The Survival Instinct

by

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FADE IN:

INT. HALF-TON TRUCK - DAY

Near blinding light fills the cab, wakes the woman who lies across the seat. She is USAF LIEUTENANT EILEEN MAY WILCOTT.

A TITLE CARD: IRAQI DESERT 1991

Eileen bolts upright and aims TWO 9MM PISTOLS at the driver's side window. Her face is battered, her T-shirt bloodied and ripped.

EXT. IRAQI DESERT - CONTINUOUS

A REPORTER and CAMERAMAN back away from the decrepit halfton, still filming as the driver's side door opens and a confused Eileen emerges, hands raised slightly.

REPORTER

(moves closer)

Can you tell me your name?

(no response)

Are you an American?

EILEEN

Yes...

REPORTER

Air Force? U.S. Air Force?

(Eileen nods)

Are you the missing fighter pilot?

EILEEN

Missing...

REPORTER

Are you Lieutenant Wilcott?

Her eyes snap to meet the Reporter's, a sudden recognition.

EXT. IRAQI DESERT - DAY

A UH-1 MEDEVAC HELICOPTER tears along, less than thirty feet above the ground.

INT. UH-1 MEDEVAC HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

Eileen is on a stretcher, struggling to stay awake. A MEDICAL PLATOON LEADER cleans dirt out of the deep scab in her cheek.

MEDICAL PLATOON LEADER

Sleep if you want to, Lieutenant. You're safe, now. Nothing to worry about.

Eileen rolls her head to watch the MARINES, focused on the landscape, fully alert and armed to the teeth.

EXT. 807TH M*A*S*H - DAY

The Medevac helicopter touches down near the center of the mobile hospital compound. A handful of MEDICS rush to meet it. The Marines jump out and clear the way.

INT. 807TH M*A*S*H - EXAMINATION TENT - DAY

A DOCTOR shines a light in Eileen's left eye. A MILITARY PSYCHOLOGIST stands a few feet away.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Survival. Escape. Resistance. Evasion. You know what I'm talking about?

EILEEN

Yes.

PSYCHOLOGIST

You'll be asked about all aspects of your captivity.

The Doctor changes eyes, careful of her bruises and cut cheek.

EILEEN

I'll tell them everything I can.

The Doctor finishes with her eyes and she looks at the floor.

INT. 807TH M*A*S*H - MESS TENT - DAY

MAJOR STEPHEN TYCZINSKI of the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency at a table well out of earshot.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

You know what J.P.R.A. stands for?

Eileen sits across from him, at full attention.

ETLEEN

Yes, sir.

(to Tyczinski)

You're the folks who are gonna ask me how the hell I got outta there. Pardon my French.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

The boys in your unit said if anyone could come out of something like this alright, it'll be Lieutenant Wilcott.

EILEEN

That's flattering, sir.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

You'll be real clear with me, Lieutenant?

(she nods)

You can confirm Lieutenant Young died last night?

EILEEN

Yes, sir.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

You saw his body?

EILEEN

My attempts to revive him were unsuccessful.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

You can pinpoint the location where you were held?

EILEEN

In my sleep, sir.

Major Tyczinski gives Eileen a satisfied smile.

INT. 807TH M*A*S*H - RECOVERY TENT - NIGHT

Eileen sits on her cot, cleaned up a bit. The cut in her face is bandaged over. She wears military issue patient's scrubs.

LIEUTENANT MARY McCALL sits on a folding chair facing Eileen.

LIEUTENANT MCCALL

We had a pool for you.

EILEEN

A what?

LIEUTENANT MCCALL

A pool. We each threw in ten bucks and picked the date we thought you'd show back up.

EILEEN

(smiles)

Who won?

LIEUTENANT MCCALL

Koskimaski. Three hundred forty bucks.

EILEEN

Figures.

(a beat)

Did they have a pool for Lieutenant Young?

LIEUTENANT MCCALL

(quiet)

Yes.

EILEEN

Can you get rid of it?

LIEUTENANT MCCALL

We're sending flowers to the family.

Eileen looks away.

INT. 807TH M*A*S*H - MAJOR TYCZINSKI'S TENT - DAY

Major Tyczinski leads Eileen to his desk.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

When you're ready to say hello, just pick up the phone. He'll be there.

EILEEN

Yes, sir.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

(hand on her shoulder)
You're doing great, Lieutenant.

EILEEN

Thank you, sir.

Eileen sits behind his desk and looks up at the Major.

MAJOR TYCZINSKI

I'll leave you alone.

Tyczinski leaves and Eileen stares at the telephone for a moment before she picks up the receiver.

EILEEN

Hello? David? Can you hear me?
 (a beat)
Yeah, it's me. I can hear you fine,
big brother...

She puts a hand over her mouth and fights back tears.

INT. C-141 TRANSPORT PLANE - NIGHT

Eileen wears her casual fatigues, stares out the window into the darkness.

PILOT (O.S.)

We're about three hundred miles southeast of Ramstein Air Base and continuing our descent, so now's the time to fasten your seatbelt...

She watches the wing light blink monotonously.

INT. RAMSTEIN AIR BASE - OFFICER'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Eileen is curled up in a chair. Two other OFFICERS sit on either end of a sofa. They watch a TV interview with COREY WILCOTT (his name on the screen), a gangly 15 year old. His English is drowned out by the German translation.

OFFICER

(to Eileen)

That's your brother?

EILEEN

My nephew.

The picture becomes a two-shot of Corey and his father, DAVID WILCOTT, in his early 30's.

OFFICER

That's your brother?

EILEEN

You'll make Sergeant in no time.

The other Officer LAUGHS.

EXT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - RUNWAY - DAY

The C-141 transport touches down.

EXT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

GRANT HUNTER, 32, small town good looks, stands with Eileen's brother, David and his son, Corey, all part of the crowd gathered for the arrival. Corey waves a small American flag.

The transport exit ramp lowers and the passengers begin to depart. First, the injured on stretchers, taken immediately to awaiting ambulances.

There are occasional SQUEALS and CHEERS that follow a brave thumbs-up from a passing casualty. A FAMILY spots a returning FATHER and sprints toward him. The soldier drops to his knees and hugs his children close.

And here comes Eileen, flanked by TWO MILITARY ESCORTS.

Corey sees her first and starts to run. Eileen sees Corey and they make a beeline to each other. He holds her tight and she gives him a kiss on the forehead.

David is next and makes no effort to stop the tears. Eileen comforts him.

Then, a long hug for Grant followed by a real kiss and more unabashed tears.

The MEDIA descends.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Eileen and Grant in bed. He holds her from behind. They are wide awake in the dark.

GRANT

They'll try and get you to go back.

EILEEN

Yeah, I know.

GRANT

You don't have to.

(a beat)

You can come back to California.

EILEEN

Maybe...

GRANT

I'm ready now, ya know? You wanna get married?

EILEEN

Grant...

GRANT

You wanna get married?

EILEEN

I need to sleep, okay?

(a beat)

Okay?

She takes his arm and pulls him tighter around her, closes her eyes.

INT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - D I A DEBRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Eileen faces two D I A (DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY) ANALYSTS, unremarkable, seemingly interchangeable. There is a tape recorder on the table between them.

D I A ANALYST #1

Okay, Lieutenant, you're doing very well.

EILEEN

Thank you, sir.

D I A ANALYST #2
Were the interrogations held daily?

EILEEN

No, sir. I mean, I wasn't always sure when one day passed in to the next. But, they were fairly regular.

D I A ANALYST #2

Were you always questioned by the same Colonel?

EILEEN

Yes. Colonel Al-Jamil...

CUT TO:

INT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - S E R E DEBRIEFING ROOM - DAY

A more comfortable setting. Eileen sits with a S E R E (SURVIVAL-ESCAPE-RESISTANCE-EVASION) PSYCHOLOGIST, a desk between them, no tape recorder.

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST

And, Colonel Al-Jamil conducted most of the abuse?

EILEEN

Yes.

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST

Were you forced to watch Lieutenant Young being beaten?

EILEEN

No, sir.

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST

But, you could hear it.

EILEEN

Yes...

CUT TO:

INT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - D I A DEBRIEFING ROOM - DAY Back to their questioning.

D I A ANALYST #1
Were you able to hear everything
Lieutenant Young said to Colonel AlJamil?

EILEEN

Our cells were right next to each other. I could hear everything.

D I A ANALYST #2 At any time, did you hear him confess to anything you would consider "propaganda".

EILEEN

Absolutely not. Lieutenant Young was very brave, all things considered.

CUT TO:

INT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - S E R E DEBRIEFING ROOM - DAY Continuing.

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST How've you been sleeping since you got back?

EILEEN

Fairly well.

 $\hspace{1cm} \hspace{1cm} \hspace{1cm}$

EILEEN

Not yet.

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST Anxiety? Feelings of tension?

EILEEN

Sometimes I feel like I'm on a moving elevator, but otherwise...

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST

Otherwise?

EILEEN

Otherwise, no, nothing out of the ordinary.

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST Okay. The night of your escape, you tried to revive Lieutenant Young.

EILEEN

Yes...

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST Have you ever seen a dead body before?

EILEEN

No.

CUT TO:

INT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - D I A DEBRIEFING ROOM - DAY

D I A ANALYST #1

But, you were certain that Lieutenant Young was dead?

EILEEN

Yes, sir. There was nothing I could do for him.

D I A ANALYST #1
And, the last time you saw him?

EILEEN

On the floor.

D I A ANALYST #2

You couldn't move him?

EILEEN

I didn't have the strength, sir. I'm very sorry.

CUT TO:

INT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - S E R E DEBRIEFING ROOM - DAY

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST Feelings of guilt are normal. You should prepare yourself for them. Fortunately, there are a number of resources available to you. And, we'll be checking in every few months over the first year.

EILEEN

I understand.

S E R E PSYCHOLOGIST You'll have to recount the events many times in the coming days... JAG, Public Affairs...are you prepared for that?

EILEEN

As ready as I'll ever be.

INT. NORFOLK AIR BASE - NAVAL LEGAL SERVICE OFFICE - DAY

In a small conference room. Eileen sits at a long table with TWO JAG OFFICERS.

There is a small contingent in the gallery, including David, Corey and Grant, the SERE Psychologist, some MEDIA.

A JUDGE ADVOCATE delivers his findings.

JUDGE ADVOCATE

Your service has examined your behavior during captivity and is more than convinced that you did not violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice; rather, you served your country honorably under extreme conditions; we are proud of you; you should be proud of yourself...

MOVING CLOSE ON EILEEN

JUDGE ADVOCATE

...It is the opinion of this body that the United States Air Force would greatly benefit from your continued service. But, we respect your desire to return to civilian life and hope you will continue in your recovery...

The expression on her face does not change.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - DAY

Eileen's cherry red Mustang convertible barrels along I-15, weaving in and out of traffic in the eastbound lanes.

A TITLE CARD: MOJAVE DESERT 1993

Her radio cranks out a classic rock tune and she sings along...poorly.

INT. EILEEN'S MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

She's 35 now, the hair is a bit longer. Her face is wind-burned from the road and swollen from a week of Canadian Club. A small line in her cheek is the only physical scar that remains from her captivity.

Eileen reaches for the pack of Marlboro's on the dash. She bumps the dog tags swinging from the rear view mirror. The pack is empty so she tosses it. She rummages through the overflowing ashtray for a salvageable butt.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - CONTINUOUS

The Mustang pulls up alongside a Winnebago. The SENIOR CITIZEN behind the wheel gets a good look at Eileen fluttering her tank top, welcoming the breeze.

Then, the SENIOR CITIZEN'S WIFE leans forward and registers her distaste.

INT. EILEEN'S MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

Eileen raises a bottle of Canadian Club from between her legs.

EILEEN

Cheers!

She downs a good couple ounces and lets out a WHOOP as she passes the Winnebago and cuts in front.

THROUGH HER WINDSHIELD we see the NEVADA HIGHWAY PATROL CAR a couple hundred yards ahead. Eileen mutters an obscenity.

The SIREN starts before she passes the cop. Eileen grabs the dog tags dangling from the rear-view mirror and yanks them over her neck.

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR, the flashing lights.

EILEEN kisses her dog tags and starts to pull over.

INT. BARSTOW POLICE STATION - DAY

CONSTABLE JACK COBB (on his nameplate) leans back in his desk chair.

David Wilcott sits across from Cobb. He's 35, still in his mechanic's coveralls and exasperated.

COBB

What am I supposed to do here, David? She may be your sister and she may be a war hero, but she was targeting RV's out there, not SCUDS.

DAVID

She's been having trouble lately, Jack. Grant kicked her out, so she's been staying with me and Corey. She had to give back the book advance.

