

CAGE

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Screenplay by Joe Doughrity

NEW DEAL PRODUCTIONS

Registered: WGAw

February 1, 1996

REVISED FIRST DRAFT

FADE IN:

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - AFRICAN RAIN FOREST - DAY

Trees as far as the eyes can see. We hear the sounds of animals in the forest, water trickling through a stream; a lush tropical paradise. Then suddenly...

A QUINJET breaks the cloud layer over the sky. We watch the sleek transatlantic craft touch down on the outskirts of a remote village.

THE QUINJET - CLOSER - LANDING

The letters "MM" are imprinted on the tail. A hatch opens and a mysterious figure emerges. We don't see his face but catch glimpses of his BOOTS and LONG WHITE CAPE as he wanders towards-

EXT. THE VILLAGE - DAY

A group of thatched huts. Home to a band of Yoruba tribesmen. None are in sight however as death permeates the air.

We FOLLOW BEHIND THE CAPED STRANGER past ceremonial masks. He's greeted by an ELDERLY YORUBA MAN dressed in traditional garb. From his elaborate adornment we gather that he is a man of rank. He puts up a hand, waving the intruder away, and mutters something in an ancient African tongue. Undaunted, our visitor walks past him into-

INT. HUT - DAY

A DOZEN SICK YORUBA MEN AND WOMEN are laid out here. All appear near death suffering from the horrific symptoms of the EBOLA VIRUS. Our attention is drawn to one SICK OLD WOMAN in particular. We watch as THE VISITOR'S BLACK HAND reaches out and takes her withered fingers in his. The dying woman looks up with LOVING EYES.

WOMAN'S POV - THE OBSCURED, BACKLIT FACE OF SALVATION

A LASERBEAM PENETRATES THE DYING WOMAN'S FOREHEAD. Suddenly the effects of the disease begin to reverse themselves through the miracle of Special Effects. The ELDERLY MAN looks on in astonishment.

EXT. BLOCKADED BORDER - DAY

MEDICAL WORKERS from the World Health Organization dressed in airtight SPACE SUITS man the barricade separating the country from the "Hot Zone". They are surrounded by high tech quarantine equipment. ARMED AFRICAN SOLDIERS hold off a mob threatening to overrun the checkpoint. Refugees shout out "CURE! CURE!" in their native tongue (Subtitled).

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DR. CLAIRE TEMPLE (a beautiful African-American woman) watches the near RIOT from a safe distance. At her side is ERIC HARRISON, a Peace Corps Volunteer/Translator. We GO WITH them as they walk and talk through the camp.

ERIC

It's been like this for the past few days
Dr. Temple.

CLAIRE

Things have gotten worse in my absence.
My team was unable to find the source of
the virus out in the rain forest but tell
me Eric: Why do they all of a sudden
think we can cure them?

ERIC

It's not us they want. There's something
you should see...

He leads her into-

INT. MEDICAL TENT - DAY

They enter and we see several AFRICAN MEN AND WOMEN looking
like the picture of good health. Claire is amazed. Eric leads
her to a bed where the NATIVE WOMAN we saw cured earlier lies.

CLAIRE

(mystified)

These people were near death two days
ago. Ask her what happened.

Eric translates the query into the native language. We hear
the woman answer him back and he looks up.

ERIC

She says a man came down from the sky and
touched her with the hand of God.

Claire and Eric exchange befuddled looks.

CLAIRE

Tell her that I'm happy she's well.

He does as instructed. The woman smiles warmly.

CLAIRE

Now ask her if this man had a name.

Eric translates again. The woman answers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

Moses.

Just then we hear a loud chant erupt in the distance.

CHORUS (O.S.)

"MO-SES! MO-SES! MO-SES! MO-SES!"

We FOLLOW Claire and Eric out of the tent.

EXT. BORDER - DAY

AN ARMY OF NATIVES retreat from the station chanting "Moses" repeatedly in their heavily accents. The GUARDS look on in bewilderment. Some throw down their weapons and join the CROWD. We GO WITH them to reveal a lone figure in a white cape seemingly FLOATING ON AIR ABOVE THE GROWING CROWD!

This is MOSES MAGNUM (a proud Black man with a short Afro and thick goatee). He wears a suit of light body armor partially concealed by a long flowing white cape (a la Boba Fett).

We see the reaction of Claire and Eric. Neither can believe their medically trained eyes. Off the natives rhythmic chant we...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. RIKER'S ISLAND PRISON - DAY

We move across the Harlem River towards New York City's notorious Riker's Island Correctional Facility.

BURN-IN THE MAIN TITLE

INT. RIKER'S ISLAND PRISON - THE DAYROOM - DAY

CARL LUCAS (a proud powerfully built Black man dressed in prison blues) watches live coverage of the events in Africa. He's one of SEVERAL PRISONERS in this sparsely furnished rec room but the only one interested in current events. Behind him SEVERAL MEN are in the corner BEATING UP a YOUNG INMATE. Carl is getting irritated by all the noise they're creating.

CARL

(annoyed)

I'm trying to watch TV.

TV REPORT (V.O.)

"The World Health Organization has declared the deadly Ebola Outbreak in the West African nation of Canann officially over. The epidemic, which claimed hundreds of lives, was apparently stopped

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TV REPORT (cont'd)
by the work of a mysterious man calling
himself Moses Magnum."

The MEN continue their pounding undaunted.

CARL
(louder, rising)
I said I'm trying to watch this!

Carl walks over. As he does the men begin to PART, abandoning their prey. The young inmate PULLS UP HIS PANTS as one of the men mutters under his breath:

INMATE
You want in on this Lucas?

Carl looks at the guy, bending a finger to motion for him to come closer. The man does so and Carl calmly palms his NOSE. Arrgh! He then PIMP SLAPS THE GUY.

Suddenly TWO CORRECTIONS OFFICERS enter causing everyone to stop in their tracks. Meet QUIRT and RACKHAM, two hardened Rednecks. They make their way over to Carl.

RACKHAM
You've got a visitor Lucas. Some Doctor
fella from Upstate.

CARL
Do I look sick to you?

QUIRT
Who cares. Just get a move on it.

Carl gives the man he was fighting with a look then follows the guards out the room. The other CONVICTS watch them leave.

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

Carl walks a few steps in front as the trio make their way through the desolate facility.

QUIRT
Buddy 'o mine who works in records says
Lucas here murdered his old lady in cold
blood.

Carl grimaces at the mention of the crime.

RACKHAM
A crime of passion. Thought you'd walk
just like that football player, huh boy?

(CONTINUED)

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Carl stops and defiantly turns to face them.

CARL

Ain't no boys here, Rackham. We all men.
Boy is on Tarzan swinging from a tree.

Rackham goes after him with a bawled fist but is restrained by Quirt who looks around warily.

QUIRT

Not here... Not now.

His words have a calming effect on Rackham.

RACKHAM

You been nuthin' but trouble since they transferred you here from Seagate. Sittin' in your cell all day reading law books, swearing up and down you're innocent... One of these days somebody's gonna teach you a lesson boy.

Quirt stops, pulls out a KEY CARD and slides it into a computerized lock before them. After a beat it opens and Rackham pushes Carl into-

INT. VISITATION ROOM - DAY

An empty room except for a table and two chairs separated by a PLATE GLASS WINDOW. Occupying the seat on the other side of the glass is a thin, haggard looking man in a pair of wire rimmed glasses. Meet DR. NOAH BURNSTEIN, an eccentric scientist. He looks up as Carl comes tumbling inside courtesy of Rackham's shove. The door closes leaving them alone.

DR. BURNSTEIN

Please, sit down Mr. Lucas.

Warily Carl takes a seat.

CARL

Who are you?

DR. BURNSTEIN

I'm Dr. Noah Burnstein, a research scientist for the government.

CARL

So what's that got to do with me?

(CONTINUED)

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A
DR. BURNSTEIN
I ran a search of the New York State prison population database looking for the perfect physical specimen. I had certain requirements of course... blood type, no history of drug use, an IQ of 180 or better... but the computer kept coming back with the same name: Carl Earl Lucas, convicted murderer.

CARL
I was framed. But you don't give a damn about that do you?

DR. BURNSTEIN
(dryly)
No, not really. I need a subject and you fit the profile. End of story.

CARL
A subject for what?

DR. BURNSTEIN
As a Genetic engineer I've been studying cell regeneration and mutations in human beings. Do you follow?

CARL
Yeah I took Biology in Junior College.
(matter-of-factly)
So what's in it for me?

DR. BURNSTEIN
A full pardon.

Carl's eyes light up at the prospect of freedom.

DR. BURNSTEIN
But I must warn you that two previous volunteers gave their lives in the name of science. This time, however, I'm confident I've worked out all the bugs. If we're successful we could discover the key to curing every disease known to mankind.

CARL
Or I'll end up a vegetable in some Mad Scientist experiment and the man who killed my fiancée will get away scot-free! No thanks, Doc... I gave this country four years of my life and they stiffed me with a murder rap. Mankind's done nuthin' for me and I'm returning the favor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Carl stands up and BANGS ON THE DOOR signalling to the guards that the visit is over. We see Burnstein's great disappointment as Quirt and Rackham enter to take him away.

INT. PRISON CELLBLOCK/CELL - MOMENTS LATER

The C.O.'s escort Carl to his cell. They unlock the door, push him inside, and follow behind.

RACKHAM

Now we're gonna have some fun with you.

Rackham CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES as Quirt pulls out a BILLY CLUB. Carl braces himself; he knows what comes next.

RACKHAM SUCKER PUNCHES CARL IN THE FACE AND HE FALLS HARD.

RACKHAM

Did you see that Quirt? This punk made a move on me! Least that's what the report'll say.

RACKHAM KICKS CARL IN THE FACE VICIOUSLY. He looks up from the ground and we see BLOOD running from his mouth.

CARL

(laughing through pain)
Is that all you got Rackham?

Quirt stands over him twirling his baton Stacey Koon style.

QUIRT

You'll break boy. After all, a man's only flesh and blood.

QUIRT HAULS OFF AND HITS HIM. CRACK! AS HE TRIES TO LAND ANOTHER BLOW CARL JUMPS OUT OF THE WAY, GRABS QUIRT BY THE NECK, AND PUNCHES HIM IN THE FACE.

RACKHAM

Oh so you fightin' back?!!

RACKHAM COMES DOWN HARD ON CARL UNLEASHING A FLURRY OF BLOWS THAT MAKE WHAT RODNEY KING GOT LOOK LIKE LOVETAPS! He lands BLOW after BLOW with the nightstick with QUIRT ADDING A SWIFT KICK TO CARL'S RIBS every now and then when he spots an opening. The beating is swift and brutal, like these two have had plenty of practice administering similar punishment.

INTERCUT - REACTION SHOTS OF VARIOUS INMATES WHO HEAR THE THRASHING BUT ARE POWERLESS TO STOP IT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE - A BADLY BEATEN CARL STRUGGLES TO STAND

Quirt and Rackham gloat over their handiwork.

RACKHAM

What's the matter boy? White man got you down?

Off their cruel laughter we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CELL - LATER

Carl, his face swollen, looks at a picture of a beautiful Black woman on the wall next to him. This is REVA CONNERS (soft brown eyes, radiant smile) his deceased fiancée.

FLASHBACK - EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

We see the CARL LUCAS of several years ago (clean shaven, neatly dressed) as he sits on a blanket underneath a shady tree enjoying a picnic lunch with Reva. She laughs, her hair blowing in the soft summer breeze, as Carl takes out a jewelry box and hands it to her. Reva's surprised. She opens the box to reveal an ENGAGEMENT RING. Her eyes light up. She looks back at Carl who MOUTHS the question: "Will you marry me?"

She slips the ring on and leans over to kiss him but just as their lips meet we...

SMASH CUT:

BACK TO REALITY

As a CURIOUS CORRECTIONS OFFICER shines his BRIGHT MAG LIGHT in on Carl's cell. It makes for a rather rude awakening. Carl LUNGES FOR THE BARS causing the C.O. to jump back.

CARL

I want outta here! Tell Burnstein he found himself a guinea pig afterall!

Off the C.O.'s look of fright and bewilderment we...

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING SHOT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

A majestic palace built during European rule that now houses the ruler of Canann, his family, and cabinet.

INT. PALACE MEETING ROOM - DAY

MOSES MAGNUM is received by PRESIDENT SEMBANE (a white haired warrior with Mandela-like nobility), VICE PRESIDENT ZANDE, SEVERAL GUARDS and ADVISORS.

SEMBANE

Moses Magnum the people of Canann are forever in your gratitude. You've brought healing where others, including the United Nations, could offer none.

Moses smiles.

SEMBANE

But I'm not foolish enough to think you have done this merely out of the kindness of your heart. What is it that you want?

MOSES

Your country Sembane.

Sembane is shocked. We see him and his cabinet react.

MOSES

We've been friends a long time. Well if not friends we've done business. This time I'm selling you and your people a future.

SEMBANE

So it's my job you're after?

MOSES

Look, let's face it you been runnin' this joint just like all these other backwards ass Africans! Your people starving, got no place decent to live, tribal warfare got 'em killing each other off faster than the Bloods and the Crips... There's no way I could ever be President of the United States, I was born too poor and too Black for that, so I'm taking over here.

V.P. ZANDE, Sembane's right hand man, can take no more.

ZANDE

Why you Black American mongrel! How dare you stand here and insult this man? He lived and fought for 20 years in the jungles before driving out the Colonialists who made you the bastard you are today.

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MOSES

That was in the 60's. It's the 90's now
and your beloved President ain't on the
job. In case you forgot folks was
dropping dead before I showed up.

Moses presses presses a button on his belt. A beat then BOOM!

THE WALLS COLLAPSE AND A GROUP OF SUPERPOWERED INDIVIDUALS
MAKE THEIR ENTRANCE. Moses stands before them and makes the
introductions as Sembane and his cabinet watch awestruck.

MOSES

This is the Wrecking Crew. A few months
ago they were mere Cons rotting away in
Leavenworth but now they represent the
latest in Bio-genetic engineering.

We see three muscle-bound brutes each towering over six feet.
First up is THE WRECKER who wears a leather mask and wields a
giant crowbar. PILEDRIIVER has long blond hair and a pair of
oversized fists. Finally there's THUNDERBALL, a Black man with
a wrecking ball on a chain as his primary weapon. True to
their name they begin wrecking the place. Moses stops them.

MOSES

No! No! No! This is gonna be my crib!
Don't mess up the place.

THE CREW

Sorry boss.

Moses moves along to his next partner in crime. The name is
"El Aguila" in Spanish. We'll call him THE EAGLE. A dashing
Puerto Rican swordsman wearing a leather jacket with an
elaborate eagle patch, red bandana, and leather boots.

MOSES

This is *mi amigo* The Eagle. His choice of
costumes is a bit colorful to say the
least.

(looks to him)

Still shopping in Spanish Harlem, huh?

(Eagle nods, then back to
Sembane & Co.)

But you better watch out for his sword.

THE EAGLE draws his blade and we watch it GLOW with power.

MOSES

Last but not least... The Fist.

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CONTINUED: (2)

We GO WITH Moses to reveal IRON FIST, a wiry martial artist in a green body suit and fierce yellow mask with a tattoo of a Black Dragon on his chest. He's called 'The Living Weapon' for reasons we'll see later.

MOSES

He's a gifted martial artist, the only man I ever met able to give me a decent sparring session, but he doesn't like to show off.

Sembane looks at his uninvited guests and does the expected.

SEMBANE

Guards! Seize them.

The assemblage of guards takes one look at Moses and his crew drops their weapons and walks away.

ANGLE ON MOSES: who smiles, pulls something out of his belt, and approaches the President offering it to him.

SEMBANE

What's this?

MOSES

It's what we mongrels call a pink slip.
You're fired.

Sembane looks to his Vice President.

SEMBANE

Do something Zande.

Zande swallows hard and thinks for a beat.

ZANDE

I assume you'll be needing a VP?

MOSES

But of course.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED BOILER ROOM - DAY

We see banks of high tech scientific equipment lined against the walls. Plastic tubes pump FLUORESCENT CHEMICALS into a large, H.R. Gigeresque HYPERBOLIC TANK in the middle of the room. Dr. Burnstein is here running frenziedly from machine to machine making last minute adjustments. Carl takes it all in curiously.

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CARL

What is all this stuff?

DR. BURNSTEIN

These machines are calibrated to reconfigure the genetic make-up of your body's cells. This tank contains an oxygenated chemical solution that will expedite the process.

CARL

Is this gonna hurt?

DR. BURNSTEIN

You should feel no pain. I'll be monitoring the entire procedure and if I detect any change in your vital signs I'll stop at once. You have my word.

CARL

Did the other brothers have your word too?

They share a look. Carl searches his eyes. Burnstein, sensing his anxiety, puts a hand on his shoulder.

DR. BURNSTEIN

Take off your clothes and get inside.
Time to make history.

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Rackham and Quirt talk by themselves.

RACKHAM

It just don't seem fair, that's all. That smart punk Lucas is gonna walk four years into a life sentence.

QUIRT

That's if he survives the Doc's little experiment. I heard the last two of volunteers weren't so lucky.

RACKHAM

Well I'm inclined to see that the third time ain't the charm.

Off Rackham's sinister glare we...

CUT TO:

EXT. RIKER'S ISLAND PRISON - TIME LAPSE SUNSET

We watch the last vestiges of day turn to night outside the foreboding exterior of brick and barb wire.

