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Courage Under Fire

By Patrick Sheane Duncan

(Peter Arnett)
You may hear the bombs now.
If you're still with us,
you can hear the bombs now.
They are hitting the centre of the city.
(second reporter)
Now we can hear explosions...
..off in the distance
to the west of central Baghdad.
Clearly I've never been there,...
..but this feels like
we're in the centre of hell.
(radio chatter)
(President Bush) The 28 countries...
..with forces in the Gulf area...
..have exhausted all reasonable efforts...
..to reach a peaceful resolution,...
..have no choice...
..but to drive Saddam
from Kuwait by force.
(Iraqi spokesman)
A great battle has been initiated.
The mother of all battles.
(Bush) Our objectives...
..in the Persian Gulf area clear,...
..our goals defined.
Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait...
..completely, immediately,...
..and without condition.
(Bush) The liberation of Kuwait...
..has now entered a final phase.
I have therefore directed
to use all forces available,...
..including ground forces,...
..to eject the Iraqi army from Kuwait.
(Peter Arnett)
At this point it seems inevitable...
..that the ground war is only hours away.
Peter Arnett, Baghdad.
Don't ever for one minute
underestimate the enemy,...
..but remember, we're better soldiers.
We're fighting with better equipment,
we're better trained and a lot smarter.

Sleep deprivation.

Our soldiers been up 46, 48 hours,...

..so stay on top of 'em.

Maintain your intervals.

Any questions?

Let's have a Little prayer.

Dear God, protect us...

..as we protect our country

we so dearly Love.

Keep us safe that well all get home

to see our famllies and our chlldren.

Amen.

Amen.

- Let's kill 'em all.

- (all) Hu-ah!

You all right, Boylar?

Hell, yeah.

- Let's heat 'em up, Nat.

- See you in Baghdad.

Yes, sir.

(engines starting)

Battle-carry Sabot.

Sabot bullet coming up, sir.

- Sabot loaded.

- Indexed.

Crew report.

- Driver ready.

- Loader ready.

Gunner ready to give Saddam

a new way to hurt.

- Hu-ah!

- Hu-ah!

Hu-ah.

All right, Boylar?

Roger that.

All Cougar elements, this is Cougar-6.

Report Red Con 1. Over.

All Sabre elements, this is Sabre-6.

Move out.

(radio chatter)

Sabre-6, this is Cougar-6.

No joy over here.

Permission to try an alternate route. Over.

Roger that, Cougar-6.

Work your way to phase line hammer.
- (Nat) No surprises. Copy?
- Roger that.
I'm taking up the right flank.
Ill get back to you. Out.
Contact. I see flashes, 3,500 metres, sir.
- All right.
- Hold on. They got no range.
Ready to lase and blaze.
Contact, sir. He's in range.
- Come on, let me kill his ass.
- Fire!
On the way!
Yeah! Yeah!
Yeah, yeah, yeah!
- Find me another target, Patella.
- Loaded!
- Identified.
- Fire.
Fire!
(Patella) Got him! We got him!
Sabre-6, Liberty-6.
We got enemy tangos retreating...
..vicinity grid 2-4-9er-8.
Your pursuit should intercept
their retreat, grid 7-6-5.
Roger that, Liberty-6.
- Troops!
- Troops!
Cease fire! Cease fire!
(shouting in Arabic)
Come on! Come on!
Sabre-6, this is Cougar-6.
Go ahead, Cougar-6.
I have got mines. Repeat, mines.
I gotta get the fuck out of here.
(Nat) Work your way to gridline Charlie.
Cougar-6 to all Cougar elements.
Let's get the hell out of here.
(shouting in Arabic)
Whoa! What the...
Oh, shit!
All Sabre units, this is Sabre-6.
We just lost a tank.

Anybody see the shooter?
- I didn't see anything.
- Where they coming from?
Who the hell is shooting at us?
Liberty-6, we got enemy tanks...
..retreating grid 7-6...
- Patella, that one of our tanks?
- Hard to tell.
Make it out, and fast!
Oh, shit! We're almost browning out.
Nat, what's happening?
Liberty-6, we got enemy tanks on our flank.
We have contact.
This is Cougar-6.
Enemy tangos at phase line delta. Over.
- Patella, find me a target.
- I think I got one, sir.
Do you or do you not have a target?
I think so!
Gunner, Sabot, tank.
Identify! Up!
Fire!
He just fired, sir.
They're firing at us!
- Loader!
- Up, sir!
Fire!
Yeah! That's the one!
All right.
(radio) Sabre-6, we just lost Cougar-6.
- We got him.
- Sabre, you just lit up a friendly!
I heard you! We... what?
Oh, my God.
You just lit up Boylar, goddamn it!
(radio) Sabre-6, Nat, what's happening?
Patella, was that one of our tanks?
He fired, sir.
At us or at the T-72s?
I don't know.
At us or at the T-72s?
I don't know!
(Patella) Oh, Jesus fucking Christ.
(radio) Colonel Serling, report status now.

(explosion)
They have range on us, sir.
Sir!
Oh, Christ, Colonel...
I gave the order to fire.
So with your thermal equipment,...
..confused by burning tanks
and smoke obscuring your visual ID,...
..you couldn't tell the difference
between the T-54 and the Abrams.
I believe that, uh, we...
I should have known the difference,...
..even with the night scope.
If we weren't under attack,...
But, under the circumstances,
there was no way to tell the difference.
Under the circumstances,...
..I suppose there was
no way to tell the difference, but...
There was no way to tell the difference.
Thank you, Colonel.
That's all we need.
(Patella) Were almost browning out!
(Boylar) We got enemy tanks on our flank.
We have contact.
Aah!
We just lost Cougar-6!
You just lit up a friendly!
(knock on door)
Colonel Serling?
Yes.
You OK? Can I get you something?
Yes, I'm fine. Fine.
Uh, yes, you can get me a cup of coffee.
You got it.
We missed you and Meredith
at Banacek's party last night.
I'm too old to dance with you youngsters.
Meredith's not,
so tell her to come without you next time.
Oh, OK. I willdo just that...
..next time.
(telephone rings)
Colonel Serling.

- Hershberg in five. Coffee's coming.
- Thanks.
Yes.
Washington Post?
About?
Yes, I was there.
That's a matter of public record.
Well, thank you very much, Mr...
Gartner. Thank you, Mr Gartner,
but I have nothing to say.
No, sir.
No, sir!
Well, Ill do just that.
Right.
Colonel Serling's here, sir.
Ban.
I'm not talking to you.
Won't even come to my anniversary party?
You and Sylvia have been together,
what, a month?
The way she danced with that marine,
it won't last another week.
It may be my last anniversary party.
Were you there for me?
What's up?
Hey, Nat.
I've got to talk to you.
How we holding, Ban?
Running late, sir.
- May I run a few things by you, sir?
- Quickly.
Lieutenant Boylar's parents...
Boylar?
Tom Boylar. He died in AI Bathra.
He'd been with me a long time.
- From Virginia, right?
- Roger that, sir.
His parents have written to me.
They're hearing rumours.
You know we can't discuss it.
You have to put them off.
- Yes, sir, but...
- Tell them he died in action.
- He's a hero. That's all they want to know.

