

CLIFFHANGER

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Based on the 1993 Film

Premise by John Long

Screenplay by M. France/ S. Stallone

CLIFFHANGER

EXT. MARSOC SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Green-grey satellite view looking down on Mount Everest -- the granite Goliath separating Asia from India. As it ZOOMS closer, we locate: *two moving specks.*

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - DAY

Two men. Barely discernible in digitized snow camouflage. They make their way up a steep incline. Trudging fast through packed snow. M4 carbines across their backs.

CHRYON: *Mt. Everest, S.W. Ridge*

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - DAY

The lead man exits a stretch of snow covered pines...

SEAN BLACKBURN, 30. Premature lines stream across an angular face. Even at rest, there's a physical intensity in his bearing. He presses tactical binoculars to his face.

LENS VIEW: Pass across white. Endless white. Then along the near ridge of the mountain. No signs of life.

Sliding beside him is... WILL GARRISON, 46. Strong jaw. Wise eyes. Greying beard. A born leader chiseled out of country boy stone.

WILL

Anything?

SEAN

No sign.

WILL

If intel's right, should put 'em this way.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - LATER

The two men hydrate. Sean wails on container of peanuts.

WILL

You get those outta my gear?

SEAN

Can neither confirm, nor deny.

Will smirks, watches Sean polishing them off.

WILL
That's alright. I already sucked
all the chocolate off 'em.

Sean freezes -- *please tell me you're kidding.* Will finally
laughs. Lets him off the hook, but holds his gaze.

WILL (CONT'D)
I'm out. End of the week.
(off Sean's look)
Takin' that training post back
home.

SEAN
The contractor gig?

WILL
Last leave got to me, seein' my
lil' girl--

SEAN
She's 25.

WILL
Still my little girl and I plan on
catching as much a' the next 25 as
I can.

SEAN
I get it, it's just... you sure?

WILL
Trust me, older you get, the more
your world starts to narrow.
Things you give a shit about start
to make for a real short list.

SEAN
And Ana's at the top.

Will gives Sean a playful smack on the face.

WILL
Yeah, but don't worry, you're a
distant second.

SEAN
Well... I'd be lying if I said I
won't miss having your ass around.
(pause)
My childhood not being the stuff of
fairy tales and all... you and Ana
are all the family I've got.

WILL
And that'll never change.

Sean nods, looks away. Will doesn't.

WILL (CONT'D)
What we do is too important. Too
much depends on us.
(pause)
If you're not all in, you need to
get out.

Before Sean can respond -- CLICK-CLICK -- an alert sound
pings from Will's walkie, then a deep male voice...

MAN (V.O.)
Base to Prince 5. Come in.

Will clicks his blue tooth com-set.

WILL
Prince 5. Over.

MAN (V.O.)
Got a variant heat sig two clicks
North East. Could be wildlife, but
might be our target. Worth a look.

WILL
On it. Will advise.

Will and Sean pack up and start to move out.

WILL (CONT'D)
One more thing. I'm recommending
you for a grade 0-3.

Will puts a *paternal* hand on his shoulder.

WILL (CONT'D)
'Bout time you had your own team.
(off Sean's look)
You earned it.

SEAN
Will... I don't know what to say.

WILL
(looks him in eyes)
Think about saying no. You earned
that too.

With this, Will heads away.



Searching for Target

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - LATER

Sean and Will on their stomachs. Sean uses the tac-binoculars to scan the mountain again. The snow is falling heavy now. Coming down in thick sheets.

LENS VIEW: Nothing. Nothing but rock and snow, until -- in the distance -- another party of FOUR MEN. They've reached a cliff face and have begun to climb.

SEAN
GOT 'EM. Thousand meters.

Will moves quickly, pulls a ruggedized satellite phone...

WILL
(into phone)
Prince 5 to base: Target thousand meters north and ascending.

EXT. MARSOC SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Quarterbacking the op is SERGEANT MAJOR TIM KILMER, mid-50's. Thick white hair. Semi-wireless glasses. A man who's risen ranks via intellect over field hours.

He speaks into a comm headset...

SERGEANT KILMER
Base to Prince: You know the drill. Green light to engage and retrieve package. Red light on leader kill for possible intel.

WILL (V.O.)
Affirmative.

EXT. MARSOC SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Kilmer strides to an FEMALE ANALYST. She doesn't wait for a command. Pulls up a GPS topographical map of Mt. Everest.

Two blinking RED DOTS represent Sean and Will. A floating box next to each shows coordinates, elevation, etc.

ANALYST
South West Ridge, elevation of 9,000 feet.
(pause)
Snow storm has washed out visual, but getting a strong signal off the NavFire tracking chips.

KILMER
Status on support?

ANALYST
With this storm, there's no way to
get a helo up there.
(leans back)
Been trying to scramble another
team with the skills to climb, but
that's another 9 hours. Minimum.

Kilmer tugs his glasses off. Rubs his eyes.

KILMER
Send a ground crew. At least get
them in the area.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - DAY

Will leads Sean as they ASCEND. Tethered together. The rope
connecting them is more than nylon. It's a wire of
communication -- *a psychological bond*.

The snow pounds straight down. Near white-out as they climb.
We switch to Sean's POV...

... as he FREEZES. Something's off. Nearly imperceptible,
but the snow pattern has changed. As if there was blocking
it's path.

Sean looks up. Hyper focused enough to just barely make out
the silhouettes of -- four MEN on the next landing.

Their carbine assault rifles pointed DOWN.

SEAN
TARGET -- ON YOUR TWELVE!

And just like that...

A maelstrom of fire. Will and Sean JAM into crevices as lead
and rock shrapnel shower down. Each grab M4's and fire
blindly up through the storm.

Wind. Snow. Gunfire. *Complete sensory overload*.

Sean hazards a lean out. He SPRAYS up at the ledge. A muted
SCREAM as one of the men above pitches forward, bounces off
rock and pin-wheels past. Absorbed by the mist below.

Will goes for the same move, only a bullet STRIKES his
forearm -- RIPS his handhold loose. He claws rock in
desperation, but -- falls backward.

Sean, still tethered -- DIGS IN as Will plummets past. The rope SNAPS tight, but the whipping tension DRIVES Will's head into rock with a sickening thud -- knocks him *unconscious*.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Will!

Sean's face contorts in a rictus of exertion. He tries to pull him up, but has no leverage. THWAP -- a bullet strikes his shoulder. THWAP -- another to the lower right stomach.

He lunges to cover. Barely holds on as he looks down to see Will dangling. Bleeding. *Unmoving*.

Sean's muscles fatigue. Shaking violently. As they are about give out, he's hit with the horrifying revelation...

Garrison's weight will pull them both to their deaths.

Sean reacts -- pulls a tac-knife. Holds it against the tethered rope. Illuminating what he's about to do.

He pulls the knife back. Makes fists of his eyes. Desperate for alternatives, but -- *there are none*. His grip is faltering. About to be ripped from the rock.

Were it not for the danger he's pursuing, he might follow Will rather than to do what comes next. He takes one last look at his dear friend and...

... CUTS THE ROPE.

Garrison's lifeless body floats down. As it disappears into the mist below...

EXT. LANDING, MOUNT EVEREST - CONTINUOUS

... the three men above stop shooting. With strained visibility, Will's body is an amorphous SHADOW as it falls. Could be one body, could be a hundred.

But knowing Sean and Will were tethered -- the men assume that BOTH bodies were pulled from the cliff.

They wait to confirm no movement below -- then offer each other a congratulatory glance and head away.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - DAY

A myriad of emotions wash across Sean's face: Shock, sadness, then something else... anger. *Infinite anger*. He begins his ascent. Oblivious to the blood snaking down his torso.

EXT. LANDING, MOUNT EVEREST - DAY

Sean reaches the landing. Pulls his weapon. No sign of the men. He barrels forward. Aiming around rock.

The path ends at the mouth of a small cave. Sean JERKS back at muffled sounds of the men seeking shelter inside.

Sean hooks his rifle. Draws a more accurate Colt M45 Close Quarters Pistol.

INT. CAVE - DAY

The three remaining men huddle around a quickly built fire. Wet gloves off. Desperate for warmth.

They never see Sean as he EMERGES out of the inky shadow. Eyes ablaze. He FIRES twice and red midsts off two heads. The men drop as if someone removed their spines.

The last MAN, *the leader*, stumbles back against the wall as Sean levels his handgun.

SEAN

Where is it?

The man barely points a palsied finger at a backpack before -- Sean pulls the trigger. The man folds in on himself.

Sean, *trance-like*, digs through the backpack. Retrieves a METAL BOX. Opens it to see four crudely shaped rings of enriched plutonium. Shuts it.

He pulls back clothing to reveal the first gunshot wound. Then takes an XStat syringe and injects small, rapidly-expanding sponges into a wound cavity. *Stop-gap measure.*

EXT. MARSOC SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Kilmer watches the Analyst's fingers blur across her laptop.

ANALYST

We've lost comm.

(pause)

Garrison assumed KIA.

KILMER

And Blackburn?

ANALYST

He seems to be... moving again.
Heading down the North face.

Everest at Dawn



KILMER
Into China?

ANALYST
Might be the only viable route.

KILMER
Get their Ministry on the line. We
have to go transparent and get
ahead of this.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - DUSK

Sean stumbles onto a dirt road. Everest rising behind him. With the sun catching the peaks first and resulting evaporation -- they literally look like they are on fire.

Sean pitches to one knee. Blood slithers down his arms. Drips off his fingers.

CHYRON: *N.W. Base of Everest / People's Republic of China*

Sean looks up. Sees a MAN in a horse-drawn trailer. He tries to yell, but instead -- tumbles. As the world spins, we FADE OUT ... and FADE BACK IN TO...

EXT. VILLAGE, TIBET - DAY

Establishing. A small village made up of crude stone homes and large, colorful tents.

INT. BEDROOM, STONE HOUSE - DAY

Sean lies on a mat covered in blankets. Nestled in an enclave of the room. His eyes blink open to see...

LIANG, 48. A Chinese man with a warm, open face.

As Sean tries to get up, Liang puts a hand on his chest. Then a cold towel to his head.

LIANG
Rest now.

SEAN
You speak English?

LIANG
Why? Is your Chinese rusty?

Sean convulses slightly. Winces.

LIANG (CONT'D)
I cleaned your wounds. Treated
them. After I pulled out these...

Liang turns over a cup -- out drops two compacted *bullets*.

SEAN
Thank you.

Sean straightens, realizes he's wearing a necklace. At the end is a metal LOCKET with a Chinese character for "*jing*."

He feels the weight of it. Although not large in size, the metal locket is THICK and substantial.

LIANG
My daughter gave that to you...
(smiles)
She thought you were going to die.

Sean glances around. Climbing gear stacked in the corner.

SEAN
You're a Sherpa.

Liang nods.

LIANG
When you're well, maybe we will
take a climb together. For now,
stay still.
(gets up)
I will get you some tea.

Liang leaves the room. After a few beats, a small head pokes into the room...

BAO, a small, ten-year-old girl. She smiles. Even in pain, Sean can't resist that cute face.

SEAN
Come in.

The young girl shyly takes one step in.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(holds locket)
Thank you for this.

Sean points at the *jing* character...

SEAN (CONT'D)
What's it mean?

BAO
 (broken English)
 To purify.

SEAN
 (opens the locket)
 What do I put inside?

BAO
 (shrugs)
 You will know.

Liang's voice BOOMS from the other room and Bao scurries away. Sean closes his eyes. After a few moments Liang reenters, but... Sean has already fallen back asleep.

INT. DREAM - NIGHT

A void. Pitch black. Suddenly -- Will falls into view. Slo-mo. Tethered line. Unconscious. Like before.

Sean's hands grab the line. As he holds the knife to it -- Garrison's eyes SNAP open. Look right at us.

WILL
 You were like a son to me.

The knife SEVERS the line. Will never loses eye contact as he DROPS. Swallowed by inky abyss.

INT. BEDROOM, LIANG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sean JERKS -- wakes from this guilt-fueled nightmare. In front of him is his flak jacket. On the inside are hand written quotes. But he only stares at one...

"I am a Marine. I am my brother's keeper."

Sean doesn't blink. Thoughts jabbing like needles. He doesn't look right. He looks -- lost.

He fingers the metal locket dangling off his neck. Looks at it -- then back at the flak jacket. In the midst of a full fledged internal struggle until finally, right or wrong... *a decision is made.*

He grabs a tac-knife. CUTS into his FLAK JACKET. Pulls out a standard issue nav-fire tracking chip. Smaller than a dime.

He INSERTS it into his METAL locket. Closes it.

Disrupting transmission.

EXT. MARSOC SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Kilmer stares at the big screen as -- the green dot representing Sean... DISAPPEARS.

KILMER

What happened?
(snaps fingers, points)
Where'd he go?

The female Analyst feverishly types.

ANALYST

Signal was strong. It just cut out.

KILMER

Damaged?

ANALYST

Doubtful. We've had nav-fires survive IED's and still transmit for a year.

KILMER

How far out is our ground crew?

ANALYST

Three hours to his last locale.

Kilmer nods. Rubs his face with both hands.

INT. BEDROOM, HOUSE - DAWN

Dawn. Sean tossing. Turning. Feverish. He JERKS suddenly. Triggered by a sound. The sound of an engine -- out of place here.

He looks out the window to see -- *a military Jeep pulling into the village*. Full of Chinese and American military men. Cooperating on a search and rescue mission.

He sits back down as Liang comes into the room.

LIANG

I believe they are here for you.

Sean pulls the METAL BOX out of his gear. Hands it to Liang.

SEAN

I'm not important. This is.

LIANG

I do not understand.

SEAN

I'm asking for one more favor.

(nods at metal box)

Tell them I left this behind and continued on. You don't know where I am.

Liang reluctantly nods and leaves. Sean looks outside as Liang offers the box to the American SOLDIER.

One of the CHINESE SOLDIERS questions Liang for a second, then blows past -- heading for his front door.

Sean sits down on his mat in the enclave. Resigned.

Outside the door, we HEAR the Chinese Soldier checking and clearing rooms -- looking for Sean, when suddenly --

-- young Boa comes in with an armful of her dolls. Before Sean can say anything...

... she puts a finger to her lips -- *shh*. Sits in the middle of the room. Seconds later, the Soldier opens the door.

Only before he can enter fully and spot Sean in the enclave --

-- Boa let's out a blood curling SCREAM. Appearing startled, frightened. The Soldier quickly looks around, but from his vantage point -- can't see Sean in the enclave.

Boa chases the scream with a terrified whimper. The Soldier holds up his hands apologetically, nods and shuts the door.

Boa smiles at Sean, calmly begins to play with her dolls.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - DAY

High, rising view of Mt. Everest. Majestic. God's fist pushing up from the dirt.

CHYRON: *Four Weeks later*

EXT. MOUNTAIN FACE - DAY

Liang leads Sean up to a high mountain face. Sean looks physically much improved, but his eyes are vacant. *Numb*.

The section of the mountain in front of them has -- four sizable indentations or CLIFFS. Each hundreds of feet apart.



Getting Strength Back

SEAN

Where exactly are we going?

Liang points to the first cliff.

LIANG

You wish to regain your strength.
This is the best way.

SEAN

We've got no gear.

LIANG

Gear?

SEAN

Carabiners, belays, harness...
(holds arms wide)
Rope.

Liang turns back to the mountain.

LIANG

She will take care of you. You do
not need rope.

Liang grabs rock. Climbs up forty feet. Motions.

Sean follows -- but as he arrives beside Liang -- SLIPS. As
he steadies himself, Liang holds up a calming hand.

LIANG (CONT'D)

There is nothing but the next step,
the next grip.Liang climbs higher. Sean finally opens his eyes, continues.
As they reach the bottom of the first CLIFF -- Liang pauses.The realization he's 200 feet in the air without a rope
suddenly hits Sean full force. He white knuckles rock.

LIANG (CONT'D)

Death is never found on a mountain,
only between your shoulders.Liang grips the edge of the cliff and slowly removes his
feet. Hanging. Then drops one arm.Dangling 200 feet in the air by one hand.

LIANG (CONT'D)

Now you.
(off Sean's look)
Clear your mind.

