

FROM AFGHANISTAN WITH PEACE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE - DAY (LOS ANGELES)

An officer, tight suit, short hair, sits at his desk and studies a file filled with ID cards and pictures. AGENT SEAN, 45.

A young, presumably Muslim couple sit across his desk, nervous. RASSUL AHMAD, 26, long beard, long hair, missing

BOTH EARS.

Rassul looks at the woman next to him, SHABNAM, 24, beautiful face, the rest covered by hijab, then back at agent Sean.

RASSUL

Is everything okay officer? I mean we've been sittin' here for almost half an hour and you didn't say a word.

AGENT SEAN

Are you in a rush?

RASSUL

No, I'm not. Are you?

Agent Sean doesn't respond, but just looks at Rassul's ID PICTURE which shows a younger version of Rassul. Clean shaved, short hair, both ears are in place.

Shabnam looks around, getting impatient. Rassul rests her shoulder with the right hand comforting her.

RASSUL (CONT'D)

Don't worry. Everything is okay.

Agent Sean looks at Rassul's hand and notices

TWO FINGERS

missing.

AGENT SEAN

You look... different in your ID. Why such a change?

RASSUL

Times change, people change along.

AGENT SEAN

Your records show that you were in Afghanistan. Tell me about it.

RASSUL

Is that an interview, or an interrogation?

AGENT SEAN

You can call it whatever you want, Mr. Rassul Ahmad, but as long as you are in this office, you'll answer all the questions I have.

RASSUL

Then I'll leave this office right now.

AGENT SEAN

I wouldn't recommend that.

RASSUL

Then stop me.

Rassul stands up, but Shabnam holds his hand.

SHABNAM

It's okay, honey. Sit down, please.

Rassul sits down reluctantly and glares at agent Sean.

AGENT SEAN

So you were in Afghanistan before or after nine eleven?

RASSUL

I'm sure it says on my files.

AGENT SEAN

I hate reading, but love listening.

RASSUL

Well, okay then... I went there after nine eleven.

AGENT SEAN

Why? To fight the enemies?

RASSUL

No. To find peace.

Agent Sean chuckles.

AGENT SEAN

You were looking for peace in Afghanistan?

RASSUL

No. Peace was looking for me in Afghanistan.

AGENT SEAN

That's interestin'. Can you please elaborate it a little bit?

Rassul looks at the window.

RASSUL

... I was a spoiled, cocky kid who took life for granted. Always drunk, high. I would do everything my Dad told me not to do. I would do it just to pis him off. But one day I went so far that even I knew I'd crossed the line...

EXT. LOS ANGELES CITY - NIGHT

Super: "August 2001."

Friday night life of down town Los Angeles glooms. People hanging out in couples, drunk. Taxi cabs are everywhere, picking up some, dropping off others.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

The music rocks. Young people dance, have fun. Among the crowd a young, handsome, and drunk Rassel dances with a girl.

GABRIEL, 20, sits on the bar and waves desperately to catch Rassel's eye, but Rassel is too busy and too drunk to notice him. Gabriel finally stands up and goes to Rassel.

GABRIEL

Lets go Rassel. It is too late.

RASSUL

Ten more minutes.

GABRIEL

You've been sayin' that for hours now. Lets go. Your parents are waitin'.

RASSUL
Let them wait then, I'm busy with
this beauty here.

Girl smiles. Gabriel grabs Rassul's hand and pulls him out.

GABRIEL
(to the girl)
Sorry but he got to go.

Rassul grabs girls hand and pulls her with him.

RASSUL
If I go, then I go with her.

GABRIEL
I don't think that's a good idea.
Your folks are not gonna like it.

RASSUL
They don't have to. I like her.

Girl smiles again. All three leave the club.

INT. RASSUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A middle aged woman wearing hijab sits by the window and looks at the wall clock. AISHA, 45. A long bearded, religious looking man walks around her, impatiently. AHMAD ZAMAN, 50.

AISHA
It is already four. Maybe we should
go and look for him?

AHMAD
No need for that. We already lost
him.

Aisha sees a TAXI CAB come to a stop in front of their house.

EXT. STREET

Gabriel and the girl try to help Rassul out, but Rassul doesn't give in.

RASSUL
I'm not drunk. I don't need no
help.

Rassul pushes them off, stumbles a few steps, and falls down. Ahmad and Aisha stand by the doors and look at him.

Disapproval and embarrassment is on their faces. Aisha tries to go and help him, but Ahmad stops her.

AHMAD

He doesn't deserve that.

Gabriel helps Rassul up.

GABRIEL

You're too drunk dude.

INT. HOUSE LIVING ROOM.

Gabriel and the girl put Rassul on the couch. Ahmad and Aisha only stand by and glare. Gabriel takes the girl by the hand.

GABRIEL

We've got to go sweetie.

RASSUL

No. She is stayin' here.

Ahmad hands some money to Gabriel.

AHMAD

Gabriel, son. Put her in taxi please and send her home... If she has one.

GABRIEL

Sure.

AHMAD

Thank you for your help... again. And sorry for the trouble.

GABRIEL

Not a problem. Rassul is my best buddy. I'm sure he'd do the same for me.

Gabriel and the girl leave. Ahmad stares at Rassul. Rassul looks back, brave.

RASSUL

What are you glarin' at?

AHMAD

I'm looking at a failure. I'm looking at a loser.

Aisha holds Ahmad's hand.

AISHA

Don't argue with him when he is drunk.

AHMAD

(shouting)

Enough! I want to talk to him right now. This is my house, and I am a Muslim. So it is going to be my way. A Muslim way.

Rassul burps and laughs.

AHMAD (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

RASSUL

Your itchy Muslim beard is funny.

Ahmad is enraged, he grabs Rassul by the throat and pulls him out. Aisha tries to intervene, but Ahmad has had enough.

EXT. HOUSE

Ahmad drags Rassul to the street and throws him. Rassul falls on the dirt, then stands up and punches Ahmad in the face. Ahmad and Aisha are shocked, Rassul too.

AISHA

Rassul! How dare you?

AHMAD

Don't you ever come back. I disown you.

Aisha puts his hands on her ears.

AISHA

No!

Ahmad takes Aisha's hand and pulls her back inside. Rassul sits on the dirt. Completely sober.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Rassul sits on the curb, dirty, bruised. A bus passes through the street and it's ad catches Rassul's eye.

INSERT THE AD, which shows: Uncle Sam pointing his finger with the slogan, "I want you." Join the US Army and change your life. Rassul looks at it, considering.

INT. ARMY RECRUITMENT OFFICE - DAY

Dozens of young men and women jam the hallway. Some are getting consultations, some medical examinations. Rassul consults with an OFFICER.

OFFICER
So when you wanna join?

RASSUL
As soon as possible.

Officer smiles and taps Rassul's shoulder.

OFFICER
That is the warrior spirit. I like that.

Officer stamps Rassul's papers as valid.

INT./EXT. RASSUL'S HOUSE - DAY

Rassul places his bags in a taxi trunk. Aisha stands behind him.

RASSUL
Okay Mom. It's time to go.

Aisha hugs Rassul with tears in her eyes, then offers him a small book.

AISHA
Take this Koran with you son. It will guide and protect you.

Rassul looks at the house where Ahmad obliviously sits in the living room and watches TV.

RASSUL
I don't want to live my life according to a book that was written thousand years ago.

Rassul gets into the taxi and it drives away. Aisha falls on her knees. Passerby neighbors come and comfort her.

EXT. KABUL AFGHANISTAN - DAY

SUPER: "January 2003"

Middle of a fight. Three U.S. Army Hummers are stuck in the middle of a street with dilapidated houses.

One of the Hummers is burning. Bodies of soldiers are scattered around. The remaining ones are engaged in the fight.

Rassul and a wounded soldier hide behind a Hummer. PRIVATE POL TEEMAN, 20. Pol recharges guns for Rassul and Rassul shoots.

Two other soldiers shoot from behind the second Hummer.

A TALIB aims the second Hummer with the rocket launcher and screams.

TALIB
Allah Akbar.

POL
Oh God. I hate it when they shout
God is great.

Talib shoots and destroys the Hummer killing both soldiers.

Now it's only Rassul who fights back. He finishes one magazine, hides back and shouts.

RASSUL
Jon. What's takin' you so long,
damn it?

INT. HUMMER

PRIVET JON FOX, 20, struggles with walkie-talkie. His hands are shivering.

JON
Give me a minute. Help's on the
way.

POL
We don't have a damn minute.

A wounded soldier lays in the middle of the fight and calls for help. PRIVET TRISS FARROW, 19.

TRISS
Help. Somebody, help.

Rassul looks at him.

RASSUL
He's alive. Triss's alive.

POL
Who's alive?

RASSUL

Triss.

Pol peeps from under the Hummer.

POL

Holly crap.

Rassul lies under the hummer and sees the Talib recharge his rocket launcher.

RASSUL

There you are.

Rassul aims at him. Talib aims at Rassul's Hummer.

INT. HUMMER

Jon is shocked seeing the Talib aiming at them.

JON

God help.

EXT. STREET

Talib shouts.

TALIB

Allah Akbar.

POL

No! He is shouting it again.

Rassul shoots the Talib dead.

RASSUL

(sarcastically)

So who's great now?

TRISS

Help, help!

Triss screams. The Taliban shower the street with bullets. Pol shouts to Triss.

POL

Shut the hell up Triss and pretend dead for now.

Rassul gives the gun to Pol.

RASSUL

Cover me up.

POL
Where are you going?

RASSUL
I've to get him.

POL
No! You can't go there.

RASSUL
I have to. They'll kill him.

Rassul gets ready and runs.

RASSUL (CONT'D)
Go, go, go.

Pol stands up and fires, shouting, cursing.

Rassul runs to Triss, grabs him, and pulls him back to the Hummer.

INT. HUMMER

JON
Get down guys. Help is here.

They all lay down, covering their heads.

EXT. SKY

Four helicopters come and shower the Taliban with rockets and machine guns.

EXT. STREET

One Helicopter lands next to the Hummer and covers the soldiers' retreat.

Rassul picks up Triss and runs to the helicopter.

Two soldiers come to Pol and help him get on the helicopter too.

Jon takes his walkie-talkie and gets follows them. The helicopter takes off.

INT. HELICOPTER - AIRBORNE

Rassul is excited. He sticks his head out and yells.

RASSUL

Yea. Fuck you bitches. It was our last day in your freaking country and you couldn't get us --

BANG! BANG! BANG! A few bullets hit the helicopter right next to Rassul's head. Rassul falls back in.

RASSUL (CONT'D)

Crap!

Chuckles from the comrades.

POL

Don't celebrate too soon dude. One day in Afghanistan passes like five years.

RASSUL

And that day is finished. We'll get to the base and start packing up.

JON

Say God willing.

RASSUL

No. I willing. Your God has nothing to do with it.

EXT. BAGRAM MILITARY BASE KABUL - DAY

The helicopters land. GENERAL ABRAMS, 55, greets the soldiers personally. He shakes hands with Pol who lays on the TROLLY.

GENERAL ADAMS

(greeting Pol)

Glad you made it.

(greeting Jon)

Glad you made it.

(greeting Rassul)

Here we go. My golden boy. Three years of brave service and not a scratch. Not even in the last day.

Well done Rassul, well done.

Your folks must be proud of you.

(to the soldiers)

Go and pack up kids. You're goin' home.

Soldiers run to their barracks, screaming.

EXT. RASSUL'S HOUSE (LOS ANGELES) - DAY

Aisha, short, blond hair and a long skirt, stands in the street holding a bag of cookies. She sees the post office car coming and rushes to it.

MAIL MAN gets out of the car smiling and gives Aisha a letter from his pocket.

MAIL MAN

You are always before me. I can't compete with that... Here we go, your letter from Afghanistan.

AISHA

Thank you very much my friend. This is for you.

Aisha gives the cookies to the Mailman and takes the letter.

MAILMAN

(smelling the bag)

Hmm... Ah. Smells delicious.

Aisha rushes back to the house pressing the letter to her chest as if someone is going to take it from her.

INT. RASSUL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Aisha sits on the bed and opens the letter.

INSERT: THE LETTER, which reads:

Hi Mom. How are you doing? I hope everything is fine. Looking forward to seeing you soon. Say hi to Gabriel. Tell him just in few short days from now, we'll be hanging around and having fun like crazy... If you ask about me, I am still alive and doing well. Everything is peaceful here. My friends are okay too... Sometimes the crazy terrorists give us minor headaches, but we pound them with full might. Here is my last army picture. Take care Mom. Looking forward to seeing you.

Your son Rassul!

BACK TO SCENE

Aisha turns the page and looks at the picture, which shows, Rassul and his friends riding in a Hummer.

Aisha kisses the picture and puts it on the shelf where dozens more of Rassul's army pictures stand.

INT. LEAVING ROOM

Aisha brings a cup of tea, smiling. Ahmad reads a newspaper. He is shaved clean and has a short haircut.

AHMAD

Another Muslim man is killed
because of his beard.

AISHA

May Allah have mercy on his soul.

AHMAD

God damn this Bin Laden spy.
Because of him, we ordinary Muslims
cannot live in peace.

AISHA

Honey. Rassul is coming.

Ahmad turns to Aisha with a wide smile, then stops smiling and turns to his newspaper.

AHMAD

Time goes fast huh?

EXT. US ARMY BASE KABUL - DAY

Soldiers carrying big bags enter a huge C-17 JET. They all have happy faces. Rassul and his friends are amongst them.

RASSUL

Yeah, baby. We are going home.

A hummer comes at high speed and breaks by the airplane gates grabbing everybody's attention.

General Adams gets out and comes to the soldiers.

GENERAL ADAMS

Rassul? Private Rassul Ahmad?

Rassul comes out of the crowd and salutes him.

RASSUL

General. Private Rassul Ahmad.

GENERAL ADAMS

Can I have a word with you Rassul?

RASSUL

Sure. Is everything okay General?

GENERAL ADAMS

Yes. Everything is fine. Get into my car.

Rassul gives his bags to Jon.

GENERAL ADAMS (CONT'D)

Take your bags with you... please.

RASSUL

But our plane is leaving in half an hour.

GENERAL ADAMS

Don't you worry about planes son. We got hundreds of them.

Rassul is confused, he takes his bags and follows General Adams to the Hummer.

