

The Ace Of Spades

Written by

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Based on true events

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FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN:

"Saddam - One who confronts...One who frequently causes collisions."

INT. WOMAN'S WOMB

A heartbeat quickens as a fetus grimaces. It's utterly vulnerable, trapped, and helpless...

INT. IRAQ - SADDAM HUSSEIN HOME - MORNING

SUBHA, 20's, serious, nine months pregnant stands four feet from a drab wall. Arms sway slightly to her side as her head droops. A tear slides down her cheek.

NOTE: THE DIALOGUE IN EACH SCENE WITH AN ARABIC CHARACTER IS SPOKEN WITH A MODERATE ARABIC ACCENT.

SUPER: aD-Dawr, Iraq - April, 1937. Subha, Mother of Saddam Hussein or otherwise known as the "Mother of Monsters"

SUBHA	SUBHA
No. No...No.	La. La...La.
(yells)	(in Arabic. yells)
Nooo!	La-aaa!

She arches her back. Her stomach forced out. She raises her head. CHARGES the wall. Her stomach COLLIDES with a full impact. She falls, hurt, but still determined.

SUBHA (CONT'D)	SUBHA (CONT'D)
(cries)	(cries)
No!	La!

She struggles to her feet. Wobbles to take three steps back.

RUSHES the wall. Full of RAGE. Her unborn, protected only by her stomach-lining, SLAMS into the wall.

SERIES OF IMAGES - DECK OF CARDS

The infamous IRAQ MOST WANTED DECK OF CARDS flutter down and land softly on a black table. The last card falls...

TITLE: THE ACE OF SPADES

INT. AD-DAWR - SPIDER HOLE - AFTERNOON

Dust passes through a sliver of light in a confined space.

SUPER: aD-Dawr, Iraq. 13 December 2003. 62 Years Later.

Labored breathing comes from an ELDERLY MAN.

The wood floor creaks from soldier's footsteps above.

SOLDIER (O.S)
(excited)
Over here! Over here!

The hatch is RIPPED off.

SPIDER HOLE - SAME

Sunlight ILLUMINATES halfway down the steps into the cavernous, musty-smelling dungeon.

Something. Someone is holed up.

SOLDIER (O.S)
Don't move. Don't you fuckin'
move!

The TRANSLATOR wrangles himself next to the soldier.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
(to translator)
Come and talk to him. Tell him to
come out before he gets killed.

The SOLDIER waves his hand over to SIX FULLY ARMED SOLDIERS.
They make a bee-line to the hole and circle it.

TRANSLATOR	TRANSLATOR
Who are you?	(Arabic)
	Min 'ant?

RUSTLING seeps out from the darkest part of the cavern.

ELDERLY MAN (O.C)
I am Saddam Hussein...the duly
elected President of Iraq.

The TEAMS hearts pound. This is the moment of a lifetime.

ELDERLY MAN (O.C) (CONT'D)
I am willing to negotiate.

SOLDIER

Well, President Bush sends his regards.

(to Translator)

Tell him to put his hands up and come out.

TRANSLATOR

Come out slowly. Very slowly.

TRANSLATOR

(Arabic)

Yakhruj bbt'. Bati' jiddaan.

Guns drawn. They're dialed in, barrels fixed on the hole.

EXT. BAGHDAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Jet noise screams from the TARMAC while Humvee's grind down roads and military men crowd the unpleasant landscape.

SUPER - Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) - February 2003

INT. CAMP CROPPER - ENTRY CONTROL POINT - SAME

Kyle holds a handful of manila folders in one hand and an access card in the other while he approaches the GUARD DESK.

SUPER: Camp Cropper - Coalition Interrogation Hub

The GUARD looks up and nods.

Kyle swipes his card and punches his code into the key pad.

INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Long yellow fluorescent tube lights decorate the cold lonely room. One metal table. Two uncomfortable metallic chairs.

Glass the size of a large family portrait lines one wall.

Kyle fumbles to lay his mess of folders on the table and pulls the metal chair out making an ear-retching noise. The effect heightens the awkwardness of the two men's encounter.

Kyle sits across from SADDAM HUSSEIN. Face to face.

The battle of intellect begins.

SADDAM

(stern)

Perhaps a conversation between two such educated people will not be useful...

(MORE)

SADDAM (CONT'D)

(beat)
Or successful.

Saddam, although a captive, is arrogant and confident.

Kyle calmly begins to flip through his papers as he tries to keep his composure in front of a living legend.

KYLE

(clears throat)
...let's begin, why don't we.
Would you consider your efforts
successful?

SADDAM

When compared to other governments
I am not convinced my efforts are
any different, especially the
Americans.

Kyle notices Saddam avoids the question like a pro.

KYLE

You see similarities in the actions
of the American government and
Iraq's?

SADDAM

Of course.

Saddam waves his hands flippantly.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Thirty million people live in
poverty in America, but this is not
consider a crime? I would never
accept that for Iraq.

KYLE

What about your mistakes?

SADDAM

(snarky)
Do you think I would tell my enemy
if I made a mistake?

Kyle's voice deepens to keep from cracking but struggles with the enormity of the situation.

KYLE

I--I'm an enemy?

SADDAM

I do not know if you are or not,
but your demeanor is something I
can handle for now.

Saddam's smug demeanor oozes from each word.

KYLE

Is it the current system that's in
place that has you at odds?

SADDAM

It works for America to a large
degree, but one party is not good
for Iraq. Multiple parties will
cause too much commotion. The
people here does not accept only
one idea. They will have to be
forced to accept it.

KYLE

Then that would spoil the root of
the Ba'ath party. They were the
dominant ones.

SADDAM

I wish there were political parties
other than Ba'ath. Because of you,
the only political parties in Iraq
today are the ones with the
weapons.

Kyle wants to jump down Saddam's throat but remains calm.

KYLE

Does a leader gain greatness
through achievement or demand
greatness through fear?

SADDAM

Fear will not make a ruler and will
not make people love a ruler. Love
comes through communication.
People will love me more after I
pass than they do now.

Kyle looks down to keep track of his pre-interview tasks.

KYLE

But you've suppressed them for
decades.

SADDAM

I do not believe so. My people love someone for what they have done. I have done many things. I concluded a peace agreement with Barzani --

KYLE

The Kurds?

SADDAM

Yes, in '70. I nationalized the Iraqi oil, supported the war against Zionist, won the war against Iran, survived the Gulf War and lived through a boycott for fourteen years. Does it still exist?

KYLE

No.

Saddam nods. He holds, straightening himself.

SADDAM

Despite all these hardships endured by the Iraq's, one hundred percent of the people voted for Hussein in the last elections. They still supported me and your government removed me.

Saddam begins to become agitated.

KYLE

Where did you go when hostilities began?

SADDAM

Why are you retracing my steps. You got me!

Kyle feels his heartbeat in each finger.

KYLE

(calmly)
Please, just answer.

SADDAM

'03...March I would say. I remained in Baghdad until April 10 or 11, I think. Who cares.

KYLE
You left prior to the city falling?

SADDAM
It was a somber day.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. AL FAW PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

An elaborate room. Civilian and military dignitaries from the upper echelon of the Iraqi government sit evenly spaced along a large table. Others stand in grim silence along a wall of Iraqi landscape paintings.

SUPER: Al Faw Presidential Palace - "The Water Palace" - 23 March 2003

SADDAM
...we come here at a somber time in our Nation's history. The evil that is at our doorstep will eventually turn the handle, open the door, and enslave us...

The building RUMBLES from the "Shock and Awe" campaign.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
We must endure and place our trust in Allah. I look to each and every one of you knowing that from this day forward we will struggle in secret. Praise Iraq, praise Allah!

They all stand in unison. CLAP vigorously.

TEARS in the eyes of everyone. They realize this will be the last time they are together.

Saddam turns to shake the hands of everyone. He makes his way to depart the room trying to stay above it all, knowing his last card has been dealt and he's lost.

END FLASHBACK

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

Saddam, in a long robe, shuffles in escorted by a SOLDIER.

Kyle waits patiently. Papers laid out neatly before him. His demeanor is one of more control this time.

SUPER: BIAP - Operations Center - 8 February 2004

KYLE

Why go to war with Iran?

SADDAM

I will put it as simply as I can
for you and the others watching.

Saddam points to the mirror.

KYLE

I can assure you, it's just us.

Saddam gives him a look, "as if".

SADDAM

Consider this. One day, the
neighbor's son beats up your son.
Yes?

KYLE

I'm listening.

SADDAM

The next day, the neighbor's son
bothers your cows. Then the
neighbor damages your farmland's
irrigation system.

Saddam lifts a finger, waiting for the words to sink in.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

If all these things occur,
eventually, after enough incidents,
you approach your neighbor, tell
him each transgression by event and
ask him to stop.

KYLE

...farmer's terms.

SADDAM

It's simple. Now usually, a
warning or approach to the neighbor
is enough to stop this behavior.
With Iran however, this approach
did not work.

KYLE

Was Khomeini mostly to blame?

SADDAM

Khomeini was a religious zealot who came along when I did. He thought all leaders were like the Shah and easily toppled and figured he could do the same with me. He calculated incorrectly.

Kyle's face tightens to come to his foes' point.

KYLE

Then what was your objective?

SADDAM

Ask Iran. They began the war. I have explained my reasons.

KYLE

Can you tell me then for the record?

SADDAM

By '87 we had three-fourth's of their tanks and half of their artillery and APC's.

KYLE

They most certainly would have advanced on you if the tables were turned.

Saddam in full lecture mode.

SADDAM

Is that what immediately comes to mind from an American point of view? One cannot plan the Iraqi army the same as the Americans. When supply routes are lengthened, problems arise. The soldier of 100 years ago is not one of today.

Kyle is calm, almost enchanted by the sermon.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

This is the universal difference between our worlds. Iraq had recovered enough territory. If we went deeper inside Iran we would have lost Iraqi lives. For many of our men it was their first combat experience. Many began to ask, "Why am I here?", and our leaders felt Iran had learned their lesson.

KYLE

But you finally had the upper hand.

SADDAM

If a soldier does not see logic, he will not perform as well or be obedient. Discipline becomes a problem. But if he accepts the task at hand as logical, he will stay obedient.

KYLE

Do you see all soldiers this way?

Saddam laughs at Kyle in a way a teacher does to a student. He's making his point confidently.

SADDAM

If you asked the American soldiers, who came to look for WMD and found none, removed my leadership and now replaced them with other dictators, whether they wanted to stay or go, they would say go!

KYLE

Let's be clear. We haven't found them yet.

SADDAM

(smugly)
Keep searching.

Kyle moves as if he's stepped on a nail. For a split second he realizes that this is going to be a very difficult task.

KYLE

Do you think you would have lost the war with Iran if you didn't use chemical weapons? WMD?

SADDAM

I do not have an answer for that -- I am not going to answer.

KYLE

But you did use them.

SADDAM

I will not be cornered or caught on some technicality. It will not do you any good.

(MORE)

SADDAM (CONT'D)

The United States has paid dearly for its mistakes here in Iraq and will continue to pay...Iran did not get the message of our powers. If we did not break their heads, they would not have understood.

KYLE

But UN findings show you had chemical weapons and you used them.

SADDAM

History is written and will not change. No one can stop history from being written. But let me remind you that Iran used them at Muhamra in '81.

KYLE

So you used them for defensive reasons!

SADDAM

(to the point)

I'm not going to answer, no matter how you put the question.

Saddam pushes back his chair. He's exhausted.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

I am tired now.

Saddam stands up. He now towers over Kyle in a most serious way in order to put Kyle in his place.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

For future between us remember.

(beat)

It is not fair for someone in charge to blame others.

INT. INTERROGATION PREP ROOM - MORNING

Maps of Iraq and pictures of the famous DECK OF CARDS line the walls. Stacked filing cabinets and gray safes hold classified information. Metal desks and one television connected to a VCR on a portable stand.

Kyle sits across from MELANIE TURNER, 30's, a tomboy interrogator.

MELANIE

Well, you got him to talk about WMD but don't get wrapped up in all that Ba'ath party shit.

