

1-800-MISSING

"Basic Training"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 1

We are low, like an animal, moving fast, relentlessly pursuing our prey... who happens to be a MUD-COVERED, young SOLDIER, who we will come to know as VALERIE MATHIS, 19. She is in full battle fatigues and helmet, carrying her PACK and RIFLE.

Valerie runs through the brush and the thick mud, breathing heavily, soaked through-and-through. She's afraid... but there's a strength in her face, too.. a determination, a will to survive... until she comes to a sudden stop, eyes wide with fear. This is the end for her...and she knows it. And as we RUSH up BEHIND HER, closing fast, she turns to face us and SCREAMS, her cry of terror DROWNED OUT by A THUNDERCLAP. And we CUT TO:

2 INT. FBI HQ - DAY 2

Sunny is at her computer, typing away, eyes intent on the screen. She hits the RETURN key. Then hits it again. And again. And again. She grimaces in frustration.

SUNNY

Come on. Come on.

(then, resigned:)

Fine.

She grabs her WIRELESS KEYBOARD and CHUCKS IT ACROSS THE ROOM. The keyboard smacks into the wall and breaks into pieces. Brooke and Jess come out of the adjoining office and look in on Sunny.

JESS

Is everything all right?

SUNNY

It is now.

BROOKE

Computer problems?

SUNNY

What was your first clue?

Brooke stiffens. What's that about? Jess forces a smile.

JESS

I've always been tempted to fix my computer the same way.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

SUNNY

Excuse me. I need to get a new keyboard out of supply.

Sunny marches out. Brooke and Jess share a look. In the corridor, Sunny nearly collides with Coyle, who is escorting in MAJOR CATHERINE O'MALLEY, in full uniform. O'Malley has a file under her arm.

COYLE

Sunny, you remember Major Catherine O'Malley, Army Criminal Investigation Division...

SUNNY

How can I forget the woman who tried to have me reprimanded?

Coyle clears his throat, uneasy.

COYLE

(to O'Malley:)

There are no hard feelings, of course.

O'MALLEY

Of course.

SUNNY

That's because she's not the one with a letter of complaint in her jacket.

Sunny continues on past them.

COYLE

Sunny is coming off a difficult case. You know how it is.

O'MALLEY

As a matter of fact, I don't. I've never been kidnapped and strapped to a bomb.

COYLE

You heard about that?

*

O'MALLEY

Frankly, I'm surprised to see Agent Estrada back at work so soon after her ordeal.

BROOKE

She's the one who chose it. She loves her work.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

Brooke and Jess have emerged from Sunny's office. O'Malley glances past them at the pieces of the keyboard on the floor.

O'MALLEY

Obviously.

Coyle motions them into Brooke's office.

COYLE

We have to talk.

JESS

(to O'Malley:)

You haven't come back to chew us out again, have you?

Coyle shoots Jess a look.

COYLE

What Jess means to say is we still appreciate your professional courtesy for overlooking some unfortunate lapses in procedure during our investigation of the Crowley affair.

Brooke gives Coyle a pointed look, which he ignores.

O'MALLEY

I'm glad you feel that way, Agent Coyle. Because I have a favor to ask.

She opens her file and sets it on the desk. There's a report inside... clipped to it is a PICTURE OF VALERIE MATHIS, wearing a crisp CADET'S UNIFORM.

O'MALLEY

This is Valerie Mathis, a cadet at George Washington Military Academy.

BROOKE

The Garrison.

O'MALLEY

Two weeks ago, just before the end of the academic quarter, she disappeared. School officials believe she went A.W.O.L. I don't.

BROOKE

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (3)

2

O'MALLEY

Valerie loves the Garrison as much as I did when I was her age...she wants nothing more than to excel there. It's her dream. She wouldn't run away... she'd wouldn't run away from anything.

COYLE

Valerie?

O'Malley tightens up, suddenly self-conscious.

O'MALLEY

She's my niece. If she was having problems of any kind, she would have called me. Something is wrong.

COYLE

You must have looked into her disappearance yourself.

O'MALLEY

There's an institutional "code of silence" at the Garrison, that's nearly impossible to crack. No one will talk.

BROOKE

You think it's going to be any easier for us? At least you're wearing a uniform. We're outsiders.

O'MALLEY

That could be an advantage. A new academic quarter is beginning in two days. The admissions officer is an old, trusted friend. I'd like to get someone inside as a new cadet... undercover. Someone so obviously green that she won't arouse suspicion.
(to Jess)
Someone like you.

And on her Jess' surprise, we FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 INT. FBI HQ - DAY

3

Everyone is right where we left them three minutes ago, only for them about three seconds have passed, long enough for what O'Malley just said to really sink in.

BROOKE

You want Jess to go undercover?

JESS

Has anyone mentioned I'm not really an agent...

*

*

BROOKE

It's out of the question.

*

*

O'MALLEY

It's the only way we'll find out what happened.

JESS

I can't really be the only way... Can I?

*

*

*

BROOKE

Jess doesn't have the training or the resources for this. She's not capable of doing this..

*

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(to O'Malley)

Send one of your C.I.D. officers.

*

*

Jess is a little stung.

*

JESS

I haven't actually said "no" yet. I mean, if there's no other way...

*

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O'MALLEY

I don't have any female officers who are young enough to pass for cadets... besides, even if I did, they wouldn't be able to hide their military training. It's instinctive. Jess won't have that problem.

JESS

That's true.

*

*

BROOKE

Could you excuse us for a moment, Major?

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

O'Malley nods, almost like a salute.

O'MALLEY
I'll wait outside.

As soon as O'Malley has stepped out of the office and is out of earshot, Brooke turns to Jess. But before she can say anything...

JESS
You really don't think I could do
this?

*
*

BROOKE
An undercover mission isn't a costume party. We're talking about full immersion in military culture.

JESS
I'm not invading Iraq. It's a military school.

BROOKE
You can't handle it.

JESS
We won't know until we try. You brought me into the FBI because I started having visions about missing people while I sleep... but I've proven I can do more than that.

COYLE
I'm inclined to agree. We're not talking about a terrorist group or a crime family... it's a military academy. One that gets substantial federal dollars, which makes it our jurisdiction.

JESS
I want to do this.
(defiantly to Brooke:)
I can do this.

Coyle nods, then turns to Brooke.

COYLE
Brief her.

BROOKE
Alan--

COYLE
You heard me, Brooke.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

COYLE (CONT'D)

Prepare Jess for her assignment.
I'll make the necessary arrangements
with Major O'Malley.

Coyle walks out. And on Brooke simmering, and Jess, hiding her apprehension, we CUT TO:

4 INT. FBI HQ - ANALOG BOARD - DAY

4

The boards are filled with facts, tree-charts and photos about "The Garrison" and its social structure. Brooke and O'Malley lead Jess through the briefing.

O'MALLEY

The Garrison is a co-ed institution. Women make up 15% of the student body. The Seniors are all officers. Freshman are Privates, also known as "plebes." You are required to remain in uniform at all times, salute officers and follow the commands of your upperclassmen.

*

BROOKE

You will serve them their food. Clean up their toilets. And you will do it with pleasure.

*

*

*

JESS

And you're wondering why Valerie might have left?

O'MALLEY

The point isn't humiliation... it's to make you a soldier.

*

(then, firmly:)

And no matter what, you never quit.
Never.

BROOKE

But you'll want to.

