

Basic

by

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FIRST DRAFT
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OVER BLACK:

The sound of HELICOPTER ROTORS slicing through the air.

 STYLES (O.S.)
 Jesus, God. . .

FADE IN ON:

An ARMY HELICOPTER as it soars over the thick LOUISIANA BAYOU.

Lush and green only a day ago, the foliage below has been ripped to shreds. The kind of damage that can only be done by nature.

SUPERIMPOSE:, FEBRUARY 2 - 0630 HOURS - 32 KILOMETERS NORTH OF FORT MCKINLEY, LOUISIANA

INT. ARMY HELICOPTER (FLYING) -- SUNRISE

Sitting next to the PILOT is COLONEL WILLIAM STYLES. Mid-40's, normally gruff, but completely cowed by the damage below. The PILOT, unfazed.

 PILOT
 Hurricane Beth, huh? Had an ex-wife named Beth, this is pretty much par for the course. This area got the worst of it, I hope these guys are all intact-

 STYLES
 That's enough, Lieutenant.

SOMEONE'S P.O.V. - RUNNING through the underbrush - ducking branches, pushing through bushes, splashing through streams. LABORED BREATHING wheezes over the sound track. We're headed for a CLEARING...

INT. ARMY HELICOPTER (FLYING) -- SUNRISE

The Pilot pushes his stick forward, descending to tree level.

 PILOT
 Coming up on the pick-up.

EXT. CLEARING -- DAWN

TWO MEN emerge from the underbrush at a run. The BIGGER MAN carrying the wounded SMALLER MAN over his shoulder. Both in ragged army cadet fatigues - ripped, muddy, and bloody.

The Bigger Man lowers the Smaller Man to the ground and unshoulders his M-16. Face panicked.

The sound of the HELICOPTER approaching...

INT. ARMY HELICOPTER (FLYING) -- SUNRISE

The unmistakable SOUND OF GUNFIRE from below.

PILOT
Holy shit, that's *live fire!*

As the Helicopter comes over the clearing, Styles and the Pilot squint down through the windscreen to see the Two Men, huddled together as BULLET HITS kick up DUST around them!

STYLES
Who's shooting at them-

The Bigger Man raising his own his weapon and RETURNING FIRE. The Smaller Man frantically waving the Helicopter down...

PILOT
I can't see-

Below, the Bigger Man still shooting and then he lowers his rifle and there's only SILENCE. No return fire.

And then Styles sees why. A THIRD MAN. Lying by the treeline. Chest torn open by gunfire. Obviously dead. His clothes - the same fatigues the first two men are wearing.

STYLES
That was one of their own, he just
Shot one of their own men-

PILOT
Who was trying to shoot them-

STYLES
Get us on the ground!

EXT. CLEARING -- SUNRISE

As the Helicopter comes in for a landing, the Bigger Man kneels next to the Smaller Man, who bleeds from a bullet wound to the arm. His face, pale, sweating. The Bigger Man wipes the Smaller Man's brow and speaks softly and seriously.

BIGGER MAN
Are you ready for this?

The Smaller Man nods.

INT. ROADHOUSE -- MORNING

A full on shit-kicking dive. Nearly empty, given the hour. A TELEVISION plays the morning news over the bar. Only two inhabitants - one a BARTENDER, the other the lone CUSTOMER, smoking and picking at a plate of criminally runny eggs.

HARDY
Tell the truth, Vic. You made these
with a blender, right?

He grins and we get our first good look at

TOM HARDY - Three day stubble, dark rings around his eyes,
but a with strong jaw and steady voice. Not your average
barfly. Somebody who maybe used to be somebody.

BARTENDER
Don't like 'em, don't eat 'em, don't
make no damn difference to me.

HARDY
You know that was like a quadruple
negative?

The Bartender takes the plate away from him.

HARDY
Can I at least have a drink?

BARTENDER
It's ten thirty in the morning.

HARDY
Yeah, if you've slept.

BARTENDER
You know the law - no liquor before
noon. Could lose my license.

HARDY
Don't you mean "don't need no liquor
license not taken away from me"?

The Bartender smiles.

BARTENDER
Hurricane kept you up, too?

HARDY
Yeah, and I could've used the sleep.
I'm supposed to meet people here
tonight, try and get some work going.

He stops, his attention suddenly on the TV. A NEWSCASTER:

NEWSCASTER
...is expected to announce the grand
jury indictments in the Guissepe
Torres police corruption case as
early as tomorrow afternoon.
Speculations abound that up to ten
former homicide detectives could be
named in the proceedings-

The Bartender turns the TV off hastily. Embarrassed:

BARTENDER

Sorry.

Hardy just looks away. The Bartender puts an empty glass down and fills it to the lip with bourbon.

Hardy nods a "thank you" and reaches for the glass when the PAGER on his hip goes off. He checks the number.

HARDY

Bill Styles...

BARTENDER

Who?

HARDY

Old friend. Haven't talked to him in- 911. Can I use your phone?

The Bartender hands him a cordless and Hardy dials.

HARDY

Hey, Bill, it's Tom. Long time no.
. . . whoa, whoa, slow down. Yeah...
yeah, of course I'll come. An hour.

He hangs up and hands the phone back to the Bartender.

BARTENDER

What was that?

Hardy, obviously shaken by the call.

HARDY

I gotta go out to McKinley.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- MORNING

Establishing. A sprawling five square mile compound nestled in the Louisiana backwoods. Also damaged by the Hurricane.

HELICOPTERS loaded with emergency supplies land and take off, REPAIR CREWS work feverishly on damaged buildings, all while CADET PLATOONS complete morning drills around them.

This is still a boot camp after all.

SUPERIMPOSE: 1130 HOURS - FORT MCKINLEY BASIC TRAINING CENTER

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- MAIN GATE -- MORNING

Styles stands waiting nervously just beyond the CHECKPOINT with WARRANT OFFICER JULIA OSBORNE - early 30's, attractive, close cropped hair and icy eyes. In the middle of protesting.

OSBORNE
This is totally unnecessary-

STYLES
He asked to see a policeman, we're getting him a policeman .

OSBORNE
But this guy you called, he's not even Army-

STYLES
He's former Army and the best I've ever seen in a room. Besides, he knows the territory, we did Basic together here.
(off her look)
You've had three hours with Dunbar and haven't gotten a peep, we need to take a different tack.

OSBORNE
He's not Army, it's not official-

STYLES
Then it's unofficial.

He takes a hit from an ASTHMA INHALER, as a '71 PONTIAC GTO drives through the gate and pulls up. Hardy emerges.

OSBORNE
(re: his appearance)
Doesn't get any unofficialer than that...

The two old friends embrace.

HARDY
How are you?

STYLES
Been better.
(pause)
I read about what's been happening With you... I should have called-

HARDY
What kind of trouble are you in?

Styles looks at the ground. Momentarily flustered.

HARDY
That bad?

STYLES
Would I have called you if it wasn't? If there was any other way-

HARDY
Tell me what I can do.

OSBORNE
You can get us some answers.

Hardy takes off his sunglasses, noticing her.

STYLES
This is Warrant Officer Julia Osborne,
The closest thing we have to an in-
House investigator.

HARDY
And here you are going out of house.
How's that make you feel, Jules?

OSBORNE
Hostile and uncooperative.

HARDY
Fantastic. You want to tell me what's
going on?

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- CORRIDORS MORNING

Hardy follows Styles and Osborne. They pass SOLDIERS
replacing broken windows and sweeping up glass.

STYLES
The official term for it is
"Clusterfuck" . By the time Beth hit
us, I'd canceled all off base
exercises save one - a six man cadet
team and their Drill out in the bush.
We're missing three and the Sergeant.
The cadets are in their eighth week
of the cycle, nobody here knows much
about them, up to and including their
names. But the Sergeant...

HARDY
It's not West, is it? Tell me it's
not West.

Styles' look tells him it is.

HARDY
Ah, Christ

OSBORNE
You knew Sergeant West?

HARDY
He was our Drill here. Man's older
than *sand*.

STYLES

A few years ago, the Army picked our good buddy as their go to non-com to trot out to the press to talk about the kinder, gentler military. He even did the standard video greeting played to all incoming Basic cadets across the country.

HARDY

Well, he's a good soldier.

Osborne nods, agreeing.

HARDY

I didn't mean that as a compliment.

OSBORNE

Sergeant West's served for twenty-three years. He's the public face of the modern Army.

HARDY

And you notice I'm not in the Army anymore.

They round a corner.

STYLES

The exercise was one of his Section Eight "private sessions". Left around 2100 yesterday and were scheduled for pick up at 0630 this morning.

HARDY

And the problem is you only got three.

STYLES

No, the problem is one's dead, one's got a bullet in his arm, and one won't talk. The one who won't talk was trading live fire with the dead one as we reached the pick-up.

HARDY

I'm assuming that's what made him the dead one?

STYLES

Cadet Roberto R. Nunez. Killed right in front of me.

OSBORNE

Search parties for the others are fanning out in a ten click radius from the pickup. If they're hurt and we can get to them in time...

STYLES

I called the JAG Corps, the two cadets we retrieved are to be flown to D.C. On a transport leaving here at 1700-

HARDY

Which gives us about five hours. Why'd you call me?

STYLES

The guy in interrogation said he'd only talk to a cop.

HARDY

And I'm the closest thing to it, right?

Styles stops, turning to his friend.

STYLES

Tom, bottom line: I let those kids go out there. If JAG shows up and I don't have any answers for them, my career is finished-

HARDY

I'm not gonna let that happen.

Styles exhales, relieved.

STYLES

Thank you. Osborne will brief you on the cadets. And Tom?
(half-smile)
It really is good to see you.

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- OSBORNE'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Osborne and Hardy enter, stepping over broken glass and hurricane debris. Hardy looks around.

HARDY

Gotta be honest, I love what you've Done with the place-

OSBORNE

You and the Colonel go back.

HARDY

He got me through Basic and a lot of other stuff. I owe him.

OSBORNE

You're the Tom Hardy I've been reading about in the papers, right? New Orleans PD fired you for taking bribes from Guissepe Torres.

HARDY

It was for suspicion of bribery,
it's really all in the wording-

OSBORNE

Wording and your friendship with the
Colonel aside, I'm not comfortable
having you involved in this.

HARDY

Subtlety really isn't one of your
finer points, is it, Osborne?

Osborne opens her mouth to reply but Hardy cuts her off.

HARDY

Three things. First - You don't
have a choice. Second- I've never
taken a bribe in my life. And Third -
I'm still a little drunk from last
night, so if I skip over the witty
banter and move forward to straight
hitting on you, try not to take
offense. Tell me about the two guys.

OSBORNE

Hurricane knocked out our Mainframe,
so all we have are their dogtags.
Cadets Raymond Dunbar and Levi Kendall-

HARDY

Levi? Who names their kid Levi-

OSBORNE

Senator Jonathan Kendall, of Ohio.

HARDY

Christ... Remind me to thank Bill
for mentioning that on the phone-

OSBORNE

Kendall Junior is still in surgery,
so he won't be available to answer
for his name or anything else for
another hour - the cadet we're talking
to first is Dunbar.

HARDY

He's in interrogation?

OSBORNE

Yes.

HARDY

Move him.

OSBORNE

Why?

HARDY

Because interrogation rooms look suspiciously like interrogation rooms, which doesn't exactly put people at ease. Is he cute?

OSBORNE

Excuse me?

HARDY

Is Dunbar cute?

OSBORNE

(pissed)

That is the most unprofessional-

HARDY

Is he handsome, self assured, carry himself well, does he look you in the eyes or down at the floor, does he have good bones, suggesting good breeding, does he slouch or sit up straight - these are important questions, as they reveal a great deal about this man's character so please get over yourself for two and a half seconds and tell me is he cute?

Osborne stares at him. She finally nods.

HARDY

Thank you. At some point in there I'm gonna rub my nose. When I do, go at him with everything you got.

OSBORNE

Good cop/bad cop?

HARDY

Something like that.

She starts to go make preparations.

HARDY

Oh, and Osborne? You have any donuts around here?

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- CORRIDOR -- MORNING

As two M.P.'s escort RAYMOND DUNBAR (the "Bigger Man") into

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- MORNING

A small cluttered room with the shades drawn. A folding table has been set up in the middle of it with a chair on each side. Dunbar takes a seat in the far chair. Takes in his surroundings as the MP's leave, locking the door.

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- CORRIDOR - MORNING

Hardy and Osborne head towards the Coffee Room.

OSBORNE

I questioned him for three hours and he didn't make a sound. You don't have a badge, he won't talk to you.

HARDY,

Ten bucks says I have him talking in under three minutes.

Osborne starts the timer on her digital watch.

OSBORNE

Go.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- MORNING

Dunbar looks up as they enter. Hardy smiles, cheerily.

HARDY

Cadet Dunbar, good morning! I'm Tom Hardy and I believe you've already met Officer Osborne. I understand you had a rough time of it last night?

No response. Hardy takes a seat across from the cadet.

HARDY

Not talking, huh? You probably just want to get some food and some sleep. They feed you yet?

No response. Hardy reaches into his pocket. Pulls out a DONUT.

Dunbar eyes it, wary but definitely wanting it.

HARDY

Go on. You can eat in front of someone and still not talk to them - my parents did it for years.

Dunbar grabs the donut, wolfing it down.

HARDY

Want another one?

No response. Osborne looks to her watch - it's been a minute.

HARDY

Maybe later. Ray, let me say this up front - I'm not a cop.

Dunbar turns away, no longer interested. Hardy continues:

HARDY

I used to be, but that's beside the point. Who I am doesn't really matter; what matters is that right now, you're in a shitload of trouble. You understand that, right?

No response.

HARDY

Now, I don't know if you did what you did in self defense and frankly I don't really care. I'm just doing a favor for Colonel Styles because he wants to know if anyone else who's still out there is in need of assistance. To be honest with you, though, I don't care about that either.

Dunbar looks up at this, surprised.

HARDY

I don't know those guys, you do. They die, to me, it's like seeing a couple people died in a fire on the news - tragic, but it doesn't affect me. The only thing I care about is I agreed to do a favor for a friend and try and talk to you till your transpo shows up. You like baseball?

No response. Osborne looks at her watch - two minutes.

HARDY

I could talk baseball for days. Batting averages, ERA's, I got statistics in my brain, I don't know how I remember them. It's freaky. You wanna talk baseball?

Dunbar, completely confused.

HARDY

Come on Ray, we're gonna be here five hours, we gotta talk about *something*. So who do you like?

A long silence and then:

DUNBAR
I don't like baseball.

Hardy grins as Osborne stops her watch at 2:41.

HARDY
Why not?

DUNBAR
I asked for a policeman.

HARDY
You're under military arrest, it's not gonna happen. What's wrong with baseball?

DUNBAR
It's... too slow.

HARDY
Well, it's a game of anticipation, that's the beauty.

DUNBAR
I just don't like it.

HARDY
What do you like then?

As they continue, we TRACK under the table to reveal a HIDDEN MICROPHONE...

INT. STYLES' OFFICE -- MORNING

Styles and an M.P. listening to the Coffee Room conversation.

DUNBAR'S VOICE, over the speaker:

DUNBAR (O.S.)
I don't know... I like the Army.

HARDY (O.S.)
C'mon, Ray, everyone hates the Army during Basic. I'll tell you straight, I hated it here.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- MORNING

DUNBAR
You did Basic here?

HARDY
Fifteen years ago under Sergeant West. Piece of work, that guy. I remember, he used to have these two silver .45's with ivory handles and if you weren't quick enough, he'd
(MORE)

HARDY (CONT'D)
 knock you on the head with one of
 them. He still carry those guns?

He Dunbar nods.

HARDY
 I was also his "knife dummy" .
 (to Osborne)
 See, West used to say he could slit
 a man from stem to sternum in three
 seconds. He'd use this length of
 pipe to demonstrate and if you were
 the knife dummy, you'd spend all day
 getting a pipe rammed into your balls
 if you weren't fast enough to defend
 yourself. That was a loooong day.

