

**LANDSLIDE**

by

Will Staples & Tony Camerino

Based on the book *How to Break a Terrorist*  
By Tony Camerino (a.k.a. 'Matthew Alexander')

A note to the reader...

The operation chronicled in this screenplay is still highly classified and the Pentagon has declined to comment. The target was Black List #1, the most dangerous and most wanted man in the world.

This screenplay was developed based on conversations with five Delta Force operators who were members of "The Task Force" in 2006. Additionally, it was co-written by Major Tony Camerino, who features as one of the primary characters in the story and personally conducted the interrogations contained herein.

While the public may never know all of the facts about the hunt for the man who created ISIS, this screenplay represents the closest thing to a true account that exists.

FADE IN:

A still image. The Canal Hotel - UN Headquarters in Iraq. A voice breaks the silence. A man we'll come to know as TONY. He sounds educated, but emotionally detached - a drizzly November of the soul.

TONY (V.O.)

2003. Iraq. I leave behind a country at peace. Mission accomplished. Now it's up to the international community to rebuild.

BOOM! The UN building explodes. HEADLINES: "22 Dead, 100 wounded", "UN to withdraw all personnel from Iraq".

TONY (V.O.)

Without warning, Al Qaeda launches an unprecedented wave of suicide bombings targeting civilians. Their stated goal is to plunge the country into civil war.

The demolished GOLDEN DOME MOSQUE. HEADLINES: "Iraq's Holiest Shrine in Ruins," "Retaliatory Attacks Claim over 1,000".

TONY (V.O.)

The architect of the attacks is a Jordanian ex-convict named Abu Musab al Zarqawi a.k.a. The Sheikh. Like Adolf Hitler, he rises rapidly from obscurity to power through spectacular acts of violence.

A suicide bombing at a crowded Baghdad marketplace. The charred BODIES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN litter the street. HEADLINE: "Suicide Bomber Strikes Baghdad Market; 52 Dead".

TONY (V.O.)

By spring of 2006, Zarqawi becomes only the second man in history to have a \$25 million bounty on his head. He is the most wanted terrorist on the planet - a higher priority than Osama bin Laden. With Iraq on the brink, a highly classified Task Force is assembled with a single mission...

The infamous Nick Berg execution video, moments before his beheading. ZOOM IN ON THE HOODED MAN WIELDING THE KNIFE.

TONY (V.O.)

...to locate and kill Zarqawi.

INT. DELTA SAFEHOUSE - DAY

POV LOW-RES VIDCAM FOOTAGE: Standing in front of us in the Spartan safehouse is "WORM". He is tan and lean, his all-American looks and shaggy hair at odds with the TATTOOS OF SKULLS AND FIRE smothering his arms.

A low-budget graphic spins on screen: '**CRIBZ BAGHDAD'**

WORM

Yo, yo, yo, welcome to Cribs,  
Baghdad. We got all the homies here  
today.

As Worm moves through the house, we glimpse his bros lifting weights, powering down energy drinks, skyping with their families...One of the men, STORMY, shaves a big mustache.

WORM (CONT'D)

Hey Stormy - nice 'stache.

STORMY

Anything worth doing is worth  
looking good doing.

Worm approaches CRAPSHOOT, who plays X-Box on a ratty couch.

WORM

Right here we got our Christian  
Dior couch.

CRAPSHOOT

Bro, we're in Arabia. This shit  
ain't Christian Dior. It's Muslim  
Dior.

Worm moves on to a man standing before a giant link analysis chart featuring the players in AL QAEDA IN IRAQ. At the top, above a row of lieutenants, is Zarqawi a.k.a. The Sheik.

Worm points to Zarqawi's black-and-white headshot.

WORM

Oh, and if you see this guy, tell  
him we're looking for him.

As Worm and the camera move on, we stick with the man standing before the wall of photos. He is muscular, built like a pro athlete. With his long beard and grown-out hair he looks somewhere in between Tyler Durden and a modern day Maximus, with Ahab's unsurrenderable will. Meet RIP, the alpha of the wolf-pack.

Rip studies the photos, something not right. He pins a blank sheet of paper in between the lieutenants and Zarqawi - some second-in-command they have not yet identified. Rip draws a large question mark on it, then steps back, staring at the sum of all that maddens and torments.

Another Operator, POPE, approaches. Something urgent.

POPE

Boss, this just came in from higher.

Rip examines the report, concerned.

RIP

The Sheik?

POPE

NSA picked up SIGINT chatter, so take that for what it's worth. Looks like Zarqawi's sending out three virgin winners.

RIP

Get me execute authority.

EXT. DELTA SAFEHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Worm stands before the camera in front of a parking lot filled with...

WORM

And no pimp's crib would be complete without his riiidez.

Behind Worm is a row of the sickest luxury sports cars in all of Mesopotamia. Saddam's old fleet, now Delta Force's undercover interdiction vehicles.

Rip approaches, geared up for war. Unlike the big green machine soldiers we are used to, everything about Rip's team is customized for speed, surprise and violence of action in a scorching theater of war where no op lasts longer than a few minutes. Sleeves cut off shirts, fingers cut off gloves, battle-worn weapons with tricked-out rail systems. No backpacks or canteens. Fresh rifle mags stuffed in every available pocket.

RIP

(to Worm)

Kit up. We're wheels up in one.

Rip and his team pile into TWO AH-6 LITTLE BIRD HELOS. Worm arrives with his gear as he chugs a Red Bull. He sits beside Rip, strapped onto the bench hanging out the chopper. He hands Rip the drink. Rip finishes it.

WORM  
Happy Easter.

Rip raps on the wall of the Little Bird twice and the helo takes to the sky.

EXT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - BAGHDAD - IRAQ - DAY

The Little Birds skim across the rooftops and leave the city behind, a vast red desert laid out before them.

Crapshoot studies a ruggedized laptop with a live UAV feed.

ON SCREEN: Three cars pull out of the target house simultaneously.

CRAPSHOOT  
Looks like we've got three vehicles on the move.

RIP  
Is the Sheik still on the target?

CRAPSHOOT  
We don't know if he was there in the first place.

RIP  
How long until those suicide bombers reach civilians?

CRAPSHOOT  
Ten mikes.

Rip considers, time to make a game-time decision. Weighing the lives of hundreds of innocents against a kill that could win the war.

RIP  
We hit the house first. Speed over security. Touchdown to jackpot no more than thirty seconds. Then roll up the virgin winners.

WORM  
Hope you got a slow watch.

RIP  
Set a timer.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

AN IRAQI FARMER and his SON work the fields near the house as the two helos approach with the Operators hanging out.

FATHER  
Run!

The boy flees into the palm grove.

FIFTY METERS FROM THE HOUSE: The helos touch down in the dirt, causing a total brownout from the rotor wash.

Before the skids settle in the dirt, Rip and his team are sprinting hell bent for leather toward the house. We follow them, breath labored as they brave the 130-degree heat.

Worm places a breaching charge on the door. Rip lines up a mere three feet from the charge and nods. Worm hits the clacker. The door blows and...

...Rip races through with his men in tow, clearing every room. Finding the house empty save for...

...a large clay ball with three cell phones wired into it. Rip's eyes go wide. He keys his radio.

RIP (ON RADIO)  
Landslide! Landslide! Landslide!

Hearing the command, Rip's teammates race like hell to unass the target. Diving out windows. Clambering for safety.

Rip dives into the dirt outside as...

THE FARMHOUSE EXPLODES. As debris rains down on Rip, he turns to see Worm lying beside him. *Shit, that was close.*

RIP (CONT'D)  
Time check.

Worm checks his watch.

WORM  
Five minutes.

RIP  
(keying his radio)  
Chalk Two, MEDEVAC the wounded.  
(MORE)

RIP (CONT'D)  
Chalk One - we're going after the  
suicide bombers.

WORM  
Which bomber?

RIP  
All three.

Worm casts Rip a look, concerned Rip is overplaying his hand.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - DAY

The Operators hang out the helo as the pilot calls back...

PILOT  
White truck, twelve o'clock.

Rip scans the horizon, his eyes fixed and fearless.

RIP  
Time.

WORM  
Three minutes.

INT. WHITE BONGO TRUCK - OUTSIDE RAMADI - DAY

SUICIDE BOMBER #1 rides shotgun, sweat rolling down his brow. His TERRORIST colleague drives.

Suddenly, the Little Bird drops from the heavens and flares 90 degrees directly in front of them, stopping perpendicular to the truck and placing Rip and Worm eye-level with the terrorists.

As the Suicide Bomber fumbles for the plunger --

SUICIDE BOMBER #1  
Allah Ak-

The bongo is riddled with 5.56, killing the terrorists.

EXT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - DAY

Rip swaps out his mag.

RIP  
Time.

WORM  
Two minutes, twenty seconds.

INT. RED SEDAN - OUTSIDE RAMADI - DAY

SUICIDE BOMBER #2 sits in the passenger seat. THREE ADDITIONAL TERRORISTS fill the car.

The DRIVER checks his side mirror to see the Little Bird.

DRIVER  
Americans!

As the Terrorists reach for their AKs...

INT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - CONTINUOUS

PILOT'S POV: Two terrorists pop out the rear side windows.

PILOT  
You boys hang on.

The Terrorists fire indiscriminately as the Little Bird performs evasive maneuvers, bullets ZIPPING past.

A lucky round pierces the cockpit, just missing the Pilot.

CRAPSHOOT  
Predator has eyes on the third vehicle. They're approaching Ramadi.

RIP  
(to Pilot)  
Get us closer.

PILOT  
On it.

He pushes forward on the stick and lifts the collective, diving at his prey.

INSIDE THE SEDAN: The Driver turns to Suicide Bomber #2 who grips his clacker.

DRIVER  
(in Arabic)  
We can't escape.

SUICIDE BOMBER #2  
Get us close.

BACK ON THE LITTLE BIRD...

RIP'S RIFLE SCOPE POV: Rip tries to steady his laser dot, which bounces like a jumping bean.

RIP  
(to Pilot)  
Need some clean air.

CLOSE ON a FLYER'S BOOT as it kicks a little rudder and the nose of the Little Bird deflects the airstream.

Rip lets a little slack out of his D-belt, braces one foot against the skid and wedges the other between the bench and the ribs of the Little Bird - balancing over the side.

He waits for the red dot to settle. Then...

INT. RED SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

The Driver's brains paint the inside of the windshield.

INT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - CONTINUOUS

Rip looks down to see the Suicide Bomber raising his clacker defiantly, hoping to take the Americans with him...

RIP  
Pull up!

BOOM! THE CAR EXPLODES, sending up a fireball that engulfs the Little Bird...which comes out the other side unscathed.

Rip and Worm cough black smoke.

WORM  
Fuckin' A!

Rip barely process the explosion, tunnel vision setting in.

RIP  
Where's the third bomber?

CRAPSHOOT  
We're not gonna make it, boss.

INT. TAN PICKUP - DAY

SUICIDE BOMBER #3 plays with the radio as he drives. Tunes in a little Rolling Stones courtesy of the Armed Forces Network. Ahead, he sees the city of Ramadi beyond the wheat fields.

Suddenly, he spots the shaky reflection of the helo in his rear view.

CLOSE ON the fender of the truck as it's sprayed with bullets. The wheels blow out.

The suicide bomber jams the brakes...

I/E. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - CONTINUOUS

Rip watches as the bomber leaps out of the sedan and disappears into the wheat field on foot with his bomb vest.

RIP  
(to pilot)  
Put us down.

As Rip racks the slide on a fresh mag, Worm tries to be the voice of reason.

WORM  
Bro, this is a big old ball of fuck. How about we keep eyes on the field and see where he comes out?

RIP  
If we don't go in, next time we see him will be when he blows up some town square.

Worm hides his disapproval at placing Iraqi lives ahead of the team's.

The Little Bird sets down on the road, Rip leaps out before the skids even touch. His men follow.

EXT. WHEAT FIELD - DAY - INTERCUTTING

Suicide Bomber #3 low-crawls through the field, the dense stalks making it impossible to see a foot in any direction. A slight breeze sways the stalks. He stops, eyes darting.

Rip moves through the head-high wheat, gently pressing the stalks out of the way as he advances blindly toward almost-certain death. He hears something behind him and spins to see...a sparrow take flight.

Rip pushes forward, one step at a time. Adrenaline coursing.

Suicide Bomber #3 stops. Slowly stands, the detonator in his hand, and whispers a prayer...waiting for his chance.

Rip pauses. Did he hear something? Or is it just the wind? He turns and sprints, the wheat clawing at him.

Then he abruptly stops again, listening. Rip delicately lowers his M4 into his sling and pulls his GLOCK. He takes a small step forward and pushes a single stalk of wheat aside with the barrel of his pistol, revealing...

...the back of the Suicide Bomber's head. BAM.

The bomber drops to the ground, the detonator falling harmlessly from his hand.

Suddenly an ELECTRONIC BEEPING. Rip looks up to see...

...Worms fiddling with his stopwatch.

WORM

Guess I can turn that off.

Rip relaxes. Fuck.

WORM (CONT'D)

Ambien?

Rip nods and Worm tosses him a bottle of meds from his pocket. As Rip dry swallows some pills, he keys his radio.

RIP (ON RADIO)  
This is Zulu 1-1. All suicide  
bombers neutralized. No joy on the  
Sheikh.

Off Rip, frustrated. His white whale still out there...

CUT TO:

INT. CARGO HOLD, C-130 - DAY

Turbulence rattles the plane. Then the violent THUNDER of an IED somewhere far below. Casually propped against the bulkhead, we find MAJOR TONY CAMERINO (mid-30s, dark tan), his head buried in a vintage copy of the Qur'an. Tony is equal parts T.E. Lawrence and Holden Caulfield. Though he is a stubborn intellectual elitist, beneath it all is a lost quality - as if he is human flotsam adrift at sea.

Opposite Tony on a bench of mesh netting are TWO AIR FORCE OFFICERS. With their tight grooming standards and clean uniforms, the airmen are a photo negative of Rip's team.

MIKE (late 20s, Texan), gnaws a bag of beef jerky. He glances at a surfboard tucked between the cargo boxes next to Tony.

MIKE

Hope you enjoyed your R&R in Bali,  
sir. Won't see much surf here.

ANN (20s, Air Force by way of Georgetown) addresses Tony.

ANN

When's the last time you were here,  
Major?

Tony doesn't look up from the Qur'an.

TONY

Been three years.  
(beat, sarcastically)  
After we won the war.

Tony lowers the Qur'an, using a weather PHOTO of a young girl as a bookmark. He looks out the porthole, reminiscing, but obviously unsure about his decision.

TONY (CONT'D)

Spent a day in Baghdad right after  
we took it. People gave us ice  
cream.

ANN

And now?

TONY

All seven gates of hell have been  
ripped wide open.

MIKE

Say what you will about Saddam. He  
was the only motherfucker here who  
knew what time it was.

Ann spots an ancient RED FORT passing underneath.

ANN

How old do you think that thing is?

TONY

Babylon. Cradle of civilization.  
People been crossing this desert to  
kill each other since the beginning  
of time. Only thing that changes is  
the direction.

MIKE

You guys know anything about this  
Task Force we're joining?

ANN  
Heard we'll only be interrogating  
big fish.

Tony's head is back in the Qur'an.

TONY  
Horse, then cart.

ANN  
How's that?

TONY  
Won't know if they're big fish  
until after we interrogate them.

MIKE  
Thing I don't get...how do you  
scare a guy into talking who's  
willing to blow himself up in the  
name of religion?

TONY  
You don't. You interrogate  
terrorists the same way you  
interrogate criminals.

MIKE  
Which is?

TONY  
Find out what they care about, and  
then give it to them.

