WARRIORS

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CHARACTER LIST

The Primary Doctors:

Tory Sterling, 33, A psychiatrist. Just back from a tour in Afghanistan. Married to **Clay.** They have a daughter, **Jo.**

George Mann, 38, Trauma surgeon. He and Tory share a secret.

Leonard Mooney, 37, OB/GYN. Wheelchair bound. A gambler.

Walter Reed Staff:

Stacey Weebling, 27, Surgical Resident. With a terrible crush on her boss, George.

Hennessy Fiske, Orthopedic surgeon, subspecialty in neurology, genius at prosthetic design.

Carla Wayne, Chief of Staff at Walter Reed.

Anna Stonecifer, Surgical Nurse.

Tess Ong, ICU Nurse

Lucy, Works in Requisitions. Leonard's date.

The Patients:

Marlon Jones, Double amputee. George's patient. Recently married to **Sienna.**

Jasper Koop, In a coma. Also George's patient. He may never wake up.

Darla Olney, About to have a baby. Her husband, Mike, left for Afghanistan before they knew they were pregnant.

Oscar Tibor, He has PTSD. He can't sleep. Tory's patient. (And Fiske's.)

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

A choral concert. An AUDIENCE of PARENTS. Twenty adorable KINDERGARTENERS sing “The Garden Song.” Some of them, anyway.

A WOMAN slips in the door. TORY STERLING, 33, and from her UNIFORM, a soldier. She’s pretty, sturdy, practical. She MOVES, quietly, up the aisle.

A MAN in the front, CLAY, 35, her husband, spots her and smiles. This was planned. The children SING: “Inch by inch, row by row, someone bless these seeds I sow...”

One LITTLE GIRL, a tomboy, JO, spots her mother. She stops singing. Her mouth hangs open. Like she’s just seen Santa Claus -- or a unicorn -- something impossible.

And even as the song is ending: “Someone warm them from below, ‘til the rain comes tumbling down,” she LEAPS off the riser and into her mother’s arms. Tory holds on tight.

TORY
Hey! Joey! Oh, Joey. You’re so big.

Jo looks at her. Bewildered.

JO
You came to my concert?

TORY
I’m home, Jo.
(Jo looks disbelieving)
What did I promise you?

Jo reaches under her shirt and pulls out a NECKLACE, with HALF A HEART. And Tory does the same -- the other half.

TORY (CONT’D)
I couldn’t live with half a heart.

Tory pulls her close again. Clay WIPES AWAY A TEAR. And maybe a few other PARENTS too.

The APPLAUSE begins and spreads across the room. Even some of the children applaud, not quite knowing why. The SOUND MORPHS into the SOUND OF HELICOPTER BLADES, which takes us to

EXT. ANDREWS AFB - TARMAC - DAY

Two gurney bound WOUNDED WARRIORS are transferred by their medical teams from a military medevac PLANE to A CHOPPER.

They are: ARMY CORPORAL MARLON JONES, 22, critical, sedated. He is MISSING BOTH LEGS. And ARMY CORPORAL JASPER KOOP, 22, very critical, in a coma, all bandages and tubes.

They are greeted by -- note his name tag -- ARMY MAJOR DR. GEORGE MANN, 38, trauma surgeon. George cannot stop taking care of these men, though it nearly breaks his heart, every day. No saint, but the good he does, no one does better.

ARMY NURSE
IED attack four days ago. Corporal Jones. Injuries left AKA, right BKA, TBI with clear head CT. Crpl. Koop. TBI. Right AEA. Comatose.

George takes a look at him, at his chart. Shit.

ARMY NURSE (CONT'D)
I know.

George turns to DR. STACEY WEEBLING, 27, name tag: Surgical Resident, Walter Reed. A tattoo peeks out of her sleeve.

GEORGE
Which one do you want?

STACEY
What?

GEORGE
We can flip.

STACEY
I --
(what the hell?)
Heads.

He grins. She smiles. She has a bit of a crush on her boss.

GEORGE
No. Sorry. It's tails. It's always tails. You get the one in the coma.

He points to Jasper. His game. By now he's on his cell phone.

STACEY
You're in a good mood, today.

GEORGE
Really. I don't think so. My usual.
(shouts to the pilot)
You can start your engines, Sgt. We're good to go.

And as the rotors wind, he SENDS A TEXT: “Welcome home.”

INT. TORY’S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tory’s just walked in from the other room. Clay is waiting.

TORY
I wouldn’t go to sleep, right away, either, if my mommy had been gone for nine months.

Her PHONES BUZZES.

CLAY
Tell whoever it is --

TORY
-- It’s George. He’s glad I’m home.

CLAY
Tell George he can get in line --

-- He KISSES her. Deeply. Passionately. She melts into him.

CLAY (CONT’D)
You taste like I remember. I love that. You smell like you, too.

TORY
I think I may just smell.

She kisses him. He LIFTS HER TEE SHIRT up, over her head. She is beautiful. And they slide toward the bed --

TORY (CONT’D)
Clay --

CLAY
-- What -- ?

TORY
-- I want to... but --
(off his look)
It’s eight and a half hours later in Kabul. And I’ve been up for thirty-six hours --

CLAY
-- I’ll hold my nose and I’ll make it quick --

TORY
-- That's so romantic. I have work tomorrow.

Clay starts at her neck, kisses his way down to her breasts.

CLAY
You think that's such a good idea? So soon?

TORY
(swooning a bit)
I... yes. You're working. Jo's in school. I just -- I need a routine. All I want is to get back to normal as quickly as -- Oh, God -- that's the spot!

-- She pulls him up. To her mouth. Kisses him.

LATER

Clay is fast ASLEEP. Gently SNORING. Tory lies on her back. STARES at the ceiling. There's been no sleep for her. She's used to that -- we'll find that out in time.

SOUNDS in her HEAD. EXPLOSIONS. GUN FIRE. SHOUTING. We can't quite tell. She SHAKES her head to get rid of them. Silence.

Her PHONE VIBRATES on her bedside table. TIGHT ON the TEXT. From GEORGE. "I'll see you, tomorrow."

SMASH to BLACK. TITLES OVER

EXT. WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Tory DRIVES through. And immediately we are aware that this is **no ordinary hospital**. It is a **WHOLE WORLD.**

Expansive and green. Stores, pathways, trees, fire and police department. A nine hole golf course. A mix of majestic and modern alongside pretty homes on lawns. A HELICOPTER HOVERS overhead and lands. Looming, at the center, THE HOSPITAL.

COLONEL WAYNE (O.S.)
We missed you, Captain Sterling. Good to have you back.

A SOLDIER, pushed in a WHEELCHAIR, holding a CHILD's hand, crosses in front of her at a stop sign.

INT. WALTER REED - MEETING ROOM - MORNING

Packed with DOCTORS, NURSES -- from every branch. We'll come to know them, later on -- DR. FISKE, TESS ONG. At this point, they're simply members of the Walter Reed community, welcoming home one of their own. Tory stands just inside the door -- her WHITE DOCTOR'S COAT over her AIR FORCE FATIGUES. Her NAME TAG tells us she's a psychiatrist.

ARMY COLONEL CARLA WAYNE, CHIEF OF STAFF, in charge.

COLONEL WAYNE
For those of you who are new, Dr. Sterling was with us for two years before being posted for the second time to Afghanistan. Where you served alongside Dr. Mann.

TORY
For about the first five months, Colonel, yes.
(beat)
Where is George?

INT. WALTER REED - OR - SIMULTANEOUS

George operates on Jasper Koop. Surrounded by his team -- an ANESTHESIOLOGIST, a SCRUB NURSE, his CHIEF SURGICAL NURSE, NAVY LT. ANNA STONECIFER. Dr. Weebling assists.

While the scrub nurse RETRACTS, George slowly runs the LARGE INTESTINE through his fingers. He looks up:

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
Getting better, George. Backing off on pressers. 110/80. O2 sat. 98%

George turns to Stacey.

GEORGE
Lavage.

And she alternately washes out the abdomen and suctions the liquid, while he works.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
This kid's been through too much.
(beat)
Four days in a coma, Cpl. Koop. So much for those chess lessons, huh?

Anna shakes her head. Shoots a look at the scrub nurse.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
There it is. That's where we're spilling sewage into the ocean.
(Stacey looks; nods)
Perforated bowel. They sewed him up, but it reopened.
(to Anna)
02 Silk.