INT. BOILER ROOM - NIGHT

Carl climbs atop the tank BUTT NAKED, takes a deep breath, then submerges himself into the bath. We watch as CHEMICALS SWIRL AND BUBBLE UP AROUND HIM.

INSIDE THE TANK

Carl gags and chokes as the solution fills his lungs. The sensation of learning how to breathe liquid is unnerving to say the least.

A FEW FEET AWAY

Dr. Burnstein monitors his progress at a computer terminal nearby. He speaks into a microphone.

DR. BURNSTEIN

Relax. Your body will adjust in a few moments.

CARL'S OBSCURED POV - FROM INSIDE THE TANK

CARL

Man this feels weird!

DR. BURNSTEIN (O.S.)

Are you alright?

CARL

Yeah I'm okay, Doc.

ANGLE ON BURNSTEIN: He reads from the screen.

DR. BURNSTEIN

Just stay calm, this'll all be over in a few minutes. I'm preparing to expose you to a mild dosage of radiation.

Burnstein gets up and goes over to a nearby mainframe. He checks the readout and presses a few buttons before-

THUNK!

The BUTT OF A HANDGUN hits him over the head. He falls to the ground, collapsing like a sack of flour.

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INSIDE THE TANK

Carl makes out his assailant as Rackham presses his face to the glass.

RACKHAM

You didn't think I was gonna stand by and let you walk outta here did you boy?

Carl BANGS ON THE INNER GLASS to no avail.

OUTSIDE

we don't hear a thing. Rackham walks over to a row of machines and begins turning dials, pulling levers, and twisting knobs all the way up to beyond their safety limits.

INSERT - Carl's cells being mutated under a microscopic lens.

INSIDE THE TANK

Carl writhes in anguish.

INTERCUT - The computer readout: 500 rads and rising rapidly!

ANGLE ON CARL: He yells out in extreme pain as his flesh is seared by the chemical reaction. We watch as his body is forever mutated. The cells reconstructed to another, inhuman form. He POUNDS AGAINST THE SIDE OF THE TANK until-

KA-BOOOOM! The tank EXPLODES sending fragments of space age plastic and metal throughout the room. RACKHAM is thrown back into a wall. CARL recovers, picking himself off the floor. He's dripping wet from the tank and his muscles have taken on a bulkier, more pronounced tone.

A FEW FEET AWAY

Rackham, slightly injured from the blast but still conscious, aims his gun, squeezes off two shots. BLAM! BLAM!

To our amazement the bullets BOUNCE OFF CARL'S CHEST!

Full of rage and adrenaline, CARL RUNS AT RACKHAM AND DELIVERS A POWERFUL BLOW THAT KNOCKS HIM ACROSS THE ROOM LIKE A RAG DOLL.

Carl studies his fist for a beat in bewilderment but the sound of DR. BURNSTEIN MOANING brings him back to reality. He runs over to the Doc who rubs his aching head, slowly regaining consciousness.

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DR. BURNSTEIN
(groggy)
What happened?

CARL
It was Rackham. He messed around with the machines trying to deep fry me but he must've overloaded the system.

DR. BURNSTEIN
Are you alright?

CARL
My body feels kinda strange but I'm okay.

Burnstein goes over and examines Rackham's motionless form.

DR. BURNSTEIN
(over Rackham's body)
His breathing is irregular and he's bleeding internally. This is serious.

The Doc picks up an emergency phone, dials the infirmary, and AD LIBS instructions to get a stretcher there ASAP. Carl can't believe what's happening.

CARL
I don't understand. I barely tapped him!

DR. BURNSTEIN
Well he's out like you used a sledgehammer. I don't know if he's gonna make it.

CARL
Did I survive that crazy experiment just to get set up for this?

Enraged, CARL POUNDS ON A NEARBY WALL WITH A BAWLED FIST. To his/our surprise his hand creates a HUGE HOLE!

CARL
What the?!

DR. BURNSTEIN
(examining his hand)
The skin on your knuckles isn't even scraped.

Carl examines his hands in disbelief. A beat then HE USES BOTH HANDS TO POUND A MAN-SIZED HOLE IN THE WALL!

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CONTINUED: (3)

The good Doctor watches in utter amazement as Carl clears out a few more bricks to make the opening complete.

DR. BURNSTEIN

Something must have gone wrong. We must run tests-

CARL

Sorry Doc but I'm not waitin' around to get Rackham's death pinned on me. With power like this no man's keeping me caged up like an animal.

DR. BURNSTEIN

Lucas wait!

Too late. Carl jumps through the hole. Burnstein looks after him for a beat then goes back to treating Rackham as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. RIKER'S ISLAND PRISON - NIGHT

Carl reaches an ELECTRIFIED FENCE as we hear an alarm sound in the distance. He uses his bare hands to RIP A SEAM IN THE FENCE, causing SPARKS TO FLY, large enough for him to squeeze thru as SEARCHLIGHTS sweep over the prison grounds.

INT. RIKER'S GENERAL POPULATION - NIGHT

CHEERS erupt as a SIREN signalling an escape sounds throughout the facility. We see the reaction of VARIOUS PRISONERS. From one convicts barred window we see Carl running off in the distance? CON: "It's Lucas! Go Lucas, go!"

EXT. RIKER'S ISLAND - NIGHT

Carl runs through the grass towards the edge of the island. INTERCUT PRISON GUARDS leading DOGS on his trail.

EXT. A CLIFF - NIGHT

He reaches the edge of the island which ends in a steep fifty foot drop into the river below. We hear dogs barking and male voices shouting orders in the distance.

CARL'S POV: as he peers down. The tide sends waves crashing into the rocks below creating a THICK WHITE FOAM.

SNIPER'S POV: an unseen SHARPSHOOTER takes aim at Carl from a rifle scope.

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CONTINUED:

SNIPER
That's it. Hold that pose.

BLAM! BLAM!

He fires two shots that hit their mark. The bullets TEAR INTO CARL'S SHIRT and the IMPACT sends him toppling over the cliff

SPLASH!

into the murky water below.

BACK TO THE SNIPER: who wipes his brow, relieved.

SNIPER
(into a walkie-talkie)
You can call off the search. Our escaped
con is fish food.

EXT. THE HARLEM RIVER - NIGHT

We see the murky depths and, several miles in the distance, the bright lights of the Big Apple. A TATTERED PRISON SHIRT floats by as we...

WIPE TO:

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM - IN PROGRESS - DAY

A CLOSE SHOT of PRESIDENT SEMBANE as he stands at a podium addressing his nation.

SEMBANE
And so, after nearly three decades, I hereby resign as President of Canann. Vice President Zande will remain in his post and I shall continue to function as an advisor to the new government. Citizens of Canann I present to you your new leader... Moses Magnum.

WIDEN TO REVEAL a TV studio where a DOZEN SOLDIERS have their rifles aimed at Sembane who reads from a CUE CARD. MOSES, dressed in traditional African garb over his body armor, steps in front of the camera with a magnanimous smile.

MOSES
Good afternoon citizens of Canann. President Sembane has asked that I succeed him in running the daily affairs of this glorious nation and I have graciously accepted. It is my intention to lead this country into the next
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES (cont'd)
century by transforming it into the jewel
of the African continent.

MOSES continues his acceptance speech as we see a broken
Sembane led before Zande by THE EAGLE.

THE EAGLE
What should I do with this relic?

ZANDE
Take him to the dungeon.

Sembane gives his former associate the evil eye before being
led off by a wave of THE EAGLE's sword.

INT. RIKER'S ISLAND PRISON - WARDEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

WARDEN GOODWIN (an ex-Military man in his late 50's) sits
behind a desk wearing a troubled look. Standing over him is
DR. BURNSTEIN nursing a cup of coffee.

DR. BURNSTEIN
That's precisely what happened, Warden.
Whether you choose to believe it or not
is up to you but somehow the experiment
gave him superhuman strength.

WARDEN GOODWIN
Not only that, take a look at these...

The Warden presents him with TWO SLUGS. The tips are smashed
in like they struck something impenetrable then bounced off.

WARDEN GOODWIN
Rackham's gun was fired twice. It would
appear our man is bulletproof as well.
How is old Rackham?

DR. BURNSTEIN
He'll make it. I gave him a sedative to
help him sleep. He's still in shock and I
can't say I blame him.

A knock at the door. Goodwin yells "Come in" and a man in a
suit carrying a briefcase marches in. This is PHILLIP JACKSON
(30ish, a corporate type). He pats Burnstein on the back.

JACKSON
You finally did it you old kook! You hit
pay dirt.

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DR. BURNSTEIN
(to the Warden, annoyed)
What's he doing here?

WARDEN GOODWIN
I was instructed by the Govenor to inform
the people at Stark Enterprises if
something like this ever happened, Noah.

The Doc doesn't mask his contempt for his corporate sponsors.

JACKSON
Where is he? Have you found him yet?

WARDEN GOODWIN
Relax Jackson, we have our search and
rescue teams out combing the area.

A KNOCK at the door. Goodwin yells "Come in" and QUIRT enters
carrying Carl's tattered, bullet riddled PRISON SHIRT.

QUIRT
We fished this out of the water about a
mile away sir. The tide must've carried
his body away.

WARDEN GOODWIN
Thank you, Quirt. That'll be all.

Quirt cuts Burnstein an evil glare then exits.

JACKSON
We've invested millions of dollars in
creating this Powerman. Until we find a
body we must assume he's alive and at
large... I've already notified the Feds
and NYPD. If this Carl Lucas sets one
foot in the city we'll capture him.

EXT. 42ND STREET/BROADWAY - TIMES SQUARE - DAY

Action grinds to a halt along "Forty-deuce" as a cross-section
of New Yorkers watch the image of MOSES MAGNUM on a giant TV. In
the b.g. we hear the instrumental to James Brown's "The Boss".

MOSES (V.O.)
My first act as President will be to open
Canann's borders to all people of African
descent around the world. Come home
brothers and sisters and help build the
nation prophesied by the likes of Marcus
Garvey, W.E.B Dubois, and Malcolm X! I'm
not talking about a march I'm talking
about a Million Man Migration!

(CONTINUED)

We see the various reactions of the people gathered here. PROFESSIONAL BLACK MEN IN SUITS, PIMPS, TEENAGED HUSTLERS, DRUG DEALERS & ADDICTS. A CRAZY MAN carrying a cup walks by: "Gimme some spare change... I gotta get to Africa!" A few WHITE FOLKS scoff or turn their noses up at the whole affair. SOMEONE says: "If I was a millionaire I'd buy 'em all tickets!" The camera moves to reveal CARL, dressed in a frayed trenchcoat and blending in with the other HOMELESS, standing in front of an electronics shop with the image of Moses over a DOZEN COLOR TV's in the window behind him. Off his curious look we...

CUT TO:

INT. NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY OFFICE - DAY

DIRECTOR PETER GYRICH (late 30's, red hair, intense) sits in a plush office chair watching the image of Moses on CNN. A LOYAL AGENT enters.

AGENT

The Chief wants to see you right away.

GYRICH

Let's not keep the man waiting then. I've already pulled the file on this Moses Magnum character.

Gyrich rises and puts on his jacket. The agent pulls an APB for "Carl Lucas" from a manila folder.

AGENT

Before we go there's something you should see. It was faxed to us by our friends at Stark.

GYRICH

What is it?

AGENT

(handing him the paper)

It's the Powerman Project... Something's gone wrong.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

A BUBBA CLINTON look-alike looks at a slide of MOSES on an overhead projector. Gyrich steps into the light.

GYRICH

Maurice Magnum, an International arms dealer we've known about since the 70's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

What does he want? And, more importantly, how did he end this outbreak we know nothing about?

GYRICH

We don't know exactly. Military Intelligence reports he's hooked up with Dr. Curtis Carr, one of our top Bio-Genetic Engineers who defected at the height of the Cold War. We've been searching for him for years. I suspect he invented this miracle cure.

PRESIDENT

What's stopping him from using this virus against us?

GYRICH

Once it's airborne there is no stopping it! An infected man or woman could get on an airplane and in a matter of hours the disease would be here in the U.S.

PRESIDENT

This is not good, Gyrich. Especially in an election year.

GYRICH

We've got another problem, sir. It's the Powerman Project.

PRESIDENT

I remember voting on that as a Senator: a controversial experiment to create genetically enhanced supersoldiers. But that thing was terminated before my administration took office.

GYRICH

I've a confession to make, sir. You see, purely in the interests of national security of course, I took the liberty of continuing the program without the knowledge of the former President.

The President covers his ears with his hands.

PRESIDENT

I don't know this. I'm not hearing any of this, you understand?

(Gyrich nods)

I could have you brought up on charges for this.

(CONTINUED)

GYRICH

I'm aware of that but I believe my mistake in judgement may inadvertently be the solution to our present crisis in Africa.

PRESIDENT

Go on. I'm listening.

GYRICH

Last night at Riker's Island prison there was a freak accident during one of the tests and a man escaped.

Gyrich pulls out a PHOTO of a clean shaven Carl.

GYRICH

Carl Lucas. A former Navy SEAL decorated during Operation Desert Storm. After the war he returned to his native Harlem where, several weeks later, he was convicted of murdering his girlfriend and sentenced to life without parole.

PRESIDENT

(studying the photo)

Where is he now?

GYRICH

We don't know exactly. The local authorities are staking out his old haunts, relatives, the usual; it's only a matter of time before he's caught.

PRESIDENT

Hmmm. Perhaps he could be persuaded to serve his country again?

Gyrich smiles. His sentiments exactly.

PRESIDENT

I want you on the next plane to New York. Bring him in.

GYRICH

Yes sir.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

VOLUNTEERS watch as Carl scarfs down several plates of food. These calories are needed to run his new body. Later he sorts through a bin of old clothing in search of something to wear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IN FRONT OF A MIRROR: Carl tries on several items. One of them is that ugly yellow shirt with the fly away collar from the 70's Marvel comics. He settles on a Black sweatshirt and jeans with a pair of combat boots to complete the ensemble. Maybe we keep the chain link belt idea from the comics but tone it down a bit?

EXT. 125TH STREET - HARLEM - DAY

We see the historic Apollo Theater, a mural showing Adam Clayton Powell and Malcolm X, and a bustling 125th street. A Pete Rock beat captures the energy of Mecca.

A RALLY is being held with AL SHARPTON (or reasonable facsimile) speaking to the crowd extolling the virtues of "Brother Moses". Carl is just another Black face here, anonymous.

SHARPTON

Just as Moses heard the word of God in biblical times our brother Magnum has heard the word today.

(to the crowd)

Have you heard the word?

"Yes!", "Amen." The crowd roars.

SHARPTON

I say have you heard the word?

The crowd reacts again, this time LOUDER.

SHARPTON

The time has come for us to leave Pharaohs land and enter into the Promised Land. And it's Brother Moses who shall deliver us from bondage.

Satisfied he's heard enough, Carl moves on.

EXT. HARLEM STREET CORNER - LATE AFTERNOON

Carl walks past a group of brothers hanging out. Among them are METHOD MAN and OL' DIRTY BASTARD (ODB), two members of the multi-Platinum rap group "The Wu-Tang Clan".

METHOD MAN

Yo C.L., was'sup kid?

CARL

(recognizing his old homeboy)

Meth? What's happenin'. Long time no see.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

METHOD MAN
It's all good. I heard they had you on
lock down though?

CARL
Yeah I was doin' a bid on Riker's but
broke out last night.

OL' DIRTY
(laughing in disbelief)
Yeah right. You buggin'! Ain't nobody
ever escaped from the Isle.

CARL
(changing the subject)
Yo you seen Stryker? He told me to look
him up first thing when I got out.

METHOD MAN
Ain't you heard? Willis is 'The Man' now!
He's livin' large, running things from
over in Bed-Stuy.

Carl has to contain himself to keep from running to the
nearest subway station.

CARL
Good looking out. I'll catch y'all later
alright?

METHOD MAN
Bet.

They watch him run off then trade glances.

OL' DIRTY
I'mo go beep Stryker.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Carl sits near a window enroute to Brooklyn. He thumbs
through a DAILY BUGLE with a picture of Moses Magnum. The hum
of the subway car lulls him to sleep as we...

FLASHBACK - EXT. INNER CITY BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

WILLIS STRYKER, shirtless with a neck full of gold and chest
full of tattoos, plays a game of "21" with a GROUP OF
BROTHERS. The game is intense even if the rims are netless.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Carl, clean shaven in his Navy dress blues,
watches the game from the other side of the fence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK TO STRYKER: who notices his old friend and calls for "time". He wanders over to the fence where they converse like two old friends. After a beat a fine Black woman struts by. This is REVA CONNERS. She turns both heads but Carl, clearly the classier guy, gets the smile. And man is it beautiful! He smiles back.

STRYKER

She's enough to make a brother homesick, huh? I been tryin' to get some rhythm but she won't give me the time of day.

CARL

It's all in the approach, Willis. Watch and learn.

Carl runs after her. He catches up and spits some game. He continues to lay down his rap as we CUT back to Stryker seething with jealousy. One of Stryker's HOMEBOYS comes over to the fence dribbling the ball.

HOMEBOY

(to Stryker, re: Carl)

Yo I know G.I. Joe ain't gaming on your woman is he?

The homeboy laughs. Off an angry Stryker we...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY CAR - (BACK TO PRESENT) - NIGHT

SCREEECH! Carl OPENS HIS EYES, waking suddenly, as the train reaches its final stop. He's alone except for a HOMELESS MAN asleep in the back. Carl gets up and exits.

