

ATTICUS

written by
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Based on the novel "Capernaum" by
Louis De LoPraesti

Author adaptation permission obtained

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OVER BLACK

ATTICUS (V.O.)
You want to hear what it's like in
a real war zone? I got stories,
Doc. Friendly fire.

The voice of a mid-30's male, bearing the weight of war.

INT. BON SECOURS DEPAUL MEDICAL CENTER, ROOM 309 - DAY

ATTICUS (15) in bed. Gangly, self-conscious even without the
bandaged wrists. Brother DANIEL (17) and sisters JULIA (12)
and LAURA (16) gather around.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
When I was young I wanted to be a
farmer. Own horses. Chickens. A big
red barn. But the one thing I never
wanted was a family.

MARY BRUNNA (38) enters. She has been crying.

INT. BON SECOURS DEPAUL MEDICAL CENTER, HALLWAYS - DAY

DR. RAMOS (30s) pushes Atticus in a wheelchair. At the exit,
She hands Mary some brochures.

DR. RAMOS
Mrs. Brunna. Remember we offer
Intensive Outpatient Treatment for
these situations. I've also
included a referral to a therapist.

Dr. Ramos turns to Atticus, who shifts, embarrassed.

DR. RAMOS
I want you to do something for me.
If these feelings come back, I want
you to try and ask yourself what
you want your life to be instead.

Dr. Ramos pats his shoulder. Mary leads them away.

Dr. Ramos watches. A NURSE hands Dr. Ramos a chart.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
Where was my father? Lucius Duncan
Brunna. I could give you years of
that man, pounding away at you like
the ocean. Relentless. And totally
convinced he was doing you a favor.
Like finding out the guy shooting
at you wasn't some hajji hiding in
a hole. No. He was wearing your
colors, bearing your flag.

EXT. WOOD YARD - MORNING

Autumn, Virginia Piedmont. Ravens caw against a tangerine sun. Atticus (9) is Dickens-orphan thin. Bruises on his forearms.

He hefts an ax. Swings. A weak hit.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
I didn't want to get married or
have kids. My father was why.

LUCIUS (54): husband, father, tyrant. Neck tattoo: War Eagle atop a globe grasping an anchor--**Semper Fidelis** above this.

He takes a hard pull from a bottle of vodka in the logs.

LUCIUS
You hit like a girl.

Lucius wrests the ax away. Atticus yanks it back.

ATTICUS
I got it!

Lucius shoves Atticus on his ass. Atticus cuts his hand on the ax.

LUCIUS
Fine. You don't come in til you
finish this load of wood. Every
log, split twice, and stacked.

Lucius holds his hand out. Atticus grabs it, and Lucius wrenches him to his feet.

LUCIUS
Blood's good--shows you're alive--

Lucius hauls Atticus up. Breathes vodka fumes in his face.

He pours vodka over the wound. Atticus screams.

LUCIUS
Quit wailing, ya sound like your
mother. You want to get infected?

Atticus quiets. Lucius glances into the snow-cloud skies.

LUCIUS
Snow's coming, best get on, boy.

Atticus grips the ax. Cowers. But revenge is in his eyes.

LUCIUS
Oh, I've had that look. You're a
Brunna, even if you don't act it.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, SITTING ROOM - TWILIGHT

Atticus and Daniel (11) play cards. Mary makes dinner in the kitchen. Julia (7) comes up to Daniel.

JULIA
I want to play.

DANIEL
Julia, get lost, go find Laura.

JULIA
Laura doesn't want me either. She just keeps brushing her hair.

ATTICUS
Here, you can help me.

He scoots over and shows Julia his cards.

A car pulls up outside. All sound ceases. Boots up the steps.

Lucius (54) enters, black pea coat and scarf. Eggshells.

JULIA
Hi Daddy.

Julia hangs up Lucius' coat. Daniel takes his briefcase, initialed LDB in gold letter. A nightly ritual.

DINING ROOM

The family with bowed head over a meat and potatoes meal.

LUCIUS
For the gifts of thy bounty, we thank thee. Amen.

Mary eyes Lucius, wary. He tries the potatoes. The children hold their breaths.

LUCIUS
Needs some damn salt.

Mary slumps. The children peer down at their plates. Bad.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
He was a deacon at the church, and a demon at home.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, PORCH - NIGHT

Distant lightning. Thunder. Lucius broods. Whiskey. Face to match the coming storm.

A CRASH of dishes from inside. An owl hoots, flies off.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Atticus creeps down the stairs. The sounds of an argument between Lucius and Mary. Then violence. Thuds. A plate smashes. A sharp gasp. Intersects with lightning.

KITCHEN

Lucius thunders at Mary. Smack of skin on skin. Mary drops to the floor and cowers. Bruised.

Lucius stalks out of the room. She stumbles to her feet, grabs a knife from the block.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
I don't blame her for the times she
fired back. Survival tactics.

STAIRWELL

Atticus and the other kids hide behind the balustrade. Pain in his eyes. Julia and Laura crying. Daniel hollow-eyed.

Lucius strides past, ignores them. Mary flies through with the knife.

MAIN ROOM

Mary attacks, shrieking! Slashes Lucius on the forearm! He parries. Smack! Shoves her back to the wall. Hard.

The glass in the photo of Lucius in Vietnam CRACKS on impact.

EXT. POND - DAY

Atticus (12) slaps a shot at a milk crate hockey goal. Scores! He celebrates, mimicking a roaring crowd.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
He never wasted a teachable moment.

The ice COLLAPSES, taking Atticus into the black water.

LUCIUS
Go on. You got this. C'mon, boy!
Kick those legs, that's the way...

Atticus goes under. Reaches out of the inky black. Flounders. He finally grabs the edge, pulls himself--

--to the surface. Atticus flops out of the freezing water. He gasps as Lucius bends approvingly.

LUCIUS
C'mon, let's get a drink in you.
You don't want to catch a cold.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, MAIN ROOM - DAY

Lucius pours a stiff bourbon into two glasses. Clinks it and sips it with no side effects.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
Maybe that's how it started. The drinking. I remember thinking how cool it was that my dad and I were sharing a drink together. He wasn't yelling or slapping me around.

Atticus drinks and coughs, winces at the burn.

LUCIUS
Fire in your belly, boy.

Lucius ruffles Atticus' hair and chuckles.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
He could be very inviting and warm, when he wanted. But he could turn in an instant.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, MAIN ROOM - DAY

Lucius presents Atticus with two antique Spanish shotguns.

Atticus touches them. Lucius pulls the guns back violently.

LUCIUS
Rules of gun safety! A gun is always loaded. Always. Never point a gun at someone unless you mean to use it. You understand?

Atticus nods.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus (15) sneaks inside. The light switches on. Lucius sits there with the shotgun.

LUCIUS
Smell like cigarettes. I know you didn't forget curfew. I can only assume this is outright rebellion. And rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, sayeth the Lord.

Lucius rises, motions to the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Atticus enters. The kettle is on. Mary cries at the table.

MARY
Please don't do this.

The kettle shrieks.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
He liked to make my mother
complicit in his abuse.

LUCIUS
Hold out your arm. Mary, the kettle.

Atticus stiffens. Mary grabs the kettle. Shaking.

LUCIUS
I told you there'd be consequences.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
I know it killed her not to stand
up to him for me. For a long time I
held that against her. I shouldn't
have done that.

Atticus glares at Lucius. A spark of defiance, rage, fear. He
takes the kettle from Mary and puts it to his arm.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, YARD - NIGHT

A loud SHRIEK OF PAIN from inside--a DEER runs off.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, ATTICUS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Atticus in bed. He cradles his burned arm. Stiff upper lip.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, YARD - MORNING

Atticus emerges from the house, quiet. Grabs his bike.

EXT. SANDBRIDGE BEACH - DAY

The day is young. The beach is empty. The bike lies in the
sand like a skeleton.

Atticus swims. Strong strokes. Then he treads. Stares.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
It took me fifteen years to get up
the courage.

Atticus emerges, otter-lithe and self-conscious.

SANDBRIDGE BEACH COVE

Secluded. Atticus sits with a huff on the sand, towels off.

Atticus rustles in his clothes and towel and pulls out a pen knife. He slips it open. Feels the edge against his thumb.

Takes some deep breaths. Puts the blade to his wrist. Trembles. Closes his eyes. Prepares his mind.

He cuts. It's clumsy, lateral instead of down. But it bleeds.

Atticus lies back and contemplates the sky.

Blood drains into the sand.

Atticus' brother DANIEL (17) runs the beach, a daily ritual. He glances toward the cove. Sees Atticus.

DANIEL

It's fucked up we have curfew but
we can come out here as early as we
want--

(spies Atticus' wrists)
oh my God, Atticus??!

He rushes over--

DANIEL

Oh shit! Atticus! Wake up! Wake up!

--and slaps Atticus' cheeks. Atticus stirs.

DANIEL

Oh you fucker! What did you do!?
Get up! C'mon!

He tears his shirt and uses the strips to bandage the wrists.

ATTICUS

I didn't mean to bother anyone...

Daniel supports Atticus as they both rise and stumble away.

ATTICUS (V.O.)

When I left for good, I told myself
I'd never fall in love. I didn't
want to put anyone through that.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

Waves roll in, crash against black stone.

Atop the cliff: white buildings. Weedy tennis court, poorly kept grounds. Beyond: Brown California hills.

ATTICUS (V.O.)

But I did, in the end.

**SUPER: Navy Reserve Mental Health Treatment Center,
California. 2007.**

Chain link fencing keeping everyone in. A gate. A plain white sign with black lettering: CAPERNAUM.

DR. DAVIS (O.S.)
Fell in love?

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

ATTICUS (33), a caged animal, soul tattooed with PTSD, observes veterans kicking a soccer ball around.

DR. WENDY DAVIS (50s), of the unwavering belief in the rehabilitative powers of therapy, sits in a comfy chair with a notepad.

He turns. Her eyes clock his suicide scars.

DR. DAVIS
Are you--have you been thinking of
killing yourself? Recently?

He glances at his wrists, lowers them and chuckles.

ATTICUS
Only very slowly.
(makes a drinking motion)
It's my family's preferred method
of self-destruction.

Atticus rises again. Paces. Agitated.

ATTICUS
I thought, hey, the Marines are all
about discipline. Maybe I can get
clean there.

DR. DAVIS
What do you want out of this? Out
of your time here?

ATTICUS
First, I want to get clean, deal
with my shit. I'd also like to
leave ASAP. I've got unfinished
business in Malaysia.

DR. DAVIS
Okay... I'm intrigued.

ATTICUS
We got confidentiality, right?
Doctor-patient thing?

DR. DAVIS
Of course.

He stands, energized. Conspiratorial.

ATTICUS

And you read my file? What happened to me in Afghanistan? DOD doesn't think there's a case.

DR. DAVIS

But you do.

ATTICUS

I'm not crazy. I've been dealing with friendly fire all my life. I know what happened out there.

Dr. Davis stares. He gives a knowing chuckle.

DR. DAVIS

What?

ATTICUS

If Dad saw me in here with you like this, he'd fuckin' laugh his ass off at how soft I am. Therapy.

INT. DR. DAVIS WAITING ROOM - DAY

Atticus emerges from Dr. Davis' office. Waiting is PETER LINDERHOOT (30s), a veritable tattoo seascape of mermaids, an octopus and shark on his arms.

Linderhoot gives Atticus a GLUG-GLUG motion as he enters Dr. Davis' office and slams the door shut.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - DAY

The men wait for their cup of pills. Atticus inches forward.

A plexiglass-protected NURSE hands out pills.

NURSE

Brunna, Atticus. 150mg of Manerix.
150mg of lithium carbonate.

ATTICUS

I gotta take this?

NURSE

You gotta take this.

She slides the pills through the opening. Atticus pops it.

INT. ATTICUS' ROOM - CAPERNAUM - NIGHT

Atticus hangs a calendar above his bed.

He flips ahead three months and circles JULY 5.

He lights a cigarette while ignoring the small "No Smoking" sign posted by the door. Waves the smoke through the window.

Atticus unpacks his ruck. He pulls out a KORAN and a MANILA FOLDER, places the Koran with reverence on the nightstand.

He opens the folder. Inside: scraps of scrawled notes. Photographs of some desert site--an overturned Humvee, shot through with bullets. Blood stained sand. Surrounding hills.

One photo captures Atticus' soulful attention. A dark-skinned, bearded grinning man, about 30.

ATTICUS

This is just a detour, Kappy. I'm still on the case.

Next he pulls out his clothes. An ORNATE TIBETAN MALA NECKLACE falls out. He picks it up. Feels it. Remembers...

INT. ATTICUS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

SUPER: Six years earlier. September 2001. Venice Beach, CA.

Atticus (27) sits, bag packed and ready to roll. He's composed--a mask of unearned confidence hiding a timid boy.

In his hands: a letter from the UCLA School of Law.

"Dear Mr. Brunna, we are sorry to inform you..."

"...due to declining academic performance..."

"...immediate dismissal..."

"...ABA policy of no re-admission for two years..."

ATTICUS (SOTTO)

Shit.

(out loud)

Natalie... come on. Traffic's gonna be brutal as it is.

He stuffs the letter in his pocket as NATALIE (23) enters in a rush from the bedroom. She's a trust fund vegan, well-meaning but naive.

NATALIE

I'm not going without it.

She flounces off.

ATTICUS

When did you last see it?

He pulls out a mini-bottle of Stolli from the couch cushions. Next to it is an ornate Tibetan Mala necklace.

He downs the vodka.

ATTICUS
Found it!

INT. ATTICUS' FORERUNNER - DAY

Landscape flashes by through the window. Natalie fingers the Mala around her neck.

Atticus' flipphone buzzes. He checks it. Doesn't answer.

ATTICUS
She's freaking out about us going
on this trip so soon after...

NATALIE
So answer her!

ATTICUS
I said, Ma, the terrorists don't
drink a lot of booze, you know?
It's like, forbidden or whatever.

A deer launches in front of them--he swerves! Too late!!

Atticus slams into it--Natalie screams! They skid to a stop.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

The deer is a twisted wreck. Blank, black eyes.

Jaw clenched, Atticus pets it.

EXT. PISMO COVE HOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

The Forerunner pulls into the parking lot. Engine off.

INT. ATTICUS' FORERUNNER - DAY

Silence. Atticus stares ahead.

NATALIE
You okay?

She leans across and kisses him. He kisses back.

She bounces out of the car, her mood shifted positive.

Atticus digs in his pocket. He pulls out a ring box.

Ahead is a billboard for Smokey the Bear. "A cigarette can be dangerous in more than one way! Save lives. Don't smoke."

ATTICUS
Fuck you, Smokey.

EXT. VINEYARDS - DAY

Along a grapevine path. Natalie smiles at Atticus. Grabs a grape off the vine, tosses it at him. He smiles back--digs the ring box out. Palms it with his bandaged hand.

STONE PATIO

She wisps through a wisteria archway. Cafe string lights. Fountain in the center. Romantic. They're alone.

She notices his hand.

NATALIE

Ah-ha! What is that?

Buzzed tourists duck under the arch, laughing.

His moment is ruined by both tourists and Natalie. He puts the box back in his pocket.

ATTICUS

Nothing. I, uh-- Let's get going. I could use a drink. Tasting room?

Natalie's face falls. She puts on a brave smile.

INT. WINERY TASTING ROOM - DAY

Wine flight. Atticus tosses them back, not savoring. Natalie is concerned at his drinking, but says nothing.

INT. PISMO COVE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus collapses on the bed. Drunk. He grabs at but misses Natalie's hand as she passes.

ATTICUS

So they're saying we might be going to war now--if you can believe it.

He smells his pits, makes a face. He pulls off his shirt. The ring box falls out of his pocket. Regret on his face.

NATALIE (O.S.)

It's bullshit propaganda. They just want revenge and oil. I say when we get back we organize something. A protest rally. "No blood for oil" or something like that...

ATTICUS

Catchy. Of course you know my whole family line is...

BATHROOM

Natalie, on the toilet. Shrinks as Atticus staggers past.

ATTICUS
...basically a platoon of Marines.

NATALIE
Hey! Get out! Pig!

ATTICUS
I thought we were at that level in
our relationship.

NATALIE
No--we're definitely not. Never.

Atticus steps in the shower. She peers at his shadow behind
the steamed glass.

NATALIE
I know today didn't go exactly...
how you wanted it to...

SHOWER

She steps into the shower with him. He smiles at her.
Caresses her cheek. She closes her eyes, taking in his touch.

NATALIE
Hey you. Turn around.

He turns around. She soaps his back. Caresses his skin, then
hugs him. He clasps her arm lovingly.

ATTICUS
You okay? What'chu thinking about?

NATALIE
A dream I had last night. You were
burning piles of grass. There was
this old woman babbling in Russian.
You'd throw a new pile of grass
into the fire, and you were taking
off your clothes. Then a soldier
came on horseback and dragged you
away. And the fire got so bad it
was burning the entire countryside.
I barely got away. You know how
dreams are... for some reason this
felt more real. Or something.
(off his confusion)
It's okay if it's not perfect.
Because what is perfect? If you
ask, I'll say yes.

He smiles. She turns him around.

NATALIE
 Why don't you ask me... what you
 want to ask me earlier?
 (off his confusion)
 It's okay if it's not perfect.
 Because what is perfect? If you
 ask, I'll say yes.

ATTICUS
 Here? Wait. You know?

NATALIE
 I know everything, dummy. And yeah.
 Right here is wonderful.

He goes to one knee. He tries to focus with the water rushing
 down on his face. He sputters, and she laughs, in a good way.

ATTICUS
 Will you?

NATALIE
 I will.

PRE-LAP: Phone rings.

INT. ATTICUS' FORERUNNER - DAY

ATTICUS
 Yeah, hey. What's up?

LOUD SOBBING on the phone from JULIA (34).

JULIA (FILTERED)
 You need to come home now! Mom...
 she's gone.

ATTICUS
 Julia? Talk to me. Where's mom? Did
 dad do something to her--?

Natalie watches the speedometer in alarm. 55. 60. 70--

NATALIE
 --Slow down, Atticus, fuck's sake!

80--85--the car drifts--an oncoming truck--HONKS!