Triss and Jon are dumbfounded. They take a few steps to follow Rassul, but the plane's gates start to close.

TRISS

Where are they taking him?

JON

I don't know... Let's get into the plane. He'll be back.

They board the plane.

INT. HUMMER - DRIVING

A soldier drives the hummer. General Adams and Rassul sit in the back.

RASSUL

What's this about sir?

GENERAL ADAMS

We'll talk in my office.

Rassul looks through the window and sees the PLANE TAKE OFF.

INT. GENERAL ADAMS'S OFFICE - LATER

A buff and scary looking officer walks around reading a file. CAPTAIN BAXTER, 40. The door opens and general Adams comes in followed by Rassul.

GENERAL ADAMS
Come on in Rassul...
(to Captain Baxter)
Sorry for the wait.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Not a problem.
(looking at Rassul)
So is this your hero?

GENERAL ADAMS
Yes. This is my golden boy Rassul
Ahmad.
(to Rassul)
Take a seat son, make yourself
comfortable.

RASSUL
Yes sir.

Rassul takes a seat.

GENERAL ADAMS
Rassul, this is Captain Baxter.
Commander of our elite navy Seals
team.

Rassul stands up and salutes him.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Sit down tiger. Relax.

GENERAL ADAMS
You've done a great job Rassul.
Gave a great service to the nation.
We appreciate that. Now you're
demobilized and legally I have no
rights to give you any orders...
but I wanna ask you for a favor.
You can reject it and turn me down.
No hard feelings.

RASSUL
What is it, sir?

CAPTAIN BAXTER
We have a raid tonight. A highly
classified raid, and we need a
Persian translator.

RASSUL
Translator?

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Our translator was killed by a roadside bomb this morning and we don't have time to bring a new one... Your reports say that you are fluent in Persian.

RASSUL
That's my first language.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
That's why we need you.

Rassul doesn't say anything.

CAPTAIN BAXTER (CONT'D)
It's a really important operation and we need a translator to avoid the casualties among the civilians.

RASSUL
Can I know the details?

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Only if you join us.

RASSUL
For how long is this raid gonna --

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Only tonight. Roughly couple of hours. Tomorrow you're gonna be in first plane home.

Rassul considers for a while, then stands up.

RASSUL
Okay. One more day, is only one more day. When are we --

CAPTAIN BAXTER
After dinner my men will teach you what you need to know. We'll take off before the midnight.

RASSUL
Okay.

Rassul salutes them and walks out.

EXT. BAGRAM BASE - NIGHT

TWELVE NAVY SEALS, masculine, heavily armed, wearing black uniforms, stay round a big table with a huge map on it.

SARGENT WILL, 35, cleans his Terminator style sunglasses and studies the map. Two pilots prepare a huge helicopter in the background.

Rassul and Captain Baxter come and join the Seals. Rassul is dressed up for the party too. He is excited about his toys.

RASSUL

This's some nice shit.

Captain Baxter and Seals salute each other.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Rassul, these are my boys. Boys, this is Private Rassul. Our translator for tonight's party.

RASSUL

What's up.

Seals nod, studying Rassul from toe to head.

RASSUL (CONT'D)

What are you staring at?

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Okay. Sargent Will here, will brief us once more about the mission... briefly please!

Sargent Will points at a RED POINT in the map.

SARGENT WILL

This small, mountainous village in the heart of Tora-Bora mountains is called the Hunters. Mullo Ummar's birth place. His mother and daughter still live there... The first night of every new moon Mullo Ummar comes down from his hideouts and visits his family... Ladies, tonight is the first day of a new moon and it should be the last day of that mother fucker...

SEALS (IN UNISON)

YEAH!

SARGENT WILL

... We gonna land three miles north
from the village and approximately
by one am we'll knock on the doors.
(pointing at a green mark)
The only two storied house in the
village belongs to Mullo Ummar.

The pilots get on the helicopter and start the engine.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

The order is to kill or capture
this mother fucker and come down
one mile south where the chopper
will be waitin' for us... Got it,
everybody?

SEALS

Yes, Sir!

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Well okay then. Lets go and get 'm.

Seals pick up their heavy gear and running get into the
helicopter. The helicopter doors close and it and takes off.

INT. HELICOPTER (AIRBORNE) - NIGHT

Seals paint their faces tossing the marker over. Rassul takes
the marker, draws a line across his face and passes it along.

THE RED LIGHT starts flashing and the rear doors open.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Here we go guys.

Seals stand in two lines ready to jump. Rassul is last.
Captain baxter gives orders.

CAPTAIN BAXTER (CONT'D)

Go, go, go...

Rassul runs to the front and jumps first, surprising others.
Seals follow one by one.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

The team accidently lands by a tent surrounded with sheep
causing a panic among the cattle.

A SHEPHERD comes out of his tent and sees the Seals getting
rid of their parachutes.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Don't worry you rughead. We are not here for you... or your cattle.

Team descends towards the village. The Shepherd watches them disappear in the darkness then enters his tent.

INT. TENT

The Shepherd takes an old Soviet era WALKIE-TALKIE from his bag and tries to connect with somebody.

EXT. THE HUNTERS VILLAGE - MIDNIGHT

Small, humble mud houses are dotted on the body of a mountain.

Seals run through the empty street and surround the only two storied compound in the middle of the village.

Captain Baxter gives a sign and one group led by Sargent Will climbs the walls and enters the compound.

INT. COMPOUND

-- Group breaks the door and enters swiftly. They scan the room but find nobody.

-- They break into the next room. Nobody.

-- The second floor is empty too.

INTERCUT - SARGENT WILL/CAPTAIN BAXTER

SARGENT WILL

Negative Captain. No one's home.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

What? Look everywhere. They must be hidin'.

EXT. VILLAGE - SHORTLY

Seals come out from the compound. Captain Baxter looks at Sargent will, confused.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

What?

SARGENT WILL

Not a soul.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

It's too quiet in here. I don't like it.

RASSUL

May be we got into the wrong house.

SARGENT WILL

This is the only two storied house.

Captain Baxter looks around at the village and laughs.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

You sneaky rughead.

SARGENT WILL

What is so funny sir?

CAPTAIN BAXTER

We got screwed by a shepherd.

(Beat)

The target is close by. I can feel it... Spread out and search every single house. Bring whoever you find.

Rassul cant stop smiling. He is too excited and eager to storm the houses.

CAPTAIN BAXTER (CONT'D)

Rassul. You stay with me.

RASSUL

Yes, sir.

Seals storm the houses.

The sound of gunshots and screaming women kill the silence of the night.

Rassul looks around. Not sure what is going on.

Captain Baxter leans on the compound wall and lights a cigarette. He is calm, cool, and collected.

Seals finally bring the VILLAGERS out, beating and pushing them.

Rassul's smile disappears seeing mistreatment of civilians. No matter how spoiled, he still has some goodness deep inside.

RASSUL (CONT'D)
 Why are they kicking the civilians
 sir?

CAPTAIN BAXTER
 We came too far to go back empty-
 handed.

RASSUL
 But you said you needed me to avoid
 the civilian death.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
 I need you to interrogate them.

Seals bring out two dozens of people and line them up. Most
 of them are women and children.

Captain Baxter throws his cigarette away and slowly walks to
 the crowd. He looks at each one of them. Rassul follows him.

CAPTAIN BAXTER (CONT'D)
 Ask them Rassul... Where are the
 people who live in this compound?

RASSUL
 (in Persian)
 We need people who live here. Where
 are they?

Nobody says a word.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
 Tell them. Hiding a terrorist is
 the same as being a terrorist, and
 the punishment for the terrorists
 is death.

RASSUL
 (in Persian)
 Please cooperate with us. We don't
 want you to get hurt.

An OLD MAN, 70, steps out from the crowd and beats Rassul
 with his cane. Rassul steps back.

RASSUL (CONT'D)
 (in Persian)
 Sir. Do not do this again. It's
 dangerous.

OLD MAN
 (in Persian)
 You pig eating sons of the whores.
 (MORE)

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Who do you think you are, to come
and treat us like this?

The old man holds his cane up and is about to beat Rassul again, but Captain Baxter pulls his pistol out and shoots the old man dead. Women scream, children cry. Panic

A woman runs screaming to Captain Baxter and a Seal shoots her dead too.

Rassul is dumbfounded, shocked. This is not what he is.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

You stinky mother fuckers. You
think I'm kiddin' --

Two women in the middle of the crowd catch Captain Baxter's eyes. He goes to them.

CAPTAIN BAXTER (CONT'D)

I bet you two have something to
tell me.

Captain Baxter pulls them out of the crowd and forcibly removes their head scarves. MARYAM, 70, and SHABNAM, 20, beautiful. Captain Baxter puts the gun in Shabnam's head.

CAPTAIN BAXTER (CONT'D)

Where is your daddy bitch?

She gives him a murderous look.

SHABNAM

(subtitles)
Go to hell.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

I take that as no.

Captain Baxter is about to pull the trigger, but Rassul has had enough. He pushes Captain Baxter away and stands between Seals and women.

RASSUL

Enough Captain! This is not why we
came.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Stay away soldier.

RASSUL

I'm staying right here. It's not
right. And you're not gonna do this
as long as I'm alive.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Is that what you want? Okay than.
Sargent Will, disarm him.

Sargent Will disarms Rassul and steps back. Captain baxter aims at Rassul.

CAPTAIN BAXTER (CONT'D)
Death to the --

BOOM! Suddenly a missile hits the ground and everybody falls down.

Taliban descend from every corner of the nearby mountains, Seals take positions and the fight starts.

A kid is caught in the middle of the fight. He cries.

Rassul goes running and brings him to the villagers. He hands the kid over to Shabnam.

RASSUL
(subtitles)
Hold him.

Shabnam looks at Rassul. They stare at each other for a second then she nods.

Rassul runs to Sargent Will, roughly grabs his gun back, and joins the fight. Rassul fights bravely. He moves faster, shoots more and hits more then all the Seals team combined.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Withdraw back. Back to the chopper.

The Seals cover each other and withdraw slowly.

Rassul is last to go. Shabnam looks at Rassul once more before he leaves.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

Seals come to the appointed place, but the helicopter is not there yet. A Seal argues with the pilot on walkie-talkie. Captain Baxter snatches the walkie-talkie from him and shouts.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
Get your fat ass here. Now!

PILOT (V.O)
Just two minutes Captain.

Rassul and a Seal hide behind a rock. They shoot all over the place.

Sargent Will shoots and runs back. A missile heats right in his leg and cuts it off. He falls down screaming. Everybody sees him, but nobody goes to help.

Rassul gives his gun to the Seal and shouts.

RASSUL

Cover me up.

Rassul runs to Sargent Will. Bullets shower the ground. Rassul grabs Sargent Will by the shoulder and pulls him to the back of the rock.

The helicopter shows up and showers the Taliban with missiles and machine guns. Then it lands at the top of a hill and Seals withdraw to it.

Two Seals take Sargent Will and run to the helicopter. The remaining ones get in too.

Now only Captain Baxter and Rassul left. Rassul clearly outclasses him in fight.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Cover me up Soldier.

Captain Baxter runs to the helicopter. Rassul covers Captain Baxter's retreat then backs up to the helicopter while fighting fearlessly.

INT. HELICOPTER

Captain Baxter gets in and yells to the pilot.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Take off.

PILOT

What?

CAPTAIN BAXTER

TAKE OFF.

PILOT

But a man's left behind.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Don't worry about him. Take off.
It's an order.

EXT. MOUNTAINS

A missile hits the ground and Rassul falls down. He gets up right away and runs to the helicopter, but helicopter takes off.

Rassul looks at Captain Baxter, confused. Captain Baxter waves him goodbye.

INT. THE HELICOPTER - AIRBORNE

SARGENT WILL
What the hell are you doing sir?

CAPTAIN BAXTER
I don't wanna go under tribunal
because of that rughead.

SARGENT WILL
He saved my ass.

CAPTAIN BAXTER
I'm saving everybody's ass.

EXT. MOUNTAINS

The Taliban circle Rassul. Rassul looks at Captain Baxter, disappointed. The Taliban beat him down.

EXT. MOUNTAINS

A young, scary looking Taliban fighter with silver teeth stands on a rock and aims the helicopter with his rocket launcher. JALLOD, 30.

JALLOD
Allah Akbar.

Jalldod pulls the trigger and the missile hits inside the helicopter right before its doors close. Then the helicopter whirls in the sky for a moment and crashes into a rock.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Allah Akbar.

THE TALIBAN (IN UNISON)
Allah Akbar. Allah Akbar.

Taliban run to the crash site.

EXT. MOUNTAINS (PLACE OF CRASH)

The helicopter burns. The Pilots lie dead on the ground.

Captain Baxter, wounded, opens the door and jumps out.
Sargent Will and four other survived Seals crawl out too.

The Taliban come and take them.

EXT. THE HUNTERS VILLAGE - DAWN

Rassul's put on his knees. Dozens of curious, scary looking Taliban fighters surround him. The villagers watch from a distance.

Some other Taliban bring Captain Baxter along with other Seals and put them in a line next to Rassul. Rassul and Captain Baxter exchange a look.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

What the fuck you lookin' at?

A U.S. Army Hummer filled with the Taliban fighters comes in and breaks in the middle of the street. It's front doors open and two men get out. The shepherd and a long-bearded, one eyed man. MULLO UMMAR, 47.

(All the Afghans' dialogs amongst themselves and with Rassul are in subtitles)

Mullo Ummar hugs the shepherd.

MULLO UMMAR

Thank you very much for your help.
You'll be rewarded.

THE SHEPHERD

In your service Sheikh.

The shepherd leaves. Mullo Ummar stares at Seals.

MULLO UMMAR

(looking around)
Majeed? Where is Majeed?

A short Talib runs in, with a paper in his hand. MAJEED, 50.

MAJEED

I'm here Sheikh.

MULLO UMMAR

Where have you been?

MAJEED
Sorry Sheikh, but I --

MULLO UMMAR
Don't give me sorry. Give me the
report.

Majeed opens the paper and reads it out loud.

MAJEED
Sixteen brothers and two villagers
are martyred. Nine wounded.

MULLO UMMAR
What about them?

MAJEED
We killed nine of them, took down
their helicopter, and these are
captured.

