Couch

By

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INT. VIETNAMESE TENT - NIGHT

Fade in from black. Army tent in the middle of the strange, confusing jungles of South Vietnam. It is loud, but at the same time it is quiet.

POV of YOUNGER GRAMPS:

He sits up in his bed, startled from the noise. He is breathing heavily. He looks in every direction, but sees none of his comrades.

YOUNGER GRAMPS
Hello? Is anyone there?

There are no answers, but there is gunfire from not too far away. Younger Gramps takes no hesitation, he jumps off his bed, grabs his M16, puts on his helmet, disregards clothes, and runs out of the tent in his American flag boxers with a bald eagle on the crotch.

EXT. VIETNAMESE JUNGLE - NIGHT

There is no one in sight in either direction, but the gunfire continues. He runs to his left to an opening in the brush. 100 yards in front of him, he sees a lone American soldier standing in the open.

YOUNGER GRAMPS
(shouting)
Are you okay?!

PVT.PHILIPS
(cautiously and quietly)
The yellow boys came in from nowhere, I’m the only survivor!

A twig snaps behind Younger Gramps, he looks and sees a Vietcong soldier with a platoon behind him. Before he can do anything, a flash is seen in the tree line followed by a quick snap, Philips drops in a pool of blood.

Fade to black:

End of POV:
INT GRAMPS’ LIVING ROOM – MORNING

GRAMPS, now overweight, bald, and in his late 60s, wakes up, fully clothed, out of his nightmare breathing heavily. When he realizes he is awake, he slowly sits up on the couch. He drops his head and begins to snort what appears to be a previously prepared line of cocaine. He lifts his head back up, a white powder is all over the underside of his nose and his ares are dilated and bloodshot.

TITLES: COUCH

INT. HARVEY LOWENSTEIN’S OFFICE – DAY

HARVEY, a big time Jewish Hollywood representative, is talking to TONY and MIKE, in his neat, but expensive looking office, about an upcoming project. He is doing most of the talking.

HARVEY
I have to say, you two really are the hottest things in the business right now. Your film "The Point", is breaking box-office records for independent films, and has won every Independent Spirit Award that anyone cares about. Hell, Spike Lee said it’s the only white movie worth seeing. And you did it on a budget of...

TONY
$200.15

HARVEY
Exactly. Tony, you’re dating Emma Watson. You realize every straight man in the world is jealous of you, myself included.

He looks at a picture of his wife on his desk.

HARVEY
Love you honey.

HE looks back at them and continues the conversation.

HARVEY
You’re the next Kubrick.

He then begins to address Mike. Mike is a heavy-set 20 year old with chops and 5 o’clock shadow.

(CONTINUED)
HARVEY
And Mike, you are the next big writer. I’m sure you get your fair share of the hot ladies.

Mike blushes and looks down in embarrassment.

MIKE
Well ya know...

FLASH TO:

INT. MIKE’S APARTMENT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Close up of a tube of KY Jelly and Kleenex. Mike is sitting on the couch in just his underwear, watching a pornographic video.

FEMALE ON TV
I’m not sure if I have any money to pay for those pizzas.

MALE ON TV
That’s alright, you can pay me in other ways!

Mike’s eyes get wide and his mouth opens wide as the sound of wild sex begin. He sticks his hand in his underwear.

MIKE
Yeah, bitch, you pay that delivery boy!

Zoom in on fleshlight on the coffee table.

BACK TO:

INT. HARVEY LOWENSTEIN’S OFFICE – DAY

Mike’s smile goes to a frown and he now looks full of shame.

HARVEY
Anyways. What was I saying? I remember now. Oliver Stone is planning a new Vietnam war epic that he is going to produce. He saw "The Point" and would like to know if you guys would be interested in writing a movie about a Vietnamese army camp.
Tony, skinny, and his left arm full of tattoos, begins to take the lead in the conversation.

TONY
Any stories in particular?