MIKE  
These are hardcore jihadists. True  
believers. Only thing they care  
about is killing.

TONY  
There are no true believers.  
Everyone cares about something.

Ann considers.

ANN  
What do you care about?

TONY  
You're an interrogator - figure it  
out.

As Tony returns to his Qur'an, Ann smiles in spite of  
herself.

EXT. BALAD AIR BASE - DAY

The C-130 touches down.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

**SUPER: TASK FORCE INTERROGATION UNIT, UNDISCLOSED LOCATION, CENTRAL IRAQ**

Tony and the other 'GATORS' get the welcome briefing from RANDY, the Interrogation Unit's Ops Officer (30s, short, and as serious as the Operators he supports).

There is a claustrophobic quality to the facility. Narrow walls, low ceilings. Rooms packed with broken office furniture and computers with tangles of wires. Everything coated in a fine layer of red dust --

RANDY

Pentagon likes to call us 'The New Manhattan Project', but we prefer 'Superbowl of the Human Race'.

All around us, INTERROGATORS and ANALYSTS connive and conspire.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Interrogators and Analysts work side-by-side here in the Gator Pit. We are in the target procurement business. Detainees give us targets. Ops Team hits the targets. If the targets are brought in alive, they become detainees...

MIKE

...and they feed more targets.

RANDY

Rinse and repeat.

A deep RUMBLE. The building rattles, but no one bats an eye.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Mortars. You'll get used to them.

They continue...

RANDY (CONT'D)

Interrogations run 24/7. Two teams-- day shift and night shift. You'll spend 90% of your waking hours in the booths.

## INT. HALLWAY - GATOR PIT - DAY

Lining the hallway are the booths - 6' x 6' squares framed by four plywood walls with two plastic lawn chairs.

GUARDS, INTERROGATORS, and DETAINEES (orange jump suits, black hoods, shackles) rub shoulders as they squeeze past each other in the narrow corridor.

RANDY

You'll conduct the interrogations here.

They pass a booth where a GUARD short-shackles a DETAINEE to a bolt in the floor, turns off the light, and locks the door.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Vegas Rules. What happens in the unit, stays in the unit. Only thing that matters is finding Zarqawi.

Ann and Mike look to Tony for guidance. He's concerned, but says nothing. Continuing...

BOOM.

RANDY (CONT'D)

You'll do three interrogations a day, three hours each. An hour after each to knock out a report, thirty minutes for chow, mandatory briefings at noon and midnight... if you're lucky you'll get five hours for shut-eye. No days off.

The wall rattles. But this time it's not a mortar. They turn and look through a slot hole to see...

## INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

SLOT HOLE POV: MACK (late 40s, prematurely gray beard), a former Marine and weathered post-9/11 contractor. Meet the Task Force's ranking gator, a man who takes pleasure in forcing square pegs through round holes.

Mack holds the collar of his latest peg, who is pinned against the wall.

MACK

Tell me, haji. Where the fuck is-

Realizing we're watching, Mack let's go of the detainee, walks to the open slot hole, and eyes the Airmen.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Newbies?

RANDY  
Yup. Two active, one reservist.

Mack's eyes fall on Tony...*the reservist*.

MACK  
A weekend warrior?! Fuck me.  
Welcome to the Gator Pit. Now if  
you'll excuse me...

He slams shut the slot hole. Through the door...

MACK (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Where were we...?

BOOM. The wall rattles.

Ann and Mike look to Tony - *what the fuck did we get ourselves into?*

TONY  
(to Randy)  
You guys ever heard of Abu Ghraib?

RANDY  
That shit isn't tolerated here.  
But neither is failure. How gators  
get results is on them. This is big  
boy rules. We don't tell you how to  
tie your shoes.

TONY  
I think I speak for my team when I  
say we don't exactly feel like  
getting dragged in front of  
Congress with our dicks in our  
hands.

RANDY  
Like I said, what happens in the  
Task Force stays in the Task Force.

Ann looks behind Randy into--

A disheveled CLOSET, shelves filled with 'site litter'-  
laptops, CD's, papers, photos. A terrorist garage sale.

ANN  
What's all that?

Randy turns and looks inside, then calmly shuts the door.

RANDY

We're a little behind on evidence  
exploitation. Most of this stuff is  
worthless junk.

Tony inspects the closet, wondering what treasures have been overlooked.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Time to rub nuts with the other  
gators.

As Randy points the way...

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Tony approaches BOBBY (20s, Army 3-striper, and hyperactive cornhusker). He's been up an hour and is already on his third coke.

TONY

You Bobby?

BOBBY

Yeah. You the new guy I'm supposed  
to train?

Tony extends a hand.

TONY

Tony.

BOBBY

Where you from? DIA?

TONY

Air Force.

BOBBY

I thought you guys fly shit.

TONY

That's what my recruiter told me.

BOBBY

Today's your lucky day.

Bobby hands Tony a file and Tony opens it.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

We got a goddamn dirt digger.

Bobby looks across the room at a snot-nosed analyst, PAUL (20s, John Lennon glasses).

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Hey Paul. Come here, motherfucker.  
Got a question for you.

Paul rushes across the room.

PAUL  
What's up?

BOBBY  
Maverick here is new. Give him the  
what's what on the booger eater we  
rolled up this morning.

PAUL  
Abu Ali owns the farmhouse where  
this morning's suicide bombers  
staged. Nothing in the database.  
Could just be an Al Qaeda hired-  
hand.

BOBBY  
Yeah, right. Motherfucker would  
probably strap a bomb to his chest  
given the first opportunity. Allah  
Akboom.

TONY  
Assuming he's religious.

BOBBY  
Uh, yeah. Why else would he be  
helping Al fucking Qaeda?

Bobby throws Paul a look (duh!). He downs his coke and tosses  
the can in the trash before popping a new one.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
C'mon let's break this skinny  
little shit.

Heading for the door... Off Tony, wondering what the hell he  
has gotten himself into.

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

ABU ALI (40, skinny as a date palm) sits in front of the  
interrogators in an orange jumpsuit. We recognize him as the  
FARMER who ran from the Little Bird in the opening.

**SUPER: Detainee #0811 - 'ABU ALI'**

Bobby taps the screening report.

BOBBY

Let's start with what we know.  
Says here you speak English. I'd  
say that's a win for everyone here.

Abu Ali looks at Tony, sizing him up.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Also says here you own the house  
where the suicide bombers prepared  
for their mission. In case you're  
wondering, your buddies are all  
dead.

ABU ALI

I do not own the house. I only work  
the field.

BOBBY

Who do you work for in Al Qaeda?

ABU ALI

I told you - I am just a farmer.

Bobby stands, towering over Abu Ali.

BOBBY

That's how you want to play it,  
huh?

He walks over to the A/C unit on the wall, turns it on full blast, and aims it at Abu Ali, who recoils in discomfort.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

What's wrong? Too chilly for your  
desert ass? Back in Nebraska, this  
is fuckin' springtime.

CLOSE ON Tony, like he's watching a fifth grader fuck up basic arithmetic.

TONY

Why don't we back up and--

BOBBY

I got this.

He half-covers his mouth, whispering to Tony-

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Fuckers only understand strength.

Then he turns and stands in front of Abu Ali again, this time poking at his forehead.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Listen up, motherfucker. You know what's going to happen when we turn your ass over to the Ministry of Interior?

Bobby imitates pulling on a rope around his neck.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Those Shi'a boys can't wait to have another Sunni to test their ropes. You're fucked without us. So you can either talk to us, or you can roll the dice with them.

ABU ALI

I know nothing.

Bobby leans in close to Abu Ali.

BOBBY

FUCK. YOU. HAJI. Fuuuuuck you.

(to Tony)

Let's go. This bastard can sit in his cell and think about rope day.

TONY

I'm just gonna follow up on a few things. I'll catch up to you.

BOBBY

We got two more interrogations to do. No use wasting time.

TONY

I'm good.

BOBBY

I said--

TONY

Thanks, *Specialist*.

Bobby's jaw drops - can't believe this asshole just pulled rank on day one.

Bobby departs, slamming the door upon his exit, leaving Tony and Abu Ali sitting in uncomfortable silence.

Tony turns off the A/C, then sits back down.

TONY (CONT'D)

Kids these days. No respect for their elders.

Abu Ali studies Tony, uncertain what to make of him.

TONY (CONT'D)  
You lost anyone since this war  
started?

Hesitant, but intrigued by the change of tone...

ABU ALI  
My brother was killed by the Shi'a  
militia that your government  
allowed to run free.

TONY  
We've made a lot of mistakes in  
Iraq, but that one is up there.

Abu Ali relaxes a little, surprised by Tony's criticism of  
his own government. Tony picks up on it. Presses...

TONY (CONT'D)  
Way I figure, if someone murdered  
my brother, I'd be strapping on a  
vest for Al Qaeda tomorrow.

ABU ALI  
How can you understand what Sunnis  
have been through?

TONY  
I can't. But I'm guessing it  
explains why you joined Al Qaeda.  
For protection.

ABU ALI  
You know nothing about me.

TONY  
I know you are hiding a son.

Abu Ali freezes in his seat, and Tony realizes he's found the  
detainee's pressure point.

ABU ALI  
I don't know what you are talking  
about.

TONY  
Really? Because Abu Ali means  
"Father of Ali." And you didn't  
list a son on your screening report  
but this...

Tony pulls out IMAGERY from the morning's mission. CLOSE ON two shadows standing in a field. He shows it to Abu Ali.

TONY (CONT'D)  
...looks like a father and son to me. I don't know, what do you think? Shadow's a little shorter than yours. Maybe about this tall.

Tony holds his hand up to demonstrate the height. Abu Ali looks at the space as if seeing his son standing before him.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Hey, I get it. You're hiding your son because you want him to grow up in a different Iraq. An Iraq like it used to be.

ABU ALI  
Before you Americans, Sunnis and Shi'a lived in peace. We had water and electricity.

TONY  
Can't blame you. But let me ask you something, my friend...if I may.

Tony scoots his chair up real close. Puts his hand on Abu Ali's knee...a reassuring gesture, masking the fact he is about to go in for the kill.

TONY (CONT'D)  
How long until your son Ali becomes a victim of the violence? How long until he's standing in the market when the suicide bomber strikes? How long until he's praying in the mosque that gets blown up by the car bomb? Or until the Shi'a militias come for him because you're helping Al Qaeda?

Abu Ali averts his eyes, unable to face the words.

ABU ALI  
You don't understand Iraq.

TONY  
"They only invent falsehood who do not believe in the verses of Allah, and it is those who are the liars."

ABU ALI  
(surprised)  
You've read the Qur'an?

TONY  
Way I see it, this dark spiral of  
revenge that's taking over your  
country - the retaliation killings -  
it's going to swallow everyone up.  
Including your son, Ali.

The truth hitting home, Abu Ali reacts with anger.

ABU ALI  
What other choice is there?!

TONY  
Work with me, my friend. Let's find  
a way. It won't be easy, but the  
other choice, to keep doing what  
you're doing...you might as well  
sign your son's death warrant.

As the guilt overcomes Abu Ali...

TONY (CONT'D)  
Think of your son. What type of  
Iraq do you want him to grow up in?

...and his eyes start to soften. Tony places his hand on Abu Ali's shoulder, having made his first convert.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

**SUPER: JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER, CENTRAL IRAQ**

Also known as "The Death Star", the JOC is the Spec Ops version of the captain's bridge. Dozens of monitors stream live ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance). The minimal decor and advanced tech are all designed to leverage one crucial element of warfare: decisiveness.

Randy approaches COLONEL MARK DANNER (mid-40s, MMA fighter's physique; he's a career Spec Ops soldier and man of few words) as Danner is being briefed by his J2, MAJOR SUSAN GIVENS (30s).

RANDY  
Sorry sir, we have a hot one.

DANNER  
Whatcha got?

Randy holds up a map.

RANDY

That farmer we rolled up this morning. He just gave us a location for Zarqawi's top general - Ali Wali. It's a house in Baghdad.

Givens angles for a view, the name carrying weight for her.

GIVENS

Bullshit. No one's seen or heard from Ali Wali in two months. Rumor is a Shi'a militia got to him.

DANNER

Let me see that.

Randy hands Danner the map.

DANNER (CONT'D)

Ops team is gonna have a field day with this. He killed one of their men.

GIVENS

Could be a trap...

DANNER

Why's the detainee giving this up?

RANDY

To be honest, I'm not sure. New guy over there got it. Some reservist.

Randy nods over his shoulder towards the door, where Tony stands, waiting.

DANNER

(to Tony)

You - front and center.

Tony approaches Danner.

TONY

Sir.

DANNER

You willing to bet the lives of my men on this?

TONY

Sir, yes, sir.

DANNER

Cut the 'sir sandwich'. I'm asking,  
is this intel solid?

Under the spotlight, Tony masks his uncertainty.

TONY

I'd bet my own life on it.

Randy can't believe the balls on the new guy.

EXT. DELTA SAFEHOUSE - DAY

The Operators file out of the house, dressed like Iraqis, carrying compact AK-74u assault rifles with collapsible stocks. They walk in silence toward the fleet of luxury cars, ready to get it on.

One by one, the men load into the Porsches and BMWs.

Worm tosses Rip a set of keys as they approach a Ferrari.

VOICE (O.S.)

Can I have a word?

Rip turns to see Tony approaching.

RIP

Who the fuck are you?

TONY

The guy who delivered the intel on  
Ali Wali. Do me a favor and bring  
him back in one piece.

Rip studies Tony. Knows his rank just by his stature.

RIP

Whatever you want, *Major*.

Rip gets in the driver seat and ties a keffiyeh around his face, concealing his Caucasian features. He throws the car in gear and fishtails out.

Off Tony, concerned-

EXT. PREDATOR UAV - OVERHEAD BAGHDAD - DAY

From a bird's eye view, SCALE DOWN to the Al Mansour neighborhood and settle on a MANSION. As TWO IRAQIS exit...

EXT. MANSION - BAGHDAD - DAY - OVERHEAD FEED TO LIVE

ALI WALI (30s, Iraqi), hair slicked back and glossy suit, approaches a shiny Silver Mercedes with his colleague JAMAL.

JAMAL  
(in Arabic)  
*Is it safe to travel in the open?*

ALI WALI  
*We're safer posing as government officials than hiding in trunks.*

They get in the Mercedes...

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - DAY

The Ferrari and Porsche haul ass down a crowded street, swerving around pedestrians, livestock, and trash. Iraqis pay them little notice - nothing Uday and Qusay didn't do.

INT. FERRARI - DAY

Rip keys his radio as he drives.

RIP  
This is Zulu 1-1. Need a fix on our target.

ANALYST (ON RADIO)  
Roger 1-1. Target is twelve o'clock, one thousand meters, over.

EXT. PREDATOR UAV - OVERHEAD BAGHDAD - DAY

TRACK with the Ferrari and Porsche, then scan ahead to find the Silver Mercedes.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

The ANALYST sits at a computer tracking the live UAV feed. Danner and Givens observe over his shoulder.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Tony pulls up a chair and joins Paul watching Kill TV (the live UAV feed a.k.a. "combat entertainment"). Paul hands him a box of candy, eyes never leaving the monitor.

PAUL  
Jujubee?

Tony takes a handful of candy, eyes glued to the screen.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

As Ali Wali drives..

JAMAL  
*Look out!*

Ali Wali slams the brakes, stopping just short of an OLD MAN pushing a shwarma cart. As the man struggles to get his cart out of the street...

ALI WALI  
*This neighborhood used to be Sunni.  
Once the Americans leave, it will  
be ours again.*

Ali Wali lays on the HORN and the old man throws his hands in the air.