MULLO UMMAR
Who did they kill among the
villagers?

MAJEED
The old teacher Nasser and his
daughter in law.

MULLO UMMAR
Bring me the traitor.

MAJEED
Yes Sheikh.

Majeed nods to Jallod who stands by the Hummer.

Jallod opens the trunk of the Hummer. A MAN, 35 is tied down.
Jallod pulls the man by the rope and brings him to Mullo
Ummar.

JALLOD
(to the man)
Ground.

Man looks at him confused. Jallod whirls around and kicks the
man in the head causing him fall down by Mullo Ummar's feet.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
I said, ground!

Man hugs Mullo Ummar's leg.

MAN

Please master. Have mercy. I am innocent.

MULLO UMMAR

If you are innocent, then you'll become a martyr and enter the paradise right away. If not, then I'm doing the right thing.. Jallod, behead him.

Jallod smiles viciously showing his silver teeth. Its his favorite part. He swiftly ties man's feet and hands together like a lamb, digs a small hole in the ground, and places the man so that his neck comes right on top of the hole.

After Jallod pulls out a huge knife from his waist and swiftly beheads the man whose blood soaks Jallod's ruthless face.

Villagers close their eyes. All the Taliban enjoy the show, except for two young ones. ALI, 15, and HUSSAIN, 17. They look away.

Mullo Ummar gives a satisfied smile, takes a pistol from Majeed's waist and goes to the Seals.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)

I learned how to read and write from teacher Nasser. So its my duty to take revenge for his blood.

He puts the gun in Sargent Will's forehead and shoots.

Rassul closes his eyes and whispers a supplication.

RASSUL

Help me God if you're out there.

Mullo Ummar shoots the second soldier then puts the gun in Captain Baxter's head.

CAPTAIN BAXTER

Fuck you all. You fuckin' terrorists.

MULLO UMMAR

Thank you very much.

Mullo Ummar shoots him and comes to Rassul. Captain Baxter's body crumples in the background. Mullo Ummar puts the gun on Rassul's forehead and is about to shoot, but a FEMALE HAND holds his pistol and gently pushes it down.

MARYAM

Stop.

Mullo Ummar turns to the woman, confused. Rassul opens his eyes and sees Maryam and Shabnam stand right between him and Mullo Ummar's pistol.

MULLO UMMAR

Mother?

MARYAM

Don't kill this boy.

MULLO UMMAR

Why is that?

MARYAM

If not for him. Now you'd be mourning your mother and daughter.

MULLO UMMAR

You can't do that mother. It's a war.

MARYAM

All the villagers can testify that this boy saved our lives.

MULLO UMMAR

I don't care!

MARYAM

If you kill this boy Ummar. I will disown you!

Mullo Ummar looks at Maryam, angry.

MULLO UMMAR

I can't just let him go.

MARYAM

He saved our lives. It doesn't mean anything to you?

Mullo Ummar looks down considering.

MULLO UMMAR

Take Shabnam and go home. I will not kill him.

MARYAM

Swear on Shabnam's life that this boy will not die.

MULLO UMMAR
I will not kill him!... I will just
give him to Jallod.

Maryam and Shabnam look at Jallod, worried. Jallod cleans his bloody knife and looks at Rassul, smiling. Maryam and Shabnam walk away.

Mullo Ummar shoots last two Seals.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)
Majeed. Take all the infidels to
their helicopter alongside with the
traitor and burn them.

Mullo Ummar gets back to Rassul, looks at Rassul's DOG-TAG.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)
Take it off.

Rassul takes the dog-tag off and hands it to Mullo Ummar.
Mullo Ummar reads Rassul's name and chuckles.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)
Another traitor.

He throws the dog-tag to Majeed.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)
Put it on the traitor's neck.

MAJEED
Why? He didn't get no head.

MULLO UMMAR
We don't want the enemy think that
we have one of them alive. Do we?

MAJEED
Sorry Sheikh. Didn't think that
far.
(pointing at Rassul)
What to do with this one?

Mullo Ummar looks at Jallod.

MULLO UMMAR
He is yours. Show him our Afghan
hospitality... but make sure you
don't kill this one.

JALLOD
Yes, Sheikh.

Jallod unties the rope from the beheaded man and ties with it Rassul's shivering hands.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Don't worry, its temporary. When we go up to the valley of lions, I have a thick chain and a dark room waiting for you.

(whistling)

FEEEW! FEEEW! Palvon, Sarhur.

TWO BIG DOGS come running to him. Jallod pulls his knife out and cuts Rassul's ears off. Rassul holds his ears screaming.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Welcome to Afghanistan.

Jallod kicks Rassul in the face, Rassul passes out. Jallod throws the ears to his dogs.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DOWN (PLACE OF CRASH)

The Taliban take shoes, cloths, ammuniton, and other necessities from the dead Seals. Ali takes Sargent Will's sunglasses and puts them on.

They dump the Seals' bodies alongside with the traitor in the helicopter, pour gasoline on them and light them up.

Majeed comes running with a video camera in his hand. He tries to record as much as he can.

MAJEED

You damned idiots. Why didn't you wait for me?

JALLOD

You said we didn't have much time.

MAJEED

Never mind now. Assemble the fighters, we are going up.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - SUNSET

The mixed caravan of pick-up trucks and horse riders led by Mullo Ummar's Hummer slowly ascend the sky reaching mountains.

Jallod rides on a horse. He wears Rassul's uniform.

Rassul is tied up on a donkey.

INT. HUMMER - DRIVING

Majeed drives the car with Mullo Ummar sitting next to him. Maryam with Shabnam sit the back.

MAJEED

How long we are staying up there,
Sheikh?

MULLO UMMAR

In the valley of lions?

MAJEED

Yes.

MULLO UMMAR

Til they find us.

Majeed nods.

EXT. MOUNTAINS

The caravan climbs a steep pass and disappears into the soaring mountains.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - SUNSET

Typical Afghan village. Small, mud and stone houses are dotted in the body of a rocky mountain.

Caravan passes through the village exposing its life.

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- A shepherd watches after his sheep on the top of a ridge.

-- Women get water from a spring. Kids play around them.

-- Peasants work in a HEROIN field.

-- Two men slaughter a sheep. Some kids sit around and watch.

-- An old man steps on the top of a roof and calls for prayer, IMAM HAJJI, 65.

Caravan reaches the end of the village and spreads out. Mullo Ummar and his family go to the biggest house in the middle. The only house with a satellite dish on the roof.

Jallood pulls Rassul across the village and brings him to a small DUNGEON.

JALLOD

This is my guesthouse. It was built by a Russian captive of mine. So I call it, the Russian house... Now it is all yours.

Jallod takes out a key from his necklace and unlocks the door. Then he puts Rassul right by the entrance and kicks him in the chest. Rassul falls

IN

Rassul rolls down the stairs all the way to the bottom. He is unable to stand up. Jallod comes in and cuffs Rassul with a CHAIN nailed in a corner.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

I have entertained many Russian and European guests in here. You are the first American... So stand up.

Rassul stands up barely.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Sky.

Rassul looks at him, confused.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

When I say sky, you look up at the sky. When I say ground, you get on your knees. Understood?

Rassul nods.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Sky!

Rassul looks up at the sky. Jallod punches him in the throat. Rassul falls down, coughing.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

This will help you appreciate the food we have over here.

Jallod leaves.

EXT. RASSUL'S HOUSE - DAY (USA)

Aisha decorates the windows while chatting with the neighbors NICK MEYERS, 50 and his wife EMILY, 46.

NICK MEYERS
So Rassul is coming huh?

AISHA
Yes. I can't wait to see him.

NICK MEYERS
And I can't wait to eat the
delicious Persian food.

AISHA
You don't need a big event like
that to eat Persian food. Just come
over and be our guest whenever you
wish.

AMILY
We sure will.

Suddenly a black military car comes and breaks next to their house drugging their attention.

A male officer, 50, gets off the car. He is all in black, decorated uniform. The officer looks at Aisha, sad, then takes his hat off and looks down. Aisha rushes to the house.

AISHA
Ahmad!

She runs a few steps, then falls on her knees and crawls to the door.

Ahmad rushes out, sees Nick Meyers and Emily holding Aisha, then looks at the officer and falls down unconscious. Nick Meyers runs to Ahmad.

EMILY
Somebody call the ambulance!

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DOWN

Imam Hajji steps on the roof of the Mosque and calls for prayer.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - SAME

Rassul opens his eyes and looks around the dungeon. BLOOD STAINS are everywhere. Writings with blood in Russian, French, English. It is like a wall of fame with names, dates, signs of cross, drawings of Mary and Jesus.

Jallood enters the room. He has a long chain in his hand. Rassul stands up, terrified.

JALLOD
What is your name?

Rassul looks down, no response. Jallood punches him in the face. Rassul falls down. Blood from his nose.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Stand up.

Rassul stands up.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
What is your name?

RASSUL
Rassul.

JALLOD
Okay. Listen carefully Rassul, for I do not repeat myself. The sound you heard just now is the call for prayer. There will be five of those every day. Your work starts with the first one which is this early and finishes with the last one, which is at night. You gonna do what ever you're ordered to. If you do your job properly and on time, there won't be too much pain. Understood?

RASSUL
Yes.

Jallood unlocks Rassul's chain and pulls him out.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They come out and Jallood points at the surrounding mountains.

JALLOD
Look around. We are in the heart of Tora-Bora mountains. The closest American check point is twenty miles away. If you ever develop a desire to escape, make sure you succeed, because if you try and fail, I will be angry. Trust me Rassul, you don't want to make me angry.

Jallood pulls Rassul across the village to a small and dilapidated SHED.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
This is the public toilet. You can only use it at dark and with my permission.

Jallood pulls him to the

SPRING

And pushes him into it.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Now wash yourself.

Rassul washes himself, shivering. Water is freezing cold.

EXT. MOSQUE - DAY

Jallood brings Rassul to the Mosque backyard, gives him an axe, and shows him a big pile of wood.

JALLOD
Cut them in small pieces and sort them out... finish today!

Jallood walks some steps away then stops.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
And remember Rassul. I always see you. Especially when you don't see me.

Jallood walks away whistling. His dogs come out from a house and run to him. Rassul cuts the wood.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

Jallood sits on top of a rock cleaning his sniper rifle. He takes the rifle scope and looks down at Mullo Ummar's house.

Jallood POV: Shabnam does the chores.

Jallood smiles.

JALLOD
You'll be mine one day.

EXT. MOSQUE - DAY

Rassul works hard. Ali teaches kids and Hussain Koran in the background.

Imam Hajji comes out of the Mosque with some food in his hand and goes to sit under a tree.

IMAM HAJJI
(to Rassul)
Hello.

Rassul startles and looks at him.

IMAM HAJJI (CONT'D)
Put your axe down and come here.

Rassul puts the axe down and goes to him.

IMAM HAJJI (CONT'D)
Sit.

Rassul looks around then sits, reluctantly. Imam Hajji puts a big chunk of meat and a piece of Nan in front of him.

IMAM HAJJI (CONT'D)
Eat.

Rassul eats. Imam Hajji looks at Rassul's bloody ears.

IMAM HAJJI (CONT'D)
I'll be right back.

Imam Hajji goes to the Mosque and comes out moments later with an old plastic bag in the hand. He opens the bag and takes from it an old packaged medicine.

IMAM HAJJI (CONT'D)
It's actually for the cattle, but
for a hungry person a plain bread
is just as tasty as Kabob.

Imam Hajji brakes couple leaves from a grape tree, rubs the medicine on them, puts one on each of Rassul's ears and ties them up.

IMAM HAJJI (CONT'D)
May Allah cure your wounds through
this medicine, amen.

Rassul finishes his food.

RASSUL
Thank you.

Imam Hajji smiles in response. Rassul stands up and continues his work.

EXT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Villagers jam the front yard. A big TV is placed on the window. They enjoy watching the news about their fight.

THUMB! THUMB! The sound of cutting wood is heard.

EXT. MOSQUE - SAME

Rassul is exhausted, but he is only half way through.

Imam Hajji steps on the roof and calls for prayer.

Rassul works faster.

EXT. MOSQUE - LATER

People come out the Mosque and spread out. Jallod comes to Rassul. He looks at the wood, then takes a bloody bandage from his pocket.

JALLOD
You didn't finish on time.

RASSUL
(looking down)
It is too much.

JALLOD
Is it huh?... Ground.

RASSUL
I will finish --

Jallod grabs Rassul by the throat and pushes him down. Rassul falls on his knees.

JALLOD
I said ground!

Jallod pulls out his knife and is about to cut Rassul's nose.

RASSUL
No. Please.

Rassul cries.

JALLOD

I don't believe in tears so --

Imam Hajji rushes in and holds Jallod's hand.

IMAM HAJJI

You are still inside the Mosque.

JALLOD

But he didn't finish his job.

IMAM HAJJI

That is because I stopped him. And you are not going to punish him for that.

JALLOD

This is my prisoner.

IMAM HAJJI

And this is my Mosque and village.

JALLOD

I'm ordered to torture him.

IMAM HAJJI

Remember Jallod, God has much more power over you, than you have over this man.

Jallod looks down, considering, then lets Rassul go.

JALLOD

Get out of here.

Rassul stands up, gives Imam Hajji a thankful look, and rushes away.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Rassul sits by the wall and looks at the sky. His eyes close slowly and he falls asleep. Somebody throws something through the roof hole. Rassul doesn't wake up.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - SUNRISE

Imam Hajji steps on the roof and calls for prayer.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - SAME

Rassul opens his eyes. A flat bread wrapped with something inside. He looks around then opens the bread to see a huge slice of meat inside. Rassul eats in rush.

The sound of Jallod SINGING is heard.

Rassul swallows the rest of the food at once. Jallod comes in and unlocks him.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE

Jallod checks Rassul's bloody ears and his bandage.

JALLOD
You are getting better. That's not
good... Sky.

Rassul looks up and Jallod punches him in the throat. Then he takes the chain and pulls Rassul to the

SPRING

Rassul takes bath. Water washes his bandage away.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Don't lose the cloth. You gonna
need it a lot.

Rassul gets his bandage and comes out of the spring. Jallod passes him a piece of bread.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Eat it and go finish your work.

Rassul takes the bread and goes to the Mosque.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Wait. I have a question.

Rassul turns to him looking down.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
What is the worst bad word in
America?