JULIA (FILTERED)
 --Just get here, Atti. Mom's dead.

Natalie grabs the wheel! The car swerves! Atticus over-
 corrects--regains the correct lane--he slams the brakes,
 slides into a loose gravel pull-off.

NATALIE
 Fuck! Atticus!! What the fuck!?

ATTICUS

She's dead. Because of me.

She touches the Mala around her neck. Horrified.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Atticus steps out. Face set hard. Natalie emerges too. Her feet are bare. She tiptoes on the hot asphalt.

Atticus fumbles, lights an American Spirit Yellow. Draws deep. Stares out over a rocky brown hill.

ATTICUS

One cigarette. Place'd be gone.

The heat of the road stings Natalie's feet. She hops.

NATALIE

You didn't kill her, Atti. Damn, that road's hot...

ATTICUS

I hung up on her. I was angry... My mom put up with so much shit--

NATALIE

I know...

ATTICUS

The littlest thing could be enough.

She pours the water over her feet. Steam rises. He glances at her hopping from one foot to the other.

ATTICUS

Your feet are gonna burn right off. Where are your shoes?

She steps on his shoes. They embrace.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Atticus pulls out a vodka from the mini-bar, downs it quick. Relief. Sound of Natalie showering, then the water stops.

He wraps the bottle in some tissues, pretends to blow his nose as Natalie emerges from the bathroom.

ATTICUS

There's a 6am flight into Richmond. You can drive back to L.A.

NATALIE

I want to go with you.

ATTICUS
Are you sure?
(she nods 'Yes')
I'm sorry all this happened--

NATALIE
It's not your fault. It's normal to
feel--displaced--and fucked up.

She hugs him. Sniffs the air around him. Then his breath.

NATALIE
When did you have a drink?

ATTICUS
I was going to tell you something
important earlier. I don't know if
I should now.

She questions with her eyes. He's blank, distant.

NATALIE
You can tell me. When you're ready.

He comes back to the present. Feels her wet shoulders...

NATALIE
You want to get something to eat?

He gazes at her with intensity.

NATALIE
What?

ATTICUS
Actually... I was a little hungry.

He yanks the towel away. She grabs the towel back.

NATALIE
Not right now.

He kisses her...she kisses back, then pulls away.

NATALIE
C'mon. Let's get some food.

She sways back into the bathroom. He is disappointed.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Atticus sighs. Plate empty. He is drunk. Natalie is not. He
pulls out a cigarette--

NATALIE
You can't smoke--

Atticus puts it back. He's over-the-top in his drunken state.

ATTICUS
--Shit, forgot. California turned
into a fascist state so quickly...

Pours a huge glass of wine. Natalie is displeased.

NATALIE
Take it easy on the wine, Atti?

ATTICUS
You didn't yell at me when we were
drinking all day yesterday.

NATALIE
Maybe Napa was a bad idea.

ATTICUS
It's all gonna burn away, might as
well enjoy it while we can.

NATALIE
I know you're sad. But you've been
drinking a lot lately. And... I'm a
little concerned.

He stares at her. Then chuckles.

ATTICUS
Okay. Concern noted.

Atticus spies two TWENTY-SOMETHINGS at the bar. They laugh,
smile, flirt with the bartender. Natalie follows his gaze.

NATALIE
Let's get back to the hotel, we've
got an early flight.

ATTICUS
They look happy. Don't they? Sheep
don't know how bad things can get.

NATALIE
That's an asshole thing to say.

Natalie rises, gathers her purse.

ATTICUS
Lighten up. It's not a funeral. Yet.

He cracks himself up at this. She is pissed.

ATTICUS
C'mon. Don't be like that. One
more. Please. You're not "enabling
me" if you drink one more glass of
this fucking amazing wine. Here.
C'mon.

He pours another glass. Sloppy. She glares and leaves.

He raises his glass. Other patrons are embarrassed.

ATTICUS

To my father. The man I love and
deeply respect, and to my mother,
who is no longer with us.

He chugs the wine. Raises his hand for the check.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Door opens. Light slants across Natalie's sleeping face.

Atticus stumbles in. Absolutely wasted. He trips his way to the desk. Pulls out stationary. Scribbles some words...

ATTICUS (V.O.)

Mary Brunna. My mother. She once
told me the world is hard. And it
only takes one person to make you
lose trust.

He bears the pen down so hard the tip breaks. Natalie wakes. She crosses the room to comfort him.

He doesn't notice, so engrossed in his drunken flow.

NATALIE

Where were you??

Years of PTSD cause him to react. He launches to his feet. At the same time he SHOVES her away against the bed--hard.

She falls on her ass, shocked--scared--

His face is caught between light and shadow. He realizes what he's done.

ATTICUS

Natalie--I--I--I'm so sorry.

She's terrified. Heartbroken. He tries to help her up. She lets him, but her eyes are open now.

PRE-LAP: a shotgun blast.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAWN

A jet takes off and leaves San Francisco behind.

EXT. ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Off the church sign: St. Andrew's Episcopal, Richmond, VA.

Atticus, black suit, tie. Major hangover. He leans against a black Lincoln Continental. Smokes his American Yellow.

Atticus holds a piece of crinkled paper. A few words visible: "Mary...trust...miss her."

ATTICUS (V.O.)
My mother had courage to tell the
truth. Mary Brunna was really good
at telling you how it was.

Natalie, black dress, waits in the grass. Checks her watch.

A limousine pulls up.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
She believed in all us kids. She
only ever wanted us to be free.

Lucius exits, followed by Atticus' siblings, now grown up:

JULIA (34). Attentive, abrupt, forgiving.
LAURA (36). Indifferent and self-obsessed.
DANIEL (31). As if a child became a door-to-door salesman.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
You don't have time to regret your
choices, Ma would say.

Atticus spits when he spies Lucius. Stubs out his butt.
Lucius stares back, cold, distant, aloof, yet critical.

ATTICUS (V.O.)
She believed--to a fault--that you
only get one family, so you love
them hard, no matter what.

Daniel gives Atticus an awkward hug. Julia and Laura hug him
as well. Pro forma. All exhausted.

Four PALLBEARERS carry the casket up the steps to the church.

INT. ST. ANDREWS NAVE - DAY

Atticus at the lectern. He smooths the paper.

ATTICUS
That's what Mary Brunna did. Stuck
it through. In the end it cost her.
Well. She may have been brave. But
she was also stupid.
(gasps from the mourners)
I want to be brave too. But I won't
be like her and stick something out
just because of some imaginary
line. Fuck that. So here's the
deal. I'm getting kicked out of law
school.

(MORE)

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

I have a tiny, teensy drinking problem. It's a family trait, if you don't know.

Natalie is shocked, appalled. She marches out.

Daniel shares a concerned glance with Julia and Laura.

ATTICUS

There's my dad. He killed her.

More gasps. Lucius rises, rage in his eyes.

ATTICUS

No, no, not like murdered her. You people are so literal. But c'mon. You see him, right? You know who he is. He's Lucius motherfucking Brunna--okay. I'm done--Rest in peace, Ma.

Atticus brushes past Lucius who grabs at Atticus.

ATTICUS

You wanna do this?

Murmurs, stirring in the mourning party. Atticus keeps going out, after Natalie. Lucius rolls his eyes as he steps up.

LUCIUS

Leave it to my son to make his mother's funeral all about himself. Mary would have told him, "that's okay, Atti, we all have our cross."

Awkward laughter as order is restored.

EXT. ST. ANDREWS STEPS - DAY

Atticus emerges. Can't seem to light a cigarette. Hand shakes. Natalie takes his hand. Lights it for him.

ATTICUS

Holy shit. That was... intense.

NATALIE

Did you know you were going to say those things?

(he doesn't answer)

I didn't want to see your drinking. Bottles in couch cushions. Mood swings. I thought it was just stress or school. I was stupid.

CEMETERY

Atticus eyes a new grave plot as they pass. He leads Natalie to a small garden inside the cemetery.

NATALIE
Promise me you'll get help.

A crumbling statue of the Virgin Mary, two angels. One of the angel heads has toppled to the ground.

ATTICUS
My grandpa could fix any kind of stonework. Even drunk as he was. But he could never fix himself.

He picks up the angel head and puts it back on the body.

ATTICUS
I'll quit. Done with the drinking.

NATALIE
You know it doesn't work like that.

ATTICUS
It was a joke.

NATALIE
I won't turn into your mom.

The engagement ring is in her palm. Her eyes are twin lakes. She shoves the ring into his hand.

ATTICUS
Natalie? Natalie, whoa whoa. What are you doing--please don't.

She takes off her Mala. She hands it to him.

NATALIE
For peace. I love you. I'm sorry.

She stumbles off in tears.

He chases her, but trips over his grandfather's grave marker.

Duncan Brunna - 1922 - 1985

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

It's quiet. Searchlights patrol the perimeter fence.

INT. ATTICUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus puts the Mala away. Regretful.

Linderhoot peeks his head in.

LINDERHOOT

Wait'll they make you pee into a cup while you stand on one foot and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

He spies the glint of Atticus' flask.

LINDERHOOT

Drinkin', *on ze other hand*, is *strictly verboten*.

He grabs for the flask.

LINDERHOOT

Nice trick, getting this through their eagle eye confiscation. What, did you wedge it in your ass? So, what're you in for?

ATTICUS

Give it back.

LINDERHOOT

Sip of whiskey gets your toes wet.

VIRGIL

Everything okay in here?

VIRGIL (29), a one-legged African-American nirvana seeker on crutches, stands at the door. Linderhoot withholds the flask.

LINDERHOOT

Dive too deep you'll get caught in the net.

(hands flask back)

Just getting friendly. So. Why. Are. You. Here?

Atticus' face goes hard, eyes set. Some sadness too.

ATTICUS

I shot someone.

LINDERHOOT

Hell. That's what they hired us for. I stabbed a Marine with a butter knife. Accidental, of course. Desert heat caused my hand to sweat. A poor son of a bitch was on the receiving end as gravity did its grim fuckin' work. They declared me Section 8, shipped my ass here. What were you going to say?

ATTICUS

I was going to ask you to shut the fuck up and leave me alone.

LINDERHOOT
You'd say that to a guy who jagged
fellow Marine in the eyeball?

ATTICUS
FINE. What do you know about
friendly fire?

LINDERHOOT
I know it don't happen less someone
in comms fucks up.

Linderhoot lunges in Atticus' face like a hawk. Virgil
hobbles in and hauls Linderhoot back.

VIRGIL
Jesus Christ, you gotta take a shit
in every new guy's sense of calm
and well-being? Be cool!

LINDERHOOT
I figure you got three weeks till
you run up on a sandbar.

Linderhoot cackles and flexes his arm muscle, causing the
ship tattooed there to "roll" on the ocean.

VIRGIL
Leave 'im alone. Go read Moby Dick.
Don't mind Linderhoot, he's an
asshole.

LINDERHOOT
Hey, I got feelings.

He leaves.

VIRGIL
Virgil. Fitzgerald. You okay? So
you got shot at by our guys?

ATTICUS
I need Internet access. Is there a
library here?

INT. CAPERNAUM, LIBRARY - DAY

Atticus searches the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve - FOIA
Requestor Service website. He types in a name: KAPILAS SINGH.

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY (PRESENT)

Atticus slumps in his chair. Exhausted.

DR. DAVIS
So how are you?

ATTICUS

Still getting my bearings. There are some real... dicks here.

But then he sits forward. Intense.

ATTICUS

Comms logs from that day in Afghanistan. There's something off. Operator ID was redacted. There's no mention of which grid was being targeted, but based on radio transcript they thought my three-man unit was finishing up a patrol in a totally different sector.

DR. DAVIS

--Atticus--I have to stop you. Let's focus. You used the phrase "war zone" in our last session. I'd like to talk about what took you from that to an actual war zone where you saw--

Atticus rises. Agitated.

ATTICUS

--Kappy and I were ambushed. I think by our guys.

DR. DAVIS

That's a tough allegation to prove. You can log a petition with the USMC for a formal investigation but I can tell you in my service time I've only seen two approved when requested by infantry. But right now we need to focus. Please. Sit. War zone.

Atticus keeps pacing.

ATTICUS

It means what it sounds like, Doc. I grew up in a war zone. It sucked. People got hurt. Put that in a paper and get published, make yourself famous.

DR. DAVIS

So why'd you join the Marines? You'd already escaped that life.

ATTICUS

Afghanistan was an answer to the question I kept asking myself.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, SITTING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

SUPER: September 24, 2001. Outside Richmond, VA.

Around the room. Club leather couch. Vintage chairs. Coffee table made from a single slab of an old oak.

DANIEL (O.S.)
You think he's gonna try something?

ONE WALL adorned with four roses and gold-gilt framed portraits of four generations of Brunna soldiers.

--A lush oil painting of a General and his adjutant in front of a colonial facade. Avery Brunna, 1789

--A painting of a fierce man in blue on horseback. He surveys troops emerging from a thick wood. Ishmael Brunna, 1866

--A photo of an Army doctor in Trieste. Duncan Brunna, 1945

--The faded photo of men in fatigues, Vietnam palms behind, HOTEL NEW HAMPSHIRE sign behind them. Lucius Brunna, 1971

This last photo's glass has a spider-web crack in it.

JULIA (O.S.)
Try what? You mean--
(gestures cutting a wrist)
That was a long time ago.

Julia sips from a tumbler with a finger of scotch.

Daniel plays with his daughter CORRINE's fire engine, rolling it up the pillow where Corrine naps. He nods at Julia.

DANIEL
No, I mean, like, start some shit with dad. I don't want Corrine or Max to see that stuff.

JULIA
I think it'll be fine.

DANIEL
Should someone get dad?

JULIA
Let him sleep a bit more.

Atticus, just inside the

KITCHEN

Overhears their conversation. A TOILET FLUSH and a moment later, Laura enters the kitchen.

Laura grabs a plate and serves a pile of food on it.

LAURA

...Where was I? Oh. Right. I don't know why she doesn't like me. She crosses the room when I come in for yoga. Who does that?

Atticus wants out of the conversation. Julia wanders in.

JULIA

Jesus, how you eat so much and keep thin at your age is beyond me. You should bottle and sell it.

Laura makes a dismissive face. Julia grabs beers from the fridge. Hands one to Atticus.

LAURA

Whatever. Where's Dad?

Atticus leans over, checks up the stairs.

ATTICUS

Sleeping one off. As usual. Surprised he made the funeral.

LAURA

Someone's not in a hurry to spend quality time with daddy.

JULIA

He's not sleeping one off. He's just sleeping. Been a long day. A long few days. Give him a break.

LAURA

You running for daughter of the year?

JULIA

It wouldn't matter if I were.

ATTICUS

You two need to get some new material. I'm going for a smoke.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Daniel joins Atticus. Holds a battered black briefcase. Gold letters LDB on one corner.

DANIEL

Dad'd smack the hell out of them for quarreling like that.

ATTICUS

He never needed an excuse. Also, Daniel, no one says quarreling. Jesus, what are you, in law school?

DANIEL
Like you, no.

Atticus drags from his American Spirit cigarette.

ATTICUS
Touché. You look good. How's Maria?
And the kids? Corrine and...

Daniel sets the briefcase down. Snags Atticus' cigarette.
Takes a drag. Hands it back.

DANIEL
Max. They're good. We're all good.
Sorry about--heard you broke up.

ATTICUS
Wasn't meant to be.

Atticus offers Daniel his cigarette. Daniel waves off.

DANIEL
No thanks, I quit. I used to think
dad kept top secret documents in
this briefcase. Then one day I
opened it--guess what was inside.

ATTICUS
I don't know, Daniel, what do
washed-up drunken asshole attorneys
usually keep in their briefcase?

They both grin.

DANIEL
A fucking fifth of Bushmills. That's
it. No papers. No legal pads.

ATTICUS
Maybe that's why he got disbarred.

Daniel keeps taking the cigarette from Atticus.

ATTICUS
Dude--just take the stick.

Daniel acquiesces. Atticus gets his own fresh cigarette.

Julia and Laura emerge. Laura downs a plate of chips.

Atticus struggles to light his cigarette. Hand doesn't work
right. Daniel grabs the lighter to do the honors, but sees
Atticus' wrist scar.

Atticus pulls his wrist back. Gives Daniel a subtle squint.
Not here. Daniel nods. He lights Atticus' cigarette.

JULIA
Hope Dad's alright up there.

DANIEL
How is he? You see him a lot?

ATTICUS
Same asshole, different day...

JULIA
He's softer. Less...rigid. He'll be
lonely now, without mom.

A few cars pull up the drive--friends of Mary's, mourners.

LAURA
Well. Showtime.

Atticus tosses his butt. Kicks the briefcase off the step.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, MAIN ROOM - DAY

Post-funeral buffet spread. Laura still chowing down.

Photos of Mary at a tiny memorial with candles. Some guests
linger over them. Atticus overhears snippets of conversation.

GUEST 1
...was never able to go out without
his permission, you know.

GUEST 2
Poor, dear Mary. She did her best.

Julia approaches Atticus.

JULIA
Someone should go wake him up...

ATTICUS
Christ. Fine.

None of the siblings give each other more than a glance.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Atticus turns the corner. A door. Hand on knob. Hesitates.

INT. LUCIUS' ROOM - DAY

Atticus enters. Sees scuffed black military boots, one lying
on its side. A white undershirt, thrown without care on the
floor. Lucius asleep in bed. He groans. Bolts up.

ATTICUS
You were dreaming.

LUCIUS
I don't dream anymore, Atticus.

Atticus shakes a bottle of Klonopin on the nightstand.

ATTICUS
Might be a reason for that.

Lucius tugs his sleeve. Atticus pulls away, faces the window.

LUCIUS
That girl you were with. Natalie,
was it? I don't blame her for
ditching, funerals are a misery
only human beings could enjoy.

ATTICUS
Ever open a window? Stinks of booze
and failure in here.

LUCIUS
Show me some respect, boy, I'm
still your father--

Atticus shoves the jammed window open. One pane breaks,
leaving a jagged hole.

LUCIUS
Chrissakes! Leave things as they are!

