

A GLASS OF MILK

by

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OVER BLACK:

HEAR the voice of the narrator, DYLLAN LAWSON - a 13-year-old boy.

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.)

The story that I'm going to tell, dates back to the times when our countries were still at war. It all begins with Thomas Lawson - a boy who lived in the streets.

FADE IN:

EXT. THE STREET - DAY - RAIN

THOMAS LAWSON - a white beggar boy of 16 years, with dark hair and complexion, runs through the streets. His rags are soaked from the pouring rain. He knocks on doors of the HOUSES.

THOMAS

Could you please help me?
Kind sir, please spare a dime!
Please, at least a glass of water!
I'm begging you! I'm starving!

Most houses don't respond. Some harshly reject him.

FIRST MAN (O.C.)

Get off here, you pest!

SECOND MAN (O.C.)

You again, brat? Beat it!

WOMAN (O.C.)

Sorry, child, we've nothing to give you!

It THUNDERS. Thomas stops to take a breath.

THOMAS

Damn it... Damn it all!
(looks up at the
thundering sky)
Did I really deserve this? Why are
you not answering? Huh, God?

It THUNDERS more. The rain pours onto Thomas's face. He spits and runs again. He knocks on doors of HOUSES as well as RESTAURANTS and INNS. They either ignore or reject him everywhere.

Thomas reaches a CERTAIN DIRTY DISTRICT OF HIGH BLOCKS with multiple apartments. He runs into one of the blocks, on a dirty ground floor, to hide from the rain.

INT. GROUND FLOOR, NEAR THE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Thomas sits down on the cold pavement and shivers, his stomach grumbling. He sees rats feasting upon scrubs.

THOMAS

Damn, even you guys have it all
merry-go-round! Curse you... Curse
it all!

He spits again. He sees a single apartment on the first
floor upstairs. He hesitates for a certain time, but then
his stomach grumbles again.

THOMAS

Well, here goes nothing...

He WALKS UPSTAIRS and knocks on the door.

THOMAS

Excuse me, I'm a homeless young boy
and I've really been starving the
whole day! Please, if you can spare
at least a glass of water and a
piece of bread! Anything will do, I
beg you!

There is no response. Thomas heaves a sigh and turns around
to leave.

HEAR the door creak.

Thomas starts and turns back, to see JANE DIAMOND - a
6-year-old blond curly girl - at the threshold.

JANE

You really are homeless?

THOMAS

Uhm, yes..?

Jane hesitates. She looks back into the apartment, then
again at Thomas, as if brooding over what to do.

JANE

Mommy won't be home until midnight.
I can let you in... I can't offer
much, there's only milk and cookies
left. But you must promise me
you're not a bad guy!

THOMAS

Wow... Okay, I promise. So, may I
come in now?

JANE

Pinky promise?

THOMAS

Yeah yeah, pinky promise, I'm a
good guy, I swear.

(shakes her little finger
with his one)

Now can I come in?

JANE

Sure, but brush your feet on the rug, you're kind of dirty. I don't want mom to get angry with me later, or suspect anything... Usually, I'm not to answer when strangers are at the door.

Thomas brushes feet and enters the apartment. Jane closes the door behind.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

THOMAS

So why did you answer then, if you're forbidden to?

JANE

Well, you did say you were homeless and starving, and I had cookies at home... I thought I'd share since I've got a lot.

THOMAS

(laughs bitterly)

Damn, if only everyone thought like you! This world would be hell of a better place...

JANE

Huh? What did you say?

THOMAS

Nothing... Fancy house, though.

Thomas looks around the apartment. It is orderly and neat. There are many kidly DRAWINGS attached to walls. At a glance, they pollute the view, but in fact, they give the house a cosy feeling of a young child living within.

Thomas easily gathers those drawings should be Jane's doing, so he smiles to himself.

JANE

Hehe, I know, right! All those drawings on walls, are mine! They are pretty, aren't they?

THOMAS

They sure are!

Jane leads Thomas to the DINING ROOM.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT, THE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane pulls a chair for Thomas near the table.

JANE

Well, take a seat, uhm... What was your name?

THOMAS

(laughs)

Oh, I haven't told you, have I? Sorry for my manners. In the streets, you don't usually need them... The name's Thomas.

(stretches his hand out)

It is a pleasure to know you!

JANE

(shakes his hand)

I'm Jane. Nice to meet you, Thomas! Well, take a seat now. I'll get you the cookies.

Thomas sits on the chair Jane's pointed on. Jane runs into the kitchen and brings a plate full of delicious cookies.

THOMAS

Wow, those I call cookies!

JANE

Hehe, thanks! Mommy made them. She always makes yummy stuff, and she loves when guests enjoy them. So eat as much as you like!

THOMAS

Thanks a bunch!

JANE

Wait, wait, I need to get the milk too!

Jane runs off into the kitchen again and brings a cup of hot milk to Thomas.

JANE

I nearly forgot about it!

(laughs)

Enjoy!

THOMAS

Haha, thanks! Damn, just the smell is so delicious!

JANE

Come on, eat up!

(laughs)

You're so strange, I've never seen people smelling the food so eagerly before! Are all boys like that?

Jane takes a seat near Thomas, who delightfully digs in.

THOMAS

What do you mean, 'all boys'?
(munching cookies)
You've never seen other boys
before?

JANE

I've not really known any. Mommy
says I'll start school next year,
but that too will be a school for
all girls.

THOMAS

What about your father?

JANE

Daddy's a man, not a boy!

THOMAS

(laughs)
Damn! He's been one in the past at
least, hasn't he?

JANE

Yeah but... Daddy's been away for
long. Mommy says he fights for us,
against bad guys.

THOMAS

Oh... You mean he's on the
frontlines? In the war?

JANE

Yes. Mommy says I should be proud
of him. I am proud - he fights all
those bad guys and all, he's a
hero... But at times, I do want him
to be here. I wish there were no
war. It feels lonely at times, only
me and mommy...

Tears fill Jane's eyes. Thomas feels pity for her.

THOMAS

Well, your dad is strong, isn't he?
I bet he'll return when the war is
over.

JANE

But when? It's been so long!

THOMAS

Not that long... He'll be back, no
worryes. You know, there's a saying
- if you strongly believe in
something, it comes true. So just
believe in the day your father
comes back, and he will.

JANE

Really? Who told you that?

THOMAS

Meh, I've read, somewhere...

(scratches the back of
his head)

Doesn't really matter. Just trust
me, alright? I've told you, I'm a
good guy. Good guys never lie, do
they?

Thomas gives her a wink. Jane laughs.

Thomas soon FINISHES eating and drinking milk. He puts some
cookies in pockets for the way back. He looks outside.

The rainstorm has stopped. The sun has come out, though it
is dusking.

Thomas stands up.

THOMAS

Well, I guess I'd better head my
way until your mother returns.
Thanks for the food!

JANE

Oh? You're leaving already?

(gets sad)

We've become such good friends...

THOMAS

(laughs)

Damn, you define friendship so
easily! Ugh, for real, if only more
people were like you, kid...

JANE

What do you mean?

THOMAS

Nah, nothing. Forget it. Anyway, I
really need to go.

(heads towards the door)

But I am indeed eternally grateful
to you... Jane, was it? You know,
no one has been so kind to me for
as long as I can remember. I shall
always mention your name in my
prayers. Not that I pray too often,
but you know...

JANE

Huh? Wait, in that case, it's Jane
Diamond!

THOMAS

Huh?

JANE

Well, God should know which Jane you're talking about, right? Mommy says God needs to know the full name, or else he won't bestow his blessing.

THOMAS

What?

(chuckles)

Damn, that's something new! Alright, alright... Jane Diamond, right? I'll remember! Thank you for everything, Jane Diamond! Goodbye!

JANE

Goodbye Thomas! You really are a good guy! It was fun!

THOMAS

Haha! Bye!

EXT. THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Thomas walks out of the block and heads his way, back to the beggar quarters where his fellow streetrats live.

EXT. THE BEGGAR QUARTERS - NIGHT

BEGGARS are gathered in dark, dirty quarters, near the brick walls of high buildings. Many are casually sitting on the pavement, some are wrapped in rugs and sleeping, some others are smoking, drinking, or just cursing among themselves.

Thomas walks on, watching them with apparent contempt.

He walks past a certain WOODEN BUILDING, all broken down and withered away.

He approaches JOE HUMMINGBS - a wrinkled old man lying on the pavement, wrapped in rugs. He is blind and has no feet hence cannot move. Thomas takes a seat beside him.

JOE

Is that you, Thomas?

THOMAS

Sorry Joe, left you here all day... I couldn't find a damn penny! Those assholes,

(glances at the wooden building)

Who said they can boss around as they please? That shelter should be for all of us!

JOE

(chuckles)

Kid, no need to curse so much! It's all God's will. If he wants to, he shall bestow his blessing upon us. If not, we are to bear with it. That's the rule of this world. Did you at least find a shelter somewhere?

THOMAS

I did, but... Ugh, what of it if you were to soak and starve out here, eh?

JOE

Boy, I'm nearly dead anyway. It doesn't matter_

THOMAS

All lives matter! You have taught me that, remember? Is that any way a doctor should talk?!

JOE

Former doctor...

THOMAS

Who cares? You've saved so many lives, yet look what your God has done to you! God... Even if he exists I doubt he cares about us at all!

(spits)

That aside, I've at least managed to get you something to eat...

Thomas stuffs a cookie in Joe's hand. Joe examines it with his hands, then takes a bite. A smile covers his face.

JOE

Where did you get this?

THOMAS

Meh, some central blocks. There was this girl...

JOE

Oh?

THOMAS

Quit thinking of shit, Joe!

(reddens up)

It's nothing like it, she was just a kid! Maybe 6 or 7 years, not more!

JOE

(laughs)

Sorry, sorry... But you're in such a good age now, Thomas. You should think about it.

THOMAS

Quit yapping, old man! How can a beggar rat like me possibly think about girls?!

(spits)

Just eat that damn thing, will you?

JOE

You're as harsh as ever, eh, Thomas?

(laughs)

You've got a good heart, though... I'm glad you've managed to find someone with those same generous traits. At least, from now on, you won't think that God doesn't exist in this world.

THOMAS

Huh?

JOE

You see, you've managed to find a shelter from the rainstorm, and a kind child has given you food, so much that you've even managed to bring some to your old friend. What is that, if not God's blessing? The God held his hand out to you, in the moments of despair.

THOMAS

Quit preaching, will you?

(sneers)

It was just luck...

JOE

Luck... God's blessing... What's the difference? For us beggars abandoned in these cold streets, that's the only hope - the trust in God's will_

THOMAS

If God really were there, Joe, there'd be no beggars, in the first place.

JOE

We all have our cross to bear_

THOMAS

Well, tell me then, Joe - are all human souls equal?

JOE

Why, yes!

THOMAS

So, all children born, should be equal?

JOE

Certainly.

THOMAS

Then why the hell are some born in beggar families and some - in rich ones?! Huh? Why the hell is that, Joe? Are they not equal from the very beginning? Why should some be born in poverty and some in luxury?!

JOE

It will all be evened according to how they lead their lives_

THOMAS

Don't give me that crap, Joe! Don't give me that crap! This world is unjust, okay? You've lived for seventy-eight years! Just accept this shitty truth, will you?!

Joe gets worried at Thomas' such raging cries. He wants to reply but starts intensively coughing, hence his speech is interrupted.

Thomas grows concerned and grabs him.

THOMAS

Joe? What the hell? What's wrong with you?

(feels his rags and his skin are wet)

What the_ You've really been lying here in cold all day?! What the hell?!

(looks around at the other beggars)

Couldn't these bastards give you warmer stuff?!

JOE

I didn't_

(coughs)

Ask...

THOMAS

What the_

Thomas jumps to his feet and runs to the wooden building. He slams on the door with his fists.

THOMAS

Ronald, you bastard, open up! Joe's freezing to death! Open up, for the fuck's sake, you damn freak!

The door opens and RONALD - a 45-year-old street bandit with a single eye, scars, a cigar in his mouth, and ragged clothes - appears. His two henchmen of the same appearance - JACK and BILL - stand behind him. There's an INTENSIVE LAUGHTER coming out of the SHELTER - the GANG is sitting at the fire and drinking.

RONALD

What ye're yapping at, chap?

THOMAS

Cut the crap, you bastard! Joe's freezing out here. Let him in!

RONALD

Three pounds per person, told ye already, haven't I?

THOMAS

He's a blind old man_

RONALD

Don't give a damn.

JACK

Pay or get lost, kid!

BILL

Yeah, we've no time for lousy brats like ye_

THOMAS

He's a damn feetless old man freezing to death, you idiots!

Thomas swings a fist at Ronald's very face in attempt to hit him right in the jaw.

Ronald easily catches his fist in mid-air and clutches his arm tightly so that Thomas SCREAMS in pain.

