

"THE PEACEKEEPER"

FADE IN:

EXT. PANORAMIC VIEWS OF AN EASTERN EUROPEAN CITY - DAY

SUPERIMPOSED OVER the scene: SARAJEVO, BOSNIA

EXT. A RESTAURANT/BAR

People walk by, enter.

INT. INSIDE THE RESTAURANT

Two young British Army officers, a man and a woman, dine at a table beside a window.

SUPER: TWO MONTHS AGO

A middle-aged couple, both with drinks in their hands, approach the table. ZORAN, the standing man, questions the officers.

ZORAN

I'm Zoran, and this is my wife,
DESA. I assume you are with the
European Union peacekeeping forces?

The FEMALE OFFICER nods. The MALE OFFICER responds.

MALE OFFICER

Yes, we are, but we are new here.
We've been in Bosnia only a few
months.

ZORAN

Could we buy you drinks, to thank
you for keeping us and our country
safe? We're having plum brandy,
the favorite of the Serb militias
you are helping keep peaceful.
Have you ever tried it?

MALE OFFICER

No, but I've heard about it. I'd
like to try it.

FEMALE OFFICER

Me, too.

MALE OFFICER

I'm TONY, and this is Belinda.

He points to his companion.

FEMALE OFFICER

Everyone calls me BELL.

TONY

Please join us.

Desa slides into an empty chair at the table. Zoran orders extra drinks from a waiter, then takes a chair from a nearby empty table and joins the others.

TONY

I assume you're both Muslims.

ZORAN

Actually we're Serbs. We knew the famous original peacekeeper, American Army Corporal BRAD Fisher. That was about 20 years ago, soon after the Balkans War ended. When the United Nations still supplied the peacekeeping forces and there was a huge American base up north at the airport in Tuzla.

DESA

I no longer consider myself a Serb, but I'm still a Byzantine Christian. And I sure qualified as a Serb in those days. MARKO Popovic, my father, commanded the militia in a Bosnian Serb area near Tuzla.

BELL

Wow! Everyone here has heard the stories about the legendary Corporal Fisher, but you guys are the first people we've ever met who actually knew him. And it was your family and friends he was fighting!?

DESA

We also know AMIRA, the Muslim girl he was protecting. Her dad, Mehmed SMAJIC, was then the Muslim political leader in Tuzla. It all started when my father's militia tried to kill him ...

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

An old-fashioned burial ground with tombstones of varied sizes.

SUPER: TUZLA, BOSNIA - 20 YEARS AGO

Mehmed Smajic, an imposing man about fifty years old, stands with his back to a road a short distance away. He is flanked by two American soldiers, both armed with M-16 rifles.

Four Army Humvees, two with cannons mounted atop them, are parked about 50 yards away. More than a dozen additional soldiers stand by the vehicles. All the soldiers, including those with Smajic, are wearing helmets and flak jackets.

Smajic speaks into a microphone, addressing more than one hundred listeners standing among the tombstones. Sound system speakers are on the grass nearby.

SMAJIC

We must preserve the peace in Bosnia. We must make whatever sacrifices are necessary to provide a safe place for our children to grow and learn.

He gestures with a fist. LISTENERS cheer, shout his name.

LISTENERS

Smajic! Smajic! Smajic!

SMAJIC

But the one thing we dare not sacrifice is our honor. Peace must come without bowing to Serbian aggression. Otherwise, those we come here to honor will have died in vain.

A Russian-made car roars down the road behind Smajic. Both the driver and a front-seat passenger wear ski masks. The passenger leans through an open window, is outside the car from the waist up.

Several listeners scream warnings. The passenger pulls the pin on a grenade. Throws it at Smajic. Smajic, the soldiers, and nearby listeners dive for cover. A loud explosion. The speakers and microphone are thrown violently.

The soldiers aim their rifles at the car. Automatic rifle fire.

The car careens into the cemetery.
Bangs against a tombstone.
The driver slumps over the wheel.
The passenger dives out the open window.
A rifle in his hand.
The soldiers shoot him down.

One of the soldiers helps Smajic to his feet. He appears uninjured. Listeners talk loudly.

EXT. AN ARMY BASE - EVENING

The base includes a former commercial airport that now houses military aircraft, including Apache and Black Hawk helicopters.

A few hundred yards away, in a compound surrounded by barbed wire, are several former airport buildings and seemingly endless rows of rectangular tents, enough to house more than a thousand soldiers.

SUPER: AMERICAN ARMY BASE, TUZLA, BOSNIA

There is no military activity at the compound, except for a handful of soldiers on guard duty. They wear helmets and flak jackets, carry M-16 rifles. Military personnel walking in open areas also wear protection against potential snipers.

Officers and enlisted men pass each other without saluting, fearing that doing so would identify the officers and make them prime targets.

A variety of vehicles, including tanks and Humvees with cannons mounted atop them, are visible. The buildings are old and pockmarked with bullet holes. A covered canteen has been erected against the wall of one of them.

INT. CANTEEN

It is crowded with military personnel, about one-third of them women, sitting at tables that look like mismatched lawn furniture but are each lighted by matching candles inside smoked-glass containers.

Except for two tables of officers, seated together at one end, the patrons are boisterous, laughing and talking loudly. Service is provided by Bosnian nationals, a male manager behind the bar and three waitresses.

The beverage menu above the bar includes various coffee drinks, soda pop, and non-alcoholic beer, but no liquor.

Corporal Brad Fisher and Private JACK Mason sit at a corner table. Both have half-full beer mugs.

In the center of the table is a small statue of Buddha. A photo of a young woman burns in Buddha's lap. A letter is on the table in front of Brad.

JACK

Using the Buddha's a nice touch.
Where'd you get it?

BRAD

Won it in a poker game, years ago.
Screwball religions should serve
a purpose, Jack -- besides turning
people into fanatics.

He pours a small amount of liquid from his mug into Buddha's lap, extinguishing the fire.

BRAD

I should've known Sarah was
screwing around.

Jack takes a long drink from his beer mug.

JACK

While you're over here, living
like a monk.

BRAD

Surrounded by damned Muslims.

JACK

And we're not even allowed to date
them.

Brad finishes his drink with one long swallow.

BRAD

As if any self-respecting
Christian would want to. Muslim
women aren't people. They're
possessions.

JACK

Right now, I'd settle for
possessing anything in a skirt.

Brad laughs, elevates his empty mug.

BRAD

They're like this stuff. It looks
and tastes like beer, but it's
sure not the same.

EXT. A COFFEE BAR - DAY

Most customers are seated at sidewalk tables.

SUPER: TEMPE, ARIZONA, NEAR THE ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

Amira, a pretty woman in her early twenties, sits alone at a small table. Two backpacks loaded with books are beside her on the sidewalk. At the nearest table, BILL Conroy, a short young man, sips a drink.

SHERRY Rogers, a woman about the same age as Amira, attractive but not as pretty as her companion, exits the bar carrying two iced drinks, joins Amira. She sits, hands one drink to Amira.

SHERRY

So you're definitely not going home until after graduation?

AMIRA

It's only another two weeks.

SHERRY

But they tried to kill your father.

Before answering, Amira sips her drink, sets it back on the table.

AMIRA

He wasn't hurt. My family's used to violence. They insisted I finish my classes.

She again sips her drink.

AMIRA

Actually, I'm more worried about my mother. Her health isn't good.

MATT, a young man wearing a backpack, and a male companion exit the bar, stand staring at Amira, whisper to each other. Matt then walks over to the the women's table, eyes Amira from head to toe, addresses her.

MATT

Hi, I'm Matt. You're the student from Bosnia, aren't you?

AMIRA

I'm sure there are others on campus.

MATT

But your father's the Muslim leader the Russians tried to assassinate yesterday. I saw it on CNN.

Sherry interrupts.

SHERRY

Her name's Amira. I'm Sherry. And the assassins were Serbs, not Russians.

Amira mutters to Sherry.

AMIRA

Close enough. We haven't time for a geography lesson.

Matt grins broadly at Amira, ignores Sherry.

MATT

You know, I'd really like to talk more. Learn about Bosnia and Muslims.

AMIRA

Believe me, Matt, you don't want to get messed up with a Muslim girl.

MATT

Why's that?

AMIRA

If we kissed, we'd have to get married.

MATT

Really!?

Sherry chokes back a snicker, stares at her drink. Amira remains straight-faced.

AMIRA

I'm from a very strict culture. Press our lips together and we're stuck for life.

MATT

Okay. Well, nice meeting you, ah, virgin lips.

He makes an awkward departure. As he walks away, both women laugh.

SHERRY

I can't believe anyone is gullible enough to think you've never been kissed.

AMIRA

Some people will believe anything about Muslims.

SHERRY

How many guys have you kissed since you've been here?

AMIRA

Dozens of frogs, but there wasn't a prince among them.

SHERRY

Why were you so cold to Matt?

AMIRA

I'm tired of guys pretending to be interested in my country and my beliefs. I know -- we both know -- what they really want.

Sherry leans closer to Amira.

SHERRY

What'd you expect him to say?

She speaks in a dorkish-sounding voice.

SHERRY

You have a great body. I'd sure like to grope it.

Amira laughs.

AMIRA

It'd be a lot more honest approach.

Sherry leans back in her chair.

SHERRY

Maybe you should stick to dating Muslims.

AMIRA

That's even worse. The only Muslims I meet are from Old World countries.

Sherry laughs.

SHERRY

They want you to wear a veil in public?

AMIRA

Just about.

Bill, the short young man from the table nearby, rises, walks over to Amira. He speaks loudly enough for several other customers to hear.

BILL

You're so gorgeous, I'm tempted to make mad, passionate love to you right here. I'm Bill.

Amira stands, showing she is a few inches taller than Bill. She looks down at him, responds loudly.

AMIRA

You do and I find out about it, Bill, you're in big trouble.

Sherry and several nearby customers laugh loudly. Bill sheepishly returns to his table.

SHERRY

Now there's a direct approach. I think he overheard us.

EXT. AMERICAN ARMY BASE, TUZLA, BOSNIA - DAY

The base is routinely active. Soldiers drill, work on helicopters and vehicles.

INT. OFFICE

An officer, late thirties with the no-nonsense appearance of a career soldier, sits at a wooden desk. A desk nameplate identifies him as Colonel Jason ROSS. A large map of Bosnia hangs on one wall, a table beneath it.

Lieutenant Eric BALLARD, early twenties with the look of a clean-scrubbed recent college grad, enters.

BALLARD

You wanted to see me, Colonel?

ROSS

Yes, Lieutenant Ballard. Smajic's daughter just graduated from college in the States and is coming home. We've decided to give her an escort through Serb territory.

Ballard glances up at the map of Bosnia on the wall.

BALLARD

But there isn't any Serb territory between here and Sarajevo, Sir.

ROSS

She's flying into Belgrade. Accepting some kind of International Business School award.

BALLARD

Isn't it risky for her to go to Belgrade?

ROSS

Not really. The Serbs wouldn't dare harm her while she's in their country.

BALLARD

No?

ROSS

The real motive behind this award she's receiving is to show how relations are improving between Serbia and Bosnia.

Ballard nods.

ROSS

The Serbs aren't likely to mess up their propaganda efforts by giving her a plaque and then shooting her.

Ross stands, looks at the map.

ROSS

The real threat is from Bosnian Serbs, after she crosses the border. The Russians will escort her that far.

BALLARD

So she's coming from the East.

Ross walks to the map, circles an area with his finger.

ROSS

Through fifty kilometers of
Bosnian Serb territory.

BALLARD

Then an escort's a good idea. If
her father's a Serb target, she
probably is, too.

ROSS

Take a sedan and four Humvees.
Pick out sixteen of your best men.

BALLARD

When does she leave for Tuzla?

ROSS

Friday. I'll get you the details
later.

EXT. AMERICAN ARMY BASE

Same level of activity as previous scene.

Corporal Brad Fisher inspects a Humvee. Lieutenant Ballard
approaches him.

BRAD

I've lined up the men you need,
Lieutenant. There isn't anyone
better with an M-16 than these
guys.

BALLARD

And the vehicles will be ready?

BRAD

I'm taking care of that now, Sir.
(he stammers)
Permission to talk frankly,
Lieutenant?

BALLARD

Shoot.

BRAD

I'd like to find another man to
take my place.

Ballard stares into his eyes.

BALLARD

Why?

Brad breaks eye contact with the lieutenant, looks at the Humvee.

BRAD

Baby-sitting some raghead's daughter just isn't my kind of assignment.

BALLARD

I wouldn't call Bosnians "ragheads." They're nothing like Arab Muslims.

BRAD

They're still Muslims. One of my best friends lived with them in Iraq. Told me all about them.

He looks down, lowers his voice.

BRAD

That was before one of their bombs blew his legs off.

BALLARD

I'm sorry about your friend, but that was another situation in another part of the world. Here, the Muslims are the victims.

BRAD

But, Sir ...

BALLARD

You're going, Corporal. I want a squad leader the others know can outshoot and outfight them.

BRAD

Yes, Sir.

BALLARD

And keep your opinions of Muslims to yourself.

BRAD

Yes, Sir.

Ballard puts his hand on Brad's shoulder.

BALLARD

Don't look so glum. It's a
beautiful drive. You'll enjoy it.

BRAD

If you say so, Sir.

EXT. A RURAL HOME - NIGHT

The house is small, a battered old truck is parked in the
yard.

SUPER: A SERB VILLAGE NEAR TUZLA

INT. KITCHEN

Marko Popovic, late forties, and two younger men stand around
the table, drink plum brandy from the bottle, look at a map.

JOKA Popovic, a woman in her forties, and Desa Popovic, a
young woman who looks a little like Amira but is a couple of
years younger, sit on a worn couch in the adjoining living
room in the background.

MARKO

Smajic's daughter means more to
him than his own life. If we do
her, the Muslims will fight.

He pauses, takes a long drink of brandy.

MARKO

When they attack, the Americans
will have to protect us.

(smirking)

They're peacekeepers.

He sets down the bottle.

MARKO

And once the war resumes, we'll
soon be rid of the Americans. The
American Congress has no stomach
for more blood -- not American
blood.

The other men enthusiastically nod their agreement.

LIVING ROOM

Desa starts to speak. Joka puts her finger to her own lips.
Desa whispers instead.

DESA

What craziness is father planning now? He'll bring the peacekeeping forces down on our village.

JOKA

His way is not always right, but his goal is noble. He seeks a greater Serbia.

Desa raises her voice.

DESA

Greater, robho! Greater suffering for all.

Marko sticks his head into the living room, glares at the women and brandishes the brandy bottle threateningly at Desa.

MARKO

Shut up or I'll knock those treasonous thoughts from your head.

Joka pushes Desa to a bedroom, shoves her inside and shuts the door. She then returns to the couch, sits quietly, listens to the men joke and laugh in the kitchen.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Amira strides down a sidewalk crowded with students walking to class. Bill runs up to her from behind.

BILL

Hi, Amira.

She stops walking.

AMIRA

Hi.

BILL

I'm sorry I was so forward last week. I overheard you and your friend talking. I thought it would be funny.

AMIRA

It was funny.

BILL

I really do think you're gorgeous.

She smiles.

AMIRA

Thanks.

BILL

I hope you're not prejudiced
against dating short people.

Amira laughs.

AMIRA

Actually, I prefer my men short.
They're easier to handle.

BILL

I would like to go out with you.

AMIRA

I'd like that, too, but I'm flying
home to Bosnia in three days. I've
a million things to do before then.

They both step to the side of the sidewalk, so that passing
students need not detour around them.

BILL

Can I take you to the airport?
Maybe buy you a drink.

AMIRA

That'd be great.

