

A Safe Place

by

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FADE IN:

TITLES OVER:

1 EXT. CHICAGO -- MORNING

The Cold and Grey sky hangs heavy across an ANAMORPHIC FRAME. The Elevated Subway steams, over a decrepit neighborhood, across a tangle of shoddy steel pillars. Nobody is rushing off to a job because nobody has one.

2 INT. SHABBY APARTMENT - DAY

WE DRIFT PAST a few windows covered with ICE. Cold wind HOWLS through several more fractured frames of glass. Shit brown furniture litters the room. A TABLEAU of dirty dishes. We FIND a bed -- clouds of FROSTED BREATH rise and we are brought to the face of a SLEEPING MAN.

NICHOLAS GUNAR suddenly snaps his eyes open, turns his head and stares at his cheap ALARM CLOCK. Waiting...

RINNNNNNGGGGGGGG!!!!!!!!!!!!

Nick off the alarm and rises from under the blanket -- revealing an extra large frame, rippling with muscles. Nick trudges into the bathroom.

3 INT. SHOWER

Nick BARELY fits in the extra small stall. Hot water BLASTS at his bleary eyes, unkempt blonde hair and unshaven face. We see that he has some SCARS on his body -- a few real shrapnel-zippers. He raises a worn toothbrush with no paste and scrubs the grime from his mouth.

4 INT. SHABBY APARTMENT - DAY

CLOUDS OF STEAM rise off Nick's scalded body as he trudges, unaffected by the cold, back into the UNHEATED room, toweling himself dry. He snags dirty pants, T-shirt, boots off the floor and throws them on. Snatches up a SHOULDER HOLSTER and straps it on the way another man would zip up his fly -- like he's been doing it forever.

A picture of a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, LITTLE BOY and NICK sit on top of a dresser. Nick opens the dresser drawer. A half empty pint bottle of O.P. ANDERSON liquor stares back at him. Next to it lays the blue steel of a Ruger P85 9mm Automatic pistol.

He picks up the liquor and shoves it into the holster.

5 EXT. STREET - CHICAGO - DAY

Nick waits in a freezing doorway wearing a thin jacket stretched over his iron frame. Not minding the sub-zero temperatures, he watches another doorway and takes out a small tin of Copenhagen and opens it.

From another small packet he reveals FIBERGLASS and sprinkles it into the tobacco. He puts the violent concoction in his mouth -- rubbing his top lip against his teeth.

THE OTHER DOORWAY

Out walks JAMAAL SHABAZZ and, bundled against the cold, steps onto the frozen streets.

Nick follows. It's not long before Jamaal knows he's being trailed. He's nervous and starts to walk faster. He suddenly cuts into --

GRANT'S PARK

-- and breaks into a run. Nick, not running, follows after him. Jamaal disappears into the trees --

6 EXT. GRANT'S PARK - DAY

Jamaal zigs left and right through the TREES, trying to cut up his trail --

NICK

still walking, loses the path for a second -- then studies several snow prints -- thinks then realizes, when he looks closer, that somebody has doubled them up.

END TITLES

He puts another load of Copenhagen in and follows the tracks backward...

JAMAAL

lays collapsed against the trunk of a tree, panting for breath. His ears prick up at the CRUNCH of approaching footsteps in the snow -- but from where?

He gets up and sets a fighting stance -- turning in a slow 360.

JAMAAL
C'mon, mutherfucker --

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

NICK

appears from behind another tree -- WHACK!!! -- Jamaal drops as Nick delivers a devastating KICK to his gut.

Jamaal, from the ground, instantaneously comes back and sweeps Nick off his feet -- surprise -- the guy is good --

The fight -- a combination of martial arts, not so delicately mixed, with common street sense -- two former masters who are now incredibly out of shape.

It comes from nowhere, but Nick finally takes Jamaal off his feet with a HARD RIGHT.

Nick, sucks wind, while Jamaal catches his breath on his ass.

Then... Jamaal's eyes almost explode from his head as he sees Nick reach beneath his jacket into his shoulder holster...

JAMAAL (CONT.)

Oh, shit! No man, DON'T SHOOT --

Nick draws the bottle of O.P. ANDERSON out of his shoulder holster, unscrews the cap and takes a sip. Jamaal is stunned.

NICK

How 'come you don't pay child support?

JAMAAL

What? Alimony. I don't pay alimony.

Nick thinks, then accepts this...

NICK

You need this more than I do.

He offers the bottle. A confused Jamaal stands and takes a swig... then instantly SPITS it out --

JAMAAL

Where the fuck this shit come from?

NICK

(dry)
Sweden... like me.

7 INT. GIN MILL

Nick and Jamaal together at the bar. Jamaal's hands are CUFFED in front of him.

JAMAAL
 (sipping his bourbon)
 Now that's more like it.
 (savoring the feeling)
 How much they pay ya to get my
 ass?

NICK
 Two hundred bucks.

JAMAAL
 (thinks about it...)
 That's pathetic.

LIGHT is refracting off the little bits of FIBERGLASS -- as Nick pinches and mixes from the tin of Copenhagen Tobacco again.

JAMAAL
Broken glass...?

NICK
 'Makes me bleed.

He puts the tobacco in and RUBS the mixture through his lip.

NICK (CONT.)
 (explaining)
 The nicotine gets right to the
 blood...

JAMAAL
 (not believing)
 Get the fuck out...

Nick wipes the corner of his mouth with a napkin -- producing a SMEAR OF BLOOD.

JAMAAL
 Jesus...

NICK
 What happened to Special Forces?

Jamaal looks down at the patches which cover his fieldjacket --

JAMAAL
 (shrugs)
 Peace Dividend. They say they
 train you for a good job when you
 get out...
 (more)

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

JAMAAL (Cont'd)
 Shit, I ain't seen a job in the
 Want Ads yet payin' me what I do
 best.

NICK
 What's that?

JAMAAL
 Well, let me see... I'm real
 good at jumpin' outta a
 Helicopter, settin' up my
 scope... then shootin' the spleen
 outta some foreign mutherfucker
 at two hundred meters.

NICK
 (dry)
 Guess they don't need that kinda
 help down at the 7-11.

BARTENDER (O.S.)
 Five eighty.

Nick pulls out his wallet and as it hit the bar several family
 pictures -- the SAME WOMAN and LITTLE BOY again spill out.

JAMAAL
 You got a family?

Nick collects the pictures...

NICK
 (sotto)
 No.

8 INT. NICK'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

A television screen -- The First Walton Christmas.

ERIN WALTON
 Will pa be down the mountain in
 time for Christmas Dinner?

Grandpa Walton looks out the window at the falling snow.

GRANDPA WALTON
 Seems unlikely.

Nick pinches and mixes from the tin of Tobacco and Fiberglass.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

Then suddenly... his eyes catch movement under the door and, in a moment, he's turned off the Walton's and has the P85 placed firmly in his grasp -- cocked -- he's ready to fire.

He throws open the door to REVEAL --

WARREN AND LYLE

-- two well-groomed businessmen in top-of-the-line designer winterwear. They are shocked to see a pistol pointed at their heads.

WARREN
Nicholas Gunar?

9 INT. APARTMENT -- LATER

Nick is just finishing frisking Warren -- satisfied, he goes back and takes his seat. He gestures that they can both sit on the bed. Finding, it amazing that they can see their breath indoors, and the sight of the bed fairly distasteful...

LYLE
How about we go to a nice
restaurant -- have a hot meal?

WARREN
Our treat.

Nick ignores Lyle and raises his trusty bottle of O.P. Anderson. Warren and Lyle exchange a look, "I guess that means no" --

WARREN
We're businessmen, Mr. Gunar.
We're in the market for someone
with your special talents.

LYLE
We represent the Nitrodyne
Corporation. We're in minerals
and --

WARREN
(interrupts)
All you need to know is the color
of our money.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

LYLE
 (enthusiastic)
 It's a pushover of an operation.
 In and out in no time with no
 casualties. Not like these hard-
 core "wetwork" gigs you pulled in
 Angola, Honduras, Mozambique --

NICK
 I don't do that stuff anymore.

WARREN
 You come highly recommended.

LYLE
 Let me explain... you'll be
 working in a beautiful, warm and
 very tropical paradise.

Nick then turns to the two men -- both shivering despite their
 layers of Gortex and Thinsulate.

NICK
 I hate the heat.

LYLE
 Would it help if we said who
 recommended you?

Nick takes one last swig, polishes off his bottle.

NICK
 I know who recommended me.

10 INT. STUDY - NIGHT

A warm, oak y, contrast to Nick's shithole. COLONEL MERRICK,
 A seasoned military professional in his fifties, his grim edge
 offset by an almost fatherly benevolence -- takes a long moment
 studying his next CHESS move. He moves then looks up -- deep
 into Nick's eyes.

MERRICK
 Take the job, Nick.

Merrick and Nick sit playing surrounded by souvenirs of the
 Colonel's long distinguished career spanning a dozen dirty
 little wars in a dozen different armies. FLAGS, MEDALS and
 PHOTOS line the walls.

MERRICK
 You always spend too much time
 protecting your pawns.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

He takes a rook.

You've got to let some of the
little people go.

Merrick then steals his bishop.

Of course it's good to leave your
enemy a straw. A way out -- some
chance at survival. Odds are
he'll take the straw and withdraw
instead of fighting to the death.

NICK
Still preaching Sun Tzu?

MERRICK
"The Art Of War" is the art of
life.
(moves a knight)
Check. So... tell me more about
the operation.

NICK
You know I can't do that,
Colonel.

MERRICK
(smiles)
I trained you well, Nick.

Nick GETS UP and walks over to the pictures on the wall.

NICK
Why'd you give them my name, sir?

There are PICTURES of Merrick and Nick in Africa, posing in
front of a burning building.

MERRICK
I heard you had troubles. Giving
up the life can be as dangerous
as the fight.

NICK
(painful for him)
I managed.

MERRICK
I've found, personally, giving up
the money especially hard.

Merrick pours a few more from pitcher of ice cold Pims Cups.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

MERRICK (CONT.)
Some women get used to a certain
lifestyle...

NICK
(remembering)
... That's the past.

Other VIOLENT COMBAT SHOTS, as someone else might display shots
from vacation, line the walls.

MERRICK
You weren't a saint, Nick. You
can't be in combat. But you
wouldn't be here if you had done
truly reprehensible things.

NICK
(not buying it)
I was a mercenary.

MERRICK
One can be a mercenary and a
gentlemen, you know.
(moves his knight)
Checkmate.
(beat)
It might be healthy for you to
win at something you're good at.

Nick's eyes come to rest on a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH of the Colonel,
smiling, his arms around the shoulders of Nick and another
YOUNG SOLDIER. We PUSH IN tighter on the other Soldier. He is
smiling -- but as we go in TIGHTER we see that the smiling has
a distinctly evil quality to it.

NICK
(indicating the THIRD
MAN in the photo)
Why didn't you recommend Keefer?

MERRICK
From what little I know, this op
isn't just slash-and-burn. This
one, from what I'm told, calls
for a touch of the poet...

11 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

The front door swings open and Jamaal, still in his Army
fieldjacket, walks out. He takes a deep breath of free air,
adjusts his eyes to the sunlight and recognizes Nick, waiting
at the curb --

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

JAMAAL
Blondie -- what a coincidence?

Nick looks at the man deeply in the eye. Jamaal realizes it's not a coincidence.

JAMAAL (CONT.)
What do you want from me?

NICK
I've got a job.
(beat)
Something you're qualified for.

Jamaal silently stares at Nick for a moment. Then --

JAMAAL
What color?

NICK
What?

JAMAAL
The people you want me to shoot
at. What color?

Nick shrugs.

NICK
Lighter than you but darker than
me.

12 INT. ZOO - GORILLA

An old Greyback, with bare patches on his pelt stares equally deep in thought.

VOICE (O.S.)
They can tell they're doomed.

OCKER -- a well-tanned, burnt-out Australian -- sits somberly peering through the bars of the gorilla cage. Nick stands behind him.

OCKER (CONT.)
You can see it in the eyes. Ten,
twenty years, they'll be extinct.

NICK
I was surprised to hear you were
still breathing yourself.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

OCKER
The world is dying, Nick. It
needs a witness.

Long beat.

NICK
You interested?

OCKER
What's the bottom line...?

NICK
A paycheck and some excellent
surfing.

Ocker gives Nick a smile.

13 INT. RAUNCHY BAR - NIGHT

A JUKEBOX blaring Honkytonk, lots of REDNECKS drinking and
yelling, sounds of a BAR FIGHT filling the place.

NICK, OCKER AND JAMAAL

watch with professional interest from a corner.

NICK & OCKER'S POV

We see BLADES -- a hunk of black iron with the hard eyes of a
killer -- wailing into a knot of beefy WHITE TRASH, stabbing,
punching, cleaving, kicking much ass without mercy.

JAMAAL
World class kidney punch.

Ocker ducks to evade a FLYING bar stool.

OCKER
Nice phoenix-fist to the larynx.
Hardly ever see those anymore.

JAMAAL
He's out of control.

NICK
Merrick says he takes orders.

OCKER
Hope so, mate.

14 EXT. MARCO POLO RISTORANTE - NIGHT

We hear the strains of an ITALIAN OPERA as Nick turns a corner and heads into the restaurant...

15 INT. MENS ROOM STALL

JAMES "JIMMY G" GARZILLO digs inside the toilet tank, comes up with an AUTOMATIC PISTOL and SILENCER in a waterproof ZIP-LOCKED BAGGY. He grabs a bunch of paper towels and wipes off his PINKY RINGS -- careful not to drip water on his expensive shoes.

KNOCK! KNOCK! -- Jimmy G freezes in place.

JIMMY G
Hey, I'm takin' a crap here!

NICK (O.S.)
Jimmy G -- it's me, Nick.

JIMMY G
(eyes lighting up)
Nick the Swede?

Jimmy G flings open the door, smiles wide at the sight of Nick, grabs him in a hug and pulls him into the stall.

JIMMY G
Nicky! Long time no see.

NICK
(eyeing the gun in
Jimmy's hand)
What's going down, Jimmy?

JIMMY G
(shrugging)
I'm whackin' a guy -- what else?

NICK
Cancel the hit. I've got a
better job.

Jimmy G shakes his head as he unbags the pistol and screws on the silencer --

JIMMY G
I don't know, Nicky, you're
puttin' me in a bad position
here.
(a confession)
I already spent the money on an
engagement ring.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

NICK
Congratulations.

JIMMY G
Forgetaboutit, she dumped me for
some Stugatz.

He looks Nick in the eye...

Okay, I'm in.

Jimmy G starts out the stall door -- but Nick blocks his way.

NICK
The piece, Jimmy.

Jimmy G stares hard at Nick -- then breaks into a grin and
hands over the silenced automatic.

16 INT. MARCO POLO RISTORANTE - NIGHT

Nick leads Jimmy G past a large MAFIOSO gorging himself on a
plate of spaghetti, a BODYGUARD at each elbow. Jimmy glances
at him for a second, then his eyes are drawn to a shapely
HOSTESS. Jimmy G winks at her as he goes by...

17 EXT. MARCO POLO RISTORANTE - NIGHT

Jimmy G follows Nick out the door, then stops short --

JIMMY G
'You get a load o' that Hostess,
Nicky? Give me two seconds, I
gotta get her phone number.

Nick sighs and nods. Jimmy ducks back into the restaurant.
Nick waits. Suddenly --

BAM!!! BAM!!! BAM!!! BAM!!!

Nick CURSES in SWEDISH as Jimmy G BURSTS out the door and
shoves the .38 back into his ANKLE HOLSTER. Nick scowls at
him.

NICK
Are you crazy?

JIMMY G
Hey, Nicky -- I made a
commitment!

The run off into the night.

18 EXT. SKIES ABOVE BANGKOK - TWILIGHT

A PASSENGER JET zooms right past us, ROARING...

19 EXT. BANGKOK -- NIGHT

The traffic is murder. Bright lights, bridges, hookers. Nick, Ocker, Blades, Jimmy G and Jamaal, watch it all while stuffed into two three wheeled MOTORCYCLE CABS.

They arrive, surrounded by a sea of Asian humanity at -- the Gladiator Pit.

20 INT. BANGKOK -- GLADIATOR PIT

A capacity CROWD fills this vast space with an EVEN LOUDER ROAR.

Half-a-dozen FIGHTS are in progress -- each a no-holds-barred, hand-to-hand duel to the bloody finish surrounded by throngs of yelling, screaming, betting FANS. The odds are constantly changing -- bills of every imaginable currency trading faster than pork bellies on the floor of the Commodities Exchange.

OUR TEAM stands intently -- watching the Circus Maximus -- Nick, Ocker, Blades, Jimmy G and Jamaal -- the only five in the whole place not betting the rice field and screaming like maniacs.

Nick finds what he's looking for --

NOLAN

a wiry, compact gladiator is getting the shit beat out of him by a Sumo-sized OPPONENT.

OCKER

Doesn't look too sparky, mate.

Nolan takes a terrific blow which sends him FLYING into the ODDSMAKER, a bespectacled Chinese accountant.

NOLAN

(wiping blood from his nose)

What are the odds?

The Oddsmaker does a quick computation on his ABACUS.

ODDSMAKER

Twenty-to-one you lose.

Nolan nods and sluggishly heads back into the arena. WHAM!!! SLAM!!! BAM!!!

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

Nolan is sent flying into the corner again. He weakly motions to the Oddsmaker.

NOLAN
(wiping blood from his
mouth)
What now?

ODDSMAKER
(computing on his
abacus)
Thirty-to-one.

Nolan rolls his eyes, takes a deep breath and heads back towards his opposition.

NICK

winces and the crowd SCREAMS its approval as --

NOLAN

is lifted off his feet and HURLED across the arena by his gargantuan Opponent. Nolan lands hard, wipes blood from his eyes and looks at the Oddsmaker...

ODDSMAKER
Fifty-three-to-one!

Nolan breaks into a cockeyed grin, digs into his boxing trunks, pulls out a wad of U.S. DOLLARS and hands them to the Oddsmaker.

NOLAN
(over the ROAR)
All on me.

ODDSMAKER
Who?!

NOLAN
Me!

The until-now sluggish Nolan suddenly MOVES LIKE LIGHTNING -- charging straight at his Opponent, bobbing, weaving, ducking blows, all the time landing his own rapid and surprisingly powerful KICKS and PUNCHES! The pint-sized human punching bag has become a ferocious little tiger -- mercilessly raining an unending series of vicious BLOWS upon his surprised Opponent.

The crowd goes insane.

The Opponent staggers blindly in a dazed stupor --

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

Nolan gets a running start --

KRUNCHHH!!!

-- and delivers a devastating KICK TO THE OPPONENT'S FACE! The giant Opponent drops to his knees and topples to the floor.

Nolan raises his fists and jumps up and down, savoring his triumph -- then spots Nick and the team.