RONALD

Picking fights again, chap? Never learn, do ye?

THOMAS

I really am going to kick your ass this time, you fucking bastard!

RONALD

We'll have to teach you a lesson
again then, I guess.

Ronald HITS him hard right in the stomach. Thomas crouches and falls to his feet. Ronald, Jack, Bill, and the whole gang gather round him and KICK and BEAT him.

When Thomas is already too bloodied and exhausted to even move, the gang gets off him and returns back into the shelter.

Before closing the door, Ronald glares back down at him.

RONALD

Three pounds or no entrance. Rules
don't change. I'll let ye get away
with a warning this time, but the
next time it won't be so easy,
brat.

JACK

Leave em alone, Boss! That brat's
just a bootless piece of garbage,
like his late old man!

The laughing men and Ronald walk back into the shelter and shut the door behind.

Thomas sneers, blood trickling off the sides of his mouth and his nostrils. The other beggars are watching him distressed, but nobody moves a finger - everyone fears Ronald and his gang.

Thomas crawls up to Joe's side.

Joe couldn't see anything due to blindness, but could hear all that has happened. When he hears the boy moan right next to him, he takes out a certain GREEN BOX he's been hiding behind himself amidst the TRASH SACKS. He opens it and hands it to Thomas. It is full of MEDICINE and BANDAGES.

JOE

Treat yourself.

Thomas eyes Joe, then grabs certain medicine, greases it on his aching bruises and wounds, and bandages them carefully.

WHEN THOMAS FINISHES treating himself, he returns the box to Joe. Joe shuts it with a lock and hides it again.

Neither of them give a voice for a certain time. They are fallen into thoughts. Then Joe breaks the silence.

JOE

I first met Henry right here in the
streets. Back then, I'd already
lost both of my feet and been

(MORE)

JOE (cont'd)

dumped here to starve. Henry had lost his position due to the factory going bankrupt, lost his wife to a cholera, and feared he might lose his son too. He carried you along and tried to scrap up some pennies for your sake. He raised you so you'd find a decent path in your life and make use of yourself. If he were to see you in your current condition, kid, he'd be utterly disappointed.

Thomas looks away, still silent.

JOE

He hoped at least his son would get to have a decent future_

THOMAS

He really was hopeless then, imagining a son of a beggar could be anything but a beggar.

JOE

Kid, you've so much talent, yet here you are, picking senseless fights and spitting nonsense. You don't know when to cool your head, and when to raise your voice. You don't even know anything about this life, yet you speak like you've seen it all. You lecture a seventy-eight-year-old man who's seen so much in these long years that he's lost his sight and his feet were cut off. Yet... You could learn how to treat wounds from a blind old man, and learned it so proficiently you can easily do it even if you're bloodily wounded. Do you not think you're wasting so much potential?

THOMAS

You really are an annoying old man...

JOE

Kid, you really do have to get out there. See the world. Don't spend your days here lying in garbage. Make use of yourself. Of your youth. Of your life.

THOMAS

How on earth?

(MORE)

THOMAS (cont'd)
 (chuckles)
 I've not a penny. Travelling and
 studying needs some greens, Joe.

Joe doesn't answer.

Thomas bitterly chuckles again. He doesn't turn to Joe anymore, since his neck still hurts from the earlier beatings. He wraps himself up in his rags some more since it's freezing, and soon goes to sleep.

EXT. THE BEGGAR QUARTERS - DAY

The morning is cold. Thomas wakes up. He stretches and sits up.

THOMAS
 Well, I'm going to go scrap up some
 pennies, Joe_

He freezes once turns to Joe. Joe is lying motionless, his eyes closed and his skin gone yellowish - he is dead.

Goose-bumps run down Thomas's skin.

THOMAS
 Joe? Joe, wake up! Damn it, old
 man, this is not funny!

Thomas shakes him violently. Then he quickly puts an ear to his chest. There is no heartbeat.

Thomas is shocked - he guesses Joe truly is dead.

THOMAS
 (muttering)
 Goodness... Oh no... No...
 (yells)
 No!
 (tears come to his eyes)
 Damn it! Damn it all! Joe...

At Thomas's yells, the neighbouring BEGGARS arrive and a commotion starts.

HUGH - a 48-year-old beggar man, war veteran with a single leg and a cane he leans on - begins to take actions.

HUGH
 We need to bury him. Follow me!

Some of the BEGGARS carry a large WOODEN BOARD from the dumps, using it as a stretcher. They put Joe's body on it and carry it off.

EXT. BY THE LAKE, 'BEGGAR CEMETERY' - CONTINUOUS

The beggars carry Joe's body to a remote area near the LAKE close by, where they start digging.

There are many such covered-up TRENCHES in this place amidst the trees - the beggars use this spot to bury their dead.

EXT. BY THE LAKE, 'BEGGAR CEMETERY' - DAY (LATER)

Thomas is standing at Joe's grave, sadly staring at it.

Hugh walks up to him limping, leaning on his cane.

HUGH

You've been his closest friend,
huh, Thomas?

THOMAS

Only friend, I'd say.

HUGH

He did seem to like you and Henry a lot. Your late old man was always his favourite - the only one he's ever opened up with.

THOMAS

He really was a good old fellow, our Joe. He always wanted the best for me... I guess. He always advised me well, as if I were his own grandson. I've learned a lot from him.

HUGH

(laughs)

Like, to not pick fights with street bandits?

THOMAS

(chuckles)

Leave me alone, you bastard...

HUGH

But for real, Thomas... I do understand about us old fellows rotting out here, but you are so full of life, kid! Why don't you try to put yourself to good use?

THOMAS

How on earth? To be of good use, one needs education, Hugh. Education needs money. I've got not a penny.

HUGH

Nah, kid, education is just one of the many routes you can take. There are a bunch of other ways. Like, in this wartime - the military.

THOMAS

Go out on the battlefield and get myself killed?
(spits)
No, thank you.

HUGH

Damn, you're putting it all in such grey colours, kid! I did work in the military. You get to serve your country in such a good way! We got excellent physical education, travelled somewhat, and had much better food than those scraps you get in these streets. Not to mention a lot of fun we had, us young fellows, all of 'em young ladies swooning over us soldier boys and all! It is worth a shot, definitely.

THOMAS

You seem to be putting it all in rosy colours, Hugh.

Thomas and Hugh look at Joe's grave. Then Thomas heaves a sigh, casts the last glance at Joe's grave, and walks off.

Hugh watches Thomas from behind. He then takes a small piece of paper out of his pocket, where there's written "To Jonathan Crowe; From Joe Hummings".

HUGH'S FLASHBACK:

EXT. THE BEGGAR QUARTERS - DAY - RAIN

(It is a day before the current events. Thomas is still gone, apparently at Jane Diamond's place)

Joe, still alive, sits on the pavement as usual. Hugh sits beside him.

JOE

Hugh...

HUGH

Yes, old man?

JOE

Can I ask you a favour?

HUGH

Oh? What is it?

JOE

I know I might not hold on long now, the way I am... But I'm truly concerned about Thomas' future. You know, he's such a talented young man! Yet is rotting here amidst the trash sacks. I don't even know how I can show my face to good old Henry up in heavens, at this rate. He entrusted me with the kid's well-being. He hoped he'd follow some decent path! I've long been thinking about a solution. I believe I might've found it, but due to my limited abilities, I don't think I can manage to execute it, as I am now. Please, when I am no more, deliver this letter of mine, to Mr. Crowe. I guess he is better fit to take a good care of Thomas when I'm gone.

Joe stuffs the same piece of paper in Hugh's hands. Hugh looks at it: "To Jonathan Crowe; From Joe Hummings". He gets bewildered.

HUGH

Jonathan Crowe?! You don't mean the current General of the Army?!

JOE

Yes, him.

(smiles)

We used to be good friends one time. I am certain he should remember me. He's been a good man, he wouldn't have forgotten me that easily... Anyway, it is worth a try. Please, Hugh, you are the only one I can entrust this letter to. We are both war dogs, we can understand each other better than anyone. You are my only hope...

Hugh watches Joe thoughtfully for a while, and then stares at the letter.

BACK TO THE PRESENT:

EXT. BY THE LAKE, 'BEGGAR CEMETERY' - DAY

Hugh heaves a sigh, puts the letter back into his pocket, and walks off to his corner at a wall.

EXT. THE BEGGAR QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Hugh walks up to his place at a wall. He unwraps a certain sack he's been hiding. There is his old soldierly attire placed, and medals of a lieutenant.

He grabs the clothes and begins to put them on.

EXT. THE ARMED FORCES HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Hugh, dressed in his old lieutenant clothes, arrives at the Armed Forces Headquarters, at the gates.

There are two guards. Hugh walks up to the gates and wants to enter. The guards stop him.

FIRST GUARD

Stop, sir. Please, identify yourself.

HUGH

I am Hugh Golding. I have served as a lieutenant for 25 years. Now I am a veteran.

SECOND GUARD

What is your business here, Mr. Golding?

HUGH

I need to see General Crowe.

SECOND GUARD

On what behalf?

HUGH

I need to deliver him a letter.

Hugh shows them the piece of paper.

FIRST GUARD

Oh. In that case, you can hand it to us. We shall take care of it.

HUGH

No. I need to deliver it in hand. Let me through.

Hugh wants to enter, but the guards stop him again.

FIRST GUARD

I am afraid we cannot do that, Mr. Golding. Unauthorized people cannot meet General Crowe.

HUGH

Hmph! Unauthorized?! I've devoted my life to the army! Only because I've lost a leg, I cannot even enter the Quarters anymore?! Let me through, I said!

SECOND GUARD

Calm down, sir! We cannot let you through.

HUGH

I said I need to deliver this letter. You cannot stop me!

Tension rises. Hugh breaks into a fight. The guards try to stop him and call the reinforcements.

FIRST GUARD

Calling for help at the gates! A citizen is out of control!

HUGH

A citizen? Quit messing with me! You brats weren't even born when I was defending this country!

While they are fighting and reinforcements are coming, the gates open and a big car comes in - the car of the General of the Army. Hugh gathers General Crowe should be inside. He gets off the guards and jumps before the car, making it stop.

HUGH

General Crowe, I know you're there! I am a former lieutenant, Hugh Golding, and I've got a letter to you from Doctor Joe Hummings! He passed away today, dumped in the streets, and this is his last will, addressed to you! I'm not going to give old Joe's will to anyone but you, so you'd better come and take it! You hear?

The guards arrive and apprehend him. He struggles to get free.

HUGH

Let me go, you bastards! I'm having a talk here!

GUARDS

Sir, your further resistance will be considered a violation of the law! You'd better surrender.

HUGH

Cut the crap, brats! Is that any way to talk to a former lieutenant?!

While they are fighting, the window of the car lowers and JONATHAN CROWE's hand stretches out. The hand motions Hugh to approach him.

JONATHAN CROWE (O.S.)

Mr. Golding, is it? Please, hand me the letter!

While the guards are stopped by General Crowe's escorts, Hugh walks up to the back of the car and hands the letter to JONATHAN CROWE sitting inside - a 55-year-old man with cut-marks on his face.

General Crowe takes the letter and glances at it. "To Jonathan Crowe; From Joe Hummings". He recognizes the handwriting. He opens the door of the car.

JONATHAN CROWE

It is truly Dr. Hummings' handwriting. I would like you to follow me to my office, Mr. Golding, if possible.

HUGH

Oh... As you wish, General.

Hugh sits into the car. The escorts and the car enter the gates. The guards watch them from behind.

INT. THE ARMED FORCES' HEADQUARTERS, GENERAL CROWE'S WORKING-ROOM - DAY

Jonathan Crowe and Hugh enter. Jonathan walks up to his desk, and points Hugh on one of the chairs.

JONATHAN CROWE

Please take a seat, Mr. Golding.

HUGH

Thank you.

Hugh takes a seat.

JONATHAN CROWE

Can you tell me more about Joe Hummings' whereabouts? I've been searching for him since ages, but I was not able to find a single clue. Now, your dropping by this place in such a sudden, with this letter and information that he's passed away today... It's been very shocking to me. Even now, I find quite difficult to put up with it.

HUGH

He's been a beggar in the streets for years. He had slowly been losing his sight, and some years ago, lost it completely. We, fellow beggars, had been keeping him and helping him as we could. There are many other war veterans in the streets, like us. No wonder, though...

(MORE)

HUGH (cont'd)
(bitterly smiles)

Even here, at Armed Forces Headquarters, we are not welcome, even if one time we were the important part of the army, guiding them towards victory. People seem to forget one's good deeds way too fast.

Jonathan heaves a sigh full of bitterness at these words. He goes on with the subject.

JONATHAN CROWE

So, you say this letter to me, is Joe's last will?

HUGH

Yes. That is how he told me. He wanted it to be delivered straight in your hands. I did as I was asked.