JESS

I'm tougher than you think.

BROOKE

Once you walk through those gates, you'll be stripped of everything that makes you an individual.

*

JESS

Bring it on.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

O'MALLEY

That's the attitude.

BROOKE

She'll need more than attitude.

SUNNY

She'll need a good medical plan.

Sunny walks up, holding a thick file, the contents of which SPILL OUT when she opens it.

SUNNY

Damn!

She crouches and starts gathering up the papers, mashing them into the file folder in no particular order as she speaks:

SUNNY

There have been five training-related deaths at the Garrison in the last decade, far more than any other military academy in the nation. All the victims were first year cadets.

BROOKE

(to Jess)

So you'll be in danger... and I can't be with you. We're giving you this instead.

She nods at Sunny, who produces what appears to be a cell phone. But not quite. *

JESS

A cell phone?

SUNNY

Looks like it. But it's professional com gear. It's a straight satellite line, you to us. No phone company, no interference, no signal failure. *

BROOKE

With high level-encryption. It's impossible to tap.

SUNNY

And it's got a GPS locator. You get into trouble, we know where you are.

JESS

Cool.

She goes to take it, but Sunny pulls it away.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

SUNNY

How you gonna bring it in there?

JESS

In my pocket.

SUNNY

They *empty* your pockets, Kreskin.

BROOKE

And com gear is forbidden.

JESS

So...

O'MALLEY

I'll get it in. Just search your room when you arrive. It will be there.

BROOKE

This is your last chance. It's not about sleeping and dreaming now, Jess. You'll be in danger.

JESS

I want to do this. I'll be fine.

BROOKE

(pause)

All right then.

(to Sunny:)

Let's look into those accidents and get the details.

SUNNY

Thanks for that direction, Brooke. I've only been a special agent for five years -- it would never occur to me to do that on my own.

Sunny marches off, her back to Brooke.

BROOKE

(to O'Malley:)

She's having a rough week.

(to Jess)

See you soon.

JESS

As soon as I find Valerie Mathis.

Jess looks at VALERIE'S PHOTO. And on Jess' determination, and Brooke's skepticism, we CUT TO:

5 EXT. THE GARRISON -- MORNING

5

It is every bit as foreboding an institution as the nickname would suggest. CADETS in FATIGUES work-out and march on the grounds. We FIND a ROW OF FRESH-FACED NEW CADETS, Jess among them, standing casually in line in their NEW FATIGUES (the female cadets have their hair trimmed or pinned up). Jess is standing next to ANNA, 19, who looks tough... street tough. A CORPORAL walks along the line, shoving a THICK BOOK into their arms as SGT. CYNTHIA DOLAN, 20s, watches.

DOLAN

Welcome to George Washington Military Academy, the finest institution of its kind in the nation. The book in your hand is the U.S. Corps of Cadets Manual of Standard Operating Procedures. Learn it. Live it. You will be given two opportunities to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test each quarter. The first will be tomorrow at 0500 hours. Minimum requirements are fifty-three sit-ups in two minutes, sixty six pushups in two minutes, and a two mile run in fifteen minutes, fifty-four seconds. If you do not pass this simple test each quarter, you will be separated.

JESS

(low to Anna:)

Separated? Will we also be dismembered and deboned?

Anna cracks a thin smile. Dolan is in Jess' face in an INSTANT, their noses nearly touching. Jess is startled.

DOLAN

Give me forty!

JESS

Forty what?

DOLAN

Push-ups, Cadet. Now.

(to Anna:)

You, too.

ANNA

But I didn't do anything.

Now Dolan is in her face.

DOLAN

Drop.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

Both Jess and Anna drop and do push ups. Dolan stands in front of them, continuing her lecture, but aiming it at them.

DOLAN

Separation means expulsion. When I am addressing you, don't talk. Don't smile. Don't move. Keep your arms at your sides and your eyes focused on me. If you are addressed or corrected, you will reply promptly, crisply and with no emotion on your face whatsoever. You will address your superior officers as "Sir" or "Ma'am."

(to Jess:)

Is that clear?

JESS

Yes.

Dolan crouches beside Jess, who is doing push-ups.

DOLAN

Yes, what?

JESS

Yes, Ma'am.

DOLAN

Report to your dormitories.

The new cadets disperse. Jess starts to get up, but Dolan shoves her back down by stomping her boot on her back.

DOLAN

Did I relieve you, Cadet? You still owe me thirty.

JESS

Yes, ma'am.

Dolan glares at Anna, who is smiling at Jess' distress.

DOLAN

Is that a smile? No one cares what amuses you, Cadet. Give me another forty.

*

*

Dolan steps away. Jess glances at Anna and is about to speak, when Anna cuts her off with:

ANNA

Don't ever talk to me again.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

And on Jess, having made two enemies in the first ten minutes of military life, we CUT TO:

6 INT. GARRISON - DORM ROOM - DAY

6

It's like any other dorm room anywhere in the world -- except it's incredibly, spotlessly neat. Straight angles, hospital corners, not a speck of dust anywhere. Well, half the room, anyway. The other half is littered with Jess's STUFF -- she's just dumped everything out of her duffel bag onto her bed. She looks around the room... where would they have hidden that com gear... her lifeline? She looks under the desk, through the clothes locker... nothing. Now she's feeling around the stitches of her mattress, searching with her hands until she finds a HOLE in the seam that faces the wall. She reaches in, starts to pull out the COM GEAR when --

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

This was definitely more fun at my old school.

Jess jumps up, stuffing the communcator back in the mattress, and turning to see BRITTANY MORRIS standing in the doorway. In any other school, Brittany would be head cheerleader. Here, she's perfectly military while retaining a sorority-girl perkiness.

BRITTANY

The best part of getting a new roommate at SCU was going through her clothes, seeing what I could wear.

Brittany goes over to the bed, picks up one of Jess's uniform shirts -- identical to the one they're both wearing.

JESS

I can see how the magic might be missing. I'm Jess Mastriani.

BRITTANY

Brittany Morris.

They shake hands, then Brittany neatly folds Jess's shirt and lays it on the bed.

JESS

You went to Southern California University?

BRITTANY

Spoiled Children U. Full ride.

JESS

So how'd you get here?

(CONTINUED)

BRITTANY

Too many parties, too many guys... I lasted one semester.

JESS

You got thrown out for partying?

Brittany shakes her head "no" and laughs.

BRITTANY

They got thrown out, not me. I got sick of watching people throw their lives away. I wanted to do something meaningful with my life, so I quit and enrolled here. Only thing I miss are the clothes... what about you?

JESS

I lost my Dad... my brother has psychological problems... my life has been chaos. I needed... you know, some order. This seemed like the place.

There's more than a little truth to what she just said...and that sells it.

BRITTANY

Welcome to the Garrison, then. And if there's anything you don't understand, ask me. I've been here a whole semester -- I know it all.

JESS

Thanks.

BRITTANY

So you ever have family go here, friends?

JESS

Me, no. Although, I heard of a friend of friend who went here. Valerie... Matthews, I think.

BRITTANY

Don't know her. Wait, there was a Valerie Mathis...

JESS

Was?

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6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

BRITTANY
Haven't seen her lately. I hear she
went AWOL. Washed out.

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JESS
She just left?

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BRITTANY
Guess so. No surprise. She couldn't
keep up. She was only average.
We're expected to excel here.

