

LONG TRANG

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. RICE PADDY, 1966 - DAY

Panning across we come upon a half submerged AK-47 propped up by a dead Viet Cong Guerrilla floating face down in the water. The camera panes across revealing the paddy full of dead V.C. Guerrillas floating in the water.

V.C. GUERRILLA (O.C.)
(Vietnamese)
Stop, come back.

Two V.C. Guerrillas make a run for it across the paddy. Boom the first Guerrilla's shot in the back drops dead in the water. Three more steps and boom the second Guerrilla drops dead in the water.

SFX crying V.C. Guerrilla

Panning over we come upon a crying V.C. Guerrilla hiding below the dike with his dwindling platoon.

An older V.C. Guerrilla moves to slap him.

V.C. GUERRILLA (CONT'D)
(To crying V.C.)
Stop it.
(Slaps him again)
Stop crying.

He clubs him with his AK-47.

V.C. GUERRILLA (CONT'D)
(Clubbing crying V.C.)
Stop crying.

He stops crying.

SFX BULLET CRACK.

Another V.C. Guerrilla is hit.

The older V.C. Guerrilla turns around to see him fall dead. Fear builds in his eyes. Then suddenly BOOM he's shot and falls dead into the water.

MONTAGE: V.C. being SNIPED

- Four V.C. Guerrillas make a run for it and shot back to front.

- Boom another V.C. drops dead in the water with a bullet hole to the chest.
- Three V.C. run for the tree line and boom two are cut. The last one retreats back.
- A wounded V.C. pleads for help as his comrade comes to his rescue and boom is cut down.
- As the wounded V.C. cries for help a V.C. lifts his head up to search the for the sniper.
- Seeing nothing but jungle.

CUT TO:

INT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ, LAOS - DAY

The hands of the North Vietnamese Army General grips the report on the ambush.

The NVA GENERAL(40s) finishes reading and looks up in disgust at his cowed NVA officers before him. Wanting someone to suffer for this debacle.

NVA GENERAL
(Vietnamese)
An entire battalion wiped out. How
could this have happened?

He slams his fist on the table.

NVA GENERAL (CONT'D)
I want answers.

One NVA Officer nervously looks at his comrades and steps forward.

NVA OFFICER
(Shaky)
A pair of snipers comrade general.
One of whom we have known for some
time we believe was there.

NVA GENERAL
Two snipers?

NVA OFFICER
(Hesitant)
American marine snipers comrade
general. They work in pairs one is
the actual sniper while the second
man observes for him.

NVA General stares him down.

NVA GENERAL
This American sniper you know for
certain he was there?

NVA OFFICER
Yes comrade general our spies
confirm it.

NVA GENERAL
What is his name?

NVA Officer looks NVA General in the eye.

NVA OFFICER
Long Trang.

BACK TO:

EXT. SNIPER HIDE - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE POV - watching the V.C. Guerrillas in the
rice paddy.

Moving slowly into the dense jungle we come to a green faced
Marine hidden behind a long barrel Winchester model 70 rifle
and Unertl 8 power scope. This is the legendary CARLOS
HATHCOCK(20s).

Next to him is Marine sniper BURKE green faced with an M-14
and radio.

CARLOS (O.C.)
(To Burke)
Call in the arty.

He calls in an artillery strike.

BURKE
(Radio)
Sierra one November, sierra one
November this is sierra one alpha.
Do you copy over.

CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE POV - a V.C. Guerrilla sticks his head up
then back down.

Sierra one November comes in on the radio.

RADIO
(Static)
Loud and clear one alpha. What's
your situation over.

Burke checks the map coordinates.

BURKE
Sierra one November need a fire
mission at grid coordinates tango
Charlie eight one niner over.

CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE POV - several V.C. Guerrillas cower
behind the dike terrified to move.

RADIO
(Static)
Rodger one alpha, spotter round on
the way over.

Burke holds the radio close. The sound of the first
artillery shell flies overhead.

EXT. RICE PADDY - CONTINUOUS

The artillery shell detonates into a white phosphorus cloud
above. Right on target.

EXT. SNIPER HIDE - CONTINUOUS

BURKE
(Radio)
Fire for effect sierra one November
over.

RADIO
(Static)
Rodger one alpha more is on the way
over.

EXT. RICE PADDY - CONTINUOUS

High explosive artillery shells rain down on the V.C.
Guerrillas and are wiped out.

EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL LEAVING SNIPER HIDE - CONTINUOUS

Their back to us CARLOS and BURKE retreat into the jungle to.

CUT TO:

JIM LAND (O.S.)
 Consider this scenario. A squad of
 V.C. come into a village.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH VIETNAMESE VILLAGE 1966 - DAY

In front of his people the Village Elder is executed by the
 V.C. POLITICAL OFFICER.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
 And execute the elders/leaders in
 front of the people of the village.

Pistol waving Political Officer harangues the passive
 Villagers before him. Surrounded by black pajamas VC
 Guerrillas with AK-47s.

V.C. POLITICAL OFFICER
 (Vietnamese/Threatening)
 You leaders are puppets of
 imperialist American war mongering
 dogs.

A boy cowers into his Mothers arms.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
 With that done now comes the
 indoctrination which usually
 involves a long winded speech by a
 political officer.

V.C. POLITICAL OFFICER
 We the fighters of the national
 liberation front are here to free
 you.

An Old Man and his Wife look down in silence.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
 Soon after the whole village turns
 to the VC and cooperates in giving
 them shelter, food intel all out of
 fear. Never supported them they
 just feared retaliation if they
 didn't. It's all psychological
 terrorism kill one so as to
 intimidate a thousand.

CU - Political Officer WAVES his pistol higher.

V.C. POLITICAL OFFICER
(Waving pistol high)
We are only here to help
liberate...

SFAX BULLET CRACK followed by distant BANG five seconds later.

VC Political Officer FALLS DEAD from a shot to the chest. Villagers run for cover and VC Guerrillas look in all directions.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
But it can also be turned against them. Especially when they give themselves away.

One V.C. Guerrilla approaches the dead Political Officer. He feels for a pulse and SPINS his head around scared out of his mind.

CUT TO:

INT. JIM LAND'S HOME, PRESENT - DAY

All things Marine and marksmanship decorate the wall behind retired captain JIM LAND(60) as he talks to CHARLES.

JIM LAND
From the time of revolutionary war right up to Vietnam we always learned to forget what we pay for in blood. That's the story of the American sniper you need them and don't have them when war comes. And when it's over you disband them thinking you don't need them again.

(Gestures)

The most feared weapon today is not gonna' be a guided missile or a nuke. It's the sniper because just one shot and one kill can win it all. It's how we won the battle of Saratoga and won our independence. An American soldier and his rifle sending the entire British command into chaos with one bullet. An economy of force like none other. That is the power of a sniper.

He points to group picture of him and Carlos on the wall.

JIM LAND (CONT'D)

(Pointing)

Carlos Hathcock was one of my first graduates from the scout sniper school I first set up in Hawaii. He'd been part of the shooting team there and back at camp Lejune. Won a hell a lot of marksmanship competitions including the Wimbolton trophy in 64. And when I was in country setting up the scout sniper school for first marine I brought him in as an instructor. But what the hell could we teach we were starting from scratch literally. The only reference book was my copy of "A Rifleman went to war." Had no manuals or a doctrine so we had go into the bush and figure it out ourselves. The lessons from those first missions we passed onto the next class of scout snipers. Carlos would literally take students out into the bush and teach them right there on the job. Stalking, tracking, range estimation all out in the field. That was his classroom. The whole time he never took pleasure in killing the enemy. He'd say that he was just doing his job saving marines.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILL 55 OUTSIDE THE WIRE - DAY

A bloody and TORTURED MARINE limps toward Hill 55.

JIM LAND (O.S.)

But there was this one V.C. he did hate.

EXT. HILL 55 GUARD POST - CONTINUOUS

MARINE 1 on guard duty lifts his binoculars scanning the terrain below. Spots the tortured Marine.

MARINE 1

(To Gunny Sargent)

Gunny.

He points him out for the GUNNY SERGEANT.

EXT. HILL 55 PERIMETER WIRE - CONTINUOUS

TORTURED MARINE stumbles into the perimeter wire becomes entangled. A squad of Marines led by the GUNNY SERGEANT come to his rescue.

MARINE 2
(Untangling)
Jesus the fuck they do to him.

GUNNY SERGEANT
Get him out of that fuckin' wire
now.

They untangle him from the wire. Lay him on the ground.

MARINE 3
Stick with me man, stick with me
your gonna' make it.

He dies with his eyes open staring at the sky.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH VIETNAMESE VILLAGE - DAY

A frightened SOUTH VIETNAMESE VILLAGER pours water on the blood stained hands and knife of a striking female Viet-Cong guerrilla with a hint of French ancestry. This is APACHE(20s).

APACHE
(Vietnamese)
That's enough.

The villager goes away.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
Her name was the Apache - she was
an evil one.

EXT. HILL - DAY

AK-47 in hand the V.C. SCOUT checks out and signals the coast is clear.

The V.C. platoon comes forward.

APACHE K-44 sniper rifle in hand hides among them. They stop and Apache breaks off into the grass to urinate.

Suddenly artillery shells explode all around. Apache RUNS downhill.

Sensing a trap V.C. Scout RUNS after her.

V.C. SCOUT
(Vietnamese/shouting)
Stop, stop, stop.

SFAX BULLET CRACK

Apache's hit and drops dead.

V.C. Scout drops to the ground daring not to come closer.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
She was indeed a cruel bitch when
it came to the V.C. But they could
cruel in other ways too.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH VIETNAMESE FARMER'S HUT 1966 - DAY

Two V.C. GUERRILLAS with AK-47s come out of the jungle and approach the hut of the South Vietnamese Farmer. Next to the doorway sits a CLAY JAR covered by a lid.

The first V.C. Guerrilla removes the lid and extracts twenty spent SHELL CASINGS and shows them to the second V.C. Guerrilla. Then drops in twenty fresh BULLETS into the jar.

MOMENTS LATER

A tired and sweating SOUTH VIETNAMESE FARMER comes home from working the field. He putters in and out of his hut then turns toward the CLAY JAR.

CLAY JAR POV - Farmer lifts off lid and shutters upon seeing the fresh bullets inside.

South Vietnamese Farmer looks around making sure no one sees him and scoops up the bullets.

INSIDE HUT

He removes the matting on the floor retrieving a rusty rifle from underneath the floor.

EXT. RICE PADDY - CONTINUOUS

Rusty rifle in hand the SOUTH VIETNAMESE FARMER runs across the dike path. Heading for the Marine Camp on the ridge.

TALL GRASS

He stalks his way through the tall grass. Looking up he sees his target the Marine camp on the ridge above. He aims the rusty rifle and fires as fast as he can.

BOOM and the South Vietnamese Farmer head explodes.

EXT. MARINE CAMP ON RIDGE - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE POV - looking down on the dead South Vietnamese Farmer.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
Everybody's cannon fodder.

CU - Carlos ejects an empty SHELL CASING onto the ground.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP PEARY RANGE, 1965 - DAY

SFAX RIFLE SHOTS.

ECU - CARLOS EYE looking down the sights of his M-1 rifle at the bull's-eye downrange.

He closes his eye for a beat and opens it his sights steady on the bull's-eye.

He watches the wind sock waiting for the wind to die.

JIM LAND (O.C.)
Growing up in rural Arkansas Carlos had to hunt to put food on the table. This is where he learned to be what he called.

Up and down the range Marines and Civilians aim and fire at their targets. Competing for the Wimbledon cup.

JIM LAND (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 (emphasizing)
 In the bubble, being perfectly
 still, aware of your surroundings,
 focusing all your senses what ever
 the environment and notice details
 big and small.

The windsock falls Carlos tightens up on the trigger and
 pulls. Firing one shot.

EXT. CAMP PEARY RANGE, TARGET PIT - CONTINUOUS

A Marine pulls down the target and pushes a marker into the
 winning bulls eye made by Carlos.

CUT TO:

INT. HILL 55 WORKSHOP TENT - DAY

An old Winchester M-70 is dumped on the work table.