HARVEY
Actually, he would like you guys to make it a true story. He suggests going to a veteran club and talking to some of the Vietnam Veterans there. But as far as which stories to do, he wants to give you free reign.

MIKE
I like rain.

Long pause. Tony and Harvey questioningly stare at Mike, but then go right back into their conversation.

TONY
Has he mentioned payment to you, or will we have to wait for that? If I am going to do this and not spend time with my hot British girlfriend, it has to be good.

Harvey and Mike both look annoyed.

HARVEY
Are you done?

Tony gets low in his chair.

TONY
Yeah. Sorry. Go ahead.

HARVEY
He did mention payment. He would be willing to pay you guys each $500,000, and an extra $250,000 for Tony to direct it. Minus my 10% of course.

MIKE
But you don’t do anything!

This comment seems to have hit Harvey hard.

HARVEY
Yes I do! But to explain what I do, I would have to read you an

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
HARVEY (cont’d)
assortment of complicated legal
journals, and the language might be
too much for your artistic
faculties to handle. Do you see the
direction I am taking this?

Mike is confused.

MIKE
Ummm, okay?

HARVEY
Stick to writing kid, let me handle
the stuff that involves real
thinking.

Tony looks very excited and happy.

TONY
I can’t believe that Oliver Stone
wants me to direct a movie for him!
What an honor! I must really be the
best! It’s funny, two years ago, a
chick I worked with who was a
couple of years older than me said
she couldn’t date me because the
male brain doesn’t mature all the
way until I am 24. But, then again,
she was jumping up and down on our
manager’s dick...

FLASH TO:

INT. STORE – DAY

A flashback to when Tony was a teenager working at a grocery
store. The manager office is closed and locked. Tony walks
up to the office. He is now 18, face covered in acne, four
eyes, and kind of fat.

He knocks on the door.

TONY
Justin, I refilled the bread. What
do you want me to do next?

You hear the sound of people moving around in a hurry in the
office. Justin, his manager, and Haley, the hot girl he was
a crush on, come out of the office hair a mess and looking
guilty.
JUSTIN
(big smile on his face)
Ummm, I don’t know. Haley what are your chores?

HALEY
Umm, clean the bathrooms.

JUSTIN
Clean the bathrooms.

He and Haley walk away. Tony looks pissed off.

TONY
Dammit!

BACK TO:

INT. HARVEY LOWENSTEIN’S OFFICE – DAY

Mike and Harvey are both staring at Tony in confusion and shock. Tony immediately notices this and tries to change the subject.

TONY
Ummm, how long do we have to write the movie?

Harvey gets back onto the subject.

HARVEY
Let’s see. Right now, he is giving you a month to find a subject and idea and meet with him. After that, he’ll give you another six months or so for each draft.

TONY
Okay.

HARVEY
So, should I call him and tell him you accept?

TONY
Of course. This is the chance of a lifetime!

Mike sees this as a good chance to speak up and prove that he is intelligent.

(CONTINUED)
MIKE
Yes. This is a once in a lifetime chance for both my writing partner and myself. It would be a very unintelligent thing for us to say no to it. So call back Mr. Stone and tell him that we accept.

It takes Harvey a couple of seconds to process what Mike just said.

HARVEY
Okay. I will let him know. Thank you for your time. Have a great day!

Tony and Mike stand up and leave the office.

EXT. BUSINESS PARKING LOT – DAY

Mike and Tony are walking to their car.

TONY
Oliver Stone. I still can’t believe it!

MIKE
Yeah. Sure.

TONY
I want to get started right away!

MIKE
Yeah, let’s go ahead and go to one of those clubhouses.

TONY
Okay we could do that, but we would need to find original stories. Something we have never heard or seen before.

MIKE
Okay, but let’s just not write an Anti-Vietnam Vietnam movie, like "The Point" was the Anti-Road Trip Road Trip movie. That’s too obvious for us to do.