Sean pauses. Still skeptical.

LIANG (CONT'D)
 Maybe you would rather go back down
 and think about other things?

Sean frowns. That's the last thing he wants. Thinking is pain. Guilt. Self-hate.

Everything he's left behind.

He closes his eyes. Focuses only on the mountain. Slowly removes one foot, then the other. Hanging only by his hands.

He opens his eyes and oddly -- a peace washes over him. He lets go of one hand. As he exhales, we fade into a...

STYLIZED MONTAGE

>> Sean climbing to the SECOND CLIFF. Movements cleaner, more confident. Liang helps him up the last couple feet.

>> Climbing the THIRD CLIFF. Sean is graceful. Assured. Forces knees into an indentation. Torso perpendicular over the abyss. He rests, then -- quickly scales up to the cliff.

>> Climbing the FOURTH CLIFF. Pulling an insane move as he jumps from one landing to another -- then ascends a vertical jagged crack to reach the cliff.

Off this ultimate success, we END MONTAGE and fade into...

EXT. PEAK - DUSK

Liang and Sean on top of the peak. Legs dangling over. Soaking in the spectacular view. Musing into space.

SEAN
 I'll be leaving tomorrow.

LIANG
 Thought you might.

SEAN
 Thank you, Liang. For everything.

LIANG
 You are quite welcome.

SEAN
 How do you say, "I owe you" in Chinese?

LIANG
 (in Chinese)
I owe you.
 (back to English)
 But you do not.

Sean smiles nods.

LIANG (CONT'D)
 Where will you go?

SEAN
 I'm not sure.

Liang turns to face Sean.

LIANG
 My Grandmother once told me
 something that I have found to be
 quite true...

EXT. AUSTRIAN ALPS - DAY

Lush valleys give way to towering slate peaks. More green than Everest, but as formidable as mountains come.

CHYRON: *Austrian Alps - four months later*

LIANG (V.O.)
 She said... "You can not run from
 your past. At some point you must
 turn around and face this monster
 or it will catch you from behind."

We push past elephant skin of glaciers, bared teeth of rock and blinding sheets of snow -- to a SPECK near a peak...

EXT. ROCK FACE, AUSTRIAN ALPS - DAY

Sean free-climbing. Twenty five hundred feet up. You could stack two Empire State Buildings. *They'd still be shorter.*

Sean comes to a dead end. The face dips in and away. The closest parallel face is thirty feet across.

An arc connects the two sides, but has only a small lip. Sean grabs it. SWINGS into empty space. Just fingertips keeping him alive, yet he is...

... completely calm. The lip is well-toothed, so he closes his eyes and simply hangs. *An extreme form of meditation.*



Austrian Alps

EXT. BASE CAMP, AUSTRIAN ALPS - AFTERNOON

Sean walks through a base camp. Climbers sort through heavy-duty gear to perform the same climb Sean just did by hand.

Several nod hello, a pretty girl smiles, but he keeps eyes forward. Refusing any interaction.

EXT. VAN - AFTERNOON

Sean heads to a large, beat-up white van. Jumps inside...

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

He's clearly living out of it. Air mattress, hot plate, clothing in clear containers, etc.

He grabs a jar of peanut butter, a few slices of bread. Hops into the front seat. Grabs a map.

C/U on map: A route in red pen that leads to a circled spot. Below that spot is one word -- Ana.

EXT. BASE CAMP, AUSTRIAN ALPS - DUSK

A GROUP sets up camp. Surrounded by thick woods. Near the base of the mountain range. Constructing a large tent is...

ANA GARRISON, 27. American. Long, athletic build. Brunette hair pouring out of a pony tail. A perfect mix of cute and pretty. *She's also Will's daughter.*

Helping is her boyfriend...

LUKAS BLAKE, 30. Canadian. Handsome enough to land Ana, but overcompensating with long hair and unkept beard.

As Ana finishes connecting a tent rod, she glances at the *engagement ring* on her finger. Modest, but antique. Unique.

Lukas walks up. Hugs her from behind.

ANA

I stare at it twenty times a day.
Minimum. I'm such a cliché.

LUKAS

No cold feet?

Ana motions down. They are standing in a foot of snow. She cocks an sardonic eyebrow.

MENG (O.S.)
Ughhh. Come on.

They both turns to see...

MENG, 50. Chinese American. Middle-aged, but in good shape. Trying to build a fire. It's not going well.

She gives Lukas a kiss and heads across the camp site to Meng who blows furiously -- trying to keep the fire lit.

ANA
Here, lemme show you...

She kneels down, pointing.

ANA (CONT'D)
Like a cabin... stack the base...
(aligns logs)
Fill your "cabin" with kindling.
Then put the roof on...

She stacks more logs on top.

ANA (CONT'D)
But this fire won't last without
more kindling. Back in a sec.

Ana heads away, only as she's about to enter the woods --
-- Sean emerges. Silent. Like a specter.

ANA (CONT'D)
Sean?

Ana stops. Stunned. Shocked. She takes a step back. Stares at Sean as if he's a mirage.

She struggles to compose herself, then...

ANA (CONT'D)
◆ They wouldn't give me any
information on you, I...
(pause)
... thought you might be dead too.

SEAN
I know. I'm sorry.

Long beat. Ana swallows her emotions.

ANA
How did you even know where I'd be?

SEAN
Was a pretty big part of my job --
finding people.

Ana's mind whirls. A withheld affection and complexity of feelings in her eyes.

Suddenly Lukas walks up. Defensive.

LUKAS
Ana. Everything okay?

ANA
Lukas... this is Sean Blackburn.

This name immediately registers with Lukas. Neither he nor Sean move to shake hands.

ANA (CONT'D)
Sean, this is Lukas.
(pause)
My fiance.

This clearly surprises Sean. But he covers.

SEAN
That's... great. Congratulations.

LUKAS
What're you doing here?

SEAN
I was hoping to talk to Ana.
Alone.

LUKAS
(sardonic)
I'll be honest -- kinda bumping on
the whole "alone" part.

Ana puts a hand on Lukas' shoulder.

ANA
It's okay.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Sean and Ana sit on the edge of a rocky bluff. A fast running stream a few feet below.

SEAN
Engaged...

ANA
I would've told you, but you've
been incommunicado for awhile.

SEAN
You happy?

ANA
Really happy.

An uncomfortable silence ensues. Then finally...

ANA (CONT'D)
You know... this was the first
place Dad ever took me climbing.
(pause)
I didn't scale twenty feet, but I
watched him go up so high...

She finally turns and faces him.

ANA (CONT'D)
What happened, Sean? That's what
you came here to tell me, isn't it?

SEAN
There's so much I can't talk about,
but so much... I have to tell you.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DUSK

Lukas works climbing gear. His eyes never leave the woods. Through the trees he watches -- Ana and Sean having an emotional talk.

AT some point, Ana leans over, hugs Sean. Sean wraps his arms around her. Pulls her tight.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DUSK

Sean sits next to Meng as he works through his gear. He pulls out a harness, but it's tangled.

Sean stares at the fire. Mind a million miles away.

MENG
You okay?

Sean slowly turns to him.

SEAN
Yeah. Fine.

MENG

I know that look. I've had that look. Not sure fine is the word for it.

Sean doesn't want to get into it, motions toward Meng's gear.

SEAN

Do a lot of climbing?

MENG

Not until recently.

SEAN

You're American.

(off Meng's nod)

Why the alps? Plenty of good rock back in the states.

Meng finishes the harness, lays it aside.

MENG

My wife died in these mountains. In fact, she's still there.

SEAN

I'm sorry.

MENG

It's okay. She was an expert climber, Denali, Elbrus, K2. This was nothing for her. Her death was a fluke really.

(pause)

Trapped by an avalanche and... froze in the ensuing storm.

Meng falters for a moment. Then...

MENG (CONT'D)

She asked me to come climb with her so many times, but... I was never the outdoors-y type.

Meng takes a deep breath. Composes himself.

SEAN

You've come for her body?

MENG

No. She'd want to be left there. I've come to see her one last time and give her this...

Meng holds up a small baby blanket.

MENG (CONT'D)

We had a son that passed away years ago. Honestly, I think that's what started her climbing.

(squeezing blanket)

This was his. I want to leave it with her. She'd like that.

SEAN

Ana's the best guide I know. She'll take good care of you.

MENG

I've been training for six months non-stop and I've learned to enjoy it, but... this is the last mountain I ever intend to climb.

As Meng forces a smile, we move to...

ANA and LUKAS

As they prepare dinner.

LUKAS

This guy admits to killing your father and you invite him for dinner? You just forgive him. Just like that?

ANA

I didn't say I forgave him.

(pause)

I said I understood.

LUKAS

The hell's that mean?

ANA

Means being in the military's a different mind-set. Putting your life on the line is the job.

(pause)

I'd been preparing for my father's death as long as I can remember.

Lukas glares at Sean. Beat.

LUKAS

At least tell me that he said what he needed to say to you -- and this is the last we'll see of him.

Ana doesn't respond. *She can't say that.* Lukas is clearly hurt by this.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
Every girl wants to marry her
father, don't they?

Ana leans over, puts her forehead against his.

ANA
Hey, come on. You and I talked
about this -- Sean and I dated, it
ended and now I'm with you. Okay?

Lukas pulls away. Stands up.

LUKAS
I'm going to get more fire wood.

Lukas heads off.

EXT. CAMP SITE - NIGHT

The only light is a blazing camp fire and a plump moon overhead. Everyone has finishes their meal.

MENG
(to Sean)
Where were you stationed?

SEAN
Unit I was with, we... sorta
floated around.

MENG
Iraq?

SEAN
Everywhere you can think of.

LUKAS
All peace keeping missions, right?

SEAN
I like to think so.

As the two men eye each other, Ana lets out a dramatic yawn to interrupt the tension.

ANA
Oooh, so sleepy. Guess we should
all get some shuteye. Big day
tomorrow.

SEAN

I'll set up over there.
 (looks at Lukas)
 Be gone in the morning.

LUKAS

So soon?

Sean ignores him, starts to get to his feet when...

MENG

Wait. Please.

All eyes turn to Meng.

MENG (CONT'D)

I wonder if you all would allow me
 to share something.

He pulls out a small, brightly colored bottle.

MENG (CONT'D)

This is baijiu, a Chinese alcohol
 made from distilled sorghum.

(smiles)

Very potent.

(pause)

This particular brand, Maotai, was
 brewed mainly in the 70's and is
 quite rare.

(pause)

Please join me in a toast. To
 christen our climb.

Meng passes small glasses. Fills them. Raises his up high.

MENG (CONT'D)

Zhù ni yìlù shùnfēng!

(quickly)

Which means, "May we have favorable
 winds all the way."

Everyone CLINKS their glass and downs the baijiu.

They all wince and cough, except Meng, who thoroughly enjoys
 their reaction.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A military GRUNT sits behind the wheel of a transport truck.
 Dressed in plain greens, it's unclear which unit he's in or
 even which country. The only thing giving it away is...

... a tatoo. A skull with a Ranger beret in front of an American flag.

This Grunt is a highly trained Army Ranger named -- AXEL. Male, late 20's. Tough. Battled-scarred.

He pulls down his sleeve. Covers the tatoo as he rounds the bend. He taps a micro ear piece...

AXEL
Approaching.

A DEEP MALE VOICE answers...

VOICE (V.O.)
You are green to go. Remember, we want a zero body count.

EXT. MILITARY COMPOUND - NIGHT

Axel pulls the truck into a large MILITARY COMPOUND.

CHYRON: *Undisclosed location, Central Europe*

Guns cover all angles as the truck rumbles up to the ram-proof security gate. A team of ARMED GUARDS surround it.

A LEAD GUARD steps up, says something. The accent is hard to make. Maybe Slovenes, maybe Serbian or Croatian.

Axel clears his throat and responds with a matching accent...

AXEL
23-43-89-1091.

The guard seems content with this access code. He motions and more guards sweep the truck with bomb mirrors as --

-- Axel drives through an NII X-RAY CARGO SCANNER, which reveals...

... four containers that can not be scanned.

Guards open the back to examine the concerning payload.

Inside are: four 2' X 8' rectangle steel boxes with *hazardous chemical warning symbols.*

A TALL GUARD motions the Lead Guard over. Shows him that the payloads are Hazardous and -- HERMETICALLY SEALED.

The Lead Guard stares Axel down, then finally -- NODS.



Ranger Op

INT. WAREHOUSE, MILITARY COMPOUND - NIGHT

Axel drives into a warehouse for hazardous payload. As he exits -- a skeleton crew of three armed GUARDS approach. Seedy types, all smoking cigarettes.

AXEL

Evening boys.

The American accent takes them by surprise. But what comes next, more so. A blend of strike combat and Aikido as...

Axel ELBOWS the near Guards's temple -- traps the second's hand -- twisting out his EM-2 Rifle and driving it under his chin before -- using the last Guard's momentum to spin into a rear choke hold that -- knocks him out.

Within seconds -- all three Guards are unconscious. *Quietly.*

Axel hops in the truck bed. He CUTS hermetic seals on the containers, TAPS a security code. They yawn open to reveal --

-- the rest of the Ranger unit. America's finest. They pull off oxygen masks and step out. Front and center is...

DEVLIN - Colonel. Team leader. Male, late 40's. Worn, soulful face. Air of authority. Sledgehammer tough.

DEVLIN

Okay, huddle up.

We recognize his voice as the one speaking to Axel earlier through his ear piece.

The unit surrounds Devlin. All dressed in Crye Precision Camouflage -- designed to reflect surrounding colors, blend into any environment and deceive the eye.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

Axel, Grinder, Cujo. On the exits.

AXEL

Yes sir.

Axel moves quickly. Grabbing the other two soldiers...

GRINDER -- Male, 29. Shockingly pale. Close set eyes. A human hummingbird. Always in motion. And...

CUJO -- Male, 33. Black. Piercing, unnerving eyes. Ripped, vascular build. Never says a word.

They follow Axel and disappear from view.

Devlin then pulls out a separate MANIFEST and hands it to...

RODRIGUEZ -- Female, 30. Mexican-American. Corn-row hair pulled tight. Copious tatoos.

DEVLIN

I want these cases on the truck in three minutes.

Snatching the manifest from Rodriguez is...

UNITAS -- Male. White. mid-30's. Short-cropped, red hair. Pessimist. Fast talker.

UNITAS

Yes sir.

As they run off, Devlin walks to the last man in the unit...

NOAH -- Male, 32. Short. Nebbish face. His head is craned, hen-like, over a computer pad with a LIVE satellite feed of the base.

Illuminating real-time positions of all guards.

NOAH

All good, sir. Clean and clear.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Rodriguez and Unitas run past safety lock ups to a metal door with warning symbols: Flammable, toxic, explosive.

Rodriguez sprays a foam-base ACID onto the hinges. Metal SIZZLES. They attach suction cup handles, quickly lift the door out of its frame and head inside...

INT. LOCK-UP, WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

... a refrigerated room lined with other hermetically sealed containers. In the middle is something covered with a tarp.

Rodriguez tears it off, revealing -- FOUR footlocker-sized CASES, with code numbers stenciled on the sides and... BIOHAZARD SYMBOLS on top.

INT. TRANSPORT TRUCK (MOVING) - LATER

Devlin drives. Crew and four cases in back. As they approach an electronic metal gate leading to an airfield...

EXT. MILITARY COMPOUND - CONTINUOUS

... Devlin gives a hand signal. Noah, Grinder and Axel jump out and run down a side alley. Behind patrolling guards.

They come to a communication building, SHOOT anchor points to the top ridge -- THWACK.

Then attach spool/winders to their belts and with a CLICK of a button -- run up the side of the building like spiders.
Hands free.

INT. ROOF, SECURITY HUB - NIGHT

Axel and Grinder stand guard as Noah splices computer gear into a bundle of exposed server wire.

AXEL
Twenty seconds.

NOAH
Only need five.

INT. TRANSPORT TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Devlin smiles as the towers ringing the airfield go BLACK and the electronic gate -- slides OPEN.

He pilots the truck to a row of helicopter pads. Four AS532 Cougar helicopters. Thirty yards apart.

