

FADE IN:

EXT. INDIANA FARMHOUSE - DAY

Chickens move around in an area next to a beat-up farmhouse.

A CBS van, a truck, two new 1969 automobiles and several older ones park on a dirt area in front of the farmhouse.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

PAUL MEADLO (21), glasses, sits on a worn out sofa between his WIFE (20) and his MOTHER.

MIKE WALLACE (50) sits across from them.

WALLACE

How many people did you kill  
that day?

MEADLO

Well, I might have killed about  
10 or 15 of them.

WALLACE

Women and children?

MEADLO

Yes, there were women, children,  
and even babies.

Wallace scrutinizes Meadlo.

WALLACE

They weren't begging or saying,  
"No, no"?

MEADLO

Right. They didn't put up any  
fight. The women huddled against  
their children and took it. Some  
put their bodies over them trying  
to save them.

WALLACE

Obviously, the question comes to  
mind, how do you shoot babies?

MEADLO

I don't know. It's just one of those things.

WALLACE

Why did you do such a thing?

MEADLO

Why did I do it? Because I felt like I was ordered to do it. And it seemed like I realized...at the time, I felt like I was doing the right thing. I really did. Like I said, I lost buddies.

WALLACE

You're not suggesting that justifies the slaughter of innocent babies?

MEADLO

Well, they were the enemy.

MOTHER

I gave the army a good boy and they sent back a murderer.

INT. DRUGSTORE - DAY

Meadlo's mother strolls up to a magazine rack.

INSERT: Bodies of dead Vietnamese on the cover of Life.

She picks up the magazine and examines it.

MOTHER

Oh, my God.

She puts the magazine back and wipes the tears from under her eyes.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

REPORTERS, holding pens and notebooks, stand against the walls while most of them sit on folding chairs.

President NIXON stands at a podium.

NIXON

What appears was certainly a massacre, and under no circumstances was it justified. One of our goals is to keep the people of South Vietnam from having a government which has atrocity against civilians as one of its policies. We cannot ever condone or use atrocities against civilians to accomplish that goal.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A uniformed CAPTAIN AUBREY DANIEL (28), handsome and boyish looking, sits across from Meadlo.

MEADLO

I refuse to testify.

DANIEL

More arrests are forthcoming. If you testify, you'll be given full immunity. On the other hand, if you are convicted of a crime related to that incident, you will lose your disability pension.

MEADLO

Okay, I'll think about. I got your phone number.

Captain Daniel stands.

DANIEL

My full immunity offer is good for forty eight hours.

MEADLO

Yeah, yeah. I'll call you.

Daniel leaves.

EXT. NARRAGANSETT BAY - RHODE ISLAND - DAY

Low tide. Dead horseshoe crabs, jellyfish and rocks cover the beach.

Daniel strolls down the rocky beach with COON (21), a pretty boy with pearl white teeth.

COON

I'll never forget that day. I have nightmares several nights a week. Maybe after I testify I'll sleep better.

DANIEL

Are you ready to head back?

COON

Nah. I'm going to take a long walk. Get some fresh air.

DANIEL

Thanks again for your cooperation.

They shake hands.

DANIEL

I'll keep in contact until the trial.

COON

Later.

Coon gives Daniel a little hand jester as Daniel walks away.

Coon picks up a good size stone and throws it in the air towards the bay.

EXT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

S. I. DECEMBER 2, 1967

The plane flies above the China Sea towards the coast of Vietnam. The sky is black. Bright flashes from explosions and lightning light up various areas of Vietnam.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Coon peers out the window of the plane.

EXT. AIRFIELD - NIGHT

SOLDIERS wearing jungle fatigues and carrying green duffle bags across their shoulders run down the ramp leaving the plane. A SOLDIER wearing a helmet and flak jacket leads them to a bus that's parked about thirty feet away from the plane.

The sound of firecrackers exploding fills the air.

Coon follows several soldiers into the bus.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Coon sits down next to the window. He looks out.

EXT. AIRFIELD - NIGHT

TWO MPs stand by three black rubber body bags. Both of them light up packages of firecrackers and toss them at the bus.

The bus drives away.

EXT. REPLACEMENT CENTER - BARRACKS - DAY

A SERGEANT stands in front of two rows of Soldiers, six men in each row. Coon stands behind Paul Meadlo.

SERGEANT

Until your orders arrive, which takes about two weeks, you will be busy. The first row will be filling sandbags. The rest of you will be burning shit. Someone will be here shortly to escort you to your assigned work areas.

The sergeant struts away.

Coon taps Meadlo on the shoulder.

COON

Wanna swap assignments?

MEADLO

Why?

COON

I like manual labor. And I have  
a very weak stomach. Swap and  
the beers will be on me.

MEADLO

All right. I was brought up on  
a farm. Shit doesn't bother me.

Coon and Meadlo swap places.

INT. ENLISTED MEN'S CLUB - NIGHT

Coon and Meadlo stand at the bar.

Coon takes a sip from a can of Budweiser.

COON

Not bad for a dime.

MEADLO

It's only three point two.

COON

I can't tell the difference.  
I never had any stateside.

MEADLO

Neither have I.

COON

Old enough for combat, but not  
old enough to buy a beer. Doesn't  
make any sense to me.

Coon eyes two soldiers playing chess at a small table.

COON

Do ya play chess?

MEADLO

Nope. Do you?

COON

Yup. I'll be right back.

Coon walks over to the soldiers.

COON

Can I challenge the winner?

PFC OVERMAN (20) glances up at Coon, then goes back to staring at the chess pieces.

OVERMAN

Are you any good?

COON

Over a 1500 rating when I played on the high school chess team.

OVERMAN

Go to Captain Dion's hootch. Tell him Overman sent you.

INT. CAPTAIN DION'S ROOM - NIGHT

CAPTAIN DION (26) stares at the chessmen.

DION

I should have seen that coming.

He tips over his king.

DION

Good game.

Coon sits across from him.

COON

Thanks.

DION

I don't know why you were sent up here. We don't need any searchlight repairmen. You'll be assigned to infantry, I'm sure of it.

COON

I guess there's nothing I can do about that.

DION

I can if they have an opening in your MOS somewhere in country.

COON

I would appreciate that, very much.

DION

I know some people in Long Bihn.  
I'll see what I can do for you.

EXT. ARTILLERY COMPOUND OUTSIDE OF LONG BIHN - DAY

Rows of long wooden and screened barracks surrounded by six feet high rows of dirt filled sandbags stand in one area of a very large compound.

Wooden decking runs between and to the entrance of each barrack.

Coon follows SPEC. 5 DRINKHOUSE (23) into a barrack.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

Coon and Drinkhouse stand in the center of a two bunk room. There's a large stereo system and a small refrigerator against the wall. At the foot of both bunks are black foot lockers.

DRINKHOUSE

A Vietnamese girl will wash and iron your clothes, shin your boots, make your bed and clean the room for two bucks a week in funny money. If a searchlight brakes down, they'll fly you out to the field to fix it. You stay there until you can get a ride back. When there's no searchlight work, you work in the motor pool. Any questions.

COON

No. Everything sounds good to me.

DRINKHOUSE

Good. Sergeant Margarita wants you to ride shotgun for him. Be out front at 1100.

COON

I'll be there.

EXT. BARRACK - DAY

Coon, wearing a helmet and flak jacket and carrying a M-16 rifle, stands in front of his barrack.

SGT. TILO MARGARITA, mid thirties, wearing combat gear and smoking on a fat cigar, approaches Coon.

TILO

You're driving, Pard. Let's  
move it out.

Coon follows Tilo to an army jeep. They get in.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The jeep moves along on a two-lane paved road.

INT/EXT. JEEP

TILO

We're gonna stop in Binh Hoa. I just  
heard about a classy new whorehouse.

COON

It's off limits.

TILO

So what? Every whorehouse in the  
world is off limits.

Tilo shows Coon a pint of blackberry brandy.

TILO

This is for my cold.

He removes the cap and takes a big swig.

TILO

Ahh! There! Cold all gone now. Ya  
wanna sip?

COON

No thanks.

Tilo takes another big swig. He puts the cap back on and lays the bottle under his seat.

TILO  
Take your next right.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The jeep travels on the asphalt road. It makes a right turn onto a dirt road.

INT./EXT. JEEP

Tilo pulls out another cigar and lights it with a lighter shaped like a hand grenade.

TILO  
Have ya been laid since ya been in  
country, Pard?

COON  
No.

TILO  
Ya know, one in the bush is betta  
than two by the hand.

COON  
I guess.

TILO  
(pointing)  
There it is. Pull up to the gate.

A tall metal fence encircles two large brick buildings.

Coon stops the jeep in front of a large gate.

He scans the area.

COON  
There's no one here. I got a gut  
feeling something isn't right here.

TILO  
You worry too much.

Coon picks up his M-16 rifle.

Tilo steps out of the jeep and strolls up to the gate.

A door to one of the brick building opens. TWO WOMEN dressed in black appear.

Tilo turns to Coon.

TILO

Look at that. The whores are dressed like nuns. Whatta front!

COON

They are nuns! It's a nunnery.

The two nuns march towards Tilo.

TILO

I'll ask and find out for sure.

COON

Come on, Sergeant. Don't ask a nun if she's a boom boom girl.

Tilo waves goodbye to the nuns.

The nuns look at each other, confused.

Tilo returns to the jeep and gets in.

TILO

That ball buster will pay for this. I know anotha place.

EXT. DESOLATE DIRT ROAD - DAY

A VIETNAMESE FARMER, a small elderly man wearing a large funnel shaped straw hat, squats next to the dirt road.

The jeep moves towards the farmer.

The farmer stares at the jeep.

The jeep moves closer and closer.