KYLE

That Ba'ath party shit is what he's **all** about. It's like stripping the Republican from President Bush. It's his identity.

MELANIE

You're not here to get his life story. Time is short. We need to get his take on the video.

KYLE

I know, I know. I have to get his trust.

Stress is written all over his face.

MELANIE

When are you gonna show him?

She points to the television.

KYLE

I don't want to piss him off too much yet. He's finally opening up a little.

MELANIE

Is that what you call it? He's only insulted you half a dozen times.

KYLE

Better than a dozen.

MELANIE

Can't wait for you to show him.
(laughs)
He might punch you in the face within the first three minutes.

Kyle continues at his keyboard. He abruptly stops. Then spins his laptop around.

KYLE

Here, check out this part.

Kyle presses the play button on the laptop.

INSERT - TELEVISION SCREEN

INT. PRIVATE RESTURANT - NIGHT

ABU ABBAS, 50's and professionally dressed, with TAHIR JALIL HABBUSH, 50's in his robe sit comfortably over lunch.

KYLE (O.S.)
(points to the screen)
That's Abu Abbas, Palestine
Liberation Front and Tahir Jalil
Habbush, Director of Iraqi Intel
Service.

MELANIE (O.C.)
Just like the dossier.

ABU ABBAS
Thank President Hussein.

HABBUSH
Most certainly. The flow of money,
training, weapons, and
transportation to carry out. Your
missions to attack Israel will be
on the forefront of our minds.

ABU ABBAS
God is great.

BACK TO INTERROGATION PREP ROOM

MELANIE
There's no way he can deny it.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

SUPER: BIAP - Operations Center - 10 February 2004

KYLE
Could you have done more to help
Syria during their war with Israel?

SADDAM
What more could we have done? I
sent all of our military men to
fight under Egyptian and Syrian
command.

KYLE

Does it bother you that they didn't welcome you with open arms?

SADDAM

A loser does not know where his head and feet are. It was a difficult situation to come together like this anyway.

KYLE

I've seen a video of Abbas and Tahir at a meeting.

Saddam immediately becomes defensive.

SADDAM

So.

KYLE

There was a deal.

Saddam waits ready to pounce on Kyle's words.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Do the actions against Israel constitute a legitimate defense of Palestine? Some say it was terrorism.

SADDAM

(aggressive)

What did the Iraqi government do?

KYLE

That's what I'm asking.

SADDAM

If you have the recording, then you know. Why pester me with this?

KYLE

Can you at least elaborate?

SADDAM

To what? Attempts to regain the Arab lands that were raped and taken.

KYLE

Abbas asked for many things. Weapons, transport--

Saddam is quick to cut Kyle off.

SADDAM

If Abbas asked for things, it does not mean we gave them to him.

KYLE

So you didn't?

SADDAM

If Abbas carried out any attacks, that means we helped. If he did not, we did not help. We have the right to help anyone that struggles. Who are you to question a sovereign country's actions?

KYLE

Including the intelligence director of the PLO?

SADDAM

No. I am talking about organizations in Palestine. The work you are talking about is entirely different. It is intelligence work.

KYLE

You don't know exactly what the Director of the Iraqi Intel Service did?

SADDAM

Does the American CIA Director call the President every time he meets someone? Of course not.

INT. INTERROGATION PREP ROOM - DAY

MELANIE

Did you hear?

Kyle looks up from his laptop. Expecting more explanation.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

He's hardly eating.

KYLE

Damn it. He's gonna play that card with me?

MELANIE

(laughs)

Well, it's one way to get our attention.

KYLE

The longer he does it, we lose.

INT. SADDAM'S PRISON CELL - DAY

Food trays with large portions of food remain.

A GUARD comes to retrieve it. Pulls out a green logbook.

INSERT - GUARD LOGBOOK, which reads:

"1300 Food Entry. Prisoner Number
1: Continues minimal food
consumption. 10 percent consumed."

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Saddam looks more thin but still heathy -- ready to talk.

SUPER: BIAP - Operations Center - 13 February 2004

SADDAM

Let me ask a direct question.

KYLE

Of course.

SADDAM

I want to ask where, from the beginning of the interview process until now, has the information been going?

KYLE

Good question--

SADDAM

For our relationship to remain clear, I want to know.

KYLE

They're no doubt being reviewed by many officials...maybe even the President.

SADDAM

Good, I appreciate.

KYLE
You're welcome.

Saddam turns verbose, even nonsensical.

SADDAM
But I don't mind if this
information is published but...it
has to be in both English and
Arabic.

Kyle's shoulders relax -- he's building much needed trust.

KYLE
(smirks)
Yes. I will do what I can. I'm
curious though.

SADDAM
About?

KYLE
Doubles.

SADDAM
(laughs)
Movie magic.

KYLE
Did others have doubles?

SADDAM
Not that I'm aware of.

KYLE
Uday or Qusay?

Saddam's face instantly becomes serious.

SADDAM
I think my sons would not do this.
They might have considered such a
tactic during war, but not in
peace.

KYLE
But you were at war.

Saddam begins to rub his palms with his thumbs -- trying his
best to stay stoic.

SADDAM
Do you think I'm getting upset when
you mention my sons?

KYLE

I would hope not. It certainly isn't my objective but I understand somewhat.

SADDAM

(inquisitive)
You have boys?

KYLE

(dispirited)
No. Soon though.

His pencil taps against his clipboard.

SADDAM

Well then, you couldn't possibly know. But you will know that bond.

The pencil tap stops completely.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

...but I still think about them as martyrs.

KYLE

Do you recall the day?

SADDAM

Bits and pieces. I was fighting in other areas at the time.

KYLE

I have read the report. I can describe the day for you.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. IRAQ - MOSUL - HIDEOUT - DAY

Clear Arabian skies as the sun cooks two dozen HUMVEES from the 101st Airborne Division while a platoon of TROOPS encircle a multi-level brown stained building.

One Lamborghini SUV and Mercedes C-series serve as a beacon of extravagance on a black-topped driveway.

SUPER: Uday (Ace Of Hearts) and Qusay (Ace Of Clubs) Hussein Hideout - Mosul, Iraq - July 2003

Two large speakers sit on the hood of the COMMANDER'S Humvee.

SOLDIER
 (through speakers)
 Come out. Do not attempt anything.

INT. HIDEOUT - LIVING ROOM - SAME

UDAY, 39, smug, tall, and QUSAY, 37, mustache, lanky, and his SON, 10, hustle in a panic in and out. They peak through window shades to get a sense of the force at their doorstep.

<p>QUSAY (fast) When they come, shoot. Keep them out.</p>	<p>SON (to dad; scared) What do we do?</p>
---	--

Uday gives his son a look of defiance.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Small arms gunfire ERUPTS from the windows as the soldiers approach. The gunfire is wild, sloppy and indiscriminately hits everything in sight.

Soldiers duck and find cover but hold their ground. They attempt a tactical approach time and time again to no avail.

COMMANDER
 (into radio)
 Command. Recommend heavy air assistance.

RADIO
 Roger that. Support in vicinity.
 ETA ten mikes.

COMMANDER
 (to soldier)
 Pull them back. Air coming.

LATER --

OH-58 KIOWA HELICOPTERS circle the site while an A-10 WARTHOG ATTACK AIRCRAFT fire on the hideout.

One TOW MISSILE after another SLAMS into each side of the building. The ground SHAKES.

Smoke BILLOWS from the remaining structure. No one could have survived.

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

Saddam is riveted by Kyle's account but grief stricken again.

SADDAM
How long did it last?

Kyle finds it difficult to keep his face hard.

KYLE
Hours.

SADDAM
(looks at his hands)
So they gave a good fight.

INT. INTERROGATION PREP ROOM - DAY

Kyle's desk is loaded with folders labeled, "SECRET" and "TOP SECRET". It's a mess that has no end.

KYLE
Have them change the room.

MELANIE
From what to what?

KYLE
Get rid of those fucking table and chairs.

MELANIE
Your trying to get him to eat?

KYLE
I'm trying to get him to talk.

MELANIE
About WMD?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A tattered carpet and two red simple padded chairs and a small table with a teapot and two tea cups.

Saddam enters. His eyes widen. He's pleasantly surprised.

SADDAM
Much more suited for a President.

His mood noticeably flips like a switch.

KYLE

I thought you might say that.

Kyle stays formal.

SADDAM

Could be better.

Just the reaction Kyle was expecting.

KYLE

I'm trying. Can I speak to you now about your beginnings?

SADDAM

Beginnings?

KYLE

To exert your power.

SADDAM

With who?

KYLE

Senior leadership of Ba'ath. Nayif comes to mind.

SADDAM

You're going far.

KYLE

He seems like a good place to start, especially with his repeated attempts to be President.

SADDAM

He tried.

KYLE

Was he your first adversary?

SADDAM

He was a minor irritant.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

Large and elaborately decorated. The aqua dome dominates the center while the east and west wings hug the large fountain.

SUPER: Republican Presidential Palace - Summer 1974

INT. DINNING ROOM - SAME

PRESIDENT BAKR, late 60's, a statesman, Saddam and others sit at a grand table. The backs of the chairs protrude above everyone's head. The CLANKING of utensils provide a steady stream of noise.

NAYIF, 20's, slick black hair strolls into the room and approaches the table near Bakr. He's full of himself.

Saddam, upon seeing him, pushes back from the table. The wooden legs squeal on the marble floor. His napkin falls to the floor. In seconds he's two feet from Nayif.

NAYIF
(shrugs)
What?

Saddam pulls his shinny SILVER PISTOL from his holster and wedges the guns barrel into Nayif's gut.

Nayif's eyes widen. His hand moves toward his holster.

SADDAM
Don't even.

Within seconds Nayif knows he's in trouble. He tries not to make a scene in the elegant room.

NAYIF
(grits his teeth)
But I have four children.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
They're our family too.
(to Barzan)
Take him.

BARZAN, early 40's, tall, a strapping military man grabs Nayif by the arm.

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM

KYLE
So your brother-in-law took him?

SADDAM
I could trust Barzan.

KYLE
Then what?

SADDAM
We negotiated.

INT. POCKET ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nayif, still cocky, sits erect in a chair made more for the eye than for comfort.

Saddam in iconic black boots paces back and forth across the lavish red and gold colored carpet.

SADDAM
(head down, then to Nayif)
Where do you want to go?

NAYIF
Go?

SADDAM
Yes, go.

Nayif can't believe what's happening. He attempts to pull a strategy together in real-time.

NAYIF
Lebanon.

BARZAN (O.S.)
(laughs)
Lebanon!

SADDAM
No.

NAYIF
No?

Nayif's posture begins to show his precarious situation.

SADDAM
Lebanon is a place where
conspiracies are made. Choose
another.

NAYIF
Algeria.

BARZAN
Algeria's in its own revolution.

SADDAM
Again.

NAYIF
Damn it...Morocco?

SADDAM
Fine. Let's go.

NAYIF
Now?

SADDAM
Right now.

INT. SADDAM'S LIMOUSINE (MOVING) - DAY

Saddam and Nayif sit side by side in the back of the shiniest of black stretched limousine.

Saddam's pistol rests on his knee, easily assessable while his middle finger taps the grip.

NAYIF
What's going to happen?

Saddam talks while he watches the city go by.

SADDAM
You will be in a safe place. No
one will hurt you.
(to Nayif, stern)
But you have to obey.

Nayif, in a fog of uncertainty -- stares out the window. Unfortunately, he can do nothing but accept his fate.

NAYIF
Don't worry.

SADDAM
When the guards salute, you salute
back. If you think about doing
something, remember I am next to
you.

NAYIF
I--I understand, but what do I do
when I get there?

SADDAM
Act like an Ambassador.

NAYIF
Like an Ambassador, I--

SADDAM
You are smart. Figure it out. You
come from elegance.

Saddam goes from talking to the street to directly to Nayif.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

I know everything and will notice
if you are planning something or
not.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE

You just sent him like that?

SADDAM

We were thirteen days into a new
regime.

KYLE

Did you even get a chance to tell
Morocco that he was coming?

