

THE SAFE ZONE
"PILOT"

By

Lee Cordner

Season One, Episode One

(C) 2016

leecordner@live.co.uk

FADE IN:

EXT. MIDTOWN EAST - NIGHT

No power, post-apocalyptic and rundown. Burnt vehicles line the side of the road.

FIVE well-equipped TEENAGERS maneuver the ruins, machetes & sidearms in hand. They approach a rundown house.

From left to right -

JASON, 18, handsome/capable. **SASHA**, 17, beautiful/prepared. **GREG**, 18, scrawny. **ASHLEY**, 17, hot. **OWEN**, 17, tall/strong.

Jason heads up to the door, grips the handle.

JASON

Greg, Ash... take the alleyway. Owe and Sash with me.

Greg and Ashley take the alleyway.

SASHA

We shouldn't be out here, Jason...

JASON

Relax, it'll be fine. Trust me, S.

SASHA

This is Peacekeeper territory. They won't like us stepping on their-

OWEN

Who gives a shit if they "like it". Stop being such a girl scout.

Sasha scowls at him.

JASON

Look, we do this right, we get that promotion. Means no more sanitation bullshit. Unless you wanna be up to your eyeballs in human-

SASHA

Fine. Let's just get this over with and get back home.

JASON

That's my girl.

Owen chuckles at the remark. Jason's radio CRACKLES to life.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
 (via radio)
 We're in position. On your signal.

Jason pulls up his radio.

JASON
 (into radio)
 On three. One... two...

INT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

LOUNGE on the left. KITCHEN up ahead. STAIRCASE on the right with a CLOSET underneath. Very compact/narrow.

Jason, Owen and Sasha tactically enter, flashlights and guns primed. Jason checks the LOUNGE.

Owen moves to the KITCHEN. Sasha checks the CLOSET. They all return to the hall a few moments later.

Ashley and Greg approach from the kitchen.

ASHLEY
 (hushed)
 All clear outside.

JASON
 (hushed, RE: Upstairs)
 I'll take point. Sasha, with me.

INT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Three doors. BATHROOM ahead of the stairs. Two BEDROOMS, one on the side of the hall, the other at the far end.

Jason opens the bathroom door, shines his flashlight inside.

Sasha cautiously moves to the far end of the landing. Grips the door handle. Looks back -

- Jason grips the other bedroom door handle, nods "go".

INT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sasha moves inside and sweeps the room with her flashlight -

- Empty food cans and water bottles on the floor. Crumpled cigarette packs everywhere. A lit cigarette in the ashtray.

Sasha collects the cigarette... inspects the butt.

JASON (O.S.)
Any luck?

Jason inspects the room.

SASHA
Target a cross-dresser?

JASON
Huh?

SASHA
Butt's got lipstick on it. I don't
think HE was here.

She sets the cigarette in the ashtray. THUD. They both turn around and face - a BUILT-IN WARDROBE - THUD.

Jason cautiously approaches the wardrobe, reaches out. Sasha takes aim at the door -

- Jason pulls the closet door open - a **FRESH FEMALE ZOMBIE**, 30s, slashed neck, lunges out and tackles him into Sasha -

- all three spill to the floor. Jason lands on Sasha. Zombie bites a chunk out of Jason's neck. He CRIES in pain.

Blood flows onto Sasha's face as she struggles to get free.

Zombie rips into Jason's stomach. Tears out his innards and ravages him. Sasha WINCES and pulls herself back.

Owen, Greg and Ashley rush into the room.

ASHLEY
(RE: Zombie)
Holy shit...

SASHA
SHOOT IT!

Owen shoots... misses... shoots again... misses. Greg takes off like a bat outta hell.

Owen shoots zombie in the cheek. A bullet rips her face wide open. She pauses a moment. Her lips rises, she looks at him.

Zombie lunges and takes Owen to the floor. Ashley panics...

OWEN
Get it off me!

Ashley grabs zombie and pulls her off Owen. Zombie viciously swipes Ashley across the face and slices her cheek open.

Sasha squirms free, grabs her pistol and aims at zombie -

ASHLEY

NO!!!!

- a bullet rips zombie's head open. Ashley shoves her to the floor and checks her cheek, blood cascades down her face.

Jason spews blood, mumbles incoherently/painfully.

OWEN

(RE: Scratched Cheek)

Ash... oh shit... you...

ASHLEY

(stony)

I'll be fine.

Sasha emotionally stands over Jason. He reaches for her. She shoots him in the head. Ashley and Owen glare at her.

SASHA

(to Jason)

I'm sorry.

CUT TO BLACK:

RUN TITLE SEQUENCE...

SUPER: **THE SAFE ZONE**

FADE IN:

EXT. MIDTOWN WEST - THE WALL - NIGHT

A large WALL separates NORTH MANHATTAN from SOUTH MANHATTAN. GUARD TOWERS run along the wall with SPOTLIGHTS and **SNIPERS**.

A MAKESHIFT MILITARY BASE with TENTS and VEHICLES occupies the area. U.S. SOLDIERS/RECRUITS maneuver the base.

Sasha, Greg and Owen wait outside a MEDICAL TENT, stripped of their weapons/gear. Owen impatiently paces back & forth.

GREG

(RE: Pacing)

You're making me nervous.

OWEN

You're lucky I didn't kill you. You almost got us all killed.

Sasha rolls her eyes.

GREG

It's not my fault you can't aim.

Owen gets in Greg's face.

OWEN

Say that again and I'll put you in the ground real fast, you hear me?

Intimidated, Greg backs up.

OWEN

Why the hell did you even join up?

SASHA

Same as the rest of us. He didn't have a choice.

ALEX WALKER, 40-43, gruff and ruggedly handsome, athletic physique, military fatigues, exits the medical tent.

Sasha, Owen and Greg acknowledge him.

SASHA

How is she?

WALKER

Lucky to be alive. What in the hell happened out there?

SASHA

We were following a lead.

WALKER

Mine?

SASHA

No, sir.

Walker looks at each of them.

WALKER

Let me make something clear to you. The only orders you follow are mine and mine alone. If an order doesn't come from me, you do not follow it, do I make myself clear?

They all nod their heads "yes".

WALKER

You went on an unsanctioned mission into the Dark Zone that resulted in the death of one of your comrades.

Sasha and Owen shamefully bow their heads.

WALKER

It also put another in containment, further draining our manpower. Your actions will not be tolerated and higher ranking officers would face demotion under these circumstances, but since you're already at the low end of the chain, demotion would be dishonorable discharge.

SASHA

Sir, if I may-

WALKER

Did I give you permission to talk?

SASHA

No, sir. But-

WALKER

This is not up for discussion.

(beat)

You're all relieved of your duties. Pack up your gear and move out.

Walker leaves.

Owen wipes a hand down his mouth and sighs. Sasha hangs her head in shame. Greg bows his head.

OWEN

(to Greg)

This is your fault. If you hadn't run, none of this woulda happened. This is all on you.

GREG

I didn't-

Owen shoves Greg to the ground, huffs and walks away.

Sasha helps Greg up.

SASHA

Don't pay attention to him. He's an asshole. Can't shoot for shit.

GREG

He's right though, this is on me. I ran. I got Jason killed, got Ashley infected. Almost got you killed...

She sighs...

SASHA

Jason was dead before you got there
- and Ashley got herself infected.
None of this is on you, Greg. Jason
got us into this, it's HIS fault.

GREG

Can't you talk to the General?

SASHA

Once he's made up his mind there's
no changing it.

(beat)

Let's get outta here.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Calming music plays. Candles illuminate the place. JASON &
ZOMBIE'S bodies lay on slabs.

