

WAVES

by

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SHOOTING SCRIPT

FLASHFORWARD

EXT. BEACH - DAY

A lone soldier sits on the beach, looking out onto the horizon.

The waves crash onto the shore as he maintains his gaze on the setting sun.

ATHENA (V.O.)
In reaching for the beautiful
there is beauty, yet also in
suffering, whatever it is that one
suffers.

The sun begins to set.

END FLASHFORWARD

FADE TO:

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

A bright sun rises above the mountains, shining over the vast land.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Julius, 25, wearily opens his eyes.

His wrists are bound together behind him around a tree, rendering him useless. His head is slumped from exhaustion.

He hears a CRUNCH. He raises his head slowly.

JULIUS
(softly)
Someone there?

More leaves crunch.

A mysterious figure appears from behind a tree. A young woman, Athena, dressed in a well-decorated military outfit, walks towards Julius.

Julius looks at the approaching figure in confusion.

As she gets closer,

JULIUS

Who... are you?

Athena continues approaching, not answering.

He grows nervous.

Julius, restrained, presses up against the tree, as if trying to edge away.

She touches his face softly, noticing his tired eyes.

As soon as she touches his face, his shoulders relax, seeming to feel in the presence of a Goddess.

ATHENA

Who did this to you..?

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD

FLASHBACK

EXT. FOREST - DAY

There are footsteps sprinting through the winter woods.

Combat boots. Ragged breathing. Men yelling.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3 (O.C.)

Take them down!

Gunshots.

Suddenly, four soldiers run by.

ANTHONY

Go! Go! Go!

The four soldiers dart through the woods, dodging trees and brush. They're running for their lives.

While running, Marcus (20), turns to look back over his shoulder. He trips and falls down.

Julius, running behind him, grabs him by the collar in stride and hoists him up, propelling him forward.

The four continue their mad dash until they come upon a steep slope.

JULIUS
Everybody down!

They roll down a slope and come to a halt.

Julius pins down the other three soldiers, Anthony (22) Thaddeus (20), and Marcus.

JULIUS
Sssh...

We hear a gunshot and other soldiers' footsteps running by.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2 (O.S.)
I think they ran over there!

With his eyes peeking over the edge, Julius keeps watching, his eyes tracking the other soldiers' movements.

JULIUS (V.O.)
(hesitant)
...We were all deserters.

ATHENA (V.O.)
Who?

JULIUS (V.O.)
The four of us...

The soldiers' footsteps fade away.

Julius relaxes.

The other three begin to get up and brush themselves off.

ANTHONY
Close one, huh?

Julius tackles Anthony to the ground, his hands wrapped around his neck.

Anthony resists, holding Julius' grip.

JULIUS
It's your damn fault!

Anthony spins Julius around to the ground, reversing their positions, but with Julius' hands still at Anthony's throat.

ANTHONY

If I hadn't done something, we'd be dead.

MARCUS

Enough!

Marcus kicks Anthony off of Julius.

MARCUS

This isn't the time.

Julius brushes himself off as he gets up.

Smirking, Anthony does the same.

JULIUS

Marcus, it's 'cause of him we're in this situation!

MARCUS

Julius!

Thaddeus, the fourth member, intervenes.

THADDEUS

Ah, will you guys shut up already?

The other three turn to look at him.

THADDEUS

(rubbing his head))

All your yelling is giving me a headache.

The other three return to their debate.

ANTHONY

Don't pretend if I didn't take that chance we'd be alive right now. They knew about your plan to escape. Didn't you see how prepared they were?

JULIUS

You went too early! You nearly woke up the entire camp when you stabbed that guard! Not only are we being hunted, we don't have a goddamn thing to protect ourselves with.

THADDEUS

Or anything to eat or drink...

Thaddeus slips out a pouch that holds a few rations, looking at it with dismay.

JULIUS

This was a stupid plan to begin with.

MARCUS

But it's even more stupid sitting in the trenches day and night while your country wages a hopeless war. And for what?

Marcus puts his hand on Julius' shoulder.

MARCUS

Julius, neither the enemy nor our own leaders care about whether we live or die. This was our only option.

They think on this momentarily.

THADDEUS

So... are we sticking to the plan?

JULIUS

Well, there's no other option. As much as I'd like to, we can't go back and beg for forgiveness.

He looks north.

JULIUS

We head northwest, towards the Tiberian border. It'll be safe.

ANTHONY

No.

Julius, Marcus, and Thaddeus look questioningly at Anthony.

ANTHONY

We should go to the sea. We could easily sneak a boat at the port and sail out to Phratia and leave this mess behind.

JULIUS

You understand those are enemy waters, right?

ANTHONY

No, it's a trade route for many nations.

JULIUS

There're too many chances to get caught going that way...

ANTHONY

The port's closer than Tiberia.

MARCUS

Maybe we should vote?

Julius and Thaddeus nod in agreement.

JULIUS

All in favor of going to the sea?

Anthony raises his hand.

JULIUS

All in favor of going north to Tiberia?

Julius, Marcus, and Thaddeus raise their hands as if saying "aye".

JULIUS

It's settled.

Julius walks deeper into the woods.

Marcus and Thaddeus follow.

Anthony, disappointed, follows as well.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Julius leads his men with determination through the dead winter woods.

JULIUS (V.O.)

It shouldn't have been like that... Marcus, Thaddeus and I had planned carefully to sneak out, but Tony jumped in last minute and ruined everything... but it didn't matter. At that point, our mission became to survive.

The troop approaches an area with a nearby small muddy creek.

Julius examines the area.

JULIUS
Thaddeus, do you have the ration
tabs?

Thaddeus produces a small pouch.

Julius holds his hand out. Thaddeus passes the pouch to him.

Julius pours some out onto his hands and examines them.
Small brown tabs.

