

KNOWN BUT TO GOD

FADE IN:

EXT. MILITARY CARGO PLANE - NIGHT

A Lockheed C-141 churns through a fierce thunderstorm.

SUPER: 80 MILES OUTSIDE PARIS, FRANCE

INT. MILITARY CARGO PLANE - COMMAND CENTER

Four MARINES mill about with purpose. A large holographic global map is plastered on the wall.

CARGO HOLD

A smirking soldier in camo fatigues, STAFF SERGEANT DEVON FORTE (24), takes a long drag from his cigarette.

Handcuffed inside a small cell is PAYAM YAVARI (57), clean-shaven, bandaged forearm, with the smile of a winner.

DEVON

You smoke? Or, ya hungry?
Somethin'? Gonna be a long trip
back to the States.

PAYAM

I'm not hungry.

DEVON

Can't say I didn't try.

They share a moment of silence. Devon finishes his cigarette and just as soon lights another.

DEVON

I got a couple more weeks out there
in that desert shit hole and y'know
what I'm gonna do when I get home?

PAYAM

I could not tell you.

DEVON

I'm gonna get a 12-ounce sirloin
then I'm gonna go to Arlington and
visit all my friends who've died
fighting you fucking sand niggers.

PAYAM

How many?

DEVON

Too many.

PAYAM

(Slight nod)

Don't you have that question
itching at the back of your skull?

DEVON

I got a lot of questions. Like what
the fuck am I doing in here with
you right now?

PAYAM

But a different question. It's
nagging at you, isn't it?

DEVON

(Long drag)

No clue what you're talking about.

PAYAM

"Why was it to easy for those
Americans to get into my compound?"

DEVON

Mmm. All right. You wanna play it
like that? We cleared out your
security, killed eight guards--

PAYAM

All expendable.

DEVON

Killed one of your wives.

PAYAM

Who had already given herself to
Allah.

DEVON

Your son.

PAYAM

Collateral damage. You did nothing
we didn't allow.

Devon gets up. Walks to an intercom on the wall.

DEVON

(Into intercom)

Sergeant, I need you in cargo.

JIMMY (V.O.)
 (Through intercom)
 Be right there.

PAYAM
 That question is just burning its
 way into your soul. Isn't it?

DEVON
 No. It's not. We beat you, plain
 and simple.

PAYAM
 That doesn't sound like the tone of
 a certain man.

DEVON
 Your little Jedi mind trick, it's
 clever, but useless. In twenty
 minutes, it won't mean shit.

The solid steel door to the cargo hold opens. SERGEANT JIMMY BARNES (22), three-day facial growth, weary eyes, steps in.

DEVON
 (To Jimmy)
 Watch him a minute.

JIMMY
 You got it, Devon.

PAYAM
 It won't go away just because you
 need to take a breather... Devon.

Devon gives Payam a cold glare before leaving the room. Jimmy walks close to the cell, stares down at Payam.

JIMMY
 (Scoffs)
 Look at you. The great Payam
 Yavari. You look like you could
 keel over at any second.

PAYAM
 Oh, I have more strength in me than
 you can imagine. Of course, not as
 much as I usually have.

JIMMY
 Yeah, why's that?

PAYAM

I haven't consumed a meal in about four and a half days.

JIMMY

You on some hunger strike?

PAYAM

Not exactly.

JIMMY

Good, 'cause we'll put a tube down your throat to keep you alive if we have to.

PAYAM

That won't do any good.

JIMMY

You should have more faith in us.

Then, Payam starts ripping the bandages off his arm. Jimmy reaches for the door, realizes he doesn't have the keys.

JIMMY

Shit!

Jimmy rushes to the intercom.

JIMMY

(Into intercom)

Devon, get back here! I need the fucking keys!

COMMAND CENTER

Devon checks the map with another MARINE as the intercom message comes through.

DEVON

What now?!

Devon rushes to the door.

CARGO HOLD

Devon gets inside as quick as possible to find Payam ripping the skin off his forearm with his teeth.

Jimmy has his sidearm trained on Payam.

DEVON
Don't fuckin' shoot him!