Hardy laughs at the memory and turns back to Dunbar.

HARDY
 Incidentally, Ray, I promised them
 I'd ask where West and the others
 are. Can we get to them?

He looks to the floor.

DUNBAR
 There's no need...

HARDY
 They're dead, aren't they?

Dunbar looks back up at Hardy.

DUNBAR
 Yeah.

INT. STYLES' OFFICE -- MORNING

Styles lowers his head at this.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- MORNING

HARDY
 You kill them?

No answer. Hardy rubs his nose. Osborne steps forward.

OSBORNE
 The Colonel saw you shoot Nunez,
 You're a murderer-

HARDY
 See, Ray, this is what we call "good
 cop, bad cop".
 (MORE)

HARDY
 She shouts, I stand up for you, you're grateful, a bond of trust is established.

Osborne, stunned by this.

HARDY
 But I don't want to play games. That's why you're not in an interrogation room, with one of those two way mirrors - everyone knows those things are two way, right?

Dunbar looks at him good nods slowly.

HARDY
 Right. Now, I'm gonna go get you another donut and you think about whether you want to talk more, okay?

DUNBAR
 Okay.

Hardy smiles at him, gets up, and leaves.

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- CORRIDOR -- MORNING

Osborne follows him out into the hall where Styles waits.

OSBORNE
 Baseball?

HARDY
 Believe somebody owes me ten dollars-

OSBORNE
 You made me look like an idiot-

HARDY
 Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know the object of the interrogation is to make you look good- Everyone knows good cop, bad cop - by admitting it I appeared trustworthy.

STYLES
 You think he did it?

OSBORNE
 No-

HARDY
 Yes-

They stop, looking at each other.

STYLES

You've got four hours and forty-five minutes to find out.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- MORNING

Hardy returns, another donut in hand, Osborne behind him.

HARDY

Why'd you ask for a cop, Ray?

DUNBAR

I'm not telling you what happened.

HARDY

Okay... but I would like to know about the other cadets. What they were like - nice guys? Dunbar takes a deep breath.

DUNBAR

Some.

HARDY

Tell me about them.

As Dunbar begins to talk, we FLASHBACK...

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- PARADE GROUNDS -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO

Row upon row of freshly shaven headed CADETS stand at attention. Their first day of boot camp.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

First day was when I met Pike. Sarge hated him from the beginning.

A man with a face of granite strides up and down the lines.

Two ivory handled pistols on his hips. His lifeless cobalt blue eyes take in the Cadets. This is SERGEANT WEST.

WEST

You motherfuckers have just made the worst mistake of your lives! You have chosen to join my Army! This Army is my mother, my father, and my little virgin sister and I will not allow anyone or anything that is not up to my standards near her pretty little virgin cooze, do you understand me - give me a *sir, yes, sir!*

THE CADETS

Sir, yes, sir!

WEST

Those who I deem unworthy to pass through this camp will quit, and those who refuse to quit I will kill. You ever hear of a training accident - Give me a *sir, yes, sir!*

THE CADETS

Sir, yes, sir!

WEST

In my time I have killed sixteen men for the good of my country, sixteen men whose entrance into this Army I could not condone, as it would weaken the fabric of this nation's defense! This base suffers an average of three training accidents a year, unfortunate incidents that I will not hesitate to repeat if you cross me, understand - Give me a *sir, yes, sir!*

THE CADETS

Sir, yes, sir!

WEST

So forget what you've seen on Sixty fucking Minutes about the kinder, gentler military - you will either succeed, quit, or die by my hand!

He walks over to a tall black cadet in the front row. PIKE.

WEST

My power here is absolute, isn't that right, nigger?

PIKE

Sir, yes, sir!

West hauls off and SLAPS Pike across the face!

WEST

I hail from Biloxi, Mississippi where we string greasy coon necks up from tree branches when the mood strikes us you have a problem with that?

PIKE

Sir, no, sir!

West grabs Pike by the neck, CHOKING HIM. The others Cadets GASP. Pike goes down on his knees, the loss of air is so great. He reaches up automatically to try and save himself...

WEST

What the fuck is this? You lay a hand on me while I'm trying to do my duty and rid the world of you?

He KICKS PIKE IN THE BALLS and releases him. Pike goes fetal on the ground, VOMITING, as West stands over him, screaming.

WEST

Get the fuck up, you're still in formation, get the fuck up!

Pike somehow gets to his feet, vomit streaking his clothes.

WEST

What the fuck have you done to that uniform, take it off, take it off, take it off!

Pike, still gasping, can't move fast enough. West slaps him again and tears the man's shirt off.

WEST

Get those fucking pants off, I want you buck ass naked, you don't deserve to wear these beautiful United States Army issue clothes!

Pike struggles off the rest of his clothes until he is NAKED.

West turns and spies Dunbar in the line.

WEST

Cadet, what's your name!

DUNBAR

Sir, Dunbar, sir!

WEST

You know how to work a pistol, Dunbar?

DUNBAR

Sir, yes, sir!

West draws one of his PISTOLS and gives it to him.

WEST

Dunbar you are to stand here and guard this nigger for the next twenty-four hours! He is not to be given food, water, or clothes! If he so much as moves, you are to blow his nigger brains out, is that clear?

DUNBAR

Sir, yes, sir!

WEST
The rest of you, fallout for
physicals!

The rest of the Cadets fallout, following West away to one
of the buildings, leaving Dunbar and Pike.

One with a gun, the other naked.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
Fifteen guys quit that day. But not
Pike.

EXT. OBSTACLE COURSE -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- MORNING

The CADETS, navigating a log spanned over a PIT OF MUD.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
Time went on and the Sarge started
singling people out.

One of the Cadets, a small man named ANDERSON, falls from
the log. Screaming, West dives into the pit and pulls
Anderson out, knocking him on the head with a pistol.

EXT. TARMAC -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- AFTERNOON

Anderson stands naked, his arms straining to hold up TWO
PAINT CANS perpendicular to his body as West berates him.

DUNBAR
He'd zero in on a fella and ride him
till he quit.

EXT. MAIN GATE -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- NIGHT

Anderson, now in civilian clothes, gets into a TAXI. Quit.

EXT. FIRING RANGE -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- MORNING

West, screaming at a weasely looking cadet named CHILDS.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
Those who wouldn't quit, he'd put in
what he called Section Eight.

INT. SECTION EIGHT BARRACKS -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- NIGHT

A horribly dilapidated quarters. Four cadets, Dunbar, Pike,
Childs, and MUELLER sleep in rickety bunks.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
Washout rejects, guys he said were ,
"dumbfucks too stupid to know they
were dead". He separated us from
the rest. We slept alone...

INT. MESS HALL -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- MORNING

The same four Cadets, eating ON THE FLOOR as the other members of the Cadet Corps chow at tables.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
 . . .ate alone.. .

EXT. REGULAR BARRACKS -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- EVENING

The four Cadets fallout on a run shirtless, with heavy packs and rifles held over their heads as the rest of the Cadet Corps files into their barracks for sleep.

DUNBAR (V. O .)
 ...and trained long after the other
 guys got to turn in.

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO -- MORNING

The Cadet Corps, mustered. West zeroes in on NUNEZ (the "dead one"), whose t-shirt has a spot on it.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
 Fellas lived in daily fear of being
 Sectioned and with good reason, too.

West pulls Nunez out of line by his ear and kicks him over towards a separate muster of our Four Section Eighters.

DUNBAR
 They figured we were the boys who'd
 meet with a "training accident" .

Nunez takes a place among them. Looking absolutely terrified.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

Osborne leans forward.

OSBORNE
 Are you saying Sergeant West tried
 to kill you?

DUNBAR
 No, ma'am, he just wanted us to quit.
 Making it through was kind of an
 honor. Some of the other guys on
 the base told us that if you could
 hack Section Eight, Command would
 consider you at the top of the class.

HARDY
 That's not exactly true...
 (off their looks)
 I'm living proof. How did you get
 Sectioned, Ray?

Dunbar gives a look that almost resembles a smile.

DUNBAR

That first night with Pike. I made the mistake of letting him sit down at around 0300.

OSBORNE

Tell us about the other guys, the ones West weeded out.

DUNBAR

There were six of us...

EXT. OBSTACLE COURSE.-- ONE WEEK AGO -- EVENING

The six members of Section Eight on a forced run through the rain. We focus in each face as Dunbar describes them. First up is MUELLER a tall Aryan looking blonde with a square jaw.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

Mueller was from Tulsa, a real good ol' boy type. One of those "his Daddy's Daddy's Daddy died at Bull Run and no bleeding heart Yankee was gonna take away his scatter gun" . He idolized West.

Muller, grinning, as West kicks his ass to pick up the pace.

Next to him is NUNEZ, a strapping hulk of a manchild.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

And Nunez idolized Mueller. Big fella from New Mexico. After he got Sectioned he just followed Mueller around like a lap dog. He wasn't mean like Mueller, though, didn't have it in him.

Next to Nunez is CHILDS, small and weasely with feral eyes.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

But Childs did. Didn't talk to anyone, but you got this feeling something was wrong with him, like real wrong. Type of guy you felt uncomfortable going to sleep near.

Behind Childs runs Pike.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

Pike I told you about. He took the brunt of it from Mueller and West. Once they found it out he was a convict they were merciless.

(MORE)

DUNBAR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 He'd been busted for Auto Theft,
 judge gave him the option of jailor
 the Army. He made the wrong choice.

Next to Pike, Dunbar and KENDALL run side by side. Kendall is short like Childs, but also weak. Wheezing.

DUNBAR
 Finally Kendall and me. Kendall was
 a smart guy, we got along okay.
 Pike and I tried to help him, but...

Kendall falters and Pike stops to try and help him up. West smacks the him away, practically kicking Kendall to his feet.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
 He was sickly. Had that shaking
 thing, whatd'yacall it, epoxy?

OSBORNE (V.O.)
 Epilepsy.

DUNBAR (V.O.)
 Yeah. Spent half his time in the
 infirmary. Only reason he enlisted
 was his father. West didn't section
 him till last week.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

HARDY
 And those were the guys who went on
 the exercise with you?

DUN BAR
 Yeah. And that's all I'm saying.

Hardy leans back in his chair.

HARDY
 You smoke, Ray?

DUNBAR
 This is one of those interrogation
 tricks, isn't it? You don't give me
 a cigarette till I tell you more.

HARDY
 No, actually, I just left mine in
 the car and was hoping you had some.

Dunbar studies him for a moment and then pulls a pack of Dorals from his pocket and puts them on the table.

HARDY
 My brand. Must be my lucky day.

He takes one and lights it. Dunbar does the same.

HARDY

Let me ask you one thing. You seem like a good guy, Ray. You carried Kendall wounded to the pickup. So what I don't get is what you did to make Nunez want to kill you?

Dunbar just looks at the ground. A KNOCK at the door. Hardy and Osborne turn to see an M.P. stick his head in.

M. P.

Sirs?

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- CORRIDORS -- MORNING

Hardy and Osborne emerge to find Styles waiting for them.

HARDY

He's not done by a longshot, I can get more out of him-

STYLES

He can wait. Kendall's out of surgery.

EXT. ARMY JEEP (MOVING) -- MORNING

Hardy and Osborne sit in the back of the open car as it rumbles across the grounds, headed towards the Base Hospital. They sit in silence until:

HARDY

Why'd you join the army?

Osborne looks at him, annoyed.

OSBORNE

You really want to make banal chit-Chat like that now?

HARDY

You're right. We should sit in silence.

OSBORNE

We're in the middle of a murder case-

HARDY

Best time for banal chit-chat.

He slips something into his pocket.

OSBORNE

What is that?

HARDY

Microrecorder for Kendall - didn't have- time to wire his room. Now tell me why you joined the army or I'll jab this pen through your neck.

Osborne smiles in spite of, herself.

OSBORNE

Typical army brat story. Dad was noncom, Mom was a Nurse. There was never any real doubt of joining up.

HARDY

You had a mobile of bayonets above your crib.

OSBORNE

Something like that. You?

HARDY

I lost a bet.

Osborne laughs.

OSBORNE

You're *kidding*.

HARDY

Yeah. That's just the story I tell the girls to get them into bed. Truth is... I don't know. The whole honor and duty thing. Make a difference in the world, crap like that. Didn't really work out.

Osborne studies him.

OSBORNE

I bet that's the second story you tell the girls to get them into bed, after you make them laugh with the first one.

Hardy just smiles.

OSBORNE

This is the straight hitting on me you were talking about, isn't it?

HARDY

The very same.

OSBORNE

You do understand that there's absolutely no way I could ever be attracted to you, right?

HARDY
I plan to grow on you.

OSBORNE
You're off to a late start.

HARDY
So noted.

They pass an OVERTURNED CLIMBING TOWER.

HARDY
You guys really got the shit kicked
out of you here.

OSBORNE
Imagine what it must have been like
for them out there. What do you
think of Dunbar?

HARDY
He's telling the truth, up to a point.

OSBORNE
What point?

Hardy doesn't respond, instead looking out as they pass the
SECTION EIGHT BARRACKS.

OSBORNE
Something wrong?

HARDY
Being back here. Gives me the
willies.

OSBORNE
Not the happiest of memories?

FLASHCUT TO - FIFTEEN YEARS AGO. A bunch of young Cadets,
Hardy and Styles among them, doing forced push-ups by the
barracks in the rain as West randomly berates and KICKS THEM.

BACK TO HARDY - As he looks away and shakes it off.

HARDY
No.

INT. BASE HOSPITAL -- RECOVERY UNIT -- DAY

A NURSE leads Hardy and Osborne down a spotless white hall.

NURSE
Normally we wouldn't let anyone see
him this soon, but Colonel Styles
said it was urgent-

HARDY

It is.

OSBORNE

Remember, he's the son of a Senator,
so go easy. Kid gloves.

HARDY

Got it.

INT. BASE HOSPITAL -- KENDALL'S ROOM -- DAY

Kendall lies in a bed, a network of tubes in his arm. He is awake but pale, still weak. He studies his visitors.

KENDALL

You... I've seen you around the Base.
But you...
(POINTING TO HARDY)
You're not Army, are you?

HARDY

Coast Guard, special detective detail.
We feel this incident may have put
the beaches of Florida at risk.

Kendall's laugh turns into a cough. Placing Hardy.

KENDALL

That's it. You're that policeman
with friends in low places. Tell
me, how's Guissepe Torres doing these
days? Those racketeering indictments
must have really been a downer-

HARDY

Levi, you got about four hours before
armed men show up here, put you on a
plane to Washington, and lock you in
a very small dark room. I suggest
you talk to us.

Kendall smiles again, not losing any of his cool.

KENDALL

I've done nothing wrong.
(gestures to his wound)
I'm the victim here.

HARDY

But not the only victim, right?

KENDALL

My, my, my, how did things turn so
hostile so quickly? If I didn't
know better, I'd say you two were
out to get me.

OSBORNE

We just want-

KENDALL

What, "The Truth"? Please. There are degrees of truth, officer, always degrees. Things are not what they seem.

Hardy stares at him for a moment and then gets up to leave.

HARDY

It's too early in the day for me to give a shit about some pissant cadet's bad version of "intrigue". You want to talk to us, send word over to the brig. Let's go.

Nonplussed, Osborne follows. Hardy turns back at the door.

HARDY

You're working too hard, Levi. I can tell cause you're sweating. And you're sweating cause you have no idea what Dunbar's already told us.

INT. BASE HOSPITAL -- CORRIDORS -- DAY

Hardy and Osborne walk to the NURSE'S STATION.

OSBORNE

That was kid gloves?

HARDY

Have no fear, Osborne, we have not yet begun to fight.

He pulls a cigarette from his pocket and lights it.

OSBORNE

But we have to question him-
(noticing)
Thought you didn't have cigarettes-

HARDY

I lied. Wait for it...

Osborne just stares at him, not knowing what to say next. The PHONE at the Nurse's Station rings and a NURSE answers.

Listens for a moment, hangs up, and turns to them.

NURSE

Cadet Kendall-

HARDY

We're on our way.

