

HEARTS & MINDS

Written by

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HBO

FIRST DRAFT
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“We need to be prepared to fight a different war. This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origin, war by guerillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of combat, by infiltration instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It requires in those situations where we encounter it, a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore, a new and wholly different kind of military training.”

President John F. Kennedy
Speech before the graduating class of the U.S. Military Academy
1962

FADE IN:

MAIN TITLES

Mixing together images that rattle our cultural DNA: the reality of foreign occupation on a level not seen since the end of World War II in Germany and Japan. Checkpoints, immunization clinics, house-to-house searches, graveyards, looting Iraqis, U.S. soldiers camped out in trashed palaces. Tangles of razor wire, tanks rolling through Baghdad, citizens walking past a fallen Saddam statue like it's so much trash to be avoided and the roadside husk of a burned-out Oldsmobile.

Imagine a cratered street with a home scarred by bombs and disrepair. Now imagine a satellite dish on the roof...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - DAY

As HEAT WAVES shimmer upward from the ground, we hear the ROAR OF HEAVY MACHINERY. Crews are at work, pouring steaming black asphalt, rolling it into newly paved road, around an area that looks like it was bombed and never repaired. The workers are largely Middle-Eastern men, working to the rhythms of "choobi" dance music, under mixed supervision which includes American civilians.

PICK UP a Humvee as it jumps the old road to avoid a gaping pothole, kicking up dust along the dirt on the side. In the passenger seat is **COLONEL DANNY O'BRIEN**, 42, confident New York cop turned reservist ass-kicker. Driven by a young African-American, **PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JAMES L. LEWIS**, 21, an easy smile but questionable road sense. The jolt causes O'Brien to look up from his ever-present clipboard.

O'BRIEN

Goddamn, Private, where'd you learn to drive?

LEWIS

Here, sir.

O'BRIEN

Here? Iraq here?

LEWIS

(nodding)

Always took the MTA back home.

As the Humvee maneuvers through an intersection where the traffic light does not work, an ad-hoc Iraqi tries to direct cars with marginal success.

O'BRIEN

No shit? Been a New Yorker all my life.

LEWIS

Greatest city in the world.

O'Brien reaches over a big M-249 automatic machine gun in the back seat, grabbing instead a bag of Doritos. He sticks a couple in his mouth, then offers the bag to Lewis.

O'BRIEN

Yankees?

LEWIS

(hates to disappoint)

Mets.

As Lewis takes a chip, he suddenly jerks the vehicle back onto the road, sending the two of them flying up off their seats. During the bump, O'Brien sees a couple of shabby cars pulled over to the side of the road, two Iraqis speaking to each other.

O'BRIEN

You pick teams like you drive.

LEWIS

Join the Army, learn a skill, sir.

As O'Brien turns around in the car to get a look, WE SEE one of the men shut his car trunk quickly.

O'BRIEN

Pull it around, Private!

Lewis hesitates a moment. O'Brien grabs the wheel, starts cranking it himself.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Over here! Give me some gas!

The Humvee comes up to a fast stop by the two men. O'Brien hands the M-249 machine gun off to Lewis.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Watch my back. Look like you're ready to use this.

O'Brien gets out, walks toward the two men, his own pistol out.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Anybody speak English here?

The two men look at each other, neither one speaks. O'Brien uses his weapon to gesture at the trunk, war-zone sign language.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Let's have a look inside.

The man who shut the trunk in the first place starts to motion against this course of action. O'Brien moves to open the trunk anyway.

THE TRUNK

Jammed with AK-47s, virtually bristling with firepower.

BACK TO SCENE

O'Brien keeps his gun trained on them, as he begins to lift up one of the AK-47s.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Now if this was the Bronx, right about now you'd be telling me you have no idea how these got here.

(calling to Lewis)

Okay, Private, keep me covered, and get over here.

Seeing where this is going, one of the Iraqi men just turns and runs at full speed away from the car.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Shit!

O'Brien lets go of the AK-47, takes off after the Iraqi perp.

If this wasn't Baghdad, the chase would look like any other police rundown, except that the cop, in this case, is in military fatigues, and the perp is an Iraqi.

Down an alley... the perp scrambles over a collection of trash... O'Brien scrambles after him...

Over a wall... first the perp, then O'Brien...

Through a house... into the back door, out the front door...

Onto a street... O'Brien manages a takedown... pulling the perp to the ground... everybody's out of breath...

O'BRIEN'S POV - THE CROWD

Gathering around them.

About twenty Iraqis -- men, women, children. Friend or foe? It's hard to tell. O'Brien stands up, pulling the perp off the ground with him, speaks to the crowd:

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Show's over. Let's move along, folks.

No one moves. Off this disquieting moment, we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP BIG STICK - ESTABLISHING - CONTINUOUS

Two helicopters clear airspace above the former Saddam International Airport, now Baghdad International.

From above, it's revealed as a combination of existing structures, including a sprawling nearby Guest Palace, and temporary tents, etc., all bristling with activity. This is the headquarters of V Corps, the top Army command in the country, known informally to everyone as "Camp Big Stick."

INT. PALACE HQ - GENERAL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Working at a large table/desk, facing out toward the airfield, is **LIEUTENANT GENERAL RICHARD SHATTUCK** ("Big Dick"), 52, chief of Coalition Joint Task Force Seven. Old school at heart, he's sitting on a folding chair with an artificial lower leg propped up against it, wearing his Army fatigues, chewing on an unlit cigar, watching one of several TV sets in the office, this one marked "Line Feed."

TV SET - PRESS BRIEFING

This is a now routine press briefing conducted by **CAPTAIN BRUJIDO ROJALES**, 31, Public Affairs. Beside a display of international flags, where the US and Iraq flags are prominent, Rojasles speaks from a podium.

ROJALES (T.V.)

Since our last briefing, a Coalition team led by Colonel Daniel O'Brien of V Corps broke up a gun exchange between suspected Ba'athist party elements on Muthana Al-Shababi street.

Rojales sees the hand of L.A. Times hotshot, **EMMETT KINCAID**, shoot up.

KINCAID (T.V.)

Why is a Colonel out on patrol?

ROJALES (T.V.)
He wasn't. He was in the area
conducting other business.

KINCAID (T.V.)
What kind of guns?

ROJALES (T.V.)
Seven AK-47s, and a rocket propelled
grenade launcher were recovered.

KINCAID (T.V.)
Follow up... do you have any evidence
to tie this Al-Shababi incident to
any organized resistance?

BACK TO SCENE

Shattuck scowls at the TV set, and Kincaid.

SHATTUCK
Bloodsucker.

On the TV, Rojasles doesn't miss a beat, answering in that
matter-of-fact military briefing style.

ROJALES (T.V.)
That matter is under investigation.
Two Iraqi citizens have been taken
into custody and remain unidentified
at this time. If you want to visit
the area, Lieutenant Barello from
Civil Affairs can arrange an escort.

Inside the briefing room, **FIRST LIEUTENANT DEE DEE BARELLO**,
28, does a short stand and royal wave, then sits back down.
Kincaid also sinks back in his seat, visibly deflated from
the lack of incident to the "incident."

Back in the office, Shattuck looks past the television set,
sees a couple of Chinook "Heavy-Lift" choppers on approach.
He picks up a pair of field binoculars.

BINOCULAR POV - THE CHOPPERS

On approach, each with something dangling from its metal
belly --

-- one has a huge, freaking out cow -- Bessy --

-- and the other has an angry, pissed-off pig -- Porky --

As the choppers lower their flying livestock, Bessy and Porky are freed from their trusses by ground crews, and the hoists retracted, allowing the choppers to land nearby.

A man hops out, jumps off, runs hunched over under the chopper blades. This is **LIEUTENANT TRENT TRAVERS**, 32, Psychological Operations. More later...

BACK TO SCENE

Shattuck spits on the contact point on his artificial leg, smears the saliva around with his elbow, pulls the limb on. Shattuck stands up, stamps his leg on the ground to "set" it properly below the knee.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION ZONE - CONTINUOUS

A cluster of mobile office spaces, a sign proclaiming "Bechtel" on the main double-wide, a collection of military and civilian vehicles surrounding them including a giant earth mover. An outdoor thermometer pegs the temperature at 104 degrees.

Lewis parks the Humvee in front, near an awning providing shade from the scorching sun. Underneath, **LISA FENTRESS**, 31, talks with a local Iraqi man, **NAQUIB**, smoking a Viceroy cigarette.

UNDER THE AWNING

O'Brien watches as Fentress gestures to the map spread before them. She exudes understated competence, making hot and sweaty look pretty good. Naquib works nearby.

FENTRESS

We're laying down three-hundred twenty-seven miles in this phase. We've had attacks on crews twice in the last ten days. Mainly Sunni Triangle stuff, from al-Fallouja in the east over to Hadithah in the west.

O'BRIEN

(nods)

Next time we start a post-war reconstruction, maybe we should wait for the war to be over.

FENTRESS

Yeah, I know, peace is hell.

(MORE)

FENTRESS (CONT'D)

Anyway, we need more protection, and we need it now.

Fentress speaks to Naquib in ARABIC. He nods, exits.

FENTRESS (CONT'D)

I got the report to prove it.

O'BRIEN

Troop level's been set. We've got to make do.

Fentress looks up from the map, brushes back her hair, looks him straight in the eye.

FENTRESS

Our contract already has us peeling the Army's potatoes, doing your laundry and cleaning your portapotties. Bad guys, that's your department, right?

