

EXECUTIVE DECISION

Written by

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**FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY**

EXECUTIVE DECISION

FADE IN:

TITLE SEQUENCE.

OVER BLACK. On the main title "EXECUTIVE DECISION," we FLARE OUT TO WHITE and INTO a blazing sun, situated in the intense blue sky of the Mediterranean.

1 OMITTED 1
thru thru
13 13

14 EXT. HOTEL COURTYARD (NICOSIA, CYPRUS) - LATE AFTERNOON 14

FROM the sun we SLOWLY TILT DOWN INTO the courtyard, the MOVE ENDING as an explosion of white doves, fluttering into the air, revealing a Muslim wedding party, the guests gathered around the bride and groom, both early 20s. The attendants are all well-dressed, affluent Arabs, most in western attire.

SUBTITLES: NICOSIA, CYPRUS

Cautiously, the bride looks up, toward a balcony... Where four men, strategically positioned, watch the proceedings below. The men, all Arabs in casual western attire, are focused not on the wedding party but the balconies and windows around them. Deep in the shadows, a fifth man, wearing dark glasses, is barely visible.

15 EXT. BALCONY - LATE AFTERNOON 15

The fifth man emerges, removing his dark glasses: the terrorist ABD SA'UD JAFFA, a name synonymous with death. of medium height, late 50s, he imparts an instant, chilling presence: skin soft and paunchy, dark circles of flesh beneath his eyes -- heartless, cold as ice, bespeaking evil and treachery. As we study his face the following SUBTITLES APPEAR:

Abd Sa'ud Jaffa, once the most notorious and feared terrorist in the world, now a desperate, hunted man, his sanctuaries nearly exhausted, betrayed by even his own people.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

Beside him is his chief of staff, ALI NAGI HASSAN, early 30s, a complex, highly-intelligent man, responsible for Jaffa's security and middle man to outside organizations. A man of considerable power but exercised only on behalf and at the behest of Jaffa -- an man who never dictates policy, only carrying it out. At the moment, he is extremely anxious at this careless exposure of a man carrying death warrants even from his own people. Ali glances at his watch.

ALI HASSAN

(subtitles)

Jaffa, we must go. We have stayed too long. There are many on this island who would betray you.

Jaffa turns, holding up his hand in a gesture of restraint. He focuses on his beautiful daughter below, radiant in this moment. He motions to her, indicating an adjoining courtyard below. She excuses herself from the party, Jaffa turning to descend a staircase. Ali is upset by this recklessness but dogged in his determination to maintain security. He turns to one of the guards.

ALI HASSAN

(subtitles)

Check the street, then bring up the cars.

16 EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

16

Elegant, a stone fountain as the centerpiece. Jaffa extends his hands to his daughter who complies, obediently, she too in awe of this powerful, dangerous man, a man she has rarely seen. Jaffa embraces her and then presses something into her hand, a small gilded box. He speaks softly to her.

Suddenly Ali is there. He nods differentially to the daughter and then whispers anxiously to Jaffa.

ALI HASSAN

(subtitles)

The plane cannot wait any longer. We must go, please.

Jaffa bids a final farewell to his daughter and then turns, nodding quickly to Ali.

JAFFA

(subtitles)

We go.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

He replaces his glasses and ascends the stairs, Ali quickly following, signalling to one of the guards at the top of the stairs. Ali keys a tiny hand radio.

ALI HASSAN
(subtitles)

Go.

16A INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY OF UPPER FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON 16A

Jaffa, Ali and a bodyguard enter. Emerging from a room are three men, one of whom is dressed identically to Jaffa, his body type and face, very similar to Jaffa. The double makes momentary eye contact with Jaffa and Ali. Jaffa nods his approval. The man puts on dark glasses and the decoy team heads rapidly down the hall.

16B INT. NICOSIA HOTEL - LOBBY - LATE AFTERNOON 16B

The decoy team descends the stairs, moving through the lobby, few of the patrons or employees paying attention to their presence.

16C EXT. NICOSIA HOTEL - LATE AFTERNOON 16C

Small but elegant. The decoy team leaves the hotel, entering a waiting Mercedes sedan. The car pulls smoothly away from the curb.

16D INT. MERCEDES SEDAN - LATE AFTERNOON 16D

One of the bodyguards looks out the rear window, the hotel receding in the b.g. He keys his hand radio.

BODYGUARD
(subtitles)
We're clear.

16E INT. HALLWAY - UPPER FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON 16E

Ali lowers his RADIO, nodding to Jaffa who quickly removes his necktie and replaces his business suit coat with a sports jacket, a man always in hiding.

ALI
(subtitles)
I must phone the airfield. I will
be in the other car. Go with God.

Jaffa briefly touches Ali on the shoulder, a quick nod from Ali and Jaffa leaves, escorted by three bodyguards.

17 EXT. NICOSIA HOTEL - LATE AFTERNOON

17

Now parked in the curved driveway is a Fiat sedan, a driver behind the wheel.

Another car is parked in front of the Fiat, its driver unloading baggage for an Orthodox Greek priest who stands waiting on the sidewalk, eyes half-closed, feeling the heat of the sun on his upturned face.

From the hotel lobby, two of Jaffa's guards emerge, one standing lookout, the other walking quickly to the Fiat. Looking cautiously about he leans into the driver, giving instructions. The driver starts the car but before he can back up, a taxi whips in behind, trapping it between the two cars.

Three men, obviously drunk, stumble from the cab and head for the lobby, arm-in-arm, talking loudly in German.

The terrorist beside the Fiat moves towards the cab, shouting at the driver to back up. The taxi driver emerges, shouting back at the terrorist. They meet at the rear of the car, arguing. Suddenly the taxi driver reaches to his back, whipping free a silenced .22 Beretta automatic. In a flash, the gun is under the chin of the bodyguard, a soft THUMP as the GUN is FIRED.

The driver lays the dead bodyguard in the street, swinging out and around the car, leveling, FIRING TWICE, the driver in the Fiat slumping down in the seat.

At the same moment, the three drunken men reach the lobby doors, one of them pulling a silenced pistol, pressing it into the lookout's stomach, FIRING. As he sits the dead man into the base of a potted tree, the other two push through the doors.

18 INT. LOBBY - DAY

18

As Jaffa and the remaining guard descend the stairs, a BUSINESSMAN, seated at a couch folds a paper and picking up a briefcase, follows in behind them.

The two boisterous drunks spill through the doors but as they approach Jaffa and his bodyguard, pull their pistols as the Businessman moves in from behind, shoving a pistol into the bodyguard's back, a quick spin, another soft THUMP and the bodyguard drops to the floor.

As the stunned patrons and employees look on, Jaffa is moved quickly toward the doors, the Businessman speaking into a lapel mike on his suit.

AGENT (BUSINESSMAN)
(in English)
We have number one. Move.

(CONTINUED)

- 18 CONTINUED: 18
- The three men push Jaffa out the door and down the stairs.
- 19 EXT. HOTEL - DAY 19
- A late-model MERCEDES SQUEALS INTO VIEW, the back door flying open as more agents leap out. Jaffa is shoved into the back seat.
- Just then, Jaffa's backup car pulls around the corner and into the driveway. The three terrorists inside realize what is happening, the doors fling open, their weapons drawn.
- At this moment, the Greek priest, who has been backing away in mock horror at the kidnapping, clears a MACH TEN MACHINE GUN from his robes, his driver pulling a similar weapon from the trunk. The two OPEN FIRE, the terrorists in the backup car disappearing in a hail of EXPLODING GLASS and ruptured metal. The priest and driver jump into their car, pulling out.
- As the MERCEDES PEELS OUT behind the priest's car, the businessman leaps into the taxi, hiking out the window and over the roof, FIRING several rounds into the tires and radiator of the Fiat with a SILENCED PISTOL. A second later, one of the priest's suitcases on the sidewalk EXPLODES, a dense cloud of C.S. gas enveloping the area, providing cover.
- 20 INT. HOTEL - UPPER BALCONY - DAY 20
- Ali Hassan, hearing the faint but distinctive SILENCED SHOTS, rushes from the room, a machine pistol in his hand. Seeing the abduction below he leaps from the balcony onto the roof, running across the tiles towards the street.
- He sights in on the Businessman, hiked out over the cab, but stops short, seeing the silhouette of Jaffa, framed in the back seat, too dangerous a shot for a machine gun. Unwilling to risk hitting him, Ali throws out his arms, screaming a cry of defiance and revenge, his eyes wild with anger and hatred.
- As the car whips its way through the narrow streets, we hear the following VOICE OVER as we view the series of news reports of terrorist activities including the bombing of a disco; aircraft wreckage; bombing of a military hospital, etc:

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

BBC REPORTER (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 ... In a bizarre development, the terrorist Abd Sa'ud Jaffa was abducted in Nicosia, Cyprus late yesterday afternoon by a group of unidentified mercenaries. Jaffa was apparently delivered by his abductors to the commander of an American warship, at sea in the Mediterranean.

20A EXT. MILITARY BASE - BBC REPORTER

20A

standing outside a chain link fence, a military base in the b.g.

BBC REPORTER
 Jaffa was then flown here, to Lakenheath Air Force Base, 75 miles northeast of London, arriving only moments ago.

20B TELEPHOTO LIVE VIDEO

20B

of Jaffa being taken from a helicopter and placed inside a waiting van.

BBC REPORTER (V.O.)
 Both the U.S. and U.K. have claimed no involvement in the abduction, the mercenaries apparently motivated by a reward of two million pounds offered for information leading to Jaffa's arrest.

20C EXT. MILITARY BASE - REPORTER

20C

BBC REPORTER
 Cyprus, claiming a violation of its territorial sovereignty, has lodged an emergency protest with the U.N. Security Council, halting the extradition. Until this complicated issue is resolved, Abd Sa'ud Jaffa, apparently will remain in U.S. custody at Lakenheath...

END TITLE SEQUENCE and...

LONG DISSOLVE INTO:

21 EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

21

A shimmering collage of heat-waves and OUT-OF-FOCUS images.

SUBTITLES: ATHENS, GREECE -- 1 MONTH LATER.

Appearing mid-point in this silent, shimmering field, a black dot slowly expands into an amorphous sphere, two unattached, horizontal bands appearing on either side, growing towards the center. Suspended in mid-air, slowly drifting forward, the gigantic object resolves, revealing a Boeing 747, the monarch of the air, descending directly towards us.

As if defying gravity, the mammoth airship seems suspended as it settles towards the earth. The runway appears, the 747 FILLING the SCREEN as it passes silently overhead... shattering the silence as three-quarters of a million pounds of modern-age miracle return to earth: an ear-splitting SCREAM and erupting smoke as tires smash into the tarmac, followed by the THUDDING GROAN of the suspension as it absorbs the awesome weight of the plane. The 230 feet of hurtling mass ROARS down the tarmac towards the terminal buildings in the b.g.

22 INT. PASSENGER TERMINAL - DAY

22

Where a variety of international travelers pass through the security and X-ray control area, several traveling in groups, their tour leaders dealing with last minute problems and questions.

Among the passengers is a man, late 40s, European, carrying a small, laptop computer which is being checked by X-ray and a bomb analyzer, a device searching for the scent of plastic explosives. Collecting his computer from the inspection, he lights up a cigarette, looking nervously about him as he does.

Behind him, a dark-complected MAN, late 20s, handsome, Mediterranean, dressed in sporty, but expensive outdoor clothing, is insisting that his two heavily-laden camera bags be hand inspected by the agent.

23 INT. BAGGAGE SORTING AREA - DAY

23

As baggage from the terminal is carried along conveyor belts and loaded into aluminum baggage containers, security men and dogs move against the flow, the dogs eagerly sniffing for the tell-tale scent of drugs or explosives.

24 INT. 747 CARGO COMPARTMENT - DAY 24

The food carts are rolled down floor tracks and into the two lower galleys where the meals will be prepared. As panels are lowered, isolating the galley from the rest of the hold, the baggage containers are rolled and locked into place.

25 EXT. 747 LOADING AREA - DAY 25

The massive fuel lines, pumping thousands of pounds of kerosene into the airframe are pulled aside as mechanics perform last minute checks on tires, landing gear and engines, using ladders and lifts to gain access to the belly and wings, ten feet above the ground.

26 INT. FIRST CLASS CABIN AREA - DAY 26

Where twelve flight attendants are being briefed by the CHIEF STEW reading to them from a computer manifest. Among the attendants is FRAN, 32. Aside from being physically striking, she possesses an easy, relaxed manner and confident bearing.

CHIEF STEW

Our Captain today is Brad Stewart, based in New York. We've got a full load, 406 passengers. Also a Federal air marshal, in 13-B and he's carrying. Otherwise you know your assignments so let's get ready for pre-check.

The attendants move to their stations to prepare for the long flight. GO WITH Fran and another attendant, JUDY, 28, black. By their smiles and animated conversation, we understand they are close friends.

In a moment, the first of the 406 passengers begin filing on board, looking for their seats, stowing their luggage, assisted by the attendants.

The PHOTOJOURNALIST is having some difficulty placing his two camera bags into the overhead. Fran appears.

FRAN

Sir, I can check those for you.

He turns, somewhat startled and then smiles. He is a very handsome, exotic-looking man and the effect on Fran is not unnoticed.

(CONTINUED)

PHOTOJOURNALIST (MAN)
 No, I'd feel more comfortable with
 them here. They're quite valuable,
 you see...

Fran smiles, moving to help place them in the overhead.

FRAN
 Let me see what I can do.

With a little expert arranging, she slides the bags into
 the compartment.

PHOTOJOURNALIST
 Thank you...

FRAN
 (smiling)
 Fran. Have a nice flight.

She walks away towards the forward compartment.

An American family, husband and wife and two children,
 boy and girl, take their seats. The children are seated
 separately at window seats, tended to by their mother,
 storing toys into the upper compartment, the kids, DAVID
 and KAREN, playing with their latest Nintendo game.

A priest and two Greek orphans, boys, seven and eight,
 take their seats in the center section, directly across
 from the two American children. The children study each
 other closely, the orphans dressed in shorts and knee
 socks, the Americans in Reeboks, baggy pants and
 T-shirts. The little girl seems totally mesmerized by
 the two. She smiles warmly at them.

Judy is putting on an apron. Fran appears, continuing
 her conversation as she checks the area for supplies.
 Fran nudges her playfully.

FRAN
 So, how does it feel, now that
 it's really happening?

JUDY
 Can't get out of it now. He's
 already paid for the hotel, the
 church, and...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

JUDY (CONT'D)
 (holds up diamond
 ring)
 ... the ring. But the big question
 is, have you filed for that leave
 of absence?

FRAN
 Not yet. Still got the car to pay
 off, helping my brother out, the
 usual... I'll get around to it.

JUDY
 Fran, you take care of everybody,
 except yourself. When we get to
 New York, you and me are havin' a
 girl to girl. You've helped me
 out of more shit than I can name.
 Now it's pay back.

FRAN
 (laughing)
 Okay, we'll talk.

JUDY
 You bet your sweet ass we will.
 (opens elevator)
 Meanwhile, back to the 'pit.'

Judy laughs, enters the elevator and descends from sight.

28 INT. MID-SECTION CABIN AREA - DAY

28

The man seen earlier with the computer, boards and takes
 his seat. Moments later, a heavy-set WOMAN finds her
 seat alongside him.

As she attempts to stow some of her luggage in the over-
 head, several souvenirs slide from a bag, hitting the
 small computer, resting on the man's lap. Startled, he
 grabs the computer, looking up angrily at the Woman. He
 then stows the machine beneath his seat.

WOMAN
 (defensive)
 Well I'm sorry. I didn't do it on
 purpose.

The man ignores her, the woman, still mumbling, settles
 uncomfortably into her seat, making sure to avoid any
 further contact with him.

- 29 EXT. 747 TAXI AND TAKE-OFF SEQUENCE - DAY 29
- The massive aircraft taxis into position and holds. We hear the RADIO CHATTER between the cockpit and the control tower as final run-up tests are performed.
- When the final clearance has been given, the ENGINES are pushed to near red-line, the exhaust obscuring the runway in a shimmering wall of heat. Within two miles, the plane is nearing 150 mph and beginning to lift as millions of pounds of air are sucked into the SCREAMING ENGINES. A moment later the plane clears the runway, pulling magnificently into the sky.
- 30 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY 30
- As the plane banks, turning into its outward course, we hear the final course assignments and weather conditions from the TOWER. A sense of calm settles over the cockpit, the crew adjusting for the long flight.
- 31 INT. 747 FORWARD CABIN AREA - DAY 31
- The "fasten seatbelt" sign winks off, the attendants and passengers settling into their in-flight routines. Moments later a man leaves his seat and we follow his legs as he walks down the aisle, stopping at a seat, the Photojournalist casually looking up before returning to his magazine. The man, wearing horn-rimmed glasses, hair and mustache salt and pepper gray, skin slightly clay-like, looks like a conservative businessman or professor. He opens the overhead, removing one of the camera bags. The man moves on, towards the mid-cabin bathrooms.
- 32 INT. BATHROOM - DAY 32
- The grey-haired man stares into the mirror before removing his glasses, pulling free his wig, revealing black, slicked-back hair. Using a towel he wipes the makeup from his face, looking back at himself in the mirror: Ali Hassan.
- He removes from the camera bag two 6x7 reflex cameras. Turning them over, he tears away the bases, an expertly molded and painted section of plaster, revealing the slides of two automatic pistols. He then removes two camera pistol grips, pulling each away from its unit, exposing firing pin and hammer mechanisms. He unscrews a 500mm mirror lens. Behind a dummy photo of the iris, are secreted bullets in a long roll of lead foil. He continues to assemble the weapons...

33 INT. FORWARD CABIN AREA - DAY 33

Ali leaves the bathroom. He passes another Arab in the aisle, handing him one of the weapons, secreted in a magazine. This man walks to the front of the plane and ascends the staircase.

At the same time, a third Arab leaves his seat, walking to the forward galley area. He waits until the attendant leaves her station and then slips into the elevator.

34 INT. LOWER FORWARD GALLEY AREA - DAY 34

The door to the elevator bursts open as the third terrorist storms into the galley, slamming Judy across the chest, knocking her unconscious against the bulkhead, her head striking the counter with a sickening THUD as she falls.

The terrorist begins tearing into the food carts scattering several of the trays to the floor. A moment later he finds what he is looking for, several automatic weapons and two grenades, hidden among the rows of food trays.

35 INT. UPPER DECK - BUSINESS CLASS - COCKPIT AREA - DAY 35

The Terrorist approaches the cockpit door, an ATTENDANT, working in business class seeing him.

ATTENDANT

Sir, the bathroom is to the right.

He nods. As she turns back to her work, the Terrorist pulls from his pocket a small wedge of plastic explosive with a fuse attached. Pressing the plastic into the seam by the door latch and pulling the igniter, he calmly steps back, revealing his handgun.

A sharp EXPLOSION blasts the door free from the lock. As the startled passengers watch in shock, the Terrorist rushes inside, brutally pistol-whipping the flight engineer as he stands, then pressing the muzzle into the pilot's neck.

Expertly the Terrorist reaches up, turning off several overhead switches, and then turns to the navigator's station, shutting down the radio and radar. He hands the captain a sheet of paper.

TERRORIST

Your new course, Captain. Careful,
I am a pilot. No tricks.

36 INT. LOWER PASSENGER LEVEL - DAY

36

The passengers reacting in confusion to the sound of the explosion. Ali walks past a U.S. Navy serviceman, now starting to rise to his feet. Ali turns, FIRING TWICE, point-blank into the man's chest, the high-caliber bullets ripping through the seat, also killing a woman sitting behind the sailor.

Behind him there is a CRASH. Ali spins, raising his weapon, stopping as he sees an attendant, NANCY, backing into the partition, holding her hands over her face, her eyes wide with fear and horror. Ali studies her, calmly, appraisingly and then dismissing her, hands the weapon to Kahlil, the photojournalist. As if his point has been made, Ali walks swiftly down the aisle, not bothering to look at another passenger.

Somewhere in the main cabin, a hand gripping a .357 Magnum, partially removed from a belt holster, hesitates before returning the revolver. Carefully, the man's hand unsnaps the holster, sliding it and the gun down to his feet where it is secreted in a dress boot, pants leg covering it. Next his Federal I.D. wallet is slipped between the seats.

A wave of fear rolls through the passengers as they confront the horrible reality -- hijacked. In a SERIES OF SHOTS, we see passengers quickly hiding jewelry, watches, Star of David medallions, passports, diamond rings.

37 INT. MID-SECTION WORK STATION - DAY

37

As a terrorist, shouting in Arabic, pushes Fran and Nancy into the station, shoving them roughly into their jump seats. As Fran sits, she looks up, seeing the passenger manifest, hanging from the wall. Her eyes go to a name: Edward Strickler, 13-B, United States Federal Air Marshal.

As the terrorist turns his back, she pulls the manifest from the clipboard, slipping it into a trash receptacle. She looks up, just as Ali steps into the space. He removes his suit coat, hanging it over some work aprons on the bulkhead. Lifting the intercom handset from the wall, he speaks calmly, in perfect English.

ALI HASSAN

My name is 'Al Iqab.' In a few hours we will return to London, refuel and then travel to the Middle East. You are to remain in your seats and do as you are told. Anyone disobeying my orders will be shot.

