

BAD TRAVELING

adaptation by
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based upon the
short story by
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EXT. THE VESSEL "BLOODHAWK," AFT -- NIGHT

Lit by LIGHTNING: the CAPTAIN of this two-masted, BRIGANTINE-type SHIP points, terrified.

CAPTAIN
Thanapod! Leeward side!

Face-tattooed MARIL runs toward the MAIN DECK, twisting his momentum to THROW a HARPOON...

FORWARD

A many-legged monstrosity of a CRUSTACEAN is climbing on near midships; its maw and giant claws snapping. Maril's harpoon CLANKS off the thing's SHELL.

The motley CREW of 13 are taking to arms; grabbing AXES, HOOKS and HARPOONS. They charge, MARIL amongst, with the CAPTAIN shouting and hastening them.

Thanapod and CREW meet in frenzied, Harryhausen-esque battle. HARPOONS careen off armored carapace. Jagged legs and claws counter AX strikes. THUNDER RUMBLES. The thanapod's TAIL SWATS crewman CALIS away. Another MAN is IMPALED on a sharp foreleg and flung overboard, SCREAMING. The advancing beast CRACKS a massive YARDARM.

TOWARDS AFT

The CAPTAIN, seeing the inevitable, turns to flee, but the thanapod LURCHES forward -- takes most of the CAPTAIN HEADFIRST into its rapacious mouth.

As the CAPTAIN's kicking LEGS fly off in different directions, the munching beast rears, stalk-eyes wide. Feckless CREW attack its flanks. War-crying and ax-wielding TURK is grasped by one massive claw. The 2nd claw SNIPS him in half at the waist. TURK spews BLOOD.

LIGHTNING FLASHES. The thanapod scuttles, SNAPS LASHINGS and THROWS the COVER off the HATCH.

Retreating SIDEWAYS, it folds itself to fit -- barely -- into the hold, carrying the limp, flopping top-half-of-TURK down in with it.

Crew are shell-shocked, looking to each other. A beat, then... Cabin Boy CERT retches, puking.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFT DECKS -- NIGHT

DEACONS's withered FIST holds up 9 STRAWS.

Hesitant FINGERS arrive to... slowly draw a 3 INCH STRAW.

Cabin Boy CERT's looking gladly down at those 3 inches.

The gathered, miserable CREW is apprehensive as DEACON moves on. Identical twins, MELIS and CALIS step up, with MELIS supporting CALIS (from here on) who has a bandaged, splinted LEG and ARM. They consider, then look together beseechingly to prim BOSUN TORRIN.

TORRIN

It's within my purview to send any one of you down.

Hulking JORVAN gives a GRUNTING scoff of discontent.

TORRIN

Something you wish to add, Jorvan?

JORVAN

All due respect, some of us wonder why we aren't already making for the sharking boats.

TORRIN

Abandon ship in these infested waters, and we'd be as good as dead. Anything else?

JORVAN smiles a big, fake, sharky grin.

JORVAN

For the time being, no.

TORRIN eyes JORVAN, then looks back to the twins.

TORRIN

I believe this is the only fair way.

MELIS and CALIS share a glance, then reach nervously, simultaneously... plucking TWO 3 INCH STRAWS.

MELIS

Thank Cerval!

CALIS

Thank Cerval!

Hulking JORVAN is next. He clears his throat, scratching his stubbled chin as he studies the 6 remaining STRAWS. He wiggles his fingers... extends forefinger and thumb, about to choose, hesitates... instead chooses another.

(CONTINUED)

JORVAN looks sullenly upon the ONE INCH STRAW he's drawn.
The crew, sighing collective relief, knows almost simultaneously to mask delight with MUTTERED condolences.

JORVAN
So... that's it then...
(LOOKS to crew)
Now that we've chosen a leader,
I'll be picking who goes.

All eyes go wide and mouths drop.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN DECK -- NIGHT

TORRIN is throw sprawling to the deck, falling against the edge of the gaping, exploded HATCH.

The crew advance as one, with JORVAN in the lead.

JORVAN
Report what you see.

A rusty SWORD is throw forward, clattering onto the deck. TORRIN takes the sword as he stands, wary of the hatch.

