

MISSING IN ACTION

Screenplay by

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Registered WGA
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FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN: The following GRAPHICS appear:

"Americans Missing in Action in Southeast Asia"

Army	705
Air Force	948
Navy	506
Marines	294
Coast Guard	1
Civilians	40
Total	<u>2,494</u>

DISSOLVE TO:

1. INT. MAYFLOWER HOTEL CONVENTION HALL - WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

The hall is packed with PEOPLE of all ages and races from every state in the Union. RICHARD JAMISON, a tall handsome man in his forties, stands at the podium waiting for the audience's thunderous applause to die down. A large banner hangs over the podium. It reads: "NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF POW/MIA'S IN SOUTHEAST ASIA". Jamison is the National Security Council Advisor to the President on POW/MIA affairs and an ex-military man. Jamison resumes speaking as the applause trails off.

JAMISON

The President of the United States is pressing for a resolution of this problem. The governments of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Laos are put on notice that we will resolve this issue regardless of any obstacles...

He is interrupted by tremendous applause and cheering.

JAMISON (CON'T)

...and if it takes bribery, trechery...or black helicopters in the night we will leave no stone unturned!

The audience is on its feet enthusiastically approving Jamison's speech.
(THIS SPEECH WAS DELIVERED BY RICHARD CHILDRRESS, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT, TO THE LEAGUE OF FAMILIES IN THE SPRING OF 1983.)

CUT TO:

TITLE SEQUENCE

MONTAGE of Vietnam war news footage with titles over freeze-frames of the action. Stress footage of P.O.W.'s and P.O.W.'s coming home.

CUT TO:

2. EXT. OUTER SPACE

The CAMERA moves slowly forward through a bright field of stars. We hear a faint mechanical hum growing louder, accompanied by a soft clicking sound and a large MILITARY SATELLITE moves slowly into view. An American flag is painted on its side and a large camera protrudes from its shiny underbelly. As the camera lens passes over us we hear the shutter click again and we

CUT TO:

3. EXT. EARTH (AS SEEN FROM OUTER SPACE)

We get a full view of the entire planet, half of which is bathed in darkness. The shutter clicks again and we get a closer view of the western Pacific Ocean. The wall of darkness that divides day from night is just to the west of the Southeast Asian Peninsula. The shutter clicks again and we get a closer view of Southeast Asia. Another click and we start to move in towards Vietnam. Click. We see the southern portion of the country. Click. The camera starts to zero in on the area south of the Mekong Delta. Click. A bird's eye view of a large area of jungle dotted with scattered rice paddies.

CUT TO:

4. EXT. A JUNGLE PRISON CAMP - DAWN

The camp is small and triangular shaped. It is hidden almost completely from the air by tall palm trees. Two guard towers stand outside the barbed wire fence that encircles the perimeter. Five two-man "tiger cages" stand in the center of the compound on short stilts.

A small guards' barracks and another building that serves as the camp office and commandant's quarters stands outside the camp's single gate. All of the buildings are made of bamboo and have thatched palm roofs.

FOUR SLEEPY GUARDS wearing khaki uniforms and pith helmets stumble sleepily out of the barracks. Two guards head towards the gate while the other two move towards the watch towers, calling out to the men in them.

The GUARD in the forward tower yawns and starts to strike a crudely forged triangle with a long bolt. The clanging sound shatters the early morning silence and sends birds whirling into the air from the encroaching jungle.

CUT TO:

5. INT. DALTON'S CAGE - DAWN

LIEUTENANT KEV DALTON, A Ranger from Kansas City attached to the 75th Infantry and captured in 1970, sits up slowly, wakened by the incessant clanging. He yawns, revealing blackened teeth. He is emaciated and his bones show clearly through his sun-blackened skin. His close cropped hair is a dull gray and his face is furrowed with lines etched by pain and malnutrition even though he is in his early forties. His thin arms are dotted with open sores and infected cuts.

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5. CONTINUED:

Dalton stretches, grimacing as his ankles are scraped by the fetters that hold them to a steel bar which runs across the back of the dirty eight by ten foot cage. He glances down at his cellmate, CORPORAL DON GIBSON, a member of the 101st Airborne from Georgia who was captured in 1970. Gibson is pallid and his body shakes with chills.

Dalton takes a bent nail from the flooring and makes a new mark on one of the bamboo uprights, signifying another day in captivity. The upright is covered from top to bottom with marks. He shakes his head and gently shakes Gibson awake.

Gibson comes around slowly, his teeth chattering, his face dripping with sweat.

GIBSON

'M-m-m-morning, L-T.

DALTON

'Morning, Don... Happy Easter.

GIBSON

Easter? No shit?

DALTON

That's right.

GIBSON

I w-wonder what my kids are doing today? Christ, I probably wouldn't even recognize them. They're all grown up by now...do you think they even remember me?

DALTON

I'm sure they remember you, Don. And that they're proud of you.

GIBSON

But its been thirteen years, L-T. I think the whole world has forgotten us.

DALTON

I'm sure that some people have forgotten. But there were a hell of a lot of good men that were over here with us...and you can bet your life they haven't forgotten.

GIBSON

We are betting our lives, L-T.

DALTON

How're you feeling this morning?

(CONTINUED)

5. CONTINUED:

GIBSON

Still pretty weak. They aren't going to put us to work on that damn dike again, are they?

DALTON

Probably.

GIBSON

I don't know if I can take it anymore.

DALTON

You have to take whatever they dish out, Don. You know what The Nose will do to you if you can't work.

HOLT (O.S.)

We'll cover for you, Don. Don't worry.

SERGEANT ED HOLT, from Lubbock Texas, of the Third Marine Division, captured in 1969, peers through the bars from the next cell. He has a U.S.M.C. tattoo on one thin forearm.

GIBSON

Thanks, Ed. You know, I wouldn't have made it this far without you guys.

HOLT

As long as we stick together they can never really beat us... Is it really Easter, L-T?

DALTON

Yes. At least it is back in The World.

HOLT

Shit! I can almost smell the ham bakin' in my momma's kitchen. She's the best damn cook in Lubbock.

GIBSON

Where's the flag, L-T? The guards'll be here in a minute.

Dalton takes a small, tattered handmade American flag from a hiding place in the thatching. The three battered men stare at it in silence for a moment. The flag seems to give them strength.

DALTON

I know they haven't forgotten about us.

(CONTINUED)

5. CONTINUED:

HOLT

Its been more than ten years, L-T. We're ancient history now.

DALTON

I pray to God you're wrong, Ed. I pray to God you're wrong.

CUT TO:

6. EXT. JUNGLE PRISON CAMP - DAY

Dalton and Holt are squatting on either side of Gibson, who leans back against a tree trunk near the cages. The three other P.O.W.'s join them, each carrying their meager ration of rice and fish paste. The three men are gaunt and hollow eyed and dressed in rags and worn tire-tread sandals. They are all survivors:

CORPORAL FRED BARNES, 1st Infantry Division (Big Red One), Detroit, captured 1967.

CORPORAL HENRY KIM, 5th Marine Division, San Francisco, captured 1968.

SERGEANT KEVIN MOORE, 23rd Infantry Division (Americal), Sioux Falls, captured 1970.

As each man joins the group he gives Gibson a portion of his rations. Barnes is a deeply religious man, Kim has retreated into himself, and Moore is on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

All of the men look to Barnes.

BARNES

This is the anniversary of the day of our Savior's resurrection.

The men all bow their heads and a shaft of misty sunlight suddenly streams through the palms overhead, illuminating them as they pray.

BARNES

Lord, we ask your blessing on this special day. Perhaps we don't have as much to be thankful for as the folks back home right now, but we are still Your obedient servants. And we know that while our fellow men may have forsaken us for these many years, You have stood by and protected us. We ask for Your continued blessings and once again offer You a prayer for our salvation.

CAPTAIN BA, the camp commander, strides out of the command hooch as the prisoners finish praying and wolf down their food. He is a huge, savage-

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6. CONTINUED:

looking man who carries a well-worn bamboo cane. His nose was shattered at one time and never set properly. It is splayed over his mouth like an ugly growth. Ba watches with a scowl as the prisoners line up for work and are issued hoes, shovels and picks.

His scowl changes to a grin as he notices that Dalton and Holt are supporting Gibson, who is too weak to even hold his hoe. Ba strides through the gates. Dalton sees Ba approaching and whispers urgently to Gibson.

DALTON

You've got to stand on your own for a few minutes, Don.

Gibson leans against the hoe, using it to support his weight, as Ba steps up to him and speaks in heavily accented English.

BA

You know that I have orders from Hanoi to keep you alive as long as I can...as long as you remain...productive. But I think you are too weak to work, Gibson.

GIBSON

No. I'm fine. I can handle it.

BA

You are sure?

GIBSON

Yes.

Ba turns to go and the prisoners visibly relax. Ba turns suddenly and kicks the hoe from Gibson's hands. Ba laughs harshly as Gibson falls sprawling at his feet. Dalton and Holt start forward to help Gibson but are driven back into line by two guards who beat them with their gunbutts. Barnes and Moore mutter threateningly, but the other guards raise their weapons and they fall silent.

Gibson struggles to his feet as the others root silently for him to succeed. He stands swaying for a moment.

GIBSON

I can work Captain. I know I can work.

BA

We'll see.

He throws the hoe at Gibson. It catches him across the chest and he falls. Ba smiles and points to a patch of open ground near the fence.

BA

Dig!

(CONTINUED)

6. CONTINUED:

GIBSON

Please...I can work...

The guards herd the prisoners over to the indicated spot and force them to dig a deep hole, driving them on with fists, kicks and gumbutts. As the digging proceeds Gibson continues to plead with Ba. Ba ignores him.

When the hole is about seven feet deep the guards order the prisoners out. Half a dozen guards keep the prisoners covered as two other guards drag Gibson to the hole and throw him in.

BA

Bury him!

The prisoners do not move. Their knuckles whiten on their tools.

BA

I said 'Bury him'!!!

The prisoners still do not move. A guard fires a burst into the ground at their feet. They do not flinch. Gibson tries to clamber out of the hole, but the sides are slippery and he cannot get a handhold.

GIBSON

Help me. Please help me. I can work. I know I can work. Please, give me a chance.

Ba steps up in front of Dalton.

BA

Bury him!

Dalton stares straight ahead. Ba curses and strikes him savagely across the face with the bamboo cane, cutting both his cheeks deeply. Dalton does not flinch.

BA

(In Vietnamese to guards)

Get them out of here!

The guards shove the prisoners towards the gate while other guards start to fill in the hole. Gibson manages to crawl up one side of the hole and reach the edge, but Ba savagely stamps on his hands and he falls back. He continues to plead as the dirt starts to cover him.

GIBSON

Please. For the love of God. Tell him I can work. Someone tell him I can work...

Dalton, Holt, Earnes and Moore shed tears of anger and frustration as they are herded through the gate. Behind them Gibson's cries become muffled as he is buried alive.

CUT TO:

7. EXT. RICE PADDY NEAR THE PRISON CAMP - DAY

Dalton, Holt and the other three men are marched out on the dike under the careful eyes of a half dozen guards.

We hear the camera shutter click O.S. and the scene is freeze-framed. It fades slowly from color to black and white and we

DISSOLVE TO:

8. INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a black and white photo of the paddy scene. The CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal the photo is in the PRESIDENT'S hands. He studies the shot for a moment and lowers it. We see that it is dated 5-10-83. He looks briefly at half a dozen other satellite photos dating back six months. They show the M.I.A.'s working in rice paddies and on roads and bridges. All come from the same sector of Vietnam.

The President frowns and looks across the desk at GENERAL ROBERT DAVIS, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

PRESIDENT

Are you sure that these men are Americans, General Davis?

DAVIS

Yes sir. The D.I.A. has assured me that there is a 89.9 per cent probability that those men are not Russians. They appear too young to be surviving French M.I.A.'s. They are too large to be Vietnamese, and as you can see in the photo that came in two days ago, we've been able to establish for the first time that they are accompanied by armed guards. In addition, we have been able to correlate several of the photos with a number of live-sighting reports by refugees.

PRESIDENT

Have the live sighting reports been confirmed by polygraph analysis?

DAVIS

Yes, sir.

The President turns to the other man in the room, LEWIS STAFFORD, the Director of the C.I.A.

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8. CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

Lewis, what is the C.I.A.'s assessment of the photographs?

STAFFORD

We concur with the D.I.A., Mr. President. It is very likely that those men are Americans and are being held against their will.

The President leans thoughtfull back in his chair and glances slowly around the plush office before turning back to the two men.

PRESIDENT

Gentlemen, the last three administrations have sidestepped this entire issue. If it is not satisfactorily resolved how can we expect future generations of servicemen to feel about fighting for their country? Our people have to be confident that we care about them and know that no matter the circumstances we will do everything to support them in combat and bring them home again to their families...I didn't send those men over there, but by God, is there is any way humanly possible, I'm going to bring them home. How do you suggest we proceed?

DAVIS

We have to be very careful, sir. The Son Tay mission during the war failed because of poor intelligence and I don't think we need to discuss the Iranian raid. We have to make sure that the cards are stacked in our favor. This is the first time we have gotten solid incontrovertable intelligence on the location of our people...And its less than three days old. All prior intelligence has been at least six to eight months old. We have to insure that the intelligence is used properly. To that end I'd like to bring General Archer in now.

The President nods and pushes a button on his intercom.

SECRETARY

Yes, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT

Send General Archer in, Mary.

DAVIS

General Archer commanded the Studies and Observation Group, which was also called the Special Operations Group, in Vietnam. He is an expert in unconventional operations, especially those mounted behind enemy lines.

GENERAL HUGH ARCHER enters, greets the three men and sits down.

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8. CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

Let's cut through all the preliminaries, General. I want those men out of there as soon as possible. How do we do it?

ARCHER

Well, sir, before we can mount a full-scale rescue operation we need to make a more detailed reconnaissance of the area in order to determine the exact location of the camp, the number of prisoners and guards, and the effectiveness of their security.

DAVIS

Once the recon has been carried out we can train our men and plan the operation. We could be ready to go in three or four months.

PRESIDENT

That's too long to leave them there.

STAFFORD

We'd like to free them tomorrow, Mr. President, but there's too much at stake to go in less than fully prepared. If we can get just one of our men out we can pressure the Indochinese governments into releasing others.

PRESIDENT

And what do you think, General Archer?

ARCHER

I agree with you, sir. Three or four months is entirely too long a time, but I'm afraid we don't have any other options. Our first move has to be the insertion of a small Reconnaissance Team to map out the area and make sure our men are there. The Recon Team can also bring back further photographic evidence which may help us identify some of the men.

DAVIS

We want the recon to look like a freelance operation in case anything goes wrong, so the team will consist of one or two Americans and several indigenous personnel who have no present ties to the American military or intelligence communities.

PRESIDENT

Do you have a specific team leader in mind?

ARCHER

Yes, sir. Matt Hunter.

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8. CONTINUED:

Stafford grimaces at the mention of Matt's name. Archer hands the President Matt's dossier. The President opens it as he speaks and finds a photo of Matt, a handsome clean-cut man in a Special Forces uniform.

PRESIDENT

Do you disapprove of Hunter, Lewis?

STAFFORD

Yes, sir. I worked with him in Saigon. He's an independent son of a bitch.

ARCHER

But he gets the job done. He was a Captain with the Fifth Special Forces Group and worked extensively for me in S.O.G.'s OPS 35, our direct action arm. He's used to operating behind enemy lines and has led several successful P.O.W. snatches. As a matter of fact, he was a P.O.W. himself for a little over six months before he managed to escape.

DAVIS

We still use him occasionally for unorthodox undercover missions. He's never let us down.

PRESIDENT

Hunter sounds like our man. How soon can you get in touch with him?

ARCHER

I'm not sure, sir. He keeps on the move constantly. He's hard to find when he doesn't want to be found, but he owns an island near St. Croix in the Virgin Islands. We can start there tomorrow...

Archer is interrupted by the intercom buzzer.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Speaker of the House Maxwell is here to see you, sir.

PRESIDENT

Send him in, Mary...Would you gentlemen wait in the other room for a few minutes?

Davis, Archer and Stafford move through a side door.

CUT TO:

9. INT. OVAL OFFICE ANTIROOM - NIGHT

Archer closes the door behind them as Stafford turns and glares at Davis.

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9. CONTINUED:

STAFFORD

Why didn't you tell me about Hunter?

DAVIS

I know how you feel about him, Lewis, but he's the best man for the job.

STAFFORD

He's a damn mercenary bastard!

ARCHER

Let's leave our personal feelings out of this. A number of mens' lives are at stake. They may be faceless statistics to you, but to me they're flesh and blood. They may even be friends. Don't worry about Hunter. He'll do the job, and do it right. I suggest you worry more about security. One peep out of anyone and those poor bastards won't have a chance.

CUT TO:

10. INT. OVAL OFFICE - NIGHT

SPEAKER PORTER MAXWELL, a large, florid-faced man, tosses the satellite photos distainfully onto the President's desk.

PRESIDENT

Porter, I've given my word to the families of our M.I.A.'s that if I ever recieved conclusive proof that any of them were still alive, I would bring them home.

MAXWELL

And you believe that these photographs are conclusive proof?

PRESIDENT

Coupled with the confirmed live-sighting reports I told you about, yes.

MAXWELL

Mr. President, why in the name of God would the Vietnamese still be holding American prisoners?

PRESIDENT

Why did the Russians hold German prisoners captured at Stalingrad in 1943 until 1954? Why did the North Vietnamese hold thirteen French Legionaires captured in Dien Bien Phu in 1954 until 1970?...It doesn't matter why they're holding our men. The simple fact is that they are holding them and we have a moral responsibility to set them free.

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10. CONTINUED:

MAXWELL

The war was over a long time ago. We lost and no one wants to think about it anymore. Remember what happened in Iran. I don't know if we could carry out a rescue even if we wanted to...Look, we're both coming up for re-election next year. An unsuccessful raid could hurt our chances for detente and even drag us into another unpopular war.

PRESIDENT

My predecessors have swept this issue under the rug for exactly those reasons. But I'm willing to take those chances if there is only one of our people still in captivity.

MAXWELL

Mr. President, you forget that I was in Hanoi only last year to discuss the M.I.A. situation. I have been assured by the highest officials that there are no Americans being held against their will in Vietnam...Hell, you just told me that you aren't one hundred percent sure that those men are Americans.

PRESIDENT

If we were only ten per cent sure, don't you think it would be worthwhile to at least investigate it further?

MAXWELL

No sir, I don't. Forget about it, Mr. President. I'm going to.

He rises and smiles at the President, who is barely able to suppress his anger and frustration.

CUT TO:

11. INT. OVAL OFFICE ANTEROOM - NIGHT

Davis, Stafford and Archer are still arguing about Hunter and security leaks when the President enters the room.

STAFFORD

No one in my office has ever breached security...