JULIUS
We don't have many.

He puts them back on the pouch.

JULIUS
I think it's best if Marcus holds
onto these.

He tosses the pouch to Marcus.

JULIUS
Who has a canteen?

Thaddeus and Anthony shrug. Marcus pulls out one.

MARCUS
I do.

JULIUS
(motioning)
Would you do us all a favor and
get us some water?

Marcus nods and heads down towards the creek.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

Marcus makes his way down to the creek to find clear water.

He finds a spot, undoes the top and begins collecting water as he presses the canteen against the water.

Marcus looks up and around as the canteen fills.

He stands up and replaces the canteen's cap, only to drop it onto the forest floor.

Marcus jumps over the creek to find a wounded soldier in a different colored outfit resting against a tree.

MARCUS

(yelling)

We got a wounded man over here!

The soldier moans in pain.

Apprehensively, Marcus approaches the blood-soaked soldier.

The wounded soldiers moans in pain, unable to speak properly.

Marcus runs back to collect the canteen and returns to the soldier.

He feeds him water.

The soldiers drink it, albeit painfully.

The other three members of the troop catch up.

JULIUS

You find him like this?

Marcus nods.

Anthony examines the man's uniform.

ANTHONY

He's a Nasirian soldier.

MARCUS

So?

ANTHONY

'Shouldn't be helping enemy.

Marcus glares at Anthony and looks back at the soldier.

NASIRIAN SOLDIER

You... you did this to me...

MARCUS

Who? Who did this to you?

NASIRIAN SOLDIER

Your... men... you Bravian dogs...

The wounded soldier begins breathing heavily as his anger rises.

MARCUS
(defensive)
We're not with them anymore!

The wounded soldier's anger subsides.

NASIRIAN SOLDIER
So... you're traitors then?

The soldiers wait for the four men's reactions.

They all look down in varying degrees of shame and awkwardness.

The Nasirian soldier spits in their direction.

NASIRIAN SOLDIER
You're lower than scum...
abandoning your country... where's
your sense of honor?

ANTHONY
(stern)
Shut up.

The wounded soldier looks up.

He looks at Anthony with confusion and a flare of recognition. He struggles to raise his hand in pain to point at him.

Anthony pulls out a hidden revolver and SHOOTs the soldier.

Marcus jolts back in shock.

Julius aggressively shoves Anthony back; the revolver drops.

JULIUS
Are you crazy?!

Anthony picks up his revolver and places it at the back of his pants.

MARCUS
(softly)
Why did you do that?
(louder)
He wasn't going to hurt us!

ANTHONY

Why do you care if he's dead or alive? He wasn't going to survive out here in his condition.

THADDEUS

Sure, but now anyone in earshot knows where we are.

Anthony pushes past Marcus to scavenge the corpse.

Thaddeus sighs and joins him.

Marcus walks away with the canteen, disgusted.

MARCUS

We didn't even try to help him...

Julius joins Marcus.

JULIUS

I can't believe he's been hiding a gun...

In the background, Anthony and Thaddeus begin to search the body.

ANTHONY

Do you trust Julius?

THADDEUS

I don't know; I'm just trying to survive.

Anthony finds a bit of rope on the dead soldier's body.

ANTHONY

Could be useful.

He pockets the rope and gets up.

They return to the group.

ANTHONY

Nothing of value.

Marcus and Julius look at him skeptically.

JULIUS

We're going to need a fire soon.

He looks at Thaddeus.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

A fire gets going, its light keeping darkness at bay. The four soldiers huddle around the fire.

Marcus plays his harmonica for his comrades, in tune. Anthony sketches in a pocketbook.

Thaddeus takes several gulps of water.

JULIUS

Don't drink all the water.

Julius reaches for the canteen. Thaddeus hands it over reluctantly.

Julius takes two small sips and replaces the cap.

He motions for Marcus to cease playing.

JULIUS

It's best if we get to know each other. I want to know the men my survival depends on.

THADDEUS

(annoyed)

Why you don't you start then? Why would someone who was so close to the General want to escape?

Julius looks and around and hesitates.

JULIUS

I didn't want to, but...

He glances at Marcus.

JULIUS

I had no choice.

There's a silence as Julius' face grows dark as he stares into the fire.

JULIUS

My brother and I enlisted because we thought it was the right thing to do... We felt that there was no greater calling than to serve our country.

THADDEUS
(chuckling)
What happened to *your* calling?

FLASHBACK

SWAMP - DAY

Julius holds the body of a young man in his arms.

We cannot see the soldier's face. There is mud and blood all over Julius. He looks distressed.

Julius shakes the body in his arms, screaming at it to wake up, although no sound comes from his lips.

All we can hear is explosions and gunfire in the background. There's a ringing in his ears.

When Julius realizes the soldier isn't waking up, he hugs the body close.

He pulls at the body's dog tags.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Julius snaps out of his memory.

His fingers rub his third dog tag.

JULIUS
I watched my brother die in
combat... I realized there's no
getting through this alive... I
swore I wouldn't let anyone else
die on my watch.

Thaddeus is unimpressed.

THADDEUS
(to Marcus)
Why're you here?

Marcus is caught off guard.

MARCUS
(clears his throat)
Uh... similar to Julius. I thought
joining the army was the right
thing to do. They needed men.

And, you know, you read all these stories of great heroes in war, real courageous men...

(quieter)

And I thought I could be one...

Thaddeus laughs.

THADDEUS

You were afraid of the sound of a gunshot, what made you think you could shoot a man?

Marcus looks struck down. Thaddeus isn't wrong.

MARCUS

I know I'm not cut out for this... that's why I had to leave.

Marcus looks up at Thaddeus.

MARCUS

You don't strike me as someone who would join the army... what's your deal?

