

J.A.G.

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Pilot
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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. FORTIFIED FENCE-LINE - NIGHT

The day's last sunlight glints off curled razor-wire. TITLES tell us this is **CAMP SHORAB**, base of operations for **MARINE TASK FORCE SOUTHWEST** in **HELMAND PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN**. PRELAP:

JASON'S VOICE (O.C.)
... she just said "Dad." Don't
even try to deny it --

INT. CAMP SHORAB - COMMS HUB - NIGHT

Captain JASON HUNT (35) is Face-Timing with his wife ALEX, who's holding their babbling toddler MOLLY up to CAMERA.

ALEX (ON SCREEN)
No, you're right. To a
sufficiently biased observer, one
of those random syllables might
have sounded like "dad."

JASON
That wasn't random.
(then; to toddler)
Molly. Say "dad" again. "Dad."

An ALARM sounds from somewhere outside. Jason GROANS, stands --

JASON (CONT'D)
(*I won't miss this*)
I'm gonna miss this.

ALEX
Don't pretend you're anything but
a lifer. You love the Corps --

JASON
True. But I'm not sure how much
longer it's gonna love me back.

ALEX
What are you talking about -- ?

JASON
Gotta go. I'll e-mail you, okay?

EXT. CAMP SHORAB - NIGHT

Jason emerges to SEE that SPOTLIGHTS from the guard stations are shining onto a Marine who wanders, jelly-legged, into the open space that separates the barricade from the heart of the base.

CONTINUED:

We can HEAR AMPLIFIED COMMANDS for the Marine to stop what he's doing. Jason approaches the open bay doors of a MECHANIC'S DEPOT, where a small crowd has gathered to watch.

Jason approaches a CORPORAL who's watching through binoculars.

CORPORAL
Pretty sure that's one of your
guys, Captain Hunt.

Jason takes the binoculars, looks through them to SEE:

JASON'S POV (THROUGH BINOCULARS): The Marine's not heeding the calls to stop, and he's getting close to the fence-line.

CORPORAL (CONT'D)
You think he's drunk?

Jason lowers the binoculars, looks around the mechanic bay.

JASON
I think if he tries to get off
the base, he's either getting
court-martialed... or shot.
(then)
Any of these Jeeps work?

EXT. CAMP SHORAB - FENCE-LINE AND ENVIRONS - NIGHT

Jason, at the wheel of a Jeep, speeds toward the fence-line. Jason shouts to the Marine as he approaches --

JASON
Private Morehead! Stop -- !

But there's no response. Jason brings the Jeep to a skidding stop, waving up at the guard towers as he emerges.

JASON (CONT'D)
I got it! Don't shoot -- !

The man we'll come to know as PRIVATE COOPER MOREHEAD is at the fence-line now. As Morehead grabs it to begin climbing --

JASON (CONT'D)
Private Morehead! Get down -- !

Jason moves to the fence, yanks Morehead off. Jason, face-to-face with Morehead now, suddenly stops and goes wide-eyed. We REVEAL --

Private Morehead is holding his KA-BAR KNIFE IN ONE HAND, and he's just buried it in Jason's stomach. We STAY CLOSE ON THEM, a shocked Jason holding Morehead's empty gaze...

CONTINUED:

... and then a WIDE SHOT shows us both men, spotlights dancing on them as Jason collapses to his knees.

FADE TO:

BLACKNESS. Titles tells us it's now: **48 HOURS LATER**. We HEAR a DRILL SERGEANT barking "encouragement," and FADE UP ON:

EXT. QUANTICO - CONFIDENCE COURSE - DAY

RECRUITS, men and women of all backgrounds warming up to test themselves against Quantico's infamous proving ground. TITLES:

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO

OVER THIS, we HEAR:

SID'S VOICE (O.C.)

Who ya got?

ANOTHER ANGLE, some distance away, FINDS **CAPTAIN JOHN "SID" SIDNEY** (35) and **MAJOR TREY FERRY** (40), stretching. Sid -- never at a loss for words, as tricky to pin down as a drop of loose mercury -- eyes the recruits, trying to engage Trey.

Trey is stolid, abundantly Southern -- and, while he'd just as soon not play along, Trey also knows that resistance is futile.

TREY

No one. I "got" no one, Sid. I'll just focus on my 40-year-old hamstrings, if it's all the same to you.

SID

It's not. "All the same." Due respect to you as my superior officer.. it's not even close to all the same.

(then)

We have a tradition. We size up the new recruits, and we bet on who's going to finish first.

TREY

You have a tradition. I have a guy I run with who won't shut up -

SID

Who ya got, Trey?

Trey nods off-handedly at a strapping recruit.

TREY

That guy. Can we run now -- ?

CONTINUED:

SID

You should put more effort into this. It's a lesson in life, it's a lesson in being a lawyer: *if you can spot winners in advance, then all you have to do is show up... do your job... and the rest will take care of itself.*

Trey, familiar with this, says the last part in chorus with Sid.

TREY

... and that world view is why you bitch when I assign you a case where you actually have to make an argument.

SID

No. It's why I'm the best prosecutor you've got.

TREY

Both of those statements can be true at the same time --

SID

(over him; re: recruits)
Glasses. Knee sleeve.

Sid points out a recruit with spectacles and a neoprene knee sleeve on one leg. Trey gives Sid a look; *seriously?*

SID (CONT'D)

If that guy wasn't on the cross-county team, I'll eat my hat.

TREY

You're not wearing a hat.

SID

I own a hat --

Sid is cut off by a VOICE from nearby.

ALEX (O.C.)

Sid... ?

Sid turns to find Alex Hunt standing there, pushing a stroller.

SID

Hey, Alex. Everything okay?

EXT. QUANTICO - GROUNDS - DAY

Moments later. Sid and Alex have found a private spot near the finish line of the Confidence Course. Mid-conversation:

CONTINUED:

ALEX

... they operated on him for hours. I'm sorry, Sid.

A beat as Sid absorbs the news Alex has just passed along.

SID

Are you okay? Molly? You guys need anything?

ALEX

(shakes her head)
My mother's flying in. Thanks.

SID

... they brought Jason back there to be an advisor. He wasn't supposed to be out on patrol --

ALEX

It wasn't combat. Jason was stabbed by one of his own men.

SID

-- *what?* --

ALEX

Enlisted guy. Private Cooper Morehead. No one knows why he did it, but there are witnesses.

SID

I wouldn't have made it out of West Point without Jason. There were times -- a *lot* of times -- when I just wanted to burn my commission. He wouldn't let me.

ALEX

He saw something in you.
(then)
The guy who killed Jason? I want you to put him away, Sid. Jason would want it to be you.

A beat; then A COMMOTION draws Sid's eyes to the finish line of the Confidence Course, where --

The Recruit With Glasses, the guy Sid picked to win, is accepting congratulations from his fellow cadets.

INT. J.A.G. HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - DAY

This is a hub of martial law, where the men and women charged with enforcing the Uniform Code of Military Justice ply their trade.

CONTINUED:

The attorneys here are active duty Marines -- they could be making six or seven figures in private practice, but they've chosen to serve their country rather than their bottom line.

Sid, wearing his Marine dress uniform now, ENTERS. Warrant Officer **CARLTON PRICKETT** (23; the equivalent of a paralegal in the Judge Advocate Corps) falls into step beside Sid --

CARLTON
It's 0913, Captain Sidney --

SID
I'm aware of the time, Carlton.

(**NOTE:** Carlton, and everyone else besides Sid, is wearing the day-to-day uniform of Corps-issued shirt sleeves and slacks.)

CARLTON
Then you're aware that the staff meeting is in progress.

Carlton consults a note pad that he's carrying.

CARLTON (CONT'D)
You should say you got pulled over for running a stop sign. We haven't used that one in --

SID
Don't worry about it.

CARLTON
Sir. It's been more than five months since you pretended to get a moving violation. It's the freshest excuse by far.
(consults list)
I guess you could go with a burst pipe in your apartment --

SID
Pay attention, Officer Prickett.
I have a legitimate excuse today.

Carlton stops short at that, surprised. Sid OPENS a door into a CONFERENCE ROOM, Carlton making note of Sid's dress uniform --

CARLTON
The clothes. It's got something to do with the clothes --

INT. J.A.G. HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

-- Sid steps into an ongoing staff meeting. These are the prosecuting Judge Advocates of Quantico, responsible for making the government's case against those who violate the UCMJ.

CONTINUED:

The vibe in the room could be summed up as "collegial shark tank." These are driven, competitive lawyers with crushing case loads who demand competence of themselves and their colleagues.

And, oh yeah: no one is the least surprised that Sid is late -- not Trey, and certainly not **COLONEL EISA TRUESDALE** (50s, Commanding Officer of the Quantico Judge Advocate Corps).

2nd Lieutenant **HARPER REIN** (20s; there's no problem she can't subdivide into a series of color-coded action points) is giving an (AD-LIBBED) update on her case load when Sid interrupts --

SID

Can we discuss the murder at Camp Shorab -- ?

HARPER

Talking here, Sid.

EISA

We usually suggest late-comers catch up by listening, Captain Sidney.

In other words: *shut up*. But Sid presses ahead --

SID

No one appreciates that policy more than I do, Colonel.

EISA

You've certainly demonstrated your commitment to tardiness --

SID

My friend is dead.
(and then)
He took a knife wound on the fence-line, and then he bled out on the operating table.