NOLAN

Yo, Nick!

Nolan staggers over to Nick...

NOLAN

(cocky)

If you're gonna bet your last dime -- it might as well be on yourself, uh?

Suddenly Nick gives a DESPERATE YELL to Nolan -- but his voice is drowned out by the crowd.

NOLAN

Huh?

WHAM!!!

Nolan is squashed into oblivion by a blow to the back of the head. He hits the floor, his bloody Opponent towering above him.

The Oddsmaker shakes his head sympathetically -- but pockets Nolan's money anyhow.

21 EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Under a cloudy sky with SHAFTS OF LIGHT and RAIN FALLING, a small, rusting FREIGHTER inches across the vast South China Sea.

22 INT. FREIGHTER BATHROOM

The THROBBING of the ancient diesel engines hum through the ship. Nick barely fits in the cramped, dank space. He's leaning over a small metal sink, staring into a cracked MIRROR, using a STRAIGHT-RAZOR to shave the stubble from his face and the long, scraggly hair off his head.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

NICK (V.O.)
We're hitting a tiny island at
the edge of the South China Sea.

23 INT. FREIGHTER - PASSAGEWAY

A FACE FILLS THE SCREEN. Clean-cut, high and tight -- looking every bit like a soldier -- the New Nick --

NICK (V.O.)
No army, no airstrip. A barrier reef that makes landing anything bigger than a Zodiac impossible. They don't know it but they're sitting on a fortune in mineral deposits.

24 INT. FREIGHTER'S HOLD

Oily and harshly lit. Ocker, Blades, Jimmy G, Jamaal and Nolan are getting the feel of their ENFIELD L85's -- the cutting edge of assault rifle technology. Nick lays out a MAP and several AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE PHOTOGRAPHS -- a pistol-gripped AUTO-SHOTGUN slung over his shoulder.

NICK (CONT.)
The tribal council doesn't want to sign over the mining rights. We go in, lean on the locals, convince them to accept the contract. Our employers have promised a 7,500 dollar bonus per man once they sign on the dotted line.

Ocker is stripped down to his shorts, ABORIGINE TATTOOS all over his body, mirrored sunglasses hiding his eyes.

OCKER
Sounds a bit simple, doesn't it?

Nolan tapes a twin clip on upside down for convenient, instant reloading.

NOLAN
Did they tell you what the mineral deposits are?

NICK
For what they're paying it's none of our business.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

Jamaal holds up a bazooka-like hollow tube --

JAMAAL
Blondie, where'd this old piece
of junk come from?

Nick takes the CARL GUSTAV 84mm ROCKET LAUNCHER from Jamaal and swings it expertly onto his shoulder.

NICK
(smiles)
Where? Sweden... Like me.

Jimmy G chuckles, slides an attachable GRENADE LAUNCHER onto his L85A1 and loads up a grenade --

JIMMY G
Why all the top-of-the-line
hardware, Nicky? We could'a
bought cheap and pocketed the
difference.

NOLAN
(to Jimmy)
I like the way you think, my
friend.

NICK
The object is to show our
strength, let them know what
they're up against.

Blades feels the weight of the L86 MACHINE-GUN -- bigger, uglier, meaner than the L85. Blades likes what he feels.

BLADES
(fondling his L86)
I light up a couple with this
thing, they'll get the point.

NICK
(hard)
You shoot when I say and at who
I say. No rape, no pillage, no
plunder.

The look between Nick and Blades is broken with...

JIMMY G
Nicky -- what about native
virgins?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK

We pull in for fuel at Poona Bay --
 (the rumble "Poona Bay"
 travels through the
 crowd)
 -- before making the last leg to
 the target. If you can keep your
 mouths shut about the job, I'll
 give you 16 hours to get your
 rocks off.

25 INT. TAMMY'S TIGER DEN - POONA BAY - DAY

If you want to ruin your liver, acquire a social disease, then
 be robbed and beaten, this is the place to go.

Up on a platform a heavily made-up ISLAND GIRL wearing nothing
 but a G-string and admiral's cap grinds to the pounding beat of
 a CANTONESE RAP SONG.

Cigarette, hash and opium smoke mix together above the heads of
 Chinese GAMBLERS, Malaysian SMUGGLERS and multi-national
 SAILORS on liberty -- a flock of tarted-up Asian B-GIRLS
 competing for their cash.

THE DOOR opens, a shaft of light cutting through the grungy
 air. Nick and the mercs enter -- they are immediately stopped
 by a hulking BRUTE in a Hawaiian shirt.

BRUTE

Gun check..

Nick lays his Ruger P85 on the counter. The Brute stashes it
 in a little cubicle surrounded by dozens of other cubicles
 filled with checked WEAPONS -- it's the Tower Records bag
 check, "Soldier Of Fortune" style.

The Brute runs a handheld METAL DETECTOR over Nick's body,
 grunts and hands him a ripped-in-half NUDIE PLAYING CARD.

Nick walks in and surveys the bar while his men proceed through
 the GUN CHECK..

NICK'S POV

A noisy band of Chinese GAMBLERS crowd the nearest table,
 laying down big money as they COUNT FISTS -- two players
 throwing out a fistful of fingers worth from 1 to 10 and
 simultaneously yelling out numbers from 2 to 20. First to
 guess the total of both players' fingers wins.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

AT THE GUN CHECK.

Jimmy G reluctantly lays a .44 Magnum down on the counter. The Brute runs his metal detector over Jimmy --

BEEEEEEPPPPPP!!!!!!

The Brute jabbars at Jimmy in PIDGIN, jabs him with the detector --

JIMMY G
Awright, awright...

Jimmy G reaches down, pulls the snub-nose .38 from his ankle holster and hands it over. The Brute checks him again --

BEEEEEEPPPPPP!!!!!!

The mercs waiting on line shoot Jimmy dirty looks. He rolls his eyes...

UP ON THE DANCING PLATFORM

the Island Girl grinds her way to Nick, turns and jiggles her shapely ass right in his face. Nick places a palm on her cheeks and gently pushes her away -- but she's not giving up that easy. She turns and bends over him -- her cascade of raven hair dropping over his face. Nick brushes her hair away and looks into her eyes.

AT THE GUN CHECK.

Jimmy G -- standing over a small pile of pistols, brass-knuckles and a knife -- digs both hands into the back of his pants and passes a MATCHED PAIR of little silver-plated .22 automatics to the Brute.

JIMMY G
(indicating the silver
.22's)
Take care of my babies.

The Brute runs his detector over Jimmy G again, finally comes up clean. The impatiently waiting mercs give him a round of sarcastic APPLAUSE. The Brute hands Jimmy G a nudie card and waves him on.

ANGLE -- OCKER AND NICK

OCKER
How about this, Nicky? It's like
Disneyland for low-lifes.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK
(sarcastic)
Charming.

NICK'S GIRL
You want party-party upstairs?

NICK
Not right now, thanks.

NICK'S GIRL
Mellican guy alla same-same.
Boocoo dollar, no wanna spen.

A unhealthy-looking B-girl sits on Ocker's lap --

OCKER
(introducing)
This is My Lin. She's dying of
TB.

NICK
(nods)
How do you do?

My Lin coughs softly, covering her mouth, and gives them a wan smile. Nick heads towards upstairs -- his girl smiles and follows.

26 INT. SESSION ROOM - DAY

The Island Girl leads Nick into her closet-sized place of business.

She clicks on the radio -- SALLY YEH crooning a romantic ballad in Cantonese.

She goes straight for Nick's fly -- but he stops her, turns and steps out through billowing shears to the balcony.

27 INT. TAMMY'S TIGER DEN - DAY

Three SPANISH PIRATES sit silently together. The leader, GOLDMOUTH -- each of his teeth capped in gold -- rhythmically sharpens his jagged SHARK KNIFE on a leather strop. His two companions share a bottle of rotgut whiskey. The trio stares intently at the next table --

NOLAN (O.S.)
... I'm tellin' you, man, it's
gotta' be jade -- "The Stone Of
Heaven"!

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

PIRATES' POV

Nolan sits with Jamaal, unable to contain his enthusiasm as he waves a worn copy of NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC and jabs his finger at a dot on a map.

NOLAN

Edge of the South China Sea was never colonized! There's trace deposits of nephrite jade all through these islands -- I bet those two yuppie faggots hit the motherload!

THE PIRATES

exchange looks, Goldmouth's lips curling into an evil grin.

28 INT. SESSION ROOM - BALCONY - DAY

Nick leans on the railing, staring out at the decrepit harbor. The Island Girl joins him, puts her arms around his shoulder.

NICK

Where do you come from?

ISLAND GIRL

From here.

NICK

This town?

ISLAND GIRL

Born this bar. Room down the hall.

NICK

(musing)

You ever wish it was like the old days? Like it was before we came?

ISLAND GIRL

(impatient)

You wanna fuck, twenny dollar. You wanna make friend, cost more.

NICK

(smiles cynically)

No shit.

29 INT. TAMMY'S TIGER DEN - DAY

Jimmy G and Jamaal sit nursing beers, watching Nolan COUNT FISTS with the table of Chinese Gamblers. A loud GROAN goes up and Nolan grins, collecting money all around.

A couple of good looking B-GIRLS sashay up to Jimmy and Blades and sit on their laps. Jimmy pushes his away, a frustrated look on his face.

BLADES

I thought you was the supreme ladies man?

JIMMY G

(indignant)

All these broads want is money!

SUDDENLY there's a COMMOTION at the Gun check.. Jimmy G shifts his gaze across the room --

JIMMY G'S POV

The Brute is taking his time running his metal detector over the tautly curved body of GRACE LASHEELE -- American, with eyes of soft blue steel. Her looks are too good for this place but her attitude fits in perfectly.

The metal detector BEEPS again. Grace rolls her eyes and adds two more HANDGUNS to her pile.

Jimmy G's eyes are sparkling. He runs his hands through his hair and adjusts the gold chains around his neck.

JIMMY G

(under his breath)

Baby.

GOLDMOUTH

Smitten as well.

GOLDMOUTH

Mamacita.

GRACE

The leering Brute collects up Grace's weapons and hands her one of the usual Nudie cards. She eyeballs it with disdain --

GRACE

Nothing with a hairy chest?

EVERY MAN IN THE PLACE follows Grace with his eyes as she crosses to the bar -- but Goldmouth, the Pirate leader, is way ahead of them.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

He y up with two drinks, flashes his hideous metallic smile and offers her one --

GOLDMOUTH
Ever have gold-tooth man dive
very deep for your pearl?

Grace stares at him as if he were a cockroach --

GRACE
(Asian dialect
w/subtitles)
Ever have a woman cut off your
dick and shove it up your ass so
you can fuck yourself?

All the Asian dialect speaking customers in the place bust out LAUGHING.

The smile drops from Goldmouth's face. He angrily goes to draw his Shark Knife from his belt -- but a STRONG HAND grabs his wrist and squeezes tight.

JIMMY G
Hey, whatever the hell she said
goes double for me.

Goldmouth looks at Jimmy oddly, then decides against drawing his knife -- he storms back to his cutthroat comrades.

JIMMY G
(to Grace)
Hello... Name is Jimmy G. You
can thank me later.

GRACE
(unimpressed)
Thank you? I was looking forward
to kicking his ass.

Jimmy G, taken off guard, quickly changes tactics --

JIMMY G
Okay, okay... I see a woman in
trouble and...

GRACE
... You see an opportunity to get
laid.

JIMMY G
Alright, sue me... I'm from
Brooklyn.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2)

GRACE
(suddenly)
Look out!

Grace shoves Jimmy G out of the path of Goldmouth's SHARK KNIFE as it comes stabbing at him! She SNAGS the pirate's KNIFE HAND and SLAMS it into the bar, JAMMING THE BLADE DEEP INTO THE WOOD.

Jimmy G watches in shock as Grace hits Goldmouth with a QUICK SERIES OF MARTIAL ARTS BLOWS. Goldmouth is too battered to fight back but remains standing. Grace SNAGS a whiskey bottle off the bar and SMASHES IT ACROSS HIS FACE! Goldmouth drops to the floor. The other two Pirates CHARGE for Grace. Jimmy G tackles them both to the floor, CRASHING into a table of drunken Smugglers.

All hell breaks loose.

The mercs wade in to help Jimmy G. Jamaal plucks salt & pepper shakers off his table, drops them in a bar rag and whips it through the air, WAILING away with his improvised blackjack. Blades breaks one leg off a table and starts WHACKING guys with his makeshift club. Nolan uses the cover of chaos to snatch up all the money laid out for bets, KICKBOXING anyone who tries to stop him.

Glass SHATTERS, chairs SPLINTER, bodies FLY EVERYWHERE. This is the brawl to end all brawls.

30 EXT. TAMMY'S TIGER DEN - POONA BAY - DAY

Ocker sits on the front porch, sharing an opium BONG with an ancient-faced ISLAND SHAMAN. A Malaysian Smuggler CRASHES out the front window, glass SPRAYING everywhere. Ocker and the Shaman completely ignore him.

31 INT. TAMMY'S TIGER DEN - DAY

The Brute is desperately fighting to protect the GUN CHECK. from the weapon-hungry brawlers.

Nick bounds down from upstairs and into the fray -- starts PUNCHING his way through the melee, looking for his men, separating combatants as he goes...

32 EXT. TAMMY'S TIGER DEN - POONA BAY - DAY

The fight SPILLS OUT ONTO THE STREET, more bodies CRASHING out the windows and door. One of them lands on Ocker's bong, BREAKING it in half.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

Royally pissed, Ocker gives the guy a vicious WHACK. He hands what's left of the bong to the Shaman, gets up and joins in the madness.

The sudden sound of HEAVY MACHINE GUNFIRE fills the air. Everyone freezes.

A JEEP full of LOCAL GENDARMES pulls up in front of the bar, the brawlers parting to let them through. The Gendarmes brandish automatic weapons and man a .50 caliber machine gun mounted atop the jeep.

A pair of white-laced, spit-polished COMBAT BOOTS step out of the jeep and into the dusty road.

CLOSE ON NICK

as he recognizes the man wearing the boots.

CLOSE ON THE MAN

whom we recognize from the photo on Merrick's wall. The third man.

NICK
(barely audible)
Keefers.

KEEFER stands resplendent in a starched tiger stripe uniform and KEVLAR FLAK VEST covered with colorful lanyards, epaulets and campaign ribbons. He surveys the motley crowd like a Roman Emperor reviewing his slaves.

Keefers strides in amongst the panting, sweating and bruised bar-fighters, who nervously keep as QUIET as they can. He marches up and down their ranks, calmly snatching MONEY away from them all.

Keefers reaches Nolan -- whose pockets bristle with the CASH he grabbed in the bar. Nolan watches in suppressed rage as Keefers takes all his money, peels off a SINGLE BILL and sticks it back in Nolan's pocket. Keefers BARKS a curt sentence in his Island's tongue, then English --

KEEFER
Who the FUCK is responsible for
this mess?

Goldmouth steps out of the crowd, his face crisscrossed with BLOODY CUTS. He jabbars at Keefers in the same language, then points out Grace and Jimmy G.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

Keefer BELLOWS an order. Several Gendarmes double-time over and yank Jimmy G and Grace out of the crowd. Keefer strides up to them -- eyeballs Grace.

KEEFER

What's your story, bitch?

Grace doesn't blink.

GRACE

I'm stuck on an island run by assholes. What's yours?

Keefer's nostrils flare. He's ready to kill -- but the moment passes and he chuckles instead.

KEEFER

I'm the minister of defense --

NICK (O.S.)

We'll pay for the damages,
Keefer...

Keefer's eyes light up like two tiny napalm strikes.

KEEFER

Nick Gunar...?

Keefer's eyes SNAP open. He stares at Nick... and smiles.

KEEFER

This is good, this is really
good...

Jamaal whispers to Nick --

JAMAAL

Who's this mutherfucker?

Nick ignores the question, eyes still locked on Keefer.

NICK

Come on, Keefer. I can line your
pockets...

KEEFER

(pissed)
Murder is six months for all of
you bastards at hard labor.
(suggestively to Grace)
But for you it might be really
hard.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (3)

NICK
Nobody's been killed.

KEEFER
Well, I beg to differ.
Somebody's been killed -- in
fact, someone's been murdered.

Keefer nonchalantly draws his pistol and SHOTS one of his Gendarmes through the temple.

JIMMY G
Holy shit.

A shock-wave passes through the crowd. The Gendarmes swallow hard. Keefer holsters his pistol.

KEEFER
You see that, Nick?! He was one
of my best men...

Ocker, Jamaal, Nolan and Blades gather around behind Nick -- they see the shit's gonna' hit the fan. Keefer notices the mercs around Nick and makes the connection.

KEEFER
You are all arrested.

NICK
This is between you and me.
Let's settle it that way.

Brawlers, Gendarmes, B-Girls and Mercs hold their breath -- their eyes glued to the two enemies in the middle of the road.

KEEFER
Hand-to-hand?

NICK
Afterwards we're all free to go.

KEEFER
Agreed.

Nick walks back to the mercs, pulls off his shirt and starts stretching.

Keefer walks back to the jeep, unbuckles his pistol belt, removes his flak vest, hands it to a Gendarme.

Nick and Keefer turn and face each other across the road.

The sun beats down on Nick's glistening body. He raises his fists AND CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES -- PREPARING.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (4)

KEEFER

Oh, by the way, there is only one ground rule. This isn't "You hit me, I hit you, you hit me, I hit you." This is I hit you -- I hit you -- I hit you.

Keefers turns to the Gendarmes --

KEEFER

Every time he touches me, kill one of his men.

A MURMUR runs through the crowd. Nick lowers his fists.

OCKER

(frantically whispering to Nick)

Don't do it, mate, we can take 'em!

NICK

(flicking his Gun check. card to Ocker)

With what?

Ocker stares at the nudie card helplessly. Realizes Nick's right. Keefers walks over and smiles some bad breath into Nick's face. Nick just stands there, muscular arms hanging limply at his sides...

NICK

Don't be stingy.

CRACK! Keefers delivers a vicious knuckle-punch to Nick's face!

The punishment begins. Keefers radiates sadistic glee as he covers Nick's face and head with BRUTAL BLOWS.

Nick clenches his fists -- but does nothing. Keefers keeps it coming.

THE MERCS

want to avert their eyes away but can't. Nick's taking it for them.

Keefers's glee turns to frustration. Nick isn't going down. He turns away from Nick, wipes the sweat from his brow -- then SUDDENLY SPINS AND LANDS A TREMENDOUS ROUNDHOUSE KICK TO NICK'S CHEST --

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (5)

KERAAAACCCCKKKK!!!!!!!!!!

Nick clutches at his ribs...staggers...drops to his knees in the dust. Finally.

