

RIVER CITY

by

Patricia L. Walsh

adapted from the Patricia L. Walsh memoir
RIVER CITY a nurse's year in Vietnam

Every war has a love story. This is Vietnam's.

Logline: A young nurse, opposed to the war, volunteers for Vietnam to care for civilian casualties, never expecting to fall in love with a gung-ho Marine, or the Tet Offensive.

The Other Angels medical team documentary
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FADE IN:

EXT. L.A. FREEWAY, FEBRUARY 1967 - DAY

PAT WALSH (24), long, brunette hair, drives '67 Mustang convertible, top down, along busy freeway. Taps wheel in time to MAMAS AND PAPAS SINGING "MONDAY MONDAY" on RADIO.

Traffic slows, she pulls beside VW bus with MAKE LOVE NOT WAR stickers and flower decals. RADIO of the longhaired occupants plays same song and they sing along with gusto. They flash peace sign. Pat smiles and flashes back.

INT. L.A. HOSPITAL O.R. LOUNGE - DAY

Several nurses in lounge. Pat, in surgery garb, smoking while watching morning news show on T.V. O.R. NURSE with clipboard comes to door. The other nurses start to exit.

O.R. NURSE

Pat, they need an anesthetist in room four. Nose job, followed by hair plugs.

PAT (mutters)

Real life and death stuff I'm doing here.

Pat jams out cigarette, starts to get up. Suddenly on T.V. terrified Vietnamese children. EXPLOSIONS and BLACK SMOKE of napalm in b.g. as they run SCREAMING to older sister, about twelve, who frantically looks for cover, SHOUTING as she herds them into ditch. Pat transfixed by scene.

T.V. ANNOUNCER

Intense action near Phu Bai as American and Viet Cong forces fight for domination of ...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WALSH HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT (BLACK & WHITE)

YOUNG PAT (12) gathering five frightened younger siblings. MOTHER and FATHER shouting and dishes breaking O.S.

MOTHER (O.S.)

This is the last night you'll come home drunk!

FATHER (O.S.)

If I'm coming home to you, I'm coming home drunk!

YOUNG PAT
 (to children)
 Hurry. Bring the blankets.

Children piling out of bed in night clothes. Pat carries toddler as they scramble downstairs.

EXT. WALSH BACKYARD - NIGHT (BLACK & WHITE)

Young Pat and siblings run for large barn in distance, illuminated by yard light.

SMASH CUT

INT. L.A. HOSPITAL O.R. LOUNGE - DAY

INTERCOM
 Miss Walsh, surgeon ready.

Pat startled back to present. She gets up, sees LA TIMES on table with headline: AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RECRUITING DOCTORS AND NURSES. She folds paper and leaves with it under arm.

INT. L.A. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Pat helping O.R. nurse move MALE PATIENT to stretcher. He touches dressings on his head, speaking in medicated slur.

MALE PATIENT
 I can't wait to feel real hair up there. You don't know how I've suffered.

Pat rolls eyes above surgical mask.

INT. PAT'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sixties decor. Glass doors show pool where singles drink, barbeque and flirt. Pat having drink with ROOMMATE.

ROOMMATE (shocked)
 You joined the military?

PAT
 State Department. I'll be taking care of wounded Vietnamese civilians.

ROOMMATE
 Get real.

Pat waves at party scene outside glass doors.

PAT
For Christ's sake, we're frying
kids on one side of the world and
partying on the other.

ROOMMATE
But signing up for Nam? That's
crazy, man.

Pat focused on partiers.

PAT
Can't be any worse than this.

INT. AIR AMERICA PLANE IN-FLIGHT, VIETNAM - DAY

Pat, dripping perspiration, fingers small gold cross
around neck. Only American in small, crowded aircraft.
Vietnamese clutch baskets and half-naked children.

Rough flight, VIETNAMESE MOAN, hold dirty rags to mouths.
CHILDREN CRY, SOUNDS OF RETCHING. Woman next to Pat
holds basket of SQUAWKING DUCKLINGS.

EXT. DANANG AIR BASE, VIETNAM - DAY

Jets overhead. Pat with two bags outside shabby DANANG
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES building. Military come and go.
Battered white van squeals up. SHELLY (28), voluptuous blond
hops out in O.R. gown with cutoff sleeves, rubber flip-flops.

SHELLY (smiling)
Hi, sorry I'm late. Shelly
Phillips, anesthesia. Welcome
to River City.

She grabs one of Pat's bags. There is a LOUD EXPLOSION in
b.g. and Pat jumps. Shelly waves it off.

SHELLY (cont'd)
How was the hop from Saigon?

PAT
Ever sit next to airsick ducks?
I think they shit themselves to
death.

Shelly laughs, helps get bags into van, jumps behind wheel.

SHELLY

Casper International Airlines
hauls the locals around to promote
goodwill. They never travel
without their critters.

PAT

Casper International Airlines?

SHELLY

C.I.A. runs Air America. They
have their fingers in everything
over here. That's why it's all so
fucked up.

EXT. DANANG DIRT ROAD - DAY

Van passing shacks made of tin, cardboard and flattened
American beer cans. Shelly drives fast, swerving around
people and potholes.

EXT. DANANG CITY STREET - DAY

Villas with ornate balconies and peeling paint, sandbags
piled against walls, military vehicles in courtyard.
Street filled with bicycles, pedicabs, jeeps, motorcycles,
peasants pulling carts filled with produce.

Troop truck ahead, G.I.s in the back HOLLER and WHISTLE.

G.I.#1

Hey, round-eyes!

SHELLY (leaning out window)

Hi fellas! Nice day for a war!

Van moves between wide river and open-air market. Plucked
chickens hang by necks, old women squat next to stacks of
pilfered M16s, grenades, C-rations and Sunkist oranges.

SHELLY

Black market sells what they
swipe from Americans, including
our medical supplies.

Van stops at bamboo structure built out over river.

SHELLY (cont'd)

The Bamboo Hut, our escape from
the mule-shit pie we work in.

INT. BAMBOO HUT - DAY

Pat and Shelly enter room with mismatched tables and chairs. Open veranda over river. Elderly PROPRIETOR hurries to pull chairs out next to railing.

SHELLY
Hai, Coca Cola.

PROPRIETOR
Duc, duc. Hai Coca Cola.

He bows and shuffles toward back room.

SHELLY (to Pat)
Coke and beer are the only safe things to drink off the local economy.

Proprietor returns with Cokes, bows, takes Shelly's money.

SHELLY
Cam An, Ong.

PAT
Washington didn't give me language training. Said you needed me now.

Shelly shrugs and takes a long drink.

SHELLY
We have an interpreter. When the little bastard bothers to show up.

Pat looks to wide, gentle river.

PAT
It's pretty.

SHELLY
Full of rats and sewage. Drink up. You'll need your strength when you see the pan of worms we call a hospital.

PAT
Do you work for A.I.D.?

SHELLY
We all work for Uncle Sam, even the Vietnamese. I signed up when my fiance got sent over. Tom's a doc at Navy Hospital.

PAT
Oh.

SHELLY

And what form of dementia is responsible for you volunteering?

PAT

I guess I got tired of watching people die on T.V.

SHELLY

So you came to watch in person?

EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL COURTYARD - DAY

Van pulls up to walled off compound with sign AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CIVILIAN HOSPITAL. A.I.D. handshake logo and Vietnamese writing beneath.

Old Vietnamese man swings gate open. Large, dirt courtyard jammed with patients in bloody dressings, filthy plaster casts, many missing limbs. Dogs, chickens, ducks mingle with people. Laundry hangs from lines strung everywhere.

Hospital dilapidated French-colonial with covered verandas lined with patients. More patients in shacks around complex. Vietnamese MUSIC on outdoor speaker. ARTILLERY in b.g.

SHELLY

Vietnam's Mayo Clinic.

Van moves slowly through crowd. Pat looks dazed.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Pat and Shelly walking down hallway when MR. HAI (25), tiny, Vietnamese man, roars by on motorbike spewing fumes.

SHELLY (cont'd)

Our interpreter, Mr. Hai. He parks it inside so it won't get stolen.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL O.R. - DAY

Pat in O.R. garb enters surgery suite with Shelly. Hallway contains concrete sink and overflowing garbage can. Shelly leads Pat into O.R. whose equipment is all antique. American nurse JEAN (27), all business, swats flies.

SHELLY (to Pat)

Jean's our O.R. supervisor.

PAT

Hi, Pat Walsh.

JEAN

Welcome aboard.

Jean hands Shelly yellow streamer, climbs onto O.R. table and trades one covered with flies for new one Shelly holds up. Jean jumps down while Pat looks at open windows and flies crawling over bloody floor.

PAT

Why are the windows open?

JEAN

Air conditioning.

A disbelieving Pat follows Shelly back to central hallway. Shelly drops fly streamer into now empty trash can. African American nurse KAREN (26), mopping floor.

SHELLY

Karen, our new anesthetist, Pat.

KAREN (smiling)

Glad to have you.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Shelly and Pat move along screened porch where dozens of patients squat. DOCTOR FITCH (38), a man in baggy cotton pants, hurries by. He looks like disciple with long hair and flowing beard.

SHELLY

Doctor Fitch, the protoplasm in charge 'til Washington finds someone with a brain.

PAT

Is he a surgeon?

SHELLY

Nobody knows, he hasn't done enough to give it away.

Pat and Shelly encounter American G.I.s in muddy combat clothes with M16s slung over shoulders. They carry Vietnamese casualties with bones jutting from torn flesh.

SHELLY

Time to play tug of war with God.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL TRIAGE - DAY

Room has sparse equipment and sawhorses to support field stretchers. Casualties MOAN AND CRY as Shelly puts tourniquets on severed limbs and starts I.V.s.

Pat in doorway staring at casualties. Jean, from behind, physically moves her aside.

JEAN

Get to work or get out of the way.

Jean counts patients and leaves. Pat moves into triage. JIM (34), deeply tanned and muscular American surgeon, enters in O.R. scrubs with the sleeves cut off and pantlegs chopped off above the knees. He wears combat boots.

JIM

Who's ready to go?

Shelly points to young boy Jim picks up and exits. Another surgeon looks in and heads for the O.R. Shelly dips needle in antiseptic and starts an I.V.

PAT

You're reusing needles?

SHELLY

Until Saigon sends more. We've been out for days.

Pat distastefully dips a needle in antiseptic and starts I.V. Vietnamese lab tech arrives with arms filled with bags of O positive blood. Pat helps Shelly start several on patients. Pat suddenly stops hanging blood.

PAT

This blood is out of date.

SHELLY

Navy Hospital gives us the stuff too old for our G.I.s.

PAT

But that causes jaundice.

SHELLY

So what? They're yellow anyway.

PAT (offended)

Forgive me if I fail to see the humor.

Shelly stops working and faces Pat.

SHELLY

Listen, honey, you may have some bleeding heart fantasy of saving the world, but I came here because of Tom. Period.

(beat)

I do the best I can and indulge in some gallows humor to be able to face this pus pocket every day.

Pat, chagrined, hangs blood and moves to next patient.

SHELLY

(continuing)

Roll them over to look for entry and exit wounds. Get an X-ray to locate projectiles for surgeons.

Shelly heads for door.

SHELLY

(continuing)

I'll go back to the O.R. and help my anesthesia students. You stay here and keep the blood and I.V.s running.

PAT (scared)

But who goes to the O.R. first?

SHELLY

The most salvageable. The ones you think won't make it go last.

PAT

I can't make that decision.

SHELLY

Triage is the number saved, not the person.

(beat)

Remember, we didn't shoot them.

Shelly exits and Pat gets back to work. Shortly, Mr. Hai enters triage in scrubs, clicking long nail on small finger of left hand. Manner aloof.

MR. HAI (to Pat)

Co Shelly send me interpret.

PAT

Right now, I need an extra pair of hands to help me carry stretchers to X-ray and the O.R.

MR. HAI

Call if you need interpreter.

Pat hurries after him as he exits triage.

PAT

Hey, you're paid to work and that means whatever needs to be done!

Mr. Hai smiles coolly, clicking his claw.

MR. HAI

I interpret.

PAT

These are your people! Why wouldn't you want to help them!

MR. HAI

We live five thousand year, many war. Take care of family. Your country not two hundred year. Baby country. Never survive.

He walks away before Pat can respond. Series of quick cuts of Pat working on patients and them being hauled out by janitors as room gradually empties. DAN COWAN (25), tall, handsome Marine lieutenant, enters carrying a small GIRL.

DAN

Excuse me, ma'am. She's bleeding really bad.

Pat points to an empty stretcher on floor. Girl cries in pain and holds bloody abdomen.

GIRL

Dao quadi! Dao quadi!

Dan kneels protectively near child as Pat examines wound and quickly starts IV.

PAT

Shrapnel.

DAN

Can you save her?

PAT

I'll get her to the O.R. next.

RON (36), pale and overweight American surgeon, enters in scrubs like Jim's, wiping perspiring brow.

RON
 My tongue feels like beef jerky.
 Do we have any potable water?

DAN (exiting)
 We've got a spare jerry can in
 the truck.

Pat starts blood on girl.

PAT
 This one's next. Maybe shrapnel.

Dan returns with jerry can and tin cup. Ron takes quick
 drink, carries girl out. Pat wipes perspiring face.

DAN (to Pat)
 Would you like a drink?

PAT
 Sure, thanks.

Dan removes helmet, revealing short, Ivy League haircut,
 not Marine whitewall. Fills tin cup. Pat drinks, grimaces.

DAN
 We add Kool-Aid to kill the taste
 of chlorine tablets. I like grape.
 (beat)
 Do you think she'll make it?

PAT
 Probably.

DAN (smiles)
 Great. Thank you.

TRUCK ENGINE starts in b.g. and Dan exits.

EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL E.R. RECEIVING PLATFORM - DAY

Pat and Shelly having cigarette, sweaty scrubs spattered
 with blood. Pat hesitant as she speaks.

PAT
 Shelly, did Americans injure those
 patients they brought in?

SHELLY
 We don't ask. And they don't ask
 about who we give the blood to
 that they've donated.

SHELLY (cont'd)
 At least our guys bring the
 wounded in. The other side never
 does.

They smoke, watching boy ride water buffalo in rice paddy.

PAT
 Mr. Hai refused to help in triage.

SHELLY
 The little V.C. spends his time
 clicking that claw he flaunts to
 show he's not a peasant.

Shelly grinds out cigarette butt under foot.

SHELLY (cont'd)
 Need to make a run to Navy
 Hospital so we can open up shop
 tomorrow. C'mon, I'll teach you
 how to cumshaw.

Shelly and Pat head for van.

PAT
 What's cumshaw?

SHELLY
 Smile and beg. It's the only way
 we keep this joint running.

EXT. STREETS OF DANANG - DAY

Van headed out of town, Shelly driving, windows down.

PAT
 Isn't the U.S. government
 providing our supplies?

SHELLY
 A.I.D.'s spending billions here.
 But they let the Vietnamese unload
 supply planes. A lot goes straight
 to the black market.

PAT
 So why don't we unload the planes?

SHELLY
 Washington says that might make us
 look like we don't trust the
 Vietnamese. As it is we just look
 stupid.

EXT. OUTSIDE CITY - DAY

Van crossing high wooden bridge spanning river. American sentries FIRE ROUNDS at water. Shelly speaks above shots.

SHELLY

Enemy tries to blow up the bridge with explosives in tree branches and other crap they float down the river. Sentries shoot at it so it detonates before reaching us ... hopefully.

Pat relieved when they reach other side. Shelly turns off main road, approaches cluster of shacks. Scantily clothed children wander, WHORES in western clothing lean against shacks. They see van and run towards it flapping dresses.

WHORES

Boom-boom G.I.! Numbah one boom-boom. Ten dollah!

Two run into road, forcing Shelly to hit brakes. When they see van occupied by women, expressions turn to scorn.

WHORES (cont'd)

Numbah ten! No G.I.!

SHELLY

Sorry, ladies.
(to Pat)
Cabbage Patch, the local
whorehouse.