The farmer watches the jeep as it passes by.

Tilo tosses a grenade. It lands in front of the farmer.

The farmer eyes the hand grenade on the road in front of him.

He stands.

The grenade explodes.

INT./EXT. JEEP

Tilo turns to Coon.

TILO

Did ya see his eyes, Pard? I thought they were gonna pop out of his fuckin' head.

Coon stares ahead. His hands firmly clutch the steering wheel.

EXT. AIRBASE - DAY

The jeep moves into the airbase. It travels a short ways and stops by an outside dining area.

SOLDIERS and VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS sit around small round tables.

EXT. OUTSIDE DINING AREA - DAY

Tilo and Coon sit at a small table. Tilo takes a swig out of a can of Budweiser beer.

COON

I want to go back. I don't feel well.

Tilo ignores him. He takes a swig of beer.

A VIETNAMESE GIRL, 7, wearing a long white gown, approaches Tilo. She shows him a small notebook.

GIRL

Play tic-tac-toe?

TILO  
Go play in the barbed wire.

GIRL  
No bitt.

Tilo grabs the girls hair and pulls her head back.

TILO  
Ya bitt this, ya little gook?

Coon stands.

Tilo lets the girl go.

She backs away from Tilo.

GIRL  
(pointing)  
G I number ten thousand.

Tilo squints at Coon.

TILO  
Ya think ya can take me, Pard?

COON  
I'm going to go PX.

Coon saunters towards the PX.

INT./EXT. JEEP - DAY

Tilo sits on the passenger side puffing on a cigar.

EXT. OUTSIDE DINING AREA - DAY

The little Vietnamese girl takes the grenade shaped lighter off the table.

She rushes towards Tilo.

INT./EXT. JEEP - DAY

Tilo observes the little girl. He picks up his M-16 rifle and takes aim. The tip of the cigar in his mouth turns a bright red. He squeezes the trigger.

Flames shoot out of the flash arrester.

A bullet passes through the girl's arm. The lighter falls to the ground.

The stunned girl gawks at the hole through her bloody arm.

Tilo takes aim. The tip of the cigar turns red. He squeezes the trigger.

The girl stares at Tilo as a bullet enters her forehead.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The CAPTAIN, sitting behind a desk, shrugs his shoulders and makes a frown.

CAPTAIN  
Shooting a civilian accidentally  
isn't a war crime. He thought it  
was a real grenade.

Coon stands in front of the desk.

COON  
It was his lighter. I saw him  
use it.

CAPTAIN  
He says it wasn't his.

The Captain sits back in his chair and rubs his crotch.

COON  
What about the farmer?

CAPTAIN  
I'll have lieutenant Rice look into  
that. In the meantime, I want you to  
get a haircut. And shave that peach  
fuzz off your face.

INT. INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

The MAJOR sits behind his desk reading a complaint.

Coon enters the room and salutes the Major.

The Major returns a salute without taking his eyes off the complaint.

Coon stands at attention in front of the desk.

The Major scrutinizes Coon.

MAJOR

Do you have anything to  
substantiate your allegations?

COON

No sir, I don't.

MAJOR

These are serious charges. Do you  
realize you can go to jail for  
signing this?

COON

For reporting war crimes?

The Major almost comes out of his chair.

MAJOR

Wait a damn minute, soldier. I will  
not tolerate any insubordination  
from you. You better think things  
over before you get into big  
trouble.

COON

I thought it over.

MAJOR

You're accusing a non-commission  
officer of committing two hideous  
war crimes and you don't have any  
proof.

COON

I saw him murder the farmer.

The Major pulls out a green handkerchief and blows his nose.

MAJOR

Your captain told you he was ordering an investigation. Don't come back to this office until his investigation is completed and you have some proof.

INT. COONS HOOTCH - NIGHT

Coon tosses and turns on his bunk.

EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT

Illumination flares light up the compound.

The THUMPING of mortars and the BURSTING of automatic weapons.

A loud siren WAILS. Soldiers, wearing helmets and flak vests, scramble for the bunkers that surround the compound.

Coon comes out of his hootch and sprints towards a bunker.

Tilo, aiming his rifle at Coon, stands next to Coon's hootch. He notices SEVERAL SOLDIERS running close by. He lowers his rifle and moves towards Coon.

Two VIET CONG, firing their AK- 47's, dash out from besides a hootch.

TWO SOLDIERS fall to the ground.

Coon eyes the Viet Cong. He jumps to the ground, chest first. Dirt kicks up around him as he fires. The two Viet Cong fall to the ground.

Tilo prowls towards Coon. He brings his weapon to his shoulder and takes aim.

Coon rolls on his side and fires.

Tilo falls to the ground.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The Captain reviews some paperwork as Coon stands in front of his desk.

CAPTAIN

It appears there's a problem with your orders. You were assigned to infantry duty up north. Be packed and ready to leave by 1300.

EXT. LZ DOTTIE - DAY

Paul Meadlo and SGT. BOONE, (28), large, black, slightly overweight, wearing a Santa Claus hat, pose for a picture. Both men are smiling and wearing green tee shirts.

PHOTON, (22), blond hair, takes the picture.

SGT. BOONE

Now, Photon, I expect to see that in Stars and Stripes. My four-year-old will love it.

PHOTON

I can only promise both of you a copy of the photo. That's it.

Meadlo peers over Photon's shoulder and squints.

Three shirtless BLACK SOLDIERS fill sand bags.

Beyond the black men, Coon, wearing full combat gear and carrying a rifle with a duffle back over his shoulder, moves towards them.

MEADLO

(Yells)

Hey, Coon.

The three black MEN look up and glare at Meadlo.

Boone pushes Meadlo's arm.

BOONE

What's wrong with you, Meadlo?

MEADLO

Huh? What I do, Sarge?

Coon stomps by the three black soldiers.

Meadlo smiles broadly as he watches Coon advance towards him.

Upon reaching Meadlo, Coon lays his duffel bag and rifle down.

Meadlo and Coon shake hands.

MEADLO

Didn't think you were coming.

COON

Paperwork problems.

MEADLO

Okay if he stays in my bunker,  
Sarge? We have an empty bunk.

SGT. BOONE

Sure, that'll be fine.

Sgt. Boone extends his hand towards Coon.

SGT. BOONE

I'm Sgt. Boone. If you need  
anything, I'm the man to see.  
Do you have a first name?

COON

Yeah, but even torture won't get  
it out of me.

Boone laughs out loud.

SGT. BOONE

It's that bad?

COON

Yup, I'm afraid so.

MEADLO

There was a rumor he had a clerk  
at the replacement center killed  
for revealing it.

SGT. BOONE

We'll have no killing around here.

COON  
What about Charlie?

SGT. BOONE  
I've been here three weeks. No  
sign of Charlie, yet.

COON  
I think I'm gonna like it here.

Photon offers his hand.

Coon shakes it.

PHOTON  
They call me Photon. I'm a  
photographer. Therefore that  
stupid nickname.

COON  
That's what I need, a good  
nickname.

BOONE  
I'll say.

Boone laughs.

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

Coon, Meadlo, R A(22), tall, pale and thin, and ALPHABET  
(20), muscular, sit around a small round table playing  
cards. Each man has a pile of paper military currency  
(commonly referred to as funny money) on the table.

MEADLO  
R A is the only volunteer grunt  
here. Everybody else is U S.  
Drafted.

R A  
And I'm proud of it. Shoes on my  
feet. Food in my belly. And when  
I re-up, a six thousand dollar  
bonus. What more can a man ask  
for.

COON

A night with Ann-Margret or Tuesday Weld would be nice. Actually three minutes would be great.

Alphabet stretches his arms, showing off his muscles.

ALPHABET

I'd settle for anything with a little public hair.

COON

Pubic hair.

MEADLO

He means public. He likes his women easy.

ALPHABET

They're easy around here. The going rate's two hundred piasters or a cartoon of cigarettes.

Coon pulls out a marijuana cigarette and lights it.

MEADLO

Is that pot?

COON

Yeah. I bought a bag of it for fifty cents. It relaxes me. It's been a tough week. Want some?

MEADLO

No thanks. I hear that leads to the hard stuff.

ALPHABET

I'll take a drag.

Coon passes the joint to Alphabet. He puts it to his lips and inhales deeply.

R A

I'll stick with my booze.

ALPHABET

Tomorrow, shithead is gonna take us on patrol again. Talk about a waste of time. Stomping through rice paddies, for what?

COON

Who's Shithead?

ALPHABET

Our lieutenant. The Captain calls him shithead. He doesn't care who's around, either.

MEADLO

Nobody likes the guy. Everybody wonders how did he ever make lieutenant.

COON

You guys been here only two and three weeks, right?

ALPHABET

You'll see. Only Meadlo and R A listen to the runt.

MEADLO

I don't want an article 15.

R A

He's an officer and I respect him for that. Even if he isn't allowed to ride all the rides at Disneyland.

Alphabet laughs.

Coon looks confused.

EXT. LZ DOTTIE - DAY

A sign made out of a large cardboard box rests against the gate. On it is a drawing of a man holding a ruler out with 63" written above a line by the end of the ruler. Just above the 63" reads, "You have to be at least this tall to exit the compound."

LT. CALLEY (24), 5' 3" tall, and Sgt. Boone march up to the gate. Boone laughs out loud. Calley gives him a dirty look.

Calley turns to his patrol, all wearing full combat gear. He points at the sign.

CALLEY

Who's responsible for that?

SOLDIER (O.S.)

Charlie did it.

Calley eyes his men.

CALLEY

Who said that?

SGT. BOONE

Sir, the boys are just having a little fun. I'll see that it doesn't happen again.