EISA

I know. I'm sorry for your loss.

Sid refers to the file he's just opened --

SID

I'd like to request that we bring the accused to Quantico for court-martial. This is the murder of an officer, it deserves the varsity team.

(when Eisa nods)

Furthermore, I want to handle the prosecution.

CONTINUED: (2)

As the request lands on Eisa and Trey --

HARPER
Did you just say "furthermore?"

SID
I did.

HARPER
He's serious. He said
"furthermore."

EISA
I've already asked Major Ferry to
handle the case.

SID
Colonel, I have the utmost
respect for Major Ferry's work --

HARPER
(*who are you today?*)
... "utmost" ...

SID
-- he's an exceptional lawyer and
his commitment to a frugal
lifestyle inspires us all. But in
light of the unique
circumstances, perhaps it would
be better if one of the Major's
subordinates took it on.

EISA
Meaning you?
(when Sid shrugs)
The "unique circumstances" are
the *reason* you're not getting the
case. Captain Hunt's next of kin
aren't going to need a *friend*
arguing on his behalf. They're
going to need a lawyer.

SID
Six people saw Cooper Morehead
stab Jason. The facts aren't in
question. It's all about making a
panel of twelve Marines
understand what was lost when
Jason died.

(Sid's point)
I was his roommate at the
Academy. No one's more qualified
to do that than me.

Eisa considers that for a beat. Glances over to Trey...

CONTINUED: (3)

EISA

Major Ferry, you're willing to
accept co-counsel?

Trey nods. As Sid RISES to his feet:

SID

Who's on defense?

TREY

I e-mailed Maya. She's being
cagey.

HARPER

(to Sid)

Where are you going, anyway?
What's up with the clothes?

SID

Jason's coming home.

EXT. QUANTICO - AIRFIELD - DAY

A Marine Corps "Carry Team" brings a flag-draped COFFIN down the
ramp that's attached to a KC-130 transport plane.

On the tarmac, Jason's family and a few friends watch from
behind a rail. This is a "dignified transfer" ceremony.

Sid watches as Jason's coffin is placed in a MILITARY HEARSE. As
the doors close, Sid notices a FEMALE OFFICER standing nearby.
This is **MAJOR MAYA DOBBINS** (30s; fierce-eyed; head of the
defense side of the Judge Advocate Corps). As Sid approaches --

MAYA

I'm sorry about your friend.

SID

Thanks. What are you doing out
here, Maya?

MAYA

I'm waiting to meet my client.
(off Sid's look)
The MP's put Cooper Morehead on
that transport.

SID

You're representing Morehead? I
always thought the first time we
went head-to-head, it'd be on
something less... open-and-shut.

Maya, an eye on the plane ramp, gives Sid a small Cheshire grin.

CONTINUED:

MAYA

You're filing capital charges?
Bold play. The military hasn't
executed anyone since 1960.

SID

Could be this is a special case.
(or:)
Could be my co-counsel and I are
just waiting for a reason to take
the death penalty off the table.

MAYA

You'll know when I'm in
bargaining mode, because I'll be
bargaining with you.

Sid assesses her for a beat, wondering what angle she's playing.

SID

Am I to understand that Morehead
will be pleading "not guilty?"
(Maya shrugs)
Bold play. Your client stabbed
his Commanding Officer in front
of six Marine eyewitnesses.

ON THE RAMP: Two MILITARY POLICEMEN lead a handcuffed Cooper
Morehead down onto the tarmac. As Maya moves off to greet him --

MAYA

There's a pre-trial motion on its
way to you. Be ready to argue it
at the arraignment.

SID

A motion for what? Mercy?

MAYA

A continuance. I want some more
time to investigate.

SID

(investigate?)
Everyone knows what happened.

Maya doesn't answer. ON Sid, as he wonders what she's up to --

EXT. QUANTICO - COURTHOUSE - DAY (**ESTABLISHING**)

We HEAR a BAILIFF'S VOICE over this shot of the courthouse where
military justice has been dispensed for centuries --

BAILIFF (O.C.)

All rise.

INT. QUANTICO - COURTHOUSE - DAY

It's a skeleton crew for the arraignment -- Sid and Trey at the Prosecution table, Maya and her JUNIOR COUNSEL for the Defense. Pvt. Morehead sits to one side. Maya has a DAIS near her table.

Everyone STANDS as Lt. Col. MICHAEL METCALF makes his way to the Judge's bench and sits. Sid leans over to Maya --

SID

Fifty bucks says I can get
Metcalf to mention his Purple
Heart before you can.

Maya nods; *you're on*. The Judge looks to the prosecutors --

JUDGE METCALF

Don't keep us in suspense...

TREY

Docket number eight-seven-four-
four-three-nine-nine. The United
States versus Private First Class
Cooper Morehead. The accused is
charged with Murder, and Conduct
Unbecoming a U.S. Marine.

JUDGE METCALF

Does the defense have a plea?

MAYA

"Not guilty," your honor.

JUDGE METCALF

So noted. Now, as to this motion
for a continuance...

SID

Respectfully, your honor... why
the need for a protracted
investigation? The accused
stabbed his commanding officer in
front of a six eyewitnesses.

MAYA

Private Morehead doesn't remember
the incident --

SID

That's what the witnesses are
for.

MAYA

Your honor, I refer the court to
page 13 of the pre-trial motion.

CONTINUED:

Maya's Junior Counsel puts a piece of white board up on the dais. It depicts AN MRI OF A HUMAN BRAIN.

MAYA (CONT'D)

This picture depicts an MRI scan of a healthy human brain.

Maya nods to her Junior Counsel, who replaces the picture with ANOTHER MRI SCAN. Even to a layman, this one looks different... the brain in question is desiccated, riddled with holes.

MAYA (CONT'D)

This is an MRI of Private Morehead's brain, taken at my request after his arrest.

(then)

I'm sure the Court can see the differences between a scan of a healthy brain and this one. The overall neural mass is considerably decreased, and these hardened areas indicate necrotic tissue. The defense plans to call experts who will testify that my client has clearly suffered one or more Traumatic Brain Injuries.

SID

Your honor, this is nothing more than an attempt to distract the Court from the *fact* that Private Morehead stabbed Jason Hunt --

MAYA

TBI's have been called the "signature wound" of our conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. They occur when the blast wave from an explosion -- most typically caused by an IED -- causes a soldier's brain to slam against the inside of his or her skull with tremendous force.

SID

We're active duty Marines; we know full well what a TBI is. Is the defense advancing a legal argument?

MAYA

TBI's have been difficult to diagnose because there are few obvious outward symptoms.

CONTINUED: (2)

MAYA (CONT'D)

Fortunately, the military has developed ways to assess and treat these wounds.

(then)

The defense intends to demonstrate that these protocols were not followed in Private Morehead's case, and that he was left untreated and permitted to remain in a combat zone while clearly unfit for duty.

SID

Which, if true, is a tragedy... but not one that impacts on the fact that Private Morehead murdered his commanding officer.

MAYA

Your honor: untreated TBI's have dozens of side effects. But the most serious ones involve personality changes... changes that, if left unchecked, can lead to violent incidents.

(then)

Incidents like, say, the stabbing of Captain Hunt.

(then)

I'd like to go to PFC Morehead's base and find out *why*... why is it that a soldier who should have been honorably retired from combat several times over remained at his post?

As Judge Metcalf considers Maya's request...

SID

The government requests dismissal of the motion so that Private Morehead's court-martial can proceed as scheduled.

JUDGE METCALF

(to Maya)

You'll supervise the investigation personally?

Sid senses this is going Maya's way. He intercedes:

SID

The government requests equal access to personnel serving overseas.

(re: Metcalf's look)

CONTINUED: (3)

SID (CONT'D)

Your honor, what I'm trying to say is: If she's going, I'm going, too.

A moment, and then Judge Metcalf issues his ruling:

JUDGE METCALF

Keep your heads down over there.
We don't need any more Purple Hearts in this courtroom.

With that, Metcalf gavels the proceeding to a closed. A beat as both Sid and Maya absorb the ruling. Then Sid turns to Maya --

SID

You owe me fifty dollars.

MAYA

No. Metcalf was ruling on *my* motion when he mentioned the Purple Heart.

SID

I was the last one who talked.

A beat as Maya considers Sid's argument. And finally:

MAYA

Inconclusive. I'm not paying.
(then)
Go pack. We're headed to a war zone.

As Maya heads off, Sid watching her go --

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. KC-130 TRANSPORT PLANE - NIGHT

We're in the belly of a transport plane that's racing the sunrise into Asia. Among the RECRUITS and OFFICERS heading overseas for deployment, we FIND --

Sid, earplugs stuffed in his ears as he reads through a stack of papers. He finally looks up, SHOUTS Across the aisle to one of the SOLDIERS. Sid reads the name stitched to the man's uniform --

SID

Private Guerwicz. Can you tell me the months of the year, in reverse?

PRIVATE GUERWICZ

... excuse me, sir?

SID

Start at the end, and work your way back to the beginning.

PRIVATE GUERWICZ

December, November, October, September, August, June --
(catches himself)
I mean, August, July --

Across THE AISLE: Maya eyes Sid dubiously.

MAYA

You're making some kind of point.

SID

The tools the Corps uses to diagnose concussions are a long way from an exact science. Private Guerwicz here is a green recruit -- he's never seen a second of combat, and he still failed the MACE. Should we pull him from active duty?