O'Brien takes a long drain from a full-liter water bottle he carries in a netting slung over his shoulder. His view wanders to her exposed pierced naval, then back to eye contact.

O'BRIEN

What do you need?

FENTRESS

Brigade strength, at least three-thousand troops.

O'BRIEN

(sarcastic)

You're an expert on troop deployment, are you?

FENTRESS

I've been in a war zone or two.

O'Brien writes "50-75" on his clipboard.

O'BRIEN

I can get you fifty soldiers more, maybe seventy-five.

FENTRESS

(points to road)

That's the road to democracy. Haven't you got the memo from Washington?

O'BRIEN

Listen, I ran straight into the problem on the way over here. I get it. But you need to get that the idea's to protect people, not asphalt.

FENTRESS

(sees the logic)

I still need a minimum of two-hundred.

O'BRIEN

(bottom line)

One hundred. And you send your earth mover over to Camp Big Stick and build my guys a baseball field.

FENTRESS

Now we're negotiating? You been in Baghdad too long.

O'BRIEN

Learned that in New York.

FENTRESS

(bottom line)

We'll take what you got. Fast as you can.

O'Brien nods, puts a check on his clip-board, as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP BIG STICK - DAY

The Humvee carrying O'Brien and Lewis enters the base. O'Brien flips through some paperwork on his clipboard, turns to Lewis.

O'BRIEN

How come this says you're from Abilene, Texas?

LEWIS

No clue, sir. Never got out of the city until I joined up.

O'BRIEN

But your name is James L. Lewis?

LEWIS

Far as my momma told me.

Under the watchful eye of a massive eagle carved of Italian marble, the Humvee moves among troops camped out on a patio underneath a bombed-out once-luxurious "Presidential Palace." Truly surreal...

O'BRIEN

And what were you supposed to do when you got in country?

LEWIS

Field artillery. Been a gun bunny from day one. Never trained for motorpool, that's for damn sure.

O'BRIEN

(starts to laugh)

There's gotta be two James L. Lewises. Some kind of computer snafu. Jesus...

LEWIS

Just don't tell my mother. She always says they broke the mold after they made me.

O'BRIEN

You gonna tell her about today?

LEWIS

No way. She worries enough about me just watching the news.

O'Brien and Lewis trade a smile, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER (TOC) - DAY

Follow O'Brien into an improvised "CentCom" built inside what was previously a huge dining hall -- dozens of computer stations, all with exposed wiring, phones, etc. Several large viewing screens dominate the front. O'Brien passes **LIEUTENANT COLONEL GORDON HODGSON**, 41, Intelligence Officer, a man who's never been asked and who's never told about that thing that the military doesn't ask or tell about.

O'BRIEN

Anything from the poker players?

HODGSON

Got some possible chatter on the Jack of Hearts. If it pans out, we could be playing him --

(snaps fingers)

-- like that.

O'Brien whips out a deck of playing cards, faces of the "Most Wanted" on them, and flips through them quickly.

O'BRIEN
Sabawi Tilfah Al-Tikriti? You said
he was dead.

HODGSON
That was last week.

O'BRIEN
Which A-Team's in prep?

HODGSON
249. Gallagher's.

O'Brien nods, moves off.

O'BRIEN
Keep me posted.

Shattuck appears. He's got a slight limp, not bad.

SHATTUCK
Heard about your run-and-gun.

O'BRIEN
Something just didn't look right.

SHATTUCK
Don't let your cop instincts get
yourself killed, Colonel. I've gotten
used to you.

O'BRIEN
Yes, sir.

SHATTUCK
Walk with me. What's our status?

O'Brien and Shattuck take off together.

O'BRIEN
Possible takedown pending, but intel's
soft. And the boys at WMD still
think they need to dig up the
Shandrukh Triangle for bio-germs.
Plus, a local politician got himself
hung by his new constituents over in
Buhriz. And we got a troop
reassignment to the road crews in
the kill zone northwest of the city.

SHATTUCK
How many?

O'Brien consults his clipboard where he's written "50-75."

O'BRIEN

I promised them a hundred and fifty.

SHATTUCK

Jesus Christ, O'Brien. Are you screwing that Bechtel woman?

Shattuck talks this way to others, but no one is stupid enough to talk this way to him. O'Brien wisely ignores him.

O'BRIEN

Sir, the company report says it's like the Wild West out there and we're the only sheriff they got. Which I didn't need a report to know.

(shrugs)

Plus, she's gonna build us a baseball field to thank us.

SHATTUCK

(nods)

Lisa Fentress. Her father used to be Ambassador to Bahrain. Wife died, so our little Lisa, a teenage hottie, took over mom's job as the hostess with the mostess. Stirred up so much shit, they had to send her back to Washington. So now she's back in the hot zone.

(exerting his authority)

A hundred should do it.

O'Brien writes "100" on his clipboard. He got what he wanted, and Shattuck thought he made the decision. O'Brien holds out a form for Shattuck to sign.

O'BRIEN

You need to authorize the transfer, sir.

SHATTUCK

Where are we going to get these men?

O'BRIEN

Bravo Company mostly.

Shattuck signs, but he's distracted.

SHATTUCK

Okay.

(beat)

And, listen, find us a butcher.

O'BRIEN

Sir?

SHATTUCK

I saw Travers' flying cow. We're gonna have us a barbecue.

Shattuck spies someone else he needs to talk to, takes off.

SHATTUCK (CONT'D)

Pete!

O'Brien watches a beat, turns in the other direction. Spies **MAJOR JOHN WEXELL**, 37, Logistics. O'Brien hands him the paperwork.

O'BRIEN

We're moving some men tomorrow. We got any Dan Rathers looking for a story?

WEXELL

(smiles)

I'll ask Rojales who's the most annoying.

O'BRIEN

Great. Oh, and one more thing.

O'Brien pulls another piece of paper off his clipboard.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

They got this kid Lewis driving me today. Put him out there on road security, anywhere but motorpool.

O'Brien takes off now, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPLANE HANGAR - DAY

With an ALT.ROCK band playing on a nearby CD box, a corner of the hangar has been converted into a farm set, complete with straw and wooden fence and a bluer-than-blue sky with soft cotton ball clouds painted behind it. Several standing lights make it glow like a Technicolor version of reality. Travers, who we last saw exiting the chopper, now trains a digital camera on the cow, pig and chickens.

TRAVERS

C'mon, Bessy, give me that "come milk me" look... yeah, baby... that's perfect... yeah!

O'Brien enters, observes. Winces at the music, moves to turn it off.

O'BRIEN
Lieutenant, when did "Animal Farm"
become an aerial operation?

TRAVERS
You said to get it done ASAP.

O'BRIEN
I didn't say to fly them past
Shattuck's window.

TRAVERS
You signed for the choppers. Sir.

A moment of tension as O'Brien recalls that Travers is right, and doesn't like that. He checks his watch.

O'BRIEN
How much longer?

TRAVERS
Would've gone a lot faster if you
had the blue M-and-M's and the chilled
Pellegrino waiting for 'em.

This seems completely off-the-wall for the situation, and so does O'Brien's reaction.

O'BRIEN
You won't stop until you get me
fucking courtmartialed.

TRAVERS
This pamphlet's gonna get you a medal.
25-million bucks may work in the
city, but out in the sticks, they
don't know dollars --

TRAVERS / O'BRIEN
-- but they do know livestock.

Clearly, these guys have history, they're friends.

TRAVERS
Danny boy, I'm thinking Bessy goes
camera left, then Porky. And we'll
see if we can get a couple of the
Dixie Chicks to sit on 'em.

The soldiers working with Travers set about switching the cow and the pig and trying to wrangle the chickens.

O'BRIEN

Not many farm animals in the Bronx,
but I'm fairly certain you can't get
a chicken to sit on a pig.

TRAVERS

You can if they're on anti-
depressants.

O'BRIEN

Just get whatever you need today --
'cause your supermodels are turning
into steak, bacon and rotisserie.

TRAVERS

You'll just have to replace them.

O'BRIEN

I'll put it on the list.

O'Brien heads out. Travers watches, turns back to Bessy,
pats her on the head, nuzzles her affectionately.

TRAVERS

Is my good little fat cow ready for
her close-up?

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION ZONE - OUTSIDE AR-RAMADI - DAY

As before, a road crew of mostly Iraqi workers are on the
job in the background. An M-1/M-2 Bradley armored fighting
vehicle is parked near a makeshift checkpoint.

In the background, a patrol boat heads down the Euphrates
River, about a dozen U.S. troops aboard, reminding us of
Vietnam, except for the spire of a mosque in the background
and the Iraqi flag waving nearby.

THE CHECKPOINT

Five soldiers, and one reporter. They include -- Lewis, the
bad driver from NYC; **MASTER SGT. MARK VAUGHN**, 38; **STAFF SGT.**
VINCE COHEN, 40; **SGT. KURT ROBERTS**, 31; **SPECIALIST SENECA**
RATLEDGE, 19; and **SPECIALIST STEPHEN HAUMSCHILD**, 19; plus
Kincaid, the newly embedded reporter from the LA Times.

VAUGHN

All right, then. We keep two men on
the checkpoint at all times. Standard
procedure: identify, warn, stop,
engage.

(MORE)

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

The other four are either down for chow and sack-time, or patrolling. Any questions?

KINCAID

I want to go with the patrol.

VAUGHN

Not yet, sir. As a reporter, you stay with the checkpoint until such time as we've conducted our preliminary assessment of the neighborhood.