JONATHAN CROWE

I truly thank you for this, Mr. Golding. Thank you immensely, and... I deeply apologize, for you and Dr. Hummings, and all the other war veterans whom you've mentioned to be out there, to have been thus neglected. These last years, ever since I became the General of the Army, I've been trying as hard as I could to change the way this current system works, but unfortunately, one man cannot do as much as is required when his ideals are not widely shared.

HUGH

I understand.

General Crowe opens the letter and runs through the lines. His hands begin to tremble from sorrow as he reads.

JOE (V.O.) (THE LETTER)

To Jonathan Crowe,
Greetings, old friend. This is Joe Hummings. You might be wondering where I've been for all these years, not contacting you... After my trauma and retirement, I was dumped in the streets. I decided to keep it low. You know, I did not want to bother you with my affairs, considering you're leading a tough life out there on the frontlines... However, for this one issue, I've

(MORE)

JOE (V.O.) (THE LETTER) (cont'd)

decided I had to contact you and ask you a little favour, after all. Jonathan, my friend, I have a little kid I've been looking after in these streets - Thomas Lawson, my late good friend Henry's only son. He asked me to keep watch over him after he passed away. Little by little, I've got attached to the boy. He is a very good child, but loves to pick fights every now and then. A hothead, you know... I regard him as my own grandson - a family I've never got to have. So I don't want him to live out his life dumped in the streets when I see he's such a talented young man, particularly in medicine, judging by the skills he's picked up from me.

I am badly ill, and have even begun to slowly lose my sight. I don't think I'll last long, so I've decided to ask you for help. I'd want you to keep watch over Thomas for me. You know, enlist him in the army and see to it that he puts his talents to good use. That, my friend, would be the biggest blessing for my soul.

Thank you for everything, Jonathan. Sorry for putting this burden on you, but I had no other option. I am eternally grateful, and truly blessed to have had a friend like you.

Sincerely yours,
Joe Hummings

General Crowe watches the letter for a while, even though he's long finished reading. He's fallen into thoughts. Then, he picks up the phone and orders.

JONATHAN CROWE

Call Mr. Jim Hunter to my office!

Soon, Officer JIM HUNTER - a man in his thirties - enters and salutes him.

JIM HUNTER

General Crowe, Sir!

JONATHAN CROWE

Mr. Hunter, I would need to assign you a task of finding a certain person for me. You must bring him here at any cost.

JIM HUNTER

Yes Sir!

JONATHAN CROWE

As for you, Mr. Golding,
(turns to Hugh)

I would like you to stay here for a while. I gather, you too are acquainted with Thomas Lawson mentioned in the letter?

HUGH

The letter is about Thomas?!

JONATHAN CROWE

Indeed. So you know him. I would like you to offer Mr. Hunter assistance in finding that boy for me. Please give him as much information about the boy as you can. Then, I'd like you to remain here until he arrives, so we would discuss the details further. Sounds agreeable?

HUGH

Oh... Yes, General.

JONATHAN CROWE

Perfect. Well then, Mr. Hunter, I'm counting on you.

MR. HUNTER

(salutes again)

Yes Sir!

EXT. THE STREET - DAY

Thomas is walking on, hands in his pockets. He walks up to certain passers-by and asks for money.

THOMAS

Hey, can you please spare a dime?
Please, ma'am, I'm a homeless young boy!
Please, sir, can you spare a dime?
I'm starving!

A MAN

I've got nothing to give you, chap.
Beat it.

A WOMAN

Sorry, kid, I can't help you!

People either politely refuse him or walk away without a word. Some might indeed spare a dime and put a single coin in his hands.

In the end, Thomas turns to the left and follows a narrow street. He eyes his earnings - three coins.

THOMAS

Damn, "I've got nothing to give you", and the next thing you look they have bags costing 200 pounds and some even walk a pure-bred dog or feed a giant cat! Curse it... Even animals live better than us beggars! And they tell me I should go to the army to defend this careless lot?

(spits)

No, thank you!

A military car shows up on the narrow street. Thomas eyes it with scorn.

THOMAS

What the hell have they lost out here?

(spits again)

Weirdos...

The car pulls up at his side. The doors open and three soldier boys come out, approaching him. They are Sergeant JOACHIM WHITE - a 23-year-old black young man, Sergeant DANIEL HUGHES - a 24-year-old blond young man, and Staff Sergeant HARRY JAMES - a 27-year-old black-to-white mixed-race young man. Now Thomas gets a bad feeling.

THOMAS

What the_

HARRY JAMES

Are you Thomas Lawson?

THOMAS

Yes_ Wait, what? The hell do you want_

The soldiers grab him and take him to the car.

THOMAS

What the hell_ Cut the crap, you bastards!

DANIEL HUGHES

Follow us peacefully. We've got orders to deliver you to General's quarters.

THOMAS

Wha_ Quit messing with me, for fuck's sake! What General's quarters?! I've got no business with you army lot!

JOACHIM WHITE

Just shut up and follow us, kid!

Thomas struggles as hard as he can, but they subdue him, put handcuffs on him, and shove him into the car amidst each other.

INT. THE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Harry James sits at the front of the car, the other two sit at the back on each side of Thomas. There is a Fourth Soldier at the driver's seat. Thomas is still yelling.

THOMAS

Let me go, you fuckers!

The car drives off.

INT. THE ARMED FORCES' HEADQUARTERS, GENERAL CROWE'S WORKING-ROOM - DAY

Hugh is sitting calmly on the chair in a corner, eyeing the office. General Crowe is reviewing late Joe Hummings' and Hugh Golding's old documents.

HEAR a knock on the door.

JONATHAN CROWE

Come in!

Jim Hunter enters, salutes him, and declares.

JIM HUNTER

General Crowe, Sir! The boy has been found. Our sergeants have brought him successfully.

JONATHAN CROWE

Good job. Bring him here.

Jim exits again.

After a few minutes, he returns, followed by Harry James and Thomas Lawson.

Jim Hunter salutes the general again and so does Harry James, while Thomas stands there casually, hands in his pockets, as if he's still in the streets. He seems discontented.

JONATHAN CROWE

Thank you, Mr. Hunter. You two can leave us.

JIM HUNTER

Yes Sir!

Jim Hunter and Harry James salute Jonathan Crowe and walk out of the room.

Jonathan, Thomas, and Hugh remain alone.

THOMAS

What the hell is going on here_
 (notices Hugh)
 Hugh?! Damn... What the hell is
 going on here, for real?!

Jonathan eyes Thomas with a stern gaze.

JONATHAN CROWE

Welcome, Mr. Lawson. It is I who
 has called for you. I am sorry if
 they have treated you roughly, but
 since I have an urgent business
 with you, we had no other option.

THOMAS

What the_

HUGH

Listen carefully to the general,
 Thomas. This concerns your future.

THOMAS

Eh?!

JONATHAN CROWE

Please take a seat, Mr. Lawson. I
 shall explain the details to you.

Thomas eyes them both with bewilderment. Then he frowns and
 takes a seat on a chair General Crowe has pointed him on.

Jonathan Crowe studies him carefully for a while, and then
 asks.

JONATHAN CROWE

How old are you, Mr. Lawson?

THOMAS

Sixteen.

JONATHAN CROWE

(to himself)

A little too young for the army...
 But can be done.

(to Thomas)

So, this is the situation, Mr.
 Lawson: as Mr. Golding here has
 told me, Dr. Joe Hummings has been
 your friend, and today, he has
 passed away.

THOMAS

Yeah, that's true. But what does
 that have to do with my getting
 shoved in here?

JONATHAN CROWE

(strictly)

Let me clarify some rules to you before I go on, Mr. Lawson: this is my office. I am General of the Army, hence you are to address me as 'General', or 'Sir', and you are not to interrupt my speech, or give your comments until asked. Am I clear?

Thomas glares at him with apparent discontent. When General Crowe's own stern gaze intensifies, Thomas finally decides to yield and averts his eyes from him, murmuring with reluctance.

THOMAS

I am sorry, Sir.

JONATHAN CROWE

Good. So you attest to Mr. Golding's words. That makes our talk easier. Before he would pass, Dr. Hummings wrote his last will, which was addressed to me, since the two of us have been good friends_

THOMAS

Oh?

(with irony)

So that is why he was dumped in the streets after the retirement?

Jonathan does not give a word, but his glare freezes Thomas. Hugh has the same accusing gaze.

THOMAS

I am sorry. Please continue... Sir.

JONATHAN CROWE

In the letter, Dr. Hummings talks all about you. He says you are a talented young man. He wants me to take you under my wing. We usually do not accept sixteen-year-olds, more so beggars, especially such ill-mannered youngsters, in the army. But, because of my immense respect to late Dr. Hummings, and my eternal debt to him, I shall fulfill his last wish and enlist you. However, you are to prove me that you are indeed worthy of the praise he has given you... And so far you're not doing a good job at it. Am I clear?

THOMAS

Yes... Sir.

JONATHAN CROWE

Good. I shall put you in the list of new recruits and you will undergo the Basic Combat Training. You will be under my son's supervision, so that I may know of your progress. The training will start in a month from today.

THOMAS

Alright... I mean yes, Sir.

JONATHAN CROWE

Very well, then. From now on, your primal values should be discipline, order, obedience to your superiors, and perseverance, or else you will drop out, and I will no longer be able to help you. Keep that in mind - I might manage to open up the door for you, but from then on, you'll be on your own. All clear?

THOMAS

(nods)

Yes Sir.

JONATHAN CROWE

As for you, Mr. Golding,
(turns to Hugh)
I believe I can find a place for you too, if you are willing to rejoin us in the service.

HUGH

Rejoin the army? How's that possible? I mean, with my condition?

JONATHAN CROWE

(smiles)

Places can be found for anyone... I am certain we may find you a job through our newest veterans' employment services.

HUGH

Ah, I am immensely grateful, General!

JONATHAN CROWE

You're welcome. Also, I would like to give a proper burial to late Dr. Joe Hummings in our military cemetery. I would ask for your help, if possible.

HUGH

Ah, sure! I shall help you with all I can, General. I am certain Dr. Hummings would appreciate it - he will be able to rest in peace...

THOMAS

(with irony)

Yeah, of course, take care of the corpse now, the dead man would surely love it_

HUGH

Thomas!

Thomas shuts his mouth, for he can well see General Crowe glaring at him with apparent wrath he perfectly subdues. Hugh is no less upset.

THOMAS

I am sorry, Sir, Hugh.

HUGH

I too, apologize, General, for his ill manners.

(sighs)

One doesn't get to learn a lot about discipline in the streets.

JONATHAN CROWE

I figure. It is fine, though, he'll learn plenty of it in the army, or else he's gonna have it the hard way.

(glares at Thomas. Then turns back to Hugh)

Well then, I guess we have discussed all the necessary issues. You are free, gentlemen.

Hugh salutes General Crowe and he and Thomas walk out.

INT. THE ARMED FORCES' HEADQUARTERS, CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

The Sergeants Joachim White, Harry James, and Daniel Hughes are standing outside in the corridor, together with some other soldiers.

Hugh and Thomas walk out of the general's office.

The soldiers are whispering among each other, watching the two.

HARRY JAMES

They say this guy's been entrusted to General Crowe by Dr. Joe Hummings.

DANIEL HUGHES
 Joe Hummings? That legendary
 wartime doctor?!

JOACHIM WHITE
 You gotta be kidding!

HARRY JAMES
 No, I'm for real.

DANIEL HUGHES
 Isn't Dr. Hummings the one that
 General's been searching for years?

JOACHIM WHITE
 Yeah, I too have heard Dr. Hummings
 saved him from a fatal injury once,
 and General's been feeling indebted
 ever since.

DANIEL HUGHES
 Yeah, such a hero, and he's been
 taking care of such a tramp?
 (eyes Thomas from aside)
 What a shame...

HARRY JAMES
 I know, right.

Thomas hears their talks. He sneers and turns to Hugh.

THOMAS
 What are they yapping about? They
 say Joe's been a war hero.

HUGH
 Well, he has. Joe Hummings was a
 well-known wartime doctor. He was
 said to have saved the most
 soldiers on the frontlines. But I
 had no idea it included even the
 General of the Army.
 (chuckles)
 That old man was truly something,
 our Joe... And he taught his craft
 to no one but you.

THOMAS
 Wow, I had no idea he's been that
 important in the army... But that
 aside, this whole military issue
 was your doing, wasn't it? Out with
 it! I know it was!

HUGH
 (laughs)
 Maybe? But it was Joe's initiative.
 He handed me that letter yesterday,
 (MORE)

HUGH (cont'd)
and told me to give it to the
addressee when he was no more. He
apparently felt his final day was
approaching... I too, did as I was
told.

THOMAS
You really are an annoying old
bastard, Hugh...

HUGH
(laughs)
Well, aren't you going to accept
the offer? What else is there for
you?

THOMAS
I'm not going to accept it because
you told me to or because that old
general's ordered... I'll just do
it of my own free will. I've kinda
made up my mind.