MAYA

It's a blunt instrument. But without it, hundreds of honorably obtained war wounds would go undiagnosed. Do you really plan argue that's a *bad thing*?

(then)

I've got science on my side, Sid.

CONTINUED:

SID

I've got witnesses. You've got...
concentration games.

Maya takes up the implicit challenge.

MAYA

December, November, October,
September, August, July, June --

SID

You can stop now.

MAYA

May, April, March, February,
January.

Before Sid can respond, the plane BANKS STEEPLY as it prepares
to land. As Sid looks out the window --

MAYA (CONT'D)

Did you ever think you'd be back?

EXT./INT. CAMP SHORAB AIRFIELD/JEEP - DAY (**HELMAND PROVINCE**)

LIEUTENANT ELENA TORRERO drives Sid and Maya to the base.

LT. TORRERO

... we haven't had an artillery
attack for a while, but if one
comes in just duck. They're just
taking pot shots.

SID

Will do, Lieutenant.

LT. TORRERO

We're not even technically part
of the fight anymore, so odds are
good you won't see any action --

MAYA

Lieutenant Torrero. Are you aware
that Captain Sidney served
multiple tours at this base when
it was called Camp Leatherneck?

LT. TORRERO

I wasn't briefed on that, ma'am.

MAYA

He saw combat here, real war, and
he brought a bullet home for his
troubles. So spare us the hand-
holding if you don't mind.

CONTINUED:

LT. TORRERO

Copy that.

Torrero looks back and forth between them in the rear view mirror, trying to suss out their dynamic.

LT. TORRERO (CONT'D)

I was led to believe that the two of you are on opposing sides.

SID

We are. But Major Dobbins likes to look out for me. Right up until we get into court.

(then; re: base)

It looks empty. There were twelve thousand Marines here in '07.

LT. TORRERO

There's four hundred of us now. We're not even officially called 'soldiers' anymore. We're 'advisers' now. Welcome to Operation Resolute Support.

ON a wide shot of the Jeep, rumbling along the airstrip --

INT. CAMP SHORAB - BATTALION AID STATION (B.A.S.) - DAY

CLOSE ON: a transparency of the MRI that Maya ordered for Cooper Morehead, displayed against a LIGHT BOX. We HEAR:

COMMANDER HEWITT (O.C.)

I concur with your expert.

A WIDER ANGLE finds that Sid and Maya are now standing opposite NAVY COMMANDER Noah Hewitt (40), the battalion surgeon for Task Force Southwest. Cdr. Hewitt is looking at the MRI --

COMMANDER HEWITT (CONT'D)

This scan indicates that Private Morehead has necrotic tissue in his brain. It's a fair bet that he's suffering from CTE. But of course there's no way to say that for sure while he's still alive.

MAYA

I'm confused, Commander Hewitt. As Battalion Surgeon, aren't you the ultimate medical authority at Task Force Southwest?

COMMANDER HEWITT

I am.

CONTINUED:

MAYA

Private Morehead survived seven different explosive incidents during his tours here, and no one ever thought to give him an MRI.

Sid's listening, but this interrogation is Maya's show... as she talks, he looks around the station. His eye is drawn to --

The rafters of the one-story building, where the NAMES of various servicemen have been carved into the wood.

COMMANDER HEWITT

We can only work with the assets we're given. After each incident, we administered the MACE to Private Morehead. He passed every time. There was no sign that an MRI was indicated.

(then)

I wish the MACE was a perfect tool. It works sometimes, and it's all we've got.

Hewitt notices that Sid's looking at the names in the rafters.

COMMANDER HEWITT (CONT'D)

Can I help you find something?

SID

Sorry. Just looking at names --

MAYA

(to Hewitt)

Can you give me some examples?

(off Hewitt's look)

You said the MACE works sometimes. Can you give me some examples of cases when active-duty Marines at Camp Shorab have been diagnosed with a TBI and treated properly?

COMMANDER HEWITT

I'm certain there are plenty of instances. But of course you're asking me to describe medical records. Those are private.

Sid's curiosity has the better of him now. He interrupts.

SID

That's not *necessarily* true.

(off their looks)

CONTINUED: (2)

SID (CONT'D)

The UCMJ specifies that, under the Military Command Exception, privacy can be waived in urgent circumstances. Like when, say, a Marine is on trial for his life.

Hewitt squirms under their gazes for a beat. Finally:

COMMANDER HEWITT

Look. I appreciate that you both have a job to do. And you're more than welcome to interview my staff with any general questions you've got. But I can't invoke the Command Exception. I'm not the C.O. of Task Force Southwest.

As Sid and Maya realize that Hewitt is passing the buck --

INT. QUANTICO - EISA'S OFFICE - DAY

We're CLOSE ON a COMPUTER SCREEN, which features LT. COLONEL ANWAY BUTLER, looking right INTO CAMERA and asking --

LT. COL. BUTLER (ON SCREEN)

Can anyone hear me?

As the image of Butler FRITZES AWAY, we REVEAL that Carlton is working at Eisa's computer. The Colonel frowns as her Warrant Officer tries to make a remote connection.

EISA

This can't be secure. We should just walk over to the SIVTS.

CARLTON

No need. The new system is a hundred per cent safe. I can show you the memos if you like.

EISA

I'm going to go ahead and trust you. That's my only option if I want this place to actually run.

A KNOCK; Harper, holding a massive binder, stands at the door.

HARPER

Ma'am? You wanted to see me?

EISA

Assuming Carlton can work his mojo, I'm about to connect with Lieutenant Colonel Anway Butler over in Parway Province. He needs some Command Legal advice.

CONTINUED:

ON-SCREEN: the image of Lt. Col. Butler has been restored. He smiles as he spots Eisa. As Carlton EXITS --

LT. COL. BUTLER (ON SCREEN)
Ma'am, good morning.

EISA
It's the end of the day here. But we appreciate the sentiment. Good morning to the fighting men and women of FOB Ratchet. How can we help?

LT. COL. BUTLER (ON SCREEN)
We've got a handful of AQA taking pot shots at us. They're not game for a stand-up fight -- they just hit us and run back to the Hindu Kush mountains. They're hiding in tunnels down there.

EISA
The Salang Pass is enemy territory --

LT. COL. BUTLER (ON SCREEN)
Exactly. I want to call in an air strike and take out the whole tunnel system. We'd need to drop a MOAB to do it.

EISA
... and you realize that if we do, the Joint Chiefs will be reading headlines about the "Mother of All Bombs" for the next month?

LT. COL. BUTLER (ON SCREEN)
That's why I'm reaching out.

EISA
How's our intel on the tunnels?

LT. COL. BUTLER (ON SCREEN)
Sketchy at best. There could be civilians in there, women and children hiding from the fighting. AQA could even be using them as human shields.

EISA
... so it's not just a potential PR nightmare. We might also want to study up on Protocol I of the Geneva Convention?

CONTINUED: (2)

LT. COL. BUTLER (ON SCREEN)

Correct. The only thing I know for sure is that the men killing my soldiers are down there.

(then)

I'm not sure how long they'll be squatting in those caves. Maybe a week at most. Can you analyze the situation ASAP and give me the go-ahead to call in a MOAB strike?

EISA

You'll hear from us shortly. Stay safe, Lieutenant Colonel.

Lt. Col. Butler's face FRITZES AWAY. Eisa turns to Harper:

EISA (CONT'D)

Get me your best read. Assess all the factors and bring me a recommendation.

(as Harper nods)

Lieutenant Rein. Be thorough. Lives are at stake.

ON Harper, absorbing the gravity of the assignment --

EXT./INT. CAMP SHORAB - FIRING RANGE/JEEP - DAY

The Jeep, piloted by Lt. Torrero, is pulled over at the edge of an abandoned FIRING RANGE. Torrero leans in to Sid and Maya before heading off to the range's firing line.

LT. TORRERO

The general is usually working his long game right about now.

Sid and Maya exchange a look: *long game?* As Torrero EXITS:

LT. TORRERO (CONT'D)

Let me see if he'll give you guys a minute. Be right back.

And, with that, Lt. Torrero EXITS. Maya turns to Sid --

MAYA

There's something weird going on here. Please tell me you agree.

(Sid doesn't answer)

We talked to all of Commander Hewitt's staff, and not even one of them could describe a single time that a wounded soldier failed a MACE exam.

CONTINUED:

SID

Not necessarily weird. Everyone we talked to works for Hewitt; it's only natural that they'd follow his lead. This will all make sense once we've got our hands on those records.

Lt. Torrero returns from her foray onto the target range.

LT. TORRERO

General Coburn will see you now.

EXT. CAMB SHOUBURN - FIRING RANGE - DAY

THWACK!! The head of a GOLF CLUB whacks a GOLF BALL off of a tee. As the ball sails off into the sky --

BRIG. GEN. COBURN (O.C.)

Jason Hunt was a good Marine. I could use more like him.

BRIGADIER GENERAL BRAD COBURN (50) is using this abandoned firing range as an impromptu driving range. Afghan local MAHWASH ADEEB attends the General as he hits balls off into the yonder.

Maya and Sid linger near the tee, as Coburn lines up a ball.

MAYA

If you're willing to invoke the Command Exception to give us access to your medical records, you could help clarify the circumstances surrounding Captain Hunt's death.

Coburn tees up another ball, in no hurry.