COBB

But this is her second arrest this year. She's gotta go before the judge.

DAVID

What if I get her some help? Get her into A.A.

COBB

She needs more than twelve steps, David.

DAVID

So, help me out here.

COBB

I think you better start shopping around for rehab clinics.

INT. POLICE STATION - HOLDING CELL - CONTINUOUS

Eileen, passed out on the cot, fetal position, alone.

COBB (O.S.)

...It'd be good for you, too. Your boy doesn't need her staggerin' around the house while you're off at work.

She groans and rolls over.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

David and Corey stand near the empty garage. A tow truck backs Eileen's Mustang on to the property.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eileen sits on the edge of her bed with her head in her hands.

INT. DAVID'S PICKUP - DAY

David drives, Corey in the middle and Eileen leans her head against the passenger window. She has her sunglasses on and could very well be asleep.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A white longhouse behind an unimposing fence, expansive grounds beyond, everything serene and comforting.

MAURICE (O.S.)

Okay, Eileen, these are the rules: no visitors in your room. No smoking...

David's truck pulls up to the gate.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MAURICE EPSTEIN is a linebacker-size Orderly. He steps aside, making room for Eileen to enter with her overstuffed duffel bag.

MAURICE

...Lights out at eleven, and no funny business with the other guests.

His scrubs match the green quilt on the single bed. The spare furniture is a pallid French country design. The closed bathroom door has a full-length mirror on it.

EILEEN

Do I have my own bathroom?

MAURICE

(points)

Right through there.

Eileen drops her duffel bag on the bed and goes to the mirror. She takes a slow look at herself and shakes her head. Maurice appears in the reflection.

MAURICE

I'm gonna let you get unpacked. If you need anything, you just ask for Maurice.

He heads for the door.

EILEEN

Hey, Maurice.

(turns)

Where's the bar in this joint?

Maurice smiles at a joke he's heard a million times and closes the door behind him.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - SOLARIUM - NIGHT

Two patients on either end of a sofa, LORI and BRENT, unrelated, in their early 20's and both very good looking. They watch President Clinton talk about gays in the military.

Eileen enters and explores. The television doesn't interest her.

She crosses to a window table to observe ARNIE and CLARICE, middle age, middle-America and in the middle of a game of "Scrabble". Eileen studies Arnie's letters from behind while Clarice lays down a word...

CLOSE ON "SCRABBLE" BOARD: "TRANQUIL"

CLARICE

(smug)

That's...twenty-four points.

BACK TO SCENE as Arnie records her score while Eileen helps herself to four of his letters. She lays them down beneath "TRANQUIL". Arnie and Clarice look up as one. Eileen smiles and TAPS the board.

EILEEN

That's on a triple-word, by the way.

CLOSE ON "SCRABBLE BOARD": "TRANQUILIZER"

BACK TO SCENE as Eileen walks away. Arnie smiles. Clarice does not.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DECK - DAY

Behind the longhouse, tables have been moved aside to accommodate a semicircle of plastic patio chairs.

Eileen is one of half a dozen patients, including Arnie, Clarice, Lori and Brent.

All eyes are aimed at DOCTOR LLOYD GREENFIELD, a balding little man in a white coat. He leads group therapy, looking over his bifocals at those before him.

DOCTOR GREENFIELD

The decision to enter treatment is the first step on the journey toward mental, physical, and spiritual healing and recovery. Your journey alone is over...

Eileen watches DOCTOR LEWIS ALBRIGHT crossing the grounds with Maurice the Orderly. Albright is tall, handsome, in his early 40's, at ease with himself.

DOCTOR GREENFIELD

... "In short, we chose to become willing, and no better choice did we ever make". The words of Bill W...

Doctor Albright smiles at Eileen as he passes.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - NIGHT Eileen, in bed, a fitful sleep...

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - EILEEN'S NIGHTMARE - NIGHT

Only SHADOWS on a bare, scarred wall, STRUGGLING BODIES, PRISON BARS. We hear GRUNTING, MUFFLED PROTESTS, A GUNSHOT...

CUT TO:

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Eileen wakes with a start, gasping for air, dripping with sweat. She kicks off the sheets.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER Eileen on the floor, counting off push-ups in the dark.

EILEEN

...fifty-six, fifty-seven, fifty-eight...

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Pushing hard on her abs, punishing sit-ups.

EILEEN

...fifty-nine, sixty, sixty-one...

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER Eileen boxing with her image in the bathroom door mirror.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER Eileen collapses on the bed, drenched and covering her face with her hands.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DECK - DAY

CLOSE ON A MODEL JET FIGHTER, starting to take shape. Eileen's hand shakes a little as she attempts to attach a plastic wing.

EILEEN

Damn...

DOCTOR GREENFIELD and DOCTOR ALBRIGHT emerge from the longhouse and approach her table.

DOCTOR GREENFIELD Good morning, Eileen. How are you today?

EILEEN

Well, you can't sniff this glue worth shit, but otherwise, peachykeen.

Is that a Thunderbolt?

EILEEN

P-47. You an aviation nut?

(looks up)

Oops, poor choice of words.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(smiles)

My father flew one over Germany.

EILEEN

With the 4th?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

That's right.

(extends his hand)

I'm Lewis Albright.

Eileen shakes it.

DOCTOR GREENFIELD

Doctor Albright is going to oversee your stay with us, Eileen.

EILEEN

And, how long do you think that's going to be?

DOCTOR GREENFIELD

That depends on your progress, of course. I'll let you two get acquainted.

Albright pulls up a chair as Doctor Greenfield leaves.

Eileen goes back to the model. He watches her for a moment, notices the shakes.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Want a hand with that?

Eileen attaches the tiny piece before he can help.

Doctor Greenfield gave me your case file and a general overview of why you're here. I was hoping we could fill in some blanks together.

EILEEN

Should I prepare to be probed?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Any thoughts on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?

EILEEN

Not a one.

(looks him in the eye)
It was a long time ago, Doctor
Albright. I've moved on.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT
I'm hoping you'll indulge me a bit.

EILEEN

If you think it'll make a difference...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I do.

(a beat)

Did you ever wonder why they ask so many personal questions when you enlist?

EILEEN

So they can keep out the homos?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(leans in/smiles)

A few of us slipped through the cracks.

EILEEN

(realizes what he means)
What happened? Discharge?

No, I retired about nine years ago, got my Ph.D. I'm a Marine, so I get assigned a lot of veterans.

(a beat)

I request it, actually. So, you see, we've got a lot in common. Ever hear of the Hanoi Hilton?

EILEEN

(suddenly defensive)
You wanna get inside my head?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT Would you like to tell me about your service?

EILEEN

(gets up)

I'm expecting company.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

How about tomorrow morning after breakfast? Say, nine-thirty?

Eileen grabs the glue bottle and heads for the longhouse.

EILEEN

Whatever you say, doc.

She disappears inside.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - GROUNDS - DAY

Eileen rests her back against the trunk of a weeping willow, her knees pulled up to her chest. David and Corey sit on opposite sides of the tree. Each of them faces their own direction.

DAVID

Anybody recognize you yet?

EILEEN

Oh, I don't know. I don't think so.

DAVID

How're they treating you?

EILEEN

Can we talk about anything other than this place. That's all anyone does is yammer on about their problems.

DAVID

I ran into Constable Cobb yesterday.

EILEEN

Is he still taking bribes?

COREY

They took away your license for a year.

EILEEN

Well...isn't that the shits.

DAVID

It coulda been worse.

EILEEN

(to Corey)

I suppose you'll wanna baby-sit my Mustang.

COREY

No.

EILEEN

(insulted)

Why the hell not?

A beat.

COREY

Can I tell her, Dad?

EILEEN

Tell me what?

COREY

I'm enlisting at the end of summer. My processing test is July 6.

She doesn't respond.

COREY

Aren't you gonna say something?

EILEEN

I'm not sure I'll be home yet...

COREY

Sure you will.

EILEEN

What does your mother think?

DAVID

We haven't told her yet.

COREY

She won't care.

Eileen gets up and starts to walk away.

COREY

I thought you'd be happy for me.

Eileen turns and gives Corey a smile, but he can see right through it.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - SOLARIUM - DAY

Eileen's hair is pulled back, still wet from the shower. She wears a bathrobe and sits at the games table with coffee and a plate of toast.

Brent, the handsome young man from her sessions, approaches with his coffee. He pulls up a chair and sits across from Eileen. He smiles at her.

She gets up and leaves.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY

Doctor Albright behind his small desk in a swivel chair.

Eileen is across the room. She runs a finger along the spines of a full bookshelf, looks at a photograph of Albright from 1976 in his Marine uniform, standing next to California Governor Jerry Brown.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Why not make yourself comfortable.

Eileen crosses to the over-stuffed chair across from his desk and sits.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

How was your visit yesterday?

EILEEN

Fine.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Your boyfriend?

EILEEN

No. Grant and I are on a little break right now.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Anything you want to tell me about it?

EILEEN

What's to tell? He owns a bar and I was a real good customer.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(smiles)

I pissed you off yesterday.

EILEEN

I've never understood people who just...blurt out all their personal stuff seconds after you meet them.

It's who I am.

EILEEN

Uh-huh.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

And I hardly blurt it out.

Eileen raises a skeptical eyebrow.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

What did I say? You made a joke about keeping gays out of the military and I confided that the system isn't foolproof.

EILEEN

And then you implied that it made us similar.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Again, what did I say?

EILEEN

Something about what we have in common.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

And I asked "have you ever heard of the Hanoi Hilton?"

EILEEN

Of course I have.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

That's what we have in common. I was a P.O.W., too.

A moment.

EILEEN

Like I said, it was a long time ago.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT Let's talk about it anyway.

EILEEN

Fine.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(flips through notes)
So, I know there's a history of
military service in your family. I
know you were one of the first
female pilots in the 335th, one of
the first to command a Strike
Eagle...

(a beat)

What did you guys call them?

EILEEN

SCUD-busters.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT Was that your mission that day?

Eileen nods.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT Do you want to start there?

EILEEN

Should I lie down?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Would you like to?

She considers it briefly, but stays put.

EILEEN

Okay, well, you're right, I am one of the first women pilots to see combat. In my first week of missions I took out two silos. Guaranteed kills, not like all those shots you see on CNN.

(MORE)

EILEEN(CONT'D)

The day we were hit...it was January 19...we were four or five miles from target, trying to stay under radar range, but they saw us before we saw them...

CUT TO:

EXT. IRAQI DESERT - DAY

On the horizon, the SMOKING AND BURNING DEBRIS from Eileen's F-15E Strike Eagle.

EILEEN (V.O.)

...We took some flak and dumped out about six hundred yards from the Syrian border...

An IRAQI TANK ENTERS FRAME, plowing across the landscape.

EILEEN (V.O.)

...You know how hard it is to run through sand when you're tangled up in your chute?

The tank closes in on EILEEN as she trudges through the sand, in her fighter suit and helmet, the parachute drags behind her.

Eileen's copilot, JEFFREY YOUNG (23), same gear, same situation with the parachute, a hundred yards ahead of her.

As the tank nears, the copilot drops to his knees, exhausted, raises his arms in surrender.

But, Eileen keeps running, not giving up, screaming out in frustration before she finally falls to the ground.

EXT. IRAQI DESERT - DAY

A GM half-ton charges along a desert road.

THREE IRAQI SOLDIERS in the back guard Eileen and Jeffrey. They lie flat on the bed floor, blindfolded, hands and ankles bound with duct tape.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT (V.O.)

Were you with your copilot all this time?

EILEEN (V.O.)

Jeffrey Young, my Weapons System Officer. Yeah, they picked us out of the desert at the same time.

Every time they hit a bump in the road, their bodies bounce and the Iraqi soldiers laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY

Back to the session.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

When did you realize where they were taking you?

EILEEN

I never knew until I got out. We never saw a thing until we were in our cells. I'd hear about a P.O.W. site...the "Baghdad Biltmore"...and for a while, I thought that's where we were, but it wasn't.

(sighs)

Still, no view and shitty room service.

Eileen gets up and crosses to the window, looks out on the grounds.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Did they beat you?

EILEEN

(a weak laugh)

Oh, yeah.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Was there any other form of abuse?

Eileen turns to face him, gives him a look: "don't go there".

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - DAY

Eileen returns, lies down on the bed, stares at the ceiling. When her eyes close, we

CUT TO:

INT. F-15E STRIKE EAGLE - DAY

SUDDEN NOISE and WARNING LIGHTS and SMOKE creeping into the small cabin.

Eileen in the cockpit, a desperate attempt to regain control of the fighter jet.

We can't see her copilot, but we hear their conversation through communication equipment.

EILEEN

It's no use...we won't make it to the border...