EXT. OUTDOOR SHOOTING RANGE

About a dozen shooters fire both handguns and rifles at
targets set up at varying distances. They are supervised by
three young men with crew cuts wearing military fatigues.

Amira wears headgear to protect her ears, fires a handgun at
a silhouette target 25 yards away. After several shots, she
reels in the target, admires closely clustered holes in the
target figure's chest.

She adds it to other used targets beside her. An INSTRUCTOR
approaches her. She removes her headgear. He takes her
latest target, examines it.

INSTRUCTOR

The Serbs better not mess with
you.

Amira smiles. He looks at two earlier targets, whistles.

INSTRUCTOR

I see you're just as good with a rifle. Think you'll have to use your shooting skills when you return to Bosnia?

AMIRA

I hope not, but in Bosnia these days everyone should know about guns.

Amira runs her fingers along the barrel of the handgun.

AMIRA

I've never shot at someone, but I think I could if I had to. The Serbs killed a lot of my friends. Crippled many others.

INSTRUCTOR

I'm sorry. I hope things go well for you over there.

AMIRA

Thank you.

She waves, walks away carrying her targets.

EXT. A COLLEGE DORMITORY - DAY

Amira and Sherry sit on a low wall in front of the building, luggage piled in front of them.

SHERRY

I'm really gonna miss you.

AMIRA

I'll miss you, too.

SHERRY

Don't kiss any Bosnian frogs. You'll find your prince when you get back.

Amira laughs.

Sherry's expression becomes serious.

SHERRY

And don't forget to duck when you hear loud noises.

AMIRA

The attack on my father was an isolated incident. The peacekeeping forces are keeping a lid on things.

SHERRY

Why can't the Serbs and Muslims live together anyway?

AMIRA

A lot of them do. My mother's a Serb.

Sherry looks surprised.

SHERRY

Are mixed marriages like that rare?

AMIRA

Not at all. In the countryside, villages are either Serb or Muslim, but Tuzla isn't like that.

SHERRY

No?

AMIRA

In the cities, Muslims and Christians have lived together for centuries.

SHERRY

And slept together?

AMIRA

Right.

Amira glances down the street, stands as Bill's car approaches.

SHERRY

Is that still allowed?

An old-model convertible pulls up to the curb.

AMIRA

Not in areas the Serbs have conquered. They've made it a crime for a Muslim to marry a Serb -- or have sex with them.

SHERRY

God! Your multi-cultural dating
would blow their minds.

Bill jumps from the car, grins at Sherry and waves to her.
Sherry stands, waves back.

AMIRA

Got to go.

The two women hug as Bill loads Amira's luggage in the back
seat.

SHERRY

Don't forget to write.

AMIRA

I won't.

She waves to Sherry, gets into the car. She and Bill drive
away.

INT. AN AIRPORT COCKTAIL LOUNGE

Amira and Bill sit at a table, sip mixed drinks.

BILL

If I knew for sure that you're
coming back, I'd invest in
elevator shoes.

AMIRA

That's not necessary. You can
reach everything you need to.

BILL

(Look herup and down,
appreciatively.)
Yes, I guess I could! You are
coming back?

AMIRA

Eventually. To work here.

BILL

Doing what?

Amira sips her drink.

AMIRA

International stuff. I hope to work in the import/export business -- or maybe in international marketing for a big company.

BILL

Why'd you go to college in the U.S.?

AMIRA

My parents wanted me somewhere safe.

She laughs.

AMIRA

They didn't know how dangerous dating is here.

She looks at her watch.

AMIRA

I'd better get going. Let's just say "Good-bye" here.

They stand.

BILL

It's been great meeting you. I'm going to pray hard that I get to see you again.

She grins.

AMIRA

Face Mecca when you do.

He offers his hand for her to shake. Instead, she kisses him briefly on the lips. She waves as she walks away, smiling at his surprised expression.

INT. A MILITARY TENT - DAY

Brad sits on a bunk, cleaning a disassembled M-16. Parts of the rifle are on a towel on the bunk. There is no one else in the twelve-man tent. Jack enters, sits on the end of the bunk.

JACK

When we escort Smajic's daughter on Friday ...

He stutters, pauses.

BRAD

Yeah?

JACK

Can you arrange for me to be her
chauffeur?

Brad tosses Jack a rag and a piece of the rifle. Jack helps
him clean it.

BRAD

Why?

JACK

They say she's a real knockout.

BRAD

They also say "Don't touch."

JACK

She went to school in the U.S. You
can bet her education included how
to date American guys.

BRAD

She's still off limits. She's
Bosnian.

Brad begins reassembling the rifle.

JACK

She's Smajic's daughter. She can
probably date anyone she wants to.

BRAD

She's a damned Muslim!

Jack winces, gives his friend a disapproving look.

JACK

A damned beautiful one. I just
want to meet her. Talk to her.

Brad grimaces, shakes his head in disbelief.

BRAD

Okay, you can drive the sedan.
And you owe me, big time.

Jack smiles. Then his expression turns serious.

JACK
You think this assignment is
dangerous?

BRAD
For you -- if you try to date a
Muslim.

JACK
They did try to kill her father.

BRAD
The Serbs only have the guts to
attack civilians. They'd never
take on a heavily armed convoy.

EXT. HIGHWAY

An Army convoy of four Humvees, two with cannons atop them, and a sedan slows down, pulls into an observation area by a bridge spanning a river. The heavily armed vehicles are in front of and behind the sedan.

SUPER: NEAR THE BOSNIA/SERBIA BORDER

The occupants of the vehicles, Lieutenant Ballard and a total of sixteen American soldiers, climb out, stand around their vehicles talking. All wear helmets and flak jackets and, except for Ballard who has a sidearm, carry M-16 rifles.

A Russian-made sedan flying an United Nations flag travels the opposite direction across the bridge, pulls across the road into the observation area and parks a short distance from the American vehicles.

The Russian soldier driving it steps out, opens the back door. A Russian officer and Amira emerge. She wears Guess jeans, American running shoes and an ASU football sweatshirt.

Amira shakes the Russian officer's hand, then walks toward Ballard. The Russian officer and Ballard salute each other. The Russian driver and Jack move luggage between the trunks of the two cars.

Amira shakes hands with Ballard. The two Russians then return to their sedan, drive back across the bridge.

BALLARD
I'm Lieutenant Eric Ballard. I
hope you've enjoyed your trip so
far, Miss Smajic.

AMIRA

Yes, I have. Thank you.
 (looks at the convoy)
 Is all this hardware and firepower
 really necessary?

BALLARD

I sure hope not, but we believe in
 playing it safe.

He opens the back door of the sedan. Amira enters.

BALLARD

We'll have you home soon.

AMIRA

Great.

Ballard closes the sedan door, then climbs into the front passenger seat of the lead Humvee. The enlisted men enter their vehicles. Brad is the front seat passenger in the rear Humvee and Jack is behind the wheel of the sedan.

The convoy pulls onto the highway, returns the direction it came from.

INT. SEDAN

Jack's rifle leans against the seat beside him. He initially concentrates on the road, but frequently glances at his passenger in the rearview mirror. Finally, he works up the courage to initiate a conversation.

JACK

You like it in Arizona, Miss
 Smajic?

AMIRA

Very much. Where are you from?

JACK

Jacksonville, Florida.

Amira playfully covers the ASU logo on her sweatshirt with her hands.

AMIRA

That's Gator country.

JACK

ASU has had some good teams, too.

AMIRA

Not like Florida.

She leans forward over the back of the front seat.

AMIRA

You like it here?

JACK

It's pretty country, but I don't really know the people. I don't even understand the different religious groups and why they hate each other.

AMIRA

I lived here most of my life, and I don't understand it either.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME

About thirty armed men mill about five trucks parked in the yard, drinking, laughing, and talking. Marko exits the house.

MARKO

Load up! It's time for the Smajic girl's welcome home party.

The men cheer and wave their weapons in the air as they jump into the truck cabs and beds.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY

The military convoy travels slowly up a steep mountain road flanked by heavily wooded countryside. The woods are closer to the road on the side opposite the convoy.

The sedan in which Amira is riding remains sandwiched between the two heavily armed Humvees.

INT. LEAD HUMVEE

Lieutenant Ballard is the front seat passenger. Two armed enlisted men sit in back. Ballard speaks to the enlisted DRIVER, whose rifle is standing beside him in a holder on the Humvee dashboard.

BALLARD

I'll be happy when we get to the top of this grade. I don't like moving so slowly.

DRIVER

It's only a couple more minutes to the top, Sir.

INT. SEDAN

Amira and Jack are no longer talking. She leans back in her seat, watches the scenery through the side window. Then Jack resumes the conversation.

JACK

Is there going to be a big welcome home party?

Amira sits up, leans forward.

AMIRA

I'm sure there will be. You and the other soldiers want to come?

JACK

I don't think it would be allowed. There are regulations about fraternizing.

AMIRA

We'll see. My dad's a master at circumventing regulations.

JACK

It would be great. We don't get much chance to party.

AMIRA

It'll be a real blast. I promise.

EXT. HIGHWAY

A rocket streaks toward the Humvee in front of the sedan. The vehicle explodes. A ball of flames. Flips and spins on the roadway. The sedan starts to maneuver around it.

EXT. VIEW THROUGH A TELESCOPIC RIFLE SIGHT

Amira's head is framed in the sight.

EXT. WOODS NEAR THE ROAD

The sniper and Marko crouch behind a tree. Marko, also armed with a rifle but without the telescopic sight, looks over the sniper's shoulder.

About four dozen more men lie in wait nearby. All are armed either with automatic weapons or hunting rifles.

MARKO

Shoot just the driver. The girl
will not die so quickly. We'll
have some sport with her.

INT. SEDAN

A shot.
Jack slumps against the shattered driver's window.
Blood covers his face.
Amira screams.
Dives to the floor.
Automatic and semi-automatic rifle fire.

EXT. HIGHWAY

The sedan bounces off the road.
Rolls down an embankment.
Slams against a tree.
The other vehicles stop.
The remaining soldiers take cover behind the Humvees.
Return fire.

Bursts of heavy automatic weapons fire from both sides. A
second rocket explodes the other specially armed Humvee
seconds after its occupants take cover beside the highway.
The other Humvees are heavily damaged in the firefight.

Other vehicles on the highway, approaching from both
directions, screech to a stop, make U-turns.

Ballard barks an order to Brad.

BALLARD

Fisher, get the girl! Into the
woods.

(to other soldiers)

Give him some cover!

Heavy fire. Brad runs hunched over until he reaches Ballard.
The lieutenant takes off his sidearm and holster, hands them
to Brad.

BALLARD

Better take this, too.

Brad puts the holster on his belt, crawls across the open
area to the the sedan, opens the rear door.

Amira is crouched on the floor, apparently uninjured. He
glances quickly at Jack, sees that he is dead, takes his
friend's rifle and ammunition.

Brad takes Amira by the hand, pulls her from the car. She carries a purse with a shoulder strap in one hand. They crawl back to the lead Humvee. Brad tosses Jack's rifle to Ballard, but keeps the extra ammunition.

Brad and Amira then slide down an embankment, run hunched over until they reach the protection of the woods opposite the attackers.

EXT. WOODS

Brad and Amira sprint through the woods. She puts the purse on her hip with the strap on her opposite shoulder, leaving her hands free. Brad carries his rifle cradled in both hands.

At first, Brad leads the way, but he eventually falls behind Amira. Continued firing.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Automatic weapons fire from both sides of the road. Ballard is shot in the shoulder, grimaces in pain, falls. Soldiers shoot down two attackers trying to cross the road.

EXT. WOODS

Amira sits on a rock, waits for Brad to catch up. He kneels beside her, gasps for breath. He catches his breath, looks apprehensively into the surrounding woods, sees no one else.

BRAD

I thought I'd have to wait for you.

AMIRA

I ran cross-country in college.
And I'm not wearing body armor and
carrying a rifle.

(looks around)

We're heading deeper into Serb
territory.

BRAD

We can circle back toward Tuzla
later.

He looks at her purse.

BRAD

Is your cell phone in there?

AMIRA

No. It's in one of my bags. In the
trunk of the car.

She shrugs.

AMIRA

It wouldn't work, anyway. We're in the middle of the mountains.

She points.

AMIRA

I think there's a Serb village that way. Maybe they won't look for us there. They'd expect us to go the other way.

BRAD

It's our only option right now. We better keep moving.

He raises his voice.

BRAD

Come on, Lady. Let's move it.

AMIRA

Why are you so angry?

BRAD

My best friend just got killed.

AMIRA

I'm sorry about that, but don't yell at me.

She yells back.

AMIRA

I didn't kill him! The Serbs did!

Brad mutters something under his breath. Amira frowns. He pulls her to her feet. They jog in the direction she indicated earlier. Amira takes the lead.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The Humvees have been pushed onto the side of the road. Ballard lies on the grass nearby. The remaining enlisted men stand and sit beside him. There is no sign of the attackers.

An Apache helicopter circles overhead and Black Hawk helicopters land on the road. Noise and wind.

About a dozen heavily armed American soldiers jump out. Some sprint up and down the highway, light flares and block the road. The others join the soldiers involved in the ambush.

Two soldiers put Ballard on a stretcher and carry him to one of the helicopters. As he is loaded aboard, he yells to the pilot and points to the woods.

BALLARD

One of my men and the girl are out there in the woods. Can one of the choppers search for them?

PILOT

We'll try, but its a damned heavy forest. You can't see much.

The bodies of the soldiers and the two Serbs killed in the fight are put in body bags and loaded aboard one of the helicopters. All the soldiers, including those from the convoy, climb aboard the Black Hawks.

Both of the large choppers take off, leaving behind the wrecked sedan and the destroyed and shot-up Humvees.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME - EVENING

Marko's truck pulls into the yard. Marko is driving and has five men with him, one in the cab and four more in the bed. All have hunting rifles or automatic weapons and are carrying flashlights.

The MEN IN BACK are drinking and boisterous. They sing a crude song.

MEN IN BACK

We will cleanse our land of Muslim dregs. Bare their chests and spread their legs. Give them what they so justly need. A piece of Serbia on which to breed.

Marko climbs out of the truck, leaves his automatic rifle in the cab. He strides into the house.

INT. KITCHEN

Joka stands at the sink, washes dishes. Marko enters the room.

MARKO

The damned bitch got away. Make me a sandwich. Put some coffee in a flask.

JOKA

You're not going out again tonight?

MARKO

We have to find her before she gets too far.

JOKA

Why not let her go? She's just a girl.

MARKO

She's Smajic's daughter.

JOKA

You know what those men will do to her.

Marko smirks.

MARKO

They deserve some fun after a long hunt.

JOKA

What if the Muslims did the same to Desa?

MARKO

You talk nonsense. She's nothing like Desa. It's all a Muslim whore is good for.

Joka frowns, begins making a sandwich.

EXT. SHELL OF DESTROYED HOUSE - NIGHT

The ruin is located on a high-ground clearing. The house has no roof and only parts of its walls.

BRAD

We'd better stay here tonight. We shouldn't travel in the dark unless we have to. There could be mines.

AMIRA

I don't think there was much fighting in this area. There will be more mines closer to Tuzla.

Brad builds a small fire in a fireplace on one of the partially destroyed walls. Amira huddles against the wall nearby, shivers.

AMIRA

You sure it's safe to build a fire?

BRAD

It'll be okay, Miss. Put this on.

He takes off his flak jacket, hands it to her.

AMIRA

Thanks. My name's Amira.

She puts on the jacket, sits up straighter.

BRAD

I'm Brad Fisher. I'm from Omaha, Nebraska.

AMIRA

Hi, Brad. I'm sorry we had to meet in such a lousy way.

(pauses)

What about the fire?

