

QUARTERMAIN

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OPEN on three PORTUGUESE FACES -- JOSE DA SILVESTRE, CASTRO ZACUTO, and DIOGO DA DIOS (30s; bearded). The year is 1575, and these armored knights have been to hell and back.

CASTRO ZACUTO

I thought you said they didn't even
know we were here, Da Silvestre.

And that's when we realize the predicament they're in--

EXT. COURTYARD, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

Eight KNIGHTS, armed with swords and rifles and wearing dirt-stained white tunics emblazoned with red crosses, stand atop a mountain. FIVE-HUNDRED SPEAR-WAVING AFRICAN WARRIORS block their way down a 50-foot wide staircase!

JOSE DE SILVESTRE

Do you see Gagool?

DIEGO DA DIOS

How is she not dead? I put a knife
in her heart.

CASTRO ZACUTO

Who's got the bag?

A KNIGHT holds up a leather sack. DA SILVESTRE nods.

JOSE DA SILVESTRE

Whatever happens, it must reach the
king -- NOW!

The KNIGHTS SPLIT UP and run around a colossal, apparently bottomless OPEN-PIT MINE -- 200 feet across -- at the center of the hewn-floor courtyard. Massive support struts reach over the edge; chains GRIND loudly through gears.

The WARRIOR HORDE divides and rushes after them, roaring.

ZACUTO and DE DIOS' group of five go right, heading for three 100-FOOT-HIGH STATUES -- Egyptian-like parodies of human -- that watch over a path into the mountain.

DA SILVESTRE and two KNIGHTS go left, shooting with muskets.

ZACUTO and DA DIOS lose the KNIGHT WITH THE SACK to a spear, but another KNIGHT grabs up the SACK.

That's when 100 more WARRIORS rush from beyond the statues to meet them!

DA SILVESTRE and his KNIGHTS draw swords, prepare to fight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZACUTO leads his KNIGHTS into the--

INT. OPEN-PIT MINE, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

--along a rickety wooden mine-cart path that spirals down the wall. WARRIORS pour onto the path behind them like liquid.

Hundreds of feet below, AFRICAN SLAVES slowly push mine carts brimming with rock up this path.

EXT. COURTYARD, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

The two KNIGHTS with DA SILVESTRE are struck down. DA SILVESTRE sheathes his sword; he has no chance of fighting back the WARRIORS massing around him.

INT. OPEN-PIT MINE, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

ZACUTO and his KNIGHTS run for their lives as spears strike the mine wall and path around them. Behind them, HUNDREDS OF WARRIORS rush after them.

EXT. COURTYARD, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

DA SILVESTRE runs from the WARRIORS he faces -- right at the open-pit mine. He LEAPS OFF THE EDGE, over a BLACK ABYSS, as the audience's collective stomachs sink!

INT. OPEN-PIT MINE - CONTINUOUS

DA SILVESTRE lands in a metal bucket dangling by chain from one of the support struts, causing it to swing wildly.

Below, ZACUTO has a pack open. He stuffs a leather bladder into it, then waves the pack at the others.

CASTRO ZACUTO

Quickly, your powder!

DE DIOS drops his bladder in. Another KNIGHT catches a spear in the back and falls just as he chucks his bladder in.

DA SILVESTRE ducks in his swinging bucket as spears strike the metal with loud THUNKS. He's going to die if he stays here so he aims with a musket at a control arm at the base of the strut above. Fires, misses, immediately begins reloading.

ZACUTO stuffs his pack into a space between the path and the mine wall, losing not more than a step or two.

DA SILVESTRE fires at the control arm again. Misses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZACUTO's pack of gunpowder EXPLODES -- destroying a stretch of the wooden path. The WARRIORS at the front of the charge try to fall back from the conflagration, but their momentum is too great. Several topple to their deaths while squealing.

Other WARRIORS struggle to retreat, but the now-collapsing path drops out from below them. It's a CHAIN REACTION, climbing up the wall -- sending HUNDREDS more to their doom.

The chain reaction moves downward, too. The KNIGHT WITH THE SACK watches as the wood beneath his feet crumbles -- tosses the SACK to DA DIOS.

ZACUTO and DA DIOS run, one step ahead of the vanishing path. WARRIOR bodies fall from above, crashing through the wood -- creating HOLES they have to leap over.

DA SILVESTRE shoots at the control arm again, this time striking the fulcrum. The swinging bucket PLUMMETS toward the wall now; chain GRINDS through the support strut's pulleys.

ZACUTO looks up, eyes bulging at the bucket falling at them.

CASTRO ZACUTO (CONT'D)

This is going to be close!

They leap -- the bucket crashes through the path behind them!

Chain snares in the support strut pulleys, suddenly arresting the bucket's descent. DA SILVESTRE almost flies out of the bucket, before it snaps away from the wall.

ZACUTO looks up to find the bucket swinging back at them. It crashes into the path under them, bucking them into the air -- the SACK leaving DE DIOS' hands.

ZACUTO comes down, hooking an arm around a beam protruding from the wall, his other hand catching DA DIOS by the wrist -- who catches the SACK.

DA SILVESTRE looks out from his bucket, swinging in place again. ZACUTO and DA DIOS are climbing back onto the path.

JOSE DE SILVESTRE

There!

He points at a tunnel off the path. Further below, hundreds of distant fires burn like stars in the endless black.

JOSE DA SILVESTRE

What could they be looking for so deep?

EXT. SIDE OF MOUNTAIN - DUSK

DA SILVESTRE, ZACUTO, and DA DIOS climb out of a small shaft near the base of the mountain. Find themselves overlooking a green paradise dotted with distant ancient ruins.

JOSE DA SILVESTRE

With any luck, they'll think we
died in there and forget about us.

A spear explodes from DE DIOS' chest then, thrown from 50 feet above where an AFRICAN WARRIOR shouts AN ALERT to unseen allies. DA SILVESTRE and ZACUTO fall to DE DIOS' side.

DIOGO DA DIOS

Take...this.
(hands sack over)
Tell the king...Solomon's mines are
real.

DA SILVESTRE opens the sack, scoops out an UNCUT DIAMOND THE SIZE OF A SOFTBALL.

DIOGO DA DIOS (CONT'D)

Tell him...the diamonds are real.
With such a treasure, Portugal's
armies will be...unstoppable.

DA SILVESTRE and ZACUTO understand; pack up the diamond. DE DIOS watches them run.

DIOGO DA DIOS (CONT'D)

God be with yo--!

Another spear plunges into his back. He slumps forward.

TITLE CARD over the sort of death those who try to find the treasure will suffer: KING SOLOMON'S MINES

EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL, ESTABLISHING SHOT - MORNING

Rural England. Jane Austen would've told her siblings ghost stories about this building and its Gothic architecture.

TITLE CARD: 1900

WOODED FIELD

NEVILLE SINCLAIR (11; bully) has HENRY QUARTERMAIN (10; frail) pinned down, slugging him over and over in the face and chest. Two CRONIES (11) cheer NEVILLE on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEVILLE

(with each punch)
Lousy...liar...where's your
daddy...elephant hunter, my arse--

INT. HEADMASTER'S OFFICE, BOARDING SCHOOL - LATER

HENRY, face bloody and bruised, stares dejectedly from a chair at his desk-bound HEADMASTER (60; snake).

HEADMASTER

Why do you insist upon goading the other students with these wild, fantastical African tales? Is it any wonder they pick on you, Mr. Quartermain?

HENRY

But they're true, sir. My father's a great hunter--

HEADMASTER

You haven't seen your father in what? Six years? He's written you five letters in all that time. You know nothing about him other than he appears to prefer savages to your company.

MR. GIBBON'S CLASSROOM - LATER

HENRY limps past the open door, sniffing.

MAN (O.S.)

Mr. Quartermain.

HENRY steps back into the dim classroom, where MR. GIBBONS (40; stern face) is grading papers at his desk.

MR. GIBBONS

Sometimes it's not enough to cling to letters or trinkets when what we want seems lost.

He glances down at a PHOTO OF HIS FATHER, a military officer; over the top of the frame hangs a beautiful GOLD MEDAL.

MR. GIBBONS (CONT'D)

Sometimes all we have to get us by are daydreams.

HENRY half-smiles, understanding.

EXT. DRIVEWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

A CHAUFFEUR-driven 1900 Mercedes pulls up.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - LATER

The HEADMASTER leads a well-dressed IMPOSING MAN (55; handle-bar mustache) down the dark hall.

HENRY'S BEDROOM

From his desk, HENRY looks up at a KNOCK at his door. The HEADMASTER enters before he can react.

HEADMASTER

You have a visitor.

He leaves immediately. In walks the IMPOSING MAN who, compared to the HEADMASTER, radiates manliness.

IMPOSING MAN

Henry Quartermain?

HENRY nods. The MAN regards him skeptically.

IMPOSING MAN (CONT'D)

You certainly don't look like your father.

HENRY

You know my father?!

The MAN pulls a PACKAGE from his jacket.

IMPOSING MAN

This is for you. It's an early copy.

HENRY takes it, finds his name scrawled across it. The MAN looks him over again.

IMPOSING MAN (CONT'D)

You truly don't look like him.

HENRY

Is he well? It's been more than a year since he's written.

IMPOSING MAN

Your tuition is paid up. You have nothing to worry about. Good day.

The MAN walks out then, leaving HENRY confused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY examines the package, begins pulling away string and brown wrapping paper -- until a NECKLACE MADE OF LIONS' TEETH falls out.

He keeps peeling, revealing a book. The cover is inlaid with a gold illustration of an elephant pushing through trees.

Inside, the title page: KING SOLOMON'S MINES.

And on the next page: BY ALLAN QUARTERMAIN, OF DURBAN, NATAL. This discovery is so shocking, HENRY drops the book to the floor. He runs to his door, but the IMPOSING MAN has gone.

CUT TO:

HENRY sits on the floor. With the tooth necklace wrapped around his hand, he opens the book; there's something magical about its pages for him. Then he begins to read--

HENRY

Chapter One. How I Came to Be
Retired. This book of African
adventure, in which I hope you will
find some enjoyment, was written
for my son.

HENRY's eyes open wide. He can't believe it -- for him?

ALLAN (V.O.)

Henry, my boy, by the time you read
these words, we will have spent
more of your life apart than
together. So I thought it best, in
case I do not survive this last
expedition, you got to know
something about who I am.

EXT. SAVANNAH WOODLAND - AFTERNOON

South Africa, as we imagine it. Beautiful savannah woodland populated by GIRAFFE and BUFFALO. A HERD OF KUDU -- giant antelope with long, spiraling horns -- feeds on grass.

JACK (40; Khoi African; semi-traditional dress) leads trophy hunters DUNCAN and WILSON (50s) to the edge of an overlooking ridge, crawling on their stomachs.

ALLAN (V.O.)

I begin to write this as I make my
way to a place found on only one
map in the world.

WILSON aims at a KUDU 300 feet away. JACK grabs his rifle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

Not yet.

ALLAN (V.O.)

It is my opinion that my party will not likely survive, and so this book should also be considered my last will and testament.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY goes white -- last will and testament?

HENRY

You can't be dead.

ALLAN (V.O.)

All that I have or am owed, including the proceeds from this book, if any, is yours, Henry. Now, let us get to the adventure!

EXT. SAVANNAH WOODLAND - AFTERNOON

WILSON and DUNCAN are upper-class, over-privileged Brits who have come to Africa to score animal heads for their smoking-room walls. They look over their shoulders at their guide.

WILSON

What are we waiting for, Quartermain? We want our lions.

Hands tap a pipe against palm to empty ashes, before the man turns -- introducing ALLAN QUARTERMAIN (45; salt-and-pepper goatee and mustache; looks as weathered as the land). He sighs, tries to hide his disdain for these trophy hunters.

ALLAN

It's called *hunting* for a reason, *gentlemen*. The kudu feeds on the grass, the lion feeds on the kudu--

DUNCAN

And we?

ALLAN

Wait.

DISSOLVE TO:

WILSON and DUNCAN sweat as they wait. ALLAN removes his brimmed hat, ringed by LEOPARD FUR; wipes his brow. We now see he wears the lion-tooth necklace HENRY just received.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

They say one of the mangy mongrels
murdered your wife.

DUNCAN

Wilson.

JACK winces for his friend. ALLAN doesn't respond.

WILSON

Then why aren't you as thrilled as
us to be taking a few of them home
with us? If that had been my wife--

DUNCAN

Wilson!

ALLAN

The animal was simply following its
instincts. I've lived most my life
in this country, and, after a
while, you come to realize it has a
mind of its own. God's laws don't
really apply.

(rises suddenly)

Shh. Here comes one now.

ALLAN moves forward, crouching; points to tall grass below. A
BLACK-MANED LION is slinking toward the distant KUDU.

CUT TO:

ALLAN leads WILSON and DUNCAN through the tall grass. Through
shifting blades, he can make out KUDU 100 feet away and the
black mane of the LION 50 feet away. JACK brings up the rear.

ALLAN points at DUNCAN, then the lion -- this is your shot.

WILSON

What about me?

ALLAN

You do as I tell you.

DUNCAN lifts his rifle, looks for his shot. WILSON, unwilling
to wait, sneaks away as JACK watches.

JACK

Macumazahn.

ALLAN sees WILSON's gone now, too. He mutters a curse,
motions at DUNCAN -- hurry, take the shot. But DUNCAN's
barrel shakes; he's too nervous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

Take the shot.

BANG! The KUDU scatter.

ALLAN jumps to his feet, already aware the shot missed. The BLACK-MANED LION is charging them now, so DUNCAN runs.

ALLAN unslings his rifle, aims calmly. When the LION leaps, he fires. ALLAN drops to his knee then as the beast flies overhead, CLAWS RIPPING THROUGH HIS SHIRT, and crashes dead.

NEARBY

WILSON can only see over the high grass here by jumping.

WILSON

Quartermain! Where are you?!

He turns, hearing MOVEMENT. Sweat trickles down his face.

WILSON (CONT'D)

Quartermain?

Something GROWLS. WILSON turns, finds a SECOND LION's face pushing through the grass about ten feet away.

As the LION lunges, a rifle FIRES; the LION goes down, rolls back to its paws immediately. JACK leaps atop it then, stabbing with a knife as WILSON watches, too scared to act.

ALLAN runs up and finds the LION on its side, blood-covered, panting its last breath. JACK lies DEAD, clawed to pieces.

WILSON (CONT'D)

I...I'm sorry.

ALLAN spins, driving his fist into WILSON's nose. CRUNCH! The trophy hunter goes down hard.

EXT. NATIVE SECTION, DURBAN POINT - AFTERNOON

A large KHOI funeral for JACK; mournful singing and dancing. At the edge of the CROWD, ALLAN broods beside friend CHARLIE SAYER (37; American; cross evident around his neck).

CHARLIE

How many years was he with you?

ALLAN

(grieved pause)

Six.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN watches the outside of the CROWD where the only other WHITE MAN (29) at the funeral tries to spy on him -- but he's so finely dressed, he could never blend in.

LATER

The funeral is disbanding. The WHITE MAN, JONAH PETTIGREW (handsome; British Army) follows ALLAN in--

BETWEEN HUTS

PETTIGREW moves through KHOI, staying 30 feet behind ALLAN. But when ALLAN vanishes in a casual passing of bodies, PETTIGREW rushes forward, scanning faces and corners.

ALLAN lunges from behind a hut then, SLAMS PETTIGREW against another hut -- his 12-INCH KNIFE inches from opening up PETTIGREW's belly.

ALLAN

Why are you following me?!

PETTIGREW

I-I'm not.

The tip of ALLAN's knife presses into PETTIGREW's jacket.

PETTIGREW (CONT'D)

Fine, fine, I was following you.
But there's no need for that. I
want to hire you as a guide.

ALLAN remains unconvinced.

PETTIGREW (CONT'D)

I just wanted to get a...*sense* of
who you were before we put our
lives in your hands. Now please,
sir, remove your knife.

ALLAN considers this, sheathes his knife in a flash.

ALLAN

You're too late. I just retired.

ALLAN walks away. Confused, PETTIGREW follows.

PETTIGREW

But we came all the way from
England to find you, the "great
white hunter, Allan Quartermain."
They say nobody knows this land
like you, not even the kafirs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

They were wrong. Half the men in this village are every bit as good as me. You just wouldn't hire them because they're only *kafirs* to you-- Why are you still following me?!

PETTIGREW

(stops)

Do you know a Henry Curtis, Mr. Quartermain?

ALLAN makes it a few more steps. Stops. Doesn't turn.

ALLAN

I haven't seen him in 20 years, not since the war here.

PETTIGREW

Nevertheless, he's gone missing.

ALLAN

(turns now)

Missing *where*?

PETTIGREW

I'd prefer not to share that until--

ALLAN

Where?!

PETTIGREW

Have you heard of King Solomon's diamond mines?

ALLAN snorts, then lets loose a rolling laugh.

PETTIGREW (CONT'D)

What are you laughing at, sir?

ALLAN walks away again, still laughing.

ALLAN

Curtis got himself killed chasing a fairy tale, I've no doubt. Go home before the same happens to you!

INT. DINING ROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

Dinner. Friendless, HENRY eats alone, his father's book his company. CHAPTER TWO, the page reads: THE MAP OF SILVESTRE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (V.O.)

Henry Curtis had, when I still knew him, married a British woman of some standing who eventually divorced him when he would not give up his career as a guide, hunter, and, as we joked, *opportunist*.

EXT. PUB, DURBAN POINT - AFTERNOON

Through a wide, open window, we watch ABIGAIL MARCH (24; effortlessly beautiful; out of place in her fine dress) drink, laugh, and sing with a crowd of BOISTEROUS SAILORS.

ALLAN (V.O.)

If this union gave him any joy, it was, I imagine, at the birth of his daughter, Abigail.

LATER

SAILORS help a grinning, but very inebriated ABIGAIL down the stairs onto the dirt street as she blows kisses at them.

ALLAN (V.O.)

Though he did not raise her, she nevertheless inherited his sense of...*impropriety*.

PETTIGREW swoops in, cavalierly stealing her away from the SAILORS who groan in unison.

PETTIGREW

Sorry, men, party's over.

ALLEY

PETTIGREW sits ABIGAIL down on a crate, smiling at her; he holds great affection, even love, for her despite her spoiled immaturity. She looks up at him, blows hair out of her eyes.

ABIGAIL

So. What did he say?

PETTIGREW

Abigail...

But PETTIGREW doesn't want to answer. She immediately knows why, and her eyes narrow with impudent anger.

INT. GENTLEMAN'S CLUB - NIGHT

The mostly empty club is surprisingly classy for this corner of the world. ALLAN and CHARLIE sit, drinking whiskey and smoking pipes together as ALLAN reads a newspaper with the headline: SECOND BOER WAR WITH BRITAIN INEVITABLE?

CHARLIE

And so you're actually serious about this retirement nonsense?

ALLAN tosses the paper aside, kicks his boots onto a table.

ALLAN

Do you know what the average life of an elephant hunter is, preacher? Between *six* and *eight* years. I've been at it for almost three decades now, which means I've lived through some *six generations* of my class.

CHARLIE

That's because you're the best there is.

ALLAN

The best?

ALLAN yanks up his left pant leg, reveals he's horribly scarred below the knee -- as if once mauled.

CHARLIE

Don't do this to yourself--

ALLAN

When that lion got Lizzie, I should've died, too. Hell, I should've been killed 20 times over by now. How much longer will I be able to say that? I've outlived everyone I care about.

CHARLIE

You still have your son.

That stabs ALLAN. He slams what's left of his whiskey.

ALLAN

I need another drink. Waiter!

There's a SCUFFLE at the door then. ABIGAIL, cleaned up and refreshed, pushes her way into the room, the short CLUB MANAGER trying to block her.

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CONTINUED:

CLUB MANAGER

This is a gentleman's club, miss.
Women are *not* permitted.

