

"Africa"

Screenplay

by

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"Stand still and consider the wonderful works of God."

Job 13

"AFRICA"

There's the sound of BREATHING, rhythmic, regular...And we're looking into a strange dark universe. A deep, bottomless, shimmering black pool. There's a glint of light. And we see the reflection of the rising sun on the dark pool's surface. And suddenly the pool blinks. We PULL BACK and we see we've been looking into an ELEPHANT'S EYE. Into its very soul. We keep PULLING BACK, and we see the elephant, a huge bull, with its statuary like tusks, is standing, a massive figure, on an African plain. And we see it's dawn. The first light of day. And we can make out, across the plain, as far as the eye can see, herds of animals; zebras, gazelle, elephants, silently grazing...And there's a strange buzzing SOUND. The elephant pricks its ears. The buzzing sound getting louder and louder. And suddenly, small, APE LIKE MEN, making a guttural buzzing sound, our distant ancestors, hominids, just past the ape in our evolutionary line, our "Lucy," come pouring out of some tall grass. There must be a hundred of them, brandishing clubs, running onto the plain. And before the huge elephant can run, the small creatures, like ants, literally swarm over the beast, climbing onto its back, clubbing at it, a hundred clubs, pounding the elephant to its knees, stoving in its skull. The beast, rolling over, literally crushing some of the helpless "men" as it lays down on its side and dies...The "men" setting to work with crude stone cutting tools, carving its carcass...And as the beast lies on its side, the "men" crawling over it, making their strange buzzing sound, the sun rising over Africa...There's the sound of the rhythmic BREATHING again...And there's another sound, the sound of shovels, picks. And we see a piece of BONE. We PULL BACK and we see we're looking down into an ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION. An open pit. Africans working, digging. And we see a small BOY, no more than five, standing beside a Woman in her late thirties in the pit. The Woman, wearing a field hat and khaki pants, has been out in the sun for so many years she seems to have grown a tougher, second skin. And we see that they're standing in the pit looking at the uncovered fossilized skeletal remains, the bones, of the million year old bull elephant. The elephant who met man. The Boy turns to look up at his mother. Her figure framed against the sun. She's taken off her hat, her hair down, quietly looking at the skeleton. And as her image lingers, like an old black and white photograph: We're suddenly looking at a CLOSE ANGLE OF A MAN'S FACE. His eyes shut, his breathing regular, his eyes moving inside his lids as he's somewhere between this world and dreams...

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM, NAIROBI, KENYA - DAY

We PULL BACK and we see mosquito netting is around a bed in a hospital room...And we see a Man's still figure, a man in his early forties, lying under hospital covers. His eyes blink open, coming awake...He lies for a moment staring, realizing where he is. He sits up. He starts to get out of bed...And he suddenly falls, sitting heavily on the floor. He sits there, motionless. He looks down. And he sees his legs, heavily bandaged, have been amputated below the knee.

He sits for a moment, his back against the bed on the floor, dealing with this revelation. And he seems to readily accept it. A man readily willing to accept fate. And there's something else about him. Despite sitting unceremoniously on the hospital floor, there's a dignified quality about him, a regal bearing, that's usually reserved for kings. We'll come to know him as RICHARD LEAKEY. He looks across the room, his clothing on a chair. He pulls himself over, swinging on his knuckles, to his clothing. There's something he has to have. He takes down his shirt, going through the pockets. And he takes out a cigar. He looks at it, like it was his salvation. He finds some matches in the shirt pocket. He strikes a match to light the cigar. And as he looks at the burning match, as if he was thinking about how he got to here....We're suddenly looking at the SUN...And we see it's rising, blood red, over another African plain...And we hear a Woman's Voice:

MEAVE'S VOICE (OVER)

Over a lifetime thousands of people will pass through our lives. But it's the one person, among all the passing people, that stays with us. Richard was mine. He was...my Africa...

ROLL MAIN TITLES:

"AFRICA."

EXT. AN AFRICAN PLAIN - SUNRISE, ANOTHER DAY

Animals, in silhouette, figures on the landscape, stand silently grazing. Elephants, and zebras, and giraffes, and antelopes. And we hear it before we see it. A droning sound. And suddenly we see an AIRPLANE, a single engine plane, seemingly coming right out of the blood sun, flying low over the animals, no more than twenty feet above their heads. The animals scattering, running from the invasive machine...

INT. THE AIRPLANE - EARLY MORNING

And we see Richard is flying. Flying dangerously low over the herds of animals. And he lets out an exultant "shout," chasing the animals for sport...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - EARLY MORNING

There's a huge cloud of dust. The zebras stampeding. The antelope, with their graceful leaps. The giraffe's awkward gait. The elephants lumbering...The animals running across the vast plain, the airplane their flying shepherd. And there's something glorious, and free about it, the plane and the animals, like running through heaven.

INT. THE AIRPLANE - EARLY MORNING

And Richard sees something, through the rising dust, off in the distance, on the ground.

And as he flies over it, he sees that some Africans, in tattered clothing, automatic weapons slung over their shoulders, are out of a jeep, kneeling over a mortally wounded elephant. And we see that they're using a chain saw, cutting into the elephant's face, cutting out its tusks. Richard circles them. They look up. And raising their weapons, they suddenly shoot at the airplane. Richard takes the plane higher, out of range. He turns the plane, silently circling, watching the men far below him eviscerate the elephant. And finished with their bloody task, taking the tusks, they load their jeep and drive off. The elephant left, like some garbage, an afterthought, on the plain. Richard circles the fallen elephant once more. And shrugging at the vagaries of African life, turning the plane, he flies off...

END MAIN TITLES:

EXT. A RIVER IN AFRICA - MORNING

We see the plane landing in a remote grassy field by a wide River. Richard gets out. He crosses down to the River. A rowboat's left on the shore. He pulls the boat into the water. He gets in the boat. And as he rows across the green water:

EXT. A RIVERSIDE ENCAMPMENT - MORNING

He comes to a small encampment. Tents. Archeology gear. Africans, getting up, bathing in the River. He says something in Swahili to an African. The Man motions. Richard, following his directions, goes up a steep narrow trail through some rocks, to a promintory, where huge towering rocks have formed a natural cave. He goes inside.

INT. A ROCK CAVE IN AFRICA - MORNING

It's dark. And as his eyes adjust to the dark...

A WOMAN'S VOICE (OVER)

You've gained weight. Are you drinking again?

He looks above him. And he sees high up on the rock wall, dangling from a rope, sitting in a sling, a lantern her only light, a Woman in her late thirties looking down on him.

RICHARD

(wry)

You know me, I only drink in warm weather.

Her red hair, accentuating her pale skin, makes her seem fragile. Wearing khakis, with full sleeves, her arms always covered, we'll come to know her as MEAVE EPPS. She has a distinct English accent...

MEAVE

It's always warm weather.

He smiles. Using a dental pick, and a small fine brush, she's carefully scraping dirt off the wall. And we can see the object of her work. She's uncovered a "Cave painting" on the rock wall. A beautiful, timeless, charcoal drawing, etched into the rock.

MEAVE (cont'd)
(meaning the painting)
....Forty thousand years or so...The detail is exquisite isn't it?

He nods. They're quiet. She carefully scrapes at the dirt.

RICHARD
(watching her)
I got your letter.

She nods.

RICHARD (cont'd)
It's not polite to ask for a divorce in the mail.

MEAVE
I don't believe it was a question.

She's far from fragile. She pulls a tarp down covering the artwork, protecting it. She comes climbing down from her perch. He offers her his hand, she doesn't take it.

EXT. THE RIVERSIDE CAMP, AFRICA - MORNING

They cross through the small encampment, to a tent. She goes inside...he starts to follow her...

MEAVE
I'm going to change.

He stops, respecting her privacy. And a very thin Man, a blanket wrapped around him, comes out of the tent.

MEAVE'S VOICE (OVER)
You know Beard.

And the very thin man, BEARD, stands with the blanket wrapped around him. They look at each other. There's no love lost. Beard wanders down to the river. And he suddenly, blanket still around him, walks into the water. He stands there, knee deep, shivering in the cold water...

MEAVE'S VOICE (OVER)
Beard's come out to kick the habit...

RICHARD
(disdainful)
He spends his life kicking the habit.

MEAVE'S VOICE (OVER)
(sympathetic)
We all have our addictions, Richard.

RICHARD
What are you addicted to, Meave?

She's quiet. Some moments, and she comes back out in a lovely white dress and a straw sun hat. They walk back down to the River. As they walk:

MEAVE
(answering his
question, not
happily)
I happen to be addicted to you.

She gets in the row boat. Richard gets in. Meave, rowing them back across the river...

EXT. THE RIVER - DAY

The boat in the wide river. It's quiet. A bird silently flying over them. The soft sound of the oars on the water.

RICHARD
What would be the point of a divorce?
(ironic)
We rarely see each other anyway.

She nods at that sad truth. And she says something that could break your heart...

MEAVE
There just doesn't seem to be anything
left...

And as she rows them across the African river:

EXT. AN AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

We see Richard and Meave walking up a trail from the River. They come to small, poor, African village. They go into a white-washed, wooden, two hundred year old, Anglican missionary Church.

INT. ANGLICAN CHURCH, AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

They sit in a pew. The church crowded with villagers. As an African Priest leads them in prayer, Meave's head bowed:

MEAVE
(to Richard, hurt)
I'm sick of hearing about you cheating
on me with anyone who wants to taste
the "real" dirt of Africa. It's
bloody boring, Richard. Not to
mention humiliating.

And before he can say anything she gets up to take communion. He looks at her kneeling...Her slender ankles, her straight back, her supple neck, her red hair. And as he watches her take communion, the flesh and blood of Christ:

EXT. AN AFRICAN PLAIN - ANOTHER TIME, LATE AFTERNOON

The sky's dark, threatening. And we see Richard, a younger man, standing with an older gray-haired Woman now, a woman we recognize from his dream, the woman who had stood against the sun, his mother, MARY LEAKEY, on a barren empty plain. It might as well be the moon. And we see they're at an ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION. Tents on the horizon. The Laetoli Beds. And we see they're standing in silence, looking at FOOTPRINTS that have been uncovered, footprints that have been preserved for over three million years in cooled volcanic ash in the earth. The earliest footprints ever discovered of man. And there's an appropriate deep silence. After some moments:

MARY LEAKEY

(simply)

...Three million years ago a man and a woman walked here...

(motioning)

...The depth of her footprint, the weight, she seems to have been carrying something. Perhaps a child?

And as they look at the footprints:

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, THREE MILLION YEARS AGO - DAY

And we see a "man," and a "woman," just past the ape in our human development, walking across the plain. And we see the "woman," is indeed, carrying a child...And as this, the earliest of human families, leave their footprints in the cooling earth...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, IN OUR TIME - DAY

Mary and Richard walking, following their footprints...

MARY LEAKEY

(pointing out)

...He stopped here. She walked ahead...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, THREE MILLION YEARS AGO - DAY

And we see indeed, the "man's" stopped. The "woman," carrying her child, walking on...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, IN OUR TIME - DAY

Mary and Richard following the "woman's" footprints...

MARY LEAKEY

(motioning)

...She stopped here to turn...as if...as if, she heard something...

And we see the "woman's" footprints have stopped, doing something so human, as turning...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, THREE MILLION YEARS AGO - DAY

And indeed we see the "woman" has stopped, doing something so human as turning...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, IN OUR TIME - DAY

And we see both Mary and Richard have instinctively turned, as if to hear what "she" heard...

MARY LEAKEY

A bird...? The wind...? A thought left behind...?

(a beat)

Or, maybe, she turned to say something to him...? Perhaps...A protestation of love? Perhaps....

(a beat)

A "goodbye."

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, THREE MILLION YEARS AGO - DAY

And we see the "woman" has turned back to say something to the "man." Perhaps, "I love you." Perhaps, a "Goodbye..." And she turns again, walking off...And as we watch her walk into the distance, moving further and further away...

MARY'S VOICE (OVER)

Where was she going...?

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN, IN OUR TIME - DAY

And three million years later we're looking at "her" footprints walking into the distance, until they disappear as if they were literally swallowed up by time...And we see Mary and Richard standing stock still, looking off at the disappearing footprints, caught in this haunting seminal moment of man's history. After some moments:

RICHARD

You must feel very good about yourself, mother. It's the crowning achievement of your work.

And it seems like he wants to embrace her. To tell her he loves her. But there's an awkwardness between them, a coldness. And Mary, incongruously, takes out a small cigar, lighting it.

MARY LEAKEY

Crown's are for kings. You know I don't believe in divine right.

And she walks away, to stand alone with her momentous find. More comfortable with the past. As Richard looks at his mother, wishing he knew her...

A WOMAN'S VOICE (OVER)

Mr. Leakey.

He turns. And a young Woman, wearing a wide brimmed hat, in a white dress, a suitcase at her side, is standing there. And we recognize it's MEAVE.

MEAVE (cont'd)
I'm Meave Epps. I sent you a letter
at the museum.

He doesn't remember...

MEAVE (cont'd)
Cambridge. Paleontology. Summer
study. You invited me to come.

RICHARD
(doesn't remember,
and couldn't care
less)
Find yourself a tent to sleep in.

He turns to look at the footprints.

MEAVE
You're rather a rude prick, aren't
you?

RICHARD
(stops)
Excuse me?

MEAVE
I traveled a long way to be here. It
would be polite if you made sure I was
comfortable.

RICHARD
The object here isn't to be
"comfortable." Perhaps you should
return to your nice warm bed in
Cambridge.

And he starts to walk off.

MEAVE
I was led to believe you were a bigger
man than that. I guess I was
mistaken.

He stops. He turns to look back at her, her suitcase at her side, standing on the desolate plain. The same plain a man and a woman stood on three million years ago, and perhaps said, "I love you." And as he looks at her for the very first time:

INT. THE OLD ANGLICAN CHURCH, AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

He watches Meave, finished taking communion, getting up, turning back along the aisle. She comes back by him...

RICHARD
When will you be home again?

MEAVE

I don't know. Three months, maybe.
When the children are home from
school. I want to finish here before
the rains.

He nods. It's quiet. They look at each other.

RICHARD

(after a beat)

...I don't want a divorce, Meave.

(tenderly smiles)

I've grown accustomed to you.

She's quiet. A Choir starts to SING. After some moments:

MEAVE

This is our last chance, Richard.

(a beat)

If I have to I'll break the habit.

And she turns to leave. She slows, looking back at him.

MEAVE (cont'd)

You don't have to prove to anybody
you're a man. Especially not to me.

And she turns and she's gone. And as Richard sits in the
small church, an African choir singing the glory of God...

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE/AN AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

And we see Richard, smoking a cigar, flying his plane again.
And he sees, once again, below him, the results of
poachers...Another eviscerated elephant, tusks cut from its
face, lying on the ground. But this time other ELEPHANTS
have come to stand over the crumpled figure. In human terms,
an "elephant's funeral." Richard circles them, watching the
ritual. The elephants shuffling, taking up dirt in their
trunks, blowing the dirt over the dead elephant, as if trying
to salve its eternal wound. One of them, a female,
plaintively runs her trunk over the fallen elephant as if
trying to comprehend the enormity of it. And strangely,
Richard sees amongst the elephants, diminutive beside the
great creatures, a WOMAN in her thirties. She stops for a
moment, looking up at him, at the airplane. She kneels to
quietly look at the mortally wounded elephant. The elephants
blowing dirt over it. The female elephant, feet shuffling in
some sad dance, running its trunk over the still figure,
intimately touching the fallen elephant in some kind of
primal memory, some kind of final kiss. And as the female
elephant suddenly lifts her head, trumpeting her sorrow to
the heavens...

EXT. LAKE TURKANA, KENYA - DAY

We see a pick digging at the earth. We PULL BACK and we see
Richard, a bandana around his mouth, wind blowing dirt around
him, kneeling in the dirt, chipping away tiny pieces of rock
from a fossil imbedded in the hard dry edge of an ancient
river bed...A small older African man, KAMOYA, kneeling
beside him, assists him with a brush.

We keep PULLING BACK, and we see African workers, bandanas covering their mouths, are all along the dry river bed, digging for fossils. CLOSER ANGLE as Richard makes a last chip at the rock and the fossil comes free. He turns the bone in his hand...

RICHARD

(to Kamoya)

You were right...it's part of an arm bone...an ulna...

(studying it)

Good work. Seven years, I've walked this river bed a thousand times, and never once saw it...

(barely able to
contain his
excitement)

Let's see if it belongs...

He quickly gets up. They move against the wind across the site, to a BASE CAMP set on a rise above an aqua-marine Lake. Lake Turkana, called "The Jade Sea" for its color. They come to a cluster of tents, huts, a concrete building with a thatched roof. They cross to a small building, little more than a shed. Richard unlocks the door.

INT. A CAMP BUILDING, LAKE TURKANA - DAY

They come inside. It's quiet. And we see layed out on a table a virtually complete fossilized SKELETON, bones pieced together like a jigsaw puzzle, of one of our most distant ancestors. Richard hesitates. And he carefully puts the bone where an arm bone, a part of the ulna, is missing. And it fits precisely.

RICHARD

(quietly)

Two million years old...And he has an arm again...

And they're still, taken with their distant ancestor.

KAMOYA

When are you going to announce the find? Nothing this old has ever been found...

RICHARD

Not until it's complete.

(motioning at the
jaw)

We still don't have the lower mandible...

(at the vertebrae)

...The fourth and seventh vertabrae...

(MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (and a small space
 between a finger
 bone)
 ...The meta-carpal on the little
 finger...Tens of other bones...

KAMOYA
 They could just as well be dust now.
 We may never find anything else...

RICHARD
 (nods)
 And then it won't be complete.

And he seems to be saying something about himself. About
 being "complete." A Man comes in. He says in Swahili...

THE MAN
 (subtitles)
 Your guests are here.

RICHARD
 (a beat)
 Fucking tourists.

And he goes outside...

EXT. THE LAKE TURKANA CAMP - DAY

And we see standing outside a Van, like lost sheep, a small
 group of ill at ease people of varying ages. And an
 attractive, dark-haired Woman in her mid-thirties, something
 bruised about her, that life hasn't lived up to her fondest
 dreams, comes forward...GRACE...

GRACE
 Mr. Leakey I'm Grace Moyer, Director
 of the Indiana archeology society...

RICHARD
 (nods)
 Welcome, Ms. Moyer.

GRACE
 (introducing)
 ...Our group that's come to work with
 you for the next two weeks...Mr. and
 Mrs. Blanchard, Mr. Wilson, Mrs.
 Lester, Mr. Thomas, and Mrs.
 Simpson...

Richard nods.

GRACE (cont'd)
 (a hint coquette)
 We're greatful for the opportunity to
 be able to work and learn from you.

His eyes meet her's. She self-consciously smiles. He looks at them, at their eager faces...And swallowing his pride, dutiful:

RICHARD

I'm pleased you chose to join us on our excavation. I hope you will find it worthwhile. Without the support of groups like yours we couldn't continue our work here....

And as he stands, hands in his pockets, looking at them...

RICHARD (cont'd)

(after a beat)

You payed to get dirty. I promise you...you will get dirty...

EXT. THE LAKE TURKANA SITE - DAY

And we see it's pouring rain. And we see the "tourists," literally knee deep in mud, kneeling with Richard, Kamoya, and the workers, digging along the ancient river bed in the rain...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE LAKE TURKANA CAMP - NIGHT

The rain's stopped. The camp dark, quiet, asleep in the African moonlight.

INT. THE CAMP BUILDING - NIGHT

The moon's light seeps in the camp building, bathing the skeleton in its eternal slumber on the table. And we see Richard, unable to sleep, a liquor bottle at his feet, a drink in his hand, not his first, sitting by his find. And there's a loneliness about him, as deep as the African night...

RICHARD

What could you tell me dear boy? What were your dreams?

There's a slight sound. He turns. And he sees Grace is standing in the doorway, looking at the skeleton.

GRACE

I'm sorry...I couldn't sleep...the door was open...

He waves it doesn't matter. After some moments:

RICHARD

Homo erectus...."The Man of The Lake."
Two million years old...

She stands her distance as if her very breathing could affect something momentous.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(smiles)
You can come closer. I promise, he won't bite.

And it's hard to tell if he's talking about the skeleton or himself. She comes closer, silently looking at the skeleton. Richard gets up coming to stand beside her...After some moments:

RICHARD (cont'd)
(motions)
...life was brutally short...He drowned or was killed in a river that was here...

EXT. A RIVER, TWO MILLION YEARS AGO - NIGHT

And we see a young "Man," just past the ape in our development, standing by a river looking up at the stars, dreaming...dreaming about what? And suddenly, from out of the deep brush, a TUSKED BOAR charges him, goring him. The young "Man," his dreams over in an instant, falling backwards into the river...

THE RIVER - TWO MILLION YEARS AGO...

And we see the young Man's body, in the moon's light, floating down to rest at the bottom of the river...

RICHARD'S VOICE (OVER)
His body was covered with sediments that preserved the skeleton.

The body covered with river sediment. As the water runs by, like time passing:

RICHARD'S VOICE (OVER)
Over the millenia the skeleton broke into pieces and was spread along the the river bank.

The "man's" skeletal remains, like flower petals, deposited on the river bank:

INT. THE CAMP BUILDING - NIGHT

Richard standing beside her over the skeleton. She's mezmerized...

RICHARD
The river's been gone for a million years....
(smiles)
...but he decided to wait around to meet us.

She smiles. And they're quiet, looking at the skeleton that was man. And the dark shadow crosses his face again...

RICHARD (cont'd)
Archeology is the most lonely of professions...It constantly reminds us how insignificant we are. How we are ultimately, alone.

GRACE
That doesn't leave much room for God.

RICHARD
(imperious)
I'm a scientist, Ms. Moyer. I'm searching for proof of God.

They're quiet. She looks at him.

GRACE
What makes you feel significant?

RICHARD
(laughs)
Sex and alcohol.
(smiles)
Right now all I have is the alcohol.

She laughs. And a dangerous romantic, he can't help himself...

RICHARD (cont'd)
Two million years ago he lived right here...He had all the joys...all the heartbreak we have...

And in his own way he's making love to her...She self-consciously pushes some hair off her forehead...She's not saying no...

RICHARD (cont'd)
Like the rest of us he was afraid of the unknown...

He touches her shoulder, she fairly quivers at his touch...

RICHARD (cont'd)
...and at night...he would lay with someone, so as not to be alone...

And as she looks at him...

INT. RICHARD'S TENT - LATE NIGHT

And we see Richard making love to Grace, "...so as not to be alone..."

INT. RICHARD'S TENT - DAYBREAK

Richard and Grace asleep. And suddenly the tent flap is yanked open...Kamoya...

KAMOYA

Richard, come quickly...

Richard jumps up, throwing on his pants...

EXT. THE SITE - DAYBREAK

First light. Richard, running with Kamoya across the site, down to the dry river bed....

KAMOYA

He got up to relieve himself....

And we see an African, framed against the burning sun, standing in the dry river bed...

KAMOYA (cont'd)

He saw this...

And they see on the ground a piece of a bone that's been uncovered by the rain...Richard bends, quickly digging it out of the dirt with his bare hands...And we see it's a complete piece of jaw bone...

RICHARD

(whispers)

A mandible...

He jumps up, running with Kamoya back to the shed...

INT. THE LAKE TURKANA CAMP BUILDING - DAYBREAK

He bursts inside. He places the bone where the missing piece of the skeleton's jaw line is. And it fits perfectly. His discovery "complete." And they're still, just the sound of their breathing.

KAMOYA

Do you have enough to share with the world now?

RICHARD

We have his mouth. If we could only now find his voice.

And he smiles, nodding, "yes," we have enough. Kamoya smiles. They shake hands. And it becomes an embrace. And Kamoya, an emotional man, starts to cry. Embarrassed, he leaves. Richard stands with his find. But even with the "last" piece in place, he still isn't satisfied. And as he traces with his finger the empty spot where the tiny bone in the little finger is still missing, like himself, incomplete.

INT. THE CAMP SHED, LAKE TURKANA - DAY

The "LAKE MAN" SKELETON on the table. And suddenly a Camera flashes. We Pull Back and we see the small shed's crowded with Reporters, photographers taking pictures of the historic find. Richard, Kamoya beside him, standing by their "treasure." African workers standing at the shed windows looking inside.