Anna hands him a SUTURE on a hemostat. As he works.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Guy comes into the doctor's office with six plastic horses stuck up his ass. Doctor lists his condition as stable.

Stacey smiles and shakes her head. Looks over at Anna.

ANNA
God almighty.

He looks up. Just for a second. And grins.

GEORGE
That one was especially for you, Lt.
(back to work)
This was a close call, Corporal. Don't do it again.

INT. WALTER REED - HALLWAYS - DAY

A SOLDIER on a PROSTHETIC LEG navigates his way down a hallway, with GREAT DIFFICULTY. A YOUNG WOMAN, SIENNA JONES, 20, watches him, as she passes. Her face betrays that this is not yet normal for her. She is pretty, but plain and fragile.

DILLON (O.S.)
We'll check you into Fisher House.

REVEAL ARMY STAFF SGT. SHAR DILLON, 40, her MILITARY LIAISON, beside her. Tory's on her other side.

DILLON (CONT'D)
I'll let you settle in. Then I'll come back and answer any questions -

SIENNA
-- How long can I stay?

DILLON
Here? As long as you need. As long as your husband stays.

TORY
This isn't an ordinary hospital, Sienna. It's more like an entire military base -- a whole community -- just for healing.... Think of it as home.

SIENNA
I don't -- I didn't bring everything I need. I --

DILLON
We'll take care of all of that.

Sienna nods. Grateful.

SIENNA
When can I see Marlon?

TORY
Very soon.

SIENNA
Uh-huh. I might -- I need... a little warning before.

TORY
Why don't you and I go sit somewhere and talk?

Dillon leaves. Sienna looks at Tory. Suddenly concerned.

SIENNA
You think I need a shrink?

TORY
Everyone here needs someone to talk to, Sienna. Families too.

SIENNA
Okay. That sounds right.

TORY
It's very hard when someone comes back home, after a long time away.
(this is from the heart)
Particularly when they've changed -- as Marlon has. You have to cut yourself more slack than you thought you had...

She sees George. He walks toward her. Close now.

TORY (CONT'D)
... rope... Major.

GEORGE
Captain Sterling. I --

There's something in the way they look at each other.

TORY
-- This is Sienna Jones. Corporal Jones' wife.

Tory gives him a look that says, she's shaky. George nods.

GEORGE
I'm your husband's surgeon, ma'am, Dr. Mann. Marlon's doing great. And I'm gonna come by and see him tomorrow and I'll see you then, too. I didn't mean to interrupt.

SIENNA
Thank you. Doctor. Major.

GEORGE
(to Tory)
You okay?
(she nods; hesitantly)
Okay. Me too.

Tory watches him go. And Sienna looks down the hall -- all wheelchairs and prosthetics.

SIENNA
He's doing great. What does that mean?

TORY
Sienna --

SIENNA
(a waking nightmare)
-- I woke up in Des Moines, this morning.

George TURNS BACK TO LOOK AT TORY, from down the hall.

SIENNA (CONT'D)
I don't know where I am.

ANOTHER HALLWAY

DR. LEONARD MOONEY, 37, speeds by us in his white coat.

COLONEL WAYNE (O.S.)
Dr. Mooney?

Leonard puts on the brakes. Turns. To Colonel Wayne.

COLONEL WAYNE (CONT'D)
You missed the staff meeting.

LEONARD
Traffic was --

COLONEL WAYNE
-- This is not the first time.

LEONARD
I know. Traffic is a perennial problem. If you'll excuse me--

-- He ROTATES his chair.

COLONEL WAYNE
We don't believe in saluting anymore, Major?

LEONARD
(turning back)
You didn't hear, Colonel? I've done my time. Decommissioned two days ago. I'm a civilian now.
(as he rolls away)
You can fire me. But you can't court martial me and shoot me.

Everything Leonard shows the world -- his warm charm, his nerdish good lucks, belie the demons inside him.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
You missed your chance.

EXT. WALTER REED - A BENCH AMIDST THE GREENERY

Tory's outdoor office. ARMY SGT. OSCAR TIBOR, 40, sits opposite her. As always, he PLAYS a VIDEO GAME.

TIBOR
At different times: Lexapro, Zoloft, Celexa, Amitriptyline, Fluoxitine, Sarafem. You want me to keep going? Luvox.

TORY
You can't sleep, Sgt. Tibor?

TIBOR
I could teach the CIA a few things about torture... I'm tired all the time. Losing weight. Real jittery.

TORY
(re: the game)
Does that calm you down?

TIBOR
It's fun.
(beat)
They said you could do better than the regular VA where I was.

TORY
We can do things no one else can.

TIBOR
Good. 'Cause I'm home, you know. But I'm still there. I never left there.

TORY
I understand.

TIBOR
Bull.

TORY
Two tours.

TIBOR
Yeah, but you weren't on the front lines. You're a shrink. You didn't never see what I saw.

TORY
Some things. Our post was ambushed. I lost friends. So... not the same as you, but...
(beat)
I understand lying awake at night.

He relaxes a bit. A tiny victory. Of trust.

TIBOR
How're you sleeping these days?

TORY
(she lies)
Better.

INT. GYNECOLOGICAL EXAM ROOM

CLOSE on an ULTRASOUND WAND. It glides over a PREGNANT BELLY. The belly belongs to ARMY SGT. DARLA OLNEY, 28, fresh and beautiful like the image of the heartland girl next door.

Leonard guides the wand from his chair. Watches the monitor.

DARLA
Mike's mom says she's moving in. She's already bought her ticket. Three months away, a first baby. Can you believe it?

LEONARD
Mothers-in-law. Not to be trifled with. Or denied... Not that I have any personal experience.

DARLA
But maybe someday?
(he looks up; smiles)
What? Have we made some progress?

LEONARD
I don't want to jinx it... Her name's Lucy. In Requisitions.

DARLA
She sounds fantastic!

LEONARD
Really, that's -- ? You're sold already?

She sees something. A slight change in expression.

DARLA
What?

LEONARD
No. It's not -- Your placenta is partially covering your cervix.
(points it out)
It's called a placenta previa. It may be the reason you're experiencing some bleeding.
(beat)
We'll watch it.
(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)
What we don't want is for it to rupture during delivery. Or before.

DARLA
Well, I'm back in two weeks --

LEONARD
-- I'm gonna keep you here a few days, Sgt. Just to keep my eye on it.
(she's nervous, he knows)
To have you close by. For advice.

INT. WALTER REED - NURSES STATION - EVENING

George teases with Anna -- from the OR.

GEORGE
So if I said, movie on Friday night, you would say...?

She just gives him THE LOOK, as Leonard wheels up to the station to drop off a chart.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Really? Because of one... questionable joke in the OR?

LEONARD
Which one, George?

GEORGE
Plastic horses.

LEONARD
He's stable? I love that one.

GEORGE
I know. Is this an Army/Navy thing?

ANNA
Yes. That's the reason.

GEORGE
Not that I was going to ask. But for research purposes.

ARMY NURSE, LT. TESS ONG, 29, drops a CHART on the desk.

TESS
Is he hitting on you again?

ANNA
Apparently, he's doing a survey.

TESS
Poor Dr. Mann. Women who can resist his charm. It does not compute.

GEORGE
You too?

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE MARLON'S ROOM

Tory and NAVY LT., DR. HENNESSY FISKE, an orthopedic surgeon with a subspecialty in neurology -- and the resident genius at designing prosthetics -- watch a sleeping Marlon.

TORY
I met his wife today. I don't think she's old enough to buy a beer, let alone handle this. She's just waiting for him to wake up.
(beat)
Listen, I'll handle the "life isn't over, no matter how it feels today" part of it. You'll build him a good pair of legs, when the time comes?

FISKE
State of the art. You know me.

TORY
I do... I think I'm gonna head home. First day back. Don't wanna lose out on putting Jo to bed.

FISKE
Why are you back so soon, anyway? You didn't want a few days off?

TORY
It's easier to jump back in. Makes me feel like I'm my old self again.
(beat)
Plus, just because I'm a shrink doesn't mean I'm not crazy.

INT. TORY'S HOUSE - JO'S BEDROOM - EVENING

ON JO, as Tory pops her head up from under the bed.

TORY
All clear.

JO
Daddy says they're make believe.
But you can see them, right?