BRODY, 35-37, geeky and scholastic, white coat, sews Jason's
stomach up with precision. The door SQUEALS open.

BRODY

How many times must I ask you NOT
to smoke in my lab?

HARRY HIGGINS, 44-47, gruff, burly and broad, with a sleazy
trench-coat and NYPD badge on his belt, smokes a cigarette.

HIGGINS

Dead don't mind. And it's a morgue.

BRODY

I'm not dead, detective Higgins.

HIGGINS

Yet, but page me at four o'clock in
the morning one more time and maybe
I'll rectify that.

(beat)

So what's the headline?

BRODY

We got a fresh one.

Brody approaches the zombie. Points out the SLASHED NECK.
Higgins inspects it -

- SERRATED BLADE marks across the neck. COAGULATED blood all
around the slashes tissue. He takes a drag on his cigarette.

HIGGINS

Point?

BRODY

She wasn't bitten. I've checked her all over. No bites or scratches. If I were to guess, I'd say a serrated blade coated in infected blood-

HIGGINS

Just get to the point, Dexter.

BRODY

She was murdered.

Higgins raises an eyebrow.

HIGGINS

You're NOT serious.

(RE: Brody's expression)

You ARE serious.

(beat)

So let me get this straight... you dragged me outta bed at four in the morn to tell me there's a crazy nut bag out there murdering people with an infected knife to make them turn into ravenous undead bloodhounds?

BRODY

Not the wording I'd use, but yeah, that's exactly what I'm saying.

Higgins takes a final drag off his cigarette, drops it and crushes it with his boot.

HIGGINS

(points at Jason)

Was he cut too?

BRODY

No... that was all HER.

Higgins inspects Jason's body.

HIGGINS

Tough way to go...

(beat)

Anyone with him when it went down?

BRODY

Is it important?

Higgins just stares at him.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - DAY

Ancient computers and technology, barely functioning. A few TECH SAVVY individuals operate the machines.

Walker studies the big screens. Distorted transmissions of a map overview - DELAWARE. Snowy reception on most screens.

ALDO, 50-55, receding hairline and withered complexion, taps in MORSE CODE and reads the return transmission.

MARIA, 35-38, worn and frayed military woman, one leg, works the main hub, headset on and eyes focused on her monitor.

MONITOR: **6 RED DOTS** converge on **FORT DELAWARE** from seafront.

Walker fits on a headset.

WALKER

I need visual confirmation, Sphinx.
What do you see? Over.

SPHINX (V.O.)

(man's voice, distorted)
Visual coming in. Over.

The big screen show a snowy/distorted view of **FORT DELAWARE** from the seafront - smoke billows from inside the walls.

WALKER

Goddammit...
(to Sphinx)
Roamers in the area? Over.

SPHINX (V.O.)

No visual. Moving in for a closer
look. Over.

WALKER

Cancel that last, Sphinx. Return to
the mainland. Over.

ALDO

I'm still receiving a transmission
from within the fort, General.

Walker considers his options.

WALKER

(to Sphinx)
Can you get a clearer view? Over.

MONITORS: The visuals maneuver the wall and distort. They lose transmission... beat... "TRANSMISSION LOST" on screen.

WALKER
 (to Sphinx)
 Sphinx, do you copy? Over.

Walker looks at Maria, she checks her monitor.

MONITOR: 6 red dots still present...

WALKER
 Sphinx, report. Over.
 (beat)
 Sphinx? Alpha unit, respond. Does
 anyone copy? Over.

BEEP. Walker acknowledges Maria's monitor. BEEP. BEEP.

MONITOR: 3 red dots go OUT. BEEP. Another one disappears...
 BEEP. A fifth vanishes... 1 remains, it quickly moves...

WALKER
 (into headset)
 Abort mission. ABORT! Get the hell
 outta there!

MONITORS: Visuals return... someone RUNS toward the seafront
 - looks back - HUNDREDS of ZOMBIES pursue... visuals vanish.

Tension mounts. Walker grits his teeth.

MONITOR: BEEP... the final red dot FADES away...

WALKER
 SHIT!

Walker tosses his headset against the wall and turns away in
 anger. Stressed, he rubs the space between his brows.

WALKER
 (to Aldo)
 What are they saying?

ALDO
 They're not saying anything, sir...
 the transmission stopped.

WALKER
 (to Maria)
 Anything?

MARIA
 All units K.I.A.

Walker nods "OK".

WALKER

It never rains...

(beat)

Contact Specter. I want full recon.
We need to know how this happened.

MARIA

Sir.

WALKER

(to Aldo)

I want the script on my desk by the
end of shift. All transmission logs
and data-streams.

ALDO

Of course.

EXT. HARLEM - QUADRANT 1 - DAY

Rural and secure. Military checkpoints on every street. Greg
and Sasha step through a CONTAMINATION/metal detector.

A **MILITARY OFFICER** hands them their gear and they walk away.

SASHA

If you need somewhere to stay-

GREG

I'll be fine.

They stop. Greg studies a HOUSE. He sighs...

GREG

I miss my mom...

(laughs)

My dad... he's like Owen, blames me
for getting her killed. Said it was
all my fault. The day I got called
up to serve, he said "Son, this is
your chance to redeem yourself, to
set right all the wrongs you made,
stop being a scared little piss-ant
and grow a set, then when you come
home, I'll forgive ya".

(beat)

I don't think he will. Especially
when he hears I got someone else
killed 'cause I ran away, just like
I did when my mom died. The hell am
I gonna say, Sasha? "Hey dad, I got
discharged for being a coward".

SASHA

You didn't get anyone killed, Greg. Shit just happens sometimes and you can't change it no matter what you do. Coward, hero, survivor, doesn't matter, you can't save everyone and it's never YOUR fault.

Greg shakes his head.

GREG

You weren't there, Sasha. When my mom died. That WAS my fault.

She sympathetically looks at him.

SASHA

I can come with you, if you need some backup.

GREG

Letting a girl fight my battles? He'd have a field day.

(beat)

I'll see you around, Sash.

SASHA

Good luck.

They part ways. He approaches the front door.

GREG

(discreetly)

Need all the luck I can get...

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS FOYER - DAY

Sasha hangs up her jacket and sets down her backpack. Hangs her keys on the hook by the door.

SASHA

Mom, you home?

SLURP. She sneers as she notices -

- **DREW**, 14, that annoying little brother we all have, shorts and bare feet, slurping milkshake in the lounge doorway.

DREW

What are YOU doing HERE? Shouldn't you be at Boot Camp?

He slurps milkshake.

SASHA
Is mom home?

DREW
She's playing "bingo" with friends.
By BINGO I mean she's at the range.
I play stupid, makes me the good
child, and you didn't answer my Q.
What are YOU doing HERE?

SASHA
I got kicked out.

Drew laughs and turns into the lounge.

DREW
Dinner's gonna be entertaining...

SASHA
(discreetly)
Annoying little snot.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

An American flag and **PRESIDENTIAL PORTRAIT** on the wall that depicts - **CHARLES ABEL**, 52-54, strong, cunning and noble.

Charles sits at his desk, checks various files/reports and gives them his "seal of approval". Someone KNOCKS the door.

CHARLES
Come in.

Walker enters the office. Charles stands up.

CHARLES
General Walker. Always a pleasure.
What can I do for you?

WALKER
I have some bad news, sir.

Charles heads over to a liquor cabinet, grabs two glasses & a bottle of BOURBON.

CHARLES
Have a seat. Are you a bourbon man,
Alex?

WALKER
Not really.