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Hardy and Osborne sit across from Kendall's bed.

HARDY
Sergeant West is dead isn't he?

Kendall nods.

HARDY
And the other three Cadets?

Kendall hesitates, then nods again.

HARDY
Feel free to elaborate .

Kendall takes a breath and begins, all trace of bravado gone.

KENDALL
My father is a powerful man. Over the years he's used that power to protect me, in one form or another, from certain... unpleasantries.
(deep breath)
I am a homosexual.

HARDY
Senator Daddy must be *thrilled*.

KENDALL
He is not, shall we say, wild about the idea. He has asked me on numerous occasions to be more discreet about my proclivities, and I have done my best to oblige him. However, in the last four weeks, I began a relationship with another cadet. What do you think of that?

HARDY
I think you just blew "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" out of the fucking water.

KENDALL
The Sergeant discovered this relationship and wanted me expelled. My father interceded, so instead, West Sectioned me and made sure every other cadet knew that I was gay.

OSBORNE
He couldn't kick you out so he wanted you to quit on your own.

KENDALL
He wanted more than that.

HARDY
More intrigue, Levi?

Kendall stares at them, dead serious.

KENDALL
Yes.

INT. SECTION EIGHT BARRACKS -- LAST NIGHT

The six Cadets asleep, all except Kendall, who stares up at the patchwork ceiling.

KENDALL (V.O.)
It was the regular Tuesday night drill. He'd let us sleep for an hour and then wake us up, drag us out to the bayou, and work us all night, separate from the others. The door SLAMS OPEN, revealing West.

WEST
Get up, get up, get up! We're going on a little night hike, boys - muster in five on the south tarmac!

He leaves as the Sectioners rise, groaning.

PIKE
Hurricane's due after midnight and we're still going out?

MUELLER
Toughens us up, Pike. You don't like it, quit.

Pike pulls on his pants and shoots him the finger.

KENDALL
Maybe we shouldn't go.

MUELLER
The faggot speaks.

KENDALL
You ever been in a hurricane, Mueller?

MUELLER
(mocking gay lisp)
You ever been in a hurricane, Mueller?

Mueller and Childs laugh, but Nunez looks concerned.

NUNEZ
You really heard this?

PIKE

You know Popham, works in the kitchen?
He told me it was on the radio.

He stops, listening. They all hear the WIND, HOWLING outside.

KENDALL

We should tell him we're not going.

MUELLER

Oh, yeah, "Excuse me, Sergeant, sir,
we don't feel like going out - we
don't want to get rained on." He'll
kick our asses from here to Cleveland.

He pulls on his rain poncho and is out the door, Nunez right behind him. The others, getting ready, all except Kendall.

Dunbar comes over and puts a hand on his shoulder.

DUNBAR

He's right. We don't have a choice.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- TARMAC -- LAST NIGHT

The six cadets, mustered in front of West and a TRANSPORT CHOPPER. West hands out M-16's, sidearms, and grenades while yelling above the wind.

WEST

A rifle, a pistol, and three
phosphorous grenades to a man! This
is live fire, so keep those safeties
until we touch down; I don't want
anyone shooting their dick off!

Some chuckling.

WEST

Some of you may have heard there's a
hurricane coming! American soldiers
do not wait for good weather - they
do not wait for a bright sunshiney
day to do their duty! An American
Soldier learns to operate in the
worst conditions and turn said
conditions into an advantage against
their enemy! Anyone who thinks these
conditions are too harsh, feel free
to lay down and die, you get me?

THE CADETS

Sir, yes, sir!

WEST

LZ is two clicks North of a cabin,
you are to split into teams of two
(MORE)

WEST (CONT'D)
 and work your way through your designated area blasting as many targets as you can find! Each area has twenty targets, first team to take all twenty and find the cabin wins! Teams are as follows - Dunbar and Nunez, Pike and Mueller, Kendall and Childs!

Mueller groans.

WEST
 I will be in the areas monitoring your progress and if I see anyone drag ass I will personally slit your stem to sternum and leave you for dead! Fall out!

The Cadets board the Transport Chopper. Kendall gets on last, passing West who leans in and whispers to him:

WEST
 You're gonna die tonight, faggot.

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

Osborne looks up.

OSBORNE
 He said *what*?

KENDALL
 "You're gonna die tonight, faggot" .
 Clear as day.

OSBORNE
 No one else heard it?

KENDALL
 He whispered it in my ear.

Hardy scratches his temple.

HARDY
 Levi, I don't know if you're familiar with investigative work, but we have this little thing called "motive" and you just gave yourself one.

KENDALL
 You said you wanted to know what happened- I'm telling you the truth.

HARDY
 What happened to "degrees"?

KENDALL
 Didn't kill him-

HARDY
 Then who did?

INT. ARMY TRANSPORT HELICOPTER (FLYING) -- LAST NIGHT

On Kendall, sitting among the Sectioners in silence. terrified he looks like he's about to throw up.

KENDALL (V.O.)
 I wanted to tell someone what he'd said, but I couldn't. Mueller would just laugh. Nunez and Childs wouldn't care. Pike and Dunbar were okay, but... When West outed me, he isolated me. An outcast among outcasts. And I'd just been told tonight was the night I'd die.

The Chopper touches down on the edge of the BAYOU. The door rumbles open as West points out different team directions in the blackness.

WEST
 First team, second team, third team, go, go, go!

The click of rifles being unsafetied as the cadets pour out of the helicopter.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- LAST NIGHT

We track with Kendall and Childs as they head away from the Landing Zoe, rifles up, heads down, side by side. Moving the brush quickly and quietly, eyes scanning for targets.

KENDALL (V.O.)
 I knew Childs a little, we worked at the PX together.

The wind is picking up and it's started to RAIN. Their ponchos flap loudly against the elements.

KENDALL (V.O.)
 I started getting it in my head that maybe West had paid him, maybe he was the one who was supposed to give me a training accident-

The ROAR of GUNFIRE! Kendall turns towards it, SCREAMING for a moment... Until he sees Childs lower his smoking rifle, a SHREDDED TARGET on a tree in front of them. He looks down, noticing has his own weapon TRAINED ON CHILDS. . .

Childs steps forward, knocking Kendall's rifle away.

CHILDS
Don't you ever point a gun at me!

KENDALL
I'm- I'm sorry. . .

Kendall, terrified. Shaking. A beat. Childs picks up the rifle from the ground and hands it back to him.

CHILDS
Come on, let's move.

VARIOUS SHOTS -- Kendall and Childs, moving through the bayou, Childs taking out targets. It's raining harder now.

KENDALL (V.O.)
All I could think of was West, out there somewhere in the dark. Maybe watching the others, maybe watching me. And waiting to make his move.

Childs speaks, and Kendall almost jumps out of his skin.

CHILDS
Christ, am I alone in this world?
Shoot something-

A SOUND from the left. Kendall panics, pivots, and FIRES... Into DARKNESS. No target, no West, no nothing. Kendall, *really* freaked out now.

CHILDS
A target, Kendall, cap a fucking target. What's wrong with you?

KENDALL (V.O.)
I thought I was gonna have an attack. Go into a fit and bite off my own tongue in the middle of the bayou. Childs could tell I wasn't right.

CHILDS
Just safety your shit and get behind me, okay? I'll take care of this.

Kendall nods and lets Childs walk ahead. Staring at Childs' back as they move on. On Kendall's face, thinking...

KENDALL (V.O.)
Maybe it was a trick. Maybe this was when they'd get me, when I felt safest.

CLOSE. ON KENDALL'S FINGER - Clicking off the safety again. Moving towards the trigger...

KENDALL (V.O.)
 But if I struck first and took out
 Childs, then maybe I could make it
 out alive...

Kendall raises the rifle. Sights Childs' back. A moment
 of utter silence and then...

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

KENDALL
 Maybe I shouldn't tell you that.
 Maybe I should tell you I wasn't
 scared at all. But I was...
 (long pause)
 Enough to almost kill him.

HARDY
 But you didn't.

KENDALL
 No. Poetic justice, though.

OSBORNE
 Why?

No reply. Hardy smiles, understanding.

HARDY
 Because Childs is the one who shot
 you.

Osborne looks up, surprised. Kendall nods.

KENDALL
 But that came later.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- LAST NIGHT

As Kendall safeties his rifle and lowers it... The SOUND of
 a tremendous EXPLOSION comes from their right! Kendall and
 Childs knocked off their feet as the sky momentarily LIGHTS
 UP with the blast as a MAN SCREAMS!

CHILDS
Over there!

Childs points to the right, where the dim shine of PHOSPHOROUS
 can be seen through the trees. He drags Kendall to his feet
 and the two take off running towards it.

Kendall panting and scared, ducking branches and leaping
 ditches as the two sprint towards the dying glow.

CHILDS
Hello! HEL-

The sound of GUNFIRE! Childs TACKLES Kendall...

CHILDS

GET DOWN!

They hit the deck, face down in mud. It takes them a second to realize the shots are not directed at them.

CHILDS

Fuck, what the *fuck* is going on-

KENDALL

What do we do?

CHILDS

Whoever it is isn't shooting at us...

He trails off. The gunfire and screaming have stopped. Silence now, save for the wind and rain.

KENDALL

Don't want to go-

CHILDS

Fine.

Childs rises and heads towards where the sounds were.

Kendall, lying in the rain and mud, shivering. Alone. After a moment he gets up and follows.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- CREEK BED,-- LAST NIGHT

The SCORCHED GROUND and TREES smolder under the rainfall. Kendall finds Childs, standing down by the creek.

Something lies by his feet.

KENDALL

What's-

He stops, seeing.

KENDALL

Oh, *Jesus*.. .

WEST. Literally spread out on the ground, dead. Eyes open, face half blackened, he has been ripped in two at the torso. A *horrifying* sight. Kendall stumbles back from it.

KENDALL

Did- Did you-

CHILDS

It was the *grenade* you fucking idiot. Look at him!

Kendall can't. He sits, sobbing. Part horror, part relief.

 CHILDS
 This isn't our area. Whose area is
 This-

 MUELLER
Can anybody hear me!

Childs pivots at the sound of Mueller coming over the ridge.

 MUELLER
 Hey, I-
 (seeing it)
 Holy fuck. . . . holy fuck, what the
 fuck did you guys do?

 CHILDS
 We found him like this-

Mueller raises his rifle at the weeping Kendall.

 MUELLER
 You killed him you fucking faggot-

 CHILDS
 We found him like this! Kendall was
 with me the whole- Listen to me!

Mueller, finally seeming to understand. Lowering the gun.

 MUELLER
 Jesus, Jesus fucking Christ...

Muttering to himself, walking in circles.

 CHILDS
 Where's Pike?

No response.

 CHILDS
 Mueller, where's Pike?

Mueller looks up.

 MUELLER
 We got- I don't know, we got separated

 CHILDS
 Before or after the explosion?
 (no response)
Mueller-

 MUELLER
I don't know!

KENDALL
How can you not know-

Mueller comes at him, screaming:

MUELLER
*Shut the fuck up, you fucking faggot,
You just shut the FUCK UP-*

CHILDS
HEY!

Mueller stops, eyes crazed. Childs looks to the sky, which is becoming worse by the second.

CHILDS
We have to get out of this. To find
the cabin.

He helps Kendall to his feet.

KENDALL
What about Pike?

CHILDS
Maybe he'll be there. Either way,
we have to go.

Kendall nods, slowly. The two start up the hill.

MUELLER
Shouldn't we- I mean, we shouldn't
just leave him here.

He points down to West's body. Childs looks at it.

CHILDS
You can carry him if you want.

He and Kendall continue on. Mueller lingers a moment longer and then turns, following them up the hill.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- LAST NIGHT

Kendall, Childs, and Mueller make their way through the bush. The WIND and RAIN have conspired into a FULL BLOWN HURRICANE.

The three men are practically stumbling now, leaning in against it to stay on their feet. Kendall spies something through the maelstrom. It looks like WET WOOD. He points:

KENDALL
There!

THE CABIN -- Wooden, one story, and large, it resembles a solidly built shack. It is being thrashed by the storm.

The trio stumble towards the front door...

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

Obviously abandoned. Bare of any furniture save for two wooden chairs next to an empty fireplace.

DUNBAR and NUNEZ shout in surprise as the three men practically collapse into the cabin. Dunbar runs to bolt the door against the elements as Nunez helps them up.

NUNEZ

What happened to you-

MUELLER

What happened to you?

DUNBAR

We finished the course and came here,
Then heard an explosion-
(to Mueller)
Where's Pike?

CHILDS

We don't know. West is dead.

Silence. Dunbar and Nunez stare at him. Mueller jerks a hand towards Kendall and Childs.

MUELLER

They found him. Poor fucker was
Practically blown in half-

KENDALL

Poor fucker my ass...

MUELLER

You better watch it, faggot, I'm not
Sure you and Childs didn't do him-

CHILDS

What about you, wandering around
Alone? At least we have an alibi-

DUNBAR

What do you mean, alone?

MUELLER

Pike and I got separated-

KENDALL

Yeah and he doesn't know when-

MUELLER

I remember now, it was before the
Explosion-

KENDALL
Oh, you remember now-

MUELLER
I'm about two seconds away from seeing
If fairies really can fly-

NUNEZ
What about Pike?

Mueller stops, as the others turn towards the big man.
Silence. They realize what the question means.

DUNBAR
He wouldn't kill anybody. . .

MUELLER
Oh, bullshit, he's a fucking convict.
You know how much he hated West-

DUNBAR
I hated West, Childs hated West,
everyone with a goddamn brain hated
West but that doesn't mean we killed
him!

NUNEZ
What if it wasn't one of us? What
if it was a local-

KENDALL
He was blown up by a phosphorous
grenade, they don't exactly sell
those at 7-11.

MUELLER
Look, here are the facts - Roberto
was with Dunbar, Queen Kendall was
with Childs, and Pike's the only one
not here. He did it!

The others nod, becoming convinced.

CHILDS
He *is* the only one unaccounted for.

KENDALL
Maybe he's dead too. Maybe you killed
Them both, Mueller-

DUNBAR
Shut up.
(to Mueller)
Let me see your grenades.

MUELLER
Why?

DUNBAR
 We were each given three so whoever
 killed West will be missing one.

Mueller angrily digs into his sack and pulls out his grenades.

MUELLER
 See? Three. Now can we please-

He stops. Hearing a SOUND outside. Through the wind and
 rain, FOOTSTEPS on the porch.

They all turn to the door. Waiting...

The DOOR SWINGS OPEN.. Pike. Covered in BLOOD.

PIKE
 Hey, guys.

They stare at him as he calmly closes the door and walks
 over to the empty FIREPLACE. Finally:

DUNBAR
 Whose blood is that, Jay? West's.

PIKE
 Any kindling for afire?

He looks around for kindling. A beat.

DUNBAR
 What do you mean, West's?

PIKE
 I mean I killed him.
 (pause)
 Isn't that what we all wanted?

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

HARDY
 He admitted it.

KENDALL
 Right in front of us. Mueller went
 after him but we held him back.
 Pike surrendered and volunteered to
 be tied up. So we roped him to a
 chair and tried to ride out the storm.

OSBORNE
 Why would he just surrender?

Kendall turns to her and smiles.

KENDALL
 Because he had a plan.

INT. CABIN -- LIVING ROOM -- LAST NIGHT

Pike, tied to a chair by the fireplace while the others look for, food in the KITCHEN. Alone, Kendall walks past Pike:

PIKE

Hey, Kendall, talk to you for a sec?

Kendall looks around - there seems no harm in it.

PIKE

You hated West as much as I did.
I'm not saying what I did was right,
but you can't tell me you're not
glad the motherfucker's dead.

Kendall says nothing. Pike looks around, makes sure no one is listening and then whispers:

PIKE

The thing is, we've got a real
opportunity here. You turn me in
Tomorrow and we're both fucked-

KENOALL

What are you talking about?

PIKE

A gay Senator's son who let his Sarge
get fragged on a training exercise?
The press'll crucify you *and* your
father. His career will be over and
it'll be your fault. But we do this
different and you come out a hero.

