEF

Get to the checkpoint before the
shift change at 7 pm. Find Ari.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - LATER

Rand stands at the small metal sink in the back of the ambulance, the organ transporter case at his feet.

He washes his hands of the fine white powder from the pills. He scrubs hard, his face distorted in the stainless steel mirror.

EXT. EREZ CROSSING CHECKPOINT - ISRAELI SIDE - EVENING

Moths FLUTTER around sodium lights as Israeli flags FLAP over cammo-netting and massive concrete reinforcements holding up coils of prison-like concertina wire.

An olive-uniformed IDF SOLDIER stands at the ambulance window.

RAND
Captain Ari?

CUT TO:

Ari opens up the back doors.

A thick brown envelope sits on the stretcher.

Looking back up at the guard tower, Ari does his due diligence, LOUDLY opening and closing the cabinet doors. He looks at the Magen David Adom organ transporter case wedged under the stretcher.

Rand looks over his shoulder from the driver's seat. Ari nods.

He stuffs the envelope into his jacket and SLAMS the back doors.

ARI
Clear!

EXT. SALAHUDEEN HIGHWAY - OUTSIDE GAZA CITY - LATER

Palm trees silhouetted against the purpling sky.

Somewhere, far away, a minaret SINGS the Qu'ran, interrupted by the staccato CHOPPING of a hovering gunship.

STRIKER
It's curfew. We have to go inside.
My place is close.

CUT TO:

INT. STRIKER'S APARTMENT - AL QUBBAH - OUTSIDE GAZA CITY

Striker unlocks the door, a SCRATCHING NOISE coming from the other side. A shaggy GERMAN SHEPHERD bounds out, excitedly licking Striker and pacing back and forth.

It's the dog from the photo in the visor, though much older. Curiously, the dog WHEEZES and WHOOPS hoarsely, but doesn't bark.

The dog sniffs Rand.

RAND
Is he ok? He sounds sick.

STRIKER
He's fine. His chords are cut.

Off Rand's quizzical look -

STRIKER (CONT'D)
He barked too much.

Rand tries to suppress his shock.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
If they hear a dog barking on the
road when they're on patrol at
night, they shoot it.

The dog jumps on Rand.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Don't worry, he's friendly.

Striker begins to unbutton the cuffs on his blood-stained
shirt.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
The municipality claim the dogs are
spreading rabies and eat the dead
after bombings.

Rand lets the dog lick his hand.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
But it's really just to shut them
up because their barking is an
early warning for the IDF raids.
Hamas has hundreds of dogs.

RAND
What's his name?

STRIKER
Simba. It's from the Lion King.

RAND
The Disney movie?

STRIKER
My son named him.

Striker disappears into the bathroom to change.

Rand scans the room. He is surprised by the size of the
apartment. It's a cramped studio - spare, almost unfurnished.
Plain off-white walls. No pictures, except for:

A framed photograph on a desk in the corner: Striker, a Palestinian woman, an 8 year-old girl and the BOY from the visor photo smiling against a painted backdrop of clouds.

But there's ANOTHER picture on the table - a SECOND family, Striker - probably ten years younger here - with his arm around an attractive red-haired woman. Behind them, a semi-detached house in the East End of LONDON.

Rand hears the sink RUNNING in the bathroom.

He lifts a book from the desk. There's a diagram with various components circled. The books all appear to be about mechanical and electrical engineering.

The top drawer is open a crack. Rand pulls it open slightly:

Pills. Syringes. Lots of them. Rand reads the labels: "Valium." "Oxycodone." Painkillers.

Tucked underneath the half-empty pill bottles is an un-mailed letter - old and worn around the edges, but sealed. Rand carefully pulls it out and flips it over. It is addressed to: "Emma Russell" in London.

As Rand slides the envelope back, something cold and metal catches his hand at the back of the drawer -

It's another GUN - a 9mm Browning embossed with a crown and lion insignia and the inscription: "*PROPERTY OF THE BRITISH ARMY.*"

Rand picks it up. Suddenly -

Striker is standing behind him, drying his face in a towel and holding a leather belt.

Startled, Rand puts the gun down. He can't read Striker's poker face.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
I see you've discovered my small project.

Striker closes the opened books.

RAND
I was just -

STRIKER
And you don't know much about guns do you?

Striker slams the drawer SHUT.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
When you picked it up, your finger
went right to the trigger.

He picks up the weapon.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
When you hold a firearm, you always
make sure the finger is outside the
trigger guard.

He holds the pistol in his palm.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
It's not like in the movies. You
never put your finger on the
trigger.

He points the gun at Rand's foot and COCKS the gun.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Until -

Rand takes a step back. What is he playing at?

He pulls the trigger. Rand flinches. CLICK!

Striker laughs.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
That's the only time you pull the
trigger: when you're ready.

RAND
Get that thing away from me.

He hands Rand the belt he is holding.

STRIKER
Here. Sorry it's not Calvin Klein.

Rand starts to put it on.

RAND
You were in the armed forces?

STRIKER
Medical unit. Operation Granby,
1991.

(Granby = the British designation for Operation Desert Storm)

Striker takes out something from a cupboard, wrapped in
cloth.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Here, you can put this on the belt.

He tosses a brown leather medical pouch onto the chair.

RAND
Really?

Rand opens it up; it has two sets of medical scissors, a thermometer, dissecting forceps, a pen flashlight and an empty syringe.

STRIKER
It's old. I don't need it.

RAND
This is a really nice set.

Rand admires the pouch in his hands. It's military issue. He clicks the flashlight on.

RAND (CONT'D)
No, I can't take it.

STRIKER
You don't have one. Just take it.
Why are you always refusing?

Rand starts to unclip the pouch from his belt. Striker stops him, putting his hand over Rand's.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
I want you to keep it. I don't have
anyone else to give it to.

A beat.

CUT TO:

LATER

Rand's eyes flicker open on the sofa: the HALLWAY, sideways.

Striker sits on a stool down the hallway. He's holding a thin hardback book in his hand. His hands cupped around the phone dangling from the wall, he whispers into the yellow handset, in an almost sing-song voice.

He's reading a children's book to someone, ever so softly.

Striker gently replaces the handset. He takes a moment before returning to the living room.

Striker lays down on the mattress in a sarcophagus pose. Quietly, he straps a tourniquet around his arm and INJECTS himself with a clear liquid. Instantly, he relaxes, lets go.

RAND
What's that?

STRIKER
Keeps the ghosts away.

He CLICKS the lamp off.

CUT TO:

INT. HYDER'S BUNGALOW - RAFAH - MORNING

HYDER counts the cash in the Magen David Adom organ case: ten thousand in American bills.

He's satisfied.

He peels off a few bills and gives them to Striker.

Rand refuses, but Hyder pushes the money into his hand.

HYDER
We just got in some supplies for
the district.

CUT TO:

EXT. HYDER'S COMPOUND - MINUTES LATER

They load up several LARGE CARDBOARD BOXES of assorted goods into the back of the ambulance.

Striker sets aside a CD-Radio on the seat next to him.

EXT. RAFAH NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

The Mediterranean sea sparkles through the haze on the horizon. Paved streets give way to dirt roads.

They drive silently through the dusty wreckage of Rafah: decapitated palm trees; piles of uncollected garbage; pools of standing water in the alleys.

STRIKER
The aid trucks are too afraid to
come here.

The ambulance pulls up to an empty intersection and parks.

Striker turns the siren dial to an alternate tone.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You want to do it?

Rand presses the siren button. After a few BLEATS, Striker switches it off.

Silence.

All of a sudden, out of doorways and alleys emerge: CHILDREN, WOMEN in abayas, and MEN in dirty athletic wear and wife-beaters. They rush towards the ambulance.

It's like an ice cream truck.

CUT TO:

Rand TEARS open boxes, pulling out blankets, baby formula, batteries, flashlights, toys. Eyes look up to him, some old and wrinkled, some wide-eyed and young, some hidden behind veils. People reach out, holding out babies, grabbing. Needy. Desperate. Hopeful.