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JESS
Even how we fold our clothes?

BRITTANY
Cuff to shoulder at 75 degrees. Make
sure the buttons touch the seams.
Like this.

Brittany begins to fold Jess' clothes the right way -- and put
them in her foot locker.

BRITTANY
I know it seems arbitrary at first.
But it's about self-discipline.
Being at The Garrison means holding
yourself to a higher standard. Isn't
that why we're here?

JESS
Absolutely.

BRITTANY
The military term is: huah!

JESS
Huah.

BRITTANY
(laughs:)
No...you have to belt it out: Huah!

JESS
Huah!

BRITTANY
You're a natural.

And as Jess and Brittany share a smile, a friendship starting to
grow:

7 EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - LOT - DAY

7

JAN MATHIS, 40s, steel-hard and knife-sharp, is holding a DEAL MEMO and talking to a NERVOUS YOUNG COUPLE standing in front of her.

JAN

If it were up to me, I'd say yes right now. But I have to run these numbers past the credit manager.

She takes the paper and towards the OFFICE, where Brooke waits outside for her.

JAN

Sorry to keep you waiting. It's a very delicate moment in the deal. The Bureau still driving Fords? Because I'd love to get a crack at your fleet.

BROOKE

You don't seem very concerned about your daughter's disappearance from the Garrison, Mrs. Mathis.

JAN

I was -- the first dozen times she ran away from home. Guess what, you can get used to anything.

BROOKE

Major O'Malley doesn't think she ran away.

JAN

Cathy can't imagine her favorite niece would run out on her, too. But when things get tough, my daughter takes off. Like mother like daughter.

BROOKE

Have you heard from Valerie lately?

JAN

Not in the last few days. Before that, she had so much to complain about, I couldn't get her off the phone.

BROOKE

What were her complaints?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

JAN

"It's too hard, I'm not making it, I'm not strong enough, I'm not fast enough, I'm letting down the platoon." I said, honey, you're not happy, you should quit.

BROOKE

Major O'Malley seemed to believe Valerie was thriving at the Garrison.

Jan stiffens at the mention of the name.

JAN

That's because Valerie wouldn't say anything that might disappoint her idol. Valerie would have joined the Foreign Legion if she thought her aunt would approve. I wish Valerie cared as much about how I felt.

BROOKE

Maybe it works both ways.

JAN

I love my daughter, Agent Haslett. I want her to be happy. But she's an adult now, she makes her own choices whether I agree with them or not. If leaving the Garrison makes her happy, I'm not going to run panicking to the FBI to drag her back.

BROOKE

If you hear from Valerie, give us a call.

She turns and walks out as Jan heads back to her clients.

JAN

(to the young couple)
I fought for your deal, but that woman is a bear. Now here's what we can do.

And as she bores in for the kill, we DISSOLVE TO:

8 INT. GARRISON - DORM ROOM - NIGHT

8

Jess sleeps soundly -- for once, no disturbing dreams, just sheer exhaustion. That's when Brittany, in full uniform, shakes her.

BRITTANY

Jess! Wake up! On your feet!

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

Jess' eyes flash open as she realizes where she is. She looks at the clock. It's 4:30.

BRITTANY

Fitness test. 0500 hours.

Brittany trots to the door, then stops to make sure Jess is pulling herself out of bed.

BRITTANY

Trust me, you do not want to be late.

And as Brittany dashes out, we CUT TO:

9 INT. GARRISON - DORM HALLWAY - MORNING

9

The cadets are running out onto the field. Jess waits until they are gone, then slips into

10 INT. GARRISON - LOCKER ROOM - MORNING

10

The room is empty. Jess is alone. She finds a locker with VALERIE MATHIS' name on it. She opens it (in accordance with the code of honor and stripping away of individuality, there are no locks on any of the lockers). The locker is incredibly organized. Jess starts sorting through it, looking for clues when:

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MAN'S VOICE

Is your name Mathis, plebe?

Startled, Jess slams the locker shut to reveal CORP. MIKE FABER, 20s, standing right next to her. She stands at attention.

JESS

I made a mistake. I opened the wrong locker, sir.

FABER

Mastriani. That's two lockers down.

JESS

Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.

He stares at her a long moment.

FABER

You're supposed to be on the field. Get moving.

She rushes out.

11 EXT. GARRISON - TRAINING GROUNDS - MORNING

11

Though it's dark enough to be night. Jess flies across the green, tucking in her uniform shirt on the run, as the clock tower bell

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

chimes five times, finally making it to the LINE OF CADETS standing at attention. Sgt. Dolan walks the line, trailed by a CADET WITH A CLIPBOARD.

DOLAN

For reasons I will never understand, you plebes will be given two chances to pass this test. Fail twice, you will be separated. Is that clear?

Jess falls into line right next to Brittany, just in time to join the rest of the plebes in shouting:

JESS

Yes, ma'am!

That's when Dolan seems to notice Jess for the first time.

DOLAN

Private Mastriani, what time does this test begin?

JESS

0500 hours, ma'am!

DOLAN

That was three minutes ago.

Dolan turns to the clipboard-carrying cadet.

DOLAN

Mastriani. Fail.
(to Jess:)
You will take your second test tomorrow.

Dolan turns back to the assembled cadets.

DOLAN

On the ground for push-ups. 53 in two minutes.

*

Half the assembled cadets drop and lie on the ground to start the test, the other half holding their feet. Jess looks around, wondering what to do. Dolan marches over to her.

DOLAN

You, too. Just because you failed doesn't excuse you from the activity. Now drop!

Jess does, and Brittany holds her feet as Dolan blows her whistle. Jess starts doing her sit-ups and we DISSOLVE TO:

12 EXT. GARRISON TRAINING GROUNDS - DAY

12

Almost all the cadets are done with their push-ups, except for one young WOMAN who struggles with all her might as Dolan stands over her.

DOLAN

43, you've got 15 seconds left. 44.
Nine more to go.

The struggling cadet is ringed by her fellow soldiers. Some of them are cheering her on. Not many. Shouts of "You're gonna fail!" and "loser" fill the air around her.

JESS

Who's that?

BRITTANY

Juanita Alcala -- worst cadet in the Academy. She already failed this test once -- she doesn't make it today, she's out.

JESS

So why aren't people encouraging her?

BRITTANY

They are. She'd be doing her platoon a favor if she left. She's dragging everybody down.

JESS

Like Valerie Mathis?

BRITTANY

Valerie left. Juanita is still here.

DOLAN

Three seconds left. 52, 53...

With a mighty effort, Juanita finishes the last sit-up. A couple of cadets CHEER for her. The others walk away.

DOLAN

Congratulations, Private Alcala, you're still a cadet. For now.
(to the cadets)
Line up for the run. Two miles, maximum time 15 minutes 54 seconds.

Everyone goes to the starting line. Jess goes to Juanita who, exhausted, is struggling to her feet. Jess helps her up and gives her a friendly smile.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

JESS

Hey, that was really great.
Congratulations.

JUANITA

Thanks. And I know you're going to
pass tomorrow. Let me know if you
need help waking up on time.