SADDAM

No. I did know what I was doing.
We were young student
revolutionaries.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. RASHEED AIRPORT - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

GUARDS wave the limousine through.

SUPER: Rasheed Airport - Just outside Baghdad

TARMAC - MOMENTS LATER

The crew wait at the top of the stairs. Guards on either
side stand at attention at the bottom.

The limousine pulls up next to the stairs. A guard walks up
and opens the door.

The door swings open. Nayif and Saddam step out. Saddam
trails Nayif closely. Gun in his holster. Hand on the grip.
Both march up the stairs, reach the door and stop.

SADDAM

Here.

Nayif turns around slowly avoiding any sudden move.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
You can have this back.

Saddam stretches out his arm and hands Nayif his pistol.

NAYIF
My family though...

SADDAM
I told you. I will take care of
them.

NAYIF
But--

SADDAM
Now is not the time to test my
generosity.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE
If he represented a potential
threat to the Ba'ath, then why an
ambassador?

SADDAM
I did not want anymore bloodshed.
The coup in '59 had members tied to
cars and dragged through the
streets until death. Virgins were
hung on electric poles. We needed
to forget about the past and
prohibit revenge.

Kyle's mannerisms show he's comprehending more and more.

KYLE
So you were selective in your
choosing?

SADDAM
We started our arrests with Nayif,
then Da'ud, and went on. Nayif to
Morocco, Da'ud to Saudi.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. LONDON - INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - LONDON PARK LANE -
EVENING

Light rain falls lightly on the shiny asphalt outside an elaborately decorated five-star hotel.

SUPER: Intercontinental Hotel - London - July 1978

Nayif pushes through gold-framed glass doors.

A MAN quickly approaches him from the street.

Nayif is preoccupied and looks up, surprised by the man's sudden movement towards him.

The man RIPS open his trench coat. He pulls a pistol from his breast pocket and then FIRES a round. The sound of the gunshot reverberates through the buildings.

Nayif falls to the cold wet pavement. He reaches for his stomach. Blood seeps from the entry and exit holes.

The man stealthily moves to a nearby car and speeds away.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE

Salem Ahmed Hassan killed him.

SADDAM

That is what has been reported.

KYLE

Some believe you killed him.

Saddam remains unfazed by these accusatory accounts.

SADDAM

God killed Nayif.

KYLE

But you ran the ISS. That leads to you.

SADDAM

No. Nayif started acting in a way against the country. He gave his word that he would not. He went to Iran, met with Dayan, we could go on and on.

KYLE
Yes, the Israeli Defense Minister.

SADDAM
These were all considered bad acts.

KYLE
Did you know of his death?

SADDAM
I told you clearly. Only God knows.

KYLE
Could Nayif have just been arrested
and punished, instead of executed?

SADDAM
I gave you my answer.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

The U.S. PRESIDENT reads from a folder marked "TOP SECRET".
His National Security Team sits idle awaiting his response.
Their look is of concern because they haven't got much.

PRESIDENT
What's taking so long?

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
It takes time to work him, Mr.
President.

PRESIDENT
Then massage harder. We've got
boys out there looking and the guy
who knows sits in a cushy cell.
Get him to talk faster. I want
confirmation.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
Yes, Mr. President. WMD is our top
priority.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Kyle scribbles crude, quirky notes on his yellow pad.

KYLE
Nadhim Kazzar. Your right-hand man
and at the same time a threat.

SADDAM
Not to me he was not.

KYLE
To President Bakr then?

SADDAM
I don't believe so either. He
wasn't a revolutionary, nor among
our seventy who took over the
Presidential Palace, but he was a
good party member...and tough.

KYLE
How so?

SADDAM
In prison. He wasn't convinced
that the military would be good for
the Ba'ath. He felt them old and a
burden.

KYLE
With his questioning of the party
did he ever meet with Iran?

SADDAM
I do not know. But what I do know
is that his coup failed and then he
tried to hide and run but he was an
easy capture...again I do not want
to talk bad about Kazzar.

KYLE
Can you at least tell me for
history's sake?

Kyle throws a bone to Saddam, hoping he will take it.

KYLE (CONT'D)
We know he tried to kill Bakr when
his plane was delayed.

SADDAM
Not true. Your information is not
specific.

KYLE
Then educate me.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. BAGHDAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - TARMAC - DAY

Saddam is patient in a black stretch MERCEDES BENZ as President Bakr's 737 touches down.

The aircraft ramp lowers as Saddam's pulls up.

Bakr sees Saddam as he steps out. They smile in unison.

SUPER: Baghdad International Airport, June 1979

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE (MOVING) - MOMENTS LATER

Bakr's presence with Saddam is what he enjoys and needs.

BAKR
How are things?

Saddam's eyes flit from Bakr to the streets. He's anxious.

SADDAM
Many things. Almost too many to mention.

BAKR
Then we will have tea at the Palace and discuss.

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

Bakr and Saddam sit at an elaborate table sipping tea.

BAKR
What is wrong?

SADDAM
I feel we are not in a great place right now.

CHILDREN barge into the room, laughing and talking loudly.

CHILD 1	CHILD 2
Grandpa, grandpa, dinner is ready.	Please join us. Please!

She grabs his hand. His smile grows with each second.

BAKR
(laughs)
I will. I will.

Bakr reaches over to Saddam to touch his hand.

BAKR (CONT'D)
 You don't mind do you? We will
 continue.

Saddam knows a moment has slipped through his fingertips.
 Disappointment is clear as Bakr playfully joins the ruckus.

INT. SADDAM'S CAR (MOVING) - LATER

Saddam in the passenger seat. Street lights silhouettes glow
 as they move along the road.

The radio plays Muslim theme music. A police bulletin
 interrupts what Saddam was enjoying. The light BLINKS red.

RADIO (V.O.)
 "An attempted coup is in progress
 at the Presidential Palace. All
 units report."

SADDAM
 (to driver)
 Take me back at once!

INT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - HALLWAY - LATER

Saddam is practically running to Bakr's massive wooden-etched
 door. He waves his hands to the guards to open them.

BAKR'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sweat beads up on Saddam's forehead. He's as calm as he can
 be, given the chaos.

SADDAM
 I came at once. Is everything
 okay?

BAKR
 Shihab and Ghayan.
 (shakes his head)
 I tried to reach both of them but
 no answer. They betrayed me.

SADDAM
 I had a feeling it is Kazzar.

BAKR
 Kazzar.

Bakr can hardly think straight. He's in disbelief.

BAKR (CONT'D)

Why?

SADDAM

You have to trust me. Give me permission to go after him.

BAKR

I do trust you.

Bakr's eyes dart, trying to collect himself.

BAKR (CONT'D)

Who do you want?

SADDAM

The Military Division. We must hit him before he crosses into Iran.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

At run at a 100 yard dash pace Saddam and Barzan.

Saddam grabs him by the arm.

SADDAM

Get the tribes together.

BARZAN

They'll do it?

SADDAM

They better. We gave them everything. Weapons. Rifles...

BARZAN

I'll put it on the air. We'll get him.

SERIES OF IMAGES - SWAMPS OF SOUTHERN IRAQ - NIGHT

TRIBES in different locations listen intently to the radio as the Iraqi military describe the attempted coup and the need to capture Kazzar. They offer a significant reward.

EXT. SWAMPS OF SOUTHERN IRAQ - ROAD - NIGHT

A caravan hastily travels down the dust-laden road. The conditions force them off the road occasionally.

SUPER: Swamps of Southern Iraq

The caravan stops at an intersection littered with debris. Suddenly they are surrounded by gun toting TRIBESMAN.

In the distance, helicopters fly low in their approach. They draw closer with every second.

No one moves a muscle.

The HELICOPTERS come down hard, skids flex. SPECIAL FORCES TROOPS jump out and run to the caravan, yelling as they converge. They breach open each door.

KAZZAR, mid-40's, short, average build is found. He's scared, unsure -- captured.

Right away, the troops snatch him out of the truck.

KAZZAR

(fast)

What--what did I do? What did I do?

Kazzar tries to rationalize while being dragged in the sand.

SPECIAL FORCES SOLDIER

Do not move. Hussein will see you shortly.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - LATER

Bakr sits at his desk, shoulders slumped over displaying his mood. The toll of another coup is too much to bear for him.

The door swings open as Saddam steps through. He sees defeat in Bakr's face upsets him greatly.

SADDAM

What is wrong?

BAKR

I cannot do this.

SADDAM

Do what?

BAKR

(waves his hands)
All of this.

SADDAM

Of course you can. We are Ba'ath.

Bakr puts his hands to his eyes. Begins to cry.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
Let us go back to your residence.

PRESIDENTIAL GARDEN - LATER

Bakr and Saddam stroll through a perfectly manicured garden. Their talk is somber and their walk is at a snails pace.

BAKR
I want to step down.

Saddam chuckles, trying his best to keep the situation light.

SADDAM
I said the same thing to you many times before but I stayed.

Bakr stops dead in his tracks to face Saddam.

BAKR
This is different. I am older...tired.

SADDAM
And what would you have me do?

BAKR
Stay...stay in the government.

SADDAM
But--

BAKR
No, I know how. I will slip out quietly.

SADDAM
And go where?

BAKR
Away.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE
That's when you knew you had the upper hand.

SADDAM

That is absurd. He was my friend, my family. I served him for over a decade. Why is it when Bakr ruled he was not called a dictator, but after I take over they call me one. No one was killed or assassinated inside or out of Iraq. No one was executed from the Ministries or out of the leadership after I took over, but I receive ridicule.

KYLE

They're many incidents that suggest many people were killed. That's why these unanswered questions need to be clarified, for the sake of history.

SADDAM

It is not enough to ask?

KYLE

Then who else? Give me names?

SADDAM

You have them shoved in other pens around here. Ask.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - DAY

A MEDICAL OFFICER pulls vials of blood from a spinning centrifuge. They're labelled, "HUSSEIN".

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

KYLE

Would Shaykhli do anything?

SADDAM

For who? Me? Ba'ath?

KYLE

Any.

SADDAM

I don't know. Ask him.

KYLE

Was he a friend?

SADDAM

Yes--Yes. We go back even to our days in Taji Prison.

KYLE

He visited you?

SADDAM

Yes. Our friendship grew over time.

KYLE

Enough of a friendship for you to give him upper echelon positions?

SADDAM

I didn't give him anything. We were all young revolutionaries. So, he got what he could handle. When the work overcame an individual's ability they were replaced.

KYLE

He was murdered in 1980, though. That's a long way from appointment to death.

SADDAM

It is.

KYLE

And he saved your life.

Saddam sits stone-faced while he waits for Kyle's next move.

KYLE (CONT'D)

The night you were almost killed, or at a minimum arrested, at your house.

SADDAM

I was never in danger.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. SHAYKHLI'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

SHAYKHLI, 20's, plump and sweaty, controls a dirty black smoke spewing sedan. It skids to a stop at Saddam's driveway creating a tornado of dust in the yard.

SUPER: Saddam's Residence - 1978

SHAYKHLI
(jittery)
Police? Who tipped them?

Saddam reaches to his side. Places his hand over his pistol.

SADDAM
You stay here.

Saddam opens the clunky door.

EXT. SADDAM'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Saddam's dark gold-rimmed sunglasses scan the area. He crosses over a patchy lawn enclosed by a simple fence to a small overhang covering concrete steps.

Saddam glides smoothly up the stairs and KNOCKS.

INT./EXT. SADDAM'S HOUSE - SAME

The door abruptly opens and SLAMS against the interior wall.

A POLICE OFFICER stands like he owns the place.

Saddam stands, cool as a cucumber.

POLICE OFFICER 1
Don't move.

The police officer whips his machine gun from his side and shoves it into Saddam's belly.

INT. SHAYKHLI'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Shaykhli JAMS the stick shift into gear and STOMPS on the gas. Tires spin in a heap of dust. He's as good as gone.

EXT. SADDAM'S HOUSE - SAME

Saddam's head spins around and glares at the cars getaway.

The Police Officer's gun barrel sticks deeper into Saddam and forces him to step back. They are practically nose to nose.