EXT. HELICOPTER PADS - LATER

Cujo finishes putting C-4 charges on three helos as -- *the cases are loaded into the fourth.*

As they are about to board... THREE GUARDS approach -- shouting, gesticulating and aiming rifles at the crew.

Devlin holds up his hands in mock surrender, only there's a detonator in one. He thumbs the button -- BOOM--BOOM--BOOM! The other helos explode.

Knocking the guards off their feet.

EXT. MILITARY BASE - CONTINUOUS

High view as the compound-wide alarm goes off. It resembles an anthill someone jammed a stick into. Guards swarming.

INT. AS532 COUGAR HELICOPTER (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

Devlin pilots the helo. Tracer fire screams after. Devlin pulls to a stiff ascent. Trying to get out of ground weapon range, only --

A final few bullets RIP into the helicopter's fuselage.

OIL and SMOKE start to billow.

DEVLIN
(checking gauges)
Losing compression. I can keep us up... just not sure how long.

AXEL
Can you get us across the border?

Devlin watches the gauges. Then...

DEVLIN
Guess we're gonna find out.

Behind him, the crew desperately hangs onto the biohazard cases as they...

EXT. AS532 COUGAR HELICOPTER (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

... speed away. A thin trail of smoke as the chopper heads toward snow-capped mountains. Sun not yet over the horizon.

EXT. BASE CAMP, AUSTRIAN ALPS - DAWN

The sun is now up and Meng, Lukas and Ana are up with it.

Lukas helps Meng with his gear. On the other side of the camp -- Ana makes sure the fire is out.

Sean walks up to her, his back to Lukas...

ANA
Hey...

SEAN
I just wanted to say goodbye.

Over Sean's shoulder, Lukas starts forward, but Ana gives him a subtle hand gesture. He frowns. Keeps helping Meng.

ANA
What will you do now?

SEAN
Still trying to figure that out.

ANA
(pause)
I'm the last person to give advice,
but if anyone was put on this earth
to be a Marine, it's you.

Sean looks down. Shakes his head.

SEAN
I'm not that guy anymore.

Ana's face falls. Saddened by how lost he is. Sean looks up, catches her eyes. Clearly uncomfortable. Deflects...

SEAN (CONT'D)
I should head off.
(looks up)
Be nice to see you from time to
time, I just don't know about...

Sean motions to Lukas without turning around.

ANA
Lukas is a really great guy. But I
think he needs a little time to
process all this.

SEAN
And you?

ANA
I could use some time too.

Sean nods. Beat. Then turns serious...

SEAN
I understand. It's just...
I made a promise to your dad.
Anything happened to him, I'd look
out for you. That promise feels
like all I have left of him.
(pause)
So I need you to know -- if you
ever need anything. Anything.

ANA
I do know that...

Ana is about to continue, when she takes a step back.
Squints. Distracted by...

... a helicopter in the distance. Black smoke billowing behind. Much worse than before. It disappears from view for a split second. Then...

ANA (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

VRRRRRROOOOOWWWW! From nowhere, the helicopter ROARS directly over overhead. Clearly out of control.

INT. AS532 COUGAR HELICOPTER (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

Devlin fights the controls. Helo banking back and forth uncontrollably. Everyone straps in.

DEVLIN

She's staring to fail. Not gonna make it. I've got to put her down.

Unitas is freaking out. He glances at Cujo, who shows no reaction at all. Then turns to everyone else.

UNITAS

Shit, this is it. This is fucking it. Kiss our asses goodbye.

RODRIGUEZ

Shut up Unitas.

UNITAS

There ain't no soft landings in a helo, Rodriguez.

The bottom falls out as -- the helo loses altitude fast. Dropping them in front of a mountain peak.

So little clearance that Devlin BANKS the helo -- takes it near vertical to avoid the rocky point. Everything inside SLAMS to one side and --

-- ONE OF THE CASES is flung out the open side of the cabin!

The crew fights G-forces and GRABS the remaining cases, but the helo dips again, time harder and faster. Down into --

-- thick woods. The tail SLAMS against a tree and -- SHEERS OFF. Sending the rest of the helo into a mad spin and --

-- DISCHARGING TWO MORE CASES.

The crew is unable to move as -- the helo careens through the woods and down an embankment. Branches attack the fuselage.

Going Down



EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

The helo BURSTS out of the woods and -- DRIVES down into a snowy plateau where it DIGS into the ground. Rotors STRIKE the ground and SPLINTER as -- *the helo finally comes to rest.*

EXT. CAMP SITE - CONTINUOUS

Lukas grabs his gear as Ana and Sean run up.

LUKAS
I've got the first aid.

ANA
We do what we can to stabilize injuries and wait for search and rescue.

Meng holds up his cell phone.

MENG
Nothing.

LUKAS
No cell towers around here.

Lukas hands out comm-gear. Long range Walkie with earpiece.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
Here. In case the wind gets bad or anyone gets separated.

ANA
Sean too.
(off Lukas' look)
He's the strongest climber.

Lukas frowns. Hands the walkie gear to Sean.

SEAN
◆ We should hurry, weather's going to turn soon.

MENG
(looks around)
The sky looks clear.

Sean points at a group of low-flying birds.

SEAN
Falling air pressure causes pain in bird's ears. See 'em flying low, means a storm's coming.

EXT. CLIFF FACE - DAY

Sean, Ana and Lukas work the cliff. It's technical, but they are all expert climbers -- except Meng who takes a bit more time to complete each move.

Wind whips, making it hard to hear. Ana looks back at Meng. Talks into her walkie com...

ANA
How you feeling?

MENG
Never... better.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

They crest onto the snowbound plateau and up to the -- *mangled body of the chopper*. Inside the wreckage, they see that Noah is -- IMPALED by a thick tree branch.

ANA
Jesus.

Sean enters the fuselage. Otherwise empty. He pauses. Thinking. As he exits -- *a red dot appears on his chest*.

He looks up to see -- Devlin, Unitas, Rodriguez, Grinder and Axel. Coming into view. All pointing rifles.

DEVLIN
You all American?

ANA
Yes.

Devlin gives a hand motion. Rest of the crew lower weapons.

DEVLIN
What are you doing here?

ANA
Climbing. Guided tour. What happened?

He doesn't answer, instead -- extends a hand. Ana takes it.

DEVLIN
Captain Devlin, ma'am. Alpha Company commander, 75th Ranger Regiment. US Army.
(shakes hands)
Do you have a satellite phone, anything to call for help?

LUKAS

No. Just long range walkies, but it shouldn't take search and rescue long to find you.

DEVLIN

Wouldn't... if we'd called it in.
(quickly)
How far are we from the border of Austria?

ANA

About 15 kilometers? Why?

DEVLIN

You all are experienced guides?

ANA

It's how we make our living.

DEVLIN

Then we need your help. My unit has no climb training, we don't know these mountains.

ANA

Help with what exactly?

He motions to Rodriguez who carries over the lone remaining CASE -- drops it in front of everyone.

DEVLIN

There were three more cases like this that were lost in the crash.
(pause)
We need to retrieve them.

MENG

Is that a biohazard symbol?

Devlin doesn't respond.

SEAN

Cases aren't going anywhere. How 'bout we take you down the mountain. Into town. You can call whoever you need to call.

DEVLIN

Afraid we don't have that luxury.

ANA

Meaning?

Devlin clearly doesn't want to explain himself.

LUKAS

You want us to risk our lives, yet
you won't tell us what's going on?

Devlin nods reluctantly. Takes a beat. Then...

DEVLIN

Few days ago a Montenegrin group
stole an truck containing four
cases of a highly classified
biological agent.

(pause)

Our intel advised they were using
Slovenian military as transport.
My team went in, recovered the
stolen cases.

(pause)

They clipped us on the way out. We
dropped before we could make it
over the mountains.

LUKAS

How do you know these guys aren't
coming after their cases right now?

DEVLIN

I assume they are. Which is why
it's vital we secure these cases
and make contact with our command
ASAP.

(pause)

The U.S. Army is asking for help,
on a matter of national security.

Complete silence. No one says a word until...

ANA

I'll go. I'll guide your team.

Everyone turns to her.

ANA (CONT'D)

You all don't have to go, but this
is something I need to do.

SEAN

Then I'm going.

MENG

Me as well. My wife would
understand.

ANA

Soon as this is over, we'll get you there, okay?

As Meng nods, they all turn to Lukas. The last hold-out. He exhales, then...

LUKAS

How do you plan on locating the cases?

Devlin shows Ana a small GPS device with retinal display. On screen is a topographical map of the mountains and three blinking GREEN DOTS.

The dots represent...

>>> The FIRST CASE -- *off on its own.*

>>> TWO OTHER CASES -- *grouped relatively close together.*

DEVLIN

Area look familiar?

ANA

(nods)

First case is about 5 kilometers from here. But it's rough terrain.

DEVLIN

My team will keep up.

ANA

It's not about endurance or muscle mass. It's about technical proficiency. This...

(motions out to mountain)

Is more unstable, more dangerous than any mine field. Which means, you follow my lead and go at my pace. Agreed?

DEVLIN

Agreed. And... thank you.

ANA

(motions)

I'm Ana, that's Lukas, Meng, Sean.

Devlin turns, motions to each crew member...

DEVLIN

Axel, Rodriguez, Grinder, Cujo and Unitas.

ANA
Okay then. Follow me.

DEVLIN
(to team)
You heard her. Let's move out. We go where she goes, so give me a soft, moving perimeter.

Unitas and Cujo each grab a handle of the case.

UNITAS
One big happy family.

CLIMBING MONTAGE

Everyone plods up a steep, snow-covered moraine, dragging the case behind them as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

The group struggles up a steep face. Sean free-climbing a tough overhang. Clinging to the rock ceiling. Jamming cams. Stringing rope for the others.

DISSOLVE TO:

The struggles of Devlin's unit -- Misjudging angles, rock holds. Their natural bravado degrading into uneasiness. Bringing home Ana's point as she instructs them.

DISSOLVE TO:

The group ascending the beetling cliff face. Tethered together. Everything slow and steady. Safety lines intact.

Axel is working with Unitas and Cujo to hoist the CASE when it -- BANGS into the wall. *Sean reacts.*

AXEL
It's fine. Chems are stable.

Sean frowns -- clocks the case -- before his eyes tick from one Ranger to the next as we finally DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

Everyone grunts up another slope. The footing a patchwork of snow, ice and rock. Sean sticks close to Meng. Offers encouragement and technique.

Devlin catches up. Trudges next to Sean for a beat. Then...



D.

DEVLIN

So. You still active?

(off his silence)

I served 25 years and had a
thousand men under my command...
not that hard to spot my own kind.

They trudge further. Devlin eyes him.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

Don't tell me... not Airforce, not
Army. Marine.

(off Sean's face)

Yeah. And given how guarded you
are, I'm gonna go special forces.
MARSOC, am I right?

SEAN

No. Not anymore.

Sean picks up his pace. Purposefully distancing himself.

MENG

(to Devlin)

What is MARSOC?

DEVLIN

United States Marine Corps Forces
Special Operations Command. Those
boys are what they call...
"Scalpels."

MENG

Scalpels?

DEVLIN

Rangers, we're hammers. MARSOC's
different in every way. From
training to orders.

(off Meng's look)

Say a skirmish starts. We'd go in,
bring big numbers. Train locals to
defend themselves, give 'em
supplies. Make a presence to deter
future attacks.

MENG

And MARSOC?

DEVLIN

MARSOC would send a couple guys in,
take out the opposing leaders.
Make sure there was no one left to
even give an attack order.

Beat.

MENG
Sound like assassins.

DEVLIN
They prefer "scalpels."

EXT. CHASM - DAY

Ana leads through a rocky trail. Rounding a bend, she -- halts. Puts up a hand, STOPS everyone in their tracks...

SEAN
Snow bridge?

ANA
Yeah.

UNITAS
The hell's a snow bridge?

SEAN
Exactly what it sounds like -
bridge of snow across a gap.

Ana motions to a hundred yards of flat, snow-covered ground.

ANA
This looks like a plateau covered
with snow, but it's riddled with
crevices and pits.

(pause)
In the summer, this spot looks like
swiss cheese. The rock is sturdy
enough to cross on, but there's no
way of knowing where the holes are.

RODRIGUEZ
So we could fall through?

SEAN
Yes.

Unitas shoves Rodriguez.

UNITAS
You go first.

She shoves him back.

RODRIGUEZ
I'm from L.A., I don't know nothin'
about no snow - you go.

Grinder moves close to Ana. His eyes boring into her.

GRINDER
She's our guide. Let the pretty lady go first.

UNITAS
Uh-oh. Grinder's got another crush.

Sean steps between Grinder and Ana.

SEAN
Why don't you take a step back.

GRINDER
Or what?

SEAN
Or I'll do it for you.

Grinder smiles. Revealing rows of chipped, stained teeth. Until Devlin grabs his shoulder.

DEVLIN
MOVE back.

Grinder shoves Devlin's hand off. As he moves back, Sean frowns at the insubordination. Shocked Devlin allows it.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
(turns to Ana)
I'm sorry. The aggression that makes men like Grinder so valuable, in the field can be a liability away from it.

ANA
I've been around it my whole life.
(pause)
But there's staying loose, then there's disrespect.

DEVLIN
Understood. Won't happen again.
(motions forward)
Is there another way around?

Ana turns to Lukas, who knows these mountains better than anyone. He shakes his head.

No.

EXT. SNOW BRIDGE - LATER

Devlin's team waits in a line and watches as... Ana, Sean and Lukas step out onto the flat white snow. No way of knowing what's underneath. Maybe rock.

Maybe a precipitous drop.

They eye the far side: jagged ledges jut from the next rock face, which is the only definitively solid structure and starting point for the next ascension.

Tethered, they move in a three prong formation. Ana in lead. Fifty feet behind, Lukas and Sean spread diagonal.

Slowly testing the snow, Ana pauses as -- the ground beneath her GROANS. Behind her...

DEVLIN'S CREW

UNITAS
That ain't good.

RODRIGUEZ
Shut up, *Culo*.

UNITAS
Culo? That's new. What's it mean?

RODRIGUEZ
Means asshole.

UNITAS
That's what they always mean.

Back on...

ANA

As she side-steps a few yards, then continues on.

ANA
Easy, easy...

A ways behind her...

LUKAS and SEAN

They slowly continue forward.

LUKAS
(re: Grinder)
She doesn't need you to protect her.

SEAN

I know guys like that. They only respond to an equal threat.

LUKAS

I can handle myself just fine.

SEAN

Just saying you're smart enough not to get in a fight with that guy. So relax and realize that's what Ana sees in you-

ANA

(shouting back)

Much as I enjoy the clumsy attempts at what I want and need, maybe you two could concentrate on not dying--

Ana's entire left leg DISAPPEARS as she steps on a snow bridge. As the floor beneath gives way -- Lukas and Sean DIG IN and YANK her back onto firm ground as --

-- a twenty foot hole is exposed in front of her.

The snow bridge is gone, revealing the sturdy portion of rock around it. Ana looks down the giant drop at the bowels of the mountain -- over twelve hundred feet, straight down.

As she gets up and GLARES at Sean and Lukas, they all continue forward. Around the hole.

Sean spreads further left. Stops as the icy snow GROANS and -- a THICK CRACK spreads out -- heading RIGHT FOR LUKAS.

SEAN

On your six.

Lukas sees it, moves quickly out in front of the crack as -- an eighty foot section EVAPORATES. Inches from Lukas' feet.

ANA

(calling out)

Slow and steady.

Tension ratchets as they go forward. The safety of the rock cliff they are trying to reach -- still fifty yards away.

Sean and Lukas let Ana separate. The long rope allows her to get nearly to the rock cliff when --

-- the snow beneath her feet starts to GROAN, but -- she lunges and finally MAKES it safely to the other side.

Ice Bridge Peril



ANA (CONT'D)
Now you guys.

LUKAS
Cut the rope.

ANA
What?

LUKAS
We both go down, you'll be yanked
right off.

Ana frowns, but can't deny the logic. She unhooks the rope.
Leaving Lukas and Sean tethered to each other.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
I'll lead.

