

THE GENERAL'S DAUGHTER

Initial Writer: David Himmelstein

Revisions: Mark Montgomery

Based on a novel by Nelson DeMille

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FADE IN:

A DARK RANGE

of open ground bordered by black pine. Stillness. The shrill of insects. Thermal clouds flowing overhead, underlit orange.

Heat lightning flickers. Thunder sounds distantly. Half-seen in the dark, a standing form.

THE SILHOUETTE

of a soldier. Helmeted. Unmoving.

AGAINST THE NIGHT,

the shape of a hand, bound by rope. Jagged yellow electricity branches across the clouds.

THE SOLDIER'S

features illuminate. The face like a mask, no expression. A face of hard plastic. Eyeless.

A WOMAN'S FACE

in deep shadow. Staring upward in terror and sorrow. A tear glinting, spilling slowly.

HER VOICE

Father...

THE SKY

boils in fury, clouds churning, as if in God's answer. Crazy streaks of lightning fracture the sky.

HER EYES

flare, reflecting the flashing sky. A shadow falls over them. The heavens rumble.

EXT. CID HEADQUARTERS - FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA - NIGHT

Hot rain falling. At the lit entrance, two burly MPs standing sentry. Above them, a legend reading:

United States Army Criminal Investigation Command

BURNS (V.O.)

Gentlemen, this is Major General Joseph Campbell, Commander of the Post at Fort Hadley, Georgia...

INT. SCREEN - BRIEFING ROOM - CID HQ - NIGHT

Army footage. A general walks among his troops in the Saudi Arabian wastelands. Desert camouflage, two stars on his cap, a huge man, big of bone and breadth, iron visage, intensity.

BURNS (O.S.)

(CONT'D)

They call him Smokin' Joe. Forty years of distinguished service. Three tours in 'Nam. Served in Central Command under General Schwarzkopf...

Dust churning, MIAI tanks charging down a sandhill. Turreted guns hammering. Mechanized terror.

BURNS (O.S.)

The Gulf War. He stormed Saddam's Republican Guard with his armored division and helped retake Kuwait City...

Towers of black smoke spinning. Rubble. Slain Iraqis lying like black rags across the desert floor. Then, an airport, a crowd cheering as the General moves down the ramp of a Boeing 707.

BURNS (O.S.)

The General came home a hero. He's recently accepted an appointment to the National Security Council where he'll receive his third star. He's also considered a contender in the next Presidential campaign...

An exterior shot of the White House. Then an office within, a cadre of administrative and military leaders gathered with the President to effect strategic planning.

BURNS (O.S.)

With the military drawdown, General Campbell's election would be vital to our national defense.

General Burns sits in silhouette below a projector lens. The lights in the room come up. Burns, Commander of the CID, two stars on each collar of his battle-dress greens, gazes gravely along the length of a conference table.

BURNS

The directive from Washington is to clear the homicide at Fort Hadley before the General leaves command.

Several high-ranking officers and government officials regard him solemnly. Colonel Hellmann, Director of Operations, hair shorn in a military mohawk, face chisled and seamed, wants to clarify the directive.

HELLMANN

When is change of command scheduled, General?

Burns considers Hellmann significantly.

BURNS

In one week, Colonel.

Hellmann's adjutant, Lt. Rogers, looks up from her notations. Hellmann tries not to openly scowl.

HELLMANN

This may be a complex investigation, sir.

BURNS

And a volatile one. The General has been struck by a tragedy. We don't want to see it escalating into some kind of scandal that smears the Army or derails his future. Tight containment and rapid closure are imperative... What's the situation at Hadley?

Hellmann restrains his opinion of the timeline.

HELLMANN

The crime scene has been secured by Special Agent in Charge Hawthorne, sir. I'm assembling a team of our top homicide people for deployment.

BURNS

(frowning)

We have no homicide agents assigned to Fort Hadley, Colonel?

Lieutenant Rogers slides a computer printout over to Hellmann. He scans it, seeing a name that makes him unhappy.

HELLMANN

Chief Warrant Officer Brenner. He's on loan to Procurement and Fraud...

Hellmann looks up from the print-out, his eyes flint.

HELLMANN

He'd be my last choice, sir.

Burns stands, expression ominous.

BURNS

You have the objective. I want the investigation opened immediately.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - OUTSKIRTS - MIDLAND, GEORGIA - NIGHT

Headlights flare. A Chevy pick-up truck bounces over a rutted track, exhaust rumbling.

ELKINS (V.O.)

(deep South)

That's her up ahead...

INT. PICK-UP - NIGHT

Armory sergeant Dalbert Elkins, jittery and sweating, his face eroded by hard times, has his eyes riveted ahead.

ELKINS (CONT'D)

HQ -- White Americanist Movement.

The driver, Chief Warrant Officer Paul Brenner, stares through the windshield. Rugged, well-built, somewhere in his forties, at present he is gritty and unshaven, wearing the same type of battle-dress fatigues and insignia as Elkins.

BRENNER

Looks like they run a pretty tight budget, Elkins.

They take in the junked cars and old Harley frames rusting in the weeds. Ahead, a flood light burning from a squalid shack. Elkins draws feverishly on a cigarette smoked to the filter.

ELKINS

Hell, these old boys put all their money in ordnance. They see what we got, I gar-an-tee, they'll buy.

EXT. YARD - SHACK - NIGHT

Brenner and Elkins stand out of the truck, look to the porch where several dark shapes lounge in the shadows.

JOHNNY RAY

How y'all, Dalbert?

A backwoods baritone. Elkins squints nervously.

ELKINS

Up to no good, son. Heh, heh.

Johnny Ray saunters off the steps. Bald head, pirate's beard. Goes about two-fifty. Made of bricks. An extreme individual.

ELKINS

Johnny Ray, this here's my partner Armory Sergeant White. We go way back. He's good wood.

Brenner's eyes cut sharply to Elkins. He looks to Johnny Ray who studies him with keen intensity, his focus resting on his name tag.

JOHNNY RAY

Love that name.

Brenner manages a grin, noting a set of prison-issue lightning bolts emblazoned on Johnny Ray's forearm -- modified German SS declaring allegiance to an Aryan brotherhood.

BRENNER

Nice bolts.

JOHNNY RAY

You like skin art?

BRENNER

You bet.

Johnny Ray grins, turns. A short, stocky bruiser has appeared behind him. Deuce. Shirtless, heavily muscled. Bleary-eyed.

JOHNNY RAY

Sergeant *White* likes skin art.

Deuce focuses on Brenner insolently. Tattooed vividly across his chest, a rising eagle, a swastika clutched in its talons.

DEUCE

This here's a vision for him. Wants to see more, I'll drop my pants.

Low laughter from the porch. Johnny Ray has a dangerous glint in his eyes.

JOHNNY RAY

Deuce is my road dawg.

Deuce, high-strung and violent, lunges suddenly, snarling, his teeth bared. He barks rabidly, snapping at Brenner. An eerie and dead-on imitation of a pit bull.

More laughter. Deuce growls warningly, glowering. Johnny Ray chuckles cavernously, observes Brenner.

JOHNNY RAY

What ya'll think, *White*?

BRENNER

Trained him good.

Deuce woofs, swaggering over to Brenner's pick-up, all eyes on him. He parks himself before a front tire, back to them, rips open his pants. The drumming of a forceful stream hitting the sidewall ensues. He lifts one leg.

The porch crew rock in hilarity. Brenner frowns. Johnny Ray wheezes, his frame shaking.

JOHNNY RAY

Ever seen a dawg didn't like to piss on a tire?

Deuce finishes, grinning drunkenly. He ambles away, leans in the open trunk of a Cadillac parked beyond the light, lifts a beer, pops it, raises it to Brenner defiantly. Brenner looks at Johnny Ray unsmilingly.

JOHNNY RAY

Show us what you got.

BRENNER

Dalbert.

Elkins hustles to the pick-up, drops the gate, snaps back the tarp in the bed to expose a heavy BFVS machine gun, ammo feed belt looped through the breech.

ELKINS

Combat-loaded seven-six-two coaxial machine gun. Raps-off six-hundred armor-piercing rounds per minute... Got a hot two-dozen of 'em. Desert Storm's blown into Georgia, boys.

Johnny Ray stares, transfixed. He reaches for it.

ELKINS

That's a vehicle-mount item, hoss.

Johnny Ray heaves up the heavy rig, steps away from the truck. He sweeps the barrel over the yard, the bore swinging around on the two armory sergeants. Both men step back, Johnny Ray, grinning, levels the gun on Brenner's pick-up.

He prepares to fire. There's no trigger. He looks up at the two armory sergeants accusingly.

BRENNER

Gimme that.

Brenner cradles the weight of the gun, angles the sights onto the hazy shape of a coupe past the lights, strikes the manual-fire pad.

The weapon rattles deafeningly, flame spitting, streaks of hot blue tracer ripping a line through the air. The sheet metal caves in, glass explodes, chrome crumples, the trunk lid blows off, turning in the air. Deuce's mouth is open wide in a yell that is drowned out by the gunfire.

The firing suddenly ceases, ejected casings flying, blue smoke billowing, Deuce's scream cutting in.

DEUCE

-- HOOOWEEEE! *That's some screamin' shit, hog!*

Awed commentary rises from the porch. Deuce blearily studies Brenner's target. His slitted eyes jump wide in recognition.

DEUCE

Wait a fuckin' minute... **THAT'S MY RIDE!**

His Cadillac comes into focus, blown to scrap-metal. Brenner squints toward it, feigning concern.

BRENNER

Aww Jesus... I'm sorry.

DEUCE

He smoked my fuckin' car!

Brenner shrugs helplessly. Deuce advances for him, Johnny Ray steps in first. He towers over Brenner.

JOHNNY RAY

Who'd you brang, Dalbert?

Elkins offers a rattled smile. The crew on the porch descend, expressions malignant. Brenner edges back.

BRENNER

Okay. I've decided I don't like your attitude. Whole thing's off.

The pack of men start to move on him in unison. Brenner puts the gun on them, unused rounds visible in the belt.

BRENNER

Let's go, Dalbert.

Elkins stares at him incredulously.

INT. PICK-UP - NIGHT

Brenner blasts the vehicle out of the yard, the ring of angry men falling behind in the rear window. Elkins rips a hide-out semi-auto from his waistband, slams it on the dash.

ELKINS

Man, what the fuck is wrong with you?

BRENNER

You just blew a two-month operation,
bonehead!

ELKINS

Fuck that noise! They were ready to
deal!

Brenner faces him, snarling.

BRENNER

They were on to us! You introduced
me as Sergeant White!

Elkins pauses in confusion.

BRENNER

Look at my name tag, Elkins!

Elkins looks at Brenner BDU blouse, the nametag, black letters
on a white rectangle. It reads "Wright."

ELKINS

Oh, shit.

He stares at his mistake, chagrined. Brenner, disgusted, rams
the truck up onto the dirt road.

BRENNER

They caught it immediately. It was
downhill after that.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

The truck roars, clay-dust trailing as it recedes on the road.

ELKINS (V.O.)

Damn.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NEAR FORT HADLEY - DAWN

Brenner's truck rolls up in front of a weather-faded sign that
reads: "Whispering Pines Trailer Park". He gets out, wearily.

Ahead of him, a few run-down mobile homes among rows of vacant
trailer pads. He walks up a path of rotted planks toward a
battered Airstream framed against a band of light to the East.

INT. BRENNER'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Brenner switches on the light. It flickers weakly, revealing shabby green furniture, plaid carpet, mustard-colored drapes.

He strips off his wet battle-dress blouse, tosses it, moves in through the dim clutter to the galley area where he takes up a bottle of scotch, finds a glass, pours a stiff one.

IN THE LIVING AREA,

someone is seated in the shadows, motionless, watching him.

Brenner stands in the galley. Without seeming to look toward the living area, he finds a second glass.

BRENNER

You havin' one of these, Hawthorne?

Rodney Hawthorne, Special Agent in Charge of the CID unit at Fort Hadley, leans forward. Fifty, weathered, black-skinned, hair dashed with gray, eyes jaded. Rumpled suit, tie undone.

HAWTHORNE

Can't sneak up on you anymore.

Brenner tilts the bottle, pours out another drink.

BRENNER

When could you?

He moves into the living area, proffers the glass to Hawthorne. Hawthorne takes it. They regard one another. Years of rocky history. Friendship.

BRENNER

This a social visit, sir?

Hawthorne drinks his scotch, surveys the trailer's disorder.

HAWTHORNE

Nothin' social about this place.

BRENNER

This is my front.

Brenner throws some clothes off the sofa, sits down. The two men drink, watching each other.

BRENNER

Knew a kid in infantry training who lived in this trailer. Summer of Sixty-Nine. Had a beautiful wife.

Hawthorne watches him.

BRENNER

He gave his all in 'Nam. Won some medals. Came home, wife was gone. She'd divorced him, married a draft-deferred civilian.

HAWTHORNE

Ain't that a bitch.

BRENNER

What's really a bitch, dumb bastard re-upped. He's still in the Army.

Hawthorne lifts his glass to Brenner.

HAWTHORNE

And no smarter. Here's to him.

They drink.

HAWTHORNE

What's your progress on the weapons operation?

BRENNER

Negligible. But then, so was the operation.

Hawthorne stares at him.

HAWTHORNE

You got your twenty in. Maybe it's time you cashed out.

Brenner considers his drink, the muggy Georgia sky lighting up the trailer windows.

BRENNER

Where the hell would I go?

Hawthorne shakes his head, sadly.

HAWTHORNE

Two years, Brenner. That's how long you've been missing in action. Fort Belvoir is done, man. It's time to move on.

Brenner becomes uneasy. It's a sore subject.

BRENNER

That's not why you came over at o-five-hundred, is it, sir?

Hawthorne sets his glass down.

HAWTHORNE

There's been a murder on the post.

BRENNER

Who was the victim?

HAWTHORNE

The General's daughter.

Brenner is still, jarred by the news.

BRENNER

General Joe Campbell?

HAWTHORNE

Affirmative. Captain Ann Campbell was found on Rifle Range Six last night. Strangled. Possibly raped.

The magnitude settles on Brenner.

HAWTHORNE

It's a hard blow. She was the Golden Girl of Fort Hadley.

BRENNER

What's the crime scene like?

Hawthorne shakes his head solemnly. Bad. Strange.

HAWTHORNE

This case is gonna be big, Brenner. Real big... I got you in.

BRENNER

You what?

HAWTHORNE

As of this moment, you are the lead investigator on a priority homicide.

Brenner regards him in disbelief.

BRENNER

You cleared this with Falls Church?

HAWTHORNE

Colonel Hellmann's under the gun to get this solved.

Brenner's face darkens.

BRENNER

You know Hellmann won't let me keep this. He's got me on back-water assignments. He'll send in a hand-picked team.

HAWTHORNE

I just said I got you in. You'll have to figure out how to stay in.

Brenner tries to calculate the depth of what lies ahead.

BRENNER

Case like this could be career-suicide.

HAWTHORNE

Unquestionably. Want it or not?

BRENNER

Yeah, I want it. I need a comeback. It's just that...

He looks at Hawthorne, his confidence flagging.

HAWTHORNE

You'll go up against the same things you went up against last time. Even worse. I can bring someone else in.

BRENNER

No.

Hawthorne stands, a large man, still powerful. He moves past Brenner, stands on the porch gazing out at the steaming pine.

HAWTHORNE

I'm out of the Army next week.

BRENNER

Is that your choice?

HAWTHORNE

I've given everything I have. There ain't no more to give.

He turns, looks evenly at Brenner. His life spent in service to something greater than himself.

BRENNER

You always said, stand by the truth that comes out of an investigation. Never look the other way. And you never did.

His eyes convey his respect, and an apology for falling short.

HAWTHORNE

That's the job, Brenner. Don't ever let 'em tell you different.

They shake hands in farewell.

HAWTHORNE

Provost Marshal's waitin' for you at the infantry training field. He'll brief you. Good luck.

EXT. INFANTRY TRAINING AREA - FORT HADLEY - DAWN

Major William Kent, Provost Marshal, spit-shined in his white helmet and white pistol belt, stands on the field watching with icy eyes as Brenner walks toward him from his pick-up.

Brenner, wearing a blue tropical worsted suit, snaps a salute. They have a past, one of restrained animosity. The day hangs heavy with humidity.

BRENNER

Major Kent.

KENT

Mr. Brenner. You're looking worse for the wear.

BRENNER

Thanks. You're still a marvel of preservation. Were you born or engineered?

Kent smiles, his frame conditioned and as hard as his outlook.