Rand's AMPED. It's a rush.

INT. AMBUALANCE C108 - DAYR AL-BALAH - LATER

Iron Maiden BLARES from the speakers as the ambulance cruises down the road.

Rand looks at the CD-Radio on the floor.

RAND
Who's that for?

STRIKER
My 'wife'.

A beat.

RAND
Where is she?

STRIKER
She lives outside Gaza City.

Striker turns up the Iron Maiden as if to indicate the conversation is over.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIPLOMAT HOTEL - GAZA CITY - LATER

The ambulance pulls up to Rand's hotel.

STRIKER

Get some rest. We have a dialysis
run at 1600.

He makes a shushing gesture with his finger and lips.

INT. DIPLOMAT HOTEL - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

Rand walks into the lobby to find a small gathering in the lounge. Young men and women, mainly European, drink colored juices and talk animatedly. French POP MUSIC plays from a stereo.

It's a weekend NGO mixer.

Grant waves to Rand and summons the bartender.

GRANT

You have a choice of tomato juice
from a can; Coke, which tastes
great by the way - they use real
sugar - or orange juice that tastes
like camel's ass.

He winks at him, pulling out a stainless steel flask from his hip pocket.

GRANT (CONT'D)

But I carry a bit of that-which-
shall-not-be-named.

He chuckles. He takes a swig of his drink and smacks it on the bar.

GRANT (CONT'D)

You look like you could do with
some sleep.

RAND

Yeah. It's been a long 36 hours -
but I feel amazingly awake.

GRANT

Well, if you ever need some (wink,
wink), I got plenty in my room.
(whispering) Got some movies too.
Travel three thousand miles, and
what do you find? Bootleg DVDs of
pussy from the valley.

He laughs and smacks Rand on the shoulder, but Rand is distracted:

He spies Iris in the corner, holding a large portfolio case, chatting up a bearded MAN with a PRESS lanyard. She winks -

Rand approaches her as the man leaves to get a drink.

RAND

Is that the new conquest?

IRIS

Did you get your gold star for
'making a difference'?

RAND

I didn't expect to see you back
here.

IRIS

Well, with the circus in town for
the Secretary of State's visit next
week, looks like I'm out of a room.

A beat. Iris has this planned. She turns on the charm.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Would the Good Samaritan take in a
roommate?

RAND

As long as you're okay sleeping on
the floor.

IRIS

And who said chivalry was dead?

Off Iris's grin -

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM 32 - DIPLOMAT HOTEL - LATER

Iris's portfolio photographs are spread all over the bed: a woman holds up a glinting cross to an approaching tank; ashes fall like snow around a young girl; a single bedouin traverses a vast rocky overpass -- if there's a theme, it's people defiant, courageous, on their own.

Iris holds up a 4 by 5 inch negative against the window.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Church of the Nativity. That's
where Jesus was born. It's just
hidden away -

Rand leans in and squints at the image: a lone man
momentarily caught by a shaft of sunlight as he kneels in a
cavity under a floor - a guard with a machine gun just in
frame behind him.

IRIS (CONT'D)
See that silver star? That's the
spot.

Rand moves in closer, his lips brushing the curve of her ear.

Iris almost flinches - she's usually in control of this game.
It has been a long time since she has actually been
interested - but there's something about our rookie's un-
jaded innocence and his newfound audacity...

A beat. What the hell, they'll always have Gaza. She kisses
him back.

IRIS (CONT'D)
You're sleeping on the floor.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE - KEFAR DAROM - GAZA - 1630

The glaring sunlight of the afternoon. Rand and Striker have
just started their dialysis run.

STRIKER
They're already overdue a couple of
days. Careful, they're weak - and
crabby.

A skinny man, KAMAL, 60, sits on the side of the road in a
plastic lawn chair clutching a tattered instrument case.

The ambulance pulls up beside him. Rand leaps out and
attempts to support him as he creaks to his feet, but Kamal
slaps his hand away.

KAMAL
(in Arabic)
I can do it myself.

Kamal places his case inside the ambulance and clambers in.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - AL BURAYI - GAZA - LATER

Striker drives. Rand rides passenger. There are now FIVE pale-looking patients crammed into the back.

STRIKER
One more stop.

EXT. APT COMPLEX - AL BURAYI - LATER

Striker emerges carrying RANA, a tiny elderly woman, in his arms. He carefully winds down the staircase that wraps around the outside of the building.

Rand pops open the rear door of the ambulance.

CUT TO:

EXT. EREZ CROSSING CHECKPOINT - GAZA SIDE - LATER

Jacob is on duty. Rand gives him a mock salute and a grin but he doesn't smile back.

RAND
We have six dialysis patients.

Jacob nods.

JACOB
Okay. IDs?

RAND
We came through yesterday.

JACOB
Yesterday was yesterday.

RAND
They can't go any longer without their dialysis.

JACOB
You want me to let you through without the right papers?

Incredulous, Rand reaches into his pocket for his wallet, pulling out the bills from yesterday's encounter with Hyder.

Glancing behind him, Jacob leans in close.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Put that back. The Lieutenant is here.

He takes a step back and gestures with his rifle. Rand realizes he has just driven into Jacob's theater piece for the day.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Everybody out!

CUT TO:

The rear door of the ambulance. Rand beckons the six patients to exit.

As they clamber down, a scowling second officer, LT. HERZL stares suspiciously at Kamal's instrument case.

LT. HERZL
What's that for?

Kamal stares blankly at Herzl. He opens the case to reveal a time-worn violin.

STRIKER
It's to pass the time during his dialysis. He has a stamped form allowing him to take it.

Kamal holds up a laminated piece of paper. Herzl sneers.

LT. HERZL
Tell him to play it.

CUT TO:

A bizarre sight in the middle of the road. Cars stopped in line at the checkpoint as a frail man sits on a metal folding chair playing chords on a violin. Sweat runs down his brow.

RAND
Enough.

Rand takes the violin from Kamal and returns it to its case.

RAND (CONT'D)
We're leaving.

Jacob steps up to him.

JACOB
I'm afraid they can't leave here until we have the right documentation.

Jacob summons another guard to round up the patients.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Make sure you get back before my
shift is over...or we might have to
send them for interrogation.

He smiles with mock concern.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - EREZ CHECKPOINT - MOMENTS LATER

Rand BANGS his fist on the side door as he turns the vehicle
around, fuming.

STRIKER
Humiliation is just part of their
policy. Sends a message.

Striker stubs out his cigarette in the bed pan.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
I'm sure they'll let them out
tomorrow...

Rand looks to Striker.

RAND
Can we go back to Hyder?

Off Rand's look -

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - HYDER'S COMPOUND - LATER

Rand tosses the plastic-wrapped ecstasy packets into the
green Magen David Adom organ transporter case. He spreads ice
over them.

He SLAMS the doors shut.

CUT TO:

The plastic organ case rattles in the back as the ambulance
speeds down the highway.

CUT TO:

EXT. EREZ CROSSING CHECKPOINT - LATER

The rear ambulance doors SLAM shut on the faces of the six
dialysis patients, now covered in a film of sweat and dust
from waiting outside.

Jacob stuffs an envelope into his back pocket and bangs on the side of the vehicle.

JACOB

Clear!

The ambulance REVS and kicks up a cloud of sand onto him as it speeds through the gate into the promised land.

EXT. AMBULANCE BAY - BARZILAI HOSPITAL - ASHKELON - LATER

Striker and Rand help the patients out of the ambulance and into wheelchairs.

INT. DIALYSIS WING - BARZILAI HOSPITAL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

We're clearly not in Gaza anymore; there are nurses and crash carts and x-ray rooms and the sharp smell of disinfectant hangs in the air.

The white linoleum floor might be missing a few tiles and there are no computers - only stacks and stacks of patient files spilling out of boxes and cabinets - but it's a real hospital.