The three men get to their feet.

PRESIDENT

Get Hunter!

CUT TO:

12. EXT. HUNTER'S ISLAND DOCK - DAY

A large power boat roars through the quiet translucent blue water towards the small densely jungled island and its long rickety pier. Archer stands in the bow with CARL GARRETT, a C.I.A. agent. FOUR hard-faced MEN with military haircuts are also on board. They are heavily armed but all are dressed in casual tropical civilian clothing.

The boat heaves to next to the pier. There is no one to greet them.

ARCHER

Are you sure he got our message, Carl?

GARRETT

There's no way of knowing for certain, sir.
If he's here we'll probably find him at the house.

Archer and Garrett disembark with two of the other men and start towards the island and the narrow path that leads into the jungle from the end of the pier.

CUT TO:

13. EXT. HUNTER'S ISLAND TRAIL - DAY

Garrett leads the way down the narrow winding trail.

GARRETT

Stay close together. Hunter had a bad time with drug smugglers when he first moved here so he set up a few surprises to take care of any uninvited guests. The last time I was here I almost ended up in a pit full of pungi sticks.

The two soldiers glance skeptically at each other, but move closer to Archer.

As they continue down the trail they hear footsteps in the jungle parallelling the trail. One of the soldiers draws a gun, but Archer motions for him to put it away.

Archer stops and pulls a leafy branch aside with a grin.

ARCHER

You'd better practice your tracking, Matt.
We could hear you a mile away.

Archer freezes as he discovers that a length of almost transparent fishing line leads from the branch to a nearby tree where the other end is tied to the pin of a hand grenade. His movement has pulled the pin nearly out of its resting place.

GARRETT

What...?

(CONTINUED)

13. CONTINUED:

ARCHER

Shhhh!

He eases the branch back into place, trying not to dislodge the pin. He appears to have succeeded and starts to breathe a sigh of relief. The branch settles back into place and the pin pulls free.

ARCHER

Hit the dirt!

Everyone dives for cover. The grenade explodes, showering everyone with dirt and debris and filling the area with smoke.

We get glimpses of a tall MAN moving slowly down the trail through the smoke towards Archer and the others. He wears well-worn jungle boots, bluejeans and a camouflage teeshirt. He carries a CAR-15 assault rifle easily in one hand.

The man steps out of the smoke like a phantom and towers over Archer and Garrett. WE SEE MATT HUNTER clearly for the first time. He sports a full mustache and wears a black patch over one eye that gives him a faintly piratical look. Matt grins down at Garrett.

GARRETT

Hunter, you bastard!

MATT

Nice to see you, too, Garrett.

He glances at Archer.

MATT

Welcome to paradise, General.

Matt starts to laugh and after a moment Archer joins in.

CUT TO:

14. EXT. HUNTER'S HOUSE - DAY

The small ramshackle beach house sits nestled in the palm trees at the edge of the beach. The two soldiers are strolling along the edge of the encroaching jungle.

Archer and Garrett are sitting on the small veranda, watching as Matt feeds sunflower seeds to LORD BYRON, his huge ancient PARROTT, who perches on a nearby swing.

After a moment Matt turns to face them.

(CONTINUED)

14. CONTINUED:

MATT

So how do I fit in?

ARCHER

We need someone to lead a freelance Recon Team into the area before we can mount the actual rescue operation.

MATT

How long between the Recon and the rescue?

ARCHER

Four months at least.

MATT

Four more months of pure hell...

GARRETT

There really isn't any other way. The President feels that there is too much at stake...

Garrett continues talking as Matt stares out at the sunlight sparkling on the water and seems to drift away.

DISSOLVE TO:

15. EXT. SMALL PRISONER OF WAR CAMP - DAY - FLASHBACK

Matt squints as the bright sunlight filters through the branches of the towering trees which hide the camp from the air as he and FIVE other barefoot new AMERICAN P.O.W.'S are led into the camp. He and the others are clad in tattered camouflage fatigues and their arms are bound tightly behind their backs.

The Americans are pushed into a ragged line as a NVA NONCOM salutes the camp CO, LIEUTENANT BA. Ba is dressed in a gray uniform and pith helmet and carries a bamboo cane. Ba returns the salute and stalks along the line of prisoners, accompanied by TWO BURLY NVA REGULARS. His nose is normal and he wrinkles it as he glares at each prisoner in turn. Several of the P.O.W.'S cannot meet his eye, but Matt meets his stare unflinchingly. Ba scowls and steps back.

BA

You imperialist lackeys are fortunate to be in the hands of the glorious North Vietnamese People's Army. You running dogs deserve far worse treatment than you will receive. We treat you leniently so that you may ponder the errors of your ways as our mighty forces sweep your reactionary army into the sea.

MARINE SERGEANT

Bullshit!

The prisoners chuckle and Ba's face turns bright red.

(CONTINUED)

15. CONTINUED:

BA
Who said that?

The prisoners are silent. Ba. nods and his henchmen grab a prisoner at random and start to beat him mercilessly with fists and riflebutts. The MARINE SERGEANT steps forward.

SERGEANT
Let him go. I said it.

Ba strikes him across the face with the cane, but the Marine does not flinch.

BA
Now tell me what you think of our cause.

SERGEANT
Its full of shit. You're the real invaders
are aggressors.

Ba's henchmen strike the Marine with their riflebutts and he goes down. Ba starts to kick and beat him mercilessly. The other prisoners start forward, but are driven back when a guard fires a burst over their heads.

Ba laughs savagely as he strikes the Marine. Matt can stand it no longer. He kicks a guard out of the way and then attacks Ba, kicking him off the dying Marine. Ba rolls to his feet and Matt smashes his nose to jelly with a spin kick.

The other guards jump Matt. He fights back for a moment, then is beaten to the ground as the other prisoners are forced into tiger cages.

Ba staggers to his feet and shouts at the guards.

BA
No! I want him alive!

Several guards drag the half concious Marine to an open grave near the fence as the other guards tie Matt's feet together. The Marine is thrown into the grave as other guards appear. One carries an empty rice sack, the other a LARGE RAT.

Ba grins as Matt is hung upside down from a bamboo tripod. The other guards start to bury the Marine alive and Matt struggles to free himself as the Marine's pleading voice reaches his ears.

MARINE
Oh, God, no...no...

The Marine's voice is muffled as a guard drops the rat into the sack and walks towards Matt. Ba leans towards Matt and laughs.

(CONTINUED)

15. CONTINUED:

BA

You're going to wish you were in his place
before I'm through with you.

Matt spits in Ba's face in reply. Ba kicks him, then signals to the guards. They pull the sack over Matt's head and tie it securely at the neck. Matt's body bucks in pain as the rat starts to bite his face. Ba laughs harshly.

ARCHER (O.S.)

How much do you want?

DISSOLVE TO:

16. EXT. HUNTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Matt is unconsciously rubbing his eyepatch as Archer resumes speaking.

ARCHER

I said 'How much do you want?'

Matt stares at him for a moment, a thin film of sweat glistening on his face.

MATT

Nothing.

GARRETT

Then you won't go?

MATT

Try and stop me.

CUT TO:

16A. HUNTER'S ISLAND DOCK - DAY

Garrett and the two soldiers climb back on the boat as Archer and Matt walk towards it.

ARCHER

When do you think you'll be ready?

MATT

I'll be leaving today. I need to see a few
people stateside before I fly to Kuala Lumpur.
With some luck we can be ready to go in two
weeks.

Archer puts a hand on Matt's shoulder and stops him.

ARCHER

Good...You'll be the man on the ground, Matt.
The boss'll back any decisions you make...Our
people have been there a long time. We don't
know how much longer they can hold out.

CUT TO:

17. INT. DALTON'S CELL - NIGHT

Dalton tosses fitfully, unable to sleep.

HOLT (Whisper)
You awake, L-T?

DALTON (Whisper)
Yeah. What's the matter?

HOLT
I've been thinking. One of us has got to escape.

DALTON
What?

HOLT
Its the only chance we have. If one man can get through and get word to our people I know they'll come back for us. Hell, no one probably knows that we're still alive. Who knows what these bastards have told everybody.

DALTON
It wouldn't work, Ed. The odds are too great. How many others have tried over the years? Ten? Fifteen? They're always brought back so The Nose can finish them off. Besides, who would go? We're getting weaker every day

HOLT
You're in the best shape, L-T. You'd have the best chance. You could use all the tricks they taught you in Ranger school.

DALTON
Forget it, Ed. It would never work.

HOLT
Maybe not, but at least we can try.

Holt lies down, leaving Dalton to stare at the dark roof of the cell thoughtfully

CUT TO:

18. EXT. NORTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Matt streaks by a sign that reads "Fort Bragg, fifteen miles" in a beautifully restored 1957 Thunderbird.

CUT TO:

19. EXT. FLYING MAIDEN BAR - NIGHT

The T-Bird pulls up in front of the sleazy go-go bar as SEVERAL DRUNKEN SOLDIERS in civilian clothing stumble out onto the sidewalk and stagger slowly down the street.

Matt opens the door to the bar and is greeted with a blast of blaring juke box music. He steps inside.

CUT TO:

20. INT. FLYING MAIDEN BAR - NIGHT

Matt stands in the doorway for a moment and scans the bar's dingy interior. The place is small and dark and about half the tables are filled with a mixture of soldiers and civilians. TWO GO GO GIRLS are gyrating on the small stage in the front of the room.

Matt crosses to the bar and leans over it to speak to the BARTENDER above the tinny blare of the music.

MATT

Has Luke Buchanan been in tonight?

BARTENDER

You mean Dallas? Sure. He stepped out back a minute ago. You might still be able to catch him.

MATT

Thanks.

Matt heads for the back door.

CUT TO:

21. EXT. ALLEY BEHIND THE FLYING MAIDEN - NIGHT

As Matt steps through the rear door into the dark alley a MAN is hurled hard up against the wall next to him. The man stares at Matt for a moment, then grins.

DALLAS

Hi, Matt.

MATT

Hi Dallas. You got a problem?

A HUGE THUG steps forward and grabs Dallas by the lapels. He sneers at Matt.

THUG

Stay out of this, one-eye. (To Dallas) And you keep away from my lady, asshole. You understand me?

Matt glances past the thug and sees a PRETTY BARGIRL, SIX THUGS and a BURLY FAT WOMAN all glaring at Dallas.

(CONTINUED)

21. CONTINUED:

MATT

He understands, don't you, Dallas?

Matt grins. Dallas grins at the thug.

DALLAS

Sure. I understand.

Matt and Dallas explode into action, punching the huge thug at the same time and knocking him sprawling into his friends. The others go down in a heap, cursing.

MATT

You've only been retired for three months.
Don't you have anything better to do on
a Friday night?

DALLAS

Hell, its cheaper than drinking. And you don't
get a hangover.

The thugs and the women scramble to their feet. They attack Matt and Dallas, shouting threats and curses, but are really no match for the two men, who use some spectacular hand to hand combat techniques to dispatch the thugs.

During the fight the fat woman attacks Dallas. He shoves her away, not wanting to hit her, and she kicks him in the groin. He doubles over for a moment with a curse, then straightens up and knocks her out with a backfist.

Matt dispatches the huge thug, who has finally staggered to his feet. He and Dallas glance around, see that all their opponents are down and out, and shake hands enthusiastically over the huge thug's inert body.

DALLAS

Shitfire! Just like old times.

MATT

Yeah. Just like old times.

CUT TO:

22. INT. DALLAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dallas is sitting back on the decrepit couch which leans against one grimy wall of the tiny ramshackle apartment.

Matt stands at the window, a beer in his hand. He stares pensively through the dirty glass for a moment, at the flashing neon sign which illuminates the outer darkness.

He speaks without turning to face Dallas, watching his reflection in the glass.

(CONTINUED)

22. CONTINUED:

MATT

That's it, Dallas. Are you in?

DALLAS

Christ, Matt, do you know how many friends we left over there? Except for a lucky turn of the cards it could be you and me in that hellhole. And you know damn well we'd be hoping that we hadn't been forgotten, and that someone was coming to get us out...You bet I'm in. All the way.

MATT

Thanks.

DALLAS

There's only one thing I don't like. It could take those clowns in Washington six months or more to actually pull off a rescue operation. Who knows how many of our guys will still be alive by then.

MATT

Exactly. That's why we aren't going to wait. I'm going to recon the area with a couple of locals. If our guys are still there you'll bring in a strike force and we'll get them out.

DALLAS

You really think we can pull it off?

Matt hands him a list of names. Dallas scans it quickly and whistles appreciatively.

DALLAS

Not bad. Every man here worked with us in S.O.G.

MATT

That's right. They're the best there is. Some of them probably won't be in shape or available, but we need at least four. Track them down as fast as you can and meet me in Kuala Lumpur in ten days.

Matt opens a briefcase filled with hundred dollar bills.

MATT

The pay is one hundred thousand.

DALLAS

Considering the objective, most of these guys would probably go along for free.

(CONTINUED)

22. CONTINUED:

MATT

I know, but Uncle Sam's being generous this time. They'll earn every dime.

DALLAS

Then the whole operation is sanctioned by Washington.

MATT

Only the Recon. The snatch is my idea. The President is behind us, unofficially, but no one else will know about the rescue until we've pulled it off. We'll be on our own. If we blow it, nobody's going to bail us out.

CUT TO:

23. EXT. PRESIDENTIAL YATCH - POTOMAC RIVER - DAY

The President is meeting with Archer, Davis and Stafford. In the background we see several of the monuments as the conversation progresses.

ARCHER

The operation is underway, Mr. President. Hunter left for Kuala Lumpur earlier today. He'll rendezvous there with Jack Tucker, an ex British Special Air Service officer. Tucker is arranging for special weapons and equipment and a plane to drop Hunter and his team over the target area.

DAVIS

We ran a check on Tucker, sir. He is heavily involved in the black market now, but he had a distinguished career with the S.A.S.. He served a tour in Vietnam on the exchange program with the Australian S.A.S.. That's where he met Hunter.

ARCHER

Tucker will rendezvous with Hunter four days after the air insertion and evacuate the team by boat.

PRESIDENT

Is that the best way?

ARCHER

Yes, sir. Tucker runs contraband into Vietnam on a regular basis. The team should be safe.

(CONTINUED)

23. CONTINUED:

STAFFORD

There's only one problem.

PRESIDENT

What's that, Lewis?

STAFFORD

Hunter met a retired Special Forces Master Sergeant named Buchanan at Fort Bragg yesterday. He and Buchanan served together in S.O.G.. Buchanan has since dropped out of sight.

PRESIDENT

And that alarms you.

STAFFORD

Yes, sir. It doesn't seem to fit in with the planned mission.

ARCHER

I suggested that Hunter bring a second American along to serve as assistant team leader. If one of them goes down, the other will still be able to provide positive intelligence on the P.O.W.'S.

STAFFORD

It still doesn't seem right to me. I think we had better keep a close watch on Hunter.

PRESIDENT

Do you really feel that's necessary?

STAFFORD

Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT

Can your people do that without being obvious?

STAFFORD

Of course, sir.

CUT TO:

24. EXT. KUALA LUMPUR AIRPORT - DAY

A Continental 747 taxis up to the terminal.

CUT TO:

25. INT. KUALA LUMPUR TERMINAL - DAY

Matt strides out of customs carrying a large aviator's kit bag and an attache case. Carl Garrett watches him over the top of a newspaper in a lounge as Matt walks past. He stands, picks up an attache case indential to Matt's, which is filled with U.S. currency, and follows him.

(CONTINUED)

25. CONTINUED:

Matt stops at a postcard display in a giftshop and sets the attache case down. Garrett approaches the postcard display and sets his case down next to Matt's. He and Matt stare at each other for a moment, sizing each other up, then Matt picks Garrett's case up and walks towards the exit. Garrett waits a moment, then starts to follow.

26. EXT. ENTRANCE TO KUALA LUMPUR AIR TERMINAL - DAY

Matt strides out of the terminal, followed by Garrett who tries unsuccessfully to stay in the background. TWO ATTRACTIVE PROSTITUTES approach Matt.

FIRST PROSTITUTE

Hello, handsome. Like to have a good time while you're here?

MATT

Thanks, but not now.

SECOND PROSTITUTE

We'll give you our two for one special.

MATT

Sounds tempting. I tell you what. I just ran into an old friend. How about showing him a really good time?

Matt hands them a hundred dollar bill and motions at Garrett.

FIRST PROSTITUTE

You bet. We'll make him happy all night!

They rush towards Garrett. Matt chuckles as the girls fall all over Garrett, hugging and kissing him. Garrett tries to push them away, but they only redouble their amorous efforts.

A cab screeches to a stop in front of Matt and he throws his bag in the back and climbs in. The cab starts forward and Garrett motions frantically to a sedan parked across the street. STAN CARROLL, the driver, nods, and pulls out behind the cab. WADE HARRISON, the man in the passenger seat grins at Garrett as they pass him.

CUT TO:

27. INT. TAXICAB - DAY

MATT

The Hilton, please.

DRIVER

Since when have you ever stayed at the Hilton?

(CONTINUED)

27. CONTINUED:

MATT
What?

Matt lean forward as the driver, NGUYEN VAN TRAN, a Vietnamese in his thirties, removes his dark glasses and smiles at him. Matt notices a tattoo on Tran's upper arm which depicts the insignia of the Vietnamese Black Panther Ranger Company.

MATT
Tran?

TRAN
Its been a long time, Dai Uy. Tuck sent me to pick you up. He said you might have an exotic good deal going that I might be able to get in on.

They shake hands warmly.

MATT
Tuck talks too much...How'd you get out of Saigon?

TRAN
We fought our way to the coast and managed to get on a small boat. After a run-in with some pirates the Thai navy picked us up. I drifted down here and have been driving this damn cab for almost eight years.

MATT
Where's your sister?

TRAN
She didn't make it.

MATT
I'm sorry.

TRAN
When the NVA took Saigon their revenge squads ~~hunted down~~ the Black Panther Rangers and their families. My sister and one of my brothers were killed. My other brother managed to get back to our parents' village near Quan Long City. I haven't heard from them for two years.

Tran glances in the rear-view mirror.

TRAN
Is the Company following you for any particular reason?

(CONTINUED)

27. CONTINUED:

MATT

I have some business to take care of that they may not be too happy about. Can you lose them?

TRAN

Does a water buffalo have flies?

He stomps on the brakes and thows the cab into a screeching U-turn.

CUT TO:

28. EXT. KUALA LUMPUR STREETS - DAY

Carroll curses as Tran's cab turns suddenly. He tries to follow, but crashes through a vendor's fruit stand before managing to turn the sedan. He roars off in pursuit as melons splatter on the windshield. He uses the wipers to clear away the pulp.

A brief but exciting car chase takes us through the streets of the city before Tran manages to lose the sedan on the outskirts of town. They leave Carroll and Harrison scrambling out of the sedan which has ploughed into a rice paddy and laugh as the two agents are chased by an angry FARMER and his WATER BUFFALO.