RICHARD

(smoking a cigar,
holding court)

...I have found fragments of bone that indicate an even earlier "human" may have lived here...As old as four million years ago...Nothing that old has ever been found. I believe we could find him, our oldest human ancestor, if the government would realize the importance of what we're doing here and help us.

He looks at the skeleton.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(passionate)

We could never have dared to walk on the moon if we didn't first learn how to walk on the earth.

A REPORTER

(chimes in)

Kenya is on the verge of bankruptcy. Archaeology isn't exactly high on the priorities of a country that can barely feed itself, Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD

(angrily, snaps)

That's because Kenya is being managed by fools and thieves.

THE REPORTER

Are you calling the President and his government fools and thieves?

RICHARD

(annoyed)

Draw your own conclusions. I thought you wanted to talk about The Lake Man?

And as a camera flashes, the white light of the flash bathing Richard and his historic find:

EXT. NAIROBI, KENYA - NIGHT

It's raining, the busy Kenyan capital sodden. And we see an old brick building. Kenya's National Museum.

INT. THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, NAIROBI, KENYA - NIGHT

An old museum, display case, after display case, filled with archeological finds, lines the walls. It's still. The museum and its offices, closed for the night. And we see a light is on down a hallway. And we see Richard alone in his musty, cluttered office. He gets up putting on a raincoat. He comes out of the office, coming down the hallway, starting across the display floor. He slows.

And he sees there are two men in dark suits, Security Men with impassive faces, and standing with them, wearing a tuxedo, a tall imposing man in his early seventies, with deceptively quiet eyes, the Kenyan President, DANIEL arap MOI.

MR. MOI
(meaning the
tuxedo)

There was a state dinner...

Richard doesn't say anything. There's no love lost between them. It's quiet. And Mr. Moi sees a leak, water dripping from the ceiling onto the display floor.

MR. MOI (cont'd)
You know the saying..."A man who's
roof leaks, will soon be getting wet."

He smiles. He's not a man to be taken lightly.

RICHARD
What can I do for you Mr. Moi?

MR. MOI
You don't like me, do you Mr. Leakey?

RICHARD
(honestly)
I don't know you well enough, Mr. Moi.
I don't like what's happening to
Kenya.

Moi nods. He wanders. He stops to look into a display case. The skeletal remains of Richard's historic Lake Man.

MR. MOI
Congratulations. An astonishing find.

Richard doesn't say anything.

MR. MOI (cont'd)
(knowing full
well, pointed)
Do you think they were dark skinned,
these people...Africans...? Or light
skinned, Europeans, like you?

RICHARD
(bristles)
I was born in Kenya. My family has
been in Kenya for a hundred years. I
am as much a Kenyan as you are, Mr.
Moi.

The President, not without a sense of humor, smiles, wry.

MR. MOI
We have much in common, then, don't
we, Mr. Leakey?

Richard doesn't say anything. After some moments:

MR. MOI (cont'd)

I understand you have many leaks. That you are in grave financial difficulty. The museum, and its archaeological work, might have to close...

RICHARD

The government doesn't seem interested in perserving its past, Mr. Moi.

MR. MOI

I have a country to feed. Some of us are more concerned with the present, Mr. Leakey.

Richard doesn't say anything. The President hands him a newspaper.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

Did you say the government was being run by thieves and whores?

RICHARD

(arrogant)

I think I said thieves and fools...

Moi laughs. He wanders along the display cases. As he looks at the displays:

MR. MOI

Do you know what's been happening to our elephants?

RICHARD

The elephants?

MR. MOI

At the present rate, in five years, they will be extinct in Kenya.

RICHARD

(not particularly interested)

Most of the species that walked the earth are extinct, Mr. Moi. You've heard of Darwin, "natural selection," haven't you?"

MR. MOI

(ignoring him)

We have lost more than ninety percent of our elephants to the poachers...the ivory trade. Without the elephants there are no tourists. Without the tourists there is no money. Without the money there is no...

RICHARD
(pointed, meaning
his tuxedo, wry)
State dinners...

Mr. Moi doesn't say anything, cold.

MR. MOI
(after a beat)
I was thinking more of your Lake
Turkana project...
(motions)
...your National Museum...

Richard doesn't say anything.

MR. MOI (cont'd)
(a beat)
You're an intelligent man. What would
you suggest we do, Mr. Leakey?

RICHARD
(sarcastic)
Buy ivory.
(a beat,
seriously)
I suggest you start by firing the
director of the Wildlife Service.
Find somebody who values wildlife more
than he does the price of ivory.
(and arrogantly)
I don't know a goddamn thing about
elephants but I know I could run
wildlife better than it's being run
with my eyes shut.

MR. MOI
Are you volunteering?

Richard laughs at the idea.

RICHARD
The only animals I know anything about
is what's on my plate.

Mr. Moi smiles.

MR. MOI
(after a beat)
Is there somebody you would recommend?

RICHARD
(shakes "no.")
It's not my problem.

MR. MOI
It's all of our problem, sir.
(a beat, and
through)
I'm sorry to have taken up your
time...

And he turns to leave. He slows...

MR. MOI (cont'd)
Charles Darwin wrote "The Origin Of
Species," in 1853. Do not think I am
a stupid man, Mr. Leakey...
(a beat, wry)
Despite my heritage.

And he leaves. And as Richard stands in the empty museum,
the water dripping on the floor.

INT. A BAR, NAIROBI, KENYA - NIGHT

And we see Richard sitting in a small African Bar, ceiling
fans turning overhead, drinking alone. A TELEVISION'S ON
behind the bar, the sound, low...And Richard notices that his
photograph is on the television...

RICHARD
(to Bartender...)
Turn it up...

The Bartender turns up the sound.

A NEWSCASTER
...announced the appointment of Mr.
Richard Leakey as the new director of
Kenya's Wildlife Service....

Richard stops. And Mr. Moi, taped in his office, comes on
the screen:

MR. MOI
(on tape, on the
television)
Mr. Leakey's family has been in Kenya
for over a hundred years. Mr. Leakey,
and his family, through their
archeological finds, has put Kenya on
the map. What better choice than Mr.
Richard Leakey, who is first and
foremost a Kenyan, to protect our most
valuable national resource, the
elephant.

RICHARD
(looking at the
screen)
You son of a bitch!

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, NAIROBI, KENYA - DAY

And we see Richard standing, cooling his heels, waiting in a
large empty room with a wall of open windows. The door
opens, and Mr. Moi comes inside, an everpresent impassive
Security Man in a suit, at his side.

MR. MOI
I'm sorry to keep you waiting.

He isn't at all.

MR. MOI (cont'd)
 Congratulations on your appointment.
 Your staff is eager to meet you.

RICHARD
 (angry)
 I told you I don't know the first
 fucking thing about elephants. You're
 going to have to find somebody else.

MR. MOI
 There isn't anybody else. Didn't you
 say yourself you could run the
 Wildlife Service with your eyes shut?
 I took you at your word. You're a man
 of your word, aren't you Mr. Leaky?

RICHARD
 (beat)
 I'm sorry Mr. Moi...But I can't help
 you...good luck...

And he turns to leave...

MR. MOI
 You are a selfish man, Mr. Leakey. We
 are on an economic precipice. The
 elephant is an important symbol.
 Would you prefer there be chaos?
 Would it make you feel more righteous?
 I am sure you and your community would
 prefer I fail.
 (resolute)
 I am not going to fail, Mr. Leakey,
 with or without your support.

They look at each other.

RICHARD
 You're right. You are not a stupid
 man. Is it possible you would like to
 see me fail, Mr. Moi? It would
 certainly silence some of your
 critics.

MR. MOI
 (smiles, doesn't
 dispute that)
 We would both have much to gain then,
 wouldn't we? Politics make strange
 bedfellows.

RICHARD
 (after a beat, the
 bottom line)
 I'm a paleontologist, Mr. Moi. I
 spend my life looking into "graves."
 I'm more interested in the dead than
 the living.

MR. MOI

Maybe it's time for you to start to think about the living.

RICHARD

(decided)

There's nothing to think about.

And he turns to go, his footsteps echoing on the tile floor...

MR. MOI

(after him)

You said it yourself...

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

"We are all Kenyans."

(a beat)

Aren't we Mr. Leakey?

They look at each other. And as Richard turns and leaves.

INT. THE LEAKEY HOUSE, RICHARD'S BEDROOM, NAIROBI,
KENYA - NIGHT

We see Richard in his bedroom, a drink in his hand, not his first, standing by an open window looking out at the Nairobi night. There's a light knock on the door.

RICHARD

Yes.

And an African man, a Manservant in his fifties, looks in.

MARTIN

Are you going to need anything else tonight?

Richard shakes "no."

RICHARD

If you would lock up before you go, Martin.

Martin nods. He turns to leave...He stops at the door.

MARTIN

Will Mrs. Leakey be home soon?

RICHARD

Mrs. Leakey is thinking of changing her name.

The Man doesn't say anything. And turning, discreetly shutting the door, leaves. Richard quietly stands by the open window, drinking. And as he looks out at Nairobi, trying not to think about "the living..."

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE/AN AFRICAN PLAIN - ANOTHER DAY

We see Richard, on his way back to Lake Turkana, flying over another African plain. He slows. And he sees some poachers, out of a jeep, holding automatic weapons, are standing across from a grizzled OLD ELEPHANT with huge tusks. And he sees the sudden staccato flashes of their automatic weapons, the old elephant stopped short by the bullets, its knees giving out from under him, sitting on its knees...trying desperately to stand, and its legs giving out, rolling plaintively on its side, to die. Richard hesitates, and it being none of his concern, he starts to fly off...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

We see the poachers standing over the dying elephant, one of them holding a chain saw, getting ready to perform their bloody task. And there's suddenly the SOUND of the AIRPLANE. They turn. And we see the plane, Richard, having turned around, coming lower and lower, no more than ten feet off the ground, coming right at them...They shout, scrambling to their feet, running...The plane coming at them...the men diving to the ground to avoid it...The plane lifting, gaining altitude...and turning...

INT. THE AIRPLANE - DAY

The men scrambling to their feet below him. And Richard heading the plane at them again. The poachers running to their jeep, and driving off. Richard circles. The elephant, left lying on the ground. And in spite of himself, Richard turns the plane, coming back, landing...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

He gets out. It's still. He crosses to the elephant. Not yet dead, its breathing rasps, labored. Its trunk plaintively rubbing at the dirt. Richard stands over the dying beast. There's nothing he can do. And he feels the elephant looking at him, the dark pool of his eye. He looks in the elephant's eye. And there's a momentary connection. The elephant and Richard. And the glint goes out of the animal's eye and its lid closes, forever. And it's still. Richard standing on the plain by the huge fallen animal. And it starts to RAIN. The rain falling on the veldt. The elephant literally steaming in the rain. And as Richard stands in the rain by the fallen giant, for a moment he feels something significant. Something lasting. He quietly turns to leave. And he sees that the predators have come; a pack of HYENAS, waiting. He walks toward his plane. He slows, looking back. The elephant's still figure. The hyenas circling. He gets into his plane.

INT. RICHARD'S AIRPLANE - DAY

He starts the plane, the prop turning, getting ready to go. He looks over at the elephant, the hyenas moving closer...

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

And suddenly the plane's prop is shut off. And Richard, a revolver in his hand, comes back out of the airplane, crossing back to the fallen elephant. It's become personal. Richard, the pistol in his hand, standing guard by the elephant. The hyenas nervously pacing. And suddenly a hyena makes a run at the elephant, sinking its teeth into its flesh. And Richard fires, hitting the hyena in the belly. The dog stopped dead in its tracks. The other hyenas moving away...but not far, sitting, biding their time...And as Richard stands with "his" elephant:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - NIGHT

The rain's stopped. The moon lights the plain. Animals, in silhouette, standing sleeping. And we see the airplane's emergency flares are burning around the elephant to keep the predators at bay. Richard, the pistol in his hand, sitting beside "his" elephant. And we can see the pack of hyenas has swelled, there must be twenty of them now, sitting in wait...And as Richard sits protecting "his" elephant...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PLAIN - SUNRISE

It's dead quiet. The flares have burned out. Richard, still sitting by "his" elephant on the quiet plain. The hyenas, their numbers swelled again, at least thirty of them now, having bided their time, still sitting in wait. And with the coming of the sun, suddenly one of them makes a run at the elephant. Richard fires, hitting it. But it's opened the floodgates. And the hyenas, the entire pack, making a sound like a lost wailing baby, charge the elephant, setting upon it. Richard fires again. And again. But it's to no avail. And all he can do is watch and let nature take its course as the predators tear apart "his" elephant. He quietly gets up. And as he crosses back to his plane, the sun rising over another day in Africa:

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, NAIROBI, KENYA - DAY

We see Mr. Moi in a meeting. A Man comes in bending to say something to him. Mr. Moi nods. He gets up. He goes to a phone.

MR. MOI

Yes.

INT. RICHARD'S AIRPLANE, KENYA - DAY

And we see Richard flying his plane over a vast wildlife refuge. And we see he's talking on the plane's RADIO.

RICHARD

(on radio)

I will take the job on three conditions: One. I run the Service exactly as I see fit...Two. For the privilege of having me, you allocate money for further excavation at Lake Turkana...Over...

DANIEL MOI'S VOICE (OVER)

That's blackmail, Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD

(on radio)

I'm sure it's something you're familiar with Mr. Moi...Over...

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, DANIEL MOI'S OFFICE - DAY

MR. MOI

(a beat, on the phone)

You said three conditions?

INT. THE AIRPLANE - DAY

RICHARD

(on radio)

You're to stay out of my hair.

(sarcastic)

Politics might make strange bedfellows Mr. Moi, but I still choose who I sleep with...Over...

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, DANIEL MOI'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Moi's quiet, thinking...

RICHARD'S VOICE (OVER)

(impatiently)

Do we have a deal or not? Over...

MR. MOI

(after a beat,
nobody's fool,
wry)

God save the elephant, Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD'S VOICE (OVER)

(arrogant)

God has nothing to do with it, Mr. Moi.

And as Mr. Moi smiles, and hangs up, pleased:

INT. RICHARD'S AIRPLANE - DAY

He puts the radio away. And as he quietly looks below him at the endless herds of animals, and he's not sure what he's gotten himself into.

EXT. THE AMBOSELI GAME PRESERVE, KENYA - DAY

We see an African man, a "Ranger," barefoot, an old rifle at his side, asleep in the shade of a solitary acacia tree. Suddenly somebody takes up the rifle, putting the rifle barrel up against the man's cheek. He starts awake. And we see Richard, holding the man's rifle, is standing over him. Richard's jeep stopped nearby...

RICHARD

Aren't you supposed to be patrolling?

The Man stares at him.

THE MAN

Who are you?

RICHARD

The new director of the Wildlife Service.

That gets the man's attention. He jumps up.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(looking)

Where are your shoes...the trousers to your uniform....?

THE MAN

I gave them to my son to go to school...

That momentarily stops Richard...

RICHARD

(a beat, turning)

Let's go...

THE MAN

Go where?

RICHARD

We're going to take a walk.

THE MAN

A walk?

Richard simply motions. And as they walk off across the veldt, far in the distance we see the mountain called Kilimanjaro...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PRESERVE, A GAME PLATFORM - DAY

We see a wooden lookout tower over the game preserve. And we see Richard climbing up the ladder of the tower going inside...

INT. A GAME PLATFORM, AMBOSELI PRESERVE - DAY

And instead of finding a "Park Ranger" at his post, he sees a family is literally living in the lookout tower. An African Woman and her three small children.

RICHARD

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

Where is the park ranger?

THE WOMAN

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

My husband. He has gone for food for us.

RICHARD

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

Why aren't you living in your village?

THE WOMAN

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

Our house came down in the last rain...This at least has a roof...

And Richard sees one of the children looking up at him. And as he turns, looking out over the vast veldt...

EXT. AMBOSELI GAME PRESERVE, THE PARK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

And we see Richard, the rifle at his side, and four "Rangers" walking in front of him, approaching the park headquarters. Headquarters is a misnomer. A small run down building, jeeps, their tires gone, sit rusting in the sun...And FIVE AFRICAN MEN, in various combinations of "rangers uniforms," are sitting outside the building by a campfire, cooking an antelope on the open fire. They stare at Richard with his "charges"...

RICHARD

(seeing the
antelope)

You're supposed to protect the animals, not eat them...

A MAN

Who are you?

RICHARD

Your new boss.

The Men silently look at him.

A MAN

(meaning the
animal)

We haven't been paid in three months.
How do you propose we eat, "new boss?"

That momentarily stops Richard...

RICHARD
(a beat)
Who's in command here?

A MAN
Mr. Agwanda.

RICHARD
Where is he?

The Men don't say anything.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(adamant)
Where is he?

Silence. They're at an impasse. And we hear a Man's voice.

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)
I will take you to him.

Richard turns. And he sees a Young Man, a boy really, just eighteen, standing in the building's doorway. A Maasai, an extremely tall and slender boy, we'll come to know him as JOSEPH ole KATITIA. He quietly turns. And as Richard follows him....

EXT. THE AMBOSELI GAME PRESERVE - DAY

We see Richard and Joseph quietly moving through some tall grass. The young Man stops, motioning...and we see a trio of "poachers" are cutting the beautiful horns from a prong deer...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA
(whispers)
Mr. Agwanda...

And we see a large man in a Ranger's uniform is leading the evisceration of the deer. Richard suddenly gets up. And without a moment's hesitation he crosses to the "poachers." They turn, seeing him. Undaunted, he walks up to the large man.

RICHARD
Mr. Agwanda...

The Man eyes him.

MR. AGWANDA
Who in hell are you?

And Richard suddenly hits the man, knocking him down...

RICHARD
 (answering him)
 Somebody you will remember.
 (a beat)
 Who pays you for poaching?

The Man hesitates. Richard starts to hit him again...

MR. AGWANDA
 Ricky Kubo.

Richard turns to the young Man to verify. Joseph nods, he knows who he is. And as Richard turns to leave:

RICHARD
 (to Agwanda)
 By the way, Mr. Asshole. You're
 fired.

EXT. AN AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

And we see Richard and Joseph in a jeep, pulling into a small poor village. The villagers, sitting outside their traditional round huts with their families, eating. Richard and the Young Man get out of the jeep. The people silently watching them. Joseph takes Richard to one of the huts. And Richard, without knocking, parts the straw curtain, and walks inside...

INT. A HUT, AN AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

And we see in the hut, against a wall, are an elephant's tusks, horns from prong deers, rhino tusks... And we see a MAN in his thirties is on a mat on the floor copulating with a younger girl. And seeing Richard, he stops in mid stroke. He gets up, pulling on his pants. The girl, covering herself.

RICHARD
 (meaning the
 animal contraband)
 Who pays you for this stuff?

RICKY KUBO
 (a beat, smart)
 You are Mr. Leakey, aren't you? The
 new head of Wildlife?

Richard nods. The man looks at Richard. And he starts to laugh.

RICKY KUBO (cont'd)
 Do you really think you can do
 anything about it?

Richard's quiet. The man motions outside, meaning the village...

RICKY KUBO (cont'd)

How do you think these people have any money to buy food? One elephant tooth buys food for a village for six months. Would you let your family starve Mr. Leakey? Or would you carve out an elephant's tooth?

RICHARD

(his answer, to
Joseph)

Start taking these things....

RICKY KUBO

(laughs again)

Do you think they are going to just let you walk out of here with their "food money?"

Joseph looks at Richard. Richard simply nods. And as he and the Young Man start to take the poacher's "contraband..."

EXT. THE VILLAGE - DAY

Richard and Joseph, their arms laden with the contraband, walk through the village, all eyes on them, toward their jeep. And a trio of Men, one of them holding a machete, move to intercept them, standing in the street between them and the jeep...It's dead still. Richard, undaunted, keeps on walking...

RICHARD

(to the villagers
in Swahili,
subtitles)

I understand how hard it is to feed your children.

It's quiet.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(to the villagers
in Swahili,
subtitles)

But once these animals are gone, they will not return. And then how will you feed your families?

Richard and Joseph approach the trio of Men. The men stand their ground, the machete at the man's side. And Richard, keeps right on walking. And seeing Richard's not going to stop, there's that moment when they must act, or not act at all. They look at Richard. He shows no fear. The men hesitate. And stepping aside, they let him cross to the jeep. He slows...

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (to the village,
 in Swahili, hard)
 The next time anybody is found with
 elephant's "teeth"...found poaching...
 they will be arrested...

And with that he gets in the jeep with Joseph. And as they
 drive off:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PRESERVE - DUSK

The sun is on its last legs. And we see Richard and Joseph
 standing by the jeep, looking out over the vast
 preserve...the animals moving in the dying of the light...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA
 ...Four hundred square
 kilometers...And with only twenty
 rangers to patrol it...

Richard's quiet...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)
 ...There are many Ricky Kubos...He is
 small time...The Tanzanians are your
 problem...Come, I will show you...

And as they get back in the jeep and drive across the veldt
 through the animals...

EXT. THE GAME PRESERVE - NIGHT

The moon lights the preserve. And we see Richard and Joseph
 silently coming through some tall grass. A herd of elephants
 silently grazing nearby. Joseph motions Richard to stop.

JOSEPH ole KATITIA
 (whispers)
 We will wait here...down the
 wind...they won't smell us...

They silently watch the elephants.

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)
 (motioning)
 Just there...is the border to
 Tanzania...

He motions in the distance. There's no demarkation, just the
 endless plain...And as they wait, the elephants, in the
 moonlight, ghostly...Richard looks at the young man....

RICHARD
 How do you know so much about this?

JOSEPH ole KATITIA

(quietly)

My father was a park ranger.

(after a beat)

One night he was on patrol. He was ambushed by Tanzanian poachers.

EXT. THE GAME PRESERVE - ANOTHER TIME, NIGHT

And we see a very tall, dignified, African Man, a Maasai, in a ranger's uniform, Joseph's father, surrounded by three other African men...their guns trained on him. One of them says something, and without a moment's thought, shoots Joseph's father in the head, his tall dignified figure falling backwards, to lie poignantly in the dirt...

JOSEPH'S VOICE (OVER)

They made him an example. They cut out his heart...left it on his chest...And left him for the lions...

EXT. THE GAME PRESERVE - DAYBREAK

And we see a lion feasting on his father's motionless figure.

JOSEPH'S VOICE (OVER)

(after a beat)

I was with him that night...

And we see a small BOY lying in-hiding in the brush...His world figuratively, and literally, torn apart...

EXT. THE GAME PRESERVE - THE PRESENT, NIGHT

Richard and Joseph standing in the grass in the moonlight.

JOSEPH ole KATITIA

He had become a ranger because he said he wanted my children to grow up and see the elephants.

Richard quietly looks at him. And suddenly there's the unmistakable lights of vehicles in the distance...coming from Tanzania, coming closer...and closer...And we see it's a small caravan...two jeeps and a truck...They come across the "border..." And the elephants, hearing the sound of the vehicles, start to move en masse, moving across the plain. The convoy getting closer. And the elephants, trumpeting their fear, start to run. And the jeeps break away from the truck, racing alongside the herd. And suddenly poachers in the jeeps start firing on the herd with machine guns. Elephants falling, one after another. One of the elephants, trying to protect the herd, charges a jeep. It's stopped in its tracks, riddled with machine gun fire. And it's over as quickly as it began. Five of the elephants left lying dead on the moonlit ground...The other elephants running off... The truck comes forward. And some men get out of the truck with the familiar chain saws. And by the light of lanterns, like a battlefield surgical hospital, they set to work carving out the tusks. CLOSER ANGLE RICHARD AND JOSEPH. Richard motionless, watching the carnage.

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)
 (whispers, meaning
 the poachers)
 We better go...before they are able to
 see us in the darkness...

They turn to silently leave, and they see there's another vehicle's headlights. A Land Rover, coming across the plain...coming to a stop by the poachers. And a very heavy African MAN, wearing a traditional African skull cap, gets out...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)
 (whispering)
 That is the boss, Fat Kombo...

A moment, and a tall, distinguished looking caucasian MAN in his early sixties, with a white beard, gets out behind him...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)
 (a beat)
 He is known as the "mamba eupe..."
 "The snake with white-eyes."

