

EXPECT NO MERCY

INTERROGATION

By

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EXT. USMC HUMMER AMBULANCE-NIGHT

The Military Ambulance flies through the desert. It heads towards the distant lights of Camp Baharia.

INT. USMC HUMMER AMBULANCE

Medics swarm over Sanders as the Humvee-Ambulance screams through the night. West is at Sanders' side, holding his hand.

SANDERS

Please, don't...let me die.

WEST

They're trying, just hold on.

West squeezes Sanders' hand. The medic glances up at the EKG monitor.

MEDIC

(reading EKG)

Oh shit, give him some lidocaine, now. Now.

WEST

(beat)

You can't die, not after everything that's happened.

Sanders EKG's begun to falter. The other medic fires off an injection into his IV.

MEDIC

His pressure's fading -- push some adrenaline.

The EKG's become erratic. Sanders' eyes close.

WEST

Oh man, don't you die... Don't you die...

MEDIC

He's going south... He's gonna box damn it...

The EKG begins shrieking.

Against black, TITLE CARD: ONE WEEK LATER

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM-DAY

A white room. Metal table. West sits alone, staring strait ahead.

WEST (V.O.)

As soon as we got back, we were striped of our weapons and placed under solitary confinement until an official inquiry could deem exactly what went wrong with the mission.

The door suddenly opens and two large men walk in. These are MAJOR SHEPARD and CAPTAIN HAYES. Two career military men. Major Shepard sits down across from West. A thick manila envelope slaps down on the table.

SHEPARD

Private, I'm sure you understand this is not a witch-hunt; we just want to know what exactly happened out there.

He opens the file. Paper rattle marks the silence as he flips several pages.

SHEPARD

Four Marines dead. One Pilot critically injured. We need answers.

West simply nods.

SHEPARD

Good, then please tell us your side of the story.

Shepard leans over and activates a voice recorder.

WEST

The mission started off perfectly. We entered the city undetected.

INSERT CUT: A Black Hawk Helicopter burst over the top of a ridge. It performs a radical left bank turn and descends rapidly into the burning city, racing over the city at rooftop level.

WEST

We found tire tracks near the pilot's ejection seat.

INSERT CUT: Sanders ejection seat sits in a pile of rubble in the middle of the street. Two pairs of tire tracks, are clearly imprinted in the dusty street.

SHEPARD

Where did the tracks lead?

WEST

A bombed out office building.

SHEPARD

What actions did Charlie Company then take?

INSERT CUT: The Marines stand in the shadow of a very old school house. They gaze across the street at dilapidated office building. Two men stand guard outside the building front entrance and four more on the roof.

WEST

Captain Jones then deployed our sniper to take out the guards.

INSERT CUT: Tyson crawls towards the roof's ledge. He drags his SAM-R behind him, in a duffle bag. A small gap has been blow out of the ledge, making a perfect sniper's nest.

WEST

Once the guards were taken out, we entered the building in force.

INSERT CUT: Everyone hurls their grenades. The grenades crash through several large glass windows that line the building. KABOOM. The grenades explode in concert, ripping the lower level apart. Every window turns into a deadly chimney. Spewing out smoke and glass.

WEST

Once inside, Private Wolf and myself were ordered to clear the basement.

INSERT CUT: West and Rolland slowly walk down a damp and dark hallway. Busted pipes leak water, which has collected into puddles on the floor. The hallway leads to a single metal door, which is rusted over.

WEST

The pilot was being held inside a small chamber, in the North-Eastern corner of the building.

INSERT CUT: In the center of the room sits Sanders, he has been completely devastated. He is soaked in blood. He has been gagged by a piece of duck tape. He tries to speak, but it comes out muffled. West walks over and peels the duck tape off.

SHEPARD

Now, I want you to choose your words carefully and tell us exactly what happened next.

WEST

I walked over to the pilot, while Private Wolf guarded the door.

SHEPARD

Where exactly was Private Wolf, in respect to your position.

WEST

He was behind me, directly behind me, five feet.

SHEPARD

Now, if you can, please explain how you could have possibly missed an armed Insurgent in the room.

WEST

Sir, the room was covered in deep shadows-

SHEPARD

So, your telling me that you risked your team's security by not clearing the room first.

WEST

Sir-

SHEPARD

You forgot everything that was taught to you?

West gives in.

WEST

Yes, sir.