Charles sets the glasses on the table.

CHARLES
 Me either, but I found myself quite
 enjoying this bottle. Drink?

WALKER
 I'm on duty, sir.

CHARLES
 Ah tosh. I insist.

Charles pours two bourbons and takes a seat. He slides the
 glass over to Walker. Walker accepts it.

CHARLES
 So what's on the agenda?

Walker takes a swig of bourbon.

WALKER
 We lost Fort Delaware.

CHARLES
 Lost?

WALKER
 It was overrun, by Roamers. We sent
 in Alpha unit, but we lost contact.
 K.I.A. No survivors.

Charles weighs his thoughts.

CHARLES
 Send another.

WALKER
 It's a dead-zone, sir. Nothing left
 but dead and ruins. It's not worth
 the risk, and even if it were, we
 don't have the men to spare and no
 one will willingly-

CHARLES
 Fort Delaware is our most valuable
 outpost in that wretched wasteland
 and one we cannot afford to lose. I
 want it reclaimed. The dead control
 nothing when the living have a say
 in the matter.

WALKER
 With all due respect, sir, the dead
 control everything outside the wall
 and don't give a rat's ass what the
 living have to say about it.

Charles leans forward.

CHARLES

Are you disobeying a direct order?

WALKER

Merely stating my concern for your state of mind, sir.

CHARLES

Your concern means nothing to me. I want that fort reclaimed, General. See it done, or I shall relieve you of your command and find a man more willing to do what is necessary. Do I make myself clear?

WALKER

Yes, sir.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - DAY

Military controlled, no power.

Walker steps out of a building plastered in various MAYORAL FLIERS/POSTERS "**VOTE ABEL, MAYORAL CAMPAIGN, 2018**".

CAPTAIN **MICHELLE TAYLOR**, 28-30, beautiful yet capable with a stony expression, waits by a military HUMMER.

TAYLOR

Things didn't go so well?

WALKER

Asshole threatened to relieve me of my command. He's a real prick. I'll explain on the way back to base.

INT. ISOLATION - CONTAINMENT WING - DAY

Clean rooms everywhere. DOCTORS wear full HAZMAT suits. They check PATIENTS with INFECTIONS from BITES to SCRATCHES.

INT. ISOLATION - POD A - DAY

A glass walls separates a table and two chairs. Higgins, in a DOCTOR'S SURGICAL MASK with RUBBER GLOVES, sits one side.

Ashley, in a hospital gown, cheek patches up and IV line in her arm, takes a seat on the opposite side.

Higgins shows her his badge. She checks it.

ASHLEY
What do you want?

HIGGINS
Information.
(clips badge to belt)
I hear you were present during the
attack last night. Wanted to get an
idea of what went down. Thought you
could enlighten me.

ASHLEY
You're howling in the wind. I don't
know anything other than one of my
friends got torn apart and I nearly
died. And even if I did know, what
the hell are you so interested for?

HIGGINS
I'm investigating a murder.

She SCOFFS and shakes her head.

HIGGINS
The Roamer that tore into your bud
looking for that happy meal toy was
"iced" by some-ONE, not some-THING.
She wasn't bitten...
(RE: Ashley's cheek)
...or given a makeover.

ASHLEY
(offended)
Screw you, asshole.

She stands up.

HIGGINS
You're not the only one with a few
scars, girl. I got a couple myself.

ASHLEY
How did it happen?

HIGGINS
Before, when it all started.

ASHLEY
Does it hurt?

He shrugs.

HIGGINS
Not physically.

She considers... and sits down.

ASHLEY
What do you wanna know?

HIGGINS
How fresh was she?

ASHLEY
Recent. I could tell by the way she
- it moved. It was fast, strong and
it...

(RE: Cheek)
...swiped me so fast, I barely knew
what was happening.

HIGGINS
Did you notice anyone in the area,
besides you, your friends, locals?

ASHLEY
Barren. It's the Dark Zone. No one
goes out at night.

HIGGINS
Anything out of the ordinary?

ASHLEY
Besides a Roamer tearing into Jason
and infecting me? No.

Higgins pulls out a notepad.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - DAY

Walker, Taylor, Maria, Aldo and several SOLDIERS gather at a
STRATEGY TABLE with a MAP of FORT DELAWARE on it.

CARSON, 30-32, strong, chiseled and built for the military,
stands with folded arms and shakes his head.

CARSON
That's a suicide mission.

WALKER
It's not something I would usually
consider, but the Mayor has spoken.
Orders are from the top. We go in.

Carson shakes his head "no".

CARSON

If Sphinx couldn't handle this then no one can. I got faith in my unit, but I'm not walking them into Hell.

WALKER

You won't be going alone. Dragons, Hunters and Specter units will with you. We need the Bisons, Captain...

Carson weighs his options.

CARSON

That bridge - is it the only access point to the fort?

MARIA

It's a classic bottleneck. Control the bridge, control the horde.

WALKER

Knock 'em down one at a time. Easy pickings.

CARSON

Tell Alpha unit that.

(sighs)

Alright, if we're gonna do this, we do it my way. My mission.

WALKER

Then take the reins, Captain.

Carson studies the plans.

WALKER

(to Maria)

Get the other leaders, then get on home. I'm heading out.

(to Taylor)

Taylor, it's your charge.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Drew looks across the table, then down the far side. Forks hit plates as people eat.

Sasha, full plate in front of her, stares down the far side of the table with a scowl on her face.

FRAN, 40-42, pretty yet worn around the edges, tough, takes a sip of red wine as she looks at Sasha, and -

- WALKER, at the far end of the table.

FRAN
(to Sasha)
You haven't touched your dinner.

SASHA
(staring at Walker)
I lost my appetite.

Walker acknowledges Sasha. Fran studies the situation. Drew smirks, amused.

FRAN
(to Walker)
How was work, Alex?

WALKER
(convincingly)
Same old, same old. Nothing out of
the blue...
(looks at Sasha)
...how about you?

SASHA
Just peachy... "dad".

Fran obliviously smiles, notices Drew.

FRAN
And how was your day, Drew?

DREW
(RE: Situation)
It's better now.

FRAN
Oh? And why's that?

Sasha and Walker stare at one another. Drew chuckles.

DREW
Because dad fired Sasha and they're
staring at each other trying not to
tell you what happened.

Fran drops her cutlery onto the plate.

FRAN
You discharged her? Why?!

Walker sighs and sets down his cutlery. Sasha kicks Drew's knee under the table. He YELPS.

WALKER

Because she violated several rules
that resulted in-

FRAN

She is YOUR daughter. How could you
do that to your own child?!

WALKER

I was following protocol. I can't
play favorites, even when it comes
to blood. It's military policy, if
you break a rule, you're de-

FRAN

Oh quit your military bullshit. She
is YOUR daughter.

WALKER

And MY daughter broke a rule that
resulted in the death of a fellow
comrade and forced another one into
quarantine fighting an infection...
I had to make a call and I made it.

FRAN

(to Sasha)

Is that true?

SASHA

I was following the orders of my
commanding officer, as I was told I
had to do. But "dad" didn't let me
explain the situation before he got
on his moral high horse.

Walker doesn't like this.

WALKER

His orders were not my orders. You
should've double-checked with me...
then none of this would've happen-

SASHA

You were gonna kick me out anyway!

Walker points at Sasha.

WALKER

Do NOT interrupt m-

Sasha stands up, her chair screeches.

SASHA
I'm not under your "command" now.
You can't order me around!

WALKER
I am still your father and this is
MY house, so you will do whatever I
tell you to do or you can-

SASHA
I can what? Leave? I'll leave right
now, if that's what you want.

