

'Nam

written by

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OVER BLACK:

SUPERIMPOSE: "Khe Sanh, Vietnam, 1968."

EXT. NORTH VIETNAM - JUNGLE - NIGHT

The mountains of Vietnam are smothered in fog. Beneath them sprawls the dense, all-consuming JUNGLE.

In its tangled midst, dark smoke billows a mile high. The smoke leads us deeper into the jungle, where --

A smoking BURN PIT is being utilized by a pair of VIETCONG SOLDIERS (20s).

One of the soldiers has a TWINE NECKLACE around his neck, the pendant tucked into his shirt.

The Vietcong drag American bodies toward the pit. They grab one by the arms and legs, before swinging him into the fire.

They move to retrieve a couple more dead Americans. One is pulled by his hair toward the fiery pit. Another is dragged by his feet. They create a ghoulish stack nearby.

The Vietcong soldiers stop for a break. They take a seat on one of the body piles, rummaging through American backpacks. One pulls out a can of beans, they pop it open and chow down.

While they eat, they laugh and mock the Americans they've recently slaughtered. One drops to his knees pretending to beg for his life.

VIETCONG 1
(faux-English)
Please... Please.

The other spits out his beans, laughing like a madman.

VIETCONG 2
(faux-English)
I have a family!

Their laughter, loud and obnoxious, echoes through the woods.

We GLIDE IN on the pile of corpses. Closer, closer... then --

One of the bodies MOVES slightly. He's still ALIVE!

This is NIKKI HENDRIX (30s), a Southern-Fried tattooed bruiser with a barrel chest and a severe buzz cut. His slate eyes slowly open. The Vietcong have no idea.

He closes his eyes listening to the enemy, trying to stay undetected. They now speak in VIETNAMESE, with SUBTITLES:

VIETCONG 1
The stack is starting to stink.

VIETCONG 2
They all smelled like wet dogs when they were alive.

VIETCONG 1
Good thing we put them down, then.

The Soldiers cackle, Hyena-like.

Despite the language barrier, he realizes these soldiers are talking about his dead comrades. He's filled with rage, his face trembling. He searches for a weapon.

VIETCONG 2
Just as long as they *stay* down.
I've heard rumors...

VIETCONG 1
Best not to even talk about *her*.
(tugging twine necklace)
Besides, I told you, my grandma has
me protected.

VIETCONG 2
(sucking teeth)
Superstitious jackass.

The corpse Hendrix stacked on top of has a machete on its belt. He reaches for it, slowly sliding it off the belt.

The Vietcong finish their break and take a look around. They walk up to where Hendrix lies.

VIETCONG 2 (CONT'D)
Let's get rid of this one first.

VIETCONG 1
I don't know. He looks heavy.

VIETCONG 2
Oh, stop whining, would you?

Hendrix sweats with anticipation.

They both grab hold of him, dragging him toward the pit, but at the last second he --

Grabs one of them by the wrist, catching him off guard, yanking him toward the pit!

The enemy soldier is thrown face-first into the FIRE. He jumps out, engulfed in flames. He runs around screaming as his flesh chars, then collapses into a heap.

The other enemy soldier rushes Hendrix, who pulls the machete. They grapple fervently for the blade.

Hendrix rips it from his hands, lifting it high above his head and BURYING it half-way through the man's neck. Blood gushes all over his body.

He stumbles around, leaking plasma at an incredible rate. Hendrix grabs the handle of the Machete and YANKS it loose with a jerky motion, killing the enemy instantly.

Hendrix is rocked by the adrenaline dump, he doubles over coughing and gagging.

HENDRIX
Cocksuckers.

He notices the ground around him is littered with American bodies. He walks around, respectfully removing the tags from their necks.

He then stands over one of the Vietcong soldiers, removing the TWINE NECKLACE from around his throat.

He then hears a GROAN of pain, emanating from the other side of the tree. Hendrix lays down. He sneaks around the tree to find --

A man tied to it. A fellow MARINE.

JACK BENNETT, (30s), the thinking man's soldier, circular-rimmed glasses, shaggy and lanky with a mane of wavy hair.

He's evidently been in the bush far too long, bruised and half-petrified. He hangs his head, nose bleeding heavily.

Hendrix kneels down and taps on his leg.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Hey... hey. Bennett, that you?

Bennett open's his eyes, but his vision is blurred.

BENNETT
Hendrix? You real or an illusion?

HENDRIX

Real, far as I know. Look at me,
I'm gonna cut ya loose. We have to
get the fuck out of here.

BENNETT

Nowhere to go.

HENDRIX

We'll worry about that next, hoss.

Hendrix pulls his machete and cuts the rope binding Bennett.

BENNETT

I owe you one.

HENDRIX

Or ten. Why ain't you a rotisserie
chicken right now?

Bennett groggily climbs to his feet, rubbing his wrists.

BENNETT

They were going to torture me
first. Suppose I pissed them off.

HENDRIX

From what I hear they've been
strappin' our boys to poles, force-
feeding 'em milk and honey, then
letting the bugs eat 'em alive 'til
their guts pop like water balloons.

BENNETT

Another classic Hendrix whopper.

HENDRIX

Keep telling yourself that. Where's
the rest of the squad?

BENNETT

What squad? Everyone's dead.

HENDRIX

Bullshit. I didn't see any of 'em
in the pile. That means they can't
be far. Pretty sure they carried
the Captain off, and a few others.

BENNETT

Didn't think there was anyone left.

HENDRIX

That's 'cause you're a pessimist.

Leaves rustle, twigs and sticks snapping. FOOTSTEPS!

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Shit. Pretend you're still tied up.

BENNETT
I've been tied up long enough.

Hendrix gets in his face.

HENDRIX
When I make a move, you back me.

A look of hesitation on Bennett's bloodied face. Hendrix grabs him.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
You hear me, Marine?!

BENNETT
Don't get your panties in a twist.

Bennett leans back against the tree, pretending to be unconscious. Hendrix hides behind an outcropping of rocks.

Three Vietcong soldiers arrive to relieve the others Hendrix just killed. They have AK-47s slung over their shoulders.

The enemy soldiers quickly find one of their fellow Vietcong, face down in the dirt, burnt beyond recognition. They yell at each other before turning to Bennett, walking toward him.

Before they reach him --

Hendrix throws his machete across the burn pit like a fastball pitch. *WHUMP!* It nails one of the soldiers center mass, impaling his breast bone.

He screams, dropping to his knees. The other enemy soldier points his AK-47 at Hendrix, but Bennett charges him from behind, tackling him and knocking his rifle in the dirt.

The soldier grabs Bennett by his leg, tugging him to the ground. They roll around, trading fierce punches.

They get to their feet where Bennett rag-dolls the soldier, against a tree. Hendrix picks up the AK-47 and lets it rip.

BRRRRAT! The Vietcong soldier is pumped full of holes.

ANGLE ON: The third Vietcong soldier shoves Bennett against a large boulder. He tries gouging Bennett's eyes out with his LONG FINGERNAILS before lunging at his face.

Bennett holds him back, shaking against the strain. Like a wild animal, the Viet Cong SCRAPES his nails across Bennett's face, drawing blood.

Hendrix tries to fire but -- *CLICK!* His gun jams.

HENDRIX
Piece of shit!

Bennett kicks the Viet Cong between the legs, then grabs his collar and headbutts him twice, putting him on his ass.

Hendrix turns the jammed AK-47 around and pummels the soldier with its wooden butt, bashing his face in.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Fuckin' die already!

Bennett clutches his face as blood drips down it.

BENNETT
Goddamn Charlie scratched me!

FLASHLIGHTS begin scanning the jungle around them. Vietnamese commands echo out.

HENDRIX
That's the least of our worries. We gotta get out of Dodge STAT!

BENNETT
I don't think that's in the cards for me. I'm too jacked up.

HENDRIX
The fellas can't be far. We stay alive for them. Stick behind me!

Hendrix picks up two AKs off the dead Vietcong. He hands one to Bennett. As the flashlights get closer, the men sprint in the other direction.

TIME CUT:

Moments later, they stop in a remote clearing. They huff and puff, trying to catch their breath.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Let's make our stand right here, set a counter-ambush.

BENNETT
I'm not crazy about this idea.

HENDRIX
You got a better one?!

Hendrix points out a spot behind some bushes.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Lay there until you hear gunfire.

Bennett follows his directions. Hendrix sets himself up behind a large tree. They hide in total darkness.

The voices get louder and louder, sporadic gunfire as the enemy searches for them.

The flashlights get very close, then stop moving. One at a time, the flashlights shut off.

They wait in silent darkness. HEARTS POUNDING. A beat. Then --

A branch SNAPS! A flashlight beam illuminates RIGHT BEHIND the pair, illuminating the sunken face of a Vietcong Soldier!

The Soldier aims to shoot but before he can, Hendrix whips around, lifts his rifle and LETS LOOSE.

Gunfire RIPS through the soldier, then strafes the entire jungle. Bennett joins him in unleashing a fearsome volley.

MUZZLE FLASH lights up the area revealing several Vietcong soldiers. They return fire, but they're too slow to stop the counter-ambush and are MOWED DOWN by hot lead.

Bennett screams, face covered in blood. With every flash of gunfire, the enemy soldiers become less and less. Seven soldiers become five. Five become two.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Reload so we can keep moving!

Bennett looks about, still somewhat dazed by the bloody frenzy surrounding him.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
I said *reload*, Poindexter!

Rattled into reality, Bennett sets about grabbing ammo off the dead Vietcong.

They run as fast as their legs will carry them.

EXT. NORTH VIETNAM - JUNGLE - NIGHT

Hendrix and Bennett's platoon-mates, the survivors of a gnarly firefight, are locked in bamboo prison cells, guarded by soldiers with automatic weapons.

INT. BAMBOO CELL ONE - NIGHT

In the first cell is NORMAN DUKE, (40s), a captain with the attitude to match, clean-shaven and officious. He holds his parallel SILVER-BAR PIN, rubbing at it.

DUKE

They've ruined my Captain Bars.

Right by his side, WILLIAM "DOC" LEWIS, (late 30s), cynical and rangy, permanent five o'clock shadow on his face, stares off into the distance blankly.

LEWIS

Forgive me if I'm not all broken up
about your little trinket, Cap.

DEAN (O.S.)

Pipe down in there!

INT. BAMBOO CELL TWO - CONTINUOUS

In the neighboring cell is "MEAN" MICHEAL DEAN, (30s), an ugly son of a bitch with bad teeth and a foul temperament. Gnarled burn scars snake up his neck.

DEAN

This ain't debate club.

The Vietcong soldier guarding their cell BARKS angrily at Dean in Vietnamese.

DEAN (CONT'D)

I'm trying to help you out, gook!

JACOB (O.S.)

Don't call 'em that.

Dean turns to see CHRISTOPHER JACOB, (20s), a baby-faced sniper sporting a crucifix around his neck.

JACOB (CONT'D)

We're all children under God.

DEAN
Save the gospel routine, church-
mouse.

Shaking his head, Jacob takes a knee to pray.

EXT. BAMBOO CELLS - JUNGLE - NIGHT

Bennett and Hendrix reach the cells. Hendrix signals Bennett to move past the pond and wait on the other side. Goats, chickens and pigs roam the area.

Hendrix takes a look. He raises his rifle, watching the guards through his scope as they circle the captured marines.

Nearby is a bamboo hut, around which the Vietcong soldiers and civilians are all mixed together in a stew of humanity.

INT. BAMBOO CELL ONE - NIGHT

As Duke looks around the jungle, the sun reflecting off Hendrix's scope beams into his eye. He grabs Lewis by the shirt and yanks him down. They hit the deck.

INT. BAMBOO CELL TWO - NIGHT

Dean and Jacob lay on the ground after watching their comrades do the same. Dean whispers to the Captain.

DEAN
What is it?

JACOB
Cavalry.

EXT. BAMBOO CELLS - JUNGLE - NIGHT

The guards look at the prisoners bewildered when --

AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE ERUPTS from behind a crowd of goats.

Bullets tear through the area, including the cells, cutting down the bamboo walls. Hendrix takes two guards out with the first burst of gunfire.

Not missing a beat, Duke rams through one of the damaged bamboo walls, crashing to the ground outside the cell.

He crawls under the gunfire to get to one of the dead guard's rifles.