Juanita smiles and starts to stretch for the run. And we CUT TO:

13 INT. FBI HQ - PARKING GARAGE - DAY

13

Sunny drives into the parking structure and parks her car. She shuts off the radio and the engine and is about to reach for the door latch when something stops her. She studies the garage. It's EMPTY. Not a soul in sight. It's also DEAD QUIET. The shadows seem LONG AND OMINOUS. The corners and alcoves seem dark enough to hide anything, and none of it pleasant. Sunny looks increasingly nervous. What could be out there... lurking? Waiting? Hunting? The ELEVATOR DOORS seem to STRETCH FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY. They were just a few yards away... now it's MILES. She sits stiffly in her seat, unable to move. Her hand shaking...the only sound the nerve-wackling JANGLING of her keys. Suddenly there's THREE SHARP RAPS on her window. She whirls around, stifling a scream to see COYLE looking at her through the passenger window.

COYLE

You okay?

Sunny covers quickly, masking her fear with ANGER, grabbing her purse and getting out of the car, slamming the door behind her.

SUNNY

Yeah, fine. Just lost in thought.

Coyle walks alongside her to the elevator...acutely aware of just how closely she is to his side... almost as if she was seeking protection.

COYLE

Anything you want to talk about?

SUNNY

No.

And on Coyle's concern, and Sunny, trying to hide her SHAKING HANDS, we FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

14 INT. GARRISON - DORM ROOM - NIGHT 14

Brittany is asleep in the next bed. Jess rolls over, her back to Brittany, and looks under the mattress. She takes out the FBI communications device... thinks about using it... but it's too risky. Brittany could hear. Jess slips it back into the mattress, and takes out a a PHOTO of VALERIE MATHIS. She stares at it for a moment, then slips it under her mattress again and drifts off to SLEEP. We PUSH IN and DISSOLVE TO:

THE DREAMSCAPE

VALERIE runs past a GNARLED TREE...it's RAINING ROCKS... blood is streaming down her face from the impacts...as she runs, her FACE morphs into JUANITA...she falls INTO A PIT... looks up, and sees the edge ringed with DARK FIGURES, all throwing STONES down at her. And as she's pummeled to the ground with ROCKS, her face MORPHS back to VALERIE, and we CUT TO:

15 INT. GARRISON - DORM ROOM - NIGHT 15

Jess wakes up, breathing heavily, to see Brittany studying her.

BRITTANY

Nightmares?

Jess nods, still trying to collect herself.. and becoming aware of the sound of COMMOTION in the corridor.

BRITTANY

It's stress. I had them the first few nights here, too. I couldn't say the word "sir" -- I kept saying "Corn Flakes" instead.

JESS

(re: the noise:)
What's going on?

She gets up (in gym shorts and a tank top) and starts for the door. Brittany stops her.

BRITTANY

You're not allowed outside the room unless you're in full uniform.

Jess opens the door a crack TO SEE cadets in MUDDY CAMOUFLAGE FATIGUES are shuffling in. Suddenly the door is YANKED OPEN to reveal CORPORAL FABER, his face COAL BLACK, his boots caked with MUD.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

FABER

What are you doing in the corridor
out of uniform?

Actually, she's not in the corridor, just standing in her doorway,
but she's learned not to argue. She stands at attention.

JESS

Going to the bathroom, sir.

Brittany steps forward, half-dressed in her uniform, and stands
attention.

BRITTANY

It's her second night, sir. She's
still learning the rules, sir.

FABER

Oh, I understand.

Jess and Brittany relax. Faber gets right in their faces.

FABER

I understand that a mistake in the
field could get your platoon killed!
(to Jess:)

Put on your uniform and report to
the latrine. Polish every toilet,
faucet and tile until they shine, is
that understood, plebe?

JESS

Yes, sir!

Faber looks at both plebes for a moment, then nods a curt dismissal
and moves on.

JESS

Did you see how they were dressed?
What do you think they were doing?

BRITTANY

I don't think. And neither should
you. Not unless you want to spend
your days cleaning toilets. Speaking
of which, you want to get moving.

Jess goes to her bed to grab her uniform and, checking to make
sure Brittany isn't watching, grabs her COM GEAR from the mattress.

16 INT. GARRISON - LATRINE - NIGHT

16

Jess is on her hands-and-knees, scrubbing around a sink. She's
exhausted. She steals a GLANCE at two OTHER CADETS, who finish
scrubbing and move on. Finally she's alone.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

She takes out her COM GEAR, presses a button. It flashes to life. You don't even have to dial it. The display shows an automatic connection being made, but then...

MAN'S VOICE

You missed a spot.

Startled, Jess jams the com gear back in her pocket and scrambles to attention... only to discover it's another CADET...FRED GROVENER, 19, an amiable guy with a quick, friendly smile.

FRED

Relax, it's no problem. Let me get it for you.

16A INT. FBI HQ - BROOKE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

16A*

Brooke was listening to Jess' communication when the line goes dead...

*
*

BROOKE

Jess... Jess?

*
*

16B INT. GARRISON - LATRINE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

16B*

Fred bends down and wipes it up with a smile. He seems to actually be enjoying himself.

*

FRED

If the Yuks and Cows can't see their reflections off the toilet bowl, they freak.

*

JESS

Yuks and cows?

*
*

FRED

Sophomores and Juniors. You got to make that porcelain shine.

*
*
*

JESS

How can you be so peppy about scutwork?

*

FRED

I don't mind latrine duty. It's easier than memorizing the manual of standard procedures. What are you in for?

JESS

You mean after only one day at the Garrison? Maybe I can't cut it.

(CONTINUED)

16B CONTINUED:

16B

FRED

I don't know. The cadets who are struggling, like you and me... they're the ones with soul. And they all end up scrubbing the floors sooner or later.

JESS

Like Juanita?

FRED

She's a regular, yeah.

JESS

And Valerie Mathis?

FRED

She lived in this latrine.

JESS

She have trouble memorizing the manual, too?

FRED

She could recite every word, including the index. Her problem was physical. She didn't have the strength. But I thought she was determined to make it anyway... guess I was wrong.

A clue. Jess is pleased with herself. She is achieving her mission after all... she can cut it. That's when the door blasts open and Corporal Mike Faber strides in. Fred jumps to attention -- with Jess following -- as he surveys the room.

FABER

Good work, Grovener. Nice to see you're not completely worthless.

FRED

Thank you, sir!

FABER

You're dismissed. Get to class.

Fred salutes and marches out. Jess starts to follow, but:

FABER

Where are you going, plebe?

JESS

To class. Like you said. Sir.

(CONTINUED)

16B CONTINUED: (2)

16B

FABER

I ordered Grovener to class because he had completed his work satisfactorily. You have not.

JESS

This latrine is spotless. Sir.

Faber picks up the bucket of filthy water -- and SPLASHES it all over the room.

FABER

Then why do I see filth everywhere?

JESS

Because you --

She sees the look in his eyes and stops herself.

JESS

Because I did a poor job. I'll do better this time, sir.

He nods and leaves. She waits until she's sure he's gone, then pulls out her com gear and hits the send button

16C FBI HQ - BROOKE'S OFFICE - NIGHT*

16C*

Brooke is reading a file, but she jumps like a cat when a cell phone on her desk rings.

BROOKE

Haslett.

INTERCUT WITH JESS IN THE LATRINE.

JESS

Hi. It's me.

BROOKE

Where the hell have you been?

JESS

They watch you closely here. Listen, I found out something. Valerie Mathis was a screw-up. In my dreams she's getting hit by stones... and so is another cadet. Juanita Alcalá.

*

BROOKE

She's not missing, too, is she?

