

NO REST FOR THE BRAVE

Written by

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Based on the memoirs
"Running Scared," by Robert W. Jackson

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INTERCUT BLACK SCREEN / IRANIAN REVOLUTION FOOTAGE

A black screen shows the title cards intercutting with historical footage of the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979.

- Iranian DEMONSTRATORS climb the iron gates of the American embassy and jump over the brick walls.

TITLE: "In November 1979, Iranian students invaded the American embassy in Tehran and took 52 Americans hostage."

- Iranian HIJACKERS drag an American DIPLOMAT, who is tied and blindfolded. They walk through a crowd of Demonstrators, who shout at the embassy's gates.

TITLE: "In response to the attack, US President Jimmy Carter imposed an arms embargo on Iran."

- AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI blesses Iranian political and military LEADERS.

TITLE: "After Iraq invaded Iran in 1980, Iranian Forces desperately needed weapons and supplies to fight the war."

- In a Middle-Eastern desert hill, an Iranian Anti-Aircraft GARRISON tries to shoot down an enemy jet fighter.

TITLE: "On 20 January 1981, on the same day that Ronald Reagan was sworn President, the Iranian Government inexplicably released all the 52 hostages."

- With his right hand raised, President RONALD REAGAN takes the Constitutional Oath in front of his WIFE and the CHIEF JUSTICE.

TITLE: "Despite that, Reagan promised to continue Carter's policy of blocking the arms sales to Iran."

FADE IN:

EXT. WASHINGTON DC (1985) - DAY

Capitol Hill, West Front. The sprawling, green lawn. The vast stairs. The unmistakable dome.

REPORTERS, STUDENTS, NAVY OFFICERS, and POLITICIANS' ASSISTANTS run up the long stairs trying to get to a session in time.

INT. US CAPITOL, HOUSE WING - DAY

A hallway full of PRESS REPRESENTATIVES.

The REPORTERS pick up their tape recorders and microphones and shout.

SUPER: "October 1985. US Congress Committee on Armed Services - Hearing"

CAPITOL ROTUNDA

Wearing his white uniform, a NAVY CAPTAIN (45) talks to the press.

NAVY CAPTAIN

Petty Officer Jackson's allegations are ridiculous. We've checked all the inventory. There are no F-14 jet parts missing. There's nothing to be investigated, simply because--

HOUSE WING, PASSAGEWAY

A blonde FEMALE REPORTER (25) pushes through the crowd as she shouts to her cameraman.

FEMALE REPORTER

Get the camera! Get the freakin' camera!

The PRESS goes crazy as the MAIN WITNESS comes in.

REPORTERS

Mr. Jackson... Mr. Jackson... Mr. Jackson!

NATIONAL STATUARY HALL

A POLITICIAN (50s) in an elegant suit gives a one on one interview to the LA Times.

POLITICIAN

Why would the U.S. Government sell weapons to Iran? Between you and me, this guy is mentally ill. He's crazy, okay? We're sorry for him, but he needs to stop this and seek treatment.

HOUSE WING, PASSAGEWAY

The Female Reporter jumps into the crowd and manages to get to...

...ROBERT W. JACKSON (late 20s), former Navy Second Class Petty Officer, now in civilian clothes.

Impeccably shaved, cheap suit, he looks like the perfect blue-collar, hardworking son-in-law. And, today, he is the most famous face in the national news.

The Female Reporter shoves the microphone right into his face.

FEMALE REPORTER

Mr. Jackson, the Navy is calling you a traitor, and the Government calls you a compulsive liar. Which one is the right one?

Jackson stops.

JACKSON

If you were me -- I'd want you to blow the whistle too.

CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER, EMANCIPATION HALL

In front of the Statue of Freedom, The US ATTORNEY-GENERAL (40s) speaks to the JOURNALISTS. He follows lawful protocol under a rain of questions.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

This Administration did not-- This Administration did not, and will not, sell any military equipment to Iran. There's no way to sugarcoat this. It's a lie. Mr. Jackson is lying, and we'll prove it in Court.

HOUSE WING, PASSAGEWAY

RANDY WHALEY (40s), a smart country lawyer with a severe and intimidating gaze, steps in and tries to make Jackson keep moving.

A Vietnam vet and a former Air-Force Parajumper, Randy has seen his share of battles. But nothing like this.

RANDY

No comments. No comments!

FEMALE REPORTER

Mr. Jackson, the American people have the right to know if--

ANGELA PARKER (30s), a cutthroat Attorney, more dangerous than a nuclear bomb leaking, pushes the Female Reporter to the side.

ANGELA

He said no comments, blondie! Back off!

INT. CONGRESS, AUDIENCE ROOM - DAY

With Angela and Randy at his side, Jackson sits in front of the Congressional Committee on Armed Services.

The room is total chaos. CONGRESSMAN KILGORE (50s), the Committee's chairman, tries to open this session.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE

Mr. Jackson...

The incessant sound of flashes and reporters muffles the words from the Congressman.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE (CONT'D)

Mr. Jackson...

A MALE PROTESTER stands up with a billboard and is contained by CAPITOL POLICE. The billboard says: "Reagan lies."

MALE PROTESTER

You have blood on your hands! This whole Government has blood on its hands!

A few other YOUNG PROTESTERS join the Male Protester. Capitol Police haul the Protesters from the hearing as they scream.

YOUNG PROTESTERS

Stop the arms sales! Stop the arms sales! Stop the arms sales!

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE

Mr. Jackson!

The room slowly becomes quiet.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE (CONT'D)

Can you clarify to this Commission what the heck happened on the USS Kitty Hawk?

Jackson clears his throat and nears the microphone.

EXT. FLORIDA, SWAMPS - DAY

Early dawn.

SUPER: "Two years ago. Search and Rescue Aircrewman Training - SAR."

Coming out of the morning fog, a platoon of Navy SAILORS run through the swamps in full gear.

They pass in front of a wall where the SAR's motto is written: "So Others May Live."

The INSTRUCTORS monitor the pack of tired candidates. Jackson is one of them.

The lead of the instructors is Master Chief Petty Officer FORD (late 40s), a seasoned, hard-ass type who has proudly trained hundreds of the best Navy swimmers. Sir, yes, sir.

Ford sings a running cadence, "Easy Run." The platoon claps at the song's rhythm.

FORD
Easy run.

PLATOON
Easy run.

FORD
Easy run.

PLATOON
Easy run.

FORD
No sweat.

PLATOON
No sweat.

FORD
Let's go home.

PLATOON
Let's go home.

EXT. FLORIDA, SWAMPS, IN THE WATER - DAY

The pack of SAR Swimmers enters the swamp's cold water. An alligator lurks in the distance.

The candidates swim in a vertical position, in perfect formation.

They struggle to keep themselves at the surface of the water. Cold and tired, the platoon sings "Anchors Aweigh" (The US Navy Song).

PLATOON

*Anchors Aweigh, my boys /
Anchors Aweigh /
Farewell to foreign shores /
We sail at break of day-ay-ay-ay /
Through our last night ashore /
Drink to the foam /
Until we meet once more /
Here's wishing you a happy voyage
home.*

Ford and the rest of the instructors are inside an inflatable boat, watching the candidates.

FORD

Ferris! The solo part.

Petty Officer FERRIS (mid-20s) vocalizes the instrumental part of "Anchors Aweigh" as he fights to keep swimming.

Ford lectures the Platoon as they sing the next part of the song.

FORD (CONT'D)

You've volunteered to be search and rescue swimmers. You're supposed to be the best swimmers in the best Navy in the whole world. Do you want me to believe that the best swimmers in our glorious Navy can't swim for a lousy thirty minutes in the same spot? My grandmother can do that -- and she only has one leg. How do you plan to rescue someone, if you can't even save yourselves?

PLATOON

(singing)

*Anchors Aweigh, my boys /
Anchors Aweigh /*

Ford spots someone not singing. This is Petty Officer DAVIS (30s), scared to death.

At Davis' side, Jackson tries to cheer him up.

JACKSON

C'mon, Davis. Just a few more minutes.

DAVIS

I... I have a cramp... I can't--

Davis is almost drowning.

The inflatable boat comes closer to Davis. Stern, Ford observes him.

FORD

Davis, do you hate the Navy?

Davis struggles not to sink. After a moment, he manages to answer.

DAVIS

No... no sir.

FORD

So, why aren't you singing? You want to be a search and rescue swimmer, so I suppose you don't have a problem with the swimming part. If you aren't singing our glorious song, the only logical explanation is that you hate the Navy, isn't it?

Davis can't answer to Ford.

FORD (CONT'D)

Do you hate the Navy or not, Petty Officer Davis?

DAVIS

(trying to sing)
Anchors Aweigh, my boys /
Anchors Aweigh /

FORD

We already did that part.

Jackson makes a move to help Davis.

FORD (CONT'D)

Don't you dare touch him, Jackson.
Back to formation.

Still worried about Davis, Jackson does as he is told.

FORD (CONT'D)
I still don't hear you, Petty
Officer Davis.

Davis sinks. Another INSTRUCTOR jumps in the water and
rescues him.

They put Davis on the inflatable boat.

FORD (CONT'D)
You're a disgrace to your Navy
brothers, Davis. You're not going
to be a Rescue Swimmer. Not on my
watch.

Davis coughs and spits water out of his lungs.

DAVIS
Sir...

FORD
Jump back in the water or quit.

Davis coughs.

FORD (CONT'D)
Either you say you quit or you jump
back in that damn water right now.

Davis cries.

JACKSON
Davis! Come back here.

FORD
C'mon, Davis. Just say "I quit."
You know you want it.

Ashamed, Davis looks at his fellow swimmers.

DAVIS
I quit, Sir.

FORD
Louder.

JACKSON
Don't do it, Davis!

DAVIS
I quit, Sir!

Disappointed, Ford frowns. His attention goes to Jackson now.

FORD

Jackson, I believe I heard you screaming instead of singing. Do you hate the Navy too?

JACKSON

I love the Navy, sir.

FORD

Oh... She loves you too, Jackson. The Navy has a few gifts to give to you. Here you go.

Ford hands a 16-pound weight belt to Jackson while he keeps swimming.

FORD (CONT'D)

That's not all. There's this one... and this one.

Ford puts a second and a third weight belt on Jackson. On the third weight belt, Jackson drowns.

A second INSTRUCTOR prepares to jump in the water, but Ford signals him to wait.

Jackson emerges from a brief time and gasps for air.

FORD (CONT'D)

Who gave you permission to breathe?

Jackson drowns again. The second Instructor jumps in the water and tries to rescue him.

Coughing, Jackson dismisses the Instructor's help and goes back into formation.

FORD (CONT'D)

Good. Good... But where are my weight belts, Jackson?

Still swimming, Jackson realizes he left the weight belts in the bottom of the swamp.

FORD (CONT'D)

A single mother had to work extra hours to pay her taxes. She believed she was paying her taxes to be protected by the Navy. Now, her tax dollars rest on the bottom of a damn swamp in Florida. What should I tell her, Jackson? What should I say to this woman?

(MORE)

FORD (CONT'D)

Should I tell her that her money is
lost because people in the Navy
can't swim?

Jackson takes a deep breathe and prepares to dive.

JACKSON

Tell her I'm taking it back.

Jackson dives and searches for the weight belts.

Ford proudly smiles.

EXT. FLORIDA SWAMP, SURVIVAL CAMP - NIGHT

Cold night. Still wet from the training, the SAR candidates
shiver and try to warm up.

Ford nears Jackson, who stands "at attention."

FORD

You won't get special treatment,
Jackson.

JACKSON

I know, sir.

FORD

Doesn't matter if you've done this
before. You've spent three years
outside the Navy. If you want to be
a rescue swimmer again, you have to
qualify like all the other guys.
You understand that, don't ya?

JACKSON

Yes-sir.

FORD

What about drinking? Did you get
your act straight?

Jackson just nods.

FORD (CONT'D)

I see it all the time, Jackson. The
death-wish gaze. The reckless
impulse. People who think they will
be heroes, but are just fools
trying to overcompensate the
failures in their miserable lives.
No commitment. No discipline.

(MORE)

FORD (CONT'D)

I don't need another adrenaline junkie in my squad. Do you understand that, sailor?

JACKSON

Aye, aye, sir.

FORD

Good. Now clean this freaking rifle. It's full of mud.

EXT. MONTAGE - TRAINING - DAY / NIGHT

At the sound of a running cadence, the PLATOON of SAR candidates gets smaller and smaller as the weaker candidates drop out.

Ferris and Jackson stay to the end.

PLATOON

(running cadence)

*I had a dog / his name was blue /
Blue wanna be a SAR too / So I
bought him a swim mask / and four
tiny fins / I took him to the ocean
/ and I threw him in / Blue came
back / to my surprise / With a
shark in his mouth / and a gleam in
his eyes.*

- BASE, DAY. They run in the morning;
- SWIMMING POOL, DAY. They jump off a high tower into the pool with full rescue gear;
- LAWN, DAY. They practice self-defense;
- BASE, NIGHT. Tired, they run in their camo uniform;
- SWIMMING POOL, DAY. Inside the water, they train how to rescue a pilot trapped under his parachute;
- SWAMPS, NIGHT. They dive backward from an inflatable boat into the swamp's cold water and swim to the other side;
- SWIMMING POOL, DAY. They practice the rescue of a VIOLENT SURVIVOR, who tries to drown one of the CANDIDATES;
- OCEAN, DAY. They deploy from a moving CH-46 helicopter and jump into the open sea, full-geared.

END MONTAGE

EXT. PENSACOLA (FLORIDA), NAVAL BASE - DAY

Graduation ceremony.

Jackson and Ferris are in the line-up of SAILORS who successfully concluded the training.

FAMILY and guests watch and take pictures. No one is here for Jackson.

COMMANDER WHITE, the Unit's CEO, gives a speech.

CDR. WHITE

...And we should never forget that we're Americans, fighting for the World's freedom, responsible for our actions, and dedicated to the principles which made this nation free. Our trust resides in God, in our brothers in arms, and in our Country. -- "So others may live."

SAILORS

So others may live!

Dignified, Ford hands Jackson the certificate of conclusion.

FORD

Welcome back.

Thankful, Jackson stares at Ford, meaning to say something.

FORD (CONT'D)

What are you looking at, sailor? Do you want a medal too?

Jackson looks straight ahead, back at "attention." Ford moves to the next RESCUE SWIMMER in line.

INT./EXT. NAVY HELICOPTER, TRAVELING - DAY

An SH-3 Sea King helicopter flies at full speed over the deep sea.

SUPER: "Six months later."

Jackson, Ford, Ferris, and other NAVY SWIMMERS are inside it, ready for another search and rescue mission.

MALE VOICE (RADIO)

Charlie Three, Victor one. Target is two clicks ahead of you. You should have visual. Over.

Ford screams, doing his best to be heard over the sound of the helicopter's engines.

FORD

Listen up. We're the first ones responding. Coast Guard divers are on their way. Priority is to take survivors from the water. The ship is sinking. We're not getting inside the boat.

Everyone nods.

SINKING SHIP

It's a small sailing yacht. The hull is cracked, and it's quickly sinking.

There's SOMEONE in the water.

The Rescue Sea King chopper hovers at low attitude as the Navy Swimmers jump out from it into the sea, one by one.

Jackson and Ford are the first ones to get to...

THE MAN IN THE WATER

They put a cinch rescue collar on the Man and prepare to hoist him into the helicopter.

MAN

Chipper! Chipper is still there!

Attached to the hoist, Ford tries to calm down the Man.

FORD

We're taking you out, Sir. Hold on.

JACKSON

Who is Chipper?

MAN

My dog! My dog is inside the cabin!

JACKSON

(to Ford)

Coasties won't get here in time.

FORD

Jackson...