Her face betrays that she sees them all the time.

TORY
... Sometimes. In the dark.

Tory gets up. Heads into the bathroom. STAY with Jo.

TORY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You just have to know how to send them away, tell them who's boss. And I happen -- by chance and training -- to be the world's greatest expert at that.

She returns with a SPRAY BOTTLE in her hand.

TORY (CONT'D)
Anti-monster spray.

She SPRAYS under the bed. Jo LAUGHS.

JO
That's so easy!

TORY
(if only)
... Yah.

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM - NIGHT

Sienna walks hesitantly to the side of Marlon's bed. He looks up at her and SMILES.

MARLON
Hey.

SIENNA
Hey... You're up!

She BENDS to kiss him. Hesitates.

SIENNA (CONT'D)
Can I?

MARLON
Yeah. My lips work okay.

She KISSES HIM. CLOSES HER EYES as she does and CRIES.

MARLON (CONT'D)
Don't cry.

SIENNA
Why not? I'm happy.

MARLON
Okay.

SIENNA
... Does it hurt?

MARLON
I'm a little drugged up.

SIENNA
Right. That's probably good.
(beat)
Mike sent me this note to give you. You can read it later. He said to tell you that you were an asshole for telling his sister that she should marry Bobby. It was funny.

MARLON
Oh, yeah?

He lifts his hand up. She takes it.

MARLON (CONT'D)
You look pretty.... I missed you.

She tears up again.

SIENNA
I met the doctor. He said that you were doing great.

MARLON
I don't have any legs.

Silence for a terrible moment.

MARLON (CONT'D)
If you wanna look...

Nothing could be harder for her.

SIENNA
Not yet.
(beat)
Is that okay?

MARLON
...Sure. It just takes time, right?

And he musters a smile that hides what we see in his eyes -- the fear that all the time in the world won't be enough.

INT. TORY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tory climbs into bed, next to Clay.

CLAY
So? Postmortem. First day back.

TORY
Better food. Way less dusty than Kabul. No one's shooting.

CLAY
Last time - remember - it took you two weeks to stop saluting everyone in sight.
(kisses her)
I wanna hear everything -- what the new field hospital was like, and who's still there from two years ago, and all the crazy stories about General What'shisname --

-- But she ROLLS on top of him before he can finish. Takes off her shirt. She's naked now. This is all playful:

TORY
You know what? No more talking.
(kisses him, teases)
Tonight, I don't even want to play mute french artist's model taken by her jealous sculptor lover.

CLAY
Wha? No mute french girl? How about two strangers stranded in the same hotel room by a front desk mistake?

TORY
How about soldier who has dreamed of this night and you for nine months since she left home?

CLAY
Now that's hot.

And she lowers herself onto him, and they MAKE LOVE.

INT. WALTER REED - SURGEON'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

George is alone. Lying on a couch. Phone in hand. Stacey appears in the doorway. Looks in on him.

STACEY
I'm going home. Unless you need --

GEORGE
-- No. You're good to go. I've gotta check on Cpl. Koop and then I'm out of here.

She lingers. It's clear from the way she looks at him that she worships him. And maybe a little more than that, too.

STACEY
Okay. I didn't know if you wanted to... We could...

She watches him. Expecting more attention. But getting none.

STACEY (CONT'D)
Who are you texting so late?

GEORGE
Nobody.

STACEY
Someone who doesn't sleep, obviously.
(he's oblivious)
Anyway. 'Night.

And she leaves. And he's back to his phone. And his texts.

GEORGE
'Night.

INT. TORY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clay is asleep. Tory is not. She lies in bed, TEXTING

TIGHT ON THOSE TEXTS:

George: You were avoiding me today.

Tory: I was not. I was working.

George: Tomorrow?

Tory: I wanna see you too --

She stops... Looks over at Clay, who SHIFTS in his sleep.

She DELETES the last line. Types:

Tory: Yes.

FADE OUT.

ACT TWO

INT. WALTER REED -- TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY CENTER

Tory consults with a NEUROLOGIST. Both studying a BRAIN SCAN.

NEUROLOGIST
No sign of traumatic brain injury. No physical changes. It's PTSD.

The two of them look through a pane of GLASS at Tibor, 40. He PLAYS A VIDEO GAME and PACES, like a big cat in a cage.

NEUROLOGIST (CONT'D)
He looks like he could just explode at any second, doesn't he?... Any history of violence?

Tory studies him. Shakes her head, silently. Quietly:

TORY
Apart from being a soldier, you mean?
(beat)
When I was eight, I took a car trip to New York City with my mom. It was summer. It was hot. We had our windows down, sitting at a red light. And a homeless man, crazy looking, walked over to us. My mother got scared and tried to close the window as fast as she could. And the homeless man whispered to her, "Don't be afraid, lady. I only hurt myself."

If Oscar Tibor could see through the glass, he and Tory would be looking right at each other. She understands him.

INT. WALTER REED - DARLA'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Leonard's reading a chart, while Darla charms.

DARLA
Our timing wasn't... perfect exactly. Mike had to ask his Sgt. for two more days before he shipped out to Afghanistan. Cause his wife was ovulating. I would have liked to have heard that little conversation.

LEONARD
He had to do his duty.

DARLA
At home and abroad. Exactly.

LEONARD
Your blood tests show a rise in alpha-fetoprotein. It suggests placenta accreta -- a placenta that has grown into your uterus.

DARLA
Oh. I assume we don't want that.

LEONARD
It could require a hysterectomy during delivery.

DARLA
(eyes welling)
Okay. I'm -- I'm twenty-eight.
(beat)
And a widow.

He takes her hand. He can't bring Mike back.

LEONARD
Hey. Stick with me.

DARLA
Every step of the way. You promise?

The pain, half-hidden on Leonard's face, is both for her and for himself. Not every step. He can't operate on her. Not allowed. Not in that damn wheelchair.

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM

George sits, just at the edge of Marlon's bed. Warm. Relaxed. Sienna listens from a chair in the corner.

GEORGE
You got some very good care over there, but my motto is: trust, but check. So I'm gonna have your orthopedic surgeon go in. Make sure there's no dead tissue. No debris. We'll put a suction dressing on it. Go back in and take a look in a few days. And when it's pristine. We'll close you up.

SIENNA
That sounds good. Doesn't it baby?

Marlon's not there yet. No way he could be. It takes time.

MARLON
Yah.

A KNOCK on the door. A STRAPPING YOUNG MARINE on TWO PROSTHETIC LEGS stands there with Tory.

TORY
Corporal Jones? Mind if we come in?

LT. CORBIN
(literally STRIDES in)
What -- I bet no one told you I was going to stop by. I'm Marine Lt. Austin Corbin. Your peer visitor.

MARLON
I don't know what that means.

LT. CORBIN
It means I was lying <u>right there</u>, where you are, eighteen months ago. Until this man...
(points to George)
... took care of me. Got me back up on my feet. Well, "feet."

MARLON
Afghanistan?

LT. CORBIN
Helmand Province. IED took both my legs. One above, one below the knee. They flew me out of Landstuhl and I thought -- don't waste the flight. Just let me die.

The look on Marlon's face says he understands.

MARLON
And what, you run marathons now?

LT. CORBIN
No, actually, I'm a mountain climber.

And something shifts, subtly, in Marlon's face. And Tory looks at George -- the slightest hint of a smile.

INT. WALTER REED - CAFE 8901 - DAY

This is the main dining facility. FIND Tess and Anna eating lunch together.

TESS
My brother said, it's the happiest he's seen Mom since Dad died.

ANNA
All because of the new guy -- ?

TESS
-- Wallace, yeah. From her "Mindfulness Weekend."

ANNA
This sounds like <u>good</u> news.

TESS
It's so fast. It's a month and already he's moving in? She says, at my age, what's the virtue in delayed gratification?

ANNA
It's not the worst argument in the world. You want me to talk to him? Wallace, I need to make sure you're after Hattie's body and not her money, Of which, by the way, she has none.

TESS
Do you mind?

They look up to see Col. Wayne approaching.

COLONEL WAYNE
Lt. Ong?
(Tess rises, nervous)
May I?

Anna watches as they move off to a corner. ANGLE on the two of them, huddled in a corner.

TESS
<u>Where</u>?

COLONEL WAYNE
Craig Joint Theater Hospital. Bagram, Afghanistan.