THADDEUS

(smirking)

You're right, but for good pay, food, and shelter, I'll do just about anything.

JULIUS

Simple man, huh?

THADDEUS

Call me whatever you want, but I didn't come from the background you guys did.

(re Marcus)

I didn't have an education like you did.

(re Julius)

I didn't have family like you.

Julius and Marcus shift uncomfortably.

THADDEUS

I had nothing to lose and everything to gain. Joining the army meant I could have protection, a stipend... basic things. I'm here, for me.

JULIUS

You lost all of those when you
came with us.

THADDEUS

Yeah, I'll have to start over from
nothing, but at least I'll be
alive.

Julius nods in apathy, and then looks at Anthony.

JULIUS

You. We don't even know your name.

Anthony listens haphazardly, still sketching in his
notebook.

ANTHONY

(not looking up)
Anthony. You can call me Tony.

JULIUS

What's your deal?

ANTHONY

That's none of your business.

The other three share a look.

JULIUS

It's awfully hard to trust a man
you don't know anything about.

Anthony ignores Julius and continues sketching. There is
a tense pause.

JULIUS

What're you doing in that
notebook? Hand it over.

ANTHONY

Don't worry 'bout it.

JULIUS

Hand it over, Anthony.

Anthony stops and looks up.

ANTHONY

Look, just because you've got
these other two wrapped around
your finger doesn't mean you can
tell me what to do.

Marcus and Thaddeus are insulted by his remark.

Anthony returns to his pocketbook.

THADDEUS

You're not getting off that easy.
Why should we trust you?

ANTHONY

(looking down)
You're alive 'cause of me, aren't
you?

MARCUS

No, that's 'cause of Julius. He's
the one who made the plan.

ANTHONY

(working on his
sketch)
When I caught wind of you three
trying to run off... I knew that
the General probably knew as well
and he would have caught you if
you didn't leave immediately,
before the guards were alerted.

He stops sketching and looks up.

ANTHONY

(smirking)
So I did it for you. You're
welcome.

He looks back his at his notebook, examining it.

ANTHONY

Looks pretty good to me.

He tucks his notebook into his pocket with his pen.

ANTHONY

Now if you'll excuse me.

Anthony walks off into the darkness.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. CAMPFIRE - DAY

Julius, Marcus, and Thaddeus are asleep. The fire is freshly out, smoke rising from its ashes.

Anthony places his hand over Thaddeus' mouth. He shakes him awake.

He puts a finger to his lips and motions for Thaddeus to follow him.

Thaddeus stirs up quietly. He grabs the canteen and follows Anthony over.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Anthony and Thaddeus enter a secluded area, further away from Julius and Marcus, leaving them as specks in the background.

ANTHONY

You really think he knows best?
You heard him, he doesn't even
want to be here.

Thaddeus takes a drink from the canteen.

ANTHONY

Going to the border is asking for
trouble. You really think the
people of Tiberia are going to
welcome some soldiers with open
arms? They barely take in civilian
refugees.

Thaddeus thinks as he takes another sip.

Anthony reaches out for the canteen. He takes a sip.

THADDEUS

So you think going to Phratia
shore is a better idea?

Anthony nods.

ANTHONY

It's closer. We take a boat out,
sail over there, and live
peacefully until all of this blows
over. That's what you want, isn't
it?

THADDEUS

Yeah...

He thinks on this for a moment.

THADDEUS

I want the rations back.

ANTHONY

What?

THADDEUS

He took them from me yesterday. I made sure to steal them from the camp.

Anthony smiles wistfully and nods in agreement.

He heads back towards the campfire.

ANTHONY

Watch this.

Anthony drinks the rest of the canteen as they walk back.

He tosses it to Thaddeus.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - DAY

Marcus and Julius still lie asleep on the cold ground.

He pulls out the revolver and kicks Julius' leg to wake him up.

He cocks the revolver and points it at Julius' head.

Julius stirs up slowly, the sleep still on him. He sees the gun barrel pointed at his face.

He freezes.

Anthony aims it into the sky and pulls the trigger. Empty.

ANTHONY

(smirking)

That's what I thought.

Turning away, Anthony puts back his revolver at the back of his pants.

ANTHONY

A real leader wouldn't freeze up.

Growling, Julius tackles Anthony to the ground.

JULIUS
You're pathetic.

Anthony spins Julius back around and pins Julius down.

Julius twists out under Anthony, spinning around to put him in a choke-hold.

JULIUS
Don't test me, Anthony.

Julius lets go and brushes himself off as he rises.

JULIUS
Don't point that gun at me again
or you won't be alive to use it.

Anthony gets up, brushing himself as well.

ANTHONY
We'll see about that.

Julius spits on the ground.

JULIUS
Get me some water!

Thaddeus tosses the canteen to him.

Julius shakes the canteen.

JULIUS
(angrily)
It's empty? Did you drink all of
it?

Julius shoots a dirty look at Thaddeus.

He looks back.

JULIUS
We can't go back to the creek we
were at...

He turns around and looks forward.

JULIUS
Let's get going.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The four soldiers steadily move through the woods.

Julius leads the pack with Thaddeus, Marcus, and Anthony trailing behind.

Anthony holds a vigilant eye on their surroundings, constantly looking behind his back.

Thaddeus, who has been struggling to walk, suddenly collapses from dehydration.

The other three come to his rescue.

Marcus holds him in his arms.

Thaddeus opens his eyes slowly.

MARCUS

Talk to me. What's wrong?

THADDEUS

(inconsistently
breathing)

...dizzy.

JULIUS

You two stay put. We'll go find a
creek nearby for water.

Marcus nods as Julius and Anthony head into the woods.

EXT. WOODS WITH CREEK - DAY

Anthony and Julius walk deeper into the woods, looking for water.