The hushed crowd watches wide-eyed as Keefer steps up to Nick and towers over him. Blood drips from Nick's mouth onto Keefer's COMBAT BOOTS. Keefer BARKS an order and a Gendarme tosses him a rag. Keefer bends down and wipes Nick's blood off his boots.

KEEFER

You got one hour to disappear.

Keefer strides triumphantly back to his jeep and climbs in.

Goldmouth runs up, insistently JABBERING to Keefer, pointing at Grace. Keefer BARKS another order and four Gendarmes grab her and drag her towards the jeep --

JIMMY G

She's with us!

Nick looks up from the dust. Looks at Grace, then locks eyes with Jimmy G.

KEEFER

That true, Nick -- the bitch with you?

Jimmy's eyes plead. Nick painfully rises to his feet.

NICK

Yeah.

Keefer shrugs, BARKS another order. Goldmouth watches in silent rage as the Gendarmes release Grace, pile into the Jeep and start the engine.

KEEFER

Great reunion, Nick. Gotta' do it again some time.

The jeep speeds off in a cloud of dust.

33 EXT. OCEAN - FREIGHTER - DAY

The ship plows through the sea.

34 EXT. FREIGHTER DECK - DAY

Nick sits in the bow, stripped to his waist, grimacing as he TAPES UP his ribs. Ocker runs up --

OCKER

Something off the port stern,
mate. Better check it out.

BINOCULAR POV

Focusing in on a HI-SPEED LAUNCH cruising slowly, far behind the freighter's wake.

JAMAAL (O.S.)

She could be following us,
Blondie.

35 EXT. FREIGHTER DECK - DAY

Jamaal lowers his binoculars. Nick, Nolan, Blades and Jimmy G are all gathered together, gazing back at the small craft on the horizon. Ocker jogs up with the Carl Gustav and hands the rocket launcher to Nick --

OCKER

Could be nothin' -- Smugglers
cruise these waters day and night
with cigarettes and beer.

BLADES

I don't care who the fuck they
are -- blow 'em out of the water.

Nick loads a rocket into the launcher, raises it onto his shoulder and sights on the distant boat --

GRACE (O.S.)

You're wasting your rockets.

The mercs all turn to see Grace standing framed in the pilot-house door.

NICK

I told you to stay below.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

GRACE

(evenly sarcastic)

Even women need to breath.
Thought I'd mention that since
your target's almost 600 yards
away and that HEAT round you just
loaded into that Carl Gustav anti-
tank rocket launcher has a range
of 492 yards...

(shrugging)

You'd be better off saving it for
something you could actually hit.

The mercs are silently shocked for a moment --

BLADES

What a bunch of bullshit.

NICK

It's not bullshit.

(lowering the launcher)

She's right. We'll wait till
they come into effective range.

The mercs eye Grace, grudgingly impressed.

JIMMY G

(proudly)

I told you jerk-offs... she's a
natural!

JAMAAL

(peering through his
binoculars)

They're changing course...

The mercs turn back to the railing and watch as the small craft
passes them on the horizon.

GRACE

Look, I can help you guys out.
And I can take orders.

NOLAN

Oh yeah? I'll take a beaver
sandwich.

Everyone but Jimmy G and Nick laughs. Nick stares at Grace --

NICK

What branch?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

GRACE
Army Ordnance -- First
Lieutenant.

NICK
What happened to your bars?

GRACE
My C.O. in the Gulf tried to
bend me over a Patriot Missile.
So, I shot him -- right between
the uh...

NOLAN
(intrigued)
... Eyes?

GRACE
Legs.

JIMMY G
Ouch.

The mercs exchange looks. Nick smiles. Turns to Ocker --

NICK
Brief uh, --

Nick realizes he doesn't know her name, points --

GRACE
(answering)
Grace LaSheele.

NICK
-- Grace on the mission.

Jimmy G grins like the cat about to eat the canary. Nick hands
him the Carl Gustav --

NICK
Her cut comes out of your pay.

Jimmy G's grin drops.

36 EXT. OCEAN - HI-SPEED LAUNCH - DAY

GOLDMOUTH

stands at the helm, his two Pirate cohorts at his side. All
three watch the freighter in the distance. Goldmouth looks
down at Nolan's NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, opened to the page with
the map. He then TOSSES the magazine to...

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

KEEFER! Who sits perfecting his tan on the tuck and roll leather seats. Keefer flips open to the map and pulls a PENCIL from behind his ear and repeatedly CIRCLES the dot of the island...

KEEFER
 (to himself)
 I don't know why you're there
 but...
 (screams)
 I know where you live,
 dickhead...!

37 EXT. AERIAL SHOT - SOUTH CHINA SEA - NIGHT

The dot is now the ISLAND viewed from high above, the FREIGHTER a small shape two miles offshore. As we DESCEND towards the moonlit waters, a tiny SPECK becomes visible, speeding towards the Island coast, growing LARGER as we get CLOSER...

NICK (V.O.)
 It's twelve clicks across at the widest point -- the whole east side is rocks covered with bird shit. There's high reef surrounding and the main village is a half click up from the beach...

38 EXT. SOUTH CHINA SEA - MOVING WITH THE ZODIAC

A muffled Mercury engine propels a sleek RUBBER RAFT through the seaweed beds towards the surf. The seven mercs are barely visible in the darkness, practically on top of each other, crouching low, pressing themselves deep into the raft.

NICK (V.O.)
 The freighter makes its loop picks up Lyle and Warren and comes back in two weeks.

NOLAN (V.O.)
 And after we hit the beach?

NICK (V.O.)
 We introduce ourselves to the locals.

THE MERCS

float past, fierce, camouflage-blackened faces wired with adrenalin. We hear the SURF BREAKING on the beach ahead...

39 EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

A wave breaks, recedes, then a BOOT appears. Jamaal creeps through the sand as the others follow, dragging the Zodiac ashore. Jamaal trots ahead, suddenly sees something, raises a HAND SIGNAL, drops to his belly --

THE OTHER MERCS

fan out, falling on their bellies in the sand --

Jamaal squints his eyes. Nick crawls up next to him --

NICK AND JAMAAL'S POV

A small FIGURE steps out of the treeline and strolls across the beach towards them --

NICK AND JAMAAL

bring their rifles up, ready to fire if necessary --

CLOSER - THE FIGURE

A little barefoot Islander in his 30's, PO, keeps strolling closer, seeming not to see them. He wears shorts, a cotton shirt. He stops, looks up at the moon, starts to take a leak --

BLADES

pulls a big knife from a sheath on his calf.

OCKER

eyes this uneasily --

PO

shakes off a piss shiver, tucks it in and, apparently oblivious to the mercs, strolls directly at them, still admiring the sky --

NICK AND JAMAAL

tensing, ready --

BLADES

gathers to pounce --

OCKER

hand-signals for Blades to wait --

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

PO

comes closer, closer -- he's almost stepping on them when he looks down, smiles and speaks in English with an ISLAND ACCENT --

PO

You boys lost or wot?

40 EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE - NIGHT

Po leads the mercs past a reception committee of ASIAN VILLAGERS in native gear, faces gleaming in TORCHLIGHT. The natives smile and bow slightly, one after another, each saying in a phonetically-learned monotone --

VILLAGERS

Hey, G.I. Joe -- you got gum?

Po smiles at Nick as YAP, a 4-year-old boy, reaches up to tug the big Swede's arm.

YAP

Hey, G.I. Joe -- you got gum?

PO

I tell them this how to say hello in American. Some joke, huh, boss?

Nick and the black-faced mercs hold their weapons ready, grim.

NICK

You the Big Kahuna around here?

PO

(laughs)

No way, Jose! Po just fisherman, speak little English. Po small potato.

Po stops in front of a large THATCHED HUT.

PO

You boys like to stay here? No Holiday Inn onna island

NICK

(points to treeline)

We'll set up out there. In the morning you and me have big talk.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

LOKI, a beautiful island woman in her early 20's, steps out from the crowd. She looks first to Nick, then to Po for guidance. Po digs Nick with his elbow and winks.

PO
You need company, boss? Getting
pretty lonely inna jungle.

Nick looks her over, suspicious. She is lovely...

NICK
I don't need any company.

Loki notices Grace among the mercs. The Island woman's curiosity is piqued by the vaguely feminine form hidden beneath the camouflage and equipment.

NICK
You people stay away from us
tonight. We hear any creepy-
crawlies in the bush...
(nods)
Blades --

Blades hefts his L86 machine gun and BLASTS from the hip at the thatched hut -- BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP!!! Thatch and bamboo fly as the hut disintegrates under the barrage.

The natives duck and cover, terrified.

Blades ceases fire and a last piece of palm frond flutters to the ground.

Po looks serious, speaks to the Natives in ISLAND TONGUE as they peek out from wherever they've taken shelter. They begin to smile and APPLAUD.

The mercs react, confused by the response. Po stops clapping and smiles.

PO
That was a good show.

NICK
Tomorrow morning, you and me,
small potatoes.

Nick flashes a hand-signal and the mercs pull out, Blades and Nolan walking backwards to cover their rear as they file into the jungle.

PO
(calling after them)
Sleep well!

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

Po and the Villagers grin until the mercs are swallowed up into the bush, then drop their smiles and look worried -- all but little Yap, eyes wide with wonder.

YAP
(softly)
Hey, G.I. Joe -- you got gum?

41 EXT. UTU AWNING - MORNING

At the center of the village an enormous Utu tree supports a THATCHED ROOF that shades a meeting of the village ELDERS. OLD MEN and OLD WOMEN sit in a semi-circle near the trunk of the tree.

An old man, TAPU, rises with difficulty and walks to the central thatched mat that serves as the speaker's platform.

PO AND NICK

sit in front of Po's hut, watching the meeting from a distance. Nolan and Blades stand at ease behind them.

PO
I tell 'em everything you say,
boss. Village elders pretty
heavy thinker, they know the
score.

NICK
I hope so for your sake.

TAPU

gives the other Elders a slight bow, sits on the speaker's mat.

NICK (O.S.)
Is he the chief?

PO (O.S.)
Everybody chief here, boss. One
happy family.

The Elders bow back to Tapu.

PO (O.S.)
Alla them gotta have chance to
say-say.

NICK AND PO

NICK
That could take forever.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

PO
That just for say-say. Then they
start to argue. Days and days.
Village elders big pain inna
butt.

NICK
Your butt, not mine.

Yap appears and sits next to Nick, looking up worshipfully --
a little HOWLER MONKEY perched on his shoulder. Nick looks at
the kid and the monkey. Yap gives him a sweet smile...

NICK
For now you can take me on a
guided tour of this shitpile.

PO
Sure thing, boss.

NICK
(to the mercs)
Keep your eyes open back here.

NOLAN
(mimicking Po)
Sure thing, boss.

42 EXT. ISLAND - ANTS - DAY

Huge RED ANTS file across a palm-frond bridge. PING! One is
nicked off by a whizzing projectile --

VILLAGE KIDS giggle as they take turns putting seeds into long
bamboo shoot BLOWGUNS and taking potshots at the ants.

OCKER AND JAMAAL

stroll through the village, armed to the teeth, eyes on the
Kids.

OCKER
Little sprogs know how to shoot.

SNICK! A seed hits Jamaal on the neck. He flashes the Kids a
mean look -- they turn their backs and grin, acting totally
innocent.

OCKER
(laughs)
First blood.

43 EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Nick and Po tread through heavy underbrush, BIRDS and MONKEYS CHATTERING above.

NICK

Where'd you pick up your English?

PO

National Geographic. They here two whole year, always taking pitcher, asking question. Po was native guide. Some joke, huh?

NICK

How'd you like to be President of this rock? We could arrange it.

PO

(laughs)

Guys who come before offer Po same-same.

NICK

Who came here before?

PO

Two fella -- think their name "Eddie Bauer" and "L.L. Bean" Ask a lotta question, pick up a piece of ground from all over, put in a bag. They tell Po to sign paper, let them come and dig onna island. Them fella send you, no?

NICK

(a slight grin)

Yeah, they sent me.

PO

Why they think Po wanna be President?

NICK

You could make decisions without waiting for a lot of old farts to make up their minds. You could be the head of the army.

PO

No army here, boss.

NICK

Come on -- how do you defend yourselves?

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

PO
 (shrugs)
 What to defend? Couple tree,
 lots of rock, birdshit on
 everything.

SNAP! Nick suddenly SPINS at the sound of a breaking twig,
 aiming his shotgun pointblank at --

YAP

Nick lets out a breath and lowers his shotgun. Po SCOLDS Yap
 in Island tongue, turns back to Nick and grins --

PO
 Relax, boss. You the mighty
 warriors -- not us.

NICK
 (unamused)
 You're jerking my chain, Po. You
 shouldn't do that.

CLOSE ON A TIKI DEATH FACE

A haunted visage carved from a thick log stares at us.

44 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Ocker stares back at the face. He sits cross-legged before it,
 rifle across his lap. The Tiki stands at the head of the
 village, watching over the natives' every move. A willowy
 young Island GIRL with sunken eyes and hollow cheeks leaves an
 ANIMAL BONE OFFERING before it and casts a shy glance at Ocker
 as she leaves.

NOLAN (O.S.)
 Guy's a waste.

Blades and Nolan stand a few yards behind Ocker. Blades
 pointedly talks loud enough for the burnt-out Aussie to hear --

BLADES
 Fuckin' useless.

Ocker smiles his tight little smile and keeps staring into the
 face of death.

BLADES AND NOLAN

leave Ocker behind and stride through the village, trying to be
 intimidating. Blades is taught, machine gun at the ready.
 Nolan has his rifle slung on his back, relaxed.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

The Villagers around them keep working -- THATCHING, ROOT POUNDING, NET-MENDING, with only an occasional glance at the two mercs.

NOLAN

Before I leave here I mean to find that jade and pick me up a piece or two. What do you say, Blades?

BLADES

(deadpan)

We kick ass and we leave.

NOLAN

Yeah, sure, I see where you're comin' from. Me, I'm the kinda' guy who likes to know all the angles. I think my luck has definitely changed coming here. I got a good feeling about this place. Tropical breeze, sandy beach, smiling natives --

BLADES

The minute we let our guard down they'll cut our throats.

Nolan looks to see if he's serious. He is. Nolan curiously sniffs the air.

45 EXT. ISLAND SHORE - DAY

A dozen NATIVE MEN and WOMEN move waist-deep in the surf pulling a HUGE NET -- crawling with SILVERY LITTLE FISH.

NICK, PO AND YAP

watch from the beach.

PO

On this island everybody do work. You wanna eat, you gotta work.

NICK

You folks sign with Nitrodyne and you can take it easy.

(pointing at the fishermen)

You'll have a hundred nets like that, all filled with money.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

LOKI (OFF SCREEN)
What are we gonna buy with money?

Loki APPEARS from seemingly nowhere... She has caught Nick off guard and speechless.

LOKI (CONT.)
Buy food? Got plenty food inna ocean. Maybe we outta buy a big American car?

PO
She pretty funny, huh boss?

NICK
(to Loki)
You won't have to work to get the food.

LOKI
And that suppose to be good?

Grace emerges from the treeline, wiping sweat from her brow, rifle slung over her shoulder. Po watches her in surprise -- he didn't make her as a woman last night. Po grins, digs Nick with his elbow and winks.

PO
Po get it now, boss -- you bring own bang-bang girl to island.

Before Nick can reply, Grace marches up to him --

GRACE
Perimeter's secured. I laid out trip-wires, flares and a couple Claymores.

PO
(concerned)
Claymores, boss -- bomb in ground?

NICK
Just keeping you honest, Po.

Yap stares up at Grace, fascinated -- Loki SPEAKS harshly to him in ISLAND TONGUE. Yap keeps staring up at the female merc.

GRACE
(smiling at Yap)
Listen to your mother, kid.

Loki glares at Grace, then Nick. Nick notices.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK
He's your son?

Loki nods. She SPEAKS in ISLAND TONGUE to Po.

NICK
What did she say?

PO
She say you remind her of her
father.

This catches Nick totally off balance. Loki takes Yap and
EXITS. Nick's eyes linger on Loki as she walks away --

Po shoots Nick a sympathetic look --

PO
Looks like you got woman trouble,
boss.

NICK
No trouble. No trouble at all.

Po grins.

PO
You jerkin Po's chain, boss --
you shouldn't do that.

CLOSE ON A HANDFUL OF SMALL ANIMAL BONES
as they're tossed into a circle drawn in the dirt.

46 EXT. GAMBLING GLADE - DAY

A throng of YOUNG ISLAND MEN cheer or groan, depending on how
they laid their bets. A NATIVE BOOKIE pays out in TURTLE EGGS
to the winners and calls for the next round as another BONE
SHOOTER steps up to the circle --

NOLAN (O.S.)
You fellas mind if I get in on
this action?

The Island Men welcome Nolan into their ranks, smiling. One
points to the merc's canteen. Nolan hands it over to the
Bookie and gets a pile of TURTLE EGGS in exchange.

NOLAN
So tell me, boys -- who's the
hottest shooter in the house?

47 EXT. JUNGLE - COCONUT TREE - DAY

Jamaal stares up, frustrated, at the ripe, milk-filled fruit hanging out of reach on branches twenty feet above. He raises his assault rifle, aims carefully and FIRES A BURST into the tree.

The coconuts above EXPLODE into a million inedible pieces.

JAMAAL
Goddammit!

LAUGHTER comes from behind Jamaal. He turns and sees the Village Children amused at his predicament.

JAMAAL
(pissed)
You got a better idea?

The kids urge one of their comrades towards Jamaal -- but as he emerges from their ranks we realize it's a HOWLER MONKEY.

The Monkey scrambles past Jamaal and effortlessly scrambles up the tree. A moment later he scampers back down -- arms filled with choice COCONUTS, which he deposits at Jamaal's feet.

Jamaal picks up one of the coconuts, shakes his head, smiles at the kids -- and LAUGHS.

48 EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - DAY

Po, Nick and Yap move through the heavy foliage --

PO
I show you somethin' National
Geographic never see.

NICK
If they were here two years how
could they miss it?

PO
Some things Island only show to
certain people. Island want you
to see this.

Yap sees something up ahead and points excitedly --

YAP
Aku! Aku!

We see a small clearing with an enormous STONE HEAD, cracked and overgrown, at its center.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

Ocker has somehow gotten there before them and is examining it, fascinated.

AKU HEAD

More than twenty feet high, with a fierce, twisted grimace on its face.

Ocker is blown away as he looks up at it. Nick and Po walk up on either side of him.

NICK
(a bit spooked)
How'd you get here?

OCKER
(still staring up at
the head)
I just had a feeling and kept on
walking. What is this thing?

PO
The Old People leave this.

NICK
Old People?

PO
People who live here before us.
They all gone now.
(darkly)
Very fierce people, fight alla
time, alla time make big head
like this to honor King, no time
to catch fish, grow food. They
fight wars with other island,
make other island people slaves
so they can make more big head.

CLOSE ON THE AKU HEAD

grimacing down at us.