(CONTINUED)

- 37 CONTINUED: 37
- He hangs up as Kahlil appears.
- KAHLIL
I will start separating the men
and collect the passports.
- Ali considers this a moment and then answers in English, catching Fran's stare, looking into his cold, calculating eyes as he does.
- ALI
There is no need for that. Keep
them seated and maintain security.
I'm going to the cockpit.
- He stares at Fran a moment and then turns away from Kahlil, leaving the area, Fran seeing an expression of confusion on Kahlil's face.
- 38 EXT. AMERICAN EMBASSY (LONDON) - MORNING 38
- ESTABLISHING SHOT of the embassy, Grosvenor Square.
- 39 INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY - MAIN RECEPTION DESK - MORNING 39
- Where a young ASSISTANT answers a RINGING TELEPHONE.
- ASSISTANT
Good morning, American Embassy.
- 40 INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY 40
- Piccadilly Square visible in the b.g. A gloved hand places a mini tape recorder next to the handset, a finger pressing the play button.
- ALI HASSAN (V.O.)
(filtered)
This is Al Iqab. In fifteen
minutes a clear message of my
convictions will be delivered to
the satanic American president.
- 41 EXT. FINANCIAL DISTRICT (LONDON) - DAY 41
- Alive with mid-morning activity. We FOCUS ON a posh, glass walled restaurant.

42 INT. LONDON RESTAURANT - DAY

42

Businessmen and ladies tailored in Saville Row fashions wait patiently to be seated. A dark-complected man, early 20s, wearing a shabby overcoat, pushes through the patrons, past the MAITRE D' and into the main dining area, oblivious to the indignant stares and murmured comments. The Maitre d', offended at this incursion follows after him.

MAITRE D'
(indignant)
Excuse me, sir, but may I help you?

The man reaches the center of the restaurant.

MAITRE D'
Do you have a reservation...

The man turns, the Maitre d' staring into the glazed eyes of death. In that frozen moment, the Maitre d' notices the man is sweating heavily, his breathing shallow.

The man slowly opens his coat, revealing a canvas vest to which are taped a dozen blocks of plastic explosive, fused and wired together in series. He holds out his arm, revealing a detonator switch, crudely taped to his palm, two wires running up his sleeve.

A frozen moment of hesitation and then the man, lifting his face, eyes rolling upward, screams something in Arabic and presses the detonator...

43 EXT. RESTAURANT - AERIAL VIEW - DAY

43

A fireball flashes through the atrium, a tidal wave of flame and GLASS erupting into the street, followed by the deafening THUNDERCLAP of the EXPLOSION.

43A INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

43A

The silence shattered by the RINGING of a TELEPHONE. A bedlamp is switched on, a hand groping for the phone. A bedside clock indicates 3:30 A.M.

SUBTITLES: GEORGETOWN, WASHINGTON, D.C. 3:30 AM

Answering is DAVID GRANT, 32, intelligent, introspective, and by the way he forces his mind into activity, not unaccustomed to awakenings in the dead of night.

(CONTINUED)

43A CONTINUED:

43A

GRANT

Hello... Yes?

(listens)

When? Just a second...

(begins to jot down
items on a pad)

I'm on my way.

He hangs up, shaking the sleep from his brain. He thinks a moment and then picks up the phone, punching in a number.

44 OMITTED

44

&

&

45

45

45A EXT. VIRGINIA BEACH - NIGHT (FIRST LIGHT)

45A

A man dressed in gray sweats is running hard, pushing himself down the hardpacked sand, sprinting the last quarter mile.

SUBTITLES: VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 5:30 AM

IN CLOSE we meet COLONEL AUSTIN TRAVIS, leader of an elite special forces commando team, early 50s, graying hair, still hard and lean, a man of incredible drive and endurance.

Reaching a set of stairs he stops, checking his watch. Satisfied he heads up the stairs ascending a grassy bluff, taking the steps three at a time.

46 OMITTED

46

&

&

47

47

47A INT. TRAVIS' BEDROOM - NIGHT (FIRST LIGHT)

47A

Tastefully furnished, French windows opening onto a deck overlooking the beach and the sweeping hillside below. Travis enters and sits down on a multi-station fitness machine, grasping an overhead bar and beginning a series of gut crunches coupled with pull-ups.

From the bathroom a woman's voice calls out, cheerful, playfully.

(CONTINUED)

47A CONTINUED:

47A

VOICE (O.S.)

(mock-scolding)

Uh, uh, Colonel. You don't have time for that. Shower's free, hurry up.

TRAVIS

(grunting)

For what?

From the door LYNN TRAVIS, late 40's, athletic, short bobbed hair, in tennis togs, appears.

LYNN TRAVIS

We've got doubles with Tom and Karen at seven. Breakfast at the club and then the house in Little Creek, which you've been putting off seeing for a week. Now get in here.

She throws a towel at him. Overhead we hear the faint THUMPING sound of a HELICOPTER passing by. Travis listens, judging the distance and type of aircraft by habit. He returns to Lynn, smiling.

TRAVIS

(teasing)

Hell, I thought that was tomorrow. I already made plans to run into D.C., drop by the Pent...

LYNN TRAVIS

Oh, no. As of 0:600 this morning, you are on leave, mister, thirty days, in preparation for reassignment to staff headquarters.

(beat)

Just where I want you, a nine to fiver, like it or not. And the next thirty days are going to be devoted exclusively to me...

The sound of the HELICOPTER has increased. Through the curtains Travis sees a blurred movement over the beach, an army 500C helicopter feathering out, settling to earth.

Lynn stares at the helicopter, face stricken, hands moving defensively to her breast. An officer in camouflage fatigues runs towards the house, a briefcase under his arm. Travis turns, looking at Lynn, seeing once again the look of betrayal, resignation, he has seen from her so many times before. Unable to speak she breaks away, entering the bathroom.

48 INT. PENTAGON - HALLWAY - NIGHT

48

Travis and his Staff Officer hurrying down the hallway, Travis reading from a top secret briefing.

TRAVIS

Has Delta been alerted?

STAFF OFFICER

Yes, sir. Warning order in force, they should be on the tarmac at Fort Bragg by 0:800.

TRAVIS

Then let's go see what the hell this is all about.

49 INT. ANTEROOM - NIGHT

49

Outside the Joint Chiefs Operations Center, where PETER CAHILL, early forties, intellectual, slightly hyper, wearing a crumpled corduroy suit and yesterday's shirt, is gulping coffee from a large paper cup. He looks as if roused from sleep, only minutes ago. A portable computer rests at his feet.

Travis and his Staff Officer appear, Cahill looking up. The two men stare at each other and then Cahill rises.

CAHILL

Colonel Travis?

Travis studies him, remembering. He nods.

TRAVIS

Cahill. The Jules Verne kid from Advanced Projects Research. Two years ago, right? That screwball experimental airplane you were trying to justify to the Appropriations Committee. What the hell was it called, 'Ramona?'

CAHILL

(quietly)

Ramora.

TRAVIS

Ramora. Right.
(looks at him hard;
puzzled)

What the hell are you doing here?

49A INT. PENTAGON - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

49A

Spartan but tastefully furnished. In the center of the room three men are conversing in hushed tones. GENERAL MIKE SARLOW, head of ISA, the army's CIA, is speaking while CAPTAIN DAVID GRANT, now dressed in an army uniform, studies carefully the reactions of an ARAB DIPLOMAT, late 50's, compassionate but penetrating eyes, wearing an expensively tailored English suit.

SARLOW

There must be some way to contact them. Someone he will listen to.

ARAB DIPLOMAT

(cautious)

Jaffa is a pariah to the Arab community, a total threat to any hope we have of peace in the Middle East. No one will have anything to do with him publicly.

SARLOW

I realize that, but we must try.

ARAB DIPLOMAT

I will do everything possible. But there is no one politically to deal with except Ali Hassan. And he is a true believer. He will be difficult to deal with. A very dangerous man.

Sarlow looks at Grant for his assessment, receiving a solemn nod of agreement.

49B INT. PENTAGON - ANTEROOM - NIGHT

49B

Some distance down the hallway, a door opens and Sarlow, Grant and the Arab Diplomat emerge. Travis watches as they briefly shake hands, the diplomat leaving, escorted by a waiting Pentagon official. Sarlow and Grant turn and walk towards the anteroom. As they approach, Travis appraises them carefully just as the door to the operations center swings open, a CIA OFFICER appearing.

CIA OFFICER

Gentlemen.

50 INT. OPERATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

50

The emergency operations center of the Joint Chiefs, five stories underground, a huge oval-shaped room on two levels.

(CONTINUED)

The lower level is devoted to a massive communications center, an intricate collection of telephones, computers, and printers manned by military operators. On the walls are a bank of television sets, flanked by huge screens onto which maps, computer data and video images may be projected.

The President's crisis-management team stands before one of the overhead screens on which we see a map of Europe, indicating the location of the 747, enroute to London. Leading the team is GEORGE KAPLAN, the President's National Security Advisor. With him is DIRECTOR NELSON, head of the CIA (DCI); MAJOR ERWIN PRICE, and ADMIRAL CHESTER LEWIS of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Along with Sarlow, Travis and Grant, they listen to another tape recording by Ali Hassan.

ALI HASSAN (V.O.)

(hard; clipped)

You have witnessed the conviction of Al Iqab. My instructions will be given once; no theater, no negotiation. Jaffa will be taken to Gatwick Airport, a long-range private jet provided. With Jaffa's release, Flight 343 will divert to Washington, D.C. where half the prisoners will be exchanged for fuel and fifteen million in gold bullion.

(beat)

Jaffa must be airborne by three P.M., G.M.T., or a second, more convincing message will be delivered. All communication will cease after this message.

Kaplan turns to Travis, studying him, carefully choosing his words before he speaks.

KAPLAN

Colonel Travis, as you know, the President is out of the country, scheduled to meet with the Soviet Premiere tomorrow. We're in constant communication with him. He's been apprised of everything I am about to tell you.

Kaplan glances at Sarlow and Grant.

(CONTINUED)

KAPLAN

In the past hour, some new, rather disturbing elements have surfaced, possibly calling for some extraordinary measures. That's why you're here.

Travis looks around at the sober faces staring at him. He seems to be the center of attention -- as if he's the last to be brought in on something. He turns back to Kaplan.

KAPLAN

The immediate situation is this. The Prime Minister is demanding Jaffa's release or he'll take action on his own. We're going to comply, to gain some time, at least.

(to Sarlow)

General Sarlow?

GENERAL SARLOW

A number of Arab factions are willing to attempt negotiations with Jaffa's group, but unless the hijackers elect to make contact, our options are severely limited.

(looks at Grant)

I'm going to ask Captain Grant to continue. He's the best expert we have on Arab terrorists, and he's been on the highjacking since we first learned of it.

Grant addresses the group but focuses on Travis, again as if this is for his benefit. Grant refers to a series of documents taken from his briefcase.

GRANT

Based upon a voice print, I'm certain 'Al Iqab' is Ali Hassan, Jaffa's second in command. For such a high-ranking member to actually be in charge is highly unusual.

He pauses, Travis cautiously acknowledging.

TRAVIS

Yes, highly unusual.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT

Then I'm sure you would also agree, Colonel, that taking hostages to spring Jaffa makes sense, but not coming here. They can secure his release and never leave Europe.

Again, Travis stares coolly at Grant.

TRAVIS

Obviously Hassan is up to something.

GRANT

Jaffa knew his effectiveness as a terrorist was over and was in the process of portraying himself a moderate, another Arafat. But Ali has always represented the hard line, fundamental position.

(beat)

Rather than take a Mossad bullet in the head he would rather go out striking a blow at the Great Satan. The Sword of God's Will.

(beat)

His nom de guerre, 'Al Iqab,' is deeply rooted in Arabic culture, associated with suicidal vengeance. It means: "The Punishment.'

TRAVIS

So, what's the punch line?

Grant refers to an open folder before him.

GRANT

Less than a week ago, a small Russian army convoy was ambushed outside of Ashkhabad, near the Iranian border. Ten men were killed, a truck hijacked.

He places several satellite photographs on the table, showing the burned wreckage of several Jeeps and soldiers lying on the road.

GRANT

Recent intelligence gives us strong reason to believe Jaffa's group was responsible.

(beat)

The cargo of that truck consisted of 42 canisters of DZ-5, being relocated to a secret storage facility.

(CONTINUED)

Travis stiffens slightly at the mention of the word.

GRANT

DZ-5 is the latest generation of a biogenic nerve toxin, far more lethal than any chemical weapon we've ever seen...

He places several photographs on the table showing Middle Eastern tribesmen and soldiers, lying in contorted and misshapen heaps; one photograph showing a Kurdish tribeswoman clutching a baby, their faces frozen masks of agony, gasping for their last breath of life.

TRAVIS

(sober)

I'm aware of its capabilities, Captain.

Grant stops, his briefing finished for the moment. He looks to Director Nelson, the DCI, who picks up a computer printout.

DCI

A cross-check of the passenger and cargo manifests, Colonel, indicates a shipment of 'art objects,' leaded pottery, 250 kilos in weight, on board Flight 343...

(beat)

The point of origin, final destination and the person assigned to that shipment are all non-existent.

Kaplan now resumes, but Travis clearly understands the situation, Grant carefully studying his reaction.

KAPLAN

We have to consider, Colonel Travis, the strong possibility that gaining the release of Jaffa is only the first phase of a larger plan...

TRAVIS

(grave)

A major strike against the U.S.

Again Grant speaks up, referring to his notes. He is obviously well prepared for this briefing.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (5)

50

GRANT

Assuming only 10 canisters, airburst over Washington... we could expect between 50,000 to 100,000 deaths. Anything inside a hundred miles of the coastline would be disastrous.

A frozen moment and then Kaplan looks directly at Travis.

KAPLAN

(gravely)

Meaning, Colonel Travis, if this scenario is true, the President would have no other choice but to order the plane destroyed.

TRAVIS

(confused)

Yes, sir, no other choice. But I'm at a loss, Mr. Kaplan. If this is all true, where does my team fit in?

Kaplan glances at Grant, then to the DCI.

KAPLAN

Because, we've been told we may have another option, Colonel. Which does concern you.

(to Nelson)

Let's get on with it, gentlemen.

Nelson nods to one of his aides who leaves the room.

DCI

It's a wild card, Colonel, but under the circumstances, it's all we've got. You've already met, I think, Peter Cahill, an aeronautical engineer at DARPA, a pioneer in stealth technology...

51 OMITTED
thru
53

51
thru
53

CLOSE ON a video screen where a computerized blueprint is displayed, a drawing of a double-walled, ovoid cylinder, at the top of which is an inner and outer o-ring device: a series of circular, sucker-like cups, attached to a collection of pneumatic pumps.

The image changes, an engineer's drawing, showing the cylinder, similar to a submarine's conning tower, attached to the top of a radically designed executive-style jet with stealth characteristics, featuring swept-back wings and a horizontal, rather than vertical, tail.

Another drawing shows the cylinder telescoped upward, several times its original size, the delivery plane now positioned beneath and mated with an aircraft many times its size, a giant XB-70 bomber.

Suddenly Travis gets the picture, understanding where he fits into the loop.

TRAVIS

Jesus H. Christ...

All eyes are on Travis.

TRAVIS

Excuse me, Mr. Kaplan, but I see where you're going with this. My team is thoroughly versed in carrying out assaults on hijacked aircraft. But on the ground, not five miles above the earth.

(beat)

I informed Mr. Cahill two years ago that we had little use for this 'aircraft' in Special Ops. This thing was designed to transfer flight crews to and from strategic bombers, requiring special adaptation to the aircraft.

(looks at Cahill)

Its application with a civilian aircraft was dismissed as posing too great a risk to the passengers. A hijacked aircraft eventually has to land somewhere where we can deal with it...

Travis realizes the irony of his last statement, even before Kaplan speaks up.

(CONTINUED)

KAPLAN

This does appear to be the exception to the rule.

(beat)

We said this was a wild card, Colonel. But if your team can board that airplane, determine if there is a bomb and take control of the situation, we at least have a fighting chance. Otherwise, four hundred and six passengers will have to be sacrificed.

(sober; intense)

The President does not want to shoot down that plane, Colonel... but he will. He cannot risk 50,000 American lives.

(beat)

In his words this is a Hail Mary pass. He has no other options.

Kaplan continues to look at Travis.

TRAVIS

How much time?

Grant speaks up.

GRANT

You have to be airborne within the hour.

Travis thinks a moment and then nods, the soldier's acceptance of duty. He looks at Cahill.

TRAVIS

One question. You have enough confidence in this gadget to stake your life on it, under these circumstances?

CAHILL

It's been modified... the pump's much stronger... Even without the mating collar there is an appropriate hatch on the 747 and the wide surface area of the aircraft should be sufficient for a link-up...

(beat)

I'd have to say I have extreme confidence in its application, even under the less than optimum circumstances.

(CONTINUED)

TRAVIS

Well, good. Because I want you to go along. I don't want anything left to chance.

Cahill is stunned. He starts to speak but a withering look from the DCI shuts him up. Cahill looks sick. Kaplan speaks up, dealing his last card.

KAPLAN

I think one addition to the team is called for, Colonel. An expert in Arabic dialects, someone who has made a careful study of Ali's life, who knows how he thinks, how he operates...

Travis turns and looks at Grant, their eyes locking. This was unanticipated by Grant and his face shows it. The Major-General, Travis's boss speaks up.

MAJOR-GENERAL

I see absolutely no need for Captain Grant's involvement in the actual operation. He can accomplish an advisory role right from here in Operations.

KAPLAN

On the contrary, General, I think his actual presence could prove crucial. Captain Grant might be able to forecast something Ali is going to do, before he does it.

MAJOR-GENERAL

Mr. Kaplan, it's going to be difficult enough for the Colonel and his men...

Travis speaks out.

TRAVIS

Excuse me, General. I'll take him. He could prove useful.

He fixes Grant with a look that says, "Okay, let's see how you handle the real thing."

Moving swiftly across the flight line, passing hangars and military aircraft.

(CONTINUED)

54A CONTINUED:

54A

Travis's Special Forces driver is at the wheel, Travis in the front seat, Grant in the rear. Grant, windblown and chilled, seems uncomfortable and nervous, a marked change from his confident bearing at the Pentagon. Travis turns in his seat.

TRAVIS

Curious why I didn't vote against your coming, Captain?

Grant is curious but remains silent.

TRAVIS

Because this whole operation was your idea, wasn't it? Your little brainstorm.

The look on Grant's face says it all.

GRANT

That's what I get paid for, Colonel.

TRAVIS

And my boys get paid for putting it on the line. I'm not faulting your ideas, Captain. Like Kaplan said, under the circumstances it's a brilliant plan. And crazy enough that it just might work.

(beat)

Except we know we shouldn't be doing it in the first place, don't we?

GRANT

(uncomfortable)

I'm not sure I follow you, sir.

TRAVIS

Then I'll enlighten you. Where you intel boys fucked up was cooking up this hare-brained scheme to put Jaffa on trial in the first place.

GRANT

You're mistaken, Colonel. We had nothing to do with Jaffa's abduction...

(CONTINUED)

TRAVIS

Oh, horse shit. I know a hell of a lot more about what goes on in your world than you think. It was a C.I.A. op, an executive decision from the beginning. We both play for the same team, Captain. The only difference is, you don't have to pull the trigger.

GRANT

I had no involvement with that operation, Colonel.

(beat)

But I agree with it in principle. Jafa is an international criminal and had to be brought to justice. Men like that have to know they're not beyond the reach of the law.

TRAVIS

Law? The only law animals like Jaffa and Ali understand comes from the end of a gun.

(beat)

You should have killed them all when you had the chance.

Grant reflects on this.

GRANT

Well, that's all a moot point, isn't it? No matter what, Jaffa is home free.

A cold look from Travis.

TRAVIS

Don't count on it, Captain.

The Jeep pulls to a halt beside a massive hangar, just as a CH-46 HELICOPTER ROARS INTO VIEW over the top, quickly settling to the tarmac, Travis and Grant turning to avoid the prop wash.

Emerging from the helicopter are seven men, wearing watch caps, dark green pullovers, black cargo-pocketed pants, and light weight, crepe-soled boots. Quickly they unload dark duffel bags and ABS plastic suitcases.

Travis swings from the Jeep, leaving Grant behind, making his way to the team. They cluster momentarily, Travis warmly greeting them.

(CONTINUED)

54A CONTINUED: (3)

54A

Grant sees a very close-knit, highly motivated and bonded team, but he sees as well the fear in their eyes, the adrenaline rush, and as they glance towards him, the automatic distrust of outsiders.

TRAVIS

(shouting)

Outstanding, gentlemen. Any problems?

One of the men, BAKER, good-natured, wide beaming face speaks up.

BAKER

(shouting)

Almost missed Cappy. Caught him in his driveway, pole in his hand, headed for the Keys.

Travis looks across at CAPPY, 48, black, lean, chiseled, intelligent features, wearing in contrast to the others a black insulated jumpsuit, covered with dozens of pockets and pouches. On his head is a floppy fatigue hat, several trout flies in the brim.

CAPPY

(shouting)

Damn near made it, too.

Several of the men look up, seeing Grant as he approaches. Travis turns, looking at Grant.

