

The Debt of Life

Written By

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Inspired by real people and experiences.

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SUPER: TRIANGLE OF DEATH, IRAQ - AUGUST 2003

00:00:01

EXT. INDUSTRIAL JUNK YARD - IRAQ - DAY

00:00:28

HEADS ON A SWIVEL, two MARINE SNIPERS stalk silently through the dense labyrinth of industrial scrap heaps surrounding them.

The mid-day sun drowns them in sweat, STINGING their eyes and soaking their clothes, but their hyper-focus prevents them from noticing the discomfort.

A SNIPER RIFLE slung across his back and a pistol in his hands, Sergeant MATT ANGELO (23) patiently follows the young Marine five yards in front of him. His hardened-eyes belie his innocence and compassion.

In front of Angelo, Lance Corporal JAMES CROCKETT (20) moves with honed precision, an M16A4 rifle firmly in his shoulder and a pistol strapped to his thigh. He is cocky and loyal and his face reveals a THRILL FOR THE HUNT.

Angelo quietly signals with his left hand and Crockett changes directions slightly to the right.

The world around them seems to disappear as they make their way through the MAZE OF TWISTED METAL- the soft CRUNCH of earth under their boots the only perceptible sound.

LATER:

00:01:07

Crockett stops at the edge of a clearing, signals to Angelo and takes a knee. Angelo does the same.

Crockett gives a different set of signals. Angelo moves over to him and kneels and taps him on the shoulder.

Crockett crosses the clearing and kneels at the corner of a small building, ADRENALINE coursing through his body.

Angelo follows him to the corner and kneels beside him.

Crockett moves to the opposite corner -- A TIGER STALKING ITS PREY -- and kneels behind a disjointed latticework of metal.

HE FREEZES.

His left hand moves in a series of gestures.

Angelo's eyes widen. He carefully moves over to Crockett and leans over. His eyes STRAIN to see through the jumbled wall of scrap and he -- FREEZES.

An IRAQI MAN with an AK-47 walks toward the other side of the building 30 yards away.

Angelo holsters his pistol and unslings his sniper rifle. He steps in front of Crockett, takes a knee and places the sniper rifle in his shoulder.

He finds a small opening through the twisted metal, centers his CROSSHAIRS on the Iraqi's chest and places his finger on the trigger.

CLICK -- his thumb pushes the safety off.

He slowly EXHALES and TIGHTENS his finger on the trigger...

ANGELO
(clumsily in Arabic)
Stop! Drop your weapon!

The Iraqi stops -- TURNS TOWARD ANGELO -- and searches for the unidentified speaker.

ANGELO (CONT'D)
(in botched Arabic)
Stop! Drop your weapon!

The Iraqi WALKS TOWARDS ANGELO.

Angelo keeps his rifle centered on the Iraqi and STEPS OUT INTO THE OPEN.

TERROR grips the Iraqi and he THROWS his AK-47 to the ground.

Angelo glances over his right shoulder and sees Crockett standing behind him, his rifle aimed at the Iraqi.

Angelo slings his rifle, draws his pistol and walks towards the Iraqi --

ANGELO
Put your hands on your fucking
head!

EXT. POWER PLANT - IRAQ - LATER

00:00:10

A large power plant lies nestled among lush palm groves and the glistening sleepy waters of the Euphrates river. Except for a column of steam rising from 1 of its 4 smokestacks and the movement of Marines outside a SINGLE-STORY BUILDING, the plant would appear abandoned.

EXT. SINGLE-STORY BUILDING - SAME

00:00:30

A few Marines go about their business as a column of Humvees comes to a stop outside the building.

Angelo and Crockett emerge from one of the Humvees and make their way toward the building as their prisoner -- zip-tied and blindfolded -- is escorted away.

Before they reach the door it opens and an IRAQI MALE steps out. The Marines call him MIKEY.

Mikey (19) has a baby-faced complexion that betrays his innocence and naivety. His constant smoking reveals his growing doubts and worries.

MIKEY

(looking at Angelo)

Hey brother. I'm going out to smoke. Want to join me?

ANGELO

Sure. Let me put my stuff up and I'll join you.

Angelo and Crockett enter the building.

EXT. POWER PLANT - MOMENTS LATER

00:02:07

Angelo and Mikey stand on a berm not far from the single-story building. They gaze at the Euphrates thirty yards away while Mikey smokes a cigarette.

Angelo pulls a military log book wrapped in green duct tape out of his cargo pocket.

ANGELO

Wanna teach me some more Arabic?

MIKEY

Can we do that another time please?
I'm too stressed out right now.

He lifts the cigarette to his mouth and takes a puff.

ANGELO

Yeah, no problem.

MIKEY

Let's talk about America. What state are you from again?

ANGELO

Arkansas.

MIKEY

Is that close to California?

Angelo laughs.

ANGELO

No dude. California's on the west coast. Arkansas is in the middle and south of the country. It's next to Texas.

MIKEY

I've heard of Texas. That's where the cowboys are right?

ANGELO

(chuckling)

I think they still have some cowboys. But that was mainly in the wild west days.

MIKEY

What is Arkansas like?

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey Angelo!

Angelo turns to see Crockett and two other Marines walking by.

CROCKETT

We're going to get kabobs. Want to us to get you one?

ANGELO

Yeah. Can you get me two with everything on them? And a coke too?

CROCKETT

Yeah sure.

ANGELO

Thanks man. I'll pay you back.

He turns back to Mikey.

ANGELO

Yeah, Arkansas's very beautiful.
Lots of trees and hills. But it
also has a lot of farm land.

MIKEY

Sounds nice. I would like to live
in the U.S. one day.

ANGELO

You can live with me if you want.

MIKEY

I would like that very much
brother. But I have a family to
take care of.

Angelo wipes the sweat from his forehead.

ANGELO

I thought you weren't married.

MIKEY

No shit! I already told you I have
a mother and two younger brothers.
I am the one who provides for them.
And my brother Ali needs constant
medical help. It's not cheap man.

ANGELO

Are you making enough being an
interpreter?

MIKEY

Not really.

ANGELO

Then why are you doing it?

MIKEY

Because I want peace and democracy
in Iraq.

He takes a short pull from his cigarette and exhales.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

And I like working with you crazy
fuckers.

INT. SINGLE-STORY BUILDING - ROOM - DAY

00:01:27

Military cots line opposite ends of the room, packs and weapons organized neatly beside each one. Angelo and Crockett sit with two other Marines around a Scrabble board in the center of the room. A few Marines occupy the room around them.

ANGELO

We're gonna have to change the rules to allow four letter words. This is ridiculous.

Everyone laughs.

CROCKETT

Three years in the Marines and your vocabulary is limited to fuck, shit, cunt -- actually, more like suck.dick.good.

Everyone laughs again.

ANGELO

(laughing)

Shut the fuck up!

A YOUNG MARINE walks through an interior door and over to an OLDER MARINE sitting on his cot in the corner reading. Silver Captain's bars ornament his collar and his nametape reads -- COLBY.

YOUNG MARINE

Sir. We just got a message from battalion. Task Force Twenty told them there is an insurgent attack planned for Thursday in Haswah.

CAPTAIN COLBY

Did they say where?

MARINE

Yes. Near the police station.

CAPTAIN COLBY

Ok. Thanks Johnson.

Angelo stands up and walks over to Captain Colby.

ANGELO

Sir. What's Task Force Twenty?

CAPTAIN COLBY

They are a joint Delta CIA unit based out of Baghdad.

ANGELO

Why don't you send my team out.
We'll take out the insurgents.

CAPTAIN COLBY

No. I'm not going to do that. It's
too dangerous.

ANGELO

(flustered)

But that's exactly the mission
we're trained for.

CAPTAIN COLBY

This isn't a discussion. I'm not
going to argue with you about it
Sergeant Angelo. Besides, I'm going
to have your team provide overwatch
during the meeting in Haswah
Thursday.

In frustrated disbelief, Angelo turns and walks outside.
Seeing his reaction, Crockett follows.

EXT. SINGLE-STORY BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:17

ANGELO

This is fucking bullshit!

CROCKETT

No. You're fucking bullshit!

They both laugh.

ANGELO

No matter how bad it gets --

CROCKETT

It can always get worse.

Angelo's face turns solemn.

EXT. ROOFTOP - CITY OF HASWAH - THURSDAY EVENING

00:00:32

Angelo and Crockett observe a busy 3-way intersection as
daylight begins to fade.

Below, four Humvees with machine gun turrets pull up in
front of a small fort across the road from them.

Captain Colby and Mikey emerge from the fort and climb into the FIRST HUMVEE.

VOICE (V.O.)
(filtered)
Widowmaker Two, Widowmaker Two.
This is Warhorse Six, over.

Crockett grabs the radio handset on his shoulder.

CROCKETT
Warhorse Six, this is Widowmaker
Two. Send it, over.

HANDSET (V.O.)
(filtered)
Index, over.

CROCKETT
Roger. Widowmaker Two enroute. Out.

Crockett puts on his daypack and then Angelo slings his sniper rifle and picks up his M16A2.

EXT. HUMVEE COLUMN - SAME 00:00:07

Angelo and Crockett emerge from the side of the building, run across the road to the FIRST HUMVEE and climb into the backseats.

INT. ANGELO'S HUMVEE - SAME 00:00:10

Mikey sits behind the back seats with an AK47. Captain Colby sits in the passenger seat.

CAPTAIN COLBY
(looking at the driver)
Alright. Let's roll.

EXT. HUMVEE CONVOY - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER 00:00:05

The convoy turns left at the intersection onto a busy 4-lane highway.

INT. ANGELO'S HUMVEE - MOVING - SAME 00:00:08

Crockett scans the roadside BUILDINGS to their left.

Angelo observes a WIDE IRRIGATION CANAL flanked by berms that parallels the road to the right.

The ROAR of an EXPLOSION --

EXT. HUMVEE CONVOY - MOVING - SAME

00:00:10

The SECOND HUMVEE DISAPPEARS under a cloud of dirt and debris causing the Humvees behind it to come to a grinding halt.

GUNFIRE erupts from across the CANAL and from the BUILDINGS as Angelo's Humvee escapes the KILL ZONE.

INT. ANGELO'S HUMVEE - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:32

CAPTAIN COLBY
(looking at the driver)
Stop the Humvee!

He grabs the radio handset as the Humvee comes to a stop.

CAPTAIN COLBY (CONT'D)
Warhorse One Seven, Warhorse One
Seven! This is Warhorse Six, over!

The staccato pounding of a machine gun echoes inside the Humvee as the turret gunner opens fire.

CAPTAIN COLBY (CONT'D)
Warhorse One Seven, Warhorse One
Seven! This is Warhorse Six, over!

Angelo observes the ambush unfolding behind them.

ANGELO
Sir! They're getting hit from both
sides! Request permission to clear
the buildings!

CAPTAIN COLBY
Denied!

Mikey gazes WIDE-EYED at Angelo.

Frantic, Angelo looks back at the kill zone.

EXT. KILL ZONE - SAME

00:00:14

A charred and MANGLED SECOND HUMVEE straddles the road, the BODY of the turret gunner draped over the side.

Beside it, the THIRD HUMVEE RETURNS FIRE as Marines try to rescue the survivors.

Not far behind the FOURTH HUMVEE SAGS in the dirt, its tires shot out and engine smoking. Its WOUNDED occupants take cover behind a berm engaging in a FIERCE FIREFIGHT with insurgents across the canal.

INT. ANGELO'S HUMVEE - SAME

00:00:11

ANGELO

Sir! We're clearing the buildings!

CAPTAIN COLBY

Sergeant --

ANGELO

Crockett! On me!

EXT. ANGELO'S HUMVEE - SAME

00:00:18

Angelo and Crockett link up outside the Humvee.

MIKEY

(through the window)

Wait for me!

ANGELO

Stay here Mikey! It's too dangerous!

Angelo and Crockett SPRINT across the road.

Mikey watches them with frustration and then a look of determination crosses his face. He grabs his AK47 and races AFTER THEM.

EXT. BUILDINGS - SAME

00:00:08

Angelo and Crockett SPRINT to the nearest building, the relentless torrent of ENEMY gunfire only blocks away.

Using hand and arm signals to communicate, they move with

STEALTH and precision toward the sound of the enemy fire.

EXT. ROAD - SAME

00:00:05

Mikey watches Angelo and Crockett disappear into the shadows as he runs to catch up with them.

EXT. KILL ZONE - SAME

00:00:07

GREEN tracer bullets converge on the Marine positions from both sides of the road and are answered by RED tracer bullets from the Marines.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - SAME

00:00:11

The sound of machine guns from the roof of a two-story house BOUNCES off the walls of an alleyway.

Three INSURGENTS carrying ammunition run down the alleyway and through the house's courtyard gate.

Crockett and Angelo emerge from the shadows, RIFLES RAISED, and follow the men through the gate and into the house.

INT. TWO-STORY HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:15

They follow the sounds of the insurgents up a stairway to the rooftop.

Crockett peaks around the rooftop door and JERKS back --

CROCKETT

There's a fuck ton of em' out there.

ANGELO

Ok. Throw a grenade. As soon as it goes off, we go.

EXT. ROOFTOP - SAME

00:00:24

Insurgents fire over the rooftop wall into the kill zone and other insurgents load ammunition behind them.

A GRENADE rolls into their midst and...

EXPLODES.

Insurgents writhe in pain and stumble about dazed as
Crockett and Angelo glide toward them GUNNING THEM DOWN.

When Crockett and Angelo reach the wall they take a knee.

ANGELO

I'm gonna engage the insurgents on
the canal. You guard the door.
I'm gonna pop a red star cluster so
they know it's us.

He pulls a thin ALUMINUM TUBE from a pouch and slams it
against the ground. A trail of smoke shoots high into the
sky above them.

EXT. KILL ZONE - SAME

00:00:10

Marines and insurgents look up in confusion as a cluster of
FLICKERING RED LIGHTS explodes above the buildings.

Gunfire ERUPTS from the rooftop and a stream of green tracer
bullets SLAMS into insurgent positions.

A chorus of cheers fills the air.

EXT. ROOFTOP - SAME

00:00:12

Angelo hammers into insurgent positions across the canal
using a dead insurgent's machine gun.

GUNSHOTS ring out behind him. He turns and sees Crockett
firing into the stairway. He rushes toward him --

CROCKETT

I got this bro! Save our Marines!

-- hesitates, then returns to the machine gun and resumes
firing.

ROOFTOP DOOR

00:00:10

A BURST OF AK-47 FIRE sends pieces of stairwell wall flying
into Crockett's face and an insurgent RUSHES up the stairs.

Half blinded, he sights in and pulls the trigger. The
insurgent crumples to the ground.

Another burst of gunfire forces him to take cover and --
 A GRENADE LANDS AT HIS FEET.

ROOFTOP WALL

00:00:25

Angelo fires the machine gun and is rocked by an EXPLOSION behind him.

He jerks about and sees Crockett --

MOTIONLESS ON THE GROUND.

He pulls his M16 from his side and insurgents RUSH onto the roof. He guns them down but his rifle JAMS.

An insurgent appears in the doorway and TAKES AIM --

The insurgent's HEAD EXPLODES as gunfire erupts inside the stairwell.

Angelo stands in shock as --

MIKEY EMERGES FROM THE DOORWAY.

Shock turns to DESPAIR and Angelo runs over to Crockett.

He rolls Crockett over -- sees his mutilated head -- and collapses SOBBING.

MIKEY

Brother --

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DURHAM, NC - DAY (SPRING 2014) 00:03:21

Angelo sits with his head in his hands. His veins bulge and his MUSCULAR PHYSIQUE flexes as he struggles to suppress his SOBBING.

His WIFE, JOSY (31), sits on a couch across from him. Petite and gorgeous, her makeup runs as tears flow down her cheeks.

A MARRIAGE COUNSELOR sits at the end of the small room observing Angelo. Mid-50's, hippyish, she seems more like a yoga instructor than a nationally-recognized psychologist.

DR. WILKES

Josy, did you know about Matt's spotter?

Josy sniffs and Dr. Wilkes passes her a box of tissues.

JOSY
(blows her nose)

No.

DR. WILKES
(looking at Angelo)
Is this the first time you have
talked about this to anyone else?

Angelo nods as he gains control of his crying.

DR. WILKES (CONT'D)
I've been counseling combat
veterans for thirty years. What
you're experiencing right now isn't
unique. Many World War Two and
Vietnam veterans never spoke about
their experiences until something
traumatic brought it out. For a lot
of Vietnam veterans it was actually
the war in Iraq. You've been
through a lot since you left the
Marines, but this is the first time
you've opened up about this very
traumatic experience. Is there
something that happened recently
that really affected you?

Angelo looks at Josy, then back at Dr. Wilkes.