Thomas shrugs and looks away with a frown, hands in his
pockets. Hugh laughs at his attitude. Then, a smile covers
his face.

HUGH (V.O.) (THOUGHTS)
One thing I know, though - both Joe
and good old Henry can finally rest
in peace now. This kid's on the
decent path at last...

1 MONTH LATER:

INT. BASIC COMBAT TRAINING CAMP - DAY

There are many new RECRUITS of 18 years, or at least 17, in
the camp. Among them is Thomas, more muscled and well-fed,
apparently having done excessive training this past month
just to be ready for the Boot Camp.

The RECRUITS wear uniforms and have their hair cut. They
have already passed the Reception Battalion and are waiting
for the real Boot Camp to begin.

The RECRUITS have grouped around 3 DRILL SERGEANTS: Harry
James, whom Thomas has seen a month before; ROGER HERRING -
a 31-year-old black muscled man; and FYNN KENT - a
29-year-old blond blue-eyed man of stern demeanour.

There is also Lieutenant ELIJAH CROWE - a 28-year-old tall
young man, with blond hair and blue eyes. He looks
benevolent and mild at heart. His military coat is hung on
his shoulders, adorned with a lieutenant medal. Thomas
easily figures he should be General Crowe's son.

Drill Sergeant Roger Herring does the main talking. Everyone listens.

ROGER HERRING

I am Roger Herring, and I am your Senior Drill Sergeant. I shall be assisted by Drill Sergeant Harry James and Drill Sergeant Fynn Kent.

(points on the two)

This training will be supervised by Lieutenant Elijah Crowe,

(points on him)

who will evaluate all of the successful recruits at the end of the training. The ones that appeal to him might be recruited to his personal division and be sent to the battlefields shortly after the Advanced Training in his camp. Is all clear?

RECRUITS (INCLUDING THOMAS)

Yes Sir!

ROGER HERRING

I compliment you all on passing the Combat Readiness tests. But the real deal begins now.

We shall put every effort in you, for you to develop into worthy soldiers our country can be proud of.

Do not expect the Combat Training to be easy. You will get tired, you will get stressed, you might be on the verge of giving up on yourselves, but be sure - we won't give up on you! Each of you can become a glorious soldier serving this country, if you instill discipline and courage.

If doubts and questions arise, always refer to the army values - Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honour, Integrity, and Personal Courage.

All clear?

RECRUITS (INCLUDING THOMAS)

Yes Sir!

EXT. BASIC COMBAT TRAINING CAMP - DAY

The training begins.

Thomas and the other recruits are being trained in all aspects - MARCHING, DRILL, RAPPELL, etc., and learn THEORIES as well. They learn FIRST-AID too.

Thomas shows especially good talents during FIRST-AID TRAINING - he always finishes faster than others and does it all perfectly, so that even the Drill Sergeants are stupefied.

However, during other exercises, Thomas often picks fights and has to do more push-ups than expected, punished by the sergeants.

ROGER HERRING

Lawson! Drop down and give me twenty!

THOMAS

(drops down. Mutters)

Tch, what a slave-driver... I did nothing wrong_

ROGER HERRING

You'll do thirty sit-ups next, for your loud mouth!

Thomas hushes up, clearly discontented.

INT. BOOT CAMP CHOW HALL - DAY

Thomas and the recruits are in a line before they get to the Chow Hall.

Even while eating, the orders from Drill Sergeants keep piling on. Even so, Thomas feels he's in paradise - he has never had such nutritious food for his entire life as a beggar back in the streets.

INT. DORMITORY - NIGHT

Thomas has 3 roommates: DARRELL LEE - a 19-year-old Chinese guy; JEREMIAH POWER - an 18-year-old black guy; and ERNESTO RAMIREZ - a Mexican guy of 17 years.

There are 2 two-storey BEDS.

Thomas is lying on the BOTTOM bed, while Darrell is ABOVE him.

ON THE OTHER BED, there's Ernesto lying on the BOTTOM part, and Jeremiah ABOVE him.

DARRELL LEE

Okay, you all, let's get to know each other. I'll go first. I'm Darrell Lee, 19, Chinese by ancestry. I've enlisted in the army to serve my country and eventually become a ranked officer.

THOMAS

Nice to meet you, Lee.

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

Yeah. Fancy ambition you got there!

JEREMIAH POWER

I know, right! But ranked officer is still humble - aim higher, man, a general!

DARRELL LEE

(chuckles)

Come on, I'll just stay down to earth.

JEREMIAH POWER

No, for real, man, whatever ya do, ya need to aim to the top! That's how my old man says, and when my old man says it, it's a thing. Okay, anyway, fellas, I guess it is my turn. I am Jeremiah Power, 18, and just as I said - I aim to the top: gonna be a general, mark my word!

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

Woah!

(laughs)

Good luck with that, bro. Well, I'll go next, I guess. I am Ernesto Ramirez, Mexican, 17, but turning 18 this year so it doesn't count... Anyway, I just want to protect this country and be a worthy soldier everyone can be proud of.

JEREMIAH POWER

Woow, that's a goal, man! I like it!

DARRELL LEE

Yeah, me too. You have my support, Ramirez.

THOMAS

Yeah, that sounds like a nice goal.

JEREMIAH POWER

So what about ya, fella?

(to Thomas)

Lawson, I recall?

(laughs)

Damn, man, they be yellin' all the time, those Drill Sergeants, but ya still received the most of 'em, didn't ya?

THOMAS

(chuckles)

Ugh, shut up, Power... Yeah, my name's Thomas Lawson. I'm 16_

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

16?!

JEREMIAH POWER

No kiddin', man?

DARRELL LEE

How did they let you in?

THOMAS

Well, it's complicated... My old friend's blessing, I guess. To you this camp might look like an all-out hell, but to me, it isn't all that horrific, even if I am indeed stressed-out. I lived in the streets before I'd come here, so the meals they give here, the clothes, everything... It seems heaven compared to what I've been acquainted with. I am learning a thing every day and, it seems like I've begun to see the world in other colours, too.

JEREMIAH POWER

Woah, I like ya, man! Ya preachin' so good!

DARRELL LEE

I know, right. He seems on a whole another level.

(to Thomas)

So, Lawson, what's your dream?

THOMAS

Dream?

(shrugs)

Currently, I'm kind of lost. So many things have happened, and each day is like a new revelation... I really am confused. My whole world's been turned upside down. The only thing I can hope for, I guess, is to find my true self eventually... Hopefully after I graduate from this camp.

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

Wow, that's really deep, bro.

JEREMIAH POWER

I'm tellin' ya, this guy will ace the top!

(to Thomas)

Hey, Lawson, fella, whatever ya may need, ya can address me at any time! I'm all yours, bro!

DARRELL LEE

Yeah, we're all in for each other here. You all can count on me, too.

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

I'm in, bros!

THOMAS

(chuckles)

Thanks, guys. Likewise.

EXT. BASIC COMBAT TRAINING CAMP - DAY

Thomas and his friends pull through the obstacles together.

However, due to his temper, Thomas continues to get the whole group of recruits in trouble.

HARRY JAMES

Lawson, drop down and give me forty!

THOMAS

Forty?! My foot! I did exactly as I was told!

HARRY JAMES

Alright. You all,
(to the group)
To a certain someone's loud mouth,
(glares at Thomas)
You all drop down and give me hundred!

The recruits are astonished, but do as they are told. Apparently, they all curse Thomas in their thoughts, while his 3 friends - Darrell, Jeremiah, and Ernesto - are not that much angry, rather disappointed.

DURING THE 3RD WEEK, the recruits finally get to start SHOOTING exercises. Thomas uses a rifle very well.

Elijah Crowe, who is always somewhere nearby, contemplates Thomas with a smile.

Gradually, Thomas stops messing with the Drill Sergeants, talking back, etc. His expression too, changes - it does not bear hatred and disgust anymore, rather determination and willpower.

10 WEEKS LATER:

EXT. BASIC COMBAT TRAINING CAMP - DAY

The families of the recruits visit the camp. They congratulate their sons who have graduated.

Thomas is among those successful candidates. Hugh has visited him on the occasion.

Thomas has changed - he is taller, more muscled, and his overall expression too, has turned into milder, calmer, and kinder one.

HUGH

Thomas, goodness! Congratulations, boy! I admit I was worried about you.

THOMAS

(laughs)

What the hell, Hugh? I told you I was gonna make it. You doubted my capabilities?

HUGH

Nothing like it, but you know... How you've been, though? Was it rough?

THOMAS

Rough? For God's sake, Hugh, that's a mild notion - it was hell! You know what hell is? I thought I knew back when I was a beggar, but turns out that was just a kindergarten! Tch, curse it all...

HUGH

Oh?

(smiles)

You've changed.

THOMAS

Huh? What do you mean?

HUGH

The Thomas I knew, would give it a good amount of curse, and probably spit, too... But he'd never mention a word such as "God", even if just as a manner of speech.

THOMAS

Oh?

(smiles for himself)

Good old Joe would, though...

(to Hugh)

You know, Hugh, here in the Boot Camp, we had first-aid training,

(MORE)

THOMAS (cont'd)
 too. Lieutenant Crowe had been observing us from aside during the whole past 10 weeks. When the first-aid training finished, he once called me aside. What he told me, has been constantly on my mind ever since. I guess I'll accept that offer, after all.

HUGH
 What_ Lieutenant Crowe has given you an offer?!

THOMAS
 He asked me to take Advanced Training as a Combat Medic.

THOMAS'S FLASHBACK:

EXT. BASIC COMBAT TRAINING CAMP - DAY

The training in the field has just finished. Thomas and Elijah Crowe are standing alone having a private talk.

Thomas is standing in position. Elijah chuckles.

ELIJAH CROWE
 Ease up, Lawson, it's just a small talk.

THOMAS
 (relaxes)
 Yes Sir.

ELIJAH CROWE
 As you might be aware, I've been constantly watching your training, as per my father's request.

THOMAS
 Yes, Sir.

ELIJAH CROWE
 He informed me of the contents of Dr. Hummings' letter. Now I fully realise what late Dr. Hummings meant - you indeed have medical skills.
 So here's my suggestion, kid - after you finish the Basic Combat Training, go straight in for Combat Medic Training. Your skills will be essential out on the battlefield. The way you do it so fast and efficiently... That's innate, no one will top that. Don't waste that gift. Give it a thought. I'd be
 (MORE)

ELIJAH CROWE (cont'd)
 happy to welcome you in my
 division, but if you enter as a
 medic, it'll be even better.

Thomas remains bewildered and shocked.

BACK TO THE PRESENT:

EXT. BASIC COMBAT TRAINING CAMP - DAY

THOMAS

(to Hugh)

Considering some of my friends were
 already recruited by Lieutenant
 Crowe to join his division, I guess
 I'll accept that offer and support
 them as a medic.

HUGH

Wow...

(smiles)

Yes, you've indeed changed a lot,
 Thomas. Changed for the better...
 I'm so proud of you, kid.

THOMAS

(blushes and looks away)

Cut the crap, old man...

THOMAS (V.O.) (THOUGHTS)

(looks at Hugh's leg)

This is also for you, Hugh, and for
 Joe... For all those soldiers out
 there... And, for those fathers
 whose families are waiting at home.

(looks up at the sky)

I'll repay you this way, Jane
 Diamond... For back then.

3 YEARS LATER:

EXT. THE BATTLEFIELD - DAY

SOLDIERS are firing at each other. It is a heavy battle.

Some soldiers motion at each other to approach the enemy
 side, some go on crawling up. Soldiers get shot down quite a
 lot.

The group of MEDICS is active on the battlefield. Among them
 is Thomas (19-year-old, much taller and more muscled), fully
 equipped with medical equipment as well as arms.

GARRY RUTH - a 24-year-old black-haired green-eyed soldier -
 gets wounded. The medics instantly come up to his side.
 Thomas begins the treatment. Some other soldiers defend
 them.

THOMAS
 (to medics)
 Give me a hand, guys!
 (to Garry)
 Okay, mate, I got you! Don't worry.

Garry heavily breathes. His wound is deep, but Thomas performs the medical aid so fast and efficiently that even the other medics are amazed.

Thomas gets done and the medics move along to the next wounded.

Some medics whisper among each other. They are NOAH SHETNER - a 22-year-old Jewish guy, ROBERT MARLOWE - a 28-year-old blond curly guy, and TIMOTHY BROWN - a 25-year-old black-to-white mixed-race guy.

NOAH SHETNER
 (stares at Thomas)
 Damn, this guy's a beast!

TIMOTHY BROWN
 And to think he's the youngest...

SOLDIERS are getting wounded one after another.

Thomas and his medical group operate fast and move on. The SHOOTING goes on.

INT. BATTLE CAMP - NIGHT

The MEDICS are actively treating the WOUNDED.

Lieutenant Crowe and 2 other RANKED OFFICERS are talking in a faraway corner.