Suddenly, from a balcony above, an IRAQI MAN on a cell phone yells down to Ali Wali.

IRaqi MAN  
Ameri-cahns!

Ali Wali and Jamal turn to see the Ferrari closing. Ali Wali slams on the gas and SMASHES through the food cart, sending it tumbling and knocking the old man to the ground.

INT. FERRARI - DAY

Rip spots the Mercedes up ahead...

RIP  
Shit...

The race on, he shifts and accelerates as Worm radios.

WORM  
Zulu 1-3, this is 1-2. We've been  
made, over.

CRAPSHOOT (ON RADIO)  
Roger 1-2. We're one block east of  
your position, heading northbound.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

Ali Wali veers around a taxi, jumping the curb onto the sidewalk, crashing through tables, and leaving chaos and destruction in his wake.

JAMAL  
*They're gaining on us!*

ALI WALI  
*The glove box.*

Jamal opens it to find GRENADES. He grabs one, rolls down his window, pulls a pin and tosses it onto the road.

INT. FERRARI - DAY

Worm spots the grenade bouncing erratically in the street.

WORM  
*Grenade!*

As Worm grabs the oh-shit handle, Rip swerves. The grenade EXPLODES, pelting the rear of the Ferrari with shrapnel.

But they don't slow down. As Rip shifts--

WORM (CONT'D)  
*Another one. Two o'clock.*

Rip swerves again just in time as a second grenade EXPLODES and misses again.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

As the analyst watches the feed...

ANALYST  
*Zulu 1-3, you are pulling even.*

ON UAV FEED: The Ferrari and Porsche close on the Mercedes.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

Jamal has only one grenade left. Ali Wali looks ahead and sees a group of CHILDREN playing on the sidewalk.

ALI WALI  
*Throw it there.*

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - DAY

As the Mercedes races past, the grenade drops onto the road and bounces off the curb, settling in the street next to the children. They turn and look just as -

INT. FERRARI - DAY

Worm's eyes go wide.

WORM  
Kids.

RIP  
Get down.

Rip hammers the HORN as he swerves between the kids and the grenade, pulling the emergency brake. A brief pause, then...

The grenade blows. IMPLODING RIP'S WINDOW IN A HAIL OF GLASS.

As Worm dusts the glass off himself, Rip looks past him to see the kids are okay.

A renewed purpose in his eyes, Rip tosses the Ferrari in gear and the engine ROARS to life.

The shredded tire flies off the wheel, metal sparking on the pavement.

INT. PORSCHE - CONTINUOUS

Crapshoot scans the streets as he tears through Baghdad.

CRAPSHOOT  
This is 1-3. Do you have eyes?

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

The Analyst spots two cars moving parallel on adjacent streets.

ANALYST  
Roger, turn west at the next intersection.

INT. PORSCHE - DAY

Crapshoot throws the wheel and races to intercept.

CRAPSHOOT  
Where is he?!

As Crapshoot searches for the Mercedes...

...he smashes into a taxi. Both vehicles violently spinning to a stop.

INT. MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Ali Wali sees the crashed Porsche and taxi blocking the road ahead. Crapshoot can be seen staggering out of the car.

Seeing the American soldier, Ali Wali hammers the gas, death in his eyes.

Ahead, Crapshoot raises his rifle. Ali Wali realizes he is not prepared for martyrdom. He slams the brakes just short.

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - CONTINUOUS

As Crapshoot trains his weapon on Ali Wali...

CRAPSHOOT  
Hands up!

...Rip screeches to a stop beside Ali Wali, hemming him in.

Rip approaches the Mercedes. All of the Operators have their rifles trained on Ali Wali.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Danner watches the feed over the Analyst's shoulder, anxious for an update.

DANNER  
Do you have a positive ID on the target, over?

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - DAY

Jaw clenched, Rip stares at Ali Wali, who sits in the driver's seat with his arms raised.

Crapshoot and Worm glance at Rip. *What's the play?*

Ali Wali's face goes white as he realizes Rip's rifle isn't going down. Speaking English for the first time--

ALI WALI  
Please...

Rip's finger takes in the slack on his trigger...

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

As Tony watches the standoff breathlessly from the infrared Predator feed...

...streams of white-hot lead pour from the Operators' guns,  
ripping the Mercedes and its occupants apart.

PAUL  
Good night.

Furious, Tony storms out.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

As Danner watches the feed, Rip's voice comes over the radio.

RIP (ON RADIO)  
This is Zulu 1-1. Target is KIA.  
All eagles accounted for. RTB,  
over.

Danner smiles - mission success. He turns to Givens.

DANNER  
That's how it's done.

Givens walks over to an Al Qaeda organizational chart and draws a BIG RED X over the mugshot of Ali Wali.

EXT. TASK FORCE COMPOUND - DAY

Tony leans against a jersey barrier, quietly observing as the wounded Ferrari limps inside the Compound, kicking up a cloud of red dust in its wake.

As the Operators disembark, Tony locks eyes with Rip, none too happy about the loss of his next detainee.

INT. CHOWHALL - TASK FORCE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Tony eats dinner with Ann and Mike, mid-conversation.

TONY

That dark spiral...it's always  
pulling at you. We need to rise  
above it.

MIKE

Or maybe we're the ones who need to  
change our way of thinking. We're  
losing this ballgame. Could be time  
to loosen up the ROEs.

Tony loses his cool.

TONY

Bullshit. America has spent a  
hundred years perfecting the art of  
interrogation. Find me one FBI  
agent who thinks he could get a  
confession by punching a serial  
killer in the nose.

(gathering himself)

You don't have to break the law to  
break a terrorist.

Tony spots Rip and Worm dining across the room.

TONY (CONT'D)

That knuckle-dagger murdered our  
only lead. If we don't convert  
targets into actionable intel,  
what's the point?

Tony stews, tunnel vision setting in.

TONY (CONT'D)

I'm going to talk to him.

Ann knows Tony well enough to fear where this is going.

ANN

Talk?

TONY

(cavalier)

What do you think, Mike? "Pride and  
Ego Up" or "Love of Comrades."

MIKE

You're going to run an approach on  
an Operator?!

ANN

You sure this is a good idea?

Tony shrugs. Stands up.

TONY  
Fortune favors the brave.

ANN  
So do fuckups.

Tony seats himself across from Worm and Rip, who barely acknowledge his presence.

TONY  
Thought you said you were going to bring the target in alive.

Rip doesn't need to justify himself to anyone.

RIP  
He didn't make it.

TONY  
Guess he had it comin'.

WORM  
You could say that.

Tony addresses Rip, the man he knows he needs to convert.

TONY  
Hard not to hate. Every time I see a beheading video, makes me think our enemies are fucking animals.

Rip studies Tony. Beat.

RIP  
Save the *empathy* approach for the hajis.

Tony realizes he may have underestimated Rip.

TONY  
Twelve deployments and twenty plus years active duty...guessing you could be coaching high school football or spending time with your family. But you keep coming back. Why?

RIP  
Me and the Sheikh have unfinished business.

TONY

And you think what you did today  
got you any closer to him? You need  
to fight smarter, not harder.

RIP

What we did today wasn't about  
Zarqawi. That was revenge for our  
boy, Sandy. Warrior code shit.  
Outside your wheelhouse.

TONY

Your boy Sandy gave his life trying  
to find Zarqawi - that was the  
mission. And you dumping a mag in  
Ali Wali just lowered the chances  
that we'll make his death count.

WORM

Watch your fucking step.

Tony presses...

TONY

Your boy may end up dying for  
nothing because your thirst for  
revenge just killed the one good  
lead we had on the Sheikh.

Rip puts his utensils down, wiping his mouth. Simmering.

RIP

Let me tell you something.

Rip leans in, something important to say.

RIP (CONT'D)

Come here.

Tony leans across the table, prepared for whatever secret Rip  
is going to unveil. Instead, Rip yanks Tony by the collar so  
he is flat on the table with his head hanging off the edge.

Rip wraps his shemagh (rag) around Tony's neck like a boa  
constrictor, choking him. Tony thrashes violently on the  
table, but it's no use.

Ann and Mike look up from their dinner, preparing to  
intervene as the entire chowhall watches the scene unfold.

Worm rises, posturing. His body language letting everyone in  
the room know not to get involved.

Rip whispers in Tony's ear.

RIP (CONT'D)

I asked around about you. Turns out  
the only people here who don't hate  
your guts are the terrorists.

Tony tries to wrestle free, but Rip subdues him. His voice is  
cold as a cadaver.

RIP (CONT'D)

You want to sing kumbaya and buy  
the world a Coke, that's on you.  
But don't ever question me or my  
men again. You have no fucking idea  
what it's like outside the wire.

Tony struggles to breathe, face red.

TONY

One question.

Rip releases the tension just enough for Tony to speak.

TONY (CONT'D)

Do you want revenge, or do you want  
to win? Because I'm here to find  
Zarqawi.

Worm spots TWO MILITARY POLICE approaching.

WORM

Another time. Let's go.

Rip releases Tony and leaves with Worm, who address the MPs.

WORM (CONT'D)

We're good.

Tony rests on the table, adrenaline coursing as he catches  
his breath - *what the fuck just happened?* Ann approaches.

ANN

That went well.

OFF Tony, watching Rip exit -

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Back at his desk, Tony types up a report. Nearby, Mack  
mentors a small group of gators -

MACK

It's just like Yoda said, "Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering, and suffering leads to intel."

The gators laugh.

Tony looks over at Mack and Mack nods, glad he overheard. The other gators glare at Tony -- after the chowhall, he's *persona non grata*. Tony gives up, calls it a day and heads for the door.

EXT. TRAILER - TASK FORCE COMPOUND - DUSK

Tony enters to find his surfboard broken in half. He picks up the tail and inspects it. Beyond repair, he tosses it out the door into the dirt.

Combing through the rest of his stuff looking for more casualties, he flips through his vintage copy of the Qur'an and...

...the worn PHOTO of a young girl falls out.

Tony picks it up, eyes it for a second, then replaces it and shuts the book.

EXT. TRAILER / TASK FORCE COMPOUND - DUSK

Tony steps out of his rickety box and crosses the compound.

EXT. COMPOUND PERIMETER - DUSK

Looking like a prison inmate, Tony stands with his fingers curled around the perimeter fence.

He stares out into the empty desert...*outside the wire*.

Suddenly an OLD BEDOUIL appears, herding camels. He spots Tony and stops. Raises an old thermos. Tony fishes a couple dollars out of his pocket, indicating his interest.

Tony watches as the old Bedouin milks one of his camels into the thermos. The camel GROANS.

The Bedouin then pours the fresh milk into a filthy tin cup. He passes it to Tony through the fence.

TONY  
('thank you' in Arabic)  
*Shukran.*

Tony notes a thick layer of film-coating on top. Hesitant, he raises the cup to his lips - half expecting his bowels to spontaneously combust the second he takes a sip.

BEDOUIN  
(Arabic, subtitled)  
*Good, yes?*

Forcing the milk down, Tony responds in English. Sarcastic.

TONY  
*Yeah, it's fucking great.*

The Bedouin gestures to see if Tony wants more. Tony waves his hands, graciously declining.

INT. GATOR PIT - NIGHT

Tony marks locations on a map of Iraq as the World Cup plays on an old tube TV on his desk. The picture cuts out and Tony slaps the side of the TV. The picture comes back in for a moment, then frizzes back out.

Tony uses a compass to draw a circle around the cluster of locations, then rubs his red eyes. Beyond exhausted...

VOICE (O.S.)  
*You bring tac gear?*

Tony turns to see Randy.

TONY  
*Sorry?*

RANDY  
Just received a request for a battlefield interrogation.

TONY  
*My shift is over.*

RANDY  
It was a by-name request. Asked for you specifically.

Tony turns, suspicious.

TONY  
From who?

RANDY  
Doesn't matter. Tarmac in twenty.  
Be there.

Off Tony, realizing he's stepped in some major shit.

EXT. HANGAR - HELO PAD - NIGHT

Tony boards an MH-47 Chinook, where the elite Night Stalker check their instruments.

Tony sees the large passenger area of the helo is empty.

TONY  
Who else are we waiting for?

The PILOT calls back to Tony.

PILOT  
Just you, Major.

The roar of the engine builds as the rotors spin up.

I/E. CHINOOK - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Tony, staring down at the desert as TRACER ROUNDS sporadically streak into the sky.

In his headset Tony can hear the Pilot and CO-PILOT chatter. They are clearly confused by the orders.

PILOT (ON RADIO)  
Can you verify these coordinates?  
There's nothing down there.

CO-PILOT (ON RADIO)  
This is the place.

The pilot calls back to Tony.

PILOT  
This is your stop, buddy.

Tony glances out into the pitch black desert.

TONY  
Where's my rendezvous?

PILOT  
We only guarantee on-time delivery.  
Rest is on you.

Off Tony, rubbing his dog tags-

EXT. DESERT - OUTSIDE TIKRIT - NIGHT

The Chinook sets down in a dust cloud and Tony jumps out.

The helo departs, leaving Tony standing all alone in the middle of the desert, dark as three feet up a bull's ass.

He strains to peer into the inky abyss stretched out before him. His labored BREATH cuts through the silence.

He checks his GPS, cupping his hand to avoid light bleed.

TONY

Fuck it...

He takes a sip of water from his camelback as he waits.

And as he wonders if he's just been set up, on the horizon - HEADLIGHTS.

He fumbles to raise his rifle.

SCOPE POV: FOUR SHITTY TOYOTA PICKUPS race toward him. Headlights blinding. Indigenous vehicles.

Tony drops to a knee...clicks off his safety...places his finger on the trigger. Lining up the vehicles in his sights--

Tony can just make out the silhouettes of Arab men inside the vehicles.

The trucks draw near and suddenly skid to a stop. The window of the lead truck rolls down, revealing Rip at the wheel, keffiyeh wrapped around his face and neck.

Rip addresses Tony, cool as the other side of the pillow.

RIP  
Asalama alaykum.

Tony isn't sure what to make of it, but doesn't want to show fear. Especially if this is how it ends for him. He responds with the traditional Muslim greeting.

TONY  
Wa alaikum-salaam.

RIP  
Get in.

Tony gets in the truck.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

As the truck pulls away, Tony glances at Rip in the low lights of the cabin. Rip keys his radio.

RIP  
I send checkpoint Zeus, over.

Tony takes note of Rip's thumb tapping on the steering wheel - a telltale of some sort. Tony breaks the awkward silence.

TONY  
The Azurri knocked the U.S. out of  
Group A.

Rip turns, uncertain what Tony is talking about...

RIP  
Is that a soccer thing..?

TONY  
World Cup.

So much for common ground...

TONY (CONT'D)  
I guess if you were gonna shoot me,  
you'd already have done it.

Rip's thoughts are elsewhere.

RIP  
If it were up to George Senior,  
we'd have handled this shit back in  
'91. Would've wiped our asses with  
every last one of their turbans.  
Instead, we're still here because  
people like you with your pink  
gloves keep imposing rules as if  
war is something other than what it  
is.

TONY  
And what is it?

RIP  
A global fucking cage match.

After an uncomfortable beat, Rip switches gears.

RIP (CONT'D)  
Why'd you go Air Force? You watch  
Top Gun as a kid and buy that shit  
that they'd let you fly planes?

TONY

Helos. I flew Pave Lows until I got grounded with a heart murmur. Still owed Uncle Sam four years so I became a military investigator.

RIP

You got in the fratricide business. Locking up your own.

TONY

I worked crimes against children.

Rip can sense the pain in Tony's response. Maybe they have some common ground after all.

RIP

No greater sin. You deploy anywhere besides Iraq?

TONY

Colombia. Bosnia.

