

THIRTEEN LIVES

Written by
William Nicholson

Dialogue in bold italics to be spoken in Thai and sub-titled.

1

EXT. FOOTBALL PITCH - BAN CHONG, THAILAND - DAY

1

DAY 1 - Saturday June 23

A thick mist hangs over Nang Non mountain, a curtain of dark green tropical vegetation. DOWN TO FIND a football pitch, where the under-15 team of local club the Wild Boars are having a kick-around for practice, under the eye of their young COACH, 25.

The tallest boy in the team, gangling LEK, has the ball at his feet and is racing for the goal. The smallest boy in the team, his friend little CHAI, is on his heels, trying to tackle him, weaving in and out, constantly out-played.

ARM, the team captain, urges Chai on.

ARM

Go Chai! Go Chai!

PREM, the team clown, can't stop laughing at the sight of little Chai trying to tackle big Lek. Lek slams the ball between the goal posts. He does a victory dance like his hero, football star Ronaldo.

Coach blows his whistle. The boys race to the side of the pitch, where there's a cart selling grilled pork skewers. They're hungry, and they jostle to get the food.

CHAI

***Here comes Messi, greatest player
in the world!***

He clenches his fists and does the Messi shoulder shake. Prem finds this hilarious.

PREM

***Messi! My hero! Let me touch your
golden boots!***

Arm comes up to Prem, holding a bag -

ARM

***Hey, birthday boy! Today's your
day!***

PREM

You're all invited to my party!

ARM

But first -

He takes a flashlight from his bag and shines it in Prem's face.

ARM

Guess where we're going?

He shines the flashlight round the other boys. They let out a cheer and race for their bikes. Lek stays back with Coach.

LEK

My dad's cooking for the party. I promised I'd help.

COACH

I'd better go with them. See you at the party.

Coach goes after the boys, as they jump on their bikes and cycle away up the track.

Lek mounts his bike and pedals off in the opposite direction, back into town.

2 EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY 2

Twelve boys and their coach, a column of bicycles, pedal up the dirt track, shouting to each other as they go. The track runs through rice fields where FARMERS are out tending their crops.

3 EXT. THAM LUANG - CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY 3

The mountain is close now, looming overhead.

The boys dismount just before the mouth of the cave, and push their bikes. They pass a small shrine where candles burn before a statue of a reclining woman, a goddess, decorated with garlands of flowers. They put their hands together and make a quick token bow as they go by, and push their bikes on to the cave. Prem forgets to pay his respects and turns back for a hurried bow.

Coach, bringing up the rear, also bows to the goddess, but he does so more intently than the boys.

4 INT. THAM LUANG - CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY 4

The boys wheel their bikes into the wide entrance to the dark cave, and lean them against the long railing.

5 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY 5

The boys head off in a laughing chattering band across the immense cave entrance and into the wide tunnel on the far side that leads to the inner chambers. They race through it, their flashlight beams dancing on the rock walls.

6 INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY 6

The boys come out of the tunnel into a broad chamber, where a little water has pooled onto its floor. They splash each other as they race across, their flashlight beams reaching ahead to the next tunnel. Some of the boys kick off their shoes. Those still carrying rucksacks drop them off on the wide rock shelf.

7 INT. STALACTITE TUNNEL - DAY 7

In the juddering flashlights we see Chai clambering down a narrow sloping tunnel into a tight squeeze. He stops, looking round, not sure if the boys are going further.

Arm shines his flashlight on Chai's face.

ARM

You scared?

CHAI

No way! Let's go!

He pushes on into the tunnel. The others give a whoop and follow.

THE CAMERA STAYS as the tunnel empties, and the sounds of the boys fade to silence. Then all we hear is the trickle of the water flowing in from the right-hand tunnel, and the water seeping steadily down the walls to pool on the chamber floor.

8 SCENE DELETED 8

9 EXT. MAE SAI, THAILAND - NIGHT 9

Rain. Rain soaking down on the tropical forest round the town. Rain making puddles on the paths between the houses. Rain on the roofs and streaming down the narrow streets.