TONY
You’re right. We’ll think about this long and hard.
EXT. MIKE’S APARTMENT - MORNING

Tony walks up and starts to knock on the door. He gets no response.

    TONY
    (shouting)
    Come on Mike! We gotta go to the VFW house!

He stands there for a second but gets no response.

    TONY
    (shouting) Come on man! I wanna get started on this!

You hear hear shuffling inside.

    MIKE
    (shouting and out of breath) Ummmm, hold on a second!

The door opens and Mike is standing there, shirtless, sweaty, out of breath, extremely hairy, and covered in oil.

    MIKE
    What’s up?

Tony looks at Mike.

    TONY
    Masturbating again?

    MIKE
    No I was just working out.

    TONY
    With oil?

    MIKE
    Sure, yeah. That’s what I was doing.

    TONY
    Dude you don’t have to lie to me. You’ve been a chronic masturbator as long as I have known you. I expect it.
MIKE
Oh, well then yes, I was masturbating... Feverishly.

TONY
Well, you wanna get cleaned up so we can go start interviewing people today?

MIKE
Yeah, I’ll be out in two shakes.

TONY
Okay, just stay away from Kagney Linn Karter.

Mike looks at camera with his eyebrow raised, then goes into his apartment.

INT. TONY’S CAR - MORNING

Tony is half asleep in his car waiting for Mike while the Wu-Tang Clan plays in the background. Mike finally shuffles in waking Tony up.

TONY
Finally. Took you long enough.

MIKE
What do you mean, I said "two shakes".

TONY
Whatever.

MIKE
So where are we going?

TONY
We are going to a VFW clubhouse...

MIKE
What is that a cat house? Dammit I didn’t get any singles!

Tony is annoyed at this point.

TONY
No, it’s not a "cat house", but remind me later and we’ll get you laid, ’cause lord knows you need it. Anyways, it’s where veterans of (MORE)
TONY (cont’d)
foreign wars go to, quote unquote "hang out".

MIKE
Oh, is this where we are gonna find our interviewee. Big word!

TONY
Yeah.

MIKE
(making trumpet noise with mouth)
And we’re off!!

TONY
Ummm, yeah.

The car pulls away.

INT. VFW CLUB HOUSE - MORNING

Tony and Mike walk up to the front desk where they are greeted by an older gentlemen. The room looks similar to the waiting room of a doctor or dentist’s office.

FRONT DESK MAN
(with whispering lisp)
Yes, can I help you two young gentlemen?

TONY
Yeah, hi. My name is Tony Danek, and this is Michael Jernigan.

MIKE
What up front desk man!

The front desk man looks at Mike with an odd face. Tony is a little embarrassed, so he tries to continue on.

TONY
I called you earlier. We are the filmmakers that wanted to talk to some veterans from the Vietnam war.

FRONT DESK MAN
Oh yes. They are eagerly waiting in our rec room for you guys. I think you’ll be pleased with their stories! Let me take you there!

(CONTINUED)
They begin to follow the guy through a door. When they get through the door, it seems like the whole place changes from a pleasant building, to looking like an insane asylum. You see big, black, middle aged men in their helper uniforms walking around with depressed old men in gowns with their wrinkly ass cheeks hanging out. Then out of a hallway come two bulging black men carrying away an old white man screaming, clawing, and kicking; struggling to get free.

**SCREAMING OLD MAN**
(yelling)
Don’t let them fucking Gooks take you alive, get out while you still can!!!

Mike and Tony look at each other with a "what the fuck?" kind of look on their faces. The Front Desk Man, turns to them with a smile on his face.

**FRONT DESK MAN**
Don’t mind him, some of our members are a little traumatized from their experiences in Vietnam.

**TONY**
(sarcastically)
A little?!

They continue on and follow the man to a door that says "Recreation Area".

**FRONT DESK MAN**
This is it.

He pulls out his key, unlocks the door, and lets them in.