Lukas doesn't wait for an answer. He tries to walk in Ana's
path, when suddenly a FISSURE appears just off to the left.
Brought on by the heavier weight. Sean and Lukas freeze.
Listen. Watch.

ANA
Easy, easy.

They get another ten feet when another fissure appears. This
time -- much larger.

Spiderwebbing the entire surface.

SEAN
MOVE!!

Sean and Lukas pick up their pace as much larger chunks of
snow fall away -- ALL AROUND THEM.

The earth QUAKES and the two of them break into a sprint.
Lukas gets within feet of the second cliff when -- the ground
in front starts IMPLODING.

He takes a few more steps and -- LEAPS for the safety of the
rocky shelf. He makes it easily and turns to see -- Sean in
mid-air as the ground beneath him -- EVAPORATES.

He arcs over chasm and lands on the very edge of the cliff.

About to fall when -- Lukas GRABS his jacket. Holds him at a
90 degree angle. Sean's life in his hands until he...
YANKS him to safety.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Sensed some indecision there.

LUKAS

Hard to pass up the sweet irony of letting go.

Sean grabs Lukas.

SEAN

You got something to say to me, say it and be specific.

LUKAS

(shoves off)

I don't like you. You're a dark cloud over Ana and I want you out of our lives. Specific enough?

SEAN

That's not up to you.

LUKAS

You should have the decency to do it yourself.

(quickly)

Whatta you think -- that you're gonna come back and be part of the family? MY family?

(shakes his head)

That is NEVER going to happen.

ANA (O.S.)

Lukas? Sean?

Lukas grabs the rock face, leans forward to see Ana.

LUKAS

We're okay.

Lucas starts up the ridge toward Ana. Sean watches him go. Then finally looks back at the area they just crossed...

It does vaguely resemble Swiss cheese. Thick flat portions of sturdy rock with sporadic crevices, gaps and holes. But...

Thanks to their nearly fatal, guinea pig trek across -- ALL the rock and safe paths have all been revealed.

Allowing Devlin and crew to use the sturdy rock portions to cross the same space without concern.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

Everyone sits in the shelter of an overhang. Finishing up a quick break in tired silence.

ANA
Everyone ready?

Devlin turns, motions to Axel. Then to the CASE.

DEVLIN
Axel, you and Unitas on the case.

AXEL
Screw that, I did the last five clicks.

Devlin sets his jaw. Nods to Grinder.

DEVLIN
Grinder, you're up.

Grinder exhales, grabs the case with Unitas.

Sean watches the exchange. Gears in his head spinning.

EXT. ANGLED MOUNTAIN FACE - LATER

Everyone slogs down an angled slope. Dangerous and hard going down. Ana and Lukas in the lead as Sean catches up.

SEAN
Something's off with these guys.

LUKAS
Same guys that saved your ass back there?

SEAN
(ignoring, to Ana)
Way they handle the chems. Chain of command. It's too loose.
(quickly)
Not to mention, an op like this would have multiple fail safes. It'd never be this insular. It all feels... *wrong*.

LUKAS
Or maybe you just don't like not being the center of attention.

SEAN
It's not about your insecure bullshit--

LUKAS
Fuck off.

ANA
Stop it, both of you.

Silence. Ana rubs her face with both hands.

ANA (CONT'D)
 (to Sean)
 What do you suggest we do?

SEAN
 Get 'em to the first case -- show them the route to the other two. It's nearly to the border anyway. Then we go our separate ways.

ANA
 What if you're wrong? These are American soldiers.

SEAN
 I need a little faith here. You trust me, don't you?

LUKAS
 No.

ANA
Yes.
 (to Lukas)
 I'm sorry. I do. This is too important to worry about feelings.

Lukas glares at Sean.

LUKAS
 Fine. We get them the case, send them on their way and then we bail. WE meaning: me, Ana and Meng.
 (pause)
 You go your separate way.

ANA
 Lukas--

SEAN
 Agreed.

With this Sean heads away.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

The group is high up on another section of mountain. They round a small pathway when it suddenly -- DIES.

A fifty foot crevice separating the rest of the path.

LUKAS

This is new. Rock slide took this whole side out.

ANA

(to group)

We have to go back down, take another route.

DEVLIN

That's going to take hours.

ANA

I'm sorry. We have no choice.

Devlin nods, conceding the point.

DEVLIN

Yes ma'am. You're the boss.

ANA

Good, I--

She turns to see Sean scaling the wall behind them. The wall of rock rises, then curves like a thin stone wave.

Sean tight ropes the section and in parkour fashion -- JUMPS off -- springs onto a ledge, then ricochets down and...

... lands across from the rest of the crew.

SEAN

Throw me a line.

UNITAS

I like this guy.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

Ana has her gear out -- throws a line across. Sean quickly attaches a piton -- embeds it into solid rock.

Behind him, Ana does the same -- strings the rope and ratchets it tight. The line across now taut as a bow string.

Lukas clips a zip-line trolley onto the cable and climbs aboard. Hanging upside down...

LUKAS

(to Devlin and crew)

Watch and do like I do.



Leading the Way

With his feet on the cable, Lukas "runs" across the chasm.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
Send over the case.

They suspend the case from the cable with a zip-line trolley.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
Need someone to push it across.

RODRIGUEZ
I'll go.

Rodriguez straps on behind the case. Moves herself and the CHEMS across. The chasm is a dizzying, deadly abyss with nothing but jagged rocks and a raging river far below.

The wind picks up. Rodriguez and the case begin to SWAY back and forth. Rodriguez for all her bluster, grinds her teeth.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

The group heads across -- one by one. It's a terrifying trip for the Rangers, but they all make it over.

Last one to step up is Meng. Clearly nervous at the prospect. Hands shaking.

ANA
(calls out)
Meng? You okay?

MENG
Yes. I think so.

Meng slowly inches out over the chasm. About half way across, the wind picks up dramatically.

Meng sways violently. Hangs on for dear life. Then does the worst thing possible -- he looks down. *Meng freezes.*

ANA
It's okay. You're locked in.

Meng doesn't respond. Eyes shut. Teeth rattling.

LUKAS
Hand over hand, just keep moving.

But Meng can't.

ANA
I think we've lost him.

With the combined weight -- the rocking and shaking are playing hell with the zip-line.

LUKAS

That piton's not gonna last.

Lukas points at the far end where the piton that secures the rope is starting to -- COME LOOSE.

Sean doesn't hesitate. He UNCLIPS from his trolley and crawls along the cable without a harness!

He moves quickly. Up to Meng. They are now head to head.

SEAN

Meng. We need to go right NOW.

Sean reaches over. Puts a hand on his chest. Meng JERKS. Frightened. Sean realizes he needs another approach.

SEAN (CONT'D)

It's okay. Relax. Look at me.

Meng slowly opens his eyes. Connects with Sean.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You're locked in. You're safe.

MENG

I know, yet... I still can't move.

Sean eyes the piton on the far end. JERKING back and forth. He knows he needs to speed this up.

SEAN

Someone once told me -- "Death is never found on a mountain, only between your shoulders."

MENG

You bought that?

Sean smiles. Meng is back to the living.

SEAN

Yeah, well, he said it so earnestly.

Meng lets out a nervous laugh.

SEAN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna pull you. You move when I move, okay?

MENG

I'll try.

Sean begins pull. Meng freaks out again. Fighting the pull.

C/U on piton: A chunk of rock around it disintegrates. As it sways back and forth, *slowly coming out*, we go back to...

SEAN

Hiding his worry as he locks eyes with Meng.

SEAN

(distracting)

Tell me something -- how'd you meet your wife?

MENG

We... uh... I met her on a blind date. But not mine.

SEAN

I like the sound of this already.

Sean pulls again. This time Meng -- mind on his wife now --

-- starts to move with him.

MENG

I was at a bar. Happy hour with some coworkers. I saw her the moment she came in the door.

They slowly head back across. Starting to get some momentum.

MENG (CONT'D)

When her date went to the bathroom I approached her. In the five minute before he came back, I knew she was the one.

SEAN

She ditch the other guy?

MENG

No. I tried to give her my phone number, but she wouldn't take it. But as they were paying the bill, I had the waiter slip her a note.

Everyone on the far side is listening as they come across.

Trying not to alert Meng that he is seconds from death.

MENG (CONT'D)

It was two weeks before she called.
After that, I never let her out of
my sight.

Almost there, closer, Closer, CLOSER. They just make it to
the other side, when --

-- THWACK! The far piton finally breaks and -- the ROPE
SNAPS FREE! Meng and Sean DROP with it, but --

-- Devlin's crew are there to GRAB THEM BOTH.

They PULL Sean and Meng onto solid ground as the rope falls
into the chasm below. *Saving their lives.*

It's only now that Meng realizes how close he was to death.
He turns to Sean and almost by reflex, finishes...

MENG (CONT'D)

We were married six weeks later.
(catches breath, to crew)
Thank you.

DEVLIN

Yes sir. Catch your breath.

Devlin steadies Meng, then releases him.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - AFTERNOON

Everyone heads down the mountain side. They level off and
snow gives way to beleaguered tall grass and thick forest.

They head single file. About to enter the woods when -- Ana
freezes. Puts her hand out for everyone to stop. In front
of them are... three BEAR CUBS.

UNITAS

Hey, teddy bears.

Unitas is about to get closer when -- Cujo slaps a hand on
his chest. Before Unitas can respond --

-- an ENORMOUS BROWN BEAR -- the mother -- steps in front of
the cubs. SNARLS and reveals her razor-sharp teeth.

UNITAS (CONT'D)

(takes a step back)
I'll be honest. Didn't see that
coming.

Axel JERKS his rifle and aims at the mother bear when --



Momma Bear

ANA
NO! That's a defensive posture!

She shoves the rifle down.

ANA (CONT'D)
Do not shoot that rifle unless it's
life or death. Look around you.
These drifts are completely
unstable.

AXEL
You mean avalanche?

LUKAS
Flows can reach speeds of 300 km/h
and carry a million tons. Will
send us all off the mountain.

The giant bear hop-charges. Closes half the distance, then
backs up. Clacks its teeth and CLAWS the ground.

UNITAS
(jerks back, palms rifle)
Then how do you suppose we get past
momma bear?

SEAN
Stay close, step as one. Make
yourself look big.

UNITAS
You wanna pull a Little Rascals and
get on each other's shoulders?

SEAN
(smirks)
Everyone huddle up. She'll move.

They all stand together, move slowly down. Immediately, the
cubs run away. After a moment... the mother runs after.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

The group has made it to the top of one of the peaks. They
crest onto a large plateau. Devlin holds up the GPS device.

DEVLIN
(looking around)
It should be here. Right here.

The entire group looks around. No sign of the case.

Sean continues up to the edge of the cliff ahead. A hundred feet down is a long, thin ledge. *Barely twenty feet wide.*

There, leaning upside down against the mountain face is --

-- THE FIRST CASE.

UNITAS

I'll be damned. Couldn't do that again if we tried.

Devlin approaches. Glances over. It's a long way down and the rock shelf is very thin.

DEVLIN

We lower someone down. Tie it, pull it up.

Devlin turns to his crew. It's clear none of them want to go. He looks at Unitas...

UNITAS

Hey, don't look at me.

He glances at Rodriguez...

RODRIGUEZ

Esas son mamadas.
(nods at Sean)
Send monkey man.

Sean doesn't turn around. Keeps looking down at the case.

DEVLIN

He's not part of this op.

Devlin looks down the line of his crew. Stops on Grinder.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

Grinder. You're up.

GRINDER

Fuck that, why me?

DEVLIN

That's an order.

UNITAS

Extremely wise choice.

GRINDER

Shut up.

(to Devlin)

You know I don't like heights.

SEAN

I'll go.

Everyone turns to Sean.

SEAN (CONT'D)

But here's the thing...

(pause)

I'll get you the case, but then our groups part ways.

(off Devlin's look)

These people are civilians. Closer you get to the border, more chance of them running into someone looking for those chems.

Sean locks eyes with Devlin.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Other two cases are a straight shot North. Border's only a half day past. We'll give you the gear you need, but... we've done more than our share.

Pregnant pause, then...

DEVLIN

You're right. You've have done more than enough.

EXT. CLIFF - LATER

Sean ties off rope to his harness. The other end is in the hands of Unitas and Axel.

The portion of the cliff they stand on is angled and ice covered. Without crampons, the footing is precarious.

Unitas and Axel POUND the ice with the heels of their boots -- attempting divots to add traction.

Sean leans back off the cliff. As Unitas and Axel give slack -- Sean walks down. The rock face so smooth that the rubber soles of his boots barely stick.

He quickly reaches the thin shelf below. Bends down and ties the rope to the case.

Unitas and Axel begin to pull. The case rises up, Up, UP. Almost to the top when -- Unitas SLIPS. As he tries to reach down to recover -- *he lets go of the rope.*

The resulting torque PULLS Axel to the edge so fast -- he's forced to LET GO too in order to keep from going over!

The case DROPS -- CRASHES down next to Sean who -- barely manages to keep it and himself on the thin rock shelf.

He looks at the case to see that it has... cracked OPEN.

Sean REACTS -- not knowing what he could be exposed to ONLY -- what's inside are not chems at all. Instead the case is...

... PACKED WITH MONEY.

Hundred and thousand dollar bills in neatly bundled stacks.

Back up top, everyone reacts. Especially Ana...

ANA
(to Devlin)
What... ?

Devlin turns to her. Taping his rifle against his thigh.

DEVLIN
Well this is awkward.

As Ana takes a freaked out step backward.

Devlin offers in impassive look. Then...

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
But it doesn't change things as much as you might think.
(pause)
Your job is the same. Get us to the cases, then the border and we all walk away.

Lukas steps up, shakes his head.

LUKAS
I don't know what you're into and I don't care. But we agreed to separate after we got you the case. So just take it and go.

DEVLIN
Exactly what I meant about things not changing. That was never going to happen.
(exhales)
You and your girlfriend have proven too valuable and these mountains too dangerous.

The normally reserved Meng approaches.

MENG

You have no right to involve them.

Axel motions to Meng.

AXEL

Them? Don't know what you're talking about -- you're coming too.

(smirks)

A little insurance -- in case our guides here try and make a run.

MENG

No.

Axel takes a step toward Meng who reflexively steps away.

MENG (CONT'D)

I came here to honor my deceased wife. That's what I plan to do.

Meng swallows hard and finally stands his ground. Pride, honor and emotion overwhelm his natural fear.

AXEL

Sure I can't change your mind?

MENG

I'm sorry. The answer is no.

Beat.

AXEL

Then give your ol' lady my best.

BANG -- the gunshot astound the air. Meng's forehead blooms crimson as he falls back in the snow.

ANA

NO!

Ana RUSHES Axel, who spins on her. ONLY, before he can take aim -- Lukas is on him.

He rocks Axel with an impressive right hook. But Axel is a trained killer. He twists out of Lukas' reach and -- FIRES!

Lukas' abdomen eats the blast as he drops to the ground. Holding his stomach. Blood seeping between his fingers.

Axel moves to finish, but -- Ana throws herself onto Lukas.

ANA (CONT'D)
Kill him, you kill me too!
You'll have no guide.

Devlin SHOVES Axel's gun down.

DEVLIN
WHOA. Stand down.
(pushes Axel back)
The hell's a matter with you?

AXEL
A point needed to be made.

DEVLIN
Fire again without my command and
I'll do you myself.

Devlin exhales. Turns to Ana.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
I want your word that you'll guide
us to those other two cases.

Ana pauses. Devlin presses his own gun to Lukas' head.

ANA
Yes. I'll go. I'll Go!

Rodriguez is on the cliff.

RODRIGUEZ
What about monkey man? You want me
to do him?

As Devlin moves to the edge, we rocket back down to...

SEAN

Stoic. Intuition correct as he -- LOCKS EYES with Devlin.

The two men boring holes into each other until finally...
Devlin throws down a bungee cord.

DEVLIN
Go on and fasten that case so we
can pull it up.

When Sean doesn't move, Devlin reaches back -- grabs Ana by
the neck.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
Or I shoot this girl in the head?

Sean frowns. Picks up the bungee. Secures the case. Watches as it's pulled up.