Lucius lumbers up, shoves Atticus away. Atticus' hand slams
against the broken glass--

FAST FLASH TO:

--AN AX SPLITS WOOD--
--A BOY'S BLOODY ARM--

EXT. SANDBRIDGE BEACH COVE - DAY

Atticus (15) cuts his wrist. Blood flows.

INT. LUCIUS' ROOM - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Atticus SHOVES Lucius back! The two scuffle.

LUCIUS
Well. C'mon.

He takes a swing, CLOCKS Atticus a stunner in the jaw.
Atticus is still outmatched by this powerful old man.

DOWNSTAIRS

Sounds of the fight grow louder. Julia glances at Daniel, who
seems fourteen again, and dashes up the stairs. Daniel
follows. Laura scoffs silently to herself.

LAURA
Nothing ever changes.
(to everyone)
What are you looking at?

INT. LUCIUS' ROOM - DAY

Lucius goes for a haymaker, then clutches his back in pain.

The door slams open. Julia and Daniel.

Atticus glances at his hands. One drips blood from the glass.
Lucius sits back on the bed, massaging his pulled muscle.

DANIEL
We heard--we thought you might be...

ATTICUS
We're fine. Just a broken window.

Atticus' eyes shift to his reflection in the window. He appears older, more like his father now.

The image scares him.

He sees a pile of handkerchiefs on the dresser, grabs one to wrap his hand, and stalks out.

JULIA
Smells stale in here. C'mon down,
dad, guests are here for Ma.

LUCIUS
Be down in a minute. Go on.

Daniel motions to Julia. Follows her out.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Atticus emerges from the shadows of the door frame. He has wrapped his hand with a towel.

JULIA
He's so feeble.

ATTICUS
Don't you dare feel sorry for him.

DOWNSTAIRS

Atticus follows Julia and Daniel down, goes to the hall bathroom to clean up his bleeding hand.

He's about to enter but is stopped by the sound of someone in the bathroom throwing up. He's about to knock, but stops.

ATTICUS
Everything ok in there?

SFX: Toilet flushes. He waits. The door opens. Laura emerges.

LAURA
Hey. Yeah. You okay?

Glances at his hand.

LAURA
What was it dad used to say?
Crawling is acceptable. Falling is
acceptable. Blood is acceptable--

ATTICUS
Puking is acceptable--
(Laura glances away)
But quitting never is.

LAURA
You'd better go clean up.

SITTING ROOM

Lucius descends. Everyone watches. Silence. Daniel hands him coffee and a plate.

Atticus emerges from the bathroom, hand wrapped in gauze.

DANIEL
We got lox, and tomatoes, and...

Lucius hands the plate back. Wordless. Grimaces. Stalks out.
The guests turn in embarrassment.

DANIEL
What does it take for your own
father to not treat you like shit?

ATTICUS
You know the miserable pricks are
the ones that live the longest.

JULIA
Atticus! I can't with you two! This
is about Ma! Can't you just--

Daniel puts the plate down, shoulders past Atticus, who takes the plate to the

KITCHEN

Atticus grabs the bottle. Finds a glass. He pours. Drinks.
Stops himself. Holds the glass up with his bandaged hand.

ATTICUS
Hardcore Marine.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, PORCH - DAY

Lucius with a neighbor, JENKINS (60s)--a salivating moocher. Atticus emerges. Bottle hidden.

JENKINS
--last year's tulips all drowned
after that first big rain. Say, you
got anything with pep?

Lucius turns. Atticus produces the bottle and glass.

He pours. Jenkins licks his lips. Hopeful.

ATTICUS
You've earned it, Pop. Every drop.

Lucius downs it. The sweetest thing.

ATTICUS
Let me tell you something. This
family's had a legacy of shit. No
more. I'm breaking it.

LUCIUS
You still pissed about something
that happened ten years ago, huh?

ATTICUS
Next time you see me, I'll be a
sober soldier. First in our line.

Lucius lets off a guffaw, slapping his knee.

LUCIUS
The day he goes sober'll be the day
I die. Mark it.

Lucius pours another. Fills Jenkins' glass. They drink.

ATTICUS
You know what? Fuck you, dad.

Lucius hauls himself up, faster than seems possible for his old frame. To his credit, Atticus does not flinch.

Jenkins horrified, flits to the bottle and back.

LUCIUS
No one's asking you to stay.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, MAIN ROOM - DAY

Atticus enters in a rush. All the post-funeral guests stare. He approaches Daniel. Grabs him in an embrace.

ATTICUS
Tell Julia and Laura... tell 'em
I'll see them one day. I love you.

DANIEL
Where are you going?

Atticus gives those two shotguns one last, longing look.

DR. DAVIS (O.S., PRE-LAP)
Do you feel it helped? Enlisting?

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Atticus turns from the window. Picks a book from the shelf.

ATTICUS
"The Self." What a title. Hey, you
wrote this?

DR. DAVIS
Do you think it was a waste?

ATTICUS
Just six years of my life to fully
understand how broken I really am.

DR. DAVIS
Your father didn't respect your
decision, even though he was once
in the Marines--

ATTICUS
He didn't respect me, period. It's
not that complicated.

Teeth grit. Dr. Davis consults some notes.

DR. DAVIS
Dishonorable discharge, drunken
assault of a fellow Marine. You, on
the other hand, served with
distinction. On paper you and your
father are very different.

Atticus clenches the book, white knuckled.

ATTICUS
Time's up.

Atticus launches to the door, slings it open.

DR. DAVIS
Wait. Natalie. Have you seen her,
since she left?

Atticus' face is full of grief, regret, pain.

ATTICUS
Once. In passing.

DR. DAVIS
And?

ATTICUS
She looked happy. I'm glad she
escaped.

INT. CAPERNAUM, HALLWAY - DAY

Atticus strides past veterans and nearly runs into a Buddhist monk--JOSHIN TAKAMATSU (50s), who bows. Atticus stumbles on.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

Sun sinks into the ocean. Twilight turns to dusky purple to star-sky. A shooting star hurtles through atmosphere.

INT. CAPERNAUM LIBRARY - DAY

Atticus at a computer, writes down everything he can find about Kapilas Singh. Questions on his notepad: *DOD Religious Waiver? Sector JB-13 patrol, who signed off? Radio requests?*

INT. ATTICUS' ROOM - CAPERNAUM - NIGHT

Atticus marks his calendar. Checks the date. Two weeks down.

Atticus smokes in bed. A knock on his door. Atticus stubs out the cigarette, wafts the smoke toward the open window.

Joshin opens the door.

ATTICUS
Oh hey. You're not going to hassle
me about the smoking, are you?

Joshin motions for Atticus to come.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

Joshin leads Atticus outside.

ATTICUS
Who are you? Where are we going?

Joshin leads him along the cliff's edge. Waves crash against the rocks below. Moonlight on whitecaps.

JOSHIN
Come. Surf with me.

ATTICUS
We can't leave the grounds, dude.

Joshin holds up a keycard as they approach the gate.

ATTICUS
I've never surfed...

JOSHIN
You'd never breathed before you were
born, yet you made it this far.

ATTICUS
I'm not about to start at two in
the damn morning. No offense.

JOSHIN
Don't you want to escape? Now's
your chance.

Joshin zeroes in on Atticus' eyes. Holds the gaze, then grabs
his wrist feels the suicide scar. Atticus yanks back--

He turns to go. Joshin claps hands together like a steeple.

ATTICUS (PRE-LAP)
I don't want to be on the lithium.

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Atticus sits still. Arms crossed.

ATTICUS
I don't mean to be a hardass here.
I want to get better. I'm committed
to the process. But the lithium is
like... everything is slowed down.

Dr. Davis nods, sympathetic.

DR. DAVIS
We can talk about your treatment as
we observe your progress. Now. From
your military report you were nearly
killed in multiple encounters,
including when Kapilas Singh--

ATTICUS
His name was Kappy. We met at Basic.
He was the best thing that happened
to me there.

ROAR OF A C-130 REVVING UP (PRE-LAP)

DRILL INSTRUCTOR (PRE-LAP)
We will give every effort to train
you, even after some of you have
given up on yourselves!

A SERIES OF SHOTS

1. Atticus signs his name. A RECRUITER shakes his hand.
2. Atticus gets his buzzcut.
3. Uniform and toiletries issue. Atticus hefts his camo.
4. DOCS examine the recruits. Full medical eval.
5. Strength and agility training. Sit-ups. Pull-ups. Mile and a half run. Atticus sweats, struggles, nearly passes out.

INT. RECRUIT STAGING ROOM - NIGHT

New recruits sit at desks while three DRILL INSTRUCTORS file in. The SENIOR DRILL INSTRUCTOR steps forward, while the SECOND HAT and THIRD HAT stand back.

SENIOR DRILL INSTRUCTOR
Now it's our job to make you sweat!
And sweat you will! But you will
not be alone!

Atticus glances back. A Middle-Eastern man--KAPILAS SINGH--or KAPPY (27)--pays attention.

EXT. AIRFIELD - PARRIS ISLAND - DAY

BIG MAROON SIGN: U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island South Carolina

Palms. A long tarmac. A white mini lighthouse. An Osprey jet is bolted to the concrete, frozen in a takeoff.

SENIOR DRILL INSTRUCTOR (O.S.)
Discipline. Cleanliness. Esprit de
corps. Hallmarks of a Marine!

EXT. PARRIS ISLAND, FORMATION FIELD - DAY

Shaved-head recruits in formation on field. Other companies practice drills, march together. Senior DI stands them down.

SENIOR DRILL INSTRUCTOR
You will cry and you will bleed,
but when you bleed, it will be
Marine Red!

Sweat pours off Atticus and the other recruits.

Second Hat passes with a stride that could cut paper, it's that sharp. He halts. Gets in Atticus' face. Sniffs him.

SECOND HAT
Recruit, why do you smell like the
back alley of a whorehouse? Have
you been drinking, Recruit?

ATTICUS
I have not. No.

Second Hat stares Atticus down, then continues on.

Kappy nudges Atticus, whispers.

KAPPY
Don't worry, they do this to
everyone! Name's Kappy.

ATTICUS
Atticus.

KAPPY
Hey, like Harper Lee, eh? "If
Atticus Finch drank until he was
drunk, he wouldn't be--"

ATTICUS
Don't.

RECRUIT
Will you two shut the fuck up?!

Second Hat's ears prick up.

SECOND HAT
Who's got the pretty mouth?

He picks on a recruit a couple men down from Atticus.

THIRD HAT
You must be one of those new Cross
Fit junkies. They never shut up
either! Step out, sweetheart.

The recruit steps out. Atticus can't help himself--

ATTICUS
Uh. It was me, sir.

SECOND HAT
Back in formation.
(to Atticus)
You again. You must be suffering
from cranial-rectal inversion! Do I
look like an officer to you?

ATTICUS
No sir. I mean, no. It won't happen
again, on my honor.

SECOND HAT
You probably think you got honor.

Atticus doesn't move a muscle.

SECOND HAT

You think you're the first grunt to come in here hoping Mother Corps will save your whiny butt from your problems? It is not a question of if you make it through the next twelve weeks. In what condition is the question you should be asking yourself.

Kappy steps forward to save Atticus.

KAPPY

I'm sorry, it was actually me--

DRILL INSTRUCTOR

Oh! Another do-gooder, huh? Step out, both you.

Atticus and Kappy step forward. Third Hat steps in.

THIRD HAT

You two jokers want to be the leaders of this platoon? Well?

They glance at each other. Unsure.

THIRD HAT

You look lost. Well let me give you a map. Put your noses in the dirt! Ten squat thrusts, in thirty, now! On the deck! All of you! Up! Down! Up! Down! Up! Down! Yes!

Third Hat struts among them with military precision and intent. Senior DI stands in front with Second Hat.

SENIOR DRILL SERGEANT

You may think you are individuals but you are not! You will be a fighting machine, all parts in service to the greater whole! Some of you are flagging! We can't swear at you or call you pretty names. But Mother Corps has deemed us fit to put you into situations you will hate us for! Hate is a tool! Use it! Everyone on your feet! Fall in.

TRAINING MONTAGE:

- 1) Atticus runs rifle drills--
- 2) climbs walls--
- 3) slithers through mud--
- 4) crawls under barbed wire and through trenches--
- 5) bandages wounds, ties splints, injects morphine--

Through it, Atticus and Kappy are together, forging bodies and friendship in the furnace of the Marine Corps.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

Atticus lies on his bed, white tee and fatigue pants. A soldier enters, hands Atticus his orders.

FLASHES OF TEXT: Afghanistan, Helmand Province, Andar, Camp Canon, MAGTF Command and Control.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN, HELMAND PROVINCE - DAY

CH-53E Super Stallion chopper, armed and hungry, ducks and banks over dusty hills and scrub.

KAPPY (O.S.)
*I wish I was little bit baller,
 like Gustav Mahler--*

A shepherd glances up as the chopper zooms past, scattering the flock in its wake.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Atticus, Kappy, and a few other soldiers watch the landscape fly by beneath. Kappy continues to rap.

KAPPY
If I had a symphony I would holler.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN FIREBASE IEOVA - DAY

SUPER: January 2002, 1539 (3:39PM). Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

Afghan sun. A barren, brown world. Chopper takes off. Atticus, Kappy and a few other guys emerge from the dust.

Past a hand-painted sign: CAMP CANON.

KAPPY
 Gonna get the DoD to give me a
 waiver to grow out my beard.

ATTICUS
 Never give it to ya.

KAPPY
 Religious persecution--

ATTICUS
 You're a fuckin' madman--

Wind brings a massive cloud of dust, covers everything.

PRE-LAP: The scream of a Stinger Missile and then SCREAMING--

EXT. FIELD OF BATTLE - DAY

A soldier. Leg shredded at the knee. Atticus administers medical. Comforts him.

Dead Taliban nearby. Blazes of fire, black smoke. Bullets. Blood. Radio chatter. Apaches and SuperCobras roar overhead.

EXT. CITY PATROL - DAY

A dirty street with merchants, bakers, goat herders, children running, playing amongst shops, canteens, car tires, clothing lines filled with linens and wraps.

Atticus and Kappy on foot patrol, loose, casual but alert. Interacting with Afghani civilians. A cautious calm.

Humvees creep along near the patrol soldiers. *THE SWAN OF TUONELA*, OP.22 NO.2 plays over--

INT. MEDICAL TENT - DAY

Atticus listens to an iPod. Eyes closed. He's older now-- dirtier, grizzled. More compact.

Kappy enters. Full beard. Majestic black. Pulls the earbuds out of Atticus' ears.

KAPPY

You can't live on music alone.

EXT. MEDICAL TENT - DAY

They head toward mess.

ATTICUS

They shipped Berman to Kandahar.
Probably gonna lose his leg.

KAPPY

I was going to suggest Berlioz's
Symphonie Fantastique, but maybe
something lighter?

He steps in front and stares at Atticus' eyes.

KAPPY

Still clean. Good. I'll know, so
don't let me down.

PRE-LAP: ZIPPPPP SOUND then CRACK CRACK CRACK of rifle fire.

EXT. MOUNTAIN BRUSH - DAY

Atticus wraps a wounded man's arm. The rush of battle around him. Concentrates. Everything goes silent.

He glances up. Past the smoke. A hawk floats. Above it all.

A helicopter pulses overhead. Rattle of machine gun fire. Bullets rip the ground. He dives, blocking the wounded.

Another soldier screams, torso blown open, exposing guts. Atticus crawls over, injects him with morphine.

ATTICUS

Here. Get you home quick.

He takes his hand. Squeezes tight. The morphine takes hold. Atticus' eyes water. Gazes into the sky. It's too much.

He pulls out a tiny flask. Guzzles that medicine.

INT. CAMP BARRACKS - NIGHT

Atticus reads the Koran by penlight. Kappy below, writing.

ATTICUS

People want to be fucking right.
That's what this is all about. The
war. 9/11. The whole damn history
of the world.

KAPPY

You seem very sure of yourself.

Atticus closes the Koran. He swings down from the top bunk.

ATTICUS

God commanded Abraham to sacrifice
his son. How fucked up is that?

KAPPY

Allah calls for sacrifice as an act
of love and obedience.

ATTICUS

Sacrifice isn't something you do to
someone else.

KAPPY

Abraham also suffered. His father
before him, and his grandfather's
father, all of them in a long line.
They all suffered. Allah's demands
are just, but hard.

ATTICUS

Well that's fucked up.

Kappy rolls out. Slams his notebook shut. Annoyed.

KAPPY

And yet here are you. In
Afghanistan. 2300. Get some sleep.

Atticus shines the penlight into Kappy's face.

ATTICUS

You're pissed. I can take it.

KAPPY

Okay. You think you know
everything. You show contempt for
what you don't understand.

ATTICUS

You want me to sugar coat reality?

KAPPY

Ask yourself this: what has being
condescending done for you here?

ATTICUS

Fathers should love their sons.
That's not condescending. It's
basic fucking humanity.

Kappy swivels on his heel and leaves.

INT. MESS TENT - DAY

Kappy and three other grunts--JAMES, MELLON, and LEE--at
chow. Atticus enters.

LEE

Atticus! Over here!

KAPPY

He may not want to eat with us.

MELLON

Lovers' quarrel...

LEE

No lube. Bad business.

They crack each other up.

INTERCUT BETWEEN ATTICUS AND KAPPY

Atticus runs smack into GABRIEL (29), a Mexican-American
built like a Howitzer. Fully decked out. Beard. Scarf. More
warlord than Marine.

The food lands all over Gabriel. Everyone goes silent.

ATTICUS
Shit. Sorry. Here.

He tries to clean off Gabriel's front.

KAPPY'S TABLE

JAMES
Who the hell is that guy?

KAPPY
They call him the Ghost. That's
Gabriel Sanchez. Trained with the
SEALs, Special Forces. A legend.

Atticus holds out his hand. Gabriel shoves Atticus.

GABRIEL
Pendejo.

Gabriel stalks back to the line. Drama over. Talk resumes.
Atticus shakes it off. Continues to Kappy's table.

Atticus comes up at this moment and sits across from Kappy.

ATTICUS
A pissed off dude with a weapon and
unchecked aggression. Just what we
need here in BFE. Fuckin' prick.

Atticus glares across the tent at Gabriel.

MELLON
We'll leave you lovebirds to it.
Hey Atticus--don't let him leave
any hickeys on you. You know Kappy
likes it rough!