CALLEY

It better stop. I want discipline. No, I demand it.

SGT. BOONE

I'll see to it, sir.

Calley and Sgt. Boone lead the men out the gate.

Alphabet marches next to R A.

ALPHABET

Midgets. No sense of humor.

R A

I look up to the guy.

ALPHABET

Yeah, you worship the ground he slithers on.

EXT. SMALL VILLAGE - DAY

The patrol strolls through the village.

Some of the villagers pay no attention to the soldiers. Some give them the evil eye while others just observe.

A pretty GIRL (16), holding a BOY (2), admires Coon.

Coon returns a smile and a wink.

Alphabet hands the boy a piece of candy.

Calley notices him and marches over to him.

CALLEY

You know I don't allow that.

ALPHABET

Sorry sir, I forgot.

Calley moves away from Alphabet as Coon approaches them.

COON

I'm falling in lust again. I just saw the pettiest girl.

ALPHABET

It would never work out. Her father is Viet Cong. He would never approve the relationship.

COON

I'll convert him.

ALPHABET

Or die trying.

They stroll by a Vietnamese WOMAN breast feeding a baby.

The patrol moves out of the village and along the dirt road between the rice paddles. Several farmers stand and watch them.

The point man steps just to the side of the road. A LOUD EXPLOSION and a ball of flame hurls the man into the air.

The man lands on his back. His helmet flies off his head.

What's left of his leg and foot hang from skin just below his knee.

A SOLDIER runs over to the wounded man.

SOLDIER  
(Yells)  
Medic.

A bullet goes through the soldier's neck. He falls to the ground.

The rest of the troops get into firing positions.

One of the farmers points towards some bushes.

A half a dozen soldiers fire towards the bushes.

One soldier fires several rounds from his M-79 grenade launcher.

CALLEY  
Those villagers should have warned us.

INT. CAPTAIN MEDINA'S BUNKER - NIGHT

CAPT. MEDINA, (30) meets with Lt. Calley.

MEDINA  
In the future, time permitting, I want you to use the mine detector whenever possible.

CALLEY  
Yes, sir. But most of the time we're going to be walking through rice paddies.

MEDINA  
I realize that. I said when possible. Don't you listen?

CALLEY  
Sorry sir.

MEDINA  
What's with the R & R request? You've only been in country a month.

CALLEY

It's not until the February, sir.

MEDINA

I'll approve it for now, subject to change.

CALLEY

Thank you, sir.

INT. BUNKER - DUSK

Coon stands in the middle of the bunker.

COON

This is my impression of a Polish mine detector.

He sticks his fingers into his ears and closes his eyes. He stomps his foot several times in front of him.

Meadlo sits on his bunk and laughs.

MEADLO

That's funny.

Alphabet, sitting on the bunk across from Meadlo, flexes his arm as he rubs the back of his head.

ALPHABET

Watch yourself, I'm Polish. Next time make it Vietnamese.

COON

More censorship.

ALPHABET

Look at it as advice on how to stay healthy.

COON

Really, there's too much censorship here. I saw, "Bonnie and Clyde" and "The Graduate" at the replacement center. No graphic violence and no teat scene.

MEADLO

What teat scene?

COON

Ann Bancroft flashed her teats.  
I saw both of them state side.

ALPHABET

Her teats?

COON

No, the movies. At the end of  
Bonnie and Clyde you can see  
bullets enter his head and one  
goes through the lens of his  
glasses. All in slow motion.  
Great scene. Here, they cut it  
out completely.

R A, reading "Catch-22", sits by an opening in the bunker.

A 6 inch long snake with stripes along its side slithers  
across the sandbag.

The snake stops inches away from R A. Half its body goes up  
in the air as it examines R A.

R A turns his head towards the snake.

They look each other in the eye.

The snake turns and slithers away as R A jumps off his  
chair. He quickly moves away from the opening and stops next  
to Coon.

COON

What's with you?

R A

I just saw a snake with stripes  
along its sides.

ALPHABET

Sounds like a two stepper.

R A

What's a two stepper?

ALPHABET

It bites you. Then two steps  
later your dead.

R A looks at the opening.

Sgt. Boone enters the bunker.

BOONE

Sorry to break up the party,  
but I got some bad news.

COON

Charlie surrendered?

Boone laughs and shows his big toothy grin.

BOONE

No, and that would be good news.  
I'm sorry boys, but I need two  
volunteers for L P.

ALPHABET

Damn, Sarge, I was out there  
last week.

COON

L P?

MEADLO

Listening Post. It's guard duty  
outside the barbed wire.

BOONE

Pvt. Meadlo and Pvt. Coon, thank  
you for volunteering. As a reward,  
you two will accompany me tomorrow  
at 1200.

MEADLO

A supply run, Sarge?

BOONE

Among other things. We may even  
get in a little skeet shooting.

MEADLO

How about some miniature golf?

BOONE

Why not?

Boone smiles.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF COMPOUND - NIGHT

Coon and Meadlo lean against a tree about fifty feet away from the barbed wire.

COON

See those barrels over there?

Coon points at three fifty gallon drums about 75 feet away.

MEADLO

Yeah.

Coon picks up a M-79 grenade launcher.

COON

Let's see who can get the most inside one for a buck.

MEADLO

You're on.

Coon puts a round into the short, almost looks like a shotgun, grenade launcher.

He takes aim and squeezes the trigger.

EXT. BASE CAMP - MINIATURE GOLF COURSE - DAY

A white golf ball drops into a hole.

Boon, holding a putter, shows a toothy smile.

BOONE

Another par. Who said this was a white man's sport?

Meadlo and Coon stand just outside the putting area.

MEADLO

Not me.

BOONE

Maybe I'll get my son into golf.  
Sidney Boone, Master's Champion.

The three men walk towards the next hole.

COON

I think you'll see a woman president  
before a black man wins The Masters.

Boone laughs.

BOONE

A woman president and a black  
Master's Champion. Wouldn't  
that be something?

They get to the next hole and stop as four young soldiers in  
front of them walk towards the hole.

COON

Did you know that the blacks got  
the right to vote fifty years  
before women did?

MEADLO

Rightfully so.

BOONE

Jokes like that aren't funny,  
Meadlo. I've heard quite a few  
in my day, believe me, they hurt.

Boone places his hand on Meadlo's shoulder.

BOONE

Put down women and you'll never  
get laid. Bigotry and hate brings  
trouble.

MEADLO

What about Charlie?

BOONE

Charlie's just like you and  
me. Soldiers fighting for what  
they believe in.

The four soldiers ahead of them finish the hole.

COON

You're still up, Sarge.

BOONE

Those boys are slow. We're  
not going to finish the round.

MEADLO

We going to have time to eat here  
before going back?

BOONE

Of course.

COON

Great! It's been a while since  
we had a real meal.

INT. MESS HALL - DAY

The mess hall is crowded with SOLDIERS. Most of them sit at  
cafeteria type tables eating. Some stand in the food line.

Several VIETNAMESE WOMEN remove trays and cups from the  
tables.

Coon and Meadlo, carrying trays filled with food, follow  
Boone to a table. They lay their trays on the table and walk  
away.

Coon hurries up to a milk dispenser. He takes a plastic cup  
from a rack and gets some milk from the dispenser.

A VIETNAMESE WOMAN takes Coon's tray away from the table.

Coon carries his milk back to the table. He stops and looks  
around. He lays the cup down on the table and goes back to  
the food line.

Coon lifts his tray in front of one of a SHORT CORPORAL.

SHORT CORPORAL  
I recognize you. What are you  
trying to pull?

COON  
Nothing. I just want something to  
eat. Someone took my tray.

SHORT CORPORAL  
That's your problem. Put the  
tray back and get out of line.

A TALL STAFF SERGEANT comes up behind the short corporal.

STAFF SERGEANT  
What's the problem, here?

SHORT CORPORAL  
He's trying to get seconds.

COON  
I didn't eat anything. Someone  
took my tray of food.

STAFF SERGEANT  
Write your congressman. Put the  
tray back. You're holding up my  
line.

An empty tray lies in front of Boone as he pats his mouth  
with a napkin.

BOONE  
Now that was mighty good. Don't  
worry, Coon. I'll get you some  
extra C-rations when we get back.  
A nice can of franks and beans will  
fill you up in no time at all.

Boone smiles.

Coon frowns.

EXT. RICE PADDIES - DAY

The patrol mucks through the rice paddies.

Alphabet's about eight feet away from Coon.

ALPHABET

March, march, march. One stinking  
pointless patrol after another.

COON

How do I get out of this outfit?

ALPHABET

On a stretcher or wait to your  
year's up.

COON

I'm starting to get dishpan feet.

ALPHABET

That's what I smell at night.

COON

I'd love to be a base camp warrior.  
You know for two bucks a week a  
girl washes and irons your clothes,  
makes your bunk and shines your  
boots.

ALPHABET

Did you ever notice that those  
prima donnas get all the promotions.

COON

Of course. The grunts go home  
E-3 and all the boys in the  
motor pool and all the clerks  
get E-4 or E-5.

ALPHABET

Heard you almost got busted.

COON

Yeah, Lt. Shithead bagged me  
for wasting a box of ammo for  
a M-79.

ALPHABET

How'd he find out?

COON

He must have seen me and Meadlo  
target practicing a couple of  
nights ago.

A FARMER, waving, stands in his rice paddy.

R A shows him a middle finger.

R A

I'd like to pop that gook.

Meadlo, across from R A, stomps through the paddy.

MEADLO

Why?

R A

Don't let the wave fool you. He's  
Charlie.

MEADLO

Looks like a farmer to me.

EXT. LZ DOTTIE - TWILIGHT

One end of a garden hose hangs from a 7 ' pole. Water flows  
from the hose.