Rand and Striker park the patients at a bank of DIALYSIS MACHINES: rectangular metal cabinets housing black and green monitors with transparent rubber tubes running out of them.

The hospital's in-house TECHNICIANS take over and begin to hook up the patients.

INT. SICK BAY 4 - BARZILAI HOSPITAL - LATER

Light streams through the grilles on the windows.

A Filipino NURSE leads Rand and Striker to a large room with several beds. There are no curtains separating them.

In the bed in the corner lies DAREEN, now looking much more like the young face on her ID.

RAND

How are you?

Dareen smiles weakly at Rand, not understanding the English. She gestures for him to move closer. Striker stays back.

Rand leans in towards her to hear what she has to say. Instead, she takes off a thin silver chain from her neck - on it is the 'Hand of Fatima' encircled by her name in Arabic lettering. She loops it over Rand's head.

Rand doesn't know how to take the gesture. He smiles an awkward thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. FANAA FAST FOOD - ASHKELON - LATER

An Arabic fast food joint, modelled after a 1980's McDonalds: formica table tops, faux-wood panelling, glowing yellow plastic letters in Arabic and Hebrew.

Striker and Rand eat shawarma wrapped in newspaper.

STRIKER

You should have gotten the Falafel
Burger - my so -

He catches himself mid-sentence. Chews on his wrap, continues-

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Twice or thrice a week, I'd get
food from here and sit with him
while he got his dialysis...He
liked the Falafel Burger.

RAND

Can I ask what happened?

STRIKER

Hamas started an offensive during
Passover that lasted twenty-two
days. And the crossings were
closed.

He puts down his half-eaten shawarma and pushes it away.

RAND

I'm sorry.

STRIKER

There's nothing to cry about or be
sorry about. Fariha thinks that I'm
cold, but being a medic all these
years has only shown me the truth:
there's no grand plan. Karma,
coincidence, it's all shit. I'm a
medic and there was nothing I could
do to save my own son.

Striker gets very dark.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You learn that, in war. You strip
away all the bullshit. You discover
who you are and what the world is.

He scrunches up his napkin and throws it on his tray.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
That's why I'm here. The state of
always being alert, life and death
every day - after Granby - this is
my normal. Once you're a sand dog,
you can't live any other way.

He pushes his tray away. Almost under his breath -

STRIKER (CONT'D)
And you can't go home because
you're not the same fucking person.

Contemplating, Striker flicks his cigarette against the
window.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Lesson Number Five: when you see
the truth of the world, you can't
talk about these things with anyone
else - except those who know.
Because they will not understand.

He kicks his chair back -

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Let's get out of here.

CUT TO:

EXT. ZANZI-BAR CLUB - ASHKELON - LATER

A high angle view, above the neon sign.

Rand's figure emerges from the ambulance carrying a green
organ transporter case and walks up to the doorway.

CUT TO:

EXT. AMBULANCE BAY - BARZILAI HOSPITAL - LATER

Holding two small boxes of medical supplies under his arm, Striker shakes hands with a Jewish doctor as Rand helps the dialysis patients out of their wheelchairs. They're looking flushed.

Curiously, two of the younger patients now have CASTS on their legs.

RAND
What's with the casts?

STRIKER
It's part of my little project.

He winks as Rand starts the engine.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
I'll show you at the clinic.

CUT TO:

EXT. EREZ CROSSING CHECKPOINT - SUNSET

No cars, no sniffer dogs, no fenced-in commuters. The place is deserted, the concrete barricade down.

The Erez Crossing is CLOSED.

RAND
Fuck.

STRIKER
We have to take the embargoed route through the hills.

EXT. NISANIT TUNNEL - NETIV HA 'ASARA - ISRAEL - DUSK

The ambulance passes Caterpillar earth-movers and concrete mixing trucks parked between steel beams and piles of earth in front of a row of semi-built Jewish settlement houses.

As they approach the tunnel Rand notices a RING OF LIGHT growing in the darkness of tunnel - headlights!

Rand TURNS off the road into the construction site, hiding between a rubble pile and a concrete-mixer. He kills the engine. Everyone is silent, holding their breath.

The vehicle RUMBLES by. It's an IDF truck, followed by a second one.

They wait a few minutes before pulling back onto the road and into:

THE TUNNEL

Marked "IDF ACCESS ONLY."

It is illuminated only by a single spine of sodium vapor lamps: the coast looks clear.

The patients nod asleep in the back as the ambulance drives through.

Rand repeatedly checks the rear view mirror, when --

Two tiny spots appear in the distance. They're growing rapidly and there's nowhere to pull over.

In another few seconds, the lights take shape - Rand can make out that the vehicle is not a green IDF vehicle...but a beat-up red Toyota pick-up.

A relief.

The vehicle flashes its lights.

STRIKER

I think we should let them pass.

Rand slows down and hugs the wall of the tunnel. The pick-up drives by slowly. As it does, Rand's eyes connect with one of the men in the car. He stares at Rand.

A RUSH of air as the car overtakes them. The ambulance shudders slightly.

Rand gets back into the center of the lane.

Suddenly the Toyota BRAKES HARD on the road in front of them, SCREECHING to a halt at a 45 degree angle.

Rand SLAMS the brakes. The ambulance skids to a stop in front of the car.

Two MEN jump out of the Toyota. They're swinging AK-47s.

RAND

Brace!

He throws the ambulance into REVERSE.

The back of the tunnel - now only a small spot of light at the end - is too far behind them.

The guns are pointed directly at the windshield.

A warning BURST goes off. The REPORT reverberates through the tunnel.

RAND (CONT'D)

Fuck!

STRIKER

Stop! We won't make it.

The ambulance SQUEALS to a halt. A stand-off.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

Don't speak.

The two men - JAFFER and WAJID - dressed in black, their faces covered with black and white scarves with Arabic lettering - slowly walk up to the ambulance. The steady, menacing clicking of their boots echoing in the tunnel.

Striker rolls down his window.

STRIKER (CONT'D)

(in Arabic)

Good afternoon, brother. How can we help you?

The pleasantries aren't working.

Jaffer YANKS on the door handle. The vehicle is locked.

He RAPS on the glass with the butt of his rifle.

JAFFER

Open!

Rand looks at Striker. He CLICKS the unlock button.

The man FLINGS open the driver side door, grabbing Rand by the arm.

JAFFER (CONT'D)

Get out!

His command ricochets down the tunnel. There's no one for miles around.

Nervously, Rand unfastens his seat belt and steps out.

STRIKER

(in Arabic)

Talk to me. He doesn't understand Arabic. Talk to me, brother.

Jaffer ignores Striker. He looks directly at Rand, seeing the "USA" on the Red Crescent ID clipped to his shirt.

He smiles and holds his hand out to shake. Rand just stands there.

JAFFER
What kind of politeness is this?
You come to our country, but you
won't take my hand?

Rand looks at him blankly and then Striker.

JAFFER (CONT'D)
My hand is not clean for you?

Jaffer looks at his blackened hand. He spits into it, leaving a phlegmatic residue.

He pats Rand on the cheek with his moist palm. Rand winces.

Hesitating, Rand gingerly puts out his hand to shake when -

THUD! He's HIT in the gut with the butt of Jaffer's rifle.
Rand bends over double, winded.

Wajid, his partner, sneers. He joins in and KICKS Rand in the gut while he's down.

Striker RUSHES out of the ambulance.

Wajid points his rifle at Striker.

STRIKER
Brother, stop!

JAFFER
What is he, your son?

STRIKER
He is my partner.

Jaffer SHOVES his gun in Striker's face.

YUSEF
(in Arabic)
Don't think I won't shoot you.

Striker PUSHES the rifle butt away. He continues moving towards Rand.

Jaffer is caught off guard by his audacity.

Striker slowly gets Rand back on his feet.

He turns to the two men.

STRIKER
What do you want?

JAFFER
We want morphine.

WAJID
And painkiller. Diazepam.

JAFFER
And gauze.

STRIKER
Take what you want and go!