ANTHONY

He's not very strong.

JULIUS

You can't blame him for being
dehydrated.

ANTHONY

I meant the other one, Marcus.
You're doing this for him, aren't
you?

JULIUS

You're very perceptive.

ANTHONY

If it wasn't for him, you'd probably still be back at camp, getting ready for the next battle.

Julius stays quiet.

ANTHONY

You think because you helped secure the southern border that you're some kind of hero? You're a murderer, just like the rest of us.

JULIUS

What's your problem, Tony? You wouldn't talk when we asked you to and now you won't shut up.

ANTHONY

You think leading us to the border is best? You really think they'll want refugees in Tiberia? And traitors at that? You've heard what happens to deserters.

Julius keeps a straight face as he walks. He hears the gunshots in his head.

JULIUS

Tiberians are only hostile to Nasirians. They shouldn't have a problem with us.

They continue walking.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Marcus holds the weary Thaddeus.

Thaddeus pushes Marcus away and sits up.

He holds his arm out to motion to Julius that he is fine.

MARCUS

They'll return soon with water.

Marcus takes out the pouch with the ration tabs.

Thaddeus' eyes light up as Marcus pulls out one for Thaddeus.

He hands it to Thaddeus who takes it and consumes it greedily.

Thaddeus puts his hand out for more. Marcus shakes his head.

MARCUS

There aren't many left.

Slighted, Thaddeus grows impatient.

EXT. WOODS WITH CREEK - CONTINUOUS

Anthony and Julius continue walking.

ANTHONY

Phratia's not too far off from the shore.

JULIUS

Sounds like a longer trip than Tiberia.

ANTHONY

Yes, but once we get on the water, we're safe. We won't have to constantly look over our shoulders.

JULIUS

It's too risky.

ANTHONY

Why do you insist on leading your own soldiers deaths? Because that's what's waiting for us in Tiberia.

JULIUS

I'm not the one needlessly killing soldiers.

ANTHONY

(bitter)

It was for the best.

The scene of Anthony shooting the soldier replays in Julius' head in a quick, brief flash.

Something clicks in Julius' head.

They've approached the creek.

JULIUS

Before you shot him... he looked
at you strangely.

Anthony lets Julius slip in front of him.

Julius unscrews the top of the canteen and begins trying
to fill it up.

JULIUS

As if he knew you... What was that
about?

Julius replaces the cap of the canteen.

Julius turns around to look down the barrel of Anthony's
revolver. Anthony cocks it.

Julius holds still.

ANTHONY

It's not empty this time.

He drops the canteen and puts his hands above his head.

ANTHONY

I'm tired of these games.

JULIUS

If you shoot, they'll hear you.

With the revolver still trained on Julius, Anthony's eyes
flash.

ANTHONY

On your knees.

Julius complies.

Anthony circles behind Julius, revolver trained on him
still.

Anthony kisses the revolver with the back of Julius'
head.

Julius braces himself.

Anthony strikes Julius with the butt of the gun.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. WOODS WITH CREEK

Julius is on the forest floor, knocked out cold.

Anthony puts the revolver away and pulls out the rope.

He begins dragging Julius' unconscious body.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Marcus and Thaddeus are on their knees, their hands on the back of their heads as they keep their eyes to the ground.

The pouch of ration tabs lies on the forest floor.

A BRAVIAN SOLDIER has found them. His rifle's barrel breathes down their necks.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2
Finally found you traitors...

Marcus and Thaddeus remain quiet.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2
Where are the other two?

No answer.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2
Answer me or I will shoot.

The rifle moves to the back of Marcus' head.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2
I'll give you 'til five.

Rustling in the woods. The Bravian looks out into the woods for a moment.

He refocuses.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2
One.

Rustling again.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2
Two.

Marcus and Thaddeus remain silent. They've accepted their fates.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2

Three.

He cocks the rifle.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2

Four.

He places the finger on the trigger.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 2

Five. Time's up.

Marcus braces himself.

BANG!

The Bravian Soldier falls.

Anthony appears behind the soldier, revolver in hand.

Anthony walks over to the fallen soldier.

He shoots again. He replaces the revolver.

Anthony squats down to hide the soldier's likely destroyed head in his helmet.

Marcus relieved, slowly stands up.

MARCUS

Th-thank you.

Anthony picks up the rifle and inspects it.

MARCUS

Did you get the water?

Anthony passes over the canteen.

Marcus hands it to Thaddeus, allowing him to drink first.

Thaddeus drinks from it and hands it to Marcus who also takes a drink.

Thaddeus rises.

Then Marcus realizes.

MARCUS

(worried)

Where's Julius?

ANTHONY

They got him.

Marcus is confused.

ANTHONY

We need to get going; they're probably on my tail.

Anthony heads in a different direction.

THADDEUS

(feeling better)

That's the way to-

ANTHONY

The ocean? I know.

MARCUS

What happened to Tiberia?

ANTHONY

Julius got caught taking us this way. And you almost did too. It's not safe. Let's go.

MARCUS

But...

ANTHONY

Now!

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Julius stirs.

His wrists are tied together, behind his back around a tree.

He gets his bearings and realizes his situation. Julius struggles. His wrists are tied together too tightly.

He screams in frustration.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A little later, Julius remains tied to the same tree.

Athena stands nearby, listening intently to the story.

JULIUS

...And that's how I ended up here.

Athena studies Julius.

She unsheathes a knife and walks behind Julius.

She begins to cut the rope that ties Julius' wrists together.

ATHENA
You've suffered long enough,
Julius.

Julius' arms become free.

He rubs his wrists, massaging them.

ATHENA
I can take you to safety if you
come with me.

Julius hesitates and contemplates. He shakes his head.

JULIUS
I have to return to my men.