CUT TO:

29. EXT. WHANG'S "HOUSE OF HEAVENLY DELIGHTS" - DAY

Tran drives down the narrow, dark street and stops in front of a large dingy colonial building.

Matt shakes Tran's hand.

MATT

Thanks, Tran. I'll see you around noon tomorrow at the temple.

Tran drives away as Matt knocks on the massive teak door. A small, highly polished plaque in the center of the door reads "Whang's House of Heavenly Delights." A peephole opens and a brutal face studies Matt for a moment before the door opens. Matt shoulders his kit bag and steps inside.

CUT TO:

30. INT. WHANG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The faded opulence of the house's exterior is completely belied by the plush interior which is furnished in the most comfortable colonial fashion. Overstuffed leather furniture stands amid lush plants which sway in the breeze generated by large ceiling fans.

(CONTINUED)

30. CONTINUED:

More than a DOZEN BEAUTIFUL GIRLS of every nationality, each dressed in brief yet elegant attire, laugh, joke and tease half a dozen MEN from every continent. Beautiful YOUNG ASIAN GIRLS move through the room serving drinks and hors d'oeuvres.

A BURLY SERVANT takes Matt's kit bag, but he keeps the briefcase in hand as MADAME WHANG herself, a beautiful Eurasian woman in her mid-forties, hurries towards him and embraces him emotionally.

MADAME WHANG

Welcome back, Mister Matt. It has been far too long since you have graced my humble bed.

MATT

Its good to see you, Danielle. You get more beautiful every year.

MADAME WHANG

Flattery will get you no special favors, but don't stop trying. Mister Tuck is waiting for you upstairs...Kai!

KAI, a beautiful young Oriental woman, hurries over and bows to Matt and Madame Whang.

MADAME WHANG

Show Mister Matt to room 32.

Kai smiles and takes Matt's hand.

MADAME WHANG

It is truly good to have you back.

MATT

Its good to be back. I'd forgotten what I'd been missing and how it feels to really be alive.

Kai leads Matt up the broad staircase towards the second floor.

CUT TO:

31. INT. ROOM 32 - DAY

Kai ushers Matt into the large room, which is filled with beautiful green plants and HALF A DOZEN even more BEAUTIFUL scantily-clad WOMEN of several nationalities. Two large Japanese-style tubs are sunk side by side in the center of the mosaic tiled floor and two bottles of champagne are chilling in a silver ice bucket between them.

JACK "TUCK" TUCKER, a loud burly Irishman, is seated in one of the tubs attended by three of the women.

(CONTINUED)

31. CONTINUED:

Tuck laughs delightedly as he sees Matt and stands to greet him. As he stands we see that he is wearing nothing but a belt with an automatic pistol sealed in a waterproof ziplock bag stuck in it.

TUCK

Matt Hunter, you glorious one-eyed bastard!
Its damn good to see you, man! I hope you
don't mind that I started without you, but
after all, I'm only made of flesh and blood...

He shakes Matt's hand vigorously.

MATT

...and enough Irish whiskey to drown an
elephant. Its good to see you too, Tuck.

Matt points at the gun.

MATT

Are you afraid the girls might be more than
you can handle?

Tuck laughs and sinks back into the tub as Kai and three other girls start to undress Matt. He pushes them back.

MATT

We've got some business to take care of first.

Tuck pops the cork on one of the champagne bottles.

TUCK

We are taking care of business, or have
you become blind in your good eye as well?
You're talking about work. And that's all
been done. Everything is ready to go.

He takes a long pull from the bottle as the girls start to undress Matt.

TUCK

So relax for once, you bloody single-minded
man. "Eat, drink and be merry..."

He throws the bottle to Matt.

MATT

..."For tomorrow we die."

Matt takes a long drink from the bottle.

CUT TO:

32. INT. DALTON'S CAGE - NIGHT

Dalton lies awake, staring at the darkened roof, thinking about escape. He sits up and takes the flag from its hiding place and looks searchingly at it for a long moment, then folds it reverently and replaces it.

He leans towards the bars of Holt's cage.

DALTON

Pssst...Pssst...Ed...Ed.

He hears Holt stir. Holt sits up and leans towards the bars.

HOLT

What's wrong, L-T?

DALTON

I'll go the first chance I get.

CUT TO:

33. INT. WHANG'S HOUSE - DAY

Matt and Tuck stumble slowly down the staircase supporting each other and suffering from colossal hangovers.

MATT

I haven't felt this bad since that weekend leave in Hong Kong in '69. Where do you think Danielle gets that champagne?

TUCK

I think she makes it in the bloody bathtub, while she's bathing.

The place appears to be empty. Matt taps the bell on the front desk and winces at the loud sharp ring. Madame Whang appears instantly with the servant carries Matt's kit bag.

MADAME WHANG

I hope your evening was most pleasant, gentlemen.

MATT

Very nice, as usual. A bit too much champagne.

MADAME WHANG

As usual.

Madame Whang takes out a small abacus and does some quick computation.

MADAME WHANG

Six, no seven of my "A" girls...4 bottles of my best champagne...the baths...the best rooms in the house...That comes to \$2,000, but since we are old friends let's say \$1500.

(CONTINUED)

53. CONTINUED:

Tuck coughs nervously.

TUCK

Look mate, I'm a bit short today. Think you could handle it? There's a good lad.

He saunters towards the door as Matt reluctantly pays up.

MATT

One of these days, Tuck...

Tuck grins and suddenly one of Madame Whang's huge BOUNCERS comes tumbling down the staircase and crashes into a table, destroying it completely. Madame Whang shrieks in alarm and ANOTHER BOUNCER comes flying down after the first. Two beautiful GIRLS appear at the top of the stairs on either side of a short, slim, white haired GURKHA, DURGABAHADUR GURUNG, a.k.a. SAM LOW. The girls are shouting at Sam and Sam is shouting angrily back.

SAM

No, no, no! You said two for the price of one!

A THIRD BOUNCER appears behind Sam and grabs him in a bear hug. Sam drops to one knee and sends the man sailing over his shoulder and down the stairs, making THREE MORE BOUNCERS who are charging up scramble out of the way.

Sam moves out of sight down the hallway, followed by the shouting girls and the running bouncers. A moment later the bouncers and girls run screaming back down the hall and down the stairs, chased by Sam, who wields a shining, razor-edged Kukri. (Gurkha fighting knife).

SAM

Ayo Gurkhali! (The Gurkhas are coming!)

Sam chases the bouncers and the girls out into the street as Matt and Tuck watch, amused. Madame Whang collapses into a chair and shakes her head.

MADAME WHANG

Why me?

Sam re-enters the room. He sheathes the Kukri after cutting his thumb on the notch provided for that purpose and glares at Matt and Tuck.

Matt laughs and grins back at him. Sam stalks towards them.

TUCK

Careful Matt. This lad takes himself pretty seriously.

MATT

I know.

(CONTINUED)

33. CONTINUED:

Sam stares hard at Matt and Tuck, then grins broadly and snaps off a highly polished British military salute. Tuck is puzzled.

SAM

Subedar! (Captain!) I didn't recognize you with the beard and eye patch.

MATT

Hello, Sam. Its been a long time since jungle warfare school.

They shake hands.

SAM

And like most Americans you've probably forgotten everything I taught you.

MATT

Jack Tucker, this is Havildar Durgabhadur Gurung, late of the Queen's Own Gurkha Rifles, and the best damn tracker the Malaysian jungle warfare school ever had. We call him Sam Low.

TUCK

Well thank God for that. I've heard of you and I'm glad you're on our side.

Sam and Tuck shake hands.

MATT

Get your gear, Sam. I'll take care of Madame Whang.

Sam hurries upstairs as Matt opens his briefcase. Madame Whang gets a glimpse of its contents and bursts into a wide smile. She begins working the abacus furiously. Matt grimaces at Tuck and shrugs his shoulders in resignation.

CUT TO:

34. EXT. LARGE HARBOR ON EASTERN SIDE OF MALAY PENINSULA - DAY

Matt and Tuck are moving through the teeming throngs that swarm over a large dock on their way to Tuck's ship.

MATT

The camp is somewhere southwest of Quan Long City and Camau near the Ong Doc River. I want to go in by air, but the only way out is by boat.

TUCK

Well, you've come to the right man, mate. I've been making monthly runs to the coast near there

(CONTINUED)

34. CONTINUED:

TUCK

since the NVA took Saigon. The black market's bigger now than its ever been. I take whiskey and cigarettes in and bring refugees out. I know the coast like the palm of my hand and I've got the best smuggling ship afloat.

They have arrived at the end of the dock and Tuck points proudly at a large, battered decrepit looking junk riding at anchor several hundred feet away.

TUCK

The Rose of Tralee.

MATT

You've got to be kidding.

CUT TO:

35. INT. THE ROSE OF TRALEE - DAY

Matt and Tuck stand in the center of the junk's deck. Matt shakes his head.

MATT

I hate to say it, but it looks worse up close.

TUCK

Appearances can be deceiving, lad.

He lifts a cracked stained tarpaulin covering a large object standing before the mast, revealing a 60mm mortar and several dozen rounds of ammo. The mortar is secured to a spring-mounted recoil plate. Matt grins.

TUCK

There's lots of pirates in the Gulf of Siam. This discourages them a bit. And if you'll step this way, I'll show you the real topper.

They climb up to the poop deck where Tuck raises another tarp to reveal a coaxially mounted pair of .50 caliber machineguns. Matt laughs.

MATT

Okay. So you can put up one hell of a fight. I hope we won't have to. If everything goes right we'll be in and out with the prisoners before the enemy knows what hit them. The extraction is the phase of the operation that worries me the most. How fast can she move?

Tuck grins knowingly and motions to a hatch leading belowdeck.

TUCK

Step right this way and I'll show you.

CUT TO:

36. INT. ROSE OF TRALEE - DAY

Tuck stands grinning next to a piratical looking CREWMAN and points at the brand new twin diesel engines.

TUCK

I've just broken these babies in. They're turbocharged twin Detroit 650 horsepower diesels. We can cruise for a week at 15 knots. I've even pushed her up to 21 for short periods of time. Her hull is delicate though and I've got to watch it in rough seas. She can outrun and outfight almost any patrol boat the locals send out after us.

MATT

It looks like you've got everything covered, as usual. What about the plane for the flight in?

TUCK

It's all set. We can check it out tonight.

MATT

Good. What about weapons and equipment?

TUCK

They'll be transferred to the ship today. How about the rest of the team?

MATT

They'll be here tomorrow.

CUT TO:

37. EXT. MARRIOTT TWIN BRIDGES MOTEL - DAY

A car carrying Archer pulls up in front of the entrance.

38. INT. MARRIOTT HOTEL - DAY

CLOSE ON a telegram which reads: "WE NEED YOU IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT STOP \$1,000,000 FEE STOP ROOM 1533 PALMER HOUSE CHICAGO STOP MATT HUNTER LUKE BUCHANAN STOP."

The CAMERA pulls back to reveal Archer holding a telegram. He tosses it onto the bed and Stafford hands him a sheet of paper listing the names of the telegram recipients.

STAFFORD

We intercepted that telegram two days ago. The men on the list left today on a commercial flight to Kuala Lumpur.

(CONTINUED)

38. CONTINUED:

ARCHER

So what's the problem? We gave Hunter Carte Blanche to operate as he saw fit.

STAFFORD

You gave him Carte Blanche. I don't trust him. There are five men on that list and every one of them worked with Hunter in S.O.G..

ARCHER

It looks like he's putting together a solid Recon Team.

STAFFORD

Recon Team. Right. Wouldn't two or three men in addition to the indigenous personnel be more suitable?

ARCHER

Maybe he wants a backup in case there are problems.

STAFFORD

Maybe. But look at these men's credentials...

As Stafford starts to read the names and biographies of the men on the list, we

CUT TO:

39. EXT. CONTINENTAL 747 - DAY

The giant plane wings its way into the setting sun over the vast expanse of the Pacific.

CUT TO:

40. INT. CONTINENTAL 747 - DAY

The CAMERA tracks down the aisle, stopping at FRANK LEVY, a tall, slender, rugged looking man who gazes out of a window a row behind Dallas.

STAFFORD (O.S.)

Frank Levy. Ex 75h Rangers. Sergeant. Chest full of medals. Resigned from the New York Police Department yesterday with no explanation after 12 years of service.

DISSOLVE TO:

40A. EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT

DISSOLVE TO:

41. INT. DOCTOR'S EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Levy is seated on an examination table buttoning up his police uniform.

(CONTINUED)

41. CONTINUED:

He looks apprehensive as a DOCTOR enters the room and slides several X-rays onto a lighted viewing stand. The X-rays show a large tumor on Levy's brain.

LEVY

How's it look, Doc?

DOCTOR

Not so good, Frank.

LEVY

Give it to me straight.

DOCTOR

I'm afraid that the tumor's virtually inoperable. If we go in, the best we can hope for is complete and permanent paralysis. I'm sorry.

LEVY

How much time do I have?

DOCTOR

Six weeks, maybe six months before total paralysis sets in. I can't tell you for sure.

LEVY

Do me a favor, Doc. Don't mention this to my wife.

He takes a telegram from his pocket and stares down at it.

LEVY

I want to take care of a few things first.

CUT TO:

42. INT. CONTINENTAL 747 - DAY

Levy lights a cigarette absently and inhales. He coughs slightly and the CAMERA TRACKS back down the aisle.

STAFFORD (O.S.)

Hank Gonzales. Sergeant. 5th Special Forces Group. Recently retired. Demolitions expert. Currently unemployed...

HANK GONZALES, a stocky, swarthy man, sits several rows behind Levy, drinking a beer and looking at a snapshot of his wife Maria and two small children.

DISSOLVE TO:

43. INT. GONZALES LIVING ROOM - DAY

JIMMIE and SUSIE, Hank's two small children, rush to greet him as he enters the modestly furnished apartment. He looks haggard and demoralized, but puts on a smile as he hugs the kids.

HANK

Have you two been good today?

JIMMIE

Un-huh.

Hank's wife, MARIA, an attractive slightly weathered woman, comes out of the kitchen to greet him. They embrace tightly.

MARIA

Any luck today?

Hank shakes his head sadly.

HANK

There's no jobs anywhere.

MARIA

At least you have your retirement pay.

HANK

That's not enough to feed the kids for a week.

MARIA

There's always the government.

HANK

No. We aren't taking any handouts.

MARIA

But...

HANK

No. I don't want to hear about it.

She starts back to the kitchen, tears in her eyes, then remembers the telegram and picks it up from a table. She hands it to Hank.

MARIA

This came for you today.

He pulls her down next to him as he opens the envelope.

DISSOLVE TO:

44. INT. CONTINENTAL 747 - DAY

Hank drains his beer and slides the photo lovingly back into his wallet.
The CAMERA moves on.

STAFFORD (O.S)

Benjamin Lee. Ex-Navy S.E.A. L. Professional
soldier of fortune. Just returned from Lebanon...

44A. EXT. SAN DIEGO - DAWN

Establishing shot.

44B. EXT. BAR - DAWN

Establishing shot - sleazy bar. There is a sign in the window which reads
OPEN AT 6 AM. A "Closed" sign next to it.

Ben Lee stands near the door - He is hungover, unshaven and dressed in worn
clothing. He glances at his watch. It is 6 AM. A BARTENDER removes the
"Closed" sign to an "Open" sign and we hear him unlock doors. Lee throws
the door open and hurries inside.

CUT TO:

44C. INT. BAR - DAWN

Lee steps up to the bar. Bartender nods a greeting.

BARTENDER

'Mornin' Ben. When did you get back?

LEE

Couple a days ago, I guess, Mike. Give
me the usual.

Bartender pours a tumbler full of scotch and adds a dash of water.

LEE

Don't drown it.

Bartender hands him the drink. Lee takes a large gulp and sighs contentedly.

LEE

There wasn't a drop of good Scotch
in Beirut.

BARTENDER

Any word on the wife and kids?

LEE

No. She's gone for good this time. She
pulled the kids out of school. If the
relatives know anything, they ain't talkin'.

(CONTINUED)

46. CONTINUED:

STAFFORD (O.S.) (CONTINUED)
 than a month. I don't know what he's doing
 with the rest of these men...

DISSOLVE TO:

47. INT. PLUSH BEDROOM - DAY

Simon is carefully packing a suitcase with tropical clothing when his beautiful wife, DEBORAH, enters the room.

DEBORAH

So you decided to go after all.

SIMON

That's right. I talked to Dallas an hour ago. We're shipping out to Kuala Lumpur tomorrow.

DEBORAH

You never really left Vietnam, did you, Simon? What the hell is so important over there that makes you willing to give up everything for it? You're a family doctor now, not a soldier.

SIMON

Try to understand. You know I was an orphan. Special Forces was the only real family I've ever had until I met you.

DEBORAH

That's still not a reason. Why, Simon, why?

SIMON

During one of our reconns, I left two guys at the side of a trail in Laos. They covered for me and the rest of the team so we could get away safely. They've never been accounted for.

DEBORAH

Simon, the war is over.

SIMON

That's right and I can't enjoy one day of peace knowing that those men are still in captivity. We have to bring them back home where they belong.

DEBORAH

No matter what it might cost?

SIMON

No matter what it might cost.

DEBORAH

If you go, I won't be here if you come back.

(CONTINUED)

47. CONTINUED:

SIMON

I love you, Deborah. I've been taking chances all my life and I'm taking this one now.

Simon slams the suitcase shut.

DISSOLVE TO:

48. INT. CONTINENTAL 747 - DAY

Simon slams the book shut, startling the passenger next to him, and leans back in his seat, shutting his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

49. INT. MARRIOTT HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Stafford lowers the paper and stares hard at Archer.

STAFFORD

Well, what do you make of it?

ARCHER

They sound like one hell of a team.

STAFFORD

That's all you have to say?

ARCHER

Let's cut the bull, Stafford. So far Hunter is just following orders. The President trusts him and so do I. Are you afraid that he might succeed? That we will get our people out of there and the Company will look bad for not finding them sooner?

STAFFORD

The reputation of the Company has nothing to do with it. What concerns me is the security of this country. I can't sanction anything and I mean anything that might jeopardize it.

ARCHER

Then why don't you wait until Hunter oversteps his authority before you come down on him?

STAFFORD

By that time, it might be too late. I can't take any chances. My people in Kuala Lumpur will be keeping a close watch on the whole group. They have orders to step in if there is any deviation from the plan.

CUT TO:

50. EXT. ANCIENT TEMPLE NEAR KUALA LUMPUR - DAY

Garrett watches from a distance as Matt, Sam, and Tran tour the temple grounds.

SAM

You're crazy, Subedar! The odds are incredible.

MATT

When has that ever stopped you?