INT. LEXUS COUPE - MOVING - NIGHT

WILLIS STRYKER drives through the streets of Brooklyn talking with ODB, calling from a pay phone, on his cellular phone. We INTERCUT their conversation.

STRYKER

Man you crazy! That nigga's servin' a life sentence.

OL' DIRTY

I'm telling you boss it was him! He came up to me and Meth in plain daylight. You want me to put a hole or two in 'em?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRYKER

Naw I can handle Lucas if he steps to me.

Stryker clicks off the phone and continues to drive along. He reaches into his jacket and checks the safety on his TECH 9 auto pistol. Is that just a hint of worry on his face?

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - NIGHT

BROOKLYN RESIDENTS are evacuated from their homes by agents from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). They wear jackets and caps with FEMA on them and travel in official looking vehicles. A JAMAICAN IMMIGRANT wearing a house coat and clutching her son asks a FEMALE AGENT:

BROOKLYNITE

What's going on? Why are we being asked to leave our homes?

FEMALE AGENT

There's a gas leak in the area. It's just a safety precaution, nothing to worry about. You'll be back in your homes in a few hours.

The man follows his NEIGHBORS onto a school bus parked on the street. The camera PANS to include an RV with a satellite dish mounted on top of it nearby.

INT. CUSTOM RV - NIGHT

GYRICH briefs a NY POLICE CHIEF and a ROGUE SHIELD SPECIAL FORCES COMMANDER inside. Maps of the borough are spread out before them.

GYRICH

Our target is a Black male approximately six feet four with incredible strength, bulletproof skin, and no known weaknesses. He escaped from Rikers Island several days ago and we've managed to track him here to Brooklyn. It's our job to capture him alive if at all possible. Dead if necessary.

POLICE CHIEF

Isn't this a bit out of our league?

GYRICH

Don't worry Chief your men are here mainly to keep the general populace and media out of the way. The Commander and his Strike Force will handle all the dirty work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMMANDER

My men are prepared and awaiting further instructions, sir.

GYRICH

Excellent. Let's move out.

The RV pulls off followed by a nondescript cargo van.

EXT. BROOKLYN BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

A sleek Lexus pulls up in front and THREE FIGURES emerge. It's WILLIS STRYKER along with METHOD MAN and ODB. They're greeted at the door by a DREADLOCKED BROTHER toting an automatic weapon. He lets them in and peeks out to make sure no one is following. As he closes the door Carl emerges from the shadows and walks stealthily across the street.

INT. BROOKLYN BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

STRYKER and FOUR LIEUTENANTS are gathered here around a table crowded with STACKS OF MONEY and KILOS OF COCAINE. One of the lieutenants is ITALIAN, another IRISH, a third CHINESE, and the fourth PUERTO RICAN. It's the U.N. of crime cartels.

STRYKER

We've done well for ourselves gentlemen. By joining forces we've minimized risks while maximizing profits. No more turf battles or drive-by shootings and everybody gets their piece of good 'ole American apple pie.

Stryker paces to and fro a la "The Untouchables".

STRYKER

This system can only work if we're honest with each other. I'm sorry to report that someone here has violated that trust.

We see the face of each man as Stryker walks by in the b.g. He stops behind GIANCARLO, the Italian Don.

STRYKER

Is it you Giancarlo?

GIANCARLO

Come on Stryker we've known each other for how many years? I wouldn't rip you off. Not with all the paper we're makin'!

STRYKER

Of course you wouldn't.

(CONTINUED)

23.
CONTINUED:

WHISSH! In one fluid movement Stryker turns, draws his gun, and aims it at MIGUEL, the Puerto Rican dealer. BAM! BAM! BAM!

Miguel's bullet ridden body falls to the floor.

The other LIEUTENANTS and HENCHMEN react in horror.

STRYKER

Good help is so hard to find these days.

CHANG

Now you've done it, Stryker. Who's gonna deal to Spanish Harlem now?

Before Stryker can offer an answer-

CRASH! THE SKYLIGHT WINDOW SHATTERS sending shards of glass raining down along with

CARL

who lands on top of the table amid the money and drugs.

STRYKER

You!?

CARL

Hello Willis. Long time no see.

Stryker turns to his henchmen who've drawn their weapons.

STRYKER

Blast him!

METHOD MAN, ODB AND THE RASTA BROTHER SPRAY CARL WITH AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE. It does little but put holes in his shirt. He walks towards Stryker like a man possessed.

CARL

This is between me and you, Stryker.

STRYKER

(to his Lieutenants)

Get him!

GIANCARLO THROWS HIS BEST RIGHT HAND. He comes away wincing in pain hurting his hand on Carl's iron jaw.

CHANG and the IRISHMAN attack him simultaneously. Stryker uses this diversion to escape through a back door.

The Irishman, an ex-prizefighter, THROWS A FEW JABS AT CARL who grabs both his wrists and-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEAD BUTTS HIM UNCONSCIOUS!

CHANG executes a flying kick towards Carl who GRABS HIS FOOT and TOSSES HIM THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW OUT ONTO THE STREET! Carl runs through the back door and up a flight of stairs.

EXT. BROWNSTONE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Carl walks out onto the roof. Stryker is here, peering across to the next building, but he's already determined that he can't make the jump. He turns back to Carl brandishing the TECH 9 and opens fire. BRRR! BRRR! BRRR! Short bursts that merely bounce off Carl who reaches out and SMASHES THE GUN WITH HIS BARE HANDS like that Super dude.

CARL

Why? We were like brothers growin' up.

STRYKER

You changed. When you stopped running with "The Decepticons" you started thinkin' you were all that.

CARL

I grew up. There wasn't no future on the streets only jail or death. I built a new life for myself and you destroyed it.

STRYKER

She never told you what happened between us while you were overseas?

We see Carl's reaction as he absorbs this revelation.

STRYKER

No, she didn't. I can tell by the look on your face.

CARL

You're lying. And even if you aren't I can forgive her. But for you I got no sympathy.

STRYKER

When you got back from the War she tried to break it off but I wasn't havin' it.

CARL

So you killed her?

STRYKER

I hate to sound cliché but if I couldn't have her nobody could.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL CHARGES TOWARDS HIM LIKE A WILD BULL. BAM! HE BULLDOZES INTO STRYKER KNOCKING HIM BACK. Stryker picks up a METAL GIRDER lying nearby in hopes of evening the odds.

SWING, SWING, SWING. Carl sustains several blows but stands his ground. Stryker can't believe it.

POW! BAM! BOP!

Carl proceeds to beat the living crap out of Stryker. Each blow is like therapy for our hero.

CARL
(throwing an uppercut)
This is for Reval!

Stryker FALLS TO THE GROUND, DEFENSELESS. Carl stands over him with the power to take his life. This is the moment that's kept him alive in prison; revenge at last. But as he stands here he realizes that killing Stryker would only make him the murderer he's insisted he wasn't for all these years. As Carl's inner conflict rages Stryker manages to get to his feet. He backpedals away from Carl's steady approach.

STRYKER
You always were soft. Never quite had the
killer instinct it takes to survive out
on the streets.

CLOSE ON: STRYKER'S FOOT

as he takes a tragic step backwards, plummeting through

A SKYLIGHT WINDOW

INT. BROWNSTONE - CONTINUOUS

Stryker lands with a sickening THUD.

VIEW FROM ABOVE: as Carl peers down at his twisted body satisfied that justice has been done.

CARL
Watch your step.

Suddenly A BLACK STEALTH HELICOPTER descends into view and SHINES A SPOTLIGHT onto the roof revealing Carl.

ON THE STREET BELOW AND ATOP NEIGHBORING BUILDINGS: SEVERAL DOZEN SHIELD TROOPS have their high tech weapons aimed at him.

INT. THE RV - SAME TIME

CONTINUED:

A COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER reports to GYRICH who sits before a static filled two-way monitor. ON SCREEN we see the image of a MAN in his 50's with salt & pepper hair and an eye patch.

OFFICER

We've got him, sir. Two blocks away.

The man on the monitor screams: "Gyrich what the hell's goin' on down there!?"

GYRICH

(flicking off the screen)

Can't talk right now, Nick.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The helicopter hovers over Carl. Through a speaker we hear:

PILOT

We have the building surrounded and hereby order you to surrender. Come quietly and you'll make our job a lot easier.

Carl shields his eyes from the chopper's light. He looks around then decides to RUN LIKE HELL! We GO WITH him as he JUMPS FROM ROOFTOP TO ROOFTOP IN SINGLE BOUNDS.

LASERFIRE erupts from the barrels of TWO DOZEN GUNS. A blasts find its mark on Carl's side. He GRABS it in pain and can't believe he's been hurt. (INSERT - The wound healing itself?) He jumps off the roof into-

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Carl runs down the alley. He looks up to see the helicopter in hot pursuit.

INSIDE THE CHOPPER

The pilot communicates with Gyrich using a hand-held mic.

PILOT

He's in the alley heading westbound, sir.
We've got him in our sights.

THE RV: where Gyrich turns to his COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER.

GYRICH

Release the Mandroid.

The Officer nods in compliance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RESUME SCENE

Carl picks up a large industrial sized DUMPSTER. HE LIFTS IT ABOVE HIS HEAD AND AIMS IT AT THE CHOPPER.

PILOT
(to his CO-PILOT, frantic)
Pull up! Pull up!

Too late. Carl throws the dumpster like a projectile. BAM! A direct hit on the tail rotor. The copter goes down twirling and CRASHES in the middle of an abandoned street.

INT. THE CARGO VAN - SAME TIME

THE DOORS TO THE VAN OPEN UP, A RAMP EXTENDS, AND OUT WALKS-
THE ROGUE SHIELD COMMANDER DRESSED IN A SUIT OF POWER ARMOR!

He stands 10 feet tall, designed like something out of a Japanese cartoon. In actuality it's an experimental battlesuit equipped with 20 mm Vulcan cannons and jets enabling it to fly; an M-1 tank with feet. The MANDROID walks down the ramp and then BLASTS OFF into the night sky.

EXT. THE ALLEY - NIGHT

The Mandroid flies down the alley towards Carl.

CARL
What the hell!?

IT KNOCKS HIM TO THE GROUND WITH A SWIPE OF A METAL ARM.

Carl recovers and PICKS UP A HYUNDAI SEDAN. He TOSSES IT towards the Mandroid who evades it by activating a retro rocket and moving to one side. Carl closes the gap between them with a few bounds and PUNCHES THE DROID IN THE CHEST several times, drawing SPARKS of electricity.

INSIDE THE BATTLESUIT

The pilot screams in agony. He reaches out and presses a button that FIRES THE VULCAN CANNONS AT CARL AT POINT BLANK RANGE! This sends him flying into the box office of an old movie house across the street. He looks to be unconscious.

INT. THE RV - SAME TIME

Gyrich watches the battle rage over multiple video monitors.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - NIGHT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Carl lies motionless inside the collapsed box office.

TWENTY FEET AWAY

The Rogue Commander inside the Mandroid presses a few buttons and a ROCKET LAUNCHER appears atop his left shoulder.

BACK TO CARL

who begins to regain consciousness just in time for-

THE ROCKET LAUNCHER to spit out a ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE that lands near him and emits an IMMOBILIZING GAS. He inhales just enough of the deadly gas for it to take effect and passes out.

The STRIKE FORCE moves in to investigate as we...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. SECRET GOVERNMENT INSTALLATION - DAY

Carl regains consciousness inside this high tech facility. His arms and legs are restrained by ADAMANTIUM SHACKLES. Instinctively he tries to break free.

GYRICH (O.S.)

(slipping out of darkness)

Don't bother trying to get out of those.
We made 'em strong enough to hold the
Incredible Hulk.

CARL

Who are you?

Gyrich steps from the shadows.

GYRICH

Peter Gyrich from the National Security
Agency. And I know all about you, soldier.

CARL

I'm retired. You guys gave me a discharge
fair and square.

GYRICH

(waving a file)

It's all right here in black and white.
Your troubled background with multiple
gang-related arrests followed by your
distinguished military career and finally

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GYRICH (cont'd)
the details of the murder case that put
you in Riker's.

CARL
It was a set up.

GYRICH
Maybe. But Henry Rackham is dead so that
makes you guilty of at least one murder.

Carl shakes his head in frustration. He has no way of knowing
what Gyrich has just told him is a lie.

CARL
What do you want from me?

GYRICH
With your new powers and military
background we feel you'd make an
excellent field agent. We're willing to
forget about what happened at Riker's if
you'll come work for us.

CARL
(cocky)
And what if I refuse? What're you gonna
do? Kill me?

GYRICH
No, your body is killing itself.

Carl tries not to look surprised but he is.

DR. BURNSTEIN (O.S.)
I'm afraid he's telling the truth, Lucas.

Dr. BURNSTEIN enters with PHILLIP JACKSON at this side.

CARL
Well if it ain't Dr. Frankenstein
himself.

DR. BURNSTEIN
Good to see you in one piece my boy. I ran
some tests while you were out and it seems
your body's metabolism has been speeded up
1000 times that of a normal man.

CARL
That explains my appetite. I been eating
like a horse since I came outta your
bathtub.

(CONTINUED)

DR. BURNSTEIN

'But I'm afraid it's also causing a tremendous strain on your body's internal organs.

CARL

How long do I have?

DR. BURNSTEIN

I don't know exactly. There are no precedents to draw from. It could be days, weeks, or even months. I'm sorry.

CARL

Not half as sorry as I am, Doc.

JACKSON

(extending a hand)

I'm Phil Jackson. I represent the company that funded the good Doctor's experiment. Dead or alive your body belongs to us. You even signed a contract to that effect before taking part I'm sure you remember?

CARL

I ain't no man's property.

JACKSON

The bottom line is if you won't cooperate we'll simply wait until you expire. Then a team of government eggheads will cut you open and see what makes you tick. Or you can work for Mr. Gyrich and my company will supply Dr. Burnstein with everything he needs to find a cure. The choice is yours.

Carl is disheartened but he knows what he must do.

CUT TO:

TESTING MONTAGE

We watch as Carl performs incredible feats of strength with his body linked to a computer through a series of diodes. He lifts dead weight on a machine. The display reads 5 tons. A scale measures his body weight: an amazingly dense 425 lbs. A LASER BEAM is unable to penetrate his new skin. From point-blank range a LAB TECH fires a RPG. The smoke clears and Carl is revealed, barechested without a scratch.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Gyrich briefs Carl on his first mission. He turns on an overhead projector and we see a file photo of Moses Magnum.

GYRICH

Do you recognize this man?

CARL

Yeah he's the dude who took over that country in Africa, right?

GYRICH

Correct. Maurice Magnum, an International arms dealer who's making a ploy for legitimacy by establishing the nation of Canann as a haven for Black people. Already thousands have heeded his call, liquidating their assets, and travelling there by way of Europe and Asia.

CARL

So what do you want from me?

GYRICH

We want to send you to Africa to infiltrate his organization.

CARL

And do what?

GYRICH

Observe. Try to get close to him if you can. We've already got an agent in place who will contact you with further orders. If Magnum goes crazy and unleashes this virus you are to eliminate him with 'extreme prejudice'.

CARL

I'm no killer, Gyrich.

GYRICH

So you keep insisting. Just remember your life depends on us now.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - CARL travels to Africa INTERCUT with MOSES taking charge. We hear James Brown's "The Boss".

A) CARL steps off a commercial flight wearing a pair of cool shades with a travel bag over one shoulder.

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CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON - A PASSPORT

where we see a photo of Carl with the name of his new civilian identity printed underneath... "LUKE CAGE". A STAMP presses down allowing him free passage into London, England.

Carl (from here on referred to as LUKE) walks through busy Heathrow airport. He spots a crowd of BLACK FACES crowded into a terminal marked "Air Africa" and wanders over in search of his connecting flight past-

CNN's BERNARD SHAW

who tapes a segment with a CAMERA OPERATOR.

BERNARD SHAW

Moses Magnum's plea to millions of people of African descent has spawned a worldwide pilgrimage to Canann from the United States, Europe, South America, and the West Indies. Despite the President's order for all Americans to stay out of Canann the majority of people embarking on this exodus appear to be African-Americans disenchanted with their lives in the U.S.

B) MOSES gets to know the inhabitants of "his" country. We watch him interact with CHILDREN OF CANANN, address CHIEFS from various tribal factions, and, inside his private luxury chambers, converse with EUROPEAN BUSINESSMEN.

MOSES

I want Snell Oil out of here within 24 hours. And, as a down payment on the reparations you owe, leave behind everything; the refinery equipment, computers, trucks, everything.

The stuffy executives can't believe it.

MOSES

And tell your bosses I'll be in touch.

C) LUKE steps off the plane. A sign reads: "Welcome to Canann. The Black Man's Heaven." He's greeted by several BEAUTIFUL BLACK WOMEN of different hues (Honey toned to Dark Chocolate) who drape his neck with Hawaiian style wreaths. LUKE helps a MAN with his oversized trunk. He thanks him in French: "Merci beaucoup". For the first time in a long time Luke feels good to be alive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

D) MOSES argues with a NEWT/LIMBAUGH TYPE on ABC's Nightline as TED KOPPEL mediates. The Conservative says, "We know the U.S. isn't perfect but we're tackling our problems with social programs to help the less fortunate." MOSES fires back: "You've been saying that for over 400 years. There's no justice for the Black man in America. The only solution is to separate once and for all."

END MONTAGE.