ATHENA
To do what?

JULIUS
To save Marcus.

She hands him the knife in sheath.

Julius attaches the knife and its sheath to his belt.

ATHENA
Go then. But focus on saving a
life, rather than taking one. It
is not right to do harm to any
man, no matter much he has made
you suffer.

Julius turns to contemplate, gazing on the path ahead. He turns back.

JULIUS
What did you say your name...?

But Athena has already disappeared.

Julius look out into the thicket and begins his return.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The three soldiers walk as Anthony leads the pack.

MARCUS
(with hope)
Do you think he's still alive?

ANTHONY
(half listening)
Who?

MARCUS
Julius.

ANTHONY
If God loved him, he died quickly.

Marcus becomes quiet.

They continue on.

ANTHONY
Thaddeus, bring me the rations.

Guilt and discomfort grow on Thaddeus' face. He stays quiet.

Anthony stops walking and turns around.

ANTHONY
Did you hear me?

Thaddeus, trying to hide his shame, walks over to Anthony.

ANTHONY
Hand over the pouch of rations.

Thaddeus takes out a small, empty pouch and hands it to Anthony.

Anthony inspects it, puzzled at first. Then he grows angry.

He tosses it.

ANTHONY
Goddamnit! This was supposed to
last the entire week!

He strikes Thaddeus' chest with the butt of the rifle, knocking Thaddeus down.

Marcus runs over to help Thaddeus up.

ANTHONY
(gravely)
If we die of starvation, you can
blame yourself.

Anthony kneels down and grabs the canteen of water from Marcus.

He takes a sip and returns to walking his path.

Anthony stops for a moment and looks back.

ANTHONY
You coming?

BEGIN MONTAGE

- The soldiers walk through thick woods
- Julius walks through a forest
- The soldiers pass by a lake
- Julius passes by the same lake
- They stop by a creek
- Julius rests at the same creek

Throughout the montage, Thaddeus' strength fades and the other two become more ragged in appearance. Julius follows their path.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Marcus, Anthony, and Thaddeus continue through the forest.

Thaddeus grows wearier as they continue. He holds his sides in pain.

Thaddeus collapses.

Marcus runs back to his comrade.

Thaddeus lies on the ground, breathing heavily, holding his stomach.

Anthony rushes over too.

ANTHONY

(annoyed)
What's wrong?

Thaddeus continues breathing heavily in pain.

MARCUS

Water. He needs water.

Marcus uncaps the canteen and pushes the canteen towards Thaddeus' lips.

Thaddeus pushes the canteen away, shaking his head.

ANTHONY

Can you move at all?

Thaddeus shakes his head furiously, writhing in pain.

Anthony looks behind his shoulder, calculating his next move.

ANTHONY

Marcus, pick him up.

Marcus helps Thaddeus up, putting Thaddeus' arm around his own shoulder while putting his own arm around Thaddeus' waist.

Thaddeus holds tightly to his own stomach.

They take a step and Thaddeus immediately lets go of Marcus to hold himself, falling to his knees.

MARCUS

Let's set up camp here and let him rest.

ANTHONY

We can't waste time. The longer we stay here, the greater chance of us getting caught. We wouldn't want another run-in, might not get so lucky next time.

Marcus kneels down to rub Thaddeus' back.

MARCUS

We can't just leave him behind. He'll die of dehydration or hunger.

If we just let him rest for a
while and splash some water on his
face--

Marcus grabs the canteen and is prepared to douse
Thaddeus' face when Anthony swoops in and grabs the
canteen.

ANTHONY

(angry)
Are you crazy? Don't waste any
more water on him.

Marcus stares at Anthony.

MARCUS

But he needs it.

Anthony walks over and grabs Marcus' collar and brings
him face-to-face.

ANTHONY

Listen here... the weak suffer
while the strong do what they
must. It's not pretty but that's
just the way life is. You're
strong, that means you have a duty
to survive.

Marcus pushes Anthony away.

MARCUS

The strong have to protect the
weak! It's an obligation.

ANTHONY

Alright then...

Anthony turns around with his rifle and pushes past
Marcus, and kicks Thaddeus onto his back.

He holds Thaddeus down with his boot. He points the rifle
at his head.

ANTHONY

(to Marcus)
Now, are you going to come with me
to the sea, or are you going to
jeopardize my survival, too?

Marcus freezes.

He looks down at Thaddeus, struggling with the pain. He
looks back at Anthony whose eyes are dead set.

ANTHONY

He's been dead weight this entire time. Drinks all the water and ate up all the rations. He's weak and you know it.

Anthony spits on Thaddeus.

MARCUS

I thought you were better than this...

Marcus looks down at Thaddeus with fallen eyes.

MARCUS

I'm sorry Thaddeus...

Anthony smirks. He relaxes the rifle.

Anthony crouches down and speaks condescendingly.

ANTHONY

Isn't this what you were talking about? You're only here for yourself? Let me know how that goes for you.

(to Marcus,
maintaining eye
contact with
Thaddeus)

Let's get going.

Anthony and Marcus begin walking, leaving Thaddeus behind.

Thaddeus realizes he is being ditched.

He lets out a painful scream, as if begging for them not to leave.

Marcus keeps walking, trying to ignore Thaddeus, guilt painted on his face.

Anthony, not disturbed, continues leading Marcus.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Julius continues trekking his way through the woods, making his way to the sea.

Occasionally, he stops and examines a place where branches are broken or where boot tracks mark the ground.

He stops to gaze at the dipping sun, realizing night will soon fall.

He takes a deep breath knowing the difficulty of what is to come and begins on his way.

EXT. ANTHONY'S CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Anthony and Marcus are around a campfire.

Anthony, with his pocketbook out, sketches in it.

Marcus, bothered by earlier events, plays his harmonica in a painful tune.