TRAVIS

Boys, this is Captain Grant, I.S.A. He's along in case we get into any serious trouble. Let's go. We'll brief in flight.

The men pick up their gear, walking towards the hangar. Another of the men, a wiry, intense Chicano, nicknamed "RAT" for his expertise in surreptitious entry, looks around him, searching for something.

RAT

Colonel, I don't see the support van. Are we takin' it?

TRAVIS

Not this time, Rat. We're traveling light.

The huge doors begin to part...

55 INT. HANGAR (AIR FORCE BASE) - DAY

55

As the DOORS RUMBLE open, the men walk forward, casting long backlit shadows before them as they step through the hangar doors.

They stop, staring at something inside the cavernous hangar.

BAKER

What the hell is that?

CHARLIE

(pilot's drawl)

Well, it ain't made the cover of Popular Mechanics.

55A REVERSE ANGLE

55A

we see a hawk-like aircraft of black, anodized titanium, so rakish and streamlined it looks almost in flight just sitting on the ground. A flight crew, finishing last minute services and checks on the high-tech bird, remove their service equipment, the pilots entering the craft.

As the team approaches the plane, Cahill appears from inside. He calls out to Travis, gesturing towards the men.

CAHILL

(shouting)

Too much weight! Never designed for this many -- never get off the ground!

(beat)

And we're running late. For every minute we're here, we have to make up ten in the air. Got to go!

Travis turns to the men, pointing to the equipment.

TRAVIS

(shouting)

Cut it down! Close-quarter weapons, bomb kit, detection and surveillance gear, and the sleep agent. Dump the rest! Let's go!

Immediately the team begins digging through the equipment, taking only the essential items, leaving the rest on the hangar floor. As Travis and Grant stand next to each other, Travis's Driver appears.

DRIVER

Sir, I have your call to S.A.S command in London. 'Cousin Reggie' is on the scrambler.

Grant seems very curious as Travis takes the call on a SAT-COM briefcase unit, but Travis's words are drowned out as the powerful ENGINES on the jet begin to POWER UP.

- 56 EXT. RUNWAY - DAY 56
- The delivery plane has taxied into position and held, ENGINES WHINING. The plane pivots hard, aiming down the runway, the ENGINE REVVING to FULL BURNER, heat waves OBSCURING FRAME as the jet accelerates...
- 57 OMITTED 57
- 57A INT. MILITARY BASE (ENGLAND) - PRISON CELL - DAY 57A
- Where in the dim light of the cold cell, Jaffa sits on his bunk, dressed in gray overalls. Suddenly the heavy steel door swings open and several American MPs enter, pulling Jaffa to his feet, putting him in handcuffs. As the startled Jaffa is led from his cell, he sees an American diplomat, staring at him coldly from the hallway. As he's ushered down the hall, Jaffa realizes something significant has taken place.
- 58 EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE (NEAR LONDON) - DAY 58
- A convoy of U.S. and British military vehicles flies past on a country highway, the access roads blocked by military police. A sign reading: "LONDON 150km" is seen in the f.g.
- In the third vehicle from the lead, Jaffa sits in an armored Range Rover, surrounded by soldiers, the diplomat seated beside him.
- 59 INT. DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 59
- We PULL BACK to reveal the interior, spartan but functional. Fold-down jump seats accommodate the team, the rear of the jet devoted to racks of miniaturized electronic and navigational gear. The predominant feature of the jet, however, is the dome-like appendage swelling from the ceiling near the cockpit. A pressurized hatch is located in the center of the dome, surrounded by a series of gauges, levers and switches.
- The ship is intermittently buffeted by turbulence, obviously not the best of flying conditions. The men are intense and highly focused as they listen to Travis' briefing of the bizarre mission they are about to undertake. Grant is obviously the outsider, sitting near the rear of the aircraft.

(CONTINUED)

TRAVIS

The stakes are high on this one, gentlemen, the most important mission we've ever been handed. This assault is untested and carries more than the usual element of chance, but under the circumstances, it's the only chance those people on board have.

A quick look to Grant, then to Cahill.

TRAVIS

Otherwise, it's a standard suppression op, just as if we had boarded on the ground.

(beat)

All right, let's go through it. Baker.

Baker turns to a video screen, part of a portable high-tech communication and tracking system. He plots a simulated course, showing an intercept point of the 747 and the delivery plane over the Atlantic.

BAKER

The 747's transponder and radar is off, but the E2 now has a fix on them. Our intercept should be about here, roughly an hour out of London.

(beat)

That gives us four hours on board before she reaches the hundred mile limit.

TRAVIS

Give me that schematic.

Baker snaps an exploded-view cell, showing the 747 in intricate detail, into a light box. The team studies the glowing, back-lit schematic.

TRAVIS

Grant, you're up after Baker, find a hole and sit tight while Baker sets up the intercom link with the Pentagon. Sleep-agent is next. Rat, five bottles on the port manifold, Charlie, five on starboard.

Grant's voice breaks in, drawing several annoyed looks from the men.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT

Excuse me, Colonel... You're using sodium chloral-hydrate?

TRAVIS

(surprised)

You've done your homework. Any problems with that?

GRANT

In the tests of S.C.H. I've been briefed on, the effects on most subjects was a gradual drowsiness for about thirty seconds before unconsciousness.

TRAVIS

(curious)

Correct. What's your point?

GRANT

Thirty seconds may be too long. Ali is highly intelligent, acts instinctually, by nature suspicious of everything. The slightest indication his mission has been comprised could result in a disastrous reaction on his part.

Travis considers this.

TRAVIS

Good point. Baker?

BAKER

I can increase the saturation. It'll put 'em out instantly but it's pretty risky. We could lose someone before we cycle the gas out.

Travis looks at Grant.

TRAVIS

Increase it. We'll take the chance. Catman, you ready to fly it?

CATMAN, smooth, confident, a pilot's manual for a 747 open on his lap, looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CATMAN

Once we clear the flight crew from the cockpit, no problem. Should be on auto pilot but even if it isn't, plane pretty well flies itself.

TRAVIS

Once we've got control, Rat, you and Cappy start the sweep through the forward baggage compartment. If we find a bomb we divert. Baker.

CATMAN

(checking his map)
S.A.C. base at McNeil, Greenland is our best bet.

RAT

And if this bitch has a short fuse?

Cappy, resolved, opens a folding, three-sectioned soft case containing a fantastic array of miniature bomb tools. He looks up.

CAPPY

Well then, I guess your asses are all mine.

A sober moment passes through the group.

TRAVIS

All right. That's it. See to your equipment.

Grant looks over at Cahill, busily at work on a small, calculator-like device.

GRANT

Last minute calculations?

CAHILL

(sheepishly)
No. Three-dimensional chess. I don't do well with flying. Have to keep distracted.

The Pilot's voice breaks in, heard OVER SPEAKERS in the cabin.

(CONTINUED)

PILOT (V.O.)

The E-2 is vectoring us into an intercept with the 747 now. Estimating contact in thirty-eight minutes.

Anxious faces look up and then the team returns to packing and preparing equipment.

Travis, near the cockpit, is busily typing on a satellite transceiver unit, a high-tech computer phone unit, housed inside a black aluminum case. He enters a command and a small plastic strip, a magnetic code key, emerges from a slot. He closes the case, motioning for Grant.

TRAVIS

You'll run the intel-board, mikes, microwave scanners and video probes. Things run to plan, you're just along for the ride.

He gives Grant the mag-key, matter of factly.

TRAVIS

Hang on to this. Access key for a scrambled transmission I'm expecting. Little arrangement with Cousin Reggie in England. You'll need this to patch me through. Code name is 'Executive Decision.'

Grant nods, putting the code-key deep inside his shirt pocket. Travis looks at him, studying him. He grins.

TRAVIS

By the way, good call on the sleep agent.

(beat)

You're the expert on Ali. Tell me, aside from freeing Jaffa and killing a lot of innocent Americans, what does he hope to gain from all this?

GRANT

If the attack on Washington were successful, sometime in the aftermath, with Americans at the peak of their outrage, no doubt certain undeniable information would be leaked to the West.

TRAVIS

Leaked?

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (5)

59

GRANT

By Ali. Set up before his suicide. Information implicating the country who supplied Ali the nerve gas, the bomb, the diplomatic support needed to get the highjackers on board. So damning, so...

TRAVIS

That the U.S. would be forced to retaliate.

GRANT

In Ali's mind, hopefully so swiftly and devastatingly, maybe even nuclear, that a Pan-Arabic war would result, the focus at the only plausible target in the region, Israel.

TRAVIS

And restoring Jaffa as a leading power in the region as well. Very clever.

GRANT

Inspiration born of desperation.

TRAVIS

Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

They look at each other, a new level of respect for their situation passing between them.

60 EXT. 747 - DAY

60

The huge plane moves majestically onward on its course across the Atlantic.

61 INT. 747 CABIN AREA - DAY

61

Silent as a tomb. Terrorists armed with automatic weapons are stationed at various locations on the plane. All of the window shades have been pulled down.

A terrorist armed with an automatic weapon, pistol and grenade, moves slowly down the long corridor, his eyes glaring at the passengers, who sit terrified, unable to move or speak.

(CONTINUED)

He passes the mid-cabin area where Ali Hassan and two others have set up a monitoring station, adapted to the plane's gutted telephone system, consisting of a SHORT-WAVE RADIO, over which can be heard a NEWS BROADCAST, and alongside it, a military field radio.

As the guard nears the front of the plane, he walks past a terrorist, dragging the two murdered passengers, now covered in blood-stained blankets, into one of the forward bathrooms.

We FOCUS ON the PARENTS of Karen and DAVID, whispering to each other in urgent voices.

WIFE

I want them here, with us.

HUSBAND

No. They're insane. They've already killed two people. We're going to sit here...

WIFE

And do what?

The terrorist guard passes by them, then past Karen and David. As he does, Karen looks across at the two Greek boys, silent, terrified, the priest beside them deep in prayer, eyes closed, prayer beads moving through his fingers. One of the boys notices her, staring back at her with frightened eyes. Suddenly, on impulse, Karen stands, moving into the aisle. Her brother reacts, startled.

DAVID

(under his breath)

Karen! What are you doing! Get back here!

But Karen stands in the aisle, holding out to the Greek boy a Nintendo game, the boy remaining frozen, staring at her.

Two rows back, Karen's mother looks up, seeing Karen in the aisle, starts to rise when her husband's hand comes down firmly on her arm.

HUSBAND

(stern whisper)

No! Don't move.

Slowly they lean out, trying to get Karen's attention without alerting the guard.

(CONTINUED)

As Karen holds out the game, the Greek boy reaches out to accept it... A gun barrel flashes INTO VIEW, the game snatched from her hand. Terrified faces freeze in place, priest, children, parents, passengers, as the terrorist guard stares at the game. Angrily he shoves Karen aside, shouting at her in Arabic. As Karen begins to cry, her father, unable to restrain himself, lunges from his chair.

FATHER

You son of a...

The terrorist spins, slamming the butt of his rifle into the father's chest, driving him back into his seat. Instantly the barrel of the rifle is pressed hard into his windpipe, cutting off his air, the father beginning to choke. His wife reaches out, desperately, pleading...

WIFE

Please, you're choking him...

Please stop it!

But the terrorist presses harder, an angry sneer across his face, a very ugly situation about to get worse... Suddenly a hand reaches out, grasping the gun barrel. Startled the terrorist looks up into Ali's face. Ali pulls the gun away, carefully backing the guard into the aisle, speaking softly to him in Arabic. The terrorist settles but glares back in anger at the father.

Ali kneels to the floor, picking up the game. He examines it and then hands it to the Greek boy.

He helps Karen into her seat, speaking to her in English.

ALI

You must stay in your seat.

He gently roughs her hair, looking up into the frozen faces of her parents, and then into the faces of a dozen other passengers, all staring at him, humbled with fear. As Ali looks from face to face he sees, perhaps for the first time, the people, the human souls, who are destined to die with him in his desperate statement to the West. He grows agitated and then speaks out, almost as a parent to a child explaining why the child must be punished.

ALI

I am not your enemy.

(beat)

You have been betrayed by your own leaders... The supporters and instigators of the Zionist occupation of my homeland.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (3)

61

ALI (CONT'D)

(beat)

I am but an instrument of God, a messenger of his will. In my hand he has placed the Sword of Islam and commanded me...

He stares into the frozen faces, paralyzed in fear. He relaxes, smiles slightly.

ALI

But you have nothing to fear. God's mercy is bestowed upon the innocent and the righteous.

With a last look he turns and moves down the aisle.

62 INT. FORWARD GALLEY AREA - DAY

62

Fran, Nancy and two other attendants, sit in their jump seats. Fran warily eyes the terrorist as he passes by, the others averting him altogether. Fran turns to Nancy, sitting next to her, obviously still deeply shaken by the murders she witnessed earlier.

FRAN

(whispering)

Judy's been down there for four hours. They wouldn't have left her there alone. Something's wrong.

NANCY

(whispering; terrified)

Oh God, Fran, be quiet. They're crazy...

Sensing someone's presence, Nancy looks up, the words freezing in her throat as she looks into Ali's face.

ALI HASSAN

You will bring food for my men. Now.

Nancy, frozen with panic, closes her eyes, unable to move or speak. Ali leans in closer.

ALI

I said, bring food for my men...

But then Ali looks up, seeing the empty clipboard that once held the passenger manifest.

(CONTINUED)

He removes the clipboard, studying it, Fran's eyes momentarily going to the trash bin where she hid the manifest.

ALI
(to Nancy)
The passenger manifest. Where is it?

Startled, Nancy looks up. She has no idea where it is. Ali leans in closer, his face inches from Nancy, now trembling in fear.

ALI
(menacing)
I will not ask you again. Where is the manifest?

Fran's voice breaks the tension.

FRAN (O.S.)
I destroyed it.

Ali stands back, scrutinizing Fran.

ALI
(bemused)
Destroyed. How?

FRAN
The toilet...

ALI
I see. And why?

Fran hesitates a moment.

FRAN
To protect the passengers.

ALI
(smiles)
To protect the Jews.

He moves closer, scrutinizing her, his eyes deeply penetrating hers.

ALI
(quietly)
Or, someone else...

Fran is terrified out of her wits but holds her ground. Slowly, Ali backs away, eyes still probing her for the slightest betrayal.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (2)

62

ALI
 Brave, but a very stupid, foolish
 thing to do.
 (stares at her)
 And totally unnecessary.

He replaces the clipboard. He gestures to Fran.

ALI
 You will bring food for my men.

FRAN
 (calmly)
 What about the passengers? They've
 had nothing to eat or drink...

ALI HASSAN
 (smiles)
 No food, only drink.
 (beat)
 And, they may use the rear bathrooms,
 accompanied by a guard. Any
 suspicious movement, they will be
 shot.
 (beat)
 See, I am a generous man. You are
 free to move about the cabin. But,
 no more mistakes. Understood?

FRAN
 (softly)
 Yes. Thank you. I'll have to use
 the elevator.

Carefully she turns and opens the elevator door. As she
 steps inside, Ali stops her, motioning for one of the
 terrorist guards to accompany her.

ALI
 No more mistakes.

63 INT. 747 LOWER GALLEY - DAY

63

The elevator door opens and Fran emerges, followed by
 the guard. Immediately her eyes go to the limp form
 of Judy, lying against the food carts. She starts to
 move to her side, but the guard stops her with the
 barrel of his weapon. Slowly she pushes it aside.

FRAN
 (quietly weeping)
 Do what you want, I'm going to
 cover her body.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

She turns away from him, taking a blanket from an overhead storage compartment. She kneels, a last look at her friend before covering the body. As she stands and turns toward the food carts we see that her eyes, filled with tears, also blaze with anger and hatred.

64 INT. DELIVERY PLANE - DAY

64

Rat attaches a pressure valve to a small stainless steel cylinder, labeled: "GAS AGENT: SODIUM CHLORAL-HYDRATE." He re-locks the valve, replacing the cylinder into a circular, foam-filled nylon carrying case.

Beside him, Charlie opens an aluminum case, marked with a wide red stripe. Enmeshed in foam is an array of highly specialized weapons: a four-shot, high-powered taser unit, equipped with Teflon barbs; lethal-looking hand shotguns mounted on heavy pistol grips; a short-barreled impact cannon with several rubber-tipped shells.

Cahill, studying the team, turns to Travis, eyeing the .22 Beretta automatic strapped to his chest.

CAHILL

Why all the guns?

TRAVIS

Hope for the best, plan for the worst, Cahill.

RAT

Don't sweat it, they're all high-impact, close-quarter weapons.

A warning light flashes on, announced by a BUZZER. The pilot's voice is heard.

PILOT (V.O.)

Target acquisition, twenty-five miles and closing. Initiating approach system. Stand by.

The men quickly stow their equipment, putting on their closed-circuit communications units, consisting of headsets and microphones. Cahill nervously motions to Travis, and Grant to approach the cockpit.

CAHILL

Once the tunnel is pressurized, I'll open the hatch to the 747. When you're inside, I'll go back up and lock it.

(CONTINUED)

Travis interrupts.

TRAVIS

As soon as the hatch to the 747 is open, an alarm will activate in the cockpit. We have to lock off that switch within seconds or run the risk of being discovered. Just explain the procedure to Baker...

CAHILL

(adamant)

You don't understand. Opening the final hatch is complicated, every phase critical. I can't just tell someone how to do it. Unless I can ascertain that the seal is at the proper vacuum, you may not have any mission left to accomplish.

Travis considers this, Grant carefully studying him.

TRAVIS

Okay, Cahill. You make your inspection and open the hatches. But Baker is going to be right there behind you. As soon as the 747 is open, you haul ass inside so Baker can lock off that switch.

CAHILL

But...

TRAVIS

Then, when we're on board, you can climb back down and close the hatch.

Cahill is obviously not pleased with the idea of going on board the 747, even for a few minutes, but Travis has the final word.

CAHILL

(hesitant)

All right, but while the pressure locks are open, both planes are vulnerable to explosive decompression. Move fast. This was designed to be carried out with both planes on automatic pilot.

TRAVIS

Add it to the list.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED: (2)

64

The pilot's voice breaks in.

PILOT (V.O.)
Target sighted, initiating approach
on infra-red.

They move forward into the cockpit.

65 INT. COCKPIT DELIVERY PLANE - DAY

65

Through the windshield can be seen the 747 as the delivery plane approaches from the rear.

The CO-PILOT pulls down a transparent screen, covering the mid-section of the windshield. He activates an infra-red viewing field, revealing the wind-foil patterns flowing over the wings and along the body of the 747, leaving streaming contrails in its wake, the engines glowing red-black.

CAHILL
An infra-red imaging device. The
air flow of heated molecular
particles, surrounding the plane.

Suddenly the plane pitches and rocks, encountering a pattern of turbulence as they enter the wake of the 747. Moments later, as if through parting clouds, we see a channel appear, a clear spot underneath the belly of the plane.

CAHILL
There, the 'sweet-spot.' A valley
of dead air, like the eye of a
hurricane.

They stare in awe as the tiny plane is slowly engulfed by the huge mass of the 747 above it.

66 EXT. 747 - NOSE - DAY

66

MOVING DOWN the cockpit of the massive hull, seeing the crew inside, PANNING ACROSS the nose of the plane and below.

Slowly, appearing from below, the delivery plane, dwarfed by the huge 747, RISES INTO VIEW, moving forward.

66A INT. COCKPIT - 747 - DAY

66A

The flight crew quietly monitoring the aircraft's controls and instruments as the craft is buffeted by turbulence, the terrorist guard seated directly behind the captain on a jump seat. The plane is on automatic pilot, the crew totally unaware of the delivery plane's presence.

67 EXT. 747 - BELLY SIDEVIEW - DAY

67

The delivery plane pulls forward into position, approaching the nose area. Suddenly, the two planes are hit by turbulence, the 747 surging downward, the delivery plane darting quickly away.

67A INT. COCKPIT - DELIVERY PLANE

67A

The pilot and co-pilot maneuver the tiny plane into position beneath the 747. Despite their obvious skill with the aircraft, they are both incredibly tense, the operation requiring dead on, precision flying.

68 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - DAY

68

As it is hit by turbulence, the PARTITIONS, CABINETS RATTLING with the shock. Ali Hassan looks around him, a worried look on his face. Suddenly the plane is hit again, Ali buckling at the knees, nearly falling. He grabs a cabin phone, beads of sweat forming on his face.

ALI HASSAN

(subtitles)

Ahmed. Order the pilot to climb out of this turbulence, immediately.

69 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY

69

The TERRORIST hangs up the phone, turning to the Captain.

TERRORIST

Begin an ascent to thirty-six thousand feet.

The Captain turns to the FLIGHT ENGINEER.

CAPTAIN

Turn on the radar.

TERRORIST

No, no radar. Just climb.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

CAPTAIN

To do that, we'll need radar.

TERRORIST

No radar!

CAPTAIN

I'm still the captain of this plane and the safety of these passengers is my first concern. I'm not climbing into another air corridor without radar.

TERRORIST

(shouting)

You will obey!

The Terrorist COCKS his PISTOL, leveling it at the pilot's head.

CAPTAIN

Then you'd better shoot.

(beat)

Better yet, you know all about this plane, you do it.

The Terrorist hesitates, staring at the pilot.