Striker goes around the back of the ambulance and unlocks the back door to reveal the six huddled dialysis patients cowering and praying in the back. Kamal looks at Jaffer with disdain.

JAFFER
What are you looking at, old man?

Striker unlocks the glass cabinets.

CUT TO:

Jaffer and Wajid grab as much as they can carry, leaving medicine jars and blister-packs strewn across the ambulance floor.

Wajid notices Rand looking over at the green Magen David Adom organ transporter case tucked under the stretcher.

He nudges his partner.

Jaffer puts down a handful of supplies and makes for the case.

Striker watches tensely as Jaffer slides it out.

Jaffer gestures at Rand with his rifle.

YUSEF
(in Arabic)
What is this, Amrekee?

STRIKER
You've taken what you need. Now go.

Jaffer shakes his head, looking straight at Rand.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
(to Rand)
He wants you to tell him what's
inside.

Jaffer aims the rifle at Rand's head.

Rand calls his bluff.

RAND
It's a transplant organ. You must
not open it.

Jaffer looks at Striker; he mis-translates to protect Rand.

Wajid opens the box, scraping the ice aside to reveal ROWS OF
STACKED BILLS.

His eyes light up. JACKPOT.

STRIKER
Now get the fuck out of here!

Jaffer scurries out of the ambulance holding the transporter
box. Wajid follows backwards behind him with his rifle aimed
at the ambulance.

They hop into the pick-up with their bounty and the Toyota
SQUEALS into the darkness.

Striker and Rand watch the ring of light recede into the
blackness in front of them.

Rand turns to Striker in the driver's seat.

RAND
What do we tell Hyder?

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - HYDER'S BUNGALOW - RAFAH - LATER

The tea sits untouched on the coffee table.

Hyder is fuming, but maintains his cool facade. He paces as
Striker and Rand sit perched at the end of the sofa.

HYDER
My suppliers are waiting on the
other side of the tunnel for my
payment. What do I tell them? And
the IDF officers? Who's going to
pay them their protection money?

He glares directly at Striker.

HYDER (CONT'D)
Brother, I thought you were going to be responsible for him. He has been quite costly for us.

RAND
It was my fault. I'll do whatever you need to make up the payment.

HYDER
What can you do?

RAND
I'll do more runs for you. Look at me. As an American they're much more likely to let me pass.

The room is silent. Close on Hyder: we see an idea forming.

HYDER
I'll find a special project.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - SALAHUDDIN HIGHWAY - LATER

Rand and Striker drive in silence. They're both nervous, trying not to think about what lies ahead.

Striker turns on the radio to break the tension.

He turns a knob on the console. Nothing happens.

He SMACKS the dash and the TINNY radio CRACKLES to life.

Striker tunes to a different station. Nothing. Static.

STRIKER
Still jammed. They won't even let us have our own radio. Fuckers.

He flicks it off, leaving just the sound of the cat's eye worry beads dangling from the rear-view mirror CLATTERING against the windshield.

They drive in silence.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
It wasn't your fault.

EXT. DIPLOMAT HOTEL - LATER

The ambulance pulls away from the front entrance.

INT. HALLWAY - DIPLOMAT HOTEL - LATER

Drained, Rand unbuttons his shirt as he takes out his room key -

But the door to his room is already AJAR.

INT. ROOM 32 - DIPLOMAT HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

He pushes it open, turns on the light -

The SHOWER is running.

RAND

Iris?

He turns around and freezes -

There's an olive-uninformed MAN sitting on a chair at the window, silently waiting.

It's JACOB.

RAND (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

JACOB

I thought I'd pay you a visit.

RAND

Get out.

Fingering past photographs and negatives on the table, Jacob picks up a piece of Iris's clothing. Sniffs it.

JACOB

I'd love to get her in an interrogation room and see what she could do for me.

Jacob gets up to leave.

Rand cringes, grabbing back the blouse.

JACOB (CONT'D)

I have a message from Hyder.
You'll get an emergency call at
10:00. Come alone.

RAND
I'll be there.

JACOB
Gate B. Don't forget my papers.

Jacob turns around in the doorway.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Don't fuck it up this time.

The door clicks shut.

Rand locks it and slides the dead-bolt just as Iris opens the bathroom door in a towel.

IRIS
Who were you talking to?

RAND
They had the wrong room.

INT. ROOM 32 - DIPLOMAT HOTEL - NIGHT

Rand and Iris on opposite sides of the bed. She's asleep, separated by a dam of pillows. Rand looks at the ceiling and watches the breeze rustle the musty curtains.

A dog BARKS in the distance. And then another. And another.

And then another sound. The GRINDING sound of military vehicles. GUNSHOTS. Single, targeted BURSTS. It's the night exterminators.

Beams of light sweep across the ceiling from the vehicles.

One by one, the barking of the dogs is silenced.

Rand lays there sweating, tense. He turns over.

IRIS
You okay?

He slips his arm around Iris. Unguarded, she takes it. He just holds her.

CUT TO:

INT. RED CRESCENT CLINIC - DAYR AL-BALAH

Rand follows Striker down the hallway. He looks at the clock: it's 9:45.

They approach two dialysis patients from yesterday - SAMEER and QASIM - waiting in wheelchairs.

They're wearing casts.

STRIKER
You want to help me remove these?

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A large pair of plaster shears cut carefully along the length of Sameer's cast. Curiously, there are points where the shears won't cut through.

Rand reaches the end of the cast and puts down the shears. Grabbing the ends of the cast, he pulls - it comes apart in a stream of plaster and gauze.

But there's something else - there are pieces of metal EMBEDDED into the plaster - hinges, a circuit board, a valve.

Rand is alarmed.

RAND
What is this?

STRIKER
From Barzilai.

Rand holds up a circuit board and turns it over in his hand.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
This is what I've been working on.

Striker pulls a sheet off a cabinet. It's not a cabinet at all, but a partially assembled DIALYSIS MACHINE.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
So we can treat them right here
regardless of the checkpoint
closures.

Rand tries to smile, but he's tense. He looks at the clock: 10:05.

On cue: The loudspeaker SQUAWKS to life.

VOICE
Attention C108. We have a Ten-17.
Three female patients. Rafah, Taba
Compound, Block 11. Dispatch.

Striker immediately recognizes Hyder's address.

RAND
I have to go alone.

Rand looks Striker straight in the eye.

CUT TO:

EXT. HYDER'S COMPOUND - RAFAH - LATER

The guards swipe the airport wand over Rand. It BEEPS around his neck. Rand pulls out Dareen's chain.

It BEEPS again at Rand's medical pouch. He opens it to reveal the scissors, flashlight and syringe. He's clear.

CUT TO:

INT. HYDER'S BUNGALOW - MOMENTS LATER

Hyder leads Rand down the stairs to the basement bunker, past the tunnel and the racks of supplies and into a locked room on the side.

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - HYDER'S BUNGALOW - CONTINUOUS

The door opens to reveal:

Three unconscious WOMEN lying on a tattered, stained mattress with no sheets. Two are African - they look like sisters - and the other appears to be Eastern European or Russian - she can't be more than 16 years old.

They've been sedated and they have bruises on their arms and legs.

HYDER
These are your patients. They need to be taken to Yosef at Zanzi-Bar in Ashkelon.

Hyder hands Rand three flawless blue ID cards.

HYDER (CONT'D)
Tomorrow there will be three more, until you've paid off your debt.

CUT TO:

INT. HYDER'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A banal red-tiled bathroom. An ornate brass tissue box holder. A kids toothbrush. A picture of sunset.

Rand could be in any American suburban bathroom - far away from this madness, but he's not. He's here in Hyder's lair.

Rand wretches, but nothing comes out. He's sweating, gasping for breath.

He looks at his bloodshot eyes in the mirror. They look like Striker's.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - HYDER'S COMPOUND

Ismail helps Rand strap the women into the stretchers - the two sisters together on one and the Eastern European girl on the other.

The women moan softly, heavily drugged. Ismail looks at them, almost regretful.