A nude SOLDIER washes himself under the hose as a half dozen  
SOLDIERS, wearing towels around their waist, wait in line.

Meadlo and Coon sit on folding chairs in front of a bunker.

Sgt. Boone approaches them.

BOONE

Cumhail, you're riding shotgun  
for me tomorrow.

Coon, embarrassed, surveys the area.

COON

Damn, Sarge, not so loud.

BOONE

What kind of a name is Cumhail?

COON

Irish. I was named after an Irish poet. We're we going?

BOONE

The replacement center. Lt. Calley's going on R & R.

MEADLO

Are we going on patrol tomorrow?

BOONE

Afraid so. Capt. Medina will be in charge.

MEADLO

I can't believe the Captain's taking us. You can't drive a jeep through a rice paddy.

EXT. RICE PADDY - DAY

Capt. Medina stomps through a rice paddy.

An EXPLOSION, followed by a ball of flame, hurls a soldier into the air.

Two more EXPLOSIONS

Three soldiers lie in the rice paddy, out of sight, and screaming out loud.

MEDINA

(Yells)

Freeze!

One SOLDIER moves a little to his right. A loud EXPLOSION and a FIREBALL tosses him into the air.

MEDINA

I said nobody move.

Another loud EXPLOSION.

The men, frightened and some are crying, stand still.

MEDINA

(To his radioman)

Don't move. I want you to call  
in for some mine sweepers. We're  
going to need some marked paths  
to get out of here.

Another loud EXPLOSION.

INT. MEDINA'S BUNKER - TWILIGHT

Medina sits at his desk writing a report.

INSERT REPORT: 3 DEAD 12 WOUNDED

Sgt. Boone enters the bunker and salutes Medina.

Medina returns the salute.

MEDINA

Is he ready for questioning?

BOONE

Yes, sir.

Medina stands and grabs an M-16 rifle.

Boone follows Medina out of the bunker.

EXT. LZ DOTTIE - TWILIGHT

Soldiers stand around and watch Boone follow Medina outside  
the gate of the compound. They march a short distance and  
stop in front of a Vietnamese INTERPRETER.

INTERPRETER

He's ready, Captain.

A VIETNAMESE MAN is tied to a tree just off the dirt road.  
His face is covered with dry blood and an eye is completely  
closed.

Medina, carrying his rifle, marches towards the man and  
stops about ten feet away. He takes aim and fires his rifle.

A bullet hits the tree a couple of inches from the man's  
head.

BANG. Another bullet hits even closer to the man's head.

Medina smiles and takes aim again. He fires.

The bullet hits next to the man's head.

MEDINA

See if he's willing to talk now.

EXT. DIRT ROAD AND RICE PADDIES - DAY

Sgt. Boone walks with PVT. LOPEZ, (19), along the dirt road.

The rest of the platoon are scattered in the rice paddies and behind them.

SGT. BOONE

Next week I'll be in Hawaii with  
the love of my life.

LOPEZ

I thought the Army was the love  
of your life, Sarge.

Boone laughs out loud.

SGT. BOONE

The Army is just a job. After  
twenty years I can retire with  
full medical benefits. Open up  
a little convenience store and  
live the American dream.

A little cat lies next to the road. It has a broken leg.

Boone and Lopez notice the cat.

SGT. BOONE

What have we got here?

Boone approaches the cat, with caution. He bends down over  
the cat and examines the area.

SGT. BOONE

What's the problem, little fella?

The cat meows.

LOPEZ  
Careful, Sarge.

Boone looks up at Lopez with a big smile.

SGT. BOONE  
It looks like the little guy has  
a broken leg.

Boone reaches for the cat.

A loud EXPLOSION.

Lopez, stunned, stares.

Boone lies on the ground. His hands and half his head are gone.

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

R A, Coon, Meadlo and Alphabet sit at the table playing cards.

R A  
He should of known better.

COON  
We all make mistakes.

ALPHABET  
He was a pretty good guy. I liked  
him. I usually don't like lifers.  
Most of them are assholes.

R A  
What about me?

ALPHABET  
See my point.

R A scratches his nose with his middle finger.

MEADLO  
Calley said in a couple of days  
it'll be payback time.

R A

I heard there's going to be a few thousand of those little fuckers.

COON

No way.

R A

Tomorrow after Boone's funeral, Mad Dog Medina is going to tell us all about it.

COON

Who tells you these things?

R A

I've got connections.

MEADLO

If the Captain finds out you call him Mad Dog, you'll be one sorry lifer.

EXT. LZ DOTTIE - DAY

In a large area in the center of the compound, Medina, surrounded by his officers, talks to his men.

MEDINA

Tomorrow we'll have two objectives. Avenge the lives of the men we lost over the last few months and to kill the enemy. Kill everything.

SOLDIER (O.S.)

Does that mean women and children?

MEDINA

There won't be any women and children there. Just the enemy. It's payback time. Pollute their water system, kill their livestock and burn their homes. And remember, I want a high body count.

EXT. BUNKER - NIGHT

Coon and Alphabet sit just outside their bunker.

ALPHABET

Finally, we'll get to fight the enemy. Four months and we haven't seen one yet. Just snipers and mine fields.

COON

He never really answered the question.

ALPHABET

Which one?

COON

Do we kill the women and children?

ALPHABET

He said there won't be any there.

COON

How could he know that?

ALPHABET

Intelligence reports.

COON

Right. Maybe he means don't look at them as women and children. Kill them anyway. He wants a big body count. He was very clear on that.

ALPHABET

No way. You have to use a little common sense. We don't shoot kids.

COON

I know someone who did. And he got away with it. I shot the bastard.

ALPHABET

Did you kill him?

COON

No. He didn't rat on me either.

ALPHABET

Ratting on someone here can get you killed. I hope you learned your lesson.

COON

I did. It's not worth it.

EXT. LZ DOTTIE - DUSK

Capt. Medina, holding a shovel, stands over a map of My Lai 4 drawn on the ground. He's surrounded by Lt. Calley, two other lieutenants and six sergeants.

MEDINA

We're going to be outnumbered by more than two to one. Expect a hell of a good fight.

CALLEY

We're ready for them, sir.

MEDINA

Don't interrupt, shithead. Our helicopter gun ships will be supporting us. Enabling us to settle the score. And I don't expect any prisoners. Any questions?

BLACK SERGEANT

What about civilians?

MEDINA

Like I said earlier today, there won't be any innocent civilians there. Just the enemy. Viet Cong and Viet Cong sympathizers.

Medina turns to Lt. Calley.

MEDINA

Lt. Shithead, what do we do to VC and their sympathizers?

CALLEY

Kill them, sir.

MEDINA

That's right, sweetheart. This is a search and destroy mission. Completely neutralize My Lai. Don't let anyone or anything get behind us as we move on to Pinkville.

Medina sticks the shovel into an area on the ground identified as Pinkville.

EXT. HELICOPTER LANDING AREA - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: MARCH 16, 1968 0700

Approximately 28 Soldiers board nine helicopters.

One by one the helicopters take off while another 50 soldiers tend to their gear on the ground below.

EXT. LANDING AREA NEAR MY LAI HAMLET - DAY

Three helicopter gun ships fire rockets and rounds around the landing area.

The helicopters carrying the troops land.

The soldiers jump from the helicopters and run for irrigation ditches.

The gun ships continue to fire machine gun rounds on the outskirts of the village.

A farmer, wearing a funnel shaped straw-hat, stands in a rice paddy by the village waving his hands above his head.

A gun ship fires a burst of rounds into the farmer.

EXT. IRRIGATION DITCH

Meadlo, holding his M-16, lies against a side of the ditch.

Coon jumps next him.

COON

It's cold, man. Charlie isn't here.

MEADLO

He's there. They're all Viet Cong.

COON

Right. If they're all V C, who are we fighting for? Why are we here?

MEADLO

To stop the spread of communism.

COON

By killing them?

EXT. SOUTHERN PORTION MY LAI 4 - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: 0800

Lt. Calley, followed closely by his radio operator, leads his platoon into the village.

Some soldiers fire their M-16s from their hips. A few take aim at livestock: pigs, ducks, chickens and cows.

A woman, carrying a baby, steps out of a bamboo hut.

A soldier turns and fires his weapon on full automatic.

CALLEY

I want everybody gathered up.

The soldiers move towards the huts, some killing livestock on the way.

An old farmer, with his arms in the air, stands in front of a hut. A soldier stabs him with his bayonet.

Calley, his RADIOMAN, Meadlo, and a Vietnamese INTERPRETER approach the entrance to a hut.

Calley and Meadlo aim their rifles as the interpreter yells into the hut.

INTERPRETER

Hoan toan. Ngay bay gio! Hoan toan.

The pretty girl Coon saw earlier, holding the same boy, and a WOMAN (40), come out of the hut.

CALLEY

Di di.

Calley nods towards an area in front of the hut.

The interpreter peeks inside the hut.

An old toothless WOMAN and two YOUNG GIRLS (7 & 8) followed closely by Coon approach Calley. Behind Coon, R A tosses a hand grenade into a hut. Seconds later it explodes.

CALLEY

Take 'em all over there by that tree and take care of them.

Coon and Meadlo lead the prisoners away as Calley goes over to the interpreter.

INTERPRETER

There's a Buddhist priest and an old woman in there.

INT. HUT

A PRIEST, wearing all white, prays over an OLD WOMAN lying on a bed.

A bullet hits the woman in the forehead.

Stunned, the priest turns. Calley grabs his arm and pulls him towards the open doorway.

EXT. HUT

The priest comes flying out of the doorway, landing on the ground. He gets on his knees and begs.

PRIEST

No VC. No VC.

