

THE CORRESPONDENT

C.J. Cronin

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cjcronin1@gmail.com
0456637848

For script reading purposes actors can double up on the following characters, thereby requiring a cast of only 5. As a casting suggestion for a film the same doubling up might be considered for novelty and budgetary reasons.

ACTOR 1 : SEAN FLYNN.

ACTOR 2 : RICHARD, BUCK, MYERS, PAGE.

ACTOR 3 : TOM, BRUNO, GREEN, MIKE.

ACTOR 4 : CHUCK, TULIO, LOU, JOLE, HAMMER, DANA.

ACTOR 5 : SUE, MILA, STEVIE, VIETNAMESE GIRL, CATHY

CHARACTER LISTING

SEAN FLYNN, age 25-30, son of Errol Flynn. Free-lance photographer, listed missing in action 1970, during the Vietnam War. He always wore a length of Australian sweatcloth around his neck.

RICHARD, age 26. New Zealand conscript, Intelligence Officer. Civilian qualification - Doctor of Philosophy. Imprisoned with Sean.

TOM, age 22. Australian conscript, infantry Private. From Dubbo, N.S.W. country. Imprisoned with Sean.

CHUCK, age 40-45. Marine, Sergeant. From Louisiana. Imprisoned with Sean.

SUE, age 25-30. American. Assistant chief, "TIME" magazine office, Saigon. Sean's lover.

TULIO, an Italian film director, middle-aged, obese.

LOU, editorial chief, "TIME", Saigon, middle-aged, robust. American.

MILA, 22-25 French, Sean's lover, young, beautiful, hot tempered.

BUCK, an American soldier.

BRUNO, an American soldier.

JOLE, an American soldier.

STEVIE, an effeminate American soldier.

MYERS, a Green Beret marine, Corporal. Shorthand specialist. Studios, efficient.

GREEN, a Green Beret marine, Captain. In charge of interrogations.

HAMMER, a Green Beret marine sergeant. Interrogation specialist. Big, intimidating, brutal, late 30's, early 40's.

VIETNAMESE GIRL, 18 interrogation victim.

PAGE, an English free-lance photographer in Vietnam, slender, upper-class, eccentric, energetic, late 20's.

MIKE, an American journalist in Vietnam, mid-late 20's.

DANA, a Canadian photographer/journalist in Vietnam, late 20's.

CATHY, an American free-lance journalist in Vietnam, mid-late 20's.

THE PIT : A prison pit dug 5 meters into the earth. The light from above is broken in places due to foliage and camouflage. In the rear wall there is a large slab of dark rock protruding slightly from the cutting (This is later drawn upon, using a white pebble). Also in the rear wall there is a short tunnel, half doorway size. It is covered by a rag curtain. It leads to another small pit, used for defecation by the prisoners. There is a table, (or an old footlocker/chest) and 3 wooden crates for seats. There are 3 bamboo sleeping mats on the floor.

FADE IN.

INT. PRISON COMMANDANT'S HUT -- NIGHT

We are watching the opening sequence of an existing movie - "The Son Of Captain Blood". We see the credit: "Starring Sean Flynn". (If unavailable then use "Captain Blood" starring Errol Flynn.)

A man stands up before the projection, thereby making it evident it is a small screen we are watching. SEAN FLYNN is considerably aged. The titles ironically are across his chest. The following is in Vietnamese - English subtitles.

SEAN

Excuse me, Commandant. I'm not feeling well. Would you mind if I returned to my bunker?

The Commandant sits in a cane armchair.

COMMANDANT

But Sean, I go to much trouble. This...

SEAN

Perhaps another night. I'm...ill.

DANA sits in another chair. He catches the Commandant's eye and gives a slight nod, urging him to allow Sean to leave.

COMMANDANT

Yes, of course. Tomorrow, perhaps.

SEAN

Goodnight.

DANA

Night.

He exits. The Commandant looks at Dana, who shrugs.

DANA

You weren't to know.

He turns back to the screen.

DANA

I'm looking forward to this.

EXT. SPARSE TROPICAL FOREST -- NIGHT

Sean, escorted by GUARD 1, moves through the trees. He takes a cigar from his pocket and lights it. They eventually reach a bamboo grate set in the ground and halt. Guard 1 unlocks the grate and opens it. He throws down a bamboo ladder and waits for Sean to go down. Sean looks around, taking in the night. Large flying fox cross before the moon.

SFX: the sounds of the jungle.

Sean looks at Guard 1. He offers him the cigar. Guard 1 looks cautiously toward the Commandant's hut. There is the flicker of the projector inside. Guard 1 shakes his head, unnerved. Sean breaks the cigar in half and offers him the unlit half. Checking the Commandant's hut again, Guard 1 readily agrees and takes the offering. He bows and puts it under his pith helmet. Sean clamps the cigar between his teeth and climbs down the ladder.

INT. THE PIT - NIGHT

As Sean reaches the pit bottom, the ladder is withdrawn and the bamboo grate secured.

The pit is illuminated only by shafts of moonlight through the camouflaged bamboo crossbeams above. Sean crosses to his sleeping mat and unfurls it. He lies down and smokes the cigar. He becomes aware of a scraping sound.

RICHARD (O.S.)

You're home early.

RICHARD's face is obscured in the shadows. The contrast between Sean's neatness and Richard's shabbiness is immediately apparent. He sits cross-legged on his mat, and scrapes at a length of wood using the serrated lid off a tin can.

SEAN

What're you making?

TOM (O.S.)

Have you thought about what we said?

Sean looks at Tom.

TOM is lying on his mat, propped up on his elbows. His face is heavily in shadow. He is also unkempt.

Sean lies back and smokes the cigar.

SEAN

The Commandant'd have my balls.

RICHARD

You could explain it was a matter of principle.

TOM

Yeah, tell him we asked you to.

SEAN

You know what you're saying?... You're talking reality here. It's not some movie.

RICHARD

We know.

SEAN

You know...Make me laugh...S'all just a movie. Just a movie.

RICHARD

Sean, we need your help.

SEAN

I don't want to talk about it.

RICHARD

There's a difference between suicide and execution. Punishment.

Execution by a friend...there's honor...

SEAN

Dead know the difference?

RICHARD

Sean, please...

SEAN

I told you. I don't want to talk about it.

RICHARD

Please, just...

SEAN

Shut up!

EXT. PIRATE MOVIE LOCATION -- DAY

TULIO, a fat director, waddles between a series of location vans and trucks. A beautiful actress, dressed scantily as a HAREM GIRL, is seated on a canvas chair and being made up by a MAKE-UP GIRL. TECHNICIANS and GAFFERS work unloading lights, etc. As Tulio approaches a trailer, he flirts momentarily with the Harem Girl. He knocks briefly at the trailer door, opens the door a fraction and peeks cautiously inside.

EXT. CARAVAN INT -- DAY

Sean sits in front of a make-up mirror, his legs resting up on the bench. He smokes a long cigar and reads a script and is dressed in buccaneer's costume. Tulio dares to poke his head further in the door.

TULIO

Hey...Come on. Everyone's there.
Whassaproblem?

SEAN

Stinks.

Tulio enters, shutting the door.

TULIO

What?

SEAN

(tossing Tulio script)
The whole scene. Stinks.

TULIO

Hey, Seanny. Come on. Alright, so it's not War and Peace, but it's not bad.

SEAN

Not bad? I know it's only a Spaghetti movie, but for Chrissakes - "My men are werewolves and women wasters?" - What sort of a line's that?

TULIO

Hey. I don't like to hear you say that.

SEAN

Why? It stinks.

TULIO (feigning hurt)

No. Spaghet.

Sean stares in disbelief. Tulio pulls up a chair.

TULIO

I'm going to say something you may not like, Seanny. But I speak with my heart to a man.

SEAN

What?

TULIO

I don't like your attitude.

Sean stares at him.

TULIO

Si. There it is. I say it, and
I'ma nota sorry.

SEAN

Look, Tulio. I know screenplays.
I know movies. Bad sets, bad
actors, bad lighting aside,
there's no need to further
sabotage this fucked up film with
lines straight out of a comic
book. "My men are werewolves and
women wasters" is too bad to put
in a comic book. If they looked
like werewolves and they wasted
women, then we wouldn't have to
say the stupid, fucking line. For
Chrissakes the guys out there are
dressed like the faggots of
Penzance!

TULIO

Alright. You know I worked with
your father once and he didn't...

SEAN

Leave my father out of it, just
stick to the subject.

TULIO

What's wrong about your father?

SEAN

You're not talking to my father,
you're talking to me.

TULIO

He's a fine man your father.

SEAN

So?

TULIO

You know your father he never do this to his director...

SEAN

My father never had to work with an incompetent like you. You were a gaffer on his set and that's as far as you should have got. Now say what you were gonna say or get the fuck out of my trailer!

TULIO

Alright...Alright. We both got a little...and...and...let's forget it. I only want to do the right thing by you.

SEAN

Alright.

TULIO

You don't like the line, I'ma gonna fix it for you.

SEAN

Alright.

TULIO

If you are unhappy I'ma gonna look after you.

SEAN

Alright! Say what you're gonna say.

TULIO

We cut the line...

SEAN

Good.

TULIO

...to "My men are women wasters."

SEAN

No! No!! Just cut the fucking line!

TULIO

I can't just tell the writer we're gonna cut his line, he's a sensitive man...

SEAN

I'm a sensitive man!

TULIO

He spent weeks on that script...

SEAN

Yes, weeks!

TULIO

Seanny why you like this? Why? Your father not once did I ever see him...

SEAN

Leave my fucking father out of this!

TULIO

Not once did I ever see him!...

SEAN

Leave him out I said!

TULIO

Why? Not once did...!

Sean suddenly seizes Tulio by the throat.

SEAN

Shut the fuck up.

Tulio realizes he is in severe danger.

INT. THE PIT -- NIGHT

SEAN

Everything's a movie. Nobody
considers the art.

He looks round.

Ever stop to think I might need
you?

RICHARD (Unsure)

Well...

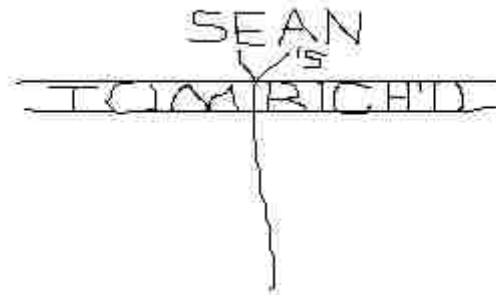
SEAN

Okay...You'll get what you want...
We both will. You might have seen
a lot, Richard, but I want you to
feel what you're getting...I want
you to feel the art.

FADE OUT.

INT. THE PIT -- DAY

FADE IN. Sean weaves a roughly made basket. Richard sits
on his mat, watching Sean, and thinking. Tom paces. Every
now and then he pauses and looks at a black rock embedded
in the rear wall of the pit. On the rock the following is
drawn with a white pebble



Tom walks past Richard and Richard looks up at him,
irritated. Tom is more physically formidable than
Richard. This is not to say he is particularly dangerous
in appearance, but that Richard is obviously no match for

him.

RICHARD
Do you have to do that?

Eventually...

TOM
Helps me think.

RICHARD
Why, keep the blood up to your
brain?

TOM
What?

RICHARD
I'm playing too you know.

Tom looks at him, frowning, then goes back to pacing.

Thomas!

TOM
What?!

RICHARD
Sit down!

TOM
Why don't you get up and walk?
It'd help you think too.

RICHARD (utterly aghast)
I'm an Intelligence Officer!

Tom stands still, working out Richard's answer. He decides it doesn't make sense and resumes pacing. This really starts to irritate Richard.

RICHARD
Why don't you pretend you're
pinned down.

TOM

Don't think under fire.

RICHARD

What?

TOM

Don't think. Just breathe.

Tom begins heavy breathing.

TOM

Start to breathe. Get the oxygen going. Get that adrenalin stuff to me muscles. And I get stronger, and stronger. And I start to see things real clear. Hear things real good. And when I run me feet hardly touch the ground.

RICHARD

And you become the primordial hunter. Pure and strong, at one with nature.

TOM

Yeah. But I don't think. I just...I just am there.

RICHARD

You just am there. Jesus you... Christ. What an inane...I tell you to sit down because it gets on my nerves and you start telling me how you become the God of fucking war!

Tom stares at him. Eventually...

TOM

Officers think sitting down.

Tom continues pacing. He stops and turns to Sean.

Starts with M?

Without looking up Sean nods. Tom continues pacing. He stops.

TOM

How many goes do I get?

Sean holds up a hand, fingers splayed.

And it's gotta be in this pit?

Sean nods.

And what is it again? It can't be an adjective or a verb...

SEAN

Can't be a verb, adjective or adverb. It can only be a noun. A thing. Or a pronoun. The name of a thing. It can be animal, vegetable or mineral or part thereof. I don't want to explain this again, Tom.

TOM (hurt)

Only went to grade eight, Sean.

Tom paces once more.

SOUND FX - SIREN : a low pitched sound of approximately 5 seconds duration.

Tom stops pacing and looks around. Sean takes a cigar from his pocket and lights it. Richard and Tom watch him. Tom announces:

TOM

(as if a feat of intelligence)

I reckon it's gonna rain at five o'clock tonight.

There is no reaction from Sean or Richard.

FADE OUT.

INT. THE PIT -- LATE DAY

FADE IN.

Sean's basket is aside in the corner, half completed. Richard sits at the table, deep in thought. Tom, lies on his mat, feet up the wall.

FX - RAIN : spitting, shortly followed by a heavy fall.

Richard returns to his mat, and huddles. Tom sits up and huddles. Sean, in a relaxed sitting position, doesn't move.

SFX - SIREN.

Tom begins nodding continuously. He addresses Richard:

TOM (I told you so)
Five o'clock.

Eventually Richard looks at him and begins nodding back in subdued capitulation of the point, and sympathetic toward Tom. Still nodding, he looks at Sean. Sean eventually nods back to Richard, then to Tom.

FADE OUT.

INT. THE PIT -- DAY

FADE IN.

Sean sits in a corner, weaving his basket, which is now almost complete. Tom sits at the table. Richard stands looking at the dirt in one of the walls. He has a grin on his face, carried by his thoughts. He turns:

RICHARD
D'you know how a penguin chooses its mate? Huh, it's the cutest thing. All the penguins stand around on the rocks, you see, the way penguins do, and a male penguin, he toddles around, and penguins can't tell females from males, you see, and anyway, the

RICHARD (Cont'd)

male penguin picks up a pebble in his beak and toddles over in front of another penguin and he drops the pebble on the ground in front of it. And if that penguin is a male he squawks and yells and flaps his little arms, oh well, flippers, and he lets the other male know he's a male, y'see, and it's a bit of an insult that the other male mistook him for a female. So the penguin sighs and picks up the pebble and goes over to the next penguin and drops the pebble on the ground in front of it. And if that penguin is a female, and she hasn't got a mate, then she lets him know that he's found the right one, you know, a female, and then they...well, then they begin the mating ritual... and, um, well, that's how they...Huh, it's the cutest thing.

Tom thinks hard about what Richard said. Eventually...

TOM

Y'know the best fuck I ever had?
Was this pro in Saigon see...

RICHARD (subdued infuriation)

Where is it you come from, Thomas?
Dubbo isn't it?

TOM

Yeah...Anyway, this pro, she
kissed me on the mouth and
everything...

RICHARD

Kissed you on the mouth. Well,
well. Dubbo. That's in New South
Wales isn't it?

TOM
Yeah. Grid eight.

RICHARD
Yes. Grid eight.

Richard nods and Tom begins nodding back.

TOM
Best little humdinger of a place,
mate. Bees knees. Bees knees that
place.

Richard nods a little longer, then gives up and looks at Sean.

RICHARD
What are you going to do with that
basket when it's finished, Sean?

SEAN
Going to stick it over my head at
five o'clock.

GUARD 1 (O.S. ABOVE)
Flynn! Flynn!

Guard 1 flings back the bamboo grate.

Sean crosses to the ladder as it comes down.

RICHARD
Oh, could you ask the Commandant
for some paper and a pencil. I'd
like to draw up a list.

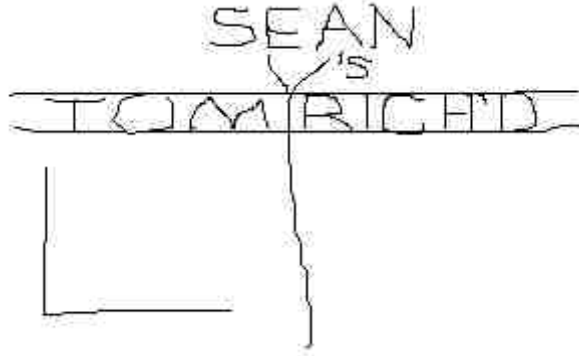
Sean nods.

TOM
Sean.

Sean looks at him. He signals to the Guard to wait and is given a nod. Tom hesitates, then picks up a tin mug.

Mug...Mug.

Sean crosses to the black rock, picks up the pebble, and draws:



Sean places a cigar on the table, and exits. Guard 1 does not shut the grate, but does withdraw the ladder.

TOM (downcast)
What's your word start with?

RICHARD
C.

TOM (suddenly enthusiastic)
It might not be a mug, but it could be a cup!

Richard shakes his head. Tom puts the mug down.

TOM
Why's he gonna put the basket on his head?

RICHARD
There's a rumour going round it rains at five o'clock...stupid.

Tom crosses to the table and picks up the cigar. He lights it.

EXT. FOREST -- DAY

Sean strolls towards the Commandant's hut, followed by Guard 1. He sees something to one side.

In the distance Dana is being allowed out of his pit by GUARD 2.

Sean looks ahead once more. He becomes thoughtful. We may hear Tom's voice extracted from the previous scene:
"Mug...Mug."

We regress to Sean's memories.

EXT. PARISIAN BACKSTREET -- DAY

MILA, skirt swishing with beautiful femininity, is carrying a shopping basket. An elderly FRENCH SHOPKEEPER stands in the doorway to his shop, admiring her.

SHOPKEEPER

Mila!

He tosses her an apple. She catches it. Laughs and waves to him. She bites into the apple as she enters a below-street-level apartment.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Sean sleeps on a bed, a rifle across his chest. A shaft of light splashes onto him as the door is opened. A shadow crosses the room in stealth. The shadow halts over Sean.

Mila looks down on him. A loving grin comes to her lips.

Suddenly the clock alarm goes off. Sean leaps from the bed and throws her against a wall, shoving the rifle in her face.

MILA

Non ne tires pas, ne tires pas,
c'est moi! C'est moi, ne tires
pas, Sean, s'il te plait!

He lets her go. He crosses to a lamp and turns it on.

MILA

Tu es stupide et fou tu aurais pu
m'avoir fait sauter la cervelle!
J'aurais pu etre tue! Pourquoi
insistes tu a dormir avec ce sacre
object?!

(English translation: No don't shoot, don't shoot, it's
me! It's me, don't shoot, Sean, please! You stupid fool
you could have blown my head off! I could've been killed!
Why do you insist on sleeping with that damn thing?!)

Sean turns off the alarm and lights a cigarette stub
gleaned from an ashtray.

SEAN

How'd you get in?

Mila holds a key out from around her neck.

MILA

La cle! Tume donnas la cle! Te
rapelles-toi? Tu disais de venir a
dix heurs tu aurais pu m'avoir
tue! C'est dix heures! J'avois
si...[peur]

(English translation: The key! You
gave me the key! Remember? You
said to come at ten! You could
have killed me! It's ten! I was
so...{scared})

SEAN

English for Chrissakes.

MILA

You said you would like for me to
come here to take me out to movie.
Remember? At ten. You say to come.

SEAN

Ten already?

MILA

Oui oui, I set your alarm for ten. You are stupid too much sleeping with that thing. One day, bung! I tell you, you frighten me sometime. Always the gun. Why always the gun? Is stupid.

SEAN

How'd you get in?

MILA

You give me the key last night. I tell you. What is the matter with you? You give me the key. You don't remember do you? You don't remember. We make love and you give me the key and today this morning when I leave you say to come and we go movie.

SEAN (not remembering)

...Did I?

MILA

You smoke too much pote. You never remember anything no more.

SEAN

Well I remember saying pot not pote ten million times.

MILA

And how many time I tell you this is Francais not U.S.fuck A. You speak the French and maybe you sound like the stupid preek. Well? Shower. Change. We go movie, oui?

Sean stubs out the smoke and falls on the bed.

SEAN

I didn't really say I'd take you to a movie, did I? Not really?

MILA

Oui! You promise me!

Sean groans in affected suffering.

MILA

Get up!

Mila punches him several times, but he lies still, merely groaning. She grabs him by the foot and tries to drag him off the bed toward the bathroom, but as she starts to make progress he holds on to the bed.

MILA

Eh toi grand et gros batard! Plein de graisse allez, bouges! Uh! Tu ne's rien d'autre qu'un cochon pareseux!

(English translation: You great big fat bastard! Come on, move! Uh! You are nothing but a lazy pig!)

She gives up.

MILA

Oh come on, Sean! You promise me! You promise me that you take me to the picture house and we see your movie!

SEAN

My movie?

MILA

Oui. You know, "The Son Of Captain Blood". You tell me. Sword fighting, killing the parrots..

SEAN

Pirates. It's here, in Paris?

MILA

Oui. But of course. You said you promise to take me and we see it together. You remember.

SEAN

No.

MILA

Yes you do, you say...

SEAN

No, I said...Yes, I remember, but no...I, I don't want to see that...film. I was stoned, I didn't know...

MILA

But Sean you promise me!

SEAN

I'm, I'm sorry but please, no, I don't want to see it. S'like, bad memories. Hollywood's gone, baby, gone.

MILA

But I have told Brigittas and Louis. I told them we meet them. Oh please, Sean, you promise me.

SEAN

No! Damn it! If I said I'd take you to see it I must've been very stoned or very...um...um...I don't know. I...that film...that whole part of my life...I want it to just...I'm not like that...Alright? Understand?

MILA

Non.

She shrugs, and moves away.

MILA

But you are beautiful man. I like to love with you...You are very good in the coat you know.

SEAN

Cot.

MILA

(She grins) That too. I suppose it alright that you be a little auchcentral. I read about you in the newspaper you know. You crazy sometime too much. I read you shoot your papa when you are little boy. Only seven.

CUT TO:

INT. A STUDY -- DAY

NO SOUND. ERROL FLYNN (not properly seen from the rear) sits at his desk. Sean FLYNN1, at 5 years of age, appears in front of the desk. He raises a gun and fires. CAMERA holds on his face.

SEAN (V.O.)

Five. I was five. And I didn't shoot him, I shot at him, through his desk. Didn't hit him. I remember I wanted to.

MILA (V.O.)

And they say when you are sixteen you have whole asshole.

CUT TO:

INT. MILA'S APARTMENT -- DAY

SEAN

A whole asshole?

MILA

Oui. Three five seven magnum,
Thompson machiney gun...

SEAN

Arsenal. Arsenal.

Eventually...

MILA

I talk about guns, you talk about
soccer.

SEAN

Soccer?!

MILA (flash temper)

Will you stop repeating everything
what I say!!

SEAN

Well, will you start making some
sense?!!

MILA

Me?!! I should make some sense?!!
What about you?!! Asshole!! Ugh!

She exits to the bathroom.

SEAN

Lost me.

Sean begins to prepare some lines of coke on the bedside
table. Mila enters, her face dripping with water,
seething with anger.

MILA

What you do?

SEAN

Gonna have some?

MILA

Non. And neither are you.

He glances at her with bored dismissal.

MILA
You are so stupid!!

SEAN
Uh huh.

MILA
I never met anybody so stupid!!

SEAN
Uh huh.

MILA
You are obsessticle with throwing
everything you have away!!

SEAN
Obsessticle.

MILA
Don't you try to put sheet on me,
you know what I talk! You are all
the time zonked in the head taking
the drug. But you never think of
me!

SEAN
Just asked if you wanted some.

MILA
All you ever think about is
yourself! You don't give one hell
in damn about me! You are so
selfish!! You you...Fuck!!
Sheethead!!

SEAN (Becoming terse)
Just calm down.

MILA
You know what you are? You are
just like him...

SEAN

Shut up.

MILA

Yes, you are just like your Papa!!

SEAN

Shut up!

MILA

Oui! Oui! You are his son! Like
son like father...

Sean grabs her by the throat.

SEAN

Don't you ever say that!! Ever!!
You hear?!? You hear?!?

MILA (Choking)

Sean...Sean...please...please...

With a yell of rage Sean pushes her violently away. She hits the bed, instantly rolls across it to the other side, and blows the coke off the bedside table. Sean crosses angrily toward her.

SEAN

Why you stupid...

Mila holds up her fists.

MILA

Come on! Come on! You try! You
try to punch my face! I dare you!
I dare you!

Mila spits in his face. He rushes her. She puts her head down and starts swinging. He sidesteps her and she falls past him. He grabs her, spins her round, pins her arms, and grabs her hair.

SEAN

I don't want to fight you!

She bites his nose. He releases her and she kicks his

shin. They struggle. Suddenly in the midst of the struggle they kiss passionately. She begins to tear his clothes from him.

SEAN

No...No...

He throws her to the bed.

No!! What is this...this...
Even with you! Even you!! You want
to fuck Flynn!! I'm not like
...There's...There's more...

Mila moves to him and puts her hand gently over his mouth.

MILA

I know.

Eventually...

SEAN

Tomorrow. I'm leaving.

MILA

What?

SEAN

Tomorrow.

MILA

Do I come?

Sean shakes his head.

MILA

Where?

SEAN

Vietnam.

MILA

(Whispered disbelief)
Vietnam?...Why? There is only
death there. You want to be
near death?

SEAN

I know that, when I was in
the Middle East, in the war,
I never felt so alive.

Mila absorbs what he is saying.

MILA

You will be killed. It is simply
the matter of time...Mug.

SEAN

What?

MILA

Mug. You are the mug.

She holds out her arms to him, and appears about to cry.

Sean.

He doesn't move, but watches her face i.e. same
expression as the 5 y.o. Sean watching his father after
the shooting.

INT. THE PIT -- DAY

The tin mug in ECU. Tom's hand is holding it, tapping it
in thought.

Tom sits at the table, smoking the cigar given to him
earlier. He shakes his head ruefully. He places the mug
on the table and gestures at it.

TOM (as if it could be nothing else)
Mug...M for mug.

He shakes his head in dismay.

RICHARD

Say, er...I couldn't have a puff
could I?

TOM

Piss off! Whaddaya think this is,
bush week?

He indicates the drawing on the rock.

Got the scaffolding up already.

RICHARD

What, you'd begrudge me one puff?

TOM

Take a chance, sport. I did.

Tom studies him.

TOM

You're not going to make it are
you, carrot legs?

RICHARD

What do you mean?

TOM

Even if you lose you'll let us
down, and if you win you'll back
out.

RICHARD

No...What do you mean, carrot
legs?

TOM

Well six inches longer they'd come
to a point, wouldn't they. Put a
tin can on your head, you'd be a
nail.

RICHARD

Oh, and you're the bronzed Anzac I
suppose.

TOM

Sure as eggs you'll crack when
all's said and done.

RICHARD

What leads you to that hypothesis?

TOM

What?

RICHARD

Why do you say that?

TOM

You can't take a knock. You're a
pooftah.

RICHARD

I'm heterosexual.

Tom looks dangerous.

TOM

Don't keep doing that. Sean's
not here now.

RICHARD

Then stop deriding my intestinal
fortitude.

Tom leaps to his feet and kicks a crate aside.

TOM

You stop that!!

RICHARD

Stop what?

TOM

You know what you're doing!
Talking to me like I was some low
life! I'm not as stupid as you
think!

RICHARD

Really? Well, come on, explain to me what I just said.

TOM

I know what you said, I just can't put it into words!

RICHARD

You can't put it into words. You-can't-put-it-into-words! You just heard it! What a fucking moron!

TOM

I said you stop!

Tom rushes him. Richard ducks under his arms. Tom sprawls on the floor.

RICHARD

You!...Just remember one thing. Just remember I don't need Sean for protection because I've got you now. You kill me, who are you going to play the game with?

TOM

Sean. I can play with Sean!

RICHARD

And what if Sean wins? Remember Sean holds the answers and he can easily beat both of us. So when he's gone who does that leave you with? Me, pal. Me. You need me. You accuse me of not having the guts to go through with it? That's a laugh. A man who machine guns women and children to death! A man who hasn't got the guts to kill anything but babies!

TOM

You can't talk! You can't talk, you killed a whole village!

RICHARD

I made a mistake on a piece of paper. I didn't stand there and pull the trigger and watch the bullets tear the people apart before my very eyes! Mine was a mistake! But not yours! Not yours!

Tom begins to gasp for breath.

TOM

No. No. I tried to breathe. I tried to...breathe...I couldn't see proper...

SFX - SIREN. Richard gasps, holds up his hand suddenly and listens.

RICHARD

What? What was that?

TOM

What? The siren. It was the siren.

RICHARD

No. No, it wasn't, Tom. It wasn't. It's the bombers. The bombers are coming, Tom.

TOM

No.

RICHARD

Yes. Yes it is. It's the bombers. The bombs are falling. Hear them? Listen...Hear them?

TOM

No. No!

Tom's eyes become defocused, staring into the distance. His breathing becomes very labored.

RICHARD

Any minute now. Any minute. Any
minute...move, move...

TOM

Any minute...move, move, any
minute
(whimpering) Please...move...move.

Almost unable to move with his fear, Tom crawls to his bedding mat. He reaches under it and takes out some rags.

TOM

Any minute...Any minute.
(Continuous)

Tom puts a rag, already folded as a blindfold over his eyes and attempts to stuff two thin strips of rag into his ears. Richard follows him closely, chanting into his ear - "Any minute, any minute" - Huddled, Tom tilts his head to rest on his right shoulder, and folds his right arm across his eyes. He covers his left ear with his left hand and begins rocking back and forth.

Sean enters silently down the ladder. Blank sheets of paper drop from his hand as he watches the proceedings.

RICHARD

Here they come, Tom. Any minute
now. Here they come. Here come the
bombs.

Sean crosses to Richard, spins him round and slaps him to the floor. Richard cries out, both in alarm and hurt. He shrinks back and huddles, whimpering in the corner, as demented in his own way as Tom. Sean sits next to Tom, holds him like a child, and rocks him soothingly.

SEAN

It's alright...It's alright.

FADE OUT.

INT. THE PIT -- DUSK

FADE IN.

Tom, the rags removed from his head, sleeps in Sean's arms. Sean rests with his head back against the wall. Richard gets up, and approaches, in shame. He crosses to the fallen papers, collects them, and turns to Sean.

RICHARD

Shakespeare...Shakespeare once...
 ..."There is nothing either
 good or bad, but thinking makes it
 so..."...I know you must think me
 bad...

Sean merely watches him.

RICHARD

Was...Was there a pencil?
 Sean merely watches him.

RICHARD

I can't explain why....

He indicates the depictions on the rock.

...especially after we... See...
 Sean...Something in me wants to
 say...I..I...care, what you think
 about me. It's that I've come to
 admire you, and, depend on you for
 strength. You have a certain
 grace, certain majesty. Like, like
 a big bird flying high overhead...
 Purity...That's why when you hit
 me...well...it, it hurt right down
 deep...like...shame.

Sean gets up. Tom wakes. Sean crosses to Richard. He places a pencil on the table. He looks at Richard.

SEAN

What sort of a bird?

RICHARD (Not understanding)
What?

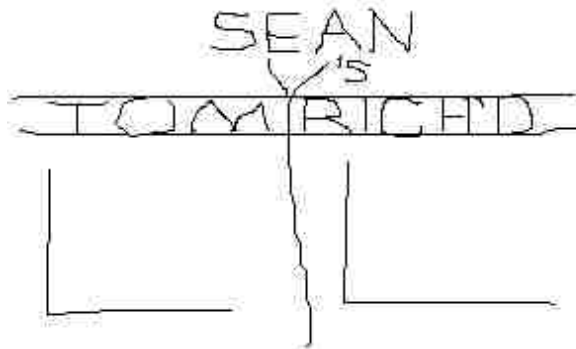
SEAN
A Condor?...Was it a Condor?

RICHARD (Not understanding)
W...Well...I...I suppose...

Sean walks past him. Richard's eyes fall on Tom. Without taking his eyes from Tom, sympathetic to him:

RICHARD
Sean...Was it a cup?

Sean draws on the rock:



Sean crosses to Richard and holds out a cigar.

RICHARD
(turning away)
Give it to him.

Sean crosses to Tom and drops the cigar in front of him. He then crosses and sits on his mat.

SEAN
Feel that? Somewhere, a long way away...A big bird fell from the sky.

EXT. SAIGON STREET -- DAY

Riding a red dirt bike, Sean makes his way down the busy street. He wears sunglasses, a sweat cloth, a camera, and jungle greens - replete with untaped grenades (not safety taped) on his shoulder webbing. He pulls up in front of a building. A sign above reads: "TIME". He revs the bike.

INT. "TIME" MAGAZINE OFFICE -- SAIGON -- DAY

Tilting down from a portrait of Lyndon Johnson...

LOU and SUE work in the office.

SFX - MOTORBIKE revving outside. It stops.

Sue crosses to her handbag near the door. Sean enters. Sue has not yet seen him.

SUE

Going to the pizzeria. Want something?

LOU

Yeah. A four pound aspirin.

SUE

Hawaiian or supreme?

LOU

Lasagne.

Sue turns and almost bumps into Sean.

SEAN

Hi.

SUE

Hi, yourself.

Lou points at the camera round Sean's neck.

LOU

Hey, where'd you get that?

SEAN

What?

LOU

That Rolex!

SEAN

Kid down the street sold it to me.
Four bucks.

LOU

Well I'll be dipped in shit.
That's mine!

SEAN

Don't see your name on it.

LOU

Well it is! Has it still got my
film in it?

SEAN (Checking)

Nope.

LOU

Damn! Had some great napalm shots
in that. Give it here.

SEAN

Bullshit.

LOU

You give me that goddamn camera!!

SEAN (To Sue)

He always like this?

SUE

Feeding time.

LOU

Listen, smart ass, you see those
white mice on the corner?

Sean looks out the window.

HIS P.O.V.: TWO VIETNAMESE POLICEMEN wearing white lanyards, hats, and gaiters. They hold large batons and wear pistols.

LOU

Well I pay them real good to look after me. Now give me that camera and get the fuck outa my life.

Sean hands him the camera.

SEAN

I'm seriously considering not working for you.

LOU

What? Who are you?! Where you from?

SEAN

Paris.

LOU

Yeah, I can pick the accent. Out!

SEAN (To Sue)

On your way to lunch?

SUE

Yeah.

SEAN

Ah, can you wait a sec. (To Lou)
Um, listen, I need a job.

Lou points at him in horror.

LOU

You...you got untaped grenades on your shoulders.

SEAN

So?

LOU

So?!!

SUE

Aren't you...Yes, Sean Flynn.
Errol Flynn's son. (To Lou) Errol
Flynn's son.

LOU

Errol Flynn's...? Heeeeey...I saw
your movie. "Son Of Captain
Blood". Right?

SEAN

Yeah.

LOU

Terrible.

SUE

You're not that much like your old
man.

LOU (shaking Seans' hand)
Hey, no shit. Errol Flynn's son.

SEAN

Sean.

LOU

Oh yeah, right, right. So what are
you doing here, Sean?

SEAN

Came to photograph the war.

LOU

Oh, and you're looking for a job,
right? Have you done much
photography before, Sean?

SEAN

Well, no. (pointing out the
window) But I just sold some great
napalm shots to "NEWSWEEK".

Lou is stunned, then bursts out laughing.

LOU

He's a kidder this guy. Just like his old man.

SEAN

(Laughing along, but serious)
Don't say that.

LOU

So sit down, take a load off.
Let's talk, let's talk.

SEAN

No, look I'll be heading out in an hour. You just give me the best locale. I'll get some shots. We'll take it from there.

LOU

Well...hey, er, we don't do things that way here, Sean. There's contracts and stuff.

SEAN

No, no contracts.

LOU

Well listen, maybe you should get the lay of the land a bit first, son, you know, look around. I don't know what part of Beverly Hills you're from but this ain't no John Wayne wetdream here you know.

SEAN

You got a location?

Lou looks at him long and hard.

LOU

Okay. Here's a topographical map. You read a topographical?

Sean nods.

LOU

Hill 432. Y'got safe access from
the rear. Succinct enough for you?

SEAN

Yeah. Thanks.

Lou hands Sean the map. Sean picks up the Rolex and heads
for the door. To Sue:

SEAN

Shall we?

SUE

Never been to a last supper
before.

LOU

Ah, hey hey, that's still my
camera, Sean.

SEAN

Oh...yeah.

LOU

No. No, you keep it. Buy your own
film seeing you got no contract.
Bring it back intact and I'll give
you your four bucks back.

SEAN

Well...thanks.

He begins to leave.

LOU

Er...wait a minute, wait a minute.
Seeing you got no presscard, no
contacts, how in hell you getting
there?

Sean motions with his head toward the window. Lou crosses
and looks out.

LOU'S P.O.V.: The dirt bike is parked in the street.

LOU
That's a motorbike.

Sean puts his index finger to his nose, then points at Lou.

It's painted red!

SEAN (fondly)
Yeah.

LOU
Gimme back my camera!

SUE
That's quite a deathwish you
have there.

SEAN (opening the door)
S'alright. I'm a low flier.

LOU
Huh...you'll get your wings
clipped fast here, pretty boy.

SEAN
Well see, where I do come from,
Palm Springs, people don't flap,
they glide. Just like a Condor.

Sean and Sue exit. Lou raises his voice for Sean to hear.

LOU
Yeah, well bye bye, Condor.
See you when you hit the ground.

PHOTOGRAPH/MUSIC MONTAGE.

MUSIC: LATE 60'S

MONTAGE: Black and white photographs of americans in the war dissolve and appear before us. toward the end of the montage the photographs show G.I.'s taking drugs, or 'out of it' on drugs.

EXT. FRONT LINE TRENCH -- NIGHT

STEVIE, JOLE, BRUNO, and BUCK lie about within the trench. They share a joint. Their equipment is all around them in a disordered mess. They don't speak. Sean appears.

SEAN

Hi.

They don't reply. Wary of their appearance, Sean remains still, observing them. He looks over the trench wall toward enemy lines. A shot rings out. Sean falls back as if hit. He sits up, and wipes blood from his ear.

JOLE

What the fuck you doin', asshole?

Sean notes the blood on his fingers.

SEAN

You could have warned me there's a sniper!

JOLE (Mock surprise)

A sniper?!

BRUNO

Bullshit?!

BUCK

Out there?! No?! Here?! A sniper here?!

JOLE

Gosh. (To Sean) A fella could get hisself greased.

Bruno offers Sean the joint. Sean accepts it and drags.

JOLE

Shows what he knows.

BUCK

Yeah.

SEAN
What do you mean?

BRUNO
Hash'll make it sting more,
turkey. What tree you fall outa
anyhow?

STEVIE
FNG.

SEAN
FNG?

BUCK
Fuckin' new guy. Here, m'man, s'my
last one. Chew on that.

He hands Sean a small white ball.

SEAN
What is it?

BUCK
What's it look like, dipshit?

Sean smells it.
SEAN

Opium.

JOLE
He ain't just a pretty face.

BUCK
No way.

STEVIE
Hey, I'll go see if I can get you
a bandaid. It's only a scratch,
man.

Stevie exits. Sean watches him go.

SEAN
Hey, um...was that a girl?

BRUNO

Oh, fuck...Where's your gun,
asshole?

EXT. FRONTLINE TRENCH -- NIGHT

Stevie is walking along. He hears something drop beside him. He stops and looks toward the sound.

A HAND-GRENADE rolls to a stop.

Stevie grins.

EXT. FRONTLINE TRENCH -- NIGHT

There is a loud explosion in the vicinity of where Stevie should now be. Bruno and Buck immediately curl into tight balls on the ground. Yelling unintelligibly, Jole exits in the direction of Stevie. Sean crosses to the far side of the trench for safety. Jole enters. He drags Stevie, disembowelled, bloody, dying.

JOLE

Hey hey!! Give me a hand! Give
me a hand! Hey, c'mon, Stevie,
c'mon, man! Oh, Jesus! Oh,
Christ! Oh, don't do that, don't
do that. Hey, please man,
please, Stevie...

Stevie dies.

JOLE

Hey gimme something to stop the
bleeding! Gimme something!

BRUNO

Hey forget it, man. He's wasted.

JOLE

Gimme something to stop the
bleeding, you fuck!!!

BUCK

Hey, hey Jole. Stevie's gone, man.
Stevie's gone.

Jole seizes a rifle and attempts to cock it.

JOLE

You gimme something or I'll blow
the fuck outa you, you assholes!!
You fucking assholes!!

Sean overpowers him and gets the rifle away from him.
Bruno and Buck watch as if disconnected from the event.
Jole, on the ground, covers his face and sobs:

JOLE

Stevie...Stevie...Stevie...

SEAN (To Bruno and Buck)
Thanks for the help.

BUCK

Good ol' Stevie. Hell. (To Bruno)
You going after him?

BRUNO

Huh, not me, man! He probably
tossed that pineapple and
pissed off. S'all she wrote.

BUCK

Think so?

BRUNO

Ain't gonna test it, man.

SEAN

Hey, what's going on?

BUCK

Stevie. He's dead.

Sean watches them more warily.

BUCK

Ol' Charlie musta got past the wire up there. (Calling out) Hey!...You got Stevie! Hey, enough, okay?! Okay?!

Sean checks Stevie's pulse.

SEAN

Was it a grenade?

BRUNO

No, he's got fucking food poisoning, man. Shit.

SEAN

Well, why are you just sitting there?

BRUNO

Don't you know nuthin'? Christ Americans can't see at night. That gook that took a piece of your ear is probably in a tree two hundred yard off. He ain't got no night scope, no telescopic scope neither.

SEAN

Well, what's stopping them lobbing another grenade in here?

Bruno shrugs.

BUCK

Heeey. Hey, wait a minute. Hey, shit man. Wow. Insight. Insight, y'know? Where'd this dude come from?

BRUNO

Whaddaya talkin' 'bout?

BUCK

I mean how'd this sucker get here?
We been cut off for two days now.

BRUNO

Hey, wait a minute...Hey, yeah...

They stare at Sean.

SEAN

Just walked up.

BUCK

At night? You walked up at night?

Bruno and Buck exchange a look.

BRUNO

Well, knock me down and suck me
off.

BUCK

Didn't occur to me, y'know? Just
walked right on in.

BRUNO

Yeah. Right. Right.

SEAN

This Hill 432?

Bruno and Buck look at each other in confusion, then back
at Sean. Sean decides he's seen enough. He begins to pick
up Stevie.

BUCK

You'll get blood all over your
shirt, man.

Suddenly a brilliant white light illuminates from above.
All three look up.

EXT. FRONTLINE TRENCH -- NIGHT

A NIGHT FLARE hangs from a small descending parachute.

Bruno and Buck 'ooh' and 'aahh' like children watching a fireworks display.

BUCK

Hey wow, I can see my whole hand clear as day. Look at that.

BRUNO

Yeah, those things are great.

SEAN

Hey.

They don't notice him.

SEAN

Hey!

BUCK

Huh?

The light dims and goes out suddenly.

SEAN

Where was Stevie going?

BUCK

Search me...Fuck man, I ain't Stevie!

BRUNO

Jole'd know. Was his buddy.

BUCK

Yeah. Hey, Jole. Jole...
Jole!...Oh, he's asleep.

Sean sets his camera for a shot.

BRUNO

Stevie didn't know nuthin', man.
He's just some dumb-ass 'Frisco
fag. Worse he can do is give you a
bad hickey, that's it.

BUCK

Yeah. Fancy makin' him a grunt.
Give him a stripe too, if that
ain't sumthin'. (To Sean) Whaddaya
doin', man?

SEAN

Got a flashlight or a lighter?

BUCK

Hey, I got a match...somewhere...
you got a roach? Hey, great. That
was our last. We've been savin'...
Hey, where's the matches? I just
had 'em.

BRUNO

Hey, I know something 'bout that.
You need fast film, y'know. Photos
don't come out at night.

SEAN

Have you got a light?

BUCK

Know I had 'em...here someplace...
Hey, Jole...Jole. Fuck, now
where'd I put 'em?

BRUNO

Hey, I got a stereoscope. It's all
busted up but the battery still
works.

Bruno goes through his pack.

Here someplace.

He locates it.

BRUNO

Yeah, here. See the back's all
busted out, see, but it still
works sorta okay. Yeah...see here.
That's 'Frisco Bay. Beautiful,
ain't it? God, that's beautiful.

We see the viewer in his hands with a slide transparency of 'Frisco Bay illuminated.

He hands Sean the viewer and keeps looking in his pack.

BRUNO

And I got the Grand Canyon here
someplace.

Sean pushes out the transparency and puts the slide casing back into the viewer. Bruno locates another slide.

BRUNO

Here. Here it is...no, no that's
my girlfriend...Hey (laughing)
Hey, I got the Grand Canyon and my
girlfriend mixed up. Hey...Hey...

BUCK (Laughing)

Hey, that's gotta be a compliment!

BRUNO

Yeah!

As they laugh hard Sean puts the viewer in Bruno's hand and leads him to Stevie.

SEAN

Here, hold this over his face like
that.

BRUNO

Hey, fuck man, what'd you do to my
slide?!

SEAN

Hold it like that!!

BRUNO (subdued)

Why don't you just wait 'til the
next flair goes up?

Sean takes some shots.

BUCK (finding the matches)
 Hey, alright, man! So where's that
 roach?

BRUNO
 Ain't gonna develop no how.

Sean picks up Stevie.

BUCK
 Hey, what's he doin'? There see,
 blood all over your shirt, man.

SEAN
 Follow if you want.

BRUNO
 Hey where's 'Frisco Bay?!

Sean exits.

BRUNO
 Motherfucker...Look he ripped
 the shit outa it.

BUCK
 Yeah, shit. Hey, that's too bad,
 man. Which one was it?

BRUNO
 'Frisco Bay.

BUCK
 Oh...no...not 'Frisco. That's
 Stevie's favorite. Oh hey, that's
 bad, man. That's bad.

Another flare goes up. Bruno holds the transparency up to
 the light and smiles. Close on the slide. As before, the
 light suddenly goes out.

INT. THE PIT -- DAY

Sean softly sings "If You're Going To San Francisco."

FADE IN.

Sean sits on a crate against the wall. Tom sits at the table, deep in thought, turning the pencil end over end and staring fixedly at the drawing.

Sean stops singing abruptly and listens. He looks up. The grate is thrown open and the ladder lowered.

Tom's eyes widen and he freezes.

CHUCK climbs down the ladder. He carries a sleeping mat.

Tom stands and points at the mat.

TOM (completely ignoring Chuck)
Mat!

Tom crosses excitedly to Chuck.

CHUCK (offering his hand)
No. Chuck.

Richard, sitting on his mat in a corner, stands. He stiffens in fear.

TOM (ignoring the hand)
No. (To Sean) Mat.

CHUCK
No. Chuck.

Chuck re-offers his hand.

Chuck O'Connel.

Tom ignores the hand.

TOM
Sean. Sean. Mat.

CHUCK (To Sean)
What's he talking 'bout?

He indicates Richard.

CHUCK
What's wrong with him?

Sean stands and offers his hand.

SEAN
Sean Flynn.

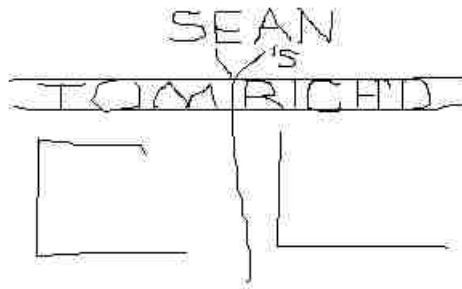
They shake.

CHUCK
Chuck O'Connel.

TOM
Sean?

SEAN
No, Tom. You draw it.

Downhearted, Tom does as told. He draws on the rock:



SEAN
Chuck, I'd like you to meet
Richard. Come on Richard, it's
alright.

Richard hesitates, then crosses and shakes Chuck's hand.

CHUCK
Hey, I ain't gonna bite you, man.

SEAN
I was told about Chuck, Richard.
Didn't think it worth mentioning
'til he got here.

RICHARD

Why?

Sean indicates Tom with a nod of his head. Richard realises.

Tom turns and stares at Chuck's mat under his arm. He frowns and shakes his head. Chuck notices him. Tom crosses to them.

TOM (To Sean)

You sure?

Sean nods.

TOM

Sean, this is making me nuts.

SEAN

Here.

He hands Tom a cigar. To Chuck:

Care for one?

CHUCK

Well hell, yeah, thanks.

SEAN

Richard?

RICHARD

Oh...aren't we going to save them?
You know, for the...(Nods toward
the rock).

SEAN

Oh...it's a special occasion.

RICHARD

Oh...well.

He accepts a cigar. Sean lights them. He offers Tom a light.

TOM

Nah, last one made me sick. Give you cancer them things.

CHUCK (To Richard)

You a Britisher, huh?

RICHARD

No. No, I'm from New Zealand.

CHUCK

Oh...hell, sorry. Y'all speak like a Limey.

RICHARD

No, I don't. (To Sean) Do I?

SEAN

Richard has a Doctorate in Philosophy.

CHUCK

Uh huh.

RICHARD

This um...this is Thomas.

CHUCK

Hey, Tom.

TOM

G'day.

CHUCK

Well I know that one. He's an Aussie.

Sean and Richard laugh pleasantly.

RICHARD

Yes.

TOM

Ozzie.

CHUCK

Yeah.

TOM

No. Ozzie.

CHUCK

Yeah, Aussie.

TOM (suddenly angry)

No, an Ozzie!

RICHARD (Joking)

Er...Tom's very phonetical.

CHUCK

Oh...Well, what's he a fanatic about?

RICHARD

Sorry?

CHUCK

I say, what's he a fanatic...

TOM

Fuckin' Yanks! Finger in every pie! Your bombers fly so high you can't see 'em or hear 'em and next thing you know they're going off all around you! We got up and ran like shit to the enemy lines! Only safe place to be when the fuckin' yanks are about!

CHUCK (To Richard)

He is a fanatic. (To Tom) Hey boy, that's the enemy outside there. We's allies, remember? Hang loose, son. We'll get out of this.

TOM

Computer fuckin' war, mate!
Computer fuckin' war! Can I've a light?

Sean lights him. Chuck watches Tom, cautious. As he watches the cigar being lit, his eyes drift onto Sean. Tom wanders away.

CHUCK (To Sean)

Hell I, I know your face from
somewheres, I'm sure of it. You at
Khe Sanh sometime?

SEAN

For a while.

CHUCK

Oh. Yeah. Must be it. Your
face sure is familiar.

RICHARD

Oh, well Sean's a movie star.

Sean shoots Richard a glance of contempt.

Richard realizes his blunder.

CHUCK

Heeey...yeeeer. Sean Flynn...
Yeah! Well, hell, goddamn, so it
is.

TOM

He's Errol Flynn's sprog. Outa
Lili Damita, by Flynn.

CHUCK

Yeah?

TOM

Errol Flynn was an Ozzie, y'know.
Hailed from Tassie.

CHUCK

What? Errol Flynn weren't no
Australian. He lived in Beverly
Hills, everybody knows that.

TOM

Faaark!!

SEAN

'Fraid he was.

CHUCK

Bullshit? An Aussie?

Tom looks about to attack,

(To Tom) Ozzie!

Tom relaxes.

Jeez...No kiddin'? The hell he was?

SEAN

Yes. Tragic isn't it.

RICHARD

Er, 'scuse me for saying so but you seem a bit old for a field soldier.

CHUCK

Hell, boy, you don't become a sergeant in the U.S. of A. Marines by passin' a good looks competition. These here three cost me in blood. You ain't no chicken no how.

TOM

Rod Taylor's an Ozzie! And Peter Finch!

RICHARD

I was deferred until I finished my honors. Never thought I'd end up here.

CHUCK

How did you end up here?

RICHARD

Shot down. Aerial reconnaissance.
Just walked away from the crash.
Straight into their hands.

TOM

And fuckin' Rod Laver'd beat
Arthur Ashe any day!

RICHARD

We hear the bombing sometimes. Are
the Americans in Cambodia yet?

CHUCK

Huh, we been here for a year. How
long you been captured?

RICHARD (Shrugs)

A long...a long time.

TOM

Why don't yus use the bomb? Hey?
Hey?! Didn't seem to bother yuse
blokes too much in World War
fuckin' two!

CHUCK

He always like this?...These are
good cigars. Where'd you get 'em?

SEAN

Commandant.

CHUCK

The head gook?...Probably taken
off dead Americans.

(SFX -SIREN)

What is that?

RICHARD

The perimeter guards sound it every quarter hour. Just means all's well.

CHUCK

Funny sound.

RICHARD

Low frequency, doesn't carry.

CHUCK (To SEAN)

Khe Sanh huh? Who were you with?

SEAN

Green Berets.

CHUCK

Green Berets?! Hell, they's wild boys. Yes, sir. They feed them suckers raw meat. They's motherfuckers those boys.

RICHARD

CHUCK!!!

CHUCK

What?! What?!

RICHARD

It is, isn't it, Sean?!

SEAN

No.

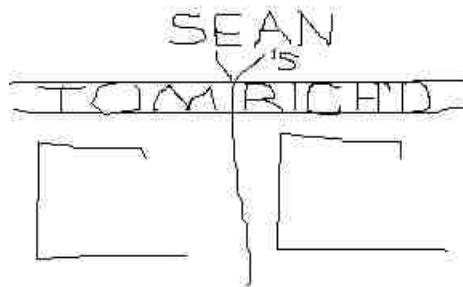
RICHARD

Don't tell me it isn't! Course it is!

SEAN

No.

Sean draws:



RICHARD

Don't draw it, don't draw it! Of course it is! Look, look you said it before, right? You said you'd been told about Chuck, you knew he was coming. Will-you-stop-drawing!!! C, Chuck! C for Chuck! See? See?! That's how your mind works! I know how your mind works! You knew he was coming and you knew his name was Chuck!

SEAN

No. I just heard someone was coming, that's all.

RICHARD

You're lying!

SEAN

Getting too real, Richard?

RICHARD

What?

SEAN

Feel the art?...You're wrong.

RICHARD

I can't be. Must be right. It fits.

He begins sobbing, and sinks to the floor, repeating:

Must be, must be, must be...

Chuck indicates the rock.

CHUCK
What's that?

SEAN
Just a game to amuse ourselves.

Chuck looks at Tom and Richard.

CHUCK
Shit.

Sean indicates an area against a wall, the only wall not occupied.

SEAN
That's a good spot.

SFX - SIREN

CHUCK
Thought he said every quarter
hour?

Sean frowns, listening.

TOM
That's never happened
before...Sean?

Sean ignores him.

Sean?

Sean relaxes, deciding it was nothing. Chuck spreads his mat.

CHUCK
Green Beret's, huh? They's
motherfuckers those boys. "If you
kill for money, you're a
mercenary. If you kill for
pleasure, you're a sadist. If you
kill for both...you're a Green
Beret."

He chuckles softly.

FADE OUT:

EXT. GREEN BERET'S CAMP -- DAY

FADE IN.

There are a series of ordered tents, and GREEN BERET SOLDIERS move about with spit and polish precision. Sean and CAPTAIN GREEN emerge from a tent and cross the compound.

They approach a large tent.

EXT. INTERROGATION TENT INT -- DAY

GREEN BERET PRIVATE 1, wearing fatigues, is filling a 44gal drum with water from a hose.

CORPORAL MYERS stands by a small table, unloading a briefcase of writing materials. Sean and Green enter. Green glances around.

GREEN
Sergeant Hammer?

Myers comes to attention.

MYERS
Gone to fetch his smokes, sir.

GREEN
Er, this is Corporal Myers. Sean Flynn.

Myers offers his hand. They shake.

MYERS
Yes, sir. How are you, sir?

GREEN

Corporal Myers is a shorthand expert, he takes down divulged information as Sergeant Hammer translates.

SEAN

I see.

HAMMER, a big tough guy, enters.

GREEN

Oh, Sergeant Hammer, like you to meet Sean Flynn.

Hammer comes to attention and offers his hand.

Simultaneously the hose to the trough is turned off, and Private 1 exits.

HAMMER

Pleased to meet you, sir.

SEAN

Hi.

GREEN

Sean is a free-lance photographer. He's here as a guest of Colonel Rutt.

HAMMER

Oh? With all due respect, and to you, sir, does the Captain think it advisable...

SEAN

Oh, it's alright. No cameras was part of the deal.

HAMMER

Yes, sir, I see that, but for your own safety, if you were to fall into the hands of the enemy...

GREEN

I'm sure Colonel Rutt has considered that, Sergeant.

HAMMER

Yes, sir.

GREEN

Well, I'll leave you in Sergeant Hammer's capable hands, Sean.

SEAN

Fine. Thanks for the help.

GREEN

Pleasure. See you in the Officer's Mess for dinner.

Green exits. Hammer and Myers come to attention.:

EXT. INTERROGATION TENT INT -- DAY

Hammer's manner immediately becomes recalcitrant, whereas Myers is still spit and polish.

HAMMER

My capable hands, huh?

Sean grins.

HAMMER

Huh...Officers. Smoke?

SEAN

Yeah.

Sean takes one. Myers is not offered one, but supplies the light.

HAMMER

You related to Errol Flynn?

SEAN

Yeah. His son.

HAMMER

Oh...You legitimate?

Sean lights the cigarette.

SEAN

That's a pretty personal question,
Sergeant.

HAMMER (deadpan)

No. It's a legitimate question.

Sean wonders if he is joking.

SEAN

I'm legitimate.

HAMMER

So you're a registered
photographer.

MYERS (Grinning)

Sergeant Hammer's humor is an
acquired taste.

HAMMER (feeling the water)

(To Myers) Too warm. (To Sean)
Didn't I see you in a movie or
two?

SEAN

Could have.

HAMMER

Yeah. "Son Of Captain Blood".
Cashing in on the old man's name,
huh?

SEAN

Something like that.

HAMMER

Hhmmm.

Hammer crosses to the doorway and looks out. Without

turning:

HAMMER

Why you want to see this?

SEAN

Why do you want to see movies?

Hammer crosses to Sean and stands too close.

Hhmmm.

MYERS

They're bringing her up, Sergeant.

Hammer places a stool near the trough.

MYERS (To Sean)

Perhaps over there would be the best, sir.

Sean nods and crosses to one side of the tent. Hammer drags on the cigarette, then drops his butt in the water.

GREEN BERET PRIVATES 2 & 3 enter. They each hold the arm of a young VIETNAMESE WOMAN. Her wrists are bound, she is barefoot, in black, a black hood over her head. They sit her on the stool, and exit. Hammer moves to a doorway, and looks out. He signals Myers to remove the hood. Myers does so, drops the hood into the trough, and takes his seat at the table. Vietnamese Woman looks around. She is terrified. Sean and her exchange a long look. Hammer remains at the door, not watching her. Eventually...

HAMMER

Man-giu-kung. Toi la trun si kua,
Hammer beret. Toi-Chi muon hoi
chee-mo vai dieu. Zin-hoi chai-ten
chai?

She does not answer.

HAMMER

Zin-hoi chai-ten chai?

He crosses to her and stands very close. He grins.

HAMMER

Zin-hoi chai-ten chai?

(English translation: Hello. I'm Sergeant Hammer of the Green Berets. I only want to ask you a few questions. What is your name? What is your name? What is your name?)

WOMAN

Heo!

(English translation: Pig!)

Hammer grins. He stamps on her foot suddenly. She screams in pain. Hammer takes the hood from the trough and secures it to her head.

HAMMER (To Sean)

This little honey was seen
throwing grenades at our guys.
Killed three.

He takes the Woman's hand.

Toy chai moo-an hoy chee.
Zin hoy chia?

English translation: Now I'll ask you again. What is your name?

He squeezes her hand. We see their hands as he squeezes.

WOMAN (Sobbing in pain)

Nguyen Thi Thu Mai.

HAMMER (To Myers)

Nguyen Thi Thu Mai. (To Woman)
Chung da?

(English translation: Your age?)

WOMAN

Moi tan.

HAMMER (To Myers)
 Eighteen. (To Woman) Ahn tu jung
 nao toy?

(English translation: What Hamlet do you come from?)

She does not answer. He slaps her face, knocking her and the stool over. Hammer crosses to the door. Myers crosses to her. He rights her and the stool.

HAMMER
 Ahn tu jung nao toy?

The Woman merely sobs.

(To Myers) Water bottle.

Myers, looks round, realises it's missing, and exits to an adjoining tent.

C'mon! Why the goddamned hell
 isn't it here?!

(To Sean)

You know, had fun the other night.
 Playing cards with a bunch of
 redneck grunts. You play cards?

SEAN (shrugs)
 Blackjack.

HAMMER
 Oh, hey, they got a new casino in
 Saigon now.

SEAN
 Yeah.

HAMMER
 Supposed to be a war on. Anyway...

Enter Myers. He hands Hammer a soft drink bottle filled with water. Myers re-secures the hood. Hammer lifts the hood to reveal the Woman's mouth. He forces her to drink.

HAMMER

Anyway, I'm playing with these guys and they're doing alright, see. Rednecks are dumb but they know how to play poker. Anyway I'm nearly busted, so I burrowed a couple of bucks from my buddies, and it's rolling on to 2200 hours and these rednecks think they're cleaning up.

He hands Myers the empty bottle. Myers fills it in the trough.

SEAN

Why are you making her drink water?

HAMMER

Make her feel sick. She spilt most of that, but she'll drink the next one. Anyway, I'm starting to act uptight see, sorta loonie, just to put these grunts on edge, 'cause we're coming up to the last hand. And these grunts didn't realise that, see, but at a Beret unit lights out is at 2200 hours to the second.

Myers hands him the bottle. Hammer lifts the hood and makes her drink. She starts to choke.

HAMMER

So then we're up to the last hand, so I bet my watch. Genuine Seiko, gold band, cost me two hundred in Hongers. So then these grunts bet everything they had, and I'm talking about the watch, see, but what I'm really doing is watching the seconds tick on to 2200 hours. Then it happens. Lights out.

He hands the empty bottle to Myers. He leads her to the trough, and with the hood still secured, plunges her head

in the water for ten seconds. He pulls her out, gasping.

HAMMER

That's just to give her a taste.

Assisted by Myers, he removes the hood. The Woman sees the water. She is terrified. She begins a panting whine. Hammer pushes her head under.

HAMMER

So I leap out of the chair and pull my 45 and scream, 'Who turned out the lights? Don't anybody move!' Then one of our guys who's hip to what I'm doing says, "Stay cool, it's just lights out, that's all." So I light a match and start to calm down, see.

He pulls her head from the water.

Ahn tu jung nao toy?!

He pushes her head under.

And these grunts are really shitting, and then I said, 'Where's my watch?' 'Cause it's gone, see, but really, it's in my pocket. So then I went bananas and I'm waving this pistol in their faces and I'm screaming at 'em.

He pulls her head from the water.

Ann tu jung nao toy?!

He pushes her head under.

Anyway, the match went out. So straight away these grunts hightail it outa there like their asses are on

HAMMER (Cont'd)
 fire and then we just switched on
 the flashlight, split the pot
 between us. Beautiful. Works every
 time. You should try it.

Sean grows anxious. She's been under a long time.

SEAN
 How long's this go on?

HAMMER
 Oh, sometimes minutes, sometimes
 hours. Once kept a guy here for
 twelve and a half hours.

SEAN
 Did he break?

HAMMER
 No.

SEAN
 Ah...She's going limp.

Hammer has not taken his eyes from Sean.

Much longer she'll die.

Hammer barely grins. Some time passes. He watches Sean,
 testing him to see how much he can take before he cracks.
 Realization comes to Sean that he is being used against
 the woman. He opens his mouth to protest. Hammer suddenly
 pulls her head from the water. She splutters and faints.
 He holds her up effortlessly with one hand. He indicates
 to Myers to take her to the recovery tent, adjoining.
 Myers exits with the Woman. Hammer lights a cigarette.

SEAN (trying to appear calm)
 Looked like you broke her foot.

HAMMER
 Smoke?

SEAN
 No, thanks.

HAMMER

We'll get the Doc up when we're finished.

SEAN

Finished?

HAMMER

She'll come round.

SEAN

Then?

Hammer just shrugs.

SEAN

Well...thanks for letting me watch.

He crosses to the door.

HAMMER

Know what happened?

SEAN

To what?

HAMMER

Two nights after the poker match. Grunt rolls a grenade into Captain Foley's tent. Killed him.

SEAN

So?

HAMMER

Was Foley's tent we had the game in. He was on leave.

Sean watches him, aware he is watching a monster. He leaves.

Hammer chuckles softly i.e. in the same manner as Chuck did, end of previous scene.

Hammer puts his hand into the trough, lifts up a handful of water, drinks it and spits it as he watches Sean walking away.

INT. THE PIT -- DAY

ECU: Water splashes from above into a volume of water.

Sean sits on his mat, the water bucket in front of him. He dips a mug into the water and pours it back into the bucket continuously. There is a noise above. Tom gets up and runs to meet a basket being lowered into the pit.

TOM

Tucker!

There are four bowls of rice in the basket. Tom quickly puts them on the table and the basket is withdrawn. Each man crosses to collect his. They eat with their fingers. Chuck now has considerable beard growth.

CHUCK

They don't expect white men to survive on this do they?

They eat.

TOM

Sean got us two a day.

CHUCK

Two meals?

TOM

We used to only get one.

Chuck studies Sean.

CHUCK (To Sean)

Your greens are in good shape too.
They do your laundry for you as well?

Sean ignores him and continues eating. Chuck looks at his food.

CHUCK

Oh well. Could do with losin' a few pounds, I s'pose.

He studies Sean.

SEAN

Hey, ah, d'you ever see that movie? Starred um, oh, who was it now. George what's-his-face.

SEAN

Segal.

Chuck is mildly surprised. Sean looks at him.

"King Rat".

CHUCK

Yeah. That's the one.

They eat.

SFX -SIREN.

CHUCK (Cont'd)

Hey, Tommy. What time's that?

TOM

That's a quarter past nine.

CHUCK

Yeah. Zero nine fifteen. D'you ever figure out why that siren went off twice in a row?

TOM (trying to sound intelligent)
Might have been an electrical fault. I seem to recall that happening once before.

CHUCK

Whadda you think, Dicky?

RICHARD (seething)
The name is Richard.

CHUCK
Alright. Richard. What do you think?

RICHARD
No idea.

CHUCK
Sean?

Sean ignores him.

Sean?

Sean ignores him. Chuck looks dangerous.

CHUCK
I'm talking to you, boy.

TOM
You leave Sean alone! He's my Mate!...Hey, Sean.

Sean looks at him.

Ready to have another crack at it. That alright?

Sean nods. Tom smiles and nods at the bucket. He keeps on nodding at it, and smiling. He sees Sean does not understand, and the smile fades from his face. He decides Sean is fooling, and so smiles again.

TOM
You were giving us a hint all along weren't you?

Sean merely looks at him. Tom's smile fades.

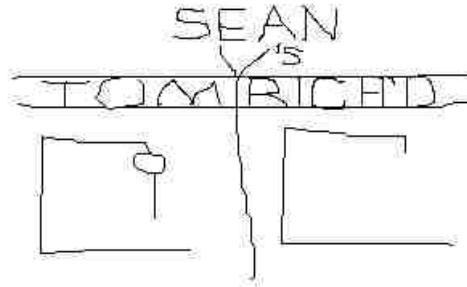
Mud.

He smiles again. He nods at the bucket of water Sean was

playing with. The water is muddy, and there is mud surrounding the bucket.

Isn't it? Isn't it? Mud, isn't it?

Sean shakes his head. Tom is crestfallen. Somewhat trance-like, he crosses to the rock and draws:



CHUCK

What is that?

Tom drops the pebble near Sean.

TOM

Hangman.

CHUCK

Oh? How many letters in your word?

TOM

Aw, we're not playing it that way. We're playing 'I Spy' for the word.

CHUCK

Oh. Something beginning with what?

He indicates Richard.

I already know his letter.

TOM

M. M for mud.

He points at himself.

Or mug.

CHUCK

M, huh? In this pit?

Tom nods.

CHUCK

Well, how 'bout mold? See there's mold on them bamboo fronds up yonder.

TOM

Hey, yeeeah! Hey, Sean...

RICHARD

Thomas.

TOM

What?...Oh. (To Chuck) Nah, I...I gotta play for meself.

CHUCK (Shrugs)

Just tryin' to help.

Tom considers.

TOM (Laughs falsely)

Couldn't be mold. (Laughs) It'd be a million to one chance it'd be mold...Sean?

Sean picks up the pebble. He rolls it in his fingers and watches Tom. Tom suddenly turns on Chuck.

TOM

You nearly got me hung!!!

CHUCK

Hey. At ease Rinny, at ease.

TOM

I oughta...I oughta...Jeez, mate!!

CHUCK

Hey boy, I was only tryin' to help you with your game.

RICHARD

Well, why don't you just mind your own business!

CHUCK

Hey, how'd you like me to put my feet in your mouth and stand at ease.

TOM

You leave Richard alone! He's my mate!

CHUCK

He's a nut! And so are you!

TOM

Righto righto! Put 'em up!

CHUCK

Son, I'm a marine. And I only been captured three days.

SEAN

Tom. Behave yourself.

Tom calms down.

TOM

Yeah, well just as well for you, pal.

CHUCK

Oh, thank you. Thank you.

TOM

Yeah, well, don't forget it.

CHUCK

Oh, I won't. You can count on it.

Chuck gets up and puts his bowl on the table. To Sean:

CHUCK

They'll sit up and beg for you
won't they?

Sean does not react.

Hey?...King Rat.

Tom walks behind Chuck and taps him firmly on the back.
Chuck ignores him. His attention is fixed on Sean.

CHUCK

Whata you give 'em to make 'em
beg? Those cigars?

Tom taps him on the back, harder. Chuck turns suddenly.
He puts a hand hold on Tom and restrains him. Richard
exits through the tunnel curtain. Tom eventually realizes
he's out of his league and stops struggling. Chuck
releases him and walks away. Tom remains where he is.
Eventually Sean crosses to Tom and hands him a cigar.
Sean crosses back to his mat, and crouches on his
haunches.

CHUCK

This ain't no five star hotel
that's f'sure.

Sean ignores him.

CHUCK

I said! This-ain't-no-five-star-
hotel! That's for sure!

SEAN

You want a cigar, Chuck?

Chuck glares fixedly.

Then why don't you just shut up.

Chuck's expression turns murderous. Tension builds. Chuck

looks set to attack. Richard emerges from behind the curtain. He carries a heavy lump of wood i.e. the piece we saw him working on earlier, scraping with the lid from a tin can. It has been fashioned into a heavy make-shift sword. Chuck notices him. Eventually, he backs away, realizing he is outnumbered. He squats slowly, watching the others. Tension holds...

FADE OUT:

EXT. CARAVELLE HOTEL - SAIGON -- DUSK

Loud sixties music.

FADE IN:

Close on a sign: "CARAVELLE*****HOTEL"

Dana and Sean arrive on motor bikes. They are loaded with cameras and have road dust and dried mud on their clothes.

Dana enters the hotel.

Sean smiles when he sees some VIETNAMESE STREET KIDS, and takes some shots of them sitting on his bike.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- DUSK

The music from the previous scene is blaring from a stereo in the room. PAGE, with shirt off, dances wildly in front of a full-length free-standing mirror. CATHY, a correspondent, sits in the corner. A bong is on the floor before her. She is stoned. Dana enters, discovers Cathy, kisses her, then crosses straight to the drinks cabinet. He ignores Page. He pours himself a large drink and exits to the bedroom. Enter Sean. He drops his cameras and kisses Cathy. He crosses to behind Page, and imitates his dancing. Page sees him, turns, and they dance together. Sean gives up, crosses to the drinks cabinet and fetches himself a drink. He crosses to the terrace doors and looks out. Cathy joins him and they stand arm in arm. Enter Dana. He carries his drink and a camera with a large telephoto lens. He joins Sean and Cathy and she puts her arm around him as well. Dana holds the camera to his eye.

SEAN (Shouting over the music)
What time is it?

DANA
1730!

SEAN
Anything?

Dana shakes his head. Enter MIKE. He carries cameras, and is rubbing his eyes. He turns the music completely down. It has no effect on Page. Mike dumps his cameras.

MIKE
Motherfucking sons of bitches.

CATHY
Hey, Michael.

DANA
Hi, Mike.

MIKE (muttering)
Fucking dumb asshole creeps. Jesus
H fucking Christ.

SEAN
Hey, Page...Page!

Page keeps dancing.

MIKE
Anyone got eyedrops?

SEAN
What's up?

MIKE
Blind lemon man. Got a load. Damn
morons gassing C.S. everywhere.
Goddamn chemicals.

Without turning round or lowering the camera, Dana produces a bottle of eyedrops from his pocket and holds

it up. Mike sees it.

MIKE

Oh, praise the Lord!

Groaning with relief, he puts the eyedrops in.

SEAN

Hey, Page!...Page!

Page stops suddenly. He looks around, disorientated.

SEAN

Page!

PAGE

Has the record finished?

Sean shakes his head, amused. He looks away.

PAGE

Page was just getting into it.

He rushes to the player.

It's still going! What's wrong?
Is the stylus broken?

MIKE

Turned it down.

PAGE

What?! What a delinquent!

He turns it up defiantly, and rushes back to the mirror. Mike crosses to the player and turns it off completely. Page rushes back, but Mike halts him.

MIKE

Page! I have flown 200 miles
holding an eyeball in each hand!
Go watch the bombing!

PAGE

Oh, is it that time already?

Page hastily makes himself a bong. Cathy has taken the camera from Dana and is searching the horizon. Mike gives back the eyedrops and makes himself a drink.

SEAN

Anything?

CATHY

No...Must be late tonight.

SEAN

There!

He points to the far left, his arm following a fast moving object on the horizon.

CATHY

Where?

Sean guides the lens.

CATHY

Oh, yeah, got 'em.

HER P.O.V.: CAMERA LENS FX: Distant low-flying jets.

DANA (O.S.)

What are they?

CATHY

Fighter bombers.

Dana and Sean exchange a look.

DANA

Aussie, Kiwi, Yankee Americana?

Cathy hands the camera to Dana.

CATHY

I'm too stoned.

DANA

Yanks.

SOUND FX: DISTANT BOMBING.

HIS P.O.V.: CAMERA LENS FX: FIRE-BOMB explosions.

CATHY
(DISTANT SFX-BOOM) Boom... (SFX)
Boom... (SFX) Boom.

DANA
Incendiaries. Makes a
change(meaning opposite).

CATHY
Fourth of July every night.

Mike crosses over, a drink in hand.

MIKE
And they wonder why ol'Charlie's
gettin' browned off.

Page crosses over, sucking on a bong.

PAGE (Gasping and coughing)
they going to make another run?

SEAN
Yeah. They're turning. Hey...
they're coming this way.

MIKE
Must've heard me.

CATHY
Didn't think they were allowed to
fly over us.

SEAN
They're not.

DANA
No...the rest are turning west.

MIKE
Well what's that fucker doing?

CAMERA LENS FX: JET approaching head-on, blowing smoke.

PAGE

Probably got a girl over
here he wants to impress.

SEAN

He's blowing smoke.

All except Sean stiffen.

SFX - AN APPROACHING JET.

PAGE (Sucking in with surprise)
He's engine's out...shit...

DANA (Lowering the lens)
Turn it, man..turn it...
What-is-that-fucker-doing?!

MIKE

He's coming straight for us!

THEIR P.O.V. SPECIAL FX: A JET APPROACHES HEAD-ON.

All except Sean back inside, their fear growing.

SFX: SOUND GROWING TO A ROAR.

PAGE

This is it! This is it!

CATHY

Oh, my God! Christ!

PAGE

This is it! This is it!

They gather in a tight, terrified group.

SPECIAL FX: Sean is on the balcony. The plane appears to
be heading straight for him.

DANA

Sean!! Sean!!

Dana and the rest duck for cover.

SPECIAL FX: At the last second the plane veers, buzzing the hotel very close. The building shakes violently.

Dana looks up, amazed they are still alive.

Sean, though, is relaxed. He sips his drink.

Dana looks at Sean. He shakes his head slightly.

INT. THE PIT -- LATE DAY

FADE IN:

Chuck, Tom and Richard sit round the table. They play cards with a deck made from Richard's writing paper. They bet with pebbles. Sean is absent.

CHUCK

Two.

Richard gives him two cards.

CHUCK

Damn! I fold. (To Tom) Hey boy, hold your hands over 'em. He probably knows y'all got the ace b'now.

Tom pulls a face.

Say, you know how you make a round hole square? You shove a fencepost up a mule's ass.

He and Tom laugh fully. Richard does not react. To Richard:

You shove a fence...Guess y'all don't appreciate country humor, huh? Hey I'm not puttin' you off your game am I?

Richard does not react.

"McCabe And Mrs Miller", that one.

TOM

What?

CHUCK

That joke. Was from "McCabe And Mrs Miller", the movie. Starred Warren McClaine and Julie Christie. Great picture. Great picture.

RICHARD

Beatty...Warren Beatty.

CHUCK

Oh, Beatty. Oh well, Shirley Beatty's brother. Yeah, I know 'em all. Quick games a good game, boys. Come on Dicky, what you doin'?

RICHARD (threateningly)
I've told you before. It's Richard.

CHUCK

Okay with me, Dicky.

Chuck and Tom laugh.

RICHARD

Don't call me that! I despise it!

CHUCK

"Now what we have here, is a failure to communicate..." "Cool Hand Luke", Paul McQueen. See that one? Great picture, great picture.

RICHARD

It was Newman.

CHUCK

Huh?

RICHARD

Pauley Newman.

TOM

Yeah, I saw that one. In Dubbo.
Good filum.

CHUCK

Where?

TOM

Dubbo... (surprised he doesn't know
it) North west of Mudgee.

CHUCK

Uh huh.

RICHARD

Bet two.

CHUCK

Watch him, boy, he's a high
roller. You lookin' Tommy or are
you just stoned.

They laugh. Richard rolls his eyes at their level of
humour.

TOM

Just stoned...Yeah, I'm with ya.
(Sobers) Yeah, I'll have a Captain
Cook. What've you got?

Richard lays down his hand.

CHUCK

You bet two stones on a pair of
fives?! Christ, I threw out
a pair of eights.

RICHARD

Well, that makes you look very
silly, my friend, because he
only had a pair of threes.

He takes the pot. He imitates Chuck:

RICHARD

Tommy, what the hell you playin'
at boy?!

CHUCK

Well, you're a lucky son a' bitch,
I give you that.

RICHARD

Another round, gentlemen?

CHUCK

Naw. 'Sides s'nearly five, better
put 'em under your mat 'case they
get spottied up in the rain.

TOM

What'll we do now?

RICHARD

I know. Let's play prisons.

TOM

How you play that?

Richard stares at him.

CHUCK

Hey hey! I got it! I got it!
We need sumthin'. We need
sumthin'. Ah, let's see here.

He picks up a crate and looks around. He puts it down.

CHUCK

No, no. Oh yeah, these'll do!
These'll do!

He picks up two tin mugs and bangs them together in a
rhythm.

Hey hey, calypso beat, man.
Hey hey! Here!

He tosses them to Tom.

TOM
These are mugs.

RICHARD
That makes the set.

CHUCK
Yeah, see what we do is, y'all
make sumthin' outa them see,
and me, I gots to put a movie
to the...the...

RICHARD
Depiction?

CHUCK
Er...

RICHARD
Illustration.

CHUCK
Yeah, yeah that's it.

TOM
Not with you.

RICHARD
Well, for instance, you put a cup
to your head to illustrate a
hat, and he'll match it with a
movie title or an actor. Like a
hat could be Rex Harrison in
"My Fair Lady".

TOM
Oh yeah, I'm with you, I'm
with you! Um...let's see, um,
oh Christ, this is hard...

Richard groans.

Hold your horses, um...

Tom holds the mugs to his eyes as binoculars.

CHUCK

Um um oh... "Guns of Navarone",
David what's-his-face.

RICHARD

Niven.

CHUCK

Yeah yeah, see, I know 'em all!

Tom holds one mug to his mouth and one to his ear as a telephone.

CHUCK

Oh oh ah... Clint... Rawhide, you
know, "Play Misty For Me"!

Chuck and Tom laugh.

RICHARD

Eastwood.

Tom puts the mugs to his chest as breasts.

CHUCK

Jane Fonda Jane Fonda...
"Barberella".

Chuck and Tom laugh, Chuck pounding the table.

Yeah yeah, I know 'em all!

Tom puts the mugs to his groin as huge gonads.

Ahm!... Sean Connery...

"Thunderball"!!

Hysterical laughter from Chuck and Tom. Chuck notices Richard smirking.

Hey, I got him, didn't I? Took me
a while but I got him. That
tickled you, Dicky, didn't it? Now
admit it, that tickled you!

They chuckle, and slowly sober. Eventually....

CHUCK

Hey, looks like ol' Seanny's stayin' over to the big house for supper, huh? Hey, how come Sean gets to go there all the time?

TOM

Oh, him and that Dana bloke tell the Commandant all about Hollywood. The Commandant really loves films.

CHUCK

S'that a fact? Who's Dana?

TOM

Sean's mate. He's in another pit round here somewhere. They were captured together.

CHUCK

Oh? How did he get captured? Never does talk about it.

RICHARD

Don't think he was captured.

CHUCK

How's that?

RICHARD

I think it was 'arranged'.

CHUCK

See son, I'm what they call a long looker and a slow thinker. You gots to keep it real simple like.

INT. INTELLIGENCE OFFICE -- DAY

Richard sits at his desk, feet up. He is reading a copy of "STARS AND STRIPES". There is a photograph of Sean in the mag. The caption heading reads: "CORRESPONDENT

DISAPPEARS"

RICHARD (V.O.)

Well...I remember reading about his disappearance about twelve months before I was captured.

FAST DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AMERICAN CHECKPOINT -- DAY

As dialogue progresses, we see the following:

TWO AMERICAN CHECKPOINT GUARDS are on duty. Sean and Dana arrive, riding dirt bikes. They are asked for their papers and hand them over. US Guard 1 studies the papers. He looks at US Guard 2 still in the guard hut. He crosses to the hut, and speaks with Guard 2. Guard 2 picks up a telephone and speaks into it. Sean and Dana exchange a look, wondering what is going on. Guard 2 puts down the phone. Guards 1&2 approach Sean and Dana.

RICHARD (V.O.)

He was last seen at an American checkpoint near the Cambodian border. This was before the war escalated into this country.

CHUCK (V.O.)

Yeah?

RICHARD (V.O.)

Well, I think his capture was engineered. I think he was deliberately misdirected.

BACK TO:

INT. THE PIT -- LATE DAY

CHUCK

By our guys?...That what you're saying?

Richard picks up Sean's basket and crosses to his mat.

RICHARD

Draw your own conclusions.

He puts the basket over his head.

CHUCK

How's the game goin', Tommy?
Thought of a word yet?

TOM

Nah. Nearly out of goes too.

CHUCK

Seems you guys take this game
awful serious...You got sumthin'
on your mind, Tom?

TOM

Whadda y'mean?

CHUCK

You do sumthin' wrong?...You kill
a buddy or sumthin'?

TOM

No...wasn't a buddy.

CHUCK

Who was it then?

TOM

I...I gotta take a piss.

Tom exits through the curtain.

INT. THE PIT -- LATE DAY

Sean enters, coming down the ladder.

CHUCK

Howdy. We's just talkin' 'bout
you.

SEAN

Oh?

CHUCK

Yeah. Y'know, you interest me. You're a real mystery man. I bet if your own daddy was to walk down that ladder right now, you wouldn't even bat an eyelid.

SEAN

What makes you say that?

CHUCK

Don't know. You're sort of an empty vessel, ain't you?

SEAN

No. Empty vessels make the most noise.

CHUCK

Huh. Y'know, I seen a lot of guys wasted from the outside over here, Sean, but the real tragedies are the ones wasted from the inside.

SEAN

Spare me.

CHUCK

Y'know, we heard the scuttlebutt. Seems everybody knew 'bout the bombing 'cept the press. How'd you go? Get some photographs?

SEAN

Could have.

CHUCK

Well now I can only put two and two together. Richard here was tellin' me he thinks...

RICHARD

(Still under the basket)
Sean!

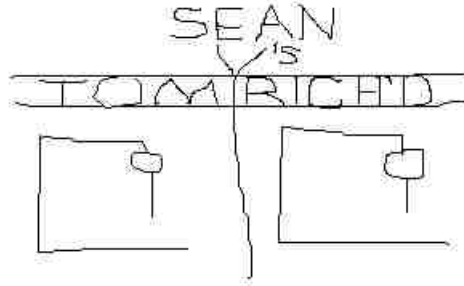
SEAN

Mmm?

RICHARD

Cane...Cane.

Sean crosses to the rock and draws:



Sean takes a cigar from his pocket and puts it under the basket in front of Richard's face. Richard takes the cigar.

FX: It starts to rain.

CHUCK

Hey, er...You notice sumthin'?

SEAN

It's raining?

CHUCK

Where's the siren? Ain't heard that siren since sixteen hundred.

Sean does not react.

Tom enters, doing up his fly.

TOM

Hey, did Sean Connery get a kick in the nuts in that filum, did he?

CHUCK

Yeah...yeah, Tommy.

The sound of rain intensifies.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. TIME MAGAZINE OFFICE -- SAIGON -- NIGHT

FADE IN.

The blackness of night through a pane of window glass. Rain runs down the glass. A faint desk lamp is the only illumination in the room.

We come down from a portrait of Richard Nixon i.e. where the Lyndon Johnson portrait used to be, to:

Sue paces the floor. She is smoking. She stops as she hears:

SFX - A MOTORCYCLE APPROACHES AND STOPS.

Back to the pane of glass: The blurred image of Sean dismounting and moving toward the door.

Sue opens the door. Sean rushes in past her, wearing a raincoat and hat, and dripping wet. Sue closes the door and rushes to his arms. She kisses him.

SEAN

Hey, you'll get all wet!

SUE

I don't care! Oh God, I'd almost forgotten how beautiful you are. Oh, I could eat you.

SEAN

(getting out of his raincoat)
I'm good with that.

SUE

How was Paris?

SEAN

Interesting.

Sue opens a magazine.

SUE

So I see. (She reads) 'Sean
Flynn and friend. The guy
who makes Vietnam look the way
a war ought to look.'

Close on a picture of Sean, smiling with his arm around
Mila.

SUE (O.S.)

Who's she?

SEAN

Like it says, old friend.

SUE

How's Page?

SEAN

Fine. What's left of him is
recovering. He's in the States
now.

SUE

Why didn't you go back with him?

SEAN (tenderly)

Vietnam.

Sean has entered a private world momentarily. Sue
carefully notes the change in him. Sean looks at her.

SEAN

Here. Bought you something.

He produces a pendant.

SUE

Oh, it's beautiful. What is it?

SEAN

Found it at Angkor Wat.

He puts it on her.

SEAN

Carried it ever since for good luck. Think secondhand charms work okay. It's a Goddess. Had it set in Paris.

SUE

Oh...thank you.

They kiss.

Sean.

SEAN

Plenty of time.

SUE

No. No, there isn't. Lou left urgent instructions.

SEAN

Where is Lou?

SUE

Hongers. He's tired, Sean.

SEAN

Stress?

SUE

Yeah. Well, you know what a patriot he is. See, he thinks we might lose this one.

SEAN

Do tell.

SUE

He's also concerned, ah, this is complex...He thinks we're fighting dirty. He thinks we're deceiving the American people and our allies. In short he thinks we should get the fuck out of here and leave these people alone.

Sue unlocks a cabinet and extracts some files.

SEAN

Amazing how the perspective clears
when losing.

SUE

Here.

She hands him a photograph.

Close on a photograph as Sean takes it. It is a picture
of blue sky, with an arrow drawn on it.

SUE

This was taken close to the
Cambodian border.

She hands him a magnifying glass. Looking through the
magnifying glass there are tiny images of planes
apparent.

SEAN

B52's.

SUE

This arrow is north.

Sean orientates the photograph.

SEAN

How far from the border?

SUE

Five miles.

She hands him another photograph: BOMBERS on the ground
being loaded with bombs.

And this.

She hands him another photograph.

This is it blown up eight times.
See what somebody chalked
onto this bomb?

Through the magnifying glass - a bomb with chalk writing on it. The writing reads 'Cambodia sucks'.

SEAN

Your mission should you decide to accept it...?

SUE

This is serious.

She hands him a slip of paper.

SUE

Lou made a booking for you at this hotel in Cambodia. He wants you to find out exactly what's going on. He wants estimates of how much tonnage is going down and corroborative photographs.

Sean indicates the Nixon portrait on the wall.

SEAN

Tricky Dicky won't like this.

SUE

(shrugs) Lou's a democrat. He said to warn you it'll be extremely dangerous. No one on our side will know you're there, or want you there, and there's also the very real chance you could get yourself killed by our bombers.

SEAN

Fine.

SUE

What?

SEAN

I'll see if Dana can go.

SUE

Now look...Lou left me instructions to give to you. Now I've done that, I've done my job. I was sure that you'd reject this. You are going to reject it, aren't you?

She sees that he is not.

You'd be going into V.C. held territory to investigate our country's illegal bombing. That's a no win situation. Sean...throw that in the trash where it belongs... Sean...

SEAN

Ever read, "My Wicked, Wicked Ways"?

SUE

No...What's that got...?

SEAN

Toward the end, he didn't need anyone.

SUE

You're not your father...What do you mean toward the end?

He merely looks at her. She lights a cigarette, nervous.

I was engaged to be married once. Yes. But then I found my fiancé was bisexual. You know what? I felt utterly powerless. I couldn't be a man for him. You've no idea how helpless that makes you feel. And I'm getting that same feeling now.

SEAN

There's no one else.

SUE

No, there isn't...There is no one else. You're fucking the war.

Sean turns away, dismissing her comment.

SUE

Michael told me! Michael told me that you go up to the front now and don't even take your camera. I didn't believe him. But it's true, isn't it? It's true. You're fucking the war and you're so up it now you don't even care if people see you for what you are. My God, Sean, my God.

Sue has been clutching at the pendant. Sean indicates it.

SEAN

Don't lose that. It'll be bad luck.

He begins to leave. She grabs him.

SUE

Sean! Blood and guts and shit are not what life's about! What we can have is everything! War is nothing, it's just losing. It's everyone losing! Sean, Sean you're something beautiful, something pure, something special. What was it you said, what...? A...a Condor. It's like you glide with grace and beauty above everything else. You're...

Sean breaks from her and crosses to the door. He turns.

SEAN

Know what a Condor is?...World's biggest vulture.

He nods farewell and exits.

SUE

Sean!

Sue cries.

EXT. TIME OFFICE -- NIGHT

Sue, crying, is apparent through the rain drenched window as Sean's bike departs.

SLOW CROSSFADE:

INT. THE PIT -- DAWN

A low angle shaft of sunlight through the fronds in the pit ceiling.

Sean, well awake, sits on his mat, smoking a cigar.

Chuck and Richard sleep on their mats.

Tom enters from behind the curtain. He smiles at Sean.

TOM (talking quietly)
Just had a bog by numbers.

He sniggers. He watches Sean smoke the cigar.

TOM
How many of them you smoke a day?

SEAN
Any given number.

Tom works it out.

TOM
Oh! Yeah, I get it, I get it...
(suddenly serious) Can I have one?

SEAN
You know the procedure.

TOM

Do I still get one if I get it right?

SEAN

Yeah, suppose so.

TOM

Well, I know what the answer is. Dreamt about it last night.

Tom nods for a long time.

SEAN

Well don't keep me in suspense.

TOM (lowering to a whisper)
You couldn't give us a hint could you, Sean?

SEAN

That wouldn't be fair, would it.

TOM

Yeah, I know, but...Well, I just want to see if what I dreamt is right.

SEAN

Well, there's one sure fire way to find out.

Tom's face suddenly lights up.

TOM

Sure fire, huh? Sure fire.

He walks in small circles, bouncing his hands merrily off his hips.

I know what it is. I know what it is. Go on, give us another hint.

SEAN

What?

The smile drops from Tom's face, but reappears as he thinks Sean is joking.

TOM

I'm with you, I'm with you. Go on, give us another one.

SEAN

(tuts and sighs) The answer's right in front of your nose, Tom.

TOM (Laughing)

Right in front of me nose. In front of me nose.

Tom smiles and nods at Sean's hand. Sean wonders what he is doing. Tom keeps nodding toward his hand, indicating it. Sean looks at his hand. He looks at Tom. Tom nods toward his hand again.

SEAN

Hand starts with H, Tom.

TOM

No.

He smiles and points at the match in Sean's hand.

Match. The match. Sure fire?

SEAN

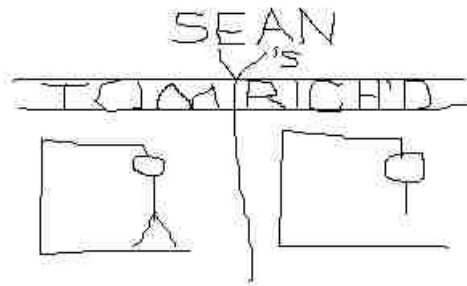
Oh!

Sean laughs. Tom laughs.

SEAN

No.

Tom is crest fallen. He crosses to the rock, picks up the white pebble and draws:



Richard, sleeping below the rock {Note for original blocking} is woken by Tom's presence.

RICHARD

What're you doing?

TOM

Hangin' me bloody self.

Chuck has rolled onto his back and woken. He blinks, and sits up suddenly. He has something in his eye. He tries to get it out.

Richard arises and goes behind the curtain.

Tom crosses to Sean and receives a cigar, and a light. He crosses to his side of the pit.

Chuck gets up, still having trouble with his eye, and crosses to the curtain. Richard comes out and they bump into each other.

CHUCK

Oh, sorry. Got something in m' eye.

RICHARD

Give me a look.

CHUCK

See it?

RICHARD

Nah, stop blinking. Know what I'm looking for?

CHUCK (pointing up)
Oh, think it's some of that ash
from the burnt bamboo.

RICHARD
Oh yeah, I got it. Keep still. Got
it.

CHUCK
Oh, thanks. That's better.

Chuck exits behind the curtain. Richard looks at the
piece of ash on his finger.

Sean watches him.

Richard frowns and looks slowly at Sean. Slowly, Richard
holds out his finger. He grins slightly.

TOM
S'gonna be hot today. S'hot
already.

Chuck makes some grunting, straining noises behind the
curtain. Tom notices Richard's finger.

TOM
What's wrong with your finger?

RICHARD
(watching Sean)
Nothing...Nothing at all.

Richard crosses to his mat and sits.

CHUCK (O.S)
Hey, you got any paper out
there or anything?

RICHARD
There's only the cards.

CHUCK

Oh, no, don't use them. Got any
leaves or anything?

Richard picks up a piece of palm frond and hands it
through the curtain.

Thank y'kindly.

We can hear Chuck using the fronds.

CHUCK

Y'know there's two kinds of palm
leaf. There's the rough kind...

No one responds, but Tom is interested...

TOM

...Yeah?

CHUCK

And there's the kind your finger
goes through. Ough!

Chuck enters.

In days of old when knights were
bold and paper was not invented,
I wiped my ass with a piece of
grass and went away contented.

Chuck and Tom laugh.

TOM

Go on.

CHUCK

That's it. That's my full
repertoire of toilet paper jokes.

TOM

In days of old...?

CHUCK

When knights were bold...

TOM

Jeez you got big teeth, haven't you?

Chuck sighs.

CHUCK

Sure, Tommy. Came with the big mouth.

TOM (laughs)

Came with the big mouth.

Tom laughs some more but then stops laughing and the smile disappears suddenly from his face. He looks slowly at Sean.

TOM

Right in front of your nose.

CHUCK

Thought rice was supposed to make you shit okay. Think I'm constipated. I know I'm constipated. Must be from breathing all the cigar smoke down here...Hello?

Sean looks from Richard to Tom.

SEAN

Notice anything?

CHUCK

Yeah. I'm talking to myself all of a sudden.

SEAN

There hasn't been a siren all night. Not since yesterday, four o'clock.

CHUCK

So?

SEAN

Notice something else? No bird noises. Now why do you suppose that is?

CHUCK

Ain't never heard birds down here...Okay hotshot, why?

SEAN

The Americans are very close.

CHUCK

How you know that?

SEAN

Commandant told me.

CHUCK

And why the fuck would he tell you that?

SEAN

He thinks we'll figure it out. Dana and I have matches. We could start a fire. I was warned that at the first sign of trouble we'll be bayoneted to death. So you see, you've got three choices. You can make trouble and get killed by them, or you can wait and hope the Americans'll stumble on us and set us free.

CHUCK

And?

Sean, Richard, and Tom stare at Chuck. Chuck notes Tom and Richard. He grows exasperated.

CHUCK

That's two. What's the third?

SEAN

Appreciate it if you'd mind your own business, Chuck. There's three of us. (To Richard and Tom) It's up to you.

Richard and Tom exchange a look of understanding.

RICHARD

I don't want to die by their hand. I'm with you, Sean.

Sean looks at Tom. Tom nods.

SEAN

Who's first?

TOM (Stuttering)

Mmmm...Mmmm...

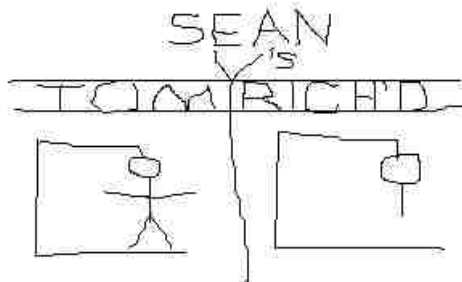
SEAN

Yes?

TOM

Mm...mouth.

Sean draws:



TOM

Right in front of me nose?

SEAN

Yeah.

Tom puts his hand to his moustache and realizes. He looks at Richard and smiles weakly.

TOM

Looks like it's between you
and me.

Sean looks at Richard. Richard holds out his finger, and
with his eyes, indicates the bamboo above.

RICHARD

Cinder.

Sean drops the white pebble into Richard's lap. He
crosses to the corner where the wooden sword leans, and
picks it up. Richard sits forward on his knees.

RICHARD

I felt it, Sean. I felt what
I was getting, the art of it, and
I thank you for that...It's
morning. Funny, never imagined it
would be morning. Was always
night.

Sean walks toward him, raising the wood.

CHUCK

You!!

Sean hesitates.

CHUCK

You hold it right there! Nobody
kills nobody while I'm here!

RICHARD

Chuck. I won. It's my choice. It's
useless to interfere. You have to
sleep sometime.

CHUCK

Son, I ain't asking you, I'm
tellin' you!

They merely stare at him. Chuck tries to reason...

CHUCK

Richard, this is no way to die!
Like rats in a hole! If you must
die, die like men facing the
enemy. Make some noise. Bring 'em
down here. Fight 'em tooth n'nail
if you have to but don't die like
this!

RICHARD

You want me to die, trying to take
another life with me. So typical
of your kind. I've enough blood on
my hands.

CHUCK

And what about you, Tommy? Huh?
You lost to Sean. That means you
gotta kill him, right? That what
you want to do? Kill Sean? Your
good buddy, your mate? How's that
gonna wash the blood offa your
hands? Who's gonna kill you?
'Cause I sure ain't!

TOM

Sean?

RICHARD

Was a fair game, Thomas. You
lost.

CHUCK

Richard, the Americans are close
by. You want honor in death, then
signal the Americans. The gooks'll
kill you but you'll save all the
other poor sons a'bitches in other
pits 'round here. There's your
honor!

SEAN

There are no Americans. Tom was
right. Just an electrical fault in
the siren. They fixed it already.

TOM

Well, why'd you tell us...?

SEAN

Game's not a game 'less you really
want to play, Tom.

Richard looks up at Sean, and nods.

RICHARD

Please.

He lowers his head. Sean raises the wood to strike.

CHUCK

No!!

Chuck rushes Sean. He pushes him into a corner and disarms him. They fight, Chuck winning. Chuck pins him in the corner, beating his head against the wall.

CHUCK

No! No! No!

SEAN (Overlapping)

Help me! Help me!

Richard and Tom snap into action. They pull Chuck away. Chuck throws Richard to one side and fights with Tom. Sean straightens up, and merely watches. Tom goes down, and Chuck turns on Richard. Tom seizes the length of wood and strikes Chuck across the back of the head with it. Chuck goes down, but begins to get up. Tom hits him again. Richard picks up a rock and hits Chuck across the head repeatedly, drawing blood.

Chuck struggles on, seemingly unkillable. Building to a frenzy, Tom and Richard strike him again and again, even after he is motionless.

RICHARD (demented)

Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! (etc)

TOM (Overlapping)

Stop! Stop! Stop! (etc)

They stop, exhausted. They fall beside Chuck. Sean watches them impassively. Realization comes slowly to Richard. He looks up at Sean, sees his face. His expression slowly turns to one of horror.

RICHARD

No...no...no!!...No!!!...You never...you never...

Sean takes three cigars from his pocket. He moves past Richard and Tom and drops a cigar in front of both of them. He moves past them, lighting his own cigar. They watch him.

SEAN

Don't you see the art?...You were right...I knew he was coming...Knew before we started.

He lights his cigar.

So...learn something?...Can you learn?...Oooh, feel the art. That was good...you got to admit, that was good...S'all just a movie...just a movie.

The full realization of what has happened hits Richard. His hands go to the sides of his face, stretching it into a mask of trembling terror. Tom starts to whimper, and sway. He looks toward his mat.

TOM

Move...move...Any minute...Any minute...

Tom crawls toward his mat, to put the rags in his ears and over his eyes.

Sean smokes the cigar impassively, watching them.

FADE OUT.

ROLL CREDITS.