ISMAIL
I'm sorry. We all have to make
difficult choices to survive here.

Ismail looks at Rand with a flicker of compassion before turning away.

CUT TO:

EXT. EREZ CROSSING CHECKPOINT - GATE A - LATER

Rand sweats profusely as he waits in a crooked line of cars and vans up against the concrete wall.

The posters of missing sons and daughters stare at him. They're peeling and tearing in the dusty wind, revealing layers of other faces below them, and layers of faces even further.

Rand gets to the front.

It's Jacob.

He takes the three blue IDs.

JACOB
Permit?

Rand hands over a thick brown envelope wrapped in documents.

RAND
You want me to open the back?

JACOB
I'll see them later.

Jacob smiles, but it looks more like a snarl.

The gate GRINDS open.

He waves him through.

EXT. ISRAELI SUBURB - OUTSIDE ASHKELON - LATER

The setting sun glints through the olive groves.

Rand looks ahead - the yellow light hits the facades of Ashkelon apartment blocks at an angle. The seedy neon sign at Zanzi-bar must be flickering on right around now.

Close on Rand and the look in his eyes.

No, he can't do this.

No.

Rand pulls over.

He moves to the back compartment and pulls out a jar of adrenaline. He fills three small syringes with the clear fluid and, one by one, carefully INJECTS the three women.

He unstraps them as the adrenaline kicks in.

The sisters are the first to rouse, disoriented and groggy, they look at him with fear, startled. The Eastern-European girl wakes and stares at him blankly, like the life has already been sucked out of her.

Rand takes out the bills given to him by Hyder and PUSHES them into the hands of the girls.

They look back at him, wide-eyed, afraid of what lies ahead.

Rand opens the back doors. His heart beating wildly.

RAND

RUN. Don't come back!

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - SALAHUDDIN HIGHWAY - GAZA

The ambulance speeds down Salahuddin Highway as the evening prayer ECHOES from minarets around Gaza City.

Rand rolls down the windows as he drives back, the air THUNDERING through.

The radio CRACKLES. Striker is paging through.

RAND
C108 here. Copy?

STRIKER
(Filtered)
Pick me up at the clinic. It's
urgent.

RAND
Striker. I couldn't do it.

CRACKLING silence.

STRIKER
(Filtered)
I know.

EXT. RED CRESCENT CLINIC - LATER

Striker rushes out and jumps into the ambulance. His face is white.

STRIKER
It's my wife.

The siren BLARES as they roar through the outskirts of Gaza City.

INT. STRIKER'S FORMER HOUSE - AL QUBBAH - HALF AN HOUR LATER

STREAKS OF BLOOD across the floor, leading into the kitchen.

There's a bloodied, furry mass in the middle of the floor.

It's Striker's dog, Simba.

He's wheezing, half alive.

FARIHA - the woman from Striker's family portrait - ashen-faced, is huddled in the corner of the sofa holding a SOBBING SAHRA, 9, Striker's daughter.

FARIHA
She found him at the doorstep.

Simba has several gunshot wounds. He's choking on the blood filling his lungs.

A note has been tucked into his collar. Striker unfolds the bloody piece of paper -

Inscribed in Arabic: *"It takes two hands to clap"*

STRIKER
(to Fariha)
Take her to the other room and turn
up the television.

TV is on LOUD. Striker pulls his handgun from his satchel. He wraps the barrel in a dishrag and holds it against Simba's head.

Hands shaking, face contorted, he pulls the trigger.

BANG. The report is deafening.

The dog stops wheezing.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
(to Fariha)
Stay inside. Lock the doors.

EXT. STRIKER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Striker stumbles into the ambulance and turns on the IRON MAIDEN really LOUD.

He sits at the wheel. From his eye, a tear. He wipes it away.

But he can't stop the next one. And the one after that.

And for the first time since his before his son's death, Striker CRIES.

In that moment, everything he has held away like a dam, catches up to him.

Rand puts his hand on his shoulder.

RAND
I'm sorry...

Striker gets out of the ambulance and goes back inside.

STRIKER
I'm going to stay here.

As Fariha comes to the door, he hugs her tight, like he never wants to let go.

Rand, in the vehicle, ponders what to do next. He looks at the seat next to him, under which Striker's pistol is strapped.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - RED CRESCENT CLINIC

Back at the clinic. Rand shuts the door behind him. He collapses into a kid-sized plastic chair. He's drowning inside.

Someone opens the door - it's Khaleed, one of the other medics. He has a locker a few doors down.

Rand composes himself and begins to change out of his uniform.

Khaleed looks over.

KHALEED
You have a nice watch.

RAND
Thanks.

KHALEED
Nice shoes.

RAND
Thank you. You too.

KHALEED
No. I know I don't.

A long, awkward silence.

KHALEED (CONT'D)
Most of us here are just trying to make a living. Not all of us can afford to save the world.

RAND
I'm just trying to do my best.

KHALEED
So is Hyder. (a beat) He helps take care of our families.

Rand is chilled by the reference. Another long pause.

KHALEED (CONT'D)
You know why we have a cat here at the clinic?

Rand shakes his head.

KHALEED (CONT'D)
To kill the rats.

Rand, silenced.

Khaleed shuts his locker and leaves.

KHALEED (CONT'D)
You have a good night.

Rand opens his locker to hang up his uniform and finds - affixed to the back of the locker with medical tape - a half-chewed DEAD MOUSE hanging from its tail. He stops cold.

CUT TO:

INT./ EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - GAZA CITY

Rand drives C108 through the streets of Gaza City. Amongst the collapsed buildings and the rubbish and the rubble, cars honk, men smoke hookah on steps outside shops, music plays through windows. For this one hour before curfew - the city is teeming with life and hope.

Rand pulls up to the hotel.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DIPLOMAT HOTEL

Rand shoves Iris's things into a bag.

RAND
You have to leave.

IRIS
What the fuck is going on?

RAND
I want you to go into Israel.

IRIS
Why? I'm staying right here. I have an assignment!

RAND
They're going to come for you.
Because of me.

Rand sits her down on the bed and begins to tell her the truth -

CUT TO:

MINUTES LATER

Shock, confusion, anger, fear burn across Iris's face. Just when she had let her guard down...she wants to say something but nothing comes out.

RAND
I'm sorry.

Iris grabs her bag to leave. She looks back at him, not knowing whether to kiss him or punch him -

She disappears. Probably forever. Rand's world is crumbling.

CUT TO:

EXT. HALLWAY - DIPLOMAT HOTEL

Rand stalks down the hallway. He knocks on a door.

The door opens, revealing Grant, holding a glass of whiskey.

GRANT
Welcome! You came for some (he makes a drinking gesture) Eh?

He notices Rand's bloodshot eyes and senses the desperation in his breath.

RAND
No, I need to tell you something.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANT'S ROOM - DIPLOMAT HOTEL

Grant puts down an empty glass of whiskey on the table.

GRANT
Look, you're in way over your head. I'm just a visiting consultant. I'm out of here in a couple of days.

RAND
You can tip-off the Palestinian Authority police. There are more women coming through the tunnels tomorrow.

GRANT
You think they have the power to take them down? They barely have enough funding for uniforms.

RAND
Just call the police commissioner
for me, please.

Grant looks at him, shaking his head. He then picks up the phone and starts to dial.

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC - SIMULTANEOUS

Nadia attends to a patient. The fluorescent tube lights flicker off.

NADIA
What happened to the generator?

EXT. CLINIC - SIMULTANEOUS

IDF military vehicles SCREECH to a halt outside.

INT. CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

IDF RAIDERS
Get down! Get down! Everybody get
down!

A group of UNIFORMED OFFICERS storm into the building, their assault rifles illuminated with flashlights. One of them is JACOB.

They SMASH open cabinets and lockers. They've clearly been tipped off to look for something. They CRACK open patient's casts and TOPPLE Striker's DIALYSIS MACHINE - years of work CRASHES to the floor.