Calley smashes the priest's face with his rifle butt.

The priest falls on the ground. Then he gets on his knees, blood pours from his mouth as he begs.

PRIEST

No VC. Dong tu. Danh tu.

Calley shoots the priest in the head.

Several soldiers gather small groups of women and children.

CALLEY

(Pointing)

Take 'em over to the ditch  
and take care of them.

Calley grabs a handset from his radioman.

A hundred feet behind him R A and a SOLDIER drop an old man down a well. R A tosses a grenade into the well.

It EXPLODES.

CALLEY

We gathered up a large group, sir.  
They're going to slow us down.

VOICE

Get rid of them.

Coon and Meadlo guard their prisoners. The young girl, still holding the boy, has her blouse open. One breast is exposed.

Calley marches over to Coon.

CALLEY

What are you doing, soldier?

COON

Making sure she doesn't have a  
concealed weapon, sir.

CALLEY

Didn't I order you two to take  
care of them?

COON  
We are. We're watching 'em.

CALLEY  
I mean kill them.

Surprised, Meadlo glares at Calley.

Coon examines the group.

The young girl buttons-up her blouse. The boy smiles at him. One older woman and the eight-year-old girl cry.

Photon takes a picture of the prisoners, then strolls away.

COON  
No, I'm not going to do that.

CALLEY  
That's an order, soldier.

Calley points his rifle towards Coon.

Coon turns his rifle on Calley.

COON  
Point it in another direction,  
sir.

CALLEY  
I can have you shot.

COON  
Move your weapon. I won't say it  
again.

Calley turns his rifle towards the prisoners and focuses on Meadlo.

CALLEY  
What about you? Are you going  
to follow orders?

MEADLO  
Yes, sir.

CALLEY

Then do it. Waste them.

Meadlo raises his rifle. The rifle shakes in his hand.

Some of the prisoners, in Vietnamese, beg for their lives.

MEADLO

Sir, I...

CALLEY

Do it. That's an order.

Meadlo closes his eyes and fires his rifle.

Calley, on full automatic, squeezes the trigger. He displays no emotion.

Coon takes several steps behind Calley. He turns with his rifle pointing at Calley's back. His finger goes on the trigger. His head turns towards the bodies on the ground.

The girl's lifeless eyes appear to be staring at him. As if they were begging for help. Her son now looks like a porcelain doll covered in blood.

Coon mopes away.

Soldiers gather prisoners, mostly women and children.

Large groups of prisoners are escorted out of the village towards a ditch. Dead livestock and dead Vietnamese are everywhere. Several huts burn.

EXT. A LONG AND WIDE IRRIGATION DITCH - DAY

More than forty Vietnamese, mostly women, children and babies, squat in the ditch.

Coon, Alphabet, and Meadlo, holding M-16 rifles, stand along the top of the ditch looking down.

Calley struts up to them and stops next to Meadlo.

CALLEY

How come they're not dead?

MEADLO

I didn't know we were suppose to  
kill them, sir.

CALLEY

I want them dead. Fire when I say  
fire.

Coon stands on the other side of Meadlo. He steps away from  
the ditch.

COON

Do your own killing, Calley.

Some of the Vietnamese cry and hold their children close to  
them.

Alphabet steps away from the ditch and moves after Coon.

CALLEY

We're you going, soldier?

ALPHABET

That's right. I'm a soldier.  
Not a baby killer.

CALLEY

Do you want a court-martial,  
private?

ALPHABET

I'm only a private, but I know an  
unlawful order when I hear one.

Alphabet and Coon move towards the village.

Calley glances at Meadlo. Then he looks down into the ditch.

CALLEY

We got another job to do, Meadlo.  
Start firing.

On full automatic, they fire into the ditch.

Tears flow down Meadlo's cheeks as he reloads. After he  
empties his rifle and reloads four times, he turns and mopes  
away from the ditch.

MEADLO  
(Crying out loud)  
I can't do it anymore.

Calley takes aim and fires. He does it several times.

EXT. AREAS AWAY FROM DITCH - SHORTLY LATER - DAY

Some soldiers, smoking cigarettes, stand in small groups, and some sit on the ground eating C-rations out of green cans.

Calley walks up to his radioman.

A CHILD (2), covered in blood, crawls out of the ditch. He stands and scampers down the dirt road, towards the village.

Calley notices the baby.

CALLEY  
Somebody, shoot him.

The soldiers glance at Calley, then return to what they were doing.

A little frustrated, Calley, holding his rifle, dashes after the child.

Calley grabs him by the arm and yanks him up. Swinging by his arm, the boy is carried back to the edge of the ditch and hurled in.

Calley takes aim and squeezes the trigger, twice.

He turns and strolls back to his radioman as if nothing had happened.

Coon turns to Alphabet.

COON  
I'll give you a months pay if  
you frag that bastard.

ALPHABET  
First chance I get, I'll do  
it for nothing. With pleasure.

R A struts up to them.

R A  
You pussies ready to do some  
work?

COON  
Fuck you, lifer.

R A smiles.

R A  
Yup, and proud of it. Sgt. Gley  
told me to tell you'll to start  
torching some of them bamboo  
shacks. Pronto.

Coon stands.

COON  
Sure thing, kimma suck up. My  
handy government issued Zippo  
is ready for action.

Coon pulls a cigarette lighter out of his pocket and lights  
it.

A flame comes out of the lighter.

Coon pulls out a joint and lights it. He inhales.

R A  
Don't let Calley see you.

Coon exhales.

COON  
Why? Is smoking a little grass  
worst than what's going on here?

R A  
They're just following orders.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Every hut in the village is engulfed in flames or almost  
burnt to the ground.

The soldiers, scattered, move away from the burning village.

R A, Alphabet and Photon move along a dirt road.

TWO BOYS (5 & 8) walk towards them.

R A takes aim and fires.

The five-year-old boy falls to the ground. Blood flows from a small hole in his shoulder.

The other boy gets on top of him, as if to protect him. He looks up and stares at R A.

Photon takes a picture.

R A takes aim and fires four shots.

ALPHABET

I don't know if I can take any more of this. How do you do it?

R A

Because they're already half-dead. We're doing them a favor.

R A winks at Alphabet.

ALPHABET

You're a cold bastard.

EXT. RICE PADDY - DAY

Capt. Medina, holding a .45 caliber handgun, and a group of SOLDIERS move across the rice paddy towards the burning village. He sees a woman carrying a small wicker basket.

Medina takes aim and fires two shots.

The woman falls into the rice paddy.

Medina goes up to the woman and examines the contents of her basket.

INSERT: BASKET FILLED WITH SYRINGES AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES

The woman, bleeding from a chest wound, lies on the ground.

Medina shoots her in the head.

A helicopter orbits above Medina.

INT./EXT. H-23 BUBBLE HELICOPTER - DAY

Warrant Officer HUGH THOMPSON, (25) maneuvers the helicopter closer to Medina.

THOMPSON

That captain just murdered that woman.

Thompson's gunner, LARRY COLBURN, points towards the ditch.

COLBURN

There's a ditch full with dead bodies over there. Everywhere I look I see dead bodies.

Thompson maneuvers his helicopter over the ditch and village.

THOMPSON

Infants, women and very old men. No draft-age people whatsoever.

COLBURN

Sir, there's people in that bunker.

Calley and his troops move towards the bunker.

Thompson's helicopter flies towards the bunker. It lands on an area about twenty feet away from it.

Thompson turns to Colburn.

THOMPSON

If they start firing, open up on them.

Colburn nods.

EXT. BUNKER - DAY

Calley and several of his men approach the entrance.

Thompson runs over to him.

THOMPSON

Hey, there's some civilians in the bunker. Can you get them out.

CALLEY

Well, we're gonna get them out with a hand grenade.

THOMPSON

No, you're not. Hold your people back, please. I think I can do better.

CALLEY

I'm the boss here.

THOMPSON

I don't like the way your handling things, quite frankly.

CALLEY

I'm following orders.

THOMPSON

You're not killing those civilians. I'm flying them behind the line.

Calley glances at the helicopter.

CALLEY

Not in that thing.

THOMPSON

The gun ships are going to take them.

CALLEY

That'll be a first.

THOMPSON

You're probably right about that.

Thompson goes over to the entrance of the bunker and leans in. He motions for the people to come out.

THOMPSON

Come out. No one will harm you.

One by one, women and children, all looking very frightened, come out of the bunker. Nine of them.

Calley and his troops move out.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Thompson talks into a microphone.

THOMPSON

The gun ships evacuated the civilians.  
How about putting an end to this  
madness? They're slaughtering women  
and children.

EXT. RICE PADDIES AND A DIRT ROAD - DAY

Calley and his troops, to his right and left, in line, spaced about eight feet apart, move towards a burning village.

Approximately twenty dead bodies lie on the road.

Photon takes a few pictures of the bodies.

R A yells to Alphabet.

R A

Looks like the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon didn't  
get the word.

ALPHABET

Nah, they've been dead for over an  
hour.

R A

I see one of them has her pants  
down below her knees.

ALPHABET

Yeah, there's a few animals in  
that outfit, too.

R A

Photon shouldn't be taking a picture of her ass. Now that ain't right.

MEADLO

No conscience.

ALPHABET

Like Calley.

COON

No, he doesn't have a brain.

ALPHABET

At least he has a first name.

COON

So do I.

ALPHABET

Yeah, what is it?

COON

If I told you, I'll have to kill you.

ALPHABET

A human life means that little to you?

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

Alphabet does push-ups on the floor.

Coon sits on a bunk watching him.

COON

You kill anybody?

ALPHABET

Nope.

COON

I almost killed somebody, but I chickened-out. I almost shot him. I really did.

ALPHABET

Who?