Drew enjoys this.

WALKER
Then go! Walk out. One less mouth
to feed.

SASHA
Fine!

WALKER
Fi-

A dinner plate SMASHES against the wall. They all look over
at Fran, seething/pissed off, on the verge of a meltdown.

FRAN
That. Is. Enough. That's enough...
(breathes)
I am going to bed.
(to Walker)
You can sleep on the couch.
(to Walker & Sasha)
And you can both talk this out like
grownups, or so help me God...

Fran heatedly approaches the door.

FRAN
Drew, be a good boy and clean up
the broken China.

DREW
Why do I have t-

FRAN
Just. Do it.

Fran leaves the room. Heavy FOOTSTEPS pound the stairs and
ascend... a beat... a door SLAMS.

Walker and Sasha exchange wide-eyed looks.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Walker washes up plates and cutlery. Sasha dries them, sets them on the draining board.

WALKER

I don't want you to leave, Sasha. I hope you realize that.

SASHA

Heat of the moment, right?

WALKER

Yeah, something like that.

He hands her a plate. She dries it.

WALKER

Look, things are hectic at work and I may have been a bit hasty. You're still young, got a lot to learn.

SASHA

What are you saying?

He tosses the dishrag in the sink, dries his hands.

WALKER

I'm saying; you go back to training camp, with Miller and Shaw. Start at the bottom and work your way up. You will work the sanitation shift-

SASHA

But-

WALKER

You will follow MY orders and ONLY MY orders. Do I make myself clear?

She considers this... sighs...

SASHA

Crystal.

WALKER

Then turn in. Your training begins at zero-six-hundred hours tomorrow morning. Do not make me regret it.

SASHA

Yes, sir.

Sasha leaves the kitchen as Drew walks in.

DREW
Don't let the bed bugs bite.

SASHA
Don't let the bed get wet.

Walker discreetly smiles.

DREW
One time and I drank too much soda!

Drew opens the fridge and browses.

WALKER
How's school?

DREW
I didn't go today.

WALKER
Why not?

DREW
'Cause Thursday lessons are stupid.
It's just geography and French and
it's not like I'm ever gonna go to
France or Canada... so it's stupid.

WALKER
(hopeful)
You might. One day.

Drew pours a glass of milk.

WALKER
I want you to attend every day from
now on, OK?

DREW
Whatever you say, dad.

Drew returns the milk carton to the fridge.

WALKER
I'm serious, Drew.

Drew grabs his milk and leaves the kitchen.

DREW
Night, dad.

Walker leans back against the cabinet and tiredly sighs. He rubs the space between his brows...

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP. He checks his watch: "**21:30pm**" flashes.

Walker unlocks a padlocked cabinet, inside: various boxes of Z-X-54 SERUM in white/blue packaging.

Walker sets a box on the table, rolls up his sleeve and ties a tube around his bicep, bites down on the tube.

He holds a syringe of PURPLE LIQUID over his forearm. A BITE SCAR on his wrist. He injects the serum into his wrist.

His eyes roll back as he GROANS.

EXT. MIDTOWN EAST - NIGHT

A crappy SEDAN sits outside the RUNDOWN HOUSE. A flashlight beams around the SECOND FLOOR window.

INT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Higgins, flashlight in hand, inspects the room. SQUELCH. He looks down -

- a blood spatter on the carpet. He steps OUT of the blood.

Higgins checks the walk-in wardrobe... nothing but shoeboxes and hanging clothes. He notices something.

Higgins carries a RUCKSACK from the wardrobe and drops it on the bed. He unzips it. Rummages through the contents.

He pulls out a journal and examines the INDEX: "**Ortega, Pier 12, Aztecs**". An ACE of SPADES playing card falls out.

He picks it up, turns it over. On the back: "**The Spades**".

INT. SEDAN - NIGHT

Parked. Higgins lights a cigarette, leans over to the glove compartment and pulls out a box of BLACK MARKET Z-X-54.

He injects the serum into his right thigh. Takes a breath... then a drag on his cigarette and relaxingly exhales.

LEANNA (O.S.)

Those things will kill you, Harry.

He looks to the passenger seat - **LEANNA**, 35, withered, fresh bite mark on her neck and pale complexion, stares at him.

He gives a slight nod "I know".

LEANNA
You should quit.

HIGGINS
We're all on borrowed time, Leanna.
I'm just enjoying mine while I can,
like you used to say "take one day
at a time and let fate work itself
out". Remember?

LEANNA
Of course.

He looks her in the eyes... deep emotion in his.

LEANNA
You're still wearing it.

He looks down, pulls out a string necklace with a WEDDING
RING attached to it. He fondles the ring.

HIGGINS
It's a reminder. Of the man I was.
(sadly)
And of the woman I lost.

LEANNA
You didn't lose me, Harry.

HIGGINS
Yeah, I did.

His eyes find hers.

HIGGINS
I miss you.

LEANNA
You know where I am.

HIGGINS
I can't... I won't...

LEANNA
Yes, you can. You have to.

HIGGINS
No.
(beat)
Never. I'm sorry, I just-

He looks across - she's gone, as if she were never there. He
shamefully looks down. Clenches a fist around the ring.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - NIGHT

Taylor oversees the MILITARY OPERATION. Maria and Aldo work their stations and keep track of information.

MARIA
Blackbirds, report, over.

CARSON (V.O.)
ETA two minutes, Hub. Over.

MONITORS: 2 LARGE RED DOTS "**BLACKBIRDS 1**" and "**2**" approach DELAWARE from the sea.

TAYLOR
(into headset)
Does anyone have a visual? Over.

CARSON (V.O.)
Can't see a damn thing through this fog. We're gonna set the birds down in the field, move in on foot.

TAYLOR
Negative on that last. Do not land. Repeat, do not land. Over.

A beat. Taylor opens her mouth to talk.

CARSON (V.O.)
Copy that. Over.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - NIGHT

FOG shrouds the entire fort. Nothing but the wall visible. Two HELICOPTERS "BLACKBIRDS" soar overhead.

INT. BLACKBIRD 1 - NIGHT

Carson, the **BISON** (A BISON logo on their chests) and **SPECTER** (masked/light armored) units occupy the back.

PILOT and CO-PILOT operate the controls/instruments.

CO-PILOT
I'm receiving a lot of interference over the shortwave frequency.

CARSON
Survivors?

Co-Pilot turns dials and flips a switch... STATIC pierces the air, followed by BLURTS of INCOMPREHENSIBLE WORDS.

TRANSMISSION (V.O.)
 (via shortwave, distorted)
 Request- evacuation, we have- eight
 survivor- these coordinate- please-

The transmission cuts out.

CARSON
 (into radio)
 Hub, do you copy? Over.

TAYLOR (V.O.)
 What's your status? Over.

CARSON
 I need information. Last broadcast from the fort came via Morse code, correct? What did it say? Over.

A beat. Co-Pilot fiddles with the dials.

TAYLOR (V.O.)
 "Requesting immediate evacuation, we have eight survivors located at these coordinates, please send-".

CARSON
 (to Co-Pilot)
 It's a dead message.
 (to Taylor)
 That's all I needed, Hub. Over.
 (to Pilot)
 Bring us in on the east side of the fort. Get us close to the wall.

Pilot operates the stick. The helicopter changes direction. Carson acknowledges Specter and Bison unit.

CARSON
 We're gonna rappel down onto the east wall and make our way inside the fort from there. Thermal scopes on, keep it tight and contained. Do not stray from the flock, clear?

They all equip thermal scopes to their automatic rifles.