Rassul looks down, silent.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
I don't like repeating myself.

Rassul looks Jallod in the eyes.

RASSUL
You asshole mother fucker!

JALLOD
You asshole mother what?

RASSUL
Mother fucker!

JALLOD
You asshole mother fucker?

RASSUL
Yes. You asshole mother fucker.

JALLOD
What does it mean?

Rassul looks down, scared.

RASSUL
Ah... Nothing. This just what
people say when they hate somebody
so much.

JALLOD
I hate you so much that I wanted to
call you bad words, but I didn't
want anybody else to hear me saying
bad words... Now go to work you
asshole mother fucker.

Rassul walks away.

EXT. MOSQUE - DAY

Rassul is all sweaty. He works tirelessly.

Ali lets his students go, and brings Rassul a pot of water.

ALI
Drink this water.

Rassul takes the pot with caution, empties it, and returns it
to Ali.

RASSUL
Thank you.

ALI
My name is Ali.

RASSUL
Nice to meet you Ali.

ALI
And that is my best friend Hussain.

Ali points at Hussain who sits under a tree, alone. Rassul waves him hi. Hussain just looks.

RASSUL
Is he okay?

ALI
He is always like that.

JALLOD (O.S.)
(whistling)
Hey.

Rassul and Ali look up at the rock and see Jallod watching them with the rifle scope.

RASSUL
Thank you for the water.

Rassul cuts the wood.

ALI
Be careful with Jallod and try not to displease him. He has no mercy.

RASSUL
You are talking to me. It is dangerous.

ALI
He cannot touch me. Nobody can touch me and Hussain.

RASSUL
I mean it is dangerous for me.

ALI
Oh, okay. I will talk to you later then.

Ali walks away. Rassul cuts the wood.

INT. RASSULL'S HOUSE - NIGHT (USA)

Ahmad sleeps on the bed. A DOCTOR, 45, talks to Aisha. Rassul's friend Gabriel, neighbor Nick Meyers, his wife Emily and a few other neighbors jam the room. Women comfort Aisha.

DOCTOR

He is partially paralyzed and his right side is not functioning.

NICK MEYERS

Is there any remedy or --

DOCTOR

The stroke was the result of a shock. And the closest remedy is another shock of equal level or higher. And I'm being very optimistic.

Some other neighbors come in with food in their hands. Aisha greets them.

AISHA

Oh dear. You didn't have to bring anything. There is already so much food.

NEIGHBOR # 1

It is absolutely okay Aisha. You deserve much more.

Gabriel takes the food from them and puts it in the kitchen already full of food and groceries.

INT. RASSUL'S HOUSE - LATER

The doctor and the neighbors leave.

Aisha covers Ahmad with blanket and lays next to him.

AISHA

Good night honey.

(Beat)

Good night Rassul.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY (AFGHANISTAN)

Rassul brings a huge bag of RIPE HEROINE POPPIES and adds it to a hip of more bags. Then goes to join Ali, Hussain, and other Taliban in collecting the harvest.

ALI

Rassul. How do you call this plant in America?

RASSUL

Heroine.

ALI
Whatroine?

RASSUL
Heroin.

ALI
I never heard that name.

RASSUL
What do you call it here?

ALI
Here we call it the death of the infidel... We invented it for Russian soldiers, but now the Americans are enjoying it.

RASSUL
So what are you gonna do with it?

ALI
We sell it to your sin loving people.

RASSUL
Isn't it bad for Muslims to be involved in a sin?

ALI
Islam is perfect my friend. Muslims are not.

Ali smiles.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

The Hummer and two other pickup trucks are filled with poppies. Rassul loads the last bag and covers the top.

Majeed, Jallod and three other Taliban get into the Hummer. Hussain and Ali get on the last car.

Mullo Ummar comes to the passenger side of the Hummer and talks to Majeed.

MULLO UMMAR
Watch out for Hussain. We don't need an extra headache.

MAJEED
Don't worry Sheikh. I will take care of him.

Jallood looks at Rassul who stands aside looking down.

JALLOD

You don't expect me to unload all these do you? Get your soul onto the truck. You asshole mother fucker.

ALI

Hey Rassul. Ride with us.

Rassul sits next to Ali, facing silent Hussain.

Mullo Ummar nods giving them permission and they move, quickly disappearing into the mountains.

EXT. MUNAFIKUN VILLAGE - NIGHT

Big party. Music is playing. Hundreds of scary looking, long bearded, heavily armed Afghan fighters and police officers sit in a big circle. Smoking weed, watching young boys dance.

Boys are dressed and decorated like girls. Amongst them there are two young white man, also decorated like girls, dancing.

SHAMR, 50, sits on a corner next to the singer and collects money from the fighters, refusing some, accepting others.

Ali and Hussain stay by the trucks and observe. Hussain is all red glaring at Shamr. Rassul is chained in the back, observing.

Close by Majeed and Jallood bargain with a fat Afghan.

Ali taps Hussain on the shoulder.

ALI

Calm down. There's nothing you can do about it... Better go to toilet. You wanted to pee, remember?

Hussain is silent as always. He just glares at Shamr. Ali pushes him away.

ALI (CONT'D)

Go, go to toilet.

Hussain gives Ali a cold look then goes.

INT. MUNAFIKUN PUBLIC TOILET - NIGHT

Hussain pees. Suddenly a slight NOISE of a crying kid is heard. Hussain ties his pants and rushes

OUT.

Hussain comes to the back of the toilet and sees a boy crying. YUSUF, 10.

YOUSUF

(to himself)

Mom. Dad. I miss you. I want to go home. I don't want to work anymore. I don't like it. I am afraid.

Hussain's eyes are full of tears. He gently puts his hand on Yusuf's shoulder.

HUSSAIN

What is your name brother?

Yusuf turns to Hussain, smiling, terrified. Both of his eyes are bruised.

YUSUF

Sorry master. I was just practicing my song.

HUSSAIN

I am not your master. I am your brother. What is your name?

YUSUF

I am Yusuf.

HUSSAIN

Where are you from Yusuf?

YUSUF

I'm from Darbor.

HUSSAIN

Oh. That's close to the valley of lions... So you want to go home? To your parents?

YUSUF

No. I don't.

HUSSAIN

Yes, you do. Come with me.

Hussain pulls Yusuf with him.

EXT. MUNAFIKUN VILLAGE

Ali helps Rasul to unload the poppies and load in products and ammunition.

Ali sees Hussain coming with a boy and sighs with grief.

ALI

Ya Allah. This guy never listens.

Hussain opens the door of one of their trucks and sits Yusuf in it. Shamr sees it and comes running. Yusuf is horrified.

HUSSAIN

Don't worry my little brother. You are going home.

Shamr approaches the truck yelling.

SHAMR

Where the hell are you taking my boy? You need to pay first.

Hussain gives Shamr a murderous look.

HUSSAIN

Fuck off.

SHAMR

You fuck off. Son of a bitch. Where are you taking my boy?

The music stops and everybody's attention is drawn to Hussain and Shamr.

SHAMR (CONT'D)

Who is this little mother fucker?

Hussain goes very close to Shamr and looks him straight in the eye.

HUSSAIN

Don't talk bad about my mother. She was a good woman.

Hussain turns around and walks to the truck. Shamr is irritated. He slaps Hussain in the head knocking him down.

SHAMR

Your mother was a bitch.

Hussain stands up swiftly, pulls his pistol off, and shoots Shamr dead.

Everybody gets out his gun, pointing at each other, intense. Hussain bravely goes to the middle of the crowd and talks with his chin high.

HUSSAIN

I am Hussain. That boy in the truck is my little brother Yusuf. And I'm taking him home. Whoever dares to stop me can come forward.

Majeed and Jallod rush in. People see them and back up.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

The hummer and two pickup trucks climb a steep ridge.

INT. HUMMER - MOVING

Majeed yells at Hussain.

MAJEED

You do this everywhere we go and cause us a lot of unwanted problems...

Hussain is silent. Again.

MAJEED (CONT'D)

... And now we have to go ten kilometers away from our path.

Hussain looks at Yusuf and smiles.

EXT. DARBOR VILLAGE - NIGHT

Hussain knocks on the door of a delapidated house. A WOMAN wearing a full BURQUA opens the door. She looks around carefully, then A MAN, 50, comes out.

INT. TRUCKS

Majeed and others sit on their trucks and wait impatiently. Ali holds Yusuf's hand.

EXT. DARBOR VILLAGE

Hussain checks the couples' papers then waves to Ali and Ali lets Yusuf's hand go. Yusuf jumps from the truck and runs to them.

YOUSUF

Mom. Dad.

WOMAN

Yousuf.

Yusuf jumps on his mother's hug. Hussain takes out a bunch of dollars from his pocket and hands it to the man.

HUSSAIN

This is for his school. Don't send him to work no more.

Man takes the money and nods in appreciation. Hussain looks at Yusuf to say goodbye, but Yusuf is too excited about his mother to notice Hussain.

Hussain gets into the truck. Rassul looks at him, impressed.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DOWN

Shabnam stays on the roof of Mullo Ummar's house and looks at the road, squeezing his hands, worried. Procession of trucks come. Shabnam sees Rassul and sighs with relief.

The trucks stop in the middle of the village and distribute some food to the people.

EXT. ALI'S HOUSE - DAY

WINTER

Snow is up to the knees. Rassul has a long beard and hair now. He is pale, skinny. He helps Ali fix an old motorcycle.

ALI

Did you see the terminator in America?

RASSUL

The movie?

ALI

No. The terminator himself.

RASSUL

No, I haven't.

ALI

What about Rambo?

RASSUL
America is a big country.

ALI
How big?

RASSUL
Hmm... about twenty times bigger
than Afghanistan.

Ali laughs.

RASSUL (CONT'D)
What is funny?

ALI
Mullo Ummar said the same.

RASSUL
Yeah?

ALI
He said that the Russia was twenty
times bigger than America, but we
defeated them.

RASSUL
Well... that's because we,
Americans helped you.

ALI
No, no. That is because Allah
helped us. And he is helping us
now. Everything else is just an
excuse.

RASSUL
But you don't have the weaponry to
fight Americans.

ALI
We don't need any weapons. We have
Allah and Allah is sufficient for
us.

Ali turns the motorcycle on and smiles.

ALI (CONT'D)
Allah Akbar.

Ali drives down the street, excited kids chase him.

RASSUL (V.O.)

I was astonished by their faith and appreciation of God for everything they had. And believe me or not, they had nothing. Nothing, but faith and it was sufficient for them.

Ali passes by women who make bread in the village tandoori. Shabnam is among them.

Motorcycle gets stuck in the snow. Kids try to push him out but can't. Women are amused by their efforts. Rassul comes and saves the situation. Shabnam watches him smiling.

INT. RASSUL'S HOUSE - MORNING (LOS ANGELES - USA)

Ahmad, paled, lies on the bed. Aisha feeds him.

AHMAD

I'm sorry. I let you down. I'd rather --

Aisha puts her hand on Ahmad's mouth.

AISHA

Don't say that.

AHMAD

You have to work in this age because of me.

AISHA

You took care of me for thirty years. Now it's my turn.

AHMAD

Had I not fought Rassul constantly, he would stay home and be alive now.

AISHA

Stop tormenting yourself. You meant good and he knew it deep inside.

AHMAD

I should have given him time.

AISHA

It was our destiny.

Aisha finishes feeding Ahmad, takes her bag and kisses Ahmad's forehead.

AISHA (CONT'D)
 Okay dear. I'll go now.

Aisha leaves.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Aisha comes, clocks in and starts cleaning the store.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - DAY (AFGHANISTAN)

Mullo Ummar sits by the window looking outside where Rassul works. Rassul's clothes are dilapidated.

MAJEED (O.S.)
 Sheikh. I want to give you an
 advise not as a servant, but like a
 friend and brother in law.

Mullo Ummar turns to Majeed.

MULLO UMMAR
 What is that?

MAJEED
 (sipping tea)
 Your daughter Shabnam. She has
 grown up, and now can be a
 beautiful bride.

MULLO UMMAR
 What are you talking about?

MAJEED
 (cleans throat)
 You have to think about her future.
 There are hundreds of young, and
 brave brothers who would die to be
 her husband.

Mullo Ummar gives Majeed a cold look and Majeed looks down.

Shabnam stays behind the door and listens.

MULLO UMMAR
 I appreciate your concern about
 your niece, but I haven't found the
 right person yet.

MAJEED
 But Shabnam --

MULLO UMMAR

Shabnam is my life, my blood, and
as a father, It's my duty to find a
right man for her.

Shabnam smiles and looks at Rassul working outside. Mullo
Ummar looks at Rassul too.

EXT. WILLAGE - SAME

Jallood watches Shabnam with his rifle scope.

Jallood's POV: Shabnam looks at Rassul who is working and
smiles.

Jallood is shocked.

JALLOD

You asshole mother fucker.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Rassul comes in to see Jallood stays by the doors holding his
dogs, cursing.

JALLOD

Didn't I tell you to come before
the night prayer?

RASSUL

No. You --

JALLOD

Didn't I tell you?

RASSUL

Yes. You did.

JALLOD

Am I getting too soft?

Jallood points his finger at Rassul and orders his dogs.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Palvon, Sarhur, Fetch. Fetch.

Dogs jump at Rassul biting his legs and hands. Rassul falls
down screaming.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - SAME

The sound of CRY and dogs BARKING is heard. Shabnam runs out.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE

Jallod beats Rassul in the head.

JALLOD
Shut up. Shut up!

Dogs are very aggressive. They make Rassul all bloody. Rassul can't endure anymore and instinctively kicks the dogs away. Dogs get discouraged and step back. They only bark now, but don't attack.

Jallod pushes them to Rassul, but they are afraid. Jallod lets the dogs go.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
You asshole mother fucker. How dare
you beat my dogs?

Jallod beats Rassul ruthlessly. Rassul covers his face with his hands.

Maryam comes in and pushes Jallod back.

MARYAM
Stop it!

Jallod looks at her angrily, then lowers his gaze.

JALLOD
But aunt --

MARYAM
Stop now and go to sleep.

JALLOD
But aunt --

MARYAM
Go to sleep Jallod!

Jallod looks at Rassul who is all bloody, then leaves reluctantly. Maryam helps Rassul up.