**FRONT DESK MAN**
(closing the door)
Good luck!

INT. REC ROOM - MORNING

The rec room is a depressing sight. You see a bunch of doped up old men trying to play games like ping pong, checkers, and poker. There is also a large group of men around the TV drooling on their robes. One of the helpers approaches them.

**HELPER**
Are you the two filmmakers?

Tony and Mike just nod.
HELPER
We have a table set up for you two
to interview any of these
gentlemen.

He hands them a list of names.

HELPER
Just pick which one you want, and
I’ll bring them to you.

They stare at the list and choose a random name.

TONY
Ummm, Joshua Claiborne seems good
to me.

HELPER
Okay, I’ll get him.

Tony and Mike sit down at the table across from and ugly
green couch. They pull out recorders, and notebooks. The
helper brings back an old, depressed looking Jew and sits
him on the couch.

TONY
Are you Mr. Claiborne?

He just nods.

TONY
How are you today?

He shrugs.

MIKE
Wonderful weather we’re having huh?
It was a little humid the past
couple days, but today is just
perfect! Don’t you think?

He gives them no response.

TONY
Okay then Mr.Claiborne we’re going
to begin with a couple questions
about your time in Vietnam, if
that’s O.K. with you.

MIKE
So Mr.Claiborne what part of
Vietnam did you serve in.

(CONTINUED)
MR. CLAIBORNE
(in monotone like Ben Stein)
Saigon.

MIKE
Great, what happened?

TONY
Really? That’s your question?

MIKE
You got a better way to get this started?

TONY
Well actually, no I don’t. Sorry. So, what happened?

MR. CLAIBORNE
(in monotone voice)
Well, Vietnam is a very, very horrible place. I would never have gone there if I had had the choice.

Mike and Tony already look bored. They fight sleep as he continues talking. They eventually call the helper over.

TONY
Can we get another guy?

MIKE
Yeah, I think this one’s batteries are running low.

Tony looks at the list.

TONY
Just give us everyone on the list in alphabetical order.

START MONTAGE

They are seeing a lot of different veterans. Some of them are boring, some of them yell, and one of them jumps over the table at Mike, making him scream like a little bitch.

TONY
You little bitch! Seriously?!

MIKE
What! He jumped at me, what else would you do?
TONY
Dude he’s old, you could totally take him!

MIKE
Did you see the look in his eyes, he’s completely doped up, he probably doesn’t feel pain anymore.

Tony just shakes his head, and the montage continues. Tony and Mike are getting more and more bored as they interview more and more veterans.

END MONTAGE:

INT. REC ROOM - AFTERNOON

Tony and Mike are looking through their notes trying to find anything of value.

TONY
Dude, I have absolutely nothing we can use for this movie.

MIKE
Me either.

Tony throws his notebook on the table in anger.

TONY
Dammit, dammit, dammit, dammit!...

As he says this he puts his face in his hands. The helper comes up to them.

HELPER
So, did you guys get what you need?

Tony looks at him through his fingers.

TONY
Can I be honest with you?

HELPER
Sure.

TONY
We got absolute shit! Everyone you brought to us had nothing interesting to say, or would not tell us at all. Are you sure you don’t have anyone else?
HELPER
Well, there is one more person I can think of. (pause) But no, it would be forbidden for me to say who it is.

He walks away. Tony and Mike are left in suspense. They get up and follow him.

TONY
You can’t just say something like that and walk away!

MIKE
Yeah, what the hell!

The Helper stops and turns around to them.

HELPER
I’m sorry, I’m just not allowed to tell you. This man is horrible.

TONY
I won’t say anything. How about you Mike?

MIKE
Of course.

Tony gives him an angry look.

MIKE
Just kidding.

The Helper thinks about it. He then pulls out a slip of paper, writes on it and gives it to Tony in a hand shake.

HELPER
I’m sorry I can’t help. I think you gentlemen need to leave. Good luck with your picture.