Thomas runs around the stretchers together with the other medics and provides full support.

THOMAS
 This one needs blood transfusion!
 Quick, quick!

NOAH SHETNER
 Coming!

ROBERT MARLOWE
 Aid me out here! This one's got a
 hand torn!

TIMOTHY BROWN
 I got my hands full here! Ask
 Jackson, he's just finished!

The medics are moving around hastily.

Garry Ruth, who's been treated right on the field earlier by Thomas, is stabilized now. His wound is bandaged and he's

lying on a stretcher to get some rest. He eyes Thomas who is working next to him.

GARRY RUTH

Thank you, Doc, for before...

THOMAS

That's my job, mate, don't mention it.

Thomas turns back to his patient Jeremiah Power, now 21, and performs blood transfusion with the help of some other medics. Garry watches him.

INT. BATTLE CAMP - NIGHT (LATER)

When all the wounded are treated, Lieutenant Crowe walks up to Thomas.

ELIJAH CROWE

Hey, Lawson, I need your help.

THOMAS

(salutes him)

Yes, Lieutenant, Sir! What is it?

ELIJAH CROWE

Follow me.

ELIJAH LEADS HIM AWAY INTO A DIFFERENT CORNER, where an enemy soldier - KNUT BERGER, a 28-year-old blond blue-eyed man - is lying, wounded heavily. He has an emblem of a Major on his uniform.

Thomas' group of MEDICS has been called in too. There are also the other 2 RANKED OFFICERS standing nearby.

ELIJAH CROWE

That's a major of the enemy army. Since you medics have finished up with our soldiers, we would like you to treat him as well.

Thomas carefully observes Knut, who watches him back. Then Thomas looks at his medic comrades.

THOMAS

Okay guys, help me up!

The medics begin to treat the wounded.

Thomas works as hard as he can. Knut doesn't take his eyes off him.

As Thomas is treating him, Knut's wound hurts and he grimaces in pain. Thomas notices it.

THOMAS

I'll finish up soon, friend. I'm sorry, but you'll need to bear with it for a bit. No worries, I'll get you back on your feet, I promise.

Thomas zealously continues working. The other medics help him.

Noah Shetner, who's been with him all the time, murmurs.

NOAH SHETNER

Why're you wasting your breath? He's an enemy, I doubt he knows our language.

THOMAS

When you want to help people, you don't need no language - it'll all be written on your face.

The medics can't help but chuckle at Thomas' such half-joke. Knut instead continues observing them with attention.

THOMAS FINISHES stitching up his wound and Knut lets out a sigh of relief.

Knut suddenly GRABS Thomas' hand. Elijah Crowe and the ranked officers instantly place hands on their weapons, while the medics start in fright.

Thomas does not move or show fear - he instead establishes direct eye-contact with Knut.

Knut watches him with all-seriousness and nods his head. Thomas guesses it's a sign of gratitude, and smiles.

THOMAS

No problem, friend. Enemies or not, my job, as a doctor, is to save lives. I'll help out anyone who needs my aid.

Knut returns a very faint smile and lets go of his hand.

Thomas and the medics stand up. Thomas waves a hand at Knut. He and the medics walk out.

EXT. THE BATTLEFIELD - DAY

The heavy battle continues. SOLDIERS are SHOOTING each other. MEDICAL UNITS are moving around the battlefield to treat the WOUNDED.

Thomas works as zealously as always.

Darrell Lee (22-year-old) and Ernesto Ramirez (20-year-old) are fighting alongside Garry Ruth, shooting the enemies. Garry seems to have recovered - he is quite energetic.

Garry's friend, BILL HAWKINS - a 23-year-old black-haired guy - YELLS and falls, wounded in chest.

GARRY RUTH

Bill!

Garry SHOOTS at the ENEMIES, grabs Bill and hides behind a TRENCH.

GARRY RUTH

Hang on, Bill! Docs are going to be here soon!

Bill heavily breathes.

The MEDICAL UNIT arrives. Thomas is leading them.

Thomas kneels beside Bill and unwraps his vest. Bill's left chest is soaked in blood. He MOANS. Thomas is shocked.

NOAH SHETNER

Goodness, it's nearly at the heart_

Thomas grabs Noah's arm and shakes his head, giving him a sign to hush. Thomas then turns to Bill.

THOMAS

No worries, mate! We got you.

GARRY RUTH

Docs, you have to save him!

Thomas just nods and begins the treatment.

Garry stays with them to protect them if need be. He is worried about Bill, his friend. He CLUTCHES Bill's hand.

GARRY RUTH

Come on, Bill! You can make it, buddy!

Thomas tries his hardest to stabilize the wound, but Bill's skin turns yellower.

The medics exchange grim gazes, while Thomas perseveres.

BILL HAWKINS

Leave me...

GARRY RUTH

What? That ain't happening, buddy!
Docs are going to save you, you'll see!

BILL HAWKINS

It's no use...

GARRY RUTH

Stop talking nonsense! Docs know better...

Bill smiles once, wheezes, and closes eyes. Thomas gets chills, but perseveres.

THOMAS

No, no, no... Come back! Wait, I'm going to_

NOAH SHETNER

(grimly)

Mate, it's no use. He's already_

THOMAS

No! It's not over! I can still_

TIMOTHY BROWN

Lawson...

THOMAS

No!

Garry turns pale.

Thomas wants to continue trying, but the medics stop him - they can well see there's no use since Bill's already dead.

GARRY RUTH

Hey... Hey, it can't be true! He can still be saved, right? Tell me he can!

NOAH SHETNER

The wound was deadly. It's over.

GARRY RUTH

Wha_ You can't be serious!

(yells)

He was my friend since school! This can't be happening! You gotta treat him!

TIMOTHY BROWN

There ain't nothing we can do, mate. He's dead. This is war. No matter how hard we may try, such things happen.

ROBERT MARLOWE

Yeah, I've seen a lot in my time - it's six years since I'm on the frontlines. We are medics, not miracle-workers. No matter what we do, there will be people who can't be saved.

Garry yells in agony and bursts into tears on dead Bill's corpse.

Thomas is no less agonized.

THOMAS

No! It can't be happening! I should have saved him! I should have... Why didn't I come here sooner?!

ROBERT MARLOWE

Chill, Lawson. This boy was already beyond salvation.

THOMAS

(in tears)

No!

NOAH SHETNER

(sighs)

I guess it's the first ever patient he's lost?

TIMOTHY BROWN

I figure. I remember how I wept at my first time. Poor kid...

INT. BATTLE CAMP - NIGHT

The medics are running around as always.

Medic ORLANDO JACKSON - a 24-year-old black guy - is treating Garry Ruth, who's been wounded in an arm.

Garry looks grim - he's still grieving about his lost friend Bill Hawkins. He grimly watches Thomas who's running around the stretchers trying to save everyone he can, without much words. It is evident Thomas too, still laments the first-ever loss of a patient. It has hit his nerves hard.

THOMAS AND THE MEDICS FINISH treating all the wounded. Orlando Jackson too, has just finished bandaging Garry's arm.

ORLANDO JACKSON

Well, boys, I guess that's it for today.

THOMAS

(sullen)

No, it's not.

NOAH SHETNER

Huh? What do you mean?

THOMAS

I've got one patient left.

NOAH SHETNER

One patient_ Who do you mean?

THOMAS

I'll do it alone. One person will suffice. You guys stay here.

The medics and Garry are shocked.

THOMAS WALKS OFF TO A DISTANT CORNER, into the little room in the tent where Knut Berger is lying.

ORLANDO JACKSON

Wait... He's going to treat the enemy?!

NOAH SHETNER

I don't understand... That man's condition has been stabilized even yesterday! Why would he want to treat him further? I know the law to treat all the wounded and everything, but... He's an enemy! He doesn't need as much attention as our boys.

TIMOTHY BROWN

Leave him alone, Shetner. That kid's had it hard... Today's been his first loss. He wants to make "amends". Let him do as he pleases. It's not like that enemy major's getting away anyway.

NOAH SHETNER

Yeah, you're right...

The medics watch Thomas with pity.

Garry's eyes show fury: he is not satisfied that Thomas is going to treat the enemy major - the leader of those who have killed Bill Hawkins.

INT. BATTLE CAMP, KNUT BERGER'S CORNER - NIGHT

Knut Berger is lying in a corner, withstanding apparent pain with pride and strong will.

Lieutenant Crowe and the 2 RANKED OFFICERS are in the room as well.

Thomas ENTERS and walks towards Knut with his medical equipment ready.

ELIJAH CROWE

Lawson? What are you doing here_
Wait, what are you up to?

THOMAS

Lieutenant, sir.
(salutes him)
I'm here to treat my patient.

ELIJAH CROWE

I know I've told you yesterday to treat him, but... Lawson, you are not obliged to heal him up completely. His condition is stabilized. That's all that matters.

THOMAS

As a soldier, I am not obliged to treat an enemy, it's true. But I am not a simple soldier anymore, Lieutenant. I remember you once told me I had an innate medical talent and should've followed that path... I admit you were right. But it is not only the talent that I have. I have this urge... The urge to help every person that might need my attention, and with that, I mean to help fully. Once a person becomes my patient, I find it my duty to heal them up completely, and I don't care whether they're my friends or foes. I am not just a soldier, Lieutenant. I am a doctor.

Lieutenant Crowe watches Thomas for a while, and so does Knut Berger.

Knut's gaze is serious, observing, and a bit astounded, as if he can fully understand what Thomas is saying.

Elijah Crowe is surprised at first, but then heaves a sigh - he has been a leader of the armies for long, so he guesses Thomas must have lost a patient on the battlefield.

ELIJAH CROWE

Alright, Lawson. After all, it was I who asked you to follow that path. Now I can't really order you to trample on your principles of a true medic. I really am proud of you, though. I am proud you belong to my division.

THOMAS

(smiles)
Thanks for understanding, Sir.

Thomas kneels beside Knut and grabs the bandages of his wound.

THOMAS

Hey there, friend.

(smiles)

Sorry I came so late, had to treat my friends first. You are a soldier too so you know the rules, right? First, one's teammates, then - one's foes... So it goes.

(chuckles)

But for true doctors, every life matters. That is how I've been taught, even before I'd join the army.

Now then, bear with me, friend.

Just need to make sure you're properly recovering.

He begins to treat his wound.

THOMAS

Hmph, who would've thought? You're doing pretty great... Are all of your people so sturdy?

(chuckles)

Good job.

At such gaiety of his, Knut Berger returns a faint chuckle.

THOMAS FINISHES treating Knut and bandages his wound again.

Knut raises his hand. Elijah carefully watches them from aside - still observing that the hostage doesn't mess up.

Knut has no ill intentions. He just rubs Thomas' head with a kind grin. Thomas laughs.

THOMAS

No problem, friend, you're welcome!

Thomas packs his medical equipment, stands up, salutes Lieutenant Crowe and the 2 officers and walks out.

INT. BATTLE CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Thomas returns into the soldiers' place. Once he passes Garry Ruth, this latter sneers.

GARRY RUTH

Good job helping our enemy, Lawson!

The soldiers widen eyes hearing such a remark. Jeremiah Power rises up from the stretcher he's lying on.

JEREMIAH POWER

Huh? Bullshit! Mah mate Lawson would never do that!

(to Thomas)

Am I right, mah man?

DARRELL LEE

Yeah, there's no way! That man's condition has been stabilized yesterday. Why would Lawson treat him further?

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

Don't speak crap, Ruth! Lawson just went to visit the lieutenant.

(to Thomas)

Right, mate?

THOMAS

(grimly)

I did treat him. But I don't see why I shouldn't have. He's my patient.

The soldiers are shocked.

JEREMIAH POWER

Ya did what?!

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

Are you for real? He's an enemy, dude!

DARRELL LEE

That is really careless of you, Lawson! We don't need our enemies at full health!

FIRST RANDOM SOLDIER

I know, right! And it's not like those guys will pity their own captives or anything! They're brutes, those bastards!

SECOND RANDOM SOLDIER

Yeah, I hear they don't even treat their wounded prisoners.

THIRD RANDOM SOLDIER

(laughs)

Screw treating! They even torture them, sometimes to death!

Thomas just walks on.

FIRST RANDOM SOLDIER

Where're you going, Lawson? We need answers!

JEREMIAH POWER

Yeah, man, what the heck?

THOMAS

We've got nothing to discuss. I acted on my honour, just as the Army Values demand.

Thomas walks out of the tent, headed to the medical unit.

EXT. THE BATTLEFIELD - DAY

The battle continues. Thomas's friends are shooting at full force: Darrell Lee, Jeremiah Power, Ernesto Ramirez, Garry Ruth - everyone's dived into the severe fight.

However, they are at a disadvantage - the ENEMY PLANES appear in the sky and shoot BOMBS down. The ENEMY TANKS seem to be advancing as well. ENEMIES are shooting bombs that explode near the TROOPS and injure quite a lot of them.