Shit. She deflates right there. Tries to cover.

COLONEL WAYNE (CONT'D)
They need ICU nurses. The order came today. You have eight weeks before you ship out.

TESS
Uh-hunh. I really don't want to go.

COLONEL WAYNE
I understand.

Tess reels. Her whole life has been pulled out from under her in a second. Home, routine, friends. She looks back at the table. At Anna, with whom she was laughing one minute ago.

Anna watches, suddenly worried at the look she sees on Tess' face. And we hear:

TORY (O.S.)
I was angry at you when you left.

INT. WALTER REED - SOME PRIVATE CORNER

Tory and George. Finally, a moment to talk. The space demands that they stand closer. He stares at her even closer.

TORY
Which was stupid, but...

GEORGE
So Afghanistan just wasn't the same with me gone?

TORY
Yeah. It stopped being fun.

He puts his arms around her neck. Electricity between them.

TORY (CONT'D)
What -- what are you -- ?

GEORGE
Your collar.
(he straightens)
There. How's your knee feeling?

TORY
... It's fine.

GEORGE
I bet you didn't do the exercises after I left.
(off her look)
(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)
I knew it. If you don't strengthen the ligaments, you're just --

TORY
My knee's okay, George. I took care of myself. Even after you left.

GEORGE
Okay, good. How's the rest of you?

Silence. She looks at him. He knows.

TORY
I just have to push through it. Get back to normal and eventually everything will be normal. It's a -- a very mild case. I mean, I'm the expert on PTSD. I should know, right? I have nothing to complain about, next to these guys.
(beat)
How are you?

GEORGE
Happy now that you're here.
(beat)
I'll help you through it.

TORY
Uh-huh. You have to stop texting -- even funny little things -- at all hours of the night while you're working.
(takes out her phone)
Reminder: there's no need to take your gun and a flashlight into the toilet anymore... First of all, I was not the only one --

GEORGE
-- I'm not saying that. I'm just saying old habits die hard.

TORY
You are missing the point, George. You can't just text me --

-- A BUZZ on his phone. He looks. SHIT!

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM

A MAD RUSH of NURSES and DOCTORS and Marlon on his GURNEY. Tubes and monitors -- they all go. Past Sienna who watches, in SHOCK. Still in a nightmare.

INT. WALTER REED - CATHETER LAB - MOMENTS LATER

The cath lab is like an OR. A C-arm over Marlon beams live X-rays onto monitors. LT. DR. WALTER SING, 31, to George.

SING
The pulmonary artery is too narrow. Surgery would be less risky.

GEORGE
Cut him open to remove the clot, he doesn't get off the table.

George turns off the noise, threads the catheter up from Marlon's groin. No jokes this time. IMAGE ON THE SCREENS: catheter snaking through the heart to the pulmonary vein, and the clot. George activates the ANGIOJETS in short bursts.

We see Marlon's heart slow down - not good.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Shit. Give him a mig of atropine. C'mon Jones, you're buddy Koop's still alive. Don't quit on me.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
(not into this)
BP's unstable. He's throwing PVCS.

ON the VITALS MONITOR. Marlon's signs continue to drop. ON Stacey. Not breathing.

On GEORGE and the SCREENS. No going back. A race between Marlon's heart and the clot.

INT. WALTER REED - ICU/WAITING AREA

Tory sits with Sienna. Waiting. Tense and silent.

SIENNA
My sister had her appendix out when I was twelve. That's the only time I've ever been in a hospital, except for this.

TORY
Older or younger sister?

SIENNA
Younger. Two years.

TORY
Me too. Big sister. So you're a natural at taking care of people, I bet. Making sure everyone's happy. Goes with the territory for us, doesn't it?
(Sienna nods)
Marlon's very lucky.

Sienna smiles. Mission accomplished.

Tory looks up. George and Stacey are walking toward them, still in their OR gowns. This is news: good or bad. Sienna closes her eyes and prays.

MOMENTS LATER

The news:

GEORGE
The long flight may have caused the clot to break off, go to his lungs. That's why he went into cardiac arrest... But we removed the clot and he's fine. He's gonna be fine.

ANGLE on TORY. She watches, as the story finishes; Sienna with her arms around George. Good news.

INT. WALTER REED - COL. WAYNE'S OFFICE

She has Leonard with her.

COLONEL WAYNE
I have to hand it to you, you are punctual about some things. One month exactly since we last talked about this. The answer is still no.

LEONARD
I'm the best obstetrical surgeon here.

COLONEL WAYNE
Yes, you <u>were</u>, Dr. Mooney.

LEONARD
I have been assisting whenever I can. Learning to adjust --

COLONEL WAYNE
-- You don't have complete mobility and I can't take the risk.

He begins to wheel himself out.

LEONARD
Ironic. I thought this place was all about making people whole again.

COLONEL WAYNE
As close as possible. Then helping them cope with the fact that things will never be exactly the same. If you need to talk to someone --

LEONARD
-- I don't need therapy, Colonel. I need to get back in the OR.

COLONEL WAYNE
I know.

INT. WALTER REED - ICU/WAITING AREA

INT. WALTER REED - JASPER'S ICU ROOM - EVENING

Quiet. Darkening. Jasper's motionless, hooked up to a hundred tubes. A MALE NURSE monitors his signs. George wanders in.

GEORGE
Any change?
(a shake of the head)
Has anyone been here to see him?

JASPER'S MALE NURSE
No. Mom's dead, apparently. Dad walked away years ago. He has a sister. With four kids. She's still trying to make arrangements.
(beat)
I'm his family, for now.

George sits by the bed.

GEORGE
I thought I'd come by... let him know that we just saved his buddy, Marlon. In case he wants to wake up and say hello.

INT. WALTER REED - NURSES LOCKER ROOM

Anna watches Tess THROW a pair of shoes into the bottom of a locker, clearly distressed.

ANNA
Hey. Are you alright?

Tess turns. Professional demeanor gone. She starts to CRY. Anna REACHES OUT to her. Puts her arms around her.

ANNA (CONT'D)
It's okay.

She looks around. No one else there. KISSES HER. Deeply.

ANNA (CONT'D)
We're gonna be okay.

INT. WALTER REED - POOL - NIGHT

George pushes himself, harder, harder. Off one wall and back. At the next, he STOPS. PANTING. Stacey looks down at him.

STACEY
They said you'd gone home, but I knew I'd find you here.

GEORGE
What's up?

She leans over to talk. Revealing a body beneath the dress.

STACEY
I was wondering if you were starving. Like I am. We could go back to that vegetarian Thai place. Or, what was the name of that burger joint you said --

GEORGE
-- Not tonight. I'm just -- not tonight.

STACEY
... Okay.

She's always trying to balance between her attraction to him -- which he neither fully repays nor rebuffs -- and her desire to remain professional.

She sees where he's looking. Who could help it? She's beautiful. She pulls up her dress a bit. Stands up straight. Shifts the conversation:

STACEY (CONT'D)
Do you actually enjoy going back and forth, back and forth, or is this just how you keep your sanity?

GEORGE
Find yourself something. You'll need it.

STACEY
But it went well today, right?

GEORGE
Yeah. Yeah. Today was one of the good days.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Tory and Clay stroll down an aisle. Clay pushes. Tory grabs.

TORY
Pick-a-size? Or big roll? What's your current philosophy?

CLAY
I don't -- you choose.

TORY
You're not really committing to this.

CLAY
Well... it's not exactly my idea of a romantic evening.... Why don't we risk running low on paper towels, chuck this and go out for a long, candle-lit dinner?

TORY
Dressed like this? And with Jo's play date over in an hour?
(beat)
Anyway, for me, this is a romantic evening. I just -- I want to do every ordinary thing with you.
(MORE)

TORY (CONT'D)
I would mow the lawn with you and think it was a miracle.

CLAY
Uh-huh. Everything but talk.

TORY
What? That's ridiculous --

CLAY
I know you, baby. This is not the first time you've come back home. But this time...
(beat)
You're like: go, go, go! Work. Jo. Chores. Sex -- which I don't mind. But you haven't said one word about what you're thinking or feeling, or what it was like to be over there, or what it's like to be back.

TORY
Okay. That's not true.

CLAY
It's true.
(beat)
The day I met you, I called my mom and said, I met this great girl. She won't shut up, but that's okay -- I'm interested in everything she has to say.
(he KISSES HER)
It's been nine months. I miss you.