COON

Calley. After I saw him kill that girl and her baby, I almost lost it.

ALPHABET

You're not going to do anything stupid, are you?

COON

I don't know. I'm thinking about it.

Alphabet gets off the floor.

ALPHABET

Don't. And don't mention what your thinking to anyone.

Capt. Medina enters the bunker.

Alphabet and Coon immediately stand at attention and salute Medina.

Medina returns a salute.

MEDINA

At ease.

Medina looks around the bunker.

MEDINA

Where are the other two?

ALPHABET

I don't know, sir.

MEDINA

Lt. Calley told me he had a problem with you two. You both refused to follow his orders.

Medina walks up to Coon and glares into his eyes.

MEDINA

I know about you. Don't do anything stupid like writing your congressman about what happened today.

COON

I have eight months left in Vietnam, sir. It's dangerous enough worrying about the acknowledged enemy.

MEDINA

That's wise. You're smarter than I thought.

Medina steps away from Coon and looks around the bunker as he talks.

MEDINA

What happened today was a gross misunderstanding. Nothing we can do will bring those people back.

Medina moves towards the entrance. He stops and turns to Coon and Alphabet.

MEDINA

In the future, If either of you believe that Lt. Calley is unjustly harassing you in anyway, I want to know. Do you both understand?

COON/ALPHABET

(In unison)

Yes, sir.

Medina turns and exits the bunker.

Coon pulls out a joint and lights it. He takes a puff and passes it to Alphabet.

ALPHABET

We better watch our backs.

R A and Meadlo stagger into the bunker.

R A

(Slurring his words)

Was that Mad Dog Medina I just  
saw?

COON

Yeah, he just stopped by to say  
hello.

R A

No shit?

Meadlo staggers over to his bunk and lies down.

ALPHABET

Out celebrating your war kills?

R A

No, just having a few drinks with  
some friends.

R A goes over to his bunk and gets in. He lies on his back,  
fully dressed, and closes his eye. He starts to snore.

COON

They're both out like a light. Can  
you believe that.

ALPHABET

I doubt if I can sleep at all tonight.

COON

Me too. Let's give the bastard a  
blanket party.

ALPHABET

Who?

COON

Calley.

ALPHABET

You're crazy. They'll put us in  
LBJ for life.

COON

Maybe, but it'll be worth it.

Wait, I got a better idea. Let's  
kill him.

Meadlo's eyes open wide. He stares at the wall.

INT. CALLEY'S BUNKER - NIGHT

Calley sleeps on his back.

Two strong hands pin Calley to his bunker.

Another set of hands places two inch wide green tape across  
his eyes.

COON

(Whispers into Calley's ear)

Make a sound and I'll cut your  
throat.

Coon places the sharp edge of a bayonet against Calley's  
throat.

COON

(Whispers)

See how easy it is to frag you.  
You fuck with us again and your  
head will be floating in a latrine.  
Report this, and one of us will get  
you. That's a promise.

Coon and Alphabet hurry out of the bunker.

Calley sits up and removes the tape. He appears petrified as  
he stares at the entrance to his bunker.

EXT. BUNKER - NIGHT

Coon and Alphabet dash into their bunker.

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

A beam of light from a flashlight shines into the bunker.  
Coon holding the flashlight enters the bunker. Alphabet is a  
couple of feet behind him.

COON

I couldn't do it.

ALPHABET

Maybe he didn't recognize your voice.

COON

I hope not. Let's hit the sheets.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Paul Meadlo moves a hand held minesweeper slowly across the road as he approaches the base of a hill.

A short distance back, Calley stops and raises his arm. He turns to the patrol behind him.

CALLEY

Take a break.

Calley marches up to Meadlo. He gets very close to him.

CALLEY

If you don't give me their names, you'll be walking point for the next eight months.

MEADLO

I don't know anything, sir.

CALLEY

I know you do. Just tell me you saw them leave the bunker after midnight. That's all I want.

MEADLO

Sir, I was asleep by 2300.

CALLEY

Private, see what's on the other side of that hill and report back to me.

Meadlo turns and moves the minesweeper across the road.

CALLEY

We don't have time for that. Move out. That's an order.

Meadlo places the minesweeper and starts towards the hill.

Coon and Alphabet stand about twenty feet away.

COON

That prick's up to something.

ALPHABET

If he thinks Meadlo knows something,  
why take a chance of losing him?

COON

I told you before, he's an idiot.

Meadlo is near the top of the hill when he steps on a land mine. The loud explosion throws him to the ground. A pant's leg is covered with blood and a foot is gone. He screams.

A medic rushes over to him and gives him a shot of morphine.

Meadlo looks up at the medic.

MEADLO

(Crying)

God punished me for what I done.

(Yells at Calley)

You'll get yours! God will punish  
you too, Calley.

INT. BUNKER - DAY

Alphabet sits on his bunk watching Coon and R A pack their duffle bags.

ALPHABET

That was quick. So you don't  
know where you're going?

COON

Nope. Medina just told us to  
pack my gear and be ready to  
go by 1300.

R A

My buddies Troy and Silver Teeth  
are going too. They say the place has  
showers and a big enlisted men's club.

INT. ENLISTED MEN'S CLUB - NIGHT

The club is filled with soldiers wearing jungle fatigues.

Coon, R A, TROY(22) shaved head, SILVER TEETH (19), silver caps over his two front teeth, and RON RIDENHOUR (20) sit at table.

TROY

Hey, man, did you hear what we did in Pinkville?

RON

No.

TROY

(Slurring)

We went in there and lined up all the people and massacred them. Massacred a whole fucking village. Women, kids, babies. Anything that moved.

RON

I don't believe it.

R A

We wasted them. Every fucking one of them.

COON

It's true. Troy, tell him the stories you told me.

TROY

This one gook stunk so bad, we gave him a bath.

EXT. MY LAI - DAY - FLASHBACK

R A and Troy drag a man up to a well.

R A

You smell of V C.

MAN

No V C.

TROY  
Let's give the mother fucker  
a bath.

Calley stands with his radioman a short distance away.

R A and Troy drop the man into the well.

R A  
Don't forget to wash behind the  
ears.

R A pulls out a hand grenade and removes the safety pin. His  
hand remains on the safety clip.

R A  
Let's help him out of there.

R A tosses the grenade into the well.

They move away from the well.

The grenade explodes. Smoke comes out of the well.

Troy and R A move towards another bamboo hut. They pass  
soldiers escorted Vietnamese civilians towards the ditch  
outside the village.

Silver Teeth comes out of a hut, buttoning up the front  
of his pants.

R A and Troy walk up to him.

Silver Teeth nods his head towards the entrance to the  
hut.

SILVER TEETH  
Ya wanna get some before we put  
her to sleep? She's pretty good.  
Great teats.

R A  
Who's in there now?

SILVER TEETH  
Just Colwell.

TROY  
I wouldn't touch anything that  
had your dick in it.

SILVER TEETH  
Don't. What about you, R A?

A loud shot comes from inside the hootch.

SILVER TEETH  
Oops! Too late.

TWO SOLDIERS lead a group of WOMEN and YOUNG GIRLS towards  
them.

R A examines the prisoners.

R A  
(To Troy)  
How about some skull action?

Troy scans the group of prisoners.

TROY  
Mind as well give one of them  
a treat before dying.

EXT. IRRIGATION DITCH - DAY

Calley tosses the boy into the ditch.

About 100 feet away, R A, Troy, and Silver Tooth, sit on the  
ground eating C-rations.

SILVER TEETH  
I saw a couple of them move.

TROY  
We ought to put them out of  
their misery. Whatta ya say,  
R A?

R A tosses an empty can of C-rations and stands.

R A  
I got orders to burn down what's  
left of the this village.

SILVER TEETH

What are they going to do with  
the prisoners on the other side  
of the village.

R A

What do think? Mad Dog said no  
prisoners.

Troy stands and puts a magazine into his M-16.

TROY

Come on, Sil, let's do those poor  
bastards a favor.

Troy and Silver Teeth stroll over to the edge of the ditch  
and look around.

Blood flows out of a WOMAN'S mouth. She moves her head.

A bullet hits her forehead.

Silver Tooth aims his rifle and fires three shots.

Troy scans the area. He takes aim and fires two shots.

SILVER TOOTH

I think they're all dead.

TROY

Yeah, let's go.

EXT. NORTHERN PART OF MY LAI 4 - DAY

PFC LOPEZ lies on the ground looking down the sight of his  
M-60 machine gun mounted on a tripod.

A GROUP of 40 prisoners, women and children, huddle  
together.

Calley walks over to Lopez.

CALLEY

Fire.

Lopez squeezes the trigger.

Troy and Silver Teeth walk towards Lopez as the loud shots ring out.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

INT. ENLISTED MEN'S CLUB - NIGHT

Ron stares at Troy in amazement.

Troy takes a sip of beer.

TROY

We saw Lt. Calley execute three groups of prisoners with that M-60. There must have been 50 in the last group. Calley got on the M-60 and killed all of them himself.

RON

I can't believe you guys. You all act like it was nothing.

SILVER TEETH

What's that supposed to mean?

COON

Don't say all of you. I didn't kill anybody and there was nothing I could do to stop it.

RON

Did you report it?

COON

To who?

RON

Calley's superior officer.

COON

He gave the orders.

TROY

Damn right. No prisoners. I heard him say it.

Ron stands.

TROY

Ron, you weren't there. What happened, happened. The other two platoons did the same thing.

R A

Over four hundred villages were killed that day. That sent a message to Charlie.

RON

What message? We murder defenseless women and children? I'm writing Westmoreland and my congressman.

COON

If they need a witness, tell them to contact me.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - NARRAGANSETT BAY - DAY

Coon strolls along the beach. A pretty GIRL (20) approaches him.