ELIJAH CROWE

Retreat! Abandon the camp!

RANDOM OFFICER

Move out, boys! Now!

The armies begin retreating. Thomas and the MEDICS are carrying the wounded as well as treating them.

Thomas hears a shrill from the behind. He sees Darrell Lee has collapsed due to an EXPLOSION nearby.

THOMAS

Lee!

Thomas runs back.

TIMOTHY BROWN

Lawson, come back! It's dangerous!

Thomas doesn't listen and grabs collapsed Lee's hand. Garry Ruth, who is nearby, gives them a hand. They both help Lee up.

DARRELL LEE

Thank you!

THOMAS

No problem. Let's run!

They run off.

Darrell soon outmatches both Thomas and Garry Ruth and runs up to his friends Ernesto and Jeremiah.

ELIJAH CROWE

Don't fall behind! Move!

The PLANE ENGINES are ROARING and BOMBS are EXPLODING all over the field.

JEREMIAH POWER

Ugh, curse these air forces!
 (keeps shooting and
 retreating)
 We would've won if not those
 bastards!

ERNESTO RAMIREZ

Yeah, but this is war. They don't
 fight all fair and square. Let's
 keep moving now!

JEREMIAH POWER

Tch, curse 'em!

Thomas runs at a slower pace since he pays attention to the whole army - he doesn't want to leave anyone behind.

A BOMB EXPLODES near him. Thomas YELLS and falls, injured due to the impact. Blood trickles off his skin.

Thomas looks up. His vision has gone BLURRED, yet he can still notice Garry Ruth near him.

THOMAS

Ruth...
 (coughs)
 Help...

Garry is terrified - ENEMIES, now not only tanks and planes but even the FOOT SOLDIERS - are advancing at a fast pace. There's no minute to lose. He looks back at Thomas.

GARRY RUTH

You've been helping enemies. I... I
 can't help a pathetic traitor such
 as you, Lawson.

Garry runs off, clearly terrorized of the advancing enemy forces rather than acting on his principles.

Thomas can see Gary from the behind as he runs off - the man he has once saved.

Thomas's entire body has gone numb. He looks around with his blurred vision, and barely notices ENEMY SOLDIERS come up to him. They have overtaken their former camp. They point guns at Thomas. Thomas blacks out.

INT. ENEMY BARRACKS - NIGHT

Thomas wakes up in a locked cell. He is bewildered and confused at first, not able to remember all that has happened.

SEVERAL FLASHBACKS RECUR - the sounds of BOMBS EXPLODING, his sight going BLURRED, and Garry Ruth abandoning him.

GARRY RUTH (O.S.) (FLASHBACK VOICE)
 You've been helping enemies. I... I
 can't help a pathetic traitor such
 as you, Lawson.

Thomas feels disappointed and betrayed - he had saved the
 guy and this latter has dumped him at the enemies' mercy.

HEAR the door creak and open.

Five ENEMY SOLDIERS walk in, led by MAJOR SCHNEIDER - a
 40-year-old scarred-faced ruthless man.

MAJOR SCHNEIDER
 (in English with broken
 accent)
 What is your purpose on our lands?

THOMAS
 H... Huh?

Major Schneider gives a sign to his henchmen. They BEAT
 Thomas hard so that his wounds reopen and he begins to
 bleed.

MAJOR SCHNEIDER
 I'll ask again - what are you
 after, on our lands?

THOMAS
 (coughs blood)
 Hell, I've no idea of that crap,
 man... I'm just a doctor.

The enemy soldiers continue beating him hard.

THOMAS
 Hell, I'm just a doctor, you
 bastards!

The enemies don't want to hear this simple truth.

Thomas and some other PRISONERS in different CELLS are
 getting TORTURED in a similar manner, day by day. Their
 SHRILLS deafen the area.

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.)
 Since he was captured, it was
 almost like hell, or even worse.
 The prisoners were not fed, their
 wounds were left untreated... Some
 soldiers would die on their own,
 some would be killed during
 torture, some would even be shot.
 My father held out, but... It did
 leave a huge mark on his soul.
 Luckily, the war ended soon after,
 so he managed to survive.
 (MORE)

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.) (cont'd)

But it was not that much of a happy moment.

EXT. ENEMY BARRACKS - DAY

The PRISONERS are taken out of the barracks. The end of war has been announced, but the prisoners still remain in custody, Thomas included.

Thomas looks all bloodied - apparently just been tortured. He is held together with the other prisoners - his countrymen.

MAJOR SCHNEIDER

Okay, put these scum in a line and shoot 'em down, all of 'em!

ENEMY SOLDIERS

Yes, sir!

They put the FIRST LINE OF CAPTIVES and shoot them down.

Thomas and the others watch it in horror. Thomas trembles - he knows now will be his turn.

MAJOR SCHNEIDER

Second line, go!

ENEMY SOLDIERS

Yes, Sir!

KNUT BERGER (O.S.)

Wait, Major Schneider! Let me handle that one.

Thomas is shocked - Knut Berger, one time a captive of theirs, has now approached them in his major attire, full of pride and dignity.

What's more - Knut is the same kind of a ruthless war dog as Major Schneider that's been torturing him these past weeks. Knut's part of prisoners are no less tortured - it seems he's no different from his colleagues.

MAJOR SCHNEIDER

Oh, Major Berger?

KNUT BERGER

I've got a business with this one. I'd prefer to finish him off myself, if you allow.

Knut Berger points on Thomas.

Thomas is even more shocked - he doesn't know their language, but can understand few words like "finish off" since they've been using it a lot while he's been in captivity. He senses something is up.

MAJOR SCHNEIDER

Oh... Alright, I've got no objections. Main is we wipe 'em out since we've got no more use of 'em. The sooner we're done the better.

Knut nods and gives a sign to his UNDERLINGS. They grab tortured and weakened Thomas who cannot even struggle anymore and take him away.

They shove him INTO A CAR. Knut takes the wheel and drives off.

FROM THE BEHIND, Thomas once again hears the SHOTS - the SECOND LINE OF CAPTIVES has been shot down.

INT. KNUT BERGER'S CAR - DAY (TRAVELING)

Knut is driving the car on the road.

Thomas watches Knut from the backseat and floats into thoughts, aware that his death is near. This time too, a man he's saved has turned against him.

THOMAS (V.O.) (THOUGHTS)

The hell with it... Is this all I've been striving for? Live up to 19 years and die like a dog in some foreign land by the hand of some bastard I've once saved? Friend? Foe? What is the damn difference? What is the use of helping people if they stab you in the back like this? What was all that "kindness" crap Joe's been teaching me all those years? Is this what army's all about - be abandoned by your comrades and killed in custody? What have I been fighting for? Those mollycoddle citizens warming up in their damn houses, not even giving a pin for a hungry beggar boy in the streets? Ugh, I'd rather have died from hunger than be shot down in a remote land like this!

THE CAR STOPS. Thomas is stupefied. He then shudders as he sees they're in a REMOTE FIELD.

THOMAS (V.O.) (THOUGHTS)

Do I literally have to die in a remote land?

EXT. REMOTE FIELD, KNUT BERGER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Knut comes out of the car, opens the backseat door and drags Thomas out.

KNUT BERGER
(in perfect English)

Out!
Out, I said!

Thomas, much weakened from wounds and maltreatment of the previous days, obeys without much struggle and gets out of the car. He is terrified that his death has come so near.

The minute Thomas comes out, Knut takes his major emblem off his military jacket, then takes off the jacket itself, and wraps Thomas in it. He then puts his own hat on him.

Thomas watches Knut bewildered. Knut doesn't explain much. He grabs Thomas' arm a bit violently again, as per his habit, and shoves him in the frontseat, beside himself. He then enters the car and takes the wheel anew.

INT. KNUT BERGER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS (TRAVELING)

Knut begins driving again.

Thomas is much perturbed - he can't understand what has just happened and what his fate might be.

Knut starts talking, much in an ordering tone like a true military major.

KNUT BERGER
Now, kid, listen carefully and do exactly as I say.
I'm taking you to the border. Just hand them this thing,
(stuffs a border pass paper in his hands)
And they'll let you pass. No odd gestures, no odd emotions, got it? Just pass through and get the hell out of here.

THOMAS
W... What?

KNUT BERGER
I believe I'm talking normal English?

THOMAS
No, I mean_

KNUT BERGER
Then no questions, hell with it!

THOMAS
But if I cross the border... What will happen to you? I mean_

KNUT BERGER

You want me to shoot you down so bad?

Thomas freezes in dread. Knut easily notices his reaction.

KNUT BERGER

Well then, shut your mouth and do as told. I'll manage my affairs. I just don't want to see a kind little guy like you shot dead. Don't ruin my mood. I'm not always so generous.

Thomas hushes up, still horrified that Knut might as well change his 'mood'.

EXT. BORDER - DAY

The CAR arrives at the BORDER.

There are CERTAIN PEOPLE passing through. Since the war has been announced over, people are returning to their former homes after custody.

Knut walks OUT OF THE CAR and drags Thomas out.

KNUT BERGER

Now then, go, and don't turn back.

He pushes him towards the GROUP OF PEOPLE that are PASSING the BORDER.

Thomas, much bewildered and only half-awake due to his past injuries, trots through the crowd. He doesn't dare turn back, for he still thinks Knut might change his mind.

He places the PAPER Knut has given him before the BORDER CONTROL, just as Knut has instructed.

They indeed let him pass. He walks on, and soon appears on the OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER.

There, he turns back, to see Knut BEYOND THE NET-WALL.

Knut salutes him just once, from afar, and sits back INTO THE CAR.

Thomas watches him DRIVE OFF.

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.)

So, out of all the guys he had treated, dad was betrayed by a comrade, and saved by an enemy.

INT. THE SCHOOL, CLASSROOM - DAY

The classroom is full of 13-year-old CHILDREN. DYLLAN LAWSON - a likewise 13-year-old boy with strawberry-blonde hair and light-blue eyes - is standing AT THE BLACKBOARD and READING his assignment paper in front of the class.

The TEACHER, MS. NORTON - a curly woman with glasses - is listening attentively FROM THE TEACHER'S SEAT.

The CHILDREN are likewise drawn into the narrative. Especially interested is JANICE MCMILLAN - a curly red-haired green-eyed girl sitting AT THE FRONT DESK.

MS. NORTON

Your story is so interesting,
Dyllan! So, what happened to your
father after he returned?

DYLLAN LAWSON

Thank you, Miss.
Well, since he had been taken under
the patronage of General Jonathan
Crowe, it continued even after the
war. The Crowe welcomed him in
their family. Father got a lot of
support from them, and gradually,
was able to continue his studies in
a Medical University, as per his
own wish.
Nowadays, he's a renowned doctor,
and he strives to help as many
people as he can.

MS. NORTON

That is amazing! And, what about
your mother?

JANICE MCMILLAN

Yeah, how did they meet?

DYLLAN LAWSON

(smirks)

Oh, by the time the war ended, they
had already met... But how they met
a second time, is where things get
interesting.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jane Diamond, now 9-year-old, is zealously DRAWING beautiful childish PICTURES.

MOST OF THE DRAWINGS depict how a LITTLE GIRL gives a POOR BOY some gifts, food, or simply helps him out.

IN SOME DRAWINGS, the GIRL is a FAIRY and the BOY is a HUMAN, in some others - both are human, but the GIRL is RICH while the BOY is a BEGGAR.

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.)

Jane Diamond had always had a great passion for drawing. But it intensified after she met the beggar boy from the streets - Thomas. Since then, the major inspiration of many of her drawings was a poor ragged boy receiving blessings from a kind little girl.

HEAR a bell on the door.

THERESE DIAMOND, Jane's mother - a woman in her upper thirties, with black bob-hair and light-blue eyes - runs up to the door and OPENS it.

Jane hears her mother scream in happiness and burst into tears.

Jane drops the pencils and runs into the entry, to see HER FATHER come home. It is JAKE DIAMOND - a strawberry-blond-haired, blue-eyed man in his early forties, strawberry-blond stubble covering his face. He lacks the left arm.

JANE

Daddy!

Jane bursts into joyful tears and hugs him tightly.

Therese is no less joyful, and hugs him too.

Jake embraces both Jane and Therese, covering them in kisses.

JAKE DIAMOND

I'm back, my angels...

JANE

I knew it!

(sobs)

I knew you'd come back!

I believed so strongly, it had to come true!

JAKE DIAMOND

(laughs)

Of course, I came back! Your daddy can't be beaten by some spineless enemies now, can he?

The family rejoices.

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.)

Jane's father came back from the frontlines, and the family rejoiced...

However, their joy was short-timed.

(MORE)

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.) (cont'd)
 In just a year, a horrible event
 shook their hearts.

1 YEAR LATER:

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jane is ill. Therese is nursing her. Jake is present in the room too. He is no less worried. The DOCTOR - a chubby old woman - is examining Jane's heartbeat.

