

AM
FMT
D

I'll tell you what.

A: Yeah.

C: Those can make you crazy.

A: No no no. Listen.

C: Be careful, son.

A: They don't make you crazy. What I'm talking about is a catalyst. It's all Catalytic Converters. What you're talking about? Those aren't steroids. Cortisol. Cortisone. Prednisone. Those aren't—they're converters—for the anabolic. Picture rings. Just picture rings. And these rings form with other rings and you get the picture. Rings. Steroids just affect the body size. You might be thinking about what are called corticosteroids. That's different... I can't remember his name—English Woke?—had chickens. And one was on the hormone. And one wasn't. What happens? You know what happens? The chickens have a red hat on their head, right? For the chicken who was not on the hormone was really small. Had this LITTLE small thing—

C: A crown?

A: Yes! A crown. Little thing. Crown. And the other one?

C: Was big...

A: Exactly. Nice big one.

C: All right.

A: But I also work out. The chickens weren't working out, exactly. You gotta work out. So? That's all. You know. If you keep taking them, and keep taking them, then maybe you'd go crazy. But that's true with most things. That's true with everything! But you're not going to go crazy. They're not going to make you crazy. I mean they could make you crazy. But they're not going to make you crazy.

C: Yeah.

(Pause)

A: All right?

C: All right. That's inneresting.

CORPS VALUES

BY BRENDON BATES

CHARACTERS

CASEY (24), athletic build, closely cropped crew cut—dressed in long-sleeved T-shirt and thermal underwear; WADE (60s), CASEY's Dad, a larger man, walks with a limp

SCENE

The kitchen of WADE's farmhouse

TIME

Late November 2004. After midnight.

CASEY, a Marine, was in Iraq, but given a leave for the funeral of his mother.

CASEY: Dad...

WADE: (Reentering.) Yeah?

CASEY: ... I'm not going back.

WADE: Pardon?

CASEY: I'm not returning to duty.

(Pause. WADE laughs.)

WADE: You have to go back. You have six months left.

CASEY: I know.

WADE: You got an entire company counting on you.

CASEY: Half my company has been wiped out.

WADE: Well the other half is counting on you.

CASEY: I'm writing a letter to each member of my platoon, explaining myself, asking for their forgiveness...

WADE: What?

CASEY: Encouraging them to do the same.

WADE: Encouraging them to do what?

CASEY: To walk away from the war.

WADE: Have you lost your mind?

CASEY: I'd rather rot in jail than—

WADE: (*Interrupting him.*) What are you saying?

CASEY: I'm saying I'm done with this war.

WADE: Listen. . . . Go get some much-needed rest. You've had a rough couple of months. And we just buried your mother. It's hard for you to . . . think straight.

CASEY: I'm thinking perfectly clear.

WADE: Listen. . . . War is messed up. Believe me, I know. But, right or wrong, you made a *commitment*. A commitment to those men who fight beside you. Think about your squad members. Your *brothers*. Look at me, Goddammit!!
(CASEY looks at him.)

Remember when you told me you wanted to enlist? I sat right here; you sat right there. I looked you in the eye and I told you, in full detail, the horrors I faced as a Marine, the horrors *you* would face as a Marine, what would be expected of you wearing that uniform. Remember all that?

CASEY: Yes.

WADE: And you *still* enlisted. You *still* made that commitment. So, be a man and face the consequences. (*Turns his back on CASEY and heads for the bedroom.*)

CASEY: I killed a young boy.

(WADE stops.)

A young Iraqi boy. In Fallujah. Couldn't of been 15 years old. Shot him right through the throat. He was firing at me from an elevated position. Bullet nicked my helmet. I got down, took aim. He stood up for some stupid reason. And I fired. He fell three stories.

WADE: You did what you had to do.

CASEY: I heard a woman scream as soon as he hit the ground. I couldn't tell where the scream came from, but I knew it was his mother.

WADE: Listen, we're going to get you some help. You can see a doctor.

CASEY: (*Ferociously.*) I DON'T NEED A DOCTOR!!!

(WADE seems shocked.)

I need to walk away from this war. That's what I need. And I'm prepared to face the consequences.

WADE: Are you?

CASEY: Yes.