KENT

I was forged, wise-ass. By the U.S. Army.

Brenner nods. He knew that. Kent looks at Brenner's pick-up.

KENT

You CID guys goin' redneck?

BRENNER

That's my front.

KENT

Now that's subterfuge.

BRENNER

You've been studying the vocabulary in your Reader's Digest.

KENT

I heard you were here, so I wanted some ten-cent words ready... I'm surprised you're still in business.

BRENNER

So am I. How's the baton? Spilled any brains with it lately?

KENT

Oh, sure. You know me.

BRENNER

Yeah. So you'll understand why I'm not anxious to work with you again.

KENT

Same here. But it won't be for long. You won't go the distance.

Brenner receives the prediction with steadiness.

BRENNER

You can make book on it when you're off duty. In the meantime, this case is under my control, and you're here to serve the CID.

Kent's eyes glitter with amused dislike. A boom reverberates from beyond the barracks, the post cannon announcing reveille. A bugle call, floating from remote loudspeakers.

Both men, conditioned by military custom, their eyes on each other, raise their hands in salute. The bugle echoes in the hot stillness.

EXT. RIFLE RANGE ROAD - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Kent's white Taurus stops in the middle of a road bordered by flat vistas. Kent and Brenner get out. They begin walking.

KENT

Crime scene's locked down. The SAC sent some warrant officers who seem pretty useless, and I posted MPs. It's virgin, nothing's been touched. Except her, of course.

BRENNER

You've informed General Campbell and his wife of her death?

Kent nods, a tic of emotion working at the line of his mouth.

BRENNER

I want to see the General as soon as possible.

KENT

He taking it hard, but I'll see what I can do.

The control tower for the firing range rises ahead of them.

KENT

It's a nasty killing. I hope to God it was committed by a civilian.

BRENNER

Who made positive identification?

KENT

A Sergeant St. John found the body. He was on guard duty with her last night. And I knew her.

BRENNER

Fill me in.

KENT

She was an instructor, Psychological Operations School. West Point. Smart. Good-looking. Standing tall. Poster girl. Put her name on all the duty rosters to set an example.

Brenner hears possible invective, files it for later review.

BRENNER

Was she armed last night?

KENT

She had her sidearm.

Ahead of them, a sand-colored humvee parked at the roadside.

BRENNER

Why was Sergeant St. John out here?

KENT

Captain Campbell left headquarters to check the guard posts and didn't return. St. John got concerned and tried to locate her. Found her jeep parked here.

They approach the humvee. Brenner peers beneath the vehicle, then touches the exhaust pipe. He moves to the window, looks inside, sees a purse on the seat.

BRENNER

Have you questioned the guard at the nearest post?

KENT

PFC Robbins. She heard nothing, but saw some headlights.

Brenner opens the door, turns the purse over, sorting through the contents. He lifts a ring of keys.

BRENNER

Detain St. John and Robbins. I'll want to talk to them.

They walk toward the fire control tower where a number of MPs and vehicles are stationed.

EXT. RIFLE RANGE SIX - DAY

Brenner and Kent move past the tower. The firing range comes in view, a long expanse of open terrain, black and white lane markers receding to 500 hundred meters. The sun hovers like a disc of fire. Brenner shields his eyes.

A series of berms ahead. Atop each, pop-up targets simulating soldiers with rifles. Two MPs stand at parade rest at a berm fifty meters ahead. They salute as Brenner and Kent approach.

Brenner regards the target on the berm, its green plastic face staring eyelessly at the sun. He finds it unsettling.

BRENNER

Where are the warrant officers the SAC sent over?

Kent looks to the MP's, one male, one female, both young and pale under the shade of their helmets.

MALE MP

One of 'em's losing his breakfast in the bushes, sir.

They round the berm. Brenner halts, looks to the dirt ahead.

Bluebottle flies whip through the air. Her white, naked flesh glares in the hard light. She lies stripped, on her back, her wrists and ankles bound to plastic tent pegs.

Captain Ann Campbell. She is no more than thirty. Once quite lovely, now drained, vacant -- the triangle of her pubic hair, her mouth open, tongue and teeth exposed, her eyes rolled back into her head. Bitten deep into her neck, a green nylon cord, knotted tightly.

Brenner stares at the body, reminded sharply and painfully of another death, another woman. He turns from the image, walks away a few paces, helpless anger filling him. He looks down at her bra, filmy silk, lying cast in the weeds near his feet.

KENT

I should mention, there's a rape counselor assigned to this case.

Kent is behind him.

BRENNER

The victim doesn't need counseling, Major. She's dead.

Kent clears his throat. Brenner turns. Special Agent Cynthia Sunhill has arrived. She stares at the victim, silent outrage in her eyes, then at Brenner. Late twenties, trim, attractive without vanity, features shaded by an edge, a resolve within.

SUNHILL

Warrant Officer Sunhill, Mr. Brenner. I was called in from Fort Stewart to assist in this investigation.

Brenner assesses her, registering her correctness, her youth, and her spiky attitude. She promises to be a pain in the ass.

BRENNER

By whom?

SUNHILL

By Colonel Hellmann's office.

She returns Brenner's examination with her own, her expression indicating unfavorable conclusions.

BRENNER

You're a Grade One, Ms. Sunhill. Is Hellmann short-handed?

Sunhill's eyes glint stonily.

SUNHILL

He's assembling his team from Falls Church. And for the record, when I heard you were here, I asked myself the same question.

Kent utters a short, mocking laugh.

BRENNER

Do we know each other?

SUNHILL

Your reputation precedes you.

BRENNER

Hope you're not here to fax reports on my conduct. You'd never get off the line.

SUNHILL

I'm here because I have specialized training in sexual assault cases.

BRENNER

This may not be a sexual assault. An investigator's trained not to form conclusions in advance. Says so in the manual.

She regards him thinly, her eyes glittering.

SUNHILL

Why don't we get on with it, Mr. Brenner?

BRENNER

You go first.

The body is between them, they both kneel down. Sunhill looks at the victim's naked skin, withering under the heat.

SUNHILL

Rigor has commenced. Lividity in the thighs and buttocks...

Brenner watches her.

BRENNER

Indicating death occurred when?

SUNHILL

Seven, eight hours ago. Consistent with the report.

She pauses, then forces her gaze to the neck, the cord bedded tightly into it.

SUNHILL

Other than the ligature marks made by the rope, there are no apparent bruises, lacerations or bite marks...

She glances at him. Brenner is unimpressed. Her face darkens and she looks back to the body. She stares at the eyes, takes her thumb to an eyelid, hesitantly.

SUNHILL

The corneas have clouded... Small, spotty hemorrhages in the lining of the lids. Presumptive evidence of death by asphyxia.

BRENNER

What about the hands and nails?

Flies snap past her face. Pressing herself, she takes one of Campbell's stiffened hands in her own.

SUNHILL

There are no defensive marks... No blood or dirt under the nails...

BRENNER

Go on.

She lowers her gaze to the abdominal region.

SUNHILL

There's no evidence of semen around the thighs... or the genital area. No outward signs of penetration...

Brenner rises, picks up the bra, offers it to her.

BRENNER

And this?

SUNHILL

No rips or tears. The clasp is not bent or broken.

BRENNER

So far, there's no support for sexual assault. In fact, there are no signs of a struggle. Not on the victim and not in the immediate area.

Sunhill stands, keeping her face even.

SUNHILL

You're saying she disrobed of her own accord, had herself staked out and strangled?

BRENNER

I'm not saying anything, yet. Thank you, Ms. Sunhill.

Brenner crouches, stares into Captain Campbell's vacant face for a long time. Sunhill watches him, wondering whether she hates him or not. Probably she does. Kent and the two MPs stand sweating silently in the sun.

Brenner, eyes fixed, seems to make a resolution. He rises.

BRENNER

Where did Captain Campbell reside,
Major?

KENT

Off post in Midland. I'd recommend
you clear a civilian search warrant
through Chief Yardley. He's a real
stickler for jurisdiction.

Brenner ignores the advice, scanning the range.

BRENNER

Where's her uniform and dogtags? Her
Boots? Pistol?

KENT

We didn't find 'em.

BRENNER

Has anyone called in the forensic
team from Fort Gillem?

SUNHILL

I did.

BRENNER

Major Kent, can you set up a grid
search, excluding an area of fifty
meters around the body? Have your
people to collect anything that's
not part of the landscape.

KENT

This a trash detail?

BRENNER

It's an Army detail -- by-the-book --
lots of extra work. You like that.

Kent watches him, face blank, the light of hatred in his eyes.

BRENNER

I need Captain Campbell's medical and personnel files sealed and in your office by noon, Major. Tape off her office, impound her humvee, and her private vehicle. Get me a list of everyone who's been here for disqualifying footprints. And tell Public Affairs we're running a black-out on this.

Kent nods curtly, moves off. Brenner looks at Sunhill and she sees for the first time how haggard he is.

BRENNER

How you feeling, Ms. Sunhill?

SUNHILL

You want the truth?

BRENNER

Hit me.

SUNHILL

I want to nail the motherfucker who did this to the wall.

Brenner is taken off guard by the force of her language. He's starting to reassess her.

BRENNER

We have something in common. Did you bring a car?

EXT. VICTORY HIGHWAY - MIDLAND - NEAR FORT HADLEY - DAY

A new, convertible Mustang GT moves rapidly down a wide street bordered by Georgia pine.

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Sunhill drives, dark glasses on, eyes on the road. Brenner is is making notations, a folder on his lap. He stops writing.

BRENNER

Okay. I've got a theory. Since we saw no signs of a struggle, we have to consider the possibility Captain Campbell had a preplanned rendezvous with a lover. I'm talking bondage, Ms. Sunhill. Consenting partners.

SUNHILL

That's a typical male fantasy. She consented to being bound in the dirt like an animal?

BRENNER

I don't know that the animal kingdom enters into it.

Sunhill stares ahead, heat in her eyes.

SUNHILL

I don't think you know women, Mr. Brenner. I'm reasonably sure you're not cohabitating with one.

He grins. She's outspoken, smart, aggressive, and she really wants to nail him.

BRENNER

I did once. But the cave got too cramped.

Sunhill shakes her head to herself.

SUNHILL

Thank you. Your analogy helps me understand who I'll be dealing with.

BRENNER

Glad to be of assistance. Pull into that driveway, please.

She sees a sign at gated drive: "Victory Gardens". A complex of brick-fascade townhomes.

SUNHILL

I thought you were going by-the-book.

BRENNER

Give or take a chapter.

EXT. REAR PATIO - CAMPBELL'S UNIT - VICTORY GARDENS - DAY

They enter a fenced area. Potted plants, a barbecue, a chaise lounge. Brenner presses the buzzer at the kitchen door.

SUNHILL

This is illegal, Mr. Brenner. You're jeopardizing the case, not to mention your career.

Brenner takes out Campbell's key ring, sorts through the keys.

BRENNER

My career's been in jeopardy for some time, Ms. Sunhill.

The latch clicks, he swings open the door, peers into the dark inside. He turns to Sunhill.

BRENNER

You armed?

SUNHILL

Yes.

BRENNER

Back me up.

He moves inside.

INT. CAMPBELL'S KITCHEN - DAY

Dim light, blinds drawn. Gleaming, sterile. Brenner moves to a door at the end of the kitchen, eases it open, looks inside, closes it. He silently swings a chair out from the table and props it under the knob. Sunhill moves up, her automatic out.

BRENNER

Basement. We'll check it last.

INT. CAMPBELL'S BEDROOM/STUDY - DAY

Simple and ordinary decor. A tightly-made bed. No frills, no sentiment. Order. Brenner stands at an open closet, the rack hung precisely with civilian clothes and uniforms.

BRENNER

This place is sanitized.

Sunhill replaces her automatic in her purse. Brenner strolls around the room, moves into the bathroom, back out. Walks to an alcove containing shelving with books. Studies the titles.

BRENNER

The complete works of Friedrich Nietzsche... Remember this old favorite? "In revenge and love, woman is more barbarous than man."

Sunhill stands at the dresser, examining an open jewelry box.

SUNHILL

Spare me the misogyny, Mr. Brenner.

Brenner shrugs. He turns to the wall nearby, scans the framed plaques, awards, commendations.

BRENNER

American Red Cross. Victory Gardens Safety Council. Volunteer work at Children's Hospital...

He looks over at her.

BRENNER

She was perfect in every way. Made in the USA. White-glove immaculate.

SUNHILL

Is that a clue?

His gaze falls on a flat carrying case on a shelf.

BRENNER

Everything is a clue, Sunhill. The lack of clues is a clue.

He unzips the case, exposing a notebook computer.

SUNHILL

I guess I haven't progressed to that level yet. Sounds Zen.

BRENNER

This lady had no private life. Does that not strike you as odd..?

He considers her buttoned-down aspect.

BRENNER

Well, maybe not.

SUNHILL

That's very comic... Maybe she was what she was. An unimpeachable and dedicated officer.

He removes the notebook computer from the case.

BRENNER

Sorry, I don't buy it -- I want this. Can you fit it in your handbag?

SUNHILL

We entered illegally. You know any evidence we find won't be admissible.

He crosses to her, standing near and sizing up her handbag.

BRENNER

We admit it into our strategy -- that is great perfume.

He hands her the computer. She regards him with vigilance.

SUNHILL

I don't wear perfume.

BRENNER

Now I'm really intrigued.

SUNHILL

You're not exempt from harassment charges, Brenner.

She moves to the door, expression stern.

SUNHILL

Let's go down to the basement.

Brenner's eyes light up.

BRENNER

But we have this great bedroom.

Brenner watches her stalk down the stairs, enjoying himself.

INT. CAMPBELL'S BASEMENT - DAY

A fluorescent light bursts on. The agents scan the basement: Concrete, washer, dryer. Heating and air conditioning ducts.

On the rear wall, a broom closet and a full-color recruiting poster, six-feet high. It features Captain Campbell wearing her battle dress uniform and full field gear.

They move toward it. Campbell holds a radiotelephone, checks her watch, her portrayal sexy, strong, gung-ho. The caption: "Synchronize Your Life. See Your Army Recruiter Today."

BRENNER

I see a subliminal sexual message here.

SUNHILL

Point to it.

BRENNER

Well... it's subliminal. How can I point to it?

SUNHILL

Your mind runs in very small circles.

BRENNER

It's only a thread, Sunhill. Part of a vast fabric.

She moves away. Brenner remains, gazing at the woman's image, appreciating her beauty, and wondering who really lived there.

Campbell's face looms larger, frozen forever in printer's ink.

SUNHILL (O.S.)

I think you better look at this.

He turns. She has the broom closet door open, staring within.

He moves up next to her. Inside the closet, on a shelf above the brooms and mops, a black camcorder. It rests on its base, turned to the rear of the closet, lens aimed against the wall.

Brenner reaches in, slides the camera back, revealing a gap in the plaster where the lens met the wall. They exchange a look and Brenner presses in, peering at the gap.

SUNHILL

Is something behind there?

BRENNER

Maybe. It's dark. I can't see in.

Heavy footsteps shudder the ceiling. The agents whip around. Sunhill wrestles her pistol free. The basement stairs creak. A large man in a suit is descending.

Brenner nudges the closet door shut. The man stops short, his eyes lighting on them. Heavy face, pitted skin. Built like a refrigerator. Sunhill trains her semi-auto on him.

SUNHILL

CID..! Identify yourself!

Ignoring her weapon, he raises a police radio-phone, thumbs it on, the line crackling.

YARDLEY

Big Cat... Where's the detail I ordered to secure this townhouse over to goddamn Victory Gardens?

His face inflames, staring at the intruders, the phone hisses.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

They should be there, Chief.

The floor shakes overhead. Two eager and oversized patrolman clamber down the stairs, stopping short. They see the agents, the gun, both grab at their holsters. Yardley growls at them.

YARDLEY

Leave it..! Goddamn g'rillas...

Brenner glances at Sunhill. He nods to her weapon. Maybe it would be a good idea to put it away. She does. Brenner one-hands his wallet, flashing his badge.

BRENNER

Agents Brenner and Sunhill. From Fort Hadley. We're investigating the homicide of Captain Campbell.

Yardley moves into the basement, the patrolmen trailing him. He stands across from the agents, clearly restraining a will to do harm. His voice is native Dixie and under hard duress.

YARDLEY

I been notified. Did you obtain a search warrant, Mr. Brenner?

Sunhill glances at Brenner, shifting her handbag, the notebook computer bulging inside it.

BRENNER

We're working on it.

Yardley breathes out a long sigh. His patrolmen take menacing positions behind him.