- Roger, but it's not just his parents.
We got a call...
..from the Washington Post.
A reporter named Gartner.
A reporter called you about AI Bathra?
You didn't talk?
Of course not.
Nobody ll hang you out to dry.
I won't let 'em.
Did you listen to the tape, sir?
Colonel, the war's over.
You and I have been given
the great responsiblility and privllege...
..of investigating combat medals
for our army.
In other words, we've been passed over.
I prefer to think of it
as a second chance, Nat.
We understand each other?
Yes, sir.
OK.
The White House heard we're considering
the Medal of Honour for a chopper pllot...
..who saved some guys
on a downed Blackhawk.
- Naturally they want it for Veterans Day.
- Naturally.
Which is why
you're taking over the inquiry.
We've got the rescued soldiers
in there for debriefing.
Attention.
Morning. Take your seats.
Everything in order?
- Just going over the sequence of events.
- Bring Colonel Serling up to speed.
Morning, sir.
Good to see you again.
Could we get a picture
of you and the survivors?
No, thank you.
- Keep me in the loop.
- Thank you, sir.
- Morning.

- Morning.

Doug Bruno, White House.

Do everything my way and well be fine.

Nat Serling.

Ill, uh, get out of your way.

- Major.

- Sir.

these men were part of a refuelling convoy.

Their Blackhawk was shot down

by an SA-7 west of AI Kufan.

Five seconds after it locked on,

we were down.

- We didn't know what hit us.

- Our lines were surrounding them so fast,...

..we got caught in a pocket of resistance.

Iraqi ground troops on the ridge above

kept them completely pinned down.

Did you discuss surrendering?

Yes, sir, we did.

We were all wounded one way or another.

We weren't trained

for that kind of situation, sir.

Don't have to make excuses to me.

Go on, Sam.

That's all we got so far, sir.

OK.

- Lieutenant Chelli.

- Yes, sir.

Well,

as if things weren't bad enough already,...

..one of their T-54s...

..joins the ragheads up on the ridge.

(tank engine)

Incoming! Get down!

That round

kills the medic, Relleno, Gerspach,...

..and, uh, Egan here lost his leg.

So we figure that's it. We're dead.

But then we hear it.

Nothing like the sound of an inbound Huey.

(helicopter)

Yeah!

Yeah!

(Serling) This Huey, did it take any fire?

Right off the bat.
But this time
when the Huey comes back, it returns fire.
Ground troops go for cover.
Then the Huey circles back over the tank...
That's when
they threw something overboard.
- Threw something, or something fell off?
- I couldn't tell, but the tank blew.
Oh!
Yeah!
Man, did it ever blow!
We, uh, we never did see
what knocked the Huey down.
(explosion)
We couldn't see the crash.
That night we caught sporadic ground fire.
The Huey was down below,
between us and the enemy,...
..so they caught most of it.
Any communications
between you and them?
No, sir. As I said, our radio was wasted.
Shouting just draws enemy fire.
So the Iraqis,
they start to close in on the Huey...
..under cover fire,...
..and the Huey returns fire.
We figure it's all over,
and that's when we hear the rescue team.
Cobras, Hueys...
And a big-ass A-10 Thunderbolt.
I swear I never heard such a sweet sound.
But now the fuckers are...
I'm sorry, sir.
The Iraqis are letting loose with all they got.
- You were right the first time.
- (laughter)
Plus the Huey crew is still banging away.
We load our wounded aboard,...
..and that's when
somebody decided to leave the dead.
I guess it was the commander of the rescue.
Mm-hmm.

And this... Huey crew,...

.they, uh, they returned fire
all through the final rescue?

Yes, sir. I... I think so.
I couldn't see much, though.
I heard it.
Nothing else sounds like an M-16.
Not no A-K or M-60.
I heard it, too.
The last thing we see is the Thunderbolt
dropping napalm on the downed choppers.
I don't know if it was Captain Walden...
..but that Huey...
..saved our lives.
It sure sounds like it.
OK.
Thank you for your help.
Ill look over your statements.
Thank you, sir.
Thank you, Colonel.
Thatll be all.
- Got something for me?
- I do, sir.
Walden's 201 file. Evaluation reports.
You know I'm going to need
background on these guys.
Make sure we don't have a wife-beater
or an illegal allen or gays.
Thatll blow it.
About this Congressional Medal of Honour.
It's not the Congressional Medal of Honour.
It's just the Medal of Honour.
Tell that to Congress.
If Captain Walden wins this medal...
You don't win it. You, uh, receive it.
It's not a contest.
But that is perfect. That is why I'm here.
I'm not here
to get down your throat, make you crazy,...

..take these facts and twist them.
I just want to get these nuances out
of your head and to get it straight from you.
- It's a woman.
- You didn't know?

What did you think the hoopla was about?
Banacek's got information
on three of Walden's men.
- The crew chief we're still tracking.
- This is Captain Karen Emma Walden.
She's the first woman ever to be nominated
for a Medal of Honour for combat.
I mean, this is gold.
It's gold.
Unfortunately it's posthumous, ...
..but I've got her Little daughter.
I got the President of the United States.
It's all set in the Rose Garden.
The President's going to lean down and
hang that ribbon round that pretty face.
There is not going to be
a dry eye from Nashua to Sacramento.
Excuse us.
OK, it was 5 to 1, ...
..hook shot.
Me and her are cheerleaders.
- More mashed potatoes.
- (woman) Sorry, no more potatoes, ...
..but how about some bread?
Aah!
(Boylar) Aah!
Daddy, can I have your mashed potatoes?
Daddy?
Sir?
Can I have your mashed potatoes?
M... Yeah. Sure.
Yeah, ...
..soldier.
You want 'em all?
(telephone rings)
That enough?
More?
Hello?
Yes.
Uh, who is calling, please?
Just a minute.
It's for you.
Who is it?
Somebody Gartner.

Want some more peas?
Excuse me.
Where are you going?
Fort Hood.
General Hershberg's got me investigating
a Medal of Honour.
It's a woman.
Good for her.
Posthumous.
Too bad, but still good for her.
Mmm. Too bad.
You talk to the investigators today?
Right.
It's all right, isn't it, Nat?
Yeah. Fine.
How long are you gone for?
Couple of days.
Then why are you emptying
your sock drawer?
I may be gone more than a couple of days.
Nat.
Yes.
I don't know what's happening.
Everything's fine.
I'm handling it.
(Nat) Mr. Rady,
you were Captain Walden's copilot.
That's right.
(Nat) Can you tell me
what you remember about AlKufan?
I remember the earth.
I remember... llario's face.
I wish...
- She hadn't needed to be a hero so bad.
- That's not fair.
We were just doing our job.
It's not Ren's fault I got hit.
She sure as hell saved the lives
of those guys on the Blackhawk.
- You always defend her.
- Why didn't you like her?
She was so butch.
Honey, shut up.
She was, you know.