GIRL

What did he want?

COON

He wants me to testify against Calley.

GIRL

Don't. People will label you a traitor.

COON

I want to. I only wish I could be his executioner.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A COLONEL, FOUR MAJORS, and A CAPTAIN, sit in the jury box. To their left stands a large American flag. To the right of the flag Meadlo sits on the stand.

MEADLO

They were sitting down.

Capt. Aubrey Daniel stands in front of Meadlo.

DANIEL

The women, the children and babies were sitting down?

MEADLO

Yes.

DANIEL

Did they attack you?

MEADLO

I assumed at every minute that they would counterbalance. I thought they had some sort of chain or a little string they had to give a little pull and they blow us up, things like that.

DANIEL

You said you were under emotional strain. Can you describe the strain?

MEADLO

Just that I was scared and frightened.

DANIEL

What were the children in the ditch doing?

MEADLO

I don't know.

DANIEL

Were the babies in their mother's arms?

MEADLO

I guess so.

DANIEL

And the babies moved to attack?

MEADLO

I expected at any moment they were about to make a counterbalance.

DANIEL

Had they made any move to attack?

MEADLO

No.

DANIEL

When you left the ditch, were any of the people standing?

MEADLO

Not that I remember.

DANIEL

Did you see anyone who was not shot?

MEADLO

There might have been a few. I didn't check 'em out.

DANIEL

Now, Mr. Meadlo, one last question. Did Lieutenant Calley or did Captain Medina order you to kill?

MEADLO

I took orders from Lieutenant Calley, but...

DANIEL

That's all.

CUT TO:

Coon sits on the witness stand.

GEORGE LATIMER (70), wearing a suit and a hearing aid, marches up to Coon.

LATIMER

Did you see any dead bodies at My Lai?

COON  
Of course. Quite a few.

LATIMER  
Were they sleeping or did they  
appear dead?

COON  
Well, they had holes in 'em, so  
I assume they were dead.

LATIMER  
Weren't you under the influence of  
marijuana that day?

COON  
Yeah, I smoked a little grass that  
day.

LATIMER  
And the night before?

COON  
Probably.

LATIMER  
Weren't you a constant marijuana  
smoker?

COON  
I wouldn't say that, but I did  
smoke it quite a bit.

LATIMER  
Did you open your pants in front  
of a woman in the village of My  
Lai?

COON  
Absolutely not.

LATIMER  
Isn't a fact that you were going  
through My Lai that day looking  
for women to rape?

COON

No.

LATIMER

Didn't you cuss Lieutenant Calley out because he stopped you from raping a woman at My Lai?

COON

No.

LATIMER

Didn't you go around and tell members of your platoon about the number of times you'd raped Vietnamese women?

COON

No.

LATIMER

As a matter of fact, aren't you here testifying against Lt. Calley because you hate him?

COON

I don't like the guy, but I don't hate him. He was just there.

LATIMER

Do you remember one night, you were on guard duty and had a M-79 and shot all your ammunition?

COON

Yes, I remember that.

LATIMER

Weren't you mad at Lieutenant Calley for reporting you?

COON

I don't think so.

LATIMER

You deny that?

COON

Yes, I do.

LATIMER

Did you ever threaten to kill  
Lt. Calley?

COON

No.

LATIMER

Did you ever put a knife against  
his throat?

COON

Absolutely not.

CUT TO:

Alphabet sits on the witness stand.

ALPHABET

Yes, I refused.

Latimer stands in front of him

LATIMER

Were Lieutenant Calley and Meadlo  
firing single shots or automatic?

ALPHABET

I haven't any idea. They were both  
firing into the ditch. I saw people  
go into the ditch and no one came  
out. That's all I know.

LATIMER

You testified earlier that you  
saw tears in Meadlo's eyes,  
correct?

ALPHABET

Yes, I saw tears in Meadlo's eyes.

LATIMER

He had on his helmet and his gear and  
you saw tears in his eyes?

ALPHABET

Yes.

LATIMER

He was pointing his weapon away from you and you saw tears in his eyes?

ALPHABET

Yes, he was firing and crying.

LATIMER

Did you ever threaten to kill Lt. Calley?

ALPHABET

No.

LATIMER

Did you ever hear Cumhail Coon threaten to kill him?

ALPHABET

No.

CUT TO:

Photon sits on the witness stand.

LATIMER

From the time you took the pictures you sold to Life Magazine until after you got back to the United States, no one had been told of the film, is that right?

PHOTON

I can't specifically recall.

LATIMER

You never told anyone in the chain of command about the atrocity and massacre?

PHOTON

No, sir.

LATIMER

Weren't you shocked at what you'd seen?

PHOTON

Yes, sir, I was.

LATIMER

Why didn't you report it?

PHOTON

I decided to keep quiet until someone came to me. I didn't want to start the ball rolling.

LATIMER

Have you never heard of a MAC-V order of 1967 that requires all military personnel to report war crimes and preserve the physical evidence?

PHOTON

I never heard of that regulation before.

LATIMER

Did you ever consider the impact of your failure to disclose that you had these pictures to your commander?

PHOTON

No, sir, I did not.

LATIMER

You had no feeling that failure to disclose those pictures was a dereliction of duty?

PHOTON

I've heard that.

LATIMER

And the best excuse you can give is that you didn't want to start the ball rolling?

PHOTON  
That's the truth.

CUT TO:

William Calley sits on the witness stand.

Daniel stands in front of him.

DANIEL  
Did you tell Captain Medina which of  
your men had been involved?

CALLEY  
Involved in what, sir?

DANIEL  
Shooting into the ditch.

CALLEY  
That wasn't any big deal, no  
sir.

DANIEL  
You told Captain Medina that you  
had rounded these people up, put  
them in the ditch and shot them?

CALLEY  
No, sir. Why should I? He knew  
what...the circumstances they  
were shot under, sir.

DANIEL  
How did he know?

CALLEY  
Because he had told me to shoot them,  
sir. I was ordered to go in there and  
destroy the enemy. That was the job of  
the day.

DANIEL  
You construed that the enemy  
were unarmed women and children  
of all ages?

CALLEY

I did not sit down and think in terms of men, women, and children. They were all the same and that was the classification that we dealt with, just enemy soldiers.

DANIEL

Lt. Calley, you did graduate from Officer's Candidate School, correct?

CALLEY

Yes, sir.

DANIEL

Weren't you told that it is unlawful to kill an unarmed enemy even if you were ordered to do so?

CALLEY

Not that I recall.

DANIEL

Do you recall hearing the term an unlawful order during your OCS training?

CALLEY

Yes, sir.

DANIEL

Do you recall be given some examples of unlawful orders?

CALLEY

Yes, sir.

DANIEL

Can you tell us some of those examples?

CALLEY

No, sir. I can't recall at this time.

DANIEL

You do agree that you were trained that there are orders that you do not have to obey, correct?

CALLEY

Yes, sir.

CUT TO:

DR. ALBERT LA VERNE (61) sits on the witness stand.

DANIEL

Was Lieutenant Calley's judgment impaired beyond normal limits?

LA VERNE

What do you mean by "normal limits"?

DANIEL

Was his judgment impaired?

LA VERNE

Yes, sir.

DANIEL

How?

LA VERNE

He could not challenge the legality of the orders given by Captain Medina. Captain Medina had become a father figure to him.

DANIEL

Did he suffer from an irresistible impulse?

LA VERNE

He was compelled to carry out that order without challenging that order.

DANIEL

Could he disobey that order?

LA VERNE

No, he could not disobey that order. He was like an automation, a robot. When the order came to stop shooting, the party's over, he stopped.

DANIEL

Was he conscious of his actions?

LA VERNE

Yes, absolutely.

DANIEL

Did Lieutenant Calley know right from wrong?

LA VERNE

Yes.

DANIEL

Could Lieutenant Calley adhere to the right?

LA VERNE

He had a compulsion to carry out his orders, to do his duty as an officer.

DANIEL

It's not you contention that it's the duty of an officer to slaughter innocent people when they're ordered to do so?

LA VERNE

Of course not. He proceeded to carry out his orders.

DANIEL

Did Lieutenant Calley tell you the facts about March sixteenth?

LA VERNE

Well, I think I got more from the newspapers, radio, and television.

DANIEL

You mean, you knew about what happened before you talked to lieutenant Calley?

LA VERNE

I'd have to be pretty stupid not to know.

DANIEL

Do you remember what he told you?

LA VERNE

No, all I can remember is what's in the hypothetical statement.

DANIEL

Didn't you ask him a lot of questions?

LA VERNE

Yes.

DANIEL

What were some of those questions?

LA VERNE

I don't remember.

DANIEL

Why not? It doesn't take much energy to remember what you asked.

LA VERNE

I spent my energy preparing for your cross-examination.

CUT TO:

Capt. Medina sits on the witness stand.

Daniel stands in front of him.

MEDINA

My reply to that question was:  
No, you do not kill women and children. You must use common

sense.

DANIEL

Did you ever give an order in My Lai four to anyone that they should move the civilians out of the way, or get rid of them, or anything in substance like that?

MEDINA

No, sir.

DANIEL

Did you make a radio transmission to Lt. Calley?

MEDINA

Yes, after I received a call from task force S-3 stating that there was a helicopter report that there was indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians. I called Lt. Calley and asked, "Damn it, what is going on?"

DANIEL

Did you see any Vietnamese being shot?

MEDINA

Yes, sir. A small boy was moving from the edge of the wood line in front of the command group. I started to raise my rifle and saw that it was a child. I either uttered the words, "Get him! Stop him!" or "Don't shoot!" Somebody fired, the child fell.