ANGELO
It's just that I've been tryin'
really hard to make my life mean
somethin' and no matter what I do
it's never enough for Josy, it's
never good enough --

JOSY
That's not true --

ANGELO
It is. I'm gone too much. I don't
make enough money. I don't take you
out to eat enough --

JOSY
That was when we first started
dating. It was silly. I've gotten
over that. I just want you to stop
dragging us deeper in debt with
this business you think is finally
gonna give you meaning in life. I

(MORE)

JOSY (CONT'D)

want you to find a job and keep from getting fired or quitting so that we can finally have a normal life.

Angelo starts to reply --

DR. WILKES

Hu-hold up a second. I know that Matt has been struggling to find purpose after getting back from Iraq and it's creating a lot of anxiety and uncertainty in your relationship right now. And that's something we can work on. But for now, I would like to focus on whether something specific has happened recently in your life, Matt, that has brought these feelings out.

Angelo exhales deeply and his eyes grow distant.

ANGELO

I got a message from Mikey a few weeks ago that really upset me.

DR. WILKES

So you're still in contact with Mikey.

ANGELO

Yeah. Well, kinda. I've been in contact with him off and on since 2006.

He starts to fidget.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Every couple of years he gets in contact with me and then goes silent. Each time, I think he's been killed. Either by a car bomb or by a hitman for working with the fuckin' Americans.

DR. WILKES

So you feel a sense of responsibility for Mikey's safety.

ANGELO

Fuck yeah I do. He saved my fucking
(MORE)

ANGELO (CONT'D)

life. And the lives of I don't know how many other Americans. And our government left his ass behind to die. It's only a matter of fuckin' time.

He looks away at the box case to his right.

DR. WILKES

Did he say something in his message that made you fear for his life?

ANGELO

A hitman came lookin' for him. He dropped a note off with his fuckin' mom sayin' that they know where he lives, that he worked for the Americans, and that they're gonna fuckin' kill him.

JOSY

There's nothing you can do to save him Matt. He's not your responsibility. He knew what he was doing when he volunteered to work for the Americans. You need to stop worrying about other people and start worrying about all this debt we're in!

Dr. Wilkes starts to talk --

ANGELO

He saved my fucking life!

DR. WILKES

I think Josy has a good point. Is there anything you can realistically do to help him?

ANGELO

Well, I contacted my congressmen and a refugee project in Yale to help him with his visa but they didn't fuckin' do anything.

DR. WILKES

Well, you tried. I think that is about all that you can ask of yourself.

INT. MIKEY'S HOUSE - BAGHDAD - NIGHT

00:01:17

Mikey bustles about a moderately furnished bedroom hurriedly packing clothes into bags. MIKEY'S MOTHER, early 50's and dressed in traditional black, stands beside his DISABLED teenage brother, ALI, lying in bed. A CRYING child can be heard in the background.

MIKEY'S MOTHER

(pleading in Arabic)

I don't want to leave. This is our home.

MIKEY

(in Arabic)

We don't have a choice mama. They won't just kill me. They'll kill you, Ali, Noora, and Hussein too.

MIKEY'S MOTHER

Where will we go? How will you take care of us?

MIKEY

Pack your things mother. I don't have time to explain. We'll worry about those things when we're safe.

Mikey finishes packing a bag and walks into the

LIVING ROOM

Mikey's wife, NOORA (early-20's), is swollen with child and paces about the room with their CRYING 2-year-old son, HUSSEIN, in her arms. Despite her thick layer of makeup, she looks SICKLY.

NOORA

(distressed)

I'm tired of this Qasim! I'm tired of you being gone. I'm tired of moving constantly. I want a normal life!

COOING from two NORWICH CROPPER PIGEONS in a cage mixes with the cries of Hussein.

MIKEY

(kisses her on the forehead)

I know habibi. I'm sorry. I want a normal life too.

He observes her sweaty brow.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
How are you feeling?

NOORA
(visible pain)
I feel worse habibi. I'm really hot
and my stomach aches.

MIKEY
When we get to the village I'll
take you to a doctor. Ok? But we
have to go now. Take Hussein and
get in the car.

EXT. MIKEY'S HOUSE - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT - LATER

00:00:12

Noora sits in the passenger seat of a white Hyundai sedan, holding Hussein nervously as Mikey emerges from the back door carrying Ali in his arms, his mother in tow.

Mikey places Ali in the back seat, then closes the trunk -- filled with bags and his two pet pigeons. Then, he climbs into the driver's seat, double checks that everyone is secure and drives away.

EXT. MIKEY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT - LATER

00:00:10

A HITMAN (20's) with a SCARRED FACE approaches the front door with three other men carrying AK-47's. His face reveals menacing hatred as he pounds on the door violently --

SILENCE.

He KICKS the door in and the men rush inside.

EXT. PATIO - CRAFT BEER STORE - NIGHT

00:02:51

Angelo sits across from GLENN MASTERS, early 50's. Pudgy and soft spoken, the dip in Glenn's mouth doesn't stop him from enjoying his craft beer.

GLENN
Back in Camp Lejeune, they're like-
you're fucked up, you got some
issues. And I'm thinkin- I'm fine,
(MORE)

GLENN (CONT'D)

I'm fine ya know. And then they're like- no we're gonna send ya to the PTSD clinic over here, you know the, the mental health people.

(takes a swig of beer)

So I went to the M.H.U. people, to the PTSD clinic on Camp Lejeune and a very well meaning young man umm he'd been doing PTSD clinics here at Lejeune for about a year and a half, and all a these guys he'd been dealing with had been like you know one and two pump chump people...

Glenn stuffs a pinch of snuff under his lower lip.

GLENN (CONT'D)

And ya know we talked about my history and it was like this poor guy he was mind blown. Ya know cause we were talkin like back into the 80's about El Salvador or somethin and he was like- what the fu...

(chuckling)

hold on dude. This is too much for me. We just... I don't know where to start. I can't help you.

Angelo joins in the laughter.

GLENN (CONT'D)

But ya know it's like that whole year where my only function is to breath and show up at hospital appointments. Mind wise that's what made it so hard. Bein the fuckin rear party of Two Three as a Master Guns while all my buddies are overseas and my job is to go to fuckin physical therapy.

ANGELO

Well, it's it's the whole purpose thing right? Ya know it's like I don't want I don't wish destruction on the world ya know. I want the world to all live in peace. But at the same time I have this unique skill set...

GLENN
If there's a fight...

ANGELO
And this experience...

GLENN
You wanna be a part of it...

ANGELO
I wanna be there. Ya know and it's
it's never left me and I didn't
know that back when I was twenty
four and I got out. But the reality
of human nature is there's always
gonna be some kid ya know that's
screamin and some evil motherfucker
that wants to kill em that I'm not
there to protect.

Angelo takes a sip of his double IPA.

GLENN
Yeah. Well ya know the initial
thing for me everytime we had a
casualty it was- I fucked up, I
didn't protect him. But it was even
worse if it was a casualty from my
unit and I wasn't there, you know
what I'm sayin.

Glenn finishes off his pint of imperial stout.

GLENN (CONT'D)
The last time I smoked a cigar was
with my buddy Master Sergeant Hayes
in Afghanistan 4 years ago.

He looks away and tears start to fill his eyes.

GLENN (CONT'D)
We ran into each other at Camp
Leatherneck and smoked some Cubans
he had stashed away for a special
occasion. The next day he went out
to check on Fox Company and was
killed by an I.E.D.

(sobbing)

Ya know, I was stuck manning the
C.O.C. and I was completely fuckin
helpless to do anything about it.

(beat)

(MORE)

GLENN (CONT'D)

Anyways, wanna get another round?

ANGELO

Nah man. It's gettin late. And I know better than to hang out too long at a bar with you. You got me shitfaced last time.

Angelo starts to leave.

GLENN

Haha. I know right? Well, let me know if you're still interested in me helpin out with your media business.

ANGELO

Yeah of course man.

GLENN

I really think that what you're doin with tellin the uh tellin veterans stories is something that we really need to make happen.

ANGELO

Thanks brother. I can definitely use your help.

INT. SINGLE-ROOM BUILDING - IRAQ - NIGHT

00:00:28

Mikey removes a large bottle of water from a refrigerator and walks a few steps over to Noora. PAIN racks her face as she lies on a queen-size bed, belly swollen with child.

MIKEY

(in Arabic)

Here. Drink this Habibi. It will make you feel better.

Mikey's pet pigeons coo in the background as Noora takes the bottle and drinks.

Mikey looks across the room. His mother sits on a large floor mattress beside his disabled brother Ali. Together they play with Hussein.

When Noora is finished drinking, he takes the bottle and walks outside into a small

COMPOUND

Small buildings and a large house enclose a dusty courtyard.
Mikey lights a cigarette and pulls a cell phone from his pocket.

EXT. WOODS - DAY - SAME

00:02:05

Angelo, shirtless, muscles glistening with sweat, runs along a trail with earphones in his ears.

He looks down at the cell phone in his hand and stops.

ANGELO

Mikey what's up man?

INTERCUT ANGELO/MIKEY

MIKEY

What are you doing? You sound like you're jerking off or something.

ANGELO

(laughing)

Nah dude I'm runnin.

MIKEY

Ok. Is now a good time to talk?

ANGELO

Yeah of course. What's goin on?

MIKEY

I'm all fucked up brother.

He takes a long drag from his cigarette.

ANGELO

Why? What happened?

MIKEY

What the fuck man? Do you not remember last time we talked?

ANGELO

Yeah. You said somebody left a note with your mom sayin they were gonna kill you?

MIKEY

Yeah and I had to move my family to safer place. It's not safe for them either.

Angelo wipes sweat from his eyes.

ANGELO
Where'd you move to?

MIKEY
A village east of Baghdad. You
wouldn't know it.

ANGELO
Well, I'm glad you guys are safe
now.

Mikey looks back at the door and walks toward the center of
the courtyard.

MIKEY
Yes. But Marwa is sick. She needs
to go to the hospital.

ANGELO
What's wrong with her?

MIKEY
Her stomach hurts her really bad.
She's been bleeding.

Angelo's brow furrows and he paces back and forth.

ANGELO
Yeah that's not good, especially
since she's pregnant. Can you get
her to the hospital safely?

MIKEY
Yes, but I don't have money to pay
the doctor. I had to quit my job
when we moved.

ANGELO
How much do you need?

Mikey takes a quick puff from his cigarette.

MIKEY
\$900. Can you send me some money
please?

ANGELO
Fuck. I want to man, but I'm gonna
have to ask Josy.

MIKEY

Can you please do that for me and let me know soon. I'm afraid for her man.

ANGELO

Yeah. I'll do that when I get home ok?

Angelo starts to walk back up the trail.

MIKEY

Thanks brother. I have to go now. Let me know soon ok?

ANGELO

Alright. Stay safe.

MIKEY

Love you man.

ANGELO

Love you too.

INT. ANGELO'S HOUSE - LATER

00:01:31

Josy lays on the couch watching The Real Housewives of Atlanta.

The door opens and Angelo walks inside covered in sweat.

JOSY

How was the run?

ANGELO

It was good thanks. Hey I need to ask you somethin and I know you're probably not gonna like it, but it's important.

Josy mutes the TV and looks at Angelo with annoyed anticipation.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Mikey's wife is sick and he doesn't have money to pay for the hospital.

JOSY

(angry)

Why don't you spend less time working out and more time looking

(MORE)

JOSY (CONT'D)

for a way to pay my parents back
the \$14,000 you owe them.

ANGELO

His wife is pregnant and she's been
bleeding. If I don't send him the
money she might die.

JOSY

He's an adult. He can take care of
his own family.

She stands up and walks toward the kitchen.

ANGELO

(exasperated)

He had to quit his job and flee
Baghdad after the militia found
him.

JOSY

Well, he knew the dangers when he
signed up to work for the
Americans.

ANGELO

What the fuck!

He follows her into the

KITCHEN

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Look. I'm meeting with DAN KURCINA
next week about additional funding.

JOSY

(grabbing a wine bottle)

I'm tired of you getting us deeper
into debt over something that's not
going to succeed in the end.

ANGELO

Dan believes it will succeed.

JOSY

Yeah, because you're really good at
convincing people to believe in
you. But you refuse to listen and
let people who actually know what
they're doing help you.

She pours a glass of wine.

ANGELO
 (leaving the kitchen)
 I know what I'm fuckin doin.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

00:00:50

Angelo sits across from DAN KURCINA- late 40's, smartly dressed and attractive. Empty plates and full pint glasses rest on the table in front of them.

DAN
 The skills and experience my father learned in Vietnam are what made him so successful in the business world. The skills and experience I gained in the Persian Gulf are why he invested in me. And the skills and experience you gained in Iraq are why I invested in you.

He takes a drink of beer.

DAN (CONT'D)
 But we didn't get to where we are by trying to be a one man show. And we certainly didn't turn down help when it was offered.

ANGELO
 How've I turned down help?

DAN
 I've given you lots of advice on how to improve your business, but I haven't seen any of it put to use. I've connected you with people in the industry who want to help, but you act like you know better.

Angelo drinks uneasily from his pint glass.

DAN (CONT'D)
 I believe in you Matt. But you're going to have to start listening to others. I'm going to need some more time before I make a decision ok?

INT. ANGELO'S HOUSE - NIGHT (JUNE)

00:00:10

Josy lies on the couch, her head resting in Angelo's lap as he switches through TV channels. BREAKING NEWS flashes across the screen and he stops.

Video shows fierce fighting in Iraq as reporters describe the ISIS INVASION OF MOSUL.

INT. HOME OFFICE - ANGELO'S HOUSE - DAY

00:00:08

Angelo sits behind a desk working on video editing software when his phone RINGS.

ANGELO

Hey man. I saw the news about Mosul. Are you safe?

EXT. PALM GROVE - MIKEY'S VILLAGE - NIGHT- SAME

00:00:42

Mikey stands under a palm tree looking out over cropland.

MIKEY

No, but I have worse news. Noora's not with us anymore.

INTERCUT MIKEY/ANGELO

ANGELO

What!? What happened?

MIKEY

Her bleeding got really bad and I didn't have money to take her to the hospital. She suffered a lot before she died. It was bad.

Angelo starts pacing with TEARS in his eyes.

ANGELO

I'm sorry man. I fuckin listened to Josy instead of sendin you the money. It's my fault.

MIKEY

No it's not brother. I know you would have helped me if you could. But I know how you can help me now.

ANGELO

How?

Mikey lights a cigarette and takes a drag.

MIKEY

I want you to train the men in my
village so they ready when ISIS
gets here.

INT. ANGELO'S HOUSE - DAY

00:00:11

Angelo sorts through military gear, clothing and bags that
lie strewn around an unfurnished bedroom.

Angelo's phone RINGS.

ANGELO

(excited)

What's up man?

EXT. RESTAURANT - CHANTILLY, VA - SAME

00:01:58

TY leaves the restaurant, phone pressed to ear, and heads to
his car. He is mid-30's and athletic, yet unassuming.

TY

What's goin on brother? What's it
been like 14 years?

INTERCUT TY/ANGELO

ANGELO

Fuck man, I think so. Casper told
me you're workin for the Agency
now. Is that right?

TY

Hold on a second.

He climbs into a

JEEP WRANGLER

and starts driving.

TY (CONT'D)

Yeah brother. I've been at Ground
Branch since 2005.

ANGELO

No shit.

TY

What's this I hear about you going
(MORE)

TY (CONT'D)

back to Iraq?

Angelo leaves the bedroom and walks downstairs.

ANGELO

My interpreter Mikey wants me to train some men to protect his village from ISIS.

TY

Are you fuckin crazy? When I was training Iraqi SWAT in Hillah I had to inject those fuckers with steroids just to get them to fight. If you go over there you're gonna get yourself killed.

Angelo grabs a Coke from the fridge.

ANGELO

Mikey saved my life in Iraq. He's on the run from militia who wanna kill him for working for the Americans. His wife just died and it was my fault...

TY

How was his wife dying your fault?

Angelo walks out onto the back patio.

ANGELO

Because he asked me for money to take her to the hospital and I didn't fuckin do it. And now ISIS is threatening him and his son.

TY

I don't know if I can help you. All our guys were pulled out of Iraq in 2011. What's your plan anyways?

Angelo begins pacing back and forth.

ANGELO

I'm gonna fly into Erbil and then head south through Kurdistan until I get to his village.

TY

Where's his village?

ANGELO
It's near Khanaqin.

TY
(contemplating)
I've got a buddy that's in Kurdistan now working in the oil sector. He was with me in Iraq back in '07. He's a good guy, former Force Recon. If you're dead set on this I'll call him and see if he wants to help you out...

ANGELO
Thanks man. I really appreciate it.

TY
...but I really don't think it's a good idea. You're one of the few guys I respect which is why I'm willing to help. Just don't get yourself killed. I don't want to lose another brother.

INT. ANGELO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

00:01:38

Angelo and Josy sit at the dining room table eating dinner. An uncomfortable SILENCE fills the room as Angelo picks at his food.

JOSY
(annoyed)
What's going on? You've barely said a word to me since I got home.

Angelo sets his fork down and stares into her eyes.

JOSY
Well?