SEAN

Don't suppose that rope's coming back down, is it?

DEVLIN

Afraid not. But one military man to another -- I'll do you a solid.
 (holds up gun)
 Not gonna shoot you. You go out how you want. Tease it a bit with dehydration or make it quick and step off. Your choice.

As the case is pulled up and over, we move back up to...

ANA

Searching through Lukas' gear for first aid. Devlin snatches the bag away from her.

He TAKES all valuable CLIMBING GEAR -- before tossing Lukas the rest.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

Let's go. Sooner you get us to our cases, sooner you can get back here and play nurse.

Ana gets up, looks at Lukas in despair.

LUKAS

Go...

Ana's eyes fill, but she cuts it off. Heads away.

Only thing that matters is getting to those cases so she can return to Lukas.

EXT. SMALL CLIFF - LATER

The sound of Ana, Devlin and his crew's footsteps have long since receded.

SEAN

LUKAS!

No response. Sean feels the rock face before him. Weather over eons has worked its erosive will. The rock is like GLASS. No cracks. NOTHING to provide his hands purchase.

There's no way to climb up or down.

LUKAS (O.S.)

Sean?

Sean sees Lukas peering down. He's pulled himself to the edge. Hands dripping red.

SEAN

Do you have rope?

LUKAS

No.

SEAN

Any climbing gear?

LUKAS

No. They took all that.

Sean eyes something. Steps to the side of the ledge. Across a twenty foot gap is -- another rock face. A parallel wall.

This one is also smooth, but has several vertical CRACKS running all the way to the top.

AT the bottom of the crack is another ledge. *Two feet by three feet.* Positioned ten feet lower than the one he's on.

If he could get to that ledge, he could work up a vertical crack. Problem is -- *that twenty foot gap.*

LUKAS (CONT'D)

There's no way.

SEAN

Before you try to talk me out of it -- know that no matter what Devlin told you, he is going to kill Ana.

Lukas watches in silence as Sean's world narrows to one thing -- that tiny ledge across.

His legs coil and release. Gaining speed. He LEAPS out and -- the earth falls away. Arcing. Stretching the last few feet. Only, it's -- *not enough.*

He drops toward the ledge, but *comes up short.* LANDS half off the shelf. Sliding down. SLAPPING desperately at rock before finally -- securing a single hand.

He twists. Hangs. Exhales in relief. This precarious position is nothing new. Sean slowly GRABS the ridge with two hands and then...



... PULLS himself up.

LUKAS

You okay?

Sean nods. JAMS fingers into the vertical CRACK and puts his entire weight on them. He then presses feet against rock and begins to WALK UP. Ten tiny fingertips standing between him and certain death.

EXT. CLIFF - LATER

Wide view of Sean. Insanely high up. NOTHING but smooth rock all around him.

EXT. CLIFF - LATER

Lukas lies, staring at the cliff edge when -- a hand appears. Then Sean's whole body as he -- *finally makes it over*.

LUKAS

(weakly)

I'd be lying if I said that wasn't the craziest thing I've ever seen.

Sean ignores this, kneels beside him.

SEAN

Lemme see.

Sean examines the wound. Pressing, then *putting his fingers INSIDE it*. Lukas SCREAMS. Writhing as Sean feels into his guts -- before finally removing his fingers.

LUKAS

(hyperventilating)

Wha-why... did you do... that?

SEAN

◆ Good news -- bullet went clean through.

LUKAS

That's... good news?

SEAN

Worst thing that can happen is the bullet strikes your vertebra. Breaks apart, ricochets around.

(pause)

You'd be dead already.

LUKAS
 How long? How long do I have?
 (off Sean's pause)
 Give me the truth.

Beat.

SEAN
 Without proper medical care...
 could be twelve hours... could be
 two. No way to know.

Sean rifles through Lukas' bag.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 I'll do what I can to stabilize you
 and prolong things.

He grabs Sean's arm...

LUKAS
 Just bring her back.

SEAN
 I will.

Sean yanks out a first aid kit. As he works, Lukas watches.
 A silence ensues. Both men inside their heads for a moment.

LUKAS
 Do you know she's the one that
 asked me to marry her?
 (off Sean's look)
 I almost said no. Guess I wanted
 to be the one to ask.

SEAN
 Ana never did stand on ceremony.

Lukas looks down at the bloody mess his stomach has become.

LUKAS
 'Course I caved. Couldn't imagine
 not seeing her face every day.

Sean bandages in silence. *Moved by this.* He stares at
 Lukas' wound. Considers how dire the situation is and
 then... looks down at his pendant.

Grips it for a moment, then -- OPENS IT. Takes out the thin
nav-fire tracker. Free from it's metal environment, it is
 now able to...

... TRANSMIT AGAIN.

He closes his eyes for a moment. The repercussions of what he's just done setting in. *Knowing he's exposed himself.*

He finally hands it to Lukas.

LUKAS (CONT'D)

What is it?

SEAN

A long shot.

(pause)

But if the right eyes see it, they might send help.

Sean examines his handiwork on the bandaging. Gets up.

SEAN (CONT'D)

I need to go.

LUKAS

What are you going to do?

SEAN

I'm gonna do...

Sean's face drops. Mournful.

SEAN (CONT'D)

... what I do.

LUKAS

There are seven of them.

Lukas watches Sean. His last statement not phasing Sean in the least.

LUKAS (CONT'D)

Listen... I know these mountains. Every path that Ana will take...

(winces)

You won't be able to follow.

You've got no gear and there's no way to free climb most of it.

Sean looks out at the mountain. Thinking. He glances at Meng. In a pool of blood.

SEAN

Meng's wife. Could I get to her?

LUKAS

I think so, but why--

(realizing)

Her gear!

Lukas struggles to sit up.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
I can help. I can guide you.

He motions to a section of cliff extending out over the drop.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
Pull me there.

Sean carefully drags Lukas onto the jutting edge. Lukas then grabs a set of high-powered binoculars and points...

LUKAS (CONT'D)
This is a perfect vantage point. I know every inch of this mountain, every shortcut, every trail. I can get you anywhere you need to go.
(turns to him)
The fastest way possible.

SEAN
Okay. Get me to that gear.

LUKAS
Problem isn't distance. It's less than three kilometers from here.
(motions)
Problem is we are on the wrong end of the mountain. The face on this side is nearly straight up.

SEAN
Have you climbed it?

LUKAS
Twice. But with a team, with gear, with safety redundancies. I've just never heard of anyone free climbing it before.

SEAN
Worst pep talk ever.

Lukas rifles through his pack. Hands out the com-gear. They both put in ear pieces as Sean walks away.

LUKAS (V.O.)
(through ear piece)
Good luck.

Sean simply nods. Heads across the snow, but then suddenly --
-- stops at Meng's body.



Going After Ana

Saddened. He digs around in Meng's coat and pulls out -- the baby blanket. *The one Meng wanted to bring to his wife.*

INT. OFFICE, CAMP LEJEUNE, NC - AFTERNOON

Counter-terrorism office. Nondescript, except for a breathtaking catastrophe of papers, maps, and evidence grids.

Sergeant Kilmer (who we recognize from the opening scene as Sean's commanding officer) sits behind a desk.

He stares at a computer screen when -- a KNOCK. Door opens to reveal... a tall, lanky LANCE CORPORAL. He salutes.

KILMER
(without looking up)
At ease. What can I do for you?

LANCE CORPORAL
I've got something you're going to want to see. We had a GPS tracker come on line. One of yours.

KILMER
Mine? I don't have any active ops.

LANCE CORPORAL
It's First Sergeant Blackburn, sir.

Kilmer finally looks up. Stunned.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - LATER

Sean stops at the base of the HUGE peak. Beyond intimidating.

SEAN
The only way, right?

LUKAS (V.O.)
◆ 2,050 feet with 15 pitches.

Sean grabs the first hand-hold. Pulls himself up.

EXT. MOUNTAIN FACE - AFTERNOON

The howling wind shotguns flurries of snow around as Ana comes to a split in the mountain pass.

Devlin wraps a proprietary arm over her shoulder. Shows her his rifle.

DEVLIN

I find out you're sending us off track, you lose your value.

ANA

Why would I do that? Sooner I get the cases, sooner I go home.

(faces him, locks eyes)

You are going to let us go, right?

Devlin smiles at her gumption.

DEVLIN

That's what I said.

Ana turns away, points. Clouds above are dark and full.

ANA

We can't go much longer. Storm's coming in and it'll be dark soon.

DEVLIN

Then let's get a move on.

INT. MARSOC SITUATION ROOM - DUSK

The Lance Corporal shows Kilmer the tracking signal on a large topographical map.

KILMER

You've told no one but me?

LANCE CORPORAL

No sir.

KILMER

(nods, thinking)

Not saying we go dark, not saying we do an end-around. But I want to send a team out with as little internal exposure as possible. Can you do that?

LANCE CORPORAL

Yes sir. I've got a team just over the border I can scramble -- but not before sunset.

(pause)

With weather conditions as is and the altitude -- we can't send a helo in there at night. They wouldn't spot anything on the ground anyway.

KILMER

How soon?

LANCE CORPORAL

I can get them in the area just after day break.

KILMER

Do it. Go small, but heavy.

(pause)

If Sean is asking for help, this isn't just a search and rescue.

EXT. CLIFF - DUSK

Lukas holds high-powered binoculars to his face. Watches Sean make the insane free-climb.

BINOCULAR VIEW: Sean is halfway up. A tiny dot on the large mountain face.

LUKAS

(into com)

Doing well. Almost there. When you reach the next cliff, you'll find a giant crevice where the avalanche hit. Passage dead ends in a small cave structure.

(pause)

Where the climb party took refuge. It's where you'll find Meng's wife.

EXT. CLIFF FACE - CONTINUOUS

Sean secures footing. The frigid wind attacks him. Freezing perspiration to his body. He looks up, plans his next move.

SEAN

How's the next bit looking?

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - CONTINUOUS

Lukas adjusts his walkie comm...

LUKAS

Gonna make a 90 degree shift. It'll take you to a nice bottle neck. Lot of solid grip.

INTERCUT

Sean reaches for a hand-hold. SWINGS to it. Holding it now with both hands -- but he's got no foothold.

SEAN
Do me a favor. Keep talking.

LUKAS
Don't you want to focus?

SEAN
Actually, I could use a diversion right about now.

Lukas looks down at his bandages. Soaked in blood.

LUKAS
Yeah. Me too.

He adjusts himself. Pain radiates.

LUKAS (CONT'D)
So why did you and Ana break-up?

Sean GRUNTS. Pulls himself up to another grip.

SEAN
Goin' there straight off, huh?

LUKAS
Well, you gonna tell me or not?

EXT. MOUNTAIN WALL - DAY

Sean is a good way up the wall, two thousand feet off the ground. Wind and snow make the climbing tenuous at best.

LUKAS (V.O.)
I've asked her, but don't think she quite understood it. Said it was very... abrupt.

SEAN
Ahh, we were never right for each other. We were always gonna be better off as friends.

LUKAS (V.O.)
Bullshit. It was more than that.

This part of the wall is sheer, slightly overhung and slick. His only foothold is a half-inch of ledge.

SEAN
Her dad asked me to end it.

LUKAS (V.O.)
I thought you guys were close.

SEAN
Which is why I broke it off.

LUKAS (V.O.)
I don't get it.

SEAN
You have to understand, what we do
has a short life expectancy.
Chances were good at some point,
both of us would be killed.
(pause)
He didn't want Ana losing a father
and a boyfriend or maybe even a
husband at the same time.

Sean gropes up, stretching, trying to get that extra half-
inch reach... he gets it.

SEAN (CONT'D)
It's not right to bring other
people into that world.

LUKAS (V.O.)
(pause)
Do you still love her?

SEAN
Not in the way you're asking.
She's family. Least as close as it
gets for someone like me.

LUKAS (V.O.)
What about your parents?

SEAN
Couldn't say. My dad, well... he
was a son-of-a-bitch. No other way
to say it.

Sean reaches for another hand hold. Pulls up.

SEAN (CONT'D)
One of those men who sit in a room
and you can just feel it.
(pause)
That sense of unease. Like any
moment, he might break loose and do
something terrible.
(grunts, pushing up)
For all I know, he's dead.
(MORE)



D.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Be a' line of people happy to do it. But I haven't talked to him in years.

(pause)

And my mom... she was so scared of my ol' man, she left town without me when I was a baby. Didn't wanna give him a reason to follow.

Beat.

LUKAS

That may be the worst story I've ever heard.

SEAN

Ahh, I've got plenty worse.

(grabs a rock cornice)

But I will say... Ana, her father are the only two people I can say with all certainty -- truly gave a shit about me.

EXT. MOUNTAIN FACE - CONTINUOUS

The entire crew is tired, but Ana pushes forward. UP a rocky, steep incline. Grinder moves next to Ana.

GRINDER

So... that guy back there that took one in the gut -- that was your boyfriend?

Ana loses her footing and Grinder puts his hand on her BUTT. She SHOVES his hand away. Keeps moving.

GRINDER (CONT'D)

Well? He your boyfriend or not?

ANA

Fiance.

GRINDER

Hmmm, that's a tough one. I don't think he's gonna make it.

(off her silence)

Look, I know it sucks, but on the plus side -- your dance card's about to be wide open.

ANA

Do me a favor. Fuck off.

GRINDER

Hey, I'm trying to be nice to you.
(smiles)
Was thinking maybe you and me could
be friends.

ANA

Why?

GRINDER

Why not -- you think you're too
good for me or something?

ANA

I think we probably both do.
(turns, shouts)
Devlin.

Ana STOPS abruptly. Lets Devlin catch up.

ANA (CONT'D)

Curb your dog.

GRINDER

(gets in her face)
What'd you say, bitch?

Devlin shoves him back. Motions to Cujo who -- GRABS Grinder
and pulls him all the way back. He then turns back to Ana...

DEVLIN

Shall we?

Everyone continues moving. Devlin and Ana stay out in front.

ANA

This a real crack unit you got.

DEVLIN

May be a little rough around the
edges. But they deserve to be.

ANA

Meaning what?

DEVLIN

Meaning one Soldier in nine exits
for mental disorder. One in three
suffer PTSD. Hell, every 65
minutes a vet commits suicide.

(pause)

My crew's given everything for
country. They deserve to have
their idiosyncracies forgiven.

ANA

And you?

DEVLIN

My scars are more physical than mental. 30% of my body burned, a rod in both legs...

(pause)

Hell, I've even got a metal head.

He takes his rifle and taps the back of his head. *Thump.*

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

Titanium actually. Roadside IED took the back of my skull off.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

Sean is almost to the top, but no longer moving. Above the wall mushrooms into an OUTWARD FLANGE. No safe way to make the curling lip. Only bad options. *Sean picks one.*

He faces out, palms against the rockshelf above. Maintaining constant pressure between feet and hands, he eases out.

One hand after the other. As the angle of his body increases, the more force required to stay wedged.

He finds the FLANGE lip, fingers it and in a completely insane move -- KICKS off, swinging out and -- TUCK ROLLS! Flipping his legs UP and OVER the flange. EXCEPT now --

-- only the lower half of his body is safely on the ledge. He fights and slithers back on his stomach -- void of any finesse -- a desperate animal battling gravity, until --

-- he finally pulls his entire body to safety.

He lays there, panting. Mouth ajar. There, in front of him, is the thirty feet wide crevice that Lukas described.

EXT. CREVICE, MOUNTAIN - LATER

Sean makes his way in. Walls of rock and blue ice rising on both sides. At some point, walls connect, forming a TUNNEL.

Water has SEEPED down along the walls and FROZEN. Forming a hypnotic, rippled pattern that's stunning to look at.

He exits the tunnel, sees the cave structure and heads...



Searching for Equipment

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

... inside. There against the wall are *four frozen bodies*. Huddled. Skin bone-white. Snow covering from the waist down makes them resemble statues, partially carved out of marble.

Sean takes a reverent beat. Then begins -- rifling through their gear. Setting anything of value off to the side.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Ana and Devlin are still out in front.

ANA

So where'd it come from?

DEVLIN

The money? Serbian military compound, that part was true.