The Marine Armorer turns around, looks at the rifle then at
 CARLOS standing in front of him - his BACK to us.

MARINE ARMORER
 (Gestures)
 Whadda' need done?

CARLOS (O.C.)
 (Back toward Camera)
 Need the scope removed and mounted
 to another gun. Can you do it?

MARINE ARMORER
 Sure.

MONTAGE - MOUNTING SCOPE TO .50 CAL

- Marine Armorer remove the scope from the M-70 and sets it
 aside with care.

- He lays a MOUNTING BRACKET next to it, MEASURES the scope
 and MARKS the bracket.

- With a drill press he DRILLS out holes in the bracket.

- Then screws the scope to the bracket.

- Marine Armorer DRILLS holes for the scope/bracket on a .50 cal. machine gun and attaches it.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD, ELEPHANT VALLEY - DAY

On a red dirt road a teenage VIETCONG PORTER pushes a bike overloaded with AK-47s and ammunition.

Suddenly a .50 caliber bullet strikes the handle bars. The V.C. PORTER drops the bike looking where it came from.

Scared he grabs an AK-47 off the bike and starts shooting.

Split second later BOOM a second .50 Caliber bullet kills him and goes down.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE 1971 - NIGHT

CARLOS suddenly wakes from a bad dream and SITS UP. Revealing SKIN GRAFTS on his body a result wounds from his last tour.

CARLOS
(Back to us)
Aaaah.
(Pain)

JO wakes and sits up.

JO HATHCOCK
(Touching him)
What is it? What's wrong?

Carlos breathes heavily.

CARLOS
(Remorse)
All he had to do was drop the damn
gun and live.

BACK TO:

EXT. ROAD, ELEPHANT VALLEY - DAY

The V.C. PORTER lays dead on the ground.

WE PULL BACK 2500 YARDS TO HILL 55.

EXT. .50 CAL. POSITION, HILL 55 - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS sits behind the .50 caliber machine gun with the SCOPE/BRACKET. He's just pulled off the longest sniper shot in history.

JIM LAND (O.S.)

An army can't fight an enemy that hides like a fish in the sea. But a small army of snipers could.

CUT TO:

INT. HILL 55 TENT - DAY

A new crop of Marine SNIPER STUDENTS sit on the benches. In front JIM LAND (30) towers over them on a box.

JIM LAND

(Addressing)

Gentlemen you have been selected to become scout/snipers not because you are the meanest sons of bitches in the valley, nor was it for show off what a tough guy you are to the gang back on the block. You were chosen not because you have muscles or because you have potential to become some sort of cold blooded killer who'd just as soon blow the eyes out of a baby as step on a bug.

He looks a few Sniper Students in the eye.

JIM LAND (CONT'D)

Your units selected each of you to become snipers because you are good Marines men who are well disciplined, courageous, duty-bound and loyal to your country and your Corps. You've been found to be in top physical condition, mentally sound, and patient. Each man here has demonstrated that he has good moral character and a strong sense of values, among which he holds life sacred.

INT. HILL 55 ARMORY - DAY

The MARINE ARMORER hands over new Winchester 70 sniper rifle to the first SNIPER STUDENT.

JIM LAND (O.S.)

(Continuing)

These attributes are important to be a successful sniper. When you go on a mission, there's no crowd to applaud you, no one to show how tough you are. When you go on a mission, you're alone.

He checks out his weapon as the next Sniper Student is handed his Winchester 70.

EXT. HILL 55 BALLISTICS CLASS - DAY

A Marine Sniper Instructor gives a ballistic lesson to a handful of Sniper Students.

JIM LAND (O.S.)

You have to be strong enough to physically endure lying in the weeds day after day, letting the bugs crawl over you and bite you, letting the sun cook you and the rain boil you. Shitting and pissing in your pants as lay there. Lying there because you know Charlie's coming, and you're gonna' kill him.

INT. HILL 55 MAP & RADIO CLASS - DAY

Sniper Student is tested on his map reading skills.

JIM LAND (O.S.)

You don't shoot the first gomer that walks into your field of fire, either. You select your target carefully, making sure that the gomer you kill is Charlie, so that you can waste the bastard with no doubts or remorse.

PANNING over another Sniper Student learns to use a PRC-25 radio.

JIM LAND (CONT'D)

(Continuing)

You acted as a professional. You identified and put an end to a man, a woman, or even a child who would have killed your best friend, most of your friend's friends, and you. And that's what's important

EXT. HILL 55 FIRING RANGE - DAY

A Sniper Student fires his Winchester 70 at his target 500 yards down hill.

JIM LAND (O.S.)

(Continuing)

As a sniper, you do not have that luxury. You will be killing the enemy when he's unaware of you. You will be assassinating him without giving him the option to run, fight, surrender or die. You will be, in a sense, committing murder.

We MOVE on down the firing line of Sniper Students training in pairs - one SHOOTING the other OBSERVING with SPOTTING SCOPES

JIM LAND (CONT'D)

To deal with this successfully, you must be mentally strong. You must believe in what you are doing-that these efforts are defeating the enemy and that your selected kills of their leaders and key personnel are preventing death and carnage that this enemy would otherwise bring upon your brothers.

BACK TO:

INT. HILL 55 TENT - DAY

We PAN over from the FRONT to the BACK ROW

JIM LAND

I will tolerate only hard work and dedication. You give us that, and we will make you the deadliest creature on earth-a sniper.

CU - on a particular Sniper Student the eager trigger happy PRIVATE FIRST CLASS in the final row. You will see him again.

CUT TO:

INT. G-2 HUT DA NANG 1966 - DAY

The fingers of the COLONEL(40) reads through Carlos' file detailing his marksmanship records and newspaper clippings of Carlos winning the Wimbledon cup trophy at Camp Perry.

COLONEL (O.C.)
(Holding clipping in
fingers)
This one's a scout sniper?

INTEL SERGEANT (O.C.)
Yes sir, one of the first graduates
class of 1960.

He pages through the file.

COLONEL (O.C.)
Got quite a number of marksmanship
awards here.

INTEL SERGEANT (O.C.)
Mostly from his time spent with on
the competitive shooting teams
stateside. Right now he's an
instructor at first's marine's
scout sniper school at hill 55.

COLONEL (O.C.)
How many kills he got so far?

INTEL SERGEANT (O.C.)
Believe seventy so far sir.

COLONEL (O.C.)
(Whistles)
Really that many?

INTEL SERGEANT (O.C.)
Several of their snipers have got a
high number of kills. But, he's...

He reads the report of the half mile shot with 50 caliber machine gun.

COLONEL (O.C.)
(Interrupts)
Holy shit, he took a gook out at
half a mile with a 50 cal.

INTEL SERGEANT (O.C.)
That's why I brought him to your
attention sir.

Beat.

COLONEL (O.C.)
Who's his CO?

INTEL SERGEANT (O.C.)
Captain Jim Land sir.

COLONEL (O.C.)
I want him in my office ASAP.

CUT TO:

EXT. NVA SNIPER SCHOOL, NORTH VIETNAM 1966 - DAY

North Vietnamese Army sniper the COBRA teaches a new class of
NVA SNIPER TRAINEES.

COBRA
(Vietnamese)
Of all the targets a sniper will
encounter on the battlefield.
Which is your first priority?

He points to a trainee.

TRAINEE 1
(Quick)
The officer.

COBRA
(Blunt)
Wrong.

He points to another.

TRAINEE 2
(Confident)
The radio man.

COBRA
Wrong.

Points to the next one.

TRAINEE 3
 (Hesitant)
 The machine gunner?

COBRA
 Wrong.

Cobra looks them straight in the eye. He points to the trainee in the back.

COBRA (CONT'D)
 (Pointing)
 You.

The trainee shutters.

COBRA (CONT'D)
 What are you doing here?

TRAINEE 4
 To be a...
 (Realizing)
 The enemy sniper comrade lieutenant. The first priority of a sniper to kill the enemy sniper first.

COBRA
 Why?

TRAINEE 4
 Because the sniper kills one to terrorize a thousand comrade lieutenant.

COBRA
 Correct.

An NVA messenger comes running toward him. Envelope in hand.

NVA MESSENGER
 (Approaching)
 Comrade lieutenant, comrade lieutenant.

He hands Cobra the message.

NVA MESSENGER (CONT'D)
 Urgent orders for you comrade lieutenant. You've been ordered south.

He grabs the envelope and steps away to read it.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE - DAY

JO HATHCOCK(20s) finishes making the bed.

JO HATHCOCK
(Loud)
Carlos.

She opens the closet revealing Carlos Marine uniform on a hanger.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
Carlos

CARLOS (O.S.)
(In the next room)
Yeah.

She gathers up the laundry.

JO HATHCOCK
I'm doing a wash, have anything
that needs washing?

CARLOS (O.S.)
Should be in the hamper.

She heads into the HALL and to the LIVING ROOM.

She passes CARLOS on the floor practicing his SHOOTING POSITIONS.

JO HATHCOCK
(Passing by)
When will you be back?

CARLOS (O.C.)
Late Sunday night.

JO HATHCOCK
Alright.

Jo sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. HILL 55 BUNKER - DAY

Through the bunker door a MARINE urgently enters and over to JIM LAND(30) doing paperwork. Stands at attention and salutes.

MARINE 4
(Saluting)
Message for you sir.

Land looks up making eye contact with him.

JIM LAND
At ease.

Then back down at his paperwork.

MARINE 4
You're wanted in Da Nang ASAP, sir.

He looks back up.

JIM LAND
(Squinting)
What for?

MARINE 4
A colonel Smith from G-2 has
personally requested your presence
sir.

Land stares off curious as to what's up.

CUT TO:

EXT. MU GIA PASS, NORTH VIETNAM/LAOS BORDER - DAY

A long line of camouflaged NVA trucks and soldiers snake into the mountainous jungle pass toward the Ho Chi Minh trail.

The COBRA marching with the soldiers looks up as fighter planes fly overhead.

CUT TO:

EXT. G-2 HUT DA NANG - DAY

CARLO'S POV: following Burke and Land to the G-2 hut.

BURKE
(To Land)
What's the word captain.

JIM LAND

Don't have all the details yet.
But they want you two for an op. A
very important man needs to be
killed right now. Once we get to
the departure point they'll give us
more information. For now just
keep it quiet both of you.

BURKE/CARLOS

(Both)

Yes sir.

They come to the door and follows them inside.

INT. G-2 HUT DA NANG - CONTINUOUS

The salt and peppered haired COLONEL(50s) rises from his desk
as they enter. Blocking our view of Carlos but not of Land
or Burke.

JIM LAND

(Extending hand)

Colonel?

They shake hands.

COLONEL

Captain.

The Colonel turns his attention to Burke first then to Carlos
sizing them up. He turns to Land.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Your men?

JIM LAND

Yes sir, sergeant Hathcock is one
of the best long range shooters in
the United States. Lance corporal
Burke is one of the best people in
the bush whom I've ever known. The
two of them are the best sniper
team in the country today.

Colonel turns to face Carlos.

COLONEL

Sergeant Hathcock, I need you to
kill me a man. What do you say to
that?

CUT TO:

INT. VILLA - DAY

CARLOS (O.S.)
Yes sir. Who?

The cracking interior of a French colonial villa being slowly invaded by the jungle.

A box of wine and empty bottles litter the table as we come upon a heavysset six foot Frenchman with a bald spot and shaggy hair sharpening a straight razor on a stone. This is PHILIP METZ(50).

SFAX BELL RINGING

Outside the bell announcing a visitor and Philip leaves the room.

Passing the torture chair with dangling leg and arm straps. An indication of his line of work.

EXT. VILLA GATE - CONTINUOUS

VIETCONG MESSENGER rings the bell. PHILIP approaches.

PHILIP
(French)
Enough comrade, enough. Now state
your business.

He stops ringing.

V.C. MESSENGER
(French)
Many apologies comrade I bring you
an urgent message.

From his bag he hands over a sealed envelope. Philip opens and reads the message. When he finishes he looks the messenger in the eye. There's work to be done

COLONEL (O.S.)
He's a Frenchman in his early
fifties, slightly bald with shaggy
hair. Six foot tall and heavysset.