One of the guards mows down the goats in front of Hendrix. A couple rounds pop through the hapless animals and --

Strike Hendrix in the gut! He goes down, moaning.

BENNETT

Hendrix!

Bennett pops up around a giant tree to return fire. He drops the other guards in a heartbeat.

Duke hops to his feet to help Lewis break the other two Marines free. The civilians flee into the jungle.

DEAN (O.S.)

Hurry goddamn it! They're coming!

Dean and Jacob break free, panting, back to back when --

WHOOSH! A wall of FIRE blasts forth, lighting the jungle around them ablaze.

REVERSE: One of the incoming SOLDIERS wields a FLAMETHROWER. He takes aim at Dean and Jacob, about to spew hellfire again --
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But Bennett takes one shot at the Flamethrower, hitting the tank.

BOOOM! The tank explodes, ripping the guard into smoldering pieces. Errant flames land on Lewis. He panics!

He stands up screaming, and runs toward a pond sitting behind a bamboo hut. He dives into the pond.

The other guard, a particularly YOUNG SOLDIER, sprays bullets toward Bennett, but he ducks behind the tree.

The young soldier catches Jacob and Dean moving in the corner of his vision. He turns, spraying the rest of his rounds at them. Jacob runs into the hut by the pond.

Dean gets caught out in the open.

DEAN (CONT'D)

No, no, not like this --

BRRRATT! His prone frame is sprayed with bullets, killing him instantly.

EXT. BAMBOO CELLS - JUNGLE - CONTINUOUS

Duke races over to Hendrix, dragging him to cover. The YOUNG VIETCONG SOLDIER reloads nearby. Bennett raises his rifle, but he's out of AMMO.

He sprints at the Vietcong soldier, but he sees Bennett coming. It's a *RACE!*

The soldier pops a new magazine in, but Bennett gets there first, tackling him like a linebacker.

They roll around before Bennett gets the upper hand, pummeling the soldier within an inch of his life.

DUKE (O.S.)
Need backup! Hendrix is hit!

Bennett slugs the soldier one last time, knocking him out cold. He then races over to Duke and Hendrix outside the hut. He passes Dean's body, riddled with bullets.

BENNETT
Jesus, Dean.

DUKE
Poor SOB never had a chance.

BENNETT
Where's Lewis?

DUKE
In the fuckin' water!

Bennett looks over to see Lewis floating face down, still smoking. Bennett ROARS in primal anger.

Jacob comes out of the hut to find complete devastation.

JACOB
Dear Lord...

Duke and Bennett work on Hendrix.

BENNETT
Keep the pressure on him!

DUKE
Hang on!

Hendrix groggily looks toward the hut, he hears something over all the chaos.

HENDRIX

There's people in there. Check it out.

BENNETT

But --

HENDRIX

If I die, I die. *Look.*

Bennett draws his pistol, slowly approaching the hut. As he gets closer, the chanting becomes louder. He reaches for the flap, goes to peek inside --

INT. BAMBOO HUT - NIGHT

At once, the chanting STOPS. All is dark and silent. At the far end of the hut, Bennett can make out a shaded silhouette.

BENNETT

You there... Don't move!

A beat. A raspy WHEEZE emanates from the figure. Then, in an instant, it SNAPS around and SCUTTLES towards Bennett with surprising speed, revealing --

An ancient, gnarled WITCH (100+), craggy skin, whited-out eyes, missing teeth, body bent and distorted!

WITCH

(ethereally deep)

De lai day!

Bennett backs off, startled. The Witch clambers back over to her prior position. We now see she is bent over a DEAD WOMAN'S BODY, torn asunder by bullet holes.

The Witch repeats her ethereal chant again and again.

EXT. BAMBOO HUT - JUNGLE - CONTINUOUS

Shaken, Bennett waves over the Captain.

BENNETT

Cap, you gotta see this.

Duke hurries over and peers in, perplexed.

DUKE

Ugly old bat. What's she doing?

BENNETT
I don't know.

HENDRIX (O.S.)
Phù thuy.

The men turn to Hendrix.

DUKE
Gesundheit.

HENDRIX
It's witchcraft. Viet' Voodoo.
She's repeating some kind of
sumpa... their word for a spell.

They look back inside the hut.

INT. BAMBOO HUT - CONTINUOUS

The Witch's chant reaches a fever pitch. A beat. Then --

GASP! The Dead Woman LURCHES upright, sucking in air!

BENNETT (O.S.)
Jesus Christ!

The WITCH wipes the woman's face down as she looks around,
confused and frightened.

They speak in VIETNAMESE with SUBTITLES:

DEAD WOMAN
Where... where am I?

WITCH
Back among us, dear.

EXT. BAMBOO HUT - JUNGLE - NIGHT

Bennett and Duke back away from the hut.

DUKE
Did she just... heal her?

BENNETT
Gotta be an LSD flashback.

Duke runs a hand through his hair, walks off. Bennett
follows.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

DUKE
We have to collect the men.

BENNETT
Are you kidding me? Did you see
what just happened in there?

DUKE
I don't give a shit if that crone
did some freak show magic on her
friend. I'm going to put both of
those slants in the ground!

A COUGH rings out nearby. The YOUNG VIETCONG SOLDIER regains consciousness.

DUKE (CONT'D)
Jacob! Nail his ass!

Jacob turns to the Vietcong soldier, bruised and battered by Bennett. He tries to climb to his feet, but Jacob rushes him and shoves him back down.

He shoves his face in the mud and pulls a pair of shackles off him, slapping them on in a hurry. He stands him up and shoves him toward the hut.

JACOB
Got a live one.

DUKE
That's the one who shot Dean!

Duke hops up and rushes toward him. Jacob pushes him down to his knees.

JACOB
He's a POW, we're not killing him!

DUKE
That sounds like traitor talk,
choir boy!

Duke grabs the blade off a dead guard and goes to slit the soldier's throat when --

Out of nowhere, the Witch comes HURTLING in with unnatural agility, blocking Duke's path with a piercing SCREAM!

She points to the tent, shouting frantically in Vietnamese. Duke holds the knife shakily toward her.

DUKE (CONT'D)
I don't talk Chop Suey, lady!

Just then, the DEAD WOMAN comes charging out of the tent, lurching back toward the jungle.

Bennett runs over and manages to stop her. She thrashes against his grip, hissing and growling like a feral creature.

BENNETT
Look, Duke!

Bennett pulls the woman's bloody clothes up -- NO INJURIES. He throws her in the mud. The Witch continues to yell.

DUKE
Someone shut her up!

Jacob snatches the Witch, while Duke yanks up the soldier, knife to his throat.

HENDRIX
Wait!

Hendrix crawls up to the group. The Witch WAILS hysterically.

DUKE
I'm through waiting! It's an eye
for an eye!

HENDRIX
Don't you get it? That's her son.

Lightning FLASHES in the distance, followed by a roll of thunder. Rain begins to pelt down upon them.

DUKE
Wrong, this *was* her son.

HENDRIX
You don't wanna do that. We can use
her!

DUKE
She ain't my type.

HENDRIX
Not like that, moron. She healed
that woman...

BENNETT
(realizing)
So she can heal you.

HENDRIX

She was chanting, telling that
broad to rise and be free of pain.
She brought her back from the dead!
Maybe she can even bring the others
back, too!

The rain is DUMPING down now, wind howling away. They have to
shout to communicate.

JACOB

It's not Godly. Black magic!

HENDRIX

Whatever it is, it's the best
chance we've got!

DUKE

Horsehit! You must have seen wrong.
Maybe she wasn't dead.

HENDRIX

You know that isn't true. Release
the kid and we'll make a bargain.

DUKE

He killed Dean, he's not walking
out of here!

Duke goes to slice the young soldier's throat --

BENNETT

Wait! He's right. You want to talk
about Dean, well what if he could
come back to life?

Duke falters, torn.

HENDRIX

Let me talk to her. I'll tell her
to heal us and we'll let him and
her leave.

JACOB

That's blasphemy! You don't make
deals with the devil.

Hendrix spits up blood when he shouts.

HENDRIX

I'm about to meet the devil in five
minutes if we don't get this done!

BENNETT

We have to try, Duke. We owe it to
Dean and Lewis.

Duke mulls it over. Nods begrudgingly.

DUKE

Fine. But I don't like it one bit.

Hendrix looks at the Witch. They speak in VIETNAMESE WITH
SUBTITLES:

HENDRIX

You and your son can leave here
with your lives if you can allow us
to leave with ours. Heal all of us.
Every one.

She looks at him pointedly.

WITCH

Him for you. Only you.

HENDRIX

I said everyone!

The Witch shakes her head up and down.

BENNETT

Jacob, fish Lewis out of the water.
I'll get Dean.

Jacob clutches his crucifix.

JACOB

I want no parts of this!

DUKE

That's an order!

Duke shoves Jacob.

JACOB

We can't cheat death, if it's our
fate, we have to allow our Savior --

DUKE

You don't answer to your Savior,
you answer to me. Now go!

Jacob sighs, but follows his orders.

The Witch kneels down beside Hendrix, rubbing his stomach. He
moans, trembling, seconds away from shock.

She pours a vial of dark liquid into her hands and massages his stomach wounds.

Bennett and Jacob pull Dean and Lewis up to the Witch as she finishes working on Hendrix's wounds.

DUKE (CONT'D)
She'd better hurry up or we won't
make the rendezvous time.

JACOB
What's the point? We're all damned.

The Witch moves over to Lewis, his body still smoldering. She places a hand on him, mumbling to herself.

As if on command, the smoke stops rising. She rolls him over on his back and rubs his chest.

After a beat, she pulls up his sleeve revealing an arm dotted with puncture marks. They look infected, purple and red. She rubs the area and pulls his sleeve back down.

BENNETT
Was he shooting up horse?

DUKE
Wouldn't blame him.

Hendrix grabs Bennett, excited.

HENDRIX
Bennett, I think it's working. I
don't feel the pain.

Bennett helps him stand.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
It's not a numbness like morphine,
either. It's just... gone.

Hendrix lifts his shirt. The bullet holes remain but are no longer bleeding.

He watches the Witch moves on to massage Dean's wounds. Bennett, Duke and Jacob join him, watching with bated breath. Just then --

Lewis' LEG jerks up spasmodically.

BENNETT
He's moving!

Lewis' eyes flutter a bit, then open. He sits up all at once. Jacob gasps and grabs his crucifix.

LEWIS
What happened?

He stands, trying to shake it off. His back is no longer burned. Skin intact.

BENNETT
Hendrix just pulled you out of a frying pan.

JACOB
(sotto)
And into the fire.

LEWIS
Huh? What are you guys on about?

The Witch stands up and backs off. Lewis approaches Dean. He kneels beside him.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Dean's dead?

HENDRIX
So were you.

Troubled, Lewis watches closely.

DUKE
Dean! Come on, wake up.

HENDRIX
Still no pulse. Come on!

Hendrix puts his ear next to Dean's mouth, listening for a breath. A beat, then --

Dean GASPS and RATTLES loudly, jarring Hendrix! He BOLTS upright, leaping to his feet in a manic state.

DEAN
Holy fucking shit! Where am I?!

HENDRIX
You're back from the fuckin' dead!

LEWIS
It takes no skill to die and you even found a way to screw that up.

BENNETT
You're one to talk, Lewis.

Lewis lifts his buddy out of the dirt.

LEWIS
I don't follow.

DEAN
That makes two of us.

Hendrix puts his hand on Dean's shoulder, points at the Witch, who stares them down.

HENDRIX
That Witch healed you.

DEAN
Get bent. How?

HENDRIX
Dunno, I'm not a witch.

BENNETT
Warlock. Male witch is a warlock.

HENDRIX
Shut your hole.

LEWIS
What matters is that we're alive.

Bennett takes a knee.

BENNETT
That's not all. We need to swear on the lives of our families, to never talk about this.

JACOB
What's done in the dark must come to the light --

DUKE
You want to be seen as freaks?
Studied like lab rats? Nobody died!
Nobody was injured! Period.

HENDRIX
Got it.

DEAN
Copy.

LEWIS
Ten, four.

BENNETT
Jacob?

JACOB
... May God forgive me.

Duke releases the young soldier. The Witch embraces him, growing visibly emotional.

LEWIS
What are we doing with them now?

HENDRIX
We could bump 'em off.