On Kendall, thinking about it. A beat.

KENOALL

How?

PIKE

Mueller. He's as bad as West and we
both know it. Now I can't do it,
cause I'm tied up, but we get the
others to go along-

KENDALL

Don't think I want to hear this-

PIKE

Someone *else* can do the deed, it
doesn't have to be you. Maybe Nunez
too, he's got a tendency to follow
Mueller, but the rest of us can come
out ahead - the guys who took out
their Sergeant's killers!

(MORE)

PIKE (CONT'D)

We'll move the bodies out to the creek and say we came over the hill right as they fragged West, all we gotta do is tell the story right.

Kendall stares at him. Disgusted.

KENDALL

You're sick, Pike.

He turns and walks away. Pike watches him go.

KENDALL (V.O.)

Later on I saw him talking to Dunbar. They had been close. I was in another room when it happened.

INT. CABIN -- KITCHEN LAST NIGHT

Kendall, looking through the empty cabinets for food when

A GUNSHOT -- From the living room. As Kendall bolts towards the noise, the air is filled with the sounds of SCREAMING and SHOOTING! He pushes through the door...

INT. CABIN -- LIVING ROOM -- LAST NIGHT

Kendall, coming through the door as we SLO-MO...

Mueller, sprawled out on the floor, dead... Pike, tied to the chair, bullethole in his forehead... Nunez, wounded, stumbling out the front door into the hurricane...

And a badly wounded Childs, pistol out, TURNING towards the SOUND OF THE DOOR and FIRING...

Kendall's arm, HIT with a SLUG, and he starts to go down...

FREEZE-FRAME -- On Kendall's form, falling.

KENDALL (V.O.)

I don't think he meant to do it. It was just reflex - he'd already been gutshot. I must have passed out cause next thing I knew...

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- DAWN

The sounds of RUNNING and HEAVY BREATHING. Kendall's eyes flutter open. He's on Dunbar's back, being carried through the woods. The sound of GUNFIRE and a TREE BRANCH SHATTERS next to them. Someone is chasing them. Trying to kill them.

Nunez.

Dunbar bobs and weaves as another volley of bullets comes from behind and we can now hear ROTOR BLADES APPROACHING...

EXT. CLEARING -- DAWN

As Dunbar bursts into the sunlight, carrying Kendall.

The entire thing dreamlike, what we saw at the opening, but from KENDALL'S VIEWPOINT -- the helicopter overhead, Nunez behind, Dunbar turning and shooting, NUNEZ GOING DOWN...

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

KENDALL
And that's it.

Hardy is silent. Staring at him.

OSBORNE
Nunez was chasing Dunbar.

KENDALL
Because he'd shot Mueller.

OSBORNE
But you didn't see it, right?

KENDALL
Like I said, I was in the kitchen.
When I came out, Mueller and Pike
were dead, Nunez and Childs were hit
and Dunbar was gone.

HARDY
Why did he come back for you?

KENDALL
I honestly don't know. Maybe to
have someone to cover for him. And
I wish I could, but there's no doubt
in my mind he killed those men.

Silence. Kendall's got nothing more to say.

HARDY
Okay. I think that's it. He rises
and walks to the door.

KENDALL
Mr. Hardy?

Hardy turns back.

KENDALL
What *did* Dunbar tell you?

Hardy smiles and pushes out the door...

EXT. STYLES' OFFICE -- DAY

Hardy and Osborne stand before the Colonel, filling him in.

HARDY
Pike killed West, Dunbar killed
Mueller, Childs, and Nunez.

STYLES
Who killed Pike?

HARDY
Someone must have got a shot off.
He wasn't exactly a moving target.

Styles turns to Osborne.

STYLES
What do you think?

OSBORNE
It's too neat.

HARDY
"Too neat." How long have you been
an investigator?

OSBORNE
I don't think that has anything to
do with-

HARDY
That means under a year. Let me
explain what ten years of police
work has taught me - murder is *basic*.
There are no conspiracies, no grand
mysteries, and no evil puppet masters
behind it all, pulling the strings;
murder is shitty people doing a shitty
thing to other shitty people - it
doesn't always make sense but it's
always neat. Dunbar's our guy.

Osborne struggles to put it into words.

OSBORNE
I just... He came *back* for Kendall.
I don't think he's capable of murder.

HARDY
Everyone's capable of murder, Osborne.

Osborne turns, making her case to Styles.

OSBORNE

Look, all we've got is what Kendall says, and he didn't actually witness any deaths except Nunez. He found West, he saw Mueller and Pike, but just their bodies - he didn't see any crime committed.

HARDY

Well, I'm sure if he'd known this was all going to happen he'd have Tried harder to witness it for you-

STYLES

West's body isn't in the creek bed.

They stop arguing, turning to look at him.

STYLES

We've already been over the terrain twice. Nothing.

HARDY

There was a hurricane, Bill, the wind probably moved it.

STYLES

Habeas Corpus - you have to have a body to have a crime.

HARDY

Okay, then let's widen the search 'to include the endzone in Giants Stadium and the trunk of my car-

STYLES

Without the body we have no physical proof. We need a confession.

HARDY

From *Dunbar*? I hate to break this to you, but I don't think he's gonna be all that psyched to put himself in for the death penalty.

STYLES

Nevertheless-

HARDY

Nevertheless what'? Kendall will testify and that'll be enough.

STYLES

Not for me.

A beat. Almost accusingly:

HARDY
You mean not enough to save you.

STYLES
JAG gets here in three hours. Try
for the confession.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- DAY

Dunbar looks up as Hardy and Osborne enter.

HARDY
(cheerfully)
Hey, Ray! Just had a nice talk with
your buddy. Kendall - seems you
killed three people!

DUNBAR
That son of a bitch.

HARDY
That'd be my reaction too-

DUNBAR
He's lying.

HARDY
Well, why didn't you say so? We'll
Just drop all your charges, then-

DUNBAR
I'm *serious*-

Hardy leans across the table.

HARDY
Fuck "you're serious", Raymond, you
got exactly zero truck with us; right
now we'd take the word of a *crackhead*
over yours, so if you've got something
to say, say it.

DUNBAR
Did Kendall tell you about the PX?

OSBORNE
He said he worked there-

DUNBAR
No, did he *tell* you about it? About
the business Childs ran?

OSBORNE
What business?

DUNBAR
Pills, shots, you name it, Basic's a lot easier when you don't feel pain-

HARDY
So Childs made some side money, so what? *People are dead*, Ray, and the only one we have to blame is you-

DUNBAR
Didn't shoot West-

HARDY
Yeah, we know, Pike did.

Dunbar stares at him.

DUNBAR
You think you know everything, don't you? You haven't even scratched the *surface*.

Hardy leans across the table, looks Dunbar dead in the eye.

HARDY
I know enough to know you got two choices - you can sign a confession, in which case you'll probably spend the rest of your life in a military prison, or you can tell us to fuck off, in which case you'll probably get the *gas chamber*.
(smiling)
Am I scratching your surface yet?

Dunbar stares at him for a moment and then LAUNCHES HIMSELF at Hardy, SCREAMING. Tackles him to the floor, CHOKING HIM...

Osborne, pulling her sidearm, and PISTOL WHIPPING Dunbar in the head! Dunbar goes sprawling off Hardy as M.P.'s rush into the room, RESTRAINING him.

Hardy gets up, gasping, and stumbles to the door.

OSBORNE
Hardy!

But he's already gone.

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- CORRIDORS -- DAY

Hardy, walking angrily towards the front entrance, wheezing and massaging his neck. Osborne, running to catch up.

HARDY
Why the *fuck* wasn't he in restraints?

OSBORNE

I don't know.

Styles appears at the end of the hall.

STYLES

Tom, where are you going-

HARDY

Home, I'm *done*.

STYLES

What about the confession?

Hardy stares at him. ..

HARDY

You want a confession? Why don't you confess, Bill: people are dead and you don't give a *shit* about it! Only reason you called me is to protect your fucking job, you *know* this is your fault-

STYLES

What the hell are you talking about-

HARDY

I'm talking about *West!* We had him, Bill, we were *there*. You're the fucking Base Commander, you knew what he did to Cadets and you let him go on the way he always he has- Styles couldn't reassign him, he's a legend-

HARDY

You knew what he was capable of and you just *stood by*. It was just a matter of time till somebody fragged his ass, and you know what? He deserved it. *There's* your confession.

He pushes past a shocked Styles and walks out the door.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- PARADE GROUNDS -- DAY

Hardy storms across the grass. Osborne, still following.

OSBORNE

Goddammit, Hardy, you can't just leave-

HARDY

Watch me.

OSBORNE

You said you owed Styles and now you're gonna turn your back on him?

Hardy whirls on her.

HARDY

West was a monster! Fifteen years ago, I was here, I was Section Eight, I was Pike. Fuck being the knife dummy- that thing he did, stripping Pike down, making him stand outside all night? He did that every year, he did that to me. Fifteen years ago, I wanted him dead, and now I'm supposed to care that somebody offed him? Sorry, no can do. I tried.

OSBORNE

You did more than try. You cracked Dunbar in less than three minutes, as an investigator you're *phenomenal*-

HARDY

Phenomenal at taking bribes, right?

A beat. Osborne shakes her head.

OSBORNE

I was starting to believe you, you know? That you weren't who everyone said. I guess I was wrong-

HARDY

Oh, spare me the reverse psychology *bullshit!* This isn't my "great second chance", Osborne. Everyone thinks I'm a piece of shit cop who took money and *nothing* is going to change that. Nobody will ever know what happens here-

OSBORNE

But you will.

Hardy stares at her.

HARDY

Why do you *care*?

OSBORNE

Because it's my job. Because people are dead. Because of the whole honor and duty thing, make a difference in the world, crap like that.

(pause)

We can *do* this, Hardy.

Hardy looks at the ground.

OSBORNE
Two and a half hours. That's all
I'm asking. Two and a half hours to
maybe get the truth. Silence.

Hardy looks back up at her. Speaking softly:

HARDY
I didn't shoot West...

OSBORNE
What?

HARDY
Dunbar... He said he didn't shoot
West. West wasn't shot, Kendall
said he was blown apart by a
phosphorous grenade and Dunbar never
saw the body.

They stare at each other for a moment...

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- DAY

Hardy and Osborne enter to find Dunbar in SHACKLES.

DUNBAR
Apologize-

HARDY
You saw West's body.

DUNBAR
Of course-

OSBORNE
Where?

DUNBAR
The creek bed-

HARDY
And he'd been *shot*.

DUNBAR
Yeah-

OSBORNE
What about the phosphorous grenade?

DUNBAR
One went off, yeah, but it didn't
Touch him- I thought you knew this-

HARDY

Tell it to me.

INT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- CREEK BED -- LAST NIGHT

Dunbar and Nunez RUNNING towards the glow of phosphorous and sound of GUNFIRE. They come over the hill to see Childs and Kendall, standing over WEST'S BODY. Dunbar stops, shocked.

DUNBAR

Holy fuck... Holy fuck, what the fuck did you guys *do*?

CHILDS

We found him like this...

Dunbar edges closer, looking at West. With BULLET HOLES. His chest, riddled.

KENDALL

Somebody emptied a full clip into him-

HARDY (V.O.)

Stop.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

HARDY

Kendall told us *Mueller* was the one who found them with West's body.

DUNBAR

He's lying, then. We didn't see Mueller till we got to the cabin.

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

Dunbar, Kendall, Childs, and Nunez push through the door to find Mueller in his undershirt, a FIRE burning in the hearth.

MUELLER

Jesus, what happened?

DUNBAR

(breathing hard)
West...he's dead.

OSBORNE (V.O.)

Back up.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

OSBORNE

Mueller was alone in the cabin?

DUNBAR

Yeah.

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

MUELLER

Pike and I got separated... then I heard gunfire. Close.

DUNBAR

So did we. Why didn't you come?

Mueller looks down, scared.

MUELLER

I was afraid... Mueller voice FADES OUT as he continues to talk.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

I didn't buy it. But Mueller had all three of his grenades.

Mueller shows his three grenades to the others.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

OSBORNE

At least you and Kendall agree on that.

HARDY

What happened next? Dunbar shudders.

DUNBAR

Pike came back.

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

Pike, staggering in through the door. The others get up from where they are sitting - it's been awhile since they arrived. Pike shouts at Mueller:

PIKE

What the fuck happened to you-

MUELLER

What the fuck happened to you? One minute you're next to me and the next you're gone and the sky lights up like fucking Christmas-

DUNBAR

Where have you been, Jay?

PIKE
 Wandering through a *hurricane* trying
 to find this place. It's gettin'
 bad out there-
 (looking around)
 Where's West?

CHILDS
 Yeah, *right*. . .

DUNBAR
Shut up.
 (to Pike)
 West's dead.

A beat.

PIKE
 What?

Silence. All of them staring at Pike.

DUNBAR
 Where have you been, Jay?

Pike, suddenly understanding. Fear creeping into his face.

PIKE
 Oh, no. . . no, fuck that-

He moves to the door, but. . .

NUNEZ
Hey!

Nunez, with his PISTOL out. Trained on Pike.

PIKE
 Roberto, what the fuck?

DUNBAR
 We just want to check your pack-

PIKE
 Why?

MUELLER
 Whoever shot the Sarge blew a grenade
 first-

PIKE
 Blame the nigger, then, huh? Someone
 turns up dead, you just look for the
 Darkest face in the crowd-

DUNBAR
 You know it's not like that-

PIKE

Do I?

The CLICK as Nunez pulls back the pistol's hammer.

NUNEZ

Let him check your pack.

Pike stares at them and then throws his pack down, angrily.

Dunbar goes to it, opens it, and reaches in. Pulls his hand out. Only TWO GRENADES. Looks at Pike. Sadly.

DUNBAR

Tie him up.

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

Later. The fury of the storm has increased. Kendall, Childs, Nunez, and Mueller, in the KITCHEN looking for food.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Pike, tied to the chair. Dunbar sitting in a corner, listening to the hurricane rage outside. Pike watches him.

PIKE

Just like the first day, huh? You standing guard on me.

A CREAKING as the cabin SHIFTS on it's foundation. Dunbar looks up at the roof, scared. It holds.

PIKE

This place ain't gonna hold much longer.

Dunbar doesn't reply. Still staring nervously at the roof. Pike looks to make sure the others out of earshot, then:

PIKE

You and me are friends, right?

No reply.

PIKE

Right?

DUNBAR

Yeah...

Pike takes a deep breath.

PIKE

You gotta untie me.
(off Dunbar's look)
I didn't do this thing, Ray.

DUNBAR
You hated West more than any of us.

PIKE
Maybe, but that don't make me a killer-

DUNBAR
You're the only one missing a grenade.

PIKE
Which anyone coulda taken out of my gear on the chopper. Were you watching *your* pack on the ride in?

Dunbar starts to get up.

PIKE
Ray, this is my *life* here. I ain't gonna pretend I'm not happy West is gone, but you *know* I couldn't have done this. It's not in me.

DUNBAR
If not you, then who?

PIKE
Mueller.

DUNBAR
Oh, come on-

PIKE
We're sweeping our area and suddenly he's gone. Couple minutes later, phosphorous grenade pops off about a third of a click away-

DUNBAR
That's exactly what he says about *you*.

PIKE
Who you gonna trust, Ray? Him or your friend?

Dunbar stares at him.

DUNBAR
You hated West, Mueller *loved* him-

PIKE
Enough to go to prison? Childs' PX Scam, Mueller was in on it-

DUNBAR
Bullshit.

PIKE
Look in my pack.

DUNBAR
Why?

PIKE
Just look. Little pocket.

Dunbar walks over to Pike's pack and unzips it. Checks the little pocket. Pulls out a VIAL and a SYRINGE.

PIKE
Combat grade morphine. Mueller sold it to me. .

DUNBAR
You're lying-

PIKE
Pull up my sleeve. Right arm.

Dunbar does to reveal a cluster of TRACK MARKS.