He walks away. Tony unfolds the paper and smiles and shows the slip to Mike and he smiles all the way out the door.

INT GRAMPS’ LIVING ROOM - DAY
Gramps is sitting on his couch watching the History Channel. Pawn Stars comes on. Gramps suddenly goes from calm, to violent like someone turned on a switch.
GRAMPS
What the hell is this shit?! I watch the history channel for history, Dammit, not to watch an all fat man orgy rip off peoples prized family possessions.

Gramps’ door bell starts ringing to the tune of REVEILLE.

GRAMPS
Who the hell is it?!

He gets up off the couch and goes to the front door which is covered in dead bolts, chain locks, and one giant bar lock in the middle. He leans into the peep hole to see Tonys’ big nose covering up the entire peep hole hiding and cheesy grin with Mike standing with his back to the door. Then Giving out a loud groan and begins the unlock only the dead bolts and bar lock. With the chains still intact opens the door slightly.

GRAMPS
(sarcastically)
Yeah?!

TONY
Hi, are you Mr. Riley?

GRAMPS
Yes, I am. What do you want? You girls selling thin mints?

Tony lets out a nervous laugh.

TONY
Good one, but no we are not selling thin mints. My name is Tony Danek, and this is Mike Jernigan.

MIKE
(briefly looking back)
Sup.

TONY
We are screenwriters and we are writing a film about Vietnam and we were wondering if we could interview you about your experiences.

GRAMPS
Who gave you my address?
TONY
We got it from the VFW club. Can we come in?

GRAMPS
No.

He slams the door in their faces. He locks the locks and begins to walk away, but he feels bad so he goes back to the door and opens it enough to let them in.

GRAMPS
Come in.

Mike and Tony come in and Gramps shuts the door behind them. The dynamic duo make their way to the couch and right as they begin to sit.

GRAMPS
What do you think you’re doing?

MIKE
Sitting?

GRAMPS
I don’t think so. Not on my couch.

TONY
Well then where are we supposed to sit?

GRAMPS
I don’t give a damn just not my damn couch.

Tony and Mike exchange a puzzled glance and Mike takes one giant step over the living room table and sits on the floor behind it like a desk while Tony just drops to the ground. Gramps makes an awkward shuffle over Tony and sits down in the middle of the couch like a throne with a beer in his hands.

GRAMPS
Okay so what you two... "fellas" want?

TONY
Like we said at the door sir, we are two aspiring screenwriters hired to write a true awe-inspiring Vietnam War epic.
GRAMPS
So what you think I have just some "awe-inspiring" epic story to tell?

TONY
Well, to be honest, we don't really know. One of the helpers down at the House told us you could help. He didn't tell us what you went through though.

GRAMPS
Of course he didn't. If he tried to tell you, he would just screw the story up. He has no clue what it's like to be in Vietnam. Wondering which day will be your last. Barely getting any sleep because of all the bombs going off. And losing someone close to you in a second from a sniper. That's why he couldn't tell you.

Tears come to Gramps' eyes. Tony is impressed by this.

TONY
Now that's the kind of emotion and stories we are looking for.

The emotion overcomes Gramps.

GRAMPS
Excuse me.

He gets up and walks to the bathroom and closes the door. Tony and Mike just sit there waiting. In the background, you hear him cutting the coke and snort it, but they don't seem to notice. Gramps comes out with the toilet flushing and rubbing his red nose with his left eye blood shot.

GRAMPS
Sorry 'bout that.

TONY
That's fine. (pause) Mr. Riley, I would really like to interview you and make this movie based on your experiences. If that is fine with you.

GRAMPS
(thinking)
Ummm, I guess that will be alright. But I have one condition.

(CONTINUED)
TONY
What?

GRAMPS
Get the story right. Tell it straight. Don’t put that Hollywood touch on it. Keep it raw and get the feel of Vietnam.

TONY
Sure.

EXT. GRAMPS’ HOUSE - DAY
Tony and Mike are leaving. Mike is a little unsure about Gramps.