YARDLEY

I am very upset that you are here.

Sunhill, commanding and smart, steps forward.

SUNHILL

Chief Yardley, this is a priority investigation. It's important our agencies work in a combined effort on this.

Yardley gazes on her curiously. He shakes his head, bemused.

YARDLEY

Women in the Army...

He gestures toward the poster of Captain Campbell.

YARDELY

Look at that. She's got sixty pounds of field gear. How's she gonna squat to pee?

The patrolmen chuckle appreciatively. Sunhill's face tightens in anger. Brenner gives her a sidelong glance. She should've known better.

YARDLEY

Come here, Wade.

Wade, the larger of the patrolman, assumes a serious, official demeanor, steps next to the Chief.

YARDLEY

It was your responsibility to seal these premises, am I correct?

WADE

Chief, I had to get fueled.

Yardley shakes his head. No excuses. Wade becomes morose.

WADE

Yes, sir. It was.

YARDLEY

And you know we're family, and that I depend on your police-work.

WADE

Yes, sir.

YARDLEY

Well, then, there's nothing more for me to verbalize, is there?

Wade nods, swallows, closes his eyes.

WADE

No, sir.

Yardley throws a massive right. Wham. Wade goes down. Hard.

BRENNER

Jesus...

The agents, stunned, gape at the fallen patrolman. Sunhill's handbag slips from her arm, the computer in it clanking as it hits the floor. She looks down at it, then to Brenner who is staring at her warningly. Yardley sucks on his torn knuckles, seems not to have noticed.

YARDLEY

Now... Mr. Brenner. Let me explain somethin'. I work on a cooperative basis with Fort Hadley. But you got to get the proper clearances...

Wade groans, lurching to his hands and knees, mouth streaming blood. Without looking at him, Yardley lowers a handkerchief into his reach.

YARDLEY (CONT'D)

Above all, sir, you got to be sure you talk to me before you so much as step in a pile of dogshit that's situated on civilian property. Am I makin' myself understood?

Brenner looks to the second patrolman who observes his fallen partner neutrally. Apparently, he's seen it before. Sunhill casually recovers her handbag.

BRENNER

If I give the wrong answer, does the other guy go down?

Yardley stands like a sullen rock.

YARDLEY

Court order is standard procedure for a search, Mr. Brenner. You file your document, and I'll see that my cousin Judge Dupree expedites it. Meantime, you're trespassin'.

Brenner nods, reasonably.

BRENNER

Well, that's it. The Chief's already marked this tree.

SUNHILL

We better go, then.

They make their way toward the stairs. Chief Yardley's face is set in hard lines, watching them.

YARDLEY

Mr. Brenner...

Brenner turns back to him.

YARDLEY

Walk carefully in Midland.

INT. SUNHILL'S MUSTANG - PARKING LOT - VICTORY GARDENS - DAY

Sunhill pulls out, still shaken. Brenner looks over at her.

BRENNER

There's something in that basement.

SUNHILL

He's going to try and jam us on the warrant.

BRENNER

We're going around him.

SUNHILL

This case is doomed.

BRENNER

The motto of the CID is -- "Do what has to be done." You can look it up in the manual.

She glares straight ahead.

SUNHILL

I'll say this for you -- you live up to your billing. Arrogant, inflated and careless.

Brenner scowls at her.

BRENNER

Listen, Sunhill -- I'm at the rank where I get respect. I was in the middle of a shooting war when you were carrying your lunch pail. I've spent three-quarters of your age in this outfit.

SUNHILL

(acidly)

You're a lean, mean killing machine. Death from the skies. Is that it?

BRENNER

That's not bad.

She smolders.

BRENNER

Let's dust this computer for prints, then get a tech on it. And don't make any plans tonight. We're going back to the townhouse.

The car weaves.

BRENNER

Watch the road.

EXT. MAIN BOULEVARD - FORT HADLEY - DAY

An open post. Civilian traffic and Army vehicles. Sunhill's Mustang moves along a street bordered by WWII-era whitewashed bungalows set back on wide dry lawns.

DIXON (V.O.)

This unit has a hard disk failure, Mr. Brenner...

INT. DIXON'S OFFICE - CID UNIT - DAY

Campbell's notebook computer is on, the screen displaying the error message. Specialist Dixon, a female agent, sits before it, tapping the keyboard. Brenner and Sunhill stand over her.

DIXON

It may have been exposed to heat or excessive vibration...

Brenner conveys a dire look to Sunhill.

BRENNER

I want those files, Dixon.

They all stare at the screen dimly.

DIXON

I'll have to open the unit and run an internal check. It's gonna take some time.

BRENNER

That's something we don't have.

Specialist Dixon nods, goes to work.

KENT (V.O.)

Here's the status: We got the grid search going and sent the dogs out...

INT. PROVOST MARSHAL'S BUILDING - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Brenner, Sunhill and Major Kent move down the faded linoleum of the hallway, a succession of hard, tattooed kids in battle dress and MP armbands snapping off perfect, vertical salutes.

KENT (CONT'D)

Nothing so far... General Campbell's adjutant will contact you regarding a brief interview. And I have Captain Campbell's files in my office, along with a lecture tape from Psy-Ops.

BRENNER

Who was her CO at the school?

KENT

Colonel Moore. Head-shrinker. And real strange.

BRENNER

Tell him we want to see him today.

They walk through a busy office area, turn down another hall.

KENT

Check. Last item: Colonel Hellmann's
in from HQ at seventeen-hundred hours
to see the General. You're to meet
him at the airfield.

Brenner looks at him. Kent grins. He can hardly wait for the outcome. And Sunhill shifts her eyes to him, meaningfully. A beheading on the tarmac. Brenner is angered.

BRENNER

Probably another commendation.

They stop at a door with a heavy glass window. Inside, a sad-looking sergeant with a leathery face sits smoking at a table.

KENT

Sergeant St. John. Private Robbins
is waiting in another room.

BRENNER

Didn't happen to sign a confession,
did he?

Kent, an old headbreaker, cracks his knuckles, flashes a grin.

KENT

I could put on some sap gloves and
get you one.

INT. PSY-OPS LAB - DAY

A violent blur of fangs and fur slams against the wires of its cage -- a rhesus monkey, shrieking and yammering, its fangs on prominent display. Past it, a line of rattling cages occupied by crazed primates raising a cacophonous din.

At a lab counter, a man in white, working on a computer among a clutter of electronic equipment. Brenner and Sunhill stand in the open doorway.

BRENNER

(over the noise)

Colonel?

Colonel Moore peers up at them, lips twisted. He turns a knob on an amplifier, an ultrasonic wave shudders, the racket from the cages instantly ceases. A dozen monkeys stare silently at him, red-eyed with fear and hatred.

Moore regards the agents. A short man. High, domed forehead. Messianic eyes behind smeared glasses. Lab coat well-sprayed with monkey piss.

MOORE

Ultrasonic. They hate that.

Brenner and Sunhill stare at the cages, then Moore, unsettled.

MOORE

The study of induced aggression for war applications.

BRENNER

How do you induce the aggression?

MOORE

I'm getting excellent results with pharmaceutical cocaine.

Brenner looks sidelong at Sunhill.

SUNHILL

We're here regarding the murder of Captain Campbell, sir.

MOORE

(woodenly)

Shocking. I'm in a state of profound distress.

BRENNER

Did you have a close relationship with the deceased, Colonel?

MOORE

I considered her my protege.

SUNHILL

How would you describe her?

MOORE

Skilled, intelligent, charismatic courageous, and utterly dedicated.

BRENNER

Did she have any good qualities?

Moore's eyes become scalpels.

BRENNER

That was a joke, Colonel.

MOORE

This is hardly an appropriate time for levity.

BRENNER

Sorry, sir, the left side of my brain got the better of me... Was Captain Campbell seeing anybody? Dating? A boyfriend?

MOORE

Captain Campbell considered men weak and contemptible.

SUNHILL

This was a personal view she shared with you?

MOORE

Professionally. I was her therapist.

The agents are given pause. Brenner wants some clarification.

BRENNER

You provided Captain Campbell with psychological counseling, Colonel?

Moore's glasses glint frostily, Brenner's implication evident.

MOORE

You're very quick, aren't you?

BRENNER

We'll need your transcripts.

MOORE

There are no transcripts. That was our arrangement.

BRENNER

That's highly unusual, isn't it?

MOORE

The term "unusual" has no application in the frontier of psychology.

BRENNER

Well, we still use it out here in the frontier of homicide, Colonel. And we think it's unusual that as her superior and her therapist you're not cooperating in this investigation.

A rhesus shrieks out, the agents jump. Moore, unfazed, stands before the cage. He and the monkey lock eyes.

MOORE

You've stumbled into the wrong door, Mr. Brenner. When and if you stumble into the right one, the real investigation will begin.

The animal shrinks before Moore's will. Its black, primordial eyes recording him: Mortal enemy.

BRENNER

You're a very spooky man, Colonel. If you're withholding information relevant to this case, I'll make sure you see a court martial.

Moore looks up from the cage, triumphant. Man over beast. He moves to the amplifier, rests his hand on the knob.

MOORE

I can't tell you how frightened I am. If I'm a suspect, arrest me, and I'll exercise my rights as such -- if not, then I'm extremely busy.

He cuts the ultrasonic sound. The monkeys, unleashed, screech out, their angry clamor ricocheting deafeningly off the tiles.

The agents, assaulted, retreat. Moore smiles happily, bending to his computer.

A HIGH-DECIBEL WAR SHRIEK

rings out joltingly, a blood-chilling, piercing, primal scream demonic in its fury. It issues from a woman's open mouth, her teeth flashing, eyes aflame.

CAPTAIN ANN CAMPBELL

ends the shriek, shockwaves reverberating. Her face instantly composed. She smiles.

CAMPBELL

Good morning...

INT. LECTURE HALL - PSYOPS SCHOOL

She stands on a rostrum, immaculate in battle fatigues, gazing out over an audience of stunned soldiers.

CAMPBELL (CONT'D)

Today we discuss applications for psychological warfare -- how we can use it to loosen the sphincters of opposing forces...

Tense laughter. Campbell smiles again, assured, poised, sexy.

CAMPBELL

Psychological warfare plants the poisonous seeds of doubt. It paves the way for fear and panic. Deep, paralyzing, free-floating anxiety...

She stares out over the audience.

CAMPBELL

That same fear and panic, instilled in a troop commander can cause even more havoc. Our objective is to render leaders useless. How..? By knowing our enemies. Exploiting weaknesses. Undermining strengths. Manipulating... Mind-fucking...

CAMPBELL'S IMAGE

becomes grainier, playing from a television screen.

CAMPBELL (V.O.)

Excuse, me -- mind-fudging -- because we're on tape today...

Audience laughter. Her face in close-up. Her eyes hazardous.

BRENNER AND SUNHILL

sit in his darkened office, staring at Campbell's image on the screen. The screen blanks, they are still, the VCR rewinding.

BRENNER

That was a dangerous woman.

SUNHILL

I like her.

Brenner looks over at her. She looks back at him, unblinking.

EXT. AIRFIELD - FORT HADLEY - EVENING

An eight-passenger C-21A dips down from the purple clouds and skims the runway, turbo-fan engines screaming. Dust explodes from its landing gear.

Brenner and Sunhill stand at the edge of the tarmac, watching.

BRENNER

Der Oberfuhrer has arrived.

SUNHILL

I have a feeling this is where we part company.

They hold a stare, hers confident, his calculating. The plane taxis toward them, heat shimmering off on the runway.

BRENNER

I wouldn't rock the boat, Sunhill. Right now, it's you and me, and we can solve this. It would do a lot for your career. Know what's gonna happen if Hellmann puts his team on? Bunch of male hotshots? You'll end up serving the coffee.

She regards him uncertainly. He nods. Something to think on.

EXT. C-21A - RUNWAY - EVENING

Colonel Hellmann moves down the ramp, bearing a valise and a severe expression. His adjutant, Lt. Rogers, following him.

Brenner and Sunhill salute. Hellmann ignores Brenner, gives Sunhill a charming smile.

HELLMANN

Ms. Sunhill. I'm glad you were able to transfer to this case.

SUNHILL

Sir.

He transfers his gaze to Brenner, charm drained.

HELLMANN

I see that you've been debauching yourself.

BRENNER

It's called lack of sleep, sir.

HELLMANN

I'm going to remedy that. I intend to replace you.

Brenner subverts an urge to kill him. A staff car is pulling up nearby. Hellmann's transport to the General's house. The group starts walking toward it.

BRENNER

Yes, sir. But I don't think that would be wise.

HELLMANN

Why wouldn't it be wise?

They pass a line of dark and lethal AH-64 Apache helicopters.

BRENNER

This is a very sensitive case, sir. And our findings so far say it's gonna get a lot more sensitive. A team will step all over it. You need a low-profile, a delicate hand.

HELLMANN

Delicacy isn't a word that occurs to me when I think of you, Mr. Brenner.

BRENNER

That's where Ms. Sunhill comes in, sir. My expertise, her finesse...

Sunhill throws a stabbing look at Brenner.

BRENNER

This case gets very tangled, Colonel. We're already untying the knots. We can bring it home. In record time.

HELLMANN

Is this a clumsy attempt to deceive me, Ms. Sunhill?

They both look at her.

SUNHILL

We have some... strong leads, sir.

HELLMANN

Twelve hours into the investigation, I'd expect nothing less. I'm certain whatever leads you have will be put to good use by the incoming team, of which you will be a part.

Sunhill bleakly considers her part with the team. They arrive at the staff car. The driver salutes.

SUNHILL

Sir, we expect a major break in the investigation by tonight.

Hellmann turns, his full attention on her. She's in it now.

HELLMANN

A major break?

Brenner's eyes urge her to plunge ahead.

SUNHILL

Yes, sir. It's... going to blow this case wide open.

Hellmann stares measuredly at her.

HELLMANN

I'm leaving at o-six-hundred. You have til then to substantiate that.

He pauses before entering the car, turning to Brenner.

HELLMANN

If it goes unsubstantiated, you, Mr. Brenner, will answer to a board of inquiry, seven steely-eyed officers who will eat your ass for lunch... Long overdue, in my opinion.

He closes the door. The agents stand in the twilight watching the car drive away.

BRENNER

You're coming around.

SUNHILL

We have maybe twelve hours. What if there isn't anything behind that basement wall?

BRENNER

Then I'll have some company at the top of Hellmann's shit list.

SUNHILL

Why are you on that list?

They begin toward her car. She stares insistently at him.

BRENNER

It's under the bridge, Sunhill.

SUNHILL

That's not good enough.

Brenner keeps walking. She grabs his arm, halting him, eyes intense, on his.

SUNHILL

You were a top agent a few years ago. What happened?

Brenner frowns, looking out over the airfield, heat rising in the red twilight.

BRENNER

There was a case. A captain who was beating his wife up on a regular basis. I had enough for an arrest -- felony battery.

She waits for more. Brenner is not forthcoming.

SUNHILL

That's it?

BRENNER

No. She told me she was terrified he'd end up killing her. But the captain had an outstanding record and some high-ranking friends. It was strongly suggested I should act in the best interests of the Army and drop it.

She surmises the rest from his grim profile.

SUNHILL

But you didn't.

BRENNER

No. I did. And ten days later he beat her to death with his hands.

He faces her, his eyes stark. An Army chopper rams overhead, lights blinking in the red sky.

BRENNER

There was an inquiry. Some people who wanted the case dropped turned around and helped rake me over the coals. Hellmann was one 'em. But they were right about one thing -- I didn't do my job.

Sunhill watches him somberly.

BRENNER

It comes down to this -- The Army's all I have. I didn't want to risk it. So I went along, and she lost her life for it. I'm only on this case because an old friend threw me a rope.

He moves for the car.

SUNHILL

I going all the way on this, Brenner. Can I count on you?

He turns, considering the question.

BRENNER

I don't know.

EXT. CAPTAIN CAMPBELL'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Lightless windows. Police tape. Parked in the shadows by the front door, a patrol car. Two officers behind the windshield.

EXT. PATIO - TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Sunhill watches him through the slats of the privacy fencing.

Behind her, Brenner has a penlight trained on the police lock barring the kitchen entry. He takes out a screwdriver, starts prying the lock on the sliding glass door.

INT. BASEMENT - CAMPBELL'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

The penlight glares. They stand before the open broom closet, the camcorder illuminated.

Brenner slides the camera off the shelf. He opens it and they both look down at the film cassette still inside. He hands it to Sunhill, uses his penlight to probe the hole where the lens met the wall.