The Man quietly walks among the fallen elephants looking at their tusks...And there's something dreamlike about it, his pale figure walking among the huge still beasts, like walking through a graveyard of dreams. He stops to look out at the night. He instinctively looks over in the direction of Richard. Richard looks over at him. The two men separated in the darkness. And if we didn't know any better, it almost seems that their eyes meet. But of course they don't. The Man turns, and with the heavy African man in the skull cap, gets back in the jeep, and drives away. And it's quiet. The chain saw momentarily still. And a FIGURE appears on the empty plain. The WOMAN we had seen earlier among the elephants, standing ghostly now in the moonlight.

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)
 (whispers)
 The elephant woman.

They look again. And she's walked back off. Just the empty plain. And in her wake there's a SOUND. A sound like no other. The mournful sound of elephants trumpeting, trumpeting their sorrow into the African night.

INT. THE KENYAN WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES, NAIROBI -
 MORNING

A small, quiet office. We see the door open. A short, older African Woman, coming to work. She takes off her coat, starting to sit at her desk. She hears a sound. She looks into an office. And she sees Richard sitting on the floor surrounded by file boxes...papers all around him...We will come to know her as HELLEN OJUKWU...

HELLEN OJUKWU
 Excuse me....?

RICHARD
 (doesn't bother to
 look up)
 I'm Richard Leakey. I think you work
 for me.

He reads something, absorbed.

RICHARD (cont'd)
 What time does the rest of the staff
 come in?

HELLEN OJUKWU
 (laughs)
 Staff? I'm the only staff.

And for the first time Richard looks up.

RICHARD
 (a beat)
 I like coffee in the morning.

And he bends back to his reading.

HELLEN OJUKWU
 (a beat)
 It's nice to meet you, too.

She leaves. And as he looks at some maps on the floor of the
 park system...

WE SEE BARE FEET POUNDING THE GROUND.

EXT. AN AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

We PULL BACK and we see African WOMEN in traditional garb, a
 hundred of them, line after line of women, singing, dancing
 barefoot, in the dirt of a village square. And we see MR.
 MOI, his imposing figure accentuated as he sits in an
 ornately carved high backed chair in the street, tribal
 leaders sitting in chairs beside him, watching the ceremony.
 And we see Richard is standing behind Mr. Moi, talking to him
 above the singing....

RICHARD
 (animated)
 ...Amboseli has twenty rangers to
 patrol four hundred square
 kilometers...They haven't been paid in
 three months...They have no
 radios...Their jeeps don't run...They
 have single action rifles, most of
 them useless. The same's true for the
 other parks, at Tsavo...Sibiloi...
 (going on)
 ...Villagers, poach for money for
 food...And well trained, well equipped
 poachers from Tanzania and Somalia,
 armed with automatic weapons, roam the
 parks with impunity...
 (MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)
 ...I need a hundred more men...I need
 Range Rovers... Radios...Patrol
 aircraft...I need automatic
 weapons...I need a small fucking
 army...

Mr. Moi is quiet. After some moments:

MR. MOI
 I will get you money for some more
 men. That's the best I can do.

RICHARD
 (a beat)
 What about automatic weapons?

MR. MOI
 You know it is illegal to possess an
 automatic weapon unless it is under
 the jurisdiction of the police.
 Civilians are emotional, they can't be
 trusted with weapons.

Richard's quiet. He looks over at one of Mr. Moi's taciturn
 personal guards, an automatic weapon slung over his shoulder.

RICHARD
 Your security force is under the
 jurisdiction of the police, isn't it?

Mr. Moi nods.

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (a beat,
 motioning, meaning
 the taciturn
 Guard)
 You trust this man with your life?

MR. MOI
 He has been with me for fifteen years.
 He would die for me. Why?

RICHARD
 (after a beat)
 I'd like you to make him commander of
 the park rangers. He can supervise
 their recruitment and training...under
 police jurisdiction of course...

And Mr. Moi smiles.

MR. MOI
 You are a clever man Mr. Leakey.

They look at each other.

MR. MOI (cont'd)
 (wry)
 What is to say, your little "army"
 won't turn it's attention on me?

RICHARD
 (equally wry)
 "Uneasy...", Mr. President, "...is the
 head that wears the crown..."

Mr. Moi smiles. He's quiet. And after some moments, he
 motions over the impassive Security Guard. He whispers
 something to him. The Man doesn't say anything, his face
 impassive.

MR. MOI
 (after a beat, to
 Richard, smiles)
 We are getting further and further
 into bed together, Mr. Leakey.

And he turns back to watch the ceremony. Richard looks at
 the impassive Guard. His dark mien.

RICHARD
 (introducing
 himself)
 I'm Richard Leakey.

The man doesn't say anything, quiet, stoic. We'll come to
 know him as BENJAMIN KIPRIANO. And as Mr. Kipriano stands,
 impassively...and we watch the Womens' feet dancing in the
 African dirt....

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

Richard flying his plane. Mr. Kipriano riding beside him.
 It's quiet. And Richard sees Mr. Kipriano, despite his
 impassive facade, is looking out the window with a sense of
 wonder at something. And Richard sees he's watching a herd
 of elephants running on the plain below them. Mr. Kipriano
 senses Richard looking at him. He straightens, sitting
 impassively. Richard doesn't say anything. They fly in
 silence....After some moments:

MR. KIPRIANO
 (his first words)
 I come from Malindi...on the ocean...I
 have never seen an elephant...not in
 life before...

RICHARD
 That shouldn't be a problem.
 (smiles)
 I've never led an army before.

They hit an air pocket, the plane bouncing, Richard noticing
 Mr. Kipriano fearfully gripping the seat...

RICHARD (cont'd)
 Are you afraid of flying?

Mr. Kipriano nods "yes." And as they fly off, this unlikely
 pair...and we see the Women's feet dancing in the dirt:

EXT. ANOTHER AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY

We see an old BUS is parked in a village. And we see Mr. Kipriano, Richard at his side, talking in Swahili to a group of men. A man steps forward. And as he gets on the Bus: And we're looking at the Women's feet dancing in the dirt...

EXT. ANOTHER SMALL KENYAN TOWN - DAY

And we see Richard and Mr. Kipriano talking with a group of men in the street of another small poor Kenyan town. And as some more MEN get on the Bus...And we see the Women's feet, dancing in the dirt...

EXT. ANOTHER KENYAN TOWN - DAY

Another small poor Kenyan town. And we see some more Men are getting on the Bus...And as the Women's feet dance in the dirt...

EXT. AN ARMY BARRACKS, ARMY BASE, NAIRBOI, KENYA - DAY

We see a group of some sixty rag-tag recruits standing outside an army barracks. We see among them, the young Maasai, Joseph. And we see Richard standing in front of them...the impassive Mr. Kipriano nearby...

RICHARD

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

...This is not a meal ticket. You will train hard...At the end of your training we will decide who of you is fit for service...

Once they've absorbed that...

RICHARD (cont'd)

Mr. Kipriano will supervise your training.

He steps aside. Mr. Kipriano coming forward.

MR. KIPRIANO

(in Swahili)

Tahadhari! (Attention!)

They come to attention. And as they follow him, marching off...Richard watching them go...And we see the Women's bare feet, like history, dancing in the dirt...

EXT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, A GARDEN - NIGHT

We see a palace garden, crowded with people in evening clothes. And we see Mr. Moi, in a tuxedo, standing with three men and an older woman, honorees...Mr. Moi putting a medal around the woman's neck. And we see the woman is MARY LEAKEY. In her seventies now, the years in the sun, in the field, have etched her, memorialized her...

MR. MOI

...On behalf of the people of Kenya,
it is my honor to present to you the
Silver Star, the highest award a
Kenyan civilian might attain.

And we see Richard, in a tuxedo, looking at his mother. And
as the gathering applauds:

EXT. THE PALACE GARDEN - NIGHT, LATER

An ORCHESTRA is playing. People milling in the night air,
drinking, talking. And we see Richard, standing alongside
his mother on a reception line, shaking hands...

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

(introducing)

...Thomas Cook, Mrs. Leakey...Mr. Cook
is one of the leading exporters of
Kenyan goods...

Richard instinctively turns. He stops. And we see the tall,
distinguished looking Man, with the distinctive white beard,
we had seen on the moonlit plain, is shaking hands with his
mother. Raw boned, he has the face of a man that has
weathered more than one storm. We will come to know him as
THOMAS COOK.

MARY LEAKEY

(introduces)

My son, Richard.

THOMAS COOK

Mr. Leakey.

The men shake hands. They look at each other. And this time
the darkness does not separate them.

RICHARD

(after a beat)

What do you export, Mr. Cook?

THOMAS COOK

It depends on the season. Right now
it's coffee.

RICHARD

(nods)

Coffee.

THOMAS COOK

(after a beat)

I understand you've been made head of
the Wildlife Service. That must be a
daunting task.

RICHARD

Why's that?

THOMAS COOK

Poaching is a way of life here.

RICHARD

It's a "way of life" I intend to make obsolete.

(a beat)

You're not a Kenyan, are you Mr. Cook?

THOMAS COOK

(shakes "no")

In spirit. I'm a British citizen. I was raised in Hong Kong. I've lived for many years in Macao.

RICHARD

You're a long way from home.

THOMAS COOK

(smiles)

Aren't we all.

They look at each other. A man to take seriously. And as Mr. Cook turns along the line, Richard looking after him:

EXT. THE PALACE GARDEN - NIGHT, LATER

The ORCHESTRA playing. People having finished dinner, dancing. And we see Richard, sitting at their dinner table by himself, having a drink.

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

May I join you?

Richard looks up, and he sees Mr. Cook, a drink in his hand, has come to stand by the table. Richard motions. Mr. Cook sits down. The two men in their tuxedos sitting at the empty white-linen table. Richard, unaffected, lights a cigar. Mr. Cook, unfazed, lights his own. A subtle battle of nerves. Mr. Cook looks around him...at the African night...

THOMAS COOK

(ruminating)

I have been coming to Africa for forty years, but I never get used to the sky.

(drinking it in)

Africa is an intoxicant.

Richard doesn't say anything.

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

(a muse)

To think, just ten miles from here, there are animals whose nature hasn't changed in millions of years. The strongest still prevails.

Richard quietly looks at him. It's a contest of wills.

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

(smiles)

You know about "survival of the fittest," Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD

(a beat)

There are viruses, Mr. Cook, who came long before man, and will last long after man, that have no other purpose than survival. It's no particular badge of courage, "survival of the fittest."

THOMAS COOK

What is our purpose then, Mr. Leakey?
If not survival?

He doesn't have an answer for that. But what he does say...

RICHARD

There's a saying in Swahili...

And he says something in Swahili...

RICHARD (cont'd)

(pointed)

"The animal that makes the loudest sound in the jungle...is the one that is most afraid."

Mr. Cook laughs at his rejoinder. And as they look at one another:

MARY LEAKEY'S VOICE (OVER)

Dance with me...

And we see Mary's come to the table...

RICHARD

(to Thomas,
getting up)

Excuse me, Mr. Cook...

THOMAS COOK

(nods, after a
beat)

I wish you luck on your new endeavor.
(and toasting him)
To the elephant.

RICHARD

(toasting, wry)

To the survival of the fittest.

They look at each other for one last time, and Richard turns with his mother to the dance floor: He awkwardly takes her in his arms, dancing with her...While they dance:

MARY LEAKEY

I didn't know you had such a great fondness for animals. I remember, when you were younger, leading hunting safaris.

RICHARD

(nods)

I'm tired of fund raising. Begging for money for excavations. Hearing myself talk. It's a means to an end.

(and arrogantly)

Six months...and I'll have the problem taken care of...and I can go back to where I belong, to my shovel...

She doesn't say anything. They dance. After some moments:

MARY LEAKEY

I heard that you and Meave may be getting divorced.

Richard doesn't say anything.

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)

I can't give you any "motherly" advice. Your father and I were married for forty-five years, and for the last fifteen years of his life we were never in the same room alone together..."Love," I'm afraid, contrary to Mr. Shakespeare, doesn't always, "conquer all."

Richard smiles at her way with words. And after some moments:

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)

I'm quite sick, Richard. I have cancer.

Richard slows. Before he can say anything:

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)

I'm dying...I intend to make the most of my time left...I'm going to open a new site at Olduvai...To see if I can find "the mother" of all of our mother's...

He starts to say something, but she stops him with...

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)

Hold me closer, Richard...

And it's the first time he has ever heard his mother have fear...

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)

...living is long, but life is very short...

And as he holds her close to him, dancing with his dying mother under the mystical African sky:

EXT. THE LEAKEY FAMILY RANCH, KENYA - DAY

We see Richard driving a jeep, coming along a tree-lined road, approaching an old wooden ranch house. A hundred year old house, weathered to its knees, it stands on a rise overlooking a vast stretch of savanna. Animals, far off in the distance, standing in silence in the afternoon sun. Richard quietly gets out. A Land Rover is parked by the house, some boxes, clothing, piled in the back. He goes into the house.

INT. THE LEAKEY RANCH, KENYA - DAY

It's still. The old wooden walls crowded with photographs of Mary and her husband Louis, of Richard, and the other Leakey children. The years bundled together in the photographs on the walls. He turns at a sound. And we see MEAVE, in her familiar hat, some of her things in her arms, standing in a hall doorway.

MEAVE

I came to get some of my things. I was hoping not to see you.

She starts by him. He stops her.

RICHARD

What are you doing?

MEAVE

What am I doing? What I'm doing is, a group from Indiana came to visit the cave site. There was a woman named Grace. We shared a drink. A laugh. She said she had met the great Richard Leakey. How he had told her all about the Lake Man..."in intimate detail..."

She turns, as if going to the door, and she suddenly turns back, and slaps him across the face.

MEAVE (cont'd)

You bastard!

It backs him up. But she's not done. And she slaps him again and again, until he grabs her arms, stopping her. They're quiet, catching their breath. And before he can say anything, she turns, going out the door. Richard goes after her...

EXT. THE LEAKEY RANCH, KENYA - DAY

RICHARD

Meave...

And he sees Meave's suddenly stopped in mid-stride halfway to her jeep. And we see the reason for her suddenly stopping. A LION CUB, roamed from the savanna, is standing in the road. And having protectively come after it, standing in the road, is a LIONESS. Meave knows to stand still. As does Richard. The lioness takes some steps closer to her cub.

It stops, looking at Meave. Looking at Richard. It's dead quiet. And before the lioness can reach her, the cub suddenly runs over to Meave, playfully jumping on Meave's leg. Meave's motionless, the cub like a kitten, playing with her leg. The lioness protectively takes some steps closer. And Meave, kneeling on the ground, bends over, purposely cowering, covering herself with her arms, showing the lioness she's not a threat. The lion cub, still playing, climbs onto Meave's back. Meave, trying her best not to move. The lioness moves toward her. It stops, its back chillingly going up, getting ready to pounce if necessary, to protect her cub. The lioness suddenly turns. And we see Richard has come down onto the road, protectively standing between Meave and the lioness. The lioness stares at him, faced with the new danger. But Richard kneels on the ground between the lioness and Meave, putting his face to the ground, covering his head in the same cowering position, showing he's not a threat. The lioness, slowly crawling on her forelegs, ready to pounce, comes over to him. She puts her face directly at his eye level. ANGLE HIS POV THE LIONESS' EYES boring into him...And satisfied he isn't a threat the lioness turns away from him, slowly moving on her forelegs, toward Meave and her cub. The lioness stops again, ready to pounce. It's dead still. Meave bent over in the road, cowering. The cub playing on her back. And the lioness, its back up, hair bristling, ready to pounce, slowly moves closer and closer to Meave. And suddenly she puts her forelegs up onto Meave's back, and roars as if she's going to strike...but instead, taking the cub in her mouth gently by the nape of its neck, she turns and walks back down the rise, moving into the distance, back to the savanna. And there's the sound of Meave, sobbing. Richard comes to comfort her. Sitting in the road, holding her. And he says:

RICHARD

(for everything)

I'm sorry.

Regaining her composure she gets up. She picks up her hat that had fallen on the ground, her belongings. She looks at him...

MEAVE

(for everything)

I am too.

And she gets into the jeep. And she drives off. And as Richard stands in the road outside the ranch house, completely alone:

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM, NAIROBI, KENYA - THE PRESENT, DAY

Daylight, coming in through the blinds, mottles the room. And we see Richard, his cigar in his hand, still sitting unceremoniously on the hospital room floor. He catches a glimpse of his reflection in a mirror on a door. His amputated legs. He looks at himself, his incompleteness. There's the sound of a radio somewhere in the hall, playing African music. He turns, listening to the faint sound of the music. And as he looks up at the daylight coming in through the window...

WE'RE LOOKING AT A SKULL WITH ITS ETERNAL EYES.

EXT. THE LAKE TURKANA SITE - LATE AFTERNOON

We PULL BACK and we see Richard kneeling in the dirt of a pit with KAMOYA, looking at a vacant-eyed skull staring up from the earth at them...

RICHARD
(gently touching
it, beat, to
Kamoya)
Congratulations...

KAMOYA
(proudly)
How old do you think it is, sir?

RICHARD
Very old.
(quietly)
Perhaps older than anything that's
ever been found.
(a beat)
It's like looking into the face of
God...

And they're still, looking at the "face" of "God" staring out of the dirt at them. And there's the droning sound of an AIRPLANE, flying low over their heads, coming in for a landing on the lake.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(to Kamoya)
Are you expecting anyone?

Kamoya shakes "no." Richard stands, watching a FLOAT PLANE taxiing on its pontoons to a stop. The plane turning around, it's prop barely turning, making its way toward a dock. And a blonde Woman in her thirties, wearing bush shorts and an expensive khaki jacket, comes out of the plane to stand on the pontoon. At first glance she seems quite sure of herself, a "bright shining light." Her posture betrays her. Hands perennially in her pockets, there's a sense she's a woman who's forced herself, in spite of her insecurities, into being adventurous. We'll come to know her as KATHLEEN COLE.

KATHLEEN
(calling, asking
the African
workers)
Mr. Richard Leakey?

And we see Richard's come down to the edge of the lake at a distance from her...

RICHARD
I'm Richard Leakey.

She turns, seeing him. The distance causes them to raise their voices.

KATHLEEN
Your office said I could find you
here.

RICHARD
(caustic)
You found me.

KATHLEEN
I'm Kathleen Cole, Mr. Leakey..."ABC
News..." People sometimes call me
Sunny.

He digests that.

RICHARD
(beat)
What can I do for you, Ms. Cole?

KATHLEEN
Can I come ashore? Or do we have to
stand here yelling at each other.

The precious appellation "Sunny" is deceiving, there's nothing
"precious" about her. He looks at her.

RICHARD
(nods)
Suit yourself.

The plane slowly moving toward the dock...Kathleen standing
on the pontoon....And she oddly takes off her shoes...

KATHLEEN
(looking)
Is the water warm?

He sees her start to take off her jacket...

RICHARD
(realizing,
shouts)
Don't...!

But before he can stop her she shucks her jacket and jumps in
her shorts into the water, swimming toward him. Richard,
runs along the shore...

RICHARD (cont'd)
(shouting at her)
Get out of the water...!

She doesn't hear him, peacefully swimming. He runs to a
rowboat, pulling it into the water, furiously rowing out to
her...

RICHARD (cont'd)
(shouting at her)
Stop swimming...!

She's oblivious, enjoying the swim. And we see the reason for his fears. The sleek figures of CROCODILES are making their way towards her.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(shouting at her)
Don't move..!

Not hearing him, she blithely swims. The dark shapes of the massive crocodiles coming towards her. Richard furiously rowing...

RICHARD (cont'd)
Stay where you are..!

She still doesn't hear him. The crocodiles coming at her. Richard reaches her first...

RICHARD (cont'd)
(yelling at her)
Get out...!

KATHLEEN
(raising her head,
seeing him,
oblivious)
It's really lovely...

The dark shadows of the crocodiles are almost on her. And Richard, reaching over, suddenly grabs her by the arm, pulling her into the boat.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
(angry)
What the fuck's the matter with you!?

RICHARD
(angrily)
What's the matter with me? Are you always that foolish? This isn't your local country lake.

And she sees the crocodiles, circling the boat. She pales...and terrified at what might have been, she instinctively reaches to clasp him...She catches herself...She moves away, catching her breath...And she starts to laugh at herself...

KATHLEEN
(honest,
self-effacing)
I was trying to make an impression on you.

RICHARD
(smiles, wry)
Well, you certainly did that..."Sunny..."

EXT. LAKE TURKANA - DUSK

The sun, taking its last breath, is gold on the lake. And we see Kathleen sitting with Richard at a camp table by the lake. As we come closer:

KATHLEEN

It's nice of you to let me stay this evening.

And we see there's a bottle of wine. Kathleen's hardly touched her glass. Richard, drinking for both of them...

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

...I'm doing the story for our newsmagazine show, "Prime Time..." Poaching...the ivory trail...the extinction of the elephant...

RICHARD

What does that have to do with me?

KATHLEEN

I understand you've taken on running the wildlife service. I'd like to do a profile on you.

RICHARD

(wry)

A profile?

(sarcastic)

What would that be? Something like a white man in a black world?

KATHLEEN

(smiles)

Yeah. Something like that.

Richard doesn't say anything.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

From what I know about you you've never been shy.

RICHARD

When it comes to archeology I'm willing to talk to anybody who will listen. I don't have much to say about this. I'm a rank amateur.

He's a little too self-effacing.

KATHLEEN

(beat)

The elephant's become a world wide symbol...You could have a major influence on countries trying to enact endangered species laws. It could help stop the sale of ivory.

RICHARD

(uninterested)

It all sounds a little too noble for me. Why don't you talk to President Moi. I'm sure he'd love to be on American television.

She looks at him. And there's an honesty, a perceptiveness about her.

KATHLEEN

You're pretty sure of yourself, aren't you Mr. Leakey?

RICHARD

(annoyed)

You came to visit me Ms. Cole, not the other way around. I don't usually go into somebody else's house, and tell them they're full of it.

And it's quiet. He looks at her. She self-consciously looks away. And as night falls on the lake, there's the sound of a bird calling.....a sparrow...

KATHLEEN

(listening,
meaning the
sparrow)

It almost sounds human...

They listen to its haunting call. He looks at her. Challenged by her. And he can't help himself...the dangerous romantic...

RICHARD

They call it the "night sparrow."

(after a beat)

There's an African folk tale...a warrior came home to find his village destroyed. His lover missing. He went to search for her...He discovered she had been turned into a bird...He pleaded with the Gods, if he could be turned into a bird, he would lay down his spear, and give up his soul...The Gods agreed. And he killed himself, burying his spear into his heart. He waited to join his lover...But the Gods had lied, and turned him into an ant instead. And when that life had ended, they made him into a snake...And then a leopard...and with each new lifetime he waits to become a bird...

It's still.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(after a beat)

And every night, the "night sparrow" sings its song, calling him, telling him she's still there...waiting for him...

He looks up and instead of seducing her, he sees that she's crying. She gets up walking down to the lake to be alone. Richard comes behind her. It's still. After some moments:

KATHLEEN

I'm sorry. My husband died earlier this year.

She puts her hands protectively in her pockets.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

Sometimes I find myself talking to him. And I realize he's not there.

It's quiet. They find themselves looking at each other. She looks away.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(beat)

I hope you don't mind me saying goodnight.

He shakes, "no." She starts back to the camp. She slows....

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(by way of an apology)

Thank you for inviting me into your house, Mr Leakey.

And as he watches her, hands in her pockets, cross back up the hill to the camp, and the "night sparrow" sings its song:

EXT. THE LAKE TURKANA CAMP - NIGHT

We see Richard, a drink in his hand, not his first, sitting with Kamoya on chairs outside Richard's tent, quietly talking. And although he's talking with Kamoya he's aware of Kathleen's presence. A camp light's on in her tent, her shadow, as she lies on her cot, on the tent wall. Some moments and Kamoya gets up...

KAMOYA

Goodnight, sir.

He walks off into the night. Richard sits silently drinking, listening to the African night. The birds. The ferral creatures in the brush. The occasional splash from a crocodile in the lake. And the deeper, darker, undifferentiated sounds of the night, that are the heart of the African soul. And he's enveloped by his loneliness. And getting up he crosses to Kathleen's tent. He lightly knocks on the closed tent flap.

RICHARD
Do you have everything you need?

KATHLEEN'S VOICE (OVER)
I'm fine, thank you.

And sensing his loneliness.