(off her confusion)

There's an enormous stream of money pumped into Iraq, Afghanistan. A lot of it started going missing, so the U.S. started cloaking the cash as biohazard and sending it through other countries to disperse risk.

(pause)

Hard to track. Unless you know where to look.

Ana gets her head around this. Looks at Devlin with disgust.

ANA

So this is some sorta compensatory payback for you and your men?

DEVLIN

More like payment overdue.

(pause)

Wars aren't about WMD's, spreading democracy or any party line bullshit. It's about money. Always has been.

ANA

I don't believe that.

DEVLIN

How can you not? We talk about fostering peace in the middle east, then flood the region with weapons.

(pause)

(MORE)

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

1.3 Billion worth to Egypt, 6.8 to Saudi Arabia, 11 to Qatar, 4.2 to Kuwait. 3 billion a year to Israel.

(pause)

We WANT war. Need war. It's the most lucrative business on the planet.

(pause)

All we're doing is taking our cut.

EXT. CAVE, MOUNTAIN - LATER

Sean is loaded with gear. He pulls out the small baby blanket. Walks up to... Meng's wife.

Her jet black hair matted to her face. Sean tries to move it away, but it breaks in his hand.

He digs away at the snow. Finds her hands folded in her lap. In prayer. *He wraps the blanket around them.*

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DUSK

Sean stands on the edge of the cliff again. Beset with snow flurries. He looks out at the vista before him.

SEAN
(into com)
Lukas?

LUKAS (V.O.)
Yeah, I'm here.

SEAN
What's next?

LUKAS (V.O.)
Small path down the east side.
(pause)

◆ You've gotta go fast though. We're losing light.

EXT. SNOWY PLATEAU - DUSK

The sun goes down red and inflamed as Ana comes to a stop. Woods on one side. A curving mountain face on the other.

ANA
(to Devlin)
We have to stop.



Meng's Wife

DEVLIN

Not yet.

ANA

The terrain is too intense up ahead. Steep drops and steeper climbs. If we set up here, we've got cover from the storm.

Ana motions. The clouds above are dark and menacing. A storm moving in from the North.

RODRIGUEZ

Yeah, I'm beat. I say we set up here and hit it hard tomorrow.

ANA

(off Devlin's pause)
Gonna be kinda hard to spend all that money after you die screaming from a thousand foot fall.

Devlin smirks, then looks at his crew.

UNITAS

I for one, vote against death or paralysis.

AXEL

This is as good a place as any.

DEVLIN

Alright. Dig in.

EXT. SNOWY PLATEAU - LATER

Devlin and his men set up tents against the mountain face. Ana walks to Devlin who sits on a fallen log.

ANA

◆ I need to go to the bathroom.

DEVLIN

Rodriguez, go with her.

Ana and Rodriguez head away. Grinder watches them go.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

As Ana makes her way slowly into the woods. Rodriguez stops.

RODRIGUEZ
 Go too far and I start spraying
 bullets, feel me?

We stay with Rodriguez as Ana walks away.

After a few moments... Grinder taps Rodriguez on the
 shoulder.

GRINDER
 I got this, chica.
 (off her look)
 What can I say, I like to watch.

RODRIGUEZ
 You got issues.

Rodriguez shakes her head and heads away. Once she's out of
 sight, Grinder turns and slinks slowly into the woods.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

The sun is behind the horizon. A waning gibbous moon the
 only light as Sean jogs along a path. Face flush with sweat.

LUKAS (V.O.)
 I can't see shit. Where're you at?

SEAN
 Almost to the southern ridge.

LUKAS (V.O.)
 Okay, one more climb and then you
 better call it for the night.

Sean increases his pace.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Lukas stares at the Nav-fire TRACKING CHIP in his hand.
 Turning it in his fingers.

INTERCUT

LUKAS
 Hey. Can I ask you a question?

SEAN
 (labored breath)
 Sure.

LUKAS
Why'd you leave? Marsoc.

SEAN
I could no longer be effective.

LUKAS
The hell's that mean?

Long beat. Then...

SEAN
Means it's one thing to have the strength to do what's necessary. Another to live with it.

Lukas ponders this. Could never imagine having to do what Sean does. Beat.

LUKAS
I won't pretend to understand, but if you ask me - the kind of man who struggles with ramifications of hard decisions is exactly who I want making them.

SEAN
I don't wanna make them. Get it?

LUKAS
Yeah, I get it.
(pause)
Yet here you are -- doing it again. Risking your life to save Ana's.

Sean goes silent. *Lukas' words having an impact.*

He lunges up a steep incline. But suddenly stops at -- giant FROZEN WATERFALL. Magnificent. Nine hundred feet high.

SEAN
♦ I'm on the S.W. ridge.

LUKAS
Should be vertical rise right in front of you. Free climb up and set camp.

SEAN
I can't.

LUKAS
You could climb that in your sleep. It's a low grade rise.

SEAN

Yeah, it was. Now it's a frozen waterfall.

Lots of boulders and broken stone shoulders scattered around.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Must have been a rock slide. It diverted part of the river.

(pause)

I need another way around.

LUKAS

There is no other way. Not without a major backtrack.

(quickly)

I'd say wait till morning, but temperature's dropped and that ice is as stable as it's gonna get. You gotta hit it now.

Sean looks up at the water fall. Squints. Trying to find a path up, but -- it's too DARK. Nearly pitch black now.

SEAN

I can't. Visibility's almost zero. I've got no way to judge density. I axe the wrong spot and that's it.

Silence. Nothing from Lukas. Then...

LUKAS (V.O.)

Got an idea. Saw a couple guys do this on frozen waterfall outside of Hokkaido, Japan. 'Course they were tethered and had a safety--

SEAN

What? Saw them do what?!

LUKAS

Right, sorry. Get your flares out.

(Sean does)

Wedge them in deep, far as you can. Your strike spots will show opaque.

Sean strikes the tops and they BLAZE. Then JAMS three of them deep into a large fold of ice. The result transfixing:

The waterfall now GLOWS like a giant LED Fiber-Optic light. Brilliant red pulses under the translucent ice.

The thicker spots more opaque. While the thinner parts are nearly see through. *Sean now has his map up.*



Frozen Waterfall Climb

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Ana is almost finished, when she hears something behind her. She YANKS up her pants to see -- Grinder. *Watching her.*

ANA

Get the fuck--

She bites off any remaining words as -- a sliver of moonlight hits the combat KNIFE in his hand.

GRINDER

Got a great ass, you know that?

(moves closer)

Ass does something to a man. Makes him crazy, gets him all stirred up.

He moves closer. Looks at her with baleful, distorted eyes.

GRINDER (CONT'D)

I haven't seen a female naked in three years. Did a straight run in Afghanistan, two in Iraq. All the women there got those beekeeper outfits. Man can't even catch glimpse of a leg for christsakes.

Grinder is within ten feet now. Ana takes a step back and -- slowly DIGS her foot into the snow -- *all the way down.*

ANA

What do you want?

GRINDER

Want you to give a lil' something back to your country.

Grinder smiles, leans forward to grab Ana when -- she KICKS! Launches a spray of dirt and snow into Grinder's face. Blinding him and giving her the tiniest of windows to -- RUN.

GRINDER (CONT'D)

BITCH!

Ana sprints. Frosted branches lashing. She hazards a look back to see -- Grinder just behind. His crazed face flicking on and off in the sporadic moonlight.

She spots the edge of the woods -- desperate to get back to camp. Only just as she's about to make it to the clearing --

-- she's GRABBED! She SCREAMS out reflexively, only it's -- Devlin. He steps between her and Grinder who skids to a stop. Devlin SHOVES Ana away.

DEVLIN
Get back to camp. GO!

Ana scurries off. Her ragged, frozen breath trailing as --
Devlin turns on Grinder...

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
Couldn't hold it together.

Devlin JAMS a fist into his gut -- sends Grinder down.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
When you get your head straight --
come back to camp. You can't do
that -- keep walking.

EXT. ICE FALLS - NIGHT

Sean's newly acquired ICE AXE -- SLAMS into the frozen
waterfall. New crampons (spiked metal strapped to bottom of
boot) -- BITE into the ice as he gets in rhythm.

He STRIKES his two FLARES -- JAMS them into the ice, lighting
the last fifty feet and CREST in a womb-like glow.

He drives the axe in again, only -- CRACK -- an ENTIRE side
section of the waterfall -- SEVERS.

Sean is forced to give up the axe impaled in it. His entire
weight now on *the tiny tip* of the remaining axe as the giant
SHEET of ice SMASHES at the bottom.

Sean DRIVES his tac-knife into the ice. Allowing him to
swing the remaining Axe and -- *barely make it to the top.*

EXT. PLATUEA - NIGHT

Sean has dug himself a snow cave. Essentially a hole with a
shelf to sit/sleep on. Cold air drops and the warm air your
body generates settles into the top shelf.

He squeezes inside the snow cave. Looks at the sky. Seeded
with bright, cold, indifferent stars. Taps his com device.

SEAN
Hey. How you feeling?

EXT. CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

Lukas has pulled himself under an rocky overhang. Covered in
a thermal sleeping bag. Wind whips and beats around him.

LUKAS
Never better.

Lukas winces. Lets out a GASP.

SEAN
You okay?

LUKAS
Yeah, just a radiating pain.

SEAN
Rise in heart rate, hard breathing?

LUKAS
I don't think so. Mostly just feel weak.

SEAN
(relaxes slightly)
Good. Sepsis hasn't kicked in yet.
That buys time.
(pause)
How long you figure till sunrise?

LUKAS
Five hours. You should get some sleep.

SEAN
Can't risk it. Soon as there's passable light I need to move.
(pause)
Ana's only alive as long as Devlin needs those cases.

Sean, while just being pragmatic, realizes how that last sentence hits Lukas. Knows he needs to keep his spirits up.

SEAN (CONT'D)
♦ Just hang in there. I'm gonna get her back.

Beat.

LUKAS
I know.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Ana gets into her sleeping bag. Starts to zip it up when...

... Devlin ducks inside the tent.

Ana JUMPS, moves back.

DEVLIN
Relax. Me sleeping here keeps
Grinder in check.
(moves around)
Also helps in case you get any
funny ideas about leaving.

Devlin throws down his sleeping bag next to her. Gets in.

He tries to break the tension...

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
Want me to tell you a bed time
story?

ANA
Tell about the time you decided
completely give into greed.

DEVLIN
That's easy. Because I remember
exactly when.

Devlin turns to her. She's struck a nerve.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
My last tour, when my squad took
refuge in a dry riverbed we'd been
lead to by locals. Locals from the
village my men and I rebuilt a
school for. *Only it was an ambush.*

Beat.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
I watched every man in my unit get
slaughtered before I got out.
(pause)
And for the next two years saw
billions go toward buying the
hearts and minds of the very same
people that killed my men.
(pause)
Just like the money in those cases.
Except that's one delivery that
ain't gonna happen.

Devlin leans back. Beat.

ANA

"No matter what situation I am in. I will never do anything for pleasure, profit or personal safety which will disgrace my uniform, my unit, or my Country."

DEVLIN

Excuse me?

ANA

A *soliders'* code. My father taught me when I was five. He promised no matter what atrocities he saw, no matter what sins occurred around him, he'd never lose sight of the reason he was fighting... Me. And every child like me.

(pause)

So tell your story to someone else. I know better...

Ana and Devlin's eyes meet in a head-on collision.

ANA (CONT'D)

I'm the daughter of a real soldier.

Devlin's jowls protrude.

DEVLIN

Story time's over. Go to sleep.

Ana turns away. Pulls the sleeping bag under her chin.

INT. SNOW CAVE - PRE-DAWN

The sun is still hidden behind the horizon. Sean is in the exact same position. *Eyes wide open*. He holds a hand out of the cave -- to discern current visibility.

Good enough. Sean grabs his gear and lunges forward. His clothing stiff with a brittle crust of ice.

It showers off him as he breaks into a sprint.

INT. TENT - DAWN

The just-rising sun streams in through the tent. Pours in soft suffusion, the color of good scotch.

It washes over Ana's face. Wakes her. She turns. Sees Devlin is still asleep. Then slowly, inches her way out.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Ana looks around the base camp. No sign of anyone. Starts to sprint away when -- she turns into the barrel of a GUN. Grinder zips up his pants from his morning piss. Smiles.

GRINDER

Morning sunshine. Dream about me?

Ana spins the other way, but Devlin is out of the tent. He shoots her a look, then...

DEVLIN

Everyone up. We roll out in five.

Devlin notices a SPECK of LIGHT blinking on the ice-covered rock face. Sees the source. A reflection in the distance.

Devlin grabs tac-binoculars, locates the source. The sun is reflecting off -- *the lenses of Lukas' binoculars.*

Devlin then TRACES Lukas' line of sight.

LENS VIEW: Across the snow covered mountain peaks to find...

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

Gotta be shitting me.

EXT. WOODS - DAWN

... Sean on the move. Less than a mile away. Running like a bull. Condensed vapor streaming from his mouth and nostrils. Lukas' voice in his ear...

LUKAS (V.O.)

Hundred meters north. You'll hit a steep face. Make it over and...

SEAN

Lukas?

LUKAS (V.O.)

Sorry, chest feels tight.

Sean looks worried. Knows Lukas doesn't have much time left.

LUKAS (V.O.)

There's a giant GULLY that runs through there, can't miss it.

(coughs)

It's the safest route. They've gotta cross there and you'll be right on top of them.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAWN

Ana leads the group down the mountain. Pauses as Cujo breaks off -- goes his own way. Jogging out of view.

ANA
Where's he going?

DEVLIN
Hunting.

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAWN

Three MARINES finish loading up a UH-1Y VENOM helicopter...

>> Two of them, a TALL MARINE and a STOCKY MARINE -- are both loaded up in a full combat gear

>> The third is a MEDIC who carries a "Unit One" pack (backpack-style bags containing med equipment) with red cross patches at the top.

TALL MARINE
How's the flight line to that tracker location?

STOCKY MARINE
Storm's not making it easy. Gonna be touch and go.
(pause)
I suggest everyone strap in.

TALL MARINE
Roger that. Let's saddle up.

The rescue squad hops in. Within seconds -- the rotors start to strobe.

EXT. WOODS - DAWN

Ana leads the crew through a crop of thin woods. Devlin consults his GPS tracker.

The retina display shows the final two cases are NEAR.

DEVLIN
Five kilometers. Almost there.
Pick it up.

They pick up their pace, make it out of the woods and up to -- a large FROZEN LAKE with small rivers connecting on each side. *The lake is completely covered with snow.*

Ana steps on top. Brushes away the snow to get a look at the ice below. Then tests it. Pulls back.

ANA

We go around. I don't trust this ice.

Devlin surveys the area. Mountain rings the lake on both sides. The only way is across or back.

DEVLIN

Hold up, how much time is that going to add?

ANA

Few hours, but --

DEVLIN

Axel, punch a hole in that ice.

Before Ana can protest -- Axel FIRES off several rounds. BLOWING small halos in the frozen lake.

ANA

STOP!

The gun fire ECHOES. Off to the west comes a RUMBLING. Like a giant wing beating the air as -- snow BREAKS OFF the covered cliffs. But stops. Thankfully -- *no avalanche.*

ANA (CONT'D)

What'd I tell you about the stability of these caps?

RODRIGUEZ

(shoots Axel a look)
You lucky *pendejo*.

Devlin checks the hole. Puts his fingers inside to check the thickness of the ice.

DEVLIN

That ice is four inches thick. I played hockey for fifteen years -- it's plenty. We go across.

ANA

You haven't seen the weather swings here. This lake's bound to be riddled with double ice.

UNITAS

Double ice? The hell are you talking about?

ANA

Two layers of ice with water between. Water levels rise after a storm, but the shore ice is locked, so the ice cracks. Water oozes up.

GRINDER

Bitch is totally lying.

Ana shoots him a look, but he flicks his tongue at her.

UNITAS

Yeah, no offense sweetheart, but that does sound like horse shit.

DEVLIN

We go across.

Devlin motions with his rifle. Everyone moves out. Ana frowns, reluctantly steps onto the ice.

ANA

Spread out and diffuse the weight.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - MORNING

Sean makes his way down another incline. Moving quickly now.