BRIG. GEN. COBURN

I wasn't aware the circumstances needed clarification.

(then; lines up shot)

We don't use the range much these days. Not enough personnel. But at least I can use it to keep my iron game sharp.

(THWACK; re: attendant)

Mahwash can get you something if you're thirsty.

MAYA

No thank you, sir. The eyewitness testimony is compelling. But if you could give us access to the base's medical records, we could rule out any uncertainty...

CONTINUED:

BRIG. GEN. COBURN

(tees up a ball)

Forgive me, Major Dobbins. But I'm not inclined to share the private records of Marines who haven't stabbed their commanding officer in order to come to the defense of one who *has*.

As Coburn THWACKS a ball into the empty firing range --

SID

At this point, General, you'd be helping the prosecution as much as you'd be helping the defense.

(re: Coburn's look)

The prospect of negligence is going to be raised regardless. So if I can demonstrate that it's not part of a pattern, then my case against Private Morehead is easier to prove.

BRIG. GEN. COBURN

Easier? I used to drink with some Judge Advocates. They had a motto back then: "*Marines first. Lawyers second.*" Is that still the thinking back at Quantico?

SID

Of course.

BRIG. GEN. COBURN

Then please tell me how an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps - - one who's already got a half-dozen eye-witnesses to a murder -- can stand there in good conscience and ask me to make his job easier?

SID

Respectfully, General: it's a court case. Our job is to cross the t's and dot the i's.

BRIG. GEN. COBURN

With mutual *respect*, Captain Sidney: I suggest you make do with what you've got.

(then)

Task Force Southwest will do the same.

CONTINUED: (2)

BRIG. GEN. COBURN (CONT'D)

We'll content ourselves with
balancing the hopes of the free
world in the Afghan theatre on
the backs of 400 Marines.

WHACK! General Coburn sends another golf ball arcing out into
the Afghani ether.

EXT./INT. CAMP SHORAB/JEEP - DAY

The wind whips through Sid and Maya's hair as Lt. Torrero drives
them back to the flight line. Maya shouts to be heard over it.

MAYA

... do you still think the
leadership here isn't trying to
keep something off the record?
(off Sid's look)
You came right out and *told*
General Coburn that access to
those medical records would help
convict Cooper Morehead... and
all you got in return was a
condescending lecture.

Sid just stares out at the base, expression inscrutable.

MAYA (CONT'D)

I want to go over Coburn's head.
Appeal to the Commander of
CENTCOMM and get *him* to release
the records.

(then)

It'd probably be better if we
went to him together. But you've
already got a good case. Maybe
the actual truth isn't that
important to you.

Sid just gives her a look. Turns to Torrero --

SID

Lieutenant, can you drive us back
to the Battle Aid Station before
we head to the flight line?

LT. TORRERO

Of course, sir.

As Torrero TURNS THE JEEP AROUND...

MAYA

Why are we going back to the
hospital?

CONTINUED:

SID

Because there's no point in appealing to the head of CENTCOM for the records. He's not going to undermine a general in the field. The people who work for Commander Hewitt right now aren't going to tell tales outside of the chain of command. So they're a wash. But if we could talk to some people who *used* to work here... maybe they'd be a little more candid.

MAYA

It's a good idea. But why would Hewitt just give us those names? He hasn't exactly been a model of transparency so far.

SID

He doesn't need to give us anything.

(then; explains)

There's a tradition at this camp. Marines who are rotating home carve their names and dates of service into the wood they used to build the camp.

MAYA

... that's why you were looking at that plank.

SID

Commander Hewitt might not be willing to share... but he can't keep us from looking at a plank.

ON Maya, impressed by Sid's resourcefulness... we --

CUT TO:

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - TREY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: a picture of a wood beam with various names carved into it, displayed on someone's SMART PHONE.

TREY'S VOICE (O.C.)

Sure, I can read the names.

Trey, packed to go home for the night, looks down at the picture that's just been texted to him.

CONTINUED:

TREY

What do you want me to do?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. KC-130 TRANSPORT PLANE - DAY

Sid's strapped in for transport, his phone to his ear. Maya sits opposite Sid, listening closely to his end of the conversation.

SID

Those are all former Battle Aid staff at Task Force Southwest. Some of them will still be in the military, some not. But find someone who'll talk to you, and ask them if there were any irregularities in the enforcement of MACE protocols while they were stationed at Camp Shorab.

TREY

I'm on it first thing.

SID

(checks his watch)
What time is it there, anyway?

TREY

Twenty-three-thirty.

SID

Is that eleven-thirty yesterday, or eleven-thirty tomorrow?

TREY

Does it matter?

SID

Would you rather be talking to me from the past, or the future?

As Maya rolls her eyes, the plane engines whine as the KC-130 accelerates for take-off --

TREY

This is time-travel stuff. You're breaking my brain. I'll have what you need by the time that transport gets back to Virginia.

INT. HOLY CROSS HOSPITAL (**SILVER SPRINGS, MD**) - ER - DAY

Physician's Assistant ANTOINETTE "TONI" PETTITE (30) lingers at the edge of this busy emergency room, responding to a question from Trey. Mid-conversation:

CONTINUED:

TONI

... I spent... let's see, just over two years as an Independent Corpsmen assisting Commander Hewitt at Camp Shorab. What would you like to know?

TREY

"Independent Corpsmen?" Pardon me, ma'am, but I don't know the term --

TONI

First of all: I'm younger than you, and I'm not in the Navy anymore. You can call me "Toni."
(then; explains)
I helped diagnose and treat injuries when the Battalion Surgeon was busy or unavailable.

TREY

And as part of those duties, you administered the Military Acute Concussion Examination?

TONI

Sure. I ran the MACE plenty of times.

TREY

Can you recall any irregularities in how the exam was given, or how it was scored? Anything unusual at all could be helpful --

TONI

Helpful with what -- ?

TREY

A Marine stationed at Camp Shorab murdered his commanding officer. He had an undiagnosed TBI.

A moment as that lands on Toni. Before she can answer, a DOCTOR makes an (AD-LIBBED) call for her services from across the room.

TONI

I gotta go.

TREY

... if you could just tell me what you remember --

CONTINUED: (2)

TONI

There's nothing, okay? We did our jobs over there. Good luck.

Toni TURNS to EXIT. Trey makes note of the rainbow-colored AUTISM AWARENESS WRISTBAND she's wearing. Looking to salvage *something* from this exchange, he nods to it --

TREY

You know someone on the spectrum?

TONI

My son. You recognize this, huh?

TREY

My nephew's in the same boat. Does your kid have a classroom assistant?

TONI

I'm working on it.

TREY

My sister told the principal at Andy's school she'd start a Tumblr if her kid didn't get help. Moved things along.

TONI

... thanks.

The DOCTOR bellows for Toni again. As she excuses herself --

EXT./INT. PARKING LOT/TREY'S CAR - DAY

CLOSE ON: a handwritten list of names, as someone strikes out the words **ANTOINETTE PETTITE**.

TREY (O.C.)

I'm almost all the way through the names you gave me --

WIDER to FIND: Trey sits behind the wheel of his twelve-year-old car, which he keeps on the road with hope, regular maintenance, and boundless determination to stretch his government salary.

Trey has his phone to his ear, leaving a message for Sid.

TREY (CONT'D)

I haven't found anyone who's willing to stray from the party line. I'm starting to think the party line might be the truth --

CONTINUED:

Trey is interrupted by a KNOCK at his window. He LOOKS UP to SEE that Toni is standing there, a troubled expression on her face. Trey hangs up, hand-cranking the window down.

TREY (CONT'D)
Everything all right, ma'am?
(then)
Sorry. "Toni." Can I help you?

EXT. QUANTICO - AIRFIELD - DAY

The KC-130 disgorges an exhausted Sid and Maya, who are surprised to find Trey waiting for them on the tarmac.

SID
Major Ferry. To what do owe the --

TREY
(cuts him off)
There was an order, Sid.
(off their looks)
This guy Hewitt? He called a meeting with the entire medical staff and gave them explicit instructions about the MACE. They were supposed to issue it as many times as it took for the person taking it to get a passing score.

Sid and Maya exchange a look, absorbing the implications.

MAYA
... sorry. Doesn't that negate the whole purpose of the test?

TREY
Of course it does. It wasn't just Cooper Morehead who didn't get the treatment he needed. *No one* at Camp Shorab could fail a MACE exam. It was official policy.

And as that lands on Sid and Maya, who are only now realizing that they've stumbled onto something much larger than one incident of negligence... we --

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. QUANTICO - AIRFIELD CAFE - DAY

Sid sits opposite Trey at this small cafe.

TREY

... my witness says Commander Hewitt used to complain about Task Force Southwest being understaffed -- so he told his team to re-administer the MACE as many times as it took.

SID

... so what do we do?

TREY

We don't have to do anything. We've got our eyewitnesses. The case is strong.

From a table nearby, a familiar VOICE --

MAYA (O.C.)

This is ridiculous.

REVEAL that Maya sits a few tables away, just out of earshot.

MAYA (CONT'D)

This changes everything. You need to make a deal with my client --

SID

Excuse us. The prosecution is conferring.

(turns back to Trey)

So we put Morehead away. Does that feel like... justice?

TREY

Did you just say "justice?" You?

SID

Bear with me. There was a standing order at Camp Shorab, and it led to Jason's death. Noah Hewitt should be accountable.