Van moves on, SOPHIE, toothless old woman, flaps dress.

SOPHIE

You lika boom-boom? Numbah one virgin.

SHELLY

Sophie, their talking billboard.

PAT

God. Who'd screw that?

SHELLY

Guys have been killed by grenades lobbed into those shacks while getting their jollies.

PAT

Talk about the earth moving.

Shelly looks at smiling Pat and laughs.

PAT (cont'd)
Who're all the kids?

SHELLY
By-product of the boom-boom
business.

Pat's smile disappears.

EXT. NAVY HOSPITAL - DAY

Van pulls through guarded gates with NAVY HOSPITAL over top. Large red crosses on each quanset building. Shelly stops abruptly when med-evac helicopter lands at building.

Chopper's blades rotate as corpsmen run to unload AMERICAN CASUALTIES. They are horribly wounded and CRY OUT.

AMERICAN CASUALTIES
Mama help me! Medic! Medic!

Shelly holds up hands to shield face from sand pelting van as she rolls up window. Pat staring, stunned by gruesome sight. Chopper departs. Shelly turns van back toward gates.

SHELLY
Bad timing. Let's try the Green
Beret camp out by Marble Mountain.

INT. GREEN BERET MARBLE MOUNTAIN CAMP - DAY

Shelly leans across counter in supply hut talking to pimply-faced SUPPLY CORPORAL (19). Pat observes while RADIO PLAYS Green, Green Grass of Home in b.g.

SHELLY
We need needles the most. We've
used ours so much they're duller
than Westmoreland's speeches.

SUPPLY CORPORAL
Special Forces always happy to
help civilian casualties, ma'am.

Supply corporal eyes Shelly's fine bosom resting on counter as he sets boxes of needles on it.

SHELLY
I could maybe arrange a beach
party with our nurses when the
action lets up.

Supply corporal lifts several more boxes to counter.

SUPPLY CORPORAL
Fuckin' A! Need anything else?

EXT. DANANG - EVENING

Shelly and Pat drive through Danang with back of van full of medical supplies. Shelly stops at old villa where trees and flowering vines decorate courtyard instead of sandbags.

SHELLY
Home sweet hootch.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - EVENING

Pat and Shelly carry supplies into second floor spacious room. Large fans rotate on high ceiling and gekkos skitter over peeling walls. Seedy but homey.

Vietnamese woman TIEN (33), quietly humble, sets table in front of French doors leading to balcony. Small monkey rides fan above table, CHATTERING.

SHELLY (to Pat)
We chip in to pay Tien to do our laundry, clean, shop and cook. She understands English but won't speak it.

Tien smiles, bowing to Pat.

TIEN
Chao Co.

PAT (bowing)
Chao Co.

Shelly is pouring ice tea and hands one to Pat.

SHELLY
She's married so you call her Ba. But with the wrong inflection you could be calling her a cow.

Jean, Karen and MARGARET (26) enter from various rooms. Margaret, pretty but with a deeply scarred cheek, has a pronounced British accent. She looks up at monkey on fan.

MARGARET (to Shelly)
Get that wretched beast out of here.

SHELLY (holding up arms)
Come to Mama, Bac Si.

Monkey jumps to Shelly and she puts it on balcony. Tien serves meal. Pat samples skeptically and brightens.

PAT

This is wonderful.

KAREN

She used to work for the French.

MARGARET

Tien and their bread are the only good things the Frogs left behind.

SHELLY

She boils our water and soaks food from the marketplace in Chlorox. Cuts our Ho Chi Minh's revenge to only once a week.

PAT (looking around)

I like this place.

SHELLY

We roast in the hot season and freeze during monsoon. But it's a lot better than the troops have.

JEAN (to Pat)

You can order an electric blanket to keep you warm during monsoon.

(beat)

When the power's on.

MARGARET (to Jean)

I thought your pilot friend did that.

JEAN

Jealous?

PAT

Order a blanket from where?

KAREN

Sears. They'll ship anything but bathtubs. We've tried.

SHELLY

When we don't have water we use the South China Sea to bathe. It's nice except for sea snakes.

Pat shudders.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - NIGHT

Shelly shows Pat to room with bed, dresser, and gekkos on walls and ceiling. Open door leads to bathroom with ancient fixtures. Shelly pulls chain. Nothing happens.

SHELLY

I'll get someone to fix it.

Shelly, in bedroom, indicates crisscrossed taped windows.

SHELLY (cont'd)

Tape keeps glass from flying if we take a close hit. Things heat up at night when the V.C. crawl out of their tunnels. Get under your mattress and wait it out.

Washington won't give us bunkers, might make us look scared.

Strange light turns sky orange.

SHELLY (cont'd)

Flares are shot up to light enemy positions in firefights.

Shelly exits. Pat sits on bed and nervously lights cigarette. When ARTILLERY THUNDERS she drops cigarette and crawls under mattress. Shelly enters.

SHELLY (cont'd)

You can use the john in ...

Shelly looks around, then sees Pat beneath mattress. Pat slides out sheepishly.

PAT

How do you know when ...

SHELLY

If it starts out loud and gets quieter it's outgoing fired by our side. Quiet to loud, it's incoming. Hit the deck.

WINDOWS RATTLE from sequence of blasts, which grow quieter.

SHELLY (cont'd)

Outgoing.

INT. HOSPITAL BURN WARD - DAY

Pat and Shelly enter crowded ward, many children. Patients gaze from bandaged red and purple faces.

Silver-haired, dignified, American nurse RUTH (52) works with French-Vietnamese nun SISTER FRANCOISE (30).

SHELLY (quietly)
Burn ward. Napalm.

Pat puts hand over nose. Ruth approaches and she quickly removes it.

SHELLY (cont'd)
Ruth, this is Pat, our new
anesthetist.

RUTH
Hello, Pat.

Ruth indicates a small child.

RUTH (cont'd)
I can't get an I.V. in.

Pat quickly starts an I.V. in the child's ankle.

RUTH
Thank you.

PAT
Any time.

Shelly waves at Sister Francoise, who approaches them.

SHELLY (to Pat)
Sister Francois's from an
orphanage out by the beach. She
rounds up our stray kids and helps
Ruth when she can.

SISTER FRANCOISE (bowing)
Happy to meet, Co Pat.

PAT (bowing awkwardly)
Happy to meet you, Sister.

EXT. HOSPITAL VERANDA - DAY

Pat and Shelly exiting burn ward.

RUTH (O.S.)
Careful of my screen-door.

Shelly closes door carefully and turns to Pat.

SHELLY
Ruth got Navy Seabees to build it.
The flies were awful before.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL O.R. - DAY

SHELLY

The only anesthetic we have is ether
left over from the French.

PAT

Ether. That's from the dark ages.

SHELLY

We use spinals on any injury below
the waist to save on oxygen we
scrounge at the airbase from their
supply for high altitude flying.

While Jean sets up instruments, Pat watches anesthesia
student BECKY (21) put spinal in patient with great skill.

PAT

Better than doctors.

BECKY

Co Shelly teach me.

JEAN

Becky's marrying a Vietnamese guy
who works at our consulate. Her
English is number one.

Becky bows. Jean preps patient's leg. Jim enters, dries
dripping hands, whips on gown, gloves, moves to table.

JIM

Everyone ready?

Before anyone can answer, he slices into leg.

BECKY (to Pat)

Bac Si Jim bery fast.

EXT. CHINA BEACH - DAY

Nurses in bikinis on beach with Green Beret and other men,
many minorities. Supply corporal poses for photo with
Shelly beside hand-painted sign, WELCOME TO CHINA BEACH.

SUPPLY CORPORAL

Folks back in the world'll never
believe this.

More men line up by nurses. Margaret picks up blanket.

MARGARET

Pardon me, Yanks. I didn't come here
to entertain the troops.

Jean with boyfriend RICK (35) and cool pilot buddies in dark aviator glasses. Hundreds of men swim, throw footballs, drink beer, grill hamburgers. STATESIDE MUSIC PLAYS ON RADIOS. Children hawk peanuts, Cokes. Prostitutes hang on men. Shelly joins fiance, TOM (34), serious professional.

Pat, whose hair is now short, looks around at crowd.

PAT

Jeez, who's fighting the war?

KAREN

Guys come here for in-country R&R.

Dan lies on sand drinking a Bud while watching Pat. Swim suit reveals muscular body. BIRD-DOG (30), Australian, beside him in boxer shorts, combat boots, bush hat and pistol, drinking Foster's beer. He looks from Dan to Pat.

BIRD-DOG

She's a prime Sheila, all right.
But you don't stand a chance with
those jet jockeys hangin' 'round.

DAN

She works at that dung heap
hospital in town.

BIRD-DOG

So she's brave too.

Dan watches Pat go for swim. She's beyond breakers when CAMERA picks up long snake behind her. Unseen by Pat, it darts forward and strikes back of neck. Pat arches up from water then slips beneath.

Only Dan notices. He runs for water and swims to where Pat disappeared, dives, surfaces alone, dives again. Moments go by. He finally surfaces with unconscious Pat. Her spastic arms kick up water and scratch Dan's face. Dan struggling.

DAN

Don't fight. Can't help if you
fight me.

They dip below surface, then Dan up and swimming with one hand under Pat's chin. Pat semi-conscious as exhausted Dan carries her through surf. Pat's friends run to them along with G.I.s and Vietnamese. Dan lays Pat on sand, gasping.

DAN (cont'd)

She had some...kinda'...seizure.

Dan steps back. Shelly and Tom kneel over Pat.

SHELLY

It's Shelly, Pat. Can you hear me?

Pat slowly opens eyes. Tom checking pulse.

TOM

Do you have epilepsy or some other seizure disorder?

Dr. Fitch, in only baggy cotton pants, elbows through crowd.

DR. FITCH

Did she wet her pants? That's how you're sure she had a seizure.

SHELLY

How the hell do you tell if she wet her pants in the middle of a fucking ocean!

Fitch melts into crowd. Pat rubs back of neck.

PAT

Felt like being hit with a bat.

She turns and WE SEE fang marks on swollen neck.

BEACH G.I.

Oh, oh. Sea snake.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Field ambulance on sand. Dan approaches Pat on stretcher.

DAN

Get better, hear?

Pat looks up, not recognizing him.

DAN (cont'd)

I pulled you out. Used to be a lifeguard on Long Island.

Pat notices scratched face.

PAT

You're hurt.

DAN

It's nothing.

PAT

What's your name?

DAN
Dan ... Dan Cowan.

PAT
Kool-Aid Dan?

DAN
Yeah, Kool-Aid Dan.

Shelly gets in back of ambulance with Pat and it departs.

RICK (to Dan)
Nice save. Let me buy you a beer.

INT. NAVY HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Long ward of beds with wounded G.I.s in blue P.J.s. Several missing limbs or with bandaged eyes. MILITARY NURSE and CORPSMAN care for them. At far end, screens around Pat's cot.

CORPSMAN (O.S.)
I need a surgeon stat! Abdominal
bleed!

Pat sits up, holding swollen neck, and peers out. Personnel gather around G.I.PATIENT as other patients watch silently. Corpsman trying to start second I.V. while military nurse checks blood pressure.

MILITARY NURSE
Sixty over nothing.

CORPSMAN
All his veins are collapsed.

Pat, in large blue P.J.s, moving unsteadily toward patient.

PAT
Maybe I can put in another line.

MILITARY NURSE
Let 'er try. Where she works they
can throw one in a charging water
buffalo.

Corpsman hands Pat sizable needle. She moves to head of bed and deftly inserts needle in jugular vein. Tom and OTHER DOCTOR hurriedly enter and examine patient.

TOM (to nurse)
Belly's tight as a tick. Order six
units of blood and notify surgery.

Nurse exits. Tom puts long needle into abdomen; blood gushes.

OTHER DOCTOR

He's got another pumper.

Military nurse returns with bags of blood and forces it into jugular I.V. Pat off to side with hand working small cross around neck. Ashen patient rallies and looks toward her.

TOM

We're taking you back to surgery,
trooper.

G.I. PATIENT

Doan mean nothin'.

But as he looks back at Pat his bravado disappears. She moves closer, takes his hand and smiles down at him.

PAT

Your docs are the best.

TOM

Let's move 'im out.

Team loads patient onto stretcher. Pat follows to door.

PAT

See you in a while.

G.I. PATIENT

Pray for me.

PAT

I will.

Pat moves slowly back through ward. Patients stare with old soldier eyes: weary, sad, frightened, dazed. Military nurse stripping bloody bed stops to help Pat to her bed.

MILITARY NURSE

Thanks for holding his hand. It's
tough being nurse, mother, wife
and girlfriend to so many.

PAT

He looked so scared.

Military nurse shakes head sadly.

MILITARY NURSE (quietly)

He's already been back to the O.R.
twice.

INT. NAVY HOSPITAL WARD, PAT'S CUBICLE - NIGHT

Shelly, Karen and Jean there. Pat rubs swollen neck.

SHELLY

You look like a water buffalo.

PAT

I feel like one.

KAREN

You're lucky. They've found guys
dead in the water with fang marks.

PAT

Yeah. Miss Lucky herself.

SHELLY

Why so down? If you've made it
this long you'll live.

PAT (hesitant)

I care about our Vietnamese
patients ... But this place ...
It's different seeing people who
look like your kid brother.

Shelly's face saddens.

SHELLY

Tom wants me here when he's on
call, but I dread it.

PAT

It makes me feel so...

JEAN

Don't you dare say guilty. We're
risking our lives to help the
Vietnamese. Isn't that enough?

SHELLY

You need to get back to the pig
sty. No time for feelings there.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL TRIAGE - DAY

Pat working on casualties with Ron. Sister Francoise enters
with small boy being carried by his young SISTER.

SISTER FRANCOISE (to Ron)

I find them in courtyard. His
sister say he swallow coin.

Ron palpates child's throat as he keeps trying to swallow.

RON

It's in the esophagus. He'll have to go out to Navy where they have instruments to go after it.

PAT

I can take him when I finish here.

RON

No rush. He's breathing O.K.

Child's sister worried.

SISTER FRANCOISE

Mother, father die in war.

Nun and Ron exit with children. Dan appears in doorway in clean combat gear, removes helmet.

DAN

I was in the neighborhood.
Thought I'd see how you're doing.

PAT

I'm fine.

Dan looks at bloody patients and shifts uncomfortably.

DAN

Guess I oughta split.

PAT

Do you have time for lunch? We have a great cook, and I at least owe you that for saving my life.

DAN

I never turn down real food.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - DAY

Dan and nurses at table. Bac Si cavorting on balcony in b.g.

MARGARET

So how's the war going, lieutenant?
Won any hearts and minds lately?

DAN

We're building a school on an island I helped pacify, if that's what you mean.

MARGARET

And how many buildings did you first destroy to pacify it?

DAN (flatly)

None.

PAT

Could we talk about something else?

MARGARET

My, my. I shouldn't think you would have to defend a big brave Marine.

SHELLY (to Margaret)

Pat's already had one snake bite.

DAN

We're busting our butts to give these people a democracy.

MARGARET

And you actually believe that is what they want?

She nods toward Tien, who is clearing plates.

MARGARET (cont'd)

Perhaps they prefer to plant rice and raise their children, without having to dodge bullets.

DAN

You're British aren't you?

MARGARET

And what if I am?

DAN

You should know what freedom costs. Or haven't you heard of the blitzkrieg?

MARGARET

I am quite well aware of the bombing of London. My mother was killed in it.

She gets up from table and touches scarred cheek.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I was more fortunate. Just a few scars and the honor of growing up in an orphanage. Things might have been different, but my mother had the bad taste to have me fathered by a yank flyer who had his fun and skipped.

Margaret exits and all sit quietly until Dan breaks silence.

DAN
Sorry, I didn't know.

KAREN
Neither did we.

EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

Pat and Dan in Dan's jeep. Sandbags on floor raise his long legs to steering wheel.

PAT
Margaret's a great nurse. She dates an American from our consulate.

DAN
I don't care if she doesn't like me. Just so you do.

Pat is shy as she gets out of jeep. Dan stops her.