He ducks out of the closet, searching along the wall with his light. It hits Captain Campbell's poster, her features eerily illuminated. He runs his light over the poster frame.

BRENNER

Okay.

He is staring at one side of the frame, slightly ajar from the wall. He takes hold of it and the poster swings out on blind hinges. Revealing a doorway.

The agents gape inside, Brenner's penlight piercing the black.

SUNHILL

My God.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - DAY

Brenner snaps a light switch. The agents enter slowly, taking the room in, astonished.

The furnishings and color scheme are whorehouse-chic. Over a four-poster bed, a huge, violent, acrylic depicting a bull-like satyr and a nymph in the throes of thundering copulation.

SUNHILL

I don't like where this is going.

BRENNER

Welcome to the lower-depths.

Brenner moves past a T.V. and VCR on a dresser, opens the door on an antique wardrobe. A rack of specialty clothes. Leather and red lace. Spiked heels, riding crops.

BRENNER

Jesus Christ... Nurse. Dominatrix.
Lingerie Queen.

Sunhill pulls out a drawer, her eyes widening. Neatly stowed within, tools for erotic pleasure: oils, lubricants, manacles, devices of rubber and metal, obsessively ordered, categorized.

BRENNER

This place is set-up for traffic.
What was she doing? Running a
bordello right under the nose of
the U.S. Army?

Sunhill is bewildered, and angered. She rips open the next drawer -- Triple X-videos, alphabetized. Hauls out another, spilling a heap of crisply laundered sheets and towels. She stares down at them, resentfully.

SUNHILL

It isn't about sex. Everything's
organized, clinical. It's cold.
Why did she do it?

Brenner sees her conflict.

BRENNER

She had some problems. This is where
they climbed out.

She looks at him.

BRENNER

I'd say this qualifies as that major
break, wouldn't you?

EXT. CAMPBELL'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

A bright flashlight beam pierces the night. A big silhouette moves up behind it. Wade, Yardley's patrolman, mouth bruised.

He ambles along the front of the townhouse, throwing his light on the windows and shrubbery. He turns at the building's edge and begins toward the rear.

INT. BASEMENT - TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Brenner is reflected in a wall-sized mirror, holding a pen to the glass. He turns to Sunhill.

BRENNER

This is two-way. She was rolling home videos.

SUNHILL

Starring who, Brenner?

BRENNER

My guess is, the armed forces. Let me have that cassette.

Brenner moves next to her, turns on the TV and VCR. Sunhill gets uncomfortable.

SUNHILL

You're going to run that now?

BRENNER

Preview.

Reluctantly, she gives the cassette to him. He slides it in.

THE SCREEN

blips on, a poorly-lit recording cuts in. Two naked, heaving bodies engaged in savage intercourse. The man, on the bottom, not clearly seen. The woman, on top, stunningly identifiable.

Captain Ann Campbell. Full breasted, hair tangled, riding her partner on the four poster bed like a banshee.

The sequence cuts out. Another interlude jogs in. The light bad, but not so bad that Campbell can't be identified again, receiving the strokes of a lash held by a different man, tall and lean and standing half-out of the lens's view.

SUNHILL

Turn it off.

BRENNER

Wait a minute. This last guy looks familiar.

The action reverses as Brenner rewinds. He freezes the frame on the the man with the lash, shirtless, face in profile, his features defining into sudden, shocking clarity.

SUNHILL

(jarred)

Brenner...

She and Brenner stare, dumbfounded.

BRENNER

Major Kent.

EXT. REAR PATIO - TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Wade stands at the sliding glass door, frowning, his light on the jimmed latch. Beyond the patio fencing, a car starts up.

Wade stamps over to the gate, ramming through it. Glares out at a Mustang, lights off, speeding away across the lot. He jerks his police radio up, dashing for the front of the unit.

EXT. RESERVATION ROAD - FORT HADLEY - NIGHT

The Mustang shoots down a long empty strip of asphalt bordered by a black wall of trees.

INT. MUSTANG - RESERVATION ROAD - NIGHT

Sunhill drives swiftly. Lights hit her rear view mirror. She stares into it. Closing in on her rear at high speed, a large rust-colored vehicle.

SUNHILL

There's a truck behind us.

Brenner turns around as the truck looms up in the back window. It rides their bumper, then pulls out to pass, engine roaring.

The agents look over to it as it comes up even. A big, dented flatbed, two men in the cab, the driver huge, the passenger leaning out his window, leering at them with a strange leather harness clamped to his face.

The truck pulls ahead. Chained to the back, a greasy pit bull lunging against his chain and barking dementedly. The flatbed shoots up the road, exhaust ripping the air, harness-face half out his window, his jubilant howl trailing.

Sunhill swerves the car, jarred by the exhibition.

SUNHILL

Good lord. Who the hell is that?

Brenner stares ahead grimly. He knows who it is.

SUNHILL

Brenner, that man had something on his face.

BRENNER

He's wearing a dog muzzle.

SUNHILL

What?

She looks at him, perplexed.

BRENNER

You had to have been there.

The flatbed, far ahead, disappears around a bend in the road.

EXT. RESERVATION ROAD - FURTHER - NIGHT

The Mustang blows past a road sign: "Leaving Fort Hadley". It sweeps into the bend the flatbed vanished around.

INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Sunhill cranks around the turn, accelerates. As she does, the road ahead comes into view, and they both gape at the wheeled farming implement that rushes up in the headlights, a bladed disk harrow pulled broadside in their path.

Sunhill screams. Brenner flinches. She jogs the wheel right.

EXT. MUSTANG - ROAD - NIGHT

The brakes scorch, the car plows sideways toward the machinery in screen of tire smoke, narrowly avoiding the blades, leaving the road, cleaving a wire fence, slamming through brush, right hand wheels dropping into a drainage ditch.

The car skids aslant, metal shearing, sparks flying, comes at last to a grinding halt under the trees.

INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

The interior turned at an angle, the driver's airbag inflated. Sunhill slides out from behind it, tumbles against Brenner who is slung tight against his seatbelt. He looks dazedly out his window, the bottom of the ditch a foot and half from his face.

In the hot quiet, a backwoods baritone floats from the trees.

VOICE (O.S.)

Tear 'em up!

Clawed feet scabble. Something is bounding through brush and moving rapidly toward them. Brenner and Sunhill stare out the window, panic in their eyes.

SUNHILL

Brenner. The dog.

Sunhill lifts herself off Brenner. He struggles furiously to free himself as the sound of cracking brush and pounding paws closes in.

Brenner's arm is pinned by his weight. He tries to wrench it loose. A malevolent rumble. They freeze.

Above them, in the dark at the top of the ditch, the pit bull, wedge-headed, fangs glistening. It scans them with a killer's eyes, shoulders and chest bunched with muscle.

SUNHILL

Brenner... do something.

The dog's heavy jaws drop open, strings of spittle suspending.

BRENNER

Nice doggy...

The animal leaps in flying snarl. Brenner wrests his service automatic from his shoulder holster. The gun cracks, bucking in his hand, the dog yelps, slain in mid-leap. It soars over them and thumps solidly against the roof of the car.

Someone screams from the trees, an anguished, vengeful howl. A deeper voice is heard in reprimand. The doors of a vehicle clunk closed, a big engine fires. The flatbed pulls away, the sound of it receding.

Brenner and Sunhill sag, drained. In a few moments, the sound of another vehicle is heard. They raise up, listening, as it swerves suddenly off the asphalt, bumps slowly up through the weeds, stops nearby. The door opens, footsteps crunch closer.

Brenner angles his pistol toward the top of the ditch. A pair of boots appear above them. Chief Yardley squats down with a flashlight, examing the Mustang's roof.

YARDLEY

Damn, that's an ugly dog. Anybody hurt down there?

The light probes Brenner's face.

BRENNER

Nope. Just chillin'.

YARDLEY

Mr. Brenner, you and the lady are both very lucky. This could have been a serious accident.

BRENNER

We had an airbag.

YARDLEY

Who put this harrow out here in the road like this?

BRENNER

Clem, the mad rutabaga farmer.

A delirious laugh escapes Sunhill. Yardley's eyes are slits.

YARDLEY

I tried to warn you about Midland. Folks hereabouts are touchy. Is there anything you might have done that offended someone?

BRENNER

I'm searching my mind...

YARDLEY

We need a cohesive strategy here, Mr. Brenner. A cooperative plan to achieve our mutual objective, which is findin' the scum killed Miss Campbell.

BRENNER

I couldn't have said it better.

YARDLEY

Here's my proposal. You give me what you got, I'll give you what I've got. We'll trade information. How's that sound?

Brenner starts to tell him. A vehicle roars by on the highway at high speed. Yardley jumps up with his radio.

YARDLEY

(into radio)

BACK HERE! BACK HERE, MORONS!

No reponse. Yardley sprints away in the dark. Brenner hauls himself out of the window, kneels in the ditch to help Sunhill through. She drags her purse out, they stand.

Yardley is a dark shape on the road, waving his arm, shouting into his radio, the flashing red police lights of the vehicle dwindling.

BRENNER

Chicken-fried-piece-of-shit.

SUNHILL

Let's get the hell out of here.

BRENNER

Good idea.

They climb out of the ditch, fade into the cover of the woods.

EXT. PROVOST MARSHAL'S BUILDING - FORT HADLEY - DAY

A row of identical white MP cars. Major Kent, blouse already plastered with sweat, stands at the door of one of them.

He turns to the sound of thumping exhaust. A pick-up glides up behind him. Brenner leans out. The two men stare at one another.

BRENNER

Hot.

Brenner shuts his truck off, gets out, saunters over.

KENT

What's on your mind, Brenner?

BRENNER
Thought we'd talk.

KENT
Talk about what?

BRENNER
Let's talk about Captain Campbell.

Kent assesses him. Brenner has something.

KENT
All right. Captain Campbell: She
was an inspiration to us all.

BRENNER
Wholesome. Clean of mind and limb.

KENT
Virtuous. Godly. The angel of the
armed forces.

BRENNER
Sanctified.

KENT
Duty, honor and integrity.

BRENNER
And you were fucking her.

Kent sighs, a long, tired exhalation.

KENT
I was *seeing* her.

BRENNER
You were '*seeing*' her?

KENT
(resigned)
I was fucking her.

BRENNER
You were lashing her with a whip.

KENT
Let's don't get personal.

He glowers, uncovered, grimly considers his options.

KENT

It was a fling -- all right -- it was a full-blooded affair. Christ, she was twenty-nine, I'm fifty-two. What man could've turned that down?

BRENNER

This isn't good, Major.

KENT

I know. But I wasn't the only one. She was a whore, Brenner.

BRENNER

Give me some names.

KENT

I didn't stand in a line with them.

Brenner is ominously silent.

KENT

All right. Yardley. The Chief of Police... I had nothing to do with her murder.

BRENNER

You're a prime suspect. Where were you between o-twenty-two and o-twenty-four hundred hours that night?

KENT

Home in bed.

BRENNER

Your wife can verify that?

KENT

(bitterly)

No. She's on an *extended* visit with her parents.

Brenner stares at him. Kent struggles to hold in his temper.

KENT

You've got me wrong on this. I'm not in the best of shape right now. One man to another, hold off for a while. I can help you find the real culprit.

Brenner shakes his head.

KENT

Thirty years as a military policeman in this division, Brenner... I want to leave with something.

BRENNER

I'm sorry, Major.

Kent becomes deadly silent. Brenner walks to his truck, gets in, starts it. He looks at Kent as he rolls by. Kent stands watching him, forbiddingly.

EXT. ROAD - RIFLE RANGE SIX - DAY

Brenner's truck moves past an MP checkpoint. It drives past a long row of cars, vans belonging to the forensic team. Ahead, Sunhill, waiting for him outside a rental car. Brenner parks, gets out, moves up to her. M-16 gunfire crackles from nearby.

SUNHILL

We have an appointment with General Campbell at eighteen-hundred hours.

BRENNER

Good.

SUNHILL

What did Kent give you?

BRENNER

He's coming unwound. He denied any part in the killing, threw Yardley at me.

SUNHILL

Kent. Yardley. Moore. And how many others? Any one of them could've had a motive.

They begin walking toward the fire control tower. Beyond it, the peak of the team's canvas pavillion.

SUNHILL

I got the report to Hellmann. Over breakfast at the OC. He said he'd review it, but I didn't like the look in his eyes.

BRENNER

Maybe his croissant was stale.

Sunhill regards him tensely.

SUNHILL

We're in trouble, Brenner. Even if he keeps us. This case is not a straight line. It's warped. We'll never solve it before the General leaves command.

BRENNER

Relax, Sunhill. We have seven days.

SUNHILL

Six.

Brenner frowns.

BRENNER

Who's counting?

EXT. PAVILLION - RANGE SIX - DAY

Brenner and Sunhill move down a path of tarpaulin toward the berms where the huge, green, open-sided pavillion is erected over the site of the murder.

Forensic staff swarm the area, taking casts of indentations, firing cameras, scouring staked-off quadrants on their hands and knees to collect evidence.

Officer in Charge Cal Seiver approaches them. A well-trained neurotic, short and bald, wearing a dusty BDU cap and forever piecing together chaos.

SEIVER

The entire fucking world danced around the body, Mr. Brenner.

BRENNER

Agent Sunhill, Chief Warrant Officer Seiver.

SEIVER

Pleased to meet you, Ms. Sunhill.

BRENNER

Any non-military footprints?

Seiver looks at their shoes.

SEIVER

Yours and hers. I'll need the shoes for disqualifying. Everything else is boots. Forensics ain't easy when everyone's wearing the same fucking thing.

He takes off his cap, mops sweat from his bald head.

BRENNER

New memo from the Pentagon, Seiver. You are not short and bald. You're a vertically challenged man of scalp.

Seiver looks at Sunhill.

SEIVER

You have to work with this guy? I extend my sympathies.

SUNHILL

Gratefully accepted... Did you find any indications of a sexual assault, Mr. Seiver?

SEIVER

We ran some tests. Pathologist will have the final word, but my take on it is, she wasn't raped.

Brenner gives Sunhill a meaningful glance.

BRENNER

What else do you have at this point?

SEIVER

We dusted for latent prints, vacuumed for trace evidence, analyzed for tool marks, and ran some seriology tests. To answer your question, we have shit at this point.

Brenner glances at his watch.

BRENNER

All right. We requisitioned an empty hangar over at Jordon Field. You can set up your lab and offices there.

SEIVER

Fuckin' spectacular.

BRENNER

All reports and inquiries go to me,
sealed and confidential. Instruct
your people not to talk to anyone,
particularly the Provost Marshal.

Seiver nods, registering the implication here.

SEIVER

How'd you pull this case, Brenner?

BRENNER

Dumb luck.

INT. - BRENNER'S TRUCK - ROAD - FORT HADLEY - EVENING

Brenner drives, Sunhill jots in her notebook, evergreen blurs.

BRENNER

Okay. No signs of struggle, no signs
of rape. Consensual. Orchestrated.
Ritualistic... What's that suggest?

SUNHILL

A sacrifice.

He turns to her, struck by the revelation.

BRENNER

A sacrifice... That's dead-on. But
to what?

SUNHILL

And by whom? Our killer's hiding
in a suspect list that's starting
to read like the phone book.

BRENNER

We'll have to flush him out.

SUNHILL

How?

BRENNER

We throw out the rules.

SUNHILL

Oh, God.

Brenner loosens his tie.

BRENNER

Had a homicide suspect once. I knew he did it. He knew he did it. But we had no physical evidence. He was carrying this terrible secret around. Went to the post chapel every Sunday.

SUNHILL

I know -- you *planted* the evidence.

He gives her a narrow look.

BRENNER

I capitalized on his sense of guilt. Got a confession.

SUNHILL

How did you get a confession?

BRENNER

In the confessional... I sat in for the chaplain.

SUNHILL

You've got to be kidding.

BRENNER

The man bared his soul to me. I got everything. Then I held my badge up to the grill. He was expecting Hail Marys... It would have been thrown out in court, but after that, how could he deny it? So he signed the real thing.

SUNHILL

That's reprehensible.

BRENNER

Of course it is. So was the crime. I just leveled the playing field. And that's my point. That's how we get this guy.

Sunhill eyes, him, envisioning the end of her career. Brenner slows the truck. Ahead, a drive shaded by magnolias, a wooden marker reading: "Residence of General Joseph Campbell".

They turn up the drive. Coming into view, an antebellum relic of the Old South. White columns, white iron balustrades, sun declining behind the roofline.