ALLAN and CHARLIE watch the struggle, chuckling.

ABIGAIL

I don't give a damn about your
silly, misogynistic rules. I'm
looking for someone. If you just
let me find out if he's here--

CLUB MANAGER

Give me his name then.

ABIGAIL stops struggling, quickly scanning the room.

ABIGAIL

Fine, fine. His name is...

Her voice trails off. She was just buying time until she
spotted her quarry herself -- ALLAN!

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

You!

ALLAN points to himself -- me?

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

It has to be you, you sonuva--

CLUB MANAGER

Miss!

ALLAN

I think it's best if you oblige the
manager. This sort of tantrum might
work back in England, but this is
South Africa. It's a man's world,
and you must know your place.

CHARLIE holds his hand over his mouth, wanting to laugh; he
can't believe ALLAN just said that.

ABIGAIL

Of all the indignant, chauvinistic--

CLUB MANAGER

Mr. Sayer is a man of the cloth,
miss. Please watch your language.

That gives ABIGAIL pause. She calms fractionally, glowering
at ALLAN while CHARLIE stands to shoo the MANAGER away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

It's fine, Carter.

ALLAN

Ignore him, Carter. Take the child away.

CLUB MANAGER

(muttering as he leaves)
No women allowed. It's a gentlemen's club. Not gentlewomen.

CHARLIE

Would you like a seat?

ABIGAIL remains standing, seething. CHARLIE shrugs, sits.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Shame on you, Allan. She's half your age.

ALLAN

Don't be absurd. I've no idea who she is.

ABIGAIL

You would if you had taken the time to speak with my companion, Captain Pettigrew.

ALLAN

Wait, are you with the boy who came tracking me this morning? I already told him I'm not interested.

ABIGAIL

Five minutes, Mr. Quartermain. That's all I'm asking for.

ALLAN

Are you hard of hearing, or just exceedingly dense? I told you, I--

ABIGAIL

Henry Curtis was my father!

That hits ALLAN like a fist in the gut. He looks to CHARLIE, whose reaction reveals he knew Curtis, too.

EXT. DINING DECK, GENTLEMAN'S CLUB

ABIGAIL follows ALLAN outside onto the unoccupied deck.

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CONTINUED:

ALLAN

You couldn't have been more than three last time we met, Ms. Curtis.

ABIGAIL

March.

ALLAN doesn't understand her response.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

My name, sir. Abigail March.

ALLAN

As in Colonel Sir Richard March?

ABIGAIL

As in *General* Sir Richard March, the man who married my mother after she left my real father.

She pulls a wrinkled, stained letter and PHOTOGRAPH OF HENRY CURTIS from her purse.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

I only recently found out the truth of my heritage. I just wish I knew why Curtis waited so long to write.

ALLAN

He didn't ask for money, did he? He always needed a loan.

ABIGAIL

(becoming incensed again)
How very *cute*, Mr. Quartermain. I'd walk out -- in truth, I would have walked out after one look at that preposterous beard -- except Curtis told me, if I needed help, you were the one to go to for it.

ALLAN

(strokes beard, wounded)
The man always had too much faith in me.

ABIGAIL

Clearly. What was your relationship to him anyway?

ALLAN

Oh...I suppose he'd say he taught me everything I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

You wouldn't?

ALLAN

Not if he was within earshot.

ABIGAIL

Then you were obviously close at one time. Why not help him now?

ALLAN

Because I know where he went. No white man has ever traveled into that part of the country and made it back to tell about it. There aren't even maps, it's so isolated.

ABIGAIL

You're wrong about that.

ABIGAIL pulls out a piece of paper, slaps it down on a table -
- an exact copy of the map we saw in the opening sequence.

ALLAN

Ah, the *Map of Silvestre*. Did Curtis mention he won it along with a handful of riddles in a game of cards?

(sighs)

He shouldn't have dragged you into this, Ms. March. Solomon's mines aren't real. They're a fairy tale, like the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. For half my life I've watched fools go searching for them. It's always the same thing, too. "If we ever meet again, I shall be the richest man in the world." But none of them ever come back.

ABIGAIL

Like my father.

ALLAN doesn't want to respond to that.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Fine. If you don't want to do it for a friend, do it for greed.

ALLAN

You couldn't possibly offer me--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

Five-thousand pounds.

ALLAN

(stunned by that amount)
Where would you get that kind of money?

ABIGAIL

After years of lying to me, Sir Richard wants to clear his conscience by paying whatever it takes to make me happy. That's why he assigned Captain Pettigrew to accompany me.

ALLAN

I'm still listening.

ABIGAIL

I can promise you 5,000 pounds now, and 5,000 more if, contrary to what you assert, we actually *do* return. Is that enough to lure you out of *retirement*, Mr. Quartermain? If not, then consider whatever diamonds we find in the mines yours, too. Wealth beyond your wildest dreams, Mr. Quartermain.

ALLAN

And what do you get?

ABIGAIL

My father, of course.

ALLAN thinks long. Finally, he shakes his head.

ALLAN

Sorry, I am. But I'm retired.

He walks inside, leaving ABIGAIL spinning with desperation.

EXT. RAMSHACKLE CHURCH - LATER

CHARLIE's dilapidated parish.

ALLAN (O.S.)

Tell me you don't sleep down there.

INT. RAMSHACKLE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

ALLAN gulps from a whiskey bottle. Behind the pulpit, he stands over a trap door to what should be a small dirt cellar; a cot stands amidst shelves and stacks of teetering books. CHARLIE's sleeping space is a pit of knowledge.

CHARLIE

Don't knock it. It stays cool down here, day and night -- here it is!

CHARLIE climbs up his ladder with two large books under arm. Sits on the edge of the pit, flips through one book until he finds an illustration of an enormous gold-covered temple.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Nobody's ever been able to explain how Solomon amassed the fortune necessary to build the first Temple of Jerusalem. In all of Israel, he couldn't have found enough gold to pay the Phoenicians for a tenth of the materials.

ALLAN

So he dug diamond mines a continent away. Convenient.

CHARLIE flips to a reproduction of the Renaissance painting "SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA" (Eustace le Suer, 1650).

CHARLIE

He didn't necessarily have to dig them himself, Allan. If he took the Queen of Sheba as a lover, like the stories say, she could have given him them as a gift to seal their alliance. She did rule over a trading empire that stretched from the Cape to Arabia.

ALLAN

More fairy tales, preacher. Nobody has ever been able to prove she existed -- much less the mines.

CHARLIE

Your Silvestre proved the mines exist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

No, Silvestre drew up a fairy-tale map with a lot of silly clues as to how to make sense of it. Maps shouldn't require more than a compass to read.

CHARLIE

Unless the map *maker* meant to protect the mine's secrets from everyone but his king. You said Curtis told you Silvestre was a knight of the Order of Christ.

OUTSIDE THE DOORS: Someone is watching ALLAN and CHARLIE from the shadows just outside the church.

CHARLIE opens his second book to an illustration of the same elaborate red cross we saw on DA SILVESTRE.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Well, King Sebastian famously scattered the Order across the globe in search of lost treasures to finance his wars to reestablish Portugal's imperial power.

ALLAN

(heard it all before)
And Silvestre led the expedition to find Solomon's mines. For all of Silvestre's efforts to keep this secret, Curtis told anyone who would buy him a pint. I just don't understand why you're pushing this so hard, preacher. If you believe all of this codswallop, why don't you take the job?

EXT. RAMSHACKLE CHURCH - LATER

ALLAN and CHARLIE walk away from CHARLIE's church, through the slums of Durban. The dirt streets are all but abandoned.

CHARLIE

Tell me something, Allan. When did you stop believing? I can understand not buying into the mines; it's a bit much even for me, and I grew up dreaming about Camelot and the Golden Fleece.

ALLAN takes a swig from his bottle. Glances behind him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Was it when Lizzie--

ALLAN

No. To be honest, I don't remember when the last time I believed in--

(glances up: *Him*)

--was. I was a young man, prayed like any other. Then one day I just...didn't.

ALLAN looks behind them again. A kitten runs into an alley.

CHARLIE

What is it?

ALLAN

Hmm. Nothing most likely.

In between buildings, a BLACK MAN watches ALLAN and CHARLIE. At his feet, the kitten licks his boot.

CHARLIE

Listen. Allan. You still care deeply for Curtis, that much is obvious. Now this girl is asking for your help finding him, and you might just be the only person in the world qualified to actually get her where she needs to go. Lizzie was a sweet woman -- but she's gone. For five years now. You can't keep turning your back on people just because you're angry at God, this country -- *existence* -- for taking her from you.

ALLAN's drunken eyes suggest an agony he can't escape.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, HOTEL - NIGHT

ABIGAIL lies in bed with her FATHER'S PHOTO, reading his letter: "My dearest Abigail...should have been written years ago...your mother thought it best...With love, Your father."

RAPPING at the door interrupts ABIGAIL's wallowing. She glances at the night stand; atop it a Bible lies open next to an empty whiskey bottle, in the half-open drawer is a pistol.

ABIGAIL

One moment.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL, now wearing a silk robe, pistol hidden behind her hip, opens the door a crack. Finds ALLAN rocking on his feet.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

ALLAN

Aren't you going to invite me in?

ABIGAIL sets her pistol down, then opens the door fully so she can stand in it. She quails at the alcohol on his breath.

ABIGAIL

You can explain yourself from there.

ALLAN

Jolly good, I needed something to lean against anyway.

(leans against jamb)

So. Ms. March. I wanted to let you know that I've changed my mind. You have a deal, if you're still feeling suicidal.

ABIGAIL

Are you serious? This isn't the alcohol speaking, Mr. Quartermain?

ALLAN

Absolutely not.

ABIGAIL

You're absolutely *not* serious, or this absolutely *is* the alcohol speaking?

ALLAN

(confused now too)

Can we start over? I want the job.

ABIGAIL

Oh, Mr. Quartermain, thank you!

ALLAN

On one condition, though. Actually, *several*. The first, I'll only enter into this agreement with you if you sign a contract guaranteeing that all payment due to me will instead be paid to my son when you get me killed.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (CONT'D)

I...I haven't been there for him,
and I'd like to make it up to him
in some way.

ABIGAIL

Deal.

ALLAN

We'll be traveling across savannah,
jungle, and desert for three months
-- through country populated by war-
mongering tribes, territorial
settlers, and, worse, every manner
of creature evolved to offer peril
and death to man.

ABIGAIL

And woman.

ALLAN

We'll need wagons, oxen, medicine,
guns -- *many, many* guns -- and men.
At least six, and they don't come
cheap. I'll expect top pay for
their risk and, like me, I'll want
contracts guaranteeing their
families what they're owed in the
likely event of my, your, their,
my, all of our deaths. How does
that sound to you? Do we have a
deal, Ms. March?

ABIGAIL slowly grins, thrusts out her hand.

ABIGAIL

Let's give it a shake then.

ALLAN blinks, sobering for a moment.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

What is it?

ALLAN

Nothing. That's just something your
father used to say to me.

He shuffles away then. A groggy PETTIGREW sticks his head out
of the next hotel room's door.

PETTIGREW

What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

Pack your bags, Captain. We're going to find my father!

INT. CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

While other STUDENTS study Charles Darwin, HENRY draws a lion inside his workbook, daydreaming about his father's book.

MR. GIBBONS finishes polishing his father's medal and lovingly replaces it on the framed photo.

HENRY'S BEDROOM - LATER

HENRY races into his room and bounds onto the bed where he retrieves his father's book from under his pillow.

HENRY

Chapter Four.

ALLAN (V.O.)

Umbopa Enters Our Service.

EXT. SQUARE, BRITISH QUARTER, DURBAN - MORNING

KHIVA (28; Zulu) supervises the loading of a 22-foot, half-tented wagon with supplies. Drivers GOZA and TOM (30s; Zulu) direct BLACK SERVANTS #1 and #2 on the harnessing of 16 oxen.

ALLAN and VENTVOGEL (38; Khoi) examine the wagon. ABIGAIL walks up, a little too proud of her smart appearance.

ALLAN

That's some costume you're wearing, Ms. March. Did you order it from one of your fashion magazines?

ABIGAIL wears a khaki skirt and long-sleeved jacket. Her boots and hat look appropriate enough, but her long ponytail and heavy clothing say she didn't come prepared.

ABIGAIL

I'm quite comfortable, thank you. Must you be so difficult?

VENTVOGEL says something in Khoi about her and ALLAN laughs. They reach the back of the wagon, where ALLAN climbs onto a runner to look inside at numerous racks of rifles and elephant guns hanging along the tent walls -- a SMALL ARMORY!

ALLAN

How we going, Khiva?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KHIVA

Loaded, and everything where you
like it, Macumazahn.

ALLAN climbs inside. ABIGAIL whispers to VENTVOGEL.

ABIGAIL

What does this "macumazahn" mean?

VENTVOGEL looks at her as if she's an idiot, then walks away
muttering disgustedly in Khoi. KHIVA chuckles, explains.

KHIVA

"He Who Bleeds for the Land," miss.

ABIGAIL

How...aboriginal.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Allan!

ALLAN leans out of the wagon, finds CHARLIE outside.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

There's someone you need to meet.

INT. LIVING ROOM, ALLAN QUARTERMAIN'S HOUSE - LATER

ALLAN and CHARLIE stare at a giant BLACK MAN crouched in the
corner, head down; a spear stands against a wall next to him.

CHARLIE

I asked him who he was, but he
wouldn't even acknowledge me.

The BLACK MAN begins to rise, his unexpected movement causing
CHARLIE to start comically.

BLACK MAN

(slow, deep voice)
Macumazahn.

The BLACK MAN is dressed in a long military overcoat bound at
the waist with a native-made belt from which hangs a 16-inch
sheathed knife. His cheekbones are marked by tiny scars; his
jaw looks hard as a rock. This is UMBOPA (32).

UMBOPA

I am Umbopa. You are going to the
Lukanga River, then across it into
the uncharted country other white
men will not go. I will travel with
you there now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

Presumptuous, aren't you?

UMBOPA doesn't answer. His face remains expressionless.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

You know where we're heading, and yet you don't seem afraid.

UMBOPA

It is said, we all have our demons we must face. In the land of the Kukuana where we go, these demons live in the rocks. Their song is the wind. Umbopa has grown tired of being afraid. In the end, man must die. At the worst, he can but die a little sooner.

ALLAN blinks, baffled by that answer. CHARLIE laughs.

CHARLIE

A philosopher! Oh you two will get along swimmingly.

ALLAN

I hope you brought more than a spear with you.

EXT. SQUARE, BRITISH QUARTER, DURBAN - LATER

ALLAN and UMBOPA cross the square -- UMBOPA carrying a RIFLE over his shoulder, his SPEAR in his other hand, a BANDOLIER OF BULLETS across his chest, and his GIANT KNIFE at his side.

They pass ABIGAIL, who's confused by UMBOPA's presence; he salutes her with his spear.

ALLAN

Where's your Captain Pettigrew?

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, HOTEL - SAME

PETTIGREW hands the HOTEL MANAGER a note across the desk.

PETTIGREW

I'll need this telegram sent immediately.

HOTEL MANAGER

Of course, Captain Pettigrew.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETTIGREW walks for the front door. The HOTEL MANAGER looks at the telegram, which reads: TO: GENERAL SIR RICHARD MARCH. DEPART DURBAN TODAY. IF MINES STILL EXIST, YOU CAN PAY FOR COMING WAR WITH DIAMONDS.

EXT. SQUARE, BRITISH QUARTER, DURBAN - LATER

The CARAVAN is ready to set out. ABIGAIL sits in the driver's seat with GOZA, while the others will go it on foot. ALLAN shouts from atop a wheel--

ALLAN

That's it. Let's go, let's go!

ALLAN hops down, WHISTLES. GOZA whips an ox with a stick, and TOM, at the head of the oxen team, guides them forward.

The wagon lurches, ABIGAIL almost falls backwards out of her seat; she laughs, excited by all of this. PETTIGREW, always watching her from nearby, laughs with her.

CHARLIE jogs up to ALLAN, walks with him.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Come to bless our journey with a little holy water?

CHARLIE

No. I brought you this.

CHARLIE hands him a leather-bound diary bound with cord.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I'm tired of being the only one who hears your stories, Allan. Write a few down, would you?

ALLAN

Thank you. I'll be sure to include a note that, when they find my body, they send this back to you.

CHARLIE chuckles. They walk in silence for a moment, unable to express their friendship for each other. ABIGAIL glances down from the driver's bench, noticing the awkward moment.

CHARLIE

Do me a favor, Allan. Keep your mind open, will you? There are miracles all around us, even if you've got your head so far up your ass you can't see them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN claps his friend on the back--

ALLAN

Take care, preacher.

--then picks up his pace. CHARLIE watches him go, worried.

EXT. VALLEY OF ONE THOUSAND HILLS, ESTABLISHING SHOT - DUSK

A land of rolling hills and labyrinthine depressions, painted bronze by the setting sun. AFRICAN DRUMS BEAT somewhere.

CAMP

While the AFRICANS laugh around a large fire, ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW sit nearby under a lamp. Books, the Map of Silvestre, and sheets of paper lie at their feet.

ABIGAIL

What is that horrible sound?

ALLAN

Locals. Nothing to worry about.

(points with knife at Map)

Now we're somewhere over here, but these mountains, they were Curtis' destination. Starting tomorrow, we're a thousand miles away, 700 before we reach Sitanda's Kraal here. It's a long trek to get even that far, 14 weeks if we're lucky. According to your father's calculations, the desert is more than 100 miles across--

PETTIGREW

We can't carry enough water on our backs to cross that.

ALLAN

That's what I keep telling her, but Ms. Social Calendar prefers fantasy to facts.

ABIGAIL

Now you're just being childish.

ALLAN

Sweat much today, Ms. March?

ABIGAIL's still wearing her now-sweat-stained jacket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Just because people have been telling you you're something special your whole life doesn't mean you possess a fraction of the wits it takes to survive out here.

PETTIGREW

Go easy on her, Quartermain.

ABIGAIL

I don't need you to defend me, Captain.

ALLAN

We'll be able to refill our canteens if we reach this waterhole. Of course, the chances of us finding it in all that sand are...well, pray if you believe in that sort of thing.

ABIGAIL

I do, Mr. Quartermain.

He notices the cross around her neck now.

ALLAN

Whatever helps you sleep at night.

PETTIGREW

(interrupting the spat)
What should we expect after that?

ALLAN

Oh, well, the fun is just beginning at that point. Curtis would spend hours poring over Silvestre's map and letters to his king, trying to decipher the clues.

ALLAN picks up the Map and a letter, which he reads aloud--

ALLAN (CONT'D)

I, Jose da Silvestre, write this in the year 1575 with a cleft bone upon a remnant of my raiment, my blood being the ink.

INT. CAVE - FLASHBACK (1575)

JOSE DA SILVESTRE sits against the wall of a cave that has bones lying across the floor of it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's panting hard, dying as he uses a cleft bone to scratch this letter across a scrap of linen on his lap.

JOSE SILVESTRE (V.O.)

These, my last words, are intended
for the king alone, and should be
carried there by my holy brother,
Castro Zacuto...

SILVESTRE jabs his "quill" into an oozing wound in his forearm, whimpering as he digs the point around to get it wet. Beside him, CASTRO ZACUTO watches him start to scratch out his letter again.

SILVESTRE (V.O.)

We are the only two survivors of a
expedition doomed by the Kukuana
and their devilish arts. With my
own eyes I have seen the countless
diamonds stored in Solomon's
treasure chamber, but, through the
treachery of Gagool the Witch-
finder, I have escaped with barely
any life left in me.

EXT. CAMP, VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS - INTERCUT

INTERCUT SILVESTRE writing/narrating his tale with ALLAN reading the letter as ABIGAIL and PETTIGREW follow along on the Map of Silvestre, south to north -- a desert, twin mountains, ancient ruins and road, and three mountains.