70 INT. COCKPIT - DELIVERY PLANE - DAY

70

Recovering from the turbulent air, the PILOT begins yet another approach. The delivery plane eases toward the belly of the 757, filling the windshield. Suddenly the 747 drops, the Pilot jerking hard on the yoke, darting the agile craft away from the plunging mass above them.

PILOT

May have enough fuel for one more pass. We should break off, find the tanker and refuel. Your call, Colonel, but make it quick.

Travis looks back at Baker who consults his tac-board. He shakes his head, no. Travis turns back to the Pilot.

TRAVIS

Stick it.

PILOT

All right, hold on.

71 EXT. 747 - DAY

71

The delivery plane pulls back into position.

72 INT. COCKPIT - DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 72

The Pilot holding steady, the belly of the 747 filling the windshield.

PILOT

Extend the sleeve.

Cahill, now seated at his work station beside the hatch, activates a lever, the SOUND of HISSING AIR as the hydraulic pumps are switched on.

73 EXT. 747 - DAY 73

The docking tower begins to rise from the delivery plane, extending toward the belly of the 747, a laser-beam sighting device scanning along the skin of the plane.

74 INT. CABIN - DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 74

Cahill, at his station, is looking through a viewer while grasping a control-stick in one hand.

74A POV - BELLY OF 747 SEEN THROUGH VIEWER 74A

Powerful lights play along the hull as the delivery plane moves forward. A small hatch appears in the viewer. As the hatch is centered, a red-targeting grid appears over the hatch. A BEEP is heard.

CAHILL (V.O.)

Steady... steady. You're right on it... activated!

75 INT. COCKPIT - DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 75

On the screen in the dashboard a target-image appears, a read-out at the edges indicating closing speed and distance.

PILOT

I have the target. Prepare for link-up and lock.

ON the screen, the target grows closer as the Pilot 'lands' the plane into the belly of the 747.

The PILOT'S VOICE cracks over the speaker.

PILOT (V.O.)

Engage! Auto-pilot on.

Cahill instantly pulls a lever, the SOUND of powerful SUCTION-PUMPS being activated, filling the cabin.

76 EXT. TOWER - DAY 76

As the pumps are engaged, the thick, neoprene collar draws down tight against the skin of the 747.

77 INT. 747 MAIN CABIN - DAY 77

As another wave of turbulence hits, Ali again grabs the phone. He is obviously very worried about something.

ALI HASSAN
(subtitles)
Why are we not climbing!

He listens, his face incensed at what he hears. He slams down the phone, moving towards the front, passengers reacting with new alarm to the heavy buffeting the plane is receiving at times.

78 INT. CABIN AREA - DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 78

Cahill quickly reads a series of gauges on the tower, indicating pressure lock at 5,000 HG IN. A HISS of AIR as he throws a switch, pressurizing the tunnel.

CAHILL
Primary tunnel is pressurized and
stable. I'm going up.

Travis motions to Baker who moves up behind Cahill, Baker holding a stainless steel clip in his hand.

TRAVIS
(to Cahill)
As soon as that final hatch is
open, get the hell out of the way.

Cahill nods, then cautiously releases the locking device on the hatch. He pushes it upward, securing it, exposing the interior of the tunnel.

79 INT. DOCKING TUNNEL - DAY 79

Cahill climbs up the interior ladder. At the top of the tunnel is a second pressure hatch, isolating the outside collar and the skin of the 747. This section as well as the hatch is made of clear, plastic, enabling Cahill to physically examine the suction pumps outside.

Cahill studies a series of pressure and vacuum gauges and then using a flashlight, inspects the suction pumps, verifying that there is a complete seal with the skin of the 747.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

Just below him, Baker clings to the ladder, poised, ready to move.

CAHILL

(tense)

Seal looks good. I'm equalizing the outer chamber.

Carefully he opens a bleed valve, a HISS of AIR as the final link is pressurized. Cahill studies the gauges, consulting his watch. Taking a deep breath, he gently opens the final hatch, swinging it down into the chamber.

CAHILL

I'm opening the hatch...

He opens the hatch, revealing the belly of the 747 and the avionics hatch, surrounded by the heavy neoprene vacuum-collar. Cahill releases the locking device on the 747 hatch, lowering it into the tunnel. Quickly, urged by Baker, he scrambles up the ladder and inside the 747 as Baker follows, quickly placing the steel clip over a switch, closing it.

80 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY

80

A flashing yellow light on the dash winks off. The First Officer thumps it with his finger.

FIRST OFFICER

Short.

81 INT. 747 AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

81

Running crosswise to the plane, the nerve-center of the aircraft housing the flight recorder, transmitters, receivers and the main electrical connectors. Cahill climbs into the room, reaching down to grab a bag.

Below, Travis stands at the ladder, directing the boarding. Grant follows Baker, who has already begun attaching a series of electrical leads to the ship's power supply in preparation for his equipment. Seconds later, Rat scrambles into the room, followed by Charlie.

But as Charlie enters the hatch, his pack catches on the clip securing the warning switch, the clip falling unseen into the door frame.

82 INT. 747 - FORWARD SECTION - DAY

82

Hassan walks towards first class and the stairway.

83 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY

83

The light on the dash winks on again, catching the attention of the Captain and First Officer. The Terrorist guard, standing behind them, still holding a gun on the pilot, also notices the light.

TERRORIST

What is that light?

The First Officer thumps it with his finger.

FIRST OFFICER

Warning light, indicating an open hatch in the avionics room.

CAPTAIN

Which is impossible with the plane pressurized. Must be a short.

TERRORIST

Where is this room?

FIRST OFFICER

About ten feet below us.

84 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

84

Rat grabs a case from the tunnel, swinging it inside. As he turns back he sees the open switch on the hatch. Frantically he searches for the clip, finding it in the doorframe. Digging it out with his fingers, he replaces it over the switch. He looks up at the ceiling as if in anticipation...

85 OMITTED

85

thru
87thru
87

88 INT. COCKPIT - DAY

88

The yellow light on the dash winks off again.

CAPTAIN

Off again. Got to be a short.

Just then the plane is buffeted by turbulence, Ali stumbling into the room. He seems highly agitated.

ALI

Why are we not climbing?!

89 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 89

The team waits a moment for the buffeting to cease and then Charlie reaches down into the tunnel, pulling up one of the electronics cases.

Cappy has just cleared the hatch and is starting to rise to his feet, both hands on equipment bags, when the PLANE is HIT by windshear, a sudden and VIOLENT SHOCK as the plane falls several hundred feet before it bottoms out on solid air.

With the impact, Rat is thrown off balance, his body slamming into Cappy, sending him airborne across the narrow room.

89A CAPPY'S POV OF ROOM 89A

A DIZZYING RAPID DOLLY TOWARDS an electrical panel containing the high voltage bus bars and circuit breakers for the aircraft's heavy electrical system.

89B BACK TO SCENE 89B

Cappy, arms forward, smashes into panel, his right hand splintering a plastic safety cover protecting a huge, high voltage fuse, a blinding EXPLOSION of sparks and flames as his hand hits the fuse. Instantly, Cappy is blown backwards, the back of his neck slamming into the corner of a steel equipment rack. He falls to the floor, his hand smoking, his sleeve on fire.

Baker leaps on Cappy, smothering the fire with his body, Cappy's face in contorted, agonizing pain, barely resisting the primitive urge to scream.

90 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY 90

As the Flight Engineer throws a series of switches, providing backup power to the cabin lights, blown by the fuse.

PILOT

What the hell...

FLIGHT ENGINEER

Damned if I know. We blew something big.

90A INT. DELIVERY PLANE - CARGO AREA - DAY 90A

A MASSIVE SHOCK hits the plane, knocking Catman, and Doc to the floor. Travis looks up into the tunnel, beginning to climb.

90B INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY

90B

The Captain is arguing with Ali Hassan.

CAPTAIN

... I'm telling you, without radar
I can't climb into another corridor
filled with east-bound traffic.
But if we hit another pocket of
windshear, we could fall ten,
twenty thousand feet...

As another wave of TURBULENCE HITS, Hassan looks around
him, at the airframe and then to the pilots.

ALI HASSAN

Climb. Turn the radar on.

Suddenly the other Terrorist interjects.

TERRORIST

(subtitles)

Ali. It's a trick. We turn on
the radar, they can find us.
They'll discover us when we turn
back. The plan was not to...

ALI HASSAN

(to Captain)

Climb. Now. Turn on the radar.

The Flight Engineer switches on the radar. Ali's lieu-
tenant is obviously enraged at this infringement of their
plans.

CAPTAIN

Stand-by, we're climbing...

He begins to pull back on the controls...

91 INT. COCKPIT - DELIVERY PLANE - DAY

91

As a WARNING BUZZER SOUNDS. The Pilot checks his
instruments.

PILOT

Load on the sleeve increasing...
Jesus, they're climbing!

He grabs the stick...

91A INT. TUNNEL - DAY 91A

Travis, nearing the top of the tunnel when the PLANE is HIT by a sudden buffeting, knocking him from the ladder, just as two of the heavy equipment cases fall from above, wedging in the tunnel just above him.

92 OMITTED 92

93 INT. COCKPIT - DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 93

A SHRILL ALARM sounds as the plane pitches violently to starboard.

CO-PILOT

We're losing pressure on number six pump. Go with him, keep climbing!

94 EXT. 747 - DAY 94

The delivery plane sags sharply to starboard, STRESSING the sleeve and the docking seal. The PLANE begins to BUFFET and CHATTER wildly.

95 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 95

Grant, nearest the tunnel, struggles to pull the cases from the tunnel when there is a LOUD HISSING of AIR as one of the pumps begins to fail. Cahill pushes his way INTO the SCENE, looking down into the tunnel.

CAHILL

(panic)

We're losing the seal! Hurry!

With a combined effort, Charlie, Rat and Grant, pull the gear from the tunnel and onto the floor, as Cahill stares into the tunnel, frozen, listening to the increased VOLUME of HISSING.

Grant frees the last of the gear, seeing Travis, fighting to climb up the ladder. Grant extends his arm.

GRANT

Colonel!

The HISSING INCREASES, the seal threatening to go. Travis looks up, realizing...

TRAVIS

Close the hatch!

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED: 95

Grant hesitates, still extending his arm.

TRAVIS
We're losing it! Close the
god-damned hatch...

With the SCREAM of the failing SEAL increasing by the second, Travis scrambles down the tunnel...

96 INT. CABIN DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 96

Travis at the bottom of the tunnel, grabs for the hatch when ANOTHER BUFFETING knocks him aside. He recovers, grabbing the release. As he does he looks up, eyes locking with Grant's, a frozen moment, a look from Travis as if he were entrusting the rest of the mission to Grant. And then...

TRAVIS
Close the hatch!!!

Hesitant but obeying, Grant reaches down, closing the hatch to the 747...

But as Travis pulls the lower hatched closed, the delivery plane pulls free from the 747.

The escaping pressure turns into a SCREAM of AIR, followed by a THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION that rips through the plane. As the tower tears loose, the implosion sucks Travis through the tower as if a leaf in a gale.

97 EXT. DELIVERY PLANE - DAY 97

Pulls violently away from the 747 and begins to tumble out-of-control as it falls a thousand feet, the TOWER RIPPING apart, followed by one of the wings. An instant later, the plane disintegrates.

98 EXT. E2-HAWKEYE RADAR PLANE - DAY 98

Flying on station, tracking the 747 and the delivery plane. We GO IN ON the revolving radar dish.

99 INT. E2-HAWKEYE RADAR CENTER - DAY 99

An OPERATOR sits in front of a radar screen, surrounded by a complex array of radar equipment. On the screen we see the strong, steady blip of the 747, and the fading blip of the delivery plane.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

OPERATOR

They're gone.

100 INT. PENTAGON - OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

100

The crisis team is fixated on the overhead screen, plotting the course of the two planes, the course of the delivery plane fading, dropping away. In a moment it blinks from the screen.

A RADIO TRANSMISSION from the E2 breaks the stunned silence.

E2-OPERATOR (V.O.)

Castle Rock, this is Big Eye-6.
We have lost all contact with Hail
Mary.

The Major-General picks up the microphone.

GENERAL

Big Eye-6, this is Castle Rock.
Was delivery accomplished?

E2-OPERATOR (V.O.)

Castle Rock, I can't say. Hail
Mary was attempting delivery when
contact was lost.

A moment of silence, broken by the Director's voice.

DCI

(quietly)

Something must have failed with
the airlock and they depressurized.

Kaplan turns away from the overhead screen, his eyes cold and hard. He addresses the Admiral.

KAPLAN

Where is the Task Force, Admiral?

The Admiral points to a location on the situation board.

ADMIRAL

Carrier Task Force Six has been
diverted and is heading towards
an intercept point in the Atlantic.

PRESIDENT

Go to Red Alert. Contact the
President.

He looks up at the situation board, at the flashing dot, advancing steadily onward towards the United States.

100A INT. 747 AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

100A

Cappy is lying on the floor, his face covered in sweat, writhing in pain as Baker carefully sprays antiseptic over Cappy's burned hand and forearm, wrapping the area with gauze bandages.

BAKER

Best I can do for now. I've got some morphine, take care of that pain.

CAPPY

No... Might need me... Got to stay awake...

But as Baker moves Cappy's arm across his chest to isolate it, Cappy inhales sharply in pain.

CAPPY

Baker... My neck. Whole left side... burns like acid.
(moves fingers of left hand)
All down my arm...

Alarmed, Baker carefully feels behind Cappy's neck, gingerly palpating down his neck, stopping at a point near the shoulder blades. Cappy again winces, nearly fainting from the pain.

BAKER

There's a depression, a deformity of C-7...
(looks up)
He's got a fractured vertebrae. We've got to immobilize him.

100B INT. 747 - COCKPIT - DAY

100B

The Flight Engineer is patiently trying to explain to Ali his need to go into the avionics room.

FLIGHT ENGINEER

We don't know what happened. But I've got to go down there, check it out. We could have a fire, anything.

ALI

Where is this room?

The Engineer points to a hatch on the floor near the rear of the cockpit.

(CONTINUED)

100B CONTINUED:

100B

FLIGHT ENGINEER

About ten feet below us.

ALI

Go ahead.

The Engineer opens the hatch, peering down the narrow ten foot shaft, leading through the stairwell bulkhead and into the avionics room.

100C INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

100C

With the hatch above them open, light streaming down from above, the men move rapidly for cover, Cappy left where he lays, hidden in the shadows. Anxious looks from the men as they draw their weapons.

100D INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY

100D

The Flight Engineer descends into the tunnel, Ali standing over him, a flashlight in his hand, the Terrorist Guard pointing a gun at him. The Engineer looks at the gun.

FLIGHT ENGINEER

Relax. I'm not going anywhere.

100E INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

100E

The Engineer enters the darkened, cramped room, moving towards the electrical panel. He shines a tiny flashlight on the broken fuse cover, examining the destruction with a puzzled look. Suddenly he grows wary, slowly turning, looking down at the floor, into the shadows and Cappy's sweating, pain-racked face. He's about to speak when he looks up, directly into Rat's face, a pistol pointed at him. Dumbstruck the Engineer watches as Rat indicates silence, then points to the small American Flag on his shoulder.

The Engineer looks around, seeing other faces, staring at him, weapons pointed.

Rat gestures to the panel, then upwards towards the cockpit, as if to say, "Hurry up."

The Engineer turns back, throwing a switch, replaces the fuse, then restores the power to the fuse. Again, Rat gestures for silence, offering the "okay" sign. The Engineer numbly nods his understanding and moves back to the ladder. He looks up into the cockpit, Ali standing above, shining a flashlight on him. The Engineer climbs the ladder.

100F INT. 747 - COCKPIT - DAY

100F

The Engineer enters the room, closing the hatch. The Pilot turns.

PILOT

Everything okay down there?

FLIGHT ENGINEER

Huh? Oh, yeah. Just a blown fuse.
Must have been the turbulence.

The Pilot seems puzzled by this but the Engineer turns and sits at his station, staring at his instruments, still in shock at what he has just seen below.

101 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

101

Cappy has been strapped to a blackboard made from a bulkhead panel. Cahill, looking pale and stunned, watches with Grant as Rat and Charlie hold Cappy's head as Baker places a makeshift cervical collar of foam insulation around Cappy's neck. Baker then carefully tapes Cappy's head and shoulders to the blackboard. Cappy closes his eyes, resting.

A silence descends on the tiny room.

CHARLIE

(quietly)

What about Travis, the others?

CAHILL

(numb)

The plane depressurized. At this altitude,, the airframe would have collapsed, like an egg shell. They couldn't have...

The team is silent, stunned by the reality of their situation.

BAKER

Now what? We've got no radio, half the equipment...

CHARLIE

We're fucked, that's what.

Cahill suddenly panics.

CAHILL

They don't know we're here.
Think we're all dead...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAHILL (CONT'D)

(realizes)

They're going to blow us out of
the sky!

Cahill turns to them, panic filling his face.

CAHILL

We have to negotiate with them.
Tell them they know about their
plot, they'll never let them reach
the United States. It's our only
chance.

Rat, assessing their situation, speaks up.

RAT

I'm in charge, Cahill. Sit down
and shut up.

(beat)

There's only one thing we can do.
Take over the plane, let them know
we're in command and then land it
some place safe. As planned.

CAHILL

Look at you. There's nothing
left. You've got no chance.
We're the only ones who know
they aren't going to make it.
They have to listen...

Rat reaches out, grabbing Cahill by the shirt, yanking
him forward, nose to nose.

RAT

(coolly)

Get a grip, Cahill.

(beat)

We're all in the this together,
so just hang with us and do what
you're told. Now sit your ass
down and stay put.

Stunned but under control, Cahill nods, Rat releasing
him.

Silence settles over the room, the men now realizing
there is but one choice facing them.

RAT

All right. We need to know how
many, where they are, how they're
armed.

(CONTINUED)

BAKER

We should set up the probes,
mikes.

(nods to Grant)

Let the Captain here have a
listen. Could be a dozen of them,
we don't know.

RAT

Okay. What's left of the gear?

BAKER

Not much. No radio, scanners,
sleep agent, only half the weapons.
We've got fiber optic probes and
mikes, infra-red goggles, bomb
kit. That's it.

RAT

And no one to fly the plane.
What's our time frame?

Baker consults a Plexiglass card, three analog watches
indicating elapsed time; time on board; time to fail
safe, the sweep hands moving at steady, unstoppable
speed.

BAKER

Unless a change in speed and
course, we've got three hours
and forty-eight minutes.

RAT

All right. We figure out where
they are, how to hit 'em.

He points to the power control boxes on the bulkheads.

RAT

Power for lights, everything is
right here. We blow the lights,
use infra-red to hit 'em hard
while they're still surprised.

(beat)

Let's get started.

Again, Grant's cautious warning sounds out.

GRANT

You're forgetting something.

RAT

What's that?

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: (3)

101

GRANT

The bomb.

RAT

We'll worry about that after we take the plane. We can't spare the time to look for it.

GRANT

I don't think you can afford not to...

RAT

(irritated)

Let's get one thing straight, Captain. You're still along as an advisor. Stick with the interpreting. When I need your opinion, you'll know it.

GRANT

It's more complicated than chain of command. Finding that bomb is just as important, maybe more, than taking over this plane. Think about it.

From his stretcher, Cappy calls out.

CAPPY

He's right. Got to know if there's a bomb.

(beat)

Could be a pressure switch, timer. Try to land the plane, change altitude, anything could set it off. Don't know what you're dealing with. Got to find it.

The men look to Rat for a decision. Rat looks at Cappy, then to Grant. He nods.

RAT

We'll look for it while we're setting up. Charlie, tools and bomb kit. Get started.

102 EXT. 747 - DAY

102

Moves silently above the clouds, 36,000 feet above the Atlantic.

- 103 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY 103
The Flight Engineer is staring at the hatch on the floor, leading to the Avionics Room. He looks up at the terrorist guard in the doorway and then to the pilots, a look of frustration on his face. He's dying to tell them.
- 104 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY 104
Rat, reaching the bulkhead leading to the forward galley, uses a pair of hydraulically powered shears to cut through the wall.
- 105 INT. FORWARD GALLEY - DAY 105
Carefully pushing aside the bulkhead, Rat, gun in hand, enters the galley. Seeing the blanket on the floor, he pulls it back, finding the dead attendant. He replaces the blanket, going to the elevator door, carefully opening it. Seeing that the lift is above him on the main cabin level, he begins to cut the rivet heads from the floor using his shears.
- 106 INT. NOSE OF PLANE - BELOW FIRST CLASS - DAY 106
Where Baker, using a heavily padded, nearly silent ELECTRIC DRILL, bores a tiny hole into the ceiling.
- 107 INT. FIRST CLASS CABIN - NOSE SECTION - DAY 107
CLOSE ON a section of carpet as the ceramic tip of the drill silently emerges at a forward angle. As we PULL BACK, we realize that the drill has just missed the boot of one of the terrorist guards. An inch in the other direction...
- 108 INT. NOSE OF PLANE - BELOW FIRST CLASS - DAY 108
Removing the ceramic bit, Baker inserts into one of the two holes he has drilled a spike microphone and into the other, a fiber-optic probe. He plugs the microphone into his com-unit.

On the viewscope he sees two huge boots, grossly distorted by the wide-angle lens.