TORRIN
Hold on. Now, hold on. You
needn't manhandle me further.
(POINTING to fore)
I go willingly.

TORRIN crosses... the crew parting to make way.

ACROSS THE MAIN DECK

TORRIN walks to narrow, canted DOUBLE DOORS near the FORE DECKS. Crew observe, semi-circling. TORRIN OPENS the doors. Without recourse, he goes.

BELOW, IN THE HOLD

MOONLIT, terrified TORRIN descends a CIRCULAR STAIRCASE. He glances up. DOORS above SLAM. From the BLACKNESS:

TORRIN'S VOICE
Wonderful.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS

TORRIN emerges from a tight PASSAGEWAY, sword held up in his quavering hand.

(CONTINUED)

A click-CLACKING from the thanapod is HEARD... somewhere. TORRIN creeps thru MOONLIGHT SHAFTS and dim OIL LAMP LIGHT, squinting.

RACKS of side-stacked BARRELS (many open) line outer walls. Upright, stacked BARRELS are lashed to POSTS flanking the wide, BLOOD SMEARED space beneath the HATCH. Across, at aft end, from under a raised PLATFORM, the DARK SHAPE of the thing can be seen, EMERGING.

TORRIN backpedals, reflexively TOSSES the sword...

The rusty implement bounces off the charging monster's flat face as its JAWS gnash.

TORRIN falls back onto the stairs of the passageway as the thanapod SLAMS the opening, its MOUTH snapping open and closed -- unable to breach the confined space.

One palp EYE juts in to study TORRIN as a foreleg probes, at an ineffectively oblique angle, SCRATCHING wood.

Suddenly, the thanapod retreats and... The top-half of TURK -- hoisted antennularily; a grotesque PUPPET -- pops up at the entry.

TURK-PUPPET

Land. Take me. Take me.

Flabbergasted TORRIN gets slowly back to his feet.

TORRIN

I... I don't...

TURK-PUPPET

Land. We go. Now we go.

Both of the creature's eyes loom above TURK-PUPPET.

TORRIN

(to himself)

You've...you've gone mad, Torrin, haven't you? Who could blame you?

TURK-PUPPET

World of dirt. Now. We go now.

TORRIN

I-I'm not sure I understand. Phaiden Island is close, but --

TURK-PUPPET

Phaiden Iiiiiland, yesss. Take me.

(CONTINUED)

TORRIN
Stark raving...

TURK-PUPPET
Phaiden Iiiiiland! Phaiden
Iiiiiiland! I land.

TORRIN
Right. Phaiden Island. It's
just...

TORRIN considers, glances to the fore.

TORRIN
...will take some... convincing.

TURK-PUPPET
Hungry.

TORRIN
Oh.

TURK-PUPPET
Me eat. Meat.

TORRIN
Oh my.

TURK-PUPPET
Me eat meat.

TORRIN ponders, fretful, itches his neck. He looks up,
slowly holding out his hands in submission.

TORRIN
You and I... we'll need to come to
an agreement.

IN THE HOLD

The fidgety, CLICKING thanapod backs slightly as TORRIN
cautiously steps from his safe space into scant light.

TORRIN
Most importantly, I'm the one who
can keep this ship on a straight
keel. Me...
(POINTING in a CIRCLE
to his own face)
...you need alive. *Unconsumed*.
Understand? Otherwise you get
nowhere. You'll end up drifting
in circles.

(CONTINUED)

The drooling thanapod's eyes bob up and down, "nodding."

TORRIN

Good. Now... at the moment,
there's something you possess
which I require.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEAS -- SUNRISE (MOMENTS LATER)

The MOONLIT VESSEL sails GIANT SHARK FIN infested waters.
A great JABLE breeches, CRASHING against the waves.

IN THE HOLD

The thanapod emerges partially into moonlight, feeding
appendages blooming like some deadly flower. It heaves.

TORRIN watches, forearm pressed against his mouth.

The monster expels a large BALL of SAND and SEA SHELL
fragments which contains SHREDDED CLOTHING and pieces of
HUMAN BONE. The thanapod then slowly backs away. TORRIN
digs into the HEAP, sickened. A portion crumbles,
revealing a SHINING OBJECT which TORRIN extracts...
a large, BRASS KEY.

