

TOY SOLDIER

Written by

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Darkness.

*

HEAVY BREATHING and SOBBING echo in the void.

FADE IN:

1 INT. INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR

1

*

We move forward down a long dark corridor ending in a set of double backroom doors. The decaying corridor is lit only by dim green fluorescent light creeping underneath the doors and through their grimy windows.

From behind the doors we hear...

TOMMY (O.S.)

No. Please. Please don't do
this...

The doors open as WE MOVE THROUGH THEM and are bathed in a flash of lime colored light.

SUPER: "Toy Soldier"

FLASH TO:

2 INT. BACKROOM - CONTINUOUS

2

*

The room is dim despite the glow of a few fluorescent tubes on a far wall and a solitary bulb hanging from it's cord in the center. Two FIGURES are silhouetted under it.

TOMMY

You don't gotta to do this, Billy.
C'mon, man. You've let all this
get to your head. You've been out
here too long. I mean, this is
crazy. You're acting like a real
psycho, man!

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One of the Figures, TOMMY, is naked and strapped to a dentist's chair by tattered makeshift leather restraints. He writhes and sobs.

A DELICATE HAND reaches across a small side table, hovering over a variety of stained blunt and cutting tools. The FINGERS dance along the selection before finding their prize.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Seriously, cut it out. Stop this
now, and I won't say anything!

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*

(MORE)

TOMMY (CONT'D)

You won't get in trouble, I
promise. Not a word to anyone.

*
*

WILLIAM

It's a little late for that,
Private.

A quick "SHENK" and FLASH of the blade in the green light. A
crimson stream cascades down Tommy's twisted face.

TOMMY

God, please! Someone?! Please
help me! Please. I'm sorry. This
is... It's all just a game!

*
*

The other Figure leans close, illuminating his face for the
first time. This is WILLIAM. He wears a well-worn army
combat uniform. His wild eyes are almost as bright as the
grin stretched across his scarred face.

WILLIAM

This is war, Tommy. Not just a
game.

TOMMY

I know! I... know. I'm sorry. I
didn't mean-

WILLIAM

War is the most serious of all
games, Tommy. I've tried to teach
you that. Hell, I've tried to
instill that in all my men. But I
guess some lessons you just have to-

TOMMY

Oh, my god! Your crazy! *THIS IS
CRAZY!*

Without warning, William erupts from his chair and plunges
the sharp tool into Tommy's shoulder. Blood gushes over
William's hand as he twists deeper. Tommy wails.

WILLIAM

Yell, Tommy! Go on and yell all
you want, private! But you're gonna
play *THIS* game the way I wanna play
it, you got me!

TOMMY

Please, Billy. Please. You're
right, ok? Your game; your rules.

*
*

William releases the instrument, still protruding from Tommy's oozing shoulder. He closes his eyes and whispers quietly to himself. It is intense, prolonged, and unsettlingly personal.

Tommy watches in horror, not sure of which is more terrifying; William's rage or whatever *this* is.

William slaps himself. He whimpers and slaps himself again. He grits his teeth and shakes with intensity, drool spouting from his gnashed teeth. Suddenly he stops, opens his eyes, and smiles as if nothing has happened. He rights his toppled chair and rests back into it, directly opposite Tommy.

WILLIAM

When we play this *game* of war, we play to win. And real true winning is only accomplished by following the rules. Rules are put into place to create order from chaos. We can't have chaos, Private. That's where the darkness is. Rules keep the things in the darkness from hurting us. Rules of the game. That's all we have right now. And you broke those rules. You keep breaking those rules.

TOMMY

C'mon man... please.

WILLIAM

You will address me proper,
Private.

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*

TOMMY

(whimpering)...Sir, yes sir,
Captain Nash, sir.

*

WILLIAM

That wasn't so hard was it? Now there's only one way out of this for you, unfortunately. I would be failing as your superior if I didn't teach you a vital lesson before your sentence is carried out.

*

TOMMY

Oh no. Nonono. Please-

WILLIAM

I could take that out of your shoulder right now and you'd bleed out slowly. I could. But I won't, Tommy. I won't, because we've been through some serious shit together and I owe you just a little more than that. This isn't easy for me either. You've put me in a rough place here, buddy.

*

TOMMY

Look, I wasn't the one who told on you. The other guys saw what you did too, and they--

WILLIAM

Oh, I'll deal with them, Tommy. Trust me when I tell you that they will have it worse. Much, much worse.

TOMMY

What you did... I mean. It was fucked up. Yeah. But... I mean. They were just--

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WILLIAM

They were animals, Tommy. They didn't have souls. Not really. I put them down, as nature intended.