ANGELO
I'm goin back to Iraq.

JOSY
What? What are you talking about?

ANGELO
Mikey wants me to train some men to protect his village from ISIS.

JOSY

When are you going to stop worrying about fucking Mikey and start worrying about your own fucking family.

ANGELO

His wife and unborn child fuckin died because I didn't send him that money.

He stands up from the table...

ANGELO (CONT'D)

None of your fuckin family members are gonna die because I haven't paid em back yet. Fuck.

...and walks toward the kitchen.

JOSY

Matt!

She follows him into the

KITCHEN

JOSY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry that they died. That's terrible. But if you go over there you're just going to get yourself killed.

ANGELO

(pouring a glass of whiskey)

I'd rather die tryin to save Mikey than waste away here workin for some fuckin corporation.

(walking away)

I should have died in Iraq in 2003.

JOSY

Don't say that. Your family loves you. I love you. You don't need to run away to Iraq to find meaning in life.

She follows Angelo into the

LIVING ROOM

JOSY

What about your business? What about me?

ANGELO

My business can wait. So can you.

JOSY

No I can't. I'm not going to keep waiting for you to unfuck your life. If you go to Iraq we're done.

ANGELO

I already bought the plane ticket.

EXT. NORTHERN IRAQ - DAY

00:00:05

Kurdish soldiers, called PESHMERGA, shelter behind dirt berms as they engage in HEAVY FIGHTING with ISIS fighters.

EXT. ERBIL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SAME

00:00:20

Angelo emerges from the terminal wearing a backpack and carrying a large military duffel bag.

A fit WHITE MALE in his 30's cuts his way through a crowd of Kurds and approaches Angelo.

WHITE MALE

Matt?

ANGELO

Todd?

TODD

Welcome to Erbil. Lemme grab that bag for ya. We're in the white Land Cruiser over there.

INT. LAND CRUISER - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

00:01:52

As they weave their way along Erbil's FRENZIED beltway a large Peshmerga convoy passes in the opposite direction.

TODD

ISIS is right outside the city. Most of the westerners are either gone or on their way out. I tell

(MORE)

TODD (CONT'D)

you what bro. You're fuckin ballsy.
Mikey must be one special dude.

MOMENTS LATER:

They approach a checkpoint manned by HEAVILY ARMED
PESHMERGA.

TODD

Get out your passport.

The soldiers wave them through.

TODD

They fuckin love Americans.

LATER:

They pass through the verdant foothills of the mighty Zagros
mountains as they travel south.

TODD

So no shit, drop everything and
come rescue your ass is Chosin.

ANGELO

Yep. Chosin and my grid coordinate.

TODD

Sounds good.

Todd grabs a can of Rip It from the console, cracks it open
and takes a swig.

So Ty tells me you were in a sniper
platoon together. You school
trained?

ANGELO

Yeah.

TODD

One of my regrets is I never got to
go to sniper school.

ANGELO

What years were you in Force?

TODD

2002 to 2005.

ANGELO

Yeah, those were busy years for you

(MORE)

ANGELO (CONT'D)

guys.

Todd takes another drink from his Rip It.

ANGELO

How'd you get involved in the oil business?

TODD

I saved a Kurdish oil minister's life when Ty and I were workin out of Erbil in '07. He wanted to return the favor so he offered to hire me as a consultant. It was a lot more money. Plus, I get my own Pesh security detail.

ANGELO

Are they good enough to take on ISIS?

TODD

If you need us, we'll get the job done.

LATER:

They pass through mountain valley farmland. A serene river meanders below them.

EVENING - LATER:

City lights appear below them as they emerge from a mountain pass.

TODD

That's Khanaqin below us.

LATER:

Todd slows the Land Cruiser as they approach a checkpoint on the outskirts of the city. Peshmerga soldiers stand beside Toyota pickups mounted with machine guns and rocket launchers.

He pulls up behind a black civilian Hummer. Mikey stands beside it smoking.

EXT. LAND CRUISER - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:47

Mikey strolls over to the Land Cruiser as Angelo gets out.

MIKEY
(with giant smile)
Hey man!

ANGELO
(chuckling with joy)
Hu hu. What's up dude?

MIKEY
(embracing Angelo)
How are ya bro?

ANGELO
Good to see ya man.

MIKEY
Good to see you brother.

Todd walks around the front of the vehicle.

ANGELO
Todd. This is Mikey.

TODD
(extending his hand)
What's up brother?

MIKEY
(shaking Todd's hand)
It's good to meet you.

ANGELO
(looking at Todd)
Hey man. Thanks again for doin
this.

TODD
You take care of yourself alright.
You've got my cell number. It's on
at all times.

INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

00:01:24

Barren hills surround the Hummer as Mikey and Angelo drive toward the setting sun.

ANGELO
Dude. What's up with the Hummer?

MIKEY
My friend let me use it to pick you
(MORE)

MIKEY (CONT'D)

up.

ANGELO

The same friend who's letting you stay at his place?

MIKEY

Yeah.

Mikey lights a cigarette and Angelo rolls down his window.

ANGELO

How far's your village from here?

MIKEY

It's about 50 kilometers from Khanaqin.

Angelo, tense and anxious, gazes out the opened window.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

I've missed you man. I didn't think I was ever going to see you again.

ANGELO

I've missed you too. I'm sorry about Noora.

MIKEY

I am too. I miss her a lot. But it's good that she isn't here to see what's about to happen.

ANGELO

What are you talkin about?

MIKEY

When ISIS get here they're going to kill everyone.

He takes a pull from his cigarette.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

They aren't human. They're fuckin' animals.

ANGELO

That's why I'm here.

MIKEY

I know. But we only have 20 men. They have an entire fucking army.

Angelo grins with confidence.

ANGELO
That's one thing Marine snipers are
good at- economy of force.

MIKEY
What you mean?

ANGELO
I mean that we can do the same job
as a hundred men.

MIKEY
I hope so brother.

He takes a drag from his cigarette.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
I really hope so.

EXT. COMPOUND - MIKEY'S VILLAGE - LATER

00:01:38

Mikey grabs Angelo's duffel bag from the back of the Hummer
and leads him into the compound.

MIKEY
(pointing at a house)
That's where my friend lives.

He leads Angelo to a tiny building along the compound wall.

MIKEY
This is where you'll sleep.

He opens the door, turns on a light and drops the duffel bag
on a concrete floor next to a floor mattress.

Angelo looks around at the small room and sees a small chest
of drawers and a painting of the Shia prophet Ali hanging on
one of the dirty, chipped walls. He sets his backpack down
and opens his duffel bag.

ANGELO
I know this horrible. I'm a
horrible person, but...

He reaches into the duffel bag, pulls out a pack of
cigarettes and hands it to Mikey. Mikey examines it and
smiles.

MIKEY

Ah. Ha ha ha. Got me some Camels.
Haven't had these in like 13 years.

ANGELO

I got you something else too.

Angelo reaches back into the duffel bag and hands Mikey a large bottle of Jack Daniels. Mikey smiles with excitement.

MIKEY

The good stuff. You remembered.
Thanks brother.

Mikey looks at the bottle longingly then hands it back to Angelo.

MIKEY

Keep it in here until we use it. I don't want anyone to know I have it. Muslims aren't supposed to drink.

ANGELO

Yeah, but they do anyways.

MIKEY

I know. But Iraqis look down on it. I don't want to bring disgrace on me or my family.

ANGELO

Alright. No problem.

Angelo puts the bottle back inside the duffel bag.

MIKEY

Come on. I want you to come meet my family.

ANGELO

Hold on. I brought something for Hussein too.

Angelo pulls a small stuffed bear from the duffel bag.

MIKEY

(smiling)

That's really nice man.
(reading the bear's
shirt)
I love Dubai?

ANGELO

I wanted to get him somethin with
an American flag, but you know that
ain't gonna happen.

Mikey laughs.

MIKEY

It's ok brother. This is great.

Mikey turns to the door and Angelo follows him out.

INT. MIKEY'S ROOM - SAME

00:01:42

Mikey's mother sits on the floor mattress and helps his
disabled brother, Ali, eat from a plate of food. Hussein
sits on the floor next to them, playing with a toy.

The door opens and Mikey walks into the room, followed by
Angelo. Hussein's big brown eyes widen when he sees his
father and he rushes across the room to greet him.

Mikey crouches down...

MIKEY

Hussein habibi!

...and lifts him into the air.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

(in baby voice)

Ba ba tee. Ba ba tee.

Hussein giggles.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

(in Arabic)

Hussein. Look what uncle Angelo
brought you?

Mikey holds the bear in front of Hussein.

MIKEY

(in baby voice)

Ow ow.

(looking at Angelo)

He calls all animals ow ow cause
that's the sound dogs make. I don't
know why.

ANGELO
Is it alright if I hold him?

MIKEY
Sure brother.

Mikey hands Hussein to Angelo.

ANGELO
(in kid's voice)
Allo Hussein.
(touching Hussein's nose)
Boop.

Hussein giggles, then stares at Angelo in wonder and Angelo smiles.

MIKEY
(in Arabic)
Mama. Come say hi to Angelo.

Angelo hands Hussein back to Mikey as his mother walks over to Angelo and grabs his arms.

MIKEY'S MOTHER
(in Arabic)
Praise be to God for your safe arrival.
(hugging Angelo)
God bless you for coming to help protect my beloved son.

Mikey translates for Angelo and then walks him over to Ali.

MIKEY
(in Arabic)
Ali. This is the American friend I told you about- Angelo.

Ali's hand shakes as he lifts it.

ALI
Allo.

Angelo places his right hand over his heart and bows slightly.

ANGELO
(in Arabic)
Pleased to meet you Ali.

ALI
(in Arabic)
(MORE)

ALI (CONT'D)

Pleased to meet you.

Ali turns away, lost in his own thoughts.

MIKEY

Let's eat some dinner. Tomorrow
I'll introduce you to the men.

INT. ANGELO'S ROOM - MORNING

00:00:21

Angelo sits on his mattress looking at a satellite image of the village. He hears a knock on his door.

VOICE (O.S.)

Good morning brother. It's Mikey.

Angelo opens the door.

MIKEY

Were you up already?

ANGELO

Yeah. I have trouble sleeping.

MIKEY

I'm sorry habibi. I want you to meet my friend Mohammed. The one who's letting me stay here.

EXT/INT. MOHAMMED'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:34

Mikey and Angelo stand outside the front door as it opens. MOHAMMED, late 20's and thin, appears and waves them inside. They follow him into a

LARGE ROOM

with a Persian carpet surrounded by floor cushions. Mohammed motions at the ground and says something in Arabic.

MIKEY

(looking at Angelo)

Have a seat.

Everyone takes a seat on the cushions. Mikey and Mohammed exchange conversation, Mohammed touches his heart with his right hand and extends it to Angelo.

MOHAMMED

Salaam Alaikum Angelo.

ANGELO
 (shaking Mohammed's hand)
 Alaikum Salaam.
 (touching his heart)
 Shukran.

An old woman in a hijab brings in metal platters with flat bread, butter, jam, honey, cheese, yogurt, and tea and sets them in front of the men.

EXT. ARMS ROOM - COMPOUND - LATER

00:01:07

Mohammed, Mikey and Angelo stand outside a small building inside the compound. Mohammed opens it to reveal a stockpile of Russian-made weapons and ammunition.

ANGELO
 Fuck dude. We can use all of this?

MIKEY
 No. We're just going to stand here and stare at it. Of course we're gonna use it.

Iraqi men begin to walk into the compound.

LATER:

20 men, ranging from teens to late 40's and skinny to fat, stand in a semi-circle around Angelo, Mikey and Mohammed.

MIKEY
 (in Arabic)
 Good morning. My Marine brother has arrived to help us defeat those ISIS fuckers.

The men cheer.

MIKEY
 (turning to Angelo)
 It's all yours.

ANGELO
 (addressing the men)
 Salaam. Ismee Angelo.
 (turning to Mikey)
 Translate for me.
 (turning back to the men)
 Today we are going to start with the four rules of weapons safety.

Mikey begins translating in Arabic.

ANGELO

Repeat after me. Rule number one.
Treat every weapon as if it's
loaded.

Only some of the men repeat. Angelo looks at Mikey with disapproval.

ANGELO

Let's try this again. Rule number
one. Treat every weapon as if it's
loaded.

A few more men join in this time. Angelo looks at Mikey and shakes his head.

ANGELO

This is gonna be fun.

EXT. COMPOUND - AFTERNOON - LATER

00:01:35

The men lie behind AK-47's and aim at small circles drawn on the inner compound wall 5 meters away.

Angelo walks behind the men, Mikey by his side translating.

ANGELO

Inhale. Exhale. Natural respiratory
pause. Slow steady squeeze.

CLICKS reverberate down the line as each man squeezes the trigger on his unloaded AK-47.

ANGELO

Mostafa. Rule number one of weapons
safety.

A TEENAGER with peach fuzz, MOSTAFA, rolls over and replies.

Angelo looks at Mikey.

MIKEY

He answered right.

ANGELO

(looking at Mostafa)
Zain Mostafa.

Angelo points at AHMED, late-40's and fat.

ANGELO
What's his name?

MIKEY
Ahmed.

ANGELO
(looking at Ahmed)
Ahmed. Rule number two of weapons
safety.

Ahmed looks confused and replies.

MIKEY
He says don't pull the trigger
unless you're ready.

ANGELO
Everyone. Repeat after me. Rule
number two. Never point your weapon
at anything you don't intend to
shoot.

The men repeat half-heartedly and Angelo shakes his head.

LATER:

The men lay behind their rifles squeezing the triggers at
the circles on the wall. Angelo kneels beside one of the men
as he inhales, exhales and pulls the trigger.

ANGELO
(patting the man on the
back)
Zain jidan.

He gets up and walks over to Mikey.

ANGELO
Tell the men to cease firing and
look at us.

Mikey yells in Arabic and the men cease firing and look up.

ANGELO
We're done with training today.
Good job. Meet back here at seven
a.m. tomorrow and be ready for
physical exercise. Make sure you're
dressed appropriately.

Mikey translates, then turns to Angelo.

MIKEY

Man. I don't think they're ready
for P.T. yet.

ANGELO

Then I hope they're ready to die.
Cause that's what's gonna happen if
they don't start takin this shit
seriously.

EXT. FARMLAND - MORNING

00:00:05

Angelo, wearing shorts and a t-shirt, runs past palm trees
and crops as the sun peaks over the horizon.

EXT. COMPOUND - LATER

00:00:24

Angelo stretches as men begin to trickle into the compound.
Mikey, dressed in black track pants and a soccer jersey,
smokes a cigarette as he walks up to Angelo.

MIKEY

Good mornin brother. Why are you
all sweaty?

ANGELO

I went for a run.

MIKEY

You should sleep instead. You'll
have time to run when you're back
home.

ANGELO

I may not make it home if I don't
stay in shape.

EXT. COMPOUND/FARMLAND - MONTAGE

00:00:07

The men STRUGGLE and COMPLAIN as Angelo leads them in
pushups, situps, fireman's carries, and a run.

END MONTAGE

EXT. COMPOUND - LATER

00:00:22

Mikey stands by Angelo as the men leave the compound
DISPIRITED.

MIKEY

You need to stop wasting time. They
need to learn how to fight, not
exercise.

ANGELO

Dude. When ISIS gets here, they're
gonna fuckin die if they can't
shoot n' move.

MIKEY

They're not Marines. They're just
regular Iraqis. You can't expect
too much from them.

EXT. AK-47 RANGE - DESERT - LATER

00:01:05

The men lie in the dirt, aiming their loaded AK-47's at
paper targets along a dirt berm 25 meters away. Angelo and
Mikey stand behind them, Mikey translating as Angelo speaks.
The village appears behind them a mile away.

ANGELO

Inhale! Exhale! Natural respiratory
pause! Slow steady squeeze!

GUNSHOTS ring out across the line.

ANGELO

Cease fire! Cease fire! Weapons on
safe! Check your targets!

As the men stand up Angelo sees one of the men point his
rifle at the man beside him.

ANGELO

(angry)
Everyone stop.
(pointing at the man)
Inta. Ta'ala hoonā.

The man sheepishly walks over to Angelo.

ANGELO

What's safety rule number two?

The man hesitates and then responds.

MIKEY

He says don't point your rifle at something you don't want to shoot.

ANGELO

Ok. Then ask him why he pointed his rifle at the man next to him when he stood up.

Mikey translates and the man looks confused. Angelo grabs the AK-47, looks at it and lifts it into the air.

ANGELO

Tell the men he pointed this rifle at his friend when he stood up.

Mikey repeats Angelo's words to the men.

Angelo places the rifle in his shoulder, swings it past the man's head and the rifle --

FIRES.

The man JOLTS with fear.

MIKEY

What the fuck man.

Angelo flicks the safety and hands the man his rifle.