BRAD

As long as we keep it small, it can't be seen outside.

Amira looks up at the star-studded sky.

AMIRA

You consider this inside?

BRAD

They won't be able to see the smoke at night.

AMIRA

They can smell it.

BRAD

If they get that close before we see them, we're in big trouble.

(pauses)

You better get some sleep.

Amira stands up.

AMIRA

I'm too scared to sleep. Should I take the first watch?

BRAD

Okay, but wake me as soon as you start to tire. Watch for lights in the woods.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

The building is small and shows signs of the war that once ravaged the area.

SUPER: TUZLA

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Ballard is lying awake in bed, his wounded shoulder and chest heavily bandaged. Colonel Ross enters.

BALLARD
Good morning, Sir.

ROSS
You did all you could out there,
Ballard. You must've been heavily
outnumbered.

BALLARD
They could have overrun us easily.
They broke off the fight soon
after Fisher and the girl got away.

ROSS
The girl's all they want -- and
God knows where she is now.

Ballard struggles to raise his head higher. Ross helps him by adjusting the pillows.

BALLARD
What are our chances of finding
her first?

ROSS
Not good. The Serbs know the
countryside. We don't.

BALLARD
They can't last long without food.

Ross walks to the window, looks out.

ROSS
Damn, we have to find them.

Ross leaves the window, makes eye contact with Ballard.

ROSS
If the Serbs get the girl, we'll
be in the middle of an all-out war.

BALLARD

And that's just what those Serb bastards want.

EXT. DESTROYED HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Amira is curled up near the fireplace asleep, covered by Brad's jacket and using her purse as a pillow. Brad shakes her gently, wakes her.

BRAD

I think we lost them for the time being.

(smiling)

I'm sorry I yelled at you yesterday.

AMIRA

That's okay. I only knew Jack a short time, but I liked him, too.

Brad looks puzzled.

BRAD

I don't know much about Muslims, but shouldn't you have a veil or something?

She grins.

AMIRA

I've seven of them. There's this dance I do -- but this definitely isn't the time.

He looks even more puzzled.

AMIRA

I make jokes only to forget how terrified I am. You know what they'll do to me if they catch us?

BRAD

They won't touch you as long as I'm alive.

Amira smiles.

AMIRA

I'm really getting hungry.

She hands him his jacket.

BRAD

You keep it. And the vest.

She shakes her head.

AMIRA

It's too heavy.

BRAD

I'll get us some food.

AMIRA

How?

BRAD

I'll kill some kind of game.

AMIRA

If you fire that rifle, the sound will travel for miles. And then we'd need a fire to cook it.

She stands.

AMIRA

I'm the logical one to get us food. I can walk into a store and buy it.

BRAD

You're kidding.

AMIRA

I can pass myself off as a Serb. There's a store in the village. It can't be more than a few kilometers.

She tugs at her ASU football sweatshirt.

AMIRA

But I can't wear this. It's a dead giveaway.

She pulls off the sweatshirt, smiles when she notices that Brad averts his eyes from her breasts, now concealed only by a lacy bra.

AMIRA

I'll trade you. Give me your shirt.

He takes off his shirt, hands it to her. She hands him her sweatshirt.

BRAD

Won't people recognize it as an
Army shirt?

AMIRA

I'll just use it as a halter.
They'll never notice.

She puts on his shirt and ties it in a knot in front,
exposing both her midriff and ample cleavage.

BRAD

I'll go with you. Wait on the
edge of the village.

AMIRA

I'll be safer alone. They're
looking for us together.

BRAD

I know, but ...

AMIRA

Really. It's safest for you to
stay.

BRAD

You're sure you want to do this?

She nods.

AMIRA

I'll be back by midday.

He hands her his sidearm.

BRAD

You know how to use it?

She nods. She puts the gun in her purse and slings the purse
over her shoulder. She walks away, pauses after a short
distance to look back and smile. She jogs into the woods.

EXT. MARKO'S HOME

There are four trucks and three cars parked in the yard.
Nearly two dozen armed men mill about, drink and talk loudly.

ONE MAN takes a long drink from a brandy bottle, complains to
his COMPANION.

ONE MAN

Marko spends too much time
planning.

His companion takes the bottle from him, drinks before responding.

COMPANION

Right. Let's just get out in the woods and find the bitch.

INT. KITCHEN

Marko and three men stand around the kitchen table, study a map. Marko points to an area on the map.

MARKO

Station your men all along here. We have to make sure they don't cross into Muslim territory.

He gestures above the map.

MARKO

We'll flush this entire area.

ANOTHER MAN responds.

ANOTHER MAN

What about telephone lines?

MARKO

Cut them.

Marko folds up the map.

MARKO

I need supplies before we go out again.

EXT. A SERB VILLAGE

It is a cluster of a half dozen small, basic homes. The only public building is a small general store.

Amira enters the store.

INT. STORE

There is a middle-aged woman behind the counter and two young men lounge against one wall. Zoran, now about Amira's age, is shorter and, apparently, younger than the other man. Both are wearing jeans and T-shirts.

Both men eye Amira as she enters. She is startled to see them, but quickly regains her composure. She smiles at them.

TALLER YOUNG MAN
You're not from around here.

AMIRA
I am right now.

ZORAN
(to taller young man)
She must be the cousin Desa
Popovic said was coming to visit.

TALLER YOUNG MAN
Ya, Desa said she's a real looker.

AMIRA
You think I'm a real looker?

The taller young man steps closer, looks her up and down.

TALLER YOUNG MAN
Yes, I do.

AMIRA
Then I must be Desa's cousin.

TALLER YOUNG MAN
Those are pretty fancy shoes
you're wearing. Are they from
America?

ZORAN
I bet those jeans are American,
too.

AMIRA
I've an aunt in America. She
sends me clothes every Christmas.

She walks to the counter, speaks softly to the woman.

AMIRA
I need soda, bread and some cooked
ham.

As Amira selects and pays for her groceries, the two young men continue to watch her closely, whisper to each other in voices too low to be understood.

Only the sweat rolling down her cheeks provides a clue to Amira's anxiety, and the men are not close enough to notice that.

EXT. THE SERB VILLAGE

Amira leaves the store carrying groceries, tries to walk nonchalantly. Beads of sweat form on her forehead. The taller young man steps out of the store and yells to her.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Hey, that's not the way to Desa's house.

Amira stops, turns, and slips her hand inside her purse.

AMIRA

Desa's not my only friend here.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Are your other friends boyfriends or girlfriends?

AMIRA

Why do you ask? You want to be a boyfriend?

TALLER YOUNG MAN

I might.

AMIRA

Then stop by sometime. I'm staying with Desa.

As Amira waves to the young man and starts to walk away, Desa Popovic putts up to the store from the opposite end of the village on a motor scooter. She wears slacks and a blouse.

The young man greets Desa before she even shuts off the engine. He points at Amira and speaks loudly enough that he knows she will overhear.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Hi, Desa. That cousin of yours is a real looker.

Amira stops walking, fights an initial impulse to run, looks back. Desa drives to her and stops, speaks while still seated on the running scooter. She speaks softly enough that the young man cannot overhear.

DESA

You told him you're my cousin?

Amira is so frightened that it is a couple of seconds before she makes eye contact with Desa. She nods. Desa shuts off the scooter, stands and eyes Amira from head to toe.

DESA

You're the Muslim girl everyone is
looking for, aren't you?

Amira's reply is little more than a whisper, but filled with
emotion.

AMIRA

Help me, please!

Zoran also steps outside the store. Desa yells to him.

DESA

Hey, Zoran, I want you guys to
know something.

A look of terror spreads across Amira's face.

DESA

Quit hitting on my cousin. She's
a nice girl.

The two men laugh, wave. Desa takes Amira by the arm.

DESA

Let's go someplace where we can
talk. I can help you get away.

They walk farther from the store, leave the scooter. The men
go back into the store.

AMIRA

This is so dangerous for you. Why
are you doing it?

DESA

I went to school in Sarajevo. I
had a Muslim boyfriend. I'd want
someone to help him.

AMIRA

Where is he now?

Desa has tears on her cheeks.

DESA

Still in Sarajevo, I guess. We
lost contact after I came home.

AMIRA

I hope he's okay.

DESA

My father found out about us. He went ballistic. Pulled me out of school.

EXT. DESTROYED HOUSE - MIDDAY

Two men carrying rifles, one in his twenties and the other about ten years older, walk through the ruins. The OLDER MAN feels the ashes in the fireplace. The YOUNGER MAN watches.

They whisper, apparently fearing their prey is nearby and might hear them.

EXT. WOODS

The two men search the nearby woods, walking quietly.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CREEK

Brad sits on the bank, now wearing Amira's sweatshirt, his rifle and jacket beside him. He strips to the waist, washes himself in the creek.

Then he walks into the woods, carries his rifle in one hand and the jacket and sweatshirt in the other.

EXT. WOODS

The two men see Brad approaching, hide behind trees in his path.

The younger man grabs Brad from behind.

Flings him against a tree trunk.

The older man rips the rifle from Brad's hand.

The younger man points his rifle at his chest.

The older man speaks in halting English, with a heavy accent.

OLDER MAN

We want only the girl. Tell us where she be. We let you alive.

BRAD

What girl? I'm just ...

The older man rams the butt of his rifle into Brad's stomach. Brad groans in pain, doubles over, drops the jacket and sweatshirt.

OLDER MAN

You will tell. Do it now. Stop the hurt.

He raises the butt of the rifle menacingly above Brad's face.

OLDER MAN
Where the girl!?

AMIRA (O.S.)
Right behind you, pointing a gun
at the back of your head.

The men look over their shoulders, see Amira a few feet away.
She holds the pistol in both hands, arms fully extended.

AMIRA
Don't turn around or I'll shoot.
Drop your rifles.

The men hesitate.

AMIRA
Now!

They drop their weapons.

Brad picks up his rifle, plunges the butt into the older
man's stomach. The man screams, sinks to his knees.

BRAD
(to Amira)
I'm glad you kept our date.

AMIRA
What'll we do with them?

BRAD
We'll leave them here -- in a
natural state.

The men eye Brad, growing fear on their faces.

OLDER MAN
Natural state? What you mean?

BRAD
Both of you take your clothes off.

The men strip to their shorts and socks.

BRAD
All your clothes!

OLDER MAN
No leave us here naked!

BRAD

The choice is yours. Naked or
dead.

The older man removes his shorts and socks, but the younger man still refuses. Brad points his rifle at his head. He removes his socks, looks at Amira with obvious hatred and, after a momentary hesitation, takes off his shorts.

AMIRA

(to younger man)
Now aren't you ashamed of
yourself -- making such a big deal
out of such a little thing?

She gathers up their clothes, using the shirts to wrap them in bundles easy to carry. She picks up the younger man's stained shorts gingerly by the waistband, using her finger tips.

AMIRA

(to younger man)
Mother would be disappointed.
Obviously, you didn't dress for
the occasion.

OLDER MAN

You will pay for what you do.

YOUNGER MAN

Especially you, you whore. I will
enjoy screwing you to death.

Amira kicks him hard in the groin. He screams, doubles over. Brad puts the sweatshirt and jacket back on, gathers up the extra rifles. Amira carries the men's clothes. She and Brad walk away as the two men curse at them.

AMIRA

I left the groceries by the ruins.

EXT. AMERICAN ARMY BASE

The entire camp is buzzing with activity. Soldiers scurry about.

INT. COLONEL ROSS' OFFICE

Ross is seated at his desk. Mehmed Smajic stands in front of the colonel.

ROSS

I understand your anxiety, Sir.
I've got a fifteen-year-old
daughter. I'd be going crazy if
she was in Amira's place. But you
must let us handle it.

Smajic leans over the desk, his face shows panic and
desperation.

SMAJIC

You have to do more!

ROSS

We're doing everything possible.
Our search copters are constantly
in the air.

SMAJIC

We need searchers on the ground,
too.

Ross stands.

ROSS

I've sent two convoys into the
Serb villages. Our troops will
disarm any militia members they
encounter.

Smajic puts his face only inches from Ross's.

SMAJIC

Amira isn't in a Serb village.
She's hiding in the woods.

ROSS

The convoys give her someplace to
go for help. I can't send my
troops into the woods.

SMAJIC

I can!

ROSS

Armed Muslims in Serb territory?
I cannot permit it.

SMAJIC

You cannot prevent it.

ROSS

If you turn the area into a battlefield, your daughter will have no chance of escaping. Give us more time.

SMAJIC

You have twenty-four hours. Then we will find her, even if we must search every Serb house in Bosnia.

ROSS

It's a large area and the terrain is difficult.

SMAJIC

Twenty-four hours. No longer.

He turns, strides from the office.

EXT. DESTROYED HOUSE

Brad and Amira jog up to the ruins. She sits on a low portion of one shattered wall, rests. He leans against a higher section, catches his breath. Both set down the rifles and clothes they are carrying.

AMIRA

Why can't the damned Serbs just leave us alone?

BRAD

I guess there are two sides to every issue?

Amira's response shows obvious irritation.

AMIRA

And what's the Serb side?

BRAD

Living in a Muslim-dominated society can be repressive.

Amira's tone remains hostile.

AMIRA

In what way?

BRAD

Women forced to wear veils and cover themselves from head to toe -- and not allowed to drive.

There is heavy sarcasm in Amira's voice.

AMIRA

Why did that lieutenant pick the
company redneck to save me?

Brad replies with equal sarcasm.

BRAD

This particular redneck is the
best shot in his company.

Amira's demeanor softens. She smiles.

AMIRA

I guess that is more important
than your politics.

She stands, turns around slowly.

AMIRA

You really consider this covered
head to toe?

BRAD

You lived in the States.

AMIRA

That makes no difference. I dress
the way I always have. Muslim
girls here dress no differently
from girls in the U.S.

She again sits on the wall.

BRAD

The Serbs even claim there was a
Muslim plot to murder Serb men and
force their wives into harems.

AMIRA

Harems!? We're Europeans, not
Arabs. Anyone who believes that
would believe the Earth is flat.

BRAD

It does sound pretty far-fetched.

AMIRA

In my country men have their hands
full trying to handle just one of
us.

BRAD

I can see where that might be the case.

Brad picks up the rifles. In addition, he also picks up a bag of groceries setting on the floor inside the ruins. She stands, picks up the bundles of clothing. They jog toward the woods.

EXT. MARKO'S HOME

Desa putts up on her motor scooter, enters the house.

INT. KITCHEN

Joka stands by the sink, prepares lunch. Desa enters, sits at the table.

DESA

Where's father?

Her mother stammers, answers sheepishly.

JOKA

Hunting.

DESA

Hunting!? -- Hunting that poor girl. He and that drunken rabble he calls "his troops."

JOKA

Show some respect, he's still your father.

Desa snorts.

JOKA

He's a patriot and a brave man. He risks his life for his country, to make life better for us all.

DESA

He's a dinosaur -- a killer dinosaur out "ethnically cleansing" our neighborhood of one last Muslim.

She stands up, looks Joka in the eye.

DESA

And murdering her isn't enough. First they have to rape and torture her.

JOKA
She's our enemy. She's a Muslim.

DESA
She's a girl -- like me. What makes us so different? We go to church twice a year. She probably hasn't been in a mosque that often.

JOKA
If your father heard you talking like this ...

DESA
I met her.

Joka sits, a look of shock on her face.

JOKA
Met her!? Where?

DESA
By the village store. Just a little while ago.

JOKA
She's here!? Oh, my God.

DESA
You can't tell father. She's just a girl -- and she's being hunted like an animal. She's terrified.

JOKA
What can we do?

DESA
You do nothing -- and say nothing! I'm going to help her get away.

JOKA
If Marko ever finds out ...