SHEPARD
Until this inquest is complete your
not to leave the base, is that
understood?

WEST
Yes, sir.

West gets up and steps towards to door.

SHEPARD
One more thing, private.

West turns around, slightly confused.

WEST
Yes, sir?

SHEPARD
The pilot, whatever happen to him?

Shepard looks through the files, looking for an answer.

WEST
(beat)
He made it, sir.

EXT. COMMAND OFFICE/BAGHDAD-DAY

West steps out into the glaring sun. Suddenly a Humvee skids
to a stop right in the front of him.

Sergeant Miller hops out, puffing away at one of his cigars.

WEST
Sergeant Miller?

MILLER
West. How'd it go?

WEST
Horrible. We're in deep shit.

MILLER
No, no I'm in deep shit.

WEST
Sir?

MILLER
Don't worry about it kid. I'll take
care of everything.

WEST

But-

MILLER

I gotta run. See ya around kid.

Miller walks up to the front entrance and suddenly stops. He glances to his right.

On the wall hangs a "No Smoking" sign. He takes his cigar and rubs it out on the sign.

INT. TENT-NIGHT

West lies in bed. He rolls back and forth. He mumbles incoherently.

INSERT CUT: In the center of the room sits Sanders. He has been gagged by a piece of duck tape. West walks over and peels the tape off.

SANDERS

Behind you.

West turns to see Shahir cutting Rolland's throat.

WEST

(screaming)

No!

Rolland's body crumbles to the ground, lifeless and bloody. Shahir stands there with a bloody dagger. West squeezes the trigger and just holds it down. Shahir is cut in half by the hail of bullets.

INT. TENT-NIGHT

West awakes with a scream. He tries to get his breathing under control. He begins to get dressed; he is leaving.

WEST (V.O.)

I can't take this place anymore; I got to get out of here.

EXT. CHECKPOINT-NIGHT

West walks up to the base checkpoint. A guard sipping coffee drifts out of the control shack.

WEST

Hey man how is it going?

COFFEE GUARD

Name?

WEST

(beat)

West, Andrew.

The guard glances over a clipboard.

COFFEE GUARD

I'm sorry Private, but you're on the "detention list" and I'm afraid I can't let-

WEST

Cut the shit. Will this get me off the list?

West pulls out an I-pod from his jacket.

COFFEE GUARD

Shit, for that I'd let you fuck my sister.

WEST

Maybe later, how about a Humvee?

COFFEE GUARD

Sure, around the corner. Make sure ya have it back before 0500 hours.

WEST

Yeah, you got it.

INT. RAHJIEM-NIGHT

It's an older building, a converted factory. Large windows have been spray-painted black. Smoke machines pump out a veil of smoke, blurring the few lights there are. Hookers work their johns.

West stands against a wall, alone, sipping from a bottle of beer. He is about to leave when he notices a woman staring at him.

The woman is Zahrah. It's the hooker that West meet during his last visit. She walks straight up to him.

WEST

Hey.

ZAHRAH

Remember me?

WEST
How could I forget?

ZAHRAH
You look sad.

WEST
Am I that transparent?

ZAHRAH
No, I'm just good at reading
people.

WEST
Could I buy you a drink?

ZAHRAH
Absolutely.

INT. BAR/RAHJIEM

West and Zahrah sit at a crowded bar. They each sip from their drinks. The music is so loud, we can't can barely hear what their saying.

ZAHRAH
(shouting)
We should go somewhere private.

WEST
(shouting)
Sounds like a plan.

INT. PRIVATE ROOM/RAHJIEM-NIGHT

The light bulbs have been spray painted red. In the center of the room lies a huge bed. West grabs her by the hips and shoves his tongue down her throat. They passionately kiss. She starts tugging at his zipper.

WEST
You don't know how much I need
this.

ZAHRAH
Shut up.

She yanks his pants down and pushes him back onto the bed.

INT. HUMVEE/ BAGHDAD-NIGHT

The Humvee flies down a deserted street in Baghdad. West is behind the wheel, Zahrah sitting next to him. She wears his camouflage jacket.

WEST

So, tell me about yourself.

ZAHRAH

What is there to tell?

WEST

Well, where are you from.

ZAHRAH

Qaim.

WEST

Never heard of it.

ZAHRAH

And you?

WEST

Nashville.

ZAHRAH

Never heard of it.

They both chuckle.

WEST

Where did you learn to speak English?