WADE: When I was in Nam, a kid by the name Justin Shear, Private First Class Rifleman, went over the hill and disappeared. They found him a month later in a place called The Dog Patch in Da Nang. He got busted. They sent him back to our company. The C.O. made him walk *point* day after day, until. . . . I don't need to tell you what often happens to the point man.

CASEY: I'll just tell them I refuse to fight.

WADE: (*Laughs.*) Oh. . . . okay!

CASEY: I'll just flat out refuse.

WADE: You think they're going to grace you with mercy? This is the military. Not Little League.

CASEY: I know that.

WADE: They will work. . . . you. . . . over. . . . Do yourself a favor: Finish the six months, get out, and protest when you *get back*. No shame in that.

CASEY: Yes, there is.

WADE: Marines did it all the time during Vietnam.

CASEY: There's no way in hell I can spend another day contributing to this war.

WADE: What the hell you gonna do then? Go run, hide in the woods? Escape to Montreal? What?

CASEY: I'm going to Washington.

WADE: D.C.?

CASEY: Yeah, Katie is vice president of a grassroots organization that's connected to Charlie Waltz, the editor of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. Mr. Waltz is a board member for the organization Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

WADE: Oh, for crying our loud!

CASEY: (*Continuing.*) He's going to print my letter—(*Holds up letter.*) *this* letter—in the Sunday edition and, then, drive me down to a huge rally at the Capitol.

(CASEY pulls out a purple flyer from his back pocket. HE unfolds it. HE hands it to his father, who looks at it.)

He says I can speak at the rally.

WADE: Speak at the rally?

CASEY: Yeah.

WADE: What do you mean, *speaking at the rally*?

CASEY: You know. . . . Tell my story. . . . Inspire others to stand against this war. . . .

WADE: Jesus Christ. Is this Katie's idea?

CASEY: No! It's mine.

WADE: Bullshit.

CASEY: She tried to talk me out of it.

WADE: I find that hard to believe.

CASEY: (*Shrugs.*) All she's doing is introducing me to Mr. Waltz.

WADE: Pph. . . . So—okay, fine—you speak at this thing, get people hootin' and hollerin', and then. . . . what?

CASEY: And then. . . . we. . . . rally.

WADE: And *after* the rally? The rally *ends*, everyone goes *home*. What happens *after* the rally?

(CASEY shrugs.)

WADE: Oh, for crying out loud! You're going back. And I'm taking ya. (*Rises.*) Get your stuff, throw it in the truck, we're leaving at dawn. (*Points at him.*) If I wake up and you're missing, I will hunt you down. You hear me?

CASEY: So be it.

(THEY stare at each other.)

DEWEY BOY AND WOOKIE

BY DWIGHT WATSON

CHARACTERS

DEWEY BOY (30s or 40s) and WOOKIE (20s) are prison guards about to execute a condemned man by pulling the switch on "Old Smokey," a monstrous wooden-framed electric chair.

SCENE

A room with antiseptic walls and floors, recently scrubbed, in the State Prison Center for the Penalty of Death by Electrocution. The room is bare except for the chair, the white walls, the chamber door, and a large plate-glass window.

TIME

The present

(Dressed in institutional uniforms, DEWEY BOY studies the morning newspaper while WOOKIE, unshaven, gruff, and irritable, paces about.)

WOOKIE: (*With growing frustration.*) Come on, Commissioner. Flip the light! Let's send the "Ol' Boy" home!

DEWEY BOY: Relax, Wookie.

WOOKIE: What's he waitin' for, huh? A thunderbolt! (*In the direction of the audience.*) Hell, Commish, we got the power, so just gimme some kinda sign!

DEWEY BOY: Whatsa matter with you, Wookie?

WOOKIE: Nothin'. Ain't nothin' the matter with me. I just hate wastin' the taxpayers' money. That's all. Time and money. Get this thing over with!

DEWEY BOY: Twelve sharp. Nothin's gonna happen 'til twelve sharp. Not a minute before.

WOOKIE: Why make such a damn big fuss out of this thing?!

DEWEY BOY: They gotta do it by the book, Wookie.

WOOKIE: I say we burn the book, fry his ass, and go home. (*Chanting.*) "Fry his ass and let's go home! Fry his ass and let's go home!"

DEWEY BOY: Shut up, Wookie. This ain't no baseball game. We're 'bout to make history here.