PO (O.S.)
Time comes when they fight each
other. Women and children killed
same-same as men. People drink
blood like water.

Yap is terrified before the Head, hugging Nick's leg.

PO (O.S.)
Very bad time. People live only
for killing.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2)

Nick listens, reflecting on his own life.

PO (O.S.)
Old People all gone now, turn to
stone. This face is their face.

CLOSE ON THE AKU HEAD

PO (O.S.)
... Face of the dead.

CLOSE ON GOLDMOUTH

Spanish Pirate and scourge of Poona Bay -- moonlight glinting
off his hideous metallic grin.

49 EXT. ISLAND COAST - NIGHT

Goldmouth and his six cutthroat accomplices putter their hi-
speed pirate launch towards the beach in silently low gear...

CLOSE ON A BOAR

roasting on a spit over a ROARING FIRE --

50 EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

A LUAU TABLE loaded with food, decorated with island orchids
and lit by TORCHES.

THE TIKI MASK

watches over the proceedings.

Most of the Villagers are already seated. They APPLAUD as the
mercs file up to the table in semi-casual battlegear.

Blades carries his machine gun, Nolan his rifle, the other
mercs only sidearms. Ocker has his mirrored shades on even
though it's night. They cautiously settle into seats around
the luau table.

PO
Welcome to our honored guests.

Suddenly there's an EXPLOSION of drums and, as the Mercs watch
with rapt attention, a performance of story and dance is
revealed with festive color.

Old people come out dancing to the distinctive Asian rhythms --
they are adorned in colorful costumes of big and little fish.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

After a moment the dancers separate to REVEAL a stunning, young, bright faced LEAD DANCER. She is no more than seventeen and dressed as the Hungry Fish -- attracting all the other little fishes with her sensual movements.

In the background the ELDERS are making HAND SHADOWS against a backdrop. Others hold banners of blue and green Thai silk to simulate waves, big and small.

All the little fish swarm around the beautiful Hungry Fish and are instantly swallowed up.

The drums build and build... the Hungry Fish seems to be driven crazy by her hunger, the young woman writhing around in mock agony from eating too much. The drums hit a crescendo then BOOM...! The little fish EXPLODE from the Hungry Fish's belly, escaping to freedom.

The whole village stands and applauds. The Mercs are on their feet as well -- except Nick and Blades. Nick reluctantly shows his appreciation with a slight smile while Blades stares unamused.

Nick catches Loki off to the side looking at him -- she smiles.

WILLOW -- the thin, hollow-cheeked Girl -- lays a large EGG IN A BOWL in front of each merc -- lingering as she serves Ocker his. Ocker gives her a little smile, eyes still hidden behind his glasses.

NICK

What's this?

PO

Guests must eat before main course begins. Big honor.

Nick breaks the top off his egg. He and Jamaal look in --

JAMAAL

There's feathers on it already, Blondie. And little feet --

PO

Very rare delicacy. Just chew and swallow.

Nick hesitates, unsure what Po is up to.

PO

Is necessary for all great occasion.

Blades grabs his egg and cracks the top off --

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

BLADES

The gooks are testing us, man --
bottoms up.

Blades sucks his embryo out and gulps it down, staring coldly at Po. The other mercs reluctantly dig in.

We PAN FROM MERC TO MERC -- each one squeamishly crunching and chewing.

We PAN ACROSS THE NATIVES -- old and young, reverently watching the outsiders eat.

The mercs swallow the last bit of it down, looking green.

NICK

(grimacing)

You guys eat these all the time
or just for ceremonies?

PO

You kidding? We don't eat that
shit.

The Natives bust out LAUGHING, the whole village in on it --

PO

We do same-same to National
Geographic fellas. Some joke,
huh?

Blades glares daggers as the Natives continue to whoop it up. Nick looks coldly at Po.

NICK

You're full of surprises, aren't
you, Po?

Nick pulls a thick CONTRACT out of a waterproof pouch.

NICK

Let's take care of business. Do
you sign or is it one of the old
farts?

Po smiles slightly and shakes his head.

PO

Nobody sign paper, boss.

NICK

(confused)

You'd told me we'd get the
decision tonight.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (3)

PO
I tell you the decision.
Decision is no.

It is suddenly very, very silent, the mercs touching their weapons and looking to Nick for their next move. Nick's face is a tangle of conflicting emotions --

NICK
You don't understand --

PO
Island spirit tell us how to decide. Island spirit heavy thing, boss.

BLADES
You little prick --

Blades leaps to his feet and levels his machine gun at Po's belly.

NICK
Put it down, Blades.

BLADES
They're fuckin' laughing at us man!

NICK
Put it down.

Blades furiously swings the machine gun away from Po and opens up -- BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP!!! -- the Tiki mask SPLINTERS apart as bullets SMASH into it.

The Natives watch dumbstruck -- a very heavy taboo is being fucked with.

Blades, machine gun at his hip, keeps BLASTING AWAY. Po and the others look on. Finally Blades stops firing. Glares at the Natives --

BLADES
That's what I think of your fuckin' island spirits.

CLOSE ON THE TIKI

Shot to shit, what's left of the face grotesque.

The Islanders look terrified, but not necessarily of the mercs. They cast dark glances back to the ruined Tiki.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (4)

PO
Bad thing to do, boss. You angry
up Bo'uta.

NOLAN
(sarcastic)
Who the fuck is that?

PO
Spirit of War.

NICK
Bo'uta ain't shit compared to
what's gonna' fall on you people
if you don't sign on the dotted
line.

PO
That was real bad thing, boss.
Po scared for you.

NICK
Tell them what I said.

Po just shakes his head, reluctantly begins translating to the Villagers. Nick looks at his mercs, surrounded by the uneaten feast.

Jimmy G hungrily points to Grace's uneaten egg.

JIMMY G
So... you gonna eat that or what?

KABOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Everybody jumps at the sound of a tremendous EXPLOSION --
followed by a horrible SCREAM OF ANGUISH.

GRACE
The Claymores --

Suddenly, a BARRAGE OF GUNFIRE rakes the feast table, spraying food into the air. The Mercs hit the ground, Nick diving for Yap, tearing the young boy out of the line of fire. The Villagers stand, mouths agape, not sure what is happening --

BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!

Another round of gunfire rips into the villagers who scream in panic and horror. The costumes are torn to bits.

NICK
Get down! Get Down!

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (5)

Po is screaming the same in Island Tongue. Loki yells at the beautiful young Hungry Fish -- but she looks like a doe caught in the headlights on an oncoming truck!

BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!

She and her beautiful costume are RIPPED TO SHREDS. Nick watches her fall lifeless to the ground -- then begin to return fire into the treeline. Immediately he hits the flesh of a PIRATE. The Pirate stumbles out of the trees, still smoking, firing wildly, clutches his fatal wounds.

The mercs instantly break for the camp, Nick in the lead --

51 EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

The mercs charge past, moving fast through the heavy foliage --

52 EXT. MERCS CAMP - NIGHT

-- breaking through the treeline into their RANSACKED camp, frantically scanning through the dark, spotting --

ONE OF GOLDMOUTH'S PIRATE COHORTS

barely alive -- laid out like a science experiment -- atop a exploded anti-personnel mine, his AK-47 blown into splinters.

Grace drops to the Pirate's side and hurriedly asks a QUESTION in Spanish. The dying Pirate coughs out a few last words. Grace looks up at Nick --

GRACE

"Stone of Heaven"?

NOLAN

Jade -- they came for the jade!

NICK

What the hell are you talking about?

BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!

Two AK-47's OPEN UP from the jungle, spraying lead. Ocker SCREAMS and grabs his BLOODY shoulder --

NICK

Suppressing fire!

The mercs hit the dirt and instantly pour RETURN FIRE at the trees --

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

OCKER
Thirty degrees left!

Two pirates plummet from a tree -- dead.

NICK
(yelling to Jimmy)
Thumper!

Jimmy G bellies over to his knapsack, pulls out his assault rifle with attached GRENADE LAUNCHER and slaps in a grenade. He sights on the MUZZLE-FLASHES lighting up the trees and pulls the launcher's trigger --

The grenade EXPLODES into the treeline, LIGHTING UP the jungle. This doesn't stop the mercs from continuing to pour automatic fire into the trees.

NICK
Check your fire!

One by one the mercs weapons cut out, the jungle returning to a strange silence. A CLOUD of smoke and dust from the explosion hangs in the air. Nick bellies over to Ocker --

NICK
You okay?

OCKER
(fingering 2 bloody
holes in his arm)
In and out. No problem.

Nick slaps Ocker on the back, rises to a crouch and HAND-SIGNALS the mercs. Nolan, Blades, Grace, Jimmy G and Jamaal fan out into a skirmish line and head towards the BURNING PATCH OF JUNGLE --

Nick reaches the spot. Looks around. Three still smoking bodies lay mangled. He sees something else and bends down, picking up a torched National Geographic. Nolan steps up next to him.

NICK
(deadly)
"Jade," huh?

Nick angrily tosses it to Nolan, who cringes and drops the SMOLDERING magazine. Nick spots something WET, glistening in the darkness --

BLADES (O.S.)
Bloodtrail!

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK
 (yelling back)
 Follow it!
 (to Nolan)
 Go with Blades.
 (angry)
 They get off the island our
 mission is compromised.

Nolan nods and disappears into the jungle. Nick signals to Grace and points out the wet spot on the leaves -- a second BLOODTRAIL.

NICK
 Grace, you follow this one with
 me.
 (calling out)
 Jimmy G, Jamaal -- sweep the
 camp.

Jimmy G and Jamaal signal "message received" and head back for the camp. Nick races into the jungle, following the bloodtrail, Grace hot on his heels --

53 EXT. JUNGLE - BLADES AND NOLAN - NIGHT

Moving quickly through the darkness. Blades FIRES a night FLARE lighting up the sky.

BRAP!--BRAP!--BRAP!--BRAP!--BRAP!

AK-47 fire cuts through the jungle at them.

Nolan and Blades hit the dirt and roll off to either side. Blades FIRES another signal flare at the muzzle-flashes --

PIRATE #2

is HIT IN THE FACE by the flare! He SCREAMS and fires blindly into the jungle.

BLADES

appears behind him, jams his machine gun flush against the Pirate's head, squeezes the trigger --

54 EXT. JUNGLE - NICK AND GRACE - NIGHT

Freeze in their boots as the sound of Blades' MACHINE GUNFIRE carries through the trees --

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

Nick signals for Grace to follow him deeper into the bush. Grace nods and starts to follow him -- then hangs back, something catching her eye -- a metallic glint in the moonlight? She peers into the pitch-black jungle...

GOLDMOUTH

suddenly melts out of the bush RIGHT BEHIND GRACE! The wounded Pirate CLAMPS one hand over her mouth and uses the other to JAM his shark-knife up against her throat! He forces her down onto the ground, his wounded side bleeding all over her...

NICK (O.S.)

Grace -- where the fuck are you?

Goldmouth goes stiff. Tightens his blade against Grace's throat, drawing a tiny trickle of blood as the sound of Nick's FOOTSTEPS grow CLOSER --

GOLDMOUTH

(a deadly whisper)

I'll be back.

Goldmouth gives Grace a HIDEOUS LINGERING KISS -- then shoves her down into the dirt and charges into the jungle --

Grace gasps, holds her throat and dry-heaves as Nick appears at her side --

NICK

What the hell --

SUDDENLY THE SOUND OF A POWERFUL ENGINE SPUTTERING TO LIFE --

Nick and Grace exchange a look.

GRACE

Go!

Nick crashes through the jungle, racing towards the still-sputtering engine --

55 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - NIGHT

Nick charges out of the treeline -- BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP!-BRAP! BRAP! -- then dives into the sand, Goldmouth BLASTING AWAY at him from --

THE HI-SPEED PIRATE LAUNCH

at the edge of the beach. Goldmouth lowers his AK-47 and gives the engine one more YANK. It finally KICKS to life. Goldmouth laughs out loud, takes the helm and heads out to sea --

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

Nick rises out of the sand and OPENS FIRE on the departing speedboat --

56 EXT. PIRATE LAUNCH - MOVING - NIGHT

Goldmouth locks the boat into full speed, turns, RACES BACK to the stern and FIRES BACKWARD at Nick --

57 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - NIGHT

Nick eats dirt as Goldmouth's bullets KICK SAND UP ALL AROUND HIM --

58 EXT. PIRATE LAUNCH - SPEEDING - NIGHT

Goldmouth SCREAMS CURSES IN SPANISH and keeps BLASTING AWAY --

59 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - NIGHT

Nick BLASTS BACK at the Launch as Grace CRASHES out of the trees -- the Carl Gustav rocket launcher in her hands! She drops to one knee, IGNORES the flying lead, and frantically starts loading it --

GRACE
(calling to Nick)
How many yards?

Nick looks at Grace in surprise -- then stares out at the rapidly escaping speedboat --

NICK
Four-hundred -- no, four-fifty...

Grace swings the Carl Gustav up onto her shoulder, aims --

NICK
Four-sixty --

Grace's sweaty fingers clamp around the pistol-grip --

NICK
Four-seventy --

Her eyes stare down the TELESCOPIC SIGHT at the escaping pirate launch, barely illuminated by the moon and stars --

NICK
Take the shot!

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

GRACE
Wait! Wait! It's too dark!

NICK
Four-eighty -- four-ninety --
five-hundred --

Grace blinks sweat from her eye --

GRACE
Perfect...

Pulls the trigger.

FWOOOOOSSSSSHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

FLAMING BACK-BLAST shoots out the rear of the tube, LAUNCHING
the ROCKET across the water --

GOLDMOUTH

looks on in horror --

ROCKET'S POV

Zooming through the night, heading STRAIGHT FOR THE LAUNCH --

GOLDMOUTH

leaps off the boat just as --

BAROOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

-- the rocket hits home, blasting the boat into a BALL OF FLAME
which catches Goldmouth in MID-AIR -- LIGHTING HIM UP LIKE
CHRISTMAS! He hits the water and disappears.

STEAM rises off the spot where he went under.

60 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - NIGHT

Nick and Grace watch the burning Launch as it lights up the
night sky.

NICK
Nice shooting.

Ocker, Jimmy G, Jamaal, Nolan and finally Blades emerge from
the jungle and join them on the beach.

OCKER
What now, Nicky?

61 EXT. VILLAGE -- NIGHT

Nick leads the Mercs back from the beach. The village is in total shock -- men and women are weeping openly over the dead. Nick finds Yap poking questioningly at the dead young dancer, looking almost peaceful still in her ceremonial garb.

Nick carefully eases Yap away from the body. Loki comes over and tries to take Yap away -- but Yap holds on tightly to Nick. Loki is pissed.

LOKI

You're fault. They come because of you.

This hits Nick hard. He wants to walk away but Yap keeps holding on tight.

PO

Don't worry, boss -- they unnerstand now. Everybody unnerstand. They know you gonna shoot anybody don't do what you say.

BLADES

Man's right, Nick. If we greased just one gook for every day they...

NICK

(cutting him off)
We won't have to grease anybody.
(to Po)
Are there any Islanders who don't live in the village?

PO

Couple mountain people. Free spirits, don't like taking orders.

NICK

They'll get used to it. How long a trip?

PO

One day up, one day down. Loki take us up... if you want.

Nick looks over at Loki, who stands with the other Villagers, looking at him with barely concealed anger. Grace looks from Loki to Nick, shrugs --

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

GRACE

Strategically speaking it is the high ground. We oughta' check it out.

Nick thinks -- then points to Blades.

NICK

(to Po)

Okay. But I'm gonna leave him in charge, understand?

Po nods solemnly -- Nick looks to Loki --

Why her?

PO

(shrugs)

Nobody else know way up. Loki mountain girl.

62 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - DAY

She is too -- Loki, barefoot, puts Stallone to shame -- CLIMBS INTO FRAME Grace, however, is keeping up fine. Nick, way behind, is having a rough time because Yap has practically glued himself to his back. Po is right behind.

PO

(re: Loki)

Mountain girl.

NICK

(winded)

You know -- you speak a lot better English than two years leading National Geographic around.

Po, caught in a lie, confesses --

PO

Po in San Francisco long time. Busboy, Mark Hopkin Hotel.

NICK

So why not say so?

PO

Po say that, you fellas treat him like busboy. You ever been a busboy?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

He's got Nick there.

63 EXT. UTU AWNING - MORNING

Blades addresses the council Elders, the other mercs flanking him, fully armed.

BLADES

You piss-ants been operating on Island time, so from now on you're operating on my time. I think it's a little too comfortable.

The Elders listen intently.

BLADES

So today you'll do your say-say Bullshit out in the sun 'til I hear the right answer.

Blades steps in and with a few swift heaves pulls the roof off the branches of the Utu tree.

The Elders watch expressionless, then sit down right where they are, forming their usual semi-circle. They start to TALK calmly with each other.

JAMAAL

-- stands uncomfortably watching Blades -- then turns at the sudden CHATTERING of the Howler Monkey as it scampers up to him and deposits a huge COCONUT at his feet. He looks up and spies a knot of Island Kids watching him from the edge of the jungle.

JAMAAL

(snatching up the coconut)

No thanks.

Jamaal vents his anger by launching the coconut in a powerful HAIL MARY PASS at the Kids. The perfect spiral soars through the air. A Kid makes a beautiful catch, snagging it just before it hits the ground.

JAMAAL

(impressed)

Nice hands.

64 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DAY

Ocker lays in the sand as Willow, the hollow-cheeked Island girl, gently applies an herbal salve to his entry and exit wounds. She says something to him in ISLAND TONGUE, pointing at his wound and offering him a NUT and MIMING for him to chew it.

OCKER
 (popping it in his
 mouth)
 Painkiller, eh? I'll try
 anything once.

65 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DAY

Ocker wanders towards the surf, weaving slightly from the effects of the nut. Red juice dribbles out the corners of his mouth, a goofy smile on his face. Willow follows, making sure he doesn't fall over.

OCKER
 Honey, I'm livin' in my own
 private Club Med.

Ocker stops, sees something, takes off his shades and blinks.

I'm hallucinating...

OCKER'S POV

A rough-hewn SURFBOARD carved out of wood floats at the water's edge.

Ocker staggers down the beach and falls on his knees by the board. He reaches out tentatively to touch it, as if it might disappear. It is solid.

OCKER
 I've died and gone to heaven.

He looks up at --

SURF - NATIVE TEENAGERS

with Ocker and Jimmy G -- who doesn't know what the fuck to make of a surfboard -- out riding the waves. Ocker and the kids get caught up trying to get the same wave -- they fall off and burst to the surface, laughing.

Ocker see's another swell building... He paddles quickly and -- grabs the wave -- he is in heaven -- he starts even SHOUTING OUT the theme song from "Hawaii Five-O."