DAN (cont'd)
Did that little girl make it? The one I brought in.

Pat smiles and nods yes.

PAT
It's nice you remember her.

DAN
I have a little sister.

Dan puts on helmet and starts jeep.

DAN (cont'd)
Thanks for lunch.

PAT
Sure.

She watches him back away and head out hospital gates.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL O.R. - DAY

Pat enters O.R. and is surprised to find Dr. Fitch operating while Becky gives anesthesia.

DR. FITCH (to Pat)
This kid's got a coin stuck in him.

PAT
I know but ...

BECKY (anxiously)
Co Pat, you prease help.

Pat finds air hissing out crude throat incision.

PAT (to Dr. Fitch)
You have to close that incision so
we can breathe him.

DR. FITCH
I'll take a quick look at the
esophagus to see if it's in there.

PAT
You opened his trachea before you
checked the esophagus?

DR. FITCH
I thought that's where it was.

PAT
This isn't a guessing game, doctor.

Fitch pulls out coin and sutures trachea and throat incisions.

BECKY
Heart stop.

Pat begins to resuscitate. Shelly enters as Dr. Fitch flees.

SHELLY
What's this mule-shit pie?

PAT
Fitch decided to try surgery.

SHELLY
Surgery? That looks like a shark
attack.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Pat carries body out of surgery. SISTER SCREAMS.

SISTER.
Cam duc chet roi! Cam duc!

EXT. ORPHANAGE ROAD - DAY

Pat drives hospital van down dusty lane. Dead boy's sister
sits stoically beside Becky in back.

Van pulls up to complex on dunes by beach. Sister Francoise comes to gate.

BECKY (in Vietnamese)
Another for you, Sister.

INT./EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Sister Francoise leads Pat, Becky and child's sister to courtyard. Old cribs hold dozens of children who CRY or stare sadly through slats. Harried nuns give bottles and change diapers. Children thin and ragged. Toddlers play.

SISTER FRANCOISE
We were school before the war.
Now orphanage with little money.

PAT
You don't receive aid from America?

SISTER FRANCOISE
Much goes to black market.

Pat stoops to boy's sister, who holds head down.

PAT
(in Vietnamese)
I'm sorry your brother died.

The child turns her back. Pat distressed.

SISTER FRANCOISE
You must give time.

EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL COURTYARD - DAY

Pat and Becky drive into hospital compound. Becky sad.

PAT
It wasn't your fault. Bac Si
Fitch shouldn't have done surgery.
(beat)
And I shouldn't have left for
lunch.

Pat and Becky about to enter hospital when food cart arrives with rice and fish heads in watery broth. People, old, young, mothers with children, fight for food waving cheap bowls. CHILDREN CRY. Pat watches pandemonium, then stomps inside.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Pat walks quickly to triage. Shelly working on patients.

PAT

Can you manage two days without me?

SHELLY

Why, are you running off with your handsome lieutenant?

PAT

I'm going to Saigon. I've had it with this supply shit. And Fitch.

SHELLY

Headquarters ignores our cables. They'll probably ignore you too.

PAT

If they do, I'll quit.

SHELLY

Tell them I'll throw it in too.

INT. A.I.D. HEADQUARTERS, SAIGON - DAY

Pat enters huge room filled with Vietnamese and Americans typing or sorting papers. She asks directions and is pointed to office with PAULA CHAMBERS, MEDICAL LIAISON sign on it.

INT. MEDICAL LIAISON'S OFFICE - DAY

MISS CHAMBERS (34), American with blond hair and dark roots, rises to greet Pat.

MISS CHAMBERS

I can only give you a minute. I have an important appointment.

She sits back down at desk and motions Pat to chair.

PAT

I'll wait. We need to talk about conditions in Danang.

MISS CHAMBERS

I won't be back today.

PAT

I'll stay until tomorrow.

MISS CHAMBERS

I won't be in tomorrow.

Vietnamese SECRETARY comes to door.

SECRETARY

Miss Chambers, time for hair appointment.

Supervisor flushes under Pat's steady gaze.

MISS CHAMBERS

Tell them I'll be a little late.

Secretary exits. Miss Chambers gives Pat full attention.

MISS CHAMBERS (cont'd)

So what's the problem in Danang?

PAT

For starters, get rid of Fitch.

MISS CHAMBERS

Doctor Fitch? On what grounds?

PAT

That he's a total incompetent.

MISS CHAMBERS

I'm afraid Washington wouldn't agree. He's being promoted.

PAT

I hope to the other side.

MISS CHAMBERS

He'll be returning to the United States to become A.I.D.'s Chief of Medical Affairs.

Pat at first aghast, then brightens.

PAT

Does that mean we get a new chief?

MISS CHAMBERS

He's already on the way.

PAT

How about a nursing director to improve care on our wards?

Miss Chambers is putting papers in expensive briefcase.

MISS CHAMBERS

Things don't happen as easily as you seem to think, Miss Walsh.

PAT
I've been here five months and the
situation is only getting worse.
Here's a list.

Pat takes paper from pocket and hands it across desk. Miss
Chambers glances at it, reading aloud.

MISS CHAMBERS
Medical supplies, better diet for
patients, food and clothing for
orphanage ... anything else?

PAT
American taxpayers have paid for
all of that and more.

Miss Chambers stands to leave. List on desk. Pat stays
seated.

PAT (cont'd)
Get us our supplies or I quit.
(beat)
The other anesthetist will, too.

Miss Chambers tosses list into briefcase. Pat stands,
extends hand.

PAT (cont'd)
Thank you.

MISS CHAMBERS
(taking hand)
I'm giving a party at my quarters
tonight.

PAT
I'm pretty tired from the flight.

MISS CHAMBERS
The Ambassador will be there.

PAT
Could you give me directions?

INT. CHAMBERS' VILLA - NIGHT

Dozens of well-heeled guests in palatial villa. Women all in
silk gowns. Ornate tables hold shrimp, fancy sandwiches and
liquor. Vietnamese in white jackets carry trays of champagne.
STEREO SYSTEM PLAYS Petula Clark's DOWNTOWN.

Miss Chambers in long silk dress, freshly bleached hair in
stiff beehive, introduces guests to grey-haired AMBASSADOR.

Pat enters in mini dress and sandals. KEN MILES (38), one of many men in pressed safari suits, spots her. He takes two glasses of champagne from passing waiter, glides easily through crowd to Pat and hands her a glass.

KEN MILES

Ken Miles, Associated News.

PAT

A reporter?

KEN MILES

We prefer to be known as journalists. New in-country?

PAT

No. I'm stationed in Danang.

KEN MILES

A bush ape, huh? ... That's what we call people who are out in the bush.

PAT (looking around)

Do you know all these people?

KEN MILES

Most. Not much action in Saigon.

Pat indicates French doors open to balcony where we hear distant ARTILLERY. Orange glow hangs in night sky.

PAT

Have you tried looking out there?

Miles glances at distant battle.

KEN MILES

It's not some big knockout body count.

Pat sees Miss Chambers and AMBASSADOR, hands glass to Miles.

PAT (to Miles)

Please excuse me.

Pat approaches group around Ambassador, quietly observing while Miss Chambers introduces COMMANDER JAMES.

MISS CHAMBERS

Mister Ambassador, may I present Commander Andrew James, chest surgeon at Cam Ranh Bay.

COMMANDER JAMES

An honor to meet you, sir.

AMBASSADOR

I trust your hospital is doing well.

COMMANDER JAMES

Very well, sir. All patients
receiving excellent care.

Miss Chambers spots Pat and smile disappears from face.

MISS CHAMBERS

Pardon me, Mister Ambassador,
there's someone else you must meet.

She begins to turn ambassador toward opposite side of room.

PAT

Excuse me, Mister Ambassador.

He looks around and sees Pat moving to forefront.

PAT (cont'd)

Forgive my interruption, sir, but
I'm sure you'd like to know how
our hospital is doing in Danang.

Ambassador smiles. Miss Chambers on high alert.

MISS CHAMBERS

Miss Walsh is part of our A.I.D.
team caring for wounded civilians.

AMBASSADOR

Admirable, Miss Walsh. And how is
your work with the civilians?

PAT

Not well, I'm afraid. But Miss
Chambers has promised top priority
to our supply problems.

Miss Chambers nods eagerly as ambassador turns to her.

MISS CHAMBERS

Remedies already underway.

PAT

Like having Americans unload supply
planes instead of the Vietnamese,
so our food and medicine stop going
to the black market.

Miss Chambers nods so forcefully, beehive leans to one side.

PAT (cont'd)

And the same for the orphanage.

MISS CHAMBERS

Of course, the orphanage.

PAT (to Ambassador)

We take children whose family die
at our hospital to the nuns.

AMBASSADOR

Commendable.

Pat extends a hand and the ambassador takes it gently.

PAT

Thank you for caring, sir.

AMBASSADOR

And thank you, Miss Walsh.

Miss Chambers hustles him away. Ken Miles reappears and
holds out a glass of champagne to Pat.

KEN MILES (to Pat)

Bravo. Very impressive.

PAT

Excuse me. This bush ape has
an early flight.

Pat starts toward door.

KEN MILES (calling after her)

I might get up your way sometime.

INT. DANANG NURSES' VILLA - NIGHT

Pat, Karen, Margaret, Tom, Shelly, Rick and Jean finishing
candle-lit dinner. MUSIC in b.g. Tien serves tea.

PAT

At least Fitch will soon be at a desk
in Washington, not killing patients.

MARGARET

They would hire Hitler because he
had experience in relocating people.

PAT

And we get to unload our supply
planes.

SHELLY (holding up glass to Pat)

To the mouse that roared!

KAREN

To Mouse!

Rick, dressed in flight suit, gets up from table.

RICK
Got a date up north with Uncle Ho.

MARGARET
Time to drop bombs on children?

JEAN
Don't start, Margaret.

MARGARET
Aah, is it bad luck for aviators
to consider what's blowing up
beneath them?

RICK
Why do you assume we don't?

Jean walks him out, after giving Margaret murderous look.

TOM (to Margaret)
You sure know how to make a guy
feel good.

MARGARET
I didn't come here to ease
anyone's conscience. I came to
care for people being maimed.

SHELLY
You're getting a lot of mileage
out of those scars of yours.

Margaret touches a hand to face, then leaves table.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - NIGHT

Candles burned down. Pat, Karen and Jean drinking wine at
table with darkness beyond French doors. MUSIC PLAYS.

JEAN
They were separated before we met
over here. Rick wants a divorce,
but she's threatening to hold
their two sons hostage.

KAREN
Sounds like a great relationship.

JEAN
I love him but ...

Huge EXPLOSION blows doors open.

PAT

Incoming!

Pat, Karen and Jean dive beneath table as MUSIC WAVERS AND STOPS. Lights fail. Flares turn sky orange. Jean stands up.

JEAN

They're hitting the air base!

Tom rushes from Shelly's room still buttoning pants. Shelly runs behind in short, filmy nightgown.

TOM

I've gotta get back to Navy
Hospital!

SHELLY

Not without us!

Pat, Karen and Jean crawl from beneath table. Shelly runs back to room as Margaret appears, pulling on uniform.

TOM (looking out)

God, the whole airfield's on fire.

JEAN

Rick's out there.

Shelly returns in scrub dress. Another ENORMOUS EXPLOSION.

TOM (running for door)

That's the ammo dump! We'll have
mass casualties!

EXT. DANANG STREETS - NIGHT

Tom drives hospital van through streets filled with tanks, jeeps and troop trucks with headlights off. Boiling orange cloud over air base and THUNDER OF EXPLOSIONS.

Flares in sky illuminate concerned faces of van's occupants. Pat runs her gold cross back and forth on its chain.

Van crosses bridge, where SENTRIES FIRE CONSTANT VOLLEYS toward water. As van passes Cabbage Patch whores run into road flapping dresses and shouting above noise.

WHORES

Hurry-up boom-boom! Five dollah!

TOM

Are you shittin' me?

SHELLY

Jesus, they're having a fire sale!

Van's anxious occupants howl. Tom swerves to avoid Sophie.

SOPHIE
Hurry hurry boom-boom. One dollah!

EXT. NAVY HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Van stops at closed gates. Complex darkened.

TOM
The compound's secured. It'll be
tough talking my own way in.

He kisses Shelly and disappears into darkness.

SHELLY
What ever happened to looking out
for the weaker sex?

MARGARET
There is none in war.

Another EXPLOSION sends Shelly behind wheel.

SHELLY
I guess if the whores aren't
afraid, I shouldn't be either.

MARGARET
Nice comparison.

Van, headlights off, travels short distance when dark shape
steps into fire lit road. Jean touches Shelly's shoulder.

JEAN
Don't stop.

Small man runs straight toward them.

PAT
Isn't that Mr. Hai?

Shelly hits the brakes. Mr. Hai breathless as he reaches van.

MR. HAI
Brother hurt bad. I get him.

He darts away. Shelly turns to others.

SHELLY
I vote we get outta here. His
brother's probably V.C.

KAREN

You think everyone's Viet Cong.

Mr. Hai is seen carrying a man across his shoulder.

PAT

We can't just leave them.

The women help Mr. Hai load wounded man into van.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Nurses and Mr. Hai carry man toward triage. Rats scurry over feet and windows break. Patients run in all directions carrying their I.V. bottles and clutching bandages.

Nurses work on Mr. Hai's brother while he nervously clicks claw.

JEAN

Pat, stay with him. Karen and I'll get the O.R. set up.

(to Shelly)

You get a surgeon and blood.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Pat and Shelly haul stretcher out of O.R. Hai's brother awake.

MR. HAI (bowing)

Americans number one.

Pat and Shelly take stretcher to recovery and put him in bed with another male patient. Shelly points to deep creases over both shoulders of Mr. Hai's brother.

SHELLY

Strap marks from carrying supplies down the Ho Chi Minh trail. V.C.

Margaret takes over.

MARGARET (to Shelly)

In here he is a patient.

Pat returns to triage, where Jean looks through blown out window to fires at air base. Pat goes to her side.

PAT
Rick'll be all right.

The two women watch fires, which DISSOLVE TO morning sun through heavy smoke.

EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL, E.R. RECEIVING PLATFORM - DAWN

Pat and Jean watch sun rise through smoke over air base.

PAT
Why aren't we getting casualties?

JEAN
The military has Americans to pick up before they can get to ours.

Jean starts for van in parking lot.

JEAN (cont'd)
I have to see if Rick's O.K.

PAT
I'll drive.

EXT. DANANG AIR BASE - DAY

Pat drives past smoldering hulks and pieces of planes. Craters pock runways. Arrival and departure building flattened.

Americans in body bags lie in neat rows outside morgue. Large sign over door reads UNCOVER IN RESPECT FOR THE DEAD.

PAT
I wonder how they'll report this body count back home.

Jean waves toward group of pilots hurrying to A6 fighters.

JEAN
Rick, over here!

RICK (waving)
Headin' north! Payback time!

Jean gives thumbs up.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL, TRIAGE - DAY

Pat attends to badly wounded woman, crying three-year old boy on stretcher with her. Pat picks up boy, balancing him on hip while caring for mother. Dan comes to door.

DAN
You nurses O.K.?

PAT
Just a little busy. Could you
hold this one while I get his
mother ready for surgery?

Dan clumsily shifts squalling child. Shelly enters.

SHELLY (to Pat)
Let's get her to the O.R.

PAT (to Dan)
Be right back.

Pat and Shelly pick up field stretcher and exit with mother.

INT. TRIAGE - DAY

Pat enters to find Dan walking floor with fussy child.

PAT
She didn't make it.

DAN
What'll we do with the kid?

EXT. DANANG - DAY

Dan driving jeep across bridge. Pat holds boy.

PAT
The nuns take in our orphans and
all the babies fathered by G.I.s.

She stops abruptly and looks at Dan, who laughs.

DAN
Hey, don't look at me.

INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Sister Francoise greets them, takes them to SISTER MARIE (50).

SISTER FRANCOISE
Sister Marie, our Mother Superior.

SISTER MARIE
How nice you visit.