JEFFREY

Ready for ejection drills...

EILEEN

Good luck, Lieutenant...

Then, a BURST OF RUSHING AIR as the top of the cockpit FLIES OFF and Eileen is SHOT in to the late afternoon sky.

EXT. SKY OVER DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Complete silence...

EILEEN'S P.O.V. of events on the ground.

TO THE WEST, the F-15E Strike Eagle SPIRALS earthward, EXPLODING in a brief FLASH OF ORANGE, swallowed by SMOKE as BLACK as can be.

Descending...

The Iraqi tank IN THE EAST, a WAKE OF DUST trailing behind.

Closer...

Lieutenant Young lands first, rolls, the parachute deflating like a soft balloon.

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - NIGHT

The SLAM OF A STEEL-BAR DOOR. Eileen alone in the 8x10 cement room, still blindfolded and bound at the hands.

She staggers about, SLAMS into a cot, CRASHES on to it and stays there.

THROUGH THE BARS we see her captors, an Iraqi Colonel, HOSSAM AL-JAMIL, mid-40's, thick neck and chest, menacing without saying a word. He holds a 9mm pistol.

Behind him, DUNYA ANSARI, 21, barely a man but given a gun and a uniform.

Al-Jamil holds his pistol to his lips: "silence". They watch and listen.

JEFFREY

Lieutenant Wilcott!

Eileen tries to prop herself up.

JEFFREY

Eileen!!

EILEEN

(stage whisper)

Jeffrey...be quiet!

INT. JEFFREY'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

The same as Eileen's: a bare cot, a tin pot for a toilet.

Jeffrey is on the floor, pressed up against the bars and the wall that divides their cells. He is still blindfolded and bound at the hands.

JEFFREY

I...I think my arm is broken...

EILEEN

It'll be alright, Jeffrey. Keep your mouth shut.

JEFFREY

Christ...it hurts...

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL/JEFFREY'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

Eileen struggles to her feet. She finds the dividing wall and edges along until she bumps the bars.

Al-Jamil and Dunya continue to watch in silence.

Eileen slides down on her haunches against the wall. She and Jeffrey are basically back to back.

ETLEEN

Lieutenant, you've got to be quiet. That's an order.

Al-Jamil crouches down. Eileen hears the soft CLICK of his knees but doesn't let on. He is only inches from her.

JEFFREY

(groans)

What are we gonna do?

EILEEN

We tell them the truth. That was the last mission. No more SCUD-busting.

JEFFREY

What?

EILEEN

That's it, Jeffrey. Tell them the truth...

Eileen turns her head so she is almost face to face with al-Jamil.

EILEEN

...Besides, I doubt they even speak English.

Al-Jamil slowly presses the pistol between the bars and into Eileen's chest.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

Nine millimeter automatic, aimed at the heart. Is my English good enough for you?

She doesn't flinch.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DECK - DAY

Eileen works on the model again, trying to focus.

Brent watches her from a few yards away.

Eileen's hand tremors recur as she works with a small piece of the model. Suddenly, she SWEEPS the model off the table and it SPLINTERS on the deck.

Brent approaches.

BRENT

It didn't explode.

EILEEN

(looks up)

What?

BRENT

Are you okay?

Eileen ignores him.

BRENT

I'm Brent, remember?

EILEEN

Yeah, I've seen you around.

BRENT

So?

EILEEN

So...

BRENT

So, how are you doing? You seem kind of upset.

EILEEN

Well, sometimes all the pieces don't fit where you think they should.

BRENT

Doctor Albright would have a field day with that one.

EILEEN

Do you have him, too?

BRENT

No, but I see you guys together. I think he's got a thing for you.

EILEEN

(laughs)

I don't think so.

BRENT

Word around here is otherwise.

EILEEN

Yes, but the problem is I'm an "inny" not an "outty".

(he doesn't get it)

Never mind. How am I doing, you ask? How am I doing? Well, let me think...

(after a moment)

I think I'm about as bored and horny as I've ever been. How about you?

Brent GULPS before he grins.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - HALLWAY - DAY

Eileen and Brent skulk through the corridor, GIGGLING and SHUSHING each other.

BRENT

If Maurice catches us, we're dead.

They arrive at Brent's door and take one last look before disappearing inside.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - BRENT'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brent closes the door and takes Eileen, wheels her around and they are kissing, groping each other as they stumble for the bed.

They flop down and Eileen GIGGLES again.

BRENT

We have to be quiet!

EILEEN

Sorry...sorry...

Their clothes are coming off: shirts, pants around her ankles, she can't get them over her shoes.

Brent is already naked. He fumbles with Eileen's bra.

EILEEN

Wait...wait...it's on the back...

She twists on to her stomach. Brent tries again.

BRENT

(giggling)

Shit...I could never figure out how you got these things on...

EILEEN

Let's see if you can figure out how to get it off!

BRENT

Shh...

EILEEN

Shh, yourself...

Brent abandons the clasp and pulls the bra up, yanks it over her shoulders, but it catches in her hair.

Eileen twists it, tries to pull it out, to no avail.

BRENT

Screw it...

He lays his weight on her back, kisses her neck, moving up to her ear, pins her on the bed, the jeans around her ankles, the bra twisted in her hair.

EILEEN

(starting to panic)

Stop...wait...

But, Brent doesn't let up.

Eileen loses it, BUCKS him on to the floor with a THUD.

He sits up, naked and LAUGHING.

BRENT

Whoa! Easy girl!

Eileen is up, straightens her bra, pulls on her jeans and grabs her shirt.

EILEEN

This wasn't a good idea.

She bolts for the door.

BRENT

What is it? Are you okay?

She is gone, leaves Brent on the floor wondering what just happened.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY

Deep into a session. Eileen looks exhausted, curled up in the big chair. Albright remains still behind his desk.

After a few moments of silence...

You wanna keep going?

EILEEN

I'm very tired.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You think you could sleep?

Eileen smiles because she knows the answer.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Who handled the interrogations? The English-speaking Colonel?

EILEEN

No. He translated for another one, a big fat fucker who insisted on knowing when the ground war was going to start.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT Which was never planned.

EILEEN

Just for Kuwait, but, you know, how would I know that? I tried to explain that not every soldier was briefed on the Pentagon's plans. But, they'd lie to us, tell us that Israel was nuked and the U.S. surrendered, totally contradict themselves. Al-Jamil would threaten us, tell us we'd be taken to Baghdad where the mothers of the murdered children will have their way with all captive Americans.

A beat.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Did anyone have their way with you?

Eileen turns her head toward Albright.

EILEEN

I need to get out of this place.

We're getting there, Eileen.

EILEEN

He didn't...well, I guess it was...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

What?

(a beat)

Did the guards rape you?

EILEEN

Fuck...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Please talk to me, okay?

A beat.

EILEEN

You see, one of the things I figured out was, if it's gonna happen, it's gonna happen. I believe in the inevitable.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'm not sure what that means.

EILEEN

If you don't fight it, it won't be as bad.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

And yet, it's still a violent act.

EILEEN

Yes it is.

CUT TO:

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Dunya stands in the hallway next to a gas lantern, deliberately watching Jeffrey's cell.

Al-Jamil SHOVES Eileen on to her cot. She is no longer blindfolded, but her wrists are bound again.

Through the walls of the compound, WE HEAR AIR RAID SIRENS.

Eileen does not struggle and shows no fear. Al-Jamil sits next to her, runs a finger along her neck and lower, squeezes her breast. Then, he simply gets up and leaves her.

INT. JEFFREY'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

THE AIR RAID SIRENS still in the distance...

Jeffrey lies on his left side, favoring his broken right arm. He hears EILEEN'S CELL DOOR CLOSE.

Al-Jamil appears at his door, motions for Dunya to open it. Dunya follows orders and steps aside.

Al-Jamil pulls out his pistol.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

Get up.

JEFFREY

My arm...

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

On your feet!

Jeffrey struggles to sit up, then stands.

Al-Jamil walks past, looks at Jeffrey's cot then crosses to the tin pot, looks inside.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

You piss in your bed?

JEFFREY

No...my...

Al-Jamil grabs Jeffrey from behind. Jeffrey groans in agony as al-Jamil shoves him against the bars, presses in to Jeffrey's back with his shoulder, holds him there.

Then, al-Jamil grips Jeffrey's broken arm and raises it over his head. Jeffrey SCREAMS and goes in to shock.

Stop!

Al-Jamil uses handcuffs to shackle Jeffrey's wrists to the bars.

EILEEN

Don't...please...don't hurt him!

We hear DUNYA YELLING IN ARABIC, telling Eileen to shut up and go to her cot.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

(leans in close)

So many good doctors in this country. What a shame...

JEFFREY

What...

AL-JAMIL YELLS IN ARABIC at Dunya, tells him to come back in twenty minutes.

Dunya passes Jeffrey's cell, glances toward them quickly, then disappears through another door.

EILEEN

Hey...hey! Come here, huh! Why don't you come on in here for awhile...

Al-Jamil pockets his pistol and removes a serrated knife from a belt sheath.

Jeffrey tries to turn his head to see, but al-Jamil shoulders him against the bars again.

JEFFREY

Come on...

Al-Jamil uses one leg to spread Jeffrey's apart.

JEFFREY

Please...

Al-Jamil grabs the back of Jeffrey's pants and begins to slice them open at the waist.

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

Eileen, at the bars, hears the RIP OF FABRIC.

EILEEN

Lieutenant Young...Lieutenant Young, I'm right here, buddy.

There are MUFFLED PROTESTS and the sound of STRUGGLE. Eileen grips the bars, helpless.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - LATER

Dunya is back, stands guard next to the gas lantern. He watches both cells and we see...

EILEEN AND JEFFREY, on the floor, back to back at the wall near the bars. Jeffrey in boxers and a tank top, his head hangs low and he nurses his arm, but the handcuffs are gone.

EILEEN

You know everything's going to be okay.

Jeffrey groans.

EILEEN

Are you listening to me, Lieutenant?

JEFFREY

You have to promise me...

ETLEEN

What?

JEFFREY

You have to promise, if we ever get out of here...you won't tell no one about this.

EILEEN

Shit, I'm just waiting for my turn.

A beat.

JEFFREY

What the hell are we doing here?

Eileen looks up at Dunya, who stares straight ahead.

JEFFREY

My dad was an infantryman in Korea, before I was even born. Did I tell you that before?

ETLEEN

Maybe.

JEFFREY

He used to tell me all these stories about getting down in the mud, staying up for days, looking the enemy in the eye before you shoot, scary shit like that.

EILEEN

It's sure not like that anymore, huh?

JEFFREY

They're just blips on the radar.

There is a CREAK from the door at the end of the hall. Eileen turns to see what is happening.

Jeffrey keeps his head down.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY

Albright and Eileen sit in silence for a moment. Then...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Have you met Lieutenant Young's parents?

Eileen shakes her head, no.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT
Do you think they know what

happened to him?

I don't think so. I hope not.

Another silence.

EILEEN

Can we stop now, please.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Sure.

But, she doesn't move.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'd bet they'd like to meet you, all things considered.

EILEEN

Right.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'd like to know more about the night of your escape. Maybe tomorrow, huh?

EILEEN

(gets up)

Sure. Whatever you say.

She leaves.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - SOLARIUM - DAY

Eileen on the telephone, away from the other patients watching television, etc.

EILEEN

Hey, big brother, it's me...Fine, good, how about you?

(a beat)

Yeah, well, she'll come around. You approve, she disapproves, like always.

(a beat)

(MORE)

EILEEN(CONT'D)

It was kind of a rough day, I'm gonna try and get some sleep...no, not really. So, is Corey home? Can I talk to him?

(a beat)

Oh, okay, well tell him I said hello. I'll give you a call back in a couple days...thanks, David. Goodnight... Love you, too.

She hangs up the phone.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DECK - DAY

Eileen sits with the others at a group session. Doctor Greenfield talks while the others listen. Eileen seems engaged, paying closer attention.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eileen finishes brushing her teeth and examines her tired face in the small mirror over the sink.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lying in bed, asleep, restless but not as bad as before.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY

Eileen enters the empty office for her next appointment. She looks around for Doctor Albright, crosses to her chair, notices her file on the desk, tries to look closer, but sees a bottle of pills and curiosity gets the best of her. She picks up the pills and reads the label:

LEWIS ALBRIGHT - ZIDOVUDINE 2 TABLETS DAILY - 8 HOURS APART

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

It's A.Z.T.

Eileen JUMPS, turns. Albright stands in the doorway.

I'm sorry, I...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

My mistake. If there's one place you don't want to leave pills lying around...

EILEEN

A.Z.T.?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

It's an anti-retroviral, helps fortify my immune system.

EILEEN

(clues in)

Oh, shit.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Tell me about it.