KATHLEEN'S VOICE (OVER)
(a beat)
You're welcome to come in if you'd like.

He hesitates, and goes inside.

INT. KATHLEEN'S TENT, LAKE TURKANA - NIGHT

Kathleen, wearing a tee-shirt and sweatpants, is lying in a camp bed, a book, Romain Gary's African classic, "The Roots of Heaven," in her hand. Richard, drink in hand, sits on a camp chair. There's an awkward quiet.

RICHARD
(a word of advice,
meaning the
netting)
You might want to use the mosquito net
when you go to sleep...

KATHLEEN
(looks)
Thank you...I will...

It's quiet again.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
(a beat, meaning
the book)
Have you ever read this? They tell me
it's the best book about Africa.

RICHARD
(looks, shakes
"no," pointed)
I don't read much fiction.

She smiles at his pointed comment. And in hopes of
illiciting a response...

KATHLEEN
(reads)
"With a little good will, we shall
certainly manage, taking Africa as a
whole, to kill a hundred thousand
elephants a year, and so on, till the
ceiling is reached, if I may put it
that way. It will then be necessary
to pass on to other species. Ours, I
suggest." He wrote that in 1958.

He indifferently nods, but doesn't say anything, taking a drink instead. And it's quiet again.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
(a beat, honestly,
meaning his
silence)
I thought you wanted company.

RICHARD
(covering)
What made you think that?

KATHLEEN
(letting him off
the hook)
I guess I was wrong.

And it's quiet again.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
(beat, measuring
him)
You don't like people knowing much
about you, do you?

RICHARD
(pure Richard)
Everybody is too public.

And he's successfully cut off any conversation about himself. And it's quiet. The sounds of the African night closing in on them.

KATHLEEN
(acutely aware)
There's a quiet here I've never heard
before.

RICHARD
(smiles)
If you drink enough, after awhile you
don't hear it.

She smiles. But she's serious. And listening to the sounds:

KATHLEEN
(beat)
It makes me feel...I don't know...
(realizing what it
is, quietly)
"...vulnerable..."

She self-consciously folds her arms across her chest as if trying to hide her skin from him, trying to hide the intimacy of what she's feeling. And it's dead still. Richard quietly takes another drink.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(after a beat,
reflecting)

When I was small I was afraid to sleep in my own bed. My parents didn't want me to sleep in their bed, so they put a mat on the floor, and in the middle of the night I would go in and sleep on their floor. I stayed one night at a friend's house. I woke up on the floor by her parent's bed. Fortunately, nobody saw me...

(her smile)

I still can't sleep...I guess I'm afraid of waking up in the wrong place.

(catching herself,
laughs)

I have no idea why I'm telling you any of this...

RICHARD

(smiles)

I'm a good listener...

KATHLEEN

(nods, smiles)

I'm supposed to be the one interviewing you.

He smiles. And it's quiet again. Just the two of them alone in the small tent. Richard on the camp chair. Kathleen sitting cross legged on the bed. A breeze ruffles the tent flap accenting the intimacy of the situation. And with the intimacy there's a palpable sexual tension.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(after a beat)

I think I'd like to try to go to sleep now.

He nods. He gets up.

RICHARD

(wry, meaning his
tent)

If you need a floor to sleep on...

She laughs. There's an awkward moment, a hang up, accenting their tension...And Richard says:

RICHARD (cont'd)

(formally)

Goodnight, Ms. Cole.

KATHLEEN

(equally formal)

Goodnight, Mr. Leahey.

And the "formality" has it's own intimacy, they look at each other for a last time, and he goes out.

EXT. THE LAKE TURKANA CAMP - NIGHT

He stops for a moment in the darkness. He sees her light go off. And it's still. He stands, listening to the sounds of the night. And as he crosses to his tent to finish his drink, so that he won't hear the sounds anymore...

EXT. LAKE TURKANA - DAY

We see Richard standing on the dock helping Kathleen onto the FLOAT PLANE.

KATHLEEN

I'll be back next month. I hope
you'll change your mind.

RICHARD

(nods)

I'll think about it.

She looks at him, this interesting, complicated man, and catching herself, turns inside. And as Richard, standing on the dock, watches the plane taxi out across the lake, gather speed, and take off, flying off into the African sky:

THERE'S A MAN'S VOICE, SINGING OUT CADENCE.

EXT. THE ARMY BASE, NAIROBI, KENYA - DAY

And we see Joseph and the RECRUITS, in uniforms, automatic weapons slung over their shoulders, a Drill Sergeant calling out cadence in Swahili, sing-song, marching in formation on a parade ground, becoming a well trained unit. And we see Richard and Mr. Kipriano standing on the parade ground watching them. And as the men march by, turning to salute them, Mr. Kipriano returns the salute. Richard, a role he's not familiar with, doesn't know to salute...Mr. Kipriano nudges him...And as Richard, out of his element, salutes them...watching them march off...the Drill Sergeant singing out cadence in Swahili...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PARK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

We see Richard's plane parked nearby. And we see Richard, with Joseph and a small group of recruits, a work party, rebuilding the delapidated park headquarters building. There's the sound of a BELL. And incongruously, a COW, a bell around its neck, comes wandering across the plain. And then another. And another. And more and more. Their bells ringing. And following the cattle is a tribe of MAASAI. The tall, proud, African nomads, moving their cattle to another pasture. And a tall young PREGNANT WOMAN stops on her journey, shouting something to Joseph. He laughs, shouting something back. The young Woman waving, and moving to catch up with the others. And as Richard and Joseph watch them move off across the plain on their eternal journey...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA

My wife, she said, "good luck to us,"
Mr. Leakey.

Joseph contently turns back to his work. And Richard's quiet, looking out at the empty plain. And there's a sense he's feeling the weight of his responsibility. And there's a puff of dust in the distance. And coming across the plain is a JEEP. Richard stands watching the jeep coming closer and closer. And he sees the distinctive figure of the white bearded THOMAS COOK, an African man driving, and two ORIENTAL MEN, wearing safari clothing, in the back. The jeep pulls to a stop.

THOMAS COOK

Hello again, Mr. Leakey.

Richard nods. Thomas gets out. In a field hat, wearing a bush jacket and traditional bush pants, he looks as if he were from another era, when adventurers were kings.

RICHARD

(a beat)

I thought you were in the coffee market, Mr. Cook?

(wry)

There isn't much coffee grown out here.

Thomas smiles at his wryness. And Richard, meaning some RIFLES that are in the jeep...

RICHARD (cont'd)

You gentlemen know hunting is illegal in the park.

THOMAS COOK

I gave up hunting a long time ago, Mr. Leakey...

(smiles)

It just wasn't sport anymore...

Richard doesn't say anything.

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

(a beat, motions, introducing)

John and Robert Loo, Mr. Richard Leakey.

The Oriental Men nod their respects.

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

The Loo's own the largest department stores in Southeast Asia. They're interested in traditional African goods. We were visiting a village just north of here. They make wonderful masks.

RICHARD

(nods, skeptical)

Masks.

THOMAS COOK
 (his smile)
 I'll have to remember to get you one.

RICHARD
 I'll look forward to that.

There's an antipathy between them you could cut with a knife.

THOMAS COOK
 (looking around)
 You seem to be making good progress...
 (matter of fact)
 I understand you're training quite a
 formidable force. A small army.

Richard doesn't say anything. There's an awkward quiet.

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)
 (after a beat,
 smiles)
 It's a pleasure seeing you again, Mr.
 Leahey.

Richard nods. And nothing more to be said, Thomas starts
 back to the jeep...

RICHARD
 (after him)
 Mr. Cook.

He turns.

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (motions)
 You have blood on your trousers.

And Thomas sees there is indeed blood on his pants cuff.

RICHARD (cont'd)
 You should watch where you step.

Thomas smiles at the thinly veiled warning.

THOMAS COOK
 You'll discover, I'm a very careful
 man, Mr. Leahey.

They look at each other. Thomas gets back in the jeep. And
 as Richard watches the jeep, and its white bearded merchant
 of death drive off across the plain until it becomes a mere
 puff of dust again:

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE/AMBOSELI GAME PRESERVE - ANOTHER
 DAY, LATE AFTERNOON

We see Richard flying over the game preserve. Herds of
 animals below him. And he sees a group of elephants, birds
 like statues on their backs, standing in a swamp.

And he sees, sitting on the hood of a Land Rover, a notebook in her lap, watching them, the illusive "Elephant Woman..." He circles, and coming back, lands...

EXT. THE GAME PRESERVE - DAY

He gets out of his plane, starting toward the elephants and the "Elephant Woman..." She doesn't bother to look up from her notes...

THE WOMAN

(warning him)

Unless you intend to challenge one of the males for a mate I would suggest you don't come any closer.

He stops, standing his distance. It's quiet. The Woman barely giving him notice, making notes, watching the elephants. In her early thirties, with short cropped hair, sinewy fit, she's long ago left behind any importance to gender, her one last feminine touch, some earrings, incongruous to her rough faded shirt, worn khaki shorts, and barefeet. We will come to know her as ANNE SANDERSON. And we can see what she's watching. The elephants are doing a not so subtle "dance..." A mating dance...The males rutting, pursuing the females, battling with their rivals...The sounds of the males trumpeting for dominance...

ANNE (cont'd)

Is there a particular reason you're here, Mr. Leakey, or do you just like watching elephants fuck?

RICHARD

(smiles, a beat)

How do you know who I am?

ANNE

(caustic)

You're the latest jungle news. The great Richard Leakey. The great white hope.

(and bluntly)

Another arrogant fool who doesn't know elephant from rhino scat.

Richard smiles at her characterization. And two of the males, trunks raised, trumpets blaring, rise up on their hind legs, kicking out at one another with their massive front legs to prevail...The "weaker," properly chastened, accepting his defeat, moves off...

RICHARD

(after a beat)

What are you doing here?

ANNE

What am I doing here?

(MORE)

ANNE (cont'd)
 (a beat, droll)
 I like watching elephants fuck.

Richard laughs. A tentative connection. It's quiet. After some moments:

ANNE (cont'd)
 (busy making notes)
 I've been living with the elephants for five years. I had a grant from the government to do a population study. But they stopped paying me a couple of years ago.
 (matter of fact)
 I know virutally every elephant that lives in the park...

And as if to prove that...

ANNE (cont'd)
 (motions)
 The young bull there, with the patch of white skin, is "Little Man..."

She motions at a particular young bull with a patch of white skin.

ANNE (cont'd)
 He's not particularly large of stature. But he has the most prodigious penis I have ever seen.

Richard laughs. And having made the tentative connection with her, feeling comfortable, he starts to walk towards her...He hasn't gone more than a step or two when one of the male elephants, a huge old grizzled bull, charges him, trumpeting...ferociously coming at him...Richard about to be run down....His instinct is to run...

ANNE (cont'd)
 (shouts)
 Don't move!!

Richard stops. And the old elephant suddenly stops his charge no more than five feet from him, his trumpet screaming, looking at Richard, menacing.

ANNE (cont'd)
 (to Richard, angrily)
 I told you not to come any closer. These aren't some friendly neighborhood dogs who want to play.

She gets up. She comes over to the elephant. There's a trust between them that she's earned.

ANNE (cont'd)

This one's "Echo." He has a piece of his ear missing.

And we see he does have a part of his ear missing.

ANNE (cont'd)

A poacher just missed. You should see what he did to the poacher. He would have been better off to have been run over by a truck.

"Echo" turns back to the herd. They watch him move next to a female elephant. There's a ritualistic dance. "Echo" and the female. Elephants "courting" if you will. And there's a surprising, almost, tenderness about it. And as he mounts her:

ANNE (cont'd)

(droll)

Another happy ending.

And she looks over at Richard...

ANNE (cont'd)

(impatiently)

...Is there something I can do for you, Mr. Leakey? I'm not wild about company.

RICHARD

(smart, smiles)

Maybe you can tell me the difference between elephant and rhino shit.

And as she looks at him, studying him:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PARK - SUNSET

"God's light," the last gasp of the sun, paints the plain. The elephants, finished rutting, stand in the swampy water, "bathing..." And we see Richard sitting with Anne on the roof of her Land Rover, watching them...

ANNE

...Gestation is two years...At birth a calf weighs 250 lbs. A full grown male weighs up to fourteen thousand pounds...females, about seven thousand...They'll live to about sixty...

(beat)

The males and females live separately, except during the breeding season. Females live in family units led by the oldest female. Males, live alone...

(smiles)

...as it ought to be...

Richard smiles. And she's quiet.

ANNE (cont'd)

When I started there were almost five thousand elephants here...there are less than a thousand left...At Tsavo there were seventeen thousand elephants a year ago...there's not a hundred left...

She looks into the distance...the endless plain...

ANNE (cont'd)

(motioning)

They've been walking this trail for millions of years. Their only enemy, until man came along, was time...

EXT. "THE ELEPHANT TRAIL" - A FEW MILLION YEARS AGO

And we see an endless herd of elephants moving along the trail, their only enemy "time."

EXT. "THE ELEPHANT TRAIL" - THE PRESENT, LATE AFTERNOON

The elephants in the dying light of the sun.

ANNE

....the trail's called the "Ole Sarre," after an old Maasai Chief who loved the elephants. The story goes, he was dying. He was said to have sat along the trail so he could see the elephants go by for one last time...

EXT. "THE ELEPHANT TRAIL" - MANY YEARS AGO

And we see an old Man, a Maasai Chief, a woven blanket wrapped around him, sitting along the trail waiting for the elephants.

ANNE'S VOICE (OVER)

The story is he sat for three weeks, without moving, waiting for them...and he died there, still waiting for them...

EXT. "THE ELEPHANT TRAIL" - MANY YEARS AGO

The Maasai Chief, wrapped in his royal blanket, peacefully lying on the trail.

ANNE'S VOICE (OVER)

The story goes when the elephants came they took his spirit with them...

EXT. "THE ELEPHANT TRAIL" - MANY YEARS AGO

Elephants standing over the fallen Maasai elder, running their trunks over him...

ANNE'S VOICE (OVER)
 ...That he walks the trail with them
 now, forever...

EXT. "THE ELEPHANT TRAIL" - AS THE STORY GOES

And we see a herd of elephants moving along the trail, and walking with them the old Maasai chief, "Ole Sarre."

EXT. "THE ELEPHANT TRAIL" - THE PRESENT, LATE AFTERNOON

ANNE
 (after a beat, the
 moral)
 The Maasai believe, some things are
 worth waiting for.

And as they sit watching the elephants, as the sun goes down...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - NIGHT

There's the sound of a SYMPHONY. The elephants, as if in a dream, stand in the moon's light in the swampy water, at peace. And we see a rudimentary camp in the nearby brush. Anne's "camp." Anne and Richard sitting by a fire, quietly talking. The symphony playing on a portable tape player.

ANNE
 (arms around her
 scraped knees)
 ...I got my degree from Johns Hopkins
 in Baltimore...I came here six months
 after that...

She self-consciously pushes some hair off her forehead...

ANNE (cont'd)
 I needed some time to be alone...

And there's a sense of some great heartbreak in her life.

RICHARD
 (after a beat)
 Do you get lonely...?

ANNE
 Lonely...?
 (certain)
 No. Not at all.

But she says it with a little too much certainty.

ANNE (cont'd)
 (covering)
 I've always been more comfortable with
 animals than people.

It's quiet. She looks over at the elephants.

ANNE (cont'd)

They are the most accepting, the most generous, the most understanding creatures in nature.

(losing herself)

To tell you the truth, I'd give anything to become an elephant myself.

She catches herself, pulling herself from her reverie...

ANNE (cont'd)

(beat)

...They have one small problem.

Richard looks at her.

ANNE (cont'd)

Their teeth...A tusk sells for \$450 a pound. A fifty pound tusk is worth over 20,000 dollars. A tusk can grow up to 120 pounds. A ton of ivory is worth about a million dollars. It's easy money.

RICHARD

(after a beat)

I'm going to need somebody to keep track of the elephant population. Would you be willing to work for the Wildlife Service?

ANNE

Would I get paid?

RICHARD

Not much.

ANNE

(nods, smiles,
droll)

I guess "not much" is better than nothing at all. I'll think about it.

He nods. And there's a pause in the music. Anne stops, hearing something...

ANNE (cont'd)

No...

And she suddenly gets up, grabbing up a RIFLE, running through the brush toward the elephants...

ANNE (cont'd)

(shouting)

Move...move...!

The elephants, not paying her any heed, stand stoically...She runs into the swampy water, starting to beat on them...

ANNE (cont'd)
(desperate)
Move...!

And Richard, coming out of the brush after her, not knowing what's going on...

ANNE (cont'd)
(entreating)
We've got to get them to move...

She swats at the elephants, trying to impel them...Richard's momentarily frozen, not knowing what to do or why...

ANNE (cont'd)
(near tears)
Help me for Godsakes!

Richard hesitates, and despite a normal fear of these huge beasts, he goes into the swampy water, following her lead, swatting at them...An elephant, not taking kindly to Richard hitting it, suddenly flings its trunk, knocking him down into the water...

ANNE (cont'd)
(shouting)
Move...move....!

And suddenly we see the reason for her fears. In the distance, coming across the plain, are the two, now familiar, jeeps, "the killing machines," and the "slaughterhouse" truck. And Richard, picking himself up, moves among the elephants with her, swatting at them, shouting, trying to get them to move. The symphony, sounding in the night, incongruous with the life and death struggle that's going on. The jeeps coming closer, and closer...Anne throwing water, kicking at the elephants, doing anything to get them to move...She beats on the formidable lop-eared "Echo..."

ANNE (cont'd)
Move, Echo....! Move...!

The jeeps coming closer...The poachers weapons visible...The symphony booming...

ANNE (cont'd)
(shouting)
Move! Move!

And Echo, under Anne's desperate urging, starts to move...As do the others...like a wave...coming out of the swamp, starting down the "elephant's trail..." Anne and Richard running alongside them, shouting, to keep them going...The jeeps bearing down on them, their headlights lighting the herd...And Anne, rifle in her hand, runs to stand between the oncoming jeeps and the retreating elephants...She raises her rifle at the jeeps...

ANNE (cont'd)
 (shouts in
 Swahili)
 Goddamnit, Stop...!

But the jeeps keep on coming...And having no other recourse she suddenly fires at the lead jeep...The bullet smashing the windshield...The sound of a pained shout...And the jeep careening to a stop...The other jeep and the truck stopping...Their headlights lighting Anne and Richard...One of the men, shot in the shoulder, laying across the seat. And the Africans, automatic weapons in hand, blood in their eyes, stare malevolently at Richard and Anne. And we see one of them is a MAN with a traditional gold ring through his lip. And there's an eerie quiet, just the sound of the symphony. The Men, their weapons leveled on Anne and Richard. Anne, sighting her rifle at them. A stand-off.

ANNE (cont'd)
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles, so
 there's no doubt)
 You will kill us...but I will kill one
 of you first.

It's dead still, just the music. The Men deciding what to do. There are quick exchanged whispers. The Men look at them. And then the lead jeep turns, and with the second jeep and the truck following it, drives off, moving back across the plain until they disappear in the night. And it's still. Anne and Richard standing on the plain.

ANNE (cont'd)
 (shaken)
 This is what it's come to. I could
 have killed a human being.
 (troubled)
 Is it worth that?

Richard doesn't have an answer for that. And there's a sound. They turn. And we see that "Echo" has come back, standing on the "elephant trail," looking at them. And as they stand, the three of them in tableau, the Symphony playing:

EXT. A CAR LOT, NAIRBOI, KENYA - DAY

We see Richard looking at a line of new Range Rovers with a Salesman...

THE SALESMAN
 Have you made up your mind, sir?

RICHARD
 (after a beat)
 I'll take all of them...

THE SALESMAN
 (stops)
 All of them?

INT. A BANK, NAIROBI, KENYA - DAY

And we see Richard sitting at a Bank Officer's desk. An African BANK OFFICER looking at a form...

BANK OFFICER

This is quite a sizeable investment.
What will you be using as collateral,
Mr. Leakey?

And Richard oddly gets up, poking his head out the door...

RICHARD

(calls)

Mr. Katitia...

And Joseph, carrying one of the elephant's tusks they had taken from Ricky Kubo, comes in. Richard takes the tusk from him, putting it on the man's desk. Joseph leaves. The Bank Officer laughs at Richard's "collateral." But he sees Richard isn't laughing, deadly serious.

RICHARD (cont'd)

That's an eighty pound tusk...worth
over thirty thousand dollars...Three
elephants are killed every day. I'm
going to, unfortunately, have plenty
of "collateral..."

BANK OFFICER

(seeing he's
serious)

I can't loan you this kind of money
without a more substantial form of
collateral, Mr. Leakey...

RICHARD

(annoyed)

I assume the Bank of Nairobi is as
concerned about the loss of the
elephant as the rest of the country
is...

BANK OFFICER

Of course...But I'm afraid I can't...

Richard realizes it's a losing battle...

RICHARD

(after a beat)

May I use your phone, sir?

The Man nods...Richard takes up the phone, dialing...

RICHARD (cont'd)

(to the Bank
Officer)

As I understand it the government of
Kenya does a good deal of business
with the Bank of Nairobi...?

BANK OFFICER
 (nods, proudly)
 We're the oldest and most trusted bank
 in Kenya.

RICHARD
 (on phone)
 President Moi's office, please...

The Bank Officer slows...

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (beat, on phone)
 President Moi, please. Tell him
 Richard Leakey is calling...

The Bank Officer is concerned now...

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (after a beat, on
 phone)
 Daniel. I'm having a small problem
 with an officer at the Bank of
 Nairobi...
 (beat, to Bank
 Officer)
 He asked me your name, sir?

The Bank Officer, blanching, afraid now...

BANK OFFICER
 I'm sure we can work something out,
 Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD
 (smiles)
 I'm sure we can.

BANK OFFICER
 (getting up)
 I'll need to talk to my superiors...

He starts to leave...

RICHARD
 (after him)
 We're going to need some short wave
 radios, too...

The Man goes out of the office. Richard, still on the
 phone...and we can hear on the phone...

A RECORDING
 (continuous)
 "...You have reached the National
 Museum of Kenya...our hours are..."

EXT. THE ARMY BASE, NAIROBI, KENYA - DAY

And we see Joseph, and the chosen recruits, in their uniforms, automatic weapons over their shoulders, standing at full attention on the parade grounds. Mr. Kipriano, in a uniform, standing nearby. And we see Richard, incongruous, wearing a uniform, and his idea of a soldier, a beret, standing next to the impassive Mr. Kipriano. Mr. Kipriano whispers:

MR. KIPRIANO

Your beret is on the wrong side. That is the side when you are mourning the death of a comrade.

Richard, an embarrassed smile, fixes the beret. And he turns to the Men:

RICHARD

(after a beat, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

You have shown great determination in completing the rigorous course of training. You are about to face a much greater task. You are charged with protecting our nation's wildlife. It is my honor, on behalf of the Republic of Kenya, to welcome you as Rangers in the Kenyan Wildlife Service.

And as a Man reads off each of their names, Richard moves along the line of men, pinning the Kenyan Wildlife Service badge on them, shaking their hands. He stops by Joseph...

THE MAN

(reading off)
Joseph ole Katitia.

Richard pins the badge on the young man.

RICHARD

Your father would be very proud of you.

And as he affectionately shakes his young friend's hand, a stiff breeze ruffling their clothing...

WE SEE THE KENYAN FLAG FLAPPING IN THE WIND...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI GAME PRESERVE, THE PARK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

And we see the flag, on a stanchion, raised over the park headquarters. A Park Ranger, an automatic weapon over his shoulder, standing sentry.

EXT. THE TSAVO NATIONAL PARK, THE PARK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

We see the Kenyan flag flying over Tsavo. A Ranger standing sentry.

EXT. SIBILOI NATIONAL PARK, THE PARK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

And the same is true at Sibiloi. And we hear Richard's voice over:

RICHARD'S VOICE (OVER)
(in Swahili,
subtitles)
Sector four...This is Mambo
two...what's your position...Over?

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE/THE AMBOSELI GAME PRESERVE - DAY

And we see Richard, talking on the radio, flying over the game preserve.

EXT. A JEEP, THE AMBOSELI GAME PRESERVE - DAY

And we see two Rangers in a Range Rover, patrolling the park...

A RANGER
(on a radio, in
Swahili,
subtitles)
Mambo two, this is Shadow Seven...We
are four kilometers southeast of the
north end...Over...