Devon unlocks the gate with his keys then enters a pass code. Payam pulls a detonator from his forearm. Holds it up.

DEVON
Shoot him!

Jimmy shoots Payam in the right shoulder. Payam clutches his shoulder in pain but pushes the detonator button.

Devon gets inside the cell. Drags Payam out onto the ground. Knocks the detonator away.

JIMMY
Nothing happened...

PAYAM
Are you sure?

Suddenly, the lights all go out and the plane dips forward at a 20-degree angle.

PILOT (V.O.)
(Through intercom)
We have a complete systems failure.

DEVON
(To Payam)
You son of a bitch.

JIMMY
What?

DEVON
He planned the whole Goddamn thing!

Jimmy and Devon both grab a pair of nightvision goggles to see in the pitch black.

PAYAM
(Laughs)
Told you I wasn't hungry.

Devon unloads a full clip into Payam's abdomen as the plane dips even lower.

A small explosive device slides out of Payam's corpse as his body glides lifelessly to the front of the plane.

DEVON
Jimmy, we gotta get the fuck outta here! Let's go!

They cautiously make their way to the front of the plane.

Just then, a metal case falls off an upper rack and bashes Jimmy's skull. He falls to the ground.

DEVON
Jimmy? Jimmy! Fuck!

Devon drags Jimmy's limp body to the door.

STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Devon lifts Jimmy over his shoulder as he makes his way up three flights of stairs.

COMMAND CENTER

Devon sets Jimmy down on a large center table. Looks around for any signs of life.

DEVON
Stevens? Wade? Where the fuck are
you guys?!

Devon rushes to the --

COCKPIT

-- where the PILOT (late 30s) struggles to maintain control of the plane.

PILOT
Forte, what are you still doing
here?

DEVON
Where's everyone else?

PILOT
They jumped ship. You'd better,
too.

DEVON
I can't. Jimmy took a good shot to
the head and I'm not leaving him
here.

PILOT
Look, the plane's screwed. I don't
know what happened--

DEVON

It was Yavari. The bastard had an EMP in his stomach or something.

PILOT

Well, there's no way I can save this plane before we go down. Best I can say is to get the hell outta here ASAP.

DEVON

What about you and Jimmy?

PILOT

If I can't save it by 5,000, I'm out, too, and I'll try and get Barnes out of here with me.

Devon shakes Pilot's hand.

DEVON

Good luck, man.

PILOT

See you on the other side.

Devon rushes back to --

COMMAND CENTER

-- where he grabs an assault rifle and a parachute then places one hand on Jimmy's shoulder.

Devon slips the parachute on, jumps out without hesitation.

SKY

Devon sky dives with the plane going down in the distance. On the ground, he notices a distinct lack of lights.

Devon releases his parachute, glides safely through the air.

FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Devon hits the ground with his assault rifle at the ready. He sees several ARMED MEN approaching.

He crouches with his rifle as the men fan out and slowly surround him.

DEVON

Friendly.

They move close enough where Devon can make out who they are:
FRENCH SOLDIERS.

The leader, GUILLAUME (early 40s), grizzled face and chiseled features, steps forward.

GUILLAUME

(French)

Drop your weapon!

DEVON

Uh, no habla--um, fuck. *Parlez-vous*
English?

Several of the Soldiers laugh at the odd request.

GUILLAUME

I speak English.

DEVON

Good, listen I need--

The C-141 crashes several miles in the distance. The Soldiers grab Devon and rush away with him to a FARM HOUSE.

FARM HOUSE - COMMON ROOM

DEVON

What the fuck is going on?

GUILLAUME

Be quiet.

(To Soldiers, in French)

Léon, Tristan, check the back.
Board up the doors if you have to.

DEVON

Look, dude, I don't speak French.
Can you tell me what the hell is
going on?

GUILLAUME

Were you born yesterday?

DEVON

Is that rhetorical?

GUILLAUME

Who are you? You're one of the
Germans, aren't you?

DEVON
German? Do I sound German?

GUILLAUME
You're a spy.

DEVON
Spy? I'm a fucking Marine!