TORY
I'm here.

She KISSES him back. And at that moment, someone DROPS A JAR, at the end of the aisle. It SMASHES with a LOUD CRUNCH.

Tory JUMPS. A CLAMMY SWEAT. She LAUGHS to cover it.

TORY (CONT'D)
That was perfect timing.

CLAY
Are you okay?

TORY
.. Yeah. I'm fine. What?

She goes to kiss him again. Before she can.

CLAY
What happened over there?

In her head, she HEARS the HIDEOUS CRACK of an EXPLOSION. Closes her eyes -- the briefest flash, a glimpse:

SOMEWHERE IN AFGHANISTAN

She's on the ground. Destruction everywhere. A SOLDIER CRAWLING toward her.

She shakes herself out of it. There is Clay. In the supermarket aisle.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Tory?

She gets cold.

TORY
What? It was a war.

And she walks off, down the aisle and around the corner, grabbing a roll of paper towels as she goes. STAY with Clay, utterly alone, watching his wife <u>disappear</u>.

FADE OUT.

ACT THREE

INT. WALTER REED - JASPER'S ICU ROOM

George is alone with him. Checking his dressings.

GEORGE
Who are you, Cpl. Koop - with no family to speak of?
(checks the chart)
Twenty-two-years-old, from Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Did you play baseball in high school? Hmm? From the looks of you. Did you hope for a major league contract? Or to be recruited by a college? And when that didn't pan out....
(replaces his covers)
Did you enlist so that you could see the world? What exactly did you think you were fighting for?

Jasper's Male Nurse walks back in.

JASPER'S MALE NURSE
Talking to yourself, Dr. Mann?

GEORGE
Chatting with Jasper. He's pretty tight-lipped. But, I suppose we're all mysteries, one way or another.

EXT. WALTER REED - GROUNDS

Tory and Tibor wander. Just wander.

TIBOR
And I'm driving, right. And looking. I'm always looking. Who's pulling up next to me. Why is that guy stopping at the corner? And always... in the back of my mind... what's my escape route? Plan B.

TORY
Are you thinking that <u>now</u>, with me?

TIBOR
You're distracting me. That's why I can't have no one talking to me when I'm out of the house, when I'm driving. SHUT YOUR MOUTH, ETHAN!
(MORE)

TIBOR (CONT'D)
I GOTTA FOCUS.
(beat)
My kids won't drive with me. Daddy's freakin' nuts. Daddy smells like beer.
(beat)
I don't like that. I wish...

TORY
Do you blame yourself for all of these things?

TIBOR
Yes.

TORY
We're gonna work on that, too.
(beat)
You're a hero, Sgt. Tibor.

TIBOR
A funny kind of one.
(he tears up, wipes his eyes)
Stupid.... Just help me to sleep. If I had one good night's sleep.

INT. WALTER REED - PROSTHETICS LAB

Computers, machines sculpting remarkably lifelike prosthetics; semi-finished limbs hang in rows. At a computer, Fiske sits, working on a design. Think Q in James Bond.

Leonard waits, impatiently. He CLEARS HIS THROAT.

FISKE
I know you're there, Len. You're just not my biggest problem... at the... moment.
(turns to him)
Maybe the Colonel would be more amenable if you made a practice of showing up for meetings.

LEONARD
It's been sixteen months. I've been patient. But, at some point, I need to get back in the OR.

FISKE
Need?

LEONARD
You, of all people, should understand that. You are your work.

FISKE
You're your work, Len. Really?

LEONARD
These legs -- who cares - ? I can't run. I was never much of a dancer. But I'm a very good surgeon. I was. Without that, who am I?

FISKE
So... Specifically?

LEONARD
The best chair you've ever built. Full range of motion. In every direction. Hands free. The six million dollar surgeon. No argument from Col. Wayne that I'm less than I ever was in the OR.

FISKE
... I can do that.

LEONARD
(a weight lifted)
And soon. I'd prefer soon.

EXT. WALTER REED -- OUTSIDE FISHER HOUSE - DAY

Sienna walks out. A beautiful morning. She stops. WATCHES a SOLDIER in a wheelchair... and a MOM... and a YOUNG BOY... playing ball on the grass. She HEARS them LAUGHING.

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM

Sienna's by his bedside again. Trying cheerfulness.

SIENNA
They opened up a new Wal-Mart in Altoona. It's huge. Everybody's working there. Veterans too.

MARLON
Oh, yeah? That could come in handy.

SIENNA
What else? Connie got Zach to marry her.

MARLON
No way! That's not gonna last. She hates hunting and that's all he wants to do. And those boobs are gonna sag --

SIENNA
-- I know. Her boobs are the only thing they have in common.

He laughs.

MARLON
Lift up your shirt. I wanna...

SIENNA
Marlon. No. It's a public place.

MARLON
I wanna look at you. Please? I've been you-know-what'n to your picture for a year. And now you're right here, in front of me.

She looks around. Surreptitiously lifts her shirt and bra, so only he can see.

MARLON (CONT'D)
Oh, man.
(beat)
Something's happening down there.
You gotta take a look.
(she hesitates)
Take a look.

And she lifts up his covers and looks at him. We can't see it, but she can. His erection. And beyond that... his legs.

She stares for a long time. And then she says the thing she knows she's supposed to say. And it's not that it isn't true.

SIENNA
I like it.

And Marlon tries to be comforted by that -- forcing a smile that hides the fear that he's losing her.

INT. WALTER REED - HALLWAY

Leonard's on the move. Outside of DARLA'S ROOM, he stops. A BUZZ. A MESSAGE from STU. He doesn't read it. And heads into:

DARLA'S HOSPITAL ROOM

LEONARD
Dr. Robb said you wanted to see me.

DARLA
You have to promise me something.

A look that says, name it.

DARLA (CONT'D)
If it comes down to a decision between me and the baby -

LEONARD
-- Okay, that's not --

DARLA
-- I know. I know you're waiting as long as you can for the baby to develop. Which means the risk of rupture. And bleeding. I read about it online. And at some point you might decide, for my sake --

LEONARD
-- This is not a choice, Sgt.

DARLA
My husband is buried in a military cemetery, not very far from here. Well, except for a couple of pieces of him scattered in Afghanistan.

LEONARD
Darla --

DARLA
This baby is all that is left of him.
(beat)
Please. I'm not a hero. That's Mike. And you. I didn't give up my life or my legs.

She doesn't see the effect that has on Leonard. We do.

LEONARD
I don't really think --

He has a second secret. About his legs and the hero thing... But this is not the time.

DARLA
-- I'm just a mom. And I'm asking you. If it comes down to a choice.

LEONARD
Not to choose you?

DARLA
Not to choose me.

That would be hard. Because Leonard's final secret is just how much he's starting to care about her.

INT. WALTER REED - TV ROOM

On Tory. She nonchalantly WIPES AWAY A TEAR. We HEAR DIALOGUE in the background. CRYING. We don't know why.

WIDEN to reveal SIX SOLDIERS, men and women, all watching television. "GENERAL HOSPITAL" A man by a woman's beside.

CORPORAL HARVEY (FEMALE)
Captain Sterling?

TORY
What? He loved her for a long time. When I left for Afghanistan, they were really happy...
(the soldiers laugh)
I'm telling you, stick with me. This stuff's addictive. And if you're having a tough day...
(point to the screen)
Piece of cake.

Seven of them, all injured in some way, turn back to the TV.

EXT. WALTER REED -- A TABLE IN THE SHADE

A GATHERING of NURSES. Advice for Tess time.

NAVY LT. PRYOR (MALE)
They pack you up. Take care of all of it. Permanent Change of Station. I had a buddy who got posted to Germany, so I know the drill.

Tess nods.

ARMY LT. BEALS (FEMALE)
Are you gonna go see your mom, in Honolulu?

TESS
Yeah. The Colonel gave me a week. My mom's so excited. Course I haven't told her why I'm coming.

Anna's held back till now.

ANNA
I could take a bunch of your personal stuff. The stuff you don't want in storage. Pictures. Mementoes. Whatever. I have room at my place to look after them.
(beat)
I mean, if you want.

TESS
Yeah. That would make me feel much better.