A small motorbike comes put-putting through the rain. Its rider is Chai's 35-year-old mother BUAHOM, well-wrapped against the rain. She weaves her way through the town, splashing in and out of puddles.

10

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - MAE SAI - NIGHT

10

Rain falling outside the windows. Buahom comes in, shaking off the rain. She looks nervous, she's not a regular part of this group.

BUAHOM

Am I late? The shop got really busy.

The table is laid for a birthday party. MANOP, father of birthday boy Prem, is on his phone. His wife WANNA, another father, SOMBOON, and YOD and KAMPANG, father and mother of Arm, are helping get the party ready. Wanna is putting candles onto a birthday cake decorated with a frosting version of SpongeBob SquarePants. For a moment no one's paying any attention to Buahom.

MANOP

(to phone)

Are they with you? Where are they?...

BUAHOM

What a great cake!

Wanna now registers Buahom.

WANNA

You're Chai's mum, right?

Buahom nods.

BUAHOM

I keep trying to get to watch the games. There never seems to be time.

Lek comes in from the kitchen carrying a plate of food. Buahom looks round.

BUAHOM

Where are the boys?

LEK

They went to the cave.

SOMBOON

In this rain?

LEK

It wasn't raining earlier.

MANOP
 (to phone)
*Looks like they went to the cave...
 Me too.*

He ends his phone call. Buahom looks at the rain streaming down outside and starts to worry.

BUAHOM
*Shouldn't we drive over there and
 get them? They'll get soaked biking
 back.*

SOMBOON
*Serves them right! They've as much
 sense as chickens.*

10A EXT. MAE SAI - NIGHT

10A *

Rain streams down on the market area of town. In the cars,
 Buahom, Lek, Somboon, and the other parents. The car radio is
 running a news bulletin. *

CAR RADIO
*Heavy rain in Northern Thailand is
 forecast to continue as the
 moonsoon season starts -* *

The people in the car react to the radio, speaking on top of
 the newsreader - *

BUAHOM
Monsoon? *

CAR RADIO
Six weeks earlier than expected - *

SOMBOON
It can't be the moonsoon. *

LEK
That comes in July. *

BUAHOM
But that cave floods every year! *

SOMBOON
I'm sure they're fine. *

11 EXT. THAM LUANG TRACK - NIGHT 11

Rain streaming down as the day ends. Two cars jolt their way up the track where the boys cycled. In the cars, Manop, Wanna, Somboon, Yod, Kampang, Buahom and Lek.

12 EXT. THAM LUANG - CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT 12

Rain is already turning the track to mud as the cars pull up by the Parks Building. Lights are on, and PARK RANGERS are moving between the building and the entrance to the cave.

The six parents and Lek get out of the cars, pulling hoods over their head against the rain, and go to the cave.

13 INT. THAM LUANG - CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT 13

The parents see the line of bikes leaning against the railings. Buahom identifies Chai's bike with a cry.

BUAHOM

That's Chai's bike!

Deeper inside the dark cave she sees men training the beams of their flashlights on rising water. The sound of rushing water everywhere.

KITTIPONG SAISOR, a veteran park ranger, comes over to them. He's carrying a powerful flashlight.

MANOP

Where are the boys?

SAISOR

We've been in as far as we could go. The cave's flooding. We've put out an emergency call.

SOMBOON

(to Manop)

Let's go in and get them.

He and Manop head for the tunnel but Saisor blocks their way.

SAISOR

The cave's closed! Look! It's flooding!

BUAHOM

How can the cave be closed? How are they to come out?

She starts to shout for her son -

BUAHOM

Chai! Chai! Can you hear me?

14 EXT. GOVERNOR'S HOUSE - CHIANG RAI - NIGHT

14

Rain falling. A car and driver stands waiting, engine running, as GOVERNOR NARONGSAK comes out of his house, pulling up his coat's hood against the rain. His female assistant PREEYA is by the car.

NARONGSAK

I'd just started my dinner.

PREEYA

Sorry, Governor.

The Governor gets into the back of the car. Preeya gets in the front by the driver. The car pulls away.

15 INT/EXT. CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

15

NARONGSAK

Strictly speaking, none of this is my responsibility now. You know what my next job is?

PREEYA

No, sir.