SADDAM
I am confused.
(looks around)
I am looking for Mohammed.

Saddam is playing him in order to set his trap.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE
He left you?

Saddam fluffs it off as if it was no big deal.

SADDAM
He was brave but I understood.
People react differently to certain
situations.

The cocky Saddam is back, making Kyle laugh inside.

KYLE
No?

SADDAM
No. Iraqi police do not kill
someone easily, unless their life
is seriously threatened. Plus
people in Iraq generally know each
other and their tribal influences.
It happens--

KYLE
Violence?

SADDAM
Tribes seek revenge.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. SADDAM'S HOUSE - DAY

The Police Officer shadows Saddam to the driveway.

Saddam stealthily shuffles to the side. His arm is now out
of view as he moves his hand slowly to his side.

Saddam stops dead in his tracks and side-steps as gracefully
and DRAWS his pistol.

He grabs the Police Officer's gun barrel and forces it down while he jams his pistol into his neck.

SADDAM

Drop it.

The Police Officer glares. He knows he's been outplayed.

Saddam's pistol moves from the neck to inches from the Police Officer's ear. He pulls the trigger, it SNAPS, a MISFIRE.

The Police Officer's eyes almost pop out of their sockets.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Don't move.

Saddam snaps open his palm to unlatch the magazine to reset. It pokes out of its casing. He punches the clip back into the housing and pulls the firing pin back above the policeman's head. CLINK. BAM.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

(smooth)

The second one will go in your neck.

LIVING ROOM - SAME

MEN kneel, faces down in the couch. Machine guns point at their head.

Their heads swing towards the sound of a GUNSHOT.

Saddam!
THUG 1

POLICE OFFICER 2
Who?

THUG 2
(optimistic)
Saddam comes for us!

Uneasiness flashes in the face of the three officers.

POLICE OFFICER 3
(to police officer 2)
Stay here.
(to police officer 4)
You. Come with me.

DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Saddam turns to the Officers as they stumble out the house.

Shaykhli's car ZOOMS into the driveway and SKIDS to a halt. He jumps out and rests a machine gun on the hood.

The Officer slides to a stop. They know Saddam is in charge.

Saddam reaches and unsnaps POLICE OFFICER 1's machine gun and swings it over his shoulder. He strolls confidently to the center of the lawn, in total control.

SADDAM

You come here uninvited. I know your tribes, so I know you, your wives, your children, your family...leave now willingly and I will guarantee you will be safe and taken care of.

The officers are silently obligated and obedient.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE

He came back?

SADDAM

In the end he always made the right decision to come back to me, but make no mistake I was never in danger.

KYLE

I have to take your word. It could have been a turning point in the history of the Ba'ath.

SADDAM

In what way?

Kyle is caught up in the tale and can't help his fast talk.

KYLE

Guns. Opposition. Confrontation. Shaykhli was considered powerful enough to lead the party.

SADDAM

That is strong.

KYLE

Is it really?

SADDAM

It is keeping with rumors far too much.

KYLE

Their data points more than rumor.

SADDAM

Hardly. From the days underground to today I was always in charge. But it is embarrassing to talk of one's own position. Everyone knew the order of things.

KYLE

It's commonly believed that your rivals were eliminated between the revolution and your rise to the Presidency in '79.

SADDAM

I do not agree with your assertion, nor would the Iraqi's, Kyle. Opinion is not fact.

KYLE

But it's the start of something.

SADDAM

Fiction, yes. One must take a logical approach to accession during a revolution. France, a single soldier, Napoleon became the leader after the French Revolution when others gave up. American history is also full of examples. These are all revolutionary ways.

KYLE

Revolutions involve death, tragedy.

SADDAM

Revolutions are a new step in government, not a liberal way where someone is groomed and chosen. Revolutions come from the people. The Brits, I'm sure, didn't like America's revolutionary ways in 1776. No difference, really. It happens in Iraq as it happens elsewhere in the world. Do you think 15,000 murders every year in the U.S strike you as odd? I do.

KYLE
But of high ranking people?

SADDAM
So one life is more precious than
another? They are all a tragic.

INT. SADDAM'S PRISON CELL - DAY

A simple ten by ten foot room. Rough walls. One single bed, comfortable blankets. A small table with Saddam's childhood Quran and a relaxing chair under a lone small window.

Saddam lays in bed facing the wall. He's beyond tired.

A KNOCK.

SADDAM
Yes.

Saddam rolls over slowly.

KYLE (O.C.)
May I enter?

SADDAM
Kyle?

KYLE (O.C.)
Yes.

SADDAM
Of course.

The stale gray door opens.

Kyle is determined yet looks sincere.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
What brings you here?

KYLE
You.

Kyle stops in the middle of the room.

SADDAM
(laughs then coughs)
Don't worry, I see you tomorrow,
no?

KYLE
I know but this is too important.
(beat)
Do you trust me?

Kyle's shoulders hunched as he stands.

SADDAM
As much as anyone can trust another
in the position we find ourselves.

KYLE
I need you to do me a favor.

Saddam rubs his eyes and keeps them shut. He knows what Kyle wants.

SADDAM
I am not eating, Kyle.

KYLE
You need to.

SADDAM
I do not need to do anything.

KYLE
Do you want others to talk to you?

Saddam perks up. The thought of someone else terrifies him.

SADDAM
No.

KYLE
Neither do I. If for no one else
do it for me, then.

SADDAM
That will not change my mind.

Kyle walks to his bed. Kneels down.

Saddam opens his weary eyes.

KYLE
Then do it for your people.

SADDAM
You keep reminding me they are not
mine.

KYLE

But as you remind me...they are still yours. Don't come out of here defeated. Come out ready to face what this country brings you.

Saddam slowly looks up. Nods his head.

SERIES OF IMAGES - WORLD NEWS PAPER HEADLINES

-- Three US soldiers and one Iraqi are killed by a roadside bomb attack on a military convoy in Khalidiyah.

-- At least thirteen people are killed when a suicide bomber rams an explosives-laden car into a police station in Kirkuk.

-- 130,000 coalition troops. Deaths of US personnel killed in Iraq to 540, civilian deaths 14,000.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

SUPER: BIAP, 20 February, 2004

KYLE

You look refreshed.

SADDAM

(grins slightly)

I figure if I continue to eat the food, it will kill me as quickly as a hunger strike.

KYLE

It's not that bad.

SADDAM

I challenge you to try it.

KYLE

Then I will.

They both laugh. A kinship is growing.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Let's make today a short one, shall we?

SADDAM

That would be appreciated.

KYLE

I've wondered when you spoke of
Bakr. Did he step aside willingly?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - HALLWAY - DAY

Bakr and Saddam stroll along an etched marble floor.
Portraits and artifacts symmetrically decorate the walls.

Servants follow closely but far enough to not hear.

BAKR

(somber)

I know you have felt it.

SADDAM

I have, unfortunately.

BAKR

The desire for the Presidency and
my ability to care for our people
escapes me now more than ever.

SADDAM

Yes. It has us all worried.
Forgive me, but I can see your
ability has eroded.

Saddam finds it difficult to continue.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

...what would you have me focus?
Regardless of difficulty.

Bakr stops and stumbles slightly. He reaches out and grabs
Saddam's shoulder. Saddam stops for him to right himself.

BAKR

I want you to lead us.

SADDAM

But you are aware of my wish to
leave government?

Saddam tries to make this a major point for Bakr.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

We have had many discussions about
this.

BAKR
Not Ba'ath though, no?

SADDAM
No, not the party but the
government.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE
If you walked away what would you
do?

SADDAM
Tend to my land.

KYLE
A farmer!? I sure have difficulty
seeing you do that. Day in, day
out.

SADDAM
Why? It is honorable.

KYLE
You told Bakr?

SADDAM
I would never decline him, but I
was forward in my reservations.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. PRESIDENT BAKR'S OFFICE - LATER

BAKR
You must take it...I am not one on
forcing an action with you but I
will if I have to.

SADDAM
It is still not my desire.

BAKR
It is for the party, our people.

Saddam gets up from the couch. Bakr feels he's
uncomfortable, but knows his request is the only choice.

BAKR (CONT'D)

I know this is not the normal method for a Presidency but I will go to the radio and announce it regardless.

SADDAM

That would cause tremendous consternation for our people and in the eyes of foreigners would look like something was wrong.

Bakr stands and pats Saddam gently knowing he's got his wish.

BAKR

Then it is done.

INT. SADDAM'S HOUSE - MORNING

Saddam, comfortable as he sits next to a mahogany-encased radio on an elegant claw foot table.

BAKR (V.O.)

(from radio)

For a long time I have been talking to my leaders in the command, particularly cherished confidant Saddam Hussein about my health, which no longer allows me to shoulder the responsibilities with which you have honored me. I would repeatedly ask them to relieve me of this burden, but the magnanimity of Saddam Hussein and the leadership prompted them to refuse to discuss.

(trembles)

Therefore I have insisted that my dear friend Saddam Hussein and my party leadership and the RCC respond to my request to be relieved of my responsibilities in the party and our country.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE

Some say he was coerced.

Saddam defends himself like a lawyer in a court room.

SADDAM

I was not even there.

KYLE

Even with all that, it wasn't a smooth transition for you, though.

SADDAM

It was not that difficult. There was nothing and no one against me.

KYLE

Muhie Mashhadi?

SADDAM

Sure, some voiced their opinions, asking Bakr to stay, but he made up his mind. As I like to see it, his health made it an easy one.

KYLE

Once Mashhadi found out he called a vote.

Kyle moves closer as he tries to get a rise out of Saddam.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Even begged Bakr to stay, telling him to just take a rest.

SADDAM

(deadpan)

Not one of his smarter moves.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. BAGHDAD - REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL CONGRESS
HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Hot and musty. Over two-hundred MEN cram into stadium-style seats. Others stand shoulder to shoulder along with dark sunglass-shaded GUARDS in uniform. A low roar fills the room.

SUPER: Revolutionary Command Council Congress - AKA, The Ba'ath Party Purge - 22 JULY, 1979

TARIQ AZIZ, 30's, a geeky glasses military man stands at the podium with a serious purpose.

Saddam in a three-piece suit sits at an arching table with a skinny microphone and overlooks the crowd. He grabs a cigar from his suit pocket. Lights it and smugly puffs away.

TARIQ

We have come together as a great party. A great country. A great leader for the future...Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq.

Isolated pockets of men stand to CLAP.

TARIQ (CONT'D)

(slow. melancholy)

But my comrades we have exposed a painful and atrocious plot.

Faces go from joy to confusion.

The sound of doors LOCKING reverberates in the room.

TARIQ (CONT'D)

This betrayal comes from within our Party by some of our most senior members.

MEN look around, searching for the exits. Several men attempt to flee but are easily corralled by the guards.

TARIQ (CONT'D)

It saddens us all to know that every one...every one of the traitors is here in the hall...among us right now.

MAN IN CROWD (O.C.)

No. It can not be.

TARIQ

We will begin our session with our first speaker

(looks down at his paper.

adjusts his glasses)

This is a most sad day. Details of this plot will be given by former Secretary General Muhie Mashhadi.

The audience GASPS as the red curtain parts behind the podium. MUHIE MASHHADI, 50's, a beaten man emerges, escorted by an OFFICER to the podium. He knows his end is coming.

A rush of terror emanates and ENVELOPS EVERYONE.

Saddam is alone in his power trip.

Muhie avoids eye contact with the CROWD but it's impossible.

MUHIE

I...I have plotted against many. Since 1975 I have been part...part of a Syrian plot aimed at...

(MORE)

MUHIE (CONT'D)

(voice cracks)

...at removing President Bakr and Saddam Hussein in order to pave the way for an Iraq-Syria unification, headed by Hamad and President Asad.

CROWD (O.C.)

What? No. Tyrant. Traitor!

Saddam grabs his microphone.

SADDAM

(to Muhie)

I noticed you behaving strangely during the meeting at the RCC.

(to crowd)

He was nervous and looked at me with hatred!

Muhie turns slowly towards Saddam. It's a struggle to move his neck. He's in pain but tries to maintain his composure.