INT. WALTER REED - REHAB CENTER

State-of-the-art. All around us, the WOUNDED are building their strength, regaining their balance, learning to walk again. But WE FOCUS on Tory and Sienna.

SIENNA
His friend Bobby introduced us. Me and Bobby dated for like two weeks, but there was no spark, you know. One night, we went bowling and I met Marlon. Bobby was cool with it.

TORY
You're all still friends?

SIENNA
Yeah. Bobby's been so good for me while Marlon's been gone.

A SERVICE DOG wanders over. Straight to Sienna.

SIENNA (CONT'D)
Marlon took me paint balling on our first date. Isn't that romantic?
(pets the dog)
You are too sweet.

A SOLDIER IN A WHEELCHAIR ROLLS OVER.

WHEELCHAIR SOLDIER
This is Air Force Major Major.

SIENNA
I want a dog. I do.

Tory watches. An IDEA SPARKS. To the soldier:

TORY
Thank you.

Major Major wanders off with his soldier.

SIENNA
It got real intense, real fast between us. He asked me to marry him. I didn't even know he was being deployed before that. Right before he left, we went to Las Vegas. Caesar's Palace. That was nice. And we eloped.

TORY
Eloped? Wow.

SIENNA
Yeah. It was like jumping off a cliff together. It felt so intense, you know? And how could I say no to him? He was so handsome. And a soldier. Going off to fight.
(Tory smiles, nods)
The truth is: I don't really know him all that well.

INT. WALTER REED - HALLWAYS

A gathering. NURSES. A few DOCTORS, including George. And a bunch of SOLDIERS, one of them, in the center of all of it, is in a wheelchair. This is a rehearsal.

BEWILDERED NURSE
Are you asking me?

ROMANTIC SOLDIER (FIGGS)
It's just practice.

CORPORAL VALDEZ
You're a guinea pig.

BEWILDERED NURSE (CONT'D)
Do I say yes?

CORPORAL VALDEZ
Not if you know what's good for you.

ROMANTIC SOLDIER (FIGGS)
I need to be on my knees.

GEORGE
You're kidding me?

ROMANTIC SOLDIER (FIGGS)
On. My. Knees.

George and another Doctor lift him off his chair and onto his knees in front of his practice fiancee.

GEORGE
This could be a little awkward in the moment.

Tory wanders into the crowd.

ROMANTIC SOLDIER (FIGGS)
I think I may tip over.

BEWILDERED NURSE
Yes. Yes. Yes.

ROMANTIC SOLDIER (FIGGS)
Wait until I ask you!
(beat)
Chloe Fink?

The Bewildered Nurse starts to LAUGH.

BEWILDERED NURSE
That's her name. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sure she's very nice. Keep going.

Amidst the merriment, Tory turns to the NURSE next to her.

TORY
Remember when that really sweet kid -- Cpl. Sandoval -- brought the mariachi band in to propose to his girlfriend?
(odd look from the nurse)
What?... What?

Something's terribly wrong. This is not the time to explain.

INT. WALTER REED - TORY'S OFFICE

She's alone. CRYING. She's reading a file. We can READ the TITLE: Corporal Sandoval. George comes in, quietly.

TORY
I didn't know. I was away. He was such a sweet boy. Paco Sandoval.
(beat)
Why would he do that to himself?

GEORGE
We both know why. Too well.

George puts his arms around her. She JERKS away from him.

TORY
DON'T DO THAT -- !

GEORGE
-- Okay --

She POUNDS HIS CHEST.

TORY
-- It doesn't help. Go away!

GEORGE
Tory, come on. I was just trying to help --

TORY
-- Well, don't!! It just confuses me. And I don't want to feel those things. I can't.

GEORGE
Right. I know.

TORY
We have to put those things away. We have lives here. And people we -- And that was -- another country.
(she looks at him)
I want to go back to how things were. Friends. Good friends, who work together and have lunch once a week, schedule permitting. And four times a year you come over for dinner on Sunday. And Jo learns to call you Uncle George.
(beat)
Can you do that? Can you?

GEORGE
... I don't know.

And he walks out, leaving her alone, shaking.

FADE OUT.

ACT FOUR

EXT. WALTER REED - GROUNDS

TIGHT ON Sgt. Tibor -- video game in hand.

TIBOR
A dog?

REVEAL Tory and, by her side, Major Major.

TORY
Yes.

TIBOR
This is the kind of medical care I can't get anywhere else?

TORY
No. It's just a dog.

TIBOR
What about sleep chambers and, I don't know, therapy crap.

TORY
We'll get to the therapy crap.

He shakes his head, starts to walk away. Major Major FOLLOWS.

TIBOR
Look, I'm not a dog person. I got enough just taking care of myself. Would you call your animal -- ?

He walks again. Again, Major Major follows.

TORY
I would give in, Sgt., cause that dog is stuck on you.

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM

George sits on the edge of Marlon's bed.

GEORGE
Just if you had any questions, before tomorrow morning...

MARLON
Yeah, one: How's Cpl. Koop? I've been kinda scared to ask.

GEORGE
...He's holding his own. We'll see.

Marlon reaches over to his side table. Picks up his PHONE. Taps a few times and hands it to George.

A VIDEO. Marlon and Jasper. Mugging together. IN A HUMVEE. Jasper SMILING at the camera. AN EXPLOSION. Then nothing.

MARLON
He saved my life.

GEORGE
Oh. I don't know the story...

MARLON
No -- I don't mean -- Not then. Not like that. Everyday. Just --
(beat)
I don't know if anyone tells you this -- doctors -- but when you're over there. You're not fighting for back home. Or some flag. Or any of that. Or even to stay alive. All of us -- we're just fighting to keep the guy next to us alive.
(beat)
That's how I got through it, day by day. I had to keep Jasp alive. Get him...
(breaks down)
Get him home.

George nods. A sharp exhale. Struggles not to crack.

INT. WALTER REED - GYM

We are IN THE MIDDLE of a WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL GAME. In the STANDS -- family, friends, staff. Tory watches, with Clay and Jo sitting by her side.

The CRASH of metal against metal. The extraordinary strength of these SOLDIER/ATHLETES. SHOUTS of encouragement. And in the middle of all this - Leonard. Trying to keep up.

A MAD SCRAMBlE for the ball. A PASS out to the POST. A PERFECT SHOT. Nothing but net. And then the PUMPING OF WHEELS. A LONG INBOUND PASS. Then a PASS to Leonard.

From the stands. Shouting:

TORY
Let's go, Mooney!!!
(turns to Jo)
Doctor Mooney.

Jo smiles. Clay takes note. She's better when she's at work.

LEONARD DRIVES TO THE BASKET. CRUNCH. Right into two guys with POSITION.

Leonard and his wheelchair FLIP OVER. He lies there, until two guys LIFT HIM UP, one arm under each of his. How they look after each other is as moving as the way they play.

ON Tory and Jo and Clay. Jo looks nervous.

CLAY
He'll be fine. Isn't he fine?

TORY
Well, he's not good. But he's gonna be fine.
(beat)
All of these guys: they're gonna be better than fine.

ON the players. As the guys SHOUT ENCOURAGEMENT, Leonard wheels over to the bench. Fiske lingers behind the bench.

FISKE
Seems like you may need more than just a better wheelchair.

INT. WALTER REED - CAFE 8901

Jo's EYES FOLLOW a FEMALE SOLDIER on a prosthetic leg.

CLAY (O.S.)
Don't stare, Joey.

REVEAL the FAMILY, together, having lunch.

TORY
Basketball. Ice cream. Not too bad, right? While everyone else is in school.

CLAY
Suckers!

JO
Could that happen to you?

Tory takes a beat.

TORY
No. No, baby.

CLAY
Mommy only works in hospitals. Just like this. Even over there. She's in a safe place.
(sees someone)
Hey! Hey, George!

George -- spotted, stuck -- wanders over.

GEORGE
Hey, Clay. Hey, Joey. The last time I saw you, you were a mermaid for Halloween.

George and Tory exchange a look. Neither one wants this.

TORY
You remember Dr. Mann, Jo?

GEORGE
Please. Uncle George.

CLAY
Join us?

George sits... Reluctantly. Looks at Tory. Takes a bite.

CLAY (CONT'D)
You have to come over for a barbecue again, one of these days. Normal life.
(smiles at Tory)
That's all we want right now.

GEORGE
Yeah. I'm all in on that.