One of those women
who want to be officers...
Annie, shut up.
She gave her life for those men.
She was a soldier.
There she blows.
(gunfire)
- We're taking fire!
- Holy shit!
- Kill that motherfucker, Bonfires!
- I may as well be pissing on him.
- We need a fucking air strike!
- We got no fucking bomb!
- Making another pass, Ran?
- Yep.
No! We should go for altitude,
and call for support.
After we slow down that tank!
- How we gonna do that?
- Shut up and listen, soldier!
Altameyer,
unhook the aux fuel bladder port side.
Get ready to push it overboard.
Push it overboard, ma'am?
llario, unhook the flare gun!
What the fuck...
Do it!
It's a bomb, asshole!
Target coming up!
Gimme more!
Ready here!
- Got it?
- I got it!
- Tell us when you're there! Hell kick it!
- Allow for the speed of the craft!
- The pod will drop at the same velocity!
- He knows.
Pick your moment!
Now!
(cheering)
Oh, my God!
Oh!
Whoa! Shit!
Whoa! Oh, God!

Hang on, llario! Grab a hold of me!
Don't let go of me! Pull me in!
Hang on.
Come on, llario! Pull yourself up!
Do something!
No! No! Rady, call in a Mayday!
llario,... call it in!
(Ilario)
Mayday! Dustoff-3... we are going down!
Mayday! Mayday! This is Dustoff-3!
We're going down! Mayday! Mayday!
This is Dustoff-3!
We're going down! We're going down!
Mayday! Mayday! This is Dustoff-3!
We are going down!
Mayday! Mayday! This is Dustoff-3!
We're going down! We're going down!
We're going down! Oh, my God...
That's it.
I woke up three days later
on a hospital ship.
Nearly bought it, that's sure.
(Larry King) When did you decide
the type of career in the Army you wanted?
(Schwarzkopf) That happened about
my third year at WestPoint when I was...
I could have gone in the Air Force.
I stood high enough in my class.
You can't get away from that guy.
He's everywhere.
- Hell of a soldier, though.
- You think so?
I know so.
Really. How?
I was with him in the Gulf.
No shit.
- Doing what?
- Armoured cavalry.
Hu-ah.
Hu-ah.
Once upon a time,
I was humping in the delta.
- With who?
- The 9 th.

- You kicked some serious butt.
- That's right.
- One for my friend...
- Colonel Nat Serling.

Make it a double for Colonel Serling.

Tony Gartner, Washington Post.

They won't find any criminal culpability
in the AI Bathra incident.

You got nothing to worry about.

Those were my men.

I put that badly. I'm sorry.

Look, I went to Virginia
and spoke with Mr. and Mrs. Boylar.

You what?

I'm sorry, but they got a right
to know what happened to their son.

Ill take that.

(steam hissing)

(Serling) And this Huey crew, they, uh,
returned fire all through the final rescue?

(Chelli) Yes, sir. I think so.

I couldn',t see much.

(Thompson) I heard it.

Nothing else sounds like an M-16.

Not know A-K or M-60.

(Egan) I heard it, too.

(Chelli) Last thing we see
is the Thunderbolt dropping napalm...
..on the two downed choppers.

(screaming)

Oh!

Sir!

All right, this is antifungal cream,...

..but to kill the athlete's foot when
you're in the shower, just piss on your feet.

That's disgusting.

What've you got for me today?

You want to get rid of the allergies to
bee pollen, then no caffeine, no chocolate.

Jesus. I give up coffee,
you can bury me now.

(chuckles)

- Morning, Colonel.

- Morning. You got some aspirins?

How many do you want?
I take eight every day.
Four's good.
- I need to talk to you, Specialist.
- Sir?
I'm investigating the recommendation to
award a Medal of Honour to Captain Walden.
Rowtero?
Yeah?
Can you cover for me?
I'm going to go feed the cancer genes.
Do you really need to, uh, I mean...
It's fine.
Uh, what do you want to know?
How long were you with Captain Walden?
Um... over... over two years.
Quite a long time.
Yeah.
You were her medic.
Yes, sir.
I don't fly any more though.
Well, don't miss it, do you?
Never.
Never again.
That's quite a habit you got.
Yeah, it's, uh...
..one of the few things I can call my own.
(laughs)
So...
..tell me what happened at AI Kufan.
See, I'd, uh...
..I'd never been in... in combat.
(tapping)
(helicopter)
Mayday! Mayday! This is Dustoff-3!
We're going down!
Mayday! This is Dustoff-3...
(groaning)
(moaning)
llario?
Yeah, I'm OK.
Rady's hurt.
Monfriez?
(crackling)

AItameyer?
Functioning.
Fire in the hold!
(Ilario) Come here, buddy.
This is Dustoff-3.
Acknowledge.
This is Dustoff-3.
Here. Come on.
This is Dustoff-3.
Come on.
Dustoff-3. Acknowledge.
AItameyer, how's that fire?
Under control. Fuel tank's intact.
(gunfire)
Enemy at the back door!
Come on! Come on!
Monfriez, get that saw working!
Come on! Get down!
I've got the M-16!
(gunfire)
llario?
He's bad. It's the lung.
We gotta get him out of here.
- Head wound?
- Superficial. How's the radio?
Dead. So's the ADT.
Monfriez, easy on the ammo!
We might be here a while!
Captain!
You've seen me do this a million times.
Youll be fine.
Ammo?
I got this belt and three more boxes.
OK, AItameyer,
rip out everything you can from the inside.
We're gonna make a perimeter.
Monfriez, cover us!
Go!
Where's our Kevlar?
I got one!
Well, put it on!
Unh. How's he doing?
He's the same.
I need a hook.

As soon as it gets dark, we dig in.
Then we wait.
For what?
For the good guys.
(laughing and shouting in Arabic)
You won't think it's so funny
when I nail your fucking ass!
Yeah, they were laughing.
You about, uh... You done?
So tell me what happened...
..during the night.
You were there. You saw the nights.
You know, just... it was black.
Just... black.
Tell me what happened that night.
Well, she put us on two-hour watches.
Um... it's not like
any of us were going to sleep anyway.
(Monfriez)
Head down, AItameyer. You might lose it.
You OK, Captain?
Shit in my eye.
Will our guys come tonight?
Theyll be here.
Dust is blowing pretty bad.
I don't know
how much longer Rady can hang on.
I can hear the rag heads
when you're not gabbing.
Then I'd suggest everybody just...
They're going away.
It was just a probe.
llario?
I'm OK.
AItameyer?
My ear!
Monfriez?
I... I took one.
- Rady?
- Hanging in. How about you, Cap?
Unh...
Oh, shit.
Stay with Rady.
I like to come here.

It's not just the bikinis,
although they ain't bad.
It's these kids.
I like to watch them, you know?
My folks had this place
out on Calaveras Lake.
I still go there sometimes, watch 'em dive.
They do the damndest things.
They never think about the consequences.
Imagine that.
Imagine not thinking
about the consequences?
Imagine that.
Are... are we done?
After the attack...
..during the night...
What?
I mean, we waited.
I... I still don't...
- I... I don't know what you...
- Just go on with what happened.
Well, Karen,...
the captain,... uh, was hurt pretty bad.
Ohh...
Unh...
Unh!
How many rounds left?
Just a sec.
How many rounds?
I just opened my last can of ammo.
Five mags for the M-16,...
..9-mll's full.
Mine's empty.
Fire a couple of rounds off.
- Let 'em know we're still allve.
- Roger that, Captain.
Now save your ammo
for something you can see.
During the course of the incident,
did she display any doubt, any fear...
..when she had to make
these life-and-death decisions?
No.
No. Never.