ZAHRAH

My grandfather, he was born in America.

She moves closer to him, he wraps his arm around her.

WEST

Why?

ZAHRAH

Why, what?

WEST

Why did you become a hooker?

ZAHRAH

My family needed the money.

WEST
How long?

ZAHRAH
Actually, you were my first.

WEST
Oh.

They share a long stare. She glances back at the road.

ZAHRAH
This is me.

WEST
Oh, sure.

He pulls the Humvee over, in front of her home; it's the typical accommodations for an Iraqi family. She gets out and closes the door.

ZAHRAH
Bye.

WEST
See ya around.

She suddenly stops and turns around.

ZAHRAH
Who you like to come in?

WEST
Yeah, I would.

INT. ZAHRAH'S HOUSE-DAY

They walk into a dark apartment. FLICK. She hits the lights to reveal a sparsely furnished home. Family pictures dominate the walls. She guides him to the couch.

ZAHRAH
Do you want something to drink?

WEST
Yeah, sure.

He looks around, taking in his surroundings.

CRASH.

There are suddenly several loud noises outside. West jumps up; he walks over to the window. He slowly pulls down a blind.

EXT. STREET/ZAHRAH'S HOUSE

A large man stands outside; he carries an AK-47. He screams at the top of his lungs in Arabic.

WEST
Zahrah?

ZAHRAH
Yes?

She walks in with two cups of tea.

WEST
Who is that?

She peers out the window and swears in Arabic.

WEST
What?

ZAHRAH
That's is Muhammad. He is my um...
I don't know the word.

WEST
Pimp?

ZAHRAH
Yes.

WEST
One minute.

West walks towards the door.

ZAHRAH
No, he has a gun!

WEST
So do I.

He steps out of the door.

EXT. STREET/ ZAHRAH'S HOUSE

WEST
Get the fuck away from my car.

Muhammad spins around and points his AK-47 at West, who has already fired.

BAM.

A slug flies through his shoulder and he falls to the ground. Zahrah runs out of the house.

WEST
(to Zahrah)
Come here.

West hovers over Muhammad. Zahrah stands by watching. West snatches up the AK-47.

WEST
(to Zahrah)
Translate for me.

ZAHRAH
Okay.

WEST
Never come around here again.

Zahrah translates.

WEST
Or I'll fucking shoot you in the head.

Zahrah translates.

WEST
Never bother her again, or I'll kill you.

Zahrah translates. She then looks to West.

ZAHRAH
He will never bother me again?

WEST
Yes.

She realizes her new freedom and goes berserk; she starts beating the shit out of Muhammad. West waits a few moments and then pulls her off.

WEST
Alright, lets go finish that tea.

INT. TENT-MORNING

West lies in his rack, just staring straight up. He has a big dumb "I'm in love" smile wrapped on his face.

WEST (V.O.)
For the first time ever, I'm in love and it just happens to be with a hooker, great. This shit always happens to me.

Suddenly West's roommate burst in, his name JONATHAN DAVIS. Rather sort for a Marine.

DAVIS
Man, have you seen my I-POD?

WEST
Nope.

DAVIS
Damn it. Well if you see it, let me know.

WEST
Will do.

Davis begins to leave the tent, but suddenly the entrance is block by a huge M.P., he towers over Davis.

M.P.
Andrew West?

Davis points towards West.

WEST
Yes.

M.P.
I've been ordered to escort you to the command building.

West gives out a loud sigh.

WEST
Alright.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM-DAY

A white room. Metal table. West sits alone, staring strait ahead, again. Major Shepard walks in and sits across from West.

SHEPARD

Well son, I have some good news and bad news.

WEST

Yes, sir.

SHEPARD

Good news is that you are cleared of any wrongdoing regarding the Falluja mission.

WEST

Yes, sir.

SHEPARD

Bad news is that you will not be returning to Charlie Company. You are being transferred to Fox Company.

WEST

Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

SHEPARD

Dismissed.

West salutes and walks out.

INT. HOSPITAL-DAY

We see Sanders' lying in a hospital bed. He stares at the ceiling, a blank look on his face. His face is still covered with cuts and bruises.

NURSE (O.S.)

Lieutenant Sanders, good news, your going home.

This brings him out of his trance, he seems angered by the news.

SANDERS

What?

NURSE

Your going home.

SANDERS

I... I don't think I'm ready.

NURSE

Well, the doctors say you are.