EILEEN

You're sick?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(shrugs)

I feel great right now. Headaches, sometimes. A little insomnia.

Albright rounds his desk, takes the pills from Eileen, puts them in a drawer and sits down.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Did you get some breakfast?

EILEEN

Don't tell anyone I said so, but the food here is pretty decent.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You're getting your appetite back.

Eileen raises an eyebrow, she hadn't considered it. She sits down.

You went in to some troubling areas yesterday and I want to thank you for your frankness. The more we learn, the better able we are to help you understand why drinking makes it harder to come to terms with your captivity.

EILEEN

See now, I've never said that I've had a hard time coming to terms with it.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You don't think it's related?

EILEEN

I'm broke and my boyfriend just kicked me out of our house, so I've got plenty of issues.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Why are you broke?

EILEEN

I was supposed to write a book. A very nice publisher gave me all sorts of money to tell my story, but...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

But what?

EILEEN

I'm not a very good writer.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'm sure they could find someone to help you.

EILEEN

Uh-huh.

What about the relationship?

EILEEN

What about it?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You think it has something to do with your drinking?

EILEEN

Sure.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

But, you gave me the impression that the relationship is struggling because of your drinking.

EILEEN

I did?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Sort a "chicken and egg" thing.

EILEEN

You can paint it into any corner you want, Doctor Albright. You're trained for that.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

For a reason.

EILEEN

What reason?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

To get to the root of your drinking problem, which I think is related to your captivity in the war.

A beat.

EILEEN

Wasn't that a fun game of checkers.

(smiles)

How are your cravings?

Eileen holds up her hands, fairly steady.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You're not drinking too much coffee, I hope?

EILEEN

One vice at a time, I figured. Actually, I'm learning to appreciate herbal tea.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(smiles)

It takes some getting used to.

Albright opens Eileen's folder and studies it while he talks.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'd like to talk about your rescue.

EILEEN

I'd like to talk about the guard.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Is there something else he did?

EILEEN

Not the Colonel, the guard who watched over us.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Did he do something?

EILEEN

Yes...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(looks up from Eileen's

file

You hadn't really mentioned him before.

I got to thinking about him last night, wondering if he lived through it all...

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON DUNYA as he stands guard.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT (V.O.)

Okay, then tell me about him.

(a beat)

Do you remember his name?

EILEEN (V.O.)

His name is Dunya. I think he saved my life.

ON EILEEN at the bars, sitting against the wall. A silence before she speaks.

EILEEN

You know Jeffrey, my father fought in Korea too. He didn't talk about it much, and I never really got around to asking him. I guess those are the things we regret, huh? The questions we didn't get to ask. Life's funny that way, with its little interruptions. I told you about the car accident, didn't I?

Then, Dunya crouches down beside Eileen. She looks him in the eye.

DUNYA

Your Lieutenant is asleep.

EILEEN

(surprised/angry)

You keep your mouth shut, listen to our conversations?

(MORE)

EILEEN(CONT'D)

Pretend you can't understand what we're saying...report it back to your Colonel...

DUNYA

The Colonel doesn't know I speak English.

EILEEN

Why are you telling me this?

DUNYA

Something has happened. The Colonel is very upset.

EILEEN

What?

DUNYA

I am not certain, but the Colonel believes you have lied to him.

EILEEN

Well, it can't get much worse than this.

DUNYA

Yes, it can.

Eileen leans her head back against the cement wall.

DUNYA

I see what he does to your Lieutenant. I don't like it.

EILEEN

Why do you care?

DUNYA

I care very much about what America is doing to my people.

EILEEN

It's your country's leadership
we're fighting.

DUNYA

(snorts)

Soon, our country will be in ruins and then you will leave, as America always does.

EILEEN

That won't happen.

DUNYA

We shall see.

A beat.

EILEEN

Why don't you tell them about your English?

DUNYA

English is a commodity. I have not spent my few years studying to become one of them.

EILEEN

Is there anything you can do about his arm...

The CREAKING of the hallway door and Dunya jumps up, back at his post.

We hear al-Jamil before we see him, speaking in Arabic, asking him to unlock Eileen's cell door.

Dunya YELLS at Eileen in Arabic, motions for her to return to her cot at once.

Eileen gets up off the floor and crosses to her cot, sits.

Dunya opens the door and al-Jamil appears, enters her cell. Dunya closes the door again. Al-Jamil instructs Dunya to leave until called upon. He exits and we hear the HALLWAY DOOR CLOSE.

Al-Jamil paces Eileen's cell. She watches from her cot.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

Get up.

Don't do this.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

Do as you are told.

Eileen stands, faces al-Jamil.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

At each interrogation, we have given you the opportunity to speak the truth, to make this a less unpleasant experience for all of us. But, you American women, you open your mouths and the truth evaporates like so much...

EILEEN

I have never lied to you, sir.

Al-Jamil SMACKS Eileen across the face. A single thread of blood runs from her lower lip down her chin.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

One hour ago, your fighter jets destroyed the only children's hospital in Tikrit, but Saddam's army has prevailed. And now, joining the martyred children are your pilots who have been blown from the sky. You are not long from joining them. Sit.

Al-Jamil unbuckles his belt. Eileen watches while she slowly begins to sit on the cot.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

Hands.

Eileen extends her hands. Al-Jamil wraps the belt around her wrists. When secure, he YANKS her down on to the cot.

EILEEN

What are...

Another JERK and she is on her back. He ties the belt to the metal at the end of the cot. Her arms are over her head.

Al-Jamil pushes Eileen's legs down and climbs on top of them, pins her. They look directly at each other, but she gives him nothing.

Al-Jamil starts to lean toward her face.

INT. JEFFREY'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUING

Jeffrey, on his cot, eyes wide open, listens to the low noises from Eileen's cell.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT (V.O.)

Is that the only time it happened?

EILEEN (V.O.)

The only time that night...

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - LATER

Eileen sits on her cot, her back against the wall, legs pulled up to her chest.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT (V.O.)

There was no way to protect yourself?

The CREAK of the hallway door and a moment later, Dunya returns, stands by his gas lantern on the floor and watches both cells.

EILEEN (V.O.)

Well, rape was the last of my concerns. When they found out I was lying about the missions, I thought I was dead.

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - LATER

Eileen, on the floor doing push-ups, sweat drips from the tip of her nose.

Dunya watches then turns his attention to Jeffrey's cell.

DUNYA

You...come here...come here, quickly.

Eileen keeps doing push-ups, but watches Dunya approach Jeffrey's cell door. After a moment...

DUNYA (O.S.)

Take them and stay quiet.

Eileen gets up and goes directly to the bars.

EILEEN

What are you doing?

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Thank you...

EILEEN

Tell me what's going on.

Dunya goes to the wall and stands there.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Painkillers...

DUNYA

(to Eileen)

It's all I can do.

EILEEN

Can I trust you?

DUNYA

That is something you will have to decide.

A beat.

EILEEN

Lieutenant Young?

JEFFREY (O.S.)

I'm alright.

Eileen starts to pace the cell.

(to Dunya)

Thank you.

She begins shadow-boxing with the wall.

DUNYA

You know there is no hope for us.

EILEEN

(doesn't stop shadow-

boxing)

The three of us?

DUNYA

Our people.

EILEEN

With new leadership, maybe...

DUNYA

There will be no new leadership. This will not go that far.

EILEEN

Saddam started this and we will finish it.

DUNYA

Do you even know who is holding you?

Eileen stops and returns to the bars.

DUNYA

You and your Lieutenant, you are collateral.

EILEEN

P.O.W...

DUNYA

Chess pieces. This is going very badly. Only the Republican Guard are surviving.

Who are you?

DUNYA

The Colonel wants to survive. He wants to be Republican Guard, but they won't have him. He thinks he can use you to make a deal.

EILEEN

What if they don't deal?

DUNYA

Then he will...what's a good American way of putting it...cut his losses.

Eileen starts to pace again, absorbing this.

EILEEN

I don't understand why you're telling me this.

DUNYA

The end is coming, we all know it. The day will come when I no longer stand here.

The nightly AIR RAID SIRENS can be heard in the compound. It ends their conversation.

Eileen crosses to the cot and sits. Dunya remains at his post, staring straight ahead.

There is a distant RUMBLING.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

You hear that!

EILEEN

Just stay quiet, Lieutenant.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

That's the closest one I've heard yet.

Eileen swallows hard and rests her head against the wall.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT (V.O.)

Was that the night you got away?

EILEEN (V.O.)

No, we were there another week or so. Look, that's all I got in me today.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT (V.O.)

Okay...

The AIR RAID SIRENS fade into the distance.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - GROUNDS - DAY

A handful of patients toss a football, a disorganized game of keep-away with Maurice, the Orderly.

Eileen crosses the grounds, watches them, smiling.

Maurice waves her over, to come join in the game. Arnie, the agent, tosses the football to her and she catches it.

Maurice runs toward her, grinning. Before he reaches her, she throws the football to Brent. Maurice turns and starts after Brent.

The game continues and so does Eileen, away from the group.

She reaches the tree where she visited with David and Corey earlier in her stay. She sits down and takes a letter from her pants pocket and starts to read.

Doctor Albright approaches. He squats in the grass a few feet from her.

EILEEN

Am I late?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Nope, just getting some fresh air.

EILEEN

You feeling okay?

(smiles)

I feel fine. How about you?

EILEEN

(indicates the letter)
Against his mother's wishes, my
young nephew has decided to enlist.
Wants to join the Air Force like
his favorite aunt.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT Are you worried about him?

EILEEN

What happened to me, you know, it's a billion to one that something like that could happen to him, but still...it sticks with you.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Sure.

EILEEN

He's a great kid. He'll be alright.

Eileen puts the letter back in her pocket.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Got any plans for the Fourth of July?

EILEEN

What do you mean?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I was thinking you might like to go home for the long weekend.

Eileen smiles.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - DAY

Eileen packs her bags. Maurice, the Orderly, appears in the doorway.

MAURICE

Your brother's here, Eileen.

EILEEN

Thanks, Maurice. Happy 4th.

MAURICE

Keep your nose clean.

EILEEN

(smiles and nods)

I will. Judges orders.

Maurice leaves. Eileen zips up her duffel bag.

Doctor Albright is next in the doorway.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Hey...

EILEEN

I really appreciate this, doc.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

(hands her a card)

Give me a call if you need to.

Eileen sits down on the bed.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Your brother's waiting.

EILEEN

You know, we were only there a month.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Yes...

EILEEN

Every night, the air raid sirens started up around eight o'clock. Dunya told us the time once in a while, kept us oriented...

...And, every night, it seemed the bombing was getting closer.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You wanna do this now?

EILEEN

The twenty-ninth night...it all went down...

CUT TO:

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Eileen, in the middle of the room, bruised around the eyes, a black scab running down her cheek. She is a caged animal, every nerve alive as she waits...

THE AIR RAID SIRENS in the distance. And then, a SHARP CRACKLING grows louder until a THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION shakes the walls, sends dust slowly from the ceiling.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Holy fuck! Holy fuck!

EILEEN

Quiet! Just...stay calm!

There is no guard, only the gas lantern on the hallway floor. Eileen goes to the bars.

EILEEN

They know we're here, Lieutenant! Nothing's gonna happen to us!

ANOTHER CRACKLING, the air filled with electricity before a CLOSER EXPLOSION that sends Eileen to the ground, flat on her ass.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

So close! My wall...there's cracks in my fucking wall!!!

Eileen scrambles to her feet. Dust begins to fill the room.

Could you just...

(coughs)

I need to think!

Suddenly, we can HEAR PANICKED VOICES from another room, MEN YELL IN ARABIC.

Eileen rushes to the bars and finds herself face to face with Dunya. His rifle is strapped across his back.

DUNYA

It is happening.

EILEEN

I know.

DUNYA

There is much confusion. I am leaving now. The Colonel is here and he is raging. That is all I can tell you.

EILEEN

Can you let us out!?

DUNYA

I am sorry...

EILEEN

You could unlock the door.

DUNYA

No! Do not ask.

EILEEN

You can get away...you'll be a hero! I'll do everything I can...

CRACKLING...EXPLOSION, not as intense, but too close for comfort.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Come on, man, let us outta here...

Enough!

(a beat)

Please...you can't leave us here like this. He will kill us!

JEFFREY (O.S.)

There's a hole in my wall. I can see...something...

DUNYA

(to Eileen)

Go back to your bed...

Eileen doesn't move.

DUNYA

...Go!

Eileen relents, goes back to her cot and sits down.

DUNYA

You must give me fifteen minutes.

Eileen leans forward to see him through the dust.

Dunya unlocks her cell door.

EILEEN

Thank you so much...