ON THE MAIN DECK

JORVAN, arms crossed, and the mortified CREW all watch
DEACON, who has his ear pressed to the double doors.

DEACON lifts his ear from the door, shakes his head. As
he SHRUGS to the crew, 3 KNOCKS are HEARD, startling all.

The crew share astonished looks. 5 loud KNOCKS are
HEARD. JORVAN goes remove a PLANK from thru the handles.
One DOOR is thrown open and TORRIN emerges.

TORRIN

Thank you, kindly.

TORRIN nods casually to them as he ambles aft thru their
dumbfounded, disbelieving ranks. They all watch.

TORRIN, whistles to himself, trying to remain nonchalant
even as he subtly run-walks toward the AFT DECKS.

Behind, JORVAN realizes, gives chase. The others follow,
CALIS and MELIS bringing up the rear.

At the CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS, TORRIN uses the KEY.

INSIDE THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

TORRIN enters, quickly searching; throws open CUPBOARDS. He dives to crawl under the MAP-strewn NAVIGATION TABLE and goes to peer beneath the BED. He pulls out an ornate WOODEN BOX. Flips the lid open.

OUTSIDE THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

JORVAN leads the crew charging the OPEN DOOR...

TORRIN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I negotiated with *it*...

...where TORRIN emerges, holding up a large REVOLVER.

TORRIN

...as you now must with *me*.

Crew halt, including sinewy CHANTRE, lanky PALN and HELMSMAN SUPARIN, held at bay.

TORRIN

Listen carefully. I'm in no mood to repeat myself. The thing speaks...

PALN

Ain't possible.

TORRIN

...which I haven't the patience to explain beyond saying it wants passage to the nearest island.

CHANTRE

You had a conversation with a crustacean?

TORRIN

Go yourself and ask, if you care to. It's hungry again. Were I you though, I'd place your trust in me, if you wish to survive.

The crew react, beginning to MUTTER amongst themselves.

MARIL

D-did he say what I think he...?

CABIN BOY CERT

Said it's hungry.

(CONTINUED)

SUPARIN

Might've started out with that.

JORVAN

We saw that monstrosity do as it pleased. You'd have us believe you're the one to go up against it?

TORRIN

Thank you again for the unsolicited opinions, Jorvan. As a matter of fact, if we do transport it in the hope that it will spare our lives, we still have nothing substantial to feed it. Unless it craves shark oil. And since it actually seems to have acquired a taste for... well...

(with a SIGH)

I probably shouldn't have implied we might *all* live through this.

The unnerved crewmen begin loudly voicing protestations. JORVAN steps up, pointing to wounded CALIS.

JORVAN

What about him, then? Already half done in, isn't he?

PALN

Looks quite unwell.

MELIS

He's half more alive than anyone else'll be who points a crooked finger at my brother.

Angry raised voices and raised fists ensue.

TORRIN

Enough! We reside together in this misfortune.

CHANTRE

Which puts us right back where we started, doesn't it?

PALN

Yeah, except for, uh...
(jerks head at Torrin
+ makes hand a GUN)
Important distinction.

(CONTINUED)

TORRIN
 (holds up GUN)
 Resorted to only against the
 further dissolution of chain of
 command. But you are correct,
 Chantre. We find ourselves again
 with a grim and terrible choice
 before us.
 (holds a FINGER up)
 Or... or has it *already* been made?

As the crew absorbs this, realizing Torrin's meaning...
 Everyone looks to the as-yet-uncomprehending JORVAN.

CUT TO:

IN THE HOLD

ANGLE ON: DAWN SKY thru the HATCH. JORVAN, SHOUTING,
 appears -- carried bodily, struggling as he's THROWN IN.

ON THE MAIN DECK

The crew retreat; no one daring to linger by the hatch,
 except TORRIN, revolver held, who leans to peer down in.
 JORVAN'S O.S. PLEAS become EXCLAMATIONS... then SCREAMS.

TORRIN
 (quietly to himself)
 Larger the meal, the more time
 between. One hopes.

Torrin grimaces as FLESH TEARING and BONES CRUNCHING are
 HEARD from O.S. He averts his gaze, closing his eyes,
 but opens one eye to take a last peek.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS -- DAY

TORRIN'S THUMB thunks down on PHAIDEN ISLAND on a MAP.