CARSON
 (into radio)
 Horrus, you copy?

HORRUS (V.O.)
 (via radio)
 Copy, Bison One. What's the game
 plan? Over.

CARSON
 I need the Dragons and Hunters on
 the west flank. Thermal scopes and
 snipers at strategic choke-points.
 Keep to the high ground. Over.

HORRUS (V.O.)
 Copy that, Bison One. Over and out.

Carson raises his rifle and looks to his men.

CARSON
 We're about to step off this bird
 into hellfire and brimstone, right
 into the devil's cauldron. Some of
 us might not live to see dawn so if
 this is our last night on earth I'm
 proud to have you all at my side.
 (beat)
 Specter unit too.

TYRUS, late 30s, Specter leader, takes to his feet, raises
 his rifle and cocks it.

NOTE: Specter unit's vocal patterns are filtered/radio-like
 through their masks.

TYRUS
 My unit appreciates that. But we do
 not follow others into battle. YOU
 follow US.

Tyrus jumps out of the helicopter. Specter unit follows him
 out the door. Bison soldiers watch as -

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - NIGHT

- Specter unit wing-suits with style toward the eastern wall
 of the fort. All of their parachutes open simultaneously.

INT. BLACKBIRD 1 - NIGHT

CARSON
 Cocky bastards.

He shakes his head and smirks.

BISON#1
 (RE: Wing-suits/parachutes)
 Why can't we have those?

CARSON
 Budget restraints.
 (to Pilot)
 Set us down on the wall.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - EAST WALL - NIGHT

Specter unit lands on the wall, detach their parachutes and take strategic positions along the wall.

SPECTER SNIPER (FEMALE) mounts up, looks through the scope and scans the environment.

THERMAL SCOPE: No heat-signatures.

Three Specters attach rappel lines to their belts and hop onto the wall. They descend. Tyrus remains up top.

TYRUS
 (into radio)
 Horrus, what's your position?

HORRUS (V.O.)
 (via radio)
 On your two, Specter One. En route to the courtyard.

THERMAL SCOPE: 7 heat-signatures move down the west stairs in tactical formation.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - COURTYARD - NIGHT

HORRUS, late 30s, built like a brick shit-house with tribal tattoos down his face, coordinates DRAGON UNIT.

Dragons move into position around MILITARY TENTS and TRUCKS.

DRAGON#1 activates his night-vision goggles. Performs a hand gesture "move up".

Horrus takes point, moves behind a truck. He activates night vision, leans around the front of the truck -

NIGHT-VISION: No heat-signatures, no thermal readings.

- Horrus tactically moves out into the open. Dragons#1 & #2 follow him. They close on a drawbridge activation system.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - EAST WALL - NIGHT

Blackbird 1 hovers above the wall. Carson leads Bison unit toward Specter unit. Tyrus meets Carson.

CARSON

How are we looking?

TYRUS

Dragons are on the ground. No sign of enemy movement. Hunter unit is inside the facility.

CARSON

Alright Bison, move inside. Sweep the upper levels, keep it tight.

(to Tyrus)

I need you and Specter unit-

HORRUS (V.O.)

(via radio)

Carson, Tyrus, do you copy?

CARSON

Copy, Horrus. What's your status?

HORRUS (V.O.)

The drawbridge controls are shot. I can't raise it from- wait.

(beat, confused)

What the hell...

CARSON

Horrus?

A distant BANG. Everyone seeks the noise. A WHOOSHING noise grows closer...

THERMAL SCOPE: Tracks a ROCKET (RPG) gliding overhead.

CARSON

RPG!

...the rocket strikes Blackbird 1 and sends it on a wicked downward spiral. BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP...

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - NIGHT

Blackbird 1 spirals outta control, destroys some of the wall and CRASHES in a fiery blaze in the moat outside the fort.

A fireball rises from the wreckage. A beat. A HORDE of 50-60 ZOMBIES converge on the fort from the east.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - NIGHT

Taylor, Maria and Aldo monitor the screens.

MONITORS: Several groups of RED DOTS all over the fort. One large BLUE DOT remains.

TAYLOR
 (into headset)
 Status report.
 (beat, no response)
 Does anyone copy?

BEEP. BEEP... BEEP-BEEP... BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEPBEEPBEEPBEEP.

MONITORS: Red Dots drop like flies all around the fort.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Horrus and Dragon unit backup as a horde of ZOMBIES flood through the drawbridge entrance.

A zombie takes Dragon#1 to the ground. More zombies pile on top of Dragon#1 and devour him. He CRIES for help.

Horrus backs up the staircase -

- a large castle-like door behind him THUMPS... THUMPS again and again and again. The wood SPLINTERS.

HORRUS
 Fallback! FALLBACK!

The large door BREAKS off the hinges. ZOMBIES flood out in droves. Some wear SCIENTIST and MILITARY outfits.

HORRUS
 (RE: second horde)
 SHIT!

Horrus turns his gun and sprays at the horde. FRESH ZOMBIES run and lunge at him -

- they tackle him over the battlements.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - EAST WALL - NIGHT

Specter Sniper shoots into the courtyard. Reloads. She takes aim, shoots a few more times.

Carson, Tyrus, Bison and Specter units shoot down into the yard. BANG. They look up -

- another RPG hits BLACKBIRD 2. It spirals outta sight. Two SOLDIERS fall out. BOOM. A fireball rises in the distance.

CARSON
GODDAMMIT!

TAYLOR (V.O.)
(distorted/muffled)
Hunter and Dragon units- down- does
anyone cop- ABORT M-

CARSON
(into radio)
Hub, we are under hostile attack. I
repeat, we are under hostile attack
- requesting immediate-

The signal cuts out.

CARSON
SHIT!

SPECTER SNIPER
I'm out of ammo!

TYRUS
Retreat!

Specter unit backs up.

TYRUS
(into radio)
Sweepers, disengage hostiles. Full
retreat. Get your asses back up-

SPECTER#1 (V.O.)
(via radio)
Not an option, Captain. It was an
honor serving with you.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Three Specter soldiers fire at zombies as they back into the wall, a LAST STAND. Zombies overrun them.

Specter#1 pulls a grenade pin as zombies take him, #2 and #3 down. Zombies tear into them as - BOOM, the grenade blows.

More zombies flood inside the courtyard & move up the steps.

Specter units fire at the zombies from the top of the wall. Zombies fall off the staircase.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - EAST WALL - NIGHT

Specter units attach rappel lines and hop onto the exterior wall. They descend. Bison units provide cover fire.

A zombie tackles a Bison to the ground. Carson shoots it in the head. Tyrus attaches a rappel line to his belt.

TYRUS
(to Carson)
Captain, move your ass.

Tyrus climbs over and rappels down.

CARSON
(to his unit)
Get over the wall!

Bison unit grabs rappel lines.

BISON#1
What about you?!

CARSON
Just go!

Bison#1 rappels. Carson provides cover fire as zombies flood his location. He runs outta assault rifle ammo, ditches it -

- and pulls up his sidearm. Shoots zombies in the head. One bullet tears through four heads. He runs outta pistol ammo.

Carson backs up, whips out his knife. Slashes through them and unleashes a battle-cry. He gets an opening -

- grabs a rappel line and bounds over the wall.

EXT. FORT DELAWARE - NIGHT

Carson SLAMS into the wall and BREAKS his arm. He GROWLS in pain as he clings on with one hand.

Bison units scramble out of the moat as Specter unloads on the zombie horde.

Bison#1 provides Specter Sniper with cover fire. She gives him a slight nod "thanks".