66 EXT. EDGE OF THE VILLAGE - DAY

Jamaal has the Kids in a pick-up FOOTBALL GAME, using a coconut as the ball. He's QB'ing for one side and coaching for the other. The Kids love it.

BLADES

watches from deeper in the village, machine gun in hand.

BLADES
Fuckin' worthless.

67 EXT. MOUNTAIN STREAM - DUSK

Nick, Po, Loki, Grace and Yap walk, after a long day of hiking, into the beautiful mountain Village. This charming and very magical looking hamlet is built into the side of the cliff's surrounding the most beautiful stream you've ever seen.

As they arrive -- all of the Mountain people are SINGING as they leave their work and whatever they're doing to congregate by the stream.

PO
Mountain people, boss.

NICK
What are they doing?

LOKI
Evening the whole village wash together.

The whole village begins to take off their clothes.

GRACE
Naked? They're all naked?

Yap starts to pull Nick towards the water -- excited to be one of the first in. Po starts to removing his clothes...

PO
Gotta do it, boss. Mountain
People don't listen to nothin'
you don't join in sacred
ceremony...

Loki steps out of her sarong and dives in. Nick and Grace exchange a look -- Yap pulls on Nick. Nick shrugs his shoulders...

DISSOLVE TO

68 EXT. POOL -- SUNSET

There's a playful giddiness in the air as the Mountain people wash each other in the last light of day.

Children play -- old people tell stories.

Loki is talking to MARA -- a striking older woman with iron-gray hair. Occasionally they look at Nick.

Yap swims around Nick, playfully splashing him. We SLOWLY PAN OVER to Grace who is reaching half naked out of the water, helping a girl pull a Mango from a low hanging branch.

Suddenly she feels somebody's eyes on her and turns... She finds that it's Nick -- who is looking more at her generosity than her body.

GRACE

What do you think you're lookin' at?

NICK

Uh, nothing.

He quickly turns his attention away and discovers Loki who smiles at his embarrassment. The old woman laughs as well.

A FULL MOON --

-- burns a clear white light into the tropical night --

69 EXT. MOUNTAIN VILLAGE -- NIGHT

Resting in Nick's arms, Yap has drifted off to sleep. Grace is fieldstripping her assault rifle. Loki walks up looks at Nick holding her son.

LOKI

He likes you.

NICK

I like him.

LOKI

He doesn't know you.

NICK

Neither do you.

Nick slowly reaches over and puts Yap down on his mat -- then drapes a light blanket over him.

NICK

Where's his father?

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

LOKI
Gone.

NICK
Where?

LOKI
There is a spirit, O'una, that lives in the sea. Sometimes he need people so he won't be lonely. So he take one of us. My man is out beyond the reef with others one day, fishing, when there is a storm and O'una take him.

NICK
How old was Yap then?

LOKI
He is still inside me.

NICK
Well, if the Nitrodyne people come they'll give you money to buy better boats. Your husband wouldn't have died.

LOKI
(shrugs)
O'una want you, O'una come and get you.

NICK
Right.
(beat)
Where'd you learn to speak English?

Loki looks to the top of the mountain and points.

LOKI
Up there.

70 EXT. MOUNTAINTOP -- PLANE WRECK - NIGHT

The awesome sight of a wrecked Vietnam-era A-4 SKYHAWK -- it sits planted into the side of the mountain -- jungle leaves growing around it. It's eerily lit by TORCHES stuck in the surrounding earth.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

Nick looks at the plane, spooked, Loki standing at his side. MARA -- the woman Loki was talking to in the water -- is speaking, her voice cracking with age and wisdom.

MARA

There was a noise and a fire on the mountain and then there is a putupa -- a jellyfish in the sky -- hanging down -- it is a man. A white-skin man like we hear about from other island but never see. This man talks funny talk but always smile. His name is Flyboy.

NICK

(to Loki)

Your father?

Loki nods.

NICK

How long was he here?

Mara waves a bony hand at their surroundings --

MARA

He still here. Inna trees, inna air, inna water. Flyboy part of island now.

NICK

He never left?

Loki looks at Mara and Mara nods...

LOKI

He wanted to go -- always say he's living like cave man -- nothing to do. He was unhappy 'til he started to hear.

NICK

Hear what?

LOKI

The voice of the island speak to him -- tell him how to fish, to laugh, to be with the mountain people.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (2)

MARA
 He understood. He was a mighty
 warrior...
 (misses him)
 Very powerful.

Nick watches Mara's aching heart.

NICK
 A good man?

LOKI
 He became good man.

NICK
 When did he die?

LOKI
 (indicates hip-height)
 I was this high.

Mara steps forward to look Nick over closer. She asks Loki something in Island Tongue. Loki ANSWERS. Looks at Nick.

LOKI
 My mother want to know if
 jellyfish fell from the sky with
 you. I tell her you wash up onna
 sand like a garbage.

Nick looks back at her -- hurt, trying not to show it. Mara pulls a discolored PHOTOGRAPH out of her sarong and holds it out for Nick to see. He takes it.

CLOSE ON THE PHOTO

Three Vietnam War fighter-jocks stand grinning on the deck of an aircraft carrier, the middle pilot circled in red. He's about Nick's age and build.

Mara gives Nick a proud smile and touches her heart to indicate possession.

MARA
 Flyboy.

71 EXT. PLANE WRECK - LATER

Everybody else is long asleep. Nick walks around the plane, examining the rusted-out hull, 'til he comes to the nose. He wipes some dirt from the double row of RED STARS stenciled below the cockpit --

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

LOKI (O.S.)

Those mark mean people he kills.

Nick turns and Loki steps out of the dark. They are the only ones still awake, the night is alive with JUNGLE SOUNDS, the warplane ghostly lit in the torchlight.

LOKI

Each mark means maybe one, maybe more places he drop fire on.

NICK

(eyes on the overgrown jet)

He flew close air support off a carrier in Vietnam --

(indicating all the red stars)

-- Musta' been pretty good.

LOKI

You mean good at burning people.

Nick takes a few steps, stares pointblank at the dancing flames of a torch -- then turns and goes to sit on an old banyan root structure. Loki sits down next to him.

NICK

Once my job was to keep people from being burned. To put the fires out. Then I learned how the world really works. People like to burn each other.

(hard for him)

I burned people.

(beat)

I learned I was good at it.

(pointing to the red stars on the plane)

Like your dad.

LOKI

He stopped.

NICK

I tried, but I... I couldn't...

LOKI

Why?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK
 (ashamed)
 A lifestyle -- money. Money is
 very important in my culture.
 The woman I married -- we had a
 kid... When I stopped making
 money, she left.

Loki stares at him, the same dancing flames reflected in her eyes.

LOKI
 How much they pay you to burn our
 island?

NICK
 I don't want to burn your island.

LOKI
 You will if they pay you enough.

NICK
 You're a real pain in the ass,
 you know that?

Loki smiles. She has a gorgeous smile.

LOKI
 My dad always say same thing...
 (beat; she hears
 something)
 Sshh.. Listen...

They sit and listen -- a warm breeze blows her hair.

Been long time since I hear a
 mountain-sound. Different spirit
 live up here. Very old -- very
 wise.

NICK
 What does it say?

They sit silently together. She looks at him, very directly as
 always but with a softer look than we've seen before. She
 moves closer, touches his lips, then kisses him. The soft
 breeze seems to blow in the SOUNDS of the JUNGLE. Loki
 separates almost to look to see if he's changed. She looks
 off, listening to the sounds.

LOKI
 You hear...

He nods yes... He kisses her passionately. As it builds we...

DISSOLVE TO

72 EXT. A SMALL WATERFALL -- NIGHT

By the banks of the small stream Nick and Loki make love under the light of the full moon.

DISSOLVE TO

73 EXT. MERCS CAMP - MORNING

Jimmy G lies sound asleep in his bag -- until the sound of MACHINE GUNFIRE cuts through the air and coconuts begin to THUD to the ground all around him. He wakes with a start, grabs up his rifle and sees --

BLADES

spraying the palms overhead with his L86, the mercs leaping out of their bags and grabbing up their weapons all around. Blades ceases fire --

BLADES

Rise and shine, people. We got bonuses to earn.

74 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Tapu stands at the head of the Village Elders, watching something, his face drawn tight.

NOLAN AND BLADES

finish sloshing GASOLINE onto a hut. Blades flicks a lighter.

ALL THE VILLAGERS

stand herded together behind the Elders -- Blades rounding them, rifles at the ready. They all watch the hut catch fire and BURN.

OCKER

We shoulda' waited for Nick.

BLADES

What makes you think he's coming back?

Blades addresses the Villagers, acting out with his hands as he speaks --

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

BLADES

Okay, folks, here's the story --
no sign on the dotted line, we
burn your whole village to the
ground.

The Villagers seem to understand and accept this information.

WILLOW

suddenly steps out from the throng, looks Blades right in the
eye, glances at Ocker, then walks to the burning hut, picks up
a stick and lights the end of it in the flames. She walks to
a neighboring hut and holds the burning stick to it.

CLOSE ON OCKER

dying inside, unsure what to do, the burning hut reflected in
his mirrored lenses.

Willow moves to another hut with the burning stick -- but
Blades jumps in front of her and KNOCKS HER TO THE GROUND with
his rifle-butt --

OCKER

Dammit, Blades!

Blades ignores Ocker, pins Willow's chest down with his foot
and presses his machine gun barrel against her WRIST --

BLADES

Drop it, bitch, or I'll blow your
fuckin' hand off!

OCKER

(aiming his rifle at
Blades)

LET HER GO YOU BASTARD!

Blades looks at Ocker and laughs --

BLADES

You gonna' fuck with me, useless?
I'll kill you, then blow her hand
off anyhow!

NOLAN

Watch it, Blades --

Blades swings his machine gun around and aims for Tapu as the
old man walks straight at him -- an obsidian-bladed AXE
clutched in his hand.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (2)

BLADES
Back off, pops!

Tapu looks at Blades with steady eyes. He stops at a CUTTING STUMP in front of the burning hut, kneels and lays his left arm, palm up, on the stump, keeping his eyes locked on Blades --

CLOSE ON BLADES

watching the old man, puzzled, wary --

CLOSE ON TAPU

He doesn't flinch as he strikes with the axe -- WHACK!

JIMMY G
(freaked)
Holy fucking shit.

Tapu drops the axe, stands and stretches the GUSHING STUMP of his left wrist into the flames of the burning hut. There is a SIZZLE of burning flesh.

CLOSE ON BLADES

for the first time, genuinely frightened.

Tapu stares hard and steady at Blades as he cauterizes the stump.

He pulls his blackened wrist out of the fire, picks up his SEVERED HAND and walks towards Blades, offering it, SPEAKING in Native Tongue -- Then we HEAR from OFF SCREEN...

PO (O.S.)
He say you wanna hand, you got
one.

We PULL BACK to REVEAL Nick, Po, Grace, Yap and Loki.

NICK
Back off, Blades. That's enough.

Po CALLS something out to the Villagers and several children step out of the crowd and walk towards the various mercs --

One of Jamaal's little football players stands in front of Jamaal, gently takes his rifle barrel in his little hand, presses it against his forehead and looks up -- Jamaal is speechless, desperately looking to Nick for help.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (3)

JIMMY G, GRACE, NOLAN AND OCKER

each has a kid at the barrel of their rifle. They also look to Nick --

YAP

holds the barrel of Blade's gun up to his little head. Nick looks to Loki --

NICK
Make him stop!

She stares back at him, unmoved.

PO
Your move, boss.

CLOSE ON JAMAAL

JAMAAL
I didn't sign up for this...

Blades shakes with anger, finger tense on his trigger --

BLADES
They're askin' for it, man!
They're fuckin' askin' for it!

Nick decides softly --

NICK
I said, back off. Everybody
back.

The Merc's drop their muzzles -- all except Blades.

BLADES
Dammit, we been paid to do a job!
Let's do it!

NICK
Drop it, Blades.

BLADES
What?!

NICK
You're paid to do what I tell you
to do.

BLADES
Bullshit, man. You're a fuckin'
pussy.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (4)

Blades turns the piece on Nick. Nick slowly advances...

BLADES

Stay there, man! Stay fuckin'
put! I'll shoot -- I swear I'll
fuckin' blow you away!

Nick slowly moves aside the child and puts Blades muzzle to his own chest.

NICK

I'm giving you an order...

Blades finger tightens on the trigger. His sweaty face tells us he wants to blow Nick to Hell.

BLADES

Ahhhhh!

Suddenly Blades throws aside his weapon and ATTACKS Nick.

Blades is tough but extremely wild. Nick is extremely focused and it's not long before he's uses Blades own energy to beat him into a bloody mess. Loki is concerned but stays where she is.

NICK

(winded)

Okay... everybody, let's go --
base camp.

The Mercs shoulder their arms and EXIT. Nick turns looks hard at Po --

BLADES

(through a bloody face)

This isn't over.

NICK

(looking at Po)

He's right, it isn't.

Nick walks away -- leaving a very worried Po.

75 INT. TAMMY'S TIGER DEN -- DAY

Lyle and Warren are nervously drinking a couple of Diet Cokes and listening.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

VOICE (O.S.)

Okay, I'll give you two dick-licking church goers the benefit that you didn't know in who's back yard you were sticking your little weenies into.

LYLE

We have to be honest...

ANGLE -- REVEAL KEEFER

KEEFER

Shut your hole! Did I ask you to be honest!? Honesty means nothing to me! I know your angle -- you've hired Nick Gunar to do a job...?

WARREN

Okay, we'll hire you.

KEEFER

(to Lyle)

Did you hire him?

LYLE

No, he's my partner...

KEEFER

My point exactly -- you can't hire me because I am now your partner.

Lyle and Warren are stupefied. Lyle puts on his best Harvard business school voice.

LYLE

(scared)

I wish we could sell you some stock, but we're a privately owned company... Just three shareholders.

(clear his throat)

There's no room...

Keefer thinks about this...

KEEFER

No room, eh...?

(speaking OFF SCREEN)

They say there's no room...

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: (2)

GOLDMOUTH

his face and hands horribly disfigured by THIRD-DEGREE BURNS which have been wrapped in gauze. The lone surviving Pirate is struggling to STAB a syringe of painkilling morphine into a scab covered vein.

Lyle and Warren, like us, are sickened by the sight and smell of this human atrocity.

Keefers draws from his well polished holster and jams the business end of a Glock 17 into Lyle's MOUTH.

WARREN

Jesus!

KEEFER

Let's go ahead and make room...

Lyle's eyes are wide and he TRIES TO SPEAK but it's hard with his new stainless steel tongue depressor.

WARREN

Okay, okay, we'll have our lawyer draw up a new contract!

KEEFER

Immediately.

WARREN

Immediately.

With his gun -- STILL IN PLACE -- he pulls a business card from his starched uniform and explains it to Warren --

KEEFER

Here's my office number, my home number is on the back... that's my fax number right here. Also, feel free to page me if you need to.

76 EXT. MERCS CAMP - NIGHT

Jimmy G, Grace, Jamaal and Nolan sit together, sharing smokes, rifles across their laps. Jimmy G watches the treeline. They are still freaked out and reflective about the days events.

77 EXT. JUNGLE -- NIGHT

Blades, all alone, is quietly cleaning the sand from his L86.

78 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - NIGHT

Moonlight touches the tips of the waves as they roll in.

Nick sits on a driftwood log, staring out at the sea, shotgun across his lap. Loki comes up behind him, sits --

NICK

You've been stalling all along,
haven't you?

LOKI

We need time to know you, you
need time to know us.

NICK

The say-say?

LOKI

Say-say is only story. Elders
talk about weather and old times --
like dice game your man Nolan
plays --

NICK

That's fixed?

LOKI

(nods yes)

Men make up the rules while they
play.

Nick takes a moment to think about this.

NICK

Your people can't stall anymore.

LOKI

You ever been Poona Bay?

NICK

Yeah.

LOKI

We rather die than live like
that.

Nick gives Loki a look.

NICK

If we don't do it, they'll just
send someone else.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

LOKI

When somebody else come we tok to them. Now we tok to you. You don't wanna do somethin', you don't do it. You know us now, you don't wanna hurt us.

NICK

So, last night on the mountain was your way of talking...

LOKI

(quietly)

No. Last night was my way of making love.

She looks out at the ocean, the warm breeze blowing her hair. She speaks without looking at him.

LOKI

Nick, today the Village decides we never sign. We decide tomorrow you gotta shoot us all.

Nick looks long and hard at Loki. Finally Loki looks away --

Up from the beach we see Po's distinctive figure walking towards us. He sits down and looks at the two of them.

PO

Tapu dies tonight.

NICK

Tapu?

PO

Old man who cuts offa hand.

NICK

Oh, Christ --

PO

(shrugs)

He was a old man. Young fella can cut offa hand two, three time a week, it don't bother him, but you get old --

NICK

Very funny.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: (2)

PO
 Tapu big Elder. People wanna
 have BIG funeral ceremony
 tomorrow morning -- ask me to ask
 you it's okay -- you don't shoot
 us all dead 'til afternoon.

NICK
 (sadly)
 Okay...

PO
 You okay, boss. See you
 tomorrow.

Po pats Nick's shoulder and leaves. Nick sits for another moment alone with Loki, thinking, then sees somebody in the dark, raises his shotgun and challenges them --

NICK
 Who's there --

YAP

slowly emerges into the moonlight, cautious after today's near-slaughter. He walks up to Nick and crawls neatly under his rifle and into his lap.

NICK
 You took a big chance today, my
 boy.

Yap settles in to Nick's lap -- watching the ocean as most Americans would watch T.V. Nick finds himself unconsciously stroking the boy's hair as he worriedly looks out to sea.

Loki watches Nick --

79 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DAY

CLOSE ON AN OLD NATIVE WOMAN
 crying over her lost husband.

A DRUMMER beats out a slow, dirge-like rhythm. Tapu is laid out on a bed of tropical flowers in an elaborately-carved COFFIN BOAT. A native TATTOO ARTIST is putting the finishing touches on a painting that covers almost every square inch of the dead man's face and body.

Ocker, Jamaal, Jimmy G and Grace watch from several yards away as Villagers start lining up near the coffin.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

JIMMY G

Beats the hell out of a body-bag.

Each Villager passes by the coffin and lays a farewell hand on the dead man's forehead.

Nick watches, thinking, Blades and Nolan behind him, covering the Villagers with their rifles.

Native men lift the coffin boat and start with it towards the water -- where others are waiting with OUTRIGGERS and TORCHES.

Loki walks up to the mercs, stares out at the coffin.

LOKI

He was a good man.

GRACE

Where are they taking him?

LOKI

His spirit is already with the island. His body they give back to O'una. They pull outside the reef and the current take him away.

OCKER

I'd like a send-off like that when I go.

Natives in a pair of outriggers row out beyond the reef, pulling the coffin between them. They set it AFIRE and push it out to sea.

Nick turns away from the water to find Loki staring at him.