Mellon pulls Lee and James away, laughing. Kappy remains
seated. Atticus stares back with hard eyes.

ATTICUS
Look man. I don't wanna fight.

Kappy grins. Chuckles a bit.

KAPPY
Think of all that wasted training.

Gabriel muscles his way off the chow line and exits.

EXT. FIREBASE - DAY

They pass Quonset huts. A sortie flies over.

KAPPY
 You believe God's just an angry,
 unfulfilled man with a superiority
 complex, like Gabriel?

Atticus points as the planes blast by in perfect formation.

ATTICUS
 No. I believe in complex
 superiority. God's a metaphor. A
 fairy tale. Sorry.

Kappy acknowledges this in silence.

ATTICUS
 So what's up? You still mad at me?

KAPPY
 We've been here three years and
 somehow the backwards shepherds
 have us in the same place we were
 in 2001.

Kappy removes his turban. Hands it to Atticus. Embarrassed.

KAPPY
 I want you to have it.

ATTICUS
 Uh. Dude. I'm not... Sorry.

KAPPY
 What?

ATTICUS
 I'm not gay.

KAPPY
 Who says one man can't give another
 man his turban? It's a sign of
Sunnah Mu'akkadah. It means one is
 always reaching toward perfection.

Atticus bursts into laughter.

KAPPY
 You thought I was gay?

ATTICUS
 I mean, I don't know. No, but... I-
 -thanks, but you keep it. You're
 the better man. I feel like you're
 the one attaining perfection. I'm a
 fucker from Virginia.

Atticus tries to hands the turban back. Kappy rejects it.

KAPPY

There is no shame seeking to know
the mind of Allah, even if it's
unattainable. Whatever you're angry
at, it isn't me. If it's Allah, He
is eternal. He can take it.

Atticus nods, clasps the turban and peers over the mountains.

KAPPY

I love you. You are my brother. Do
you understand?

Atticus nods. Ashamed at feeling embarrassed.

KAPPY

It's hard to escape thirty years of
American influence. Love is not
such a terrible thing.

The sun burns down sending a golden haze across the valley.

KAPPY

There's a tailor on Jalan Tuanku
Abdul Rahman. It's a famous street
in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This
tailor makes delicious tea and will
tell you stories of when he made
clothes for the Prince of Wales. He
married my mother after my father
died. He's the closest thing I have
to a dad. I'm going back to work
with him. After this, I mean.
There's something magical about
making clothes, getting that
perfect fit. It's simple. Honest.
We need more of simple and honest.

INT. CAMP CANON CAFETERIA - NIGHT

A movie screen plays The Matrix Reloaded. Atticus, Kappy,
Lee, Mellon and others watch. Happy. Laughing. A good time.

INT. OFFICER'S QUARTERS - DAY

Kappy at a mirror. Massages in his beard oil. Sibelius on the
Jambox. Atticus reads the Koran. Kappy's back is turned.

KAPPY

So my great grandmother really
wanted my grandfather to be a
conductor. Her favorite piece of
music was The Swan of Tuonela. So
she named him Kapilas Sibelius. And
then my father was named Kapilas
Tuonela, and now there's me,
Kapilas Johannes Tuonela Singh.

Atticus takes a secretive shot from his flask.

ATTICUS
All the men in my line were
soldiers, every one.

KAPPY
We'll remember these days to tell
our grandchildren.

Kappy watches Atticus in the mirror. Atticus takes another pull. Lies back, buzzed, not drunk. He hides the flask.

ATTICUS
Hey, I saw we got another shipment
of DVDs. What do you say we nuke
some corn and check out a flick?

Kappy grabs a bottle from the officer's cabinet.

KAPPY
I've got a better idea.

Kappy pours a shot, pours another, hands it to Atticus.

ATTICUS
Dude. Why would you do that?
Doesn't Allah forbid alcohol? And
you know I'm not drinking--

Atticus scrambles to his feet. Pissed. Kappy slams his shot.

He stares at Atticus' eyes.

KAPPY
Don't sneak around--taking pot
shots at the enemy!

Kappy snatches the flask hidden in under Atticus' pillow.

KAPPY
Don't hide it! Ratchet this .50-cal
back and mow 'em down! That's how
you win wars, boy!

ATTICUS
Don't call me boy!

Atticus gives Kappy a shove! Kappy staggers back.

ATTICUS
What the fuck do you want from me?

KAPPY
I want to you stop running and
start facing who you are!

Atticus rushes Kappy, but Kappy sidesteps him. Atticus crashes into a cabinet.

KAPPY

You think you're the only one!? My father was just like yours! Only he bombed a post office! But you can't fight fire with fire! It doesn't matter whose side you're on. Either drink reality away or accept it.

Kappy pours another shot, raises his glass.

KAPPY

To the fallen.

Kappy does not drink. Sets it down next to Atticus. Atticus hands the Koran to Kappy.

ATTICUS

Here. I'm obviously not a good enough sinner for you.

KAPPY

Oh get off it. Just don't think salvation only comes by reading it.

Kappy leaves. Atticus feels the Koran. Picks up the shot. About to drink it. Puts it back down. But he wants it.

The struggle is real. But he's now resolute.

He tips over the tequila into the sink. He goes the cabinet, pours out all the alcohol except for one.

Picks up his flask. Fills it, then pours the rest of the liquor into the sink.

EXT. TRAIL - NIGHT

A night patrol. Atticus brings up the rear as they hike up a mountain trail. The squad is silent. Kappy tries to catch Atticus' eye, but Atticus is being a prick and ignores him.

A soldier, PVT BANQUES, falls out. Atticus offers his camelback. They fall behind.

ATTICUS

Private Banques, you are aware you can die out here like fucking that?

Banques leans back, shivers, sheet-white. Kappy runs up.

KAPPY

He's dehydrated. Low blood sugar.

ATTICUS

I know. You go on.

Banques VOMITS--

KAPPY
You need help.

Atticus stands watch as Banques retches. Kappy makes him drink water and hands him a chocolate bar.

Atticus peeks over the ridge.

ATTICUS
Shit. Squad's gone. Damn it.

KAPPY
They'll be in sector P-8 in twenty,
we can rendezvous if you can move--

Banques collapses into the dirt.

BANQUES
Fuck! I'm sorry.

KAPPY
Don't be sorry. We'll stay with you.

Kappy makes him drink again. Atticus sets a watch, rifle up, pulls out a ration. Alert.

LATER

Wind blows. Rattles old brush. Atticus drinks from his flask.

Kappy watches him.

Atticus stares at Kappy and takes another deliberate drink.

VOICE (O.S.)
If I were hajji, you'd be really
fucking dead right now.

Kappy scrambles to lock and load--Atticus turns to see a gun right in his face. He freezes.

VOICE
You three make more noise than my
niece did at her quinceañera.

Gabriel's face, eyes glowing hot, emerges from the darkness.

GABRIEL
Some fucking jihadis creeping out
there. Three birds whistling. Any
left in that can?

Atticus hands the flask over. Gabriel swigs.

GABRIEL
Drinking in the desert--a very good
way to die young.

Gabriel makes a sudden stab next to Atticus! He flinches. A wriggling desert mouse stuck on the end of Gabriel's knife.

ATTICUS

It's true what they say about you.

GABRIEL

Guys talk shit, amigo.

KAPPY

You've got the mark of God on you.

Gabriel rolls his fatigues up. Three jagged scars. Torso.

Banques jolts awake, startled from a dream--

BANQUES

Had the wildest fucking dream.

GABRIEL

If hajji finds us, we're fucked.
They will chop your fucking heads
off. Mix up a batch of hummus in
your skull and have a real feast.

KAPPY

That doesn't sound right.

A smear of red light streaks across the sky. EXPLODES in a stand of trees fifty feet away.

All four weapons scramble, stay low and tight.

GABRIEL

RPG... INCOMING!

He fires round after round toward the tracer's origin. More zips around them, pocks of dirt and debris as the air is ripped with metal

GABRIEL

Fire your fucking weapons!

Another explosion! Atticus and Kappy fire into the black. Banques fires blindly, screaming.

A round zings in! Another! And another! Gabriel goes down. He peeks up. Fingers the hole in his armor.

GABRIEL

Fucking close one! Motherfuckers
shooting up my shit!

Banques shrieks, spins back--hit in the shoulder--Atticus crawls to Banques, administers first aid.

GABRIEL

Stay here! Lay a fucking egg for
me. When I get back, we'll fry it!

Gabriel crawls away. A few more rounds whistle.

KAPPY
He's crazy!

ATTICUS
You have to be to stay alive.

Another round of firing. Back and forth across the valley. A single shot rings out. Night settles back. Silence.

They all wait, tense.

BANQUES
Think he got 'em?

EXT. TRAIL - DAWN

Atticus stirs awake--scrambles for his weapon--disoriented.

Kappy is already awake. He scans the valley.

Gabriel munches a protein bar. Kicks Atticus a bit.

GABRIEL
Nice firefight. You get any rest,
or did you shit your pants?

ATTICUS
This isn't my first rodeo, asshole.

GABRIEL
You duck and cover if someone pops
a champagne cork near you.

Gabriel kicks Banques to wake him up.

GABRIEL
Pack your shit, princess.
(to Atticus)
Two hundred says you don't make it.

ATTICUS
You're fuckin' on. End of my tour,
I'll be seeing you and that money.

Gabriel nods at the aggressive wager.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Rocky landscape. Atticus supports Banques. Gabriel leads. Kappy brings up the rear.

KAPPY
It's funny. We evolved to be the
smartest apes on the planet.
(MORE)

KAPPY (CONT'D)

What do we do? We sharpen our sticks. The other monkeys sharpen their sticks and we all run around and try to kill each other.

Banques collapses, shoulder bandage red with fresh blood.

BANQUES

I gotta stop, man. My shoulder--

GABRIEL

We're seven clicks from base. You want to sit and wait for a taxi to come pick you up, be my guest, but Sergeant Brunna and I will not be waiting. So, are you a Marine, or are you a guy waiting for a taxi?

Banques struggles up.

BANQUES

I got some gas in the tank.

ATTICUS

You make good choices, Private.

BANQUES

I just wanna get laid. All this fightin' and no fuckin'.

GABRIEL

Private Banque, you couldn't get laid if someone willed you their pussy on their deathbed.

BANQUES

Hoo-ah, sir.

Gabriel crouches. Stop. Peers around. Hillside. A glint!

Atticus pulls Banque down as a BULLET ZIP goes past his ears. Kappy crouches. and a distant rifle report--

ATTICUS

Two o'clock!

GABRIEL

I see it. 400 yards.

Another ZIP! Another! another! Banque freaks and runs.

ATTICUS

Banque!! GET DOWN!

Banque dives--and EVAPORATES INTO CHUNKY MIST as an IED detonates beneath him--

SOUND GOES TO HIGH PITCH WHINE, MUFFLED. Atticus gets blown on his ass, covered in Banque's gore.

Kappy crawls to Atticus. Atticus rolls--retrieves his weapon. Heavy breaths. Heart pumps. KA-CHUNK KA-CHUNK KA-CHUNK KA-CHUNK. Sights in. Echoes. Heart pounds.

POV through scope: Movement--BOOM! A blossom of red--

Gabriel ratchets his rifle. His single shot has found its mark. Scan the area--sound winds down.

GABRIEL

Amigos! You hurt? You alive? Fuck!!
God damn fucking fuck!

KAPPY

Atticus. Atticus. Look at me.

Kappy stares into Atticus' eyes, focused on some far away place. Face red with guts. Kappy holds his gaze.

EXT. FIREBASE STAGING AREA - DAY

Gabriel whistles a complex signal. MARSOC guys emerge from the dirt and scrub brush like octopuses abandoning their camouflage. Gabriel leads Kappy and Atticus to the camp.

GABRIEL

Don't lose your squad next time,
pendejos. Shit like this happens.

Two heavily bearded men practice knife maneuvers. They clear a path for Gabriel, who passes through wordlessly.

One of the Mil-Ops guys howls like a mad wolf.

KAPPY

I got you--come on, Atti. Let's get
you to medical.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) MESS TENT - Atticus at chow. Face blank.

B) LATRINE - Atticus shaves at a mirror. Face blank.

C) AFGHANISTAN VILLAGE - Atticus and the rest of the patrol sidle through small herds of goats, Afghani men, women, children, past huts, carts, wells. Atticus is grim.

D) VOLLEYBALL PIT - Atticus and Kappy watch the volleyball players slam home spikes and rebounds. Kappy talks, laughs, smiles, tries to distract. Atticus' face is blank.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. ARMORED HUMVEE - DAY

A Humvee's wheel rumbles over dirt. Atticus mans the .50-cal. Kappy scopes the side of the road for hostiles and IED cord.

The Driver is BILL HOLLANDER (22).

Kappy spots something ahead--a dead animal in the road--

Atticus WHISTLES--Bill stops the Humvee. Scans. Open plains, a few trash piles, some low hills a couple hundred yards off.

Kappy hops down, crouches--senses something--

Atticus swivels, eyeing the brush and outcroppings. A bird CHIRPS THREE TIMES--

The BUZZ of insects. Natural. But something's off.

Wire! Barely visible. Emerging from the animal corpse. Atticus follows it to a pressure plate in the road ahead.

ATTICUS
STOP! IED cord! EOD's going to have
to come through.

Kappy bypasses it. Steps back toward the truck--

CRACKS and ZIPS as shots hit the Humvee. Kappy dives to the dirt. Bill is hit--

Atticus swivels the .50 cal, fires into the brush--

Kappy crawls in the passenger side, pulls Bill away.

INT. HUMVEE

Kappy hunches into the driver seat and spins the Humvee around--just misses another IED pressure plate--

Atticus takes fire, ducks--

Kappy drives, one hand staunches a wound on Bill's neck--

ATTICUS
(on the radio)
Firebase, Rabbit Patrol! We are in
sector JB-13, taking fire--

BOOOOOOMMMMM--a third IED.

Atticus spins midair--ragdoll--lands--shatters his humerus. SOUND STOPS for Atticus. Rolls to avoid the Humvee that flips on its side and settles.

Atticus yanks the door open. Kappy falls out--alive. Kappy pulls Bill out. Alive, but bleeding bad.

KAPPY
 Spinal shot! Set up for assault!
 Wait for the cavalry. Your arm!

Broken bone juts through Atticus' arm--scattered shots hit the Humvee armor plating.

Kappy is slammed back! A burst of crimson from his heart--

Atticus pulls Kappy close, covers him despite his own injury. He screams--

Time slows. Two Apaches soar in low. DROP munitions all around the HUMVEE. Sabre rounds light up the hills.

ATTICUS
 FUCK! Hang on, Kappy!!

A Humvee rolls up. One MARINE jumps out, sees the damage.

MARINE
 Oh, shit. Hold all fire! We've got
 friendlies! HOLD FIRE!

INT. MEDICAL CENTER ER - DAY

NURSE 1 peels off Kappy's flak jacket.

Massive, pulsing wound just below Kappy's armpit. A burly surgeon--LT. COL. BRET COPLEY--shaved head, mustache----examines Kappy.

Nurse 1 passes an endotracheal tube into Kappy's throat.

NURSE 2 injects a needle into his femoral artery.

Nurse 1 rifles through a drawer for a thoracotomy kit.

Atticus grabs Kappy's hand. Kappy squeezes. Tries to say something, but nothing comes out.

NURSE 3 pulls Atticus away. Atticus hangs onto Kappy's hand. Kappy's eyes roll back. Blood pulses, cascades to the floor.

COPLEY
 I can't reach it without cracking
 him open. I can attempt a
 resuscitative thoracotomy and open
 chest compression to get his heart
 going but we gotta do it now!

He cuts a line with a scalpel from sternum to bottom ribs.

A nurse hands Copley a bone saw. Copley saws through Kappy's chest and PRIES his chest open. Kappy's lungs emerge. Two gray sacks, inflating--deflating.

Copley massages Kappy's heart with his gloved hand.

COPELY	ATTICUS
Manual compression, one--two--three.	Please, Kappy, please--!!

NURSE 1 COPLEY
Lost almost all his blood-- God damn it! I've lost him.

ATTICUS
Don't stop!! Kap! Come on!! Don't
let him fuckin' die!!

Nurses restrain Atticus. One grabs his broken arm. He screams in agony--he breaks free and stumbles out--

COPLEY
Code. 0841 hours, 11 September
2006. And get that man a sedative.

EXT. MEDICAL TENT - DAY

Two choppers angle in from the brown mountains.

The business of war continues around Atticus. He collapses to his knees. A hand rests on his shoulder.

VOICE
Puke it out if you gotta.

In the sun's corona glare--a silhouetted face. The man lights two cigarettes, hands one to Atticus.

VOICE
Get this man some medical help!

The nurses surround Atticus and lift him up, escort him back to the medical tent. For a second Atticus thinks the man is Kappy--but then he turns--it's Gabriel.

INT. MARINE HOSPITAL - DAY

Atticus wakes up. Gabriel grins sadly down at him.

GABRIEL
You've been out a long while,
amigo. Almost 22 hours.

Gabriel shows genuine pain and... regret?.. on his face.

ATTICUS
Those assholes--They knew we were
out there, they fucking knew.

I know. GABRIEL

ATTICUS
They're gonna cover their asses.

GABRIEL
Amigo. You're going home. Well,
they're sending you to Hilo anyway.

ATTICUS
Hawaii?

GABRIEL
I put a word in. You need it.

Gabriel hands Kappy's turban to Atticus.

GABRIEL
You dropped it.

ATTICUS (PRE-LAP)
I think he felt guilty.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - DAY

Dr. Davis and Atticus stroll among azaleas and manzanitas.

DR. DAVIS
Guilty? For what?

ATTICUS
I don't know. Just a feeling I had.

INT. CAPERNAUM GROUP ROOM - DAY

OFF the TV in the lobby playing a CNN report of a rare Afghan deer recently discovered in Afghanistan.

TV ANNOUNCER
The Bactrian deer is a rare sub-species native to central Asia and was feared extinct in Afghanistan, which has undergone decades of war, civil unrest and chaos.

Atticus and Dr. Davis stroll in. They stride past veterans in various states of recovery.

