

HALF RIGHT
an army play

by Jason Pizzarello

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Characters

Daniel “Crow” CROOM, 18, a skinny black kid from St. Louis. Brash, but at heart, a dork.

Zach “HUTCH” Hutchinson, 19, a husky farm boy from Iowa. Quiet, and a natural leader. Holds his bible close.

Michael MORELLI, 23, an Italian-American from Long Island. Opinionated, and a natural instigator. Married with a kid of his own.

Janio “SPEEDY” Gonzalez, 17, a scrawny Puerto Rican from Florida. Emotionally fragile, possibly with a learning disability.

SAIID Ramachandran, 24, a Muslim American from Ohio. Reserved, smart, and fit. Engaged to a woman and to his Quran.

MASON, 36, Senior Drill Sergeant. A dark giant with bulging eyes and tiny legs. Intimidating but has an affinity for training. Married with three girls.

WILES, 29, Drill Sergeant. A white bulldog. Knowledgeable but has difficulty controlling his strange anger issues. Married. Impotent.

Time and Place

Beginning in July, 2003. (Post Iraq Invasion/Pre Saddam capture)

Nine weeks of Basic Combat Training.
Fort Benning, Georgia.

A unit set representing several locations around the barracks and in the field.

Act One: “Half Right, Face.”

Act Two: “Get in Where You Fit in.”

Act Three: “What Had Happened Was...”

Note

While traditionally cadences are only used with marching, the cadences sung here serve as transitions as the soldiers move from one location to another, or accomplish a certain task, or to represent the passing of time.

Reference guide included at end of script.

First developed with Michelle Bossy in the Fordham Alumni Theater Program

Everyone's quick to blame the alien.

—Aeschylus

The creature was a party of boys, marching...

—William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*

Act One: “Half Right, Face.”

Lights up on:

Five US ARMY recruits, fresh-faced, buzzed and uniformed stand in a line with their right hands raised. They repeat in unison:

SOLDIERS

I —

Down the line they each state their name:

CROOM

Daniel Croom

HUTCH

Zach Hutchinson

MORELLI

Michael Morelli

SPEEDY

Janio Gonzalez

SAIID

Saiid Ramachandran

And back to the oath:

SOLDIERS

do solemnly swear
that I will support and defend
the Constitution of the United States
against all enemies, foreign and domestic;
that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same;
and that I will obey the orders
of the President of the United States
and the orders of the officers appointed over me,
according to regulations
and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
So help me God.

They lower their hands and there’s an exchanged moment of anticipation, a final reprieve, before the shark attack hell that is about to rain down upon them. Next to them is all of their newly issued gear and uniforms, jammed into two Army duffle bags and a green laundry bag.

*They strap one of their duffles on their back, before picking up their second one. Some of them manage to also pick up the laundry bag.
They look like sweaty mules.*

*As soon as this happens, two Drill Sergeants swarm them:
MASON, a dark giant and WILES, a white bulldog.*

MASON

You shitbag civilians!

One of the soldiers drops his duffle bag.

WILES

You motherfucker! Pick up your duffle. Pick up your duffle. Pick up your duffle.

*The Drill Sergeants are screaming so fast and loud it's practically indecipherable.
It's not meant to be understood anyway; it's just meant to terrify the shit out of the new privates. And it's working.
They're as close to the soldiers' faces as you can be without actually touching them.*

DRILL SGTS

Pick that bag up. Who gave you permission to drop that bag? Why are you dropping your bag? Why are you disobeying orders? Do you want to go home? Are you giving up? I would love nothing more than for you give up you pile of monkey shit! Look at your fucking nose! What kind of fucking nose is that? That's a pig's nose. Do you have a pig dick, too? Does your mother oink when she gets fucked in the mud? Should I call you Private PigDick? Yes, I should. Private PigDick did you grow up on a farm? Why are you trying to turn my Army into a bunch of pussypigfuckers.

MORELLI is struggling. Every time he bends over, one of the bags falls to the ground.

MASON

Put one on your back you fucking weirdo.

WILES

Use your fat to hold it up.

MORELLI

Yes, Sergeant.

WILES

Sergeant? Sergeant?

MASON and WILES both get in his face.

MASON

Oh that's fuckin it. I guess we never went to Drill Sergeant school. I guess that training wasn't worth anything to you.

WILES

He's just stripped us of our fuckin badge. Morelli? Morelli? Don't look at me. Are you eye-ballin me, you fat sausage?

Note: Every Drill Sergeant wears a large Drill Sergeant badge on their chest that reads "This We'll Defend."

MORELLI

No, Drill Sergeant.

MASON knocks the bag out of his hands and throws it.

MASON

Go get your fuckin bag.

WILES chases after MORELLI as he does.

WILES

Get your fuckin bag. Get your fuckin bag. Get your fuckin bag.

MASON

You will respond to everything we say with Drill Sergeant. Not Sir or Sergeant. Drill Sergeant. As in "Yes, Drill Sergeant" or "No, Drill sergeant" or "I have no idea because there's a turd where my brain is supposed to be, Drill Sergeant." We earned our fuckin badge and you will respect it. You will not say anything unless spoken to. You have nothing to fuckin say. Ever. You are pieces of garbage. You will only shit when I say you can shit until I say you're fucking done. When I say pinch it off you better fuckin pinch it off. Privates. You are here to learn discipline, which you do not have. You're fuckin soft ass civilians.

WILES

Soft as baby shit.

MASON

But we'll gladly help your weak little bodies and minds. That's our job and we take it very seriously. You are the future of the United States Army. Our Army.

WILES

Group, ATTEN-SUN!

The SOLDIERS attempt to go to the Position of Attention, while holding all of their bags. An impossible task, really. But that was the point.

WILES

You are at the position of ATTENTION, why are you moving? Did anybody say AT EASE? Did anybody say RELAX? No they didn't!

MASON

Stop thinking like civilians. I hate civilians. I fucking HATE civilians. You want to act like a civilian I'm gonna hate you too. Fuck, I hate you anyway. Know why? Cause now you're privates. And I fuckin HATE privates.

CROOM has been breathing with his mouth open.

MASON

Close your dick trap, mouthbreather. I fuckin hate mouthbreathers.

CROOM

Me? Uh... Drill Sergeant.

MASON

Did you just speak to me?

CROOM

Yes, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

You have zero seconds to stand at parade rest, nerd.

CROOM positions his hands behind his back to be at Parade Rest.

MASON

If you talk with your hands, I'm telling you right now, I'm gonna interpret that as you want to fight me. You gonna try and strike me, I will smash your head like a fuckin grape. I will crush you. Technically we're not allowed to hit you.

WILES

New fuckin army.

MASON

But that just makes us anxious. It makes us jumpy.

WILES

Very jumpy.

MASON

And we be lookin for any kinda excuse to fuckin put you down. Are you trackin on that? Better be at parade rest for your own safety. Not gonna tell you again. Now get out your phones. You will be calling home.

WILES

Like that retarded giraffe alien. *(to Mason)* What's his name?

MASON

E.T.

WILES

E. fuckin T. Fuckin weirdo alien wants to call home like a fuckin pussy.

MASON

You will make ONE phone call. You will call your mommy and tell her you are alive and well and receiving good training. Or you will tell your daddy his tax dollars are at work. You will tell him that you might, MIGHT become a man. You will NOT call suzie q. You will not tell her how perky her titties are and you will not be making her panties wet. You will not be making her panties wet for a very long time. Jody will be taking care of that. Yes he will.

WILES

He's probably fucking her right now.

MASON

Probably is. And she's not even screaming out your name. She forgot your limp dick name already, I can assure you of that. Now hold up your phones.

They hold up their phones.

Now turn your phones on and dial your numbers.

WILES

Dial the right number, shit dicks.

They open their phones and start dialing.

SPEEDY is dialing a lot of numbers. MASON attacks.

MASON

Why the fuck are you dialing so many numbers, private? Are you making an international call?

SPEEDY

No... I ...uh...

MASON

You, I, uh, what?

SPEEDY

I am calling home, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

How many numbers are in your phone number?

SPEEDY

...Eight?

MASON

Eight? Eight? Try again, mother fucker.

SPEEDY

Eleven, Drill Sergeant?

MASON

Eleven numbers?! What happened to eight? What do you think this is, the *Price is Right*? Don't go over. You never wanna guess too high. Do you know what the fuckin *Price is Right* is?

SPEEDY

I... uh....

WILES

Maybe he's calling the fuckin hajji in Al Tifar. Is that what you're doing, private? Giving away our locations and shit? We need to teach some OpSec to these twerps before bin Laden blows up my fuckin house. Why do you look like the turd I took after I went to Taco Bell?

SPEEDY shrugs. He nervously dials again.

MASON

(aside to Wiles) I'm not a violent person, I'm really not. But they're so fuckin stupid I just want to smash their faces. They're dumber than last time, right?

WILES

They're always dumber than last time.

Here we hear them each make their phone calls, but the calls can be broken up and jump back and forth.

SPEEDY puts the phone to his ear. He starts to speak in Spanish, but self-consciously and very quiet.

SPEEDY

Hola Mami. Soy yo, Janio. Estoy aquí. Fort Benning. Georgia. Sí, en el ejército. No, no es en Florida, ... porque no lo es. Georgia Mami, en el Sur. Sí, es muy caliente. No se puede llamar más tarde. Porque yo no voy a tener mi teléfono. Son muy estrictas. Ajá. Ajá. Tengo que colgar, así que no me gritaba. Salude a Papi y Julia y Nana. y Danny demasiado. I love you. Voy a ser un hombre fuerte. Adiós.

[Roughly translating as: Hello Mami. It's me, Janio. I am here. Fort Benning. Georgia. Yes, in the army place. No, it's not in Florida....Because it's not. Georgia Mami, in the South. Yes, it's very hot. You can't call me later. Because I'm not going to have my phone. They're very strict. Uh huh. Uh huh. I have to hang up so they don't yell at me. Say hello to Papi and Julia and Papa. And Danny too. I love you. I will be a strong man. Goodbye.]

Mid-way through Speedy's phone call, we pick up on another.

MORELLI

Hey, babe. I made it yeah.... Listen...what are you having for dinner? Tell me what you're havin for dinner. Cause I wanna know.Yeah.... Yeah....Oh man, that sounds good. I'm fuckin starvin already.... No you can't send me food! Cause they'll beat the shit outta me, that's why. I don't care if my mother wants to send it. Don't send it. Don't. I'm telling you, it's only gonna get me in trouble.

(...intercut...)

Yeah, I can hear him. Hey buddy. It's your daddy. You're the man of the house, so if you really need to put your foot down about something, you do it. ...He doesn't understand. He's fuckin two. He doesn't, I'm tellin ya. ...Okay, I gotta go. Cause they're takin away our phones. Yeah, well, I love you too. But you know that. Okay, baby. Gotta go. ...Seriously do not send food.

He hangs up.

HUTCH

Hi Ma...oh, Pop you're there too? Great. *(He starts laughing and crying a bit.)* Wow I miss you guys. Yeah, I hear them in the background. I wish I was there. Sure, I'm okay. *(He wipes his eyes, and clears his throat.)* No I'm just calling to let y'all know I'm here. Yeah, we came over from reception in this bus and ...Yeah a real mixed group of guys. But you know, we're all here for the same reason, right?

(...intercut...)

Y'all gotta tell everyone I say hello from Georgia. Yeah, at the Church too? Tell them I say hello back. I've written you letters and one to Lizzie and one to grandpa. I'm hopin' to write every night but who knows. They don't tell us much. Aw, I miss y'all. They're looking at us, so I think I should go before they make me do push ups. Right, I don't mind. I like push ups. I'm gonna stay positive. Thank you. Love you. Okay, I will. God bless you.

CROOM leaves a message...

CROOM

Dad... it's Danny. I...uh.... am calling to let you know I'm in Fort Benning and I'm still alive. For now. I...was hoping you'd pick up. It's like important for us to talk to someone I guess. ... They're making a big deal out of everything. It's their way or... anyway. I don't think I can call again, so... I don't really have anything else to say. Be cool.

He hangs up.

Everyone else is still talking. MASON notices and pounces.

MASON

Did you get through?

CROOM

Yes, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

So you talked to someone. Who'd you talk to, your pappy?

CROOM

No, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

So who'd you talk to?

CROOM

I didn't talk to anyone, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

What the fuck do you mean you didn't talk to anyone, Drill Sergeant? You just said you got through. You know I hate fuckin liars.

CROOM

I got through to a voice mail. I left a message, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

Well that's not getting through, now fucking is it?

CROOM

I don't know, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

You don't know.

CROOM

I don't know, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

You don't know fucking much, do you, Private. God damn you're skinny. Why are you so fucking skinny? Didn't you drink mommy's milk?

CROOM

I don't know, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

No, then her titty musta run dry. Where are you from, the fuckin desert?

CROOM

St. Louis, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

Buncha dry titties in St. Louis. Drill Sergeant Wiles, you know all the titties are dry in St. Louis? I had no idea. I won't be planning any visits to St. Louis. See how skinny this mother fucker is?

WILES

Holy shit!

MASON

Did they issue you a skinny bitch waiver at MEPS?

CROOM

No, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

Well they should have. What do you look like?

CROOM

A skinny bitch, Drill Sergeant?

MASON

I know that. But what kind of fuckin animal? Drill Sergeant Wiles, what kinda animal does he look like?

WILES

Huh. Maybe one of those skinny Indian cows. You can see all their fuckin ribs.

MASON

Yeah, but with this beaker of his, I think he looks like a fucking crow.

WILES

That's it. A crow. Be careful, he'll peck your pecker off.