JACKSON
I'll get him.

FORD
Jackson! We don't have diving gear--

Jackson is gone.

FORD (CONT'D)
Freaking stubborn motherfucker!

JACKSON

Swims to the sinking yacht. He sees the dog, CHIPPER, a Jack Russel Terrier locked inside the cabin with water at the window's level.

Jackson swims around and assesses the best spot to enter.

Gets a metal tool and hits the glass window.

First hit on the glass... No good.

The yacht sinks...

Second hit... Chipper barks, desperate.

The yacht is underwater.

Jackson dives.

ON FORD

Ford and the rescued Man are lifted by the helicopter.

At the helicopter's cargo door, Ford looks around. The yacht is gone. The only thing that can be seen is the tip of the mast.

No sign of Jackson or Chipper.

In distress, Ford signals the pilot to hover to the mast.

When they get there...

...Jackson emerges with Chipper in his arms.

The rescue team on the chopper throws an inflatable device and a rescue collar to help Jackson and Chipper.

FORD
Son-of-a-bitch...

Still in the water, Jackson smiles. He can't hear Ford.

FORD (CONT'D)
Good call.

EXT. PENSACOLA (FLORIDA), NAVAL BASE - DAY

A different platoon of NAVY RESCUE SWIMMERS runs and chants through the base as they start their intensive training course.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

In his white uniform, Jackson waits outside of Ford's room.

A TV shows a program about the crisis in Nicaragua.

REPORTER (ON TV)
The Civil War in Nicaragua is getting worse, as the revolutionary Sandinistas and the resistance troops, called the "Contras," fight for the control of the country. Meanwhile, Congress prevented the US government from intervening in the conflict.

The door opens.

INT. FORD'S OFFICE - DAY

With a severe expression, Ford hands a file to Jackson.

Jackson examines it.

JACKSON
USS Kitty Hawk?! A ship?

FORD
Yeah, it's a ship. That's why they call it "the Navy," Jackson.

JACKSON
Why am I the one to--

FORD
Commander White. He hand-picked you.

JACKSON

It's because of the last mission,
isn't it?

FORD

It has nothing to do with you
saving puppies.

JACKSON

Alright. You tell him--

FORD

Tell him what? Uh? -- I told the
old man you're my best swimmer.
Asked him to send another guy.

Jackson waits for an explanation.

FORD (CONT'D)

Did you mention him in a safety
report?

JACKSON

That?! -- They're mandatory! We're
supposed to file it if ANYONE
violates a safety rule.

FORD

Oh, my God...

JACKSON

The man showed up drunk for a
rescue mission. A seaman almost
died because of him!

FORD

He's your Commander!

JACKSON

Those reports are supposed to be
anonymous.

FORD

Oh, really, Sherlock?! Welcome to
the Navy. BOHICA - "Bend Over, Here
It Comes Again."

JACKSON

This is a bunch of bullshit...

FORD

Why do things have to be so
difficult with you? You changed
nothing! You learned nothing!

Jackson grunts, takes the papers, and moves away.

FORD (CONT'D)

Jackson!

Jackson stops. Ford ponders about his next words.

FORD (CONT'D)

You need a fresh start. Slow down.
Make some friends. Find a nice
girl. Start over.

JACKSON

Tried that already. Didn't work.

Still angry, Jackson leaves.

EXT. SAN DIEGO, NORTH ISLAND NAVAL BASE - DAY

Thirteen piers stretched over 977 acres. The principal home port for the Pacific Fleet.

Title: "San Diego, California"

Two dozen US Navy warships rest at the piers. Among them, proudly lies an aircraft carrier...

...the CV-63 USS Kitty Hawk.

A gray behemoth with 60 thousand tons of displacement and 1,000 feet in length, capable of transporting 85 aircrafts at once.

Jackson walks down the pier carrying a heavy duffle bag.

He stops and admires this modern-day monster. This is home now.

Optimistic, Jackson walks up the very lengthy gangplank. He salutes the flag and comes aboard of...

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, UPPER DECK

As Jackson walks out the gangplank, he's interrupted by Commander HARTWIG (40s).

CDR Hartwig is a member of the Navy "royalty," coming from three generations of Officers and Admirals. With a pretentious tone, CDR Hartwig speaks to Jackson while still keeping his eyes on a list.

CDR HARTWIG
You're new here, aren't you,
Sailor?

JACKSON
Second Class Petty Officer Jackson,
Robert, reporting as ordered.
Permission to come on board, sir.

CDR HARTWIG
Denied. -- First time on a ship?

JACKSON
Uh... Yes, sir.

CDR HARTWIG
This is the Officer's gangplank.
The Enlisted gangplank is the lower
one.

CDR Hartwig points to another gangplank, far away.

Jackson nods and walks out the gangplank.

JACKSON
Sorry, sir. I'll remember that next
time.

CDR HARTWIG
I know you will. Go back and enter
the right one.

Jackson waits for CDR Hartwig to say he's kidding. He's not.

CDR HARTWIG (CONT'D)
You heard me. Have a nice day,
Sailor. Welcome to Kitty Hawk.

Humiliated, Jackson shambles down the Officer's gangplank
back to the pier. He has to march and salute against the flux
of Junior and Senior OFFICERS.

JACKSON
Sorry, sir... excuse me... Sorry...
Sorry, sir... I didn't... Sorry.

Jackson hastens across the pier and gets to the Enlisted
gangplank.

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, LOWER DECK

A MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER (late 40s) waits for Jackson to
come off of the gangplank.

JACKSON
Permission to come on--

MASTER CHIEF
Name?

JACKSON
Jackson, Robert. Reporting as--

The Master Chief consults his list.

MASTER CHIEF
Jackson... Jackson... Jackson...
Here you are. AW Division.

JACKSON
No, sir. I'm a SAR swimmer.

MASTER CHIEF
Yeah. And you're in the AW
Division.

JACKSON
There must be a mistake.

MASTER CHIEF
I just read the names on the list.
Talk to your Division Officer.
(to a sailor)
Show the AW Division to Petty
Officer Jackson.

Petty Officer Second Class PHIL (late 20s) greets the newcomer with a friendly smile and a strong mid-western accent.

PHIL
Welcome to Shitty-Kitty!

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Lost, Jackson follows Phil through the maze of passageways, ladders, and watertight doors.

PHIL
You'll get used to it. She's
actually smaller than she looks,
dontcha know?

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, AW DIVISION - DAY

LIEUTENANT JONES (early 30s) is a crisp and devoted Officer, born and raised in Utah. He doesn't seem particularly interested in Jackson.

A Holy Bible is on his desk.

Busy, he quickly examines Jackson's papers while Jackson and Phil wait.

LT. JONES
You have antisubmarine training,
don't you?

JACKSON
Yeah, but...

Lt. Jones waits.

LT. JONES
But what?

JACKSON
I'm a rescue swimmer, sir. I was
told that USS Kitty Hawk needed a
search and rescue swimmer.

LT. JONES
We do. We need a *backup* rescue
swimmer. And we also need a new
antisubmarine operator in the
C.I.C., ASAP. Anything else?

Disappointed, Jackson nods.

LT. JONES (CONT'D)
Don't worry, sailor. As a backup
diver, you still get to fly in
helicopters every other month.

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Jackson and Phil walk past the parked F-14 Tomcats, F-18 Hornets, and S-3B Vikings. Behind them, the USS Kitty Hawk main tower.

JACKSON
BOHICA.

PHIL
This is the Navy's way of saying
she still loves ya.

JACKSON

Right...

PHIL

Hey... Don't worry, right? AW Operators just look at their screens all day long, nothing to worry about. It's not like we're going to attack a submarine, dontcha know? You got it easy.

JACKSON

Who said I was looking for easy?

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN, USS KITTY HAWK - NIGHT

The aircraft carrier sails in the middle of the Naval Task Force.

An F-14 jet fighter takes off.

SUPER: "Sea of Okhotsk. 500 miles North-East from Japan. Three weeks later."

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, PASSAGEWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Frantic, the SEAMEN run through the passageways to get to their stations.

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)

General Quarters, General Quarters, General Quarters. All hands man your battle station. Up and forward on the starboard side. Down and aft on the port side. This is a drill. Repeat. General Quarters--

INT. COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER (CIC) - CONTINUOUS

A tight room surrounded by a red light. LOFAR gram stations, green screens, and radio equipment (Note: LOFAR - Low Frequency Array System).

A SEAMAN writes on transparent glass, next to the ship's call-signs and a list of enemy contacts.

Tense MEN observe their electronic devices and study the blips on their screens.

Intrigued, Jackson watches a new blip on his LOFAR screen.

JACKSON

What the...

Phil watches over Jackson's shoulder.

PHIL

You got something?

Baffled, Jackson stares at Phil.

CIC WATCH OFFICER'S STATION

Lt. Jones studies a nautical map on an horizontal electronic screen. Phil interrupts him.

PHIL

Sir -- Petty Officer Jackson found a new contact.

LT. JONES

Who?

PHIL

The new guy. He found a Russian sub headed in our direction.

LT. JONES

It's a glitch.

PHIL

Sir, I've checked--

LT. JONES

This is a joint exercise with the Korean and Japanese Navy only. There are no Russian subs in the area.

PHIL

But, sir--

LT. JONES

Back to your post, Petty Officer. And tell Jackson to reset his equipment.

INT. K-314 SUBMARINE - NIGHT

A Russian Submarine Victor-I class, nuclear-powered attack boat.

Water leaks from the hull. An emergency alarm blares.

Seated on his chair, the SUBMARINE COMMANDER firmly gives his orders as the panicked OFFICERS shout them to the rest of the CREW.

SUBMARINE COMMANDER
(Russian)
Keep the course. Five degrees up
bubble.

INT. CIC WATCH OFFICER'S STATION - NIGHT

Lt. Jones speaks to someone on the radio. Phil breaks in.

PHIL
Sir. You really should see this.

INT. CIC, JACKSON'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Tense, Jackson observes the LOFAR. Over Jackson's shoulder, Phil and Lt. Jones study the screen.

JACKSON
This is no glitch. They're coming
toward us.

LT. JONES
What's the ETA?

JACKSON
Sixty seconds.

LT. JONES
Damn!
(to someone O.S.)
Get me the Bridge! Now!

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, BRIDGE - NIGHT

Surprised, the OFFICER on duty holds the telephone and tries to figure out what's going on.

OFFICER
What do you mean a Russian
submarine is moving toward us?

Nervous, the HELMSMAN calls for the Officer's attention.

HELMSMAN
Sir? -- Sir?

The Officer looks at the Bridge's front window, and his expression changes in terror.

OFFICER

Oh, God...

OUTSIDE - ON THE SEA

The K-314 Russian Submarine emerges.

It's in front of the USS Kitty Hawk, on a collision course.

KITTY HAWK, BRIDGE

Desperate, the Officer shouts his orders to his MEN.

OFFICER

Hard right rudder! Hard right rudder! Reverse the starboard engine! Give her more rudder, dammit!

OUTSIDE - ON THE SEA

The USS Kitty Hawk slowly turns to her right, until she inevitably...

CRASHES!

...side by side with the Russian Submarine.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- MEN lose their balance in the Kitty Hawk's passageways;
- Inside the ship's kitchen, a pile of plates and silverware falls to the ground and shatters apart;
- The Russian submarine drags on the Kitty Hawk's side, damaging both vessels;
- A weighty missile falls from the rack over a SEAMAN's leg, which gets severely injured;
- A watertight door is quickly sealed;
- An EMERGENCY TEAM runs through the passageways with their equipment.

END OF SHOTS

EXT. OPEN SEA - NIGHT

In the night ocean, with a damaged hull and the moon behind her, the USS Kitty Hawk slowly moves away from the Russian Submarine.

A helicopter SH-3A Sea King takes off and searches for the Soviet sub.

Illuminated by the helicopter's light, a RUSSIAN SAILOR emerges from the submarine's hatch and waves for help.

INT. CDR HARTWIG'S OFFICE - DAY

Fuming, CDR Hartwig scolds Jackson and Lt. Jones.

CDR HARTWIG

This is a genuine cluster fuck!
What happened over there,
Lieutenant?

LT. JONES

Sir, I'm taking full responsibility
for--

CDR HARTWIG

Damn right you're taking this one,
Jones. I've got to debrief the
Captain in five minutes, and I'll
make sure this one falls on you.

Lt. Jones takes a moment.

LT. JONES

I've interrogated their Captain. It
wasn't an accident. They had an
emergency on board and needed us to
rescue them. Their plan was to
collide with us to call our
attention and--

CDR HARTWIG

They were spying on us. You're
supposed to find 'em before they
shoot us! Your damn division
couldn't spot a nuclear submarine
ten feet away from the prow.

Jackson intervenes.

JACKSON

It was my fault, Sir.

LT. JONES
Jackson... Wait outside.

CDR HARTWIG
(to Jackson)
You again. Were you the operator?

JACKSON
Yes, sir. I thought it was a
glitch. Luckily, Lieutenant Jones
saw the contact in time for us to
slow down and reverse motors.

LT. JONES
Shut up, Jackson. I've got this.

CDR Hartwig examines Jackson's expression.

CDR HARTWIG
And that's what happened?

JACKSON
I'm a SAR swimmer, Sir. I did the
basic anti-sub training years ago
but never really operated on a
ship. I should be in search and
rescue. I'll take the blame for
this one.

Amused, CDR Hartwig smiles.

CDR HARTWIG
You think you're too smart, don't
you? Do you think that if you take
the blame for this one, I'll let
you fly again with your buddies? Is
that what it's about?

JACKSON
Sir, that's not--

CDR HARTWIG
I don't need to negotiate with a
Petty Officer.

LT. JONES
Commander. Permission to speak. In
private.

CDR HARTWIG
Denied.
(to Jackson)
It seems Supply needs a new clerk.
(MORE)

CDR HARTWIG (CONT'D)
 You're going to report to them.
 Immediately.

JACKSON
 Uh -- Supply? Sir... I've got no
 training in supply. Or as an
 accountant.

CDR HARTWIG
 I'm sure they have a manual
 somewhere. You better mind your Ps
 and Qs, Jackson, or I will have
 your stripes. Do you understand me?

JACKSON
 Aye, aye, Sir.

CDR HARTWIG
 No more flights for you, sailor.
 Now -- leave my sight.

Jackson salutes and leaves.

INT. ENLISTED BERTHING COMPARTMENT - DAY

Jackson slams his metal cabinet.

PHIL
 BOHICA?

JACKSON
 Damn right.

Irritated, Jackson grabs his duffle bag.

INT. SHIP'S PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jackson and Phil carry Jackson's personal belongings down the
 passageway as he moves to the Supply's birthing compartment.

PHIL
 Tough tomatoes... Ya know, this
 could be a good thing.

Weary, Jackson glares at Phil.

PHIL (CONT'D)
 Supply guys rule on Shitty-Kitty.

JACKSON
 I don't want to rule anything. And
 stop calling her Shitty-Kitty.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - CONTINUOUS

They rush across the main deck, where a maintenance CREW checks an F-14 fighter.

PHIL

All I'm saying... I play poker with those guys. They're all high rollers.

JACKSON

(sarcastic)

I thought gambling on board was against the regulations.

PHIL

Yeah, right... Look -- If life gives you lemons...

JACKSON

I don't want any trouble, okay? I'm a SAR swimmer. That's what I do. I just have to figure out how.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

SUPER: "Coronado, CA - DEA drug bust."

A nice, white beach house close to the sea.

The lawn is full of DEA AGENTS and police vehicles. A SWAT TEAM takes off their gear and relaxes.

POLICE OFFICERS move away from the house escorting a couple of very SUSPICIOUS DUDES (20s) in cuffs. These boys look like surfers.

Another OFFICER carries a pack of cocaine.