TORRIN
 Phaiden Island. Heavily
 populated, as you all well know.

TORRIN (GUN still in his belt) addresses the 8 other
 remaining CREWMEN across the NAVIGATION TABLE.

TORRIN
 This is where it wants to be
 taken.

(CONTINUED)

PALN

Sounds good.

MARIL

Sounds like a plan.

MELIS

Sooner we get there...

CALIS

...the better.

*

TORRIN regards the men with a furrowed brow.

SUPARIN

With the wind at our backs, it's
another day and a half.

TORRIN

Except... to allow this thanapod
ashore would mean unleashing it on
unsuspecting Phaiden citizenry.

The men MURMUR: "Yeah, well..." "Uh huh."

MARIL

(looking around)

It's not like any of us's got kin
there, am I right?

MELIS

They always been kind of...

CALIS

...snobby.

*

MARIL

Skinflints, is what. Never gave a
great price or fair trade.

PALN

As soon spit on you as nod, in my
experience.

CABIN BOY CERT

(frowning)

Happened to me. Twice.

TORRIN sighs deeply, regrouping.

TORRIN

Nevertheless. I propose another
possibility. These nameless
islands, further on...TORRIN quickly draws his other finger on the MAP from the
sea (where they are) in a straight line (passing near
PHAIDEN ISLAND) to a smaller ISLAND GROUPING.

(CONTINUED)

TORRIN

...are deserted. We may be able to take the monster there without it realizing. This would, however, require additional travel. And, yes, while the farther we go the more likely we may perish... this course of action offers a chance at sparing countless innocent lives.

TORRIN looks to his MEN: met with "CRICKETS" as they all stare back at TORRIN.

TORRIN

I sense the slightest reluctance amongst the ranks. Fine. Let's see here...

TORRIN goes to the CAPTAIN'S DESK and grabs PARCHMENT.

TORRIN

We will put it to a vote. Each of you shall have equal voice.

TORRIN begins TEARING the paper into rough squares.

TORRIN

It will be secret ballot, with no one knowing any other man's choice. I want you to privately mark and fold your ballots, then return them to me.

He then begins handing out the irregular BALLOTS.

TORRIN

A circle means you vote to sail beyond the peopled shores, despite the risk. X is a vote for a shorter voyage to Phaiden Island. X means you fulfil the creature's wish.

The grim men, accepting ballots, cast sidelong glances.

TORRIN

I implore you: let conscience be your guide.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPTAINS QUARTERS -- DAY

The ornate WOODEN BOX sits open on the navigation table as FOLDED BALLOTS are tossed in, one after another, till... all the votes are in. The LID is SLAMMED shut.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN DECK/AFT, OUTSIDE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS -- DAY

CHANTRE, MARIL, PALN, SUPARIN, DEACON, Cabin Boy CERT, and MELIS and CALIS loiter nervously by the CLOSED DOOR, some seated on the AFT DECKS STEPS, others pacing. The DOOR slams OPEN and TORRIN strides out, sullen, gun in one hand and waving the MARKED BALLOTS in the other.

TORRIN

I begin... with a confession. By a folded corner here... an irregular edge there, I made each of these ballots unique. Unbeknownst to anyone but myself.

The crew, gathering around, are worried, confused.

TORRIN

Having paid strict attention as I handed them out, it's now my duty to reveal that I have succeeded in ferreting out the cowards in our midst.

MARIL

W-what'd he say?

CABIN BOY CERT

He said there are --

TORRIN

(angrily, of BALLOTS)
Craven cowards who'd gladly betray strangers, so long as it meant saving their own skins.

The chagrined men eye each other.

MELIS

Now, hang on a minute --

TORRIN

Two cowards, who voted to pass our terrible burden on to Phaiden Isle's defenseless men, women and children.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TORRIN (CONT.)
 (off-handedly)
 Melis, move to your left.

MELIS
 'Cuse me?

TORRIN
 A step to your left, please, if
 you don't mind, thank you.

Unsure, MELIS nonetheless obeys, stepping to his left.