Patients SCREAM. Glass BREAKS.

INT. AMBULANCE BAY - SIMULTANEOUS

A flashlight sweeps the interior of an ambulance - Jacob's face, illuminated by the glow of light. Jacob uses a cloth to pull out three cylindrical cannisters from his jacket. He cuts open the gray foam padding on the bench and carefully slides them in.

He clicks on his radio.

JACOB
Ten-79, Captain! I found something!

CUT TO:

EXT. CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

Nadia and the clinic nurses are marched out in cuffs and shoved into the back of an IDF vehicle.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL CAFE - DIPLOMAT HOTEL - LATER

Rand feels safer waiting in this public place. Egyptian pop videos play on the television. He sits there, picking at tapas as the world spins around him.

CUT TO:

INT. STRIKER'S HOUSE - HALF AN HOUR LATER

Two IDF officers knock on the door.

Striker answers the door and is immediately bagged, cuffed with zip-ties and dragged out by the men.

Fariha SCREAMS.

They throw Striker into the back of a van - but it's NOT an IDF vehicle.

These are Hyder's men.

INT./EXT. TAXI - CHECKPOINT - EREZ CROSSING - LATER

CHECKPOINT OFFICER
Check if we have media clearance
for Iris Beringer, German national.

Flashlight in her face, Iris squints in the back seat of a taxi into Israel. A familiar face emerges from behind the glare -- it's JACOB.

JACOB
Let me check the bags on this one.

Off his menacing grin -

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CAFE - DIPLOMAT HOTEL - LATER

Rand hangs up the pay phone against the wall, his face white. He slumps into a seat across from Grant, reeling inside.

RAND

That was Fariha. They got Striker.

Grant snaps his cell phone shut.

GRANT

The German consulate in Tel Aviv says Iris was arrested at Erez on smuggling charges.

Rand holds his head in his hands, but he can't stop the spinning.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Look, we can't save you from this. Our hands are tied. These are some pretty serious charges. The State Department wants you out of here on the next flight.

Grant's cell phone buzzes.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Talk to him.

Grant flips open his cell phone. It's an international number.

Rand puts the handset to his ear.

RAND

Hello?

LESTER (O.S.)

Rand?

Silence.

LESTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I don't know what you've gotten yourself into, but you need to get out now. We've arranged a diplomatic pouch through Jack's connections.

RAND

Dad, I can't leave.

LESTER (O.S.)
Come home before this becomes more
embarrassing for everyone.

RAND
I have to finish this.

LESTER (O.S.)
You don't need to prove anything
out there. It won't make a
difference. Just get on the plane.

RAND
Sorry...I have to go.

Rand hangs up and pushes the phone back across the table.

GRANT
Rand, I have tickets from the
consulate for you to leave the
country.

He slides the travel documents towards him.

GRANT (CONT'D)
You can leave now. Or you're on
your own. Flight leaves in 3 hours.

RAND
If I leave, Striker is a dead man.

Rand looks at the ticket.

In a second he can make this all go away. Fuck this hellhole.
Fuck Striker. Fuck Iris. Lesson number four, was it? *Don't
get too attached, gets in the way of proper judgment.*

He picks up the ticket. He's done.

GRANT
Who is he to you anyway?

A long pause...

RAND
He's my partner.

A beat. Rand slides the tickets back.

Grant looks at Rand, shaking his head - stunned and impressed
by his stubbornness.

RAND (CONT'D)
I'm not leaving them to Hyder.

GRANT

Listen, I spoke to the commissioner about this Hyder guy. They're looking into it, but they can't go in there.

Rand rubs his temples.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Rand, they're not going to touch him. He's a mole.

RAND

He smuggles drugs and traffics women!

GRANT

Prostitution is legal on the Israeli side. And drug enforcement isn't the domain of the State Department. Besides, we can't prove any of that.

RAND

What about the checkpoint officers on his payroll? I know who they are - what if you had an opportunity to take down the ring? It'll be a coup for the security forces.

GRANT

Look, even if somehow you can prove it, the IDF isn't going to take a chance by raiding him in his own district. The area is protected by Hamas. They don't want a bloodbath.

Rand shakes his head.

GRANT (CONT'D)

We have no power unless he's out of there.

RAND

And if he's out of there?

GRANT

I can't guarantee anything, but if you can get him out of that jurisdiction, I can tip off my contact the IDF. They have an aerial surveillance unit. Maybe they'll make a move.

Rand gets up to leave.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Good luck.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - ROADSIDE - SALAHUDDIN HIGHWAY - LATER

Hold on Rand in the ambulance, gripping the steering wheel.

There's only one plan left. And he could die. If he's worth anything, now's the time to prove it.

His heart pounding, Rand takes out the two halves of Striker's modified Soviet pistol. The handle and the chamber are each no bigger than a medium-sized cellphone. With a medical scalpel, he peels off the soles of his boots, gauging out a compartment in the rubber.

Rand slams on the accelerator and barrels boldly through the night, Striker's Iron Maiden SCREAMING through the speakers.

The sodium street lights sweep across his face as determination burns in his eyes.

EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - RAFAH/ NEAR EGYPTIAN BORDER - GAZA

The headlights flash wildly as the ambulance hurtles through the dirt roads towards Hyder's compound.

INT. AMBULANCE - HYDER'S COMPUND - LATER

Stray dogs BARK and HOWL as the ambulance lurches to a halt.

Rand removes the metal components of the medical pouch on his belt. He pulls out a small syringe from the back of the ambulance and slips it into one of the empty slots.

EXT. HYDER'S BUNGALOW - MOMENTS LATER

Rand walks up to the front gate, confronted by the guards.

RAND
I have some business.

They are surprised by his audacity. They pat him down. He shifts from foot to foot, steadying himself on his uneven soles as they move down to his ankles. Clear.

Now the wand. Again, the chain BEEPS around his neck, so does the medical pouch. They check. Flashlight, syringe, pen - no weapons.

They buzz the intercom and let him in.

Sweat trickles down Rand's temples.

INT. HYDER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The front door closes behind him. He scans the hallway.

The tinny SOUND EFFECTS of a cartoon waft from a television down the hall.

Rand stops in a dark corner of the vestibule. He peels off the soles of his boots, and pulls out the pistol components, locking the two pieces together. He tucks it into his medical pouch, using it as an ad hoc holster.

Suddenly, he's SPIED - it's Hyder's son, Jamil, peering out from an archway, dressed in a Spider Man costume. Recognizing him, he instinctively smiles at Rand.

Rand lifts up his hands in mock-surrender. The boy grins.

Rand silently counts down from ten with his fingers.

The boy gets it: hide-and-seek. He scurries off to hide.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Rand creeps down the hallway, past the living room.

Through the beaded curtain, he catches Hyder's silhouette in the kitchen.

Unclipping his pouch, he pulls out the gun, keeping his fingers off the trigger, hands trembling.

As he pulls back the curtains, the beads CLATTER - Hyder spins around, holding a cup of steeping tea.

He's not afraid, rather amused.

HYDER

I didn't think you were this foolish.

RAND

Where's Striker? Let him go.

He puts the tea down on the counter.

HYDER

I feed the people, pay for their families and this is how you thank me? You think you can threaten me in my own home?

He pops a few Canderel tablets into the cup.

HYDER (CONT'D)

Do you know how much each of those girls was worth? Over the years? If you didn't come here with the money, I have no use for you.

He opens a drawer and gets out a teaspoon. We notice there's a large knife amongst the silverware.

Rand aims the gun at Hyder's head.

HYDER (CONT'D)

What? You're going to shoot me? Is that the plan? You think you can get out of here alive?

Hyder ignores him and stirs his tea, deliberately leaving the drawer open.

HYDER (CONT'D)

What were you thinking when you went to inform the IDF?

Rand notices the blade glinting in the drawer.

RAND

Move away from the cabinet!

Hyder backs off.

HYDER

Why do you think this place is left standing when all the others have been bombed?

Hyder takes a sip from the cup.