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TOMMY

And I won't say a word! I'm sure the other guys wouldn't say anything else to--

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*

WILLIAM

I never really trusted them, but you... I *knew* you. You vouched for them, and so I brought them in. But... there has to be a foundation of trust. And you betrayed that trust. You betrayed *me*, Tommy. And for that you have to die.

*
*

TOMMY

(crying) Oh, god. Oh, mommy.

WILLIAM

They'll look for you. But they won't find you. You will just be lost. Missing in action.

Tommy breaks down in heavy incoherent sobs.

TOMMY

*I don't want this stupid war
anymore, you fucking psycho! I
don't want- I'll do anything! Just
let me go. Please. Anything.*

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*
*

WILLIAM

Your a liar and a cheat. I don't
think you were ever really cut out
to be in my unit anyway.

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*

TOMMY

I can report that I just fell and
got cut up on the rocks down at the
quarry. No one will know the
difference and no one has to know
this ever happened. No one has to
know about you and what we saw. I-I
can do that.

*

WILLIAM

No one is gonna know about me,
Tommy.

*

William turns to the side table, lifting a jagged wood saw.

TOMMY

No. Please, man. Please don't--

WILLIAM

When we enlisted we said we were to
become more than friends.
Brothers. Being out here in the
thick of it, we're supposed to have
each other's backs. Trust.
Absolute loyalty. No one else can
possibly know what it's like out
here. How it changes you.

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*

He runs his fingers across the rusted teeth of the saw.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

When dad came back, he wasn't the
same. I was a baby when he left
but I still remember him before.
He smiled. He laughed. He hugged
me. He'd never yell, or break
things, or... After he- was gone,
mom said he hadn't come back the
same man. He hadn't been my father
anymore. But that's not right.
Part of him was still there.

(MORE)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Trapped behind his hollow screaming eyes. He was out there for months, lost and alone. If his brothers hadn't abandoned him, maybe he wouldn't have become whatever it was that came back home to us. Maybe he wouldn't have... But this is why we always follow the rules. Why we have each other's backs. We know. We know that our actions, justified as they may be, will never be understood by those we left behind at home. Real soldiers would never turn on one of their own and leave them to return to the outside world a hollowed out man-shaped thing to be judged and ridiculed and locked away. You knew the drill when you signed up with this outfit. We all did. Here in the thick of it, we play this game of war and we play for keeps. (pause) I only wish you would've followed the rules, brother.

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TOMMY

No! NO!

William lifts the saw and swings it into Tommy's face with a loud squelch.

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Blood spatters across William's expressionless face. He blinks for a moment before struggling to dislodge the weapon. WE HEAR MORE THAN WE SEE, as he manages to pull the saw free and toss it back onto the side table.

William turns and without a care in the world, whistles a peppy march while he packs up his bag of bloodied tools.

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SERIES OF SHOTS

He lifts the lifeless body from the chair and drags it across the room.

He rolls the body up in plastic trash bags.

He haphazardly wipes down the blood spattered chair and table.

He uses a large squeegee to push the blood and viscera toward a large drain in the floor.

He drags the wrapped body toward the corner of the room, when suddenly...

The PHONE RINGS.

William startles. The PHONE RINGS again. William drops the body, and races to a large switch in the opposite corner of the room.

He shuts off the lights and bends down, grabbing a rope on the floor.

He pulls it and a large trap door creaks open, flooding his face with white blinding light. The PHONE RINGS again *simultaneously* as...

MOM (O.S.)
(echoing from far off) WILLIAM!

William stares into the light from the floor.

WILLIAM
Coming!

William quickly scans the room before stepping down into the light and pulling the trap door closed behind him, SNAPPING US INTO DARKNESS.

3 EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

3

A SMALL TENNIS SHOE lands on a wooden step nailed into a tree trunk. Then the other shoe lands.

The two small shoes crash down on a patch of grass.

MOM (O.S.)
(off but closer) Billy, c'mon now!
It's dinner time!

WE FOLLOW the tiny legs up to the innocent blood-spattered face of a young boy, BILLY (11). He is draped in the same ragged bloody army jacket as his imaginary self had worn in the torture room.

MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(off) Is your friend staying for dinner, dear?!

Billy contemplates this for a moment, looking back up to his tree house. He turns back.

BILLY
No, Ma! Tommy's gone!

MOM (O.S.)
(off) Well, C'mon, kiddo, it's
getting cold!

Billy wipes the blood spatter from his face and runs off
toward the house. *

BEHIND HIM the dark treehouse stands tall and imposing.

The wooden trapdoor beneath it is closed.

Between it's boards BLOOD begins to seep out and drip down
the makeshift wooden ladder.

FADE TO BLACK.