Tyrus drives a combat knife up through a zombie's neck and pushes it back, shoots 2 zombies with his sidearm. BANG -

- a third RPG strikes the fort's drawbridge wall. Concrete and stone collapse, trapping zombies inside the fort.

Carson splashes down into the moat. Bison soldiers help him to dry land. Specter units wipe out the remaining zombies.

CARSON
(into radio)
Hub, do you copy?

Radio static hits the air.

TYRUS
(to Carson)
We're on our own, Captain.

An army of BLINDING LIGHTS strike them from all directions. Specter and Bison units raise their weapons -

- a ROGUE SECT of MILITARY PERSONNEL approach from every direction, assault rifles, shotguns and pistols in hand.

A TANK rolls up alongside other MILITARY VEHICLES.

Carson holds his broken arm to his gut as he stands up and steps to the front of his unit.

Tyrus' gaze sweeps the rogue sect. Locks onto a TRUCK.

HADES, 40-43, vicious burn scar down one side of his face & a blind eye, in military gear, steps out of the truck.

Tyrus and Carson exchange looks. Specter Sniper looks on...

Hades stops and coldly surveys Specter and Bison units. He pulls out a COLT PYTHON/REVOLVER.

Tyrus scans the rogue sect - **JONES**, 31, scrawny, a patch on his arm with a SCORPION logo, takes position next to Hades.

Carson recognizes Jones.

CARSON
(to Jones)
You son of a bitch...

JONES
I did what I had to do...

Hades pockets five bullets, loads one into the revolver and snaps the barrel shut.

HADES
Which one of you is in charge here?

Carson steps forward - Tyrus bravely moves ahead of him and confronts Hades. Hades acknowledges him.

TYRUS

I am.

HADES

And you would be?

TYRUS

Captain Tyrus Stone, Specter Unit.

HADES

Helmet. Off. Let me see your face.

Tyrus releases his helmet clips and takes it off -

- **TYRUS**, late 30s, chiseled and battle hardened, beard and a scar down his lip. He ditches the helmet.

Hades and Tyrus stare one another down. Hades smirks, turns away and methodically paces as he weighs his thoughts.

Specter Sniper grips her sidearm. Tyrus looks at her "no".

HADES

Your services are no longer needed.

Hades aims at Tyrus and pulls the trigger - a bullet tears through Tyrus' forehead. He collapses to the ground.

Specter and Bison units raise their weapons. Carson stares at Tyrus' body. Hades' men aim at them.

HADES

(to his men)

Hold your fire!

(to Carson)

Tell your men to stand down.

CARSON

Go to hell...

Hades chuckles.

HADES

(motions around)

I'm already here.

He sets his revolver to Carson's forehead.

HADES

But if I need to make another point
I will gladly perform an encore. So
what do you say?

Carson sighs...

CARSON
 (to Bison and Specter units)
 Stand down.

Specter and Bison units reluctantly drop their weapons.

HADES
 Good choice.

Hades pulls the trigger - CLICK, empty - Carson flinches as Hades looks at the gun.

HADES
 I forgot I only loaded one bullet.
 Guess it's your lucky day, huh?
 (to his men)
 Load 'em up.

EXT. PIER 12 - NIGHT

High barbed-wire chain-link fences with occupied guard posts and towers. FORKLIFTS maneuver the WAREHOUSE area.

The sedan pulls up to the MAIN GATE. Two ARMED LATIN GUARDS stand nearby. Higgins rolls down the driver's window.

Higgins showcases his badge.

GUARD#1
 That don't mean nothing now, pal...
 you best head on home. Docks ain't
 no place for a "cop".

HIGGINS
 Relax, "amigo". I'm not here about
 your counterfeit stock.

Higgins shows him the playing card. Guard#1 nods to Guard#2.

GUARD#1
 Open the gate.

Guard#2 opens the gate.

GUARD#1
 He's in his office.

HIGGINS
 Appreciate it, "pal".

The sedan pulls up to the warehouse.

The main gates close.

INT. WAREHOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

Higgins takes a seat on a fine leather couch. GLASSES CLINK. Someone hands Higgins a glass of BRANDY. He accepts it.

ORTEGA, 35-38, Latino, tattooed, gang-like, jeans and tank top, takes a seat in an armchair, glass of brandy in hand.

ORTEGA
Any leads?

HIGGINS
Why do you think I'm here?

Ortega takes a drink, keeps his eyes on Higgins.

HIGGINS
Your comrade got jacked in, tore up a kid and slashed up a girl's face before she got put down. One bullet to the head, quick and easy.
(beat)
No bites or scratches. She didn't turn naturally. Grade A neck tie... serrated blade coated in dead man's blood. Someone wanted her to turn.

Higgins takes a drink and sets the PLAYING CARD on the table in front of Ortega.

HIGGINS
Question of the day; who would do something like that?

Ortega smirks.

ORTEGA
You think I did it?

HIGGINS
It's your style.

ORTEGA
Do you even know what the card you played means?
(leans forward)
Organization. The Aztecs might deal in black market goods but we have a system, and that card represents MY business model.

Higgins tries to get a read on him.

ORTEGA

When the Aztecs formed the previous leader made a sham of everything... no one knew their roles, so we were fumbling in the dark. When I took control, I made it my first action as the new president to ensure all Aztecs knew their place, and role.

Ortega picks up the card, and pulls out his own: KING of DIAMONDS. He compares them for Higgins.

ORTEGA

King of Diamonds. Ace of Spades... the chain of command. Highest rank, lowest rank. Picture clearing up?

HIGGINS

You seem like more of a joker than a king. No offense.

ORTEGA

None taken.

Ortega pockets the KING and tables the ACE.

ORTEGA

Ace of Spades is a designation for "groundskeeper". Basically, the one who holds the card leads the farm and organizes supply runs for food and fertilizer, that kinda thing... it's shitty work, most o' the time they go out, come back empty handed and sometimes they don't come back.

Higgins ingests the information. Ortega finishes his brandy.

ORTEGA

But they never come back and die... Grade A neck tie, huh? Nasty.

HIGGINS

You don't seem too broke about it.

ORTEGA

Barely knew her.

(beat)

But I know someone who did, and if you came here for answers, he'd be the one to talk to for 'em. You're looking for Kyle Mills...

Ortega heads to his desk, writes something down and hands the piece of paper to Higgins.

ORTEGA
Anything else you need?

Higgins stands up and pockets the piece of paper.

HIGGINS
Carton o' smokes. I'm running low.

ORTEGA
That shit'll kill ya.

HIGGINS
That's what my wife says.

ORTEGA
Smart woman.

Higgins agrees.

ORTEGA
See Dominguez down in section four.
He'll hook you up. Here.

Ortega flips Higgins a poker chip. Higgins catches it.

HIGGINS
The hell's this?

ORTEGA
Bargain chip. Give it to Dominguez.
Fifty percent discount. Now scat, I
got shit to do.

EXT. MIDTOWN HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

A military HUMMER pulls up outside the school. Drove of TEENAGERS and YOUNG KIDS maneuver the campus.

Drew exits the hummer, slings a backpack over his shoulder. Walker in the passenger seat, Sasha rides shotgun.

WALKER
Drew, remember what I said.

DREW
I know, dad.
(to Sasha)
Have fun at Boot Camp.

Drew closes the door, walks away with a smirk. The passenger window rolls down.

SASHA
Have fun at daycare!

DREW
It's ninth grade!

Sasha waves "bye-bye" as the hummer drives away. Drew flips her off as they go.

DREW
(discreetly)
I hate you.

Drew faces the school. TEACHERS usher students inside. The campus clears...