ALLAN/SILVESTRE (V.O.)

Let him who comes after us follow
the Map across the Sands That
Cannot Be Crossed; in an oasis of
spring snow, you will find respite.
Let him who comes climb Sheba's
easternmost breast; lay down your
head inside the nipple alongside a
faithful friend with one final
secret to share. Let him who comes
turn away from the past; take the
Great Road Bilqis built for
Solomon, but do not kneel before
the Silent Ones who watch. Let him
who comes sit with Solomon at the
Table of Kings; fill your belly
with their feast, but never forget
the ancient evil buried beneath
Asmodeus' bones.

EXT. CAMP, VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS - NIGHT

ALLAN lowers the letter, finishing the rest from memory.

ALLAN

Let him Kill Gagool. Pray for my soul.

(beat)

Silvestre's mate, Zacuto, returned to Portugal with the map and nightmarish tales of a pagan tribe that wiped out his brothers. The Portuguese king sent 100 more knights to find the diamonds.

PETTIGREW

Let me guess. They never returned.

ALLAN

Like I keep saying, nobody ever does.

PETTIGREW

But who is this *Bilqis*?

ABIGAIL

The Queen of Sheba.

ALLAN looks at ABIGAIL, surprised by her knowledge.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

I did some of my own research before I left England. I might be just a silly society girl to you, Mr. Quartermain, but I do have my talents.

ALLAN

Oh, I bet you do.

PETTIGREW

Careful, Quartermain.

ABIGAIL

While her male counterparts built empires with brute force, Bilqis used trade to expand her borders. Popular legend says she seduced Solomon to this end, but ultimately found herself trapped by her love for him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

A great sorceress, she had taught him how to control the birds and beasts -- even the legions of demons that had roamed the earth since Creation. Jewish and Islamic scholars both tell you the same stories. Solomon, wisest of all the ancient kings, used *demons* to build the first Temple of Jerusalem.

ALLAN stands, chuckling.

ALLAN

Demons? Cloven hooves, horns, bat wings -- that sort of thing?

ABIGAIL

The stories are obviously not meant to be taken literally.

ALLAN

(walking away)

They never are.

UMBOPA is crouched on the hill, eerily watching from the shadows. His ominous face suggests dark knowledge.

INT. LOUNGE, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY reads in a secluded window nook.

EXT. CAMP, VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS - DAWN

Morning mist rolls over the sleeping camp. ALLAN, the first to rise, walks between tents and sleeping rolls.

ALLAN

Up and at 'em!

(knocks on wagon)

You decent, Ms. March?

He rounds the wagon, peers inside. No ABIGAIL; the wagon looks to be in disarray.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

All right, who was supposed to be watching the princess?

VENTVOGEL points at PETTIGREW, who's asleep on his bedroll, a dart sticking out of his throat. ALLAN sighs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Not even a day out of Durban, and
she's already slowing us down.

(to the others)

Ms. March has gone and gotten
herself kidnapped. Continue onward
while I go fetch her, would you?

(indicates PETTIGREW)

Take Sleeping Beauty with you, too.

UMBOPA looks up from where he's examining footprints.

UMBOPA

I will come with you, Macumazahn.

ALLAN

Sure. Why not?

EXT. FOREST - AFTERNOON

ALLAN and UMBOPA track through the woods. UMBOPA points with
his spear at the broken branches of a bush. ALLAN finds a
moss-covered rock, moss scratched away.

EDGE OF PLAIN - LATER

ALLAN and UMBOPA peeks over a ridge; the forest opens up into
a plain where two GIRAFFE are feeding.

An eight-foot-long BLACK MAMBA slithers toward their legs.

The GIRAFFE scatter suddenly at the sound of MOTORS. A train
of wagons, horse-drawn heavy artillery, and a TRUCK and TWO
CARS cross the plain in the distance.

INT. MILITARY CAR - CONTINUOUS

SIR RICHARD (60s; white hair), in British general's uniform,
sits in the back seat, reading PETTIGREW's telegram.

EXT. EDGE OF PLAIN, FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The BLACK MAMBA continues to slither toward ALLAN and UMBOPA.

ALLAN rolls over. An ancient STONE OBELISK stands near them,
leaning as if roots had upheaved it over the centuries.

The BLACK MAMBA raises its head to strike.

ALLAN eyes TWO PICTOGRAPHS on the obelisk, one breasted.

ALLAN

What is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Without looking, UMBOPA's hand lashes out with his large knife, decapitates the MAMBA. Absent reaction to the near-death experience, he answers ALLAN.

UMBOPA

Bilqis, the First Queen. The other
is Asmodeus, father of all demons.

ALLAN

More superstitions.
(picks up mamba)
Lunch?

EXT. ZULU RAIDER CAMP - NIGHT

Four ZULU WARRIORS eat and joke around a fire made at the center of scattered the last remnants of ancient ruins.

ABIGAIL lies on her side nearby, gagged, ankles and wrists bound -- struggling.

ALLAN wades through a marsh toward the fire's light, only his face from the nose up exposed. Beside him floats a raft of reeds, carrying his elephant gun. CROCODILES lurk around him.

ABIGAIL manages to roll onto her knees. The ZULUS don't notice. Next, she bounces onto her feet, wobbling.

ALLAN sneaks through tall reeds toward the camp, gun ready.

ABIGAIL hops away.

The ZULU WARRIORS continue to joke. ALLAN springs from the reeds then, landing amongst them with his gun aimed at the RAIDER CHIEF. The CHIEF blinks, then starts laughing.

RAIDER CHIEF

Macumazahn?

ALLAN

Mageba?

MAGEBA (40) stands and hugs ALLAN as the other ZULU laugh.

ABIGAIL, who has made it into the reeds, continues to hop away from the confusing voices.

MAGEBA

What are you doing here?

ALLAN

Well, you kidnapped my contract.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGEBA

The girl is yours?

ALLAN

Unfortunately. I'm really going to need her back now.

The other ZULU grab their guns. UMBOPA emerges from bushes then, rifle aimed at their backs. MAGEBA chuckles at this.

MAGEBA

Ah, I should've known better than to underestimate you, old friend. Will you stay for dinner?

ABIGAIL, still hopping away, trips on what looks like this base of a broken obelisk -- and falls into the marsh.

ALLAN

What was that?

MAGEBA glances at where ABIGAIL had been lying and sighs.

MAGEBA

She is the most infuriating white woman I have ever met.

ALLAN

Tell me about it.

UNDERWATER

ABIGAIL is flopping about, drowning. Before her, she spots part of an obelisk that fell into the water long ago -- and a CROCODILE skulking around it. Her eyes bulge.

ZULU RAIDER CAMP

ALLAN drags ABIGAIL out of the water even as she still struggles. Removes her gag.

ALLAN

Calm down, will you?

ABIGAIL

What took you so long?!
(sees MAGEBA)
Behind you!

ALLAN

Oh, *him*. We're old friends...more or less.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

That man fondled my bum!

ALLAN

Don't act like it's a first for you.

ABIGAIL

How dare you--

ALLAN rolls his eyes, yanks her gag back into place.

MONTAGE - LATER

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and the ZULUS laugh, eat, and, more importantly, drink, passing bottles around. ABIGAIL is the most able boozier of them all, earning impressed looks.

The night becomes progressively more wild, punctuated by ABIGAIL taking a comb from her skirt to brush her comically natty hair and, when she can't, cutting at its length with ALLAN's knife as the others laugh drunkenly.

ALLAN takes another drink, falls over. ABIGAIL laughs, keeps drinking. UMBOPA watches silently from outside the camp.

MORNING

The camp is quiet. ABIGAIL wakes slowly, realizes she's been sleeping in her own drool -- and against ALLAN's chest!

ABIGAIL

What the hell happened last night?

That's when ABIGAIL also realizes water has pooled around her legs. It's trickling down the slope they lie at the foot of -- but that's confusing, since there was no slope last night.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Mr. Quartermain.

ALLAN doesn't wake, but we now recognize what ABIGAIL is panicking about. The camp has dropped some ten feet -- A SINKHOLE! Scattered ZULU limbs stick out of the loose earth; a tree leans over them; and the water is trickling from the marsh -- at any moment it could turn into a waterfall.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Mr. Quartermain!

ALLAN starts to wake then, his head throbbing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

What the hell happened last--

ABIGAIL

Look!

ALLAN's eyes bulge at the sinkhole -- especially the ruins of a monster-faced statue -- and he rolls to his knees. The earth GROANS, sinking more in spots.

ALLAN

Sinkhole. Don't. Make. Any. Sudden movements.

ALLAN eases himself to his feet, elephant gun in hand. Helps ABIGAIL to her feet.

ABIGAIL

Where's Umbopa?

He doesn't try to figure that out. They slowly back away from the invading marsh; the water flow is picking up. The monster-faced statue falls over, splashes.

As they approach the sinkhole wall, chunks of earth give way and the marsh begins to flow -- then FLOOD in!

ALLAN

Come on.

ALLAN helps ABIGAIL up the loose wall of dirt, slipping, searching for purchase as the sinkhole fills with water. It's up to their knees now. They must get higher, especially when--
--a CROCODILE slides down the slope, splashing into the hole.

UMBOPA appears at the edge then, yanks ABIGAIL out. As he reaches for ALLAN, the 11-foot-long CROCODILE lunges out of the water at ALLAN's ankles. ALLAN kicks, the CROCODILE's jaws snaps, UMBOPA tries to hold onto wet wrists.

ALLAN finally pins his boots against the beast's open jaws as ABIGAIL throws stones at it. UMBOPA grabs his shirt, hauls him to safety even as the wall of the sinkhole collapses.

From above, we see theirs wasn't the only sinkhole either. ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and UMBOPA run, rounding MORE SINKHOLES as they appear, leaping away from VANISHING EARTH and exploding rock, dodging enormous trees as they uproot. Every step lands on a surface that seems to disappear or buck on them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They're trying to reach an outcropping of safe rock, even as Africa seems to be swallowing itself up behind them. And, just as they're about to make it--

INT. LOUNGE, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

NEVILLE yanks ALLAN's book out of HENRY's hands as HENRY sits in his reading nook.

NEVILLE

What's this now?

HENRY

Hey, give it back!

HENRY grabs for the book, but one of NEVILLE's CRONIES trips him and he crashes to the ground.

Laughing, NEVILLE moves into the center of the lounge where other STUDENTS -- including EDDIE BROWN (10) -- read, do homework, and play board games around the massive fireplace.

NEVILLE

*King Solomon's Mines...by Allan
Quarterbrain.*

HENRY

(standing)

Neville, I'm going to--

The CRONIES grab HENRY before he can act.

NEVILLE

No, no, let him go.

And so the CRONIES do. HENRY stands there, breathing hard.

NEVILLE (CONT'D)

You're going to what, Henry
Quarterbrain?

But HENRY doesn't move. It's clear now, he's too scared.

NEVILLE (CONT'D)

That's what I thought. Now this is
what you get for forgetting your
place.

The CRONIES grab HENRY again. NEVILLE takes the book's cover in both hands and tears.

HENRY

NO!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEVILLE drops one of the halves, tears the other half in two again -- laughing with his CRONIES and other STUDENTS.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Please, don't! Don't!

NEVILLE takes one section and whips it into the fireplace.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Please!

HENRY is bawling so hard now, the CRONIES let him fall to his knees. This is like losing his father for real.

NEVILLE

But wait, there's more!

He throws another book section into the fireplace.

MR. GIBBONS (O.S.)

THAT IS ENOUGH, MR. SINCLAIR!

Everyone freezes at MR. GIBBONS' thunderous voice; he stands in the doorway, furious.

EDDIE jumps at the fireplace, snatches the second section of the book NEVILLE threw in. The other section, however, is already a black husk.

GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY

HENRY, sniffing away tears, clutching half of his father's book to his chest, stalks angrily away. EDDIE runs up.

EDDIE

Henry.

HENRY

What?!

EDDIE

I just...I wanted to give you this.

EDDIE holds out the section of the book he rescued. HENRY snatches it out of the student's hands, desperate for it.

HENRY

Give me that!

He stomps away, stops, thinks. Finally turns.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

I looked at a few pages. Did your father really do all those things?

HENRY nods slowly.

HENRY'S BEDROOM

HENRY and EDDIE sit on the floor, reading from the section EDDIE saved -- the edges are burned black and the first couple of pages are half-burned away. HENRY is devastated.

HENRY

Four chapters. *Six weeks* lost.

EXT. SAVANNAH WOODLAND - AFTERNOON

The CARAVAN crosses a hill, green country around them. ZEBRA mill about a waterhole, GIRAFFE move between them.

ABIGAIL fingers her new bush-appropriate, modern-by-today's-standards haircut. She now wears pants.

ALLAN (V.O.)

--day by day we found clues of a civilization long forgotten along with its superstitions.

INT. GORGE - AFTERNOON

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW explore the walls of a gorge, which have been covered by ancient San paintings similar to those of Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc. Elephant, lion, giraffe...a variation on the Bilqis pictograph...and then swirling, MONSTROUS FIGURES -- some devouring warriors.

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

The CARAVAN presses on as a gang of VERVET MONKEYS laugh and leap through the branches around them.

ABIGAIL smiles widely at them, when something soft and brown hits her face. Disgusted and confused, she wipes and flings the goop away even as PETTIGREW can't help laughing at her.

ABIGAIL

What is this?!

UMBOPA

Maybe you don't want to know.

EXT. TUGELA WATERFALL - AFTERNOON

The CARAVAN has stopped for lunch near the picturesque TUGELA WATERFALL, the second highest in the world.

EXT. WETLANDS - MORNING

The CARAVAN weaves through animal-rich wetlands. STORKS take flight. ABIGAIL grins, awed by the natural beauty.

LATER

The CARAVAN has braked to address wheel troubles. While others work, ABIGAIL notices a BABY HIPPOPOTAMUS rolling about near the waterline of a marsh; the wrinkly little thing is absolutely adorable, even the way it snorts.

ABIGAIL

Hey there.

She crouches down to pet its head -- which is when the 5,000-pound MOTHER HIPPO surfaces, ROARING so powerfully that ABIGAIL's hair is blown by her breath.

ALLAN grabs ABIGAIL, yanks her away from the MOTHER.

ALLAN

It's not a dog!

EXT. CAMP, FOREST - NIGHT

ALLAN'S PARTY, except UMBOPA, eat meat around two fires.

ALLAN pulls a long, thick bone from the fire with a rag and cracks it in two with a hatchet. Within moments, he's SLURPING marrow out of the end. ABIGAIL, who's biting daintily at her meat, gags at the gross sight.

ALLAN

What? There's no greater luxury in the bush than giraffe marrow.

VENTVOGEL adds something in Khoi.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Indeed, *except* for elephant heart.

ABIGAIL gags again. PETTIGREW isn't amused.

PETTIGREW

I'd take a *civilized* roast duck any day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA watches the others, crouched at the edge of camp.

ALLAN

Curtis would've put a man's eye out before he let him claim an elephant's heart from a fresh kill.

ABIGAIL

Tell me about him. You're always so reluctant to speak of him.

ALLAN

(contemplative pause)

If we find your Curtis, I'm sure he'll talk your ear off. The man loves the sound of his own voice.

ALLAN chuckles, ABIGAIL laughs.

ABIGAIL

May I ask...what drove you apart?

ALLAN

Curtis and I, we fought as volunteers for the British in the Boer War. While I eventually realized the Queen was just trying to steal land from poor farmers and natives, he refused to turn his back his country.

PETTIGREW

The Queen didn't see it that way. She still doesn't.

ABIGAIL

You turned your backs on each other because of a...*political* disagreement?

ALLAN

Not exactly. He tried to stop me, so I shot him in the leg.

ABIGAIL

Oh.

ALLAN

I liked the idea the wound would keep him safe from all that insanity, too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA (O.S.)

Macumazahn.

ALLAN looks over at UMBOPA, who has stood and points with his spear into the darkness around them.

UMBOPA (CONT'D)

Indlovu.

The other AFRICANS stand, picking up their spears and rifles. Off their reactions, PETTIGREW reaches for his rifle.

ABIGAIL

What is it?

ALLAN

(stands slowly)

Shh.

NEARBY

Moonlight trickles through twisted branches. ALLAN leads his PARTY to the edge of a clearing where they all whisper.

PETTIGREW

What is it?

UMBOPA

A road.

A CRUNCHING, like wood CRACKING over and over, slowly rises.

PETTIGREW

To where?

UMBOPA

Not that kind of road.

ABIGAIL

Can you feel that? The earth
is...trembling.

Forty feet away, small trees suddenly part, many shattering. From the woods, a giant black shape emerges -- an AFRICAN ELEPHANT, the largest land animal in the world!

ABIGAIL starts, but ALLAN clamps his hand over her mouth. More ELEPHANTS appear, following the leader.

UMBOPA

Indlovu.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

When ALLAN removes his hand, ABIGAIL is smiling at the magic of the moment.

PETTIGREW slowly raises his gun, to take aim at an ELEPHANT -- but UMBOPA grabs him by his wrist.

PETTIGREW

Take your hand off me.

ALLAN lowers PETTIGREW's gun. Now UMBOPA removes his hand, which he wouldn't have otherwise.

ALLAN

We've got enough meat already.

PETTIGREW

But I've never brought down an elephant before.

ALLAN

First, your shot will probably cause a stampede you wouldn't want to be around for. Second, in this country, you don't kill anything you don't intend to eat or make use of. It's the deal you must make with the land.

PETTIGREW

The land? You speak of it like it's a living thing.

ABIGAIL

(interrupting them)

They're, they're beautiful.

The animals seem almost SUPERNATURAL in the moonlight. One pauses before ALLAN, bows its head slightly as if it senses something noble in ALLAN. ALLAN reaches out and strokes its trunk, encourages a nervous, but awed ABIGAIL to do the same.

EXT. SAVANNAH WOODLAND - MORNING

UMBOPA and KHIVA lead the CARAVAN, trailed by the oxen-drawn wagon. ABIGAIL sits in the driver's seat next to TOM, while ALLAN walks alongside, puffing thoughtfully on his pipe. She notices the hunter seems to be out of sorts.

ABIGAIL

What's on your mind, Mr. Quartermain?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

I, ah... It's the fifth of January.

She doesn't get why that matters.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

I write my son, Henry, in the last week of November, to make sure it reaches him by Christmas day. In the hurry to leave, I forgot.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

EDDIE points at the book section he and HENRY are reading.

EDDIE

See, that must be why you didn't hear from him at Christmas.

EXT. SAVANNAH WOODLAND - AFTERNOON

Back to the CARAVAN. ABIGAIL smiles sadly at ALLAN.

ABIGAIL

Your son, Henry. Was he named after my...?

ALLAN doesn't answer.

KHIVA

Smoke!

Dark smoke rises over the trees from somewhere ahead.

EXT. TRADING POST - LATER

A cluster of wood buildings and tents have been burned to the ground. ALLAN'S PARTY wanders through the smoldering carnage, avoiding the CHARRED BODIES that lie here and there.

ABIGAIL

(handkerchief to mouth)

Who were they?

ALLAN

Boer settlers. Just looking for a better life.

VENTVOGEL says something in Khoi, ALLAN nods in agreement. UMBOPA lifts a tent flap and spots the legs of a dead child.

ABIGAIL

But who would do such a thing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

The British Army, judging by the bayonet wounds. Boot tracks. Mostly, the total disregard for human life gives their involvement away.

PETTIGREW

I take offense to that, Quartermain.

ALLAN

(walking away)
I would be disappointed if you didn't.

EXT. SAVANNAH WOODLAND - MORNING

The CARAVAN presses on, UMBOPA and KHIWA in the lead. It's passing a HERD OF 12 ELEPHANTS grazing lazily 30 feet away.