ANGELO

Tell the men his safety was off.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

00:00:35

- The men continue to fire at the paper targets from the prone position.
- Angelo stands in front of the men holding a target with a bullet impact below the bull's-eye. He places a rifle in his shoulder, acts like he is afraid and thrusts downward.
- As the men go to check their targets Angelo notices a man carrying his AK-47 in one hand. He stops him and makes him hold the rifle with two hands.
- The men fire from the kneeling position. Sweat pours down their faces from the midday sun.
- Angelo shows them a target with a bullet hole above the bull's-eye. He places a rifle in his shoulder, acts afraid and pulls the rifle upward.

- As the men walk away from the targets Angelo notices a man with his finger on the trigger. He gets UPSET and corrects him.

- The men fire from the standing position.

- The men stand in front of Angelo looking exhausted. Angelo shows them a target with an impact to the right of the bull's-eye. He holds a rifle in his shoulder and jerks it to the right. He sees a rifle with the safety off, grows ANGRY and orders the men back to the compound.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. ARMS ROOM - COMPOUND - LATER

00:00:58

The men line up to turn in their rifles. Angelo walks up to them carrying a small bag.

ANGELO

We're not done yet.

He opens the bag and hands each man a weapons cleaning kit.

MIKEY

Everyone's too tired. Let's do this tomorrow.

ANGELO

Nope. Translate this for me.

(looking at the men)

Your rifle is your life. Treat it better than you treat yourself. Never lay it on the ground. Never drop it. Never get it wet. Always keep it clean. The day you don't will be the day that ISIS attacks.

LATER:

The men stand around tables in the courtyard cleaning their AK-47's. Angelo is helping one of the men disassemble his rifle when Mikey walks up, smoking a cigarette.

MIKEY

Can I talk to you brother?

Angelo follows him away from the men.

MIKEY

They're not happy. You were too

(MORE)

MIKEY (CONT'D)

hard on them today.

ANGELO

Well, if they wanna survive they're gonna have to learn fast.

MIKEY

I know that. But if you keep treating them like you did today they're all gonna quit.

ANGELO

I'd rather they quit than get one of us killed because they're too fuckin lazy to handle a weapon right.

EXT. FARMLAND/COMPOUND/AK-47 RANGE - MONTAGE

00:00:11

- Angelo leads the men on a jog through cropland early in the morning and some men fall behind.

- They return to the compound, sweaty and tired, the men COMPLAINING.

- Morning turns to evening as Angelo instructs and reprimands the men during target practice at the berm.

EXT. COMPOUND - EVENING - LATER

00:01:01

Loaded AK-47 magazines lay stacked in pairs on a table. AK-47's are stacked like teepees off to the side.

Mikey and the men huddle together around the table having a heated discussion as Angelo watches with impatience.

Mikey walks over to Angelo.

MIKEY

They say they're done with training. They're gonna train themselves.

Angelo clinches his jaw, but remains silent.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

They think that they way you're training them is wasting time. And that you don't respect them.

ANGELO
What'd you say?

MIKEY
I said I'd talk to you. You need to stop treating them like they're Marine snipers. They're Iraqis and you're a guest in their village. Show them you respect them.

Angelo starts to reply when --

A MAN runs into the compound YELLING.

MIKEY
He says two ISIS trucks are outside the village.

The men rush to their rifles and start grabbing magazines.

ANGELO
Ask him where they are.

Mikey speaks to the man and he replies.

MIKEY
He says they are on the road driving east.

ANGELO
Tell the men to follow me. We're gonna set up an ambush at the palm trees at the entrance of the village.

Mikey yells at the men as Angelo SPRINTS to his room and grabs his AK-47 and ammo vest.

EXT. ROAD - MIKEY'S VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

00:02:02

Angelo runs south down the road and the men STRUGGLE to keep up.

He stops at a Y-INTERSECTION 200 meters from the compound. A row of palm trees line the road leading into the village 75 yards to the east.

He turns to the men who have caught up.

ANGELO
(pointing)
(MORE)

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Mostafa. Hammad. Ma'a ana.

He turns to Mikey and points at the palm trees.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Mikey. Take the rest of these men
and line them up in those palm
trees. Tell them not to fire until
I fire. I'm gonna stay here with
Mostafa and Hammad.

Mikey SHOUTS to the men and they RUN toward the palm trees.

Angelo places HAMMAD, early 20's and skinny, on the left
side of the road and lays down with Mostafa on the right.

Ahmad and three others stagger up, out of breath, when --

TWO TRUCKS with ISIS FLAGS appear down the road.

Angelo points to a berm behind Hammad, yells at the
stragglers --

ANGELO

Hoonak! Hoonak!

-- and they take cover behind the berm.

The trucks reach the palm trees and Angelo INHALES...
EXHALES...

GUNSHOT.

Gunfire ERUPTS as the lead truck SLAMS into a palm tree and
the second truck runs off the road.

Ahmed rushes into the road, fires recklessly and SHOOTS
HAMMAD in the leg as the gun battle unfolds around them.
Angelo sees it happen, but focuses on the battle in front of
him.

Angelo picks off the last few ISIS fighters and screams --

ANGELO

Cease fire! Cease fire!

Mikey screams in Arabic from behind the palm trees and
silence fills the air. Angelo pulls out his phone, dials and
puts it to his ear.

ANGELO

Mikey. Me and Mostafa are gonna
search the vehicles. Tell your men
not to fire.

He puts the phone away and turns to Mostafa.

ANGELO
(motioning to come)
Ta'ala ma'a ana.

Angelo and Mostafa move to the first vehicle and search it. Then, they move to the second and find a WOUNDED ISIS TEENAGER lying on the ground crying.

ANGELO
(screaming)
Mikey! Get over here! I need you to translate!

Angelo and Mostafa point their rifles at the teenager as he lays there crying, shock and fear on his face.

Mikey rushes up and looks at the boy with pity.

ANGELO
Keep your weapon on him while I search him.

Mikey points his AK-47 at the boy while Angelo pats him down and searches his body. He finds a wallet and cellphone, places them in his pocket, then removes the boy's ammo vest and places it out of reach.

ANGELO
(to Mikey)
Tell him that I'll help him if he answers my questions.

Mikey speaks to the boy.

ANGELO
(looking at the teenager)
Where did you come from?

Mikey translates and the boy responds. Mikey says something else and the boy replies.

MIKEY
He says north of Muqdadiah. That's only 55 kilometers from here.

ANGELO
How many ISIS fighters are there?

Mikey repeats Angelo's question and the boy replies.

MIKEY

He says there are over 300.

EXT. COMPOUND - EVENING - LATER

00:01:07

Angelo and Mikey help the men organize the ISIS fighters' weapons, ammo and personal belongings into piles. When they are done, Angelo turns to Mikey.

ANGELO

Tell the men to gather around.

Mikey speaks to the men and they gather around Angelo.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

(aggressively)

What happened today is exactly why I've been training you so hard.

Mikey translates as Angelo speaks.

ANGELO

Next time ISIS shows up it won't be so easy. You barely pulled it off today. And even then, Hammad was shot by one of your own men.

Angelo looks at Ahmed.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

I want everyone to thank Ahmed for shooting Hammad.

Ahmed looks down at the ground in shame as some of the men glare at him in anger.

ANGELO

(pointing at Ahmed)

That is exactly why I've been so hard on you with marksmanship and weapons safety.

Angelo scans the group of men, seeing looks of guilt, determination and reflection.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

If you're gonna survive the next time, you're gonna have to start taking this seriously. You can start by cleaning your weapons and reloading all your ammunition.

Mikey gets closer to Angelo and leans in.

MIKEY

Brother. I think we should give them tomorrow off. This was their first time fighting and it was hard on them.

Mikey pulls out a cigarette...

MIKEY (CONT'D)

Besides, I need a fucking break.

... and lights it.

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:00:08

A large convoy of Toyota pickups and armored military Humvees leaves behind the BURNING remains of a small village. ISIS flags, heavy machine guns and rocket launchers are mounted to the vehicles, overflowing with ISIS fighters.

INT. ANGELO'S ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

00:02:27

Angelo sits on the floor mattress looking over satellite images of the village and surrounding areas. Then, his phone RINGS.

Angelo pulls his phone from his pocket, sees that TY is calling and answers it.

ANGELO

What's up dude?

TY (V.O.)

How's it going bud? You free to talk?

ANGELO

Yeah man. What's up?

TY (V.O.)

How are things going over there? You safe?

Angelo chuckles, stands up...

ANGELO

Dude.

... and walks into the courtyard.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Two ISIS scout vehicles came to the village today. We barely fuckin got em in time. One of Mikey's men shot one of our own men.

TY (V.O.)

(chuckles)

What'd you expect? Iraqis don't have any balls. They're gonna get you killed man. You need to just cut your losses and get out before the rest of those fuckers show up.

Angelo paces walks along the edge of the wall, staring up at the star-filled sky.

ANGELO

I mean. They did well for never havin fought before. But, the basics. They just won't take em seriously.

TY (V.O.)

I'm telling you man. Get out. You can't hold yourself responsible for Mikey. He can take care of himself.

Angelo stops, exhales and his eyes fall to the ground, lost in thought.

TY (V.O.)

You got some emails I thought you should know about.

ANGELO

Oh yeah? Who are they from?

TY (V.O.)

You got one from Josy and another from Dan Kurcina. You got some other ones but those are the ones I think you might wanna know about right now.

ANGELO

Alright. What do they say?

The door to Mikey's room opens and Mikey emerges.

TY (V.O.)
Josy says she's filing for divorce.
Dan says he's decided to invest
more in your business and wants to
meet next week.

MIKEY (O.S.)
Brother.

Angelo looks up from the ground and sees Mikey walking
toward him.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
We're about to eat dinner. Why
don't you come join us?

Angelo raises his hand and looks back at the ground.

ANGELO
(into phone)
Is that all they said?

TY (V.O.)
Yeah.

MIKEY
Who are you talking to?

ANGELO
(into phone)
I gotta go man. Thanks for telling
me about the emails.

TY (V.O.)
Of course brother. Nothing over
there's worth losing your life
over. You've got a good thing going
with your business. You should
focus on that. If you need anything
else let me know.

ANGELO
Alright. I appreciate it. Thanks
brother.

TY (V.O.)
No problem. Take it easy.

Angelo puts the phone in his pocket and walks toward Mikey.

ANGELO
Let's eat some dinner.

MIKEY
What were you talking about?

ANGELO
I'll tell you about it later.

INT. MIKEY'S ROOM - LATER

00:01:02

Mikey and Angelo sit on floor cushions around a rug as Mikey's mother picks plates and serving dishes off of the rug. Hussein sits in Mikey's lap and Ali lies on the floor mattress.

ANGELO
(in Arabic and in child's
voice)
Hussein. How old are you?

Hussein stares at Angelo.

MIKEY
(in Arabic)
Hussein. Tell uncle Angelo how old
you are.

Hussein holds up two fingers.

HUSSEIN
(in Arabic)
Two.

ANGELO
(in English)
Two. You're a big boy now. What's
your favorite animal?

Mikey translates and Hussein points at the cage with Mikey's pigeons. Angelo chuckles.

ANGELO
(to Mikey)
Your birds are his favorite animal
huh?

MIKEY
Of course bro. Look how awesome
they are.

Angelo looks at the pigeons asleep in the cage.

MIKEY
 (pointing at the cage)
 What sound do the birds make
 Hussani?

HUSSEIN
 Hoo Hoo.

Angelo and Mikey chuckle, then Mikey stands up and brings Hussein a toy.

MIKEY
 Let's go to your room. I'm too
 stressed out. I need a drink.

INT. ANGELO'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

00:02:48

Angelo and Mikey sit on the floor mattress, glasses filled with Jack and Coke. The bottle of Jack sits on the floor beside them.

MIKEY
 The fucker who took my passport
 application spelled my name wrong.
 They have to make a new one.

ANGELO
 How about your family's?

MIKEY
 Theirs are fine. I have theirs. I'm
 gonna have to go back to Baghdad
 soon to get it.

Mikey takes a swig from his Jack and Coke.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
 I just want to relax and forget
 about everything for a while.

LATER:

The bottle of Jack is emptier and Mikey is visibly drunker. He pulls his wallet from his back pocket.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
 I really miss Noora man. I miss her
 so much.

Mikey opens his wallet to reveal a picture of Noora smiling.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
(showing the picture to
Angelo)
Wasn't she beautiful?

ANGELO
Yeah. She was.

Angelo looks down at the ground in shame and Mikey flips through photos, looking painfully at pictures of Noora with him and Hussein. Then, he mixes an ample amount of Jack with Coke and takes a large gulp.

ANGELO
Dude. You need to slow down. You're gonna get fuckin wasted.

MIKEY
No I'm not. I can't even feel it.

ANGELO
You don't drink enough to be able to handle that. I drink a lot and I'd be fucked up if I drank as fast as you.

Mikey lights a cigarette and takes a pull.

ANGELO
Dude. Go outside to smoke.

MIKEY
What the fuck man. Just let me drink in peace. Please. I never get to relax. I just want to forget about how fucked up my life is for once.

ANGELO
You don't think I want to forget how fucked up my life is? I gave up my marriage and business to come here and train your men and they won't get their heads out of their fuckin asses.

Angelo takes a long drink from his glass.

MIKEY
You're the one with his head up his ass. I've been telling you you're training them wrong and you refuse

(MORE)

MIKEY (CONT'D)

to fucking listen.

Smoke drifts across Angelo's face and he coughs.

ANGELO

I know what I'm fuckin doin.

MIKEY

No. You don't. You're not from Iraq. I am. I know how to train Iraqis.

ANGELO

Then why the fuck did you ask me to come here?

MIKEY

Because I didn't think you'd be such an asshole.

ANGELO

Man.

(coughs)

Fuck this.

(finishes Jack and Coke)

You can train em then and see how well that works.

Angelo stands up and heads to the door.

MIKEY

Where are you going?

ANGELO

Out for a walk. I need to decompress before somethin bad happens.

Mikey stands up and BLOCKS Angelo from leaving.

MIKEY

You can't go outside. Someone might see you're drunk.

Angelo reaches for the handle and a STRUGGLE ensues.

ANGELO

(straining)

If you don't move I'm gonna fuckin move you.

Mikey THROWS HIS WEIGHT AGAINST THE DOOR like his life depends upon it and Angelo JUDO THROWS him to the ground.

Mikey holds his hip in pain and looks up at Angelo in confusion. Tears fill his eyes.

MIKEY

You hurt me. Why would you do that?

ANGELO

I told you I'd move you if you didn't let me leave.

Angelo opens the door and walks

OUTSIDE

and quickly walks from the compound to a palm grove on the edge of the village. There, he lays down underneath a tree and stares up at the stars --

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (2004) 00:00:02

Angelo eating dinner with family. Everyone is happy.

INT. BASKETBALL ARENA - DAY (2007) 00:00:02

Angelo graduating college.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY (2008) 00:00:02

Angelo sits with Josy. He appears enraptured as she talks.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (2009) 00:00:04

Angelo and Josy playing a board game with Angelo's brother and his girlfriend. Everyone is happy.

EXT. MANSION - DAY (2010) 00:00:02

Angelo and Josy getting married.

INT. BAR - NIGHT (2011) 00:00:04

Angelo drinks sits at a table drinking beer while he watches Josy dance with friends.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT (2011) 00:00:04

Angelo lies in bed staring at the ceiling while Josy sleeps next to him.

INT. OFFICE - DAY (2012) 00:00:02

Angelo fights with his boss, quits and then leaves.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT (2012) 00:00:02

Angelo and Josy fighting.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (2013) 00:00:02

Angelo and his brother fighting.

INT. CHURCH - DAY (2013) 00:00:07

Angelo's brother getting married. Josy sits in the pews without Angelo.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. PALM GROVE - LATER 00:00:04

Angelo sits up and begins to cry.

INT. ANGELO'S ROOM - MORNING - LATER 00:00:07

Angelo wakes up on his floor mattress - daylight shines underneath the door. He lays there for awhile -- lost in thought -- then gets up and leaves the room.

EXT. MIKEY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 00:00:15

Angelo knocks on the door and Mikey's mother emerges.

ANGELO
Qasim hoona?

MIKEY'S MOTHER
La.

ANGELO
Shukran.

Angelo walks back toward his room, stops in the courtyard and pulls out his phone.

EXT. BUSY STREET - MUQDADIYAH - SAME 00:01:34

Mikey stands at a street vendor purchasing a pack of cigarettes and a bottle of Coke when he hears his phone RINGING.

He sees that it's Angelo and answers it while quickly crossing the street.

INTERCUT MIKEY/ANGELO

MIKEY

Hello?

ANGELO

Where are you?

MIKEY

I'm in Muqdadiyah. I'm going to Baghdad to get my passport.

Mikey finds an unoccupied section of sidewalk and stops.

MIKEY

Are you gonna apologize to me?

ANGELO

Apologize to you? You're the one who needs to apologize.

MIKEY

For what? You're the one who hit me. You fucked up my hip bad.

Mikey lights a cigarette.