...**CALEB**, 17, jock-like with an attitude, along with various douche-like FRIENDS, stands near the entrance.

Drew notices Caleb and leaves campus.

INT. HUMMER - DAY

Walker shifts gears.

WALKER
Listen, I know I was hard on you...
you probably thought you were doing
the right thing listening to J-

SASHA
You don't have to apologize, dad...
you did what you had to do, right?

WALKER
As your General, yes, but as your
father, no. I didn't.

She cocks an eye.

WALKER
All I want, is for you and Drew to
survive this war. Sometimes I feel
like an asshole, maybe I am, but I
do the things I do to prepare you,
Sasha. I want you to WIN. It's all
I care about. You, your brother and
your mother, you're the only things
in my life that mean anything. This

(MORE)

WALKER (cont'd)
 job, the rank, all the people that
 salute me and call me "sir", far as
 I'm concerned, it means nothing.
 (beat)
 I just want you to understand.

They exchange looks. She smirks.

SASHA
 You can be an asshole sometimes...

He laughs. She chuckles.

WALKER
 I said all that and that's the only
 thing you caught?

EXT. MILITARY ACADEMY - DAY

Makeshift, barbed-wire fences all around the perimeter and a
 large UNIVERSITY building at the center.

Owen and Greg wait near the gate. RECRUITS with brick-filled
 backpacks run past them.

The hummer pulls up at the curb. Sasha steps out.

WALKER
 See you at home.

SASHA
 Yes, sir.

She closes the door. Walker drives away. Sasha meets Owen &
 Greg at the gate.

COLONEL **FRANK PORTER**, late 30s, drill sergeant/military man
 by heart, approaches with a clipboard in hand.

OWEN
 (RE: Porter)
 Shit...

Porter meets the trio.

PORTER
 (RE: Owen)
 Can't say I'm surprised to see you
 back, Miller.

Porter checks off their names.

OWEN

Well, what can I say, sir? I'm like a boomerang. Soon as you think I'm gone, I fly right on back.

PORTER

Quit being a smart-ass, recruit. We are NOT friends. Understand?

OWEN

(sarcastically)

Yes, sir.

PORTER

(deadpan)

Bunk room four.

Owen slyly smirks at Sasha as he heads off.

PORTER

You two are with me.

GREG

If it's sanitation, can't Owen do it, sir?

PORTER

Owen's already on the roster. You two have advanced beyond sanitation duty. Follow me.

EXT. EAST HARLEM - DAY

Dreary and dull. Unguarded. HOMELESS, SICK and WOUNDED roam the streets and gather at fiery oil drums in alleyways.

Higgins stands outside a DUPLEX & consults Ortega's note. He heads up the steps and KNOCKS on the door.

No answer. He KNOCKS again. Beat. He tries the doorknob. It opens. He pulls up his sidearm and cautiously enters.

INT. DUPLEX - FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Higgins moves inside. Scrunches up his face in disgust and covers his mouth/nose with a handkerchief. He COUGHS.

HIGGINS

(RE: Smell)

Jesus Christ...

He pushes a side door open with his gun, peeks inside.

INT. DUPLEX - APARTMENT LOUNGE - DAY

Maggots wriggle on spoiled food upon the coffee table. Empty beer bottles and shattered vase shards litter the floor.

Higgins moves through the room. His eyes sweep the filth.

SQUELCH... He looks down... COAGULATED BLOOD soaked into the carpet. He moves toward the far ajar door.

Higgins pushes the door open with his pistol.

INT. DUPLEX - APARTMENT KITCHEN - DAY

Higgins steps inside. He turns away in disgust -

- flies BUZZ over a **MUTILATED CORPSE**, unknown gender, guts everywhere, face mangled, ripped to shreds, on the floor.

Higgins inspects the corpse from a distance. THUD. His eyes find the ceiling. THUD...

INT. DUPLEX - UPSTAIRS LANDING - DAY

Higgins closes on a closed door to the second level. Slowly, he reaches for the handle. He pulls it down -

- THUD. He instantly backs up. THUD-THUD-GROWL-THUD. He gets closer and sets his ear to the door panel. Contemplates...

...sets his gun to the door, THUD... adjusts its position... THUD, GROWL... adjusts once more, pulls the trigger, BANG.

A beat... SOMETHING hits the FLOOR. Higgins opens the door.

INT. DUPLEX - APARTMENT 2 LOUNGE - DAY

The door strikes a COMBAT BOOT. Higgins squeezes inside and inspects the scene. His face says it all -

- **MALE ZOMBIE**, late 20s, slit-throat, fresh, lies motionless on the floor, bullet in his head.

HIGGINS

You must be Kyle.

Higgins squats and checks "Kyle's" pockets. He finds several dimes, a roll of \$1's and a KEY to a locker "141".

He pockets the cash and key-chain, returns the dimes.

HIGGINS
(RE: Kyle's neck)
The hell is going on?

INT. DUPLEX - APARTMENT 2 BEDROOM - DAY

Messy, blood spatters on the wall and bed. A black and white photo of KYLE and a **WOMAN**, mid 20s, pretty, busty physique.

Higgins inspects the room. Checks the wardrobe, dresser and bedside units. He finds the photo. SCOFFS...

HIGGINS
Cleopatra...
(beat)
Kid had fine taste.

Higgins sets the photo down, turns -

- ZOMBIE LEANNA grabs and tackles him into the wall. Bites for his neck. He YELLS and shoves her back -

- pulls up his pistol and aims - she's gone. He searches the room. No sign of her. He lowers the gun, sighs.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Higgins pops a pill bottle and takes two pills. He swallows them dry. A beat. Looks at the passenger seat. EMPTY.

He grips the wheel and closes his eyes. He takes a moment...

A KNOCK on the window alerts him. He rolls the window down.

HIGGINS
What?

DREW stares at him.

DREW
You got a smoke?

HIGGINS
No, I don't. Beat it, kid.

DREW
(scoffs)
Asshole.

Drew walks away.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - DAY

Walker enters the tent. Taylor meets him. Two new **TECH GUYS** sit where Aldo and Maria usually sit.

WALKER
What happened?

TAYLOR
We lost contact eight hours ago...
the mission was a critical failure.

WALKER
Critical?

TAYLOR
We lost both Blackbirds. Hunter and
Dragon units were K.I.A. Bison and
Specter units are M.I.A.

Walker grits his teeth.

TAYLOR
They were attacked, sir.

EXT. MIDTOWN WEST - THE WALL - DAY

Military maneuver the place. A SNIPER heads to a WATCHTOWER.
Walker and Taylor exit the communications tent.

TAYLOR
We need to inform the Mayor, sir.

WALKER
No. He doesn't need to know.

TAYLOR
General?

WALKER
(to soldier)
You, over here.

Soldier/**RIDLEY WILCOX**, early 20s, athletic/handsome, walks
over to them. Walker reaches the hummer.

WALKER
What's your name?

RIDLEY
Ridley Wilcox, sir. New recruit.

Walker opens the driver's door.

WALKER
You're with us, Wilcox.
(to Taylor)
Get in.

INT. HUMMER - DAY

Walker drives through Times Square. Taylor rides shotgun & Ridley occupies the backseat.

TAYLOR
If you don't mind my asking, sir...
where are we going?

WALKER
To see an old friend.

TAYLOR
Why do we need the recruit?

WALKER
My old friend's not the kind you
invite to the family barbecue, if
you catch my meaning.
(to Wilcox)
You a steady shot, kid?

RIDLEY
I hold the record at the academy,
sir. Most head-shots on a moving
target, averaged one-shot one-kill.