MUHIE

I--I have willingly met with them on many occasions...in an attempt to keep this vision alive. To eliminate Saddam Hussein.

(tears flow)

I have committed treason. Many of you have also committed this act.

Saddam pushes his chair back. Stands tall and sets his cigar down. Straightens his suit.

Saddam approaches Muhie. Puts his arm out in front and brushes him aside to take the podium.

SADDAM

I am stunned to discover I have been betrayed by my closest friends.

(beat)

I visited him to understand the motive of this behavior.

Saddam swings his verbal assault to Muhie and the crowd.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

(to Muhie)

What political differences exist between you and me? Did you lack power or money? If you had an opinion, submit it to the party, you are a leader.

(MORE)

SADDAM (CONT'D)

(to crowd)

Even our own Ghanem, former
Director of the Office of the
President admitted his guilt.

Saddam reaches in his pocket for a handkerchief to wipe his
tears. The sound of a single crinkled piece of paper from
his pocket echoes in the room. He smooths it out.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

When your name is called, simply
stand.

As if the thermostat was turned to a hundred and fifty
degrees, sweat beads profusely on each face. PANIC sets in.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Do not resist. Own your fate and
your treason to our Party. Just
stand. God will show you the way.
Muhyi Abdel-Husseini...

Saddam scans the room and finds him. They have a moment
together. Guards BURST towards him pushing others out of the
way and quickly grab him.

ABDEL

(terrified)

No! I never!

ABDEL, 60, frail, struggles to no avail.

MAN IN CROWD

Traitor! Kill him!

SADDAM

Aman Aden...Hassan
Ibrahim...Jamel Khalil.

The guards go after them and force them out of the room.
Despair and SHOCK in each one's eyes.

LATER --

Tariq stands at the podium with "The List."

Saddam grabs the microphone while he sits. His cigar billows.

SADDAM

(agitated)

The dream of the conspirators are
many, but be assured I will pick up
my gun and fight.

TARIQ

Malik Nasser.

KYLE

I don't mean to be callous but it's what's been written.

SADDAM

So? I can not defend history. I know what I felt.

KYLE

But the fact that you recorded it leads people to conclusions. It was brutal...and you had it recorded. I saw it.

Saddam shifts from conversation to teacher mode.

SADDAM

Treason is the root of a coup. I had to exterminate the root. I had to show we would not tolerate traitors. With our Party methods, there is no chance for any one who disagrees with us to jump on a couple of tanks and overthrow us.

KYLE

And the video to all the Iraqi ambassadors in other counties?

SADDAM

I have no knowledge of where it went but if it was shown to others, that would have been a good thing, not a bad thing.

KYLE

It essentially showed you were in charge.

SADDAM

This is your opinion, you have the right to think that way.

KYLE

The video didn't show how the plot was discovered.

SADDAM

(matter of fact)
It did not.

KYLE

Why?

SADDAM

Despite being twenty five years ago
it will always remain a state
secret.

KYLE

Some could have been proven
innocent.

Saddam finds this as comical as a joke at a comedy club.

SADDAM

No. There were probably more
conspirators who were not
identified.

(beat)

When one is surrounded by monsters,
one must be one for a time.

ARCHIVE FILM FOOTAGE - IRAQ INVASION OF KUWAIT - 1990

-- Iraqi tanks charge through the desert. Dust trails each
ironclad track as they fly by a sign that reads, "KUWAITI
SOVEREIGN TERRITORY - KUWAIT CITY 150km".

-- Iraqi troops take positions throughout the city. Kuwaiti
citizens run to take shelter.

-- Military helicopters patrol the city overhead. Drops off
troops at the airport and the sea port.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

SUPER: BIAP - 3 March 2003

SADDAM

No. So I told Saudi that if Kuwait
did not stop interfering I will
take the Kuwait dinar to fil.

KYLE

But that doesn't necessarily make a
conspiracy.

SADDAM

There are many incidents. We sit
here conversing. There is no way
for you to feel a conspiracy when
you have the freedom to walk out of
here?. You move on. I live it...

Kyle stares, hoping to get a better clue.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

I contemplate it now. A conspiracy is an amalgamation of events, of actions that you feel as a leader threatens you...you would have no idea...you never will.

KYLE

Then tell me more about actions; more events.

SADDAM

Kuwait's lack of action toward us for the price of oil confirmed a conspiracy. I do not have to tell you about what oil does to countries. The Americans are feeling it now are you not?

KYLE

Depends--

SADDAM

Really? I hear things. I hear what is going on out there.

KYLE

That's not why I'm here. Tell me another.

SADDAM

The visit of US General Schwarzkopf provided further confirmation.

KYLE

Our military--

Kyle tries to be objective but knows he's slipped a bit.

SADDAM

Our military?

KYLE

We visit countries throughout the world to conduct exercises. That's not a conspiracy.

SADDAM

In what other country did Schwarzkopf do "sand planning" like Kuwait?

KYLE
It's called CONOPS, contingency
planning.

Saddam's mind wanders while he touches his side and GRUNTS.

KYLE (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

SADDAM
(grimaces)
Fine. Fine. Where were we?

Kyle slows down. He feels something is amiss with Saddam.

KYLE
Contingency versus conspiracy.

SADDAM
Right. Schwarzkopf personally
conducted negotiations with Kuwait
in order to enter for defensive
purposes. I am smart enough to
know that Schwarzkopf would not do
that for any other country other
than South Korea, which in the
United States' mind, there is an
evil neighbor. We've been labeled!

KYLE
But you're planning just the same.

SADDAM
For survival, yes. Not for oil
like the West. Do you see the
difference?

Saddam breaks eye contact.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
I know you do. You can not hide
what your eyes are telling me.

KYLE
Please don't confuse my
understanding of the situation for
apathy. I'm trying to find
reasoning.

SADDAM
I do not want nor seek apathy, but
in our mind a country like ours has
to be aware of conspiracy. I fully
understand why the US turned on us.

Saddam grabs his side again but remains a soldier.

Kyle can't help but look at each twitch of Saddam's face.

KYLE

I wouldn't consider it turned.

SADDAM

When the Soviets were a superpower
it was easier.

KYLE

We would argue that it's just as
difficult.

SADDAM

No. The balance was equal. Both
attempted to get other countries to
side with them. When the Soviets
collapsed, there was nowhere for
someone like Iraq to go when we
disagree. Our disagreement made us
an enemy by default.

KYLE

But you attacked Kuwait. That
doesn't endear you in the eyes of
many.

SADDAM

It was a "defend-by-attacking"
approach, and regardless of any
circumstances, Kuwait has always
been a part of Iraq for
centuries...our nineteenth
province.

INT. BAGHDAD HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY

Saddam lays on a gurney in obvious pain.

A MEDIC pushes him as SOLDIERS stay close to their prize.

INT. KYLE'S QUARTERS - LATER

Kyle, asleep on his cot, is startled by a POUND on the door.

KYLE

(groggy)
Who is it?

MELANIE (O.C.)
 Get up! It's me. Saddam is sick.
 He's being transported.

KYLE
 Shit.

Kyle stumbles as he jumps up out of his cot.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Kyle paces, checking his watch like a worried parent.
 The double doors. A DOCTOR in a white lab coat enters.

KYLE
 So?

DOCTOR
 He'll be fine.

KYLE
 When can I have him back?

The doctor takes a step back. Nerved by the forwardness.

KYLE (CONT'D)
 Sorry. Didn't mean it that way.

DOCTOR
 (blunt)
 Tomorrow. 24 hours in house.

KYLE
 I'll wait.

DOCTOR
 We're short on space but if you
 find an open spot...

The doctor abruptly turns and storms off.

EXT. BAGHDAD - NIGHT

Two CH-46 CHINOOK and UH-1 HUEY attack helicopter fly in
 perfect formation like a bat out of hell.

It's a patchwork of lights below them.

Fires billow from objects along the route and on the horizon.

INT. UH-1 HELICOPTER - SAME

Hot wind swirls in from the open door rustles the cabin.

Kyle sits adjacent to Saddam who's blindfolded and handcuffed to the fuselage wall.

KYLE
(leans over to Saddam)
You doing okay?

Saddam nods. Kyle knows what Saddam wants.

KYLE (CONT'D)
Would you like to see?

SADDAM
More than anything.

Kyle checks to ensure no one is looking and reaches over to pull the blindfold up just enough for Saddam to see.

KYLE
It can't be long.

Saddam's eyes blink wildly. He collects himself enough to bring into focus his vibrant city. He knows it's hurting.

Kyle smiles as he gets a healthy dose of trust from Saddam.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A flowing Arabic red and yellow desert landscape carpet with tassels. Two ruby colored padded chairs with a portrait of Iraq hangs behind them.

SADDAM
(looks around in pleasure)
Another change?

KYLE
Thought you might like it.

SADDAM
Much, much more suitable for a president.

Saddam puffs his chest out.

KYLE
(laughs)
Well I would like to finish our discussion about Kuwait.

SADDAM

I did have time to think.

Kyle's mouth unknowingly hangs open like a child in waiting.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Kuwait is Iraq. There is not much more to say.

KYLE

They were, are, a free country.

SADDAM

No. They were stolen from us by the Brits, the British resolution.

KYLE

That was so long ago. You have to agree it is more than that. It involves captives--

SADDAM

Captives! Of what degree?

Saddam is puffed up. Kyle is used to this by now.

KYLE

Human shields and captives. I have a government paper that suggests Iraq used Kuwaiti's as human shields.

SADDAM

I can not deny that individuals volunteered as human shields.

KYLE

Did these volunteers exist in '91?

SADDAM

I do not remember.

KYLE

Qusay wrote a government letter to the claim of human shields.

SADDAM

(fast)
I do not know of such a letter.

KYLE

But you can't deny it's legitimacy.

SADDAM
I answered.

KYLE
That you don't remember or that
they volunteered?

SADDAM
No one was captive. We all did our
part to prevent attacks.

KYLE
These letters are dated March of
2003.

Saddam looks confused.

SADDAM
2003?

KYLE
Yes.

SADDAM
Impossible!

Saddam starts to wonder if Kyle's done his homework.

KYLE
No. It's fact.

Saddam starts the quiz.

SADDAM
You need to examine them closely
for authenticity. I thought we
were talking about 1991.

KYLE
No. That is why I brought it up.

SADDAM
If it is dated 2003, it is a
forgery. We did not have captives
then.

KYLE
Your government documents suggest
otherwise.

SADDAM
Qusay was not the type of person to
make up things.

KYLE
You deny it?

SADDAM
I suggest experts from the U.S and
in Iraq scrutinize such documents.
Especially the ones you present to
the president of Iraq.

KYLE
The president.

SADDAM
I'm still the president.

Kyle focuses on not making eye contact, but it's tough. He
looks though his papers for nothing but to catch a break.

KYLE
(clears his throat)
Regarding documents. We also found
documents about chemical weapons.
Why didn't you use them in the
first gulf war?

SADDAM
I have already been asked
this...and answered.

KYLE
(peculiarly)
No. I've never asked.

SADDAM
You certainly did.

KYLE
Well. I apologize for not
remembering. Can you provide me
the answer again?

Saddam doesn't appreciate Kyle's apparent condescension.

SADDAM
I find it all together a strange
question. Why would someone ask
this question of me? Not just at
this point but any time?

Kyle changes his tone on a dime to quell a brewing quarrel.

KYLE
Again. I apologize and I wouldn't
ever waste your time.

SADDAM

It is not Iraqi policy to use
chemical weapons against anyone,
let alone the coalition.

KYLE

Is that written somewhere?

SADDAM

How do you think Iraq would have
been described if it had used
chemical weapons?

Kyle feels like he's finally getting closer to the prize.

KYLE

You know. I'm not here to judge.

SADDAM

We would have been called stupid.

Kyle fights to keep from drawing a smile.

KYLE

Stupid would not be the word I
would use.

SADDAM

We never discussed their use before
or during either war. We believed
that our meeting with Baker was
true but he was
irrational...thought this would
carry weight in the international
community.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. GENEVA - UN CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

U.S. Secretary of State JAMES BAKER stands in frustration.
His placard serves as the sole record of his presence. Lap
dog staffers around the room abruptly stand in unison. He
eyes Aziz, then closes his binder.