DESA
He won't! See that he doesn't.

EXT. WOODS

Brad and Amira jog at a slow pace. He again is wearing the ASU sweatshirt. In addition to all the clothes and weapons they are toting, Brad also carries a sack of groceries. They pause by a deep gully.

AMIRA

I made a friend in the village, a Serb girl named Desa. She's going to help us.

BRAD

Can we trust her?

AMIRA

Yes, I'm sure of it. I know she'd never do anything to hurt me.

BRAD

How can she help?

AMIRA

She's going to bring us her scooter. She says more and more men are joining the search. We must get away fast, using back roads.

BRAD

When do we meet her?

AMIRA

This evening, at an abandoned church in a village about eight kilometers from here.

BRAD

I guess we have to trust her -- and your instincts. It's our best chance.

They throw the bundles of Serb clothing and one of the extra rifles into the gully. Before Brad can discard the second Serb rifle, Amira takes it from him.

AMIRA

Shouldn't we keep one for me?

Just as Brad is about to answer, a shot rings out and a bullet tears bark from a nearby tree. He and Amira take cover behind other trees.

Two more shots. Five armed men can be seen among the trees the width of a football field away. Brad fires back twice.

BRAD

When I start firing again, run for the top of the ridge.

Amira nods.

BRAD

I'll stop a couple of times to slow them down, but you keep going. I'll catch up.

Brad fires three times. He and Amira run up through the woods toward the crest of a ridge. She is still carrying the Serb rifle. The Serb hunters pursue, firing occasional shots.

Amira continues running.

Brad turns.

Drops to one knee.

Takes careful aim.

Fires.

One of the pursuers screams.

Falls. Brad stands.

Continues to fire.

Moves toward the remaining hunters.

He stops.

Aims.

Fires two quick shots.

Two more hunters fall.

The remaining hunters turn and run. Brad then heads back up the ridge after Amira. He catches up to her, leans against a tree to catch his breath.

AMIRA

That was very impressive. You just saved my life.

BRAD

You saved my ass earlier.

She touches his arm.

AMIRA

That lieutenant knew what he was doing. I'm glad he picked you.

BRAD

I'm glad he did, too.

She smiles.

AMIRA

I'm a good shot myself, but you may be the best marksman in THIS company, too.

BRAD

We'll see. Shooting targets is easier than shooting people.

EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS AND SKY ABOVE

An Apache helicopter passes overhead.

INT. HELICOPTER

It has a two-man crew, a PILOT and an OBSERVER. The observer searches the ground below through binoculars.

OBSERVER

Take us lower. I think I saw something in the clearing down there.

EXT. CLEARING

The helicopter circles lower. The two men that Brad forced to strip are crossing the clearing, still naked. They see the Apache and shake their fists at it.

INT. HELICOPTER

The pilot laughs.

PILOT

They're both bare-ass naked.

OBSERVER

They don't want help. That's sure not a friendly greeting.

PILOT

This can't have anything to do with our mission.

OBSERVER

They said to report anything unusual. I'd better call it in.

EXT. WOODS

Brad and Amira race along the edge of a small clearing, both now carrying rifles. She has fallen about twenty-five yards behind him. He stops as he enters a more heavily wooded area, waits for her to catch up.

BRAD

Leave the rifle. It's slowing us down. We have to be able to move fast.

AMIRA

But it'll give us more firepower.

BRAD

I'll take care of the firepower.

Amira leans against a tree trunk, rests for a couple of seconds before responding.

AMIRA

I don't care if you're Rambo. Two rifles are better than one.

BRAD

The sidearm's all you need.

AMIRA

That's male chauvinistic bullshit!

She takes a tissue from her purse, holds it over her nose and lower face like a veil.

She bows deeply to Brad, makes a sweeping gesture with the arm holding the rifle, then tosses the weapon away, speaks with heavy sarcasm.

AMIRA

Your wish is my command, brave warrior.

She blows her nose in the tissue, discards it. Brad smiles, shrugs.

EXT. AMERICAN ARMY BASE

Helicopters land and take off. Soldiers scurry about, fueling and maintaining the choppers.

INT. OUTSIDE COLONEL ROSS' OFFICE

A female sergeant, an unattractive woman in her late twenties, is seated at a desk reading a manual. The door to Ross's office is open and he can be seen at his desk in the background.

Ross rises, walks to the door, pokes his head out, addresses the sergeant.

ROSS

Sergeant, I've been thinking about that report of the naked Serbs.

The sergeant smiles.

SERGEANT

What about them, Sir?

ROSS

What if Fisher got the drop on a couple of the Serbs hunting them, but didn't want to kill them ...

She finishes the thought for him.

SERGEANT

Then he'd have to do something so he and the girl would have time to get away.

The colonel thinks for a second.

ROSS

Spread the word to concentrate our search west and north of where the men were spotted.

INT. A COFFEE SHOP

Mehmed Smajic and three other men sit around a table, drink coffee. ONE MAN speaks, slaps his hand against his chest for emphasis.

ONE MAN

The Americans accomplish nothing. We are Amira's only hope.

A SECOND MAN interrupts, addresses Smajic.

SECOND MAN

Didn't you tell Colonel Ross we'd wait twenty-four hours?

Smajic nods. The THIRD MAN offers his opinion, raises his voice to make his point.

THIRD MAN

We must act now. If we wait, it will be too late.

SMAJIC

I agree. Get the men ready. We'll leave as soon as it's dark.

SECOND MAN

Ross will try to stop us.

SMAJIC

We'll be in the woods before he learns we've gone.

EXT. WOODS

Brad and Amira sit under a large tree, resting against its trunk.

BRAD

I'm sorry for what I said about Muslims.

AMIRA

That's okay.

BRAD

I was really upset about Jack. I arranged for him to be your driver. He wanted to meet you.

Brad takes a large bottle of soda, bread and wrapped meat from the bag, uses his Army knife to cut the bread.

BRAD

It was stupid to blame you. It isn't your fault he was killed. It was more my doing.

AMIRA

It isn't your fault either. The Serbs killed him.

He nods, hands her the container of soda.

AMIRA

It's warm.

BRAD

It's wet. That's all we need.

He unwraps the meat. She takes a small swallow of soda.

BRAD

You bought ham? I thought Muslims didn't eat pig products.

AMIRA

That's why I got it. It seemed like a Christian thing to do.

He cuts the ham, hands her a sandwich, fixes his own meal. She takes a large bite of her sandwich, chews and thinks for a few seconds, drinks more soda and passes the container back to Brad.

AMIRA

Is there a girl waiting back in
Omaha, Brad?

BRAD

No, not anymore. How about you?

AMIRA

I haven't been home for years. Of
course, my parents have lots of
prospects lined up -- doctors,
lawyers and an engineering chief.

BRAD

You'll have a cushy life -- once
I get you home.

He munches his sandwich, takes a drink of soda.

AMIRA

That doesn't seem important now.
None of them would risk their
lives to save mine.

BRAD

In one crazy way, I'm almost glad
this happened.

He sits more erect, looks pensive.

BRAD

Otherwise, I'd never have met you
and found out what you're really
like.

Amira looks into his eyes.

AMIRA

I'll never be glad this happened,
but I'm flattered you think
meeting me is worth being shot at.

BRAD

Soldiers get shot at. I never
thought I'd be in combat with
someone like you.

EXT. WOODS

Brad and Amira are still resting against the tree trunk. He
digs in the bag of groceries.

BRAD
You bought soap -- and a
toothbrush and toothpaste?

He laughs.

BRAD
This is no picnic. We're being
hunted.

AMIRA
They can hunt us like animals.
They can't make us live like
animals.

BRAD
You really are a pampered city
girl.

AMIRA
I'm dying for a hot shower.

BRAD
You'll have to settle for a very
cool stream.

AMIRA
That's okay.

BRAD
We do have time to clean up -- if
we can find someplace safe to
stop. We won't meet Desa until
it's dark, and you said it's only
a short distance from here.

She digs in her purse.

AMIRA
I got some candy, too.

He laughs.

BRAD
Now that was a practical purchase.
Risk your life to buy candy. You
must have a real sweet tooth.

AMIRA
It's for my breath -- in case
someone wants to kiss me.

He responds jokingly.

BRAD

Soldiers are not allowed to fraternize with the local women.

AMIRA

I know, but I've noticed you're not too hung up on regulations. You're out of uniform most of the time.

BRAD

You want me to kiss you? After all the stupid things I said?

AMIRA

I hoped you might -- if I get cleaned up and look and smell a little more feminine.

She puts a piece of candy in her mouth, hands him one.

AMIRA

I don't care what you used to believe. This is now -- and it's all we have.

BRAD

If I kiss you, will you give me my shirt back?

AMIRA

Don't you think it looks better on me?

He takes off the ASU sweatshirt.

BRAD

I deserve to be shot for wearing this. I'm a Cornhuskers fan.

AMIRA

Normally, I wait for the man to make the first move.

She leans closer to him.

AMIRA

But we may not have a lot of time for courting etiquette.

He takes her by the shoulders, pulls her closer still and kisses her, briefly but tenderly. Their lips part and they stare into each other's eyes.

BRAD

Please give me my shirt back.

AMIRA

Perhaps later.

They kiss again, far more passionately. Finally, Amira pulls away, closes her eyes and leans back against the tree. She opens her eyes, resumes eating her sandwich.

AMIRA

Finish your lunch, Brad. No more fraternization until after I bathe.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Return to Tony, Bell, Zoran, and Desa at the restaurant/bar in Sarajevo. The table has been cleared, except for fresh glasses of plum brandy.

SUPER: AN HOUR AND A HALF LATER

DESA

That's it for now. Story to be continued at another time.

TONY

Damn! Just when it was getting really interesting.

BELL

And sexy!

DESA

There's a lot more action -- and sex -- to come. Can we agree to meet here again a couple of months from now?

TONY

Why wait so long? The suspense will be unbearable.

DESA

We plan to bring someone you need to meet. The only person who can give the story a proper ending. That's the earliest it can be arranged.

Tony takes a final sip of his brandy, responds.

TONY

I guess a long, sober break is in order. The plum brandy is making it hard to concentrate. Now I understand why militia riflemens' hands weren't as steady as Brad's.

BELL

We'll do our best to keep it quiet and peaceful until we meet again.

TONY

We worry that Ratko Mladic's war crimes trial will lead to violent local outbreaks.

DESA

That bastard was aptly named.

BELL

He was like a modern Hitler. Just as evil, but on a smaller scale. Thousands of victims rather than millions.

ZORAN

Even so, he is a war hero to many Bosnian Serbs. Some current militia leaders served under General Mladic in the war.

They exchange phone numbers, all hug or shake hands. Zoran and Desa leave. As they pass the bar, they notice that a news broadcast from the Hague about Ratko Mladic is being broadcast on the TV above the bar. As it is on an international news channel, it is in English.

NOTE: What they see should be taken from existing news footage and be as timely as possible. It should be added or changed, if necessary, when the movie is almost ready for distribution.

EXT. A MUSLIM MEMORIAL PARK - NIGHT - ONE WEEK LATER

The dedicating sign is in the local tongue, but translated on the screen.

SUPER: IN HONOR OF THE MORE THAN 7,000 UNARMED MEN AND YOUNG BOYS MURDERED AT THE SREBRENICA ENCLAVE, A DESIGNATED UNITED NATIONS "SAFE AREA," BY ORDER OF INVADING SERBIAN GENERAL RATKO MLADIC IN JULY, 1995.

Four large trucks with searchlights, armed men inside both the cabs and beds, roar into the park, drive over the sign, children's play structures, and picnic site furniture. Molotov cocktails are thrown at a concert shell and stage, and bullets are pumped into the seats facing it. No one is in the park, and the trucks roar away, their occupants laughing and yelling, without anyone being hurt.

EXT. THE RESTAURANT/BAR IN SARAJEVO - DAY

INT. INSIDE THE RESTAURANT

Tony and Bell are seated at the same table by the window. Zoran and Desa join them.

BELL

No mystery guest?

DESA

Coming within the hour. First I'll finish my part of the story.

A waiter serves drinks as they talk.

TONY

I'm sure you guys know what happened at the Memorial Park?

Zoran and Desa both nod.

TONY

There was a lot of damage, but no one was hurt. I guess it could be a warning of bigger protests to come.

Zoran sneers.

ZORAN

Or just a final, bloodless whimper for an ill-conceived plan to reunite a crumbling nation. Two decades after they last tried, even Bosnian Serbs must consider it a far-fetched dream that Serbia will ever rule its neighbors.

DESA

Let's hope the latter. As I recall, I left off where Brad and Amira had quit sniping at each other and had a meeting of the lips.

BELL

Before you continue, I've got a question.

DESA

Okay.

BELL

Why was Amira so anxious to get romantically involved in so dangerous an environment? Was she falling in love and determined to make the most of what little time they might have left?

DESA

Running around with a super soldier who constantly risked his life to save yours, who wouldn't fall in love? But it's more complicated.

She pauses, thinks for a few seconds, than continues.

DESA

She was also terrified. Situations in which militias were using a loved one to send a message to the enemy were excessively brutal, and could last for days. She wanted Brad to make sure she wasn't captured alive, but felt that before she could make him promise to shoot her, she needed to first consummate their relationship.

BELL

Oh, my God.

DESA

On that sombering note, back to the story ...

EXT. VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS - AFTERNOON - 20 YEARS AGO

Zoran rides a bicycle on a dirt road. The two naked men wave and shout to him from bushes about fifty yards away. Zoran pedals over to them.

OLDER MAN

Get us some clothes. Hurry!

Zoran laughs initially, but stops when he is close enough to see that their bodies are covered with scratches and their feet are swollen and bleeding.

ZORAN
What happened!?

OLDER MAN
The Muslim whore and a soldier did it. Snuck up on us.

ZORAN
Where?

The older man points.

OLDER MAN
Several kilometers that way.
We've been walking for hours.
(pauses)
Quit talking and get us some clothes.

ZORAN
I'll be right back.

He pedals away.

EXT. A CREEK

Brad and Amira sit on the bank. She hands him the soap, toothbrush and toothpaste.

AMIRA
You bathe first. I'll stand guard.

She stands, picks up his rifle.

BRAD
I'm disappointed you didn't buy me a razor.

AMIRA
I'm sorry. I didn't think of it.
Don't put your shorts or socks back on. I'm going to wash mine.
I'll do yours at the same time.

BRAD
Okay.

AMIRA

We can use the sweatshirt to towel off. I won't wash it; it'd take too long to dry.

Carrying the rifle, Amira climbs to higher ground, where she has a better view of the surrounding woods. She sees a helicopter in the distance. She waves frantically, but it is too far away and flying away from them.

From her vantage point, she can see Brad undress and splash in the creek, but her view is partly obstructed by tree branches.

EXT. VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS

The two naked men wait impatiently, partly concealed by bushes. A blue truck pulls up. Zoran jumps from behind the wheel, hands them clothes.

The men dress quickly. They are still barefooted and walk awkwardly, obviously in pain. All three climb into the truck cab.

INT. TRUCK CAB

Zoran pulls away, immediately resumes questioning them.

ZORAN

So, what does this Muslim girl look like?

OLDER MAN

She's pretty, but real trouble. She's wearing jeans and a man's army shirt tied in front.

ZORAN

Shit, that's the girl we saw in the village. Desa Popovic said she was her cousin.

OLDER MAN

Desa!? That lying bitch. You better tell Marko about this right away.

EXT. WOODS

Amira is still standing guard. Brad climbs up to her. He is naked to the waist, dripping water from his hair and upper body. He wears his boots, but without socks.

He offers Amira the soap, toothbrush, toothpaste and his shorts and socks.

BRAD

The water's pretty cold, but it was refreshing. I left our ASU towel on the bank.

Amira hands him the rifle, takes the things he is carrying.

AMIRA

I saw a helicopter, but it was too far away. Over there.

She points.

BRAD

I'll keep an eye on the sky.

AMIRA

I won't be too long.

Brad watches her descend to the stream and disrobe on the bank. Tree branches partly obstruct his view. She steps into the creek and immediately jumps out.

Brad grins, apparently remembering how cold the water is. He watches Amira re-enter the stream, this time staying long enough to soap herself thoroughly and rinse by splashing in the cool waters.

He studies the sky and the surrounding woods for a minute. He spots a timid deer grazing near the creek further downstream, but sees nothing unusual. His eyes return to Amira.

She is on the bank, wearing only her jeans. She kneels beside the creek, brushes her teeth, then washes clothes. Brad's eyes return to scanning their surroundings.

He looks back to the creek. Amira carefully spreads clothes, including his shirt and her bra, out to dry on a sunny spot on the bank.

Amira kneels on the bank, dunks her head and upper body in the creek. She soaps her hair, rinses it thoroughly, puts the soap, toothbrush and toothpaste back in the bag with the groceries.

She stretches to put the bag high in the crook of a tree, slips on her shoes, puts her watch back on, picks up her purse.

Still naked to the waist, she takes lipstick from her purse, applies it and climbs toward their observation point. Water drips from her hair and breasts.

Brad watches her intently throughout the half minute it takes her to reach him. Amira takes two pieces of candy from her purse, puts one in her mouth, offers the other to him.

BRAD

You're so beautiful.

She smiles, speaks softly.

AMIRA

Let's find someplace safe to fraternize while our clothes dry.

She takes his free hand. They walk deeper into the woods.

AMIRA

I don't want you to think I'm too easy, Brad.

BRAD

I don't.

AMIRA

If we'd met in Tuzla or Phoenix, you'd have given up on the uptight Muslim girl and wandered off to greener pastures.

BRAD

I'd have been crazy if I did.

AMIRA

I'm a fanatical monogamist. Absolutely no sex without total commitment.

She pauses, then continues speaking more softly.

AMIRA

I want to make love to you today because today may be all we have.

BRAD

I understand that.

EXT. A SERB VILLAGE

It is the same village where Amira shopped and met Desa. An American Army convoy consisting of four Humvees, two with cannons mounted atop them, drives slowly through the village. An Apache attack helicopter circles overhead.

An ELDERLY MAN and two BOYS in their early teens stand outside the general store. The man shakes his fist and yells at the Americans.

ELDERLY MAN

Go home! Worry about your own country. Leave us alone!

The boys throw rocks at one of the Humvees.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME

Marko's and Zoran's trucks are parked in the yard. Loud voices indicate a heated argument inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Marko and Desa stand a couple of feet apart, shouting at each other. Joka and Zoran sit on the couch, watching.

MARKO

Where is that Muslim bitch now?

DESA

I've no idea. I only saw her for a minute. And if I did know, I'd never tell you.

MARKO

Go to your room -- and stay there until this matter is over.

DESA

I'm almost twenty years old, and now you're going to ground me? Get real, Father.

He slaps her face so hard that she reels back several feet. Joka jumps up.

JOKA

Marko, No! Please.

MARKO

Is that real enough for you!?

Desa runs into her room, slams the door.

MARKO
(to Zoran)
Stay here. See that she doesn't
leave the house.

ZORAN
I will.

MARKO
I'm going hunting.

Marko storms out of the house.

EXT. WOODS - A DENSE THICKET

The thicket surrounds a large tree.

EXT. INSIDE THE THICKET

Brad and Amira lie under the tree, both still naked to the waist. The rifle and handgun are on the ground beside Brad. Amira kisses his chest, runs her fingers through his chest hair. They talk softly.

AMIRA
Promise me one thing, Brad. If
we're caught, don't let the Serbs
take me alive.

BRAD
My God! I can't promise that.

AMIRA
You know what they'll do to me.
And when they're finished with me,
they'll kill me -- a slow,
horrible death.

BRAD
Why are they so savage?

AMIRA
They want to restart the war -- do
something so gross it will drive
my father and other Muslim leaders
to retaliate.

BRAD
The bastards realize the
peacekeeping troops have to
protect anyone who is attacked,
even the Serbs.

Amira sits up.

AMIRA

If they catch us, we won't be the only ones to die. There will be thousands more.

BRAD

It'll never come to that. I'm going to get you home.

AMIRA

But if they do catch us? You have to shoot me.

She kisses him, long and passionately.

AMIRA

Promise me!

BRAD

I promise.

EXT. WOODS - A DENSE THICKET

Two Serb hunters stealthfully circle the thicket, use hand signals to position themselves. They cannot see Brad and Amira, but hear the soft voices of a man and a woman. They cannot tell what is being said.

EXT. INSIDE THE THICKET

Brad and Amira kiss. The loud crunch of a branch breaking. The two hunters force their way inside the thicket from opposite directions. Amira screams.

The hunters have miscalculated. The space is so tight, the brush so dense, that it is difficult to use their rifles. One does fire at Brad, but he pushes the barrel aside. The shot hits the tree.

His companion in the way, the second hunter is unable to use his rifle. He drops it, pulls a hunting knife. As he lunges at Amira with the knife, Brad grabs the handgun, shoots him, then shoots the first hunter in the chest from inches away.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE THICKET

Brad and Amira emerge from the thicket, scratching their bare upper bodies on branches. He carries the handgun, she has the rifle. Amira is splattered with blood from one of the hunters.

BRAD

It was really stupid to let our guard down like that. It almost cost us our lives.

AMIRA

I guess we never will have a chance to make love.

BRAD

Sure we will -- in Tuzla.

EXT. OBSERVATION POINT

Brad and Amira near the observation point, both still naked from the waist up. He now carries both the rifle and the handgun. Brad stops, holds Amira back and puts his finger to his lips. He points toward the creek where they bathed.

Two boys and a girl look at Brad's jacket and the clothes Amira left to dry on the bank. Brad and Amira move back to where they are sure they cannot be seen, whisper.

AMIRA

They're just school kids.

BRAD

Unfortunately, they'll tell the older kids what they found.

EXT. CREEK BANK

The FIRST BOY puts on Brad's jacket, which is far too large for him. The other children laugh at his appearance.

FIRST BOY

I'm an American helicopter pilot.

The SECOND BOY examines the jacket.

SECOND BOY

That's not a pilot's jacket.

FIRST BOY

Doesn't matter.

He spins around with his arms outstretched, makes a noise imitating a helicopter. The GIRL laughs.

GIRL

You're not a real pilot. And that doesn't sound like a real helicopter.

When the boys are not watching her, the girl picks up Amira's bra, slips it into her pocket. The three children walk away from the creek. The first boy still wears the jacket. The sleeves almost drag on the ground.

EXT. OBSERVATION POINT

Brad and Amira peek out, see the children leave.

CREEK BANK

Brad picks up the ASU sweatshirt.

BRAD

Why didn't they take this instead of my jacket? It's still wet.

AMIRA

Thank God they didn't find the food.

Amira retrieves the bag from the tree nook, looks at the clothes on the bank.

AMIRA

Damn, they took my bra.

BRAD

Okay with me.

AMIRA

I'm happy to titillate you, but I don't run as well without proper support.

Brad hands her his shirt.

BRAD

Well, this is dry. It's yours now. A gift from Support Team Fisher.

AMIRA

Thanks.

They pick up underwear and socks, sit on the bank to dress.

EXT. A SERB HOME

It is a house much like Marko's, but more isolated. Marko's truck is parked in the driveway behind an old car.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Sparsely furnished with well-worn furniture. Marko sits in a stuffed chair. A middle-aged WOMAN sits on the couch.

The boy who took Brad's jacket and the girl who took Amira's bra run in from another room, carrying the items they found. They give both items to Marko. He examines the jacket quickly; looks more closely at the bra.

MARKO

It's an American soldier's jacket,
and this must belong to the Muslim
tramp.

He dangles the bra.

MARKO

A Christian girl wouldn't wear an
undergarment so sensuous -- or
take it off so casually.

Marko stands, shakes hands with both kids and their mother.

MARKO

Your loyalty is appreciated.
You've brought our dream of a
greater Serbia a step closer.

He walks toward the door, takes the jacket and bra with him. The woman accompanies him to the door.

WOMAN

Thank you, Mr. Popovic, for all
you're doing for us.

EXT. WOODS - LATE AFTERNOON

Brad and Amira walk at a brisk pace, stop to rest near a clearing. They stay hidden back among the trees. He wears the ASU sweatshirt; she has on his shirt, now buttoned and stuffed into her jeans.

AMIRA

The village with the old church is
on the other side of that ridge.

BRAD

It won't be easy to get there
unseen.

He points to the other side of the clearing, about one hundred yards away. Six armed searchers trek through the woods.

AMIRA

My God, I think two of them are women. Hunting Muslims is now a dating thing.

He points to additional hunters farther away.

BRAD

We may not be able to get through until dark. How long will Desa wait?

AMIRA

I don't know. It's dangerous for her to stay very long.

BRAD

We better get closer before dark. Let's circle around behind them.

EXT. SKY

An Apache helicopter circles above the forest.

INT. HELICOPTER

The Apache again has a two-man crew, but not the same OBSERVER and pilot who saw the naked men.

OBSERVER

Swing further east. I see smoke. Let's check it out.

The helicopter heads toward a billowing cloud of smoke. It flies above what is obviously a man-made ring of fire in a clearing. Brush is burning in several piles that form a circle about twenty yards in diameter.

OBSERVER

There's something in the middle of the circle.

He peers through binoculars as the helicopter swings lower.

OBSERVER

It's a military jacket and something else I can't make out. We'd better get a Hawk in here.

EXT. CLEARING AND SKY ABOVE

The Apache circles high above the area. A Black Hawk helicopter comes into view.

The larger helicopter lands inside the circle, makes a lot of noise and creates strong winds. Several soldiers jump out, lie or kneel on the ground around the chopper, train their rifles on the surrounding woods.

A sergeant steps out of the chopper, retrieves the jacket and a bra.

INT. COLONEL ROSS' OFFICE

Ross and the female sergeant study the map of Bosnia on the office wall. Brad's jacket is on the table beneath it.

ROSS

It makes no sense. Why would they be so far east?

SERGEANT

I wouldn't think they could get that far on foot.

ROSS

And why would Fisher do something like this? That fire would attract an army of Serbs before we saw it and got there.

SERGEANT

Either Fisher did it or the Serbs caught him. There's no other explanation for the jacket.

ROSS

If the Serbs caught them, they'd leave bodies -- not clothing.

Ross points to two locations on the map.

ROSS

This is where we spotted the naked Serbs, and this is where the jacket was. They couldn't possibly cover so much ground in so short a time.

SERGEANT

One incident has to be unrelated to where they are, but which one?

ROSS

We have to broaden our search, just to be safe. That poor girl's running out of time, and whatever happens to her may be my fault.

The sergeant looked shocked.

SERGEANT
Your fault!?

ROSS
I should never have provided an
escort. That damned convoy just
made her an easy target.

He picks up Brad's jacket.

ROSS
My gut feelings tell me we're
being suckered somehow, but we
can't ignore evidence like this.
I'll have some of our copters
search farther east.

EXT. WOODS

Brad and Amira crouch silently behind a tree. Four armed men stomp through the woods, laugh and talk loudly, pass less than fifty feet from their prey. One of them throws an empty brandy bottle that lands close to Brad and Amira.

The HUNTER who threw the bottle tells a joke.

HUNTER
Why do Muslim virgins wear veils?

Two companions shrug their shoulders, a THIRD MAN responds.

THIRD MAN
I don't know. Why?

HUNTER
So you can't see them grin when
they proclaim their innocence.

The others laugh.

When the men are out of sight, Brad whispers to Amira.

BRAD
We need to stay hidden until dark.

EXT. A DIRT ROAD

Marko leans against his truck, puffs a cigarette. A BLOND MAN with a rifle jogs toward him from a nearby hill, pauses to catch his breath when he reaches the truck.

BLOND MAN

Your plan worked, Marko. There are now fewer American copters searching this area.

MARKO

They must also be searching way to the east. Now we have a better chance of finding them first.

EXT. WOODS

Brad and Amira huddle together inside a thicket. Someone could pass within a few feet of their hiding place without seeing them. They speak in whispers.

AMIRA

We run and run, but we can't get away. There's too many of them. They're everywhere.

Tears well in her eyes, begin to roll down her cheeks. She tries to wipe them away with her hand, but they continue to flow.

AMIRA

I don't want to die yet. I don't even know what it's like to be loved -- really loved.

She puts her hand over her mouth, muffles the sobs she can no longer hold back. Brad holds her. She cries uncontrollably.

BRAD

Don't give up on me, Amira. I want to live, too. And I can't do it without you.

Brad wipes her tears on the sleeve of the sweatshirt he is wearing.

BRAD

I don't know the language. I don't know where I am or where I'm going.

He cradles her face in his hands.

BRAD

But together we're going to make it.

Amira snuggles against him, rests her head on his shoulder and, except for an occasional sniffle, stops crying.

Amira kisses him tenderly, rests her head back on his shoulder.

BRAD

I could be monogamous -- but I'd never give up eating ham.

AMIRA

Funny you should mention that. I'm hungry.

Brad takes the ham and bread out of the bag beside him, begins making sandwiches.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME - EARLY EVENING

The only vehicles in the yard are the truck driven by Zoran and Desa's scooter.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Zoran sits on the couch, thumbs through a newspaper. Desa paces about nervously.

DESA

You may be my jailer, Zoran, but you don't have to ignore me.

She pulls the paper from his hands, throws it on the floor.

DESA

I'm not mad at you because you're helping my father. I know you're afraid of him.

ZORAN

I'm sorry. I can't let you leave the house.

DESA

I know. I'm not going anywhere. Can't we have some fun while we're here alone?

ZORAN

How?

DESA

I'm so excited by all that's happening, my heart's pounding.

She pulls him to his feet, puts his right hand atop her left breast.

DESA

Feel it?

She puts his other hand on her other breast.

DESA

You really want me, don't you?
You have for years. I can tell by
the way you look at me.

He nods, massages her breasts hesitantly, then stops. He keeps his hands on her chest.

DESA

Don't stop. That feels good.

He resumes rubbing her. She slips her hands into the front pockets of his jeans.

DESA

Does that feel good, too?

He nods, grins sheepishly.

ZORAN

Do we have time? How soon will
your mother be back?

DESA

We have plenty of time for what I
have in mind.

She removes her right hand from his pocket, unbuckles his belt and unzips his jeans. She slowly pulls down the jeans, her left hand still in his pocket.

Desa then violently yanks his jeans below his knees, pulling his legs from underneath him. He falls on his back. Her left hand emerges from his pocket holding his truck key.

She races out the door, leaves it ajar.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME

Desa puts the stolen key in her pocket, jumps on her scooter and speeds away as Zoran hobbles to the doorway, still pulling up his pants.

EXT. WOODED RIDGE - EVENING

The sun has set, but a nearly full moon provides some light. Brad and Amira crouch on a ridge, observe a Serb village nestled in the valley below. One of the buildings is a small church.

The lights of more than a dozen searchers, divided into four groups, are visible in the woods between them and the village. Other lights flicker in the distance in forests on all sides.

AMIRA

My God, how can we get through that?

BRAD

We both can't, but you can if I draw them off.

AMIRA

No, Brad. No! I can't leave you here.

BRAD

It's our only chance. Send help as soon as you get away. I'll wait at the ruins where we spent last night.

AMIRA

God, isn't there another way?

BRAD

No. Stay here until they're gone.

She kisses him.

AMIRA

Please stay alive.

He holds her and they look into each other's eyes. They say nothing, but with their eyes and facial expressions, they express more emotion than words ever could.

Brad jogs down the hill holding the rifle in one hand. Amira watches him approach the searchers until she can no longer see him.

EXT. WOODS

Brad jogs to within a hundred yards of one search party. He slows to a walk, apparently saving his energy for the chase to come. He makes no effort to be quiet.

One SEARCHER sees him, shouts.

SEARCHER

There! It's the soldier.

He fires. Brad fires back, apparently misses intentionally. He runs away from the village.

There is noisy excitement among hunting parties throughout the area. They yell and whoop like American Indians in an old-fashioned western movie. More and more hunters rush toward the sound of the shots and the bobbing lights held by running pursuers.

Brad stops, without taking aim fires in the general direction of his pursuers. Several hunters fire back.

EXT. WOODED RIDGE

There are no longer any lights between Amira and the village. She puts her purse on one hip, the strap on the opposite shoulder.

Amira runs downhill through the woods. Because she runs so fast and has only moonlight to guide her way, she almost bumps into a tree.

Amira stumbles over a dead tree branch, falls, rolls on the ground. She gets up, brushes herself off, checks to ensure the gun is still in her purse, resumes running.

EXT. WOODS

Brad stops, kneels, takes careful aim at one of the pursuing lights, fires. Someone screams, one of the lights disappears. ONE HUNTER in the group closest to Brad yells to those in other groups.

ONE HUNTER

He's aiming at the lights. Shut them off.

ANOTHER HUNTER yells back.

ANOTHER HUNTER

Spread out. Get him in a crossfire.

Some of the closest pursuers turn off their lights, slow down.

EXT. VILLAGE

Amira reaches the outskirts of the village, slows to a walk. Rifle fire can be heard behind her. She moves stealthily, darts from shadow to shadow, reaches the church.

She draws the handgun from her purse, tiptoes up the stairs, slips through a rotted wooden door that is ajar.

INT. CHURCH

Amira stands silently. Moonlight filters through the windows, but most of the church is dark. Desa calls to her softly from only a few feet away.

DESA
Amira? It's Desa.

Amira puts the gun in her purse, talks in a whisper.

AMIRA
I was afraid you wouldn't wait.

Desa steps closer. They hug.

DESA
I heard shooting. I'm happy to see you're still well, Cousin.
(she looks puzzled)
Where's the soldier?

AMIRA
He made them chase him. He did it to save me.

DESA
It was a brave thing to do.

AMIRA
I begged him not to do it. We have to get help. Otherwise, they'll kill him for sure.

DESA
There's no time to get help. It would come too late.

AMIRA
I should never have left him.

Desa puts her hand on Amira's shoulder.

DESA
Your romance must live, too. We want him to get away from the Serbs -- not from you. Know where he's headed?

AMIRA
Yes.

DESA
I'll look for him after you escape.

Amira smiles. Desa takes her hand, leads her to the door. They look out, pause.

EXT. CHURCH

Desa leads Amira out of the church to her scooter, parked in the dark on one side of the building.

DESA
To find the soldier, I need
another vehicle.

She takes Zoran's truck key from her pocket, shows it to Amira.

DESA
Want to help me steal a truck?

Amira nods, sits behind Desa on the scooter. They speed away, drive without a light.

EXT. A DIRT ROAD

Desa and Amira travel on the unlighted scooter at a moderate speed. The lights of an approaching vehicle are visible in the distance.

Desa pulls off the road, shuts off the scooter. She and Amira lie on the ground, hide until a truck passes. Several men in the back of the truck laugh, drink, talk loudly.

The women return to the road once the truck is out of sight.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME

Only one light is on in the house. Zoran's truck is the only vehicle in the yard.

Desa and Amira shut off the scooter some distance from the house, walk it the rest of the way, stand beside the truck whispering.

DESA
If we're quiet, they won't even
know the truck is gone until my
father gets back.

AMIRA
Let's get away from here.

DESA
You want to take the truck? It's
faster.

AMIRA

I'll take the scooter. You and
Brad may need something fast.

Amira shrugs, takes a deep breath.

AMIRA

If I'm lucky, they'll never see me.

DESA

How do I find Brad?

AMIRA

He'll be at the ruins of a
house -- just a shell -- on a high-
ground clearing about four
kilometers northwest of the store
where we met.

DESA

I know that place. There used to
be a road to it. It's grown over
since the war, but I can drive to
within a kilometer of it.

Amira pulls the gun from her purse, offers it to Desa.

AMIRA

You want to take this?

Desa shakes her head.

DESA

I don't know anything about guns.
I could never shoot someone,
anyway.

Amira looks pensive, as if upset that Desa doesn't want the
gun.

AMIRA

Maybe I should go back for Brad.
He may need help from someone who
can shoot.

DESA

No, you must escape now -- while
you have a chance to get away.

Amira shrugs.

DESA
 You don't have to go all the way
 to Tuzla. Get to a Muslim
 village. Phone the Americans.

She pauses, hugs Amira.

DESA
 Or find an American convoy. There
 are troops searching the area.
 God speed, Cousin.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Two American Army trucks barricade the road. An OFFICER and dozens of heavily armed soldiers stand guard, peer down the road toward approaching headlights.

Several trucks filled with armed men slow down, stop at the barricade. Mehmed Smajic jumps from the passenger side of the red truck that leads the convoy, strides to the American officer.

SMAJIC
 Let us through!

OFFICER
 I'm sorry. I can't.

SMAJIC
 If you stop us, you're no better
 than those Serb rapists and
 murderers.

The officer addresses the convoy through a megaphone.

OFFICER
 Go home! All of you. This won't
 help the girl. It'll only make
 things worse.

SMAJIC
 Would you go home if it was your
 daughter?

OFFICER
 Let us handle it. Our helicopters
 and convoys are searching night
 and day.

SMAJIC
 If it was an American girl, you
 wouldn't send helicopters. You'd
 send battalions.

The officer again uses the megaphone, addresses the entire convoy.

OFFICER

Go home and care for your own daughters. We'll save the girl.

He speaks more softly to Smajic.

OFFICER

If this situation isn't resolved tonight, we'll start sending our own men into the woods as soon as it's light. You and some of your men can go with us as guides.

Smajic hugs the officer, returns to the convoy, climbs back into the cab of the lead truck. Slowly the trucks turn around, head the other direction.

EXT. RURAL ROAD

A motor scooter with a single rider putts through the darkness without a light, drives through a curve in the road.

Suddenly, a truck, traveling the same direction much faster, barrels through the curve, catches the scooter in its headlights.

There are two men in the cab, five more in the bed. They see the scooter is driven by a girl wearing jeans and a man's shirt, toot the horn, laugh, and wave their rifles in the air.

A TALL MAN in the back yells to her.

TALL MAN

I've got something here that's even more fun to ride.

The girl jumps from the scooter, runs into the woods. The truck screeches to a stop. The cab PASSENGER jumps out, yells.

PASSENGER

It's the Muslim bitch! Get her!

EXT. RIDGE

From the crest of a nearby ridge overlooking the road, Brad sees the truck run the scooter off the road. Cradling his rifle in both hands, he starts down the side of the ridge toward the road.

He runs as fast as he can, makes no effort to be quiet or remain hidden.

EXT. WOODS

The others in the truck jump out. All seven men have rifles and three of them have flashlights. The tall man yells to his companions.

TALL MAN

Spread out. Don't let her get away. We're all going to score tonight.

They pursue the girl into the woods, spread out to search for her. The men split into three groups, centered around the three who have flashlights, laugh and whoop. The tall man catches her in the beam of his flashlight.

TALL MAN

I see her! Over here!

Another group circles around, trying to cut her off. ANOTHER MAN yells.

ANOTHER MAN

There she is!

She turns around.
Runs right into a HEAVY-SET MAN.
She spins free.
He grabs her from behind.

HEAVY-SET MAN

Quit squirming, Bitch. Save your energy for screwing.

DESA

You touch me and my father will cut your balls off. I'm Desa Popovic.

The other men arrive, surround her.

HEAVY-SET MAN

She claims she's Popovic's daughter. Do any of you know Desa Popovic?

The others shake their heads. The tall man answers him.

TALL MAN

She lying. She's the Muslim
bitch. She's wearing American
clothes.

HEAVY-SET MAN

How would she know about Desa? We
better make sure.

EXT. RIDGE

Brad is now about half way down the side of the ridge. He is still running as fast as he can and is breathing heavily.

EXT. WOODS

The men drag, push Desa back to their truck, force her to climb into the bed, load her scooter in the bed, climb aboard themselves.

Brad staggers within sight of the truck, falls to his knees, gasps for air. He is still too far away to see that the woman the men have captured is not Amira. No one at the truck sees him.

The truck drives away. Brad lies on the ground for a minute, catches his breath. He then jogs down the side of the road, heading the same direction that the truck went.

EXT. DIRT ROAD

The truck travels a short distance, reaches a Serb village.

EXT. SERB VILLAGE - NIGHT

The truck pulls up to a small village store, not the same one that Amira shopped in. The tall man unlocks the door, three others force Desa inside.

INT. STORE

The tall man turns on the lights.

TALL MAN

Lock her in the storage room.
I'll call Popovic.

Two men force her into the storage room.

DESA

Don't be so rough. You'll pay for
any bruises when my father gets
here.

ONE MAN responds.

ONE MAN

Don't complain, Bitch. You know what we have planned for you. You should be happy to be put in storage.

He pushes her inside, slams the door, locks it.

The tall man finishes a quick phone conversation, hangs up the phone.

TALL MAN

Popovic's on his way.

He pulls out a pair of dice.

TALL MAN

Let's shake to see who gets her first if she is Smajic's daughter.

ANOTHER MAN responds.

ANOTHER MAN

Marko should be first if he wants a turn.

TALL MAN

I think he's too old to get it up.

Everyone laughs.

HEAVY-SET MAN

I should be second. I caught her.

TALL MAN

You should be last. You'll crush her to death before the rest of us get a turn.

Everyone except the heavy-set man laughs.

TALL MAN

You'll shake like everyone else.

The tall man writes their names on a piece of paper, everyone shakes the dice. The heavy-set man rolls snake eyes. The others laugh.

TALL MAN

By the time you get your turn, she'll be as passive as your ex-wife.

EXT. VILLAGE STORE

Marko's truck pulls up. He storms into the store.

INT. VILLAGE STORE

Marko enters gruffly, without greeting any of the men.

MARKO

Where is she?

TALL MAN

Back here.

He unlocks the storage room door. Marko flings it open.

MARKO

Desa! So it is you.

DESA

You going to let them rape me
instead of my friend!?

He slaps her face hard.

MARKO

Serbs don't have Muslim friends.

Desa walks out of the storage room, brushes herself off and rubs the cheek her father struck, which has turned bright red.

MARKO

You switched clothes with that
Muslim whore!?

DESA

An old blouse and slacks for a
pair of Guess jeans? That's a
trade any girl would make.

MARKO

You shame me in front of my
friends once too often. Where is
the Muslim girl? Tell me now or,
by God, I'll let these men have
you.

DESA

By now she's safe in Tuzla.

MARKO

I'll deal with you at home.

EXT. SERB VILLAGE

Brad reaches the edge of the village. He walks, holds his rifle in one hand. He obviously is extremely tired. He sees the truck that took Desa, with Marko's parked beside it.

INT. VILLAGE STORE

Marko drags Desa outside. The tall man shrugs, addresses his companions.

TALL MAN

If we're going to have any fun tonight, we have to find the real Smajic's daughter. Desa's lying about her being in Tuzla.

EXT. VILLAGE STORE

Marko throws Desa into the truck cab, takes her scooter from the other truck and loads it in his own truck bed, climbs into the driver's seat, curses at his daughter.

Brad steps out of the shadows at the side of the building, races to the passenger side of the truck.

He opens the truck door, pulls Desa out with one hand, points his rifle at Marko with the other. Desa pushes the barrel of the rifle into the air, screams.

DESA

Don't shoot! He's my father.

BRAD

Who are you?

DESA

I'm Desa -- Amira's friend.

Brad pulls Desa further away from the truck, continues to point his rifle at the vehicle. The tall man steps outside the store to see what is going on.

Brad fires in his direction. He ducks back inside the store, grabs a rifle beside the door, fires at Brad as he and Desa retreat across the street.

Marko shouts at the men in the store.

MARKO

Don't shoot! You'll hit Desa.

Lights go on in a couple of homes on the street. Brad pulls Desa further away, toward the woods. He looks at her clothes.

BRAD
You some kind of decoy?

DESA
I gave Amira my clothes. So she'd
look more like a village girl.

She pulls free of his grip, but stays beside him.

DESA
She has a truck. Went to meet you.

BRAD
She was supposed to get away.
Then send help.

DESA
I wanted her to go. She could be
safe by now, but she wouldn't
leave you.

Brad looks back at the village store and Marko's truck, sees
no one trying to approach them.

DESA
I said I'd meet you, but Amira
insisted she had to go -- because
she knows how to shoot.

Marko calls to Desa from his truck.

MARKO
Come home, Desa. Don't stay with
the American. He'll get you
killed.

BRAD
(to Desa)
I can't believe she has a truck
and didn't make a run for Tuzla.

Desa nods.

DESA
She said you need her help. And
you'd never leave her behind.

BRAD
I wouldn't.

DESA
She's in love. That makes her
brave -- or crazy.

Marko yells again.

MARKO
Desa, please!

DESA
(to Brad)
I better go with him. Meet Amira.
Get away before its too late.

BRAD
I don't know how to find our
meeting place from here.

DESA
(pointing)
It's about three kilometers
straight that way. She'll wait
until dawn. You can make it by
then.

He jogs into the woods. She walks back to Marko's truck,
climbs into the cab.

INT. TRUCK CAB

DESA
Let the soldier go. He's no
longer important.

MARKO
Don't tell me how to run the
militia.

DESA
Amira's already in Tuzla. The
Americans will come soon. Why
anger them further by killing the
soldier?

MARKO
I don't believe the Muslim bitch
got away. No one does.

He drives away.

INT. VILLAGE STORE

The tall man watches impatiently as the others gather up
their rifles, flashlights and brandy bottles.

TALL MAN

Hurry up. We have to catch the soldier. He could lead us to the Muslim girl or tell us where she is -- with a little persuasion.

EXT. SERB VILLAGE

The men leave the store, jog into the woods in pursuit of Brad, who is no longer in sight.

EXT. A DIRT ROAD

Zoran's truck travels along a deserted mountain road. Its lights are on.

INT. TRUCK CAB

Amira is driving and is alone. She wears the clothes Desa formerly had on.

EXT. A DIRT ROAD

As the truck bounces down an incline, the rear tire on the passenger side goes flat, thumps louder and louder. Amira stops at the bottom of the incline, pulls partly off the road, climbs out of the truck.

The lights of another truck, approaching from the opposite direction, come into view.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME

The only vehicle in the yard is Desa's scooter.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Present are Joka, Desa and Zoran, all seated.

ZORAN

(to Desa)

I'm sorry about your Muslim friend. I really am.

DESA

Why is everyone so consumed with hate? It's just an excuse to behave like wild animals.

ZORAN

I never hunted her.

Desa gives him a disgusted look.

DESA

You never tried to help her either.

ZORAN

Marko doesn't believe that she escaped. He plans to hunt for her most of the night.

DESA

That's his problem.

Joka stands up, walks into the kitchen, is out of sight.

ZORAN

What about my truck? Will I ever get it back?

DESA

I'm sure you will. Amira's parents may buy you a brand new one.

Zoran stammers.

ZORAN

When you were nice to me, was that just because you wanted to get away?

DESA

Not entirely. You'd be a neat guy if you thought for yourself -- instead of following Marko and the others like an obedient little dog.

She rises, pauses to kiss Zoran briefly, goes into her room.

EXT. A DIRT ROAD

Amira jogs a couple of steps, as if to abandon the truck, run into the woods. Then she stops, walks in front of the truck until she is clearly visible in the headlight beams, waves at the approaching vehicle.

The other truck stops. There are two men in the cab, three more in the bed. All are armed; those in back are drinking.

AMIRA

Hi. I'm Jasmina Simic from the Srebrenica Militia. We came up to help you search.

The DRIVER looks her over carefully, apparently likes what he sees, smiles broadly.

DRIVER

What's a girl like you doing out here alone after curfew?

AMIRA

I'm not alone. Five of our men are sweeping the ridge from the other side. I brought the truck around to meet them. Got a flat.

DRIVER

A girl in the militia!?

AMIRA

I'm the best shot in our group -- probably better than any of you guys, too.

(pauses)

Can you loan me a flashlight, so I can fix the tire?

DRIVER

We'll change it for you. Won't we, Men? It'll only take a couple of minutes.

The driver and two men from the back jump out. One of the men holds a light while the driver and the other man assess the situation, begin changing the tire.

The LAST MAN in the back jumps down. He drinks from a bottle of plum brandy. Amira smiles at him.

AMIRA

Can I have a drink?

LAST MAN

Sure.

He hands her the bottle.

AMIRA

Thanks.

She takes a couple sips of the brandy.

AMIRA

You guys ever get down to Srebrenica?

LAST MAN

We might.

AMIRA

If you do, look me up. I'll buy you some brandy to repay you for your help.

EXT. WOODS

Brad collapses on the ground out of breath, leans against a tree, rests his rifle in his lap, breathes heavily.

After a short rest, he climbs to a vantage point atop a ridge to observe his surroundings. There are lights in the woods, but all are far away.

He looks slowly at the surrounding hills, which all look similar. He obviously is lost and unsure which direction to go.

EXT. PAVED ROAD

The truckload of hunters who helped Amira meets three trucks full of Serb searchers headed the other direction. They toot, stop on opposite sides of the road.

The cab passenger in one of the three trucks is the taller young man Amira met in the village store. He walks over to visit with the driver who helped Amira.

DRIVER

Any luck?

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Not yet. The Muslim bitch stole a blue truck and changed clothes with a Serb girl.

DRIVER

Holy shit, we saw her! Changed a tire for her. We never suspected her.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

She can be pretty cool. Yesterday, I was closer to her than I am to you. Never doubted she was a Serb.

DRIVER

She said she was from Srebrenica. Even invited us to visit.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

How long ago?

DRIVER

Only a few minutes. Follow us,
we'll show you where we saw her.

The taller young man runs back to the other trucks, excitedly talks to other searchers.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Follow that truck. They saw her
just a few minutes ago.

The truck full of hunters who helped Amira turns around, heads back the direction it came from. The other trucks follow.

EXT. DIRT ROAD

The blue truck slows as the road ends. Amira pulls the vehicle as far into the woods and out of view as she dares to go without danger of getting stuck.

She jumps out, slings her purse over her shoulder, jogs toward the woods. As she nears heavier woods, a hunter steps into view in the moonlight. He carries a rifle, but does not have it pointed at her.

HUNTER

We finally gotcha, Bitch.

Amira pulls the gun from her purse. Her hand shakes, but she fires once, striking him in the chest. The impact knocks him over backwards. He gasps, clutches his chest, then is motionless.

Amira stands staring at the fallen hunter for a few seconds, as if unable to believe what she has done. Then she jogs up a wooded hill.

INT. ROSS' OFFICE

The DUTY OFFICER is in Colonel Ross' office, on the phone. He hangs up as Ross enters.

DUTY OFFICER

I'm moving all of our search
helicopters into the western zone.

He circles an area on the map with his finger.

DUTY OFFICER

Our choppers report lights in the
woods throughout this area, but
none as far east as we're
searching.

Ross bangs his fist on the table in front of the map.

ROSS

Damn! I should have ignored that jacket nonsense.

DUTY OFFICER

There must be hundreds of searchers. It means the Serbs still haven't found the girl.

Ross turns away from the map.

ROSS

We have to assume the Serbs know where to search for them. You're right, we have to concentrate on the same area.

EXT. WOODS

Amira stands in the woods at the edge of the high-ground clearing with the destroyed house. She searches the surrounding woods for lights, sees none.

She jogs up to the ruins, looks about, calls out softly.

AMIRA

Brad. Brad, where are you?

She speaks more quietly, more to herself than her missing lover.

AMIRA

Damn it, Brad, please come. I can't leave you here to die for me.

She sits on the floor, leans against the remains of one wall.

AMIRA

You have to come, Brad. I can't wait long. We must leave before dawn.

EXT. A CREEK

Brad stands on the bank of the creek where he and Amira bathed. He looks about, apparently trying to get his bearings. He jogs a few yards in one direction, stops, changes his mind, jogs in another direction.

EXT. DIRT ROAD

Marko's truck travels slowly, pulls to a stop where a group of five hunters are leaving the woods. Marko climbs from his truck, walks over to meet the hunters. One of them is the blond man who traveled with him earlier.

BLOND MAN

Hi, Marko.

MARKO

Any luck?

BLOND MAN

No, and the damn American helicopters are back snooping around in full force.

MARKO

I know how to discourage them. I need a young woman to help us.

BLOND MAN

My sister would love to help. She'd do anything to support the cause.

Marko clasps him on the shoulder.

MARKO

Good. Let's go get her. We'll also need about a dozen men, maybe more.

BLOND MAN

That's no problem. There are hundreds out here.

They walk back to Marko's truck, climb into the cab.

EXT. SKY

An Apache helicopter circles above the woods.

INT. HELICOPTER

The PILOT is accompanied by an OBSERVER, who uses night-vision goggles to scan the woods below. There are three flashes of light from a small clearing.

EXT. SMALL CLEARING

A young woman stands at the edge of the clearing, fires a rifle into the air three times.

EXT. SKY

The Apache circles lower. There are three more flashes of light.

PILOT
Someone's firing in the air.
Trying to signal us?

OBSERVER
I think so. It's a woman.

EXT. SMALL CLEARING

The young woman waves frantically.

INT. HELICOPTER

The observer studies the woman through his goggles.

OBSERVER
She looks young. It could be
Smajic's daughter.

PILOT
Better get a Hawk here pronto.

EXT. SMALL CLEARING

The Apache hovers directly above the woman, who continues to wave.

EXT. LARGE CLEARING

Brad jogs to the edge of a clearing that is not too wide to cross, but is long and would take considerable time to circle around under cover of the woods.

He scans the surrounding woods, sees nothing. Then he glances at his watch, obviously thinking about the time he could save by crossing the clearing. He hesitates, then jogs into the clearing.

Brad jogs a short distance into the open, is clearly visible in the moonlight. Two hunters appear on one side of the clearing. One is carrying a flashlight. They see Brad.

One HUNTER yells to Brad.

HUNTER
Stop! Identify yourself!

Brad doesn't respond, keeps running. Both hunters fire at him.

Brad is shot in the leg, moans, grabs his leg with his free hand, falls.

The two hunters yell jubilantly, run into the clearing toward him. Brad rolls over, fires twice from a prone position. Both hunters fall.

EXT. WOODS

A group of five hunters are in the woods at the opposite edge of the clearing. Two are carrying flashlights and two others have bottles of brandy. They hear the shots, talk excitedly, run toward the gunfire.

EXT. SMALL CLEARING

The Apache continues to hover above the woman on the ground. A larger helicopter comes into view. It lands, creating a lot of wind and noise. The young woman shields her face from the wind.

Several soldiers jump out, kneel, point their weapons at the woods. A sergeant sticks his head out of the chopper, yells to the woman.

SERGEANT

Miss Smajic?

The woman runs into the woods.
Rifle fire from all sides.
Two soldiers are hit.
Other soldiers fire back.
Help wounded into the chopper.
The sergeant yells to the pilot.

SERGEANT

It's a trap! Get us out of here!

Fire continues from all sides.
Another soldier is wounded climbing into the chopper.
The helicopter is struck several times.

The Apache dives to the rescue.
Makes a loud noise.
Strafes the woods.
Two hunters are killed.
Other hunters stop firing.
Flee deeper into the woods.
The bigger chopper takes off.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - AERIAL VIEW

Three trucks are parked on a dirt road a short distance from where the helicopter was ambushed.

Above them, the bigger helicopter disappears into the dark sky.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - GROUND VIEW

More than a dozen hunters run from the woods, quickly board the trucks. They include Marko, the blond man and the woman who stood in the clearing. Many hunters jump into the truck beds.

The Apache swoops above the trucks.
Dives at them.
A loud noise.
Strafes the hunters.
Several are killed or wounded.
Others jump from the trucks.
Run back into the woods.

The Apache makes a second pass.
Destroys two trucks with rockets.
Flies away in a wide arc.
Disappears into the sky.

Marko's truck is one of the vehicles destroyed. He, the blond man and the young woman are not injured. They survey the destruction from the safety of the woods.

INT. ROSS' OFFICE

The Duty Officer paces in front of the colonel's desk. Ross rushes in.

ROSS
How bad is it?

DUTY OFFICER
Three wounded, one critical.
They'll be here in a couple
minutes.

The Duty Officer stands still.

ROSS
The Serbs must think they're close
to finding the girl. They sure
want to stop our air search.

DUTY OFFICER
They paid a high price for this
escapade.

ROSS

If we'd checked the area before landing, we'd have noticed the trucks. Smelled a trap.

Ross now paces.

ROSS

We need to be extra careful about landing a chopper -- and never do it without an Apache to provide air support.

DUTY OFFICER

But you're not restricting our search.

ROSS

Of course not. That would give those Serb bastards what they want.

EXT. LARGE CLEARING

Brad uses his rifle as a crutch, stands up, tries to walk. He finds he cannot put his weight on his injured leg, grimaces in pain when he tries to do so, falls again.

Brad again uses his rifle to pull himself up, hops on his uninjured leg to the opposite end of the clearing and into the woods. He sits under a tree.

EXT. WOODS

Brad draws his knife, cuts open his bloody upper pants leg, examines what appears to be a flesh wound.

He takes off his belt and applies it high on his leg as a tourniquet, using his knife to cut an extra hole in the belt. He takes off his sweatshirt, cuts off the sleeves and slices them to make bandages for his leg.

These measures stem the bleeding. He again uses the rifle as a crutch, struggles back to his feet. He hops on his other leg, resumes traveling, much slower than before being shot.

EXT. LARGE CLEARING

The five hunters find the two men shot by Brad. The FIRST HUNTER examines one of them.

FIRST HUNTER

Damn it, this guy's dead. Shot clean through the heart.

He curses loudly, picks up the flashlight dropped by the slain hunter, hands it to one of his companions.

A SECOND HUNTER examines the other man shot by Brad.

SECOND HUNTER
He's still alive.

The others run over to the WOUNDED MAN, who is still conscious.

WOUNDED MAN
Water, please. My stomach's on fire.

A THIRD HUNTER offers him a drink from his brandy bottle.

THIRD HUNTER
This is all we have.

The second hunter pushes the bottle away.

SECOND HUNTER
Don't give him any. He's gut shot.

WOUNDED MAN
We wounded the bastard. Look for a blood trail.

FIRST HUNTER
He needs medical help fast. You two carry him back to the truck. Get him to a doctor.

One of the hunters assigned to carry the wounded man hands his flashlight to one of his companions. The three remaining hunters spread out, search for a trail. All are now carrying flashlights.

EXT. WOODS

Brad continues to hop through the woods. He stops, leans against a tree, loosens the tourniquet. The bandages and his lower pants leg are soon stained with fresh blood. He retightens the tourniquet.

EXT. CLEARING

The second hunter yells to his companions, who are searching the ground in other parts of the clearing with their flashlights.

SECOND HUNTER

Over here! I found blood on the ground.

The others join him. They slowly follow the blood trail left by Brad.

EXT. DIRT ROAD

Four truckloads of hunters arrive at the end of the dirt road where Amira left the truck. They stop. Some of them spot Zoran's truck, run over to examine it. ONE MAN yells.

ONE MAN

She's without wheels. She can't be far.

ANOTHER MAN shouts.

ANOTHER MAN

Spread out. Search every direction.

The hunters search the woods. Some have flashlights, many are drinking. Two men find the body of the man Amira killed. ONE HUNTER shouts a warning to the others.

ONE HUNTER

Be careful. She must have a gun.

EXT. WOODS

A three-man search party reaches the edge of the clearing on which the ruins are located. It is composed of the taller young man Amira encountered at the village store, a muscular, UNSHAVEN MAN about ten years older, and a smaller young man.

The smaller man carries a flashlight. The unshaven man has a bottle of brandy in one hand, a hunting knife in a sheath on his belt.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Turn off the light. I saw someone up at the ruins.

The smaller man shuts off the flashlight. The taller young man takes the flashlight, shoves it in a back pocket.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

(to smaller young man)
You find the others. We'll check it out.

EXT. DESTROYED HOUSE

Amira is seated against the wall. She kneels, then prostrates herself in prayer, speaks softly.

AMIRA

Please, God, bring Brad back and take us safely home.

She raises her head, looks up.

AMIRA

I know I haven't prayed in a long time. Don't hold that against me. I promise to do better if you help us now.

She hears a noise, stands up.

AMIRA

Brad?

The taller young man steps inside the ruin, turns on the flashlight, shines it in Amira's face.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

We meet again.

Amira reaches for her purse on the floor beside her. The unshaven man grabs her from behind, kicks the purse away.

Amira pulls free, runs a few steps. The taller young man grabs her from behind, pins her arms behind her back.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

I told ya. She's a looker, isn't she?

UNSHAVEN MAN

That she is. Let's get ours before the others come.

Amira struggles to free herself, but she is held too securely.

UNSHAVEN MAN

It's party time, Girl!

He picks up the bottle of brandy he had set on the ground, holds her face with one hand, forces liquor into her mouth. She coughs, spits. Much of the liquid runs down her neck. He pours more on her chest.

The men both laugh.

UNSHAVEN MAN

You're braless aren't you, Bitch?

He tears open her blouse.

UNSHAVEN MAN

The slut has super tits.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Nice round ass, too.

UNSHAVEN MAN

I think I'll cut off one of the
tits. Have it mounted. A trophy
for my wall.

Amira struggles frantically, but can't break free. The unshaven man pulls the hunting knife from its sheath. Amira screams hysterically.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

We better not cut her yet. She
could bleed to death. The others
will really be pissed if she dies
before they have some fun with her.

UNSHAVEN MAN

(to Amira)

He's right. We'll get our
souvenirs later. Including those
cute little ears.

He presses the blade of the knife under one of Amira's ears. She closes her eyes, sobs loudly.

UNSHAVEN MAN

We want you to enjoy your
popularity. You'll meet dozens of
new boyfriends. Too many to
remember.

He puts the knife away, grabs her rear end, pulls her closer.

UNSHAVEN MAN

Maybe we'll carve our initials in
that nice round ass.

TALLER YOUNG MAN

Quit talking and do it. I want my
turn.

They pull Amira to the ground. The taller young man stretches her arms above her head, kneels on her palms, puts one arm under her chin, grabs her hair with his free hand.

The unshaven man stands between Amira's thrashing legs. She screams again.

UNSHAVEN MAN

Go ahead, Bitch. Scream and kick.
It makes it more fun.

He unzips his pants, bends over to lift her legs.