LUKAS

I've still got a visual on you.
You're making great...

Sean hears COUGHING through his ear piece. Then GASPING.

SEAN

You need to lay down. Keep still.

LUKAS

Chest feels tight, but... I'm okay.

Sean looks extremely WORRIED. Tries to stay positive.

SEAN

Hang tight. Almost there.

EXT. FROZEN LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Everyone is spread out. Moving cautiously across the lake. Ana stays back a bit. Leery of the ice. Stops suddenly.

She senses something. Then -- a loud CRACK. Everyone turns toward the source. Directly under Grinder's feet as --



Grinder's Justice

GRINDER

What the... ?

-- Grinder FALLS THROUGH. Disappears under the ice.

DEVLIN

Everyone move -- find him!

They form a circle around the jagged hole. He's disappeared from view. Pulled under the ice.

RODRIGUEZ

Current moved him. I got nothing!

They start brushing away snow to find him. As they frantically search -- Ana sees something pass under a footprint cleared path in the snow.

Coming toward her. She clears a patch in front of her to see -- Grinder. Her would-be rapist. Under the ice. Eyes open.

SCREAMING up at her. Face like a twisted jack-a-lantern.

For a split second, she considers yelling to the rest of the group. But instead, looks back down and slowly --

-- COVERS the clear patch... *and Grinder's face...* with snow.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - MORNING

Lukas is eyeing the terrain through binoculars. He leans toward his walkie comm, excitedly...

LUKAS

Sean, I've got a shortcut--
(winces, catches breath)
Should make up enough time to put
you right on them.

EXT. MOUNTAIN FACE - CONTINUOUS

Sean crests a small peak stops.

SEAN

Okay, slow down. Tell me.

INTERCUT

LUKAS

Hundred yards North West.

Sean sees the next mountain peak to be crossed and there's -- a CRACK. An enormous crack. He pulls out binoculars...

BINOCULAR VIEW: The width of the crack is uneven, ranging from eight inches to six feet. The good news is -- *it goes all the way through to the other side.*

Sean can tunnel the mountain instead of having to scale it.

LUKAS (CONT'D)

How's your chimney technique?

SEAN

Guess we're about to find out.

LUKAS

Walkies won't work in there, so we'll be out of communication for a while. Just do me a favor. Hurry.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Ana leads the crew. Up ahead, an enormous gully. Everyone silent. Processing Grinder's death. Until finally...

UNITAS

Well, on the bright side, our share just got a little bigger.

RODRIGUEZ

No manches. Have respect for the dead, *cabron.*

UNITAS

You want me to go fetal and cry? Hell, I only knew the dude for a couple months.

(pause)

Makes you feel better, I'll have a margarita for him when I'm knee deep in sand and tan skin honeys.

Axel, always a stranger to subtlety, chimes in...

AXEL

Fuck 'em. He was damaged goods any way. World's a better place.

UNITAS

My man Axel doesn't say much. But when he does, he speaks the truth.

Ana doesn't say a word. Keeps moving forward.

INT. THE CRACK - LATER

Minimal light in the crevice. The crack zigzags up, blocking out the sun as -- Sean chimney climbs. Barely two inches of clearance between chest and rock. *Like being buried alive.*

He slips, but quickly regains leverage and looks down. The crevice in this section has veered over OPEN SPACE.

It OPENS dramatically underneath him -- a clear shot STRAIGHT DOWN -- 1,200 feet to the bottom.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - LATER

Lukas has binoculars to his face. Waiting for Sean to emerge. He jerks. Adjusts his field of vision to see...

LENS VIEW: ... Cujo heading right for Sean. A locked and loaded M16 carbine in his hands.

Lukas scrambles for his head set -- puts it back in.

LUKAS

Sean! Can you hear me?

STATIC. SILENCE. STATIC.

LUKAS (CONT'D)

The mute's heading your way. He's almost on you. SEAN!

No answer. No way to warn Sean. Lukas pounds the ground.

INT. THE CRACK - CONTINUOUS

As the crack narrows, Sean spots the exit, but it's fifty feet higher. As he starts to head up...

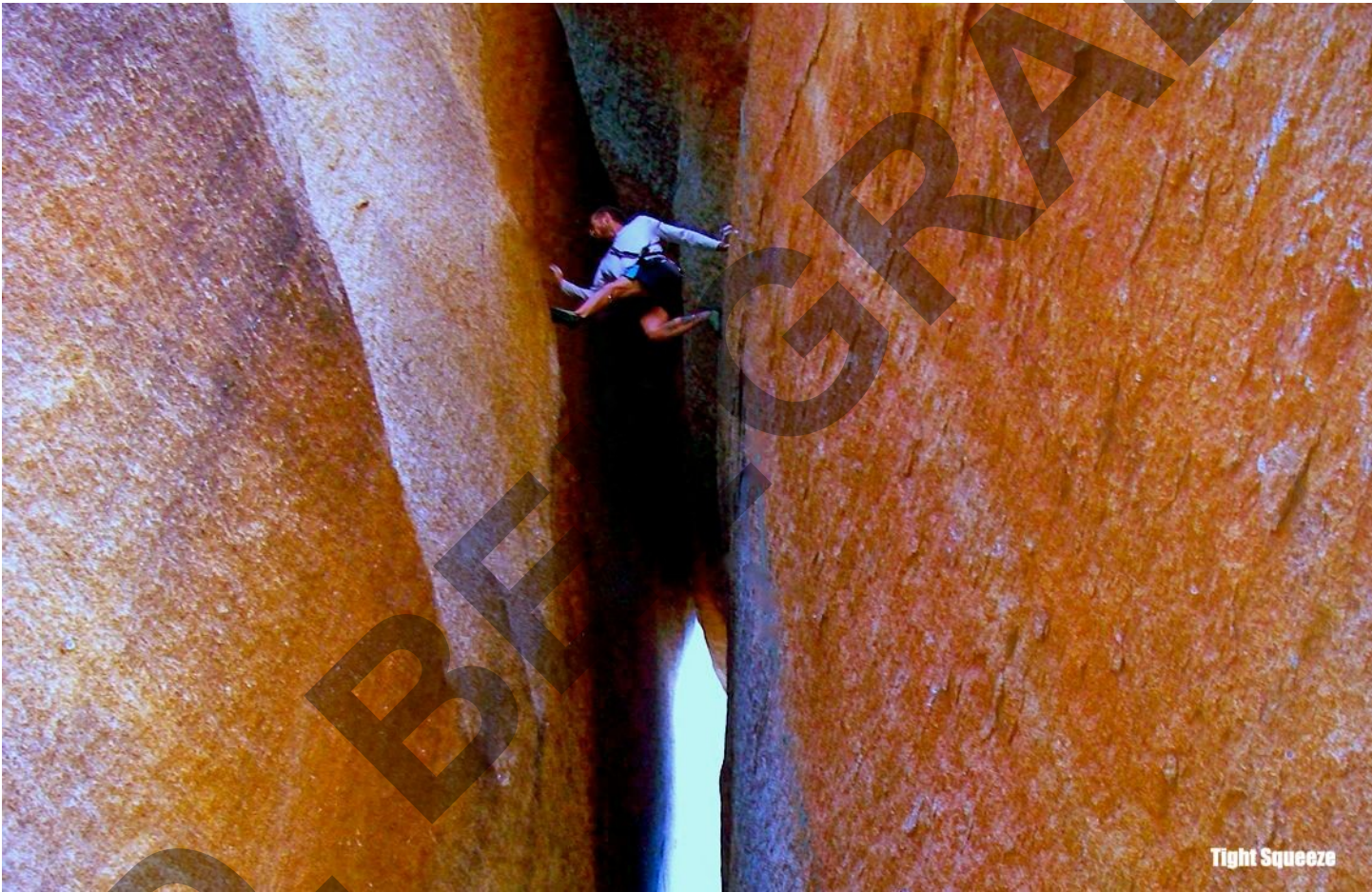
... a bit of dirt floats down and he sees -- the barrel of Cujo's M16. And then... a hail of gunfire.

As he LUNGES sideways, the crack WIDENS! Because he's been bracing, Sean FALLS out of control. Down the crevice until finally CATCHING himself. Bracing again.

He watches his backpack *with all his equipment* -- take the 1,200 foot plunge. Having tumbled from his grasp.

One more foot and he'd have soared to his death.

But the threat is still not over. Cujo continues to fire. Walls detonate and chunks of heavy ROCK pinball down.



Tight Squeeze

Sean lunges left -- avoids. Lunges right -- takes a glancing blow off his shoulder. He can't do this much longer.

At the bottom of the crevice, he finds a LIP. The underside is rocky with holds. He starts hand crawling across. Like a monkey bar. Legs dangling over the abyss.

In seconds he reaches the next rock face. *His path up.* He climbs. Fast. Just before he makes it to the top, he spots a row of six inch long icicles.

He SNAPS one off.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Cujo, unable to verify Sean's death, PUMPS rounds into the crevice, until he sees -- a shadow. He SPINS, but Sean is on him. He grabs the M16 with one hand and --

-- DRIVES the icicle under Cujo's collar bone with the other.

Blood fountains, but Cujo HEAD BUTS Sean and -- DRIVES him backward. They SLAM together -- SPIN -- out of control before finally -- dropping completely off the far side!

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - CONTINUOUS

The mountain here is a steep 90-degree incline. The two men land hard. Cujo on top of Sean -- reining blows as they ROCKET down the icy slope like some horrific sled.

Sean manages to catch one of Cujo's punches and use the momentum to FLIP him. Sean finally on top, but the two men now -- *slide down even faster.*

Sean jams Cujo's face into the ice. The sharp ice sheering flesh and we hear Cujo's voice for the very first time as he CRIES out in pain.

But Sean lets up as, directly ahead -- the slope ends in a SHARP DROP.

Sean tries to BAIL, but Cujo grabs his leg -- pulling them both OVER THE LEDGE. Sean CLAWS the lip and strains to hang on as Cujo dangles off his leg.

Cujo, still holding the M16, swings the gun up -- fingers the trigger but -- realizes he can't shoot. He shoots, he dies.

Instead he drops the gun and tries to grab Sean with both hands. Except -- this is what Sean was waiting for as he...

... DRIVES the heel of his boot into Cujo's face.

Immediately separating the two men.

Cujo's eyes widen in horror as he's suddenly in free fall. He drops 200 feet before SLAMMING into angled rock, pin-wheeling down another 300 feet.

Sean pulls back onto the cliff. Stares at his hands -- covered in BLOOD. But that doesn't matter now.

The only thing that matters now -- is Ana.

He grabs fists of snow, washes the blood off and heads away.

EXT. GULLY - DAY

Ana leads the crew through the gully. Rodriguez to Devlin...

RODRIGUEZ
How we lookin'?

Devlin consults the tracking device. Shows Ana.

DEVLIN
Close. Less than a kilometer
between the last two cases.

Ana takes the device. Looks up for visual confirmation. Ahead, the gully splits -- *going around either side.*

ANA
One case, half a kilometer West.
The other a kilometer East.
(pause)
Border's North about five
kilometers.

DEVLIN
Sooner we hit that border the
better.

Devlin thinks, then takes the tracker and taps the screen.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
Got a good bead on this location?
(off her nod)
We split up. Two teams.

Devlin THROWS the tracker to Axel.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

Unitas and Axel. You take the West case. Rodriguez, myself and our guide here will get the East one.

(nods)

Each grab a case, meet back here, then head for the nearest town and get warm.

UNITAS

Amen to that.

DEVLIN

Keep walkies on. Run into any trouble, give a holler.

As the two teams split and head in opposite directions, we ZOOM up -- a hundred feet to a outcrop of rocks where...

Sean watches the whole thing. He stares at Ana. Heart welling. It's all he can do not to run to her. Instead...

SEAN

(into com)

Lukas.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - CONTINUOUS

Lukas looks bad. He's balling up his fist, trying to stabilize his palsied hand.

INTERCUT

LUKAS

My hand... won't stop shaking.

SEAN

Concentrate on your breathing. You can do this.

LUKAS

Just kinda freaking out.

SEAN

Listen to me. I found her.

LUKAS

You found Ana?

There's renewed energy and hope in Lukas' voice.

SEAN

Got a bead on 'em right now.

LUKAS
What's going on? Tell me.

SEAN
They're splitting up. Each going for a case. Ana, Devlin and Rodriguez went one way, Axel and the mouthy one went the other.

LUKAS
This is good. Makes it easier for you, right? You can take Devlin and Rodriguez out and save Ana.

SEAN
Take them out, you mean *kill*.

LUKAS
That is what you do.

Beat.

SEAN
I'm going after the other team first.

LUKAS
What?!
(quickly)
No, no -- you have to save Ana. That's the only thing that matters--

SEAN
Devlin and Rodriguez are both armed. Ana could get hurt or killed. Tactically it makes no sense. Smarter move is to get something to barter with.

LUKAS
The other case.

SEAN
I get the other case, then make a deal... a peaceful deal. It's the smarter move.

Lukas makes fists of his eyes. Fearful of his life, but more fearful for Ana's. He wants her safe.

Right now.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You gotta trust me.

Lukas nods. Trying to convince himself that everything's going to be okay.

He has to trust Sean.

LUKAS

Hey, we all make it out of here...
how'd you like to be part of the
wedding?

Sean pauses. Stunned. Lukas inviting him to the wedding is *the ultimate olive branch*.

LUKAS (CONT'D)

Be an usher or something. Just be
part of it.

(off Sean's silence)

Get drunk, hit on a bridesmaid. It
would mean a lot to Ana. And me.

SEAN

I gotta wear a tux?

LUKAS

And a cummerbund.

Beat. Sean smiles. Overwhelmed at the invitation to continue to be part of their lives.

SEAN

Yeah... I'd love to come.

LUKAS

Good. Go get that other case.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - MORNING

Axel and Unitas follow the tracker. They come to a cliff and look down to see -- a sublevel -- a wide rocky ledge a few hundred feet down where...

... *the CASE sits*. Covered in snow.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - MORNING

Ana leads Devlin and Rodriguez up a steep incline.

ANA

(to Rodriguez)

Suppose you have a good rationale
for stealing this money too?

Rodriguez smirks, looks at Devlin. He motions for her to say whatever she wants.

RODRIGUEZ

Yeah, I got a good rationale -- ME.
Me and mine.

(chuckles)

The hell else I'm supposed to do
now that I'm out? Skills I've got
ain't good for nothin' else. PTSD
so bad I can't sleep at nights.

She scoffs.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

If the choice is between this or go
back to the barrio and get knocked
up -- there ain't no choice.

ANA

There's always a choice.

RODRIGUEZ

Whatever Snow White. Just get us
to our money.

EXT. MOUNTAIN FACE - MORNING

Axel and Unitas stand on the edge of the lower rocky ledge.
They have tethered the case between the two of them for the
long climb back up. At the same time...

EXT. CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

... Lukas stares through binoculars at Unitas and Axel.
Talks into his comm...

LUKAS

I see them. I've also got a visual
of the case.

SEAN (V.O.)

What's the best route?

LUKAS

Case is on a plateau. It's equal
distance from the top and base.

SEAN (V.O.)

Okay, so w--

Crackle. Crackle. Lukas smacks his walkie.

LUKAS

They went high to repel down, but from where you are -- if you free climb up from the bottom--

SEAN (V.O.)

Wha... I can't hea... you...

Crackle. Lukas looks at his walkie -- the LED display that shows battery strength has -- one blinking bar left.

SEAN (V.O.)

... from the bottom, right?

LUKAS

Yes, that's the shorter route for you. You can make up time and --
(more static)
Did you get that?

Crackle, then... nothing. Lukas looks at his walkie.

It's dead. He's about to throw it down in frustration, but --
-- he seizes. Lurches.

A SPASM OF PAIN runs through him as he leans over and coughs up a *rope of blood.*

EXT. PLATEAU - LATER

Unitas and Axel have the CASE tethered between them. Off their ascension, we... PULL BACK... to see the entire mountain face.

There, coming up from the bottom is -- Sean. Using the curvature of the mountain to hide from sight as he quickly... *moves up to catch them.*

EXT. MOUNTAIN FACE - MORNING

Unitas and Axel are nearly to the top. As they pull up, the tethered case rises between them.