SAM

That is true. I am not getting any younger. And with the money, I could make amends to the lovely Madame Whang, and I die happily in her bed... I also think it is time for those men to come home. I am with you.

He extends his hand and Matt grabs it warmly.

MATT

Tran?

TRAN

The camp must be near my village. Is there any chance that we can take my family out with us?

MATT

I can't promise anything, but we'll try.

TRAN

That's all I ask.

Tuck steps through the gate and motions to Matt. Matt nods and takes Sam by the arm, motioning towards Garrett.

MATT

Do you think you can keep him busy while we check the airfield?

SAM

I'm sure I can think of something.

MATT

Make sure that it's not lethal. He's technically on our side.

Sam walks nonchalantly toward Garrett, as Matt and Tran join Tuck and hurry out the gate. Garrett starts after them, moving past Sam. Sam grabs his arm as he moves past, and twists it into a painful nerve hold as he pretends to pat Garrett on the back.

SAM

Ah, it is so good to see you, my old friend.

(CONTINUED)

50. CONTINUED:

GARRETT

Let go of....

Sam twists Garrett's arm. Garrett gives a little yelp of pain as Sam steers him back towards the temple.

SAM

Did I ever tell you about the time I was cut off from my company during the Malaysian Insurrection? No? Oh, you must hear about it. It was in the spring of '52 or was it '53? It's a terrible thing at my age to have problems with dates. Anyway, as I was saying...

CUT TO:

51. EXT. SMALL JUNGLE AIRSTRIP - DAY

Matt and Tuck are inspecting the ancient C-46 airplane that stands beneath camouflage netting at the edge of the airstrip. HANS SCHMIDT, the owner, an athletic man in his early sixties, is with them. A tarp covers a large amphibious plane (PBY) which stands nearby.

SCHMIDT

We'll follow the Gulf until we're southwest of the drop zone, then come in low just above the waves and under their radar. You'll have to jump from less than 500 feet. We won't have time to make a second pass.

TUCK

Jesus! You won't even have time to use the reserve if the main chute malfunctions.

MATT

No sense in carrying reserves then...What do you think our chances are, Hans?

SCHMIDT

About 60-40, our favor. Most of their first-line aircraft are either in Cambodia or out near the Chinese border. They don't give their pilots much fuel in case they decide to defect to Thailand or Malaysia or look for an American carrier to land on. We should be in and out before any ground forces can report us.

Matt opens the briefcase and offers him several stacks of hundred dollar bills.

MATT

There's a hundred thousand here. Tuck will pay you the rest when the mission is completed.

(CONTINUED)

51. CONTINUED:

SCHMIDT

This one's on the house.

MATT

But I thought...

SCHMIDT

I was in the German Air Force during The War. I was shot down over Stalingrad and captured in 1943. The Russians didn't release me until 1955. I know what those men are going through. Give the money to them when you get them out. They'll be able to put it to better use than I can.

MATT

We owe you one.

SCHMIDT

No, I meant what I said. Helping to bring those men home is reward enough.

CUT TO:

52. EXT. RICE PADDY - DAY

Dalton, Holt and three other prisoners are working on the dike in the muddy water under the merciless sun. The men look in even worse shape than before and most of them bear scars or fresh savage cuts about their emaciated torsos. Four guards watch them from the shade of a nearby tree.

Moore collapses and Dalton pulls him to his feet before a guard can start to beat him.

MOORE

I can't make it, L-T.

DALTON

Hang on, Kev. We're due for a break.

GUARD

No talking! Work!

Evans manages to keep going. A short time later a guard steps out onto the dike.

GUARD

Rest. Ten minutes.

The prisoners drag themselves up the dike, helping the weaker men, and collapse in the shade of several trees on the edge of the jungle. They begin to carefully twist large slimy leeches off each other's legs, making sure they get the whole head out.

(CONTINUED)

52. CONTINUED:

The guards pay little attention to them and continue talking and laughing a hundred feet away. Holt glances questioningly at Dalton and Dalton nods slowly. Holt watches the guards as Dalton starts to inch his way back into the underbrush. He is not quite completely into the brush when a guard appears unexpectedly from the opposite direction.

The guard stares questioningly at Dalton for a moment, then shouts at the prisoners.

GUARD

Work! Now!

The prisoners move slowly back into the muddy water. Dalton and Holt exchange exasperated glances.

CUT TO:

53. INT. ROSE OF TRALEE HOLD - DAY

Dallas and the rest of the team, including Sam and Tran, are listening intently as Matt outlines the mission, pointing out the operational area on a large map of Vietnam. Unmarked crates of varying shapes and sizes are scattered around the hold, as are a large number of boxes of whiskey and cigarettes.

MATT

Sam, Tran and I are jumping in tonight to do an area recon. We'll determine the exact location of the camp. You'll sail tomorrow night. That'll give you plenty of time to meet us at the mission support site in three days. If there are Americans in the camp, we'll hit it with all we've got at dawn on the fourth day, then hump it back to the beach landing site with our people for extraction. You'll all be home again next week. Any questions?

DALLAS

I thought General Archer wanted another American on the Recon Team in case you go down.

MATT

I'm aware of that, but I don't want to expose any of you to any unnecessary danger.

JACKSON

Damn it, we're already committed to go all the way.

LEVY

I'll go.

(CONTINUED)

53. CONTINUED:

GONZALES

Take me.

LEE

I'm ready.

SIMON

You better take me in case anyone gets hurt on the way in.

MATT

Do you think you're in shape for it?

SIMON

I've been running seven miles a day.

DALLAS

Isn't there anything else to do in Lincoln?

MATT

Simon, you're on. Anything else?

JACKSON

Are there any other enemy forces in the area?

MATT

A few. They're primarily support troupes. They keep their best on the border. We'll neutralize their capability to counter-attack before we hit the camp.

LEVY

What about communications?

MATT

We'll have ground communications with the boat. Tuck will relay any pertinent information back to Archer's man in the Embassy for transmission back to Washington. Is that it?

DALLAS

Just one more thing...Where the hell's the beer?

The men laugh and Matt tosses Dallas a crowbar.

MATT

It's somewhere in there...you'll have to find it.

(CONTINUED)

53. CONTINUED:

The men start breaking open the crates, revealing M-16's, CAR-15's, Web Gear, grenades, C-5 Data Sheet Explosive Charges, detonating cord, Claymore mines, ammunition, etc.

LEE

- This is better than Christmas.

Sam pulls up a Kevlar bulletproof vest.

SAM

What's this?

TUCK

That's the newest thing, lad. Kevlar bodyguard vest. They only weigh three pounds, but they'll stop a 7.62 round at point blank range.

SAM

Right.

Levy opens a crate and pulls out a camouflauge fatigue jacket with a prominent S.O.G. shoulder patch.

LEVY

I thought this was supposed to be a sterile operation. No obvious links to the West.

MATT

Those were the orders, but if we go down, I want those bastards to know just who kicked their ass.

Dallas pries open a crate, looking for the elusive beer. He peers inside and grimaces.

DALLAS

I don't believe it.

He holds up a can of C-rations and all the men groan collectively. Dallas finds the beer and tosses bottles to everyone while they assemble their kits.

Matt checks his M-16. Sam checks his AR-180 and the radio. Tran checks his CAR-15 with its attached 40 mm grenade launcher (XM 10). All four men carry Match .45 automatics. Simon checks his CAR-15 and his large medical kit bag.

Matt, Sam, Tran, and Simon carefully load large quantities of C-5, det cord, grenades, Claymores and C-rations into four large ruck sacks, along with large quantities of ammunition.

(CONTINUED)

53. CONTINUED:

MATT

Remember, we've got to travel light and freeze at night. We're going to be moving fast on this one.

Tuck joins them, carrying a bottle of Tullamore Dew Irish Whiskey and two handfuls of glasses. He passes the glasses around and fills them, serving Matt, Sam and Tran last.

TUCK

Now lads, I'm not very good at making speeches, but if any occasion called for one, its this one. All of us are here for different reasons, some selfish, some noble. But we're here together with one purpose in mind: to rescue those poor bloody bastards who've suffered these past ten years in a hell on earth. I'm proud to be with you.

He drains his glass and the others follow suit. Tuck smashes his glass against a bulkhead as he says:

TUCK

Let's kick ass!

The men all cheer and smash their glasses, too.

CUT TO:

54. EXT. SMALL JUNGLE AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Schmidt warms the engines as Sam, Simon, Tran and Tuck load the four rucksacks and four steel helmets for the jump into the plane. Sam, Simon and Tran are dressed in camoflauged fatigues and their faces are skilfully covered with camoflauged paint. Simon wears a green beret. Tran wears a black beret with a Black Panther Company flash. Sam wears the distinctive cap favored by the Gurkha Battalions.

The door to Schmidt's hut opens behind them and they all turn as a bright beam of light spills out onto the runway. Matt stands silhouetted in the doorway for a moment. He is dressed in well-tailored camoflauged fatigues and carries his M-16. The men's attention is drawn to the somewhat worn but still proud Green Beret with the 5th Special Forces flash that is angled rakishly over his camoflauged face.

TUCK

Everything's ready.

MATT

Let's do it.

He climbs into the plane. The others follow.

CUT TO:

55. OMITTED

56. EXT. SMALL JUNGLE AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

The plane taxis down the runway and takes off, just skimming the tops of the trees.

CUT TO:

57. EXT. PLANE - NIGHT

The plane wings low over the Gulf of Siam heading towards the coast of Vietnam.

CUT TO:

58. INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Sam hones his Kukri as Simon checks the medical kit. Tran stares at an old picture of his family. Matt and Tuck are crouched over a map of the target area.

MATT

You're sure that the Bay is safe for the junk.
It may take us a full day to get back there.
The prisoners won't be in very good shape.
Simon's going to have his hands full just
keeping them on their feet.

TUCK

I've got it covered, Matt. I've laid up there
for three and four days at a time without any
problem.

MATT

You know the extraction is the most crucial
part of the operation.

TUCK

I won't let you down.

MATT

I know you won't. Just be there on time.

CUT TO:

59. EXT. PLANE - NIGHT

The plane goes into a steep dive, pulling up at the last moment several feet above the turbulent waters of the Gulf of Siam. It turns to the north-east and moves toward the coast of Vietnam.

(CONTINUED)

60. CONTINUED:

Simon slaps Tran on the butt.

Three okay.

TRAN

Tran slaps Sam on the butt.

Two okay.

SAM

Sam slaps Matt on the butt.

One okay.

MATT

Tuck opens the door and we see the jungle rushing by in the moonlight below.

Stand in the door.

TUCK

One minute to drop zone. Good luck
and bring 'em home.

SCHMIDT (O.S)

Good luck.

TUCK

We'll see you in three days. Don't forget
the beer.

MATT

Beer, hell! It'll be champagne all the way.

TUCK

As long as it's not Madame Whang.

MATT

A red light goes out, the green light goes on and the port engine cuts out.

Go!

TUCK (yells)

Matt leaps out the door and the slipstream tears him away from the plane.
Sam, Tran, and Simon follow him in one and a half seconds. Tuck stares
emotionally out after them.

God go with you.

TUCK

CUT TO:

61. EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING - NIGHT

The four parachutists descend quickly and expertly towards the small grass choked clearing. They release their rucksacks and the rucksacks hit the ground seconds before they make expert parachute landing falls. As they land, the port engine coughs, sputters, and starts up.

They gather their parachutes in quickly and silently as the drone of the plane's engines fade away, leaving them alone in the muggy silence of the jungle. The four men stare in the direction the plane took and it is evident by their faces that they are aware that the plane was their last link with safety. They conceal the parachutes quickly and move into the jungle.

CUT TO:

61a. EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Sam, Simon and Tran are spread out in a 360 degree defensive circle. Matt squats in the center of the circle, taking a compass reading and checking his map. He points to the west.

MATT

The river is about ten clicks away. Sam, your point...

Matt throws Sam a pair of night vision goggles and Sam puts them on.

SAM

It's just like daylight, Subedar. I wished I'd had these during the Insurrection.

MATT

Find us a good trail.

TRAN

I think we can reach my village by dawn.

Sam finds a narrow partially overgrown trail and motions to the others. Simon and Matt fall in behind him. Tran brings up the rear, and they move quickly into the darkness of the jungle.

CUT TO:

62. EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL - NIGHT

Matt is walking point, wearing goggles, moving rapidly yet carefully through the darkness. He stops suddenly and goes into a crouch. Sam, Simon and Tran follow suit, scanning the surrounding darkness for any sign of the enemy.

(CONTINUED)

59. CONTINUED:

The plane swoops towards a white sand beach which is visible in the moonlight, then pulls up at the last moment and skims the tops of the trees.

CUT TO:

60. INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Matt, Sam, Simon and Tran replace their caps with their jump helmets. Their faces are grim with anticipation.

Tuck watches their preparations silently, a trace of worry apparent on his face. He forces a smile as Schmidt's voice crackles over the intercom.

SCHMIDT (O.S.)

Three minutes to drop zone. Red light on.

A red light goes on above the cargo door. Tuck takes his place next to the door.

TUCK

Did you ever think that you'd be going back?

MATT

No. It's an uncomfortable feeling, almost like going back through time.

Tuck nods and shakes Matt's hand, then shakes hands with the others. Tuck uses hand signals and shouts to make the following commands understood over the roar of the engines.

TUCK

Stand up and hook up.

Jumpers stand and hook their static lines to the anchor line that runs down the center of the aircraft.

TUCK

Check your static line.

The men pull on their lines as the plane bounces, encountering some turbulence.

TUCK

Check your equipment.

The men check their equipment straps, then check the chute on the man in front of them.

TUCK

Sound off for equipment check.

SIMON

Four okay.

(CONTINUED)

62. CONTINUED:

Fifty feet ahead the flames from a large campfire flicker through the leaves of the intervening trees. Matt crawls slowly forward until he has a clearer view. FIVE VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS sit sprawled around the fire. They wear green uniforms and their AK-47 assault rifles are stacked close at hand. They are laughing at some joke.

Matt hears a twig snap behind him and rolls silently into the brush at the side of the trail. He glances back in time to see Sam, Simon and Tran do likewise.

A moment later THREE MORE VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS appear on the trail. Matt holds his breath as they pass scant inches from his hiding place. He lets his breath out slowly as they join their comrades.

FIRST SOLDIER (Viet subtitles)
(Did you find anything?)

SECOND SOLDIER (Viet subtitles)
(No. It must have been a plane from Camau.)

The three soldiers unsling their rifles and squat around the fire with their comrades.

Matt moves back and joins Sam, Simon and Tran.

MATT (whisper)
We'll have to go around them.

The others nod and they slip into the jungle and start to move slowly and noiselessly around the fire and small clearing.

Matt steps around a bush and finds himself looking down at a SEVENTH SOLDIER who is squatting to defecate. The soldier is awestruck for a moment as he stares up at Matt, who towers over him wearing the feared Green Beret. Matt kicks him beneath the chin, snapping his neck, in a reflex action. The loud crack of his vertebrae and the crash of his body into the brush alerts his comrades. They look with concern towards the jungle.

FIRST SOLDIER (Viet subtitles)
Phong? (Are you alright?)

He starts to rise and screams in terror as Matt leaps through the fire like a devil and blasts him with a controlled burst from the CAR.

Tran and Simon leap out to cover him and they mow five other soldiers down. The remaining three run screaming into the jungle where Sam kills them with a series of lightning blows from his kukri.

As they check the bodies, one of the soldiers pretending to be dead, starts to raise his AK to fire at Simon's unprotected back. Matt spins and kills him with a single shot just as he is about to squeeze the trigger.

(CONTINUED)

62. CONTINUED:

SAM

You owe him a night at Whang's.

SIMON

Night, hell. He's good for at least a week.

MATT

I'm a bit out of shape. Make it three days.

SIMON

You got it.

MATT

Let's get 'em into the jungle.

They start to drag the bodies into the brush.

CUT TO:

63. INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Archer enters and faces the President.

ARCHER

We've just received a communication from Dallas, sir. Hunter and the recon team have made a successful insertion.

PRESIDENT

Good.

ARCHER

Tucker will be sailing within 24 weeks. By that time we'll know whether a rescue attempt will be made.

PRESIDENT

Thank you, Hugh. Let's hope our luck holds, and keep me informed.

ARCHER

Yes, sir.

Archer starts to leave, but turns as the President calls after him.

PRESIDENT

Hugh? What do you think the percentage for success is?

ARCHER

There's no percentage in this case, sir. It's either success or failure. But if anyone can pull it off, Hunter and those other men can. It's too bad we can't give them any overt support.

(CONTINUED)

63. CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

Yes. They're brave men. If they succeed, they'll be heroes. If they fail, their courage will be for nothing.

ARCHER

Not for nothing, sir. At least they will have tried. What more can any man ask for?

CUT TO:

64. INT. CAPITOL BUILDING CORRIDOR - DAY

Speaker Maxwell is walking down the corridor with another REPRESENTATIVE.

MAXWELL

Alright, Albert. I'll support your damn water resources bill if you'll vote against Henry's pollution control legislation...

ELLEN GRAHAM, a slight, intense looking young woman in a tweed suit, hurries down the hall towards them.

ELLEN

Pardon me, Mister Speaker. There's something important I have to discuss with you.

MAXWELL

Excuse me, Albert. See you on the floor and thanks for your help.

He shakes Albert's hand and Albert hurries off.

MAXWELL

You little bastard...What is it, Ellen? More damn boat people heading this way?

ELLEN

No sir. My sources in Bangkok have reported some unusual activity involving a group of American soldiers of fortune.

MAXWELL

Probably some half ass group going to work for one of the Golden Triangle warlords.

ELLEN

I don't have any details yet, sir, but these men appear to be real professionals.

MAXWELL

All right. Keep on it and see what you can dig up.

(CONTINUED)

64. CONTINUED:

ELLEN:

Yes, sir!

She hurries away as Maxwell shakes his head.

CUT TO:

65. EXT. TRAN'S VILLAGE - DAWN

Matt, Sam, Simon and Tran study the small village from a jungle covered rise several hundred meters away. It is apparent that something is wrong. There is no smoke from cooking fires rising above the thatched roofs of the huts and no dogs or chickens can be seen.

SIMON

I don't like it.

MATT

It's too quiet to be a trap. Besides, no one knows we're here.

Matt glances at Tran, who appears extremely worried.

SAM

That's what we'd like to think. But you know how well they keep secrets in Washington. We could be on the front page of the Washington Post right now for all we know.

MATT

Tran?

TRAN

I think we should check it out. It might take us weeks to find the camp on our own.

MATT

Okay. Let's do it.

The four men move quickly and carefully towards the village. As they near it, they discover that a number of the huts have been destroyed or damaged by fire. They move through the village, but all the huts are empty.

Someone coughs loudly from the encroaching jungle and the four men immediately take up defensive positions. A moment later AN ANCIENT GRANDMOTHER hobbles out of the jungle with a load of firewood on her back.