KINCAID

I've already signed all the waivers so the Army's off the hook.

VAUGHN

I'm not so worried about you, sir. I'm protecting the safety of my men.
(to Roberts)
Understand you've been in this area. What can you tell us?

Roberts spits his smokeless tobacco into an empty Coke can.

ROBERTS

Fair amount of hostiles, sir. Mosque over yonder, according to our translator, main sermon on Friday basically saying you're not a true Muslim if you're not killing Americans or the Jew pigs.

COHEN

(nervous laugh)
Guess I'm two for two.

VAUGHN

Same old peace, love and understanding. Just keep your eyes open.

A man wearing a long Arab robe known as dishdasha approaches. It's Naquib, who we last saw at the construction site with Fentress. Vaughn holds up a hand, to stop his own men from talking, and to stop Naquib.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

You have to stop right there!

NAQUIB

Please I am Naquib.

Naquib reaches under his dishdasha and, as he does, half a dozen automatic weapons get trained on him. He produces not a gun, but a photo ID.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

See? Work with Americans.

LEWIS

I can vouch for that Sergeant. Saw him up at the trailers yesterday.

Vaughn reaches over, takes the ID, studies it, as one of the men pats Naquib down. A beat, then Vaughn hands the ID back.

VAUGHN

How can we help you out Mister Naquib?

NAQUIB

Naquib Hassan, very good. Men from crew wish to welcome you, share tea, tell about attackers.

VAUGHN

Now?

NAQUIB

Yes, very good.

Vaughn considers this, nods to the men.

VAUGHN

Ratlidge, Haumschild. You take the first shift. We'll go over, check things out.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOSQUE - DAY

Surrounded by concertina wire. Two signs: one Arabic, one English. The English one says: "Keep Out. Building Is Unsafe To Occupy."

Vaughn, Cohen and Lewis finish patting down three men (**ABDEL-RAZAQ ABBAS, AHMED ABDULLAH, AWATIF FARAJ**) who are with Naquib at a couple of tables in the shade of the building. Roberts stands with his weapon pointed down, but ready. As they all sit down, tea is offered.

VAUGHN

This is very nice of you, thank you.

LEWIS

You guys ever drink ice tea?
(off their looks)
You know. Ice cubes. Cold.

NAQUIB

No, no ice cubes. Hot tea very good.

ROBERTS

My kids always sell ice cold lemonade
when it gets humid like this. 'Course
it costs my wife more just to make
it than the kids pull in sellin' it.

Without taking his eyes off his constant scan, Roberts reaches into a velcroed pocket, pulls out a photo of two young kids and a beautiful young mother, hands it over to the table.

ROBERTS (CONT'D)

My oldest boy could sell sand to...
(considers present
company)
Well, he's a great salesman.

Vaughn studies the photo carefully.

VAUGHN

Good looking family. Makes me
homesick for San Diego.

Naquib and the other Iraqis look at the picture.

NAQUIB

Very good.

VAUGHN

How long you been married?

ROBERTS

Since college...

Roberts cocks his head in one direction, moves off.

ROBERTS (CONT'D)

Excuse me, Sergeant. I'm gonna check
out the perimeter a sec.

Vaughn nods, turns his attention back to Naquib.

VAUGHN

You said you had some information
about who's been causing trouble
around here?

Even as he's asking, Vaughn nods to Cohen, who picks up his weapon, takes Roberts' place standing guard.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHECKPOINT - MOMENTS LATER

Ratledge, Haumschild and Kincaid talk near the M-113. Haumschild is the outgoing talker; Ratledge is wound tight and speaks little. Kincaid lights a cigarette.

KINCAID

See, since what's going on now is not technically war, I'm not actually embedded, which means I could go over there if I wanted to right now.

HAUMSCHILD

True, but then technically we'd be free to let you find your own way back to base, too, wouldn't we?

Haumschild winks at Ratledge -- always fun to goof on reporters. Kincaid realizes they're not going to really leave him.

KINCAID

No offense, guys, but I did a checkpoint story last week. Tea with the locals -- that's today's angle.

Haumschild watches as Kincaid takes off in the direction the others went. Shakes his head.

HAUMSCHILD

So what's the difference between a Sunni and a Shi'ite?

RATLEDGE

I give up.

HAUMSCHILD

What's the difference between a hand job and a blow job?

Haumschild smiles. Not much of a joke, but it passes the time.

HAUMSCHILD (CONT'D)

Not that I'd remember.

A beat, then Ratledge comes to life.

RATLEDGE

More visitors.

In the distance, there's a small car approaching. Haumschild checks it out with his binoculars.

HAUMSCHILD

Single driver.

RATLEDGE

Isn't he supposed to slow down at that sign?

There's a tense moment, but then the car does slow down, and the two soldiers relax a bit.

RATLEDGE (CONT'D)

I fucking hate this checkpoint shit.

They watch as the car drives up, then slows to a halt. Haumschild makes a "roll-down the window" motion. The driver rolls down the window.

HAUMSCHILD

Where you headed today, sir?

The man looks up and smiles. It's chilling, actually.

KABOOM!!!!

The car explodes into a HUGE FIREBALL.

The driver, gone on to meet his afterlife virgins or whatever reward he's expecting, disappears in a mere instant.

Haumschild and Ratledge -- two young Americans who were in high school not too long ago -- are incinerated in the fireball, their bodies shredded by the force of the blast.

A car door literally flies through the air, hitting Kincaid in the back, knocking him to the ground, covering him in ashes and obscuring him in smoke, as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. MOSQUE -- CONTINUOUS

Everyone at the table reacts to the SOUND OF THE BLAST. The Americans go instinctively for their weapons but, as they do, the quiet Iraqi tea drinkers and Naquib back away from the table.

COHEN

Gets shot instantly in the chest, and even though he's wearing Kevlar, it still knocks him off his feet, and separates him from his weapon.

VAUGHN'S POV - HIS SURROUNDINGS

There are armed men everywhere, "sleepers" awakened by the blast. The Americans are in a kill zone.

ROBERTS

Wheels back around the corner where he realizes the same thing too late. Several guns are aimed straight at him. A bullet from above zings straight into his shoulder, drawing blood.

NAQUIB

Looks straight on at Vaughn. His English is hardly broken any longer. He sounds like he's been educated in the United States.

NAQUIB

Touch any of the guns and you die.

A white windowless van pulls around the corner. The back door opens. Naquib gestures to Vaughn, Cohen and Lewis.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

Your checkpoint guards are already gone. There is nothing you can do for them.

Vaughn, Cohen and Lewis trade glances. Vaughn speaks the cruel truth to his fellow soldiers.

VAUGHN

We can't take 'em.
(to Naquib; re: Roberts)
I'm a trained medic. Let me help him.

In answer, the three Americans are herded into the van, and Roberts, bleeding from his wound, is put inside with them as Vaughn immediately starts to inspect the wound. The doors are closed.

NAQUIB

(broken English voice)
Very good.

Naquib gets in the passenger seat, and the van takes off, as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMP BIG STICK - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Unlike a city where lights provide security, this is already a secure place. Lights provide illumination and are used when necessary, in a sporadic pattern. MOVE IN on one particular set of lights.

BATTING CAGES

A couple of improvised cages, made out of cyclone fencing. Inside one is O'Brien, smacking one ball after another with the kind of ferocity born of experience with a bat and the need to blow off some steam.

A beat, then O'Brien feels a set of eyes upon him. He cracks one last power hit and turns to see Barello watching. She's the Civil Affairs officer we saw briefly in the news conference, only now she's wearing a Nike tee-shirt, baggy shorts and flip-flops.

BARELLO

Very impressive, Colonel.

O'BRIEN

Nah. Impressive is doing it in front of 74-thousand fans at Yankee Stadium.

Another pitch comes in, too close for comfort. O'Brien turns off the machine. Turns back to Barello, her hands entwined in the fencing, notices her wedding ring.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

What brings you out tonight?

BARELLO

I've been having trouble sleeping. I don't know what's wrong with me.

O'BRIEN

Well, for starters, it's ninety degrees and there's no air conditioning.

BARELLO

What's your excuse?

O'BRIEN

Just need something to wind down.

(MORE)

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Can't shake the feeling that something's really wrong.

BARELLO

And that's a new feeling for you?

O'Brien and Barello trade smiles. Boots on the ground always know the way it really is.

BARELLO (CONT'D)

Well, I guess I should be going. There's still parts of the base I haven't seen twenty times.

O'Brien regards her a moment, sees a woman who's desperately lonely for some company.

O'BRIEN

Wait up. I'll give you the VIP tour.

O'Brien collects his things. Barello's turn to regard him, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. CAMP BIG STICK - GUEST PALACE - NIGHT

O'Brien and Barello stand in the hallway in front of a door. Graffiti on the wall reads: "Bring It On!" It's a pretty grand place, except for the fact that it's suffered extensive unrepaired bomb damage and that there are still soldiers sleeping on cots, desks and storage all over. O'Brien pulls out a set of keys on a retractable chain and opens the door. They enter into:

THE GOLD BATHROOM

Nearly the size of the entire master bedroom in a large house. Gold sinks, gold toilets. O'Brien quickly closes the door behind him, locks it from the inside.

BARELLO

Wow. I heard about this place.

O'BRIEN

So did everybody else. We had to put it off limits. Every other private was coming in here, having his picture taken on the toilet, mailing it home. When they started showing up on the Internet, the General shut it down.

BARELLO

Was this, you know, Saddam's?

O'Brien gestures to some velvet paintings of scantily clad women riding tigers.