Baker methodically ushers himself around the table. Fingers
lightly touch the slick mahogany tabletop.

Closer and closer to Aziz. Aziz is taken aback.

Baker and Aziz now in each others personal space.

AZIZ

The accomplishment of these steps
would not be possible.

BAKER

You tell Saddam to accept every
term...otherwise we'll take you
back to the pre-industrial age.

Baker abruptly turns around to walk out.

Aziz is frustrated; he has desperately tried everything.

AZIZ

(loud)

You must understand our
perspective.

Aziz is left in shock. He and his assistants stand as still
as stone statues.

Baker doesn't acknowledge Aziz. His team SLAMS the door.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

SADDAM

Baker provided no solutions.

Saddam is almost pleading to Kyle for no reason.

KYLE

Can you blame him? He was
frustrated, especially with all the
steps he had taken.

SADDAM

Coming from someone in a strong
position, matters like this should
not have been reduced to one in
which the strong side, dictated to
the weak side, us, the terms of the
agreement.

KYLE

Kuwait was the weak one.

SADDAM

We sought and more importantly
needed a format which did not
portray us in defeat. Baker forced
our hand.

(MORE)

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Our pride as a Nation...there was no respect for our military or our people.

KYLE

The proposals from the international community gave you that. All of them.

SADDAM

They did not. It was insulting. Our only play was to not be made a fool.

INT. INTERROGATION PREP ROOM - MORNING

Kyle sits at his desk with papers in disarray. He's clearly frustrated.

MELANIE

You broached the chemical weapons?

KYLE

He still denies it.

MELANIE

Of course he would.

KYLE

We haven't gotten anywhere.

Melanie tries to find some light in a dark situation.

MELANIE

But he did talk to you about the SCUDS. That's something.

KYLE

To some degree, I guess.
(rubs his fingers through
his hair)
I told my wife a couple weeks...

MELANIE

Well, no one lasted as long as you. Five or six, you're getting somewhere.

She stares intently.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

What did he say? What are you thinking?

KYLE

I'm thinkin' I don't have much time here or at home.

(beat)

My wife. My new son.

She tries to keep him focused.

MELANIE

The Iraqi's are anxious.

KYLE

They're anxious? Try sitting with the guy for hours on end.

He flips through a folder.

MELANIE

That's what everyone is sayin'.
"Our guys are out there scouring the country and they need help."

Kyle's eyes are tired and his frustration grows.

KYLE

Shit. I know. I'm tryin'.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

Saddam is joyful by the look on his face.

SADDAM

My protective detail did not necessarily dictate the details of my movements.

KYLE

They're professionals, trained to be the best.

SADDAM

I continually taught them ways to improve their performance and be more successful.

KYLE

Do you feel that upset them in any way?

SADDAM

(laughs)

No.

(MORE)

SADDAM (CONT'D)

I joked with them often that I could perform their job better than they could. I could help you as an interviewer.

Kyle leans back and laughs with Saddam.

KYLE

Lunch time!

LATER --

SADDAM

We had to take the enemy. Those who would not be deterred by words would be deterred by weapons. A lengthy discussion of this matter was not required.

Kyle needs to change the subject. He moves his chair to set a new mood.

KYLE

I want you to watch television with me.

SADDAM

Like what?

KYLE

Southern Iraq documentary from 1991. After the first Gulf War.

SADDAM

Why?

KYLE

It'll give us a basis to talk more.

Saddam is matter-of-fact. He knows it won't be good.

SADDAM

I have a good idea of the situation.

KYLE

Do you?

SADDAM

Each person presents information from a certain background.

(MORE)

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Despite having his own opinion a person cannot help to be affected by others.

KYLE

Agree. But facts are facts.

SADDAM

Any person speaking on Iraq speaks from three view points. A "divine scale" according to his own beliefs. A scale on his own experiences--

KYLE

But this is video--

Saddam ignores Kyle. Trying to put it out of his mind.

SADDAM

And the person regarding information from the U.N. and International law. What is your scale as you show this film?

KYLE

Why does it matter? I didn't produce it.

SADDAM

You chose it didn't you?

KYLE

Not necessarily.

SADDAM

So you have no say?

KYLE

I didn't say that.

SADDAM

If we are to converse on this topic intellectually it would help me to answer questions in the best manner.

KYLE

You must listen to all facts and find the truth.

He points to Kyle to emphasize his point.

SADDAM

How will you find the truth? It's obviously western media, biased to determine truth.

KYLE

I take in all information.

SADDAM

Easy for you Kyle, in this instance. Your army occupies my country. You are free. I am a prisoner, but I don't want to put you in a difficult position.

KYLE

It's fine.

SADDAM

But you must learn the truth as it is. Not as I tell it, nor as a film producer tells it.

Kyle reaches for the TV remote.

KYLE

Would you just indulge me?

Saddam nods.

Kyle gets up to press play. The video begins.

INSERT - TV PROGRAM

Shia's in southern Iraq gather around a mosque.

SADDAM (O.S.)

(quips)

Could be anywhere, even now.

TV REPORTER

"They're confined as you can see."

More images of the Shia in the mosque.

SADDAM (O.S.)

They're not confined. You can clearly see.

TV REPORTER

"Iraqi tanks are approaching the mosque."

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

SADDAM
(points to the television)
Where are the tanks?

TV REPORTER (O.S.)
"President Bush encouraged the rise
of the Shia's against the Iraqi
government."

Sounds of a dialogue behind Saddam hang in the room.

SADDAM
(yells)
A confession of a crime!

Saddam SLAMS his fist and practically hops out of his chair.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
I want to know when this was made,
the commentator, and who he worked
for.

Kyle tries to keep the program moving.

INSERT - BBC TV PROGRAM

People of Shia origin flee their land - southern Iraq.

SADDAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
They don't appear to be scared,
they appear to be happy.

KYLE (O.S.)
You really think so?

SADDAM (O.S.)
They don't even look Shia. They
look Kurdish.

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

Saddam is visually agitated, almost popping off his seat.

SADDAM
(abruptly)
It's my exercise and prayer time
now.

KYLE
It can be postponed, no?

SADDAM
I think it is enough.

KYLE
But--

SADDAM
We can view it together later. Why
rush?

Saddam pushes back from the table and stands. His finger
tips stand erect on the desk and tremble slightly.

Kyle moves his papers back. Looks up.

KYLE
Will you continue this later?

SADDAM
I believe so, but I feel sorry for
someone who watches this and
doesn't know the truth.

LATER --

KYLE
I hope you're refreshed.

SADDAM
Better.

KYLE
(rustles papers)
Let us continue. I don't want to
keep you from meal or prayer again.

Kyle presses play.

INSERT - BBC TV PROGRAM

Various images of Shia being killed.

TV REPORTER
Figures estimate over 300,000 Shia
killed.

SADDAM (O.S.)
What sources gave them that?

KYLE (O.S.)
According to the film, the Iraqi
government.

SADDAM (O.S.)
For what?

KYLE (O.S.)
To serve as a warning to the Kurds.

Various images of dead fish in ponds, destroyed villages, and drained marshes.

SADDAM (O.S.)
They don't even look like the
correct marshes.

IRAQI WOMAN panic in sheer desperation.

IRAQI WOMAN
We have nothing left. We had to
leave our homes.

Saddam shows his evil side when he laughs.

SADDAM (O.S.)
What did she have before? Reeds?

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

SADDAM (CONT'D)
I have never understood why your
government is so quick to judge
without all the facts. Someone who
judges to the letter from a traffic
violation to your Supreme Court,
but when you accuse me of weapons
of mass destruction without much
evidence, you waste billions.
(beat)
For what? Thousands of lives lost
and now you are here with me.
Ridiculous.

Saddam becomes more irritated by the second.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
I do not have a comment. This talk
is beneath me to further comment.

KYLE
But there are--

SADDAM
This talk isn't even appropriate of
interviewing the President of Iraq
with such a propaganda film.
(MORE)

SADDAM (CONT'D)

We should stop. I have answered everything. I am done...

KYLE

But I want to understand the dynamics of Iraqi leadership. Al-Zubaidi and Abdullah. They're the ones in charge of the uprising aren't they?

SADDAM

I have already explained this.

KYLE

I don't want to keep you from the evening prayer.

SADDAM

Thank you for thinking of my prayer time. It is one less sin.

EXT. KYLE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - NIGHT

Kyle squints as he approaches the door. A crude handmade sign saying, "Congratulations, it's a Boy!" is taped to it. He grabs it and rips it off.

INT. SADDAM'S CELL - MORNING

Saddam paces impatiently. He's jittery while he waits for Kyle's. He glances at the clock. He wants to get back into their previous discussion.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

SUPER: BIAP - Operations Center - 22 March 2003

Kyle eyes red and irritated. A large water bottle, half empty by his side.

SADDAM

Life expectancy was relatively low. I could not simply sit back and watch this misery.

KYLE

But by draining their marshes--

SADDAM

Have you been?

KYLE

No.

SADDAM

Severe illness, bilharziasis--

Saddam notices the confusion on Kyle's face.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Intestinal disease. Unimaginable suffering. So, I decided to bring them inside life.

KYLE

In the harshest of ways.

SADDAM

No...to not continue to have them disgraced or insulted by their environment. I know it is enchanted, I slept there for days in 1981 and 1982.

KYLE

For what?

SADDAM

I wanted to see, to be there on the front lines of our war with Iran. I went back and forth until 1984.

KYLE

So you know the value, the majestic land; the people.

SADDAM

I took care of them.

KYLE

But your actions show something different.

SADDAM

It is complicated. Everything about the marshes has to be handled with a soft hand.

EXT. SOUTHERN IRAQ - BAIDA MARSH - DAY

A rare aquatic landscape, harsh but full of grandeur. Thick, long flowing reeds and rice plots decorate the territory. Bugs skim in fast fashion along the river.

SUPER: Baida, Iraq - Marshes of Southern Iraq - 1995

EXT. NEAR BAIDA - SADDAM'S BOAT - DAY

Three slender reed-woven boats lazily float down the murky river. One BOAT holds Saddam and his group, while the other has his PROTECTIVE DETAIL, and the other, the PRESS.

Saddam sits idly by, surveying the area. His large black aviator glasses reflect TWO MEN strapped with machine guns.

EXT. BAIDA - LATER

An ancient town from the Mesopotamia era. Thick reed huts litter the finger lake area. SHEPHERDS tend to WATER BUFFALO as town people walk with purpose.

Saddam's entourage slide into a makeshift water landing zone.

The INHABITANTS are still. The MAYOR is nervous on the shores banks as the protective detail disembarks.

MAYOR

Mr. President, how was your journey?

SADDAM

As I expected.

Saddam waves his hand while approaching the crowd in a half-hearted attempt to mingle.

The crowd grows in hopes of an interaction with Saddam.

MAYOR

Your people hope you would stay for dinner.

SADDAM

After we discuss things.

PROTECTIVE DETAIL OFFICER

Where can we discuss in seclusion?

INT. MAYOR'S HOME - LATER

A modest residence but extravagant for a marsh. Reeds are strung together and meet in the center of the angled roof.

The group surround a large table with ornate placemats.

MAYOR

Sir, will you and the group be staying for dinner? We would be very--

SADDAM

No. I must attend to other matters. Tell me of this attack.

Sweat forms on the mayor's forehead.

MAYOR

Uhhh, Sir, I--I would not characterize it as an attack.

SADDAM

Then what?

MAYOR

A misunderstanding.

Saddam looks around the room to show his displeasure.

SADDAM

I did not travel here for a misunderstanding.

MAYOR

It is the uneasiness of situations. The Iranian's.

SADDAM

They are the attackers?

MAYOR

Precisely. They bribe, steal; and encourage lawlessness.

The Mayor feels he's digging his hole more by the second.

SADDAM

There is nothing you can do?

MAYOR

Well--

SADDAM

You have weapons?

MAYOR

Yes.

SADDAM

Then use them.