Anthony, finished with his pocketbook, places it beside him.

He grabs the rifle and hugs it close.

ANTHONY

We leave at dawn.

Marcus continues playing his harmonica poorly.

ANTHONY

I said we lave at dawn.

Marcus keeps playing his harmonica.

ANTHONY

(yelling)

We leave at dawn!

Marcus stops playing his harmonica for a moment.

MARCUS

(deadpan)

I heard you the first time.

Anthony, annoyed by Marcus' sudden attitude turns his back to the fire, hugs his rifle and closes his eyes.

Marcus continues playing his harmonica.

After a bit, Marcus stops playing. He looks over at Anthony

His breathing has become more stable... He's asleep.

He places his harmonica away and gets closer to the fire.

Marcus spots Anthony's little pocketbook.

He creeps up to Anthony, inching closer and closer to him.

Anthony begins to move in his sleep.

Marcus freezes and holds his breath.

He awaits Anthony's awakening....

Anthony returns to his normal breathing.

Marcus gently grabs the pocketbook and opens it.

He begins reading it by the light of the fire.

EXT. JULIUS' CAMPFIRE - CONTINUOUS

Julius has a little fire started in a clearing surrounded closely by trees.

He huddles close to it, warming his hands up with the fire, rocking back and forth to keep his body temperature up.

He hears leaves crunch from the woods.

Julius spins to look out into the dark abyss of the woods.

He begins hearing whisperings in the trees.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4(O.S.)
Is that a fire? Someone over
there?

Julius slips into the darkness in the opposite direction.

He scales a small tree and hides in its branches.

Two Bravian Soldiers enter the small clearing that Julius has made camp.

One of them has a rifle, similar to the one Anthony procured. The other a revolver and knife.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3
Someone must have made camp...

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4
But there's only a fire here, not
even a bag. You think they left?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

No, this fire looks fresh. They'll
be back.

The soldier begins circling around the clearing, looking
out into the woods, searching for someone.

The other soldier huddles up next to the fire, warming up
his hands.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

Come get warm while we wait.

The rifle-bearing soldiers comes down to the fire and
sets his gun down. He also warms himself up.

Julius stays still, trying not to give away his position
in the tree.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

Where do you think they're headed
off to?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

Probably the border... they'd be
idiots to head to the shore. All
of the Nasirian fleet is stationed
right off the coast.

Julius overhears this.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

Maybe they went to the other side
of the mountains. That's where I'd
go.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

What do you mean?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

You know, if I were in their
shoes. If I was on the run.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

(skeptically)
What are you saying? Have you
thought about abandoni-

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

(defensive)
No, no of course not.

His eyes cast aside as if to suggest otherwise.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3
You're talking about treason. Just
thinking about it could get you a
death sentence.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4
I would never! I was ... I'm just
making conversation.

He pauses.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4
Why do you think they left?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3
Because they don't have any sense
of honor. They're cowards.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4
No, think about it. Soldiers don't
abandon their country because of a
lack of morals.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3
Then what?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4
Maybe they know something we
don't. Something about this damn
war--

A branch snaps.

The soldiers become alert. They look around, searching
for the source of the sound.

Julius freezes.

The soldier with the rifle grabs his weapon and stands
up. He circles around the clearing.

He begins moving towards Julius' direction.

Julius closes his eyes and holds his breath.

The soldier gets closer and closer to Julius.

The soldier looks to his left and right. He glances up.
He spots Julius. He briefly fumbles with his rifle; he
aims it at Julius.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3
Come down from there. Slowly.

Julius slowly begins to lower himself out of the tree.

As he is coming down, he jumps straight at the soldiers, knocking the rifle out of his hands.

The two roll together on the ground, grappling.

After a moment, however, the other soldier has retrieved the rifle and points it at Julius' head. Julius stops fighting.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

Arms up! Where I can see them.

He raises his arms slowly.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

Now come to the fire.

Julius, with his arms up, slowly gets up and walks towards the fire.

The soldier follows him with his rifle pointed at his back.

Soldier 3, who has recovered and brushed himself off, walks over to the fire as well. Soldier 4 gives him the gun back.

Soldier 3 then kicks the back of Julius' knees, forcing Julius down.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

Hands behind your head. Don't try anything smart.

The other soldier inspects Julius. He squats down to get to Julius' level.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

He's one of the ones that ran away! Julius, right?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

Where are the others?

Julius keeps his down. No answer.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

Is there a point to bringing him back alive?

The other soldier contemplates.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

He would be more useful alive,
right?

JULIUS

What do you want?

The tougher soldier kicks him in the back. Julius falls
onto the ground.

Julius rolls onto his back to look at his enemies who
close in on him like scavengers with their weapons out.

Julius squirms away on the ground.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

Your escape left quite an
impression. The General would love
to see you again... let's tie'm
up.

JULIUS

Wait!

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

Save your breath.

JULIUS

I did nothing wrong. I was just
trying to survive.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 4

(shaking his head)

What happened to you Julius? You
were the best of us... you gave so
much to Bravia.

JULIUS

I realized no soldier is getting
out alive. Don't you understand
how pointless this has been?

Julius looks directly at Soldier 4. He's the easier one.

JULIUS

You. How many of your brothers
have you seen die in combat? How
many have you killed? Do you even
know?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

That's enough.

JULIUS

This war is going to kill us all eventually. And for what?

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

I said that's enough!

JULIUS

You can call me a traitor or a deserter, but I did this trying to save my brothers. Isn't that something we all swore by?

This hits a nerve with the softer soldier. He lowers his gun off Julius, in deep thought. His eyes glance at his partner.

The soldier with the rifle shifts his weapon at his fellow.

BRAVIAN SOLDIER 3

Don't you dare.