DUNYA

Stay where you are!

EILEEN

We won't forget this, Dunya.

Dunya stays at the bars and watches her for a moment.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

What about mine!!!

EILEEN

Shut up, Lieutenant! Jesus Christ!

DUNYA

Fifteen minutes...

Yes, qo!

Dunya walks away, then returns a few moments later.

He takes his 9mm pistol from its holster and sets it down just inside the bars of Eileen's cell, stands quickly and disappears.

EILEEN

Oh my God...

JEFFREY (O.S.)

What's going on!?

Eileen jumps off her cot and lunges for the pistol, checks the clip and tucks it in the back of her pants.

EILEEN

If you don't shut up, I'll break your other fucking arm! Do you hear me! Do not fuck this up! What can you see through the wall?

JEFFREY (O.S.)

I'm not sure. Just shapes...nothing moving, though.

Suddenly, the CRACKLING returns, loudest of all.

EILEEN

Get away from there...

JEFFREY (O.S.)

It's beautiful!

THE EXPLOSION HURLS EILEEN against the bars and back to the ground, momentarily stunned.

A high corner of the wall that separates their cells has given way and the cot is covered with debris. There is almost a square foot of space visible between cells and a glimpse of the outside world near the ceiling.

EILEEN

Lieutenant! Are you alright? Jeffrey, can you hear me? (MORE) EILEEN(CONT'D)

(on her knees, facing the
cot)

Lieutenant Young, answer me!

Then, a GUNSHOT and a piece of her wall BURSTS in a spray of powdered cement.

Eileen is on her feet, spins around.

Colonel al-Jamil is at the bars.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

(grins)

I missed.

Al-Jamil slips his pistol into its holster and bumps the bars just enough that they open slightly.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

What is this?

They are his final words.

Eileen whips Dunya's pistol from the back of her pants and FIRES.

The bullet slices through the Iraqi Colonel's heart. He drops to his knees, already dead when he falls face first in to the cell door, pushing it open.

Eileen steps on his neck while she snatches up his pistol. She exits...

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...and stares through the bars of Jeffrey's cell, through the smoking black hole in the wall where his cot was.

EILEEN

Lieutenant...

The wall has collapsed inward. Eileen pushes his cell door open and starts to shake. Jeffrey's broken and motionless body is covered with rubble.

She drops to her knees beside him, clears what she can.

...Jeffrey...shit...

There is GROWING NOISE from the HALLWAY, VOICES, COMMOTION.

EILEEN

...shit! Lieutenant, oh, shit...

(gets up)

...there's nothing...goddamn it...

Eileen takes one last look behind her, listens for the VOICES.

She turns back toward the ruined wall and climbs over the wreckage, steadies herself against a mangled length of rebar, then jumps to freedom.

Eileen disappears in to the darkness of the world. We follow through the hole in the wall, but looking skyward at the TRACER FIRE THAT ILLUMINATES THE BAGHDAD SKY.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARSTOW FAIRGROUNDS - NIGHT

The 4th of July FIREWORKS BURST and EXPLODE over the small city, a celebration of light.

Hundreds gather at picnic tables, dance to country music near a bandstand, mill about visiting friends and neighbors.

Eileen sits with David and Corey at one of the picnic tables, eating hot dogs, drinking soda.

EILEEN

Hot dogs and soda pop, is there anything more American?

DAVID

We could get little flags painted on our cheeks.

COREY

I want one of those foam Statue of Liberty hat-things.

Well, then, you'll have one. It can be my graduation present.

COREY

Gee, thanks.

Eileen fills her mouth with hot dog and chomps away.

DAVID

(to Corey)

Are you getting nervous?

COREY

(shrugs)

Were you nervous, Eileen?

EILEEN

There isn't much time. The first night you go through a few basic tests, then they'll put you up in a hotel. If you wanna have a shower, do it the night before 'cause you'll be up by four in the morning. Then, you do even more tests, give a urine sample, a blood sample, wait a while, hang out in your underwear with a bunch of other guys, do your oath and then you're in. Eventually.

COREY

Eventually?

EILEEN

You become a "shipper", and that just means you gotta wait until your shipping orders come through.

DAVID

That took a couple months for you, didn't it?

EILEEN

Six weeks.

DAVID

(to Corey)

Good, you'll have the summer off to finish the roof on the garage.

Corey groans.

EILEEN

Come on...

(gets up)

...dance with your old auntie.

She grabs Corey's arm and leads him from the table, toward the other dancers.

Corey turns toward David and mouths the words "help me"!

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eileen washes her face, looks in the mirror.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BEDROOM - LATER

Eileen lies in bed, staring at the ceiling, waiting for sleep.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

David, in the driveway, works on a truck engine.

Eileen and Corey are on the roof of the garage. They pull up old shingles and hurl them in to the yard.

The cordless phone sitting on the truck cab RINGS. David picks up.

DAVID

Hello?

(a beat)

No, it's David. I'm good, thanks.

You wanna talk to Eileen?

(a beat)

Okay, just a sec.

David crosses to the side of the garage.

DAVID

Eileen! Catch!

David pitches the phone up to Eileen. She catches it with one hand.

EILEEN

Hello?

(a beat)

Hey, doc, how are you?

(a beat)

Yeah...yeah, I was gonna call this

afternoon...

Eileen gets up and walks to the far end of the garage and turns her back to Corey.

EILEEN

...Not too bad...

David watches for a moment before going back to the truck. Corey peels shingles but keeps an eye on his aunt.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Eileen pecks along the soup can aisle. Her cart is half full.

GRANT HUNTER rounds the corner. He is in his mid 30's now, with longer hair, tied in a small ponytail. They are cart to cart.

EILEEN

Hey...

GRANT

Hey, yourself. I didn't know you were home.

EILEEN

Yeah, well, I was gonna give you a call, but...

GRANT

How are you doing, Eileen?

Do you care?

GRANT

Of course I care. Shit...

EILEEN

Yeah, shit.

(suddenly cheery)

How are things at the "Armadillo"?

GRANT

Same old crowd. The regulars ask about you.

EILEEN

I suppose everyone knows.

GRANT

Kind of a small town.

A beat.

EILEEN

Well, I should get going. Gotta feed my boys.

GRANT

You're sure you're doing alright?

EILEEN

I'm getting better, okay?

Eileen starts to move past Grant. He stops her for a quick hug, a bit awkward.

GRANT

It's real good to see you.

EILEEN

It's good to be home.

She gives him a smile before moving on. Grant watches her as she reaches the end of the aisle. She turns and sees him watching.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Eileen returns with the groceries, sets them on the counter. Corey enters from a hallway, drying his hands on a towel.

They spend their time in silence, put away the groceries.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

David, Eileen and Corey eat dinner.

DAVID

The weekend goes fast, huh?

EILEEN

(nods)

What time should we go in the morning?

DAVID

I guess we should be on the road by ten.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eileen at her dresser. She looks at a framed photo of her and Norman Schwarzkopf, after her escape. The ribbon of her Purple Heart medallion is draped over a corner of the frame.

She touches the medallion, gently rubs a finger over it then takes it off the frame, opens a jewelry box and puts it inside, closes the lid.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eileen is asleep, a bad dream plagues her. She tosses about in the dark.

EILEEN

...you gotta...you gotta shut up... keep your head down, huh...

The bedroom door opens. Corey enters cautiously.

COREY

(not too loud)

Eileen...Eileen, wake up...

EILEEN

(still dreaming)

...don't do that...

COREY

(reaches down)

...come on, you're having...

EILEEN

(yells)

...get out of the way!

As Corey touches her shoulder, Eileen SPRINGS upright, grabbing her nephew by the neck.

They CRASH to the floor together, she is on top of him and Corey fights back, pulling on her wrists for air.

COREY

(grunts)

...Eileen...stop...

Corey pushes her off and she bangs in to the dresser, knocks down the Schwarzkopf picture and toiletries.

Eileen wakes up, sees Corey holding his neck, near tears.

EILEEN

What's...fuck. Corey, I...

Corey climbs to his feet.

COREY

(starts to cry)

Why don't you get better!?

Eileen realizes what she's done and reaches out to Corey but he runs out of the room.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eileen, in her T-shirt and underwear, paces back and forth, barely holding on. She rummages through the medicine cabinet but finds no comfort.

EXT. BARSTOW MAIN STREET - LATER

Eileen wanders past Cy's Smoke Shop and Medley's Funeral Parlor.

We hear COUNTRY MUSIC before we actually see the bar...

EXT. ARMADILLO PUB & GRILL - CONTINUOUS

Eileen stands before her old watering hole with its neon Budweiser sign glowing in the glass door. After a moment of deliberation, she enters...

INT. ARMADILLO PUB & GRILL - CONTINUOUS

Eileen enters, heads for the bar, past terry-cloth covered tables, mismatched chairs and patrons; a real beer-and-a-shot joint. Others stand near a jukebox and pool table.

Resident barfly, OLD BILL, is the only one on a stool, under the rubber armadillo in Ray-Bans hanging from the suspended glass rack.

To this point, she has not been spotted. She pulls up a stool next to Old Bill, nursing his scotch and chain smoking.

EILEEN

Hey there, Old Bill...

OLD BILL

(focuses)

Hey yourself, top gun!

EILEEN

Aw, jeez, you know I hate that.

OLD BILL

(pounds his chest)

I'm allowed. I'm Old Bill and I'm gonna buy you a drink.

EILEEN

Sorry, William, I am on the wagon.

OLD BILL

Well then, you can buy me a drink.

EILEEN

(smiles)

You got it.

Grant enters from the kitchen, sees Eileen, crosses to her, the bar between them.

EILEEN

Hey, Grant.

GRANT

They let you out to play, huh?

EILEEN

Yeah, you got a minute?

GRANT

(to Old Bill)

You wanna watch the bar for a bit?

OLD BILL

It's your funeral.

GRANT

(leads Eileen to a table)

Can I get you something?

EILEEN

The dregs of the oldest pot of coffee you've got sittin' around.

INT. ARMADILLO PUB & GRILL - LATER

Eileen and Grant at a small table. They share a cigarette. Grant drinks a can of cola. Eileen drinks coffee.

GRANT

You gotta remember, Eileen, Corey has always seen you as a role model. It's not just the military stuff and it's not just what you went through. You're smart and funny as hell, educated. I think he's a young guy who sees how you made it out of here and realizes it's possible.

EILEEN

I'm home from a fucking rehab clinic for the weekend. Some role model.

There is a sudden CHEER from across the bar. Eileen and Grant turn to see...

TWO REDNECKS at the pool table, rough housing after a shot.

BACK TO Eileen and Grant.

GRANT

Give Corey some time.

EILEEN

Like you?

GRANT

(smiles)

You want some more coffee?

The rednecks YELL at each other, a mock argument over a pool shot.

EILEEN

Who are those guys?

GRANT

I don't know.

EILEEN

You gonna cut them off?

GRANT

I might have to.

A MAN stands at the bar, wants to order.

Grant gets up.

GRANT

I'll be back.

Eileen waits, looks in her coffee cup and grimaces. She turns and looks at the pool players.

One of them, JOE, catches her eye and gives her a wink. Eileen raises an eyebrow and he takes it as an invitation to come over.

JOE

My buddy tells me you're a war hero.

EILEEN

Your buddy watches too much TV.

JOE

(extends his hand)

I'm Joe.

EILEEN

(shakes it, reluctant)

How're you doing, Joe?

Joe sits in Grant's chair.

JOE

Well, I'll tell ya, I'd be a lot better if you let me buy you a drink.

EILEEN

Thanks, but I don't drink.

JOE

Imagine a pretty thing like you in a fighter jet. Times sure have changed, huh? EILEEN

Imagine that.

JOE

They shot you down, right?

EILEEN

We all get shot down once in a while, Joe.

Joe laughs, gets the joke. He reaches across the table and strokes the back of her hand. Eileen slaps it away.

EILEEN

No touching, got it?

Joe raises his hands, leans back.

JOE

I just can't picture a woman dukin' it out with those fuckers.

EILEEN

Look, maybe you should go back to your game.

JOE

Come on, my buddy and I got a room down at the Motel 6. We could have a private party. You can tell me all about Norman Schwarzkopf.

Eileen looks to the bar. Grant, with the customer, but watching her, too.

JOE

It must get lonely way out there in the middle of all that desert. Cold at night...

Eileen turns back, faces Joe.

EILEEN

It wasn't so bad.

JOE

No?

EILEEN

Sure, there were times when you'd get kind of...lonely, but there were always ways of...satisfying yourself.

JOE

Oh, really? Now, how'd you do that?

EILEEN

(like a shy girl)

I...used my...finger.

Joe lets out a horny chuckle and looks around the room. Then, he leans forward again, takes Eileen's hand. She plays along.