BAKER
(under his breath)
Shit.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

108

A moment later, the boots move forward, the form of the terrorist revealed as he walks past the passengers, pausing at the work station by the staircase leading to the upper level.

BAKER

(to mike)

Got one. First class cabin. W.Z.
63 machine gun, grenade, and 9mm
pistol.

As he continues to watch, the terrorist from the cockpit, descends the staircase to talk. Baker switches on a tiny bug mike and we faintly hear the CONVERSATION in ARABIC...

109 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

109

Grant is seated before a fold-out, portable control panel, a series of lights and switches indicating the various locations of the highly sensitive spike mikes. Grant writes: "First Class" on a piece of tape, sticking it on the board. He listens to the conversation in Arabic.

GRANT

(to headset)

Sounds like one more on guard in
the upstairs cockpit and business
class area.

110 INT. OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

110

Where Rat, suspended upside-down, attached to a special harness to a thin cable, strung the entire length of the plane, pulls himself along on silent rollers, a human gondola. The air temperature is cold enough to fog the breath.

RAT

(to headset)

Okay, I'll check it out. I'm at
mid-cabin. Hold on...

He stops, twisting to his side, pushing the viewscope probe and mike through a joint in one of the ceiling panels.

110A RAT'S POV OF THE CABIN BELOW

110A

Seen through the wide-angle lens, the rows of passengers directly below him. The probe moves, revealing more sections of the cabin, holding on the mid-section galley area where four terrorists, including Ali Hassan, are gathered, listening to the SHORT-WAVE and MILITARY RADIOS.

110B BACK TO SCENE

110B

RAT

(to headset)

Four in the main cabin, listening to a radio. Two others, in the aisles. Machine guns, side arms, grenades.

111 AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

111

Grant is now listening to the conversations in Arabic from the mid-cabin area.

GRANT

(to headset)

They're waiting for a report on Jaffa's takeoff from London. Sounds like they'll contact them on their own frequency.

112 OMITTED
thru
116

112
thru
116

116A INT. MID-CABIN WORK STATION - DAY

116A

Fran enters and begins preparing coffee. She removes a packet of coffee from a drawer, dumping the old coffee filter in the trash. She searches for a new filter, and finding none, reaches to an overhead cabinet, opening it. As she does, Ali's coat, hung over the aprons, falls to the floor. As she bends to pick it up, a folded map falls to the floor. Fran can see that it is an aeronautical navigation map, part of the Washington, D.C. area exposed. Cautiously Fran opens the map, seeing an air corridor approaching the Washington airport where the White House and other government buildings are located, heavily circled in red marker, the notation: "2,000 feet," in handwriting.

She studies the map and then carefully refolds it, replacing it in the inside pocket. As she stands, Ali walks into the room. Fran looks at the coat.

FRAN

I'm sorry. It fell when I opened the cabinet.

(gestures to open
cabinet)

I was getting some coffee filters.

(CONTINUED)

116A CONTINUED:

116A

He reaches out, taking the coat. He checks inside, seeing the tip of the map in the inside pocket. He reaches to his waistband, his hand closing on the handle of his pistol, the move hidden by the coat.

ALI

How are the passengers? Are they comfortable?

FRAN

They're... very scared, but under the circumstances doing well.

Ali's eyes, probing, searching.

ALI

It's important they remain calm. Is there anything they need?

FRAN

No. They just want this to be over with.

ALI

Soon enough. A few more hours. I will share something with you, but it must remain between us.

(studying her)

When we land... in London. We will be releasing the women and children.

Fran stares at him, knowing this is a lie.

FRAN

That would be very kind.

He studies at her a long moment, then removes his hand from the gun, folding the coat.

ALI

I'm keeping you from your work.

He turns and leaves. Fran stares ahead, her hands trembling. She knows something horrible is going to happen with this highjacking and she has to do something. But what? She sees the empty clipboard where the manifest had been, thinks, and then removes from her apron her ballpoint pen.

117 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

117

The air temperature also cold enough to fog the breath.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

117

Charlie, using a sophisticated array of bomb detection equipment to locate the presence of explosives and magnetic and electrical fields, makes his way over the tops of the baggage containers. He stops, carefully moving one of the probes over a container. He adjusts the sensitivity of the instrument and then keys his mike.

CHARLIE

(to headset)

Rat. Forward baggage compartment.
Got something.

RAT (V.O.)

(filtered)

I'm on my way.

117A INT. MAIN CABIN - DAY

117A

Fran walks down the aisle, stopping at a seat. For a moment, all we see are the brown leather boots of the Air Marshal.

FRAN

I believe you're next, sir.

The AIR MARSHAL, early 30s, mustache, dark hair, looks up, puzzled.

FRAN

The bathrooms. You're next.

Something in her eyes.

AIR MARSHAL

Thank you.

As he rises she moves away, face close to his, whispering, barely audible.

FRAN

(whispering)

Razor blades...

She turns to the passenger across the aisle, leaving the Marshal bewildered over her phrase as he heads down the aisle.

118 EXT. 747 - DAY

118

As we TRACK ALONGSIDE the massive airframe, HOLDING ON the section just aft of the wing juncture.

We MOVE ACROSS the tops of baggage containers, barely two feet of clearance overhead. Tiny lights have been clipped to the ceiling, illuminating the darkened room with red light.

We ARRIVE at a container, opened up like a soup can, baggage strewn everywhere. Overhead lights illuminate the open container as if it were the crater at Tycho in 2001. Inside is Rat and Charlie. Charlie examines something in the container with his detector.

CHARLIE

Almost missed it. Reading was less than one part in two million.

Inside we see a dismantled wooden packing crate, revealing a three-tiered object, at the bottom of which are two rows of double-ended bottles, two feet long, six inches in diameter, stacked two deep, a total of 12 bottles. The surface of the bottles is a shiny, metallic material, like mirrored sunglasses. Strapped to the canisters with stainless steel bands, is a black metal box, two feet high.

RAT

Whatever it is, it's sittin' on enough Semtex to fuck up your whole day.

CHARLIE

(nervously)

Let's do it.

Using a hand-powered drill, Rat carefully drills a tiny hole into the case. He attaches a fiber-optic probe, peering through the eyepiece. He looks up.

RAT

Take a look.

Charlie uses the probe to examine the container. He looks up, confused.

CHARLIE

Way out of my league.

Rat studies the interior again, thinks a moment and then keys his mike.

RAT

(to mike)

Captain, you know anything about bombs?

120 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 120

Grant at the com-board, listening to Rat.

GRANT

A lot of theory.

RAT (V.O.)

There's something I want you to look at -- forward baggage compartment.

120A INT. REAR OF PLANE - DAY 120A

The Air Marshal waits near the bathrooms, a Terrorist on guard. A passenger leaves one of the bathrooms, the Guard gesturing to the Marshal to enter.

GUARD

Thirty seconds.

The Marshal enters, attempting to close the door, the Guard shoving his foot INTO the FRAME.

GUARD

Leave it open.

120B INT. BATHROOM - DAY 120B

Leaving the door slightly ajar, the Marshal faces the toilet, eyes searching the room, focusing on the tiny sign near the sink: "DISPOSE OF RAZOR BLADES HERE." Still facing the toilet he opens the tiny disposal box, removing a folded slip of paper. He reads:

"Plane going to Wash. D.C. Target
White House. Do something."

Behind him the DOOR EXPLODES OPEN, the Marshal dropping the paper into the toilet...

TERRORIST

Too long! Back to your seat!

The Marshal bends to flush, the note stuck to the bowl near the top. He FLUSHES, the water flowing over the note, still stuck. He FLUSHES AGAIN...

TERRORIST

Out!

The Terrorist yanks the Marshal around, just as the water catches the paper, swirling it down the toilet.

121 INT. BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

121

Grant eases into the pit, replacing Charlie. He takes the probe from Rat, studying the interior of the bomb a moment before standing. He looks puzzled, very worried.

GRANT

(quietly)

You'd better get Cappy.

RAT

We can't move him.

GRANT

I don't think you've got any other choice.

Rat considers this and then nods to Charlie.

122 INT. PENTAGON WAITING ROOM - DAY

122

The Arab Diplomat and an Assistant are in the room. The Secretary of State, the DCI and Kaplan enter the room. The Diplomat hands a document to Kaplan who grimly reads its contents.

ARAB DIPLOMAT

The man who designed the bomb is most probably Jean-Paul Demou. That's a recent photograph. He's French, nuclear engineer, once assigned to a reactor plant in Damascus, Syria. His wife, a Syrian national, was killed during an Israeli attack on the plant, three years ago.

Kaplan hands the document to the DCI then offers his hand to the Arab.

KAPLAN

Thank you for your help. Please excuse me.

He takes the two men aside.

KAPLAN

It's confirmed.

DCI

Twelve canisters and at least fifteen pounds of plastic explosives. We're dealing with a potential kill-factor of a low-yield nuclear weapon.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

122

SECRETARY OF STATE

Then we have no other choice.

KAPLAN

As per the orders of the President, instruct Admiral Crosby to go to full alert. When he's in range, he's to launch his strike aircraft. Authorize the press release for the B.B.C. as per Ali's instructions.

SECRETARY OF STATE

If we have to shoot down the 747, why release Jaffa at all?

DCI

We have to take Ali's word that there will be more bombings in London if he's not airborne by three.

KAPLAN

Contact Ambassador Hennings in London. I want to deliver a message to Jaffa. I want him to negotiate with Ali Hassan. Tell him we know of Ali's plot, that we will exchange the lives of the passengers for Ali's, if he will divert to an isolated airbase. Jaffa's the only one who knows the frequencies to contact Ali.

(beat)

I'm not giving up on those four hundred Americans. That madman is our last avenue of hope. We've got to try.

123 INT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER - HANGAR DECK - DAY

123

Somewhere in the Atlantic. Several F-14's are being readied for flight, deadly Sidewinder missiles fitted to their racks, magazines of .20MM cannon rounds loaded into place.

124 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

124

Baker, Charlie, Rat and Cahill carefully move the makeshift stretcher with Cappy strapped in place, over the tops of the baggage containers.

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

Working on hands and knees, they lift, move and pass the stretcher along, straining and sweating in the close confinement. The stretcher is placed alongside the open container, Cappy grimacing in pain from the movement.

RAT

Sorry to do this to you, Cappy.
But we've got a bad one here.

GRANT

It's some form of computer
controlled triggering device, very
sophisticated.

CAPPY

(in pain)
Let me have a look.

Baker attaches a second eyepiece to the unit, holding one to Cappy's eye as he squeezes the trigger. Grant observes the interior along with Cappy.

124A CAPPY'S POV - INT. BOMB

124A

In the eerie illumination of the probe is revealed a forest of printed circuit boards, and in one section, a rotating laser-disc-like mechanism, connected through a series of relays and wires to a thick floor of dark orange material at the base of the computer, sitting directly atop the nerve gas.

124B RETURN TO SCENE

124B

Cappy studying the bomb.

CAPPY

Micro-processor, dedicated fixed
drive, least 40 megabytes... could
be running a dozen programs...

Cappy now sees the guts of the bomb, the lens moving around, showing the relays and probes, pressed into the plastic explosive at the base.

CAPPY

Take me in a little closer...

As the lens zooms in and moves around the interior, Cappy grows more concerned and focused by the second.

(CONTINUED)

124B CONTINUED:

124B

CAPPY

Sweet Jesus... nerve gas, binary canisters... Plastic in two pound blocks, sixteen pounds more or less, enough to atomize this plane... Guy doesn't fuck around. This ain't no pipe-bomb and a six volt battery.

(beat)

This is major-league talent.

The lens plays across a glass tube with several elements inside.

CAPPY

Now what is this? Stop. Go in on that. Right there.

(beat)

Now that's something I do recognize. Barometric pressure switch. Activated on take-off, probably set to air-burst during landing.

(beat)

Could be the way in. Looks like an isolated trigger. If I can... if you can disable that switch, it might buy you some time.

Grant stands, looking into the faces of the men grouped around him. Rat ponders the situation.

RAT

Okay, we go as planned. We shut this thing down, take over the plane and get it to someplace safe.

CHARLIE

Who gets to fuck with the mousetrap?

They're stumped on this one. Grant speaks up.

GRANT

Cahill.

RAT

(stunned)

Cahill?

GRANT

He's the best qualified and the only one you can spare.

(looks at bomb)

He's a design engineer. He builds stuff like this all the time.

(CONTINUED)

124B CONTINUED: (2)

124B

RAT

Except it doesn't go boom if you fuck up.

(thinks)

What the hell. All right, it's your baby. The rest of us, let's get in position. Charlie, mid-cabin. Baker, rear compartments. I'll take the cockpit, business class. Keep your units on. Let's go.

The commandos depart leaving Grant and Cappy behind. Grant turns to Cappy.

GRANT

So what do you think?

CAPPY

Honestly?

GRANT

Honestly.

CAPPY

We're all lookin' up the ass end of a dead dog.

124C INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

124C

Off to one side, Grant is talking to Cahill, who stares at him, dumbfounded.

CAHILL

Jesus. I don't know anything about bombs. I can't do it. Why me? Why not you?

GRANT

I'm the only one who can monitor their conversations. You're all we've got left.

(beat)

Look at it this way, you've built computers before, haven't you?

CAHILL

(puzzled)

Yes, but what does that have...

GRANT

Now you're going to take one apart.

(CONTINUED)

124C CONTINUED:

124C

CAHILL

But what if I...

GRANT

Make a mistake? Don't worry about it, Cahill, you'll never know it.

(beat)

You can do it, Cahill. Now let's get going, I've got work to do.

Grant pats Cahill on the shoulder. He moves over the cargo containers towards the bomb where Cappy lies, Cahill reluctantly following.

GRANT

All right, Cappy. Walk him through it. Call me if you need any help.

Grant leaves.

CAPPY

Don't worry, Cahill, this is just like playing with Leggos, but more exciting. Bring that bomb kit over here and let's get started.

Cahill slides the bomb kit into position.

CAPPY

First things first. Looks like that black cover is just a lead shield. See if you can lift it off... But, Cahill, everything real easy, okay?

Grant carefully releases the four spring-latches at the base of the cover. He removes the fiber-optic probe and then gently lifts the cover, revealing the bomb in its entirety.

125 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY

125

With the Terrorist Guard now downstairs, the Flight Engineer is trying to tell the disbelieving pilots what he witnessed earlier.

FLIGHT ENGINEER

(urgent; whispering)

I'm telling you, I saw them. Americans...

He hears the GUARD ASCENDING the stairs and APPROACHING the cockpit. He turns back to his work station.

125A INT. MAIN CABIN - DAY 125A

Where the Marshal ponders his dilemma, carefully studying the positions of the Terrorists, trying to formulate a plan.

125B INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 125B

Grant is on the com-board, headset on, monitoring the various microphones and serving as the link to the team.

He keys a switch labeled "CAHILL."

GRANT

Cahill. How you doing?

126 INT. BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY 126

Cahill is huddled over the bomb, Cappy's bomb-kit open beside him, an electronic detector attached to the wires near the barometric switch.

A mirror, taken from a vanity case, has been attached to Cappy's stretcher by an aluminum pole, somewhat like a rear-view mirror. From his position, Cappy can supervise Cahill's work on the bomb.

CAHILL

(to mike)

Uh, okay, I guess. We're ready to start.

(to Cappy)

Cappy. The meter indicates 15 oms.

CAPPY

Okay, that's good. Looks like it's in parallel and isolated. Go ahead and complete the by-pass.

Cahill attaches the end of an alligator clip to the right side of the switch, completing a by-pass loop of the unit.

127 INT. ELEVATOR - COACH LEVEL - DAY 127

FROM ABOVE, we see the floor of the elevator pushed upward, revealing Rat in the lower galley. With the skill of a gymnast he carefully wedges his way upward into the elevator, holding his body against the wall as he closes the floor panel.

Holding tight to the wall, he carefully peers out the elevator window, seeing Fran, her back to him, working at the galley.

128 INT. MID-CABIN WORK STATION - DAY 128

Fran catches sight of a movement, reflected in the polished surface of the stainless steel wall. Startled, she turns and before Rat can duck, their eyes meet, a look of total shock registering on her face. The flag is visible on Rat's shoulder as he puts his finger to his lips.

Suddenly Fran hears SOMEONE APPROACHING from behind, Ali appearing. A moment's hesitation and then she turns, grabbing a coffee urn and a cup. Putting her back to the elevator window, she offers Ali a cup of coffee. He stares at her suspiciously and then accepts the coffee.

129 INT. ELEVATOR - DAY 129

Rat rapidly turns his attention to the overhead panel. Pulling the panel downward, he pulls himself into the upper section, reaching down to close the panel.

130 INT. WORK STATION - DAY 130

Ali sips the coffee, studying Fran. He's very uneasy about something but he can't put his finger on it. Finally he moves on.

Fran looks around her, and then cautiously shoots a glance inside the elevator. It's empty. We FOLLOW her gaze UPWARDS to the overhead panels.

131 INT. 747 OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY 131

Above the coach section, the longest open space of the plane, consisting of support struts and ribs for the ceiling structure; air conditioning units; ducting, wiring and hydraulic lines. Rat is crouched on one knee, closing the top panel to the elevator shaft.

RAT

(to mike)

Shit, I was made. Attendant saw me in the elevator.

(beat)

Grant, you copy this?

131A INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 131A

GRANT

I copy. Describe her.

(CONTINUED)

131A CONTINUED:

131A

RAT (V.O.)

(urgent)

She's working the mid-cabin.
Short blonde hair, five six.

GRANT

Okay. I'll have Baker keep an
eye on her. All we can do is
watch, hope she can keep a secret.

(switches)

Baker...

131B INT. OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY

131B

Rat continues on, spider-walking along the support beams, reaching up to clip in to the trolley cable when his foot hits a patch of grease, his foot flying out from under him. In one cat-like movement, Rat flips his position, catching himself spread-eagled over the lower support beams, directly over the plastic ceiling panels for the main cabin. Sweat drips from his face as he carefully regains his position.

132 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - DAY

132

Fran studies the ceiling, half-expecting the commando seen earlier to come crashing through to the floor. She looks at Ali, some distance behind her, watching her, unaware of the disturbance she has just heard.

133 INT. OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY

133

As Rat, moving down the cable, approaching the forward-most section of the plane, Charlie's voice cuts in.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

(filtered)

I'm in position, mid-cabin.
They're all over the place. I can
take two, maybe three. I'm good,
but I ain't that good. We need
another gun.

RAT

Okay, stand by. I'm at the
forward section. Let's see how
bad it is up there.

He moves on, pulling himself along the cable towards the forward section.

134 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

134

Grant wipes the sweat from his brow and taking a pair of clippers from Cahill, moves his hand into the heart of the bomb.

CAPPY

Cahill, could you adjust the mirror? I want to take a better look at this thing.

(Cahill adjusts mirror)

That's better. Now, clip the wires on either side. Don't touch anything else.

Cahill places the cutter around the wire. He hesitates and then, clips the wire, watching the om meter, the needle darting slightly and then holding on: 15 oms. Relieved, he clips the second wire.

CAPPY

Good work. That should do it.

Relieved, Cahill sits back, keying his com-unit.

CAHILL

(to mike)

We've isolated the pressure switch.

134A INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

134A

Grant switches from Cahill on the "B" channel to the "A" channel.

GRANT

Rat, this is Grant. They've isolated the switch.

RAT (V.O.)

Thanks. All right, everyone in final positions. Captain, I need to see you in the forward galley, right away.

Grant seems puzzled by this.

135 EXT. GATWICK AIRFIELD (LONDON) - DAY

135

A light mist is falling on the tarmac where a Lear jet is being serviced by a flight crew. Long range, wing-tip fuel tanks are being installed.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

A Mercedes sedan, darkened windows, pulls alongside, accompanied by a military escort. Three Arabs emerge from the car, two obviously pilots, carrying flight bags, the other, a grim-faced MAN dressed in a tailored suit.

From the plane, a MECHANIC emerges, descending the stairs, the name on his coveralls reading: Reggie. He addresses the three men in a heavy Cockney accent.

MECHANIC

(grinning)

She's all yours, China-plate.

The Mechanic moves on, the grim-faced Man turning to the pilots, speaking in Arabic.

MAN

(subtitles)

Search it. Everything.

The pilots enter the plane.

136 INT. GATWICK AIRPORT - VIP LOUNGE - DAY

136

Inside a commercial aviation building, now serving as a heavily guarded holding room for Jaffa. Soldiers and security men are everywhere. Seated on a couch, in a darkened side of the room, is Jaffa, wearing a belly-chain and handcuffs. The U.S. AMBASSADOR to England is speaking to Jaffa, two marine guards standing nearby.

AMBASSADOR

... If they will divert to Gander Air Force Base, Newfoundland, the United States will guarantee the safe passage of Ali and his men back to the Middle East.

(beat)

Otherwise, he will never be allowed to reach the shores of the United States.

Jaffa studies the Ambassador appraisingly. He may be in chains but beginning to relish the power attending his new found importance. He smiles, assuming a diplomatic air.

JAFFA

Ali is an impassioned man, but in the interests of peace, I will do my best.

AMBASSADOR

I am sure you will.

137 INT. 747 FORWARD GALLEY - DAY

137

Rat and Grant are conferring off to one side of the elevator, just below the emergency escape hatch, leading to the main cabin aisle above. Rat hands Grant a hand shotgun, the size of a flare gun.