TORRIN aims and FIRES -- sends a single, BLOOD-splattering BULLET thru both MELIS and CALIS, since CALIS is now directly behind. To everyone's horror.

TORRIN
 Done and done.

Torrin shoves the GUN into his belt, his chin jutting.

TORRIN
 Nearly as unpleasant as it was
 necessary. United as we are at
 last in spirit, goal and purpose.

The men are still lost in stupefaction.

TORRIN
 (gestures to CORPSES)
 Let's... lend a hand now, eh?

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN DECK -- DAY

MELIS and CALIS' BODIES are tossed into the hold.
 Calis' CRUTCH is thrown in after for good measure.

TORRIN observes intently as, below, the thanapod creeps
 into the light, eyes swirling. It begins to consume.

TORRIN
 (sotto voce)
 That's it. Every last bite.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SEAS -- DUSK

The SHIP's making good sail, under darkening skies.

EXT. CROW'S NEST -- DUSK

TORRIN's in the high CROW'S NEST, looking thru a TELESCOPE in the direction they're headed.

THRU THE TELESCOPE

A faint line of distance LIGHTS twinkles on the horizon.

EXT. AFT DECKS -- DUSK

SUPARIN mans the HELM. His eyes glancing upwards.

TO THE FORE

CREWMEN adjust SAIL and hammer repaired YARDARM. Here and there, while keeping to the fevered work of sailing, they surreptitiously glance skyward as...

ABOVE

DEACON climbs the rigging, a KNIFE between his teeth. He's slowly spidering to the crow's nest from behind.

IN THE CROW'S NEST

TORRIN pockets the spyglass and takes up a SEXTANT, which he holds up to use it against the burgeoning STARSCAPE.

BELOW

Higher, nearing the nest, DEACON takes knife in hand.

As DEACON rises up... he comes face-to-face with Torrinn's revolver barrel, which TORRIN presses DEACON's forehead.

DEACON
Wait, sir... please...

DEACON, in supplication, DROPS the knife.

ON DECK, BELOW

PALN, peering up, YELPS and leaps asides, barely missed as -- the falling knife IMBEDS with a THUD into the deck.

ABOVE

DEACON
Weren't my idea. They... they
made me.

(CONTINUED)

DEACON takes from behind his ear and holds up, by way of explanation... a ONE INCH STRAW. An O.S. BELLOWING is HEARD. TORRIN and DEACON react, looking down.

BELOW, ON THE MAIN DECK

Everyone's attention is drawn to where...
The puppeted TURK pops up from the hold like a gangrenous Jack-in-the-box, "looks" around, one eyeball dangling.

PUPPET TURK
Torrin! Torrinnn! Torrrrrriinn!

CUT TO:

INT. HOLD -- DUSK

TORRIN, passing lashed BARRELS, notices...

A SKELETON, picked clean of flesh, lies in the place where Calis' corpse landed; same position.

Before TORRIN can fully weigh this, his attention is drawn to the thanapod's arrival. The thanapod, now moving to be fully seen in DUSKLIGHT thru the hatch above, is larger and more bloated, sluggishly lumbering.

TORRIN peers up like Androcles dwarfed by the lion.

TORRIN
You... rang?

TURK-PUPPET rises close by TORRIN, crooked jaw jawing.

TURK-PUPPET
Phaiden Iiland. Phaiden Iiiiland.

TORRIN uncertainly addresses both puppet and stalk-eyes.

TORRIN
Yes... yes. Almost there.
Patience, however, is the word of
the day. Trust me, I've been
nothing but...

TORRIN falters, aghast. He's looking down as...

Something moves in the SHADOWS beneath the thanapod.
Hard to make out at first, until... a relatively small
THANAPOD BABY scutters into the pale light.

TORRIN's eyes are wide.

(CONTINUED)

At least a DOZEN more THANAPOD BABIES crawl into view, under and flanking "mother," their tiny mouths working.

TORRIN steps back, pressing the back of his hand to his mouth. The babies, however, advance no further; all just PEERING fixedly out at TORRIN from the edge of darkness.

TURK-PUPPET

Hungry. Hungry.

TORRIN speaks numbly thru the sick rising in his mouth.

TORRIN

Of... of course you are. So many mouths to feed.