JOE

Yeah? Which one of these pretty fingers did you use?

Eileen pulls down all her fingers but the middle one.

EILEEN

This one, you goddamn pig.

She yanks her hand away from him and gets up.

JOE

Fuckin' dyke...

EILEEN

(turns)

What did you say?

Joe gets up.

AT THE BAR, Grant and Old Bill watch.

OLD BILL

Oh, shit.

Grant starts back to Eileen.

JOE

I said all you wanna-be military bitches are a bunch of pussy-lickin', stuck-up cunts.

Eileen LAUGHS loud.

GRANT

(at Eileen's side)

I think you owe my girlfriend a very large apology.

JOE

I think you can suck my very large dick.

Grant THROWS THE FIRST PUNCH, but Joe doesn't take much of it.

Joe grabs Grant by the shirt and SHOVES him back, over a chair.

Joe turns and is face to face with Eileen. She grabs him and before he can open his mouth, is on the ground, chewing carpet. Eileen's elbow is planted firmly in his spine, her other elbow looped under his shoulder, ready to snap his arm.

She leans in close to Joe's ear.

EILEEN

I don't want your apology, you stupid piece of shit.

JOE

(sputters)

Fuck you...

Eileen applies more pressure on his shoulder.

JOE

You're gonna break my fuckin' arm!

Finally, Eileen lets him up and they stand face to face.

JOE

Those ragheads should killed you when they had the chance.

EILEEN

Get the fuck outta here.

Joe eventually turns and walks toward the door, kicks it open and disappears in to the night.

Eileen watches his pool buddy lay down his cue on the table and leave.

Grant approaches Eileen and takes her arm, but she pulls away. She crosses to the bar and sits beside Old Bill.

Old Bill has a half shot of scotch in front of him.

EILEEN

Can I bum a smoke, Old Bill?

OLD BILL

Help yourself...

Instead, Eileen reaches across and takes his scotch. She downs it in one shot.

GRANT

(back behind the bar)

Eileen...

EILEEN

Two more of these, Grant.

GRANT

I'm not serving you...

Eileen SLAMS her hand on the bar.

EILEEN

Now!!!

Grant watches her for a moment, then turns and takes a bottle of J&B off the shelf behind him, grabs a shot glass, sets it in front of Eileen.

He tips the bottle, but stops before it pours, sets the bottle down and hurls the shot glass against a wall. It SMASHES and Grant storms through the kitchen door.

Eileen takes the bottle, tops up Old Bill's glass and raises the bottle to him.

EILEEN

Cheers!

She takes a deep swig of the scotch and sets the bottle down.

EILEEN

(mutters)

Shit...

Old Bill watches her cautiously before he takes a sip of his scotch.

EXT. BARSTOW MAIN STREET - LATER

Eileen staggers down the middle of the empty street. She SINGS something incomprehensible, laughing to herself from time to time.

A Camaro approaches, slows down near her. It's Grant. He rolls down the passenger window.

GRANT

Eileen...Eileen, get in.

Eileen stumbles to the open window and leans in.

EILEEN

Look who it is! It's my...what are you, anyway?

She laughs.

GRANT

Eileen, please get in the car. Come on, now.

EILEEN

Sorry, buddy, I already told you, I'm not coming back to your sordid little love nest...

GRANT

I'm taking you home before the cops have to.

Eileen pushes off the car and starts to laugh and run down the street.

EILEEN

You'll never take me alive!

She makes it less than twenty yards, falls and rolls.

Grant is out of his car, runs toward her, picks her up off the ground.

GRANT

Come on...

EILEEN

Grant...Grant...

GRANT

Yes, Eileen?

EILEEN

Grant...

GRANT

What is it?

EILEEN

Take me home, will ya?

Grant opens the passenger door and dumps her in to the Camaro.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

The taps are running in the sink. Eileen bangs the cabinet mirror with her forehead, dangerously close to breaking it.

She turns off the sink and rests her palms against the cool porcelain.

EILEEN

(in the mirror)

It is your fault. Your fault.

(points at her reflection)

You know it. I know it.

She turns away and leaves the bathroom.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eileen lurches through her room.

EILEEN

(louder)

I admit it, okay! You wanna talk about it?! Ask me how I'm feeling?

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Eileen bumps against the wall as she moves, pictures fall to the carpet.

EILEEN

(shouting)

How am I feeling!? You wanna know how have things been since you got home!?

David enters the hallway, behind Eileen.

DAVID

Eileen...shh...Jesus Christ.

Eileen spins around.

EILEEN

You shouldn't sneak up! You know what happens to people who sneak up!?

DAVID

You're drunk!

Eileen pretends to shoot David with her finger.

EILEEN

Bang, bang!

DAVID

Eileen...come on. You're gonna wake up Corey.

EILEEN

(whimpers)

Bang, bang...

Eileen SMASHES her fist against the wall, cracks it.

DAVID

Shit...

Corey enters the hallway and stands behind his father.

EILEEN

(to David)

Look out behind you, Colonel! (drops to her knees)

Look out behind you...

David approaches her slowly.

DAVID

Let's go to bed, sis.

Corey goes back to his room, SLAMS his door. David stays with Eileen, tries to help her up.

EILEEN

I'm sick, David. I'm still so sick...

DAVID

It's okay to be sick. There's nothing to be ashamed of.

Eileen is dead weight in his arms.

EILEEN

So much, David, so much to be ashamed of.

DAVID

How can I help you? What can I do to help you, Eileen?

EILEEN

In the morning...we'll go in the morning.

DAVID

Yes, Eileen. Everything's gonna be alright.

He gets Eileen up and moving, down the hall, near her door. David opens it and they go inside.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The next morning. David and Corey at the table, eating cereal. David leafs mindlessly through the morning paper. Corey just stares into his bowl.

Eileen enters from the hallway. David looks at her first. She steadies herself against the back of an empty chair.

EILEEN

Corey...

He looks up and Eileen sees the purple bruises around his neck from her own hands.

EILEEN

...oh, shit...

Corey pushes back and gets up to leave.

EILEEN

Corey, wait. I'm so sorry. Please wait...

She's too late, he's gone.

INT. DAVID'S TRUCK - DAY

David drives, Eileen stares out the window, hiding behind her sunglasses.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DAY

David's truck pulls up to the gates, drives through.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DOCTOR ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY

A familiar scene: Doctor Albright behind his desk, Eileen in the big chair, curled up, the initial silence.

Eileen pulls a pack of Marlboro's out of her shirt pocket, draws a cigarette into her mouth and fumbles for matches in the same pocket.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You know you can't smoke in here.

EILEEN

Oh.

Doctor Albright gets up, crosses to the window and opens it. He goes back to the desk, opens a low drawer, and retrieves a big glass ashtray. He sets it on the arm rest of her chair.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

For special occasions.

EILEEN

Thanks.

She finds a pack of matches and lights her cigarette, takes a deep drag and exhales.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'd kill for one of those.

EILEEN

Help yourself.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I can't. As much as I want to, I can't.

EILEEN

What's life without the things that are bad for us?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

We should use that in our advertising.

EILEEN

(laughs)

What'd you used to smoke?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Camels. Two packs a day. Strong stuff.

EILEEN

No shit.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

What were you drinking last night?

EILEEN

(darkens)

J & B rare.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Straight up?

EILEEN

Is there any other way?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You seemed to be doing so good, Eileen. What set you off?

A beat.

EILEEN

I just can't seem to shake them.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Shake what? Memories?

EILEEN

No...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Is it why you can't sleep at night?

EILEEN

I think so.

You have dreams you can't shake.

EILEEN

At least when I'm drunk, they don't seem to be so bad.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

And when you're sober, you don't want to fall asleep.

EILEEN

It's gotta give sometime...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Dreams are good. As bizarre and nonlinear as they are, they're the subconscious' way of parceling our waking lives. What can you tell me about them?

EILEEN

That's the thing...it doesn't make any sense. They don't feel like dreams.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

What do they feel like?

Eileen stubs out her cigarette and exhales.

EILEEN

Like...someone's telling me something...telling me stories in my sleep...stories without a beginning and an end.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

A dream can be nothing but the middle. Give me an example of what you're hearing.

EILEEN

I only remember patches, someone telling me it's my fault what happened to us.

So, these dreams are specifically about your captivity.

EILEEN

Oh, I'm sure of it. It's his voice I hear, the Colonel's, telling me it's my fault.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Straight from the hip question, Eileen, okay?

She nods.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Before this, had you ever killed anyone in action?

EILEEN

No...wait, yes, of course. Of course, I did. We bombed dozens of targets.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You told me you made two guaranteed kills during your first week of missions. What kind of impact does that have on you?

EILEEN

I suppose you think about it. I mean, how could you not? But, they're just...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Blips on the radar?

EILEEN

Is that what I said?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Uh-huh.

Eileen reflects for several moments.

EILEEN

I've never shot anyone before. At close range.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Sure.

EILEEN

Do you think that's it?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I think that's part of it. What about Lieutenant Young?

EILEEN

Jeffrey...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You were able to save yourself.

EILEEN

Yes.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

But, there was nothing you could do for him. You *know* that.

EILEEN

He was in...I mean, it was...raining Tomahawks.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

He was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

EILEEN

Yes. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

It's called "survivor's remorse",
Eileen.

EILEEN

I need to get some air.

She gets up and leaves.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DECK - DAY

The next morning, Eileen sits at a table with a cup of coffee, a note pad and a pen. She considers the next sentence.

CLOSE ON NOTE PAD

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Young, This is a letter I've been meaning to write for quite some time, but I've worried about adding to your grief since Jeffrey's passing.

BACK TO EILEEN as she crumples the page, tosses it toward the lawn and sits back in frustration.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - FOYER - DAY

A small desk near the front door, a reception area, manned by a NURSE'S AID, exchanging files with Maurice, the Orderly.

The door opens and David enters. The Nurse's Aid recognizes him immediately.

NURSE'S AID

Good morning, Mr. Wilcott. Nice to see you.

DAVID

Good morning.

NURSE'S AID

I'll find Eileen for you...

DAVID

Actually, I was hoping to talk to Doctor Albright. Is he in?

NURSE'S AID

(to Maurice)

Is he with anyone?

MAURICE

I'll check.

Maurice leaves.

NURSE'S AID

Eileen's just out on the deck, if you'd like to see her after.

DAVID

Yes, thank you, I will.

(a beat)

How's she doing today?

NURSE'S AID

I think she's doing okay. Keeping to herself lately, sorting things out.

DAVID

Good.

Maurice returns with Doctor Albright.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Good morning, David.

DAVID

Hi, Doctor Albright.

(they shake hands)

Is there somewhere we could talk?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Sure...

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DOCTOR ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY

Doctor Albright lets David through the door and closes it behind him.

Before he sits...

DAVID

There's something going on...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Have a seat, David.

DAVID

(sits)

The police came by last night to talk to Eileen.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

She told me about the fight in the bar.

DAVID

No...no, these were military police. They want to talk to her, but I told them she was in the hospital and unavailable.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT What do you think they wanted?

DAVID

I don't know if she knows...the Iraqi government returned a bunch of remains.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Lieutenant Young?

DAVID

They did an autopsy. They were asking me if Eileen ever said anything about the night she escaped, about how this guy died.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

What has she told you?

DAVID

There was a bombing raid and their compound was hit and the wall collapsed in on him.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Right.

DAVID

So?

It's the military, David, they have to investigate "friendly fire" incidents.

DAVID

Sure.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT
Do they still want to talk to her?

DAVID

(nods)

I told them they'd have to call you.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT
Okay, well that's all right. It's
nothing to worry about, I'm sure.
I'm gonna give it a few days,
though, before I tell her.

DAVID

So, is she doing okay?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT
She's dealing with a lot of guilt about not saving him, I think.

DAVID

She said that.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

She did?

DAVID

The other night, when she came home all...upset. She was saying "it's all your fault", over and over again, but I think she was talking to herself.

Okay, well, that's good to know. Look, David, I'd appreciate it if you didn't mention the investigators just yet.

DAVID

All right.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Is there anything else?

DAVID

I don't think so.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'll take you to her.

Doctor Albright gets up first.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - GROUNDS - DAY

David and Eileen walk toward the longhouse, finishing their visit.

They stop near the deck steps.

DAVID

He'll get over it, Eileen. He's just not used to seeing you like that.

EILEEN

I don't know if he'll ever forgive me for it...

DAVID

He's a kid. It just didn't make sense to him.

EILEEN

Tell him again, will you? Tell him I'm sorry.

DAVID

Look, I should get going. The boss is gonna kill me if I take much more time off.

EILEEN

I'm real sorry about it all.

DAVID

Shut up, huh?