MIKE
I’m not too sure about this guy.

TONY
What are you talking about? This guy is perfect! Did you hear his speech? We’re lucky someone like him is willing to talk to us.

MIKE
What if this guy just flips the hell out with a crazy ass tunnel flash back cuts the lights on us in the middle of the interview?

TONY
(Cutting off Mike in the middle of his paranoid rant)
Mike seriously? Don’t worry about it.

Mike shrugs and they both get into Tony’s car.

INT. TONY’S CAR - DAY
Tony’s phone starts ringing. He answers it.

TONY
(into phone)
Hello?...Yes this is Tony Danek, might I ask who’s calling?...Oh, Mr. Stone...You want us to meet you in your office?...No it’s not a problem, just give me the address
(MORE)
TONY (cont’d)
so I can put it into my
TomTom...Yes I still have a
TomTom...Yeah I guess it’s funny.
Can I just get the address?

He writes the address down.

TONY
(into phone)
Okay see you in a few minutes.

He hangs up the phone and puts the address into the TomTom.

MIKE
Who was that?

TONY
Really? Did you not just hear me say Oliver Stone?

MIKE
No, you said "Mr.Stone"

TONY
Same thing

MIKE
No, saying "Mr.Stone" could mean anyone.

TONY
Like who?

MIKE
I don’t know. Roy Stone.

TONY
Why would we meet with someone named Roy Stone?

MIKE
I don’t know. I’m just saying.

The TomTom starts to give directions. It’s got Snoop Dogg’s voice.

TOMTOM
Take a left in 500 yards, like a playa do.
INT. OLIVER STONE’S OFFICE

Tony and Mike are sitting in legendary filmmaker Oliver Stone’s office. It is the office of all offices. He has lots of memorabilia and pictures with actors around. OLIVER STONE is sitting at his desk counting money.

OLIVER STONE
So have you guys gotten started on the writing yet?

TONY
Well, Mr. Stone, we actually have.

OLIVER STONE
Come on, call me Oliver. We’re gonna be working together we might as well get personal.

TONY
Okay, Oliver, we met with a guy who has had some big experiences in Vietnam and he is going to let us interview him and build the movie around those experiences.

Oliver is pleased with this statement.

OLIVER STONE
That’s very good! It’s always good to find real stories, that way it is a more of a realistic movie. Good work.

Tony is so happy he can hardly hide his smile.

OLIVER STONE
I knew I picked the right two people to work on this film. I suggest that you interview him as soon as possible and write the script so we can get the production started soon.

TONY
We’ll definitely do that.

OLIVER STONE
Good. Now you can go.

TONY
That’s it?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

OLIVER STONE
Yes, is there anything else?

TONY
Nope.

OLIVER STONE
Then go.

TONY
Okay.

He and Mike leave the office.

FADE OUT:

CREDITS:

FADE IN:

INT. PAWN SHOP - NIGHT

RICK, BIG HOSS, THE OLD MAN, and CHUMLEE are sitting in the pawn shop watching Couch on the TV. The scene where Gramps yells at his TV comes on. They look upset by the joke. Chumlee thinks the show is hilarious.

RICK
Did he just call us fat and gay in the same sentence? How dare they do that!

BIG HOSS
It’s not funny at all!

OLD MAN
It might not be funny, but they are right one thing.

RICK
What?

OLD MAN
You guys are fat.

This makes Rick and Big Hoss mad.

RICK
You’re defending the writers?

(CONTINUED)
OLD MAN
Maybe if you hit the gym every once
in awhile, they wouldn’t have any
reason to call you guys fat.

They roll their eyes and look at Chumlee.

BIG HOSS
What are you laughing at, Chum?

CHUMLEE
This show is hilarious! These guys
are great at writing! They totally
got us right!

RICK
Are you serious?

CHUMLEE
This is the greatest show ever!

FADE OUT: