

Spring 2016

Guerrilla

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Guerrilla

by

Jake TMT Sheets

A thesis presented to the

Faculty of the Department of
School of Film & Television
Loyola Marymount University

In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts in Feature Film Screenwriting

May 5, 2016

APPROVAL TO ADVANCE TO CANDIDACY

The following student has met all the criteria to advance to candidacy
for an M.F.A. in Fine Arts with an emphasis in Screenwriting

Student: Jake TMT Sheets Date: 12-15-2015

Committee Co Chair (690): *[Signature]* Date: 12/15/15

Committee Co Chair (691): *[Signature]* Date: 5/5/2016

Advanced Screenplay Project Title:

Guerrilla

Criteria for advancement to candidacy:

Student has demonstrated sufficient ability and knowledge to complete the thesis project.

Approved to Candidacy

Not Approved to Candidacy

Comments:

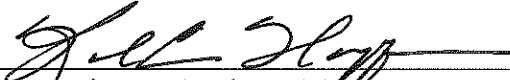
This feature length screenplay written by
Jake TMT Sheets

under the guidance of a faculty committee
from the School of Film & Television at
Loyola Marymount University, and approved
by the members of the committee, has been
presented to and accepted by the Graduate
School in partial fulfillment of the thesis
requirements for the degree of Master of
Fine Arts in Screenwriting.

Advanced Screenplay Project Committee:



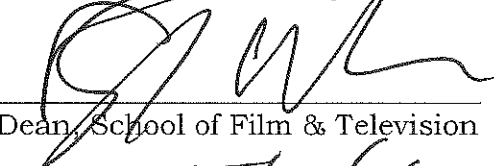
Committee Chair: SCWR 690



Committee Member: SCWR 691

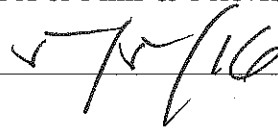


Graduate Director



Dean, School of Film & Television

Date



ADVANCED SCREENPLAY PROJECT APPROVAL

The Advanced Screenplay Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Screenwriting submitted by the candidate fulfils the requirements and standards set forth in the University Bulletin by the Division.

Screenplay Title: Guerrilla

Student: Jake TMT Sheets Date: 12-15-2015

Committee Co Chair: SCWR 690 Beth Serlin

Signed:  Date: 12/15/15

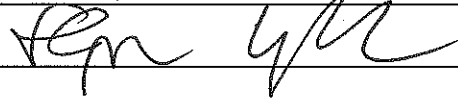
Committee Co Chair: SCWR 691 Karol Hoeffner

Signed:  Date: 5/5/2016

Graduate Director: Karol Hoeffner

Signed:  Date: 5/5/2016

Dean: Stephen Ujlaki

Signed:  Date: 5/5/16

Guerrilla

A Screenplay

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Film & Television,
Loyola Marymount University of Los Angeles, California

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts

By

Jake TMT Sheets



GUERRILLA

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5/5/2016 3rd Draft

FADE IN:

EXT. RIVER VALLEY, AFGHANISTAN - NIGHT

A thin river SMACKS between rocks, snow-covered brush under moonlight.

A DARK FIGURE hops across the river, rolls into the brush, disappears.

Further down, the brush RUSTLES and the Dark Figure pops up and peers around, then crouches down and continues downhill.

The Dark Figure appears from behind a fallen trunk, revealing himself as SGT. DANIEL SHRINE (34), bearded Army intelligence sergeant with the stoicism of a monk and the valor of a knight.

SIX GREEN BERETS wait on high alert on the other side of the fallen tree.

Shrine climbs over the fallen tree and plops down, sits up.

SHRINE

Ok. I found the village. There're some TICs in our way - maybe seven to eight - but we can skirt around them if-

CAPT. BELLUM (26), means well but too young for his job, inches close to Shrine.

CAPT. BELLUM

Skirt around them? We can handle seven to eight TICs.

SHRINE

I'm sure you can. But we have orders not to engage in combat if we can avoid it. Maj. Osborne said-

CAPT. BELLUM

He's not here, sergeant. And I'm your captain.

SHRINE

But we have our orders.

CAPT. BELLUM

Forget that. If we can get some, then we can kill some.

SGT. RAYS (35), seasoned and with a grin that exudes overconfidence, always chewing Bubble gum, stands up, ready to move out.

SGT. RAYS

Most agreed. If the TICs are sitting right there, let's smoke 'em.

SHRINE

We came here for a peaceful meeting with the Elder. If orders are broken, people die.

CAPT. BELLUM

Only Taliban are gonna die today.

Capt. Bellum signals to his Men. They move out.

Shrine waits behind, upset, then climbs back over the log and follows after them.

Sgt. Rays waits up ahead and motions for Shrine to catch up.

They scurry up river, weaving through the dense brush.

They hop to the other side of the river and disappear into the darkness.

EXT. RIVER VALLEY - DAWN

Shrine comes to a thin trail and kneels down upon it. He checks his watch, then conceals himself away in brush and catches his breath.

SHRINE

(into radio)

On my shot.

SEVEN TALIBAN (TICs: troops in contact) slowly make their way down the trail.

Shrine raises his RIFLE and hears a RUSTLE in the bushes across the trail.

The Taliban freeze, on alert.

Sgt. Rays and the other Green Berets appear from the bushes.

The Taliban spread out and SPRAYS bullets in every direction, SHATTERING the silent night.

The Green Berets take cover and FIRE back. Shrine, annoyed but skilled, SHOOTS a Talib.

Several Taliban run off. Shrine and Sgt. Rays chase after them, firing BURSTS here and there.

The Taliban turn around and lay down fire, pinning Shrine and Sgt. Rays down. Capt. Bellum catches up with them.

CAPT. BELLUM
Calling in air support.

SHRINE
We're too close to the village.

CAPT. BELLUM
Fuck it. We got enemy fire up our
ass, sergeant!

Despite the heavy gunfire, Shrine pops up and throws a grenade.

BOOM!

Shrine fires a burst and then chases after the Taliban.

SHRINE
(annoyed)
Fuuuuck!

The Green Berets follow behind him.

Shrine shoots a Talib, then another in the leg and watches the Wounded Talib crawl away.

A Talib hops up onto a rock and launches an RPG.

SGT. RAYS
Shrine!

The RPG WHISTLES toward Shrine and he sprints to the side and dives for his life.

BOOM!

Shrine COUGHS from the settling cloud of dirt and snow. He checks himself for wounds, then rises to his feet.

Sgt. Rays takes aim at the Talib on the rock and shoots him.

The gunfire stopped, the river valley returns to its tranquil manner.

Shrine and the Green Berets regroup.

CAPT. BELLUM
Everyone good?

GREEN BERETS
Hoo-ah.

Shrine quietly walks off, searching for the Wounded Talib.

CAPT. BELLUM
Where are you off to, sergeant?

Shrine ignores him.

He finds a trace of blood on a rock and continues on until he pushes his way through some dense brush and comes across the wounded Talib slowly inching away.

Upon seeing Shrine, the Talib turns over, reaches into his tunic, and grasps a PISTOL.

Shrine trains his rifle at the Talib's head and the Talib freezes, then pulls his pistol out, but Shrine SHOTS him in the head.

He takes several deep breaths, then steps away and crouches down. He pulls from his pocket a worn copy of "GOING AFTER CACCIATO" with half the pages missing and he tears out another.

Shrine lights the page on fire and gently places it on the Talib before walking back to the Group.

CAPT. BELLUM (CONT'D)
What the hell was that?

Shrine ignores Capt. Bellum again and takes off his helmet to rub the dirt off his head and face.

Sgt. Rays pulls out a cigarette and hands it to Shrine.

SGT. RAYS
You alright?

SGT. Q (30), eager and collected, steps over.

SGT. Q
Yo, if it weren't for Sgt. Rays
killing that Talib with the RPG,
you'd be toast.

Shrine spits, then lights the cigarette.

SHRINE

And if we had followed the fucking orders, I wouldn't have needed saving.

EXT. MALASHEJA - DAY

Shrine smokes the last of his cigarette and steps atop a short ridge as the sun rises behind him.

The Green Berets join him.

Shrine flicks the cigarette away and they descend upon Malasheja, a hamlet of a dozen houses circled around a well.

The Green Berets spread out among the hamlet to pull security. Shrine peels off from the group.

CAPT. BELLUM

Make it fast, sergeant.

Shrine walks toward the well where SEVERAL CHILDREN are playing with a chicken. A WATCHFUL MAN (30s) sits atop the well. The children stop playing and hurry toward Shrine.

He reaches into his pocket and grabs some CANDY, and gives it to the Children. Some pieces fall to the ground but he ignores it and moves past them.

Shrine stands and makes brief eye contact with the Watchful Man.

NOTE TO READER: All words in italics will be spoken in Pashto, with English subtitles.

SHRINE

I hear the Elder has news for me.

The Watchful Man hops down and motions for Shrine to follow him. They move toward a house with a red door.

Capt. Bellum motions to Sgt. Rays to follow Shrine.

Sgt. Rays goes after Shrine.

INT. ELDER'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine stands in front of the ELDER (60s), a frail man with a red, wispy beard. Shrine peels off his gloves and uses both hands to shake the Elder's.

SHRINE
May peace be with you.

ELDER
 (in English)
 And peace to you also.

They sit cross-legged, facing each other.

SEVERAL OTHERS from the hamlet join them in the cozy room adorned with a lush purple rug and red throw pillows.

Shrine sips from a cup of hot tea and sets it down. He reaches into his rucksack and pulls out a BOX OF CHOCOLATES and hands them to the Elder who graciously accepts them.

EXT. MALASHEJA - DAY

Sgt. Rays peers around the door to the house.

INT. ELDER'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine and the Elder SPEAK in HUSHED PASHTO. The Elder motions to a YOUNG MAN who hands him a DISPOSABLE CAMERA. The Elder then gives it to Shrine.

Sgt. Rays quietly enters the room from outside and Everyone turns their attention to him. The Watchful Man stands quickly and YELLS angry Pashto at him, motioning with his arms for him to leave.

Sgt. Rays grips his rifle and looks to Shrine.

SGT. RAYS
 What's he saying?

Shrine stands up and hurries toward him.

SHRINE
 Get out.

SGT. RAYS
 What's he saying?

SHRINE
 I said get out.

Shrine ushers Sgt. Rays back outside and closes the door, then turns to the Elder. The Watchful Man sits back down but eyes Shrine suspiciously.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
My sincere apologies.

Shrine bows his head to the Elder and then collects his rucksack and rifle. The Elder stands and walks Shrine to the door where they shake hands.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
Thank you for your hospitality. And for the news.

ELDER
I hope it helps. Insha'Allah.

Shrine steps out.

EXT. MALASHEJA - DAY

Shrine and Sgt. Rays meet up and walk together as the Green Berets leave the village.

SGT. RAYS
 (jokingly)
 What's with you always giving the sandrats chocolates?

SHRINE
 It's their fucking custom. Like us bringing flowers- or wine.

A Green Beret throws a can of GREEN SMOKE into a snowy meadow.

A BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER approaches the billowing smoke and settles upon it. The WHIPPING rotors scatter the smoke into a whirlwind of green.

EXT. KUNAR PROVINCE - DAY

Afghanistan's 15,000-foot, snow covered mountain range stretches as far as the eye can see. The blue sky only makes the snow brighter.

The Black Hawk descends from the high snowy peaks and into a wide stretch of flat terrain.

A massive AIR BASE surrounded by tall cement walls sits in the middle of barren land.

EXT. BAGRAM AIR BASE - DAY

The Black Hawk lands in the center of the base just off of a large tarmac. Shrine and the Green Berets hop out but Shrine splits off.

White-painted, plywood bungalows line the inside of the base and SOLDIERS move about their routine.

Shrine walks down a muddy, slushy road to a cluster of bungalows.

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Big black letters on the wall read "Mission Support Activity" (MSA).

SGT. EVA CAPA (36), countenance of a general, runs the room of SEVERAL INTELLIGENCE SPECIALISTS, each behind a desk topped with papers and multiple computer monitors.

Capa paces the room, speaking into her headset.

CAPA
 (into headset)
 OK. Hold there. No- hold!
 Goddammit. I said hold!

Shrine steps into the room. Capa doesn't notice him.

CAPA (CONT'D)
 (to Spc Parker)
 Parker, get me the DLZ UTM in AO
 210 stat!

SPECIALIST PARKER (25) double-times his hard work.

CAPA (CONT'D)
 (into headset)
 I can't give you an order but if I
 need to I will send hellfire down
 upon your private sector ass!

Capa notices Shrine and flashes him a friendly smile.

CAPA (CONT'D)
 (into headset)
 You're damn right that's a threat!

She throws her headset across the room.

CAPA (CONT'D)
 Shit!

She takes a deep breath.

SPC PARKER
(timidly)
Sergeant Capa, do you still want
that UTM?

CAPA
(annoyed)
What do you think, Parker?

She focuses on Shrine.

CAPA (CONT'D)
And what the hell do you want?

Shrine LAUGHS.

INT. DARKROOM - DAY

Capa drops the disposable camera into a bin labelled "Used."

Shrine lights a cigarette and Capa takes it from him.

CAPA
Just what I needed.

Shrine lights one for himself.

SHRINE
I thought you quit.

CAPA
I wish I knew how.

Capa pins up the photographs to dry as she smokes.

CAPA (CONT'D)
You burn another page?

Shrine's answers in silence.

CAPA (CONT'D)
One of these days you're gonna
finish the book and I don't know
how you're gonna cope.

SHRINE
(jokingly)
I'll get another book.

Capa knocks the ash from her cigarette into a pail of water.

CAPA

Alright. Let's see what we got here?

Capa repositions several photographs in front of a dim light panel.

The photographs show mountains, trails, Taliban carrying weapons in the distance.

SHRINE

Look's like they're carrying a goddamn arsenal.

Capa puts up a few more photographs showing more Taliban.

CAPA

And in this one, as well.

One photograph shows a rock upon which a Pashto phrase has been written in chalk.

CAPA (CONT'D)

What's this? What's-
(tries to read it)
Daw' alzzalam?

SHRINE

I don't know. Must be slang.

Capa takes the photographs down and throws her cigarette into the pail of water like a bad life decision.

CAPA

Now I quit. Maj. Osborne's coming in from Kabul and he wants to see you. Get cleaned up cause ya look like death and you smell like a dog.

Shrine takes a drag and releases the smoke.

SHRINE

(straight-faced)
Woof.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Shrine wipes steam off of a bathroom mirror and dries his hair. He studies his reflection, numb to what he sees.

EXT. HEADQUARTERS BUNGALOW - DAY

Shrine, in fresh ACUs (Army Combat Uniform), and Capa walk into a larger bungalow with an American flag hanging outside.

INT. HEADQUARTERS BUNGALOW - DAY

Shrine and Capa weave their way through a series of hallways, past Sgt. Rays chatting with Sgt. Q, and come to a door that reads:

"Maj. Osborne - Mission Support Activity"

INT. MAJOR OSBORNE'S OFFICE - DAY

Made of more plywood, Maj. Osborne's small office looks seldom used.

Shrine and Capa enter and salute MAJ. HENRY OSBORNE (40s), tough as nails, a lot on his mind, and he welcomes them.

MAJ. OSBORNE

Come in. Have a seat.

(to Capa)

You have everything?

CAPA

Yeah, I have it.

Capa sets a folder down on the desk.

Maj. Osborne walks back to his desk.

MAJ. OSBORNE

I hear you've become best friends with all the indigs.

SHRINE

I just know how to work them.

MAJ. OSBORNE

Which is why you're just the man we need. What do you know about Eshkashem?

SHRINE

Border town. Between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, but we're not permitted on that border.

MAJ. OSBORNE

That's not for you to worry about. We believe some weapons are coming through that town and getting into the hands of some dangerous men.

CAPA

The log you recovered, it fits as the second to last piece of the puzzle in this weapons exchange.

MAJ. OSBORNE

It all points to Eshkashem. You understand?

SHRINE

If that's the second to last piece of the puzzle, what's the final piece?

MAJ. OSBORNE

You.

SHRINE

Just me?

MAJ. OSBORNE

You and a team of Green Berets are gonna drop in near a village called Ali Moghol where you'll meet up with a sheep herder named Nufail Baharakai - he knows you're coming and he'll guide you to your target, keep you under the radar. Once you're there, I want bulletproof intel of this exchange.

SHRINE

All do respect, sir, I don't need a team.

MAJ. OSBORNE

(laughs)
Like hell you don't.

SHRINE

I'm serious.

MAJ. OSBORNE

This mission's too important.

CAPA

And dangerous. You'll be alone.

SHRINE

Better alone and successful, than
with others and unsuccessful.

MAJ. OSBORNE

Sergeant Capa's right. It's too
dangerous. Too risky.

Shrine opens the door.

SHRINE

Hold on.

He sticks his head out.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Sgt. Rays, what's the Afghan
greeting in Pashto?

SGT. RAYS (O.S.)

Fuck you!

Shrine steps back in and shuts the door.

SHRINE

That, Major, is too risky.

Shrine sits down in front of the desk.

Maj. Osborne hesitates, leans back. He taps his desk, meets
eyes with Shrine.

MAJ. OSBORNE

I'm giving you ten days. After
that, I'm pulling you out, OK?

SHRINE

Yes, sir.

MAJ. OSBORNE

Alright, that's all. Capa will get
you what else you need.

Maj. Osborne shows Shrine the door.

Shrine salutes Maj. Osborne and exits.

INT. BLACK HAWK TWO - DAY

The HOTSHOT PILOT flies nap-to-the-earth, fast and just above
the trees of the valley below.

Shrine holds on tightly as the Black Hawk jerks. He wears no uniform, but DUST-COLORED PANTS and SWEATER.

TWO MACHINE GUNNERS sit in the cabin.

The Black Hawk banks right over a ridge, swoops down, and rides another long valley.

SHRINE

(annoyed)

Drop me off at the base of this valley and I'll be good.

HOTSHOT PILOT

Nah, I'll take you all the way to Ali Moghol.

SHRINE

That's enemy territory. Set me down here.

The Black Hawk banks hard again and Shrine jerks in his seat.

HOTSHOT PILOT

Shit, man. Whole country's enemy territory.

Shrine slouches and looks out to the snowy mountains. The cold makes him shiver.

The Black Hawk pushes up a ridge and dives back over.

Shrine jerks harder this time.

The Black Hawk settles on a steady path through the valley.

Unseen by anyone, an RPG cuts through the air, leaving a smoke trail behind it.

The radar's alarm sounds. BEEP BEEP BEEP!

BLAST! The RPG slams into the tail rotor of the Black Hawk.

The Black Hawk spins endlessly until it SMASHES into the ground, digging up chunks of frozen dirt, as the Hotshot Pilot digs the nose into the earth to steady it.

EXT. FOREST / INT. BLACK HAWK TWO - DAY

The Black Hawk settles down. Bits of dirt fall down upon them, clouding the air.

1ST MACHINE GUNNER
Everyone OK?

SHRINE
Yeah.

Shrine climbs into the cockpit.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
(to the pilot)
You OK?

HOTSHOT PILOT
Yeah. I'm good. Just help me-

Shrine helps the Pilot get out of his harness but a bullet RIPS through the windshield and hits the Pilot in the head.

Both Machine Gunners grab their rifles and post up on either side of the cabin.

2ND MACHINE GUNNER
Shit.

Bullets CRACK and RATTLE the outside of the Black Hawk. The Machine Gunners return fire.

Shrine grabs the radio.

SHRINE
Bagram, do you copy?

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.) (RADIO)
Copy. This is Bagram Air Base.

SHRINE
Calling in downed Black Hawk, 1
KIA. Send medevac ASAP.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.) (RADIO)
Copy. What's your position?

Shrine reaches out and messes with the digital map on the display panel.

SHRINE
Coordinates are 34-45-29 North, 69-
58-07 East.

RADIO OPERATOR (O.S.) (RADIO)
Copy that. Sending you the closest
response team. Hang tight.

Shrine crawls back into the cabin and grabs his rifle.

Two Taliban move close, taking cover behind thick trees.

Shrine takes aim and shoots a Talib. He looks for the other but can't find him. A bullet ZIPS by his head and RICOCHETS inside the cabin.

Shrine finds the source and shoots the Talib.

A fiery Talib rushes the Black Hawk and the 2nd Machine Gunner shoots him, but the Talib is still alive and dives for cover under the Black Hawk's nose.

2ND MACHINE GUNNER

Stepping out.

The 2nd Machine Gunner steps out and finishes the Talib before he can sneak up on them. He shoots the Talib and heads back inside the cabin but is shot in the thigh and gets pinned down outside.

The 1st Machine Gunner swings around and shoots the Talib before pulling the 2nd Machine Gunner into the cabin.

1ST MACHINE GUNNER

You OK?

2ND MACHINE GUNNER

Got me in the thigh.

The 1st Machine Gunner taps the 2nd Machine Gunner on the helmet and swings back around.

A Talib rushes Shrine and Shrine pulls the trigger but is out of bullets. He whips out his hand gun and shoots the Talib.

SHRINE

Reloading.

He reloads.

A Talib sneaks up to the Black Hawk's tail and side-steps toward the cabin. He pops out and sprays the 1st Machine Gunner, killing him.

Shrine turns on his heels and pulls out his handgun and kills the sneaky Talib.

Shrine looks over at the 1st Machine Gunner, intensely.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Man down!

2ND MACHINE GUNNER

Fuck.

Shrine climbs to the back of the Black Hawk and fishes out a large duffle bag.

SHRINE

Cover me!

The 2nd Machine Gunner looks over to Shrine.

2ND MACHINE GUNNER

(in disbelief)

What?

Two more Taliban rush the Black Hawk and the 2nd Machine Gunner frantically shoots them both as bullets RICOCHET around him.

Shrine rummages through the bag and pulls out a grenade launcher. He loads it as he climbs back through the cabin.

Three more Taliban sneak from tree to tree, firing sporadically as they move forward.

Shrine remains calm as bullets WHISTLE by him and SMACK into the side of the Black Hawk.

He takes aim and fires a grenade. BOOM!

A Talib is shot into the air.

Another BOOM!

A second Talib is shot into the air.

The third Talib retreats.

Shrine takes even more careful aim and fires.

A grenade SMACKS into the Talib's back and BURSTS him open.

The forests grows quiet.

The 2nd Machine Gunner sits back in the cabin and takes a deep breath. Shrine throws the grenade launcher down and finds a medic kit.

He bandages the 2nd Machine Gunner.

2ND MACHINE GUNNER (CONT'D)

(high on adrenaline)

Man, get me out of here!

SHRINE

Looks like it missed the femoral.
You're lucky.

2ND MP
I don't feel lucky.

SHRINE
You want some water?

2ND MACHINE GUNNER
Man, can I get a cigarette?

Shrine LAUGHS.

SHRINE
Sure thing.

He gives him a cigarette from his pants pocket and lights it.

Shrine pulls out a MAP and opens it. He uses his COMPASS and PENCIL to mark a line on the map.

2ND MACHINE GUNNER
Man, if I'm gonna die, I wanna know why. What was our mission anyway?

SHRINE
You're not gonna die.

INT. BLACK HAWK - DAY - LATER

Shrine listens to the radio.

BLACK HAWK PILOT 1 (O.S.) (RADIO)
Three mikes out, hang in there.

SHRINE
Copy.

The 2nd Machine Gunner takes a long drag and watches Shrine gather his things.

Shrine slings the handgun over his chest, then the rifle, and grabs his rucksack.

He hands the radio to the 2nd Machine Gunner.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
You've done good.

The Black Hawk can be HEARD in the distance.

Shrine pops RED SMOKE outside the Black Hawk.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The red smoke dies down.

Shrine watches the new BLACK HAWK TWO, loaded with the dead and wounded 2nd Machine Gunner, prep to take off.

A FLIGHT SURGEON hops out and runs to Shrine.

FLIGHT SURGEON

You sure?

SHRINE

I have my orders.

The Flight Surgeon turns and signals to the Pilot, then jumps into the Black Hawk.

The Black Hawk lifts up and flies off.

Shrine turns and wraps an OLIVE-GREEN SHEMAGH (Afghan headscarf) around his head.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Shrine hurries through the snowy forest.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Shrine crests a ridge.

He checks his compass and orients his map.

He looks through the scope of his rifle to a trail down below and spots-

A DOZEN TALIBAN. They look in his direction, then move quickly toward him.

Shrine quickly picks himself up and hurries in the opposite direction.

EXT. SLOPE - DAY

He jumps off a boulder and lands further down the slope.

He hides behind a thick tree and peers around for any danger, then continues onward.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Shrine comes to a slow river. He looks back at his obvious tracks he's left in the slush.

TALIBAN VOICES call out to him in PASHTO.

Shrine steps into the frigid river and shivers, but walks through water and down the length of the river, avoiding anything that could leave a trace.

EXT. RIDGE LINE - NIGHT

Shrine, exhausted and dirty, climbs up from a steep slope and onto the top of the snowy ridge.

Stars shine brightly from the clear sky.

He looks down from where he came and spots the TALIBAN close behind him. One of them raises his rifle.

BULLETS SMACK against the rocks all around him and he clings on and makes himself small.

He takes several deep breaths, then slings his rucksack around and pull out TWO GRENADES.

He drops them below.

BOOM! BOOM!

A mass of loose rocks SLIDE down below.

Shrine pushes upward.

EXT. RIDGE LINE - DAWN

Shrine moves slowly across a drier ridge line, wearily stepping around large rocks and holding onto them for balance.

He stumbles and tries to catch himself but is too exhausted.

Shrine falls to the ground and rolls off the ridgeline until SMACK. He face plants onto a slab of rock jutting outward.

He tries to get up, then collapses in exhaustion.

He crawls under the rock and hides himself, then shuts his eyes.

EXT. RIDGE LINE - DAY

The sun has shifted to the opposite side of the ridge as Shrine wakes.

He lifts himself achingly onto his hands and knees, then swings his rucksack around and opens it.

He finds food packets, a satellite phone, \$5000 in cash, and his nearly empty water bottle. He drinks the last of it.

Shrine climbs to his feet and steps out onto the jutting rock. He peers down to the valley below.

SHRINE (V.O.)
I'm looking at it now.

A fat and muddy river cuts through the valley floor. On Shrine's side sits the small village of Ali Moghol, a cluster of a dozen houses. Far off to the right, in the midst of brown fields of dried agriculture sits a small house.

SHRINE (V.O.)
Negative. I have not made contact yet.

Shrine, wearing an earpiece, looks through the scope on his rifle and spots a MAN by the house digging a trench. Nearby, a flock of sheep stand around.

SHRINE
(into satellite phone)
Roger. Well, I'm gonna do this first, Capa. Then I'll call you if anything comes up.

He lowers the scope and furrows his brow in deep thought.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
Out.

Shrine takes out his earpiece and packs it away with the satellite phone into his rucksack.

He disassembles his rifle and conceals it away in the rucksack too, then swings it around to his back and descends the ridge.

EXT. ALI MOGHOL - DUSK

A house built of large mud-bricks sits perched atop a small mound.

Standing out from the light brown of the house is a sky blue painted door worn and chipped away from decades of use. Several holes have been punched out for windows and a short opening sits just above the ground leading below.

Among the house and the dry farmland, NUFAIL (55) looks 75, weary but resolute in his stature, drives a shovel into the ground to lengthen an irrigation ditch.

The small speck of Shrine appears off in the distance and grows larger until Nufail notices.

Nufail walks to the nearby well and leans his shovel against it. He draws up a pale of water and washes his face and hands with a wet rag.

He watches as Shrine becomes more visible. Shrine's thin image fills out. He holds up his hands to show he has no weapon.

Still, Nufail retreats into his house.

Shrine arrives at the well and draws up a pail of water and is about to drink when he sees Nufail and a YOUNG GIRL peering out from the darkness of their house.

Shrine hears the door creek open and lowers the pale without drinking.

He looks over to see Nufail step out, standing tall.

They study each other for a moment.

SHRINE

Are you Nufail Baharakai?

NUFAIL

I am. And who are you?

SHRINE

I am Daniel Shrine and I am here with peace.

NUFAIL

How do I know you are not lying?

SHRINE

They entered his presence and said, Peace. And Abraham said, Peace. And he thought they were unusual people. Then he turned to his house, brought out a roasted fattened calf, and placed it before them.

NUFAIL

And where are the others?

SHRINE

I come alone. But will you guide me to Eshkashem?

NUFAIL

I cannot. My daughter is getting married.

SHRINE

I was told you would guide me.

NUFAIL

Whatever promise I was supposed to have made to America, is nothing to the promise I have made as a father.

Shrine looks to the young girl in the window.

NUFAIL (CONT'D)

Your Pashto is good.

Nufail gestures for Shrine to come inside.

NUFAIL (CONT'D)

So is my English. I have not roasted fattened calf, but in the words of Abraham, Will you not eat?

INT. SITTING ROOM, NUFAIL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MINA (17) wise and observant, nervous of the American's presence, lights a LANTERN in the darkness.

The light illuminates the room revealing an old, short table sitting on a worn rug. Tired pillows lean up against the dry mud-caked walls.

Mina places the lantern on the table as Nufail welcomes Shrine to sit.

NUFAIL

Mina, can you bring in food?

Mina nods and exits into the next room.

NUFAIL (CONT'D)

We do not have much to eat. Most is packed away.

SHRINE

You're travelling far?

NUFAIL

To my daughter's new village.

SHRINE

Where is that?

Mina enters the room with a plate of naan and rice with kofta (meatballs) and sets it on the table.

NUFAIL

Deep in the mountains where it is safe.

Mina fills three cups with hot tea and sits down. Shrine eyes her and she diverts her eyes.

SHRINE

Is it near Eshkashem?

Mina looks up, startled at the conversation's topic, then looks back down.

NUFAIL

I cannot take you. Travelling with an American would be too dangerous.

SHRINE

So you travel alone?

Mina tunes into the conversation, now able to understand.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

With a young woman? Your only daughter?

Nufail shifts uncomfortably, nervously in his seat.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

With no guns?

NUFAIL

*(with courage for Mina)
The mountains are wide. I do not fear coming across the Taliban.*

SHRINE

The Taliban got to me and I was in a helicopter. They shot me out of the sky.

Mina gazes harshly at her father, who gazes back sternly. They break their gaze and all three of them sit quietly, each avoiding eye contact.

NUFAIL

You can stay the night, but in the morning you must leave.

INT. SITTING ROOM, NUFAIL'S HOUSE - LATER

Shrine lies in the bed roll, using his rucksack as a pillow. He can't fall asleep.

He hears HUSHED WHISPERS from the other room.

MINA (O.S.)

(fiercely)
He is dangerous.

NUFAIL (O.S.)

(worried)
But the road may be more of a threat than he is.

MINA (O.S.)

I don't trust him. He is after something. Or someone.

NUFAIL (O.S.)

You do not know that.

MINA (O.S.)

What will the others say when they learn he was here and that we harbored him?

NUFAIL (O.S.)

That is not for you to worry about. You are leaving this place.

MINA (O.S.)

I know. But you must return.

Shrine turns and tries to go to sleep.

INT. SITTING ROOM, NUFAIL'S HOUSE - LATER

Shrine turns back over, wide awake.

He sits up and puts his boots on.

EXT. ALI MOGHOL - NIGHT

A steady breeze blows across the frosty landscape.

Shrine shivers in the cold.

He walks around to the other side of the house to get out of the wind.

Shrine lights a cigarette and leans against a bare wooden door. He hears a SNORT and looks into a mud shack attached to the side of the house.

INT. SITTING ROOM, NUFAIL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Shrine steps back into the house and spots Nufail watching him from the darkness.

Shrine nods unassertively and goes back to his bed roll.

EXT. DEH-E PARIAN - DAWN

Nufail steps out of the house, surprised to see Shrine DIGGING the rest of the ditch.

Nufail walks to several DONKEYS hitched to a post and pours some food in a trough.

SHRINE

I want to buy a horse from you.

Nufail places a blanket on each of the donkeys.

NUFAIL

I'm sorry. They are not for sale.

SHRINE

What about for a thousand dollars?

NUFAIL

I cannot.

SHRINE

Two thousand?

Nothing.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Three thousand.

NUFAIL

I have three horses. Two are part of the dowry for my daughter's wedding. The other, I must use to return home.

Nufail walks to the well and lowers a pail of water into it.

Shrine bites his lip and looks at the ground.

SHRINE

How about a donkey? I'll buy a donkey.

Nufail walks back with the full pail of water.

NUFAIL

We need them to transport our food and my daughter's belongings.

SHRINE

You realize that I can simply take the horse from you, but I won't.

Nufail hands Shrine the pail of water. Shrine drinks.

NUFAIL

I do have a solution.

Shrine lowers the pail and studies Nufail's face.

INT. KITCHEN, NUFAIL'S HOUSE - DAY

Mina pours water from the pail into a blackened pot cradled over a wood-burning stove in the center of the cramped kitchen.

Nufail scoots around the stove with a bag of wheat and sets it on the ground.

NUFAIL

I have been thinking about what you said, and you're right.

SHRINE

I agree.

NUFAIL

We could help other.

Nufail rolls open the top of the bag and scoops out a cup of wheat, then hands it to Mina.

NUFAIL (CONT'D)

You can ride with us to Kazdeh and
give us protection. Then I will
take you to Eshkashem.

Shrine looks down in thought, then up at Nufail.

SHRINE

When do we go?

EXT. ALI MOGHOL - DUSK

Shrine climbs onto his WHITE HORSE, his rifle hidden
underneath a blanket.

Nufail and Mina wait up ahead, towing the donkeys behind
them.

NUFAIL

With a gun like that, I want you in
front.

Shrine nods as he passes them to take the lead. He notices a
KNIFE strapped to Mina's saddle.

They work their way up a sloped, snow-covered valley, and
into the brooding mountains.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

Shrine, Nufail, and Mina follow a tiny worn out trail through
the steep terrain.

Nufail WHISTLES a disjointed tune.

They come to a ridge where Shrine sees a narrow mountain pass
just up ahead. He hold his hand up for Nufail to stop
whistling.

Nufail doesn't stop.

Shrine turns around.

SHRINE

*When I hold my hand like this, it
means stop and be quiet.*

Nufail stops whistling, but pulls his horse alongside Shrine.

NUFAIL

Do you see something?

SHRINE

I thought I heard something.

They remain quiet, listening for anything. Nothing.

Shrine pushes his horse forward and they continue onward.

Nufail resume WHISTLING.

EXT. CAMP, ROCKLANDS - NIGHT

Nufail WHISTLES as he brings his bedroll under the lean-to shelter by the fire.

Large boulders protect their camp from the wind.

Shrine tends to the fire as Mina sits close to stay warm. She KNITS a GREEN BLANKET.

Shrines take the pot of hot tea from above the fire and pours some into his cup. He puts the pot back above the fire and sits back.

Mina grabs the pot herself and refills her own empty cup.

LATER

Nufail and Mina sleep under the shelter.

Shrine sips the last of the tea and stares out into the darkness, keeping watch. The wind has died down.

Shadows dance on the rocks from the remaining embers.

CRUNCH. CRUNCH. Footsteps.

Shrine perks up and takes hold of his rifle.

CRUNCH.

He sees nothing, but softly steps forward.

He makes it to the end of one boulder, then another, and another, RIFLE RAISED.

CRUNCH.

A shadow moves across a nearby boulder.

Shrine turns and spots a YOUNG TALIB lost in the darkness.

Shrine slings his rifle behind him and draws his knife.

Shrine leans into a boulder and draws closer to the Young Talib, then pounces.

They fall to the ground, Shrine's knife stuck into the Talib's throat. Shrine rises to his feet and looks around to catch his bearings.

MINA (O.S.)

Ah!

SCUFFLING.

Shrine darts back through the maze of boulders and skids to a stop outside the camp. He peers around a boulder.

THREE TALIB drag Nufail and Mina from their shelter and onto their knees.

Nufail tries to stand but Talib One knocks him back down. Talib One holds them at gunpoint while Talib Two searches them for weapons. Talib Three crawls into their shelter to search for anything else.

Shrine raises his rifle and inches around the boulder.

Talib Two touches Mina as she makes quick eye contact with Shrine.

Shrine SHOOTS Talib One holding them at gunpoint and SHOOTS Talib Three as he crawls out from the shelter.

Talib Two frightens and takes hold of Mina, sticking his gun into her neck.

TALIB TWO

Who is there? Show yourself!

Shrine can't get a good shot and steps forward into the light.

Talib Two frightens at Shrine.

TALIB TWO (CONT'D)

Don't move! Drop it!

Shrine hesitates.

TALIB TWO (CONT'D)

I'll kill her!

Shrine sets his rifle on the ground but inches closer.

Talib Two points his rifle at Shrine.

TALIB TWO (CONT'D)

Don't move!

Mina JABS Talib Two in the ribs and breaks loose.

Shrine rushes Talib Two and tackles him to the ground.

They SCUFFLE, PUNCH, and JAB. Shrine pins him to the ground and gets him in a choke hold, but Talib Two kicks him over and onto his side.

Talib Two unsheathes his KNIFE and climbs onto Shrine and stabs, but Shrine grabs his wrists and deflects the stab into the ground by his head.

Talib Two struggles to pull the knife from the frozen dirt and Shrine PUNCHES him in the ribs.

Talib Two pulls the knife back and takes another aim at Shrine's head, but the knife slips from his hand and he falls onto Shrine.

Mina stands over them. Her own knife stuck in the Talib's neck.

Shrine rises to his feet, shaken. He pulls the knife out, wipes it off, and gives it back to Mina.

SHRINE

You saved me.

Mina looks up at him with fear in her eyes from just killing. She takes the knife as if it were poisonous.

Shrine places a comforting hand on her shoulder.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Good job.

Shrine retrieves his rifle and turns back.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

We should move. It's not safe here.

EXT. CAMP - DAWN

Shrine holds up a torn out page from "Going After Cacciato" and lights it on fire, watches it burn, then drops it on the ground.

STRONG WINDS carry the burnt pages far away.

Mina stares curiously at Shrine's ritual as Nufail fastens the goods back onto the donkeys.

Shrine unwraps a DARK BLUE, WOOL BLANKET from its rolled up place behind his saddle and wraps it around his torso. He climbs onto his Horse.

EXT. LARGE MEADOW - DAY

SNOW FLURRIES sweep across the meadow. DENSE FOG renders visibility low.

Nufail, Mina, and Shrine push forward, tethered together by rope. The Donkeys, too.

A Dark Figure emerges in the distance.

Shrine grabs his rifle and hops off his horse. He passes Nufail and moves toward the approaching Dark Figure.

The Dark Figure gets closer and appears to be a MAN carrying a stick.

Shrine raises his rifle in defense but Nufail hops down and pushes Shrine's rifle away.

The Man gets closer and unwraps his Shemagh. It's a WOMAN carrying a STICK.

Behind her, SEVERAL DOZEN GOATS emerge from the fog.

The Woman nods to Shrine and Nufail and passes them.

EXT. CAMP, FOREST - NIGHT

Shrine walks to join Mina at the small CRACKLING CAMPFIRE.

Nufail lies asleep under a lean-to shelter.

Shrine lights a cigarette and offers it to Mina but she declines.

Mina focuses on knitting her green blanket.

SHRINE

What are you making?

MINA

A blanket for my father. For when he return home.

SHRINE

Hm. That's sweet.

He takes out what remains of his copy of "Going After Cacciato."

After a silent moment-

MINA

Is that your religious book?

SHRINE

Kind of.

Shrine tries to continue reading, but can't.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

What's troubling you?

MINA

*The Quran forbids to take a life.
All life is sacred.*

SHRINE

*Don't beat yourself up over it. It
was you or him.*

MINA

*I do not want to be a killer like
the Taliban.*

SHRINE

*Obviously Taliban never read the
Quran.*

Shrine takes the pot of hot tea from above the fire and pours a cup for himself and then for Mina.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Nufail and Mina take the lead with Shrine bringing up the rear. He now wears the dark blue, wool blanket wrapped around his shoulders all the time.

They make their way up the snow-covered terraced farmland oddly resembling a tiered wedding cake.

Shrine surveys the land.

SHRINE

How close are we?

NUFAIL

Half-hour.

Shrine breaks from their path.

NUFAIL (CONT'D)

Where do you go?

Shrine looks to a patch of trees across the slope.

SHRINE

There. I will wait for you.

NUFAIL

*No. You will come with us into
Kazdeh. Then we leave in the
morning.*

SHRINE

I don't want to cause trouble.

Nufail rides to Shrine's side.

NUFAIL

Nonsense. They will understand.

SHRINE

*I don't want to risk it. You take
your daughter to her fiance. Then
find me in the morning.*

Nufail unties a bag of food from his horse and tosses it to Shrine.

NUFAIL

Very well.

Nufail and Mina ride up toward Kazdeh. Shrine rides off to the cluster of trees.

EXT. TREES - NIGHT

Shrine builds a small bed of pine branches to keep him off the cold ground. He lays out a bedroll on top and climbs in.

He closes his eyes but is unable to sleep.

He stares up at the starry sky, then climbs out of his bedroll.

EXT. KAZDEH - NIGHT

Shrine moves as light as a fox across the snowy slope and up to the crest of a ridge.

He peers down upon the tiny hamlet of Kazdeh and takes out his scope.

The cluster of a dozen homes huddle around a well.

Light flows out from a larger home. Outside, Nufail chats with a SMALL MAN in an ivory-colored, wool pakol hat.

Nufail and the small man turn their attention to the outer edge of the village.

A DOZEN MEN on horses ride slowly and quietly into the town.

They are bundled in blankets and their heads are wrapped to keep warm.

The LEAD MAN, stops in front of Nufail and the small man and exchange some words, then continue on and out of the hamlet.

EXT. TREES - DAWN

Shrine rolls up his bed and fastens it to the back of his saddle.

He opens the sack of food Nufail gave him and breaks off a piece of stale flat bread.

He considers giving up on the stale bread, but continues chewing.

He looks around for Nufail. Nothing.

He begins fastening the sack of food to his horse when he hears FOOTSTEPS.

He draws his rifle.

The sack of food drops to the ground.

Shrine aims his rifle at the person approaching.

Nufail appears, leading his horse.

SHRINE

I thought you were someone else.

NUFAIL

And I thought you would be frozen.

SHRINE

Glad to see you.

Nufail picks up the fallen sack of food.

NUFAIL

If you do not like the food, you
can tell me.

Shrine CHUCKLES.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Nufail leads Shrine down the slope into the valley floor.

SHRINE

Who were those men who came through
last night?

NUFAIL

I thought coming into Kazdeh was
trouble for you?

SHRINE

I couldn't sleep. Who were those
men?

NUFAIL

Traders.

SHRINE

What do they trade?

NUFAIL

They pass through. We don't ask
questions.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Shrine and Nufail ride their horses alertly across the open,
snowy expanse.

A gentle breeze HOWLS in the distance.

A tiny black dot appears on the flat horizon.

Shrine stops and trains his eyes upon it as they ride
forward.

NUFAIL

What do you see?

Shrine holds up his hand for silence.

The black dot slowly gets bigger and morphs into the figure of a man on a horse. Then another, and another.

A DOZEN of them.

Shrine grabs his rifle.

Nufail looks to Shrine.

A bullet WHISTLES by.

Shrine and Nufail take off at full speed in the opposite direction.

Shrine looks over his shoulder and spots the Dozen Men chasing after them.

EXT. STEEP MOUNTAIN - DAY

Shrine and Nufail work their way up the steep slope.

They see the Dozen Men at the bottom still pursuing them.

Soon Shrine and Nufail hit a dead end. They look around and find nowhere to go.

SHRINE

You stay here. I'll lead them away.

NUFAIL

It's too dangerous.

SHRINE

Go back to your daughter.

Shrine turns his horse around and descends the slope.

He FIRES at the Dozen Men to catch their attention, then rides into a wide ravine.

EXT. WIDE RAVINE - DAY

Shrine leads his pursuers further in. He pushes his Horse faster, and faster. His Horse BUCKS him off and takes off without him.

Shrine looks around frantically for cover, then dives into some shrubbery.

He's still visible and looks up to see the thin tree he's under has plenty of snow on it. He shakes the tree, causing plenty of snow to pile on top of him and conceal him.

Just in time.

The Dozen Men ride past him, oblivious of his whereabouts.

A moment passes, and then they ride past him again, this time exiting the ravine and giving up on their chase.

Shrine crawls out from the snow and shakes himself off.

He walks out of the ravine.

After a while, he comes across Nufail who rides up to him.

NUFAIL

They left. Back across the plateau.
But not where we are going.

SHRINE

Where I'm going. You're going back.

NUFAIL

I made a promise.

SHRINE

You've done enough.

NUFAIL

And where is my horse?

SHRINE

Only he knows.

Nufail looks at him angrily. But lets it go.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. But you can still be
with your daughter on her wedding
day if you leave now.

Nufail gets off his horse and embraces Shrine.

NUFAIL

Stay safe, if Allah wills it.

Nufail climbs back onto his horse and rides off.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Shrine walks toward the end of the plateau. He crests a short hill and spots a small village down below. A small forest wraps around half of the town like a horseshoe.

He crouches down and lies on his belly to study the village. It's lifeless.

Shrine checks the clip in his rifle to make sure he has ammunition and then descends toward the village.

EXT. BAZGIR - DAY

Shrine moves carefully through the small village, peering around every corner of the worn mud-brick houses.

No sign of life.

Shrine opens a frail wooden door and steps inside.

INT. MUD-BRICK HOUSE - DAY

Shrine steps lightly through the barren house. The floor rugs are neatly stretched. Pots, pans, and meager dining ware sit atop a table undisturbed.

In the room lies a long wooden crate caked in dirt. He opens the crate - nothing.

A TAPPING noise grabs his attention.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

Shrine steps into the square, open-air patio. A lone bench sits to the side. Next to it, a chair has been knocked over.

The TAPPING noise comes from beyond the chair and Shrine hesitantly approaches.

On the other side of the chair lies a broken grain jar from which a chicken pecks again and again to get some hidden grain.

Shrine lightly shifts the jar with his foot to release some grain.

He hears a THUD from outside.

EXT. DASHT-E ROBAT - DAY

Shrine, rifle drawn, moves quietly around the corner of the house.

He moves down the length of a short wall and peers around.

Across the way he spots a BLACK HORSE standing alone next to a mound of dirt.

Shrine approaches the horse and looks down to see a half-filled hole with a shovel lying beside it.

The Horse NEIGHS.

Shrine rubs the Horse's neck.

SHRINE

Shhhh. Where is your master?

Shrine looks to the hole.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Or do you have one?

Shrine sets his rifle and his rucksack down. He picks up the shovel and digs out the hole, revealing a wooden crate not unlike the one in the house.

He hops down into the hole and pries open the crate - WEAPONS. HIGH-TECH GUNS.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

(mouths)

What the fuck.

He grabs his CAMERA from his pants pocket and photographs the weapons, then grabs a small amount of EXPLOSIVES.

He wires the explosives to the weapons and sets a detonator.

Shrine crawls out of the hole, grabs his rifle, and leads the detonating wire away to cover.

He steps back out into the open to get his rucksack and the Horse when- PHT. BANG! SMACK.

A BULLET SMACKS into the house behind him.

Shrine drops down and ducks for cover. Another bullet SMACKS into a wall over his head. The gunfire makes no noise and the sniper rifle must have a silencer.

Shrine lies face down in the snowy dirt and looks up at the bullet hole in the wall, then looks to the direction it must have come from.

He crawls a few meters and spots the Horse oblivious to the quiet fight.

Shrine CLUCKS his tongue to call the horse over.

The horse ignores him.

Shrine runs toward the Horse. A bullet kicks up dirt behind him. He dives for cover into the hole and winces at the explosives underneath him.

He sticks his head out and a bullet hits the dirt directly in front of him. He ducks back in - takes a moment to plan his next move.

He finds the shovel just outside and reaches for it.

PHT. A bullet hits a foot in front of his hand.

He reaches again and grabs the shovel.

He waits, then sticks the blade up. A bullet hits the shovel and gives him enough time to jump out, grab his rucksack, and hide behind the horse.

Together they move behind a house for better cover.

Shrine spots a good point for cover behind a house on the other side of the road where he can get into the trees.

He leads the horse diagonally across the road, using it for cover.

PHT. PHT.

The horse NEIGHS as two bullets SMACK into its side and it falls down to the ground.

Shrine sprints as fast as he can from the horse toward the house.

PHT. CRACK.

A bullet ricochets into Shrine's calf as he dives behind the house and drags himself to cover.

He tries to stand but falls back down. He collects his breath.

He opens up his rucksack and pulls out a small signaling mirror from the survival kit.

He crawls to the edge of the house and uses the mirror to see around the corner. He spots a constant reflection of sunlight between some rocks in the distance, then a flash.

PHT.

Dirt splashes up as a bullet hits just a few inches away.

Shrine retreats back behind the house, grabs his rifle, and pops it against his rucksack so the muzzle sticks slightly out from the corner, a few feet off the ground to make it appear as if he's holding it.

He then grabs his knife and his handgun and limps to the other end of the house and into the trees.

EXT. TREES, BAZGIR - DAY

Shrine moves quietly from tree to tree. Fortunately the hard winter ground suppresses any noise.

To move more stealthily, he crouches down but winces in pain at the pressure on his wounded calf.

He kneels behind a tree and surveys the landscape.

A distance away he spots a black object shift behind a rock.

Shrine grabs a rock and hurls it between the black object and the town.

CRACK. THUD.

The black object shifts again and becomes visible as a head wrapped in a black shemagh (head scarf).

Shrine continues from tree to tree, flanking the back side of the Sniper until he's upon him.

Shrine fires his handgun and shoots the Sniper in the shoulder.

The Sniper rolls over and fires the sniper rifle at Shrine. He misses, but the heat of the bullet scorches Shrine's face and Shrine ducks down.

The Sniper draws his handgun and is about to shoot Shrine but Shrine regains himself and shoots the gun out of his hand.

He rushes over to subdue the Sniper who's bleeding out. Shrine sits on him and presses the muzzle of his handgun into the Sniper's head.

SNIPER
(midwest accent)
The fuck, you American?

The SNIPER (30s), batshit crazy but incredibly focused, squirms under the gun.

SNIPER (CONT'D)
Shit! Just great. Just fuckin' great! Of course this would end up happening!

Shrine fights through his confusion.

SHRINE
Who the fuck are you and what are you doing here?

The Sniper LAUGHS like a lunatic.

SNIPER
I could ask you the same goddam thing

SHRINE
Yeah, but I'm asking you. So talk.

Shrine digs the gun into the Sniper's blonde head of hair.

The Sniper begins to fade. Shrine shakes him awake. It's no use.

Shrine digs through the sniper's pockets and finds a folded piece of paper.

A handwritten list of Pashto words is on it along with a date: "Jan 30"

SHRINE (CONT'D)
What's this? What's this date?

Shrine shakes the Sniper awake.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
What's January 30?

The Sniper tries to speak, but CHOKES on blood and dies.

Shrine pulls his gun back and gets up.

Shrine digs through the Sniper's pockets and comes across a small BLACK CODE BOOK in English. He flips through it. The name "DarkLight" grabs his attention.

He pockets the code book, pulls out his camera, and takes a picture of the dead sniper.

EXT. BAZGIR - DAY

Shrine limps back into the village and collects his rucksack and his rifle.

He pulls out in medic kit and bandages his leg wound.

He gets his satellite phone and ear piece and dials a number.

SHRINE

Capa?

CAPA (O.S.)

Shrine! What's happening? Where are you? Did you find the supplier?

Shrine locates the wire and the detonator.

SHRINE

I don't have time to answer those right now.

CAPA (O.S.)

Are you OK?

Shrine looks down to his wounded leg.

SHRINE

Yes. Remember that slang in the photograph?

CAPA (O.S.)

Yeah.

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Capa flips through a file, looking for the photograph with he slang.

SHRINE (O.S.)

See if there's a connection to DarkLight.

CAPA

OK.

Capa address her team.

CAPA (CONT'D)
Everyone!

She writes the word "Daw' alzzalam" on a white board.

CAPA (CONT'D)
Stop checking your Facebook and
find a link between this and
DarkLight!

Her team gets hard to work.

SPC Parker lights up.

SPC PARKER
Got it!

Capa hurries to his desk and read his computer.

CAPA
Son of a bitch. They are linked.

SHRINE (O.S.)
How?

CAPA
It is DarkLight. How'd you know?

SHRINE (O.S.)
Cause I just found them.

EXT. BAZGIR - DAY

Shrine, unfocused, stands too close to the hole.

CAPA (O.S.)
Shit. You gotta get outa there. I'm
calling in an evac stat.

SHRINE
No! Something's going down January
30. I need to find out what it is.

CAPA
That's a week from now. You sure
you can stay low until then?

SHRINE
Positive.

Shrine detonates the explosives.

KABOOM!

He's knocked back by the blast, lifts his head, then falls back and fades away.

BLACKNESS.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Nufail, spotted through a monocular, rides across the land.

BLACKNESS.

INT. SMALL ROOM, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine wakes up on a bedroll.

A thick ray of sunlight shoots in through a small window.

He HEARS rhythmic beating, like a muffled helicopter.

Not knowing where he is, his heart POUNDS, he reaches for his rifle. It's missing.

He reaches for his knife on his belt. Also missing.

He finds a jar on the ground and smashes it and picks up a JAGGED SHARD.

He stands, feels the pain of his wound and falls, then stands again and walks to the window.

He looks outside and sees Two Women swinging dirty rugs against a wooden post.

He turns and steps slowly toward the open doorway.

He raises the shard and steps into-

INT. HALLWAY

Shrine limps quietly down the hallway and turns a corner.

INT. SITTING ROOM, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine walks in on SEVERAL MEN sitting in the plush room filled with floor rugs, pillows, and wall tapestries.

The Men startle and stand.

Shrine quickly turns back.

INT. HALLWAY

Shrine hurries down the hallway.

The Men chase after him.

Nufail steps in his path and grabs onto him. Shrine nearly stabs him with the shard out of reflex.

A Small Man grabs Shrine's wrist before he stabs Nufail.

Seeing Nufail, Shrine lets his guard down and collapses.

Nufail and the Small Man help Shrine back into-

INT. SMALL ROOM, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Nufail and the Small Man lower Shrine onto his bed and he sits back, clutching his leg in pain.

SHRINE

Where am I?

NUFAIL

Rahim's house. My daughter's fiancée.

Nufail motions to the Small Man.

NUFAIL (CONT'D)

This is Rahim.

RAHIM (28), built like a lightweight boxer, wears an ivory-colored, wool pakol hat.

Shrine recognizes him from the man he saw Nufail talking with outside when the traders passed through.

Rahim turns to Nufail.

RAHIM

Now that he is awake, tell him.

SHRINE

Tell me what?

Rahim is taken aback by Shrine knowing his language.

NUFAIL
*Would you really refuse a guest
 during this holy time?*

Rahim looks from Shrine to Nufail and hesitates.

RAHIM
I'll send the doctor.

Rahim exits.

SHRINE
 He doesn't want me here.

NUFAIL
 He'll come around. Until then, you
 have me.

SHRINE
 And how did I end up here?

NUFAIL
 I brought you.

SHRINE
 You should not have.

NUFAIL
 You would have died.

SHRINE
 We could have been followed.

NUFAIL
 You would have rather died?

The DOCTOR (40s), a pudgy man, enters with a bag of medical supplies.

INT. SMALL ROOM, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine bites a wooden spoon as the DOCTOR pours a burning disinfectant onto his leg wound.

Nufail worriedly watches.

The Doctor SPEAKS soothingly as he pours more disinfectant.

DOCTOR
Relax. It is healing.

Shrine digs his free foot into the ground.

The Doctor dabs the wound with a rag and gently bandages it. He looks up at Shrine and smiles.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
(in English)
Good!

Shrine takes the spoon out of his mouth and smiles as he lets out a SIGH.

SHRINE
Good.

Mina steps lightly into the room and sets a fresh pair of clothes down next to Shrine. Without a word or eye contact, she leaves.

INT. SMALL ROOM, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine slips into the dark blue, loose fitting pants and pulls on the dark, mustard yellow wool sweater.

Nufail hands him the dark blue, wool blanket which he wraps over his body.

Shrine stands up proudly, favoring his right leg.

Nufail smiles in approval, then hands him a grey pakol to keep his head warm.

SHRINE
Where is my rifle and my knife?

NUFAIL
We didn't want you to use them when you woke up alarmed.

SHRINE
I need them back.

INT. KITCHEN, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Nufail pours two cups of hot tea and gives one to Shrine as they sit at a short table in the middle of the spacious kitchen.

Mina stands at a counter by the window rinsing vegetables in a pail of water.

Shrine takes out the Sniper's list and shows it to Nufail.

SHRINE

I can't make it out.

NUFAIL

It's a rare dialect.

SHRINE

Do you know it?

NUFAIL

No. Rahim would. His mother's mother knew it.

Mina's ears grab onto Rahim's name, but she continues and places the vegetables on a cutting board.

SHRINE

Where is he? I must ask him.

NUFAIL

He has been hard to reach.

Nufail studies the list a bit longer.

SHRINE

Please. It's important.

Mina reaches toward a display of different sized KNIVES and grabs one but drops it instantly as if it stung her.

She takes a deep breath, then picks the knife back up and cuts the vegetables. A TEAR runs down her cheek.

EXT. SLOPE - DAY

Shrine walks with a bad limp next to Rahim along a narrow trail overlooking the foggy valley below.

RAHIM

Nufail tells me you need my help.

Shrine shows him the list.

SHRINE

Can you tell me what it means?

RAHIM

Why?

SHRINE

Because it will save lives.

RAHIM

That's what everyone says. Do you believe it?

SHRINE

I believe it when I say it.

Rahim takes the list and studies it.

RAHIM

There are weapons - guns. Radios. And this. Qunbula.

SHRINE

What's that?

RAHIM

It means bomb.

SHRINE

What kind?

RAHIM

It just means bomb.

Shrine, concerned, reaches for the list. Rahim pulls it back.

RAHIM (CONT'D)

But these words here. They are numbers.

INT. KITCHEN, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine opens a map on the kitchen table and takes the list out.

He speaks into his ear piece and satellite phone as Rahim READS the numbers from the list in PASHTO.

SHRINE

Thirty four. Thirty two. Five. Sixty nine. Eleven. Twenty four.

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

SFC Parker punches the numbers into his computer as Capa studies a digital world map on a large screen.

CAPA

OK. Definitely coordinates.

Several cross-hairs appear on the map.

Capa points to the one in Afghanistan.

CAPA (CONT'D)

Thirty four, thirty two, five
north. Sixty nine, eleven, twenty
four east.

INT. KITCHEN, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine finds the numbers on the edges of his map and
pinpoints their intersection.

CAPA (O.S.)

That's the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.

SHRINE

So whatever bomb the Taliban's
getting in this exchange, that's
where they want to take it.

CAPA (O.S.)

Shrine, don't do anything stupid.
Take pictures of the exchange and
get out of there. Special Ops will
take care of the rest.

Shrine studies the map.

INT. SMALL ROOM, RAHIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Shrine sits back on his bed, studying the map under his
headlamp.

He hears a FOOT SCUFFLE and looks out his door.

Mina stands in the moonlight and looks at him.

EXT. KAZDEH - NIGHT

Shrine, with a crutch, and Mina stand along a short stone
wall overlooking the moonlit valley.

MINA

I must ask you one last favor.

SHRINE

Anything.

MINA

I'm afraid it will sound unusual.

Shrine tips his head to her.

MINA (CONT'D)

May I have a page from your book?

SHRINE

Why's that?

MINA

I have tried prayer and I have tried reflection, but my soul continues to be weighed down from the other night.

SHRINE

The Talib you-

MINA

Please. Do not.

SHRINE

What I do with my book- it is not for everyone.

MINA

I know it is personal for you, but it may work for me.

Shrine, unsure, stares into the distance.

MINA (CONT'D)

If nothing else, see it as a gift.

SHRINE

Let me think.

MINA

Please do. I do not want this weight on my wedding night.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine walks slowly with the crutch through the snowy streets. Nufail walks by his side.

The VILLAGERS stare at Shrine in curiosity.

Shrine tries to avoid them as he feels the weight of their stares. He makes eye contact with an OLD WOMAN holding a suspicious grin.

Shrine slips a little and Nufail grabs hold of his arm to stop him from falling.

Shrine digs his crutch into the ground for a better hold and Nufail releases his grasp.

Shrine takes a careful step forward.

SHRINE

Some time for a wedding.

NUFAIL

One should never wait for summer.
Time is too valuable.

At the end of the street, a LITTLE GIRL (8) walks up to Shrine and reaches for his hand.

He looks to Nufail who only offers a smile and a CHUCKLE.

Shrine takes the Girl's hand and she pulls him off the road.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Shrine steps carefully through the snowy field and follows the Girl into the meadow that sits within a cluster of birch trees.

Shrine looks up from watching his footing to pleasantly discover the snowy meadow is spread with ORANGE AND PINK TULIPS.

The Girl begins picking several tulips.

Shrine looks around nervously, always cautious of his safety.

The Girl hands her tulips to Shrine and he awkwardly takes them.

As she hands him more and more tulips to hold, he looks more and more out of place, but begins to feel more comfortable.

EXT. BAGRAM AIR BASE - DAY

A CHINOOK HELICOPTER circles above the base before settling down on the ground.

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Capa and Maj. Osborne sit staring at a digital screen, video-conferencing with COLONEL COLLINS (40s).

MAJ. OSBORNE
Yes, sir, and attack on the
embassy.

COL. COLLINS
What's the intel?

MAJ. OSBORNE
I have eyes in the field reporting
to me.

COL. COLLINS
That doesn't sound too bulletproof.

MAJ. OSBORNE
They're my best eyes. Trust me.

COL. COLLINS
I trust you, but I can't make any
moves without hard evidence.

MAJ. OSBORNE
My man has a Taliban supply list
for a bomb and coordinates of the
embassy. What more do you need?

COL. COLLINS
More intel than a list. And I need
to see that intel with my own eyes.

MAJ. OSBORNE
OK. Until then, I strongly suggest
you beef up security.

COL. COLLINS
We're thin as it is, you know that.
Get me bulletproof intel, and we'll
have the brass on our side.
Anything else?

MAJ. OSBORNE
That's all.

Col. Collins' screen goes black.

Maj. Osborne rubs the bridge of his nose.

MAJ. OSBORNE (CONT'D)
What can Sergeant Shrine do?

CAPA
Trust me, he's working on it.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine leans against the short wall overlooking the valley. He writes on a small piece of paper.

He looks over his shoulder and eyes the small crowd of VILLAGERS entering Rahim's house which appears large from the outside.

The Crowd wears their best clothes. Men in pants, tunics, and embroidered vests. Women in colorful pants and flowing, silk dresses with long sleeves embroidered with gold thread.

Traditional MUSIC spills out from the house.

The Crowd dwindles down and Shrine turns back to his view. He SIGHS tiredly, home sickly.

Nufail comes out of the house looking for Shrine and spots him. He walks to over.

SHRINE

*Your daughter is getting married.
You should be inside.*

NUFAIL

They will not begin without me.

A moment of silence between them both.

They both take a deep breath, as if from the same lungs.

NUFAIL (CONT'D)

We are missing one guest.

SHRINE

*I do not want to intrude. Do not be
offended, but I would rather keep
my distance.*

NUFAIL

*You have lost before. I see it in
your eyes.*

SHRINE

How is that?

NUFAIL

Because the same is in my eyes.

SHRINE

I am sorry.

NUFAIL

I took my family into Kabul one night. My wife and I had five children, not just Mina. A bomb was dropped at dinner and then it was just Mina. And just me. But it is not your fault so do not be sorry.

Shrine gulps, taken aback.

SHRINE

Was it American?

NUFAIL

I do not know. I do not judge. Your name, it means "Allah as judge." I am not Allah and so I will not do His duty.

After a long silence, avoiding eye-contact.

SHRINE

I lost five too. Not my family, but like my family.

NUFAIL

Everyone loses those they love. Tonight I will lose Mina, but giving her a better life gives purpose to my own. Now get inside before they do start without me.

Nufail walks away and after a moment Shrine follows.

INT. PATIO, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

The large open-air room sits in the middle of the house. A large fire pit in the middle offers heat and warm lighting.

Colorful lanterns, silk sheets, and countless tulips are strung up over head.

Shrine, having removed his shoes along with everyone else, finds a cushion to sit on among the many guests just as the MUSICIANS start a song which calls everyone to their feet.

Rahim and Mina, bride and groom, enter and pass among the guests. They each hold the Qaran on top of their heads until they take a seat behind a low table decorated with tulips and candles.

Everyone sits.

The Little Girl enters the room and dances with a silver plate until she arrives at Rahim and Mina's table. Upon the plate are flowers, candles, and little jars of henna dye.

Shrine watches on with curiosity.

The Little Girl leaves the plate on the table and finds a seat.

Rahim's MOTHER steps up and rubs the henna on Mina's palm, then wipes it off with a silk cloth. She does the same to Rahim, but on his pinky.

The Guests applaud graciously.

INT. PATIO, RAHIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Many of the Guests dance about the room while other are lost in deep conversation.

Shrine nibbles at his baklava and looks awfully lonesome.

The Little Girl finds him and pulls his hand.

LITTLE GIRL

Come. Dance.

Shrine smiles at the sweet invitation.

SHRINE

I am sorry. I cannot.

LITTLE GIRL

Please?

SHRINE

I do not know how to dance.

LITTLE GIRL

It is easy.

SHRINE

My leg. It is still sore.

The Little Girl looks at him, not registering his excuse. She pulls again at his hand and he reluctantly follows her.

The Little Girl leads Shrine in the traditional dance around the fire.

Nufail CLAPS his hands in applause.

NUFAIL
I will not judge!

Shrine smiles at him.

The Doctor slaps his leg as he walks past Nufail.

DOCTOR
 (in English)
 Good!

Slowly, he learns to be at ease and go with the flow, but still looking oh so out of place.

A gossip circle of OLD WOMEN sitting to the side LAUGH and CHEER for him as he passes them by. He smiles and blushes.

He catches Mina smiling at him as well from across the room. Yet quickly, as Shrine looks down at his feet, the smile disappears from his face.

EXT. PATIO, RAHIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Shrine limps on his sore leg and leans against a short wall. He lights a cigarette and takes a drag.

Rahim finds him and steps beside him.

RAHIM
Your leg is better?

SHRINE
Still sore, but I will be able to leave tomorrow.

Rahim motions for a cigarette and Shrine lights one for him.

RAHIM
Thank you.

SHRINE
Anything.

RAHIM
No. Thank you for protecting Mina on her journey.

SHRINE
I wish I could do more.

Rahim puts a hand reassuringly on Shrine's shoulder.

RAHIM

*You have done enough. Stay as long
as you need to.*

Rahim exits.

INT. PATIO, RAHIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Shrine moves hypnotically through the wedding celebration.

People dancing, laughing, children chasing each other.

Rahim and Mina begin a dance.

As Shrine passes them, Mina catches his eye. Shrine nods,
then exits.

EXT. KAZDEH - NIGHT

Shrine leans against the short stone wall and stares out over
the valley, studying the night sky.

FAINT MUSIC still spills out of Rahim's house.

Nearby CHATTER interrupts Shrine's moment of reflection.

He looks over his shoulder. Mina and several other WOMEN
LAUGH with each other.

Shrine turns back to his view.

The noise dies off.

MINA (O.S.)

May I join you?

Shrine turns. Mina stands before him.

SHRINE

Please.

Shrine takes out his book and hands it to Mina.

She looks at him for direction.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Go ahead. A page is yours.

Mina carefully tears out a page, then hands the book back to
Shrine.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
That one is for burning.

He takes the book and gives Mina another piece of paper, the one he was writing on previously.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
And this one is for you to keep.

Mina studies the new paper.

MINA
You translated it.

SHRINE
So you know what it says.

Mina reads from the new paper.

MINA
*Peace was shy. That was one lesson:
Peace never bragged. If you didn't
look for it, it wasn't there.*

Mina looks up at Shrine.

MINA (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Mina slips the new paper into her dress.

Shrine hands her his lighter.

Mina lights the torn out book paper on fire and let's it loose.

The BURNING PAGE catches the wind and floats away into the night sky.

EXT. KAZDEH VALLEY - DAWN

From behind a dark mountain, the sun rises and warms the long valley.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAWN

Shrine straps on his rucksack and slings his rifle around his arm.

Rahim approaches him with a Brown Horse.

RAHIM

This will be better. For your leg.

SHRINE

Thank you, but I will be more hidden on foot.

Rahim nods.

RAHIM

I understand.

SHRINE

My thanks, though.

RAHIM

Mine.

Shrine Nods his head to Rahim and walks to Nufail, who watches from just outside Rahim's house.

SHRINE

Where is Mina?

NUFAIL

Inside. Sleeping.

SHRINE

Well, so long.

NUFAIL

May Allah keep you safe.

SHRINE

May He keep us all safe.

Shrine turns and walks off, out of the village.

He continues down the snow-covered terraced farmland.

EXT. VALLEY OF ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine descends a steep trail into the wide, snowy valley.

He reaches the bottom and continues onward, flanked by towering mountains.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Shrine huddles inside a shallow cave, keeping warm from a small fire.

The wind HOWLS outside.

EXT. CAVE - DAWN

Shrine stirs from his sleep and brushes snow off of his blanket.

He checks his watch - "JAN 30"

He straps his rucksack on and wraps the blanket around his shoulders, then slings his rifle on.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine digs a small hole and lies prone in it. He piles some snow in front to conceal himself and pulls out his rifle's scope.

He peers into it and down on the town below.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

A small oval town divided by a river. Afghanistan on one side, Tajikistan on the other. A narrow stone bridge connects them both.

The town appears deserted.

From a distance, a string of black dots descend the same trail Shrine used the day before.

As they get closer, they form into a DOZEN TALIBAN on Horses along with a DOZEN MULES.

Three WHITE PICK-UP TRUCKS drive down a Tajikistan road and come into the village. They cross the bridge and stop just outside the village on Shrine's side of the river.

The Taliban, wearing BLACK, approach the trucks and stop before getting too close.

A DOZEN MEN - DARKLIGHT - step out from the trucks. They wear DIRT-COLORED CLOTHES and SKELETON SKI-MASKS. Their leader, MANCUSO (30s), wears a ski-mask with menacingly long teeth. He motions for the DarkLight Operatives (DLO) to unload heavy crates from the truck-beds.

They carry the crates halfway to the Taliban.

The Taliban approach the crates and open them. The HEAD TALIB pulls out a large steel tube and inspects it.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine shifts and zooms his scope in.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

Upon the tube is a RADIOACTIVE symbol.

The same symbol appears on the crate it was taken from.

Shrine scans the other crate - all have the symbol.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine break away from the scope in shock.

He fishes out his satellite phone and earpiece and dials a number.

CAPA (O.S.)
Go fer, Capa.

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Capa leans back in her chair and sips a cup of coffee.

SHRINE (O.S.)
It's uranium.

Capa chokes on her coffee and wipes her mouth.

CAPA
What now?

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine takes out his camera and photographs the uranium exchange.

SHRINE
DarkLight is supplying uranium. And plenty of it.

CAPA (O.S.)
How much?

SHRINE
A shit load.

CAPA (O.S.)
Shit. OK. Uhhh-

SHRINE
I need to step in.

CAPA (O.S.)
No!

SHRINE
Why not?

CAPA (O.S.)
How many of them are there?

SHRINE
Couple dozen.

CAPA (O.S.)
That's why.

SHRINE
OK. Then what?

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Capa gets to work on her computer and rounds up her Team.

CAPA
I'm sending in an airstrike now.

SHRINE (O.S.)
This is a restricted area. They
won't allow it.

Capa grabs her cup of coffee and throws it against the wall

CAPA
For fucking uranium, they'll allow
it! And right now all their uranium
ducks are in the same fucking
basket!

SHRINE (O.S.)
How far is the blast zone?

CAPA
How close are you?

SHRINE (O.S.)
Somewhat.

CAPA
Then fucking run!

EXT. SKY - DAY

TWO AIR FORCE FIGHTER JETS ROAR through the sky above the mountains and bank left.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine packs his satellite phone and earpiece away in his rucksack. He's about ready to go when he hears TRUCK ENGINES start up.

He looks down upon the village.

Several DLOs are starting up the trucks as the Taliban begins loading the crates onto the Mules.

SHRINE
(sotto)
Shit.

Shrine eyes his rifle for a moment.

He picks it up and aims at one of the trucks and squeezes off a round.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

SMACK!

The bullet hits the bumper of the 1st Truck.

The DLOs grab their guns and ward off the Taliban.

MANCUSO
Which one of you shot at us!

The Taliban, confused, fall back and grab their guns.

MUCH YELLING back and forth.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine hurries down the slope to get the hell out of there.

The enemy spots him. Bullets WHIP by his head and he dives into the snow for cover.

Shrine crawls behind a snow embankment and FIRES back.

He hits one Talib.

Mancuso grabs a grenade launcher and FIRES.

BOOM!

It hits just feet in front of Shrine, blasting a hole in his snowy defense.

DarkLight and the Taliban start hitting his position hard, pinning him down.

Shrine pulls out a smoke grande and throws it to his right.

RED SMOKE billows into the air, concealing Shrine as he darts to another snow embankment.

As the smoke clears, he pops his head up and FIRES back.

He shoots a DLO in the head.

A DLO, fed up, gets in his truck with TWO OTHERS and drives full speed toward Shrine, skidding in the snow along the way.

Shrine shoots at the truck but it keeps coming.

The truck launches itself over the embankment, over Shrine's head and smashes into the snow beyond him.

Shrine pops another smoke grenade - GREEN - and pulls out his KNIFE.

He pulls a STUNNED Operative 1 out of the passengers seat and stabs him in the chest.

Operative 2 steps out of the truck and lunges at Shrine who dodges him.

Shrine comes back and slashes him across the face.

Operative 2 reaches into the truck for his gun, but Shrine slams the door on his arm, breaking it, and then stabs him in the back.

The Driver comes around from the other end of the truck and raises his gun to shoot Shrine.

Shrine opens the passenger door and blocks the shots fired.

Shrine takes Operative 2's rifle and shoots through the window, hitting the Driver in the shoulder.

The Driver kicks the door in and knocks the rifle out of Shrine's hand.

Shrine lunges at the Driver and knocks his gun away.

They fight fist-to-cuffs.

Shrine maneuvers his knife and slashes across the Driver's chest.

The Driver winces and lunges at Shrine and grabs him, swings him into the car door. But the door swings back and the Driver loses his balance and falls to the ground.

Shrine falls with him and sticks the knife to the Driver's throat.

DRIVER

We know who you are.

Shrine stops himself from killing him.

SHRINE

What do you know?

DRIVER

We know you're working with the old Raghead.

SHRINE

You people know nothing.

DRIVER

Without people like me, you'd be out of a job.

SHRINE

That's a day I look forward to.

Shrine sticks the knife his the man's throat and kills him.

The smoke now cleared, Shrine rises to his feet and climbs into the truck.

He drives it full speed toward the Taliban and DarkLight. They fire at him but he ducks. The window shatters.

He takes out a few DLOs, SMASHES into another truck, and then swerves into the side of a house, which crumbles on top of the truck.

INT. CRUMBLED HOUSE - DAY

Shrine climbs out of the truck with his rifle and rucksack.

He hears the JET FIGHTERS approaching.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine steps out of the crumbled house and throws all the smoke cans he has - RED, YELLOW, PURPLE.