David smiles and hugs Eileen. She hangs on longer than normal.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DOCTOR ALBRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY Doctor Albright, on the telephone.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

No, I can't go in to any details about her treatment, but if you could give me some more information about your investigation, it might be able to help me in her analysis.

(a beat)

Right. Yes, she has told me about the night Lieutenant Young died. I have a fairly good understanding of the details.

(a beat)

Oh . . .

Albright sits forward, intrigued by something we don't hear.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - SOLARIUM - DAY

Eileen watches television. Clarice the housewife is on the other end of the sofa, otherwise they are alone.

EILEEN

So, this is a soap opera, huh?

CLARICE

Yes.

EILEEN

And, we think we have problems.

Doctor Albright enters. Eileen looks up, notices him.

EILEEN

Hey...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You got a minute?

EILEEN

Sure.

EXT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - DECK - DAY

Eileen and Doctor Albright stand away from others.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Your brother and I had a quick talk yesterday.

EILEEN

He said.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Remember when you told me you don't think you have blackouts?

EILEEN

Yeah.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Well, I'm inclined to agree, but do you have much memory of the things you say when you've been drinking?

EILEEN

I...I never really thought about it before.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'm going to suggest something and I'd like you to keep an open mind.

Eileen looks at him with some curiosity.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - EILEEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Eileen under the sheets of her bed, propped up on extra pillows.

Doctor Albright and Maurice sit on either side of the bed.

ETLEEN

You know, I was trained to resist things like this.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I do know, but let's give it a try anyway.

ETLEEN

Okay...

Doctor Albright takes a gold chain from his jacket pocket. There is a small amulet on the end, a symbol of strength.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

All right, then, here we go... (holds up chain)

From here on in, I'd rather you didn't speak unless I ask you to. It's okay to nod or shake your head, but stay focused for me and we'll do this right. Okay?

Eileen nods.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

What I'd like you to do, Eileen, is focus on the amulet, just like you've seen done in the movies and television. Excellent, very good. I'd like you to take deep breaths through your nose...fill your lungs and abdomen...

(she breathes deeply)

...and then release the air, again through your nose...

(a steady exhale)

...and in again...and release.

(MORE)

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT (CONT'D)

Don't force the air, let it seep out of you until cleansed.

(a beat)

(a bea

Good.

The amulet is making slow circles that Eileen follows with her eyes.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

The next time you exhale, release all of the tensions of your day...

(she exhales)

...bringing in the clean air, in to every part of your body, down the length of your arms, in to the tips of your fingers as the muscles slowly reee-leease. And, exhale...

(a beat)

...letting any tightness in your legs reee-leease, the ends of your toes relaxing, the muscles in your face, softening, the air coming in to your body past the neck, an open passageway to your heart. The air massages your liver and fills your abdomen and out again...

(another exhale)

...And now I'd like you to keep watching the amulet, Eileen, breathing in, deeeeeply. When you're ready, I'd like you to keep watching, but now with your eyes closed and still breathing. Exhaaaale...

(a beat)

... Iiiiinhale...

(a beat)

...Exhaaaale...

The amulet continues to turn and Eileen closes her eyes, breathing deeply, inhale and exhale.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

...still turning in circles as you breeeathe...in...and out...

A long silence as he rotates the amulet.

...and nod for me as you can see the amulet sloooowly turning...

(Eileen nods)

...goooood. Nice deep breaths...

Eileen's breathing comes from a deeper place now. She is moving in to another state of consciousness.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Doctor Albright and Maurice, outside Eileen's room. They speak quietly.

MAURICE

I'll come back and check on her in a few hours.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I'd like her to sleep through the night.

MAURICE

That poor girl, she's kept a lot of shit to herself.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I don't think she remembers what really happened.

MAURICE

You'll have to tell her. I hope she doesn't get herself in too much trouble.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

It's hard to say. Look, Maurice, I've got to get in to town, I've got a therapy session, but I'll come back out early. Keep an eye on her for me.

Maurice nods, gives Doctor Albright's shoulder a squeeze before he heads off. Doctor Albright remains, staring at Eileen's closed door.

INT. HOPE RECOVERY RANCH - KITCHEN - DAY

The next morning. Eileen and Clarice prepare breakfast in silence.

Doctor Albright enters a few moments later.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Good morning, ladies.

CLARICE

Would you like some eggs, Doctor Albright?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

No thanks, Clarice. Eileen?

EILEEN

(curious)

So?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You wanna go for a drive after breakfast?

Eileen holds Doctor Albright's gaze, trying to read him.

EXT. JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK - ROAD - DAY

Doctor Albright's Jeep heads north, the soft top down. Eileen is in the passenger seat.

EXT. JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK - LATER

Eileen and Doctor Albright walk through a field of stones and boulders and scrub, the Santa Rosa mountains in the distance.

EILEEN

Are you gonna tell me about last night?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Let's find a place to sit.

Eileen sits on a rock big enough for both of them. Doctor Albright sits next to her, faces her directly.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I don't tell many people about this, but...I spent years coming to terms with the anger I felt toward my commanding officer. See, he surrendered our battalion without a fight and we got shipped up the Mekong Delta to this little fisherman's hut, eight of us all together in a hole under the floor, up to our ankles in mud and rats and...well, you can imagine.

(a beat)

Anyway, I don't know if it was a deliberate contest or what, but each day, the guards would take two of us out at a time but only one would come back. They were taking us out on this dock, putting us in a bamboo cage and lowering it in to the water with about this much space to breathe.

Doctor Albright indicates with his hands, about three square inches.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

And, that wasn't enough room for two of us. So...and this is what they wanted...we had to fight each other under water to get to that space. On the fourth day, only me and the commanding officer were left to go in. Walking to the cage, he told me that he thought surrendering would save us all. He took a gamble and he lost. And, then they put us inside the cage.

EILEEN

He didn't fight you...

No. He fought. But, I was pissed at him for not giving us the chance to fight them. So, I took that anger and when I got the advantage, I wrapped my legs around his neck and held him under until he stopped moving.

EILEEN

Jesus...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

The thing is, he was probably right. He probably made the right decision. And, that's something I've had to live with. It was something I thought about every single one of the two hundred and twenty four days I spent in the Hanoi Hilton.

EILEEN

What did I say last night?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

We do what we have to do to survive.

EILEEN

What did I say!?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Eileen, there's an investigation happening. Lieutenant Young's remains were returned last week. They did an autopsy and your brother told me two military police came by his house, wanting to talk to you about the night he died.

EILEEN

(growing more upset)
I don't understand.

Your dreams are good, Eileen. You said it yourself, it's not your fault.

Eileen gets up, turns and faces Doctor Albright.

EILEEN

(screams)

Tell me what is going on!!!

Doctor Albright stands, takes Eileen by the shoulders.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

The guard...Dunya...he unlocked Lieutenant Young's cell, too. Remember?

EILEEN

No, he left. He...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

You said it yourself. Dunya unlocked our cells, that must be how he got out. Do you remember?

EILEEN

Oh my God...oh my God...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

It's okay, Eileen. It's going to be okay. I spoke to the investigators, they understand you're getting help, dealing with it. So, let's talk about it.

EILEEN

(closes her eyes)

No. I don't remember...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Sure you do. It'll come back. Let it come back...

EILEEN

(eyes closed)

No...two years ago, too long...

Tell me what happened.

EILEEN

(eyes closed)

I can't...

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Tell me about the night of your escape. Tell me about the night Lieutenant Young was shot...

CLOSE ON EILEEN as her eyes open fast and we

CUT TO:

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - NIGHT

The twenty-ninth night...

ON EILEEN'S EMPTY COT. The SHARP CRACKLING and THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION that follows shakes the walls, sends dust slowly from the ceiling.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Holy fuck! Holy fuck!

EILEEN paces the cell, her eyes black, the scab on her cheek all present.

EILEEN

Quiet! Just...stay calm!

Eileen looks through the bars at the empty corridor, only the gas lantern on the floor.

EILEEN

They know we're here, Lieutenant! Nothing's gonna happen to us!

ANOTHER CRACKLING, the air filled with electricity before a CLOSER EXPLOSION that sends Eileen to the ground, flat on her ass.

INT. JEFFREY'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

Jeffrey, on his feet in the middle of his cell. He wears boxers and a tank top. He favors his broken arm.

JEFFREY

So close! My wall...there's cracks in my fucking wall!!!

Indeed, a crack big enough to peer through.

EILEEN (O.S.)

Could you just... (coughs)

I need to think!

Then, we can HEAR PANICKED VOICES from another room, MEN YELL IN ARABIC.

Jeffrey turns to see Dunya pass by with his rifle strapped across his back.

INT. EILEEN'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

Eileen is face to face with Dunya at the bars.

DUNYA

It is happening.

EILEEN

I know.

DUNYA

There is much confusion. I am leaving now. The Colonel is here and he is raging. That is all I can tell you.

EILEEN

Can you let us out?

DUNYA

I am sorry...

ETLEEN

You could unlock the door.

DUNYA

No! Do not ask.

EILEEN

You can get away...you'll be a hero! I'll do everything I can...

CRACKLING...EXPLOSION, not as intense as the last.

INT. JEFFREY'S PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

Jeffrey is at the bars, terrified.

JEFFREY

Come on, man, let us outta here...

EILEEN (O.S.)

Enough!

Jeffrey turns back for the wall over his cot. The last explosion enlarged the crack into a small hole.

EILEEN (O.S.)

Please...you can't leave us here like this. He will kill us!

JEFFREY

(looking through the hole) There's a hole in my wall. I can see...something...

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

WE WATCH BOTH CELLS FOR THE ENTIRETY OF SCENE.

Jeffrey at his wall, Dunya faces Eileen at the bars of her cell.

DUNYA

Go back to your bed...

Eileen doesn't move.

DUNYA

...Go!

Jeffrey turns and looks toward the bars.

Eileen relents and goes back to her cot. She sits.

DUNYA

You must give me fifteen minutes.

Dunya takes out his keys and unlocks her cell door.

EILEEN

(leans forward)

Thank you so much...

Jeffrey starts back for his bars.

DUNYA

(to Jeffrey)

Stay where you are!

Jeffrey stops.

EILEEN

We won't forget this, Dunya.

Dunya stays at the bars and watches her for a moment.

JEFFREY

What about mine!!!

EILEEN

Shut up, Lieutenant! Jesus Christ!

DUNYA

Fifteen minutes...

ETLEEN

Yes, go!

Dunya goes to Jeffrey's cell and unlocks the door, points at Jeffrey to stop where he is.

Then, Dunya returns to Eileen's cell, takes his 9mm pistol from its holster and sets it down just inside the bars. He stands and leaves quickly through the door at the end of the corridor.

Oh my God...

JEFFREY

What's going on!?

Eileen jumps off her cot and lunges for the pistol, checks the clip and tucks it in the back of her pants.

Jeffrey starts to walk toward his door.

EILEEN

If you don't shut up, I'll break your other fucking arm! Do you hear me! Do not fuck this up!

(Jeffrey stops again)
What can you see through the wall?

JEFFREY

(goes back to the wall)
I'm not sure. Just shapes...nothing
moving, though.

Suddenly, the CRACKLING returns, loudest of all.

EILEEN

Get away from there...

Jeffrey pushes himself off the cot with his good arm and backs away quickly.

JEFFREY

It's beautiful!

THE EXPLOSION HURLS EILEEN against the bars and back to the ground, momentarily stunned.

JEFFREY'S WALL IMPLODES, chunks of cement PELTING HIM and knocking him to the ground. He rolls a bit, holds his arm. He bleeds from several cuts on his arms and face. His tank top is speckled with it.

Eileen pushes on to her hands and knees, looks up at the hole in the high corner of her wall that grows in to the much larger hole in Jeffrey's cell. There is too much smoke to see the outside clearly but we can see it is a large hole.

EILEEN

Lieutenant! Are you alright? Jeffrey, can you hear me?

COLONEL al-Jamil passes Jeffrey's cell, sees him motionless on the floor, continues on.

ETLEEN

Lieutenant Young, answer me!

Al-Jamil points his pistol through Eileen's bars. She is on her knees, facing the cot.

He FIRES and a piece of the wall she faces BURSTS in a spray of powdered cement.

Eileen leaps to her feet.

JEFFREY PUSHES HIMSELF UP with his good arm, stands.

Eileen spins around.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

(grins)

I missed.

Jeffrey takes off his tank top and opens his cell door.

Al-Jamil bumps the bars just enough that Eileen's cell door opens slightly.

COLONEL AL-JAMIL

What is this?

Suddenly, JEFFREY IS BEHIND AL-JAMIL, loops his tank top around his neck to choke him, but it all happens too fast.

Eileen whips Dunya's pistol from the back of her pants and FIRES.