PIKE
That look like a lie to you? I been using solid for the last eight weeks.

Dunbar sits down. Not knowing what to say.

PIKE
After that first night on the parade Grounds with you, I was bad - Exposure, malnutrition, the works. I needed something to keep me from crashing. Mueller found me.

INT. CADET SHOWERS -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO

Empty except for Pike. He sits, nude, curled up on the tile, as the nozzles blast STEAMING WATER down onto his shivering form. FOOTSTEPS approaching. Mueller. He leans down next to Pike, speaking to him. Kindly.

PIKE (V.O.)
He said he knew guy who had an in at the PX, could hook me up. This is before I knew what a dick he was.

As Mueller produces a SYRINGE from his pocket...

INT. BASE PX -- BACKROOM -- SIX WEEKS AGO

A covert meeting among stacks of supplies. Childs stands with Mueller, talking to a gaunt Pike. Behind Pike are a group of other SICKLY LOOKING CADETS, all jonesing.

PIKE

Later on Childs got assigned there, started running the shit out to every cadet who needed it. But I was our class's first customer.. .

Pike hands the smiling Mueller a WAD OF CASH...

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

Dunbar staring open mouthed at Pike. Shocked.

DUNBAR

Why... why didn't you tell me?

PIKE

Becoming a morphine addict during Basic ain't exactly something you want to broadcast. Only Mueller and Childs know.

A beat. Dunbar gets to his feet.

DUNBAR

That still doesn't mean you didn't kill him.

PIKE

You saw West, right? How was he killed?

DUNBAR

Full clip to the body-

PIKE

From up close or far away?

DUNBAR

His chest was hamburger-

PIKE

That's close range. You go full auto on a guy from close range, you're gonna be swimming in blood. Look at my uniform. Nothing.

Dunbar looks. Not a speck of blood on it.

PIKE

And where's Mueller's? When I came in, he was only wearing a t-shirt.

Dunbar looks over to fireplace, where ashes are smoldering...

FLASHCUT TO - When Dunbar first entered the Cabin: Mueller, standing there in a T-SHIRT, a FIRE burning in the hearth.

PIKE
 Way I figure it, West must have found
 out about their little business and
 was gonna bust them, so they decided
 to get rid of him first...

DUNBAR
 (softly)
 They?

PIKE
 Mueller and Childs. One of them
 must've taken the grenade from my
 pack on the chopper...

INT. TRANSPORT HELICOPTER (FLYING) -- EARLIER LAST NIGHT

The Sectioners sit, stonefaced, staring out the window.
 CLOSE ON - Mueller's hand as it snakes into Pike's pack and
 extracts a phosphorous grenade.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- EARLIER LAST NIGHT

Mueller and Pike, twenty feet apart, scouring the brush for
 targets. Mueller looks to Pike and then slips away...

PIKE (V.O.)
 Then Mueller ditches me during the
 exercise and heads for the creek.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- CREEK BED,-- EARLIER LAST NIGHT

Mueller stands on the hill and pulls the grenades pin, tossing
 it down the embankment. ..

PIKE (V.O.)
 He blows the grenade to frame me and
 gets West to come running... .

The grenade BLOWS, setting the entire area AGLOW...

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- EARLIER LAST NIGHT

Kendall and Childs, turning towards the sound...

*Note: Each shot of Kendall and Childs in this sequence should
 correspond exactly to Kendall's Flashback.*

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- CREEK BED -- NIGHT

West emerges from the bush at a sprint.

WEST
 What the *fuck* is going on?!

Mueller runs down the embankment toward him.

MUELLER
Don't know, sir, I-

Six feet away from West, Mueller suddenly raises his rifle and PULLS THE TRIGGER.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- EARLIER LAST NIGHT

Kendall and Childs, running in the direction of the grenade...

PIKE
Childs' job is easy, he only has to
delay Kendall long enough for Mueller
to get away.

Suddenly MACHINE GUNFIRE shatters the night!

CHILDS
GET DOWN!

He tackles Kendall into the mud.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- CREEK BED -- EARLIER LAST NIGHT

Mueller, smoking rifle in hand, uniform covered in blood stands over WEST'S DEAD BODY. He turns and runs off INTO THE BRUSH. A moment later, Childs and Kendall come into view at the top of the embankment...

PIKE (V.O.)
Now all Mueller has to do is get rid
of the evidence...

INT. CABIN -- EARLIER LAST NIGHT

Mueller, still covered in blood, enters the dark cabin. He strips of his shirt and throws it in the fireplace. Striking a match, igniting the bloody rag... .

PIKE (V.O.)
And wait for everyone else to arrive.

Mueller, watching the evidence burn...

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

Pike sighs, finished with his story.

DUNBAR
I... I don't know...

PIKE
What don't you know?

DUNBAR
This is a lot of information to be
Getting... I have to think-

The hurricane outside GROWING LOUDER as the Cabin ROCKS again.
The sound of WOOD SNAPPING. Pike stares up at the roof.

PIKE

There's no time to think, Ray, we gotta get out of here! You untie me, we grab the guns, get Kendall and Nunez, and make a run for it-

DUNBAR

No... no, we can just wait till we get back and then tell the M.P.'s-

PIKE

We wait and I'm a dead man. I got a black face, a criminal record, and over a hundred other cadets who'll testify how much I hated West - my court martial will take six minutes. It's either me or them, Ray, and you gotta decide *right now*.

The cabin SHIFTS again. Dunbar stares at him.

PIKE

Untie me.

Dunbar doesn't move.

PIKE

Untie me, Ray.

A long beat. The two men stare at each other.

And then Dunbar pulls his knife from his boot and leans down to cut Pike's bonds.

PIKE

Thank God. . .

MUELLER (O.S.)

What the fuck are you *doing*?

Dunbar freezes. Caught.

He looks to the open kitchen door where Mueller stands.

MUELLER

Guys, get out here!

The others enter the room. Dunbar, kneeling there, knife inches away from severing Pike's ropes.

PIKE

This place is *going*, Mueller. We gotta move-

MUELLER
 Shut the fuck up.
 (to the others)
 He was gonna cut him loose.

The others stare at Dunbar.

NUNEZ
 Why?

PIKE
 Cause I didn't do it.

Childs motions to Dunbar.

CHILDS
 Get away from there.

He's serious. Dunbar moves away from Pike.

MUELLER
 We all know what you did, Pike. I
 don't know what kind of nigger voodoo
 You been working in here, but-

PIKE
 Where's your shirt, Mueller?

MUELLER
 Used it to start the fire-

PIKE
 Still got mine on, not a speck of
 blood on it. Not a bad trick for a
 murderer- you said you *burned* yours?

The others begin to look at Mueller with new eyes.

MUELLER
 Was freezing from the hurricane-

KENDALL
 So you took off your shirt?

MUELLER
 To start a *fire*, goddammit!
 (pointing to Pike)
 What about him, huh? Maybe he offed
 the Sarge and changed shirts, brought
 an extra one in his pack. Y'ever
 think of *that*? Go ahead, cut him
 loose! First chance he gets, he'll
 waste the rest of us, that's how
 they work-

The hurricane, reaching FEVER PITCH outside as WATER begins
 leaking in through the roof.

PIKE
 Goddammit, Ray, we gotta get out of
 Here-

MUELLER
 We're not going *anywhere*.

PIKE TURNS TO MUELLER:

PIKE
 Cadet Michael Mueller, I hereby place
 you under military arrest for the
 Murder of Sergeant Nathan West-

MUELLER
 The *fuck* are you talking about-

PIKE
 You are to be stripped of all weapons
 And placed under guard-

MUELLER
Bullshit-

PIKE
 Until we return to base, and
 ballistics can match your weapon to
 the slugs in Sergeant West's body-

MUELLER
Shut up!

Mueller pulls his SIDEARM and POINTS IT AT PIKE.

KENDALL
 Mueller, what the *fuck-*

DUNBAR
 Don't do this-

Pike, EYES LOCKED with Mueller. Continuing:

PIKE
 A test will no doubt *link* you to the
 Killing-

DUNBAR
Put it down!

MUELLER
Tell him to shut up-

PIKE
 -failure to comply with this arrest
 is a court martialable offense in
 and of itself-

KENDALL

Pike, *please*-

PIKE

Although that won't matter much when
Coupled with the *murder charge*-

MUELLER

SHUT THE FUCK UP YOU FUCKING NIGGER-

Pike leans forward.

PIKE

You stupid white trash motherfucker,
I saw you do it-

And Mueller FIRES.

Pike's head SNAPS BACK.

The gunshot, DEAFENING. Then, for an eternity, SILENCE.

Nobody moves. Nobody breathes. As if time has stopped.

KENDALL

Oh.. . my God...

Mueller lowers his arm, the pistol clattering to the floor.

His face, as shocked as the others.

MUELLER

He wouldn't... stop talking...

He takes a step forward towards Pike. A hole in the middle
of the black man's forehead.

DUNBAR

(softly)
So you killed him?

MUELLER

I. . .

Almost mechanically, Dunbar begins to reach for his own gun...

The unmistakable sound of a two rifles' magazines being RACKED
simultaneously. Dunbar turns to see Childs and Nunez, their
M-16's in hand. Levelled at him.

CHILDS

Get that hand away.

Dunbar does. Looks to Nunez.

DUNBAR

You too?

CHILDS

We can still come out of this okay.
Pike got free, he got a gun, he came
after us. That's the story.

Mueller collapses on the ground. Head in hands.

MUELLER

West was one thing, but this-

CHILDS

Shut up, Mueller.

KENDALL

You framed-him...

CHILDS

None of that matters now. We got
two dead bodies and a story that
explains them. You're either with
us, or against us - which is it?

Dunbar and Kendall, looking at each other. It's clear what
the wrong answer will mean. A long beat, until

KENDALL

Okay-

He is cut off as the WIND outside ROARS - the HURRICANE
mounting to it's FULL FORCE - and the WINDOWS BLOW INWARDS,
showering Childs, Mueller, and Nunez with glass!

Dunbar's hand flies to his pistol, PULLING IT...

Mueller, SCREAMING, trying to claw the glass from his EYES...

Childs, seeing Dunbar move, PULLS THE TRIGGER. . . .

And the cabin is filled with the THUNDER OF GUNFIRE as Kendall
goes down, clutching his ARM...

DUNBAR FIRES, hitting Childs directly in the chest...

Childs, still shooting, falls back, his random spray of
bullets PUNCHING INTO MUELLER who jerks like a marionette...

Nunez, drawing a bead on Dunbar, about to shoot, when...

A great CRESCENDO of WOOD SPLINTERING and SUPPORTS BUCKLING
overtakes them and the CABIN'S ROOF COMES DOWN ON THEIR HEADS.

EXT. DEMOLISHED CABIN -- FIRST LIGHT

Hours later. The rain has lessened and the Hurricane has
begun to lift as Dunbar pulls himself from the debris.
Hearing a FAINT CRY from his left.

Kendall. Half conscious, his arm, bloody.

Dunbar slings the man across his shoulders as the rising sun begins to peak through the clouds overhead.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- SUNRISE

Dunbar, carrying Kendall towards the clearing when GUNFIRE comes from behind. He turns to look...

Nunez. The only other survivor from the Cabin. A hundred yards back, rifle in hand, coming after them with a vengeance.

Dunbar, sprinting towards the clearing, bullets at his heels and as he bursts from the tree line he looks up to see a

HELICOPTER OVERHEAD

DUNBAR (V.O.)
And then I killed the last of them.

FLASHCUT TO - Nunez, chest blown open, going down...

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

And we're back to the interrogation. Dunbar, stubbing out a cigarette and looking up at Hardy and Osborne.

DUNBAR
Can I have some coffee?

Osborne blinks, like a trance has been broken.

OSBORNE
Yeah... yeah, sure.

She goes over to the machine and pours a cup.

HARDY
You shot Childs and Nunez.

DUNBAR
They would have killed us both. You want me to write a confession, I'll write a confession.

HARDY
You saved Kendall's life-

DUNBAR
But not Pike's.

Osborne hands him the coffee.

OSBORNE
Why didn't you tell us all this in the first place?

DUNBAR

Would you have believed me?

Their faces say "no". Osborne spreads a MAP out on the table.

OSBORNE

Where's the cabin?

DUNBAR

Don't know on a map. West told us it was there, we just found it. Maybe the hurricane took it away.

HARDY

Raymond, for you to have any chance of coming out of this, we need to locate the other bodies and examine them to corroborate your testimony. Otherwise this is just another story-

DUNBAR

Mr. Hardy, I joined the army for college money. I didn't ask for any of this - I tried to do the right thing out there and people got killed. You say finding those bodies'll help me, then go find them. I don't want to die.

EXT. FOR MCKINLEY -- CORRIDORS -- DAY

Hardy and Osborne, walking and talking.

OSBORNE

Talk it through: Childs, Mueller, and Nunez know they're going out on the regular Tuesday Night drill, hurricane or no hurricane, so they plan it: Kill West, pin it on Pike.

HARDY

And they're smart about it. They know when you commit a crime you know is going to be investigated, you need a fall guy and for that to work, you have to have a witness.

OSBORNE

Dunbar.

HARDY

Exactly, someone who's not involved, who's word can't be questioned. You only let them see what you want them to see, you make them believe, so when the time comes, they've totally bought into your version of events.

OSBORNE

They believe the innocent are guilty
and the guilty are innocent.

HARDY

And if they're asked, that's what
they'll tell the, world.

OSBORNE

So it's a good plan but it goes wrong;
Mueller flips out and shoots their
fall guy, which means they have to
bring Dunbar and Kendall into the
Cover story-

HARDY

Kendall maybe would have agreed, but
The hurricane buttfucks the cabin-

OSBORNE

Buttfucks the cabin?

HARDY

And all hell breaks loose. A lot of
Good guys shoot a lot of bad guys
and whiz, bang, zoom, happy ending.

OSBORNE

So why, after Dunbar drags Kendall
out from under a house, does the
Senator's son try and get us to put
his savior in the gas chamber?

HARDY

That bugs you too?

OSBORNE

Little bit.

HARDY

Let's go talk to Bill...

INT. STYLES' OFFICE -- DAY

Hardy and Osborne stand in front of an agitated Styles. He
tries to take a hit off his asthma inhaler and gets nothing.

Frustrated, he tosses it away.

STYLES

Fucking asthma... This whole thing's
driving it nuts.

A beat.

HARDY

What I said before-

STYLES
Was dead right. You think Dunbar's
on the level?

HARDY
Yeah.

STYLES
Does Osborne agree?

OSBORNE
Yes, sir, I do.

Hardy lays a piece of paper on Styles' desk.

HARDY
Dunbar's confession. It should be
enough to get you out of trouble.

Styles looks at it and then slowly up to Hardy.

STYLES
You want Kendall, don't you?

OSBORNE
He tried to burn Dunbar to us. You
don't do that if you're not involved.

Hardy nods, agreeing. Styles stares at them.

STYLES
You both know if you do this, if you
go after a Senator's son and you're
wrong... it's not just me in the hot
seat anymore.

OSBORNE
We know.

STYLES
(to Hardy)
I'm giving you a chance to walk away.

HARDY
We know.

Styles nods and looks to his desk. Almost to himself:

STYLES
You don't get to be a Colonel without
compromising. Without getting out
of the way of the bigger dogs. You
politic, play it safe, think of the
career first. And when things get
dirty, you just look the other way...

He looks back up at Hardy. His eyes, steeled.

STYLES

Four of my men are dead. You think Kendall had something to do with it, then you go get the son of a bitch.

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Kendall lies in his bed, looking worse than before. Hardy and Osborne enter.

OSBORNE

Pike never confessed.

KENDALL

We've been making progress, I see.

Osborne looks to her watch. Kendall notices.

KENDALL

Running out of time, are we? Tick-Tock, tick-tock, how long till your witnesses fly the coop?

OSBORNE

Fifty minutes.

KENDALL

Not much time to solve the crime. Tell me, detective, how did it feel taking blood money from Guissepe Torres? Did it weigh on your conscience or did you just not think about it?