Tran stares hard at her for a moment, then calls out as he stands up.

TRAN

Aunt Mai!

The old woman gasps as Tran rises from concealment. She drops her wood and turns, trying to run back into the jungle. Tran hurries after her.

(CONTINUED)

65. CONTINUED:

TRAN
Aunt Mai! Wait! It's me, Tran!

He catches her arm and turns her to face him. She is terrified.

TRAN
Don't you recognize me? It's Tran. Your nephew! Remember?

She touches his face and nods slowly, then hugs him.

GRANDMOTHER
I thought you were dead these eight years.

TRAN
No, I've been fine. In Bangkok. Where are my parents and brother?

GRANDMOTHER
They're all dead.

Tran shakes his head in disbelief.

TRAN (choked voice)
How? Why?

GRANDMOTHER
After the VC took over, they left us in peace for a while. Your parents and brother worked on the farm and we began to grow prosperous. Then a commissar arrived and said that all the land belonged to everyone. That no one could own any land themselves. Your father told him that he was crazy. That his family had owned the land he worked for hundreds of years. The commissar insisted, so your father and the other farmers chased him away. He came back with many soldiers to enforce his demand. Your father, brother, and some others resisted. They were killed and the survivors were taken to a new village to the west.

TRAN
How did he die?

GRANDMOTHER
Like a man. Fighting for what he believed.

Tran wipes tears from his eyes.

GRANDMOTHER
Why have you come back? There is nothing for you here anymore.

(CONTINUED)

65. CONTINUED:

Tran signals to Matt. He, Sam and Simon emerge from cover and join them. Aunt Mai is overjoyed at the sight of Matt. She squints up at his beret and chuckles in delight.

AUNT MAI (broken English)
Special Forces! I knew that you would come back and save us! I knew it! How many more are with you? I have food enough for everyone.

MATT
I'm afraid that we're alone.

Her face falls and her shoulders slump.

AUNT MAI
Why are you here then?

MATT
We're looking for the camp where the VC are keeping American prisoners.

AUNT MAI
You cannot miss it if you follow the main trail north about ten kilometers. You will try to free them?

MATT
We will free them.

CUT TO:

66. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

Dalton, Holt and the other three prisoners are working in the camp, repairing cages, cutting jungle growth back from the perimeter fence, etc. Dalton and Holt are digging a short trench for a new latrine.

DALTON
I overheard The Nose talking to one of the guards. We'll be working on the dike tomorrow.

HOLT
Good. I've got a diversion planned for our morning break. The old leech behind the ear scream and shuffle.

Dalton grins momentarily, then frowns.

DALTON
You're taking a hell of a chance, Ed. You won't fool The Nose for long. When he finds out I'm gone, he'll have your ass.

(CONTINUED)

66. CONTINUED:

HOLT

To hell with him. The most he can do is
kill me.

DALTON

He'll do worse than that.

HOLT

It's worth the risk.

He straightens up to wipe the sweat from his eyes and glances out at the jungle just as the sunlight flashes on the lens of Matt's binoculars. He rubs his eyes, then squints at the spot again, but sees nothing.

DALTON

What's wrong?

HOLT

I thought I saw something.

A guard looms over them and kicks Holt in the back.

GUARD

Work, son of a bitch. No talk.

CUT TO:

67. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

Matt lies in the crook of a huge tree which stands across a clearing several hundred yards from the camp. Matt studies the camp through binoculars with a built-in camera and takes pictures of everything. Sam and Simon crouch next to him. Simon holds a long-distance listening device which is hooked up to a small tape recorder. Tran squats in the brush at the base of the tree watching a nearby trail. Matt lowers the binoculars and rubs his eyes.

MATT

Did you pick them up?

Simon stops the tape.

SIMON

Loud and clear. They are Americans.

Emotion overwhelms both men for a moment. Matt turns away and raises the binoculars to hide his feelings.

CUT TO:

68. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY (MATT'S POV THROUGH BINOCULARS)

We HEAR camera clicks off screen as Matt photographs the following scene.

(CONTINUED)

68. CONTINUED:

Matt studies the perimeter fence, the guard towers and the gate, and then focuses on the prisoners.

MATT (hoarse whisper)
I count five of our guys. They look like hell, but they're all on their feet.

Matt pans the binoculars towards the guard towers, then over to the officers quarters just as BA and aide emerge. Ba has his back to Matt for a moment as he gives the aid orders. Then, as the aid scurries off, Ba turns towards the clearing and Matt gets a clear view of his face for the first time.

CUT TO:

69. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

Matt stiffens, startling Simon and Sam, who look around in alarm.

MATT
You bastard!

SIMON
Matt?

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

70. EXT. SMALL PRISON CAMP - DAY

Ba holds a blood-soaked rag to his shattered nose as a guard cuts the thongs binding the rice sack to Matt's head. He starts to laugh as the bag is removed, then stops abruptly as Matt spits the dead rat out of his mouth.

One of Matt's eyes is a bloody ruin and he glares hatefully at Ba with his good one. Ba flinches involuntarily.

CUT TO:

71. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

SAM
Subedar! Subedar!

Matt lowers the binoculars slowly. His face is dripping with sweat and his teeth are clenched.

SAM
What's wrong?

MATT
Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

71. CONTINUED:

SIMON
Nothing my ass. What did you see?

MATT
The camp commandant. The one responsible for this...

He touches his eye patch.

MATT
Come on, Sam, we've got to move if we want to get to Quan Long City before dark.
(to Simon)
Simon, you stay here and keep an eye on the camp. One of us will relieve you in the morning.

Matt tosses Simon the night-vision goggles. Sam and Simon watch, concerned, as Matt starts to climb down to the ground.

CUT TO:

72. INT. MARRIOTT HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Archer sits coolly composed as Stafford stalks angrily around the room.

STAFFORD
Look, Archer, my people reported that Hunter took French and two locals in with him on the recon. The other men Buchanan recruited are still in Kuala Lumpur. What the hell is he up to?

ARCHER
I don't know. Maybe Hunter's using the other men as a diversion in case anyone gets wind of the operation. But so far everything seems to be moving forward according to plan. Tucker will be leaving tonight for the pick up. I don't foresee any problems.

STAFFORD
Maybe you're right. But I don't like being kept in the dark. I'm going to have my people shut Buchanan and the others down until the operation has been completed.

CUT TO:

73. EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL NEAR QUAN LONG CITY - DAY

Matt, Sam and Tran are moving quickly down the trail. Tran has the point, Sam the rear. As they near a bend in the trail, Tran suddenly freezes and sniffs the air. He silently signals "enemy in sight" and the men take up defensive positions on the side of the trail.

(CONTINUED)

73. CONTINUED:

Matt disappears into the heavy undergrowth and Sam takes cover beneath a large leafy bush at the side of the trail. Just as the men have taken cover, TWO VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS appear around the bend. They are walking carelessly, their thoughts elsewhere. One of them is smoking a Russian cigarette. He tosses the butt into the brush. It lands, smouldering on Sam's bare arm.

Sam stifles a yelp. He stares at his burning flesh, willing himself not to move. After what seems like an eternity, the soldiers disappear down the trail. Sam quickly knocks the butt off his arm and blows on the blister.

The three men start to slip back onto the trail, then dive back under cover as A DOZEN MORE SOLDIERS round the bend. They saunter past the three men's hiding places without suspecting a thing.

The LAST SOLDIER steps into the bush next to where Sam is hiding and urinates on it, unaware that Sam is almost directly beneath him. Sam grits his teeth as he is splattered and silently curses the soldier. As the soldier hurries after his comrades, Sam shakes his head and mouths the words:

SAM

Why me?

He crawls out from under the bush to find Matt and Tran who had witnessed the entire scene, trying to suppress their laughter. He glares angrily at them, then whips his kukri from its sheath in one lightning-fast move and hurls it past Matt and Tran's heads.

Matt and Tran duck instinctively and whirl to find the kukri's target: a stunned looking SOLDIER who looks dumbly from them to the gleaming blade that is protruding from his heart. He collapses with a choking cough.

MATT

Shit. We may have blown our cover.

SAM

Better our cover than our heads. It was an amazing throw, wouldn't you say?

TRAN

They won't find him if we hide the body in the jungle.

Sam retrieves the kukri, wiping it clean on the soldier's tunic.

SAM

Of course I've made better throws...And gotten more praise for doing so.

(CONTINUED)

73. CONTINUED:

TRAN
They might think he's deserted.

MATT
Let's hope so.

He drags the body into the brush.

SAM
Take for instance that time in Borneo
when we ran out of ammunition and the
enemy was closing in fast...

CUT TO:

74. INT. WHANG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dallas and Lee are drinking heavily and entertaining Kai and three of Madame Whang's girls. Jackson sits away from the others, lost in thought, a drink sitting untouched before him.

Levy and Gonzales are playing poker in a quiet, friendly fashion.

Each of the men is dealing with his anxieties and fears in his own way, either through external display or internal control.

Tuck enters and joins Dallas.

TUCK
Matt just checked in. They located the
camp. There's five Americans there. It
looks hairy, but he thinks we can take it.

Dallas nods and stands up. The other men regard him apprehensively. Dallas smiles.

DALLAS
We're on!

Everyone cheers and takes a drink.

Garrett suddenly steps into the room and the men fall silent instantly. He has one hand behind his back.

GARRETT
Good evening, gentlemen. I see you're enjoying
yourselves. My name is Garrett and we're going
to be enjoying each other's company for the next
few days.

DALLAS
Like hell we are.

He starts towards Garrett, but freezes when Garrett whips an Uzi submachine gun out from behind his back and points it at his stomach.

(CONTINUED)

74. CONTINUED:

GARRETT

I don't think you understood me, Buchanan.

DALLAS

How the hell do you know my name? And whose authority are you holding us on?

GARRETT

I got your name from Uncle Sam...

He pats the Uzi affectionately.

GARRETT

And this is all the authority I need.

Lee slips his hand into his jacket to draw a hidden gun. Garrett fires a burst into the table, shattering the glasses in front of Lee.

GARRETT

I wouldn't do that if I were you, Mr. Lee. Drop the gun on the floor and kick it over here. Real easy.

Lee takes the pistol out with two fingers and drops it on the floor. As he kicks it towards Garrett. Jackson picks up the teak table he is sitting at and throws it at Garrett. The table strikes Garrett a glancing blow and knocks him down.

The men start to scramble for the door, but before they get more than two or three steps, Carroll and Harrison and a DOZEN THAI M.P.'s charge into the room from every entrance.

A terrific brawl takes place with the team winning the upper hand. Madame Whang runs to and fro trying to rescue various valuable antiques which are threatened with destruction. She grabs a priceless statuette from Dallas' hands as Dallas is about to clobber Harrison with it, but has to break it over an M.P.'s head a moment later when the man attacks her. She shrugs and takes one of the M.P.'s arms and leads him out of the room.

Garrett finally struggles to his feet as the team pitches Harrison over the bar and into the huge mirror behind it. He angrily fires a burst from the Uzi over everyone's heads. All of the combatants drop to the floor instantly.

GARRETT

That's enough. You bastards line up against that wall.

The team moves slowly over to the wall.

GARRETT

Harrison! Carroll!

(CONTINUED)

74. CONTINUED:

Harrison and Carroll stagger to their feet. Their clothes are torn and their faces bloody.

GARRETT
Search 'em!

Harrison and Carroll start to follow orders as the M.P. CAPTAIN limps over to Garrett and salutes.

GARRETT
Thank you, Captain. Your men did a wonderful job. I think we'll be able to handle it from here.

The Captain nods and motions to his men. They pick themselves up and start to stagger out the door. Madame Whang appears with the M.P., smiling and disheveled. The Captain grabs the M.P. angrily and pushes him after the others.

DALLAS
How long are you planning to keep us here, Garrett?

GARRETT
Just long enough for Hunter to do his job and get back here. You can go now, Tucker. I believe you've got a job to do.

Tucker nods. He winks at Dallas before he saunters towards the door. He stops long enough to put his arm around Madame Whang's waist.

TUCK
Cheer up, lass. At least your mirror didn't break.

As soon as he finishes speaking, the mirror settles and shatters. Tuck shrugs and heads out the door.

CUT TO:

75. EXT. LADY OF TRALEE - NIGHT

Tuck is giving orders to his sleepy THREE MAN CREW.

TUCK
There's been a slight change in plan. We're sailing tonight.

SAILOR
What about the other men?

TUCK
They won't be coming.

CUT TO:

76. EXT. QUAN LONG CITY MILITARY BASE - NIGHT

Matt, Sam and Tran lie in the brush at the edge of the jungle near the camp's perimeter. Matt carries a short .45 silenced rifle. The camp dates from the French colonial period and has fallen into general disrepair and neglect.

Half a dozen barracks stand on the far side of the compound. Half a dozen canvas backed trucks and three jeeps are parked in neat rows near the edge of the jungle. Several other cannibalized and broken down vehicles stand around the area.

MATT (whisper)

I make out three sentries.

SAM

Four.

He points to a dark area near the barracks as a match flares. A SENTRY's face is illuminated briefly beneath his pith helmet as he lights a cigarette. When the match goes out, the sentry becomes invisible except for the glowing tip of his cigarette.

MATT

I didn't know that Gurkhas could see in the dark.

SAM

We eat Wheaties for breakfast. You should try it some time.

The camp is almost totally dark. The only lights are at the guard post at the gate and over the doorway to the base offices. The buildings are all dark.

MATT

Why the blackout?

TRAN

It's S.O.P.. They're always trying to conserve energy.

MATT

Good for them.

SAM

And us.

TRAN

How many vehicles should we mine?

MATT

All of the trucks. Forget the jeeps. They're the most likely to be used for routine travel.

(CONTINUED)

76. CONTINUED:

SAM

Tran, are you sure they'll only use the trucks in an emergency?

TRAN

That's what my aunt said. They only get a small allotment of fuel.

SAM

I hope she's right.

They crawl forward, taking cover as a SENTRY makes his rounds and passes them unsuspectingly. When the sentry is safely past they continue to crawl towards the vehicles.

Each man slips carefully into the cab of a truck. Using wire cutters they cut the ignition wires and rig up a C-5 charge that will detonate as soon as the key is turned in the ignition and the circuit is completed.

When the first three trucks are wired they slip into the next three and repeat the procedure, freezing with hands on weapons when a SECOND SENTRY moves past. Matt drops his wire cutters and as he searches in the dark for them Sam and Tran finish and move back towards the jungle.

Matt finishes up and leaves a "Death Card" with the S.O.G. death's head insignia propped up on the ignition. The card carries an inscription in Vietnamese at the bottom which reads: "Guess who's back?"

Matt slips out of the truck and rolls beneath it scant seconds before the First Sentry passes by. He holds his breath as the sentry's sandals pass inches in front of his feet, then grits his teeth as he notices the silencer of the .45 rifle protruding directly into the sentry's path. There is a tense moment when it appears that the sentry will stumble over the silencer, but he steps over it and moves on. As he walks on we see the small red dot from the AR-180 laser sight directly in the center of his back.

Matt crawls quickly back to the jungle and joins Sam and Tran.

SAM

Don't do that to me again. I'm getting too old for that kind of tension.

Matt and Tran grin and move off into the jungle.

CUT TO:

77. INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

The President and Archer are walking slowly down the hall. Both men look grim.

(CONTINUED)

77. CONTINUED:

ARCHER

That's right, Mr. President, the camp has been located. Positive on-ground photographic identification has been verified by means of a long range listening device. The five men in the camp are definitely American soldiers being held against their will.

PRESIDENT

That's all the evidence I need, Hugh. Is Hunter going to try to bring them out?

ARCHER

Yes, sir, but Stafford's men have the rescue team under wraps and Tucker's set sail without them.

PRESIDENT

Dammit! I'll have to call Lewis and fill him in on the whole operation. Without the rest of the team the operation can't succeed.

ARCHER

Stafford's not going to like it, sir. And if he talks to the wrong person he could compromise the mission and end your political career.

PRESIDENT

Those five men's lives mean more to me than my damn career. I ordered this mission and I am damn well going to see it through, no matter the cost.

ARCHER

Sir, give me six hours before you make that call. I have some people in Kuala Lumpur who owe me a favor. We might be able to handle this without the Company.

PRESIDENT

Will that still give the team time to reach the rendezvous?

ARCHER

Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT

Your six hours have just started.

CUT TO:

78 EXT. RICE PADDY - DAY

Dalton, Holt and the other three men are thigh deep in the muddy water working on the dike at the edge of the jungle. The relentless sun beats down mercilessly on them and several of the men appear to be near to collapsing when one of the guards gets up from the shade of a large tree and saunters over to them.

GUARD

Rest now. Ten minutes.

The men climb up the slippery bank, helping each other along, and collapse in the shade of the trees along the edge of the dike. Dalton sits farthest away from the guards while Holt sits closest to them.

Both men eye the guards as they catch their breath. Finally, Dalton nods and starts to inch back into the brush every time the guards glance in another direction.

Holt suddenly leaps to his feet with a scream of terror and stumbles towards the guards, tearing at his ear.

HOLT

Get it off of me! Please! Get it off of me! Help me!

The guards leap to their feet and approach him cautiously. Dalton slips completely into the brush, disappearing from sight, as Holt falls to the ground and rolls around in the mud, clawing at his neck. The guards kick at him as Dalton stumbles through the brush, deeper into the jungle and freedom.

Finally the guards pin him down. They are amazed by the large grayish leech that they find behind his ear and burn it off with a cigarette, then kick him back to join the other prisoners. Several of the men stare at him, aware of his diversion, but saying nothing.

GUARD

Work now!

The men slide back down the dike and start back to work.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. JUNGLE NEAR THE RICE PADDY - DAY

Dalton stumbles headlong through the heavy undergrowth, ignoring the branches that slap and tear at his body. He comes to an impenetrable wall of vegetation and drops to his knees, crawling beneath it, his breath rasping from his throat.

He crawls into an open area and staggers to his feet, then lurches forward. He trips over an exposed root and sprawls full length on the ground. He lies still for a moment, wheezing from exertion, trying to gather his strength.

(CONTINUED)

80. CONTINUED:

Hearing some movement close by he slowly raises his head and finds himself looking at a well-worn pair of jungle boots. He shakes his head in anguish.

DALTON

Oh God, no. Not now. Not yet. All I wanted was a fair chance. Was that too much to ask?

MATT (O.S.)

No it wasn't, soldier.

Stunned, Dalton cranes his neck to look up at Matt. He cannot believe his eyes

Dalton closes his eyes and shakes his head, trying to dispel the vision. He opens them to find Matt is still there.

DALTON

You can't be real. Not after all this time, after all the years of hoping.

MATT

I'm real all right.

DALTON

Who are you? How'd you get here? What are you doing?

Matt helps Dalton to his feet.

MATT

My name's Hunter.

Sam and Tran step out of the trees and join them.

MATT

The President sent us to bring you home.