Jane coughs out blood in the bed.

THERESE DIAMOND

Goodness!

DOCTOR

You will need to see a cardiologist. It might be more severe than we thought.

THERESE DIAMOND

What?! W... What is wrong with her?

DOCTOR

Her heartbeat is abnormal. I'd suggest it be checked so we know what exactly is wrong.

THERESE DIAMOND

Oh, goodness! Jake...

JAKE DIAMOND

I'm calling the hospital right now!

INT. THE HOSPITAL, CARDIOLOGIST'S ROOM - DAY

The CARDIOLOGIST - a middle-aged man with glasses - is talking with Therese and Jake after having examined Jane.

CARDIOLOGIST

She has a heart condition. Thankfully, it can be treated, since it's not seriously developed. However, she will need to take medications properly, and she should not be exposed to much stress, by any means.

THERESE DIAMOND

Oh, goodness! Will she be alright, Doctor?

CARDIOLOGIST

If you take all of my advice and treat her as is due, she will be perfectly alright, Madam. But be
 (MORE)

CARDIOLOGIST (cont'd)
 sure not to expose her to stress,
 by any means, so that the process
 does not go worse.

THERESE DIAMOND
 Ah, thank you, Doctor! We will do
 exactly as you advise!

JAKE DIAMOND
 Truly, thank you.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Therese has just put Jane to bed. She is ready to leave the
 room when Jane asks.

JANE
 Mommy, am I going to die?

THERESE DIAMOND
 What?! Ah, no, sweetie, never say
 that! You heard the doctor, didn't
 you? You'll be perfectly fine! He
 said not to stress out or worry. So
 you needn't worry at all, about
 such things!

JANE
 I want to grow up and become a
 world-famous painter, mommy.

THERESE DIAMOND
 Oh, you certainly will, darling!

Therese kisses Jane on the forehead.

THERESE DIAMOND
 Everything's going to be alright.
 Now sleep. Nighty night!

JANE
 Nighty night, mommy!

Therese switches the light off, leaves the room, and closes
 the door behind. Jane watches her exit.

Jane turns around TO A WALL. There's a colourful CHILDISH
 DRAWING hung, done on simple paper - her work.

THE DRAWING DEPICTS a girl giving a cup of milk and hot
 cookies to a beggar boy.

Jane faintly smiles.

JANE (V.O.) (THOUGHTS)
 How are you, Thomas? I wonder where
 you are now...
 (MORE)

JANE (V.O.) (THOUGHTS) (cont'd)

Daddy returned, just as you told me he would, if I kept believing. Do you think that, if I keep believing now, I will truly be fine? Mommy and daddy say so, so it must be true. But I'm still a bit scared... But you're right - I must keep believing. Dreams will always come true, if one believes strongly enough.

She closes eyes and falls asleep.

13 YEARS LATER:

INT. JANE'S UNIVERSITY, THE AUDITORIUM - DAY

Jane - now a 23-year-old beautiful young woman with long curly strawberry-blonde hair and blue eyes - is sitting in the auditorium full of STUDENTS of her age, listening to the LECTURER - an old man with glasses.

Jane looks pale, exhausted, and nerve-wracked, as if she has many personal problems.

Next to her, there are her friends: BRIDGET ROSE - a 23-year-old black girl with a ponytail, and SHIRLEY LONGWOOD - a 24-year-old blue-eyed girl with long blond straight hair.

Bridget WHISPERS to Jane and Shirley.

BRIDGET

Hey, do you have any more lectures after this one?

SHIRLEY

No.

JANE

Nah. This one's last for today.

BRIDGET

Wanna go have some fun?

SHIRLEY

Sure! Grab a coffee or?

BRIDGET

Yes, perfect!

JANE

I can't. I've got work today.

BRIDGET

Aww, come on! Not again!

LECTURER

That's all for today. See you on
the seminar on Friday. Goodbye!

Jane, Bridget, and Shirley grab their bags and walk out of
the auditorium together with the other students.

INT. JANE'S UNIVERSITY, CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Jane, Bridget, and Shirley walk through corridors, to go
downstairs and exit the building.

BRIDGET

(to Jane)

So, work again, huh?

JANE

Yeah... Dad doesn't work due to his
war injuries, and mom has her hands
full, but the income's not enough.
So I've got to take care of myself
and pay my study fees on my own.

SHIRLEY

But you work every day and even on
Saturday! Isn't it a bit too much?

JANE

Well, until I become a famous
artist, I've gotta feed myself
somehow. Children can't rely on
their parents forever, can they?

BRIDGET

Yeah but... Ugh, that sucks!
Especially putting up with such a
jerk as that Mr. Green of yours.
How do you even handle that kind of
an idiot?

SHIRLEY

I know, right! I've heard he's
always yelling at his employees
like crazy.

JANE

Ugh, don't even get me started on
that.

(rolls eyes)

Every day is a disaster.

BRIDGET

Why don't you just look for another
job?

JANE

I've been looking for it, but none
of them fit my schedule so far.

(MORE)

JANE (cont'd)

Ugh, it's complicated... Let's not talk about it, okay?

SHIRLEY

Yeah, let's focus on the positive. How's that exhibition thing coming along? You said you were participating, right?

JANE

Yeah, at least that's a relief. Mrs. Lee said my painting was really unique and would attract much attention, so they're going to display it near the entrance. I hope it succeeds.

BRIDGET

Wow, that's amazing! Which painting is it? "A Glass of Milk", perchance?

JANE

Yeah, that one.

BRIDGET

Damn, I knew it! That one's my favourite of yours - that little girl and a beggar guy and all. Congratulations! That one's a masterpiece, for sure.

JANE

Yeah, thanks... Although it's still early to judge.

BRIDGET

Ugh, come on! To be accepted in an art exhibition? Are you kidding? It's a blast!

SHIRLEY

Bridget's right - it is an amazing achievement. More so that you're still but a student.

JANE

Yeah, I guess so...

INT. CAFE (JANE'S WORKPLACE) - DAY

Jane is waiting to the CUSTOMERS in a cheap cafe.

Many lecherous guys have their eyes on Jane. 3 GUYS are particularly interested. She tries to act like she doesn't see it, even though it bothers her a lot.

Jane brings a dish to the table of those 3 guys.

JANE
Here's your order, sirs. Enjoy!

The 3 guys lay eyes on her. Jane walks back into the kitchen.

MR. GREEN - the boss - is walking around. He is a chubby man in his fifties, with a moustache and an unwelcoming demeanour.

MR. GREEN
Miss Diamond!

JANE
(rolls eyes and turns
around)
Yes, Mr. Green?

MR. GREEN
Come to my office.

Mr. Green walks INTO HIS OFFICE. Jane heaves a sigh of irritation but follows him because she has no other choice.

INT. CAFE (JANES WORKPLACE), MR. GREEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Green's office is arranged in meticulous order. He changes the place of a pen on his desk so that it will remain neat. It is obvious he is eccentric and keen on tidiness.

Mr. Green takes a seat and motions Jane on a chair opposite to himself.

MR. GREEN
Take a seat.

Jane reluctantly takes a seat and looks at him.

MR. GREEN
Miss Diamond, I am sad to announce this to you, but I've got no other choice: I have to fire you.

Jane remains speechless for a while - she's too shocked.

JANE
W-What?

MR. GREEN
Don't get me wrong, I've got nothing against you. It's just that I've done several calculations and it turned out I need less employees.

JANE
But... Ugh, why me? You know I need this job, Mr. Green! I'm barely_

MR. GREEN

Yes, I understand your conditions, Miss Diamond, but there is nothing I can do. Others have been employed here for much longer than you. And let's be honest - you don't perform quite as well as them. Added that you have a complicated schedule. You are the one who has to go. I am sorry, but there's nothing I can do.

Jane wants to reply and spit out all of her anguish, but restrains herself. She leaves the office without a word. Tears appear in her eyes.

EXT. STREET NEAR THE CAFE (JANE'S FORMER WORKPLACE) - CONTINUOUS

Jane is walking in the street, wiping tears off her face. She feels embarrassed that she is crying. She tries to hold herself but is unable - she is way too worried and stressed.

The 3 GUYS from the cafe that had been watching her are now ON HER TAIL. They are following her, clearly for bad intentions.

JANE

(mutters)

You don't perform as well, blah, blah... As if working and studying simultaneously is easy! Ugh, everyone only cares about their own damn position... You are a full-time student? Your family can barely pay taxes? Well not that we care, we have our damn business to run here!
Asshole...

Jane feels the ominous presence. She stops. She glances behind. The 3 guys stop too. Jane walks on. They walk on as well.

Jane now faintly looks back and notices the guys are following her.

Her heart starts beating hard - she is frightened. She swerves INTO A SMALLER ALLEY.

EXT. DARK ALLEY DISTRICT - CONTINUOUS

Jane walks through DARK ALLEYS.

The BOYS are still on her tail.

Jane MAKES MANY TURNS through the ALLEYS and comes out on a BROADER STREET. Her BLOCK is NEARBY.

EXT. THE BROAD STREET NEAR JANE'S BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Jane CROSSES THE STREET and arrives at her BLOCK.

The BOYS walk after her anyway.

Jane opens the door and WALKS UP THE STAIRS.

The 3 BOYS stop AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE BLOCK. They walk away in disappointment.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Therese - Jane's mother - is sitting AT A TABLE in the PARLOUR. She has hung her head in her hands and seems really distressed.

Jake - Jane's father - is walking up and down in the PARLOUR. His lost arm is wrapped-up - he is a war veteran with no job.

HEAR the door creak and open. Therese and Jake look at it.

JANE

I'm home!

Jane enters and closes the door. She walks INTO THE PARLOUR to meet her parents. She seems troubled - she doesn't know how to reveal her bad news.

Jane notices her mother is no less distressed. She gets more worried than before.

JANE

Mom? W... What happened?

Therese wants to reply, but remains silent. Jake speaks in her stead.

JAKE DIAMOND

Your mother lost her job today.

JANE

What?!

THERESE DIAMOND

The factory was shut down. All of us had to leave.

JANE

Impossible...

THERESE DIAMOND

We will have to rely on you for a while, dear, until I find another job. Is that okay?

JANE

Rely on me?!

Jane is dreaded.

JANE

This... This can't be happening!

THERESE DIAMOND

Jane, are you alright? What's wrong?

Therese rushes up to Jane once notices she's troubled.

Jake is no less distressed.

JAKE DIAMOND

What happened, treasure?

JANE

Goodness... Ugh! I can't!

Jane gasps for air. She has a hard time breathing. Her eyes roll and she blacks out.

THERESE DIAMOND

Jane!!!

JAKE DIAMOND

Jane!

Jake quickly catches Jane in mid-air.

THERESE DIAMOND

Goodness! Call the ambulance!

Therese dashes at the phone and dials the number.

THERESE DIAMOND

Hello? Ambulance? My child's unconscious!

SEE Jane unconscious and paled-out in Jake's arms.

HEAR the siren of the AMBULANCE.

INT. THE HOSPITAL, CORRIDORS NEAR JANE'S WARD - DAY

Therese and Jake are sitting in the hospital before Jane's ward, worried.

Soon Nurse MS. ROBINSON - a fair Indian woman - walks out of the ward.

THERESE DIAMOND

How is she?

MS. ROBINSON

We have examined her condition. I'm afraid the surgery will be necessary.

JAKE DIAMOND

What?

THERESE DIAMOND

Oh, goodness!

Therese cuddles with Jake in distress.

JAKE DIAMOND

Will she be alright?

MS. ROBINSON

Our doctors are professionals. You can rest assured.

JAKE DIAMOND

Thank you.

INT. THE HOSPITAL, DR. LAWSON'S ROOM - DAY

Dr. Thomas Lawson (now 33-year-old, dressed in a white smock, with faded scars on hands and the neck, that are remnants of his military service) is sitting at a table examining some papers.

Nurse CODY ROGERS (a 28-year-old guy with glasses) enters Dr. Lawson's room.

CODY ROGERS

Good evening, Dr. Lawson!

THOMAS

Oh, hey, Cody. I hear I'm called up for another surgery?

CODY ROGERS

Yes, Doctor. Here are the details about the patient.

THOMAS

Oh, thanks!

Thomas grabs the papers and eyes them. He gets shocked at a certain detail.

THOMAS (V.O.) (THOUGHTS)

Jane Diamond?!
23-year-old...
Yes, it should be her!

Thomas reviews the papers in a haste. He stands up and places the papers on the table.

THOMAS

Okay, Cody. Tell them to prepare for the surgery. I'll be there in short.

CODY ROGERS

Yes, Doctor.

Cody leaves.

INT. THE HOSPITAL, THE SURGICAL WARD - NIGHT

Jane is sleeping on a surgical bed (anesthesia's already been done).