NARONGSAK

Nor do I. The Minister hasn't been kind enough to tell me yet. So what is this? Some kids stuck in a cave?

PREEYA

Yes, sir. A youth football team.

NARONGSAK

Football team! They play football in caves? Look at this rain! How far is this cave?

PREEYA

About an hour and a half, sir.

The Governor sighs.

NARONGSAK

And no dinner.

16

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

16

The mountain looms in the darkness beneath the night sky. DOWN to see the headlights of cars and trucks sweeping towards the cave. People hurrying back and forth in the rain-drenched night.

Two buses drive in. Out of the buses streams a platoon of NAVY SEALS, led by their commander CAPTAIN ARNONT SUREEWONG, 40, slight in build, close-cropped hair, glasses: an intellectual-looking military man. As his men unpack their diving gear the Governor's car arrives. Narongsak and Preeya get out. They see the Navy Seals getting ready to enter the cave.

NARONGSAK

Who called in the Navy?

He goes over to the Seals and speaks to Captain Arnont.

NARONGSAK

*I'm the Governor of the province.
You are?*

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Captain Arnont Sureewong, sir. Navy Seals.

His attention is on his men, and he barely glances at the Governor.

NARONGSAK

Brief me, please.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

*The cave is flooded. My men will
enter with breathing apparatus.
It's all under control.*

Preeya joins the Governor with a lean Englishman who's just arrived, VERN UNSWORTH, 60.

PREEYA

*This man lives near by, sir. He
knows the cave.*

VERN UNSWORTH

I've mapped it. All of it.

He's pulling out a hand-drawn map. The Governor studies it by the light of his phone.

VERN UNSWORTH

I've never been in when it's
flooded - that's a whole different
game. You have to be a bit -

He makes a gesture meaning 'crazy'.

VERN UNSWORTH

There's some pretty tight corners
in there, real squeeze. But there's
some big chambers too. The boys
should be okay, so long as we get
them out soon.

Captain Arnont is now also looking at Vern's map.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Let me show this to my men.

Narongsak nods. Vern and Captain Arnont go into a huddle over the map with the Navy Seals. The Governor finds himself effectively left out as the professionals get into the details.

PREEYA

*Maybe I could find you something to
eat, sir.*

NARONGSAK

*That would be kind. This could be a
long night.*

17 INT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

17

Buahom and the other parents look on as a powerful light is dragged into the cave. It comes on, dazzling everyone. Its light illuminates the great space so that we see it clearly for the first time. From the railing where the parents stand and the bikes are parked a rock face slopes steeply down to an immense void, bigger than a football arena, with stalactites stabbing down from the high rock roof like monster's teeth. At the far end a lake has formed, into which water is flowing from a wide rock tunnel. The light gleams on the water, bouncing patterns onto the tunnel roof.

The team of Navy Seals now enter the cave, ready to dive, wearing head-torches. Their leader, LIEUTENANT KIET, a super-fit 25-year-old, leads them across the wide entrance. As they reach the tunnel he pulls out a phone, holds it up for a group selfie. His group includes a medic, DR KARN, and two young eager Seals, JAY and PICHAJ.

KIET

***Navy Seals! We don't go home till
we've got the kids! Hooyah!***

His comrades punch the air and echo their trademark cry.

NAVY SEALS

Hooyah!

18 INT. CHAMBER 1 - NIGHT

18

DAY 2 - Sunday June 24 (midnight)

The Seals splash through shallow water down the wide tunnel. The terrain rises and falls, and is strewn with boulders. Their head-torches throw beams of light onto the craggy roof and walls. The sound of gushing water fills the air.

18A INT. U-BEND - NIGHT

18A

The Navy Seals stride across U-Bend to the point where the next tunnel is almost completely filled with water. Here the diving begins.

Kiet looks round his men, fixes his mask. They all follow suit. He gives them a thumbs-up, and submerges himself under the murky water. One by one his men follow him, and they're gone.

19 EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT 19

The rain falls ceaselessly. Lightning lights up the long low mountain.

20 EXT. THAM LUANG - BASECAMP - NIGHT 20

More and more cars arriving. A local TV news crew is setting up camera and lights.