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE/THE AMBOSELI - DAY

And Richard can see their jeep patrolling, moving across the plain...

RICHARD
I have you Shadow Seven, Over.

THE RANGER'S VOICE (OVER)
(on radio)
All clear, Mambo Two.

RICHARD
All clear...

Richard peacefully flies over the Amboseli. And there's another Range Rover off in the distance...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI, A PATROL JEEP - DAY

And as Richard flies over them, the Rangers waving, Richard dipping the plane's wings to them, feeling good about himself, and flying off...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - THE DEAD OF NIGHT

As if in a dream, the moon going in and out of some clouds, we see the young bull elephant, "Little Man" standing alone on the plain. There's a slight sound. "Little Man" turns. And we see the Man with the decorative ring in his lip, along with two other Men, holding automatic weapons, are crouched in some brush. And they suddenly fire. "Little Man," despite being hit, in SLOW MOTION, charges them. The bullets pocking open holes in his beautiful hide. Even with his bloody wounds, he keeps on coming. He gores one of the men with his tusks, literally throwing him in the air. The other Men keep on firing. "Little Man" turns, stumbling away from them, and despite his mortal wounds, walks back to his beloved "elephant trail," and in SLOW MOTION plods along the trail as if he were trying to find his way "home." He goes a short distance and falls helplessly to his knees, and trumpeting his "siren song" for a final time, his "voice" raised to the moon, he rolls over, and making small plaintive mewling sounds, dies...And as he lays on the "Ole Sarre," the dream over:

EXT. THE GAME PRESERVE - NIGHT

We see Richard, Joseph driving him, coming across the plain. And ahead of them three jeeps are parked, their lights on...Joseph stops the jeep. Richard gets out. And he can see, illuminated in the jeeps' headlamps, is the fallen elephant. Tusks cut from its face, it lays in the dirt like a macabre death mask. Mr. Kipriano stands impassively nearby. And kneeling beside the elephant, is Anne...

ANNE
(seeing Richard)
It's "Little Man."

And Anne starts to cry. Embarrassed, hiding her emotions, she turns her back on them...Richard's still. He looks at the tracks made by the poachers' jeep, moving back across the plain into Tanzania...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA
(reading his mind)
We are not permitted to cross the border, sir...

RICHARD
(his mind made up,
turning)
We're going to bring back his tusks.

And he gets back into their jeep. Joseph, dutifully comes after him. Mr. Kipriano and the other Rangers get in their jeeps. Richard looks over at Anne. Their eyes meet. And as Richard and the men race off, Anne sitting on the plain by her beloved "Little Man."

INT. A SHACK, A BORDER VILLAGE, TANZANIA - NIGHT

We see a family, a man, a woman, and their children, asleep in a small mud and straw hovel.

And suddenly Richard, along with his Rangers, bursts in. The Man jumps up. The children, awakened, crying....

RICHARD
(in Swahili,
subtitles, intent)
Somebody from your village was
poaching tonight...We followed them
here...We're going to have to search
your house...

The Man of the family, indignant, shouts something in Swahili...

RICHARD (cont'd)
(unaffected,
motions to the
Rangers)
Look for the tusks...

And the Man, cursing them, moves to stop them. Mr. Kipriano grabs him, restraining him, as the Rangers search the hut. And not finding anything, Richard, on a mission, quickly turns back outside...

EXT. THE TANZANIAN BORDER VILLAGE - NIGHT

A desperately poor village, mud and straw shacks are clustered along a River. And Richard, leading his Rangers, moves along the dirt street...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA
(to Richard,
protesting)
You cannot do this to people.

RICHARD
(obsessed)
Don't tell me what I can or can't do.
If something about this bothers you
Mr. Katitia, I suggest you go home.

And as Richard bursts with his Rangers into another pitiful shack...

EXT. THE BORDER VILLAGE - NIGHT, LATER

And we see Richard, catching his breath, standing with his men in the village street "empty handed." Joseph and him exchange a look. Richard, gets back in his jeep. Joseph gets in. There's a thick silence. They start to drive out of the village...And as they come along the street Richard notices a group of young Men standing outside of a shack. And he sees one of them is wearing a decorative RING through his lip, recognizing him from the encounter with Anne. He motions Joseph to stop. The jeep abruptly stops. And Richard gets out, crossing to the Man with the ring in his lip.

RICHARD

You have something that belongs to me...

The Man laughs. His friends laugh. And Richard suddenly puts his finger through the Man's lip ring, pulling him by the ring into the street...The Man shouting in pain...

RICHARD (cont'd)

Where are the tusks...?

The Man doesn't answer him...Richard pulls on the ring... pulling him along the dirt street...

RICHARD (cont'd)

The tusks?

The Man, in extreme pain, points toward a rusted storage shed by the River. And Richard, leading him by the ring, pulls him over to the shed...

RICHARD (cont'd)

Open it!

The Man unlocks the shed. And Richard sees there are a small cache of elephants' tusks inside, including the still bloody tusks of "Little Man."

RICHARD (cont'd)

Mr. Kipriano, place this man under arrest for poaching.

Mr. Kipriano swiftly handcuffs the Man. And as they take the Man, along with the tusks, back to the jeeps...the flashing blue light of a Tanzanian Police Jeep turns the corner. And Two Tanzanian Policemen, guns drawn, get out. And along with them we see the unforgettable figure of the "boss" FAT KOMBO.

A TANZANIAN POLICEMAN

(to Richard, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

You are violating sovereign Tanzanian territory!

RICHARD

(couldn't care
less, to Mr.
Kipriano, meaning
the young man)

Put him in the jeep.

Mr. Kipriano starts to put the Man in the jeep, and suddenly two more Tanzanian Police Jeeps, blue lights turning, come barreling around the corner, Tanzanian Policemen, guns drawn, jumping out...

A TANZANIAN POLICEMAN
(threatening, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

Leave him!

There's a moment of deadly silence, the opposing camps guns ready...Blood about to be shed....

RICHARD
(after a beat, to
Mr. Kipriano,
capitulating)

Let him go...

Mr. Kipriano hesitates and reluctantly uncuffs the Man. He arrogantly crosses the street to stand with Fat Kombo and the protective Police. Richard turns to leave...

A TANZANIAN POLICEMAN
(motions, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

And the ivory.

RICHARD
(in Swahili,
subtitles)

Those tusks are the property of the Republic of Kenya. You're going to have to kill us to get them.

Richard gets back in his jeep. The Police, guns in hand, just might kill them.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(a beat, to the
Policemen, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

I don't think Tanzania wants to start a war with Kenya.

That gives them pause for thought. Richard motions, and the jeeps start off...Richard and his Rangers starting to drive away...And Richard slows by "Fat" Kombo...

RICHARD (cont'd)
Tell Mr. Cook I look forward to seeing him again.

And as they drive off:

INT. PRESIDENT MOI'S OFFICE, PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

MR. MOI
(on telephone)
...The Tanzanian Ambassador lodged a formal complaint...Are you trying to start a fucking war, Mr. Leakey?

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

And we see Richard's flying.

RICHARD
(on the radio)
This is a war...Just nobody's bothered
to declare it yet...
(after a beat)
I need to have a shoot to kill
order..."Over."

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

MR. MOI
(troubled)
That would mean declaring "martial
law," Mr. Leakey.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

RICHARD
Call it what you want...
(arrogantly)
I told you, I do this my way, or not
at all..."Over."

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

MR. MOI
(a beat, quietly)
You are a dangerous man, Mr. Leakey.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

RICHARD
(on radio)
You made me dangerous, Mr. Moi...
(after a beat,
confrontational)
Did you sell the mineral rights at
Tsavo to a private firm owned by a
friend of yours?

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

Mr. Moi's still.

MR. MOI
(and quietly, like
ice)
Be very careful, Mr. Leakey. You are
still under my command.

And Mr. Moi hangs up. And as he sits, motionless...

INT. RICHARD'S AIRPLANE - DAY

Richard silently flying. And suddenly he takes the plane
down, flying low over the herds of animals...and there's
something like Lawrence about him, self-righteous...

And as he flies low over the animals; if we didn't know any better the plane's shadow on the animals looks very much like a cross:

AND IN QUICK SUCCESSION:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - ANOTHER DAY

We see a family of elephant grazing. And we see a trio of poachers coming silently through the brush. And as they approach the helpless elephants, about to fire on them, three jeeps suddenly emerge from the brush; Rangers, automatic weapons drawn, surrounding the poachers. And as Mr. Kipriano gets out of a jeep, ready to shoot to kill if necessary:

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

Richard, righteously flying over the herds of animals:

EXT. THE TSAVO NATIONAL PARK - ANOTHER DAY

We see another team of poachers, Somalis, arms raised in surrender, standing on a trail in some thick foliage, a quintet of efficient Rangers in fatigues and camouflage, their automatic weapons leveled on them, willing to kill them:

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

Richard flying over the herds of animals:

EXT. THE PARK HEADQUARTERS, AMBOSELI - ANOTHER DAY

And we see two poachers, handcuffed together, sitting in the dirt outside the headquarters building. And as Richard and Mr. Kipriano, and two armed Rangers, stand over them:

RICHARD
(a beat, to Mr.
Kipriano)
Let them go.

Mr. Kipriano looks at him. Richard gives him a look, he doesn't have to say it twice. Mr. Kipriano takes the handcuffs off the prisoners.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(to the poachers,
in Swahili,
subtitles)
Tell anybody who is interested in
poaching, I have a shoot to kill
order. I've told my men, if they see
a poacher...
(simply)
...kill him.

And Richard motions they can go.

And as the men run off across the veldt, taking the "word" home, Richard watching them go...He sees a small plane on the horizon, coming closer and closer....coming in for a landing, and bouncing to a stop. The door opens, and he sees KATHLEEN get out. She stops, hands in her pockets, standing in her familiar posture. He isn't unahppy to see her.

KATHLEEN
Hello again, Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD
(beat)
You don't take "no" for an answer, do you?"

KATHLEEN
(smiles)
Not easily.

Richard doesn't say anything, taking out a cigar, lighting it, instead. And as they stand looking at each other, a light breeze flapping at their clothing.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

And we see Richard flying with Kathleen over an endless valley.

RICHARD
(motioning below them)
The Great Rift Valley...Astronauts say it's the only feature you can distinguish from space with the naked eye...Life began on the planet here...We can all trace our ancestors right here...

KATHLEEN
(looking below her)
The garden of eden.

RICHARD
(caustic)
There isn't an apple tree for a thousand miles...

She smiles.

RICHARD (cont'd)
(a beat)
Are you religious Ms. Cole?

KATHLEEN
I went to Catholic school for twelve years. They told us we had an angel on our shoulder.

(MORE)

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(a beat)

I've been to crack houses, sat and talked to people who slept in their own vomit. I was in Rwanda, saw children so hungry they couldn't cry anymore. I've interviewed gun runners, mafia button men, serial killers, people with hearts of stone, without a moment of remorse.

(after a beat,

shakes "no")

I stopped believing in angels a long time ago.

They're quiet, looking at the endless valley, the cradle of "man, below them. Richard motions...And ahead of them they see a HERD OF ZEBRAS...there must be two hundred of them, running across the plain...Richard flies lower, flying over them...And the sight of them is enough to inspire poetry in the least of us...

RICHARD

Isak Dinesen said she imagined the herds of animals as, "...a great wheat field in the wind..."

And indeed the zebras, like a great wave of wheat, move as one entity, in one direction and then the next, running across the plain...Richard flies ahead of them, and coming down, lands...

EXT. THE VELDT - DAY

They get out of the plane. They stand watching the endless herd of zebras, their hooves thundering, as they run by them. And suddenly they abruptly stop. And every living thing seems to stop. Even the air seems to stop. And there's a quiet so deep, that you can hear it.

KATHLEEN

(chilled)

What's happening?

Richard doesn't know either. And the zebras, all of them at once, suddenly turn their heads, as if somebody had whispered. And we can see a huge shadow coming across the zebras...crossing Richard and Kathleen...enveloping the entire plain. Richard and Kathleen instinctively look up. And they realize it's a total eclipse of the sun. For a moment the land bathed in darkness. And moved by the momentous event Kathleen holds onto Richard's arm. And as they stand motionless, as if covered by the hand of God...

EXT. THE VELDT - NIGHT

The endless veldt. The airplane. And not far from the plane, we see a small campfire burning, like the last two people on the earth. As we come closer:

KATHLEEN

...You feel like you're an African?

RICHARD

(without any
question)

I am an African.

(beat)

I had gone to a segregated, colonial school. I hated it, the formal education, the bigotry. I was ashamed for them. I dropped out when I was fifteen. I preferred to be with Africans.

KATHLEEN

How were you treated?

RICHARD

I guess you could say I was an outcast. The term people used was, "nigger-lover." I was a "nigger lover" as a young boy, and I'm still proud to be one.

(and fervent)

I have always felt...this is my country.

And it's quiet. He stops to light a cigar. And he notices her shiver...

RICHARD (cont'd)

You're cold?

He puts his jacket around her shoulders.

KATHLEEN

(a smile)

Everybody told me to stay away from you. That you're dangerous with women.

RICHARD

(laughs)

Who said that?

KATHLEEN

(honestly)

Your wife.

It stops him for a moment.

RICHARD

What else did she say?

KATHLEEN

She said you were self-destructive, arrogant and adolescent.

RICHARD

(laughs)

She has a way with words.

She laughs.

KATHLEEN
(a beat)
She's beautiful. She's a real rose.

RICHARD
(nods, quietly)
An African rose.

And they're quiet. After some moments:

RICHARD
Do you believe her? That I'm
dangerous.

KATHLEEN
I'm not married to you.

RICHARD
She's not about to be, either.

It's quiet.

KATHLEEN
I'm sorry I brought it up.

RICHARD
(beat)
You didn't answer me. Do you think
I'm dangerous?

KATHLEEN
(beat, answering
him, smiles)
I don't think I want to find out.

He smiles. They're quiet. After some moments:

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
Would you let me fly us back?

RICHARD
You know how to fly?

She nods.

KATHLEEN
My husband loved to fly. I took
lessons so we could fly together.

RICHARD
Well, I hope you fly better than you
swim.

She laughs. And they're quiet. After some moments:

KATHLEEN
What else should I know about you, Mr.
Leakey?

He doesn't say anything, smoking his cigar. And as they sit under the stars by the fire talking, like the last two people on earth.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE, THE AFRICAN SKY - NIGHT

And we see Kathleen flying the plane. The moon shows the way. The sky a blanket of stars. It's dead quiet, as if the two of them were alone with the night sky.

KATHLEEN

My husband used to say flying is as close as you can get in this life to heaven.

He nods, it is.

RICHARD

(after a beat)

You miss him.

KATHLEEN

Everyday.

(beat)

Do you miss your wife?

RICHARD

We're used to missing each other.

And they're quiet, each with their own thoughts. Each alone. And maybe it's the moon, or the stars, or being, "This close to heaven..." but Kathleen puts her hand gratefully in his rough hand. They look at each other. And he reaches over, kissing her. Some moments, and she moves away from him, putting her hands back on the yoke. They're quiet.

KATHLEEN

I wish you hadn't done that.

And they know nothing will ever be the same again.

EXT. THE AFRICAN SKY, RICHARD'S PLANE - NIGHT

And as they fly off into the African night:

EXT. THE PARK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

We see Richard watching Kathleen start to get back on the small plane. It's awkward.

KATHLEEN

I'll be back in another few weeks...I've lined up a number of interviews...

He nods.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(beat, realizing)

You never said, Mr. Leahey...if you'd let me interview you...

RICHARD
(smiles, wry)
I thought that's what we were doing.

KATHLEEN
(smiles)
For the camera.

RICHARD
I'll think about it.

KATHLEEN
That's what you said last time.

RICHARD
I'm a slow thinker.

She smiles. She starts into the plane. She turns.

KATHLEEN
(a false bravado)
If you really want to know. I don't
think you're that dangerous at all.

They look at each other. And she gets on the plane. And as the plane taxi's away, gathers speed, and takes off, and he finds he can't take his eyes off of it, until it goes out of sight...

EXT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH, KENYA - DAY

We see an old two story, dark-wooded RANCH HOUSE along a River. A place Hemingway might have stayed in. The distinctive heads of hippos lolling in the river. And beyond the ranch house, as far as the eye can see, animals are grazing on a savanna. And off in the distance, we see sitting on the plain under a large umbrella to keep out the sun; watching the animals, as if he's been there for a hundred years, this man "who would be King," THOMAS COOK. We see a jeep coming across the plain. The jeep comes to a stop. And we see Fat Kombo getting out, crossing to stand by the "mamba." Thomas, a rifle at his side, is quietly watching a particular WILDEBEAST that's separated from the herd, grazing by itself.

THOMAS COOK
(motioning at the
wildebeast)
In less than a minute he will be dead.

They watch the solo wildebeast. And suddenly a LION comes racing out of some tall grass. The wildebeast running. The lion literally chasing him down, jumping on his back, burying his teeth in the wildebeast's neck, bringing him down. After some moments:

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)
I understand Mr. Leakey is making a
name for himself.

And Mr. Kombo with a distinctively British accent, is more articulate than we would have imagined from his appearance:

FAT KOMBO

He has a shoot to kill order. He's stopped five of our best teams...Taken seven of our men into custody...I think we should curtail our operations for now...

Thomas doesn't say anything, watching the lion eating his prey, his face bloody...And suddenly Thomas takes up his rifle and fires, hitting the lion in the side. And the lion, in pain, enraged, turns, running at the source of his pain...running right at them...

THOMAS COOK

(calmly, quite sure)

He'll never make it...He's shot in the heart...

But the lion keeps on coming, running at them, coming closer, and closer, and closer...And Mr. Kombo, not so sure, starts to turn, to run...

THOMAS COOK

(turning the rifle on him)

You trust me, don't you Mr. Kombo?

And Mr. Kombo, not sure who he is more afraid of, stops...and the lion is almost on top of them...his eyes visible...no more than ten feet from them now...and even Mr. Cook has a flicker of uncertainty...and the lion, charging, less than five feet from them now, roars, getting ready to pounce...when suddenly his heart stops from the lodged bullet, and he falls dead no more than three feet from them, literally falling at their feet...And it's still...

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

(a beat)

You have to learn to trust me, Mr. Kombo.

(and after a moment)

I think we should tell Mr. Leakey what we think of his shoot to kill order.

And as Mr. Cook sits under his umbrella on the savanna, the dead lion at his feet.

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - IN THE DARK OF THE NIGHT

A moonless night. And we see a lone bull elephant silently grazing. And suddenly two Poachers stand from the cover of some thick brush, firing on it...And as the elephant stumbles, and falls:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - SUNRISE

We see Richard and Mr. Kipriano silently standing over the eviscerated elephant:

EXT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH - ANOTHER DAY

And we see Thomas Cook, sitting in his familiar chair under the umbrella, silently watching the animals:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - ANOTHER NIGHT

We see another elephant lying on the ground. And as Poachers, under the cover of another moonless night, cut out its tusks:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - DAYBREAK

And we see Mr. Kipriano, and Richard, looking at yet another slaughtered elephant:

EXT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH, THE PLAIN - DAY

And we see the white-bearded Thomas, off in the distance, silently sitting under his umbrella:

EXT. ANOTHER PLAIN - ANOTHER DAY

Richard's plane is parked nearby. And we see Richard and Mr. Kipriano standing on a plain over still another butchered elephant:

EXT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH, THE PLAIN - DAY

We see Thomas, dressed in an off-white suit, a Manservant with some luggage standing beside him, standing motionless on the plain waiting for something. And we see a single engine PLANE coming in low over the veldt, landing. The Manservant hands the pilot the luggage. Thomas gets on the plane. And as the plane turns, taxiing, and flies off:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - DAY

We see Richard and Mr. Kipriano still standing over the fallen elephant. Richard lights a cigar. And as Richard looks out across the endless veldt, as if looking for Mr. Cook himself...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI - ANOTHER NIGHT

We see a young elephant peeling bark from a tree. And suddenly a jeep races out of the darkness across the plain, coming toward the elephant. Two Poachers. And as they approach: We PAN OVER and see Richard and Joseph sitting in a jeep in some tall brush.

JOSEPH ole KATITIA
(fingering his
weapon, anxiously)

Let's go...

But Richard unexpectedly stops him...

RICHARD

Wait...

The young elephant peacefully scratches himself on the trunk of the tree. The jeep coming closer and closer...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA

(getting upset)

What are we waiting for...?

Richard doesn't say anything. And the young elephant, seeing the jeep, starts to run in fear. The Poachers come after it...And still Richard doesn't move...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)

Mr. Leakey?

The Poachers raise their weapons. And Joseph, unable to watch the impending slaughter, grabs his weapon, starting out of the jeep...And Richard literally grabs him...holding him from going...And the Poachers open fire, the young elephant badly hurt, running in circles as if trying to comprehend the pain, and the Poachers firing again, cutting it down. Joseph, frustrated, near tears...not understanding...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA (cont'd)

Mr. Leakey?

RICHARD

(quietly)

It has to be done this way...

And Joseph's still. And the Poachers, using a chain saw, go about their bloody business. And taking the tusks, getting back in their jeep, they drive back across the plain. It's dead quiet. The eviscerated young elephant lying motionless...

RICHARD (cont'd)

(after some
moments, nods,
quietly)

Okay, now...

And Joseph, understanding him now, drives them out of the brush...They slow for a moment looking at the young elephant lying in his blood on the ground...And as they follow the jeep at a safe distance...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PLAIN - NIGHT

We see Richard and Joseph stopped at a safe distance, watching the Poachers. And we see that the Poachers have stopped at an Acacia tree. And we see there's a cross, marking a GRAVE under the tree. The Poachers busy digging up the "grave." They reach a "casket." They open it. The casket empty. They put the tusks inside. They rebury the casket, replace the cross, and getting back in their jeep drive off. And as Richard and Joseph sit silently waiting...Watching the "grave" under the lone acacia tree.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PLAIN, THE ACACIA TREE - DAYBREAK

The silent "grave." Richard and Joseph, off in the distance, still waiting. There's a sound. And we see an old TRUCK coming across the early morning plain. Two African Men get out. They dig up the "casket." They put it in the back of the truck. They put another casket back in the hole to replace the first. And after covering the grave back up, replanting the cross, they drive away. And as Richard and Joseph follow them:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PLAIN - DAY

We see Richard standing out of the jeep looking through a pair of binoculars. And we see he's watching the Men, out of their truck, digging up another "grave." Taking another "casket." Another cache of tusks. And as he watches them drive off:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE HILLS OF TANZANIA - DAY

We see the Truck coming along a winding road, moving by us. And some moments, following them at a safe distance, Richard and Joseph.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA - DAY

The busy seaport capital. We see the Truck moving along the hectic waterfront. And shortly behind it, Richard and Joseph. The Truck comes to a dock. Richard and Joseph park nearby. Richard climbs out. He stands, hands in his pockets, quietly looking at the busy dock. A SHIP, a Freighter, is in port, a crane loading cargo containers on board...He watches as some men unload the Truck, taking the "caskets" out. He watches as the "caskets" are put in a sling, the crane lifting them high over the docks, and lowering them into the ship's hold. Richard looks over at the vessel's name: "THE NOLIZWE." He lights a cigar. And as he silently looks at the "death ship."

DISSOLVE TO:

THE CARGO SHIP, "THE NOLIZWE," BERTHED AT ANOTHER DOCK...

EXT. MACAO, THE SOUTH CHINA SEA - DAY

WE PULL BACK and we see the cargo being unloaded, the "caskets" being hoisted by a crane out of the hold. We KEEP PULLING BACK and we see we're in a different PORT altogether. The tiny Portugese Province of Macao on the South China Sea. And we see standing along the waterfront, watching the "caskets" being unloaded, is Richard.

He watches as dock workers put the "caskets" onto a Truck. He crosses to get into a Rental Car. And as he follows the Truck:

EXT. A FACTORY IN MACAO - DAY

We see Richard standing outside his car across the street from a small FACTORY. He watches workers unload the "caskets" from the truck putting them on a skip loader and taking them inside. Richard crosses the street, going into the factory...