ANGELO

I didn't fuckin hit you. I moved you outta the way because you were trying to physically imprison me in the room.

MIKEY

I was trying to keep you safe.

ANGELO

I'm tired of you treatin me like a fuckin kid. I know what the fuck I'm doin.

A YELLOW TAXI slowly passes by Mikey.

MIKEY

I loved you like a brother and you treated me like a dog. I don't want you here anymore. I'm gonna drive you back to Khanaqin. After that, we're done.

ANGELO

Fine. I fucked up my marriage and business because I cared more about helpin you than taking care of my own fucking life. I should never've fuckin come here.

The yellow taxi STOPS by a crowd of shoppers 30 meters from Mikey. Mikey bends down to tie his shoelace and the taxi --
EXPLODES.

ANGELO

(into phone)

Mikey! Mikey!

Angelo hears the sound of SCREAMS, but Mikey doesn't reply. He waits a minute, then hangs up the phone, shaken. Just then, Hussein runs out from Mikey's room and over to Angelo. He holds a toy car up to Angelo.

HUSSEIN

(in Arabic)

Uncle Angelo. Will you play with me?

Angelo's face turns to a gentle smile and he kneels down beside Hussein. He takes the car and makes siren sounds as he pushes it around on the ground. Hussein laughs.

EXT. COURTYARD - LATER

00:01:30

Angelo sits under a tree with Hussein on his lap, reading to him from an Arabic children's book. He hears a vehicle approach the compound and park beyond the wall. Then,

MIKEY

emerges through the gate -- disheveled and covered in dust -- and Angelo RUSHES over to him and embraces him.

ANGELO

(weeping)

I'm sorry. I'm sorry for hurting you.

MIKEY

It's ok. It was my fault. I got too drunk.

ANGELO

No. You're my brother. I'll die
before I ever stop being here for
you.

Hussein appears beside them, raising his arms to Mikey...

HUSSEIN

Baba, baba.

... and Mikey picks him up.

MIKEY

(in Arabic)

Hussani, I love you so much.

Mikey kisses Hussein on the forehead, then turns to Angelo.

MIKEY

I love you man. You've done more
for me than anyone else. I'm sorry
I said those bad things.

Angelo looks Mikey up and down.

ANGELO

Are you ok?

MIKEY

Not really brother. A car bomb went
off 30 meters from me.

ANGELO

Fuck man.

MIKEY

I bent down to tie my shoe when it
went off. A big piece of metal hit
the wall where I was standing. I
almost fuckin died man.

He opens his mouth as if trying to pop his ears, puts a hand
to his forehead and scrunches his face in pain.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

My ears are still ringing and I
have a bad headache.

ANGELO

You wanna go to the doctor?

MIKEY

No man. I just want to lay down.

Mikey walks toward his room carrying Hussein and Angelo follows.

ANGELO

I've been thinking. I wanna apologize to the men and let em know I'm gonna respect em and change how I've been training em. I wanna spend the rest of my money on a feast for em tonight and show em I appreciate em.

INT. LARGE ROOM - MOHAMMED'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

00:01:45

A MAGNIFICENT FEAST of large platters heaped with rice and meat, bowls of vegetables and soup and piles of flat bread lies at the center of the room.

Angelo and Mikey stand at one end of the room, speaking to their men who sit on floor cushions surrounding the feast.

ANGELO

I am proud and honored to have trained and fought beside such brave men.

Mikey repeats his words in Arabic.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

I respect you and your families and want you to live. Which is why I've been so hard on you and expected so much.

Mikey translates.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

But I haven't shown you that respect and I'm sorry.

The men focus attentively on Angelo as Mikey translates.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Daish is outside your village, waiting to kill you and your families.

Mikey translates.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

If you continue to let me train and
(MORE)

ANGELO (CONT'D)

fight with you...
(places right hand over
heart.)
I promise to listen to you and show
you that respect.

One by one the men stand, shake his hand and kiss him on
both cheeks.

LATER:

Laughter and conversation fill the room as the men enjoy
their feast. Angelo sits next to Mostafa laughing.

ANGELO
Jennifer Lawrence huh?

MOSTAFA
(in broken English)
Yes. She's sexy man.

ANGELO
(speaking slowly)
You think she would marry you?

MOSTAFA
After I become famous movie star.

Angelo laughs.

ANGELO
You wanna be an actor?

MOSTAFA
(flexing)
Like The Rock.

ANGELO
(flexing)
You need to get bigger.

MOSTAFA
I work out.

ANGELO
I can tell. You run fast.

MOSTAFA
Thanks man.

Angelo looks across the room and doesn't see Mikey.

ANGELO
Have you seen Qasim?

MOSTAFA
No.

ANGELO
Shukran. Samehni. I'm going to find Qasim.

MOSTAFA
Ok.

EXT/INT. MIKEY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:30

Angelo knocks on Mikey's door and Mikey answers it.

ANGELO
Dude. Where'd you go?

MIKEY
I wanted to spend some time with Hussein.

ANGELO
Is it alright if I join you?

MIKEY
Of course brother. Come on in.

Angelo walks inside and finds Hussein playing with the stuffed bear he got him.

ANGELO
(smiling)
Looks like he likes the bear.

MIKEY
He does. He likes it a lot.
Let's go for a walk. I need some fresh air.

EXT. MIKEY'S VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

00:02:58

Angelo walks with Mikey as they pass through the village.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
I've been thinkin and I'm worried about you man.

Angelo's brow furrow with concern.

ANGELO

Why?

MIKEY

You said you ruined your marriage and business because of me.

ANGELO

I shouldn't have said that. I'm sorry.

MIKEY

I just want you to be happy. If you need to go home to save your marriage and business then you should do that.

ANGELO

It's ok. I just read some emails from Josy and my business investor after our fight and they upset me even more.

They turn right and walk along a grove of palm trees.

MIKEY

What did they say?

ANGELO

Josy's email said she's gonna file for divorce if I don't come home.

MIKEY

Then you should go back to her.

Angelo stops and turns toward Mikey.

ANGELO

What. And abandon you? Fuck no.

MIKEY

Thanks brother. If she loves you she'll wait for you.

Mikey tosses his cigarette, then starts walking again.

MIKEY

What did the email from the investment guy say?

ANGELO

He wants to invest more in my business.

MIKEY

Congratulations. That's a good thing.

ANGELO

He wants me to meet with him next week.

MIKEY

Well, tell him to wait.

Mikey chuckles wryly.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

Doesn't he know you're over here riskin your life for your brother?

ANGELO

Dude. People like that don't give a fuck. When they give you a chance you take it or they move on.

MIKEY

Be patient. You can find other people to invest in your company.

ANGELO

No. I can't.

Mikey stops and lights another cigarette.

MIKEY

Let me ask you somethin brother. Does this investor really care about you?

ANGELO

I mean, he cares enough to risk his money with me.

MIKEY

Does he care enough to risk his life for you?

ANGELO

Mikey. You don't think I spend every fuckin day thinkin about how you saved my life and how I've left you here to fuckin die?

Angelo shakes his head and looks up at the starlit sky.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

You're the most honorable,
courageous person I've ever known.

(beat)

I've barely been able to live with
myself since I got Crockett killed.

MIKEY

It wasn't your fault.

ANGELO

If I had tried harder to convince
Captain Colby to let us take out
the insurgents before the ambush
happened he'd still be alive.

A strong breeze cuts through the stillness of the night.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Saving you is the only thing that's
kept me going. That's why I haven't
listened to you or the men. I'm
afraid that if I don't listen to
myself this time I'll get you
killed.

MIKEY

Bro. You saved me and the Marines.
You did the right thing. The
insurgents killed Crockett, not
you. And yeah, I've suffered a lot
because of what I did for the
Americans. But I would do it all
over again for you brother.

Angelo scans the surrounding countryside, sadness in his
eyes.

ANGELO

So what happens if we're able to
hold off ISIS? You have passports,
but you don't have any visas or
money.

MIKEY

We'll worry about that when the
time comes. Right now we need to
focus on kicking those ISIS
fuckers' asses.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

00:02:05

1) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - DESERT - MORNING

Angelo watches as two men, in subsequent order, lie behind a PKM machine gun, fire at a barrel 50 meters away and MISS. He watches a third man, RAMI (20's), HIT the barrel.

2) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo issues Rami a PKM and JAMEEL (19) a walkie-talkie.

3) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo watches as two teams of two RACE to RPG-7 rocket launchers and prepare them to fire. YUSUF (16) and Mostafa win.

4) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo issues Yusuf an RPG-7 and Mostafa a walkie-talkie.

5) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - DAY

Angelo watches two men fire a PKM and MISS the barrel. He watches NADIR (20's) HIT the barrel.

6) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo issues Nadir a PKM and LUFTI (20's) a walkie talkie.

7) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo watches as two teams of two RACE to RPG-7's and prepare them to fire. SADIQ (30's) and IBRAHIM (30's) win.

8) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo issues Sadiq an RPG-7 and Ibrahim a walkie-talkie.

9) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - DAY

Angelo watches as two men fire a PKM and MISS the barrel. He watches RASHEED (30's) HIT the barrel.

10) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo issues Rasheed a PKM and GADI (30's) a walkie-talkie.

11) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo gives the men a class on how to employ a grenade.

12) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - DAY

Angelo watches two men fire a PKM and MISS the barrel. He watches DAWUD (40's) HIT the barrel.

13) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo issues Dawud a PKM and FARRAN (20's) a walkie-talkie. He places the other eight men in 2-man teams with Ak-47's and walkie-talkies.

14) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Angelo gives a class on communication procedures with the walkie-talkies.

15) EXT. - COMPOUND -DAY

The men watch as Angelo points at a map of the village and surrounding area drawn on the compound wall. He draws team positions on the map.

16) EXT. AK-47 RANGE - EVENING

Angelo lies behind an AK-47 and shoots a paper target in front of the berm 50 meters away. He hits the BULLS-EYE.

17) EXT. COMPOUND - MORNING

Angelo stands with nine men across one end of the compound. Beneath each man, an AK-47 lies on a towel. Mikey SHOUTS and they begin doing pushups. When they finish, they disassemble their AK-47 and SPRINT to their partner waiting on the other end of the compound. Their partner fireman carries them back to the AK-47 and then reassembles it. Angelo congratulates the winning team.

18) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - DAY

Angelo instructs the four machine gun teams as they FIRE at barrels 100 meters away.

19) EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

The men work in pairs applying field dressings and tourniquets to one another.

20) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - DAY

Angelo observes the two RPG teams as they go through the proper procedures. They fire their rockets at barrels 50 meters away and the barrels EXPLODE.

21) EXT. DESERT - DAY

1,000 meters east of the village, Angelo and the men use shovels and a bulldozer to build 3-sided berms on either side of the road.

22) EXT. HILLTOP - EVENING

One mile north of a 2-lane highway, Angelo and the men build a makeshift observation post on top of a hilltop.

23) EXT. AK-47 RANGE - DAY

The men kneel beneath the berm and Angelo instructs Mostafa as he goes through the proper procedures and LOBS a grenade.

24) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - DAY

The men lie in their 2-man teams aiming AK-47's at barrels 50 meters away. Angelo speaks into his walkie-talkie and they begin FIRING. One man from each team BOUNDS back five meters and resumes firing. His teammate follows and they repeat the process, communicating and firing as they bound backwards.

25) EXT. MACHINE GUN RANGE - EVENING

Angelo lies behind a Dragunov sniper rifle and shoots at a barrel 800 meters away. The barrel PINGS as each round impacts.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. STREET - MUQDADIYAH - DAY

00:00:12

Smoke billows from destroyed buildings and Iraqi army vehicles burn. Rubble and dead bodies lie strewn across the road.

Iraqi soldiers kneel as ISIS fighters with beards and Afghan clothing SHOOT THEM IN THE HEAD.

Civilians stand in a row as ISIS fighters check their ID's and randomly EXECUTE THEM.

EXT. COMPOUND - SAME

00:00:28

Mikey's men stand in three groups of six men each, each group divided into three 2-man teams. Each man wears an ammo vest and carries his assigned weapon and radio. Machine gun and RPG gunners also carry AK-47's.

Angelo and Mikey stand in front of the men. Angelo wears the chest rig he wore in Iraq, the Dragunov slung across his back and an AK-47 in his hands. Mikey wears an ammo vest and carries an AK-47.

ANGELO

You've trained hard. Now it's time
for your final training exercise.

Mikey repeats Angelo's words in Arabic.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

You know the plan. Remember. Slow
is smooth, smooth is fast.

Mikey translates.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Team Leaders, load the trucks.

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:05

Mikey's Hummer leads three trucks out of the village, east along the road.

INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:24

Angelo peers out of the passenger window and sees their defensive positions located 1,000 meters east of the village.

ANGELO

(turning to Mikey)

Go ahead and stop here.

Angelo grabs the walkie-talkie attached to his chest rig.

ANGELO

(into walkie-talkie)

Bravo Three Bravo Three, this is
Delta One. Position team, over.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

(in broken English)

Delta One this is Bravo Three.
Position team, out.

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:00:10

The rear truck drives off road 100 meters north and 150 meters east and unloads a machine gun team and AK-47 team at a defensive position. It drives back to the other trucks and parks behind a berm to the right of the road. An RPG team climbs out and takes cover behind the berm.

INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:12

Angelo's walkie-talkie beeps.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O)
Delta One this Bravo Three. Set,
over.

ANGELO
(turning to Mikey)
Alright. Let's move.

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:50

Mikey's Hummer and the other two trucks drive another 1,000 meters to a chain of hills running north/south on either side of the road.

Mikey's Hummer and one truck park underneath a hill on the south side of the road. The other truck parks underneath a hill on the north side of the road.

Mikey and Angelo climb out of the Hummer.

ANGELO
(into walkie-talkie)
Alpha One Three, this is Delta One.
Position team, over.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)
(in broken English)
Delta One, this is Alpha One Three.
Position team, out.

An RPG team, machine gun team and AK-47 team exit the truck parked on the north side of the road. The RPG team takes up position beside the road and the machine gun and AK-47 teams take up positions on the ridgeline overlooking the road to the south.

ANGELO
(into walkie-talkie)
Alpha Two Two, this Delta One.
(MORE)

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Position team, over.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

Delta One, this is Alpha Two Two,
Position team, out.

Two machine gun teams and an AK-47 team exit the truck parked on the south side of the road and take up positions on the ridgeline overlooking the road to the north.

LATER:

Angelo and Mikey inspect each team's position, making adjustments and offering advice.

EXT. OBSERVATION POST - SAME

00:00:11

Ahmed, ammo vest on and rifle across his lap, dozes in his chair underneath the observation post's palm frond shelter.

He comes awake, looks up and FREEZES --

THREE TRUCKS WITH FIGHTERS head east on the 2-lane highway below him to the south.

Frantically, he grabs a walkie-talkie from the ground.

EXT. RIDGELINE - SAME

00:00:37

Angelo and Mikey inspect a machine gun team on the southern ridgeline when the walkie-talkie on Angelo's chest rig BEEPS.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

(in broken English)

Delta Two, Delta Two. This is
Charlie One, over.

Angelo hands the walkie-talkie to Mikey.

MIKEY

(into walkie-talkie)

Charlie One. This is Delta Two,
over.

Mikey and Angelo listen as Ahmed speaks in Arabic and Mikey's face shows concern. He SPEAKS RAPIDLY into the walkie-talkie and Ahmed replies.

MIKEY
 (into walkie-talkie)
 Roger. Delta Two, out.

Mikey turns to Angelo.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
 (anxious)
 Ahmed spotted three trucks with
 fighters heading our direction on
 the highway.

EXT. RIDGELINE - LATER

00:00:11

Angelo and Mikey lie on a ridgeline overlooking the road as
 three Toyota pickups come into sight.

ANGELO
 (into radio)
 Alpha One Three, Alpha One Three.
 This is Delta One, over.

EXT. ROAD - SAME

00:00:20

Mostafa and Yusuf kneel behind cover next to the road.

MOSTAFA
 (into radio)
 Delta One, this is Alpha One Three,
 over.

INTERCUT ANGELO/MOSTAFA

ANGELO
 Ista'ada, over.

MOSTAFA
 Roger. Ista'ada, out.

Yusuf places an RPG-7 on his shoulder and AIMS at the
 approaching pickups.

EXT. RIDGELINE - SAME

00:00:12

The pickups draw nearer when --

Mikey SNATCHES the radio from Angelo and frantically speaks
 Arabic into it.

MIKEY
They're not ISIS. They're Badr
militia.

Angelo looks and sees a YELLOW FLAG on one of the trucks.

EXT. MIKEY'S VILLAGE - LATER

00:01:02

Mikey's Hummer and the other team vehicles pull up beside the Badr pickups parked in the center of the village. Mikey and Angelo emerge from the Hummer and approach four haggard fighters holding AK-47's.

MIKEY
Salaam alaykum ikhwan!

One of the fighters, late-30's with a short-cropped beard, steps forward aggressively and begins speaking with Mikey. Angelo scans the men and pickups, his AK-47 ready to fire at a moment's notice.