The Taliban takes off running away from the village.

DarkLight shoots at Shrine but loses him in the smoke, then take off running too.

Shrine sprints as fast as he can toward the river.

EXT. SKY - DAY

The Fighter Jets bank downward and zero in on the colored swirl of smoke.

They unleash hell.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

Missiles SMACK into the earth, sending BALLS OF FIRE into the air, obliterating and scorching nearly the whole village.

Shrine takes a deep breath and dives into the river just in time.

INT. RIVER - DAY

Shrine swims underwater and the explosions swoop above him.

A shock wave hits Shrine and smacks him against the riverbed.

BLACK.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine washes up on the riverbank.

After a moment, he wakes up, COUGHS up water.

Blood drips from his head where he hit it on the riverbed. He dabs it with his sleeve.

Remembering the uranium, he digs into his rucksack and pulls out a gas mask and puts it on.

Shrine walks through the bombed out village - what's left of it.

The front end of a truck sticks into the ground, the RADIO buzzes with STATIC.

Shrine steps through craters, steps around a car door, and finds remnants of the crates.

A DOZEN URANIUM STEEL TUBES lay around, smashed and torn apart.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine sits against a fallen tree trunk, talking on the satellite phone with the earpiece.

SHRINE

Yeah, it's all destroyed.

CAPA (O.S.)

Good. Saw the whole thing with the drone.

SHRINE

How'd I do?

CAPA (O.S.)

Interesting choice of colors.

SHRINE

I try.

Shrine COUGHS, still some water in his lungs.

CAPA (O.S.)

HazMat's on their way now. Sit tight and ride out with them.

SHRINE

Copy. Over n' out.

Shrine puts the satellite phone away.

A curious expression comes across his face and he starts back for Eshakshem.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine comes to the front end of the truck sticking into the ground. He digs around and opens the glove compartment.

He pulls out a map. Nothing.

Then he fiddles with the radio. He pulls it apart and reworks some wires.

STATIC.

VOICES (FILTER THROUGH RADIO)

Goo-

Shrine tweaks the wires.

STATIC.

VOICES (FILTER THROUGH RADIO) (CONT'D)

Route-

STATIC.

Shrine tweaks the wires one last time.

VOICES (FILTER THROUGH RADIO) (CONT'D)

To Kazdeh. SOB gotta be there.

Shrine forgets the radio and digs out his satellite phone.

SHRINE

DarkLight. They're heading to Kazdeh.

CAPA (O.S.)

What the fuck is Kazdeh?

SHRINE

I have to go there.

CAPA (O.S.)

Go? Are you serious!

SHRINE

I have to.

CAPA

What you have to do is wait for the goddamn Evac!

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Maj. Osborne stands over Capa's shoulder and speaks into his headset.

MAJ. OSBORNE
Sergeant Shrine, this is Major
Osborne. Listen. You did your job.
Now I'm ordering you to wait for
the Evac.

No response.

MAJ. OSBORNE (CONT'D)
Sergeant? If you disobey me I will
personally kill you!

A moment passes.

SHRINE (O.S.)
Yes, sir. Sorry.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine steps up onto a snow bank to survey the land.

MAJ. OSBORNE (O.S.)
Thank Jesus.

CAPA (O.S.)
Evac on it's way.

Shrine puts his satellite phone away, then stares across the valley.

A moment passes and something catches his eye.

Off in the distance, he spots the White Horse that bucked him off.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, ESHKASHEM - DAY

Shrine approaches the Horse.

The Horse NEIGHS, backs off a little.

Shrine slows and reaches out. He steps closer, then closer.
He rubs the Horse's neck. The Horse lowers its head.

Shrine climbs onto the Horse.

EXT. VALLEY OF ESHKASHEM - DAY

On horseback, Shrine follows the trail of kicked up snow up the steep edge of the valley.

EXT. KAZDEH VALLEY - DAY

The Goatherd directs her Goats over a knoll.

She looks back to make sure they all follow the lead.

The goats ahead of her start BLEATING and she turns her attention to them.

Mancuso and five remaining DarkLight Operatives block their path.

MANCUSO

Where is the American?

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Shrine gallops across the plateau.

He looks to his right and sees a new, expansive valley with towering mountains on each side.

He steers the Horse toward it, kicking up snow behind them.

EXT. KAZDEH VALLEY - DAY

As Shrine enters the valley, he hears GUNSHOTS bounce off the mountains.

He pauses to listen, then resumes a full gallop.

EXT. KAZDEH VALLEY - DAY

Shrine gallops his way further into the valley. He spots some RED in the snow and slows down.

He comes across more red snow until he finds a DEAD GOAT lying in the snow, then another one.

He goes a little further and finds a woman lying face down, riddled with bullet wounds.

He gets off his horse and kneels down to turn the body over, confirming it's the Goatherd.

Shrine furrows his brow and notices a trail of kicked-up snow leading up a slope.

A Goat walks up to him and BLEATS.

Shrine rubs the Goat's neck.

EXT. BAGRAM AIR BASE - DAY

Capa runs, full speed, through the base and into-

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Capa bursts inside.

CAPA
What is it?

SFC Parker tosses her a headset.

SPC PARKER
Evac team.

Capa puts the headset on.

CAPA
Go fer Capa.

EXT. ESHKASHEM - DAY

A HAZMAT CREW collects the destroyed uranium at the bombed out village.

SPC SONOMA (20s) stands outside a CHINOOK helicopter, speaks into a radio.

SPC SONOMA
Yeah, there's no sign of your man.

STATIC. He holds the radio away to protect his hearing, brings it back.

SPC SONOMA (CONT'D)
Yeah, we checked everywhere. Look,
I'm gonna call a Dust One.

MORE STATIC. He holds the radio away.

INT. MSA OFFICE - DAY

Capa's team watches alertly, somewhat afraid of her.

CAPA

Do not call a Dust One! I swear to
God if you do I will fucking
destroy you!

She throws her headset on her desk and takes a deep breath.

SPC PARKER

Sergeant? No Dust One?

CAPA

If Osborne learns he's missing,
he's dead.

SPC PARKER

So what are we going to do?

CAPA

I'm going to find him and I'm going
to kill him myself.

SPC PARKER

Where should we look?

CAPA

I have a hunch. But I'm not going
to like it.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Mancuso and his DLOs enter the village, guns drawn.

They FIRE shots into the air.

The villagers flee.

MANCUSO

Nobody move!

The DLOs fan out into the homes and round up the villagers.

Rahim storms out of his home, hands up in defense.

RAHIM

What do you want?

Mancuso aims his rifle at Rahim.

MANCUSO
Get back! Get back!

A DLO grabs Rahim and pushes him into the middle of the road.

Other DLOs escort Men into the middle as well.

Nufail gets thrown to the ground and Rahim helps him to his knees.

DLO Two motions his hand to the top of his head.

DLO TWO
Hands!

The Men kneel and put their hands on top of their heads.

Several DLO hold them at gunpoint.

Nufail looks around and spots Mina with the Women and Children huddled under gunpoint against a wall.

The Little Girl hugs Mina who tries not to show fear.

Mancuso peels off his skeleton ski-mask and rubs his face.

DLO Two steps toward him.

DLO TWO (CONT'D)
 We didn't find him.

MANCUSO
 I can see that.

Mancuso faces the Village Men.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)
Where is the American?

No one answers.

Mancuso pulls out a HANDGUN.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)
I will use this!

He gets in the face of a Villager and digs the gun into his neck.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)
Where is the American??

The Villager shakes his head.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

Where??

VILLAGER

I do not know. I do not know. I do not know.

Mancuso turns back out of frustration.

MANCUSO

Bullshit!

He turns back around and SHOOTS the Villager in the head, dropping him to the ground.

Nufail winces as blood spatters on his face.

DLO TWO

Mancuso, the old man.

Mancuso points at Nufail.

MANCUSO

You!

Mancuso gets in Nufail's face.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

You know the American. Where is he?

Nufail turns his head away.

Mancuso grabs Nufail's head with his hand and YELLS into his face.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

Where is he??

Rahim swings his arm down and knocks Mancuso's hand away from Nufail.

Mancuso punches Rahim across the jaw and kicks him over. He bends down above him.

Rahim GRUNTS and spits, redness on his face.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

You want to hit me, don't you?

He spits on Rahim and steps away and motions to his DLOs.

DLO One and Two grab Rahim and drag him away.

They start beating down upon him.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

You ragheads cost me time. You cost me people. You cost me money! Now, you better tell me where that American is because it's either his blood or your blood.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS, KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine crawls up a rocky knoll and pulls out his scope.

He looks through it and sees-

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

DLO One and Two take turns kicking Rahim on the ground.

Mancuso walks over to the Women.

MANCUSO

Leave him for now.

He eyes the Women.

Mina protects the Little Girl, but accidentally catches Mancuso's attention. He spits on the ground and grabs Mina by the hair.

She struggles to break free as he drags her and throws her to DLO One and Two.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

Maybe he'll talk now.

He digs his handgun into Mina's head and looks Rahim in the eye.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

Where is the American??

Rahim, a face of blood and tears, shakes his head.

RAHIM

I do not know.

MANCUSO

Bullshit!

He points his gun to the ground a FIRES off a shot.

Mina shakes from fear in his grasp.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)
Where is he??

Goats BLEAT.

They all turn their attention to Several Goats strolling up the road toward them. They stop a dozen yards away.

A RED LIGHT blinks underneath the long hair of one of the Goats.

No one notices except Nufail, who smiles.

MANCUSO (CONT'D)
What the hell are you smiling at?

KABOOM!

An explosion erupts from the Goats and hits Mancuso and his men.

The Villagers break free and run away.

Nufail runs to Mina and Rahim and helps them to cover.

DLO FOUR checks on DLO FIVE who lies facedown in the snow.

DLO FOUR
 He's dead!

Shrine charges the village, rifle raised. He SHOOTS DLO Four as he rises from checking on his partner.

DLO Four drops dead.

Villagers run past Shrine and he pushes them aside.

SHRINE
Inside! Get inside!

He spots the Little Girl out in the middle of the road and runs to her. He picks her up with one arm and turns so his body protects her.

He FIRES at Mancuso, then hurries for cover by a house.

A Villager reaches through a window and takes the Little Girl from him.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
Stay down!

Shrine charges back out into the open.

Mancuso and his THREE REMAINING MEN fall back for cover.

Shrine grabs a DLO rifle on the ground and tosses it to Nufail.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Cover me!

Nufail breaks off from helping Mina and Rahim and gets behind a short wall.

Mina helps Rahim back into a nearby house.

Nufail struggles with the rifle and Shrine hurries over to him. Shrine quickly demonstrates how to hold and fire the rifle.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Like this. You got it.

Shrine pops up and charges out front.

Mancuso and his Men fire at Shrine.

Shrine dives for cover behind a doorway. He looks over his shoulder, but bullets hitting nearby push him back in.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Nufail!

He points to the roof of the house next to Nufail.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

The roof!

Nufail nods to Shrine and slings the rifle over his shoulder.

Shrine tries to provide covering fire but Mancuso and his men pin him down.

Nufail climbs up a wooden ladder and steps onto the roof.

Shrine leans out once more and fires back at DLO, getting an advantage on them.

DLO THREE steps out into the open and spots Nufail on the roof.

Shrine shoots but has no ammo. He hurries to reload.

Too late. DLO Three shoots Nufail.

EXT. ROOF - DAY

Nufail falls over to his side and clutches the BLEEDING WOUND in his abdomen.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine reloads and KILLS DLO Three. He runs for the ladder.

Shrine braves GUNFIRE as he climbs up the ladder.

A bullet SMACKS into his left arm and he nearly falls off, but he persists and climbs onto the roof.

EXT. ROOF - DAY

Shrine hurries to Nufail.

SHRINE

Shit.

Nufail tries to control his breathing, but struggles.

NUFAIL

I'll be fine.

SHRINE

Hold on.

Shrine looks around for what to do, then notices several small bullet holes in the roof. He takes the butt of his rifle and smashes it into the roof, making a fist-sized hole.

He smashes it again, enlarging the hole, and then again.

The hole breaks open and he grabs Nufail. Together they fall through the roof.

INT. HOUSE WITH CAVED-IN ROOF - DAY

Shrine and Nufail cough from the dust as he helps clear some of the debris off of Nufail and lay him down on flat ground.

The gunfire outside stops.

Shrine turns with his rifle to the sound of RUNNING FOOTSTEPS.

Mina and Rahim enter the room from further inside the house. Mina rushes to Nufail's side and grabs his hand.

MINA

Papa!

NUFAIL

My daughter.

Shrine rips open Nufail's sweater to reveal the wound. He unwraps his shemagh scarf and holds it on the wound.

SHRINE

Do what I'm doing.

Mina, distracted, goes unaware.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Mina.

Mina turns her attention to Shrine.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

Do what I'm doing.

Mina takes over holding the wound and Shrine checks Nufail's pulse. He rises to his feet and WHISPERS into Rahim's ear.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

He is bleeding internally.

RAHIM

Should I find the doctor?

SHRINE

He needs more than a doctor.

Rahim stares at Nufail, unsure of what to do. Shrine picks up his rifle.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

There's still three of them out there. I have to go before they surround us.

Rahim eyes Shrine's arm wound.

RAHIM

I will go. You are wounded.

SHRINE

No.

RAHIM

You do not have to risk your life for us.

SHRINE

*Nufail did not come all this way to
have his daughter become a widow.*

Shrine picks up Nufail's rifle and hands it to Rahim.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

In case they come.

Shrine ducks out of the house.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Several bullets SMACK behind Shrine as he hurries out.

Shrine spots DLO TWO on the roof across the street and SHOTS HIM DEAD.

INT. GYM - DAY

Sgt. Rays, chewing BUBBLE GUM, and Sgt. Q get ripped lifting weights.

Capa sits down on the bench across from them.

CAPA

Sgt. Shrine's in trouble. I need your help.

SGT. Q

Does it involve killing Taliban?

CAPA

Fuck yeah.

SGT. RAYS

If there's two things I love, it's
chewing bubblegum and kicking ass-
(blows a bubble)
Fortunately for me, I can do both
at the same time.

He LAUGHS and high-fives Sgt. Q.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine creeps along from behind one house to the next, searching for Mancuso and his last man.

He comes to a wooden door into a house and gently opens it with the point of his rifle.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A FAMILY huddles in the corner.

Shrine motions for them to keep quiet and stay low, then closes the door.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine steps down a narrow passage between two houses. He moves alertly, with his rifle raised.

Mancuso calls out from a distance.

MANCUSO (O.S.)
What's your name, boy?

Shrine turns to the voice. Nothing. He continues onward.

Shrine comes to the end of the passage, crosses the road, and takes cover against a house.

MANCUSO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I want to know the name of the man
I'm about to kill!

Shrine turns his ear to the voice, then moves down the road toward it.

Shrine spots a BOOT as it disappears into Rahim's house.

Shrine moves toward it and steps inside.

INT. RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine moves quietly through the hallway, passing the sitting room, then passing the room where he slept.

INT. KITCHEN, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine eyes the kitchen. A KNIFE is missing from the display on the counter.

Shrine steps through the kitchen and outside.

EXT. PATIO, RAHIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Shrine steps onto the patio. Ornamental rugs and linens hang to dry. Tulips leftover from the wedding still fill the patio.

MANCUSO (O.S.)
Shitfire! Turn your self in and
I'll let you choose how you gon'
die!

Shrine FIRES several shots around the patio.

Just when it seems no one's there, a hand wielding a knife juts toward Shrine. He ducks backward and swats the hand with the butt of his rifle, knocking the knife to the ground.

He kicks DLO ONE into the wall and raises his rifle.

DLO One takes off his ski mask. It's A WOMAN - BLONDE HAIR, BLUE EYES.

Shrine hesitates.

DLO One grabs a clay jar and chucks it at Shrine as she rises to her feet.

Shrine ducks to avoid the jar which breaks against the wall behind him.

The woman draws her handgun at Shrine but he lunges at her and knocks it away.

They tussle and turn, throw punches, and fight vigorously.

She takes off her scarf and loops it around Shrine's neck. He slams her back into the wall several times but she's a fighter and doesn't let go.

They fall to the floor.

Shrine fights to break free, jabbing her in the side with his elbow, but it's no use.

He feels something crunch beneath him and grabs a shard of the broken jar. With all his strength, he stabs it into her thigh and she cries out in pain. Shrine breaks free.

She rises to her knees and tackles Shrine's back.

Shrine finds the kitchen knife under him and turns around and stabs her in the stomach.

She keels over and DIES.

Shrine achingly rises to his feet and collects himself.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine steps out into the street and creeps down a set of houses.

He spots the house with the caved in roof.

Shrine crosses the road.

Down the road, Mancuso steps out into the open, holding a GRENADE LAUNCHER.

They stare each other down.

MANCUSO

No use dying for these ragheads.

SHRINE

Only one dying gonna be you.

MANCUSO

Let's see you back that up.

SHRINE

I've backed it up five times already. I can back it up once more.

Shrine raises his rifle.

Mancuso runs to the side of the road and FIRES a grenade at Shrine.

BOOM! The grenade hits near Shrine as he dives to the side of the road, dropping his rifle in the process. He takes cover behind a short wall.

He eyes his rifle.

Rahim appears in the house with the caved in roof just across the road. Rahim steps out and FIRES at Mancuso.

Mina darts out into the road and picks up Shrine's rifle. She dives into him behind the short wall.

Rahim stops firing.

Mancuso steps out and fires several grenades.

Rahim falls back into the house as a grenade blows out a wall.

Another grenade hits in front of Shrine and Mina. He covers her with his body as debris fall upon them.

Rahim steps back out and FIRES back at Mancuso.

Shrine grabs Mina's arm.

SHRINE (CONT'D)

*Follow me. I'm gonna get you to
safety.*

Shrine pops up and FIRES at Mancuso. He pulls Mina up behind him and pushes forward toward Mancuso while hiding Mina behind his body.

Shrine leads Mina into a house off the side of the road.

Mancuso fires a grenade and hits just behind Shrine. The blast pushes him forward into the house and on top of Mina.

INT. BLOWN OUT HOUSE - DAY

The blast crumbles a brick wall which falls onto Shrine.

He and Mina yell out in pain.

Shrine pushes the rubble off his backside and climbs out. He pulls Mina out with several cuts on her legs.

SHRINE

Are you OK?

Mina nods.

Shrine ducks out of the house.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Another grenade hits above Rahim and rubble comes down on top of him. He works to dig himself out.

Shrine, fearless, walks down the road toward Mancuso.

Mancuso steps out to shoot at Shrine, but each time he does, Shrine FIRES shot at him and Mancuso retreats behind a house.

Mancuso, fear in his eyes, draws his handgun and retreats into the house.

As Shrine approaches the house, several bullets RIP through the mud-brick wall in front of him.

Shrine SPRAYS bullets into the wall.

Shrine and Mancuso fire into the wall so much it collapses. They stand just yards apart.

Mancuso fires the handgun at Shrine but has no ammo left.

Shrine fires his rifle at Mancuso but also has no ammo left.

Mancuso pulls out a grenade and loads it into his grenade launcher, then takes aim.

Shrine bends down and picks up a brick. He hurls it at Mancuso as Mancuso fires the grenade at Shrine.

Shrine's throw puts him off balance and he slips and falls. The grenade sails over his head and BLASTS into a house behind him.

The brick HITS Mancuso and knocks him over.

Shrine stumbles to his feet in the loose rubble and climbs over the mound.

INT. HOUSE WITH COLLAPSED WALL - DAY

Shrine picks up a brick and throws it at Mancuso, hitting him in the back.

Mancuso turns as Shrine charges him. Shrine tackles Mancuso and they fall through a mud-brick wall.

Shrine gets on top of Mancuso and grabs a brick. He brings it down on Mancuso's head but Mancuso rolls Shrine off of him and dodges the brick.

Mancuso rolls on top of Shrine, grabs a brick. Shrine knocks it away.

They tumble and wrestle to the bone.

Mancuso forces a brick on Shrine's head, but Shrine pushes it back.

Mancuso fights, pushing the brick harder upon Shrine, almost crushing on his temple.

Shrine grits his teeth, take a deep breath, throws Mancuso off.

They rise to their feet, each with a brick in their hand. They fight brutally, exchanging mirror-image moves.

Mancuso begins to tire, no longer as quick.

Shrine smashes the brick into Mancuso's thigh. BONE CRUSHING.

Mancuso falls on his knee. Shrine SWIPES the brick across Mancuso's face. More BONE CRUSHING.

Mancuso falls to the ground, writhing in pain.

Shrine climbs on top of him and SLAMS the brick into his skull several times, grunting like an animal with each blow.

He tires, stops, looks up.

Mina looks on, dispirited.

Shrine calms down and rises to his feet.

SHRINE
Do not become like me.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine limps out of the crumbled house and down the street.

Villagers begin creeping out of the houses.

INT. HOUSE WITH CAVED-IN ROOF - DAY

Shrine kneels by a now lifeless Nufail. He bows over him and rests his head on Nufail's chest.

He looks up, several tears on his cheeks.

Rahim and Mina comfort each other.

SHRINE
I am so sorry.

MINA
It is not your fault.

SHRINE
I wish that were true.

EXT. CEMETERY, KAZDEH - DAY

In the small cemetery off to the side of the village, Shrine, Rahim, and other villagers dig a grave.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine, Rahim, and the villagers place Nufail's body, wrapped in white cloth, onto an ornate funeral bed. They drape a traditional funeral blanket on top of him.

They pick up the bed and carry it upon their shoulders toward the cemetery. The village's MULLAH (religious figure) leads the way.

EXT. CEMETERY, KAZDEH - DAY

Shrine, Rahim, and the villagers set the bed on the ground next to the grave.

The Mullah sprinkles rosewater on Nufail's body.

The Mullah leads them all in PRAYER IN PASHTO. Shrine bows his head.

Shrine helps lower Nufail's body into the grave using narrow strips of white cloth.

MULLAH

*We are Allah's and to Him we shall
return.*

Shrine and the others each throw in a handful of dirt.

The Mullah continues a PRAYER.

LATER.

Shrine kneels by the now-filled grave. Mourners place small pieces of pottery on the grave, bow their heads.

One by one the villager leave until all who remain are Shrine, Mina, and Rahim.

Rahim comes up behind Shrine and places a hand on his shoulder.

A subtle WHIPPING noise comes in, begins to grow louder.

Shrine rises to his feet, wipes away a tear, and nods to Rahim. He locks eyes with Mina.

The WHIPPING grows louder.

Shrine past Rahim and Mina and spots a black dot in the sky banking towards them.

As the black dot gets closer it reveals itself to be a BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

The Black Hawk lands just outside the village.

Capa and Sgt. Rays hop out of the Black Hawk. They spot Shrine coming back into the village with Mina and Rahim.

Shrine touches Rahim on the shoulder, then breaks off and walks toward the Black Hawks.

Rahim and Mina disappear with other Villagers into Rahim's house.

Capa waits for Shrine. She cracks a smile.

CAPA
You look like shit.

SHRINE
Can we get a medic for the man
inside that house?

CAPA
Looks like you could use a medic.

SHRINE
(sternly)
Him first.

Capa turns and motions to the MEDIC, then to Sgt. Rays.

CAPA
You go with him.

He hops out of the Black Hawk and heads to the house.

Sgt. Rays grabs a BOX OF CHOCOLATES from the Black Hawk and follows the Medic.

SHRINE
Why does Rays have a box of
chocolates?

CAPA
I guess it's his thing now.

Shrine sits next to her on the edge of the cabin.

CAPA (CONT'D)
Now, let's talk about you.

SHRINE

What for?

CAPA

Major Osborne isn't going to be happy with you.

SHRINE

He's never happy with me.

CAPA

Why the hell did you come here?

SHRINE

I had a book to finish.

Shrine looks away, out across the village.

EXT. KAZDEH - DAY

Villagers embrace each other, appreciating their fortune for having survived.

EXT. KAZDEH - DUSK

Shrine and the other soldiers load up into the Black Hawk.

Mina and Rahim walk up to him.

Mina carries a FOLDED GREEN BLANKET - the one she's been making.

MINA

This is for you.

SHRINE

I thought this was for your father?

MINA

Now it is for you.

SHRINE

Are you sure?

MINA

Take it. So you can remember us.

Shrine takes blanket.

SHRINE

I will always remember.

He bows his head to them, but Mina embraces him with a hug. After they break apart, Rahim shakes hands with Shrine, then hugs him.

Shrine hesitates, then pulls his copy of "Going After Cacciato" from his pants pocket and gives it to Mina.

SHRINE (CONT'D)
*I do not think I will be needing
this anymore.*

Mina and Shrine share intense eye-contact.

Capa watches, her questioning of Shrine's actions answered.

INT. BLACK HAWK ONE - DUSK

The Black Hawk lifts off and banks upward into the sky.

Shrine keeps his eyes locked on Mina as she becomes smaller and smaller until-

He can't see her anymore.

He settles into his seat and shivers from the cold air. As if he's always had the green blanket, he wraps it around himself for warmth.

Capa watches him curiously.

Shrine leans back and enjoys the view of the snow-covered mountains outside.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DUSK

The Black Hawk passes alongside the majestic, snow-covered mountains stretching as far as the eye can see.

The sun melts away behind the jagged horizon. The last streaks of light pierce the darkening sky.

FADE OUT.

THE END