

REACHING

Written by

Winston

OVER BLACK:

THOMAS (V.O.)  
I was six when the visions started.  
I guess that's what you'd call  
them.

FADE IN:

EXT. FOXHOLE - WW2 - DAY

A young soldier, THOMAS, 20s, peers over the edge, his face twisted with fear and anguish.

In the field ahead, some twenty feet away, another soldier, VINCE, 20s, writhes in pain. Bullets PING the ground around him as he reaches for Thomas.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - PRESENT DAY - DAY

Thomas, same age, modern army gear, desert camo, sits propped against the tire of a Humvee. Tears run down his cheeks.

THOMAS  
And the headache -- I've always had  
that. Long as I can remember.

He rubs his right temple as he drinks from a canteen.

THOMAS  
But it was the visions --

He wipes away tears as a smile breaks through.

THOMAS  
Not that they were all bad.

He laughs.

THOMAS  
He'd get so angry when we played  
cards.

INT. ARMY TENT - WW2 - NIGHT

Thomas deals a hand. Across a table, beyond a small stack of cash, Vince hides a smile as he looks at his cards.

VINCE  
Who dealt this shit?

THOMAS

I fold.

VINCE

Shit, Tommy. How do you always know when to fold?!

THOMAS

You are quite possibly the worst poker player in the world.

Vince leaps up, chases Thomas, playfully, out of the tent.

EXT. ARMY TENT - WW2 - CONTINUOUS

Thomas bolts from the tent, Vince in pursuit.

Thomas smashes into another SOLDIER. A very large soldier.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - PRESENT DAY - DAY

Thomas smiles.

THOMAS

We got our asses kicked that night.

CHAPLAIN (O.S.)

That's a good vision?

Thomas looks to the side where an Army CHAPLAIN, 50s, sits next to him, propped against the Humvee.

Blood stains dot the Chaplain's flak jacket.

THOMAS

The best. Vince always had my back.

CHAPLAIN

You talk as if it was real.

Thomas hesitates at the thought. The tears return.

THOMAS

Do you believe in reincarnation, Father?

CHAPLAIN

No, Son, I don't.

THOMAS

What about redemption?

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - 1940S - DAY

A 1940s sedan pulls to a stop outside the small tract home.

LATER

Thomas, dress uniform, stands at the door. Frozen in place.

The door opens.

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN steps out.

MAN

How long you been out here?

THOMAS

I knew your son, Sir. He was a friend. The best.

The Man hangs his head.

THOMAS

I just want you to know --

He struggles to get the words out.

THOMAS

How -- sorry I am.

MAN

Thank you. Me, too.

THOMAS

No. I mean. You need to know how truly sorry I am.

MAN

I know.

The Man wraps Thomas in an embrace.

INT. 1940S SEDAN - LATER

Thomas swings the car into a scenic overlook.

He turns off the engine.

Looks out.

Thomas puts a gun to his right temple. Pulls the trigger.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - PRESENT DAY - DAY

Thomas rubs his right temple as he bawls at the memory.

CHAPLAIN

I don't know about reincarnation.  
Or visions -- or anything like  
that.

The Chaplain leans in.

CHAPLAIN

But, I know -- what you did today --  
you earned your peace.

INT. HUMVEE - PRESENT DAY - EARLIER

Thomas and the Chaplain bounce to the rhythms of the rough road as their Humvee follows another in front of them.

Thomas massages his temple.

The Chaplain offers an Aspirin. Thomas waves him off.

Suddenly, GUNFIRE rings out, SLAMS into their vehicle.

The Humvee they're following swerves from the road, skids to a stop. A SOLDIER, the driver, leaps from the vehicle and sprints into a field.

Thomas watches as another soldier, a PASSENGER in the Humvee, screams...

PASSENGER

Stay in the vehicle!

The Chaplain watches the Soldier run across the field.

CHAPLAIN

Dear God, he's panicking.

A SHOT rings out.

The Soldier in the field drops. Badly injured, he writhes in pain as he reaches to Thomas for help.

INJURED SOLDIER

Somebody help me!

Thomas leaps from the Humvee.

He sprints for the downed soldier as the other SOLDIERS take up positions and provide covering fire.

Thomas slides to a stop next to the Injured Soldier.

THOMAS

I got you.

He drapes the Injured Soldier over his shoulders, turns for the convoy. Runs.

Bullets PING around him, until finally, one catches Thomas square in the leg.

He struggles to maintain his balance. Continues on.

Another SHOT catches him in the mid-section, rocks him back.

Still, he continues.

Eventually, he reaches the cover of the convoy.

A MEDIC takes the Injured Soldier as Thomas collapses next to the Chaplain, against the tire of the Humvee.

As the Chaplain furiously attends to Thomas' wounds, he catches the eye of the Medic.

The Chaplain shakes his head: He's not going to make it.

He hands a canteen to Thomas.

CHAPLAIN

It'll ease the pain.

Having done what he can, the Chaplain sits back.

THOMAS

I was six when the visions started.  
I guess that's what you'd call  
them.

EXT. FOXHOLE - WW2 - DAY

Thomas watches as Vince lies in the field, still reaching for his friend.

But, Thomas is frozen with fear.

Eventually, he turns away, slinks deeper into the foxhole.

VINCE (O.S.)

Help me, Tommy. Help.

Thomas puts his hands over his ears.

LATER

Thomas watches as MEDICS load Vince's body onto a stretcher.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - PRESENT DAY - DAY

Medics carry a stretcher, with the Injured Soldier, past Thomas. They pause as the Injured Soldier reaches for Thomas. A gesture of thanks.

He sees Thomas' wounds.

INJURED SOLDIER

I'm so sorry.

Thomas shakes his head.

THOMAS

You gave me a gift.

Thomas looks at the Chaplain.

THOMAS

My headache. It's gone.

A peace washes over his face.

FADE OUT.