

The Light Brigade (Teaser)

by

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**TEASER**

Black screen.

SUPERIMPOSED: "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones." - Albert Einstein

EXT. HILLTOP CITY - PRAIRIELAND - DAY

A low DRONE.

28-year-old TOMMY GRIFFIN is incoherent. The fear of death in his eyes. His left hand holds a rifle, his right hand clutches a photograph.

Two inches from his face, EDWARD DILLINGER screams with all his might, the lines of his battle-worn, 35-year-old face stretched tightly in earnest. Tommy hears nothing. Finally...

SMACK. A swift slap across his face floods the air with the sounds of war. Bullets WHIZ, shells EXPLODE in mid-air. All the while Dillinger yells.

DILLINGER

--I can't believe this pansy-ass behavior, Griffin! You are letting me down! You are letting the whole damn unit down!

At last, a response...

TOMMY

Yes, sir.

DILLINGER

Yes, sir, what?! What are you trying to say, lieutenant?! Get your ass out on that battlefield with your brothers, dammit!

TOMMY

Right-- Yes, yes sir.

Tommy tucks away the photo in his hand and springs into action.

Dillinger surveys his ranks. Nearly fifty yards from enemy lines at the top of the hill his men claw their way forward. For every man still alive there are six dead. Bodies lay scattered on the hillside.

(CONTINUED)

Dillinger leads by example. He sprints to the front of the lines with a rally cry.

DILLINGER  
One more push, men! These  
scavenging bastards will not  
survive the day! On my mark!

Just as he reaches the front lines, through the smoke and the dirt and the debris...

DILLINGER  
FORWARD THE LIGHT BRIGADE!!

A deafening BELLOW echoes through the air. The entirety of the ranks rise as one, storming the buildings. Soldiers drop left and right.

Dillinger breaches enemy lines. Gunshots all but cease as both sides are engulfed in hand-to-hand combat. The tides have turned. Dillinger's men cut through the enemy with swiftness and precision. This is where their expertise lies.

EXT. HILLTOP CITY - PRAIRIELAND - MINUTES LATER

The last of the "scavengers" flee the city.

The smoke settles. Through the haze, the soldiers take in their surroundings. The landscape is desolate. The hillside is but a small section of a crater whose diameter is more than a mile wide.

Nature now rules the city, at least what's left of it. A once brimming metropolis reduced to rubble a great many years ago.

A soldier scrapes off the crusted dirt from the side of a building revealing...

SOLDIER 1  
Austin?

Dillinger saunters by, in a hurry and angry.

DILLINGER  
Austin, Texas. Don't you know your  
history?

He doesn't stop, following closely behind Tommy.

The soldier watches him, then turns to discuss this information with his comrades.

INT. OLD BANK SAFE - AUSTIN - DAY

Hundreds of thousands of dollars coat the floor, caked with dust and dirt. In the center of the room are three fifty-gallon barrels.

A SOLDIER 2 is distressed, hunched down, staring at the barrels from a few feet away.

Dillinger BURSTS through door with Tommy. He stops. Glaring at the barrels, then at the soldier.

DILLINGER

This is it?!

Not a word needs to be said, their silence is enough.

The door SLAMS as Dillinger exits. The two remaining men are worried.

SOLDIER 2

That seemed... tame?

Tommy rushes out after Dillinger.

EXT. HILLSIDE - AUSTIN - DAY

The soldiers watch their leader racing down the side of the crater. Tommy dashes through the men. He looks back.

TOMMY

Bury the fallen. Meet at the rendezvous.

INT./EXT. HUMVEE - CRATER BASIN - DAY

Dillinger jumps into the driver's seat and throws it in gear.

Tommy leaps into the bed of the Humvee just as it departs.

INT. HUMVEE - DIRT ROAD

The vehicle flies down the dirt road. Tommy crawls into the cabin.

TOMMY

Sir?

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

Bearing down on the gate of a military base.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Sir!

EXT. ENTRANCE GATE - MOBILE HQ - CONTINUOUS

Two guards sit with their chairs kicked back against sandbags. Behind them hundreds of soldiers mill about. One guard is asleep, the other sings to himself.