MAYOR

Well, Sir--

SADDAM

Tell your people I authorize it.

Saddam waves to his detail to usher in the press. The camera's are quickly set up.

Saddam waits patiently following every hasty movement.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

I place a blanket of protection for
all the people of the marshes.

CAMERA MEN jostle to improve their angles.

MAYOR

You are a generous leader. We are
thankful to you, Sir.

SADDAM

(to his protective
detail)

Find these people who are
causing this. We need to
protect this area. My
people.

PERSON (O.C.)

Long live, Saddam! Long
live, Saddam!

Outside the house the crowd is large. Their CHEERS for
Saddam grow more intense.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Let us go. I need to feel my
people.

Camera bulbs POP at his every move.

The door opens. A streak of sunlight fills the room.

EXT. MAYOR'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Saddam is all smiles while he waves to the crowd; they
collapse on him like a rock star.

CROWD

President Saddam! Our savior!

Saddam's in his element.

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

SADDAM

Good people understood me. The evil ones also got the message.

KYLE

Did you mind visiting them?

SADDAM

They were nice to visit for two, three, or four days but in the summer the mosquitoes would eat you.

KYLE

The historical significance of the marshes should have been the driving consideration.

SADDAM

There was no similar consideration given to the area where the High Dam was built in Egypt. I am certain there was much discussion concerning the movement of the "precious" stones versus saving the people from starvation. The marshes were studied for their historical value.

KYLE

But it's the environmental consideration that is the issue.

SADDAM

We could debate this for twenty days if we wanted.

KYLE

You know we don't have that much time.

SADDAM

Why do you question our actions? Every government has to make decisions. The Americans did not allow the Indians to live as they had existed prior to colonization. What laws are in place to prohibit American and European companies from destroying the Amazon, the lungs of the earth?

INT. SADDAM'S PRISON CELL - DAY

ARMY CORPS ENGINEERS work outside Saddam's cell. The CLANKING of tools let's them know they're not alone.

KYLE

Ahhh, I see helps arrived.

(beat)

And just in time. It's blazing hot in here.

SADDAM

I am used to living simply. The extravagant lifestyle does not fit me personally.

Kyle takes him up on this and pulls the string.

KYLE

Really? So says someone with thirty plus palaces.

SADDAM

I certainly did not start that way.

Saddam backpedals in an attempt to better make his point.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Or in the end.

KYLE

But you certainly made up for it in...

(looking up to count)

The last twenty, no make that forty years.

SADDAM

Does not mean I enjoyed it.

KYLE

Let's just agree to disagree. I don't want to get off track.

Saddam reluctantly agrees. A drawn out discussion is not enticing at the moment.

The BANGING continues on the air conditioning.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Mind if I sit?

SADDAM

By all means. I have nowhere to go.

Kyle PLOPS down in the chair. His face looks clear with less stress than normal.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

You're rather light today. No papers, pens, notebooks.

KYLE

Ahhh, I think we just talk now as acquaintances.

SADDAM

Acquaintances? I feel it is more than that...no?

Saddam looks for a connection from someone.

KYLE

Yes. I would say so.

SADDAM

Since we are just chatting as friends. Please fill me in on the things going on out there.

KYLE

What things?

SADDAM

Current events situations.

KYLE

Shit, you probably know more than me.

SADDAM

Bits and pieces.

KYLE

I don't want to bore you with details.

SADDAM

If we have time, why not embellish?

KYLE

Let's see.

(rubs his chin)

Drafting the new constitution, the turn over of sovereignty to Iraq.

SADDAM

Ambitious.

Saddam is a smooth operator as he knows the answer.

KYLE

A great step. What, you don't agree?

SADDAM

I question the effectiveness of the Governing Council. They can agree all they want but once they step outside, the people will turn on them.

KYLE

I think you underestimate the will of people to be free.

SADDAM

(laughs)
You don't know Iraq then, Kyle. They will not accept an elected leader...especially one during an occupation.

Kyle can't help going from calm to defensive.

KYLE

We aren't occupiers.

SADDAM

That is exactly why it will fail. You don't understand Iraq.

KYLE

I think I do.

SADDAM

Iraq has experienced this before. The British occupation elected King Faisal. It didn't work.

KYLE

That was a different time, though.

SADDAM

In Iraqi eyes it is no different.

The CLANKING air conditioner draws their attention off topic.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
What is the death total of
Americans?

KYLE
April was a tough, tough month.
Muqtada al-Sadr's Army is dug in
everywhere...I'm not sure.

SADDAM
(in disgust)
A family of martyrs. Antagonistic.
Whatever the number.

Saddam gets up to stretch and stands in front of the cold air
from the air conditioner.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
Before we're done...triple it.

LATER --

KYLE
You achieved your objectives of
disposing your WMD.

SADDAM
We have not had any for sometime.

KYLE
Many had the opinion Iraq was
reluctant to cooperate with the UN.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. BAGHDAD - BABYLON PALACE - DAY

Saddam sits casually in an executive leather chair. A large
puff of smoke oozes from his cigar.

SUPER: Babylon Palace - Baghdad - Late 1990'S

An Iraqi FOUR-STAR GENERAL OFFICER stands at attention in
front of the wood-carved desk.

SADDAM
Make it difficult.

EXT. KIRKUK AIRFIELD - TARMAC - DAY

A white C-5 aircraft idles calmly with its prominent blue colored "U.N" letters FLASHES as a symbol of freedom, but to the Iraqi it's a beacon of intrusion and mistrust.

SUPER: Kirkuk Airfield - Western Iraq

Heat dances on the black asphalt where five green military trucks, rocked with Iraqi soldiers, zoom towards the plane.

INT. C-5 - SAME

The rear hatch cranks down and SLAMS to the ground. CHIEF INSPECTOR WILLIAMS, 50's, tight crew cut, is the first out.

Williams edges to the end of the ramp and eyes the convoy. He stands with authority knowing it's not a welcoming party.

WILLIAMS
(to the group)
Stay here.

EXT. C-5 - CONTINUOUS

The convoy screeches to a halt like an accordion.

The Iraqi OFFICER IN CHARGE (OIC) hops out of truck, slams the door. His pistol holster slaps his thigh.

Williams and the OIC head toward each other. Now toe to toe.

INT. KIRKUK AIRFIELD - WAITING AREA - SAME

UN PERSONNEL plant their faces against their oversized windows like kids in a candy store.

UN PERSON 1
What's going on?

UN PERSON 2
A problem.

UN PERSON 3
A **big** problem.

EXT. C-5 - SAME

Hot wind blows against their face as sand pelts their feet. The two men are close but far agreement.

OIC
 (devilish smile)
 You wait.

WILLIAMS
 Why?

OIC
 We are not ready.

WILLIAMS
 How could that be? You've known
 our demand for weeks.

OIC
 A request, not a demand.

WILLIAMS
 No. A demand.

OIC
 According to--

WILLIAMS
 United Nations Monitoring,
 Verification and Inspection
 Commission!

OIC
 You will have to wait.
 (points)
 Right here.

The Iraqi officer does an about face.

WILLIAMS
 What about my crew?!

OIC
 They will be fine.

Williams turns in disgust.

INT. C-5 - CONTINUOUS

The crew MOPES in their sling-seats as minutes pass. The
 heat becomes the enemy more than the Iraqis.

WILLIAMS
 This is absurd.

Williams storms off toward the ramp. He sets his sights and
 MARCHES to the terminal, two hundred yards away.

The Iraqis see his defiance and STREAK to intercept.

WAITING AREA - SAME

The crowd sees Williams is irate. His face red as the sun.

UN PERSON 1
Whoa, he looks very unhappy.

UN PERSON 2
I honestly don't think the
Iraqis give a shit.

TARMAC - MOMENTS LATER

Williams turns around in frustration. He removes his hat and wipes his brow. His patience meter is peaked.

WILLIAMS
Now! If you don't move aside we
are coming down that ramp and
heading straight to Halabja.

The OIC draws a slight grin.

Williams quickly swings around to the plane to offload.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
We, and our gear...will be right
back.

INT. IRAQ MILITARY VEHICLE - MOMENTS LATER

MILITARY OFFICER
(in Arabic into walkie-
talkie)
Halabja.

MAN (V.O)
(in Arabic)
On our way.

INT. C-5 - MOMENTS LATER

WILLIAMS
Everyone get your gear. We're
gettin' the hell out of here.

They're exasperated but relieved and gather backpacks, suitcases and metal boxes for the trip.

EXT. KIRKUK AIRFIELD - MAIN GATE - LATER

Eight UN vehicles are packed to the brim with gear.

As gestapo as they can be, Iraqi guards wearing black reflective sunglasses impede the convoys departure.

INT. UN TRUCK - SAME

The DRIVER honks his horn as the guards stand like stone statues.

Williams grabs the door handle practically ripping it off and steps out of the truck.

INSPECTOR 1

Sir--

Williams slams the door, rocking the truck from side to side.

MAIN GATE - MOMENTS LATER

WILLIAMS

Who's in charge here?

The guards remain solid.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Are you ignoring me, soldier?

Williams moves as close to the gate as possible. He contemplates jumping over it.

SOLDIER 1

(looks to his left)
Go.

SOLDIER 1

(in Arabic. looks to
his left)
Musawala.

Soldier 2 casually brings himself to attention. Performs an about face to the guard shack and steps inside.

SOLDIER 1 (CONT'D)

Any moment.
(whispers)
Kiss Ekh-tak.

WILLIAMS

(turns toward the vehicle)
What did you just say?

The soldier ignores him and steps away.

INT. UN TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Williams plops down in the seat with a perplexed look.

INSPECTOR 1
Sir?

WILLIAMS
I could have sworn that soldier
called me, ahhh...

INSPECTOR 1
A what, Sir?

WILLIAMS
Kissy tock?

The Inspector almost chokes on his own spit.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
What is it? Is that bad?

INSPECTOR 1
He called you, uhhh...sorry, Sir.
He said for you to go, ummm, fuck
your sister.

LATER --

A military truck arrives amid a cloud of dust. The OIC peels
out of his truck. He's in a chipper mood.

OIC
Is there a problem?

WILLIAMS
We're hot, tired, hungry, and now
behind schedule.

OIC
I beg your pardon, Sir.

WILLIAMS
How much longer?

OIC
Sir, this is for your protection.

Williams knows from the OIC's look that he's full of shit.

WILLIAMS
We've done this for years and now
all of a sudden?

OIC
Times change.

SERIES OF SHOTS - HALABJA SUSPECT WMD SITE

-- A massive double-fenced military secure facility. Metal guard posts on each corner.

-- Earthen bunkers, more than one can count are constructed in all different areas.

-- Radioactive warning signs are affixed everywhere.

INT. UN TRUCKS (MOVING) - LATER

Williams and two INSPECTORS flip through a folder full of papers. They are gruesome in nature.

INSPECTOR 1
Sir, have you been to Halabja?

WILLIAMS
Long ago.

INSPECTOR 1
Are there still remnants?

WILLIAMS
No, not much.

INSPECTOR 1
Just the thought is what's sad.

INSPECTOR 2
(looks out the window)
Can't imagine what these people went through for those five hours.

WILLIAMS
See that?

Williams points to the a tall immaculate memorial in the center of the roundabout. Its menacing in a weird way.

INT./EXT. HALABJA SUSPECT WMD SITE - BUNKER 34 - DAY

A dozen MEN streak between idling covered trucks and an unlocked earthen covered bunker. They grab plastic tubes and scientific gear, clearing out the bunker.

SUPER: Halabja Suspect WMD Site - Iraq - Late 1990's

INT. HALABJA - ENTRY CONTROL POINT BUILDING - SAME

The office is small, hot and musty. Papers litter the desks and the floor. It's a ruckus and very suspicious.

HALABJA DIRECTOR
Feel free to look through our
files.

The Halabja Director waves his hands around wildly.

WILLIAMS
Fine.
(to Inspectors)
Go through them.

The inspectors SLAM open drawers. They sit mostly empty.

INSPECTOR 1
Sir, there's nothing here.