She just made 'em.
Just like that?
Just like that.
Karen,... the captain... she had this quality.
The heavier the pressure,
the calmer she got.
We knew they were out there,...
..sneaking up on us.
But we also knew
at first light they were going to attack.
I don't know why people think only
good things happen when the sun rises.
Incoming!
How many?
Any good at hand-to-hand?
Wait till they get closer.
Make every round count!
- Shit!
- Quiet!
What in Christ for?
They know we're here!
Quiet! I hear something!
(helicopter)
Choppers!
Hey!
Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!
Go! Go!
Yeah! (laughs)
Let's get out of here!
llario, get the captain!
There's the rescue!
Help Rady!
Pick him up!
Go! Let's go! Let go! Let's go!
Come on! Let's move! Move it!
Gotta go! We gotta go!
Come back for me with a stretcher!
Go!
llario, let's get the fuck outta here!
Get the fuck outta here!
Aah!
Aah!
Medic!
Come on! Get him up!

Move! Come on! Let's go!
Where's Walden?
Captain Walden is dead.
Strike leader, this is Dustoff-6.
We have all the friends.
You're clear and hot.
Roger, Dustoff-6. Going on down.
So...
Is she gonna get it?
Is she gonna get the medal?
Well, I sincerely hope so.
I just... I don't want to tell that story again.
Not one more time.
Yeah, I understand.
May I be excused?
Yes, you can.
Oh, one more thing I'm confused about.
This M-16...
What?
Did it run out of ammo?
Uh, what did I say?
I don't remember. That's why I'm asking.
I guess, uh...
I guess it ran out of ammo
sometime during the morning.
Um...
Or, no, sometime during the night...
I don't know.
See, the Blackhawk crew
said they heard M-16 fire...
..during the rescue that morning.
Did they?
That's right.
Must've been wrong, then.
Them or you?
Who, them or you?
Oh, them. Them, yeah.
No, they must have been wrong.
OK.
OK.
What about the letter?
A what?
You and Walden traded letters to send home
in case anything happened to you.

Oh, yeah. Yes, sir.

So, who was hers to?

Her folks.

- So you sent it?

- Yeah.

Her folks, they're good people.

They got a farm out in Abilene.

They'd come to Hood, look after her kid while we went out on exercises.

Yeah... Yeah.

OK.

Thank you, Specialist.

Thank you very much, sir.

I read somewhere...

..that if a child doesn't see a person die,...

..or dead, like in a casket,...

..that the person isn't really dead for them.

That'd be nice, wouldn't it?

Yes, ma'am.

It was, uh... unusual, wasn't it,...

..for Karen to want to be a helicopter pilot?

I guess that's my fault.

I took her to the fair when she was 11.

Anyway, there was a helicopter there.

Small one with a bubble up front.

The fella... the pilot was selling rides.

I bought Karen a ticket.

It was a short ride.

But when she came down...

Well, I don't think

she ever came down, actually.

She showed up

at the dinner table one day,...

..just after she finished TCU.

She's joined the Army.

She wants to fly helicopters.

She's real stubborn about it, too.

That's our Karen, you know, stubborn.

So's Anne Marie here.

Come here, honey.

Excuse me.

Uh, the young men,...

..the ones that came to tell us about Karen...

..they were dressed just like you.

Oh, I see.
Major Teegarden,...
..her commanding officer, he came, too,
when he came back from the Gulf.
Brought this photo back for Anne Marie.
Meant a lot to us...
..him coming to see us,...
..telling us in person how Karen died.
I lost men over there, too.
I spoke to the major.
Everybody thought the world
of your daughter. So did Specialist llario.
It would sure help if I could see her letter.
I mean, if it's not too private.
Letter?
From llario?
Ill check my notes. Must be my mistake.
This her husband here?
No. That's Karen's older brother Billy.
Her husband's up in Michigan.
He and Karen divorced
after only a year or so.
He never... well,... it was no picnic.
Karen raised Anne Marie on her own.
We'd have been thrilled
to have Anne Marie with us all the time,...
..what with the Army and all.
But Karen was a real good mom.
Never asked for help
unless she really needed it.
You can't imagine how hard it was for her...
..to go off and leave that Little girl
to fight in a war,...
..but it was important to Karen
to do her duty.
So she went.
(children's voices)
You've been out here 20 minutes
since I spotted you.
- How much longer before that?
- 15.
I see you, uh...
..got the new refrigerator.
Do you think the kids will understand

why their daddy is out here in a Chevy...
..instead of playing with them
in the front yard?
Or at Fort Hood,
like you told me you were?
Are you back?
I'm in transit.
You know, Nat, it took me a long time...
..to figure out how to be an Army wife
without obliterating myself.
It wasn't easy, but I did it.
I know you did, Mer.
So it wouldn't be a hardship for me...
..to learn how not to be an Army wife...
..if my husband wasn't in the Army any more.
The Army's my life, Mer.
And so are we.
You don't have to figure it all out, Nat.
You just have to admit that you can't.
You have to want to be here with us,...
..that's all.
Well be here.
For a while.
Now go away.
If you're not going to stay,
I don't want the kids to see you.
- (tape) This M-16, did it run out of ammo?
- (buzzer)
(woman) Yes, sir?
- Colonel Serling, you can go in now.
- I don',t remember...
Hey, Nat, what's up?
General.
It's the Walden file, sir.
One or two discrepancies.
Discrepancies?
Yes, sir.
I knew those White House clowns
were up to something.
- If she doesn't deserve it, she won't get it.
- It's not Captain Walden, sir.
It's some of the details of the stories
I'm getting from her crew.
- I don't know how significant...

- I'm drowning in paper here.
They're crawling all over my ass
for combat assessments,...

Sir, I just wanted to let you know this is
not a rubber-stamp situation, that's all.
Now, this specialist, uh, llario,
there's something funny about his story.
We're not giving the medal to llario.
We're giving it to Walden.
Roger.

Splendid. Move forward.
OK. The discrepancies specifically
relate to... use of an M-16 rifle...
Come on, Nat! No two eyewitnesses
ever agree on every detail.
You know that as well as I do.
When do we get that report?
I want the White House off my back.
A few days, sir.
You agree that this report should be
as detailed and accurate as possible?
Which means exactly what, Colonel?
Which means exactly what I said, sir.
(knock on door)
Sorry, sir. This is the second copy
of Colonel Serling's AI Bathra deposition.
The investigator seemed to have
misplaced the last one.
Rise above.
This will all be over soon.
Will there be
a public statement of the facts...
..when the investigation is over, sir?
There's been a decision not to release
any findings until every case...
..has been thoroughly reviewed.
Well, how long do you imagine
that will be, sir?
I mean, next time I see Lieutenant Boylar's
parents, I'd like to tell them the whole truth.
You know how many grieving parents
I had to deal with during Vietnam?
This is not Vietnam.
Lieutenant Boylar's tank

was hit by uranium-depleted shells.
We're the only country
in the world that uses them.
We got reporters from the Washington Post
looking for the truth,...
..and the only person that knows it
can't say it...
..because these investigators
are dragging their backsides!
Someone has got to be
accountable for this,... sir.
Take a seat.
Nat, I'm going to give you
all the rope in the world.
First you imply I'm not interested...
..in an accurate report on Captain Walden.
Now you're suggesting there must be
some cover-up going on about AI Bathra.
So how do you want me to respond?
As your commanding officer,...
..or as your friend
who nursed you, pushed promotions,...
..and fucking burped your kids
at their baptisms?
Just how should I respond?
I'm sorry, sir.
I should hope by God you would be.
Now,...
..losing a man like your friend Boylar,...
..I've been there.
Well, this...
..whole mess...
It's my ass on the line
right there beside yours.
I can feel the chilling the air
as well as you can.
Yes, sir.
And I know about the drinking.
And if I have to write you up,...
..itll just be one more bite out of your record.
Clean it up.
Get yourself in a programme.
Ill be looking for that report.
Soon.