MASON

Fuckin Private Crow. You left a voice mail. Call again. And then call someone else. You will speak to someone in your family. Am I being clear as a motherfuckin crystal?

CROOM

Yes, Drill Sergeant. I'll call my sister.

MASON

I don't give a shit!

CROOM dials.

MASON

Private motherfuckin crow.

WILES

Peck your pecker off.

We focus in on SAIID making his call. He speaks very quickly now and in Arabic. We can't understand him but he punctuates his words with patient pausing.

SAIID

Hello. Aleslam 'eleykem alam. leqd wesl anena bekheyr. leys 'eneda alektheyr men alewqet fa aleklam, welken. har jeda hena. alekl yetsebb 'ereqa whem da'ema fa weymedhewn...N'em.... Reqm la amelk b'ed. la asettey' alatesal merh akhera. ...La a'eref... La a'eref...La a'eref. teyb. aheb. ...Alawel. Alawel. La a'eref. N'em. weda'ea.....

[Roughly translating to: Hello mother. I have arrived and I am fine. I do not have much time to speak, but. It is very hot here. Everyone is sweating and they are always yelling at us. Yes. No. I don't have it yet. I can not call again. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. Okay. I love you. I will. I will. I don't know. Yes. Goodbye.]

The others have been glancing over and even staring at him as he speaks. When SAIID notices, he is not embarrassed.

WILES

Let's go Private... Private...

WILES takes a closer look at SAIID's nametape.

WILES

Private Rama-ding-dong.

SAIID hangs up his phone.

SAIID

Ramachandran, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

Private Ramadingdong it is.

MASON

Times up. End it. Don't make me hulk smash your phones!

Now everyone take your little piece of paper with your little name on it and rubber band that shit to your phone. Get it right, Privates. It's your fuckin phone. I don't care if it gets lost. Drill Sergeant Wiles is coming around with a plastic bag.

WILES

Drop the phone in the bag, fuckers.

MASON

But before you do, you better do one last thing. You better kiss that phone goodbye 'cause you will not see it until graduation. I can guarantee you that.

WILES comes by with the bag and everyone drops their phone in. They actually look quiet sad about this. SPEEDY literally kisses his goodbye.

WILES

Fuckin weirdo.

MASON

You have five fucking seconds to secure your equipment in your lockers. Move! What're you waiting for, a french bellhop to come tickle your asshole? I bet you'd like that.

WILES

(in their faces) Pick up your shit. Pick up your shit. Pick up your shit.

MASON

And when I say secure I mean secure. As in, locked. Don't let me find an open locker. You know what, no, let me find one. Let me find an open fuckin locker.

WILES

You know someone's not gonna secure their shit.

MASON

Every time. That's why I tell em: secure it. I try and help em. I really do.

*The PRIVATES all scramble and haul their stuff into the bay.
They sing the cadence "Get on Back Home" as they do:*

SOLDIERS

I don't know why I left.
But I must've done wrong.
And it won't be long.
'Till I get on back home.

Got a letter in the mail
Said go to war or go to jail
And it won't be long.
'Till I get on back home.

Sat me in that barber's chair.
Spun me round, I had no hair.
And it won't be long.
'Till I get on back home...

Inside the bay, they find their lockers and start throwing everything inside. The bay is a large, open room with lockers along the length of the walls and bunks branching away from the lockers.

In the very middle of the bay, the floor is a polished space with a black perimeter that no one is allowed to step in or on — it is a space reserved solely for Drill Sergeants. The perimeter is known as “the line.”

We see a corner of this bay. Five bunks with lockers. The bunks have mattresses, a stack of sheets, a flat pillow and a green blanket.

CROOM is next to MORELLI. HUTCH is paired with SPEEDY. SAID is by himself.

CROOM

(leaning over to Morelli:) What's your name? *(looking at his name tag)* Morelli? Hey, I'm Croom.

MORELLI

Just lock your stuff, man.

CROOM

Yeah I am.

They continue to work in silence.

CROOM

This isn't a black-white thing, is it?

MORELLI

What?

CROOM

You a racist?

MORELLI

I bet I have more black friends than you, man.

CROOM

Good. That's good. I just wanna make sure, ya know. Ya never know who you're dealin with down here. Maybe you miss the good ol' days or somethin. I know some of these honkeys do.

MORELLI

The good ol' days?

CROOM

Slave days. The grand confederacy. Triple K gonna hang a brother in a tree. That kinda shit.

MORELLI

I don't think so.

CROOM

Trust me. I'm sleepin with one eye open. But at least now I know I don't gotta sleep with both eyes open. Aright?

CROOM and MORELLI shake.

MORELLI

Whatever you say, Crow.

CROOM

The name is Croom.

MORELLI

That's not what I heard.

CROOM

Yeah well I heard them call you Fat Sausage. So...

MORELLI

Wanna see it?

CROOM

I don't think it was a compliment.

MORELLI

Sure it was.

CROOM

I think you need to give me half your portions.

MORELLI

Maybe I do.

SPEEDY is really struggling with his locker; stuff is falling out everywhere. HUTCH finishes his and locks up.

HUTCH

You better hurry up, Gonzalez. They're going to be here any second.

SPEEDY

I'm trying. I'm trying. I can't. It won't fit.

HUTCH

Everyone else's fit.

SPEEDY

Mine won't.

HUTCH

Everyone has the same equipment and locker. You just have to work faster than you're used to.

SPEEDY

I can't.

HUTCH

Just hurry, that's all.

SPEEDY

It won't fit. It keeps falling.

SPEEDY is getting frantic now and that's just making everything worse. HUTCH comes around to SPEEDY's locker and tries to help him, but before they can finish: MASON and WILES storm into the bay.

WILES

What that hell is this?

MASON

When I enter this bay or another Drill Sergeant someone better yell "At Ease! Drill Sergeant on the floor! Toe the line!" And then you better toe the fucking line. I'm not gonna tell you again. That was a freebie. Go ahead and see what happens. I dare you. I double fucking dare you with suzie's cherry on top. I'm gonna walk in again.

WILES and MASON leave the bay. The SOLDIERS go back to scrambling. But they immediately reenter.

MASON

What'd you think, I was fucking kidding?

The SOLDIERS all yell, or attempt to, definitely not in unison:

SOLDIERS

“At Ease! Drill Sergeant on the floor! Toe the line!”

They all race to the perimeter line and stand at Attention.

WILES

That was slow and pathetic. You better immediately un-fuck yourselves.
(*in Hutch's face:*) Is this a fucking joke to you?

HUTCH

No, Drill Sergeant!

WILES

Are you taking this seriously?

HUTCH

Yes, Drill Sergeant!

WILES

Shut the fuck up, honkey tonk. Why are you so big, did they feed you hay for breakfast back on the farm?

HUTCH

No, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

Un-fuckin-likely.
(*to Mason:*) I don't think they're taking this seriously.

MASON has been checking lockers.

MASON

I don't either. It's a shame really because now we're gonna have to crush them.

WILES

I like that part, though.

MASON

Yeah, so do I. Gonna give em some Vitamin P.

MASON finds Speedy's locker is unsecured.

MASON

Well what have we here?

WILES

Got one?

MASON

I thought I told them to secure their lockers. Did you hear me say that?

WILES

Yes I did. Loud and fuckin clear. Lima fuckin charlie. Lickin fuckin chicken.

MASON

Whose locker is this?

No one budges. WILES punches the locker.

WILES

Whose fuckin locker is this?

HUTCH elbows SPEEDY to speak up.

HUTCH

(whispering) Gonzalez.

SPEEDY

I think it's mine, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

You think it's yours? You're not sure?

SPEEDY

No, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

This one? This one is yours?

SPEEDY

Yes, Drill Sergeant.

WILES rips open the door and dumps all of his equipment and clothes on the floor, shakes his duffle, completely trashes everything. He finds a can of shaving cream.

WILES

What do you need this for? *(He sprays some on the locker.)* I know you don't grow hair on your face. Is it for your pussy? Do ya leave a little landing strip for your boyfriend?

MASON

Who's your battle buddy?

A pause, no one wants this one.

HUTCH

I am, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

Private Honkey Tonk.

MASON

This your locker?

HUTCH

Yes, Drill Sergeant.

MASON sprays some all over HUTCH's locker and then tosses it.

MASON

Better help your battle buddy. One of you fucks up, you all fuck up.

WILES has made his way over to SPEEDY and is looking him up and down.

WILES

What's the name of that really fast Mexican Mickey Mouse?

MASON

Speedy Gonzalez.

WILES

Yeah. That's it. Look at this.

MASON comes over and looks at his name tape. He busts out laughing.

MASON

He even looks like him. Private fuckin Speedy Gonzalez.

WILES

Private Speedy. You got some cheese in your bag?

SPEEDY

I didn't bring cheese, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

You didn't bring cheese. Aren't you hungry?

SPEEDY

Yes, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

I bet you are. It's a long walk from Mexico.

SPEEDY

I'm Puerto Rican, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

I don't care what the fuck you are. You're fuckin Mexican now. Cause you're Private Speedy Gonzalez.

MASON

Say Aribba Arribba.

SPEEDY

Aribba Aribba.

MASON

Shout that shit!

SPEEDY

Aribba Aribba!

WILES and MASON lose it. Some of the other PRIVATES are laughing too.

MASON

Say andele andele.

SPEEDY

Andele Andele.

They crack up. Then WILES and MASON notice the other PRIVATES laughing.

MASON

What are you laughing at?! Beat your face. All of ya, dickweeds.

All the PRIVATES are doing push ups now.

Me and Drill Sergeant Wiles are the ones that get to laugh in this house.

MASON and WILES continue to trash his locker and go through his things while the PRIVATES keep doing pushups. They're exhausted and sweaty.

WILES

You turds fucking stink.

MASON

You have one mike (*minute*) to be outside. I'm timing you. Clean this shit up. My bay better be as clean as my grandmothers asshole.

WILES and MASON leave the bay.

HUTCH

Quick everyone get his shit back in the locker.

MORELLI

Why didn't you lock it, dipshit?

SPEEDY

I don't know. I thought I did.

MORELLI

Fuckin great.

SPEEDY

I thought I locked it.

HUTCH

It doesn't matter. (*to Speedy:*) Don't worry about it, alright?

CROOM

It matters if we keep getting smoked.

SAID

They're going to smoke us anyway. No matter what we do.

HUTCH

He's probably right.

SAID

It's just a game.

MORELLI

So let's play the game and not fuck everything up.

CROOM

All we have to do is follow instructions.

SPEEDY

I'm sorry.

HUTCH

Why don't you guys just help?

CROOM

Speedy Gonzalez.

MORELLI

Love it.

HUTCH finishes putting everything back in the locker.

HUTCH

C'mon let's go. (to Speedy:) Hurry. Everyone else is out there.

As they run back outside, they sing the rest of the cadence "When You Left":

SOLDIERS

Your mama was home when you left.

You're right!

Your daddy was home when you left.

You're right!

Your sister was home when you left.

You're right!

Your brother was home when you left.

You're right!

Your grandma was home when you left.

You're right!

Your girlfriend was home when you left.

You're right!

Your doggie was home when you left.

You're right!

Your mama, your daddy, your girlfriend, your doggie,

They all were home when you left.

You're right!

So you were a fool to have left.

You're right!

MASON

FALL IN!

You better get in formation. Fall in means fall - in - to - for - mation, not gaggle-fuck.

The PRIVATES are scrambling, bumping into each other, etc.

MASON

Don't think. Stop thinking. It's just gonna get you in trouble. You're tripping over your own thoughts. And you're gonna trip into a world of pain.

FALL IN!

They line up. Mostly at attention. Mostly.

MASON stays in the center of the platoon, while WILES roams, looking for easy prey.

WILES

You fall in at fucking attention. D and C, maggots. Drill and Ceremony.

You think that's Attention? Don't fuckin move. Don't fuckin move now.

MASON

You do not move. You do not blink. You do not cough. You do not wiggle your little piggy nose. I don't care if a mosquito stings you on your goddamn eye ball, you will remain at the Position of Attention. If you have to move to fix yourself, I better not see you. You better be stealth. You better be private ninja.

WILES

(roughly correcting them) Get your elbows down. Look straight ahead. Don't lock your knees unless you wanna faint. Heels together. Forty five degrees apart. Enough to stick my boot between yours.

MASON

Hands hanging naturally by your side. You fingers are curled and your thumbs line up with the seam of your pants.

WILES

Don't look down, retard, just feel it. Back straight. Stomach in, fat body. Chest out. Not like a fuckin peacock. Just stand up. You wanna cry and go home? You think this is tough? Your brothers are being shot at right now in a land made out of garbage and shit and you wanna give up because you have to stand here? Fuckin pussies.

MASON

Be proud men. You are in uniform. Be proud of that flag on your arm.

Now they're all at attention.

My next command is going to be Parade Rest. Parade is the preparatory command and Rest is the command. Your left foot moves. Not your right foot. Twelve inches to the left.

WILES

Someone's gonna fuck that up.

MASON

Place your hands in the center of your lower back. Fingers are flat and extended, thumbs interlocking. Here we go.

PARADE—

Someone moves.

Do not anticipate the command! As you were.

Let me fuck the pony, private. You just hold the tail, got it?

PARADE — REST.

They move to Parade Rest.

The position of Parade Rest is a modified position of attention which means you're still not fucking moving anywhere or anything. Rocket science. I love it. I bet you all graduated high school. Except for you maybe, Private Speedy. Do they have high schools in Mexico?

SPEEDY

I, uh—

MASON

I guess not. Forget it. On the command of At Ease your hands come down to your lower back. AT — EASE.