INT. MOSES' CHAMBERS - DAY

Moses watches TV as a young BLACK BROTHA is being interviewed on the screen.

YOUNG BROTHA

When I saw my man on TV I said "Word, I hear what he's sayin' Yo!" I'm sick of bein' dissed by White folks all the time. So I sold my car and bought a one way ticket back to the Motherland.

REPORTER

What do you hope to find there?

YOUNG BROTHA

I don't know but it's gotta be better than the projects I left behind!

Moses ZAPS off the television. We reveal a new face nearby. Dr. Curtis Carr a/k/a CHEMISTRO, a bespectacled Black man in a red and silver costume. A silent IRON FIST acts as sentry.

CHEMISTRO

There are 50,000 emigrants in the capital and more arriving by the hour.

MAGNUM

Excellent. The more Americans we lure here the better. Washington won't try to invade if it means risking the lives of their own. Even if they are second class citizens.

CHEMISTRO

I've ordered the Wrecking Crew to construct temporary shelters for the refugees.

MOSES

Excellent Chemistro, that's why you're my right hand man. Besides it's about time those brutes did something constructive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZANDE enters with a two man CAMERA CREW in tow.

ZANDE

Time for your daily broadcast, sir.

EXT. CANANN - DAY

We start on a CLOSE SHOT of a speaker mounted atop a small French subcompact (Le Car?). It broadcasts the end of an Islamic prayer and then we hear: "And now Canann state television and radio presents.... 'The Word of Moses'".

ANOTHER ANGLE: Refugees unload off a double-decker European style bus in the shadow of the Presidential Palace. In the b.g. we hear Moses addressing the people (AD LIB).

ANGLE ON LUKE: He exits the bus and looks around at the splendor of the city and endless sea of African faces. A Nationalist, Anti-American fervor is in the air. We see Canannites burning effigies of the U.S., etc. We GO WITH Luke as he makes his way past the demonstration.

EXT. CLINIC - DAY

Luke walks past a stunningly beautiful Black woman unloading a heavy box from a truck full of medical supplies. This is DR. CLAIRE TEMPLE from our opening. He reaches out and gives her a hand.

LUKE

Here let me help you with that.

She gladly relinquishes the box.

CLAIRE

Thanks.

LUKE

No problem. We're all in this together, right?

Claire leads him into the clinic past a Red Cross insignia.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

An understaffed medical facility. SEVERAL DOZEN CANANNITE CHILDREN and ADULTS are tended to by a handful of DOCTORS and NURSES. Claire directs Luke to a spot in the corner.

CLAIRE

You can just set it down right there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Luke does as instructed. He and Claire share an awkward smile.

CLAIRE
(extending a hand)
I'm Dr. Claire Temple.

LUKE
Car-
(catching himself)
Lucas Cage but you can call me Luke.

CLAIRE
What brings you here? Caught up in the dream?

LUKE
It's not an impossible dream. A decent place to live and prosper. I lost my job doin' construction, saw Moses on TV, and figured I'd come over and start fresh. Maybe even start my own business.

Claire nods.

LUKE
And yourself?

CLAIRE
I was in the Peace Corps. My tour ended a few months ago but I decided to stay a little longer. Just my luck getting caught up in an International incident.

ERIC comes over with a concerned look.

ERIC
Doctor Temple Sabu is running a fever. Can you take a look at him?

CLAIRE
I'll be right there, Eric.
(to Luke)
Duty calls. Maybe we'll see each other again?

LUKE
Count on it.

She smiles and walks off. Luke looks after her admiringly.

EXT. REFUGEE CAMP - NIGHT

An establishing shot of a crowded shelter built to house the new arrivals.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Luke settles in next to a couple of idealistic Twentysomething EXPATRIATES who are busy trying to personalize the small living spaces they've been meted out.

KHALIL is a streetwise Muslim brother while KEVIN CLARK (clean cut, wire rimmed glasses) grew up in the 'burbs. Both find themselves bunking across from our hero.

KHALIL

This sure don't look like the Promiseland to me. I've seen softer beds in prison.

KEVIN

Now don't come over here with all that negative energy. This is a developing Third World nation and there's lots to be done to improve the quality of life, that's why we're here.

KHALIL

I know but cots? No runnin' water. And where we suppose to use the bathroom?

KEVIN

I was an architect back in the States. Once I meet with Moses I'm sure he'll approve my plan for an energy efficient housing community that will run off solar energy. Next year this time we'll be living in the lap of luxury.

KHALIL

Yeah and pretty soon all those folks we left behind will be so jealous they'll be trying to swim across the ocean to get here. See I'm Muslim, but I study the Bible too and just like Moses in the scripture Moses Magnum has come to lead the Black man to salvation.

Luke heeds his word. Kevin says "Amen to that."

KHALIL

One thing I been wonderin' though... Where we gonna work?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD, - DAY

Luke and the Expatriates plant crops in the tilled field. It's back breaking labor under the hot African sun that lingers overhead.

KHALIL

(wielding a shovel)

Man I ain't come to the Motherland to pick nobody's cotton!

KHALIL

You're not planting cottonseed you're planting food. Without work there's no food. Without food we don't eat.

LUKE

Haven't you been on a farm before? You mean to tell me you ain't got no relatives in the South?

KHALIL

I'm from L.A.... Ain't there a Mickey D's or a Taco truck around here somewhere?

Luke goes back to work. He doesn't mind the tedious farm work as it gives him time to plot his next move.

EXT. PALACE GARDEN - DAY

MOSES performs T'ai Chi with IRON FIST. Their graceful movements are in perfect synch.

MOSES

How's your head?

IRON FIST

I'm still having those nightmares.

Moses looks worried.

IRON FIST

Tell me again Moses, where did you find me?

MOSES

I told you Chemistro found your body while hiding in the Savage Land. He brought you to my base in the Caribbean and nursed you back to health.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRON FIST

I can't remember anything. My past life is a blank.

MOSES

(puts a comforting hand on his shoulder)

Then plan your future at my side. Help me build a new nation and yourself a new life.

Fist nods. Moses is the only friend he's got in the world.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Luke looks up from the dirt to discover PILEDRIVER of The Wrecking Crew harassing a YOUNG AFRICAN BOY. He plays a game on his Nintendo Gameboy as the kid screams for his toy. Luke puts down his tool and walks over. Kev takes note.

KEVIN

(to Khalil)

What's he doing? That freak of nature is liable to kill him.

Khalil shrugs.

KHALIL

Let the man handle his own business.

Luke silences the BOY with a look then approaches Piledriver who is oblivious, enjoying the videogame action.

LUKE

Hey man give the kid his game back.

Piledriver looks up.

PILEDRIVER

What're you gonna do about it, punk?

Luke doesn't flinch as PILEDRIVER HAULS OFF AND SUCKER PUNCHES HIM. To our surprise the blow doesn't budge him an inch. He smiles at Piledriver who can't believe it.

PILEDRIVER

That blow should've killed you!

LUKE

"If I woulda-coulda-shoulda!" That's what folks always say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOOM! LUKE HAULS OFF AND RETURNS THE FAVOR, KNOCKING
PILEDRIIVER OFF HIS FEET AND (SPLASH!) into-

A LATRINE

Piledriver emerges covered in human waste. He's fighting mad now and lunges toward Luke. Just then a GLOWING FIST grabs his arm stopping his massive fist just short of Luke. We reveal IRON FIST who intervenes between the two combatants.

IRON FIST

Moses wants us to return to the Palace at once.

PILEDRIIVER

I got a score to settle first.

Piledriver raises his fists. Luke puts up his dukes showing he's ready whenever. Iron Fist isn't having it. He harnesses his chi power and CAUSES HIS FIST TO RADIATE WITH A HALO OF MYSTICAL ENERGY.

IRON FIST

We go back now.

Piledriver backs off.

PILEDRIIVER

(to Luke, threateningly)
This ain't over by a long shot.

LUKE

I was just gettin' started chump.

Piledriver backs off. A beat as Iron Fist and Luke exchange glares; two bad muthas sizing each other up. The two villains hop on back of a Humvee and it pulls off.

Luke turns to the boy who examines the remains of his now smashed Gameboy.

LUKE

You okay?

The boy nods; he'll live.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FIELDS - NIGHT

Stars dot the clear African sky. A lone figure walks through the fields quietly. It's CHEMISTRO walking alone lit only by the moonlight. He stops in the middle of the field and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

spreads his arms apart. A beat and then TRANSMUTATION RAYS come blasting from his hands. They LIGHT UP THE NIGHT SKY.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Luke walks along in the forest until suddenly he freezes. We see from his POV as a shaft of moonlight illuminates a woman standing twenty feet in front of him. Something about her is familiar... it's REVA!

LUKE
Reva! Is it really you?

REVA
Yes Carl it's me.

Luke runs over and they embrace like long lost lovers.

LUKE
I've missed you so... But see? We've found a place where we can be together forever. A paradise.

REVA
You cannot stay here and neither can I.
You must wake up.

LUKE
No.

HE WAKES as we-

END DREAM SEQUENCE.

KHALIL stands over a sweat soaked Luke.

KHALIL
Wake up... Got somethin' to show you.

EXT. FIELD - EARLY MORNING

WE GO WITH LUKE and a few EXPATRIATES to discover the fields they tilled yesterday. We hear Earth, Wind & Fire's "Harvest For the World". To our amazement the fields are filled with GIANT SIZED CROPS. We see ears of corn, lettuce, tomatoes, pods of peas, etc. No one can believe their eyes.

LUKE
Is this stuff safe to eat?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: -

A HUNGRY BROTHER bites into a Tomato the size of a beach ball. The juice squirts all over his face.

HUNGRY BRO.
Tastes good to me.

Luke looks to Khalil then to the object that has his attention. The camera PANS to include-

A GIANT SIZED WATERMELON

That most maligned of fruits synonymous with African-American stereotypes. Luke turns to Khalil.

LUKE
Go ahead. You know you wanna run.

Khalil gives him a glare then goes over to investigate.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Khalil uses his pocket knife to cut off a chunk of melon. It's ruby red and after a sweet taste he shakes his head in dismay.

KHALIL
Damn! Knew I shoulda brought some indo!

Off an incredulous Luke we...

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

BURN-IN: "Nairobi, Kenya"

A meeting of African heads of state in progress. Several recognizable faces are in attendance thanks to CG technology including South African President NELSON MANDELA, Libya's MOHMAR KHADAFI, FIDEL CASTRO and Angola's JONAS SAVIMBI. Maybe we even throw in SADDAM HUSSEIN or DR. DOOM for laughs?

MOSES MAGNUM addresses the assembly from a podium. IRON FIST has his back as usual.

MAGNUM
My goal is a United Africa by the year 2000. This is the richest continent on the planet in terms of natural resources but, because of the meddling of a few Western powers, we can't afford to feed our own people. I suggest we put aside our differences, tribal, cultural, and religious, and come together as Africans!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A few leaders seem moved by his plea.

MAGNUM

I've known many of you for years. Sold you arms that liberated your countries or suppressed Civil Wars instigated by outside agitators. Now I seek your help in securing a future for us all.

KING NKRUMAH of Zambria stands up to speak.

KING NKRUMAH

I object! The Organization of African Unity cannot recognize Moses Magnum as a legitimate ruler or it risks discrediting itself in the eyes of the world. He may talk sweetly but he's nothing more than a terrorist.

MAGNUM

One man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter, King Nkrumah. Tell me what is it you have against me? Your people are starving yet daily you turn away truckloads of fresh food grown in the blessed soil of Canann. Must we allow ego to stand in the way of hungry children?

An AFRICAN MODERATOR interrupts.

MODERATOR

It's obvious we won't resolve this matter today so we shall reconvene next week.

The leaders nod their approval and disperse. Magnum and Nkrumah exchange icy glares on the way out as we...

WIPE TO:

INT. HEALTH CLINIC - DAY

Luke enters to find Dr. Temple assisting a small, bedridden girl. He watches her work, stricken by her beauty, as she AD LIBS some instructions to a Nurse. After a beat she turns to discover Luke watching her.

CLAIRE

Ahh, Mr. Cage.

LUKE

You remembered. I'm impressed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

I'm good with names. I have to be to keep track of all my patients. What brings you here?

LUKE

I was wondering, if you ever get any time off from this place, maybe you could show me around sometime?

CLAIRE

Is that your way of asking me out?

LUKE

Yes.

CLAIRE

Give me a few minutes to wrap things up here and I'll be right out.

She smiles. We hold on Luke for a beat and then, for the first time in our story, we see the hint of a smile forming.

CUT TO:

EXT. A TROPICAL FOREST - DAY

Luke carries Claire, dressed in civilian clothes and hiking boots, on top of his broad shoulders. She covers his eyes with her hands and directs him on where to step.

CLAIRE

Almost there.

They walk through dense foliage and emerge next to-

A BEAUTIFUL SECLUDED STREAM

Wildflowers grow here dotting the riverbank with vibrant colors. Exotic animals and birds go about their business as usual.

CLAIRE

Okay you can open your eyes now.

Luke opens his eyes and takes in the natural beauty of his surroundings as Claire climbs down from his shoulders.

LUKE

Wow!

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE
It's beautiful isn't it? This is one of
my favorite places in all of Canann.

LUKE
Beats Central Park that's for sure.

CLAIRE
Yeah and no muggers!

TIME LAPSE DISSOLVE

Luke and Claire picnic by the shore.

LUKE
Now I see why you didn't wanna go back to
the States. This place is paradise!

CLAIRE
I felt the same way when I first arrived.
And now, with the coming of Moses, the
future of Canann looks even brighter.

LUKE
Is he as powerful as they say?

CLAIRE
I don't know the extent of his powers but
I do know he saved this country from a
terrible epidemic. Plus I've seen him fly
with my own eyes.
(earnestly)
Do you believe me?

LUKE
A few weeks ago I would've said you were
crazy but now...

Luke nods in the affirmative. Claire takes his hand in hers
suggesting friendship and maybe more.

INT. REFUGEE CAMP - NIGHT

Luke, Khalil, Kevin, and OTHERS crowd around a TV set
watching "The Word of Moses".

TV SCREEN

MOSES
And so I have been scorned by my own
brothers and the cause of uniting our
people has suffered a temporary set back
until the time that the OAU recognizes me
as the legitimate ruler of Canann.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Why won't the other leaders accept him?

LUKE

Politics which is just another word for warfare. Those countries get a lot of humanitarian aid from the U.S. and if they say don't trust Moses then they'll do as they're told.

KHALIL

Yeah and I bet the CIA is thinking of every way possible to destroy this righteous Black man. Why I wouldn't be surprised if they had spies among us right now.

ANGLE ON LUKE

who feels his loyalties conflicted. He's come to respect Moses but then there's his mission. What to do?

INT. IRON FIST'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Iron Fist, his mask removed, tosses and turns in his sleep.

FLASHBACK - A SNOW COVERED REGION OF THE HIMALAYAS

WENDELL RAND (30's, ruggedly handsome) leads his WIFE, business partner HAROLD MEACHUM, and nine year-old son DANNY through the frozen wasteland. We see the remains of a crashed private jet in the distance.

WENDELL RAND

If the flight computer's correct it'll take us a week to reach civilization.

MEACHUM

But we've only got enough food to last a couple of days. What do we do once it's all gone?

They share a look. The implication is obvious; "Alive". They trudge along encumbered by heavy parkas, boots, and equipment.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A MOUNTAIN PASS - LATER

The survivors make their way through a windy pass. Suddenly AN AVALANCHE rocks the precipice they find themselves on. MEACHUM takes cover from the falling rocks. MRS. RAND does likewise, grabbing her son Danny in her arms. Wendell Rand

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

isn't so lucky as the trembling ground sends him PLUMMETING OVER A CLIFF. At the last possible moment he reaches out and grabs hold of-

A LEDGE

where he holds on with a gloved hand for dear life.

MRS. RAND

gasps in alarm. Danny shouts out.

DANNY

Daddy!

BACK TO THE LEDGE

where Harold Meachum walks over standing above him.

WENDELL

Help me.

Harold raises a SPIKED SNOW BOOT and STOMPS ON HIS HAND. Wendell cries out in agony and FALLS TO HIS DEATH.

MRS. RAND

No!

Meachum turns to Ms. Rand and Danny with a strange look in his eye, like a man possessed.

HAROLD

With your husband out of the way I now have sole control of the Rand-Meachum Corporation.

MRS. RAND

You won't get away with this.

HAROLD

(approaching)

I did it for you, for us! Remember that night in Atlantic city? Now we can be together forever.

MRS. RAND

No! Get away from me!

She picks up a few medium sized rocks and hurls them towards Harold. This has the desired effect of driving him away. Perhaps Danny helps out by beaming him with a snowball?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HAROLD

Okay I'll leave but mark my words: you'll never make it out of here alive.

Harold runs off. Mrs. Rand grabs her son in her arms, hugging him tightly. They are alone in the frozen tundra as we...

CUT TO:

INT. REFUGEE CAMP - EARLY MORNING

The expatriates prepare for another day. LUKE makes his bed military style, KHALIL prays to the East. At his bunk KEVIN yells out in excitement waving a letter.

LUKE

What is it? What's wrong?

KEVIN

I got a letter from the President's office! They loved the designs I submitted and invited me to the inauguration at the Palace tonight.

(reading)

"For new arrivals with new ideas..."
That's me alright!

KHALIL

That's great Kev. Have fun.