MINUTES LATER Philip in khaki trousers and white bush shirt closes and locks the gate. Gesturing to the V.C. Messenger to lead the way.

PHILIP
(French)
Lead on.

They walk into the jungle destination unknown.

COLONEL (O.S.)

(Continuing)

Usually wears khaki trousers and a white bush shirt the type with patch pockets on the chest and waist.

EXT. CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

They come out of the jungle and across the clearing.

COLONEL (O.S.)

He'll be home at his walled villa, early tomorrow morning conducting business at the gate as he always does. After you kill him, leave. Don't engage anyone. Don't waste anytime just run.

Then back into the jungle.

SFAX HELICOPTER flying overhead.

CUT TO:

EXT. V.C. CAMP - NIGHT

On guard duty a V.C. GUERRILLA hears the helicopter above and looks up. Behind him a fire bathes the camp with a red-orange glow.

SFAX sobbing PRISONER OF WAR.

Through the jungle forest he spots a lamp light approaching.

V.C. GUERRILLA

(Vietnamese)

Halt who goes there.

V.C. MESSENGER answers.

V.C. MESSENGER (O.C.)

(Vietnamese)

It's me Piet.

V.C. GUERRILLA

Approach.

V.C. Messenger and PHILIP approach and pass V.C. Guerrilla on their way into the camp.

SFAX sobbing growing louder as they enter camp.

They walk toward the light of the fire.

Coming upon two V.C. Guerrillas guarding a blind folded and bound PRISONER OF WAR.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANDING ZONE FIVE KILOMETERS FROM VILLA - NIGHT

Two HELICOPTERS land seven Marines in the dark and fly away.

Two of them CARLOS and BURKE split off.

LAND and other four head for the rocky hilltop overlooking the VILLA below.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLA GATE - NIGHT

PHILLIP and V.C. MESSENGER arrive back home.

V.C. MESSENGER
Good night comrade.

Phillip locks the gate.

PHILLIP
(Nodes)
Good night.

He goes inside.

INT. VILLA - NIGHT

PHILLIP enters carrying a bucket to the WASHBASIN and fills it with clean WATER. Then washes the BLOOD off his HANDS.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABOVE THE HILL TOP AND VILLA - MORNING

The sun rises in the east revealing the VILLA down in the valley and HILL TOP two kilometers away.

EXT. HILL TOP OVERLOOKING VILLA - CONTINUOUS

MUSTACHE MAN(30) in an ARVN tiger striped uniform and sideburns watches with his binoculars. LAND is next him also watching with binoculars.

MUSTACHE MAN

(Cold tone)

Either your man is real good, or dead back in the woods. I never saw a sign of life from the time it was light enough to see down there. He's well hidden or not there.

JIM LAND

He's there, when that Frenchman shows you'll see. Bastard's good as dead.

MUSTACHE MAN

You better hope so. Otherwise a couple of pilots will be wishing they were dead.

Land lowers his binoculars turns to Mustache Man.

JIM LAND

What are you talking about?

MUSTACHE MAN

That Frenchman's a professional interrogator for Charlie. One of their best. Deserted the French army and went over to them during the last Indochina war. He's a little funny too, sadistic sex, likes young boys. They say he gets his rocks off fuckin' up people.

JIM LAND

Where'd you get all this?

MUSTACHE MAN

Just take my word for it. Son of bitch is bad.

Land stares at him a beat then back to his binoculars.

EXT. CARLOS FIRING POSITION - DAY

BURKE'S POV

Burke follows CARLOS low crawling in the grass and coming to the edge of the clearing.

Carefully pushing aside the grass we see the VILLA 800 yards away. Burke breaks out the SPOTTING SCOPE and RANGE CARD.

BURKE'S SPOTTING SCOPE

He TRACKS over the terrain to the GRASS CLEARING next the VILLA. Checking for WIND DIRECTION.

Burke DRAWS it on the RANGE CARD.

Carlos carefully pushes his Winchester model 70 through the grass.

BURKE'S SPOTTING SCOPE

He TRACKS over all corners of the VILLA and the VILLA GATE.

Burke DRAWS the villa accurately on the card and writes the range 796 yards.

BURKE

(Whisper)

Range is seven hundred ninety six
yards. Wind's fifteen miles a
hour.

Carlos turns the KNOBS on his Unertl scope to adjust for windage.

EXT. VILLA GATE - DAY

A squad of V.C. GUERRILLAS emerge out of the jungle and up to the gate. The first V.C. Guerrilla RINGS the BELL.

INT. VILLA - CONTINUOUS

SFAX Bell RINGING outside.

PHILLIP hears the bell and goes to answer.

EXT. CARLOS FIRING POSITION - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS EYE ECU - OPENING and looking into the SCOPE.

CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE

V.C. Guerrillas gather near the VILLA GATE. PHILLIP steps into view-right on target.

EXT. VILLA GATE - DAY

PHILLIP greets the V.C. GUERRILLAS.

V.C. GUERRILLA
(French)
Good morning comrade.

PHILLIP
(French)
Morning comrade and how may I help
the revolution to-

SFAX RIFLE SHOT

BOOM the bullet strikes him in the chest side and drops dead.

The V.C. Guerrillas LOOK to see where it came from.

V.C. GUERRILLA
(Vietnamese)
Over there.

They open fire.

ECU - Phillip's lifeless eyes stare into a pool of his own blood.

EXT. CARLOS FIRING POSITION - CONTINUOUS

ECU - WINCHESTER 70 - CARLOS ejects the empty SHELL.

CARLOS and BURKE quickly retreat.

EXT. HILL TOP ABOVE CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

MUSTACHE MAN
(Binoculars)
Good job.
(Lowers binoculars)

He congratulatory slaps Land on the shoulder.

Land lowers his binoculars satisfied the Frenchman's dead.

CUT TO:

INT. G-2 HUT DA NANG - DAY

At his desk the COLONEL closes the file folder on Maurice and puts it aside.

He opens a new file folder with a grainy picture of the NVA GENERAL and studies it.

CUT TO:

INT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ, LAOS - DAY

The finger of the NVA GENERAL stabs the map on the wall.

NVA GENERAL (O.C.)
(Vietnamese)
Here.

Pulling back the NVA General briefs the COBRA standing at attention.

NVA GENERAL (CONT'D)
This hilltop fort called Xoun Ang is where the American snipers conduct their training and run operations from.
(Tracing map)
They have caused many casualties among the main forces units in the area.

COBRA
(Vietnamese)
And this *Long Trang*?

NVA GENERAL
Most dangerous of them all. He's responsible for killing our most experienced liberation fighters. Our spies confirm it was him who killed our chief interrogator a few days ago and the commander of our sniper platoon. What makes him dangerous is his ability to infiltrate, camouflage himself and the discipline to lie waiting for his target to appear. Then escape long before anyone knows what happened. The damage he causes isn't just that he picks chooses to kill but the fear it instills into the all ranks. Your mission is be to lure him onto terrain of your choosing and kill him there. He maybe alone but they are know to work in pairs, one being the sniper and the other a spotter.

(MORE)

NVA GENERAL (CONT'D)

This mission will be a test of your skills and field craft. Discipline yourself for this man is not to be underestimated.

COBRA

Is it true he wears a *Long Trang*?

CUT TO:

EXT. RICE FIELD - DAY

A flock of WHITE BIRDS soar in the shadow of Hill 55 and land in the rice field.

Three black pajama clad SOUTH VIETNAMESE FARMERS walk along the dike carrying long hoes.

EXT. CHARLIE RIDGE - CONTINUOUS

POV - PRIVATE FIRST CLASS SCOPE

Looking down the cross hairs TRACK the first then the second farmer.

Hiding in the grass an overly eager PRIVATE FIRST CLASS on the Winchester Model 70. Itching for a kill.

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS SCOPE POV

He centers the cross hairs on the third farmer. His first kill an innocent man.

Private First Class' breathing grows rapid and tightens his grip on the gun stock and trigger.

Stopping him CARLOS (O.C.) BLOCKS THE SCOPE with his hand.

He turns to Carlos and guiltily cracks a smile.

Carlos motions him to hand off the Winchester to the next MARINE.

EXT. HUTS NEAR RICE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

The three Farmers chop weeds along the dike across from the HUTS.

From the forest an unarmed V.C. GUERRILLA walks up to the first hut and goes inside.

It begins to rain and the three Farmers seek shelter in one of the huts.

EXT. CHARLIE RIDGE - CONTINUOUS

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS and MARINE look on.

POV - CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE

The V.C. Guerrilla exits and disappears behind the hut.

EXT. HUTS NEAR RICE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

The V.C. GUERRILLA comes back around with a white canvas bag over his shoulder. He looks to see the coast is clear confident no has seen him. Then reaches inside the hut retrieves his SKS RIFLE hidden inside the doorway.

Near the huts a WHITE BIRD scavenges the ground.

V.C. Guerrilla walks five steps and BOOM. The white bird flies away as V.C. Guerrilla falls dead.

ECU - V.C. Guerrilla lies dead his SKS rifle at his side.

CARLOS (Face unseen) steps in and picks up the SKS as a trophy.

Turning to leave a lone WHITE FEATHER lies at his feet.

He picks it up and CIRCLING away from his face places the white feather in his hat. This is the origin of LONG TRANG Vietnamese for WHITE FEATHER.

CUT TO:

INT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ, LAOS - DAY

The GENERAL encodes a message as an NVA Soldier stands waiting.

NVA GENERAL
(Handing coded message)
Send this immediately.

NVA Soldier salutes.

NVA SOLDIER
(Saluting)
Yes comrade general.

He exits in a hurry.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ COMPLEX, LAOS - CONTINUOUS

Hidden by camouflage netting NVA SOLDIER exits the plantation house that is the headquarters complex. Weaving his way to the COMMUNICATIONS BUNKER on the far side.

INT. NVA COMMUNICATIONS BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

The NVA Soldier enters and hands the coded message to the female NVA radio operator. She taps away on her MORSE KEY sending the message out over the radio waves.

SFAX MORSE CODE.

AERIAL SHOT OF CAMOUFLAGED NVA HQ IN THE JUNGLE.

CUT TO:

EXT. LISTENING POST MARBLE MOUNTAIN, DA NANG - DAY

SFAX MORSE CODE

A forest of antennas part of the LISTENING POST pick up the signal.

INT. LISTENING POST MARBLE MOUNTAIN, DA NANG - DAY

The signal is picked on the display revealing its location angle.

A Marine at map board TRIANGULATES its location across the border in LAOS.

CUT TO:

I/E. F-4 PHANTOM 20,000 ABOVE LAOS - DAY

A Marine F-4 on a recon mission flies into Laos.

MAP in hand the Navigator traces their route to the target.

NAVIGATOR
(Static)
Target ETA three minutes.

PILOT
 (Static)
 Roger activating camera.

He FLIPS a series of switches and buttons.

NAVIGATOR
 Target ETA two minutes.

PILOT
 Camera's on.

LOOKING straight down the jungle FLIES BY.

NAVIGATOR (O.C.)
 ETA one minute.

PILOT (O.C.)
 Camera rolling.

NAVIGATOR (O.C.)
 Thirty seconds.

We see the edge of the GRASS FIELD.

PILOT (O.C.)
 Target in sight.

NAVIGATOR (O.C.)
 Ten seconds.

In a second the F-4 flies over the GRASS FIELD and camouflaged NVA HQ in the middle. Then back to jungle.

PILOT (O.C.)
 Mission accomplished returning to base.

EXT. DA NANG AIR BASE - DAY

A Marine technician unloads the FILM ROLL of the photo reconnaissance F-4 Phantom and takes it to be processed.

INT. PHOTO LAB - DAY

The hands of the photo interpreter scans the reconnaissance photos on the light table.

CU - photo of NVA HQ in the GRASS FIELD. A critical piece of intelligence for Carlos next mission.

CUT TO:

EXT. COBRA'S CAMP - DAY

ECU - The COBRA opens and removes the BOLT of his K-44 sniper rifle.

Then disassembles the weapon to perform routine maintenance and reassembles it.

ECU - he LOADS five bullets in the magazine.

He gathers GRASS and FOLIAGE with his knife. Then WEAVES them into his helmet.