INT. WALTER REED - NURSE'S STAFF ROOM

It's just Anna and Tess. Huddled in a corner.

ANNA
I want to worry about you and not have to hide it. I <u>want</u> people's sympathy. I need that.

TESS
... I'm not ready.

ANNA
Why not? It's not -- there's no rule against it. That's over.
(tries to kiss her)
I'm allowed to love --

Tess pulls back.

TESS
It's not about a rule. It's about me.

ANNA
I don't understand.

TESS
Because you don't have to go. Okay? And be there. In close quarters. In harms way. One of the guys.
(beat)
I can't -- I'm not ready to be the queer in Afghanistan. I'm sorry.

Tess reaches out to her, but Anna backs away. In tears.

INT. WALTER REED - JASPER'S ICU ROOM

George is back, checking dressings, the monitors, the charts.

GEORGE
... What else? Sgt. Figgs is planning on proposing to his fiance tomorrow. Chloe Fink. Which will make her Chloe Fink Figgs. That's love. Lt. Parker is going home, day after next, after nineteen months. Dr. Chaudry is having twins. Lots of good news around here.
(he sits)
Everyone seems to be moving on, one way or another, don't they, Corporal? Everyone but old Jasper and George. Stuck in limbo. Still half over there in Afghanistan. And not quite all here. And that -- in a nutshell -- is what a coma and unrequited love have in common.

MALE NURSE (O.S.)
Dr. Mann?
(George turns)
Incoming from Andrews.

GEORGE
Same time, tomorrow, Corporal Koop? Don't move.

INT. WALTER REED - HALLWAYS

Leonard RACES. He TURNS the CORNER. Runs into: DARLA being wheeled on a GURNEY. With her, TWO NURSES. And a FEMALE DOCTOR, Dr. Robb. He WHEELS as they race.

LEONARD
What happened?

DR. ROBB
Rupture.

LEONARD
I wanna talk to her.

DR. ROBB
She's already half under, Dr. Mooney. I'll take it from here.

They reach THE DOORS OF THE OR. The gurney PUSHES THROUGH. Leonard is left, alone. On the outside.

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM - EVENING

Sienna and Marlon. She hands him a drink. Holds the straw to his mouth.

MARLON
You're being really good.

SIENNA
What does that mean? That's stupid.
(beat)
I'm not doin' anything special. Just what anyone would do.

MARLON
Anyone who knew someone for a month?

That stops her. What can she possibly say to that?

SIENNA
Marlon, that's -- <u>We did what we did</u>.

MARLON
I needed someone to come home to. I was afraid -- I was afraid that if I didn't have a good reason to live, then I would die over there. But that wasn't fair to you. That was -- whadayacallit -- false pretenses.
(beat)
What if -- what I am now -- you stop loving me?

SIENNA
You gotta shut up, you know that.

MARLON
What if you get me through all of this and I stop lovin' you?

ON the two of them -- in way over their heads.

INT. WALTER REED - TORY'S OFFICE

Tess sits opposite Tory.

TESS
You're sure you have time --

TORY
-- I have time for a friend. When do you head over there?

TESS
About eight weeks.

TORY
Good. We'll have a chance to talk about everything. I'll give you a whole survival guide --

TESS
-- That's -- great. But I'm not actually here to talk about Afghanistan. Well, sort of I am -- it's complicated.
(beat)
It's more about secrets.

Tory knows all about secrets.

TESS (CONT'D)
I think maybe -- when I go, I'm gonna need to leave a part of who I really am over here.

TORY
I get it... And then when you come back, you might leave a part of who you are over there.

INT. WALTER REED - OUTSIDE THE OR

George walks briskly down the hall -- spots Stacey, up ahead. Mask off. On the floor, head in her hands. He goes to her.

GEORGE
Hey. You okay?

STACEY
I don't -- I don't know what happened to me in there. I was sewing up -- and I looked down at this kid, this poor soldier, and... He has the same face as my little brother. Oh, god -- I should have been a dermatologist.

GEORGE
(sitting down next to her)
Dermatologists see some pretty gross things.

STACEY
(laughs, cries)
I don't think I can do this.

GEORGE
Yes you can. But you can't do it without it breaking your heart. If you could, there would be something wrong with you.

STACEY
How can you take it? Explain it to me.

GEORGE
I close my office door and I scream -- or I cry. Once a week. And then I walk right back out. Cause it's the best medicine anyone practices in the world. And it's for them.
(beat)
(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)
I thought I'd get out. The day I put my hand on the bible, I wrote on my calendar, June 4, 2008. That was the day I was gonna quit the Army, make some real money. But here I am. And here I'll stay.

INT. WALTER REED - OUTSIDE A DIFFERENT OR - NIGHT

Leonard waits. The OR door swings open. AN OB NURSE exits.

LEONARD
What's the news?

OB NURSE
Soon.
(walks away, looks back)
I think you're a little bit in love with her, aren't you, Dr. Mooney?

LEONARD
We all are, aren't we?

OB NURSE
Yeah. That's what I meant.

INT. WALTER REED - DOCTOR'S LOUNGE

Tory NAPS on the couch. George is in a chair, just watching. She must sense him, because she wakes. He goes over to her.

GEORGE
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to --

TORY
S'okay. I wasn't actually sleeping. How long have you been sitting there?

GEORGE
I won't... come over for any barbecue, next weekend. I'll make a good excuse.

TORY
Of course. Yes.
(beat)
Clay is so good, isn't he? He's trying so hard.

GEORGE
Uh-huh. Is it working?

TORY
What? Getting back to how things were? It will. Work. In time.

GEORGE
You know what the problem is?

TORY
I didn't say there was a problem.

GEORGE
He doesn't know you. Not all of you

TORY
-- George --

GEORGE
-- No one knows either one of us. Not the way we know each other.

TORY
For God's sake -- we made a deal, George, when you left. We were traumatized. We made a mistake -- a brief mistake. And we were gonna leave it there. You promised me. Please don't do this.

GEORGE
I'm trying. But I'm not talking about something we can decide. I'm not talking about what we do. I'm talking about who we are. Now. After.
(beat)
What happens when you live through something that becomes so much a part of you that no one who wasn't there can ever get inside you all the way again?

TORY
I don't know. We'll have to figure that out.

He looks at her. Leans over. KISSES her. She wants to, but she doesn't stop him. She closes her eyes. Let's it linger.

GEORGE
Last time. Promise.

FADE OUT.

ACT FIVE

INT. WALTER REED HOSPITAL - HALLWAYS

Marlon is WHEELED on a GURNEY to the OR, PAST...

INT. WALTER REED - SLEEP LAB/TBI CENTER

A calm sleep chamber. TECHNICIANS behind glass in “mission control” monitor many chambers. In one, a TECHNICIAN hooks Tibor up with WIRELESS NODES... while he pets Major Major.

INT. WALTER REED - HALLWAYS

Tory walks with Sienna.

TORY
Sometimes patients who seem to be doing better, come out of surgery and have a short term, emotional reaction --

SIENNA
- You don’t have to tell me all this.

TORY
I think it’ll help you, in case --

SIENNA
-- I’m leaving. I’m going home.

TORY
... Okay.

SIENNA
It’s just -- so much more than I bargained for, you know? You can ask my friends. I’m one of those, “you need to take care of her” girls. I’m not the hero type.

TORY
Everyone here is on shaky ground, Sienna.
(beat)
That’s actually how heroism works. Accidentally, while you’re muddling through.

They TURN A CORNER and run headlong into an OCCASION.

It's Sgt. Figgs proposing to CHLOE FINK, 27, his pretty girlfriend, who's trying her best not to crack up or cry.

Figgs is just being lowered to the ground by George and another doctor. The CROWD is hushed.

SGT. FIGGS
I might tip over. Don't be upset.

CHLOE FINK
I'll try not to be.

SGT. FIGGS
Chloe Fink. In front of all my friends, I want to offer you my --
(looks around)
Dr. Fiske?

Fiske unhooks one of Figgs' prostheses. The ARM.

SGT. FIGGS (CONT'D)
-- My hand in marriage.

Fiske turns the prosthetic arm over to Chloe.

CHLOE FINK
Oh. That is in terrible taste, Warren.

Tory, laughing with the crowd, looks to Sienna. She's gone.

EXT./INT. WALTER REED/SIENNA'S CAR

Sienna sits at the gate of the post and TYPES "ALTOONA, IOWA" into her GPS.