A SWAT AGENT (30s), still wearing his tactical gear, approaches the DEA Officer in charge, OFFICER WALSH (late 40s).

SWAT AGENT

Sir, you should see this.

INT. BEACH HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Officer Walsh and the SWAT Agent stare at a pile of brand new silver bars.

OFFICER WALSH
Silver bars?

SWAT AGENT
Thirty-one of them. That's not the
most interesting part.
(grabs a bar)
They're all marked.

OFFICER WALSH
Can we trace 'em back?

OFFICER LI-YAN (30s) is a focused, female, Asian-American DEA Agent. She enters the room, still on her "hand-portable" mobile phone.

OFFICER LI-YAN
Already did.

OFFICER WALSH
And who is the owner?

OFFICER LI-YAN
We are. Those bars belong to the US Government. They were sent to the USS Kitty Hawk.

Surprised, Officer Walsh digests that.

OFFICER WALSH
Call the FBI.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, S-1 FINANCIAL OFFICE - DAY

In his first day in his new division, Jackson takes instructions from the veteran Supply guys.

Seated in front of Jackson is SK3 MAKALINO (30s), the S-1 Division Repairables Petty Officer.

He's a large, muscular Filipino guy with an intimidating gaze and a sarcastic smile. You wouldn't buy a used car from him.

At another desk, Petty Officer PRIMOTIVO "PRIMO" CAYABYAB (40s) reads a magazine. Asian, self-confident, Primo is an athletic guy who could kick someone's ass in a fight.

PRIMO
You never worked in Supply?!

JACKSON
I'm a rescue swimmer.

MAKALINO

(laughing)

You really must have pissed off
someone to be sent down here.

Primo drops his magazine and studies Jackson.

He moves like a natural leader and has a charismatic smile.
As sociopaths usually have.

PRIMO

You know how to balance your
checks, don't ya?

JACKSON

Yeah.

PRIMO

That's the same thing. Makalino can
teach ya everything you need to
know.

MAKALINO

We got you covered, Jackson. Don't
worry.

JACKSON

(worried)

Thanks.

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Wog day. The traditional and odd Navy ceremony to baptize the
fresh Sailors who are crossing the line of the Equator for
the first time.

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)

All hands make way to the flight
deck for polliwog initiation. We
have now crossed the equator.

Surrounded by men dressed as PIRATES, a fat Sailor wearing a
NEPTUNE costume screams to the newbies.

NEPTUNE

Bring me those green polliwogs, ua-
ha-ha-ha-ha!

The US flag is changed to a pirate flag.

The POLLIWOGS come on the deck wearing their PT (physical
training) uniforms.

The freshmen - and few freshwomen - smile and have fun. This is a mix of party, hazing, and a ritual of initiation.

Smiling, Jackson is among the polliwogs.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Polliwogs row in an invisible boat as the "Pirates" throw food, paint, and disgusting liquids over them;
- the "Pirates" soak the Polliwogs with a fire hose;
- One Polliwog grimaces after drinking a mix of chili beans, pepper, and seawater;
- A fat NEPTUNE baptizes a Polliwog by pushing the guy's face into Neptune's belly.

NEPTUNE

You're now to be known as Lord
Squids-worm!

- The "Pirates" cheer.

- Upbeat music. "Pirates" and "New Shellbacks" party together and celebrate the end of the ritual with a sweet "steel beach picnic" (barbecue).

END OF SHOTS

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, FLIGHT DECK - DAY (LATER)

Phil, dressed as a pirate, throws a can of soda to Jackson, whose hair is a total mess now.

JACKSON

Thanks.

They take their dishes and admire the ocean.

A couple of SAILORS in their duty uniforms grab a massive metal casing and throw it into the ocean.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

What the hell was that?

PHIL

Those guys? They're just "deep-sixing" their stuff. It's easier to order a new one than to repair those things.

JACKSON
Unbelievable.

PHIL
Hey, newbie. Look around. Do you know how much a ship like this costs on a daily basis? Everybody does that.

JACKSON
The problem is -- a single mother back in Minnesota had to work extra time to pay for this stuff and--

PHIL
Who again?

JACKSON
Like, well, there's this woman who had to work really hard so her money would -- be used wisely by the Navy, and... You know.

PHIL
I've got no idea what you're talking 'bout right now, buddy.

Jackson stops. That's the first time he realizes he's a long way from SAR School and Florida swamps.

JACKSON
Never mind.

INT. CALIFORNIA, DEA OFFICE - DAY

Officer Walsh and Officer Li-Yan are surprised as FEDS in suits storm the DEA station.

FBI Special Agent SUSAN NOOR (late 40s), stern and professional, leads the operation. She's a first-generation American with Saudi Arabian ancestry.

S.A. Susan Noor points to a corkboard where all the leads from the Coronado Beach House raid are displayed.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
Take all this.

OFFICER WALSH
Hey! HEY! HEY! What's going on?

The Feds start collecting evidence, taking pictures, and disassembling everything as they ignore Officer Walsh.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
You're Officer Walsh?

OFFICER WALSH
Damn right I'm Officer Walsh.

S.A. Susan Noor hands him a legal document. Officer Walsh and Officer Li-Yan try to figure out what it means.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
Special Agent Susan Noor.
I'm afraid all this evidence is
classified now.

OFFICER LI-YAN
This is a DEA case.

An almost-bald guy emerges from the shadows. This is "WILD BILL" THOMAS (early 50s), a shadowy figure recently surfaced from a CIA Black Site. He doesn't wear a suit. Never did.

WILD BILL THOMAS
A DEA case?

OFFICER WALSH
This is a drug-dealing case. We'll gladly cooperate with the FBI, but this operation should be conducted by the DEA.

WILD BILL THOMAS
A drug case?! Is that what you think it is?
(laughs)
Pal... You've just stepped on a pile of elephant shit. Time to stop worrying about the shoe, and start worrying about the elephant on the loose.

OFFICER WALSH
What are you talking 'bout?

WILD BILL THOMAS
What you've found here will make Watergate look like a State Fair cake walk.

OFFICER LI-YAN
We don't care about what you think it is. You can't get us off this case.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

Off the case? No sweetheart. You're not out. You two work for us now.

OFFICER WALSH

Under whose authority?

An imposing figure enters the office. This is District Attorney JAMES SIMMONS (early 60s), expensive suit, looking very official.

D.A. James Simmons takes off his shades.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Mine.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, WEAPONS DIVISION - DAY

The SAM (Surface to Air Missile) Section. It's full of MK 29 launcher parts and RIM-7 Sea Sparrow missiles.

Jackson checks the inventory with the Divisional MAINTENANCE GUY (30s), a Latino technician who sounds like he was raised in Queens.

JACKSON

Everything seems to be in order. Is there anything else that you guys need from Supply?

MAINTENANCE GUY

Yeah. Just stop sending us the wrong parts.

JACKSON

What do ya mean?

MAINTENANCE GUY

Every month you guys screw up and send us parts for the wrong missiles. You see that? These are all Sea Sparrows. That's all we have. Why would I need parts for a Phoenix missile? I don't even know how to assemble them.

JACKSON

You're receiving AIM-54 parts?

MAINTENANCE GUY

Every time! And plane parts! What am I supposed to do with an F-14 engine here? You guys should get your act straight.

JACKSON

And... what do you do with these parts?

MAINTENANCE GUY

I've got to store 'em and wait a full day until that lazy Filipino bastard moves his ass back here to take 'em back to the central storage.

JACKSON

Makalino?

MAINTENANCE GUY

That's the one.

Intrigued, Jackson nods.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, S-1 FINANCIAL OFFICE - DAY

Alone, Jackson checks the division accounts and balance sheets. He types on an adding machine, which prints the numbers on a long tape.

In a hurry, he seizes the opportunity. He moves the documents around and tries to memorize the numbers.

Something isn't right.

Footsteps.

Jackson puts the documents back where they belong.

MAKALINO

Is everything alright?

JACKSON

Yeah. Sure.

MAKALINO

Good... I've checked your last week reports.

Makalino shows Jackson's reports.

MAKALINO (CONT'D)

I'll be honest with you: your balances are all wrong.

JACKSON

They are?

MAKALINO

It's a common rookie mistake. We'll sort it out.

Makalino tears Jackson's reports to shreds.

MAKALINO (CONT'D)

I'll just ask Commander Hartwig to file a form two-zero-niner-zero and correct it. All you need to do is ask the division's Officers to sign this statement, saying they never received the equipment.

JACKSON

But they actually received it and sent it back. Wouldn't this make things worse in the balance sheet?

MAKALINO

Nah. That's how the system works. It's a computer thing. Don't worry, screw-ups like that happen all the time. We've got you covered, bro.

Constrained, Jackson leaves the Office under Makalino's wary glare.

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Jackson and Phil watch a helicopter lift.

JACKSON

It makes no sense. What would they do with missile parts and fighter engines? It's not like you can put it in your pocket and walk down the gangplank.

PHIL

Welcome to Shitty-Kitty.

JACKSON

Show some pride. This ship is named after Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

(MORE)

JACKSON (CONT'D)

See those fighters? None of them
would be here without the Wrights.

PHIL

For cryin' out loud, newbie. Okay --
Kitty Hawk. "Go Battle Cat." Hoo-
ray. Happy?

They admire the helicopter as it flies over their heads and
throws a strong gust of wind.

From a distance, Lt. Jones casts a glance at Jackson. It
seems he wants to say something. But he doesn't.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Watch your six, will you?

JACKSON

What do ya mean?

PHIL

You've got no idea who those guys
are.

JACKSON

Do you know something?

Phil checks his watch.

PHIL

It's late. I've got a watch in CIC.
We'll talk 'bout it later.

INT. FBI OFFICE, CORRIDORS - DAY

Officer Walsh and Officer Li-Yan follow S.A. Susan Noor
through a ridiculous amount of SECURITY GUARDS, sealed doors,
and biometric security measures.

S.A. Susan Noor smiles as she passes her ID card on an
electronic device to open the last door.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

Welcome to "October Surprise" Task
Force.

INT. FBI OFFICE, OCTOBER SURPRISE TASK FORCE - CONTINUOUS

Officer Walsh and Officer Li-Yan are baffled by what looks
like a war room from the Cold War.

Lots of busy people, electronics, maps, computers, satellite images and pictures of Iranian authorities and locations.

D.A. James Simmons meets the group at the door.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Yeah. I know. That's how I felt too when they brought me here for the first time.

AT THE TABLE

In front of a Middle East map, D.A. James Simmons presents the facts to the newcomers.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Hostage crisis of 1979. Iranians kept our diplomats in captivity for four hundred, forty-four days. This was the longest hostage crisis in recorded history.

WILD BILL THOMAS

And so it ended. No exchange. No agreement. After all this time, the hostages were liberated exactly on the day of the inauguration of our beloved President Reagan. What a nice gift from the Iranians, wasn't it?

OFFICER LI-YAN

I'm not sure where you're going with this.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

To the October Surprise theory.

A brief moment of silence as D.A. James Simmons and Wild Bill Thomas exchanges glances.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

We believe President Reagan negotiated with the Iranians, so they would only release the hostages after the Presidential election. In exchange, he promised to allow the CIA to sell weapons to Iran, using the black market.

OFFICER LI-YAN

I'm out of here.

Officer Li-Yan stands up.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Please sit down.

Irritated, Officer Li-Yan tries to open the secure door that seals this room.

WILD BILL THOMAS
Told ya.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Walsh?

Officer Walsh isn't sure how to deal with Officer Li-Yan at this point.

OFFICER LI-YAN
You're all a bunch of conspiracy theorists. I won't take part in a ridiculous plot to sabotage this Administration.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
We can't let you leave.

OFFICER LI-YAN
We'll see about that.

In a futile attempt to open the door, Officer Li-Yan keeps punching the numbers on the lock's keyboard.

Officer Walsh comes closer to Officer Li-Yan and touches her hand.

OFFICER WALSH
Li-Yan... You know me. I've voted for the guy too. Let's hear them. If we're not comfortable, we're outta here.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
We need your help.

OFFICER LI-YAN
Why?

S.A. Susan Noor glances at D.A. James Simmons, who decides to be sincere about this.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
We've got an undercover agent inside the USS Kitty Hawk.
(MORE)

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS (CONT'D)

He stumbled on some very interesting facts which are linked to your silver bars. If we want to start a formal investigation on that -- we need the DEA here.

OFFICER WALSH

What does the USS Kitty Hawk have to do with Iran?

No one answers that.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, HANGAR - DAY

A row of fighter jets stored in the hangar. A couple of PILOTS pace down the compartment with their helmets under their arms.

Jackson reaches Primo, who inspects fighter parts with a clipboard in his hands.

JACKSON

We need to talk.

Primo continues to check the parts.

PRIMO

Is it about Makalino? He told me you've screwed up the reports.

JACKSON

He's ordering a lot of equipment that no one seems to be asking for.

PRIMO

It happens. Did you talk to him? We can correct it in the system.

JACKSON

I did. He said he would file a "two-zero-niner-zero." I've looked that up. Doesn't make a lot of sense, does it? It won't really correct anything. The equipment will be considered lost.

Primo stops everything and studies Jackson. He realizes that Jackson figured out what is going on.

PRIMO

You've been studying your stuff. You're right. This would make things worse.

(MORE)

PRIMO (CONT'D)

The equipment would be outside our logs and reported as missing.

Trying to conceal his surprise, Primo returns to the inspection.

PRIMO (CONT'D)

What kind of equipment?

JACKSON

Fighter parts. Missiles. Engines.

PRIMO

You're not suggesting Makalino is stealing this stuff, are you?

JACKSON

I don't know what he's doing. And all those silver bars?

PRIMO

What about 'em? -- Repair guys need silver to weld and revamp some of the electronics.

JACKSON

There's no way we could use that amount of silver in a single ship. I'm quite surprised no one in the supply chain is asking questions 'bout it.

Primo halts and pauses for a moment.

PRIMO

You know what? We should take this to Commander Hartwig.

JACKSON

Commander Hartwig? You sure?

PRIMO

Of course. This is serious.

JACKSON

I thought you would just--

PRIMO

This is no joke. We're talkin' 'bout National Security. If it's true, Commander Hartwig needs to know.

After a moment, Jackson agrees.

INT. LEBANON, TEA HOUSE - DAY

A traditional tea house frequented by tourists, located in...

SUPER: "Beirut, Lebanon."

Wild Bill Thomas sits with HASSAN SABRA (30s), a Shiite Muslim reporter who works for the Ash-Shiraa magazine.

Hassan passes him a folder.

HASSAN SABRA

This is the guy dealing with the
Iranians.

Wild Bill Thomas briefly glances at the documents.

WILD BILL THOMAS

Cyrus Hashemi. Who he's working for
now?

HASSAN SABRA

What do you mean? He works for your
Government.

Discreetly Wild Bill Thomas hands him the money and finishes his tea.

HASSAN SABRA (CONT'D)

I was wondering...

In a hurry, Wild Bill Thomas stands up and prepares to leave.

HASSAN SABRA (CONT'D)

When this is all done... Would you
mind if I wrote a story about this
for the Ash-Shiraa? I mean, not
now... They pay good money for a
piece like this.

Wild Bill Thomas frowns. On his way out, he doesn't dignify it with an answer.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, NCO'S GALLEY - NIGHT

Phil and Jackson sit alone in a table as they eat pizza. A FEW NCOs wait in line for their slices.

Jackson checks the clock.

JACKSON

Sorry, Phil -- I should be going. I've got to finish my audit plan for tomorrow's presentation to Hartwig.

PHIL

Why bother? Obviously Hartwig doesn't care about that.

Jackson stops and plays with his slice.

JACKSON

Did I ever tell you I've broken service?

PHIL

Nope. I... I didn't know that.