RIP

Bosnia? Me too.

TONY

Didn't know you Delta boys were in the Balkans.

RIP

Lots of places I ain't been.

As the pickup pulls into a residential area, Rip keys his radio.

RIP (CONT'D)

I send checkpoint Medusa. Go dark, over.

Rip turns off his headlights and the pickups behind him follow suit.

Rip parks the pickup on the side of the road.

RIP (CONT'D)

Stay in the truck.

Rip departs, leaving Tony alone in Indian country.

EXT. PICKUP - NIGHT

Rip grabs a plastic LAWN CHAIR with rope attached from the truck bed as the other OPERATORS join him.

He places the chair against a wall and all the men use it to silently hop over.

Tony watches as the rope tugs the chair up and over the wall, leaving no sign of the men.

Tony sits in silence in the truck, feeling extremely exposed.

Suddenly, Tony hears the unmistakable POP-POP-POP-POP of a 9-banger flash-bang grenade. Followed by the CRACK of AK47s and the THUMP-THUMP of suppressed rifles.

Then the SCREAMING of a woman...the SHOUTING of Operators...

Rip marches from the front door of the house and pulls open Tony's door. There is a dark aggressive intensity in Rip's voice.

RIP

You think you're better than us.  
This is your chance to prove it.  
Haji inside stripped the SIM card  
from his phone. You've got two  
minutes to find it, and then we're  
tail-lights.

It takes Tony a second to even process what Rip is suggesting...

TONY  
Two minutes?!

Rip casts a sideways glance at the curious Lookie Loos who have now gathered on the street.

RIP  
Unless you want to stick around for  
the block party. Welcome to life  
outside the wire.

Tony gets out of the truck...

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT

Tony and Rip enter the living room, which is total chaos. Operators rip apart the house, intimidating the family with overwhelming force. The family responds with fear and panic.

Worm has TARIQ (40s, Iraqi, thick 'stache) hog-tied on the ground. He struggles under the weight of Worm's knee while another Operator forcibly searches him.

WORM  
Where is it, motherfucker?!

Tony turns to Rip, looking for an explanation.

RIP  
A little well placed pain goes a long way.

Before Tony can respond, Rip reminds him...

RIP (CONT'D)  
Two minutes.

Crapshoot joins from the bedroom, manhandling Tariq's young DAUGHTER (10, all bones). As he throws her onto the floor...

CRAPSHOOT  
This one was hiding in the closet.

Another Operator, STORMY, opens a cabinet.

STORMY  
Looks like we're in the right house.

The Operator next to him, Pope, turns to see shelves filled with RPGs, AKs, M72s.

POPE  
Good intel. That's a first.

Worm roughs up Tariq.

WORM  
Maybe your little girl knows where it is.

Tony watches in shock as Worm approaches the daughter.

Tariq's wife goes COMPLETELY APESHIT and lunges at him. Crapshoot seizes the screaming, thrashing woman.

The only one in the room who isn't dialed up to eleven is Rip, who is the portrait of equanimity, seemingly taking pleasure in the whole affair and Tony's imminent failure.

RIP  
(to Tony)  
Ninety seconds. You just gonna  
stand there, flyboy?

Worm pulls a pistol on the mother, but that causes even more  
chaos as she SCREAMS and Tariq YELLS--

TARIQ  
(in Arabic)  
*Get away from my wife!*

The daughter starts to CRY. Suddenly, the girl darts for the  
door, only to be snagged by Worm.

WORM  
Oh no you don't!

But his touching the girl only inflames Tariq's wife more and  
she starts WAILING at the top of her lungs.

Tony can't take it any more.

TONY  
Take your hands off her!

Worm turns to Rip. *Is he fucking serious?*

RIP  
(to Worm, casual)  
You heard the man.

Rip checks his watch, wanting Tony to fail on his own terms.

RIP (CONT'D)  
One minute.

WORM  
Boss, we gotta find that SIM card.

TONY  
And you think this is how you're  
going to find it?

Tony eyes the room, the impossible challenge set out before  
him. Rip meets eyes with Tony, the gauntlet dropped.

RIP  
No one's stopping you.

Tony realizes he needs to play the game on his own terms. He  
addresses Tariq's wife.

TONY  
 (in Arabic)  
*Easy now...cool heart, sister.*

The woman calms at the sound of his voice.

CRAPSHOOT  
 Look at that. Dude is the fucking  
 Haji Whisperer.

Tony turns to Rip.

TONY  
 I need everyone out of the house.

RIP  
 Not an option.

Tony gets in Rip's face, losing his cool at having to waste time explaining.

TONY  
 Listen, all these men standing  
 around with guns. Right now she...  
 (indicating the wife)  
 ...is thinking we're going to gang-  
 rape her daughter. And there's no  
 way this guy...  
 (indicating Tariq)  
 ...is going to cooperate as long as  
 she's thinking that.

RIP  
 Everyone out.

WORM  
 Since when does an augmentee decide  
 actions on the objective.

Rip casts his wolfpack a look. *Chill out fellas.*

RIP  
 We'll be right behind you.

The men file out, annoyed, but team players.

Tony searches the room for some way to square the circle.  
 Tony motions toward Tariq's wife and daughter.

TONY  
 You two - sit.

As the family sits on the couch, Tony pulls Tariq to his feet, straightens his *dishdasha*, wiping dirt from it.

**SUPER: Detainee #0834 - 'TARIQ'**

TONY (CONT'D)  
You okay, *habibi*?

TARIQ  
Okay, okay.

Rip checks his watch.

RIP  
Thirty seconds, Dr. Phil. I don't  
see a SIM card.

Tony ignores Rip, his attention on Tariq.

TONY  
You care about your daughter?

TARIQ  
Yes, yes.

TONY  
Great. Let's do something about  
that. What's her name?

TARIQ  
Sarah.

TONY  
Perfect. Now, you want to get Sarah  
and your wife out of this jam, then  
you're going to repeat exactly what  
I say.

Tariq shuffles on his feet, uncertain. He nods.

Tony whispers something in Tariq's ear. Tariq's eyes go wide.  
Rip interrupts...

RIP  
Ten seconds.

TONY  
(to Tariq)  
Say it!

Tariq hesitates...

RIP  
Five.

Tony steps in real close to Tariq. Firm.

TONY  
I said *say it*.

Tariq breaks, shouting the words.

TARIQ  
Sarah, give me what you're hiding!

The words hang in the air for a moment.

RIP  
Time. We're done here.

Suddenly, Sarah rises from the couch and removes the SIM card from under a cushion and extends it toward her father. Tariq's face falls.

Rip's eyes fall on the SIM card, then Tony. Challenge met.

INT. PICKUP - DAWN

Tony and Rip get back in the truck as the first rays of sun breach the horizon. Tony exhales, still processing how close he was to failure. Talk about a long fucking night.

RIP  
How did you know that would work?

TONY  
Understand what makes them tick,  
then make them talk.

RIP  
My kids would have told me to fuck off.

TONY  
Maybe you should convert to Islam.

RIP  
Fuuuuck that.

Tony laughs under his breath in spite of himself.

EXT. TIKRIT - DAWN - ESTABLISHING

The sun breaks the horizon painting the sand red.

INT. TRUCK - DAWN

Tony puts the SIM card in the phone and pulls up the recent calls list. Rip keys his radio as he drives.

RIP  
Zulu actual. This is Zulu 1-1.  
Jackpot. We're RTB. Out.

Tony begins scrolling through the recent calls.

TONY  
You ever wonder why every Zarqawi sighting is within a thirty mile radius?

RIP  
No, but I'm guessing you have a theory.

TONY  
So he can stay close to home.

RIP  
File doesn't say anything about him having a wife or kids..?

TONY  
Just a hunch.

Rip turns, intrigued by Tony's theory.

INSERT: CLOSE ON the 'Recent Calls' list.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Son of a bitch...

RIP  
Don't tease me.

TONY  
Fifteen minutes ago Tariq received a call from a contact labeled "The Sheikh"?

Rip turns to Tony - *are you shitting me?!*

RIP  
Have them wake up Danner. I want every SIGINT asset available triangulating that phone.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAWN - INTERCUT

Paul at his computer, on the phone with Tony.

PAUL (O.S.)  
It's active. One sec...

Paul punches in a request for a Tier One SIGINT asset.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Got a hit. Target is currently 34  
05 10 N, 43 68 40 E.

Danner watches over Paul's shoulder as an aide hands Danner a mug of coffee.

INSIDE THE TRUCK

Tony pulls out a map and plots the coords.

TONY  
That's a couple of klicks from  
here.

PAUL (O.S.)  
Target's moving south at  
approximately 50 mph.

TONY  
It's a car.

RIP  
No shit.

Rip keys his mic.

RIP (CONT'D)  
All Zulu call signs, this is 1-1.  
We got a follow on.

Tony can see the tunnel vision in Rip's eyes. Treads gently.

TONY  
Maybe we should wait. Put an asset  
on him and see where he goes.

RIP  
This is our show.

EXT. TIKRIT - MORNING

The Ops Team's indigenous trucks race across the desert,  
zeroing in on the Sheikh.

The trucks jump an embankment, crash through a fence, and swerve onto the highway.

INT. TRUCK - MORNING

Spotting a black sedan ahead, Rip keys his radio.

RIP  
Zulu 1-3, I got eyes on the enemy  
victor, over.

EXT. TIKRIT - MORNING

The sedan exits the highway and races into a dense shanty town of tin roof slums.

INT. SEDAN - MORNING

Inside the sedan, the driver nervously scans his surroundings.

Then, in the back seat, we see the face of the beast himself - ZARQAWI - with his cold dead stare. He places a call...

INT. GATOR PIT - MORNING

Paul listens to a headset.

PAUL  
Target is placing a call.

We hear an ARABIC CONVERSATION play on the speakers.

DANNER  
Run it through voice recognition.

Paul runs the software.

PAUL  
95% match for Zarqawi.

DANNER  
Zulu 1-1, we have a ninety-five  
percent positive on the Sheikh.  
You have execute authority. I  
repeat. You have execute authority.

INT. TRUCK - MORNING

For Rip, shit just got as real as it gets. Today is the day. Rip spots the sedan turning off through a residential neighborhood.

Instead of slowing, he guns the gas to close distance...

...Tony's face goes white. Doesn't want to scream, but *HOLY SHIT* they are about to smear into a wall....

...At the last second, Rip throws the hand brake and DRIFTS into the narrow street lined with shanties.

TONY  
(joking)  
Who taught you to drive, Bobby Rahal?

RIP  
(not joking)  
Dale Earnhart.

They press deeper into Indian territory....

RIP (CONT'D)  
Keep your eyes peeled. This could be a hornet's nest.

TONY'S POV SIDE WINDOW: In a doorway, a FILTHY CHILD watches them pass.

TONY  
Roger that.

Down a side alley, Tony spots the sedan.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Stop. Back up.

EXT. STREET - TIKRIT - MORNING

The trucks skid to a stop, reverse, and then accelerate into the alley. The tin shanties claw at their sides.

INT. TRUCK - MORNING

More and more IRAQIS emerge on the street to start their morning, only to find themselves in the middle of a street race.

INT. GATOR PIT - MORNING

ON THE UAV FEED: Paul sees the sedan stop and a heat signature emerges.

PAUL  
Target vehicle stopped. We have one squirter on foot.

INT. TRUCK - MORNING

Rip keys his radio.

RIP  
Can you confirm it's the Sheikh?

PAUL (ON RADIO)  
Negative.

Ahead, Tony spots the sedan. He sees a figure in a black burqa shut the back door, then turn back and make eye contact with the truck, before taking off.

TONY  
Zarqawi! In the burqa!

Rip pulls to a stop just short of the sedan.

EXT. STREET - TIKRIT - MORNING

Tony exits, M4 trained on Zarqawi's driver. The driver pulls a handgun.

TONY  
Put the gun down--

Before Tony can finish the thought, Rip empties a pistol mag into the driver, never breaking stride.

RIP  
On me.

Rip sprints into the shanty town after Zarqawi. Realizing he is way out of his depth, Tony follows.

The second vehicle pulls up behind them and the other Operators give chase on foot as well.

EXT. SHANTY TOWN - MORNING

Rip sprints through the tight alleys in search of Zarqawi...bouncing off walls...leaping fences...

He sees a door bang shut and fearlessly charges through it...

...down a corridor...out a front door...

...into a square CROWDED WITH WOMEN IN BLACK BURQAS.

Rip stops in his tracks. He scans the women with his pistol, wondering which specter in this hall of mirrors is the devil. The women recoil at the sight of the weapon.

Suddenly...BANG! BANG! BANG! One of the women fires on Rip. It's fucking Zarqawi!

Rip is slammed back against a wall.

Tony emerges behind him.

TONY  
You're hit...

Rip clutches his torn bulletproof vest, wheezing for air.

RIP  
I'm fine - it's just a cracked rib.  
Move!

Rip struggles to breathe as he and Tony resume the chase...

Rip and Tony enter a tin shanty. Rip's gun-sights settle on a frightened IRAQI BOY. The boy's FATHER points towards the back door and Rip takes off.

Rip and Tony press through the shanty, covering each other. Working together for the first time.

Everything is a threat. A black burqa drying on a line. Hanging pots. A goat.

A woman's SCREAM sends Rip running down an alley where he comes face to face with...

...a LARGE FIGURE IN A BURQA standing beside a man - ostensibly her HUSBAND.

RIP (CONT'D)  
Hands up!

Tony trains his rifle on the 'woman' as Rip scans the area. No way Zarqawi slipped away. This woman must be the Sheikh.

HUSBAND  
(Arabic)  
*Please. Don't hurt us.*

Rip points his gun at the woman.

RIP  
Take it off.

The husband and wife trade a look, uncertain what to do. The husband turns to Tony for help, pleading --

HUSBAND  
*Please. She's my wife.*

Tony raises his rifle.

TONY  
(Arabic)  
Take it off.

The husband and wife look at Tony's raised M4. They can see in his eyes that Tony will not hesitate to drop the hammer.

The husband shouts something angrily in Arabic and spits. Rip pistol-whips him to the ground. The wife stands her ground.

TONY (CONT'D)  
*Last chance, sister.*

The wife, hands shaking, slowly unveils her face to reveal...

...just some old big-boned Iraqi lady.

Tony lowers his rifle, embarrassed.

TONY (CONT'D)  
*I'm sorry.*

OFF the old lady, spitting defiantly at the feet of our soldiers...

EXT. TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Rip storms back to the truck, furious he let Zarqawi slip through his fingers. Unable to contain his rage...

RIP  
FUUUUUCK!!

...Rip punches the molded plastic knuckles of his Oakley gloves through the window of the truck.

Tony watches, knowing to keep his mouth shut.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Rip and Tony ride back to base in silence. Rip simmers. He pulls a bottle of pills from his pocket.

RIP  
Ambien?

TONY  
No thanks.

Tony watches with concern as Rip shakes a couple pills into his mouth, then pulls a bottle of Wild Turkey out of the glove box, using it to wash down the pills.

TONY (CONT'D)  
We'll get another chance.

RIP  
You find me that motherfucker.  
Understood?

TONY  
Roger that.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Ann KNOCKS on the door of Tony's trailer.

No answer. She KNOCKS louder.

ANN  
Wake up, sleepyhead.

VOICE (O.S.)  
I don't think he's home.

Ann turns to see Tony buckled over in his running shorts, drenched in sweat.

ANN  
Jesus - it's a hundred fifteen degrees out here.

TONY  
It's a dry heat.

Tony takes note of the fact that Ann is wearing her full battle rattle (camo fatigues, body armor, etc.).

TONY (CONT'D)  
You look like you fell out of the  
velcro tree and hit every branch on  
the way down. You going somewhere?