MARYAM (CONT'D)
Go to the spring and wash yourself.

EXT. VILLAGE SPRING - NIGHT

Rassul washes his face. He looks up and sees Shabnam sitting on the other side of the spring. They look at each other for a while. Then Shabnam throws to him a wrapped paper with something inside and leaves. Rassul takes the paper.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Rassul opens the paper and there's some lotion. He takes it and rubs his wounds.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

AN ICE CRYSTAL ON THE END OF A BRANCH melts. SPRING has come.

People celebrate the Persian new year. Women cook national dishes. Men play exotic, ancient games demonstrating their strength.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Riders chase each other for a dead goat.

People watch from a distance. Rassul, Ali, and Hussain watch from another angle.

ALI

Do you know this game?

RASSUL

I've heard about it, but I don't know the rules.

ALI

You have to take the goat to the other side of the field and throw it in the marked circle.

RASSUL

Sounds easy.

ALI

You'll see. Watch Jallod.

Jallod takes the dead goat and makes his way through the crowd of riders. They whip him all over the place, but it just makes him more excited. He rides across the field and throws the goat into a circle in the end. Spectators applaud.

EXT. FIELD - LATER

Wrestling competition. Again Jallod is the star. He wrestles beautifully and beats everybody. Mullo Ummar smiles proudly.

MULLO UMMAR
That's my boy.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

A single sound of DRUM plays. Men and women sit separately around a huge scatter and eat. Kids dance in the middle. Ali and Hussain sit next to Mullo Ummar, talking about something. Rassul washes the horses in the background.

Suddenly, a pickup truck comes fast and breaks next to Rassul. AN OLD TALIB gets off and runs to Mullo Ummar. Mullo Ummar greets him with hug.

THE OLD TALIB
Sheikh, we have to give a response.

MULLO UMMAR
What happened?

THE OLD TALIB
The Americans killed sheikh Mumtaz
... All the Mudjahideen are
preparing a revenge strike.

Mullo Ummar turns to Hussain.

MULLO UMMAR
Are you sure you can do it?

HUSSAIN
Inshallah.

MULLO UMMAR
Then you have my blessings.

Hussain smiles. Mullo Ummar nods to the old Talib.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)
Go and tell brothers that Mullo
Ummar will hit Kabul.

THE OLD TALIB
One is not enough.

Mullo Ummar turns to Ali.

MULLO UMMAR
Get ready Ali. You'll join Hussain.

Ali stands up, scared.

ALI
Yes Sheikh.

Ali looks at a woman who laughs with Maryam and Shabnam.
SUMAYA, 50, Ali's mother. Sumaya looks back at Ali and her
smile disappears.

The old Talib and Mullo Ummar smile.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - DAY

Ali and Hussain watch three Talibs prepare bombs and sew them
into two jackets. Hussain has a happy face. Ali is not
excited at all. A Talib gives one cellphone to Hussain and
one to Ali.

TALIB #1
This is plan B.

ALI
Plan B?

TALIB #1
In case if one of you get caught or
shot, the other one can activate
his bomb from far away simply by
giving him a call.

ALI
Easy to say.

TALIB #1
It is easy.

Ali gives the Talib a cold look.

INT. ALI'S HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

Ali sleeps. Sumaya sits next to him crying. She hugs him and
kisses his face.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - MORNING

Jallood stays by the doors. Rassul comes out. He looks down at
the village and sees crowd of people shaking hands and
hugging Ali and Hussain.

Ali and Hussain see Rassul and come to him. Everybody looks at them. Rassul is nervous, confused.

ALI
Salaam Alaikum Rassul.

RASSUL
Alaikum assalam... Is it your birthday or something?

ALI
Well, in a way... We are going to Kabul.

RASSUL
For how long?

ALI
Forever.

Ali takes out a small KORAN from his sleeve and gives it to Rassul.

ALI (CONT'D)
If you want to talk to Allah, fall in prostration and pray, but if you want Allah to talk to you, read the holly Koran.

RASSUL
Okay.

ALI
Just open a random page and let Allah talk to you Rassul. I think you need it.

RASSUL
I will.

Ali's eyes are tearful. He hugs Rassul. Rassul hugs him too.

ALI
Farewell Brother. You will be fine from tomorrow. I took care of it!

Hussain comes and gives Rassul a hug too. A silent hug. Then they return to the motorcycle where Ali's mother Sumaya waits. Ali and Sumaya hug tight.

MULLO UMMAR
It is time Ali.

Ali gets on motorcycle, Hussain sits behind him. Two Taliban fighters bring Imam Hajji in.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)
 Where have you been Imam Hajji?
 Come and give your blessings to our
 young lions.

Imam Hajji blesses them reluctantly and hugs them farewell. Tears roll down his face.

Ali puts his sunglasses and turns on the engine. Then he waves Sumaya goodbye and drives away. Sumaya falls on her knees. Shabnam comforts her.

EXT. KABUL CENTRAL MARKET - DAY

Ali drives through the busy street and breaks in a corner. Hussain gets off, takes his bag, and hugs Ali.

HUSSAIN
 See you in heaven brother.

ALI
 See you in heaven.

They kiss each other's faces and Ali drives away.

EXT. MARKET POLICE CHECKPOINT - SHORTLY

Ali approaches the police cars and stops. He looks around. Market is full of people. Patrols of American soldiers and Afghan police are scattered everywhere.

Ali looks at them, considering. TWO YOUNG BOYS, 16, 17, approach Ali and start bullying him.

BOY # 1
 (laughing)
 Hey, I like your sunglasses.

BOY # 2
 And I like your motorcycle.

Ali is oblivious about them. He stares at the police and soldiers for a while.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - DAY - FLASHBACK (ALI'S MEMORY)

Mullo Ummar and Majeed watch two Taliban wrap Ali's body with the bomb.

MULLO UMMAR
What is your last wish Ali?

ALI
No more torment for Rassul.

Mullo Ummar is surprised.

MULLO UMMAR
What?

ALI
It is my last wish that Rassul not
be tortured anymore.

MULLO UMMAR
Okay, okay. I can do that, but one
condition.

ALI
What condition?

MULLO UMMAR
You have to kill at least ten.

END OF FLASHBACK

The two annoying boys are still trying to intimidate Ali. Ali puts his sunglasses little bit down and looks at them.

ALI
Get out of here. Now.

BOY # 1
(laughing)
Uh-uh. I'm so scared.

Ali moves his jacket and reaches his pistol.

ALI
Get out of here you little shits.

BOY # 2
Oh my God. He has a gun!

Boys run way screaming and causing panic. Ali charges his pistol and shoots at policemen and soldiers.

ALI
(counting)
One, two, three, four --

A soldier shoots Ali in the chest and he falls down dropping his pistol. Police and soldiers approach him cautiously. Ali is all bloody.

ALI (CONT'D)

There is no God, but God. God is great!

Ali barely grabs a wire from his sleeve and tries to pull it, but a soldier steps on his hand and shoots him in the head.

SOLDIER

Go to hell fucker.

The soldiers open Ali's jacket and see a huge amount of explosives.

SOLDIER # 2

Mother fucker was about to explode the entire town.

More police and soldiers gather around Ali's body.

Hussain watches them from far away. He takes out the cellphone and dials the number. Bomb in Ali's body EXPLODES, spewing flames and smoke onto nearby cars and shops.

EXT. KABUL CENTRAL MARKET - LATER

Policemen and American soldiers jam the market. Doctors taking the dead bodies. An Afghan general yells at police ordering them around. YAZEED, 55, wears golden necklace, Rolex watches.

Yazeed looks at the crowd and sees Hussain staring at him, smiling. Yazeed comes to Hussain, surprised.

YAZEED

Hussain? Is that you?

Hussain smiles at him and talks in a gentle, girlish voice.

HUSSAIN

Yes master. It is me Hussain. Your best boy.

Yazeed looks around, nervous.

YAZEED

I can't talk to you here.

HUSSAIN

Then invite me to your house.

Yazeed looks around, considering.

YAZEED

You stay here. I will come and pick you up at dark.

HUSSAIN

I will be waiting impatiently.

EXT. KABUL CENTRAL MARKET - NIGHT

Hussain sits under a tree. There is nobody around, but afghan police and American soldiers. A police car comes and stops by him. Hussain gets in.

INT. POLICE CAR

Yazeed hugs Hussain and kisses him.

YAZEED

Oh. My boy is back. How happy I am. I thought you were dead or --

HUSSAIN

I am alive and I'm back.

YAZEED

We gonna have a big party and celebrate your comeback. Everybody is gonna come.

Hussain smiles.

HUSSAIN

Make sure everybody does.

EXT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

People sit in the yard and watch TV. Sumaya sits between Maryam and Shabnam. Shabnam holds her hands. Rassul watches from a distance.

INSERT: TV, which shows: Dead bodies and burning cars all over the place.

REPORTER (O.S)

Twenty one people were killed in the latest suicide attack. Most of them were civilians.

BACK TO SCENE

The Taliban cheer, screaming.

TALIBAN
Allah Akbar. Allah Akbar.

Sumaya hugs Shabnam and cries.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

Rassul carries buckets of water from the spring. He is in rush.

EXT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - SAME

Jallod walks back and forth in the yard, cursing. Rassul enters the yard. Jallod rushes to him.

JALLOD
Finish your duties on time.

Jallod leaves. Rassul looks at him, confused.

RASSUL
He didn't beat me?

EXT. ALI'S HOUSE - DAY

Rassul fixes the attic. Sumaya brings some food.

SUMAYA
Come to eat.

Rassul comes to the food. Sumaya takes a pitcher and pours water on Rassul's hands.

RASSUL
No. I can do it --

SUMAYA
You are my guest.

Rassul washes his hands and sits to eat.

SUMAYA (CONT'D)
Does he still beat you?

Rassul stops eating.

RASSUL
I'm sorry?

ALI'S MOTHER

Ali said that they would never beat you again if he succeeded.

Rassul smiles.

RASSUL

No. He doesn't beat me anymore.

Sumaya sighs with relief.

SUMAYA

At least his sacrifice did some good.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Mullo Ummar and Majeed watch TV.

INSERT: THE TV, which shows: Dead bodies of men, women, children.

TV REPORTER (O.S)

Massacre in Kandahar... A late night raid by American troops has left sixteen civilians dead. Mostly women and children... Soldiers crashed into the wedding party in the village of Mardon of Kandahar province and started shooting indiscriminately.

BACK TO SCENE

MULLO UMMAR

These late night raids are hurting our reputation. We need to stop it some how.

MAJEED

I think I know how.

MULLO UMMAR

How?

MAJEED

Your mother might not like it.

MULLO UMMAR

Don't worry about my mother. I have a war to win.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

Kids swim in the spring. Rassul fills a bucket with water and splashes the kids. A Talib comes in and calls Rassul.

TALIB
Come. Follow me.

Rassul follows the Talib, confused.

The Talib brings Rassul to the Russian house where Jallod waits.

JALLOD
(to Talib)
I get him from here.

The Talib leaves. Jallod unchains Rassul.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Come on in.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE

Majeed fixes a stand of video camera. Rassul comes, sees him and Rassul's face goes pale. His hands starts shaking. Jallod places an old chair in front of the camera.

JALLOD
Sit.

Rassul doesn't move, he is frozen from the shock. Jallod sits him forcibly and hands him a piece of paper.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Memorise it.

Rassul reads the paper. Jallod waits.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Are you done?

Rassul nods. Jallod takes a black piece of cloth from his pocket and blindfolds Rassul. Majeed starts the camera.

MAJEED
Okay. I'm ready. Are you ready
Jallod?

Jallod covers his face with the tip of his Turban.

JALLOD
Always.

MAJEED

Rassul. Today we give you a chance to be free. Right now I am recording you. When I finish, you start talking and ask for help... In English of course.

RASSUL

What should I say?

MAJEED

Your life story, what you are going through, and our demand at the end. Now ready?... And go!

Rassul is reluctant to start.

MAJEED (CONT'D)

I said go.

RASSUL

(cleaning his throat)

My name is Rassul Ahmad. I am a U.S. Soldier. Served in the Alpha Battery of the second Platoon under the command of General J. Adams... About two years ago, I joined a secret mission and we were sent to kill or capture the Taliban leader Mullo Ummar. The mission has failed... The Taliban captured and executed everybody. Everybody except me. They cut my ears on day one and I've been tortured ever since. My body is full of scars and pain... Now they want you to stop the night raids and pull the troops out of Afghanistan. If their demands are not met within two weeks, they will behead me and send you the video of the execution... I served my country at the time of need. Now I need your help. Please meet their demands and spare my life.

Rassul finishes his speech.

JALLOD

Are you done?

RASSUL

Yes.

JALLOD

Extend your right hand.

Rassul extends his right hand toward the camera.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Make a fist and point your
indicating finger to the camera.

Rassul makes a fist and points his indicating finger. JalloD puts his pistol very close to Rassul's finger and shoots, cutting it through. The finger hangs by the skin. Rassul pulls his hand back, crying.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Put your hand back.

Rassul extends his hand. It shivers like crazy. Blood pours from the wound.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Open you middle finger.

Rassul tries to open his middle finger, but can't do so instinctively. His body is locked. JalloD opens his middle finger forcibly, then shoots it off too. Now both fingers hang by the skin. Rassul cries. JalloD slaps him on the head.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Don't cry!

MAJEED (O.C)

Let him cry. It looks good.

JalloD snatches off both fingers from Rassul's hand, then takes the bandage from his pocket and ties the wounds. Blood leaks from the bandage.

MAJEED (O.S) (CONT'D)

Cut.

Majeed takes the camera and walks out. JalloD unties Rassul's eyes and displays his two fingers, mocking.

JALLOD

Have a rest. You are done for the
day.

JalloD leaves. Rassul passes out.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE

JalloD throws the fingers to his dogs.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

Rassul sleeps, panting.

The CRACKING sound of door opening is heard.

Rassul opens his eyes barely to look. A bright, but fuzzy light comes in. As the light comes closer it becomes clear. It is a woman carrying a lamp. She sits before him and opens her face.

Rassul's eyes open wide, he tries to stand up, but she doesn't let him.

RASSUL
Shabnam?

SHABNAM
Shh!

Rassul looks at the door.

RASSUL
But Jallod --

SHABNAM
Don't worry about him. Grandma put some herbs in his food and now he sleeps like a horse.