The huddle of parents stands by the cave entrance, patiently waiting for the Navy Seals to return with their boys. They're anxious, but still able to exchange chatter and even some nervy laughter. Captain Arnont waits, staring towards the cave.

21 EXT. THAM LUANG - BASECAMP - LATER - NIGHT 21

Governor Narongsak speaking to a TV news crew in the rain. He's keen to communicate his confidence that everything's under control.

NARONGSAK

It's a deep cave, several kilometers long. It's got some tricky narrow passages. If the boys have gone a long way in, it could be a few more hours. I have every confidence in the Navy Seals. They know what they're doing.

22 INT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT 22

Flickers of light from deep in the tunnel. The lights grow brighter.

Then they appear, moving slowly, exhausted and in pain: Kiet and his team of Navy Seals wading their way through the water back towards the cave mouth. One of the Seals is being supported by comrades. Another has a cut on his brow that's bleeding.

Captain Arnont, Governor Narongsak and Preeya - a huddle of parents, Buahom a little apart, by the railing - all staring in shock.

The Navy Seals come to a stop and pull off their masks, and meet the stunned gaze of all the people waiting in the cave. Kiet shakes his head.

Buahom gives a gasping sob. Governor Narongsak and Captain Arnont share a look: what now?

23 INT. RICK STANTON'S HOUSE - COVENTRY, ENGLAND - DAY 23

DAY 3 - Monday June 25

Lean, crop-headed RICK STANTON, 57, is bent over a worktop covered in tools, constructing a home-made re-breather, part of his diving kit. All round him the clutter of a man who lives alone, his life given over to his hobbies, which are cave diving and kayaking. Bottles of oxygen, diving apparatus, kayaks under repair, compete for space with a couch, a TV, and the remains of takeaway meals.

The phone buzzes. Without stopping what he's doing Rick taps the call onto speaker.

RICK STANTON

Yeah. John.

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE

You following what's happening in Thailand?

RICK STANTON

Why would I?

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE

Some kids stuck in a cave.

RICK STANTON

How'd they get themselves in there?

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE

How do I know?

RICK STANTON

If they walked in, they can walk out.

24 INT. JOHN VOLANTHEN'S HOUSE - LONG ASHTON, ENGLAND - DAY 24

COMPUTER SCREEN - BBC News Asia: *Tham Luang - Twelve members of a youth soccer team and their coach reported missing in a cave in northern Thailand.*

The laptop screen is being searched by JOHN VOLANTHEN, 47, skinny, spectacled, intense-looking. He's on the phone to Rick.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Thai government's been given a list
of names. We're on the list.

RICK STANTON'S PHONE VOICE
What cave is this?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Tham Luang.

Across the table from John, his son MATTHEW, 11, is on his X-Box playing Fortnite. The front door bell rings.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Hey, Matthew. That'll be your mum.

Matthew's attention is on his game.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Matthew!

MATTHEW
Okay. Okay.

Matthew leaves his video game to go to the front door. John continues with his phone call.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Vern mapped it a couple of years
ago.

25 INT. RICK STANTON'S HOUSE - COVENTRY, ENGLAND - DAY 25

Rick has moved over to his laptop and is googling 'Tham Luang'. He's got a page on the cave, still on the phone to John.

RICK STANTON
Okay. I've got it. It's a show
cave. Shouldn't be that difficult.

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE
Vern says when it floods it's
impassable.

RICK STANTON
Impassable for Vern.

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE
Anyway, seems there's some kids
trapped there. They've got teams
climbing all over the mountain,
drilling holes -

RICK STANTON
Drilling holes... ?

26 INT. JOHN VOLANTHEN'S HOUSE - LONG ASHTON, ENGLAND - DAY 26

Still on the phone, John has gone through to the hall, where his ex-wife ANNABEL is sorting out Matthew's backpack.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Hi. Everything okay?

ANNABEL
Sure.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
(to Annabel)
Do I have him this weekend?

ANNABEL
You know you do.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
(to Matthew)
I may have to be away.

ANNABEL
Well, it'd be helpful if you'd just let me know.

MATTHEW
Where is it this time, Dad?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Thailand, maybe.