ANN  
Happy Birthday.

TONY  
My birthday was last week.

ANN  
I just found out.

Ann hands Tony a cheesy birthday card with a kitten.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Options at the BX were limited.

Tony opens it, amusement morphing to confusion as he unfolds a satellite image inside with a location circled on it.

TONY  
What is this?

ANN  
You said on your last tour there  
was a place you got ice cream.  
Looks like the building is still  
intact. What are the odds they're  
still serving?

TONY  
I hate to disappoint, but I don't  
think the brass would approve of us  
going outside the wire...for ice  
cream.

ANN  
I got us orders to swing by the  
Green Zone. Happens to be on the  
way.

EXT. BASE - DAY

A HUMVEE streaks away from the security of the compound, tearing down Route Irish.

INT. HUMVEE - DAY

Ann takes note of a mangled humvee gathering dust on the side of the road, having been torn apart by an IED.

ANN

This better be some good fucking  
ice cream.

The humvee presses through central Baghdad. Tony looks out  
the window where...

...several humvees full of TWENTY-SOMETHING MARINES toss out  
candy to a bunch of gleeful IRAQI KIDS. For a brief moment,  
it seems like everyone has forgotten the war.

TONY

Smiling kids in the middle of a  
civil war. No idea how they do it.

ANN

Kids are easily manipulated.

Tony can't help but laugh.

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - DAY

Tony and Ann check their surroundings as they stop on the  
side of the road. Seeing something off screen -

TONY

I'll be damned.

Across the street, Iraqis eat ice cream at a shop.

ANN

Even war can't stop a sweet tooth.

EXT. ICE CREAM SHOP - DAY

Tony and Ann eat scoops of pistachio ice cream.

ANN

What's the verdict?

TONY

Even worse than I remember.

ANN

At least it's cold.

TONY

Fuckin' A.

Ann steals a glance at Tony.

ANN  
You remind me of my husband.

TONY  
He Air Force too?

ANN  
He was a Marine. Medical discharge.  
(off Tony's curiosity)  
Combat stress.

Tony realizes the insinuation. Dodges.

TONY  
Marines see a lot of bad shit.

ANN  
And you haven't?

Tony doesn't respond. But feeling she's close, Ann presses.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Why'd you spend the last year  
surfing in Southeast Asia?

TONY  
Travel is the best education.

ANN  
A good interrogator would call that  
"distancing."

Tony stops eating.

TONY  
Back at the academy, they said we'd  
all have one.

ANN  
So who was yours?

A beat as Tony reflects. Then -

TONY  
Young girl. Five. Father put her in  
a suitcase. Poured boiling water on  
her.

TONY'S POV: Nearby a YOUNG IRAQI GIRL eats ice cream.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Burns covered 80% of her body.

ANN  
That's why you left active duty?

TONY  
No, I left because I failed her.  
Never got a conviction.

ANN  
What happened to the girl?

TONY  
A year after the trial, I ran into  
her at the BX. She was with her  
father. Her face...

Tony can't even finish the thought...

ANN  
What did you do?

TONY  
Nothing to do. I guess that's the  
upside of being over here. Every  
once in a while, you get to be  
judge and jury.

If Ann was worried about Tony before, she's even more so now.

ANN  
Well, if you ever need to talk--

Suddenly, the distant sound of THUNDER. Both flinch.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Mortar?

Tony's situational awareness kicks in.

TONY  
Suicide bomber. Let's head back.

INT. HUMVEE - DAY

Tony and Ann drive back through Baghdad. Ahead, Tony sees a  
scene of TOTAL CHAOS.

ANN  
Oh God...

The square where the Marines had been giving children candy  
is filled with...SMOKE...AMBULANCES...PARENTS CARRYING  
WOUNDED CHILDREN...DEAD MARINES SCATTERED LIKE RAG DOLLS.

EXT. STREET - BAGHDAD - DAY

Tony leaps out of the vehicle as a MARINE QRF TEAM secures the area and medics race to evacuate the dead and wounded.

Amidst the WAILING and CARNAGE, Tony spots the body of a lone LITTLE BOY who isn't being attended to.

Tony rolls the little boy over...dead. He crosses the boy's arms on his chest, then scans the bodies of countless other children all around him.

Off Tony, looking like he might collapse -

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Tony eyes the weathered photo of the young girl on his desk.

Randy approaches and he tucks it out of sight.

RANDY

Got a hot one for you. Ops team rolled him up last night. Claims to be a taxi driver but they found detonators in his trunk. We think he might have rigged the bomb that killed the Marines and those kids.

Tony looks up - *a personal vendetta grabbing him.*

RANDY (CONT'D)

Most of these high value detainees go to Mack, but Rip made sure you got this one.

As Randy puts the file on the table, he hesitates. Wants to make sure Tony understands the gravity of this.

RANDY (CONT'D)

We lost a lot of men yesterday. Everyone wants to see this guy swinging from a rope. I know you got your own way of doing things. Just don't fuck it up.

Tony nods, knowing the entire unit will be watching.

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

ABU GAMAL (Iraqi, 50s, grey beard, face like a wizened mole) sits behind a table. His intelligent eyes fall on the camera in the corner.

**SUPER: Detainee #0866 - 'ABU GAMAL'**

Tony enters, dumping his TV on the table in front of Abu Gamal. He plugs it in, then begins to unshackle Abu Gamal.

TONY  
Your file says you were an electrician.

As Abu Gamal's shackles come off, he rubs his wrists.

Tony sits back down opposite Abu Gamal and places a Phillips head screwdriver on the table

TONY (CONT'D)  
Thought you could fix my TV.

Abu Gamal looks at the weapon on the table...

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOM - DAY

Randy and Rip watch the interrogation. Mack and the other gators observe as well. Most of them are torn between wanting Abu Gamal to break and wanting Tony to fail.

MACK  
Is he out of his motherfucking mind? He's going to get stabbed right in the suck.

Randy swallows, realizing Mack is probably right.

RANDY  
Get the guards down there.

Rip turns to Randy. Though he is enlisted and the lowest ranking man in the room, everyone respects Rip as the head motherfucker in charge.

RIP  
No. Let's see where this goes.

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

Abu Gamal opens up the TV.

ABU GAMAL  
I enlisted in the Army during the war with Iran.

TONY  
But we disbanded the Army in '04.

ABU GAMAL  
So then I opened an electronics  
store in Baghdad.

TONY  
Not much business these days. Must  
be tough to put bread on the table.

ABU GAMAL  
I drive a taxi to support my  
family.

Tony senses an opening...

TONY  
Family?

ABU GAMAL  
My wife.

Abu Gamal tinkers inside the set. He turns it toward Tony and hits the power button. The picture comes in perfectly.

ABU GAMAL (CONT'D)  
How do you say in English... good  
as new?

Tony lights up. Abu Gamal nods, knowing he isn't out of the woods.

TONY  
How long you been married?

ABU GAMAL  
Thirty-one years.

TONY  
That's a long time. Never lasted  
more than six months myself.

ABU GAMAL  
When you find your true love, time  
is like an arrow.

Tony senses a door opening...

TONY  
Does she know you've been captured?

ABU GAMAL  
No. I was waiting for a fare when  
your soldiers arrested me.

TONY  
Do me a favor. Close your eyes.

Abu Gamal looks at Tony suspiciously.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Here, I'll go first.

Tony closes his eyes. Abu Gamal eyes the screwdriver...  
...then closes his eyes as well.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Okay, picture this. We release you and you get into your taxi, drive home to your neighborhood, and park in front of your house. Then you turn off the car and just sit there. What do you see inside your house?

Abu Gamal shifts in his chair.

ABU GAMAL  
My wife.

Final confirmation for Tony that he's on the right track.

TONY  
And she's probably worried sick. Doesn't know what's happened to you. Her eyes are red because she's been crying. Now, all of a sudden, she's heard something outside. She thinks it might be your car, but she doesn't know. And she can't bring herself to go look for fear that it might not be you.

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rip watches curiously as Ann stands next to him.

MACK  
What is this bullshit?

ANN  
Van Gogh approach. He's painting him a picture.

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Tony digs deeper.

TONY

So now you're just sitting there in your taxi, paralyzed. Too afraid to go inside for fear that your wife won't be there. And she's too scared to look out the window to see if it's you.

Abu Gamal's brow furrows, the words hitting close to home.

Tony knows he's getting close, so he pours it on, voice rising, hands orchestrating a tide of emotions-

TONY (CONT'D)

And then suddenly you find the courage to open the door and get out of the car. And you walk up to the front door of your home and you open it. And there, standing in front of you is...

(softly)

...your wife.

A single tear streaks down Abu Gamal's face.

And now Tony changes tone...squeezing everything he can out of the picture he's painting.

TONY (CONT'D)

Now just imagine the look in her eyes. Imagine how overwhelmed she is to see you. After worrying all this time, not knowing if you were dead or alive.

Abu Gamal pounds his fist on his thigh (an Arab gesture), struggling to maintain composure.

TONY (CONT'D)

Now tell me, my friend, what do you see behind her eyes? Do you see a woman who is proud of her husband who wires suicide vests? Or do you see a woman who is ashamed because she's married to a man who helps murder children?

ABU GAMAL

No, I am not that man!

TONY  
Tell her why you are not that man.

ABU GAMAL  
My love, I have done things that you cannot understand. But please know that everything I have done I did for you. I was ashamed... I failed you as a husband. But then they offered me money. A chance to support you. All I ever wanted was to give you the life you deserved.

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rip listens to the terrorist's confession, moved. Hearing parts of his own story in the bomb-maker's tale.

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

Tony hands a handkerchief to Abu Gamal, whose face streams with tears.

TONY  
I'm going to be honest with you, my friend.

Abu Gamal looks up.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Our soldiers found detonators in your car. You are responsible for killing innocents--

ABU GAMAL  
Only Allah decides who is innocent.

Tony meets eyes with Abu Gamal, his face inscrutable.

TONY  
Either way - you are going to hang.  
There's nothing I can do about that. And they'll never let you see your wife again.

Abu Gamal internalizes his fate.

TONY (CONT'D)  
But I can offer you something they can't. I will let you write a letter to your wife to tell her all of the things you just told me.  
(MORE)

TONY (CONT'D)

That way when you die, she will  
always know the true depth of your  
love for her.

Tony slides a pen and paper to Abu Gamal, who eyes them  
suspiciously.

ABU GAMAL

You would do this for me?

TONY

For something in return. You tell  
me where you wired the vests.

ABU GAMAL

How do I know you will deliver the  
letter?

TONY

I swear on my life. I will deliver  
it myself.

Abu Gamal glances between Tony and the pen. As he picks up  
the pen and begins to write...

ABU GAMAL

There's a farmhouse...in Yusifiya.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Tony enters the Gator Pit, where people are already frantic  
to act on the intel he just extracted.

His thoughts elsewhere, Tony crosses to the shredder and hits  
the power button to turn it on. Letter in hand.

RIP (O.S.)

What are you doing?

Tony turns to find Rip watching.

TONY

What does it look like I'm doing?  
You got your target.

As Tony is about to feed the letter into the shredder...

Rip grabs Tony's arm. Uneasy that Tony is violating some  
elemental law of humanity.

RIP

You swore on your life to deliver  
that letter.

TONY

Yeah, well, fuck him. I never heard  
an apology for killing those kids.

Rip calls Tony out on his hypocrisy, sensing him being sucked  
down the dark spiral.

RIP

So this is revenge?

TONY

I seem to remember you telling me  
something about some "Warrior  
Code".

Tony feeds the letter through the shredder.

TONY (CONT'D)

This is my version.

Rip watches Tony depart as the shreds of the letter cascade  
into the bottom of the waste basket.

EXT. HANGAR - NIGHT

The Little Birds lift off with the Operators attached. As the  
green glow of the instrument panel gets swallowed up by the  
dark...

INT. GATOR PIT - NIGHT

Tony watches KILL TV with Paul, munching on some M&Ms.

ANN

Thought you'd be getting some  
zzz's.

Tony looks up, offering some candy.

TONY

I felt like watching some TV. M&Ms?

Ann senses a new darkness in him. Concerned...

ANN

No thanks.

Ann hesitates, wanting to say something to Tony.

TONY

Don't you want to know what our  
intel is used for?

Ann reluctantly takes a seat beside Tony, as if she is a meat-eater about to see a cow butchered for the first time.

ON KILL TV: A predator feed. A completely still farmhouse.

Over that image... PRELAP:

UAV PILOT (O.S.)  
Zulu 1-1, unblinking eye is online  
and established overhead.

RIP (ON RADIO)  
This is 1-1. We're in position.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

ON THE BIG DEATH STAR SCREEN we see EIGHT THERMAL SIGNATURES scattered around the house. Danner oversees the operation.

UAV PILOT  
I've got eight hot spots on ISR.  
No movement.

RIP (ON RADIO)  
Military aged males?

The image zooms in.

UAV PILOT  
Looks like one kid.

Danner keys a radio, uneasy with the op.

DANNER  
Rip, we're looking at three suicide bombers and God knows who else in that safehouse. I've got a predator full of hellfires ready to drop.

RIP (ON RADIO)  
Negative, we'll get it done.

In the corner of the screen, we see SIX DELTA OPERATORS lying still in a field. IR beacons on their bodies blink.

Danner reluctantly agrees, knowing enough to respect fielder's choice with the ops team.

DANNER  
Roger, Zulu Team. You're cleared to execute.

Six shadows of death begin slithering forward...

## EXT. FARMHOUSE - YUSIFIYAH - NIGHT

The Operators emerge like ghosts from the field. They silently approach.

Crapshoot and Worm stack up on a window. They peek in using their night vision, spotting two men sleeping on the floor. There are AK47s and extra mags laid out next to them. Boots are unlaced and ready to go. These are trained fighters.

The men level their silenced rifles through the window. IR laser dots illuminating the enemy heads.

TWO SIMULTANEOUS THUMPS and the bodies jerk ever so slightly, down for the big sleep.

Rip climbs through the window silently, one leg at a time, rifle never leaving the ready -

## INT. FARMHOUSE - YUSIFIYAH - NIGHT

The Operators move silently through the building in a complex improvised ballet. Every man knows exactly where to move, never crossing fields of fire.

Rip passes a bedroom where a husband and wife sleep in bed. On his night vision, he can see two operators standing on either side of the bed. The husband sits up in bed, looking around. With his naked eyes in the pitch black, the husband has no idea he is staring down the barrel of an assault rifle.

The operators seize the husband and wife violently - without a sound - and zip tie them.

WORM (ON RADIO)  
Five pax secure. Three bombers  
unaccounted for.

RIP  
Rog'. One room left.

Rip approaches a door and stacks up opposite Crapshoot. Rip nods and Crapshoot mule-kicks the door.

Rip flies through with Crapshoot in tow.

INSIDE THE ROOM...

FLASHLIGHTS wave at the soldiers, blinding them as PISTOLS CRACK in their direction.

The scene is total chaos (or at least seems to be from the audience perspective) as Rip and Crapshoot trade fire with the enemies.

Then the flashlights drop.

RIP'S POV: Crapshoot rips off his broken NV goggles.

CRAPSHOOT  
Fuck! They shot my nods.

Rip flips on a light-switch and pulls off his nods as well. And just when it seems the house is secure, Rip double-takes at the sight of the dead suicide bombers wearing their vests...

RIP  
Shit, we only got two crows.  
(keying his radio)  
This is Zulu 1-1, we still have a  
bomber on the loose. I say again,  
we still have one crow unaccounted  
for.

CRAPSHOOT  
No one's left the house.

Situational awareness kicking in, the men raise their rifles, searching for the missing bomber. Crapshoot approaches a closet...