JACKSON

After my first three years, I quit. I've spent two and a half years in the Naval Reserve.

PHIL

Why did you come back?

JACKSON

The real question is -- why did I leave.

Phil listens.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

My ex-wife didn't like the Navy. I thought that, if I quit, this would solve things. Turns out this wasn't the problem. So, here I was, divorced, self-employed, struggling to make a few bucks an hour...

PHIL

That's why you came back? You missed eating cold pizzas with a bunch of swinging dicks inside a tin can.

Jackson takes his moment before answering that.

JACKSON

I couldn't pay for my taxes. There was the divorce... and the drinking...

(MORE)

JACKSON (CONT'D)

The IRS seized my checking account and put me out of business. I had nowhere else to go.

Phil frowns.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

My point is... Someone, somewhere, went through hell to pay for this stuff. People shouldn't be throwing expensive equipment into the ocean.

PHIL

You don't really know what you're getting into, buddy.

JACKSON

Guess I'll have to find out.

Jackson finishes his slice and stands up. Phil interrupts him.

PHIL

You think Makalino and Primo are into something. I agree. You want to make things right. I get it. But did you ever consider that Hartwig might be in it with them?

JACKSON

Thanks for the pizza.

Jackson leaves.

INT. CROMWELL HOSPITAL - DAY

A hospital room. Under intensive care, CYRUS HASHEMI (40s), an Iranian arms dealer, breathes with the help of a life-support machine.

SUPER: "London, UK"

Wild Bill Thomas watches over him with a gloomy look.

S.A. Susan Noor enters the room.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

Is it him? Is this Cyrus Hashemi?

WILD BILL THOMAS

It's him.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
The doctors said he has a virulent
form of leukemia.

WILD BILL THOMAS
In two days? Leukemia my ass. He
was poisoned.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
CIA?

WILD BILL THOMAS
Or the Iranians. Who knows... Arms
dealers don't make many friends.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
What about the files?

WILD BILL THOMAS
Nothing. We've got here too late.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
Maybe he sent them to someone.

WILD BILL THOMAS
I've got no clue here, Susan.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
So... are you staying?

WILD BILL THOMAS
He helped us with the hostage
crisis. He was a good man. Seems
wrong to leave him here all alone.

S.A. Susan Noor acknowledges and leaves.

The moment she vacates the room, Wild Bill Thomas grabs
Hashemi's notebook, which was concealed under the blanket.

On it is written "Demavand Project" and a list of names.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, CDR HARTWIG'S OFFICE - DAY

CDR Hartwig examines the documents presented by Jackson.
Primo watches it.

CDR HARTWIG
The TAR program?

JACKSON
Yes, sir. Training, Auditing, and
Reporting.
(MORE)

JACKSON (CONT'D)

We can teach the ship's divisional supply petty officers on how to keep their books.

CDR HARTWIG

Why would we do that?

JACKSON

'Cause most of our losses in supply come from the fact that people who know what the parts are don't know how to check their balances. Basically, we gave them a credit card with no limits and didn't tell 'em how to control their expenses.

PRIMO

Jackson is right. If the Divisions knew how to balance their books, they could double check the deliveries. This could save millions of dollars.

CDR HARTWIG

And the lost missiles thing?

JACKSON

This wouldn't solve that... But it would prevent a similar situation in the future.

CDR HARTWIG

It doesn't help me right now, does it? You say there are some missing weapons, you say Makalino may be involved, but I still don't hear no damn solutions to all that.

PRIMO

Sir. This program is good. Jackson could use it to conduct full auditing of this ship's supplies.

JACKSON

No... No, that's not what I'm proposing here--

PRIMO

The Navy has a Beneficial Suggestion Program. This TAR thing could qualify. If this program works, you could get a bonus of up to twenty grand.

Languid, Jackson goes quiet.

CDR HARTWIG

This is not what you're after, is it?

(studies Jackson)

Tell you what. You find those lost missiles, I'll put you back in Search and Rescue missions. As a swimmer. What do you say?

JACKSON

I'd love that, but--

CDR HARTWIG

It's settled then. The TAR program starts tomorrow. And I'll take care of Makalino. Properly.

Perplexed, Jackson stands there.

CDR HARTWIG (CONT'D)

Anything else, Sailor?

JACKSON

No, sir.

CDR HARTWIG

Dismissed.

After a moment, Jackson salutes and leaves the Office. Primo stays behind.

CDR HARTWIG (CONT'D)

I don't like it. Are you sure you can handle him?

Primo hands CDR Hartwig a Navy official file with Jackson's psychological evaluation, made during his readmission period.

Some phrases stand out: "prone to depression; substance abuse after the divorce; avoidance behaviors." The conclusion: "patient must be kept under close observation."

PRIMO

Eventually, someone would have to take the fall.

CDR Hartwig glances at Primo and closes the file.

INT. CALIFORNIA, SURVEILLANCE VAN - NIGHT

A van full of monitors and surveillance equipment.

Wild Bill Thomas checks the microphone strapped to the chest of one of the Suspicious Dudes arrested during the Beach House raid.

WILD BILL THOMAS

Test it.

SUSPICIOUS DUDE

What should I say?

WILD BILL THOMAS

I want to suck your cock... pit.

SUSPICIOUS DUDE

Screw you.

Wild Bill Thomas checks the headphone.

WILD BILL THOMAS

It's working.

Officer Walsh nears the Suspicious Dude, who is quite nervous.

OFFICER WALSH

Be casual. Nothing fancy. No improvisations. You'll ask for El Chipó. We believe this guy is connected to the Kitty Hawk. We need this on tape.

D.A. James Simmons enters the van.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Don't push it. We can always try another time. You do that right, you're free to go.

APARTMENT ON THE STREET

Officer Li-Yan and S.A. Susan Noor are on the lookout, observing the entrance of a house.

S.A. Susan Noor watches it through her binocular and speaks on the radio.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

It's all clear. Targets are inside the house.

INSIDE THE VAN

Wild Bill Thomas signals "all ready."

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
 (to Suspicious Dude)
 Good luck.

The Suspicious Dude walks out the van and turns the street corner.

APARTMENT ON THE STREET

S.A. Susan Noor spots the Suspicious Dude turning the corner into the main street.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
 I've got visual.

WILD BILL THOMAS (RADIO)
 I hope he doesn't screw up.

Officer Li-Yan takes a deep breath.

OFFICER LI-YAN
 How can you put up with Thomas?

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
 You get used to it.
 (check binoculars)
 I kinda get him. You know -- during
 the Iranian crisis...

MONTAGE - IRANIAN HOSTAGE RESCUE ATTEMPT (FLASHBACK)

1) EXT. MASIRAH ISLAND (OMAN), BASE - NIGHT.

A DELTA TEAM wearing night-goggles embarks on an RH-53D Army Helicopter with its rotors on.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR (V.O.)
 ...the Government attempted to
 rescue the hostages. Operation
 Eagle Claw.

2) DESERT, NIGHT.

The helicopters disappear in the middle of a sand storm.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR (V.O.)
 They've sent a Delta Force team...

3) INT. HELICOPTER, CONTINUOUS.

A helicopter PILOT can't see anything, with his screen filled with sand dust. He screams on the radio.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR (V.O.)
...but the helicopters never made
it to Iran.

4) DESERT (SAND STORM), NIGHT.

Two U.S. Army helicopters crash into each other and fall on the sand. Soldiers are engulfed in flames. No one survives.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR (V.O.)
They crashed into each other in the
middle of a sand storm.

END MONTAGE.

Officer Li-Yan and S.A. Susan Noor see the Suspicious Dude as he enters the house.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
His brother died that night. Thomas
was the one who started this task
force. We wouldn't be here without
him.

OFFICER LI-YAN
Something isn't right.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
Damn! Guys?

INSIDE THE VAN

The monitors and audio equipment starts to fail, with static and flickers. Something is interfering with the equipment.

WILD BILL THOMAS
What the hell is going on?

S.A. SUSAN NOOR (RADIO)
Guys? Street lights are out!

Wild Bill Thomas and D.A. James Simmons look at each other.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Go! Go, go, go, go!

Officer Walsh and Wild Bill Thomas grab their guns and jump out of the van.

AT THE STAIRS

Officer Li-Yan and S.A. Susan Noor sprint down the stairs with their guns locked and loaded.

They hear gunshots.

AT THE STREETS

Officer Li-Yan and S.A. Susan Noor run and get to the house under surveillance.

They hear a car as it squeals the tarmac on a road behind the house.

Officer Li-Yan kicks the door open. They enter...

INSIDE THE HOUSE

...and see the Suspicious Dude laying on the floor, covered in blood and full of bullet holes.

Officer Li-Yan and S.A. Susan Noor search the house, holding their guns in a tactical mode.

Officer Walsh, Wild Bill Thomas, and D.A. James Simmons enter the premises.

WILD BILL THOMAS

Shit! Shit, shit, shit!

Officer Walsh examines the body and checks the pulse. Suspicious Dude is dead.

S.A. Susan Noor returns to the main room and puts her gun in her holster.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

They're gone.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Call Forensics. This is a crime scene now. Hopefully, we'll find some fingerprints or leads.

WILD BILL THOMAS
 We'll find none...
 (to Officer Walsh)
 Did you let him use the phone?

OFFICER WALSH
 I'm... He was--

WILD BILL THOMAS
 Did you, or did you not, let this
 guy use a DAMN PHONE?

OFFICER WALSH
 He went to the bathroom. Maybe he
 managed to...

WILD BILL THOMAS
 Goddammit!!! You have no clue who
 those guys are. No clue! Those
 fellas don't play around! They're
 not some drug addicted pinhead that
 you're used to--

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
 Enough, Thomas! Enough. Let's
 isolate the area, review the camera
 footage and follow procedure. It'll
 be a long night.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, CLASSROOM - DAY

Jackson teaches his TAR program before a room full of PETTY
 OFFICERS, JUNIOR OFFICERS, and DEPARTMENT HEADS.

Lt. Jones studies Jackson with rapt attention.

JACKSON
 The basic idea of this program is
 that everyone should be able to
 audit their divisional spending and
 report any wrongdoings. Any reports
 will stay confidential.

MONTAGE

1) DECK DEPARTMENT. Jackson shows how to balance a book to
 TWO PETTY OFFICERS.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 Now, this number should go in
 column "B."

2) HANGAR. Jackson inspects aircraft parts with the help of other CREW MEMBER.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

If the serial number doesn't match,
we have to correct the logs. You
shouldn't report it as missing.

3) SHIP'S OFFICE. Jackson shows a black and green screen with a computer report on it to the DEPARTMENT HEADS.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

This way, you can verify the
monthly reports of each Division,
and compare with their consumption
history.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, PASSAGEWAYS - DAY

Jackson strides down the passageway and is intercepted by Lt. Jones.

LT. JONES

Do you have a moment?

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, LT. JONES' OFFICE - DAY

LT. Jones looks for some papers inside his drawer.

LT. JONES

(sarcastic)

This confidential reporting deal.
Does it work for Officers too?

JACKSON

Sir. Do you have something to
report?

LT. JONES

No. No, I don't. But, sometimes, I
forget to destroy my old notes.
This is what you're looking for.

Lt. Jones hands Jackson a cargo manifest.

JACKSON

I don't get it. These are all
medical supplies.

LT. JONES

Indeed they are. Those supplies were disembarked in the port of Khasab. From there, a merchant ship transported the crates to the city of Bandar Abbas.

JACKSON

In Iran? I don't--

LT. JONES

Follow the medical supplies, sailor, and you'll find your lost missiles.

Lt. Jones leaves. Still out of it, Jackson studies the manifest.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, SUPPLY OFFICE - NIGHT

Jackson checks files, logs, and documents.

He types on the computer: "MEDICAL SUPPLIES." The screen shows a report: "NO ENTRIES."

Jackson types "Khasab." A list of crates delivered to the port on multiples dates. All crates described as "Medical Supplies."

Jackson copies everything into a disk and shuts down the computer.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAY

Jackson enters the quarters and is greeted by a NAVY YEOMAN. This room gives access to the ship's Commanding Officer.

JACKSON

I need to speak to Captain Majerski.

NAVY YEOMAN

Where's your Division Officer?

JACKSON

I need a private audience.

NAVY YEOMAN

Fill out this form.

Jackson takes the paper and scribbles on it in a hurry.

A phrase stands out: "report the theft of Phoenix missiles and F-14 parts, smuggled into Iran."

He hands the document to the Navy Yeoman, who folds it.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, JACKSON'S BERTHING COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Haunted by the possible consequences of reporting directly to the Ship's Captain, Jackson can't sleep.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, SUPPLY OFFICE - DAY

Jackson gets to his desk. Makalino and Primo stare at him, as he enters the office. Their looks aren't friendly.

There is an official envelope on Jackson's table. Someone already opened it.

Jackson checks the document. A big, red "DENIED" stamp stands out on the request chit he handed to the Navy Yeoman.

PRIMO

Anything wrong?

Pale, Jackson puts away the paper.

JACKSON

No. I've just... remembered...

Jackson exits the room.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Disoriented, Jackson paces down the passageway.

A hand grabs him and pulls him to the side, into the...

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, HEAD (BATHROOM) - CONTINUOUS

Phil seems alarmed.

PHIL

Ope! What happened? Are ya okay?

JACKSON

They know. They saw the request chit.

PHIL

What are ya talking 'bout?

Jackson shows the request form to Phil.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Are you two cans short of a six pack?!

JACKSON

We get to San Diego tomorrow. I only have sixty days left on my contract. I'll go to NIS and blow the damn whistle.

PHIL

That makes as much sense as government cheese. Are you going to end your career over this?

JACKSON

What do you expect me to do? Shut up and pretend that nothing ever happened?

Phil grunts.

PHIL

They'll wait for you to leave the ship. Don't go to the Navy Investigators yet. Take this card. Stay hidden for a couple of days and call him.

He hands Jackson a business card with the contact information to D.A. James Simmons.

EXT. SAN DIEGO, NAVAL BASE - DAY

The USS Kitty Hawk enters the port. The ship's horn blares.

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, GANGPLANK - DAY

The CREW, in civilian clothes, walks down the gangplank.

Nervous, Jackson exits the ship carrying a briefcase.

Makalino quietly observes him.

Jackson gets to the inspection point, where the U.S. Navy Security checks all the belongings.

A MASTER AT ARMS (mid 20s) opens Jackson's briefcase. Under a newspaper, he finds a set of reports and disks.

MASTER AT ARMS

What are all of these?

JACKSON

My Chief told me that I've got to do a report over the weekend.

MASTER AT ARMS

Really? You know the Chargers are playing this weekend, right?

JACKSON

He's quite an S.O.B.

The Master at Arms grunts.

Makalino is a few steps behind in line. Phil is already past the security check-point.

MASTER AT ARMS

You got that right.
(closes the briefcase)
Good luck, buddy.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Jackson enters a car and starts the engine. He drives past Phil, who nods.

EXT. RED CAR, TRAVELING - DAY

A red car passes through the base's entrance.

The GUARD at the gate casts a suspicious glare. After a moment, he lets the vehicle go.

Edgy, Jackson checks the rear-view mirror.

The red car exits the base. A few moments later, a black sedan follows it.

Jackson adjusts the rear-view mirror once again.

INT. BLACK SEDAN, TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

A SHADOWY TYPE watches the red car and talks on a walkie-talkie.

SHADOWY TYPE

Target is on the move.

EXT. RED CAR, TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

The red car continues to drive with the black sedan on his tail.

They pass a hot-dog STREET VENDOR who talks on a device hidden in his sleeve.

STREET VENDOR

It's him.

The car turns and enters in a deserted alleyway. Suddenly...

...the vehicle is surrounded by three sedans who jump from nowhere and block it from all sides.