EXT. PORCH - GENERAL'S RESIDENCE - EVENING

They stand on the porch. Brenner chimes the bell.

SUNHILL
I'm nervous as hell.

BRENNER
Let me do the talking.

SUNHILL
That's what I'm nervous about.

The door opens. A young lieutenant appears. Handsome, broad-shouldered. His name tag reads: "Elby".

BRENNER
Warrant Officers Brenner and Sunhill
to see General Campbell.

ELBY
I'm the General's adjutant. Chief of
Staff Colonel Fowler wishes to speak
with you beforehand.

INT. GENERAL'S RESIDENCE - EVENING

The agents follow Elby to a waiting room. He departs. They remain standing, tense, eyeing the period-style furnishings.

In the doorway, Colonel Fowler, in dress-greens with colonel's eagles and insignia of the General Staff. Imposing and case-hardened, a well-used weapon of a man. He moves in, his name tag introducing him. Brenner and Sunhill salute.

FOWLER
Please be seated.

They take seats. Fowler sits across from them. He examines them sternly, his eyes recording every detail, the slash of an old battle scar angling from ear to jawline.

FOWLER
Forgive the recon. I wanted to see
who was coming into the General's
house. It's ingrained, singling out
friends from enemies.

His gaze meets Brenner's.

BRENNER

Hope you're not going to radio in the rockets, sir.

FOWLER

Why? Can't you duck an incoming?

BRENNER

With a day's advance notice.

Fowler sits back, considering him.

FOWLER

Hundred and Ninety-Fourth battalion. Bantangan Peninsula. LZ Dotty. You received a bronze star for carrying a wounded soldier out of a minefield...

Sunhill looks at Brenner. He is staring at Fowler.

FOWLER

Apparently, you capitalized on your weak knees, Mr. Brenner -- Airborne School, Ranger School. Two decades in the CID. Commendations. Awards for valor. A candidate for Master Grade Five... and then you fell off the map...

Fowler's eyes veer to Sunhill.

FOWLER

Agent Sunhill... Masters degree in Psychology. Advanced training, FBI Academy. Three years as an enlisted criminal investigator specializing in rape crimes. Solid performance, rapid advancement. Experience with homicides -- limited.

He pauses, both agents watching him warily.

FOWLER

I've opened your files. It's crucial we have the best qualified people on this. So I'll be blunt. Is that who you are?

BRENNER

Sir, do you want great reviews or do you want results?

FOWLER

My requirements are straightforward,
Mr. Brenner -- *Someone has violated
the very core of this division, and
I want him found.*

A savage wrath ices his eyes. Brenner meets them.

BRENNER

We're going to have an arrest before
the General leaves command, Colonel.

FOWLER

Elaborate.

Brenner glances at Sunhill.

SUNHILL

Sir, how well did you know Captain
Campbell?

FOWLER

Well enough to deliver a eulogy when
her family buries her.

SUNHILL

Did she have a good relationship with
her father, Colonel?

Fowler considers his words.

FOWLER

General Campbell is an extraordinary
soldier, Ms. Sunhill. His daughter
was strung with the same steel. She
was in awe of him, driven to live up
to his example.

SUNHILL

The fact of the matter is, Colonel,
she was out of control.

Fowler stares at her unblinkingly.

FOWLER

Yes. She was endangering her career
as an officer.

SUNHILL

And the General's.

FOWLER
And the General's.

Everyone is silent.

BRENNER
You have the floor, sir.

FOWLER
Captain Campbell was headstrong and willful. Her conduct off-duty had become intolerable. I conducted a surveillance of her activities at the General's request. It confirmed the worst. She was consorting with many men.

BRENNER
Were you aware they included Provost Marshal Major Kent?

The Chief of Staff regards him gravely.

FOWLER
Major Kent's discharge is pending.

BRENNER
I'd like to request those files, sir.

FOWLER
Major Kent has served this division with extreme loyalty. I don't believe he committed this crime, and I would be reluctant to release them.

BRENNER
If that were the case, sir, I'd have to subpoena them.

FOWLER
You may well, Mr. Brenner. I think your perpetrator is outside the military. I'll stand by my men until the evidence tells me otherwise.

Brenner nods, he admires the attitude. Fowler smiles, warmth cutting through his harsh exterior.

FOWLER
This case seems to be in competent hands. Whatever else you need, let me know. I'll do what I can.

BRENNER

Thank you, sir.

Fowler rises. The agents rise.

FOWLER

We'll see the General now. No need to salute, quick condolences. Keep it short.

INT. GENERAL'S DEN - DAY

The agents enter. A dim chamber of polished wood and leather, the drapes drawn. A desk lamp glowing from the dark. Behind the desk, a large man in shadow.

FOWLER

Warrant officers Brenner and Sunhill, General.

Major General Joe Campbell walks forward, wearing battle-dress and a chest-full of medals. His face is craggy, his hand huge as he extends it out.

BRENNER

Our deepest condolences, sir.

GENERAL CAMPBELL

Thank you. Please be seated.

Voice melancholy, eyes glazed with grief. He nods to Fowler who leaves silently. They all take chairs.

GENERAL CAMPBELL

Colonel Fowler and I have served in the Army together for forty-three years. We were boys in Korea, men in Viet Nam, elders in the Gulf. I suppose as war becomes an antiquated notion, so do we.

His smile is pained. Brenner and Sunhill smile back politely. Campbell looks like a fierce Scottish clan chief, a broadsword wielder. His smile leaves him.

CAMPBELL

What's the objective of this meeting?

BRENNER

Sir, to collect information that will lead to a swift arrest.

CAMPBELL

Then you have my full cooperation.

He gazes on Sunhill. It is evident that he sees in her youth and attractiveness his own daughter.

SUNHILL

Sir, did you see your daughter often?

CAMPBELL

Not infrequently. We were to have breakfast the morning after she was... She never showed, of course.

He stares hollowly into her absence.

SUNHILL

What was the nature of that meeting, sir?

The General reflects, sadly rueful.

CAMPBELL

Frankly, my daughter required a bit of a dressing down. She was given to obstinate behavior on occasion. I'd given her an ultimatum. Change her ways or incur paternal hellfire.

He smiles at her, brokenly.

CAMPBELL

Perhaps you've experienced that sort of episode yourself.

The question triggers a tight reaction.

SUNHILL

Yes, sir. My father was a command sergeant and a disciplinarian of the highest order.

Brenner sees animosity flicker in her eyes. The General gazes away from her.

CAMPBELL

Well... She's gone to us now.

He sits without moving or speaking. Staring. A long silence passes. On the desk behind him, a decanter of liquor, nearly empty, a half-filled glass.

BRENNER

I have to ask this, sir: where were you on the night of her death?

Campbell stirs himself.

CAMPBELL

At my office at HQ. I was working late with Colonel Fowler.

BRENNER

What time did you leave, sir?

CAMPBELL

At about twenty-three-hundred hours.

BRENNER

General, did you have have any contact whatever with your daughter on that night?

Campbell's eyes turn clouded, desconsolate.

CAMPBELL

No.

The General slowly rises. They rise. This session is over.

BRENNER

Sir, is there anything we can do for you?

He looks down on Brenner darkly, his voice very low.

GENERAL CAMPBELL

Find the son of a bitch who killed her.

EXT. GENERAL CAMPBELL'S RESIDENCE - EVENING

Lieutenant Elby closes the door behind the agents. They step off the porch, move toward Brenner's truck.

SUNHILL

Maybe he's the son of a bitch.

BRENNER

What's wrong with you? You saw the way she was killed. The General is clearly shattered by this.

SUNHILL

He's still accepting his appointment to the Council. He hasn't said he's out of the next Presidential race.

BRENNER

This father-daughter thing's really hitting a nerve, isn't it?

His words elicit a withering look.

SUNHILL

It's obvious Captain Campbell was repressed by this man her whole life. He pushed her down and she was going all out against it. That's the reason she was killed.

Brenner stares at her. They stop at the truck.

BRENNER

Don't let your personal biases get in the way, Sunhill. You'll start forcing the pieces to make 'em fit.

SUNHILL

My personal biases? This is a men's club. I'm the woman, Brenner. It's called objectivity.

BRENNER

Better come up with more than that.

She looks at him meaningfully.

SUNHILL

I will.

INT. GYM - FORT HADLEY - DAY

The slam of gloves against a heavy bag. Sunhill is throwing a swift, solid series of combinations into the canvas, her gym clothes sweated through. She huffs out, her blows aggressive, her teeth clenched in anger.

Brenner, in a nicely tailored gray suit, stands in the doorway beyond, watching her.

BRENNER

Anybody I know?

Sunhill turns, breathing hard.

SUNHILL

Chances are good.

She strips off her gloves. She looks like she hasn't slept.

SUNHILL

I went through her files last night.
All of them. Exemplary history.
Until you go back to the beginning...

She picks up a towel, Brenner watching her.

SUNHILL

West Point. Evaluation on admission
was good. But third year evaluation
plunged. Apparently, she fell apart.

BRENNER

Fell apart?

SUNHILL

Grades, attitude. She had a series
of consultations with an Army
doctor named Zaccardo. The records
are missing, but his conclusion's on
the evaluation -- stress syndrome.

BRENNER

And you don't buy it?

SUNHILL

I think there's something else here.
This woman was acting out her anger,
rage. Maybe there was an incident,
some kind of traumatic event. It's
worth tracking down.

Brenner considers it. Her eyes are on him, intense, full of conviction.

SUNHILL

I understand her, Brenner. I know
who she was.

INT. HANGAR - JORDAN FIELD - DAY

Seiver's forensic operation is installed within the cavernous space, arched girders soaring high overhead, the commotion of his staff echoing.

Sunhill and Brenner move past Captain Campbell's humvee, walls of bulletin boards, photos, maps, diagrams, computers, phones, vast tables of bagged and tagged evidence.

They enter the lab section. Seiver stands before three coffee urns, irritably trying to get half a cup filled.

SEIVER

You want me to go without sleep, get me some fuckin' caffeine.

BRENNER

Get me some results, I'll buy you an espresso machine.

SEIVER

Start shopping. Item one: Captain Campbell's clothes and dogtags were recovered at Range Six. They were found in a plastic trash bag on the roof of a latrine.

They walk to another section of the lab. Corkboard partitions display a detailed diagram of the range, bristling with multi-colored pinheads designating prints. A table holds dozens of numbered plaster castings of impressions.

SEIVER

Item Two: Lots of tracks. We matched up the ones we thought were pertinent and fed everything into the computer.

Seiver stands at a computer monitor, hammers some keys, brings up a graphic image. Footprints. They step across the screen in a described pattern, as if an invisible being were leaving tread marks in its wake.

SEIVER (CONT'D)

That gave us the print sequence for individual tracks. We analyzed the ones closest to the body...

The screen brings up a three-dimensional image, two bootprints created with netted contour lines, one overlaying the other.

SEIVER

This is Sergeant St. John's boot and the print it overlays is Major Kent's boot. Indicating Kent arrived on the scene *before* St. John's discovery.

BRENNER

Is that positive?

SEIVER

I'm surmising. We have two military bootprints of the same make and same tread depth, made within hours of each other. If you want positive, I'll send the photos and casts to an expert.

BRENNER

I want positive. Get it on a plane.

SEIVER

Right. I have two sets of bootprints here that haven't been ID'd yet.

Brenner canvasses the area. He sees a junior agent struggling with a stack of reports. He whistles shrilly, waves him over.

JUNIOR AGENT

Sir!

BRENNER

We need some boots for the lab. The Post Commander's. The Chief of Staff's. Colonel Moore at Psy-Ops.

JUNIOR AGENT

Yes, sir... General Campbell, sir?
And Colonel Fowler?

BRENNER

Go!

The agent lurches off. Brenner is charged, looks at Sunhill. They're getting close.

EXT. BRENNER'S OFFICE - CID UNIT - DAY

The phone is ringing. Brenner and Sunhill enter, he lifts the handset.

BRENNER

Brenner.

HELLMANN (V.O.)

Colonel Hellmann.

Brenner grimaces, looking at Sunhill.

BRENNER

We're almost there, sir.

INT. C-21A - IN TRANSIT - DAY

Hellmann is in a seat with the air-phone, clouds piling past the window, turbo-fans droning.

HELLMANN

"Almost" is a subjective term, Mr. Brenner. The brass have reviewed your report. They don't like the implications, and they're getting nervous about leaks to the press.

BRENNER (V.O.)

What does that mean, sir?

Hellmann sits next to Lt. Rogers who looks up from her laptop screen. Behind them, occupying the seats of the rear cabin, five keen-eyed men in suits, CID veterans, all male, all ego.

HELLMANN

It means that as of this moment you are off the case. You'll give your files to the incoming team, due to arrive in two hours.

INT. BRENNER'S OFFICE - CID UNIT - DAY

Brenner grips the phone, the wind knocked out of him. Sunhill watches him with rising apprehension.

BRENNER

Colonel, we can give you an arrest in a matter of hours.

HELLMANN (V.O.)

We have a major scandal here. This has to be handled with surgical precision. I can't risk your track record.

BRENNER

My track record? I layed down for the Army, Colonel. We both know it.

HELLMANN (V.O.)

It's a closed issue, Mr. Brenner.

Brenner's expression hardens.

BRENNER

Yes, sir. But let's keep it clear. You're sending in a team of public-relations specialists, not a team of investigators.

The line rings off. Brenner stands with the phone. He yanks hard, ripping the line from the wall, throws the phone across the office. It bangs into a wall heater.

BRENNER

He cut us!

SUNHILL

Bastard!

Specialist Dixon appears in the door, flushed with excitement. She looks at the phone, looks from Sunhill to Brenner, their eyes crazed.

DIXON

Mr. Brenner..? We've recovered the hardware.

BRENNER

And?

DIXON

It's a bombshell.

INT. DIXON'S OFFICE - DAY

Brenner and Sunhill lean over Specialist Dixon, the lit screen of Campbell's notebook computer before her.

BRENNER

Okay, Dixon. Detonate.

Dixon scrolls columns filled with print.

DIXON

We found her calendar. Names, dates and notations regarding sexual acts.

BRENNER

Which names?

DIXON

This is extremely embarrassing, sir. We have a number of references here. The individuals we're certain about are Provost Marshal Major Kent and Chief of Police Yardley in Midland.

BRENNER

Uh huh.

DIXON

And Colonel Moore at Psy-Ops, and the General's adjutant, Lieutenant Elby.

BRENNER

Colonel Moore? And Elby?

Brenner looks at Sunhill. Bang.

SUNHILL

(jarred)

What do the notations say?

DIXON

They're pornographic, Ms. Sunhill.

BRENNER

Read Major Kent's.

DIXON

Out loud?

BRENNER

If you will.

Dixon uncomfortably clears her throat.

DIXON

"Another sweaty fuck-session with Bill. Tied me to the bed, used the whip... Multiple orgasms. Made him eat me. I put the silly pig mask on his face. Enormous erection..."

BRENNER

Ah-ha. One of those. Skip to the last entry.

Dixon scrolls, applies herself.

DIXON

It's Major Kent again... "Bill behaving like a love-sick jerk. Jealous, possessive, violent. Wanted to run away with me. I laughed. Struck me, tied me up, raped me on the floor. Think he's going off the deep end."

Dixon stops. She's a little overheated.

DIXON

That's where it ends, sir.

He glances at Sunhill. It's looking very grim for Major Kent.

BRENNER

What date is that entered under?

DIXON

August eight.

BRENNER

That thing has a clock, doesn't it? Something that automatically records dates and times for entries?

DIXON

It crashed.

BRENNER

See if you can un-crash it.

EXT. HALLWAY - CID UNIT - DAY

The two agents move toward the exit.

SUNHILL

We have the arrest, Brenner -- his footprint, the computer entry. It hangs him.

BRENNER

We don't have the arrest, Sunhill. We're officially sidelined. The glory boys are on their way, with Hellmann leading the charge.

SUNHILL

And you're just gonna let it happen? I thought you were the one who threw out the rule-book?

EXT. PARKING LOT - CID UNIT - DAY

They burst out through the door, tempers ragged, move across the hot asphalt.

BRENNER

You're a real ballbuster, Sunhill.

SUNHILL

That's right, Brenner. I'm not getting replaced by a team of stooges who think they can sweep this under the rug.

Brenner finds his keys, rips open the door of the truck. She stops behind him.

SUNHILL

We said we were going all the way with it. So get your ass off the sidelines, make a fucking end-run!

He stops where he is, turns, eyes savage.

BRENNER

You want an end run?!

SUNHILL

That's right!

BRENNER

Get in the truck!