A few people congratulate him but it's obvious everyone is a tad envious until he adds:

KEVIN

It also says I can bring as many friends as I want.

The mood in the tent changes to one of jubilation as we...

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DINING HALL - EVENING

A Black tie affair held by Moses Magnum for the cream of the expatriate crop. We see esteemed DOCTORS, LAWYERS, SCIENTISTS, and POLITICIANS sitting at various tables. The camera moves to a table where we find LUKE, CLAIRE, KEVIN and KHALIL. Luke is dressed in a tuxedo while Claire wears a stylish evening gown. The others are dressed up as well with Khalil sporting a bow tie to show his affiliation to the Muslim faith.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON STAGE: JAMES BROWN, "The Godfather of Soul" sings a live version of his song "Funky President".

J.B.

(singing)

Let's get together and get some land.
Raise our food just like the Man.
Save our money like the Mob.
Put up a factory own the job.

The Godfather finishes up to a ROUND OF APPLAUSE. ZANDE emerges from backstage and shakes his hand.

ZANDE

Thank you Godfather and I do hope you
enjoy your stay here in Canann. You can
drive as fast as you like here too.

James and his band/dancers clear the stage. (*NOTE: We could always get HAMMER to perform "Living in Canann" a la Rocky IV?)

ZANDE

Good evening and welcome to Canann. Now I
present to you the man sent by God to
deliver the Black man from the hands of
his oppressor... Our esteemed leader
Moses Magnum.

APPLAUSE greets MOSES as he takes the mic with a smile.

MOSES

Brothers and sisters it warms my heart to
see your faces here. You are the cream of
the crop, what Dubois called the
"Talented Tenth" who have embraced the
dream of a new homeland for our people.
I'm honored to receive you and eager to
hear each of your ideas on making Canann
a better place.

We MOVE AROUND THE TABLE to see the exhilarated reactions of
Luke, Kevin, Khalil, and Claire. Suddenly we see a HAND shoot
up as if to ask a question. It belongs to Claire. Moses takes
note of her and his eyes light up, struck by her beauty.

MOSES

You have something you wish to say Miss?

CLAIRE

Yes. I'm a Doctor and I beg of you to
consider the state of health care in this
country. Children die everyday here in
Canann from diseases which have long been

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAIRE (cont'd)
cured in the West all because there are
no suitable places to store and
administer vaccines. What Canann needs is
a new, state-of-the-art medical facility.

All eyes in the room turn to the table where Claire is
sitting. Drawing unwanted attention towards Luke.

ANGLE ON MOSES: Who is mesmerized by Claire.

MOSES
(mutters to himself)
My Sefora.. My Nferteri!

ANGLE ON LUKE: He feels a pair of eyes glued on him.

He turns to see PILEDRIVER staring him down.

PILEDRIVER
You and me got unfinished business.

Piledriver uses his fists to SMASH THE TABLES ON EITHER SIDE
OF LUKE as the occupants scatter.

ANGLE ON MOSES: Who realizes his speech is about to be rudely
interrupted.

MOSES
Piledriver, No!

BACK TO LUKE

who pushes Claire and the others away from him.

LUKE
Stand back.

PILEDRIVER AND LUKE CHARGE EACH OTHER. PILEDRIVER UNLEASHES A
FLURRY OF BLOWS THAT CONNECT WITH LUKE'S FACE. Luke weathers
the storm and retaliates with a DROP KICK that sends him
across the room and into an aquarium or similar set piece
with a CRASH!

WELL-DRESSED REFUGEES RUN FOR THEIR LIVES as Luke rips off
his tattered suit jacket in preparation to rumble. The other
two members of the Wrecking Crew close in on him as
Piledriver recovers, picking himself off the floor.

MOSES
(to Chemistro)
I thought you had those animals under
control?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHEMISTRO

The process that created them also increased their aggressive tendencies I'm afraid.

THUNDERBALL and THE WRECKER join PILEDRIVER in combating Luke. Luke doesn't like the new odds, spots a window nearby, and uses it as an exit-

CRASH!

He falls half a dozen flights down and hits the ground running.

THE WRECKING CREW follows in hot pursuit.

EXT. THE STREETS OF CANANN - NIGHT

Luke leads The Wrecking Crew through the streets of Canann.

A MARKETPLACE

People trade and barter for goods. Luke tries to blend in with the crowd.

BOOM!

THUNDERBALL's WRECKING BALL FLIES THROUGH THE AIR AND KNOCKS LUKE TO THE GROUND. It returns to it's master like a boomerang. Before Luke can recover THE WRECKER is upon him. He holds him from behind with his giant crowbar across his waist just long enough for-

PILEDRIVER TO CONNECT WITH A SERIES OF VICIOUS COMBINATIONS! Luke reels from the blows as Piledriver laughs maniacally. And then the coup de grace: THUNDERBALL slams his wrecking ball in Luke's face as we...

FADE TO BLACK:

UP FROM BLACK

INT. MOSES' PRIVATE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Luke regains consciousness inside Moses' plush living quarters. He looks around and notices an NBA Basketball game (The Pistons vs. The Bulls) playing on a big screen TV in the b.g.

INSERT - HIS AIRNESS MICHAEL JORDAN DUNKING THE BALL.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES (O.S.)
All those millionaires... What a waste.

Luke turns and we reveal MOSES entering the room. IRON FIST is behind him. He walks over to the tube and attempts to fix the SNOWY RECEPTION to no avail.

MOSES
I can perform miracles but can't get the ball game crystal clear. Who are you?

LUKE
A Black man on the run. Figured I'd find a place to lay low here in Canann.

Moses is intrigued.

MOSES
What are you running from? And how do I know you're not an assassin? A clerk sent to collect a bill.

LUKE
I got no beef with you, man. As a matter of fact I was interested in joining the cause... That is if you'll have me.

MOSES
I'm not running a boarding house, Mister. I only want Black folks with special skills or talents here. No gangbangers or knuckleheads. What can you do?

Luke gestures to an ELEPHANT GUN mounted above a fireplace.

LUKE
Is that thing loaded?

Moses nods and Iron Fist retrieves the hunting rifle. He hands it to Moses who cocks it open to check for a round then nods "Yes".

LUKE
Shoot me. Anywhere you like.

Moses takes aim and... BANG! The gun spits out it's huge load. The smoke clears and Luke is revealed unharmed.

MOSES
You ain't one of them mutants is you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LUKE

I volunteered for an experiment in prison that gave me super strength and invulnerability. That's why I was able to hang with your Three Amigos. But I think the process is killing me. It got too hot in the States with the government hunting me down so I thought I'd come here and offer my services for the remainder of my life, however long or short that may be.

Moses is impressed. He offers a hand.

MOSES

Well welcome aboard, brother.

INT. THE PALACE - NIGHT

Moses leads Luke on a tour of the place. They walk and talk. Iron Fist tags along a few steps behind, silent as usual.

LUKE

(re: Iron Fist)

Who's he? Your shadow?

MOSES

Iron Fist watches my back. My one man secret service.

(changing the subject)

Where you from, Luke?

LUKE

New York. Harlem to be exact.

MOSES

The Big Apple. I spent some time there but I'm from Chicago myself. Southside. So tell me, where you ever in a gang?

LUKE

Yeah but I realized early where that was headed and went back to school. Got my GED then joined the Navy.

MOSES

I was a leatherneck myself.

LUKE

(in disbelief)

Get outta here, you were a Marine?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES

Yep. For all of six months if you count Basic training. They drafted my ass straight out of high school. Man 'Nam was some crazy shit! ...Anyway it didn't take long for me to cop a discharge. When I got back to the States it was drugs, drugs, drugs! All my boys were either usin' or sellin'. I knew that wasn't for me so I headed to South America where I learned the Arms trade and made a fortune during the Cold War selling weapons to both sides always on step ahead of the CIA and KGB.

They walk into-

INT. HANGER - NIGHT

A collection of various fighter planes. Luke spots a suit of MANDROID ARMOR and gets a chill.

LUKE

Where'd you get the oversized tin can?

MOSES

Picked it up on the Black market. I had my Technicians make certain modifications from the basic design.

(suddenly serious)

So tell me: Do you believe in integration?

Luke thinks for a beat and answers honestly.

LUKE

Sometimes.

MOSES

The color-blind society is a myth. Blacks and whites aren't working together anymore. Everyone's protecting their own just like a gang or the military. For the first time in history Europe has gotten their act together and formed a United Government. It's time Black folks had a place to call their own. It's land that defines a people that's why the Jews established Israel after World War II. Malcolm X said the price of freedom is death. I wanna give our people something to believe in, something worth dying for.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE
I feel you.

MOSES
Haven't you ever been crossed by white
folks? What they gotta do to show you how
they feel about you? Lock you up?

We see a QUICK FLASHBACK of a JUDGE pronouncing Luke "Guilty".

MOSES
Beat you?

We see a QUICKFLASH of RACKHAM beating Luke senseless.

MOSES
Try and kill you?

We see a QUICKFLASH of DR. BURNSTEIN's prison lab.

MOSES
It's time you looked to yourself and your
brothers for salvation.

They walk into-

INT. CHEMISTRO'S LAB - NIGHT

CHEMISTRO is busy patching up Piledriver's fists. We see
where the knuckles are bruised apparently from striking
Luke's thick skin.

MOSES
When you're done with him could you have
a look at our newest recruit?

Chemistro stops what he's doing, much to Piledriver's
chagrin, and walks over to Luke. He looks at him like he's
something good to eat and this makes Luke a bit
uncomfortable.

CHEMISTRO
Piledriver and The Wrecking Crew were
genetically engineered so that no mortal
man could harm them yet you did.
(touches Luke)
Your skin is tough, like organic steel.

Luke removes Chemistro's hand from his body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE
I drank a lotta milk growin' up.

Moses smiles. He likes Luke's style.

LUKE
Some prison doctor named Burnstein
screwed up my DNA.

CHEMISTRO
Noah Burnstein?

LUKE
Yeah I think that was his name.

CHEMISTRO
We worked together at The Institute. A
brilliant man though a bit eccentric even
as Geneticists go.

MOSES
(to Chemistro)
I want you to take a look inside of him.
See what's going on. Maybe we can even
save the brother's life? I'll be in my
chambers.

Moses turns and exits followed by Iron Fist leaving Luke
alone with his new friends.

INT. THE DUNGEON BELOW THE PALACE - NIGHT

We follow an African soldier through the bowels of the
palace. This is AMADOU, a native of Canann who remains loyal
to his fallen leader. He walks over to a dark cell where
Sembane sits in a corner comforted by his WIFE.

AMADOU
(sottovoice)
Mr. President. I have news from the
outside.

Sembane walks over to the bars where they talk quietly.

SEMBANE
Who are you?

AMADOU
Amadou, a leader of the student
government at the University.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEMBANE

What is it you want? Speak quickly before you are discovered my son.

AMADOU

Moses is the subject of great debate among the young people of Canann. Some feel he is the Messiah while others call him the devil incarnate. It was rumored that you were being held captive here so I came to see for myself how such a proud warrior could betray his country.

SEMBANE

He threatened to unleash an even deadlier strain of the Ebola virus if I didn't cooperate. I did it to save lives.

AMADOU

I knew it! Moses is as bad as those he denounces.

(looking around)

Listen carefully. Men loyal to you are amassing weapons and meeting secretly to plan a coup.

SEMBANE

When?

AMADOU

Soon. But first we will wait to see how our neighbors respond.

SEMBANE

That would be wise. Moses is cunning and has many weapons at his disposal. I don't want to see my beloved country drowned in a bloodbath.

AMADOU

(quoting)

"To die for the people is to honor thyself." You wrote those words many years ago in the jungle surrounded by the European oppressors.

SEMBANE

Yes but this time the enemy is from within. And thanks to Zande's treachery many of our own people are blindly following this mad man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AMADOU

We'll fight to drive this imposter from our land no matter how long it takes. You have my word.

CUT TO:

INT. CHEMISTRO'S LAB - NIGHT

Luke lies on an examination table semi-conscious while a series of sensors feed data into Chemistro's mainframe.

SEVERAL FEET AWAY

Chemistro talks with Moses over a TWO-WAY VIEWSCREEN.

CHEMISTRO

His DNA and cell structure is remarkable. It continues to mutate even as we speak.
(to himself)
Burnstein what did you do to this kid?

MOSES

Can you replicate it?

CHEMISTRO

I can try. Cloning it won't be easy.

MOSES

With an army of men like him I could rule the world. Man began in Africa so it's only fitting that humans take their next evolutionary step here. The African warriors you create will be the first of a new species superior to human beings in every way. And I, Moses Magnum, shall be their leader!

Moses gloats. He's a bad, bad man. Off an incapacitated Luke we...

CUT TO:

INT. IRON FIST'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Fist lies in bed gazing at the full moon.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - EXT. FROZEN WASTELAND - NIGHT

A similar moon shines down on YOUNG DANNY and his MOTHER trudging through the knee deep snow. The going is tough and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

they must hold on to each other for support. As they reach the top of a mountain they behold in the distance-

THE MYSTICAL CITY OF K'UN-LUN

A sprawling city. A long bridge made of wooden planks built over a deep chasm leads to the city's main gate. We see the reaction of Danny and his mom as they rejoice at making it to safety. Suddenly we hear the barking of A PACK OF WOLVES in the distance. They're nearby and getting closer. Ms. Rand grabs her son with both hands and kneels down in front of him.

MRS. RAND

Danny if you love me you'll run and won't look back.

YOUNG DANNY

But Mom-

MRS. RAND

(interrupting)

Do as I say. Run!

She PUSHES HIM and he's off, racing at full speed across the bridge.

EXT. K'UN-LUN'S MAIN GATE - SAME TIME

A SENTRY spots Danny and Ms. Rand in the distance. He sounds an alarm from a horn around his neck and notches his bow. His horn is answered by similar sounds in the distance.

THE WOLVES

come upon Ms. Rand at the threshold of the bridge. The largest of the pack growl and approach her poised to attack.

THE BRIDGE

where Danny runs as fast as his little legs will take him.

THWACK! THWACK!

The Sentry fires two arrows which find their mark in the bellies of two wolves nipping at Ms. Rand's heels.

EXT. MAIN GATE - SAME TIME

The Sentry reloads as TWO GUARDS and LEI KUNG, THE THUNDERER (a large masked man, the city's greatest champion) arrive to help out. LEI KUNG grabs DANNY as he makes it to safety.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE MIDDLE OF THE BRIDGE

where a WOLF reaches Ms. Rand and TAKES A BITE OUT OF HER LEG. She falls down and the pack is upon her instantly pawing and biting.

EXT. MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

Danny screams. Lei Kung turns his head away, comforting him as best as an Eternal warrior knows how.

DANNY WAKES

as we find ourselves back in his room. He cups his face in his hands to wipe away the tears.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

A groundbreaking ceremony in progress. Moses talks into a microphone before TV cameras as the Wrecking Crew lays the foundation of a building in the b.g.

MOSES

This hospital will be the most up to date on the continent and house the most brilliant medical personnel in the world.

ANGLE ON THE AUDIENCE: We see CLAIRE who beams with satisfaction. Moses gives her a look suggesting that this is all just for her.

ANGLE ON LUKE: Standing beside Moses on the opposite side of the ever present Iron Fist. Jealousy is written on his face.

MOSES

No more will the children of Africa be born malnourished or die of diseases modern medicine has long since conquered. We shall pioneer advances in medicine and extend the life span of our people.

CUT TO:

INT. LUKE'S LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Luke lies on a king sized bed flicking through channels and snacking. We hear a KNOCK on the door and he jumps up, checks his hair in a mirror, and walks to the door. He opens it to reveal-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

Hi. Sorry I'm late. One of my patients was running a fever.

LUKE

No problem. Come on in.

Luke lets her inside closing the door behind her.

LUKE

The guards didn't give you any trouble did they?

CLAIRE

No, not at all.

(checking out the well
furnished spread)

Well I'd say this was a step up from the camp.

LUKE

Moses wanted me close by. How are you? I haven't seen you since that night.

CLAIRE

I'm fine. What about you?

LUKE

I'm okay.

CLAIRE

Luke what's going on? Who are you?

LUKE

Just a brother trying to get by. I came here looking for a fresh start just like everybody else 'cept, unlike everybody else, I got this medical condition.

CLAIRE

What's wrong? I am a Doctor, remember? Maybe I can help?

She tries to comfort Luke but he pulls away.

LUKE

I'll be alright. Moses has one of his top men looking after me.

CLAIRE

He's phenomenal isn't he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LUKE

(accusatory)

You're attracted to him aren't you?

CLAIRE

Maybe I am. Look I left my father back in the States. I'm a grown woman who can take care of herself. We're friends Lucas and I like you a lot but I'll see who I want when I want you got that?

A beat. Both wrestle with their feelings. Claire goes for the door and then she's gone with a SLAM! We HOLD ON Luke who reacts to her outburst.

INT. PALACE HALLWAY - DAY

Claire walks down the hall with determined steps. As she reaches a corner MOSES emerges flanked by IRON FIST.

MOSES

(smiling invitingly)

Ahhh Ms. Temple what a pleasant surprise.

CLAIRE

That's Doctor Temple, Mr. President.

MOSES

Why of course it is... I was impressed with your impassioned speech on health care the other day. I trust you've witnessed my first response.

CLAIRE

The hospital.

MOSES

Yes. Step one in a process that will culminate with medical care for every man, woman and child in Canann.

CLAIRE

Ambitious. Not even the President of the United States has been able to pull that off. I'm impressed.