AGENTS in civilian clothes jump out of their vehicles with their guns in their hands.

They move ferociously to the driver.

BULKY AGENT

Get out. Get out now!

LATINO AGENT

Hands where I can see.

The DRIVER is grabbed, pulled outside the car, and is put on his knees on the tarmac.

An OLD-TIMER AGENT aims his Glock at the driver's head.

OLD-TIMER AGENT

Robert Jackson?

Confused, the Driver raises his face.

DRIVER

No! He only... lent me the car.

Old-Timer Agent mouths a curse and signals to the rest of the agents who immediately come back to their cars.

The Driver remains on his knees, hands behind the head.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Was I speeding?

AT ANOTHER PART OF TOWN

Jackson drives a different car. No one follows him.

The car disappears in the middle of the traffic.

EXT. PAYPHONE - DAY

Phil gets to a payphone outside a restaurant. He checks both sides to be sure no one is watching him.

PHIL
The bird is out of the box.

INT. OCTOBER SURPRISE TASK FORCE ROOM - SAME TIME

D.A. James Simmons is at the other side of this call.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Where is he going?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION - PHIL / D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

PHIL
I've given him your card.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Is he in danger?

Phil checks the street once again.

PHIL
You betcha. They already know, sir.

D.A. James Simmons flinches and hangs up.

INT. NIS OFFICE - DAY

A set of corridors leads to the Naval Investigative Service (NIS).

In his civilian clothes, Jackson paces down the hallway and passes through a glass door.

Hesitant, he stops before the RECEPTIONIST.

JACKSON
I'm here to report a fraud. On the
USS Kitty Hawk.

Dumbfounded, the Receptionist dials to an internal number in her desk phone.

RECEPTIONIST (ON PHONE)
Agent Denton? He's here.

INT. NIS OFFICE, INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Jackson organizes the documents on top of the nice, mahogany table.

AGENT DENTON (50s), graying black, manicured fingernails, pulls a chair, glances at the papers, and sits in front of him.

AGENT DENTON
You're the famous Robert Jackson.
There's a lot of people looking for
you right now.

JACKSON
And here I am.

Agent Denton smirks.

AGENT DENTON
So, kid... tell us what you know.

BEHIND THE MIRROR

At the other side of the false mirror, TWO INVESTIGATORS watch the interrogation.

Robert Jackson explains the situation to Agent Denton while the Investigators look at each other.

A tape recorder records the whole interview.

MUSTACHED INVESTIGATOR
Is he stupid -- or just plain
crazy?

BALD-HEADED INVESTIGATOR
I guess... both.

BACK IN THE ROOM

Jackson continues to explain things to Denton, who looks indifferent to it all.

JACKSON
...so, basically, they're forging
the survey certificates. This way
they can report the items as
missing and sell them to the black
market, in the Middle East. I'm
talking about missiles, F-14 parts,
jet engines. Crates and crates.
(MORE)

JACKSON (CONT'D)

They're forging the storeroom reports. This is a clear violation of article one two one and--

AGENT DENTON

You got any proof of this, or are you just talking out of your ass? You do understand that you are making some serious allegations, don't you?

Jackson shows the file filled with documents.

JACKSON

I know.

Agent Denton glances at the documents and considers his options.

AGENT DENTON

What do you want?

JACKSON

I want to get out. I want to get a transfer off the USS Kitty Hawk. I'll testify, give you all the evidence, explain how to--

AGENT DENTON

I can't do that.

JACKSON

Excuse me?!

AGENT DENTON

I don't have the authority to take you from the USS Kitty Hawk. You have to report back.

Shocked, Jackson tries to figure out what this means.

JACKSON

Report back? You're not getting it. If I step back on Kitty Hawk, they're going to--

AGENT DENTON

I'll talk to your Captain.

JACKSON

Sir. Respectfully... He could be a part of all this.

AGENT DENTON
My hands are tied, sailor. I'm
sorry.

Jackson takes his files and stands up.

AGENT DENTON (CONT'D)
And please leave the file. This is
evidence now.

Jackson closes his eyes, not believing in what he's hearing. He hesitates for a moment, puts the files on the table, and leaves. Defeated.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE, GARAGE - NIGHT

DAVE (25) is Jackson's brother. Cocky, former Army guy, he's a man who could rebuild an engine from scratch and still be smart enough to know how to sell it.

Dave tweaks with his car's motor as the door rings.

DAVE
Damn...

He looks for a piece of cloth to clean his hands.

MAIN DOOR

Dave checks the peep-hole and is surprised to find Jackson. He opens the door.

DAVE
My long lost brother. What have ya
done this time?

JACKSON
May I come in?

Dave agrees.

LIVING ROOM

Seated, Jackson seems uncomfortable under Dave's judgemental glare.

JACKSON
I went to the NIS today. I think
some guys on my ship are stealing
stuff.

DAVE

Bro...

JACKSON

I know.

Dave grimaces.

DAVE

Pops would beat ya for being that stupid.

JACKSON

He would beat us for lots of different reasons.

Dave grins and stands up.

Still pondering about what to say, he takes a whiskey bottle and two cups.

DAVE

Do ya still drink it cowboy style?

JACKSON

I'll have a coke.

DAVE

Oh, yeah. That... Sorry.

Dave puts the whiskey back in the shelf and comes back with two cokes.

DAVE (CONT'D)

What did they say?

JACKSON

They're trying to cover it up.
(sips the beverage)
It was a major mistake.

DAVE

You're damn right 'bout that.

Jackson stares at the cup.

JACKSON

They're smuggling weapons into Iran.

DAVE

You're in deep shit. Now, why doesn't that surprise me?

JACKSON

Dave... This time it's enough shit
to be shot in the head.

Dave considers it for a moment.

DAVE

You need a lawyer.
(takes a phone book)
I know a guy. A 'Nam vet. I can
make a call.

JACKSON

I can't pay a lawyer.

DAVE

He's cool. And he hates the Navy
anyway. Guess it's an Air Force
thing.

INT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE, BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

A sophisticated, commercial building.

Randy Whaley holds the elevator. He waits for Angela Parker,
who runs through the hallway in high-heels while balancing
two large cups of coffee.

They're the Lawyers in the opening sequence.

Angela hands one of the cups to Randy.

ANGELA

Here you go.

ELEVATOR

The elevator door closes.

ANGELA

I hate when you set up these
meetings early in the morning.

RANDY

It's nine A.M.

ANGELA

In-the-morning! Hope this new
client is really good. I'm wearing
my expensive shoes.

RANDY
Did you bother to read the LA
Times?

ANGELA
(sarcastic)
Yeah, just before my morning run.

Randy glares at her.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
I barely made it here in time!

Angela uses the elevator's mirror to give the final touches in her make-up.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
You're going to tell me some boring
stuff 'bout the Lakers, aren't you?

Randy shows her the LA Times with a picture of a Navy ship.
She quickly glances through the article.

RANDY
There is an article about the
misuse of funds in the Navy. How
part of it could be diverted to
finance black-ops in Central
America and the Middle East.

ANGELA
That conspiracy theory again?

The elevator gets to the Office's floor.

CORRIDOR

They walk down toward the entrance of "Parker & Whaley
Attorneys."

RANDY
I was considering talking to some
of these Navy veterans. They're
starting to come out.

ANGELA
Randy... It's a lose-lose. If we
get a liar, he'll be sent into a
military prison. And we'll be
roasted before a Grand Jury so bad
that we'll envy him.

They pass through the office's Secretary.

SECRETARY

Your nine o'clock is waiting in the meeting room.

ANGELA

Thanks.

Angela grabs the folder from the Secretary without even opening it.

RANDY

We could discover someone who is actually telling the truth.

ANGELA

Even worse. This means he's a dead man walking. Next thing you know, people are taping your late-night phone calls and sending death threats to your wife, until the day they decide to explode you and that expensive BMW to kingdom come.

RANDY

Oh. Now you are the CIA expert. I thought this was my field of expertise.

They get to the door of the meeting room.

Angela sighs.

ANGELA

Tell ya what... If this new client turns out to be really good -- we can file a motion. A pro bono one. One motion and that's it!

Randy agrees. Angela fixes her bust.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

How do I look?

RANDY

Dainty, as usual.

She opens the door to the...

MEETING ROOM

Inside the room, Jackson waits in his white uniform. He rises and almost stands in an "at attention" position as Angela enters.

She gives him a close-lipped smile.

ANGELA
I'll be back.

The door closes. Jackson can only hear Angela and Randy arguing in a muffled sound.

OUTSIDE THE MEETING ROOM

Red-faced, Angela wrangles with Randy.

ANGELA
You trapped me!

RANDY
The reason we've started this law firm--

ANGELA
And you made me wake up early!

RANDY
The reason I quit Kirkland & Ellis and started this law firm with you was that you convinced me we could make a difference.

ANGELA
A case against the Government could bankrupt us!

RANDY
You said this firm would be different. That it wasn't about the bottom line, it was about making justice.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Here we go. Why did I put on these stupid shoes?

RANDY
I gave up a higher salary because you assured me that, here, I would be able to choose my clients and pick my fights.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
I know what I said, okay.

RANDY
You gave me a speech about how Law shouldn't be about getting rich or buying a new yacht, it was about changing people's lives.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Were you taping that meeting? Jeez.

Randy stops and stares at Angela.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
In my defense, I must say...

Randy waits. Angela clears her throat.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
I must say... I thought you only
wanted to sleep with me.

Dismissive, Randy heads toward the meeting room.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
What? I hadn't met your wife back
then.

Randy enters the...

MEETING ROOM

And greets Jackson.

RANDY
Hi, Mr. Jackson. Welcome to Parker
and Whaley.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, CDR HARTWIG'S OFFICE - DAY

Makalino enters the Office and meets Primo and Cdr. Hartwig,
who discuss some serious subject in an inaudible whisper.

They stop and stare at Makalino.

CDR HARTWIG
So? Did you talk to our friends?

MAKALINO
They don't have Jackson. And...

CDR HARTWIG
And what?

MAKALINO
He went to the NIS.

Cdr. Hartwig glares to Primo.

CDR HARTWIG
Now I've got to call Admiral
Poindexter.

PRIMO

We can handle the NIS, sir. They're
in this as much as we are.

CDR HARTWIG

I know that "I" can handle the NIS.
My question is -- can you handle
Jackson?

Annoyed, Primo signals to Makalino, and they leave the
office.

INT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE, MEETING ROOM - DAY

Angela pretends to pay attention to what Jackson is saying as
she scribbles in her notebook.

Randy enters and glimpses at Angela's notes, who willingly
shows him. It reads, "I hate you, you're going to pay for
this."

Angela smiles.

RANDY

I've just spoken to the Vice-Chief
of Naval Operations.

JACKSON

Did they agree on the witness
program?

RANDY

He said that the NIS didn't open an
official investigation so far, so
you're not legally a witness yet.
They're passing the buck to each
other as they stall us.

Jackson can't believe that.

JACKSON

Can't they send me back to Florida?
Back to HS-1, where I can be a SAR
Swimmer again?

RANDY

They're threatening you with
desertion charges if you don't
present yourself back to Kitty Hawk
to finish your tour.

Jackson casts a glance at Angela who shows an inauthentic
expression of grief.

JACKSON

What you're telling me is that I can choose between being a dead man or a deserter. Is that what you're saying?

RANDY

I'll tell this. You're not going back to that ship on Monday. You are a potential witness in a federal felony. I'll make sure they take all the required measures to guarantee your unalloyed safeness.

(to Angela)

Don't you concur?

ANGELA

(passive-aggressive)

Oh, sure. I concur.

RANDY

How much time do you still have on your contract?

JACKSON

Fifty-two days.

RANDY

In fifty-two days, you're a free civilian. Up to then, let me do my job.

(in the Intercom)

Call Glenn Bunting.

JACKSON

Who is he? A judge?

RANDY

Better than that. An LA Times reporter.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jackson enters the living-room and finds Dave watching TV.

JACKSON

I gave the interview. To LA Times.

DAVE

You did? Aren't they going to--

JACKSON

Yeah. My life as a sailor is pretty much over now.

They stay in silence for a brief moment.

Jackson goes to the fridge and grabs a beer.

DAVE

(unconvincing)
It can't be that bad.

Dave eyes Jackson with concern.

JACKSON

I screwed up, didn't I?

DAVE

Let me show ya something.

GARAGE

Dave takes off a car cover, revealing a perfectly restored, vintage car.

JACKSON

It's beautiful.

DAVE

It was a job. A client hired me to restore it.

Dave turns on the motor and opens the hood.

DAVE (CONT'D)

This guy wanted to make a quick buck, so he asked me to rig a cheap six banger in it.

JACKSON

It would have ruined it.

DAVE

Yeah... didn't feel right. So -- I decided to find the original parts and assemble the motor. Took me a lot of dime and time, but now this lady looks like the same way she was when she left the showroom.

JACKSON

What about the client?

Dave smiles.

DAVE

He said he wouldn't pay. Something 'bout the restoration price being higher than what he had paid for the car. So I bought her from him.

Jackson considers it.

JACKSON

Why did you do it?

DAVE

Because, in my heart, I knew it was the right thing to do.

Closes the hood.

DAVE (CONT'D)

You showed your face. You stood for what ya think is right. I'm proud of ya. Pops would be too. -- I'll make sure to read the LA Times tomorrow.

Grateful, Jackson nods.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

A newspaper stand, early in the morning.

The NEWSMAN drinks a "slurpy" and waits for the next client.

D.A. James Simmons glances at the pile of newspapers, grabs one and frowns, irritated.

INT. FBI OFFICE, CORRIDORS - DAY

D.A. James Simmons charges through the corridors holding today's LA Times.

He enters the--

OCTOBER SURPRISE TASK FORCE ROOM

And finds the whole team seated at the meeting table.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

This task force has almost fifty agents.

(MORE)

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS (CONT'D)

The best wire-tapping equipment.
Access to Corona satellites,
cryptoanalysis software, radio
scanners, and stuff I don't even
know how to pronounce. So, can
someone enlighten me and explain to
me how no one in this room knew
that Robert Jackson would talk to
the LA - freakin' - Times?

D.A. James Simmons throws the newspaper on the table. It has
a photo of Jackson and the title: "Sailor Robert Jackson
Blows the Whistle on the Kitty Hawk."

A moment of uncomfortable silence.

WILD BILL THOMAS

Because we're a bunch of bozos.
Satisfied? Now that we all got that
off our chests, shall we focus on
how to solve this shit?

D.A. James Simmons tries to recompose.

WILD BILL THOMAS (CONT'D)

Luckily enough, the LA Times
doesn't know what they have in
their hands. Yet.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Find him. Bring him in.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

The Navy will hold him
incommunicado.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

He's our witness too.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

This is a military crime. We have
no saying in this.

WILD BILL THOMAS

Alright. Plan B. We kidnap him.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR

Really?

Officer Li-Yan tries to step in.

OFFICER LI-YAN

The article mentions a medical
supply crate--

They ignore Officer Li-Yan, and the whole group continues to argue at the same time.

Officer Li-Yan steps in and makes sure they hear her point.

OFFICER LI-YAN (CONT'D)
The article mentions they smuggled
medical supplies into Iran!

They stop.

WILD BILL THOMAS
What the hell are you talking
'bout, Officer China?

OFFICER LI-YAN
(insulted)
My father was Korean.

Officer Walsh gets it.

OFFICER WALSH
She's talking about the DEA
jurisdiction.

OFFICER LI-YAN
The Navy reported they were
transporting medical supplies into
Iran.

WILD BILL THOMAS
We know it wasn't medical supplies,
sweetie-pie.

OFFICER LI-YAN
But the Navy says it was. The
Control Substances Act puts it
under the surveillance of the DEA.