- (Nat) Yes, this is the Serling residence.

- (Mer) Were nothing right now...

- But at the tone, leave a message and...

- (kids) Well call you when we get home.

(laughter)

(beep)

(gunfire)

You better get your head into this!

I'm going to drop you

from this programme like a hot rock!

You better hurry up!

Morning, sir. Monfriez is over there.

Ill get him for you.

Thank you.

What the fuck are you doing, soldier?

Where are your men?

- There, sir.

- Yeah? What do you call that?

You see that man?

You and he are brothers.

He depends on you. You depend on him.

You never leave a man behind.

- Yes, Drill Sergeant!

- Now get the fuck out of here.

(Nat) You were in Panama?

Yes, sir.

Were you there, sir?

Yes, I was.

And you were also in Desert Storm?

Roger that, sir.

How'd you come to be

on Captain Walden's chopper?

I used to hang around the medivac unit.

Wanted to be a medic?

Wanted to hump a nurse once.

That count, sir?

See, I play poker.

Those medivac folks, between missions,

had a lot of time on their hands.

Want to know a poker secret, sir?

Always.

The people you play against,

find out what they're interested in.

Pretend you're interested.

They start running off at the mouth,
don't pay attention to their cards.
Medevac folks,
they love to talk about their choppers.
Paid for this baby.
So, talk to me about, um, ...
..25 February.
I had some phys rehab time.
Got into boxing.
Want a soda pop?
No, sir. No, I'm good.
So, 25 February...
Major, uh, what's his butt? Garden party...
Teegarden. Major Teegarden.
Right. Asked me to go with Walden,
said she might need guns, ...
..so I said, you know, OK, why not?
Grabbed me a saw, bungeed one of
the Huey doorways and away we went.
Yeah.
And, uh...
..the captain was a big hero...
She died tragically in the desert,
and Major...
- Teegarden.
- Teegarden...
..wants her to get the Medal of Honour,
so shell get it.
When did the M-16 ammo run out?
What?
M-16 ammo?
Blackhawk crew said
they heard M-16 fire during the rescue.
When did it run out?
I wouldn't know anything about that, sir.
You wouldn't?
As... as I recall, and, uh...
..I'm not really sure, ...
..but the M-16 ammo
ran out first thing in the morning.
First thing in the morning.
But you're not really sure?
Now I'm confused.
- You were there, weren't you?

- Affirmative, sir.

But I was on the saw.

AItameyer would know, sir.

AItameyer?

- Yes, sir. He was manning the M-16.

- Oh, I see. OK.

OK, let's back up, then.

Um,...

..when that tank fired on your chopper,...

..you said that, uh...

..'You should go for altitude

and call for support'', right?

Sir?

You knew this wasn't Panama.

Men were going to die,

so you wanted to get out, right?

Wh... who told you that, sir?

Tea Party? llario?

It doesn't matter who told me that.

You tell me.

You don't want to know

what happened out there, sir.

Yes, I do.

You just want me to sign off on the story...

..so you can finish your job

and the lady can get her medal.

Are you refusing to tell me?

Colonel, you know

what to do if you get a hang fire...

..when you pull the trigger

and the round doesn't go off?

You wait, with your weapon pointed in

a safe direction, cos the primer burns slow.

You open your weapon

and take the round out,...

..it blows up in your face.

Leave this round in the chamber, Colonel.

I work at the Pentagon, Sergeant,...

..so I admit I'm a Little slow on the uptake.

Otherwise I'd say you just threatened me.

Did you just threaten me, soldier?

Because, if you did, let me respond to you.

Let me respond to you this way.

I'm an officer, and therefore,

by proclamation, a gentleman,...

..but don't abuse that, son.

Don't get in my cross hairs,
because I'll have no compunction...

..about getting up to my neck in your ass,
understand?

She was afraid, Colonel.

That's the bottom line on Captain Walden.

She was a fucking coward, sir.

Get me around so I can fire!

- Go back. Let me have another shot!

- I don't know.

I'm going for altitude, call for support.

There's no time!

All right, one more!

But then I'm calling for support.

Unhook the aux fuel cells!

Prepare to toss them overboard.

llario, get me the flare gun.

So it was your idea to use the fuel cell?

Yeah.

Me, Rady, somebody.

Adrenaline was pumping. You can't
expect me to remember everything.

Try.

Now!

- Yay!

- Whoo!

So what happened during the night?

Walden and llario,...

..they wouldn't shut up about being rescued.

Like the Army had nothing else to do.

Dust is blowing hard out there.

- Think they'll find us tonight?

- AWACS lost us when the ADT got hit.

SOP is for search and rescue
to begin looking...

Christ, Captain, are you crying?

It's OK. It's just tension.

Hey, you're going to be OK, OK?

They'll find us. It'll be OK.

I can hear the rag heads moving,
as soon as you girls stop gabbing.

They're going away.

It was just a probe.

- Shit!

- I'm OK.

- (Monfriez) I took one.

- How's Rady?

Hanging in. Captain?

Ah! Oh!

So the rest of the night
went without incident?

Yeah.

Wasn't that enough for one night?

You want to continue this tomorrow?

I don't get emotional about this shit.

I've been there, you know?

OK. Go on.

Well, after the firefight, we argued mainly.

llario was freaked out by the dark, and

Walden wanted to surrender at first light.

She was a wreck, kept asking about

the ammo, worrying we didn't have enough.

I knew they'd attack at dawn.

So what happened during the evacuation?

Evacuation.

(gunfire)

All right, let's go.

There's the rescue.

AItameyer, give me a hand with Rady.

- Come on, Captain!

- Ow!

Come on!

- No! Don't move me!

- Get away!

Suck it up!

I got you covered! Ready?

Go! Go! Go!

- llario, move!

- Not without the Captain!

I'll get her.

No! I'm not leaving!

I'm not leaving! It's not safe!

They're taking fire!

The choppers are waiting!

No! No! No!

Get the fuck outta here!