The soldier without the rifle acts quickly and pushes the barrel of the rifle away.

He pushes his partner down, drawing his gun.

They begin to tussle on the ground, keeping the revolver between them.

Julius uses this opportunity to run deep into the woods, leaving the soldiers to fight amongst themselves.

EXT. ANTHONY'S CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Anthony is still asleep as Marcus finishes going through the sketchbook.

Sketches of different things: trees, houses, mountains, farm animals, a girl.

Marcus closes the pocketbook and places it back where it was.

He wearily moves back to his original spot and stares deeply into the fire.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. ANTHONY'S CAMPFIRE - DAY

Sunrise.

Marcus sits with his head slumped forward. He finally fell asleep.

Anthony, at the light, slowly wakes up. He gathers his bearings.

ANTHONY

Get up!

A light sleeper, Marcus wakes up.

Anthony looks around. He grabs the canteen and drinks some water.

ANTHONY

We're almost out.

Anthony checks around to make sure his sketchbook is safe.

Anthony rises and readies himself.

He looks over at Marcus.

ANTHONY

Let's get going.

Marcus, groggy, rises slowly and follows.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Julius is seen still trekking through the woods. He moves have become slower; he's tired.

Up ahead he spots a body lying amidst the brush and he runs over to it, slowing down and cautiously approaching as he gets closer.

The body is on its stomach; its face hidden.

Julius checks for a pulse and finds none. The look of growing despair on Julius' face tells us he knows its Thaddeus.

Julius gently turns the body over and reveals that it is indeed Thaddeus, his mouth covered in blood from where he coughed it up. He clearly suffered.

Julius also notes a trail of displaced brush, where Thaddeus tried to crawl after Marcus and Anthony.

Sadness overcomes Julius.

He begins digging into the cold dirt with his bare hands.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Julius digs a shallow grave for Thaddeus.

He drags him in and begins to cover him up.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

On his knees, Julius makes a quick prayer over the grave.

His mind briefly flashes back on thoughts of Thaddeus from the campfire.

Then suddenly he's up and sprinting off into the woods with renewed determination.

EXT. ROCKY CREEK - DAY

Marcus and Anthony comes across a larger creek with a larger body of water.

Marcus walks over to the water's edge and begins to fill up the canteen.

ANTHONY

You stay here. I'm going to go
hunt for some food.

Marcus nods.

ANTHONY

You think you'll be all right
here?

Marcus nods again as he rests against the rocks.

Anthony leaves into the woods.

Marcus takes a sip from the canteen.

He puts it aside and brings out his harmonica.

He begins playing music, out of tune.

We hear footsteps.

Marcus stops playing his harmonica. His eyes grow warm.

We pull back... he looks warmly on... Julius!

Julius offers a tired, but triumphant smile.

Marcus turns worried.

We pull back again to find... Anthony standing right behind Julius. He puts the rifle to his head.

ANTHONY

(low-voiced)

I should have killed you.

Julius raises his hands slowly in surrender and laughs bitterly.

JULIUS

This is getting kind of old if you ask me.

Anthony shoves him with the barrel on the gun.

ANTHONY

On your knees!

JULIUS

I'm not here to cause any trouble.

ANTHONY

Marcus, They must sent him to bring us back.

Marcus initial happy reactions grows very cold.

JULIUS

It's not true!

ANTHONY

Shut up!

Anthony kicks Julius down.

ANTHONY

Look at him. He's probably been tortured. They've turned him against us.

JULIUS
Marcus, he's lying.

With the rifle trained on Julius, Anthony brings out his revolver.

He tosses it towards Marcus.

ANTHONY
I saw you get caught. The only
reason they'd let you live is if
you cut a deal...

Marcus slowly gets up and grabs the revolver.

ANTHONY
... to deliver us as prisoners

JULIUS
It's not true! He knocked me out
and left me for dead.

Marcus begins circling around and cocks the gun, keeping aim at Julius.

ANTHONY
Your life means nothing to him but
his own freedom.

JULIUS
There's a Nasirian fleet waiting
at the shore --

Anthony digs the rifle into Julius' back to shut him up.

Anthony's eyes meets Marcus gaze; his aim has shifted towards Anthony.

ANTHONY
What are you doing?

MARCUS
Let him go.

ANTHONY
I thought we were on the same
side.

MARCUS
Only if you let him live.

Anthony hesitates and weighs his options.

ANTHONY

Alright, fine.

He steps back from Julius, lowering his gun for a moment but then aims at Marcus.

Marcus is still aiming at Anthony.

ANTHONY

Drop the gun.

Marcus begins lowering the gun.

Still on the ground,

JULIUS

Marcus, don't!

BANG!

Anthony shoots and hits Marcus in the leg.

Marcus drops and screams in pain.

Julius jump at Anthony, but Anthony fends him off with the rifle.

He runs over to the fallen Marcus and takes back the revolver. Anthony places his boot over Marcus' head.

Looks up and sees Julius coming back at him.

He raises his rifle to keep him at bay.

Julius stops and surrenders. Anthony is breathing raggedly.

ANTHONY

This was supposed to be an easy mission... all I had to do was deliver one soldier to the Nasirians... two would have been bonus... Julius, you're going to carry this crippled kid all the way to the shore and I don't want to hear a single sound from either of you. Got it?

Julius nods slowly.

ANTHONY

(to Marcus)
Got it?!

Marcus tries to nod his head under Anthony's boot.

ANTHONY

Good. Now wrap up his leg.

Anthony gets off of Marcus and walks towards the woods.

Julius rushes over to check on Marcus. He puts him in his arms.

JULIUS

I'm sorry...

BANG!

Anthony has his rifle by his side and his pistol in his hand, warm from a shot.

ANTHONY

What did I say about talking?!

Julius looks back at Marcus.