DALTON

Thank God. We thought nobody knew...that they'd forgotten...that we'd all die in this damn hellhole...

He breaks down, tears streaming down his cheeks. He embraces Matt, crying unashamedly. Matt embraces him in return, a single tear ploughing a shining furrow on his grime streaked-cheek.

DALTON

Thank you...thank you...

CUT TO:

81. EXT. RICE PADDY - DAY

A guard stands on the dike, counting the prisoners slowly and with great concern. He finishes counting, then frowns.

GUARD 1

Where is Dalton?

The prisoners are silent. The guard shouts as his comrades.

GUARD 1

(Find him!)

The other guards fan out and search the edge of the jungle for spoor. One finds a broken twig.

GUARD 2

(Here! Come on!)

He starts into the jungle, following the spoor, and several others follow. The remaining guards herd the prisoners back up the dike.

GUARD 1

Back to camp. Now! Hurry! Hurry!

They push the prisoners along the dike back towards the camp.

CUT TO:

82 EXT. JUNGLE NEAR THE RICE PADDY - DAY

Matt and Dalton are squatting in a small clearing. Sam and Tran are on lookout, weapons ready. Dalton is wolfing down the contents of a can of C-rations, cold. He finishes them and looks at Matt.

DALTON

I never thought C-rats would taste so good.
I'll probably be bound up for a week

MATT

What happens when a prisoner escapes?

DALTON

They turn out the whole camp and detachments from every military installation in the area. They do a thorough job. No one's made it yet.

MATT

We'd better get moving then. We'll have to do some fancy footwork to stay out of their way. Come on.

DALTON

Wait a minute. What's going to happen to the rescue operation if the entire area is on alert?

(CONTINUED)

82. CONTINUED:

MATT

It'll be a bit hairier, but we can handle it.

DALTON

No. Its too risky.

Dalton looks down at the ground for a moment, making a decision. He licks his lips nervously, then raises his head slowly and locks square into Matt's eyes, a look of steely determination on his face.

DALTON

I'll have to go back.

MATT

Forget it. You know what they'll do to you.

DALTON

Its the only way. You're taking one hell of a chance with this operation in the first place. I'm not about to complicate it further. There's four other men in that camp that I have to think of too.

Matt grips Dalton's hand emotionally.

MATT

You're a braver man than I am, Lieutenant.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. RICE PADDY - DAY

The guards who had been chasing Dalton emerge from the jungle, exhausted, dirty and soaked with sweat. They stare in amazement at Dalton, who sits calmly on the edge of the dike in the shade of a tree. The guards hurry angrily over to him.

GUARD 2

Bastard son of a bitch! Where you go?

DALTON

I had to take a dump.

GUARD 2

You lie.

Dalton covers his head as the guards begin to kick and punch him.

Matt, Sam and Tran watch grimly from the cover of the jungle as the guards drag Dalton back to camp.

(CONTINUED)

83. CONTINUED:

MATT

I hope he can hold out until the team gets here.

SAM

He has shown the true meaning of courage.

CUT TO:

84. INT. WHANG'S HOUSE - DAY

Dallas and the others are sprawled together on the floor, handcuffed to one another. They glower angrily at Garrett, Harrison and Carroll, who sit at one of the bar tables playing Gin Rummy and drinking.

Garrett glances at Dallas and laughs.

GARRETT

Why don't you make this whole thing easier on yourselves and tell me what you and Hunter were up to. Tucker has already sailed and you're out of the picture, so what can it hurt?

DALLAS

You're the hotshot Spook. You tell me.

Suddenly a door bursts open and Kai and a SECOND GIRL crash into the room, screaming and clawing at each other. Their clothes are torn and their hair is dissheveled. Garrett leaps to his feet and moves towards the fighting women.

Madame Whang emerges from another door.

MADAME WHANG

Stop them, please!

Harrison and Carroll get slowly to their feet, grinning and enjoying the show. They make no move to break it up. Garrett tries to separate the two women but cannot get between them.

Tuck suddenly leaps off the balcony above Garrett, landing lightly behind him. He spins Garrett around and knocks him out with one punch.

Harrison and Carroll reach for their weapons, but before they can draw a bead on Tuck Dallas struggles to his feet, dragging the other men behind him, and throws a shoulder block into them. The men all crash into a table and in collapses beneath them, with the team landing on top of the CIA men.

Tuck retrieves the handcuff keys from Garrett's pocket and tosses them to Dallas. He retrieves Garrett's Uzi as the team members free themselves. Tuck grins at Kai and the other girl.

(CONTINUED)

TUCK
Thank you, ladies.

MADAME WHANG
That will be five hundred dollars.

TUCK
Put it on Matt's bill, lass.

The team finishes disarming the groaning C.I.A. men.

DALLAS
Thanks, Tuck.

TUCK
Any time, lad.

DALLAS
We didn't expect to see you again. Garrett said that you'd sailed.

TUCK
And so I did. The entire ten miles to Chukai. I've got a truck waiting outside. We can be there in a couple of hours.

DALLAS
Good. Let's go!...Jeff, bring our friends along.

Jackson picks up both Harrison and Carroll and starts for the door. Lee slings Garrett over his shoulder and follows him. Garrett starts to come to.

Suddenly HALF A DOZEN AUSTRALIAN S.A.S. COMMANDOS in full battle gear burst into the room, weapons at the ready. Garrett smiles triumphantly.

DALLAS
Oh shit!

MADAME WHANG
My poor house!

Their C.O., a full COLONEL, steps forward. Garrett slips to his feet.

COLONEL
Which one of you is Luke Buchanan?

DALLAS
Ah, I guess that's me.

(CONTINUED)

84. CONTINUED:

Right. COLONEL

He salutes Dallas smartly. Garrett is astonished.

COLONEL
Colonel Edward Morgan, S.A.S., at your service.

What? GARRETT

COLONEL
We have a mutual friend stateside who thought you could use some help, Mr. Buchanan. So we just popped over from the Jungle Warfare School to lend a hand.

TUCK
Thank you, Eddie me lad. You're a bit late, as usual.

COLONEL
Tuck. Of course. I should have known you'd be mixed up in this. Is there anything we can do?

TUCK
You could keep these three darlin' lads here for a few days. On the house, of course.

Madame Whang gives him a dirty look. The commandos smile.

TUCK
Don't worry, lass. Matt will take care of everything when he gets back.

COLONEL
Very nice of you, Tuck. Good luck. Wish we could be going with you.

They shake hands as Jackson dumps Carroll and Harrison on the floor. The Aussies take care of the C.I.A. men and the team members start for the door. Madame Whang watches happily.

MADAME WHANG
Are you really leaving?

TUCK
We'll be back, lass.

MADAME WHANG
Don't hurry on my account.

CUT TO:

86. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

Matt takes up his position in the crook of the huge tree and raises the camera-binoculars, training them on the camp across the clearing.

Simon is beside Matt with the listening device. Sam watches the surrounding jungle and Tran is on lookout on the ground.

CUT TO:

87. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY (MATT POV THROUGH BINOCULARS)

Matt scans the compound. All the prisoners are in their cages and all appears to be quiet. He continues to sweep the area and suddenly focuses on a prisoner tied to a bamboo crossbar laid across two bamboo uprights. His hands are tied behind his back. A rope stretches from his wrists to the crossbar, pulled just tight enough to keep him on his tiptoes. He is in agonizing pain.

Damn it! MATT (O.S.)

What is it? SIMON (O.S.)

Its Dalton. The bastards have really worked him over. MATT (O.S.)

Matt takes photos as a guard ambles over to the tied man and hits him in the stomach with his gunbutt, laughing. The man raises his head to curse at the guard and we see that it is Holt.

What the hell? Its another prisoner. Where's Dalton? MATT (O.S.)

They hear a long drawn out choking scream coming from the officer's quarters and Matt pans the binoculars over to it. He sees Ba walk past the open window and a moment later another choking scream echoes into the jungle.

CUT TO:

88. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

Matt's knuckles whiten on the binoculars.

MATT
Get every damn bit of this on tape. There's bound to be some bleeding heart back home who's going to ask why we were here.

CUT TO:

89. INT. OFFICER'S QUARTERS - DAY

Ba grins as he lights a cigarette and looks down at Dalton. Dalton is staked out on the floor. His head is held immobile by two boards so he cannot move it or see his interrogators.

BA
I will ask you only once more. Who helped you escape?

DALTON
I-I-I didn't try to escape. I was going to the latrine.

BA
Nonsense. You tried to escape, got lost, and ended up back at the dike where my men found you.

DALTON
I acted on my own.

BA
I don't think so. I know Holt helped you. What about Barnes or Moore? Kim is in his own world. I know he had no part in it. Tell me the truth and I'll stop.

DALTON
There was no one else.

BA
I was hoping you'd say that.

Ba nods and one of the guards stomps on Dalton's stomach. As Dalton opens his mouth to scream a second guard pours a bucket of water into his mouth, almost drowning him.

CUT TO:

91. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

Dalton's choking scream echoes chillingly across the clearing and Matt drops the binoculars.

MATT
We have to do something.

SIMON
What can we do? Attack the camp now? Just the four of us? What about the other prisoners? He knew what he was in for when he decided to go back, but he wanted to give them a chance.

(CONTINUED)

91. CONTINUED:

MATT

But he wouldn't be there if it wasn't for me.

SAM

And we wouldn't be here if it wasn't for him. He could have blown the whole mission, but he chose not to, even if it meant sacrificing himself. He bought us the time we need. We owe it to him to wait.

MATT

Maybe you're right. But when we take the camp, Ba is mine.

CUT TO:

92. EXT. ROSE OF TRALEE - COAST OF MALAYSIA - NIGHT

The junk moves at top speed through the swells. Tuck and Dallas are in the bow, glancing down at the foaming wake.

DALLAS

Will we make the redezvous on time?

TUCK

We've got a chance if the weather holds. At worst we'll be a day late.

CUT TO:

93. EXT. CAMAU AIR BASE - NIGHT

The small airbase has the same neglected look as the Quan Long camp. Two long barracks buildings stand to one side of the dirt landing pad and its ramshackle portable control tower. A small command post, open tent mess hall and open tent classroom stand nearby.

The barbed wire fence that guards the perimeter is overgrown and flattened in many places. Matt, Sam and Tran crouch in the darkness beyond the wire, studying the base layout.

THREE SENTRIES patrol the perimeter. There are electric lights only over the entrance to the command post and on a single pole above the THREE HELICOPTERS that squat on the grass to one side of the landing pad. A decrepit looking small plane, torn half apart stands in a battered hanger nearby.

MATT

Three sentries?

SAM

Three. You find some Wheaties today?

(CONTINUED)

93. CONTINUED:

Matt grins and they start to crawl forward towards the helicopters. They separate. Matt takes the farthest two, Tran the center two, and Sam the two closest to the jungle.

Matt slips carefully into the cockpit of the first helicopter and places a pressure detonated bomb under the pilot's seat. He ducks in the nick of time as one of the sentries passes by. The sentry pauses in front of the helicopter for a moment, then continues on his way.

Matt slips carefully out of the first helicopter and into the second, where he attaches a lump of C-4 to the ignition system. As he steps out of the second helicopter an AK-47 barrell is jammed into the back of his neck.

SENTRY

(Do not move)

Sweat pours down Matt's face as the sentry blows a whistle to summon the other sentries.

Sam steps out silently behind the sentry and the kukri flashes in his hand. The sentry's head flies from his shoulders and bounces across the grass. Sam grabs the AK as it falls and kicks the body to the ground.

SAM

You owe me a night at Whang's.

MATT

You're on.

The other two sentries some running across the grass towards the place where they are hiding behind the helicopter.

SENTRY

Vo! Vo! (Where are you?)

They race around the front of the helicopter where Matt and Sam are waiting for them. Sam kills his man with the kukri while Matt dispatches his with a kick-punch combination.

Tran joins them a moment later.

TRAN

The barracks are still quiet. We'd better get out of here while we can.

MATT

We can't just hide the bodies. As soon as they change the guard they'll be out in force trying to find them.

SAM

What else can we do?

(CONTINUED)

95. CONTINUED:

MATT

We'll have to take a chance. How many men do you think are in each barracks?

TRAN

Probably ten to fifteen. The same number in the command post.

MATT

We can't use grenades. They'd alert every garrison for miles.

SAM

The buildings will muffle the sound of our rifles, Subedar.

Sam grins and fingers his Kukri.

MATT

Do you think we can do it?

TRAN

We can try.

MATT

Sam?

SAM

Why not?

CUT TO:

95. INT. COMMAND POST - NIGHT (INTERCUT WITH FOLLOWING SCENES)

A SOLDIER gets up from his sleeping mat and stumbles to the door. He opens it and steps outside. A moment later Matt kicks him back inside and leaps into the room, M-16 blazing.

The soldiers are caught unaware for the most part. Several manage to grab their weapons and return fire, but the chaos is so great that they are unable to hit Matt, who changes his position constantly.

The overriding sound is that of the chatter of the M-16 and the sound of soldiers' bodies hitting the floor.

Matt is grazed by several bullets, but not hurt seriously.

CUT TO:

96. INT. FIRST BARRACKS - NIGHT

A SOLDIER shakes another SOLDIER awake.

SOLDIER 1

(Come on. Its our watch.)

(CONTINUED)

96. CONTINUED:

The second soldier grumbles and gets up. The men put their helmets on and pick up their weapons. They hear a soft knock at the door and glance questioningly at each other before opening it.

They find Sam grinning at them, his Kukri behind his back. Before they can react, Sam slashes both their throats and kicks their bodies back into the barracks. Several other soldiers wake up as the bodies thud noisily to the floor.

Sam leaps into the barracks, Kukri flashing.

SAM

Ayo Gurkhali!!!

He uses the Kukri on several soldiers, then throws it at one trying to escape from the window and opens up with the AR-180 on the rest. Several soldiers manage to return fire. Sam takes a bullet squarely in the chest and is thrown to the floor, apparently dead. The surviving soldiers approach him cautiously and he springs up and opens fire, killing them all. He touches the Kevlar vest where the bullet struck him and shakes his head.

SAM

Whew!

CUT TO:

97. INT. SECOND BARRACKS - NIGHT

Tran slips quietly through the door and closes it behind him.

SOLDIER

(Who's there?)

TRAN

(Death.)

SOLDIER

(What?)

The soldier sits up, reaching for his rifle, and Tran opens fire. Other soldiers scream as they are shocked awake. Some manage to grab weapons and return fire before they go down. Tran is grazed across the thigh as he finishes off the enemy.

CUT TO:

98. EXT. CANAU AIR BASE - NIGHT

Matt, Sam and Tran emerge from the buildings, soaked with sweat and breathing hard.

MATT

Are you all right?

(CONTINUED)

98. CONTINUED:

Sam nods and opens his Kevlar vest and jacket, revealing a large purplish bruise on his chest where the bullet struck him.

SAM

Thanks to Mr. Kevlar.

MATT

Tran?

TRAN

Just grazed, Dai Uy.

MATT

Let's get the bodies off the grass and rig up a reception for any visitors. If we're lucky we'll be long gone before anyone checks up on this place.

SAM

There's a lot of American weapons here. We should resupply before we move out.

They fan out. Tran removes an M-60 machinegun from a helicopter as Matt and Sam rearm from an ammo supply in the hangar.

CUT TO:

99. EXT. ROSE OF TRALEE - HIGH SEAS - DAY

The junk is plowing steadily along through the sun dappled sea, cutting a foaming white wake through the swells.

Dallas and the rest of the team are on deck, exercising, cleaning and loading weapons, and talking among themselves. Tuck is in the bow, squinting towards the horizon, on the alert for any potentially hostile ships. The ocean is clear.

Dallas joins him.

DALLAS

Are we going to make it?

TUCK

Well, we've picked up some time already. If we can keep up this pace without the hull splitting we should be there close to when we're supposed to be.

Just then the junk shudders mightily and Dallas and Tuck are thrown to the deck, as are the rest of the team. Scrambling to his feet, Tuck looks towards the stern and sees a spume of water shooting ten or fifteen feet in the air.

(CONTINUED)

99. CONTINUED:

TUCK

Kill the engine!

The thudding diesel stops immediately and the spume of water ceases.

DALLAS

What the hell happened?

TUCK

Something hit one of the propellers.

DALLAS

Can you fix it?

He follows Tuck as he hurries towards the stern. The team members get up.

TUCK

I'll have to. We'll never make it in time with just one engine. I've got a spare propeller but it'll take some time to replace it.

Tuck hurries to the deck and motions to Lee.

TUCK

Its time to do your S.E.A.L. stuff, Mr. Lee

They disappear below decks as Jackson joins Dallas.

DALLAS

Anyone hurt?

JACKSON

Nothing serious. How long are we going to be delayed?

DALLAS

Tuck's not sure. It could be a while.

JACKSON

Well, I don't see how one day's delay could hurt the operation.

DALLAS

Let's hope you're right.

Tuck and Lee appear back on deck. Lee fits his mask and flippers on and jumps over the side.

CUT TO:

Stafford, Archer and Davis are with the President. Archer and the President are calm, but Stafford and Davis are visibly upset.

STAFFORD

Maybe you didn't understand me, Mr. President. Hunter and his men are going to try to rescue the prisoners! Within the next few days!

DAVIS

We'll have to stop them. They could compromise everything.

PRESIDENT

We won't do anything of the kind.

STAFFORD

What? Why not?

PRESIDENT

Because Hunter is acting under my direct orders.

Davis and Stafford look awestruck. Archer hides a tiny grin.

DAVIS

I don't understand.

STAFFORD

Neither do I.

PRESIDENT

Its very simple, gentlemen. After careful consideration I came to the conclusion that a lightning fast commando raid now would be more effective than a full-scale operation in six or eight months.

DAVIS

But those men are mere mercenaries.

PRESIDENT

Those 'mere mercenaries' as you call them, general, were formerly some of the best fighting men in your army. We taught them to do exactly what they are doing now and after studying their service records I don't think that we could have found a better group of men for this mission.

STAFFORD

What happens if they fail?

(CONTINUED)

100. CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

Nothing happens to you, Lewis, if that's what you mean. I am taking the full responsibility for the consequences. I will make sure that you and General Davis are on record as opposing the operation from the start. But I warn you, if any word of this leaks out before the mission is concluded and any of those mens' lives are put in jeopardy because of your actions, I'll have your ass. And yours, general. Do I make myself clear?

DAVIS

Yes, sir!

STAFFORD

Yes.

PRESIDENT

Good. Now, if you don't mind, I have some work to do.

Stafford and Davis hurry away sheepishly. Archer starts to follow but the President motions for him to stay.

PRESIDENT

I appreciate your help and advice, Hugh, but perhaps you should go with them. This ship of state might be in danger of sinking. I'll understand if you choose to go.

ARCHER

If you don't mind, sir, I'll see this thing through. I owe it to those men who are risking their lives, I owe it to you, and I owe it to our country.