WILLIAMS
(to the Halabja Director)
Did you just move in? Or--

HALABJA DIRECTOR
No--No. Of course not.

WILLIAMS
Then why are you thinned out?

The Director's face goes from defensive to confusion.

HALABJA DIRECTOR
Thinned out?

WILLIAMS
Your filing cabinets. They're
empty!

HALABJA DIRECTOR
They were full. We have done...as
you would call some...some house
cleaning.

The Director grabs a folder from a nearby desk.

HALABJA DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
There is more here if you like.
Look! Look!

Williams snags it from his hand and flips through it while shaking his head.

WILLIAMS

This is Baji!

HALABJA DIRECTOR

Ohhh, yes, yes. Excuse me?

The Director looks over Williams shoulder to get a peak.

HALABJA DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Let me see that. Why yes it is.

MAIN GATE - LATER

The convoy of UN vehicles slide through the gate. The guards glare at them as they are invaders.

They enter an enormous facility. A wide array of brown metal building and various size bunkers.

The trucks peel off in each direction.

BACK GATE - SAME

Two semi-trucks, escorted by two military trucks file out of the complex.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

SADDAM

We cooperated for seven years.

KYLE

I wouldn't call it that cooperative.

SADDAM

There were individuals in the government who were reluctant to cooperate of course. These are hardworking people, dedicated to their work. It is difficult for them to be told one day to open all their files and turn over all their work, government secrets to outsiders...it took time and had to occur in steps.

(beat)

I can not that help your government did not get the hint.

SERIES OF IMAGES - SADDAM'S COURT PROCEEDINGS

-- Iraqi lawyers hover around each other arguing.

-- US military officials and three-piece suit officials point to documents. Their frustration is evident.

-- Iraqi officials point to a calendar. They emphasize their ravenous wants and desires to get a hold of Saddam.

INT. INTERROGATION PREP ROOM - MORNING

MELANIE

(frustrated)
Get your ass in there.

KYLE

What the hell do you want me to do?

MELANIE

We have everyone looking for this stuff and your writing a biography.

KYLE

Did it ever occur to you he might not know or we're looking for a ghost.

MELANIE

Well then get something for Christ's sake. Time is closing in.

INT. SADDAM'S PRISON CELL - LATER

SUPER: June, 2004

SADDAM

I had to appear strong, especially to Iran. We were being threatened by so many and I needed to show that Iraq could defend itself, especially towards Iran.

KYLE

At the UN?

SADDAM

They would not stand next to us. Iran was in the stages of annexing Southern Iraq.

KYLE

How did you know? Intel?

Saddam looks to Kyle with an approving glare.

SADDAM

Iran was our most significant threat.

KYLE

But you said Israel--

SADDAM

Not to us but the entire Arab world. Everyone else in the region was weak.

Saddam adjusts his seat to make his point clear.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Even though you and the others do not believe me, I did not have WMD's. But I could not let Iran think that I did not.

(beat)

The charade with the inspectors was deliberate.

KYLE

But to the detriment of an attack?

Kyle's heart drops to his stomach.

SADDAM

Of course! Above **anything else** I could not show Iran any weaknesses or vulnerabilities. I was willing to take the repercussions.

KYLE

Uhhh...it didn't work.

SADDAM

Yes it did, for many years, decades. In fact, if I would have opened up, the inspectors would have directly shown the Iranians where to inflict maximum damage.

Kyle rubs his eyes. He's in shock.

KYLE

I have to go now.

SADDAM

Kyle.

KYLE

No. I'm sorry. Not now.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Kyle stumbles like a drunken sailor to a doorway. In disbelief of Saddam's revelation.

COVERED AWNING - MOMENTS LATER

The SCORCHING Baghdad sun beats down on Kyle. His eyes try to correct from the flash of light as he continues the arduous work of conversing with a broken leader.

INT. SADDAM'S CELL - LATER

Saddam playfully grabs Kyle's arm and slides his sleeve halfway up his arm. Kyle struggles to stay calm.

KYLE

I'm sorry.

Saddam understands by Kyle's look that his revelation has set Kyle back but Saddam wants to put him at ease.

SADDAM

It is like sticking someone on the forearm.

Saddam taps Kyle's forearm.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

No problem. You could take many of those. Now...

Saddam lightly taps Kyle's elbow and then his wrist.

SADDAM (CONT'D)

Your elbow. Then your wrist. You can not take those strikes as long.

Kyle smiles. Then pulls back on his arm.

KYLE

(lightly laughs)
Owww!

SADDAM

Yes. So you get my point. Hitting you there.

(points to Kyle's elbow)

Would disable you. The US was the forearm...I could absorb that any day, all day. Iran was everything else...the US was by far much less threatening to me.

Kyle rubs his elbow to get the feeling back.

KYLE

Hold on, hold on. You held onto a thirteen year charade? That doesn't make sense.

SADDAM

What does not make sense to me is I am eliminated and Iran is increasing their power...their world power.

KYLE

The coalition perceived you as a bigger threat.

SADDAM

Just wait. Time is not on Iran's mind. They wait and wait until they are ready. The effects of this will be felt in the future, as Iran's weapons capabilities will be a greater threat than mine ever was. You enabled--

KYLE

I didn't--

SADDAM

(snarky)

The US. You stood by while Libya and others armed Iran. You allowed them to be taught, to become proficient, to threaten everyone. I had to act. I had to act on my own.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. OUTSIDE BAGHDAD - SCUD HIDESITE - DAY

A convoy of four black limousines speed down a bumpy road.

SUPER: Outside Baghdad - SCUD Hidesite

Two behemoth camo-painted SCUDS parked perfectly aligned.
One with its missile erect.

Soldiers stand at attention as they wait for their dictator.

EXT./INT. SCUD HIDESITE - MOMENTS LATER

The motorcade skids to a halt. Thick dust rolls past them as all sixteen wheels lock simultaneously.

Saddam dons his large reflective glasses.

The door to his limousine clicks. His door opens. A stream of hot humid sunlight bolts into the limo's compartment.

EXT. SCUD HIDESITE - MOMENTS LATER

Dozens float around Saddam as he beelines toward his SCUDS.

An officer SNAPS to attention as Saddam closes in.

SADDAM
Are we ready?

OFFICER
Yes, Sir. Missiles fueled.

The soldier raises his hand and waves to the technician.

The SCUD DRIVER eyes him through his side mirror. The SCUD rumbles to life. Harsh black smoke spews from its tailpipe and repositions slowly to a nearby dirt revetment.

MOMENTS LATER...

Both SCUD missiles are now erect, their missiles silhouette against the backdrop of the barren landscape.

OFFICER
Sir, we should move back.

Saddam looks to his minions while his dark glasses mask his mood. He doesn't budge a millimeter.

OFFICER (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Five, four, three, two, one.

SCUD ONE's missile shoots fire from its thruster cones. Inch by inch it pushes itself from the Earth. It picks up speed toward its indiscriminate target.

LATER --

SCUD TWO fires. It follows its predecessor's contrails.

Saddam stands with his hands crossed, confident in his flying soldiers as they head toward his most hated enemy.

EXT. OVER TEHRAN - LATER

The missiles stream at MACH five.

The rocket bodies tremble as the SHROUDS over the warhead release. They're free to annihilate.

SERIES OF SHOTS - TEHRAN - IRAN

The missiles hit civilian buildings and crumble. Their impact shakes the city. The terror value is unimaginable.

BACK TO INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME

KYLE

You struck Tehran.

SADDAM

Only because they struck Baghdad first. A war of cities, if you will. My scientists proved to everyone we could do it and not limit our supply like Iran. They were production limited.

KYLE

And that proved you could deliver WMD, without even having it...you scared everyone.

SADDAM

(smiles)
Mission accomplished.

Kyle immediately understands the famous phrase of his POTUS.

INT. INTERROGATION PREP ROOM - DAY

Melanie and Kyle rifle through paperwork. The stress on their faces is evident. Officials come in and out with paperwork, frustrating them both.

INT. SADDAM'S PRISON CELL - NIGHT

SADDAM

I wanted a relationship with the US.

KYLE

Your actions said otherwise.

Kyle is almost pleading but catches himself.

KYLE (CONT'D)

You could have done more.

SADDAM

I did. Four months before. Letting the inspectors in did me no good. I knew we were in for a fight...a losing fight. We were outgunned in every way.

KYLE

And now we are where we are.

Saddam has gone into depression mode. Kyle knows Saddam's mood doesn't help the conversation.

SADDAM

The security in the country is worse than ever. How many in April...thousands?

KYLE

Something like that. How does it make you feel?

SADDAM

It is the order of things.

KYLE

And your presidency?

SADDAM

It is clear to everyone I am no longer the President of Iraq.

KYLE
Yes, you're done.

SADDAM
It is God's choice.

KYLE
What are your thoughts about your
future?

SADDAM
It is in God's hands.

Saddam gets up from his chair. His head is low as he walks to the iron barred window.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
...I just wait.

INT. BAGHDAD OPERATIONS CENTER - HALLWAY - MORNING

Every one of Saddam's extremities is shackled. He shuffles forward. GUARDS huddle around him like a winning high school football quarterback.

EXT. BAGHDAD OPERATIONS CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Three black up-armored Suburbans eerily idle near the entrance. Helicopters circle overhead like vultures.

Kyle somberly emerges from double doors.

Saddam stops to turn around. The guards give him room.

Saddam and Kyle's eyes connect. Kyle knows this is his end. In some ways, the realization that the excitement of his mission is over is almost overwhelming.

Kyle raises his hand in a half-hearted attempt to keep his full composure but it's awkward.

KYLE
As-salamu alaykum.

Kyle knows these are his last words to his interrogatee, and in the weirdest of ways his friend.

SADDAM
(smiles)
Good bye, my friend.

The guards have enough. They block Kyle's line of sight.

The Suburban door opens and Saddam's shoved in - shackles clank. The door SLAMS. The vehicles peel out.

SERIES OF IMAGES - SADDAM'S COURT PROCEEDING

-- Saddam is defiant as he faces five Iraqi judges.

SADDAM
This is all theater. The real
criminal is Bush!

-- Saddam refuses to sign any legal documents.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
You are an Iraqi, you know who I
am!

-- Saddam's legal defense team storms out of the court.

INT. BAGHDAD - CAMP JUSTICE - COURT ROOM - MORNING

Saddam wears a black thobe and simple sandals. He's led by three HUSKY MASKED GUARDS. Their dress is more ITALIAN GANGSTER than professional EXECUTIONER.

SUPER: Camp Justice Court Room, Baghdad

Saddam is submissive and a broken man at last. Fear runs from every wrinkle in his face, as sweat becomes pervasive. He carries a brown, worn Quran.

SADDAM
(to guards)
Can you hand this to her?

Saddam kindly stretches out to hand his most prized possession to a WOMAN who begins to softly weep.

Saddam approaches the judge and is jolted to a stop.

JUDGE
Do you have any remorse or fear?

SADDAM
No, I am a militant and I have no
fear for myself. I have spent my
life in jihad and fighting
aggression. Anyone who takes this
route should not be afraid.

A black cowl is whipped and secured over his head.

A NOOSE is placed around his neck. The executioner tightens it, bringing a bitter sense of anxiety to all.

SADDAM (CONT'D)
 Allahu Akbar! The Muslim Ummah
 will be victorious and Palestine is
 Arab! Iraqis should fight the
 invaders.

The cowl ruffles with every Saddam expression.

The guards place their hands on him to move him into place.

GUARDS
 Muqtada! Muqtada! Muqtada!

SADDAM
 (mockingly)
 Muqtada! Muqtada! Muqtada!
 (turns to the executioner)
 Do you consider this bravery!

An Islamic prayer is recited by a few present in the room.

OBSERVER 1	SADDAM (CONT'D)
(shouts)	(yells)
Go to hell!	The hell that is Iraq?

OBSERVER 2
 Please, stop! The man is facing an
 execution.

INT. SADDAM'S COWL - SAME

Dark. Panic breathing as the sound of fabric wrestles against his face.

A SHIFT. BLAM.

A heartbeat is fast then fades to nothing.

FADE TO BLACK.