O'BRIEN

Well, it carries his trademark good taste, but no. Just for the lucky guests.

O'Brien moves to a room air conditioner, hooked up to a car battery. Switches it on.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

I thought for ten minutes, you might appreciate some air that doesn't smell like hot garbage.

Barello moves in front of the air vent, letting the coolness wash over her.

BARELLO

Fantastic.

O'BRIEN

So what's happening in the world of Civil Affairs?

BARELLO

Nothing to compare with your day, that's for sure.

(beat)

You made the briefing.

O'BRIEN

So tell me about your day and we'll be even.

BARELLO

Okay. Today I went to the press briefing, then our north sector Civil Affairs team started a new immunization program at a school that's been re-built at As Suwayrah. Little kids going to school, staying healthy, that's powerful stuff.

O'BRIEN

And what's on tap for tomorrow?

BARELLO

This is gonna sound crazy, but we're having a battle-bot contest with the local kids. Battery powered, remote controlled. We made 'em out of spare parts. Kids have a team, we have a team. Travers' idea.

O'BRIEN

So these kids get to kick some American butt, only nobody gets hurt?

BARELLO

Isn't that why people play sports in the first place?

Barello runs her hand over the gold sink and, as she does, O'Brien, the trained cop, notices that the ring on her finger has switched hands.

O'BRIEN

Nothing wrong with a little contact.

O'Brien uses his keychain to unlock one of the drawers under the sink. Produces a bottle of cognac and a couple of glasses.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

This was literally here when we found it.

He pours two glasses, offers her one.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

To building a better nation.

BARELLO

To getting the job done, and going home.

They clink the glasses together, as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CHECKPOINT - NIGHT

Kincaid, the reporter, lays on the ground in the same location where the flying car door hit him earlier. There's the sound of SOMETHING MOVING in the shadows. A beat, then an Iraqi man, **KHALID HADI**, 33, runs across the shadows, bends down to inspect the body. Hadi turns the body over with an effort, it's seemingly limp. He puts his head close to listen for breath.

HADI

Mister. Can you hear me?

Hadi slaps Kincaid on the face. Hadi speaks heavily accented, but clear English.

HADI (CONT'D)

Mister. You are not dead.

Kincaid's eyes come open. They're full of fear.

KINCAID

Please don't kill me. I'm a journalist.

Hadi whispers urgently.

HADI

I will help you but it is not safe here. Can you walk?

KINCAID

I don't know. I was afraid to move.

HADI

We try together. Up, up, up.
(nods)

I have home over there. My wife help. Okay, mister?

With Hadi's assistance, Kincaid gets to his feet.

KINCAID

Why are you... helping me?

HADI

(simply)
You're hurt.

Hadi slings Kincaid's arm across his shoulder, they start to walk together.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A half-bombed out structure, obviously hit during the war, and abandoned as a symbol of Saddam's authority. The white van pulls to a stop in a dirt alley behind it. The outside is covered with spray painted Arabic graffiti.

Vaughn, Cohen, Lewis and Roberts are roughly off-loaded under cover of darkness -- all blindfolded. Naquib, issuing orders in ARABIC, is clearly in charge of the operation.

He stops Roberts, inspects the improvised dressing which Vaughn has created. The prisoners are hustled inside the building and disappear, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST PALACE - GOLD BATHROOM - NIGHT

Barello, wearing only an open fatigue shirt, is on top of O'Brien who's laying back on the plush area rug. The sex is passionate, but quiet. The walls are not only thin, but the guilt is silencing in and of itself. A beat, then Barello just stops moving, puts her hands on O'Brien's chest.

O'BRIEN

What's wrong?

BARELLO

I'm married.

O'BRIEN

Not happily, I thought.

BARELLO

(tearing up)

He's a great guy.

O'BRIEN

Listen, I try to be sensitive, you know, but I'm kinda wondering where we're going with this.

BARELLO

You're my superior officer.

O'BRIEN

(noting her position
on top)

Not at the moment.

Barello lifts away, rolls over onto her back on the carpet.

BARELLO

I'm a park ranger. I joined the Reserve to make some extra cash. I didn't plan for this.

O'BRIEN

I'm sorry. I thought that you... wanted...

BARELLO

I did. It's not your fault. God!

O'BRIEN

You wanna... just talk?

BARELLO

I don't know.

They sit in silence for a moment. Barello pulls her shirt together, buttons the top couple of buttons, affording a little privacy. O'Brien pulls on his boxers to do the same for himself. Another few beats of awkwardness, then O'Brien reaches across to a drawer, produces a pack of Marlboro Lights. Offers one to Barello who waves him off.

BARELLO (CONT'D)

I don't smoke.

He lights one for himself.

O'BRIEN

Me, either. But they left 'em here, too. Shame to waste 'em.

Barello smiles a small but thankful smile, takes a cigarette, lets O'Brien light it for her. Two non-smokers smoking in silence. Interrupted by the sound of O'Brien's CELL-PHONE.

CUT TO:

INT. TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER (TOC) - MOMENTS LATER

O'Brien enters into what is clearly, by the lack of people present, the night-shift. The shift supervisor, a **SECOND LIEUTENANT SCOTT RAMIAH**, meets O'Brien.

O'BRIEN

You got a call sign and last contact?

RAMIAH

Yes, sir. "Bandit." And nothing since this morning, oh-eight-hundred.
(beat)

They were in the Falloujah sector.

O'BRIEN

How many?

RAMIAH

Six Army. There was an embedded reporter with them.

O'BRIEN

Let me see the duty list.

Ramiah hands O'Brien a print-out. O'Brien scans it. Reacts like he was hit in the gut.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)
Oh, fuck. It's Private Lewis.

RAMIAH
Sir?

O'BRIEN
The kid who drove me yesterday. I transferred him out there. It's all on me.

RAMIAH
There's a C-I-D team going out now.

O'BRIEN
That's where I'll be.

O'Brien takes off, as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CHECKPOINT - MORNING

O'Brien walks among the C-I-D, the criminal investigations team -- it's an Army crime scene. It's clear in the morning light what's happened here. Car wreckage, a small crater, a pair of sunglasses that belonged to Ratledge, an Army boot. The lead investigator, **MAJOR ARTICE WERNER**, approaches O'Brien.

O'BRIEN
Car bomb?

WERNER
Yes, sir. We're still going through it, but at this moment, we've got pieces of the driver of the vehicle, but looks like only a couple members of the team.

O'BRIEN
There were six people total out here.

WERNER
We're asking around. So far, nobody saw anything.

O'BRIEN
What are the chances of that?

WERNER

Zero.

O'BRIEN

Our two bodies... either of them
black?

WERNER

(odd question)

No, sir. Doesn't look like it.

O'Brien looks past the investigator, then takes off. It's
Kincaid, the reporter, walking toward them.

O'BRIEN

You're an American?

KINCAID

Emmett Kincaid, LA Times.

O'BRIEN

(yelling O.S.)

Get a medic over here!

(to Kincaid)

The others, do you know what happened
to them?

KINCAID

There were the two at the checkpoint,
and me. Everyone else went --

(points)

-- over there, by the mosque.

A medic moves in to help Kincaid.

O'BRIEN

He's going to take a look at you.

O'Brien turns the lead investigator.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

We've got four unaccounted for
soldiers and no more bodies, right?

WERNER

So far. So they probably went in
pursuit or...

O'BRIEN

Or they got set up. Any blood near
the mosque?

WERNER

Some. And a few shell casings. But
no big battle.

O'Brien turns away, flips out his cell-phone.

O'BRIEN

O'Brien. We're gonna need multiple search units on the ground ASAP, some air support and translators.

KINCAID

Got any cash?

(off O'Brien's reaction)

The guy who saved me speaks English pretty good. His family looks like they could use the money.

Kincaid nods toward Hadi, watching from nearby. O'Brien considers this, nods, moves off, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. SATELLITE PHONE STATION - NIGHT

It's a room with a selection of cubicles, each with a computer screen, and a small camera mount. At each cubicle, a soldier calling home to someone, seen in GRAINY RESOLUTION on the monitor.

PICK UP at one monitor, Barello, talking to a man, her husband, **LARRY BARELLO**. And, as described earlier, he does pretty much sound like a great guy.

LARRY (T.V.)

I miss you, baby. I miss you so damned much.

BARELLO

Me, too...

Barello begins to tear up.

LARRY (T.V.)

Dee Dee, it's okay.

BARELLO

It's not okay.

LARRY (T.V.)

I'm dreaming about you coming home. And, when you do, it's gonna be just like it was.

BARELLO

You don't know that.

LARRY (T.V.)

Yes, I do. I know that you're gonna get off that plane and get one helluva welcome home kiss. We'll get the gang together, go out to Cutters, and dance all night till we drop.

BARELLO

I don't deserve you, Larry.

LARRY (T.V.)

You gotta tell me what's wrong.

Larry looks hard into his screen, seeing the face of Barello as we are seeing her.

LARRY (T.V.) (CONT'D)

Dee Dee, you know you can tell me anything.

Off Barello, wondering if that's true.

CUT TO:

INT. IRAQI HOME - DAY

As American soldiers enter, spread throughout the house. Men and women are separated and held, shown PICTURES OF THE FOUR MISSING AMERICANS. The men are made to crouch on the floor wearing black hoods.

A soldier emerges from the back room, prodding one man, and displaying an RPG, or rocket-propelled grenade.