Sister Francois takes child from Pat.

SISTER FRANCOISE (to Pat)
And how is this one called?

PAT
We don't know. His mother died in
surgery.

SISTER FRANCOISE (to Dan)
Maybe we give him your name. We
use all Vietnamese.

Dan both flattered and uncomfortable.

PAT
How about Danny?

Sister Francoise repeats name to child in French accent.

SISTER FRANCOISE
Dan-nay.

She puts him at table where children eat rice and fish.

SISTER MARIE (to Pat and Dan)
You will have tea?

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Pat and Dan seated with Sister Marie at small table beneath
tall Sea Pine having tea. Children hang around Dan.

SISTER MARIE
American soldier visit with sweets.

Dan pulls gum from pocket. Children divide it and run off.

DAN
I'll bring candy next time.

PAT
Maybe you should ask Sister.

SISTER MARIE
Sweets bad for teeth; good for
heart.
(sighs)
Some miss family so big they die.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Sister Marie walks Pat and Dan outside. Dan suddenly sprints
to where children play in his jeep.

DAN
Christ Almighty!

Pat embarrassed by language in front of nun.

PAT
Dan.

Dan grabs objects children are playing catch with and holds them up so Pat can see they are grenades.

PAT (cont'd)
Holy shit.

EXT. LANE LEADING FROM ORPHANAGE - DAY

Pat and Dan head back to town. Grenades now back in wooden box on jeep floor between sandbags.

PAT
Do you always carry grenades?

DAN
When I'm driving between Danang
and Hoi An. That's Charlie country.
(beat)
I left money under my teacup. I
hope Sister Marie doesn't mind.

PAT
I did the same. It was nice of
you to give the kids gum.

DAN
I used to carry it for Marnie.

PAT
How old is your little sister?

DAN
Ten. We're pals.

EXT. NURSES' VILLA COURTYARD - DAY

Pat sits with Dan in jeep.

DAN
Maybe you could visit Hoi An. I'll
show you the island we pacified.

PAT
And drive through V.C. country?

DAN

I'll arrange for a copter.

PAT

You can get one for sight-seeing?

DAN

My outfit has a few extra perks.

Pat gets out.

DAN (cont'd)

Could you bring a friend? I have
a lonely Aussie buddy.

EXT. DANANG AIR BASE - DAY

Pat and Shelly at new building with ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES sign. Crowd of G.I.s, many minorities, wait for flight. As transport taxies up, DEPARTING G.I.s talk excitedly.

DEPARTING G.I.#1

Oh, baby! There's our ride back
to the world!

DEPARTING G.I.#2

That freedom bird's gonna crap me
out right on my hometown! San
Francisco here I come!

They are all dripping perspiration, Pat and Shelly included.

PAT (above engine noise)

How many are we picking up?

SHELLY

Cable just said meet new arrivals!

Engines stop, cargo door in rear drops. TERESA LANE (35), professional but friendly, is first off, followed by bald DOCTOR OTTO GAUKEL (60).

EXT. AIR BASE - DAY

Pat and Shelly load newcomers' bags into hospital van.

SHELLY

We didn't expect a new medical
chief so soon, Doctor Gaukel.

Otto takes cigar from shirt pocket and lights up.

OTTO
Cut the formality. Call me Otto.

TERESA
Same here. Teresa.

PAT
We really need a nursing director.

SHELLY
Guess we can head into town.

TERESA
Wait ... the anesthetist.

PAT
Anesthetist?

OTTO
Puked her guts out the whole trip.

Pat and Shelly watch as limp, grey-haired woman, GERTIE (54), helped down ramp by two G.I.s. Nurses take over.

TERESA
You'll be fine, Gertie, when you get to your quarters.

GERTIE
God, girl, I can't wait for a long cool bath and air-conditioning.

Pat and Shelly exchange looks. Gertie loaded into van.

INT. A.I.D. TEMPORARY HOUSING - DAY

Pat, Shelly and Gertie in small room with bed, chair and chest. Rough bathroom with shower head jutting from wall.

GERTIE
God girl, you don't expect me to stay here?

PAT
Just til there's room in a new apartment building.

GERTIE

But Washington promised me a modern, air-conditioned suite. How could they make me come to such a horrible place?

SHELLY

What do you mean, make you?

GERTIE

When the recruiter came to my hospital in Two Oaks, New Mexico he said they needed an anesthetist right away. The other girl was pregnant so that left me.

PAT

But it was still voluntary.

Gertie grabs her chest and collapses on bed.

SHELLY

Nice going, Co Pat.

Shelly checks Gertie's pulse. Pat touches face.

PAT

Gertie, take a deep breath.

Gertie's eyes flicker open.

SHELLY

We'll get this straightened out in the morning. You can go back home.

GERTIE

God girl, I don't think I can make that trip again.

Pat puts cold cloth from sink on Gertie's forehead.

PAT

We'll come get you after work. You can have dinner at our place.

EXT. A.I.D. TEMPORARY HOUSING - DAY

Shelly turns on Pat the moment they are outside.

SHELLY

What about our party to celebrate
Fitch's departure? We can't take
old 'God Girl' to the Bamboo Hut.

PAT

I forgot.

INT. BAMBOO HUT - NIGHT

Several members of medical team and military men at party.
FEMALE TAIWANESE TRIO sings: PLEASE RELEASE ME, LET ME GO.
Pat and Teresa haul in weak Gertie.

Gertie sees men, straightens, pushes grey hair into place and
disappears into their midst. Pat and Teresa laugh, take seats.

SHELLY

Where's 'God Girl'?

PAT

She saw men and ditched us.

Pat sits by Ron and Teresa, calling to smiling proprietor.

PAT (cont'd)

Hai Ba Mui Ba.

PROPRIETOR

Duc, duc. Hai Ba Mui Ba.

He brings bottles with 33 on label, same as others drink.

PAT (to Teresa)

Local beer. Alcohol kills the bugs.

Pat glances across room at Otto, drinking and laughing.

PAT (cont'd)

Hope he works as hard as he
parties.

Ron looks sad watching Jim Ramirez flirt with singers.

RON

Get a load a' Jim. He's 4F because
of a bad knee, and he signs up
with A.I.D. I join Public Health
to try to stay with my wife and
kids, and where do they send me?

Shelly indicates Gertie, boogying with YOUNG LIEUTENANT.

SHELLY

Looks like Gertie's found the
ultimate cure for senility. War.

Jean walks by and Pat takes hold of her arm.

PAT

Where's Rick?

JEAN

He's late. How about Dan?

PAT

He's on some recon thing.

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Dan, on radio, and Bird-dog fighting through thick undergrowth. They are being pursued by North Vietnamese who aren't sure where they are. There is much YELLING IN VIETNAMESE and staccato BURSTS FROM WEAPONS.

INT./EXT. BAMBOO HUT - NIGHT

A shaken Rick enters. He talks with Jean and they exit.

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Dan and Bird-dog still fighting their way through jungle. Gun fire in b.g. Two helicopters race toward them at tree-top level.

INT./EXT. BAMBOO HUT - NIGHT

Party wild with diving contest taking place off railing.

PAT (looking down)

I can't dive!

KAREN (in river)

Then jump!

CROWD

Jump! Jump!

Pat climbs onto railing, hikes up skirt to WHISTLES and cannonballs into darkness. APPLAUSE and CHEERS. Jim does a perfect swan dive off rail.

EXT. BOMB CRATER, JUNGLE - NIGHT

Dan and Bird-dog dive to bottom of muddy bomb crater. Distant gunfire. They remove packs. Dan takes rope from his, cuts two 10' lengths and tosses one to Bird-dog. Lines are tied around waist, ends through legs, back up and tied to waist line. Carabiners are snapped onto harnesses.

INT./EXT. BAMBOO HUT - NIGHT

Almost everyone drenched from river. Trio and tipsy partiers sing WE GOTTA GET OUTTA THIS PLACE.

EXT./INT. CHOPPER #1 OVER JUNGLE - NIGHT

Dan on radio below. Chopper #1 hovers over hole in jungle canopy above bomb crater. Chopper #2 blasting jungle as it circles area. Intense return fire.

CREW CHIEF at door of chopper #1, sees two pulses of red light from below. Gives yank on long rope secured to chopper floor, then throws jerry can tied to other end out door.

EXT. BOMB CRATER, JUNGLE - NIGHT

Jerry can slams to ground, followed by rope. Dan ties loop in rope, snaps it through carabiner, tightens lock nut. Bird-dog does same a few feet lower. Enemy gunfire closer.

DAN (quietly into radio)
Sassy Lassie, locked on.

EXT./INT. CHOPPER #1 - NIGHT

Crew Chief pulls on rope.

CREW CHIEF (to pilot)
Got 'em!

Rope goes taut, Dan rises off ground, followed by Bird-dog and jerry can. North Vietnamese fire toward both choppers.

INT./ EXT. BAMBOO HUT - NIGHT

SIRENS sound, growing louder. MILITARY scramble for door.

MILITARY
M.P.s!

Drunk young man with Gertie rubs hand over stubble on head.

YOUNG LIEUTENANT

Whadda they gonna do, shave my
head and send me ta Nam?

M.P.s storm in. Singers run for back room with proprietor.
Pat, Shelly and Karen enter, wet and covered with weeds.

M.P. SERGEANT (to group)

You never heard there're
explosives floatin' down that
river?

M.P. CORPORAL

Besides sewage.

KAREN

We were just cooling off.

M.P. corporal sniffs and backs away.

OTTO (to M.P.s)

I'm in charge of this medical
outfit. What're the charges?

M.P. CORPORAL

Shoulda' known, crazy ass medical
people. Ya love 'em, ya hate 'em.

M.P. SERGEANT (to Otto)

Clear out and no charges.

OTTO (loudly)

O.K. Party's over. Time to sleep
it off and relieve the sober shift.

INT./EXT. CHOPPER #1 OVER JUNGLE - NIGHT

Dan and Bird-dog dangle below moving chopper with jerry can
just above tree tops. Choppers taking gunfire. One round
nicks the rope and remaining strands break bit by bit.

SLOW MOTION Last strands snap and frayed end recoils into
chopper. Jerry can leads way down through canopy, followed
by rope, Bird-dog and Dan, arms flailing, rifles flying off
shoulders. Rest of rope trails after them.

BACK TO REAL-TIME Pilot fights to stabilize lurching chopper.

CREW CHIEF

They hit the fuckin' rope! They
couldn't survive that drop.

Chopper #2 starts trailing smoke in b.g.

PILOT #2 (over radio)
Sassy Lassie, took a hit. Losing
power.

PILOT #1
Roger, will cover.

Pilot #1 banks into sharp turn toward sister ship.

EXT. JUNGLE CANOPY - NIGHT

Jerry can and men fall through trees. Jerry can just misses large branch. Bird-dog's left arm bashes branch and WE HEAR SNAP but no scream. He and Dan fall on other side of branch.

Weight of Bird-dog and Dan pulls jerry can back up and it jams between two branches, turning the rope into a bungee cord, bouncing Dan through underbrush. They finally stop, Bird-dog above and Dan below.

BIRD-DOG
Bloody hell, danglin' like a
couple a' Christmas balls.

Dan, covered with cuts and blood, stunned a beat, then pulls knife from belt and cuts himself loose. He cuts Bird-dog free of rope and helps him down.

BIRD-DOG (cont'd)
Easy there, mate. Left arm's got
a new joint to it.

DAN (whispering)
Quiet. The NVA think we got away.

Dan lowers Bird-dog to ground, grabs two branches to make splints and puts a third between Bird-dog's teeth. Dan pulls on broken arm. Bird-dog bites on branch. WE HEAR CRUNCH.

DAN (cont'd)
That's the tough part.

BIRD-DOG (whispering)
Good on yer, mate.

Dan cuts rope to secure arm to splints, strips to tee shirt, removes it and makes it into sling for Bird-dog. Dan puts shirt back on and pulls Bird-dog to feet.

They disappear into jungle, Dan limping.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - NIGHT

Pat, Shelly and Karen enter. Jean at table crying.

KAREN

Did something happen to Rick?

JEAN

He had an accident on the way into town. Little boy ran in front of his jeep ... couldn't stop in time.

SHELLY

That's tough.

PAT

I'm sorry, Jean.

KAREN

Same here.

Jean gets up and goes to room.

EXT. A.I.D. TEMPORARY HOUSING - MORNING

Pat KNOCKING at Gertie's door and getting no response. Van waits in b.g. with other nurses.

PAT

Gertie, are you in there?

Door opens crack and Gertie, in sheet, sticks head out.

GERTIE

God, girl, I overslept. Can't wait to start work.

Pat surprised. Gertie accidentally knocks door open revealing stark naked young lieutenant sleeping blissfully in her bed.

EXT. HOSPITAL VAN - DAY

Van waiting for Gertie. Nurses laughing.

PAT

Wait 'til he discovers he's been screwing an old grey-haired lady.

SHELLY

Won't matter. She has round eyes and no grenades.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Nurses enter to find trail of white smoke leading to triage.

JEAN

God help us. Smokers.

Jean runs for double O.R. doors and yells inside.

JEAN (cont'd)

Smokers in triage!

SHELLY

Trouble in River City.

INT. TRIAGE - DAY

Room filled with dark-skinned people with wispy white smoke curling up from wounds. Shelly indicates abdominal wound.

SHELLY (to Pat)

White Phosphorus keeps burning 'til
it's cut out. She's first, before
it hits the aorta.

Ron, Jim and Hai enter. PATIENTS CHATTERING. Hai LAUGHS.

PAT (to Hai)

Tell them we'll be taking them to
surgery.

HAI

They Montagnard. Mountain people.
Not speak our language.

JIM

You understand them enough to
laugh. Now get to work or I'll
knock you to Cambodia.

Hai glares, clicking his claw.

JIM (cont'd)

And stop clicking that claw or
I'll take a scalpel to it!

Hai speaks to patients in aloof tone and leaves room.

RON (to Shelly)

You know the drill, burns near
arteries or vital organs first.

Pat has I.V. running on woman with severe smoking leg burn.

PAT
This one's ready.

Ron and Jim carry her out while Pat and Shelly continue starting I.V.s. Pat dripping sweat as smoke from burning flesh engulfs her. She runs to garbage can and vomits.

INT. TRIAGE - DAY

Pat alone with OLD MAN squatted on floor clutching bloody bundle. He smokes pipe and has cataract-clouded eyes.

PAT
(in Vietnamese)
What's in there?

She opens bundle and his intestines slither to floor.

PAT (cont'd)
Mr. Hai! I need you in triage!

Mr. Hai roars past door on motorbike. Shelly enters.

SHELLY
Talk about a case of loose bowels.

The two women try to coax old man onto stretcher, but he scoops guts into his dirty rag and returns to smoking pipe.

PAT (to Shelly)
Get Becky.

INT. TRIAGE - DAY

Becky squats to listen to old man. Pat impatient beside her.

PAT
What is he going on about? And
make him give me that pipe.

Pat reaches for pipe but Becky stops her.

BECKY
Opium good for pain.

Becky returns to old man, who speaks unusual Vietnamese.

BECKY (to Pat)
He say he never see white people
before. They come to village
after VC, shoot, burn houses.

Old man rambles on. Becky translates again.

BECKY (cont'd)
Then white men bring him here in
noisy bird so white woman can fix
hole in belly. He want to know,
why you make hole in first place?

Pat looks into face of old man, then away. She is spent.

PAT
Tell him I don't know. But he
does what we say or no rice.

Becky translates. Old man gets up, stubbornly steps over
stretcher, and follows Becky with his bundle of bowel.
Pat goes to window where GUNFIRE rumbles. Shelly enters.

SHELLY
Who's next? Or maybe, what's next?

PAT
Who are we kidding, Shelly? We
have supplies now, but nothing's
going to change until the fighting
stops. They shoot 'em, we patch
'em up; over and over.

SHELLY
You need an R&R. Old 'God girl'
and I can hold down the fort.