SANDERS
(angered)
Maybe the doctors are wrong.

EXT. DIRT ROAD/BASECAMP-DAY

West walks along a row of tents. The occasional Humvee flies by covering him in sand.

WEST (V.O.)
Not returning to Charlie Company
wasn't that big of a deal. All my
friends were dead and Miller is
nowhere to be found.

INT. MESS TENT-DAY

West walks in and grabs a Mountain Dew from a large standing cooler. He takes a seat in the corner and just sits. He then realizes everyone is staring at him. These are stares of disapproval and distrust.

WEST(V.O.)
The Falluja mission was no secret,
and someone had to be blamed.

West mouth opens as if he was going to tell everyone off but he is suddenly cut off by a high pitched *wailing*. Everyone is confused, looking around.

WEST
What the fuck?

A young Private burst into the tent.

PRIVATE
Mortars!

Suddenly the Private is no more; the first mortar has crash down directly on top of him, splitting him in two. Smoke and blood are everywhere.

The sound is deafening, West hits the ground and covers his ears. The tables are shattered and throw splinters everywhere. Over the explosions we can hear screaming.

Suddenly it stops. Silence.

EXT. MILITARY BASE/BAGHDAD-DAY

The once-pristine military base is now in bloody chaos. There are burned and broken people on the ground -- soldiers and civilians, all mixed in together.

People are dying everywhere, and screaming in pain, or moaning and begging for help.

EXT. MESS TENT-DAY

West slowly walks out of the mess tent. He clothes bloody and scorched. He chaos surrounds him. Wounded Marines reach out for him.

MILLER (O.S.)

West?

West spins around and there lies Miller, bloody and charred.

WEST

Sergeant Miller?

West kneels down next to him.

WEST

Medic!

MILLER

Shit, it hurts.

WEST

Hold on, sir. Medic!

A medic runs up, it Davis.

DAVIS

Alright, hold on, sir. I'm going to fix you up.

MILLER

Oh, West.

WEST

Yeah?

MILLER

In my pocket, it's a letter. Get it.

West takes out the letter, its covered in blood.

MILLER

Send it to my wife.

WEST

Sir, you're going to do that yourself.

DAVIS
He has lost too much blood.

WEST
Well get him more!

DAVIS
I don't have any available.

WEST
Sir, what blood type are you?

MILLER
Type 0

West eyes widen.

WEST
That's mine.

DAVIS
Alright roll up your sleeve.

Davis opens up his Medical duffle bag and pulls out several medical tubs and needles. He jams one needle into West's forearm and the other into Miller.

DAVIS
I hope this works.

Davis adjusts the tubes conducting blood from their arms.

MILLER
Fuck, I don't see a light.

He begins to chuckle, the laughs turn into coughs and blood begins to run from his mouth.

MILLER
It...was good to know you, Private.

WEST
Yes, sir.

The life fades from his eyes.

WEST
Damn it!

West rips the tubes from his arm.

WEST
What else can I do?

DAVIS

There's nothing you can do here,
they'll die or they won't, we just -

Someone screams for a Medic off screen. Davis runs off to another wounded Marine. West picks up the letter and shoves it into his pocket.

INT. TENT-NIGHT

West sits on the floor, he has Miller's bloody letter on top of an ammo box, and to his side he has a clean sheet of paper.

WEST

I've been ordered to do some
terrible things while in Iraq, but
this is the hardest. Most of the
letter was ruin, too much blood.

He begins writing, he glances back and forth, writing away.

MILLER (V.O.)

I survived another week, barely. I
won't bore you with the details,
but a mission I was on went to
shit.

Several people didn't make it back
and now the heats on. West, he's a
good kid about the age of Kyle, I
guess that's why I've been looking
after him.

Command wants someone to hang and I
won't let it be him, I'm going to
take responsibility for everything.

West looks up, shocked.

MILLER

Tell Kyle I love him and that I'll
be home soon. Sincerely William.

INT. HANGER-DAY

The hanger is filled with coffins, simple in design and each covered with an American flag. West enters wearing his dress uniform. He searches through the coffins until he comes across Miller's.

WEST

Hey Sergeant.

He gives a heavy sigh.

WEST

Thank you, for what you did. I just wish it didn't have to happen this way.

He looks around searching for the words to say.

WEST

I guess it's going to have to be the same old routine. Wake up and try to survive.

THE END