*

*

JESS

Not that I know of. But I haven't really looked for her either...

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

16C CONTINUED:

16C

And suddenly THE LATRINE DOOR FLIES OPEN, because Faber's come back. Jess doesn't even have time to hide the com gear. He sees the gear, which looks like a cell phone to him.

FABER

Are you calling your mommy to come take you home?

JESS

No, sir.

FABER

Too bad. That's one call I would have allowed.

He holds out his hand. Reluctantly, she gives him the gear. He drops it on the floor and stomps on it. It shatters.

FABER

You've got some more garbage to pick up there.

He turns and marches out again. Jess stares down at her shattered lifeline.

17 INT. FBI HQ - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

17

Brooke has gone to get Coyle at flank speed.

BROOKE

She's been spotted.

COYLE

How do you know?

BROOKE

I heard another cadet come in. Then the line went dead. We can't get it back and the GPS isn't working. He must have destroyed it.

COYLE

Good. Then she isn't compromised.

BROOKE

But she's got no *lifeline*.

COYLE

It's her call to come out. Did she have time to tell you anything?

BROOKE

She confirmed what Valerie's mother said.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

BROOKE (CONT'D)

It's a very different picture of Valerie than Major O'Malley painted. She may have just dropped out. I've been checking buses, trains, and airlines. She also thinks another cadet might be in danger...

*
*

They reach the analog board. That's when Sunny barrels out of the CONFERENCE ROOM holding a file and slams right into AN AGENT. Her papers go flying all over the floor.

SUNNY

(to agent:)

Damn! Why can't you watch where you're going?

She starts to gather the papers up, barely holding back tears. The agent tries to help, but she pushes him away.

SUNNY

Go away.

Brooke and Coyle move to help her, but she waves them off, too.

BROOKE

Sunny--

Sunny stands up, kicks the papers back into her office and faces Coyle and Brooke. She wipes the tears from her eyes.

SUNNY

I examined the autopsy reports from the last ten years at the school.

She motions to the papers she just kicked.

SUNNY

The five cadets all died in training accidents. Drownings, falls. The most recent was two years ago. The cadet died from exertional heat illness.

*

COYLE

What is that?

SUNNY

He was sent on a long march wearing full-battle dress with a forty pound pack. His uniform prevented sweat from evaporating, so his body temperature went shooting up.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

BROOKE

The other cadets were dressed and equipped the same way he was -- why was he the only one to die?

SUNNY

A couple weeks earlier he collapsed of heat exhaustion during his army fitness test... and he was only wearing a t-shirt and shorts.

COYLE

So he was prone to heat exhaustion.

BROOKE

Which means his last training exercise was suicide. Or homicide. You still want to leave her in?

COYLE

She said another cadet was missing?

SUNNY

It's not in The Garrison roster report. I get 'em every day.

COYLE

(thinks, and then:)
Leave her in.

And off Brooke's look we CUT TO:

18 OMITTED

18*

18A INT. GARRISON -- HALLWAY - NIGHT

18A*

Jess creeps along. She's trying very hard not to be seen. She knows the cost of being caught in the halls at night. Then we see what she's after. Inside an office, a telephone sits on a desk. She looks around, starts to creep towards it. Just as she is about to reach it... the damn thing RINGS. She hears someone coming, scrambles out and just avoids being seen by Dolan, who comes to answer it.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

19 EXT. GARRISON -- TRAINING GROUNDS - DAY

19

Jess finishes her push-ups as Brittany counts.

BRITTANY

63, 64, c'mon keep going, you got six more seconds, 65. 66.

Jess collapses, that's all she can do.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

BRITTANY

Not bad.

Brittany gives Jess a hand up and they start towards the start line for the run, Jess wincing with pain. *

BRITTANY

Are you okay?

JESS

(weakly:)

Huah.

Brittany grins. The OTHER FIRST-YEAR CADETS are all heading for the line, too.

JESS

Did all these cadets fail the fitness test yesterday, too?

BRITTANY

Of course not. But we stick together -- if you take the test again, we all take it.

Jess is impressed. She looks around the crowd.

BRITTANY

Looking for someone?

JESS

Juanita. I'm surprised she's not here.

BRITTANY

Maybe she finally gave up.

JESS

That's not an option.

Now it's Brittany's turn to be impressed. They reach the start line and stretch. That's when Sgt. Dolan appears at the start line.

DOLAN

On your marks, get set, go!

And they're off. Jess takes off flying down the path -- she's a great runner, quickly taking her place at the front of the pack.

20 EXT. RUNNING TRAIL - DAY

20

Jess cruises along the marked trail. She checks her watch, she's doing great. She could run like this forever.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

She's all alone on the trail -- the few faster runners are out of sight, the rest are way behind. She's having a great time. Until she stops dead. The trail curves to the right. But to the left, there's a smaller path -- and the GNARLED TREE from the dream stands right before it. Jess checks her watch. She's only got a few minutes to finish the course -- but she has to find out what this tree means. She starts running -- down the smaller path. Jess jogs over boulders and ducks under branches, searching for anything that might hold meaning, peering so intently into the woods that she doesn't notice that the trail abruptly ENDS -- at a cliff. Gasping for breath, she peers over the sheer cliff, to see how far she might have dropped. It's at least thirty feet down to jagged rocks... and on those rocks lies THE BROKEN BODY OF A FEMALE CADET. And on Jess' SHOCK, we FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

21 INT. FBI HQ - SUNNY'S LAB - DAY

21

A weary-looking Sunny is giving a report to Brooke. Photos of Valerie's body lie on the counter. (As Sunny talks, we FLASH to shots of VALERIE tumbling down the hill to match her descriptions)

SUNNY

The body was badly decomposed, but Valerie Mathis died from severe internal injuries consistent with a fall from a great height. Based on the rate of decomp, I'd say she was there for two weeks. She was wearing a full pack and battle fatigues. Academy officials believe she was practicing night maneuvers that she'd failed before... and didn't see the cliff in the darkness.

*

BROOKE

Any signs of foul play?

O'Malley walks in behind Sunny, accompanied by Coyle.

SUNNY

No. Just plenty of stupidity.

O'MALLEY

You want to clarify that?

Sunny winces with embarrassment, then turns around to face O'Malley and Coyle. O'Malley is consciously avoiding looking at the photos on the counter... trying hard to keep her emotions in check.

SUNNY

The M.E. says she had two broken toes that predate her fall by at least a week. She shouldn't have been running... and certainly not at night, alone, with a pack on.

O'MALLEY

Valerie was a soldier, Agent Estrada. She was trained to push herself beyond her limits... to excel. At least she died doing what she loved.

(then, to Brooke:)

Thank you for finding out what happened.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

Now O'Malley can't help herself. She glances at the photos...and STARTS TO CRY. She turns on her heels and hurries out before anyone can see her lose control of her emotions.

SUNNY

How come you didn't tell her what a hard time Valerie was having at the Academy?

BROOKE

(a shrug)
She's dead... hard time or not.

SUNNY

All the cadets who died were struggling.

COYLE

That's anomalous. You'd think the deaths wouldn't be related to performance.

BROOKE

I'm not sure. The cadets who fall behind push themselves harder. They're likelier to have accidents.

SUNNY

Like Valerie. And now Juanita Alcalá.

COYLE

Who's that?

SUNNY

Another cadet. The Garrison admits she's missing. It just came up on their roster report.