PRESIDENT

Thank you. Now is there anything more we can do to help them?

CUT TO:

101. EXT. QUAN LONG CITY MILITARY BASE - DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT. The base is quiet, with soldiers going about their daily duties.

CUT TO:

102. INT. QUAN LONG BASE HEADQUARTERS RADIO ROOM - DAY

A RADIO OPERATOR is calling Camau air base as a CAPTAIN stands next to him, frowning.

OPERATOR

(Quan Long City calling Camau. Quan Long City calling Camau. Come in, Camau.)

CUT TO:

103. EXT. CAMAU AIR BASE - DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT. The base is deserted.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

(...calling Camau...Come in Camau...Come in...)

CUT TO:

104. INT. QUAN LONG BASE RADIO ROOM - DAY

The operator switches the transmitter off and turns to the captain.

OPERATOR

(I can't raise them. Perhaps their radio is out.)

The captain nods and motions to an ORDERLY, who hurries over. He stands at attention as the captain writes a note and hands it to him.

CAPTAIN

(Take this to Camau.)

The orderly places the note in his dispatch case and hurries from the room.

CUT TO:

105. EXT. QUAN LONG CITY MILITARY BASE - DAY

The orderly hurries out of the headquarters building, slinging an AK over his shoulder. He takes a bicycle leaning up against the wall and gets on, then pedals quickly through the main gate.

CUT TO:

106. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

Matt is in his customary spot in the crook of the tree with Sam beside him. He is watching the camp through the binoculars. Iran is sitting on a lower branch watching the trail below.

CUT TO:

107. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

The gates swing open and the three other prisoners march slowly into the compound from their work in the rice paddy. Each man glances from the officer's building to the frame where Holt is still tied with smouldering eyes.

The guards prod the men into a rough line as Ba emerges from the officer's building. There is a smile on his face as the burly guards drag Dalton's apparently lifeless body out behind him. They throw the body on the ground in front of the other men and Ba grins at them as they glare angrily at him and the guards.

CUT TO:

108. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

MATT (CHOKED)

Dalton's dead.

Sam takes the binoculars from him as Matt leans back against the tree branch, staring angrily into the sky.

MATT

Its my fault. I should never have let him go back.

SAM

He chose to go. You didn't order him to. It was the right thing to do and he knew it. So do you.

MATT

That doesn't make it any easier.

SAM

I know.

Sam raises the binoculars.

CUT TO:

109. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

Ba strides back and forth in front of the prisoners as the guards revive Holt by throwing a bucket of human waster from the latrine over him. Holt comes to, coughing, and the guards cut him down. He collapses and they force him to crawl back to his cage, prodding him with kicks, gunbutts, and by shooting into the ground behind him. They throw him into his cell.

BA

This is how I will deal with anyone who tries to escape from my camp. And with anyone who aids in the escape.

He kicks Dalton.

(CONTINUED)

109. CONTINUED:

BA

It has been several years since anyone has tried to escape. I had hoped that you understood the hopelessness of your situation, but I was apparently wrong. I hope this little...demonstration will convince you to forget about making another try...Now bury him!

The prisoners begin to dig a grave. As they complete it Barnes and Moore pick Dalton up. He groans and opens his eyes. They set him back on the ground and one of them helps him to sit up.

CUT TO:

110. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR THE PRISON CAMP - DAY

SAM

Subedar! He's alive!

MATT

What?

SAM

He's alive!

Matt grabs the binoculars and focuses on Dalton.

MATT

Thank God.

CUT TO:

111. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

BA

I said 'bury him'!

BARNES

But he'll alive.

BA

Of course he's alive. That is part of his punishment. Now bury him!

Barnes shakes his head and steps back, as do the other prisoners.

BARNES

No.

BA

What did you say?

(CONTINUED)

111. CONTINUED:

BARNES
We won't bury him alive.

Ba slashes Barnes across the face with his bamboo cane, but Barnes stands his ground.

BA
I will.

He kicks Dalton into the open grave and shouts at the guards.

BA
(Bury him! Now!)

Two of the guards grab shovels and start to fill the grave in. Dalton tries to crawl out but is too weak.

DALTON
Help me...Please help me...

CUT TO:

112. EXT. JUNGLE NEAR PRISON CAMP - DAY

Dalton's cries echo faintly across the river.

DALTON (O.S.)
Help me...for the love of God...

Matt throws the binoculars down and turns to Sam. His face looks hard and cruel.

MATT
Let's go.

CUT TO:

113. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

The guards continue to shovel dirt into the grave as Ba stalks back to his quarters and disappears inside, slamming the door behind him.

The guards keep the three prisoners closely covered as Dalton is buried. Tears stream down Barnes' and Moore's cheeks as they try to control their anger and pent-up frustration. Kim watches in a daze.

Several other guards lounge in front of the barracks, chuckling at the spectacle and unaware of Matt, who slips through the brush behind them and removes the pins from two grenades. He glances down at his watch as the second hand sweeps towards the hour.

(CONTINUED)

113. CONTINUED:

Tran and Simon move through the tall grass towards the front guard tower and the gate. Tran pauses under cover where he has a clear shot at the guard in the tower and raises the M-60. Simon sights in on the gates with Tran's XM-10. He glances down at his watch.

Barnes catches a movement outside the perimeter fence from the corner of his eye. He turns, puzzled, as Sam pops out of the brush and climbs quickly up the second guard tower's ladder.

The guard in the second tower looks down as he hears Sam's feet on the rungs of the ladder and is nearly decapitated by the flashing Kukri. Sam pushes the body aside and climbs into the tower. He quickly adds the buttstock and bipod to the AR-180 and turns on the laser sighting device. He sights in on one of the guards near the prisoners and the red aiming dot appears in the center of the man's chest. He glances down at his watch. The second hand is almost at the hour.

A second guard points to the red dot.

SECOND GUARD

What's that?

The second hand on Matt's watch hits the hour and he tosses the grenades. He ducks as they explode in the midst of the barracks guards, flinging them high in the air.

The first guard's chest explodes as Sam fires a short burst from the AR-180.

Tran sweeps the front tower with the M-60. The guard in the tower is thrown over the parapet and lands on the fence, knocking it down.

Simon fires at the gates and they explode.

Sam pops up and starts to rake the guards who are covering the prisoners with laser-point accuracy. They go down like rag dolls.

SAM

Ayo Gurkhali!

MATT

We're Americans! We're Americans!

He finishes off the guards at the barracks as the prisoners stand stunned, unable to believe what is happening. Matt charges through the smoking gates into the compound, firing and screaming. He takes several hits, but his Kevlar vest protects him from serious harm.

MATT

No prisoners! No prisoners!

CUT TO:

113. CONTINUED:

Barnes grabs a fallen AK and fires a burst into a guard who is aiming at Matt. The rifle seems to give him new life. Moore grabs a rifle and helps attack the remaining guards. Kim stands dazed, in shock at the unexpected turn of events.

Simon leaps over the guard's body on the fence and enters the compound as Matt races back out the gates for the officer's quarters. A burst of fire from the building nearly hits him. He returns it, killing his assailant.

Moore body blocks Kim, knocking him down and out of the line of fire. Dalton manages to trip a guard about to shoot Barnes. Holt strangles a guard through the bars of his cage.

Matt approaches the officer's quarters carefully as Simon pulls Dalton from the grave and Moore and Barnes hunt down the remaining guards. They free Holt and the three of them set fire to the tiger cages.

Sam and Tran pick off a few surviving guards who try to flee into the jungle.

Matt kicks the door to the officer's quarters open and leaps inside, M-16 blazing.

CUT TO:

114. INT. OFFICER'S BUILDING - DAY

Matt riddles the radio and the radio operator as he sends an SOS, then kicks open the door to the other room, catching Ba as he tries to climb out the window.

Matt fires a burst over Ba's head, splintering the top of the window frame. Ba freezes.

No.

MATT

Ba turns slowly to face Matt. He stares at him questioningly for a long moment. Matt's finger tightens on the trigger.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

115. INT. SMALL PRISON CAMP - DAY

Matt's foot crashes into Ba's nose, shattering it.

The rat is dropped into the sack and tied over Matt's head.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

116. INT. OFFICER'S BUILDING - DAY

Ba is stunned. He touches his ruined nose.

(CONTINUED)

116. CONTINUED:

BA

You!

MATT

We're gonna finish it this time.

Ba glances down at the M-16 in Matt's hands.

MATT

It would be too fast.

He unslings his rucksack and unbuckles his pistol belt, dropping them to the floor while keeping Ba carefully covered. Ba follows suit, dropping his pistol belt.

Matt removes the clip from the M-16 and ejects the round from the chamber.

Ba watches closely as Matt bends down to slip his fighting knife from its sheath in his boot. Matt's eyes flicker aside for a moment and Ba attacks suddenly, catching him with a vicious knee raise and knocking him back through a bamboo wall.

He snatches a fighting knife from his gear and leaps after Matt, trying to follow up his advantage. Matt blocks a vicious slash at the last possible moment.

Matt grabs Ba's free wrist as their knife blades lock crossguard to crossguard. Matt slowly forces Ba back inch by inch. He lurches forward, trying to hurl Ba up against the outside wall and both men crash through it, still locked together.

CUT TO:

117. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

Matt and Ba crash through the wall and land hard. The impact throws them apart and they roll to their feet and circle warily. Moore and Barnes move towards Ba, raising their weapons, but Tran motions them back. The men watch the fight with fierce intensity.

The fight continues with both men receiving minor cuts as they move through the gates back into the compound. The impetus shifts back and forth several times, then Matt gambles everything on a wild slash. Ba leaps back to avoid it and stumbles into the grave he had dug for Dalton.

As Ba lies stunned in the grave the former prisoners gather around it and stare down at him. Holt kicks some dirt in on Ba, then Moore grabs a shovel and throws a shovel full of dirt down at him. Barnes kicks some more dirt in and then Kim joins in. Ba tries to struggle free, but the men push him back. They work feverishly to bury him completely.

CUT TO:

118. EXT, QUAN LONG MILITARY BASE - DAY

The Captain and a COLONEL scream orders at the SOLDIERS who pour out of the barracks, scrambling into their uniforms as they race for the trucks and jeeps.

Half a dozen soldiers clamber into the back of the first truck. AN OFFICER slides in next to the driver and points at the death card near the ignition.

OFFICER

What's that?

The driver shrugs and hands him the card. The officer reads it.

DRIVER

What's it say?

OFFICER

"Guess who's back?"

The driver turns the key in the ignition and the C-5 explodes with a roar, destroying the cab. As the soldiers try to clamber out the back the gas tank explodes, blowing up the entire truck.

Soldiers panic and take cover everywhere. They fire wildly into the jungle at an unseen enemy.

The soldiers continue to pour fire into the surrounding jungle as soldiers pile into the second truck. Again the driver turns the ignition key with the same results.

The same thing occurs with the third truck. The SENIOR OFFICER shouts at the driver of the fourth truck to get out of the cab, then clambers in himself and searches the cab. He discovers the C-5 under the dash and calls to a DEVOLUTIONS EXPERT to remove it, then shouts at the soldiers until they stop firing.

CUT TO:

119. EXT. CANAU AIR BASE - DAY

The orderly pedals slowly into the deserted base. He looks around as he approaches the headquarters building, puzzled that the camp is apparently deserted.

He leans his bicycle against the building and opens the door, pulling a trip wire leading to a booby trap on the back side of the door. The resulting explosion blows him back onto the grass.

CUT TO:

120. INT. CAPITOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Maxwell is staring incredulously at Ellen Graham.

(CONTINUED)

120. CONTINUED:

MAXWELL

They're going to do what?

ELLEN

Try and rescue some supposed American M.I.A.'s from a Vietnamese prison camp.

MAXWELL

Do you know how much trouble this could get us into?

ELLEN

Yes, sir.

MAXWELL

I'll have to see the President immediately. This thing has to be stopped!

CUT TO:

121. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

Dalton and Holt are lying on makeshift stretchers near the gates as Simon administers first aid to them.

Barnes, Moore and Kim are grouped around them, eating fresh rations from the guards' mess, the first good food they have had in ten years. Kim is functioning, but is still in a daze.

BARNES

How's Kim?

SIMON

He's still in shock, but he'll come around.

SAM

Don't eat too much of that now. We've got a long march to the coast and I don't think we'll have enough TP if you all get the runs.

The men laugh. There is light in their eyes and animation on their faces for the first time in ten years or more. They are armed with weapons taken from the dead guards.

Matt and Tran stand next to the flagpole near the officers' building. The men cheer as Tran lowers the North Vietnamese flag and throws it into the cooking fire.

Matt kneels next to Dalton and grins down at him.

DALTON

Thanks, Hunter.

(CONTINUED)

121. CONTINUED:

MATT

Don't thank me, lieutenant. If it wasn't for your courage we wouldn't be here right now.

Matt takes an American flag from his rucksack and holds it out to Dalton.

MATT

Would you do the honors?

Dalton takes the flag gingerly and clutches it tightly to his chest. He nods, unable to speak and Matt helps him to his feet. They cross to the flag pole and Dalton attaches the flag to the lanyard with trembling fingers.

HOLT

Help me up.

Barnes and Moore help Holt to his feet. All the men stand at attention as Dalton slowly raises the flag. Tears of pride trickle down several of the men's cheeks as the breeze catches the flag and snaps it out to its full glorious length.

CUT TO:

122. EXT. QUAN LONG CITY MILITARY POST - DAY

The demolitions expert dismantles the bomb from the last truck and the remaining soldiers scramble aboard.

The captain approaches the colonel and salutes.

CAPTAIN

(We are ready to move out, comrade colonel.)

The colonel nods and moves towards his jeep. The captain hurries after him.

CAPTAIN

(Excuse me, comrade colonel. Shouldn't we radio headquarters for help?)

COLONEL

(For help against who? Have you seen the enemy? I haven't. What do you think they would say? We would be planting rice in the Delta for the rest of our lives. We will contact headquarters when we have defeated the enemy and not before.)

He climbs into the jeep and nods to the driver. The jeep roars off, leaving the officer in a cloud of dust.

CUT TO:

123. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

The small column is ready to move out.

MATT (Aside to Simon)
How do they look?

SIMON
Dalton and Holt are in pretty bad shape. I've patched them up as well as I can. The others will be okay if we don't push them too hard.

Matt nods.

MATT
Its about 10 Klicks to the coast. We'll have to move as fast as we can. I'm pretty sure that Ba radioed for help and we can be expecting some company any time. The boat that's taking us out of here will be there at dawn. We'll be in Kuala Lumpur in three days.

The men cheer. Sam leads the way across the clearing and moves down a trail into the jungle. Dalton and Holt are carried by Simon, Barnes, Moore and Kim.

Tran hurries out of the officer's quarters and joins Matt.

MATT
You have everything wired?

TRAN
They'll be in for quite a few surprises.

MATT
It couldn't happen to a nicer bunch of guys.

They move across the clearing, but Tran hesitates when they reach the head of the trail.

TRAN
Dai Uy?

Matt stops and turns back to face him.

TRAN
I've been thinking.

MATT
Well think while you're walking. Those mothers will be breathing down our necks any minute now.

(CONTINUED)

123. CONTINUED:

TRAN

That's what I've been thinking about. Our men are exhausted and undernourished. 10 clicks is a long way for them to travel. Especially with the enemy on their tails.

MATT

The booby traps we've set will slow them down

TRAN

But not enough. I will stay here and hold them off as long as I can.

MATT

I can't ask you to do that. You've done more than your share already.

TRAN

No one has asked me to do it. It is my own decision. This is my country. My entire family has been slaughtered by the NVA. I have a blood debt to repay and before I die those bastards will pay it.

Matt shakes Tran's hand affectionately.

MATT

I understand. Give 'em hell, soldier.

Tran nods and steps back. He executes a smart salute. Matt returns it, then turns and hurries into the jungle. Tran watches him go, then kneels and opens his rucksack. He removes several Claymores, grenades, a roll of det cord, some fishing line and several other lethal items.

CUT TO:

124. INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

The President looks up from his desk as Maxwell storms into the office.

MAXWELL

Mr. President. I've just recieved word that a group of American mercenaries is about to land in Vietnam to try to rescue some supposed American MIA's.

PRESIDENT

Where did you get that information?

MAXWELL

From one of my aides, Ellen Graham. She had it from an unimpeachable source.

(CONTINUED)

I see. PRESIDENT

MAXWELL
Well, what are we going to do about it? This could cause a major international incident. Maybe even a war. Those men have to be stopped. We'll have to deny responsibility for the whole affair and find out what lunatic is behind it.

PRESIDENT
I am the 'lunatic' behind it, Porter.

Maxwell is stunned into silence.

PRESIDENT
Stop staring and sit down. Make yourself comfortable. You'll be staying here with me until the operation is concluded one way or another.

Maxwell collapses into a chair in front of the desk, completely at a loss for words or actions.

PRESIDENT
Let me explain the situation. As Commander in Chief of the Armed Services I have a responsibility to everyone who serves under our flag...

125. EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

CUT TO:

The jeep heading the Quan Long relief column slowly rounds a bend in the winding road leading to the camp. Its passengers scan the surrounding jungle, alert for an ambush. One of the soldiers notices the American flag flying over the silent camp and points incredulously at it.

The jeep pulls up next to the officers' building and the soldiers leap out, taking cover. The camp is deserted. A soldier picks up a walkie-talkie and speaks into it.

SOLDIER
(Point to Center. All is clear. Come on in.)

The soldiers fan out as the trucks and jeeps carrying the rest of the command move slowly down the road. The soldiers leap out and take up positions facing the river or the camp.

The colonel jumps out of his jeep and gestures at the flag.

(CONTINUED)

125. CONTINUED:

COLONEL

(Take that down. And search the buildings.)

Two soldiers hurry to the base of the flagpole as two others carefully enter the officers' building. A fifth soldier kneels down next to one of the guard's bodies and starts to turn it over.

One of the soldiers at the flagpole steps on a mine near the flagpole's base. The explosion flings both men into the air. A moment later an explosion rips through the officers' building, blowing it apart. At the same time the fifth soldier turns the guard's body over, triggering a booby trap which blows him up.

The remaining soldiers mill about in confusion as the colonel and captain try to restore order.

Suddenly Tran opens up with the M-60 from across the clearing. The bullets tear into the milling soldiers, killing or wounding three or four before the rest take cover. The soldiers fire back as Tran changes position and opens fire again.

The soldiers fire maneuver their way across the clearing, keeping the pressure on. He is wounded once, then again, then a third time. Then he staggers to his feet as the soldiers charge at him, firing into them until he is riddled with a dozen bullets. He dies with a slight smile on his face.

COLONEL

(Find their trail!)

Several soldiers fan out, searching for spoor. One of them locates the right trail.

SOLDIER

(Over here!)

The surviving soldiers, still a significant number, hurry towards him.