He jumps in. Sunhill races around to her door, clambers in as he starts it, exhaust rapping. The truck blasts away, smoking the asphalt.

EXT. MOTOR POOL - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Colonel Fowler, in battle dress, strides along a row of sand-colored Abrams tanks, howitzers, Bradley fighting vehicles, *massive engines of war mothballed in the military drawdown.

Ahead, Brenner stands with Sunhill, waiting at the motor pool gate. They salute. Fowler stops before them, torso and arms filling out his shirt, eyes razor-edged.

BRENNER

We have our man, sir.

FOWLER

Name him.

BRENNER

Major Kent.

Fowler assimilates the information grimly. Beyond, a private dutifully scrubbing out the chamber of a tank.

FOWLER

You say this understanding what my position is?

BRENNER

Yes, sir. You need to reconsider your position.

FOWLER

Why are we having this discussion, Mr. Brenner?

BRENNER

You said if there was anything you could do, let you know. There is.

FOWLER

What?

BRENNER

Keep me on this case.

Fowler considers him wordlessly.

INT. PROVOST MARSHAL'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Brenner and Sunhill enter the doorway of the Provost Marshal's office, a pair of MPs in tow. Cabinets, a wall of plaques and awards, his desk, the chair behind it empty.

SUNHILL

He bolted.

BRENNER

Major Kent's an officer in the Army.
He didn't bolt.

The phone on the desk jangles. Brenner grabs the receiver.

BRENNER

Brenner.

MP SERGEANT (V.O.)

Major Kent's on the line, sir.

Brenner nods to Sunhill, holding the phone. Kent comes on.

KENT (V.O.)

I hear you're ready to close down,
Brenner.

BRENNER

Where are you, Major?

KENT (V.O.)

At the old infantry training field.
I'm just kind of walking around out
here. I want to talk soldier-to-
soldier, Brenner. I'd really like
that courtesy.

The line clicks off.

EXT. INFANTRY TRAINING FIELD - NIGHT

Summer thunder rolls distantly. Brenner's pick-up pulls up at the edge of the field. The headlights remain on. Brenner and Sunhill get out either door, looking across the grass.

The throw of the lights graze a tall figure in a white helmet standing out in the middle of the field.

BRENNER

Don't wanna spook him. Hang back.

Brenner stares out at Kent uneasily.

BRENNER
Unless he tries to kill me. Then
don't hang back.

Brenner begins walking out.

EXT. FIELD - FURTHER - NIGHT

Kent watches Brenner approach, his face even, stance relaxed.
He puts a hand out, motioning for him to halt.

KENT
That's far enough.

Brenner stops about forty yards from him.

KENT
You armed?

BRENNER
I am.

KENT
With what?

BRENNER
With my weapon, Major.

KENT
Let me see it.

Brenner sighs. He snaps open his jacket, exposing the butt of
a semi auto in a shoulder holster.

KENT
Sig-Sauer M11.

Brenner studies him. Kent's own sidearm is still buttoned in
his holster.

KENT

I stand by my Beretta M-9. It's the most accurate piece I've shot. It's ergonomic, friendly double-action, SA let-off is smooth, the sights are nicely proportioned... regulation is dead on...

Kent eyes are on him, glassy, distant.

KENT

It'll absorb the recoil of a hot NATO-spec load with total poise.

Brenner sweats, watching him. The man is over the edge. The thrum of crickets fills the humid night.

BRENNER

That's really great, Major... Not many weapons can do that.

He steps closer.

KENT

Just stand there, please... I have a few more things to say.

His face is hollow and pale.

KENT

I've been privileged to serve in a great cause. The Army has given my life purpose. I've loved it, fought for it, bled... Now I've dishonored it... I'm resigning my commission, Brenner.

Brenner feels a ragged surge of pity.

BRENNER

You're doing the right thing, Major.

KENT

Don't patronize me. You don't meet the standards.

Kent's eyes glare white in the headlights.

BRENNER

Easy, Major... Easy. Just tell me what happened that night.

KENT

You tell me.

BRENNER

You met her on the range. It was her idea of a thrill. You'd done it before. But this time you lost it. It's understandable, Major. She was dumping you. The tent cord ended up in your hands. By the time you realized it was around her neck...

Kent shakes his head, his face broken out with beads of sweat.

KENT

Negative.

BRENNER

Come in with me, Major. Just unhook the sidearm. We'll make this easy.

Kent grins, eyes ignited. Brenner wearily frees his pistol, starting toward him.

BRENNER

We're not going hand-to-hand, Major.

KENT

Before you walk any further, you should know where you're standing.

BRENNER

Where am I standing?

KENT

In a minefield.

Brenner frowns. Kent cracks his knuckles, face anticipatory.

KENT

I buried some Bouncing Bettys. Anti-personnel. You buy that?

BRENNER

Come on, Major.

KENT

Then you think I'm bluffing.

Brenner sees elation fill Kent's eyes. He involuntarily scans the dark grass around him. It is unmowed and thick enough for concealing dug earth.

KENT

Remember how the Betty works? First man trips the primary. Mine shoots up. Rest of the column walk into the blast. Their heads are removed. Or limbs. Whatever.

Brenner starts to move for Kent. Then he sees, just past the reach of his headlights, the upright shaft of what could be a shovel jammed in the earth.

KENT

Come and get me, Brenner. I'll wait right here.

Brenner stares at Kent, trying to read him. There's a chance the Provost Marshal is crazy enough to have planted something dangerous in the grass.

AT THE PICK-UP

Sunhill is watching, adrenalin charged, unsure of what Kent is saying. She has her gun in her hands.

IN THE FIELD

Brenner stands motionless, glances back to her, then at Kent.

KENT

You could turn around. Walk out the way you came in. But if I am bluffing, you're gonna look like a coward in front of your partner.

He stands easily, savoring Brenner's indecision, the fear that is beginning to take root.

Brenner begins walking toward him, his shoes crushing into the grass. He moves with purpose, not looking down. Kent watches his every step with hollow glee.

BRENNER

There's no mines, Major. You'd be in the kill radius, too.

KENT

I want to be in the kill radius.

Brenner's gait slows. He stares ahead, the headlights at his back. Sweat rolls down his face. Crickets hum.

KENT

Amazing what a load of shrapnel will do to flesh and bone. Take it clean off -- well, not clean at all, actually. You've seen the casualties.

Brenner wills himself ahead, nerves drawn tight, looking down, watching for signs of disruption in the grass. Kent is framed against the night, bathed in sickly light, growing closer, his smile goading Brenner.

Brenner's shoe hits something. He freezes. Fear pumps sharp and instantly. His eyes bore into the grass, his foot raised half off the hidden obstruction.

His chest constricts, his breath audible, swift. He remains still, blinking sweat out of his eyes.

Kent's eyes are riveted to the grass where his shoe is poised. And suddenly the fear leaves. He sees Kent for what he is, a sad loser playing a loser's bluff.

Kent sees the realization pass in Brenner's eyes. His goading smile disappears, stripped from him.

BRENNER

It's over.

Brenner moves for him. As the weight of his foot comes down, he feels it, just under the rise of ground, the steel of it, recognizes it, and is diving in a running leap even as it is triggered, the primary charge cracking.

The mine leaps up from the grass in a spray of sod. Brenner, sprinting, skidding belly down in a headlong dive, the night lighting up, the air rocking in a massive concussion, shards of shrapnel whizzing.

AT THE TRUCK

Sunhill shouts, her voice drowned, her face lit incandescent.

IN THE FIELD

Smoke rolls, wet clay rains down. Brenner scrambles up to his feet, eyes wild.

Through the drifting smoke, Major Kent, still standing. BDU's shredded, chest, arms, legs, face, perforated, blooming blood.

BRENNER
DON'T MOVE, MAJOR!

Kent's eyes are blank. He grins a ghastly grin and takes one deliberate and suicidal step forward.

The trigger plate snaps, the charge blows, the mine springs up and seems to hover an instant, black and deadly, hung in front of his bloody face.

Kent salutes it. He disassembles in a roaring flash of white.

INT. HEARING ROOM - HQ BUILDING - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Four dour, experience-hardened military men sit in a row at a long walnut table, gaze harsh and exacting: Colonel Hellmann, blood in his eye. The Staff Judge Advocate for the Division. The new Special Agent in Charge for Fort Hadley. And General Burns, Commander of the CID.

The object of their gaze is Brenner, standing across from them uncomfortably, the harsh light of the room in his eyes.

BURNS
It's a grim outcome, Mr. Brenner.

BRENNER
Yes, sir.

BURNS
Grim. Deplorable. Bad for business.

Brenner holds silence, anticipating being drawn and quartered on the linoleum.

BURNS
Apparently your work impressed the Commander of the Post. General Campbell extended himself to keep you on -- he called his personal friend, the Chief of Staff of the Army... My boss.

He lances Brenner with his gaze.

BURNS

In effect, Colonel Hellmann was left holding his dick on the airfield.

Brenner catches Hellmann's stare, sorry he did. The Colonel is shooting death rays.

BURNS

Did you have anything to do with this? You're on your oath.

Four sets of eyes bear down on him. Brenner point-blank lies.

BRENNER

No, sir.

BURNS

If I discover otherwise, you'll be out of the Army so quick you'll think you were shot from a cannon.

Hellmann stares at Brenner unhappily.

BRENNER

Yes, sir. Sir, has the objective of this mission been met?

Burns considers him shrewdly.

BURNS

It has. Damage sustainable. I want to make this clear, Mr. Brenner -- you're walking a very thin line. I advise you to keep a low profile.

Brenner salutes crisply.

INT. VISITING OFFICER'S QUARTERS - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Drab Army housing. Brenner stands at the open door of a room. Inside, Sunhill is removing clothes from a rack in the closet. He knocks, walking in. On the bed, a garment bag, a suitcase.

BRENNER

You're leaving?

SUNHILL

I've been re-assigned.

Brenner tries to mask his disappointment.

BRENNER
Where are they sending you?

SUNHILL
Panama.

BRENNER
Panama?

She looks at him unhappily.

BRENNER
Hellmann.

SUNHILL
My ballroom days are over.

BRENNER
I'm sorry, Sunhill. I should never
have let you come in on this.

SUNHILL
You couldn't have kept me out.

She begins packing a garment bag.

SUNHILL
What's going to happen to you?

BRENNER
I guess I have a future. The upshot
is, everyone's relieved it didn't hit
any higher.

She pauses in what she's doing.

SUNHILL
Brenner... I can't leave like this.

She turns to him.

SUNHILL
This case still has too many pieces
missing.

BRENNER
I know.

DIFFUSED LIGHT GLINTS

Against white silk, Captain Campbell, like a goddess of war in repose. Her golden hair fanned out, her skin porcelain, her eyes closed. Her snow-white waistcoat adorned with medals and gold braids. Her hands clasped on the hilt of a gleaming West Point saber.

FOWLER (V.O.)

In Isaiah, it was asked -- 'Watchman, what of the night? And the watchman replied -- 'morning is coming'...

INT. CHAPEL - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Her flag-draped open casket, raised on a catafalque. Past it, a gathering five-hundred strong seated in pews, more spilling out the doorway. Officers, friends, family, a limited pool of print journalists mopping sweat in the sweltering closeness of the chapel.

FOWLER (CONT'D)

As soldiers, this is our calling -- to stand the watch each night, so that others may abide in peace until morning...

General Campbell, Mrs. Campbell, stalwart and enduring, sit in the front, gazing to the podium where Colonel Fowler delivers the eulogy, dress greens knife-pressed, his strong, commanding voice ringing out over the hushed assembly.

FOWLER (CONT'D)

And we will stand watch until the day when it pleases God to call us into His Kingdom, and we need no longer stand the watch, nor fear the night.

Further back, Brenner and Sunhill, both in dress uniform, CID patches, gold insignia, Brenner's medals. Watching Fowler.

FOWLER

Though Captain Campbell was mortal, and shed real blood, and shed real tears... She was a soldier first.

Fowler turns to the casket, saluting.

FOWLER

Captain, that's how we'll remember you.

EXT. CHAPEL FIELD - DAY

A volley of rifle fire cracks out. The firing party of seven soldiers snap the bolts of their rifles, raise them again and fire, repeat their motions, fire once more.

Smoke drifts in the silence. Ringing the hot, green clearing where the casket rests, flag across it, a huge crowd, hushed.

A lone buglar takes a place near the six Army pallbearers, the color guard, the military band, the firing party. Heat pours down. He raises his polished horn, sounds the first plaintive notes of taps.

EXT. ROAD - ABOVE FIELD - DAY

Lined with buses, Army and civilian vehicles. Brenner moves toward Colonel Fowler who stands at his staff car, preparing to enter. He sees Brenner, pausing. Brenner snaps a salute.

BRENNER

Fine words, sir.

Fowler nods his solemn thanks.

BRENNER

I wanted to thank you for your help, Colonel.

They observe each other.

FOWLER

A superior job, Mr. Brenner. Though I wouldn't want to be your CO.

He allows a brief smile.

FOWLER

Do me a favor and don't ask me for any more favors.

He turns, gets in his car. Brenner watches it drive away.

INT. HANGAR - JORDON FIELD - DAY

The operation is being dismantled, Seiver's personnel rapidly and expertly packing their gear, the slam and scrape echoing.

Seiver stands near the back of a van, supervising the loading of some lab equipment. He watches Brenner's pick-up approach from one of the bay doors. Brenner gets out, walks over.

BRENNER
Something bothers me, Seiver.

SEIVER
What's that?

BRENNER
The final results on St. John's and Major Kent's bootprints. How come your expert never got back to you?

They back away from the swinging end of a crate being hauled into the bed of the van.

SEIVER
He did. This morning -- Be careful with that fuckin' thing!

BRENNER
And you didn't you notify me?

SEIVER
It's completely immaterial now.

Brenner stares at him edgily. Seiver regards him, mystified.

SEIVER
Jesus, Brenner. You slam-dunked the case. What's the problem?

BRENNER
What did you get, Seiver?

SEIVER
He examined the tracks. Says there's no method of determining with hundred percent accuracy which came first.

BRENNER
But he gave you his opinion.

Seiver observes Brenner defensively.

SEIVER
His opinion is Kent arrived on the scene after St. John, not before.

Brenner is stunned, Seiver's voice distending, reverberating.

SEIVER

I disagree with him. Major Kent did it. The proof was collected in a hundred yard radius on the infantry field...

INT. BRENNER'S OFFICE - CID UNIT - NIGHT

Brenner, still in dress uniform, his eyes fixed on a print-out on his desk.

SEIVER (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

... So who you gonna go with?

CLOSE ON: PRINT-OUT

The log of Captain Campbell's calendar -- columns of numbers; dates, hours and minutes.

BRENNER

looks up from the print-out.

BRENNER

He didn't do it.

EXT. OFFICERS CLUB - NIGHT

A noisy dining room filled with commissioned soldiers in sand-colored battle-dress camouflage. Sunhill moves her tray along the cafeteria counter.

Someone slides a computer case her way, she looks up. Brenner has cut into the line ahead of her.

BRENNER

He didn't do it.

Sunhill stares at him, caught off guard. His eyes burn madly.

SUNHILL

What?

The officers in line are watching them. Brenner grabs her arm and leads her away.

SUNHILL

Brenner, what the hell are you doing?

They move through the dining room, stop at the front door, he takes her arms, looking into her face.

BRENNER

There's a problem with her calendar.

SUNHILL

What?

BRENNER

One of the entries was made about an hour after she was killed.

Her expression falls.

BRENNER

Dixon logged the times and dates. I went over it. He's still out there, Sunhill.

EXT. OFFICER'S CLUB - NIGHT

They rush out through the front doors, muggy rain spilling off the covered walkway.

BRENNER

He knew about the basement. He knew she kept a calendar. And he knew he could frame Kent.

SUNHILL

(dismayed)

And we bought it.

BRENNER

He overlooked the automatic time-clock. He makes mistakes.

SUNHILL

We need a new motive.

They move out in the rain.

BRENNER

That's your job. Run your theory -- the traumatic event at West Point. Plug into the Records Center, track this Army doctor down.

SUNHILL

Zaccardo?

BRENNER

If he's alive, get an airlift, talk to him face-to-face. Pull out all the stops.

SUNHILL

We have no *time*, Brenner. I'm out in two days.

BRENNER

We go without sleep.

He stops near his pick-up, slewed sideways in the parking lot.

BRENNER

Her lecture tape -- psychological warfare. Mindfucking. We'll use it to level the field. Got a car?

SUNHILL

Yes.

BRENNER

Contact me when you have something.

SUNHILL

Where are you going?