TREY

That's a trickier case, though. It'll be Toni Pettite's testimony against the word of the active-duty personnel.

CONTINUED:

SID

How'd you get this woman talking?

TREY

I told her about my neuro-atypical nephew.

SID

You don't have a nephew.

TREY

Be careful not to mention that in front of the witness.

(then)

Forget about Toni Pettite. We don't have access to the medical records. We can't even make our best circumstantial case --

MAYA (O.C.)

You need Morehead's testimony.

They turn, exasperated at the interruption. But Maya presses on.

MAYA (CONT'D)

You're going after Hewitt, right? That's what I'd do --

SID

We will be with you in a moment.

As Sid turns back to Trey --

TREY

We've got a winner here... *if* we go after Morehead. We take on the Battalion Surgeon... I wouldn't lay money on the outcome.

SID

You're too cheap to lay money on *anything*.

Trey doesn't respond; his point stands. As the WAITER ARRIVES --

SID (CONT'D)

We're good for now, thanks.

WAITER

I'm not here to take your order. This is from the young woman.

The Waiter holds up a napkin with some HANDWRITING on it. As Sid takes it and unfolds it to SEE that it reads:

10-12 YEARS. NO HARD LABOR. TREATMENT FOR HIS INJURIES.

EXT. QUANTICO - MCHUGH WOODS OFFICER HOUSING - DAY

A HAND raps on the door of this pleasant on-base townhouse. Jason's widow Alex swings the DOOR OPEN, surprised to SEE Sid, holding a TRAY OF LASAGNA.

SID
Hey, Al. I, uh... I brought food.
I read that's a good thing to do?

INT. QUANTICO - ALEX HUNT'S HOUSE - DAY

A few minutes later. Sid and Alex are mid-conversation, Sid trying to focus as Alex's daughter Molly plays on his lap.

ALEX
... you want to make a deal with
the man who stabbed Jason?

SID
He'll do time, Al. Real time. But
Morehead's not the only one
responsible for Jason's death.
(when she nods)
If you say "no," I won't do it.

ALEX
This is the right thing?

SID
Yes. But we could lose.

Alex takes a moment. Then, to Sid's surprise, she chuckles.

SID (CONT'D)
... what?

ALEX
I was just thinking how amazing
life would be if the right choice
was always the easy one.
(then)
Get them, Sid. All of them.

A beat. Sid, Molly on his lap, takes out his phone and dials.

TREY'S VOICE (O.C.; OVER PHONE)
Hey, what's up -- ?

SID
Trey: Tell Maya we'll take the
deal. We should have the MP's at
Shorab arrest Commander Hewitt.

Sid hangs up. As he looks at Molly, hoping this works out --

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - EISA'S OFFICE - DAY

We're CLOSE ON a MAP of Parway Province, Afghanistan, spread out on the COFFEE TABLE in Colonel Truesdale's office.

HARPER (O.C.)

The latest satellite photos show an offshoot of the Kochi tribe moving through the Salang Pass.

Harper sits opposite Eisa, updating her on her research.

HARPER (CONT'D)

They're nomads. They'll be out of the blast zone in 48 hours.

(then)

There's nothing from pictures or from our sources that indicates there are civilians in the tunnels under Hindu Kush.

EISA

... but? I can hear it coming. What is it?

HARPER

I'm hearing that an ANA patrol was ambushed in the province about ten hours ago. They had four Marine advisers with them. No bodies have been recovered, so it's possible that our troops have been taken hostage.

EISA

... and if they were, it's also possible that our own soldiers are being held in those tunnels?

HARPER

Maybe even likely. AQA has taken our people there before.

(as Eisa thinks)

You don't need to decide now. We can wait for a ransom call --

EISA

There isn't going to be a ransom call. If they have those soldiers, they're using them as shields. They'll be counting on us to hesitate.

Eisa hesitates a beat. Then stands, turning to her young charge.

CONTINUED:

EISA (CONT'D)

There's a reason it's called a *command* legal decision. We have to provide leadership.

(then)

I'll pray for those Marines tonight. But if we let that cell operate with impunity, they'll kill more than four of our people. When the Kochi clear that pass, we drop the ordinance.

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - DAY

Sid arrives, Carlton falling in beside him.

CARLTON

Good morning, Captain Sidney.

SID

Is it still morning, Carlton -- ?

CARLTON

Oh, let's not quibble. I understand from Major Ferry that you're looking to make a case based on a pattern of malpractice... *without* access to the relevant medical records?

SID

You have an opinion about that?

CARLTON

An opinion? Not even remotely. I'm just a facilitator here.

SID

We all know you're basically in charge of this place. What's up?

CARLTON

Since you asked, sir: you should be aware that the commanding officer for CENTCOM works out of McDil Air Force Base in Tampa --

SID

Thanks, I *am* aware --

CARLTON

-- and said C.O. is none other than General Harvey Hamilton "H.H." Carrick. The Fourth. He's the one who could overrule Coburn and get you the records...

CONTINUED:

SID

The Fourth? I admire his
commitment to carrying on the
"H.H. Carrick" lineage.

CARLTON

H.H. Carrick the *Fourth* is, as
you might guess, the son of H.H.
Carrick the Third. Who, it
happens, served honorably under
General Russell Sidney in Saigon
and other South Asian environs.

SID

His dad worked for *my* dad?
Sounds like a Hail Mary.

Sid can sense Carlton's disappointment. Tries to ease the blow
before he PASSES INTO THE CONFERENCE ROOM:

SID (CONT'D)

Resourceful as always. But I
don't think we need a... frankly?
Desperate appeal to family ties.

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON: Cooper Morehead, seen through the display screen of a
VIDEO CAMERA. We're MID-DEPOSITION:

PVT. MOREHEAD

... I'm sorry, that's in the fog.

WIDER to REVEAL: a deflated Sid and Trey sit opposite Morehead.
Maya is present as Morehead's counsel. Trey probes his witness:

TREY

When you say "in the fog"... ?

PVT. MOREHEAD

I mean I can't remember. Things
are fuzzy for me sometimes.

TREY

PFC Morehead, when you survived
your 5th explosion, can you tell
us who issued you the MACE exam?

PVT. MOREHEAD

Sorry. No. That's...

PVT. MOREHEAD (CONT'D)

... in the fog.

TREY & SID

"In the fog."

SID

Would you excuse us... ?

CONTINUED:

As Morehead nods, Sid beckons Maya into a HUSHED CONFERENCE.

SID (CONT'D)

Due respect: your client doesn't remember anything helpful.

MAYA

He doesn't remember anything *harmful*.

A beat as Sid and Trey assess their case. Finally:

TREY

Who's representing Hewitt?

MAYA

He opted for private counsel. A certain ex-Marine Colonel named Rhodes Papademetropoulos.

As Sid and Trey SIGH at that news...

MAYA (CONT'D)

Did you think Commander Hewitt was going to hire a *bad* lawyer?

SID

We're not upset because he's good. We're upset because we have to spell his name.

(beat; OPENS DOOR, shouts)

CARLTON!!

After a moment, Warrant Officer Prickett appears --

SID (CONT'D)

Can you get me an appointment with H.H. Carrick the Fourth?

CARLTON

... Hail Mary Time already?

EXT. MCDIL AIR FORCE BASE (**TAMPA**) - DAY - ESTABLISHING

As a plane lands at CENTCOM HQ, the division responsible for executing U.S. strategy in the Middle East and Asia --

GENERAL CARRICK (O.C.)

Russ Sidney? Your old man was up there with Santa in my house.

EXT. MCDIL AFB - WALKING PATH - DAY

Sid walks alongside GENERAL H.H. CARRICK IV (50s; lean with a shaved head). Carrick has a towel wrapped around his neck.

CONTINUED:

GENERAL CARRICK

Three -- that's what we used to call my father, my grand-dad was "Two," I'm "Four," you get it... Three talked about General Sidney all the time. Annoying as hell, to be honest.

SID

Did your staff brief you on why I'm here -- ?

GENERAL CARRICK

You want me to invoke the Command Exception so you can look at the records for Task Force Southwest.

They arrive at an EMPTY HANGAR, where thirty or so MILITARY PERSONNEL are gathering in a seated semi-circle.

SID

It'd help me get to the bottom of a complicated situation, sir.

GENERAL CARRICK

I'm sure it would.
(re: hangar)
I encourage my senior staff to join me for mindfulness training every afternoon. You're welcome to join us if you'd like...

SID

Thank you. But I've been on planes for the past few days. I'm afraid I'll fall asleep if I try to, you know... meditate.

GENERAL CARRICK

It's not "meditation." It's the "practice of mindfulness." This is the U.S. military; the way you phrase things absolutely matters.
(beat; then, cold:)

So... I gather you went over General Coburn's head because you thought my connection to your dad would make me sentimentally receptive to your request?

SID

... pretty much.

General Carrick gestures to the circle of personnel, unmoved --

CONTINUED: (2)

GENERAL CARRICK

Sure you won't join us?

SID

I have to get back to Quantico, sir. Thanks for hearing me out.

(as Carrick TURNS)

General Carrick? Why not invoke the Exception to look at the records yourself? To be sure there's nothing wrong?

(then)

Don't think of it as "breaking the chain of command." Think of it as a "constructive check-in." This is the military, after all. The way we phrase things matters.