S.A. Susan Noor picks up.

S.A. SUSAN NOOR
This case would be held in a
civilian court -- we could ask for
an order to put Jackson under our
protection.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
(to Susan)
Find me a Judge. Any Judge. Now!
(to Officer Li-Yan)
Good job.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - DAY

Jackson sleeps on his brother's couch.

Holding two cups of coffee, Dave eyes Jackson still holding an empty bottle of whiskey from the previous night.

DAVE

Oh, boy...

In a hangover, Jackson wakes up.

They hear a muffled gossip sound coming from outside the house.

Jackson grabs one of the cups and decides to check the door.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I wouldn't do it.

The moment Jackson opens the door...

EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE, FACADE - CONTINUES

...A storm of flashes, REPORTERS, cameras, and abrupt questions.

NEWSPAPER GUY

Mr. Jackson! Mr. Jackson!

FEMALE REPORTER

Were you threatened by the Navy?

SERIOUS MAGAZINE JOURNALIST

Do you have any proof of what you're alleging?

Still dizzy, Jackson makes a poor attempt to handle the press.

JACKSON

I gave all the documents to the Navy Investigation Service and--

TV NEWS STAR

Mr. Jackson, that's a posh house.

(other Reporters stop)

Can you explain to our viewers how is it that you can live in such a nice estate and have two attorneys?

(MORE)

TV NEWS STAR (CONT'D)
 Who is paying you to defame the
 U.S. Government, Mr. Jackson?

JACKSON
 It's my brother's house and--

NEWSPAPER GUY
 Mr. Jackson -- have you been
 drinking?!

JACKSON
 None of your business. Piss off!
 Piss off all of ya!

Jackson slams the door.

INT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE - DAY

Frantic, Randy and Angela make and take phone calls with the
 help of two JUNIOR ASSISTANTS. The Secretary comes in.

SECRETARY
 Mr. Jackson on line two.

Randy grabs the phone.

RANDY
 Randy here. Are you alright?

INTERCUT RANDY / JACKSON AT DAVE'S HOUSE

JACKSON
 I'm at Dave's house. The press
 found me.

RANDY
 I'm sending you a car.

END OF INTERCUT

MONTAGE - VARIOUS TV NEWS

1) Serious news program

NEWS ANCHOR
 Today a Petty Officer serving on
 the USS Kitty Hawk made a serious
 reveal, implying that missiles, F-
 14 parts, and military supplies
 were diverted into the Iranian
 black market--

2) A TV Show with TWO POLITICAL ANALYSTS debating.

ANALYST

The Navy had prior knowledge and took no action. This is as serious as it gets. For years this Government has been denying dealing with Iran. I guess this wasn't the whole truth.

3) Night time news - Live

FEMALE REPORTER

The Navy just released another official note. Now they say that Petty Officer Jackson suffers from severe depression and mental illness, and that he never served as the Kitty Hawk's auditor.

4) Morning talk-show

LATINO COMMENTATOR

C'mon, guys. How serious is Jackson? His motivations appear to be dubious, at best. In my opinion, he's just a coward trying to get off the boat. Literally.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, CDR HARTWIG'S OFFICE - DAY

CDR Hartwig reads the LA Times. He closes the newspaper and stares at Primo.

CDR HARTWIG

That's it. This can't go on. Sometimes -- we've got to make some sacrifices, in order to protect the greater good.

PRIMO

Sir?

CDR HARTWIG

You know what has to be done.

EXT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE, BUILDING - DAY

Jackson and Dave get out the car and enter the commercial building.

Inside another car, Wild Bill Thomas watches them and reports on the radio.

WILD BILL THOMAS

I've got eyes on the target. Should we make a move?

S.A. SUSAN NOOR (O.S.)

Not yet. We're still waiting for that Court order.

INT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jackson and Dave enter the office, which now looks like a war room filled with hopped-up ASSISTANTS, phone calls, and STAFF discussing memos, press releases, and motions.

When he sees Jackson entering, Randy drops everything and comes to greet him.

RANDY

Great. We'll accommodate you in a hotel for now. I'll send someone to brief you afterwards. We're contemplating the possibility of preparing a press conference and--

JACKSON

They're saying I'm a crazy guy, that I was never an auditor, and... Why are they saying those things?

Angela hesitates.

ANGELA

They leaked your medical report.

JACKSON

What?!

ANGELA

They leaked an official report that states that you have a drinking problem, severe depression, and possibly panic disorder.

JACKSON

This is bullshit! -- I mean, I was... It was after my marriage collapsed, alright? I was sober for over a year after that. I'm not some...

ANGELA

We know.

DAVE

They can do that?!

RANDY

No. Utterly illegal. We're already preparing a motion to grind this to a halt but --

ANGELA

Jackson, listen up -- this will get worse. They're coming for you. They'll use every dirty trick in the book. If you're having second thoughts... this is the time.

JACKSON

I won't back down.

RANDY

What Miss Parker is trying to say is--

JACKSON

I won't back down. Not now. Not in a million years. I've got nothing to hide, nothing to be ashamed of. This isn't about me. They're the criminals. They're the liars. I'm gonna prove it.

EXT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE, BUILDING - DAY

Still in the stakeout, Wild Bill Thomas gazes at something on the road.

WILD BILL THOMAS

Oh, shit...

S.A. SUSAN NOOR (O.S.)

What? Bill? -- Bill? What? What's "oh shit?"

INT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE - DAY

Randy is about to show some legal forms to Jackson when he's interrupted by the Intercom.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Sir. The Navy is here.

RANDY

What do you mean? Who in the Navy?

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Seems like the whole damn Navy,
sir.

ENTRANCE

The Secretary ogles at an intimidating line of two dozen MALE AND FEMALE OFFICERS in their white uniforms, from various ranks.

Some of them are from the Navy JAG Corps (Judge Advocate General).

They look dead serious.

INT. PARKER & WHALEY OFFICE, MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The meeting room is crowded with NAVY OFFICERS. Some of them have to remain standing up as the table is out of empty seats.

Jackson, Randy, and Angela sit at the table and try to negotiate with the Officers.

The main positions at the table are occupied by REAR ADMIRAL CLARK, COMMANDER HAYES, and LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER DELPHINE (female).

RANDY

Petty Officer Jackson is not going
back to North Island.

CDR. HAYES

This would be an AWOL, counselor.
Absent Without Official Leave.

RANDY

I know what an AWOL means,
Commander. If the Navy doesn't like
it, they can send the Shore Patrol
over here to arrest him. I'll have
the press waiting for the photo op.

CDR. HAYES

You understand he's a witness in a
military case, don't you?

ANGELA

He's already sent you all the documents he had. Work with that.

The Officers look at each other.

LT. CDR. DELPHINE

The NIS said he had no documents.

JACKSON

Are you kiddin' me?

Randy makes a signal to calm down Jackson.

RANDY

There's no need to worry, Commander. We have loads of copies.

ANGELA

Which may inadvertently fall into the hands of the press -- if something happens to our client.

CDR. HAYES

The Navy forbids Petty Officer Jackson from speaking to the press again. If the media has any inquiries, they should be sent to the Navy Press Corp.

Defiant, Angela chortles.

RANDY

Respectfully, Commander Hayes, as Mr. Jackson's attorney, I'm not going to restrict my client's first amendment rights. Especially after the blistering torpedoes the Navy has launched against him in the press.

Cdr. Hayes moans.

CDR. HAYES

Alright. We're also concerned with Petty Officer Jackson's safety. He won't report to Kitty Hawk. We'll send him to Miramar Naval Air Station until his enlistment expires.

ANGELA

Look, Major--

CDR. HAYES
Commander.

ANGELA
Whatever. I don't think you understand how this works. He's not going back.

CDR. HAYES
I don't think you understand how it works, Miss Parker. Petty Officer Jackson is part of the Navy. If the Navy tells you to jump, you ask how high.

ANGELA
Well, my father was in the military too. When he asked me to jump, I would say fu--

Randy stops Angela before she actually drops the "f" word.

RANDY
We're aware of our client's duties, Commander. But we're also heedful that our client has been harassed, intimidated, and threatened. And the Navy hasn't expressed any concerns for his safety to this point.

Rear Admiral Clark makes eye contact with his Officers, signaling this is enough. For now.

ADMIRAL CLARK
We understand your position, Mr. Whaley. Maybe it's time for you to discuss this situation with your client. Call my office when you reach a decision.

Randy nods, agreeing.

Admiral Clark stands up, followed by the Navy Officers. Still heated, Cdr. Hayes has to suck it up.

ADMIRAL CLARK (CONT'D)
Petty Officer Jackson. I would love to hear your side. There are people in the Navy who believe in you.

The Officers leave.

When there's only Randy and Angela left in the room, Jackson decides to speak.

JACKSON

They're kinda right. I should report back.

RANDY

You don't have to. I can still talk to Congressman Kilgore. He can help us.

JACKSON

I need to show my face if I want to be taken seriously.

ANGELA

Bob... you're putting your life in danger. Don't kid yourself with the fancy uniforms and speeches full of buzzwords about honor and duty. Those guys won't play by the rules.

JACKSON

I entered the Navy with my head held high. I'll leave the same way. I won't hide.

Randy assents.

RANDY

We will keep you in the hotel for the night. You can report to Miramar in the morning.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jackson looks at the window for an instant. Opens the wardrobe and spends a few moments staring at his uniform.

He surveys his full dress whites, looking for stains or wrinkles. Today, this uniform must be perfect.

With care, he puts his two ribbons on the white blouse: the Sea Service Ribbon and the Battle "E" award.

Jackson takes his "whites" from the hanger and starts to put it on.

Fully dressed, Jackson inspects himself in the mirror, presaging this could be the last time he would wear his uniform.

KNOCK - KNOCK - KNOCK. Violent bangs at the door.

Apprehensive, Jackson opens it.

At the door, D.A. James Simmons and Wild Bill Thomas.

D.A. James Simmons flashes his badge.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Mr. Jackson... We need to talk to
you.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Uneasy, Jackson examines the photos and documents presented to him by Wild Bill Thomas.

JACKSON
This makes no sense. Why would the
US Government sell weapons to the
Iranians? Those guys are the most
dangerous regime in the world right
now. Are we negotiating with
terrorists?

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
We've been investigating this
operation for over two years. Mr.
Jackson -- I believe you may have
the final piece of evidence to link
all of this together.

JACKSON
Can we do this later? I've got to
report to Miramar Station, to talk
to Admiral Clark.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Out of question. At this point, we
must assume that there are other
Officers in the Navy involved in
this smuggling scheme. We want to
put you under our protective
custody.

JACKSON
I've promised to report back to
Miramar.

WILD BILL THOMAS
Are you nuts? There's a difference
between trying to be a hero and
acting stupid, ya know.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Thomas, just... --

(to Jackson)

Please, reevaluate this decision. Those guys won't hesitate to take even the most extreme measures to keep you quiet.

JACKSON

I understand the risks. But there are still people in the Navy who want to do the right thing. They need me. They need to see my face, speaking my mind, and standing for what's right. Not hiding in shame. Those are my brothers in arms. You don't turn your back on your family in difficult times.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

You're seriously considering reporting back?

JACKSON

Facing dangerous situations is part of my daily job. How is this any different?

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

Here's the deal: we take you to Miramar, so you fulfill your word and talk to Admiral Clark. After that, you come with us.

Jackson accedes.

EXT. MIRAMAR NAVAL AIR STATION - DAY

A convoy of FBI cars parks outside the base.

Amazed, the base's OFFICER ON DUTY checks what's going on. He calls for a MARINE DETAIL that forms at the gates with automatic rifles pointing at the cars.

INT. FBI BLACK CAR - CONTINUOUS

Randy and Angela are with Jackson, who is about to get out.

RANDY

I'm not comfortable with this.

ANGELA

Bob... You don't have to do it.

JACKSON

(to himself)

"So others may live."

ANGELA

What?

Jackson gets out of the vehicle and walks toward...

EXT. MIRAMAR NAVAL AIR STATION - CONTINUOUS

D.A. James Simmons meets an apprehensive Jackson on his way to the base.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

You okay?

JACKSON

I'll be alright.

Jackson moves forward.

AT THE GATES

Jackson walks through the gates and salutes the Officer on Duty.

JACKSON

Petty Officer Jackson, Robert reporting in, sir.

OFFICER ON DUTY

(to the FBI agents)

You'll have to pass your weapons through security.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

I'm the district attorney. Those are my agents.

OFFICER ON DUTY

This is the protocol, sir. You can meet him inside, after the security check.

After a moment of impasse, with agents and soldiers touching their triggers on both sides, D.A. James Simmons seems to capitulate.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Wait for us.

Jackson walks in. Randy and Angela follow him.

OFFICER ON DUTY
The civilian entrance is on that side.

RANDY
I'm his lawyer.

OFFICER ON DUTY
Are you a military lawyer, sir?

Randy doesn't answer that.

OFFICER ON DUTY (CONT'D)
I'm afraid you'll have to use the other entrance.

JACKSON
I'll be fine. I'll wait inside.

Jackson walks in alone.

INT. MIRAMAR NAVAL AIR STATION - CONTINUOUS

Inside the base, past the security point, a MASTER CHIEF waits for Jackson with an official vehicle.

MASTER CHIEF
Petty Officer Jackson?

JACKSON
Yeah.

MASTER CHIEF
Captain Majerski is waiting for you on the USS Kitty Hawk.

JACKSON
I'm reporting to Miramar station now. I've got an appointment with Admiral Clark.

MASTER CHIEF
You've got time. The Captain wants to hear it from you first.

JACKSON
He had his chance. He didn't receive me.

MASTER CHIEF

He never saw your request chit.

This piece of information makes Jackson hesitate.

JACKSON

You sure?

MASTER CHIEF

Someone intercepted your request.
Captain Majerski didn't know.

JACKSON

(torn)

I... have to wait for my lawyers.

MASTER CHIEF

Look -- he's your Commanding
Officer, right? This is the chain
of command. He's the one you should
be talking to. Not those guys in
suits. Not Admiral Clark. Don't you
think?

JACKSON

I... I should...

MASTER CHIEF

Do you want to make things right?
Or did you just want to show your
face in the papers?

Jackson vacillates. After a moment, he enters the car.

In the distance, Makalino watches as the car drives away. He
wears a disturbing smile on his face.

EXT. NAVY VEHICLE, TRAVELING - DAY

Jackson and the Master Chief are in the backseat, as the
MOTORIST drives them out of the base.

INT. MIRAMAR NAVAL AIR STATION - DAY

Randy and Angela pass the security and look for Jackson.

RANDY

Where is he?

D.A. James Simmons nears them.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
 What do you mean where is he? He's
 not with you?

ANGELA
 Damn...

D.A. James Simmons screams to his men.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
 Move! Move now! We've got to find
 him!

EXT. NORTH ISLAND NAVAL BASE - DAY

The Navy Vehicle parks next to Kitty Hawk's gangplank.
 Jackson gets out of the car.

EXT. USS KITTY HAWK, FLIGHT DECK - DAY

A few dozen yards away, Phil observes as Jackson moves up the
 gangplank and salutes the flag.

Phil runs to his bag, grabs a radio, and moves out of sight.
 Agitated, he chatters on the radio.

PHIL
 He's here. What is he doing here?

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS (O.S.)
 Jackson? Is Jackson at the Kitty
 Hawk?

PHIL
 You betcha.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS (O.S.)
 We're going there. Don't lose sight
 of him!

Phil curses to himself and turns off the radio.

He runs to the gangplank, just to be interrupted by a PACK OF
 MEN carrying some heavy airplane parts.

PHIL
 C'mon... C'mon...

As the path clears, he paces to where Jackson was.

Too late. No sign of Jackson now.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, PASSAGEWAYS - DAY

Jackson follows a young SEAMAN.