RAT

There's just too many of them,
Captain. We need another gun.

Grant looks at the weapon.

GRANT

It's been years since I even
handled a gun...

RAT

Don't worry, with this you can't
miss. One guy on station just
above us. I'll cue you, you'll
have the element of surprise.

Rat grabs the escape handle to the hatch in one hand,
holding the weapon tight to his chest in the other.

RAT

Hold it tight, like this. Push
up hard, two steps up the ladder,
aim straight at his chest and fire.
Don't think, just shoot.

138 EXT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER (MID-ATLANTIC) - DAY

138

As the squadron of F-14's are launched from the catapults,
SCREAMING upward, silver messengers of death.

139 INT. 747 BUSINESS CLASS CLOSET STORAGE AREA - DAY

139

Directly behind business class. Rat emerges from a
service hatch, easing to the floor inside the closet.
Cautiously he parts the two doors, looking into the
business class compartment and the cockpit just beyond.

RAT

(to mike)

In the business class closet. I'll
be set in about thirty seconds.

140 INT. UPPER SECTION - DAY

140

Baker, suspended upside down, moves quickly and silently
down the cable, heading toward the rear of the plane,
passing Charlie as he goes.

141 INT. FORWARD GALLEY - DAY 141

Grant moves into position, under the emergency escape hatch, leading to the aisle of the coach section. He grasps the overhead handle which will push the door up. He stares at the weapon in his hand.

RAT (V.O.)
(filtered)
I'll take the man in the cockpit first, then down the stairs for the second. You all move ten seconds later. Baker, Charlie...

142 INT. UPPER SECTION - TAIL AREA - DAY 142

Baker is positioned over the floor, holding open a panel, looking down into the rear-most cluster of bathrooms.

BAKER
(to mike)
I'm in position. Rear bathrooms.

Baker eases down into the room, taking up position at the door.

143 INT. OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY 143

Where Charlie has placed a circle of detonation cord on the floor. He's positioned on a support beam above the ceiling panel, holding the detonating switch in his hand. He looks prepared to jump after he blows the floor.

CHARLIE
(to mike)
Charlie. Ready to blow the ceiling.

144 INT. BUSINESS CLASS CLOSET - DAY 144

Rat, his hand on the doors, is holding a silenced .22 automatic pistol. Through a crack in the door he can see the Terrorist standing several feet away, his back to him.

RAT
(whisper)
Okay, dude is right in my sights. Here we go...

145 INT. FORWARD GALLEY - DAY 145

Grant releases the safety on the deadly-looking hand shotgun, his hand trembling. He nervously double-checks the unfamiliar weapon, making sure it is cocked. He closes his eyes, blinking away the sweat.

146 INT. COACH - WORK STATION - DAY 146

Where the four Terrorists are grouped, listening to the radios. A NEWS BROADCAST is underway on the SHORTWAVE.

147 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY 147

Cahill sitting beside the bomb as Cappy studies it through his mirror. Suddenly a series of red lights flash in sequence on a unit in the center of the bomb.

CAPPY

What the hell was that?

CAHILL

(startled)

I don't know. Looked like some kind of...

The lights flash again.

CAPPY

Jesus Murphy. Stop them, Cahill. Stop the hit!

CAHILL

What?!

CAPPY

(in pain)

Use the radio. Tell them to stop the hit. Now!

Cahill fumbles for the channel switch on the com-unit.

148 INT. BUSINESS CLASS CLOSET - DAY 148

Rat pushes the door open further, lowering his pistol, sighting down on the head of the Terrorist, a few feet away. His finger starts to squeeze the trigger...

Suddenly Cahill's frantic voice breaks in.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

148

CAHILL (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Stop! Stop the attack! Stop the
 attack!

As the Terrorist starts to turn, Rat pulls back inside,
 silently closing the door. He wipes the sweat from his
 face.

RAT
 (under his breath)
 Jesus!

149 INT. FORWARD GALLEY - DAY

149

Grant closes the escape hatch, collapsing to the floor.

RAT (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Cahill, what the fuck is going on?!

CAHILL (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 He said to stop. Cappy. He said
 to stop you.

RAT (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Cappy. What is it?

150 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

150

Cahill is holding the com-unit to Cappy's head.

CAPPY
 (urgent)
 You see any terrorist with anything
 looks like a transmitter, box,
 wires, anything?

RAT (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 No. Just weapons.

CAPPY
 Well, someone just ran a program
 test on the bomb. Whoever he is,
 he's holding an override switch,
 and he's got his finger right on
 the god-damned trigger...

Cahill closes his eyes.

CAHILL
 Christ...

- 151 INT. COACH - MID-SECTION - CLOSE ON SMALL, COMPUTER-LIKE DEVICE 151
A hand touches a key and a series of green lights flash in series.
- 152 EXT. F-14'S REFUELING SEQUENCE - DAY 152
Flying in formation, waiting their turn to top off their fuel tanks from a carrier launched A-6 Tanker.
- 153 INT. PENTAGON - OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY 153
Kaplan and his entourage enter the room, Kaplan staring at the overhead screens and the situation board showing the 747's flight path across the Atlantic.
The Secretary of State approaches.
SECRETARY OF STATE
We have less than five minutes to make the release.
KAPLAN
Authorize it. Notify the press.
He turns to the Major-General.
KAPLAN
General.
MAJOR-GENERAL
They'll reach our air space in an hour and a half.
KAPLAN
It's up to Jaffa.
- 154 EXT. AIRPORT (LONDON) - DAY 154
As a LEAR EXECUTIVE JET SCREAMS down the runway, lifting off into the sky.
- 155 INT. EXECUTIVE JET - DAY 155
Jaffa sits in one of the plush cabin seats. The Arab in the tailored suit humbly approaches, speaking quietly in Arabic.
MAN
(subtitles)
We have contact with Ali.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: 155

He pulls a telephone from its cradle and hands it to Jaffa. We hear STATIC FAINTLY over the line, then a voice.

ALI HASSAN (V.O.)
(filtered)
I rejoice in your freedom. Allah
has blessed us. A great destiny
awaits us both.

156 INT. PENTAGON - OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY 156

The crisis team are grouped around the communication center, listening to the conversation as the NSA's scanners keep track of the radio transmission.

JAFFA (V.O.)
(filtered)
Listen carefully, the Americans
have a message...
(beat)
They are preparing to meet your
demands in Washington. They will
give you fuel and gold for the
hostages. But do not trust them.
Continue radio silence, make no
attempt to contact them.
(beat)
A glorious victory. You have done
well.

157 INT. 747 - COACH SECTION - DAY 157

Ali Hassan is listening on the field radio to Jaffa.

ALI HASSAN
In a few hours, you will see how
truly glorious my victory will be...

JAFFA (V.O.)
(interrupting)
We cannot talk now. They must not
locate this frequency.

158 INT. EXECUTIVE JET - DAY 158

Jaffa terminates the call, hears the STATIC as the connection is severed. He returns the telephone to its cradle, a cold, menacing look as he turns to the window.

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED:

158

JAFFA

Go with God.

He jots down several items on a tablet and turns to his new charge de affairs.

JAFFA

You will prepare an anonymous news release. In several hours, a C.S.A. 747 will be destroyed as it approaches the United States.

(hands over the paper)

This is the Arab country responsible for the highjacking and destruction of the plane. The necessary proof will be provided shortly.

(thinks)

Then contact General Hammad. Tell him I have a proposition to make.

He sits back, a cold smile forming on his lips.

JAFFA

I taught you well, Ali.

159 INT. 747 - COACH SECTION - DAY

159

Ali Hassan turns OFF the RADIO shouting a revolutionary slogan, the other Terrorists taking up the cry.

At this, terror sweeps through the plane. Ali Hassan is now truly a man possessed with carrying out his destiny, and with it, the lives of thousands of innocent people.

Hassan turns and looks at someone in the seats before him, a passenger, someone unseen to us. He gives a slight nod and then moves on, shouting another cry of revenge.

We HOLD ON Fran as she looks from the frightened faces of the passengers to the overhead panels, aware that some inescapable collision between these madmen and some unseen force infiltrating the airplane is about to happen. But who are they, how did they get here, when will they strike?

160 INT. PENTAGON - OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY

160

Kaplan turns angrily away from the center.

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED:

160

DCI
 (stunned)
 He didn't even make the attempt.
 He wants him to die.

KAPLAN
 He's forcing the President to
 destroy the plane, hoping we'll
 retaliate.

SECRETARY OF STATE
 Against whom?

KAPLAN
 Whomever he chooses to implicate.

SECRETARY OF STATE
 I say we shoot the bastard down.

KAPLAN
 If only we could. They'll stick
 to civilian air corridors, and we
 could never violate the foreign
 airspace anyway. It would be an
 act of war.

Kaplan turns away, staring at the situation board, showing the 747 growing closer to the fail-safe line every second.

KAPLAN
 Tell Admiral Crosby to intercept
 the 747. Then contact the
 President. From this point on its
 an executive decision.

161 INT. COCKPIT - DAY

161

Over the INTERCOM, the news of Jaffa's release has been broadcast to the terrorist guard. As he takes up the cry, the Flight Engineer looks down at the hatch leading to the avionics room.

FLIGHT ENGINEER
 (to himself)
 Any time, guys.

162 EXT. 747 - DAY

162

The giant plane flies on over the Atlantic.

163 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

163

Where Rat, Grant, Charlie and Baker sit in the nose section, assessing their situation in urgent, whispered voices. Grant is monitoring the activities in the cabin area via one of the microphones left in place. He is listening to a CONVERSATION in ARABIC.

GRANT

Quiet... sounds like something big's going on.

Grant continues to listen.

GRANT

(puzzled)

One of our boys is challenging Ali. Wants to know why they're not returning to London, now that Jaffa's been released.

BAKER

London?

164 INT. COACH SECTION - DAY

164

Kahlil is arguing with Ali in Arabic.

KAHLIL

(subtitles)

This was not the plan! With Jaffa's release, we were to return to London. This is insane. We must turn back...

Suddenly Ali flies into a rage, brutally whipping Kahlil with his pistol, blow after blow, driving him to the floor, killing him. Ali looks up, madness raging in his eyes. Several other terrorists look at him in total fear.

ALI HASSAN

Traitor!

165 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

165

Grant puts down the headset, looks at the others.

GRANT

I think he just killed one of his own men. The others don't know about the bomb.

(realizes)

Of course. The trigger man is one of the passengers. A sleeper. It could be anyone.

(CONTINUED)

BAKER

Four hundred passengers. Never find him. We're as good as dead.

A long moment as this new reality settles in.

CHARLIE

Then I say we go out slingin' some lead. Get some fuckin' payback.

RAT

That's not what we came here to do.

CHARLIE

Shit, man, they're gonna blow us out of the sky. At least we can have the pleasure of doin' these bastards before we all buy it.

(beat)

Hell, we might even get lucky.

Rat looks at the men, confused as to what the next plan of attack should be, realizing he has nothing left to offer. He's out of ideas, sinking into the utter hopelessness of their situation. He looks at Grant, who stares at the floor, deep in thought.

RAT

Captain.

(as Grant looks up)

Any ideas?

Grant looks at his watch. Thinks a moment.

GRANT

We might still have some time. And there just might be a way to find the sleeper.

(beat)

But we've got to keep dismantling the bomb. If we can neutralize it, then finding the sleeper won't matter. But we can't risk it. Have to do both.

CHARLIE

And how do we find this sleeper?

GRANT

Baker, what about the video equipment, what do you have?

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED: (2)

165

BAKER

Wide angle probe, hard-line cable
but no camera, monitor, relay...

GRANT

We've got to monitor that cabin.
I need to hear everything, see as
much as I can. Anything we can
use from the plane?

Baker thinks, slowly nodding his head.

166 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

166

Baker and Charlie have opened up another of the baggage
containers. Charlie hands up an aluminum suitcase to
Baker, who opens it, studying the contents.

BAKER

This will do.

167 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY

167

Rat carefully drills a tiny hole by hand through one of
the bulkheads. He attaches a long cable to the two
electrical leads on the end of a six-inch long lens, the
diameter of a pencil. Carefully he begins to push the
lens into the hole.

168 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - MID-SECTION - DAY

168

Near the flight attendant's work station. Above the
center bulkhead we MOVE IN on a tiny hole, seeing a slight
reflector of light as the wide angle lens of the video
probe is pushed into position.

169 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

169

Grant is talking to Cappy, Cahill sitting alongside them
at the bomb site.

GRANT

How bad is it?

CAPPY

Short strokes -- it's a
masterpiece. Set up on three
stages; several back-ups. Pressure
switch was designed to trigger as
the plane landed.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAPPY (CONT'D)

If that failed, there's a timer operated by the fixed disc. Probably the flight time plus an hour or two.

GRANT

Can we disable it? Cut the power?

CAPPY

He's way ahead of you. Two power sources, one protects the other. Tamper-proof. Cut one, the second one sets off the bomb.

GRANT

Cappy, how are we going to beat this god-damned thing?

CAPPY

This guy's good, real good... but I'm better. Won't be easy, but there's a way.

Grant turns to Cahill.

GRANT

We're going to do everything we can to find the sleeper, but it may all come down to you. You're going to have to go the distance.

CAHILL

(numb)

As if I had a chance.

CAPPY

Don't worry about my man, Cahill, he's got what it takes.

(beat)

Besides, he fucks up, I'll kill him.

Grant pats Cahill on the shoulder. He moves over the containers towards the Avionics Room, leaving Cahill to stare at the bomb.

Baker is working on a home video Minicam, the aluminum suitcase open beside him. He has opened up the camera and is wiring in a small electrical harness.

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED:

170

He closes up the camera, taping it together. He has removed the eyepiece, exposing the tiny viewscreen inside.

Rat appears, trailing out the hard-wire video feed, attached to the probe above.

RAT

Ran the cable down the back side of the elevator shaft. They'll never see it.

Baker takes the cable, twisting the wires into those leading from the camera. He switches on the camera.

On the tiny view screen of the camera, we see the wide angle, black and white image of the main cable. Random static crosses the picture.

BAKER

Not much resolution, but it works.

Grant pats him on the shoulder.

GRANT

Now we've got eyes and ears.

171 INT. WORK STATION - DAY

171

Fran is preparing several trays of juice and water for the passengers.

172 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

172

Grant, Rat and Baker are watching Fran on the tiny screen.

GRANT

What do you think?

BAKER

She's on a short leash, but has the freedom to move around the cabin...

Grant looks to Rat for approval of his plan.

RAT

All right. Try it.

Baker hands Grant a switch, wired into the electrical system of the plane.

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED:

172

BAKER

I've by-passed the buzzer.

GRANT

Let's hope she sees it.

Grant activates the switch. On the video monitor we see that a light on the telephone is flashing a code. A moment later, Fran notices the light, but stares at it, unmoving.

GRANT

Pick it up... pick it up.

173 INT. WORK STATION - DAY

173

Fran staring at the flashing light. She looks around, seeing one of the Terrorist Guards standing nearby. She looks at the flashing light... and then picks up the phone.

GRANT

Just listen. I'm watching you on a video. Behind you, above the bulkhead.

Disbelieving she turns, eyes searching, focusing on the tiny probe, barely visible in the bulkhead.

GRANT

We're Americans. You've seen one of us. There is a bomb on this plane. One of the passengers is in direct control of it. We have to find him and we need your help. You're looking for someone with an electronic device, a radio...

Suddenly the phone is ripped from her hand, Ali roughly spinning her around.

ALI

What are you doing?

Ali places the phone to his ear and listens. The line is dead.

FRAN

I... thought the phone rang. I'm sorry. It's just habit.

He stares at her and then hangs up the phone.

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED:

173

ALI

You always have an explanation.

Ali leaves. Fran is overwhelmed by this new development. Suddenly she remembers, the Air Marshal. She looks back down the aisle, making eye contact with him. She turns back, horrified. She has to warn him, but how?

FRAN

(to herself)

Think...

She looks around her, focusing on a rack of magazines. We HOLD ON Fran's face.

174 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

174

Grant and Baker watching the tiny screen, watching as she moves around the work station.

BAKER

She looks pretty shaken. I don't think she'll do it.

GRANT

She's got to.

They continue to watch as Fran picks up a stack of magazines and turns towards them. A moment's hesitation and then she looks up, directly into the lens, a look of strength and determination on her face, she nods. Grant turns to Baker.

BAKER

She's with us. Lady's a player.

A momentary look from Rat, a nod of acceptance. Grant is now in charge.

RAT

Good move, Captain. I'll get upstairs, watch her. If she fingers someone, we'll have to move fast.

Rat leaves via the flap leading to the baggage compartment. Baker looks at his tac-board. We PUSH IN ON the watches, the elapsed timer running down to forty-five minutes remaining.

BAKER

We reach U.S. airspace in forty-five minutes.

175 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - DAY 175

Fran is moving down the aisle, carefully scrutinizing any visible carry-on luggage, bags and seat pockets for some sign of a suspicious device, all the while pretending to look after the needs of the passengers, offering them magazines to read. Behind her, a Terrorist Guard keeps a close watch.

176 INT. PENTAGON - OPERATIONS CENTER - DAY 176

PULLING BACK FROM the situation map, showing the 747's position, now approaching the U.S. The Major-General hangs up a telephone and addresses the Kaplan.

MAJOR-GENERAL

The F-14's should be intercepting the 747 in approximately fifteen minutes. Should be coming on the board any second.

On the screen we see, four small points of light, approaching the 747 from a converging angle, their origin somewhere near Florida.

177 INT. MAIN CABIN SECTION - DAY 177

Fran approaches the Air Marshal, who looks up briefly. She reaches his seat, casually handing him a magazine. What the guard can't see is her expression as she taps the cover of the magazine. The Marshal looks down seeing: A Newsweek, a cover shot of a group of U.S. soldiers in camouflage, weapons, the banner-line reading: "HOW MUCH LONGER."

The Marshal looks up, Fran looking hard at the picture and then mouthing the words: "They're here."

She moves on, leaving the Marshal to stare at the picture in bewilderment. They're here?

Fran continues to search for some sign of suspicious behavior, an electronic device, something. There seems to be nothing but row upon row of frightened, innocent-looking passengers.

178 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - CLOSEUP - DAY 178

view of the bomb FOCUSES on a wiring harness of varying colors. The tiny, pinpoint beam of a laser appears on one of the wires.

(CONTINUED)

CAPPY

Low-power, number one. Just touch the wire for a heartbeat.

In Cahill's hand is a laser-knife, the size of a fountain pen, a wire leading to a power box on the floor beside him. Cahill touches the trigger and the beam changes intensity, the wire suddenly vaporizing, leaving the bare wire underneath exposed.

CAPPY

That's good. Now clip in.

Cahill wipes the sweat from his brow, his shirt soaked in perspiration. At his side is a small black box, taken from the bomb kit. At one end of the box are a series of ports for electrical connections. Several wires lead from the ports to the bomb, clipped in to wires in various components.

CAHILL

Here goes...

With trembling hands, he attaches another wire to a relay in the bomb, plugging the other end into the black box.

CAPPY

Outstanding. You've got the major sensors by-passed. Mr X will still think the bomb's intact.

(beat)

Kick the power up to three and cut the wires to that first relay. That's a load-fluctuator, a fail-safe against an electromagnetic burst.

Cahill turns up the power and begins to move the laser-knife towards the bomb. But his hand begins to tremble uncontrollably. He stops.

CAHILL

(verge of panic;
anger)

I can't do it. My hand's shaking too much. I can't breathe.

CAPPY

Settle down, Cahill. You're doing fine. You know anything about fishing?

(CONTINUED)

CAHILL

(numb)

No... I hate fish. Hate the outdoors.

CAPPY

Doesn't matter. Shut the fuck up and listen.

(beat)

Take a deep breath. Relax. Close your eyes.

(beat)

You're sitting at your desk... it's in the middle of a pine forest. Wind cool and light, the sun shining down through the trees. You're beside a stream, water rollin' over the rocks into the most beautiful pool of deep, green water you've ever seen...

Cahill's breathing slows, his face beginning to relax.

Cappy closes his eyes.

CAPPY

... You get up from your desk and walk to the pool, your fly rod in your hand, royal coachman tied on, your can't miss fly. At the back of that pool is Bad Leroy Brown, fifteen pound German trout, just startin' to rise from beneath a tangle of logs. Now, all you got to do is pull back, float your line out, lay that fly down like a feather, right in front of old Leroy's nose...

Cahill opens his eyes. His hand has stopped shaking. He moves forward, cutting through the wires with the laser.

CAHILL

(relieved)

I did it.

He turns, looking at Cappy's face, reflected in the mirror. Cappy nods, closing his eyes in relief.

Fran is moving down the aisle, the Terrorist Guard strolling close behind.

(CONTINUED)

As she passes a seat, a hand reaches out, tugging on her apron. Startled, Fran turns. It's the heavy-set Woman seen earlier. The Woman is perspiring and seems short of breath.

WOMAN

Miss, may I have some water? I
have to take my medication.
Diabetes.

The Woman holds out a prescription pill vial.

FRAN

(distracted)

Of course. I'll get you some
water.

The Woman fumbles with the vial, her hands trembling.

WOMAN

These things are always so hard
to open...

The vial slips from her hands, falling to the floor.

FRAN

I'll get it.