They shift. SPEEDY's a little bit slower than the rest.

WILES

(correcting) Hands there.... There... Right here.

MASON

Don't fucking piss me off now. You were getting it.

Platoon, AttenSHUN

PARADE — REST...

...AT — EASE...

WILES

Don't move that fuckin right foot.

MASON

Maybe you're not as retarded as I thought. Let's move on to Facing Movements. All facing movements must be from the Position of Attention. ATTEN- SHUN!

First is Left Face. Private Speedy what direction we moving on Left Face?

SPEEDY

What direction, Drill Sergeant?

MASON

I know what I fuckin said, I don't need you to repeat it back to me. You're about as bright as the goddamn twilight.

SPEEDY

I don't know, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

Is that your final answer or do you wanna phone a friend? Private Honkey Tonk, help your battle.

HUTCH

We're gonna move to the left when we do a left face, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

Holy shit. You just gave me a hard on. Is that what you were tryin to do?

HUTCH

No, Drill Sergeant.

MASON

Shut up, I was starting to like you.

LEFT — FACE.

The PRIVATES turn to the left but they're all jacked up. MASON and WILES just laugh.

As you were. Privates, you still move like civilians. I told you, you're not civilians anymore. Forget about that shit. Everything you do has purpose now. Every movement you make is professional and with intention.

As WILES demonstrates:

Alright, I'm gonna break this down for you barney-style:

Rotate your left heel ninety degrees to the left, while at the same time raising your right heel and placing it by your left heel. If you get this right, we might just go eat.

WILES

And don't do any crazy shit with your arms, either. Be fuckin natural.

The men follow the commands as MASON calls them. It's sloppy but they're getting the hang of it. He waits between commands for them to execute.

MASON

Left - Face. ...Left - Face. ...Left - Face. ...Left - Face.

Now you're back where you started. Holy shit. Right Face. Opposite way.

RIGHT — FACE.

Get it right men. Clean it up.

LEFT — FACE.
Right - Face.
Right - Face.
ABOUT — FACE.

They have no idea what an About Face is, and they're a total mess.

I ain't mad. I ain't. As you were. Meaning turn the fuck around and return to Position of Attention. (*They do.*) I ain't mad. Do you I look mad? I'm not. I love this shit. You wanna goof off? You wanna play games. Oh we can play. We can play all day-long. I don't have anywhere to go. Do you, Drill Sergeant Wiles?

WILES

Nope.

MASON

HALF RIGHT — FACE.

They attempt to execute a Half Right Face.

Half Right Face. Half of a Right face. On a fucking diagonal. Forty five degrees. Half of ninety. Half Right. Just like you, privates.

WILES

Barely half right. Bunch of football bats.

MASON

You will come to love being Half Right. Because guess what's coming next.

FRONT LEANING REST POSITION — MOVE.

They get down in Front Leaning Rest — the position preceding the push up.

WILES

Get your butt down. Back is flat. Like a board, fat body.

MASON

We're not gonna do anything until everyone is in correct form. We can stay like this all day. And all night. ...Down.

The men move down into the push up. MORELLI returns to Front Leaning Rest.

Did I say come back up? Get down. Everyone together. Everyone suffers. Stay down, motherfuckers! It hurt, don't it? Pain is good for you. Pain is weakness leaving the body. UP.

The men return to the Front Leaning Rest.

MASON

DOWN. ... UP.

You don't fuckin listen. But you will.

You have the easiest job in the Army. You don't have to think for shit. You just have to do what we say. DOWN. ... UP.

DOWN. ... UP.

DOWN. ... Hold it. Hold it.

WILES

You are weak. Your mama gave you tiny hearts. Hold it, you flabby jello fuckers.

CROOM puts his knees down for a second. WILES loses it.

GET. OFF. YOUR. FUCKING. KNEES.

MASON

DOWN. ...UP.

Are you ready to listen?

SOLDIERS

Yes, Drill Sergeant!

MASON

Pathetic. No motivation.

DOWN. UP. DOWN. UP.

Are you ready to show some motivation? Or do we need to do this all fucking day and night? Are you motivated?

SOLDIERS

YES, DRILL SERGEANT!!

MASON

Position of ATTEN—

Some of the men move early. WILES just shakes his head.

MASON

DOWN. ... UP.

DOWN. ... UP.

DOWN. ... UP.

DOWN. ...

Fade out as this continues...

End of Act One.

Act Two: “Get in Where You Fit in.”

Two weeks later.

Evening. Training is over for the day.

Back in the bay, the men are at their lockers downgrading from their dirty ACUs (Army Combat Uniform) to PTs (Army t-shirt and shorts).

As they change, they sing a rendition of the cadence “My Girl”:

SOLDIERS

My girl’s a pretty girl,
She’s a New York City girl,
And I’d buy her anything,
To keep her in style.

She’s got black wavy hair,
Just like a grizzly bear,
And I’d buy her anything,
To keep her in style.

She’s got two great big hips,
Just like two battleships,
And I’d buy her anything,
To keep her in style.

She’s got some funny tits,
One stands up while the other sits,
And I’d buy her anything,
To keep her in style.

SPEEDY

Do they really put chemicals in the DFAC gatorade?

HUTCH

Yeah. Soft peter.

SPEEDY

What’s that?

HUTCH

It’s to keep your peter soft.

SPEEDY

What do you mean?

MORELLI

Your dick, moron.

SPEEDY

Oh. Why?

MORELLI

So you don't get a boner and try n fuck one of us.

CROOM

I'm plugging my asshole anyway.

SPEEDY

I heard we might get mail.

HUTCH

Who said that?

SPEEDY

Ericson did. Said he saw Drill Sergeant Wiles with a whole bag. Like Santa Claus.

MORELLI

Ericson is full of shit.

CROOM

He's a duffle douche bag full of donkey shit.

HUTCH

Ericson said we'd be getting showers, too. Remember? Said he heard something from somebody.

CROOM

Who heard something from somebody who heard something from somebody who heard something from a bag full of shit.

MORELLI

That they realized was Ericson.

MORELLI and CROOM crack each other up.

HUTCH

You can't believe everything everybody says, Speedy. If we get mail, we get mail.

SPEEDY

But he saw it.

SAIID

Just cause they have our mail doesn't mean they're going to give it to us.

SPEEDY

What? Why wouldn't they give it out?

CROOM

They can't do that. That's a federal offense.

SAID

They do whatever they want.

MORELLI

I don't give a damn. Never sent anyone the address so no one's writing me anyway. Don't need the distractions. It's called mental fuckin strategy, friends.

MASON comes onto the floor with a stack of mail.

WILES enters behind him and stands nearby or paces around.

SOLDIERS

At Ease! Drill Sergeant on Floor! Toe the Line!

They all toe the line.

MASON

I guess you fuckers had some time to write home. Guess we didn't tire you out.

WILES

We can fix that.

SPEEDY

See, we have mail.

SAID

Shut up or we won't get it.

SPEEDY

I was right.

MORELLI

Shut up, blue falcon.

HUTCH shushes them.

MASON

I believe in giving you your mail, men. It's good for morale.

SOLDIERS

Hooah!

MASON

So if I have it, I'm gonna give it to you. But if anybody asks me if you're gonna get mail, you're not gonna see shit. Got it?

SOLDIERS

Hooah.

MASON

You will do twenty pushups for each letter you receive. Gotta pay the man.

MORELLI

Drill Sergeant, what if we don't want our mail? Anymore.

MASON

Too bad. And if anyone gets any nude photos...they're mine. Or food.
(to Wiles) Remember that fuckin package last cycle?

WILES

Fucking cookies with those chocolate candies in em. What're they called?

MASON

M&Ms.

WILES

M fuckin M's.

MASON

Hell yeah. Shit was still warm, too.

*MASON reads the name on the letter, and flings it in the soldier's general direction.
Sometimes he shakes them, etc.*

MASON

Private Hutchinson.

HUTCH

Here, Drill Sergeant. Moving, Drill Sergeant.

HUTCH runs over as the letter is thrown at him.

WILES

Private Honkey Tonk.

MASON

Better start pushin. Get your Vitamin P on.

HUTCH starts doing pushups.

MASON

Private Morelli.

The soldiers hit the floor after their name is called, responding with “Here, Drill Sergeant, moving, Drill Sergeant.” For the soldiers unseen, the letters are flung off.

MASON

Private Ericson... Private Rama...dingdong. ...Private Croom...

WILES

Private Crow.

MASON

Private Hutchinson... Keep pushin. ...Private Kang... ...Private Jones... The other Private Jones...

SPEEDY

I didn't get one yet.

MASON

Private... I donno who the fuck that is. (*showing the letter to Wiles*) Didn't that guy fuckin die?

WILES

Pussy.

MASON

Fuck it. (*He throws the letter away.*) That's fuckin it. Put that shit away. I don't want to see you readin it.

SOLDIERS

(*gathering their letters*) Hooah.

WILES

Actually, read it. Let us catch you.

MASON

Lights out at twenty one hundred.

WILES

That means no fuckin lights. No flashlights.

MASON

Zero three thirty we march.

MORELLI shoots up his hand. MASON looks at him.

MORELLI

How far are we marching, Drill Sergeant?

MASON

Til your feet fuckin bleed. Shut the fuck up and push.

*MORELLI gets down and starts doing pushups.
Everyone else laughs a little. It's okay, the mood is a bit lighter.*

WILES

Don't be dumb enough to ask questions. This isn't Johnny F. Pussy Middle School. There *are* such things as stupid questions. Every question is a stupid question.

MASON

We'll tell ya exactly what ya need to know when ya need to know it. Get up, Private Spaghetti.

MORELLI gets ups.

WILES

Tomorrow's gonna hurt. I'm excited.

MASON

Better get your beauty rest tonight, boys.

CROOM

I don't need my beauty rest, Drill Sergeant. I'm beautiful enough.

Everyone laughs.

MASON

(cracking a smile) Is that right?

CROOM

Yes, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

You like being pretty like a girl?

MASON

You soft as baby shit. Better start pushin, Private Crow.

CROOM

Yes, Drill Sergeant.

CROOM starts doing push ups.

MASON

Gonna make you hard as woodpecker lips. Everyone else, get your shit together.

WILES

They think this is a fuckin game.

MASON

We'll see. We'll see.

MASON leaves.

WILES

I hope you're having a good time. Got your fuckin mail. Six months from now you're gonna be over the pond with nothing but sand in your assholes. You think it's all games. Until you're fuckin downrange watchin your buddy bleed out. It's not such a game then. So laugh it up. Read your fuckin mail. Drill Sergeant Mason likes to give it to you. But if it was up to me I wouldn't give you shit. Fuckin nothin. Need to get used to it. Cause nothin is all you're gonna have when the shit gets real.

WILES leaves. A few moments hang in the air after he leaves.

MORELLI

(to Croom) Yeah you can stop now, prettygirl.

CROOM collapses.

CROOM

Now I need my beauty rest.

The rest retreat to their bunks or lockers to read their letters. SPEEDY watches.

SPEEDY

(to himself and to no one) I didn't get anything.

SPEEDY wanders back to his locker.

MORELLI plops back down on his bed.

MORELLI

(pretending to read his letter outloud) Dear Sexybeast...

HUTCH

Dude, get off your bunk.

MORELLI

But it's from my goo-ma.

HUTCH

I don't know what that is.

MORELLI

My mistress.

HUTCH

Can't sit on your bunk. Not till lights out. Unless you wanna get us all smoked.

MORELLI

Yes, sir. *(He slides off and sits beside it.)* I'm just kidding anyway. It's from my wife.

SPEEDY

I thought you didn't give out your address?

MORELLI

None your business, Speedy. Read your own fuckin letters.

SPEEDY

I didn't get any.

MORELLI

Go write one then.

SPEEDY wanders over to SAIID who is reading a letter.

SPEEDY

(to Saiid) Hey, um...?

SAIID

My name is Saiid.

SPEEDY

Right. Saiid. I didn't get any letters tonight.

SAIID

That's great.

SPEEDY

Who is your letter from? Is it from your girlfriend?

SAIID

I don't have a girlfriend.

SPEEDY

Why not?

SAID

I have a fiance.

SPEEDY

Oh. You mean you're engaged.

SAID

Yes. That is what it means.

SPEEDY

Woah, so you're gonna get married, then?

SAID

It certainly looks that way, doesn't it?

SPEEDY

I don't know. You're engaged to her, not me.

SAID

C'mere. I want to ask you something.

SPEEDY

(he does and gets close) What is it?

SAID

What's your first name?

SPEEDY

Janio.

SAID

Janio, why don't you go fuck the fuck off? Okay?

SPEEDY

But I didn't get any mail.

SPEEDY grabs for his letter. SAID hits him in the arm. Hard.

SPEEDY

Ow. Owwww. What'd you do that for?

SAID folds his letter neatly and puts it in his notebook.

SAID

Don't ever touch my things. Ever.

SPEEDY is rubbing his arm and whimpers away.

SPEEDY

Fine. Your letter's stupid anyway. Cause you're gonna get married and then she's gonna divorce you cause you're abusive.

(Back in his area, to HUTCH:) He didn't have to hit me.

HUTCH doesn't respond.

SPEEDY

Did you hear what I said? Hutch?

MORELLI and CROOM are laughing about something CROOM said.

CROOM

(reading from his letter) At night, I pretend you here, that you snuck in somehow without my parents noticing. I pretend you in my bed, hiding under the covers...touching me. Instead I touch me. And I feel so good. So wet.

(He smells the letter.) Dude.

MORELLI

No way.

CROOM

Mmmm, mmmm.

MORELLI

Right on the fuckin letter?