TURK-PUPPET begins to withdraw as the wretched crustacean turns to lumbers back toward the dark of her makeshift "cave." Her offspring FOLLOW in unison, into shadows.

As the monster's sidling into her DARK hiding place...

TURK-PUPPET

Must eat. Sssssoon.

TURK-PUPPET, "looking" back, also slowly recedes.

TURK-PUPPET

Weeee eat.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEAS -- NIGHT

The BLOODHAWK crashes headlong in heavy seas.

EXT. AFT DECKS -- NIGHT

At the rail, CHANTRE points to where they're bound. Phaiden LIGHTS are CLOSE, thru a veil of FOG.

CHANTRE

There lies Phaiden Island. Closer by the minute.

In misting sea spray, TORRIN, with hand on the GUN in his belt, is surrounded by disgruntled CHANTRE, SUPARIN (at the WHEEL), Cabin Boy CERT, DEACON, MARIL and PALN.

TORRIN

Unless our stowaway's got some sort of sixth sense, we'll skirt right past. As planned.

(CONTINUED)

CHANTRE

Except, in a few hours, we could jump ship and practically swim to the shallows.

MARIL

(to other CREWMEN)
We wouldn't though, right? W-we'd... we'd use the boats...?

PALN

Shut up.

CHANTRE

(still to TORRIN)
What's to stop us? The shoreline is well within reach.

TORRIN

Because you risk placing the shore within reach of the creature as well.

TORRIN's wearying, exasperated.

TORRIN

Look, I am willing to see the failed attempt on my life as an expression of... "low morale." But this nightmare is very nearly at an end, I swear to you.

SUPARIN

And tomorrow, sir...? If your *friend* below starts getting peckish again?

TORRIN

Just... maintain course. Wake me at the toll of the hour.

TORRIN crosses to the stairs down to the main deck.

SUPARIN and crew watch him go, with hatred in their eyes. Several share an *IF ONLY HE DIDN'T HAVE THAT GUN* look.

BELOW

TORRIN enters the Captain's Quarters, slams the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SEAS (PHAIDEN ISLAND) -- NIGHT

The BLOODHAWK is nearing those PHAIDEN ISLAND LIGHTS.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS -- NIGHT

By dim LAMP LIGHT, a FORM lies beneath the BED's COVERS.

The DOOR is BASHED IN. CERT, MARIL, CHANTRE, PALN and SUPARIN rush, YELPING, attacking pell-mell with HARPOONS, AXES and a bent SWORD (Cert's). They JAB, STAB and HACK - TEARING the BED CLOTHES. PILLOW FEATHERS fly.

TORRIN moves from a dark corner, SHOOTS his revolver!

CHANTRE's HEAD EXPLODES. TORRIN swings an AX in his other hand -- CHOPS CERT's HEAD OFF, which spins. MARIL's trying, clumsily in the confined space, to counter with his HARPOON. TORRIN's 2nd SHOT SPLINTERS the harpoon's SHAFT and BURSTS MARIL's chest, throwing MARIL aside. SUPARIN wields his AX high in both hands... TORRIN's backswung AX EMBEDS in SUPARIN's TORSO. SUPARIN'S MOUTH becomes a big "O." TORRIN GUT-SHOOTS SUPARIN -- doubles SUPARIN over, his mouth a small "o."

PALN's fleeing. TORRIN's 4th SHOT sends PALN SOMERSALTING out the door. He lands, a BLOODY heap.

TORRIN lowers his gun, in wafting SMOKE and FEATHERS. A beat, then he points at each dead man; begins counting.

EXT. FORE DECKS -- (MOMENTS LATER) NIGHT

TORRIN comes to kick OPEN a large LOCKER... Finds DEACON cowering. DEACON starts, rising, hands up.

DEACON

I... I refused to participate!

TORRIN

For that, I am grateful.

TORRIN reaches down, offering DEACON his hand.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLD -- NIGHT

Thanapod babies are creeping into the square of MOONLIGHT from the open hatch at the center of which lie the gory, crumpled CORPSES of MARIL, PALN and CHANTRE. SUPARIN's CORPSE crumple-SPLATS beside them, scattering babies.