MOSES

Let me impress you further over dinner. My Chef is quite good. He's Jamaican and makes the spiciest jerk chicken outside Kingston.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

I don't eat meat but it'd be my pleasure to dine with you.

Moses smiles. In the b.g. we see Luke who closes his door.

INT. MOSES' PRIVATE CHAMBERS - LATER THAT NIGHT

Moses opens the door to reveal Claire dressed in a stunning evening gown.

MOSES

You look exquisite. Like an African Goddess.

CLAIRE

Why thank you.

Moses lets her inside. She surveys the place with a woman's eye. Moses makes eye contact with Iron Fist.

MOSES

Leave us.

IRON FIST

Would you like for me to stand guard outside?

Moses looks to Claire then back to The Fist.

MOSES

Take the night off.

Fist makes his exit. Moses pours himself a glass of wine.

MOSES

Would you like a drink or is that on your list of "No-nos" too?

Claire chuckles then answers.

CLAIRE

I'll have a glass thank you.

She sits at a table containing the trimmings for an intimate dinner for two. Moses comes over with the wine.

MOSES

Tell me do you believe in love at first sight?

Claire takes her wine and downs it in one gulp.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE
Only when I see first.

Moses smiles; it's gonna be a great night.

EXT. TERRACE - SAME TIME

Luke, dressed in a sleek black bodysuit, climbs out onto the ledge. He jumps off into the night air like a Black ninja as we...

CUT TO:

INT. THE PALACE - NIGHT

An abandoned floor. Luke stealthily makes his way down the hall slinking into-

INT. CHEMISTRO'S LAB - BIOCONTAINMENT ROOM - NIGHT

CHEMISTRO works feverishly assisted by a Canannite LAB TECH in a space suit. He places a MONKEY in an airtight plastic cage. Chemistro uses a NEEDLE to extract a chemical solution from a test tube. He shoots the monkey up then steps back and waits expectantly.

THE MONKEY

stares at him, bemused. A beat and then the primate starts to "crash". BLOOD flows from its nose (PG-13?) then with minimal gore (like the Nazis in "Raiders") we watch it die a horrible death. Chemistro admires his handiwork.

CHEMISTRO
I still haven't lost my touch. My Medusa strain of the Ebola virus makes the original look like the common cold! It reduces the incubation period from days to mere seconds.

TECHNICIAN
But will it work on humans? Not all viruses can make the jump from species to species.

CHEMISTRO
Why don't we see for ourselves?

CHEMISTRO PUNCTURES THE LAB TECH'S SUIT WITH THE NEEDLE! The man screams but to no avail as shoots him up with the remainder of the liquid. He watches with delight as the lab tech CRASHES inside his suit in a similar fashion as the monkey. Chemistro laughs maniacally.

(CONTINUED)

03.
CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON LUKE: Watching in the shadows in horror. A beat then he moves along as IRON FIST emerges from behind where he stood. The Watchman has a Watcher.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SKIES OF CANANN - NIGHT

MOSES FLIES THROUGH THE AIR CARRYING CLAIRE IN HIS ARMS. It's a very romantic sight a la Superman and Lois Lane. They land in a remote village. Moses bends down and grabs a handful of dirt.

MOSES

There's gold in this soil. The original earth from which God created Adam and Eve.

MOSES

Soon I'll control the entire African continent. From Egypt to South Africa.

Moses grabs Claire in his arms planting a passionate kiss.

MOSES

Every King needs a Queen. Will you rule at my side?

She quivers in his grasp.

CLAIRE

First Lady Claire. Mrs. Magnum... I like the sound of it.

They share a laugh.

FLASHCUT TO:

TV SCREEN

"60 Minutes" CORRESPONDENT ED BRADLEY briefs the American public.

ED BRADLEY

Once again Moses Magnum continues to shock the world. The man who's cured diseases, stopped tribal warfare, and terraformed the Sahara desert is tackling his biggest challenge yet: He's getting married. That's right, the controversial leader is set to tie the knot with Claire Temple, an American Peace Corp volunteer. The ceremony is being broadcast live and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ED BRADLEY (cont'd)
the networks predict it will be the
highest rated nuptials since Prince
Charles and Diana tied the knot.

We PULL BACK TO REVEAL we're watching from-

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Our PRESIDENT, chomping on a Big Mac, watches the report
fuming. GYRICH and JACKSON, the suit from Stark, are present.

PRESIDENT
(between bites)
This is bad, Gyrich. Very bad. Moses is
embarrassing me in front of the American
public. Among Blacks and Americans under
25 he's more popular than me!

GYRICH
Our operative there has almost daily
contact with Cage and reports he's in
position and, presumably, awaiting an
opportune time to strike.

JACKSON
He'd better hurry. Moses has been a busy
boy flying around the world striking
deals with leaders in the Third World. If
his proposal to OPEC Ministers is
approved it could threaten the whole way
of life in this country. Could you
imagine public opinion with gas \$10.00 a
gallon?

The Prez swallows hard.

GYRICH
Agent Cage will deliver, sir. He's got
too much at stake to fail. He just needs
more time.

PRESIDENT
Time is a luxury we don't have. I want a
contingency plan in place to nuke that
entire country off the map if we detect
one biological agent has been unleashed,
understood?

GYRICH
Yes sir.

INT. CLINIC - NIGHT

Claire sits at a computer terminal typing away. She looks around warily then pulls out A HIGH TECH GADGET that's essentially a combined cellular phone/modem equipped with sophisticated scrambling/FM circuits. We watch as Claire plugs it into her keyboard.

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN

where she CLICKS ON a box that reads: "TRANSMIT".

A METER APPEARS on the screen along with the words:

TRANSMITTING REPORT. ESTIMATED TIME REMAINING: 00:59

The countdown begins.

SMASHCUT TO:

INT. THE PALACE WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

A COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER passes the time on his shift by reading a COMICBOOK. Suddenly an ALARM BEEPS! The Officer looks up at his terminal:

INTERCEPTING SCRAMBLED GLOBAL E-MAIL TRANSMISSION.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LUKE'S CHAMBERS - EARLY MORNING

Moses pays Luke a visit with Iron Fist in tow.

MOSES

How do you feel, brother?

LUKE

I woke up again this morning so I can't complain. Another day in paradise. By the way congratulations on the marriage.

MOSES

Thank you. You will attend the ceremony of course? I'd like you to be my best man.

Luke is genuinely affected.

MOSES

I asked The Fist but he claims his religion won't allow him to unmask in front of so many people.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

I'm touched. When's the Big Day?

MOSES

In three days. I'll have Zande send someone over to fit you for a tux. Hopefully it'll fair better than the last one.

They share a laugh at the memory of the inauguration.

MOSES

There is one more thing. One of my agents intercepted a communique last night from Claire's computer to a mainframe in the Washington, D.C. area. I think she may be a spy sent by the Americans.

LUKE

What do you want me to do?

MOSES

Just keep an eye on her for now. I'll go through with the wedding as planned.

(exiting)

Thank you for watching my back, brother.

EXT. THE STREETS OF CANANN - DAY

Luke runs through the city streets like a Prizefighter. A few CHILDREN wave or yell hello as he passes.

EXT. CLINIC - DAY

Luke, barely breaking a sweat, stops in front of Claire's place of business. He hesitates for a moment then enters-

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Claire comforts a YOUNG GIRL. She looks up to see Luke standing there and calls to her assistant.

CLAIRE

Eric give Taliba her vitamins. I'll only be a minute.

Eric runs over and finishes up. Claire walks over to Luke and leads him into a corner.

CLAIRE

Ahh Mr. Cage what a pleasant surprise. Come to butt into my personal life some more?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

You lied to me, lady. You're a spy.

CLAIRE

I don't know what you're talking about-

LUKE

Save it, the game is up! Moses intercepted your message to Gyrich or whoever you're working for last night. He knows you're not legit and now so do I. That time we spent in the forest... that was all an act.

CLAIRE

I was doing my job, Luke. Watching over you, observing.

LUKE

Is that what the government pays you to do? Get close to brothers and play with their emotions? How close are you and Moses?

(accusatory)

Do you know him in the Biblical sense?

CLAIRE

That's enough outta you, Mister. I know all about you I downloaded your file from the agency. Over here trying to play Shaft when you're nothing more than a killer!

LUKE

You believe everything the white man tells you? I didn't kill anybody and that's a fact.

CLAIRE

Look I'm taking Moses down with or without your help, Cage. Where do you stand?

LUKE

Moses Magnum might be the best thing to happen to our people in a long time. You sure you wanna take the brother out?

CLAIRE

Don't cop that Blacker-than-thou attitude with me there's something's strange about this guy. My Momma always said if something was too good to be true then it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAIRE (cont'd)
probably is. My first allegiance isn't to this (points to her skin) it's to right and wrong. Open your eyes, Cage. Can't you see he's losing his mind? Have you ever heard the saying, "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely?"

LUKE
You're asking me to commit suicide, lady. Moses might be my only hope of staying alive. He's got Chemistro searching for a way to cure me, maybe even turn me back to normal.

CLAIRE
And what makes you think he won't find out you're a spy too? He's quite resourceful you know.

LUKE
Is that a threat?

CLAIRE
Maybe.

EXT. PALACE GARDEN - DAY

MOSES practices full contact martial arts with a variety of sparring partners dressed in simple white uniforms. IRON FIST looks on. The scene triggers a-

FLASHBACK - EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Iron Fist appears much as he does now except his head is bald and the trademark Dragon tattoo isn't on his chest. We watch him take out a DOZEN FELLOW STUDENTS in spectacular ways much to the delight of LEI KUNG, his teacher, who is revealed several years older.

LEI KUNG
Good job, Danny. You have grown into this city's greatest Champion.

IRON FIST
Thanks to your teaching Master Kung.

LEI KUNG
Ten years have passed since you came here as a boy. The time draws near for you to return to your own world on the Earth's normal plane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRON FIST

It won't be easy leaving you behind, Sensai. You are both brother and a father to me. But I must find the man who killed my father and left my mother and I to die in an icy grave.

LEI KUNG

But first a final test. You must face Shou Lao the Undying, a great Red Dragon who has terrorized our realm for centuries. No man who's set out to slay him has ever returned.

IRON FIST

I don't understand, teacher. Why would I undertake such a perilous journey when even you say my destiny lies elsewhere?

LEI KUNG

It is said that whoever kills Shou Lao will gain his magic. Combined with your natural, God given abilities it would make you an unstoppable force.

Off Danny contemplating the trip we...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PALACE - DAY

COMPUTER GENERATED THOUSANDS have gathered outside to witness the wedding. A stage has been erected out front to hold DIGNITARIES, A CHURCH CHOIR, and MUSICIANS.

ANGLE ON THE CROWD: We see KEVIN and KHALIL among the spectators.

THE STAGE

ZANDE gives an introduction.

ZANDE

Brothers and sisters today is a glorious day. For on this day we celebrate the union of our beloved President Moses and his lovely bride Claire Temple.

The crowd roars in overwhelming approval as MOSES, dressed in African garb, walks on stage along with CLAIRE who wears an elaborate wedding dress with a veil covering her melancholy face. A DOZEN LITTLE AFRICAN GIRLS lead the way or trail behind her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANOTHER ANGLE - BACKSTAGE

LUKE watches the crowd for any sign of trouble.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. KING NKRUMAH'S CASTLE - DAY

The King watches a broadcast of the wedding. Next to him is his CHIEF MILITARY OFFICER.

MILITARY OFFICER

The whole country is preoccupied with this nonsense. Now is the perfect time to strike. I recommend we deploy our troops at once.

KING NKRUMAH

We can't afford to wait any longer.
Launch the attack.

The officer bows slightly and retreats leaving the King alone to ponder his decision.

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE - DAY

The ceremony is taking place. ZANDE acts as Minister standing before Moses and Claire.

ZANDE

Do you Moses Magnum take this woman as your lawful wedded wife to love and cherish, honor and obey, til death do you part?

MOSES

I do.

ZANDE

And do you Claire Temple take this man as your lawful wedded husband?

Suddenly an AIR RAID SIREN cracks the air. The crowd reacts in confusion and begins to SCATTER. Luke looks to Moses who turns to Zande with alarm.

MOSES

What's happening?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZANDE
We're under attack!

MOSES
No shit Sherlock but by who?

A GENERAL approaches with a report.

GENERAL
King Nkrumah's army is crossing the border.

MAGNUM
Scramble our fighters and get those anti-aircraft guns up and operational.
(to Luke)
Luke you and the Wrecking Crew get out there on the double. Take the hoversleds.

With a final look at Claire Luke runs off. This doesn't go unnoticed by Moses who screams to a nearby GUARD.

MOSES
Take Mrs. Magnum to my room and lock the door.

The Guard obeys leading Claire along.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANANN BORDER INSTALLATION - DAY

COMBAT MONTAGE as the King's INVASION FORCE advances in TANKS, APCs, and Jeeps. We see a regiment of CANANNITE SOLDIERS exchanging gunfire with the invaders who are in far greater numbers. Grenades are lobbed over wall separating the two nations with predictable results.

EXT. THE FOREST - DAY

Luke rides a custom designed Hoversled over the treetops. He's flanked by THUNDERBALL and PILEDRIIVER who pilot similar crafts. We see smoke from the border base in the distance.

CUT TO:

INT. MOSES' CHAMBERS - DAY

The Guard arrives at Moses' door leading Claire who is still in her wedding dress. As he fumbles with a ring of keys she KNEES HIM IN THE GROIN with all her might. He recoils in pain and Claire goes for the RIFLE aiming it at him like she knows how to use it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

Open it.

The Guard obeys and she PUSHES HIM INSIDE, LOCKING THE DOOR BEHIND HIM. After a glance either way she moves along by herself armed with the automatic weapon.

INT. PALACE - WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

Moses studies a tactical map of Canann. In the b.g. Zande slams down a RED PHONE and reports.

ZANDE

They've broken through the Eastern checkpoint, sir. The King's army outnumber us man for man ten to one. We'll never stop them with conventional forces.

MOSES

Then we'll use other means. I don't believe in never.

Moses punches a few keys and CHEMISTRO appears on a viewscreen. He's busy inside his lab.

MOSES

Are those special war heads ready?

CHEMISTRO

I had them outfitted on one of the long range fighters. The Medusa virus will infect every organism within a ten mile radius of the blast and is 99.9% effective.

MOSES

(to Zande)

I want that fighter launched immediately. Once it's over the King's forces have the pilot fire the missiles at the lead convoy.

ZANDE

Think about what you're doing for God's sake! Biological weapons are banned by the Geneva Convention.

Moses gets upset and FIRES A CONCUSSION BEAM out of a gloved finger. THE BEAM KNOCKS ZANDE TO THE GROUND.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES

What do I care about the white man's outdated laws? This is a chance to demonstrate to the world the power of a new kind of warfare.

Moses walks over standing over him with his fingers pointed at his eyes.

MOSES

Sorry we don't see eye to eye.

He FIRES as we...

SMASHCUT TO:

EXT. THE BORDER - SAME TIME

LUKE DOES BATTLE WITH THE KING'S ARMY from his Hoversled. He uses the craft's LASERS to STRAFE a group of soldiers who run for cover. Suddenly-

A ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE WHIZZES TOWARD LUKE! He reaches out with his bare hands and grabs the smoking projectile. With a smile he hurls it in the distance. KA-BOOM!

The Wrecking Crew take care of business as well.

FROM A HOVERSLED: THUNDERBALL uses his Wrecking Ball like a giant BOWLING BALL and MOWS DOWN A LINE OF SOLDIERS.

PILEDRIIVER hops off his sled and lands on the ground with a THUD. A TANK notices him and aims it's gun towards him slowly.

INSIDE THE TANK - GUNNER'S POV

Before the nervous Gunner can line Piledriver up in his sights THE ROOF IS PLUCKED OFF like a can of sardines. We reveal THE WRECKER, backlit by the sun, wielding his crowbar.

THE WRECKER

Knock, knock. Anybody home?

BACK TO LUKE

Who lands his craft. Before he can dismount a SOLDIER from the King's army runs toward him brandishing an assault rifle.

BRRR! BRRR! BRRR! The man fires wildly and what bullets do strike Luke simply bounce off. One them ricochets off his chest and finds it's mark in the shooter's chest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The man falls to the ground at Luke's feet. Luke bends down to investigate and gets a terrible surprise. It's just a kid. Barely out of his teens he's become a casualty of war.

ANGLE ON LUKE: He's sick to his stomach feeling responsible for the murder.

EXT. THE SKIES OVER CANANN - DAY

An F-15 launches TWO MISSILES that screech through the air.

THE GROUND

Luke, still kneeling over the boy, looks up.

CLOSE ON - A MISSILE

as fins spring up on the back of the fuselage. It begins its descent to the Earth over the advancing army before-

KA-BOOM!

The missile explodes in the air releasing tons of tiny, microscopic bacteria.

SPECIAL FX: LIKE THE VIEW THRU AN ELECTRON MICROSCOPE

We see the virus particles WHICH LOOK LIKE CRYSTALLIZED SNAKES as they trickle through the air and land on the both the King's soldiers and the men of Canann. They penetrate their exposed skin, noses, and mouths and begin replicating immediately. What follows is a SERIES OF MORPHS as the men begin to "crash". One by one they die. Like ants sprayed with Raid. Nowhere to run from biology gone amok.

ANGLE ON LUKE: He's unaffected by the virus but sickened by it's dreadful effect on the men around him. He buries his head in his hands.