COYLE

That's one too many to be a coincidence. Something isn't right here.

BROOKE

I want to pull Jess out while we investigate.

COYLE

She *is* investigating. She can come out if she wants, but we shouldn't ask her. Just try to develop another way to make contact with her, all right?

And we CUT TO:

22 EXT. GARRISON - TRAINING GROUNDS - DAY

22

Jess is doing some sort of field training with her platoon... crawling under barbed wire or running through tires... when Sgt. Dolan approaches her.

DOLAN
Private Mastriani.

Jess snaps to attention.

DOLAN
You've had a busy morning.

JESS
Yes, ma'am.

DOLAN
You found a missing cadet... and you've been asking around about another cadet, Juanita Alcala. You think she might be A.W.O.L, too?

*
*
*
*

JESS
Yes, ma'am.

DOLAN
But there are two things you didn't do. You didn't pass your second fitness test. That's cause for separation.

*

JESS
There were extenuating circumstances--

Dolan gets nose-to-nose with Jess.

DOLAN
Are you arguing with me, plebe?

JESS
No, ma'am.

DOLAN
The second thing you didn't do was notify me the instant you suspected Private Alcala was gone. That's the same as covering up her transgression... that's an honor code violation... also cause for immediate separation. You're one colossal failure, aren't you?

Jess doesn't respond. She just stares straight ahead, trying to hold her rage from showing.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

DOLAN

Aren't you?

JESS

(through gritted teeth:)

Yes, ma'am.

DOLAN

But you're still here. Do you know why? Remain at attention in this spot until I come back for the answer. Move a muscle and it will be the last thing you do as a cadet.

Jess salutes her.

JESS

Yes, ma'am.

Dolan walks away, leaving Jess at attention in shame among her platoon... and left to stand in the hot sun, cold or rain. And we CUT TO:

23 INT. FBI HQ - LOUNGE - DAY

23

Sunny straggles in, looking tired. Coyle is having a cup of coffee, going through a reports. She picks up the pot and begins to pour herself a cup... but her HAND IS SHAKING too much. She sets the pot down. Coyle gets up, picks up the pot to pour her a cup.

SUNNY

Don't bother.

(re: her hand)

I'm obviously over-caffeinated as it is.

She opens the fridge for a bottle of water.

COYLE

Having trouble sleeping?

SUNNY

Alfie got me one of those Swedish pillows that are supposed to be great for your back... it's like sleeping on a brick. Tonight I'm using a real pillow.

COYLE

A few years ago, I went to ask a guy a couple routine questions, turned my back on him for one second and he shot me. I became his hostage.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

COYLE (CONT'D)

Took six hours for negotiators to talk him into surrendering while I laid there in my own blood. After that, every loud noise terrified me. Actually... any noise at all.

SUNNY

That's terrible. But I don't see what it has to do with me.

COYLE

I hid my problem because I didn't want people to think I was weak... that I'd lost my nerve. But I finally got help...the kind you need.

SUNNY

All I need is a decent pillow.

She starts to go, but Coyle steps in front of her.

COYLE

I'm saying this as your friend, not your supervisor. I can recommend a great counselor. It won't go in your jacket, it will stay between us. No one will know unless you want them to.

SUNNY

I miss a couple of hours of sleep and you're ready to have me dragged off in a straitjacket? It's not a big deal. I'll catch up on my Zs this weekend.

She moves past him now. Coyle looks after her, concerned.

24 OMITTED

24

24A OMITTED
AND
24B

24A
AND
24B

25 OMITTED
AND
25A

25*
AND
25A

25B INTT. FBI HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

25B*

Brooke talks to Ramon Alcala, a big, working-class man.

*

25B CONTINUED:

25B

RAMON

I'm a landscaping design consultant, Agent Haslett. Which is a fancy way of saying I dig ditches and lay sprinklers for a living. My wife is a seamstress. We're hard workers, but at the end of the month, there just isn't any money left over.

BROOKE

I certainly know what that is like, Mr. Alcalá. I'm a government employee.

RAMON

But I'm betting you haven't had to send a kid to college. We don't make enough to pay the tuition, but we make too much to qualify for aid. The Garrison offered Juanita a full scholarship.

BROOKE

She doesn't want to be in the military?

RAMON

She wants an education. Staying in that school is a battle for her every day. Academically, it's not a problem, by physically she barely cuts it.

BROOKE

Maybe she finally gave up.

RAMON

You don't know my daughter, Agent Haslett. The harder they make it for her, the more determined she is to beat them. And she does. Barely. But she does.

BROOKE

Everybody has a breaking point.

RAMON

The only way my daughter would leave that school is if they dragged her out... and I guarantee you there'd be claw marks on the walls.

And Brooke's look, we CUT TO:

26 EXT. GARRISON - TRAINING GROUNDS - DAY

26*

Jess stands at attention. She's been standing this way for hours, her muscles are screaming... but she can't move. Fighting exhaustion, she stares, eyes forward, straight ahead at cadets marching up and down, completely ignoring Jess. Her eyes droop shut. She's asleep on her feet. And then her eyes flash open and she looks out at

THE FIELD - DREAMSCAPE

The field is the same... but it's NIGHT and all the cadets have turned into a FIRING SQUAD. They raise their RIFLES. ANNA steps forward and hisses in her ear:

ANNA

You're aren't one of us.

The cadets FIRE. Snapping Jess out of it into...

27 EXT. GARRISON - FIELD DAY

27

...the real world. Anna leans into Jess' face.

ANNA

Everyone knows you can't make it.

That's when Sergeant Dolan appears next to Jess.

DOLAN

Private Hicks. Get to class.

ANNA

Yes, ma'am.

She scurries off. Dolan turns to Jess.

DOLAN

Have you considered my question,
Private?

JESS

Yes, ma'am.

DOLAN

Why are you still here?

JESS

Because a soldier never quits.

Dolan nods. That will do.

DOLAN

At ease.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

Jess relaxes, and nearly collapses in relief.

DOLAN

Now get some rest. You will be taking
the fitness test at 0500 hours.

Jess marches off toward the dorms. And we CUT TO:

28 INT. GARRISON - DORMS - DAY

28

Jess straggles into her room and collapses face-down on her bed, exhausted. Brittany looks up from the book she's reading at her desk.

BRITTANY

What did you do to frost Dolan?

JESS

I found Valerie Mathis and told her
Juanita Alcala is missing. You'd
think Dolan would be more interested
in finding out what's going on than
torturing me.

*

*

BRITTANY

So what is going on?

JESS

I don't know... but don't you find
it odd that two cadets who were
struggling here both disappeared?

BRITTANY

Valerie didn't disappear... she fell
off a cliff. Juanita probably ran
away to avoid the humiliation of
being separated.

JESS

I guess.

And on Jess, utterly exhausted, we CUT TO:

29 INT. FBI HQ - DAY

29

Brooke is at the analog board, reviewing all the evidence, when O'Malley comes in, puzzled.

O'MALLEY

I just learned that Ms. Mastriani is
still at the Garrison.

BROOKE

Our investigation isn't over.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

O'MALLEY

We know what happened to my niece.

BROOKE

We know she died. We don't know why. And now there's another cadet missing who was a lot like Valerie. Both of them were struggling, both were--

O'MALLEY

(interrupts:)

Valerie was an exceptional cadet who excelled by every measure.