From the driver's seat, ABIGAIL looks through the tent, watches ALLAN walking behind the wagon. PETTIGREW sees this, darkens with jealousy.

At the front of the CARAVAN, UMBOPA slows, drifting toward the wagon. He's unfastened his belt, lets it fall away.

TOM brakes the oxen, slowly stopping the wagon.

PETTIGREW

What's happening?

ALLAN

Just a little company.

Trying not to give off any sign of concern, ALLAN casually searches the woods. He spots four -- no, five -- NATIVE AFRICANS armed with spears and shields.

He looks through the back of the wagon's tent at ABIGAIL, then his elephant gun hanging inside.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Ms. March, would you be a dear and fetch my gun there?

ABIGAIL nods nervously, slowly eases off the driver's bench.

UMBOPA unfastens his bandolier, lets it fall away.

THIRTY ARMED ZULU WARRIORS have now emerged from the underbrush. They're surrounding the CARAVAN!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VENTVOGEL, KHIVA, and the AFRICAN SERVANTS move toward the wagon to create a centralized defense. GOZA remains at the head of the CARAVAN, calming the oxen.

UMBOPA has set his rifle on the driver's bench, so he can let his overcoat fall away -- revealing an almost naked warrior's body. His spear is strapped to his back like a sword.

PETTIGREW's hand slowly reaches for his slung rifle.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Not yet.

ABIGAIL eases ALLAN's elephant gun off the rack, starts to pass it to him, but--

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Load it first.

ABIGAIL nods. As the ZULU creep forward, eyes hungry for blood, she loads shell...after shell...after shell.

UMBOPA carefully picks his rifle back up, eyes counting threats around him.

UMBOPA

Indlovu.

ALLAN heard that. He mutters to himself.

ALLAN

Oh this isn't going to end well.

The ZULU are each ten to 20 feet away.

PETTIGREW

Quartermain.

ALLAN

Protect Ms. March.

(shouts)

Now!

UMBOPA spins around the front of the wagon and fires into the ELEPHANTS, the shot shattering a tree amidst them. The ELEPHANTS turn, confused, then release TRUMPETING ROARS--

--AS THEY BEGIN TO CHARGE!

ABIGAIL tosses ALLAN his elephant gun, while PETTIGREW unslings his rifle and begins firing at ZULU.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A spear soars through the air at UMBOPA's back. He spins, swats it out of the air with his rifle, and runs for a large tree while firing from his waist -- hitting ZULU as he goes.

PETTIGREW jumps into the wagon, shouting at ABIGAIL.

PETTIGREW

Get down!

The ELEPHANTS stampede through ZULU, their SEVEN-FOOT TUSKS flinging bodies INTO THE AIR.

Ducked behind a tree, ALLAN blasts away, his shots detonating tree trunks and knocking ZULU down like battering rams.

Two ZULU charge UMBOPA with their spears. UMBOPA draws his own spear, and, with graceful ease, blocks the attacks. Slashes one ZULU across the neck, impales the other in the chest.

UMBOPA rips his spear back out, spins, and lets it fly -- into the back of a ZULU about to ambush ALLAN.

ZULU continue to squeal, running from the stampeding ELEPHANTS. AFRICAN SERVANTS #1 and #2 get caught in the middle; one is scooped up by tusks and TOSSED INTO BRANCHES.

As PETTIGREW fires out of the wagon, he realizes the ELEPHANTS aren't slowing.

PETTIGREW (CONT'D)

Jump!

He and ABIGAIL leap from the wagon into fleeing ZULU just before -- an ELEPHANT runs through the massive vehicle, destroying it as thoroughly as an artillery shell would.

Harnessed oxen try to escape, even as ELEPHANTS knock them down. One gets flipped through the air, slamming into a ZULU.

PETTIGREW drags ABIGAIL to her feet as ELEPHANTS stampede around them. As they hop left and right, thick legs stomp. Tusks flash, trunks whip, dirt flies as if caught in a storm.

Finally, one of the ELEPHANTS sideswipes PETTIGREW, knocking him away from ABIGAIL. She screams, losing sight of him.

ALLAN looks over, finds ABIGAIL's escaped the ELEPHANTS that just ran past -- but another, the HERD's BIGGEST BULL, is charging her now! He dashes forward, throws her backwards as he lifts his elephant gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN fires. The BULL continues to charge forward, roaring before crashing to the ground and sliding right at ALLAN!

ABIGAIL watches as a dirt cloud created by the approaching behemoth engulfs ALLAN. A moment later, this cloud clears -- revealing ALLAN standing in front of the BULL's head, two EIGHT-FOOT-LONG TUSKS curving up on either side of him!

The ELEPHANTS disperse into the woods, their TRUMPETING ROARS quieting. VENTVOGEL pulls his spear from a dead ZULU. UMBOPA wipes his knife clean of blood.

ALLAN turns, finds ABIGAIL looking at him with relief.

PETTIGREW GROANS. He's lying in wagon wreckage, coming to. ABIGAIL runs to him, helps him sit up.

ABIGAIL

Captain Pettigrew!

PETTIGREW

Are you hurt?

ABIGAIL

I'm not the one on my back.

PETTIGREW

It's not me I'm worried about.

He looks into her eyes, she smiles sweetly.

ALLAN, who's been watching this apparently romantic exchange, turns away to inspect the damage. UMBOPA and VENTVOGEL are kicking through the elephants' wake.

ALLAN

How bad is it?

VENTVOGEL answers at length in Khoi. ABIGAIL walks over.

ABIGAIL

What is it?

ALLAN

The servants are both dead. So's Tom.

The SERVANT's body still dangles from branches. GOZA kneels over his friend's body, mourning. ALLAN kicks debris, thinks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Well. It was only another week to Sitanda's Kraal by wagon and, after that -- if we found no sign of Curtis there -- we were going to have to go it by foot anyway. We'll just have to shed some of the extra supplies now, use the oxen we have left to carry the rest.

Furious, PETTIGREW draws his pistol and limps toward UMBOPA.

PETTIGREW

You brainless savage, you could've gotten us all killed.

ABIGAIL

Captain!

PETTIGREW

As it is, three of our men are dead -- and it's all your fault!

UMBOPA stares into PETTIGREW; he has no apparent reaction to the pistol pointed at him.

This is the first time we're able to appreciate his naked glory: his muscular body is covered in SCARS; his arms are ringed by TATTOOS; his waist is covered by an ARMORED GIRDLE.

ALLAN

What he did probably saved our lives, Captain. Those Zulu were going to slaughter us.

PETTIGREW

How do you know? I thought you said they weren't all animals like this one. Perhaps they just wanted to trade, did you think of that?

ALLAN

Your army slaughtered their people during the last two wars, and now they're back with an even fouler disposition judging by what we've seen. Those warriors would've slit our throats just as a precaution!

PETTIGREW's pistol shakes. Finally, he lowers it. UMBOPA still stares into him.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

HENRY and EDDIE lower ALLAN's book, as breathless as if they themselves had just been part of the action.

EDDIE

Wow. That was...

HENRY

Yeah.

EDDIE notices the clock on the wall, jumps to his feet.

EDDIE

Great, it's almost lights-out. Can I read some more with you tomorrow?

HENRY

Um...sure. But be here at 2 o'clock exactly. I don't want to wait.

EDDIE

I'll be here.

EDDIE nods, closes the door. HENRY is left grinning.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

A primitive bell RINGS. STUDENTS flood into the hallway.

MR. GIBBON'S CLASSROOM

On his way out of the classroom, HENRY walks past NEVILLE, who's already written "I WILL NOT DESTROY OTHER PEOPLE'S PROPERTY" 50 times across the chalkboard.

NEVILLE

Don't think I'm not going to pay you and Mr. Gibbons back for this.

HENRY'S BEDROOM - LATER

HENRY sits on his bed, his father's book in his lap, waiting anxiously. The clock reads 2:07. That's it; EDDIE had his chance. He opens the book--

There's a KNOCK at the door then. EDDIE sticks his head in.

EDDIE

Sorry I'm late.

HENRY

Hurry up, get in here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE hesitates.

HENRY (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

EDDIE

I, ah...I might have told some people about your father's book.

HENRY

What? Who?!

EDDIE hesitates again, then opens the door and enters -- followed by four other STUDENTS, #1 to #4.

STUDENT #1

We want to read it, too.

HENRY glares angrily at EDDIE, but then he thinks. Nobody likes him -- now these STUDENT want to hide away in his room!

HENRY

Close the door behind you.

CUT TO:

HENRY sits on the floor, surrounded by EDDIE and the other STUDENTS. They're all trying to read the same words.

HENRY (CONT'D)

This isn't going to work.

(considers torn book)

It's already in pieces anyway.

HENRY tears the section of book he holds in two. He hands the part he's done with to STUDENT #1, who reads it with the newcomers. HENRY and EDDIE start where they left off.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Chapter Eleven.

EDDIE

Into the Desert.

EXT. VILLAGE CENTER, SITANDA'S KRAAL - AFTERNOON

Sitanda's Kraal is a Boer trading post, surrounded by a friendly Zulu community. As ALLAN leads his remaining PARTY through the village, two ox carrying their supplies, they find hardy MEN and WOMEN, black and white, preparing for war.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (V.O.)

We arrived in Sitanda's Kraal's in the second week of March, anxious to rest before crossing the Lukanga River and beginning our long trek across the desert I expected would finally be our doom.

INT. TENTED PORCH, HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

HENDRIK (64; Dutch accent; rugged grandfather type) digs through boxes of junk he's accumulated over the years and stored out here in his dark, tented porch.

ALLAN (O.S.)

How you going, you old Voortrekker?

HENDRIK spins, pistol drawn. ALLAN puffs on his pipe.

HENDRIK

Qaurtermain? Quartermain!

He laughs, holsters his pistol, scoops ALLAN into a hug.

ALLAN

It's good to see you, too, Hendrik.

HENDRIK

But what are you doing out here?

ABIGAIL enters, smiling, followed by a saturnine PETTIGREW.

ABIGAIL

Good day, sir.

HENDRIK

(grins at ALLAN)

You brought me a *woman*? Hmm, I usually prefer them with a bit more meat on their bones, but you can't be picky at my age, now can you?

ABIGAIL laughs softly; she likes this man's lively energy.

ALLAN

We're looking for Curtis, Hendrik.

ABIGAIL

Has he passed through here?

HENDRIK

Oh, about 14 months ago, I'd say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL's spirits rise. But HENDRIK looks grimly at ALLAN.

HENDRIK (CONT'D)

He was after the mines. We get a few of them a year out here, but we never see them again, not after their boots touch the desert sand.

ABIGAIL

What about Curtis?

HENDRIK shakes his head. PETTIGREW looks to ALLAN.

PETTIGREW

That settles it. We'll have to follow him in.

HENDRIK

You came for the mines, too?

ABIGAIL

Just Curtis. He's my father.

HENDRIK

Well, miss, if anybody could do it, it would be Curtis.

(to ALLAN)

But that doesn't mean he did. To chase those mines is as good as putting a knife in your own heart.

(to ABIGAIL and PETTIGREW)

They represent everything we think we want in this world. Wealth, happiness, freedom. Power. But they offer nothing but death, that's their trick. That's why the natives talk about them like they were some kind of ring in Dante's hell.

Long pause as ALLAN'S PARTY absorbs that.

ABIGAIL

I just want my father.

HENDRIK

Then good luck, miss.

ALLAN

We don't need much, Hendrik. Just some light provisions, ammo if you can spare it, and some tobacco weed would be much appreciated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENDRIK

You can have my best tobacco. But I'm not sure how much ammunition we can spare. Those damn British roosters have come back looking for diamonds, but we're no more willing to accommodate them than we were last time. Maybe if you find Solomon's treasure chambers, you can buy us a proper army to kick their collective asses with.

ALLAN and HENDRIK laugh, but PETTIGREW shifts uneasily considering his mission here. HENDRIK holds up a finger then, finally remembering where the thing he was looking for is.

HENDRIK (CONT'D)

Eureka!

He shoves aside items stacked along the wall, and pulls from a case a dusty, half-folded piece of multi-colored cloth.

EXT. HENDRIK'S HOUSE, SINTANDA'S KRAAL - MOMENTS LATER

As ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW watch, HENDRIK hammers the cloth along his porch -- a blue flag crossed by a red X. He grins as other BOER SETTLERS notice his patriotic display.

HENDRIK

There. Now those roosters will remember we're Voortrekkers when they come to run us out. Maybe it'll give them second thoughts!

SOUTH BANK, LUKANGA RIVER - LATER

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW sit in one small boat, UMBOPA, VENTVOGEL, KHIVA, and GOZA in another; two NATIVE AFRICANS use a rope stretched across the river to pull the boats between banks. HENDRIK waves to them from the south bank.

EXT. FIELD, OUTSIDE SITANDA'S KRAAL - LATER

ALLAN leads the others out of SITANDA'S KRAAL's north side, across a familiar green field covered in countless large stones and broken rocks that stand up unnaturally.

ALLAN

Grave markers. Your father and I fought for the British here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL is bothered by what the stones mean; some even have names etched into them. She leans closer to examine a round one -- and yelps, falling back into PETTIGREW's arms.

The stone is actually part of a HUMAN SKULL, exposed by the elements. ALLAN grimaces at it.

UMBOPA

There are many ghosts here.

CUT TO:

ALLAN'S PARTY climb a tall slope at the edge of the field; it's a natural border, running east and west interminably.

On the other side, an ENDLESS, GLISTENING WHITE-GOLD DESERT.

ALLAN

Let him who comes after us follow
the Map across the Sands That
Cannot Be Crossed; in an oasis of
spring snow, you will find respite.

While ABIGAIL consults the Map of Silvestre, ALLAN looks through binoculars at the desert. He can see twin mountains rising out of a wall of lower-altitude mountains.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Sheba's Breasts.

ABIGAIL

But how do you find snow in the
desert?

ALLAN

It's three days until the waterhole
if we can figure out what the map
means, and we've got just enough
water to get us that far. That
means this is it.

ABIGAIL

It?

ALLAN

In less than a day, this will be
the moment you won't be able to let
go. The moment that drives you mad
as your throat tightens with thirst
until it feels like you're choking.
We can turn back, nobody will think
any less of you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

It must be easy for you to say that.

ALLAN doesn't understand her meaning.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

You were so insistent upon your fee for this expedition reaching your son in the case of your death. Have you ever wondered if he'd prefer to just have you?

ALLAN

You really don't know what you're talking about, Ms. March.

ABIGAIL

Of course not. I'm just the silly girl who came looking for her father when logic said he was dead, while your son is alive and only a ship's passage away.

ALLAN

You do realize you're about to die for a man who abandoned you before you knew how to speak.

ABIGAIL

We all make mistakes, don't we, Mr. Quartermain? Me. Curtis. You.

(gazes out at desert)

No. I can't give up on my father now, no matter what you say, not after coming so far. You can keep your moment, Mr. Quartermain.

ALLAN

Can't say I'm surprised. You're as stubborn as Curtis.

PETTIGREW

Now that we're agreed, what's next?

ABIGAIL starts down the desert side of the slope. ALLAN watches her, secretly impressed by her strength.

ABIGAIL

The sun will be down soon. Let's not waste anymore time.

PETTIGREW and the others follow, except for UMBOPA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA

We do not carry enough water to reach the oasis.

ALLAN

I know. But she would have insisted on trying anyway.

They start after her.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY tears out the page he just read, hands it to EDDIE, who hands the page he just read to STUDENT #1, and so on.

EXT. DESERT - DAWN

From atop a rocky ridge, ALLAN peers through his binoculars at Sheba's Breasts, then behind him.

ALLAN

We made good distance, but we'll go slower with every day that passes.

He's speaking to ABIGAIL and PETTIGREW, who stand at the base of a ridge. The AFRICANS are preparing camp.

AFTERNOON

The sun blazes in the sky above. ALLAN'S PARTY tries to sleep under a rocky outcropping, but it's still uncomfortable.

DUSK

Packs on their backs, ALLAN'S PARTY prepares to continue their trek. A canteen is handed around.

UMBOPA

One sip. No more.

NIGHT

ALLAN's PARTY trudges through deep sand, exhausted. There's no more rock out here, only scrub and sand.

AFTERNOON

The desert radiates visible heat. ALLAN'S PARTY have dug shallow holes and tented themselves under scrub and clothing, but sunlight still finds them as they struggle to sleep.

NIGHT

ALLAN'S PARTY staggers along now, so weak; their lips are starting to crack, they cough. Canteens are empty. VENTVOGEL mutters something.

KHIVA

I smell water, too. It's in the air.

ABIGAIL and PETTIGREW perk up at that, looking around. UMBOPA nods at thick clouds above.

UMBOPA

It is in the clouds.

ALLAN

And in about two months it will no doubt fall and wash our bones.

DAWN

The already-blazing red sun rises out of the horizon. ALLAN, UMBOPA, and VENTVOGEL gaze blearily at it, then at Sheba's Breasts. They've made it almost halfway.

UMBOPA

We should not stop for sleep. None of us will make it through the day.

ALLAN

If we don't find the waterhole...or pass it without realizing--

UMBOPA

We will find it, or we won't.

ALLAN nods with grim understanding.

MORNING

ALLAN'S PARTY staggers along. ABIGAIL falls, UMBOPA helps her up. KHIVA drops to one knee.

ALLAN looks back to check on the others -- GOZA lies face down 50 feet behind him. Torn, ALLAN considers going back...but knows he can't.

LATER

ABIGAIL notices tiny white flowers in her daze, but staggers past. VENTVOGEL mutters something, mutters it again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

What did he say?

ALLAN

He smells water again.

ABIGAIL looks up at the blue sky, void of clouds.

UMBOPA

I smell it, too. Look!

UMBOPA points at more of the flowers ABIGAIL noticed; the white petals cover a round slope like snow.

PETTIGREW

An oasis of spring snow!

UMBOPA claws his way up a slope of sand now, only to fall down the other side into black sand. MOIST sand. His eyes open wide like saucers and he shouts hoarsely.

UMBOPA

Macumazahn! Macumazahn!

The others slide down the slope into the sand after UMBOPA and dig frantically with hands, spears, and rifle stocks.

And then UMBOPA's hole produces A FEW BUBBLES OF WATER.

UMBOPA (CONT'D)

Water. Wa-wa-water!

Black water slowly gurgles up, filling the hole. All fall on the sandy liquid, scooping it into their mouths.

ABIGAIL

I've never tasted anything so good!

Jubilant, ALLAN grabs ABIGAIL and hugs her. She doesn't try to stop him until she realizes PETTIGREW is watching.

Elsewhere, KHIWA LIES DEAD against the slope ALAN'S PARTY just crested. Nearby, a CRUMBLING STATUE stands, half-broken arm raised as if to say, "Here, sate your thirst on this long road." Remains of SOLOMON'S ROAD peek out from drifting sand.

EXT. BASE OF SHEBA'S BREASTS - NIGHT

With the desert behind them, ALLAN'S PARTY hikes up a scree-covered slope toward SHEBA'S BREASTS -- two volcano-shaped voids in an otherwise starry sky. Snow caps -- SHEBA'S NIPPLES -- glister silver in the moonlight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (V.O.)

After making camp at the waterhole for the day, we filled our canteens and set out again at dusk. It was still three days journey to the base of Sheba's Breasts.

EXT. ROCK PATH, SHEBA'S BREASTS - AFTERNOON

Sheba's Breasts are more imposing in daylight, each mountain linked by a wall of rock; the snow is still so far away. ALLAN'S PARTY, faces sunburned, make this slow ascent. VENTVOGEL tries to sip from his canteen, but finds it empty.

ALLAN (V.O.)

Daily I wonder what sort of man you are becoming, Henry.

EXT. CAMP, SHEBA'S BREASTS - NIGHT

While the others sleep in a shallow cave, a fire half-blazing before them, ALLAN scribbles in the diary CHARLIE gave him.

