

LIGHTS up on Brig.) (KAFFEE enters.)

KAFFEE. Why did you care that Santiago was writing a letter?

DAWSON. Sir?

KAFFEE. I want to know why you cared?

DAWSON. It was a Code Red, sir.

KAFFEE. Colonel Jessep thinks you're fulla shit. He doesn't think you were just trying to train Santiago. He thinks you were trying to kill him.

DAWSON. It was a Code Red, sir.

KAFFEE. Eight thousand men on that base, why did you care?

DAWSON. I was his Squad Leader, sir. It was my job, sir.

KAFFEE. Yeah, but why did you care?

DOWNEY. Sir, Private Santiago broke the-

KAFFEE. No, no, I don't want to hear about your chain of command, I don't want to hear about your loyalty. I don't wanna hear about your bozo code of honor. Why did you care?

DOWNEY. Sir, Private Santiago broke-

KAFFEE. Did you hear what I just said??!!

DOWNEY. Private Santiago needed to learn how to

KAFFEE. Why did you care??!!

DAWSON. Because God was watching.

(KAFFEE—stopped in his tracks.)

KAFFEE. What did Kendrick say to you?

DAWSON (turns to face Kendrick.) God is watching, Lance Corporal Dawson. And he helps those who help themselves. And so do I. Get your house in order, Lance Corporal. Unit, Corps, God, Country ... and duty to self simply isn't part of the equation. Get your house in order, so that these men can believe in you again. Get your house in order ... so that the Lord our God can look down and say "There is a United States Marine and I will stand at his side." Get your house in order ... and don't let anybody ever tell you we're not at war. (Pause.)

Would you like me to tell you what to do now?

KAFFEE. You were given an order.

DAWSON. Yes, sir.

KAFFEE. Lt. Kendrick gave you an order to give Santiago a Code Red.

DAWSON. Yes, sir.

KAFFEE. You mind telling me why the hell you never mentioned this before?

DAWSON. You didn't ask us, sir.

KAFFEE. Cutie-pie shit's not gonna win you a place in my heart, Corporal. I get paid no matter how much time you spend in jail.

DAWSON. Yes, sir. I know you do, sir.

KAFFEE. Fuck you, Harold. (Pause.) Here's what's gonna happen. You'll swear out deposition against Kendrick, saying that he ordered the Code Red. If you do, I think I can get a good deal. I think I can get six months

DAWSON. Sir, permission to speak.

KAFFEE. Speak.

DAWSON. Begging the Lieutenant's pardon

KAFFEE. What??!!

DAWSON. I'm afraid we can't do that, sir.

KAFFEE. (Pause.) Can't do what?

DAWSON. Make a deal, sir. I'm afraid I can't say that Lieutenant Kendrick ordered the Code Red.

KAFFEE. (Pause.) Look, are you telling me the truth? About the meeting?

DAWSON. Yes, sir.

KAFFEE. But you won't say so in a written statement?

DAWSON. Not so we can make a deal, I'm afraid not, sir.

KAFFEE. (Pause.) Why?

DAWSON. We live by a Code, sir. Either we were right or we were wrong. We don't make deals.

KAFFEE. Well zippity doo-dah. You don't turn Government evidence, the best I can get you is seven years.

DAWSON. That's fine, sir.

KAFFEE. No, that's not fine, you pompous asshole. I'm offering you six months!

DAWSON. What do we do then, sir?

KAFFEE. When?

DAWSON. After six months, sir. What do we do after six months?

KAFFEE. (Pause.) I'm talking to you about-

DAWSON. We didn't join 'cause we felt like it. We joined 'cause it was a life decision. We wanted to live by a Code, sir. And we found it in the Corps. And now you're asking me to sign a piece of paper that says we have no honor. We have no Code. You're asking us to say we're not Marines. (Pause.) We're being tested. And if we fail, I'm asking you, sir, with all due respect for your Lieutenant's bars, what do we do after six months?

(KAFFEE/DAWSON stare each other down for a long moment.)

KAFFEE. You guys are a freak show.