INT. THE FACTORY IN MACAO - DAY

He slows. A sweat shop, a line of women and children are busy working at long benches cutting ivory. And as Richard watches them cut the tusks, making them into:

INT. A DEPARTMENT STORE IN MACAO - DAY

And we see Richard in a busy Department Store in Macao, looking at cases filled with all sorts of ivory jewelry. A teenage Girl happily laughing as she and her friend try on ivory necklaces. And as Richard looks down into the glass display case...We see in the reflection in the glass, like looking into a photograph:

EXT. THE PLAIN IN AFRICA - DAY

The young elephant rotting in the sun, vultures picking at its bones...All for a tooth...to become a giggling Girl's necklace...

EXT. THE MACAO HARBOR - NIGHT

We see an expensive house with a pool on a hillside overlooking the harbor at Macao.

INT. THE HOUSE IN MACAO - NIGHT

A tastefully decorated estate. And we see there's a small dinner party. Elegantly dressed Asians and Eurasians. Among them we recognize the Loo brothers. And we see the host, in a tuxedo, his distinctive white beard, is the memorable THOMAS COOK. The door bell RINGS. A Servant answers it. The Servant crosses to Mr. Cook quietly saying something to him. Thomas turns, looking over at the door. And he slows, surprised, seeing Richard standing in the doorway. Getting up, hands in his tuxedo pockets, he crosses to the door. And before he can say anything Richard gives him an ivory necklace.

RICHARD

I'm sorry I can't stay.

And just like that he turns and leaves. And as the white bearded Thomas Cook is left standing at the door holding the ivory necklace:

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM, NAIROBI, KENYA - THE PRESENT, DAY

We see Richard, with his heavily bandaged "legs," still sitting unceremoniously on the hospital room floor. He sees his shoes, with his clothing, neatly arranged on the chair. He reaches taking his shoes down...holding them in one hand...And as he looks at his shoes, thinking about where they've been, and where they won't be taking him anymore:

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, MR. MOI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We see Mr. Moi in bed, in his sleeping attire, reading something. And we see Richard standing not far from the bed patiently waiting. An everpresent Security Guard standing by the door.

RICHARD

...I'm sorry to disturb you...It couldn't wait...

Mr. Moi doesn't say anything.

RICHARD (cont'd)

...It will initially cover three helicopter gunships and four spotter planes...

(as Moi reads)

In three months there won't be a poacher left in Kenya.

Mr. Moi finishes reading. He puts the papers aside. He lays back, thinking. And for a moment he seems like what he is, not the "Baba Moi," the strong, quiet, charismatic President, but an aging seventy year old man in his bed.

MR. MOI

(reflecting)

Do you know what it is like, the simple luxury of a bed? I had always dreamed of having a bed. I never could afford a bed until I was twenty.

Richard doesn't say anything.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

(wry)

I have learned, over the years, having a bed does not guarantee a good night's sleep.

And he's a man worried about more than his governance.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

(meaning the document)

The World Bank would agree to this size loan?

RICHARD

With the government's approval of course. They are as concerned about the extinction of the elephant as we are.

Mr. Moi is quiet.

MR. MOI

A hundred heavily armed men. Helicopter gunships. Spotter aircraft. A loan from the World Bank. If I was an insecure man I would think you were planning an insurrection.

He looks out his quiet eyes at him.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

Why should I trust you Mr. Leakey?

RICHARD

You shouldn't, Mr. Moi.

They look at each other.

MR. MOI

I think you are a very ambitious man, Mr. Leakey. You have an opinion of yourself that you are entitled to succeed. I would hate to think what you would do if you didn't succeed.

RICHARD

If you recall, you appointed me. It wasn't a job I asked for.

MR. MOI

I'm concerned it is no longer a job, but an obsession.

Richard doesn't say anything.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

If I sign this you will have the second largest army in the country. It will not make me sleep any better, Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD

But maybe the country will sleep better, your Excellence.

Mr. Moi smiles at his response. A moment, and he motions to the Security Guard. The Man brings him a pen. Mr. Moi hesitates, and looking at Richard, his quiet eyes not quiet anymore...

MR. MOI

I have been the president of Kenya for twenty years. Only one of us is going to be left standing when this is over, Mr. Leakey.

And as if to say he knows who that will be, he signs the document, giving it to the Guard to give to Richard. And done with him:

MR. MOI (cont'd)

Goodnight, Mr. Leakey.

And as Richard is shown out of the bedroom by the Security Guard, Mr. Moi turning out the bedroom light.

THERE'S THE WHIRR OF HELICOPTER BLADES.

EXT. TSAVO PARK - DAY

And we see a HELICOPTER GUNSHIP, two heavily armed Rangers standing on the struts, guns in hand, hovering over four frightened Poachers, their arms raised in surrender.

INT. THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES, NAIROBI - DAY

The office is filled with staff now...Hellen Ojukwu the major domo. And we see Richard in his office. His RADIO on, monitoring reports coming in from the field. Voices, one on top of the other. And as the reports come in:

EXT. AMBOSELI PARK - ANOTHER DAY

We see two heavily armed Poachers running through some brush. And descending on them is another Helicopter Gunship...And as the Poachers flatten on the ground in surrender, the helicopter circling:

INT. THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES, NAIROBI.- ANOTHER DAY

Richard in his office. The Radio a veritable symphony of voices and sounds:

EXT. TSAVO - ANOTHER DAY

We see a quartet of heavily armed Poachers, moving silently along a trail through some thick brush. And we see a family of elephants "dusting" themselves on a plain. The Poachers ready their weapons...And there's the SOUND of an airplane. They look up. And they see a "SPOTTER" PLANE flying low over them.

INT. THE "SPOTTER PLANE" - DAY

We see an African Ranger flying the plane, looking down below him at the Poachers. As he gets on the Radio:

INT. THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES, NAIROBI - DAY

Richard listening to the field reports. And the Spotter Plane Pilot's Voice breaking through:

SPOTTER PILOT'S VOICE (OVER)
 (on the radio, in
 Swahili,
 subtitles)
 Poachers, one klick south of the east
 gate...

EXT. THE BRUSH, TSAVO - DAY

The Poachers, spotted, running back along the trail through the brush. The Spotter Plane circling, keeping them in sight...One of the Poachers stopping just long enough to fire on the Plane, the Plane safely out of range...

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE, THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES,
 NAIROBI - DAY

And some Staff have stopped in Richard's doorway, listening with him to the Radio reports of the on-going action:

SPOTTER PILOT'S VOICE (OVER)
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles)
 ...they're moving along the river
 trail...

Muffled sounds of gunfire...

SPOTTER PILOT'S VOICE (OVER)
 ...I'm taking fire again...

EXT. THE BRUSH, TSAVO - DAY

The Poachers running along the trail in full flight. The Spotter plane circling them. And from out of nowhere, we see a small unit of camouflaged RANGERS, coming through the brush after them. One of the Rangers, on a radio, being led by the spotter plane overhead to the Poachers position...

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE, THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

The hallway crowded with Staff, listening with Richard to the action in Tsavo.

RANGER'S VOICE (OVER)
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles)
 ...we're crossing the River at the
 Barton bridge...

SPOTTER PILOT'S VOICE (OVER)
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles)
 ...they're half a klick south of you
 crossing by the ant hills...

INT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH, KENYA - DAY

And we see the white bearded Thomas Cook in a dark paneled study. And a SHORT WAVE RADIO'S on. Thomas listening to the Wildlife Service transmissions.

EXT. THE BRUSH IN TSAVO - DAY

The camouflaged Rangers, running across a narrow bridge over the river.

The Poachers, running along the trail past huge ant hills...

INT. WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES, NAIROBI - DAY

Richard and the Staff rapt, listening to the Radio. The voices chattering, the sound of the Rangers breathing as they run, their footfalls, the plane's propeller...

EXT. THE BRUSH IN TSAVO - DAY

The Rangers come down a small hill. And they can see the Poachers just ahead of them. The plane circling above them.

INT. THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

RANGER'S VOICE (OVER)

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

...We have them in sight now...

EXT. THE BRUSH IN TSAVO - DAY

And the Poachers, seeing the Rangers, stop to fire on them. The Rangers taking cover, returning the fire. A Ranger's hit, going down.

INT. THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

The sounds of the gunfire from the Radio echoing in the offices.

RANGER'S VOICE (OVER)

(urgent, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

...Man down...need medical
assistance...

INT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH - DAY

The sounds of the gunfire.

EXT. THE FIELD, TSAVO - DAY

The Poachers turning, running again. The Rangers on their heels. The Poachers scrambling through the brush. The Rangers scrambling after them...

INT. THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

Richard and the Staff listening on the Radio to the field report...

SPOTTER PILOT'S VOICE (OVER)
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles)
 ...they're coming onto the road...by
 Konza...

EXT. A ROAD IN KENYA - DAY

The Poachers coming out of the brush onto a road that leads into a small rural Village. The Rangers coming onto the road shortly after them. The Poachers, firing at the Rangers, running for the "sanctuary" of the small village.

INT. WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

SPOTTER PILOT'S VOICE (OVER)
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles)
 ...they're going into Konza...

Richard, motionless...

EXT. A SMALL VILLAGE - DAY

The Poachers running into the small poor rural village. Women. Children. Some domestic animals. A horrible place for a gun battle. The Villagers, seeing them, run to their huts for cover. The Rangers come into the village. And the Poachers turn and fire on them. And there's a vicious fire fight. The village a maelstrom.

INT. THE WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

The "tat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat..." sounds of the GUNFIRE. As we slowly MOVE IN on Richard:

INT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Thomas silently listening to the gun battle over the radio.

EXT. THE RURAL VILLAGE - DAY

The ferocious gun battle. A Poacher hit, going down. Two Rangers, wounded. The battle raging. The Rangers finally gaining the upper-hand. The Poachers, coming into the village center, their hands raised in surrender.

INT. THE SPOTTER PLANE - DAY

The Pilot looking below him as the Rangers cover the remaining Poachers, their comrade lying dead in the dirt street.

SPOTTER PILOT'S VOICE (OVER)
 (on radio, in
 Swahili,
 subtitles, simply)
 ...Mission completed...

INT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH HOUSE - DAY

And as Thomas turns, and quietly shuts off the radio.

EXT. THE RURAL VILLAGE - LATER, DUSK

We see the POACHER'S BODY, covered with a blanket now, still lying in the dirt street. An AFRICAN WOMAN, bent over the body, is mournfully wailing. And we see Richard and Mr. Kipriano have come to the battle site, standing not far from the body. Villagers standing in the doorways of their huts. And the grief stricken Woman suddenly gets up, and tears streaming down her face, comes over to Richard. And she suddenly slaps his face...And shouts at him:

THE WOMAN

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

Is a thousand elephants worth my
husband!? Worth one human being?!

Another Woman comes to move her away. But the Woman isn't through:

THE WOMAN (cont'd)

(screaming at
Richard, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

Who makes you the judge, the jury, and
the executioner?!

Her friend moves her away. It's quiet. And a Man, sitting on his haunches outside his hut, begins to play a wooden whistle, haunting. And as Richard silently stands looking at the man's body lying in the dirt street...the whistle playing:

WE SEE IN QUICK SUCESSION:

EXT. THE BRUSH - NIGHT

A Patrol of camouflaged Rangers bursting into a Poachers' camp. Some elephant's tusks, their bloody booty, on the ground by their campfire. And there's a vicious fire-fight. And as the Poachers take a heavy toll:

INT. A MAKESHIFT MORGUE - NIGHT

A large thatched roof hut. And lying on the floor under blankets are the bodies of three more Poachers. And as Richard and Mr. Kipriano stand silently looking at the bodies...And there's the haunting sound of the wooden whistle:

EXT. A POACHER'S TRAIL - EARLY MORNING

Poachers, moving along a trail through some dense brush. And suddenly a Helicopter Gunship swoops down on them, and without any questions asked, FIRE on them.

EXT. THE POACHER'S TRAIL - LATER

The Poachers' bodies lying on the trail. And we see Richard, standing with Mr. Kipriano, silently looking at them..."naked," in death...And as we slowly MOVE IN ON Richard, and there's the haunting sound of the wooden whistle...

DISSOLVE TO:

WE SEE AN ELEPHANT LYING ON THE GROUND IN A CORN FIELD.

EXT. A CORN FIELD, NEAR AMBOSELI - ANOTHER DAY

And we see Richard and Mr. Kipriano, standing over the body of a mortally wounded elephant, talking with a small group of African farmers in a CORN FIELD. One of the farmers holding a shotgun.

A FARMER

(upset, in
Swahili,
subtitles)

They keep coming through....We grow a crop and they destroy it...We put up fences...nothing stops them...What do you expect us to do?

RICHARD

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

I can't have you killing elephants...

THE FARMER

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

Do you think we are happy about this?

And an empathetic man tears run down his black face. Richard's quiet.

ANOTHER FARMER

(in Swahili,
subtitles, angry)

You protect the white farmer.

He motions across the way to a nearby corn field, a small neat farmhouse.

ANOTHER FARMER (cont'd)

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

You make certain the animals stay out of his crops...

RICHARD

(in Swahili,
subtitles)

That's not true...We patrol the same for everybody...

A FARMER
(in Swahili,
subtitles, the
bottom line)

If they come again...we will kill them
again...

And the Men leave. Richard, problems mounting, standing with Mr. Kipriano over the elephant in the corn field...There's a sound...Richard turns. And he sees a JEEP'S stopped. And he sees it's KATHLEEN, along with a CAMERA CREW. Kathleen gets out of the jeep, walking through the cornfield toward him. She stops, seeing the fallen elephant. It's quiet.

KATHLEEN

(after a beat)

I was hoping you've changed your mind.

And as they look at one another:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PLAIN - AFTERNOON

We see a family of elephants in the afternoon shadows roaming across an endless plain...

RICHARD'S VOICE (OVER)

This is where man came from. This is where humanity arose, and elephants were part of that. And it's so easy to lose that.

And we see Richard and Kathleen standing by a jeep watching the elephants go by. Kathleen's CREW, filming them. And what we will see are fragments, bits and pieces of Kathleen interviewing Richard...

RICHARD (cont'd)

Shooting our elephants is shooting our country. We cannot afford to allow anyone to shoot her.

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PARK - DAY

Richard and Kathleen now sitting in one of the Wildlife Service Jeeps, the Crew filming them.

RICHARD

If they don't want to get shot, then they shouldn't shoot our own.

KATHLEEN

Joyce Potter, of a human rights group called "Africa Watch" says Leakey the ranger has gone too far. This shoot-to-kill policy gives them authority to act as judge, jury and executioner.

RICHARD

They have evil intent. They shoot at us; so we shoot them. We don't shoot unarmed men.

KATHLEEN

Don't they deserve a trial? Even though they are foreign mercenaries?

RICHARD

How do you get them to trial? When they shoot you with their AK-47's.

EXT. THE AMBOSELI RANGE - DAY

The Crew filming Kathleen and Richard now walking in some tall grass with a baby elephant....

KATHLEEN

(for the camera)

Elephant families may be the closest of families in nature. They have their own language and their own customs. If a mother dies, the baby becomes depressed, and they stop eating and die.

RICHARD

You usually find a mother that's been killed and find these emaciated little babies...They're picked up, stretched out, and flown on an airplane back to Nairobi, where they undergo constant care and attention.

(motions at a Man

nearby)

This man is this elephant's constant companion, who keeps this little one alive...

Richard strokes the baby elephant....It puts its trunk out to Kathleen...

KATHLEEN

Do you think they like to be petted?

RICHARD

I think they love to be petted. They love to be loved.

(his smile)

Don't you?

She laughs...And as she pets the elephant for the camera...

EXT. ELEPHANT BONE STORAGE - DAY

And we see Richard and Kathleen now walking along shelves stacked with elephant bones...the Crew filming them...

KATHLEEN

(for the camera)

Here in one of his research centers, 3,000 elephant skulls are an arid monument to a kind of animal holocaust...

RICHARD

There was once ten million elephants in Africa. We are losing thousands of them every year. 18 or 20 of them can be killed every fifteen or twenty minutes.

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PLAIN - NIGHT

Kathleen and Richard now sitting by a campfire in the dark, torches flickering as the Crew films them.

RICHARD

I don't give a damn about what outside people might think. What concerns me is what we think.

KATHLEEN

Of course, most Americans would probably say to you. "We once had a place where deer and antelope would roam and play. But not any more."

RICHARD

But I would say to you, with humility, that the people who say this are not Americans. They're caucasians who came to America from afar. Colonialists, no different than my ancestors.

EXT. A MAASAI VILLAGE - DAY

And we see Richard and Kathleen being filmed as they now walk through a crowded, poor, Maasai village....

KATHLEEN

(for the camera)

These people are the Maasai, the proud, nomadic warriors of Africa, who are now in competition with the wildlife for land and food.

(to Richard,
meaning the Maasai
way of life)

How much longer will all this last?

RICHARD

I think this will all be gone in twenty years. The crucial question is whether or not we are going to have any land for the people and wildlife to survive.

They are surrounded by some Maasai children.

RICHARD (cont'd)

These people can't be a main part of Kenya if they live like this.

(MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)
 For people to be backward, for people
 to be poor, to have bad health...why
 should they? Why should these
 children be living in malevolent
 poverty? Why shouldn't they have a
 home like you and I? Why shouldn't
 they have radio? Why shouldn't they
 hear a symphony?

EXT. THE PLAIN - DAY

And we see a fence has gone up...separating the animals from
 a farmer's crops...The Crew filming Richard and Kathleen now
 walking along the fence...

RICHARD
 I'm having fences put up all around
 the park charged with 4,000 volts of
 electricity. It will stun the animals
 but not hurt them...

KATHLEEN
 (not for the
 camera)
 Are you fencing the animals in, or
 keeping the people out...?

RICHARD
 Both...

KATHLEEN
 You think that's a good idea? How can
 animals really be in the wild when
 there's an electric fence keeping them
 in?

RICHARD
 (annoyed, snaps)
 Stick to what you do, Sunny.

She's quiet.

KATHLEEN
 It must be very hard going through
 life knowing you're always right.

They look at each other.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
 (for the camera,
 but their argument
 resonates)
 Wildlife experts object to the fences.
 They say it detracts from the wildlife
 atmosphere...

RICHARD
(for the camera,
but their argument
resonates)

I think that the hard
environmentalists are a hard species.
They are an extremely dangerous,
irrational species, and often don't
see, "the wood for the trees."

And he seems to be directing the "wood for the trees," at
her.

EXT. THE PLAIN - NIGHT

Richard and Kathleen sitting at a campfire again...while
they're filmed..

KATHLEEN
Some people looking from the outside
say, in another twenty years Africa
will be like a theme park. And this
is what you're doing. You're a scout
for this "brave new world."

RICHARD
This is absolute rubbish. Why should
we be the ones to sacrifice our
standard of living.

KATHLEEN
Because I guess people from the
outside dream that Africa will remain
the same...untamed.

RICHARD
Because that's the way they want
Africans to be. "Untamed."
(and personal)
Some journalists' romantic version.

KATHLEEN
(hurt)
That was a cheap shot.

They look at each other, apart from the interview.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
(after a beat, for
the camera)
So what's it going to be like, this
part of the world, in fifteen to
twenty years time?

But he's preoccupied. He lights a cigar.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD

I'm sorry I ever let you get me started with this.

KATHLEEN

It's important.

RICHARD

It's bullshit. You come here, spend a few days wandering around, asking a lot of silly questions, and you go back with your "story" to your nice townhouse in New York, while tomorrow, or the next day, or the day after that, somebody will get their head blown off protecting the elephants.

KATHLEEN

(hurt)

That's what you think of me?

He doesn't say anything.

RICHARD

(impatiently)

What was the question?

KATHLEEN

Where will we be five, ten, fifteen years from now...?

RICHARD

I'll be right here, Sunny...digging in the dirt...Where will you be? Looking for your next "adventure?"

KATHLEEN

Sometimes, Mr. Leakey, you can be very ugly.

And she abruptly gets up, starting toward the jeep...

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(turns)

That's what you think of me? Some barbie doll sitting in front of a camera...

And coming back toward him...

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

You sit there, smoking your cigar, pretending nothing affects you...The great Richard Leakey who doesn't feel a fucking thing. You're a fake. This job is killing you.

And it's quiet. She sits back in her chair. They look at each other.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
 (for the camera,
 quietly)
 Where will we be five, ten, fifteen
 years from now?

And the question's become personal.

RICHARD
 (honestly)
 I hope to have made some small dent on
 things. I hope to have had an effect.

And for the moment all his arrogance, his bravado, has been
 stripped away. They look at each other. It's dead quiet.
 But she won't let it drop:

KATHLEEN
 Is that what you think of me, Richard?
 A "talking head," chasing ambulances.

He doesn't say anything.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
 You're an arrogant man. What makes
 you so morally superior to everyone
 else?

They look at each other. It's quiet, just the crackle of the
 fire. And Richard, going on with the interview...

RICHARD
 (going on)
 I think we are now, in terms of this
 fire, it's burning the hell out of my
 thighs...

And it breaks the tension for both of them...And she
 laughs...laughs with great affection for him...

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (rubbing his
 thighs)
 Goddamn that hurts...

And as they both laugh, enjoying each other.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

Richard flying his plane...Kathleen flying with him...over
 the vast African plains...The Crew sitting behind them,
 filming them....

KATHLEEN
 Does it trouble you at night to think
 of killing people?

RICHARD

(a beat)

No, it troubles me much more to think that if we didn't stop this poaching, this country would collapse.

(after a beat)

There is a chance to learn. There is a chance to save the animals. There is a chance to get this right. There is a chance to provide my grandchildren with at least a glimmer of affection of what the world was once like, and so make their world that much richer.

KATHLEEN

(the interview
done, formally)

Thank you Mr. Leahey.

Richard nods. She looks at him, grateful. And as they fly over the endless plain of this place called "Africa."

EXT. THE LEAHEY RANCH - DUSK

We see Kathleen and Richard sitting on the porch of the Leahey Ranch watching the sun disappear.

RICHARD

When do you go back?

KATHLEEN

Another week.

He nods. They're quiet. A Crew Member comes over.

CREW MEMBER

(to Kathleen)

We're packed to go.

Kathleen nods. The Crew Member crosses back to their jeep. It's quiet.

KATHLEEN

(gets up, a beat,
awkward)

I appreciate everything you've done for me.

Richard nods. They look at each other. There's an awkward quiet. Neither wants the other to leave.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

I hope we can see each other again.

He nods. She hesitates, hands in her pockets, looking at him. And hands still in her pockets, she turns off the porch, onto the road, crossing to the jeep...Richard, in spite of himself, watching her go...She starts into the jeep to leave...And Richard, finally, says...

RICHARD

I can take you back if you'd like.

She slows. She looks at him. She says something to her crew. There's a brief conversation. And the jeep pulls off, leaving. And in its wake it's quiet. The day's light disappearing. Kathleen, hands protectively in her pockets, standing in the road. Richard standing on the porch. They look at each other.

KATHLEEN

(concerned,
conflicted)

I'm a journalist. There's a line I'm not supposed to cross.

He nods, understanding her concerns.

RICHARD

(beat)

I'm glad you decided to stay, Sunny.

She looks at him, his tousled hair, his rumpled demeanor, his dark eyes.

KATHLEEN

(a beat, making up
her mind)

So am I.

And as she comes back up onto the porch:

INT. THE LEAKEY HOUSE, THE BEDROOM - JUST AT DARK

The last traces of daylight. A small, hundred year old bedroom. And as we see Kathleen and Richard making love in the bedroom in the dying of the light:

EXT. THE LEAKEY HOUSE - NIGHT

We see a light on in the kitchen. And we can see through the window Richard and Kathleen eating, talking. And as she laughs at something he says:

INT. A LOCAL AFRICAN BAR - NIGHT

A small crowded, noisy, African bar. People crowded together on a small dance floor, dancing to an innocuous popular American song like, "You're too good to be true...", completely incongruous here. And we see Kathleen and Richard among them, sweating from the closeness of the room, holding onto each other, dancing, enjoying themselves. Kathleen looks around the room. At the Africans. And as she puts her head on Richard's shoulder, close to him, and despite being a stranger in a strange land, feeling at home:

EXT. A SMALL AFRICAN TOWN - NIGHT

An empty dirt street. The strange looking old Coca Cola signs. The small shacks that serve as stores...The few notions in the few shop's windows. The innocent combinations of hairbrushes and boomboxes.