ALLAN

Do you think of me often, even half as much as I think of you?

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY tears out and hands off another page of his book, which leads to pages being passed along six other STUDENTS. At the tail end, EDDIE takes his used up page and runs out the door.

ALLAN (V.O.)

I wonder if you will ever read these words. I'm quite certain if you do, it will mean someone else carried them back across the desert as Castro Zacuto carried Silvestre's map to their king.

SECOND-FLOOR HALLWAY

From around a corner, NEVILLE watches HENRY's room with vengeance in his eyes. EDDIE runs out and meets STUDENT #3, who takes the page and runs back to his own room--

STUDENT BEDROOM

--where he and other STUDENTS are also reading ALLAN's book.

EXT. STREAM, SHEBA'S BREAST - MORNING

ALLAN'S PARTY drinks and fills canteens from a thin stream being fed by a trickling waterfall.

SNOW LINE - AFTERNOON

ALLAN'S PARTY reaches the snow line. They stomp through it, laugh victoriously, throw snowballs. Birds circle overhead.

LATER

VENTVOGEL cooks a bird over a small fire, while the others partake of the blackened meat.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

HENRY tears out a page and hands it off, revealing, CHAPTER FOURTEEN: THE LAST RESTING PLACE OF JOSE DA SILVESTRE.

INT. CAVE, SHEBA'S BREASTS - DUSK

UMBOPA ducks into a cave that, with one wave of a crude torch, looks to be ten feet high and an unknown distance deep. PETTIGREW and ABIGAIL follow him inside.

OUTSIDE THE CAVE - SAME

ALLAN waves his torch over an OBELISK STONE MARKER near the cave entrance. VENTVOGEL, shivering terribly, points, says something in Khoi.

ALLAN

Asmodeus.

CAVE - NIGHT

ABIGAIL and PETTIGREW lean close into each other around a small fire, hands and necks wrapped in extra clothing. UMBOPA, who sits nearby draped in his overcoat, takes a sip from his canteen, then presses it into the ash around the fire -- which elicits a querulous look from ABIGAIL.

UMBOPA

Keeps the water from freezing.

VENTVOGEL, shaking so violently that his teeth chatter like castanets, sits almost on the fire. Beside him, ALLAN studies the Map of Silvestre.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

On the north side of the mountain,
we should find "the Great Road
Bilqis built for Solomon." That is
if it's actually a road, and not
another metaphor.

UMBOPA

The road is real.

ALLAN

Good. Then we'll just have to "turn
away from the past" and take it
until we find these "Silent Ones",
whatever that means.

UMBOPA's eyes suggest he does.

PETTIGREW

If Bilqis built this road, what
became of her?

ALLAN

Don't look at me. Ask her
biographer.

ABIGAIL

All I did was ask a few questions
at the Royal Historical Society.
I'm not an expert.

(to PETTIGREW)

As Solomon's power over the black
arts grew, the desires of mortal
men no longer satisfied him. Bilqis
introduced him to gods that were
forgotten even in her time. When
the Hebrew God's patience for
Solomon's infidelity ran out, He
banished Solomon from the land of
the Israelites.

(beat, smirks at ALLAN)

Solomon, as all men eventually do,
blamed the woman in his life for
his woes -- Bilqis.

PETTIGREW

How did it finally end?

UMBOPA (O.S.)

In war.

Everyone turns at UMBOPA's deep voice, find themselves
shrinking before white eyes that seem to glow in the shadows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA (CONT'D)

Men, beasts, demons.
(punches fist into palm)
Never before or since has there
been such a battle. The earth shook
for six days, blood ran as if
water, the heavens roared like a
pride of lions. On the seventh day,
the First Queen lie dying, Suliman
had taken his seat at the Table of
Kings, and their demon slaves had
been locked within the land. To
this day, the Kukuana hear their
cries at night.

Stunned pause. Then ALLAN snorts, starts chuckling. He looks
at ABIGAIL, how intently she's been listening to UMBOPA.

ALLAN

You're actually buying into this.

ABIGAIL

What if I did? I've heard
variations of the same story
halfway around the globe, so
perhaps there *is* some truth to
them.

ALLAN

They know who Cinderella is in Hong
Kong, too, but I somehow doubt the
pumpkin will be supplanting the
carriage anytime soon. Don't take
that the wrong way, though. I've
more than once wished I could
reassure myself about any number of
things with a little bit of your
blind faith.

ABIGAIL

No you don't. You're too afraid,
Mr. Quartermain. Too afraid that,
if you believed in anything, you
might actually have to stand for
something, too.

ALLAN opens his mouth, gets out a few syllables, but is too
frustrated to shoot back a retort. Instead, he drops to his
side, yanking his blanket up over him as childish as we'd
expect ABIGAIL to.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

That's what I thought.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the dirt at UMBOPA's feet, we see he's drawn the pictograph for Bilqis we saw much earlier.

EXT. SHEBA'S NIPPLE, SHEBA'S BREASTS - DAWN

Pastel sunlight paints the snow of Sheba's Nipple.

INT. CAVE, SHEBA'S BREASTS - SAME

UMBOPA and PETTIGREW are the first to wake; UMBOPA silently goes to work relighting the smoldering fire, while PETTIGREW takes a moment to work life into his stiff, frozen body.

ABIGAIL wakes, ALLAN's sleeping face the first thing she sees. She smiles, then realizes she shouldn't be smiling.

PETTIGREW

I don't believe I've ever been so cold.

ABIGAIL

To think I could've said I've never been so hot but four days ago.

ALLAN slowly sits up, his back cracking.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Come on, old man. Rise and shine.

UMBOPA

Macumazahn. I will go on ahead.

ALLAN waves him along as he stands. UMBOPA disappears into the dark depths of the cave.

Using a piece of clothing as an oven mitt, ABIGAIL pulls her canteen from the ashes around the fire and tests the metal cap's temperature by patting it with her palm.

ALLAN gives VENTVOGEL a light kick to the side.

ALLAN

You can't sleep all day.

ABIGAIL unscrews the canteen cap, but it's hotter than she thought and she flings it away.

ABIGAIL

Ow!

VENTVOGEL doesn't move for ALLAN. In fact, he looks frozen in a fetal position -- his teeth mid-chatter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

Oh, Ventvogel.

ALLAN crouches, pulls the blanket over VENTVOGEL's face.

ABIGAIL lights a match and begins looking for the canteen cap, waving the match in the darkness outside the camp.

PETTIGREW

(RE: VENTVOGEL)

No one deserves to die like this.

ABIGAIL spots the canteen cap and crouches down to grab it, but she fumbles with it. It rolls a few inches, up against a foot. A foot? ABIGAIL lifts her match -- finds a GHOULISH FACE staring back at her!

She screams, summoning ALLAN and PETTIGREW. PETTIGREW scoops her into his arms so she doesn't have to look.

ALLAN kneels beside the body. It's a male, seated against the wall; dressed in chain mail and a red cross-emblazoned tunic. Bones lie scattered about it as if this cave has claimed other lives, too.

ABIGAIL

Is it...is it my...my father?

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

STUDENT #5, leaning over HENRY from the bed, can't wait to find out the answer to that question.

STUDENT #5

Well, is it? Turn the page already!

HENRY glares. The STUDENT slinks back, frustrated.

INT. CAVE, SHEBA'S BREASTS - MORNING

ALLAN examines the body. The skin is yellow, leathery, stretched tightly over bones; he had an aquiline nose, black hair and long beard. Beside it lies a crusted rapier.

ALLAN

No. It's not Curtis.

PETTIGREW

Then who could it be?

ABIGAIL turns slowly, daring to look at the body now. ALLAN studies the face, a smile creeping onto his own.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

Can't you guess? It's the knight,
Jose da Silvestre, of course.

ABIGAIL points at a bone on the floor by SILVESTRE's hand.

ABIGAIL

And look! The cleft bone he used to
draw his map with!

ALLAN turns SILVESTRE's forearm, reveals the gash in his
flesh he used as an ink vat.

ALLAN

And here's where he got his ink.
(looks at fire)
Lay down your head inside the
nipple--
(looks at Silvestre)
--alongside a faithful friend--

ABIGAIL

--with one final secret to share!

ALLAN notices SILVESTRE's hand is clenched, pries open the
fingers -- breaking one off -- to reveal a scrap of linen. He
pulls it out, opens it, scowls at the crimson script.

ALLAN

More *Latin*.

ABIGAIL

But Captain Pettigrew knows Latin.

PETTIGREW

Ah, I took it in school. A *long*
time ago.

ALLAN

Make yourself useful, soldier.

PETTIGREW takes the linen, tries to work out words.

PETTIGREW

Um...all right. Here. "Blessed
be...be the first *key* that falls...
falls away from morning's light.
Uh...*ruined* be the" -- I think
that's "second" -- "*second* key that
turns from coming night."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

Blessed be the first key that falls
away from morning's light; ruined
be the second key that turns from
the night.

PETTIGREW

Coming night.

ABIGAIL

But I don't get it.

ALLAN

(low, to SILVESTRE)
We came this far, and you still
can't give it to us straight?
(sighs, stands)
Well, let's give him a companion to
keep him company until the next
gaggle of fools pass through.

CUT TO:

ALLAN and PETTIGREW set VENTVOGEL beside Silvestre.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

So long, old friend.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF CAVE, SHEBA'S BREAST - MORNING

ALLAN and PETTIGREW emerge from the cave, PETTIGREW strapping
on SILVESTRE's rapier and belt. They find ABIGAIL and UMBOPA
standing at the edge of a cliff, gazing out at the stunning
green country before them. Several rivers weave their way
through the mist-covered land; hints of RUINS rise out of the
forest canopy; in the distance stand THREE MORE MOUNTAINS.

UMBOPA

(quietly thrilled)
The land of the Kukuana.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

He made it, look!

The others turn, find ABIGAIL, teary eyed, running her hands
over the hewn rock that surrounds the entrance to the cave.
"CURTIS WAS HERE" has been etched into it.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

He wanted us to know he made it
this far, don't you see?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETTIGREW pulls ABIGAIL into a comforting hug. At the sight of the CURTIS' name, ALLAN's mouth hints at a smile.

EXT. ABOVE TREE CANOPY, FOREST - AFTERNOON

Kukuanaland. Mountains, hills, forest. Obelisks and a few crumbling, vine-covered stone ruins rise out of the green.

STREAM

Dense forest. PETTIGREW sits naked in a stream trickling along a fern-covered ravine, shaving with a straight razor. Over him looms the elephant-sized head of an ancient statue.

UPSTREAM

UMBOPA emerges from the undergrowth with an antelope over his shoulder, heaves it next to a fire where ALLAN is cleaning his pistol and ABIGAIL is consulting the Map. They've made camp near the ruins of a massive building, its stone architecture reminiscent of Egypt's Old Kingdom.

ABIGAIL

I don't understand how someplace so beautiful can feel so...cold.

She notices a large, sickly BLACK BIRD watching her from the branches above. Another BLACK BIRD lands beside it. The land around her almost seems to be BREATHING...GROWLING.

ALLAN

You're imagining things. I've been sweating for almost two days now.

UMBOPA listens, all too aware of what ABIGAIL speaks.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

So how far are we from this Great Road Bilqis built, Umbopa?

UMBOPA

Four days away through this jungle. Two if we cross the plains.

ABIGAIL

Why, that's not far at all!

UMBOPA

If we make it that far.

ABIGAIL

You're beginning to sound like Mr. Quartermain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA

Not even Macumazahn knows enough to fear the Kukuana.

ALLAN

(chuckles)

If Africa has taught me anything, it's to fear everything. Even something as small as a mosquito.

ABIGAIL

And yet you love it anyway.

ALLAN

Your father gave me the eyes to see it as it is, the way the world should be. Everything is connected here, just like Darwin wrote. You find God in your Bible, but I find Him in this country. You can hear the pulse of something greater in the earth here. Something ancient and wiser than we'll ever be.

ABIGAIL smiles, appreciating ALLAN's depth for the first time. He shakes his head, realizing he's rambling.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

That's beside the point. Umbopa, I think it's high time you share with us how you know so much about this country. Just who are the Kukuana?

UMBOPA

They are.

Thirty KUKUANA WARRIORS, armed with spears and covered in gray mud as if they crawled out of the earth, push through the undergrowth around them -- the forest GROWLING their introduction. They are every bit as muscular, giant, and fearsome as UMBOPA.

The BLACK BIRDS SQUAWK madly, flap into the canopy.

ALLAN

A little warning would have been nice.

UMBOPA

You are Macumazahn. It is said the land speaks to you. Who am I to presume you would let 30 warriors sneak up on you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

I get it now, what Silvestre meant by turning away from the past! We were supposed to avoid *the ruins*.

ALLAN

It's always the supposed-tos that get you killed.

A YOUNG WARRIOR (19) with a regal-looking gold torque around his neck barks in Kukuana. His physique and waving spear says he's a dangerous man, but it's the mad, rabid look in his eyes that's most threatening.

ALLAN and ABIGAIL slowly stand, ALLAN eyeing his elephant gun, which stands against a nearby stump.

ABIGAIL

What's he saying?

ALLAN

It's like an old-fashioned form of the Zulu tongue.

UMBOPA

He says strangers are not permitted in the land of the Kukuana, so we should prepare to die.

The WARRIORS raise their spears.

ABIGAIL

But I don't want to die.

PETTIGREW (O.S.)

Don't even think about it!

PETTIGREW, dressed but dripping wet, hops his way along the ravine bed -- rifle aimed at the YOUNG WARRIOR. ALLAN draws his pistol now.

ALLAN

That's enough. If you want a fight...

The WARRIORS have no reaction to the guns, confusing ALLAN.

UMBOPA

They have never seen a gun before.

PETTIGREW

It'll kill him all the same.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An OLDER WARRIOR (55, white bearded; wise face) steps forward, places a hand on the YOUNGER WARRIOR's shoulder. They exchange words, then the OLDER WARRIOR addresses UMBOPA.

UMBOPA

The White Beard apologizes for the other one--

ABIGAIL

Now we're getting somewhere.

UMBOPA

--but strangers are not permitted in Kukuaneland, by king's law. We are still going to be killed.

WARRIORS begin to advance, lifting spears overhead. PETTIGREW pulls ABIGAIL closer. ALLAN points at her, accusatory.

ALLAN

I was supposed to be retired!

That's it; ABIGAIL has reached her limits! She grabs ALLAN's elephant gun and fires -- the blast DETONATING a medium-sized tree trunk beside the OLDER WARRIOR.

The WARRIORS freeze, terrified. ALLAN and PETTIGREW can't believe what ABIGAIL just did.

The tree CREAKS, then falls over into the forest.

ABIGAIL doesn't miss a beat; she balances herself and points the elephant gun at the shocked OLDER WARRIOR.

ABIGAIL

Tell him I will use this, this *magic tube* that speaks on him next! Tell them I am a great wizard from, from *the stars* and we come as friends -- but, if they threaten us again, I will destroy their people!

UMBOPA slowly smirks, the first time we've ever seen amusement out of him.

UMBOPA

Yes, miss.

ALLAN

(whispers to ABIGAIL)
Are you off your rocker?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The OLDER WARRIOR nods at UMBOPA's translation, much to the YOUNGER WARRIOR's displeasure. The rest of the WARRIORS lower their spears. ABIGAIL smirks victoriously at ALLAN.

ABIGAIL

It worked, didn't it?

UMBOPA

(translating)

The White Beard has invited the
great wizard to meet his king,
Twala, and his wizard...*Gagool*.

ALLAN

Gagool?

PETTIGREW

Tell him we don't want to meet his
savage-king. We're only interested
in the mines.

UMBOPA

I thought we came in search of the
miss's father.

The OLDER WARRIOR speaks again, UMBOPA translates.

UMBOPA (CONT'D)

It is a day's journey. The White
Beard is Infadoos. The other is
Scragga, son of Twala.
(to ABIGAIL, smirks again)
We, the "children of the stars,"
will travel under their protection.

INFADOOS smiles, while SCRAGGA, the younger warrior, spits
Kukuana obscenities and vanishes into the underbrush.

EXT. EDGE OF FOREST, PLAINS - AFTERNOON

INFADOOS and his WARRIORS lead ALLAN'S PARTY out of the
forest. A flock of BLACK BIRDS circles overhead.

EXT. KUKUANA VILLAGE - LATER

The WARRIORS and ALLAN's PARTY reach the edge of a small
village of thatched huts.

NIGHT

KUKUANA VILLAGERS, considerably cleaner and more
sophisticated than the jungle warriors we just met, prepare
dinner, whispering about and pointing at one particular hut.

INT. HUT - SAME

INFADOOS and ALLAN'S PARTY enjoy a feast, served by KUKUANA WOMEN who present platters of meat and fruit.

ABIGAIL

Has he seen my father? A man with
white skin like mine?

UMBOPA translates for INFADOOS and his companions.

UMBOPA

He says we are the first *Children of the Stars* he has ever seen, but says few travel to Kukuana land. The king's regiments are quick to make war on strangers.

PETTIGREW

Are there many threats to this
Twala's reign?

UMBOPA

Now and again, warriors sweep down upon the Kukuana from the North, and the Kukuana slay them. More often, Kukuana fight Kukuana. A generation ago, there was a great civil war. Infadoos' half-brother, who was king at the time, was betrayed by Gagool the Smeller Out of Witches.

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW exchange looks at "GAGOOL".

UMBOPA (CONT'D)

The king had fathered twins, Ignosi and Twala, but the Kukuana do not favor twins and Twala, the feebler of the two, was put to death. Eight years later, a great famine struck the land and the fickle people listened to Gagool who claimed the king had angered the gods. The king died in the war. Gagool then brought a boy before the people and showed them the mark of the ancient snake around his waist, and said, "Here, look. The mark of the true king!" The boy was Twala.

ABIGAIL

Wait, he hadn't been put to death?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA

Gagool had hidden him away in caves all those years. Gagool, who does not die, is patient in her evil.

PETTIGREW

And judging by the iron fist Twala seems to rule with, I'd wager he's not a popular king.

INFADOOS shakes his head.

ABIGAIL

What about the king's other son?

UMBOPA has grown uneasy. He translates again.

UMBOPA

Gagool drove Ignosi and his mother into the Sands That Cannot Be Crossed. There...they died.

PETTIGREW

If Twala is so bad, why not just knock him out of the picture?

UMBOPA asks, INFADOOS answers.

ALLAN

I think I've got that one. He says, then Scragga would rule instead and Scragga has an even blacker heart.

ABIGAIL

I must say, I'm not enamored by these Kukuana.

PETTIGREW

I agree. The sooner we can get out of here, the better.

EXT. HILL - AFTERNOON

INFADOOS leads his WARRIORS and ALLAN'S PARTY over a hill -- SCRAGGA nowhere to be seen. Before them suddenly is a great plain, two rivers plaiting their way across it and through the great stone-walled city of LOO.

Beyond Loo, a road runs toward three mountains over which looms DARK CLOUDS. ABIGAIL is confused by the people, oxen, carts moving along it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

Solomon's Road. But, Umbopa, where are all those people going?

UMBOPA

They return from the mines.

ABIGAIL

So the mines are real.

(grins)

I guess my father wasn't a fool after all, ay, Mr. Quartermain?

ALLAN

That remains to be seen.

(points at UMBOPA)

And you! You've known all along the mines weren't just a myth, and you never thought to mention it before now?

UMBOPA

Did you ever ask me? The mines were your destination. Mine is there.

He points to Loo with his spear.

MAIN STREET, LOO - LATER

Loo is five miles around, surrounded by a stone wall and made up of thatched-roof stone buildings, half-collapsed ancient ruins, and, at the center, a stepped pyramid.