LOKI

What you gonna do now?

Nick doesn't have the answer. He moves to go but Blades, whose eyes have stayed on the horizon, stops him.

BLADES

(grinning)

Check it out, Swede. Here comes your floating pink slip.

Nick turns and looks --

NICK'S POV

The freighter is a tiny shape on the horizon, moving towards the island.

80 INT. FREIGHTER CABIN - NIGHT

Our old pals Lyle and Warren, wearing brand new Banana Republic outfits, look at Nick incredulously. Standing close by is the hulking figure of NALDO -- the bodyguard.

NICK

Okay, here's the deal... The minerals you're looking for must be on the East Side of the Island...

LYLE

Excuse me?

NICK

We'll agree to let you exploit the rocky side -- leaving the people and their fishing alone.

WARREN

Not likely...

(angry)

Naldo, get me an Evian!

Naldo does as he's told.

LYLE

(condescendingly)

We are geologists, Mr. Gunar.

NICK

Then what the hell is it -- oil? Emeralds? Plutonium?

Warren and Lyle look at each other. Warren shrugs --

WARREN

Bird shit.

NICK

Bird shit?

WARREN

Are you deaf?

LYLE

(more patient)

That's what we're after, Nick -- Nitrogen by-products build up in the bird shit for centuries. These people got tons.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

WARREN

When the first bird dropped its load, he picked this island. Pterodactyls came here to do their business -- so now we're coming here to do ours, understand? We scrape off the whole top of the island and then what do we have?

LYLE

Caves.

WARREN

Thousands of caves. And you know what that means?

LYLE

Bat shit.

WARREN

Even heavier quantity than the stuff up top and twice as rich in minerals. When we're done here, there's just gonna' be a hole in the ocean.

NICK

You wanted me to kill people for bird shit?

WARREN

Why not? You've done it for less.

LYLE

You know what the problem is? You're thinking too much, Nick.

WARREN

You're confusing the issues.

NICK

You can't have the island.

WARREN

What.

NICK

Are you Deaf! You can't have the Island!

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED: (2)

WARREN

We have some very heavy duty partners, my friend.

LYLE

We have a contract.

NICK

Then sue me.

Naldo reaches into his shirt for his piece -- then freezes. Nick already has his Ruger P85 out, cocked and aimed at Naldo's face.

NICK

Relax, Naldo.

Naldo complies.

81 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - NIGHT

Blades waits, watching the rubber launch come in. The other mercs stand behind him, the Villagers several yards up the beach behind them, everyone waiting, tense --

Nick steps out of the launch as it runs onto the sand. He approaches the mercs -- INSERT: Nick's Knuckles... and AGAIN the HORRIBLE CRACKING SOUND OF HIS PREPARATION. He stops and surveys the assembly, sizing each one up. His eyes finally come to rest on Blades --

NICK

Blades, I've got your bonus.

Blades hugs his machine gun protectively, puzzled --

BLADES

You're kidding...?

WHAM!!! Nick lays Blades out with a massive SUCKER PUNCH to the jaw. Nick reaches down, rips the machine gun out of Blades' hands, clicks off the safety and aims it at the shocked mercs.

NICK

As of right now I take possession of this island. Anyone fucks with it, fucks with me.

OCKER

breaks into a grin.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

BLADES

down in the sand, wipes blood from his lip --

BLADES

What?

Ocker moves slightly so the mercs are caught in a cross-fire.

NICK

Any of you people want to stay
and see what happens next, I'll
be glad to have you. If not,
you're off the island in five
minutes, no weapons. Your pay is
on the ship.

Blades pulls himself off the ground, veins throbbing in his
temples as he roars --

BLADES

You die motherfucker!

Ocker levels his rifle at Blades.

BLADES

I'll have your head for this!

NICK

(quietly)
Get in the boat.

BLADES

Nobody fuckin' tells me to...!

BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP-BAP!!! -- Nick FIRES A BURST into the sand in
front of Blades' feet. They stand glaring at each other.

JIMMY G

He don't bluff, man.

Nolan grunts in disgust, throws his gun into the sand and
starts towards the launch --

NOLAN

You found the jade, didn't ya'?

NICK

There's no jade. It's Bird shit.

NOLAN

Bird shit? What do you think I
am, an idiot?

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

Nolan climbs into the boat talking to himself.

You greedy bastard.

Blades follows -- not taking his burning glare off Nick.
Jamaal looks at Nick...

JAMAAL

You know what you're doin'
Blondie?

NICK

(shrugs)
We'll see...

Jamaal glances up the beach at the village Kids -- his football team. Turns to Nick and nods.

Nick looks over at Jimmy G. Jimmy squirms under his gaze --

JIMMY G

This ain't my home, Nicky. These
people ain't my family.

NICK

I thought you made a commitment.

Jimmy G looks at Nick for a long moment -- then shakes his head --

JIMMY G

I made a commitment to do a job,
Nick.

Jimmy G tosses his rifle into the sand and takes Grace by the arm --

JIMMY G

Come on, Gracie.

Grace pulls away from him --

GRACE

Go if you're goin'. I'm stayin'
here.

Jimmy can't believe his ears --

JIMMY G

What?! I saved your ass -- I'm
the one who got you this fuckin'
job to begin with!

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (3)

GRACE
 Sorry, Jimmy. Some things are
 more important than a job.

Jimmy G glances out at the guys waiting in the raft --

JIMMY G
 Do you believe this shit?!

He looks back at Grace. Shakes his head one last time, turns
 around, pushes the Zodiac off and climbs in.

Nolan starts the engine and the rubber raft backs out to sea.

POV FROM THE ZODIAC

Nick and the others receding as we pull away.

CLOSE ON NICK

Watching them go.

82 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DUSK

The mercs and villagers are all gone. All but Nick, sitting on
 his driftwood log, cleaning his shotgun and staring out at the
 ocean -- and Grace, field stripping her rifle again, trying to
 get her hair from getting in her eyes.

Grace tenses as she HEARS something, then relaxes as she sees
 Loki approach from out of the jungle. She tries again with her
 hair but it's not working.

Gracefully, Loki moves behind her and effortlessly weaves
 Grace's hair into a bun as they speak.

LOKI
 You have a man in the U.S.?

GRACE
 Nobody special. I never saw the
 appeal in somebody permanent?

LOKI
 Then who do you care for?

Grace thinks of somebody for a moment, then shrugs it off --

GRACE
 (sadly)
 Nobody.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

Loki pulls a Hibiscus flower from her hair and places it the bun she's made.

LOKI

There. Now you can do your work.

This makes Grace feminine in a way we've never noticed before.

GRACE

It's gonna be awful you know.

LOKI

When your friends come back?

Grace nods. Loki looks at Grace's face.

LOKI

You look nice.

She then walks down the beach towards Nick... From behind her Grace calls out a distant "Thank you..."

Nick loads his shotgun. Nick doesn't turn around -- he knew it was her.

NICK

I'm sorry. I didn't plan it -- it just happened.

LOKI

Island want you to stay. I want you to stay. I ask island to help.

NICK

Sure. Maybe that's it --

Before Nick can say another word, Loki kisses him long and hard. She puts her arms around him and they lie down together in the sand, Nick laying his shotgun aside.

The surf rolls in as the primal beating of an ISLAND DRUM rises on the SOUNDTRACK --

83 EXT. VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS - DAY

-- then MULTIPLIES TEN-FOLD, building in MARTIAL FERVOR as a bunch of little NATIVE BOYS AND GIRLS sit on the ground at the center of the village, whittling tiny DARTS from bird feathers.

Po and Nick appear behind them, walking together. Po nudges Nick and gives him a "watch this" wink, then barks a COMMAND in Island Tongue --

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

THE CHILDREN

silently scatter in all directions. In a single instant the spot is deserted.

NICK
(puzzled)
What was that for?

PO
Military drill. Call it "Run and Hide" -- not bad, huh?

The drum-beat keeps POUNDING --

CLOSE ON A SNAKE

being held by the neck, its fangs pressed against the edge of a shell bowl, being "milked" of its VENOM --

84 EXT. VILLAGE HUT - DAY

Jamaal watches as an OLD MAN finishes with the snake, calmly tosses it over his shoulder into a PILE OF WRITHING SNAKES. He dips a BUNDLE of the tiny bird feather DARTS into the bowl of venom -- then turns and takes another SNAKE from one of a group of young BOYS who stand waiting in line with snakes.

The drum-beat keeps POUNDING --

EXTREME CLOSE-UP - THE ALL-SEEING EYE

Tight on the Coptic eye over the pyramid, pulling back to reveal it is the eye on a DOLLAR BILL.

85 INT. TATTOO HUT - DAY

The Native Tattoo Artist holds the bill close to his face, examining it, while Ocker lies atop a mat on the floor -- COLORED WELTS already raised on his back in the shape of the eye. He winces in pain, squeezes the hand of Willow, who looks on proudly.

Nick enters curiously, comes closer to study the tattoo.

OCKER
(happy)
Now nobody can sneak up on me from behind.

The drums POUND on, reaching towards a CRESCENDO --

86 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DUSK

Nick, Ocker, Jamaal and Grace stand together, framed by the palm trees at the edge of the jungle, looking out at the sea, bristling with their modern weapons -- ready for war.

The drums rise to their FINAL CRESCENDO and abruptly go SILENT.

87 EXT. POONA BAY WHARF - DUSK

The freighter sits at anchor in the bay, glittering in the drowning sun.

88 EXT. FREIGHTER DECK - DUSK

Warren waits on-deck, eyes glued to a captain's launch approaching from the shore...

LYLE (V.O.)

And let me reiterate that my partner and I... uh, one of my partners and I, have complete and utter confidence in you guys --

89 INT. FREIGHTER'S HOLD - BLADES, NOLAN, JIMMY G

Each FACE fills the screen for a moment as we TRACK PAST them, then continue TRACKING past the faces of a RAG-TAG MERCENARY ARMY -- sort of a multi-racial U.N. peacekeeping force from hell.

LYLE (O.S.)

-- that you will hit the beach, kick ass and take names -- but take no prisoners. Am I right?

The only response is an anguished GROAN from somewhere in the ranks --

GOLDMOUTH

moans with PAIN as he now struggles to STAB a syringe of painkilling morphine into an I.V. SPIKE which has been taped above a vein in the crook of his arm. At least this way he won't have to find and poke his vein every time he needs a hit. He grits his MELTED TEETH and SHOOTs UP --

KEEFER (O.S.)

Keep your stinkin' mouth shut before I change my mind and send you back to the burn ward.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

Goldmouth raises his lashless, browless eyes -- muttering something in an Asian dialect to --

KEEFER

towering above him in his tiger stripe fatigues and Kevlar flak-vest. Goldmouth points his hand and Keefer looks over at Jimmy G -- the obvious object of Goldmouth's remarks.

JIMMY G

Who the fuck you pointin' at,
Matchstick?!

Jimmy G start's across the ranks towards Goldmouth, but Nolan holds him back --

LYLE

(nervously smiling)

Uh, listen, guys, we're all on
the same team here. I wanna' see
you guys focus all this negative
energy in a direction where it'll
do some good.

Keefer eyes Lyle with total contempt.

Keefer spins to see a grinning Warren CLANKING down the ladder from the deck above. Warren is closely followed by the grim, yet fatherly, presence of --

COLONEL MERRICK

MERRICK

(to Keefer)

Hello, Robert.

For the first time in the film Keefer speak with a deferential tone.

KEEFER

Colonel. It's excellent to see
you, sir.

He holds out his hand. Merrick stands back and looks at him.

MERRICK

Who the hell issued you a uniform
like that, soldier?

This hurts even an asshole like Keefer.

90 EXT. AERIAL SHOT - THE ISLAND - NIGHT

Bathed in moonlight, peacefully resting in the South China Sea -- just as it has for thousands of years...

91 EXT. NATIVE HUT - NIGHT

strangely abandoned.

92 EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

A bamboo ghost-town.

THE MERCS

return from the beach. They enter the village and search through the huts, spooked.

NICK
(calling)
Yap -- Loki -- anybody!

Po suddenly emerges from the shadows. He looks different somehow. Harder.

PO
You don't need to yell.

NICK
Where is everybody?

PO
(solemn)
They are with the dead.

NICK
What?

PO
We can feel that men come in a boat tomorrow. The spirit of war is with us again. You follow me now.

Visions of mass suicide in their heads, the mercs exchange a look and follow Po into the trees.

93 EXT. AKU HEAD - NIGHT

The stone monument stands big and evil in the moonlight. Po leads the mercs into the clearing. He kicks away at some underbrush to reveal an OPENING IN THE GROUND. He motions and the mercs follow him down...

94 INT. CAVE

Nick lowers himself through the opening, finding himself in an UNDERGROUND PASSAGE which widens ahead. Po hands him a small TORCH, moves forward into the darkness. Ocker looks at Nick --

OCKER
Heart o' Darkness, mate.

NICK'S POV

Moving forward through the blackness, lights coming into view up ahead.

CLOSE ON NICK

He suddenly stops, the breath caught in his throat.

NICK'S POV

A HUMAN SKELETON sits crosslegged on a stone ledge.

95 INT. CHAMBER OF THE DEAD

Po, Nick and the mercs enter, their torches illuminating HUNDREDS OF SKELETONS, lining the walls, covering the floor -- everywhere.

PO
Dead who killed in battle rest here.

NICK
Battle?

Po disappears into the shadows for a moment -- reappears across the chamber, illuminating a WALL PAINTING with his torch --

THE PAINTING

shows SOUTHEAST ASIAN WARRIORS pounding the crap out of each other with stone clubs and spears. Pretty scary stuff.

Po moves his torch to something that looks like an outline of the island with a subway map on it.

Nick and the mercs study the MAP, faces glowing in the torchlight.

PO
Under island fulla cave. Alla cave connect. Come out all over island.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

NICK
And this is a map of the tunnel
system?

PO
Bullshit map. If enemy find, he
goes wrong way, deep shit.
(taps his head)
Real map up here.

96 INT. SACRIFICIAL CHAMBER

A wild pig CARCASS hangs upside-down, slowly dripping blood.
We follow one DRIP down, plopping into a catch-bowl FINGERS
stab into the bowl --

LOKI

raises her hand and SMEARS a stripe of blood on each cheek She
hears something, turns --

PO

leads Nick and the mercs in.

THE ENTIRE VILLAGE

men, women and children, are assembled in the chamber, food
supplies piled around them, OBSIDIAN CLUBS and AXES hanging at
their sides, most of them already ANOINTED WITH BLOOD.

CLOSE ON NICK

Blown away. His eyes fall on Loki --

CLOSE ON LOKI

Fierce and proud in her war-paint.

Po picks up a large obsidian-bladed AXE and tosses it to Nick --

PO
For hundred year, this use only
for ceremony. Now again use for
war. Tonight we sleep here, with
the dead, and call for the Spirit
of War to come inside us. Spirit
has been gone a long time --
(points at Nick)
But you have brought him back to
us. We will fight.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

NICK
 (still in shock)
 Like the people in the story who
 died out -- like the Old People.

PO
 Story is bullshit --
 (streaking blood on his
 face)
 -- we are the Old People.

Loki steps up to Nick and reverently traces her bloody fingers
 across his face -- anointing him into the tribe.

97 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DAY

Nick, Po and the mercs watch from just inside the treeline as
 a launch speeds out from the anchored freighter.

As it closes in on the beach, two figures become visible within
 the launch, a WHITE FLAG flying.

CLOSE ON A CRAB

scuttling out of the way as an aluminum POLE is shoved down
 into the wet sand.

Merrick climbs out of the launch, stands beside the white flag
 he just planted. Keefer remains in the stern of the boat,
 unarmed, legs crossed in the lotus position. He looks like a
 psychotic Buddha readying for war.

Nick -- his face still streaked with the blood from last night --
 emerges from the treeline and slowly walks towards the shore
 where Merrick waits.

Merrick looks him over --

MERRICK
 You really have gone native,
 Nick.

Nick looks at Merrick, then out at Keefer, then back at Merrick --

NICK
 The old gang together again,
 Colonel?

MERRICK
 I do wish the circumstances were
 different, but you've made quite
 a mess for yourself.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

Nick nods, resolute.

I didn't just recommend you for this job, Nick -- I sub-contracted you.

NICK

Take their money and throw 'em overboard.

MERRICK

A man needs something to honor, Nick. A flag, a people. At this point all I've got left is my word. I gave my word.

NICK

(understands)
So. You came here to "Neutralize" me.

KEEFER

(suddenly chiming in)
That's right, Nick -- you and your whole FUCKING Disney World!

MERRICK

(calling to Keefer)
Shut up, Bob!
(to Nick, referring to Keefer)
Never did have any fire-discipline. Not like you, Nick.

NICK

So, now you do corporate work, Colonel?

MERRICK

(laughs)
Nitrodyne's just those two back on the boat. They were working for one of the big outfits, scouted this island, smelled the money and filed a phony report.

NICK

And you honor them?

MERRICK

(uncomfortable)
Well... I've got a bit of an interest in it myself.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK
I see. Congratulations.

Merrick gives him a cold stare --

MERRICK
That's the world, Nick.
(offers his hand)
Good luck, son.

Nick doesn't take Merrick's hand. Merrick turns and walks back to the Zodiac. Nick's eyes flick over to Keefer -- who smiling cruelly -- he can't wait for what's coming. Nick calls out to Merrick --

NICK
I don't enjoy this anymore,
Colonel...

Merrick turns to address Nick.

MERRICK
I envy you. You're gonna' die
for something you believe in.

They exchange a long, hard look, then Nick turns and heads back into the jungle.

Merrick pulls the flagpole out of the sand and climbs back into the boat. Keefer takes the flag, pulls out a lighter and sets it on FIRE.

Nick turns around --

NICK'S POV

Keefer waving the FLAMING white flag back and forth like a man possessed.

98 EXT. EDGE OF THE JUNGLE - DAY

Nick walks back from the beach, rejoining Po and the mercs. We see that, like Nick, all have been anointed, dried bloody war-paint streaking their faces.

DISSOLVE TO

CLOSE ON BINOCULARS

as Jamaal raises them to his eyes --

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

BINOCULAR POV

FIVE ZODIACS head in from the freighter, about 10 men in each --

JAMAAL (O.S.)
I count 48 -- no, 49, including
Nolan, Jimmy G, Blades and those
two old friends of yours. Pretty
nasty bunch.

99 EXT. COASTAL JUNGLE - DAY

Nick and Jamaal are hidden in a patch of brush that reaches almost all the way to the water.

NICK
Could be worse.

Nick raises the Carl Gustav rocket launcher onto his shoulder --

NICK
Start calling range.

JAMAAL
(smiling behind his
binoculars)
Two-fifty on the lead boat.
Exactly.