AMIRA

Brad! Brad, where are you! Shoot
me! Shoot me! Please.

A shot.

The unshaven man is thrown atop Amira.
A portion of his back and chest blown away.
The other man releases her.
Scrambles for his rifle.
Another shot.
He is struck in the chest.

Amira crawls from underneath the first man.
Covered with his blood.
Runs sobbing to Brad.

Brad is leaning against one wall of the ruin, still aiming his rifle. He takes her by the hand. She sees his bloody leg.

AMIRA

You're hurt!

BRAD

It's just a flesh wound. The
bullet went through. We've got to
get out of here fast.

The surrounding woods on all sides of the clearing are alive with bobbing lights. Several figures run up one side of the clearing hill.

AMIRA

It's too late. We're going to die.

She sobs.

BRAD

Not alone, we aren't.

He hobbles to the opposite wall. Fires four times in rapid succession. Three of the men on the hill fall. More than a dozen return shots are fired from the woods. Someone in the woods yells in a loud voice.

VOICE

Don't shoot wildly! We want the
girl alive!

The remaining hunters in the clearing run back to the
protection of the woods.

BRAD

Some of them will try to circle
around.

Amira picks up one of the dead men's rifles, walks to the
opposite wall, watches, takes careful aim, fires. A HUNTER
screams.

HUNTER

I'm hit! I'm hit. Someone help
me!

Amira fires several more shots wildly into the woods, tears
streaming down her cheeks. Brad hobbles to her, takes the
rifle.

BRAD

That just wastes ammunition.
We'll get a breather now. They'll
hang back for awhile. Lick their
wounds.

They sit together behind one of the walls, watch the clearing.

BRAD

They'll probably wait until dawn
before they try to overrun us.

AMIRA

Desa's our only chance. She went
for help.

BRAD

She didn't get away. I saw her.
She told me you were here.

AMIRA

Then there's no hope, is there?

BRAD

I'm sorry.

Amira hugs him.

AMIRA

I only wish I'd met you sooner --
years sooner.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME

The house is dark. Desa's scooter is the only vehicle parked in the yard. A truck approaches at high speed, skids to a stop. The lone OCCUPANT runs to the front door, bangs on it.

Marko answers the door. He is still dressed, looks like he has been napping. Zoran stands behind him.

OCCUPANT

We've got them trapped, just a few kilometers from here -- at the ruins northwest of the village.

Joka and Desa reach the doorway, both wearing nightgowns.

OCCUPANT

They're making a fight of it. We've lost more than a dozen men.

DESA

I hope you lose dozens more.

MARKO

I've had it with you, Desa. You're going to see this thing finished. You're going to watch that Muslim bitch die.

He drags her by one arm and her hair out of the house. Joka screams.

JOKA

No, Marko! No! You go too far.

Marko forces Desa into the truck, sits beside her, slams the passenger door.

JOKA

Marko, don't do this. Please! It's her friend. Don't make her watch.

The other man jumps into the truck, drives away. Joka stands in the doorway, crying.

EXT. THE POPOVIC HOME

Joka leaves the house. She is now dressed, including a heavy sweater. She boards Desa's scooter. Zoran stumbles out of the house behind her, grabs her arm.

ZORAN

I know where you're going. You can't do it.

JOKA

I must help my daughter -- both daughters.

ZORAN

Marko would kill you. I'll go. I don't need to come back.

Joka gets off the scooter, walks back into the house in a daze. Zoran boards the scooter, speeds away with the light on.

EXT. A VILLAGE - ALMOST DAWN

Many of the buildings in the village have been destroyed or damaged.

SUPER: A MUSLIM VILLAGE

Zoran roars up to the closest undamaged house, bangs on the door. When there is no response, he bangs again louder. A MAN and a WOMAN in their nightclothes answer the door.

MAN

Are you crazy!? You know what time it is!?

ZORAN

They're going to kill Smajic's daughter. Can you call the Americans in Tuzla?

The man pulls him inside. Slams the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The room is filled with furniture and decorations that are neat and clean, but also old and worn. The man goes into another room. The woman sits on a tattered couch, motions to Zoran to be seated in an overstuffed chair.

WOMAN

You're a Serb?

Zoran nods.

ZORAN

My friend, Desa, is helping
Smajic's daughter and an American
soldier with her. Now she's in
danger, too.

INT. BEDROOM

The man picks up a phone.

MAN

Operator, I need to contact the
American Army Base in Tuzla. It's
an emergency.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Zoran looks nervous, fidgets. The man can be heard talking
in the other room in a muffled voice.

ZORAN

There isn't much time. They're
surrounded. They can't hold out
long.

The man returns to the living room.

MAN

The call doesn't go through.
Lines are down.

He sits on the couch beside his wife.

MAN

The operator is trying to route
the call through Sarajevo. She'll
call us if she makes the
connection.

ZORAN

There's no time. They could be
dead already.

MAN

All we can do is wait. Hopefully,
it won't be long.

(staring at Zoran)

What'll the other Serbs do when
they find out you helped a Muslim?

ZORAN

I'm not going to find out. I
won't go back.

The phone rings. The man stands, motions for Zoran to accompany him into the bedroom.

MAN

Come. You must explain to the Americans how to find them.

EXT. DESTROYED HOUSE - PREDAWN

Amira and Brad crouch together beside the remains of one wall.

BRAD

It's almost dawn. They'll attack soon.

Amira pulls the gun from her purse, hands it to Brad.

AMIRA

It's time to keep your promise, Brad.

BRAD

I can't do it. I love you.

AMIRA

I love you, too. I want you to be the last man to ever touch me. If you really love me, you'll do it.

She puts her hand atop his, presses the muzzle of the gun to her heart. Both she and Brad have tears streaming down their cheeks.

AMIRA

What about you?

Brad looks at the men at the bottom of the hill preparing to attack their position.

BRAD

I'm going to take as many of those bastards with me as I can.

They stare into each other's eyes. She kisses him tenderly, closes her eyes.

EXT. AMERICAN ARMY BASE

A Black Hawk helicopter rises into the air. Crew members and soldiers race to board three similar helicopters.

INT. ROSS' OFFICE

Ross stands in the doorway. The same female sergeant he talked with in an earlier scene runs up.

SERGEANT

Good news, Colonel. There's an Apache searching a few kilometers away. It'll provide air support until the troops arrive.

ROSS

I hope it isn't too late already.

EXT. SKY

An Apache helicopter circles in the predawn sky.

INT. HELICOPTER

The helicopter has a two-man crew, a PILOT and an OBSERVER who searches the ground below through night-vision goggles.

OBSERVER

I still don't see anything. There should be gunfire.

PILOT

We've got to be almost on top of them.

OBSERVER

Wait! That's the ruins. On that hill in the clearing.

He studies the ground as the pilot circles closer.

OBSERVER

There are armed men in the woods below. Shit! There must be a hundred.

EXT. DESTROYED HOUSE

Brad and Amira remain crouched beside a low section of wall. They are locked in an embrace, kissing. Their lips part, they look into each other's eyes. Both are crying. The gun is still pressed to Amira's heart.

AMIRA

Do it now. Before it's too late.
I love you.

BRAD
I love you, too.

AMIRA
I know.

She closes her eyes.

AMIRA
Pull the trigger, Brad.

A shot.
A split-second pause.
Several more shots.
Hunters start up the hill, hunched over.
The sound of an attack helicopter.
Brad uses the wall to pull himself up.

BRAD
That's an Apache!

EXT. CLEARING AND SKY ABOVE

The attack helicopter dives at the clearing.
Strafes the hillside around the ruins.
Brad pulls Amira to her feet.
They watch the Apache circle overhead.

EXT. WOODS

Marko still holds Desa, clad only in her nightgown, by her hair. He shouts orders to the others.

MARKO
There's still time before the
American troops come. Everyone
attack. Get the girl. Shoot to
kill.

Dozens of militia members start up the hill, firing as they advance.

EXT. RUINS

As the militias charge, Brad hands one of the Serb rifles to Amira.

BRAD
Help must be coming. We have to
hold them off.

The Apache again strafes the hill.
Attackers drop to the ground.
Many are hit.

The helicopter swings away in a wide arc.
 The attackers rise.
 Rush the ruins.
 Firing.

Brad and Amira return fire.
 She doesn't fire as rapidly as he does.
 But her shots are almost as accurate.
 Several attackers fall.
 Dead or wounded.

The Apache swoops above the attackers.
 They are too close to the ruins.
 The helicopter cannot fire.
 Fears hitting Brad and Amira.

One attacker is only feet from Brad.
 Others close behind him.
 Amira drops her rifle.
 Shoots him with the pistol.

Brad takes the pistol from Amira.
 Pushes her behind cover of the wall.
 Shoots three more men at close range.
 Others rush the ruins.
 One of them is Marko.

Four Black Hawks come into view.
 Militia members see them.
 Point, shout warnings.
 The attackers retreat down the hill.

Marko is left alone a few feet from the ruins as his
 companions flee. He yells to them.

MARKO

No! We must get her.

INT. RETURN TO DESA, ZORAN, TONY, AND BELL AT THE
 RESTAURANT

Desa looks up as a tall, stunningly attractive woman about
 the same age strides toward the table. Desa runs to her. They
 wildly greet each other with tears of joy, laughing, hugging,
 and kissing. They step to the table. The new arrival kisses
 Zoran, extends her hand to the others.

AMIRA

I'm Amira Smajic.

Desa picks up her half-full brandy glass.

DESA

I'll finish this at the bar. I've spent 20 years trying to forget how this story ends. I don't want to relive it now.

She walks away, drink in hand. Amira sits in her place.

AMIRA

She's okay. She'll rejoin us later. Where did she leave off?

TONY

Black Hawks landed American troops and the Serbs fled. Only Marko stayed.

AMIRA

Then I arrived just in time. ...

EXT. RETURN TO THE HILLTOP RUIN - DAWN

With a look of fanatical determination, Marko rushes forward. He ignores Brad, who points the pistol at him, aims his rifle at Amira, only feet away.

She grabs the muzzle, pushes it aside. He twists the butt of the rifle into the air, tries to smash it into Amira's head. Brad's pistol clicks empty. He drops it, draws his knife, is about to throw it at Marko.

A shot. Marko has a surprised look, blood stains spread across his chest, he falls dead atop a section of broken wall. Desa stands behind him a few yards away. She holds a rifle, apparently taken from a dead militia man at her feet.

Desa screams, throws down the rifle, drops to her knees, covers her eyes with her hands, sobs loudly. Amira runs to her, comforts her.

DESA

(choking back sobs)

I didn't want to hurt him, but he had to be stopped, no?

AMIRA

He had to be stopped, yes. You poor thing.

Amira hugs her.

EXT. WOODS

The Serb fighters flee into the woods in all directions as the Black Hawks draw near and land. Dozens of heavily armed soldiers jump from the helicopters, surround the bottom of the hill.

EXT. DESTROYED HOUSE

Brad, Amira and Desa stand beside Marko's body, watch the soldiers deploy. Brad picks up his rifle, hands Amira her purse.

AMIRA

(to Desa)

I'm sorry about your father.

DESA

He was an evil man, but in his own way he loved his country -- and even me.

BRAD

He was certainly no coward. He attacked after everyone else had turned and run.

DESA

I must go to mother.

BRAD

You can't stay here. Not without Marko to protect you. The militia will kill you.

AMIRA

(to Desa)

You'll always have a home with me.

BRAD

Let's go.

He puts one arm around Amira's shoulder. She and Desa help support him as he hobbles down the hill.

EXT. CLEARING

The OFFICER in command of the rescue force walks over to them, greets Amira.

OFFICER

Ready to go home, Miss?

Amira nods, clings to Brad.

DESA
Can I come with you?

BRAD
(to the officer)
She helped us. She's not safe
here.

OFFICER
You're welcome to join us, Miss.

Two soldiers put Brad on a stretcher, load him aboard the nearest Black Hawk. Amira and Desa start to join him. A SOLDIER beside the helicopter stops them.

SOLDIER
You ladies will have to ride in
another chopper. Regulations.

Amira smiles.

AMIRA
Let's forget the regulations for
today.

She and Desa climb aboard the same helicopter. They sit next to Brad, who is sitting up on the stretcher.

The soldier who tried to stop them looks at the officer, shrugs. The officer motions with his hands, indicating the chopper can lift off.

Amira kisses Brad. Soldiers, both inside the helicopter and on the ground, cheer, wave their rifles in the air. The helicopter lifts off.

INT. AIRBORNE HELICOPTER

Brad and Amira hug. A SOLDIER beside Desa stares at her admiringly, speaks to her.

SOLDIER
I'm Bill Murphy. I'm from
Portland, Oregon.

Desa initially looks uncomfortable, doesn't answer him. Brad interrupts.

BRAD
She's had a really tough time.
Her father was just killed.

SOLDIER
I'm so sorry ...

Desa smiles weakly, offers her hand.

DESA

I'm Desa.

The soldier shakes her hand.

DESA

Thank you for helping my
friends -- and my country.

SOLDIER

That's why we're here.

Brad smiles at Desa, comments to Amira.

BRAD

More fraternization. Our
commanding officer isn't going to
be happy about this situation.

AMIRA

After what we've been through,
dealing with commanding officers
should be a piece of cake.

BRAD

Do you think ... ?

AMIRA

Shut up and fraternize.

They kiss again, passionately.

EXT. SKY

The helicopter disappears into the dawn sky.

INT. RETURN TO AMIRA, ZORAN, TONY, AND BELL AT THE
RESTAURANT

AMIRA

The end.

BELL

We need to know more. Did you and
Brad marry and live happily ever
after ... At least for a time?

AMIRA

We had a few wild, glorious months
together, but Brad was already
married -- to the Army.

Bell looks at Tony before she responds.

BELL
I know the type.

AMIRA
I'm married now, too, to an importer/exporter in New York City. We have a 14-year-old daughter.

She shows a photo of the daughter to Tony and Bell.

TONY
She's gorgeous, like her mother.

AMIRA
Also happy and safe. Life is good.

TONY
Are you still in touch with Brad?

AMIRA
Barely, but I do sometimes hear from him between top secret assignments. He's now an officer. Has been training and leading special forces units for years.

Zoran stands up.

ZORAN
I'll get Desa. Be right back.

AMIRA
I got a postcard from Istanbul about six months ago. He didn't say where he was going. Or why.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN IRAQ OR TURKEY - PRECISE LOCATION
CLASSIFIED

Four ISIS fighters, all with their faces concealed and heavily armed, guard a line of civilian captives. Two other men, unarmed and with faces bare, are with them, holding ISIS flags. The captives are mostly men, but do include women and children. They are digging their own graves.

Shots are heard, so simultaneously it is difficult to determine how many. The backs of the heads of the four armed fighters explode and they fall dead where they stood. The men with flags drop them and throw up their hands. Men from the line of captives shoot them down with the dead fighters' weapons.

EXT. THE SCENE SHIFTS TO A BLUFF IN THE BACKGROUND WHERE
A GROUP OF SNIPERS AND SPOTTERS ARE CONCEALED

Brad is the officer in charge and one of the snipers. Except
for the salt and pepper hair, he looks little different than
in earlier scenes. He whispers to the spotter beside him.

BRAD

It's ironic how things come full
circle. I started my military
career shooting Christians who
were hunting a young Muslim women.
She was the nicest Muslim I've
ever met. Also the most
beautiful -- and sexy.

He takes the sight off his rifle, continues.

BRAD

Now I'm protecting Christians from
the worst Muslims on the planet.
So evil that extermination is the
only workable solution.

He uses hand signals to move out the others.

BRAD

Anyway, let's get out of here
before someone who shouldn't sees
traces of American boots on the
ground.

FADE OUT:

-THE END-