ATTICUS
Kappy tried to tell me something before he died. I have to go to Malaysia to find out what it was.

DR. DAVIS
Having a goal in recovery is important. But it's just one step.

ATTICUS

Have you given more thought on my request to be taken off lithium?

DR. DAVIS

Sorry, Atticus, but your evaluation includes treatment for depression and suicide--you are a risk--

ATTICUS

I get it. Thanks for trusting me.

He stalks off, leaves Dr. Davis alone and frustrated.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - DAY

Atticus grabs his pills from the nurse, swallows, moves on.

INT. HALLWAYS - CAPERNAUM - DAY

Atticus spits out the pills into a water fountain.

He keeps walking. Then double take. Inside a room: Bill Hollander sits morose in his wheelchair. Both legs missing.

Joshin kneels next to Bill. Atticus waits by the door.

HOLLANDER (O.S.)

It's not the legs--it's what I done over there--the legs is punishment for the awful things I done--

JOSHIN (O.S.)

You can be reborn into a new body, Bill. But you must let go of this old one first.

Atticus' face reflects a "What the Fuck" state of mind.

INT. BILL HOLLANDER'S ROOM - DAY

Atticus steps in. Joshin stands, smiles.

ATTICUS

Bill? I didn't know you were here.

Joshin strides past Atticus. Hollander stares, hollow-eyed.

ATTICUS

Listen. Do you remember much of that day? I was trying to piece together, see, I don't think we were hit by the Taliban.

HOLLANDER

Get out.

ATTICUS

I just wanted to talk--

HOLLANDER

Get the fuck out, man. Go!

Atticus stumbles back. He leaves Hollander to brood.

INT. CAPERNAUM, HALLWAY - DAY

Atticus on the phone. He holds a bunch of print-outs.

CLOSE ON: MARINES CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION (MCID)...
No evidence of Negligent Homicide or Aggravated Assault.

"Recommend OPERATOR [REDACTED] review be suspended immediately
and field rank and designation be restored."

ATTICUS

I understand. I was there. So was
Private Bill Hollander, who is now
here with me. Yes. He lost both his
legs in the same--yes--yeah, and
I'm just following up on a call I
made two weeks ago and I've been
waiting to hear back from you guys-

The other end hangs up.

ATTICUS

The fuck?! You fuckin' piece of
shit! You absolute stonewalling
motherfuckers!

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Davis opens the door and ushers Atticus in.

Atticus sits. Dr. Davis turns. She wears a proud smile.

DR. DAVIS

I'm proud of the work you're doing.
Four weeks. Twelve sessions. Every
time, you know what I've seen?
(Atticus shakes his head)
Someone serious about recovery.

Atticus tries to hide a smile.

DR. DAVIS

Why do you do that? It's okay to
feel good about yourself.

ATTICUS

Yeah, yeah I guess I do feel good.

DR. DAVIS

You should! Celebrate that. Now. So Afghanistan. The attack, when Kappy was--you also were injured, correct?

ATTICUS

Broke my arm in three places.
Guess I collect battle wounds.

He holds up the once-injured arm, noting the suicide scar.

DR. DAVIS

How was life out of combat?

INT. C-130 AIR TRANSPORT CARGO HOLD - NIGHT

Atticus strapped in. Arm in a cast. Beyond: coffins. In his hands: Kappy's turban. A butterfly lands on it.

His face blank, expression hollow. The butterfly flits off.

ATTICUS (O.S.)

Took to it like a fish in a barrel.

INT. 5 PALMS HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Super: July 2007, 5 Palms Hotel, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay

Off the RUM CASK hanging above the bar... Atticus nurses a beer. He ignores the chunky TOURIST who waddles up.

TOURIST

Excuse me, sir? Marines, right?
Recognized the tattoo. My nephew's enlisting. Kid's crazy, wants to save the world--we're from Baraboo, Wisconsin--go Thunderbirds! Anyway. I wanted to tell you we appreciate what you're doing over there.

Atticus raises his bottle in a mock toast, takes a swig.

EXT. KAILUA BEACH - DAWN

Atticus reclines on a dune--drunk off his ass. Pours Patron into cup of black coffee.

A man crests the dune at a jog. This is BUMBY (30s), a friend with more smarts than empathy. Atticus notices him, struggles to his feet in a drunken parade of limbs.

ATTICUS
Holy shit! Bumby fucking Anderson!
How the fuck are you? What brings
you to Ha-Why-Ee? Check it out! I
got a free pass outta hell.

He holds up his cast arm. Bumby is friendly and concerned.

PACIFIC OCEAN

Bumby and Atticus stand in the surf.

ATTICUS
I used to swim every morning before
the world woke up. It was peaceful.

Coffee's gone. Atticus takes a pull from the bottle.

BUMBY
Isn't it a bit early for tequila?

ATTICUS
Every time's the right time for
fucking tequila.

BUMBY
You hit it... a little hard.

ATTICUS
Why the hell are you so bound and
determined to give me a sermon at
six in the goddamn morning?

Atticus takes a sip, pours more tequila in, lights a
cigarette and breathes in deep.

ATTICUS
Two IEDs, no remote trigger.
Pressure plates. No reason for
hajji to be there. Little things.

BUMBY
Don't do this.

ATTICUS
The Marine who radioed to stop
dropping. We've got friendlies, he
said. They were targeting our
sector. JB-13. Why would they do
that? They knew we were on patrol.

Bumby literally steers him away from the water.

BUMBY
C'mon. It doesn't help anything to
think about that shit.

ATTICUS

Six weeks out 'til this fuckin' arm mends. After that, I only hope they cut me loose. If not...

Atticus mimes shooting himself in the head.

BUMBY

Buddy in the 4th, his wife has a patch near Hilo. Peaceful. Better than staying on base anyway. Can't see Candy saying no to a fellow grunt. I think you could use it.

Atticus stares at Bumby.

ATTICUS

I'm going to find the sonofabitch who killed Kappy.

BUMBY

Sure. Get some rest. Yeah? Read, write, whatever. Just stay off the fucking bottle, will you?

ATTICUS

Whatever the universe wants.

Atticus chucks the empty bottle into the ocean. Surf brings it right back.

ATTICUS

The universe has spoken! Wooo!!!

EXT. ACCESS ROAD - DAY

Off tropical trees and lush flora: tires splash orange mud.

INT. JEEP - DAY

CANDY (40s) drives. Damaged, yet self-assured. Doesn't care how her gum-chewing looks or sounds. A baby WAILS in back.

Atticus wears hangover sunglasses. Every bump, engine roar, and infant shriek is hell for his head.

CANDY

Bumby says you grew up together?

Candy rubs a wedding ring with her thumb. Smiles at Atticus.

He tries to avoid eyeing her bare thigh. Not very well.

CANDY

Probably been a while since you saw any civilian ladies, huh? You're pretty quiet, but most of them are.

ATTICUS
Most of who?

CANDY
Soldiers who come back.

ATTICUS
Your husband's in Iraq?
She nods. Loneliness. Hikes her skirt even higher.

CANDY
He's been gone a long time.

EXT. ACCESS ROAD - DAY

The truck drives on. Pacific ocean beyond. Clouds gather.

EXT. CANDY'S FARM - DAY

The jeep parks. Atticus steps out, glances around. It's a small plot, not well kept, with free-range chickens and a horse out in a small fenced field in front.

Candy unbuckles the baby and hands her to Atticus, who flinches but holds her.

CANDY
This damn seat's kinda--
The latch pops loose and she pulls out the seat.
He follows her up to the porch. The baby coos at him.

ATTICUS
What's her name?

CANDY
Felicia.

He smiles at Felicia, tickles her chin and grabs her finger.

ATTICUS
Hi Felicia. Pretty name.

CANDY
Means happy.

Felicia giggles at Atticus, who takes his sunglasses off and lets her play with them a bit.

INT. CANDY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Atticus at the sink. He drinks water, stares out the window. Fiji fan palms. Woods past that. Dark. Foreboding.

Candy enters. Sari, wet hair. Atticus turns, tries not to leer, but intrigued by her sensuality.

CANDY
I just put her down for a nap.

ATTICUS
How old is she?

CANDY
Comin' up on a year.

Atticus glances around. Small. Very lived in.

CANDY
Why don't you come lay down?

She leads him through the hallway, bare feet on floorboards.

INT. CANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

She slips the sari down her back and turns. He pulls away.

ATTICUS
You're married--

CANDY
My husband's 10,000 miles away. We
kinda... have an agreement.

ATTICUS
It's been a while for me.

CANDY
That's okay.

She touches his face. Gentle. Comforting. She kisses him. He reciprocates. He pulls his shirt off. Awkward with his cast.

LATER

TV drones. Atticus stares at the wall. Smokes. Candy sleeps.

INT. CANDY'S KITCHEN - MAGIC HOUR

Atticus. Beer from the fridge. Swigs it hard. Candy emerges, leans against the door frame.

CANDY
I'll take some.

He swivels, alert. Then. Nods. Hands her the beer.

CANDY

Got to get this place cleaned up,
sorry about the mess, but, just me
and the baby. I get kinda lazy. I
admit it isn't a great quality.

She lights a candle, but she drops it with a sharp thud--
Gunfire echoes in his head. He flinches, ducks--

CANDY

Jesus, you went all ashy.

He whirls--the room spins. He grips Candy hard. Panic
overwhelms him. He shoves her back. Where's the exit?

EXT. CANDY'S FARM - MAGIC HOUR

Atticus stumbles out. Orienting. The sun's closing rays calms
him. He eyes the waving acacia branches. Breathing slows.

Candy runs out behind. She wants to help. Doesn't know how.

CANDY

You okay?

ATTICUS

I'm fine.

He's not.

INT. CANDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus and Candy go at it.

CANDY

You okay?

ATTICUS

Yeah, you?

CANDY

Yeah. Not so... okay there. Good.

Felicia cries--

ATTICUS

Felicia's hungry.

CANDY

Don't go away, okay?

Atticus nods, grins. Candy throws an oversized shirt on. He
grabs his smokes and lights one. Relaxed.

She re-enters, holding and bopping with Felicia.

CANDY
Wanna hold her? She likes to feel
strong arms. Put that thing out,
what are you nuts?

He stubs the cigarette out. She hands Felicia to him. He cradles her, peers down like a scientist. His expression changes. Like he's seeing what life means for the first time.

ATTICUS
She's really amazing.

CANDY
She's my light. I wish I'd been
more responsible when I was
younger, I wouldn't feel like a
fuckup but--

ATTICUS
I don't think you're a fuckup.

CANDY
We're all human, you know?

Felicia gazes back. Atticus stares at his future.

EXT. KAILUA BAY - DAY

Atticus swims. Focused. Slicing through waves.

EXT. KAILUA BEACH - DAY

Atticus on the beach. Rests. Alone. Stares over the water. Unconsciously he rubs his wrist scar. He hears rustling.

It's a shivering baby deer hidden in the grass.

ATTICUS
Hey there... where's your mama?
He pets the fawn. One of its legs has a cut hamstring.

ATTICUS
Shit...

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Atticus carries the fawn up the road toward Candy's house.

INT. CANDY'S PLACE, BATHROOM - DAY

Grabs bandage, gauze, antiseptic.

KITCHEN

He snags one of Candy's baby bottles from the cupboard. Fills it with warm milk from the stove.

ATTICUS' ROOM

Atticus wraps the wound. He tucks the deer into a pile of blankets and a pillow.

He feeds the baby deer from the bottle, but it doesn't want any. Milk spills out onto the blanket.

The fawn lays its head down. Atticus doesn't know what to do.

PRE-LAP: GUNFIRE, EXPLOSIONS

INT. ATTICUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus wakes up, wild-eyed. Echoes of war fade. The fawn stares at him. He crawls to the fawn, pets it.

ATTICUS
Fight ain't over, little guy. We're
fuckin' beating this.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Atticus carries the fawn as he passes the first shops.

An old man practices Tai Chi in his yard. Stares at Atticus.

EXT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

A drab cement building. Ill-kept grounds. Dead bushes. A sign: "Dr. Alvin Hammond, Veterinarian"

DR. HAMMOND
You want, I can put him to sleep--

INT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE, EXAM ROOM - DAY

A blonde-headed older gentleman--DR HAMMOND (60) holds up X-Rays of the fawn's leg.

ATTICUS
What? No. Can you do surgery?

DR. HAMMOND
This deer cannot survive in the
wild. Its tendon won't grow back,
even with surgery. There's no
animal rescue on the island that
takes deer. I'm sorry. That's life.

ATTICUS

Not today.

Atticus gathers the fawn up. There's nothing else to say.

INT. THE BOOKBINDER COFFEE SHOP - DAY

This coffee shop is also a minor library. Shelves of books all over the place.

Atticus approaches the counter, the deer in his arms nestled like a puppy. The tattooed Goth BARISTA melts at the sight.

BARISTA

Oh my god. What is that? Is that a deer? Holy shit, it's so fuckin'-- sorry--freaking cute!!

She reaches over to cuddle it a bit.

ATTICUS

Could I get an espresso? For here? If it's okay?

He nudges with the deer. Barista glances around.

BARISTA

Yeah, yeah. I'll bring it out to you. On the house.

ATTICUS

Oh, wow. Thank you. And maybe some water for this little guy?

Atticus sets the deer opposite him at a table.

ATTICUS

(to the deer)

You wanted a cappuccino? How was I supposed to know?

Goes to a shelf, finds a book. He brings it back. Shows the deer it's an Encyclopedia Britannica.

ATTICUS

Old school research. Back before the internet, this is what we did. We just sat around and read encyclopedias.

He thumbs through til he finds the entry on hamstrings.

The Barista brings his drink over. The deer watches him.

He pulls out his flask--about to take a pull--when--

A Japanese woman--AUNTIE BEE (70s) enters. She waves at the Barista, then sees him, and her face lights up. A kind smile.

AUNTIE BEE
You're Atticus Brunna!

He hides the flask. Unsuccessfully. Auntie Bee ignores it.

ATTICUS
How did you--

AUNTIE BEE
Small town, word travels fast, and
Candy's got lots of friends here.
Don't worry, your secret's safe.

She pulls a shriveled mushroom out of her bag.

AUNTIE BEE
Local fungi? Emphasis on fun.
(she pets the deer)
You can always tell a good man by
the company he keeps.

Auntie Bee goes to the counter, jokes with the barista.
Returns with a cup of tea.

AUNTIE BEE
Sorry. I'm Hiroku Shazuki, but
everyone calls me Auntie Bee.

Dr. Hammond enters. Auntie Bee waves.

ATTICUS
Seems you know everyone here.

AUNTIE BEE
Important to know your community,
especially one this small. Some are
slow. Some are wise. We're all in
this together.

DR. HAMMOND
Listen to her, she's the best!

He goes to the counter to order.

ATTICUS
Miss Bee--

AUNTIE BEE
I can see you'd like to be alone--
we'll leave you to your reading.

She touches him on his forehead. He flinches. She presses
anyway. He allows her to linger.

AUNTIE BEE
Ask the Goddess to help. Think
small, be small! That's the way!
And stock up on water! Tropical
storm's coming!

She cackles. She and Dr. Hammond leave together.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Atticus wanders past a COWBOY (50s) with lean physique and mustache. The cowboy ties a horse to a hitching post.

OVERLOOK

Atticus lights a cigarette, peers over the edge. Waves crash below. Storm clouds gather. He glances at the deer, which is settled in the grass.

ATTICUS

What am I doing here? Do you know?

A meth-skinny man, shabby, holding a book, emerges from the woods. JAMES (50s). Stares at Atticus with fiery eyes. Thunder growls. Lightning flashes.

Atticus flinches at the cracking gunfire sound.

EXT. GROCERY/CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Atticus runs up to the porch as it starts to pour buckets. Lightning strikes the street! Atticus dives for cover to protect the deer from shrapnel.

The horse rears in terror. Whites of its eyes. The cowboy sprints out and calms the horse. He mounts up and rides off into the gray rain.

The Hawaiian native STOREKEEPER (60s) emerges.

STOREKEEPER

Holee shit, damn that was close!
You okay, buddy? Why don't you stay
here til the rain dies down. Come
in, have a drink. On me.

Atticus shakes his head "No." Another boom. He winces again.

DR. DAVIS (PRE-LAP)

You still have flashbacks?

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Davis leans forward and makes a note in her book.

ATTICUS

Not as much. The lithium, I guess,
kinda numbs everything.

DR. DAVIS

Why'd the deer matter so much?

ATTICUS
Don't you have a theory?

DR. DAVIS
Sure. I mean. Yes. But do you know?

ATTICUS
Hell isn't a place. It's not being
able to save someone you love.

INT. CAPERNAUM, JOSHIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus sneaks in and rummages around. Inside a nightstand: A syringe with clear liquid, and a notebook.

Page after page of drawings of trees. Each tree has a human face and limbs--the people are weeping. Some of the faces look like the men at Capernaum.

JOSHIN (O.C.)
The wood of suicides, from Dante's
Inferno. Theology aside, it's an
excellent book.

Atticus whirls.

ATTICUS
You like doing that shit, sneaking
up on a man?

Joshin approaches. Atticus stiffens.

JOSHIN
Unlike Dante, I believe a cell dies
when it no longer can help the body.
So the body must shed it.

He tries to take the notebook. Atticus holds on tight.

JOSHIN
Life and death are two sides of a
leaf. One receives the rain, the
other stays dry. But in the end,
the leaf dies, as does everything.

Atticus WHIRLS and before Joshin realizes, Atticus is behind with a KNIFE to his throat.

ATTICUS
Stay away from me. Stay away from
my friends, you get me?

JOSHIN
I'd be happy to have you as a
surfing partner.

Dr. Davis and his burly orderlies enter. Atticus whirls again, still holding Joshin hostage.

ATTICUS

Well. I guess we know whose side you're on, Dr. Davis. I figured it out. He says "surfing" but what he really means is fucking kill yourself. Water is rebirth, water is cleansing, all that shit.

DR. DAVIS

We're on your side. Put the knife down. C'mon.

ATTICUS

He's telling everyone here he wants us to end it. He's using code!

Atticus hesitates, sees he's in a no-win situation. He shoves Joshin forward. He dives for the window. They grab him. Stick him with the needle. He slumps.