HARDY

You tried to pin three stone murders on Dunbar-

KENDALL

How many murders did you cover up? One? Five? Maybe an even ten.

HARDY

(to Osborne)

Can I go to jail for punching a guy who's been shot?

Kendall begins coughing.

KENDALL

I think they're giving me the wrong medicine. This isn't a very good Hospital, you know-

Hardy sighs and goes to the sink to get him some water.

KENDALL
Epileptic attacks are murder on your system. Rattle your internal organs like a paint mixer.

HARDY
My heart weeps.

He returns with a GLASS OF WATER and hands it to Kendall.

OSBORNE
Pike never confessed.

KENDALL
No, but it got you *interested*, didn't it? Got you to dig. Inspired Ray to tell you terribly sordid tales about drugs and creek beds and dead little sergeants who stuck their noses where they didn't belong.

HARDY
Is it the truth?

KENDALL
There's that word again.
(smiling)
As I told you, I wasn't in the room when everyone started shooting.

OSBORNE
Dunbar says you were.

KENDALL
Then he's mistaken. You know, I really don't think my father would approve of this line of questioning-

HARDY
Why did you tell us he shot everybody, Levi? You put him in for three murders, the man saved your *life*-

KENDALL
So I should stay silent about his misdeeds? The guns went off, I ran in, Childs shot me, Pike and Mueller were dead, and Dunbar was running out the door with the smoking gun-

HARDY
Dunbar was running out the door? Ohhhhhh... See that's where I was confused, because I thought you said *Nunez* was running out the door.

KENDALL
No. I said Dunbar.

HARDY
Huh. You know, I really thought you said Nunez. I thought you said "Dunbar was gone," My fault, I gotta check the tape on that.
(off Kendall's look)
Oh, yeah we taped the last interview. This one too. Cause it'd be a real break for us to catch you in a lie.

Silence. They wait for Kendall's reaction. He looks momentarily flustered by this... and then he smiles.

KENDALL
I believe your next line is "What are you trying to hide?"

HARDY
Well?

KENDALL
Sorry to disappoint. I'm on painkillers for the injury - they cloud the mind. You're right, it was Nunez. Any more questions?

Hardy doesn't know what to say. That was his ace card.

KENDALL
Don't get me wrong, Mueller and Childs were quite the pair, the type of guys you didn't feel comfortable going to sleep around. Completely capable of murder. But as I said, I didn't hear the exchange before the shooting. I wasn't in the room.

Osborne furrows her brow at this as Hardy continues.

HARDY
Dunbar will testify that you were.

KENDALL
Then we'll leave it up to the courts - His word against mine. What does his father do again? Steelworker?
(smiling)
Doesn't matter, I'm sure justice will be served. In any case, my father will definitely want to talk to you about all these questions, these accusations on his son. He's quite protective.

Osborne turns to Hardy.

OSBORNE
I need to talk to you outside.

EXT. BASE HOSPITAL -- CORRIDOR -- DAY

Osborne and Hardy, exiting the room. Whispering:

HARDY
We're fucked, I know-

OSBORNE
They got their stories straight.

HARDY
What?

OSBORNE
What Kendall said - "the type of guys you don't feel comfortable going to sleep around." That's what *Dunbar* said about Childs to the letter.

HARDY
Are you sure?

OSBORNE
Positive. Hardy, they *planned* this.

She grins. He grins back.

OSBORNE
Not bad for hostile and uncooperative, eh?

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Hardy and Osborne reenter, smiling. Kendall chuckles.

HARDY
Something funny, Levi?

KENDALL
I was just thinking of what's going to happen to your careers when my father gets through with you.

Hardy pulls the out MICRORECORDER and hands it to Osborne.

HARDY
Why don't you talk to Levi off the record for a second?

OSBORNE
Good idea.

Smiling, she stops the tape. Then turns to Kendall.

OSBORNE

You and Dunbar got your stories straight. Little details, little inconsistencies, designed to bounce us back from one of you to the other, asking questions, killing time, until the transport arrives and whisks you away to where Senator Daddy can protect you. You think you're just going to slide out of this? You're an accessory to murder, Levi, you're Going to *jail*-

KENDALL

You can't threaten me-

HARDY

Jail if he's lucky, the gas chamber if he's not-

KENDALL

Didn't *do* anything-

Osborne laughs.

OSBORNE

It doesn't *matter*, Levi. We're going to find those bodies and when we do, I'm going to make sure one of them has a bullet in them that matches your weapon-

KENDALL

What?

HARDY

That's a *fantastic* idea-

OSBORNE

See, I just take your gun to the morgue and fire it into one of their skulls; then I call every newspaper in the country with the story about how Senator Kendall's gay son went *nuts* on a training mission-

KENDALL

(beginning to panic)
It won't work-

OSBORNE

It will and you know why?
(MORE)

OSBORNE

Because you're not a person anymore,
you're a cadet in the United States
Army; you have no identity, no Miranda
warning, and no *rights*. So I'm gonna
throw you to the wolves, and unlike
you I'm gonna get away with it,
because you're *pissing me off!*

She finishes, breathing hard. Kendall, totally cowed. Hardy,
trying to suppress a smile. Osborne rises for the door.

OSBORNE

Enjoy your flight to Washington-

KENDALL

Wait-

OSBORNE

What.

Silence. Kendall takes a deep breath.

KENDALL

Dunbar's telling the truth.

OSBORNE

Wrong answer-

KENDALL

We did get our stories straight, but
not because we killed anyone.

(pause)

It was because I threatened him.

HARDY

Why?

KENDALL

Because of what I saw.

(pause)

Who really killed West.

Osborne holds up the microrecorder and starts the tape again.

OSBORNE

Who killed Sergeant West?

Kendall stares at the recorder. A long pause.

OSBORNE

Who, Levi-

KENDALL

Childs.

HARDY
How do you know?

KENDALL
Because I was standing next to him.

He pauses, taking a shaky sip of water.

KENDALL
I was in on the PX thing. He and Mueller and me, we were making *thousands*. West found out. Childs said we were just gonna scare him - Use my Dad's clout. I had this whole speech prepared about how if he ratted us, his career was over. We met him in the creek bed but before I said anything...

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- CREEK BED -- LAST NIGHT

West stands in front of Childs and Kendall, facing them.

Kendall opens his mouth to speak, but Childs steps forward and raises his rifle, FIRING...

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

KENDALL
I swear, I didn't know he was gonna do it. After, he told me we were gonna pin it on Pike, one of our biggest customers.

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

As they TIE PIKE to the, chair.

KENDALL (V.O.)
Nobody'd believe the word of a black junkie ex-con against ours.

Childs gives Kendall a look that says "Stay quiet".

KENDALL (V.O.)
He told me I'd better keep quiet, or I'd end up the same as West.

Pan over to Dunbar, who binds his friend, sadly.

KENDALL (V.O.)
Dunbar didn't know anything about any of it. Everything he told you was true, except after...

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- LAST NIGHT

Dunbar pulls Kendall from the cabin's wreckage. As Kendall begins to talk to him, Dunbar's eyes widen in shock. ..

KENDALL (V.O.)

I told him what had really happened to West. Told him to keep quiet about it or I'd destroy him. Because if it came out that I was involved with the whole PX scam, my father would be finished.

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

KENDALL

I scared Dunbar into silence. He's been trying to cover for me the whole time. We got here, you came to see me... I didn't know if I could *trust* him with that kind of secret-

OSBORNE

So you framed him. The same way Childs was going to frame Pike.

Kendall nods. Crying a little.

HARDY

Little advice, Levi, next time you frame a guy, pick someone who can't *defend* themselves.

Kendall says nothing.

OSBORNE

What happened with Nunez?

KENDALL

He came after us. And I told Dunbar he had to kill him...

EXT. CLEARING -- EARLIER THAT MORNING

The helicopter, hovering overhead. Dunbar, carrying Kendall, spinning his rifle to face Nunez, sixty yards away. Dunbar hesitates before firing, not wanting to...

KENDALL

Do it!

Dunbar's rifle ERUPTS...

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- PRESENT DAY

KENDALL

And he did.

Kendall finishes, wiping his face. Osborne turns to Hardy.

OSBORNE
That's how you do good cop/bad cop.

Hardy smiles and gets up. Walking slowly to Kendall's bed.

HARDY
 Childs did it, huh?

Kendall nods, still a little teary.

HARDY
 First Pike, then Mueller, now Childs?
 When are we getting to the others?
 When are we gonna hear about Nunez?

FLASHCUT TO - NUNEZ, in the creek bed, SHOOTING WEST.

HARDY
 Or Dunbar?

FLASHCUT TO - Now DUNBAR, SHOOTING WEST.

HARDY
 Or you, Levi? When is it finally
 going to come out that you were the
 one who killed him?

FLASHCUT TO - KENDALL, SHOOTING WEST.

KENDALL
 I *didn't*-

HARDY
 But you can't prove it! You can't
 prove anything until we *find the*
bodies!

Kendall, crying harder now, beginning to shake.

HARDY
 You lied to us, Levi, you're going
 to the *gas chamber* unless you tell
 us where to find them!

KENDALL
 I *don't know*-

HARDY
 Where are they!

KENDALL
 Maybe-

HARDY
MAYBE WHAT-

KENDALL

MAYBE HE-

And then. His mouth SLAMS SHUT. Teeth cracking together over and over again like a metronome on speed, and his body JERKS HORRIBLY, going horizontal, SHAKING VIOLENTLY!

Osborne, leaping to her feet.

OSBORNE

Get something between his teeth!

Hardy grabs a fork from the bedside table and tries to shove it into Kendall's chattering mouth. His teeth, CLAMPING DOWN on the metal and Hardy's hand, drawing blood.

HARDY

Shit!

The Nurse bursts into the room.

NURSE

What is-

OSBORNE

He's an epileptic!

The Nurse runs to the bed, pushing Hardy aside. As more MEDICAL PERSONNEL runs into the room, they usher Hardy and Osborne to the door.

DOCTOR

You're going to have to wait outside-

OSBORNE

He's a witness!

DOCTOR

It doesn't matter, outside-

KENDALL

F-F-F-F-F-F-Fuh-

Osborne tries to move to him, but the Doctor blocks her path.

OSBORNE

He's trying to say something-

DOCTOR

Out, NOW.

KENDALL

Fuh-Fuh-Fuh-Fuh-Fuh-

Osborne knocks the Doctor down and runs to Kendall's side.

DOCTOR

SECURITY!

Kendall looks up, focusing on Osborne, a slight moment of clarity in his eyes.

KENDALL

Fuh-Fucking *Pike*.

And relapses into ANOTHER FIT as SECURITY GUARDS drag Hardy and Osborne from the room.

INT. BASE HOSPITAL -- WAITING ROOM -- DAY

Later. Hardy and Osborne sit in silence, eyes downcast.

Waiting. Hardy pulls his last cigarette from the pack, lights it, crumples the pack and tosses it into a garbage can.

HARDY

I pushed him too hard.

OSBORNE

You couldn't have known-

HARDY

Yeah, I could've. *Should've*.

OSBORNE

You wanted to get the truth.

HARDY

No, I didn't. I wanted to humiliate him. For what he did to Dunbar. For fucking over the little guy.

OSBORNE

You mean the falsely accused?

Hardy looks up at her and nods.

OSBORNE

You wanted to break him.

HARDY

Yeah.

OSBORNE

So did I.

She looks back to the floor. Hardy takes a drag from the cigarette, and then tosses that away too.

The door opens and Styles walks into the room. Somber.

STYLES

It's over. Time of death was 4:42.
(MORE)

STYLES (CONT'D)

JAG's been notified and I called the Senator myself. My report will reflect that his medical condition made this unavoidable... you two had no culpability in the matter.

HARDY

That's horseshit and you know it.

STYLES

Maybe. But it's my fault and I'll carry it.

He sighs and takes a seat next to them.

STYLES

We found the cabin. Demolished, like they said. No bodies. Hurricane like that coulda scooped 'em up, dropped them down two counties over. We'll find them.

Hardy says nothing.

STYLES

You think you could explain all this to me?

HARDY

I wouldn't know where to start.

(pause)

I guess it was about one man framing another. He thought if the other guy got blamed, people would overlook his own wrong doings.

Styles nods, understanding.

OSBORNE

What happens to Dunbar now?

STYLES

Gets on his plane in ten minutes, which means you two are done. You'll understand if I don't walk you out.

Hardy gets up to go and then stops. Realizing something.

HARDY

They're taking your command, aren't they?

STYLES

The Senator...

He points to Kendall's hospital room.

HARDY
I'm sorry, Bill.

STYLES
Don't be. I'm not cut out to deal
with the West's of the world.

HARDY
You're a good soldier, Bill.

STYLES
I thought you said that wasn't a
compliment.

Hardy smiles.

HARDY
This time it is.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- PARADE GROUNDS -- EVENING

The sun, beginning to dip in the sky, as Hardy and Osborne
exit the hospital.

OSBORNE
Your car's in the motor pool. I'll
walk you over.

They walk in silence, for a bit.

OSBORNE
So what now?

HARDY
Now I go home, get drunk, and try
and forget this ever happened.

OSBORNE
Think it'll work?

HARDY
Nah.

They pass a GROUP OF CADETS doing drills. Hardy, watching
them. Almost looking wistful.

OSBORNE
You know, you never told me why you
left the army.

HARDY
It dawned on me one day that we were
supposed to be a nation founded on
the principle of questioning
authority... and all I did here was
follow orders. It didn't add up.

HARDY [CONT'D]
Plus, I got kicked out.

OSBORNE
For what?

HARDY
That's gonna stay my secret.

INT. MOTOR POOL -- EVENING

Hardy and Osborne make their way towards Hardy's car.

OSBORNE
We were close to something with Kendall.

HARDY
Maybe... Maybe we were nowhere near.

Sometimes mysteries stay mysteries.

(pause)
I haven't by any chance grown on you, have I?

OSBORNE
No.

HARDY
Good, just making sure.

Osborne turns to the DUTY SERGEANT.

OSBORNE
We're going need a vehicle release.

The Sergeant nods, walking up with a clipboard.

SERGEANT
Sign here and here.
(recognizing them)
Hey, ain't you the folks workin' on that whole hulabaloo from last night?

OSBORNE
Yeah.

SERGEANT
Terrible tragedy. One of those Section Eight boys worked in here. Pike. Heard he got out okay.

Hardy signs the clipboard and hands it back.

HARDY
Hate to be the bearer of bad news, Sergeant, but he didn't make it.

The Sergeant scratches his head.

SERGEANT
Funny. I swear I saw them bring him
and the smaller guy in this morning.

OSBORNE
No, no that was Cadet Dunbar-

SERGEANT
You mean Ray Dunbar? Well, that
ain't right.

HARDY
Why not?

SERGEANT
I saw 'em get off the chopper. White
guys, right? Two

OSBORNE
So?

SERGEANT
Ma'am, Ray Dunbar's *black*.

Hardy and Osborne stare at him. Shocked
A beat.

SERGEANT
Did I say something wrong-

HARDY
(to Osborne)
What runway's that transport leaving
from?

OSBORNE
Four-

HARDY
Get in.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- PARADE GROUNDS -- EVENING

CADETS SCATTER as Hardy's car ROARS OUT OF THE MOTOR POOL,
PEELING across the grass towards the far side of the base!

Hardy, white knuckling the wheel, doing his best to steer
around anyone who can't get out of the way in time.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY RUNWAY FOUR -- EVENING

A Large TRANSPORT PLANE sits on the runway waiting as three
M.P.'s and a JAG LAWYER lead Dunbar/Pike (**who, for purposes
Of continuity, we will continue to call DUNBAR**) out to it.

The SQUEAL OF TIRES as Hardy's car SLIDES around the corner of the nearest building and SCREECHES to a halt by the plane.

Hardy and Osborne, leaping out, running towards Dunbar and the M.P.s.

OSBORNE
We need to talk to him-

JAG LAWYER
Sorry, Officer, we have a schedule
To keep-

OSBORNE
We need to talk to him now.