ABOVE, ON DECK

DEACON's struggling to lift Cabin Boy CERT's inert BODY over the edge as TORRIN steps up to look down in.

Below: the thanapod babies, emboldened by their number, swarm the corpse pile. They're only momentarily put off by the LANDING of CERT.

TORRIN observes as... the colossal, slow-moving thanapod mother shows herself, larger now with more of its fleshy innards bursting from shell's seams.

The monster shoves MARIL's inert BODY from the pile, then uses her claws to POUND; pulverizing the corpse into a more readily-consumable PULP. Eager babies gather.

As thanapod offspring feast, Mother goes also to EAT.

DEACON wipes his brow, gaping down in horrified amazement upon the brood. TORRIN takes a step back.

TORRIN

It's only fair you know... I lied before. I didn't actually mark the ballots. Didn't need to.

(off DEACON's look)

Every one of you wrote an X.

TORRIN SHOVES -- sends DEACON flailing into the hold. DEACON is HEARD LANDING very badly.

TORRIN

While the Misses... she still looks to be a little undernourished.

DEACON's MOANS and LAMENTATIONS join the growing O.S. SYMPHONY of DEVOURING. TORRIN turns and walks away.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFT DECKS -- NIGHT

TORRIN's at helm, with LIGHTS a mere mile or so off. He turns larboardly, toward the shore. Ties the wheel off.

INT. HOLD -- NIGHT

TORRIN, gun in hand, steps into the moonlit square where there's only BLOOD, BLOODSTAINS, BONES and SAND now.

TORRIN

Come now. Show yourself.

(CONTINUED)

A few "children" are near, observing, mouths working.

TORRIN
We're here. "Phaiden *Iiiiiiland!*"

With monstrous, CLUNKING STEPS behind it, the moldering puppet emerges, then... thanapod EYES hover above, as...

TURK-PUPPET
Phaiden *Iiiiiiland*. Yesssss.

The bigger-than-ever thanapod lurches into view, somewhat unsteadily. A few babies accompany, beneath her.

TORRIN
Yes, and no. A single bullet is all I have left. But it'll have to do, to make certain you never reach the shore.

TURK-PUPPET quakes, emphatic, its left arm FALLING OFF.

TURK-PUPPET
Ssshell protectssss.

TORRIN
(AIMS at Thanapod)
Not you, no. You are, however, onboard a jabel sharking vessel. And there's not much good eating on a jabel shark. The meat is greasy... the hide too tough for any garment. Or hadn't you noticed...?
(AIMING aside)
We harvest oil.

TORRIN FIRES at the hanging OIL LAMP. BOOM! LAMP and BARRELS EXPLODE -- throwing BURNING OIL. TORRIN recoils.

The wheeling thanapod SHRIEKS, discarding its puppet. Nearby thanapod babies SCREECH, hit by spattering flames.

TORRIN flees back towards the stairs. Thanapod babies leap out from the mouths of empty barrels.

Mother chases TORRIN, with babies jumping onto her back.

TORRIN leaps into the narrow passageway, like a mouse dashing into its mousehole, as the thanapod CRASHES against the entry -- SPLINTERING wooden FRAMING.

TORRIN scrambles up the STAIRS, glancing back as one behemoth CLAW shoves vertically in; SNAPPING impotently.

(CONTINUED)

The thanapod gives up, backpedaling to the hatch. FLAMES SPREAD fast. As she springs up, she finds the hatch is too small. She is too big bodily now to fit back thru.

ABOVE, ON THE MAIN DECK

An EXPLOSION reverberates as TORRIN uses an AX to cut a SHARKING BOAT free. The boat SPLASHES down to the water.

IN THE HOLD

FLAMES rise. More SCREAMING, clinging babies fight each other as the struggling thanapod is simply too big a round peg to fit the square hole. More BARRELS EXPLODE.

ON THE MAIN DECK

TORRIN climbs the rail to follow the boat, DIVES in.

IN THE HOLD

Thanapod and babies are dying, engulfed by the INFERNO.

ON THE WATER -- MOMENTS LATER

Drenched TORRIN rows as best he can. He lowers the OARS to look. Behind, the flaming, BLOODHAWK lists, sinking.

TORRIN rows on, toward Phaiden Island LIGHTS.

THE END