EXT. HELICOPTER IN FLIGHT - DAY

Pat and Karen, hair blowing, legs dangling out the side door,
fly over jungle. DOOR GUNNER #1 watches terrain, firing
occasionally. Pat and Karen talk above CHOPPER NOISE.

PAT
I haven't felt this cool in months.

KAREN
This is the first time I've had
the stench of that hospital out of
my nostrils in almost a year.

EXT. VIET CONG FIRING POSITION IN JUNGLE - DAY

Through sight of sniper rifle pointed at chopper about to land. Cross-hairs first on PILOT, then shift to Pat (hold), Karen (hold), door gunner (hold), finally tail rotor.

INT./EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY

We hear loud PING, followed by GRINDING and SCRAPING of metal. Chopper spinning as DOOR GUNNER sprays bush, empty shell casings flying into chopper hitting Pat, flattened on floor with Karen. Chopper hits landing pad. Hard.

Dan, still limping, and Bird-dog come running from sandbagged bunker in crouched positions, carrying M16s. Bird-dog in bush hat and open flak jacket, left arm in cast.

DAN (into chopper)
Stay low! Follow me!

Pat and Karen run behind Dan in crouched position, crew and Bird-dog bringing up rear. All dive into bunker and Dan fires toward tree line as Bird-dog lobs grenade. EXPLOSION blows tree limbs and dirt skyward. They wait. All quiet. Bird-dog crawls to top of bunker, sniffing.

BIRD-DOG
Don't smell Mr. Charles.

Emerging from bunker, Dan turns to Pat and Karen.

DAN
You two all right?

PAT
I think so.

Dan sees red marks as Pat brushes dirt from arms.

DAN
You're burned.

DOOR GUNNER #1
Sorry ma'am. Those shell casings
come out hot.

PAT
They're only first degree.

She looks from Dan's battered face to Bird-dog's cast.

PAT (cont'd)
What happened to you two?

Dan has two flak jackets and helmets, tosses a set to Bird-dog for Karen and dresses Pat in other.

DAN
We've never had trouble out here
in daylight.

BIRD-DOG
Sniper with a lucky shot.

Bird-dog helps Karen suit up. Pat persistent.

PAT (to Dan)
Tell me what happened to you.

BIRD-DOG
A bit of a carnival ride, 'ey mate?

DAN
We missed our chopper ride but got
picked up later. All that counts.

Dan puts arm around Pat to move her out of bunker.

DAN (cont'd)
You ladies came for fun, not war
stories.

KAREN
Well, the opener was exciting.

BIRD-DOG
We only arrange greeting parties
for Sheilas we like.

EXT. HOI AN, BIRD-DOG'S JEEP - DAY

Bird-dog eases behind wheel after helping Karen into jeep with kangaroos on both sides. Dan and Pat in rear. Bird-dog pulls 6-pack Foster's beer from floor and hands them out.

BIRD-DOG (raising beer)
To good times.

Others join in, but Pat still looking at Dan's face and arms.

EXT. DAN'S VILLA - DAY

Jeep pulls into courtyard of heavily sandbagged villa. Zig-zag concrete trench with large bunkers at each end runs across back of compound. Machine guns at regular intervals.

DAN (to Pat)
We get a bit more action down here.

INT. DAN'S VILLA - DAY

Furniture sparse and strewn with helmets, flak jackets, ammo belts, and C-rations. Dart board and lusty pin-ups on walls.

KAREN

Nice hootch ... anybody live here?

BIRD-DOG

Until today we merely existed, me darlin's. Now we are living.

EXT. HOI AN - DAY

Wide river with distant island. Dan waves to fisherman in rickety boat, who moves toward shore.

EXT. BOAT - DAY

Whole group, minus combat gear, in boat gliding toward island. CHILDREN on shoreline wave their hands as they SHOUT.

CHILDREN

Lieutena' Dan! Lieutena' Dan!

Dan smiles and waves back. Boat lands and children mob Dan who hands out gum. Old men and women with babies seated up hill. Dan speaks to PEOPLE in Vietnamese.

DAN (English subtitles)

My friends want to see your island.

PEOPLE (English subtitles)

Show them big house you make.

EXT. JUNGLE PATH - DAY

Dan leading Pat and others along narrow path through thick foliage. Children follow, all chewing gum.

PAT

I didn't know you spoke Vietnamese.

DAN

Only what I learned on this island.

BIRD-DOG

The locals have adopted him. It's a regular love fest.

EXT. JUNGLE VILLAGE - DAY

Pigs, chickens and ducks wander under grass huts set on poles. Dan stops by wooden structure almost completed.

DAN

This is our new school.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Sunlight falls across rows of tables with benches. CO BIC, beautiful young Vietnamese woman hurries in carrying bananas.

DAN (to Pat and Karen)

This is Co Bic, our teacher.

Co Bic bows and hands bunches of bananas to Pat and Karen.

CO BIC (bowing)

Banon for you.

PAT and KAREN (bow back)

Cam on, Co.

DAN

She speaks English.

CO BIC (shyly)

Thi thi English.

She bows to Dan and takes leave.

BIRD-DOG

Better watch her, Pat. She's sweet on your lieutenant.

DAN

She's just friendly.

EXT. HOI AN - BIRD-DOG'S JEEP DRIVING - DUSK

Group eating bananas. Jeep stops at cinder block building with no windows. Helicopter on landing pad next to it.

BIRD-DOG

This, me darlin's, is the Happy House.

KAREN

A whorehouse?

BIRD-DOG

No one comes outta here smilin'.

DAN (sternly)
Drive on.

BIRD-DOG (driving)
No flies on me, mate.

EXT. DAN'S VILLA - EARLY EVENING

Dan showing Pat compound. Vietnamese in camouflage uniforms come and go from barracks up the hill from Dan's villa.

DAN (to Pat)
They're my South Vietnamese troops.

One soldier, TRANH, waves to Dan.

DAN (cont'd, to Tranh)
Come meet my friend.

Small man walks down in sandals made from old tires. He shows jade inlaid heart in front tooth when he smiles.

DAN
Tranh, Pat takes care of your people in a hospital in Danang.

TRANH (bowing)
Thank you, Co Pat.

PAT
I'm happy to help.

DAN
Tranh's my best troop.

TRANH
Lieutena' numbah one.

Tranh bows again and returns to barracks.

DAN (to Pat)
Let's finish the tour.

Dan lifts Pat down into zig-zag trench behind villa. She stops at machine gun with plastic lawn chair behind it.

DAN (cont'd)
The Aussies believe in comfort.

Pat reaches for wire running into tall grass. Dan grabs arm.

DAN (cont'd)
That's attached to a Claymore mine out in the elephant grass. In case the gooks try to sneak up on us.

PAT
Don't call them gooks.
(beat)
Have you ever killed anyone?

DAN
Better him than me.

PAT
I didn't mean self-defense.

DAN
It's all self-defense. There's a
war going on here, y'know.

PAT
I kinda figured that out taking
care of napalmed kids.

Dan nods sadly before they move to bunker at end of
trench. Pat glances at stacks of weapons and ammo.

PAT (cont'd)
What's the Happy House?

DAN
Nothing. Bird-dog talks too much.

PAT
You don't talk enough. Like
explaining how you and Bird-dog
got so banged up.

DAN
A reconnaissance mission that
turned a little rough.

PAT
Tell me about it.

DAN
Nothing to tell. We walked a
couple days in jungle, ran into
Americans and got out.

Jeeps are pulling into courtyard. Aussies in bush hats and
Americans in pressed civvies getting out and entering villa.

DAN (cont'd)
Party tonight. Let's join in.

As he gives Pat a boost up out of trench, she tears dress on
coiled barbed wire at top.

DAN (cont'd)
Gee, I'm sorry.

PAT
It's a Sears special. I'll change.

INT. DAN'S VILLA - EVENING

Pat and Dan enter room filled with military men and older civilians. Noisy game of darts underway. Karen, drinking, boisterously sings WALTZING MATILDA with Bird-dog and other Aussies, one of them playing a concertina.

DAN
Your bag's in my quarters.

Two Vietnamese women hurry by with trays of food.

DAN (cont'd)
Our hootch mice. They do laundry too.

INT. DAN'S QUARTERS - EVENING

Room has two beds neatly made up with Pat and Karen's bags on them. Overturned crate between has a 45 and football on it. Dan closes door and sweeps Pat into Rhett Butler kiss.

DAN
I've wanted to do that ever since
I saw you in that awful hospital.

PAT
So have I.

They kiss again. Then Dan looks around room.

DAN
It isn't as nice as your house,
but I thought you and Karen would
like to bunk together. Unless ...

Dan starts to unbutton Pat's dress as they kiss, but suddenly stops.

DAN
I have to tell you. If we start
taking fire, run as fast as you
can for the trench. If I should
fall, keep running.

PAT
But I couldn't leave you behind.

DAN

Don't worry. Nothing will happen.

He goes back to her buttons.

DAN (cont'd)

Except in here.

They are moving toward bed when tipsy Karen enters with Foster's beer in hand.

KAREN

You two party poopers get out here.

Karen sways and Dan goes to her, turning her toward door.

DAN (to Karen)

Lead the way, party girl.

He glances back at Pat with a Paradise Lost look.

EXT. DAN'S COMPOUND - TRENCH - DAWN

Pat and Dan smooching in bunker. Dan's watch catches in chain from cross on Pat's neck. She works to free him.

PAT

Oh, oh, my mother's watching. She gave me this so I wouldn't be killed.

DAN

Not a chance with me around.

PAT

You've already saved me once. That means you own a piece of my soul.

DAN

Mmmm, I like that.

Dan kisses Pat as soon as his watch is untangled.

DAN (cont'd)

I knew I loved you when I pulled you out at China Beach.

PAT (hesitant)

It's different here. You may not feel the same in the real world.

DAN

This is the real world. No game-playing, fancy cars or dinners. Just the two of us.

Pat runs a finger across large bruise on Dan's face.

PAT

Why did you come here?

DAN

To help the people. You saw my island.

PAT

Your school's great. But how long before a battle destroys it?

DAN

There won't be any battles on my island. We've driven the V.C. out.

(beat)

So why did you come?

PAT

Nursing started in war. We're supposed to care for people.

DAN

You could be doing that at home.

PAT

Women have been serving in wars as long as men have been starting them.

DAN

Whoa. Where did that come from?

PAT

I was just saying that ...

DAN

Listen, I want you to go with me on a real R&R. Get completely away from war.

PAT

Sounds wonderful. Where to?

DAN

I'll find the perfect place.

PAT

Can I at least ask when?

DAN

Believe me, as soon as possible.

They lie back on sandbags kissing with ammo all around them.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - DAY

Rick in living room when Pat and Karen return from Hoi An. He is unshaven and edgy, no longer Mr. Jet Jockey.

RICK

I wanted to explain in person and had hoped Jean would be home by now, but I have to get back.

He hands Pat an envelope.

RICK (cont'd)

Please give this to Jean.

EXT. BALCONY - EVENING

Pat watching street scene below. Jean, teary-eyed, comes onto balcony with opened letter in hand.

JEAN

He's going back to his wife. Says he realizes how much his sons mean to him since the accident with the little boy.

PAT

I'm sorry. I mean I'm sorry for you.

Jean slowly folds letter and puts it back into envelope.

JEAN

So much for love.

PAT

Dan and Bird-dog have friends.

JEAN

I'm not getting involved again in this hell hole.

EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL COURTYARD - DAY

Pat, Teresa, Shelly and Margaret leaving work. Becky's fiance, LUAN (26), rides in on motor scooter, waves to them.

PAT

Hi, Luan. Are you nervous?

MARGARET

Why frighten the poor fellow the evening before his wedding?

LUAN

Not frightened, Co Margaret.

Becky comes out and perches sidesaddle on rear of scooter.

PAT

See you tomorrow.

Becky smiles and waves as they putt-putt away.

EXT./INT. BUDDHIST TEMPLE - DAY

Pat and Shelly enter. Gifts taken at door and placed on ornate altar at foot of Buddha. Incense burns and VIETNAMESE HARP PLAYS. Guests Vietnamese, except Pat, Shelly, Margaret and her date, KEITH (35), Luan's boss at American Consulate.

Everyone seated when WE HEAR fast clacking of heels and Gertie crowds in next to Pat. Usher places bottle of Scotch with gifts by Buddha.

GERTIE (to Pat)

Sorry I'm late. Had a breakfast date.

Luan enters, then Becky in red silk Oa Dai and tall head dress on her beautifully styled long hair.

EXT. U.S. CONSULATE - DAY

Wedding party on lawn of consulate. Keith stands next to Luan and Becky. Margaret and American women nearby.

KEITH

Luan's my best Vietnamese advisor.

LUAN

I'm happy work for Americans.

EXT. U.S. CONSULATE - DAY

Pat talking with Shelly, Margaret and others. Gertie flirts with Marine guard. VIETNAMESE EMPLOYEE exits consulate.

VIETNAMESE EMPLOYEE

Miss Walsh, message for Miss Walsh.

PAT (alarmed)

That's me.

The employee hands paper to Pat as friends gather around.

PAT (cont'd)

It's from Dan. He says to be at the airbase in an hour for our R&R flight.

SHELLY

Go. I'll fix it with Teresa.

PAT

But only an hour.

VIETNAMESE EMPLOYEE

I drive you, Madam. Orders.

MARGARET

For a lowly lieutenant he has some mighty lofty privileges.

Pat, too happy to let Margaret bother her, runs to hug Becky.

PAT

I'm leaving on R&R. Take good care of her, Luan.

LUAN

Yes. Very good care.

Pat waves as she departs in black car with driver.

EXT. HONG KONG PENINSULA HOTEL - DAY

Elegant British Colonial set in lush grounds. Wide veranda with men in suits and women in dresses and hats having tea. Pat and Dan arrive in taxi with two small bags a bellboy takes. Taxi departs and they follow bellboy up stairs.

Pat lingers at cart with scones and silver bowls of clotted cream. Stiff BRITISH WAITER in white jacket approaches.

BRITISH WAITER

You wish to join us for tea?

Dan looks down at rumpled uniform. Pat tries to smooth wrinkled cotton dress as patrons observe.

DAN (to waiter)

Maybe after we freshen up.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Elegantly quaint and polished. As Dan tips bell boy, ANGLE ON opened bathroom where Pat looks around in wonder.

PAT

A bathtub.

She pushes handle on toilet, which promptly flushes. Dan comes to doorway. Pat touches towels, soap, shampoo.

PAT (cont'd)

Dan, this is beautiful.

DAN

I'd rather play house out here.

He puts out a hand to guide her to bedroom.

PAT

But I have a real tub to soak in.

DAN

Take all the time you want. After.

PAT

I don't want to smell of war.

She reaches for bubble bath, holding it up to Dan.

PAT (cont'd)

Roses.

Dan kisses her neck and shoulders, ignoring the bubble bath.

DAN

You smell just fine.

Pat moves him back. He sighs, looking like a little boy.

PAT

It'll be worth it. I promise.

DAN

O.K. But I'm timing you.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Dan speaking secretively on phone. Pat can be seen in bathroom mirror up to her neck in bubbles she pops playfully.

DAN (into phone)

What you just suggested.

Pat reaches out of tub and flushes toilet again.

DAN (cont'd, into phone)

Plus everything I ordered.

He reaches for antique RADIO, cradling phone on shoulder, and tries to find music. Only static and overlapping stations.

DAN (cont'd, into phone)
And come and go quietly.

PAT (O.S.)
Water's getting cold. If I had a pilot he could turn on his afterburners and heat things up.

Dan gives up on radio and starts stripping as he heads for bathroom. At door stumbles out of Marine boxers.

DAN
The hell with jet jockeys.

He gives bathroom door a kick behind him, but it stays open enough to see bubbles splatter against the mirror, toilet, everywhere. Pat SQUEALS delightedly.

DAN (cont'd)
The Marines have landed!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Two waiters slip into room with table adorned with candles and bouquet of white roses. WAITERS HEAR Pat and Dan in bathroom as they put table by window overlooking city, light candles and tune RADIO to soft music.

PAT (O.S.)
I love you Kool-Aid Dan.