SEAMAN

Captain Majerski is down there,
inspecting the ship's engines. You
should find him on the fourth deck.

Jackson moves forward, alone.

Cdr. Hartwig observes as Jackson walks down the passageway.

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The passageways are all empty now. Eerie.

Jackson enters in a compartment with an elevated passageway,
which passes over an enormous hangar located twenty feet
down.

As Jackson steps forward, a watertight door is sealed behind
him.

Jackson stops and casts a glance at his back, trying to
determine what's going on.

When he faces forward again, he's violently interrupted by...

...a HAND

which grabs his throat and slams him against the bulkhead.

This is Primo.

PRIMO

What the fuck have you done,
Jackson?

Primo's hands tighten around Jackson's throat.

SERIES OF SHOTS

1) D.A. James Simmons and the FBI cars race through the
streets, squealing their tires.

The black vehicles speed across San Diego's base port up to
the docks.

The FBI AGENTS and October Surprise OFFICERS storm up the gangplank.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Go, go, go!

2) Phil darts through the Kitty Hawk's passageways, looking for Jackson.

PHIL
Jackson? -- Jackson?

Phil grabs the radio and shouts into it.

PHIL (CONT'D)
I lost him! I can't find him!

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. USS KITTY HAWK, ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Primo tries to suffocate Jackson.

PRIMO
We're not criminals. We were following orders. I was told to cooperate with the CIA. I was doing what your Country asked me. I'm not going down for this. Do ya understand me? I'm not going down for this!

Jackson breaks the glass from an emergency box and grabs a metal branch pipe from a fire hose, using it as a weapon. He whacks Primo's head with it.

Below the passageway, immense motors and massive gears grind with an infernal sound. These are the ship's engines.

A violent exchange of blows takes place. Primo fights back like a trapped animal.

Jackson pushes Primo off-balance, and both of them roll into a supply room.

Primo grips a metal lever and tries to land some mighty knocks on Jackson, who keeps dodging.

Jackson finds a jet part and uses it as a metal shield, blocking Primo's hits. Jackson dashes forward and hits Primo with the metal shard, which throws him across the passageway.

Jackson seizes the opportunity and tries to run. But...

...Makalino shows up from nowhere and hits Jackson with a crowbar.

Jackson... half knocked out... stumbles. Another blow.

The alarm blares.

ALARM

Security alert, security alert,
security alert. All hands make way.
Marines responding.

Primo yells and jumps over Jackson. Dazed, Jackson tries to resist to Primo's grip.

Back to the passageway, Primo holds Jackson a foot above the deck, threatening to throw him into the colossal gears that rotate below their feet.

Jackson fights back, kicking and resisting.

MAKALINO

Shouldn't we make it look like an accident?

PRIMO

It won't look like anything when they recover his body from these engines.

Almost in his last breath, Jackson makes a self-defense move, similar to the ones he was practicing in the search and rescue training (as seen in the Survival Camp montage).

It throws Primo across the passageway.

Makalino grabs the crowbar and prepares to act.

MAKALINO

You little mother-fuck--

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS (O.S.)

Drop your weapon!

MARINES and FBI AGENTS storm through the room. Phil is with them.

Makalino drops it. Jackson gasps for air.

INT. HOSPITAL, INFIRMARY - NIGHT

Jackson rests on the hospital bed as a NURSE changes his bandages.

A couple of FBI AGENTS are on guard at the door.

Exhausted, Phil, Randy, and Angela wait.

JACKSON

(to Phil)

Some time ago, someone told me I should start over and try to make friends. I don't think he meant an FBI undercover agent.

NURSE

Hold still.

PHIL

("I'm sorry")

What you did was amazing. We knew Primo and Makalino were diverting silver bars to buy drugs. But I had no evidence of the arms sale to Iran - until you showed up.

JACKSON

Anyway... Thanks for -- you know. Saving my ass.

RANDY

Phil... can you give us a minute? I've got something to discuss with my client.

PHIL

Sure.

Randy waits until Phil leaves. He closes the curtain, keeping the agents on the other side.

RANDY

They want to put you in a Federal witness program. New identity, new--

JACKSON

This is who I am, Doc. This is what I do. Can't run away now.

ANGELA

Things change, Bob. People change.

Randy waits for an answer. Jackson doesn't seem to change his mind.

RANDY

Congressman Kilgore called. He wants to start a Congressional investigation. He asked me if you would testify.

JACKSON

Yeah. Sure. Set the date.

ANGELA

If you do that, the Government will come for you with all they got. You're young. Don't give me this phony self-sacrificing speech. You have your whole life in front of you. Think about it.

JACKSON

"Bohica."

ANGELA

Now, what is that?

JACKSON

Tell the Congressman I'll be there.

ANGELA

You're as stubborn as a blind llama, aren't you?

Jackson smiles.

INT. WASHINGTON D.C., HOTEL ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "Three months later."

Jackson wears the same suit he was wearing at the opening scene.

Randy and Angela prep him.

RANDY

This is your day. Are you ready?

JACKSON

Bright-eyed and bushy-tailed.

ANGELA

You're a piece of work.

They move into the...

INT. HOTEL, CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

...where they meet D.A. James Simmons and an FBI DETAIL.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS

I just want to say... You did a great job in the last three months, Robert. Thanks to you, we have a strong case. You should be proud. You good?

The party moves quickly through the corridors.

JACKSON

I felt more comfortable swimming with crocodiles in the Florida swamps.

D.A. James Simmons smiles.

RANDY

The lineup for testifying. Congressman Kilgore will open with his findings. Then you and then the Navy. I've outlined some points that I want you to hit when you speak.

Hands Jackson a paper.

JACKSON

Got it.

INT. CONGRESS - DAY

The same scene of the opening, with Jackson, Randy, and Angela moving through the Congress.

This time, D.A. James Simmons, S.A. Susan Noor, Officer Li-Yan, and Officer Walsh can also be seen in the SECURITY DETAIL.

INT. CONGRESS, AUDIENCE ROOM - DAY

A few Young Protesters disturb the beginning of the hearing.

YOUNG PROTESTERS

Stop the arms sales! Stop the arms sales! Stop the arms sales!

Seated in the back of the room, Wild Bill Thomas smiles.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE

Today is an oversight hearing on the operation of the naval supply system, with particular emphasis on the USS Kitty Hawk.

A blur of emotions crosses through Jackson, as the reporters' flashes keep coming.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE (CONT'D)

There is also an ongoing criminal investigation that includes a number of Federal agencies--

ANGELA

(whisper)

"Bohica." I've looked that up. -- I guess now is the time for them to bend over.

Jackson smiles.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE

Petty Officer Jackson has been both praised and maligned through these sources, but I for one would like to say that I think we need more Americans like him. Petty Officer Jackson spoke about USS Kitty Hawk. The problem is bigger than this.

The press goes berserk. A BAILIFF tries to control the courtroom observers.

BAILIFF

Order! Order!

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE

At this point, we now have Mr. Robert Jackson, a former petty officer, who served on the Kitty Hawk. We appreciate your coming forward, Mr. Jackson.

Nervous, Jackson checks the microphone and prepares to speak.

JACKSON

Good morning honorable representatives. Congressman Kilgore. In effect -- I was the ship's auditor. Nobody was doing what I did before me. I would like to read my statement, which details the--

A COURT OFFICER enters the room, and delivers a document to the Congressmen. Congressman Kilgore is visibly taken off-guard.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 (to Randy)
 What's going on?

RANDY
 Not sure.

CONGRESSMAN WILLIAMS (60s), an experienced Congressman from Texas, speaks on the microphone.

CONGRESSMAN WILLIAMS
 Mr. Jackson... we're not going to go through your written allegations during this hearing today. There are criminal cases at this time, involving National Security issues, and we don't want to jeopardize those cases.

Jackson is shocked.

RANDY
 Congressman Kilgore... We would like a recess.

Congressman Kilgore still tries to process all this.

RANDY (CONT'D)
 Congressman Kilgore--

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE
 Granted. Granted.

INT. CONGRESS, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

Agitated, Jackson, Angela, and Randy examine the Court Order.

ANGELA
 They screwed us. They screwed us in the back-seat of the car and didn't even bother to buy us dinner.

JACKSON
 They can do that?

RANDY
 This is a public hearing. If National Security is involved, they can order a private session.

JACKSON
Can I testify or not?

RANDY
It would be behind closed doors.

JACKSON
Would it go to the records?

RANDY
No public record.

JACKSON
So what's the point? Today was supposed to be the opportunity to show the American people what's going on. That's...

Gentle knocks at the door. Congressman Kilgore and Congressman Williams come in.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE
I'm sorry.

JACKSON
What's going on?

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE
I've just received a call from my Party. We're not going through the criminal part.

JACKSON
What kind of dog and pony show is this? What am I supposed to testify to then?

CONGRESSMAN WILLIAMS
Son... if we told the American people the truth about this, there would be riots in the streets. America can't afford another Watergate.

JACKSON
Shooting the messenger won't solve the problem.

Disillusioned, Jackson steps outside the room.

INT. CONGRESS, CORRIDORS - DAY

Jackson paces through the corridors.

JACKSON

What if I talk anyway? Can they stop me from speaking my mind?

ANGELA

They'll arrest you for contempt.

JACKSON

You know what? People already tried to kill me. At this point, I think I'm okay with a few days in jail.

Randy holds Jackson by the shoulder.

RANDY

Jackson -- listen.

Jackson stops.

RANDY (CONT'D)

It's over. It's over. We can't win this way. Not here. Not today. You will get 'em next time.

INT. CONGRESS, AUDIENCE ROOM - DAY

Desolate, Jackson hears the questions from different CONGRESSMEN, while forced to stay silent.

ARKANSAS CONGRESSWOMAN (O.S.)

Mr. Jackson, do you have any proof of those alleged sales of weapons into the Iranian black-market?

RANDY

A Federal Court order prohibits my client from testifying about any aspects related to the ongoing criminal investigations.

SOUTH DAKOTA CONGRESSMAN (O.S.)

Mr. Jackson, you don't really have any concrete evidence that the Reagan Administration exchanged weapons for American hostages, do you?

RANDY

Respectfully, Mister Congressman, my client can not testify about any aspects related to criminal investigations.

IDAHO CONGRESSMAN (O.S.)
Mr. Jackson, if you didn't want to share your findings, why did you even bother to blow the whistle to the media?

RANDY
Congressman, my client cannot--

JACKSON
I'm not a whistle-blower.

Flashes from the press and murmurs across the audience room.

ANGELA
Bob...

JACKSON
This is not who I am. I'm a sailor. At least I was. People have asked me why I blew the whistle. All I've done is speak the truth. I did it, first because I'm an American citizen. Second -- because it was my duty. And unless I'm mistaken, the Uniform Code of Military Justice requires me to do exactly what I've just done. I took an oath: "to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." Not the government. Not the Navy. The Constitution. I wasn't expecting any medals. But I didn't know I would be treated as a traitor.

Jackson stands up and leaves, surprising everyone in the room.

CONGRESSMAN WILLIAMS
Mr. Jackson! Mr. Jackson, you weren't dismissed!

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE
This hearing is adjourned.

CONGRESSMAN WILLIAMS
Congressman Kilgore, you can't possibly let him walk away like--

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE
I've said this hearing is
adjourned. We'll continue in the
afternoon. With the next witness.

Congressman Kilgore knocks his gavel, ending the circus.

INT. CONGRESS, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

D.A. James Simmons tries to comfort Jackson.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
Forget Congress. We've got enough
evidence to convict Primo and the
rest.

Jackson gathers his documents and prepares to leave.

JACKSON
This was never about Primo.

WILD BILL THOMAS
Hey, Popeye -- look at it this
way...
(scratches his head)
Sorry. I'm terrible at this. They
screwed us up.

Wild Bill Thomas taps Jackson on the shoulder and leaves with
no further explanation.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS
We can keep you under protection
until it's all over.

JACKSON
It's over. I tried. And I failed.
Maybe Miss Parker is right. Things
do change. Perhaps it's time for me
to go back to my life and try a
fresh start.

INT. UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE - DAY

Jackson waits in line for his turn to submit the paperwork
for unemployment benefits.

D.A. JAMES SIMMONS (O.S.)
Robert... I don't think they will
let you go this easily.

Jackson looks beaten down. The Clerk checks the computer.

CLERK

You don't have any unemployment benefits.

JACKSON

Excuse me?

CLERK

You've already applied and used up your unemployment benefits.

JACKSON

It's not possible. I just got out of the Navy.

The Clerk hands him a long form.

CLERK

Fill this out. They'll check out your story. You should have an answer in eight to twelve weeks. Until then... there's nothing I can do.

INT. BANK - DAY

Jackson, who now has a beard, seems more on edge, more anxious than before. He exhibits signs of severe depression and social disorder.

He waits for the BANK MANAGER.

BANK MANAGER

I'm afraid we can't get you a loan.

JACKSON

Why is that?

BANK MANAGER

Your student loan is in default.

JACKSON

I've never applied for a student loan.

BANK MANAGER

Someone with your social security number did.

INT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Jackson's house is a mess. All his windows are covered with paper. No light from the sun.

Empty dishes all around. Bottles of liquor left on the floor.

He looks like a patient in a mental institution.

Jackson reads his old newspaper article. The one with the interview he gave to Glenn Bunting.

He grabs the phone.

JACKSON

I'm trying to reach Mr. Bunting.

(pause)

Sure. Just -- give him the message, okay? Tell him Robert Jackson called. Thanks.

Jackson hangs up. A few moments later, the phone rings back.

DISTORTED VOICE (O.S.)

You should be careful who you talk to, Mr. Jackson. Or you may end up having a long talk with the undertaker. A permanent one.

JACKSON

Who is this? Who is this?!

The phone hangs up.

INT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - DAY (DIFFERENT DAY)

Jackson tries to call Glenn Bunting again.

JACKSON

Yeah, Glenn Bunting. Lady... I don't how many messages I left, but he hasn't--

(pause)

Sure. Sure... I can wait.

Frustrated, Jackson slams the phone.

Anxious, he waits for the phone to ring again with the mystery voice. Nothing.

Someone honks the horn on the street and scares Jackson. But the phone doesn't ring again.

INT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jackson stares at a row of empty bottles of spirit. He examines all the shelves and figures out he's out of liquor.

JACKSON

Great...

He bites a cold pizza, grabs the car keys, leaves the house, and enters...

EXT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...his old Volkswagen.

He accidentally drops the keys on the floor. It takes a moment until he finds them... Adjusts the rearview mirror... Takes a deep breath, trying to sober up.

The minute Jackson turns the ignition, a flame bursts under the back hood.

Jackson jumps out of the car just in time to see the engine catch fire, engulfing the car into flames.

The phone rings inside the house.

INT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jackson grabs the phone.

DISTORTED VOICE (O.S.)

Maybe our last message wasn't clear enough. It's not a question of whether we're going to kill you or not. It's about how much pain we'll inflict on you before we allow you to die.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Jackson sits in front of an African-American POLICE SERGEANT.

POLICE SERGEANT

You're saying that someone sabotaged your car? Let me get this straight: this is the third car that you lost this year?

JACKSON

It's probably someone from the
alphabet soup group.

POLICE SERGEANT

The alphabet soup?

JACKSON

The Intelligence agencies. CIA,
NSA, Naval Intelligence -- I don't
know. Maybe the Secretary of
Defense.

Another POLICE OFFICER discreetly laughs behind Jackson.

POLICE SERGEANT

(patronizing)

Caspar Weinberger is setting your
cars on fire? Alright. I see what's
going on here. Let's put it in our
report, and I'm quite sure someone
will figure it out.

EXT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - DAY

A female INSURANCE AGENT knocks at Jackson's door. No answer.