ANGLE ON the floor. A trap door beneath a rug creaks open ever so slightly.

POV from under the trap door -- Crapshoot tosses open the closet.

ON RIP - looking in the empty closet. A sixth sense kicking in...Rip doesn't have to look back to know...

RIP  
Landslide! Landslide!

And then Rip experiences a phenomenon known as 'time dilation', seconds turning into minutes as the adrenaline floods his veins. Behind him...

...the trap door flies open...

...and the SUICIDE BOMBER emerges.

SUICIDE BOMBER  
Allah Akbar!

As the suicide bomber reaches for his detonator, Rip spins and trains his rifle on the man...pulling the trigger...

...clipping the bomber in the shoulder. The bomber spins and...

...BOOM! The fireball expands outward, impossibly slow as it consumes Rip and Crapshoot...

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Worm is blown out the front door and tumbles on the ground.

INT. GATOR PIT - SAME TIME

Tony lunges upright in his chair at the images of tiny IR bodies exploding from the house as it is ripped apart.

TONY

Fuck.

ANN

Oh my god.

UAV PILOT (O.S.)

(filtered)

We've got a virgin winner.  
Requesting immediate QRF and  
Medevac.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

RIP'S POV - time dilated, vision blurry, ear-drums blown out. The room is now black, illuminated only by flaming debris.

Concrete cascades from the collapsed ceiling like balloons.

As Rip struggles to focus, he rises to a seated position and discovers the suicide bomber's HEAD lying in his lap.

With limited motor-functions, he tosses it aside.

Rip gets his bearings, his hearing returning. He sees Crapshoot's body, buried in concrete, twisted in a grotesque position.

Rip sees a blurry pair of legs enter the room. Coming into focus, we see they protrude from a dishdasha...not friendly.

Rip spots his assault rifle lying nearby and reaches for it, but his leg is trapped under a rock and he can't move.

As the Figure bends down and picks up Rip's rifle, he comes into a focus...

A TEN-YEAR-OLD IRAQI BOY, face covered in soot.

Rip pulls his Glock from his vest, leveling it at the boy.

He struggles, but can't bring himself to pull the trigger. The fight slips from his body.

And just when it seems the Iraqi boy will execute Rip with his own rifle...

...WHACK. Worm snatches the rifle out of the kid's hands.

Rip collapses, Glock slipping from his bloody fingers.

WORM  
Hey Rip? Rip..?

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOM - DAY

ON MONITOR: Ann interrogates NAJI, the ten-year-old Iraqi boy from the house. With his curly mop of black hair and intelligent eyes, it's easy to forget he was just pointing an M4 at Rip...

PULL BACK to reveal Tony joining Randy at the monitor, visibly upset by what he sees.

TONY  
Now we're interrogating children?

RANDY  
Kid has info that could lead us to Zarqawi.

TONY  
What happened to finding the next of kin?

RANDY  
We will - after we see what he knows.

Tony does little to mask his indignation.

TONY  
He's an innocent kid.

RANDY  
Innocent?! Listen in.

As he turns up the volume, we join the conversation inside-

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

Naji sits defiantly, arms crossed.

NAJI  
You're a whore!

ANN  
Why do you say that?

NAJI  
You're wearing pants! And why is  
your face uncovered?

ANN  
Where I'm from women don't cover  
their faces.

NAJI  
That's because you're infidels!  
Savages! My father said we should  
cut all of your throats.

ANN  
Listen, Naji, I'm sorry about your  
father-

NAJI  
My father died a martyr!

BACK IN THE HOLLYWOOD ROOM...

RANDY  
He's a ruthless little shit.

TONY  
He's a kid whose parents just got  
blown up in front of him. It's  
defensive posturing.

RANDY  
Frankly, Major, I don't give a  
fuck. I'm here to find Zarqawi and  
little Naji there had a front row  
seat to the comings and goings in  
the Sheik's safehouse.  
(MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)  
Someone needs to crack him open and  
see what falls out, and far as I  
can tell this maternal approach  
isn't working.

TONY  
You're asking me to manipulate a  
child.

RANDY  
If he has info that leads to  
Zargawi, think of how many kids you  
could save.

TONY  
Ends justify the means, huh? You're  
starting to sound like the assholes  
we're fighting.

RANDY  
If you don't want to do it, I'm  
gonna have Mack take a run at him.

Tony considers, but it's not really a choice. He knows what  
Mack will do to the kid. Between a rock and a hard place-

TONY  
Come back in an hour.

As Randy turns to leave, Tony stops him, concerned...

TONY (CONT'D)  
Was Rip in the house?

Randy nods.

RANDY  
Second degree burns and a pretty  
bad concussion. Best thing we can  
do now is make it worth it.

Tony considers. Randy softens, knowing Tony needs some tough  
medicine.

RANDY (CONT'D)  
Break the kid, Tony. It's why  
you're here.

Randy leaves.

OFF Tony, staring at Naji on the monitor, conflicted over  
what he's about to do.

EXT. HALLWAY - INTERROGATION BOOTHS - DAY

Ann exits to find Tony waiting. Her eye-roll says it all - the kid is hell.

TONY  
Finally found our true believer?

ANN  
Only thing that kid cares about is jihad.

Ann notes Tony's heavy shoulders.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Hey, you alright?

Tony stares at the door...

TONY  
Yeah. Never better.

Tony enters the room...

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

Tony avoids eye contact with Naji as he takes a seat.

**SUPER: Detainee #0870 - 'NAJI'**

NAJI  
You should teach your women respect.

Tony slides into the interrogation on autopilot. His mouth moving, though his heart is clearly pained by this.

TONY  
(faking sympathy)  
Tell me about it.

Naji betrays the slightest vulnerability for the first time, nervous to ask the next question.

NAJI  
Where's my mother?

TONY  
(lying)  
She was, uh, injured in the explosion. She's being treated by our doctors.

Satisfied she is okay...

NAJI  
Infidels cannot touch my mother.  
She'd rather die.

Tony clears his throat, continuing to lie.

TONY  
We have Iraqi doctors helping her.

NAJI  
I will kill all of you to avenge my  
father's death.

TONY  
You're one brave little mujahideen.

NAJI  
My father was training me to be  
like uncle Zarqawi.

Masking his surprise at the revelation...

TONY  
You've met the Sheikh?

NAJI  
He kissed my cheek and called me  
brave.

TONY  
No way.

NAJI  
Yes!

TONY  
The Sheikh, Zarqawi, said this to  
you? He called you brave?

NAJI  
It's true.

Tony leans back in his chair, studying Naji. He can see the opening, but is still unsure about manipulating a ten-year-old who just lost his parents. Still, he presses...

TONY  
So this uncle Zarqawi...you must  
make him proud. He only speaks with  
men of great stature.

NAJI

One day I will be just like him and  
kill many infidels.

TONY

How will you do that?

NAJI

My father trained me. He introduced  
me to many mujahideen.

Seizing the opportunity to prey on his ego, Tony twists the  
knife-

TONY

They would never take a little boy  
to such meetings. You are a liar,  
Naji.

NAJI

I am not! My father brought me to  
many meetings.

The path now completely open, Tony goes for the kill.

TONY

Prove it. Where were these  
meetings?

NAJI

At our warehouse.

TONY

I don't believe you. And I don't  
even believe this warehouse exists.

NAJI

It does!

TONY

Liar. Where?

Naji, eager to defend his own little ego-

NAJI

I'm not a liar! From the mosque you  
go straight past the old souq, then  
you'll see a road. You take that.

TONY

How do I know it's your warehouse  
and not someone else's?

NAJI

Our's has a grain silo. We're the only family who has one. Because we're friends of the Sheikh! I make him proud!

Tony, eyes filled with pity, stares at Naji. Having achieved his objective, he's now awash in guilt.

TONY

I'm sure you do, Naji. I'm sure you do...

Off Naji, beaming with pride-

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Tony emerges from the booth, shuts the door and softly places his head against the door, wrestling with what he just did.

Randy approaches.

TONY

Find his next of kin and get him out of this facility.

RANDY

Check your tone, Major.

Tony hands Randy a MAP with a red circle on it.

TONY

I got what you wanted.

As Randy studies the map.

RANDY

What is it?

TONY

Someone else to kill. Consider it my resignation.

RANDY

Excuse me?

TONY

This *elite* unit is all volunteer, right? Well, I'm un-volunteering.

Tony turns his back on Randy and begins to walk away. Randy calls after.

RANDY  
On what grounds?

Tony gives him the middle finger.

TONY  
Conscientious objector.

EXT. TARMAC - DAY

The Delta Operators from Rip's team stand in silence in faded jeans and t-shirts as Crapshoot's flag-draped coffin is loaded into the back of a C-130 by UNIFORMED ARMY SOLDIERS.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - DAY

Rip lies unconscious, bandaged and hooked up to monitoring equipment. Stormy sets a CD player on the bedside table and loads a Black Mountain album. He presses play and "Set Us Free" begins to play as...

Pope and Stormy carefully place Rip's personal mementos around the room - PHOTOS of Rip and his wife at his graduation from Ranger School, Rip's teenage son playing football...

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Tony packs up all of his belongings - not much. A glass of water sits on his desk, its surface rippling from the vibrations of an incoming MORTAR.

Tony pulls out his desk drawers and empties them directly into the trash.

Tony spots something in the trash. He stoops down to pick up...the photo of the girl who was burned. A memento of unfinished business. Tony's heart aches as he places the photo in his breast pocket, thinking of all the other kids he won't be saving.

EXT. STREET - DAY

**SUPER: SAMARRA, IRAQ**

A sedan ambles through the busy city street.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Inside, FIVE IRAQIS ride in silence.

Blocking the road ahead, they spot a truck with the hood open, smoking. An Iraqi man fans away the smoke.

The driver, ABU BAYDA, turns back.

DRIVER

*Do you want me to go around?*

In the middle back is ABU HAYDAR - built like a statue, with eyes like a cobra.

ABU HAYDAR

*No, we don't need any unnecessary attention.*

The sedan rolls to a stop by the truck. Upon closer inspection, we realize the Iraqi man fanning away the smoke is...one of the Delta Operators, POPE.

No sooner does the sedan stop than...the windows explode inward as the barrels of the Ops Team's rifles break and rake the glass.

OPERATOR 1

Out of the fucking car!

OPERATOR 2

Hands up!

The men comply as they are dragged out and laid on the ground. Knees digging into their backs as they are cuffed.

**SUPER: Detainees #0877-0881 A.K.A. 'THE GROUP OF FIVE'**

In a SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS, we see the brutal efficiency of the Ops Team as they drag away their captives and search every inch of the car...glove box...under mats...ripping off side panels...slicing open seats...

One of the operators, Stormy, digs his knife into the fabric of the roof and rips it open, revealing...

...A HIDDEN ENVELOPE.

Stormy tears open the envelope and unfolds the letter inside. His eyes saucer. Jackpot.

STORMY

Oh shit...

INT. BALAD AIR BASE - DAY

Tony sits alone in the terminal, thumbing through a copy of the Lonely Planet guide to the Maldives.

Ann takes a seat beside him in her uniform, sitting in silence for a moment.

ANN

This place. It fucking eats people alive.

In a redux of the C-130 flight, Tony barely glances from his book as he quotes Lewis Carroll.

TONY

We're all mad here. If we weren't, we wouldn't be here.

ANN

I have something I want you to see.

TONY

I'm done, Ann.

ANN

I know, but I need your help. Come on - you'll have plenty of time to plan your surf trip on your flight to Ramstein.

Tony puts down his book, annoyed.

ANN (CONT'D)

That intel you got from the kid about the warehouse. The ops team intercepted a vehicle leaving it.

Tony is caught up in the futility of the operation...

TONY

Targets become detainees. Detainees give us more targets. Targets become detainees. The wheel of war just keeps rolling.

Ann leans in, an urgency to her voice.

ANN

We've never seen detainees like these. When the ops team inspected the vehicle, they found this sewn into the roof.

Ann hands Tony a photocopy of a letter. Tony's eyes leap to the name at the bottom.

TONY  
A letter from Bin Laden?

As Tony reads...

ANN  
To Zarqawi - blessing him as the new leader of Al Qaeda. Someone in the car was supposed to hand deliver it.

TONY  
Someone with direct access to Zarqawi...Any leads?

ANN  
The dude in the front seat admitted to being the leader of the group.

TONY  
Front seat?

ANN  
All five passengers were questioned separately. All told the same story. The letter belonged to the guy in front.

TONY  
Which tells you what?

ANN  
...That these guys are trained in counter-interrogation. That they were important.

TONY  
The big fish would never be riding shotgun.

ANN  
Why do you think I am sitting here?  
We've hit a wall. Only you can help.

Tony considers her choice of words.

TONY  
"Only you can help?" Pride and Ego approach. Interesting choice, Ann.

ANN

We're running out of time. Randy wants to wrap up the interrogation and ship them off to Abu Ghraib in two days.

TONY

He's going to throw away the best lead he's ever come across.

Tony's tunnel vision sets in.

TONY (CONT'D)

Can I talk to one of them?

ANN

You know Randy hates you.

INT. CHOWHALL - DAY

Randy eats with his staffers.

RANDY

I thought you *un-volunteered*.

Tony looms over him...

TONY

It's about the Group of Five.  
They're playing you.

RANDY

We ran every approach on them,  
including Mack's.

TONY

Anyone who knows jack shit about Arab culture knows the big dog would never be sitting in the front seat.

RANDY

Maybe he gets carsick.

TONY

This is the Middle East. The letter belonged to one of the three guys in back.

RANDY

Major, the only thing I have less  
of an appetite for than this Steak  
Diane here is more of your  
theories.

Randy holds up a piece of tough pan-fried meat.

TONY

Let me talk to one of them. I don't  
care which. Give me the driver. You  
know he's the least important in  
the group. You're shipping them out  
in twenty-four hours anyway. What  
have you got to lose?

Randy glares at Tony.

RANDY

One run at the driver, and then you  
promise to ship the hell out of my  
unit.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Tony crosses the gator pit. All eyes are on him, as if he's  
some sort of ghost haunting the place.

Tony approaches Paul.

TONY

I need intel on the driver.

PAUL

Driver? Low man on the totem pole.

Paul hands Tony a FILE.

PAUL (CONT'D)

This is all we dug up.

Tony opens the file, pulls out a PHOTO (front unseen) and  
inspects it, noting something peculiar.

TONY

This'll work.

INT. BOOTH - DAY

ABU BAYDA, the middle-aged driver from the Group of Five,  
launches in the second Tony opens the door...

ABU BAYDA  
I already told the other--

Tony cuts him off, assertive. A man on a mission.

TONY  
Shut the fuck up. I don't have much time and neither do you, so listen close to every word I say. I know there were five of you in the car, and I know that you all say the man in the front seat was the big boss. I also know enough about your customs to know the senior member of the group was one of the three in back. The question is which?

ABU BAYDA  
I know nothing of-

TONY  
I'm not finished. I also know you have a son.

Tony SLAPS the photo down on Abu Bayda's thigh.

CLOSE ON THE PHOTO: A MUGSHOT of Abu Bayda's SON (Bayda, 19, spitting image of his father).

One look at the photo and Abu Bayda turns white as a ghost.

ABU BAYDA  
Where did you-

TONY  
He was arrested last week and is being held by the Ministry of Interior. I'm surprised he's lasted this long. Shi'a run prisons aren't exactly known for hospitality. Especially for the sons of Al Qaeda leaders. He'll be lucky if he survives another day.

ABU BAYDA  
What do you want?

TONY  
I told you what I want. I want to know who was the head motherfucker in your car. Do we have a deal?