GUILLAUME
What is a Marine? What were you
doing wandering around on the
battlefield, then?

DEVON
(Blank stare)
What battlefield?

GUILLAUME
The one that's been--

Gunshots ring out as the windows shatter. The Soldiers duck
down and take up defensive positions.

GUILLAUME
Does your weapon work?

DEVON
Every time. But I only got one mag
for it.

GUILLAUME
So, you're not German or Austrian?

DEVON
Austrian?! Where the fuck am I?

GUILLAUME
Chalons-En-Champagne.

DEVON
Is that near Paris?

GUILLAUME
Not particularly.

Devon seems to realize.

DEVON
Wait a minute. What year is this?

GUILLAUME
Now is not the time for jokes.

DEVON

I'm dead serious. What year?

GUILLAUME

It's 1917. Now, are you going to help us out or not?

Devon has no response for that.

DEVON

No. I don't belong here.

GUILLAUME

Neither do we but we're fighting anyway.

Devon reaches in his pocket, pulls out a picture of his WIFE and SON (25, 6), posing at the beach.

DEVON

This is impossible.

GUILLAUME

Not as impossible as you think.

TRISTAN (O.S.)

(French)

Guillaume, they have us surrounded.

GUILLAUME

(French)

Nobody quits! How is our ammunition supply?

TRISTAN (O.S.)

(French)

Limited.

GUILLAUME

(French)

Then pick your shots and make them count.

(To Devon, English)

Are you going to help or not because, otherwise, I have a good mind to throw you out there with them and be rid of you.

Devon stands, cocks his gun.

DEVON

Fuck, yeah.

Devon aims his rifle out the window, picks off a couple Germans using his nightvision.

DEVON

I see dozens more out there. Maybe a hundred.

GUILLAUME

You a defeatist? If we die, we die, but I am not going down without a fight.

DEVON

Damn right.

They fire more out at the Germans who approach the farm house en masse. They riddle the house with bullets.

LEON (O.S.)

(French)

Tristan and Joseph have been hit!

GUILLAUME

(French)

Keep firing! We'll mourn the dead later or we'll join 'em!

Just then, Guillaume takes a bullet in the head and Léon takes two bullets to the chest.

Devon is the only one still alive. He crouches beneath the window. Contemplates his situation.

DEVON

Please, God, be a fucking dream.

Devon rushes to his feet then throws the door open as he fires wildly into the GERMAN SOLDIERS.

A couple Germans die as Devon runs out of ammo. He looks defeated as the Germans encircle

A GERMAN OFFICER (early 40s) looks to a younger SOLDIER (late 20s) as the two share a brief chuckle.

OFFICER

(German)

What kind of clothes are those?

SOLDIER

(German)

I don't know, but they are ugly as sin.

OFFICER
 (German, to Devon)
 You have two choices. You can live
 in pain or die in pain.

Devon spits in the Officer's face. The Officer whips out a Bowie knife, stabs Devon in the gut.

He groans in pain as he falls to the ground. The Officer keeps his icy stare.

OFFICER
 (German)
 Search the house.

Devon stares at the picture of his family. The Officer snatches the picture from his hand.

DEVON
 Gimme my fucking picture, you
 fucking piece of shit!

The Officer rips the picture apart, throws it in the breeze.

Devon sits up, tries to bite into the Officer's leg, but he pulls out a pistol, shoots Devon in the head.

The Soldiers walk away from Devon's corpse while the Officer kicks Devon's head on the way by.

EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY - DAY

SUPER: JANUARY 24TH, 2014

Devon's WIFE AND SON pass by the Changing of the Guard as they come upon the Tomb of the Unknowns.

In the center is the original Tomb of the Unknown Soldier from World War I.

SON
 Is Daddy gonna come?

WIFE
 I hope so, buddy.

Wife clutches her wedding band, which she has turned into a necklace. An uncertain sadness on her face.

An inscription on the Tomb reads:

HERE RESTS IN
HONORED GLORY
AN AMERICAN
SOLDIER
KNOWN BUT TO GOD

FADE OUT.