BRENNER

I'm gonna start narrowing the list.

EXT. AIRFIELD - FORT HADLEY - NIGHT

A car skids to a halt. Sunhill jumps out. A UH-60 Black Hawk waits for her on the tarmac, props churning, lights winking, a crewman waiting at the open door.

She looks at it, apprehensive, determined, then sprints toward it. The crewman holds out his hand, she leaps in, the chopper tilts upward, blades slashing the rain.

EXT. TAVERN - MIDLAND - NIGHT

A drinking spot, cinderblock, a bunker. Brenner's truck rolls into the muddy lot.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Country rock on the sound system. Locals lining a dim, smoky bar. Brenner walks in, carrying a briefcase. Scans the room.

At a table in the back, Chief Yardley, chewing on a burger and staring toward Brenner. He is seated with associates, men who help run Midland and find themselves with little to do.

Brenner arrives at the table, sliding into a chair and resting his briefcase in front of him.

BRENNER

Hi, Chief.

Yardley eyes the briefcase, then Brenner. He sets his burger down, formally.

YARDLEY

Well... Mr. Brenner.

His associates regard Brenner inhospitably. A waitress with lots of hair and curves moves up behind Yardley with a tray.

YARDLEY

Fellas, why don't ya'll get a drink at the bar?

BRENNER

They don't have to go.

Yardley stares at Brenner, surmising his intent.

YARDLEY

Proceed with caution.

BRENNER

I'm in a reckless mood, Chief. Where you were on the night of August sixth between the hours of ten and twelve?

Yardley inclines his head rearward.

YARDLEY

Donna, honey, tell Mr. Brenner where I was that night.

She looks at Brenner with happy vacancy.

DONNA

In my muff.

The men around the table chortle. Yardley joins them, shakes his head fondly.

YARDLEY

Ain't she a peach..? I'm a bachelor,
Mr. Brenner.

Brenner unsnaps his briefcase.

BRENNER

Well, since we're on the subject, I
think Donna will enjoy these.

Brenner removes a stack of photos, spreads them out like cards on the table. Yardley's eyes narrow at them, then widen as he registers their content. His associates crane forward to see.

BRENNER

The Yardley retrospective. Selected
images.

Donna leans over with her tray, her face stiffening.

DONNA

Oh my God...

Brenner slides one of the photos closer.

BRENNER

This one's my favorite, Donna. Check
the paunch.

She tilts her head to it, affronted.

DONNA

The paunch? The teensy erection.

BRENNER

I think we have a tentative ID.

Yardley glowers, his complexion livid.

BRENNER

She had a camcorder in the basement,
Chief. The lab printed these. They
put you there. Withholding evidence.
Obstructing Justice. Misconduct in
office. Conspiracy...

YARDLEY

First thing, I got no idea what you are talkin' about. Second, I don't see anyone's face here.

DONNA

Well, how you gonna see the face?

YARDLEY

Shut up, honey. You got squat here, Brenner. Goose eggs. Nothin'.

BRENNER

Ever hear of forensic anthropology?

Yardley chews on his lip, glaring.

BRENNER

Forensic anthropology reconstructs the identity of a person through bone or body parts. What I'm gonna do is get a subpoena. Tell the Feds we need a shot of Chief Yardley's penis. They'll come out with a camera. Then the lab boys go to work and match it.

Brenner gathers the photos up, throws them into his briefcase, slams the lid closed.

BRENNER

You're through, Chief.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Brenner stands out among the other parked cars, staring grimly at his truck. The windshield is smashed in, diamonds of glass scattered across the hood.

He turns around. Johnny Ray and Deuce slouch against the nose of a nearby Camaro, watching him with amused menace.

JOHNNY RAY

Peckerwood pick-up.

DEUCE

Rebel thunder-Chevy.

JOHNNY RAY

Looks like a break-in.

DEUCE

Call Nine-One-One.

Johnny Ray wheezes a chuckle. Deuce leans to one side, blows a wad of spit.

BRENNER

Good thing you didn't have your muzzle on.

Deuce looks at Johnny Ray. He pushes himself off the Camaro. Tattoos, musculature, stripped to fighting trim.

DEUCE

I'm off the leash.

Johnny Ray offers advice to Brenner from his indolent slouch.

JOHNNY RAY

That's problematic for you.

Deuce glides toward him. Brenner shifts his stance. Deuce's eyes flick over him contemptuously.

DEUCE

He's tired.

JOHNNY RAY

Give 'im a rest.

Deuce fearlessly plants himself across from Brenner, unlimbers his legs in a little bounce.

DEUCE

Hey, Johnny Ray? You think he knows hand-to-hand combat?

JOHNNY RAY

Might. You just got to stay hard as white oak tree.

Deuce's eyes glaze psychotically.

DEUCE

Man down in parking lot.

He fires his leg at Brenner in vicious snap kick. Brenner is suddenly holding it tight in the crook of his arm. He blurs, sweeping his own leg behind Deuce's free leg and cracking the point of his chin with a hard palm thrust, reaping the man's standing leg out from under him. Deuce slams the ground back-first, his cranial nerves short-circuited.

Brenner releases his leg, whips his pistol out, levels it on Johnny Ray who rolls off the car defensively, his hand at the rear of his waistband.

BRENNER

You pull that, you're gone.

JOHNNY RAY

Fair fight, fair fight.

The big man is half on the ground. He holds one hand out and slowly places a pistol on the dirt with the other.

BRENNER

Now get the glass off my seat.

EXT. PSY-OPS COMPLEX - FORT HADLEY - DAY

The Chevy pick-up rumbles up to the gate, windshield missing. Brenner displays his badge as he drives past the MP.

INT. PSY-OPS LAB - DAY

The clamor of the monkeys rocks off the tiles of the room. At the lab bench, Colonel Moore, oblivious of the noise, absorbed in his work at a computer.

The lights suddenly go out, plunging the windowless room into darkness. The screaming primates fall silent. Moore, framed in the dimness, turns from his work. He looks past the cages toward the room's entrance.

Someone is standing there. A vague shape. Moore blinks, his lenses steamed in the close air.

MOORE

Who's there?

BRENNER

The grim fucking reaper.

Moore stares into the blackness, uneasily, his glasses lit in the sickly green light of his monitor.

MOORE

Is that you, Brenner..?

Moore hears a steel latch rattle. The monkeys begin howling, rocking their cages.

MOORE

What are you doing?

BRENNER

I'm letting the monkeys loose.

Moore face drains.

MOORE

Have you gone insane?

BRENNER

How would you know?

The monkeys fall silent again as hinges squeal. Moore's eyes widen sharply.

MOORE

Those animals are rabid!

Moore lurches from the bench, trying to feel his way forward.

MOORE

Brenner..? I'll have you up on --

A rhesus screams, hurtling from its enclosure. A projectile of hair and muscle that rips past Moore's face, dislodging his glasses. The shape tears across the lab bench, toppling his monitor and vanishing.

Moore gasps, his glasses dangling. He freezes, eyes blindly searching the dark. A savage shriek pierces his ear, Moore screams, a set of fangs rush out of the dark and snap at him.

He stumbles along the bench, flailing, trips, goes down to his knees. He brings his head up. A set of red eyes blink at him from a cage inches away. A low, lethal chatter commences. He hears the cage latch click.

MOORE

Enough!

Brenner's voice is very close.

BRENNER

You were there on the firing range,
Colonel! You helped stake her out!
You hid her clothes on the latrine!

MOORE

You can't do this, Brenner! It's a
violation of --

Brenner grabs him by the shirt, hauls him to his feet, slams
him against the bench, eyes murderous.

BRENNER

You're up to your ass in this! Start
talking!

Moore sags, resistance crushed.

MOORE

Ann required... bold remedial therapy
to address a longstanding... and
unresolved issue that was destroying
her...

EXT. STREET - EAST ORANGE, NEW JERSEY - DAY

A block of run-down storefronts, iron-grated windows. A taxi-
cab pulling up to the curb. Sunhill gets out, pays the driver
and looks to the entrance of a seedy clinic:

Dr. Joseph Zaccardo - Foot Surgeon
Medicare and Most Insurances Accepted

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - CLINIC - DAY

Sunhill is shown inside by a tired, obese nurse who closes the
door as she leaves. Sunhill takes in the room; an exam bench,
blistered walls, a foot chart. Not a going concern.

The door opens. A black man enters, referring to a clipboard.
He glances up at her, sunken-eyed and aged hard.

ZACCARDO

Ms. Sunhill. I'm Doctor Zaccardo.
Apparently you have some sort of
an emergency today?

SUNHILL

Yes.

ZACCARDO

Remove your shoes, please.

Sunhill kicks off her flats. The doctor leans down, examines her feet, his spidery hands manipulating them.

ZACCARDO

Actually, you have exceedingly sound conformation.

SUNHILL

Actually, it's not my feet.

The doctor's eyes peer up at her from great dark circles. His complexion gray, unhealthy.

ZACCARDO

Explain, please.

SUNHILL

I'm here to talk about West Point.

Zaccardo straightens up. He stares down at her.

SUNHILL

Nineteen-Eighty-Six, Doctor. You examined a young cadet. Her name was Ann Campbell.

Zaccardo's face closes on her.

ZACCARDO

I have no memory of her. I examined hundreds of cadets when I was at West Point. As you can see, there's been quite an interval since then.

SUNHILL

Captain Campbell was murdered at Fort Hadley, Georgia five days ago.

Zaccardo moves to the door.

ZACCARDO

I have a busy schedule.

SUNHILL

I need your help, Doctor.

ZACCARDO

Who are you?

Sunhill stares at him, desperation rising. She's losing him.

ZACCARDO
You're an investigator? Fine. I'll
call my attorney.

He begins through the door.

SUNHILL
I hope he handles malpractice.

Zaccardo stops in his tracks. Sunhill blinks, stunned by what she's just said. And it keeps coming.

SUNHILL
I'm here for the plaintiff, Doctor...
Who asserts Captain Campbell's death
was a direct result of the trauma she
underwent at West Point...

He turns back to her, fear flickering in his eyes.

SUNHILL
And unless you can convince me you
were under orders to destroy her
medical files, we're slapping you
with a multi-million dollar lawsuit.

The doctor stands uncertainly, staring at her. Sunhill opens her purse, removes a folded report. She unfolds it, reading.

SUNHILL
Campbell, Ann, Grace. Cause of death
-- asphyxia. Aside from ligature on
neck, no trauma to exposed tissue, or
to bones, brains, mouth, vagina...

She pauses, her emotions rising.

SUNHILL
Some erosion of the cervix indicating
a prior disease, abortion. Stomach,
bladder, intestine contents analyzed,
toxicology clean. No drugs, poisons,
alcohol. Trace fluids analyzed.
Perspiration... Tears...

She looks up at him.

SUNHILL
Tears running downward from the eyes.

Zaccardo moves to the counter, seems out of breath. He leans there, not facing her.

SUNHILL

This was a human being, Doctor. She was crying when her life ended. And she was crying when she came to you, ten years ago.

He remains immobilized against the counter.

ZACCARDO

There's nothing I can say that will help her now.

SUNHILL

You can tell the truth.

Zaccardo slowly turns. A man who has buried himself alive.

ZACCARDO

It was so long ago... I was sworn to secrecy. You have to understand. It wasn't easy, getting a position...

He stares into the past.

SUNHILL

Why did she need medical assistance?

ZACCARDO'S

eyes catch the sun, the broken weave of his irises, the black holes of the pupils.

ZACCARDO

She was raped...

The blackness enlarging, becoming

NIGHT

A place and time ten years ago. A place of summer heat. Dark trees ringing a view of the sky. The shrill of crickets. The muted sound of struggle.

ZACCARDO (V.O.)

Gang-raped, on a training maneuver...

Fireflies trail past. Coming into clarity below the trees, an assembly of shadowed faces. Brutal, youthful faces, concealed by camouflage netting and crazed stripes of greasepaint. Eyes glinting whitely, holding lust, violence.

ZACCARDO (V.O.)

Eight cadets... They bound her with tent cord...

One of the faces leans in, close, a cadet, eyes fixed, breath catching in his throat. A young woman's cry rises, exhausted, tortured.

ZACCARDO (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

Left her bleeding in the dirt.

IN THE EXAM ROOM

Zaccardo stares, eyes fixed. Sunhill is moved to rage, tears. She fights it, trying to keep her voice even.

SUNHILL

There's... no record of the charges.

ZACCARDO

She never filed charges.

SUNHILL

Why?

Zaccardo looks on her.

ZACCARDO

Charges would have lead to a court martial, and a court martial would have dishonored... the institution. So far as the United States Army is concerned, it never occurred.

SUNHILL

And the cadets who raped her?

ZACCARDO

Never identified. Men who've become one thing or another, blended anonymously into military or civilian life.

SUNHILL

Was it Campbell's decision not to
pursue a court martial?

The doctor regards her bitterly.

ZACCARDO

Which Campbell, Ms. Sunhill?

She stares at him across the dingy room, the silence swelling.

EXT. BRENNER'S TRAILER - WHISPERING PINES - DAY

Rain streaking down. Brenner's pick-up drives up through the mud, stops near the front of the trailer. The windshield has been replaced. Brenner gets out, his eyes on something.

Parked across the yard, a staff car. Someone behind the fog of the window. The driver's door opens and Colonel Hellmann stands out. He stares across to Brenner.

HELLMANN

The case is closed, Mr. Brenner.

BRENNER

I have evidence that says otherwise.

Hellmann walks toward him.

HELLMANN

Major Kent is guilty and a military court will make judgment accordingly. It's a done deal.

BRENNER

You may not want it go any higher, Colonel, but it does.

The rain sweeps the yard, streams down Hellmann's deadly face.

HELLMANN

Let me walk you through this: The sole purpose of the military is to serve this country. Your purpose is to serve the military. Unconditionally. Without question.

Brenner stares at him.

BRENNER

Just like Fort Belvoir, Colonel?

Hellmann takes him in, his trailer.

HELLMANN

Look at yourself, Brenner. You never really knew what being a soldier meant. The investigation's over, the best interests of the United States Army have been served.

Their eyes are locked.

HELLMANN

Have we reached an understanding?

BRENNER

Fuck off, Colonel.

Hellmann springs for him. Brenner ducks his fist, pinning him forcefully to the pick-up. He restrains him, Hellmann panting in rage, teeth clenched.

Brenner releases him. Hellmann jerks away, eyes blazing. He stabs his finger out at him, growling.

HELLMANN

I'm giving you a direct order! Drop it! Disobey, you're finished! Hear me? Finished!

He moves back, angrily straightening his sodden blouse.

HELLMANN

And Sunhill's finished, too!

He throws open his car door, glaring, gets in, slams the door, rams the car away, tires spinning.

Brenner stands in the rain, face dark, watching the car skid out of the lot.

THE SOLDIER

of plastic is silhouetted against the lowering sky, face hard and expressionless, standing eyeless sentry.

EXT. CRIME SCENE - RIFLE RANGE SIX - EVENING

Brenner, eyes haunted, stares up at the target's hollow face.

He turns from it, looks down to a chalk outline fading in the dirt, all that remains of Captain Campbell. The pavillion is gone, tattered strands of police tape strung forlornly across the area.

Beyond him, Sunhill approaches from the road. He looks up at her as she stops across from him. She has been without sleep, looks drawn, but resolute.

SUNHILL

Captain Campbell was gang-raped at West Point. There were no charges, no trial. The crime was buried. She was sold out to avoid a scandal.

Brenner computes this information grimly.

BRENNER

Who was the broker?

SUNHILL

The broker was her father... She'd been waging a war against him ever since. He demanded a cease fire...

Her eyes fall to the chalk outline.

SUNHILL

This was her answer. A reenactment of the night she was raped.

She looks up at Brenner.

SUNHILL

He sacrificed her. For the good of the Army.

Summer thunder reverberates softly. They stand watching each other, the sky hanging heavy and hot.

BRENNER

You did good work.

He takes a pocket-recorder from his jacket.

BRENNER

This is Colonel Moore's. He came out here with her, helped her set it up. Then he called the General's line at HQ and left this message:

He snaps the recorder on.

CAPTAIN CAMPBELL (V.O.)

This is your loving daughter, daddy. I have the answer to your ultimatum. I'm at Range Six. Surrounded by a compliment of very dashing soldiers. Don't keep me.

Her tone sugar-coated, chilling. Brenner snaps it off.

BRENNER

I checked the phone records. The call was received.

SUNHILL

The General lied when he said he had no contact with her. He came out here. When he saw her like that...

BRENNER

We don't have a match on his boots.