HYDER (CONT'D)

Why do I have their machines? I work for them. I'm their informant. I know which tunnels smuggle weapons and arms. They need me. They let me operate. I let them infiltrate.

(MORE)

HYDER (CONT'D)

One hand shakes the other.
Something you don't understand.

RAND

Then call your buddies at the IDF
and tell him to release Iris and
the people from the clinic.

Rand puts his finger on the trigger.

HYDER

You don't have the courage, son...

Suddenly, Hyder FLINGS his tea at Rand's face, SCALDING him.
The gun goes OFF. The cabinet SPLINTERS. Hyder lunges at
Rand. They struggle on the floor. The gun slips across the
linoleum.

Hyder grabs it.

He lifts up the gun and CLICKS - there were NO more bullets
in it. Rand grabs for the syringe in his pouch but, just then-

Alerted by the sound of the gunshot, Hyder's guards BURST
through the beaded curtain, grabbing Rand and forcing him
into a headlock. They PUMMEL his head repeatedly.

Rand thrashes about as they drag him down the stairs to the
underground hallway, until he falls almost unconscious from
the blows -

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND STORAGE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A dark, sandy space guarded by empty crates and rusty metal
racks.

Rand is thrown in and slumps onto the ground. The door SLAMS
shut.

And there beside him is - STRIKER, lying crumpled on the
floor - his face caked in dirt and blood - his hands zip-tied
behind him.

Rand has found him.

They just look at each other across the floor, barely able to
speak.

STRIKER

Amateur.

Striker smiles weakly.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
You should have looked out for
yourself.

The moment is broken by the OPENING of the door.

Rand sees the silhouette of a stocky MAN in the doorway,
holding a GUN. Ismail, Hyder's #2 stands behind him,
watching.

THWUMP. THWUMP. THWUMP. The man KICKS Rand repeatedly with
his steel-capped boots. He curses in Arabic.

Rand closes his eyes, wincing, taking the punches and the
blows, as the man ploughs into him.

His whole body convulses from the pain.

This is it.

Striker was right. There is no justice, there is no plan.
He's going to die in this basement. Executed, like a sand
dog.

Suddenly - the man STOPS. Something glimmers in the dark. A
look of recognition flickers across his face.

He leans in close to Rand, near his face. Rand can smell his
breath.

Rand waits for the cocking of the gun, but it doesn't come.
The man is looking at the shiny silver Hand of Fatima around
Rand's neck with the Arabic name on it.

MAN
(in Arabic, to Ismail)
Look at this.

The man yanks the chain off. Rand looks at him, confused.

RAND
It's from a patient - she's in
Barzilai.

Ismail wipes the dirt off the inscription.

ISMAIL
Dareen...Zayani?

RAND
How does he...?

Striker lets out a deep breath.

STRIKER
Dareen was one of Hyder's girls.

RAND
You...knew?

STRIKER
I took her over once...I didn't
know what for.

Striker's eyes mist over with regret.

For Rand, it all falls into place: the reason Dareen was so scared of Striker; the reason for her home abortion; Striker's adamant desire to save her; the whole chain of events that have led us to this moment.

Ismail turns the amulet over in his hand and whispers something under his breath.

ISMAIL
Go.

Ismail looks at him as if this is the moment - *the opportunity* - HE has been waiting for too.

Rand is confused, disoriented.

He looks to Striker on the floor.

STRIKER
Just run. He's not going to give
you another chance.

Summoning all his strength, Rand stumbles to his feet, his body aching, throbbing.

Rand rushes through the open door and UP the stairs, pulling out the syringe from his pouch.

INT. HYDER'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hyder is on the sofa with the guards. They turn to see a FIGURE coming up behind Hyder.

RAND CHARGES HYDER and STABS him in the NECK with the syringe.

Hyder WINCES and the guards immediately grab RAND in a chokehold, ready to squeeze the remaining life out of him.

The empty syringe falls out of Rand's hand to the floor: it's INSULIN.

Within seconds, Hyder's knees buckle. He falls to the floor. He begins to convulse, going into a seizure as the insulin overdose spreads through his system and his body SHUTS DOWN.

He's having a DIABETIC SEIZURE.

The guards loosen their grip on Rand, unsure of what to do. They want to kill him, but they can't - they NEED him.

GUARD #1

Fix him!

THWACK! He hits Rand over the head with the butt of a rifle. Rand reels. Mouth bloodied.

RAND

I can't do it myself! I need Striker's help.

CUT TO:

An uncuffed Striker is dropped on the floor in front of a semi-conscious Hyder.

RAND (CONT'D)

We have to get him to the hospital...

Striker suppresses a smile at Rand's bluff.

RAND (CONT'D)

In Barzilai.

CUT TO:

INT./ EXT. AMBULANCE C108 - HYDER'S COMPOUND

Striker and Rand tend to Hyder as the guards carry Hyder out to the ambulance.

They run a glucose drip to counteract the insulin shot and attach a sedative into the line.

The guards jump into the vehicle with their assault rifles.

RAND (CONT'D)

You can't take your guns - we have to go through the checkpoint to Barzilai.

GUARD # 1

We'll take them as far as we can.

Rand puts Striker in the jumper seat, taking extra effort to strap him in firmly.

Rand gets into the front seat and puts on his seat belt. Tight.

As he does so, he brushes his knuckle by the radio's ON switch - the same thing Striker did earlier to broadcast Rand's singing over the airwaves. That's the SIGNAL.

CUT TO:

INT. C108 - SUFAH - GAZA - LATER

Rand's hands grip a steering wheel. They're shaking.

He drives fast. Too fast, through the narrow, dusty streets.

We pull back from our view through the windshield. There's sweat down his temples and the glint of a metal barrel pressed against his matted brown hair.

GUARD #1
If he dies, you die.

RAND
They won't let us through the checkpoint with those weapons.

HYDER
(drowsy but coherent)
We own the checkpoints! Go to -

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. ABOVE THE STREET - IAF 23 - CONTINUOUS

HYDER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(through the radio)
- to Commander Jacob at Checkpoint Alpha.

An AERIAL VIEW on a helicopter's video display - we're looking down, directly above the rooftops. The ambulance tears through the streets, the numerals "108" visible across its roof.

Hyder's voice CRACKLES through the radio - the helicopter is TUNED IN to the ambulance frequency. They can hear everything - Jacob is fucked.

PILOT (O.S.)
(Filtered)
We've identified C108.

An American voice crackles through the radio.

 IDF MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
 (Filterd)
 Copy, continue tracking...

It's GRANT's voice.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - SIMULTANEOUS

The sound of an Apache helicopter THUNDERS above, cutting through the dusty night air.

Through the windshield, we can see a military checkpoint - with several IDF vehicles and military personnel - approaching 500 feet ahead.

It's getting closer, but the speedometer maintains its velocity at 120 kilometers per hour.

The barrel of the gun is still firmly pressed against Rand's head.

PRELAP:

 PILOT (O.S.)
 (Filterd)
 C108 at 120 kmh. Checkpoint within
 500 feet and closing. Please
 advise.

EXT. ABOVE THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

 GRANT (O.S.)
 Hold! We have a US national on
 board.

 PILOT (O.S.)
 (Filterd)
 250 feet and closing. Gaining
 speed. Permission to fire.

Grant is overridden by another IDF Commander. Fuck.

 IDF MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
 (Filterd)
 IAF-23, Granted.

PILOT (O.S.)
(Filtered)
Target locked.

IDF MISSION CONTROL
(Filtered)
Engage.

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - SIMULTANEOUS

RAND
Striker, you scared?

STRIKER
No. How about you?

RAND
No.

Rand adjusts his grip on the steering wheel.

RAND (CONT'D)
You ready to roll?

Striker gets it. He grips the side of the jumper seat.

STRIKER
Yes, boss.

Rand picks up the radio.

RAND
This is C108, we need an ambulance
at the Sufa Crossing, Checkpoint
Alpha. Three, possibly five
casualties. Urgent Dispatch.