EXT./INT. QUANTICO CAMPUS/JAG HEADQUARTERS - DAY

We're ON a YOUNG OFFICER, walking beside a CHAPLAIN. This is CORPORAL BARRY FOSTER; he's got the worst job in the military.

Corporal Foster is a CACO (**C**asualty **A**ssistance **C**alls **O**fficer), one of the people responsible for notifying family members when something awful happens to an Active-Duty Marine.

Here at Quantico, everyone knows *exactly* who Foster is; they're just grateful he doesn't approach them. As Foster passes into --

THE J.A.G. BULLPEN

-- all work stops as he ENTERS. Harper looks up as Foster and the Chaplain cross the Bullpen. Carlton is also nearby.

CARLTON

What's a Grim Reaper doing here?

Harper shakes her head, even as Foster approaches EISA'S OFFICE. Harper's expression falls when Foster KNOCKS on Eisa's door.

HARPER

He's going to see the Colonel.

CARLTON

She's got two sons overseas...

Eisa OPENS the door to her office, everyone watching, hushed, as she invites Foster and the Chaplain in.

INT. TRANSPORT PLANE (**MCDIL A.F.B.**) - DAY

Sid straps in opposite some officers who are making the hop from Tampa back to Quantico. A FEMALE MAJOR is fast asleep already, Sid nods to the MALE CAPTAIN beside her as his phone RINGS.

CONTINUED:

SID
What's up, Trey?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - TREY'S OFFICE - DAY

Trey scrolls through a .pdf, the phone crooked to his ear.

TREY
What did you say to Carrick -- ?

SID
Look, we knew it was a long shot.

TREY
Sid. He released the records.

SID
-- what? --

TREY
He invoked the Command Exception two hours ago. From what I can tell, Toni Pettite is telling the truth. No one at Shorab has been diagnosed with a concussion since Hewitt took over as Surgeon.

Sid's phone BEEPS with a call from **MAYA**.

SID
That's Maya. I'll call you back.
(CLICKS OVER)
Did you hear we got the records?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. QUANTICO - CAMPUS GROUNDS - DAY

Maya, on her way back to HQ, has her phone to her ear.

MAYA
Trey told me. Everything's moving fast over here, Sid. Two of the medical officers serving under Commander Hewitt at Camp Shorab have requested counsel.

SID
What do they need lawyers for?

MAYA
They changed their statements.
(then)
Congratulations.

CONTINUED:

MAYA (CONT'D)

You've got three soldiers who will testify that Hewitt gave an order to ignore the MACE protocols.

And with that, she HANGS UP. WE STAY WITH SID, as he absorbs what just happened. And he can't help it: he throws out a little fist pump. As the travelling Major gives him a quizzical look...

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - DAY

Harper looks up from her work as the door to Eisa's office OPENS, and Corporal Foster and the Chaplain emerge. The whole Bullpen is silent as the two cross to EXIT.

After a moment, Eisa appears in the door and beckons Harper.

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - EISA'S OFFICE - DAY

Moments later. Eisa closes the door --

HARPER

Ma'am, I am so sorry --

EISA

Nobody's dead, Harper.

(then)

My son Adam was on a routine patrol in Parway this morning when his convoy was attacked by the enemy. His C.O. thinks that Adam and three other Marines were captured in the fighting.

Harper does the applicable math right away.

HARPER

Captured in *Parway Province*?

EISA

It looks like Adam is one of the soldiers you told me about this morning. He could be in the tunnels under the Salang Pass.

(then)

If we authorize the MOAB drop... we could be killing my son.

A silent beat as the weight of Eisa's dilemma lands on Harper.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. QUANTICO - COURTHOUSE - DAY

CLOSE ON a GERMAN SHEPHERD, wearing a VEST that reads "**SERVICE ANIMAL**," as it curls up at the foot of the judge's bench.

TREY (O.C.)
Don't touch the dog. I'm serious.

A WIDER ANGLE FINDS Sid, Trey, and the rest of the courtroom's occupants -- which include Defense Counsel RHODES PAPADEMOTROPOULOS, his ASSISTANT COUNSEL, and the defendant Noah Hewitt -- all standing as the Bailiff barks out --

BAILIFF
All rise.

Sid whispers to Trey as COL. EDINA CORPUS (50s) takes the bench.

SID
I've kind of got a lot of facts and figures running through my head. Is that seriously one you need to add to the mix?

TREY
Judge Corpus trains service animals. Apparently, the worst thing you can do is pet them.
(off Sid's look; huh?)
It breaks down their discipline.
Just don't touch the dog --

COL. CORPUS
Good morning. Does the government have an opening statement?

Sid stands and addresses the jury (or "panel") of 12 Marines.

SID
Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, Colonel Corpus, and, uh...

Sid gestures to the dog, drawing some smiles from the panel.

COL. CORPUS
Yeti.

SID
And Yeti. Good morning.
(then)

CONTINUED:

SID (CONT'D)

PFC Cooper Morehead stabbed Captain Jason Hunt in the stomach while they were serving in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Captain Hunt died while being treated for his injuries.

(then)

There are numerous witnesses, all with the same account. So, you might wonder, why is the Government asking you to convict Commander Noah Hewitt of Murder?

(then)

Commander Hewitt, the Battalion Surgeon at Task Force Southwest, issued an order to his staff concerned the MACE, the exam designed to diagnose Traumatic Brain Injuries.

(then)

Commander Hewitt, who had doubts about the effectiveness of the test and who felt that Task Force Southwest was understaffed, issued an order that *no one* was to fail the MACE on their watch.

(then)

This illegal order set the conditions for Private Morehead's crime. It allowed the Private to deteriorate to the point where he could no longer control his actions. It led directly to the death of Captain Jason Hunt.

(then)

Noah Hewitt shares responsibility for the murder of an excellent Marine. He has to share in the punishment, too.

As Sid turns from the panel, taking his seat --

COL. CORPUS

Mister Papademetropoulos?

PRINCESS

(as he stands)

Thank you, honor. But you should feel free to call me "Princess." My drill instructor sure did, and the name just kinda... stuck.

(then; to Panel)

CONTINUED: (2)

PRINCESS (CONT'D)

You're going to hear some well-crafted arguments from the Government, but ultimately, it comes down to this: *it simply can't be proven that Commander Hewitt issued an order to ignore the MACE protocols.* You'll hear testimony from some of his staff saying that he did... and you'll hear from others who say he *didn't*. That's "he said, she said" stuff. You can't convict a man for murder behind that.

(than)

It's true that no one has been pulled from duty at Camp Shorab after failing the MACE. But that's not evidence of anything. There are only four hundred Marines at Task Force Southwest.

(then)

The Government, quite simply, is trying to point the finger of blame where it doesn't belong. Where it can't belong. We *know* who killed Jason Hunt. His name is Private Cooper Morehead.

We HOLD ON Sid, eyeing the panel as Princess turns and SITS.

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - EISA'S OFFICE - DAY

Eisa's COMPUTER MONITOR displays SATELLITE FOOTAGE of a storm hovering over a mountainous area.

HARPER (O.C.)

They won't be able to fly a bombing sortie until the storm system moves out.

A stoic Eisa considers the images Harper has pulled up.

HARPER (CONT'D)

It'll probably be another day before we can drop the MOAB.

As a stoic Eisa nods, there's a KNOCK at Eisa's door. They look up to find JERRY TRUESDALE (50s) there. Jerry's a civilian, but his posture indicates that hasn't always been the case.

Eisa reads his hollow eyes; Jerry clearly hasn't slept.

EISA

... Jerry. Are you okay?

EXT. QUANTICO - CAMPUS GROUNDS - DAY

Eisa and Jerry have found a bench that overlooks a bucolic corner of the sprawling campus. Mid-conversation --

EISA

There's a storm over Hindu Kush right now. We won't be able to do anything for at least a day.

JERRY

Okay. That's good, anyway...

As a worried Jerry pinches the bridge of his nose --

EISA

You look just like Adam right now. I always forget that he got that nose pinch from you.

(then)

Jerry. Try to remember: there's no confirmation that Adam's in those tunnels. We don't know where he is --

JERRY

(OVER HER; suddenly)

You can't do this, Eisa.

(then)

Adam's your son. He's *our* son.

(then)

Buy time. Say you're waiting for a ransom note. You can sell that...

EISA

I'm not thinking about what I can sell.

(then)

Every soldier in Afghanistan is some mother's son, or daughter. If I single my own kid out for protection, what kind of commander have I been? If I stall, and those AQA fighters slip out of our sights again... what do I say to the parents of the Marines they kill after that?

JERRY

You don't have to say *anything* to them. I guarantee you: if most people had a chance to keep their own kid safe, they'd take it.

CONTINUED:

EISA

I'm a colonel in the United States Marines. I don't get to do what "most people" would do.

(then)

If everyone in my position did what "most people" would do... there wouldn't be a country.

(off his expression)

Go ahead. Roll your eyes --

JERRY

I respect what you do, Eisa. I served, too.

(then)

It's been a long time since we were together... but I still care about you. I care about what happens to you.

(then)

I'm worried about Adam. I can't take a breath without thinking about where he is... but I'm worried about *you*, too.

EISA

I'm fine --

JERRY

Eisa. If you say "yes" to dropping that bomb... and our son is in those caves... *how will you live with yourself?*

ON Eisa, struggling to find an answer --

INT. QUANTICO - COURTHOUSE - DAY

LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE CAMERON BONDI (20s; uncomfortable being the center of attention) is on the stand. He's already been sworn in, and he's answering Sid's first question:

LTJG BONDI

My name is Cameron Bondi, I'm a Lieutenant Junior Grade with the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, currently assigned to Task Force Southwest.