EXT. COBRA RUNNING TO HILL 55 - DAY

The COBRA runs through the jungle. K-44 sniper rifle, helmet and backpack well camouflaged.

He slows then LOW CRAWLS into the tall grass and disappears.

TALL GRASS

Cobra STALKS through the grass coming within sight of HILL 55 four hundred yards away.

He PARTS the GRASS and steadies his K-44 sniper rifle.

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

A Marine obscured by the heat shimmer steps toward the latrine.

Cobra FIRES a shot and WITHDRAWS.

I/E. HILL 55 CARLOS HOOCH - CONTINUOUS

SFAX Rifle shot and a Marine falls to the ground.

Hearing the shot CARLOS (face hidden) rolls out of bed and LOW CRAWLS outside to the LATRINE.

OUTSIDE

Three young Marines and a Corpsman frantically attend to a dying GUNNY SERGEANT on the ground. His shirt red with blood the Corpsman rips it open exposing his ENTRAILS.

CORPSMAN

Fuck.

Carlos crawls up to the Gunny Sergeant as Corpsman pours water on his exposed entrails.

GUNNY SARGENT
 (Sun in his eyes)
 I can't move. I think I - I shit
 my pants.

Carlos moves over to block the sun from his eyes.

CORPSMAN
 Don't worry about that Gunny. You
 just keep yourself alive.

MARINE 5
 Doc's taking good care of you,
 Gunny. He'll get the bleeding
 stopped and fix you up. Just keep
 awake.

GUNNY SARGENT
 (Fading)
 I gotta' go home now. Gotta' go
 home....
 (Trailing off)

He dies with his eyes looking up at the sky.

PANNING UP we get a WIDE SHOT of the VALLEY and the CANAL.

EXT. COBRA AT THE CANAL - DAY

COBRA enters the water and floats down stream. Hill 55 in
 back of him.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
 It was a challenge. - Said come and
 get me.

CUT TO:

INT. JIM LAND'S HOME, PRESENT - DAY

JIM LAND
 By this time we both had bounties
 on our heads. That's just how good
 we were. We had effectively
 eliminated most of their snipers by
 that time. So the NVA sent one of
 their best down the Ho Chi Minh
 trail to our doorsteps. They
 called him the cobra.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANAL BANK - DAY

COBRA swims over and climbs out of the canal. Leaving an obvious SIGN in the vegetation.

He runs into the jungle leaving a FOOT PRINT to be found later.

EXT. RIDGE TRAIL - DAY

WIDE SHOT - VALLEY and CANAL below.

COBRA comes running up the trail and stops. He sits to WATCH the canal far below and waits.

DISSOLVE to COBRA still watching canal late in the day.

SFAX THUNDER STORM approaching.

Cobra spots a BOAT coming down the canal and raises his K-44 sniper rifle to LOOK through the SCOPE.

COBRA SNIPER SCOPE

Distorted by HEAT SHIMMER CARLOS and BURKE come ashore via boat at the exact CANAL BANK and disappear into the jungle. They're on his trail.

Cobra lowers his rifle knowing they've taken the bait and heads further up the trail.

EXT. CARLOS AND BURKE ON RIDGE TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

ECU - FOOT PRINTS and SIGN on the ground. CARLOS BOOT steps in next to the foot prints.

Camera PANS up behind him coming to the WHITE FEATHER in his hat.

BURKE green faced and M-14 ready watches his back.

POV CARLOS - he looks down at the foot prints and sign on the ground. It's suspiciously obvious and suspects a trap.

CARLOS
(Back to us)
Burke.

Burke moves closer to hear him. Carlos BACK TO US.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

(Whispering)

Trail's too easy. If I was chasing a VC scout I wouldn't worry. But this guy wouldn't leave a clear trail by accident.

(Pointing down)

Low crawl from here on out.

Burke acknowledges. Carlos then Burke kneel down and LOW CRAWL up the trail.

EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING AND CAVE - DAY

A hand dug CAVE sits exposed in a carefully hacked out CLEARING. COBRA quickly passes by the cave and onward.

EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

CU - COBRA opens his RICE BAG and SPREADS rice over the ground.

EXT. GULLY - CONTINUOUS

COBRA crosses the shallow gully to the steep hill of vines and boulders opposite from the ridge.

EXT. COBRA'S POSITION ON STEEP HILL - CONTINUOUS

COBRA comes to hide among the brush and vine covered boulders and AIMS his K-44 sniper rifle toward the cave.

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

He centers his sights on the CAVE which will serve as bait for ambushing Carlos and Burke.

EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL TO CLEARING AND CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Rays of SUN LIGHT cut through the canopy illuminating CARLOS and BURKE low crawling through the grass.

EXT. COBRA'S POSITION ON STEEP HILL - CONTINUOUS

COBRA watches and waits staring through the scope. He RUBS his eye and waits some more.

EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL TO CLEARING AND CAVE - CONTINUOUS

ECU - CARLOS uses his BINOCULARS to scour ahead.

CARLOS BINOCULARS

He spots the CAVE in the clearing ahead.

BURKE remains still next to Carlos as he watches him lower his binoculars and pulls out his MAP.

ECU - on the MAP Carlos traces the cave's location and the shallow gully.

As Burke looks on Carlos lifts up his binoculars to try and observe the steep hill through the thick jungle. Knowing the Cobra is over there somewhere.

He MOTIONS to Burke and follows him off the trail to CIRCLE around the cave.

EXT. COBRA'S POSITION ON STEEP HILL - CONTINUOUS

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

He TRACKS left and right of the CAVE but seeing no sign of his prey.

COBRA looks off scope realizing Carlos is not taking the bait.

EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

BIRDS feast on the rice spread on the ground earlier by the Cobra.

In the back ground CARLOS and BURKE low crawl through the brush. SCARING the birds and FLY away.

EXT. COBRA'S POSITION ON STEEP HILL - CONTINUOUS

SFAX BIRDS FLYING

At that same moment COBRA spots the birds FLY AWAY. He now knows Carlos path and ABANDONS his position.

EXT. COBRA MOVING TO ALTERNATIVE POSITION - CONTINUOUS

SLOW and SILENT Cobra heads for his secondary firing position.

EXT. GULLY - CONTINUOUS

COBRA crosses back across the GULLY.

EXT. COBRA'S ALTERNATIVE FIRING POSITION - CONTINUOUS

WIDE SHOT of the bush covered KNOB on the mountain.

COBRA lies prone on the ground pointing the K-44 sniper rifle at terrain below.

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

He TRACKS Carlos and Burke's probable path in the bush. Coming to the DEAD LOG he sees MOVEMENT in the GRASS.

SFX - TWIG BREAKING

Cobra TIGHTENS up on the TRIGGER. Knowing it can only be them.

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

Suddenly a metallic GLINT. BOOM he fires a round and hits it.

EXT. CARLOS & BURKE'S POSITION - CONTINUOUS

BURKE is hit by Cobra's BULLET.

BURKE

(Frantic)

He got me sergeant. I'm hit hard in the butt and blood's running all over me.

CARLOS scrabbles closer checks his wound and LAUGHS.

CARLOS

(Back to Camera)

Hell Burke you ain't hit.

Burke looks at his wound and sees a BULLET HOLE in his CANTEEN.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Bullet went through your canteen and that's water running all over your leg.-Come on we've got to get going and see if we can keep him moving but be careful. Damn near nailed us this time.

EXT. GULLY - CONTINUOUS

COBRA runs down hill through the gully.

CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE

From above Carlos SCANS the terrain for signs of the Cobra.

EXT. BOTTOM OF GULLY - CONTINUOUS

ECU - Cobra RELOADS ejecting an empty shell casing.

He SLINKS into the bush low crawling into a new hide.

AERIAL SHOT - the SUN sets over the valley.

Now deep in the bush Cobra AIMS his K-44 sniper rifle up hill.

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

He TRACKS across the terrain. Catching a glimpse of CARLOS and BURKE spotting with binoculars.

CU - Cobra SWINGS the muzzle of his K-44 sniper rifle at them. Causing the sun to GLINT off his SCOPE a split second.

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

He has CARLOS (aiming Winchester model 70) dead in his sights when suddenly the SUN blinds him.

He BLINKS momentarily blinded by the light in his scope.

The sun GLINTS off his SCOPE giving him away.

COBRA'S SNIPER SCOPE

He reacquires long enough to see the FLASH of Carlos rifle and BOOM.

SFX - RIFLE SHOT.

The back of his head EXPLODES as the bullet pierces the scope and is violently thrown back. He's DEAD.

Moments later BURKE approaches with CARLOS behind him. Burke picks up the K-44 sniper rifle noticing the shattered scope.

BURKE

(Amazed)

Nobody is gonna' believe us unless
they see it.

He turns to CARLOS - FOR US seeing his face for the first time and WHITE FEATHER in his hat.

BURKE (CONT'D)
Look at that. Went straight
through the scope.

Carlos takes the sniper rifle from him. Looking over the shattered scope and at COBRA'S head. Then realizing he was in his sights the moment he killed him.

CARLOS
Just had a scary thought. What's
the only way a person could make a
shot like this?

Burke looks at him puzzled.

BURKE
What do you mean Sergeant?

CARLOS
Think about it. He had to be
aiming right at me for the bullet
to pass clean through his scope and
get him like that.

BURKE
(Amazed)
Shit he almost had you.

CARLOS
Yeah Burke when you get down to it
the only difference between me and
him is I got on the trigger first.

Carlos throws the K-44 sniper rifle over his shoulder. Marks the location on his map and they walk away. Leaving Cobra's body behind.

SFX - CARLOS breathing erratically.

CUT TO: BLACK

INT. CARLOS BUNK - DAY

CARLOS lies on his bunk bed SHAKING and SWEATING profusely.

CU - beads of sweat pour down Carlos face as looks at his TWITCHING HANDS. He doesn't know what's happening to him and is SCARED.

JIM LAND (O.C.)
 Carlos, Carlos.

JIM LAND reaches and grabs Carlos. He sits up.

JIM LAND (CONT'D)
 (Concern)
 You okay Carlos.

He stares at his hands. The TWITCHING stops mysteriously as it started.

CARLOS
 I'm okay.

JIM LAND
 You sure?

He looks up to Land.

CARLOS
 Yes sir.

CUT TO:

INT. JIM LAND'S HOME, PRESENT - DAY

Charles looks at JIM LAND deep in thought.

JIM LAND
 Poor man had MS and there wasn't a cure for it then or now. They still don't know causes it. On his second tour the amtrac he was riding struck a mine and caught fire. Suffered terrible burns all over his body while rescuing his fellow Marines. Should've killed him but he lived. He was in so much pain with all the skin grafts and had to relearn how to write all over again. Wasn't easy but he overcame it.

(Sighs)

The MS though that ended his career in the corps just days short of his twenty. Barely got a pension for his troubles. Sent him into a depression that almost cost him the love of his life.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE - DAY

JO HATHCOCK (20s) enters carrying in the MAIL and groceries.

JIM LAND (O.C.)

Jo.

KITCHEN

Jo enters drops everything on the counter and puts away the groceries.

Mixed in with the mail a NEWSPAPER flops open to a news article of CARLOS in Vietnam.

Jo sees Carlos FACE in the paper and picks it up.

JO HATHCOCK

(Angry)

Damnit Carlos.

SITTING AT THE TABLE

With infant CARLOS JR on her lap JO writes a letter.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)

(Writing)

Dear Carlos, guess what I found in the paper today. A news story about you in Vietnam. Thought you said you weren't gonna' do any fighting?

CUT TO:

EXT. HILL 55 CARLOS HOOCH - DAY

CARLOS reads her letter in silence.

JO HATHCOCK (O.S.)

Guess I was naive about all this then. It's just that since you've gone to Vietnam I find myself praying for your return everyday. I'm trying real hard not to say it but I miss you so much and wish you were here with me and our son. There's so much more I want to tell you but I fear I'd alienate if I say to much.

ECU - Carlos reads the NEWSPAPER CLIPPING about him.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
Keep yourself out of trouble will
you and come home in one piece.
Love-Jo.

CUT TO:

INT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

ECU - the same NEWSPAPER CLIPPING in the hands of the NVA
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER.

EXT. OBSERVATION POST OVERLOOKING NVA GENERAL'S HQ - DAY

ECU - we PULL back into a WIDE SHOT of the HQ in the middle
of the GRASS FIELD.

A squad of recon marines covertly take up position. The lead
RECON MARINE extracts his camera.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

NVA GENERAL waves his finger as he orders his soldiers.

NVA GENERAL
(Pointing)
Moves those boxes out of here.

EXT. OBSERVATION POST OVERLOOKING NVA GEN. HQ - CONTINUOUS

RECON MARINE spots NVA GENERAL

POV - CAMERA takes PHOTO of NVA General the moment he points.

CUT TO:

INT. G-2 HUT DA NANG - DAY

ECU - the SAME PHOTO on Colonel's desk.

The COLONEL and OFFICERS debrief RECON MARINE.

COLONEL
(To Recon Marine 1)
Is he there all day?

RECON MARINE
No sir, between oh seven thirty to
oh eight hundred hours a staff car
arrives and picks him up.

OFFICER 1
(Interrupting)
What direction did it go?

RECON MARINE
(Turning to Officer 1)
Northward into the jungle.

OFFICER 2
What time he return?

RECON MARINE
Well after dark sir and never at
the same time.

COLONEL
But he leaves roughly the same time
every morning?

RECON MARINE
Yes sir.

COLONEL
What about NVA area security?

Recon Marine reaches for the aerial photo.

RECON MARINE
Estimated a company size unit guard
and patrols the area. Mainly the
grass surrounding the compound sir.

Officer 2 shuffles through the recon photos.

OFFICER 2
Quite a distance from the tree
line.

RECON MARINE
(Adding)
Estimate two thousand yards sir.

COLONEL
(Dismissing Recon Marine)
That'll be all sergeant, dismissed.

Recon Marine salutes and leaves.

COLONEL (CONT'D)
(Reaching to Officer 2)
Let me see them.

He hands him the aerial photos.

OFFICER 2
Well from how I see it air strike's
our only option. Couple of B-52s
should do it.
(Turns to Officer 1)
Don't you agree?

OFFICER 1
(Doubt)
Too overkill just to swat a gook
general.

Colonel shuffles through the aerial photos.

OFFICER 2
Well can't invade Laos much less
any closer on the ground. Even if
he could make it to a bomb shelter
there's more than enough tonnage to
kill or bury him alive.

He stares closely at the GRASS FIELD in the photo. A plan
forming in his head.

OFFICER 1
But how do we confirm if he's dead
or not? Charlie's been getting one
up on us and we end up hitting
empty jungle. I mean we're hitting
flies with a sledge hammer here.

OFFICER 2
At least we'd be killing a lot
of flies at the same time. That
recon team barely got in and out of
there. A commando team could
infiltrate under cover of darkness
but that's just suicide in my
opinion.

CU - AERIAL PHOTO - Colonel notices a slight MOUND 700 yards
from the NVA HQ. A perfect sniper hide.

COLONEL
A sniper could.

They both turn to him.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Not too close but enough to take a shot.

OFFICER 2

But it's way open there. Nothing but acres of grass.

COLONEL

That's elephant grass it's tall enough hide anything. Plus there appears to be couple irrigation ditches.

OFFICER 2

Wouldn't it be safer if he fired from the treeline?

OFFICER 1

(Jumps)

Nah too far, most sniper engagements are at four five hundred yards, seven hundred at max.

OFFICER 2

But he'd have to get closer.

OFFICER 1

Not too close.

OFFICER 2

Still he'd have to low crawl a thousand yards unseen while avoiding contact the whole time. Once he takes a shot how does he get out of there?

COLONEL

(Staring at Officer 2)

Same way he came in. - Charlie expects us to be using firepower as we always do. A sniper they wouldn't expect at all. It's too unconventional even for them and bound to catch em' off guard. A sniper team is a two man operation, a shooter and a spotter. They can infiltrate, visually identify, confirm, eliminate the target, then exfiltrate when the mission's accomplished and that's what we're gonna' do.

OFFICER 1
There's plenty of them now anyone
of them should be capable of
pulling this thing off.

COLONEL
(Shaking head)
Not all though.

Officer 1 looks at him.

OFFICER 1
Got one in mind sir?

He searches his desk.

COLONEL
(Searching desk)
Yeah, you know captain Land don't
ya?

OFFICER 1
Yeah he runs 1st Marine's sniper
program.

COLONEL
(Searching desk)
Exactly I had a newspaper clipping
about one of his snipers. Just had
it a minute ago.
(Finds and reads clipping)
Here it is Sergeant Hathcock.

OFFICER 2
Why him sir?

Colonel STARES down Officer 2.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILL 55 FIRING RANGE - DAY

CARLOS coaches a Marine sniper student on the range.

CARLOS
(Leaning over)
Read the wind carefully then
compensate by aiming off to allow
for drift.

SFAX HUEY helicopter approaches.

Above them a Huey helicopter flies overhead.

EXT. HILL 55 HELIPAD - CONTINUOUS

The Huey lands on the pad. MUSTACHE MAN and a Marine Sergeant in sterile olive drab utilities jump out.

INT. HILL 55 BUNKER - DAY

MUSTACHE MAN lights up a cigarette.

CU - CARLOS opens file folder revealing aerial photos of NVA General's HQ complex.

He looks at Mustache Man.

CARLOS

Where's this at?

MUSTACHE MAN

All you need to know is that it's behind enemy lines. Can't tell anymore than that Sergeant.

CARLOS

Who's the target?

MUSTACHE MAN

An NVA general responsible for running all of the VC activity in and around this area. What you're looking at is his HQ located in an old plantation house smack dab in the middle of what used to be farmland now its just grass.

He leafs through the photos coming too the blurred image of the NVA General.

CARLOS

(Indicating photo)

This him?

MUSTACHE MAN

Best we could get his daily routine is a staff car picks him up between oh seven thirty to oh eight hundred hours every morning and returning well after dark. The place is saturated with NVA patrols and heavy machine gun positions. It prevents getting any closer to the front door and there's no guarantee an airstrike will take him out.

(MORE)

MUSTACHE MAN (CONT'D)

So we have to be certain he's dead
that's where you come in.

(Beat)

Can you do it?

He looks at Mustache Man for a long moment. Then at the photo.

INT. CARLOS BUNK - DAY

CARLOS studies the aerial photos spread out on his bunk. Looking at each one carefully checking every terrain detail.

His eyes scan across the aerial photo spotting a HUMP rising in the middle of the grass field. He picks it up photo.

CU - PHOTO - the HUMP half way between the NVA HQ and the tree line. Giving him a clear field of fire.

BURKE enters.

BURKE (O.C.)

Whatcha' doing?

Carlos looks over his shoulder and back.

CARLOS

Intel reports.

Burke comes closer noticing photo in Carlos hand.

BURKE

(Curious)

The hell is that?

CARLOS

Recon photo of an enemy camp.

BURKE

(Reaching)

Can I?

He gives him one of the other photos.

CARLOS

(Hands other photo to
Burke)

Here.

BURKE

(Looking at photo)

Who's the target?

CARLOS
A general.

BURKE
(Whistle)
Take it this is his HQ?

CARLOS
Yep.

BURKE
(Sitting down)
Figure security's what about
company, platoon size?

CARLOS
Probably company based on the anti-
aircraft positions.

Burke looks closer.

BURKE
Where? Don't see 'em.

Carlos leans over and points them on the photo.

CARLOS
(Pointing on photo)
Here, here, here, and here.

BURKE
Oh I see.

CARLOS
They're all manned by NVA and
they've patrol the grass and nearby
jungle.

BURKE
Long distance from the treeline to
the HQ.

CARLOS
Two thousand yards give or take too
far for a thirty odd six.

BURKE
Then we'll have to low crawl
through the grass...

CARLOS
(Interrupts)
Just me Burke.

Burke stares at him disappointed.

BURKE
Ya' doing this alone-why?

CARLOS
Look at the terrain between the HQ
and the tree line tell me what you
see.

He looks closer at the recon photo.

BURKE
Just a lot grass.

CARLOS
(Gesturing)
See that ditch there circling back
toward the tree line?

BURKE
(Looking some more)
Yeah.

CARLOS
Look to the left slightly.

Burke studies the recon photo a long moment.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
See anything?

BURKE
Looks like a mound rising slightly
above. Kinda' like a hump.

CARLOS
It's a perfect firing point, it's
800 yards from the target, grass is
tall enough to low crawl through.
If I move at night should only take
me two, three nights to get to it
and after I take the shot that
ditch there makes a good escape
route back to the treeline. Then
I'm out of there like the wind but
I've gotta' do it alone.

BURKE
Why?

CARLOS
Two would create too much sign on
the ground for all to see.
(MORE)

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Alone I know I can cover my tracks
better and get out quicker.

Burke thinks.

BURKE

You won't have any back up or fire
support ya' know.

CARLOS

Never stopped me before.

BURKE

In that case good luck.

MONTAGE - CARLOS prepares for the mission.

- Carlos SWABS the barrel of his Winchester model 70 with a
cleaning rod.

- SHARPENS his KA-BAR knife.

- Draws 40 rounds of 30.06 bullets and loads five into his
Winchester.

- Carlos paints his face with CAMOUFLAGE PAINT STICKS.

- Applies camouflage paint to his arms and hands.

- And removes the WHITE FEATHER from his hat.

EXT. HILL 55 HELIPAD - DAY

All camouflaged CARLOS joins the RECON MARINES onboard the
HUEY and takes off.

AERIAL SHOT - FLYING over the JUNGLE.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

JO HATHCOCK sleeps soundly as young CARLOS JR.(3) comes into
the room.

CARLOS JR.

Mommy, mommy.

Jo wakes up.

JO HATHCOCK
 (Sleepy)
 W-what are you doing up sweetie?

CARLOS JR.
 Had a bad dream.

JO HATHCOCK
 (Rubbing eyes)
 Sweetie we all have bad dreams.
 But you have too-

Carlos Jr. looks innocently at her.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
 (Patting bed)
 Come on.

He climbs into bed. Jo wraps her arms around him.

CARLOS JR.
 Mommy?

JO HATHCOCK
 Yes?

CARLOS JR.
 Will daddy be home soon?

JO HATHCOCK
 Soon sweetie soon.

CARLOS JR.
 What's he doing?

JO HATHCOCK
 Protecting us keeping us safe.

CARLOS JR.
 From the bad men?

She pats Carlos Jr. deep in thought.

CUT TO:

EXT. HO CHI MINH TRAIL, LAOS - DAY

Camouflaged NVA trucks snake their way down the mountain road. Parked at the roadside the NVA GENERAL berates a subordinate then gets into his STAFF CAR.

JO HATHCOCK (O.S.)
 Yes sweetie from the bad men.

I/E. STAFF CAR - CONTINUOUS

NVA General reads reports.

NVA GENERAL
(To driver)
Back to base.

The staff car moves in behind a convoy of NVA trucks.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANDING ZONE, LAOS - DAY

The natural sounds of the jungle.

The HUEY lands dropping off CARLOS and RECON MARINES. They head into the jungle as the huey flies away.

EXT. JUNGLE PATH, LAOS - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS follows RECON MARINES taking him to the drop off point.

EXT. DROP OFF POINT, LAOS - DAY

The lead RECON MARINE signals a halt and waves CARLOS forward.

RECON MARINE
This where you get off. We'll
double back and rendezvous in
couple days time.

Carlos goes to leave. Recon Marine stops him one last time.

RECON MARINE (CONT'D)
Good luck to ya.'

He looks him in the eye for a long moment and moves off alone into the jungle.

CUT TO:

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ, LAOS - NIGHT

The STAFF CAR arrives back at HQ.

NVA SOLDIER (O.C.)
(Commanding)
Attention.

NVA Soldiers stand to and salute as NVA GENERAL exits the car. He stops for a moment to look around.

He GAZES across the GRASS FIELD for a long moment then goes inside.

CUT TO:

INT. SNIPER SCHOOL, QUANTICO 1977 - DAY

Sniper rifles displayed on table in a classroom. Right next to CARLOS HAT and WHITE FEATHER.

Marine sniper students in new leaf pattern uniform file inside.

One sniper student takes notice of Carlos hat as he sits down.

CU - CARLOS HAT

He sits down.

SERGEANT (O.C.)
(Commanding)
Ah Ten Shun.

All come attention.

From the back a MARINE enters slowly walks to the front of the classroom.

A couple of sniper students snatch a glance of him in his clean pressed leaf patterned uniform.

CU - name tag reads HATHCOCK and we PULL BACK revealing CARLOS.

CARLOS
(To All)
At ease be seated.

They sit down.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Some of you may have heard of me. For those who haven't I'm sergeant Carlos Hathcock and I'm here today to turn you marines into our first class of scout snipers.

CU on two-three sniper students.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

From here on out you will do more than just marksmanship, you will be taught stalking, observation, communications, camouflage and that is just the beginning. Half of you- or more than half of you won't make it. That is because we demand the best and you will give us your best for that is what it'll take to be a scout sniper. Remember that you all volunteered first to become marines and volunteered second to become scout snipers. The few and the proud. And if you can't hack it you are more than welcome to walk right out that door.

He STARES over the sniper students expecting one to walk out for a long moment. None of them do.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

At oh seven hundred tomorrow there will be an observation exercise down at range twelve. That is all dismissed.

SERGEANT (O.C.)

Ten hut.

Carlos walks to the door and EXITS.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATH TO GRASS FIELD, LAOS - DAY

CARLOS gently pushes vegetation aside heading to the tree line.

Through a gap in the trees he spies the NVA HQ below. He DROPS to the ground and CRAWLS the rest of the way.

EXT. TREELINE GRASS FIELD, LAOS - DAY

CARLOS crawls to the edge of the treeline.

SFAX distant NVA soldier shouting.

The grass field OPENS UP before him and the NVA HQ two thousand yards away.

He scans the grass field with the RIFLE SCOPE.

CARLOS RIFLE SCOPE POV:

- The NVA HQ blurry and too far away.
- NVA Soldiers cleaning a tripod mounted .51mm MG.
- a squad of laid back NVA Soldiers patrolling in the GRASS FIELD.
- and the HUMP in the middle of the GRASS FIELD.

Carlos takes a COMPASS BEARING on the HUMP and waits.

DISSOLVE to NIGHT

Carlos gets up and low crawls into the GRASS.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, LAOS - NIGHT

CARLOS crawls into the tall grass. Cradling the Winchester model 70 rifle in his arms.

Down in the grass CRAWLS a few inches PUSHING DOWN the grass. He STOPS and PUSHES UP the flattened grass behind with his BOOTS. Moving at a snails pace.

SFAX NVA Soldiers approaching.

Carlos FREEZES.

Looking through the GRASS a squad of NVA SOLDIERS walk with in spitting distance of him. One of them STUMBLES and CURSES causing the rest to LAUGH as they move on.

SFAX Dog BARKING in the distance.

Carlos TIGHTENS his grip on his rifle hoping the dog doesn't come closer. Something STINGS him and GRITS his teeth from the pain. He ignores the pain and resumes crawling a few inches at a time.

INT. NVA GENERAL'S ROOM - NIGHT

In the orange glow of a lamp NVA GENERAL finishes up some paper work, rubs his eyes.

He reaches for a the INTELLIGENCE FILE on Carlos opens it and studies it again.

CARLOS (O.C.)
 Alright gather round.

FLASH FORWARD
 TO:

EXT. SNIPER SCHOOL STALKING RANGE, QUANTICO 1977 - DAY

The sniper students gather around CARLOS.

CARLOS
 Now when you're out stalking through the grass there are gonna' be times when you need to take a quick observation. You may think you know how but there's a wrong way and a right way to do it.
 (Turns to grass)
 Now watch.

Lying in the grass a Marine raises his full head.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
 (To Marine in grass)
 Down.
 (Turns back to sniper students)
 Now that's the wrong way expose the top of your head, enemy spots you and then you are in a world of shit. Ya' need to expose as little as possible always. If you absolutely have to always tilt your head to the side and make yourself a smaller target than you are.

BACK TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS POSITION - NIGHT

Head tilted CARLOS quickly peeks over the grass and ducks back down. His crawling causing a MOVING GAP in the grass.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - DAY

The staff car pulls up to the front. NVA GENERAL gets in the car and drives off.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - DAY

Flat in the grass CARLOS sleeps.

SFAX staff car driving away.

He WAKES upon hearing the staff car drive away.

Slowly he reaches for his CANTEEN. Pours a cap full of water, drinks and replaces it. He LOOKS up in the sky.

To see the SUN beating down on him.

Carlos pulls his hat down shielding his eyes.

INT. GRASS FIELD, NVA .51MM MG POSITION 1 - DAY

An NVA Soldier swabs the barrel of a tripod mounted *dushka* .51mm machine gun.

Behind him three lazy NVA Soldiers play cards and smoke cigarettes. The first lazy Soldier stares mockingly at the Soldier cleaning the MG.

LAZY NVA SOLDIER
Comrade, there are no Yankees here.
Relax a little.

He ignores him and keeps cleaning.

FLASH FORWARD
TO:

EXT. RIFLE RANGE, VIRGINIA CITY - DAY

CARLOS teaches his son CARLOS JR(13) how to shoot a rifle.

CARLOS
Alright now hold the butt real
tight into your shoulder.
(Emphasizing)
Tighter.

CARLOS JR.
I am dad.

CARLOS
Good now aim at the target. Make
sure the front and back sights line
up.

CARLOS JR.
Okay.

CARLOS
You lined up?

CARLOS JR.
(Long)
Yees.

CARLOS
Settle down will ya.'

CARLOS JR.
I'm am.

CARLOS
Okay then now hold it steady and
take a deep breath.

He inhales.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
Then let it half out then squeeze
the trigger.

He exhales and pulls the trigger.

Hitting the target almost dead center.

CARLOS JR.
(Looking up)
I hit it?

CARLOS
(Admiring)
Not bad for a first shot.

PARKING LOT - LATER

Father and son pack up the TRUCK and drive home.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS JR turns to CARLOS driving.

CARLOS JR.
Dad you were in Vietnam weren't
you?

CARLOS
(Nodes)
Uh huh, did two tours there.

CARLOS JR.
How long's a tour?

CARLOS
Year each so two years.

CARLOS JR.
What did you do?

Carlos thinks.

CARLOS
I was a sniper.

CARLOS JR.
A sniper?

CARLOS
Yep.

CARLOS JR.
Did you?

Carlos stares straight ahead almost hesitates.

CARLOS
I did.

CARLOS JR.
How many?

CARLOS
Many.
(Turns to Carlos Jr.)
But it's not something I dwell on
too much.

CARLOS JR.
Killing them?

CARLOS
Yes.
(Beat)
The way I saw it what I was doing
in Vietnam was saving lives.

CARLOS JR.

How?

CARLOS

Every enemy I killed prevented them from killing my fellow marines. Ya' see the V.C. would ambush us then hide among the civilians when we can looking for them.

CARLOS JR.

Didn't they know who the V.C. were?

CARLOS

Oh they did?

CARLOS JR.

Then why didn't they help?

CARLOS

Because the V.C. threaten to kill them if they did. Terrorized into not trusting us.

CARLOS JR.

(Finishing thought)

So you couldn't tell who's the enemy then.

Carlos nods.

CARLOS

So what I'd do is sneak in, find a place to hide and watch. Usually a village or a trail the enemy was known to use. Over time a pattern develops. The farmer works his field, his wife feeds the chickens and takes care of the children. A kid rides his bike to the next village. Day after day the same faces doing the same thing over and over because they belong there. If they do nothing out of the ordinary they're civilians.

(Stabs the air with
finger)

When you start to see new faces among them that's when I know the enemy's near.

CARLOS JR.

Is that when you shot 'em?

CARLOS

(Head turns)

What? No, because they were dressed like civilians and I couldn't.

CARLOS JR.

So what'd you do?

CARLOS

You know how a tiger when it's ready to pounce on it hides low in the grass, right?

CARLOS JR.

Yeah.

CARLOS

Why does he do that?

CARLOS JR.

Cause he doesn't want to be seen.

CARLOS

Exactly, that's what the v.c. was doing by hiding in plain site. All I could do is observe often for hours waiting for them to retrieve a hidden weapon. Before they got their finger on the trigger I had them dead in my sights. The look on their faces, the hatred in their eyes I saw it all. And I pulled the trigger.

His hand SHAKES and grabs the steering wheel.

CARLOS JR.

(Noticing)

You okay dad?

CARLOS

(Evading)

Yeah I'm okay.

CARLOS JR.

Is it from the war? When you were wounded?

CARLOS

Partly.

CARLOS JR.

What exactly happened?

CARLOS
How I got wounded?

CARLOS JR.
Yeah.

CARLOS
(Sighs)
It was during my second tour of duty there. I was riding on top of an amtrac with a squad of marines. We were moving down this red dirt road somewhere when suddenly we hit a mine hidden under the road.

Carlos Jr. watches in rapt attention.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
The explosion set the amtrac on fire trapping those inside. I was knocked a bit but when I came to the amtrac was on fire, my clothes were burning but I had to save the others first. We we're just surrounded by flames except for a gap on the left side and I start throwing them off, couple of them were still on fire. Once I got them off then I jumped off. Only then did I notice how badly burned I was.

CARLOS JR.
Did you ever get a medal?

Carlos thinks and STARES at his hand tightly gripping the wheel.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - DAY

Across the grass and NOT FAR from the TREE LINE we come upon CARLOS lying exposed to the broiling sun.

He DRINKS a cap full of WATER.

CU - SWEAT rolls off his face and INSECTS crawl over his exposed skin. The source of the STINGING the night before.

He looks at his HAND seeing his FINGERS TREMBLE slightly. Worrying him that he's about to have seizure.

VOICE (O.S.)
 (Growing)
 Carlos, Carlos.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT, QUANTICO 1979 - DAY

CARLOS POV: a GUNNY SARGENT kneels beside CARLOS as he has a seizure.

GUNNY SERGEANT
 Hang on Carlos ambulance is on the way.

Carlos CONVULSES on the ground.

INT. HOSPITAL, QUANTICO - DAY

JO HATHCOCK exits the elevator.

CARLOS ROOM

Through the window CARLOS lays in bed attended by nurses.

The DOCTOR stops JO at the door.

DOCTOR
 Ms. Hathcock?

JO HATHCOCK
 (Looking at Carlos)
 W-what happened? Did he have-

DOCTOR
 (Finishing)
 He had a seizure a direct result of his MS. He's fine now we're taking good care of him.

JO HATHCOCK
 Will he still be able too-

She looks to the Doctor waiting for the hammer to fall.

DOCTOR
 I'm afraid not Ms. Hathcock. After this incident he'll almost certainly be medically discharged.

JO HATHCOCK
 But he's just days short of his
 twenty years isn't there anything?

DOCTOR
 I wish I could but I'm afraid not
 ma'am.

Jo looks at Carlos lying helpless in bed. His career in the
 Marine Corps at an end.

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE - DAY

In the kitchen JO HATHCOCK prepares to make lunch. She calls
 to Carlos in the back room.

JO HATHCOCK
 (Loud)
 I'm about to make sandwiches Carlos
 what would you like?

He doesn't answer.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
 Did you hear me?

Still doesn't answer.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
 Carlos?

HALLWAY - JO walks to the BACK ROOM.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
 Carlos?

Through the DOOR Jo sees CARLOS sitting in the chair.

BACK ROOM

The history of Carlos Marine Corps career, plaques, medals,
 citations and awards decorate the room.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
 Carlos?

Carlos deep in depression stares at his life on the wall.

Jo moves closer hugs him from behind.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
 (Comforting)
 You okay?

CARLOS
(Sighs)
Yeah.

JO HATHCOCK
Liar.

He smiles.

JO HATHCOCK (CONT'D)
Knew I could cheer you up. Let's
go out.

CARLOS
To where?

JO HATHCOCK
Just to get out the house.

CARLOS
You mean to get me out of the
house?

JO HATHCOCK
Why not it's a beautiful day can't
be indoors forever.

CARLOS
Hmp.

JO HATHCOCK
Carlos you've been down in the
dumps for too long now. When?
When are you gonna' snap out it?

CARLOS
I-I don't know.-the corps- It's
what I always wanted to be. It
gave meaning in life and now it's
all gone.

JO HATHCOCK
There's always something for you
Carlos.

CARLOS
Just don't know.

JO HATHCOCK
There has to be something for you
to do.

CARLOS
But what though?

JO HATHCOCK
Anything.

CARLOS
Anything?

JO HATHCOCK
Yes.

CARLOS
Such as?

JO HATHCOCK
Don't make this any harder on both
of us will you?

CARLOS
Am I really like that?

JO HATHCOCK
Yes.

CARLOS
(Pats her arm)
Alright I'm sorry for being such a
pain in the ass to ya.'

JO HATHCOCK
Good now lets get out of here.

CARLOS
Okay.

He LOOKS at his hand for a long moment. Jo notices.

JO HATHCOCK
Something wrong?

CU - Carlos HAND.

BACK TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - SAME MOMENT

CARLOS fingers stop trembling and BALLS them into a FIST. He
SIGHS relieved that he's okay.

CUT TO:

INT. JIM LAND'S HOME - DAY

CHARLES takes notes as JIM LAND talks.

JIM LAND

You'd be amazed at this statistic shocked actually. For every enemy KIA three thousand rounds were expended in combat. Quite a lot of firepower but nothing more than wasted spray and pray by the average soldier.

(beat)

We snipers on the other hand expended only 1.1 rounds per enemy KIA. Why? Because we're hunters. We stalked the enemy, watched him for days on end, observing his habits, patterns letting him relax enough to think he's safe. The face you see in the scope reveals everything, the way you smile, the way you laugh and the way you look at strangers. Tells you who's a friend and the foe that hides among them. Then it's just one shot and one kill. It's all the firepower you'll ever need.

BACK TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA PATROL - NIGHT

An NVA Soldier leads a security patrol through the tall grass and halts.

NVA SOLDIER

(Vietnamese)

Wait.

He walks a few feet away and urinates. Slowly he looks to the sky. Finishing he zips his pants and rejoins the patrol.

MOVING over fifteen feet away Carlos lies still in the grass.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - NIGHT

Carlos remains still listening for the wind and jungle sound to pick up. Then resumes crawling five inches a minute.

FLASH FORWARD

TO:

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE, BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JO moves to CARLOS side trying to snap him out of his depression.

JO HATHCOCK

(Concern)

This has gone on long enough. You just can't sit here all day feeling sorry for yourself. You need to snap out of this it's hurting both you and me. - Aren't you listening? - Carlos?

She leaves the room frustrated. Carlos closes his eyes.

INT. VIRGINIA BEACH PD 1981 - DAY

Officer MIKE MACK reads the same newspaper article about Carlos. He dials his phone.

CARLOS (O.C.)

(Phone)

Hathcock residence.

MIKE

Hello mister carlos hathcock.

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS on the phone.

CARLOS

(Phone)

Speaking.

MIKE (O.C.)

Officer Mike Mack I'm with Virginia Beach police department.

CARLOS

(Remembering)

Oh yeah you tried reaching me the other day?

INT. VIRGINIA BEACH PD - CONTINUOUS

MIKE

Yes sir I did but your wife said you were out shark fishing or something.

CARLOS (O.S.)
(Phone)
No shark fishing.

MIKE
Oh wow anyway the reason I'm
calling-

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MIKE (O.S.)
(Phone/Continuing)
Is our department is starting a
program to train police snipers and
I'm interviewing potential
applicants.

CARLOS
You need instructors?

He perks up.

MIKE
(Phone)
Yes sir.

INT. VIRGINIA BEACH PD - CONTINUOUS

MIKE flips the page.

MIKE
(Reading)
Now I gone over your records and
sez' here that you were a sniper
instructor at Quantico for four
years.

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS
Yes and also during my two tours in
nam.'

MIKE (O.S.)
Well.

INT. VIRGINIA BEACH PD - CONTINUOUS

MIKE

In that case mister Hathcock I was wondering.

CARLOS (O.S.)

(Interrupts)

Call me Carlos.

MIKE

Okay Carlos would it be possible for you to come in-

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS spirits begin to lift up.

MIKE (O.S.)

(Phone/Continuing)

For an interview sometime tomorrow?

A smile cracks across his face.

BACK TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - DAY

CARLOS sleeps on his side holding his Winchester model 70 in his hands.

CU - Carlos OPENS his EYES.

To see a poisonous lime green VIPER starring back at him flicking it's BLACK TONGUE.

He stares into the viper's eyes not moving a muscle, blinking, holding his breath for the longest moment.

Slowly the viper slithers into the grass and Carlos breaths a SIGH of relief.

EXT. HO CHI MINH TRAIL, LAOS - DAY

The General's car passes a halted NVA convoy.

At the front of it a squad of NVA soldiers gather as the car stops.

The NVA GENERAL gets out to inquire. The NVA Soldiers snap to attention upon seeing him.

NVA GENERAL
What is going on...

He looks DOWN.

On the ground a tortured SPY looks up at him. Quietly awaiting his fate.

NVA SOLDIER
(Stepping forward)
Comrade General we've captured a spy.

He hands him a damaged RADIO.

NVA SOLDIER (CONT'D)
We were lucky to capture him before he could destroy his radio. Most certainly CIA equipment.

NVA GENERAL
(Examining radio)
How did you find him?

NVA SOLDIER
Our radio direction finding unit alerted us when they detected signals coming from this area comrade general.

NVA GENERAL
Where there others?

NVA SOLDIER
No comrade general just this one.

NVA GENERAL
(Eyeing Spy then NVA Soldier)
What is your name.

NVA SOLDIER
Corporal Kiep comrade general.

He hands the radio back to the NVA Soldier.

NVA GENERAL
Good work corporal you have done a great service for the cause of the revolution. Turn this over to intelligence soon as possible and dispose of the prisoner.

NVA SOLDIER
Yes comrade general.

NVA General walks back to the car.

The SPY looks up to see NVA Soldier aim his AK-47 at him and BOOM.

FLASH FORWARD
TO:

INT. VIRGINIA BEACH PD 1981 - DAY

An VBPD Officer knocks on MIKE MACKS open door.

OFFICER
(Knocking)
Yo' Mike.

MIKE
(Looking up)
Yeah?

OFFICER
There's Gunny Hathcock here to see ya.'

He perks up.

MIKE
Thanks.

LOBBY

CARLOS waits in the lobby.

MIKE (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Gunny Hathcock.

He turns to greet Mike.

CARLOS
Hi, you must be officer Mack then?

They shake hands.

MIKE
Yeah Mike Mack friends just call me Mike.

CARLOS
Well it's an honor to meet ya' officer Mike.

MIKE
(Sincere)
No sir it's an honor to meet you.

EXT. VIRGINIA BEACH POLICE SNIPER RANGE 1981 - DAY

A Police Sniper in training practices with his rifle. He fires a round and barely hits the target.

CARLOS and MIKE watch through the spotter scope.

CARLOS
(Looking through spotter
scope)
Not bad but could do better.

MIKE
Can I?

CARLOS
(Stepping away)
Sure.

Mike looks through the spotter scope.

MIKE
(Looking through scope)
Oh, well he's new like most of us.
Still got a ways to go with the
program.

CARLOS
How long has the department had a
sniper program?

MIKE
(Looking to Carlos)
Less than a year.

CARLOS
Kinda surprised they let you have
one.

SFAX rifle shot

MIKE
Well we're a small department but
quite progressive. But we're short
on qualified instructors.

CARLOS
How many do you have now?

MIKE
Two including me.

Carlos looks over the small class of police snipers on the firing line. Thinking maybe I could help.

CARLOS
(Looking to Mike)
Including you.
(Looks back at the firing
line)
Have room for another?

MIKE
(Nodding)
Especially for you the pay on the
other hand...

CARLOS
(Cutting him off)
I care nothing about that.

Mike smiles.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
I'd do it for free if you let me.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA PATROL - DAY

An NVA patrol sweeps dangerously close to the HUMP.

We MOVE four hundred yards across the grass and come to
CARLOS taking a quick OBSERVATION.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS lays back on the ground weakened with dehydration and
insect bites.

He drinks a CAP FULL of WATER from his canteen. Then LOOKS
up in the SKY.

A pair of VULTURES circle above him.

Carlos MOVES his arm a little just enough to not appear dead.

The vultures FLY AWAY. Carlos breathes a sigh of relief.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA POST - NIGHT

NVA Soldiers relax around the cooking fire.

NVA SOLDIER 1 (O.C.)
(Vietnamese)
You're burning the rice again.

WIDE SHOT - cooking fires dot the edge of the GRASS FIELD.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - CONTINUOUS

The cooking fires glow in the distance as CARLOS makes a quick observation and CRAWLS on.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - DAY

The natural sound of the wind and birds sounds indicate all clear.

15 yards away CARLOS raises his head above the grass for a quick observation of the HUMP.

BACK DOWN in the grass Carlos hides satisfied he close.

FLASH FORWARD
TO:

EXT. VIRGINIA BEACH POLICE SNIPER RANGE, 1981 - DAY

A Police Sniper fires a round from his Remington rifle, adjusts his scope then fires again. CARLOS in civilian attire watches from afar.

Carlos WATCHES as the class of Police Snipers practice fire. He's back in his element.

SFAX WHISTLE

They cease fire and gather around the Instructor to introduce them to Carlos.

INSTRUCTOR
(to All)
Alright gather around. Wanna'
introduce you all to Gunny sergeant
Carlos Hathcock here.
(MORE)

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)

He'll be working with us on training and qualification if and when you graduate. So listen up to what he has to say.

(Turns to Carlos)

Gunny?

CARLOS

Thanks.

(To All)

Some of you may already know of my background. I served nineteen years in the Marine Corps, did two tours in nam' as a scout sniper and four years a master sergeant on the scout sniper course in Quantico. What I have to offer you is years of hard won lessons. Now I know what you do here is different than what I did during my time in the corps but I'm also here to learn as well as to teach. I expect you all to do more than your best especially when it's your first round of the day. Because when you're out in the field or on patrol that first shot will be the only one you get.

He looks them all in eye.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Any questions?

BACK TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - NIGHT

We rise slowly over the tall grassed HUMP jutting just above the field. For split second CARLOS pokes his head up less that couple yards from it.

POV - CARLOS INCHES his way through the grass reaching the hump at last.

He SCRAPES the sod into a rest for his Winchester model 70 and PARTS the grass in front of the barrel. Giving him a clear shot of the NVA GENERAL'S HQ 800 yards away.

INT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - NIGHT

NVA GENERAL finishes his paper work and stretches. He looks down on his desk seeing the file on Carlos and READS it again.

An NVA SOLDIER enters.

NVA SOLDIER
Comrade general?

NVA GENERAL
(Reading)
Yes?

NVA SOLDIER
Is there anything you need sir?

He reflects a moment.

NVA GENERAL
No comrade Vinn that will be all.

NVA SOLDIER
Good night comrade general.

The soldier leaves.

NVA GENERAL
Vinn?

NVA SOLDIER
(Turning back)
Yes comrade general?

NVA General stares into him.

NVA GENERAL
Are you afraid to die?

NVA SOLDIER
(Quick)
No comrade general. I'd gladly
volunteer this minute and go to
the...

NVA GENERAL
(Raises hand)
That's enough.
(Lowers hand)
I do not doubt your courage in
wanting to fight the Yankees.
(MORE)

NVA GENERAL (CONT'D)

I have seen many like you just as courageous but looking into their eyes I knew better. I know because I too was afraid just like them. That's how I know you are lying.

NVA Soldier reacts as if about to killed.

NVA GENERAL (CONT'D)

Fear is part of the human condition the trick is for you to control it and it not control you. If not the enemy exploits it too his advantage and will have achieved a victory without having to fight. You will learn to control your fear for the revolution has no room for traitors nor cowards. The penalty for which is death.

NVA Soldier is shaken.

NVA SOLDIER

(Shaky)

I have failed in my duties to the revolution comrade general. But I will do better.

NVA General WAVES him away and NVA Soldier leaves.

Alone at last he reads the same PRESS CLIPPING about CARLOS.

SFAX Alarm Clock

CUT TO:

INT. CARLOS & JO HATHCOCK HOUSE 1992 - DAY

CARLOS hits the alarm clock on the night stand.

His camouflaged wheelchair next to his bed.

Carlos sits up as JO still sleeps. He looks at her contemplating. Then struggles to get out of bed.

MONTAGE:

- Carlos holds himself up as he showers.
- Shaves himself in the mirror.
- Struggling open the dresser drawer for a shirt.

- Slowly he puts on his clothes.
- From the top of his dresser he picks up his CAP, puts in on and LOOKS himself in the MIRROR.

EXT. SECRET SERVICE SNIPER COMPETITION 1995 - DAY

A buzzer starts the competition. VBPD sniper and spotter team engage the first target.

VBPD SPOTTER
(using binoculars)
Target 250 yards third window from
the right.

VBPD SNIPER
(Aiming rifle)
Engaging.

He FIRES.

SFAX Bullet hitting metal target.

VBPD SPOTTER
Hit.

In the crowd CARLOS watches from his wheelchair.

VBPD sniper and spotter rush to engage the next target.

VBPD SPOTTER (CONT'D)
(Binoculars)
Target 300 yards just left of grey
car.

VBPD SNIPER
(Searching/Aiming rifle)
Engaging.

VBPD sniper FIRES.

VBPD SPOTTER
Miss, one click right reengage.

VBPD sniper FIRES again.

SFAX Bullet hitting metal target.

VBPD SPOTTER (CONT'D)
Hit.

Carlos CHEERS.

CARLOS
 (Loud)
 Yeah.

VBPD sniper and spotter rush for the third target.

VBPD SPOTTER
 (Binoculars)
 Target 520 yards upper opening in
 red barn.

VBPD sniper adjusts his scope knobs.

VBPD SNIPER
 (Adjusts scope knobs)
 Engaging.

He FIRES.

SFAX Bullet hitting metal target.

VBPD SPOTTER
 Hit.

Carlos sits higher in wheelchair.

CARLOS
 (Sitting higher)
 Come on keep going. Move, move,
 move.

VBPD sniper and spotter rush to the fourth target.

VBPD SPOTTER
 (Binoculars)
 Two targets 700 yards just inside
 the tree line.

VBPD sniper adjusts scope knobs.

VBPD SNIPER
 Engaging.

He FIRES.

SFAX Bullet hitting metal target.

VBPD SPOTTER
 Hit.

Quickly he chambers a new round and FIRES.

SFAX Bullet hitting metal target.

VBPD SPOTTER (CONT'D)

Hit.

The BUZZER signals the end of the round.

The crowds cheers.

CARLOS

(Long)

Yeah.

EXT. SECRET SERVICE PICNIC AREA - DAY

The VBPD team have a family barbecue. CARLOS holds court with the VBPD sniper as a BOY walks up to them.

CARLOS

(To VBPD Sniper)

Now the second one tripped you up.

VBPD SNIPER

I know I was in a hurry.

CARLOS

Right, right I know but you still have to take your time. Even when you're in a hurry. You can run all you want but when you're on the target you gotta' slow down if wanna' get it right.

The Boy comes up next to VBPD sniper.

VBPD SNIPER

You're right I knew that but.

(To Boy)

Hey where have you been?

BOY

Around.

VBPD SNIPER

(To Carlos)

Oh Carlos like to introduce you to my son.

CARLOS

(Leaning to shake hands)

Hi and what's your name?

They shake hands.

BOY
(Shakes Carlos hand)
Daniel.

CARLOS
Nice to meet you son.

BOY
Are you the marine sniper?

He stares in awe of Carlos.

CARLOS
Yep, I'm the one.

VBPD SNIPER
And only.

BOY
Is it true you shot a Vietcong
sniper right through his scope?

CARLOS
If you believe me then yep it's
true.

BOY
How?

CARLOS
Mostly luck, me and Burke we're
stalking him up in this place
called elephant valley earlier that
day. Turned out he was trying to
lure us into a trap and took a shot
at us. Missed me but hit Burke's
canteen instead.

BOY
Burke?

CARLOS
My spotter, ah he'd thought he'd
been hit at until I pointed out the
hole in his canteen.

BOY
Jesus your lucky he missed.

CARLOS
No he didn't miss.

BOY
W-what do you mean?

CARLOS
 Hell he came this close.
 (Gesturing)
 And if he did.

BOY
 You'd be vulnerable carrying him
 back.

Carlos is surprised.

CARLOS
 Or worse dead as well either way.
 After he shot at us he ran down
 hill ending up hiding in bush. So
 now he has to look up hill for me
 as I'm looking down hill for him.
 By this time it's late in the day
 and sun's beginning to set. All of
 sudden I see this glint that could
 only be coming off his scope so I
 aimed at it and fired. Bullet went
 right through and took him out.
 Only then did I realize he had to
 be aiming right for me.
 (beat)
 Just happened to be a bit quicker
 on the trigger that day.

VBPD sniper let's out a whistle.

BOY
 Woe.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA PATROL - DAY

The NVA Soldiers move through the grass. MOVING 100 yards
 AWAY we come upon the HUMP and CARLOS hiding in the grass.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS pulls out a BROWN HANDKERCHIEF from his pocket. LAYS
 it flat on the ground under the MUZZLE of his Winchester
 model 70.

He PULLS the BOLT out of the Winchester and sights through
 the BORE.

POV - looking through the BORE at NVA GENERAL's HQ.

He INSERTS the bolt back in the Winchester.

CUT TO:

INT. USMC QUANTICO 1992 - DAY

A room rich with Marine Corps history is host to the medal awarding of SONNY HATHCOCK.

From his wheelchair CARLOS struggles to get from his WHEEL CHAIR in front of his son.

Marines look on in silence.

Carlos grits his teeth feeling the pain as he stands up.

Sonny almost reaches out but STOPS. Knowing his father has to do it himself.

Carlos straightens up and PINS the eagle globe and anchor on Sonny's collar.

CARLOS
(Pinning)
You weren't gonna' help me were
you?

SONNY
No.

CARLOS
Sure looked like it?

SONNY
I'd know you'd just have to do it
yourself.

CARLOS
Good thing I didn't fall over. _
Proud of you son real proud.

SONNY
Thanks dad.

He taps him on the shoulder and all applaud.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - DAY

CARLOS raises his BINOCULARS

POV - BINOCULARS

- He sights in on the NVA General's HQ blurred slightly by mirage.

INT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - DAY

An NVA Soldier brings the NVA GENERAL his breakfast as does paperwork.

NVA SOLDIER
(Setting food down)
Anything else comrade gen...

He waves him away without looking.

NVA GENERAL
(Waving away)
Mmmgh.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS adjusts the binoculars.

POV - BINOCULARS

He reads the MIRAGE boiling off the ground to determine WIND SPEED and DIRECTION.

CARLOS (O.C.)
Look through you scope.

CUT TO:

EXT. VIRGINIA BEACH POLICE SNIPER RANGE 1994 - DAY

Prone on the ground a trainee looks into his rifle scope. CARLOS mans the spotter scope from his wheelchair.

CARLOS
See the mirage boiling just below
the target.

POV - SNIPER SCOPE

The MIRAGE boils left ward.

TRAINEE 4
(Looking through scope)
Yeah.

CARLOS
What angle is it moving?

He looks at Carlos then back into scope.

TRAINEE 4
About sixty degrees.

CARLOS
That's a 1-3 mile per hour head
wind. A 45 degree angle will
typically be 4 to 7 mile per hour
and if it's parallel it's going 8
to 12 mile per hour. If it's going
straight up then you've got no head
wind. If that don't work just
watch the leaves and grass instead.

BACK TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - DAY

POV - BINOCULARS

He focuses on the LEAVES and the GRASS around the NVA
General's HQ.

CARLOS lowers his binoculars, BLINKS his eyes and raises them
back.

INT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

NVA GENERAL gets ready for the day. Puts on his cap and
leaves.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS still as a rock waits.

POV - BINOCULARS

- The blurred figure of the NVA GENERAL steps out.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

The NVA GENERAL waits for the car. He spots a NVA Soldier
being sloppy and POINTS.

NVA GENERAL
(Pointing)
You there move those boxes away.

Unwittingly making a target indication for Carlos.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - CONTINUOUS

POV - BINOCULARS

- His POINTING identifies him to CARLOS.

CARLOS grabs hold of the Winchester 70.

CU - raises the Unertl scope to his eye.

He tactically breathes to lower his heart rate.

CU - rapidly he BOLTS a round into the chamber of his Winchester 70.

POV - CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE

- He targets the NVA General. Moves sideways waving his arm about.

CARLOS breathes IN and OUT steadies his aim.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

NVA GENERAL
(Pointing/ordering)
On the double.

He turns in Carlos direction.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - CONTINUOUS

POV - CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE

- NVA General turns full frontal into his cross hairs. He MOVES them a few inches left of his CENTER OF MASS compensating for wind.

CARLOS lets out a HALF BREATH and pulls the trigger BOOM.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA PATROL - CONTINUOUS

SFAX bullet CRACK.

The NVA Soldiers look in all directions as the bullet whips past them.

POV - BULLET

- rapidly the bullet closes in on the NVA GENERAL.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

BOOM the bullet strikes and KILLS the NVA GENERAL.

SFAX BULLET CRACK

NVA Soldiers panic and FIRE away at the tree line.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA PATROL - CONTINUOUS

NVA Patrol RUN blindly in Carlos direction.

WIDE SHOT - All NVA Soldiers open fire.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, THE HUMP - CONTINUOUS

POV - CARLOS SNIPER SCOPE

- NVA General lies dead on the ground.

CARLOS cradles his Winchester 70, grabs the brown handkerchief and crawls away.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

NVA Soldiers fan out into the grass field.

SFAX NVA Soldiers shouting.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, CARLOS' POSITION - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS crawls low in the grass. Passing within yards of a NVA .51mm MG position firing away.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA .51MM MG POSITION - CONTINUOUS

Two NVA Soldiers, one manning the MG while the other feeds ammo, fire blindly into the jungle.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, GULLY - CONTINUOUS

SFAX AK-47s firing and distant NVA Soldiers shouting.

Carlos CRAWLS into the gully. Heads for the TREELINE.

EXT. GRASS FIELD, NVA .51MM MG POSITIONS/PATROL - CONTINUOUS

An NVA Officer BLOWS his whistle.

The .51mm MGs ceases firing then the NVA soldiers.

Replaced by the SILENCE of the jungle.

EXT. NVA GENERAL'S HQ - CONTINUOUS

The NVA General's DEAD EYES stare up at the sky.

EXT. TREELINE - CONTINUOUS

Carlos crawls out of the gully STANDS UP for one last look and SMILES. Then enters the safety of the jungle.

EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

CARLOS runs back they way he came.

He RUNS for the longest time until he's safe and walks.

JIM LAND (O.S.)
What is the legacy of Carlos
Hathcock?

CUT TO:

INT. JIM LAND'S HOME - DAY

JIM LAND reflects.

JIM LAND
It was never the numbers besides
it's no indication of victory or
defeat. But when it came to
fighting an invisible enemy hell
bent on provoking us into reckless
violence he was the solution.
(MORE)

JIM LAND (CONT'D)

He'll never tell he was a hero but
he was one of the greatest sniper
of all.

BACK TO:

EXT. DROP OFF POINT, LAOS - DAY

CARLOS arrives back where he started.

Tired he sits down against a tree and SLEEPS.

SFAX RECON MARINES approaching.

ECU: we MOVE CLOSER to Carlos sleeping.

The HAND of RECON MARINE touches him on the shoulder.

RECON MARINE (O.C.)

Carlos?

He WAKES up.

CUT TO: BLACK

CAPTION: - Carlos Hathcock served two tours of duty during the Vietnam War with 93 confirmed kills before being wounded by an IED in 1969. Upon recovering he became one of the first instructors of the Marine Scout-Sniper program training a new generation of snipers based on his missions from the war. He died in 1999 after suffering from multiple sclerosis.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO CRY by Crosby, Stills and Nash plays in the background.

END