Rand looks at the red rubber band tied to the steering wheel.

He checks Hyder through the rear view window. As their eyes connect, something dawns on Hyder. He grabs his guard's gun to fire, a split-second of realization flashing over his face before -

SMASH! Hyder's head slams against the side of the ambulance as -

Gripping the wheel tighter, RAND suddenly YANKS it SHARPLY to the left, way beyond the RED MARKER.

THUD. The driver side wheels SLAM into the curb. SCRAPE. The ambulance SHUDDERS, lifting OFF the asphalt. It TIPS. The view through the windshield SPINS.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABOVE THE STREETScape - AERIAL VIDEO MONITOR VIEW

Sparks fly as the ambulance topples and begins to TUMBLE.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE C108 - CONTINUOUS

The windshield and side window SHATTERS. Shards splinter everywhere. Sparking metal SQUEALS against the asphalt, glass CRUNCHING underneath.

Rand and Striker try to hold tight, strapped in. Bottles shatter. Glass spraying across their faces as -

The un-secured bodies of Hyder and the guards TUMBLE, SLAM and SMASH against the inside.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The ambulance continues to ROLL, crumpling like an accordion.

The helicopter SWOOPS past overhead.

Finally, it SCRAPES to a halt on its side.

Glass TINKLES. Metal CREAKS. A moment of quiet.

The ambulance lets out its final GROAN.

But nothing stirs.

EXT. ABOVE THE STREETScape - AERIAL VIDEO MONITOR VIEW

The scene is silent.

GRANT (O.S.)
(Filtered)
Fuck.

INT. IDF MISSION CONTROL MOBILE UNIT - CHECKPOINT ALPHA - CONTINUOUS

The radio crackles. Grant yanks off his headset.

He stares at the silent crumpled box on screen. It's over.

Minutes pass.

Something catches his eye on the grainy image -

GRANT (O.S.)
Wait, what is that? Zoom in.

He taps on a part of the screen.

The camera zooms. Nothing -- Grain. Noise. Pixels.

But wait, NO... there's a tiny smudge of movement -

EXT. STREET - SIMULTANEOUS

What's left of the rear ambulance doors CLANGS open to reveal-

A single BLOOD-DAPPLED HAND gripping the edge of the ambulance frame...and then ANOTHER, and we see that it is RAND, pulling STRIKER from the battered vehicle!

They scramble out onto the asphalt and collapse onto the pavement.

Rand winces as the THUNDERING BLADES of a helicopter hover directly above.

INT. IDF MOBILE UNIT - CHECKPOINT ALPHA - CONTINUOUS

Rand salutes Grant through the screen.

Grant shakes his head in disbelief.

EXT. ABOVE THE STREETScape - AERIAL VIEW

Guns drawn, a team of IDF officers encircle the upturned ambulance as a set of emergency vehicles pull up to the site, their lights splashing across the scene.

CUT TO:

TITLE BURN: TODAY

INT. AMBULANCE C105 - AMBULANCE BAY - RED CRESCENT CLINIC

A woman sweeps broken glass from the hallways. The clinic is back up.

Fatima's voice SQUAWKS through the loudspeaker.

Striker and Rand are in a new ambulance - C105 - a German one, with a slightly different configuration.

Striker looks bruised, but fresh. His eyes aren't bloodshot anymore. Rand sports stitches across his brow.

RAND
How do you feel?

STRIKER
I feel like shit thanks.

RAND
Not even a day off, huh?

STRIKER
And leave you in charge of another ambulance?

He smiles.

Rand holds up a BLUE laminated document.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
What's that?

RAND
From the IDF, courtesy of the US State Department.

Striker takes it.

The document has a note attached from Grant. It's a "Special Clearance" pass for the clinic.

STRIKER
Does this mean I'm still stuck with the newbie?

RAND
Good to have you back.

Striker puts on his seat belt. Rand looks at him.

RAND (CONT'D)
Pussy.

He puts his on too, grinning.

STRIKER
Fuck you.

Striker pops in a cassette tape and BLARES it as the ambulance takes off.

EXT. COURTYARD - RIMAL APT COMPLEX - GAZA CITY

They pull over to a 5-story apartment building. Several Palestinian Authority Police trucks are parked outside.

High above, a helicopter hovers.

We zoom out to the AERIAL MONITOR VIEW and we see the two paramedic partners emerge from the dust cloud kicked up by their ambulance.

And suddenly, we realize, we're back - AT THE BEGINNING.

THE MONITOR CUTS TO BLACK.

We hear BREATHING. WHEEZING. QUIET.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE C105 - 30 MINUTES LATER

Rand is in the ambulance with Striker and the man with the bomb. Striker's hands are clasped around his.

STRIKER

Don't worry. I have it, just slip your hands out. We're going to be okay.

Rand looks at Striker. Striker's eyes are clear as he looks straight back at him. Not red, not bloodshot, but calm.

RAND

Okay, boss.

Just then: the approaching DRONE of heavy engines, SIRENS and tires CRUNCHING over gravel as the bomb squad pulls into the lot outside.

Moving millimeters at a time, Rand slowly slips his hand out from under Striker's.

STRIKER

Stop.

RAND

What?

STRIKER

Shhh...

Seconds pass.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Did you feel that?

They're still for a moment.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
He just passed.

Rand felt something. Or was it just his own heart thumping in his chest? No, it was definitely...something.

He slowly pulls his hands away, still staring at Striker.

RAND
I thought you said that was a myth.

Striker winks, but his eyes are glistening.

STRIKER
What are you waiting for? Go
debrief them. Get me the hell out
of here.

Rand unstraps the boy from the stretcher.

STRIKER (CONT'D)
Now light me a cigarette while I
wait for these fuckers to get me
out of this.

Rand reaches into Striker's shirt pocket and pulls out a cigarette from his perennial packet of Lucky Strikes. He sticks it into the corner of Striker's cheeky grin.

Rand unstraps the INJURED BOY from the bench and lifts him into his arms.

He jumps off the back of the ambulance and runs to get help.

EXT. AMBULANCE - EMPTY LOT - JUFFAIR - CONTINUOUS

Carrying the boy in his arms, Rand gulps the air outside. He trudges through the weeds and over to the commanding officer approaching him.

RAND
There's a patient with an IED
strapped to -

As he speaks -

A FLASH OF WHITE AND RED, a loud, concussive BANG.

Rand is thrown to the ground.

A colossal explosion RIPS through the ambulance behind him.

The world goes silent. All that's left is a TINNY RINGING in his ears.

Rand in a ball, covering the boy. His face rests in the earth.

The world is SIDEWAYS. SLOW-MOTION.

The ambulance's rear door, ripped from its hinges, lands upside down in front of him, the numbers inverted. Something strikes him about the image, but the thought is lost.

Men trudge toward the ambulance. He hears someone YELLING. Boots CRUNCH around him.

Black smoke. Splinters of debris. Burning embers float softly to the ground. Twisting, twirling in the aftermath.

Rand closes his eyes and lets out a long breath.

The world goes black as Rand passes out - the kid, safe in his arms.

Somewhere, a photo of a boy and a German shepherd curls into a crisp.

CUT TO:

TITLE BURN: THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

An IRON MAIDEN song plays.

Close up on a warped and singed red audio cassette tape marked "Powerslave" in Rand's hand, he slips it into his pocket - right alongside a long-overdue envelope, worn at the edges, addressed to a woman in London.

Rand looks through the window of the pediatric sick bay at the wounded BOY from the apartment building. We notice Rand has a medic's badge on his sleeve.

The camera pulls back to reveal a woman - her hair covered by a black scarf - next to him. It's Fariha.

She leans in to Rand.

FARIHA
When can I take him home?

RAND

Soon.

The camera pulls back further from the two figures at the window - and out the front door of the Red Crescent clinic.

A dialysis machine is being wheeled off an IDF truck.

Iris waits in a taxi outside.

A dog barks in the distance.

CUT TO BLACK.