CLOSE ON NICK

lining up the boat in his sights --

100 EXT. COASTAL WATERS - DAY

The five Zodiacs motor ahead. Suddenly -- FWOOOOOSSSSSHHHHH -- KABOOOOOMMMMMM!!!!!! -- the lead boat EXPLODES in a tremendous geyser of FLAME and WATER. The four remaining boats instantly OPEN FIRE at the source of the rocket --

101 EXT. COASTAL JUNGLE - DAY

A thousand rounds of ammo shred the surrounding bush -- but Nick and Jamaal are gone.

CLOSE ON MERRICK

ramrod stiff in the prow of his boat, his confidence unshaken by Nick's drawing of first blood.

102 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Keefer, Blades and Nolan lead a squad of Merrick's HIRED GUNS through the village, bursting into huts, searching everywhere for hiding places -- but the village is deserted.

103 EXT. MERCS CAMP - DAY

Merrick leads another squad out of the jungle and up to the remains of the camp, Jimmy G taking point --

JIMMY G
Careful. This whole area's mined --

Jimmy G kneels down and feels around for the Claymores. Finds nothing. Blades marches over from the village --

BLADES
Cleaned out. Nobody there.

MERRICK
(nods)
Burn it.

104 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

One of the Hired Guns walks up, examines the shredded Tiki Mask --

CLOSE ON HIS DIRTY BOOT

as he steps forward -- CLICK.

KABOOOOOOOOOomm!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

105 EXT. MERCS CAMP - DAY

Everyone freezes and looks over at the village, a cloud of BLACK SMOKE rising into the air --

JIMMY G
(to himself w/a smile)
She moved the fuckin' mines.

106 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY - THE BURNING TIKI MASK

seems to watch as other Hired Guns approach three blown-to-bits comrades who now lay DYING from shock and massive blood loss. Keefer shoves his way up from the rear ranks, draws an automatic PISTOL and puts a bullet in each of their brains. The rest of the men exchange shocked looks --

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

KEEFER
Bullets are cheaper than medics.

Blades runs out of the trees --

BLADES
(calling to Keefer)
Colonel says torch every hut!

GOLDMOUTH

stares at the burning Tiki Face -- it's a mirror-image of himself. He violently JAMS another hypo of morphine into his arm and injects --

107 EXT. VILLAGE - ENGULFED IN FLAME

The whole place is on fire.

108 EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING - DAY

TEN HIRED GUNS spread out, moving carefully through the underbrush --

JAMAAL SUDDENLY POPS UP OUT OF THE GROUND behind the Hired Guns and BLASTS AWAY! Three go down, the other five spinning around to face Jamaal, but ZIP! -- he's gone, disappeared back into the hole like a prairie dog!

The seven remaining Hired Guns converge on the camouflaged tunnel-entrance and POUR automatic fire into it, but GRACE SUDDENLY POPS UP a few yards behind them, the L86 machine gun in her hands -- BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA! Grace's one-woman barrage drops another five Hired Guns. She drops back into her hole. The two remaining Hired Guns back away, freaked out, frantically FIRING DOWN at the jungle floor, when --

NICK SUDDENLY POPS UP OUT OF THE GROUND, FACE-TO-FACE with the last two Hired Guns! He blows them both away with his shotgun at POINTBLANK RANGE!

Nick disappears into the ground. Another HIRED GUN breaks into the clearing and cautiously wades into the ten wasted bodies. He reaches down and starts to loot the Rolex off a corpse. Suddenly the corpse SITS STRAIGHT UP! The Hired Gun freaks out and drops the Rolex but before he can fire he's RIDDLED WITH BULLETS -- by Ocker, whose hole lay directly beneath the corpse.

Ocker drops back into his hole just as Blades melts out of the jungle and stares deadpan at the eleven bodies.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

Blades moves silently from hole to hole, checking their locations and stripping the dead men of weapons...

CLOSE ON MERRICK

blowing a WHISTLE, loud and shrill.

109 EXT. MERCS CAMP - DAY

The Hired Guns filter back in from the bush, nervously smoking and talking amongst themselves, pretty freaked. Blades strides into camp and approaches Merrick --

MERRICK

Body count?

BLADES

Thirteen -- all ours.

MERRICK

(cold)

What were you doing all day?

BLADES

(grins wide)

Finding tunnels.

110 EXT. VILLAGE - SMOLDERING - DUSK

A charred, burnt-out husk. Nick, Ocker, Grace and Jamaal sit near the entrance to a tunnel, watching the smoldering ruins --

OCKER

(darkly)

Motherfuckers.

GRACE

We took out more than a third of their force today.

JAMAAL

That's pretty damn good, Blondie.

NICK

Not good enough. Merrick was just probing with his cannon fodder, see what we got. Now he knows.

111 EXT. MERCS CAMP - NIGHT

Merrick and Keefer sit looking over an ISLAND MAP, lit by a lantern --

KEEFER

We put charges in the holes and blow the tunnels.

MERRICK

No good. Our partners want all those caves intact -- they have mineral interests down there.

KEEFER

Fuck.

MERRICK

Don't worry. There's lots of ways to flush a rodent from a hole. Nick takes a few casualties he'll get careless protecting the rest. Tomorrow I want bodies.

Keefer grins at the prospect.

112 EXT. COASTAL JUNGLE - NIGHT

Nick and Po crawl through the dense foliage up to the edge of the water --

PO

There she is, boss -- right where I found her.

Nick looks out at the water --

NICK'S POV

A Zodiac floats secured to the shore, its hull filled with food, supplies and extra fuel tanks.

NICK

Sun Tzu.

PO

Who?

NICK

"Hold out to your enemy some hope for life -- or he shall have no straw to grasp and will fight bitterly to the end."

(more)

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

NICK (Cont'd)
 (a beat)
 Merrick left me a straw.

Po stares at the boat, understands --

PO
 (quietly)
 If you wanna go, boss... I
 unnerstan.

Nick looks at Po. Aims his shotgun at the extra fuel tanks and FIRES. The fuel tanks EXPLODE and the boat ERUPTS INTO FLAME. Nick and Po watch it burn.

113 EXT. COASTAL JUNGLE - DAWN

The exact same spot. Merrick appears and examines the CHARRED REMAINS of the boat -- sadly rubs his tired eyes.

114 EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING - MORNING

The same place where Nick and the mercs were popping out yesterday. Hired Guns in GAS MASKS throw GAS GRENADES into each of the holes in the jungle floor -- POOT! POOT! -- we hear the muffled explosions, then bright yellow GAS starts to leak out of the openings.

115 INT. TUNNEL

Several Natives running past, coughing and trying to cover their mouths with palm leaves, YELLOW SMOKE billowing all around --

116 EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Five Natives climb out of a hole in the middle of the brush -- BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP!

KEEFER

stands smeared with black and green camouflage paint, blasting the Natives to pieces with his AK-47 --

117 EXT. JUNGLE - MORE HOLES - DAY

Underbrush stirs and a NATIVE WOMAN lifts her LITTLE GIRL, coughing, out of the hole. The Woman sees something, SCREAMS back into the hole -- BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP!

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

BLADES AND NOLAN

finish them off, march up to the hole and BLAST DOWN INTO IT. SCREAMS rise up from beneath the jungle --

118 EXT. JUNGLE - MOVING FAST WITH A NATIVE

as he zigs and zags through the trees, GUNFIRE crackling behind.

THUD -- he suddenly trips, hitting the ground hard --

A PAIR OF BOOTS

suddenly appear beside him. The Native looks up, terrified --

JIMMY G

towers above him, an uncomfortable look on his face. He OPENS FIRE -- but only at the ground. The Native leaps up and takes off into the trees, Jimmy G cursing to himself and letting loose some BURSTS into the air as the Native digs out the entrance to a HOLE and drops down into it --

There is a moment of silence.

Then the MUFFLED SOUND of a GUNSHOT --

GOLDMOUTH

crawls out of the hole, locks eyes with Jimmy G and grins his hideous grin --

JIMMY G

bites back the bile growing in his gut -- what is he doing on the same side as this monster?

119 EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

Hired Guns are piling DEAD ISLANDERS in the center of the village and DOUSING them in gasoline.

Keefer marches up, a smoked-down cigarette dangling from his lips. He plucks the glowing butt out of his mouth and flicks it into the pile. The bodies catch and burn.

Merrick walks up to the bonfire, stares at Keefer, a bit disturbed. Keefer shrugs --

KEEFER

You said you wanted bodies.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

Merrick is quiet a moment -- then back to business --

MERRICK

They'll be falling apart now.
Nick'll dig in, give them time to
lick their wounds. Tomorrow we
go in for the kill.

KEEFER

And if that doesn't work?

MERRICK

Leave them nothing to defend --
we'll defoliate the island.

Keefer smiles, lights a fresh cigarette off one of the burning
dead --

KEEFER

Excellent.

120 INT. SACRIFICIAL CHAMBER

The Natives tend to their wounded -- some hurt by gas
inhalation, some from gunshot wounds. The mercs are checking
their weapons and taking stock of their ammo --

NICK

That gas is gonna' hang in for
weeks. We can't use these
tunnels anymore. If they find
this one we're cooked.

(to Jamaal)

How we doin'?

JAMAAL

The weapons are great, they'll
hold up forever -- but we're
runnin' low on ammo.

Nick looks at Po and the mercs -- serious --

NICK

If people want to give up, it's
not too late. I'm the only one
they really want dead.

Loki steps out of the shadows --

LOKI

Nobody give up. Already decided.

The mercs smile grimly at Nick.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

OCKER
We're in to the end, Nick.

Nick nods -- relieved he hasn't lead anyone into anything they regret. We notice Po EXIT.

PO
What we do now?

Nick takes a deep breath, clenches his jaw --

NICK
We've got to take them all out --
fast.

OCKER
(smiles at Nick)
It's the end of the world.

NICK
(smiling back, deadly)
You'll be my witness?

OCKER
My pleasure, Nicky.

121 EXT. COASTAL JUNGLE - DAWN

The freighter still at anchor in the distance. Po emerges from the trees, wades into the water and starts swimming towards the brightening horizon.

The primal beating of the ISLAND DRUMS rises once again on the SOUNDTRACK -- and doesn't stop until the battle is over...

122 EXT. EDGE OF THE JUNGLE - MERCS CAMP - DAWN

The Hired Guns lie asleep beneath blankets and ponchos, a couple of sentries keeping watch.

Nick appears just inside the tree line, silently surveying the camp --

123 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DAWN

Two HIRED GUNS guard the Zodiac launches which ferried the invasion force to shore. Both men face the treeline, their backs to the water.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

SEAWEED BEDS bob in the waves behind them, drifting closer to shore. A wave rolls in and suddenly a BLOB OF SEAWEED STANDS UP INTO A CROUCH -- it's Ocker, an obsidian AXE gripped in his hands. A second BLOB OF SEAWEED RISES OUT OF THE WATER -- it's Willow, holding an obsidian-bladed SPEAR.

WHACK! THUNK! They each take out one of the guards, then move to SLICE UP the rubber Zodiacs.

No retreat for Merrick and his men.

124 EXT. MERCS CAMP - DAWN

The Hired Guns rustling to life -- taking pisses, muttering to each other, heating up coffee --

KABOOOOOOOOOmmm!!!!!!!!!!!!

One of Nick's 84mm rockets RIPS THROUGH THE CAMP, incinerating a few of the Hired Guns, sending the rest diving for cover --

NICK

finishes loading another rocket, aims through the treeline, squeezes the trigger --

KABOOOOOOOOOmmmm!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Hired Guns' pile of supplies goes up in a fountain of flame.

The Hired Guns start FIRING BACK, spraying the jungle with lead --

CLOSE ON MERRICK

marching through the chaos, shouting orders --

MERRICK

Everybody into the jungle! Seek
and destroy!

The Hired Guns start pouring into the jungle --

125 EXT. JUNGLE - NOLAN

marches angrily ahead, SPRAYING BURSTS as he goes --

BLADES

stomps defiantly over the undergrowth, BLASTING from the hip --

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

JIMMY G

moves reluctantly through the brush, haphazardly firing BURSTS into the trees -- until his AK-47 JAMS --

JIMMY G
Piece of shit!

He tosses the rifle aside, draws his twin silver-plated .22 automatics and stalks ahead --

KEEFER

in the thick of it, FIRING with an almost supernatural awareness of where his targets will be, Natives falling DEAD out of their HIDING PLACES wherever he aims --

KEEFER
Come on out, Nick -- you can't
hide from me anymore!

126 EXT. JUNGLE - A LONE HIRED GUN

creeps through the brush, AK-47 at the ready -- THWIP! -- he winces and swats at something on his neck. Plucks out a tiny feathered DART, scans the Jungle for his attacker -- THWIP! -- another one hits him in the cheek, drawing a tiny trickle of blood.

The Hired Gun blindly FIRES into the trees -- hears something -- turns and spies a LITTLE ISLAND BOY half hidden in the foliage, a little BLOWGUN between his lips.

The Hired Gun chuckles and starts to squeeze his trigger -- THWIP-THWIP -- THWIP-THWIP -- THWIP-THWIP-THWIP -- then SCREAMS, his entire face COVERED WITH LITTLE DARTS! He drops to his knees and goes into CONVULSIONS as a dozen more NATIVE CHILDREN melt out of the jungle, blowguns at their lips --

127 EXT. JUNGLE - A SQUAD OF HIRED GUNS

inch their way carefully through the trees, FIRING SPORADICALLY as they go --

Suddenly the sound of a CHATTERING MONKEY stops them in their tracks. One Hired Gun goes to fire but a second pushes his rifle away --

SECOND HIRED GUN
(w/subtitles)
It's just a monkey you fucking
idiot!

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

The Monkey scampers up to the Second Hired Gun, hands him a COCONUT and scampers back into the brush. The Second Hired Gun smiles, examines the coconut --

SECOND HIRED GUN
(w/subtitles)
That's cute.

BAROOOOOMMMMMM!!!!!!

The jungle is lit with a BRILLIANT FLASH as the coconut EXPLODES, taking the squad of Hired Guns with it --

THE MONKEY

scampers through the thick jungle and up onto the shoulders of Jamaal -- sitting with a stack of hollowed-out coconuts, a pile of grenades, several members of his child football team and their pet monkeys --

SNIPER-SCOPE POV

Jamaal, framed in the cross-hairs --

A HIRED GUN SNIPER

smiles as he tightens his aim, FIRES --

JAMAAL

falls back screaming in agony, his knee EXPLODED! The Kids scatter -- all but one who remains faithfully at Jamaal's side --

SNIPER-SCOPE POV

Focusing in on the small child... it is Yap!

THE HIRED GUN SNIPER

smiles and starts to squeeze the trigger --

SNIPER-SCOPE POV

Yap is suddenly OBSCURED by NICK, his Ruger pistol aimed STRAIGHT AT US!

KERBLAM!!!

Nick's bullet PLOWS STRAIGHT THROUGH THE GLASS OF THE SNIPER-SCOPE AND ON INTO THE SNIPER'S EYE!

The Sniper drops his rifle and drops dead.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK

races over to Yap and Jamaal. Helps Yap up onto his back and checks Jamaal's wounded knee --

JAMAAL

Forget me -- get the kid outta'
here!

Approaching GUNFIRE echoes through the trees --

NICK

Guess I shoulda' left you in
jail, huh?

Jamaal smiles up at Nick, slaps a fresh clip into his assault rifle --

JAMAAL

Hang tough, Blondie.

Nick takes a last look at Jamaal, then takes off into the brush, Yap holding tight on his back --

NICK

runs through the jungle, stomping past a tree where --

NOLAN

waits in hiding. He jumps out from behind the tree and fires a BURST at the ground, bringing Nick to a sudden halt --

NOLAN

Cute kid. Drop your guns.

Nick slowly lowers Yap to the ground, drops his shotgun and pistol --

NICK

Why did you have to come back,
Nolan?

Nolan moves closer, slowly --

NOLAN

You gotta' go with the odds,
Nick.

NICK

You don't have to do this.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED: (3)

NOLAN

Of course I do -- there's a reward on your head. Dead or alive. Big bucks. The only reason you're still alive and talking is I still wanna' know what it is they're after.

NICK

(chuckling)

They still didn't tell you about the bird shit?

Nick can't help but LAUGH out loud --

NOLAN

(quiet and mean)

You're a dead man.

He raises his gun to fire when....

BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA!

Nolan's chest suddenly EXPLODES and he topples forward -- revealing Loki, standing pointblank behind where Nolan stood, a smoking Enfield in her hands.

Nick breathes a sigh of relief, hugs her tight. Yap runs up and hugs them both --

NICK

Who taught you how to do that?

128 EXT. JUNGLE - GRACE

down behind a rotted-out fallen tree, draws a bead with her machine gun on an approaching squad of HIRED GUNS. Sweats it out, waiting for them all to enter her killing-zone --

GRACE

(hushed, to herself)

... Come to mamma --

THE HIRED GUNS

move cautiously ahead -- BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA! -- until Grace wails into them, TEARING THEM TO SHREDS!

A LONE SURVIVOR

manages to crawl out of the kill-zone, spots Grace's position and OPENS FIRE, BLASTING HER ROTTED-OUT HIDING PLACE INTO KINDLING!

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

GRACE

hugs the dirt and covers up to avoid both gunfire and the SHRAPNEL-LIKE SPLINTERS that are FLYING EVERYWHERE! She ROLLS away, SPRINGS UP behind a STANDING TREE and POURS FIRE back at the Hired Gun --

The Hired Gun frantically DIVES into the underbrush, ROLLS, POPS UP behind ANOTHER TREE and FIRES BACK at Grace --

Grace hits the dirt, quickly bellies over a few yards, POPS UP behind ANOTHER TREE and BLASTS AWAY at the Hired Gun --

It's a running firefight, tree-to-tree, bark and wood shrapnel piling up faster than brass from the spent casings...

129 EXT. FREIGHTER DECK - DAY

The CONSTANT BEATING of the JUNGLE DRUMS abruptly STOPS -- replaced by the soft sounds of seagulls overhead and the lapping of the ocean against the hull. Very peaceful. Naldo, wearing headphones, leans against the railing, staring off at the island, grooving to the muffled sound of his music --

LYLE (O.S.)
(calling from the
cabin)

Naldo -- another Evian!

Naldo pulls off his headphones, turns and YELLS back at the cabin --

NALDO

What?

TILT DOWN TO REVEAL THE ANCHOR CHAIN

a taught line of iron links running from the water's surface up to the deck of the ship --

PO'S HEAD

surfaces beside the chain.

130 EXT. JUNGLE - NICK, LOKI AND YAP

run through the brush together, the JUNGLE DRUMS back at FULL THROTTLE. Suddenly -- BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP! -- AK-47 FIRE rattles off the trees all around them! Nick tackles Loki and Yap to the ground, whispers in Loki's ear --

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

NICK
Stay down 'till I draw them off.
I'll meet you at the Aku head.

