

# "TELL MY WIFE"

Scene

START WITH LIGHTS OUT.

*Play sounds of warfare in the background.*

*Play sounds of a loud bomb exploding.*

LIGHTS COME UP.

*We see two soldiers on a battlefield. One, Private Gilbertson, has been hit and is sitting on the ground holding the wound on his stomach. The other, Sergeant Macon, is looking on in concern.*

PRIVATE  
(pained)

AHHHH!

SARGE  
Medic!

*Private looks down in dismay.*

SARGE (cont'd)  
Don't you die on me, Private.

PRIVATE  
(Upset. Realizing the seriousness of the situation.)  
No. This is it. This is it.

SARGE  
Help is coming, Private. Just rest. Just rest.

PRIVATE  
Sarge...Will you tell my wife...

SARGE  
(raising voice)  
Shut up, Private. You're gonna tell your wife yourself.

PRIVATE  
Come on, Sarge. I'm done.

*Cue dramatic, sweeping orchestral music like the soundtrack to Saving Private Ryan.*

PRIVATE (cont'd)  
Just promise me you'll make it out alive. And you'll tell my wife...you'll tell her...something...anything, really...to remember me by.

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SARGE

(leaning down and softening)

Fine, Private. I'll tell her about how we stormed this beach, how we fought these Krauts bullet for bullet, and who we were more than just soldiers. We were heroes.

PRIVATE

Yeah...that's good. And maybe you could also throw some of my words in there like, you know? Like, maybe tell her... Tell my wife... to keep it real. Keep. It. Real.

SARGE

Keep it real?

PRIVATE

Yeah, I thought that sounded strong. Resonant. Something to get her through the long nights. What do you think?

SARGE

Well, I don't know. Seems like you might want to say...

*Sarge is interrupted as he sees the seriousness of the Private's injury.*

SARGE (cont'd)

Oh Jesus, you're losing a lot of blood. Save your energy, Soldier.

*Private falls back as if dead.*

*Sarge looks off defeated.*

*Pause.*

PRIVATE

(breaking silence)

That was dumb.

SARGE

Oh, thank God. Now, don't give up on me.

PRIVATE

The keep it real thing. It was dumb.

SARGE

Don't worry.

PRIVATE

But I got it, now. Will you still tell my wife something?

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SARGE

Anything.

*Music builds.*

PRIVATE

(passion building throughout)

When I'm gone and you get yourself out of this hell hole, go to my house. It'll be fall by then. When the cottonwood loses its leaves. My boy will be playing in the yard. Tell him to go inside and get his mother. And when she comes out, look her in those beautiful brown eyes, and tell her, "Whazzup?" "Whazzup wich chu?" "Whazzup wich chu, shorty?"

*Long pause.*

SARGE

So "Whazzup wich chu, shorty?"

PRIVATE

(overcome with emotion)

Yeah. And that's from her husband.

*They sit in silence.*

PRIVATE (cont'd)

Oh, you don't like it?

SARGE

I didn't say that.

PRIVATE

It was implied with your silence. Dammit. What are you supposed to say to your wife, when you're...dying?

*Sarge positions himself behind the Private to hold him up.*

SARGE

Just lay back and rest. If anything happens to you, I'll tell her the truth. How you died honorably and the last person you thought of was her.

PRIVATE

(in agreeance)

It was her.

*Private lays back into Sarge.*

*There is a pause as if the Private is dying.*

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PRIVATE (cont'd)

(sitting up)

It should come from me. Think, Charles! Think!

SARGE

Soldier, lay back! I got you.

PRIVATE

No, I got me! Tell my wife...tell my wife...Here.

*Pulls note from pocket and hands it to Sarge.*

*Sarge unfolds the note and inspects it.*

SARGE

This is a drawing?

PRIVATE

(laughing and coughing at the same time)

Gotcha. It's a tracing. Not bad, huh?

SARGE

Is this a dinosaur?

~~PRIVATE~~

~~Looks like somebody knows their shapes.~~

SARGE

You want me to give your wife a tracing of a dinosaur?

*Private cries to himself for a moment.*

PRIVATE

(erupting)

No, I don't! Are you crazy? I don't want you to tell her it's a tracing! I don't want you to tell anyone it's a tracing.

*Private looks down in contemplation. Sarge looks at picture curiously.*

PRIVATE (cont'd)

And write a note on the top. Write, "Dinomite."

*Pause.*

PRIVATE (cont'd)

Get it? Because dino...

SARGE

Yeah. I get it.

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PRIVATE

Maybe you could say it so I know you got it.

SARGE

It's pretty obvious.

PRIVATE

Then I nailed it.

SARGE

I don't think...

*Private dies.*

*Music stops.*

SARGE (cont'd)

Goodbye, Soldier.

*Sarge lays him down. He sits down in defeat.*

*Sarge picks up the paper.*

SARGE (cont'd)

It's safe with me.

*Sarge stands up and looks at the paper.*

SARGE (cont'd)

(emotionally)

I'll tell everyone. You weren't just a great soldier.  
But you drew this dinosaur. From scratch.

*Triumphant music soars.*

*Sarge salutes the dead Private.*

BLACK OUT

**END**

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