INT. CAPERNAUM, ATTICUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Orderlies dump Atticus on his bed. Dr. Davis examines Atticus. Eyes heavy, dilated.

DR. DAVIS

He's regressing. We'll have to up his dosage. I don't know...

Dr. Davis notices the calendar. Stuffs it into her pocket. Eyes Atticus at the door, compassionate.

PRE-LAP: Atticus yells "KAPPY!" GUNFIRE. SCREAMS. EXPLOSIONS.

INT. CANDY'S PLACE, ATTICUS ROOM - NIGHT

Quiet. The light's on. Atticus twitches in his sleep. The dog-eared copy of the Koran Kappy gave him falls to the floor. SLAM! He screams and falls off the bed, rolls under.

The deer struggles, tries to get up, but can't. Atticus crawls out and cradles the fawn.

ATTICUS

I'm so sorry!! I'm so sorry...I--
I'm sssoo sorry...

The door swings open. Candy in her nightgown.

CANDY

You're gonna wake the goddamn baby--
-the hell is that?

ATTICUS

I'm sorry. I couldn't let it die.

He bundles the deer back into the blankets.

CANDY
Is it rabid?

He rises and brushes past her.

KITCHEN

He grabs a beer. Pops the top and starts chugging--then--stops. Holds it. Struggles.

ATTICUS
God damn it!! I just want to stop!!

He lets the rest of the beer drain into the sink.

Candy gives his arm a gentle tug. He's startled.

ATTICUS
Take it away. The beer, the liquor,
all of it.

He starts pulling beer out of the fridge. He grabs the liquor bottles, She tries to stop him--he won't be deterred.

CANDY
Will you be quiet? Baby's sleeping.

She checks her watch. 2:48am. He keeps going.

CANDY
Atticus! Stop!

He nods. Breathes hard.

CANDY
It's Felicia's birthday tomorrow.
Gonna have a small party. It'd be
nice if you were there.

ATTICUS
You want me at her birthday party?
Look at me. I'm a fucking mess.

CANDY
She likes you.

ATTICUS
I'm sorry. About freaking out.

CANDY
Go to bed.

Candy watches him, pitying him.

INT. ATTICUS' ROOM, CANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Atticus wakes up slowly. The muffled sound of laughter, chatting, from outside. The clock readout shows 1:16PM.

ATTICUS

Shit. Afternoon. How are you doing?

He glances at the deer. It keeps its head down.

EXT. BACKYARD, CANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Atticus peers out from the back door. Dr. Hammond smokes a joint next to some chickens. He waves at Atticus.

A few other people hang out near pastel streamers and HAPPY BIRTHDAY balloons, including Auntie Bee talking with Candy.

Atticus drifts over to the table where a birthday cake and some drinks are laid out. He grabs a piece of cake.

He sidles over to the blanket where Felicia crawls around like an inchworm. Felicia googoes and burbles happily at him.

He picks her up, smiles at her.

FELICIA

Dad-da.

CANDY

Oh my God. Say it again, darling.
Tell ma-ma.

Candy takes Felicia up in her arms.

ATTICUS

She didn't mean that, right?

CANDY

She never met her real daddy. Just goes to show you've got a real talent, Atticus. A baby can't lie.

Auntie Bee and the others beam in the background. Atticus is nonplussed but amused.

CANDY

You take to it natural. You're gonna be a good daddy. I can tell. She likes being held by you.

She turns, getting choked up.

CANDY

C'mon, everyone, there's still plenty of cake and ice cream.

Atticus stands. Candy kisses Felicia. She hands her back to Atticus, who is surprised.

Atticus holds Felicia closely. A moment of peace for him.

INT. CANDY'S HOUSE, ATTICUS' ROOM - DAY

Atticus feeds the deer more milk, but it's just not eating.

ATTICUS
C'mon, man. Don't do this. You
gotta eat, you're not gonna make it
if you don't fuckin' eat.

The deer is hurting. It gives him that black-glass eyed stare. Helpless. Atticus really tries to avoid crying.

ATTICUS
Fine. You do what you want. I'm
trying here. What are you doing?

INT. CANDY'S HOUSE - CANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Atticus smokes in bed next to Candy. He reads the Koran. Candy watches him. He notices.

ATTICUS
What?

CANDY
Nothing. Just, you're really
handsome, is all.

ATTICUS
But what about my brains?

Candy laughs. He uses a spatula to scratch under the cast.

CANDY
When I broke my foot, mine itched
like the dickens.

ATTICUS
One more week. I'll be getting my
marching orders too, so I'll be out
of your hair.

CANDY
Maybe before you leave, you could
tack up that netting on the coop.

ATTICUS
Sure. I always wanted chickens, you
know? Actually it's sort of my
dream to have a farm some day.

CANDY
What about that deer?

ATTICUS
It still won't eat.

He sits up.

ATTICUS
Why don't you ever talk about...
your husband?

She rolls away from him.

CANDY
What about you? How are you doing?

ATTICUS
C'mon. What's he like?

CANDY
He's kind. He's kinda big. But.
Soft, and very gentle.

ATTICUS
You two are sort of like yin and
yang then.

CANDY
You ever get close to anyone?

ATTICUS
I did. Very close. But my... there
was too many ways we--I--would have
fucked things up.

She sits up and away from him.

CANDY
Why do you do that?

ATTICUS
Do what?

CANDY
Put yourself down.

ATTICUS
I'm just being honest.

CANDY
Don't you feel like you deserve
better than to always think the
worst of yourself?

ATTICUS
I thought women liked that
sensitive soul shit.

CANDY

That's not sensitive, it's a self-involved pity party.

ATTICUS

Where's this coming from?

CANDY

You keep on this way, this godawful cloud you live under every day, nothing's gonna fucking change. I'm not saying don't feel shit. I'm saying: FEEL SHIT. Then let it go.

ATTICUS

You don't know a thing about me--

CANDY

Because you won't let me. Like a giant wall around you.

ATTICUS

Walls protect the ones you love.

CANDY

--Please. Lemme guess, mom or dad didn't love you enough? Welcome to America. If you believe in God and especially if you don't, man, life is short and you deserve to enjoy at least a few minutes of it. You know what'll happen if you don't let it go?

ATTICUS

I know how PTSD works. Trust me.

CANDY

You don't know enough! The last time I spoke with my husband was 253 days ago! He says talking and seeing me makes it harder. He'd rather be in a firefight than talk to me. He's never even seen his little girl! And I know--I know--he ain't coming back. Even if he does, he won't be the same. But you're here. Right now. If you would just fuckin' stay--

ATTICUS

Stay? Stay what?

CANDY

Stay here! With me and Felicia.

ATTICUS

Candy...I...

CANDY
 Forget it. Stupid. God. Being
 human's such a pain in the ass.

She wipes her tears. Once again tough, independent Candy.

CANDY
 I understand. I'm not what you
 want. But could you...just once...
 try to want me? For me?

Atticus leans forward and kisses her--this surprises them
 both. She kisses him back. They become passionate.

INT. CANDY'S ROOM - DAWN

Candy asleep. Atticus rises, puts on shirt and pants.

EXT. CANDY'S HOUSE, CHICKEN COOP - DAY

Atticus tacks netting up. Wind whips the acacias and palms.
 He seems at peace. Domesticity agrees with him.

He smiles at the antics of chickens scratching in the dirt.

The same man Atticus saw on Main Street--James--holds a well-
 worn King James Bible--emerges from the woods. Stumbles
 toward Atticus like a zombie.

Atticus is on edge, not wanting to piss this guy off. James
 waves the bible as if conducting a storm.

JAMES
 Blessed are the meek, for they
 shall inherit all this shit! Are
 you meek, my man?

ATTICUS
 Sometimes.

JAMES
 And you be a peacemaker? No
 warmongers in the Kingdom!

ATTICUS
 I'm both, man. Listen--you'd better
 go. Storm's on its way.

JAMES
 --You're on a journey to salvation!
 You have an incorruptible
 inheritance in Christ! But first--
 you must face the fire! Then the
 stairway to the ocean where you
 will be baptized and saved!!

James raises the Bible. Fire and brimstone preacher man. Lightning flashes. Not good for Atticus.

JAMES
Incorruptible, undefiled and that
fadeth not away! Hell yeah!!

James tries to throttle Atticus, who shoves James back.

James keeps coming, so Atticus clips him on the jaw. James laughs, bleeds from a split lip.

JAMES
The icicles are disintegrating! I
take nothing from you on this
matter! My counsel is with God! Go!

It rains. Atticus runs back to the house. James laughs as lightning crashes and wind blows.

ATTICUS (PRE-LAP)
I'm a combat Marine and he scared
the ever-lovin' shit out of me.

INT. CANDY'S HOUSE, MAIN ROOM - DAY

Atticus on the phone. Storm outside.

ATTICUS
Haven't been sleeping too good. At
least the cast comes off tomorrow.

Atticus lights a cigarette. Paces.

BUMBY (FILTERED)
Come onto the base. See a doc about
your sleep. Okay? And make an
appointment to see a counselor--

Atticus pets the fawn, but it's dead. His face grows hard.

ATTICUS
Bumby, I gotta go.

EXT. CANDY'S BACK YARD - DAY

Atticus digs a grave. Rain falls. He's distraught.

James approaches in dignified silence. He stands watch as Atticus pushes the last of the dirt over the grave.

JAMES
I'm sorry, my man.

Atticus rises. James embraces Atticus.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Atticus gets examined by a disinterested base physician.

DOCTOR

(writes a script)

I'm writing you a prescription for
Klonopin, but it's to help you re-
regulate your sleep. Don't drink
while you take this.

INT. KANEOHE BAY MCB PHARMACY - DAY

Atticus hands the pharmacist his prescription and military
ID. Atticus looks like hammered shit.

PHARMACIST

Are you thinking of harming
yourself or anyone else?

ATTICUS

Just the fucking pills.

PHARMACIST

That language won't be tolerated.

ATTICUS

Give me the fucking pills and I'll
fucking leave, so you won't have to
hear that kind of fucking language.

PHARMACIST

Just take it easy, son.

ATTICUS

We're in fucking Ha-why-ye. Aren't
we all just taking it easy as fuck?

A DUTY OFFICER comes in from the front at the disturbance.

OFFICER

You okay, son? Need to sit down?

ATTICUS

That's why I'm here. To get my fucking
pills so I can get some fucking sleep
so I won't fucking lose it to a bunch
of goddamn Maroons!

The Pharmacist goes to the back. Returns, scans the bag.

Atticus grabs it, rips it open. Shakes the bottle. One pill
rattles. He shakes one pill onto his palm.

ATTICUS

One fucking pill? Is this a joke?
Get shot at by my own fucking
company... lied to--

OFFICER
Take a knee, son. Breathe deep.

FLASH TO:

Afghanistan. Atticus on his knees. The shadow of Gabriel looms like angel wings--

The Humvee explodes--Atticus rolls away in terror--

BACK TO PRESENT

Atticus throws the bottle at the Pharmacist. Run!

The duty officer grabs Atticus! Subdues him. MPs arrive--

SLAM!

INT. MILITARY CELL - DAY

Atticus wakes. An MP is upside down, bars between them. The MP unlocks the door.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Atticus marches down the road in a torrential downpour.

The cast is gone. Atticus feels the arm and flexes.

He reaches the mailbox. Finds a letter addressed to him from the United States Marine Corps.

INT. CANDY'S PLACE, ATTICUS' ROOM - DAY

Candy checks in. No Atticus, just Koran and cigarettes.

EXT. CANDY'S FARM, BACKYARD - DAY

Atticus peers up. Hard rain. Clutches a letter. He drops it. It flutters and lands over the grave of the deer.

Disability discharge, effective immediately.

INT. CANDY'S PLACE, ATTICUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus packs a duffel. Places the Mala in, along with the Koran. A note falls out of the Koran.

SABASH'S FINE TAILORING
JALAN TUANKU ABDUL RAHMAN
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

EXT. ACCESS ROAD - DAY

The Forerunner swishes through red mud. Candy drives.

INT. FORERUNNER - DAY

Atticus sees James at the side of the road, stoking a fire.

ATTICUS
Pull over.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

James has bloodshot eyes. He bows, hand to chest.

JAMES
I'm sorry, man. I need you to
forgive me. The other day--

ATTICUS
It's okay. You need anything?

JAMES
When the fire comes, you must find
the water.

Candy drums her fingers on the wheel.

ATTICUS
Yeah. Okay man. You good?

JAMES
I am hungry.

Atticus digs in a brown bag. Gets a wax-paper wrapped bundle.

ATTICUS
Egg salad. Candy there made it.

CANDY
Best damn sandwich on the island!

James unwraps the sandwich, glances up. Blue skies.

JAMES
We're going to melt away in this
rain, all of us.

He ambles away, laughing, lost in his own world.

JEEP

Atticus gets back in the jeep. They drive off.

CANDY

He won't go to the hospital, just keeps smoking ice and looking for God to deliver him.

INT. FORERUNNER - DAY

They approach the guard station, where a soldier halts them.

CANDY

It's been real. Parts, anyway. Take care of yourself. I mean it. I'll keep you in my prayers.

They embrace. He exits the car and faces the guard.

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Atticus stares at the red glowing wing light.

On his tray table: a ticket for RICHMOND, VIRGINIA.

Across the aisle, a KID sticks his tongue out at Atticus. Atticus grins, sticks his tongue out at the kid.

ATTICUS (PRE-LAP)

Bumby used to say, "Walk toward the fire. Run to the sound of guns."

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Atticus is tired. Looks twice his age.

DR. DAVIS

So we come to it. The reason you're here. You okay to continue?

ATTICUS

What's one more day of therapy?

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, UPSTAIRS ROOM - DAY

SUPER: September 11, 2007, 8:13AM. OUTSIDE RICHMOND, VA.

Early sunlight filters in through gauzy white curtains.

ATTICUS (V.O.)

Can't take a fortified position by hiding in a bunker and wishing. I thought he would fire a few rounds.

Wispy, unkempt hair. White-beard. Lucius (now 72). Eyes unmoving. Large, calloused feet land on the hardwood floor. He creaks to his full height, mountainous, yet skeletal.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL - KITCHEN - DAY

Lucius taps the answering machine. Puts the kettle on.
Reaches into his pocket. Tobacco. Pipe. He lights up.

JULIA (FILTERED)
Dad, it's Julia. I'll be by
tomorrow with your groceries. Oh!
Atticus is back stateside! He left
me a weird voicemail--said he might
come by. Let me know if he does.
I'd love to see him.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL - LIVING AREA - DAY

Lucius puts a match-flame to newspaper and kindling. More
newspaper. A photo falls out.

It's of Atticus in Afghanistan. Tan camo. M16. Crouched.

Lucius puts the photo to the flames. The kettle screams.

EXT. VIRGINIA LANDSCAPE - DAY

A deer perks its ears. December snow flecks the landscape.

A crow takes flight from a branch. Snow billows down like
diamond shards against the cold winter light.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Atticus drives up a winding road, past a Route 28 sign.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, YARD - DAY

Icicles melt as Atticus pulls up in the rental car.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, MAIN ROOM - DAY

Atticus enters, silent. Light streams in dusty rays. He goes
to opens a window--

LUCIUS (O.C.)
Leave the damn windows shut.

Atticus swivels. Lucius hunkers in a chair.

ATTICUS
Scared the shit outta me.

LUCIUS
Marine like you? Hard to believe.
Well, come on in. Let's have a
drink. Catch up.

Lucius pushes himself up, grabs his coat, puts on his
gumshoes, opens the door, heads out.

KITCHEN

Atticus makes coffee. Eyes the Bushmills bottle, hand
lingering over it. But he leaves it.

Lucius returns. Armful of wood. Ax in other hand.

MAIN ROOM

Lucius throws the wood down next to the fire grate.

LUCIUS
Don't make a goddamn mess now. Just
finished cleaning this place.

Atticus sets one cup next to the armchair. Glances around:
The paintings. Wooden beams. He notes the empty shotgun case.

ATTICUS
You sold the shotguns?

Lucius adds wood to the fire, closes the grate, returns to
his seat. He takes a sip of the coffee.

LUCIUS
No, got 'em out for cleaning.

Lucius pulls a bottle of Bushmills out from the chair cushion
and pours some into his coffee. He peers up at the ceiling.

LUCIUS
You remember when we redid the
roof? Back in... what, 87? After
Hurricane Isabel. Not a leak since.

Lucius grunts, rises, grabs two canvas bags on the floor.

LUCIUS
So you're out. How's it feel?

KITCHEN

Lucius extracts the first shotgun, begins cleaning. Atticus
stands in the doorway.

ATTICUS
Five years, Dad. Not a word from
you the whole time I'm over there.
Even sent you a letter and a photo.

LUCIUS

You had something to prove, so did you prove it? You look like you've had a few drinks since you left. Maybe since you got back as well.

ATTICUS

And you look exactly the same as when I left. For the record, I'm sober. I wanted to be for this.

LUCIUS

Yeah? What is this?

ATTICUS

I'm here to resolve our shit. One way or another.

LUCIUS

Face it, Atti, you were always better at talkin' than doing. Hell, couldn't even cut yourself proper. From one Brunna to another, drinking too much and fucking up shit happens to be our strong suit. That's one thing your mother and I never had any problems with. She wasn't born a Brunna, but she sure took to the bottle like one.

Atticus' eyes narrow. Fury at this awful statement. He slams down his coffee, grabs the second shotgun.

ATTICUS

You never took me out shooting.

Lucius works the cloth into the barrel with the cleaning rod.

LUCIUS

Well go on if it bothers you that much. Shoot the crows who keep stealing apples.

Atticus locks the stock back into the barrel, brings it up to his shoulder and sights it out the window.

Atticus fingers the barrel. Swings it around at Lucius. At first Lucius doesn't notice. Then he does.

Atticus puts the gun against his shoulder, sights Lucius. Lucius puts his shotgun down and lays his hands on the table.

ATTICUS

We were good kids.

POV through the gun sight. Lucius, smaller somehow. Frail.

LUCIUS

Put it down, boy. This is why I wanted you and Danny to do the safety course. Never point a gun at anyone, 'less you plan to shoot 'em.