The GATE LIFTS. She exits. WIPING A TEAR from her CHEEK, she accelerates and is gone.

INT. WALTER REED - NICU

Leonard stares at a TINY INFANT, sleeping in it's plastic "bubble." The name on the tape reads "Olney Baby Boy."

Is it possible that this baby is the only one who made it?...

... No. Darla WHEELS up beside him to wonder at her new baby.

DARLA
He has his father's nose, unfortunately.
(MORE)

DARLA (CONT'D)
(off his laughter)
Thank you.

LEONARD
Dr. Robb.

DARLA
And you.
(beat)
Apparently, I can still have more babies.

LEONARD
She's very good. One of the best.

Darla takes his hand and squeezes it.

DARLA
I'm going to name him Michael Leo Olney.

Leonard can't believe his ears. Leo?

DARLA (CONT'D)
He wouldn't be here without both of you.

It overwhelms him. He turns back to the baby.

LEONARD
Wonderful.

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM

Marlon's waking up, post surgery. Groggy. Tory's by his side.

TORY
Hey, you.

MARLON
... Hey.

TORY
Dr. Mann came in to see you. You were still sleeping.

MARLON
That's good... 'ppreciate it... These are warm blankets.
(Tory smiles)
I think... Sienna left.

TORY
I think so too.

MARLON
I pushed her. Maybe. Away. I pushed her.

TORY
You did? Why?

MARLON
... Lot of reasons. I was afraid.

TORY
Of what, Corporal?

MARLON
That I would fall in love with her. You know? And then she would -- she would fall out of love with me.
(beat)
And that'd be worse than being alone.

He DRIFTS a bit. Tory studies him. Poor, brave boy.

In the HALL outside, A COMMOTION. Soldiers WHOOPING IT UP. Tory looks out. The noise rouses Marlon.

MARLON (CONT'D)
What's going on?

TORY
Looks like an "Alive Day" celebration.
(looks at her, quizzically)
Like a birthday. Except it's the day you almost died, but didn't.

MARLON
So it's... it's like celebrating the worst day of your life?

TORY
Yes.

MARLON
Not me. No thank you.

TORY
That's what everyone says.

This is about her as much as it's about him. She smiles.

TORY (CONT'D)
And then you get better. And you do.

INT. WALTER REED - JASPER'S ICU ROOM

LINGER ON JASPER, lying peacefully in his bed. PAN to George. Alone in the room with him. It's getting dark.

GEORGE
I've come to look forward to our few minutes everyday, Corporal. I assume, if you felt differently, you would say something.
(beat)
I'll admit -- and I know you've got a lot on your plate -- that I'm having some second thoughts about all of this. And it's not just me. I know a very promising young woman surgeon who would back me up if she were here.
(beat)
I don't stick my nose in why. I just put 'em back together. That's my part.
(he laughs ruefully)
You nearly die, Jasper. You teeter on the brink. For what? I don't know if I can answer that. So, is it enough... just to be heroic, without knowing why?

And JASPERS'S HAND MOVES. Just a little bit. Just a finger. George doesn't see it. But we do. It moves!!

EXT. WALTER REED - WALK WAY -- NIGHT

Tory walks alone, her jacket on, bag in hand, to her car. She's on her cell.

TORY
I'm heading home. Yah, I know it's early. I just want to see you.

MUSIC RISES SOFTLY...

INT. WALTER REED - LOUNGE AREA - NIGHT

FOLLOW George as he wanders in. It seems to be a bit of a party. Ad hoc. Doctors and nurses.

(Leonard is there.) Even a few patients. Some CAKE and some DRINKS. A TERRIBLE HOMEMADE SIGN that says “Tess.”

George spots Anna at the “bar” and walks over.

GEORGE
Is Tess leaving already?

ANNA
No. She’s just going to Honolulu tomorrow, to see her mom. Everyone seemed to need a party.

GEORGE
Have you seen Dr. Sterling?

ANNA
Everyone but Dr. Sterling. I think she went home.

Someone switches the music. The IPOD now PLAYS “The Way You Look Tonight.”

OOHS and AHHS from the CROWD. George and Anna watch as people begin to pair up. And DANCE. Anna watches Tess, laughing with friends. George turns to Anna. Well?

ANNA (CONT’D)
What the hell?

And they DANCE to a good old song.

GEORGE
Now, doesn’t this feel right?

ANNA
Don’t push your luck.

A HAND TAPS GEORGE on the SHOULDER. He turns. It’s Tess.

GEORGE
Oh, now everybody wants in!

TESS
Not you.
(to Anna)
Can two old friends have a dance?

And George steps aside. Tess takes Anna’s hand. They DANCE. “There is nothing for me but to love you... just the way you look, tonight.”

George watches them. A few others, as well. And they don't know exactly what it means. Perhaps just two old friends, dancing, as women sometimes do. But maybe something more...

ON LEONARD, watching. Darla WHEELS IN and over to him.

DARLA
I needed a stroll and I heard some music. What are we celebrating?

LEONARD
Lt. Ong has been deployed. It's a kind of premature goodbye... And a party for Michael Leo.

DARLA
Shall we dance? My doctor wants me up and walking, as it is.

LEONARD
Yes, he does. But chairs are good for dancing, too.

In TANDEM, they MOVE their chairs, up and back, to the music.

DARLA
You've got moves, doc.

FIND GEORGE. He's just outside the room, watching. <u>His family</u>. Dancing. Laughing. For all the pain -- it is a special place.

Stacey slides in next to him.

STACEY
That's a good, old song. Aren't you going in?

GEORGE
I thought I'd just watch.

She STUDIES him. This odd, handsome, duck. And, without warning, SHE KISSES him. And it's no peck. A real kiss.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
What was that?

STACEY
Thank you.
(beat)
For letting me know I'm not crazy and I'm not alone. That's all. For yesterday. For staying put .

And she walks away. From what was much more than a thank you.

INT. TORY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The MUSIC FADES OUT as Tory sits on the bed next to Clay. She looks at him. Like something's about to happen.

CLAY
... What?

TORY
... So... this is what happened to me, over there. And I haven't really talked about it. Because it wasn't just like every other time. It was...
(composing herself)
There was an attack. A suicide attack. Three soldiers died. Not medical, but people I knew really well. I held one of them as she... I thought I was going to die.

She's crying now... This is so much bigger than Clay expected. It scares him...

CLAY
--You're sure you're ready to do this?

TORY
-- Yes. Uh-huh. I love you and -- and I don't want there to be some hole - some gulf between us. You were right. I need you to know all of me. Until that happens we don't have a chance at "back to normal." So you can ask me any questions you want and I'll try to answer. On November 9th, it was late in the afternoon, about four o'clock. We were outside of Bagram, because there had been reports...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WALTER REED - HALLWAYS - NIGHT

The SOLDIER WITH THE PROSTHETIC LEG, whom Sienna had watched when she first arrived, practices walking down the hall.

Unassisted. He SMILES at the progress he is making. A private triumph. And one that happens here, every day.

INT. WALTER REED - MARLON'S ICU ROOM - NIGHT

FOLLOW Sienna into the room. It's dark. Marlon's asleep. Sienna pulls up a chair. She looks at him. Softly:

SIENNA
... I'm sorry. I got lost for a little bit. And... I know you are too.
(she touches his hand)
At least we're not alone.
(no sense of tomorrow)
We'll see... we'll see...

INT. WALTER REED - TIBOR'S ROOM - NIGHT

MOVE IN. Slowly. Is he awake? Another tortured night? No... Tibor's SOUND ASLEEP in bed, snoring. Major Major is right beside him, LICKING his hand.

INT. TORY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Tory and Clay lie in bed, on the verge of sleep, when something disturbs her and she opens her eyes.

There, at her bedside, is Jo.... Tory smiles.

TORY
Having trouble?
(Jo nods)
Climb on in.

And Jo crawls over Tory, between her and Clay and wiggles under the covers.

TORY (CONT'D)
We'll all go to sleep together.

Tory curls her arm around her daughter. Instinctively, half-asleep, so does Clay. And Jo closes her eyes. And then Tory. A picture of a family.

We HEAR a VIBRATION. PAN to Tory's phone on her night table. A TEXT. From George...

"See you tomorrow. Night."

FADE TO BLACK