Al-Jamil falls first, already dead. His face pushes her cell door open as he collapses.

Jeffrey still stands, his hands over the bullet hole in his chest.

EILEEN

Lieutenant!

Jeffrey dies on his feet and falls backward.

Eileen charges through the door and is on her knees next to Jeffrey, against the wall, next to the lantern.

EILEEN

Jeffrey...shit...

There is GROWING NOISE from the HALLWAY, VOICES, COMMOTION.

EILEEN

...shit! Lieutenant, oh, shit...

Eileen gets up, turns back to al-Jamil, steps on his neck while she pries his pistol out of his hand.

EILEEN

...there's nothing...

She turns back, takes one last look at Jeffrey, listens for the VOICES.

Looking through Jeffrey's open cell door, she sees the hole in the wall. She clambers over the rubble and steadies herself against a mangled length of rebar then jumps to freedom.

AS BEFORE we follow through the hole, looking skyward at the TRACER FIRE THAT ILLUMINATES THE BAGHDAD SKY.

INT. HALF-TON TRUCK - DAY

Eileen lies across the bench seat. Near blinding light fills the cab, waking her.

Eileen bolts upright and aims TWO 9MM PISTOLS at the driver's side window. Her face is battered, her T-shirt bloodied and ripped.

EXT. IRAQI DESERT - CONTINUOUS

A REPORTER and CAMERAMAN back away from the decrepit halfton, still filming as the driver's side door opens and a confused Eileen emerges, hands raised slightly.

REPORTER

(moves closer)

Can you tell me your name?

(no response)

Are you an American?

EILEEN

Yes...

REPORTER

Air Force? U.S. Air Force?

(Eileen nods)

Are you the missing fighter pilot?

EILEEN

Missing...

REPORTER

Are you Lieutenant Wilcott?

Her eyes snap to meet the Reporter's, a sudden recognition.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK - DAY

Doctor Albright holding Eileen as she cries, the huge sobs of a person not accustomed to her own tears.

BRIGADIER GENERAL HOYT (V.O.)

The Air Force Office of Special Investigations would like to thank all those who offered testimony these past two days... EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - ESTABLISHING - CONTINUOUS

Well over the nation's capitol, a view of the Washington Monument, etc.

BRIGADIER GENERAL HOYT (V.O.)

...Although we feel Lieutenant
Wilcott's forthrightness with the
details surrounding the death of
Lieutenant Young would have spared
all involved the lengthy process of
this investigation, notably the
family of the deceased...

EXT. U.S.A.F. OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS - CONTINUOUS

A drab, rectangular complex at Bolling Air Force base. Military personnel pass by, going about their business.

BRIGADIER GENERAL HOYT (V.O.)

...it is our belief that her exemplary service during combat and her actions while in captivity may have actually saved the Lieutenant's life...

INT. O.S.I. - HEARING CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

BRIGADIER GENERAL HOYT, in his 50's, sits between two other U.S.A.F. OFFICERS.

BRIGADIER GENERAL HOYT

... Therefore, this investigative body concludes that his death was an acceptable casualty of war...

Eileen physically trembles at the word "acceptable". She sits alone at a long table.

David and Doctor Albright sit in the small gallery behind her. There are less than a dozen others, mostly military, one or two reporters. BRIGADIER GENERAL HOYT

...Lieutenant Wilcott, it is our hope that you will continue with your treatment.

ETLEEN

Thank you, sir, I will.

BRIGADIER GENERAL HOYT

Then, it is our ruling that this investigation is concluded and dismissed.

Hoyt closes a binder and all three officers rise, as does everyone else in the room.

INT. WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Eileen and Doctor Albright stand near the security check point. He has a gym bag slung over a shoulder and holds a ticket.

EILEEN

I suppose it goes without saying I couldn't have done this if it wasn't for you.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

It's okay, you can say it.

EILEEN

(smiles)

So, I'll call you next week?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Sure. And, promise you'll call Doctor Reardon. She'll take good care of you.

EILEEN

I don't need another doctor.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

I think it might be best if you did, Eileen.

Why?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Well, it's a bit of a drive for your brother, first of all. And, second, I...I'm going to be taking some time off.

EILEEN

You are?

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Yeah, I gotta rest for a while. I'm about due for a vacation.

EILEEN

You know, I'm not a real hugger, but...

She throws her arms around him and holds him close. He reaches around and hugs her back.

EILEEN

(pulls back)

Okay...you should get going.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Give me a call.

EILEEN

I will.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Everything's gonna be fine.

EILEEN

So long, doc...

Doctor Albright backs toward the security check and gives her a wave.

DOCTOR ALBRIGHT

Good luck with it.

She gives her best smile and waves back as Doctor Albright disappears through a doorway leading to the security check.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER - DAY

A TAXI crosses a modern bridge that runs parallel to an older, iron double decker bridge with a freight train crossing it.

The taxi nears the Iowa town of Keokuk.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

Eileen sits in the back seat, her duffel bag next to her. She looks out the window as they pass a WELCOME TO KEOKUK sign, framed by active Chamber of Commerce business logos.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

The taxi pulls to a stop outside a pleasant two story home with a well-tended lawn and a rose garden.

Eileen climbs out of the cab, pays the driver and heads up the walk.

She rings the doorbell and waits. We don't see the person who opens the door and lets her in.

INT. YOUNG HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARION YOUNG is Lieutenant Jeffrey Young's 50 year old mother. She leads Eileen in to the room, decorated like the Midwest.

Jeffrey's father, ADAM, rises from the sofa when the women enter, shakes Eileen's hand.

MARION

I'm glad you could come, Lieutenant Wilcott.

EILEEN

Oh, I haven't been Lieutenant for a couple years now. Just call me Eileen.

MARION

I made some iced tea, Eileen. Would you like a glass?

Eileen smiles her response and Marion leaves the room.

There is a large, framed high school photo of Jeffrey on the fireplace mantle. He looks handsome and youthful. Next to it, a smaller picture of Adam Young, in his 20's, a soldier before his war.

Eileen crosses to the fireplace and looks at Jeffrey's picture.

ADAM

I want to make this clear right from the outset...we bear no ill will toward you.

Eileen stays with the picture.

ADAM

What you and Jeffrey went through was more than most anyone would have survived.

EILEEN

You know he was trying to save me when it happened.

Marion returns with a tray of iced tea.

MARION

We understand that, Eileen.

Eileen turns and faces the parents.

EILEEN

(takes a glass)

Thank you.

Eileen takes a sip of the iced tea.

MARION

Sit down, please.

She crosses to a chair and sits, alone, facing the Young's and the picture of Jeffrey. Marion sits next to Adam on the sofa.

ADAM

How was your flight?

EILEEN

Fine, nice. I've never been to this part of the country before. It's very beautiful.

MARION

You've seen so much of the world. Not too much to get excited about in old Keokuk.

ADAM

We've had a nice summer, though.

MARION

Yes. Very nice.

A silence.

EILEEN

I feel like I should say something. He wanted me to tell you...he wanted you to know he was brave.

ADAM

Thank you, Eileen. We know Jeffrey was brave.

Marion's eyes are reddening.

MARION

We'll always be very proud of our son.

ADAM

There's a plaque in the local park. I thought maybe we could take a drive out there.

A plaque...

(chokes up)

He spoke of you often. He...I'm sorry...I didn't mean to...

Eileen begins to SOB, carried away with it. The Young's do not move.

EILEEN

Some soldier I am...

She looks up at the Young's. They watch her, almost impassive.

ADAM

There have been many tears in this house, Eileen. Please don't be embarrassed.

EILEEN

It was very dark...he came up behind...

Marion gets up and leaves the room.

EILEEN

Wait...I'm sorry, I...

ADAM

Shh, that's okay, now. We know what happened. We know what happened.

EILEEN

Can you forgive me...can you ever...

Adam gets up and crosses to Eileen, takes her hand and stands her up. He hugs her.

Marion returns with a letter. She hands it to Eileen when her embrace with Adam ends.

MARION

I'm keeping the originals, but I figured you might want a copy.

Eileen unfolds the letter, looks up at the Young's. They give her another reassuring smile.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

January 4, 1991, somewhere over the Gulf of Oman...

EXT. KEOKUK CENTENNIAL PARK - DAY

A small cenotaph is off to the side, away from the children's swings and seesaws.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

...Dear Mom and Dad, this stack of letters is gonna be pretty thick by the time you get them all. The clock keeps ticking toward that U.N. deadline, but nobody really believes this will end without a skirmish or two. We've been pumped up for weeks, keeping up our maneuvers...

Eileen stands with the Young's looking at the plaque commemorating Jeffrey's service.

INT. UNITED AIRLINES 747 - NIGHT

Eileen, in a window seat, her head rests against the window.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

...I am Weapons System Operator to one Eileen May Wilcott, Lieutenant. And, let me tell you, she is something else. Without a doubt, one of the funniest people I've ever known, and she's also one of the first women ever to command a Strike Eagle, quite the achievement. But, she's got the skills...

She drifts off to sleep.

INT. EILEEN'S '65 MUSTANG CONVERTIBLE - CONTINUOUS

David drives, Corey in the passenger seat, Eileen in the back. They travel down the highway.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

...Whatever happens in the next few days or weeks is still anybody's guess, but I know when I need that extra bit of nerve she'll tell me some dumb joke to make me relax and I'll feel safe...

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - EILEEN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eileen unpacks her duffel bag.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

... Anyway, that's it for tonight. Que sera sera. Love to everyone back home. Your son, Jeffrey.

Eileen takes a magazine from her duffel bag and opens it to where she has wedged in the letter.

She crosses to her dresser, opens the jewelry box and takes out her Purple Heart. She folds the letter and puts it inside and closes the lid.

INT. ARMADILLO PUB & GRILL - NIGHT

Eileen enters the bar.

Old Bill sits on a stool. She comes up on his left and taps him on the right shoulder, a running gag. He gives her a smile and playfully punches her arm.

Grant comes out of the kitchen and sees the two of them sharing a cigarette. He crosses to face her across the bar and waits for a greeting.

Eileen stands up, leans across and takes Grant's head in her hands, bends him a bit and kisses his forehead.

She sits back down, Grant picks up a coffee pot and Eileen nods, yes.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Eileen, in a bathrobe and a towel around her hair, knocks on Corey's bedroom door.

EILEEN

Come on buddy, time to roll.

She opens the door and looks in.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - COREY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Corey rolls over, waking up.

Eileen enters and crosses to his bed, sits on the edge.

EILEEN

Are y'all ready for this?

COREY

What time is it?

EILEEN

Middle of the day in the air force.

COREY

Huh?

EILEEN

It's eight-thirty.

COREY

Oh.

EILEEN

Your dad's making some breakfast. Are you all packed?

COREY

Yeah, I did it last night.

A beat.

Corey, I owe you an apology...

COREY

No, come on. Let's just forget it.

EILEEN

I'm gonna miss you, kid.

COREY

I'm gonna miss you, too.

EILEEN

I'll take care of your old man for you.

COREY

Find him a girlfriend, will ya.

EILEEN

(smiles)

So, I got you something. Kind of a going away present.

COREY

Yeah?

Corey sits up a bit.

EILEEN

You keep this with you, but don't go showing it off.

She reaches in to her bathrobe pocket and pulls out her Purple Heart.

COREY

Oh, no way, I can't take that.

EILEEN

Sure you can. If you ever find yourself in a situation where you're not sure what you're gonna do or you're not sure what's gonna happen to you, remember you got it with you and remember your old auntie.

Corey takes the Purple Heart and looks at it.

EILEEN

I sure don't have any answers, but one thing I know is sometimes it's gonna suck. Don't give in to it, okay? And, find someone to talk to, someone who'll...relate. Make some buds.

COREY

Okay.

EILEEN

Quite the advice, huh?

COREY

It is.

EILEEN

Yeah, well, it's all I got.

COREY

I'll take it.

Eileen smiles at her nephew as she stands up.

EILEEN

Okay then, get outta bed, hog!

She whips off his sheets and they laugh.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Eileen is on the telephone, waiting.

David passes with another piece of Corey's luggage.

DAVID

We gotta get going.

EILEEN

I'll be right there, just...

(into the phone)

Hello? Hi. Yeah, it's Eileen Wilcott.

(MORE)

EILEEN(CONT'D)

(a beat)

Good, good, how about you?

(a beat)

Great. Is Doctor Albright in this morning?

(a beat)

Oh. Well, can you take a message for me?

She turns to see David head outside. She is alone in the kitchen.

EILEEN

Yeah, can you tell him I said hello and let him know that I had a great sleep last night.

(a beat)

Okay, take care. Goodbye.

Eileen hangs up the phone and leaves the house.

FADE OUT

THE END