Fran kneels to the floor to help. The Guard moves in, prodding her with his weapon.

FRAN

(calmly)

It's all right. I'm just getting
her pills.

Fran kneels, searching the floor for the vial, finding it next to the Woman's feet. She is about to rise when her eyes freeze on the underseat storage space of the window seat, where the Laptop Computer, seen earlier, sits, nearly obscured from view.

Fran stares at the computer, slowly looking up into the alarmed eyes of the dark-complected man at the window.

The Guard pulls Fran to her feet, examining the pill vial, before giving it to the Woman.

FRAN

I'll be right back with your
water.

The man at the window follows their movement and then carefully removes the computer, hiding it between his body and the window bulkhead.

180 INT. MID-SECTION WORK STATION - DAY 180

Fran, with her BACK TO US, a terrorist standing nearby, appears to be replenishing her drink tray, pulling down paper cups from an overhead bin and working on something before her. But as we move alongside her, we see that between movements, she hurriedly scribbles something on the back of the tray with a lipstick.

181 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 181

CLOSE ON the TV monitor, showing Fran just inside the galley. As one of the Terrorist Guards passes by, she turns back to her station, busying herself with something. She turns back, and while looking at the probe, brushes her ear several times, looking around her.

BAKER

Captain, take a look at this.

Grant studies the monitor as Fran again brushes her ear.

GRANT

She's signaling.

On the monitor we see a Terrorist Guard as he slowly moves through the galley, crossing behind Fran. Lifting the tray off the counter, Fran turns towards the camera, flipping the bottom upwards as she does. On the bottom of the tray, written in red lipstick, we see: 148-B.

182 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 182

Grant and Baker studying a schematic of the passenger section of the plane. Baker circles a section, Grant keying his mike.

GRANT

Rat, we've got something. 148-B.
Window seat, mid-section.

RAT (V.O.)

(filtered)

I got it.

183 EXT. F-14'S - IN FLIGHT - DUSK 183

Somewhere over the Atlantic, flying in tight formation.

184 INT. F-14 LEADER - COCKPIT - DUSK 184

The NAVIGATOR plotting a course on his radar screen.

(CONTINUED)

184 CONTINUED:

184

NAVIGATOR

Have target acquisition at three hundred miles, vector zero-six-zero for contact.

PILOT

Roger. Formation this is Bulldog. We have radar contact, turning zero-six-zero for contact. Initiate weapons systems check now. Notify me on visual contact.

185 INT. OVERHEAD SECTION - DUSK

185

Rat, using the fiber-optic viewscope, is lying on his stomach, observing something below. He is wedged into an impossibly tight position, under an air-conditioning vent.

CLOSE ON the monitor as the fiber-optic probe pans across the heavy-set Woman's legs, zooming in on small computer, tucked against the leg and the seat of the man in 148-B.

RAT

Could be a small computer, between his leg and the seat. Looks like he's hiding it. All I can see is his legs. Air conditioning unit, right in the way. But the computer is definitely suspicious. It has to be him.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

(filtered)

Can you get a hit on him?

Rat looks away from the fiber-optic probe, staring at the bulkhead, inches from his face.

RAT

Can't move up here, barely breathe, no hope for a shot. Charlie, what about you?

186 INT. OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY

186

Charlie is positioned near the mid-section restrooms in the crawl-space above the doorways. Lying on his side he is able to peer through the fresh air vents, providing a view of passengers. Although he can see the man in 148-B, he is barely visible behind a passenger sitting in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

186 CONTINUED:

186

Towards the rear, another terrorist is plainly visible. Charlie's pistol is at his side.

CHARLIE

No chance. Blocked by the seats, passengers all around him.

187 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

187

Cahill has isolated the wires leading to a major relay of the bomb, a harness of wires, situated near the fixed disc, the disc rotating silently behind the glass observation window. Cahill approaches the wires with the laser beam. Cappy is watching Cahill's movement through the mirror.

CAPPY

We're almost home. Next stop is a little tougher. Relax. Just do what I tell you.

(beat)

The red one on top, first. Then, separate the wires with the spreader, cut the yellow one underneath. Just kiss that red one like a feather. Don't touch the other wires.

(beat)

Take your time. Slow and steady.

As the laser-knife begins to glow, Cahill slowly lowers it to the first wire, beginning to cut.

188 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - DAY

188

CLOSE ON hands as they open the computer-like device. Fingers touch the keyboard...

189 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

189

Suddenly, on the bomb, there is a metallic CLATTER as a series of electrical relays open and close, the lights on the testing unit flashing in series...

Cahill's hand jumps, slicing through half of the harness. His face goes rigid with fear as we CRASH ZOOM to the rotation disc as it abruptly halts.

Cahill inhales sharply...

(CONTINUED)

189 CONTINUED:

189

Cappy staring wide-eyed into the mirror, sweat pouring down his face, waiting for the bomb to explode. But the frozen disc, Cahill's trembling hand, remain fixed in the mirror.

Cappy's mind is racing. He exhales sharply.

CAPPY
 (under his breath)
 Decoy. A fuckin' decoy.
 (louder)
 The whole thing's a fake. He
 snookered us.

TIGHT ON Cahill's sweating face.

CAHILL
 (near hysteria)
 What?! What's happening?! What
 the hell's happening?

CAPPY
 A decoy, to waste our time. The
 real works must be below, under
 the plate.

190 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

190

Barry and Grant, listening to Cappy's devastating news.

CAPPY (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 Real cute, this guy. Built a
 decoy into the system. Time you
 finish fiddle-fucking around, the
 timer would have gone off.
 Cahill's screw-up probably saved
 us a lot of time.

GRANT
 (agitated)
 Just give it to me straight.

191 OMITTED

191

192 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

192

Cahill is staring at the bomb as he listens to the exchange between Grant and Cappy.

(CONTINUED)

192 CONTINUED:

192

CAPPY
We'll have to start over.

Cahill, leans back, his head bumping the wall of the container.

CAHILL
(exhaling)
Jesus.

193 INT. OVERHEAD SECTION - DAY

193

TIGHT ON Rat's watch. In anger, Rat slams his fist into his hand. He seems near the breaking point.

RAT
Jesus, we've got less than fifteen minutes.

CAPPY (V.O.)
(filtered)
I'm sorry, that's all we can do.
I can't say what we'll find.

RAT
Then we go now, blow the lights,
take our chances.

GRANT (V.O.)
(urgent)
No. He just ran another test.
He's got direct access to the thing.
It's got to be by total surprise
or you're fucked.

Rat leans back against the bulkhead, closing his eyes.

RAT
We're not going to make it.

194 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

194

Grant looks around him, at Baker, at his face, tired and haggard. He looks defeated.

Slowly a new energy and resolve begins to show on Grant's face.

GRANT
He's not going to beat us. We've
come too far.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

194

He keys the mike to his head set.

GRANT
(determined)
Get into your attack positions.
Cappy, stay with it. We're taking
this thing to the wire.

RAT (V.O.)
What about the sleeper?

GRANT
I'll take care of the sleeper.

195 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

195

Cahill, wide-eyed with concentration and fear, is lifting the top panel of the bomb containing the false circuitry.

CAPPY
Easy. Not too fast. Now hold it,
don't move.

Cahill holds the panel just inches above the top framework of the bomb.

CAPPY
Knowing how this fucker thinks, I
expect he's got a surprise for us.
Check under the panel with your
light. Look for something
connecting the two panels, a trip-
wire maybe.

Holding the panel steady, Cahill lowers his head, using the light on his head gear to scan between the two levels, the second level consisting of a series of relays and a softball-sized stainless steel sphere. He scans the area, seeing a hair-fine wire, attached to the top panel and below, to a micro-switch.

CAHILL
(trembling)
You're right. There's a wire...
hooked to a switch.

CAPPY
That's it. Now just reach in with
your nippers and clip that wire.

Cahill, holding the panel with one hand, fumbles for the nippers in the tool kit. Moving them into position he cuts the wire.

196 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 196

Grant and Baker are intently studying the monitor, trained on the mid-cabin work station. Through the wide-angle lens, we can see Fran, slowly moving down the aisle towards the station.

GRANT
Come on, keep coming...

In his hand he nervously holds the makeshift switch connected to the cabin phone.

197 EXT. CLOUD FILLED SKY - DUSK 197

As four F-14's descend from the clouds, dropping in behind the 747. They pull alongside, two in front, two in the rear.

198 EXT. F-14 LEADER - DAY 198

The PILOT and his NAVIGATOR are clearly seen as they look towards the 747.

PILOT (V.O.)
(filtered)
CSA Flight 343. This is flight leader, U. S. Navy aircraft. You are approaching United States air space. You are to divert immediately to three-seven-zero North for Gander Air Force Base. If you do not comply, we are ordered to open fire...

199 INT. 747 AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 199

Grant and Baker respond in shock as they listen to this late development over the monitor they have installed to the ship's radio receiver.

BAKER
Captain...

GRANT
I know, we're in deep shit. We've got to stop them.
(thinks)
I need a schematic of the plane.

Baker turns, digging through one of their satchels. He removes a complicated schematic of the 747, showing the hundreds of miles of electrical wiring, hydraulic lines and servos. Grant desperately begins tracking something on the schematic.

200 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DAY

200

The crew and the Terrorist Guard listen in stunned silence as the F-14's demands are repeated.

PILOT (V.O.)

(filtered)

... Repeat, you must divert to 0370 immediately, or we will open fire. Squawk 433 for acknowledgement.

PILOT

Jesus Christ. What the hell are they doing? They can't mean that.

He turns to the Terrorist.

PILOT

We have to respond. You heard what they said.

The Terrorist points his pistol at the Pilot.

TERRORIST

You will say nothing. You will stay on course.

The Terrorist picks up a phone, pressing the buzzer. He speaks in Arabic.

TERRORIST

(subtitles)

Ali. Fighter planes. They say they will shoot if we do not turn away.

201 INT. COACH SECTION - DAY

201

Ali Hassan is listening to the Terrorist's report. He slams down the phone and moves towards the forward section, a look of wild rage and anger on his face. We GO WITH him as he moves towards the forward section, HOLDING ON the Air Marshal, who, seeing the disturbed look on Ali's face, carefully reaches down, removing his revolver from his boot, hiding it under his thigh. By his expression we can see he is trying to formulate some kind of attack.

202 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY

202

Grant at the electronics bulkhead, removing several panels. He pulls out a massive wiring harness, searching through the multi-colored wires.

Cahill is removing the last of several screws from a circular inspection plate on the side of the steel sphere.

CAPPY

Now, attach the grip.

Cahill unfolds a small tripod, supporting a shaft with a suction cup at one end. He places the tripod over the sphere gently pressing the suction cup over the cover.

CAPPY

Now back off, just a hair. Just enough to see if it's friendly.

Cahill swallows hard, takes a deep breath and turns the reverse-screw mechanism at the top of the tripod, lifting the cover a fraction of an inch. He stops, using a tiny penlight and a dentist's mirror to examine the edges and the back side of the plate.

CAHILL

Can't see anything.

CAPPY

Okay, back it off a little more.

Cahill slowly removes the cover, revealing the interior of the hollow sphere, at the bottom of which is a tiny brass armature situated above a steel contact point, similar to that in an automobile distributor.

CAPPY

Don't touch anything. Let me see those points.

Cahill adjusts the mirror, holding a magnifying glass over the sphere, focusing it for Cappy.

CAPPY

Looks clear. Don't think Mr. X expected us to get this far. But you need something thin and non-metallic to slip between those points.

Cahill searches through the kit but can't find anything plastic. He reaches into his pocket, pulling out a handful of cocktail napkins, paper, etc. He finds a plastic coffee straw. Slitting the straw with a knife he holds it out, ready to insert it between the points.

Cahill turns back to the sphere with the plastic strip, taking a deep breath. But suddenly he stops. Cahill looks up at Cappy in the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

203 CONTINUED:

203

CAHILL

But what if he did, Cappy? What if he did expect us to get this far. Why quit now?

Cappy smiles.

CAPPY

Good call. You're starting to think like me.

(beat)

In the kit, there should be a pair of infra-red goggles. Find 'em.

Cahill searches through the tool kit, putting on a pair of infra-red goggles, plugging a power cable into the battery unit. He lowers the goggles into place, switching them on.

CAHILL

(whispered)

Jesus.

CAPPY

That bad, huh?

203A CAHILL'S POV OF INTERIOR OF SPHERE

203A

Through the infra-red spectrum, we see that the points are protected by a spider-web maze of hair-fine photo-electric light beams.

CAHILL

That bad.

204 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DUSK

204

Grant and Baker are hearing the TRANSMISSION from the cockpit, Grant still frantically working away at wiring harness, his face dripping with sweat. He has ten or twelve wires bunched in his hand.

205 INT. 747 COCKPIT - DUSK

205

Ali Hassan is on the radio-phone, talking to Washington.

ALI HASSAN

... Why we are being threatened? our terms are absolute. The release of Jaffa for half the hostages. No compromises. No tricks.

206 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - OPERATIONS CENTER - DUSK

206

Kaplan and his crisis team are seated at the massive table, listening in rapt silence to the demands of Ali Hassan. Kaplan is on the phone.

KAPLAN

We have already met your first condition and are willing to comply with the rest of your demands. But for security reasons, we must insist that the exchange take place...

ALI HASSAN (V.O.)

(filtered)

You will insist nothing! Tell your President he will comply or suffer the blood of many Americans on this plane. Beginning now.

The President looks to the Major-General.

MAJOR-GENERAL

This may have been a mistake.

KAPLAN

We just can't shoot them down without a warning.

207 INT. 747 - COCKPIT - DAY

207

Ali Hassan leaves the cockpit, entering the business class. He grabs a male PASSENGER, pushing him into the cockpit. He forces the man to his knees, holding the pistol to his head. With his other hand he holds the radio-phone to the man's face.

ALI HASSAN

Talk to your President. Beg him for your life. Tell him who you are. Speak!

PASSENGER

(terrified)

Please... My name is Stanley Fisher... I have a wife and three children.

(chokes)

He's holding a gun to my head. Please, do what they want...

208 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DUSK

208

Kaplan and his team sit transfixed in horror as they listen to the man's desperate pleadings.

PASSENGER (V.O.)
(filtered)
Please... I don't want to die...

Suddenly, two SHOTS are heard OVER the SPEAKERS. A long pause and then...

PILOT (V.O.)
My, God, no...

ALI HASSAN (V.O.)
(filtered)
This plane is to continue on as planned or I will kill another passenger every minute.

KAPLAN
We've got to end this. Order the attack.

209 INT. F-14 FLIGHT LEADER - COCKPIT - DUSK

209

The Navigator is talking to his Pilot, his eyes intense.

NAVIGATOR
Bull, we can't do this. Warning them off is one thing... that's a civilian aircraft, full of Americans.

PILOT
It's a Presidential order, Spider, there must be a damned good reason for it.

NAVIGATOR
I sure hope to hell there is. Jesus.

PILOT
Formation, this is Bulldog. I'm assuming attack position, everyone else back off and stand clear. Climb to thirty-five thousand.

210 EXT. F-14'S - DUSK

210

As they peel off, three of the jets climb to higher elevation while the lead jet falls in behind the 747.

211 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DUSK 211

Grant is tearing open an electrical panel, exposing a sea of wires. He stares at the wires, wipes the sweat from his eyes and makes a move.

212 INT. F-14 LEADER COCKPIT - DUSK 212

Now trailing two miles behind the 747. On the control panel we see the heads-up display of the 747 as the targeting sight swings into position and centers. A SHRILL TONE is heard, indicating missile lock.

PILOT

Nav Com, this is Bulldog. I have missile lock. Request final confirmation of orders, over.

NAV COM (V.O.)

Bulldog, this is Nav Com. Proceed as ordered.

PILOT

Roger, Nav Com. Stand by.

CLOSE ON PILOT'S HAND

as he flips the firing selector to missile. His finger begins to close on the trigger...

CLOSE ON COCKPIT DISPLAY

the target center holding on the 747...

Suddenly, the navigation lights on the dark 747 flash on and hold.

PILOT

The nav-lights just came on.

Suddenly the lights begin to flash, on and off, on and off, in a steady sequence.

213 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DUSK 213

Grant has cut the bundle of wires leading to the nav-lights and is now touching them together, apart, together.

214 INT. COCKPIT F-14 LEADER - DUSK 214

The F-14 growing closer to the 747, the nav-lights still flashing.

(CONTINUED)

214 CONTINUED:

214

PILOT

Spider, is that what I think it is?

NAVIGATOR

You damned right.

215 INT. PENTAGON - OPERATIONS CENTER - DUSK

215

Kaplan and the crisis team are staring at the overhead screen, awaiting the word of the 747's destruction. The room is dead silent. A voice breaks in over the speakers, startling them.

PILOT (V.O.)

(filtered)

Nav Com, this is Bulldog. We have an unusual communication from the target.

NAV COM (V.O.)

(filtered)

Bulldog, this is Nav Com. Specify transmission. Over.

PILOT (V.O.)

(filtered)

Bulldog. Seems to be Morse code coming from the navigation lights. Message as follows: 'Hail Mary... Ten minutes.' Message repeats. Over.

Stunned, Kaplan drops into his seat.

PRESIDENT

They made it...

MAJOR-GENERAL

I'll be a son-of-a-bitch.

DCI

But it's too late. They've already crossed the line, they're into U.S. airspace. With every minute...

PRESIDENT

They made it this far, and by-God I'm going to give them another ten minutes. General, get on the phone.

MAJOR-GENERAL

Yes, sir.

216 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DUSK 216

Grant is still sending his coded message, sparks flying from the bus bar. Over the 747's radio we hear the F-14 Pilot's voice.

F-14 PILOT (V.O.)
(filtered)
Flight 343, this is Navy flight leader. We are to provide you with an escort to Dulles International.

Grant stops his signalling.

GRANT
We've got ten minutes.

217 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DAY 217

Grant turns to Baker.

GRANT
Get in position. We're going in five minutes.

BAKER
What about the sleeper?

GRANT
Time we got acquainted.

218 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DUSK 218

Through the infra-red spectrum, Cahill is attempting to weave the plastic straw through the first of the light beams. He stops, withdraws the straw and wipes the sweat from his face.

He picks up the straw and placing a bend in it, begins to maneuver it through and around the light beams.

219 INT. AVIONICS ROOM - DUSK 219

Grant is now alone, watching the monitor of the mid-cabin area work station.

GRANT
Come on...

Fran and two other attendants are sitting in their jump seats, a Terrorist standing guard in the entrance, his back to them.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED: 219

Grant is pressing a switch, the flasher on the phone in the work station responding. Fran looks up, seeing the light. But she obviously doesn't know what to do. The light continues to flash.

220 INT. WORK STATION - DUSK 220

The flashing light on the phone is becoming more urgent. Quietly, Fran rises and lifts the phone from its cradle, the Terrorist Guard still with his back to her. Her crew mates stare at her in disbelief.

GRANT (V.O.)
(filtered; urgent)
I need your help. The lower galley.
Do exactly as I say. Turn around
and enter the elevator. The lives
of everyone on this plane depend
upon what you do. Right now.

She quietly hangs up the phone and turns, looking into the eyes of her frightened crew mates. She looks at the elevator a few steps away.

With a determined look she moves forward, opening the door and stepping inside.

221 INT. ELEVATOR - DUSK 221

Fran carefully closes the door. She turns, staring at the overhead control buttons. Her finger touches the down switch.

The elevator activates, MOTORS WHINING as it descends into the lower galley.

222 INT. WORK STATION - DUSK 222

Hearing the sound of the ELEVATOR, Ali turns, seeing that Fran is gone. He looks at the red light over the elevator. He gestures to the elevator.

ALI
(subtitles)
Kill her.

223 INT. LOWER GALLEY - DUSK 223

Fran emerges from the elevator. Suddenly, Grant is behind her, his hand over her mouth. He turns her around, their eyes meeting.

(CONTINUED)

223 CONTINUED:

223

The ELEVATOR ACTIVATES, lifting up to the main floor.

GRANT

No sound. Sit over there, put
your head down, like you're crying.
Do it, now.

She moves to the opposite bulkhead, pulling down the
jumpseat.

The MOTORS WHINE again as the elevator begins to lower.
The door opens and the Terrorist emerges. Seeing Fran
sitting across from him, he raises his weapon to fire.

A voice from behind calls out:

GRANT (O.S.)

Hey!

Startled, the Terrorist turns, facing Grant, aiming a .22
silenced pistol at him. The Terrorist starts to move and
Grant FIRES, TWICE, two tiny red holes appearing in the
Terrorist's head. He falls to the floor in a heap. Grant
is stunned, momentarily overcome by what he has just done.
Fran stares back at him, realizing this is not a cold-
blooded killer. He looks at her as if asking for help
and then kneels, stripping the Terrorist of his clothes.
He looks at Fran.

GRANT

The man in 148... we're going to
stop him.

FRAN

What do you want me to do?

He stares at her, fear in his eyes.

GRANT

Help me get close enough to kill
him.

Grant continues to strip the clothes from the Terrorist.

224 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - CLOSE ON INTERIOR
OF SPHERE - DUSK

224

as Cahill continues, painfully, inch by inch, to move the
plastic strip towards the armature.

225 INT. LOWER GALLEY - DUSK

225

Grant, now dressed in the terrorist's clothing, is speaking on his headset.