CROOM

Take a whiff.

CROOM passes the letter to MORELLI. He smells.

MORELLI

Damn. Smells like a fish market.

CROOM

Shut the fuck up. It smells like a garden.

CROOM snatches the letter back.

MORELLI

Wow. You're in fuckin love. I outta smack you.

SPEEDY, overhearing them, has encroached on their space.

SPEEDY

Can I smell it?

CROOM

No, man.

SPEEDY

You let Morelli.

CROOM

So?

SPEEDY

What about me?

CROOM

Man, I don't know you.

SPEEDY

You don't?

CROOM

No.

SPEEDY goes back to his locker and pouts.

SPEEDY

Why is everyone so upset? I'm the one who didn't get a letter.

Ever since the letters arrived HUTCH has been reading one over and over by himself. He punches a locker. Everyone jumps.

MORELLI

What was that?

CROOM

You alright, Hutch?

HUTCH

Nothing. I'm fine.

MORELLI and CROOM come over to HUTCH's space. He's crumpling up his letter.

CROOM

What's wrong?

MORELLI

Let me guess... she fucked Jody.

HUTCH

Three weeks. Three measly weeks I've been gone.

CROOM

Oh shit.

MORELLI

What a slut.

HUTCH

She said she'd wait for me.

MORELLI

Fuckin broads.

SPEEDY

You broke up with your girlfriend?

HUTCH

Something like that.

MORELLI

You didn't do shit.

HUTCH

I left.

MORELLI

Big deal. It's not like you were deployed. Fuck her, dude.

CROOM

How long were you together?

HUTCH

A long time. Practically since the beginning of Junior year.

CROOM

Her loss, Hutch.

MORELLI

What were you gonna do, marry her?

HUTCH

Maybe.

MORELLI

Fuck that.

HUTCH

Aren't you married?

MORELLI

Yeah, but I'm older than you. I already fucked around. You need that time. Plus she was pregnant.

HUTCH

I'm not like that.

CROOM

I'm not either. If I had a *real* girlfriend, I'd be faithful. I'd only sleep with her sisters.

MORELLI

If I were you, Hutch, I'd be fucking a different farm girl on every hay stack.

SPEEDY

Yeah and in the barns, too.

HUTCH

Yeah... that's alright.

MORELLI

It's for the best, Hutch. You'll probably be in Baghdad in six months anyway. If she can't even...

HUTCH

Yeah. I know. Forget her, right.

MORELLI

Exactly. Whatta cunt.

CROOM

Speaking of, wanna smell my letter?

HUTCH

Do I what?

CROOM

(Pulling it out) Smell my letter. It might make you feel better.

MORELLI

Don't do it.

HUTCH

What's it got on it, perfume?

MORELLI

Pussy perfume.

SPEEDY

I'll smell it.

CROOM

I'm offering it to Hutch. To ease his suffering.

HUTCH

No thanks. But thanks. I don't wanna get home sick.

CROOM

Suit yourself.

SPEEDY

I'll smell it.

MORELLI takes the letter from CROOM.

MORELLI

Yeah you want to smell it?

SPEEDY

Okay.

MORELLI holds it out to him. SPEEDY is giggling.

CROOM

Careful with that.

SPEEDY reaches for the letter. MORELLI holds it up to SPEEDY's face.

MORELLI

Here, smell it.

*Just as SPEEDY's getting close to it, MORELLI gets him in a headlock and wrestles him to the ground. The others start to circle them and cheer.
MORELLI smashes the letter in his face.*

MORELLI

There. Smell it, you little perv.

*MORELLI is definitely dominating the wrestle by sheer weight alone, but SPEEDY is putting up a surprisingly good fight.
CROOM snatches the letter away.*

CROOM

Don't fuckin rip it, jerk.

*CROOM carefully folds the letter up and puts it in his pants.
MORELLI lets up and SPEEDY wiggles free.
The crowd disperses.
SPEEDY retreats to his locker on the verge of tears.
The lights shut off.*

MORELLI

I guess that's lights out.

HUTCH

You okay, Speedy? You hurt or somethin'?

SPEEDY

I'm not...anything.

MORELLI is rubbing his shoulder.

MORELLI

(to Croom) Damn he's kinda strong for a little guy.

CROOM

Yeah that's called retard strength.

MORELLI

Makes sense.

MORELLI jumps in bed.

CROOM

See you at fireguard in an hour.

MORELLI

Motherfucker. I forgot.

CROOM

Have a nice nap.

As they get in their bunks, and MORELLI and CROOM prep for fireguard, they sing a different rendition of "My Girl":

SOLDIERS

My girl's a vegetable,
She lives in a hospital,
But I'd buy her anything,
To keep her alive.

She's got no arms or legs,
Steel rods and wooden pegs,
But I'd buy her anything,
To keep her alive.

She's got her own TV,
They call it an EKG ,
But I'd buy her anything,
To keep her alive.

One day I played a joke,
pulled the plug and watched her choke,
But I'd buy her anything,
To keep her alive.

*Now everyone is asleep and the bay is silent.
SAIID, CROOM, and MORELLI, who are on fireguard, watch in the bay.
SAIID at a desk, reading under a lamp.
CROOM, full battle rattle, pacing back and forth in front of SAIID. He stops, watches.*

SAIID

(without looking up) Do you have the count?

CROOM

Morelli is doing it. ...So where you from, Saiid?

SAIID

Cleveland.

CROOM

No, where you from from. Originally?

SAID

I am originally from Cleveland.

CROOM

Yeah but before that?

SAID

From my mother's uterus. Would you like me to go back further?

CROOM

I mean where's your family from? And don't say Cleveland.

SAID

Where is your family from? Before they were slaves here in America? Africa?

CROOM

Ha, I don't know man. I don't know we were slaves and all.

SAID

No, your family came here as free people?

CROOM

I don't know where my family is from. Originally. Yeah, Africa, I guess. That's where I got the tan. Where'd you get yours?

SAID

My father was born in Egypt. My mother was not.

CROOM

Where were you born?

SAID

I was also born in Egypt.

CROOM

Oh. How old were you when you moved here?

SAID

Nine. No, eleven.

CROOM

Cleveland, Ohio. That's cool, man. I don't know much about Ohio.

SAID

There's not much to know.

CROOM

I'm not from Cleveland.

SAIID

Okay.

CROOM

I'm from St. Louis. Missouri. Know where that is?

SAIID

Is it in Missouri?

CROOM

You're funny, man. (*Looking off:*) What the hell is he doing? ...I'll be right back.

CROOM walks off. SAIID returns to his book.

After CROOM is out of sight, SAIID takes out a tiny notepad and jots something.

CROOM returns with MORELLI, laughing. SAIID puts the pad away.

MORELLI

What a dumb ass.

CROOM

(*to Saiid*) Houston was talking in his sleep.

MORELLI

More like crying like a little bitch in his sleep. Something about pickles. What a fag.

SAIID

What about the count?

MORELLI

Pickles. That shit was funny man.

CROOM

Prisoners accounted for. Forty-eight.

SAIID

Okay.

CROOM

Plus us. So fifty-one. All together.

CROOM does a weapons check. Counts as he does.

SAIID has returned to his book.

MORELLI

Whatcha reading?

SAID ignores him and continues reading.

MORELLI

The book. What book is that? Huh? If you somehow got porn, you're obligated to share. That's just house rules.

SAID

Does it look like porn to you?

MORELLI

No, that's why I'm confused. You're being all secretive and shit, man. There's nothing to hide here. Back home I read all kinds of shit I should be embarrassed about. But I'd share. I got nothing to hide.

CROOM

Back home I'm like a super nerd. Black people aren't supposed to be nerds but I am. Hard core. Not like Anime, World of Warcraft, naw man like beyond what you understand. Like black market nerd stuff. Ever heard of Nethack?

MORELLI

No.

CROOM

Cause no one has. It's the ultimate shit though. It'll really fuckin rock you, if you let it. I mean, take over your world. But, look, don't tell anyone, you know, cause...

SAID

You have an image to protect?

CROOM

Exactly.

SAID

It's the Quran.

MORELLI

What is?

SAID

This book. Is the Quran. Since we are sharing.

CROOM

It is?

SAIID

Yes.

MORELLI

And that's what you're reading?

SAIID

You know I am Muslim, right?

CROOM

Just cause you're Muslim doesn't mean you're religious.

MORELLI

Yeah just cause I'm Catholic doesn't mean I go to mass. You just confess anyway. Clean slate. So what does your Quran book say?

SAIID

About what?

MORELLI

About what you're doing here.

SAIID

On fireguard?

CROOM

See I told you, he's funny.

SAIID

In the Army?

MORELLI

In America.

SAIID

You know there are over eight million American Muslims.

CROOM

Is that a lot?

SAIID

Eight million?

CROOM

Out of everyone?

SAID

That's enough for eight million-man marches.

CROOM

True.

SAID

That's powerful stuff.

MORELLI

What do you need to march about?

SAID

Whatever we want.

CROOM

I hate parades. They're annoying. It's the same tacky floats and terrible school bands. I can't stand it when people are out of step. I mean if you're going to be in a parade you need to practice. Practice, man. Drill that shit.

MORELLI

Practice makes perfect.

CROOM

Exactly.

SAID

Practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect.

MORELLI

Is that what your book says?

SAID

No that's what Vince Lombardi said. Do you know him?

MORELLI

Of course I know who Vince Lombardi fuckin is. How do you know him?

SAID

He was a smart man.

MORELLI

You like football?

SAIID

No. No I do not.

MORELLI

Well you should.

SAIID

(to Croom) Would you like to read it sometime?

CROOM

Read... the Quran?

SAIID

Sure.

CROOM

No, thanks. I'm not religious.

SAIID

That doesn't have to be the way. Forever, I mean. Our paths are not carved in stone.

CROOM

I know that.

SAIID

I could pick out a passage for you. To start.

CROOM

That's alright. But thanks.

SAIID

Suit yourself.

MORELLI

What about me? Maybe I want to read it.

SAIID

Do you?

MORELLI

No. No I do not.

SAIID

Well you should.

MORELLI taps on his watch.

MORELLI

Shit man, we're done.

*SAIID marks his page and closes the Quran.
Black out.*

*Early morning, a few days later.
The lights fade up on an M16 rifle range.
As the men move into their firing positions, downstage, they sing the cadence "Here We
Go Again:"*

SOLDIERS

Here we go again.
Same old shit again.

Marching down the avenue.
Six more weeks and we'll be through.

I wont have to look at you.
Ugly ugly ugly you.

You wont have to look at me.
Pretty pretty pretty me.

*Orders can be heard from the tower (over a loudspeaker), throughout the scene.
As the commands are given, the men follow them.*

TOWER: Firers, approach your lane...
...Secure two magazines of five rounds each.
...Firers, assume a good supported position.

*HUTCH and MORELLI stand off to the side. Interspersed with their conversation and
commands from the tower, are actual M16 rifle shots.*

HUTCH

What's the big deal?

MORELLI

He was reading the Quran. The Quran.

HUTCH

Yeah.

MORELLI

Don't you that's a little...?

HUTCH

What?

MORELLI

Fucked up?

TOWER: Scorers, point out the limits of your lane.
...Secure two magazines of five rounds each.
Ready on the left? Ready on the right? Ready on the firing lane?
...Firers, lock your first magazine. Load.

HUTCH

You know he's Muslim, right?

MORELLI

I mean, I guess, I never...

HUTCH

Muslims read the Quran.

MORELLI

Didn't know he was devout. Just cause he's Muslim doesn't mean he's all religious. You shouldn't stereotype like that.

HUTCH

I'm always reading my Bible. Do you think that's f'd up?

MORELLI

Don't pull that shit, Hutch, it wasn't the Bible.

HUTCH

So that's different.

MORELLI

C'mon you know it's different.

HUTCH

My Bible doesn't bother you?

MORELLI

I'm not saying we have to burn his book or anything. I just...

HUTCH

What then?

MORELLI

I don't know. The whole thing was just... Where's Croom?

HUTCH

Ammo detail.

TOWER: Scan your sector.

...Watch your targets...

MORELLI

I just thought it was a little fuckin weird is all.

HUTCH

Why?

MORELLI

Cause you don't see anyone else reading a fuckin Quran around here do you?

HUTCH

So?

MORELLI

Maybe there's a good fuckin reason for that.

TOWER: Firers, assume the appropriate firing position and commence firing when the targets are presented.

MORELLI

Cause maybe the some assholes who also read the fuckin Quran happened to fly planes into a couple a buildings in the middle of New York City. Do happen to remember that?

HUTCH

Yeah I remember. I remember it on TV.

MORELLI

Cause I sure fuckin remember. I was there.

HUTCH

You were there?

MORELLI

I was close enough.

HUTCH

How close?

MORELLI

Close enough to see those poor bastards jumping out the window to avoid the fire. Close enough to get dead people ash on my face. That close enough for you?

HUTCH

That's close.

MORELLI

Yeah, so scuse me if I'm a little off-put by seeing someone who's supposed to be on my side, someone who's supposed to be protecting my ass, someone who is supposed to be goin over there to kill a bunch of towelheads, readin the same book they're readin. Know what I mean?

More shots from the range.

TOWER: Cease-Fire, Cease-Fire, Cease-Fire.

Clear all weapons, remove your magazine, bolts locked to the rear, selector on safe.

As the men march back from the range, they sing the cadence "Far Away (or She Wore a Yellow Ribbon)."

SOLDIERS

Around her hair, she wore a yellow ribbon.
She wore it in the springtime in the merry month of May.
And if you asked her why the heck she wore it,
She wore it for her soldier stationed far, far away.