UNITAS

Keep it moving. I want out of this shithole.

AXEL

Stop talking. For once, just shut--

Unitas turns -- all he sees is a silhouette -- AIRBORNE.

Sean -- no safety lines -- LANDS on top of him.

They CRASH together. Bodies twisting, fists slamming --
-- nearly indiscernible as they dangle by Unitas' rope.

Unitas tries to pry Sean off, which would send him to his death. He can't get the leverage he needs, but manages to pull Sean into a choke-hold.

Sean counters -- DRIVES his head into Unitas' FACE which allows him to SPIN back and leg scissor around Unitas' torso.

Sean lands an elbow to the jaw -- crushes molars. Another shot under Unitas' eye and cheekbone caves like wet clay.

He then SLAMS Unitas' head into stone...

ONCE: stunning. TWICE: unconscious. The THIRD and final time: his head strikes with such tremendous force that --

-- Unitas is killed instantly. Only --

-- Axel has retrieved his gun. Forcing Sean to use Unitas as a shield. BAM! Unitas' back erupts.

Sean gets horizontal -- RUNS Unitas' corpse toward Axel like a battering ram and --

-- SLAMS into him!

Sean leaps from one body to the next. CLAWING Axel, pulling him away from the mountain and sending them both SPINNING.

Axel gets off a final gunshot -- BAM! Sean takes a flesh wound to the shoulder, but redirects Axel into an ARM-BAR -- causing him to drop the gun.

Weaponless, the two men begin a flat-out, close-quarter death match. Raining blows and counter blows until finally --

-- their hands are locked onto each other's throats.

Squeezing. A race to stay conscious. Their very lives at stake until -- *Sean holds dead weight.*

Axel's arms drop and Sean gasps, regains his breath.

He YANKS the walkie from Axel's belt. YANKS the *second* walkie from Unitas before --

-- slowly beginning the climb up.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Ana leads Devlin and Rodriguez up a thin mountain pass. As they round a bend they see --

-- a CITY in the near distance.

DEVLIN
(to Ana)
How far?

ANA
Five kilometers. An hours hike.

DEVLIN
Good.

They round one more bend and the path opens up to a --
-- STEEP incline. There, half buried in the snow, is the final CASE.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
There it is. Rodriguez, go get it.

Rodriguez runs up the incline. Gets behind the case and -- shoves it down.

As it hits flat land -- she pulls it next to the other cases.

RODRIGUEZ
What's the game plan? We can't go lugging these around the city.

Devlin looks out at the small city below. Then turns, looks at the CASES.

DEVLIN
We'll stash them here, head into town and lay low until I arrange a new "out."

Devlin motions...

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
Get them under snow.

Rodriguez nods, starts covering the cases with SNOW.

RODRIGUEZ
Let's hope no tourists stumble on these bad boys while we're gone, huh?



Devlin's Plan

DEVLIN
Don't worry. You'll be here
watching over them.

Rodriguez squints.

REALIZATION washes across her face.

RODRIGUEZ
(to herself)
Shit.

She JERKS for her gun, but before she can turn around -- BAM!
Devlin donates the front of her skull to the mountain.

Ana staggers, face knotted in horror as Devlin turns.

A tendril of smoke curling around the barrel of his gun.

ANA
Why... ?

Beat.

DEVLIN
Said it yourself, my crew's
damaged. They aren't capable of
integrating back into society.
(pause)
Money would only exacerbate the
problem. They'd end up afoul of
the law and who's the first person
they'd give up?
(pause)
Right now I'm a ghost. That's how
I plan to stay.

ANA
And Axel and Unitas?

DEVLIN
Unitas would be the first to talk
and Axel, when off his meds, is
borderline psychopathic.

ANA
And me?

DEVLIN
I admit, your death will sting.
But as William Sherman once said,
"War is cruelty. The crueler it
is, the sooner it will be over."

With this, Devlin levels his gun at Ana's head. Only -- Ana, to his surprise, stares into his eyes.

Unwavering.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
You should look away.

ANA
No. You earn this one.

His face splits in two with a smile.

DEVLIN
My kinda girl.

He cocks the gun, fingers the trigger.

He's just about to PULL when -- a voice booms from his walkie...

SEAN (V.O.)
Devlin.

He squints. Extracts his finger from the trigger.

ANA
(stunned)
Sean?

Devlin exhales. Lowers his gun.

DEVLIN
The scalpel. Can't say I'm surprised.
(pause)
Assume you ran into Cujo.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Sean is moving quickly. Barrelling forward.

INTERCUT

SEAN
Yeah. He didn't make it. Neither did Unitas or Axel.

DEVLIN
You MARSOC boys never disappoint--

SEAN
I've got your money.

Long beat.

DEVLIN

So this is the part where we strike
a bargain.

SEAN

Ana for the money. Real simple.
(quickly)
Keep going in the direction you're
going. I'll find you.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Sean slows down and does something odd.

He takes out the two walkies that he took from Unitas and
Axel and then...

... synchronizes them to a DIFFERENT channel.

EXT. CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

Lukas is motionless. Barely hanging on now. The pain is
simply overwhelming. Just as he's about to give up anything
that resembles hope...

*...he hears it. The UH-1Y VENOM helicopter. Appearing high
up in the sky.*

Coming right for him.

The helicopter lands and the Tall Marine and Stocky Marine
disgorge and FLANK the Medic.

As they rush toward Lukas and surround him, he can barely
manage...

LUKAS

◆ Forget about me.

As the Marines look at each other in confusion, we go to...

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Devlin who has Ana by the back of the neck. Leading her
forward. Head and gun on a swivel as they round each bend.

They move through -- rock wall rising on either side. As
they take another turn, they see that fifty yards ahead is...

... the LAST CASE.

Just sitting there. Waiting to be taken.

Devlin grabs Ana -- forces her to stop.

DEVLIN

(shouts)

Come on out. Let me see you.

Sean's voice bellows just past the case. Just around a small curve in the wall face...

SEAN (O.S.)

So you can shoot me? Send Ana over. Then you take the case.

DEVLIN

Okay! Here she comes.

Ana starts forward, but Devlin GRABS her and whispers...

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

I don't think so. You and me, we go together.

Devlin pushes her toward the case. Gun on her shoulder. He approaches the curve where Sean's voice came from and --

-- LUNGES. Using Ana as a shield, he UNLOADS -- BAM-BAM-BAM! Only -- *Sean's not there.*

Instead a walkie is perched in the snow.

Devlin blinks hard. The realization that Sean was projecting his voice from a different walkie -- comes a second too late. He looks up to see --

-- Sean -- who was HANGING from the CLIFF above -- but is NOW free-falling right at him.

Devlin FIRES a shot, but it goes wide as Sean SLAMS into him.

This not only separates Devlin from Ana but -- sends Devlin sliding back down the thin path -- nearly going over the side. Sean moves to finish him, but --

-- Devlin still has control of his gun.

Even in his weakened position, he can FIRE -- BAM!

The first shot misses Sean's head by a millimeter as he whirls and --

-- SPRINTS back to Ana. Grabbing her hand and pulling her the only way they can go -- UP!

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Sean has Ana by the hand as they round another thin path.

They hit a ridge -- climb up -- keep going.

Ana YANKS on Sean's arm. Slows them.

ANA
Is Lukas... ?

SEAN
He's alive. We'll get to him, but
right now we need to MOVE.

He pulls her ahead. Around a stone lip. Up another ridge.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Devlin rushes to the case -- POPS it open, but -- it's EMPTY.

He POUNDS the case. Eyes filled with rage as he sprints off.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Sean and Ana make it to a flat plateau near the summit, but skid to a stop.

They've hit a dead end.

Behind them is a nearly vertical wall -- rising hundreds of feet and packed with thick snow. And straight ahead --

-- the edge of the plateau leads to a cliff.

ANA
(panicked)
What now? There's no more "up."

Sean sprints to the far edge and sees -- the nearly four thousand foot drop.

He looks for any way down this side. Examining the mountain face below -- looking, Looking, LOOKING --

-- *he has it!*

SEAN
Gimme your gear.

Ana tosses Sean her backpack.

SEAN (CONT'D)
There's a run of caves down this
face...

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - CONTINUOUS

We pull to a wide shot. The mountain on this side goes straight down, but -- it's pock-marked with *indentions/caves*.

Their lone shot at refuge.

SEAN (V.O.)
If we can make it to one, I don't
think he'll follow.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Sean YANKS out climbing rope -- JAMS a cam into rocky ground and strings it out.

After attaching the rope to his repelling harness, he's about to attach Ana when --

-- BAM! A shot burrows into the ground at their feet. They are too late...

Devlin has caught up.

DEVLIN
Enough. Where's the money?

Everyone pauses at the sound of snow breaking free on the mountain behind them.

The concussion of the shot shakes the stability of the thick packed snow above, but -- RUMBLING subsides.

No avalanche.

ANA
Look at that drift behind you.

Devlin glances at the enormous bank of snow rising up the entire side of the mountain.

Blanketed with tons and tons of thick white snow.

ANA (CONT'D)

That look stable? You fire again
and a tidal wave of snow rips us
ALL off this mountain.

DEVLIN

Maybe. Or maybe I get off a couple
more shots before that happens.

He turns and locks eyes with Sean. Face seaming into a net
of wrinkles as he levels his gun.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

The last time I ask. Tell me or I
incapacitate you and torture her to
death in front of you.

(screams)

Where is my money?!

Before they can even respond -- VROOOOOOOOM! The UH-1Y VENOM
helicopter RISES up behind Devlin -- eclipsing the sun.

Having left the medic behind -- the remaining two Marines are
locked and loaded.

The Tall Marine is already positioned with his sniper rifle
and in a thing of beauty... THWACK!

He STRIKES Devlin with a perfect shot to the back of the
head. Dropping Devlin and sending him...

... face first into the snow.

Ana and Sean watch with astonished gratitude as -- the Tall
Marine draws back in. The helicopter takes a dramatic bank
and lands on a the far side.

The savior Marines hop out and rush to Sean and Ana.

These guys are loaded for bear with combat gear, m16 rifles
and ready-pull grenades running down their flak jackets.
But, thankfully, *one perfect head-shot is all it took.*

TALL MARINE

You folks okay?

ANA

(still stunned)

Yes. But my fiance--

TALL MARINE

There's a medic treating him and
we've alerted the local hospital.
They have a trauma team waiting.

The Stocky Marine regards Sean...

STOCKY MARINE
You Blackburn?

SEAN
Yeah.

STOCKY MARINE
Sergeant Major Kilmer is looking
forward to talking with you--

The Marine suddenly bites off the sentence as -- BAM -- a
bullet exits his forehead.

BAM -- a second bullet takes out the Tall Marine and just
like that, both marines collapse to the ground and reveal...

... Devlin behind them. *Rising from the dead like a phoenix.*

Blood sheeting from the rear of his head where we glimpse...

Titanium. The Marine's bullet ripped open a flap of scalp --
but didn't penetrate his surgically repaired skull.

Devlin holds the back of his head -- securing the flap of
scalp down. Cords of neck muscle standing in stark, etched
relief as he -- storms forward.

DEVLIN
Fuck the money, I'm just gonna kill
the two of you.

Only as he charges -- Sean rises up. Fisting a GRENADE that
he pulled off the dead Marine's flak jacket.

Devlin pauses. Stopping fifty yards away. Smiles.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
M68. Got a wide blast radius.
Seen frags off one go 150 meters.
(off Sean's silence)
You kill me, you kill us all.

Devlin starts forward again, until -- Sean pulls the pin.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)
There's no way you throw that.

But Sean does EXACTLY that.

He LAUNCHES it. Only since he can't throw it AT Devlin, he
throws it...

... OVER HIM! All the way to the mountain face.

Taking ALL of them outside the blast radius.

The explosion is almost instant. Sends EVERYONE to the ground as the concussion -- ROCKS the mountain side.

The rumbling after the earlier gun shot was nothing compared to the TREMOR CACOPHONY that fills the air now as...

... a FULL-ON AVALANCHE begins.

Sean is already on his feet -- pulling Ana away. She can barely utter...

ANA

What are you... ?

... as Sean GRABS her tight and YANKS her to the edge of the cliff. Not hesitating for an instant as he --

-- LEAPS OFF! In mid-air as the deluge of snow hits.

They ARC OUT -- until the secured line SNAPS TAUNT -- and WHIPS them back in the direction of the mountain.

Now SWINGING toward one of the cave mouths -- Sean adjusts a millisecond before they hit and -- barely gets footing on the edge. ONLY as he grabs rock --

-- Ana slips off of him.

Sean spins -- manages to grab her forearm and secure her.

Even in his horrific situation -- both are distracted for a split second as BEHIND HER --

-- Devlin is blown over the side. Still alive. Gun FIRING uselessly as he's swallowed by the explosion of white and -- dragged down to his death.

But Sean's attention is quickly back on Ana as his grip -- SLIPS! Her arm sliding through his hands until it --

-- CATCHES on her wrist. Ana now dangling above the four thousand foot drop as avalanche BILLOWS behind her.

SEAN'S POV: Ana's face is a mask of terror. Wind swirls her dark hair. Like ink spilled in water.

THE DROP below is vertigo defined.

ANA (CONT'D)

Sean! Please! Don't drop me.



She sways from the wind. The force of her weight starting to pull Sean's other hand off the rock. Which would send them both to their deaths!

A mirror scenario of the opening scene.

Everything that matters to him is in his right hand. But this time -- Sean would *rather die than let go*.

He hangs on and with all the strength he has left manages to -
- pull Ana to safety as they fall into the mouth of the cave.

Both in amazement as the avalanche finally comes to a stop.

Sean slowly struggles to his feet. He walks over and tests his rope. It's still locked in. He grips it with one hand. Leans out and up to see...

... the thick metal tips of two LANDING SKIDS from the Marine's UH-1Y VENOM helicopter.

The helo just barely avoided being swept over.

Sean, for the first time in a while, allows himself a tiny smile.

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Lukas lies on his blood soaked sleeping bag. Staring up at the mountain range before him -- as the Medic tends to him.

He struggles to breathe. Wincing and wrenching as the Medic works the wound and stabilizes him.

But all of the pain is suddenly meaningless as -- the UH-1Y VENOM helicopter crests the cliff. Sean at the helm.

A safe and *very alive* Ana sitting next to him.

Lukas' eyes immediately fill. Tears of relief and joy stream down his cheeks as Sean approaches to land.

EXT. HANSA HOSPITAL, GRAZ, AUSTRIA - DAY

Landing pad on the hospital roof. The helicopter's rotors still spinning as the medic downloads info to the trauma team as they load Lukas onto a gurney.

Ana and Sean by his side.

EXT. HANSA HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - DAY

Sean stands as Ana comes into the waiting room.

ANA
He's in surgery now, but...
(exhales, nods)
... he's stable.

Sean nods.

SEAN
Good. That's good.

Ana pulls him into a hug. Kisses his cheek.

ANA
Thank you.

Sean pulls back. Tucks a strand of hair behind her ear.

ANA (CONT'D)
For everything.

Sean nods. Looks into her eyes, then...

SEAN
I have to go.

ANA
Figured.
(smiles)
I hear you're coming to the
wedding?

SEAN
Rumor has it.

Ana cocks an incredulous eyebrow.

ANA
◆ How will I get ahold of you?

SEAN
I'll find you.

ANA
Right...

Sean smiles and starts to head away.

ANA (CONT'D)
Oh, Sean?

Ana moves to him.

ANA (CONT'D)
Before they wheeled Lukas into surgery, he asked me to give this back to you.

She produces the small tracking device. Hands it to him.

ANA (CONT'D)
He said that he wasn't sure if you needed it any more.

EXT. HANSA HOSPITAL - DAY

Sean exits the hospital. He holds the nav-fire tracking device in one hand -- and his locket in the other.

He could put it back in the locket, disappear off-grid and go back to being a ghost.

OR he could...

... leave it out and return to doing what he does best.

As he ponders this life decision...

... we leave on this small, yet very appropriate cliffhanger and then slowly...

FADE TO BLACK

- The End -

*