ATTICUS

All these years, you never thought to say... a single goddamn word of apology. Of remorse?

LUCIUS

You should thank me for raising you up right and strong. Ungrateful, all of you.

Atticus in heated hatred. Trembles.

LUCIUS

Give me the goddamn gun. You don't know what you're doing.

ATTICUS

I served the last six years in a war and you're telling me I don't know what I'm doing with a shotgun? The fuck do you know, old man?

Atticus ratchets the shotgun.

ATTICUS

Are you scared now?

Atticus inches closer to Lucius.

ATTICUS

Are you scared? That's how all of us felt. All the fucking time! Of you! You absolute--fucking--tyrant!

He gestures wildly, enraged.

LUCIUS

You're a complete and utter failure, So you take it out on me?

ATTICUS

I went to war to get away from you-- to get some fucking peace for once.

LUCIUS

And then you came right back... your mother was right, you couldn't stick law school, you couldn't stick out the Marines--hell. You couldn't even kill yourself right.

He stands. Advances to face Atticus.

ATTICUS

Julia and Daniel can make all the excuses for you they want, but my vision is crystal fucking clear. I will never forgive you for what you did. To Ma, to me. For what you did to all of us every single day.

A car door slams. Atticus turns his head at the sound.

Lucius lunges. Grabs the barrel. Yanks it. The GUN GOES OFF. The force of the blast knocks Lucius against the far wall.

ATTICUS

Oh fuck me. Fuck. FUCK! Jesus!!
Dad! Oh God!! Oh no no no
nonoonononono...please!

Atticus drops the shotgun in shock and horror.

Lucius is against the wall, a hole in his sternum. The air is saturated with pink dust in sunlight. The clock ticks.

Atticus falls to his knees, feels for a pulse.

JULIA (O.S.)

Dad??!?

Julia rushes into the house with an arm full of groceries. She sees Atticus and Lucius on the floor. The bag falls. Lemons and cans of beans roll everywhere.

INT. NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL, MAIN ROOM - DAY

Dried blood. Fingers fumbling with a cigarette, unlit. Atticus gives his statement to a police sergeant.

A coroner signs a piece of paper. The body is carried out.

WATER

--blue-green light. Diamond shimmers. Atticus is submerged, eyes closed. Muffled drone of someone saying something.

A figure stands above, obscured by the rippling water. Then-- Atticus' eyes open.

INT. INSTITUTIONAL BATHROOM - DAY

Atticus surfaces. Water cascades down his face. He is in a clawfoot tub. Tiles and cracked plaster. Faded. Old. 1970s.

Atticus stares at the cracked plaster wall. The word LETHE is carved into it.

EXT. MEDICAL SQUADRON, BUILDING 201 - DAY

SUPER: September 14, 2007, 0930 (9:30AM). Marine Corps Trial Judiciary, Camp Pendleton, CA.

A gardener tends the hedges. A few vets stroll past.

MILITARY JUDGE (PRE-LAP)
Ten months for involuntary
manslaughter, suspended with
conditions.

INT. ROOM 418 - DAY

Atticus at attention. A military tribunal reviews his file. A MILITARY JUDGE, center, peers over her glasses.

MILITARY JUDGE
Henrico District Court has asked
this panel to render a treatment
plan as a condition of your
probation. You have not sought PTSD
treatment? Prior to the incident?

ATTICUS
No, ma'am.

MILITARY JUDGE
Why not?

ATTICUS
I just didn't. But I want to. I
need to.

Paper shuffling. Whispered conversation between panelists.

MILITARY JUDGE
You are to be remanded to a
veteran's treatment facility for a
minimum of ninety days. You will
undergo psychiatric evaluation,
after which this panel will be
reconvened to review your case.

EXT. MEDICAL SQUADRON, PARKING LOT - DAY

A white bus. Maroon logo of a GRIFFIN PULLING A CHARIOT on the side. VETERANS in a queue load up.

Atticus takes one last glance at the grounds and steps in.

MILITARY JUDGE (O.S.)
"Long is the way, and hard, that out
of hell leads up to light." We have
no doubt your way has been hard.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - DAY

The bus travels through a tunnel.

INT. BUS - DAY

Atticus watches as California turns to irrigated farmland.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

The bus winds around suburbs. San Francisco skyline beyond.

MILITARY JUDGE (O.S.)
This is a chance for healing,
Sergeant Brunna. Good luck.

INT. CANDLESTICK PARK - DAY

Atticus and the rest of the vets watch the game. Many do not.

EXT. NAPA VALLEY - DAY

Sunburnt valleys and vineyards. The bus drives on.

INT. BUS - DAY

Atticus observes a vineyard as the bus passes. A WOMAN, back turned, holds hands with another MAN. She looks like--

ATTICUS (SOTTO)
Natalie?

She turns to the man, smiles. She takes the man's hand, then they're gone as the bus keeps going. Atticus slumps back.

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Davis writes something in her notes.

ATTICUS
I keep thinking about that Marine
who saw Kappy and Bill and me all
shot to hell, and what he said.
"We've got friendlies! Hold fire."

DR. DAVIS
I think it's a good time to stop
for the day. This has been a tough
session for you.
(she checks her watch)
I want you to work on your
exercises until next time.

She touches her collarbone.

DR. DAVIS
"I am loved and accepted. I am
loved and accepted."

ATTICUS
I'll do the exercises, but I don't
want the drugs. No more lithium. I
can't be on the shit.

Dr. Davis glances out at Linderhoot, waiting like a hawk.

DR. DAVIS
You know I can't do that.

ATTICUS
They knew we were out there. But no
one told them. So who fucked up?

She gently but firmly ushers him out. Linderhoot leers at
Atticus as they pass each other.

EXT. SEA BLUFFS - DAY

Inside the fence. Atticus smokes a cigarette. Below. Far out,
Joshin surfs. Behind Atticus steps Gabriel.

GABRIEL
Amigo. Heard you were here.

Atticus turns, breaks into a smile.

ATTICUS
Holy shit. They got you here too?

Gabriel takes Atticus' cigarette and a puff.

ATTICUS
I gotta get the fuck outta here.
Got me on lithium, and no one wants
to tell me shit on this
investigation. I've put in FOIA
requests, tracking down IDs of the
comms officers on duty in Helmand
Province during that tour, to
narrow them down one by one--

GABRIEL
--whoa whoa. What investigation?

ATTICUS
You know--the day me and Kappy... I
know the CO who put the order in to
drop munitions. But who called in
the drop from the field? Who else
was out there?

GABRIEL
 You fill your head with that, it'll
 drive you loco.

INT. CAPERNAUM RECREATION ROOM - DAY

Hollander wheels himself in. Alone, except for Virgil, who reads Les Sœurs Rondoli. Hollander approaches the window.

VIRGIL
 Hi Bill.

Hollander hoists himself up on the sill, opens the bay window, wriggles to the edge, falls backward three stories.

VIRGIL
 Bye Bill.

EXT. SEA BLUFFS - DAY

Gabriel gazes at Atticus. Intensity from unspoken knowing.

GABRIEL
 There's a beach road. Bypasses the
 main gate. Frontage takes you all
 the way to the 101.

ATTICUS
 We'll need a truck. We can cut
 through the fence and--

JOSHIN (O.C.)
 --Gentlemen. Wonderful surf today.

Atticus whirls.

ATTICUS
 What do you want?

JOSHIN
 Bill Hollander said the water was
 great for his phantom leg pain--
 could be good for you too.

ATTICUS
 Yeah? Why don't you go peddle your
 shit somewhere else.

KLAXONS from the main grounds. Atticus throws the cigarette butt in the rivulet. He jogs away. Joshin faces Gabriel and smiles. Gabriel's eyes narrow, stubs the cigarette butt out.

JOSHIN
 Can never be too careful.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - DAY

Orderlies and veterans gather around Hollander. Atticus sprints up. Virgil emerges, gestures for Atticus to follow.

SIDE ROSE BED

Virgil drops his crutches, digs into the dirt.

ATTICUS
What the fuck happened?

VIRGIL
Bill Hollander. The man couldn't handle it anymore, Brunna! Same thing we all got, 'cept he did something 'bout it! Get down here and help me look, man. Got some shrooms buried in this rose bed.

Atticus sighs, gets on his knees and digs in the dirt.

VIRGIL
Why do babies cry when they're born? Ever think of that, Doc?

ATTICUS
It's Joshin. He gets you to go surfing with him, but really he's convincing you to off yourself.

VIRGIL
I thought lithium wasn't supposed to make you paranoid.

ATTICUS
Gotta get more intel.

Atticus rises to leave. Virgil grabs and pulls him back down.

VIRGIL
Womb. Tomb--they're both doorways, man. But which one do we go through first? Huh? Think about--from the darkness to the light. We die--then we're born! And then it's a lifetime of pain and misery until we approach that black door in the ground. Fuckin cycle of life, man.

Virgil pulls a plastic bag filled with dark, strange lumps.

VIRGIL
--This--this is the real shit, the only way to look at life! Or say goodbye and jump out a fuckin' window like Bill.

ATTICUS
Ahh, fuck this, stay and wallow.

FRONT GROUNDS

Atticus runs up. Orderlies still gathered around Hollander.
Gabriel is nowhere to be seen. Joshin watches Atticus.

INT. CAPERNAUM, ATTICUS' ROOM - DAY

Atticus barges into his room. Waiting for him is Gabriel.

ATTICUS
Fuck it. Let's bug out now.

Atticus grabs his duffel.

GABRIEL
No. We wait for dark.

INT. CAPERNAUM HALLWAY OUTSIDE ATTICUS' ROOM - DAY

Joshin listens at the door.

GABRIEL (O.S.)
Tonight, amigo. I'll come to you.

Joshin slips away and around the corner. The door opens.
Gabriel emerges, then heads off opposite.

INT. CAPERNAUM, ATTICUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus paces. Waits. A soft knock. The door opens. Gabriel.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

Atticus follows Gabriel out. Empty grounds. They sneak past the tennis courts. Next to it--the sea path. Gabriel cuts the fence, crawls through. Atticus is about to go through when--

JOSHIN
Where do you think you're going?
Who's that with you?

Gabriel ducks into the bushes. Atticus turns.

GABRIEL
C'mon, amigo!

Dr. Davis and a coterie of orderlies emerges from the front entrance. Joshin waves her over.

DR. DAVIS
 Atticus, I'm disappointed. You
 realize I have to write this into
 my report as well.

ATTICUS
 (pointing at Joshin)
 This dude--is not here to help.
 He's got the men offing themselves.
 Bill Hollander. And I saw him
 talking to Linderhoot too.

The orderlies pull Atticus away from the fence. He resists.

ATTICUS
 Lifetime of war and you think a few
 chemicals will straighten us out?
 Or surfing monks?

Dr. Davis injects Atticus with a syringe. Atticus wrenches
 free--only to collapse as he tries to run.

ATTICUS
 Fucking--vampires...

He falls nearly unconscious--woozy. Orderlies lift him. Dr.
 Davis is unhappy at this turn.

A BUZZ of a security door (PRE-LAP)--

INT. VISITOR ROOM - DAY

Atticus, Laura, and Daniel sit at a table. Though Atticus is
 there, he's blank; numbed. Laura is concerned. Daniel tries
 to put on a good face.

DANIEL
 Guessing the food here's not much
 better than mom's was--

LAURA
 Your doctor said you tried to
 escape?

ATTICUS
 You of all people should know you
 can't escape what you are.

DANIEL
 We've decided to sell the house,
 split the money. Make a clean
 start, all of us. We deserve it.
 You'll be out in a few months and--

LAURA
 --We don't blame you, Atti--

ATTICUS

Laura. You deserve better than what dad shoveled at you your whole life. You don't need to do what you do to make people think you're pretty and smart, huh? Get help, okay? It's never too late.

Laura is shocked. Silence. Danny is confused.

ATTICUS

And Danny--man...he fucked all of us up, but you got a wife and kids and you somehow figured out how not to be so pissed off and, and... I wish... I knew how to be like you.

Daniel doesn't know how to respond. Laura grabs Atticus' hands, squeezes them.

LAURA

We'll be waiting for you when you get home, okay? Promise you're gonna be okay.

ATTICUS

Yeah...I promise.
(he rises)
Thanks for coming. I love you guys.
And tell Julia I'm sorry.

Atticus leaves, motions to the nurse at the desk, who lets him back through the security door.

EXT. SEA BLUFFS - DAY

Joshin holds court. The men in a semi-circle. Everyone zonked on lithium.

JOSHIN

The icicles drip and melt and make a sound until they are all gone.

INT. CAPERNAUM, ATTICUS' ROOM - DAY

Atticus reads the Koran. He fingers the paper with the address of the tailor on it.

Virgil enters, holds up a baggie.

VIRGIL

There's a fungus among us. You in?

LATER

Virgil and Atticus recline on the floor.

VIRGIL
 (Jimmy Stewart voice)
 I'm shaking the dust of this crummy
 little town off my feet and I'm
 gonna see the world!

They both crumble into fits of laughter.

VIRGIL
 Maybe you shouldda taken up that
 monk's offer to surf.

ATTICUS
 Surfing only takes you into shore.
 I'm going out, man, all the way.

Virgil is introspective now.

VIRGIL
 The crutches were something to get
 used to. My first fall was the same
 day I got home. I remember
 thinking--I thought my leg was
 going to catch me and it didn't. It
 wasn't there any more. Weird, huh?

ATTICUS
 I killed my dad. Shot him in the
 chest with a shotgun.

VIRGIL
 Was he a real asshole?

ATTICUS
 They broke the mold with him.

Virgil cracks up at this.

ATTICUS
 You're more stable on one leg than
 I am on two....
 (he spaces off)
 Tomorrow's the Fourth of July.
 Independence Day.

VIRGIL
 You feelin' independent?

INT. CAPERNAUM, ATTICUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus jerks awake. A rising KLAXON blares.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

Spotlights swivel to the cliff, illuminating driving rain.

INT. CAPERNAUM, HALLWAY OUTSIDE LINDERHOOT'S ROOM - NIGHT

A commotion of people. Voices wondering where Linderhoot is--

An ORDERLY emerges from Linderhoot's room with a letter.
Atticus shoves his way through toward the orderly.

ORDERLY

Back to your rooms, everyone!

Atticus snatches it from the orderly's grasp and runs off.

ORDERLY

Bring that back! Call Dr. Davis!

Atticus escapes several hands reaching for him--

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

Atticus careens outside to the back. He crouches by an old well. Alone in the driving rain, he reads:

LINDERHOOT (V.O.)

Dear Fellow Elbows and Assholes: I asked Joshin "What do we do with what's going on all the time in our heads?" He told me that I could ignore it, because these stories we tell ourselves are not the truth. I've resisted long and hard and I am through resisting. Trying to atone for the past is like swimming against a riptide. I've been pushing against the waves like some rock getting battered day after day. But I am not a rock. I'm a human being.

ATTICUS

"I won't attempt to fit things together that do not fit."

Tears on Atticus' cheeks. He sobs, wracked with grief.

JOSHIN (O.S.)

You are always disintegrating. We are all lost here, together.

Atticus spins, advances on Joshin, puts him in a chokehold and slams him against the wall of an outbuilding.

ATTICUS

What'd you tell Linderhoot? How many men have you convinced to kill themselves?

Beyond. Shouts. Flashlights shine through brush. Closer.

JOSHIN

I can't--I can't.... breathe...

Atticus releases him. Joshin coughs, recovering.

JOSHIN

You are healing yourselves from
life. From suffering itself. You
can't escape except by letting go.
So let go.

Atticus shoves him to the dirt.

ATTICUS

Candy used to say that. But she
wasn't talking about fucking offing
yourself. Stay away from the men!
Don't talk to them. No more little
round-table sermons. I see you near
any of them, I'll kill you.

Atticus runs off as the orderlies arrive.

INT. CAPERNAUM LIBRARY - NIGHT

Atticus studies print-outs from his military FOIA requests.

Highlights on RADIO REQUEST FOR BOMBING SUPPORT SECTOR JB-13.

He matches it up with a second report detailing time and
place of action in Helmand. Highlights on PATROL FIRE,
HOLLANDER, WILLIAM, WIA. BRUNNA, ATTICUS, WIA. SINGH,
KAPILAS, WIA, DIED FROM INJURIES.

The reports detail the same time: 1335. The REQUESTOR NAME is
redacted. He circles the redacted portion.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - DAY

Atticus chats with vets. Shows them the print-outs. Most are
polite but not into it.

Gabriel comes up.

ATTICUS

Tomorrow's the 4th. Main gate'll be
open with visitors coming and
going. Have a truck waiting down
the hill by the beach. Meet me
there tomorrow night.

INT. CAPERNAUM, DR. DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

Atticus watches vets set up for July 4. Banners. Balloons.
One grills a huge plate of dogs and burgers.

DR. DAVIS

We're almost done. Do you know what addiction is? What it represents?

ATTICUS

Keeping me for another ninety days?

DR. DAVIS

That was a decision you made when you tried to make a run for it.

Dr. Davis opens the door.

DR. DAVIS

Addiction is a response to a lack of control. We look for safety and security in harmful substances and behaviors. A kind of attempt at self-therapy, without the hard work. Like a wildfire. It consumes everything. Living with your father was a constant trial by fire. And no matter what you did, you could never escape those flames. So you tried to fight fire with fire.

ATTICUS

You got all these degrees and ways of talking about a thing. What's my fucking mission, Doc? Because you keep sending me off with no map and no coordinates and no fucking objective, and all I'm getting is shot at by my own fucking guys and it's fucking killing me.

DR. DAVIS

Recovery is more than just not using. You have to acknowledge it's bigger than you. Being addicted is more than always wanting a drink. You can face it. Or you can keep running away.

ATTICUS

Whatever my dad did, I still have to take responsibility for my own mistakes. I'm doing that. But I can't go forward without seeing some truth. I'm ready to do this work. I'm serious. I'm sorry. For being a shit patient.

DR. DAVIS

You're not a shit patient.

Dr. Davis makes a note. She checks her watch.

DR. DAVIS
Get some food, enjoy the sunshine.
Keep up with your exercises.

ATTICUS
"I am loved and accepted."

He stands. Extends his hand. She shakes it.