Hardy grabs Dunbar by the arm.

HARDY
We're not finished yet-

DUNBAR
You wanna bet?

JAG LAWYER
M.P.'s, escort this man off the base!

DUNBAR
(smiling)
Sorry, detectives. Time's up.

As the M.P.'s grab Hardy, dragging him away. Osborne, trying to stop them. Dunbar, climbing the stairs onto the plane...

Osborne pulls her SIDEARM, levelling it at him as Hardy yells:

HARDY
James Randall Pike, COME ON DOWN!

Dunbar stops at the hatchway. Slowly turning back to them. Seeing the gun. The M.P.'s release Hardy. Nobody moves.

OSBORNE
Let's go have a talk.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- EVENING

Hardy and Osborne roughly lead Dunbar into the room, the JAG Lawyer trailing behind, shouting:

JAG LAWYER
This is your entire career here-

OSBORNE
Fuck off.

She slams the door and BARRICADES it. Turns to Hardy.

OSBORNE

We got maybe three minutes till they break it down.

HARDY

Right back where we started.

DUNBAR

You want to talk about baseball now?

Hardy practically throws Dunbar into a chair.

HARDY

No more games, right, *Pike*? It was you who West singled out...

FLASHCUT TO - WEST on the parade grounds, now strangling DUNBAR on the first day...

HARDY

You who got hooked by Mueller's morphine...

FLASHCUT TO - Now DUNBAR in the showers as MUELLER hands him a syringe...

HARDY

You who did it *all*.

Hardy steps forward and RIPS OPEN Dunbar's right sleeve, revealing the TRACK MARKS.

HARDY

You wanted revenge on West, revenge on them all, so you killed them.

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

Dunbar standing in the Cabin; Mueller, Childs, and Pike, dead at his feet.

HARDY (V.O.)

But that wasn't enough. You needed a new identity, because no one was going to believe James Randall Pike, convicted felon, had acted so nobly in the face of danger - you needed a name people could trust, one that hadn't been to jail, one that hadn't publicly been West's bitch boy.

He stares down at the bodies in the cabin, his eyes focusing on the black man's uniform. The name on it reads - "DUNBAR".

As he reaches for it...

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT EVENING

OSBORNE

You kept Kendall alive to corroborate your story and he did it all the way up to the end. You even gave him his own motive in case we decided to burn him, too.

DUNBAR

Can't do that now, though, can you?

HARDY

You walked into the army a convicted felon with a sentence of five years in a uniform and were going to walk out eight weeks later with a different name, a clean record, and an honorable discharge - a guy who did "everything he could" to save his friends.

Dunbar looks at them. One to the other. Slowly.

DUNBAR

Is that what I did, now? And of course, you can prove all of it.

OSBORNE

We can prove that you're not Ray Dunbar. Impersonating a fellow Cadet is a court-martial in and of itself-

DUNBAR

Did I ever *claim* I was Raymond Dunbar? Was I ever told to state my name rank and serial number for the record? No. You *assumed* who I was, because I was wearing this uniform. Don't believe me?

He reaches under the table and rips out the HIDDEN MICROPHONE.

DUNBAR

Check your tapes.

Hardy and Osborne exchange an uneasy glance.

HARDY

We don't need the tapes-

DUNBAR

Oh, you don't? What else do you have on me? You haven't found any bodies yet, have you?

HARDY

We've found all of them.

Dunbar chuckles at the bluff.

DUNBAR
Ohhhh, I don't *think* so...

OSBORNE
How do you know that?

DUNBAR
Just a guess. Maybe they're not where they're supposed to be. Maybe somebody moved them. Habeas Corpus - no bodies, no crime, and Nunez still plays as self defense. Face it detectives ... you have *nothing*.

Hardy, knowing he's right. In a flash he reaches down PULLS OSBORNE'S GUN and grabs Dunbar, SLAMMING him up against the wall, pressing the weapon TO HIS TEMPLE!

HARDY
Not true, Cadet, I've got a gun-

DUNBAR
(terrified)
Jesus!

OSBORNE
Hardy, what are you doing-

HARDY
Isn't this how your story goes?
Pike annoys someone so much he gets shot in the head-

DUNBAR
Please, please don't-

A POUNDING on the locked door. Hardy ignores it.

HARDY
We can tie you to the chair if it'll work better for you-

OSBORNE
Hardy, for Chrissakes-

HARDY
WHERE'S WEST'S BODY?

DUNBAR
(practically in tears)
You'll never find it-

Hardy COCKS the pistol as Dunbar screams:

DUNBAR
*You'll never find it cause HE'S NOT
 DEAD!*

A CRASH as the door's lock SNAPS and M.P.'s POUR into the room! Styles and the JAG Lawyer behind, taking in the scene.

STYLES
What in God's name is going on?

Hardy releases Dunbar, who slides to the floor, gasping.

DUNBAR
 He- He made me do it-

HARDY
 Do what?

DUNBAR
 Hunting- we had to *hunt* him-

JAG LAWYER
Sergeant, arrest these men!

OSBORNE
 You mean the exercise?

DUNBAR
 There never was *an exercise!* Never targets, never teams, I don't even know if there's a creek bed out there-

As the M.P.'s grab Hardy and Osborne, pulling them away...

HARDY
What did you do?

JAG LAWYER
 That's enough-

HARDY
Goddammit, what did you DO?!

DUNBAR
I COULDN'T KILL HIM!

He breaks down sobbing. Styles holds up a hand to the M.P.'s.

STYLES
 Hang on.

JAG LAWYER
Colonel-

STYLES
 No. I want to hear this.

The JAG Lawyer glowers as the M.P.'s stand down. Dunbar tries to pull himself together. To Hardy:

DUNBAR

You're right. I was the one he singled out. Beat me morning, noon, and night, ran me ragged. When Mueller found me, I was *gone*. He gave me a little taste...

INT. CADET SHOWERS -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO

Mueller showing the syringe to the naked Dunbar. Dunbar's voice over speaks in unison with Mueller:

MUELLER AND DUNBAR (V.O.)

I got a friend with an in at the PX, can hook you up...

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT EVENING

DUNBAR

What I didn't know, was his friend was West. He ran the whole thing.

STYLES

You're lying, son.

DUNBAR

You think it's easy to have all that morphine just disappear without a higher up authorizing it? Check the requisition orders, I'll lay money it's his signature on them.

INT. SECTION EIGHT BARRACKS -- EIGHT WEEKS AGO

Dunbar, alone, sleeve rolled up, arm tied off: Sliding the needle into his vein...

DUNBAR (V.O.)

That was his game, see? Ride the cadets so hard they'd need something to stay on their feet. Then he'd send Mueller or Kendall to them, waving around their magic needle promising to make it all go away.

He hits the plunger, injecting. His face goes tranquil.

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT EVENING

DUNBAR

It wasn't a new thing either. He'd been doing this for years.

(MORE)

DUNBAR

Every nine weeks, a new class of cadets, new potential customers. The amount of money involved over that period of time... this was some high stakes shit.

He takes a deep breath, looking at them.

DUNBAR

Dunbar moved his through the kitchen. I worked in the motor pool and hooked all the mechanics. By the time the hurricane hit, we were all in. Some using, some pushing, some both. But then something happened. West heard one of us was about to talk, to blow his whole operation. He figured he'd made enough money, had enough of the army, maybe it was time to disappear. But first he was gonna teach us one last thing.

INT. SECTION EIGHT BARRACKS -- LAST NIGHT

West, entering the barracks, shouting the cadets awake.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

The Tuesday Night drill was the perfect cover. The hurricane made it even better.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- TARMAC -- LAST NIGHT

The cadets, climbing aboard the chopper.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

He put us on the chopper and flew us to his cabin. And then he told us.

INT. CABIN -- LAST NIGHT

The six men stand in rigid formation, eyes on West.

WEST

Gentlemen! It has come to my attention that there is a traitor in our midst. Someone who was going to break the code of fraternal brotherhood that I have endeavored to create in all of you. Perhaps that failure is mine. But we take care of our own. And this traitor must be made to pay.

He walks down the line of the six men, eyeing each of them. Finally stopping at one. Putting a hand on his shoulder.

Nunez.

WEST

Run.

NUNEZ

Sir, I wasn't-

WEST

I know you were. Cadet Mueller found the letter you'd written to the Colonel in your locker. You were going to betray us all. Now, run.

He points to the door. The hurricane, RAGING outside. Nunez looks to the others, then the door, and understands.

He takes off running out the door. Gone.

West walks over to a table covered with a tarp. Pulls the cloth aside to reveal M-16's, PISTOLS, and GRENADES.

WEST

Now we'll see whose training's paid off the most. You are to hunt Cadet Nunez down and bring his body back to me. If you fail and he escapes, we all go down together.

The remaining five cadets, understanding there is no place for friendship or kindness here. This is life and death. They walk to the table and gear up.

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- LAST NIGHT

Lightning, thunder, and rain as Nunez runs unarmed through the thick brush.

SOMEWHERE BEHIND HIM - The other five fan out, rifles up, following his trail, ready to kill.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

It was insanity. We were hunting a man down to kill him.

ON MUELLER

Making his way down embankment, M-16 out, ready for anything. From behind him, MOVEMENT...

DUNBAR (V.O.)

He got Mueller first.

Nunez TACKLES HIM at full speed, feet SLIPPING on the wet hill, and the two TUMBLE head first into a GULLY. Punching, kicking, biting, *anything* to stop the other man.

Nunez, CHOKING Mueller as he strains to reach his gun...

MUELLER

Roberto...

With a HEAVE, Nunez SNAPS HIS NECK. Mueller lies still.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

He took his gun. Used it on Childs.

Nunez spins, seeing CHILDS BEHIND HIM. He DIVES as Childs fires! Hits the ground in a roll, comes up with Mueller's rifle, and SHOOTS - BLOWING CHILDS BACK against the wet rocks.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

I can't imagine what it was like.
Having your friends try to kill you...

Nunez slumps against the gully's wall, breathing hard. In agony over what he's just had to do.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

But you do what you have to survive.

Closing his eyes, Nunez steels himself. Wipes the blood from his hands and climbs out of the gully.

ELSEWHERE

PIKE, creeping through the foliage. Trying to listen for sounds of movement through the storm. His eyes narrow as he hears a HIGH PITCHED WHINE...

The bullet hits his forehead dead center. He crumples.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL - Nunez in a tree, thirty meters away.

Lowering his rifle. He climbs down.

DUNBAR (V.O.)

Kendall and I found Dunbar a couple minutes later.

TIME CUT TO:

Dunbar and Kendall come upon Pike's fallen form. They gaze down at the uniform emblazoned with the name "DUNBAR".

DUNBAR (V.O.)

It came to me in a split second.
Change clothes, change identities.
If James Pike gets discharged he goes right back to jail. But if I was Dunbar, I could walk away from all this with a new life. But then...

As he reaches down for the uniform, a SHOT RINGS OUT.

KENDALL FALLS, wounded in the arm. Dunbar raises his rifle to find Nunez, standing ten yards away, gun trained on him.

YELLING OVER THE HURRICANE:

NUNEZ

Put it down!

A Mexican stand-off. The rain continues to fall.

DUNBAR

I just want to go!

Nunez shakes his head.

NUNEZ

You were gonna kill me, Pike! Thought you were my friend!

Dunbar, torn. He can't bring himself to shoot, but he can't surrender either.

DUNBAR

I have to get Kendall to a hospital!

NUNEZ

He was gonna kill me too!

Silence. The two men still facing each other.

NUNEZ {CONT'D}

I snapped Mueller's neck! He was my best friend and I had to snap his neck because he was gonna shoot me for drugs! For West!

DUNBAR

We don't have to do this! You go that way, I'll go this way!

Nunez laughs.

NUNEZ

You'll shoot me in the back!

DUNBAR

You killed three people! Isn't that enough for one night?

More silence. Neither moves. The sky above, a maelstrom.

DUNBAR

I don't want to die out here, Roberto! Do you?

Nunez, staring at him. Deciding.

NUNEZ
If you even *twitch*...

Dunbar nods.

Nunez begins backing away, rifle still trained on him.

And then Dunbar spies something behind and to the left of Nunez...

West.

Staring down at him from behind some brush. Watching.

Nunez, slowly backing away. He pauses as his foot catches on a fallen branch. Looks away from Dunbar for a split second to step over it...

West nods to Dunbar as if to say "Go on. . . "

DUNBAR
Forgive me. ..

And Dunbar FIRES.

Nunez, caught by the burst, GOES DOWN. The echo of the gunshots, swallowed by the storm. Dunbar lowers his head in agony. West walks down.

WEST
Congratulations, Cadet Pike. You
get the gold star.

Dunbar stares at his Sergeant through the rain.

DUN BAR
Fuck you.

West smiles. Tilts his head to Kendall.

WEST
You'd best get him out of here.
Don't worry about the bodies, they'll
be taken care of.

Dunbar doesn't move.

WEST
This is where we part ways, Cadet.
You tell them I died out here, or
I'll come back for you. Tell them
one of the others did me. Mueller,
Childs, I don't care who. You and
Kendall, you tell them a story.
(smiling)
You can tell a story, can't you?

Dunbar doesn't reply. West laughs and flips him a salute.

WEST

Dismissed.

And West turns and walks away, stepping over Nunez. Giving Dunbar a clear shot at his back.

Dunbar raises his rifle, wanting, needing, dying to shoot the old man...

But he can't. West disappears into the bayou.

A GROAN from the ground. Kendall. Dunbar's reverie broken, he leans down, beginning to unbutton the Dunbar Uniform...

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- PRESENT EVENING

Dunbar stubs out a cigarette, finished. Hardy, Osborne, Styles, and the JAG Lawyer gaping at what he has just said.

DUNBAR

I guess Nunez wasn't dead after all.
He came after us with a vengeance.
(to Styles)
You know the rest.

HARDY

And the bodies?

DUNBAR

You won't find them. Won't find West, either. He's too good.

OSBORNE

No bodies, no West...

HARDY

No death certificates. No crime.

DUNBAR

Just four people MIA. Silence.

The JAG Lawyer steps forward.

JAG LAWYER

You'll testify to this, the corruption, the drug scam?

Dunbar says nothing.

JAG LAWYER

We can cut a deal for you on the Nunez killing.

DUNBAR

I don't want any deals.

JAG LAWYER

If you're telling the truth, the PX requisition records will prove it-

DUNBAR

All the proof you need will be when West comes back and puts a bullet in my brain. But I'll do it. I'm a dead man, anyway. Like Kendall.

(looking at Hardy)

We both should have died out there with our brothers. I know that now.

Silence. The JAG Lawyer looks to Hardy, all anger gone.

JAG LAWYER

I'll take him now if you don't mind.

Hardy nods. Dunbar rises and slowly walks to the door. Turning back to Hardy.

DUNBAR

Tell me, detective. Did you get what you wanted?

Hardy shakes his head, sadly.

HARDY

Not even close.

They leave. Styles walks over to Hardy.

STYLES

Tom-

Hardy holds up a hand, cutting him off. Styles nods, understanding, and leaves, closing the door behind him.

Hardy and Osborne stand there. Not speaking. It's done.

INT. FORT MCKINLEY -- OFFICER'S CLUB -- NIGHT

Several hours and bourbons later, Hardy sits at the bar, drunk and alone. Out of place, the only one not in uniform.

Osborne walks in, locates Hardy, and strides over to the bar, a sheaf of papers under her arm. Her face, stoic.

OSBORNE

We need to talk-

HARDY

Seven.

He takes a slug of his drink.

OSBORNE

What?

HARDY
Seven guys. What was it you said?
You were "just starting to believe I
wasn't the guy people said".

He chuckles.

HARDY {CONT'D}
Seven. *That's* the answer to Kendall's
question. How many? Seven.

Osborne looks at him. Realizing what he's saying.

OSBORNE
This isn't the time-

HARDY
This is the *perfect* time. You know
what makes a good detective? The
number of confessions they get.
You're a good detective, Osborne.
So now you get mine.