The door opens just a little, enough to show Jackson's eyes.

INSURANCE AGENT

Mr. Jackson... I tried to call you.
I'm afraid the insurance won't be
able to pay for your car. The
Police report says--

Closes the door.

INSURANCE AGENT (CONT'D)

Sir... are you okay? Is there
someone I should talk to?

No answer.

INT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Wrapped in blankets, Jackson holds a half-emptied bottle of
whiskey. He looks like shit.

The phone rings. Jackson ignores it.

After too many rings, Jackson decides to pick it up. He stays
mute.

At the other side of the line, Wild Bill Thomas is at a cheap hotel room in Tripoli (Libya).

INTERCUT - PHONE CALL WILD BILL THOMAS / JACKSON

WILD BILL THOMAS
Jackson? -- Popeye, is it you?

Jackson hesitates.

WILD BILL THOMAS (CONT'D)
Jackson? Jackson! -- We need to talk.

Jackson hangs up.

INT. JACKSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Beautiful day.

By the window, Jackson moves the paper away to take a peek at a kid playing with a dog who resembles Chipper. It makes Jackson discreetly smile.

The phone rings multiple times. Grumpy, he decides to answer it.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
May I speak to -- Robert Jackson?

JACKSON
Who is this?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
This is Pam, Ford's wife. Ford...
He passed away last night.
Pancreatic cancer. He made this
list of Navy colleagues that I
should call if... Anyway, there
will be a memorial tomorrow.

JACKSON
I'm... I'm sorry to hear it.

He hangs up the phone. Sick at heart, he starts drinking.

INT. JACKSON'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY (LATER)

It's raining now.

Half-drunk and mourning, Jackson flips several old photos of him and Ford in their SAR uniforms.

JACKSON'S FLASHBACK: FLORIDA SWAMP, SURVIVAL CAMP

Ford scolds Jackson.

FORD

I see it all the time, Jackson. The death-wish gaze. The reckless impulse. People who think they will be heroes, but are just fools trying to overcompensate the failures in their miserable lives.

END FLASHBACK

Jackson grabs the bottle of whiskey and throws it at the wall, shattering it apart.

He pants, walks out of the house, and goes to the...

EXT. FAT NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Soaking wet, Jackson knocks at the door. A FAT NEIGHBOR opens it.

FAT NEIGHBOR

May I help you, Mr. Jackson?

Jackson pushes his way in as he...

INT. FAT NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...looks for the phone.

JACKSON

I need to use your phone. Mine is tapped by... well it doesn't really matter who is tapping it.

Still surprised, the Fat Neighbor kind of allows it.

FAT NEIGHBOR

Uh... well... I guess -- it's okay.

Jackson finds the phone. Hesitates for a moment, grabs it, and dials a number.

WILD BILL THOMAS (O.S.)

Hello?

JACKSON

I'm here. What do you want me to do?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jackson waits alone in the table. He looks better but not okay.

The waiter hands him a note. Jackson reads it, stands up, and walks into the...

KITCHEN

Jackson moves through the dishes and pans as the COOKS and KITCHEN ASSISTANTS ignore him.

Wild Bill Thomas scans all the angles and checks if no one is following them.

WILD BILL THOMAS

This way.

They move into the...

EXT. BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Heavy rain. Jackson moves quickly into Wild Bill Thomas' car.

INT/EXT. WILD BILL THOMAS'S CAR, TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

Wild Bill Thomas drives.

JACKSON

Why didn't they kill me yet?

WILD BILL THOMAS

If you end up dead, your accusations will look legit. They need to make you look like a crazy guy first. They seem to be doing a good job, by the way.

JACKSON

You want my help or not?

Wild Bill Thomas smirks. He parks at the roadside and passes Hashemi's notebook to Jackson. And a pack of money.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
What's this?

WILD BILL THOMAS
Cyrus Hashemi's list.

Jackson examines it.

JACKSON
Who are these guys?

WILD BILL THOMAS
Arms dealers. Former members of the
Demavand Project.

JACKSON
Why don't you talk to them
yourself?

WILD BILL THOMAS
Those guys signed an immunity
agreement. Revealing a classified
list of informants working for the
Department of Justice would
undermine everything we've done in
the October Surprise Taskforce. I
can't touch this.

JACKSON
And that's why you're giving it to
me?

WILD BILL THOMAS
No. I'm giving it to you because
you deserve your payback, Popeye.

INT/EXT. PUBLIC PHONE - DAY

With a bag of quarters, Jackson makes a series of phone
calls. At each call, another name is crossed on Hashemi's
list.

JACKSON
I'd like to talk to General Bar-Am.
Hello? Hello?

Second call.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Can you tell him I've got a message
from... You can't?

Third call.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Dead? I'm sorry to hear it.

Fourth call.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
I would like to speak to... Mister
Nico Minardos.

At the other side of the line, seated in his posh living-room, NICO MINARDOS (50s), a Greek Hollywood actor that became an arms dealer, speaks in a calm tone.

NICO MINARDOS
Yes, this is him.

INTERCUT - PHONE CALL JACKSON / MINARDOS

Jackson wasn't expecting that.

JACKSON
Mr. Minardos. Did you work on the
Demavand Project?

A moment until Nico Minardos answers.

NICO MINARDOS
Sure. But I can't talk about that
on the phone.

Frantic, Jackson writes down the address as Nico Minardos spells it.

EXT. LOS ANGELES, NICO MINARDOS' HOUSE - DAY

A Hollywood mansion in Beverly Hills.

Looking like a movie star, Nico Minardos sits at his balcony eating a few slices of pineapple.

NICO MINARDOS
I'm a busy man, kid, so let's cut
to the chase. The reason I wanted
to talk to you is because -- I want
a new agreement. That's my price.

JACKSON
Agreement?

Nico Minardos cleans his mouth with a cloth napkin.

NICO MINARDOS

We had a deal, pal. I would be an informant, pay a fine, and would get immunity. I did my part. Full immunity, that's what I was told. The Vice-President himself would sign it. Now freakin Rudolph Giuliani is prosecuting us. Am I supposed to just take all this crap with a smile?

JACKSON

I'm afraid I don't have this kind of power, Mr. Minardos.

NICO MINARDOS

You're working with the CIA, aren't you? How would you know of the Demavand project otherwise?

Jackson shows him Hashemi's notebook.

NICO MINARDOS (CONT'D)

These are Hashemi's notes... Who -- who gave you this?

JACKSON

Hashemi is dead.

Shocked, Nico Minardos takes a moment to recover.

INT. NICO MINARDO'S HOUSE, OFFICE - DAY

Nico Minardos opens a safe and spreads some documents over the table.

NICO MINARDOS

These documents were Hashemi's life insurance. He asked me to give 'em to the press if he ended up dead. It seems the time has come.

JACKSON

The Demavand project?

NICO MINARDOS

They used to call us that. After we were arrested in Bermuda, they started to call us the "Brokers of Death."

Jackson tries to write down what Nico Minardos says as fast as he can.

NICO MINARDOS (CONT'D)

I'm not an arms dealer, okay? Write that down. I'm an actor. The only reason they called me is because I had the right friends in the right places -- back in the Middle East.

JACKSON

Why were you helping the Iranians?

NICO MINARDOS

Helping? Helping those fanatic zealots? We weren't helping the Iranians. I'm a patriotic guy. I was helping our Government.

JACKSON

So why send weapons to Iran?

NICO MINARDOS

It started with the Embassy hostages. Then -- there was this idea to keep it going so we could use the money to finance the "Contras" in Nicaragua.

JACKSON

You serious?

NICO MINARDOS

Operation Medical Supply. Me, Hashemi, General Bar-Am, and the other guys would get the crates in the port, sell the weapons to the Iranians, and fly Khomeini's money back to Nicaragua. We delivered the money to the Contras so they could fight the Sandinista commies.

JACKSON

Are you saying our Government was also interfering in Nicaragua?

NICO MINARDOS

Do you think the Russians forbid the Kremlin to finance Communist regimes? This Congressional Amendment is a joke. Colonel Oliver North explained the plan for us, and we promised to help as we could. Admiral Poindexter made the arrangements in the Navy. For a small fee, we all talked to our friends in the Middle East.

(MORE)

NICO MINARDOS (CONT'D)

The problem was... It seems that the Contras weren't really interested in fighting the commies. They were using the money to become partners of the Mexican Drug Cartels. At this point, it all went south.

JACKSON

Mr. Minardos. No offense but... I'm not sure how anyone would believe in all this.

Nico Minardos cleans his shades.

NICO MINARDOS

Hashemi stole the CIA files. I've got 'em right here. I can give you a copy. With Hashemi dead... the deal is off anyway.

He hands Jackson a set of documents.

NICO MINARDOS (CONT'D)

This is all you need. If I go down, they'll all go down. Oliver North. Admiral Poindexter. The Contras. Even the White House.

INT. LAX AIRPORT, PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Jackson paces through the LAX terminal, avoiding the security cameras.

He speaks with Randy using a public telephone.

RANDY (O.S.)

Jackson... Minardo's case is sealed by a Federal Court. Printing his allegations would directly violate a Court order. No newspaper in this country would print any of this.

Jackson hangs up. Second call.

JACKSON

Bill? I've got the papers. This is too hot. We need to make it public. Do you know anyone outside the US who would agree to print this?

WILD BILL THOMAS (O.S.)
 Um... Have you ever been to
 Lebanon?

INT. AIRPLANE, CABIN - DAY

Jackson walks to his seat in a Middle-Eastern airline, full of Arabic and Lebanese PASSENGERS.

EXT. AIRPLANE, LANDING - DAY

The plane lands at Beirut, Lebanon.

INT. BEIRUT, CUSTOMS - DAY

Nervous, Jackson passes through the Lebanese customs.

A suspicious LEBANESE OFFICER examines Jackson's passport with rapt attention.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Wearing local clothes, Jackson walks through Beirut International Airport in quick steps.

INT. ASH-SHIRAA MAGAZINE, OFFICE - DAY

An editing room which belongs to the Lebanese magazine Ash-Shiraa.

Jackson sits with Hassan Sabra, who reads Jackson's notes.

HASSAN SABRA
 Bill Thomas is a good friend,
 but... Do you understand the
 repercussions of all this?

JACKSON
 No. I don't. I'm not really here.
 And I'm certainly not giving you
 any CIA documents.

Jackson shows the set of CIA papers. Hassan Sabra grabs the documents, but Jackson still holds it.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 Do we have a deal?

Hassan Sabra ponders for a moment, then concurs.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Multiples homes, families, and places. PEOPLE watch the TV as the shocking news is announced.

TV images intercut with the action images, as the TV audio goes on.

- 1) National news program.

NEWS ANCHOR

After Ash-Shiraa Magazine denounced a secret agreement between the US Government and Iran to finance the "Contra" guerrillas in Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan government have shot down an airplane which was transporting AK-47 rifles and ammunition to the rebels. According to local authorities, the plane belonged to the CIA.

- 2) Multiple Navy AUTHORITIES and NIS Officers are arrested by the members of the October Surprise Task Force.

- 3) Political debate program.

POLITICAL ANALYST

The thing is, these Nicaraguan Contras aren't the founding fathers. They're vicious drug dealers. We weren't financing freedom fighters, we were funding drug lords like Pablo Escobar and Manuel Noriega.

- 4) FBI AGENTS open wooden crates labeled as medical supplies. They're filled with weapons and money.

- 5) Surrounded by packs of cash and cocaine, a group of "Contras" guerrilla SOLDIERS are executed by CARTEL HITMEN.

- 6) Congressman Kilgore is interviewed on the TV.

CONGRESSMAN KILGORE

This Administration lied to the Congress, lied to the American people, and violated the Boland Amendment. Someone will have to pay for this.

- 7) In Iran, IRANIAN AUTHORITIES involved in the deal with the US are arrested by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Ayatollah Khomeini makes a furious speech against the West.

8) In his Army uniform, COLONEL OLIVER NORTH testifies before Congress (historical footage).

OLIVER NORTH

I did so with a purpose. I saw the idea of using the Ayatollah Khomeini's money to support the Nicaraguan freedom fighters as a good one. I still do. I don't think it was wrong. I think it was a neat idea.

9) Images from the Tower Commission (President's Special Review Board).

CIA AUTHORITIES are summoned to testify.

10) President Ronald Reagan gives a speech.

RONALD REAGAN

Colonel North and Admiral Poindexter believed they were doing what I would've wanted done -- keeping the democratic resistance alive in Nicaragua. I believed then, and I believe now, in preventing the Soviets from establishing a beachhead in Central America. The fact of the matter is that there's nothing I can say that will make the situation right.

10) As the President speaks:

- Authorities arrested in Iran are hanged to death;
- CDR. Hartwig shoots himself;
- A PERSON in a black uniform cuts the throat of a CIA AGENT, who was sleeping in his bed.

11) In his room, Jackson watches the end of Ronald Reagan's speech.

He turns off the TV with a sense of sadness. Sad he lost his honor doing his duty.

END OF SHOTS

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

SUPER: "Twenty years later."

A small bookstore in Oregon.

A short line of people waits to get an autograph from the book's author.

This is Jackson, who autographs multiple copies of his book, "Running Scared."

Dave is at his side. And so is Jackson's service bulldog (for veterans with PTSD).

ANGELA (O.S.)

Bohica.

A much older Jackson raises his eyes and finds Angela.

BOOKSTORE AISLES

They walk through the bookstore. NOELANI KIA JACKSON (40s) is with them.

JACKSON

This is my wife. Noelani.

Angela greets her.

ANGELA

You finally did it. You really wrote the book.

JACKSON

The joke is... nobody cares. After twenty years, nobody seems to care. "It's easier to fool people than to convince them that they've been fooled."

ANGELA

You look happier now.

JACKSON

When you're twenty-six, you think you have to change the world. Now... I'm just happy I found the girl.

Angela grins.

ANGELA

Some time ago -- I think I said you were as stubborn as a llama.

JACKSON

A blind llama, actually.

ANGELA

Please don't change that.

Angela prepares to leave. Jackson interrupts her.

JACKSON

I've been thinking about starting to write for young adults. Stories about -- wizards and fairies.

Angela glances at a couple of CHILDREN playing with crayons.

ANGELA

It will be easier to convince them that those stories are true.

Jackson smiles.

FADE TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK

Historical photographs show the actual characters and what happened to them.

SUPER: "Colonel Oliver North was indicted on 16 felony counts and sentenced to 1,200 hours of community service. Later, his convictions were all vacated. He hosted a program on Fox News and was elected president of the National Rifle Association (NRA), from 2018 to 2019."

SUPER: "Admiral John Poindexter was accused of being the leader of the conspiracy that used the US Navy to transfer weapons to Iran. He was convicted of five counts, which were all reversed on appeal. After 9/11 he was appointed by Dick Cheney to head an anti-terrorist organization."

SUPER: "Four CIA officers and five government contractors were also prosecuted. Although all were found guilty of charges ranging from conspiracy to perjury to fraud, only one private contractor has served time in prison."

SUPER: "Primo Cayabyab was sentenced to six years in prison on charges of conspiracy, theft of government property, and exportation of defense materiel. Later he was sent to a mental institution in Springfield, Missouri."

Super: "After the scandal came to light, Nico Minardos gave an interview to '60 Minutes' acknowledging his involvement in the Iran-Contra affair. Although his indictment was eventually thrown out, it ended his Hollywood career."

SUPER: "Robert W. Jackson lives with his wife, Noelani Kia Jackson, in Portland, Oregon, where he writes fantasy books for young adults and runs a charity for kids with cancer. He still suffers from PTSD and rarely leaves his home."

- images of Jackson as a Petty Officer and his medals, evaluations, and documents.

SUPER: "The Navy never thanked him for exposing Primo's ring."

FADE OUT.