ABU BAYDA  
I touch my son's face. Then we  
speak.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Randy shakes his head as Tony implores him for help.

RANDY  
No fucking way!

TONY  
What happened to ends justifying  
means? We are holding Zarqawi's  
right hand man, and my detainee is  
willing to tell us which one it is.

RANDY  
And what makes you think I have the  
power to get some Sunni kid out of  
the Ministry of Interior?

TONY  
Then I'll talk to Colonel Danner.

RANDY  
I don't care if you call Donald  
Fucking Rumsfeld. The Iraqis deal  
with their own trash and we do not  
interfere. Now stop telling me how  
to do my fucking job and start  
doing yours.

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - DAY

Rip rolls in bed, bleary eyes falling on Worm sitting beside  
him. Worm looks healthy, but strangely agitated.

RIP  
You good?

WORM  
The doc checked my brain scan. Said  
there was a lack of blood flow to  
certain parts of the brain.

RIP  
From the blast?

WORM  
They think it's from eating all the  
breaching charges.  
(MORE)

WORM (CONT'D)

Same thing they're finding with NFL players. You're always number one through the door - you might want to get scanned too.

RIP

What's the rehab look like?

WORM

Cognitive therapy and some other stuff. It's all experimental.

RIP

Any idea how long you are sidelined?

WORM

I'm done, bro.

Rip doesn't know what to say...

WORM (CONT'D)

Shit, I don't even know how to go home anymore. It's like there's this switch on the back of your head that you have to turn on and off when you go home. Last time I went back, it was like the switch was broken. All I could think about was coming back here.

RIP

You'll figure it out.

WORM

You can only burn it down so far before this place...it changes you.

Worm rises to leave. Rip can see his friend is unmoored and adrift. Doesn't want Worm to become another statistic.

RIP

Anything you need. Don't ever hesitate. You hear me?

Worm turns back in the doorway.

WORM

Just find the Sheikh and put a fucking bullet between his eyes.

Rip can't help but smile.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Tony stands impatiently over the printer waiting on a document. He glances over at his laptop which plays the multiple simultaneous interrogations of the Group of Five. All leading to nothing if Tony can't deliver Abu Bayda's son.

Ann walks by...

TONY

Hey, you mind covering the rest of dayshift? I got an errand to run.

Ann looks down at the printer tray as a letter spits out.

Tony grabs it off the printer, unsuccessful in his attempt to hide it.

ANN

What the hell--

TONY

...is the thing you never saw?

Tony folds the letter and puts it in his pocket. His eyes willing her not to rat him out.

ANN

Tony--

TONY

You roped me back in because you know one of these detainees may be the link to Zarqawi. We've never had a lead remotely close to this.

ANN

I hope you know what you're doing.

TONY

I know what I'm doing. Just running out of time to make it happen.

Ann nods towards the corner, where Mack rises from his desk, preparing to head in for another round on the detainees..

ANN

Just don't let Six Figures over there get wind of this.

Tony looks over at Mack, eyes falling on a bottle of Jameson on Mack's desk.

TONY  
(distracted)  
Sure thing.

INT. DELTA SAFEHOUSE - DAY

Worm packs up his gear, placing his handycam in his duffel.  
A KNOCK at the door.

Worm turns to see Tony in the doorway.

WORM  
What do you need, Haji Whisperer?

TONY  
I'm looking for Rip.

WORM  
He's still at medical.

TONY  
What's this?

Tony studies Rip's link analysis chart on the wall. More than half the faces have red X's.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Bit different from the one in the JOC.

WORM  
That's Rip's personal shitlist.

Tony pulls down the single sheet with the question mark between Zarqawi and his lieutenants. Off the question mark...

INT. MEDICAL FACILITY - DAY

Tony enters Rip's room.

RIP  
You here to give me a sponge bath?

TONY  
You probably blame me for your guys. I should have pressed the detainee harder for intel about the target site--

RIP  
You got us to the house. What happens on the objective is on us.  
(MORE)

RIP (CONT'D)  
But I'm guessing you didn't just  
come here just to apologize.

TONY  
I've got a favor to ask.

RIP  
Christ. Why do I get the sense you  
are about to get me blown up again?

TONY  
Just answer me one question. How  
come no matter how many lieutenants  
we capture, no one knows where  
Zarqawi is?

RIP  
Because not all terrorists have the  
benefit of your group therapy  
sessions.

TONY  
No, you know the real reason.  
Because there's a go-between.

Tony unfolds Rip's sheet of paper with the question mark.

TONY (CONT'D)  
One single trusted source who has  
access. The key to finding Zarqawi.

Rip sits up in bed.

RIP  
You know where he is?

TONY  
We detained five men. One of them  
is this guy, but we don't know  
which one.

RIP  
How do we find out?

TONY  
That's where things get  
complicated. I need your help  
getting a detainee out of prison.

RIP  
You want me to break a detainee out  
of one of our prisons?

TONY  
Not out of one of our prisons - an  
Iraqi prison.

Piecing it together.

RIP  
You're making a horse trade. Why do  
you need me?

TONY  
Because it has to be off books. And  
I know you have a tendency to view  
the rules as suggestions.

Rip casts Tony a look...then pulls the cords from his veins.

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

Tony sprints over to a Little Bird, lugging his gear. Rip is  
already clipped in. Rip notices a paper bag in Tony's hand.

RIP  
What's in the bag?

TONY  
A deposit.

As Tony awkwardly clips in...

PILOT  
(to Rip)  
You sure this is authorized?

RIP  
Colonel says we take flyboy here  
down south...we take him.

PILOT  
Rog' that.

The Little Bird lifts off...

EXT. PRISON ENTRANCE - BASRA - DAY

**SUPER: BASRA, IRAQ - MINISTRY OF INTERIOR PRISON**

Dark and medieval, Saddam's former torture chamber makes  
Rikers look like Cinderella's Castle. It's the last place on  
earth two American soldiers would want to be trapped.

As three very suspicious IRAQI GUARDS open the gates to hell, we follow Rip and Tony inside...

INT. PRISON - BASRA - DAY

Sitting rigidly behind his desk is Iraqi Police COLONEL MOHAMMED BADRI (40s, severe face, thick Saddam-era mustache means he might very well still be a Loyalist). The guards post themselves auspiciously at the door, blocking Tony and Rip's exit. Tony hands over the (forged) letter.

TONY

We have a request for a transfer.  
It's time-sensitive.

Badri inspects the letter.

BADRI

Of what importance is this man to  
you?

Tony falters--

RIP

That's classified.

BADRI

Which terrorist?

TONY

It's all there in the letter--

Badri isn't sold...

BADRI

All transfer requests have to come  
from your Coalition Headquarters.

TONY

We'll only need the prisoner for a  
day or two. And for your trouble...

Tony pulls out Mack's bottle of Jameson.

TONY (CONT'D)

...a gesture of our gratitude.

BADRI

Alcohol is forbidden in Iraq.

Seeing what appears to be a miscalculation, Rip chastises Tony under his breath.

RIP  
Nice move, slick.

Tony ignores Rip. Addresses Badri--

TONY  
Sorry, I didn't mean to offend.  
Just thought -

BADRI  
- I'll have to confiscate that.

Understanding the subtext...

TONY  
Of course.

Tony hands Badri the bottle and the Iraqi drops it into the bottom drawer of his desk. Shutting the drawer.

BADRI  
Next time go through proper  
channels.  
(to the Guards)  
Show these men to the prisoner.

The Guards salute sharply.

Tony trades a nod with Rip - *refusing the bottle was just theater.*

INT. CELLBLOCK - DAY

Rip and Tony are led by the Guards through a corridor of moldy, blood-stained walls and floors. Marilyn Manson freakshow territory.

Inside the cells, PRISONERS have been beaten to within inches of their lives. SCREAMS echo through the corridors.

TONY  
This place makes Abu Ghraib look  
like Magic Mountain.

RIP  
Reminds me of Ranger School.

A PRISONER reaches through the bars and grabs Tony's leg.

PRISONER  
Please, help me! American!  
Please...

Tony pulls his leg away, ignoring the man's pleas.

They arrive at a cell where the Guards unlock the door revealing...BAYDA (19, Iraqi). The fresh-faced teen looks out of place in his euro designer clothes.

TONY

Bayda?

Bayda looks at Tony. He's emaciated, but exceptionally polite considering the circumstances.

BAYDA

What do you want?

TONY

We've come to take you to our prison for questioning.

Bayda backs away.

BAYDA

My father has told me what you Americans do to Muslims.

TONY

Your father loves you very much. He wants to protect you.

BAYDA

You spoke with him?

TONY

This morning. He wants to see you.

Bayda considers, then recoils.

BAYDA

You lie. I'd rather be beaten by Iraqis than humiliated by infidels.

Rip runs out of patience.

RIP

Enough talky talk. Time for the humiliation.

Rip steps into the cell and Bayda tries to resist. Bad idea.

Rip puts him in a quick wrist lock, head to the floor.

RIP (CONT'D)

We can do this the easy or my way.  
Your choice.

Tony kneels down next to Bayda.

TONY

Look - you're not going to last one day in here as soon as they find out your father is a high-ranking Al Qaeda leader.

BAYDA

They don't know who my father is.

Tony turns and looks at the Guards, whose faces suddenly show deep concern about what is happening.

TONY

They do now.

Rip pulls Bayda to his feet, zipties him, and marches him out of the cell. Tony then takes him by the collar and moves him along.

As they start down the corridor, one of the Guards turns to the other...

GUARD #1

(Arabic, subtitled)

*Something is not right.*

GUARD #2

*I'll call the Colonel.*

Guard #2 raises his radio.

Rip reads the concern on Tony's face.

RIP

What are they saying?

TONY

We're burned.

Rip seizes the radio from the guard.

The guard SHOUTS at Rip.

RIP

(to Tony)

Tell him we don't want any problems. We just want the kid.

Tony TRANSLATES.

The guards trade a look. Their eyes tell us they are about to make a bad choice. One of them reaches for his baton and...

...Rip delivers an elbow to his face, crumpling him to the floor.

A second guard fumbles for his pistol. As he draws, Rip delivers a quick series of body blows before judo tossing him to the ground.

Rip spins the weapon on the third guard, who raises his hands in surrender. As Rip backs away.

RIP (CONT'D)  
(to Tony)  
Move.

Tony grabs Bayda.

TONY  
If you want to live, come with us.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Tony and Rip stuff Bayda in the Little Bird as...

...guards rush out of the prison in pursuit.

RIP  
(to Pilot)  
Get us in the air!

As Tony and Rip clip in...

TONY  
What the hell was that back there?

RIP  
We call that a habeus thumpus.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOTH - DAY

Tony places a hooded figure in the seat in front of Abu Bayda. He pulls the hood off, revealing his son, Bayda.

Abu Bayda takes one look at his son and melts, falling to his knees and throwing his arms around him. He runs his fingers over the boy's face in disbelief as his eyes well with tears.

TONY  
We had a deal. Who was delivering  
the letter to Zarqawi?

Abu Bayda meets eyes with Tony, his gratitude evident.

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOM - DAY

Tony, Ann, and Mike watch tapes of Mack interrogating the leader of the group, ABU HAYDAR (the imposing Iraqi from the back seat).

ON SCREEN: Though we can't make out what Mack is saying, his body language tells us everything. Mack's broad shoulders lean over the table as he pounds his fists.

MIKE

What the hell is Mack doing? He's been hollering at this guy for hours.

TONY

'Fear Up Harsh'.

MIKE

I don't remember that approach in the playbook.

TONY

It's in a different playbook. Army field manual.

MIKE

Does it work?

TONY

On some shit-scared kid...maybe. But not on someone with counter-interrogation training. A guy like this - you need to make him think he is helping himself by helping you. And to do that, we need to get inside his head.

Ann shakes her head, frustrated as she studies Abu Haydar.

ANN

This guy's the fucking sphinx.

Tony looks at the monitor, wondering what they are missing.

TONY

Forget pressure points, forget trying to pull keywords or gestures that betray his deepest desires. Just look at the detainee. Tell me what you see.

MIKE  
He's like you.

ANN  
More like Hannibal Lecter. Look at him. The dude has the dead eyes of a snake.

Tony turns to Mike, not wanting to lose the thread.

TONY  
Mike, finish the thought. How is he like me?

MIKE  
Intelligent, confident...

Mike trails off, not wanting to offend.

TONY  
Keep going.

MIKE  
...Manipulative. He wants everyone to know he's the smartest guy in the room.

Tony betrays the faintest smile. *Way to go, Mike.*

TONY  
And who does that?

Ann's lightbulb goes off, catching up.

ANN  
A 'grand egoist'.

Tony realizes he has found what makes the man tick...

TONY  
I need to talk to him myself.

...and now it's time to make him talk. Tony rises to depart.

Mike checks his watch.

MIKE  
Haydar's getting transferred in fifteen minutes. Colonel's order. Even if Randy approved it, which he won't, there's no way you are going to have enough time to interrogate him.

TONY  
Then we need to make more time.

EXT. TARMAC - DAWN

The first signs of daylight are emerging at the edge of the big desert sky. Looking like an Arab Hannibal Lecter, Abu Haydar and the rest of the Group of Five are led across the tarmac by guards towards the open ramp of a C-130.

Tony pulls up in a Humvee and leaps out, intercepting the guards.

He holds out a letter.

TONY  
New orders. One of the detainees is needed for follow-up.

Tony meets eyes with Abu Haydar, who senses this is not some routine red tape.

GUARD  
But he's due at Abu Ghraib..?

TONY  
He got switched to the eleven-hundred flight. He's due at the gator pit five minutes ago.

The guard studies the orders, curious.

TONY (CONT'D)  
You got a problem with this, go wake up Colonel Danner.

The guard folds, unwilling to call Tony's bluff.

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

CLOSE ON Abu Haydar in the plastic chair.

Opposite him is...

TONY  
*Asalama alaykum.*

OUTSIDE THE BOOTH

The guard locks the padlock, leaving the key in it (since it is not accessible from the inside).

BACK INSIDE THE BOOTH

ABU HAYDAR  
We haven't met.

Tony signals to the camera.

TONY  
But I've been watching. I have a  
question for you.

Tony pulls out his personal copy of the Qur'an.

TONY (CONT'D)  
I've read this a few times, but  
there is something I still don't  
understand. A riddle that no Muslim  
has been able to answer.

Abu Haydar shifts, every so slightly betraying his interest.

TONY (CONT'D)  
I know the Qur'an is Allah's word,  
but if it was written by man, isn't  
it possible there are mistakes?

Abu Haydar considers the question, which would border on  
blasphemy were it not the genuine curiosity in Tony's voice.

ABU HAYDAR  
If there are mistakes, Allah would  
have intended them.

TONY  
You are a very wise man.

ABU HAYDAR  
You are not like the others. You're  
Army?

TONY  
No.

Abu Haydar studies Tony.

ABU HAYDAR  
Then who?

TONY  
I think you already know the answer  
to that question.

ABU HAYDAR  
CIA.

A smile creeps across Tony's face, pleased with the answer.

TONY  
Yes.

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOM - SAME TIME

Ann and Mike watch the interrogation on the monitors.

ANN  
Jesus fuck. He's impersonating a  
CIA officer. He could get locked up  
in Leavenworth for that. Is he out  
of his fucking mind?

Ann looks over to see Mike pulling the wires out of the monitors and VCRs.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Mike?

MIKE  
He needs all the time he can get.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Mike approaches the booth where Tony is interrogating Abu Haydar. The guard intercepts him as Mike tries to peep through the hole.

GUARD  
Can I help you?

MIKE  
Thought my detainee was in there.  
Wrong cell.