Come on!
She fired at you?
Near us, yeah.
Then why did you lie to the investigators
about how she performed?
They'd already put together
their own bullshit version of the story...
..before they talked to me. I told them
what they wanted to hear. We all did.
But that's the truth, so forget about the
medal, or leave it as it is. I don't give a fuck.
So nobody from your Huey crew
fired an M-16 any time during the rescue?
That's affirmed, sir.
Monfriez, you ready?
You sure about that?
That's affirmative, sir.
We had no ammo.
So how about it, Colonel?
Want to go a few rounds?
Are you threatening me, soldier?
- Where's your brain bucket?
- I don't need it.
Don't step in here without one.
I have to tell you again,
you won't have a head to stick it on.
Come on, Jersey. Right here.
Let's see what you got.
You got nothing, man.
Come on!
(ringing tone)
- (Meredith) Hello.
- Hello? Baby?
How're you doing?
Hi.
How',s it going?
Outstanding.
Outstanding.
I was calling, I wondered...
What... what kind of...
What size T-shirts the kids wear?
I want to get the kids some T-shirts.
You know their sizes as well as I do.
Are you OK?

Nat?

I got a pint of, um...

..Scotch here in a paper bag.

I don't want to drink any of it.

Can you tell me why you need it?

Want me to prattle on for a minute?

I can do that.

(Nat) Please.

OK. Um...

The new refrigerator doesn't work.

The light doesn't come on

when you open the door.

I had to drive all the way

over to Wagner, 12 blocks,...

..just so that Brian could practice

riding his bike.

He's afraid of falling in front of his friends.

He refuses to let anyone

see him riding with training wheels.

They've both taken to sleeping in our bed

since you left.

It's like sleeping between two tornadoes.

I better go, baby.

Don Boylar called.

Jesus.

I better go.

- Nat, talk to me.

- I can't.

- Why not?

- I can't!

Bullshit. Bull! Talk to me!

(dialing tone)

Oh, Christ.

Colonel?

Colonel?

Can we get some coffee, please?

You're not a happy man.

A woman? The Army?

AI Bathra?

Talk to me.

Off the record, if you want.

Way, way off the record.

Rangers' honour.

Serling,...

How long you been back?
Six months.
And you...
you've been in the service how long?
Ah, they got me running this inquiry...
..on this girl pilot.
Captain Karen Walden.
Shell be the first woman
to get the Medal of Honour for combat.
Oh, boy.
And everybody in the beltway
wants a piece of this one, right?
I just want to get something clear.
This time, just want somebody to be a hero.
I want to get something right.
Yeah.
Cos AI Bathra, you know...
AI Bathra.
You talked to Boylar's parents?
Yeah.
Do they know?
They heard from a few of his friends.
Aw, Jesus...
You know...
They told Boylar's parents
he died from enemy fire.
I told them that.
I carried the message,
went to the funeral,...
..watched his mother cry her eyes out.
I stood there
and looked his father in the eye...
..and told him
his son died brave under fire.
And I was the one
who gave the order to fire.
I did it.
Then the Army gave me a medal...
..for bravery and valour.
Then they buried me...
..in medals.
Got a sense of humour, don't they?
Yeah.
Can't remember anything else

except being in the Army.
Either being in it or wanting to be in it.
It's all I know.
Look, you need to sleep.
You call me any time.
Anything you want to say about anything,
on or off the record.
I'm going to leave you alone for a while.
llario. Are you saying you can't find him,
or that he's absent without leave?
(man) Sir, thats an l... l...
That's right, specialist llario.
Well, we contacted the MPs, sir...
Roger.
Roger that.
Thank you.
Did she display fear when she had
to make these life-and-death decisions?
(llario) No, never.
Karen,... the captain... she had this quality.
The heavier the pressure,
the calmer she got.
And she... you know, she put up
with a lot of shit to become an officer.
Had to work twice as hard
as everybody else, be twice as good.
Shed never let the guard down,
show any sign of weakness.
But she was tough. She could handle it.
So, ladies and gentlemen,
what I have to say to you in closing...
..is to go forth,...
..to command wisely,...
..to advise prudently,...
..to protect with vigilance...
..and to judge with care.
And above all,...
..to defend with all your heart,
all your soul...
..and all your courage...
..the lives of the men and women
under your command,...
..and the United States of America.
Are you now saying

you'll report against her getting the medal?
As I explained to the White House,
there should be a further investigation...
..before we move forward.
The discrepancies...
Another matter completely.
Write up a second report.
That's my point, sir!
llario's disappeared. Altameyer's missing.
- Who?
- Altameyer, sir. Walden's crew chief.
VA hospital's transferred him out
three weeks ago.
Paperwork's missing.
Doesn't he have any family?
Negative.
Fucking VA. We can't wait, Nat.
You cannot imagine
the kind of heat I'm getting on this.
Everybody wants it.
Senators, congressmen, one shiny
piece of something for people to believe in.
Whole episode.
Walden or AI Bathra?
Both, damn it, both.
Submit your report today.
I'm sorry, sir.
I won't put my name
on an incomplete report.
May I remind you who recommended you
for this when no-one else 'd touch you?
You saying you chose me
because I wouldn't rock the boat?
Dereliction of duty,
drunk and disorderly, conduct unbecoming.
At best, a dishonorable discharge.
At worst, AI Bathra gives us
plenty of grounds, if we want 'em.
At least somebody has finally said it.
Nat, don't do this. I could give you
a direct order to submit your report.
Yes, you could.
Put Hillerman back on the Walden file!
I handed this to you, Nat, as a way back.

You could've had one hell of a career.
And you give Meredith my best.
Tell her I didn't have any choice.
I'm going to finish this report.
On my own, if I have to.
I'm going to get this one right.
You want one?
No, thank you.
Why is it people never want to eat
when they got something important to say?
I always want to eat.
Need you to help me find somebody.
You want my help?
Yeah.
Name's AItameyer. Steven AItameyer.
He was the crew chief on the medevac
chopper, piloted by Karen Walden.
- One supposed to get a Medal of Honour?
- The very one.
- The Army's usually tidy about its people.
- Yeah, usually, but not this time.
First he demobbed,
then they had him in a VA hospital.
They transferred him.
Now no-one can find him.
Why do you need me?
Can't someone in the Pentagon help?
I'm out of the loop.
Somebody pissed at you?
- I'm out of the loop.
- Somebody important?
- You want to help me or not?
- Hey, who called who here?
Yeah, sure, Ill help.
Just tell me why I'm doing it.
When you go after stories,
you want them to be right, yes?
Yeah.
So do I.
OK.
So, I help you find this AItameyer,...
..and in return...?
There's a tape.
Sweet Jesus. There's always a tape.

- D'you want to hear this?

- Yeah.

Yeah, go on.

There's a tape of all communications
between our tanks that night in AI Bathra.

Are they trying to make it disappear?

I don't think so, but they're not
advertising its existence, either.

The Army and its image.

Where do I reach you

when I find this Altameyer?

The Bethesda Arms.

A motel?

- Bet everything's great in your life.

- Outstanding.

Serling,...

..eat something.

You look awful.

(Karen) # Make me an angel

Flies from Montgomery

Make me a poster

From an old rodeo

Just give me one thing

That I can hold on to

To believe in this living

It's just a...

Hard way to go

To believe in this living

It's just a...

Hard way

To go

(telephone rings)

Hello.

(Gartner) Found Altameyer.

Got any complaints?

Excuse me?

Rashes, fatigue, bleeding gums,...