RASSUL
What are you doing here?

Shabnam puts her hand on Rassul's mouth.

SHABNAM
Please don't talk.

They stare at each other and the light of the lamp reflects in their eyes. Shabnam takes Rassul's wounded hand. Rassul is reluctant.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)
Relax.

Shabnam unties the bandage gently. Rassul looks away. Shabnam cleans the wounds, rubs some medicine on them. Rassul stares again at Shabnam and it makes her uncomfortable. Shabnam unwraps a cloth full of meal and puts it by Rassul.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)
Eat while I'm working on your wound.

RASSUL
I'm not hungry.

SHABNAM
You have to eat.

Rassul struggles to eat with his left hand. Shabnam finishes with the wound, then takes a clean piece of cloth and tries to tie it.

RASSUL
Please use the old bandage or
Jallod --

SHABNAM
Oh, you are right. I'm sorry.

Shabnam ties the wound with the old bandage. Then she notices Rassel is fighting to eat with left hand.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)
Let me help you.

Shabnam puts food in Rassel's mouth. Their eyes can't let go of each other.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - SAME

Jallod and his dogs sleep by the door. The only sound they make from their breaths.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE

The food is finished, yet their eyes still don't let go. A tear rolls down Shabnam's face. They come close and hug. Rassel closes his eyes and breathes with relief.

RASSUL (V.O.)
That was the warmest hug I had in
my life. And for those few moments
in her hug I forgot everything.
Pain, captivity, Afghanistan, wars.
It was a feeling I never had,
before.

Shabnam stands up.

SHABNAM
Now I have to leave. Goodbye.

Shabnam leaves. Rassel lays back looking up at the dark sky.

INT. GABRIEL'S HOUSE USA - DAY

Gabriel watches TV with his mouth open wide in shock.

INSERT TV, which shows:

Rassul blindfolded, sat on a chair and talking. Jallod stands by.

RASSUL (O.S)

... My name is Rassul Ahmad.
I am a U.S. Soldier... Served in
the Alpha Battery of the second
Platoon under the command of
General J. Adams... About two years
ago I joined a secret mission and
we were sent to kill or capture the
Taliban leader Mullo Ummar...

GABRIEL

You're alive? O MY GOD.

EXT. GABRIEL'S HOUSE - SHORTLY

Gabriel rushes out toward Rassul's house where Nick Meyers stops him.

NICK MEYERS

Stop Gabriel. Where are you going?

GABRIEL

I just saw the news --

NICK MEYERS

I know, but don't go there. Go to
the church.

GABRIEL

But --

NICK MEYERS

Go to the church kid. Everybody is
there.

Gabriel obeys. Meanwhile another neighbor comes out from his house and runs toward Rassul's home. Then another and another. Nick Meyers stops them all and directs them to the church.

NICK MEYERS (CONT'D)

Everybody to the church. Please!

INT. CHURCH - LATER

Neighbors jam the Church chatting about the news. Nick Meyers comes to the stage.

NICK MEYERS

(cleans his throat)

Attention. Attention pleas!.. Today we got a great news... Rassul is alive and in a good condition... well maybe not in a good condition, but he is alive. The reason I called you here is I don't want anybody to tell his parents about it --

A LADY stands up and interrupts him.

LADY

They have the right to know about their son.

People nod in agreement, making noise.

NICK MEYERS

Please... They've suffered a lot already. And now they are getting better. What if we tell them that Rassul is alive and later he gets killed? Did anybody think about that?... Ahmad had a stroke and became paralyzed after hearing about Rassul's death. He is not gonna make it a second time --

NEIGHBOR #1

So what do you recommend us to do?

NICK MEYERS

Just remember how much this family did for us. Taking care of our kids, cleaning out the streets, and visiting the sick are just a few good things to mention about uncountable benefits we've got from this family. Therefore its due on us as a community, as neighbors, and as citizens to bring Rassul back to his parents.

NEIGHBORS

How we gonna do that?

NICK MEYERS

I suggest we find a way to convince Mr. President to meet their demands.

NEIGHBOR # 2

They would never negotiate with the terrorists.

People make noise, agreeing. Gabriel stands up.

GABRIEL

I have another idea.

NICK MEYERS

And what would that be?

GABRIEL

I propose that we make a video where we, alongside with Rassul's parents ask the terrorists to release him.

People nod in agreement, again.

NEIGHBOR # 1

That is a good idea.

NICK MEYERS

That is a bad idea. In that case we would have to inform his parents.

GABRIEL

Not necessarily both of them.

NICK MEYERS

What do you mean?

GABRIEL

I mean, we can tell Aisha, and leave the surprise for Ahmad.

NEIGHBORS

Yes we should involve Aisha.

Nick Meyers looks around, considering.

NICK MEYERS

Okay. And who is gonna do that?

Everybody looks at him.

NICK MEYERS (CONT'D)

No way.

People make noise. Emily steps up to the podium.

GABRIEL

Listen. Nick doesn't have to do it alone. We can go all together and tell Aisha about it.

Silence, considering.

INT. RASSUL'S HOUSE - EVENING

Aisha feeds Ahmad. The door RINGS and she goes to open it just to see the entire town gathered outside her house. Gabriel and Nick Meyers are pushed to the front.

AISHA

Good evening Gabriel? Neighbors? Please come on in.

NICK MEYERS

No thanks. We are... too many today. But Aisha, can we take a walk... all together?

AISHA

Is everything okay?

NICK MEYERS

Everything is fine. We just have something to talk about.

AISHA

Okay, just give me a minute.

NICK MEYERS

Sure.

Aisha closes the door.

EXT. TOWN PARK - EVENING

Aisha, alongside with Emily and two female neighbors walk in the park. Others follow behind. Women hold Aisha's hands and talk about something. Suddenly Aisha faints. Women prevent her from falling.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

Rassul washes Mullo Ummar's Hummer. Jallod comes to him.

JALLOD

Go and wash yourself. Sheikh wants to see you.

Rassul goes to the

SPRING

And washes himself.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - DAY

Mullo Ummar, Shabnam, and Maryam sit around the TV. Majeed fixes the channels. Jallood opens the door, glances at Shabnam then looks at Mullo Ummar.

JALLOD

Sheikh?

MULLO UMMAR

Yes?

JALLOD

I brought him.

MULLO UMMAR

Well let him in.

Jallood pulls Rassul in.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)

(coldly)

Come. Sit.

Maryam glares at Mullo Ummar.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)

Please, come and sit. Some tea?

Rassul sits by the threshold. Majeed fixes the TV and the news catches everybody's attention. Shabnam and Rassul share a glance.

INSERT TV, which shows:

REPORTER

Good night. Today we have a video response to the last week's terrorist video that threatened to kill an American soldier unless their demands are met. So here is the video...

TV shows: Rassul's neighbors, friends. Then it shows Rassul's house, his father laying on the bed. Then his mother surrounded by neighbors.

AISHA

(in Persian)

I want to address the people who have my son. Peace be with you... Dear brothers, you are asking for something that is not in our hands. We understand how you feel about the latest massacre in your country. Our prayers are with the deceased ones and their families... My neighbors and I, we wrote a letter to the president, but it was rejected. We did all we could, but it is not in our hands... You on the other hand have the power to free my son. Our Holy Koran says, Allah is forgiver and he loves those who forgive. My son is a good son. Please forgive him and send him back to us. Killing is not the symbol of power, forgiving is.

Aisha finishes her speech. Then neighbors all together plea for Rassul's release.

NEIGHBORS IN UNISON

Please let Rassul be free. Send him back to his parents.

BACK TO SCENE

Rassul wipes his tears. Maryam and Shabnam are also moved, but hide it.

MULLO UMMAR

Is that all? Let our son go free? What about my demands? Would you dirty pigs stop killing us if I've released this kind of video?

(yelling to the door)

Jallod!

Jallod rushes in.

JALLOD

Yes Sheikh?

MULLO UMMAR

Take this pig out of here and if they won't meet my demands by the deadline, kill him.

(to Majeed)

Make sure to make a good video out of it.

Majeed nods affirmatively. Jallod pulls Rassul out. Shabnam stares at Maryam, hopeless eyes.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Maryam enters the room and sees Shabnam crying. Maryam hugs her.

SHABNAM

They will kill him Grandma. They will cut his head off.

Maryam strokes her head. Contemplating

MARYAM

Sorry my dear. I didn't see it coming.

SHABNAM

You didn't see what coming?

MARYAM

You are in love.

Shabnam stops crying and looks at Maryam. Fear in her eyes.

MARYAM (CONT'D)

You love Rassul, don't you?

Shabnam stands leaves the room. Maryam holds her hands high and prays.

MARYAM (CONT'D)

Oh Allah. We all make plans, and you make plans, and you are the best of those who makes plans. So let Shabnam be a part of your plan, for she has a good heart. She is free of our sins.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Shabnam prays. Tears roll down her cheek. She finishes her prayer and stands up to collect her prayer mat when the

VIDEO CAMERA

laying on top of a shelf catches her eyes. She stares at it.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - DOWN

Rassul looks at the sky. The new moon and bright stars reflect in his eyes.

RASSUL

If you are really up there, show me
a sign and I'll believe.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

Rassul cleans the village toilet. Jallod comes in with a rope in his hand.

JALLOD

Hey. Stop doing that and go grab a
shovel from the Sheikh's house.

Rassul goes to Mullo Ummar's compound.

EXT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND

Rassul grabs a shovel from the yard and heads back. Shabnam stands in his way. They exchange looks. Both are worried.

SHABNAM

Allah be with you.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - SHORTLY

Rassul comes to the village center where Jallod and Majeed wait for him sitting on their horses. Rassul sees the

VIDEO CAMERA

in Majeed's hand and slows down. His hands start to shake.

JALLOD

Don't worry. This one is painless.

Jallod grabs the chain and pulls Rassul up to the mountains.

Shabnam watches from the rooftop of Mullo Ummar's compound and falls in prostration.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

They ride through the endless rocky mountains and reach a small and green field, which looks like golf yard in the middle of nowhere. Majeed looks around.

MADJID

I think this is a good location.

JALLOD

Why did we have to come so far just to kill him?

MAJEED

Because we don't want to give up our location in the video.

JALLOD

Okay. Whatever.

Jallop gets off the horse and pulls Rassul to the middle of the field.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

Dig a hole.

Rassul digs, slowly.

JALLOD (CONT'D)

I know, you want to buy yourself some time. Anybody would, but sooner we start sooner we finish. Therefore move it or I'll shoot you right now.

Rassul digs faster.

EXT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - DAY

Shabnam still prostrates, crying.

SHABNAM

Oh Allah, you are the most merciful and you love being merciful, so have mercy on Rassul.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

Rassul dug a hole as deep as his height and still digs.

MAJEED

That is enough.

Rassul keeps digging.

JALLOD
ENOUGH. Get out!

Rassul gets out the hole and puts the shovel down.

Jallop approaches him smiling viciously, then all in a sudden he whirls around and kicks Rassul in the feet. Rassul falls down.

Jallop takes the rope from his waist and tires Rassul's legs and hands like a sacrificial lamb.

Rassul doesn't resist, but his body shivers from fear. Jallop pulls out his knife and cuts his own thumb.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
Trust me Rassul. I like you. And promised Ali that I would not hurt you. That is why I am making sure that the knife is sharp enough. None of my former prisoners had this privilege. I used to cut their heads off with shovel and other objects you cannot even imagine.

Jallop puts the knife at Rassul's throat. Rassul cries.

RASSUL
God, help me!

JALLOD
Don't be afraid. It's just a few seconds.

Jallop waits for Majeed's command. Majeed turns the camera up and down, checking, confused.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
What is wrong?

MAJEED
The camera is not working.

Majeed opens the camera and sees the BATTERIES missing.

MAJEED (CONT'D)
(laughing)
You lucky son of a bitch.

JALLOD
What is so funny sir?

MAJEED
We forgot the batteries.

JALLOD
What?

MAJEED
Batteries. We left them in the village.

JALLOD
Then you just record it. When we go back, you will put the batteries.

MAJEED
It doesn't work that way, you idiot.

JALLOD
Then lets kill him first, then we go and record ourselves telling how we did it.

Majeed bursts out laughing. Jallod is confused.

MAJEED
Just untie him and lets go back.

Jallod unties Rassul reluctantly.

JALLOD
There is something about you.

Rassul stands up and looks at the sky.

EXT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - DAY

Shabnam still prostrates. Suddenly the sound of CONVERSATION is heard.

MULLO UMMAR (O.C.)
Why did you bring him back?

MAJEED (O.C.)
You are not going to believe sheikh... We forgot the batteries.

MULLO UMMAR (O.C.)
Okay then. Go get them and finish the job.

Shabnam stands up, wipes her tears and smiles looking at the sky.

SHABNAM

Thank you.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - EVENING

The house is turned upside down. Mullo Ummar, Majeed, and Jallood look for batteries.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - EVENING

Shabnam looks around cautiously, then takes the batteries from her sleeve and throws them into the spring.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - SUNRISE

Rassul sits and looks at the sky. The Koran in the corner catches his eyes.

ALI (V.O.)

If you want to talk to Allah, fall
in prostration, but if you want
Allah talk to you, read the Koran.

Rassul takes the Koran, opens a random page, and reads.

RASSUL

"In the name of Allah, the most
beneficent, the most merciful. Oh
those who ask for our signs, look
around you. Look at the sky, at the
moon, sun. Look at the universe.
How we created and sustained it.
Look at your own self. How we
created you and took care of you
when you were helpless --

Rassul falls in prostration and weeps.

RASSUL (CONT'D)

Oh God forgive me. I don't want to
die without knowing you. I believe
now. Oh God save my soul.

EXT. WALLY OF LIONS - DAY

Rassul works in the opium field. A pickup truck races down the village. TWO MEN in civilian clothes get off the car and enter Mullo Ummar's compound.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND

Mullo Ummar, Majeed and two man sit around sipping tea. Mullo Ummar listens to them talk. He seems upset. Shabnam serves the food.

MAN #1

... And they burned the Holy Korans. There are protests across the country. It's a good time to act. What is your take?

Mullo Ummar turns to Majeed.

MULLO UMMAR

Kill him tomorrow after the dawn prayer.