CUT TO:

INT. TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A collection of Costco type rectangle folding tables cobbled together into a large "U" that is more production company chic than corporate boardroom. Having said that, extremely secure -- everyone wears hanging security badges and there are armed guards at the doors.

Of the people we've met, includes: Shattuck (Commander), O'Brien (Operations, Chief of Staff), Hodgson (Intelligence), Travers (Psy-Ops), Barello (Civil Affairs), Rojas (Public Affairs). New faces include: **CAPTAIN DAVE GALLAGHER**, 38, Special Forces Team Commander, and several ND chair-warmers. Shattuck has the floor.

SHATTUCK

So we've got missing soldiers, apparently taken by organized hostiles. What we don't know is why, if they're alive or dead, or where they are. We're 13 hours past the event. These young men are our personal responsibility, and if they're alive, I want them to stay that way.

(pats leg)

I know what it's like to be rescued. Their only comfort at this moment is the unassailable certainty that no matter what they are enduring the American military is doing everything it can to bring them home.

(bottom line)

If they're dead, then we owe their families the truth as soon as we know it. Colonel?

Shattuck nods to O'Brien. The hand-off.

O'BRIEN

We've put substantial resources into the field already. Ground command is Lieutenant Wes Gerald, conducting house-to-house in the local area. We're tightening up the roads in and out which could be decisive if they stayed in Falloujah. In the meantime, our A-Team in prep is in full operational mode to move if any actionable intelligence is developed. A new A-Team will begin prep in case the bug-hunters come up with anything on Sabawi. But both General Shattuck and I want one thing clear. Our resources are all prioritized to finding our men. If any conflicts arise, resolve them to our new situation. Let's go around the table. Hodgson?

HODGSON

We have some intelligence assets already in place but no quick fix. CIA has been alerted. The Iraqi who approached them about the meeting was named Naquib, spoke good English, had ID but we don't know what it said. It's our best lead.

O'BRIEN
Iraqi Resistance Brigade, maybe?

HODGSON
Too early to tell. No one's claimed
responsibility.

O'Brien turns to Travers.

O'BRIEN
Travers. How long before you can
get those pamphlets out?

TRAVERS
Printed in two hours. On the streets
in four.
(tentative)
You want a cash reward offer or, you
know, the livestock?

O'BRIEN
It's pretty rural out there. Half
and half.

There's a look between Shattuck and O'Brien. Shattuck doesn't
like this at all, but O'Brien nods, and that's that. His
call.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)
Put a reminder on the pamphlets that
the Geneva Convention rules apply to
hostage treatment.

TRAVERS
Do they? I mean, we're not
technically at war.

SHATTUCK
(firm)
We're not splitting hairs with car
bombers, Lieutenant.

TRAVERS
Yes, sir.

O'Brien nods, turns to Barello.

O'BRIEN
Barello.

A moment of eye contact but it's over in an instant. Except
that it was noticed by Shattuck.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Civil Affairs should get the word out to your people in the field. We're gonna be tossing the area pretty hard, maybe you should get out there with something positive while the flyers are flying. Got any free food?

BARELLO

There's a UN shipment we could divert. I can get it in place by 14-hundred.

O'BRIEN

Done and done.
(to Rojasles)
Rojales?

ROJALES

We had a reporter with them. He's filed his story, it's on the web now, front page tomorrow's edition.

O'BRIEN

Did he use names?

ROJALES

He never had time to get them. I told him we're holding, pending notification of families.

O'BRIEN

Well, as soon as we've made all the contacts, release the names.

A beat, then O'Brien turns to Gallagher.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Captain. How much time will Special Forces need once we get a location?

GALLAGHER

We're running scenarios now. Depends on the intel. Anywhere from two hours to twelve.

O'BRIEN

You need anything else? We want you resourced all the way from this point on.

GALLAGHER

Sir, if the goal is to get these men back alive, you just get us in and out cleanly, and we'll do the rest.

It's all been said. O'Brien surveys the table.

O'BRIEN

Okay. Every minute still counts.
All questions go through me. Let's
do our work. Dismissed.

The table breaks up, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS OFFICE - DAY

Travers bounces between a couple of very high end Mac computers, speed-producing the flyer just discussed. On one screen, WE SEE an entire digital proof sheet of the Bessy, Billy and Dixie Chicks photo shoot.

TRAVERS

Okay, let's save some lives.

As Travers squints at the screens, he speaks to **PRIVATE BOHR** who also works in the office. WE SEE on the corkboard behind them a "greatest hits" of psy-ops pamphlets, including one showing Osama bin Laden in a western business suit shaking hands with George W. Bush that looks dead-on authentic.

TRAVERS (CONT'D)

This all of them?

BOHR

Actually, you shot over 200 pictures.
I cut them down to the good ones.

TRAVERS

(clicks mouse)
I like this one.

The picture blows up full-screen on the other monitor. They both study it.

BOHR

The chickens look a little drowsy.

TRAVERS

They do, don't they?

BOHR

We could Photo-Shop out the one asleep
on the floor.

TRAVERS

I told 'em two hours.
(MORE)

TRAVERS (CONT'D)

The Chicks are cut. Let's go with
the cow and the pig.

Bohr consults a list.

BOHR

Best cow/pig combo is 12-A.

Travers is swarming the computer, dragging and dropping, as
we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS OFFICE - DAY

A portable printing press cranks out thousands of flyers.
The writing is in Arabic, but the picture of the cow and pig
is clear. On the reverse side, the pictures of the four
missing soldiers.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED POLICE HEADQUARTERS - BASEMENT - DAY

There's no power so the only light is indirect coming from a
window that is obviously above ground. Two of the captured
Americans are together: Vaughn and Cohen. Both have their
hands tied behind them.

VAUGHN

You took a bullet. How you feeling?

COHEN

Like Kevlar rules, sir.

There is the sound of a PAINFUL SCREAM from another room,
distant enough, but clearly audible.

COHEN (CONT'D)

Sergeant, where do you think we are?

Vaughn nods to a metal hook protruding down from the ceiling
and blood spatters on the walls.

VAUGHN

Unless this was a butcher's shop and
they hung meat from that, could've
been one of Saddam's pain palaces.

COHEN

He did this shit to his own people.
What are they gonna do to us?

VAUGHN

Listen up. We've had training on this. We'll go over it together now. Tell me what you remember.

COHEN

Something about putting your mind somewhere else. What you have to live for. Thinking about your family, your fellow soldiers. Good things to look forward to.

(losing it)

It was only a two-hour class...

VAUGHN

Look, Cohen, there was a POW in Vietnam, never played golf in his whole life, but every day for seven years, in his head, he played a full round. Eventually, when he got free, he went to a golf course back home and shot par. Swear to God.

(taps head)

Go inside here.

Interrupted by Naquib who enters with Abdel and Ahmed, two of the gunmen.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

(tight; to Cohen)

This was my mistake. You let me take the heat.

NAQUIB

You are prisoners of the Iraqi Resistance Brigade.

VAUGHN

I'm the officer in charge. Where are my other men?

NAQUIB

You do not ask the questions. I do.

Abdel and Ahmed roughly lift Vaughn up off his feet and sit him at a table in front of Naquib.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

You must earn that right.

Naquib hands a videocamera to Abdel, then slides a piece of handwritten paper across the desk to Vaughn.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

You will make this statement
supporting Iraq's unity, freedom and
Arabism, yes?

Vaughn looks at the paper, reads it carefully.

VAUGHN

If I'm a prisoner like you said,
then you know I don't have to make
any political statement for you or
anyone else.

Naquib nods slowly. It's all very quiet and creepy.
Suddenly, Naquib violently kicks over the table, into Vaughn,
knocking his chair over. Vaughn, hands still tied, is unable
to break the fall and lands hard. In an instant, Naquib is
around the table, placing a loaded pistol against Vaughn's
temple.

NAQUIB

You are a piece of shit! Do you
want to die piece of shit?

Vaughn doesn't speak. A beat, where it is really in doubt
whether Naquib is going to pull the trigger or not. Instead,
he rises, allowing Abdel and Ahmed to re-set Vaughn, the
chair and the table.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

(like a prosecutor)

America's soldiers are here to
humiliate all Arabs and take our
oil.

VAUGHN

We just want to help your country
get back on its feet. Believe me,
we all want to go home.

NAQUIB

You mock our God. Allah does not
believe you. He uses us to strike
you back.

VAUGHN

Taking hostages is just gonna bring
the U.S. Army down on you.

In response, Naquib nods to Abdel and Ahmed. Abdel holds
Vaughn, and Ahmed hits him in the mid-section with a weighted
rubberized torture device designed to cause pain without
breaking bones.

CUT TO:

INT. CHECKPOINT - DAY

Not far from the scene of the explosion and abduction. Barello oversees a truck handing out international food packages that is being mobbed by a surging crowd as American soldiers hold them back, trying to keep order.

With each person who receives food, they also receive one of Travers' reward flyers.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED POLICE HEADQUARTERS - BASEMENT - DAY

Vaughn and Cohen are both sitting quietly; Vaughn obviously in a lot of pain. Naquib enters, snaps his fingers for Abdel and Ahmed to bring Vaughn back to the table.

NAQUIB

You think you are worth something to the Americans?

Naquib slides out a copy of the Travers' produced flyer: a cow and a pig.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

Your life for an animal.

Again, Naquib slides the handwritten paper across the table.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

Tell your people to go home.

Vaughn does not speak, but his closed mouth, seems to state his opinion. Naquib nods to Abdel and Ahmed.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

Bring me the other one.