..muscle and joint pain,

loss of weight, loss of appetite,...

..insomnia, reactions to bright sunlight.

You name it, we're seeing it.

I drink too much. Does that count?

Hell, we all drink too much.

Here he is.

Aitameyer, you want a shave?
Gentleman here to see you.
You want a shave?
What's wrong with him?
Abdominal cancer.
That's what's killing him.
There's many things wrong with him.
He's never awake very long
with all the pain.
Ill leave you two, then.
Thank you.
How you doing, Steven?
I'm Colonel Serling.
Nat Serling.
I want to talk to you
about Captain Karen Walden.
They want to give her
the Medal of Honour,...
..and I know
that you were there in AI Kufan with her.
Roger?
I was...
..hit.
In the back.
Roger.
But you were still able to get Rady out.
Rady.
Yeah.
Good man Rady.
I was...
..afraid.
I understand, son.
(groans)
That's OK. Take your time.
She was afraid.
She... she was afraid.
The Captain was afraid?
Not...
..the Captain.
Who then? Was it Rady or llario?
Was llario afraid?
Me.
Did... didn't tell.
You didn't tell what, son?

The major.
Monfriez.
You didn't tell the major Monfriez...
You...
you and Monfriez didn't tell the major?
He...
..and then they...
You and Monfriez didn't tell the major.
(mumbles)
You and Monfriez what, Steven?
Oh, Jesus.
What? What is it?
Tell me son, please. What is it?
Jesus.
What? What?
The fire.
- What? What fire?
- Oh, Jesus, the fire.
What fire?
The napalm fire?
Jesus.
- You see the napalm fire.
- Jesus.
Tell me about the fire.
You and Monfriez
didn't tell the major what about the fire?
- Please, Jesus.
- Steven!
Jesus, please.
Is it napalm fire? Steven?
Please, Jesus.
Jesus, please.
Steven.
Jesus.
Please.
Jesus.
What's he doing?
He's upping his meds. Self-medication.
Well, can you get him to stop?
I mean, I need to talk to him.
Give him a break.
He's feeling no pain now.
(men singing marching cadence)
Left.

Left.

Left.

Left.

Get off my car, sir.

Think you got

something to tell me, Sergeant.

I called around.

You're off this inquiry, so why you here?

Karen Walden sent me.

I just left AItameyer.

What happened out there

that was so bad...

..that it would have AItameyer

laying up in a hospital praying to die,...

..that's got llario on the run?

That's right, he went AWOL.

What do you think hell tell them about you
when they catch him?

And they're going to catch him, son.

Now, you can tell them,...

..or you can tell me.

What happened out there?

Nothing happened.

Nothing happened, sir.

It was a war.

(slams car door)

Don't lie to me, soldier.

Don't lie to me.

It doesn't matter

whether she gets this award or not.

It doesn't matter whether I'm on this inquiry
or whether I'm in this Army.

I'm going to find out the truth.

I guarantee you that.

You said you were a good poker player.

Well, look me in the eye.

You think I'm bluffing?

No, thank you.

You want it.

I can smell how much you want it.

It's coming out of your pores.

Tell me about the fire.

I like trains.

Since I was a kid.

Big...

Tough...

Iron.

Used to be iron, anyway.

When I got to boxing pro, I was going to call myself Johnny 'Night Train' Monfriez.

- Don't that have a nice ring to it?

- Very nice.

Don't humour me, man.

Say it like you mean it.

Don't humour me, either.

Tell me about the fire.

Where's my other bottle?

You ever kill anyone

at close range with a small arm, sir?

It's messy.

No.

We're not talking...

..one of your great big tank guns here.

Oh, that's OK.

I know what you did.

Your own men.

Guys under your command.

How'd it feel?

Bad, right?

Very bad, son.

Very bad.

(train whistle)

And you didn't even mean to kill them.

I've been a good soldier.

A good soldier.

(train whistle)

Listen to that whistle.

Johnny 'Night Train' Monfriez.

Say it.

Johnny 'Night Train' Monfriez.

Now get out.

You don't want to do this, son.

Let me help you.

- It's too late.

- It's never too late. Look at me.

Things get fucked up in war.

I don't care what happened to you.

You can't do this.

Wrong!

I can't do anything else.

Yes, you can. You can put the car in reverse.

Put the gun down.

We can help each other.

I don't want to lose another good soldier.

(cocks hammer)

I strongly urge you...

..to dismount the vehicle, sir.

Monfriez. Monfriez!

(screeching)

Aah!

(llario) imagine that.

imagine not thinking

about the consequences.

its not the doing shit that gets to you,

its the consequences.

My folks used to have this place

out on Calaveras Lake.

I still go there sometimes.

Guess you told me about this place

so I'd know where to find you.

It's beautiful.

The MPs at Fort Stewart...

..found your stash in your locker.

Pretty ingenious place to keep it, huh?

Not if you wanted it to be found.

Where'd you hide the needle tracks?

I, uh...

I shoot up between my toes.

Monfriez is dead.

Killed himself.

AItameyer is dying.

Aren't we all?

Mayday! Mayday!

Dustoff-3, we're going down!

We're going down! Mayday!

Mayday! Mayday!

Dustoff-3, we're going down!

We're going down!

We're going down!

And the chopper went down?

What happened next?

What happened next isn't important.

It's what happened that night.
Monfriez wanted to make a run for it.
At dawn we're dead.
They'll have reinforcements.
Escape and evasion, Captain.
Now's the time to do it.
Maybe we'd slip by them in the dark.
I told you,...

..Rady can't be moved.
Right, llario?
That lung - any movement may kill him.
But he may die lying here.
You see?
Rady will never make it. I say we go.
Oh, great.
Great. The Captain's crying.
It's just tension, asshole.
It doesn't mean shit.
Come on, Captain.
I don't want to wait here to die.
llario?
- I don't know.
- Come on, it's a majority.
That'd be great if this was a democracy,
but it isn't.
We stay with Rady.
I wouldn't risk your life. I won't risk his.
So if we surrender,
the Iraqis would doctor him up.
No surrender.
(footsteps)
I hear something moving.
- I say we make for the chopper now.
- And I say I heard enough of that shit.
You don't have to go.
We don't need your permission.
I am in command here!
Well, maybe not any more.
Give me the saw, Monfriez.
I can't stop you from running, but
you're not taking our fire power with you.
You're not taking away my weapon.
Yes, I am.
Hey, I can make a white flag, all right?

There's no way
you're taking away my weapon, cunt.
Section 28-J, ...
..code of millitary justice.
Mutiny, ...
..an offence punishable by death.
Jesus, Monfriez.
Shut up! She's trying to get us killed!
llario, who you with?
Come on, llario, shithead,
do you want to die?
Please, Captain.
Oh!
Unh.
They're going away.
It was just a probe.
Oh.
Shit.
(Altameyer) Are you all right?
(Walden) Shit!
Oh, my God.
Oh, my God.
Shit.
I don't fucking believe it.
Give me your weapon.
Christ, I thought you were firing at me!
(click)
You're wounded, ma'am. Let me see.
You're with him.
You got to let me look at it.
Christ, let him look at it!
I gave birth to a nine-pound baby, ...
..asshole!
I think I can handle it!
Cap, we got to get you out of here.
We stay with Rady.
- And then?
- And then...
- (Altameyer) Incoming!
- (explosions)
(Altameyer) 140!
(Altameyer) 130!
Give me my weapon!
llario, how's Rady?