Around her block, she pushed a baby carriage.
She pushed it in the springtime in the merry month of May.
And if you asked her why the heck she pushed it,
She pushed it for her soldier stationed far, far away.

Behind the door, her daddy kept a shotgun
He kept it in the springtime in the merry month of May.
And if you asked him why the heck he kept it,
He kept it so her soldier would stay far, far away.

So in her drawer, she kept a pink vibrator,
She kept it in the springtime and the merry month of May.
And if you asked her why the heck she kept it,
She kept it 'cause her soldier was so far, far away.

Back to bay, the men dump their gear, and each find a spot on the floor to begin weapon's maintenance, the tedious but vital task of taking apart their rifles and cleaning the

various parts. Their cleaning “kits,” consisting of swabs, cue-tips, pipe cleaners and metal brushes, are spread out around them, on towels and rags.

CROOM leans over to SPEEDY.

CROOM

Hey man ya got any more cue-tips?

SPEEDY

No.

SPEEDY hugs in his supplies, but not before CROOM snags some.

CROOM

How about I just take these then?

SPEEDY

How about you get your own?

CROOM

How about a nice warm glass of shut the fuck up?

HUTCH

How about you guys stop bickering like a bunch of little babies.

CROOM

Just admit that I'm right.

MORELLI

Right about what? You're not still debating the best kind of zombie, are you? 'Cause we settled that.

CROOM

No we've moved on to more important things. Speedy here thinks *Lucky Charms* are just for kids and I told this bitch *Tricks* are for kids and *Lucky Charms* are magically delicious and for everyone.

SPEEDY

I don't like the marshmallows. They're too small.

HUTCH

Cinnamon Toast Crunch. Now that's a cereal.

MORELLI

(doing the voice) They're gggreereeat!

CROOM

That's Frosted Flakes. You should know that. Their mascot is Tony the Tiger.

MORELLI

Why should I know that?

CROOM

Cause his name is Tony.

MORELLI

So cause I'm Italian I'm supposed to know every single Tony.

CROOM

At least the famous one.

SAID

I miss Pop Tarts. The cinnamon kind with frosting. My mom used to pack them for me just like the stupid commercial. She actually believed they were part of a complete breakfast.

SPEEDY

Plus they're in all different shapes.

HUTCH

What are?

SPEEDY

They marshmallows.

CROOM

Will you shut up about the marshmallows. You're like Rainman. I bet you count the pieces of cereal before you put them in the bowl.

SPEEDY

No.

CROOM

Yeah right.

SPEEDY

I don't.

MORELLI

Fuck breakfast. Why are we even talking about breakfast.

If I had one meal right now I'd get a large pie with sausage and extra cheese.

CROOM

Pizza?

MORELLI

Yeah what's wrong with that?

CROOM

Nothing. You called it pie.

MORELLI

Yeah a pizza pie, ever fuckin heard of it.

CROOM

No one calls it a pie.

MORELLI

I don't give a shit what people call it. That's what it is.

CROOM

No. Sorry.

MORELLI

Plenty of people call it a pie. A large pie. You're telling me you never heard of a pizza pie before?

CROOM

I'm not saying that, I'm just saying no one calls it that. You're getting upset.

MORELLI

Damn right I am.

CROOM

This is a very sensitive subject for you.

MORELLI

Damn right it is.

HUTCH

I've never heard pizza called pie before.

MORELLI

That's cause you're from fucking Idaho. All you know is potatoes.

HUTCH

Iowa. And we have pies.

MORELLI

Potato pies?

HUTCH

Apple pie. Blueberry pie. Pies with a *crust*.

SPEEDY

Yeah pies with a crust.

MORELLI

Pizza has crust.

SPEEDY

Oh yeah.

HUTCH

A crust over the top.

SPEEDY

Yeah a crust on top.

HUTCH

Or key lime pie.

SPEEDY

Oh yeah.

HUTCH

So then what makes a pie a pie?

CROOOM

Then there's shepherds pie.

MORELLI

So pizza pie is fine with everyone now? Great.

CROOM

Still wouldn't call pizza, pie.

HUTCH

No.

CROOM

Doesn't seem right.

MORELLI

Fuck all of you.

HUTCH

What about you, Said? Favorite pie?

SAID

I do not like pie.

MORELLI

That's cause your from fuckin Saudi Arabia.

SAID

I am from Cincinnati.

CROOM

I thought you were from Cleveland.

SAID

Nope.

CROOM

That's what you told me the other night. Cleveland.

SAID

Cleveland? No. Cincinnati.

CROOM

Why did you—

SAID

I would not say Cleveland. I hate Cleveland almost as much as I hate pie.
I am from Cincinnati, Ohio.

MORELLI

They don't have pie in Cincinnati?

SAID

They don't have much. But they have all the American pies.

MORELLI

What's wrong with American pies?

SAID

Nothing.

MORELLI

So then why don't you like it?

SAID

Because I am... a cake man.

This cracks some of them up...

HUTCH

Where are you really from?

SAID

Egypt.

SPEEDY

From one of the pyramids?

SAID

Yes. The big one. The one in the middle. That is my house.

SPEEDY

The pyramids are haunted.

CROOM

They are not.

SPEEDY

Because of all the tombs.

CROOM

Dead pharaohs and shit.

SPEEDY

There's a whole show about it. The mummies died thousands of years ago but they're still angry.

CROOM

About what?

SPEEDY

Being dead I guess.

MORELLI

You can't rest in peace when you enslave and murder your own people.

SPEEDY

They also could be aliens.

HUTCH

Do you have your citizenship?

SAID

I will soon.

MORELLI

Whoa. You're not a citizen? How does that work?

SAID

My military commitment will provide me a path to citizenship.

CROOM

So you have to take a test?

SAID

Right.

CROOM

Then just like that you're a US citizen?

SAID

Just like that.

MORELLI

And then what?

SAID

Then... nothing. Citizenship.

MORELLI

So if "then...nothing." Then why do it?

SAID

There are many benefits. Morelli can't deport me, for one.

MORELLI

Better hurry and get that passport.

HUTCH

Everyone wants to live in America.

SAID

I've always lived here. This is my home. And this is where I will stay.

MORELLI

Until you're deployed.

SAID

It's a sword with two edges.

HUTCH

Double-edged.

CROOM

Triple edged. Did you ever see those three-sided trench knives from World War II?

SPEEDY

Like that Ninja Turtle weapon with the three spikes?

CROOM

No, dumbass. A trench knife. It's outlawed cause you can't sew up the wound.

MORELLI

Who gives a shit if your enemy can sew up their wound.

HUTCH

It's not moral.

SAID

Even in war, there are laws.

MORELLI

Fuck that. You're telling me Bin Laden or Saddam shouldn't be stuck with a trench knife? Yeah fucking right. I don't give a shit how many sides it has on it.

SPEEDY

You're violent, Morelli. And you have a New York accent. So you'd be Raphael.

MORELLI

What?

SPEEDY

You're Raphael. From the Ninja Turtles. Plus you love pizza.

HUTCH

No wants to be stabbed with a trench knife. Just like no one wants to be gassed.

CROOM

(to Morelli:) If I was Bin Laden I'd stab you with a triple-sided trench knife.

MORELLI

Of course you would. These people don't have any rules.

SAIID

Who are "these" people?

MORELLI

Don't worry, I'm not generalizing about Muslims. You'd think I'd fall into that fuckin trap? I'm talking about terrorists.

CROOM

Terrorists have rules.

MORELLI

Yeah, kill Americans.

SAIID

What terrorists are you talking about? Any terrorists?

MORELLI

I'm talking about fuckin al-Qaeda. The goddam Taliban. They're playin their own game. We're not fightin the fuckin Germans here. No one's signin any treaties or agreements. Saddam gasses his own people. There are no fuckin rules.

HUTCH

It's a different enemy. That doesn't mean we hold ourselves to different standards. We have to be better than our enemy. Physically, mentally, morally.

MORELLI

Oh get off your fuckin horse, honkey. These are the people who flew planes into the World Trade Center. These fuckin people hate us and will not think twice about blowing themselves up to kill one of us and we're talking fuckin trench knives and clean wounds. Bunch of bullshit. Get your fingers out of your clit gentlemen and put it where it should be. On the fuckin trigger.

A silence. They clean their weapons.

SAIID

You are mixing up your terrorists.

MORELLI

Am I? Am I really?

SAIID

It's never been proven that Saddam has ties to al-Qaeda, the Islamic-militant group claims responsibility for flying the planes on 9/11.

The rest of the guys look at each other.

MORELLI

Who gives a shit if you think they're connected or not. We should bomb Iraq back to the fuckin stone age.

HUTCH

No one's ever proven Saddam is connected to al-Qaeda but it's never been disproven either.

MORELLI

They're all fuckin terrorists.

SPEEDY

(to Croom) You're Michaelangelo. He's funny. And Hutch can be Leonardo, the leader.

CROOM

Who does that leave?

SPEEDY

Donatello, the genius.

CROOM

You think that's you?

SPEEDY

I can be Donatello.

MORELLI

Will you shut up about the fuckin Ninja Turtles.

SPEEDY

And Saiid can be Splinter. Do you know who Splinter is, Saiid?

SAIID ignores him.

SPEEDY

He's a mutant rat. But he's very wise.

MORELLI

You're a retard.

SPEEDY

No I'm Donatello.

CROOM

Yes! And Saddam is the evil Shredder.

MORELLI

Terrorist turtles, great.

CROOM

Shredder isn't a turtle.

SPEEDY

We're turtles, the good guys.

CROOM

Shredder and his footclan are the terrorists.

SAID

One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.

HUTCH

Let it go, Said.

MORELLI

No this should be good. American's are terrorists, right?

SAID

America's heroes, the founding fathers who you cherish and idolize, fighting for freedom. They were the crown's terrorists.

MORELLI

What the fuck are you talking about?

CROOM

He's talking shit about George Washington.

HUTCH

You're calling George Washington a terrorist?

MORELLI

Paul Revere Mujahideen.

SPEEDY

Who is "the crown"?

SAID

I'm not calling anyone a terrorist.

MORELLI

Hell yeah you are.

SAIID

Then I'm calling *anyone* a terrorist. Depending on whose side you're on.

CROOM

Whose side *are* you on, Saiid?

SPEEDY

Saiid Ramadingdong.

SAIID

Shut the fuck up, Speedy Gonzalez.

HUTCH

Don't talk to him like that.

SPEEDY

Yeah. Don't talk to me like that.

SAIID

I can if I want. It's a free country, right?

MORELLI

Not for shit bags.

SAIID

For everyone. No matter what your opinion of them. America the free.

MORELLI

Doesn't mean we can't beat someone's ass.

SAIID

You can do whatever you want, that's the whole point.

MORELLI

But there are consequences to actions. Like you get your ass beat.

SAIID

And there are consequences to that.

SPEEDY

Who is "the crown?"

MORELLI

Jesus, Speedy, shut the fuck up.

HUTCH

The British.

SPEEDY

Oh, the British were the bad guys. They were the terrorists.

MORELLI

(to Saiid) Are you on our side?

SAIID

Yes.

MORELLI

Say it.

SAIID

Say what?

MORELLI

Say you're on the American's side.

SAIID

I am.

MORELLI

So then say it.

SAIID

I am in the US Army.

MORELLI

You think we've never had traitors before?

SAIID

I am no Benedict Arnold.

MORELLI

Stop dodging.

CROOM

Benedict Bin Laden.

SAIID

You know what side I'm on.

MORELLI

I think we'd all take great comfort in hearing you say it.

SAIID

This is an insulting interrogation. You reek of American ignorance.

MORELLI

Say it.

SAIID

I am on your side. You fucking fascist pigs.

MORELLI

Say you are the American's side.

HUTCH

Just say it, Saiid. C'mon buddy.

MORELLI

Why do you think he's your buddy?

SAIID stares at them. They all stare back.

SAIID

It's all perspective. That's all it ever comes down to. Perspective.

MORELLI

He doesn't need to just say it. He needs to mean it.

They stare at him.

CROOM pounces on SAIID and holds him down.

CROOM

What's wrong with you, Saiid? Just say it, man!

SAIID doesn't really resist.

SAIID

Nothing is as it seems.

MORELLI

Yeah, no shit.

But then SAIID swiftly and powerfully rolls CROOM and is on top of him.

MORELLI and HUTCH jump up and grab SAIID and pin him down.

SPEEDY raises his rifle at SAIID, a harmless nervous reaction, since they have no ammo, but still the reaction is disturbing and threatening.

SAIID

I am! I am on the American side.

SAIID releases CROOM.

CROOM slides back into his corner.

HUTCH and MORELLI release SAIID with a shove.

The men recover and pant.

SPEEDY now holds the rifle tight to his chest and whimpers to himself.

As the lights fade, the men sing the melancholy cadence “Mama, Mama”:

SOLDIERS

Mama, Mama don't you see
What the Army's done to me?
Mama, Mama can't you see
What the Army's doing to me?

Mama, Mama doncha cry,
Your little boy ain't gonna die.
Mama, Mama doncha cry,
Your little boy's not gonna die.

Whohh ohh ohh ohh,
I gotta leave, I gotta go
But they won't let me go.

End of Act Two.

Act Three: What Had Happened Was...

The men sing the cadence “Here We Go Again” as they horseshoe around MASON and WILES in front of a projector screen.

SOLDIERS

Here we go again.
Same old shit again.

Marching down the avenue.
Four more weeks and we’ll be through...

Nothing is coming up on the screen and MASON is fidgeting with the cables.

MASON

I’m gonna hulk-smash this thing.