RICK STANTON'S PHONE VOICE
They don't need us, John.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
(to phone)
Hold on, Rick.
(to Annabel)
It's like an emergency. Maybe.

Annabel's heard this before.

ANNABEL
An emergency. Maybe.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
(to Matthew)
Got everything?

MATTHEW
Yeah.

RICK STANTON'S PHONE VOICE
It's just a tourist cave. It's not
even the longest one in Thailand.
It's like number five.

ANNABEL
Come along, Matthew.

She's already heading out of the door. Matthew follows.

MATTHEW
Bye, Dad.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Bye. I'll tell you if I have to go.

Matthew turns back and gives John a wistful wave. Then he's
out of the door.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
(to phone)
Rick, if you don't want to do this,
I'll call Jason.

27 INT. RICK STANTON'S HOUSE - COVENTRY, ENGLAND - DAY 27

Rick still staring at the cave on his laptop screen.

RICK STANTON
(to phone)
So call Jason if you'd rather go
with Jason.

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE
I didn't say I'd rather go with
Jason. I'd rather go with you.

RICK STANTON
Just to confirm. No one's actually
asked for us yet.

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE
No. I'm just saying, Vern gave them
our names, be ready in case they do
ask for us. Start packing if you're
coming.

RICK STANTON
How many kids involved?

JOHN VOLANTHEN'S PHONE VOICE
I don't know. A football team.

RICK STANTON
I don't even like kids.

28 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

28

DAY 4 - Tuesday June 26

The rain streams down.

A shelter has been erected across from the cave entrance, and here the PARENTS of the boys are huddled on plastic chairs, trying to sleep as the rain streams down. Lek lies curled up asleep on the ground. Buahom can't sleep. She sits apart from the others, gazing towards the bright light spilling from the cave.

Park Ranger Saisor comes to the families camp carrying half a dozen clear plastic bags. He lays them out on a table. The parents gather round.

SAISOR
*We found these when we went in on
the first night.*

The parents look more closely. Then they start to recognize items, and to retrieve them: a pair of black sneakers, many pairs of slip-on sandals, half a dozen backpacks. Buahom finds her son's sandals.

Great trucks are now pulling into the muddy space by the cave. Teams of WATER ENGINEERS move GIANT PUMPS into position, and lay lines of giant hose. Among them a big cheerful water engineer called UDOM.

Engines start to rumble, and the water starts to flow through the hoses in torrents, and gush out into open ground. More news crews are arriving and setting up their cameras.

A convoy of official cars pulls in to the muddy rain-drenched site. Buahom follows the cars' arrival as if they might be bringing a savior. Governor Narongsak and Preeya head for the cars to greet the VIP. As they go, the Governor's attention is caught by a slight boyish ginger-haired figure: THANET NATISRI, an Americanised Thai. He's photographing the pumps in action with his iPad.

NARONGSAK
Who's that?

PREEYA
I don't know, sir.

GENERAL ANUPONG, the Minister of the Interior, gets out of his car.

NARONGSAK

Minister.

GENERAL ANUPONG

Governor. Bring me up to speed.

NARONGSAK

Pumping has begun, Minister.

GENERAL ANUPONG

I know that. I ordered the largest pumps in the region. Have divers gone in?

NARONGSAK

So far, the divers have been unable to get through. The water levels are too high. The flooded sections are very narrow and difficult to negotiate, and the current is too strong.

GENERAL ANUPONG

You're telling me you haven't found the boys? You don't know where they are? Or how they are? Or even if they're alive?

One of his aides comes up to him.

MINISTER'S AIDE

Would you speak to the news team, sir?

The Minister nods. Low, to Narongsak -

GENERAL ANUPONG

You'll remain as Governor until this is done.

The Minister heads off to the news team. Governor Narongsak meets Preeya's eyes and gives a wry shrug.

29 SCENE DELETED

29

30 SCENE DELETED

30

31

EXT. MOUNTAIN VILLAGE - DAY

31

DAY 6 - Thursday June 28

Rain streams down over the roofs of this little cluster of houses at the foot of the mountain. In the shelter of a doorway Thanet Natisri is deep in talk with the VILLAGE HEADMAN, a wiry old man. