

SEMPER FI

Written by

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Pilot Episode for TV Series: Letter from Montana

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. RICK'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A State Police car pulls up to Rick's office building.

A TROOPER gets out of the car and puts on his Smokey Bear hat so he is in full uniform as he walks toward Rick's office building.

A CIVILIAN in informal clothes and an outer jacket gets out of the right side of the police car and walks into the building with the Trooper.

INT. CORRIDOR TO RICK'S OFFICE - DAY

The Trooper and the civilian stop at Gertrude ROBERTS' desk. There is a Washington Herald visible on her desk.

TROOPER  
Is Chief Engineer Williams in?

ROBERTS  
Yes, officer. May I say why you are calling?

TROOPER  
No ma'am. It's official business.

ROBERTS  
Wait just a moment.

She picks up the telephone.

ROBERTS  
Mr. Williams? There is a State Trooper here to see you on official business. Yes, all right.

She puts the phone down and looks up at Trooper. She smiles.

ROBERTS  
Just go down the hall. It's the office on the right.

The Trooper and the civilian walk down the hall.

They walk by an office door which is closed with no light in the frosted window alongside the door. The sign on the door says Frank Medicine Fire, Commissioner, Billings County.

INT. RICK'S OFFICE - DAY

They walk into Rick's office.

There is a sign on his door: Rick Williams, Chief Engineer, Billings County.

RICK, 34, is sitting at a metal desk reading a report which is open on the desk. The backs of his hands are disfigured. The skin is very scarred.

His civil engineering degree from the University of Tennessee is on the wall. Next to it is a small red Marine Corps flag. Hanging below the flag is a picture of him as a Marine with his Marine buddies in Iraq in 2003.

There is a Washington Herald newspaper on the corner of his desk. Rick stands up as the Trooper and the civilian come in, and puts out his hand.

RICK  
Officer...

Rich shakes hands with Trooper.

Rick looks toward the civilian and puts out his hand.

RICK  
And you are...

CIVILIAN  
A friend.

Civilian shakes Rick's hand.

The Trooper pulls a folded paper out of his uniform tunic, opens it and reads off it.

TROOPER  
Are you Richard Williams, formerly  
Corporal, United States Marine  
Corps, Serial Number 326556117?

RICK  
Wow. I haven't heard that in a  
while. Yes, that's me.

CIVILIAN  
Mr. Williams, I'm afraid we do not  
have good news.

The civilian pulls a credential case out of his jacket pocket and holds it up for Rick to see.

The camera sees what is in the credential case. Across the top in large letters, under an official logo, is: Central Intelligence Agency.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT I

FADE IN:

INT. RICK'S OFFICE - DAY

The State Trooper and the CIA man are standing in front of Rick's desk.

Rick is standing behind it. He is looking at the CIA man's credentials.

RICK

I thought you guys didn't operate  
in the U.S.

The CIA man puts his credentials back in his pocket.

CIA MAN

That changed a bit after 9/11. We  
can't run our own operations, but  
we can advise. Let me tell you why  
we are here. I'm afraid it isn't  
pretty. Am I correct that you were  
in the Iraq War with the Marines?

RICK

That's right. I was in the 2nd  
Force Recon Company, 5th Battalion,  
1st Marine Regiment in Operation  
Iraqi Freedom.

Rick points to the picture on his wall.

RICK

That was ten years ago. Why are you  
asking about it now?

The CIA man reaches down and picks up the Washington Herald.

CIA MAN

Is this Monday's Washington Herald?

RICK

Yes. They sent us a number of  
copies. I am one of the guys  
profiled in it in a feature on  
Iraqi Freedom veterans. The piece  
was to find out what happened to  
us.

CIA MAN

But, in the segment they did on you, quite flattering by the way, they talked about your family, where you live and the unit you served with in Iraq. Here is the problem. You're familiar with ISIS, the Islamic State?

RICK

Yes.

CIA MAN

Well, there was an important Sunni mosque, the mosque of Qadisiyyah, that was destroyed in Iraqi Freedom. Rumors are that it was taken out by your Force Recon company.

RICK

That's ridiculous. The Shiites blew it up. It was gone long before we got to Qadisiyyah.

CIA MAN

We know that, but ISIS doesn't, or pretends not to. An ISIS post has been put on the Web denouncing the perpetrators of the mosque's destruction and you and your family are listed on it. I'm afraid it says that you will be beheaded after watching the throats of your wife and children being slit.

Rick is silent for a moment.

RICK

Well, they're half a world away. Who's going to pay attention to that?

CIA MAN

That's why I'm here. To tell you that we think a team from al-Qaeda has taken up the mission to prove itself to ISIS. The man leading the team may be Ali Akbar Salameh. I know him and he is very good. He was responsible for bombing our embassy in Tanzania a few years back.

(MORE)

CIA MAN (CONT'D)

I've worked with him in the past - don't ask - and I will know him on sight. But, as you just said, the CIA cannot conduct domestic operations. I can only advise the State Police, which is why I am here.

RICK

You're saying the bad guys are coming here, to Montana, to Billings?

CIA MAN

I could say that I hope not, but we think that, yes, they are. And the Mossad, Israeli intelligence, has told us the same thing, but you didn't hear that from me.

RICK

OK. You've told me. Now what do I do?

CIA MAN

Do you have somewhere you could go?

RICK

For how long?

CIA MAN

For as long as it takes.

RICK

How long will that be?

CIA MAN

We don't know.

RICK

(thinking it out)

I was disabled when I got out of the Service.

(pause)

I moved back here where I grew up.

(pause)

This is where I put my life back together.

(pause)

My children go to school here. We live here.

(pause)

Where would we run to?

(pause)

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

No. My job is here and I was lucky to get it. I can't just run away.

CIA MAN

Muslim terrorists like historical allusions. The date of the Battle of Qadisiyyah is in three days. Qadisiyyah is where the Muslims defeated the Persians in modern-day Iraq. The mosque was built after that battle, so we think the date may be significant.

TROOPER

Mr. Williams, here is my card. You can reach me at this number day or night. Unfortunately, we cannot station somebody with you. But if you call, we'll come running.

RICK

Yes, officer. But my problem is to be sure my family is still there by the time you get there.

TROOPER

We will look in on you.

The Trooper looks at the CIA man.

TROOPER

Are we done?

CIA MAN

Mr. Williams, you can't call me, but I will call you if we get any additional information. I am going to be in the neighborhood for a few days to see if I can spot any familiar faces. Perhaps we will meet in town. Please do not show any recognition if we do.

RICK

(absently)

Yes, OK.

Rick shakes hands with both men.

He comes around his desk as they leave. He stands in his door watching them retreat down the hall.

He turns back to the desk, picks up the Washington Herald, looks at it briefly and then rolls it up.

He pulls on a jacket from a hook behind the door and walks out of his office.

INT. CORRIDOR TO RICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Rick walks down the corridor to Gertrude Roberts' desk, slapping the rolled newspaper against his right leg.

He stops at her desk.

RICK  
Gerd, has Frank left on his  
vacation?

ROBERTS  
Yes Rick. He left yesterday  
afternoon.

RICK  
When will he be back?

ROBERTS  
A week from Monday.

RICK  
Can we get hold of him?

ROBERTS  
I'm afraid not. You know how he  
feels about these summer  
walkabouts. He says it wouldn't be  
wilderness if he could be  
contacted.

RICK  
(absently)  
Yeah...  
(more crisply)  
I've got to go out for a couple of  
hours. Take my messages and I will  
call in for them.

ROBERTS  
Understood.

Rick walks out of the building.

He heads for his Chevy pickup across the parking lot.

EXT. THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - DAY

Rick pulls up to his house in his Chevy pickup.

He gets out of the truck AND reaches in for the rolled Washington Herald.

He walks into the house.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - DAY

Rick walks through the living room into the kitchen.

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - DAY

Ricks finds LAURA, 34 with SUSAN, 14 and LUKE, 10. It is summer so the kids are not in school. They look up, not particularly surprised to see him.

LAURA  
Home for lunch today?

RICK  
Kids, give Mom and me a minute  
alone, OK?

The kids get up and go out to the living room. Rick looks at Laura.

RICK  
Bad news, babe.

I/E. CAMERA LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW - DAY

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - DAY

Rick and Laura are sitting at the kitchen table. Laura has her hand on Rick's.

LAURA  
(sober)  
So, what are we going to do, lover?

RICK  
I think we should send the kids  
away. And you too.

Pause. Laura holds Rick's hand. She speaks slowly, reasoning it out.

LAURA

Oh, Rick. I don't think that will work. The children can't go away without me.

(pause)

I will never leave you.

(pause)

And you won't run away.

(pause)

So here we are.

(pause)

Does Frank know?

RICK

No. Frank is in Canada on his yearly walkabout. You know how much he likes to be in the wilderness. He won't be back until next week.

LAURA

What about the police?

RICK

They can only act after something happens. And they can't guard us.

(pause)

So we are on our own.

LAURA

Well, we have to tell the kids. They have to know.

RICK

I'll get them.

Rick opens the door to the living room.

RICK

Luke, Susan, will you come in? Don't worry, we're not angry with you.

Rick opens the back door.

RICK

Jeff, will you come in here for a minute?

The three children come in. Susan and Luke come from the door to the living room.

JEFF, 16 comes from the door to the outside.

They sit down at the table.

Rick starts to talk to them, but we don't hear what he is saying.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - DAY

Rick is finishing telling the kids about the terrorists.

RICK

So, you have to stay on the property until we can get this sorted out. We have to stick together as a family and rely on each other. I have to rely on you kids, each of you, to do what I say and do it with enthusiasm. Jeff, can you do that?

JEFF

Yep.

RICK

Susan, can you do that?

SUSAN

Yes, daddy.

RICK

And Luke, you too. I have to be able to rely on you. Can I?

LUKE

(solemn)

Yes.

RICK

Very well. This is our team. We have to stay in contact with each other. None of you kids can wander off the property. And we have to talk to each other. You have to tell me if you see anything suspicious. If a stranger approaches you, make a fuss, kick and scream and the rest of us will come running.

The three kids nod their heads.

Laura is watching them and Rick.

RICK

OK. This is going to be like the frontier, like the old days of cowboys and Indians. Of course, Frank and the other Indians are our friends now, but we are going to pretend that it is 100 years ago and this is the prairie. Now you kids know that I was in the Service. The United States Marines. I am going to get out some of my old Marine equipment.

Rick walks over to the side of the kitchen and pulls a screwdriver out of one of the drawers in the kitchen counter.

He puts it in his pocket.

He walks out of the kitchen through the living room door.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - DAY

Rick walks into the living room.

JACK, the Williams' dog, is lying on the floor. He gets up to follow Rick.

Rick straightens his arm and points his index finger at Jack.

RICK

Jack! Stay!

Jack looks at Rick, turns around completely once and lies down again.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Rick walks up the stairs.

B) He walks into the 2nd floor hall.

C) He reaches up and pulls down a weighted trap door in the ceiling that has folded stairs on it. He unfolds the stairs.

D) He walks up the stairs into the attic.

INT. ATTIC OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - DAY

E) The camera sees the pitched roof of the house from the inside. Rick has to stoop everywhere but down the middle where the peak of the roof is.

F) He walks several steps to the left of the stairs.

G) He kneels down at a large dark green trunk with USMC barely visible on the lid in black, boldface ink, Marine Corps logo style. Rick pulls a small key out of his pocket and unlocks the trunk.

H) Inside are a lot of military clothes, underwear, and a dress blue uniform folded up with a hat inside a clear plastic bag. Rick quickly, but gently, unpacks all the contents of the trunk and puts them aside.

I) He pulls the screwdriver out of his back pocket and starts to unscrew the bottom of the trunk.

J) The camera looks over his shoulder and sees him pull the bottom of the trunk free with small cloth tabs that are built into the bottom.

K) As the bottom comes free, there is revealed a contoured surface within which is an evil-looking weapon: an MP5 short-barreled submachine gun. Emblazoned on the gun-holder in red metallic, stylized writing: Heckler & Koch.

L) On the left side of the bottom of the trunk are two hand guns: a 9mm Glock semi-automatic pistol and a .45 Browning M1911A1 semi-automatic pistol.

M) Next to the pistols is a black KA-BAR USMC utility knife in a black synthetic sheath.

Rick stares at the weapons for a moment and lets out a breath through pursed lips.

He reaches for the weapons.

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - DAY

Rich walks into the kitchen with the hardware, which he puts down on the kitchen table.

The family is sitting around the table.

RICK  
These are the weapons I used in the  
Marine Corps.

Rick picks up the MP5.

RICK  
This is particularly dangerous.  
None of your kids should ever touch  
this.

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

I will be very angry if you touch it. You have to be trained to handle a weapon like this. That is also true for these pistols and this knife. I trained a long time before I was allowed to use them with other men who were also trained. Now let's look at one other gun, one you know.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - DAY

Rick walks into the living room.

He takes a key out of his pocket, and unlocks a gun case hanging on the wall. Out of it he takes a double-barreled 12-gauge shotgun.

He carries it back to the kitchen.

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - DAY

RICK

You all know what this is. This is our shotgun. Jeff, I know you know how to use it, but I want your mother to handle it this time since she has used it a lot. We will have a fire base for Mom and you kids in the basement. You will be a team. You kids will get the shells for the shotgun out of the box and hand them to your Mom. I'm sorry this is necessary but it *is* necessary. We are a Marine family and this is what Marines do when enemies come after them. If you get scared, there is an old motto from Pearl Harbor you should remember:

(Pause)

"Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition." It has steadied many a hand before yours.

The telephone rings. Rick picks it up.

RICK

Hello?

CIA MAN  
(overheard)  
Mr. Williams?

RICK  
Yes.

CIA MAN  
(overheard)  
This is the friend from your  
office. Do you know who I mean?

RICK  
Yes, I remember.

CIA MAN  
(Overheard)  
They're here. In Billings. It's  
tonight. Don't ask me how I know.  
I know. I've talked to the police.  
They can't do anything until the  
opposition makes their move. I'm  
working on getting backup.

Rick breaths out through his lips.

RICK  
All right. I understand.

CIA MAN  
(overheard)  
I'll call you if I have anything  
else.

RICK  
Yes. Thanks.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The furniture in the living room is upended, with most of it  
against the windows.

The curtains are drawn against all the windows.

Rick, Laura, Jeff, Susan and Luke are standing around a round  
coffee table holding hands. The lights are off. There is a  
candle on the table. Rick is in battle gear: camo, .45 On  
his hip, Glock in a shoulder holster, KA-BAR inverted across  
his chest.

The MP5 is visible sitting on a piece of furniture.

RICK  
 (solemnly)  
 Tonight we are all warriors. In  
 the Marines, before battle, we  
 commit our souls to God.

Rich starts to recite, and the others, recognizing it  
 immediately, join in.

RICK  
 The Lord is my shepherd,

RICK, LAURA, JEFF, SUSAN, LUKE  
 (unison)  
 I shall not want.  
 He maketh me to lie down in green  
 pastures.  
 He leadeth me beside still waters.  
 He restoreth my soul.  
 He leadeth me in the paths of  
 righteousness for his name's sake.  
 Yea, though I would through the  
 valley of the shadow of death, I  
 will fear no evil; for thou art  
 with me.  
 Thy rod and thy staff they comfort  
 me.  
 Thou perparest a table before me in  
 the presence of mine enemies.  
 Thou anointest my head with oil; my  
 cup runneth over.  
 Surely goodness and mercy shall  
 follow me all the days of my life,  
 and I will dwell in the house of  
 the Lord forever.  
 (pause)  
 Amen

They hold hands for a silent moment after the prayer and then  
 slowly let go.

Rick looks up suddenly.

RICK  
 Where's Jack?

LAURA  
 (dawning realization)  
 I haven't seen him. Kids?

The three kids shake their heads.

Rick gets up, goes to the door and opens the door while  
 standing aside, by the doorjamb.

He calls through the gap in the door.

RICK  
(calls)  
Jack!

Silence. Rick walks back to the group.

RICK  
All right. Laura, take the kids  
and get in the basement. If  
there's an intruder, keep firing.  
Don't let him get his head up. Arc  
of fire. Expect him to move.  
Follow him across the full arc so  
he can't get around you.

Laura picks up the 12-gauge shotgun and the box of shells and  
heads for the door to the basement.

RICK  
And kids, keep handing the shells,  
two at a time, to your mother, just  
as we practiced. You together are  
a crew. That's the way we think of  
it in the Marines. Each one of you  
is part of the crew. Remember:  
"Praise the Lord and pass the  
ammunition."

The kids nod and follow Laura out of the room. Rick calls  
after them.

RICK  
Laura! If anybody but me comes  
through that door, don't hesitate.  
Keep firing until there is no  
movement.

Rick picks up the MP5 and seats a 30-round magazine. He  
thumbs down the tab on the barrel and lets it shoot forward  
into place.

RICK  
(to himself)  
Locked and cocked.

Rick smiles grimly.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

FADE IN:

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rick moves fluidly through the living room.

He very slowly opens the front door and slips out on the porch.

EXT. PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

VOICE FROM THE NIGHT

Hey, Williams! We're going to burn down your house with your family in it. Just like you did with the Mosque of Qadisiyyah. This is our preemptive strike. How do you like that?

Thud. A bullet hits the wall of the house just over Rick's shoulder.

Rick backs into the corner of the house, pointing the MP5 in front of him.

INT. BASEMENT OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Laura, Jeff, Susan and Luke hunker behind the upturned work table.

B) As the camera moves behind the table, there is a box of shells open and shells in front of each child. Laura is in the middle with Luke on her left and Susan and Jeff on her right. The barrels of the double-barreled shotgun point up from behind the table.

LAURA

(to the kids)

Stay here. I'm going to look around.

Laura steps around Luke and slips out from behind the table to the left.

She goes over to the basement door to the outside and pulls on the padlock. It is locked.

JEFF  
(whispers to Susan and  
Luke)  
You stay here and help Mom. I'm  
going to go help Dad.

Jeff slips out from behind the table. He is barefoot,  
dressed in sweatpants and a T-shirt.

He slips up the stairs and out through the door to the house.

LAURA  
Jeff!

Jeff is gone.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) The basement door to the outside is a wooden door, secured  
with a padlock. The padlock rattles.

B) Laura shows fear on her face, then determination, as she  
picks up the shotgun. She stares at the door.

C) A crowbar pokes through the door behind the lock.

D) Susan and Luke look up sharply at her.

E) Laura aims the shotgun at the door and shoots both  
barrels, blam, blam.

F) She breaks the gun, uses the ejector to eject the shells  
and reaches her left hand to Susan, who puts two new shells  
in it.

EXT. PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick is standing with his back in the corner of the house.  
Thud, thud, thud. Three bullets hit just in front of Rick.

EXT. FROM THE PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE, LOOKING OUT -  
NIGHT

From the distance, there is a car horn blaring, again and  
again.

A set of headlights bounces up and down.

EXT. PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick, confused, looks out at the headlights.

Thud, thud, two more bullets hit right in front of Rick's face.

A splinter hits above his right eye and draws blood.

Rick shoots two bullets, bang, bang.

Rick scans the area in front of the porch.

EXT. PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick hears the two shots from the basement, muffled by distance, blam, blam.

VOICE FROM THE NIGHT  
You kids in there? Your mother's  
going to watch you die. And then  
we're going to finish with her.

INT. BASEMENT OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Susan and Luke look up suddenly and anxiously to Laura, whose back is to the camera.

She holds out her left hand, palm down, in a calming gesture while shaking her head.

EXT. ON THE ROAD LEADING TOWARD THE WILLIAMS HOUSE LOOKING AWAY FROM THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Hammering down the road towards the Williams house at 80 mph, expertly swerving around the potholes in the road come a Chevy Suburban and behind, barely visible from this angle, a Hummer, horns blaring again and again.

EXT. ROLLING ALONGSIDE THE ROAD LEADING TOWARD THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Dust billows off the front tires of both cars.

Two small flags, the Stars and Stripes on top and a red Marine Corps flag underneath, are snapping from the antenna of the Suburban, illuminated by the hand-directed searchlight built into the Suburban.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF AND ON THE CHEVY SUBURBAN - NIGHT

Looking toward the Williams house from the Suburban, the camera sees the two flashes of the two shots from Rick's MP5.

INT. INSIDE THE CHEVY SUBURBAN

There are two men in the front seat, WETHERILL driving and Colonel EMERSON riding shotgun.

EMERSON  
Step on it!

WETHERILL  
I've got it Colonel. That's all  
she'll take.  
(pause)  
We're there, we're there.

EXT. PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE LOOKING OUT - NIGHT

The Suburban comes roaring up the driveway to the Williams house.

It brakes hard as it cuts to the left.

It drives onto the front lawn.

It cuts deep ruts in the lawn and throws up the turf as it slides to a halt.

EXT. FRONT LAWN OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

The lights on the Suburban go out.

The driver's door and the right front door shoot open.

Wetherill and the Colonel roll out of each one to a position of kneeling on one knee, automatic weapon scanning the space in front of him.

The Hummer is right behind the Suburban.

Before it stops, three doors are thrown open and a man rolls from each onto the ground and then up on one knee, panning 180 degrees with his eyes and with a submachine gun held tight to his body.

As soon as the Hummer stops, its lights go out and SMITH rolls out of the driver's door. All the men are in battle gear. Each man has multiple weapons, body armor, and is holding a submachine gun.

EMERSON  
(whispering into collar  
mike)  
(MORE)

EMERSON (CONT'D)

Smith, are the infrared floodlights on?

SMITH

(whispering into collar mike)

Yes, Colonel.

EMERSON

(whispering into collar mike)

Very well.

(calling out)

Williams, are you there? It's Colonel Emerson.

Rick is confused.

RICK

(calling out)

Colonel Emerson? What are you doing here?

EMERSON

(calling out)

Long story, Corporal. We're here now. Where are you and where are the bad guys?

RICK

(calling out)

They're after my *family*, Colonel.

EMERSON

(calling out)

They're going to have to go through us now, Corporal. I've got a squad with me. We've got plenty of firepower. Give me a sitrep.

RICK

(calling out)

I'm on the porch. One of them has me bore-sighted here. He has to be out there beyond you. I've stayed here because if they get me or get behind me, that's all she wrote.

EMERSON

(calling out)

Right.

RICK  
(calling out)  
There's at least one around the right of the house. There is a door to the basement and Laura is shooting it from the inside with a 12-gauge. The kids are in the basement with her. I don't know how many more there are.

EMERSON  
(calling out)  
Got it, Corporal. Stand by.

RICK  
(calling out)  
We've got to get them before they get Laura and the kids. They called out they are going to burn the house down, but I don't know how.

EMERSON  
(talking into his collar mike)  
Wetherill, take the guy behind us. Stay on the net in case you need backup. That goes for everybody. JOHNSTON, take the right side of the house. Take out whoever is trying to break in the basement door. Smith, go round to the back of the house. WILSON, take the left side of the house. BEN BELLA, stay with me. We're going up to the porch.  
(calling out)  
Corporal, cover us. Two of us are coming to you.

The four disappear in the directions they are ordered. Quickly after, there is a burst of machine gun fire out of frame.

Emerson and Ben Bella run up to the porch.

They run around to the corner where Rick is standing, MP5 pointing up. His face is bloody from the wound over his right eye.

Rick shows dawning recognition, letting his MP5 fall on its strap.

RICK  
 (low voice)  
 Ben Bella! Why aren't you out  
 pissing in the desert somewhere?

They have their hands on each side of the other's neck just below the ears. From a distance it can look as if they are fighting.

BEN BELLA  
 (low voice)  
 That's where I should be, but the  
 Colonel needed a medic and insisted  
 I come along and save your sorry  
 ass.

Ben Bella looks at Rick's gear. Ben Bella grins.

BEN BELLA  
 I see you haven't forgotten how  
 it's done.

Rick looks over at Colonel Emerson, but still holding Ben Bella's neck.

RICK  
 (whispering)  
 My God, Colonel, you're a sight!  
 (pause)  
 I've got to get to the basement and  
 see that Laura and the kids are OK.

EMERSON  
 (low voice)  
 I'll back you up. Our guys are  
 circling the house right now,. Ben  
 Bella, stay on point here. Don't  
 let them take you down!

BEN BELLA  
 Don't worry, Colonel. I'll be here  
 when you get back.

Jeff, barefoot and clad in sweatpants and a T-shirt, comes barreling out of the dark, straight for Emerson's back. Jeff is holding a baseball bat cocked back over his shoulder.

Ben Bella shouts a warning.

BEN BELLA  
 (loud voice)  
 Colonel!

Emerson looks behind him.

Jeff is almost on him and is swinging the bat at his head.

With practiced jiu-jitsu, Emerson turns, reaches up with his left hand, uses the momentum of the bat that is swinging toward him to wrench it out of Jeff's hand and let it swing in his hand across his left side.

Emerson shoots his right arm out, wraps it around Jeff's belly and flips him head over heels over his right hip.

Jeff lands on his back on the porch floor with a thud.

He gasps for breath.

Emerson drops down and puts a knee on one shoulder and his hand on Jeff's chest.

EMERSON

(low voice)

Easy, son. We're the good guys. I was in the Marines with your father.

Jeff is gasping, struggling, trying to draw breath, trying to get Emerson off him.

Emerson looks up at Rick.

EMERSON

Chip off the old block, Corporal?

Rick is surprised at Jeff's action.

RICK

(low voice)

I guess... Jeff. It's OK. These are friends.

Jeff, hearing Rick's voice, visibly relaxes.

He gasps for breath in short, harsh intakes.

RICK

(low voice)

Colonel, I'm sorry about this.

EMERSON

(unfazed)

(low voice)

Totally understandable, Corporal.

RICK

(low voice)

Colonel, let's take him inside.

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

I've got to check on Laura and the kids in the basement. The opposition said they were going to burn the house down and Laura has been shooting at something down there.

Ben Bella and Rick pick Jeff up by the shoulders and feet and carry him carefully through the door of the house.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ben Bella and Rick carry Jeff in and put him on the floor next to the upended couch.

Ben Bella pulls down a pillow and puts it under Jeff's head.

Emerson turns to Ben Bella.

EMERSON

Stay with him and watch that door.

Rick and Emerson head off to the basement door with their weapons at the ready.

EXT. RIGHT SIDE OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Johnston, who is African American, is cautiously moving around the right side of the house.

As he comes around the corner, he sees a figure working at the outside door to the basement.

He sees two flashes, blam, blam as Laura shoots the 12-gauge at the door.

The figure flinches as he is hit by either buckshot or a piece of the door.

Johnston steps out for a clear shot.

The figure sees him move, and runs along the side of the house toward the back.

Johnston moves to the side of the basement door.

JOHNSTON

(loud whisper)

Mrs. Williams! Mrs. Williams!  
It's Sergeant Johnston. Do you remember me? You can stop shooting. You hit him.

LAURA

What?

JOHNSTON

Mrs. Williams, we've met. I'm a Marine. They call me the Black Widower. Do you remember?

LAURA

(remembering)

Sergeant Johnston! What are you doing here?

JOHNSTON

We have a whole squad here looking for the bad guys. We just got here a few minutes ago.

LAURA

(with relief)

Oh, my God!

JOHNSTON

Yes. Now, Mrs. Williams, hold your position there in the basement. Don't come out. We'll take care of the terrorists and then come in. Don't let your guard down until we've accounted for all of them.

LAURA

Right, Sergeant. We'll be waiting for you here. Sergeant?

JOHNSTON

Yes?

LAURA

I have my younger children here but my oldest boy went out. Have you seen him?

JOHNSTON

No, but we have men all over. I'm sure he's OK.

LAURA

We'll be waiting right here for you.

JOHNSTON

Right.

Johnston moves carefully past the basement door.

He moves on down the side of the house.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rick and Emerson move across the living room to the door to the basement.

Rick calls through the door.

RICK  
Laura, are you there?

LAURA  
(with relief)  
Rick! Yes, we're here!

Rick lets air out through his lips.

RICK  
We're coming down. I've got a  
friend with me. Don't shoot us.

LAURA  
Yes. OK.

Rick opens the door to the basement.

INT. BASEMENT OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick moves slowly down the stairs. Emerson is right behind him. Both of them still have their weapons.

Laura sees Rick coming down.

LAURA  
Rick, Sergeant Johnston is outside.  
We met him at your base years ago.

RICK  
Yes. Marines are here. They just  
got here a few minutes ago.

LAURA  
Marines?

RICK  
This is Colonel Emerson, my old  
commanding officer. I don't know  
the details myself.

LAURA  
(in surprise and greeting)  
Colonel Emerson!

EMERSON  
Hello, Mrs. Williams.

Emerson looks around. There are six shotgun shells on the floor.

Laura is still holding the shotgun in her arm.

Two heads appear from behind the work table - Susan and Luke.

RICK  
Kids! Am I glad to see you!

The children come out from behind the table.

Rick moves over and hugs Susan.

Rick hugs Luke.

Susan and Luke stare at Emerson.

RICK  
This is a very good friend, Colonel Emerson.

Emerson leans down and shakes hands with Susan.

EMERSON  
Hello.

He shakes hands with Luke.

EMERSON  
Hello.

Susan and Luke continue staring at Emerson.

Emerson looks around, impressed.

EMERSON  
Remind me never to come after you, Corporal. Mrs. Williams, this is a real warrior's lair. I bet the bad guys are the most surprised people in the world to come up against this much resistance.

Laura smiles wanly.

LAURA

Thank you Colonel. Rick, Jeff's not here.

RICK

I know. He's upstairs. He's fine. A bit the worse for wear. He attacked the Colonel thinking he was one of the opposition.

EMERSON

There wasn't time to be gentle about it, Mrs. Williams. I'm sorry to have hurt your boy, but he'll be fine.

LAURA

Colonel, please. We are very grateful for your being here.

EMERSON

Very well. Let's not relax too much. They're still out there. But I think we can go up to the living room. What do you think, Corporal.

RICK

Yes. Let's do that.

They move toward the stairs. Luke is the first up the stairs.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jeff is lying propped up against the upturned sofa. Ben Bella is kneeling beside him. Jeff is struggling with his breathing. Ben bella notes his discomfort.

BEN BELLA

Jeff, I'm the medic on this team. I'm going to examine you to see if you've broken anything. Tell me if it hurts anywhere.

Jeff smiles wanly.

JEFF

Everywhere.

Ben Bella grins.

BEN BELLA  
Well, anywhere specifically.

Ben Bella kneels down beside Jeff.

He expertly runs his hands behind Jeff's neck, down his shoulders and arms.

He then runs his hands from Jeff's armpits down his torso.

BEN BELLA  
Lean forward.

Ben Bella pulls Jeff forward by his shoulders as Jeff is clearly having difficulty moving.

Jeff's head is hanging over Ben Bella's shoulder as Ben Bella runs his hands down Jeff's back.

Jeff grunts.

JEFF  
It hurts there.

BEN BELLA  
Here?

Jeff grunts.

JEFF  
Yeah.

BEN BELLA  
OK. It looks like you've broken a rib. We'll tape that up and you'll be fine.  
(pause)  
I'm going to cut this shirt off.

Ben Bella takes a rolled kit off his web belt.

He unrolls it in one move.

From it, he pulls a pair of scissors.

BEN BELLA  
OK, here we go.

Ben Bella cuts Jeff's T-shirt from the bottom to the neck and then over each shoulder down to the end of the sleeve.

He carefully pulls off the two pieces - the front and the back.

He reaches in his pack for surgical tape.

He wraps it around Jeff's midsection several times.

BEN BELLA  
So, how does that feel?

JEFF  
Hard to breathe.

BEN BELLA  
Yeah, I wrapped it tight. It makes  
breathing hard, but it holds that  
rib in place.

Ben Bella looks around for the bathroom.

He sees it and goes to it.

He comes back with a glass of water.

He and takes a pill out of his unrolled kit.

He holds the pill and glass out to Jeff.

BEN BELLA  
Take this. You will be a little  
uncomfortable for a while and this  
will help.

Jeff takes the pill and glass.

He downs the pill.

He hands the glass back to Ben Bella.

BEN BELLA  
How do you feel?

JEFF  
OK.  
(pause)  
Thank you.

EXT. BACK OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Johnston carefully works his way along the right side of the house, weapon at the ready.

As he reaches the back corner of the house, he sees Smith.

Smith sees him.

Johnston raises his eyebrows.

Smith shakes his head and then shrugs his shoulders.

In the distance, car doors slam, then the sound of a car starting and tires squealing as it roars off down an unseen road.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

FADE IN:

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Luke comes out of the basement door into the living room.

He sees Jeff lying there bandaged.

Jeff has dozed off under the influence of the painkiller, so his head is on his chest.

Luke's eyes open wide and he runs over to Jeff.

Luke stands there looking at Jeff and then bursts into tears.

Jeff wakes up a little blurry.

He sees Luke standing there crying.

He holds out his arms.

JEFF

Come here.

Luke wraps his arms around Jeff's neck.

He collapses on to him.

He buries his head in Jeff's neck.

Jeff grunts as Luke's weight hits his body and his broken rib.

He puts his arms around Luke and holds him.

JEFF

It's OK Luke. I'm OK. Mom and Dad  
are here. Suze is here. We're OK.

Luke heaves with sobs.

Laura comes out of the basement door.

She sees Jeff lying there bandaged, propped against the sofa, with Luke lying on him, face buried in his neck.

Looking at Jeff, she makes a hugging gesture with her arms.

Jeff wraps his arms tighter around Luke.

JEFF  
 It's OK. I'm here, Luke. I'm  
 here. It's OK.

Susan, Emerson and Rick come out of the basement door.

Laura walks over to Jeff and kneels down.

She brushes his hair off his forehead.

LAURA  
 Oh, baby, I'm so sorry you got  
 hurt.

Jeff is embarrassed.

JEFF  
 I'm OK, Mom. Really.

Luke moves a bit and Jeff grunts.

Laura rubs Luke's back.

RICK  
 He *is* OK, isn't he, Achmed?

BEN BELLA  
 Yes, Rick. He's OK. But he has a  
 broken rib. The eighth rib on the  
 left back. I've taped it up tight.  
 No damage to the lung as far as I  
 can see, but you want to get it X-  
 rayed as soon as possible. He's  
 going to be uncomfortable for a  
 couple of days. I've given him  
 some codeine. I'll leave some more  
 for you to give him later.

Laura stands up.

She wipes here eyes.

She looks around at the scene - the furniture up-ended, Jeff  
 lying with his back to the sofa, holding Luke, Emerson, Ben  
 Bella and Rick in battle gear.

LAURA  
 Well...

EMERSON  
 (talking into collar mike)  
 Wetherill, report.

WETHERILL

(overheard)

Holding position in front of the house, Colonel. I hit the bad guy who was firing at Williams. He dropped his weapon, but I don't think he's down. I don't see him anywhere.

EMERSON

(talking into collar mike)

Smith?

SMITH

(overheard)

Holding position at the back of the house, Colonel. No bad guys in sight. I heard a car start and speed off about ten minutes ago. My guess is that it was the opposition leaving once they saw we were here.

EMERSON

(talking into collar mike)

Wilson?

WILSON

(overhears)

Clear here, Colonel. No activity on the left side of the house. I also heard the car leave.

EMERSON

(talking into collar mike)

Johnston?

JOHNSTON

(overheard)

I'm at the back with Smith, Colonel. I saw a bad guy get hit by Mrs. Williams' shotgun. He skedaddled when he saw me and I didn't try to take him out. I figured the fewer bodies the better.

EMERSON

(talking into collar mike)

Very well. Let's collapse the perimeter back to the house. The terrorists told Williams that they were going to burn it down.

(MORE)

EMERSON (CONT'D)

See if you find any prep for that, either kindling at the low tech level or something higher tech like a gas cylinder. Report in if you find anything. I will see you in the living room when you are done if you don't find anything.

WETHERILL

(overheard quietly)  
Ooh - rah.

SMITH

(overheard quietly)  
Ooh - rah.

WILSON

(overheard quietly)  
Ooh - rah.

JOHNSTON

(overheard quietly)  
Ooh - rah.

EXT. ROADBLOCK ON MAIN ROAD OUT OF BILLINGS - NIGHT

Two State Police cars make a roadblock backed to each other in the middle of the road, blocking the road.

All the flashing lights are working.

Eight Troopers, four on each side of the road are milling around, including the Trooper who notified Rick at the beginning.

The CIA man is on the left side of the road, talking to the Trooper we have seen before.

Two civilian cars have been stopped at the side of the road.

Around a bend in the road in the distance, comes a Mercedes at high speed.

"Our" Trooper moves into the road to guide the oncoming Mercedes to a stop.

From one side of the oncoming car comes several flashes of light and the staccato sound of a submachine gun.

'Our" Trooper dives for the side of the road.

The CIA man pulls out an M1911A1 .45 Browning semi-automatic from a shoulder holster, stands in a shooting position with both hands on the grip and shoots at the car from the side of the road.

The other Troopers have their weapons out and are shooting at the oncoming car.

The oncoming car accelerates and lets off another burst of submachine gun fire that riddles the two police cars.

The Mercedes blasts through the center where the two police cars are backed into each other.

The flash from the exploding police cars suddenly outlines the blade of a bulldozer resting on the road.

The flash illuminates the Caterpillar yellow of the bulldozer.

The car crashes into the steel bulldozer blade and explodes in a fireball.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Luke has fallen asleep. He is breathing against Jeff's neck.

Laura speaks to Jeff.

LAURA  
Is he asleep?

Jeff nods.

Laura reaches out her arms.

LAURA  
I'll take him.

Jeff shakes his head.

JEFF  
Let me keep him for a few minutes.  
I'm OK with him. I think he's  
overwhelmed.

Ben Bella comes over.

BEN BELLA  
Let your mother take him, Jeff.  
Let's take the weight off that rib.

JEFF

OK.

Ben Bella bends down and lifts Luke up in his arms. Luke remains asleep.

JEFF

Mom, don't take him upstairs.  
Let's put him on the couch.

LAURA

Good idea. Achmed, can I call you that?

Ben Bella nods and smiles.

LAURA

Put him over there.

Laura points to the couch.

LAURA

Rick, pull that couch upright.

Rick and Emerson put the couch upright.

Ben Bella puts Luke down on the couch. He continues sleeping.

Laura gets a blanket from a pile in the corner of the living room.

She puts it over Luke.

The front door of the house opens and Jack bursts in.

Johnston comes in behind him.

Jack is delirious. He runs up to Rick and jumps up and down, yelping.

Rick kneels down.

Jack licks Rick's face. Jack's tail is wagging a mile a minute.

RICK

Hey boy. Where've you been?

JOHNSTON

I found him tied to a tree with his muzzle tied shut. Imagine that. I wonder why they didn't just do away with him, but here he is.

Laura walks up to Johnston.

She looks him in the eye.

LAURA  
Sergeant Johnston...Laura Williams.

Laura extends her hand.

Johnston shakes it.

LAURA  
Thank you. Thanks are not adequate  
for what you did, but...thank you.  
You'll never know what it meant to  
hear your voice.

JOHNSTON  
Actually, its retired Sergeant,  
Mrs. Williams. We are all retired.  
We just can't seem to get away from  
the Colonel here. But, you are  
welcome!

Johnston grins.

LAURA  
Laura.

Laura hugs Johnston.

JOHNSTON  
Jamal.

Johnston hugs Laura back.

Rick goes up to Johnston.

He looks him in the eye.

Then he hugs him.

RICK  
Sergeant, thank you.

JOHNSTON  
Corporal, you are welcome.

Johnston grins.

RICK  
As long as we are getting  
acquainted, Colonel, would you come  
over here?

Rick brings Emerson over.

He stands next to Jeff.

Jeff looks up.

RICK  
Colonel, this is my eldest son,  
Jeffrey Williams.

Jeff starts to get up.

EMERSON  
No, no. Don't get up.

Emerson puts out his hand.

EMERSON  
Jeff, good to meet you...again.

Emerson grins.

Jeff winces as he raises his hand to shake Emerson's hand.

RICK  
Jeff, this is Colonel Thomas  
Emerson, my commanding officer in  
Iraq, the finest man I have ever  
known, and one for whose presence  
tonight we are all very grateful.

EMERSON  
Thank you, Corporal. Don't give me  
a swelled head!

Emerson grins.

Jeff is still shaking hands with Emerson.

JEFF  
Colonel, I'm very sorry...

EMERSON  
(cutting him off)  
Not a bit of it, Jeff. In your  
position, I hope I would have done  
the same thing. In fact, you  
remind me of me.

Emerson grins.

EMERSON  
Next time, the outcome would be  
different.

Emerson, still grinning, stops shaking hands.

JEFF

I'm not sure about that, Colonel.

EMERSON

Oh, yes. All you need is a little training.

Smith comes through the door.

He comes into the living room.

SMITH

Looks like we drove the bad guys off. Not bad for a bunch of has-beens.

Smith grins.

SMITH

Wilson and Wetherill are taking another quick look around.

Wilson comes into the living room.

WILSON

We found a can of gasoline and some wooden shingles on the left side of the house. That appears to be fire-making material. I think we must have interrupted them since the stuff was left in a pile. We didn't find anything more high tech than that, although that certainly would have been enough to start quite a fire. Mac's outside. He's going to surveil for a few minutes just to be sure we got 'em all.

LAURA

Well, if you men would do us one more service and help put the furniture back, I'll go out in the kitchen and see what I can do about an early breakfast. I'm sure everybody must be hungry.

Laura goes out into the kitchen.

The men quickly restore the furniture to its normal positions and places.

Rick, Emerson, Johnston, Smith and Wilson take off their automatic weapons and stack them at the side of the room. They get out of their other gear.

They put the handguns and knives and body armor on one of the tables.

RICK

Let me get some towels so you all can clean up.

Rick goes upstairs.

BEN BELLA

Jeff, you're going to get cold on that floor. Let's get you up on the couch.

Ben Bella helps Jeff get up.

Jeff gets up very stiffly.

Ben Bella has him lie down on the couch with a couch pillow under his back so his feet rest where the pillow was.

BEN BELLA

Like that. Keep that back flat. How does that feel?

JEFF

A little sore.

BEN BELLA

I'm afraid it's going to be sore for a few days. But be sure to tell me if the pain gets worse.

Wetherill comes into the living room.

WETHERILL

It's clear out there.

EMERSON

Good.

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - NIGHT

The team crowds into the kitchen, around the kitchen table. This includes Emerson, Ben Bella, Wetherill, Johnston, Smith, Wilson, Rick and Susan.

Laura is working at the stove.

Jeff and Luke are in the living room.

The table is set with two pitchers of orange juice and a plate of rolls. Scrambled eggs and bacon are on each plate.

EMERSON

Mrs. Williams, how did you rustle this up so quickly?

LAURA

Laura, Colonel. You don't expect me to reveal the secrets of the homemaker, do you? Isn't that what you call operational security?

EMERSON

Well, it really hits the spot.

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - NIGHT

Emerson reaches for his belt.

He picks up a cellphone, which has been on silent ring.

EMERSON

Yes? Oh. Well done. We're secure here. Yes. Yes. I agree. OK. Bye.

Emerson puts the phone back on his belt.

EMERSON

(to Rick)

That was our friend. Do you know who I mean?

RICK

Yes.

EMERSON

He has been working with the State Police. They set up roadblocks on the major roads leading out of Billings. About an hour ago, a Mercedes ran one of them. But the roadblock was backstopped by a bulldozer. There is nothing left but the pieces. The police think there were three guys in the car. Our friend thinks those were our guys. They found weapons in the debris.

(pause)

(MORE)

EMERSON (CONT'D)

So.

(pause)

It's over.

(pause)

Our friend has convinced the police not to notify the press of the crash, to go silent on it. He thinks - and I agree - that it will be most effective for this op to just disappear: that there is never any news of what happened here. That keeps you and your family from the publicity and keeps the opposition from getting any feedback. Is the op ongoing? What happened to it? No answer.

RICK

(exhales audibly)

Well. That is good news.

(pause)

So, Colonel, not that we are ungrateful - quite the contrary - but what are you doing here?

EMERSON

I am retired from the Corps, as are all these men. We are civilians. We could not be operational in the US if we were on active duty. Posse Comitatus prohibits that. I am now a member of the Counterterrorism Bureau in Washington. I take special assignments. For this one, I have a temporary commission as a State Trooper from the governor of Montana. These men are deputies. The men are all ex-Force Recon who have kept their hand in.

WETHERILL, JOHNSTON, SMITH, WILSON,  
BEN BELLA

(quietly around the table)

Ooh-rah.

EMERSON

When I heard it was you who had been targeted, I assigned myself the op. We all flew into Helena yesterday afternoon. The timing only came up a day or so ago so we had to move fast. We would have been here earlier if Route 90 hadn't been under construction.

(MORE)

EMERSON (CONT'D)

By the time we got here, it was too late for a stealth approach.

WETHERILL, JOHNSTON, SMITH, WILSON,  
BEN BELLA

Laughter.

WETHERILL

Yeah, well, I'd done the obstacle course in the Suburban and we knew that the Hummer could handle anything the Suburban could, so it wasn't quite as crazy as it must have looked.

EMERSON

We figured we'd use the "wounded mother duck" approach - "look at me, look at me." At the very least, we figured it would rattle the opposition. So that is our story. Now I think I'll just go out and check on my sparring partner.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Emerson walks into the living room.

Jeff is lying on the sofa, half asleep.

EMERSON

How are you doing?

JEFF

OK. A little sore.

Jeff smiles wanly.

EMERSON

To be expected. I'll see if Ben Bella can give you another painkiller.

JEFF

Thanks. Colonel?

EMERSON

Yes?

JEFF

Were you all laughing at me in there?

Emerson is surprised.

EMERSON

No! Why would we be doing that?

JEFF

Well, I pretty much made a fool of myself tonight.

EMERSON

Is that the way you see it? Well, why don't we ask the men?

Jeff is embarrassed.

JEFF

No, no. I don't want to make an issue out of it.

EMERSON

Well, I think it's important. Let me help you up.

Jeff grunts as he swings his legs to the floor.

He grabs Emerson's arm as he stands up.

Emerson puts his arm around Jeff's waist and Jeff puts his right arm over Emerson's shoulders.

They walk to the kitchen.

INT. THE WILLIAMS KITCHEN - NIGHT

Everybody looks up as they walk in.

Emerson pulls out his chair for Jeff and remains standing himself.

EMERSON

Men, we have a question for you. Young Jeff here wants to know if you are laughing at him. I said we'd ask you. Just to review, outmanned and outgunned, he attacked straight up the middle against unknown odds to help his father and protect his family. Do any of you find that funny? Jeff, look at each of them in the face and see what you find.

The men with their backs to Jeff turn around in their chairs so he can see their faces.

The camera looks at each man and holds his face in frame for a few seconds. Each of the men has on his unsmiling, hard stare so the camera sees the warrior in each of them.

There is no other sound in the room.

EMERSON

So, Jeff, you have your answer. Don't let it go to your head. You have to earn the respect of men like these every day. But for today, you have it. As for courage, you need go no further than to ask your father how his hands got to be the way they are. But that is a story for another day. And saying that, we need to be on our way. We have to be back in Helena this morning for me to hand in my badge and for the men to get decommissioned and back to their families.

They all rise and go out into the living room.

INT. THE WILLIAMS LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Rick and Laura hug each of the soldiers as they get their gear.

Jack is running around.

Luke wakes up groggily on the sofa and sits up.

Emerson goes over and shakes his hand.

He shakes Susan's hand.

He shake's Jeff's hand and puts his other hand on Jeff's shoulder.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT IV

EPILOG

FADE IN:

EXT. PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Emerson walks out of the front door onto the porch.

He looks up at the lightening sky.

EMERSON  
 (to himself)  
 First light. A soldier's favorite  
 time of day.

Emerson smiles ruefully to himself.

EMERSON  
 I'm getting too old for this.

The other Marines come out of the front door of the house onto the porch.

WETHERILL  
 Time to go, Colonel. We have to be  
 in Helena by 10:00.

Emerson turns to Laura who is standing on the porch.

Luke and Susan are standing on either side of her and she is holding their hands.

EMERSON  
 Laura, thank you for breakfast. I  
 am sure I speak for us all when I  
 say I can't recall when I've had a  
 better one.

LAURA  
 It was an honor to have you,  
 Colonel, and...  
 (looking around at the  
 men)  
 All of you men. Thank you.

EXT. FRONT LAWN OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - DAY

Emerson and the other five men turn to go.

They walk down the front lawn toward the vehicles.

Rick walks out of the front door of the house in Marine Corps Dress Blue uniform (which includes white hat). He looks striking.

Jeff walks out stiffly behind him.

Susan and Luke stare at him. They have never seen him in his uniform.

Wetherill looks over his shoulder and sees Rick.

He nudges Emerson.

WETHERILL

Colonel...

Emerson turns around and sees Rick in uniform on the porch, standing slightly in front of his family.

He straightens visibly and snaps off a crisp salute.

Rick comes to attention and returns a slow, very formal salute. The back of his hand is scarred as seen earlier in his office.

RICK

Colonel, there are no words.

Rick has tears on his face.

EMERSON

None are necessary, Corporal. We are all in this together.

RICK

I will never forget you coming across the lawn with the men behind you.

EMERSON

And, Corporal, I will never forget you pulling me out of that burning tank.

Emerson stiffens, salutes again.

EMERSON

Semper Fi, Corporal.

Rick stiffens, salutes again.

RICK

Semper Fi, Colonel.

EXT. PORCH OF THE WILLIAMS HOUSE - DAY

Emerson turns.

He and Wetherill get into the Chevy Suburban.

Smith and Johnston, and Ben Bella and Wilson, get into the Hummer.

As they pull out, Johnston and Ben Bella, each riding on the right, salute.

Rick salutes back.

FADE OUT.

THE END