BROOKE

Valerie failed the field training exercise...she failed her first physical fitness test...and she was under-performing in all her academic classes.

O'MALLEY

That's not possible.

BROOKE

What wasn't possible was for Valerie to tell you about it...because she was afraid of losing your respect.

O'Malley lets that sink in... realizing she might have contributed to her favorite nieces's death.

O'MALLEY

She was like my own daughter. I would have understood... I would have supported her. She knew that.

BROOKE

The way you're supporting her now?

O'MALLEY

You'd better explain that.

BROOKE

Valerie disappeared in the middle of the night and was found dead with field equipment on. Juanita Alcala disappeared at night, too. I think there's some kind of hazing going on.

O'MALLEY

The Garrison is not a fraternity. They do not "haze."

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2)

29

BROOKE

Five cadets died in the last decade. Valerie was number six. They were all struggling just to meet the school's minimum requirements. Now another cadet is missing. And she fits the profile, too. If you know what's going on there and you don't tell us, then you're no better than the rest of Valerie's killers.

*

It's the hardest moment of O'Malley's life, as she's torn between loyalty to the school that made her and love for her niece. Then:

O'MALLEY

Maybe... maybe it's the Night March. It can be pretty tough on some plebes.

*

*

*

BROOKE

What is the Night March?

*

*

O'MALLEY

A rite of passage at the Garrison that goes back a century.

*

BROOKE

And you didn't think this was worth dropping into the conversation?

O'MALLEY

I went through it... every cadet does. You try to avoid capture. It's how you earn your stripes within your platoon. But if somebody was trying to get rid of a plebe... it would be the perfect opportunity.

*

*

*

BROOKE

Oh, so... if you're not in line for stripes? If you're barely making it -- but you won't quit? What does that earn you on the Night March? A case of exertional heat illness -- or a fall to your death?

*

*

*

O'MALLEY

Oh, my God. Valerie...

BROOKE

Your niece is dead and your first thought is how to protect the school. And now my partner is in danger. I've seen enough of you right now, Major O'Malley.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (3) 29

Brooke hurries away, disgusted. And on O'Malley, tears welling in her eyes, we CUT TO:

29A INT. FBI HQ - PARKING GARAGE - DAY 29A*

Brooke hurries into her car and drives out. *

30 INT. GARRISON - DORM ROOM - NIGHT 30

Jess is asleep on her bed, tossing and turning... dreaming.

DREAMSCAPE *

JUANITA is tied to a stake...and DARK FIGURES are throwing ROCKS at her. As the rocks strike her, she becomes a BLOODIED VALERIE and then...a BLOODIED JESS... and as a BIG ROCK sails right toward's Jess' FACE, we CUT TO:

31 INT. GARRISON - DORM ROOM - NIGHT 31

Jess wakes up to a BLINDING LIGHT in her eyes.

JESS

Hey!

The flashlight moves off her face and sweeps back to illuminate SIX CADETS in full uniform -- their faces masked with CAMOFLAGE MAKEUP. One of the cadets, CADET #1, tosses her battle fatigues at her.

BRITTANY

Get dressed.

Jess pulls on her clothes under the covers. She glances at the faces.

JESS

What's going on?

But nobody answers.

32 INT. GARRISON - DORM HALLWAY - NIGHT 32*

The camoed cadets march Jess along. She whispers to Brittany: *

JESS

What's happening? What are we doing out here?

BRITTANY

(whispers:)

Relax. It's the Night March. The idea is to evade the enemy and make it back to alive. Everybody does it.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

JESS

So it's like an initiation?

BRITTANY

It's more than that. It's a blast.
And when it's over, you'll really be
proud of yourself... and a member of
the platoon. Come on.

Jess is up for it now. A challenge. And we SMASH CUT TO:

32A INT. FBI HQ - COYLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

32A

Brooke bursts into Coyle's office.

BROOKE

O'Malley's been lying to us.

COYLE

About what?

BROOKE

She didn't tell us everything. The
cadets have a hazing ritual. It's
called the Night March. They use it
to get rid of people who don't belong
there.

COYLE

And Jess qualifies.

BROOKE

Yes. She does. I want to get her
out.

COYLE

Now?

BROOKE

It's a *night* march, Alan. And I
make it to be night out there right
now.

COYLE

(beat)

Go. Take the jet. I'll have a team
meet you.

And Brooke is moving out of the office, almost running to the
elevator.

32B EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

32B

Various SHOTS of Jess running... she stops, gasping for breath as
she runs through the woods.

(CONTINUED)

32B CONTINUED:

32B

She's been going for miles, and she's running out of energy, the pack pushing her down into the ground. She stops, listens. Can't hear anything over the sound of her own heavy breathing. And then -- a TWIG CRACKING. She pushes on. DOWN THE HILL FROM HER, the six cadets follow her tracks. They are carrying RIFLES.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

33 OMITTED

33

34 EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOODS - NIGHT

34

Jess staggers under the weight of her pack. Her foot hits a root sticking out of the ground, and she goes sprawling, the pack slamming her into the dirt. She can't lift herself with it on her back; she slips out of the straps, bends down to pick it up. It slips out of her hands, falls back to the ground, the seams splitting... and spilling out ROCKS. She picks up one of the rocks and FLASHES to the dream of Valerie in the pit, being stoned from above... only now the DARK FIGURES on the rim of the pit are CADETS. As Jess realizes the significance of her dream... that the cadets chasing her might be the same ones who made Juanita disappear. That's when she hears PEOPLE MOVING through the woods. Close to her. Jess drops the pack. And starts to run. She tears through the woods, zigzagging frantically to throw off her pursuers. But where ever she goes, she HEARS a cadet coming after her. She takes a turn, blasts up a small trail, not taking time to notice that she's been here before, that she's being herded... until she reaches the top and takes a step INTO THIN AIR. She's at the EDGE OF THE CLIFF...on foot hanging over nothing.

Jess staggers back, regains her balance, and falls back on solid ground. *This is how Valerie Mathis died.* She pulls herself to her feet, takes a deep breath, and starts to walk -- right into a PERSON. It's Corporal Mike Faber. No camo make-up. Thank God.

FABER

Private Mastriani, do you have permission to be out of your room?

JESS

Yes. I mean, no. I mean, they took me. Made me march.

FABER

Who did, Private?

JESS

The other cadets. They herded me here. I think they wanted me to fall.

FABER

Well... yeahs. They do. We all do.

JESS

You killed Valerie Mathis.

FABER

Obviously.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

JESS

Why? What did she do to you?

FABER

My grandfather died in Korea. My brother in Iraq. They were upholding the honor and traditions of The Garrison.

JESS

So what?

FABER

So when you're in some desert or jungle, fighting for your country, you need to know the guy next to you is the best damn soldier he can be. Your life depends on it. I'm doing what my older brothers did before me... making sure the cadets who come out of here are the best.

JESS

By murdering any cadet who doesn't measure up to your standards?

FABER

There is no such thing as murder in a war.

JESS

This isn't a war.

FABER

The only way to guarantee peace is to prepare for war. That's what we do here.

JESS

What's that got to do with murdering students?

FABER

We didn't *murder* anybody. They all killed themselves. We gave them the chance to quit. They died because they stayed...and they were too weak or too stupid to make it. Valerie fell on her own. Nobody pushed her.

JESS

What about me?