Mikey finishes speaking with the man and walks over to Angelo.

MIKEY
They just came from Muqdadiyah.
It's not good.

ANGELO
Why? What's up?

Angelo looks up at the fighters and scans the pickups.

MIKEY
ISIS captured the city. Hundreds of
them, with heavy weapons too.

Angelo notices a Badr militiamen with a SCARRED FACE staring at them menacingly. It's the HITMAN who knocked on Mikey's door in Baghdad.

MIKEY
Are you listening? Pay attention
brother.

ANGELO
I am. I'm just keepin an eye on
these guys. I don't trust em.

MIKEY
Me neither.

He gives Angelo a knowing look.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

I have something to tell you but
let's wait til we're away from them
first.

ANGELO

Ok.

MIKEY

Let me find them a place to stay
for today. Then we'll talk.

EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT - LATER

00:01:51

The men sit together, smoking and laughing around several
small fires. Their weapons and gear lay neatly stacked next
to floor mattresses grouped together in one corner.

Angelo and Mikey stand off to the side, observing the men.

MIKEY

The Badr guy said there were a
hundred of them that came from
Baghdad.

ANGELO

Where're the rest of em?

MIKEY

They're dead.

He takes a long pull from his cigarette.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

He said hundreds of ISIS showed up
yesterday and surrounded them. They
escaped but two of their trucks
were destroyed at a checkpoint.

Angelo starts pacing back and forth.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

I'm worried man.

ANGELO

Why?

MIKEY

Because we can't defend against
(MORE)

MIKEY (CONT'D)

their weapons.

Mikey takes another drag from his cigarette.

ANGELO

What are you talkin about?

MIKEY

I don't know how you call them.
They're twelve point seven...

ANGELO

Dishkas. Twelve point seven
millimeter machine guns.

MIKEY

Yeah. They have those on their
trucks. And anti-tank rockets too.
And they have armored Humvees they
captured from the Iraqi army.

Angelo crosses his arms and looks down at the ground, worry
written on his face.

ANGELO

Let's hope our RPG and machine
gunners hit what they're fuckin
aimin at.

Mikey shakes his head, takes a puff of cigarette and taps
his foot anxiously.

MIKEY

I'm worried about these Badr guys
too brother. You can't trust those
fuckers.

ANGELO

Yeah. They didn't look like they
liked us too much.

MIKEY

They don't like Americans. They get
support from Iran. They've done
some really fucked up things since
the U.S. invasion.

Angelo looks over at the men enjoying themselves and
relaxing, then at the compound gate.

ANGELO

What do you want to do about em?

MIKEY

They want to stay here and fight.
They want revenge against ISIS.

ANGELO

I don't know man.

MIKEY

We don't have a choice brother. If
we tell them to leave they might do
something stupid.

Angelo takes a deep breath and exhales.

ANGELO

Alright. I'll work em into the
defensive plan then.

EXT. COMPOUND - MORNING

00:01:24

Mikey's men sit on their floor mattresses cleaning their
weapons. Angelo, wearing his Marine Corps camis and chest
rig, talks with Mostafa while doing the same.

Mikey walks into the compound with the Badr fighter he spoke
with the day before. Eleven other Badr militiamen follow
behind. Angelo walks over to greet them.

MIKEY

This is Nasir, their leader.

Nasir looks at Angelo with distrust.

ANGELO

(extending his hand)
Salaam alaykum. Ismee Matt.

Nasir hesitates, then shakes Angelo's hand.

NASIR

Alaykum Salaam.

ANGELO

(turning to Mikey)
Let's go over to the wall and I'll
show em the plan.

Angelo leads them to the section of wall with the map of the
village and surrounding area drawn on it.

ANGELO

This is our village.

Angelo points at a group of squares and symbols on the left of the map as Mikey translates.

ANGELO (CONT'D)
Daish will come at us from this
road.

He points at a line leading into the village from the right.

ANGELO (CONT'D)
We'll ambush them in these hills
and then fall back to defensive
positions here.

He points at symbols flanking the road on the right side of the map and symbols flanking the road in the middle of the map.

ANGELO (CONT'D)
We'll hold out as long as possible
there. If they threaten to overrun
us, we'll move back to the village
and take up positions along the
south and east- here, here and
here.

He points at squares and hash marks along the right and bottom of the village.

ANGELO (CONT'D)
If we have to fall back to the
village, I want your men to protect
the northern flank here and here.

He points at squares at the top of the village.

ANGELO (CONT'D)
Does that work for you?

Nasir looks over the map, then nods his head in approval.

ANGELO
(looking at Mikey)
Let's show em the buildings where
they'll be setting up.

EXT. OBSERVATION POST - SAME

00:00:18

Hammad rests his bandaged leg on a chair as he observes the 2-lane highway below him.

A pickup truck emerges from behind a hill driving east on the highway. Then another, and another. Hammad grabs the binoculars from his lap and puts them to his face.

THROUGH BINOCULARS

A large ISIS FLAG streams from the lead Toyota Hilux, a heavy machine gun mounted in the back and filled with ISIS fighters. He shifts from left to right, each truck filled with fighters. Then --

An ARMORED MILITARY HUMVEE.

EXT. COMPOUND - SAME

00:01:30

Angelo and Mikey lead the Badr fighters toward the compound gate when Mikey's walkie-talkie BEEPS --

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)
(in broken English and
frantic)
Delta Two, Delta Two. This is
Charlie One, over.

Mikey responds and a jumble of FRANTIC Arabic comes through the speaker. Mikey turns to Angelo.

MIKEY
(anxiously)
ISIS is coming brother.

Angelo turns to his men as Mikey communicates with Hammad through the walkie-talkie.

ANGELO
(yelling in Arabic)
ISIS is coming. Get ready and come
to me.

The men QUICKLY put on their gear, grab their weapons and gather around Angelo.

Mikey finishes his conversation and moves to Angelo's side.

MIKEY
(worried)
They have sixteen trucks with heavy
weapons. And armored Humvees too.
There's a lot of them.

ANGELO

Ok. Translate for me.

(turning to the men)

I'm proud and honored to have trained and fought beside all of you. You've worked hard and made incredible progress. Alhamdulillah.

The men stand with unease as Mikey translates.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

The only thing standing between your family's safety and freedom and the greatest evil this world ever has seen is you.

Angelo points at them and looks them in the eyes.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

They do not negotiate. They do not show mercy. They kill, rape and enslave.

The man with the scarred face, the HITMAN, glares at Mikey as he translates.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Now it's time to prove to yourselves and your brothers that you have courage and honor and will stand against this evil when others have run in fear and selfishness.

Mikey's men begin to stand tall, fear turning to courage.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

They outnumber us and have better weapons.

(voice crescendoing)

But we have surprise. We have our training. And we have each other. Alhamdulillah!

A chorus of "ALHAMDULILLAH'S" fills the air.

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:05

A trail of dust fills the air as Mikey's Hummer and three trucks speed east away from the village.

EXT. RIDGELINES - LATER

00:01:47

Yusuf and Mostafa ready the RPG-7 as they kneel behind cover at the bottom of the ridgeline on the north side of the road.

Above them and 50 meters to the east, Rami aims his PKM down at the road while Jameel monitors his walkie-talkie.

Another 50 meters east, SALAH (30's) and OMAR (40's) lie behind their AK-47's.

On the western edge of the southern ridgeline, Nadir lies behind his PKM, Lufti by his side.

Fifty meters to the east, QADIR (40'S) AND KHALID (30'S) look at each other uneasily behind their AK-47's.

Another 50 meters east, Gadi helps Rasheed adjust his PKM.

ANGELO AND MIKEY

lie behind cover, 50 meters from Rasheed and Gadi, observing the road to the east.

Mikey pulls a pack of cigarettes from his pocket and puts one in his mouth.

ANGELO

Don't smoke here.

MIKEY

Why not? I'm really stressed man.

ANGELO

Because they might see the smoke
or...

A TOYOTA HILUX comes into view, a large ISIS flag blowing in the wind. A fighter mans a 12.7mm machine gun mounted in the bed, bearded fighters sitting behind him. THREE MORE TRUCKS packed with fighters follow behind.

Angelo grabs his walkie-talkie.

ANGELO

(into walkie-talkie)

Alpha One Three, ista'ada over.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

(in broken English)

Roger. Ista'ada. Alpha One Three,

(MORE)

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

out.

The ISIS trucks pass below Angelo and a TRAIL OF WHITE SMOKE flies from Yusuf's position and the lead truck --

EXPLODES.

Gunfire ERUPTS from the ridgelines and a wall of bullets SLAMS into the ISIS trucks.

The SECOND TRUCK tries to escape, but

NADIR

sights in with his machine gun and sends a STREAM OF BULLETS into the engine and DRIVER and the second truck SLAMS into the side of the ridge, CATAPULTING fighters through the air.

The THIRD TRUCK sits in the middle of the road, ENGINE SMOKING. Fighters jump from the truck and

RASHEED

guns them down with his PKM machine gun. Then dirt EXPLODES in his face as a TORRENT OF FIRE rains down on his position.

The FOURTH TRUCK shudders as an ISIS fighter fires its mounted 12.7mm machine gun into Rasheed's position and fighters rush from its bed toward the ridgelines.

ANGELO

grabs his sniper rifle and centers his crosshairs on the machine gunner. He pulls the trigger and the fighter TUMBLES from the truck.

He engages the other fighters as Mikey fires beside him and the ground EXPLODES to his right. He turns to see MORE TRUCKS firing at him and ISIS fighters rushing toward his position. He yells at Mikey...

ANGELO

Tell the men to fall back to
Position Two!

... and fires his AK-47 on FULLY AUTOMATIC at the fighters to his right. Mikey radios the men, then continues firing, but the enemy fire INTENSIFIES, forcing them to take cover.

ANGELO

Fuck! We're gonna move back to the
Hummer. Ready?

Mikey nods and they take off RUNNING.

EXT. DESERT - LATER

00:00:22

Mostafa and Yusuf, Dawud and Farran, and BAHIR(20's) and FARIQ (20's) lie on an L-shaped berm 100 meters north of the road, observing the hills 1,000 meters to the east.

Mostafa looks to the northeast where Rami, Jameel, Salah and Omar man another berm 300 meters away. He looks across the road to the southwest where Rasheed, Gadi, Sadiq and Ibrahim man a berm beside the road and Lufti and Nadir man another berm 500 meters away.

He looks east again and sees --

MIKEY'S HUMMER speeding toward them with EIGHT TRUCKS in chase.

MOSTAFA
(yelling in Arabic)
Get ready!

INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOVING - SAME

00:00:17

The back window SHATTERS and the SNAP of passing bullets echoes inside the Hummer. Angelo leans out of the passenger window and RETURNS FIRE with his AK-47. Mikey yells...

MIKEY
Hold on!

... and Angelo fights to not fall out as Mikey JERKS the Hummer right and heads toward Mostafa's berm. Two trucks chase CLOSE BEHIND, then --

a ROCKET flies past Angelo's head and EXPLODES into the truck behind him.

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:01:04

A battle unfolds as Mikey's men unleash a BARRAGE of fire and the trucks fan out across the desert RETURNING FIRE.

MOSTAFA'S BERM

A truck barrels towards Mostafa's position and Dawud disables it with machine gun fire. Fighters pour out of the back and return fire.

RAMI'S BERM

Rami engages one truck, then shifts his PKM left and fires at another truck charging toward his position. The truck stops and fighters pour out. Jameel screams at him and he looks left and sees --

a THIRD TRUCK firing its 12.7 mm machine gun into their position. Rounds SLAM into the berm and Salah's head EXPLODES.

LUFTI'S BERM

Lufti exchanges machine gun fire with a truck 300 meters away as Nadir struggles to hold off ISIS fighters RUSHING toward their position. Then --

A rocket flies through the air and EXPLODES on the berm launching Lufti into Nadir.

MOSTAFA'S BERM

Angelo and Mikey engage ISIS fighters with the rest of the men when an ARMORED HUMVEE appears in the distance, its .50 caliber turret machine gun BLAZING.

Angelo turns to Yusuf.

ANGELO
(pointing at Humvee)
Yusuf. Imri. imri.

Yusuf aims his RPG at the moving Humvee. A bullet RIPS through his chest and the rocket fires and MISSES.

Angelo grabs his sniper rifle and takes aim as bullets impact around him. He fires and the turret gunner falls from the turret. He sees MORE TRUCKS following behind and turns to Mikey.

ANGELO
Tell the men to fall back.

Mikey screams at the men, then radios the other teams. Angelo engages the ISIS fighters with his AK-47 as the men fall back to their truck and drive away.

ANGELO
Mikey. Let's go.

Mikey and Angelo SPRINT to the Hummer and speed toward the village as bullets impact the ground around them.

EXT. MIKEY'S VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:08

Mikey's Hummer parks behind a house at the center of the Y-intersection. The Badr militiamen's trucks are PARKED NEARBY. Angelo and Mikey exit the Hummer and run into the house.

EXT. ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:18

Angelo and Mikey run through a rooftop door and take up position on the east facing wall.

ANGELO

Radio the teams and get a sitrep.

Angelo looks through his sniper scope as Mikey radios the teams and sees ISIS trucks approaching from the east.

MIKEY

All the teams are in position. The Badr fighters too. Salah's dead and Lufti is...

The sound of machine gun fire echoes in the distance.

EXT. VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS - SAME

00:00:22

Mikey's men unleash a BARRAGE of fire from palm groves and rooftops as the advancing trucks spread out and return fire.

Yusuf, Mostafa, Rami, Jameel, and Omar MOW DOWN ISIS fighters as they rush toward their isolated compound.

But ISIS trucks POUND the compound with machine gun and rocket fire, killing Rami and Jameel and wounding Yusuf.

The survivors fall back to a compound manned by Badr militiamen as ISIS ATTACKS from the north. They return fire along with Badr militiamen in other compounds and the attack stalls.

But ISIS fighters close in from the right and machine guns and rockets SLAM into their positions. Several of the Badr fighters are killed and wounded and the Badr fighters abandon their positions and retreat.

EXT. ROOFTOP - SAME

00:00:24

Angelo rests his Dragunov on the rooftop wall and looks
THROUGH THE SCOPE

An ISIS fighter runs toward Mikey's men 300 meters to the east. Angelo leads the man with his crosshairs, pulls the trigger and the fighter TUMBLES TO THE GROUND.

MIKEY (O.S.)

The Badr guys are retreating!

Angelo moves over to Mikey standing at the north wall and sees the Badr fighters running toward their compound.

ANGELO

What the fuck.

Angelo slings his Dragunov and grabs his AK.

ANGELO

Find out what's goin on. Let's go.

They run to through the rooftop door.

EXT. COMPOUND - MOMENTS LATER

00:01:25

Angelo and Mikey stand outside the compound wall as the Badr fighters run to their trucks.

Mikey sees Nasir and intercepts him. They have a heated exchange and Nasir runs to his truck. Mikey runs back to Angelo.

MIKEY

He said ISIS is too many. They're fuckin pussies.

The HITMAN watches Mikey and Angelo from his truck.

ANGELO

What the fuck.

Angelo runs to the northwest corner of the compound and looks to the north. Then --

GUNSHOTS BEHIND HIM.

He kneels, swings his AK-47 around and sees the HITMAN firing as the Badr trucks speed away. He looks left and sees

MIKEY LYING ON THE GROUND.

He aims at the HITMAN and pulls the trigger and he flies off the bed of the truck and crumples to the ground -- DEAD.

Angelo rushes over to Mikey, kneels and sees Mikey's shirt SOAKED IN BLOOD.

ANGELO

You're gonna be alright man.

He removes Mikey's ammo vest as Mikey goes into shock, then rolls him on his side and checks for an exit wound. He doesn't see one and rolls him back over. He removes a first aid kit from his chest rig, lifts up Mikey's shirt and applies a pressure dressing to the hole in Mikey's chest.

Mikey looks into Angelo's eyes, shaking.

MIKEY

Bein an American's the only thing I've always ever wanted.

Tears start to run down Mikey's face.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

I just wanna live safe man. I'm tired of running.

Mikey starts to cry.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

Why was I left behind? What for? what did I ever do man?

Tears run down Angelo's face as he struggles not to cry.

MIKEY

I want you to promise me something.

ANGELO

Whatever you want.

MIKEY

Save yourself. And take Hussein. You're all I have left. Please... brother.

Mikey's head falls to the ground, he stops shaking and his eyes stare up at the sky -- LIFELESS.

Angelo lowers his head, his face convulsing as sounds of agony and despair escape through his clinched teeth. Then, a

look of anger and determination cross over his face.

He fills his chest rig with magazines from Mikey's ammo vest, grabs the keys from his pocket and climbs into the

HUMMER

Angelo speeds down the road toward Mikey's compound and slams on the brakes outside the compound gate.