Now they pull up Cohen, standing him in the middle of the room. Naquib starts the camera, aims it at Vaughn.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

Make me believe.

VAUGHN

My name is Master Sergeant Mark Vaughn, U-S Army. Bravo Company, First of the Fifteenth Armor.

Vaughn stops. He's said what he's going to say. A beat, as Naquib studies him, then stands. He walks toward Cohen.

A KNIFE!

Comes from his side belt. As the steel glints in the thin shaft of light --

VAUGHN

Tries to protest, but doesn't have time to get out more than --

VAUGHN

No! --

COHEN

His eyes go wide, a milli-second before the blade slashes his throat! A trickle of blood begins to drain along the thin, sharp cut.

As Cohen's knees give way, the two men supporting him drag his body to a corner as the life slips from him in a painful gurgle.

NAQUIB

Calmly wipes the bloody knife with a cloth, then leaves the room, followed by his men.

VAUGHN

Moves instantly to Cohen, tries to stop the blood streaming from Cohen's throat, but it's not possible.

VAUGHN

Oh, man... oh, man... oh, man...

Off Vaughn, covered in blood himself, rocking Cohen in his arms, as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. SLUMS OF BAGHDAD - DAY

It's a shithole of a neighborhood, clearly a pocket of poverty. PICK UP two armed men, **FAHID**, **SALIM**, talking together in an animated conversation.

FAHID

(subtitled; in Arabic)

Her parents have much money.

SALIM

(subtitled; in Arabic)

Bring your hunger to the wedding.
Eat until you sleep.

A third man, **JOMAL**, approaches. Jomal takes out a small round tin case of a tobacco-spice-herb mixture, pops a little into the gap between his teeth and his lower lip, offers to share it with the others. All further conversation continues in ARABIC and is SUBTITLED.

JOMAL

We have an important visitor tonight.

FAHID

We have been taking long breaths
waiting.

JOMAL

(smiles)

This is for sure. Prepare rooms in
the back.

Fahid takes off. Jomal nods.

JOMAL (CONT'D)

Praise Allah.

FOLLOW Fahid as he strolls down the street, stops for a **YOUNG BOY**, around eight, who holds out his hand. Fahid fishes in his pocket, produces a piece of hard candy, hands it to him. The boy takes off.

Fahid disappears around the corner. He reaches in his pocket again, and this time unfolds a copy of the pamphlet, examines it, paying special attention to the cow and pig, then quickly re-folds it.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

In the desolation of a nearby cemetery, that same young boy swings on a rope tied to a tree. It's hot, dusty, and there's not a living person in sight, just the crude, stone headstones of the dead.

CUT TO:

EXT. VANTAGE POINT - ABOVE GRAVEYARD - DAY

From a distant observation post through a pair of powerful field binoculars, two bearded men, also in local garb, observe the boy swinging.

The one with the binoculars turns to the soldier next to him.

BEARDED MAN #1
That's our boy.

BEARDED MAN #2
How many socks is he wearing?

The first man studies another beat, nods.

BEARDED MAN #1
Just the left one.

As they talk, it's clear they are Americans, although they do not wear uniforms or anything which would ID them as such. Bearded man #2 sets to work activating a communications set-up, next to a portable satellite dish, aimed skyward.

BEARDED MAN #2
Callin' it in.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION ZONE - DAY

Fentress works underneath her awning. A beat, then the cell phone placed on her work space begins to vibrate around the table. She picks it up.

FENTRESS
Fentress.

CUT TO:

EXT. TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER (TOC) - AFTERNOON

O'Brien waits anxiously, glancing at his watch. A black Suburban approaches. Fentress, the Bechtel construction supervisor, gets out.

FENTRESS
I'm sorry about your guys.

O'BRIEN
Sorry I don't have time for. What do you know?

FENTRESS
I got the fax. About your suspect.

O'BRIEN
(suddenly interested)
Yeah?

FENTRESS

Remember the day you came out -- the guy who got the report for us? His name's Naquib.

O'BRIEN

Where is he now?

FENTRESS

Colonel, if I knew, then he probably wouldn't be the Naquib you're looking for, would he?

(not waiting for answer)

He hasn't shown up for work.

O'BRIEN

We need everything you can provide us with on him.

FENTRESS

The company's on it already.

O'BRIEN

Well, we're about to get on it, too. With some pretty crushing force. How long has he worked for Bechtel?

Fentress can scarcely contain her contempt for where this conversation has to go.

FENTRESS

Not that company.

This catches O'Brien short, but he wasn't born yesterday.

O'BRIEN

CIA. Of course... you're...

FENTRESS

(evenly)

Either way, I'm still just a government contractor.

O'BRIEN

And I got six soldiers who are victims of your fucked up Affirmative Action program.

FENTRESS

Mistakes happen. It's not a science. You know that.

O'BRIEN

Intel's gonna need the full download. Let's go inside.

O'Brien starts off, but Fentress doesn't follow.

FENTRESS

I won't protect any information. As soon as I know anything, you'll know.

O'BRIEN

We're talking about Americans. That trumps any turf war you want to fight.
(hard)
We get everything now or I lock you up.

FENTRESS

You have no authority to do that.

O'BRIEN

You want to call a lawyer?

Fentress and O'Brien stare at each other. O'Brien needs her, yes, but he blames her, too.

FENTRESS

(sighs)
Naquib Hassan was educated in Michigan, Masters in Engineering, and worked for the Fedayeen Saddam out of Karbala until the end.

O'BRIEN

Great resumé. I can see why you hired him.

FENTRESS

(shrugs)
Keep your enemies close. Listen, the reason I came is I hear you're close to moving on the Jack of Hearts.

O'BRIEN

How'd... never mind...
(beat)
Anyway, that's on the back-burner for the time being.

FENTRESS

You might want to re-ignite. Naquib works for Sabawi. You have an A-Team?

O'BRIEN

Yeah.

FENTRESS

I know where we can acquire him.

CUT TO:

INT. A-TEAM PREP AREA - DAY

Part locker-room, part weapons armory. Members of an A-Team -- a Special Forces unit of usually a dozen people -- are in prep mode. They include: **KATT, HUMPHREY, SKINNER, ZUMWALT, LORENZO, QUINLAN**, among others. Gallagher enters.

GALLAGHER

Okay, listen up. We're operational.

KATT

We're bringing our guys home?

GALLAGHER

Not yet.

Gallagher holds up the Jack of Hearts.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)

Target is Sabawi Al-Latif Tilfah Al-Tikriti.

(beat)

Sabawi's the name. We believe he is a leader of the Iraqi Liberation Brigade, and may have information about the grab.

Gallagher goes to the large map of Baghdad, points.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)

Dimesha Street section, south of Zawra Park, six blocks to the west of the Knair River.

LORENZO

Hard or soft, sir?

GALLAGHER

Soft. A-Team positions here, here and here. Only after we're in position, we let the Joes close off the checkpoints. If we're lucky, we catch him in his PJs like that motherfucker Khalid in Pakistan.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED POLICE HEADQUARTERS - BASEMENT - NIGHT

CU on Vaughn's face as he SCREAMS, nearly breaking his teeth, then suddenly goes limp, spent.

Vaughn is now revealed to be on a table, one that has been used before, and he has ELECTRICAL DEVICES attached to his body. Naquib is his torturer, hovering close enough to him to smell his lunch on his breath.

NAQUIB

Every day you are here my people
feel the same pain.

Naquib turns to Abdel.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

Let him dream.

OFF Vaughn's face, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

KELLY, a nine-year-old, races toward the goal, controlling the ball with skill, precision and guts. An irrepressible 11-year-old with glasses, *DANIEL*, has a little lemonade business operating out of a cooler on the sidelines.

Kelly kicks a winning goal as the WHISTLE BLOWS, signifying the end of the game. Pandemonium erupts. Vaughn races onto the field. Based on what he's wearing, he's both the coach and the father, as he sweeps *Kelly* up in his arms.

VAUGHN

You did it, baby, you did it!

KELLY

I did! I did!

Now they're joined by *EMILY*, obviously mom, and *Daniel*.

EMILY

We are so proud of you!

VAUGHN

Sounds like a pizza party to me!

It's just a great family moment; hugs, cheers and elation.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vaughn sits on the edge of his bed, holding an official piece of paper. Emily sits next to him.

EMILY

Well, we'll just have to play with a short bench around here, huh?

VAUGHN

This is what I trained to do. It won't be forever.

Emily takes a family photo, stashes it in his front pocket.

EMILY

Whenever you get lonely...

Emily takes Vaughn's chin under her finger, lifts his head to her lips and tenderly begins to kiss him.

Yet, as they kiss, ELECTRICAL ARCS begin to spark from their lips.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - BASEMENT - DAY

Barely conscious, Vaughn is chained to a radiator by Abdel and Awatif.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMP BIG STICK - PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE - DAY

Rojales works at his desk. Kincaid bursts in.

KINCAID

Did you know about this and keep it from me, Rojasles?

ROJALES

What are you talking about?

KINCAID

What? You don't watch Al-Jazeera these days?

Rojales reaches across his desk for his channel remote. Turns on his TV, flips to Al-Jazeera. Regular news coverage.

KINCAID (CONT'D)

Try CNN.

Another surf. Still nothing.

KINCAID (CONT'D)
Fox News Channel.

Another surf. There's a glassy-eyed Vaughn on a crude videotape, looking straight to camera.

VAUGHN (T.V.)
-- and we hope the United States government stops oppressing the Iraqi people so that no more American lives are lost, and the people of Iraq can be free. I'm making this statement of my own free will.