CLOSE ON Mike's hand, as he breaks off the key in the padlock, the guard none the wiser--

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

Abu Haydar turns to Tony.

ABU HAYDAR  
You did not come here to discuss  
religion.

TONY

No, I didn't. I came here because I run a program, one I believe you would be very interested in.

Tony unrolls a map of the greater Middle East on the table.

TONY (CONT'D)

Tell me what you see here.

ABU HAYDAR

America has invaded Afghanistan and Iraq.

TONY

And do you believe they were the real prize? Or part of a larger plan?

Abu Haydar looks at the map, spotting the country directly in the middle.

ABU HAYDAR

You are planning to invade Iran... you've flanked them on both sides.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Randy enters the gator pit, where Ann and Mike sit inconspicuously at their desks.

As Randy settles in for the day, he addresses a junior staffer. Randy doesn't pay much mind to the fact that the monitors are all blacked out. He wasn't expecting anyone.

RANDY

Place is a ghost town for once.

STAFFER

Except for the one in booth three.

Randy turns, confused. Sees the monitor on booth three is off. He tries to turn it on but it's disconnected.

RANDY

Who's in booth three?

The staffer holds up the new transfer orders for Abu Haydar.

STAFFER

Abu Haydar - that Air Force guy got approval to take a whack at him.

Randy takes the transfer order, studying it in disbelief. He runs his finger over the seal, realizing it's bullshit.

RANDY  
Get the guards!

Ann and Mike swallow their concern, not wanting to get any more deeply involved than they already are.

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

Tony baits the hook for Abu Haydar.

TONY  
Iran is Shi'a, and I know the only group you hate more than the Americans is the Shi'a. When the great war comes, the Agency will need all the help we can get fighting our common enemy. I need Sunni allies I can trust.

ABU HAYDAR  
So you're here to recruit me...

TONY  
I want you to broker a deal that will shape the future of the Middle East. I want to partner with Zargawi.

ABU HAYDAR  
I cannot help you.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Randy and the guards storm toward the door to the booth.

RANDY  
Open that door! I want the detainee on the first helo out of here...

GUARD  
And the Major?

RANDY  
Toss him in a cell where he can await a court-martial.

The guard fumbles with the padlock, realizing the key is broken off.

GUARD  
Someone broke it off.

RANDY  
Get it open!

INT. INTERROGATION BOOTH - DAY

Tony hears the SLAMMING against the door. He doubles down his urgency.

TONY  
Listen to me, Abu Haydar, because we don't have much time. I know you are someone with *wasta* - someone with influence. The men on the other side of that door are Army, and they have only one goal - to find and kill your friend Zarqawi. And it's only a matter of time until they find him. Help me save his life and build a new Middle East.

Abu Haydar considers. Not sold. Tony pushes hard, desperate. His words rushed.

TONY (CONT'D)  
This is a one-time offer. When they come through that door, they are shipping you off to Abu Ghraib. Maybe I was wrong. Maybe you don't have *wasta*. But I think you do.

Abu Haydar considers as the SHOUTING builds outside the booth...

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The guard uses a pair of boltcutters to snip the lock. No sooner does it break off, than the men flood into the room.

They dash straight for Tony, tackling him to the ground and cuffing him. Abu Haydar watches in shock as his interrogator becomes a detainee...

EXT. TARMAC - DAY

Shackled, Abu Haydar is led onto a helo for transfer. As the helo lifts off...

...Abu Haydar takes in the base receding below, mind racing. Uncertain what to make of the man he just met.

INT. BRIG - DAY

Tony sits in a cell, locked up.

Ann approaches the bars. She hands him his Qur'an.

ANN

Thought you might want this back.

TONY

Keep it. I only read it to understand the detainees, and I think my interrogation days are over.

ANN

You're lucky no one saw you claiming to be a CIA officer.

Tony realizes...appreciates her going out on a limb.

TONY

I need you to do one more thing for me.

ANN

Erasing the recordings and tampering with the lock wasn't enough? I have a family to go home to.

TONY

I found the Sheik.

Tony's bomb hangs in the air.

ANN

Bullshit. Abu Haydar gave him up?

TONY

Blue sedan. Every Friday it arrives at Al Mansoor Mosque after noon prayers. Anyone getting in is on their way to meet with Zarqawi.

ANN

No one will believe this coming from you.

TONY

Which is why I didn't tell them. I  
need you to find Rip and get him  
the intel. Promise me.

Ann considers, not wanting to be more of an accomplice.

ANN

What's he gonna do?

TONY

Not take no for an answer.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

Rip tries to sell Colonel Danner on the op.

DANNER

Friday? That's today. We'll be  
lucky if we can get a Predator  
overhead in time.

RIP

I already put a man on the ground  
at the mosque. He picked up the  
blue sedan thirty minutes ago.  
Followed it to a house in a palm  
grove in Baquba.

DANNER

Did he get a visual on the Sheikh?

RIP

Not yet, but I believe he's in  
there.

DANNER

What's the source of this intel?

RIP

It's solid. Enough that I'm betting  
my men's lives on it.

DANNER

I can't approve a mission like this  
without knowing where we got the  
intel.

RIP

The Air Force gator.

DANNER

The one we locked up?

Rip doesn't want to hear it...

RIP

For Christ's sake, Colonel. If people knew half the shit I do, I'd probably be locked up too. But you let me work my mojo because I get results. You want to go down as the motherfucker who found Zarqawi? Fastest way to do that is to cut that gator loose and own this.

(echoing Tony)

Do you want revenge, or do you want to win?

Danner can't believe Rip's audacity, but also can't find any flaw in his logic.

DANNER

I'll get you assets. But I only let the gator loose if this intel delivers the Sheikh's head on a silver fucking platter.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Ann, Mike and the rest of the unit are glued to Kill TV.

Paul holds out a box of Jujubes for Ann, who waves him away.

MIKE

Do you think the Sheikh is in that house?

Ann considers...

ANN

I don't know. It's a big meeting.

ON KILL TV: Four vehicles are parked outside a house in the middle of a date palm grove.

EXT. HOUSE - BAQUBA - DAY

WIDE SHOT of the modest two-story home surrounded by forty foot palms. Arab, idyllic, and impossibly serene.

IN THE PALM GROVE: A Delta Operator, Pope, surveils the house from a concealed position.

POPE

This is Zulu 2-2. I've got movement. Looks like two crows coming out.

DANNER

Do you have eyes on the Sheikh, over?

POPE

Negative.

Pope watches as the hostiles get in a car and pull away down a dirt road.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Danner watches the feed with Givens.

GIVENS

The meeting's breaking up. People are starting to leave.

Danner keys his radio, concerned.

DANNER

Zulu 1-1, what's your ETA, over?

EXT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - DAY

The wind slaps Rip's face as he hangs out the bay of a Little Bird, rifle in hand. Another Little Bird full of Operators flies alongside them in tight formation.

Rip checks his GPS...

RIP

Five minutes out.

EXT. PALM GROVE - DAY

Pope watches, unable to make out the faces of the enemies, as more vehicles depart.

POPE

Two more vehicles departing. No eyes on the crows.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Ann's anxiety is through the roof.

ANN  
Shit, we're going to lose him.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Danner considers. Keys his radio.

DANNER  
Zulu 1-1. We got fastmovers  
overhead ready to drop on the  
house.

EXT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - CONTINUOUS

Rip looks down at his MOBILE GPS. ETA shows two minutes.

Rip is clearly agonized by the decision. The Operator next to him, Stormy, shouts to Rip (off the radio net).

STORMY  
If they drop a J-DAM, we might  
never ID Zarqawi.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Danner betrays his nerves as he watches more cars leaving the compound.

DANNER  
Zulu 1-1. Party's breaking up.  
It's now or never. Are you going to  
make it in time?

EXT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - CONTINUOUS

All eyes on Rip. He finally makes the call...

RIP  
Negative. Send 'em the bad news.

I/E. F-16 FIGHTER JETS - DAY

TWO F-16s in tight formation streak through the sky.

ANALYST (O.S.)  
Falcon two-five, you are cleared  
hot.

The fighters turn and dive, commencing their bomb run.

PILOT  
Copy that.

REAR WIDE SHOT: The afterburners glow red.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

The gators watch their enemies pile into vehicles on TV as...

F-16 PILOT (V.O.)  
Bomb's away. Impact in three....

INT. BRIG - DAY

Tony looks out the window of his cell, oblivious to the events unfolding. He spots the Old Bedouin in the distance.

F-16 PILOT (V.O.)  
...two...

EXT. AH-6 LITTLE BIRD - DAY

As the Little Bird streaks low over the palms...

...the house appears in the distance.

F-16 PILOT (V.O.)  
One.

Suddenly, A VERTICAL STREAK OF FIRE SPEARS DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS, connecting with the house in a....

...MASSIVE FIREBALL.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

Everyone in the room flinches as the house silently disappears in a cloud.

F-16 PILOT (V.O.)  
Second bomb is away.

ON SCREEN a second mushroom cloud billows from the house.

MIKE  
Guess they aren't taking any  
chances.

The frustration is visible in Ann's eyes.

ANN  
We might never know if we got him.

EXT. HOUSE - BAQUBA - DAY

The Little Birds land and Rip and the Operators jump off and race towards the smoke-obscured home.

Impossibly, the IRAQI POLICE have beaten them to the crime scene.

Rip spots TWO IRAQI POLICEMEN carrying off a MAN on a stretcher. He raises his M4-

RIP  
Stop!

Either they don't hear Rip, or they are ignoring him.

Rip runs, fighting through the fog...barely able to make out the stretcher...

Suddenly the policemen are within arm's reach. Rip LUNGES and....

....grabs hold of the stretcher with one hand while shifting his rifle frantically between the two Iraqi policeman.

RIP (CONT'D)  
Back off!

The Iraqi policemen lower the stretcher to the ground and raise their hands in the air. Before Rip can look down at the body, the Iraqi police run off.

Rip looks down to see...

The MAN on the stretcher (face obscured, hair burnt) GROANS as he attempts to roll off, but Rip grabs him...

RIP (CONT'D)  
You're not going anywhere, pal.

Rip pulls him back on the stretcher, revealing...

ZARQAWI.

Pope and Stormy emerge beside Rip. Jaws drop.

POPE  
Holy fuck...

Rip keys his radio.

RIP  
Jackpot. We got a positive ID on  
the Sheikh.

INT. GATOR PIT - DAY

The room erupts in CHEERS.

INT. JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

Danner is pleased, but still has a mission to complete.

DANNER  
Is the target still alive?

EXT. HOUSE - BAQUBA - DAY

Before Rip can answer, Stormy draws his Glock and hands it to Rip.

Rip takes the weapon, poised for his final act of revenge.

Stormy and Pope turn to Rip. *Do the honors, boss.*

Rip stands over Zarqawi, looking down the barrel of his Glock at Black List #1...swollen face...moaning...a worthless piece of meat...a portrait of the banality of evil.

Rip pauses, then lowers his weapon as his men watch in silent understanding. Their fight is over.

The bomb blast having already done the damage, Zarqawi coughs up blood and dies. Rip keys his radio.

RIP  
Negative. He's KIA. 1-1 out.

Rip clicks off his radio.

RIP (CONT'D)  
(to Pope)  
Bag him.

POPE  
Roger that.

As Rip turns his back and departs, Stormy and Pope unroll a bodybag next to the Sheikh.

STORMY  
Hey dickhead. When you see the Devil, tell him Uncle Sam sent you.

INT. BRIG - DAY

Randy oversees Tony's release from the brig.

TONY  
This mean we got him?

Doing nothing to mask his hatred...

RANDY  
You're being reassigned to an outstation, effective immediately.

Off Tony, taking that as a 'yes'--

EXT. TASK FORCE COMPOUND - DAY

Tony walks up to the perimeter fence and stares out into the vast desert. In the distance, a TRIBE OF BEDOUIN herd camels, oblivious to the war.

Ann approaches...

ANN  
The President just made the announcement in the Rose Garden.  
Nice work.

But Tony is hardly in the mood to celebrate. Something nagging at him.

TONY  
Did you bring the damage assessment?

Ann hesitates, holding a folder but not handing it over.

ANN  
Don't worry. It was Zarqawi. We got a visual ID.

TONY  
Let me see it.

She reluctantly hands Tony the folder.

ANN  
Don't do this to yourself.

Tony withdraws photos of the blast site, wind knocked out of him by what he sees.

TONY  
Zarqawi's wife and daughter were in the house... Any survivors?

ANN  
No.

Ann tries to keep him from unraveling.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Major. You were the only one who got this thing right.

Tony looks like he might get sick.

TONY  
I've got a flight to catch.

EXT. BALAD AIR BASE - DAY

Tony sits on the tarmac propped against his duffel. In his hand is the picture of the little girl who was burned.

The moment is broken by the sound of helos approaching.

Tony turns to see the Little Birds touch down.

Rip steps out. As he crosses the tarmac, he spots Tony propped against his duffel in the desert heat. He turns to Pope.

RIP  
I'll see you boys back at the JOC.

BACK ON TONY

Looking more lost than ever, Tony crumples the photo of the little girl. Unable to bear the guilt of taking an innocent child's life.

RIP (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Guess you were right about  
terrorists and their families.

REVEAL Rip standing next to him, watching.

TONY  
If I hadn't come to Iraq, that  
little girl would still be alive.

RIP  
And so would the Sheikh. You think  
you're the first soldier with  
collateral damage on his  
conscience?

TONY  
Our job was to protect them.

RIP  
Zarqawi made that choice. Signed  
their death certificates the second  
he stepped foot in that house.

TONY  
Do you think they would have made  
it if you'd raided the house?

RIP  
You mean if we'd risked letting him  
go? That wouldn't have been the  
smart call. Quit thinking about  
Zarqawi's family and think about  
all the other families who get to  
live tonight because that bastard's  
dead.

TONY  
And who gets to decide who dies so  
that others can live?

RIP  
We do, brother. It's what we  
volunteered for.

Rip gazes out at the dessert.

RIP (CONT'D)  
Some men find themselves in war.  
Others lose themselves in it.

TONY  
How about you?

A beat as Rip takes inventory of his life.

RIP  
Both.

Tony realizes he isn't the only one grappling with the toll of war.

TONY  
You headin' home?

RIP  
End of the month. Gonna be busy until then. We recovered a laptop at Zarqawi's house. They've already worked up twelve new targets we're hittin' tonight.

Tony returns to staring out into the desert. Rip considers their station in life. As much directed at himself as Tony--

RIP (CONT'D)  
We save as many as we can.

Rip's words seem to offer some path through the darkness. Tony nods, a hint of renewed purpose in his eyes.

A chinook touches down on the tarmac.

TONY  
That's my ride.

Tony rises and the two men stand before each other for the last time. An awkward beat.

RIP  
Been a while since I saluted anyone.

TONY  
No reason to start now.

Tony extends his hand. Rip shakes it.

As Tony lugs his bag and crosses the tarmac toward the Chinook...

**SUPER:** "Tony spent his last thirty days in northern Iraq on a raid team conducting battlefield interrogations, leading to the capture of another high-ranking Al Qaeda leader."

Tony disappears inside the helo.

**SUPER:** *"Rip returned home and started a foundation to prevent veteran suicide, which is currently the greatest threat to American armed service members. In his free time, he is an assistant coach on the local football team."*

As Tony's Chinook lifts into the sky, we hold on Rip...

**SUPER:** *"This was the last tour either man would ever do."*

And as Rip turns away, we are left on an empty tarmac...

**SUPER:** *"The network Zarqawi founded regrouped and rebranded under a new name...The Islamic State. In 2014, the Islamic State marched into Mosul and declared a Caliphate. They are still fighting to achieve Zarqawi's dream."*

FADE OUT.