INFADOOS and his WARRIORS lead ALLAN'S PARTY into the city, greeted by hundreds of KUKUANA that have gathered to gawk at the strange visitors.

LATER

ALLAN'S PARTY crosses a stone bridge, approaching the pyramid; a staircase leads up the face of it and a crude stone wall encloses the flat crown. Hundreds of WARRIORS dressed in skins and black ostrich-plume headdresses and armed with spears and ox-hide-covered shields line the road.

PETTIGREW

By God, there must be ten, 15,000 warriors.

PYRAMID STAIRS

ALLAN'S PARTY are led up the WARRIOR-lined stairs--

ROYAL YARD

--then through wood gates in the wall, inside which they find 500 more WARRIORS standing in formation on either side of a wide path to an ancient building that was probably this temple's entrance and now serves as the king's "castle".

INFADOOS continues with ALLAN'S PARTY, while his WARRIORS disperse into the assembled WARRIORS. When they are 20 feet from the castle, INFADOOS holds up a hand -- stop.

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW glance around, realizing they're now surrounded by ARMED WARRIORS. Inside each WARRIOR's shield are strapped TWO HEAVY KNIVES.

PETTIGREW

(whispers to ABIGAIL)

Can you imagine what your father could accomplish if he made this Twala an ally?

ABIGAIL

(disgusted at the notion)

His people call him a monster.

ALLAN

If the mines are still active as you say, where all the diamonds?

UMBOPA

Nobody but Gagool knows what the mines are for.

The castle's door opens then. The WARRIORS grow deathly quiet. Only the SQUAWKING of BLACK BIRDS above interrupts.

Finally, a gigantic man ducks through the door. When he looks up, he reveals a cruel face marked by a BLACK HOLE where his right eye should be. He's dressed in a leopard skin, a gold torque around his neck; atop his head, a magnificent plume of white ostrich feathers with a large, milky-white stone on his brow. In his hand, a huge spear.

UMBOPA (CONT'D)

(mutters with disdain)

Twala.

TWALA (32) stops at the edge of the porch, followed outside by SCRAGGA (also armed with a spear) and a four-foot SHAPE that hobbles on all fours, wrapped in a dirty fur cloak.

ABIGAIL points at a BLUE SNAKE TATTOO around TWALA's waist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL

Look, the ancient snake Infadoos
told us about.

TWALA raises his spear, and every WARRIOR in the yard and
outside its gates raise their spears in PERFECT UNISON.

WARRIORS OF LOO

KOOM!

It's as if the earth shakes. TWALA raises his spear two more
times, resulting in the same outcry each time.

WARRIORS OF LOO (CONT'D)

KOOM! KOOM!

It's a frightening display of military precision and power.
ABIGAIL is shaken. PETTIGREW is awed.

PETTIGREW

Such organization.

In the silence the follows the last *koom*, a WARRIOR behind
ALLAN'S PARTY drops his shield with a KLANG. A handful of
other WARRIORS turn their heads in surprise, but quickly
revert to their uniform positions lest they be punished.

SCRAGGA can't believe the audacity of the interruption. The
SHAPE snickers, turning in place. TWALA barks something.

The OFFENDING WARRIOR steps forward, to face his king. TWALA
motions to SCRAGGA, and SCRAGGA launches his spear.

The spear sails over ALLAN'S PARTY -- who start at the sight
of it coming at them -- and plunges into the chest of the
OFFENDING WARRIOR, launching him into the air several feet
before he lands on his back, dead.

ABIGAIL gasps. UMBOPA glares at TWALA.

TWALA sits on a THRONE as the SHAPE crawls forward before
rising into a hunched position. The blanket falls away into a
hooded position, reveals what was once a woman; she's so
shrunk now, her head looks no bigger than a child's.
Scattered long hairs catch in the breeze; deep wrinkles cover
her yellow-brown skin; her nose is almost gone; her lips are
sunken slits; her large black eyes gleam at their centers
like embers. When she speaks, she reveals one broken tooth.

ABIGAIL

(disgusted)
Is that...Gagool?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAGOOOL extends a bone-thin arm from under the blanket, points with a long nail. When she speaks, it's in tremulous English.

GAGOOOL

Blood. Blood! Blood!! It runs upon the ground, it rains down from the skies. I am old, I am old! I have seen much blood already, shed much myself, yes I have. How old am I, you think, Children of the Stars? I know your desires. Men with skin like yours came from the North long ago, came looking for that bright stone on Twala's forehead.

She points at the stone upon TWALA's brow. It glistens.

PETTIGREW

Why, it's an uncut diamond.

GAGOOOL

They tried to trick Gagool, but Gagool is wise, Gagool can read your minds.

(points at PETTIGREW)

You are like them, you would seek to trick me, but you--

(points at ABIGAIL)

--you seek another child of the stars, the sun that spit you out. You will not find him here. No white man's foot has been welcome in this land for thousands of years, not since the First Queen. But you--

(points at UMBOPA)

--I know your face, I have seen it in my dreams. You come from the past, you have been waiting like Gagool. You must not be allowed to--

ABIGAIL

Enough!

GAGOOOL sinks back to all fours, turning in place as ABIGAIL speak to UMBOPA -- who translates simultaneously for TWALA.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Tell the king we have no quarrel with him or this...*thing*.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

We, ah, *Children of the Stars* will bless his crops, his army, a few babies, whatever he feels like, but we're only interested in taking the great road to the mines -- and then we'll leave his land!

TWALA replies in Kukuana, UMBOPA translates.

UMBOPA

He says he thinks it is still best to kill us, but would like to see the woman demonstrate her magic tube that speaks on one of his warriors so he can understand how mighty we are.

PETTIGREW

Now what?

ABIGAIL

Tell him the *Children of the Stars* have already demonstrated the mighty tube's power.

ALLAN

Oh for crying out loud, he knows we don't come from the stars. He's *humoring* us.

ABIGAIL

Why are you always so negative? I find it very unattractive.

PETTIGREW

(lifts rifle)

If you don't want to do it, I will.

ALLAN

Nobody's shooting anybody in cold blood.

(to UMBOPA)

Tell him to bring an ox and he'll get his demonstration.

UMBOPA translates, then explicates for ABIGAIL.

UMBOPA

I told him you will demonstrate your magic if the king would volunteer his son as a target.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWALA considers this, realizing he's been outsmarted. SCRAGGA waits, worried his father might agree.

PETTIGREW

(to ABIGAIL)

Go ahead and point that at the boy.

ABIGAIL doesn't want to aim ALLAN's elephant gun at anybody, but she does as PETTIGREW asks. SCRAGGA tries to look brave.

Finally, TWALA relents and tips his head at ALLAN in acknowledgement of his "defeat". He stands, raises one arm, issues a proclamation in Kukuana.

Every WARRIOR smacks the fists that hold their spears into their shields, creating a thunderous BANG.

WARRIORS OF LOO

ROM!

TWALA ducks back into his castle, followed by SCRAGGA. GAGOOOL lingers, glowering at UMBOPA, then crawls inside, too.

UMBOPA, INFADOOS now at his side, explains to his friends.

UMBOPA

Every full moon, Gagool smells out the witches who threaten Twala. Tonight is the celebration, and we have been invited to the feast. Tomorrow, he says we may continue on to the mines.

ALLAN

Why don't I believe him?

EXT. LOO, ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

The full moon glows silver, the city twinkles with the orange light of 10,000 fire pits and torches.

ROYAL YARD - SAME

A great table only one foot high stretches out like a red carpet from the king's porch -- where TWALA sits on his throne, watching 100 pillow-seated guests, Four-hundred WARRIORS stand in formation on either side of table.

Amongst the guests are ALLAN'S PARTY (unarmed except pistols, rapier, and knives), INFADOOS, SCRAGGA, and KUKUANA CHIEFS. PETTIGREW notes how UMBOPA and INFADOOS speak quietly between themselves across the table, points this out to ALLAN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETTIGREW

They've been doing that all day.
What do you think they're up to?

ALLAN shrugs, unwilling to distrust his companion. He glances across the table at ABIGAIL, dressed in her skirt for the occasion; she takes an obscene bite of a giant ball of meat, waves it as speaks around a comically full mouth.

ABIGAIL

You were right about this elephant heart. It's sooo good!

ALLAN speaks out of the side of his mouth to PETTIGREW.

ALLAN

How long have you been in love with her, Captain?

PETTIGREW

What? I'm not... That's none of your business. Besides, don't think I don't see how you look at her. She's a gentleman's daughter.

ALLAN

What a coincidence. I'm a gentleman's bastard.

PETTIGREW

Precisely. She deserves better.

ALLAN

Like you?

PETTIGREW

Yes, if she would have me. I just have to make my intentions known.

ALLAN

Oh, they're known, trust me.

PETTIGREW looks at ABIGAIL, wonders if ALLAN is right. She smiles sweetly, juice dripping down her chin.

ABIGAIL

Whatever are you looking at?

TWALA claps his hands together then, silencing the CONVERSATION at the table. And then, quite strangely, L00 itself. It's as if every resident hears TWALA's commands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWALA makes an announcement in Kukuana that thrills him. Forty ROYAL SERVANTS descend upon the tables from the sides of the castle and, as the guests stand, remove the tables. In ten seconds, the feast is cleared, the SERVANTS gone.

TWALA shouts another announcement. INFADOOS speaks to UMBOPA, then UMBOPA explains to his companions.

UMBOPA

It is time for the witch hunt.
Gagool uses her magic to rid the
land of Twala's enemies. That is
why he has invited so many of his
chiefs.

PETTIGREW

Are we in danger?

UMBOPA

That you do not know the answer to
that question makes Umbopa laugh.

But UMBOPA doesn't laugh, confusing PETTIGREW.

GAGOOOL's twisted shape slowly crawls out of the castle doorway, scurrying onto the dirt at the foot of the porch. A flock of sickly BLACK BIRDS lands on the castle around her.

ABIGAIL

Mr. Quartermain?

ALLAN

Just stay close.

GAGOOOL stands slowly, an evil presence GRUMBLING with approval in the distance. Ten half-naked Kukuana women dance out of the doorway then -- each with white hair, faces painted, and belts of bones. These are GAGOOOL'S WITCHES.

The ten halve and part as they pass the thrown and run through the terrified crowd of GUESTS and WARRIORS, bobbing, twirling. GAGOOOL snaps at them in Kukuana, ALLAN translates.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Are your...ears open? I think
that's what she said. Can you hear
the words that come...not from the
mouth?

GAGOOOL'S WITCHES run through the gates and down the pyramid's stairs, between lines of WARRIORS and torches.

GAGOOOL throws up her arms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAGOOOL

Let it begin!!!

SCREAMS from KUKUANA outside the yard being "smelled out" violate the night. The BLACK BIRDS fly away.

GAGOOOL begins to dance through the GUESTS like her WITCHES, spinning and bobbing, waves a RATTLE that unnerves KUKUANA who tremble with fear.

GAGOOOL (CONT'D)

I smell him, the evil-doer! I hear
the thoughts of him who thought
evil of the king!

ALLAN' PARTY and INFADOOS, still a safe distance from GAGOOOL, watch as KUKUANA shift, trying to make sure they're not in the fiend's sights. RATTLE-RATTLE, RATTLE-RATTLE.

And finally, GAGOOOL freezes, rattle pointed at one of the CHIEFS. The CHIEF mutters something in fear, probably, "No."

Two WARRIORS instantly separate from the WARRIORS lining the yard and, with their knives, stab the CHIEF in his chest and back. The CHIEF collapses. TWALA laughs, pleased.

GAGOOOL cackles, begins her dance again, spews Kukuana spells. Outside the yard, SCREAMS continue to pierce the night.

RATTLE-RATTLE, RATTLE-RATTLE. GAGOOOL spins, impossibly agile for her decrepid condition, cloak whipping around her.

And then she stops again, points her rattle at a WARRIOR. The WARRIORS around the SMELLED-OUT WARRIOR stab GAGOOOL's victim.

As GAGOOOL returns to her dervish, ABIGAIL tries not to cry. Disgusted, PETTIGREW moves as if to take aim with his gun, catching the eye of a WARRIOR.

ALLAN

Don't be a fool.

GAGOOOL dances around INFADOOS. The old warrior watches her, afraid, but also courageous enough to accept his fate.

But she keeps going, RATTLE-RATTLE, coming to a stop in front of a KUKUANA OF NOBLE BEARING (late-teens). GAGOOOL points her rattle at him, two WARRIORS stab him.

As the boy collapses, INFADOOS lets out a whimper. UMBOPA explains to his companions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA

The boy was Infadoos' first son.

Her eyes blinking away tears, ABIGAIL marvels at how INFADOOS holds himself together.

GAGOOOL begins dancing again, this time through ALLAN'S PARTY. Everyone braces themselves. First she passes PETTIGREW -- he's safe. Then ALLAN -- he's safe, too. Then ABIGAIL...

GAGOOOL continues to dance, RATTLE-RATTLE, RATTLE-RATTLE. PETTIGREW prepares to turn draw his rapier.

But then GAGOOOL twirls on, finding UMBOPA. UMBOPA watches her, expressionless.

INFADOOS looks over his shoulder at UMBOPA, waiting.

And then GAGOOOL stops, points her rattle at UMBOPA.

GAGOOOL

I smell him out. Kill the stranger!

She shouts the same to TWALA in Kukuana, and instantly two WARRIORS steps forward to sink their knives into UMBOPA. But ALLAN draws his pistol, fires once into the air; PETTIGREW draws his pistol and rapier.

TWALA leaps to his feet as his WARRIORS prepare for battle, but INFADOOS shouts. Other CHIEFS join him, shouting, too.

ALLAN and PETTIGREW turn their pistols on the WARRIORS, holding them back. ABIGAIL pulls her pistol from her skirt, aims at WARRIORS, too -- earning a double-take from ALLAN.

UMBOPA roars in Kukuana, drawing everyone's attention. He throws off his overcoat and then his armored girdle -- revealing a BLUE TATTOO OF A TWISTING SNAKE.

TWALA staggers back, unable to believe what he sees. SCRAGGA and WARRIORS MURMUR with confusion. GAGOOOL points a crooked finger at UMBOPA.

GAGOOOL (CONT'D)

Imposter! You cannot be he!!

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

HENRY looks up at EDDIE and the other STUDENTS.

HENRY

I know who Umbopa is.

EXT. ROYAL YARD, LOO - NIGHT

With his deep voice, UMBOPA roars at the WARRIORS around him. INFADOOS shouts support. ALLAN'S PARTY watches, confused.

PETTIGREW

What the hell is happening?

ALLAN

(slowly understanding)

He's--

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

HENRY

--Ignosi--

EXT. ROYAL YARD, LOO - NIGHT

ALLAN

--the murdered king's son!

PETTIGREW

Twala's twin brother?

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

EDDIE squeals.

EDDIE

Oh my God, he's Twala's twin brother!

EXT. ROYAL YARD, LOO - NIGHT

ABIGAIL is still trying to make sense of what she just heard.

ABIGAIL

Wait, we just spent four months traveling with a...a king?

ALLAN tries to translate what the CHIEFS are shouting.

ALLAN

Infadoos and the other chiefs have called for rebellion, telling the warriors something about...a long darkness. If they want freedom, they must follow...the rightful king, Ignosi the Lightning.

SCRAGGA barks, then steps forward -- throwing his spear straight at UMBOPA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA watches it arc through the air at him and, only moments before it would impale him, steps aside -- watches it stick into the earth!

As UMBOPA turns back, he draws his knife and throws it flipping through the air -- it plunges into SCRAGGA's chest, killing him!

TWALA cries out, barks at his WARRIORS. But the WARRIORS hesitate as INFADOOS and the other CHIEFS plead with them.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

(smirking, to UMBOPA)

Tell them the Children of the Stars
will protect you with their magic.

UMBOPA grins at ALLAN, turns his attention back to TWALA. He draws his spear from his back, stands it beside him.

WARRIORS' eyes open wide at the sight of the spear.

And when UMBOPA raises its shaft into the air, its blade silhouetting against the full moon, every WARRIOR inside the yard and clustered outside the gates, watching, shout.

WARRIORS OF LOO

KOOM!

UMBOPA raises his spear twice more.

WARRIORS OF LOO (CONT'D)

KOOM! KOOM!

At this, GAGOOOL scurries into the castle.

PETTIGREW

Who's ever heard of a bloodless
coup?

ABIGAIL

(RE: INFADOOS' SON's body)

I wouldn't call it bloodless.

TWALA steps off his porch, removing his feathered headdress. A ROYAL SERVANT appears with a shield and large axe, another ROYAL SERVANT waits with a second set of battle armaments.

ALLAN

It's not over yet. If the Kukuana
are anything like the Zulu, no man
of royal blood can be put to death
except by battle.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN (CONT'D)

He can choose a succession of antagonists to fight, until one of them kills him.

ABIGAIL

Wouldn't he just choose Umbopa?

ALLAN

(off SCRAGGA's dead body)
Would you?

TWALA looks over WARRIORS, but his eyes keep finding ALLAN.

PETTIGREW

I think he has his mind set on you.

ALLAN

Then I'll just decline.

PETTIGREW

Are you such a coward?

UMBOPA

To refuse the challenge means a sentence of death not even a king can commute.

TWALA points with his axe at ALLAN and barks in Kukuana.

ALLAN

See, that doesn't even make sense.
(holds up his pistol)
What about my "magic tube that speaks"?

LATER

ALLAN, now wielding a shield and axe, faces TWALA across a ring of dirt surrounded by his PARTY, CHIEFS, and WARRIORS.

ABIGAIL

Get him, Mr. Quartermain!

ALLAN rolls his eyes, certain he's about to die.

INFADOOS says "start" in Kukuana then, and TWALA charges, hacking ferociously with his axe--

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - NIGHT

STUDENT #6 bursts in, ripping everyone out of the book.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STUDENT #6

Have you heard? Someone stole Mr.
Gibbon's medal!

Pause.

EDDIE

That doesn't mean we have to stop
reading, does it?

AUDITORIUM - LATER

The HEADMASTER addresses the tired STUDENT BODY from the stage, MR. GIBBONS standing disconsolately off to the side. HENRY watches his teacher, feeling terrible for him.

HEADMASTER

The piece is obviously very
important to Mr. Gibbons. The Queen
herself gave it to his father. So
I'll make this one-time offer.
Whoever stole Mr. Gibbon's medal,
if you return it by lights-out,
there will be no punishment.
(glares)
Return the medal at once. I won't
have mercy if you delay.

HENRY looks off to his right, where he spots NEVILLE looking back at him -- grinning evilly. He took it!

SECOND-FLOOR HALLWAY - LATER

A TEACHER walks the hallway, knocking on doors.

TEACHER

Lights out! Lights out!

HENRY'S BEDROOM - LATER

HENRY tosses, unable to sleep. He looks at his clock: 12:12.

CUT TO:

HENRY opens his desk drawer. His father's lion-tooth necklace stares back at him.

SECOND-FLOOR HALLWAY

HENRY sneaks out his door, dressed in boots and jacket.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY opens a window, looks down at ivy that climbs the wall.

EDDIE (O.S.)

Henry.

HENRY spins, startled. He finds EDDIE sneaking up.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

HENRY, we see, is wearing his father's necklace. He's finally made the choice to do what's right, even if he's afraid.

HENRY

Mr. Gibbons has never let us down.
I'm going to get his medal back.

EDDIE

But how do you know where it is?

HENRY

Neville's got it, I'm sure of it.
He and his cronies are always
sneaking off in the middle of the
night, and I'm going to find them.

EDDIE

How?

HENRY

(smiles)
Genetics.

EDDIE

(beat, nods)
Right. I'm coming with you.

STUDENT #2 (O.S.)

We're all coming with you.

HENRY realizes every STUDENT who bonded with him over his father's book is sneaking from their doorways, pulling on jackets. Seven in total.

HENRY

It's going to be dangerous. We
might get hurt.