The Humvee RIPS through the gate. The guards crash to the ground.

INT. HUMVEE - HQ ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Dillinger is unfazed by the desperate soldiers diving out of the way.

Running out of road, he yanks up on the emergency brake and skids to a stop in a whirl of dust.

EXT. HUMVEE - COMMAND TENT - EVENING

The door swings open and the fuming 35-year-old launches himself to the ground and darts around the front of the vehicle.

He tears open the tent flap in front of him and-

INT. COMMAND TENT - CONTINUOUS

-storms into the tent.

DILLINGER

Ackely! You son of a BITCH!

A beeline to WALTER ACKLEY, a resolute, hardened veteran, 54 years of age.

Dillinger is intercepted by WALTER ACKLEY JR, a near carbon-copy of his father. Without hesitation, Dillinger flings Ackley Jr. around and hurls him on the ground.

DILLINGER (cont'd)

You lying piece of shit!

He continues toward the general until he is finally held back by three soldiers.

(CONTINUED)

DILLINGER (cont'd)  
You murdered my men for three damn  
barrels of gasoline?!

Ackley Jr. rises to his feet, preparing to strike.

WALTER  
(to his son)  
Junior! Go collect yourself  
outside.

Ackley Jr. is furious.

ACKLEY JR.  
Dad-- Sir!

WALTER  
Go.

Ackley Jr. leaves as Tommy slides in, embarrassed and nervous.

Dillinger is still restrained by the soldiers.

Walter walks slowly around his accuser. He isn't surprised by Dillinger's outrage, he isn't afraid of it either. He is in complete control... of everything.

WALTER (cont'd)  
Colonel Dillinger, what exactly are  
you upset about?

Dillinger is speechless.

WALTER (cont'd)  
The fact that you lost a number of  
men? Or the fact that the spoils  
didn't meet your expectations?

DILLINGER  
You gave me misinformation. You  
told me--

With no hesitation in his voice, no pretentious air, just a matter-of-fact tone...

WALTER  
I told you what you needed to hear  
to get the job done. This is war,  
Edward, all is fair.

He glides behind Tommy, whose eyes follow him until they no longer can. Walter pats him on the shoulder with his left hand.

WALTER (cont'd)  
I didn't murder your men, Edward,  
you did.

Dillinger is about to explode.

WALTER (cont'd)  
But, I would like to take some of  
that burden off of you, lighten the  
load a little bit. What do you  
think? How about we share your  
guilt?

Confused for a moment, then...

DILLINGER  
NO!!

Walter's right arm raises. Tommy is completely unaware.

BANG.

The bullet exits Walter's pistol and passes through Tommy's head, spewing blood onto Dillinger and the soldiers.

Dillinger mimics Tommy in his collapse. He hears nothing as Walter continues to speak.

The soldiers let him go. He crawls to Tommy, burying his face in his lieutenant's chest. Tears stream down his face. His fists are clenched. He rises to his knees and opens Tommy's breast pocket.

The photograph. Tommy's wife, and his new baby boy.

His mind races. Suddenly, clarity.

WALTER  
...you are a soldier in my army,  
boy, and you're expected to follow  
orders without question.

He puts his head back on Tommy's chest. Under the cover of his body, he reaches for the pin of a grenade in Tommy's shoulder strap.

WALTER (cont'd)  
Do you understand me?

He stands up. Walter stands in front of him.

WALTER (cont'd)

Well?

Dillinger walks right out of the tent.

EXT. COMMAND TENT - EVENING

Ackley Jr. glares at him from across the road and makes his way back toward his father's tent.

Dillinger hops in the Humvee and shuts the door.

KABOOM.

The walls of the tent disintegrate. The Humvee shakes and its windows are shattered.

Ackley Jr. is knocked to the ground.

Dillinger hits the gas.

In shock, Ackley Jr. shouts...

ACKLEY JR.

DILLINGER! Open fire on the Humvee!

The whole camp is in an uproar.

Bullets chase the fleeing truck. Dillinger drives like the wind.

He flies back out of the gate and down the same dirt road that led him here, but nothing is the same as it was.

**END TEASER**