DAN (O.S.)
Love you ... love you.

Waiters' eyebrows rise. They drop champagne in ice bucket and hustle to door as bubbles surge into room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lights of city on. Pat and Dan, in plush robes, sit over dinner with wet hair. RADIO MUSIC in b.g. Pat dips lobster into melted butter and puts it to Dan's mouth. He closes eyes as he chews. Pat reaches for a rose.

PAT (smelling)
How did you know I love white?

DAN

I looked at that piece of your
soul I own.

Pat melts like her butter. Dan smiles and cuts off Marine size chunk of lobster. He's about to dip it in butter when he looks at Pat and holds fork to her lips.

DAN (cont'd)

A kiss would taste better.

Pat kisses it sensuously. His eyes linger as he chews.

TONY BENNETT (on RADIO)

Hello, young lovers, wherever you
are...

They rise to kiss over roses, then move into dance.

DAN

You are my first thought every
morning.

PAT

And you are my last thought every
night.

EXT. HONG KONG HILLSIDE - PREDAWN

Dan and Pat wait at base of steep hill near narrow tracks.

PAT (shivering)

It's the middle of the night.

DAN

We have to see the sun rise over
the harbor from Victoria Peak.

Dan looks up hill where WE HEAR trolley moving down tracks.

DAN (cont'd)

Here comes our ride.

They sit in open seats facing downhill. As they start up, ORIGINAL SONG begins.

"If I should fall, keep running. Don't stop or look around. If one of us should have to die, the other must go on. If I lost you darling, my heart would surely break. We met in war and ever more our lives are left to fate. ..."

Victoria harbor begins to brighten from slowly rising sun. Thin sails of hundreds of junks glow golden. Pat enthralled. At top they get out silently, still watching sunrise. In b.g. Chinese move in slow, fluid motion of Tai Chi.

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - NIGHT

Pat and Dan nude in bed. Pat dreamy; Dan pensive.

DAN

If I got on a plane for home tomorrow instead of Nam, I'd spend twenty years in Leavenworth. But you're a civilian.

PAT

You're trying to get rid of me?

DAN

Never. I just want you to be safe.

PAT

I couldn't leave my patients and co-workers who depend on me.

DAN

Just a thought, Patty. A selfish one, but I love you so.

PAT

It's a sweet thought, but I can't leave my work. Or you.

INT./EXT. PENINSULA HOTEL - DAWN

Pat by large window in sheer slip going through slow movements of Tai Chi. Dan wakes and observes as sun casts Pat in glow that shines through slip to reveal lovely body.

EXT./INT. PAN AM AIRCRAFT IN FLIGHT - DAY

Pat looks out window of plane at harbor filled with junks. Tears fall to white rose she holds.

DAN

We'll come back some day.

He slips an arm around her, bumps rose and it crumbles.

PAT (sadly)

I dried it. From the bouquet.

DAN
I'll get you more back home.

Pat looks at battered rose and lets it fall to floor.

INT. PAN AM AIRCRAFT IN FLIGHT - DAY

Flight smooth. Pat and Dan asleep together and other passengers dozing. Sudden BLAST.

PAT
What was that!

Plane begins zig-zagging in sky. Flight attendants anxious.

DAN
We're coming into Danang. The crew's taking evasive action from the welcoming party.

PAT
Danang already?

DAN (quietly)
Guess we kinda' wore ourselves out.

G.I.s now awake, peering out windows.

G.I. A
Damn, I'm glad I spent my last ten on that ugly woman I found outside my door last night.

G.I. B
Shit, man. I had her first for five. I just wanted her out of my room before it got light and I had to look at her.

Laughter throughout plane.

EXT./INT. PAN AM AIRCRAFT TAXIES AT DANANG AIRFIELD - DAY

CAPTAIN (on P.A.)
We won't be here long so depart quickly. And God bless all of you.

Passengers all applaud.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL TRIAGE - DAY

Pat working hard. Otto enters with suave DOCTOR CANNON.

OTTO

Pat, meet Doctor Cannon,
orthopedic surgeon. He'll be with
us for two months.

PAT (to Dr. Cannon)

We have a backlog waiting for you.

DOCTOR CANNON

Well, I'll do what I can.

Otto exits, Cannon examines woman set off to side.

DOCTOR CANNON (cont'd)

This woman needs to go to the O.R.

PAT

There're others ahead of her.

DOCTOR CANNON

But she's nearly gone.

PAT

That's why I set her aside. While
we tried to save her we could lose
five more salvageable.

DOCTOR CANNON

You can't play God. You leave
those decisions to doctors.

Pat says it all in the look she gives him.

DOCTOR CANNON (cont'd)

I'll report you for...

He is interrupted by three gun-toting SOUTH VIETNAMESE
SOLDIERS. They scan room, go to silent male lying on
stretcher and begin YELLING and poking him with rifles.

PAT

Hey, you can't do that. Cam duc!

She turns to Doctor Cannon when they continue.

PAT (cont'd)

Stay while I get help.

She exits and Dr. Cannon watches helplessly as soldiers
INTERROGATE patient. Pat quickly returns with Mr. Hai.

PAT

Tell them to leave that man alone.

Mr. Hai speaks Vietnamese to soldiers and they reply angrily.

MR. HAI (to Pat)
He big North Vietnamese officer.

PAT
In here he's a patient.

Soldiers pick up stretcher, but Pat intervenes. One of them shoves her away and she nearly falls. They exit.

MR. HAI
It soldier business, Co Pat.

Hai exits. Pat watches door a beat then attends to I.V. that's run dry. Dr. Cannon checks woman Pat set aside.

DOCTOR CANNON
She's dead. You killed her.

Pat turns to face Dr. Cannon.

PAT
The war killed her, doctor.
(beat)
Nurses may kowtow to you back home, but over here you work with graduates of the kiss-my-ass school of nursing.

Dr. Cannon exits in froth and Pat returns to work.

INT. TERESA'S OFFICE - DAY

Pat seated before Teresa's desk.

PAT
Cannon's been here one day, and that qualifies him to run triage?

TERESA
I'm doing the best I can to turn this place into a real hospital. Doctor Cannon's a Fifth Avenue snob, I admit, but he's also a well trained orthopedic surgeon we're in desperate need of.

PAT
But is he worth all the trouble?

TERESA
To the patients he is.

PAT
O.K. I'll go apologize.

TERESA

No need. I happen to come from
the kiss-my-ass school of nursing
myself.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Pat and Teresa exit office to find Doctor Cannon pointing to
himself while speaking loudly to shocked Vietnamese staff.

DOCTOR CANNON

Doc-tor Can-non. Like BOOM-BOOM!

Pat and Teresa suppress laughter as they hurry past.

TERESA

Do you think we should tell him?

PAT

Let Sophie do it when he goes
past Cabbage Patch.

They arrive at staff lounge and Pat takes key from pocket.
Gertie rushes up in O.R. attire as Pat fumbles with lock.

GERTIE

God, girl, my bladder's ready to
go off like a grenade.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL STAFF LOUNGE - DAY

Gertie dashes inside shabby lounge and dives for bathroom.

PAT

Only senior citizen with a chronic
case of honeymooner's cystitis.

Pat and Teresa sift through mail. Gertie exits lavatory,
grabs large package.

GERTIE

Oh boy, my Sears order.

She rips in and holds up red mini-skirt and white go-go boots.

GERTIE (cont'd)

Whadda ya think?

TERESA (hesitantly)

The skirt kind of matches your hair.

Gertie pulls off O.R. cap and pats flame red hair.

GERTIE

God girl, all my life's been
working and raising kids alone.
I never knew there was so much
fun to be had.

She cackles delightedly and leaves.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - EVENING

Nurses having dinner. Tien serves, keeping usual silence.

TERESA

Pat, did you ever find out where
they took that soldier from triage?

PAT

No. But he was North Vietnamese.

MARGARET

Expect he went for a copter ride.

PAT

To where?

MARGARET

To the end of the line, if you
have to ask.

TERESA

End of what line?

MARGARET

Word is, C.I.A. takes two
prisoners up at a time. If the
first doesn't talk, they push him
out. The other usually does.

PAT

I don't believe that.

MARGARET

Ask that guy you can't stop
smiling about.

PAT (smiling)

Dan?

MARGARET

You know he's with the C.I.A.

From Pat's expression we know she did not.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Pat and Dan walk on beach. Dan looks at dark clouds.

DAN
Monsoon season coming.

PAT
Something happened at our hospital.

DAN
You got the award for the most
flies?

PAT
ARVN troops kidnapped a North
Vietnamese soldier. Margaret says
they put him on a helicopter to
question him.

(beat)
She claims many don't come back.
And the C.I.A. is behind it.

DAN
Look, Pat, I'm in a reconnaissance
unit. I just gather intelligence
and pass it on.

PAT
To the C.I.A.?

They are by the orphanage, where children run and play.

DAN
Let's go see Danny. I have
something for him in my jeep.

Dan takes Pat's hand and pulls her up dunes.

INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Danny holds football to chest. Dan a few feet away with
arms extended.

DAN
Come on. Throw it.

Danny tries but gets little air. Dan moves closer, throws ball to Danny and he catches it. Dan raises arms.

DAN (cont'd)
Touchdown!

Pat applauds. They continue game as children and nuns watch.

SISTER FRANCOISE (to Pat)
A blessing you meet Lieutenant Dan.

PAT
Yes. He's incred...very nice.

EXT. NURSES' VILLA COURTYARD - DAY - RAINING HARD

Dan's jeep comes to stop in courtyard, awash in water.

PAT
I'm trying to stay out of your role here. But I worry that you're mixed up in ...

DAN
Patty, we have to use everything we can to win this war, the C.I.A. included.

Pat does not respond but she clearly disagrees with Dan's statement. Dan frustrated.

DAN
(continuing)
I don't interfere with your function here. And you're saving the lives of enemy soldiers who're trying to kill me.

Pat taken aback by the realization.

PAT
They're just patients to us.

DAN
Maybe you've never had a friend killed.

PAT (after beat)
My uncle Gene was nineteen when he died in Normandy. When his things were shipped home, the soap in his soap case had dried bubbles on it. They broke when my mother touched them. She wept for hours.

DAN

I'm serving my country, just like
your uncle.

PAT

But this war ...

DAN

Don't say it's not the same. I'm
a patriot, goddamn it, and I don't
have to apologize to anyone for it.

Pat deeply pained. She rubs her bare arms.

PAT

I should get inside.

She gets out of jeep in downpour. Dan roars away.

INT. BAMBOO HUT - DAY

Pat and Karen drink steaming tea. Pat watches rain on river.

KAREN

Bird-dog says Dan's really upset.

PAT

He hasn't tried contacting me in
two months.

KAREN

Have you?

INT. TRIAGE - DAY

Pat enters to find Dr. Cannon trying to start an I.V.

DR. CANNON

She's in shock. Can't find a vein.

PAT

The women all breast feed.

Pat inserts needle in breast vein and I.V. runs rapidly.

DR. CANNON

That's fantastic. Thank you.

PAT

Thank you for the last two months.
You've almost emptied our
orthopedic ward.

Pat smiles at Cannon. He smiles back.

DR. CANNON
My pleasure.

American marines carry in casualties. Pat hurries across room and starts applying tourniquets.

PAT
A few more orthopedic patients to
send you off, Dr. Cannon.

He picks up a young boy and starts for the door.

DR. CANNON
I'm not leaving until tomorrow.

Pat starting an I.V. when Dan appears at door carrying a wounded woman. She points without looking up.

PAT
Over there.

When she gets the needle in place and looks up, her eyes meet Dan's. You can see the magnetism and pain between them.

Shelly enters. She looks from Pat to Dan, finally:

SHELLY
Who's ready?

Pat points to uniformed North Vietnamese patient.

PAT
He is.

Shelly goes to one end of field stretcher. Pat takes the other. When Pat returns, Dan is gone.

INT. HOSPITAL - LATE NIGHT

Two O.R.s going. Gunfire erupts close by. Otto assisting Ron.

OTTO (loudly)
O.K. Sew 'em up and get out.

EXT. NURSES VILLA - NIGHT

Weary, blood-splattered nurses pull into flooded courtyard, Pat dozing in back of van. Margaret shakes her.

MARGARET

Wake up. You have a visitor.

Dan sits behind wheel of jeep parked in foot of water. Pat panics at her bloody uniform and matted hair.

PAT

I'm a mess.

MARGARET

Let him see how hard you work.

Pat wades to Dan's jeep while others go into villa.

PAT

Hi.

Dan takes in all of her.

DAN

Oh, Patty.

He jumps out of jeep, picks her up and carries her inside.

INT. NURSES VILLA - NIGHT

Dan sitting on Pat's bed. Pat enters from bathroom, clean.

PAT

At least we have water.

DAN

Do you work this late often?

PAT

When we have to. Which is often.

Pat lies down, patting spot next to her.

PAT (cont'd)

You can't drive back to Hoi An now. But I'm too tired to talk.

Dan removes boots, turns off lamp and lies down in uniform close to Pat, who is already asleep.

EXT. HOSPITAL COURTYARD - DAY

Pat and Dan sit in Dan's jeep. Food cart arrives in b.g. and patients line up for food under Teresa's watchful eyes.

DAN

I don't want us to say or do things that will ruin what we had in Hong Kong. Or at least what I thought we had.

PAT

I feel the same, but...

DAN

Can you wait for me two months?

PAT

What's going to be any different?

DAN

Patty, I drove up here alone in monsoon muck with Charlie taking pot shots to ask you to marry me.

Pat speechless.

DAN (cont'd)

My tour's up in two months. I can leave the Corps in another year.

PAT

You don't have to leave the Marines. Just so I know you're not torturing prisoners.

DAN

I'm not. If my word isn't ...

PAT

It is.

DAN

Just to be sure, I'll get out of intelligence when I leave country. If you marry me.

PAT

Which Dan would I be marrying? Hong Kong Dan or ...

DAN

Hong Kong Dan. With a little Kool-Aid Dan mixed in.

Pat meets him over box of grenades between seats.

PAT
I still have six months left.

DAN
You've done a year. That's enough.

EXT. LANE TO ORPHANAGE, DAN'S JEEP - DAY

Pat and Dan headed for orphanage with back of jeep jammed with large boxes. It is raining and Pat sings.

PAT
I'm dreaming of a wet Christmas ...

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Dan unloading heavy boxes.

DAN
Where'd you get all this stuff?

PAT
I wrote to family and friends.
They went to churches back home.

INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Pat pulls clothing, blankets and toys from boxes to delight of children and nuns. Sea Pine in b.g. decorated with bits of ribbon and candles. Dan throws Danny his football. Danny holds onto it a moment, then throws both arms into air.

DANNY
Tuh-down!

Dan howls. Pat spots girl whose brother died with coin in throat and takes red dress to her. Child at first ignores Pat, then slowly touches ruffle on dress. Pat slips it over ragged attire. A beat, then child gives huge smile.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - NIGHT

Pat knocking at door of her bedroom.

PAT
Can I come in now?

DAN (O.S.)
Not yet.

PAT
What in the world are you doing?

DAN (O.S.)
It's a Christmas present.

The door opens only enough to let Dan's arm slip out.

DAN
Close your eyes.

Pat does so and he guides her inside.

DAN (cont'd)
O.K., open them.

Pat's eyes open to billowy silk cloud pinned high at center, draping out to corners and falling down walls like a majestic tent. She moves in circles beneath it looking upward.

DAN (cont'd.)
It's a parachute. So you won't see gekkos running around.

PAT
It's the Arabian Nights.

INT. NURSES' VILLA, PAT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Pat and Dan in bed. Pat looking up at silk ceiling.

PAT
Our special place. No war allowed.

DAN
At last.

INT./EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

Pat, Karen and Shelly leaving work. Hospital cleaner.

KAREN
Bird-dog's coming. Tien's cooking up a feast.

PAT
Dan said he could get us a turkey.

SHELLY

Tom already did. Fell off a truck
on its way to the Admiral's.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL STAFF LOUNGE - DAY

Pat and Teresa enter and check a wood crate over 2 feet long.