ANGLE ON THE WRECKING CREW: Equally unaffected. One of them screams: "What's happening?"

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

Moses watches the men drop like flies from a grainy satellite feed. He turns to CHEMISTRO who stands beside him.

MOSES

My compliments to the Chef.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRON FIST watches the screen appalled by the orgy of death.

CUT TO:

INT. KING NKRUMAH'S THRONE - DAY

The Military Officer plays a tape of the last transmission he received. We hear their screams of agony and pain.

KING NKRUMAH

That animal! I don't believe it.

CUT TO:

INT. OVAL OFFICE - NIGHT

Gyrich talks with an EXPERT MILITARY ANALYST.

GYRICH

What's the prognosis on that agent he unleashed?

EXPERT

(reading from a computer
printout)

It appears to be a mutant form of Ebola except the incubation period has been reduced from days to mere minutes. The good news is-

GYRICH

There's good news?

EXPERT

Well comparatively speaking. Unlike Ebola the virus dies shortly after infecting the human host so there's no danger of weather patterns spreading it around. Of course nothing prevents him from launching more missiles.

GYRICH

(to himself, worried)

What the hell are you doing over there Cage?

The Prez stumbles in. He's pale and doesn't look so good.

PRESIDENT

Gentlemen, we're officially at Def Con 2.

Off his look of worry we..

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. REFUGEE CAMP - DAY

Kevin, Khalil, and OTHER EXPATRIATES huddle around a small radio broadcasting a news report on Moses' use of bio-weapons.

MOSES (V.O.)

Just as God brought plague against Pharaoh for not releasing Moses' people I have brought plague against Zambria. And if any other nation dares attack Canann they will be cursed with a similar fate.

KEVIN

He murdered all those people without a second thought. How's killing our neighbors promoting Black unity?

KHALIL

He had no choice. Zambria's army is second only to Wakanda in size and strength. They could've beaten us outright in a fair fight.

KEVIN

I don't like it. Black men fighting Black men. I thought that's what we came over here to get away from?

KHALIL

If Moses did what they say then he must've had a good reason.

LUKE (O.S.)

And I thought I was brainwashed.

All eyes turn to see Luke standing in the entrance. He's covered in the dirt and grime from the frontlines.

LUKE.

It took the death of an innocent man to see where I was heading following behind Moses. Are you all equally as blind? No amount of Pan-African rhetoric justifies killing our own people and that's exactly what he did out there today. Using a weapon that even the white man won't use against his worst enemy I might add. The question is: what're we gonna do about it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHALIL

Well, well, well. Look who came down from the big house to visit with his old friends in the field.

LUKE

Chill with that Khalil. We don't have much time so I suggest we use it constructively not like crabs in a barrel.

KEVIN

We can go North to Ghana then fly from there to anyplace in the world.

This starts debate among the expatriates as to their destination. Luke uses this diversion to slip away but Khalil stops him.

KHALIL

Where you off to?

LUKE

I've gotta find someone. I think you know who.

KHALIL

Need someone to watch your back?

LUKE

Hang tight. You're needed here. I'll be back soon.

They exchange pounds. Luke exits as we...

WIPE TO:

INT. THE PALACE - NIGHT

Claire moves through the darkened palace like a cat. She holds her gun in front of her turning into-

INT. CHEMISTRO'S LAB - NIGHT

Chemistro's lair. Claire makes her way through the lab stepping carefully so as not to disturb a thing. In the middle of the room we see a HYPERBOLIC TANK. It's similar to the one Burnstein used on Riker's to create Luke.

Claire moves in for a closer look, her Secret Agent curiosity getting the best of her. We DISCOVER A MAN'S BODY FLOATING IN THE TANK. It's ERIC, Claire's co-worker. His face is contorted. He tries to speak through the chemicals but we can't understand him.

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

Hang on, Eric. I'll get you outta there.

Claire looks around to DISCOVER an additional BODY laid out on an examination table. Suddenly she's STRUCK BY A CONCUSSION BEAM and falls. Of Course MOSES is responsible. We reveal him with IRON FIST, CHEMISTRO, and a team of GUARDS.

MOSES

That's for not signing the prenuptial.

The guards retrieve her body.

MOSES

(to Chemistro)

How goes the experiment?

CHEMISTRO

We're getting close but none have survived the transformation for more than 48 hours. I'm afraid Luke Cage is still one of a kind.

MOSES

I'm beginning to suspect his loyalty. He's wavering so I'll need some insurance that we'll continue to have his complete cooperation.

CHEMISTRO

Isn't the girl enough?

MOSES

No. Have the guards round up a few of his friends at the camp and hide them far away.

Chemistro nods. Iron Fist looks on curiously.

INT. THE PALACE - NIGHT

Luke wanders through the hall keeping an eye out for trouble.

INT. CHEMISTRO'S LAB - NIGHT

Luke discovers the replica of the hyperbolic tank that he was reborn in at Riker's. He takes it in and the pieces of the puzzle begin to fall into place. Moses is using him. Using his body to try and create more men just like him! He mutters "Oh no" reasoning this whole thing is his fault. Suddenly Luke tenses up sensing-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRON FIST lurking in the shadow. Feeling Luke's glare he steps out of the darkness.

IRON FIST
You didn't kill them. Moses is responsible.

LUKE
Yeah and after I'm through with you he's gettin' his.

Blinded by anger LUKE THROWS A POWERFUL RIGHT at Iron Fist who smoothly avoids it. He follows with a combination that misses by a mile.

LUKE
I'm warning you... Stay outta my way ballet britches!

FIST KICKS LUKE IN THE FACE WITH THE FORCE OF BOTH FEET. It stuns him for an instant.

IRON FIST
Look I don't wanna fight you but I will if you won't listen to reason.

LUKE UNLOADS, missing Fist who LEAPFROGS OVER HIM, and SMASHES A HOLE IN THE GROUND WHERE HE STOOD. Luke turns to meet Danny's FIST which GLOWS WITH POWER.

LUKE
It'll take more than a flaming fist and a loud costume to stop me.

FIST KICKS LUKE IN THE FACE with a 360 degree roundhouse. Luke CATCHES HIS FOOT AND FLINGS HIM ASIDE.

IRON FIST
Why are we fighting? Our battle lies not with each other but against a common enemy.

A beat. Both men contemplate this and lower their guard just a bit.

LUKE
Who are you?

IRON FIST
I don't know exactly. I had amnesia and only recently have my memories started to return. One thing I have realized... I'm on the wrong team.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LUKE

I'm playing for Uncle Sam myself.

IRON FIST

Moses wants to create an army of genetically engineered soldiers to take over the world. He's using you as the blueprint.

LUKE

I can't believe I've been so blind. Because of me a lot of innocent people got hurt. Time for some payback... You want in?

Danny nods.

LUKE

Come on. I know where we can go lay low for a while.

They walk off with Luke keeping a distrustful eye on his new partner.

EXT. REFUGEE CAMP - NIGHT

We START on Kevin's model of the solar powered condominiums. PULL BACK to reveal it on the ground CRUSHED like the dream of Canann. Luke and Fist rummage through the SMOULDERING REMAINS of the camp.

A VOICE (O.S.)

Looks like your friends put up one helluva fight.

Amadou steps out pointing an assault rifle.

LUKE

That thing won't do you any good against us. Who are you? Where is everybody?

AMADOU

My name is Amadou. As for the whereabouts of your companions Moses' soldiers forcibly removed them. This is a vast country with many hiding places. They could be anywhere... It won't matter soon anyway.

LUKE

Oh? And why's that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMADOU

The Ancestor spirits are angry at the destruction wrought by false prophets. Tonight the uprising begins.

Luke and Iron Fist exchange glances.

LUKE

Are you thinkin' what I'm thinking?

IRON FIST

The coup attempt will be the perfect diversion to go after Moses.

LUKE

(to Amadou, suddenly suspicious)

What's your angle?

AMADOU

President Sembane, rotting away in the dungeon of his own house, was a national hero before Moses arrived. Canann is no Utopia but it's the only home I've ever known... I'll fight with my last breath to protect her.

Luke is convinced he speaks the truth.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANANN - TWILIGHT

The sun sets over the capital at magic hour. In the distance we hear the steady beating of WAR DRUMS.

INT. THE PALACE - MOSES' CHAMBERS - SAME TIME

Moses looks out from a picture window. He looks troubled listening to the beat of the drums. In the b.g. CHEMISTRO talks with CLAIRE who's hands are tied.

CLAIRE

How can you take life so easily, Carr? You're a Doctor... What about your Hippocratic oath? With your brilliant mind you could be working to cure AIDS.

CHEMISTRO

I'm a scientist first, Dr. Temple. Surely you know that without death there can be no life. It's all part of one big cycle. That's why I'm down with Moses... See

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHEMISTRO (cont'd)

Black folks gotta stop crying about the white man this and the white man that. Hell they're on the decline themselves! Asians have all the venture capital now and they ain't ever owned no African slaves.

Moses walks over.

MOSES

Time to blow outta here. We've worn out our welcome here I'm afraid. Have my shuttle prepped and ready for take off.

Chemistro goes to make the necessary preparations. Moses turns to Claire.

MOSES

Where shall we go my bride? Europe? South America? How about my place in the Cayman Islands?

CLAIRE

You know exactly where you can go Moses.

MOSES

So I guess that means the Honeymoon is over?

Off Claire we...

CUT TO:

EXT. CANANN'S CAPITAL STREETS - NIGHT

SOLDIERS patrol the streets in an APC mounted with a M-60. They broadcasts a message over tinny speakers: "Martial law is now in effect. You are to remain in your homes or face severe punishment."

INT. PALACE SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Amadou leads a strike force of a DOZEN MEN. One of them takes out a guard at a service entrance with a poison dart fired from a perfectly blown BLOWGUN. The dart finds his neck. He falls and they move inside quickly.

INT. PALACE ELEVATOR

Luke and Iron Fist ride up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

This is it. Here goes nuthin'.

The door opens and they exit into-

INT. PALACE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Our duo makes their way along this empty hallway.

INT. PALACE BASEMENT - SAME TIME

GUNFIRE! Amadou and his men come under attack. They return fire until a full-fledged FIREFIGHT erupts.

ANGLE ON ONE OF THE SOLDIERS: who talks into a walkie-talkie.

SOLDIER

I repeat we are under attack.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY

Luke and Fist hear "Intruder alert!" over the P.A. system. This is followed by a piercing ALARM.

IRON FIST

So much for the element of surprise.

Luke nods.

EXT. CANANN'S CITY STREETS - NIGHT

REBELS hide out of sight of the APC broadcasting the message of Martial Law. One of them wields a RPG on his shoulder. He takes aim and fires.

SKREEE!

A rocket shoots through the air and hits the vehicle, causing a FIERY EXPLOSION.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Moses watches the action on several video monitors as the uprising begins in full force around the capital. The Wrecking Crew, Chemistro, and El Aguila are present as well.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES

So it has begun.

Suddenly Luke and Iron Fist appear on one of the screens creeping through a hallway.

MOSES

Well if it isn't my trusted bodyguard and favorite homeboy! And they sure look like they're up to no good.

(to the Crew)

Finish them off.

Piledriver, anxious for revenge, CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES then clenches his huge fists.

PILEDRIVER

With pleasure.

(to his partners)

I got the Black one.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Luke and Iron Fist move along. Suddenly the roof collapses and THE WRECKING CREW jump down ready to do battle.

LUKE

Uh-oh. We got company.

The two opposing forces face off. Iron Fist gets into a ready stance.

THE WRECKER

Hello boys. Going somewhere?

LUKE

Through you if we have to, leather face.

PILEDRIVER

You got lucky last time. This time once I'm finished with you your own Mama won't know you.

PILEDRIVER CHARGES and throws a combination. Luke BLOCKS THE RIGHT but the LEFT CATCHES HIM OFF GUARD ON HIS CHIN AND SENDS HIM FLYING BACKWARDS.

THE WRECKER takes a swing at IRON FIST with his crowbar. Danny ducks under it and counters with a KICK that sends the Wrecker, minus his bar, half-way down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUNDERBALL TOSSES HIS WRECKING BALL at Fist who hauls off and meets it with THE POWER OF HIS IRON FIST PUNCH!

BOOM!

THE BALL IS SHATTERED INTO A MILLION PIECES! Iron Fist then jumps up into a FLYING KICK that strikes Thunderball in the head and follows up with AN IRON FIST TO THE BODY. It puts him down for the count.

BACK TO LUKE

who has his hands full with Piledriver. Fortunately Luke is quicker than the big fella and can AVOID HIS PUNCHES which do damage to the walls and set pieces in the b.g.

LUKE

Alright enough of this. You wanna throw?
Let's go! Lemme show you how we wreck
shop Uptown New York style.

Luke hits Piledriver with several stunning combinations. BAM! POW! BAP! He lands blow after blow until Piledriver finally collapses into a heap.

Iron Fist comes over.

IRON FIST

You alright?

Luke nods. Our heroes move on.

CUT TO:

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Gyrich gives the President some good news.

GYRICH

We have reports that fighting has broken out in Canann's capital. A rebellion by military factions loyal to Sembane.

PRESIDENT

You think your operative has anything to do with it?

GYRICH

Yes, sir. Even if he didn't plan the coup he'll use it to go after Moses I'm sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

I want our forces in the region on full alert. Notify the Secretary of the Navy and the Joint Chiefs... We'll need some way of airlifting him out of there.

GYRICH

Yes, sir.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Luke and Iron Fist arrive to find the place deserted. Images of carnage from the coup raging on the streets plays over the video screens in the b.g.

LUKE

We're too late.

CHEMISTRO (O.S.)

Actually you're right on time... For your funeral.

Our heroes turn to see CHEMISTRO and THE EAGLE. Chemistro TURNS THE FLOOR BENEATH THEM INTO WAFER THIN ICE THAT BEGINS TO CRACK UNDER THEIR BODYWEIGHT. Iron Fist FLIPS OUT OF DANGER but LUKE FALLS THROUGH to the next level. Chemistro jumps down after him as El Aguila engages Fist.

IRON FIST VS. EL AGUILA: The Eagle SHOTS BOLTS OF ENERGY towards Danny. They miss, BLOWING CHUNKS OUT THE WALL. The Eagle closes on him in an attempt to use his sword but FIST DOES A FEW BACK FLIPS to evade his blade.

CUT TO:

INT. THE NEXT LEVEL DOWN - SAME TIME

Chemistro fires another ray. Luke dodges the beam which TURNS THE WALL BEHIND HIM INTO DUST! He charges Chemistro like a running back and before he can fire again Luke is upon him.

BAM! Luke hits him in the face then CRUSHES THE BANDS ON HIS WRISTS which emit his transmutation rays. Luke stands over the defenseless Dr. Carr who looks meek and scared without the benefit of his high tech weaponry. He grabs him by the neck.

LUKE

Where's Moses? Tell me or I'll rip your head outta the socket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHEMISTRO

He's at the airstrip preparing to take off any minute.

LUKE

And the refugees?

CHEMISTRO

I dunno.

Luke snaps his head back a bit. It has the desired effect.

CHEMISTRO

They're being held at an archeological dig on top of Mount Odio.

Luke rams his head into the floor. While the blow isn't fatal it is enough to cause Chemistro to pass out.

INT. UPPER LEVEL - SAME TIME

THE EAGLE SLICES THRU A PILLAR trying to slash at Iron Fist who's moves are slicker than a snake. Fist KICKS THE SWORD OUT OF EL AGUILA'S HAND and it lands in the distance with it's point embedded in the ground. (RACK FOCUS FROM THE SWORD LANDING TO EL AGUILA & FIST IN THE DISTANCE?)

Unarmed, El Aguila is no match for Danny who has his way with him in hand to hand combat. A FLURRY OF PUNCHES AND KICKS thrown by Iron Fist backs the swordsman up.

THE FLOOR

where Luke climbs up through the hole created by Chemistro. He GRABS EL AGUILA'S LEG as Danny reaches out and immobilizes him by pinching a nerve in his neck Vulcan style. He collapses and our heroes brush themselves off.

LUKE

Can you get over to Mount Odio?

IRON FIST

Yeah it's only about five miles from here. Why?

LUKE

I got it out of Chemistro that that's where the refugees are being held. They may be in danger.

CONTINUED:

IRON FIST
What about Moses?

LUKE
He's mine.

IRON FIST
We'll both need transportation. There's a
motor pool down below. Follow me.

Iron Fist leads the way as Luke follows.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Luke drives through the capital in a black Jeep. The city has erupted into violence as the PEOPLE OF CANANN ROUT FACTIONS LOYAL TO MOSES. Luke has to do some fancy driving just to avoid other vehicles and wreckage. Canannite REBELS, taking him for one of Moses' cronies, SHOOT AT HIM as he passes.

ANGLE ON LUKE: where BULLETS RICOCHET OFF OF HIM in the driver's seat.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANANN COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Iron Fist speeds along on a Japanese sport bike. He sees the snow capped peak of Mount Odio in the distance and rides faster.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

The shuttle rests on a helipad.

INT. SHUTTLE

Moses sits near a window watching the city go up in flames. Claire sits across from him. Suddenly the aircraft is jostled from side to side. Moses looks out to see-

LUKE HOLDING THE AIRCRAFT OVER HIS HEAD

LUKE
Going somewhere?

He sits the craft down just as the hatch BLASTS OPEN. Moses emerges ready for battle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES

I'm disappointed, Luke. I had such high hopes for you. Are the masters you serve worth dying for?