SID

... and why is a Navy officer stationed on a Marine Corps base?

LTJG BONDI

Sir, I'm an MSO, a Medical Service Officer.

CONTINUED:

LTJG BONDI (CONT'D)

The Marines don't staff medical personnel. The Navy handles those jobs.

SID

Thank you, Lieutenant. Did your Commanding Officer, Dr. Noah Hewitt, call a staff meeting on the morning of February 8, 2018?

LTJG BONDI

He did.

SID

And what was the topic?

LTJG BONDI

The MACE Exam. Commander Hewitt told the staff that, when someone with a head injury came in, we were to re-issue the questions as many times as it took for the soldier to get a passing score.

SID

Did anyone on staff voice concerns about the order?

LTJG BONDI

Lots of us. Commander Hewitt told us that the MACE was a clumsy tool that was pulling healthy soldiers off of active duty.

SID

And did you follow your C.O.'s orders? Did you ask the questions on the MACE as many times as it took?

LTJG BONDI

Of course, sir. We all did.

Sid, finished with his exam, heads back to his seat. Princess RISES, buttoning his coat around his massive torso --

PRINCESS

Lieutenant Bondi. How would you describe your relationship with Commander Hewitt?

LTJG BONDI

He's the Battalion Surgeon. He's my boss.

CONTINUED: (2)

PRINCESS

Do you enjoy serving under him?

TREY

Objection. Relevance --

PRINCESS

Your honor, I intend to demonstrate bias on the part of this witness.

COL. CORPUS

I'll allow the question to stand.

Princess looks to Bondi expectantly.

LTJG BONDI

He's my Commanding Officer. I do what he tells me to do.

PRINCESS

But, son... didn't you go over his head to request a transfer out of Task Force Southwest?

LTJG BONDI

... I did.

PRINCESS

So you don't *always* do what he tells you to do -- ?

SID

Objection -- !

TREY

Your honor, that's argumentative.

COL. CORPUS

Sustained. Don't needle the witness, Mister Padademo...

(gives up on the name)

Don't needle the witness.

PRINCESS

(to Bondi)

What was the reason you requested a transfer?

LTJG BONDI

I thought I could serve more effectively elsewhere.

PRINCESS

But your request was denied. How many fitness reports has Commander Hewitt issued rating your performance?

CONTINUED: (3)

LTJG BONDI

Three.

PRINCESS

In each of those reports, he described you as "barely fit for duty," your work hampered by anger management issues, did he not?

Bondi's glaring at Princess now. Sid catches Bondi's eye, gives him a gesture urging him to keep his cool.

PRINCESS (CONT'D)

... son?

LTJG BONDI

He did.

PRINCESS

So is it fair to say that your attempts to transfer out of Task Force Southwest were an effort to avoid serving under a commanding officer who consistently found your work to be wanting?

LTJG BONDI

It's fair to say it was a factor.

PRINCESS

And if this court-martial finds Commander Hewitt guilty of murder, would he still be posted at Camp Shorab?

LTJG BONDI

Of course not. He'd be in jail.

PRINCESS

And you would have achieved your goal of escaping his yoke -- ?

TREY

Objection!

SID

Your honor, we object --

COL. CORPUS

Sustained. Although the Government should bear in mind that it's under no obligation to deliver its objections in stereo.

PRINCESS

I'll withdraw the last question. Nothing further.

CONTINUED: (4)

As the Judge addresses Bondi, Trey TURNS to Sid and gives him a look, as if to say: *that could have gone much better.*

COL. CORPUS

Thank you, Lieutenant Bondi. You can step down.

SID

(to Trey, whispered)
Relax. Bondi got flayed, but we've still got Toni Pettite. Her service record is flawless.

COL. CORPUS

(to Sid and Trey)
Would the Government like to call its next witness?

Sid TURNS AROUND to look at the gallery, making eye contact with a nervous Toni, who sits beside her husband. *Show time.*

TIMECUT TO:

INT. QUANTICO - COURTROOM - DAY

Moments later. A sworn-in Toni is on the stand, Sid questioning her. Toni's clearly ill at ease, a long way from the confident woman we met in Act One.

TONI

I'm Antoinette Pettite. I was a Navy Independent Corpsman stationed detailed to Task Force Southwest from May 2017 until April of this year.

SID

... so you were posted at the Battalion Aid Station in February of this year?

TONI

I was.

SID

Can you describe what happened at the staff meeting called by Commander Hewitt on February 8th?

Toni hesitates for a long beat. Looks over to the table where Princess and Hewitt sit. Sid senses her uncertainty and nervousness, doesn't like the way this feels one bit.

SID (CONT'D)

Ms. Pettite?

CONTINUED:

Toni looks at Sid for another moment, her eyes sad. Then:

TONI

We had a lot of meetings. I don't really recall at this time.

What? A murmur spreads through court; Sid tries not to go ashen.

SID

Ms. Pettite, when we deposed you, you described the meeting in detail --

TONI

I don't remember what happened on February 8th. At this time, I don't remember it --

SID

Forget the date. Do you recall a meeting where Commander Hewitt outlined a new policy for issuing the MACE Exam?

Toni holds eye contact with Sid for a beat. Then looks down.

TONI

I don't. Not at this time.

A star witness recanting on the stand with no warning -- this is any lawyer's worst nightmare. As Sid reels --

SID

Why are you doing this, Toni?

PRINCESS

Objection, your honor. Counsel is leading the witness --

COL. CORPUS

Sustained.

But Sid has never looked away from Toni --

SID

Why are you doing this?

PRINCESS

Objection --

COL. CORPUS

Sustained! The witness will ignore the question and counsel will move on or be held in contempt.

CONTINUED: (2)

Trey, sensing imminent disaster, jumps in for the save.

TREY

Your honor, the witness's testimony runs directly counter to what she said in her deposition. The Government requests a recess to assess its case in light of the change.

COL. CORPUS

(to Toni)

Ms. Pettite, you maintain you can't recall events you recently described in detail?

TONI

Not at this time, your honor. I'm sorry.

COL. CORPUS

Then the request is granted. I'll see you all tomorrow. I suggest the Government arrive with a new strategy in hand... or with a deal to end these proceedings.

(then)

The witness may step down.

Toni steps down from the bench, averting her gaze as she passes Sid. As he watches her go, his case in tatters.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JASON HUNT, his face displayed on a Quicktime player on a computer monitor as he looks at CAMERA --

JASON (ON COMPUTER SCREEN)
Sid! Happy birthday, buddy.

ANOTHER ANGLE REVEALS Sid, sitting alone in the DARKENED BULLPEN and watching the old video message from Jason.

JASON (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)
Listen, Alex wants to fix you up with someone. Call her, okay -- ?

MAYA (O.C.)
I heard about this afternoon.

Sid TURNS; Maya just entered. As Sid pauses the message --

MAYA (CONT'D)
What happened?

SID
They went to go see Toni after the recess. She'll never admit this on the record... but I guess when she was overseas, she had an affair with one of the other officers posted to the Battle Aid Station.

(then)
The guy she used to be with sided with Hewitt. He came to Toni, and told her he'd tell Princess what happened if she didn't back off.

MAYA
... Jesus...

SID
They'd expose the affair on cross while her husband was watching.

MAYA
That's witness tampering.

SID
If we can prove it happened. Which we can't.

Maya sits down opposite Sid.

CONTINUED:

MAYA

Your star witness recanted.
That's the stuff of nightmares.
(then; her point)
Sometimes you get caught in a
perfect storm. I'm sorry it
happened with your friend's case.

A beat between them. Sid manages a grin, grateful she came.

SID

... thanks.

MAYA

So listen. I knew you'd be up
here stewing. And it's Wednesday.
That's the night I take my team
out. 37 craft beers on tap...

SID

I gotta go. Another time, okay?

Maya stands, considers him for a moment.

MAYA

I look forward to it, Captain
Sidney.

Maya EXITS. Sid sits there for a second, then presses "play" to
resume the saved video message.

JASON (ON SCREEN)

I told Alex it's a waste of time
to play matchmaker. You just
haven't realized that you're in
love with that girl from your
office yet. Take care, pal.

As the message ends, we HOLD ON Sid, sitting alone...

INT. QUANTICO - ALEX HUNT'S HOUSE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

A WEDDING PICTURE -- Jason stands beside Alex, Sid in B.G.

ALEX (O.C.)

... so this doctor's gonna walk?

Sid sits opposite Alex, hating every moment of this.

SID

Maybe. We still have the medical
records. We *might* be able to
leverage that into a little time.

Sid's *might* doesn't sound hopeful. Alex composes herself --

CONTINUED:

ALEX

Okay. Thank you for trying --

SID

I'm sorry, Al. I'm so sorry --

ALEX

It's okay. You keep acting like I expect everything to work out perfectly. I'm not some kid.

SID

I know. But Jason loved the Corps. He deserved better --

ALEX

He'd get it. I promise.

(then)

I mean, yes: Jason loved the Corps. But he knew that didn't mean things would happen the way he wanted them to.

(then)

He wasn't even sure the Corps *deserved* what he gave it.

SID

What do you mean?