TERESA (to Pat)

It's addressed to you.

Pat pries open the top, revealing brown wrapping paper.

TERESA (cont'd)

It's certainly well packed.

PAT (recognizing smell)

It can't be!

Pat rips open side of crate and layers of paper to reveal a beautiful miniature Blue Spruce tree. She sets the tree on a table and takes out and opens an envelope.

PAT (cont'd)

It's from one of my sisters. "I went
to our old farm and cut this little
tree from the place we always got our
trees growing up. I pray you stay safe.
Merry Christmas. Kitty"

Pat wipes away tears, picks up a note handwritten on Post Office stationary and reads aloud while Teresa smells the tree with her eyes closed.

PAT (cont'd)

"The cardboard box this little tree
arrived in was badly damaged when it
got to us. We figured it would be
important to someone so far away from
home on Christmas so we built this
crate for it. Merry Christmas, the
San Francisco Fleet Post Office."

PAT (cont'd)

How wonderful of them.

INT. NAVY HOSPITAL CHAPEL - NIGHT

Pat and Dan in chapel. Nurses and corpsmen push wheelchairs or lead patients with dressings over eyes. Stretchers hold men with heads swathed in bandages. Some have surgical masks over ravaged faces. The masks moving in and out with each breath are only sign of life. Dan watches intently.

CHIMES RING. CHAPLAIN and corpsman come onto altar decorated with greenery and blue lights that flicker uncertainly. Pat and Dan stand with those who are able.

INT. NAVY HOSPITAL CHAPEL - NIGHT

BELLS RING as chapel empties. Chaplain greeting people.

CHAPLAIN
(to Pat and Dan)
Did you meet over here?

DAN
Yes, sir. We sure did.

Chaplain looks toward patients wheeled out on stretchers.

CHAPLAIN
It's comforting to see happiness
in the midst of so much sorrow.

EXT. ROAD TO DANANG, DAN'S JEEP - NIGHT

Pat and Dan headed to Danang. Night quiet, no flares in sky.

PAT
It's so great to see stars instead
of flares and explosions.

DAN
My mother will be glad you got me
to Midnight Mass.

PAT
I know now what that song means.

DAN
Which song?

PAT
Silent Night.

INT. NURSES VILLA, PAT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Pat and Dan in bed. CAROLS play on tape recorder.

DAN
Sounds like Uncle Ho's taking the
Christmas truce seriously.

PAT

I hope it lasts beyond Christmas.

DAN (after beat)

Danny doesn't have much of a future at that orphanage, does he?

PAT

None of them do. The nuns say some die from broken hearts.

DAN

Would you consider adopting him?

Pat sits up excitedly.

PAT

I know someone at the consulate who can expedite his paperwork!

DAN

Then get expediting.

INT. NURSES' VILLA, DINING ROOM - DAY

Pat's decorated little Christmas tree in b.g. At two long tables put together are Pat, Dan, Shelly, Tom, Jean, Karen, Bird-dog (still in cast), Teresa, Ron, Otto, Jim, Ruth from burn ward, Gertie with a colonel, Margaret, Keith, Becky and Luan. Group SINGS JINGLE BELLS.

Tien carries in beautiful, 20-pound turkey, and everyone applauds. Otto raises wine glass and others do same.

OTTO

May the war be over and we all be safely home next Christmas.

BIRD-DOG

Hear! Hear!

INT. NURSES' VILLA, DINING ROOM - DAY

Dinner over. Luan and Becky talking to Pat, Dan, Keith and Margaret.

LUAN (to Pat and Dan)

You come Hue for Tet? Imperial city bery beautiful for New Year.

KEITH
Margaret and I are going.

DAN
Sounds like fun.

BECKY
We tell Luan family we have baby.

PAT (hugging Becky)
How wonderful. We'll be there.

EXT. NURSES' VILLA - EVENING

Dan, with Bird-dog, backing jeep out of courtyard. Bird-dog waves his bush hat. Pat and Karen wave back as RAIN BEGINS.

KAREN (to Pat)
I hate monsoon. The rain makes everything so grim.

PAT
And cold.

They run inside.

EXT. ROAD TO HOI AN - DUSK

Dan, in full combat gear, fights jeep through red muck. Bird-dog in bush hat and unzipped flak jacket drinks a Foster's.

DAN
Toss that beer and hold a weapon.
And zip your flak jacket!

BIRD-DOG
Trouble with you yanks is you're too suspicious. It's Christmas.

DAN
Cong don't care shit about a truce.

EXT. HOI AN COMPOUND - WEEK LATER - DAY

Tranh with ten troops outside quarters on hill. They survey Dan's deserted compound, then Tranh ushers his men inside.

TRANH (Vietnamese with subtitles)
Everyone gone. We go over plan.

Just after troops enter quarters, Bird-dog emerges from villa, still in cast, with two six-packs of Foster's beer. He climbs hill to Vietnamese quarters, his flak jacket unzipped.

INT. VIETNAMESE QUARTERS - DAY

Tranh squatted on floor going over small map with troops. All jump to feet when door opens and Bird-dog enters.

BIRD-DOG

G'day, mates. I don't care much
for drinkin' alone.

Tranh slides his sandal over the map.

TRANH

Why you not go Saigon with
Lieutena' Dan for meeting?

Bird-dog indicates arm.

BIRD-DOG

Twig's finally healed. Have to
go to Navy Hospital later to
have cast and screws removed.

He hands beer to troops but one can drops. Both he and Tranh bend to get it. Tranh's foot comes off map and Bird-dog picks it up. He looks at it, then Tranh. He backs away, turns and sees two soldiers blocking door.

BIRD-DOG (cont'd)

You're Dan's troops. He taught
you every bloody thing you know.

TRANH (smiling)

He numbah one teasher.

Tranh pulls knife and plunges it through Bird-dog's open flak jacket. A soldier catches Bird-dog as he collapses to floor. Tranh squats beside him and holds arm under Bird-dog's nose as he gasps for air with blood coming from mouth.

TRANH (cont'd)

You smell Viet Cong good? How you
not smell V.C. all around?

BIRD-DOG

Dan.

It is said with final breath. He and bush hat are removed, blood cleaned up and Foster's hidden under floor boards.

INT. NURSES' VILLA, PAT'S ROOM - DAY

Pat at her tape recorder when angry Dan enters wearing soaked, muddy combat attire and bandolier of ammo.

PAT
What's happening?

Dan silently pulls pistol from flak jacket and loads it.

DAN
Keep this by you.

He lays gun on bedside table next to photograph of himself.

PAT
You know I hate guns.

Tape recorder is playing IF YOU ARE GOING TO SAN FRANCISCO.

DAN
Why're you playing that hippie
shit?

PAT
What the hell's your problem?

Dan begins to tremble and Pat starts removing his wet clothes.

PAT (cont'd)
You have to get out of these wet
things.

DAN
We can't go to Hue for Tet.

PAT
But we promised Becky and Luan.
Margaret and Keith are going.

DAN
I can't fucking run off whenever
you feel like it!

Pat stops pulling off Dan's clothing and pushes him away.

PAT
Just when I start believing you're
a regular human being, someone I
can love, you turn into Macho
Marine, the Killing Machine!

She goes to door and opens it.

PAT (cont'd)
 No more Jekyll and Hyde for me!
 Get out of my house and my life.

Dan walks to door, pauses to look at her, then exits. Pat goes to bed, crying. She is there when Dan reappears in doorway. His head is down and his voice trembles.

DAN
 They killed Bird-dog. We've been
 out all night looking for him.

Pat springs upright.

DAN (cont'd)
 Found him outside our perimeter.
 In the elephant grass.

Dan goes to Pat and they hold one another as they weep.

DAN (cont'd)
 Tranh thinks the V.C. who did it
 are hiding on my island. We're
 going there tomorrow to see.

PAT
 You won't go with only Vietnamese?

DAN
 They're my men, Patty. Besides,
 I know every inch of that island.
 The people look out for me.

PAT
 Bird-dog thought he could always
 smell VC and he's dead. Don't go,
 Dan, please. We don't have to go
 to Hue, we'll just stay here in
 our Arabian tent.

DAN
 I have to find who did it. He
 would do the same for me.

PAT
 He would want you safe.

INT. NURSES VILLA - DAY

Pat holding Karen as they weep together.

PAT
 I'm sorry. So sorry.

INT. NURSES VILLA PAT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dan and Pat lie in each other's arms.

PAT (hesitantly)
I wasn't going to tell you yet.

DAN
Tell me what?

PAT
I think I might be pregnant.

Dan springs up in bed.

DAN
You are?

PAT
I'm not sure. You probably thought
a nurse would be better prepared...

Dan pulls her to him.

DAN
For the last twenty-four hours
I've been eaten up with hate.
You've changed that.

PAT
But I'm not sure.

DAN
O.K. It'll be our maybe baby.

They lie quietly.

PAT
You're exhausted. Stay here and
sleep a few hours.

DAN
I hope it's a boy.

He falls asleep.

EXT. NURSES VILLA COURTYARD - NIGHT

Dan in his jeep. Pat standing very near.

DAN
I'll come up as soon as I get back
from the island.

Pat kisses him as he starts jeep. She hasn't given up.

PAT
Please don't leave.

DAN
I have to. This one's personal.

PAT
I know. But can't some men from your
compound go with you?

DAN
They all left for Saigon this morning
to celebrate Tet.

Dan leans out and kisses Pat. Her arms pull him to her.

PAT (crying)
I love you, future husband.

DAN
I love you, almost wife.

He kisses Pat again. Pat watches him back out of courtyard.
She continues to stand there, oblivious to the monsoon rain.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL TERESA'S OFFICE - DAY

Karen, tearful, sitting in front of Teresa's desk.

TERESA
How long did you know Bird-dog?

KAREN
Long enough to love him.

TERESA
Would you like to go to his
funeral? I can get you on an R&R
flight to Australia.

KAREN
I can't. He was married.

Karen stands and Teresa gets up to put an arm around her

TERESA
Why don't you take a few days off?

KAREN
I'd rather work.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Pat and Karen walk toward O.R. Both somber.

EXT. DANANG STREET - DUSK

Jean drives van with Pat, Karen, Shelly, Margaret and Gertie.

SHELLY

One more week and Tom and I lift
out of this mule-shit pie for good.

PAT

Dan and I will be right behind you.

GERTIE

You're both leaving me all alone?

MARGARET

You haven't been alone since you
got here.

INT. DANANG HOSPITAL - DAY

Pat in triage with Mr. Hai and young woman near death who is
struggling to talk to Pat. She has blood running.

CO BIC (to Pat)

Ahlun. Bonon.

PAT (to Mr. Hai)

What is she saying?

Mr. Hai talks to woman. She answers warily. (no subtitles)

HAI (to Pat)

Say only island and banana.

Pat confused. Woman looks to Pat, pointing to herself.

CO BIC

Teesher. Lieutena' Dan.

PAT

The teacher from Dan's island?

Co Bic nods weakly. She pulls Pat down to her.

CO BIC (whisper)

Hai V.C.

Mr. Hai heads for door. Co Bic gasps for air. Pat looks frantically from Co Bic to Mr. Hai.

CO BIC (cont'd)
V.C. shoot me. Lieutena' go ahlun,
he die.

Co Bic fighting to remain conscious.

CO BIC (cont'd)
I love Lieutena' Dan same-same you.
Save Lieutena' go home America.

Her eyes close and Pat checks for pulse as WE HEAR motorbike O.S. attempting to start. Once, twice. Pat runs from triage just as it catches, then sputters out.

PAT
Mr. Hai! Wait!

Motor bike starts again but Pat grabs hold of Mr. Hai and bike falls to its side.

PAT (cont'd)
Co Bic said Dan is dead if he goes
to his island!

Staff coming from O.R. Mr. Hai pointing to triage.

MR. HAI (to Pat)
Co Bic dinky dao.

PAT
Stop calling her crazy and tell me
what's going on!

Shelly and Jean move forward. Mr. Hai pulls free of Pat and tries to right his bike, but she seizes his shirt.

SHELLY
Take it easy, Mouse.

Pat lowers voice but won't let go of Mr. Hai.

PAT (to Shelly)
A patient from Dan's island says
Hai is V.C. And Dan's headed into
an ambush.

Jim Ramirez approaches with eyes blazing. Pat waves him back, changing tone.

PAT (to Mr. Hai)
 You told me family is everything,
 and Dan is mine. I helped save
 your brother, help me save Dan.

MR. HAI (after beat)
 Tell Lieutena' don't go island.

PAT
 But he's going there today!

JEAN (to Pat)
 We'll stop him.

PAT
 How?

Mr. Hai uses opportunity to roar away.

JEAN (to Pat)
 Rick's still here. I'll see if
 he can get a chopper.

EXT. DANANG STREET - DAY

Jean hurriedly driving van with Pat to airbase.

EXT. HOI AN RIVER BANK - DAY

Dan, Tranh and ten Vietnamese soldiers, all in combat gear, load weapons from jeeps into three simple boats with motors.

EXT. DANANG AIRBASE - DAY

Jean pulls up to hangar and jumps out. Pat tries to follow.

JEAN
 Wait here.

Jean enters hangar. Jets scream into air. Jean returns.

JEAN (cont'd)
 Rick's due to leave in two days.
 He's off flight status.

PAT
 Get someone else. Please.

JEAN
 He's coming over from his quarters.

EXT. HOI AN RIVER BANK - DAY

Dan and his troops getting into boats.

EXT. DANANG AIRBASE - DAY

Pat pacing near van. Rick appears in flight suit and she runs to him. Jean follows more slowly.

RICK (to Pat)
I lined up a chopper and maybe
some gunships. But no guarantees
we can find him.

Jean looks at Rick's attire and the helmet he holds.

JEAN
You only have two days to go.

RICK
I'll be O.K.

CHOPPER REVVING UP in b.g. Rick dons helmet.

PAT (hugging him)
Come back safe, all of you.

JEAN (to Rick)
Thanks.

RICK (hugging her)
Maybe it'll make up for the boy.

Pat and Jean watch chopper depart. Pat ready to collapse.

JEAN
The best thing to do is work.

EXT. HOI AN WATER - DAY

Three boats move toward island. Dan and Trinh in lead.

INT. DANANG HOSPITAL TRIAGE - DAY

Pat tries to start I.V. and blows it. Shelly enters.

SHELLY
Supervise our students. I'll do this.

EXT. WATER APPROACHING DAN'S ISLAND - DAY

Dan in bow of boat with Trinh at motor. Two boats follow.

DAN (to Tranh)
If we encounter any fire, we fall
back until I get air support.

TRANH
Yes sir.

All quiet as boats approach. Islanders squatted on hillside
wave. CHILDREN on shoreline, waving hands above heads.

CHILDREN
Lieutena' Dan. Lieutena' Dan.

DAN (to Tranh)
We're O.K.

Dan puts his weapon across knees and waves at children. But
the children seem more mechanical than joyful and the
parents have worried expressions. As Dan's boat gets closer,
Tranh's hand pulls something from engine. It stalls as one
of the other boats pulls alongside and Tranh grabs Dan's
weapon and jumps aboard. Dan confused a moment.

TRANH (to Dan)
I kill your Bird-dog, too.

DAN
V.C. You're all fucking V.C.

Boats depart as tunnel trap doors flip open and Viet Cong
in black uniforms come up firing. Islanders SCREAM, flee
for jungle, some fall in hail of bullets.

Dan bails over side, fighting under water to get off heavy
gear. Bullets zing by. Dan surfaces with only face visible
and gulps air, then goes under as boat drifts toward shore.

V.C. hold fire until boat turns and begins jerkily toward
mainland. Dan surfaces, pulling boat with same strong
strokes he used to save Pat. He works on engine from water
and pulls rope. Nothing. Taking fire from V.C.

Dan goes under but hand on engine. He comes up, pulls rope
again. Engine starts, almost stalls, then comes alive.

Dan bursts to surface, heaving himself over side of boat
under fierce fire. He's hit and collapses, hanging halfway
out of the boat.