STUDENT #3

It's about time we had a little
adventure of our own.

EXT. BACK SIDE, BOARDING SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

HENRY clings to ivy, climbing down the outside of the school.
He looks down, becoming dizzy.

CUT TO:

HENRY waves his fellow adventurers across the yard, into bushes. The last of them are climbing down the ivy.

WOODS

HENRY leads EDDIE and the other STUDENTS through the woods.

STUDENT #4

I can't see anything.

STUDENT #1

I've got matches.

HENRY

No. They'd spot the flame.

HENRY runs his hands over thin branches, examining broken leaves that indicate someone passed through here.

HENRY (CONT'D)

This way.

LATER

Further into the woods. HENRY crouches beside rocks that compose a natural barrier for a ridge. There are several scuff marks -- boots climbed over these rocks.

RIVER BANK

HENDRY, EDDIE, and the other STUDENTS reach a river.

STUDENT #5

I'm not getting wet, no way.

HENRY

No, they didn't go that way.

(sniffs)

Can you smell that?

EDDIE

Smoke.

HENRY

Tobacco smoke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STUDENT #5

Neville smokes cigarettes.

HENRY

It's coming from upwind. This way.

CHURCH RUINS

At the center of roofless church ruins, NEVILLE marches about like a soldier, MR. GIBBONS' medal pinned to his chest, drunk on brandy he's swigging from a bottle. His CRONIES laugh.

NEVILLE

What do you think, men? Would I make a bloody good general or what?

(swigs)

Nigel, you're going to have to thank your brother again for smuggling in the peach brandy and fags. I don't know how I'd make it one week without them!

CRONIE #1

Neville, do you really think we should've taken Gibbons' medal?

NEVILLE

You're not the general! *I'm* the general! I give the orders here!

CRONIE #1

Yes, sir.

A branch CRACKS. NEVILLE spins, finds HENRY standing there. The CRONIES jump up.

NEVILLE

Quarterbrain? What the hell are you doing here...and where did you get that stupid necklace?

HENRY

I want the medal, Neville. Don't make me hurt you.

NEVILLE

Yeah, you and what army?

EDDIE steps out from behind a crumbled wall. Then the other seven STUDENTS, each armed with branches.

The CRONIES look at each other, then run.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEVILLE (CONT'D)

Oi, where you two cowards going?

HENRY

It's over, Neville.

NEVILLE

Do your worst.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' ROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - DAWN

KNOCKING at the door. MR. GIBBONS, wearing a long pajama shirt, answers it, blinking away sleep.

MR. GIBBONS

What in heaven's name--

He freezes when he sees HENRY standing there, leaves in his hair, dirt across his face, blood trickling from his nose -- and a grin on his face.

HENRY

I thought you might like this back.

He holds out MR. GIBBONS' medal. The teacher's eyes fill with tears as he takes back the medal.

MR. GIBBONS

But where did you get it?

HENRY

(grins bigger)

Don't worry, I took care of that.

EXT. STREET GATE, BOARDING SCHOOL - DAWN

A horse-drawn delivery truck rolls by. The bemused DRIVER looks at the gate, where a sobbing NEVILLE has been STRIPPED TO HIS UNDERWEAR AND TIED.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' ROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY sits on top of a desk with EDDIE, reading his father's book as pages are passed around. MR. GIBBONS sits at his desk, smiling as he polishes his medal.

HENRY

Now, let's find out how this ends.

EXT. ROYAL YARD, LOO - NIGHT

Back to the duel. TWALA hacks furiously at ALLAN, who blocks the blows with his shield. ALLAN falls to one knee, has to somersault away.

They face off again. ALLAN takes a swing, but it's easily swatted away. Another one; that's swatted away, too. Again, but TWALA swats the attack away with his shield -- and punches ALLAN in the face with the fist holding his axe.

ALLAN stumbles backwards, legs turning to noodles. TWALA charges and the two collide like great bears. Finally, ALLAN knees TWALA in the groin and brings his axe down, slashes TWALA across the cheek.

TWALA falls away, recovering quickly; he wipes at his cut with his finger, licks the blood away. ALLAN pales, realizing he's dealing with an inhuman foe.

ABIGAIL

You've almost got him!

ALLAN and TWALA meet again, hacking and blocking. One great swing from TWALA CLANGS against ALLAN's axe, knocking it away -- it spirals and lands at ABIGAIL's feet.

ALLAN stumbles backwards, no longer able to defend himself. TWALA leaps through the air at him, brings his axe down with such force that it actually penetrates the iron interior of ALLAN's shield. ALLAN's eyes bulge, and he runs away.

TWALA comes after him, strikes his shield again -- which sends ALLAN spinning, landing hard on the ground.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Mr. Quartermain!

ABIGAIL tosses ALLAN's axe to him, and he catches it just as he spins around and uses his shield to ram TWALA aside. He continues spinning, slicing through the air -- and TWALA's neck -- in a perfect horizontal swing.

The CROWD gasps.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY and the other STUDENTS collectively GASP.

EXT. ROYAL YARD, LOO - NIGHT

TWALA's body slumps to the ground. The gold torque he wore around his neck rolls away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA and his WARRIORS cheer. ALLAN collapses with exhaustion. ABIGAIL is there to help catch him, arms wrapping around him -- which PETTIGREW notes jealously.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

STUDENTS congratulate HENRY, like it was he who won the fight. Several of them are already play ax-fighting around the room, complete with their own dramatic sound effects.

Though HENRY hasn't noticed yet, he's reached CHAPTER NINETEEN: KING SOLOMON'S MINES.

EXT. PYRAMID STAIRS, LOO - MORNING

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW walk side-by-side up the steps, between lines of WARRIORS. ALLAN's fingers twitch, wanting to take ABIGAIL's hand.

ROYAL YARD

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW enter. Five-hundred WARRIORS stand at attention on either side of a wide path. Forty FEMALE DANCERS gyrate and spin joyfully through the space in contrast to the previous night's frightening dance.

ALLAN, ABIGAIL, and PETTIGREW continue toward the castle. DANCERS envelope them at first, smiling as they shake, then separate revealing UMBOPA sitting on his new throne.

INFADOOS, who stands before the throne as chief counsel, raises his hand. The DANCERS suddenly sink into the lines of WARRIORS and vanish from sight.

ABIGAIL smiles at UMBOPA. He unexpectedly half-smiles back.

UMBOPA

My friends, you have helped restore me to my father's throne. That which was his is now mine. The demons of Kukuana's past will soon haunt us no more, and this land shall finally know peace.

PETTIGREW

The British Empire would value an ally such as you, Umbopa.

UMBOPA

But would I value an ally such as it?

(to ALLAN)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UMBOPA (CONT'D)

You have earned the gratitude of a king, Macumazahn. What is it you wish?

ALLAN looks at ABIGAIL, speaks quietly just to her.

ALLAN

Are you sure about this?

ABIGAIL

I've been running away from my life back home for as long as I can remember. Dreaming of being somebody else. Don't ask me how, but I know my father will have the answers I need.

ALLAN nods, understanding. Looks back at UMBOPA.

ALLAN

We want to finish the journey we began. To reach Solomon's mines.

UMBOPA

But why if you already know your friend did not pass through here?

ALLAN

We must be certain, for her sake.

UMBOPA considers this, then signals INFADOOS. Two WARRIORS drag GAGOOL out of the castle then, her wrists and ankles bound by chains. She squeals, squirms like a trapped animal.

UMBOPA

Gagool murdered my father with her words, and for that I will see her evil put to a final end. But for now, I lend her to you. She is a trickster as well as a witch, but she knows the mines better than anyone else in this land. She will guide you, Infadoos, and six of my best warriors to what you seek.

GAGOOL

(hissing, pointing)

He, she, the one with two faces know what they seek, but know not what they will find. The mines are a myth, but so is Gagool. Help her you will before the day is done!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INFADOOS yanks GAGOOL's wrist chains, knocking the fiendish gnome to the ground. She wails in mock-pain.

EXT. SOLOMON'S ROAD - LATER

This stretch of the road to the mountains has been well-kept. INFADOOS leads, behind him two WARRIORS carrying GAGOOL on a stretcher; she sits cross-legged, hunched, huffs and spits like a child having a tantrum. Behind them, four more WARRIORS, ABIGAIL, PETTIGREW, and, at the tail end, ALLAN.

LATER

The distance to the mountains has been halved; they tower over ALLAN'S PARTY and the KUKUANA. Dark smoke rises from the center mountain, gathering around the peaks like an industrial smog -- GROWLING almost evilly.

Dirty KUKUANA MINERS shuffle past. And all around, a sea of grassland half-buried in broken rocks. MINERS lead ox-drawn carts of the debris out into this junk yard.

EXT. GREAT STAIRCASE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

The KUKUANA lead ALLAN'S PARTY up the ancient staircase we saw in the opening scene; it climbs 2,000 feet over an arch that spans a LAKE far below. Two monster-face statues protrude from mountain walls on either side, their tongues spouts that spit torrents of water into the lake.

COURTYARD - LATER

The KUKUANA lead ALLAN'S PARTY from the Great Staircase, around the OPEN-PIT MINE that's still in operation.

PETTIGREW

Can you imagine how many diamonds
they've pulled out of this? You
could buy Europe with them.

GAGOOL

If you dig deep enough, there is no
telling what you will find!

LESSER STAIRCASE - LATER

ALLAN'S PARTY are led up a lesser staircase at the far end of the mine, over which still looms the three statues -- the SILENT ONES. Something evil RUMBLES from inside them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

Take the Great Road, but do not
kneel before the Silent Ones who
watch...like Solomon did.

THE SILENT ONES

ALLAN'S PARTY and the KUKUANA move along two different paths
that run between the statues. All stare up with awe, while
BLACK BIRDS land on the eerie statues.

ABIGAIL

Solomon must have built these to
please Bilqis' gods.

PETTIGREW

No wonder God threw him out of
Jerusalem.

DOORS

As the two paths reconnect, ALLAN'S PARTY and the KUKUANA
approach 50-foot-high stone doors. Everyone stops.

GAGOOOL

Witch I might be, but even I cannot
open doors with my hands tied!

ALLAN thinks, but knows there's no choice.

CUT TO:

GAGOOOL's chains fall away, and the WARRIORS lower her
stretcher so she can rise. She looks at ALLAN, smiles with
her lipless mouth, then throws up arms as if praising gods.

The doors begin to move, stone GRINDING deafeningly. ABIGAIL
moves closer to ALLAN, drawing PETTIGREW's ire.

INT. ANTECHAMBER, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

ALLAN'S PARTY follows GAGOOOL through the doors, but, once on
the other side, realize the KUKUANA haven't followed. ALLAN
argues in Kukuana with INFADOOS, who remains outside.

ALLAN

They refuse to enter the mountain.
It's cursed, has *evil things* living
inside it.

GAGOOOL snickers knowingly. PETTIGREW shouts at INFADOOS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETTIGREW

That's just wonderful. Cowards!

The doors begin to GRIND shut as the KUKUANA take seats against boulders.

ALLAN

They'll wait for us until
nightfall. After that, they'll
assume we're dead and go home to
their women.

ALLAN's PARTY walk willingly forward now, into the enveloping dark. As the light completely vanishes, the world fades to BLACK around GAGOOL's wicked face.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Mr. Quartermain?

ALLAN (O.S.)

I'm right here. Gagool, you fiend,
what have you done?

GAGOOL's CACKLING rolls around the antechamber like a supernatural force.

Then a flame flashes to life, then hundreds of lamps. The long, wide antechamber is revealed to be some 50-feet high; shimmering STALACTITES dangle in complex curtains from the ceilings, while STALAGMITES rise out of the hewn floor.

ABIGAIL gapes with wonder. ALLAN waves his pistol at GAGOOL.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

On with it.

GAGOOL

As you wish, as you wish.

GAGOOL drops to all fours, the others follow.

ENGINE ROOM

GAGOOL crawls onto a wide bridge spanning a man-made, lamp-lit chasm that rises to imperceptible heights and looks as bottomless as the mine outside.

Thousands of gallons of water fall from above, driving immense WHEELS that project out of the hewn wall around. Through windows into the walls, we witness thick chains move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAGOOOL

The First Queen built these
machines to keep the mine from
flooding. The tears of the Three
Witches are diverted and spat
outside!

ALLAN peers around him, dizzied by the scope of it all.

PLACE OF DEATH ANTECHAMBER

GAGOOOL waves her clawed hand at a set of jewel-encrusted,
gold-plated doors, as if presenting them to ALLAN.

GAGOOOL

Here is the Place of Death where
kings are kept. You do not have to
enter, *Children of the Stars*.
Gagool would not if I was you.

ABIGAIL

I had an aunt who was this
theatrical. She fell overboard
while boating with my uncle.

GAGOOOL sniggers, then waves her hand. The doors open wide, a
warm glow pouring out.

PLACE OF DEATH

GAGOOOL crawls down steps into a long, chandelier-lit room
built around a white marble table and chairs that stretch its
length. At the table sit MARBLE STATUES OF 13 NOBLE MEN.
Around them, upon ornate bleachers, sit another 100-OR-SO
MARBLE STATUES OF KUKUANA KINGS -- a mockery of the Chamber
of the House of Lords.

At the head of the table, an apparently GREAT KING sits upon
a gilded throne and behind and over him stands a 40-FOOT-TALL
MARBLE STATUE OF A DEMONIC SKELETON that could be H.R.
Giger's vision of Death. It RADIATES EVIL as it points a
titanic metal sword ominously at the KING.

ABIGAIL

What is this place?

ALLAN'S PARTY moves through the statues that surround them
like China's Terracotta Army. All glisten, as if wet; the
stone seems to have melted minutely, like a wax statue left
for 15 minutes in the sun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETTIGREW

Place of Death is right. This is a tomb.

ABIGAIL whimpers, turns away from a king whose intestines have spilled onto his lap like macabre art. She's now facing another statue, a broken spear through this one's chest.

ABIGAIL

It isn't like any tomb I've ever been in.

Nearby, TWALA's body sits in the bleachers, head held by his own hands at his chest. He's already covered with a sparkling ooze. PETTIGREW points up at stalactite curtains dangling from the ceiling; water drips from them onto their shoulders.

PETTIGREW

They're petrifying him with minerals, turning him to stone.

GAGOOL crawls over a statue like a salamander, watches ABIGAIL -- who is realizing something about the table now.

ABIGAIL

Let him who comes sit with Solomon...

Snickering, GAGOOL hops from her statue to the table, where we now see the platters are covered by fist-sized uncut diamonds and the chalices filled with more diamonds.

PETTIGREW

Do you think...?

ALLAN

That's King Solomon himself.

The great king is indeed KING SOLOMON, the most noble and wise-looking of all those that sit at the table.

ABIGAIL

Sit with *Solomon* at the Table of Kings -- fill your belly with their feast! Diamonds!

PETTIGREW hefts a large diamond, wide eyed. GAGOOL slinks over the back of SOLOMON's chair.

GAGOOL

Suliman loved the First Queen, but the First Queen loved him more.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAGOOL (CONT'D)

She gave him her wealth, and he
tricked her with her own trickery.

She bounds back onto the table, laughing -- pointing an
ELEPHANT GUN far too massive for her body at ALLAN'S PARTY.

GAGOOL (CONT'D)

But Gagool is tricky, too.

ALLAN and PETTIGREW turn rifles on her.

PETTIGREW

Where did she get a gun?

ALLAN

It's Curtis'.

ABIGAIL's eyes open like saucers at evidence of her father.

PETTIGREW

Are you certain?

ALLAN

I should know. I gave it to him.

GAGOOL tosses the elephant gun across the table. ALLAN falls
upon it, casting it away from her reach.

GAGOOL

Gagool does not need your magic
sticks. They do not frighten me.

ABIGAIL

Enough! Just tell me where my
father is! What did you do with
him?!

ALLAN holds her back, his arm protectively around her.

ALLAN

You can keep your diamonds, witch.
We just want Curtis.

GAGOOL

Just Curtiss? You would not
perhaps care to take a few diamonds
with you?

She waves at PETTIGREW, who's emptying diamonds into his
pockets.

ABIGAIL

What are you doing, Captain?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

We came here for my fath-- For *her*
father, you greedy fool!

ALLAN grabs PETTIGREW's arm, and PETTIGREW, eyes wild and craven, draws his pistol -- and shoots ALLAN in the side!

ABIGAIL

Allan!!!

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY looks up, panic in his eyes.

INT. PLACE OF DEATH, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ALLAN's eyes open wide as he staggers backwards. ABIGAIL catches him, keeps him on his feet. The wound is bad, but not immediately critical.

PETTIGREW

I'm the fool?

(points at ABIGAIL)

You think I don't see what's going
on between you two? Do you have any
idea how I feel about you? Besides--

He waves a chalice of diamonds, spilling them like wine.

PETTIGREW (CONT'D)

--I've got what I came for.

ABIGAIL blinks, confused.

PETTIGREW (CONT'D)

Do you think Sir Richard gave a
damn about finding this man you
insist upon calling your father? He
only ever wanted the diamonds. When
we return with the Royal Army at
our back, he'll be able to crush
the Boers and buy himself a duchy
while he's at it!

GAGOOOL hops down from the table, waving.

GAGOOOL

This way. I will show you to
Curtis, this way, this way.

ABIGAIL helps ALLAN limp after GAGOOOL. PETTIGREW goes back to filling his pockets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETTIGREW

That's right, follow the freak.
Another brilliant decision!

ALLAN and ABIGAIL reach SOLOMON; between his throne and ASMODEUS, a STAR OF SOLOMON (David) is carved into the floor. GAGOOOL waves and the Star sinks in parts, creating a spiral staircase that she crawls down. ALLAN and ABIGAIL follow, though ALLAN pauses beneath ASMODEUS's baleful gaze.

ALLAN

Asmodeus.

TUNNEL

ALLAN and ABIGAIL follow GAGOOOL deeper into the dark tunnel.

ALLAN

Wait. Wait! The map. We're not
supposed to forget the ancient evil
-- never forget the ancient evil
buried beneath Asmodeus's bones!

ABIGAIL

My father is down here!!

The lamps blink out then, and GAGOOOL appears at their feet.

GAGOOOL

Down we go, down, down, to where my
babies sleep.

GAGOOOL throws a lever -- the ground suddenly drops. CHAINS spin around them, spit SPARKS. Light FLASHES through the wooden floor. They're on an ancient--

ELEVATOR

ABIGAIL

Allan!

The wall opens up, revealing the elevator is dropping faster and faster along the outside of the--

OPEN-PIT MINE

The elevator RATTLES past startled MINERS, the bright sky above slowly shrinking.

PLACE OF DEATH

PETTIGREW loads his pack with diamonds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KING SOLOMON's dead hand cracks, moving.

ELEVATOR

ABIGAIL screams, GAGGOL laughs wildly.

PLACE OF DEATH

PETTIGREW rounds SOLOMON's throne, realizes SOLOMON is gone -- only pebbly dust left behind.

ELEVATOR

The elevator passes back into the mountain, begins to BRAKE LOUDLY; SPARKS swirl. When it finally stops with a loud METALLIC BANG, ALLAN and ABIGAIL are thrown from the car.

PLACE OF DEATH

PETTIGREW grabs a fist-sized diamond from the king's plate, which TRIGGERS A MECHANISM. Like a slot machine doling out a small payout, a spout on the wall begins to trickle diamonds.

PETTIGREW holds his hand out, laughing, lets them run over his palm. Then the payout gets bigger; a torrent of diamonds fall from the spout, collecting around PETTIGREW's feet.

More spouts along this wall begin spitting diamonds, too. Then spouts on the other side of the room. The floor is quickly becoming covered in them, they're even spilling down the Star of Solomon stairs. PETTIGREW, laughing hysterically, wastes no time loading more into his bag.