ALEX

I don't know. He *did* love the Corps, like you just said. But right before he died, he told me he wasn't sure how long the Corps would love him back.

SID

Why?

ALEX

I don't know. He said he was going to send me an e-mail.

Sid considers that for a moment, something finally occurring --

SID

Do you have Jason's e-mail password?

INT. QUANTICO - ALEX HUNT'S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a computer SCREEN, as someone types in a password that, to us, is just a series of asterisks...

ALEX (O.C.)

Sorry, what are you looking for?

CONTINUED:

Sid has just finished typing in the password that Alex gave him.

SID

Jason used to send me these
incredibly long emails. I'd ask
him how he did it, and he'd tell
me he wrote them over a few
sessions. He'd save the letter-in-
progress in his "drafts" file.
(then; his point)
I guess I'm curious what his beef
with the Marines was.

ON JASON'S E-MAIL HOME PAGE: the cursor clicks on the **DRAFTS**
file. As Sid sorts through the unsent e-mails saved there,
finally settling on one with the subject heading: **M.A.C.E.**

ON SID; *holy shit*. As Sid CLICKS ON the draft in progress, Alex
reads the subject heading over his shoulder --

ALEX

"Mace?" Is that important -- ?

INT. QUANTICO - TREY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A CELL PHONE BLARES OUT a RING as Trey sleeps in bed. He picks
up the phone, checks caller ID as he answers:

TREY

Hey, Sid. What's up?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. QUANTICO - CAMPUS GROUNDS - NIGHT

Sid walks, his phone to his ear.

SID

I've got something, Trey. I need
you to buy me time. Sit down with
Princess in the morning, tell him
you want to cut a deal.

TREY

How much time do you need?

SID

As much as it takes. Improvise.

ON THE QUANTICO CAMPUS: Sid hangs up. Dials again.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. A HIP BAR - NIGHT

Maya picks up the phone; she's clearly a bit buzzed.

CONTINUED:

MAYA

What's up, Sid?

SID

I need your help with some leg-work. Right now.

MAYA

I've had two beers --

SID

So ask your Uber driver to stop for coffee. I'll see you in ten.

EXT. QUANTICO - COURTHOUSE - DAY

ESTABLISHING the august building on a bright morning. We HEAR --

TREY (O.C.)

I just negotiated with Princess for *six hours*.

INT. QUANTICO - COURTROOM - DAY

Yeti the dog curls up in front of the bench as Judge Corpus gavels the court-martial of Hewitt back into session. Sid and Trey whisper as they sit beside each other:

TREY

Thanks for that, by the way. I got the deal in a decent place. But if we call another witness... it goes away forever.

COL. CORPUS

Does the Government wish to call another witness?

A long beat. Sid looks at Trey, turns and looks at Maya... then at Alex Hunt. Sid finally stands and CLEARS HIS THROAT.

SID

Your honor, the Government calls Commander Noah Hewitt.

A murmur of surprise. As Princess reacts, and the bailiff swears Hewitt in MOS...

SID (CONT'D)

Commander Hewitt... did anyone at Task Force Southwest ever confront you accusing you of giving an order to ignore the MACE protocol -- ?

CONTINUED:

COMMANDER HEWITT
No. Of course not.

SID
No one? Not even Jason Hunt?

Princess is beginning to look worried, but Hewitt doubles down:

COMMANDER HEWITT
No.

SID
(to Corpus)
Your honor, I introduce Exhibit
H, a draft email composed by
Jason Hunt with the subject
heading "MACE" --

PRINCESS
Objection, this is not on the
list of approved exhibits --

SID
Your honor, you asked us to come
to court with a new strategy.

COL. CORPUS
I'll allow the exhibit.

SID
(to Hewitt)
Would you read the first line of
the second paragraph aloud,
please? Doctor Hewitt?

Hewitt malingers before finally reading aloud --

COMMANDER HEWITT
"Earlier today, I went to see the
Battalion Surgeon to talk to him
about the MACE issue. But Hewitt
denied doing anything wrong."
(hesitates; then)
"I advised the Battalion Surgeon
that I'd be sharing my findings
with CENTCOM."

SID
So Captain Hunt threatened to
expose your illegal scheme --

COMMANDER HEWITT
I have no idea why he wrote this.

Sid plucks the e-mail from Hewitt's hand, changing gears.

CONTINUED: (2)

SID

On the night Jason Hunt died, did PFC Morehead come to you complaining of blackouts and an inability to control himself?

COMMANDER HEWITT

What? No, of course not --

SID

There are three enlisted men from his barracks who'll testify that he made those complaints, and that his fellow soldiers sent him to *your* Battle Aid Station.

Hewitt looks to Princess for help, but none is forthcoming.

COMMANDER HEWITT

They might have referred him to us. But he never made it.

Sid considers that for a long moment. Finally:

SID

You're lying.

PRINCESS

Objection -- !

COMMANDER HEWITT

What -- ?

SID (CONT'D)

(over them)

PFC Morehead came to you complaining that he was in the midst of a psychotic break --

COL. CORPUS

Sustained! Captain Sidney -- !

SID

-- and you turned him away. You sent him toward the fence-line, knowing that Morehead's commanding officer -- the man who had just accused you of issuing an illegal order -- would be the one sent to fetch him?

COL. CORPUS

Captain Sidney! You are questioning an officer in good standing. This better be going somewhere, fast.

A beat of silence cuts the tension as the room absorbs that.

CONTINUED: (3)

SID

You didn't just neglect to treat
PFC Morehead. You used him as a
weapon, pointed at Jason Hunt --

PRINCESS
Objection -- !

COMMANDER HEWITT
I resent that -- !

SID (CONT'D)

Oh, you resent that? So you never
saw PFC Morehead that night?

COMMANDER HEWITT
Of course I didn't.

A long beat. Then Sid holds up a PICTURE.

SID

Your honor. Exhibit I. A still
from a security camera at Camp
Shorab. It depicts Dr. Hewitt
driving PFC Morehead toward the
fenceline on the night in
question.

COMMANDER HEWITT
What -- ?

SID

You never saw him? You drove him
to the edge of the base. You
shoved him out toward the fence-
line. You probably pulled
Morehead's knife out for him.

The entire court is SILENT, rapt; Hewitt just looks at the
picture, caught out.

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - EISA'S OFFICE - DAY

Eisa tries to focus on her work when Harper taps on the door.

HARPER

Colonel Truesdale. The storm is
clear of the Salang Pass. What
would you like to do?

Decision time. A long moment between the women. And finally:

EISA
Drop the ordinance.

INT. QUANTICO - COURTHOUSE - DAY

Hewitt is off the stand now, conferring with Princess. The whole
courtroom watches as the whisper to each other. Finally:

CONTINUED:

COL. CORPUS
Mister Padademotropoulos... I
granted you a *short* recess.

After another beat of frantic whispering, Princess looks up.

PRINCESS
Your Honor, my client at the time
wishes to revise his plea and
enter a new one of "guilty" on
all charges.

The courtroom erupts. *Holy shit*. Sid did it. As everyone reacts -

PRINCESS (CONT'D)
In light of this, I'd like to
request a recess to discuss a
deal with the Government.

COL. CORPUS
Granted. This court-martial will
resume tomorrow.

Corpus strikes a gavel, signalling the close of business. A
triumphant Sid shakes hands with Trey. Then moves over to Alex
Hunt -- *and the two of them hug each other tight*. We HEAR:

COL. CORPUS (CONT'D)
WHAT are you doing -- ?

Sid looks up to SEE that a mortified Princess has just tried to
rub Yeti's belly. Judge Corpus is admonishing him.

PRINCESS
I'm sorry, your Honor. I thought
he'd like it...

COL. CORPUS
Step away from the animal!

As a chastened Princess does just that --

TREY
(as he passes them)
When it rains, it pours.

Sid breaks from Alex, and moves over to Maya.

SID
Thanks for the assist.

MAYA
You got it. I'm just sorry we
didn't get to go head-to-head.

CONTINUED: (2)

SID
All good things in time.

They each get a TEXT simultaneously. As they check their phones -

SID (CONT'D)
Colonel Truesdale.

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - EISA'S OFFICE - DAY

Eisa takes a moment to center herself. Steps out into --

INT. JAG HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - DAY

-- where Eisa's staff is gathered in honor of the sacrifice she may well be making. All of our principal characters -- Sid, Maya, Trey, Harper, Carlton -- and everyone else give salutes as a stoic Eisa CROSSES THE ROOM and EXITS --

INT. QUANTICO - REMOTE VIEWING ROOM - DAY

Harper escorts Eisa into a room filled with screens and MARINES manning them. They salute -- and Eisa gives them the barest of nods as Harper leads Eisa to a chair, and screen, in the corner.

As Eisa NODS, someone comes over and punches some keys. As the screen in front of Eisa shows footage of the Afghan countryside, WE HEAR a RADIO TRANSMISSION from a C-130 HERCULES:

NAVIGATOR'S VOICE (O.C.)
20 seconds from the drop site.

HOLD ON Eisa as Harper watches her. Eisa's face doesn't move.

NAVIGATOR'S VOICE (O.C.) (CONT'D)
10, 9, 8, 7, 6... we are over
Salang... 3, 2, 1...

ON SCREEN: the bomb is released from the ship and hurtles toward the ground. It drifts away from our view... and finally EXPLODES in a bloom of bright, brilliant light.

CUT TO TITLES:

J.A.G