V.C. CHEER as boat lists to side Dan hangs over. A red stain
on Dan's hip spreads. WE HEAR growing sound of chopper. It
comes into view and DOOR GUNNER opens fire on V.C. Dan looks
up. Chopper hovers, Rick steps onto skid to reach down.

RICK
Dan, gimme your hand!

With extreme effort, Dan reaches up to RICK. They struggle, Dan panting and Rick pulling mightily. Door gunner yells over shoulder while firing constantly.

DOOR GUNNER.
I'm one against a whole platoon!

RICK
I'm going in.

He jumps into water and gets Dan's hands on chopper skid.

RICK (cont'd)
Hold on! We'll back out of range!

Dan's hands hold skid a beat, then fall limply to water. Rick puts one hand on boat and arm around Dan. Shells hitting chopper. Door gunner takes one in shoulder.

DOOR GUNNER.
I'm hit!

Rick watches chopper depart and V.C. cheer. He struggles to keep Dan's head above water as boat drifts toward shore.

V.C. #1 (in Vietnamese)
Save ammo. They come to us.

RICK (to Dan)
Pat sent me. I'm not letting you get blown away.

Huge WHUMP! WHUMP! WHUMP! sound drowns out words. Two Cobra gunships come in with guns and side-mounted rockets blazing. V.C. jump from where they squat smoking cigarettes and run for trap doors, but Cobras cut them down.

RICK (cont'd)
Fuckin' A! Cobras!

He shakes Dan and his eyes flutter open for a moment.

RICK (cont'd)
Semper Fi! Marines never leave their brothers behind!

Cobra #1 hovers and crew chief helps Rick get Dan aboard. Cobra #2 continues fire. Inside #1 Rick pats Dan's cheek and his eyes open.

RICK
No medic on board! Stay with me!

Rick puts canteen to Dan's lips. He drinks.

DAN (weakly)
Grape.

RICK
Old taste buds still working!

DAN
Patty.

RICK
We're headed there. Stay awake.

CO-PILOT (on radio)
Danang Navy hospital, bad one
inbound. No medic on board.

INT. DANANG HOSPITAL O.R. - DAY

Pat a wreck as she works on last patient. Shelly enters.

SHELLY (to Pat)
We'll go home after this.

EXT. NAVY HOSPITAL - DAY

Cobra comes in fast. Corpsmen with field stretcher run through swirling dust. Rick yells above rotating blades.

RICK (to corpsmen)
Hustle! Been in water!

Dan lifted from pool of blood. Corpsmen run for RECEIVING.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - DAY

Pat, Jean, Karen and Shelly waiting. Pat looks at watch.

PAT
Three hours.

KNOCK on door, Pat jumps up and runs. Door opens and Tom enters. Pat at first relieved, but expression changes to dread as she SEES chaplain from Navy Hospital behind him. She backs away.

PAT (cont'd)

No. Please, no.

TOM

We did everything possible.

Pat grabs hold of Tom's shirt, beseeching him.

PAT

You made a mistake, Tom. You
always say you don't like to look
at the faces.

Shelly, Jean and Karen draw near, all crying. Tien behind them, head bowed. Margaret appears solemnly. Tom takes syringe from shirt pocket.

TOM

I brought something for you.

Pat pushes past him for door.

PAT

I'm going out there. It's not Dan.

Chaplain puts out arm to stop her, speaking gently.

CHAPLAIN

You must trust in God to help
you through this difficult time.

PAT

Trust in God! While I saved total
strangers he let Dan die!

Tom injects Pat's arm while Shelly holds her.

INT. NURSES' VILLA, PAT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Pat asleep. Shelly sits at bedside. Pat's eyes open and she is at first puzzled by Shelly's presence, then terrible sadness fills face. Voice a whisper.

PAT

Is it true?

SHELLY

You need to rest.

Pat takes Dan's photo from table and holds it to breast.

PAT
 He's the first person in my life
 to tell me he loves me.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Pat enters hospital and runs into Otto and Teresa.

OTTO
 I'm awfully sorry about Dan. Let
 me know when you want to leave.

PAT
 Not while he's still here.
 (to Teresa)
 Please ... let me work.

TERESA
 Of course.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL TRIAGE - DAY

Pat, hands shaking, tries to wrap blood pressure cuff on
 patient's arm. Margaret, at door, enters and takes cuff.

MARGARET
 Let me.

Pat checks patient's pulse while Margaret does blood pressure.

MARGARET (cont'd)
 I have made it no secret I do not
 like most Americans.
 (beat)
 They are so ungrateful they have
 never had a war in their back-
 yards. But I want you to know, I
 admire you.

PAT
 Thank you, Margaret.

EXT. DANANG - EVENING

Hospital van with Pat and others moves through streets
 crowded with dragon dancers and people throwing candy to kids.
 FIRECRACKERS and CHERRY BOMBS everywhere. Pat covers ears.

SHELLY
 Happy fuckin' New Year.

INT. NURSES' VILLA PAT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Box has Pat's name on it. She lifts lid to find Dan's wallet and shaving kit. She opens soap dish and sees bubbles on bar. They break when she touches them. She weeps.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - PAT'S ROOM - EVENING

Pat on bed crying. Bottle of Scotch and glass on table.

FIREWORKS cause her to sit up. Tries to light cigarette, but hands tremble. CHERRY BOMB explodes outside window and she retreats to corner of room. Buries face in parachute draping down wall.

Gradually, she becomes aware of silk and lifts section lovingly to cheek. But hands soon tighten and a piece of parachute comes loose.

She pauses, then savagely tears down more, her movements frenzied as she continues ripping around room. Bedside table goes over and Dan's picture shatters as it and Scotch bottle hit the floor. Pat drops to floor, picks up photo in puddle of Scotch and sits tangled in silk, crying. Her face changes as she spots gun Dan gave her on floor.

She takes it, turns it over, releases safety and slowly raises it to temple. We are waiting for gunshot when hand reaches INTO FRAME, taking the gun. Tien kicks Scotch bottle aside.

TIEN

Too many die, Co Pat. Too many.

She points to door.

TIEN (cont'd)

You not eat three day. Go eat.

INT. NURSES' VILLA, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Pat, Shelly, Margaret, Jean and Karen at table.

KAREN (to Margaret)

Why didn't you go to Hue?

MARGARET

I didn't feel much like celebrating. Keith went.

FIRECRACKER thrown onto balcony makes Pat drop fork.

SHELLY

Are they going to keep this racket
up all night?

Suddenly noise changes to series of very loud EXPLOSIONS.

MARGARET

That's not fireworks, ladies.

Night erupts in battle. Plaster rains down. Nurses hit
floor.

SHELLY

Navy Hospital! They have bunkers!

EXT. DANANG - NIGHT

Van races along road, lights out. Sky lit with flares.

EXT. GATE TO NAVY HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Shelly shouts through closed gate.

SHELLY

We're American nurses!

No response. A ROCKET EXPLODES in b.g.

SHELLY (cont'd)

I'm Doctor Frederick's fiance!

SENTRY (through crack in gate)

You all can slip in, but not the
vehicle.

Nurses hurry single file through narrow opening. Pat is
about to enter last, but runs back to van and guns engine.

SHELLY

Hey, where're you going!

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Pat drives wildly down lane to orphanage.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - NIGHT

Pat pulls up to orphanage and jumps out as EXPLOSION knocks loose large branch. It crashes across van, hitting Pat in back and knocking her to ground.

INT. ORPHANAGE - NIGHT

SCREAMING children and nuns holding babies under furniture. Pat enters, finds Danny and presses him to her under table.

INT. HUE, LUAN'S FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Keith, Becky, Luan and family having Tet party when MACHINE GUN FIRE outside. Luan grabs Becky and lifts her to rafters.

Door bursts open. VIET CONG and North Vietnamese enter with weapons drawn. Viet Cong points at Luan.

VIET CONG (Vietnamese with subtitle)
That one works for Americans.

North Vietnamese rip Luan apart with AK47s, then his family. Becky watches from rafters. Keith led away at gunpoint.

EXT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL - DAWN

Hospital van with Jean, Karen, Margaret, Gertie and Shelly, enters courtyard. Behind, MP jeep with machine gunner, Teresa and Pat. Scratches on Pat's face and arms.

Courtyard filled with casualties on ground. More carried in as vehicles move slowly through crowd. Mothers with bloodied children run alongside pleading. GUNFIRE all around.

Pat walks painfully into hospital with aid from Teresa.

EXT. HUE - DAY

Battle for Hue rages. Marines fight enemy at close quarters.

INT. HUE, LUAN'S FAMILY HOME - DAY

Becky still up on rafters. Door open and FIREFIGHTS visible outside. Luan and other bodies lie in dark blood and flies.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL TRIAGE - DAY

Pat works with Teresa. Marines carry in more wounded.

MARINE #1

They're all V.C. Found 'em in
tunnels out at Marble Mountain.

One stretcher covered with tarpaulin.

MARINE #2

This one died on the way in. You
want us to take him to the morgue?

Teresa nods but as men start to leave, left arm drops
from under tarp, revealing long claw on little finger.

TERESA

Wait a second.

Teresa pulls back tarp to reveal Mr. Hai.

MARINE #2

We got lucky. He was their
commander.

EXT. HUE, PERFUME RIVER - NIGHT

Huge battle in b.g. as Becky creeps into river with reed
between lips. She goes under with only moving reed visible.

EXT. HOSPITAL COURTYARD - DAY

Margaret, Otto and Teresa unload ambulances. Pat assessing
casualties.

OTTO

They're calling it the Tet
Offensive. Finding mass graves in
Hue with Americans buried alive.

PAT

Becky's in Hue with her husband.

Pat turns to Margaret.

PAT (cont'd)

And Keith.

MARGARET

I'm sure Keith is safe.

EXT. LANE TO ORPHANAGE - DAY

Pat drives van through mud and rain with cases of food.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Becky crouched in jungle. V.C. pass within inches.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Sisters Francoise and Marie meet Pat as van pulls up.

SISTER MARIE

So sad, your Lieutenant Dan.

PAT

I brought food from the PX. Can't
unload it with my back.

INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Sisters Marie, Francois and other nuns enter with cases of food, Pat follows slowly behind. Danny runs to Pat with football, looks behind her.

DANNY

Tuh-down?

Pat sits on bench near nun sweeping up broken glass.

PAT (to Danny)

Touchdown chet roi.

Danny looks quizzically toward Sister Marie.

SISTER MARIE (to Pat)

Too young to understand.

PAT

Maybe that's better.

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Sister Marie helps Pat to van.

SISTER MARIE

May God give you courage.

PAT (sharply)

Please don't talk about God.

Pat gets into van and slip-slides away. Nun pained.

EXT. NAVY HOSPITAL - DAY

Pat pulls van up to side of Receiving. She goes inside.

INT. NAVY HOSPITAL - DAY

Pat sitting on stretcher. NAVY DOCTOR with her.

PAT

But I might be pregnant.

NAVY DOCTOR

You have a badly injured back we
need to x-ray.

INT. NAVY HOSPITAL - DAY

Pat in exam room. Navy doctor looks at x-rays.

PAT

You're sure I'm not pregnant?

NAVY DOCTOR

Well, I'm not an obstetrician.
But I would say you are not.

Pat sad.

NAVY DOCTOR (cont'd)

You have enough on your plate.
There are bone chips from your
vertebrae chewing up your nerve
roots, causing the pain. You
need to go home and take care
of your back. We're too busy to
care for you here.

EXT. HOSPITAL COURTYARD - DAY

Pat sorting casualties. Helicopter lands and Becky appears
in doorway, hair tangled, clothing torn, face cut and dirty.

BECKY

Co Pat.

PAT

Becky?

INT. HOSPITAL STAFF LOUNGE - DAY

Becky lies on sofa while Pat cleans and bandages wounds.

BECKY

I walk long time in jungle.
American soldier find me.

PAT

What about your baby?

BECKY (touching abdomen)

We save baby.
(suppressing sob)
Luan chet roi.

PAT

Dan chet roi too.

BECKY

North soldiers take Mister Keith.

INT. NURSES' VILLA - NIGHT

Nurses attempting to eat. Pat drinking generous Scotch.

JEAN (to Pat)

Patty was his last word. Rick
wanted to tell you himself before
he left but couldn't do it.

PAT

I understand. I love Rick for
risking his life getting to Dan.

Shelly's monkey comes into room and Jean pets him.

JEAN

He misses Shelly.

Jean looks at Pat.

JEAN (cont'd)

You should get out of here too.
Your back needs attention, and
you're drinking too much.

Pat looks at drink, sets it down and speaks quietly.

PAT

I'm afraid I'm becoming my
father.

Pat silent, then turns to Margaret.

PAT (cont'd)

What about our little boy, Danny?

MARGARET

I'll see his papers cleared.

INT. CIVILIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

Sister Françoise comes into hospital and finds Pat.

SISTER FRANCOISE

Co Pat, you come orphanage.

PAT

Did something happen to Danny?

SISTER FRANCOISE

You come.

INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Danny stands by Vietnamese soldier missing leg.

SISTER MARIE (to Pat)

He look for family long time. All gone but Dan-nay.

PAT

How can he be sure? Danny had to be a baby when he went to war.

SISTER MARIE

Important have son in Vietnam.

PAT

He's important to me, too.

SISTER MARIE

Important have son in Vietnam.

Pat torn by situation, walks toward beach, stops a beat, then returns and hands man all the money in her purse.

PAT (to Sister Marie)

Tell him to take good care of him.

Man bows as he accepts money, listens to nun, bows more times to Pat. Pat opens arms to Danny and they hug.

PAT (cont'd)

I'll always remember you.

Pat spots football nearby and picks it up. She holds it, not wanting to part with it, then hands it to Danny. He departs with soldier, looking back at Pat, football under arm.

EXT. BEACH - LATER - DAY

Pat looking out over ocean. Sister Marie walks down behind her, removes shawl and wraps it around Pat.

PAT

I'm sorry about the way I left last time. I just don't want to hear about God. I've seen too ...

SISTER MARIE

My father French soldier, mother Vietnamese. Both die in war.

PAT

Now another. How do you manage?

SISTER MARIE

We must live the lives God gives.

PAT

Sister, I'm so alone.

SISTER MARIE

You have family in America.

After several beats, nun gestures toward orphanage.

SISTER MARIE (cont'd)

You will have tea?

EXT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

Sister Marie and Pat at table beneath sea pine. Nun reaches across to touch gold cross at Pat's neck.

SISTER MARIE

You still believe.

Pat looks down at cross and tucks it inside dress.

PAT

I believe in people like you, Sister. Don't ask for more.

EXT. DANANG AIRFIELD - DAY

Karen, Jean, Margaret and Teresa with Pat. Karen hugs her.

KAREN (to Pat)

I'll see you back home.

JEAN (hugging Pat)
I'm glad you're leaving. You're
getting that thousand yard stare.

PAT (to Margaret)
When will you leave?

MARGARET
When they find Keith.

INT. MILITARY TROOP TRANSPORT IN FLIGHT - DAY

Pat sits on crate in hollowed out aircraft. Muddied
marines with bandoleers of ammo lie on floor, exhausted.

EXT./INT. PAN AM AIRCRAFT AT TON SON NHUT AIRPORT - DAY

Pat in window seat of nearly full Pan Am jet. Passengers
are well-dressed businessmen, reporters and diplomats.
Middle-aged, overweight, AMERICAN MAN in loud polyester
suit and tie sits down next to Pat. They take off.

AMERICAN MAN
So what's a cute little gal like
you been doing over here?

PAT
Working.

Pat turns to look out window. INSTRUMENTAL VERSION of
"If I should fall" STARTS, CONTINUES into next scene.

EXT. U.S. NATIONAL CEMETERY - DAY

Acres of white headstones. Pat, kneeling in front of
Dan's, lays bouquet of white roses on grass. Crying, she
moves her fingers lovingly over Dan's name.

Pat starts to stand, pauses, takes off gold cross and
places it at the base of the headstone. She stands,
still looking at headstone.

Pat
I'll keep running.

FADE OUT

THE END