

A Hero's Journey

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

JOHN, 20s, dressed in an Army uniform, a gun and holster strapped to his hip, enters the church.

He walks up the aisle, past rows of pews, finally taking a seat in the front row, just a few feet from the pulpit.

He looks up, eyes fixed on...

A CROSS

hangs on the wall in front of the pulpit.

JOHN
Where are you God?

John draws his gun
studies it, for a moment
raises the barrel to his right temple
places his finger on the trigger.

BLACK SCREEN

GUN COCKING SOUND

FATHER (V.O.)
How he got to this point is a story
in itself, and I'm here to tell it.

FADE IN:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

SUPER: "AFGHANISTAN"

The dim outlines of houses show through the pitch blackness.

FATHER (V.O.)
It all started one month ago when
Lieutenant John Tucker was on curfew
patrol in Afghanistan... to make
sure no one was on the road.

CLOTHES, AND RUBBLE

litter the roadway running between rows of houses.

FATHER (V.O.) (cont'd)
He didn't want to stray from his
post that encompassed an area about
a football field in length.

A LOUD NOISE

is heard from a distance.

John treads lightly, and hears a GIRL SCREAM.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

FATHER (V.O.)
This was a normal occurrence, but
what he saw next is what would
change his life.

A GIRL lies on the ground.

GIRL
Don't... No... Stop!

The MAN's pants are around his ankles, and his hands are on
her wrists to hold her down.

A TEEN BOY is straps a vest of explosives to the girl as the
man rapes her.

FATHER (V.O.)
He didn't know her age, but guessed
she was around eleven.

John

STEADILY

gets in closer

GUN

at the ready.

JOHN
(yells)
What in the hell are you doing?

The boy and the man speedily look up the man having to turn
his head.

(NOTE: The dialogue in this scene is spoken in Dari and is
subtitled in English.)

MAN

None of your damn business American.

JOHN

Hell it ain't! Get off of her.

John brings his rifle up and waves it for the man to get off.

JOHN (cont'd)

I'll shoot you if you don't get off of her.

A few more seconds pass.

MAN

I'm done anyway

JOHN

You're a sick bastard.

With his finger on the trigger, he holds back. He trembles a bit.

FATHER (V.O.)

At this moment, he wanted to blow the man's brains out.

MAN

No, I'm not.

The man rises off the girl.

Then he yanks his pants up.

The girl lies on the ground crying loudly. Blood seeps from her vagina, a puddle beneath her.

The teen boy finishes with the final clip of the vest. Then he gets up and walks toward a back room of the house.

JOHN

You are just a sick piece of shit, you know that, right?

MAN

Whatever... She is my niece. She is a Christian.

JOHN

You just raped your own niece. What does her Faith have to do with it?

John approaches the girl as the man moves back.

JOHN (cont'd)
You're really a sick son of a bitch.
Why did you strap this bomb to her?

MAN
For you American bastards.

JOHN
Why do you have such ill will
against us?

MAN
Because you have come to our country
and have tried to save that which
can't be saved.

The man shuffles toward the back room.

MAN (cont'd)
When she gets done crying she is
going to go to your base, and then
her bomb will go off, taking you
Americans with her.

JOHN
Not if I can help it.

John pulls the girl's underwear up, and pulls down her dress
like clothes.

He helps her off the ground.

John's bashed in the head.

DARKNESS

over takes him.

BLACK SCREEN

FADE IN:

John comes to and slowly gets up... rubs his head... his
vision blurry.

He staggeringly runs out of the little home back toward the
base.

EXT. BASE - NIGHT

He was just yards from the base when it

EXPLODES.

John is THROWN BACK hits a building. John moves slowly to get up. He grabs his side; ribs broken.

INT. BASE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

John runs back into the flames to find survivors.

JOHN

FUCK, GOD! I was I was supposed to stay at my post, at my ready for this. Fuck, what have I done? I have not done. Why did this happen?

He finds bodies charred by the fire and ash all around the base.

JOHN (cont'd)

Why didn't I kill that sick Fuck the moment I saw the girl? God, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, what... what have I done?

John carries a few bodies from under debris and rubble.

FATHER (V.O.)

He was honored for saving the very few that had survived, most losing a limb and almost all-experiencing PTSD. He never thought that he should live, and yet somehow he survived with no more than a few broken ribs.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The FATHER moves toward John.

FATHER

(shouts)

Stop!

(quickly walks)

What are you doing? You don't want to do that, son. Trust me.

JOHN

Why, not?

(distraught)

I don't deserve to be alive with
what I saw and what I didn't do.

John still with the gun to his head.

FATHER

God has known your path and why you
are still here with us.

The Father is near John as he sits down in the pew.

JOHN

God? Fuck God!

FATHER

Really! Son, you should watch your
tongue. This is a holy place.

JOHN

I don't even know how I got here.

FATHER

The Lord led you here, my son.

JOHN

You're not my father, don't call me
son.

FATHER

Sorry!

The Father pulls at his collar.

FATHER (cont'd)

You shouldn't be sorry for what you
didn't do or saw... in the war?

JOHN

Yeah... duh... I have a gun to my
head, and I'm wearing my camouflage.

FATHER

Yes, I see.

They talk. MOS

BLACK SCREEN

SOUND OF JOHN SOBBING

FATHER (V.O.)
We talked until the tears dried from
his eyes.

FADE IN:

BACK TO SCENE

John finally puts the gun down.

FATHER (V.O.) (cont'd)
He told me of the dreams he had, and
he told me how he got to the church.
That night he didn't take his life.

The Father takes the gun away.

EXT. BUILDING ON FIRE - NIGHT

There are people running from the building.

John walks down the sidewalk head held down hands in his
pants pockets.

He turns his head to a shouting girl in a third story
window.

He runs toward the building. Fire comes from the door.
People try to hold him back. He breaks free.

FATHER (V.O.)
He died saving a girl from a fire.

John is in the building running up stairs. Yells but nothing
is heard.

John gets to the level that the girl is on
runs to her,
picks her up,
starts to run down the stairs
the stairs and ceiling start to collapse
John reaches the bottom of the stairs
he puts the girl down.

Debris falls John PUSHES the girl out of the way.

A BEAM IMPALES him.

JOHN
RUN!!

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Father speaking. MOS

FATHER (V.O.)

One week later, I spoke at his
funeral.

People softly toss ROSES on Johns coffin.

FATHER (V.O.) (cont'd)

I know God saved him to save that
girl from the fire so that he could
feel redeemed.

They lower John's coffin.

FATHER (V.O.) (cont'd)

And then... then it was his time to
go home.

FADE TO BLACK.