And we see Richard and Kathleen, Kathleen carrying her shoes, both of them wearing the glow of alcohol, feeling immortal, coming along the empty street. And as they walk, their arms around each other, talking about nothing, and everything, on their way back to Richard's ranch:

INT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - NIGHT

And as they make love again in the small old bedroom:

EXT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - EARLY MORNING

We see Richard, dressed for the day, coming out of the ranch. He stops on the porch. And he sees Kathleen standing in an overgrown garden looking out at the veldt. He crosses to her, coming beside her.

RICHARD

I have to be at Tsavo by two.

She nods. There's a sudden rustling, and a LEOPARD suddenly comes into the garden.

KATHLEEN

(frozen)

Oh my god...

RICHARD

(smiles)

Not to worry. It's Nelson. He lives in the "neighborhood" here...

The leopard looks at them, benign...

RICHARD (cont'd)

He lives on garbage...and my neighbor's chickens...We've learned to live with each other...

And the leopard, bored with them, wanders back off.

KATHLEEN

(beat, smiles)

That doesn't happen alot in Manhattan.

He smiles. She's quiet. She looks out at the endless veldt...She puts her hands in her pockets...And because of the timeless landscape, because of the exotic culture, because how close it makes her feel to heaven...and mostly, because of Richard...

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

I could stay here forever.

He doesn't say anything. And she simply says to him:

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(for everything)

Thank you, Richard.

She takes his hand. And as they quietly stand together looking out at the veldt:

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE, KENYA - MORNING

We see Richard flying. And we see he's flying over a large gorge...pits dotting the gorge. And as he turns and lands....

EXT. THE OLDUVAI GORGE, KENYA - MORNING

Richard crosses from his plane to the gorge. African workers, along the gorge, digging in pits. The Olduvai Gorge, a "holy place" to archeology, where most of the world's great discoveries have been made. He slows. And he sees his mother, incongruously sitting in a rocking chair, asleep in the sun, above the pits. He stops for a moment looking at her. The disease has begun to ravage her. Her familiar field hat now too big for her. Her khakis bunched on her. A slip of herself. He comes beside her. She instinctively wakes up, seeing him:

MARY LEAKEY

(smiles)

Did you decide to pick up a shovel?

RICHARD

(smiles)

Not yet...

And painfully aware of how she looks she self-consciously fixes her hair...

MARY LEAKEY

(pure Mary)

It's a curious thing, dying.

Nothing's left to the imagination.

RICHARD

(a beat, meaning
the dig)

Have you found anything?

She shakes "no."

MARY LEAKEY

Not a damn thing.

And he slows, seeing Meave, in her familiar straw hat, working in a pit. And working beside her, the Man we called BEARD.

MEAVE

(seeing him)

Hello, Richard.

RICHARD

Hello Meave.

MARY LEAKEY

Meave's been my right arm.

Richard doesn't say anything.

MEAVE
(meaning "Beard.")
You remember Peter.

Richard nods.

RICHARD
(and nasty)
How are things with the habit?

MEAVE
(defensive)
Peter's kicked his habit.
(and personally)
A lot of us have.

Richard doesn't say anything.

MEAVE (cont'd)
(protective)
A journalist was asking a lot of
questions about you. I think she said
her name was "Sunny." She seemed
quite interested in you.

RICHARD
(simply)
We met.

MEAVE
(looking at him)
I'm sure you did.

It's quiet.

MEAVE (cont'd)
(after a beat)
The boys will be home soon.

Richard nods.

MEAVE (cont'd)
I was hoping to stay with them at the
ranch.

RICHARD
(nods)
That's not a problem.

MEAVE
(dry)
We'll work out the details.

RICHARD
(nods, wry)
We'll work out "the details."

And that's what it's come down to..."the details." And it's
quiet, just the sound of the shovels.

MARY LEAKEY
(to Richard,
rescuing both of
them)

Richard, take me for a walk.

Richard turns to his mother. He instinctively looks back at Meave. He catches her looking at him. Their eyes meet for a moment...And she kneels back to dig in the dirt...And as Richard helps his mother up...

EXT. THE OLDUVAI GORGE - DAY

Richard walking with his mother through the site...

MARY LEAKEY
I remember when you were a small
boy...Louis and I were busy talking
and you wouldn't stop asking
questions..."What's this?" "What's
that?" You just wouldn't shut-up.
And Louis finally said, "go find
something..."
(a beat, smiles)
And you found one of the oldest
skeletal remains of a pig that was
ever discovered. You always
accomplished what you set out to do.

Richard smiles. They've come to a rise overlooking the gorge. They stop for a moment looking at the work going on. A breeze ruffles their clothing. And there's a sense of time, personally and historically...and it's both painful and exhilarating.

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
Three million years of humans have
passed through here...I have touched
their bones...walked in their
footprints...

And what she's learned, about herself, and Richard, and for that matter all of us...

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
We are a spark. A fire of
imagination.

She looks out over the gorge...out over the endless African plain...

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
When I die, I want my ashes carried on
the wind across Africa.

Richard looks at her, her frail figure. She's taken her hat off, the breeze blowing her thinning hair. And maybe it's the light on her, or the time of day, or the season, or just the moment, but he realizes she's come to terms with her life, and found her God.

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - NIGHT

A large BALLROOM. People in evening clothes. A gala. And we see Richard, in a tuxedo, coming in. Some people stop him, saying hello.

A WOMAN

Richard, do you know Kathleen Cole?

Richard turns, and Kathleen, lovely in an evening dress is standing there.

RICHARD

I don't think so.

THE WOMAN

Kathleen is with ABC News. I just know you would enjoy each other's company.

The Woman turns to talk to someone else. And Richard smiles. And they play it close to the vest.

RICHARD

(admiring her)

You look wonderful, Sunny.

KATHLEEN

(smiles)

So do you, Mr. Leakey.

RICHARD

(beat)

When are you going back?

KATHLEEN

Tomorrow.

He nods.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

I should have something to show you in about a month.

He nods.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

Are you planning on coming to America?

RICHARD

Not anytime soon.

She reaches, affectionately straightening his tie.

KATHLEEN

It's crooked.

They look at each other. And we hear a Man's voice:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)
We always seem to be meeting at formal occasions.

And we see the white bearded Thomas Cook has come over to them.

RICHARD
(beat)
Kathleen Cole...Thomas Cook.

THOMAS COOK
(personable)
I enjoy your work, Ms. Cole. You've done some provocative stories. I particularly admired your look at child labor.

KATHLEEN
Thank you. What line of work are you in Mr. Cook?

RICHARD
(answering for him)
Mr. Cook makes his living selling ivory.

And Thomas angrily reddens finding it inappropriate to discuss that kind of thing here.

THOMAS COOK
Mr. Leahey likes to forget his good upbringing.
(a beat)
I'm a trader. Coffee. Textiles. African goods. I trade in many things.

RICHARD
(won't let him off the hook, simply)
Mr. Cook trades mostly, in death.

KATHLEEN
(a beat, contentous)
It has been a bad season for ivory, hasn't it Mr. Cook?

THOMAS COOK
(unruffled)
I have a house in Macao. I have a ranch here in Kenya. I live by myself. I have everything I could ever want.
(smiles)
I don't have a bad season, Ms. Cole.

KATHLEEN

(jumping on the
opportunity)

Would you do an interview with me for
our program?

THOMAS COOK

(self-deprecating)

I don't think anybody's really very
interested in what a coffee trader
might have to say.

(smiles)

But I'm sure our friend Mr. Leakey,
would have plenty to say on the
subject.

(beat, innocently)

Did you know that over sixty suspected
poachers have been killed? The
innocent and the guilty alike. Kenya
is bathing in blood. Some have even
suggested that for Mr. Leakey, it's
become personal...a crusade.

Richard won't rise to his bait. And before anything else can
be said:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

Ladies and Gentlemen, the President of
Kenya, his eminence, Daniel Arap Moi.

The doors are opened, and Mr. Moi, with a large, loyal
entourage, and the everpresent Security Men, comes into the
great hall, an Orchestra playing the Kenyan version of "Hail
To The Chief," for him. The people applauding him as he
walks by them through the room. He reaches a microphone.

MR. MOI

Twenty-five years ago today we won our
independence. We are now one of the
great democracies on earth. Would you
join with me in wishing our country a
happy birthday.

And the Orchestra plays the Kenyan National Anthem. The
people singing the anthem in Swahili. And we watch Richard,
and Thomas Cook, looking at each other, both of them singing
the stirring anthem, each with his own particular interest, a
very subtle war. And in its own way, knowing Richard's
strong feelings as an African, particularly a Kenyan, it's
oddly compelling, and moving. The song finishes. The
Orchestra playing a familiar show tune.

THOMAS COOK

(about to leave
them)

It was a pleasure meeting you Ms.
Cole.

KATHLEEN

I hope you'll reconsider doing an
interview Mr. Cook.

THOMAS COOK
 (smiles, charming)
 Believe me, it's not easy, Ms. Cole,
 to turn down a charming woman like
 you.

KATHLEEN
 (pure Kathleen,
 smiles)
 I've been turned down by better men
 than you, Mr. Cook.

He laughs at her answer. And turning to Richard:

THOMAS COOK
 (nodding a
 goodbye)
 Mr. Leahey.

Richard's quiet. And Thomas starts to go. But he turns back
 to look at Richard, and as if an afterthought...

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)
 I'm sure you're familiar with the
 expression, Mr. Leahey...

And he says something in Swahili, and walks off...Richard's
 quiet.

KATHLEEN
 What did he say?

RICHARD
 Basically...
 (ominous)
 "There is more than one way to skin a
 cat."

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - NIGHT, LATER

We see Richard and Kathleen, each with a glass of champagne,
 not Richard's first, sitting alone at a table. The Orchestra
 playing. Most of the guests gone home. The last few
 stubborn dancers on the dance floor.

KATHLEEN
 (looking at the
 time)
 I have to get up early. My flight's
 at six.

He nods. There's an awkward quiet.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
 I'm going to miss you, Mr. Leahey.

It's hard for him to express his feelings. She doesn't push
 it. It's quiet.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)
 (a beat, smiles,
 brave)
 Shall we dance.

RICHARD
 (nods)
 I don't see why not.

They get up going onto the near empty dance floor. While they dance:

KATHLEEN
 I was wrong.

RICHARD
 Wrong? About what?

KATHLEEN
 You are dangerous.

He laughs. And they're quiet. He puts his hand on the small of her back. They look at each other, intimate. And as she puts her head on his shoulder, dancing with him...a palace door blows open...the breeze ruffling their clothing...And on the breeze comes the first drops of rain...And as Richard and Kathleen dance, the rain falling outside...

MEAVE'S VOICE (OVER)
 And as they do every year, the rain's
 came to Africa...and everything simply
 stops...

EXT. AN AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

And we see a family of elephants standing on a plain, rain falling on them.

EXT. ANOTHER AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

Wildebeast and gazzele and giraffes standing in the rain.

EXT. ANOTHER AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

A lone lion sitting motionless on a veldt, in the rain.

EXT. ANOTHER AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

Anne, sitting in the brush under a tarp, to keep out the rain:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PARK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Joseph and Mr. Kipriano standing in the doorway looking out at the rain.

EXT. A TANZANIAN VILLAGE - DAY

Fat Kombo, along with the Man with the ring through his lip, and some other men, familair to us as poachers, standing on a shack's porch looking at the rain.

EXT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH, KENYA - DAY

Thomas Cook silently sitting on his porch looking at the rain.

EXT. AN AIRSTRIP, KENYA - DAY

Richard's plane standing on an airstrip in the rain.

INT. THE KENYAN WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

Hellen Ojukwu sitting at her desk quietly looking out the window at the rain. Richard, in his office, standing at the window, looking outside. The RADIO'S on, Richard monitoring the parks' transmissions:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)
(on radio, in
Swahili,
subtitles)
...Slowboat 5, we're at the north Gate
of Tsavo...all clear...

ANOTHER MAN'S VOICE (OVER)
(on radio, in
Swahili,
subtitles)
This is Sibiloi 17...We're moving to
the west end...all quiet....

ANOTHER MAN'S VOICE (OVER)
(on radio, in
Swahili,
subtitles)
....At the Kilimanjaro crossing...all
is quiet...

As Richard looks out the window:

MEAVE'S VOICE (OVER)
There's a saying in Swahili...

She says something in Swahili...

MEAVE'S VOICE (OVER)
The rain is..."the storm before the
storm..."

INT. AN AFRICAN BAR, NAIROBI - DAY

And as we see Richard in an African Bar, drinking alone:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PRESERVE - DAY

The rain's stopped. And we see a SAFARI TOUR, jeeps with a group of MIDDLE AGED TOURISTS, coming through the park. And as they stop to take photographs of some giraffes:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI, A SAFARI CAMP - NIGHT

The TOURISTS at their safari camp, eating dinner at camp tables by a River. A middle-aged Man, finished eating, gets up, taking a constitutional, walking along the riverbank. He stops to look at the peaceful water, alone with his thoughts. And suddenly there's GUNFIRE from some brush along the River. The Man shot in the chest. He stumbles back toward the camp for some feet, and falls, dead. And we hear the SOUND of a PHONE RINGING.

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE, NAIROBI - LATE NIGHT

Richard, awakened, answering the phone.

RICHARD

Yes.

And hearing the news he's still.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(quietly)

Thank you.

And he quietly hangs up. He gets up looking out at Nairobi. And all he can think about are Thomas Cook's parting words..."There is more than one way to skin a cat."

EXT. TSAVO - A CAMPSITE, NIGHT

We see a young COUPLE, TOURISTS, lying together in a sleeping bag at their campsite, quietly talking. And suddenly there's the SOUND of GUNFIRE. And a hail of bullets, tearing through the tent, kill them where they lay.

EXT. THE CAMPSITE - EARLY MORNING

And we see Rangers guarding the campsite. Richard and Mr. Kipriano standing outside the shredded, blood splattered tent. Policemen taking body bags out of the tent, putting them in an ambulance.

MR. KIPRIANO

...They were from Italy. On their honeymoon.

Richard nods.

MR. KIPRIANO (cont'd)

(seeing)

The press is here...Should I send them away...

And we see some jeeps have arrived.

RICHARD

(shakes "no")

I'll talk to them...

Mr. Kipriano waves to a Ranger to let the reporters through. And as the reporters come toward Richard:

EXT. THE CAMPSITE - LATER

Richard standing talking to the newsmen...

RICHARD

It happened on my watch. I take full responsibility.

A REPORTER

Do you think this is retaliation from the poachers for your shoot to kill policy?

RICHARD

(burdened)

I can't say what goes on in other people's minds. Whatever they call themselves, they are no better than cowardly killers.

A REPORTER

(the real question)

Are the parks safe for tourists Mr. Leakey?

RICHARD

(a beat, passionate)

If they are not...I promise you, they will be...We will double our patrols...We will search out those who would jeopardize the safety and security of the parks wherever they live...inside, or outside of Kenya...

(beat)

And to those that give the orders, I say to them, you are marked men, and your time will come...

And having said all he's going to say, and as he turns and leaves:

INT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH, KENYA - DAY

We see Mr. Cook, in his living-room, playing the piano, a classical piece. And as his hands move across the ivory keys:

EXT. A VILLAGE, KENYA - DAY

We suddenly see Rangers running into a village. They burst into a hut. And as they pull a Man out:

EXT. ANOTHER TOWNSHIP - DAY

We see Rangers, weapons leveled, escorting a group of ragged looking Men along a dirt street.

INT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH - DAY

Thomas, playing the piano.

EXT. A STOCKADE - KENYA, DAY

And we see a makeshift, barbed-wire stockade, filled with DETAINEES. And we see Richard, Joseph walking alongside him, and trailed by two Ranger bodyguards, walking through the stockade. And it's quiet, Richard walking past the hollow eyes of the men...

JOSEPH ole KATITIA

(upset)

I was taught in a democracy, that even the poorest, the most despised, are entitled to justice. This is not justice.

(a beat)

What are you going to do when you run out of people, Mr. Leakey?

RICHARD

(angry)

Justice? When they shot that tourist at the river -- When they killed that couple in their sleeping bag...Was that justice? Don't tell me about justice Mr. Katitia.

And as Richard walks through the crowded stockade:

INT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH - DAY

And as Thomas plays the ivory keys:

EXT. THE LAETOLI BEDS - LATE AFTERNOON

The sky's dark, threatening. We see Richard's plane landing on a barren plain. He gets out. And we see he's come to an abandoned encampment. The site of Mary Leakey's greatest discovery. The footprints. It's empty now. A tourist site. The footprints protected by a fence. We see a jeep's parked there. And we see Mary, chilled, despite wearing a long coat, smoking her "famous" cigar, standing looking at the footprints. If it's possible, she's grown even thinner, her physical body on the verge of "disappearing."

RICHARD

They said you came out here...

And she's annoyed at the intrusion.

MARY LEAKEY

I think I can go anywhere I damn well please.

And he knows not to try and engage her.

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)

(beat)

I understand you are up to your neck in trouble.

He reluctantly nods.

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
 Who are you doing this for, Richard?
 For Kenya, or yourself? Because if
 it's for yourself, you better find
 something else to do, before it
 destroys you.

He's quiet. And she starts walking along with the
 footprints, following them. She stops.

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
 (a revelation)
 I know where she was going.

And it's still, Mary standing with the three million year old
 footprints.

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
 (looking off)
 ...To find out what was over the
 hill...through the valley...across the
 river...
 (a beat, for her
 approaching
 eternity, another
 adventure)
 She was going to find out what was
 next.

And she smiles at that notion.

RICHARD
 (a beat)
 It will be dark soon. I think you
 should start going back.

MARY LEAKEY
 I'm going to spend the night here.

He looks at her, concerned.

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
 (allaying his
 concern, wry)
 What's going to happen that isn't
 going to happen anyway?

He's quiet, knowing he can't dissuade her. And that said,
 she turns her back on him, walking along with the
 footprints...Richard takes a last long look at her, her small
 hunched figure, smoking her cigar...and he's about to start
 back to his plane...when she turns, like the "woman" did
 those millions of years ago, as if she had heard something;
 the wind, a bird, a thought left behind...And she says...

MARY LEAKEY (cont'd)
 (without any
 conditions)
 I love you.

And that's all he ever wanted from her, her love. And she turns again, following the footprints, walking off into the distance. Richard turns to his plane. He gets in. He taxis out. And takes off. And as he flies over her, a woman alone, walking on the plain, going to find what's next...

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, MR. MOI'S STUDY - NIGHT

We see Richard standing in a darkened study. And we see Mr. Moi is sitting at a desk, the only light from his desk lamp. And we see Newspapers are on the desk. The headlines, with accompanying photographs: "Another Tourist Killed."

MR. MOI

(upset)

I've issued a statement that these are isolated incidents. That you have assured me that our parks are safe for tourists.

RICHARD

(angry)

I never said that. I can't give that assurance.

MR. MOI

(erupts)

The truth isn't the issue here, Mr. Leakey! This country cannot survive without tourists. I don't care what you say or you don't say! I am still the President of this country, not you!

It's dead quiet.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

And if you can't handle the situation, Mr. Leakey, I will. If I have to I will have the army called in. If I have to I will provide an armed escort for each and every tourist. If you want a war, Mr. Leakey, I will give you a war. I'll be damned if I'll let this country come apart.

A Man comes into the room. He quietly says something to Mr. Moi. Mr. Moi nods. The Man gives Richard a note, and leaves. Richard opens the note, looking at it. Whatever it is he doesn't show a reaction.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

Is there a problem?

RICHARD

My mother passed away.

EXT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - DUSK

The light is dying on the distant veldt. And we see Richard sitting beside Meave, with Richard's and Meave's children, two boys, 18 and 16, and other friends and family, on a log outside the ranch house. And we see they're watching a huge bon fire burning. And we see on the fire, is a funeral pyre, and wrapped in an African fabric, like muslin, is the great woman's, Mary Leakey's, mortal remains. And as the fire burns, her ashes blowing on the wind, as she wanted, taken by the wind across the plains of Africa, the only place big enough to keep her.

EXT. THE LEAKEY HOUSE - EVENING

The house is lit up. People inside, eating, talking. And we see Richard and Meave sitting alone in the shadows on the porch.

MEAVE

(recounting,
laughing)

...And she said to me...that's
rubbish...Richard never does anything
for anybody but himself...

And Richard laughs at the reminisce. And their laughter trails off, and they're quiet.

MEAVE (cont'd)

(meaning his work,
genuinely
concerned)

Have you taken on more than you can
chew?

Richard's quiet.

MEAVE (cont'd)

(smiles, used to
him)

I didn't really expect an answer from
you.

He smiles, she knows him well. And they're quiet again.

MEAVE (cont'd)

It's curious. When we were together I
was used to not having you around.
Now, that you're not around, I can't
seem to get used to it.

And it seems like she might cry. But she's too proud for that.

MEAVE (cont'd)

I'm going off to explore a new site.
There may be paintings as old as
sixty-thousand years. I'll be back in
the spring...

It's quiet. And Richard finally speaks.

RICHARD

(musing)

Have you ever noticed you can describe a person by the season? Mother was definitely the fall. Father, the "lion" in winter...

And he's quiet again. And after some moments he says:

RICHARD (cont'd)

When I think of you, Meave. I always think of the spring.

And now she can't stop herself from crying. But she won't let him see her, and she gets up going into the house. And as Richard sits alone on the porch, the embers still burning from the fire, and somebody's put on some classical music in the house.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE/THE AMBOSELI PLAIN - DAY

We see Richard flying over the game preserve. And he sees below him a family of elephants. And he sees one of the elephants is down. And he sees ANNE, out of her jeep, kneeling by the fallen elephant, trying in some way to help it. Richard turns the plane and lands.

EXT. THE PLAIN - DAY

Richard gets out of his plane. A female elephant is lying motionless, in the brush, on its side. Other elephants stand nearby. And he sees Anne is covered with blood. And he sees she's struggling to help birth an elephant calf.

ANNE

(upset)

...The mother's dead...The calf's breeched...If I can't get it free, it will die too...

(struggling to

birth the calf)

Please help me.

But he's surprisingly still. Unwilling to help her.

RICHARD

You know, this is how it's supposed to be. You can't stand in nature's way...

And Anne suddenly erupts, shouting:

ANNE

This isn't how it's supposed to be!

(brokenhearted)

I lost a child. I know what that feels like.

Richard's still.

ANNE (cont'd)

Don't tell me this is nature's way...!
Don't tell this is how it's supposed
to be!

And she reaches to try to pull out the calf...

ANNE (cont'd)

(a heartbreaking
plea)

Please, Richard....I can't let this
one die...

And it's beyond any philosophy. And he comes beside her, kneeling in the blood, reaching to help her...And they manage together to bring the calf out of the elephant. The calf lying on its side, barely alive, struggling to breathe. And Anne, quite literally, breathes in the calf's mouth, trying to get its respiratory system working...And the calf opens its eyes...And its first instinct is to try to get to its feet. It stands on its small stumpy legs, wobbles, and falls. It picks itself back up, finding out what the earth feels like. And there's something heroic about it, the simple act of standing, the first moments of life. And the calf, smelling its mother's milk, lies down beside her, nursing, the last vital fluid she will ever provide. And Anne and Richard are still. And Richard, from everything that's gone on, can't hold his feelings in anymore, and overcome with emotion, he begins to cry...And he says what he can't hide any longer...

RICHARD

I can't do it anymore. I feel like
I'm surrounded by death.

She affectionately touches his shoulder.

ANNE

Ten thousand elephants are alive
because of you...

RICHARD

At what cost? The bodies, lying under blankets; on the trails, in the roads, on the floors of thatched roofed huts. For what? Poor, desperate men, trying to feed their families. Trying to find some self-respect. I don't know whose side I'm on anymore. I'm an archeologist, not a bloody soldier.

And as if to underscore what he's saying a Helicopter Gunship, patrolling, appears out of nowhere, flying low over them, roaring by. And in it's wake, it's still. Anne and Richard sitting in the dirt. And the calf, finished nursing, comes to stand by them. It reaches with its trunk, touching first Anne's face, and then Richard's, trying to understand what species it's from. Trying to understand what is life. And Anne says what she ultimately believes. Answering him:

ANNE

Why do "we" presume the earth is the
rightful province of man alone?

(meaning the
elephants)

They have as much right to the earth
as we do. And we must defend them.