BENNETT
No. We have to uphold our part of the bargain.

DUKE
Send 'em back North then.

LEWIS
Copy. I'll walk them out that way.

DEAN
I can handle it.

HENDRIX
I'm the one who speaks their language.

Hendrix grabs the Witch and her son. He shoves them with his rifle, pointing them North.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
I'll walk them a few minutes that way, then double back so we can travel back south for EVAC.

DUKE
Copy.

They walk that way together, while Dean starts searching the bodies of the dead guards.

DEAN
I'm not going home empty-handed.

Mean Dean pulls out a special ops tracker knife, long and SHARP as all get-out. He picks up a corpse by the hair. The limp body dangles, eyes fixed.

JACOB

What now?

Dean saws the scalp off the dead soldier.

DEAN

Anyone hungry?

BENNETT

You get a second chance and this is what you wanna do with it?

DEAN

Redskins believed taking the enemy's scalps gave you warrior status.

Dean laughs. Bennett shakes his head. Jacob crosses himself.

Dean puts his souvenirs away, then grabs another body. He pulls something off the dead soldier, raising it in the air.

LEWIS

What'd you find?

Dean flips a gold-hewn medallion in the air.

DEAN

Military Merit medal.

He tosses it to Bennett.

BENNETT

All yours, bright boy.

Bennett pockets the medal uneasily as Dean searches the other pockets.

DUKE

That'll do Dean.

LEWIS

Wait, I want a souvenir too.

DUKE

Hendrix!

A beat. Duke looks at his compass.

HENDRIX (O.S.)

Coming!

BENNETT

We're almost out of time.

Hendrix comes running back over.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Didn't give you any trouble?

HENDRIX

They can't mess with this beefcake.

Hendrix flexes, Bennett smirks.

DUKE (CONT'D)

We're gonna have to jog if we don't get left behind.

HENDRIX

Fuckin' pencil pushers said the rendezvous point would be close.

BENNETT

All they care about is getting more boots on the ground.

HENDRIX

We're just future tombstones at Arlington to them.

DUKE

Been called worse. Let's boogie!

As a team, they move south to the rendezvous point, picking up speed.

BENNETT

Slow down. You're gonna burn out too early!

DUKE

No! Keep going!

HENDRIX

Wait!

DUKE

I'm still in control here, last time I --

Suddenly, the ground beneath Duke GIVES WAY and he PLUMMETS, shrieking into a DEAD FALL TRAP --

THWACK! He is impaled through the chest and midsection by jagged BAMBOO SPEARS!

The team CRIES OUT in shock, racing forward and peering down ten feet deep where Duke twitches and trembles, stuck through like a human pin cushion.

Duke reaches a hand up, gurgling blood bubbles. He tries to speak, but nothing comes out. Then, he falls limp.

HENDRIX
Tough break, Duke.

BENNETT
We have to go back for the Witch.

HENDRIX
No time left. We keep going.

Jacob takes a knee and says a prayer for Duke.

BENNETT
Don't touch anything. The tips of the spears are discolored. Charlie put snake venom on them.

HENDRIX
Get his tags, and the other guy too.

DEAN
For what?

HENDRIX
For their families, numb nuts!

Duke has company, another American soldier is dead and rotting, impaled by a large bamboo spear. His intestines are wrapped around the spike, chest cavity crawling with bugs.

Lewis covers his mouth.

LEWIS
Dean, give me a hand here.

DEAN
Hold the phone...

He points out a burned and broken down jeep. It sports communist propaganda painted on its doors.

Ivy and vines are weaved throughout its busted windows. A SKELETON is hunched over the wheel.

LEWIS
It's a regular tourist attraction.

HENDRIX
Watch every step you take. Unless
you want your tags brought home in
a tuna can too.

Lewis kneels down beside the dead fall, picks up a branch and
carefully uses it to lift the dog tags off of Duke's neck.

DEAN
I don't want any surprises.

Dean checks the skeleton for a pulse.

LEWIS
Fuckin' A, Dean.

Lewis moves to the other soldier, but the branch isn't long
enough. He leans in, stretching a little further. Beads of
sweat drip off the tip of his nose.

CLOSE ON: The cold, dead face of the Corpse, eyes shut, mouth
agape in horror.

BENNETT (O.S.)
We're just a couple of minutes away
from the rendezvous point.

Right as Lewis hooks the dog tags --

The corpse BLINKS. Lewis springs to his feet.

LEWIS
Son of a bitch!

He wipes his face and looks again. The eyes are closed. The
corpse is still.

DEAN
What happened?

LEWIS
It looked right at me.

DEAN
He's maggot food, Lewis.

LEWIS
I swear, he fuckin' looked at me.

BENNETT
Jungle hysteria.

LEWIS

That old bitch just brought me back
from the dead, now you're acting
like it couldn't happen again?!

The group processes this for a beat, then continues forward.

Grumbling, Lewis dumps a can of tuna out and replaces it with
the dog tags. He follows behind Dean.

DEAN

Zipper heads got us all spooked.

LEWIS

Why do y'all call them that?

DEAN

When you shoot 'em in the face,
looks like you unzipped their
heads.

Dean looks down at his jacket, zipping it up and down.

LEWIS

Thought it had to do with their
eyes.

DEAN

Now, Lewis, that's just plum
prejudicial.

HENDRIX

Let's form a skirmish line. We have
to be close, but we can't run and
risk losing any more men.

BENNETT

There's meant to be a large valley
with no trees a few clicks from
here, easy access for the bird.

The men spread out, staggered east and west. They push
forward. Fighting against the uneven terrain until they're
dragging their feet, exhausted.

HENDRIX

Keep them heads on a swivel.

The sun is rising. They move between trees and wild bushes,
keeping a steady clip.

ANGLE ON: Bennett and Dean converse quietly as they walk.

DEAN

So, what you planning on doing when we get Stateside?

BENNETT

Still an "if." But I'm thinking of looking up Trish. See if there's something there.

DEAN

That hippy weirdo? Didn't she write you a "Dear John" and split?

BENNETT

First off, she's Wiccan. And I think there's still a chance, but I'll gladly play the field.

(beat)

What about you, still with that rich WASP number?

DEAN

Lucy? Hell yeah. I'm sitting pretty with her daddy's loot. Just need to seal the deal, you know?

Suddenly, Hendrix hollers:

HENDRIX (O.S.)

It's here!

The men follow, trampling through the rough jungle, into --

EXT. JUNGLE - RENDEZVOUS POINT - SUNRISE

A large, verdant clearing. The palatial valley is eerily peaceful. Compared to the jungle, this is paradise.

The whirring of helicopter blades cut through the silence.

HENDRIX

Hear that? Throw the smoke!

Jacob tosses a smoke grenade. They watch the red smoke rise, waiting for retrieval. The chopper sound fades.

DEAN

Don't tell me we missed it!

LEWIS

If I only I had Mother Mary Jane.
We'd fly right on outta here.

DEAN

Why bring me back to life if I'm
just gonna die anyway --

Just then, in the distance, the whirlybird approaches through the scarlet fog.

Dean hoots out loud for joy, followed by the rest of the squad. Only Bennett remains somewhat uncertain.

EXT. L.A.X. - NIGHT

SUPER: 3 Days Later.

Another bustling night at the Los Angeles Airport. Jets are landing as others are taking off.

In the shadows of the terminal is a swinging dive bar. Light rain comes down.

EXT. REAL ENTERTAINMENT L.A.X. - NIGHT

In decorated uniforms, Bennett and Hendrix walk up to the front door. "R.E.L.A.X." enshrined in bright lights on the glass door. They share a cigarette.

BENNETT

Somehow, I still feel a bit "off."

HENDRIX

Loosen up and give me a drag of
that fuckin' Chesterfield.
(taking it, puffing)
Now this is what I'm talking about.

They draw near to the doors.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)

Cold beer and warm cooze. Don't
mind if I do.

Just then, a car slows down. The HIPPY DRIVER shouting anti-war rhetoric.

DRIVER

Shame on you! Babykillers!

Bennett passes the cigarette and turns to the protester.

HENDRIX

Say that one more time, you
longhair fairy!

DRIVER
Jackboot pigs!

BENNETT
We got drafted! You think we wanted
this?!

Hendrix takes a deep drag as the protester drives off.

HENDRIX
You know we volunteered, right?

BENNETT
He doesn't know that. I'm sick of
hearing everyone's two cents.

HENDRIX
You know what they say about
opinions and assholes. Now let's
get sauced.

Hendrix tosses the cigarette before they walk in.

INT. REAL ENTERTAINMENT L.A.X. - CONTINUOUS

Psychedelic lights pulsate in the smoky air. Go-go dancers
groove on stage in fringed mini dresses, illuminated by
swirling colors, sipping retro cocktails.

HENDRIX
You didn't say they had dancers.

BENNETT
Icing on the cake.

HENDRIX
Papa like.

The vets approach the bar. Hendrix scratches at his stomach.

BENNETT
How about a bottle of Jack?

BARTENDER
Bottle?

HENDRIX
Did he stutter?

The bartender and Bennett exchange cash for booze.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
This is all I thought about while I
was there, man.

BENNETT
Sure you weren't thinking more
along *those* lines?

Bennett gestures to a tall, shapely blonde gyrating
athletically on the pole.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Nothing like American women.

Hendrix shakes his head vigorously.

HENDRIX
Jack's got her beat, you ask me!

He takes a hungry swig of the whiskey. An attractive DANCER
(20s) approaches the men, dancing seductively.

DANCER
I dig your uniform, GI.

BENNETT
Thanks, but I prefer yours.

Even her laugh is sexy.

HENDRIX
You support the war then?

DANCER
I support my country. My brother
was drafted.

BENNETT
Well let me tell you something.
This patriot here? He's a hero.

He taps Hendrix on the shoulder.

DANCER
Is that right? Mr. Gold Star?

She gets in his face, but his attention remains on the bottle
of whiskey.

HENDRIX
Something like that.

DANCER
Far out.

Bennett slips some money to her.

BENNETT
Be right back.

He heads for the restroom.

HENDRIX
So, what are you doing after work?

DANCER
Depends.

She takes a swig from the whiskey bottle.

HENDRIX
On what?

He scoots closer to her.

DANCER
On you, mostly.

He gets closer and closer, only to reach past her. He snatches the whiskey bottle.

HENDRIX
I got plans of my own.

He pours himself another shot, raises it, then swigs it down.

DANCER
Count me in.

The dancer grabs his shot glass, refills it, and shoots it back. She then grabs his face and kisses him, transferring the whiskey to his mouth.

Hendrix savors the moment, eyes closed.

As the kiss intensifies, he feels her tongue explore his mouth with an unusual fervor. A strange, unsettling sensation washes over him, and he reluctantly opens his eyes.

His blood runs cold. The WITCH stares back at him, her face mere inches from his, snakelike tongue unfurled!

Her bulging eyes bore into his soul, grotesque, distorted features barely illuminated by the pulsating lights.

She tightens her grip on his face, her long, claw-like nails digging into his skin as she forces her tongue deeper into his mouth.

Hendrix finally manages to wrench himself away from the. He stumbles backward, nearly knocking over a nearby table. The other patrons turn to stare at the commotion.

HENDRIX
What the fuck!?

The dancer stands up, confused. She's normal again.

DANCER
What's your problem limp dick?

Two enormous bouncers rush over, grabbing him by the shirt.

BOUNCER
It's time to go.

HENDRIX
Get fucked, Uncle Fester!

Bennett walks out of the restroom, looking up in confusion.

BENNETT
Woah, what's going on?

HENDRIX
Long story.

The bartender pulls a baseball bat from under the bar.

BENNETT
I was gone for two minutes!

BOUNCER
Get your boyfriend out of here now.

BENNETT
We're leaving, fellas.

He guides a still-steaming Bennett outside.

EXT. REAL ENTERTAINMENT L.A.X. - NIGHT

The pavement is wet, clouds of breath escape with every word.

BENNETT
What did you do to blondie?

HENDRIX
Other way around. She ain't exactly
a natural blonde, neither.

BENNETT

What are you getting at?

HENDRIX

Things went tits up in there.

BENNETT

That's the general idea.

HENDRIX

Not the way they were meant to...

Hendrix exhales deeply, shaking his head.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)

I don't know how to explain it.
You'll think I'm nuts.

BENNETT

I already think you're nuts.

Hendrix chuckles wanly.

HENDRIX

Let's get to your place and crack
another bottle to clear my head.

BENNETT

Yeah, 'cause *that's* what you need.

Bennett chortles, still subtly troubled. They stroll through the parking lot, stopping at the sidewalk to flag down a taxi, which quickly pulls over. They hop inside.

INT. TAXI CAB - NIGHT

The driver hits the road. Bennett and Hendrix gaze out their windows. They stop at a red light, near a bus stop.

Bennett stares out his window at a handful of attractive young women outside a nightclub.

Meanwhile, Hendrix stares down the folks waiting for the bus.

REVERSE: A VIETNAMESE MAN stands stoically, clad in a trench coat. Hendrix meets his gaze, eyes narrowing.

The Vietnamese Man smiles and parts his coat to reveal an AK-47 beneath it.

Hendrix goes to react when the Vietnamese Man abruptly turns around and --

VANISHES, leaving only his trench behind, fluttering to the pavement.

HENDRIX
(sotto)
Look... look at this...

Bennett ignores him, too captivated by the ladies.

From beneath the wrinkled coat, a SHAPE TAKES form on the pavement, writhing and undulating before --

The WITCH bursts forth from beneath it, hunched on all fours like a feral beast, snarling as she LURCHES towards the taxi!

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Holy fuck, Bennett!

Hendrix grabs Bennett's coat to get his attention.

BENNETT
What is it?!

Bennett now turns and sees --

Normal people gathered at the bus stop. No sign of the Witch.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Don't tell me you're *that* loaded.

HENDRIX
She... she was right there.

BENNETT
Who?

GREEN LIGHT. They pull away.

HENDRIX
I think I'm crackin' up.

The driver looks at the two vets through the rearview mirror.

BENNETT
Look, the things we've seen, what we've been through... it's bound to have some side effects. You've just gotta ride them out. Okay?

Hendrix nods, somewhat comforted. The taxi pulls up to an unremarkable apartment building.

INT. BENNETT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The door swings open to a Boomer man-cave that's grown all the more decrepit from a couple years of disuse.

Bennett hits the lights and tosses his keys on the coffee table, next to numerous UNPAID BILLS and PAST-DUE NOTICES.

BENNETT

It's not the Ritz but it'll do
until we get back on our feet. Or
until I'm evicted, whichever comes
first.

HENDRIX

Thanks again for letting me crash.
Got anything to sip on?

BENNETT

I don't think you need anymore.

He looks out his window. Hendrix sinks into the couch.

HENDRIX

How are we not supposed to just get
past it?

BENNETT

Past what? The war? I told you --

HENDRIX

Not the war. What we seen at the
end. How they *came back*.

Hendrix stares at him.

BENNETT

We don't talk about that, remember?

Bennett pulls a couple beers out.

HENDRIX

Thought I didn't need any more?

BENNETT

I'm starting to see things your
way.

Bennett clinks bottles with Hendrix as they both drink up.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Back at the club, you clock the way
they looked at us?

HENDRIX

Like when you step in dog shit, the way you look down at your shoe?

BENNETT

That's how they see us *now*. Imagine if they heard the whole story.

Hendrix shakes his head with disgust.

HENDRIX

After World War II, my pa and his buds came back heroes.

BENNETT

The times they are a changin'. How are you feeling?

HENDRIX

Been better. But I sure as shit been worse, too. Need to piss like a race-horse, though.

INT. BENNETT'S BATHROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Hendrix splashes water on his face in front of the mirror. He scratches his belly, before taking a long piss. He leans on the wall.

Finishing up, he washes his hands before scratching at his stomach again. He lifts his shirt, looking in the mirror --

To find the bullet holes now CRAWLING WITH WORMS AND MAGGOTS!

Petrified, he begins frantically rubbing at his abdomen.

HENDRIX

No, no, not happening!

Hendrix closes his eyes tightly.

BENNETT (O.S.)

You alright in there?!

Hendrix opens his eyes to find --

The bullet holes are still closed, just slightly discolored.

INT. BENNETT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hendrix walks back into the living room.

BENNETT
You still seem a click off.

HENDRIX
Just jumpy, that's all.

Hendrix slams his beer like it's the last thing he'll ever drink.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
How do you think Dean is doing?

BENNETT
I'll give him a call tomorrow. He's probably laid up with that Lucy dish right about now.

HENDRIX
Lucky SOB.

Hendrix gets lost in an episode of *The Twilight Zone* playing on the TV.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Love this one. Where the space crew thinks they're trapped on another planet only to find out they've been on Earth the whole time.

He turns the volume up, yawning.

BENNETT
I like the one with the ugly masks better. Anyhow, you can crash on the couch. We'll get a hold of the guys tomorrow.

HENDRIX
Thanks brother.

Bennett heads to his bedroom. Hendrix stares up at the ceiling, unable to sleep.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - LOBBY - NIGHT

Lewis sits in a waiting room. He stares down at his arm, rubbing it softly. He winces.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Mr. Lewis, your counselor is ready to see you now.

Lewis snaps out of it and follows the receptionist.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - COUNSELOR OFFICE - NIGHT

A well-dressed man sits behind a neatly organized desk. MR. MENDES, 60s, rotund and patronizing, skims through a file.

A KNOCK at the door. Lewis walks in. The counselor stands, they shake hands.

MR. MENDES

Mr. William Lewis, nice to meet
you. Why don't you grab a seat?
(as Lewis does)
So you just got stateside recently,
correct?

LEWIS

Yes.

MR. MENDES

Thank you for your service.

LEWIS

You see a lot of vets?

MR. MENDES

I have lately, as you might expect.
So, how are you feeling?

Lewis chuckles bitterly.

LEWIS

What am I supposed to say? That I
think about offing myself on a
regular basis? That I can't sleep?
That I can't get those... those
images out of my head?

MR. MENDES

I would like you to say exactly how
you feel.

LEWIS

Have you ever seen a human being
explode?

MR. MENDES

It goes without saying that I
haven't.

LEWIS

Rocko. Pal I went to school with.
We were securing a dirt road when
he stepped on a landmine. Turned to
look at me when we heard the *click*.

Before he could say anything, he bursts. And I mean *bursts*. Like a coconut left in the fucking sun. What's his wife supposed to bury? A pile of meat plopped in casket?

He takes a deep breath.

MR. MENDES

Shame. Is that why you felt the need to use narcotics?

LEWIS

Heroin. Don't dance around it.

(beat)

What would you do to escape hell?

MR. MENDES

You tell me.

LEWIS

Anything.

MR. MENDES

Could "anything" include anything productive, perhaps?

LEWIS

I think we're done here.

Lewis abruptly stands, heads for the door.

MR. MENDES

Mr. Lewis --

Too late, he slams the door behind him.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lewis is out cold, recovering fitfully.

Silence engulfs the room, so profound you could hear a pin drop. Then, abruptly --

RIIINNNG! A DEAFENING FIRE-ALARM shatters the stillness, catapulting him into sheer panic!

His eyes snap open to an onslaught of chaos. The lights stutter in a frenzied dance of shadows and illumination.

Nurses blur past as they shepherd patients from the recovery room. Lewis reaches out in a desperate attempt to snag a nurse, to no avail.

LEWIS
What... what's happening --

From behind, DISEMBODIED HANDS grab his bed! They propel him through a glaringly bright corridor at a breakneck pace.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The overhead lights are blinding, the stretched-out hallway never seems to end.

LEWIS
Wait! Slow down!

As the lights blur past, each one searing Lewis's vision more intensely than the last, a wave of nausea overwhelms him. A siren's wail pierces the air, driving him to the brink.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
I... I'm having a heart attack!

He covers his ears, eyes closed as tight as he can.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Stop!

Abruptly, everything halts. Silence engulfs him. Tentatively, Lewis opens his eyes to complete darkness.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
What the fuck is going on!?

A match hisses to life, casting an eerie glow. Candles flicker on, illuminating the faces of nurses, but now --

Their features are distinctly VIETNAMESE, their expressions, ominous. Lewis attempts to rise, only to find himself bound to the stretcher.

The hospital room dissolves around him, morphing into a twisted nether realm, where the stark, clinical environment merges hauntingly with the lush, SINISTER JUNGLE OF VIETNAM.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Where did you take me/ Answer me?!

From the shadowy brush --

The WITCH bursts forth, clutching him in her gnarled claws!

Her eyes, gleaming with malevolent light, fix on Lewis as she begins a dark incantation, her voice a blend of tongues.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

Let me go!

The Witch's minions, features blurred between soldier and specter, approach Lewis.

Two of them cut loose Lewis' bindings, grabbing either end of the thick rope.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

Wait! What the hell are you doing?

NEIGH! Lewis now sees a pair of black, spectral HORSES appearing on either side of him, hooves clacking against the linoleum hospital floor.

JESUS

No! Christ, no!

His limbs are tied to the horses, their eyes glowing with an unholy fire. The Witch watches, her smile wide.

One figure raises a shotgun to the sky. The BLAST is deafening, echoing through the merged realities.

At the Witch's command, the horses tear into a frenzied gallop, PULLING LEWIS APART in a horrific orgy of viscera.

The Witch's laughter rings out and reverberates through the nether realm as we--

SLAM TO:

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lewis wakes up with a gasp, covered in sweat. He checks his arms and legs. Still attached.

LEWIS

Son of a bitch.

He walks over to the phone. He repeats several numbers until he finds the right one. It rings.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hey Mama. Can you pick me up?

(beat)

I know, but it isn't working out.

They said I didn't have to --

Lewis winces as we hear yelling on the other end. A beat.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Okay, love you too.

Lewis hangs up the phone. He wipes sweat from his brow.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Hotter than hell in here...

He grimaces. Tries to take his shirt off, only to find that it's stuck to his back.

A soft SIZZLE.

Lewis grabs the bottom of his shirt and peels it off inadvertently PEELING most of the SKIN off his back in a crinkled sheath!

He screams and rushes to the bathroom.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lewis flips the light on, he turns to look at his back. It sizzles, the musculature and spinal calm exposed beneath.

LEWIS
No! I'm dreaming! I'm dreaming!

Just then, in the mirror's reflection, THE WITCH glides past, her image a blur of malevolence.

Lewis spins, expecting to confront her, but finds nothing but the chilling emptiness of the room.

As his hand clasps the handle, a sharp CRACK reverberates through the silence.

He stares in disbelief at his arm, grotesquely snapped at the elbow, the skin around it darkening with GANGRENE.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
No, no, no!

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - LOBBY - NIGHT

The receptionist files papers away when the phone rings. She picks up.

RECEPTIONIST
Veteran's First Health Clinic.
(beat)

For William Lewis? Okie-dokie, Mrs.
Lewis, I'll transfer it now.

She tries to patch the caller through. It rings and rings.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is a mess. Lewis' clothes are covered in blood and spread across the floor.

The telephone drones on and on as we GLIDE deeper into the space before landing on --

A pair of bare FEET dangling in mid-air.

REVEAL: Lewis HANGS from the ceiling, belt around his neck, face turning blue as spittle and blood drips from his mouth.

INT. BENNETT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hendrix tosses and turns, unable to sleep.

He suddenly wakes up, and takes a deep breath to steady himself. He then glances down --

To find his shirt is SOAKED WITH BLOOD. His flesh is unnaturally pale, almost grey, and his features gaunt.

HENDRIX
What the fuck?

Hendrix clutches his stomach, hyperventilating.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Bennett! *Bennett!*

Bennett darts out of the other room, pistol in hand.

BENNETT
What happened?

HENDRIX
It's my stomach.

Hendrix doubles over.

BENNETT
Let me see it.

Hendrix shows Bennett the rotten, infected bullet wounds. Dark blood steadily flows from his ruined gut.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
No. Can't be right...

HENDRIX
The fuckin' Witch didn't heal us.
Not for good, anyway.

Hendrix stands up. Bennett grabs him and turns him.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

BENNETT
Turn around.

Hendrix slowly turns around, Bennett lifts the shirt to check the exit wounds.

He stumbles back, disturbed. Darts out of the room collecting first aid supplies from the bathroom.

HENDRIX
What happened? How's my back look?

BENNETT
Stay still.

HENDRIX
Why? What's wrong now?!

Bennett kneels, preparing gauze and rubbing alcohol.

BENNETT
Something is... falling out. The
hole in your back is wide open.

Hendrix takes off his shirt.

HENDRIX
Falling out?! What does that mean?!

BENNETT
Hold still. I'm going to stuff it
with gauze and wrap you up.

Bennett tightly wraps gauze and bandages around his partner's waist and stomach. Hendrix winces.

HENDRIX
Should we go to the hospital?

BENNETT

How would we explain this? They'll question the bullet wounds and call the cops.

Hendrix continues to lose all color. Bennett puts his finger to his wrist, then his neck.

HENDRIX

Why are you doing that?!

BENNETT

I can't even find a pulse. You're ice-cold.

HENDRIX

Jesus, I'm a fucking zombie? Is that what you're telling me?!

BENNETT

I don't know, okay?! I don't know!

HENDRIX

(panicking)

Give me that gun.

BENNETT

Don't start talking stupid now.

HENDRIX

I can't live like some kinda monster!

BENNETT

I don't know if you *can* even commit suicide.

HENDRIX

Why the hell not?

BENNETT

Because by all accounts, you're already dead.

Hendrix loses it, on the verge of tears. He grabs a waste paper basket and fills it up with puke.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Listen, Trish was always into that woo-woo Eastern mystic stuff. She might know what to do.

HENDRIX
Trish as in, the one you said
dumped you like a bad habit?

BENNETT
Yeah, what about it?!

HENDRIX
Christ, you don't think this is out
of her league?

BENNETT
She's convinced she healed her
mom's cancer with all those herbs
and what-not. Maybe she can
handle... whatever this is.

HENDRIX
You know what it is. It's a *curse*!
That gook Witch cursed us!

BENNETT
Alright, what if she did? You saved
my life once. I'm trying to return
the favor. You gonna let me or not?

Bennett sticks his hand out, Hendrix locks his hand and
stands up, moaning in pain.

HENDRIX
Ain't got much of a choice.

He and Hendrix head for the car when the PHONE RINGS. Bennett
picks it up, his expression sinking.

BENNETT
I understand.

HENDRIX
What is it?

BENNETT
Lewis is dead. We've got to warn
Dean.

Hendrix shakes his head. Bennett re-dials.

INT. LUCY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The stately Tudor house boasts a minimalist elegance, its
walls adorned with copies of notable artwork encased in
elaborate frames.

Above the couch, a grand mirror dominates. Dean steps before it, peeling off his shirt to reveal bullet wounds etched across his chest.

The phone rings. He initially goes to answer, but chooses to ignore it. He gingerly touches his wounds, a grimace of pain fleeting across his face.

LUCY (O.S.)
Babe, I'm going to clean up the
kitchen.

Startled, Dean glances up to find his fiancée LUCY (mid-20s), short hair, a striking and wealthy Bohemian. He rushes to throw his shirt back on.

DEAN
Sounds good. You mind grabbing me a
glass of Scotch?

LUCY
What am I, June Cleaver?

DEAN
Meaning what?

LUCY
It means there's a little thing
called women's lib. Get it
yourself.
(off Dean's look)
I'm just fucking with you.

Laughing, Lucy walks over and kisses Dean on the lips.

LUCY (CONT'D)
I'm so glad you're back.

DEAN
You have no idea.

Cheerful, Dean walks over to the stereo and puts a blues record on. He dances his way into the kitchen.

LUCY
You still have the moves.

DEAN
Jagger's got nothing on Dean-o.

He reaches out a hand and Lucy joins him. They dance into --

INT. DEAN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She laughs and enjoys his playfulness.

LUCY
You dance like this with your men?

DEAN
I didn't have "men." I'm a grunt.

LUCY
Correction. You're *my* grunt.

He kisses her deeply and pours himself a glass of scotch.

DEAN
Want one?

LUCE
Why Dean, I think you're trying to
get me drunk.

DEAN
I think you're right.

LUCY
(fake British accent)
Shall we abscond to my boudoir?

DEAN
I'd like nothing more.

LUCY
I'm sensing a "but..."

She looks at him with attitude.

DEAN
But... I wanna go for a ride first.
It's been almost two years.

LUCY
Two years away from *this* ride.

She pulls him close, placing a hand on his crotch.

DEAN
You are a wild one, lady. Let's --

Suddenly, Dean winces and grabs his chest.

LUCY
What's wrong?

DEAN
I don't know. Heartburn maybe.

LUCY
You're getting old.

DEAN
I'm still a young buck.

LUCY
Prove it.

Dean grabs Lucy and lifts her off the floor. She wraps her legs around him as he carries her through the bedroom door. She giggles before the door closes shut.

EXT. DARK HIGHWAY - NIGHT - LATER

A desolate highway stretches into the night, its emptiness pierced by the roar of a Harley-Davidson, "Mean Machine" emblazoned on its tank.

It's Mean Dean at the helm, throttling the engine, the speedometer needle flirting with the edge.

DEAN
Woooooh!

Electric poles and trees merge into a streak of indistinct shapes as he blasts past the speed limit until --

A figure materializes in the distance. A woman. Dean blinks, and the figure disappears.

He continues riding, throttling hard when --

WHAM! Appearing RIGHT IN FRONT of him is THE WITCH! Her flesh rotting, clothes tattered, standing ominously in the middle of the road.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Fuck!

Dean veers sharply, his heart racing as the grotesque visage of the Witch looms closer.

The sudden maneuver causes him to overcorrect, sending him and the motorcycle skidding violently across the asphalt.

Sparks fly like the fourth of July. Finally, he and the Mean Machine come to a halt.

The bike is totaled. A slow HISS emanates from one of the tires. Dean lays unconscious under his smoking motorcycle.

He suddenly jolts into awareness, grunting and grimacing. He looks around, trying to figure out what just happened.

He yanks his helmet off and tosses it to the side, checking his arms and body for damage.

Dean doesn't find any severe injuries at first. But then he looks down to find --

BOTH OF HIS LEGS HAVE BEEN SEVERED AT THE KNEE! The two limbs lay akimbo beside the bike.

DEAN (CONT'D)

No! No!

He hears something in the distance and looks down the road --

WHERE A TRUCK IS BARRELLING RIGHT TOWARD HIM!

He tries to pull himself out of the way, but the severe blood loss has rendered him weak.

The headlights get closer, and closer. Brighter and brighter. In a panic, he searches his jacket.

He pulls a flashlight out and shines it toward the approaching vehicle.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Stop! Stop!

The vehicle skids to a stop. Smoke rises from the tires. The driver turns the engine off.

DEAN (CONT'D)

I need an ambulance!

The car is shut off, but the blinding headlights are still blaring down on Dean.

DEAN (CONT'D)

I need help. Can you get to a telephone?

The driver door swings open and the headlights are shut off, revealing...

A green MILITARY JEEP with North Vietnamese Army communist propaganda on the driver-side door.

DEAN (CONT'D)
What the fuck?

The driver steps outside the vehicle. Dirty BARE FEET slap the concrete. He looks up at --

The WITCH.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Oh, Christ! Please... please, I
didn't do anything to you!

Her feet leave the ground and she ethereally FLOATS over him.

Her eyes bulge, mouth agape and stretched beyond any human ability.

He draws a blade from his jacket, but all he can do is point it impotently at her.

DEAN (CONT'D)
My legs. Put them back!

She gets closer and closer, then reaches down and picks up both of Dean's discarded LEGS.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Yes. That's right! Put them back, I
know you can!

The Witch opens her mouth to reveal gnarled rows of TEETH. She GNASHES down on the ends of his legs like drumsticks, shaving away flesh until only --

SHARPENED BONE remains at their stumps.

DEAN (CONT'D)
What are you doing?!

The Witch speaks in VIETNAMESE, but an otherworldly ECHO reverberates IN ENGLISH.

THE WITCH
Giving you your legs, like you
asked.

In one swift movement, the Witch JAMS one of the sharpened leg bones into Dean's abdomen. He SCREAMS in pain.

DEAN
You fucking bitch! I'll kill --

She then STABS the other leg-bone directly through Dean's open mouth, puncturing his skull and KILLING HIM instantly.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Ho-lee shit.

CUT OUT:

The Witch is GONE. Dean lies on the concrete, legs still intact, but pinned under the motorcycle. DEAD.

A NORMAL TRUCK DRIVER (40s) stands over him in shock.

INT. CAR - DAWN

The sunrise is slowly illuminating the downtown area. Bennett pulls up to a funky shop with a facade reading: "Unique Boutique." Hendrix remains slumped over in the back.

BENNETT
We're here. How's that bandage looking?

Hendrix is corpse-like, his color gone. Totally lethargic.

HENDRIX
I'm leaking all over.

Bennett reaches back to check the bandage. The blood is seeping through.

BENNETT
I'm going to have to re-wrap that.
Just lay down, I'll be back.

HENDRIX
You promise?

BENNETT
Swear on the flag.

HENDRIX
God, I feel like such a pussy.

BENNETT
You're no pussy. You're a hero,
Hendrix.

HENDRIX
I'm no hero. But thanks all the
same.

Bennett shoots Hendrix a two finger salute, then heads into --

INT. UNIQUE BOUTIQUE - CONTINUOUS

Bennett enters the counter-cultural boutique, lined with all manner of Tie-Die paraphernalia and Occidental trinkets. a bell rings drawing the attention of the BEARDED CLERK.

BENNETT
Is Trish still working here?

CLERK
Who wants to know, buzz-cut?

TRISH (O.S.)
It's okay, Ron. He's one of the
good squares.

Bennett turns to spot TRISH (early 30s), a new-age Jane Fonda type in thigh high boots with Peace-Sign sunglasses.

TRISH (CONT'D)
Least he used to be.

Bennett turns to face her.

BENNETT
Trish. Been a while.

TRISH
A dog's age.

BENNETT
You look great.

TRISH
You too. Glad to say you made it
out upright.

BENNETT
Yeah well, I don't know how much
longer I'll be that way.

The front door CHIMES go off as an older couple walks in.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Maybe we should go in the back.

Trish looks over at the customers.

TRISH
Let's.

They walk through the beads, into --

INT. UNIQUE BOUTIQUE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The space is small and cramped. A round table sits in the middle. Trish pulls a chair out.

TRISH
So what's shaking?

BENNETT
Something happened while I was over there.

TRISH
I've seen footage on the news.
Looks like a horror show.

BENNETT
You don't know the half of it.

TRISH
Listen, I wanted to apologize for the way I --

BENNETT
Forget it. I've got bigger fish to fry right now. Trish, do you believe in... curses?

TRISH
(without hesitation)
What kind?

BENNETT
You mean there's more than one?

TRISH
Oh, honey, there's more than you can shake a stick at. But you sound like you're talking from experience.

BENNETT
My squad and I were cursed by this... this Witch in 'Nam. She was able to heal our wounds, even...

Bennett looks around anxiously, ensuring no one's listening.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Bring some men back from the dead.

Trish whistles low, eyes widening.

TRISH

That's the ugliest kind of all.

BENNETT

Well, maybe you better take a look
at my friend.

TRISH

Sure. Where is he?

BENNETT

He's in the car, but he... uh,
shouldn't come inside.

TRISH

That bad, huh? Well, pull the car
around back to the alley.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

Bennett parks his ride beside some dumpsters. He hops out of
the car and sparks a cigarette, speaks to Hendrix through a
cracked window.

BENNETT

Hang in there buddy.

Finally, the back door pops open.

TRISH

Okay, where's the poor sap at?

BENNETT

Right here.

He opens the back door. Trish GASPS at the ghastly sight of
Hendrix, lying prone against the passenger door. Decomposing
and unmoving.

TRISH

Mother Gaia! Is he...

Suddenly, Hendrix GASPS back into consciousness, jaundiced
eyes bolting open as he reaches out frantically for Trish,
grabbing her blouse and pulling her close.

HENDRIX

Help me!

Bennett restrains Hendrix. Trish covers her mouth.

BENNETT

Easy, pal! Easy!

TRISH
(to Hendrix)
Are you... are you in a lot of
pain?

He roars back at her.

HENDRIX
What the fuck do you think, lady?!

TRISH
This is a heavy trip. I need to
know what happened *exactly*?

BENNETT
Hold tight, Hendrix.

Bennett closes the car door.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
We were ambushed, took casualties
and injuries. But we had a soldier
hostage -- this Witch's son. We saw
her heal this woman. So, we forced
her to heal the team too. In return
we let her and her son live.

TRISH
Sounds fair enough. Live and let
live.

BENNETT
Right! It looked like everything
was gravy, too. Until last night.

TRISH
But why would she curse you guys?
There must be a reason.

Bennett rubs his neck nervously.

BENNETT
I... can't think of one.

TRISH
I can. More than one. I read the
news, you know. I've heard about
those reports of civilian villages
being wiped out. Women, children.

BENNETT
Mistakes. Fog of war.

TRISH

I also read about incidents between
the GIs and local women. Rapes.

BENNETT

Not my men!

TRISH

I didn't say that. But what America
does comes back around.

Trish reaches her hand out. Bennett passes the cigarette.

BENNETT

I don't appreciate the implication.

Trish walks into the boutique without a word. Sighing,
Bennett follows her.

INT. UNIQUE BOUTIQUE - BACK ROOM - DAY

The two walk into the dark room. Trish sets about blacking
out the windows and beckons for Bennett to sit.

TRISH

Before we go any further. Let me
ask you something. What made you
think I could help you?

BENNETT

Well, I don't know anyone else with
your, uh, interests.

(beat)

And I had a feeling you still might
have a little soft spot for me.

TRISH

Even after how things ended.

BENNETT

You're the one who left *me* in the
lurch as I recall.

TRISH

Maybe I did. But I go my own way.

BENNETT

I respect it. But Trish... I'm
really scared.

TRISH

Is that a hint of vulnerability? I
must be hallucinating.

BENNETT

Joke all you want. But I've known
terror out there in the jungle...
and it's a cake-walk compared to
what we're dealing with here.

Trish takes this in empathetically.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Gonna explain what you're up to
now?

After blacking out the last window, Trish sits opposite
Bennett.

TRISH

I think tarot cards might help. Not
help us find a solution, but maybe
it can give us a glimpse.

BENNETT

Aren't those a boardwalk gimmick?

TRISH

I don't use a shew stone, the cards
are different.

Trish pulls a pack of cards from her purse.

TRISH (CONT'D)

Follow my instructions.

BENNETT

Sounds like our relationship.

TRISH

And you sound like a putz.

Bennett can't help but allow for a slight smile as she cuts
the deck into three stacks. She grabs his hand and holds it,
while putting her other hand on the first deck.

TRISH (CONT'D)

Ready?

He nods. From the first stack she draws the first card,
turning it right side up.

"The Ten Of Swords"

A man lay face down, ten swords stabbed in his back.

BENNETT

Oh great, someone's gonna give me
the Caesar treatment?

TRISH

The cards are not always as they
seem.

BENNETT

It means death?

TRISH

The Ten Of Swords *could* mean death,
but also financial ruin or torture.

BENNETT

Well, now I feel much better.

She moves her hand to the second deck. Draws the next card:

"The Ten Of Swords"

She looks up at her friend. SPEECHLESS.

TRISH

The... the first two cards have
never come out like this.

BENNETT

Just tell me what it means?!

TRISH

I'm sorry. It... it means certain
death.

BENNETT

Of course it does.

TRISH

There's a third stack for a reason.
There's always room for redemption.

Beads of sweat collect on Bennett's nose, his blood pressure
rising as he stares down that last deck.

Trish reaches for the last card, when --

SHAAACK! The bead curtain is FLUNG ASIDE as a FIGURE enters!

Bennett is about to go for his side-arm, only to realize --

It's just a harried, pimple-faced TEENAGE EMPLOYEE.

EMPLOYEE

Hey, can you watch the front for ten minutes? Donny split early again.

TRISH

Damn it, Sarah! What did I say about interrupting the spirit flow?!

EMPLOYEE

Sorry.

TRISH

You can smoke a bone later! Give me a few more minutes.

The teen smacks her lips and walks away.

TRISH (CONT'D)

(to Bennett)

Sorry. Last card.

She flips the card warily. Then freezes in place.

Abruptly, she jumps out of her chair, knocking the table over. The cards fly all over the place, many of them right side up.

ALL of them are "The Ten Of Swords!"

TRISH (CONT'D)

That's.... That's not possible.

BENNETT

What did I say?

TRISH

This witchcraft is strong. Stronger than anything I've seen before.

BENNETT

So nothing can be done.

TRISH

Did I say that?

Trish heads over to the bookshelf, looking for something. She comes upon an old weathered tome. Begins frantically scanning through it. She looks at Bennett.

TRISH (CONT'D)

You're in luck.

BENNETT

What?

She shows him a weathered page in the book. Asian caricatures on one side, English translation on the other.

TRISH

Says here you can find the lady who put the hex on and convince her to take it off, you're good as gold.

Bennett dejected, he hangs his head.

BENNETT

We're not talking about a flophouse around the block. It's across the world. And even if I find her --

TRISH

Until the hex is lifted, everything is gonna get a whole lot worse. It would sure help if you had this...

Trish points to the next page, on which there is an illustration of an arcane JADE MEDALLION of a MALE FERTILITY FIGURE, looped on a necklace.

TRISH (CONT'D)

It's known in Shinto texts as the only way to defeat a *sumpa* witch.

BENNETT

I don't suppose you have it lying around in the storage room?

TRISH

No such luck. They're only used by practitioners of white magic in the region.

He nervously rubs his hands.

TRISH (CONT'D)

Did she curse you, Bennett?

BENNETT

I don't know to be honest.

TRISH

Well, were you injured?

BENNETT

No.

TRISH

You said there's one other guy left
aside from Hendrix?

BENNETT

I tried calling and he didn't
answer. I'm going to swing by his
house later today.

TRISH

You'll need all the help you can
get.

BENNETT

Guess we're heading back to the
shit after all.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Trish escorts Bennett back outside.

TRISH

You just have to be confident,
visualize finding her in your mind.
Power of positive projection.

BENNETT

Believe me, there's nothing
positive about this woman.

They reach the car where Hendrix is shivering in the
backseat. As they approach --

WHUMP! A ROCK is hurled through the air, slamming up against
the passenger door.

REVERSE: a group of PUNK KIDS are aligned menacingly across
from the car.

PUNK KID #1

Come out and play, freak-o!

PUNK KID #2

We're gonna beat the ugly outta ya!

Bennett charges in, full of rage.

BENNETT

Hey! Get the fuck out of here!

They scatter like roaches.

TRISH

Damn kids.

BENNETT

I hate kids.

TRISH

Thought you said you wanted to have
a couple. And a white picket
fence...

BENNETT

I'm more interested in survival
these days.

Trish takes Bennett's hand in hers.

TRISH

Come back in one piece. You're sure
you have to go?

BENNETT

I won't let the rest of my brothers
die.

She grabs his hand and squeezes it.

TRISH

Maybe when you get back...

He smiles and squeezes back.

TRISH (CONT'D)

But don't get any ideas.

BENNETT

Wouldn't dream of it.

EXT. OUTDOOR SHOOTING RANGE - RANCH - SUNSET

Jacob stands at a table. Several firearms are laid out in
front of him. He loads up a rifle and puts his eye and ear
protection on.

Targets are spread across a vacant lot -- sandbags, mounds of
dirt and make-shift windows.

A loud BUZZER sounds off.

Jacob darts from behind a plywood wall with his rifle. He
runs between two mounds of dirt, takes some shots down range.

He deftly tags all his targets, before moving to the next shooting location, where he drops down on his belly.

Laying prone, he nails his next set of targets.

After finishing the course, he takes a look at his handy work. He inspects each target. Just then --

A HAND grabs his shoulder! Spooked, he whirls around with the rifle --

Only for BENNETT so snatch it by the barrel.

BENNETT
Easy there, soldier!

JACOB
Don't walk up on me like that
unless you want a close shave.

Jacob laughs, giddy to see his friend. He sets his rifle down and gives him a big bear hug.

JACOB (CONT'D)
How are you holdin' up?

BENNETT
Hanging in there.

JACOB
Yeah?

BENNETT
By a thread. Lewis is dead.

JACOB
I know. Dean too.

At this, Bennett registers shock.

BENNETT
What?

JACOB
Just got the call earlier from
Lucy. Motorcycle accident.

Bennett lowers his head, summoning his will. Then takes a deep breath and looks over at his car.

BENNETT
Should have done more.

JACOB
You know what's going on, don't
you?

BENNETT
Follow me.

Jacob follows Bennett back to the car.

JACOB
This is getting me stressed, man.
Want to smoke a doobie?

BENNETT
Doesn't that go against the good
book?

JACOB
Jesus himself ingested the holy
plant. Quaalude?

They reach the car where Bennett opens the door to reveal
Hendrix and his quickly decomposing body. He now lays
completely still.

Jacob leaps back, knocking Bennett on the ground. He rubs his
face.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Was that Hendrix? Is he... why do
you have his body in the back
seat?!

BENNETT
He's still alive.

Jacob's shock and horror is written all over his face.

JACOB
He doesn't look it.

All at once, Hendrix BOLTS UPRIGHT, mouth dropping agape,
eyes bolting open.

HENDRIX
Jacob?!

Jacob backs away, trying to hide his fright.

JACOB
Yeah, it's me pal.

HENDRIX

You look good. Then again,
anything's "good" compared to yours
truly.

Jacob smiles uneasily. Looks over at Bennett.

JACOB

(sotto)

The Witch didn't heal 'em, did she?

BENNETT

She cursed us.

JACOB

May my Shepherd have mercy. I told
you this would happen!

BENNETT

I'm sorry. We should have listened.
But Trish, she thinks we have to
find the woman that did this.

JACOB

Trish? That... Satan-loving jezebel
you told us about?

BENNETT

Call her what you want. Right now
she's our best shot.

JACOB

Your "best shot" is to go *back* to
the place you barely got out of
alive? Then what?!

BENNETT

I don't know. I guess we coerce the
Witch to take the hex off.

HENDRIX

We're all out of options. You think
this will stop with Hendrix?

JACOB

You think they're going to just let
you take a Sunday stroll in there?

BENNETT

You mean us?

JACOB

No. I told my Mother I would never go back. It's hard enough to keep the faith after... everything.

Hendrix coughs and gags, spitting up blood which SPLATTERS onto Jacob's shirt.

HENDRIX

I'm dying, Jacob. Please.

Jacob manically tries rubbing the blood off.

BENNETT

We need you, buddy.

Bennett shakily withdraws a joint. Sparks it with his lighter and inhales deep, eyes closed. Says a quiet prayer.

JACOB

I got your six.

BENNETT

You're a stud. But we've got to get there fast. Not much time.

JACOB

How we getting there?

BENNETT

I was figuring on taking a plane.

JACOB

Last I checked TWA isn't flying to the middle of a warzone.

BENNETT

I didn't say a commercial plane.

JACOB

Private? Where are you fixing to get one of those?

Bennett stares at Jacob pointedly.

BENNETT

Why do you think I came here?

JACOB

(beat, eyes widening)

Oh, c'mon, man! That's my brother-in-law's. He'd kill me!

BENNETT

"Greater love has no one than this:
to lay down one's life for one's
friends." Proverbs.

JACOB

(looking up, sighing)
It's John. 13:15.

TIME CUT TO:

Moments later. Deeper into the range, Jacob rips the tarp off, revealing a small PLANE. It's riddled with bullet holes, the windshield cracked.

Crude writing on the side reads: "Mother Mary Jane" next to a weed-leaf emblem with a cross through it.

BENNETT

This isn't how I pictured her.

JACOB

She's beat up, but she can move.

The men circle the plane.

BENNETT

Alright, I'll start patching up the
holes while you check the engine.

TIME LAPSE:

Bennett grabs some nearby tools and starts working on the plane's exterior. He calls out to Jacob as he works.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

I'm thinking late entry, under the
radar. Can she handle it?

JACOB

That's what she was built for. But
we'll have to fly low.

Bennett moves on to inspecting the landing gear.

BENNETT

What about refueling?

JACOB

I installed a reserve tank last
year. It'll be tight, but --

HENDRIX (O.S.)
 (bubbly, gurgling)
 Aaahhhh...

They both turn to find that Hendrix has CRAWLED out of the car. Flesh is now PEELING off his face and body in strips. It's clear that time is running out.

BENNETT
 We've got to get this bird up and
 running fast if he's gonna see
 another sunrise.

With a crank from Jacob, the battered plane roars to life. They look at each other.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
 Viet-Fucking-Nam.

EXT. MOTHER MARY-JANE - NIGHT

Mary-Jane flies low, over a sparkling ocean. Lightning flashes. Rain pours down.

INT. MOTHER MARY-JANE - NIGHT

Jacob and Bennett are at the helm. The rickety plane SHAKES and rumbles against the fierce wind and pelting rain. They have headsets on as they approach Vietnam.

HENDRIX
 Mary Jane, huh?

JACOB
 No one gets me higher. Except the
 lord.
 (to Bennett)
 Put it on 55.9.

Bennett turns a dial in front of him, pressing the earpiece to his ear.

BENNETT
 It's all Vietnamese.

Jacob nudges Hendrix.

JACOB
 Hey, we need your expertise buddy.

Bennett slides the headphones on a groaning Hendrix.

BENNETT
What do you think?

Hendrix coughs throatily, struggling to focus.

HENDRIX
Just... chatter. It's breaking up.

BENNETT
So far, so good.

HENDRIX
The voices are getting clearer.

JACOB
That means we're close.

HENDRIX
I can't wait to get my hands on
that ass-ugly cooze.

BENNETT
Why don't you tell her that
yourself?

Bennett grabs his radio, holds it up to Hendrix's mouth.
Manages to get a slight smile out of his faltering comrade.

HENDRIX
You hear that, bitch? We're coming
for your saggy ass!

Bennett hangs the mic back up.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
I can't thank you enough, Bennett.
For all you've done.

BENNETT
Thank me when we get home. You'd do
the same for me.

HENDRIX
How do you know?

BENNETT
You nearly got yourself killed just
to bring home dog-tags for the
families. I *know*.

Hendrix reaches into his pocket, withdrawing a key-ring with
the dog-tags wrapped around it.

HENDRIX
Still carry 'em with me.

JACOB
Sorry to interrupt the love-in, but
what are the coordinates?

Bennett pulls a paper out of his pocket, he tapes it to the dashboard.

BENNETT
There ya go.

Suddenly -- *WHOOM!* Outside the cockpit window, a Soviet MiG FIGHTER JET ROARS INTO VIEW, rapidly approaching their plane.

As they jolt, the plane's radio crackles to life, and a menacing voice comes through.

VOICE (V.O.)
(Vietnamese-accent English)
American pilots, you are in
restricted airspace.

BENNETT
What the hell? I thought we were
under the radar!

JACOB
We are!

VOICE (V.O.)
Identify yourselves. You have five
seconds or you *will* be shot down!

The Soviet MiG gets CLOSER.

JACOB
Hold on!

Jacob swerves the plane hard to the right, narrowly avoiding the MiG as it screams past them. The men are thrown against their seats, hearts pounding.

BENNETT
What was that?!

Suddenly, a chilling CHUCKLE echoes behind Bennett, sending shivers down his spine.

He whips around, coming face-to-face with the WITCH, her grotesque features twisted in a malevolent grin!

Jacob screams. Terrified, Bennett trains his gun on the WITCH. In an instant, she vanishes, leaving nothing but empty air. The men exchange horrified glances, their hearts racing.

JACOB
Where'd she go?

Jacob turns back to the plane's controls, only for --

SCREE! The WITCH now floats menacingly ALONGSIDE THE AIRCRAFT, her arms outstretched as if to embrace the plane!

BENNETT
Evasive maneuvers!

Jacob yanks the controls, sending the plane into a sharp dive. The WITCH's laughter echoes through the sky as she pursues them, her ghostly form phasing through the clouds.

JACOB
Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name...

Jacob scans the jungle below, desperately searching for a clearing when --

SCRAAAPE! The Witch's gnarled fingers tear into the fuselage like a can opener!

The side of the plane rips open, exposing the crew to the howling wind and the horrors that await them below.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Bennett, help --

Jacob, caught in the sudden decompression, is violently hurled from the plane. His body twists and turns as he plummets towards the unforgiving jungle below.

BENNETT
No!

He watches in horror as Jacob's body is IMPALED on a towering tree, a sickening crack echoing through the night.

The plane, now a spiraling deathtrap, begins to nose-dive towards the tree. Bennett, his heart pounding, reaches for the controls, desperately trying to level the aircraft.

HENDRIX
Put her down!

Bennett closes his eyes. The plane breaks through the canopy, branches scraping against the fuselage.

BENNETT
Brace yourself!

Bennett and Hendrix lock eyes, a silent acknowledgment.

The plane, like a wounded beast, careens into the massive tree, the impact shaking the earth and sending a shower of splintered wood and twisted metal raining down.

EXT. VIETNAM JUNGLE - WATCH TOWER - CONTINUOUS

A team of NVA soldiers standing next to an 82mm mortar artillery gun. They watch the smoldering plane through the jungle through binoculars.

EXT. VIETNAM JUNGLE - CRASH SITE - CONTINUOUS

Smoke and clouds of dirt have mixed in a blinding fog. All we hear is COUGHING.

Bennett opens his eyes. He checks his body for injuries.

The plane has been RIPPED open, the cockpit is upside down in a tree. Bennett hangs from his seatbelt. He unbuckles, falling to the ground.

BENNETT
Hendrix!

Bennett looks at the plane, noticing something. In the place of the Witch's claw marks, there are now clean HOLES.

The tree is on fire, rubble everywhere. Bennett climbs to his feet, proceeds forward when --

The limp, impaled and charred body of JACOB falls from the tree, nearly landing on Bennett as he recoils!

He recovers, continuing forward. The smoke is thick and unwavering. The only light comes from the fire.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Hang on!

He rushes toward the base of the tree, where Hendrix's body is about to be engulfed in flames.

As the fire rapidly spreads, Bennett reaches in, yanking Hendrix by his arm and dragging him to safety.

Bennett shakes Hendrix awake.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Come on, get up!

HENDRIX
What the fuck happened?

BENNETT
We crashed, Jacob's dead. Fuck!

HENDRIX
The Witch attacked us!

BENNETT
That's what she wanted us to think.
It was an artillery attack. She's
somehow fucking with our minds.

HENDRIX
That means Charlie's out there
waiting us on. And our rifles were
in the goddamn plane!

BENNETT
Shit. You have your sidearm?

Hendrix checks his waist. The holster is empty.

HENDRIX
Must have lost it during the crash.

Bennett pulls his pistol out.

BENNETT
At least we got one piece.

A psychotic look in Hendrix's eyes. He yanks a long blade
from the sheath on his belt.

HENDRIX
When we find that Witch. I'm going
to skin her alive and wear her
flesh as a raincoat.

BENNETT
We need her help.

HENDRIX
Did that look like she was tryin'
to help!

BENNETT
She doesn't want us here. That
means she's scared. And it means
we're close to the answer.

The sound of VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS YELLING echoes out, accompanied by distant gunfire.

HENDRIX
Or close to the end.

Bennett grabs his hand and stands him up. Hendrix spots the Vietcong soldiers getting closer.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Get down!

The pair slide down the hill, covering themselves with leaves and brush.

One bulky soldier approaches Jacob's ruined, lifeless body. He grabs him and slings him over his shoulder, carrying him off into the darkness.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Look, look over there!

On the side of the mountain, covered in shrubs and ivy is the entrance to a small CAVE. Pitch black inside.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
I've heard VC store weapons in
caves like that.

Bennett looks around.

BENNETT
Let's give it a shot.

HENDRIX
(shrugging)
If I'm croaking anyway, I'm going
out barin' arms.

Hendrix follows. The pair slowly enter the looming cave. They slowly walk in, led by Bennett's pistol.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Hendrix and Bennett crawl through the tunnel leading to a large cave. Bennett whistles in amazement, seeing --

Pallets of medical equipment and crates of ammunition are stacked everywhere.

TORCHES affixed to the wall dimly light the space. Bennett crouches down. He looks to Hendrix.

HENDRIX

All the bullets you could shake a stick at, but no weapons.

Bennett stops, noticing something odd about the cave wall.

BENNETT

This part of the wall... it doesn't match the others. It's too smooth, like it was added later.

After a few moments of scouring, Hendrix finds a small, nearly invisible latch embedded in the rock face.

He pulls the latch, and the false wall swings open, revealing a small, hidden room. Inside, a stockpile of pristine AK-47 assault rifles, neatly arranged and ready for use.

HENDRIX

Fuck me silly and call me Louise.

They walk around, between the rifles.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)

Maybe we should burn this place down after we snatch these.

BENNETT

Stay focused. I see more rooms.

Bennett continues exploring, heading into an adjacent space deeper into the cave network. Each sub-section is separated by filthy WHITE SHEETS.

HENDRIX

I don't like these one bit.

BENNETT

Thought you down-south boys dressed up in sheets all the time.

Hendrix laughs, then winces and gasps in pain, nearly collapsing. Bennett helps to guide him to a stack of crates.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

We've gotta check that gauze.

He sits him down, then goes to unwrap part of his bandage --

Part of Hendrix's LOWER INTESTINES FLOP OUT of his shredded flesh flap!

HENDRIX

Jesus Christ!

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ!

Bennett and Hendrix shove the loose organs back in, his hands trembling and covered in blood and human waste.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
You alright?

HENDRIX
My guts just fell out, but other
than that, dandy.

BENNETT
We gotta keep moving. I'll clear
the next room.

Bennett slowly creeps up to the adjoining sheet. Summoning his courage, he nuzzles it aside with his muzzle --

Only to come face-to-face the grotesque visage of a DEAD SOLDIER; eyes hollow, teeth violently removed!

The body FALLS forward, nearly landing on Bennett, who stumbles out of the way, getting caught on the sheet and tumbling into --

INT. CAVE - ROOM ONE - CONTINUOUS

Bennett hits the ground hard, he points his pistol in every direction. He spins back around --

To find himself right next to a SECOND CORPSE, horribly decayed!

BENNETT
Goddamn it!

Hendrix limps in, scanning the room with a flashlight.

HENDRIX
I thought you found her.

BENNETT
Just a couple more stiffs.

HENDRIX
Make that three.

Hendrix's beam lands on another DEAD VC in the corner. A double-barrel shotgun hangs from his mouth. The top half of his head is missing.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
I can relate, buddy.

Hendrix and Bennett continue on, but we linger on the Dead VC as his EYES move subtly, following them. *Still alive.*

ANGLE ON: Bennett uses his pistol to move stuff around. Bloodied bandages, empty I.V. bags.

The wall is lined with empty medical stretchers, most stained with blood. They inspect the whole place.

BENNETT

Think they did operations down here?

HENDRIX

Doesn't make sense. No electricity.

BENNETT

They were up to something.

Hendrix walks up to a bucket full of dark liquid. He taps it with the tip of his boot. The liquid ripples.

HENDRIX

Something sick.

Bennett puts his boot on the edge and kicks it over. The dark BLOOD spills onto the ground, making a HUMAN SKULL visible.

BENNETT

And then some.

Bennett gags on the smell. Hendrix shines his light at the other sheet.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Let's check the other room.

Bennett leads the way. He stops in front of the sheet, counting down.

He rips down the sheet, then runs inside.

INT. CAVE - ROOM TWO - CONTINUOUS

Bennett and Hendrix enter the room cautiously, their AK-47s at the ready. They cover their noses from the stench emanating from --

A pile of dead goats near a table covered in scattered documents and a small medical kit. Bennett examines the documents quickly.

BENNETT

There's a symbol, but otherwise...
Can you read it?

Hands them to Hendrix, who scans the pages.

HENDRIX

These look like some kinda ritual
instructions. And there's a map
here, but it's incomplete.

BENNETT

We need to find the rest of it. It
could lead us to her.

As they search, Bennett notices a looped symbol carved into
the wall, partially hidden behind a moldy tapestry.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

(pointing)

Matches this symbol on the map.

Hendrix looks around, spots another symbol near the entrance
to a narrow passageway.

HENDRIX

Down this way!

Hendrix goes to proceed in that direction when --

BENNETT

Don't move!

Hendrix freezes in place.

REVEAL: a thin TRIPWIRE stretches across the entrance.

HENDRIX

Good eye.

Using his combat knife, Bennett carefully disables the trap.
They proceed down the passageway, their senses on high alert.

INT. CAVE - NARROW PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The passage winds deeper into the cave system. Bennett and
Hendrix come across several forks in the path, each marked
with a different symbol.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)

Which way?

BENNETT

I don't --

Just then, the torches up ahead all BLOW OUT, bathing the space in darkness.

HENDRIX

Oh, that's just perfect!

Bennett fumbles for his lighter, the sound of his own heartbeat pounding in his ears. As he flicks the lighter to life, it illuminates --

A swarm of BATS erupting from a slivered opening, their leathery wings brushing against the men's faces!

They swat the creatures away, then turn to face the now-exposed passageway.

BENNETT

That's gotta be it.

HENDRIX

Shall we?

They step forward, only for --

The FLOOR BENEATH them to suddenly give way! They slide, rolling through earthen clumps before landing with a SPLASH in a mud-puddle.

Bennett looks around. Finds himself facing --

EXT. REMOTE CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

They hut where they first found the Witch, visible in the distance.

Bennett and Hendrix exchange a wordless look. Hendrix goes to continue, but falters, dropping to his knees.

The bleeding from his stomach is worse than ever. He clutches his gut, desperately holding in intestinal tract tissue.

HENDRIX

Go on without me.

BENNETT

We didn't come all this way to fall short.

HENDRIX

What if... what if we already did?

BENNETT

What the hell are you jawing about?

HENDRIX
I didn't know how to tell you...

BENNETT
Listen, Hendrix, I'm gonna go scout
out the place, but I'm coming back.

Bennett begins proceeding towards the hut for a few yards,
only to stumble on something.

He looks down and is stunned to find --

The rotting, half-mummified CORPSE of THE WITCH'S SON. A
bullet hole visible in his skull!

BENNETT (CONT'D)
(sotto)
No...

Bennett spins and charges back to Hendrix.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
What did you do?!

HENDRIX
I was trying to tell you --

Bennett grabs Hendrix by the collar, yanking him up and
dragging him back towards the dead Witch and her son.

BENNETT
You told me you were taking them
North?!

As Hendrix's expression droops, we --

ENTER FLASHBACK:

EXT. JUNGLE - THE PAST

Hendrix shouts commands at the Witch and her son. He
continues shoving them. They speak in VIETNAMESE with ENGLISH
SUBTITLES:

HENDRIX
Move it!

She looks back at him with a smirk.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
Keep smiling bitch!

WITCH

Watch the way you speak to me,
devil.

He pokes her with his barrel as they arrive at their destination.

HENDRIX

This is it.

Hendrix points North, but the Witch doesn't move.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)

Damn it.

Hendrix drops his rifle and draws a pistol. Without hesitation he pistol whips her in the mouth, putting her on her back.

Her son shoves Hendrix in return. He punches the son in the mouth, dropping him like a sack of rocks.

He walks up and puts a silencer on his pistol. The Witch rushes in, screaming and grabs hold of his arm.

He tosses her loose, trains his gun on the son and BLOWS his brains out!

The Witch is shocked and distraught, mouth agape, tears streaming down her cheeks. She hops to her feet and rushes at Hendrix but --

He hurls her to the ground and kicks her in the face.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)

I bet you thought you and your brat
were going home today huh?

WITCH

You... will... pay.

HENDRIX

Wouldn't bet on it.

Hendrix is about to head-tap the Witch, when --

A loud WHISTLE catches his attention.

DUKE (O.S.)

Hendrix!

He turns momentarily

HENDRIX
I'm coming!

When he looks back, the Witch is GONE.

BACK TO PRESENT:

The pair now stand over the corpse of the son.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
I couldn't let him live, Bennett.
Not after what I'd seen his kind do
to our men.

BENNETT
(furious)
We made a deal with her! An oath!
No wonder this is happening.

Hendrix closes his eyes, tight, shaking his head.

HENDRIX
Maybe I deserve this.

BENNETT
What about the rest of us! You
signed our death warrants --

Suddenly, something WET lands on Bennett's shoulder. It looks like black bile. He glances up --

Just in time to see THE WITCH swooping down on them like an Atlas Moth, SCREECHING, sharp claw-like nails bared! She LANDS inches away from the terrified pair.

Hendrix jumps back. Bennett takes a few steps back, holding out his hands in surrender.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
Listen, I'm sorry for what's
happened here. What my friend here
did was an awful mistake and --

CLICK. Bennett turns. Hendrix trains his side-arm on HIM.

HENDRIX
A life for a life. Him for your
son.

BENNETT
Hendrix, what are you doing man?

HENDRIX
 Told you I was no hero.
 (cold, to the Witch)
 You let me go, and I'll kill him
 right here and right now.

The Witch's eyes glow with an otherworldly light as she considers Hendrix's offer.

BENNETT
 What happened to risking it all for
 your brothers?!

HENDRIX
 Those tags? I took 'em home to sell
 'em. Means jack-shit to me.

Hendrix tosses the ring of DOG TAGS at Bennett, who catches them, shocked and gut-punched.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
 (to the Witch)
 Well, we got a deal?

A beat. Then, with a twisted smile --

She LUNGES at Hendrix, unleashing HELL on him. His screams are blood-curdling as her claws TEAR into his midsection.

She unravels his intestines and uses them as a garrote to choke the life out of him.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
 (groaning)
 Bennett... help...

Bennett watches for a beat, then turns and RUNS, crashing through the undergrowth.

Behind him, Hendrix's screams echo through the trees, mingling with the Witch's hideous laughter.

Suddenly, a RUSTLING in the bushes ahead stops Bennett in his tracks. He raises his pistol, his hands shaking.

HENDRIX (CONT'D)
 Who is it?!

A silent beat. Then, from the brush BEHIND HIM emerges --

One of the ZOMBIFIED VIETCONG SOLDIERS from the cave, its face a mass of bloody, mangled flesh!

Bennett SPRAYS with his AK-47. The zombie stumbles but keeps coming, its arms outstretched.

Bennett turns to run, only to find himself face-to-face with ANOTHER ZOMBIE, this one with a gaping hole in its chest. Bennett SCREAMS, firing wildly as he scrambles away.

He sprints through the jungle, the zombies in close pursuit. A THIRD ZOMBIE lurches out from behind a tree, the one with half its face missing.

Bennett barely manages to dodge its grasp, his foot catching on a root and sending him sprawling, dropping his AK.

The zombies close in, their rotting hands reaching for him. Bennett, desperate, grabs a fallen branch and swings it with all his might, SMASHING the nearest zombie's skull.

He staggers to his feet, snatches his rifle and keeps running.

EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

Bennett bursts into a small clearing, gasping for air. The zombies, momentarily lost, are nowhere to be seen. He doubles over, his hands on his knees, trying to catch his breath.

That LAUGH, cold and mocking, rings out from the shadows. Bennett's head snaps up, his eyes wide with fear.

The Witch speaks and her Vietnamese voice *ethereally translates to English* as it reaches Bennett's ears.

THE WITCH

You betrayed our bargain, American.
Now your soul is mine.

Bennett, his jaw set in grim determination, opens fire.

The AK-47 CHATTERS, the bullets ripping through the foliage, but the Witch seems to BLUR and SHIFT, the rounds passing harmlessly through her.

With a flick of her wrist, the Witch sends Bennett's AK-47 flying from his hands. It SMASHES against a tree, breaking into pieces.

The Witch LAUGHS, the sound sending chills down Bennett's spine. She raises her hand, and an INVISIBLE FORCE slams into Bennett, sending him flying backwards.

He CRASHES to the ground, the air knocked from his lungs. The Witch is on him in an instant, her clawed hand wrapping around his throat.

THE WITCH (CONT'D)

My son was a hero. But you are weak, American. Just like your friends. They died screaming, begging for mercy.

She hurls him into the opposite wall like a rag-doll.

Bennett, his vision blurring, reaches desperately for his combat knife. Instead, he comes up with the ring of DOG TAGS Hendrix tossed him.

Among them, he notices one of the necklaces' material is TWINE, not metal. Pulling it out, sees something that makes his eyes widen --

THE JADE FERTILITY FIGURINE, the exact one from the book Trish showed him earlier.

We realize the necklace worn by the Vietcong Soldier in the opening scene was this very amulet!

Witch scuttles closer to strike once more.

BENNETT

They weren't my friends. They were my brothers.

The figurine BLAZES with green light, and the Witch SCREAMS, backing away from Bennett as if burned.

Bennett staggers to his feet, the figurine held before him like a shield.

The Witch, face contorted in rage and pain, LUNGES at him, but the figurine's light SEARS her flesh, driving her back.

THE WITCH

I control the dead! I will never join them!

BENNETT

There's a first time for everything.

With a final, mighty thrust, Bennett SLAMS the figurine against the Witch's chest. She EXPLODES in a burst of green flame, her agonized scream echoing through the jungle.

As the smoke clears, Bennett stands alone in the clearing, the figurine crumbling to dust in his hand.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
(sotto)
Thank you, Trish.

Suddenly, the sound of GUNFIRE erupts from the jungle around him. Bennett drops to the ground, his heart pounding.

A squad of Vietcong soldiers bursts into the clearing, their weapons trained on Bennett.

He braces himself for the end, but before they can fire, a hail of BULLETS rips through the soldiers, mowing them down like wheat.

American Marines, led by a grizzled SERGEANT, emerge from the jungle, their weapons smoking.

SERGEANT
Private Bennett? We're here to take
you home.

Bennett smiles broadly, overjoyed.

BENNETT
But... but how did you find me?

SERGEANT
No time for that. Let's haul ass.

BENNETT
You don't have to tell me twice!

Bennett hurries over to the marines as they help him into a TRANSPORT JEEP.

INT. MILITARY JEEP - DAY

Bennett sits in the back of the jeep. The wind whips through his hair as they speed through the jungle.

The Marines all have their backs to him as they speak.

BENNETT (CONT'D)
I can't believe it's finally over.
I thought I was done for.

MARINE #1
Don't worry, buddy.

MARINE #2
We're gonna get you where you need
to go.

BENNETT
You're heading back stateside,
right?

MARINE #3
Not quite.

MARINE #4
Poor bastard.

Bennett sits upright, leaning forward.

BENNETT
Hey, what are you guys talking
about?!

The marine slowly turns around, and Bennett RECOILS in
horror.

It's *HENDRIX*, his body and face a rotting, maggot-infested
mess.

HENDRIX
Welcome back, pal.

The other soldiers turn around, revealing the dead,
contorted, zombified faces of DEAN, DUKE, JACOB, and LEWIS!

ALL IN UNISON
We missed you.

BENNETT
No! This can't be happening!

The jeep screeches to a halt beside a small lake. The zombie
soldiers grab Bennett, dragging him from the vehicle.

EXT. SMALL LAKE - NIGHT

They throw him down in the dirt, laughing at him as they rip
off all his remaining clothes.

The soldiers pull two small canoes toward a large pole
sticking vertically out of the water.

BENNETT
Stop! It's me! We're brothers!

DEAN
Not anymore.

They place the boats on each side of the pole, placing one
foot in each boat, tying him upright against the pole.

BENNETT

Just kill me!

LEWIS

You're not getting off that easy.

HENDRIX

We sure didn't.

Hendrix smacks him in the nose with the butt of his pistol. With Bennett dazed, Dean grabs his chin and pours the milk into his mouth, spilling some, but most of it is swallowed.

Two more soldiers prepare another gallon. They fill it up with honey and milk. They shake it up, before force-feeding him the rest.

He lifts his head looking around, vision blurred as he watches the soldiers disappear. He begins puking all over himself, covered in cuts and other open wounds.

His fingers begin to twitch, as the feeling comes back. With his hands tied, it's impossible to get loose.

Bugs crawl all over his body, entering through the wounds, the mosquitoes pepper him with bites.

Bennett shakes back and forth trying to thrust himself free, but he's too weak.

BENNETT

It's... it's supposed to be over.

Gradually, through the fog, the WITCH approaches. His former Comrades all KNEEL before her.

THE WITCH

It ends when I say it does.

He becomes still, eyes fixed on the water below. His body has become home to hundreds of insects.

His skin undulates with tendriled creepy-crawlies trying to break free.

Finally, his belly gives way, tearing open and spilling out his organs along with hundreds of bugs.

The fog rises all around until Bennett disappears within it, along with the other members of his spectral platoon.

Only the Witch remains.

FADE TO BLACK.