DR. DAVIS
You seem different.

ATTICUS
There's a big guy here. Mexican.
Name of Gabriel, you know who I'm
talking about?

Dr. Davis nods.

ATTICUS
So he's not a figment of my
imagination? Good.

He walks out. He turns.

ATTICUS
I remembered my mission. I'm close
to some answers.

EXT. CAPERNAUM, FRONT LAWN - DAY

Atticus plays volleyball with the other vets. It's a spirited game. He gets spiked on, and finds himself face in the sand.

The guys rib him for it, but it's a moment of happiness for him. He leaves the court and grabs a soda from the cooler.

From the tennis courts, Gabriel watches. He checks his watch.

EXT. CAPERNAUM MAINTENANCE SHED - TWILIGHT

Virgil on his ass, smokes.

Feels where his one missing leg would be. Can't stand the sight of it. Enraged, he hurls his crutches into the field.

He struggles to his feet. Uses the shed to steady himself.

Virgil tosses his cigarette butt and hops away. The butt smolders in the dry grass...

EXT. CAPERNAUM, FRONT LAWN - NIGHT

Off the HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY banner: Atticus and a few other vets disassemble tables, stack chairs from the cookout. He glances up at shouts and cheers from the volleyball pit.

Atticus spots smoke rising from behind one of the buildings.

ATTICUS

Hey! You--You--go get help!

Atticus runs. Vets glance up at the growing smoke cloud.

EXT. CAPERNAUM MAINTENANCE SHED - NIGHT

Atticus rounds the corner--The rear of the shed is on fire--out of control. Gabriel runs up--

ATTICUS

Find a hose!

GABRIEL

Amigo! We gotta go, this thing's gonna cross into the next county!

Atticus throws open the door of the shed as flames lick the roof. It's cluttered with garden and lawn equipment.

INT. CAPERNAUM MAINTENANCE SHED - NIGHT

Atticus checks around inside. Gabriel tries to pull him away.

Flames licking the inside now. Smoke fills.

GABRIEL

You can't fight it! C'mon! This is your chance to get out for good!

Atticus pauses. Decision time--

ATTICUS

I'm not going to run from this.

Atticus notices a stack of gas cans--eyes go wide--

EXT. CAPERNAUM MAINTENANCE SHED - NIGHT

He and Gabriel sprint away, yelling at the gathering crowd--

ATTICUS

Go!! Get back!!

The shed EXPLODES! Fire balls launch across the landscape. Everywhere they land, the dry tinder grass lights up--

The wildfire spreads to the other buildings, even the hills.
Dark smoke rolls down. Out of control--

ATTICUS
Get everyone back to the parking
lot! You! You! Check the outer
buildings! Check every room! Anyone
asleep, wake 'em up! Go!!

Atticus races away as the rest of the vets and orderlies
spread out--Gabriel runs toward the gate.

INT. CAPERNAUM, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Smoke rolls through. Atticus coughs--

ATTICUS
Anyone here!!

He races to the back. Steadily hotter further in he goes.

He reaches the back door--touches the doorknob--skin sizzles!
He hears pots rattling from a pantry closet--

CLOSET

Virgil lies on a giant sack of rice. Lollipop in his mouth.

VIRGIL (SOTTO)
I rearrange my thoughts like a
Rubik's cube, so the colors will
line up so I can slam the damn
thing down and say, "Yeah! I win!"

The door bursts open. Virgil is clearly high.

VIRGIL
But there's nothing to win. Like
war. Or falling in love. Or losing
your fucking leg...

ATTICUS
On your feet!

VIRGIL
It's just one foot.

Atticus lifts Virgil up.

ATTICUS
Where are your crutches??

VIRGIL
Don't need 'em.

ATTICUS
Come on!

Atticus supports Virgil--they limp out together--

KITCHEN

The fire comes in through the ceiling and walls. A glowing hellscape. Glints off stainless steel pots and counters.

The ceiling collapses behind them!

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

Atticus emerges with Virgil. Atticus sees Dr. Davis.

ATTICUS
(to Dr. Davis)
Dr. Davis! Take care of him!

DR. DAVIS
Atticus! Wait, come back!

Atticus doesn't hear. He runs toward the dorms.

INT. CAPERNAUM, HALLWAYS - NIGHT

The heat. The smoke. Hell. Atticus races through. Checks rooms. Coughs as the smoke swirls around him. Walls practically melt in the heat.

INT. CAPERNAUM, JOSHIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Atticus runs past--returns--Joshin meditates on the floor.

ATTICUS
You got about thirty seconds before
you're trapped behind a wall of
flame in here.

JOSHIN
I am not leaving. I've reached the
end of my usefulness.

ATTICUS
Oh shut the fuck up! C'mon!

Atticus rushes and lifts Joshin over his shoulder--

Joshin resists, but Atticus knows how to carry a wounded man.

EXT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Veterans are loaded into buses and driven off. The hills and buildings are a whirlwind of fire and ash.

Dr. Davis and Virgil wait. Anxious.

FIREFIGHTERS sprint up--

FIREFIGHTER
Winds are pushing this all inland!
We've gotta get you all out of here!

DR. DAVIS
There's someone still inside!!

FIREFIGHTER
I'm sorry! We can't wait any
longer--this is the last bus! That
road's going to be a wall of flames
in two minutes!

The main Capernaum building roof collapses as tongues of
flame lick through the dark swirl of smoke.

They hustled Dr. Davis and Virgil onto the bus.

The fire spreads to the road.

INT. BUS - SAME

Virgil peers out the window, stony-faced.

Dr. Davis glances back in horror at the inferno.

EXT. ROAD TO CAPERNAUM - NIGHT

The bus speeds away. Down the hill. Flames overtake the gate.

INT. CAPERNAUM GROUNDS - NIGHT

Atticus emerges from the burning dormitory. He faces a wall
of fire and the last bus leaving. He sets Joshin down.

ATTICUS
Looks like we're fucked.

JOSHIN
Everything dies.

Atticus runs around toward the side. The field is ablaze--the
hills beyond--wildfire tornadoes rise into the night sky--

The fire pushes them closer to the cliff's edge. They're at
the chain link fence. Unbearable heat. The tennis court
surface bubbles and melts.

JOSHIN
The icicles are disintegrating.

Atticus runs along the edge--finds Gabriel's fence cut.

ATTICUS

Joshin!! There's a way through!!
Get your ass up!

He runs back to Joshin--tries to pull Joshin up from his meditative Buddha pose. Joshin resists, shoves him back. Now they're surrounded on three sides by flames.

Atticus dives through the flames to the fence cut and crawls through. Singed, but alive!

Glances back. Joshin meditates as the flames take him.

EXT. CLIFF PATH - SAME

Atticus trips as he descends the cliff--he grabs a root--
Flaming embers fall around him from above--

The root tears--he slides half way down, hits a rock--careens off that and lands on the beach--

BEACH

No time to recover--above him: a flaming tree falls!

Atticus dives into the water as the tree crashes to the rocks in a burst of fiery embers.

INT. PACIFIC OCEAN - NIGHT

Waves. He keeps going, further into the darkness. Another wave. Another. The water swirls over him.

He's drowning. Lost. The crash of water! He gasps for air. Waves keep pounding against him--

A hand reaches down! Pulls him up. He spits up salt water.

KAPPY? No. Cliffside firelight reveals--

GABRIEL

I got you, amigo. The ocean ain't
drowning you tonight.

(Atticus sputters)

Going AWOL's serious shit, you
know? C'mon, if the road's still
open, we won't have to swim.

EXT. BEACH ROAD - NIGHT

They jog up to a truck parked under a tree. Far behind the fireglow. Atticus gets in.

INT. JALOPY - NIGHT

Gabriel starts it up. Atticus slumps in the seat, exhausted.

INT. JALOPY - NIGHT

Atticus sleeps. Gabriel slows down.

EXT. CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY 101 - NIGHT

A group of deer--eyes glint--alert at the truck's approach.

INT. JALOPY - NIGHT

Atticus wakes. The deer flip their white tails and flee.

GABRIEL
Fire didn't get 'em. I'm glad.

One deer stares at Atticus a moment more then bounds away.

EXT. CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY 101 - DAY

A golden, sunny day. The truck flies along toward the sun.

INT. JALOPY - DAY

Gabriel turns on the radio and sings along.

GABRIEL
"Mariposa, me retoza / la canción
junto a la boca / y tu imagen me
provoca / florar en ti, mariposa."

Atticus pulls out Kappy's turban, sighs in relief.

ATTICUS
At least I have this. But all my
papers. Kappy's Koran. Natalie's
necklace... it's all gone. I was
trying to find out what happened
that day, why we were attacked.

Gabriel white-knuckles the wheel. Atticus eyes orange groves.

ATTICUS
I don't know if I have the energy
to start over. All those FOIA
requests. Hours, hell, weeks of
cross-referencing military records,
tracking down IDs of the comms
officers on duty in Helmand
Province during that tour--

GABRIEL

--Amigo. I should tell you something importanté. You're going to hate me.

ATTICUS

You just saved my life. I can't hate you.

Gabriel hesitates, but stares ahead.

GABRIEL

Back in Helmand there were rumors of insurgents coming from Pakistan wearing stolen U.S. uniforms. There was even a local who swore the Taliban had purchased two Humvees from a contractor who was selling military goods on the black market, and we were trying to track the shit as it moved into Kabul. Well, we were set up, a few of us in MARSOC, just watching. I saw two men near a Humvee. I could only see one of them proper. He had a full beard, looked like the men we were tracking--these guys were bad dudes. Murderers. Rapists.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN, HELMAND PROVINCE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Gabriel, prone, peers through a scope at Kappy at the Humvee.

Gabriel checks his photos of the suspects. One has a vague resemblance to Kappy. He peers through the scope again.

INT. JALOPY - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Atticus has gone pale. Stiff.

GABRIEL

I called in the Apaches that day. And... I took the shot.

ATTICUS

Kappy...

GABRIEL

Lo siento, amigo. I'm so sorry.

ATTICUS

He was with us, when Private Banques died. You knew him!

GABRIEL

I made a mistake. I can never forgive myself. In another life we wouldn't be friends.

(MORE)

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Maybe it's for this reason.

Gabriel tears up. Looks like Atticus might break. But then--

ATTICUS
Goddamn it. How can you be forgiven
if you can't forgive yourself?

EXT. LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Gabriel pulls up. Hands Atticus two hundred dollars.

GABRIEL
You won the bet. I was wrong about
you. See you on the other side.

Gabriel drives off. Atticus peers up at the terminal.

INT. LAX TERMINAL - DAY

CNN covers the wildfires. An inset photo of Atticus appears.

ANCHOR (FILTER)
...and Sergeant Atticus Brunna, who
survivors say ran into the burning
facility but never returned.

Dr. Davis comes on screen, dirty, disheveled, exhausted.

DR. DAVIS (FILTER)
He saved the lives of a dozen men.
He'd probably say he was just a
Marine doing his duty. But he
should be remembered as a hero.

Atticus with a hat low, stands in line to board a flight. The
board reads KUALA LUMPUR for Malaysian Air.

EXT. STREETS OF KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA - DAY

The hot steamy sidewalks. Tourists, merchants, thieves.
Pedicabs, fast drivers, businessmen on phones, tourists
chattering. Vibrant and chaotic.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

Inside the shop, Atticus pays the merchant. The merchant
hands him a gun and a box of cartridges.

EXT. SABASH'S FINE TAILORING - DAY

OFF Kappy's note in Atticus' hands:

Sabash's Fine Tailoring
Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The sign in the window reads SHIRTS 200MRY, SUITS 300MRY.

A tab-collared military jacket rests on a mannequin, patches on it from police forces around the globe.

INT. SABASH'S FINE TAILORING - DAY

A bell dings. Atticus enters. A dark mustachioed man named SABASH (60s) appears from a back room. The air is smoky.

SABASH
Something for you today, sir? A
suit coat? Oxford shirt, perhaps?

Atticus glances around. Rolls of brightly colored material stand on end against a wall.

Shelves of suiting in grays, blacks, blues, browns. Sabash takes out his measuring tape, points to one bolt--

SABASH
Same cloth worn by his Highness the
Prince of Wales. Fits you.

Sabash has Atticus stand on a box and measures him. A young GIRL (13) brings Atticus a cup of tea.

Atticus clocks a small Hindu shrine on the counter.

ATTICUS
Islam prohibits the worship of
idols. You know, *haram*?

SABASH
Next door is a Chinese man who
claims his family sold tea to the
emperor for a hundred years. Now he
sells mobile phones. On the other
side, a family from Brunnei claim
they had great wealth and prestige.
I don't know about that, but their
roti is very tasty. This is
Malaysia. We are all mixed up here.

ATTICUS
When I arrived here some children
called me *mamanaloo*. Do you know
what that means?

SABASH
It means "meat for the Komodo."
Kapilas told me to expect you. But
first. You need a suit.

INT. SUSANNA SINGH'S COTTAGE, KITCHEN - DAY

Off an electric kettle ding, SUSANNA SINGH (66) pours water into a tea pot. She's a strong, proud woman who has faced grief head-on more than once.

SUSANNA

My husband--before--insisted our children learn English, Hindi, and Arabic. He never quite got over his colonial past. And he raged against it too. He built bombs, you know. But neither of us ever wanted Kapilas to end up in the Marines.

ATTICUS

Kappy just wanted to save lives. He did, you know. Save lives.

SUSANNA

--Why did you come here with these memories of my son?

Atticus removes a photo from his wallet, hands it to her.

It's of Kappy and Atticus, surrounded by smiling Marines.

ATTICUS

Because he asked me to. And because I wanted to know why.

SUSANNA

You Americans can never stop going to places you don't belong--Sorry--

Susanna accidentally spills hot water all over. She falters. Atticus feels his forearm, where his burn scar is.

SUSANNA

No. I am not sorry.

ATTICUS

There are many leaves on trees, and many trees in many forests. I was just lucky that Kappy was the tree next to me.

Susanna goes out the back door under the overhang watching the rain fall. Silent tears on her cheeks.

He hands her Kappy's turban.

ATTICUS

I'm not sure if you were the reason Kappy wanted me to come here. But I think he'd be glad if you kept this. I don't need it anymore.

She squeezes it in her hand, and turns away.

EXT. SUSANNA SINGH'S COTTAGE - DAY

Atticus trundles out into the rain.

SABASH

Wait! Sir!

He turns back. Sabash hands him a scuffed and dirty iPod.

SABASH

Kapilas sent this for you. Track 2.

EXT. KUALA LUMPUR SEA ROAD - DAY

The CALL FOR PRAYER rings out over a loudspeaker from the mosque a few blocks away.

Blue lanterns illuminate the rainy night. Chinese tourists eat and argue at an outdoor cafe as Atticus passes.

He pulls out the iPod, inserts earbuds and hits Play.

KAPPY (V.O.)

Hey there old buddy. You made it.
Isn't Sabash great? Did he make you
listen to his story about the Duke
of Wales? I suppose that's not
important, except, it kind of is.
The little stories from our past
and our parents' past, from our
friends, and from the days we spend
walking the earth. They shape who
we are. And I shouldn't have tried
to take your story away from you.

EXT. FISHMONGER'S MARKET - NIGHT

Fishmongers haggle with customers. Locals carouse in colorful saris and American tee shirts as Atticus wanders.

EXT. MALAY BEACH - NIGHT

Atticus at the stone walk iron rail, stares into the storm surge, the blue-gray sea churning up trash and sand.

Atticus checks around. He's alone. He digs into his pocket and pulls out... the revolver.

KAPPY (V.O.)

You're the man you are because of
the child you once were, because of
the father you had. But that's not
all. Remember how you stood up for
your brother Danny when some high
school jock stole his girlfriend?

(MORE)

KAPPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Your sister Laura--how you made her
 a welcome-home poster when she
 returned from summer camp. You're
 who you are because of the way you
 protected your family.

The moon bursts through the clouds, shining on his face even
 as the rain continues to fall. He takes it in, breathing.

KAPPY (V.O.)
 Johan Sibelius' *The Swan of Tuonela*
 captures decisive moments from the
 Finnish hero Lemminkäinen's life.
 Hunting, falling in love, fighting,
 even surviving his own death. The
 hero's journey into hell is one of
 suffering and redemption.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
 Nice evening.

A lilting, Italian accent. He quickly hides the gun and
 turns. Facing him is ISABELLA (32), imperial in her bearing.
 She's with friends, who have wandered ahead.

FRIENDS
 C'mon, Izzy, let's go!

ATTICUS
 Yeah. Beautiful.

ISABELLA
 I'm Isabella.

ATTICUS
 (he shakes her hand)
 Atticus. My name is Atticus.

KAPPY (V.O.)
 Sibelius once wrote that music
 begins where the possibilities of
 language end. If you can find your
 way home--your true home--you'll
 find peace. I sure hope you do.

EXT. KUALA LUMPUR QUAD - NIGHT

The sound of the town and the rain, and the traffic echoes as
 moonlight fills the rain-sliced air with diamonds.

EXT. ITALIAN FARM - MAGIC HOUR

Super: **Terlano, Italy, 12 years later**

Breathtaking vista. Fire-flecked sky. Gold tipped Alps. A
 small vineyard surrounds the farmhouse. Beyond, the hint of
 an ancient Roman town.

Older hands plug an ancient iPod into speakers. Sets them on a stump. He clicks play. Music swells.

Atticus, now 46, turns, hands an ax to BEATRICE (7), a scrawny, wide-eyed innocent kid with glasses.

The ax is too heavy for her. She's anxious, but he shows her where to grip. Unlike Lucius, he is gentle, helpful.

Isabella, now 44, emerges from a farm house near the forest.

ISABELLA
Dinner, you two!

Atticus notches the ax in the stump. Grabs the iPod and speaker. Beatrice takes Atticus' hand.

ATTICUS
A man named Johan Sibelius made
this music. It's from a piece
called *The Swan of Tuonela*.

Atticus kisses Isabella on the cheek.

ISABELLA
Oh. *Diano*. A fallow deer. Look.

He turns. A large buck watches them. Atticus stares. Their eyes match, the darkness mingled with the light.

He follows Isabella and Beatrice inside and closes the door.

THE END