Cody Rogers and 2 FEMALE NURSES, as well as the Assistant Surgeon GEORGE ROWAN (a 29-year-old man), are in the room.

Dr. Thomas Lawson arrives, equipped and ready to begin the procedure.

Thomas casts a single glance at Jane before starting the surgery.

THOMAS (V.O.) (THOUGHTS)

She's grown so much since we last met... Time sure flies.
No worries, Jane, I'll fix you up,
I promise. You'll be fine.

THOMAS

(out loud)

Okay, folks, let's begin.

THE SURGERY BEGINS. Thomas works hard, trying his best to save Jane's life.

INT. THE HOSPITAL, THE SURGICAL WARD - LATER

The surgeons FINISH the job. Thomas sighs in relief.

GEORGE ROWAN

You've been as amazing as always,
Doctor.

CODY ROGERS

I know, right! Yet another
successful surgery.

THOMAS

You're giving me too much credit
and selling yourselves cheap. I
couldn't have done it without you.
Thank you, guys, and good job.

The doctors and nurses seem satisfied. Thomas casts one last glance at Jane before leaving.

EXT. THE HOSPITAL, CORRIDORS - LATER

George Rowan and Thomas are walking along the corridors. Thomas wears his white smock again, as before the surgery.

THOMAS

One more thing, George...

GEORGE ROWAN

Yes, Doctor?

THOMAS

When the final bill for Miss Diamond is ready, bring it to me first. I'll give the signature, this time.

GEORGE ROWAN

Oh? Alright, Doctor. But why such a sudden change of habit?

THOMAS

Nah, just a whim.

GEORGE ROWAN

(chuckles)

Alright, alright.

1 WEEK LATER:

INT. THE HOSPITAL, JANE'S WARD - DAY

Jane is recovering. Parents Therese and Jake have visited her. Therese hugs her.

THERESE DIAMOND

Ah, I'm so happy you're alright, Jane!

JAKE DIAMOND

How are you, dear? Is everything going alright?

JANE

Yeah, I'm fine, dad. Thank you both. I am so sorry I've made you worry!

THERESE DIAMOND

What are you saying, dear? You've got nothing to be sorry for! Main is that you're healthy now, and you'll be discharged tomorrow!

JAKE DIAMOND

Yeah. Now everything will be fine.

JANE

Yeah, but... What about your job, mom? How are we going to pay the hospital bill? I've brought so many problems with this yet another mess!

THERESE DIAMOND

You don't need to worry, Jane! Your father and I will take care of everything.

Therese squeezes Jane's hand, giving her a smile to lift her hopes. But deep within, she feels worried too, because she is still unemployed, and, most likely, won't find a new job anytime soon.

Jane can notice the worry in her mother's eyes, which upsets her even more.

JAKE DIAMOND

Yeah, don't worry about a thing. Take a rest and make sure to properly recover! Aren't you daddy's tough girl? Well, who's my tough girl?

Jane can't help but smile at Jake's encouraging words. She nods.

JAKE DIAMOND

Well, that's more like it!

HEAR the door open. Nurse Ms. Robinson enters. Jake and Therese stand up.

THERESE DIAMOND

Well, we'll go now, Jane. Stay healthy! We'll be back tomorrow, to pick you up!

JAKE DIAMOND

Yeah. Stay strong! And no worries!

Jake and Therese bid goodbye to Ms. Robinson too, on their way out, and exit.

Ms. Robinson approaches Jane.

MS. ROBINSON

Good evening, Miss Diamond! How are you feeling?

JANE

I'm better.

MS. ROBINSON

Feeling any pain?

JANE

No. Not after yesterday.

MS. ROBINSON

Wonderful. Now, let me check your pulse again...

Ms. Robinson checks her pulse.

MS. ROBINSON
Yes, all in order.

JANE
Ms. Robinson...

MS. ROBINSON
Yes?

JANE
May I check my hospital bill?

MS. ROBINSON
Oh? We thought we'd give it to you
when you're discharged, tomorrow...

JANE
May I check it now?

MS. ROBINSON
Oh, sure... I'll be back in a
minute.

Ms. Robinson exits.

Jane waits. She is anxious. She fears the fees will be immense, and her parents will have a lot of problems paying it.

HEAR the door creak.

Ms. Robinson returns with the bill receipt in her hands.

MS. ROBINSON
There you go!

She hands Jane the paper.

Jane grabs the paper, trembling. She reviews the contents. She almost freaks out at the immense fees, but then she sees a certain handwritten note underneath, and freaks out even more.

THOMAS (V.O.) (THE NOTE ON THE
RECEIPT)
Bill paid years ago with a glass of
milk and cookies.

Below is the signature - Dr. Thomas Lawson.

Jane stares at the note and the signature. She covers her mouth with a hand. Tears trickle off her eyes.

JANE
Ms. Robinson, may I... See Dr.
Lawson?

MS. ROBINSON

Oh, sure, but... Why? Are you alright, Miss Diamond?

JANE

Yeah, yeah, it's alright...
(smiles, tears in her eyes)

I just want to see him, if he has a minute.

MS. ROBINSON

Oh, of course. I'll inform him right away.

Ms. Robinson exits again. Jane heaves a sob.

JANE

I can't believe this... Goodness, this must be a dream! I can't_ This is a miracle!

HEAR a knock on the door.

Thomas has entered.

THOMAS

You wanted to see me, Miss Diamond?

Thomas walks up to her side and takes a seat on a chair.

JANE

Doctor, this note...
You are that boy, of back then, aren't you?

Thomas can't help but smile. Jane guesses it's a 'yes'.

JANE

I can't believe it...

THOMAS

I couldn't either, at first...
But I sure am glad to see you again.

JANE

No, no... You don't even know how much this means to me.
(points on the note)
You have no idea... Ugh, thank you so much, Doctor! Thank you! I... I can't even thank you enough...

Tears gush from her eyes again.

THOMAS

Now, please don't cry, Miss Diamond. You've just had a surgery only a week ago. Crying is not good for your health. And then... You don't have to thank me for my own gratitude.

Jane stares at him with questioning eyes.

THOMAS

Years ago, when you invited that poor beggar boy into your house and shared with him a glass of milk and cookies, it was not just some food you gave him... You gave him the hope. The hope for a better future. The hope for the better world. You saved him. That moment back then, was my salvation. What I did now, was simply repay the immense debt I owed you, Miss Diamond. The one who should be grateful is me. To you.

Jane watches him with teary eyes. A happy smile forms on her face. She still appears to have a hard time believing in what's happening to her right now, but she seems onto seventh heaven.

DYLLAN LAWSON (V.O.)

On that day, my father and mother met for the second time in their lives. This time, as an accomplished surgeon and his patient - a talented art student.

INT. THE SCHOOL, CLASSROOM - DAY

Dyllan is standing before the classroom, near the teacher's seat, having narrated the whole story.

JANICE MCMILLAN

Wow! So, that little girl Jane Diamond whom your father met back then, was actually your mother?

DYLLAN LAWSON

(smiles)

Yes. It was my mother. After she was discharged from the hospital, she and dad continued meeting, and soon, became a couple. Mom's art she had submitted to the exhibition got an immense appeal, so it was her first successful step in her career as an artist. Now she is a famous painter and runs a

(MORE)

DYLLAN LAWSON (cont'd)
 charity fund, to help homeless
 children.
 That's all. That's the story about
 my parents.

The classmates applaud, mesmerized by the story. The
 teacher, Ms. Norton, claps too.

MS. NORTON
 Thank you very much, Dyllan! It was
 amazing!
 (to class)
 Well, class, I guess we all agree
 Mr. Lawson deserves an A?

The classmates applaud again, in the form of approval.

Ms. Norton smiles and puts the mark down on Dyllan's paper.

DYLLAN LAWSON
 Thank you, Miss!

MS. NORTON
 Thank you for such an incredible
 story! You may take your seat!

Dyllan walks back to his desk, happy to have received the
 highest mark for his work.

EXT. THE SCHOOL, YARD - LATER

HEAR the bell ring.

Dyllan walks out of the building, his schoolbag on his back,
 and walks up to JOE LAWSON - a 16-year-old tall guy with
 sky-blue eyes and strawberry-blonde hair. He has a
 guitar-bag hung onto his back.

JOE LAWSON
 Yo, Dyllan! How was school?

Joe and Dyllan exchange a brotherly hand-shake. Then they
 head out of the schoolyard.

EXT. THE STREET, NEAR SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

The boys are walking back home.

DYLLAN LAWSON
 It was cool. I received an A for my
 assignment.

JOE LAWSON
 Hmph, no wonder. Told you you'd ace
 it.

DYLLAN LAWSON
I know, right! Wait until I tell
parents. They're going to be happy.

JOE LAWSON
Yup, they sure are.

INT. THE LAWSON HOUSE, ENTRANCE CORRIDOR - LATER
HEAR the doorbell ring.

JANE (O.S.) (41-YEAR-OLD)
Tom, it should be the kids! Open!

THOMAS (O.S.) (51-YEAR-OLD)
Coming!

Thomas Lawson, now 51-year-old, walks up to the door and
opens.

Joe and Dyllan walk in.

THOMAS
Welcome home, boys.

JOE LAWSON
Yo, dad. You're home?

THOMAS
Yeah. You told me you wanted me to
hear your new album, didn't you?

JOE LAWSON
Yup. Thanks for finding time!

Thomas chuckles. Joe puts his guitar-bag at a wall.

DYLLAN LAWSON
Dad, I got an A at school today.

THOMAS
Woah, congrats! Though I didn't
expect anything less from you.

Thomas rubs Dyllan's head. Dyllan smiles.

DYLLAN LAWSON
Yeah. It was an assignment about
our parents, so I told them your
and mom's story.

THOMAS
Oh? Yeah, that one would win you a
medal, for sure.
Now come on, wash your hands and to
the dinner table. Mom's waiting.

DYLLAN LAWSON
Alright!

JOE LAWSON

Yeah, coming!

Dyllan and Joe head for the bathroom.

INT. THE LAWSON HOUSE, THE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Soon the boys enter the dining room and take seats.

There are a lot of dishes on the table, and also a plate of cookies (the very ones Jane's mother used to make in the past and which she shared with Thomas in their youth).

Jane, now 41-year-old, brings the main dish on the table and takes a seat.

Soon Thomas enters and sits too. They all begin dining.

JANE

So, how was school, Dyllan?

DYLLAN LAWSON

An A, just as expected.

JANE

Haha, that's our genius! Good job!

JOE LAWSON

You get some credit too - it was a story about you that won him the grade.

JANE

(laughs)

Come on! Having a good story is one, but retelling it well requires a different kind of talent.

THOMAS

I'll back her up on this one.

JOE LAWSON

You back her up on everything.

They all laugh.

THOMAS

Well, not my fault, really. I've got no choice. When you get married, you'll understand - women rule.

Dyllan laughs. Jane smiles and blushes.

THOMAS

No, I'm serious.
(embraces Jane)
She's the boss.

Dyllan and Joe laugh again.

JANE

So, Joe, how was your concert?

JOE LAWSON

Rocked it. We perform in a talent show next month. A guy from there attended the concert and said he wanted us in.

JANE

Wow, amazing!

THOMAS

Yeah. You'll take the stage with a blast.

JOE LAWSON

I sure will.

HEAR the phone ring on the wall.

JANE

Ah!

Jane stands up but Thomas stops her.

THOMAS

I'll pick up, honey.

Thomas walks up to the phone and picks it up.

THOMAS

Hello?

Yeah, it's me.

Yeah.

Ouch... Ah... Yeah... Okay. Be there in short.

He puts the phone down.

JANE

(worried)

What is it?

THOMAS

It was from the hospital. Have to run. A guy fell off a building and all. Severe injuries. They need me for a surgery.

JANE

Goodness! But you haven't even eaten anything!

THOMAS

No problem.

Thomas hastily puts on his boots and a coat. He then grabs some cookies and puts some in his pocket and one in his mouth.

THOMAS

This will suffice on the way. I'll have a proper supper out. Might not return today.

JANE

Okay...

The children and Jane see Thomas TO THE OUTER DOOR.

INT. THE LAWSON HOUSE, ENTRANCE CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

THOMAS

Bye kids. Be back tomorrow morning.
 (to Joe)
 Joe, sorry pal, couldn't listen to your music and all... I really wanted to, but_

JOE LAWSON

No worries, dad, you'll do that when you're back. Go do your work. You're saving lives.

THOMAS

(smiles)
 Now aren't you one hell of a son...
 Thanks, Joe.

DYLLAN LAWSON

Goodbye dad! Do your best!

JANE

Take care out there! Good luck!

THOMAS

Thanks! See you!

Thomas runs DOWN THE STAIRS. Jane slowly closes the door behind him.

CAMERA SHOWS the wall oppositely to the outer door. ON THE WALL, a PAINTING is hung - a little girl giving a beggar boy a glass of milk.

CLOSE ON the painting.

FADE OUT.

THE END