Marcus looks at him warmly, but knowing what his fate is.

Anthony grows impatient.

ANTHONY

Let's get going! We're losing daylight.

EXT. SHORELINE WOODS - DAY

Julius walks with Marcus' arm around his shoulder, his own around Marcus. Marcus limps

His leg has a bloodied bandage around it.

Behind them, Anthony pushes gently with a rifle pointing at them.

Anthony contains his excitement.

ANTHONY

We're almost there.

They get closer and closer to the shore.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

They continue walking, now on a mixture of vegetation and sand.

Anthony stays behind, the rifle pushing Julius and Marcus forward.

The get closer and closer to the water.

The beach. The ocean. It's empty.

As they get closer, Anthony lowers his rifle.

He drags his feet in front of Julius and Marcus towards the water.

He looks out at the sea.

His eyes are lost.

His hands loosens around the rifle. He takes a few more steps out. He's exhausted and feels total defeat.

ANTHONY
(to himself)
Where are they..?

Marcus and Julius share a look.

Julius lets go of Marcus, forcing him to find his own strength to stand.

Julius charges at Anthony, pushing him further towards the water. Anthony's rifle drops.

Anthony, spins around to pull out his revolver. He quickly cocks and aims at Julius.

Marcus, with his little strength, tackles the revolver out of Anthony's hand.

Julius uses this moment of disorientation to drag Anthony closer to the water.

They begin wrestling and roll down into the water.

Julius chokes Anthony face down, letting the waves drown him.

Anthony spits and chokes.

Anthony fights through the freezing water, pushing Julius away and then grabbing him.

He holds him down, allowing the waves to wash over him.

Anthony looks demented.

Immersed in water, Julius unleashes his knife and slices at Anthony.

Anthony dodges and jumps off Julius. He takes some steps back towards the beach, reorientating himself.

Julius finds his way up, using the knife to keep Anthony at bay.

He lunges at Anthony, who sidesteps and catches Julius' wrist.

They struggle as Julius tires to maneuver the blade into Anthony.

Anthony kicks at the back of Julius' knees, causing him to fall towards the water and releasing his tight grip on the knife.

Anthony scoops up the knife and flips it and is ready to stab.

Anthony lunges down at Julius, staying up top of him.

With his back to the treeline, Anthony STABS Julius.

Julius locks eyes with Anthony's. He flashes a smile.

JULIUS

(whispering)

May God have mercy on you.

This enrages Anthony, who begins to stab Julius repeatedly.

MARCUS (O.S.)

Stop!

Anthony ceases to stab Julius.

Marcus, standing with his weight on one leg, holds Anthony's revolver trained at him.

MARCUS

(yelling)

Get up! Hands above your head!

Anthony rises off of Julius.

The knife slips from his hands as he raises his hands.

MARCUS

(yelling)

Turn around!

Anthony complies and turns towards Marcus. He sees how scared Marcus is.

Marcus is trembling.

ANTHONY

Have you ever shot someone before?

Marcus doesn't answer. He nervously keeps the gun trained on Anthony.

ANTHONY

Do you think you could live with
the guilt of taking a life? Even
if it is mine?

Marcus shaken, musters up whatever confidence he has.

MARCUS

(shakily)

You deserve to die.

ANTHONY

Even if you shoot me, my men will
be here soon enough. You won't get
far in your condition. The ships
will be here soon.

Anthony, with his hands up, step-by-step, begins moving towards Marcus.

ANTHONY

Put the gun down Marcus.

Anthony edges more towards him.

MARCUS

Don't come any closer... I will
shoot.

Marcus holds the gun shakily.

Anthony continues his wary pace, inching closer and closer in the sand. He's just as tired.

ANTHONY

I promise you, I will make sure
you are treated fairly as a
prisoner.

Anthony gets exceedingly closer and closer to Marcus. Marcus' confidence fades.

Anthony looks at Marcus, eye-to-eye.

ANTHONY

Put the gun down. You're not a
hero.

Marcus' eyes fall. He lowers the revolver in defeat.

His eyes dart over Anthony's shoulders to where Julius'
body lies.

MARCUS

(choking up)
This is all my fault.

Marcus quickly puts the revolver to his head.

And pulls the trigger.

Marcus falls.

Anthony stares at Marcus' dead body.

ANTHONY

We're all at fault here, Marcus.

Anthony sighs and retrieves his revolver.

He walks over to the shore and sits down and stares at
the horizon.

The waves crash as he keeps his consistent gaze out on
the sea.

JULIUS (V.O.)

I have to return to my men.

ATHENA (V.O.)

To do what?

JULIUS (V.O.)

To save Marcus.

FLASHBACK

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Julius and Athena stand in a familiar clearing where
Julius has just been released by Athena.

ATHENA

Humans live for only so long...
When a man is terrible and knows
only terrible thoughts, he will
suffer for as long as he lives.

Julius ponders on this for a moment.

ATHENA

If you come with me, you will
always be safe.

He stares in deep thought before he shakes his head.

JULIUS

I may die trying to save Marcus,
but at least I will die with
dignity.

ATHENA

(coy)
Traitors still have dignity?

Julius hesitates.

JULIUS

I know what I've done seems
wrong...

Athena nods understandingly.

JULIUS

...But I never thought it was good
idea to live my life based on what
others thought.

ATHENA

Go then. But focus on saving a
life, rather than taking one; it
is not right to do harm to any
man, no matter much he has made
you suffer.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Julius and Marcus lay dead.

Anthony gazes at the horizon, the water coming up to him
and receding back into the ocean.

ATHENA (V.O.)

In reaching for the beautiful
there is beauty, yet also in
suffering, whatever it is that one
suffers.

The sun sets.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD

The waves can be heard hitting the shore as credits roll.