GRANT

We're ready...

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Here's how it goes: soon as you hit the sleeper, it's lights out and we go. We're on infra-red. The plane's system will kick the lights back on in six seconds, that's all the surprise we've got. Make it count.

Grant lays down the headset, pulling Fran into the elevator.

226 INT. OPERATIONS CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DUSK

226

Kaplan and his team are watching the situation map, showing the 747's position, relative to the U.S. coast-line, the F-14's tracking the jet, and a flashing, fail-safe line, indicating that the 747 has already crossed the point where it was determined it must be destroyed. The elapsed time clock indicates six minutes remaining on the additional ten minutes.

MAJOR-GENERAL

They'll be starting their descent in about ten minutes.

DCI

At thirty-five thousand feet our loses would be minimal. Every thousand feet of descent, the death toll from fallout will increase dramatically.

(beat)

I pray you've made the right decision.

Kaplan continues to stare at the situation map.

As he does, we PAN DOWN TO the table, to the open folder, the one previously given to Kaplan by the Arab diplomat. We SLOWLY PUSH IN ON a photograph of a man, early fifties, fair complexion, balding, with cold, intense eyes. It is a face we have never seen before, certainly not the man in 148-B.

227 INT. 747 - MID-CABIN - DUSK 227

The dark-complected man in 148-B looks cautiously around him pushing his computer deeper into the seat.

228 INT. MID-CABIN WORK STATION - DUSK 228

Grant emerges from the elevator, pushing Fran as if she were his prisoner. Holding the automatic weapon in his left hand as a shield across his face, we see that in his right hand he is holding the .22 Beretta, flat against her back.

GRANT

(whisper)

Just keep walking. Eyes straight ahead. When I push you, hit the floor and stay down.

Fran moves forward, her face frozen with fear. They enter the aisle, moving towards the man at the window, his head barely visible some ten rows away. On the other side of the cabin, the Terrorist Guard sees them, but as he can only view Grant from the rear, he continues on his patrol.

Grant focuses his attention on the man, now seven rows away. But he fails to see the Terrorist on patrol in the next section aft, moving AWAY FROM us and towards the work station.

229 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DUSK 229

With the intensity of a jeweler about to cut the Hope Diamond, Cahill guides the plastic straw close to the open points, through the deadly, complicated maze of light beams.

CAHILL

(to himself)

Little more, little more... light as a feather. Come on up, Leroy, you're all mine... easy now.

In CLOSEUP we see that Cahill is almost to the points with the plastic strip.

230 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - DAY 230

Grant is now only three rows away. As he takes the last step he pushes Fran aside, spins around, leveling the pistol directly at the man's face.

(CONTINUED)

230 CONTINUED:

230

We RACK FOCUS OVER the gunsights of the pistol INTO the paralyzed face of the man in 148-B. Grant's finger touches the trigger and then, stops...

Grant stares at the man, seeing him for the first time, focusing on his eyes, the trembling lip and the unmistakable fear and utter confusion of an innocent man.

Grant spins back to the aisle, meeting Fran's stunned expression.

GRANT

It's not him...

Grant reaches across the seats, grabbing the computer, yanking it towards him. As he does, the computer smashes into the seat back, the battery pack splitting open, a flood of glittering diamonds, cascading over Grant's leg and onto the floor.

Grant drops the computer, his eyes whipping across the sea of faces before him -- who is it?

231 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAY

231

Cahill inching closer to the points with the plastic strip.

232 INT. MAIN CABIN AREA - DAY

232

In the next section aft, alerted by the commotion, the Terrorist Guard has moved through the work station and seeing Grant's face in profile, raises his weapon to fire, Grant still unaware of his presence.

Suddenly, the Air Marshal springs like a jack-in-the-box from his seat, a .357 revolver held in combat stance. Grant reacts, raising his weapon...

AIR MARSHAL

(shouting)

Behind you!

The Marshal FIRES, the terrorist guard ripped off his feet, slammed into the seats, but FIRING back as he falls, the Marshal hit, spinning, dropping. Chaos spreads through the passengers, Grant still probing, searching the faces before him. Suddenly his eyes make contact and lock onto a face, a man seated in an aisle seat on the opposite side of the plane and several rows forward...

(CONTINUED)

232 CONTINUED:

232

We CRASH ZOOM IN ON the face, the face of the man on the photograph! Grant has found his man. He points his weapon, shouting...

GRANT

Freeze!

Suddenly, like a flushed quail, the man panics, reaching for something wedged between his jacket and the seat. But his fingers fumble the object, which falls to the floor.

GRANT

Everybody, down!

As the man lurches to the floor, Grant FIRES, the BULLET EXPLODING into the headrest. Grant plants his foot on an armrest and in a wild, crawling scramble across the center section seats, races desperately to beat the man to the detonator.

On the floor, the sleeper, with trembling hands, flips open the lid to a six-inch square calculator-like device, rapidly punching in a four-digit code.

Grant, in a last desperate lunge, goes airborne in SLOW MOTION, twisting and FIRING as he clears the last row of seats, delivering a fatal head shot to the sleeper, just as the sleeper's finger touches the detonation switch!

233 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - CLOSEUP DETAIL - 233
MACRO SHOT - ARMATURE - (SLOW MOTION) - DUSK

ROARING down towards the contact point, crushing down on the very tip of the plastic straw.

Cahill's face in total shock.

234 INT. MAIN CABIN - DUSK 234

The lights trip off as the circuit breaker is blown, leaving everything in semi-darkness. Passengers scream.

235 INT. FIRST CLASS SECTION - DUSK 235

Baker kicks open the storage doors in the nose, bursting into the room.

235A BAKER'S POV - IN INFRA-RED 235A

as he races towards the startled Terrorist. Baker FIRES his TASER UNIT, the deadly barb hurtling towards the Terrorist's chest...

235B BACK TO SCENE 235B

The Terrorist throws up his hands, reacting in an electrical spasm as he is hit by the taser, his body surrounded by a blue-white glow of static-electricity.

236 INT. MID-CABIN AREA - DUSK 236

The ceiling panels disintegrate as they are blown apart, a powerful flash illuminating the cabin.

237 INT. BUSINESS CLASS - DUSK 237

As Rat kicks through the sleeper doors behind the business class seats.

237A RAT'S POV - IN INFRA-RED 237A

as Ali Hassan and his partner turn in shock. Rat FIRES the STUN-GUN, the projectile mushrooming into a pancake-sized disc which slams into Ali Hassan's chest, driving him backwards into the cockpit. With his other hand, Rat FIRES a TASER UNIT into the chest of the other Terrorist, electrocuting him.

238 INT. MAIN CABIN - DUSK 238

Charlie drops through the hole in the ceiling in silhouette, landing in a crouch as the lights flash back on.

Charlie recovers and stands, FIRING his hand SHOTGUN, point-blank at the Terrorist in the aisleway, spinning to take out another with his pistol. The Terrorist is knocked sideways against the seats, his finger closing on the trigger of his AUTOMATIC WEAPON, letting loose a BURST which rakes across the cabin, SHATTERING TWO WINDOWS.

An incredible EXPLOSION RIPS THROUGH the PLANE as the aircraft depressurizes, a portion of the hull is ripped away like paper, in an instant two rows of seats vanishing in a gaping hole...

Oxygen masks drop as overhead bins erupt, the cabin becoming a hurricane of RUSHING WIND, the plane plummeting into a steep dive, the air filled with paper, debris, blankets, food trays, luggage and other flying objects.

Charlie is sucked off his feet and slammed against the wall near the gaping hole where the windows used to be. Several passengers grab him, preventing him from going out the window.

(CONTINUED)

- 238 CONTINUED: 238
- Baker, racing down the aisle is also ripped off his feet by the implosion, hurling him over several seats and into the wall. He falls, clinging to the seats.
- Grant, moving towards the Terrorist in the rear is knocked to the floor by the blast of air rushing past him. As he falls, he is hit by a briefcase, knocking the pistol from his hand.
- 239 INT. BUSINESS CLASS SECTION - DUSK 239
- Rat is sucked off his feet and pulled down the stairwell amid a whirlpool of rushing air and debris.
- 240 INT. COCKPIT - DUSK 240
- The Captain grabs the yokes as the plane noses over into a steep dive.
- CAPTAIN
We're losing control!
- The Pilot and First Officer frantically fight to regain control of the plunging airplane.
- 241 EXT. 747 - DUSK 241
- Lurches into a radical dive, SCREAMING towards the ocean below.
- 242 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DUSK 242
- Cahill is thrown from the baggage container, across the room, an avalanche of baggage covering him, Cappy's stretcher plunging backwards into the container at a near forty-five, Cappy's head coming to rest, inches from the bomb, his good arm pinned beneath his body. Cappy looks up at the bomb as we:
- ZOOM IN CLOSE ON the bomb, the plastic straw, still trapped between the points by a mere millimeter beginning to vibrate.
- 243 INT. BUSINESS CLASS - DUSK 243
- Ali Hassan struggles to his feet. Although bleeding severely from the mouth and suffering severe internal injuries from the stun-gun, he struggles on, crazed and unstoppable. He moves to the stairwell.

(CONTINUED)

- 243 CONTINUED: 243
- Rat is fighting to pull himself back up the railing when he looks up, seeing Ali Hassan above him. Before he can react, Ali Hassan FIRES his 9mm HANDGUN, the impact of the bullet knocking Rat down the stairs. Ali Hassan follows.
- 244 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DUSK 244
- Inches from Cappy's eyes the plastic straw vibrating out-of-control. Another second...
- Sweat pouring from his face, Cappy strains to free his bandaged arm from the tape holding it to his chest. He moves the clumsy bandage towards the strip. Three inches away, it seems like a mile. Cappy struggles, wide-eyed, his hand moving a fraction of an inch further, but shaking so hard he's in danger of knocking the strip from the points.
- He moves closer. Unable to grasp the strip, Cappy lines up his bandaged hand, aiming at the strip. With the last of his strength he lunges, pushing the strip between the points. Cappy collapses.
- 245 INT. REAR OF PLANE - DUSK 245
- Grant, crawling over the seats, pulling himself along, nearly swimming over the passengers, trying to get to the Terrorist in the rear of the plane.
- The Terrorist gets to his feet, seeing Grant. He levels his weapon but Grant leaps, grabbing the Terrorist, a struggle ensuing for control of the weapon.
- 246 INT. MID-SECTION - DUSK 246
- The pressure is now beginning to stabilize as Baker fights his way to his feet. He makes his way to Charlie, lying in the aisle, nearly unconscious.
- Baker moves through the work station heading for the rear of the plane, but as he steps into the aisle, Ali Hassan smashes Baker across the face with his pistol, knocking him to the floor.
- In the rear of the plane, Ali Hassan can see the fight in progress between Grant and the Terrorist.

247 INT. REAR OF PLANE - DUSK

247

Grant, struggling to tear the weapon from the Terrorist's hands. As they spin around, the WEAPON FIRES, a burst ripping through the ceiling.

With a final effort, Grant knees the Terrorist in the groin, twice, ripping the weapon free, using it to bludgeon the Terrorist to the floor. Grant falls as well, the weapon flying from his hands, lodging under a seat.

Grant, exhausted, nearly sick, struggles to his feet and turns. Facing him is Ali Hassan, his face wild and crazed. He raises his weapon, leveling it at Grant...

But his eyes go wide in shock as several SHOTS RING OUT. Blood spurts from Hassan's mouth as he turns and falls, face down.

Standing behind him is Fran, Grant's .22 automatic in her hand. She looks at the gun, her hand beginning to tremble.

Grant takes the weapon, bending to pick up Ali Hassan's weapon as well. As Grant rolls over the body...

Ali laughs, a grenade in his hand. He pulls the pin. Instinctively, Grant lunges, his hand grabbing Ali's, holding it and the grenade handle closed.

A desperate struggle ensues, Ali fighting to release the grenade, Grant to keep control of Ali's hand while trying to subdue him. As they slam against the outer bulkhead, Grant looks up, seeing an emergency exit door. Wrestling himself into position, Grant kicks upward with all of his strength, the release handle for the door flying, the door pivoting outward as the emergency slide, in an explosion of air, extends...

Grant breaks free, shoving Ali backwards. As Ali flies out the door, making a desperate grab for the slide, he drops the grenade, spoon flying, the grenade wedging in the doorway.

Ali, arms entangled in a safety line, is ripped to the end of the slide, flapping wildly in the wind.

Grant kicks the grenade, dislodging it from the doorframe, the grenade skittering down the slide. Ali screams...

ALI'S POV OF SLIDE

The 747 in the b.g., the grenade bounding towards him...

248 EXT. 747 - DAY 248

The yellow slide, Ali clinging to the end like a tail on a kite, disappears in a FIERY EXPLOSION.

249 INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DUSK 249

Cahill, battered and bruised, climbs INTO VIEW, seeing Cappy, upside down, the plastic strip in place. Carefully he crawls into the container, and with a pair of wire cutters, clips through the wires at the bottom of the sphere, leading to the points. He finds the com-unit, keying the mike.

CAHILL

(to mike; shaking)

This is Cahill. The bomb's dismantled. We're safe.

Cahill moves alongside Cappy, struggling to push the stretcher out of the container. Gasping, he puts his arm across Cappy's chest, grabbing his hand.

CAHILL

(exhausted)

Cappy, you did it, you did it.

CAPPY

(smiling)

We did it, Cahill.

250 INT. COCKPIT - DUSK 250

The Captain, still fighting the controls, begins to pull the plane out of its dive. The altimeter reads 3,000 feet as the plane begins to level out.

251 EXT. 747 - DUSK 251

Begins to nose upward.

252 INT. OPERATIONS CENTER - DUSK 252

Kaplan and his team watching the overhead situation board, indicating the path of the 747 as it begins to gain altitude.

TECHNICIAN

They're leveling out... gaining altitude, five thousand feet.

(CONTINUED)

252 CONTINUED:

252

OVER the SPEAKERS, a voice breaks the tension.

GRANT (V.O.)
(filtered)
Castle Rock, this is Grant. We're
in control of the airplane. The
bomb has been defused. We need a
place to land.

Hugging, back-slapping pandemonium spreads through the
room like wildfire.

MAJOR-GENERAL
(shouting)
Congratulations, Captain. We're
diverting you now to Carson Air
Force Base. The F-14's will
escort you.

253 EXT. AIR FORCE BASE - DUSK (SUNSET)

253

Where an isolated runway is lined with crash trucks and
other emergency vehicles. The trucks spraying the field
with fire-retardant foam are just completing their work
and are leaving the field.

All eyes look to the sky. Waiting. OVER the RADIO on
one of the Jeeps, we hear the final report from the Air
Traffic Control Center.

TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (V.O.)
Flight 343, now on final approach.
Emergency crews stand-by.

Someone points to the horizon. In the red glow of the
setting sun, we see the familiar sight of the crippled
747, drifting closer to earth.

Moments later, the airborne monster touches down once
again, plowing through the foam as the crash trucks
close in behind, following it down the runway.

254 INT. 747 - DAY

254

As the PLANE THUNDERS through the foam, its wheels on
solid ground, an incredible, deafening cheer explodes from
every man, woman, and child, the incredible nightmare
ordeal, finally at an end.

255 EXT. RUNWAY - TARMAC - NIGHT

255

The 747 sits illuminated by powerful floodlights, attached to special cranes. The area is heavily guarded and surrounded by squads of fire trucks, ambulances, military vehicles and a huge, bomb-disposal rig, from which demolition experts are unloading with a forklift a huge steel box, into which the bomb will be placed.

The cargo doors to the 747 are open and men in EVA suits are entering the plane. The terrorists' bodies, now in body bags are being placed in the bed of a large truck.

256 INT. 747 MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

256

Rat, an I.V. attached to his arm, is carried down the aisle by medics. Behind, Cappy is gently moved on his stretcher, Cahill still at his side.

As the Air Marshal is lifted INTO VIEW on a stretcher, Grant appears at his side, shaking his hand. The Marshal looks up at Fran.

AIR MARSHAL

(groggy, sedated)

The magazine. Didn't know what you were getting at until I saw his face.

GRANT

(puzzled)

Well, whatever you're talking about, you did the right thing. Tell these guys to take good care of you.

The stretcher is removed, Grant turning to Fran.

GRANT

Thank you...

FRAN

Fran. By the way, you've got a hell of a lot of explaining to do.

GRANT

Let's just say, we came along for the ride. Rest is... classified.

An Army CORPORAL appears, handing Grant a black, aluminum suitcase.

(CONTINUED)

CORPORAL

Captain Grant. They're patching
Mr. Kaplan through.

(beat)

There's also an 'eyes only' message
for Colonel Travis.

He looks at Fran, shrugging.

FRAN

I'll be up front.

Grant accepts the case, dropping into a seat. He opens
it to reveal a Satellite Communications Unit, containing
a scrambler telephone, computer keyboard and screen.
Grant turns it on, typing in an access code. On the
screen a message appears: EXECUTIVE DECISION.

Grant, remembering, reaches in his pocket, retrieving the
mag-code strip. He inserts it into the computer. A new
message appears:

Have prepared bon voyage for Jaffa.
Cousin Reggie.

Grant hits the enter key, the following appearing:

EXECUTIVE DECISION READY. CODE KEY ACCESS:
04973/WILDFIRE-1.

Beside him, the gentle BLEEP of the TELEPHONE is heard.
He lifts the handset from the black case.

GRANT

Captain Grant. Yes, go ahead.

(line crackles)

Yes, Mr. Kaplan.

Kaplan is sitting in an easy chair, a drink at his side.
He looks nearly as weary as Grant.

KAPLAN

I think I can say, Captain, this
is a day either of us won't soon
forget.

(beat)

How are the men?

(CONTINUED)

257 CONTINUED:

257

GRANT (V.O.)

(faint)

One wounded, one pretty shaken but they're both going to make it.

KAPLAN

The President personally sends his deepest thanks. I'm sure he will want to meet with you when he returns. We all owe you a great debt, Captain Grant. Thank you.

258 INT. 747 - CABIN AREA - NIGHT

258

Grant listening to Kaplan.

GRANT

Thank you, sir.

KAPLAN (V.O.)

We have accomplished a tremendous victory, but our satellite intelligence reports indicate that Jaffa is just now touching down in North Africa. I hate to see that bastard get away.

Grant places the black case on his lap and begins to enter something on the keyboard as he talks. On the screen we see:

CODE KEY ACCESS: 04973/WILDFIRE
CODE KEY APPROVED/SECURE LINE READY FOR TRANSMIT.

Grant types in:

SAT-COM UPLINK/ABLE 666 WILDFIRE-1

The screen flashes with the data as it is processed.

GRANT

Yes, sir, I agree. I hate to see the bastard get away.

The screen flashes with new information:

SAT-COM UPLINK ESTABLISHED. WILDFIRE-1
READY TO TRANSMIT.

Grant types in:

ACTIVATE: EXECUTIVE DECISION.

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED: 258

The screen flashes:

READY TO ACTIVATE: EXECUTIVE DECISION.

259 EXT. NORTH AFRICA - DESERT LANDING STRIP - DAWN 259

The executive jet is taxiing into position on a tarmac. In the distance we see that an escort of a dozen vehicles is approaching.

The plane rolls to a stop, the cabin door opening.

260 INT. 747 - CABIN AREA - NIGHT 260

Grant is staring at the screen, the words "READY TO ACTIVATE: EXECUTIVE DECISION" holding steady. We HOLD ON his eyes, remembering...

He types in:

ACTIVATE.

GRANT

The Arabs have a saying, 'Those who would bare the torch of the devil, shall be consumed in its flames.'

His finger holds over the ENTER key, pausing, a slight tremble of hesitation...

261 EXT. NORTH AFRICA - DESERT LANDING STRIP - DAWN 261

Jaffa appears in the doorway. Seeing the arriving escort, he holds up his arms in a gesture of victory.

262 EXT. RUNWAY - DAWN 262

As the approaching escort draws nearer, we see Jaffa in the doorway of the jet, his arms raised. In the lead Jeep, a man dressed in desert fatigues stands and raises his arms.

263 INT. EXECUTIVE JET - BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - DAWN 263

Where attached to the airframe are a dozen sticks of C-4 plastic explosive, wired to an electronic transfer box. A tag reads: "Happy Landings, Love and Kisses, Reggie."

A RELAY on the box CLICKS...

264 EXT. RUNWAY - DAWN 264

Suddenly the jet erupts into a gigantic fireball, which lights up the desert sky for miles.

265 EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF DESERT LANDING STRIP - DAWN 265

As if seen from a satellite, the expanding fireball racing across the runway, the escort vehicles turning desperately away.

266 INT. 747 - NIGHT 266

CLOSE ON Grant's finger as he releases the computer key, the audible CLICK intensified. We GO TO Grant's face. He breathes deeply, the first relaxed breath in many hours. He closes the case and puts his head back, closing his eyes. The mission is over.

He gets to his feet, walking down the now empty aircraft. Reaching the doorway, he steps outside, inhaling deeply the cold night air. At the bottom of the ramp, Fran is waiting.

267 EXT. 747 - NIGHT 267

Grant descends the ramp. He looks back at the towering 747, still majestic despite the gaping holes in its side. He turns to Fran.

GRANT

Let's get out of here.

END CREDITS ROLL and we:

FADE OUT.

THE END