Nick kisses her once on the forehead, loads his last shells into his shotgun, LEAPS UP, SCRAMBLES through the underbrush, turns and BLASTS towards where the shots came from --

NICK
Over here, motherfuckers!

BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BRAP! -- another barrage of fire rakes his position --

NICK

racing deeper into the bush, FIRING BACK as he goes --

LOKI AND YAP

lie huddled in the undergrowth, holding their breath --

A HUGE PAIR OF COMBAT BOOTS

step right in front of them and stand there. It's --

BLADES

BLADES
(to the Hired Guns)
This way!

Blades leads the Hired Guns deeper into the jungle, after Nick --

LOKI AND YAP

let out their deep breath and silently head in the opposite direction --

131 EXT. JUNGLE - GRACE AND THE HIRED GUN

still going at it, piling up firewood faster than Paul Bunyan --

132 EXT. VILLAGE - NICK

bursts out of the treeline, FIRING BACK at his pursuers --
CLICK -- his clip is empty --

NICK
Shit.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

Nick glances around, spies the enormous Utu tree, slings his rifle over his back and charges at it, GUNFIRE trailing close behind him --

BLADES (O.S.)
He's doubling back!

UTU TREE

watches over the scorched earth, the only thing in the village that hasn't been burnt to the ground --

NICK

looks up -- not a single branch on the sheer trunk anywhere between him and the THICK FOLIAGE thirty feet above. He unsheathes a PAIR OF OBSIDIAN-BLADED KNIVES, STABS them both into the trunk and uses them to raise himself HAND-OVER-HAND --

BLADES AND THE HIRED GUNS

burst out of the treeline and scan the burnt-out village -- Nick is nowhere to be seen --

NICK'S POV - FROM HIGH UP IN THE TREE

Staring down at Blades and his squad as they move around right below us, checking out the village --

BLADES AND THE HIRED GUNS

continue to search, leaving the Utu Tree behind.

ONE HIRED GUN

stops in his tracks and turns around to face the tree, his eyes drawn to something strange --

HIRED GUN'S POV

A set of DEEP GASHES running up the length of the tree, like jagged train tracks --

THE HIRED GUN

looks up --

NICK

LEAPS out of the branches, thirty feet above, OBSIDIAN-BLADED KNIVES AIMED STRAIGHT AT THE CAMERA --

KACHUNK-CHUNK! Nick lands hard, his twin blades finding homes in the Hired Gun's chest --

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (2)

Blades and the other Hired Guns turn to see what happened --

Nick grabs up the Hired Gun's AK-47 and EMPTIES IT STRAIGHT AT THEM, taking out a couple of Hired Guns --

Blades and the remaining Hired Guns FIRE BACK at Nick --

Nick drops the empty AK-47 and DIVES through the treeline, back into the jungle --

Blades and the Hired Guns CHARGE AFTER HIM, SPRAYING THE JUNGLE with AUTOMATIC FIRE as they go --

133 EXT. MERCS CAMP - NICK

bursts out of the jungle and charges across the camp -- A HIRED GUN SENTRY turns and raises his AK-47 --

NICK

HURLS another OBSIDIAN-BLADED KNIFE --

KNIFE'S POV - BARRELING END-OVER-END

Until we WHACK! smack into the Hired Gun's chest!

134 EXT. EDGE OF THE JUNGLE - MERCS CAMP - NICK

charges into the trees, frantically digs around through the undergrowth --

135 EXT. MERCS CAMP - BLADES AND THE HIRED GUNS

burst out of the trees, spot Nick across the camp and OPEN FIRE --

136 EXT. EDGE OF THE JUNGLE - MERCS CAMP - NICK

drops to one knee, BULLETS TEARING through the air above, finds his Carl Gustav rocket launcher --

A HIRED GUN

silently bellies up through the bush behind Nick --

NICK

swings the rocket launcher up onto his shoulder and aims for Blades --

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

The Hired Gun rises off the jungle floor RIGHT BEHIND NICK and goes to fire his pistol --

FWOOOOOOOOOOSSSSSSSSSSSHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!

The BACK-BLAST from the launcher INCINERATES HIS HEAD!

137 EXT. MERCS CAMP - THE ROCKET

EXPLODES into the midst of Blades and his men --

138 EXT. EDGE OF THE JUNGLE- MERCS CAMP - NICK

slings the launcher, turns and notices the smoke rising from the charred husk of the Hired Gun's head --

NICK

Don't sneak up on people.

Nick pockets the last rocket and charges deeper into the jungle --

139 EXT. JUNGLE -- DAY

Jamaal's boys run out to where Jamaal lies bleeding and half conscious. He looks up at them. One of them has something big in his hands -- and he brings it down on him!

NEW ANGLE -- we see that they are covering Jamaal with leaves and branches -- only hiding him from view. They run off.

140 EXT. JUNGLE - GRACE AND THE HIRED GUN

behind their trees, FIRING THE LAST OF THEIR AMMO at each other --

One tree after another -- CUTTING and TRACKING from GRACE TO THE HIRED GUN -- CHANGING SCREEN DIRECTION as bullets fly, slicing firewood to bits --

THE HIRED GUN

curses and jams his rifle against the ground in frustration -- what's it gonna' take to kill this woman?

GRACE (O.S.)

(w/subtitles)

Come out and finish it face-to-face --

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED:

GRACE

GRACE (CONT.)
-- if you're a man.

THE HIRED GUN

affixes a BAYONET to his rifle, LEAPS UP and CHARGES for --

GRACE

Who COUNTER-CHARGES, wielding her machine gun like a club --

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! -- it's cold steel vs. cold steel, size and weight on his side, speed, agility and Martial Arts training on hers -- the ultimate gunfight, with no bullets.

SLASH! -- the Hired Gun catches Grace with his bayonet, across her upper-chest --

SLAM! She bashes him smack in the head with the butt of the machine gun. SLAM -- she catches him across the head again, KNOCKING him to the ground --

STAB! -- he THRUSTS his rifle out at her leg, IMPALING HER CALF ON HIS BAYONET!

Grace SCREAMS in agony and tumbles to the ground --

The Hired Gun YANKS his bayonet out of her leg and goes to thrust for the kill --

BLAM!-BLAM!-BLAM!-BLAM!

The Hired Gun is riddled with .22 slugs --

JIMMY G

charges at him through the jungle, twin automatics BLAZING --

THE HIRED GUN

topples over, dead.

Jimmy G races over to Grace's side, sets down one of his .22's and checks her wound --

GRACE
(teeth clenched in
pain)
Why... do you always think... I
need you to save my ass?

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED: (2)

JIMMY G
 (smiles)
 I can't help myself.

Grace reaches over, plucks Jimmy's spare .22 out of the grass and aims it in his face! Jimmy G aims his second .22 right back in her face!

Jimmy G and Grace stare at each other, muzzle-to-muzzle.

JIMMY G
 Why don't you trust me, Gracie?

GRACE
 You're on the wrong side, Jimmy.

JIMMY G
 (serious)
 I'm on your side.

GRACE
 Prove it.

Jimmy G stares into Grace's eyes. Swallows hard. Makes the biggest decision of his life. Lays his gun down.

CLOSE ON JIMMY G AND GRACE - FACE-TO-FACE

They smile at each other -- until a GUNSHOT SUDDENLY EXPLODES, PUNCHING A HOLE in Jimmy G's FOREHEAD. Grace stares in horrified disbelief as Jimmy's body crumples into her arms -- dead.

GOLDMOUTH

lowers his smoking rifle, grins his hideous grin, gives himself another HIT of morphine and marches towards Grace --

Grace raises the .22 automatic and squeezes the trigger -- CLICK. No bullets left -- Jimmy shot his whole load "saving her ass!"

Grace tries to get up and run, but her wounded calf makes it difficult! She struggles desperately to get away but --

Goldmouth laughs as he grabs her from behind and holds her down, forcing himself upon her --

Grace punches and scratches at Goldmouth's horribly disfigured face but he remains numb to the intense pain, reaching a hand down to undo her fatigue pants --

Grace keeps punching away at Goldmouth -- then feels something down below his belt -- suddenly smiles up at him --

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED: (3)

GRACE
Come 'ere --

Goldmouth smiles back, presses himself against her and squeezes tight. Grace throws an arm around him and squeezes back --

GRACE
(w/subtitles)
Did you ever have a woman drop an
ice cube down the back of your
shirt on a hot day?

CLICK --

Grace's free hand PULLS THE PIN of a GRENADE. She drops it down the BACK of his shirt.

Frantically, Goldmouth tries to retrieve the grenade from his fatigues --

Grace, with every ounce of strength, attempts to make it to a large Banyan tree --

Goldmouth opens his shirt -- thud -- the grenade hits the ground at his feet --

Grace hugs the Banyan tree --

Goldmouth bends to pick up the grenade --

KABOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

141 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - BLADES

bloodied and bruised from Nick's rocket, stumbles out onto the beach -- all but one of the Zodiacs has been cut to pieces. He heads into the water, towards the surviving boat, reaches it, starts to climb in --

THUNK! -- Ocker, hidden in the well of the launch, swings his obsidian AXE into Blades' side! Blades CRIES OUT in pain -- KNOCKS the axe out of Ocker's hand with his rifle and aims it at Ocker -- but Ocker LEAPS on him before he can pull the trigger, KNOCKING THEM BOTH INTO THE WATER --

UNDERWATER

Ocker and Blades GRAPPLE violently, blood SWIRLING from Blades' side --

142 EXT. WATER - BLADES

BURSTS to the surface, his iron arms holding Ocker below --
UNDERWATER

Ocker flails madly, water seeping into his lungs --

143 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - WILLOW

runs out from the jungle where she's been hiding, obsidian
spear in hand. She CHARGES into the surf and THRUSTS the spear
into Blades' back --

Blades loses his grip on Ocker, turns to face Willow, reaches
around and PULLS THE SPEAR OUT OF HIS BACK --

Ocker BURSTS to the surface, sees Willow threatened --

OCKER

Blaaaaaaaaaaadddeess!!!!!!

Ocker stabs a hand into the Zodiac, comes up with the MOORING-
LINE and WRAPS IT AROUND Blades' neck! He yanks the starter-
cord -- VROOMMM! -- the engine JUMPS TO LIFE and the Zodiac
speeds out to sea, DRAGGING Blades behind!

144 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - DAY

Ocker reaches Willow and dies. Willow cries over his ravaged
body.

The war-drums continue to POUND --

145 EXT. JUNGLE -- KEEFER

He runs through the jungle a man possessed. He comes to a
clump of jungle and LEAPS OVER IT. We stay with the CLUMP and
find it to be the wounded JAMAAL.

146 EXT. JUNGLE - NICK

racing through the trees, the Carl Gustav slung across his
back, heading for --

147 EXT. AKU HEAD - LOKI AND YAP

wait beneath the fierce rock visage, their own grim faces
carved in stone --

148 EXT. JUNGLE - NICK

tears on through the bush --

149 EXT. AKU HEAD - NICK

emerges from the trees --

NICK'S POV

Loki and Yap at the foot of the Aku head -- Merrick standing at their side, rifle trained on them.

The primal DRUMBEAT abruptly ENDS.

MERRICK

Carl Gustav rocket launcher.

Swedish. Nice touch.

(flicking the safety
off his rifle)

I taught you everything you know --
but NOT everything I know!

Nick looks at Loki and Yap -- helpless under Merrick's gun. He unslings the Carl Gustav, drops it at his feet and marches towards Merrick. Merrick jams his rifle against Loki's breast. Nick stops in his tracks --

MERRICK

Stay back, Nicky!

(sadly)

You should've taken the straw.

Keefer emerges from the jungle behind Nick, strides over and picks up the Carl Gustav, takes a deep breath --

KEEFER

Kinda' reminds you of Angola,
doesn't it, Nick? All that
burning flesh. I was afraid I'd
never breathe that smell again.

Merrick bristles. Nick looks into his eyes --

NICK

You're not like him, Colonel.
You're an honorable man.

MERRICK

My honor is to the job, Nick.
It's as simple as that.

Suddenly --

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED:

PO (O.S.)
Job over.

PO

steps into the clearing, dripping wet, carrying a large PALM-LEAF BUNDLE. He glares at the three men.

PO
Stop now.

They watch as he crosses to the Aku Head and lays the bundle on the shelf of its lower jaw.

CLOSE-ON THE BUNDLE

Po pulls the palm-leaves away to reveal -- HEADS. Lyle's head and Warren's head. Lyle is still wearing his glasses.

Loki turns away and covers Yap's eyes.

NICK

reacting --

MERRICK

reacting --

KEEFER

no reaction at all.

PO

tears beginning to run down his wet cheeks --

PO
War is over. Go away now.

Nick locks eyes with Merrick. A tense pause. Merrick's finger on the trigger of his rifle. Merrick slowly lowers the weapon to his side. Looks at Po. Then at Nick.

MERRICK
(quietly to Keefer)
Come on.

Merrick starts to go --

Keefer can't believe his eyes or ears --

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED: (2)

KEEFER
 You're kidding -- right, Colonel?
 You're not gonna' walk away after
 all this...? After we won the
 FUCKING war?!

MERRICK
 (sharp)
 I said move out. It's over.

Something quietly psychotic snaps in Keefer's eyes.

KEEFER
 (seriously)
 You were like a father to me...

He swings the rocket launcher up at Merrick and FIRES!

Nick TRIES TO run to Merrick but he hits the deck when he see's
 it's too late.

KABOOOOOOOOOmmm!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Earth and grass SPRAY THROUGH THE AIR in a terrific EXPLOSION --
 MERRICK IS OBLITERATED.

Loki looks up from the ground --

LOKI'S POV

The cloud of dust settles -- Nick is nowhere to be seen.

A HUGE HOLE

has opened in the ground at the base of the Aku Head.

Keefer grins, tosses aside the rocket launcher, strides up to
 the edge of the hole and peers through the dust, seeking
 confirmation of his kill --

THE GROUND AT THE EDGE OF THE HOLE SUDDENLY
 BREAKS AWAY! Keefer TUMBLES out of sight, DOWN INTO --

150 INT./EXT. CHAMBER OF THE DEAD - DAY

Keefer CRIES OUT as he lands hard atop the SKELETAL REMAINS of
 the ancient warriors. Suddenly --

WHAM!!!

A fist slams into his face, knocking him backwards. He looks
 up --

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED:

KEEFER'S POV

Dust swirls everywhere, a blinding shaft of sunlight pouring down through the hole above. Nick towers above us, his fatigues shredded, his body ripped and torn by the explosion. He wears a film of blood and dirt like a second skin.

NICK

It's not a dream, Keefer. It's your nightmare.

NICK

charges straight for Keefer's throat and begins to STRANGLE HIM --

Keefer flails his hands around, feels something hard and loose, closes his fingers around --

A SKULL

Keefer SMASHES the skull across Nick's head -- Nick staggers back, blood raining into his eyes --

KEEFER

erupts in a BLOOD-CURDLING ROAR and charges at Nick --

He SLAMS Nick up against a SKELETON at the wall of the cave, the skeleton SHATTERING INTO A MILLION PIECES --

Keefer rears back, delivering THREE QUICK PUNCHES INTO NICK'S FACE --

Nick shoots out a hand, GRABS KEEFER'S FIST in mid-punch and delivers THREE RETURN PUNCHES to Keefer's ribs with his other hand --

NICK AND KEEFER

begin POUNDING each other with hardened fists, STABBING elbows into necks, SMASHING forearms into kidneys, DRIVING knees into groins, delivering BLOW AFTER DEVASTATING BLOW!

It's a fight to the death in the Chamber of the Dead.

KEEFER

locks his arms around Nick's neck and begins SMASHING Nick HEAD-FIRST into the skeleton-covered cavern wall -- KERASH! KERASH! KERASH!

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: (2)

NICK

bites back his pain, squeezes a fist swings down and ROUNDHOUSE-PUNCHES Keefer's knee --

KEEFER

scream in agony and drops to the floor of the cave, losing his grip on Nick --

NICK

falls into the BUSTED-UP SKELETON lying against the cavern wall --

KEEFER

grabs a FEMUR, struggles to his feet and CHARGES with the bone --

NICK

turns around from the wall just in time to see Keefer SWINGING for his head with the HUMAN CLUB --

AT THE LAST SECOND

Nick fends off the vicious attack, taking quite a beating -- until he manages to turn his head -- Keefer hit a rock, SPLINTERING IT IN HALF. Nick then grabs the broken femur...

SHARD

Keefer continues his punishment with the other half -- but before Keefer can beat him into unconsciousness, he STABS STRAIGHT UP, DRIVING IT UNDER KEEFER'S JAW --

CLOSE ON KEEFER

THE SHARD of BONE twisting up through his MOUTH and INTO HIS BRAIN!

Keefer produces a SOUNDLESS SCREAM and drops to the floor of the chamber -- very dead.

Nick falls back atop the pile of ancient bones, stares up through bloody eyes --

NICK'S POV

The dust has settled. Loki, Yap, Po stand at the edge of the hole, staring down at us, the sun a BRILLIANT FLARE behind them.

Jamaal limps up and joins them as we --

FADE TO WHITE.

FADE IN:

151 EXT. MOUNTAIN STREAM - DAY

The Villagers kneel in the clear, cold water, washing the blood and dirt from their bodies --

FADE TO WHITE.

FADE IN:

152 EXT. ISLAND BEACH - OUTRIGGERS - DUSK

Village Men in the outriggers guide a dozen of their carved surfboards out to sea, each one bearing the remains of the dead villagers and mercs. They paddle beyond the reef, set the funeral ships on fire and float them out to sea. Among the bodies we recognize Ocker, Jimmy G and Nolan.

NICK, LOKI, YAP AND PO

watch from the beach with the rest of the villagers.

PO

No matter what side you fight,
everyone deserve decent send-off.

Nick and Jamaal share a look.

NICK

You don't have to leave.

JAMAAL

See ya on the next one, Blondie.

Nick nods.

GRACE

-- leans on a bamboo crutch, her wounded leg bandaged. Nick turns to her --

NICK

What now?

GRACE

'Goin' home.

Nick nods quietly.

NICK

Where's that?

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

GRACE
(a bittersweet memory)
Don't ask.

Grace looks to Loki -- they share a moment. Loki raises our Island's version of a Lei and puts it around Grace's neck.

Graces, suddenly embarrassed by Loki's kindness, quickly gets into the little launch with Jamaal. They then head out to the freighter.

GRACE AND JAMAAL

Grace turns back and waves.

THEIR POV

The shore receding, Nick holding Yap, with Loki and Po at his side.

NICK, LOKI AND PO

watching them go.

PO
We have a legend. It tells of a man who comes from far over the sea to save us from great danger.

NICK
Really?

PO
No. But I'm working on it.

Nick smiles, turns and leads Loki and Yap back up the beach, towards the jungle.

Po watches the new family -- going home.

FADE OUT.

THE END