FABER

Well... you're going to need a push.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (2) 34

Faber lunges at Jess and tries to hurl her towards the edge. Jess slips out of his grasp. And as he hits the ground, she takes off running into the night.

35 OMITTED 35

35A EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOODS - NIGHT 35A*

Brooke moves rapidly along. *

36 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 36

Jess runs and runs... then stops, listening for her pursuers. She can't hear anything. Doesn't realize that:

SOMEONE'S POV

Someone is watching her through the leaves.

BACK TO SCENE

Jess steps forward... and TRIPS over a VINE stretched across the path. Jess falls forward, slams into the ground... then looks up to see SOMEONE kneeling over her, raising a rock, about to slam it down on her.

JUANITA
Who are you?

Jess realizes it's JUANITA in front of her.

JESS
Juanita...I'm not one of them.

Juanita pauses, rock held up. She studies Jess.

JUANITA
I know you. The new plebe. What are you doing here?

JESS
They took me on the Night March. Just like you. And Valerie Mathis.

Juanita lowers the rock, steps back... and that's when Jess sees that the cadet has been hidden in a crude shelter of leaves and branches. One of her legs is braced with branches tied with strips of clothing.

JUANITA
Valerie's dead... isn't she?

JESS
Yeah.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

JESS (CONT'D)

We will be, too, if they catch us.
They're not far behind me. We need
to get out of here right away.

JUANITA

I can't walk. Think I broke my ankle.

JESS

You can lean on me. We have to get
as far away from the Garrison as we
can.

JUANITA

We're not running away. Now that
you're here to help, we're going
back.

JESS

Look, I don't know if you heard me...
but there are people back there trying
to kill us.

JUANITA

They did everything to run me out,
and I wouldn't go. You want to run,
that's fine. But there's only one
place I'm going... even if I have to
crawl.

Juanita struggles to her feet, using a BRANCH as a brace...and
nearly topples with PAIN.

JUANITA

Ow!

Jess stares at Juanita, admiring her courage, then gets up and
offers her shoulder to lean on.

JESS

Not ow. Huah.

Juanita puts her arm around Jess. They take the next step
together.

JUANITA

(in great pain)
Huah.

JESS

Huah.

They walk together, slowly, working as a team.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

JESS AND JUANITA

Huah!

And as they stumble into the night:

37 OMITTED

37

37A EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - MORNING

37A

The parking lot of the 24-hour market is empty and, as Sunny wheels a grocery cart to her S.U.V, it seems to stretch out into infinity. She begins to notice just how alone she is...and vulnerable. She hurries her pace, unlocks her SUV, and starts loading the groceries as quickly as she can. That's when she becomes aware of FOOTSTEPS closing in behind her... the SHADOW of a MAN falls across her. Sunny reaches for her purse, PULLS OUT HER GUN, and WHIRLS AROUND... aiming THE MUZZLE right in the face of STARTLED BAG BOY, 19. He staggers back, terrified, hands up.

BAG BOY

Please don't hurt me...I just came
to collect your cart.

Sunny lowers her gun, her hands SHAKING.

SUNNY

I'm sorry.

But the bag boy is already running away.

SUNNY

I'm sorry.

She stares at her gun... and as she realizes how close she came to murder, we DISSOLVE TO:

38 EXT. WOODS - MORNING

38

Jess and Juanita, leaning on her for support, move through the woods. They are exhausted, Juanita from pain, Jess from the strain of half-carrying her. They freeze as they hear...

BRITTANY

Jess... Jess!

Jess peers through the trees. BRITTANY is standing on a logging road in front of them, waving and calling...

BRITTANY

Jess... come on out. It's okay.
You survived.

Jess looks at Juanita.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

JESS

What do you think?

JUANITA

She's seen us. She'll tell the others.

JESS

So there's nothing to lose.
(beat)
Maybe she's being straight.

JUANITA

Yeah. Maybe.

JESS

Come on.

They hobble out on to the road. Brittany smiles widely.

BRITTANY

Hey... good to see you.

And that's when a half-dozen CADETS spill out of the woods in front of them, with three more behind, blocking the trail. They are all aiming their rifles at them. Leading the group is CORPORAL MIKE FABER. Jess looks at Brittany.

JESS

You're in with G.I. Joe?

BRITTANY

(a shrug)
Go large or go home. You've got to be committed.

FABER

(to Juanita)
We've been looking for you.

JUANITA

I evaded you.

FABER

Yeah... until now. This is where it ends.

JUANITA

What do you mean, where it ends? I won. I beat you.

FABER

You're weak.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

JESS

Just like Valerie Mathis?

BRITTANY

She didn't measure up... and neither do you two.

JUANITA

I've passed every test... I even eluded you in the Night March.

FABER

Barely passing doesn't cut it, plebe. If people like you graduate and enter the service, you lower the credibility of The Garrison...and weaken the strength of the military.

JESS

You think after Valerie, anybody is going to believe another "accident?"

FABER

They won't have to. Juanita couldn't hack it... so she deserted. You found her... and she killed you. She also led Valerie off the cliff...out of envy and resentment. Pretty sick psycho stuff. It's all in her diary. Or it will be.

Jess looks at them all... no fear on her face, just disgust and defiance.

JESS

Maybe you can justify Valerie to yourselves. Maybe it somehow proves she wasn't strong enough to survive. But this is an execution. How does this help the cause of honor and duty?

BRITTANY

We're doing what she should have done. She should have quit a long time ago.

JESS

A soldier never quits. Juanita *is* what this Academy is about. More than any of you, anyway. She faced her weaknesses, she faced her enemies, and she won.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (3)

38

JESS (CONT'D)

(then:)

She didn't quit. She never will.
Because she's a soldier.

Jess puts her arm around Juanita and starts walking again as if the cadets weren't even there. A couple of the cadets lower their rifles, humbled, to let Jess and Juanita pass. Brittany and Faber share a look, come to a silent agreement, and RAISE THEIR RIFLES. They are about to fire when... a GUNSHOT rings out, a bullet hitting the ground between Brittany and Faber. BROOKE is aiming her gun at them from the trees... as O'MALLEY, DOLAN and several STATE TROOPERS emerge from the woods around her. Faber still has his gun up, looking determined, but Brooke calls out to him...

BROOKE

I wouldn't even think about that if
I were you.

And she's right. Faber lets go of the rifle. O'Malley snatches it up as the TROOPERS round up the cadets. Faber looks at her pleadingly.

FABER

You understand. Why we had to do it --
to protect the Garrison.

O'MALLEY

You're a disgrace to this Academy
and everything the military stands
for.

She shoves him towards the troopers, who cuff him. Brooke goes to Jess.

BROOKE

I only heard the end of that... but
it sounded very well said.

JESS

Maybe I've been a soldier all along,
and I didn't know it.

Jess glances at Dolan, who SALUTES HER. Jess salutes her back, then continues on, helping Juanita down the trail, Brooke looking after her with newfound respect. And we DISSOLVE TO:

39 INT. FBI HQ - COYLE'S OFFICE - DAY

39

Coyle is at his desk, working... when Sunny comes in. Her cheeks are tear-streaked. He gets up and steps around the desk to meet her.

COYLE

Sunny? What is it?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

She looks up at him, desperation and fear on her face...when she speaks, it's a plaintive whisper.

SUNNY

I need help.

He puts his arm around her shoulder as she cries gently against his chest and we pull back slowly, discreetly, letting them have this moment, and we FADE OUT.

THE END