As the news anchor is seen on the screen, Rojasles looks to Kincaid, shaken.

ROJALELES
Give me two hours to finish notifying all the families.

KINCAID
Rojales, you know I would, but this Al-Jazeera thing, it's just too late. It's out!

Rojales shakes his head, gathering some papers.

ROJALELES
Do what you have to.

Rojales rises, brushes past Kincaid, as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

A teary-eyed woman, Emily who we've seen in Vaughn's torture flashes, opens the door. A **CAPTAIN PUZO** in a military uniform stands before her, his crisp suit failing to disguise his mission. That, plus the fact that he's standing with an **ARMY CHAPLAIN**.

EMILY
I know why you're here.

CAPTAIN PUZO
Yes, ma'am.

EMILY
Is he alive?

CAPTAIN PUZO

We don't know. But the tape is a good sign.

EMILY

If what I saw on TV just now is a good sign, you're quite an optimist.

CAPTAIN PUZO

I just know the quality of the men and women who are trying to find him.

EMILY

Do you have any idea who did this?

CAPTAIN PUZO

They're checking out a lot of leads right now. As soon as there's anything, I'll be in contact.
(hands her card)
Call me anytime. Day or night.

EMILY

Thank you. I will.

ARMY CHAPLAIN

Would you like me to stay awhile?

EMILY

No. I have to tell the children. You might scare them.

Emily slowly allows the door to close on Captain Puzo and the Chaplain. As she turns inside, the kids are standing there. They've heard everything. She drops to a knee, and folds them into a tearful hug, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Fahid, Salim and Jomal -- among others -- lean on their prayer mats, facing Mecca, participating in their nighttime prayers.

CUT TO:

INT. A-TEAM PREP AREA - NIGHT

Gallagher calls his men together.

GALLAGHER

Huddle up.

The men all come together, bow their heads.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)

Dear Lord, protect us from harm as we perform our duty. Give us your blessings and strength to guide us. Amen.

A-TEAM / VARIOUS

Amen.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS - BAGHDAD NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Under cover of darkness, WE SEE the A-Team moving into position, all wearing body armor and night-vision.

On a rooftop, one member low-crawls to the side, safety-checks, then hand-motions for another to join him.

In an alley, two others crouch near a doorway.

From the vantage point above, another soldier has the entire panorama laid out on NIGHT-VISION viewing.

Each has a slim head-microphone wrapped around.

VARIOUS

Go. Go. Go. Go. Go.

GALLAGHER

Stand-by.

Gallagher switches a setting, speaks quietly into his headset.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)

Big Stick, this is Tuba Tango.

INT. TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER (TOC) - NIGHT

O'Brien watches this with several others, including Fentress. There are video feeds of the scene. Over the speakerphone:

GALLAGHER (V.O.)

We're ready.

STAFF SERGEANT

Tuba Tango, this is Big Stick. Stand by.

Hodgson confers with O'Brien who nods at the Staff Sergeant.

STAFF SERGEANT (CONT'D)
Chokepoints are set. Your call.

GALLAGHER (V.O.)
Tuba Tango out.

Gallagher re-keys his mike to his A-Team.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
Three, two, one, GO!

Suddenly, everything's happening at once. Doors are being kicked in, windows broken, guards being shot.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A disheveled fortysomething male, **SABAWI AL-LATIF TILFAH AL-TIKRITI**, rolls off his bed onto the floor, comes up with a handgun --

-- in time to see his door guard fire at an A-Team member and get shot from two different directions --

-- "Sabawi", seeing that he is surrounded on all sides, slowly places the now puny looking handgun on the bedcovers in front of him.

-- the A-Team storms in, pulling Sabawi to his feet, putting his hands in plastic ties.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMP BIG STICK - GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Shattuck sits at a Bow-Flex machine, straining away, as O'Brien straddles a backwards chair, completing a briefing.

SHATTUCK
When do we get him in-house?

O'BRIEN
He's in. Being processed now. CIA has an interest.

SHATTUCK
He have anything to cough up about our boys?

O'BRIEN
Team-30 had him pegged for WMD, political repression. CIA thinks Naquib reported to him.

SHATTUCK

Then we do it together.

O'BRIEN

Yes, sir. Anything else?

SHATTUCK

Yeah. Let's barbecue up Travers' cow tonight.

O'BRIEN

Sir, we've still got the missing men. It might be... misinterpreted...

Shattuck finishes his repetitions, stands up, grabbing a towel.

SHATTUCK

O'Brien, every one of these soldiers knows the risks we live with every day.

(bottom line)

We live in the moment because that's all we have. Uncle Sam can give 'em a steak.

Shattuck gestures to the Bow-Flex.

SHATTUCK (CONT'D)

Want to squeeze off a set?

O'BRIEN

No, sir. I want first crack at our new prisoner.

Shattuck nods. Good by him.

SHATTUCK

Dismissed.

O'Brien exits, and we:

CUT TO:

EXT. DETENTION AREA - DAY

A cluster of metal shipping containers, protected by a triple layer of concertina wire.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Sabawi, the prisoner, stands in the middle of the room, stripped to his undershorts, wearing a pair of spray-painted dark goggles.

A beat, then O'Brien enters, followed by Hadi, the Samaritan who helped Kincaid. O'Brien nods to the guard who puts Sabawi into a chair, removes the goggles.

O'BRIEN

My name is O'Brien. You are a prisoner of the United States Army.

Sabawi begins to speak in Arabic. Hadi listens, then turns to O'Brien, translates it back in English.

HADI

He says you have taken him by mistake. He is a businessman who has no politics.

O'BRIEN

That's a lie.

From this point, whenever O'Brien speaks, it is translated by Hadi into Arabic for Sabawi to hear.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

You are a war criminal, and you will be tried as one in an international court for the crimes you have committed against your people.

O'Brien waits for Hadi to translate.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

You are also implicated in the murder of two US soldiers and the kidnapping of four others. You will be tried by the United States for these crimes.

(waits for translation)

If you cooperate now, you will be allowed to receive mail and to talk to your family, and it will be taken into consideration at your trial.

Hadi translates. Sabawi considers this, then utters a rapid-fire burst of Arabic.

HADI

He say that even if what you say was not the lie that it is, it is the true glory of all Iraqi men to resist the occupation of the Americans.

O'Brien nods, looks straight at Sabawi.

O'BRIEN

You get a better deal if my men come back alive. If they come back dead, you get nothing.

As Hadi translates, O'Brien makes a motion for the guard to pick Sabawi back up.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

(to Hadi)

Tell him to think about it, but not to take too long.

O'Brien stands. Hadi translates, as Sabawi is returned to a standing position and the goggles replaced on his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP BIG STICK - GUEST PALACE - DAY

O'Brien passes into the open courtyard area where several huge open-barrel barbecues are smoking up a storm of steak and pork chops. It's an incongruous sight with the semi-shattered luxury buildings behind them. A blond Texan turns steaks on one of the barbecues. On his uniform is printed the word, "Lewis."

O'BRIEN

Lewis, huh? Where you from?

LEWIS

Abilene, Texas, sir.

O'BRIEN

And that would make you James L. Lewis.

Actually, the other **PFC JAMES L. LEWIS.**

LEWIS

(a little wary)

Yes, sir.

O'BRIEN

I'm gonna take a wild guess here. I'm thinking you got here figuring you'd be driving motorpool.

LEWIS

Yes, sir! How did you know that?

O'BRIEN

Doesn't matter.

(MORE)

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

But after you get done here, I want you to go get a call home to your folks. That's an order.

O'Brien takes his steak, moves off, sits down at a table next to Travers who's poking at a plate with only beans and a salad.

TRAVERS

Any word on the guys?

O'BRIEN

We're workin' it.

TRAVERS

(re: Shattuck)

He's playing a mind game with me, Danny.

O'BRIEN

Yeah, well, he's gonna have to buy you a new cow.

(leans in; whispers)

Your pamphlet got us something.

TRAVERS

(proud)

Go Psy-ops! I told you.

(whispers)

We gonna get 'em? Are they alive?

O'BRIEN

Can't say. But now we got a guy who might just know.

TRAVERS

Anything I can do. You ask.

O'BRIEN

Go get a steak. I hate to eat alone and you deserve it.

Travers considers this a moment, stands.

TRAVERS

Yeah.

Travers heads over to the chow line. As he does, O'Brien looks up, catches Barello's eye across the way. O'Brien looks quickly away as he sees:

SHATTUCK

As he approaches Barello.

SHATTUCK
Captain Barello. Walk with me.

BARELLO
Yes, sir.

Shattuck walks off, and Barello joins in next to him.

SHATTUCK
Your husband called your commander back home. Says you told him you had a sexual relationship with a superior officer. I need to know who that was.

BARELLO
I'm not sure you can ask that, sir.

Shattuck looks straight past her, over at O'Brien.

SHATTUCK
Fine. If we're going to go by the book, you should understand that if this happened, it would be the kind of serious lapse of judgment that can destroy careers.

BARELLO
Understood.

SHATTUCK
So... you either said it or you didn't. What's your answer?

BARELLO
That I'll take care of it.

SHATTUCK
Do that. Because I got some brave young men in harm's way, Lieutenant, and every second I waste on this is a second I'm not devoting to finding them.

BARELLO
Yes, sir.

SHATTUCK

Thing is, if your husband keeps asking
for an answer of his own, chances
are the Army's gonna make me get
one. Dismissed.