And as they sit on the plain by the fallen mother, her
"child" not alone in this world.

EXT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - LATE AFTERNOON

We see Richard getting out of a jeep. He slows. And we see
Kathleen's standing on the porch.

KATHLEEN

(after a beat)

I couldn't wait another month to see
you.

And as he comes up onto the porch, and she holds him:

INT. THE LEAKEY RANCH, THE BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

They make love. But somehow it's different. It's quiet.
The light isn't the same. And as a curtain blows on a
breeze:

EXT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - LATE AFTERNOON

They sit out at a stone table, with a bottle of wine, in the
overgrown garden. It's quiet. And there's a feeling they
haven't been doing much talking. Something's changed.
Kathleen gets up, she looks out at the veldt, at the
silhouettes of the animals. After some moments:

KATHLEEN

How would you feel if I came back --
lived here in Africa with you...

He's quiet. And for once in his life, he doesn't need to be
seductive, or clever, for once, he doesn't desperately need
to be loved...

RICHARD

(honestly)

I don't know if I can share my life
with anyone, Kathleen.

She's still.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Six months of the year I'm digging at
the Lake Turkana site. Another month
I'm traveling, begging for money. I
spend the rainy season on the Isle of
Lamu. I spend the holidays with my
children.

(MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)

I drink too much. I'm a lousy father,
and a worse husband. I'm a selfish
man, Kathleen. And I don't know if I
can ever change.

She's quiet. And we expect her to rage at him, beg or plead
or cry...but instead...she quietly laughs, self-effacing...

KATHLEEN

I feel like such a fool.

RICHARD

A fool?

KATHLEEN

(a wan smile)

I traveled 12,000 miles to be stood
up.

And she's quiet. And the other shoe drops.

KATHLEEN (cont'd)

(after a beat)

If I told you, I know all that, and I
loved you anyway...

And he says the most honest thing of all.

RICHARD

I don't know anything about love,
Kathleen.

And he's thinking about Meave...

RICHARD (cont'd)

I haven't stopped thinking about
myself long enough to love anybody
else...not the way it should be...

(after a beat)

Go home, Sunny...Put your husband's
death behind you, and find somebody
who deserves your love.

And it's hard to know if it's the mention of her husband, or
his rejection, but hands in her pockets, she begins to softly
cry. And he comes to her, holding her.

RICHARD (cont'd)

If I could make it with anyone else,
it would be with you, Sunny...

And it's quiet. She looks at him...his dark eyes...And
smiles...

KATHLEEN

I checked...there's no such bird as
a "night sparrow."

RICHARD

(smiles, busted)

I took a shot.

She laughs. They look at each other. And knowing it's over:

KATHLEEN

Can I fly your plane once more?

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - AT DUSK

And we see Kathleen, with Richard, flying the plane over an African plain. The animals, like Isak Dinesen's "fields of wheat," one herd after another. And she takes the plane down...flying low over the herds of animals...And the animals start to run...Running across the plain. And the whole plain, as far as the eye can see, seems to be moving as one...And as she flies over the animals, saying goodbye to Africa.

EXT. A SMALL AIRFIELD, NAIROBI - NIGHT

And we see Kathleen and Richard standing by his plane.

KATHLEEN

The show will be on in a few weeks.
Let me know what you think.

He nods, but she knows they'll never see each other again.

RICHARD

(after a beat)

There's another full eclipse of the
sun in 2079. Why don't we meet then?

She smiles. He turns, getting into his plane. He starts the engine, the propeller turning. He lights a cigar. He looks out the small window at her. He turns the plane, taxiing to the end of the runway. And he takes off:

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - NIGHT

He circles the small airfield, looking down at Kathleen, hands in her pockets, standing on the tarmac.

EXT. THE AIRFIELD - NIGHT

She watches the plane turn. And as she watches him fly off into the African night:

INT. THE AMBOSELI PARK HEADQUARTERS - ANOTHER DAY

And we see Richard with Mr. Kipriano, and two Rangers, standing over a Man, his hands cuffed behind his back, sitting on the floor of a small holding cell.

MR. KIPRIANO

He says he knows where the stockpiles
of ivory is stored....He says for
\$10,000 he will show us...

RICHARD

(a beat, nods)

He will show us. And he will show us
for free.

The Man says something in Swahili, cursing him....

MR. KIPRIANO

He said you can go --

RICHARD

I know what he said...

(a beat)

Take him up...

And as the Rangers pull him to his feet...

EXT. THE VELDT, AMBOSELI - DAY

And we see Richard, along with Mr. Kipriano, the two Rangers, and the reticent Man, driving in a jeep across the veldt.

RICHARD

(motions)

This is fine...

The jeep comes to a stop.

RICHARD (cont'd)

Please take the handcuffs off of him,
Mr. Kipriano.

Mr. Kipriano dutifully uncuffs the Man. The Man, not understanding, looks at him.

RICHARD (cont'd)

(to the Man,
casual)

You're free to go...

He opens the door for him. The Man hesitates. He gets out. The jeep starts to leave. The Man looks around him. He slows. And he sees not a hundred feet from him, lying in the brush, a pride of lions. And as the Man screams after them:

THE MAN

Mr. Leakey!!!

EXT. THE DOCKS, MOMBASSA, KENYA - DAY

The busy Kenyan seaport. And we see a WAREHOUSE. "Pan Asian Coffee Company." And suddenly a virtual army of Kenyan Police converge on the Warehouse. Police cars racing up. A helicopter circling. Policemen surrounding the warehouse. And we see Richard getting out of one of the Police cars. He goes inside.

INT. MOMBASSA WAREHOUSE - DAY

And we see the warehouse is filled with burlap bags of Kenyan coffee. A Warehouseman, agitated, is talking to the Police. Workers, stopped, silently watching. Richard looks at the sacks of coffee. He suddenly takes a knife from a counter, and slits open one of the large bags of coffee...coffee beans spilling on the floor. Nothing more. He cuts open another bag. Same result. And another. The same result. And he's quiet. He notices a back door.

RICHARD
 (to the
 Warehouseman, in
 Swahili,
 subtitles)
 Where does that lead?

THE MAN
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles)
 A storage room.

RICHARD
 (in Swahili,
 subtitles)
 Open it.

The Warehouseman unlocks the door. Richard goes inside. A storage room, nothing more. Richard's quiet. He starts to leave. And he notices that no dirt has accumulated around a piece of heavy machinery, as if it was recently moved.

RICHARD (cont'd)
 (a beat, to the
 police, in
 Swahili,
 subtitles)
 Help me move this.

They move the piece of heavy machinery. And they see, under the machinery is a trap door. Richard opens it. He goes down a ladder under the floor, to a basement. He waits for a moment his eyes adjusting to the dark. He can just make out some shapes in the dark. He runs his hand along a wall, searching for a light switch. He finds it. He turns it on. And he's still. Stacked like firewood, from the floor to the ceiling, are elephant tusks. One on top of each other. There must be ten thousand of them. A graveyard of tusks. And as Richard stands motionless, standing in the "graveyard."

EXT. A NAIROBI SQUARE - DAY

A Square's ringed by Police. A crowd filling the square. And we see Mr. Moi, in his familiar traditional carved chair, flanked by his everpresent Security Men, the "Baba Moi," sitting like a King in the street. And we see Richard standing nearby. And we see Television and News Cameras are set up. And we see the object of the attention; The ELEPHANT TUSKS, are piled, ten feet high, like so many sticks of wood, in the middle of the street. Richard crosses to a microphone. Cameras roll. Bulbs flash.

RICHARD
 We have confiscated what we believe to be the largest store of ivory in the world. Over ten million dollars in elephant tusks. This money could be used for many important things in Kenya. But none would be as important as what we are about to do today.

He motions at Mr. Kipriano. And Mr. Kipriano suddenly lights a torch, putting the torch to the tusks. And the tusks, covered with gasoline, start to burn.

RICHARD (cont'd)

The only way to stop the poaching, to stop the killing, is to make the ivory useless. We are sending back the souls, if you will, of these five thousand elephants, sending them back to their rightful place, to their home, the soil of Kenya.

And as the ivory burns, the ashes, like his mother's, blowing over the city...Richard sees across the fire, among the crowd, a familiar figure. The white bearded figure of Thomas Cook. He sees Thomas turn, and walk away. And as Richard watches the ivory burning, burning for the souls of the elephants, and the men that killed them, their ashes taken on the wind home.

INT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - NIGHT

We see Richard, a drink in his hand, sitting in the living room. And we see a television's on. Richard watching Kathleen's show. And we see on the television Kathleen, sitting with a co-host, introducing her segment:

KATHLEEN

(on the screen)

I met someone you should know about.

And we see elephants roaming across the plain in the sunset.

RICHARD'S VOICE (OVER)

This is where man came from. This is where humanity arose, and elephants were part of that.

And we see Poachers shooting elephants. Elephants dropping on the ground. And we see Richard walking toward some of his Rangers in combat uniforms.

KATHLEEN'S VOICE (OVER)

And this is Kenya's commanding General. Don't be misled by his wrinkled clothing and his middle aged-paunch.

Richard almost smiles.

KATHLEEN'S VOICE (OVER)

(after a beat)

A rumpled museum leader has become more deadly than his enemies in the field. And he has become a hero.

And Richard, having seen enough, quietly gets up, going outside....

EXT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - NIGHT

He sits on the porch. There's a slight sound. He turns. And he sees the harmless neighborhood LEOPARD is standing in the road, looking at him. They look at each other.

RICHARD

What do you want?

And the leopard takes some steps closer. Stops.

RICHARD (cont'd)

What is it...?

And closer. Coming next to Richard. And like a house cat, needing attention, he rubs his flank up against Richard's legs. And the leopard, feeling at home, lays its head on Richard's lap. Richard smiles. He strokes its head.

RICHARD (cont'd)

You like to be petted, huh? You like to be loved.

And a melancholy comes over Richard like a wave. He turns, looking back in the house, looking at Kathleen's image on the television. And he wonders what his life might have been...And looking at her, her earnest way, her hands in her pockets, her smile, he has a passing moment of regret. And the leopard, hearing something rustling in the bushes, suddenly jumps up, bounding after the sound. And it's still, just the sounds of the African night. And as Richard sits on the porch, alone again, with just the sounds of the night... Kathleen on the television behind him:

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PLAIN - NIGHT

We see Joseph ole Katitia, in a jeep...on patrol...His jeep's headlights spot a wounded deer, lying on the ground, dying... He stops the jeep. He gets out. He bends over the deer...He hears a slight sound. Metallic. He turns. And suddenly SHOTS are fired from the dark. And Joseph, hit, stumbles into some bushes. He sits heavily on the ground. And we can see blood covering his uniform shirt. There are the sounds of VOICES. The Men looking in the bushes for him. He pulls himself up. He moves through the bushes, deeper and deeper. Badly hurt, he sits down again. The Voices getting further and further away. He pulls himself up again. He walks back onto the plain. And gathering what's left of his strength he starts walking across the plain. He takes his bloody shirt off. And as he makes his way across the endless plain:

INT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - NIGHT

We see Richard's fallen asleep on the couch. The phone RINGS. He gets it.

MR. KIPRIANO'S VOICE (OVER)

(on the phone)

Mr. Katitia has gone missing. He hasn't called in for three hours.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - NIGHT

The moon shows the way. And we see Richard, flying over the great Amboseli preserve, looking for Joseph...And he sees in the moonlight, just distinguishable, a distant figure, walking. Richard turns the plane, landing.

EXT. THE GREAT AMBOSELI PLAIN - NIGHT

He gets out of the plane. And he sees Joseph's tall, dignified figure, his shirt off, walking toward him. And he sees that Joseph's mortally wounded. And Richard walks toward him, quicker and quicker, Joseph coming toward him the other way. And reaching him, Joseph, falls into his arms.

JOSEPH ole KATITIA

I am very sorry, sir...

And as Richard stands holding him, and he dies in Richard's arms on the Amboseli plain...

EXT. THE AMBOSELI PLAIN - ANOTHER DAY

We see Joseph's naked body lying in a shallow grave under an acacia tree. We Pull Back and see a tribe of Maasai, are standing around the grave. Joseph's widow, holding an infant, standing closest to the grave. And we see Richard, along with Mr. Kipriano, and Joseph's fellow Rangers, the Rangers standing at attention for their fallen comrade. And we watch as a Maasai Chief leads his tribe, performing a traditional Maasai funeral...And finished, the body left in the open grave...the people turn and move on, moving back across the plain on their journey, leaving Joseph, a part of the good earth he came from. And as Richard, walks away, he stops for a moment to look back. He stands by himself for a moment looking back at Joseph. And as he turns to leave:

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - EARLY MORNING, ANOTHER DAY

Richard, silently flying.

EXT. THE TANZANIAN BORDER TOWN - EARLY MORNING

The silent street. And we suddenly see jeeps coming around the corner. Heavily armed Rangers. The jeeps pull to a stop. Rangers, breaking open a door, running into a shack. Some moments, and they come back out with, a barefoot, and barely clothed, Fat Kombo. They put him in a jeep. And as they leave as swiftly and as silently as they came, taking him back to Kenya.

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - EARLY MORNING

Richard, silently flying.

EXT. A POACHER'S CAMP - EARLY MORNING

We see heavily armed Poachers camped in the brush along the Kenyan border. And suddenly Rangers come bursting through the brush into the camp...rousting them...And as they put them in a truck, taking them back to Kenya...

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - EARLY MORNING

Richard, silently flying.

EXT. A SMALL KENYAN TOWN - EARLY MORNING

And we see the apprehended MEN, there must be a hundred of them, among them, Fat Kombo, sitting unceremoniously in the street...Rangers standing guard around them. We SLOWLY PULL BACK and we see that they're sitting in the street outside of a local COURTHOUSE, waiting for the court to open...as Joseph would have wanted it, abiding by the law: And there is another law:

EXT. THOMAS COOK'S RANCH - MORNING

We see Thomas, in his familiar place, sitting under his umbrella out on the veldt. We see a plane coming out of the sky. Richard's plane, coming in for a landing. Richard gets out. He comes to a stop a short distance from Thomas. And he sees Thomas is watching a bloody faced lion, eating a wildebeast.

THOMAS COOK
(aknowledging him)
Mr. Leahey. What do I owe this pleasure?

RICHARD
(quietly)
I've come to arrest you for the murder of Joseph Ole Katitia.

THOMAS COOK
You've come by yourself?

RICHARD
(nods, sure)
I don't think I'll need anybody else.

THOMAS COOK
(smiles)
Do you think I'm going to quietly go back with you, Mr. Leahey? Stand before your court?

RICHARD
One way or another, you'll be leaving here, Mr. Cook.

Thomas smiles at his threat. Richard quietly walks over to him...to show that he means what he says...And Thomas says:

THOMAS COOK
(meaning the lion and his prey)
I told you all along, Mr. Leahey, it's the survival of the fittest.

Richard doesn't say anything. And suddenly, as if to prove that, Thomas fires his rifle, as he did once before, hitting the distant lion in the side. And the lion, enraged, turns, running at the source of his pain. Running at Thomas and Richard...

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

(confident)

He doesn't know it. He won't survive.
He has bullet in his heart. In less
than a minute he will be dead.

The lion keeps coming. And coming. Thomas looks at Richard. He shows no fear.

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

(wry)

You trust me, Mr. Leakey?

Richard doesn't say anything. And the lion keeps coming at them. Twenty feet from them...And ten feet from them. And eight feet from them. Running at them. And five feet from them. Both of the men motionless. A test of will. And three feet from them. And fear crosses Thomas's eyes. And two feet...

RICHARD

(a beat)

I think, Mr. Cook, you missed.

And the lion has a choice who to attack, and quickly looking at both men, making his choice, he suddenly leaps on Thomas. His massive jaws at his throat. Thomas, trying to fend him off...

THOMAS COOK

(to Richard,
screams)

The rifle...shoot him...!

Richard takes up the rifle...

THOMAS COOK (cont'd)

(desperate,
screaming)

Shoot him...! Shoot him...!

Richard raises the rifle, as if he's going to shoot the lion...There's a moment of decision...And making up his mind, he puts the rifle down, and turning, quietly walks back across the veldt to his plane...He gets into the plane, taxis away, taking off...And as we hear the lion roar..."The survival of the fittest."

INT. MR. MOI'S OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

And we see Richard and Mr. Moi in the President's Office.

RICHARD

(reporting)

There hasn't been a single poaching in three months...Tourists can watch the animals in complete safety...The fences, for the time being, have kept the animals out of the farmers crops...

(a beat)

Other farms will come, and the land will shrink, threatening the animals...and there will be the need for more fences...Soon enough, by overpopulating, there will be more elephants than the land can sustain...and we will have to cull the herds...kill the elephants ourselves...but these are problems for the future....

(a beat)

...For somebody else...

MR. MOI

(slows)

Someone else?

RICHARD

I would like to tender my resignation.

Mr. Moi's quiet.

MR. MOI

You have done an admirable job...confirmed my faith in you...Your resignation is not accepted.

RICHARD

(shakes "no," his
mind made up)

I need to get back to my shovel.

Mr. Moi looks at him with his quiet eyes.

MR. MOI

You wouldn't have political aspirations would you Mr. Leakey. You wouldn't, perhaps, want my job.

RICHARD

(wry)

Anything's possible.

The tone's light. But there's an undercurrent that seems somehow, threatening. They look at each other.

MR. MOI

I said only one of us would be left standing.

RICHARD

(nods)

I guess you were wrong.

They look at each other. And nothing more to be said, they shake hands, and Richard turns to leave...

MR. MOI

Mr. Leakey...

Richard slows.

MR. MOI (cont'd)

(his quiet eyes)

I'm not used to being wrong.

RICHARD

There's always a first time for everything, your excellence.

They look at each other. There's still no love lost. And as Richard turns and leaves:

EXT. A SMALL AIRFIELD, KENYA - DAY

The sky's dark with storm clouds, threatening...And we see Richard and Mr. Kipriano standing by Richard's plane, getting ready to get on the plane...And Mr. Kipriano's stopped, looking at the sky. And he seems upset.

MR. KIPRIANO

(hesitates)

I would rather not go, sir...

RICHARD

You're still afraid of flying...?

Mr. Kipriano doesn't say anything.

MR. KIPRIANO

(a beat, still
upset)

Goodbye, sir.

They look at each other. A mutual respect. And they shake hands. And Mr. Kipriano makes the handshake linger longer than it should...

MR. KIPRIANO (cont'd)

I will miss you very much. It has been the best experience of my life.

RICHARD

I will miss you, too.

And Mr. Kipriano completely out of character...suddenly embraces Richard, holding him close...

MR. KIPRIANO

Maybe it is a bad time for you to fly, Mr. Leakey...Go another day, sir...

And it isn't a question. And there's a feeling something else is going on here...But Richard chooses to ignore it...

RICHARD
(looking at the
sky, shrugs)

I can fly above the clouds.

They look at each other. Mr. Kipriano seems like he's going to say something...But he doesn't, impassive again. Richard gets on the plane...And as Mr. Kipriano watches him fly off, and he can't stop tears from running down his impassive cheeks...

INT. RICHARD'S PLANE - DAY

And we see he has indeed flown above the clouds. He smokes a cigar, peacefully flying...And suddenly the plane's engine starts to sputter...and dies...Richard manages to get it started again...And it quickly dies again...He tries to start it again...It won't restart at all...And the plane, without power, is quickly starting to lose altitude. Smoke coming out of the engine. And suddenly the engine is on fire. He drops the wheels. He fights to control the plane. But the fire's spread to the hydraulic system. The controls gone. The plane falling like a stone. The plane coming down faster and faster...He fights the yoke trying to keep the nose up...The ground coming up at him...faster and faster...And as he's about to crash...he manages to get the plane to land on its front wheels, but the speed of the landing tips the nose over, the plane slamming into the ground, Richard's legs literally jammed into the floor, crushing them...The plane, still traveling, hitting a small hillock, burying its nose into the hillock, and coming to such a sudden stop that Richard is literally thrown through the windshield, to lie in a crumpled heap outside the plane.

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - DAY

And it's dead still. Richard's motionless figure, his crushed legs horribly bent under him, lying on the plain.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - LATER

And we see from a distance the horrible plane crash. Richard's figure lying motionless by the wreckage. We come closer. And we see something move. The fingers on one of Richard's hands, barely moving, feeling the earth. Richard barely alive. And we see something else is moving. And we see a LIONESS, on its front legs, creeping through the brush toward Richard's body. It stops, lying on the ground, watching it. Measuring its prey. It comes closer. Stops again. Measuring. It moves closer. And closer. And it starts to pace back and forth in front of his body, back and forth, getting ready to attack...It stops, its back up, the hair on its back bristling, its legs going taut, getting ready to spring...When there's an unmistakable sound. The sound of an ELEPHANT. And we see the lop eared "ECHO," the massive grizzled old bull, has come out of the bush...and it suddenly, fiercely, trumpets at the lioness...

And the lioness turning, challenged, suddenly runs at the elephant to attack...and as the lioness leaps to attack him, "Echo" kicks out with its huge leg, kicking her in her undercarriage, sending her flying...The lioness picks herself up, and properly chastened, turns, walking away, occasionally looking back, but wisely moving off to fight another day. And it's quiet. "Echo" looking at Richard's motionless figure. He comes closer. He runs his trunk along Richard's torso. And maybe it's because of Anne, or some primal instinct, or fortune, but suddenly he wraps his trunk around Richard and picks him up. And with Richard, like a rag doll, the elephants trunk wrapped around him, "Echo" starts to walk across the plain with him, taking him to "safety..."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE AFRICAN PLAIN - LATER

And we see "Echo" putting Richard's body down among a family of elephants...the elephants running their trunks over him, spraying dirt on him, as if trying to salve his wounds...And as we see a Ranger's patrol jeep, its headlights on, coming across the plain in the distance...

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM - THE PRESENT, DAY

Richard, his cigar burned down, still sitting on the floor. There's a slight sound. He looks up. And he sees Meave, is standing in the doorway. They look at each other. She looks at his amputated "legs."

RICHARD

I'm half a man.

She's quiet. And she says:

MEAVE

Half a man, you're twice the man
anyone else is.

It's quiet. And she comes to him. Bending to him. And as she holds him, his wife, the one true, and constant, love of his life:

EXT. THE ROAD TO THE LEAKEY RANCH - DAY

We see a jeep coming along the rural road.

INT. THE JEEP - DAY

And we see Meave, driving Richard home. He instinctively scratches one of his ankles. And we see he now has artificial, metal "legs," below the knee. The jeep slows. And we see a tribe of Maasai, moving again, are crossing the road. A Man stops to look in the jeep.

THE MAN

(recognizing him)

It's Mr. Leakey...

And he respectfully takes off his hat.

THE MAN (cont'd)
 (to his tribesmen,
 in Swahili,
 subtitles)

Make room...make room for Mr.
 Leakey...

And the people make room for the car...standing along the side of road. And as Meave drives past them...the people start to applaud...saying his name as they drive past, applauding, saying..."Mr. Leakey. Mr. Leakey. Mr. Leakey.."

EXT. THE LEAKEY RANCH - DAY

The old ranch house. Richard sitting on the porch. A moment, and he gets up. And with the aid of some canes, he starts to walk...He walks through the overgrown garden...Making his way down a hill...And he keeps on walking...slowly, deliberately, walking with the aid of the canes, walking into the distance, down to the veldt. And we watch him from a distance, standing, watching the animals. And we see Meave, off in the distance, has come out of the house, standing on the porch, watching him. And we see a family of elephants has stopped. Richard walks toward them. The leader of the family trumpets, warning him away...Richard stops, not coming any closer, standing leaning on his canes, motionless. And as he stands with "his" elephants on the plain, in this place called "Africa."

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. AN AFRICAN PLAIN - DAYBREAK, ANOTHER DAY

And we see another family of elephants standing on a plain at daybreak. And we see Anne, out of her jeep, is standing with them. And we see she's standing by a particular young elephant. The calf she had help birth, grown now, a young "man," standing firmly on its own four legs, proudly standing with his tusks. And there's the SOUND of an AIRPLANE. Anne looks up. And she sees "Richard's plane" come flying over them. He tips his wings to her. And as she watches him fly off into the African sky, as close as he can get in this life to heaven:

"Presently 173 Nations have enacted laws banning the sale of ivory."

FADE OUT:

- The End -