WILES

Fuckin computers. Should probably be blown up.

MASON

Does anyone know anything about projectors?

WILES

I know we got some nerds in here. Who’s a fuckin nerd?

SPEEDY raises his hand.

WILES

Speedy you don’t know shit.

*Chuckles from the men. SPEEDY puts his hand down.
SAID puts his up.*

WILES

You? Private Rammadingdong? What do you know? I bet your family made the parts in India. I bet that’s why they’re not working.

Chuckles.

SAID

I think that is unlikely, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

Unlikely that your family made the parts are that they’re the reason they’re not working?

SAID

The whole scenario, Drill Sergeant.

WILES

I don't give a shit. Now I really think you broke it. Fuckin sabotage and shit.
Who else?

CROOM raises his hand.

WILES

Yeah you do look like a fuckin nerd.

MASON

Private Crow. Get your skinny ass up here.

CROOM looks at the monitor and the projector, presses a few buttons, and the images of the slides appear.

CROOM

The monitor wasn't set to the correct input, Drill Sarnt.

WILES

You scare me.

MASON

Fuckin Private Bill Gates.

CROOM

I'd rather be Private Steve Jobs, Drill Sarnt.

MASON

Sit the fuck down.

CROOM returns to his seat. Some slaps on the back. CROOM is beaming.

The image on the screen reads:

T.A.R.P. THREAT AWARENESS REPORTING PROGRAM

MASON

Cultural Awareness, Motherfuckers.

MASON and WILES go back and forth, delivering the brief, corresponding with slides that include corny graphics of "terrorists" and "classified documents" and "identifiable targets."

WILES

(reading off the screen) The purpose of this briefing is to assist soldiers, like yourself, in identifying and reporting threats, blah blah blah, foreign intelligence services, terrorist organizations and insider threats. In accordance with AR 381-21.

MASON

The *purpose* of this briefing is *awareness*. To help make you aware of the indicators of espionage — so you can report suspicious activity.

Click to next slide. Screen has a photo of James Bond and states: “Spies do not look or act like characters portrayed in Hollywood!”

WILES

A spy could be *anyone*... a fellow Soldier, a co-worker, a neighbor, a family member, a translator, a local national employee...

MASON

What are we talking about here? Types of National Security Crimes.

He clicks the slide. The Screen reads: “Subversion.”

Causing disloyalty. The will or intent, by any member of the armed forces or civilian personnel, to interfere with, impair or influence loyalty, discipline, or morale.

Slide: “Espionage.”

Communicating with the enemy.

WILES

Fucking spying.

Slide: “Sabotage.”

MASON

Destroying or attempting to destroy our mission. Obstructing or interfering with our national defense.

Slide: “Terrorism.”

WILES

You know what fuckin terrorism is.

MASON

It used to be Russians. But now guess where information from spies is being sent? Asian and Southeast Asian countries. The Middle East.

WILES

Fuckin al-Qaida.

MASON

Alright, clues to watch out for:

The following is accompanied by corresponding slides with photos of known and convicted spies...

*Slide reads: Money Problems, Foreign Contacts, and Security Issues.
Strong Ethnic ties and Loyalties.*

MASON

Ideology: Advocating loyalty to a foreign interest over loyalty to the United States.

WILES

Indicators: Strong ethnic ties and loyalties to country of birth. Unreported contacts with foreign nationals. Unreported trips to foreign countries. Obtains information without a need to know.

Slide reads: Ego, Psychological Issues — proving oneself as smarter, better than others, creating a sense of self-worth.

MASON

Ideology: Support of Islamic extremism ... Association or sympathy with persons advocating acts of force or violence against the US Government.

WILES

Indicators: Extremist religious beliefs.

Slide has a photo of Muslim American, a photo of a terrorist with a grenade launcher, and an American flag burning.

MASON

Advocating support for terrorist organizations or objectives. Expressing hatred of American society, culture, government, or principles of the U.S. Constitution.

MORELLI nudges CROOM and HUTCH during this last section.

MASON

Example.

New slide: Photo of a National Guard Soldier.

A National Guardsman convicted of passing information on US troops and weapons to al-Qaida. Arrested in May 2003, just weeks before he was to deploy to Iraq with the Washington National Guard. He converted to Islam in 1998 and began using the name 'Amir Abdul Rashid'

WILES

He was a college graduate, too. And married. They may be fuckin stupid and fuckin lowlifes, but that doesn't mean they're uneducated. Or lonely.

MASON

He used internet chat rooms to contact Muslim extremists that catered to jihadism.

WILES

Guilty on all five charges against him. Demoted to E-1, Dishonorable Discharge, and sentenced to Life without the possibility of parole.

Next slide, big letters: TERRORISM. Photos of Cole bombing, the Twin Towers and the Pentagon.

WILES

Bottom line: Army regulation requires soldiers to report behavior by their comrades that might be a sign of terrorist or extremist sympathies.

Slide reads: "There is no Honor Amongst Thieves" above a cartoon of "Spy vs. Spy."

MASON

Think of it as "do ask, must tell."

WILES

That's good. I like that. That's fuckin clever.

MASON

(ignoring him) Last slide.

Last slide says: Questions?

Image of Military Intelligence shield. And in red type:

Espionage is a serious National Security crime.

It can have far reaching and deadly implications.

If you encounter a suspicious situation ~ Don't take a chance — CALL US!

WILES

Alright, what are your fuckin questions?

CROOM raises his hand.

WILES

This better not be stupid.

CROOM

Are there any rewards for stopping a terrorist attack? Because I could use the cash, Drill Sarnt.

WILES

What'd I just fuckin say.

MORELLI raises his hand.

MORELLI

What if you might have terrorist tendencies, but don't even know it?

WILES

You don't know if you're a terrorist or not?

MORELLI

Well, like what you have the potential to be a terrorist? Like, you might be a terrorist in the future, but you don't know now that you will be. Not me, but like anyone. Drill Sarnt.

WILES

Morelli?

MORELLI

Yes, Drill Sarnt?

WILES

Don't be a fuckin pogue.

The projectors are shut off.

As the men transition out of the classroom they sing the cadence "The Yellow Bird":

SOLDIERS

A yellow bird,
With a yellow bill,
Was sitting on
My window sill.
I lured him in
With a crust of bread
And then I smashed
His fucking head.

A little puppy
With little paws
Was sitting on
My table saw
I picked him up
Like a pound of meat
And then I lopped
His little feet

A yellow bird
With a yellow bill
Was sitting on
My window sill
I lured him in
With a piece of bread
And then I smashed
His fuckin head

*The men have moved outside of the bay. They sit in a row, back to back.
WILES drops a box of MREs next to them on the ground.*

WILES

You have twelve minutes.

CROOM tears open the box and starts to go through it.

WILES

Don't rat fuck em either. Just pass em out. Now it's eleven minutes.

WILES leaves.

CROOM passes MREs out down the line.

CROOM

(singing) They say that in the Army, the chow is mighty fine.
A chicken got off the table, and started marking time...

*HUTCH and MORELLI lean up against each other and go through their MREs.
SAIID and SPEEDY sit at the other end.
MORELLI is staring at SAIID. He's writing in a pocket notebook.*

MORELLI

(aside to Hutch) Look at him.

HUTCH

What?

MORELLI

Fuckin guy is up to somethin.

CROOM plops down next to MORELLI and HUTCH.

CROOM

They say that in the Army the chow is mighty fine!

MORELLI

What are you so happy about?

CROOM shows off his MRE.

CROOM

Maple sausage, mother fuckers.

MORELLI

Vomit.

CROOM

Home cookin away from home.

HUTCH

This is what your food tastes like at home?

CROOM

I don't know what y'all are complaining about. I'd rather have my MREs than the DFAC.

HUTCH

At least we get to eat them in peace.

MORELLI

Yeah, for a full eleven minutes.

CROOM

(imitating Wiles) Eat it now, men. Taste it later.

HUTCH

Anyone want my cheese spread?

MORELLI

You mean your orange plastic spread? No thank you.

CROOM

I'll take it. It's just cheese whiz, you snobs.

HUTCH passes it to CROOM.

MORELLI

(to Croom) What do you want for your chocolate peanut butter?

CROOM

Um, how about your sister's virginity?

MORELLI

Throw in your blueberry cobbler and you got a deal.

HUTCH

You can't have his sister's virginity if he already traded it to me for the meatball meal.

CROOM

Did you double trade her cherry?

MORELLI

I know the rules. I traded you her ass virginity.

HUTCH

You're fuckin sick.

MORELLI

Just give me the cobbler.

HUTCH holds it out.

HUTCH

Skittles.

MORELLI

Only cause they're tropical.

They swap. They continue to tear into their packages.

MORELLI

Meatballs with Marinara Sauce is fuckin insulting.

CROOM

But you'll eat it anyway.

MORELLI

Yes. Yes I will.

CROOM

You are a walking stereotype. Now give me your cornbread stuffing.

MORELLI

Gladly. It tastes like sponge.

CROOM

Here, Speedy, you can have this!

CROOM tosses a package at SPEEDY. It hits him in the head.

SPEEDY

Ow.

CROOM

Mexican style corn.

SPEEDY

(genuinely excited) Thanks!

You want my wheat snack bread?

MORELLI

Fuckin wheat snack bread. No one wants that shit.

CROOM

Yeah, I'll take it.

SPEEDY tosses it over.

HUTCH

Here take mine, too.

MORELLI

Poor Croom. Such a skinny little crow. Our little scavenger.

Their attention shifts to SPEEDY and SAIID. They watch him eat. SPEEDY can't open a package. He tries biting it. Finally SAIID grabs it from him and tears it open.

CROOM

Who would you rather be stuck in a foxhole with, Speedy or Ramadingdong?

HUTCH

Ooo, tough one.

MORELLI

You'll probably end up dead either way.

HUTCH

I'd have to go with Saiid. He's a pretty tough guy and smart and I know I wouldn't have to deal with him crying in the middle of the night.

MORELLI

Are you fuckin kidding me? With Speedy at least I won't end up with a knife in my back in the middle of the night.

HUTCH

Speedy would stab you by accident first.

MORELLI

But at least Speedy is trying to be on our side, even if he is a retard.

HUTCH

Saiid is on our side.

MORELLI

Okay, buddy. You live in a fuckin fantasy world.

CROOM

You know who I'd choose?

HUTCH

Who?

CROOM

Neither. I'd go AWOL.

HUTCH

That'd probably be smart.

MORELLI

I think we should report him.

CROOM

Report who?

MORELLI

Who do you think?

CROOM

Report me?

HUTCH

Yeah don't joke about going AWOL. Morelli will have you shot.

MORELLI

No, assholes. Report Saiid.

HUTCH

Report him?

MORELLI

Yeah.

HUTCH

Are you serious?

MORELLI

Yeah I am.

CROOM

Report to who?

MORELLI

The drill sergeants.

CROOM

Report him for what?

HUTCH

Morelli still thinks he's a sleeper cell.

MORELLI

I think more than that.

CROOM

What could be more than that?

MORELLI

I think he's a terrorist who's plotting, gathering info. He's not sleeping. He's wide awake.

HUTCH

'Cause he was reading the Quran?

CROOM

Yeah you can't report him for that.

MORELLI

I'm gonna report him for sympathizing with the enemy. He'd save his al-Qaeda brothers over us. You were at the same brief as me. That's threat awareness. I'm aware of a threat. It's simple.

HUTCH

Yeah but you turn on your own, and you're wrong, then...

CROOM

Then you're fucked.

MORELLI

No, then it's off our conscience. It's on them what to do. Why would he defend the terrorists of 9/11? Why would he do that? There's not another soldier here who would ever think of that.

HUTCH

I think it was a misunderstanding. You heard him. He said he's on our side.

MORELLI

Yeah, 'cause he was about to get his ass beat. He's not stupid.

CROOM

I don't know. It's probably nothing.

MORELLI

Bullshit, it's nothing. He defines suspicion.

HUTCH

You're becoming paranoid.

MORELLI

Where I'm from we go by "if you see something, say something." It's the rule of the land, and it fuckin works.

HUTCH

Yeah does it? Is that how you catch the bad guys? People saying they've seen something?

MORELLI

Maybe. Most of the time. Better safe than sorry. That's a smart fuckin philosophy.

HUTCH

Shoot first and ask questions later.

MORELLI

That's right. Preeminent strike.

CROOM holds out one of the energy bars from his MRE, called a "First Strike Bar"

CROOM

First Strike Bar. They should change the name to Preeminent Strike Bar.

HUTCH

I'm going to take a preeminent bite of of your First Strike Bar.

HUTCH grabs it and takes a bite.

CROOM

Fucker.

MORELLI

See, better to be the preeminent striker.

CROOM

Preeminent striker? I barely know her.

MORELLI

So what, all the farmers are friends in Idaho?

HUTCH

Iowa.

MORELLI

You mid-westerners, man. Corn belt honkeys. You live in a fuckin bubble.

HUTCH

You don't know what you're talking about. We got plenty of guns and when the country starts crumbling you'll be beggin for our help.

MORELLI

Fuckin doomsday preppers. Fuckin rednecks. Your daddy got a stockpile of canned corn?

HUTCH

Who's the ignorant one? You wanna go huntin Muslims?

MORELLI

No. I wanna hunt terrorists. *(Lifts his hands as if raising a rifle, pointing his fingers out. He aims at Saaid.)* Bang bang.

We shift over to SAIID and SPEEDY.

SPEEDY

What do you have?

SAIID

Chili Mac.

SPEEDY

I love Chili Mac. Wanna trade with me?

SAIID

What do you have?

SPEEDY

Pork Rib.

SAID

I'm Muslim, moron.