LUKE

Save the brotherly love act for the media, Magnum. You wanna use me for your own purposes just like those suits in Washington. Well I got news for you... Nobody uses Luke Cage!

Moses fires TWO CONCUSSION BLASTS, one from each hand. They hit Luke and send him sprawling into the side of a nearby hanger.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNT ODIO - NIGHT

Iron Fist pulls up and jumps off the bike. He goes over to a lift system that carries small cars up the mountain but the controls have been destroyed. He looks up towards the top several miles in the distance. No choice but to climb.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRSTRIP - SAME TIME

Luke gets up and charges Moses, DODGING BEAMS AND LANDING A SOLID RIGHT THAT SENDS HIM SLIDING ALONG THE TARMAC.

LUKE

I believed in you like a fool. Thought what you were doing was honorable.

He picks Moses up and PUNCHES HIM IN THE CHEST, DENTING HIS ARMOR.

LUKE

But you're the worst kind of brother. Using race to keep Blacks and white apart so that you can profit.

Luke grabs Moses' gloved hand and bends it back, destroying the blasters and breaking a few fingers in the process.

MOSES

(in pain)

Arrrgh!

LUKE HAULS OFF AND SOCKS MOSES IN THE FACE, SENDING HIM BACK TWENTY FEET! He runs over to finish the job but stops dead in his tracks as Moses-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PULLS OUT AN OMINOUS LOOKING REMOTE CONTROL DEVICE!

MOSES

Ah-ah-ah. One more step and all your friends die! I had Chemistro plant a bomb on top of Mt. Odio. It has a 20 minute timer and will release enough virus molecules to wipe them all out.

When in doubt bluff. Luke plays his hand.

LUKE

I don't care about those people and neither does the rest of the world. The media's branded them as just a bunch of militant extremists. You've killed hundreds, maybe thousands already. Go ahead and waste a few more... See if I care?

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNT ODIO - SAME TIME

Iron Fist climbs up the mountain. He uses only his bare hands and incredible agility as tools. We see a FLASHBACK of Danny in K'un-Lun climbing a similar mountain. GIANT ROCKS TUMBLE DOWN FROM ABOVE causing him to cling to the sheer face of the cliff. BACK TO PRESENT where Danny shakes off the vision and continues upwards.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Luke and Moses continue their stand-off.

MOSES

So you really don't care about the others, eh?

LUKE

I didn't come here to make friends.

MAGNUM

Good. Makes this easier.

HE PRESSES THE BUTTON. Luke's eyes grow wide then he SLAPS THE REMOTE FROM HIS HANDS. It falls to the ground. Luke punches Moses hard causing him to fall back violently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

You're one sick mutha, Moses. I'm not a killer, don't believe anybody but God should have the right to take a life, but man are you tempting me!

Luke throws a few jabs that rock Magnum's jaw as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNT ODIO - NIGHT

Fist continues his treacherous climb. He's more than half-way to the top as he suffers another-

FLASHBACK - INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Danny enters a dark cave. Suddenly a huge Red Dragon appears. Meet SHOU LAO THE UNDYING, an ancient hideous beast.

Shou Lao claws at Danny who evades him. He takes several swipes at him with his tail then BREATHES FIRE where he stands. Fist avoids the attack by flipping away from danger then does the unthinkable: he jumps at the dragon, confusing it, and GRABS HIS THICK TORSO WITH BOTH HANDS!

Shou Lao's scar GLOWS and BURNS INTO DANNY'S CHEST through his gi (marital arts uni). He screams but holds on as the dragon THRASHES AND TRIES TO SHAKE HIM OFF to no avail.

Finally, the monster dies. Danny stands up and we notice the scar is now TATTOOED ON HIS CHEST and HIS HANDS GLOW WITH POWER. The power of the Iron Fist.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Moses lies on the ground in pain. Suddenly a THICK PURPLE FOG RISES FROM HIS ARMOR AND FILLS THE SURROUNDING AREA. Luke is blinded temporarily and Moses blasts off from out of the cloud VIA A JET PACK HIDDEN UNDER HIS CAPE.

ANGLE ON LUKE: As the smoke dissipates. He looks up at Moses flying away in the distance.

Claire steps out of hiding inside the shuttle and approaches Luke. They share an awkward embrace.

LUKE

I'm glad you're okay. You were right about Moses.

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE
Believe me I wish I were wrong.

Luke looks around and sees a helipad where a MD-500 NOTAR helicopter is conveniently perched.

LUKE
C'mon.

INT. ANCIENT CAVE ATOP MOUNT ODIO - NIGHT

KEVIN, KHALIL and SEVERAL DOZEN refugees are huddled here. Torches illuminate the walls which are covered with runes and drawings millions of years old. They're gathered together closely in an effort to keep warm. IRON FIST enters from the mouth of the cave casting a shadow.

Khalil picks up a stick ready to defend himself.

IRON FIST
I come in peace. Luke Cage sent me to rescue you.

Khalil lowers his stick.

IRON FIST
The lift system has been destroyed so we'll have to find another way down.

KEVIN'S POV: He notices A DEVICE FLASH TO LIFE OVERHEAD among the stalactites and bats on the roof of the cave. It's the bomb Moses referred to.

CLOSE ON - THE BOMB

where the timer counts down: 17:59, 17:58, 17:57, 17:56, etc.

EXT. THE SKIES OF CANANN - NIGHT

Luke pilots the MD-500 towards Mt. Odio. Claire points to a mountaintop and he sets the chopper down.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - CONTINUOUS

Fist and the refugees greet Luke.

IRON FIST
We're in trouble. There's a bomb in there set to go off in a few minutes.

CONTINUED:

LUKE

I know all about it. Lead the way.

Luke follows Fist inside.

MOMENTS LATER

Luke exits CARRYING THE BOMB OVER HIS HEAD. Kevin and Khalil clear a path for him through the refugees. He sits the bomb down next to the helicopter and Iron Fist carefully hooks a wench to the outer housing.

Luke hops into the cockpit. Nearby Claire gives Luke a "thumbs up". He starts the main rotor as Iron Fist jumps in the passenger seat.

THE CHOPPER TAKES OFF HAULING THE BOMB

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

LUKE

This bomb is full of Moses' killer virus. Our only chance is to detonate it over the ocean out of harm's way.

IRON FIST

This chopper's unarmed. How do you plan on blowing it up?

LUKE

I got friends in high places.

Luke picks up the radio as we...

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

Gyrich, the President, and Jackson monitor the events in Canann. A COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER jumps up suddenly from his station.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Sir we've got an incoming message on a top secret emergency frequency from Agent Cage requesting strategic air support over the North Atlantic ocean.

PRESIDENT

Air support authorized. Tell the commanding officer in the region to do whatever he asks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Yes sir.

CUT TO:

EXT. OVER THE OCEAN - NIGHT

The helicopter flies over the water with the bomb in tow.

INT. HELICOPTER

Luke briefs the Navy of his needs.

LUKE
My position is Sector Four Tango Charlie
heading West. Recommend you rendezvous
with me in Sector Six Bravo Victor.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER - SAME TIME

A F-18 Hornet takes off from the deck.

PILOT (O.S.)
Roger Blackbird, we're taking off now.
(to himself)
I hate these damn night missions.

CUT TO:

EXT. OVER THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

Luke maintains his position, hovering over the water.
Suddenly the F-18 flies into view buzzes past our heroes in
the chopper.

INT. HELICOPTER

Luke has his hand on the controls ready to release the load.

LUKE
(into the radio)
Okay Ace, now remember: we only get one
chance at this so make it count.

PILOT (O.S.)
I read you loud and clear. I've got the
bomb locked into my targeting computer.
Ready when you are.

Luke turns to Danny.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE
Here goes nuthin'.

CLOSE ON - THE BOMB

The timer reads :15, :14, :12, :11

INT. HELICOPTER

Luke releases the bomb as TIME SLOWS DOWN.

INT. F-18 FIGHTER

The PILOT, a true Top Gun, looks through his Head Up Display at the bomb free falling into the ocean. He presses a button on his joystick and FWOOSH!

A MISSILE SCREAMS THROUGH THE SKY!

Luke pulls on the stick and guns the RPMS SENDING THE COPTER STRAIGHT UP IN THE AIR IN A RAPID ASCENSION.

The missile hits the bomb and AN EXPLOSION LIGHTS UP THE SKY.

INT. HELICOPTER - SAME TIME

Luke and Fist are blinded by the burst.

INT. WHITE HOUSE WAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gyrich and the President witness a blip on their tactical map. The technician monitoring a computer turns to report:

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Satellites confirm an explosion over the ocean.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Luke and Fist give each other a pound in congratulations. Over the radio we hear:

GYRICH (V.O.)
Luke this is Gyrich do you read me?

Luke picks up the radio. After a beat he speaks. We INTERCUT their conversation.

LUKE
Yeah, I'm here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GYRICH

Sembane's men have regained control of the city and Magnum's army is on the run. But what about the man himself?

LUKE

In all of the excitement I guess he sort of escaped.

GYRICH

Well good work just the same. Follow that F-18 back to the Nimitz where we'll make arrangements for your return to the States.

Luke turns to Iron Fist.

IRON FIST

I can't go back. They'll try me as a criminal and I need my freedom to find the man who destroyed my family.

A beat. Luke's thoughts turn to Claire.

LUKE

(into the radio)

I've got some unfinished business here in the Motherland. Let me go back for awhile... I'll return later with the other refugees.

GYRICH

Negative, soldier. Your business there is complete. We have another assignment which requires your attention. Now I'm giving you a direct order: follow that fighter or be blown from the sky.

The Hornet flies by the copter like a shark circling its prey. Suddenly its posture isn't so friendly anymore.

INT. HELICOPTER

Luke and Danny look to each other. What to do? Suddenly, before either can react-

BOOM!

The F-18 EXPLODES. We reveal MOSES MAGNUM PILOTING THE MODIFIED VERSION OF THE MANDROID BATTLE ARMOR.

INT. WHITE HOUSE WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
We've lost the F-18.

GYRICH
What? What do you mean lost it?

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
It just disappeared off radar.

GYRICH
Luke what's happening? Do you read me?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SKIES OF CANANN - NIGHT

The Mandroid stands before the chopper.

INT. MANDROID COCKPIT

ANGLE ON MOSES

MOSES
Look how the white boys repay you. All
that power and you're too stupid to use
it. You're nothing but a Super Tom!

Moses presses a button and 20 mm CANNONS FIRE at Luke and
Fist in the copter. Luke AVOIDS THE BARRAGE WITH SOME FANCY
FLYING and a CHASE ensues with Moses seeking to blow the
smaller, speedier chopper out the sky.

MOSES FIRES TWO HEAT SEEKING MISSILES. Luke flies the copter
INTO THE SUN, SHAKING THE FIRST MISSILE, but can't avoid the
second which HITS THE CHOPPER AND EXPLODES.

THE CHOPPER MAKES A CRASH LANDING IN A SAND DUNE.

INT. WHITE HOUSE WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Cage's helicopter has been shot down.

GYRICH
Damn! Tell the carrier to send out a
search and rescue team.

EXT. DESERT FLOOR - DAY

Luke pulls Iron Fist's unconscious body from the wreckage. In
the b.g. Moses lands the Mandroid and we watch it lumber over

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

to the crash site where Luke drags Fist away from the flaming debris. His friend safely out of the way he then turns to fight.

LUKE

Now it's just me and you, Moses.

MOSES

Why can't I kill you?

MAGNUM FIRES A LASER at Luke who dodges it, GRABS A PIECE OF FLAMING HELICOPTER DEBRIS, and TOSSES IT his way. The Mandroid SWATS IT ASIDE WITH A ROBOTIC ARM. Luke presses the attack, running towards Moses and TACKLING THE MANDROID LIKE A MIDDLE LINEBACKER. CRUNCH!

THE GROUND

where they land and tussle. Luke wins the battle of the trenches and GRABS HOLD OF THE DROID. With his free hand HE PUNCHES THE FACE PLATE REPEATEDLY.

LUKE

I'm gonna end this right here, right now.
And this oversized R2-D2 unit ain't gonna stop me!

Luke DIGS HIS FINGERS INTO THE MANDROID ARMOR and uses his bare hands to TEAR THE STEEL MESH APART revealing Moses who reacts in terror. Luke pulls him from the suit and holds him aloft with his hands around his neck.

MOSES

Go ahead. Kill me. Isn't that what they're paying you for Superslave? Together we could've conquered the world!

LUKE

I've seen enough fighting in my life...
Harlem, Kuwait, Riker's. It never solves anything. I'm here to make peace and these...

(indicates his fists)

These are the Peacemakers!

Luke ROUGHS HIM UP with a series of blows. He holds him long and hard tempted to do justice those who've died. Suddenly a voice says, "He isn't worth it." It's revealed as a groggy IRON FIST. Luke turns to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LUKE
You're right.

BAM! Luke pounds him one more time for good measure. Suddenly a convoy of vehicles pull up led by a Jeep driven by AMADOU with PRESIDENT SEMBANE in the passenger seat.

LUKE
I'll leave his fate up to the people of Canann.

Luke drops him in the sand. Sembane and Amadou approach as a group of CANANNITE SOLDIERS grab Moses off the ground and drag him before their leader.

SEMBANE
You're a poor excuse for an African and
an even sorrier excuse for a human being.
(to his men)
Take him away.

They drag him off. Sembane turns his attention to Luke.

AMADOU
These are the ones I told you about, sir.
The Americans.

LUKE
(extending a hand)
Luke Cage.
(re: Danny)
This here's Iron Fist.

SEMBANE
I want to thank you both very much.

LUKE
You can thank us by telling the U.S.
Government that there were no survivors
in that crash.

SEMBANE
Consider it done. It's the least I can
do.

CUT TO:

INT. NSA OFFICE - NIGHT

Dr. Burnstein talks with Gyrich and Jackson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. BURNSTEIN
Any word on Lucas?

GYRICH
Not a peep. Rescue teams came up empty.

The Doc sighs. The events of the past week seem to have aged him several years.

JACKSON
Do you think he's still alive?

GYRICH
If he is he'll have to find out for himself just how much time he has left.

DR. BURNSTEIN
For all we know he may have committed suicide! I can't believe I let you talk me into deluding that poor boy into thinking that he not only committed murder but was dying as well.

JACKSON
Don't play innocent with us, Doc. This is your life's work. Without the Powerman project you go back to cloning tomatoes and making seedless watermelons. Tell me is it possible for you to recreate the conditions that gave him those powers?

DR. BURNSTEIN
They were the result of an accident. My machines were pushed to limits they were never designed for. It'll take some time before I can analyze the data but anything's possible.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - MAGIC HOUR

AFRICAN DRUMMERS play to a happy crowd of natives and refugees. A celebration is in progress.

A BALCONY: where Claire and Kevin watch the sun set. Claire looks distant and sad, her mind a million miles away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

I'm sorry Claire. Luke was a fine man.

CLAIRE

It's alright Kevin.

He comforts her. Suddenly KHALIL walks over with TWO BEAUTIFUL AFRICAN WOMEN on either arm. He's slightly drunk.

KHALIL

Yo Kev what's up? I got too many women here. Why don't you come help me out and dance with one of these fine young ladies.

One of the women grabs Kevin's hand urging him on.

CLAIRE

I think she likes you.

Kevin blushes (Black folks do that too!) He looks back at a grieving Claire feeling guilty. She lets him off the hook.

CLAIRE

Don't mind me... Go have some fun.

They move to the dancefloor and begin swaying to the native rhythms. Claire looks over the balcony in the distance and spots two lone figures trudging along. She climbs down and runs after them.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - SUNSET

Luke and Fist, both dressed in traditional African garb, lead camels encumbered with goods.

LUKE

So what's next? Where will you go?

IRON FIST

Back to America to find an old friend of my father's. I have a debt to repay.

LUKE

We make a pretty good team you and I.

Danny smiles.

IRON FIST

What about you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

I don't know how long I have with this new body, but however long that is I'm gonna live as a free man. No street gangs, no military, no prison, and nobody's secret agent. For the first time in my life I'm gonna be free.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Aren't you gonna join the victory celebration?

The camera reveals Claire.

LUKE

I got nothing to celebrate.

Iron Fist pulls his camel along a bit to give them their privacy.

CLAIRE

I thought you were dead.

LUKE

Not yet. This time tomorrow or next week I could be. That's why I didn't say goodbye.

CLAIRE

None of us are guaranteed tomorrow. Where will you go?

LUKE

I need a vacation and Africa has plenty to see: the Nile Valley, the Pyramids, the waterfalls at Lake Victoria. If I'm still alive after that maybe I'll head back to the Big Apple. What about you?

CLAIRE

I think Canann can get along without me. I'm leaving the agency and going back to New York to open up my own private practice.

LUKE

If I'm ever in town I'll look you up.

CLAIRE

Anything's possible.

Luke gives her a final look then turns to leave. He leads his camel away without looking back joining up with Iron Fist in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANGLE ON CLAIRE: who watches him disappear. A tear drop escapes one of her lids.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE DESERT - DAY

Luke and Iron Fist bid each other farewell.

LUKE
Good-bye my friend.

Iron Fist gives him an intricate pound (brother style handshake). Luke's surprised.

IRON FIST
Something Moses taught me.

They share a laugh.

CUT TO:

A WIDE SHOT

As they go their separate ways leaving tracks in the sand.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END.