MAJEED

But we don't have the batteries yet.

MULLO UMMAR

We don't need no batteries. They won't hear or see him anymore and will get the message.

Shabnam quickly leaves the room.

INT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - DAY

Shabnam is in Maryam's hug, crying.

SHABNAM

Grandma they are going to kill him. There is nothing we can do.

Maryam taps her shoulders, considering.

MARYAM

I have an idea, but you will have to obey me.

SHABNAM

Anything you say Grandma.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Rassul sleeps. The CREAKING sound of door opening wakes him up.

Rassul pulls himself back to the wall looking at the door.

Maryam comes in.

MARYAM
Rassul? Where are you?

RASSUL
I am here Grandma.

MARYAM
Come out. Quickly.

EXT. RUSSIAN HOUSE

Rassul comes out and sees Jallod laying down unconscious.

Imam Hajji grabs Jallod's hands and pulls him into the Russian house. Rassul looks at Maryam.

MARYAM
Stop staring at me, better help
Imam Hajji to take him in.

Rassul and Imam Hajji pull Jallod

IN

IMAM HAJJI
Take his clothes off and wear them.
We will wait outside.

Imam Hajji walks out. Rassul takes off Jallod's clothes, and puts them on. Then he takes his weapons.

Rassul glares at Jallod holding the knife. Then he scratches the wall next to Jallod's head writing in Persian then in English

"I forgive you!"

IMAM HAJJI (CONT'D)
Hurry up son. We don't have much
time.

Rassul comes out and they look at him. With long beard, uniform and weapons he looks just like any other Taliban fighter.

MARYAM
There are some other Talibs
guarding the village. You walk
behind us silently until we are out
of the village.

RASSUL

Okay.

MARYAM

Lets go.

They walk away looking around with caution.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - NIGHT

FOUR TALIBAN fighters chat in the dark.

They see three people passing in a distance and try to take a good look at them, but it is too dark.

TALIB #1

Who is there passing?

MARYAM

It is us.

TALIB #1

Oh. Is everything okay Grandma?

MARYAM

Yes everything is fine. Imam Hajji's wife got sick and he wants me to check on her.

TALIB #1

Oh, okay.

Three reach the end of the village. Maryam shows Rassul a delapidated MOSQUE far away.

MARYAM

Go there son. Shabnam is waiting for you. She will take you down to the river, you pass it and there is an American checkpoint.

RASSUL

Thank you very much Grandma, Imam Hajji. I will not forget this.

IMAM HAJJI

It is not us. It is Allah. He has plans for everybody. Now you go, our prayers with you.

Rassul turns around and is about to leave.

MARYAM
Wait, Rassul.

RASSUL
Yes, grandma?

MARYAM
Take Shabnam with you.

RASSUL
I am sorry?

MARYAM
Take Shabnam with you son. She
loves you.

Rassul and Imam Hajji are dumbfounded. They stare at Maryam.

IMAM HAJJI
I didn't see that coming.

RASSUL
She loves me?

MARYAM
Yes. She does.

RASSUL
Did she tell you that?

MARYAM
No. She would never admit that, but
I've know her since she was born. I
know how she feels.

Rassul is speechless.

MARYAM (CONT'D)
Please Rassul, take her with you.
She is a nice girl and can be a
very good wife. You will love her.

RASSUL
I already do Grandma.

Now Maryam is surprised.

MARYAM
You do?

RASSUL
Yes. I love her too.

MARYAM/HAJJI
I didn't see that coming.

Maryam hugs Rassul.

RASSUL
I will take her with me, if she agrees.

Maryam turns to Imam Hajji.

MARYAM
Imam Hajji. Bless them and their journey.

IMAM HAJJI
With pleasure.
(holding his hands up)
Oh Almighty Allah. Worthy of all praises and beautiful names. We leave Rassul and Shabnam with you. Deliver them to safety and bless their lives. Amen.

MARYAM
Amen... Now go son. Shabnam is waiting for you.

Rassul runs disappearing into the darkness. Maryam and Imam Hajji wipe their tears and returns to the village.

EXT. DELIPIDATED MOSQUE - SHORTLY

Shabnam waits holding a horse by a rope. Rassul comes in.

RASSUL
Hey Shabnam.

SHABNAM
You are late.

RASSUL
I just got the biggest news of my life.

SHABNAM
Good. Get on the horse.

Rassul gets on the horse. Shabnam grabs the horse by the rope and pulls. They go about fifty feet and Rassul stops the horse.

RASSUL
If we go like this, we will get
caught very soon. You sit on the
horse and I will pull it.

They exchange positions and after another fifty feet Shabnam stops the horse. She gets off.

SHABNAM
That is too slow.

RASSUL
I have a great idea.

SHABNAM
What is that?

RASSUL
We ride together.

SHABNAM
I am not going to share a seat with
you.

RASSUL
We don't have any other choice.

Rassul gets on the horse and extends his hand to her. Shabnam looks at him, considering, worried.

RASSUL (CONT'D)
You hugged me once already.

SHABNAM
I hugged you because you needed a
hug.

RASSUL
Now I need you up here even more.

Shabnam takes his hand reluctantly and gets on. They ride another fifty feet very slowly. Shabnam is not holding on to Rassul.

Rassul suddenly startles the horse faster and Shabnam almost falls, but she instinctively hugs Rassul from behind. Rassul grins and they ride full speed.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - DAWN

Jallood opens his eyes and sees his fellow Taliban circled him around, laughing. Jallood jumps up. He is almost naked. Mullo Ummar and Majeed come in too. They don't laugh.

TALIB #1

Check your but Jallod. Make sure
you are still a virgin.

More laughter.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - SUNRISE

Mullo Ummar assembled all the young Taliban fighters. Jallod
is among them, looking down, embarrassed.

MULLO UMMAR

Listen to me my lions. There's only
one way he could go, and that is
through the river. He couldn't have
gone far... Whoever brings the
infidel's head can marry Shabnam.

The Taliban get excited, shouting.

TALIBAN

Allah Akbar.

MULLO UMMAR

Now go my lions and get that
rabbit.

Young Taliban jump on their horses and chase yelling,
chanting Allah's name.

Majeed goes to Mullo Ummar.

MAJEED

Sheikh, don't send young men alone.
They can mess things up.

MULLO UMMAR

I don't want an old man to get the
trophy. I promised Shabnam to the
winner.

INT. RUSSIAN HOUSE - SAME

Jallod reads the writing on the wall, then looks up at the
mountains.

JALLOD

You are not merciful Rassul. You
are stupid.

Jallod runs

OUT

and jumps on his horse.

JALLOD (CONT'D)
CHU! CHU!

Jallop races fast.

EXT. DELIPIDATED MOSQUE - DAY

The pack of excited Taliban riders race. Scary looking faces. Heavily armed.

Jallop over passes them all and changes his direction.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

Rassul and Shabnam reach a huge mountain and start climbing its narrow pass.

Suddenly the horse steps on a RANDOM MINE and BOOM! Mine EXPLODES, spewing Rassul, Shabnam and the horse.

The ECHO of the explosion goes far and wide.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - SAME

The Taliban hear the explosion and follow its direction.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - SAME

Jallop hears the explosion and smiles. He is going exactly that way.

JALLOD
They are all the same.

EXT. MOUNTAINS

The horse is torn into two pieces.

Rassul lays down, with blood flowing down his forehead. He stands up and runs to check on Shabnam. He removes her scarf.

RASSUL
Are you okay?

SHABNAM

I think so. Oh God. You are bleeding.

She checks Rassul's head.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)

Thank God. It is not too deep.

She tears a piece of her scarf and ties Rassul's head.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)

Inshallah you'll be good. Now lets hurry up. We are very close.

Rassul searches around.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)

What are you looking for?

RASSUL

The gun. I lost it.

SHABNAM

Forget about it. We don't have time.

They climb the mountain.

EXT. MULLO UMMAR'S COMPOUND - SAME

Mullo Ummar yells at Maryam.

MULLO UMMAR

Where is my daughter?

Maryam looks down, no response.

MULLO UMMAR (CONT'D)

Don't give me that innocent face mother. I swear by Allah. If you or Shabnam have anything to do with this, I will treat you as I would treat any other traitor.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SUMMIT - DAY

Rassul reaches the top. He is a few steps before Shabnam. He takes Shabnam's hand and helps her up and surprise.

Jallob sits right at the edge of the cliff trimming his nails, smiling. His AK rests on his lap. A big river and a small military checkpoint is visible in the background.

Jallob sees Shabnam and his evil smile disappears.

JALLOB

(to Rassul)

You asshole Mother fucker.

(to Shabnam)

I knew it was not my mistake, but it doesn't matter anymore. Because it has a good ending. Your father will give you to me, after I present your lover's head to him .

Jallob charges his gun and aims at Rassul.

JALLOB (CONT'D)

I told you on day one, if you try to escape, make sure you succeed... Now you gonna die.

RASSUL

That's it? You gonna just shoot me? You said you'd get angry if I would not succeed. Come on. Show me your anger.

JALLOB

I am very angry, but I don't have time.

RASSUL

No. You have time, but you are a coward and you are afraid of me. That is why you want to shoot me instead of fighting.

JALLOB

I am not a coward.

RASSUL

Then prove it and fight me like a man.

Jallob smiles, considering the offer. He goes to look down the mountain. The other Talibans are far away.

JALLOB

I wanted to make it painless for you, but people always want more.

Jallod puts his gun down and calmly walks to Rassul. Rassul holds his fists up.

SHABNAM

Be careful Rassul, he is a beast.

RASSUL

I know.

Jallod approaches. Rassul throws some punches at him, but they are too weak for a warrior like Jallod.

Jallod beats him up. Then Rassul returns the favor with a good combination, exciting Jallod.

Jallod uses wrestling and they fall down with Jallod on the top. They bowl going all the way to the edge of the cliff. Jallod gets on top and throws Rassul many heavy punches making him dizzy and weak.

Jallod is crazed. He looks around and sees a ROCK. Jallod grabs the rock and is about to crash Rassul's head, but Shabnam takes the gun and shoots Jallod dead. She is so scared that she can't take her finger off the trigger thus emptying the whole magazine in Jallod's body.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - SAME

The Taliban getting closer. They hear THE GUNSHOT and chase faster.

TALIB #1

Hurry up guys, or Jallod is gonna get the booty... Again.

EXT. US MILITARY CHECKPOINT - SAME

Alarm goes off. Soldiers run about.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SUMMIT

Shabnam is hysterical. Rassul hugs her and calms her down.

RASSUL

It is okay. Don't cry.

SHABNAM

I killed him. I killed a person.

RASSUL

Calm down. Everything is okay.

Shabnam wipes her tears.

SHABNAM

You need to go. Now!

Shabnam goes to look down at THE RIVER, which is far below. Then she goes to the other side and sees the Taliban approaching.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)

We don't have time to climb down.
You will have to jump.

RASSUL

No. We will have to jump.

SHABNAM

What?

RASSUL

Come with me Shabnam.

SHABNAM

What are you talking about?

RASSUL

Shabnam. I love you and I want to marry you and spend the rest of my life with you.

Shabnam smiles. Then stops smiling.

SHABNAM

No. I can't go with you. We are Muslims. My father can't take a shame like this. I cannot come to you without his approval.

RASSUL

That will never happen.

SHABNAM

He never says no to me.

RASSUL

What if he will?

SHABNAM

Then I am sorry.

RASSUL

Stop this nonsense Shabnam. Come with me.

The SHOUTING of Taliban is heard.

Shabnam pushes Rassul away.

SHABNAM

Go Rassul. Please. Don't be stubborn.

Rassul doesn't move, holding her hands.

RASSUL

I am not going anywhere without you.

SHABNAM

I cannot swim. The river is deep.

RASSUL

I am a good swimmer. I can take you with me.

THE SHOUTING of Taliban gets more louder and closer. Shabnam looks around, worried, contemplating.

SHABNAM

Okay, Rassul. We will go together. Go check how high the rock is.

Rassul smiles and goes to the edge of the cliff to look. Shabnam follows him behind quietly and when Rassul reaches the very end, she pushes him off.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)

Bye Rassul. I love you.

Rassul flies high and falls down into the river.

Shabnam's eyes search for him, worried.

Rassul swims up and looks at her, disappointed face.

Shabnam smiles. They stare at each other for a moment. Their eyes are filled with tears. Rassul waves her to jump. Shabnam waves him goodbye.

SHABNAM (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Go Rassul. Your freedom is more important than my love.

Rassul floats on the river waiting for her to jump.

Shabnam stands on the rock waiting for him to go.

RASSUL (V.O.)

We were so close, but so far. I could not go back to her. She could not come to me... We were just two small people stuck in the middle of big games. So the only thing we could do was to leave it for God once again. And that's what we did.

Shabnam sees the Taliban and hides behind a rock.

The Taliban reach the summit and start shooting at Rassul. Rassul swims away fast.

American soldiers reach the other side of the river and engage in fight with the Taliban.

Rassul reaches the bank. He is hit in the shoulder. He sees the soldiers approach and faints. Soldiers take him away.

The fight intensifies and Taliban retreat. A helicopter takes off chasing them.

Shabnam takes Jallod's horse and rushes back towards the village.

The Taliban charge to the village. The helicopter follows them.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

The Taliban enter the village and the helicopter starts pounding them with rockets and machine guns.

TWO PREDATOR DRONES appear on the sky and join the fight. Shooting indiscriminately.

Mullo Ummar and his Taliban fighters return the fire and shoot down the helicopter.

INT. DRONE OPERATING ROOM - SAME

TWO OFFICERS control the drones. They eat pizza with one hand while the other hand is pulling the trigger. It looks like two teenagers playing video games. Excited. Yelling, laughing.

EXT. VILLAGE/INT. DRONE OPERATING ROOM INTERCUT

Maryam and Imam Hajji push women and children into the

MOSQUE

and close the doors. Seconds later a drone throws a bomb right on it.

DRONE OPERATOR #1

Got you.

The second drone hits Mullo Ummar and Majeed thus finishing the resistance.

Drones whirl above the village sky for a while looking for a prey. Not a moving soul left.

DRONE OPERATOR #2

Mission accomplished.

Operators high-five each other and return the drones.

EXT. DELIPIDATED MOSQUE

Shabnam rides fast. The drones fly above her head. She sees a huge smoke from the village and increases her speed, crying.