SPEEDY

I'm Puerto Rican.

SAID

So I don't eat Pork.

SPEEDY

Oh. Puerto Ricans eat Pork.

SAID

I'm sure they do.

SPEEDY

Why not?

SAID

It is forbidden in the Quran to eat swine.

SPEEDY

Oh. Is that like pig?

SAID

That *is* pig.

SPEEDY

What about Kosher animals?

SAID

Kosher meat is usually fine. It depends on how it is killed.

SPEEDY

They could shoot it of course.

SAID

No, they can't.

SPEEDY

Oh. Do you eat other farm animals? Like chickens?

SAIID

Yes.

SPEEDY

Do you know how to kill chickens? By snapping their neck.

SAIID

Are you asking me or telling me?

SPEEDY

My dad has a farm in Puerto Rico. I go there to visit him. Like when I was little. But I still do. Me and my sisters. He would show me how to kill some of the animals. But not my sisters.

Because they're girls, but also they didn't want to know. They don't like it.

For chickens, to break their neck, you have to do it quick. You grab it's legs with one hand and hold the neck in your other hand like this. (*he demonstrates*) Hold it close to your body so it can't move. Get a good grip on it's neck like with a 'V.' And then your thumb comes over the head and you push down with the weight. And force the head and twist.

They keep moving and flapping even though they're dead. I don't know why.

For rabbits it's different. Their necks are bigger and you have to get a better grip. The bigger the necks the harder you have to grip and twist. But if you do it right, it's easy. Whatever size neck, it's the same. Except with pigeons. They're heads always pop off.

SAIID

Pop off?

SPEEDY

Yeah.

SAIID

Always?

SPEEDY

Always.

SPEEDY makes a popping sound.

We shift back to CROOM, HUTCH, and MORELLI.

CROOM

I agree he's kinda shady. I don't like him, personally. But that doesn't mean he's a terrorist.

MORELLI

No, it doesn't. It's probably nothing, right, Croom?

CROOM

Probably.

MORELLI

'It's probably nothing' is a dangerous fuckin phrase.

My cousin Jed's a mechanic in the Air Force, right? He was down on a base in Florida for a few years. In Pensacola. Anyway, he walks by this guy one day. A pilot. And he seems a little outta place. You know when you see someone and they just seem fuckin weird. Can't put his finger on it. He's a pilot "of Middle Eastern decent." He's an Arab. Which actually isn't the weird part because they train a lot of pilots down there from other Middle Eastern countries. You know our "allies." Anyway. He just looked suspicious. But he didn't say anything to anyone. Even though it was against his instincts, he figured "it's probably nothing." So he did nothing.

That was one week before 9/11. And on that day, that pilot flew an airplane into the fuckin world trade towers.

It's probably nothing, he thought. Well "it's probably nothing" got a lot of people killed.

The soldiers clean up the MREs as they sing the cadence "Somebody Start a War."

SOLDIERS

One, two, three, four...hey,
Run me, run me, run some more, hey.
One, two, three, four...hey,
Somebody, anybody start a war, hey...

This cadence has transitioned us into the Drill Sergeant's office.

MORELLI and CROOM stand at parade rest.

MASON and WILES both busy themselves with other things.

MASON

So you wanna go to Airborne, huh?

MORELLI

Yes, Drill Sarnt.

WILES

Just remember there are only two things that fall from the sky. Bird shit and idiots.

They give a laugh.

MORELLI

Actually Drill Sarnt, there is another reason we wanted to see you.

MASON

Good, 'cause right now you're wasting my fuckin time.

MORELLI

Well your briefing said we should report suspicious activity. And well, uh, there are certain things, that someone in our platoon has been doing and saying. It's just suspicious, is all Drill Sarnt, and I felt like—

WILES

Like what things?

MORELLI

Like reading the Quran.

WILES

Everyone is allowed to have one religious book.

MORELLI

Right, but it's the Quran, Drill Sarnt, and—

MASON

What else?

MORELLI

And saying certain things, defending the terrorists on 9/11, and I'm from New York, and—

WILES

Saying what certain things?

MORELLI

Like how maybe it was our fault. The American's fault. And that the terrorists were right to—

CROOM

He didn't say that *exactly*—

MORELLI

It was close to that. And he lied about where he was from, and he always seems to be like taking notes about what's going on. And I can't remember everything but it's just all very suspicious, Drill Sarnt.

MASON

You know what's fuckin suspicious? You tattle telling on your fuckin battle buddy.

WILES

Maybe you're the Blue Falcon, Morelli.

MASON

Buddy fucker. Are you a buddy fucker?

MORELLI

No, Drill Sarnt.

MASON

Croom, is he a buddy fucker?

CROOM

No, Drill Sarnt.

WILES

Private Crow, what do you know. Why are you here?

CROOM

I'm his battle buddy, Drill Sarnt.

WILES

Of course you are.

MASON

Why are you saying all this shit, Morelli?

MORELLI

Because it's my duty.

MASON

Your duty.

MORELLI

The, uh, Army regulation... *(He pulls out a crumpled notecard from his pocket, reading it:)* requires soldiers to report behavior by their comrades that might be a sign of terrorist or extremist sympathies.

It's from the briefing, Drill Sarnt.

CROOM

Threat awareness.

MASON

I know what brief it's from. We fuckin delivered it. Don't tell us about our own fuckin brief. Are you sure you want to be reporting the things you're reporting?

MORELLI

I think so, Drill Sarnt.

WILES

You wanna say something, say it. Have some fuckin conviction.

MORELLI

I'm saying, Drill Sarnt. I mean to be saying what I'm saying.

MASON

Not just cause you hate Muslims.

MORELLI

I don't hate Muslims.

MASON

Cause I understand if you hate Muslims.

MORELLI

I don't hate them, Drill Sarnt.

MASON

I don't hate them. I'm not a fuckin racist. But I understand if you do. I understand the fuckin Nazis too. You see I don't have to agree with something to understand it.

MORELLI

I don't hate, Muslims, Drill Sarnt. I hate terrorists.

WILES

That doesn't mean shit. Everyone hates terrorists. Terrorists hate terrorists.

MASON

How many Muslims do either of you know?

MORELLI

Muslims? In total? Well, I know *of* Muslims. I know Saiid.

WILES

Who the fuck is Saiid?

CROOM

Ramachandran.

WILES

Ramadingdong. Why didn't you say so?

MASON

You're Italian, right Morelli?

MORELLI

Yes, Drill Sergeant. Well my mother is Irish.

MASON

What bout you, Croom?

CROOM

From here, I guess.

MASON

Before here, dumbass.

CROOM

Originally originally? The black countries. Africa, I guess. I mean my father's family is more Caribbean.

MASON

When the Irish first came to America they were poor and were totally and completely exploited for their cheap labor. That is, when they weren't discriminated against for being Catholic. They were indentured servants and even slaves. Did you know that?

MORELLI

No, Drill Sarnt.

MASON

Wanna know why? It's not cause they were White, it's cause they *weren't* White, they were something else below that. They were White Niggers. They spoke in slang, were uneducated, and people hated them for taking American jobs. See the Americans already here had stereotypes in their head of these immigrants.

And then the Italians came and they were even prosecuted worse. Low class mobsters. Wop dagos. All because they were "foreign." Hateful prejudices and bigotry.

I don't even have to touch on blacks, do I?

CROOM

No, Drill Sarnt.

MASON

Be careful who you choose to ostracize. Because at one point you were the foreigner.

MORELLI

I don't hate Muslims, Drill Sarnt. I don't like em, but I don't hate em.

MASON

Alright. Anything else?

MORELLI

Are you gonna—?

MASON

That's our business. Now get fuckin lost.

MORELLI

But don't we—

MASON

You've done your duty.

WILES

What did we just say? Get the fuck outta here.

MORELLI

Yes, Drill Sarnt.

MORELLI and CROOM leave.

As they're leaving, CROOM puts a hand on MORELLI's shoulder.

CROOM

Don't let your dingle-dangle dangle in the sand
Pick up your dingle-dangle put it in your hand.

They're gone.

WILES

Well that took fuckin balls.

MASON

He's a coward. You're too soft.

WILES

What do you mean, I'm the tough one.

MASON

Tough as baby shit.

WILES

Hard as woodpecker lips.

They have a laugh.

MASON

You dumb peckerwood.

WILES

So do we have to file some paperwork or what? Or call.

MASON

For what?

WILES

Send it up the chain?

MASON

Send what up the chain?

WILES

A report.

MASON

A report of fuckin nothin? A report of prejudice.

WILES

Of suspicious activity.

MASON

We ain't filin shit.

WILES

Okay. Alright. I thought we—

MASON

You're overthinkin it, brother.

They're just fuckin boys. They don't know shit. They're not gonna do shit.

WILES

Right. Right. But if it doesn't get reported, and something *does* happen—
I'm just tryin to cover our asses is all.

MASON

I gotcha I gotcha. Unnecessary.

WILES

The little fucker is suspicious. I got fuckin instincts too. And that kid, he's a kid who fuckin
turns. Turns on his own.

MASON

I don't like that little raghead either, but the kid's not a terrorist.

WILES

I don't know, man. It's just... I wanna sleep at night knowin we did right.

MASON

Shit, I don't sleep no matter what I do. Filin some paperwork's sure not gonna make a damn difference. Paperwork that's gonna end up in the garbage anyway.

WILES

I think I'd just feel better if we—

MASON

This is my last Goddam platoon before I'm back to the big house. And I'm certainly not going to be settin off any alarm bells with MI. Next cycle is yours, you do what you want. Fuck, burn the place down. But these boys are graduating. All of em.

We're not doin shit. You hear me?

WILES shuffles some papers. MASON watches him.

MASON

You fuckin hear me.

WILES

Yeah, I hear you. I hear you.

MASON

Woodpecker peckerwood.

WILES shakes his head, but manages a smile.

As the men move with their gear to the field, they sing the cadence "Here We Go Again:"

SOLDIERS

Here we go again.

Same old shit again.

Marching down the avenue.

Two more weeks and we'll be through...

The field.

This is the culmination of their training, away from the barracks and garrison living. It is out in the woods where the men simulate a secured area from enemy attack.

They are in a wooded area digging hasties (shallow foxholes). For every man digging, there is someone pulling "security" (watching for "enemies").

MORELLI and CROOM are working on one hasty, along another part of the perimeter SAID and SPEEDY are working on theirs.

Our attention will shift back and forth between the two locations.

CROOM is digging while MORELLI pulls security.

MORELLI

They haven't done shit.

CROOM

You don't know what they've done behind—

MORELLI

If they'd done anything, started any kind of investigation, he'd be gone. They woulda yanked his ass outta here.

CROOM

Unless they didn't find anything.

MORELLI

All they need is suspicion. And we handed that to them on a silver platter. A silver fuckin platter.

CROOM

Maybe we were wrong about him. I mean he hasn't done—

MORELLI

He's a fuckin terrorist.

CROOM

You're readin into shit that ain't there. You're chasin a ghost, man. Let it go.

We switch over to SAIID and SPEEDY.

SPEEDY digs. SAIID pulls security.

SAIID

I don't know why you think they're your friends.

SPEEDY

Cause they are.

SAIID

No they are not.

SPEEDY

You're not my friend.

SAIID

I'm more of a friend than they are for telling you the truth. You think Morelli is your friend?

SPEEDY

He's okay.

SAID

He makes fun of you all the time.

SPEEDY

He's just funny so he makes jokes.

SAID

At your expense. And Croom is his sidekick. He'd push you off a cliff if Morelli thought it'd be funny. Who else do you think is your friend?

SPEEDY

Hutch is my friend.

SAID

Hutch feels bad for you, so he looks out for your ass out of pity.

SPEEDY

No he doesn't.

SAID

This whole platoon is a bunch of cry babies and back stabbers.

SPEEDY

I don't know.

SPEEDY is barely digging at all now.

SAID jumps up and grabs the shovel from him.

SAID

Just stop. Just stop. You can't even dig a hole.

SPEEDY

Yes I can.

SAID

Look you have to do it an angle like this, and cut into the dirt, okay.
(*Chops at the dirt.*) See?

SPEEDY

Okay.

SPEEDY starts to walk away from the foxhole.

SAID

Where are you going? You need to pull security.

SPEEDY

I'm getting more water. At the buffalo.

SAID

What about security?

SPEEDY

I'm thirsty.

SAID

Fine. Fine. Here.

(Tosses him his camel bak.) Get mine too.

SPEEDY takes it and wanders off.

Back on MORELLI and CROOM.

Now MORELLI is digging and CROOM is pulling security.

HUTCH approaches.

HUTCH

Hey guys how's it going?

MORELLI

We're having the time of our lives.

HUTCH

Good good.

CROOM

How's your hasty?

HUTCH

Hoffman is digging it.

CROOM

The whole thing?

HUTCH

Well... yeah.

CROOM

Quite the set up.

HUTCH

I have to make the rounds. Check in with everyone. I'm acting Squad Leader, so... How much longer until you're set?

CROOM

Well well well. Bossman.

HUTCH

I'm just supposed to find out and report back to the Drill Sarnts.

MORELLI

Now you're *their* bitch. And Hoffman is your bitch. That's called a circle of bitches.

HUTCH

Yeah, yeah. So...?

MORELLI

We'll be done when my balls sweat off. How's that?

HUTCH

That's what you want me to tell them?

MORELLI

Yeah I do.

CROOM

Please tell them that. Please please please.

HUTCH

Yeah right.

As SPEEDY wanders along he feels something inside SAIID's camel bak. He pulls out Saiid's small personal notebook.

SPEEDY opens it and reads.