CUT TO:

126. EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Sam is crouched under cover at the side of the trail. He hears a noise in the darkness and raises his rifle. A low, two-note whistle reaches his ears and he lowers the rifle as Matt materializes beside him.

MATT

There's still about twenty of them. I left a few goodies that'll slow them down a bit.

He glances at his watch. It is past midnight.

MATT

How much farther to the beach?

(CONTINUED)

126. CONTINUED:

SAM

Its still about three klicks. We've pushed them hard. They need some rest before we can go on.

MATT

I think we can spare an hour. I want you to go ahead to the rendezvous and meet the team. Bring them back as fast as you can. We'll meet you somewhere on the way.

SAM

Right.

Sam moves off into the darkness, disappearing down the trail. Matt quickly stretches some fishing line across the trail, tying one end to the trunk of a tree and the other end to the pin of a grenade he tapes to a large exposed root.

Matt moves back along the trail until he meets Barnes and Moore, who are on sentry duty. Both men look dog tired.

MATT

How're you feeling?

MOORE

Tired.

BARNES

But we'll make it.

Matt claps Lincoln on the shoulder and keeps moving until he comes to Dalton and Holt, who are lying on their stretchers. Simon is changing dressings on their wounds.

DALTON

What's our situation?

MATT

The enemy's about two or three hours behind us. We'll stay here for an hour, then press on to the coast. We should be there by dawn.

DALTON

You could move faster if Ed and I stayed behind. We've talked it over and we could buy you some time.

MATT

Forget it. We're all in this together. Everybody goes home or no one does.

CUT TO:

128. EXT. JUNGLE TRAIL - NIGHT

The enemy soldiers are advancing slowly behind a point man. He unknowingly steps over a trip wire stretched across the trail. The main body of soldiers appears behind him and the lead soldier trips the wire, which sets off a Claymore mine. The deadly pellets mow down several soldiers and the others take cover, firing into the surrounding darkness. Several of the soldiers scream out as they are impaled on sharpened punji sticks set at angles to the trail.

The colonel and captain crouch behind a large tree. Both look fearful.

CAPTAIN

(I think we should call in reinforcements, sir. The enemy is obviously heading for the coast. We can cut them off if the garrison at Cai Nuoc can move quickly enough.)

The colonel weighs his options for a moment, then nods.

COLONEL

(Radio Cai Nuoc.)

CUT TO:

129. EXT. ANOTHER JUNGLE TRAIL - NIGHT

Matt and Barnes are on point, carrying Dalton. Simon and Kim follow them, carrying Holt. Moore brings up the rear. All the men are reeling with fatigue. In the distance they hear an explosion and small arms fire.

CUT TO:

129A. EXT. ROSE OF TRALEE - HIGH SEAS - NIGHT

The junk is nearing the coast of Vietnam. The team is on deck, fully armed, making final adjustments to their equipment. They are all tensely silent.

Suddenly a bright spotlight erupts from the darkness, illuminating the junk.

OFFICER (O.S.)

(Cut your engines and prepare for a boarding party.)

The team members scramble for their weapons as Tuck signals for the engines to be cut off.

DALLAS

What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

129A. CONTINUED:

TUCK
Vietnamese coast guard.

DALLAS
Shit. Can we take them?

TUCK
It would be hairy. Get the men belowdeck and out of sight. I can usually bribe the officer with a few cases of whiskey and cigarettes.

Dallas hurries the team down the hatch as the Vietnamese PBR patrol boat pulls up alongside. The boat is heavily armed, with twin fifty caliber machineguns, an M-60 and an 81mm mortar.

The Vietnamese CAPTAIN and several ARMED SOLDIERS climb up onto the junk.

CUT TO:

129B. INT. ROSE OF TRALEE HOLD - NIGHT

Dallas and the other team members are hidden in the hold. All are tense and have their fingers on the trigger. The hatch is thrown back and Tuck leads the Captain and several soldiers down. Tuck carries a lantern.

TUCK
As you can see, Captain. Just contraband like I told you.

CAPTAIN
You must still pay import tax.

TUCK
Of course. Two cases of whiskey, one of cigarettes?

CAPTAIN
Three whiskey. Two cigarettes.

TUCK
Right.

The soldiers pick up the indicated cases and return topside, followed by the Captain. Tuck brings up the rear. He gives the thumbs up sign to Dallas. Dallas shakes his head.

CUT TO:

130. EXT. SMALL JUNGLE CLEARING - DAWN

Barnes stumbles and falls, dropping his end of the stretcher. Dalton tumbles to the ground and Matt signals for a halt and helps Dalton back onto the stretcher.

MATT

Twenty minutes.

The other men slip gratefully to the ground, breathing raggedly and soaked with sweat.

DALTON

How much farther?

MATT

Less than one klick...Simon, can you give everyone something to keep them going?

SIMON

Sure. I've got some Dexamil.

He passes the tablets out to every man.

DALTON

I want you to promise me something, Hunter.

MATT

Sure.

DALTON

Don't let them take us alive. We can't go back.

MATT

You have my word.

CUT TO:

131. EXT. BEACH RENDEZVOUS SITE - DAWN

Sam hurries down the trail leading to the beach, his face tense with anticipation. He hurries out onto the sand and stops, stunned.

The junk is nowhere in sight

CUT TO:

132. EXT. SMALL JUNGLE CLEARING - DAY

Matt glances at his watch.

MATT

Let's go. Next stop is the boat.

(CONTINUED)

132. CONTINUED:

The men stagger to their feet. They pick Dalton and Holt up and stumble along down the trail.

CUT TO:

133. EXT. LARGE JUNGLE CLEARING - DAY

Matt stops at the edge of the jungle and looks suspiciously out at the large clearing that stretches out in front of him.

DALTON

What's the matter? Why are we stopping?

MATT

I don't know. I've got that old feeling. Something just doesn't feel right.

He scans the open, grass-filled clearing. There is no breeze, but he sees some of the tall grass move slightly.

MATT

Down!

He hits the dirt and the rest of the men follow suit as an enemy machine-gun opens fire, spraying the spot where he was just standing. Other enemy small arms fire starts to rake the tree line.

MATT

We'll move back and try to outflank them.

As he speaks he hears gunfire and several grenade explosions from the rear of their position.

MATT

Simon! Get back and help Moore. You've got to hold them.

Simon hurries away. Matt pulls Kim behind a tree, out of the line of fire.

Matt and Barnes open up at targets of opportunity as Dalton and Holt crawl off their stretchers and grab their weapons.

Moore crawls up next to Matt.

MOORE

The enemy's hitting our rear in force. We've driven 'em back for now, but I don't know how long we'll be able to keep it up.

MATT

Hold out as long as you can.

Moore nods and crawls away.

(CONTINUED)

133. CONTINUED:

The volume of enemy fire increases and Matt and Dalton are grazed. Matt fires at selective targets, making each shot count. He runs out of ammo and reaches for a spare magazine, only to discover he has only one left.

MATT

Shit!

DALTON

This is my last magazine, too.

He slams a magazine into his AK and resumes firing.

Matt runs out of ammo. So does Barnes.

A tinny bugle blares from the other side of the clearing and a WAVE OF ENEMY SOLDIERS surges out of the trees towards the Americans, shooting and screaming.

Dalton grins grimly and takes Matt's hand.

DALTON

Thanks, Hunter. It was one hell of an effort. You've still got a chance to get out of here...

Matt draws his Match .45.

MATT

I said we're in this together, whatever the outcome.

Matt picks off several of the enemy soldiers, but cannot stem their attack. They are almost upon the Americans when Sam, Dallas and the rest of the team appear in the treeline on the side of the clearing and pour a withering rain of fire into them. They go down like tenpins. The momentum of their assault slows, wavers, then disintegrates.

Several of the enemy charge into the Americans and are killed in savage hand to hand combat. Kim comes to himself and grabs a rifle from a fallen soldier, saving Dalton's life.

Matt grabs an AK and ammo pouch and races back to help Simon and Moore.

The team charges across the clearing, mopping up the enemy.

DALTON

You guys believe in cutting it close.

DALLAS

Just like in the movies.

SAM

Where's Matt, Lieutenant?

(CONTINUED)

133. CONTINUED:

DALTON

In the rear, trying to hold off another enemy detachment.

Sam, Dallas and the other men race back along the trail. They find Matt, Moore and Simon holding their position atop the steep bank of a small stream. The trail leading up from the stream is littered with enemy bodies.

DALLAS

I hoped you saved some for us.

MATT

There's plenty to go around.

DALLAS

What happened to our quiet little commando raid? Quick in. Quick out. No one the wiser?

MATT

The usual. The enemy didn't want to play by the rules.

They duck as the enemy opens fire on their position.

DALLAS

What's the plan?

MATT

We'll fight a rear guard delaying action while the prisoners get back to the junk. There's still a chance they can get out.

Levy and Lee exchange glances. Lee nods.

MATT

Moore, you go back and join the rest of the team.

Moore hurries away.

LEVY

Matt? You and Dallas go on back. Ben and I will stay here and hold the fort.

LEE

We'll cover you until you all get to the junk.

MATT

You won't have much of a chance to get back yourselves.

(CONTINUED)

133. CONTINUED:

LEVY

We know, but this is our job. We're heroes, remember?

CUT TO:

134. EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Matt, Dallas, Jackson, Gonzales and Simon are helping Dalton and Holt. Moore, Barnes and Kim are with them. Sam brings up the rear. The men look back over their shoulders as they hear distant gunfire and explosions.

CUT TO:

135. EXT. JUNGLE STREAM - DAY

Levy and Lee are under heavy attack by enemy machinegunners and riflemen. They are fighting back magnificently, inflicting a number of casualties.

Both men are wounded as enemy soldiers slip around their flanks and fire into them from the rear. They crawl together and lean back to back as the enemy closes in. They are hit several more times, but manage to mow down several more of the enemy before they die.

Large numbers of enemy soldiers jog past their bodies as the colonel and captain stand over them, shaking their heads at their bravery.

CUT TO:

136. INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Archer enters and nods at Maxwell, who is lost in thought. Stafford and Davis, looking tense, are seated nearby.

PRESIDENT

Any word yet, Hugh?

ARCHER

Yes, sir. Hunter hit the camp yesterday. He and the P.O.W.'S are on the run.

PRESIDENT

What about the rescue team?

ARCHER

They landed a short time ago. Tucker reports that they are heavily engaged with superior enemy forces and the issue is in doubt.

The President nods grimly.

CUT TO:

157. EXT. CAMAU AIR BASE - DAY

Two trucks stand in front of the barracks. Several squads of soldiers are milling around the trucks as THREE PILOTS hurry across the landing pad to the helicopters.

The first pilot enters the cockpit and is blown out through the windshield when he sits down and detonates the booby trap beneath his seat.

The second pilot switches the ignition on and is killed as the helicopter explodes.

The third pilot leaps out of his helicopter and stares back into the cockpit. A SOLDIER hurries over and searches the cockpit and finds the bomb beneath the instrument panel. He defuses it quickly and the pilot leaps back in, starting the engine.

As the engine warms up the rest of the crew swarms aboard and mans the cargo door machineguns. The helicopter rises slowly into the air and moves off quickly towards the coast.

CUT TO:

138. EXT. ANOTHER JUNGLE TRAIL - DAY

Sam hits the dirt as several enemy soldiers appear behind him and open fire. He returns fire, killing them both.

At the front of the column Matt passes his end of the stretcher to Simon.

MATT

Keep 'em moving, Simon. Jeff, Dallas, come on!

Jackson and Dallas run after him as he sprints to the rear of the column where Sam is now falling back under enemy pressure.

They take cover and open fire, dropping four of the enemy.

DALLAS

Get going Matt. We're only a few hundred yards from the beach. I'll hold 'em as long as I can.

JACKSON

We'll hold 'em as long as we can.

MATT

We'll all stay.

DALLAS

No way. Jeff and I can take care of it. Your duty is to get those men back home safely...Hell, we owe them at least this much. We've been living the good life for ten years or more while they rotted in that hellhole. Shit. It could have just as easily been us in there.

(CONTINUED)

158. CONTINUED:

He and Matt clasp hands.

MATT

I'll see you in hell.

He claps Jackson on the shoulder. Sam does likewise and follows Matt back into the jungle.

DALLAS

Let's kick ass!

Dallas lobs a grenade at a small group of enemy soldiers who appear in front of them. There is quiet for a moment and Dallas and Jackson move into the jungle on one side of the trail.

A few seconds later an enemy point man appears and moves cautiously past their position. They hold their fire until the main body moves into view a moment later, then open up with devastating effect.

Fierce fighting ensues as the enemy tries frontal assaults and flanking movements, finally succeeding in attacking them from both front and rear. Both men are wounded as the enemy closes in. Jackson is severely wounded. He falls next to Dallas, who keeps firing, and draws a photo of his wife and son from his pocket. He stares lovingly at it.

JACKSON

They're beautiful, aren't they?

DALLAS

They'll be waiting for you, Jeff.

Dallas runs out of ammunition. He crouches down next to Jackson.

DALLAS

Looks like the end of the trail, partner.

JACKSON

What do we do now? We can't let 'em take us alive.

DALLAS

Let's go out the hard way.

JACKSON

What way is that?

Dallas whips out his bayonet and fixes it quickly. He smiles at Jackson. Jackson starts to laugh. The enemy soldiers are approaching cautiously as Jackson fixes his own bayonet. Dallas starts to laugh, too.

(CONTINUED)

138. CONTINUED:

Dallas and Jackson explode screaming from the brush IN SLOW MOTION and charge into the stunned enemy, stabbing and butt stroking at close quarters. Their Kevlar vests protect them from enemy fire for a few moments as their M-16's break up in their hands.

They are finally overwhelmed, still shouting defiantly.

The enemy is stunned. The captain and colonel kick and strike their men, forcing them to go on. Several soldiers throw down their weapons and flee into the jungle. The officers fire after them.

CUT TO:

139. EXT. BEACH RENDEZVOUS SITE - DAY

Simon and Barnes stagger out onto the sand carrying Dalton's stretcher. The rest of the men follow. They pull two rubber boats from the bushes and drag them towards the water.

Tuck watches anxiously from behind the twin fifties. The junk is anchored a quarter mile offshore. Two crewmen are standing by the mortar. A third crewman stands by the tiller. There is no sign of the enemy.

Simon and Gonzales help Dalton and Holt into one of the boats and Barnes, Kim and Moore into the other. All the former prisoners are now completely exhausted. They push the boats off and start rowing slowly for the junk.

Matt and Sam take up ambush positions on either side of the trail leading down to the beach. The first enemy soldier appears a moment later. Sam kills him silently with the Kukri before he can alert the troops following.

The head of the enemy column appears a moment later and Matt and Sam open fire when they are well within the ambush site, inflicting heavy casualties. The enemy falls back in confusion and Matt and Sam move back towards the beach.

The helicopter appears over the jungle, passing above Matt and Sam. Tuck swings the fifties to bear on it and opens fire when the helicopter moves over the water to strafe the boats. The men open fire with small arms.

One of the boats is holed and starts to sink. The men cling to the secure compartments as the other boat turns to pick them up.

The helicopter moves towards the junk, guns blazing. Bullets chew up the deck all around Tuck, but he stays at his post. He is wounded in the shoulder.

TUCK

You'll pay for that, you bastards!

(CONTINUED)

139. CONTINUED:

Tuck pours an accurate stream of fire into the helicopter and it explodes in a ball of flame. The men in the boat send up a ragged cheer and Tuck bows towards them.

TUCK

All in a day's work, lads.

Matt and Sam move through the jungle until they see the colonel and captain exhorting their men. They pick both officers off and race for the beach as the soldiers mill about in confusion.

They reach the sand and pull a third boat from its hiding place. Matt rows as Sam keeps watch from the stern. The other boat is making slow time, being overloaded.

MATT

Looks like we might pull this off after all.

SAM

I never doubted it.

Just then they hear the whooshing sound of a large incoming shell.

MATT

Incoming!

A shell lands next to the junk, spraying Tuck with water.

TUCK

I took a bath last Saturday.

The coast guard PBR suddenly steams into view from behind a nearby headland. A puff of smoke appears from the mouth of its 81mm mortar and another shell whistles through the air. Tuck hits the deck as the round hits the junk's mast, blowing it to pieces.

The PBR crew opens up with their fifties and Tuck returns their fire. His crewmen fire back with the mortar but are unable to hit the fast moving boat. Tuck kills the man manning the fifties, but he is replaced immediately.

The men in the boats stop rowing, uncertain of which way to turn.

MATT

Back to the beach!

The boats turn and start slowly back to the beach as another shell slams into the junk, killing the mortar crew. Tuck stays with the fifties.

(CONTINUED)

159. CONTINUED:

MATT (To himself)

Go on, Tuck. Save yourself.

TUCK

Come on, you bastards! There's hell to pay right here!

He keeps firing as more rounds strike the junk.

Several soldiers appear on the beach and fire at the boats. The men stop rowing and return fire. Matt's boat is holed, as is the remaining one. The men cling to the secure compartments.

Suddenly the junk explodes in a ball of fire with Tuck still manning the fifties. The PBR steams towards the floundering group of men as the fire from the beach intensifies.

Tuck suddenly pops up and swims over to join the others. Matt shakes his head in disbelief.

TUCK

Now do you believe in the luck of the Irish?

Matt is treading water, holding Dalton up.

MATT

I'm sorry it has to end this way.

DALTON

So am I. But at least you gave us a chance to die as free men, not as slaves. And that counts for a hell of a lot.

They hear the sound of an airplane engine and a moment later the PBV, with Schmidt at the controls, roars into view over the trees.

TUCK

Looks like the cavalry.

MATT

Nope, Just our insurance policy.

Schmidt maneuvers towards the PBR and A GUNNER opens up with a machinegun from the fuselage door. The gunners rakes the PBR, then the plane turns and he rakes the treeline as they make another pass. He is wounded, but Schmidt lands the PBV between the men in the water and the approaching PBR.

He mans the machinegun and fires at the PBR as the men swim slowly towards the plane.

(CONTINUED)

139. CONTINUED:

Schmidt is grazed across the ribs as the fuselage is holed by the PBR's guns.

The swimmers make it to the open cargo door of the plane and start to clamber inside, but the PBR races towards them, bracketing the plane with rounds from the mortar.

Suddenly TWO AMERICAN JET FIGHTERS EXPLODE OVER THE HORIZON.

One jet attacks and sinks the PBR as the other makes a run at the beach, devastating the shoreline with its 20mm cannons.

The jets bank and return, flying over the stunned men doing victory rolls.

The static on Schmidt's radio suddenly is broken by one of the pilot's voices.

PILOT (O.S.)
Compliments of the President. Welcome back
to The World.

Matt grins at Tuck as the rest of the men cheer.

The jets are FREEZE FRAMED over the bay in a V For Victory formation.

ROLL END CREDITS.