OSBORNE
What if I don't want it?

HARDY
Tough.

He pours himself another drink.

HARDY
Thing about taking money is, you
don't have to *do* anything. You just
sit there. Maybe you don't return a
phone call. Maybe you don't follow
up a lead. But that's it. Keep the
money, your work's done.

Osborne stares at him.

HARDY
Seven unsolved murders. And you
know what? It *didn't* weigh on my
conscience. Not one goddamn bit.

He takes a slug from his glass and grimaces.

OSBORNE
That's not true.

HARDY
There are degrees of truth, officer.
Always degrees.

OSBORNE
You're a good man, Hardy.

HARDY
Really.

OSBORNE
Far as I'm concerned, whatever you
did in the past can stay in the past.

Hardy stares at her.

HARDY
I may not be growing on you, but
you're sure as hell growing on me.

He motions to the bartender for another glass, but Osborne
takes his hand, stopping him.

OSBORNE
And *because* you're a good man, I
know you'll do the right thing.

Hardy looks at her, questioning. Osborne takes a deep breath.

OSBORNE
Pike never made it to D.C.. Somebody
took him off the plane before it
left. My guess is he's already dead.

Hardy stares at her.

HARDY
West?

OSBORNE
Nobody saw. But I don't think so.

She puts the papers on the bar.

OSBORNE
These are the requisitions from the
PX, the ones used to release the
drugs to Mueller. West signed half
of them - Pike was telling the truth.
Look who signed the other half.

She taps the bottom of the paper. Hardy, not wanting to
believe it. He looks up at her, pained.

HARDY
Do I have a choice in this?

OSBORNE
Yeah. I can wait till you're off
the base and do it myself.

Hardy stares at his glass. Deciding.

HARDY
Fuck it. Let's go finish this.

INT. STYLES' OFFICE -- NIGHT

Styles, finishing his paperwork. He rises and turns off his desk light, bathing the office in DARKNESS. He's about to leave when he notices a SILHOUETTE in the doorway.

HARDY
"You have to get out of the way of the bigger dogs". *That* was good.

Styles squints at the figure.

STYLES
Tom, is that you?

Hardy steps forward, into the office.

HARDY
It was so good, I actually forgot you're one of the bigger dogs now. The Base Commander. The one in control.

You couldn't let him testify, could you?

STYLES
What are you talking about?

HARDY
If you let him testify then it would have all come out. West was supposed to take care of it out there, shut Nunez up and then disappear. But it got messy and people got killed. So you called your old pal Tom Hardy, figuring if worse came to worse, he'd cover for you.

STYLES
You're drunk-

HARDY
I'm not going to cover for you, Bill. Not for this.

Styles, realizing what Hardy's talking about.

STYLES
Look-

He begins to move from behind his desk.

HARDY
Stay where you are.

STYLES
Or *what?* You've gone round the bend-

HARDY
West had a partner. Someone who knew how to get things done.

Hardy throws the papers onto Styles' desk.

HARDY
What I can't understand is why you signed these. If you'd just let West take care of the paperwork, no one would have known, but you got careless. So when Pike finally told the truth you had to get rid of him, too.

STYLES
That's preposterous-

HARDY
Toxicology report came back. Kendall's attack was caused by a drug known as anephadrine, maybe you've heard of it. It's for asthmatics. If an epileptic takes enough, it kills them. I checked with the nurses at the hospital - you're the only other person who visited Kendall.

STYLES
Wanted to see if he was okay-

HARDY
You poisoned him, Bill. You heard our interrogation, you knew he was ready to crack, so you killed him, just like Pike.

STYLES
I'm not even going to dignify that-

HARDY
No! You will stand there and you will listen! What *happened* to you, Bill? You were the one who joined up to do good in the world. You were the one who *believed* in it-

STYLES

You want to get into a finger pointing contest about *character*? The army kicked you out for drugs, the cops fired you for taking bribes from a *mobster*, and you think you can stand there and lecture me on codes of conduct? There's only one criminal standing in this room and it's you.

HARDY

Not for long.

He walks towards the desk.

HARDY

No more witnesses. West's a ghost. But it doesn't matter because we have your signature, the hospital log, and Kendall's toxicology report. And that'll be enough.

STYLES

You're crazy-

HARDY

You can't duck this, Bill. I may have done every goddamn thing in my life wrong but I won't let this happen.

STYLES

For the last time, I have no idea what you're talking about-

HARDY

(squinting)

Get your hands away from the desk!

In the darkness we see Styles MOVE SUDDENLY...

HARDY

Osborne, gun!

Hardy DIVES to the floor - Osborne in the doorway, PISTOL raised, FIRES TWO SHOTS! Muzzle flare lighting the room for a split second as Styles is BLOWN BACK against the wall!

Hardy gets to his feet and flicks on the LIGHT. Styles lies slumped in the corner, two holes in his chest. Dead.

Osborne lowers her weapon, shaking.

Hardy points to the top desk drawer, which is open. Inside it sits an IVORY HANDLED PISTOL. Fully loaded, safety off. It's presence tells them everything they need to know.

OSBORNE
It's West's, isn't it?

Hardy nods and then turns to look down at Styles' body.

HARDY
Now it's over.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- PARADE GROUNDS -- NIGHT

The aftermath. Flashing blue and red lights from parked Military Police vehicles illuminate the grounds as M.P.'s string crime scene tape around the front entrance of the building, securing the site for investigation.

Hardy takes in the entire scene from afar. Standing by his GTO, watching as several M.P.'s finish questioning Osborne.

When she's done she spies Hardy and walks over to him.

OSBORNE
What are you doing out here?

HARDY
Leaving without saying goodbye.
What are you gonna do?

OSBORNE
Go home, get drunk, and try and forget
this ever happened.

HARDY
Think it'll work?

OSBORNE
Nah.

HARDY
Want company?

Osborne smiles.

OSBORNE
A word of advice about women - that
first hour or so after they kill
their boss? Probably not the best
time to hit on them.

HARDY
I should probably write that down.

OSBORNE
Yeah. .

Hardy pulls a card from his pocket and hands it to her.

OSBORNE
Your *phone number*?

HARDY

In case you need me to testify about the shooting. They'll clear you.

A beat.

OSBORNE

He was your friend.

HARDY

Yeah. But he was a lot of other things, too. Thanks.

She nods. An awkward moment. Finally:

HARDY

I'll see you.

He turns away. Walking towards his car.

OSBORNE

Hey, Hardy!

He turns back. She walks up and holds something out to him. A ten dollar bill.

OSBORNE

I owe you this.

He looks down at the money.

HARDY

You saved my life tonight. Keep it.
(pause)
Actually, don't keep it, I need the money.

He takes the bill and Osborne laughs. He climbs into his car and starts it. Grinning at her through the open window.

HARDY

You're one of the good ones, Osborne.
Don't sweat the details.

He puts the GTO in gear and drives off. She watches him go, then looks down at his card. Smiling. Maybe she *will* call.

INT. OSBORNE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

A bottle of Scotch at her side, Osborne slips a tape marked "BASIC TRAINING INTRO - SGT. N. WEST" into her VCR. Settles back to watch it. West's face fills the screen.

WEST

Welcome, Cadets. The art of warfare is simple and complex. Simple in its goal, complex in its execution.

INT. HARDY'S GTO (MOVING) -- NIGHT

It's started to rain. Hardy drives in silence.

WEST

As Sun Tzu writes, the true warfare
is deception.

A HITCHHIKER up ahead. Hardy pulls over for him.

INT. OSBORNE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Osborne, drinking and watching.

WEST

At all times you must confuse your
enemies, surrounding them with
uncertainty, giving them false hope.

INT. HARDY'S GTO -- NIGHT

The Hitchhiker gets into the car.

WEST

At all times, you must mask your
true intentions.

Hardy, smiling at him, because the Hitchhiker is not a
Hitchhiker at all...

HARDY (V.O.)

Why'd you ask for a cop, Ray?

The Hitchhiker is Dunbar.

OSBORNE (V.O.)

They got their stories straight. . .

EXT. LOUISIANA BAYOU -- CREEK BED -- LAST NIGHT

24 hours ago. The hurricane rages. A HAND pulls the PIN on
a phosphorous grenade and CHUCKS IT.

It blows, frying brush and nothing more.

West comes over the hill, running to investigate. He stops
at what he sees. Nunez stands unarmed in the creek bed,
SURROUNDED by the other Section Eight Cadets. A prisoner.

WEST

What the fuck is going on?

DUNBAR

Your weapons, Sergeant.

West doesn't move. Kendall walks over and DISARMS West,
pushing him into the circle next to the terrified Nunez.

WEST
Is this about that little drug
business you all are running? Yeah,
I know about that, Roberto told me-

NUNEZ
Shut up! Look, we won't say anything-

WEST
Fuck that. You little pissers really
think you can throw a scare into me?

Dunbar raises his rifle and SHOOTS NUNEZ. He goes down,
twitches once and lies still. Dead. West looks at Dunbar.

WEST
You're gonna have to do a lot better
than that, son.

HARDY (O.S.)
How about this?

And with that, Tom Hardy emerges from the brush carrying, a
COMBAT KNIFE. West's eyes sparkle with recognition.

WEST
Didn't I kick your ass out for this
drug thing fifteen years ago?

Hardy just smiles.

WEST
Should've known you were involved in
this. Come on then. Let's see you
try and stick me-

Moving faster than West thought imaginable, Hardy moves and
the knife FLASHES, CUTTING WEST OPEN stem to sternum. Hardy
grips the older man by the shoulders, lowering him to the
ground as he dies. Whispering in his ear:

HARDY
Stem to sternum. You taught me well,
Sarge.

And WEST DIES. A moment of utter silence and then VOICES
FROM THE PAST begin coming back to us:

STYLES (V.O.)
You think you could explain all this
to me?

Kendall walks over to Hardy and hands him a PISTOL.

HARDY (V.O.)
I wouldn't know where to start.

Kendall holds out his arm, gritting his teeth...

HARDY (V.O.)
I guess it was about one man framing
another...

And Hardy SHOOTS Kendall once, THROUGH THE ARM.

EXT. CLEARING -- THIS MORNING

Mueller and Childs lay NUNEZ's DEAD BODY out in the brush.
The sound of the Helicopter approaching...

TIME CUT TO:

Dunbar raises his rifle and FIRES towards the tree line.
Aiming at nothing. The Helicopter comes into view overhead.

DUST KICKS UP around Dunbar and Kendall - bullet hits.

HARDY (V.O.)
When you commit a crime you know is
going to be investigated, you need a
fall guy.. .

ON STYLES' FACE - Watching this through the windscreen.

STYLES (V.O.)
The one who won't talk was trading
live fire with the dead one as we
reached the pick-up.

RACK FOCUS TO - Hardy, concealed in the woods, FIRING at
Dunbar and Kendall's feet to simulate Nunez shooting at them.
Dunbar, shooting towards where Nunez's body lies. *Making it
look like he just killed Nunez.*

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- THIS MORNING

Hardy arriving at the Fort, EMBRACING STYLES.

HARDY
And for *that* to work, you have to
have a witness...

PAN OVER to OSBORNE, watching.

HARDY (V.O.)
Someone who's not involved, who's
word can't be questioned...

VARIOUS SHOTS -- Of Hardy and Osborne, investigating the
case, talking to Dunbar, talking to Kendall...

HARDY
You only let them see what you want
them to see, you make them *believe*...

INT. OFFICER'S CLUB -- EARLIER

Osborne, showing Hardy the requisition forms.

OSBORNE (V.O.)
They believe the innocent are guilty
and the guilty are innocent.

EXT. FORT MCKINLEY -- EARLIER

After shooting Styles, Osborne gives her story to the M.P.'s.

HARDY (V.O.)
And if they're asked, that's what
they'll tell the world.

INT. OSBORNE'S APARTMENT -- PRESENT NIGHT

Osborne, watching the taped West.

WEST
Your greatest weapon will be your
allies . . .

INT. COFFEE ROOM -- EARLIER

Hardy, taking a cigarette from Dunbar's pack.

HARDY
My brand. Must be my lucky day.

INT. KENDALL'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- EARLIER

Kendall, coughing fit. Hardy, getting him a GLASS OF WATER.

WEST (V.O.)
. . . some of which you may have to
sacrifice for the greater good.

Hardy, secretly dissolving a POWDER into Kendall's water.

HARDY (V.O.)
We got the toxicology report . . .

INT. STYLES' OFFICE -- EARLIER

Hardy, confronting Styles in the dark.

WEST (V.O.)
Make no mistake, the innocent will
die. . .

Osborne, FIRING TWICE into Styles. As he hits the wall

HARDY (V.O.)
 Next time you frame a guy, pick
 someone who can't defend themselves...
 But it will not be in vain.
 Sometimes, you can trick the enemy
 into doing your work for you. . .

Osborne, staring down at WEST'S PISTOL.

HARDY (V.O.)
 He still carry those guns?

INT. STYLES' OFFICE -- EARLIER

Earlier. Alone, Hardy plants West's pistol in Styles' desk.

WEST (V.O.)
 ...if you engage in a clever enough
 subterfuge.

INT. BASE PX -- BACKROOM -- EARLIER

Hardy stands behind Kendall and Dunbar, overseeing them as they fill out requisition forms. Kendall signs West's signature, Dunbar signs Styles'.

HARDY (V.O.)
 What I can't understand is why you
 signed these...

As we move into a CLOSE UP on Hardy:

OSBORNE (V.O.)
 You never told me why you got kicked
 out of...

STYLES (V.O.)
 The army kicked you out for drugs...

MUELLER AND DUNBAR (V.O.)
 I got a friend with an in at the PX,
 can hook you up...

STYLES (V.O.)
 There's only one criminal standing
 in this room and it's you.

INT. OSBORNE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Osborne, watching the tape of West's speech.

WEST
 Which brings us to the simple goal.
 For the true warrior, the one and
 only objective is to emerge from
 conflict unscathed.

EXT. ROADHOUSE PARKING LOT -- PRESENT NIGHT

The GTO pulls into a space and Hardy and Dunbar get out.

HARDY (V.O.)
I promised them I'd ask you where
West and the others are...

DUNBAR (V.O.)
Washout rejects, guys he said were
"dumbfucks too stupid to know they
dead"...

HARDY (V.O.)
He's telling the truth up to a
point...

They walk towards the bar's entrance.

HARDY (V.O.)
You can't prove anything until we
find the bodies...

PIKE
All we gotta do is tell the story
right...

DUNBAR (V.O.)
You haven't found any bodies yet,
have you...

As Hardy and Dunbar push through the doors into the bar...

HARDY (V.O.)
WHERE ARE THEY?

INT. ROADHOUSE -- NIGHT

A table of FOUR MEN look up as Hardy and Dunbar enter.

Mueller, Childs, Pike, and the Motor Pool DUTY SERGEANT.
All drinking beer, having a grand old time.

STYLES (V.O.)
Habeas Corpus - you have to have a
body to have a crime.

Hardy and Dunbar smile and go to join them.

INT. OSBORNE'S APARTMENT -- PRESENT NIGHT

As the taped West concludes his speech.

WEST
Thank you.

The screen cuts to STATIC. Osborne turns off the TV, extinguishing the last source of light. OVER THE DARKNESS:

WEST (V.O.)
You can tell a story, can't you?

EXT. ROADHOUSE PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Silence. We slowly move towards Hardy's parked GTO...

HARDY (V.O.)
Murder is basic.

Focusing on the TRUNK...

HARDY (V.O.)
There are no conspiracies, no grand
mysteries, no evil puppet masters
behind it all, pulling the strings.

INT. GTO TRUNK -- NIGHT

WEST'S BODY, stuffed into the trunk of Hardy's car.

HARDY
Everyone's capable of murder, Osborne.

EXT. CLEARING -- THIS MORNING

Dunbar lays the wounded Kendall down as the Helicopter carrying Styles comes in for a landing. Dunbar wipes the sweat from Kendall's brow and asks him seriously:

DUNBAR
Are you ready for this?

ROLL CREDITS

FADE OUT