SUNHILL

He gave us another pair.

BRENNER

I don't think so.

SUNHILL

Motive, opportunity, the will to act. It's all there.

BRENNER

You're really gunning for him.

SUNHILL

How can you stand there and defend him after what he did? You really are all in the same club.

Brenner scowls, insulted. She regards him, her nerves frayed.

SUNHILL

Change of Command's tomorrow. I don't want to lose this.

BRENNER

You have lost it. The Army's pulled out. We're out here on our own with zero authority.

She studies him, understands the edict has been handed down.

SUNHILL

Are you bailing on me?

BRENNER

It's a suicide mission. Always was. Let it go. Take your transfer, put it behind you.

SUNHILL

What about you?

The rain breaks, hot silver flashes.

BRENNER

I'm going down anyway. You don't have to go down with me.

He turns his collar up, moves for the road.

EXT. FIRE CONTROL TOWER - DAY

He strides below the tower, rain drifting. Sunhill jogs up.

SUNHILL

I'm not turning my back on this.

He makes no response. She takes his arm, they stop under the steel stilts of the tower, face to face.

SUNHILL

Don't walk away from me. We're in this together. We're gonna see it all the way through... I want that sick son of a bitch.

Brenner considers her irately, makes a decision.

BRENNER

Okay. You're gonna get him. I'm gonna give him to you.

SUNHILL

You have a strategy?

BRENNER

Yeah. All or nothing... Be at the parade field tomorrow morning.

He turns without another word, moving through the rain to the road. She stares after him.

INT. COLONEL FOWLER'S BEDROOM - DAY

A phone is ringing. Fowler stands before a mirror buttoning his parade blouse. His wife appears with a cordless phone.

WIFE

Chief Warrant Officer Brenner.

Fowler takes the phone.

FOWLER

What is it, Mr. Brenner?

BRENNER (V.O.)

Sir, we have proof Major Kent didn't kill Captain Campbell.

Fowler pauses, frowning.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - MAIN SQUARE - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Brenner, in a gray suit, holds the phone, tense, listening.

FOWLER (V.O.)

Where is this going?

BRENNER

In a direction you won't like, sir. It looks bad for General Campbell.

Silence on the line.

BRENNER

Colonel..?

FOWLER (V.O.)
I've heard you.

BRENNER
If this is going to be handled right,
I need your assistance, sir.

FOWLER (V.O.)
(warningly)
Mr. Brenner, General Campbell is my
closest friend.

Brenner stares through the glass. Sun-splashed lawn, the far
shout of a drill sergeant.

BRENNER
No, sir. The Army is. Where can we
we meet privately?

EXT. BARRACKS 5 - FORT HADLEY - DAY

A block-long, weathered wooden structure, long ago abandoned.
Brenner's truck moves across the weed-cracked asphalt, comes
to a stop. He gets out, scanning the area. He sees no other
vehicles, walks toward an open door ahead.

INT. BARRACKS 5 - DAY

He stands inside the doorway. Ahead of him, a long room, dust
and shadow, the floor strewn with debris.

He moves forward, the planks under his feet creaking, sagging
rottenly. In the dimness, a briefcase resting on an old table
and a figure taking shape in the dark beyond it.

BRENNER
Colonel?

The shape steps forward. Colonel Fowler, his face coming into
the light. Parade uniform, ribbons and metals, a belt with a
scabbard, the silver hilt of a saber.

FOWLER
What do you hope to accomplish with
this meeting, Mr. Brenner?

BRENNER
You helped me once before, sir. I'm
relying on you to help me again.

Fowler stares across to him.

FOWLER

According to you, my help resulted in the arrest of the wrong man.

Brenner holds his stare unwaveringly.

BRENNER

Exactly, sir. You helped keep me on the case. To arrest Major Kent. And Major Kent was framed -- set-up.

The percussion of military drums floats from the parade field.

BRENNER

Are you with me so far, Colonel?

FOWLER

I'm riveted. Please continue.

BRENNER

By your own admission, you ran a surveillance of Captain Campbell. You knew everything. Major Kent was prime to take the fall.

Fowler stares at him, his eyes deep, black, like starless sky.

BRENNER

When the General delivered his final terms, she sent back her answer. He left his office at twenty-three-hundred. At twenty-three-o-four she rang in. You picked up the call.

HEADLIGHTS

on Rifle Range Road, pulling in behind her humvee. They snap off. Darkness.

BRENNER (V.O.)

The General's protector. Forty years together. Braving wars. Slaying the enemy. She was enemy... And she was winning...

AT THE BERM,

Fowler's grim face beneath the roiling sky. Heat flickering.

BRENNER (V.O.)

So you drove out to the range and you annihilated her.

LIGHTNING FLASHES,

showering light.

CAPTAIN CAMPBELL

staring up, eyes widening in terror. Flooding with tears. A shadow blocking them.

THE CLOUDS

churning in fury, rimmed with electricity.

CAPTAIN CAMPBELL (V.O.)

Father...

Her voice lost in a clap of thunder.

THE EYELESS FACE

of the plastic pop-up soldier. Merciless. Empty and blind.

IN THE BARRACKS

Fowler's face beneath the rafters, the same eyes. Brenner is standing across from him.

BRENNER

You strangled her.

Fowler is still, watching him. He speaks finally, voice hard.

FOWLER

Captain Campbell was a disgrace to the uniform she wore. Whoever the executioner was, he did the Army a great service.

BRENNER

Is that your confession?

They stand silently in the dim, dusty light. A soft click is heard. From Brenner's jacket pocket. Fowler nods toward it.

FOWLER

I think you ran out of tape.

Brenner scowls, his eyes falling to his pocket. Fowler steps toward the table where his briefcase rests. Brenner puts his hand near his weapon, ready to draw it.

BRENNER

That's far enough.

Fowler stands motionless. Brings his full, commanding gaze on Brenner.

FOWLER

Captain Campbell is dead and buried, Mr. Brenner. But you and I are part of something that will never die. We continue. The General continues. We're pieces of the same machine.

His eyes bore into him.

FOWLER

I'm putting a letter of commendation in your file. As you've seen, I have influential connections. You can get your Master Grade. The respect and prestige that come with it. All you have to do is just turn around... and walk out.

Brenner watches him warily.

BRENNER

A bribe, Colonel?

FOWLER

A reward. For a job well done.

BRENNER

No deal.

FOWLER

Then you've chosen the alternative.

He has a black pistol in one black-gloved hand. An Army-issue Beretta that freezes Brenner's own hand at his lapel.

FOWLER

Use that hand to remove the tape recorder.

Brenner slowly does so, caught by Fowler's stealth and speed.

FOWLER

Toss it to me. Underhand.

Brenner underhands it. Fowler catches it, his weapon steady. He steps to his briefcase, opens it, drops the recorder in it.

BRENNER

Now what?

FOWLER

I shoot you. With Lieutenant Elby's weapon. Then I return it to where he keeps it. He's been under a lot of stress since you linked him up to that basement sex ring.

Brenner is coiled, intent, waiting for the slightest chance to rip his piece out and fire it empty.

BRENNER

It won't fly, Colonel.

FOWLER

No one knows we're here, Mr. Brenner. And I've arranged an emergency for Lieutenant Elby. He'll miss the ceremonies entirely. As for myself, I was in full view of four thousand troops when he shot you.

Brenner's arm flashes, his weapon halfway out as Fowler's gun cracks twice. Brenner, taking both shots in the chest, kicks backward, lands on his back, the rotten planks caving in under him, his body crashing through the floor.

Dust billows. Fowler moves over the hole in the boards. His sights rest on Brenner, sprawled on his back in the filth of the foundation three feet below. Still as rock, mouth gaping, eyes glazed, two black holes blown into his jacket, nearly on center and close together.

Fowler's gun slams, the muzzle blast lighting the dark of the foundation, Brenner's body jolting as the middle of his shirt explodes into white tatters, the ejected shell tinkling across the boards. Fowler admires his marksmanship.

FOWLER

One-inch group.

He steps over the broken planking, grabs his briefcase, walks swiftly out the barracks door.

EXT. PARADE FIELD - FORT HADLEY - DAY

General Campbell gazes out over the companies of his division, assembled in formation, rows of bright flags shimmering in the windless heat.

CAMPBELL

I stand here an old infantryman, with a soldier's love for the Army. It's grandeur. It's ability to make heroes of common men and women whose service is given in faith and courage...

His words ring over the field. He wears battle dress, a belt with a holstered pistol, a blouse filled with medals for wars, campaigns. A line of senior officers stand behind him, Fowler among them, his saber hilt glinting.

CAMPBELL

We serve something much larger than ourselves, and to serve it, we must hold it dearer than our own flesh and blood. We are bound together, as only warriors can be bound... I have given my heart to my country, and my service to it will never end.

The General turns. The color sergeant formally offers him the division flag. The General receives it, turning once more to solemnly confer it upon the new Commander of the Post, and the chain of command continues unbroken.

The General salutes him, relinquishing his position, and turns his salute to his troops, his face held rigidly against tears. There is a deep and awed silence. The General steps down from the platform, in majesty and sorrow.

A great cheer erupts from the companies standing in formation. Thousands of voices raised up in heartfelt farewell, an uproar that rocks across the still afternoon.

EXT. PARADE FIELD ROAD - DAY

Sunhill stands at her car above the field, anxiously searching for Brenner. She holds a cellular phone, the dialed number on display, the line audibly pulsing.

SUNHILL

Come on, Brenner...

EXT. BARRACKS 5 - DAY

Brenner's truck on the hot asphalt, the phone unit on the dash pulsing, light lit.

INT. BARRACKS 5 - DAY

The broken flooring. In the dimness past it, propped against the wall and in considerable pain, Brenner. He is shirtless, streaked with dirt and sweat, grimacing as he tears loose the straps of a Kevlar bullet-proof vest.

The vest slides off, three black impact marks dented into the heart region. His chest is bruised, ribs broken. He hears a phone pulsing faintly, turns his head to the open barracks door, his truck visible past it.

EXT. PARADE FIELD ROAD - DAY

Sunhill, frustrated, stares at her phone, the line unanswered.

SUNHILL

Damn.

She disconnects.

EXT. BRENNER'S TRUCK - BARRACKS 5 - DAY

Brenner leans out of the open door, thumbing the phone on and bringing it to his ear. Dial tone.

EXT. PARADE FIELD ROAD - DAY

Sunhill moves away from her car, stalled, anxious, looking for some sign of Brenner. Her beeper goes off, she turns, sprints back to her car, dives for the phone.

SUNHILL

Brenner..?

EXT. BRENNER'S TRUCK - BARRACKS 5 - DAY

Brenner, breathing in pain, is sitting behind the wheel, phone in hand.

BRENNER

Oh yeah.

SUNHILL (V.O.)

Where the hell are you?

BRENNER

(wincing)

Listen to me. Find Fowler's car. Look for his briefcase. Moore's tape recorder should be in it.

SUNHILL (V.O.)

Fowler?

BRENNER

Then find the General. That's where Fowler will be. I'm on my way.

He disconnects, fires the engine, slams into gear, scorching off across the asphalt.

EXT. ROAD - BELOW PARADE FIELD - DAY

The trunk of Fowler's staff car. The rend of metal, the trunk lid popping up. In the well of the trunk, Fowler's briefcase.

A soldier with a slide-hammer moves back. Sunhill stands over the open trunk, staring in.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - PARADE FIELD - DAY

A vast green floor studded with columns of distant soldiers in olive and tan. Tiny, colorful flags. Brass glinting from the military band, the remote sound of horns and drums. The field lined with grandstands filled with civilians.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - CLOSER

The parade march coming in louder. The General's personal car on the lawn below. A group of ranking officers gathered there bidding the General and his wife goodbye. Recognizable within the gathering, Colonel Fowler, shaking hands.

From the tan width of road below the officers, a figure moving across the grass toward them. Sunhill, her stride determined. The parade drums thundering, beating out a martial cadence.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - CLOSER

Sunhill approaches the group, stopping a dozen feet away. One by one, the officers turn to her. Stillness falling over them as the General walks out to meet her.

They exchange words. The General turns to where Fowler stood, but Fowler is no longer there. He turns back to Sunhill. The drums reverberate. She raises the tape recorder. The General stands listening to the playback.

Sunhill turns the recorder off. The General, staggered, walks away from her. He drops to his knees.

The rumbling percussion fades out as a great, anguished scream rises up, shaking the air.

EXT. BRENNER'S TRUCK - EDGE OF PARADE FIELD - DAY

The pick-up slams to a skidding halt, Brenner bails out, still shirtless, weapon in hand. He races past the crowd that pours out on the field, soldiers and civilians staring, shouting out in alarm.

EXT. PARADE FIELD - DAY

The General is bowed on the turf, his wife has rushed to him. Sunhill, stricken, turns from him as the shouting rises past her. Brenner is sprinting up through the midst of the crowd, his badge held high. She runs toward him.

SUNHILL

Fowler's gone!

Brenner and Sunhill desperately scan the field, swarming now with soldiers, many armed and ready to shoot. A group of MPs pound toward them, pistols out. Brenner raises his badge up, bellowing hoarsely.

BRENNER

CID! FIND COLONEL FOWLER!

Another wave of shouts and cries fills the air. Brenner and Sunhill pivot, see a flurry of commotion, a crowd rushing to an area ahead of them.

They take off at a dead run, both quickly closing ground for the fringes of the throng, soldiers and civilians pushing in toward something.

They reach the edge of a human wall, jump in, tearing a path.

BRENNER

CID! STAND AWAY! STAND BACK!

They fight their way through the close pack of bodies, Brenner ramming forward, yelling raggedly. The crowd gives, they push out into an open circle of lawn, bringing themselves up short, panting, staring ahead.

Colonel Fowler stands in a clearing ringed by shocked soldiers and civilians, saber drawn, an MP, arm slashed, lying pale and still on the grass below him, his pistol under Fowler's shoe.

BRENNER

Give it up, Colonel.

Fowler, face stone, eyes black, stares at him, past reason or redemption. Several soldiers make a move toward him, he cuts the air with his steel, growling, they leap back as the crowd shouts out.

He glares savagely at Brenner, swinging his blade in a circle, the sun gleaming off the razor-honed edge of it. He advances. Brenner and Sunhill drop down defensively, level their weapons as the ring of onlookers fall back.

BRENNER

Halt!

Fowler raises the blade over his head. The blast of a gunshot splits the air, a row of medals exploding off his chest. The Colonel lurches, topples face forward, dead as he hits ground.

The agents, frozen in a crouch, stare in astonishment, weapons unfired. The crowd stunned, silent, parting across the circle of the clearing, leaving one man standing alone.

General Campbell. His officer's Beretta in his hand, features terrible, eyes hollow.

He lowers his gun. It slips from his fingers. Pandemonium.

EXT. MAIN BOULEVARD - FORT HADLEY - DAY

Hot Georgia sky. Shadeless lawn. Chanting. A file of young, head-shaven recruits moving in step-time along the road, their drill sergeant dogging them.

Sunhill's Mustang, one flank scraped and battered, drives past them, moving toward the main gate.

EXT. MAIN GATE - FORT HADLEY - DAY

She stands outside her car, shading her eyes. Brenner's pick-up approaches. The truck stops, he gets out, crosses the road to her.

They stand facing each other, glad to see each other, sorry it may be the last time.

BRENNER

So you're really out.

SUNHILL

It had to be that way.

Brenner nods, understanding. She gazes at him, regretfully.

SUNHILL

What happens to you?

BRENNER

I'm not sure... They can't decide whether to give me a medal or hang me. Maybe I'll just cash out.

SUNHILL

You're a lifer, Brenner.

BRENNER

Yeah. I guess I am.

They smile, their attraction to each other seen in their eyes.

SUNHILL

Am I ever gonna see you again?

BRENNER

Just let me know where you are.

Their smiles fade. They stand close to each other, wanting to embrace. Instead, he extends his hand, in respect. Her eyes hold her own regard, sincerity.

SUNHILL

Thank you. For everything.

Their handshake lingers. Sunhill turns, her eyes damp, enters her car. He leans over her window. She looks up at him.

SUNHILL

I turned a corner in my life... My father. The General. Fowler. The Army, what it stands for... they all got it wrong.

Brenner stares at her, somber.

SUNHILL

Who really killed her, Brenner?

BRENNER

Everybody.

Their gaze lasts a moment more. She smiles a plaintive smile, a look of goodbye. Then she starts the car, turning her eyes to the future.

Brenner remains there, watching her pull out, her car drawing away on the road, receding.

FADE OUT