But the diamond flow isn't abating. PETTIGREW wades through them, toward the bejeweled doors. The diamonds are up to his knees now, he has to climb over them like loose snow.

KUKUANA KINGS domino and shatter.

Just as he's about to reach the doors, they slam shut.

PETTIGREW's eyes bulge with panic. What can he do? There, behind ASMODEUS -- a balcony! He crawls across diamonds, leaps onto the marble table as diamonds skitter across it. He runs now, kicking aside platters and chalices.

Diamonds swirl down the Star of Solomon stairs like a drain.

PETTIGREW hops over SOLOMON's throne and lands knee deep in these shifting diamonds that snare his legs like quicksand. He's being sucked down the "drain".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETTIGREW claws at the throne. The diamonds are up to his chest; he can barely move his arms. Now they're up to his shoulders, falling over his face. Filling his mouth as he screams, his voice trailing off until diamonds choke it.

Now all we can see is PETTIGREW's hand reaching up. Then that is swallowed up, too.

ELEVATOR ROOM

The smoke of the controlled stop is starting to clear, and ABIGAIL is on her feet. Light is faint.

ABIGAIL

Allan? Allan!

She moves along the wall, finds an opening she steps through -
- but slips!

BOTTOM, OPEN-PIT MINE

ABIGAIL slides along a tunnel's sloped floor, spilling out in a round space that, she realizes is the bottom of the mine. There's a pinprick of light above that suggests sunlight.

She gets up, favoring her right leg. Dusts herself off.

ABIGAIL

Allan! Where are you?!

GAGOOOL's CACKLE echoes around the space.

ABIGAIL looks around. Whereas the mine is 200 feet across at surface level, it's probably only 30 feet across here.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Allan!!!

MAN (O.S.)

(weak, coughing)

Abbie...Abbie.

ABIGAIL spots a MAN sitting on the floor against the far wall of the mine, half-hidden in shadows.

ABIGAIL

Allan!

As she runs over, she realizes the man isn't ALLAN -- it's her father, HENRY CURTIS (59)! He's covered in dust and bleeding from several cuts across his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Fa...father? Father?

ABIGAIL bursts into tears, falls at CURTIS' side, arms around him. He weakly tries to hug her back.

HENRY CURTIS

I knew...you'd come.

ABIGAIL

Can you move? What happened to you?

HENRY CURTIS

Ga...gool. You have to help Allan.
She took him...through there.

He points at a massive dark-metal PLATE at the center of the floor.

Across it, monstrous figures are etched -- a great Biblical battle between Heaven and Hell.

ABIGAIL

What do you mean, she took him
through it?

HENRY CURTIS

Don't worry about me, I'll be fine.
Right now...help Allan...please.

CUT TO:

ABIGAIL walks in circles over the PLATE -- what does she do?

HENRY CURTIS (CONT'D)

It's a door. Right there...open it
there.

ABIGAIL finds a bar built into a curved indentation in the PLATE. Crouches, takes hold of it, twists counter-clockwise -- but nothing happens. Her father nods -- try it again.

So she does. This time, the handle twists. She jerks again, until it turns 90 degrees.

Now she smiles, triumphant. But then something CLICKS. Metal braces roll out, PINNING HER WRIST.

ABIGAIL'S PINNED HAND: 20 long, thin NEEDLES suddenly stab out of the round surface around her hand, lancing her flesh before instantly retracting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABIGAIL screams in agony. BLOOD runs from her hand, drips into the bottom of the indentation -- then drains, SLURPED UP by something that sounds frighteningly supernatural.

The metal braces retract, and ABIGAIL falls back, crying at her hand. She looks back at CURTIS, but can only see his legs in the dusty dark. She tries to get to her feet.

ABIGAIL

Father? Father!

GAGOOOL appears then, scaring the hell out of ABIGAIL by thrusting her shriveled face at hers as she laughs.

GAGOOOL

Father? No father here. Just
Bilqis.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY and EDDIE look up, confused.

HENRY AND EDDIE

Bilqis?

INT. BOTTOM, OPEN-PIT MINE, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL stumbles to her feet, eyes filled with confusion.

ABIGAIL

The First Queen? That would make
you 3,000... What have you done?
(off PLATE)
What have I helped you do?

GAGOOOL

Bilqis taught Suliman her tricks,
and he used them to steal her
babies. Made them slaves, built his
Temple with them, made his One God
angry with them.

ABIGAIL keeps glancing to her father, but can't make him out.

ABIGAIL

Demons? You mean demons?

GAGOOOL

Suliman took my love and, like
every man, paid me back with pain.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAGOOOL (CONT'D)

He sicked my own babies against me,
made war on me with them, then
locked them away deep in the earth
to make his One God love him again.

(suddenly hideous)

I want my babies back! I want my
empire back! BILQIS WANTS WHAT IS
HERS!

ABIGAIL backs away. The PLATE begins to VIBRATE.

ABIGAIL

You mean this is...a prison? And I
just helped you open it, didn't I?

GAGOOOL

Suliman tricked Bilqis one last
time. Only a believer in his One
God could open the gate of his man-
made hell, so I must thank you,
thank you, thank you.

ABIGAIL

(realizing, sotto)

Blessed be the first key that turns
away from morning's light...

ABIGAIL looks again at CURTIS, whose head she can now see has
lolloped to the side.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Father?!

GAGOOOL

(like a childish taunt)

He can't hear you.

That's because CURTIS is DEAD, for almost a year by the look
of his leathery skin. ABIGAIL falls to her knees, crying.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY and the STUDENTS are traumatized. Even MR. GIBBONS
seems bothered by the tragic end to ABIGAIL's quest.

INT. BOTTOM, OPEN-PIT MINE, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

GAGOOOL laughs at ABIGAIL, pointing.

GAGOOOL

Bilqis got you good. The girl's
father refused me, saw through my
tricks.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAGOOL (CONT'D)

He wanted to keep you safe -- but
you went and ruined his sacrifice,
silly, stupid child of the stars.

The PLATE GROANS, and the center of it drops a few inches.
GAGOOL stalks toward ABIGAIL, slowly drawing a knife.

GAGOOL (CONT'D)

Do you know how long I have waited
for this?! For ages I have made my
slaves dig, deeper, always deeper.
Searching for my babies. Now Bilqis
will--

ALLAN appears suddenly, kicking GAGOOL so hard that she flies
several feet and rolls across the PLATE.

ALLAN

That's enough out of you!

ALLAN helps ABIGAIL to her feet, holding his BLOODY SIDE.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Come on, let's go.

But she hesitates, crying at her father's body.

ABIGAIL

We came all this way for nothing.

ALLAN

That's not true. Now you know how
much he loved you, how far he was
willing to go to keep you safe. The
rest I think you're ready to figure
out yourself.

ABIGAIL nods slowly. They run back to the tunnel to the
elevator room, ALLAN's movement growing labored.

ELEVATOR ROOM

ALLAN falls into the elevator, clutching his side. ABIGAIL
throws a lever and the car begins to climb -- but not before
GAGOOL grabs hold, trying to climb aboard.

GAGOOL

The gate is opening! My babies are
coming!

BOTTOM, OPEN-PIT MINE

The PLATE continues to sink, light bleeding out from the cracks. Unnatural things GROWL and SING with excitement.

ELEVATOR

ABIGAIL kicks at GAGOOL's hands, but the witch is tenacious.

BOTTOM, OPEN-PIT MINE

The PLATE drops away, LAVA-COLORED light erupting from it.

ELEVATOR

The elevator climbs out of the mountain, one wall exposed to the mine again. Light washes over them.

ABIGAIL

Get off!!!

ABIGAIL draws ALLAN's pistol from his belt and shoots at GAGOOL, hits her hand. GAGOOL falls backwards, leaving two bloody fingers behind.

OPEN-PIT MINE

GAGOOL clings to the wall of the mine as the elevator climbs. She crawls into a shaft.

EXT. GREAT STAIRCASE, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

MINERS run for their lives, INFADOOS and his WARRIORS with them. Above, THUNDERING storm clouds and a great flock of BLACK BIRDS whorl over the mine.

THE SILENT ONES

The three statues stare down at the light radiating from the bottom of the mine, triumph emanating from within them.

INT. ELEVATOR, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

As the elevator climbs, ALLAN holds ABIGAIL, watching the intensifying light. He shakes terribly.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY's hand clenches the edge of his desk, knuckles white.

INT. ELEVATOR, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ALLAN can hear the GROWLS and SINGING from below now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLAN

Abbie.

This is the first time he's used her first name.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Abbie, what did Gagool say? Only a believer in Solomon's One God could open the demon gate...but who locked it in the first place?

ABIGAIL

So...Solomon.

ALLAN

The *blessed* who had fallen away from God -- from the light. It's a riddle, don't you see? Like a combination on a safe. Only a true *believer* can damn God's earth by opening the gate...and only a *disbeliever*, the *ruined*, could have the *faith* to close it by *facing* the coming darkness.

ABIGAIL

What are you saying?

ALLAN's strength is fading fast. He slips off his pack, loops the strap over ABIGAIL's shoulder.

ALLAN

You once said I don't believe in anything, but you were wrong. I believe in my son...and I can't let this happen to his world.

He eases away from her, rips off his lions-tooth necklace.

ABIGAIL

No. No, Allan. This is crazy.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY shakes his head, tears in his eyes.

INT. ELEVATOR, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ALLAN stuffs his necklace into ABIGAIL's hand.

ALLAN

Make sure my son gets this and the diary.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She tries to protest, but he pulls her into a passionate kiss then. When he steps away, she's stunned into silence by it.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Pettigrew had me pegged. I *am* a
coward. I just know what I love.

He smiles at her, then turns and, without giving her a chance to stop him, leaps out of the elevator.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY cries out, like he's been shot or something worse.

HENRY

NO!

INT. ELEVATOR, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL falls against the rail, crying. She watches ALLAN disappear into the light.

ABIGAIL

Allan!!

OPEN-PIT-MINE

ALLAN plummets through the light, arms outstretched.

EXT. GREAT STAIRCASE, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

The thunderous clouds above crackle with lightning as they spin in a HELLSH WHORL.

INT. ELEVATOR CAR, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

As ABIGAIL stares over the side of the elevator, the car stops. She's reached the level ALLAN and her first boarded.

OPEN-PIT MINE

ALLAN continues to fall, screaming defiantly now like a knight charging on horseback. The light is blinding. Whatever is on the other side of the gate is about to come through.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY cries, not wanting to believe it.

INT. OPEN-PIT MINE, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ALLAN's scream is swallowed up by the light.

INT. DEMON PRISON - CONTINUOUS

SILENCE. A great, lava-floored cavern; SHADOWY THINGS crawl unnaturally over rocks, preparing to invade earth. In the distance, a glowing hole -- and through it falls a black dot.

INT. TUNNEL, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

ABIGAIL is getting off the elevator when something BOOMS from below. The light that was pouring out of the demon gate suddenly retreats, as if being sucked down a drain.

OPEN-PIT MINE

The light vanishes down the demon gate as things on the other side HOWL in agony. The metal PLATE locks back into place, leaving nothing but STARTLING SILENCE in its wake.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY flings the book into the wall, and runs out of the room. EDDIE makes to go after him, but MR. GIBBONS, who's blinking away his own tears, is already on his feet.

MR. GIBBONS

Let me speak with him. I know something about losing a father.

When he's gone--

STUDENT #1

What do we do now?

The STUDENTS look at each other.

EDDIE

Let's find out how it ends for Henry.

EXT. GREAT STAIRCASE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

The storm clouds begin to calm. It's impossible not to get the sense that something divine is satisfied here.

INT. TUNNEL, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

ABIGAIL smiles down at the mine, relieved and devastated.

SHAFT

GAGOOOL bangs her fist against rock in a violent fit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAGOOL

No, no, no, NO!

EXT. THE SILENT ONES, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

The three statues's bases begin to crack.

INT. TUNNEL, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

GRINDING ROCK above draws ABIGAIL's attention. One of the statues topples into the mine, catching the edge of the pit and breaking into a spin that shaves boulders off the wall.

ABIGAIL runs, the statue tearing into the wall behind her. Rock explodes after her.

SHAFT

GAGOOL kneels in a lump before the mouth of the shaft, crying as the statue's massive bulk falls past.

OPEN-PIT MINE

The statue crashes into the floor of the mine. Giant slices of rock break away from the walls above.

SHAFT

GAGOOL continues to cry as the world SHAKES around her.

MAN (O.S.)

Billllqqiiisssss.

GAGOOL looks up -- a white, skeletal hand grabs her by the throat! It's SOLOMON, his petrified body flaking apart so that fleshy skeleton is visible underneath. She smiles slowly, black eyes filling with joy.

GAGOOL

Suliman. You found me.

Wrinkles smooth as time reverses itself so that BILQIS, the beautiful Queen of Sheba (20s), can smile with love. SOLOMON opens his mouth for a kiss, revealing broken teeth.

SOLOMON

Billlllqqqiiisssssss.

SOLOMON lunges forward then, as if to swallow his ancient lover's head whole.

EXT. COURTYARD, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

THE MINE BEGINS TO CAVE IN, taking machinery with it. The other Silent Ones shatter, crashing down into the mountain.

GREAT STAIRCASE

Rock falls from the staircase's underside into the lake.

INT. TUNNEL, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

ABIGAIL limps down the tunnel, back the way she came earlier, but finds diamonds everywhere. The Star of Solomon staircase is jammed with them, splashing out across the ground. PETTIGREW's arm extends out of the treasure.

EXT. GREAT STAIRCASE, MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

The Great Staircase collapses, plummeting toward the lake.

INT. ANTECHAMBER, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - CONTINUOUS

Stalactites and stalagmites crumble.

ENGINE ROOM

A large chunk of wall tears through the bridge.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY sits in a window nook, crying as his own world falls apart. He's taken his necklace off, fingers the fangs.

INT. TUNNEL, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

The tunnel collapses around ABIGAIL as she runs. The walls give way then, SPILLING TONS OF DIAMONDS, flooding the space like water. She runs harder, trying to stay ahead of it, as something loud, like real RUSHING WATER, rises up ahead.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

MR. GIBBONS walks down the hall, searching for HENRY.

INT. DIVERSION CHAMBER, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL emerges into a chamber, where natural waterfalls spill into canals that rush away into the mountain. Diamonds explode behind her, carrying her into one of these canals.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

MR. GIBBONS hurries past windows, searching nooks.

INT. CANAL, KING SOLOMON'S MINES - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL struggles to stay afloat in the rushing water that quickly sucks her into a tunnel and UNDERWATER. She spins, searching for air in the dark.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

CLOSE on MR. GIBBONS' shoes, quickening steps.

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL launches out of one of the monster-faced spouts we saw protruding from the mountain earlier, carried by water and surrounded by SPARKLING DIAMONDS.

And below, a 100-FOOT DROP! She screams, her feet pedalling through the air as she drops, drops, drops.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

CLOSE on MR. GIBBON's shoes, ever-quickenings steps.

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

UNDERWATER: ABIGAIL plunges into the lake, sinking fast. She kicks, tries to swim, but it's no use. She's drowning. Bubbles everywhere. The sun is a quivering sphere above.

And then A HAND takes hers and pulls.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

CLOSE on MR. GIBBONS' hands, adjusting his jacket.

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL, coughing up water, is dragged half-out of the lake by a MAN. They fall against the misty shore.

MAN (V.O.)

Careful, you'll choke.

ABIGAIL looks up and finds she's under ALLAN, who's smiling playfully at her.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

EDDIE looks up with every other STUDENT.

EDDIE

Oh my God, oh my God.

GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY

MR. GIBBON'S POV, approaching HENRY in his window nook.

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL gapes at ALLAN, confused. His gunshot wound is gone.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

HENRY looks up, his teary eyes slowly opening wide with awe.

His FATHER, *not* MR. GIBBONS, is standing over him, dressed awkwardly in a fine suit, a loving smile on his face.

HENRY

But how?

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

ABIGAIL

But how?

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

ALLAN

I don't think I'll ever be able to tell you that. One moment, I was falling--

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

ALLAN

--and the next I was here, grabbing your hand.

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

ALLAN

But you were there, Henry. Somehow you were there, calling me back.

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

ALLAN

Maybe it was one of those miracles the preacher told me to watch out for.

ABIGAIL thrusts her lips up at his. He wraps his arms around her, kissing her back, as--

INT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - INTERCUT

HENRY leaps into his father's arms. ALLAN swings him around.

EXT. VARIOUS, MOUNTAIN - INTERCUT

The mountain collapses upon the mines and ancient keep.

EXT. GROUND-FLOOR HALLWAY, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

From a corner, MR. GIBBONS watches ALLAN spin HENRY around. He smiles, his heart singing for the boy.

MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM

STUDENT #4 laughs.

STUDENT #4

Oh my God, this is the best book
ever--

EXT. LAKE, MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

ALLAN leans back from his kiss with ABIGAIL, smiling at her.

ALLAN

You're...sparkling.

ABIGAIL

That's one I've never heard before.

She tries to kiss him again, but he interrupts by reaching into her hair. He rakes out a few small diamonds; her hair is full of them. Shocked, she yanks at her shirt, which is partially untucked now. More diamonds fall out.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Well, we won't be able to buy
Europe...

ALLAN

We'll just have to settle for
Australia then.

Laughing, they kiss again.

INT. MR. GIBBONS' CLASSROOM, BOARDING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON**STUDENT #4**

--except for the kissing.

EXT. SOLOMON'S ROAD, OUTSKIRTS OF LOO - MORNING

ALLAN and ABIGAIL, followed by INFADOOS and his WARRIORS, crest a hill along the road and find UMBOPA and several KUKUANA waiting for them. UMBOPA laughs heartily at the sight of his friends' return.

ALLAN (V.O.)

Here, I think I shall end my story.

EXT. HENDRIK'S HOUSE, SITANDA'S KRAAL - AFTERNOON

While ABIGAIL and BOER SETTLERS watch, ALLAN drops five large uncut diamonds into HENDRIK's hand. HENDRIK laughs with disbelief, then scoops his friend up into a great hug.

ALLAN (V.O.)

Eight months after we began our journey, I found myself once more safe and sound in Durban Point.

EXT. DOCKS, DURBAN - MORNING

ALLAN and ABIGAIL push their way through crowds, dressed in clean clothes. British warships linger off the coast. BRITISH REDCOATS everywhere. The Royal Army has occupied the city in their absence, disappointing ALLAN.

ALLAN (V.O.)

The journey would have been quicker and safer, if not for the fact that our Queen has again laid claim to the Boer Republics.

INT. RAMSHACKLE CHURCH - MORNING

CHARLIE is delivering a sermon to his ZULU and KHOI CONGREGATION when he goes white. His bottom lip trembles, finally he smiles. ALLAN is standing in the doorway.

ALLAN (V.O.)

I am glad to be done with my old life, retired for good now, I say. No more adventures, no more war. My heart has had enough of it, and knows now with whom it belongs.

EXT. PATIO, BRITISH MANOR - AFTERNOON

A sprawling estate, filled with gardens, a lake, forested hills. Dressed elegantly, ABIGAIL walks onto an immense patio and gazes out at her two men, ALLAN and HENRY, running toward the woods in the distance -- and smiles, absolutely content.

WOODS

ALLAN and ABIGAIL's treasure bought them a castle-sized, manor. ALLAN and HENRY run out of sight of it now, into the woods, laughing as they chase each other.

HILL

ALLAN and HENRY scabble up a hill, still laughing. At the top, they pause to appreciate the nature around them.

ALLAN (V.O.)

When I was younger, I used to dream
of England, of returning to the
land of my birth. Soon I imagine,
all I will dream of is Africa.

ALLAN gazes out at the horizon as he musses his son's hair.

ALLAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I wonder if I shall ever see her
again.

BLACK

TITLE CARD: Until the next adventure...

THE END