EXT. MIKEY'S COMPOUND - SAME

00:00:08

As he climbs out of the Hummer

TWO ISIS FIGHTERS

appear from behind a house. He DROPS THEM with two bullets each and rushes through the compound gate.

INT. MIKEY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

00:00:42

The sound of gunfire and explosions follow Angelo into the room. Mikey's mother sits in fear next to Ali and holds Hussein tightly in her arms.

ANGELO
(in Arabic)
We have to go, now.

Angelo searches the room.

MIKEY'S MOTHER
(in Arabic)
Where is Qasim?

ANGELO
Qasim is dead.

Mikey's mother drops Hussein and walks around the room, WAILING. Angelo finds Mikey's travel bag, pulls out Hussein's passport and secures it in a pocket.

ANGELO
Daish is coming. We have to go.

Mikey's mother launches herself at Angelo, screaming in Arabic as she pounds against his chest.

Angelo pushes her aside, throws Hussein over his left shoulder and moves toward the door.

She tries to grab Hussein from him but he pushes her to the

ground and opens the door.

 ANGELO
 (looking back)
 Come with me.

Mikey's mother's screams at Angelo with hate and resentment in her voice. He turns and runs through the door.

EXT/INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

00:01:05

Angelo rushes through the gate, opens a back passenger door and buckles Hussein into the backseat. As he climbs into the driver's seat

TWO ISIS TRUCKS

turn onto the road and speed toward him from the north.

He turns the Hummer around and races south through the village, the ISIS trucks in close pursuit.

Bullets spew from the lead truck's mounted machine gun, missing the Hummer and SLAMMING into dirt and buildings and Hussein begins to cry.

 ANGELO
 (looking in the rear view
 mirror)
 Ma mooshkala Hussein. Everything's
 gonna be ok.

They pass the last building and Angelo JERKS the Hummer right onto a dirt road. Crops appear on either side as they drive west.

Angelo looks into the driver's side mirror, sees the trucks firing and

THE MIRROR EXPLODES.

He YANKS the Hummer off the road and drives around a crop circle, the Hummer bouncing as GEYSERS of dirt erupt all around it from enemy fire.

He turns the Hummer back onto a dirt road and drives west, away from the crops. The trucks gain ground and he turns south, then east again through cropland.

The trucks stay within firing distance and more bullets SLAM into the Hummer. Then, a 3-way intersection appears and the

road

DEAD-ENDS.

He turns right onto a narrow dirt road lined by palm trees and GUNS IT. He gains distance on the trucks and the road turns sharply to the left. He rounds the corner and

SLAMS ON THE BRAKES.

He grabs his AK-47, jumps out and sprints back to the corner.

He kneels -- the trucks barrel toward him -- and takes aim.

Dirt EXPLODES all around him as the lead truck fires its heavy machine gun and he

PULLS THE TRIGGER.

The lead truck CRASHES into a palm tree, spins back into the road and is T-BONED by the truck behind it.

Angelo runs back to the Hummer and climbs in.

INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - SAME

00:00:15

Angelo looks at Hussein through the rearview mirror.

HUSSEIN

Baba. Wen baba?

Angelo looks away, sadness in his eyes, then turns toward Hussein.

ANGELO

(in Arabic)

We're going to baba, Habibi.

He turns back around and begins to drive.

EXT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOVING - SAME

00:00:08

The Hummer leaves behind the cropland and follows a wadi into the low-lying hills to the east. Smoke and sounds of battle fill the air as fighting continues in the village behind them.

INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOVING - LATER

00:00:14

Desert hills surround them as Angelo turns onto a 2-lane highway and speeds north.

MOMENT'S LATER

Ahead, a dirt road intersects the highway and disappears into the hills to the west. Angelo scans the road intensely as they approach and then pass it, then grabs the cellphone from his pocket and

CALLS TODD.

EXT. KHANAQIN - IRAQ - SAME

00:00:11

Todd FIRES an AK-47 from behind a berm as his phone RINGS inside his pocket. To his left and right, Peshmerga soldiers engage in battle as bullets impact all around them.

To the west, ISIS trucks and fighters spread out on either side of a 4-lane highway as they unleash rocket and machine gun fire on the Peshmerga defenders.

INT. MIKEY'S HUMMER - MOVING - SAME

00:00:44

The phone continues to ring and then --

ANGELO'S PHONE (V.O.)

This is Todd Boeringer. I can't come to the phone right now. Please leave a message...

... the sound of a voicemail beep.

ANGELO

(into phone)

Todd. This is Matt Angelo. ISIS overran our village. I'm heading your way on the highway in a...

A LOUD POP.

Hussein begins to cry as the Hummer sputters, steam SPEWING from the engine.

Angelo hangs up as the Hummer rolls to a stop and turns to Hussein.

ANGELO

We're gonna be ok Hussein. Ma
mooshkala, ma mooshkala.

Angelo pulls a GPS from his chest rig with his left hand and texts Todd with his right.

ANGELO (TEXT)

Chosin, Chosin. E&Eing on foot with
Mikey's son. Moving north on Route
Alpha. Current position...
(looks at GPS)
... 38SNC 2383 7200.

Angelo puts his GPS and phone away, grabs his Dragunov and AK-47 and climbs out of the Hummer.

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:00:32

Angelo slings his Dragunov over his back and opens the back passenger door.

ANGELO

Hussein habibi. We're gonna go for
a walk.

Tears drip from Hussein's big brown eyes as Angelo unbuckles him and picks him up.

LATER:

Sweat pours down Angelo's dust-covered face and STINGS his eyes as he walks quickly along the highway.

Hussein rests in his left arm, asleep on his shoulder, Angelo's Marine Corps desert boonie hat protecting his delicate face.

Angelo brings his right arm up, AK-47 in hand, and wipes his face with his forearm.

Heat from the BLISTERING midday sun shimmers on the asphalt in front of him. He checks behind him, the looks left and right --

SCORCHED DESERT HILLS.

He looks down and his eyes drift off to another place.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. CAMP PENDLETON - CALIFORNIA - DAY (2001)

00:02:08

Branches SLAP Angelo in the face and get caught in his GHILLIE SUIT as he runs through dense vegetation with 12 other SNIPER SCHOOL STUDENTS.

MOMENTS LATER:

The single file line of Marines slows to a walk as the vegetation opens up to reveal a

PUTRID, SLIME-FILLED SWAMP

Two SNIPER SCHOOL INSTRUCTORS stand waiting as they arrive. One of the instructors, mid-30's and stocky, wears Gunnery Sergeant chevrons and a nametape that reads - FRASER. The other instructor, mid-20's and athletic, wears Sergeant chevrons and a nametape that reads - PALMER.

FRASER

You guys didn't think you'd see the Pig Pond again did you?

He scans the Marines' faces for signs of emotion.

FRASER (CONT'D)

You know the drill.

One by one, the Marines plop, dive and jump into the FESTERING waters.

PALMER

There ya go. Kick back. Relax. You're gonna be here awhile.

FRASER

How do you like day one of Hell Week so far?

STUDENT

(motivated)

Get some!

FRASER

Oh don't worry. You'll get plenty. We'll see if you're this motivated after five days with no sleep or food.

Angelo sits up in the water.

PALMER

Fuck no Angelo. All the way in.

Angelo leans back until the slime is touching his chin.

FRASER

If this is too hard for you gentlemen you're welcome to quit and go become one of the thousands of Navy SEALs, Rangers, or Green Berets. This isn't for everyone. Just those who want to earn the right to become one of 300 elite Scout/Snipers.

Ooze drips from their faces as the Marines paddle around in the fetid waters.

FRASER (CONT'D)

You better learn to love this cause this is the life of a Marine Scout/Sniper. If you want a cool uniform to show how bad ass you are, go become a Green Beret. The only thing on your uniform that'll show people you're a Scout/Sniper are the sweat and blood stains you earn here.

Fraser glances around at the Marines' faces once again.

FRASER

Alright. Everybody out of the water.

The tired Marines rise -- like SWAMP THINGS disturbed from their slumber -- and they struggle to walk as their boots sink into the swamp's muddy bottom.

PALMER

Hurry up. Everyone line up.

The Marines line up on the edge of the swamp, water dripping from their burlap masses.

PALMER

Let's see some motivation. Twenty five and five.

One of the Marines, the CLASS LEADER, stands in front of the men.

CLASS LEADER

Everybody down.

The Marines drop to the pushup position.

CLASS LEADER
Ready... down.

The men yell in unison - "ONE" - as they complete a pushup and the class leader and Marines repeat the sequence, counting up to 25. With each new pushup they GRUNT and CRINGE as the 50-pound waterlogged ghillie suits wrapped around their bodies grows heavier.

After the 25th pushup the Marines do another five pushups, yelling -- "SCOUT SNIPER" -- with each one.

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:00:50

Angelo looks up and pushes on as the sun beats down on his salt-encrusted face. Hussein is asleep, strapped to his back with his Marine Corps blouse. he carries his Dragunov, his AK slung tightly across his chest.

LATER:

He STOPS and leans forward...

BUILDINGS

appear next to the road in the distance. He looks left... hills, then right... more hills.

He walks toward the hills on the right.

MOMENTS LATER:

Angelo struggles to keep his footing as he moves through the RUGGED TERRAIN in-between hills. Hussein comes awake and begins to whimper.

Angelo trips, FALLS TO HIS KNEES and Hussein begins to cry. Angelo lowers his head, closes his eyes and takes several large breaths. Then, he takes Hussein from his back and sits him on the ground.

ANGELO
It's gonna be alright buddy.

He grabs a 2-quart canteen from his chest rig, gives Hussein a drink of water and then takes one himself.

He brushes back Hussein's hair and kisses him on the forehead.

ANGELO

I'm sorry.

He straps Hussein on his back once again and continues to move.

LATER:

Angelo stands on top of a hill, hunched forward with hands on knees, breathing heavily. He looks down at the road to the north and begins his descent.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. CAMP PENDELTON - CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

00:01:05

Angelo and the 12 sniper school students sit in ocean surf, arms locked, as waves CRASH against them. The four instructors stand behind them.

FRASER

Get to your rucks.

The Marines climb out of the water and run to their rucks, rifles and ammo vests staged on the beach.

FRASER

Fill up both sandbags, wet sand only, and put them back in your rucks.

Angelo pulls two empty sandbags and an entrenching tool from his ruck and turns to his partner.

ANGELO

If you hold my bags I'll shovel and then we can switch.

ANGELO'S PARTNER

Sounds good.

Angelo's partner holds a sandbag and Angelo begins to shovel.

PALMER

Hurrrry up.

HEALY

I don't know why you're taking your sweet ass time. You have two minutes. Pays to be a winner.

Angelo picks up his pace.

MOMENTS LATER:

Angelo sits in the sand, his ruck strapped to his back. His partner stands above him, ruck on, and offers his hand.

Angelo grabs it and both men PULL in unison. Both men STRAIN as the 90 pound ruck slowly lifts from the ground and Angelo stands.

All around them, Marines struggle to pick up their rucks, or stand on their own, and fail.

FRASER

Time's up. We're moving.

FRASER TAKES OFF RUNNING.

LATER:

Angelo and his partner keep up with Fraser as they run down a gravel road. Exhilaration shows on Angelo's face as the Marines staggered behind them begin to disappear out of sight.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:00:35

Asphalt rolls under Angelo's feet in a monotonous rhythm as he drifts back out of his thoughts.

He looks up, his lips parched and face sunburned, and sees the road gradually rising as it climbs its way up a large hill in the distance.

He moves off to the side of the road and takes a knee. He removes a 2-quart canteen from his chest rig and looks over his left shoulder at a sleeping Hussein.

ANGELO

Hussein habibi. Ishrab.

He holds the canteen to Hussein's lips and gently tilts it back.

When Hussein is done drinking he puts the canteen to his own lips. He takes one gulp and

THE CANTEEN GOES DRY.

He leans forward on his knee and looks at the dirt.
Desperation and pain show on his face.

LATER:

Angelo's pace has slowed as he climbs the road, halfway up the hill. His face scrunches and he adjusts his gear trying to relieve the pain and discomfort.

He looks down at his feet and retreats back into his mind.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. BARRACKS - CAMP PENDLETON - DAY (2002)

00:00:38

Angelo looks at paperwork while talking to a Marine. Five SNIPER PLATOON CANDIDATES stand in a line behind them.

Angelo finishes talking with the Marine and he joins a group of four other candidates standing off to the side.

ANGELO

Next.

The next Marine in line -- CROCKETT -- walks up to Angelo.

ANGELO

(looking at paperwork)

Expert marksman. 110 ASVAB. First class P.F.T.

(looks up at Crockett)

So. Why do you wanna be a sniper?

CROCKETT

(cocky)

I got bored in the infantry sergeant.

ANGELO

When did you graduate from infantry training?

CROCKETT

Two weeks ago.

ANGELO

(chuckling)

Get the fuck outta here.

EXT. OUTDOOR POOL - CAMP PENDLETON - LATER

00:00:38

Angelo stands on top of a 10-meter diving platform with the 10 sniper platoon candidates.

ANGELO
Who wants to go first?

Crockett walks to the edge fo the platform, gives a "hang loose" hand gesture and

JUMPS.

Angelo shakes his head as he watches Crockett fall, then turns back to the men.

ANGELO
Smith. You're next.

A young, timid Marine walks to the edge and freezes.

ANGELO
Let's go.

Smith doesn't move.

ANGELO
If you're not willin to jump from a 10-meter platform then you're not willin to save your partners life behind enemy lines.

SMITH
I can't sergeant.

ANGELO
Ok. Head back down we'll get you back to your line company.

EXT. BARRACKS - CAMP PENDLETON - DAY

00:01:50

Angelo stands on a small hill outside the barracks, the remaining candidates scattered around him in the pushup position.

Angelo turns to Crockett.

ANGELO
Crockett. Definition of a Marine Scout Sniper.

CROCKETT
(motivated)
A Marine highly skilled in field
(MORE)

CROCKETT (CONT'D)

craft and marksmanship who delivers long range precision fire at selected targets from concealed positions in support of combat operations, sergeant.

ANGELO

Alright. Stand up.

Angelo looks at the other Marines as Crockett stands up. Sweat pours from their faces as they fight to keep from collapsing.

ANGELO

(to the group)

I don't know what you were expecting when you signed up for this, but if you're gonna make it in this platoon you're gonna have to be an independent operator.

Marines grunt and bodies shake under the strain.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

When you're behind enemy lines in a 2-man or 4-man team nobody's gonna be there to tell you what to do. If you can't think and act independently, if you can't think outside the box, you're not gonna just get yourself killed, you're gonna get your teammates killed.

Some of the Marines collapse, then push themselves back up.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

When one of you fucks up, you all pay. Everyone say thank you to Landers.

The candidates, exhausted and angry, spew out a chorus of thank you's- "Thanks dude!", "Thanks fucker!", "Thank you!", "Thanks Landers!", "Thanks!", "Go fuck yourself!", "Thank you Landers!", "Motherfucker!", "Eat shit Landers!"

ANGELO

Now's a good opportunity to introduce you to Find Life. Everybody stand up.

Grunts and sighs of relief fill the air as the candidates stand up.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

One of the traditions in the sniper community is Find Life. Whenever one of us tells you to find life, your run to wherever we point and bring back a piece of vegetation.

Angelo points to a radio tower on the highest point of the ridge.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

See that radio tower on top of the ridge. Find Life and build me a tree.

Looks of frustration come over the candidates, but Crockett TAKES OFF RUNNING.

ANGELO

Pays to be a winner.

The rest of the Marines take off after Crockett.

LATER:

Angelo watches as the candidates return as a group, carrying small tree branches and pieces of shrubbery. Then, Crockett emerges from the group carrying

A SMALL SAPLING.

Angelo shakes his head and smiles.

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:01:41

Angelo smiles, deep in thought, then looks back and sees that he has crested the hill and reached the bottom.

The smile turns into a hardened look of determination and he picks up the pace. Heavy breaths break through his cracked lips as Hussein begins to whimper on his back.

HUSSEIN

Baba. Baba. Wen baba.

LATER:

Hussein cries as they cross a long stretch of flat land, hills on either side. In the distance, the road climbs steeply up a hill.

Angelo steps off the road, sets Hussein down and unzips his chest rig. He pulls out an MRE packet and plastic spoon...

ANGELO

Here ya go little guy. This'll help
with the thirst a little.

... And begins feeding Hussein spoonfuls of fruit cocktail. Hussein stops crying and accepts them eagerly.

ANGELO

(smiling)
You like that huh?

When the fruit runs out Angelo lets Hussein drink the remaining juice.

ANGELO

Alright buddy. Time to go.

He tries to strap Hussein to his back but Hussein FIGHTS HIM and falls to the ground.

Angelo loses his temper, swings around in anger and sees Hussein lying on the ground, crying. Angelo's face turns to sadness and he kneels, lowering his head in resignation.

MOMENTS LATER:

Angelo looks north down the highway and sees

A TRUCK

crest the hill in the distance. He grabs the phone from his pocket and checks the screen - NO MESSAGES.