Barello nods, takes off. Shattuck stamps his leg to the
ground, as we:

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED POLICE HEADQUARTERS - BASEMENT - DAY

Naquib enters a room where his three men -- Abdel, Ahmed,
Awatif -- are cleaning their weapons. The conversation is
all in SUB-TITLED ARABIC.

NAQUIB

We must go now. The Americans will
be coming soon.

AWATIF

Our weapons?

NAQUIB

Quickly, quickly!

The three men begin to slam their weapons together as fast
as they can now. Naquib opens the door, looks into the
confinement area where the three Americans are now kept
together -- Vaughn, Lewis, Roberts.

Suddenly, there's the sound of a GUNSHOT!

It's confusing. Are the Americans there? Instead, Naquib
looks down at his shirt and watches as blood begins to spread
in his abdominal area.

At this point, we stop the translations -- it's all coming
fast and furious but the bottom-line is that one of the
weapons has accidentally discharged.

Naquib has been hit! Possibly mortally wounded by his own
man.

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

(in Arabic)

Allah, help me.

Vaughn, who hasn't spoken since his beating and torture,
looks up, watching what's happening.

Naquib looks at Ahmed and Awatif and, between gritted teeth,
says:

NAQUIB (CONT'D)

(in Arabic)

Take... the others... we will join
you...

As Ahmed and Awatif move to take Lewis and Roberts with them, Naquib nods to Abdel to release Vaughn from the radiator he's shackled to.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SCENE - MOMENTS LATER

Naquib is sprawled across the table, bleeding profusely, his hand on his wound, trying to staunch the flow of blood.

NAQUIB

(to Vaughn)

You, medic... you can save me...

VAUGHN

You killed Cohen. Save yourself.

Abdel backhands Vaughn across the face, hard.

Vaughn holds out his hands to be untied. Abdel looks to Naquib who shakes his head "no." Abdel keeps a gun trained on Vaughn.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

Rip a shirt into thin pieces. Get
me a knife.

(pointedly)

I know you've got one.

Naquib instructs Abdel in Arabic, almost in a whisper, and he sets to work on the task, the gun never off Vaughn even so.

Vaughn leans in close, exposing the wound. There's blood, and he tries to stop it with his hand.

Sweat forms on all three men's faces. Mosquitoes hover near the blood.

Abdel offers up the torn shirt and Vaughn begins to use it in rudimentary first aid. A beat, then Vaughn steps back, indicates that Abdel should see for himself.

As Abdel leans over to inspect, he sees Naquib's eyes widen, but he can't seem to utter words.

ABDEL

As Vaughn places his tied hands over Abdel's head from behind, he uses them to garrot Abdel! Literally choking the life out of him. He struggles, but finally succumbs.

BACK TO SCENE

Naquib tries to slide away off the table, but he's in pretty rough shape. Vaughn takes the knife from Abdel and turns to Naquib, prone on the table, glaring at him with hatred and some small place of fear. Vaughn plunges the knife into Naquib's wound, then draws it upwards toward his heart. As Naquib's life expires, Vaughn says to him:

VAUGHN (CONT'D)
God bless America, you fucking
asshole.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARKETPLACE - DAY

It's a thriving Baghdad place of business -- everything is for sale here from black market DVDs to semi-fresh produce.

PICK UP a man with wild hair, several day's beard growth, wearing torn and filthy civilian clothes. It's Vaughn. His head is down, and he lurches along with a bit of a stagger.

On the street, a unit of American troops stand guard around a couple of Humvees. As Vaughn approaches, they seem concerned until they hear:

VAUGHN
I'm an American soldier.

Vaughn collapses at their feet. As the soldiers move to his aid, one of them unfolds a flyer with the pictures of the four missing.

SOLDIER
We got one!

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED POLICE HEADQUARTERS - BASEMENT - DAY

O'Brien follows Gallagher into the basement, as the A-Team spreads out across the way.

As they sweep into one room, they find the bodies of Naquib and Abdel, left for dead.

As they sweep into the adjacent room, they find Cohen, laying in a pool of his own blood, from his cut throat. Gallagher keys his microphone:

GALLAGHER

Location is clear. We've got a casualty.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMP BIG STICK - EXAM ROOM - DAY

A **DOCTOR LEE TYLER** checks Vaughn out for injuries.

DR. TYLER

You're going to need some rest.
We'll pick this back up later,
Sergeant.

Vaughn just nods, blankly. He's spent, completely. He fishes in his pants pocket, produces a photo, hands it to the doctor.

VAUGHN

My family. I want to see them.

Dr. Tyler nods, accepts the photo.

DR. TYLER

We need to concentrate on you first,
Sergeant, but you'll see them later.
You can count on that.

VAUGHN

Not later. Now.

DR. TYLER

You get your sleep, we'll talk about
it when you wake up.

Dr. Tyler stands to leave, but Vaughn grabs him by the arm.

VAUGHN

I'm alive because my family wanted
me to be.

Dr. Tyler nods again, moves outside the exam room.

OUTSIDE THE EXAM ROOM

The doctor closes the door. O'Brien's waiting.

O'BRIEN

How is he?

DR. TYLER

Physically, he's been tortured. Looks like electrical points of contact. Plus, he seems to have received at least one beating. But he'll heal from that.

O'BRIEN

How's his mental state?

DR. TYLER

They broke him.

O'BRIEN

Yeah. I saw the tape.

DR. TYLER

So much trauma, the mind can just snap. He's had what we call a cognitive disassociation. Meaning he's not totally present. He's in and out of reality.

O'BRIEN

Well, we need him in the here and now. He's the only one who actually saw the other captors. And we still have two guys in the wind.

DR. TYLER

I know. But he's already been abused. You start pushing him now... well, you don't want to do that... he's fragile... we may crack him for good and never get him back...

O'BRIEN

He was okay enough to tell our investigators where he was being held.

DR. TYLER

He only had to point at a map. Anyway, at this moment, he is a hundred percent fixated.

O'BRIEN

On what?

The doctor hands O'Brien the photo.

INSERT - FAMILY PHOTO

Showing Emily and the two kids.

DR. TYLER (V.O.)

His wife and kids. Keeps saying he
wouldn't have made it without them.

BACK TO SCENE

O'Brien slides the photo into his clipboard.

DR. TYLER (CONT'D)

Maybe we should fly Sergeant Vaughn
up to Germany, let him see his wife
at the hospital.

O'BRIEN

That's not possible.

DR. TYLER

If he's got something you need,
getting him in his wife's arms might
be the fastest way to get at it.

O'BRIEN

That's not why it's impossible.

DR. TYLER

I don't follow...

O'Brien indicates the photo.

O'BRIEN

This can't be his family.

(taps clipboard)

According to his records, he's not
even married, never was. And
definitely no kids.

DR. TYLER

Then who are these people?

O'BRIEN

I have no idea, but we're going to
figure it out.

DR. TYLER

They're your key to finding the other
men.

O'BRIEN

Yeah.

O'Brien gazes in at Vaughn, sitting on the exam table, as
we:

CUT TO:

INT. TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER (TOC) - NIGHT

O'Brien enters, finds Travers playing a Gameboy. Travers shuts down immediately, jumps up.

TRAVERS

What do you got?

O'Brien hands him the family photo.

O'BRIEN

I need a J-Peg on this right away.
And I want everybody who served with
any of the six men who were on that
checkpoint to be able to see a hard
copy. Go.

TRAVERS

You got it.

O'Brien nods, and Travers zips off. Lieutenant Ramiah's on duty again, approaches O'Brien with something taped up in plain brown paper.

O'BRIEN

Lieutenant, I don't care if it's the
middle of the night. I want us to
wake people up and show it to them.

RAMIAH

I'll stay on it.

O'BRIEN

And pull the service files on all
our missing men, will you? I want
to see them again.

RAMIAH

Yes, sir.
(indicates package)
Supply dropped this off for you.
You want it sent to your quarters?

O'Brien takes the package.

O'BRIEN

No, thanks. Any buzz in the field?

RAMIAH

Quiet.

O'BRIEN

Check in with everybody twice. I
want anything I can get. Nothing's
too small. Understand?

Ramiah nods. O'Brien moves off to his workspace, sits down. Two personal items: a bobbing-head Yankee player... and a framed photo, not of his family, but of his cop buddies, all sporting NYPD windbreakers. He opens the package. It's a Mets cap. O'Brien looks at it for a beat, then flips through his clipboard.

He looks up at the collection of clocks. The one marked "New York" reads "10:19 AM." He scans for a number, picks up the phone and dials. A beat where we hear the subdued DIAL-TONE, then:

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello, is Mrs. Lewis home?

(beat)

Mrs. Lewis, this is Colonel Danny O'Brien, US Army V Corps. I'm calling from Baghdad. Ma'am, I know you've gotten some bad news today.

(beat)

I'm in charge of the Joint Task Force which is looking for your son James, and we are running round-the-clock. I'm not allowed to discuss the specifics of the operation, but I can tell you that if it was my own son missing we wouldn't be doing anything differently.

O'Brien picks up the Mets cap, puts it on, snugs it up for fit.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Well, let's see. I saw James just two days ago. We captured some gun-runners together. He's a brave young man, lots of potential and a fine soldier.

(beat)

When he gets back to New York, we talked about taking the subway to see a ballgame together... we just haven't decided which team...

As the CAMERA PULLS OUT, O'Brien sits at his desk, wearing his Mets cap, continuing his late night reality check with the mother of missing Private First Class James L. Lewis, as we:

FADE OUT.

THE END