SHABNAM

O Allah. What have I done! Dad.
Grandma.

EXT. US MILITARY CHECKPOINT - DAY

The officers and generals get in choppers and take off.

EXT. VALLEY OF LIONS - DAY

Shabnam gets off the horse and runs through the burning village full of dead people. She shouts, crying, searching.

SHABNAM

Grandma? Dad?

Shabnam runs to the Mosque and sees heaps of dead bodies. She falls on her knees, sobbing. The helicopters land in the background. Soldiers come and take her in custody together with some survived ones.

INT. KABUL MILITARY HOSPITAL - DAY

The place is busy with wounded soldiers and medical personal.

Rassul's shoulder is wrapped up. Two nurses clean his body. One of them is about to shave his hair.

RASSUL
I would like to keep it.

THE NURSE
Your hair?

RASSUL
Hair and beard. Just trim them a little bit that's all.

THE NURSE
Sure. No problem.

Some American and Afghan generals come in. General Adams and General Yazeed are amongst them. General Adams salutes Rassul.

GENERAL ADAMS
Hello son.

Rassul tries to stand up, but can't.

GENERAL ADAMS (CONT'D)
Relax, please.

RASSUL
Where are they?

GENERAL ADAMS
In hell. We mashed them up.

Rassul is worried.

RASSUL
How is Shabnam?

GENERAL ADAMS
Shabnam? What Shabnam?

RASSUL
Mullo Ummar's daughter. She helped me escape.

General Adams looks around, considering.

GENERAL ADAMS
Let me check something.

General Adams rushes out. Rassul lays back and closes his eyes. Officers are chatting next to him. General Yazeed checks time on his golden watch and leaves.

EXT. KABUL MILITARY BASE - SHORTLY

General Yazeed goes to the parking lot and gets into an expensive Hummer.

INT. HUMMER

General Yazeed turns on the engine and smiling rubs the lap of a person sitting on the passenger seat.

GENERAL YAZEED
(subtitles)
How are you doing my boy?

Hussain smiles at him and rubs the hand that rubs his lap.

HUSSAIN
Waiting for you master. Waiting for
your party tonight.

GENERAL YAZEED
We gonna have a great party. I
invited everybody... Blow their
minds with your dance.

HUSSAIN
I sure will.

General Yazeed drives away.

INT. KABUL MILITARY PRISON - DAY

AN OFFICER leads General Adams through a hallway jammed with prisoners. Some are being tortured. Some already dead.

They reach the end of the hallway and the officer opens a door.

OFFICER
Here they are. The lions of the
valley.

About a dozen of women and children crowd a small room. Shabnam is among them. General Adams looks inside and calls.

GENERAL ADAMS
Shabnam Ummar?

Prisoners look at each other, but nobody responds.

GENERAL ADAMS (CONT'D)
Who is Shabnam Ummar?

Silence. General turns back and walks out.

GENERAL ADAMS (CONT'D)
I guess she is dead. Such a pity.
Rassul is going to be upset.

Shabnam stands up from the crowd hearing Rassul's name.

SHABNAM
Rassul?

General Adams looks at her and breathes with relief.

GENERAL ADAMS
(in Arabic)
Thank God.

EXT. KABUL CITY - SUNSET

A taxi car drives slowly through a crystal clean driveway with Million dollar COMPOUNDS from both sides of the street. It looks more like a Dubai suburb than a Kabul neighborhood.

The taxi comes to the middle of the street and stops by the biggest house.

EXT. GENERAL YAZEED'S COMPOUND - DAY

Hussain opens the door of a shed and looks inside. About ten young boys sit in a circle, practicing some dance.

HUSSAIN
Come out. All of you.

Kids come out. Hussain studies them first, then gives to the biggest boy a fistful of money and escorts them to the

STREET

where the taxi waits. Hussain presses them all in the car, then gives another fistful of money to the taxi driver.

HUSSAIN (CONT'D)
Take them to their houses.

Taxi driver nods and drives away. Hussain goes back to the compound.

INT. YAZEED'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Hussain takes shower, dresses, prays, then puts on some make up and wears bracelets both in the hands and legs.

General Yazeed rushes in. Angry.

GENERAL YAZEED
Where are all the boys?

Hussain gives him a smile.

HUSSAIN
Let them rest. Tonight I will entertain your guests.

General Yazeed smiles.

GENERAL YAZEED
What are you going to dance?

HUSSAIN
I've been practicing a new dance called, "the dancing martyr."

GENERAL YAZEED
Wow. Sounds thrilling.

HUSSAIN
It is thrilling.

GENERAL YAZEED
Well okay then. Come and thrill us.

HUSSAIN
Just five more minutes and you are all mine... I mean, I am all yours.

General Yazeed smiles and leaves the room. Hussain locks the door, falls to pray.

HUSSAIN (CONT'D)
O Allah, accept this service from me and make it successful.

Hussain opens his bag and takes out A BLACK BELT filled with detonators.

INT. GENERAL YAZEED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

THE MUSIC plays.

The room is packed with high ranking afghan officials. A few American Generals are there too. Everybody is high. Smoking weed, drinking whisky, having fun.

Hussain enters the room. Nobody notices him at first. He locks the door from inside, then beats his feet on the ground. His bracelets make JINGLING sounds.

Room goes silent gradually and everybody turns to him. Hussain puts the door key in the left side of his shirt pocket and taps it, taunting them.

HUSSAIN

So who dares to have me tonight?
Let him come forward.

Laughter, joy and excitement from the crowd.

The musician beats the drum and to its sound Hussain slowly walks to the middle of the room. As the music gets louder and faster, Hussain dances a beautiful traditional girly dance.

People start clapping and it adds to the music and excitement. The Americans enjoy the show too.

EXT. KABUL MILITARY HOSPITAL - SAME

A NURSE brings Rassul to the balcony and helps him sit.

NURSE

You need some fresh air hero.

Rassul and the nurse enjoy the night lights of KABUL CITY city which is not impressive at all. Nurse sighs deeply.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Surprisingly peaceful night.

Rassul chuckles.

INT. GENERAL YAZEED'S HOUSE - SAME

Hussain still dances. He is all sweaty. Men dance with him. Touching him, kissing him, throwing money on him.

HUSSAIN

Everybody stand up. Stand up and
dance with me...

Everybody stands up and joins the dance. Hussain twirls around looking at their faces, smiling.

HUSSAIN (CONT'D)

(whispering)

I bear witness that there is no
God, but Allah and I bear witness
that Muhammad is his slave and
messenger. Allah Akbar. Allah
Akbar. Allah Akbar.

Hussain puts his hand in his pocket and pulls a wire out --

EXT. KABUL MILITARY HOSPITAL - SAME

-- Nurse shows Rassul a street full of lights and big houses.

NURSE

That is where the Afghan elite
lives.

As soon as Rassul looks at the street the biggest house in
the middle EXPLODES, spewing fire all around. Rassul and the
Nurse fall down.

EXT. RASSUL'S TOWN CHURCH DAY - (ESTABLISHING)

People run towards the church.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

All the neighbors are gathered and watch TV.

TV REPORTER (ON TV)

Rassul Ahmad is finally freed and
flying home right now...

Camera shows: Rassul, General Adams and Shabnam board a
military plane. Camera closes up on Shabnam.

TV REPORTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

This mystery woman was the one who
saved Rassul's life and helped him
escape.

Rassul stands by the plane doors and takes one last look at
Afghanistan. He closes his eyes and sighs deeply. General
Adams gently pushes him inside. The plane closes the doors
and takes off.

BACK TO THE SCENE

Everybody claps and cheers. A female neighbor stands up and
talks.

FEMALE NEIGHBOR

We should go to the airport and meet him.

NICK MEYERS

I have a better idea and that is the main reason why we are in the church on Monday.

EXT. LOS ANGELES AIRPORT - DAY

Nick Meyers, Gabriel, and some other neighbors alongside with Rassul's army friends Pol, Jon, and Triss wait. Press is there too.

The plane lands and everybody runs towards it.

Rassul gets off the plane. Lots of flowers, hugs, and kisses from friends and neighbors. Endless questions from the press.

Friends pick Rassul up and toss him like some kind of champion.

Rassul gets into Nick Meyers' car and they drive. Friends and neighbors get in their cars and follow them.

General Adams and Shabnam get off the plane after everybody is gone. They get into a military vehicle and drive.

EXT. RASSUL'S STREET - DAY

Convoy of cars pass through the neighborhood and stop next to Rassul's house where the neighbors wait with flowers.

Rassul gets off smiling and the music plays. Greetings, kisses, and hugs, again.

Emily brings Aisha with covered eyes. They comes close to Rassul and Emily opens Aisha's eyes. Aisha sees Rassul and faints in his arms.

RASSUL

Somebody, get me some water.

Gabriel brings some water and they splash it on her face.

Aisha opens her eyes to see herself in Rassul's arms. She hugs him tight and they both weep. All the female and some male neighbors shed tears too.

AISHA
My son is back people. Rassul is
back. I love you Rassul.

RASSUL
I love you too Mom.

A neighbor brings a chair and Rassul sits Aisha on it.

RASSUL (CONT'D)
Where is Dad?

AISHA
He is at home. Sleeping.

RASSUL
Can I go and see him?

AISHA
Yes, but he doesn't know yet.

RASSUL
It's okay. I understand.

Rassul leaves Aisha with neighbors and goes into the house.

INT. RASSUL'S HOUSE

Ahmad sleeps on the bed. He is skinny and pale.

Rassul stands next to his feet and stares at him. Tears fall
down Rassul's eyes. He falls on his knees and hugs Ahmad's
feet.

RASSUL
Please forgive me. This is all my
fault. You were right about
everything.

Ahmad wakes up, moves his feet away. Rassul wipes his tears
and stands up.

AHMAD
Who are you?

Rassul is caught off guard.

RASSUL
Ah... I'm... I'm Jon. Rassul's
friend.

AHMAD

Rassul's friend? Did you know my son?

RASSUL

Yes. I know your son. And I know he is alive.

AHMAD

Rassul is alive? My son is alive?

RASSUL

(clears his throat)

Yes. He is alive and he is doing well. He sent me here to tell you that he's comin' soon.

AHMAD

When is he coming?

RASSUL

Soon, very soon.

AHMAD

Tell him to come sooner son. I don't want to die before I apologize to him.

RASSUL

No. He is the one who has to apologize. He was a bad son, but now he is a changed man.

(Beat)

Now you go back sleep Dad. When you wake up, Rassul will be here.

Rassul turns away and tries to go, but Ahmad barely stands up and hugs his arm.

AHMAD

Please stop, Rassul. I know it is you... You think if you grow a long beard and hair, I will not recognize you? The smell of your presence woke me up and I saw you standing next to me before I opened my eyes.

Rassul turns around and hugs Ahmad. They both cry.

RASSUL

I am sorry father, I am sorry. I will never disobey you again. Never!

AHMAD

I won't let you to, I won't let you.

They hug and cry for a while, then Rassul opens his hug.

RASSUL

Go to sleep father. I have to go to the guests.

AHMAD

I have been sleeping for too long. Now I want to walk and talk and jump dance. Take me out.

Rassul chuckles and puts Ahmad's arm around his shoulder.

RASSUL

Okay then. Lets rock 'n roll.

They take a few steps and Ahmad almost falls down, but he quickly finds his balance.

RASSUL (CONT'D)

Are you sure you wanna do that?

AHMAD

Yes. I am.

RASSUL

You shaved your beard.

AHMAD

Times change. We change.

RASSUL

Yes, we change.

EXT. STREET

People see Rassul with Ahmad and Cheer. Aisha runs to and hugs both of them. People applaud smiling wide.

Emily taps Rassul's shoulder.

EMILY

Rassul. Where is the girl who saved your life and was coming with you?

RASSUL

Oh my goodness. Where is she? She was with me in the plane. Did anybody pick her up?

Rassul is anxious. Aisha smiles.

AISHA
I didn't see that coming...
My son is in love.

Nick Meyers and Rassul's friends pinpoint at each other shifting the blame.

Suddenly a military vehicle drives in and General Adams gets off. Everybody looks at him.

GENERAL ADAMS
Sorry folks. We got lost.
(to Rassul)
Come here Rassul and get your love.

General Adams opens the back-door of the car. Rassul extends his hand. Shabnam takes it and gets off.

They come to Ahmad and Aisha.

RASSUL
Mother. Father. This is Shabnam.
Your daughter. Shabnam. This is
your new family.

AISHA
She's so beautiful.

Aisha and Ahmad hug and kiss her.

NICK MEYERS
Everybody go to the backyard
please. The food is getting cold.

EXT. RASSUL'S BACKYARD

Rassul and family followed by others come and see a huge party table full of different food.

EMILY
(to Rassul)
That's for you.

People sit and eat...

RASSUL (V.O.)
... So this was the story of my
journey to Afghanistan...

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - DAY

Agent Sean listens with full anticipation. His biased face changed into educated one.

RASSUL
... The country where I found peace
and love.

Rassul looks at Shabnam. Then back at Agent Sean.

RASSUL (CONT'D)
Any other questions officer?

Agent Sean stamps the papers, signs on them and stands up extending his hand to Rassul.

AGENT SEAN
Congratulations Mister and Miss.
Ahmad. Your interview was
successful and you are both now the
American citizens.

Rassul shakes hands with him.

RASSUL
So when are we getting our
passports?

AGENT SEAN
Not today. You both need to come on
Monday and take the citizenship
oath.

RASSUL
Sure. Thank you very much.

Rassul and Shabnam leave the office. Agent Sean sees them off then dials

"Koran"

On his computer keyboard.

EXT. PARK - DAY

American flags hang everywhere. A multicultural GROUP OF PEOPLE stay in rows and sing the American anthem holding their hands on their chests. Rassul and Shabnam are among them.

A crowd of the relatives and friends watch on a side. Ahmad and Aisha are in the crowd. Ahmad has long beard and Aisha wears hijab.

The new citizens finish singing and get their passports.

Relatives and friends come to congratulate them. Rassul and Ahmad hug each other tight, smiling.

INT. AGENT SEAN'S OFFICE - SAME

Agent Sean looks at them through the window, smiling. Then he takes a copy of KORAN, closes his eyes, opens a random page and starts reading.

FADE OUT

THE END