- He's dead!
- No, he's alive!
Come on, Captain, give him his weapon!
- This is insane! Give me my weapon!
- Shut up!
I'm sorry.
OK. OK.
OK, well get you out of here, Captain.
It's all over.
No, Monfriez, ...
..it's not over.
There will be a reckoning.
Count on it.
Hey, what's that?
(helicopters)
There's the rescue!
Let's move it! Move it!
Move it! Move it!
No!
Wait.
Help Rady.
We're pinned down here!
llario, give me the M-16.
Give me the goddamn M-16!
Ill cover you.
Go!
Ill cover you!
Negative, ma'am!
Come back for me
with a stretcher and more guns!
- Karen, please!
- Go! It's an order!
Karen, please!
Go! Go!
Wait!
Wait!
Where's Walden?
She's dead!
No!
Monfriez said she would
have court-martial led us.
Aitameyer was too fucked up to say anything.
She was ...
She was probably killed by small arms ...

..before the napalm ever hit.

Either way,...

..she never could have survived that stomach wound.

You think that matters?

No.

No.

Hmm.

I couldn't bear to send this.

Uh, I didn't even want to...

I didn't even want to touch it.

Uh...

Can you get it to her parents for me?

Can you...?

Please?

Yeah.

Uh, listen,

I'm going to have to call you back.

You got off the phone for me?

- You'll want me there for this.

- Meaning?

Remember that stereo you told me not to buy cos who needs a dual cassette deck?

When does anyone ever have a reason to copy a tape?

Nat, just the man I wanted to see.

Uh, do you know Colonel Serling?

This is Tony Gartner of the Washington Post.

He was with the 9th in Vietnam.

Mr. Gartner.

Colonel.

Take a seat, Nat.

He's following up

our investigation of AI Bathra,...

..and it seems that he has a few questions that he'd like to ask us.

Let's give him every facility.

- I appreciate that.

- Some ground rules, though.

I insist we be allowed to schedule the release of all information...

..to the public regarding casualties.

Well, I wish I could accommodate you, sir,...

..but, unfortunately, well be going with
a story based on a tape that I've acquired...
..of all radio communications that night.
So,...

..I'd like you to listen...
..and then comment for the record.
I can't comment for the record.
This is an ongoing investigation.
(Serling) First right! Turn to the right!
Sabre-6, this is Bobcat-5.
Enemy tangos!
Say again! Enemy tanks in our lines. Over.
(Boylar) Sabre-6, this is Cougar-6.
Enemy tangos at phase line delta...
- I don't think any more of this...
- This is what happened, General.
(Serling) Liberty-6, this is Sabre-6.
Enemy tanks on our flank. Out!
Patella, find me a target.
- I think I got one, sir.
- Do you or do you not have a target?
It must be, sir. Theyre firing at us.
Loader!
Up, sir!
Fire!
On the way!
- Target! We got that sucker!
- Yeah!
Sabre-6, we just lost Cougar-6.
Repeat, we just lost Boylar.
Roger that, sir. We got him.
- You just lit up a friendly.
- Roger that. We... What?
- You just lit up a friendly, goddamn it!
- (turns off tape)
Cougar-6 was one of your own Abrams,
Colonel Serling. Is that correct?
Yes, that's correct.
Sabre-6, Nat, whats happening?
Sabre-6, report.
(Serling) Patella, was that one of our tanks?
They fired.
At us or at the T-72s?
I don',t know.

- At us or at the T-72s, Patella?
- I don't know!
- Colonel Serling, report status now.
- (bang)
They have range on us!
All Sabre elements,
stop all tanks, turn on your lights.
I say again,
stop all tanks and turn on your Lights.
Sabre-6, Nat, what's happening out there?
Load us up.
Patella, find me a target.
Snap out of it. Find me a target.
Patella, come on!
- Target!
- We're up.
- Lights on or off?
- Off.
- Fire!
- On the way.
- Sir?
- Fire!
Colonel Serling, report status now!
Sabre-6, situation under control, General.
General, Colonel Serling's order
to activate Lights, ...
..was that a standard response
to enemy infiltration of the lines?
At the critical moment, ...
..in spite of terrible losses, ...
..Colonel Serling didn't hesitate to act.
Ordering those tanks
to turn on their Lights ...
..saved the lives
of God knows how many of our men.
Heroic acts arise ...
..out of desperate circumstances.
I have no trouble at all
believing that Colonel Serling is a hero.
Like Captain Karen Walden.
Did you know, Mr. Gartner, for the first time
a woman is being considered ...
..for the Medal of Honour
for her performance under fire?

And, um,...

..Colonel Serling...

..is just finishing up the inquiry.

How's that going, Nat?

I think, uh,...

..in order to honour
a soldier like Karen Walden,...

..we have to tell the truth, General,...

..about what happened over there.

The whole, hard,...

..cold truth.

And until we do that, uh,...

..we dishonor her...

..and every soldier who died,...

..who gave their life for their country.

My full report, General.

Few of us are given the opportunity,...

..even fewer the courage,...

..to sacrifice ourselves
for the lives of our comrades.

In daily life, even as in battle,...

..each one of us is mysteriously
and irrevocably bound to our fellow man.

And yet,...

..it is only in death
that the power of this bond...

..is finally tested and proven.

And who among us really knows...

..how he might respond
when that moment comes?

(man) I guess we've been expecting you.

Ahem. First of all, let me, um...

Let me just say that, uh,...

..there was nothing that, uh,...

..Tom and I wouldn't do for each other.

Nothing.

He was a good soldier.

He was like a brother to me.

That night, uh, 25 February...

..there were enemy tanks in our lines.

We thought...

I... I thought that, uh,...

..Tom's tank was an enemy tank.

And, uh,...

..I gave the order to fire.
God help me.
I, um...
Yeah, I killed him.
As for the funeral,...
..the lies the Army told...
..and the lies that I told...
..to you, I can only...
..beg for your forgiveness.
As far as the...
As far as that night, um,...
..I guess there's no way that, uh,...
..I can even begin to ask you to forgive me.
I know that,...
..but it's a burden
you're going to have to put down sometime.
Thank you, sir.
Mr. President.
(engines roaring)
(Karen) Dear Mom and Dad,...
..well, this is it - the big push.
Looks like it's gonna really happen.
And I'm afraid,...
..not of being hurt or killed,...
..well, kind of, but not much.
My only regret will be
to never see you two again...
..and that Ill never see Anne Marie grow up.
But I know she's in good hands, the best.
What I'm really afraid of is that
I might let my people down, my crew.
These people depend on me.
They put their lives in my hands.
I just can't fall 'em.
Now, I know if you get this letter...
..it means I'm dead.
I only hope that I've made you proud,...
..that I did my job,...
..and I didn't let down my country,...
..my crew, my fellow soldiers.
I Love you guys.
Never stop telling Anne Marie
how much I Love her.
Your daughter, Karen.

You got it? All right.

(sighs)

(helicopter)