He grabs his sniper rifle and looks

THROUGH THE SCOPE

An ISIS FLAG flies from the truck and more trucks crest the hill -- PACKED WITH FIGHTERS.

ANGELO

looks left. The terrain is flat and open, with NO CONCEALMENT from the ISIS trucks.

He looks right -- a chain of hills is 100 away.

He throws Hussein over his shoulder, grabs his sniper rifle and SPRINTS toward the nearest hill on the right.

MOMENTS LATER:

Angelo is halfway across the open terrain as the ISIS trucks grow nearer but the ground is rocky and uneven and he

TRIPS

and as he falls he shifts his body to protect Hussein and absorbs the FULL IMPACT as he slams into the ground.

Angelo is desperate and in pain but adrenaline courses through his body. He forces himself up and continues to run.

MOMENTS LATER:

Angelo reaches the bottom of the hill and looks back at the road -- the ISIS trucks are GAINING GROUND.

Hussein cries and fights to get free but Angelo grits his teeth and begins the ascent.

He pushes through the PAIN and EXHAUSTION but loose dirt and rock give way under his feet and he

SLIPS AND STUMBLES

as he makes his way up the hill. Then, his leg shoots out from under him and

HE FACE-PLANTS.

He moans, coughs and begins to sob while Hussein cries on his shoulder.

Then, he stops and his face relaxes. He looks up, holds Hussein tight and climbs to his feet.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. CAMP PENDLETON - DAY (2002)

00:00:40

Angelo wears a heavy ruck and runs down a STEEP firebreak, passing the sniper platoon candidates as they struggle to climb the hill with their weighted packs.

Angelo stops and turns to a Marine who is distressed and barely moving.

ANGELO

Why are you the only one walking
Vela?

Vela looks up the hill, then back at his feet and continues to shuffle forward.

ANGELO

Why are you still fuckin walking?
One of these days you might have to
carry your teammate up a fuckin
mountain and you can't even carry
your fuckin self.

Angelo bites his teeth in disgust and runs back up the hill,
passing the candidates one by one.

Then, he sees Crockett ahead -- running. His brow furrows,
he grins and begins to SPRINT.

He gains ground gradually, then passes Crockett and

TRIPS

and falls HARD to the ground.

He struggles to get up and Crockett grabs his ruck and yanks
him to his feet, pulling him forward with him as he runs.

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. DESERT - SAME

00:07:21

The sound of the approaching ISIS trucks echoes off the
hillside as Angelo powers forward with RENEWED STRENGTH, the
summit only 10 meters away.

His chest heaves as he GRUNTS and GASPS for air and climbs
the last few meters to the top. The

HILL TOP

forms a small depression and he sets Hussein down in the
middle.

Hussein looks around -- as Angelo unslings his AK-47 -- and
begins to sob. Angelo kneels...

ANGELO

It's gonna be ok habibi.

... and kisses him on the forehead.

ANGELO

(in Arabic)

Don't move.

Angelo slings his Dragunov over his back, grabs his AK and
crawls to the edge of the hilltop.

Slowly, he unslings the sniper rifle and peers over the rim at

THE ROAD BELOW.

The ISIS trucks are now less than a mile away. Over 30 FIGHTERS sit crammed into four Toyota pickups and the lead and rear trucks have mounted 12.7mm HEAVY MACHINE GUNS.

The trucks speed south as they approach his hill, then slow and come to a stop

BELOW HIS HILL.

One bearded fighter climbs out of each front passenger seat and converges on the lead pickup.

The four fighters stand together talking and looking at the hilltop. Then, one of the men YELLS at the fighters in the lead truck and two fighters jump from the back and

WALK TOWARD ANGELO.

Angelo crawls from the rim, grabs his Dragunov and adjusts the scope. Then, he pulls out his GPS and cellphone and texts Todd.

ANGELO (TEXT)

Last stand at grid...

(looks at GPS)

... 1834 8147.

Angelo looks at Hussein with SADNESS in his eyes. Then, the sadness turns to DETERMINATION.

He crawls back to the rim, places the sniper rifle in his shoulder and looks

THROUGH THE SCOPE

He centers his crosshairs on the lead truck's machine gunner and

FIRES

and the fighter TOPPLES from the truck.

Angelo swings the crosshairs to the rear truck -- a fighter struggles to ready the machine gun -- centers them on the fighter's head and

FIRES.

The fighter's head FLIPS BACK and he tumbles from the truck.

BACK TO SCENE

ISIS fighters jump from the trucks and take cover behind them.

Angelo takes his face off the scope, looks down the hill and sees

MUZZLE FLASHES

between the trucks and the hill.

Dirt explodes around Angelo and bullets SNAP overhead as the two ISIS fighters who were walking toward him FIRE from behind cover.

Angelo aims the Dragunov, SHOOTS and blood SPLATTERS from one of the fighter's heads.

He shifts the rifle to the right, FIRES and the other fighter's face CAVES IN. Then,

A BURST OF GUNFIRE

erupts from the trucks and bullets WHIZ and SNAP past Angelo's head.

He looks past the scope and sees

A BEARDED FIGHTER

shooting from behind the lead truck.

He swings his Dragunov left -- dirt and rocks explode all around him -- aims and

FIRES.

Blood erupts from the fighter's head as it SNAPS BACK from the impact and he disappears from view.

Other fighters hold their AK-47's and PKM machine guns over their heads and fire over the trucks without aiming.

Angelo SCANS FOR TARGETS as bullets impact the side of the hill and fly through the air. Then,

A FIGHTER EXPOSES HIMSELF

behind the rear truck and FIRES -- Angelo jerks his Dragunov to the right -- and disappears again. Angelo looks

THROUGH THE SCOPE

aims where the man was standing and waits...

... the fighter pops up again -- ANGELO FIRES -- and his lifeless body drops behind the truck.

Angelo continues to search for targets as the ISIS fighters fire indiscriminately. Then, another fighter

EXPOSES HIMSELF

behind the second truck, FIRES and pops back down.

Angelo repositions his rifle, waits -- THE FIGHTER REAPPEARS -- and FIRES.

The fighter flies backwards and lands on the ground --DEAD.

SHOUTING fills the air behind the trucks and the ISIS fighters

STOP SHOOTING.

Angelo glances back at Hussein -- he sits in the same place, CRYING -- and looks back at the trucks. He hears shouting, but there's no movement.

Angelo moves down from the rim and crawls over to Hussein.

Tears stream from Hussein's red, puffy eyes and mix with the dirt encrusted on his face. He looks up at Angelo and his eyes plead for solace.

Angelo pulls him in close and embraces him.

ANGELO
(in Arabic)
Sssh. Sssh. Don't worry habibi.
No problem. No problem.

Dust and dirt coat Angelo from head to foot. His bare arms bleed from scratches and cuts. The desert sun has baked the sweat off his body, leaving behind salt stains on his shirt and skin. His eyes reflect doubt and sorrow.

Angelo sets Hussein back down and lays him on his back.

ANGELO
(in Arabic)
Don't move. OK?

He kisses Hussein on the forehead.

ANGLEO
(in loving voice)
(MORE)

ANGLEO (CONT'D)

Ana ahabek Hussein. Habibi.

Angelo kisses him on the forehead once again and crawls back to the hilltop's edge.

He aims his Dragunov over the rim and begins scanning the trucks from left to right. Then, a fighter emerges from behind the rear truck and OPENS FIRE.

Angelo swings his rifle to the right, centers his crosshairs on the fighter and

GUNFIRE ERUPTS

from behind the lead truck.

He pulls the trigger -- dirt explodes all around him -- then swings his rifle left to engage the other shooter.

As Angelo centers his crosshairs, an RPG LAUNCHES from behind the second truck, ROCKETS toward his position and

EXPLODES

on the hill beneath him.

Dirt and debris SLAM into his rifle and face and the SHOCK WAVE sends him tumbling backward.

Angelo lies on the ground

MOTIONLESS.

Seconds later, he moans and opens his eyes, then

BLINKS REPEATEDLY AND GRIMACES

as BLOOD POURS from his forehead, mixing with sweat and stinging his eyes.

He sits up and wipes the blood and sweat from his eyes, then opens his mouth wide and tries to pop his numb and ringing ears.

He looks back at Hussein -- Hussein is sitting up and crying -- then picks up his Dragunov and sees

THE SCOPE IS MANGLED.

He throws the Dragunov down, rushes back to the rim and grabs his AK-47 as

BULLETS AND RPG'S

SLAM into the hillside and fly overhead.

He moves to the far right side and peers over the rim --

ISIS fighters maneuver across the open terrain toward his hill, firing as they move. Behind them, the 12.7mm heavy machine guns unleash a TORRENT OF FIRE into the hillside.

Angelo ducks back down, holds his AK over his head and
FIRES ON FULL AUTO

down the hill until his magazine is empty.

The ISIS fighters shift their fire and Angelo BEAR CRAWLS to the left as

A BARRAGE OF FIRE

rips into the hilltop where he just knelt.

Angelo reaches the far left side, changes his magazine and racks a round into the chamber.

Then he moves to the rim, aims his AK at the lead truck's
MACHINE GUNNER

and fires a single round.

The fighter topples from the truck and Angelo swings his rifle toward the rear truck's machine gunner. He takes aim and

FIRES

and the bullet RICOCHETS off the machine gun. He takes another shot and

MISSES.

The fighter swings his machine gun toward Angelo and

ANGELO FIRES

and BLOOD ERUPTS from the fighter's face and he falls into the bed of the truck.

Then, Angelo hears the SNAP of bullets overhead and dirt flies into the air around him. He looks

DOWN THE HILL

and sees ISIS FIGHTERS firing and running toward the base of the hill.

He aims at one of the fighters SHOOTING at him, FIRES three times, then shifts his rifle toward

A FIGHTER RUNNING.

He pulls the trigger and the fighter TUMBLES TO THE GROUND. He shifts back toward a muzzle flash and

DIRT EXPLODES IN HIS FACE.

Angelo rolls down from the rim and bear crawls to another position several meters to the right.

He climbs back onto the rim and fires SHORT BURSTS at

A GROUP OF FIGHTERS

running toward the BASE OF THE HILL and one of the fighters goes down and the others take cover.

Angelo shifts his aim up and begins firing at

ANOTHER GROUP OF FIGHTERS

shooting at him from 50 meters away. Then,

A FLASH and BOOM

at the trucks and an RPG HURTLES toward the hilltop and EXPLODES

to the left of Angelo.

Debris showers Angelo and the shock wave ROCKS his body.

He aims his rifle at the trucks and begins FIRING at the fighters behind them. Then,

HE STOPS

and scans the battlefield. His EYES grow big and he looks to his right...

ISIS FIGHTERS

appear on another hilltop 50 meters away to the north.

Angelo FIRES ON FULL AUTO down the hill, his magazine runs dry and he SPRINTS to the hilltop's

NORTH SIDE

ISIS fighters on the other hilltop SHOOT at Angelo as he sprints to engage them and he

DIVES

behind the rim of dirt encircling the hilltop.

Bullets RIDDLE the dirt above Angelo as he loads a new magazine.

He crawls several meters to the right

POPS UP AND FIRES

and blood sprays from one of the fighters as he flies backwards.

Angelo shifts his aim and

FIRES

and dirt and rocks EXPLODE around another fighter and he takes cover.

Then, Angelo's body ROCKS and a stream of shell casings fly through the air as he

FIRES

his AK on fully automatic at the fighters on the hill.

His rifle goes silent and he SPRINTS back to the hilltop's

EAST SIDE

Angelo dives behind the rim and changes his magazine. Then, he pops up and sees two fighters

CHARGING UP THE HILL.

He fires a couple BURSTS and one fighter COLLAPSES and the other dives for cover. Then,

GUNFIRE ERUPTS

from a group of fighters at the bottom of the hill and a bullet

GRAZES

Angelo's arm and he grunts and rolls onto his back.

DESPERATION and PAIN rack his face as he grabs a grenade from his chest rig and throws it over the rim.

The grenade flies through the air, bounces down the hill and

EXPLODES

in front of a fighter and he grabs his BLOODY FACE
screaming.

Then, Angelo struggles to his feet and RUNS to the hilltop's
NORTH SIDE

ISIS fighters move along a wadi between the two hills.

Angelo FIRES at them-- a fighter on the hill aims an RPG --
and his rifle JAMS.

Angelo ducks down to clear his AK-47 as the RPG launches and
EXPLODES

on the hill below him and he cowers as dirt and debris fly
over his head.

He clears his AK and pops up to fire --

A BLAST

sends him flying backward and he SLAMS into the ground.

HILLSIDE

ISIS fighters STALK up the sides of the hill.

HILLTOP

Angelo looks up at the sky, his vision blurry, his
MOTIONLESS body covered in blood and dirt.

Slowly, he turns his head to the side and sees

HUSSEIN

rocking back and forth in the fetal position, SCREAMING.

Angelo stares at Hussein, slowly reaches for him and

PASSES OUT.

LATER:

Angelo's eyes shoots open with FEAR and he sees

TODD KNEELING OVER HIM.

TODD

(relieved)

Fuckin aye brother. Stay still. I'm
gonna take a look at you.

A GUNSHOT goes off in the distance and Angelo looks around in fear.

TODD

Don't worry. That's just my guys cleaning up.

(inspecting Angelo's wounds)

Sorry I didn't get to you sooner brother. I was in the middle of a firefight when you tried to contact me the first time and I didn't hear my phone go off.

Angelo turns his head to the side and sees

HUSSEIN

staring at him as a Peshmerga soldier holds him in his arms.

TODD (CONT'D)

I left as soon as I got your last text.

Todd looks over at Hussein.

TODD (CONT'D)

You know. Most people would have left him.

Angelo begins to cry.

INT. OFFICE ROOM - LOS ANGELES - DAY (SUMMER 2017)

00:01:08

Angelo sits behind a desk in his private office room, sadness in his eyes as he looks at a

PHOTO

of Angelo, Crockett and Mikey in Iraq. Mikey stands in-between Angelo and Crockett, his arms draped on their shoulders, a GIANT GRIN on his face. Crockett sticks his TONGUE OUT and flashes the "HANG TEN" sign. Angelo looks across at him, LAUGHING.

MOMENTS LATER:

Angelo looks up from the photo and through the glass walls at a conference room filled with men and women. Then, he checks his watch, grabs his things and walks into the

CONFERENCE ROOM

A company logo with the words "SPOTTERUP MEDIA - FIND A WAY OR MAKE ONE" hangs from the ceiling and military memorabilia adorn the room.

Glenn Masters stands up from the table and greets Angelo.

GLENN

Matt. Have a minute to say hi to our new hire?

Glenn points to a handsome man, ZACH ECKSTEIN (late-20's), sitting at the table. A PIN is attached to his lapel that reads "USAF PARARESCUE - THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE."

Angelo smiles and walks over to Zach.

ANGELO

Zach. How's it goin brother?
Welcome to the team.

Zach stands up and shakes his hand.

ZACH

Thanks so much for giving me this opportunity Mr. Angelo.

ANGELO

Matt. And you earned it. You've got some incredible skills and experience, which is why we hired you. Just remember, your mission from this day forward is to help as many veterans as possible and to tell their stories. Don't forget that.

ZACH

I won't.

ANGELO

(turning to the group)
Alright guys. I've got some place to be.

EXT. AVIARY - LOS ANGELES ZOO - LATER

00:01:37

Angelo stands LOST IN THOUGHT as the sound of exotic birds mixes with that of children and families.

Suddenly, a Violet Turaco flies through the air and lands on a sign in front of Angelo.

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)
Whoa. Uncle, can I feed him?

Angelo looks down at HUSSEIN, standing beside him.

ANGELO
(smiling)
No habibi. We're not allowed to feed the birds. It's not good for em.

HUSSEIN
Why?

ANGELO
Because someone might feed em somethin that makes em sick.

HUSSEIN
OK.

Angelo reaches down and picks up Hussein.

ANGELO
You know what today is?

HUSSEIN
No.

ANGELO
On this day 14 years ago your baba saved my life. He was one of Iraq's bravest warriors and he protected you from the bad people.

HUSSEIN
I miss baba.

ANGELO
I do too. He loved you very, very much. He was the most caring, honorable and bravest man I've ever known. He was a hero. Don't ever forget that OK?

HUSSEIN
OK.

ANGELO
And don't ever forget that you're
(MORE)

ANGELO (CONT'D)

his son. One day you'll grow up to
be a hero too.

Angelo rubs Hussein's head.

ANGELO

You know why I brought you here?

HUSSEIN

No.

ANGELO

Your baba loved birds. He always
had two very special birds and he
took them everywhere he went. Do
you remember?

HUSSEIN

Mhmm. I liked those birds. They
were funny.

Angelo smiles.

ANGELO

Maybe we can get you some them.

HUSSEIN

Can we get some like baba's?

ANGELO

I think we can make that work.

Angelo kisses Hussein on the forehead and they turn to look
at the birds.

THE END.