He's confused at first about what he reads. He turns page after page.

Then drops everything but the notebook and runs.

HUTCH

When it gets dark, we've gotta exercise noise and light discipline.

MORELLI

You got it, Capt.

HUTCH

I'm just sayin what the Drill Sarnts told me to tell you.

MORELLI

Yeah well it's the way you're sayin it.

HUTCH

How am I sayin it?

MORELLI

Like you're in charge or some shit. *(to Croom)* Right?

CROOM

He's just the messenger.

HUTCH

I am in charge. I didn't ask for it.

MORELLI

Yeah you did.

HUTCH

They told me.

CROOM

Look no problem, Hutch. Noise and light discipline. We got it.

MORELLI

It's fun playing Army isn't it?

HUTCH

What is it, you want to be in charge?

MORELLI

I don't care. Let's just get through this shit. Fuckin graduate. Get the fuck outta here with our balls in tact.

CROOM

Morelli's always talking about losing his balls or his balls fallin off. Fuck that. I'm gonna keep my balls.

HUTCH

Fine. Good. Let's keep our balls.

CROOM

I love my balls. Who else loves my balls?

MORELLI

Love is a strong word. I like-like your balls.

SPEEDY runs up to them out of breath.

HUTCH

Hey, man, slow down.

MORELLI

Yeah you're gonna fall and kill yourself. Or worse, one of us.

CROOM

What'd you see, the boogey man?

SPEEDY still can't talk. He hands the notebook to HUTCH.

HUTCH

What's this?

(He flips through it.) Whose is this?

(He reads.) What is this? Where'd you get this?

SPEEDY

Saiid.

HUTCH

What are you doing with it?

MORELLI

Let me see that shit.

HUTCH

Hold on.

HUTCH reads.

MORELLI

How'd you get that?

SPEEDY

I stole it.

MORELLI

Yeah right.

SPEEDY

I did.

CROOM

Damn Speedy, you a thief.

SPEEDY

I know. Pretty good right?

MORELLI

What does it say?

HUTCH

Nothing. It's just notes.

MORELLI

Notes about what.

SPEEDY

It's about us.

HUTCH

It's stupid, I'm giving it back.

SPEEDY

Information about us.

MORELLI

Hell no you're not.

CROOM

What kind of information?

SPEEDY

Facts. Like facts about us.

MORELLI

What kind of fuckin facts? Let me see it.

HUTCH

No.

MORELLI

I fuckin knew it. I fuckin knew it, man. Didn't I say, haven't I been saying all along, he's up to some secretive shit. And now he's writing down our personal information.

HUTCH

Speedy, you shouldn't have stolen this.

SPEEDY

I know. I didn't mean to.

HUTCH

Would you want someone reading your notebook?

SPEEDY

No.

HUTCH

So...

MORELLI

This isn't his fuckin diary.

CROOM

What does it say?

HUTCH

I'm returning it.

MORELLI makes a move to HUTCH.

MORELLI

We have a right to see.

HUTCH holds it away.

MORELLI

Give me the book, Hutch. I'm sick of your fuckin Captain America righteous bullshit. Give us the fuckin book.

HUTCH

Yeah, or what?

MORELLI rushes HUTCH.

They wrestle. It becomes vicious. They struggling in the dirt to beat each other.

CROOM snatches the notebook.

MORELLI releases HUTCH. HUTCH shoves MORELLI away as he stands up.

HUTCH

Enough of this shit. Do what you want.

HUTCH storms off.

SPEEDY

I'm sorry, Hutch.

MORELLI

Shut the fuck up, Speedy.

SPEEDY

Hey! I got the notebook.

MORELLI

Yeah, ya did. Ya did good.

SPEEDY

I know.

CROOM has been reading.

MORELLI

Dude.

CROOM

There's shit on all of us.

MORELLI

Read it.

CROOM

(reading) Daniel Croom. Nineteen. African American. Originally from Saint Louis. Three sisters. Ages twenty one to thirty two. Not all necessarily from the same father.
(breaking) When did I even fuckin say that?

MORELLI

Is that true?

CROOM

Well, yeah. *(reading)* Father from Saint Louis. Age unknown. Mother, of Caribbean decent, deceased. Religious views unknown.

MORELLI

Gimme.

*CROOM hands him the notebook. MORELLI reads.
He shakes his head.*

MORELLI

Cocksucker. My fuckin birthday. How did he get that? I never told him that.

CROOM

All the shit we fill out. All he gotta do is glance over a shoulder. But why? Who cares?

MORELLI continues to flip through the pages.

CROOM

He's got most of the platoon in there. That doesn't make any sense. Unless, unless...

MORELLI

He is gonna get his ass beat. Oh boy. I can not wait.

SPEEDY

It says my father has a farm in Puerto Rico.

MORELLI

Yeah it says a lot of other shit about you too.

SPEEDY

It says I have Asstergs Disorder. What is that?

MORELLI

Asperger's.

SPEEDY

Asperger's Disorder.

MORELLI

Wrote a whole chapter on you.

SPEEDY

What is Asperger's?

CROOM

It's like, uh, sometimes you think differently.

SPEEDY

Like how?

MORELLI

Like you act retarded, even though we tell you not to.

SPEEDY

I don't have a disorder. They check for disorders before they let you in the Army.

MORELLI

I guess the doctor was out that day.

SPEEDY

No he wasn't.

CROOM

Should we turn it in? We have to turn it in, right?

MORELLI

We already know the Drill Sarnts aren't gonna do shit about any of this. It's on us.

CROOM

To do what?

MORELLI

We should take him out before he takes us out.

CROOM

Oh yeah?

MORELLI

Yeah.

CROOM

Who's gonna do that, you?

MORELLI

Maybe.

CROOM

Okay, man.

MORELLI

I will. With you. We'll get everyone. We'll wait until he's asleep and we'll get everyone to—

CROOM

Like a mob?

MORELLI

Yeah. Exactly. Like a fuckin lynch mob.

CROOM

What about the Drill Sergeants?

MORELLI

No one will notice. No one will care. It'll just be one of those things... that happens. You think anyone's gonna argue after they see this.

MORELLI holds out the notebook. SPEEDY grabs it.

SPEEDY

I'll do it.

MORELLI

You're not gonna do shit, Speedy.

SPEEDY

I will. By myself.

CROOM and MORELLI laugh.

SPEEDY

Shut up.

MORELLI and CROOM keep laughing.

MORELLI

Maybe Saiid was right.

SPEEDY stares at MORELLI.

MORELLI

Why are you staring at me like that? You're freakin me out.

CROOM

He's just kidding, Speedy.

SPEEDY keeps staring.

CROOM

But seriously, stop staring like that.

SPEEDY

You'll see.

SPEEDY runs off.

MORELLI and CROOM laugh as he goes.

MORELLI

Ramadingdong. You motherfucker. I knew it.

CROOM returns to digging.

CROOM

Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear
Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair
Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't very fuzzy, was he?

MORELLI

Nope.

MORELLI returns to his security position, rifle aiming out.

CROOM

They say that all the privates in the Army
Envied Fuzzy's fuzz
But when they buzzed his fuzz away
He wasn't what he used to, 'cuz

MORELLI

Fuzzy Wuzzy had no fuckin hair

CROOM

Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't very fuzzy

MORELLI

Wuz he?

It's growing dark.

SPEEDY returns to his foxhole.

SAIID is not there.

He starts digging, then stops and pulls out SAIID's notebook. He flips through it.

He digs again. A hole.

He looks around then throws the notebook into it.

Throws the dirt back on. Stomps on it a few times.

Still no one around.

He sets up his security position.

SAIID comes back and gets in his foxhole next to SPEEDY.

SPEEDY

Where the fuck did you go?

SAID

Shhhh.

SPEEDY

You've been gone a long time.

SAID

Have some noise discipline, shithead.

SPEEDY

A really long time. Where did you go?

SAID

You taking security? Good. I'm going to get some sleep. Two hours on, okay? Don't wake me up early either.

SPEEDY

Where did you go?

SAID

I had to take a number two.

SPEEDY

You're a liar.

SAID

Where did you go? For water? Miami? Huh, amigo?

SPEEDY

No.

SAID

Shut up, Speedy.

SPEEDY

No one likes you. They like me. They don't like you.

SAID laughs.

SAID

Okay, sweetheart. Good night.

*SAID leans back against his ruck and pulls his poncho over his head.
SPEEDY watches him.*

SPEEDY

(to himself) No one likes you at all.

SPEEDY alternates between security and watching SAID.

He crawls away from his position and gets closer to SAID. He doesn't stir.

SPEEDY sneaks up behind SAID, almost so he's on top of him.

He looks around. All is silent.

SPEEDY slithers right up to SAID before swiftly wrapping his arms around SAID's neck, locking him up.

SAID struggles.

SPEEDY tightens his grip and wraps himself around SAID.

SPEEDY is mumbling to himself, between gritted teeth.

SPEEDY

No one likes. You. No one likes you. No one. Likes. You. They like me. Me.

SAID's neck is caught between SPEEDY's forearms, he tightens and TWISTS.

and forcefully TWISTS his neck again.

The snap is violent and swift.

SAID's body is limp.

SPEEDY releases him.

SPEEDY sits, almost unsure of what he's done.

He looks around and there's still no one.

His snivels...

HUTCH arrives at SAID's foxhole.

He looks at SPEEDY crying and SAID motionless.

The remaining light fades...

As the men transition out of the field, they sing the cadence "The Army Colors":

SOLDIERS

The Army colors,
The colors are blue,
To show the world
That we are true.

The Army colors,
The colors are green,
To show the world
We're a fighting machine.

The Army colors,
The colors are red,
To show the world
The blood we've shed.

The Army colors,
The colors are black,
To show the world
We're on the attack.

The Army colors,
The colors are white,
To show the world
That we can fight.

Outside the barracks, a parade ground.

*Two weeks later. It's graduation.
The men are in their dress blues in formation.*

*CROOM, MORELLI, and HUTCH.
On one side is WILES. On the other MASON.*

MORELLI looks at HUTCH. HUTCH shrugs.

SPEEDY comes running out and joins them in formation.

*WILES shakes his head.
MASON walks to the center of the formation, and takes command.*

MASON
PlaTOON, Atten-SHUN.

The men snap to an even more disciplined Position of Attention.

MASON does an About Face.

The National Anthem begins to play.

MASON
Present - ARMS.

*The men, including MASON and WILES, Present Arms (salute).
They hold this position until the song concludes.*

MASON

Order - ARMS.

The men return to the Position of Attention.

MASON

Right FACE.

The men perform a Right Face.

MASON

FORWARD March.

The Men march forward, across the stage, execute two Column Left turns, and march off in the opposite direction.

All of their movements are executed with absolute precision.

As they march off they sing the cadence "Here We Go Again," with the altered and final lyrics:

SOLDIERS

Here we go again.

Same old shit again.

Marching down the avenue.

NO more weeks cause we are through.

You don't have to look at me.

Pretty pretty pretty me.

I don't have to look at you.

Ugly ugly ugly you.

And as soon as they march off...

BLACK OUT.

End of Play.

HALF RIGHT reference guide

Terms

--**Basic Combat Training (BCT)** consists of the first ten weeks of the total Basic Training period, and is identical for all Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard recruits. This is where individuals learn about the fundamentals of being a soldier, from combat techniques to the proper way to address a superior. BCT is also where individuals undergo rigorous physical training to prepare their bodies and their minds for the eventual physical and mental strain of combat.

--**Drill sergeants:** the instructors that are responsible for most of the training that takes place in Basic Training.

--**Battle buddies:** generally refer to partners in a combat scenario. However, throughout Basic Training, the term is used to describe a disciplinary principle whereby recruits are generally prohibited from walking anywhere alone. When traveling away from the platoon or a drill sergeant, recruits are expected to travel in pairs, known as battle buddies. Battle buddies are sometimes assigned, or can be chosen by recruits when the need to travel arises.

--**Smoke** (verb): Term to describe punishment of minor offenses by means of excessive physical training. usage: "The drill instructor smoked me for talking back."

--**Fire guard:** Every night, at least two recruits from the platoon must be awake at any given time, patrolling their barracks area, watching for fires, cleaning the barracks, and watching for recruits attempting to leave the barracks area. They wake the next pair of recruits at the end of their two-hour shift.

--**Rat Fuck:** Term used for the action of going through a MRE box (see below) before chow time selecting the best meal for oneself. Also used to describe taking preferred items out of MRE's.

--**Jodie/Jody/Joe D.:** A man who steals a soldier's girlfriend/wife when deployed, out in the field, or in training. So often referred to in cadences used during exercises that the cadences themselves have become known as jodies or jody calls.

--**Fuzzy Wuzzy:** from a Kipling poem (1884-5), referencing the brave warriors of the Sudan. Also a children's song in the 1940s, also derogatory term for a black person with fuzzy hair.

--**Blue Falcon:** A socially acceptable term originating from the military meaning a "buddy fucker". Someone who is a total sandbag and drags their buddies down with them.

--**Hasty** (noun): A hasty is basically the same as a fox hole but not as deep; it is "hastily" dug to provide support for a security position.

--**50/50 security:** For every soldier digging, or sleeping, there is someone pulling "security." Usually in 2 hour or 1 hour shifts.

Acronyms

DFAC -- Dining Facilities (Administration Center)

MEPS -- Military Entrance Processing Center (before heading to Basic Training)

PT -- Physical Training (PTs, short for Physical Training uniform)

ACU -- Army Combat Uniform

MRE -- Meal, Ready to Eat (3 lies in 1). a self-contained, individual field ration in lightweight packaging for conditions where organized food facilities are not available