DANIEL

Did Lt. Calley ever indicate that he had gathered detainees?

MEDINA

No, sir.

DANIEL

Did you make any such inquiry?

MEDINA

No, sir.

DANIEL

Did you at any time order Lt.  
Calley to kill unarmed civilians?

MEDINA

No, sir.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Captain Daniel and TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS walk down the steps in front of the courthouse.

A large group of PROTESTERS stand by the bottom of the stairs. Several hold signs. One reads, "WE ARE WITH YOU, WILLIAM." another "YOU SHOULD GET A MEDAL."

Daniel steps off the last step. A FAT WOMAN (30) goes up to him and spits on him.

FAT WOMAN

You're a disgrace to that uniform.

Several OTHERS chant, "Traitor, traitor."

The three officers hurry away from the crowd.

DANIEL

They can't be aware of the evidence.  
Perhaps even the laws regulating the  
conduct of war.

OFFICER

Maybe they're just plain stupid.  
It could be as simple as that.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Capt. Daniel stands in front of the six male jurors.

DANIEL

And so, gentlemen, the acts are  
unjustifiable as a matter of law,  
the accused did not receive any  
order of any kind which directed

him to summarily execute the people in the ditch, the man in white or that child. Let's assume for the sake of argument he had.

He glances over the jury.

DANIEL

The judge will instruct you that even that is not a justification for his acts, if the accused knew that order was unlawful. Would the average man know that the order was illegal?

He strolls in front of the jury

DANIEL

A reasonable man would know that to put people in that irrigation ditch, like a bunch of cattle...men, women, children, and babies...that to do that is unlawful. A reasonable man not only would know it, he should know it, and he could not rely upon any order to commit that, to absolve himself of criminal responsibility for that conduct.

He stops in front of the jurors and looks each of them in the eye.

DANIEL

There can be no justification, gentlemen, and there is none under the law, or under the facts of this case.

INT. JURY ROOM - DAY

The Jury sits around a table.

COLONEL

I've labored long and hard to find some way, some evidence, or flaw in the testimony. I can't.

CAPTAIN  
Neither can I.

COLONEL  
We been back here for thirteen  
days. I don't think we have any  
other choice but to find him guilty.

CAPTAIN  
How many?

COLONEL  
At least twenty-two civilians,  
the little boy he threw in the  
ditch, and the man in white.

MAJOR  
The sentence?

COLONEL  
Life. Hard labor. I don't see  
an alternative.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

Daniel and three GOLFERS stroll away from the 18<sup>th</sup> green.

EXT. VERANDA - DAY

Daniel and the golfers sit around a round table on a VERANDA  
overlooking the golf course.

DAWN (27), a waitress, attractive, approaches their table.

She gives Daniel a big smile.

DAWN  
Hi, sexy.

DANIEL  
Hello, Dawn.

DAWN  
Did ya hear the latest about  
Calley?

DANIEL

How recent?

DAWN

Like an hour ago.

DANIEL

No, tell me.

DAWN

President Nixon promises to review his case. In the meantime he'll be under house arrest.

DANIEL

I can't believe it. He spent less than three days in Fort Leavenworth.

GOLFER

Write the President.

DANIEL

I intend to.

DAWN

What are you'll drinking?

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: MAY 23, 1989

JUDY WOODRUFF, 30'S, attractive sits under a microphone hanging about a foot above her head.

JUDY

In 1968 at a Vietnamese village called My Lai, American soldiers massacred hundreds of unarmed civilians.

TRUONG THI LE (52), Vietnamese, speaks to the camera.

TRUONG THI LE

I think of them lying there dead and my heart is cut to pieces.

## JUDY WOODRUFF

Good evening. Since the Vietnam war ended fourteen years ago this spring, many of its scars have begun to heal. But there are some things time does not heal -- My Lai is one.

## TRUONG THI LE

They blasted away and people were dying. Oh, it's so horrible. I pushed my son into the paddy field and lay on top of him. I told him, "Don't cry, the Americans have shot everyone". I miss my mother, my children. I think of them lying there dead and my heart is cut to pieces. The more I think about it the more I want to cry.

## PHOTON

I was an Army Photographer. I noticed one girl was buttoning her blouse and holding a small boy. She was in the middle of a group of prisoners. Okay, I took the photograph with my personal camera, I thought the soldiers were just going to question these people, but just as soon as I turned and walked away, I heard firing, I looked around and over the corner of my shoulder I saw the people drop.

## HUGH THOMPSON

We started seeing a lot of bodies. It, it didn't add up, you know, how all these people were getting killed and wounded and we weren't receiving any fire. Just, you know, it didn't make sense.

## LARRY COLBURN

I was Hugh's door gunner. He landed the aircraft in between the American forces and the Vietnamese people in the bunker. He was furious. He told me he was going over to the bunker himself to see if he could get them out. He told me if the Americans

were to open fire on these Vietnamese as he was getting them out of the bunker, that we should return fire on the Americans.

HUGH THOMPSON

I did instruct my crew to open up on them if they opened up on any more civilians.

SA THI QUI (60'S), Vietnamese, sits on his chair.

SA THI QUI

My people were chased into the ditch like ducks. They fell headfirst. They were crying, "Oh God, have pity. Please let me up. We're innocent, have pity!" They shot all the people dead. Then silence.

HUGH THOMPSON

During flying around we came across a ditch. It had bodies in it, a lot of them. I remember a thought going through my mind, "How did these people get in a ditch?" And I finally thought about the Nazis, I guess, and marching everybody down into a ditch and blowing 'em away.

PHAM THI TRINH (27), Vietnamese, talks to Judy.

PHAM THI TRINH

I looked out of the house and saw my sister, Mui. She was fourteen that year. An American was pressing on top of her, she had no clothing on her. At the time I didn't understand what that meant. My sister was trying to resist him. Afterwards the American got up, he put his clothes on, and then he shot her. I decided to leave my hiding place. I saw my house had burned completely and in the yard my loved ones were burned to death. My mother and my little brother still in my mother's arms. I stood by my mother's

body and cried.

R A

As a professional soldier, I was, I had been taught to carry out orders.

JUDY

If one of your men had refused to shoot, what would have happened to him?

R A

If, if one of my men had refused to shoot, I shudder to think what have been the repercussions. He would have been in serious trouble.

JUDY

What kind of trouble?

R A

He could have faced court-martial. He could have been shot on the spot for refusing an order in the face of the enemy, in face of hostile fire.

JUDY

But there was no hostile fire.

R A

At the time, we didn't realize that there was no hostile fire.

JUDY

Do you think that that order was morally right and that the actions of the troops that followed that were behaving in a moral fashion?

R A

I feel that we carried out the orders in a moral fashion and the orders of, of destroying the village, of killing the people in the village. I feel that we carried out our orders, and I feel that we did not violate any moral standards.

JUDY

News of the massacre finally broke in 1969. William Calley was charged with 109 murders. His defense that he was "just following orders" evoked disturbing comparisons with the Nazi defense at Nuremberg.

Judy holds up a picture of the Nazis that were hung after the Nuremberg trial.

JUDY

But America was still deeply divided by the war itself, and William Calley soon found public opinion swinging to his defense.

CALLEY

All I can say is thank you all very much, each and every one of you that have supported me.

JUDY

When Calley's conviction and sentence was announced, there was an outcry. In the end the army decided not to prosecute most of the 46 soldiers seriously investigated for crimes at My Lai. William Calley was the only man ever convicted. After being under house arrest for three years, President Nixon pardoned him. Today, Calley runs a jewelry store in Columbus, Georgia. He once told his judges, "If I have committed a crime, the only crime that I have committed is in judgment of my values".

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Calley, top of his head bald, 60 pounds overweight and wearing glasses, places a diamond ring on the glass counter.

A young COUPLE admire the ring.

WOMAN

It's beautiful.

The man examines Calley.

MAN

Aren't you Audrey Murphy, the war hero.

Calley laughs.

CALLEY

No, I'm not that old. Audie Murphy was a hero during World War 11.

MAN

My dad says you're the biggest hero in the state of Georgia. Says you should run for office.

CALLEY

Nah, I'm not into politics.

WOMAN

What did you do in the war?

CALLEY

That was long ago. I really don't like talking about it.

MAN

Why not? It's guys like you that make this a great country. One to be proud of.

CALLEY

I was just doing my job.

EXT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Coon, gray hair, large bags under his eyes, peers through the window. He puts a hand in his pants pocket and stares. His image, over Calley standing behind the counter, reflects off the glass of the window.

He turns and walks away.

EXT. MOTEL 6 - DAY

A 1995 Nissan Sentra pulls up in front of a room and parks. Coon gets out of the car.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Coon enters the room and closes the door behind him. He pulls a handgun out of his pants pocket and tosses it on the bed.

He turns the television on.

TELEVISION SCREEN

TWO REPORTERS stand.

REPORTER 1

The U.S. military told CNN it is investigating an incident in March near Balad in which Iraqi civilians were killed. The probe comes amid concern over U.S. conduct in Iraq, stroked by claims of a massacre by Marines of 24 civilians in Haditha last November.

REPORTER 2

Iraqi police said 11 people were killed in a raid against a suspected al Qaeda, including five children, four women and two men were killed.

REPORTER 1

The youngest child was six months old. A Balad police official told CNN that U.S. soldiers kept an entire family in a room before spraying them with bullets.

REPORTER 2

U.S. official will conduct a thorough investigation. If crimes were committed, the wrongdoers will be prosecuted. Like those who took part in the massacre at My Lai almost forty years ago.

REPORTER 1

Soldiers from all countries of  
the world commit war crimes. The  
only difference is the U.S.  
prosecutes and punishes their  
criminals.

FADE OUT:

THE END