

SUREFIRE

written by
Ryan Blackwell

FADE IN:

EXT. RURAL MIDDLE EAST - DUSK

All is quiet. Still. A light breeze kicks around the scattered rocks and brush.

Then movement - ever so slight. The camera shifts as a pile of brush just ahead crawls a few inches and comes to a rest. It turns slowly, revealing a face, a soldier - GOODSTADT.

Goodstadt motions to the camera, his partner, COSTOS. He signals: "eyes ahead"

The camera turns, focusing on a bridge in the distance where two armed men stand guard.

Headlights from an approaching truck illuminate the bridge. The truck stops and three men emerge from the back. They approach the guards.

Costos speaks OFF SCREEN as everything is from the P.O.V. of his helmet cam.

COSTOS

That's him.

GOODSTADT

No. That's the new guard.

COSTOS

Twenty bucks says it's him.

GOODSTADT

You're already into me for like three hundred.

COSTOS

Make it forty. It's him.

GOODSTADT

Fine. You're on.

The two bridge guards shoulder their weapons and get in the back of the truck, which pulls away. The new men take their places and survey the area.

COSTOS (O.S.)

Shit.

GOODSTADT

You're gonna end up putting my boy through college at this rate.

COSTOS

If little Jeff Junior takes after his old man, ain't no respectable college that'll have him.

GOODSTADT

Hey, I'm not the dumbass who keeps throwing away his money.

COSTOS

Fuck you.

GOODSTADT

Excuse me?

COSTOS

Fuck you, Sergeant Goodstadt.

GOODSTADT

Better.

They remain silent for several moments.

Goodstadt produces a long sniper rifle, seemingly from nowhere, his movements nearly imperceptible.

He flips open the scope.

GOODSTADT

Costos - give me eyes.

COSTOS

Target's not here. You called it.

GOODSTADT

Three men got out of the truck. I only see two. Please, get your sight out and give me eyes.

Costos props his spotter scope on the ground in front of him. His helmet cam spots the bridge. Two guards.

COSTOS

One... two - where are you? You sure there were three?

GOODSTADT

There were three.

COSTOS

I only have the two. Shit. Where'd he go?

GOODSTADT

It's getting too dark. Go to night vision.

As Goodstadt mounts a second scope to his rifle, a CLICK is heard from Costos and the picture changes to night vision green.

Costos turns back to the bridge as another vehicle approaches.

COSTOS

I got headlights.

GOODSTADT

Got it.

COSTOS

Forty bucks says it's him.

GOODSTADT

Hundred bucks says it's him.

COSTOS

You're on. Wait... what?

The bridge guards ready themselves as the vehicle comes to a stop. The door opens and a man in fatigues steps out.

GOODSTADT

That him?

COSTOS

Hard to say.

The guards lower their weapons and salute the newcomer.

BOTH

That's him.

GOODSTADT

Dumbasses saluting in the field.

Costos produces a two-way radio. Holds it in front of him.

COSTOS

(to radio)

This is Viper One to Base. Over.

A voice answers through some static.

RADIO VOICE (FILTERED)

Go for Base. Over.

COSTOS

We have acquired target in Sector
Three - visual confirmation.
Repeat: target is acquired. Over.

GOODSTADT

Costos.

Costos looks at Goodstadt who remains fixed on his scope,
then turns again to the bridge.

Another man, this one in a turban, exits the car.

RADIO VOICE (FILTERED)

Copy that, Viper One. Good work -
get your asses back here. Over.

COSTOS

Is that who I think it is?

GOODSTADT

Mm-hm.

Goodstadt produces a single large bullet. Pulls back the
bolt of his rifle.

COSTOS

What are you doing? This is a
recon mission.

GOODSTADT

This was a recon mission. Give me
eyes.

COSTOS

(to radio)

Viper One to Base, we have...

Goodstadt grabs Costos' hands and the radio.

GOODSTADT

Not another word.

COSTOS

Dude, he's not our target. We
can't just...

GOODSTADT

Not our... he's THE target.

Silence for a moment.

GOODSTADT

John - he's right fucking there.
The leader of the enemy puts
himself in my cross-hairs and you
want to just walk away? This is
what it's all about, man. This is
our ace.

COSTOS

I know - but we have to call it
in.

Goodstadt releases the radio. Locks the bullet into his
rifle.

GOODSTADT

We don't have time for the brass
to haggle over this. Fine. I'll do
it myself.

He takes aim. Then a WHISTLE is heard and Goodstadt's
shoulder suddenly lurches back. Then a POP is heard in the
distance.

COSTOS

Sergeant?! Jeff!

Jeff bites back a scream as he clutches his arm. His sleeve
is already soaking through with blood.

RADIO VOICE (FILTERED)

Viper One, do you copy? Over.

Another WHISTLE and a POP as a bullet flies by, missing
them.

COSTOS

Shit - no! Oh my God!

Costos grabs hold of Goodstadt and pulls him quickly behind
a nearby rock which barely covers them.

Goodstadt SCREAMS in pain.

COSTOS

(continuing)

No, no, no - I got you. I got you.

RADIO VOICE (FILTERED)

Viper One, do you copy?? Over!

Costos leans out and grabs the radio. Whistle. Pop. Miss.

COSTOS
 (to radio)
 Goodstadt is hit - the sergeant is
 hit! We are taking fire. Over.

He leans around and looks to the bridge. The car is seen speeding away.

RADIO VOICE (FILTERED)
 Viper One, can you get to the
 extraction point? Over.

Whistle. Pop. Costos pulls his head back around.

COSTOS
 (to radio)
 Negative.
 (to Goodstadt)
 Pressure. Keep pressure on it.
 You're gonna be ok.

GOODSTADT
 Told you there were three.

COSTOS
 Now? You're gonna be a smartass
 now?

GOODSTADT
 Look - take this.

He removes his helmet and takes a small envelope from it.

COSTOS
 Hey - no! Fuck you - you keep
 that. You give that to him
 yourself when you get home. You
 don't...

There's fear in his voice.

GOODSTADT
 What?

COSTOS
 You're... that's your letter home,
 right?

GOODSTADT
 Yeah... not that. Take my helmet.

COSTOS
 What?

GOODSTADT

He shot my arm, not my head,
dumbass. But I can't shoot -
you're gonna have to do this. So
take my helmet and yours and set
them on this rock like our heads
are sticking out. Plant yourself
just to the side - low. He'll go
for the decoys. When you see his
flash, take him.

COSTOS

Right. Ok. Yeah.

GOODSTADT

I'll keep my letter for now if you
don't mind.

The picture shakes momentarily as Costos removes his helmet
and places it next to his partner's on the rock. The picture
is now steady on the bridge in the distance.

GOODSTADT (O.S.)

Remember to breathe.

A moment - and then a small and brief flash near the bridge.
A WHISTLE and a CRACK as the bullet hits Costos' helmet,
sending it, and camera, spinning to the ground, landing on
its side.

BANG! A single shot issues from Costos' rifle. A beat.

COSTOS (O.S.)

Viper One to Base. Threat is
neutralized. We're coming home.

A rustling is heard in the background.

GOODSTADT (O.S.)

Careful - ah!

COSTOS (O.S.)

Shutup, ya baby.

GOODSTADT (O.S.)

You're crazy if you think you can
carry me the whole way.

COSTOS (O.S.)

Fifty bucks says I can.

GOODSTADT (O.S.)

You're on.

Heavy, but quick footsteps are heard... then seen as the
helmet cam captures Costos with Goodstadt over his shoulder

heading toward home.