WALKER
I don't need your resume, recruit.
I just need to know you're capable.
(to Taylor)
In the glove compartment.

Taylor opens the compartment, pulls out two PISTOLS. Hands one to Ridley. He checks the magazine, reloads it.

Walker turns right. Taylor studies the environment.

EXT. MIDTOWN EAST - THE GATE - DAY

Two WATCHTOWERS either side of the gate. GUARDS patrol the area. The hummer pulls up to the gate.

Guards approach the driver's side. Walker opens the window.

Ridley prepares himself. Taylor grows anxious.

GATE GUARD
Can I help you, sir?

WALKER
I need you to open the gate.

GATE GUARD
I'll have to contact the Mayor, if
you'll hold on a min-

Walker grabs his arm.

WALKER
Now, Sergeant.

GATE GUARD
(to Gate Guard#2)
You heard him.
(to Walker)
Apologies, General.

WALKER
Keep this between us.

GATE GUARD
(intimidated)
Yes, sir.

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - DAY

The gate rises. Watchtower snipers keep an eye on the area.
Walker drives under the gate. The gate lowers/closes.

The hummer takes a left - burnt out vehicles and rubble all
over the place - a CHARRED WAR-ZONE.

Rotting corpses line the streets. BIO-HAZARD symbols on the
buildings. ZOMBIES drag their entrails across the road.

DECAYED ZOMBIES, broken/beaten, barely able to move, shuffle
about the sidewalks. The hummer passes by. They don't react.

INT. HUMMER - DAY

Ridley watches the world outside the window.

RIDLEY
Back in the academy, they said this
place was hell on earth...
(beat)
It was a dirty bomb, right?

Walker gives a slight nod "yes".

WALKER

Sent the virus airborne, blanketed the entire district. Within an hour of detonation, we lost two thousand people. My predecessor sent in two infantry units, two hundred men, to contain it. But it was too late.

Walker shifts gears, weighs his thoughts.

TAYLOR

(RE: Zombies)

Look at them all...

(beat)

...this is cruel.

WALKER

It's war, captain.

TAYLOR

That doesn't make it OK, sir.

WALKER

No, it doesn't.

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - ALLEYWAY - DAY

The hummer's engine stops. Walker, Taylor and Ridley exit the vehicle. Walker heads to a dumpster.

TAYLOR

This the place?

WALKER

We're a few blocks out. Can't drive up to the front door.

Walker pulls a large tarp from the dumpster, rolls it out.

WALKER

Recruit, grab the other side.

Taylor approaches something as Walker and Ridley cover the hummer in the tarp.

TAYLOR

(disgusted)

God...

Walker and Ridley meet her. She shakes her head in disgust.

TAYLOR
 (darkly)
 That's so wrong.
 (RE: her pistol)
 I should-

WALKER
 We can't risk the noise. Leave it.

TAYLOR
 HER. Not IT.

A **CHARRED FEMALE ZOMBIE**, cut in half, one arm, in a TAR-POOL of bones and melted flesh, GASPS as she reaches for them.

Ridley looks away. Taylor bows her head. Walker approaches the zombie, pulls out his combat knife and looks at her.

He stabs her in the side of the head. She dies. He sheathes the knife and walks away.

WALKER
 Move out.

INT. APARTMENT - LOUNGE - DAY

Grubby and small with an open-plan.

Higgins enters and sets his keys on the hook. He hangs his jacket on the rack and walks into the kitchen -

- a photograph of HIGGINS, less grotty, and LEANNA, happy & full of life, sits on the bureau by the kitchen.

Higgins returns to the lounge with a bottle of beer. Takes a seat on the couch, cracks the beer open and drinks it.

He sets the bottle on a coaster on the coffee table. A FILE rests on it. He grabs the file and opens it. Reads...

FILE: Gruesome images of 4 **MURDER VICTIMS** and a newspaper clipping "**SHAMED DETECTIVE RESIGNS**".

A thin wire held by gloved hands wraps around Higgins' neck from behind. Someone **CHOKES** him. Higgins kicks out -

- his foot knocks over the beer bottle.

Higgins' face turns purple as he struggles. He reaches for his pistol... can't quite grab it. He **YELLS**.

LEANNA stands in the corner of the room, watching.

HIGGINS
 (struggling)
 AAAHHHHHHRRGGHH!

Higgins grabs his gun - the "STRANGLER" pulls hard - Higgins pops off a shot - a bullet SMASHES the window.

"Strangler" sets a foot to the back of the couch, increases his grip. Higgins fades -

- he kicks off the coffee table. The couch tumbles backward. Both fall to the floor.

Higgins violently COUGHS and grabs at his throat. He reaches for the gun - "Strangler" kicks the gun away.

"Strangler" whips out a knife. Higgins tackles him into the wall. They wrestle over the knife.

"Strangler" knees Higgins in the groin, slashes - Higgins barely avoids the knife - "Strangler" kicks him away and -

- runs out of the apartment. Higgins grabs the gun, pursues.

EXT. MIDTOWN EAST - ALLEYWAY - DAY

"Strangler" flees down the fire escape. Higgins pursues him, fires a shot - misses. Higgins hurries down the stairs -

- "Strangler" hops down into the alley, approaches a WHITE VAN at the end. He hops into the back.

Higgins drops down from the fire escape, aims and fires his gun - a bullet SHATTERS the back window as the van flees.

Higgins rubs his throat and scowls.

HIGGINS
 Shit!

EXT. EAST HARLEM - DAY

Drew walks alone. A few SHADY PEOPLE occupy the neighborhood and watch him as he passes.

Drew approaches a decrepit house. He knocks on the door. He KNOCKS again. No answer. He peers through the letterbox.

DREW
 Jessica?
 (beat)
 Hello?

INT. DECREPIT HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Empty ammo crates on the table, empty gun racks on the wall. Ransacked. Broken window.

Drew climbs in through the broken window, drops down off the counter. He looks around.

DREW

Jess?

INT. DECREPIT HOUSE - LOUNGE - DAY

A tip. Overturned couch and coffee table. Bloodstain on the carpet leading into the hall.

Drew enters from the kitchen, studies the room. He pulls up his BUTTERFLY KNIFE and flicks the blade out.

He follows the bloodstain...

INT. DECREPIT HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - DAY

The bloodstain leads to a door at the far end of the hall.

Drew cautiously approaches the door. He grips the handle and pulls down. Moves inside.

INT. DECREPIT HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Drew steps inside. His eyes go wide -

- **JESSICA**, 18, kinda hot in a tough way, DEAD and awkwardly positioned in the tub, broken neck, eyes open, throat slit.

Drew immediately turns to leave. He freezes. A gun CLICKS. Slowly, he backs up in abject fear.

DREW

Please... just... just let me go. I won't... I won't say anything...

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)

I know you won't.

CRACK. Jessica's head moves. She reanimates.

DREW

(RE: Jessica turning)
Oh shit...

The door SLAMS shut. Drew tries to open it. He pulls with all his might.

DREW
Hey! HEY! LET ME OUT! LET ME OUT!
PLEASE! OPEN THE DOOR! PLEASE!

Jessica collapses onto the floor. Slowly, she pushes up.

DREW
OPEN THE DOOR!!!!!!!!!!!!

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)
I'm sorry.

Jessica's back CRACKS as she stands up straight. Her fingers CRACK as they curl. Her lip rises. Her pupils dilate.

Drew desperately tries to open the door.

Jessica voraciously GROWLS and lunges at Drew. He SCREAMS.

Flesh SQUELCHES as blood SPLASHES across the tiles...

CUT TO BLACK.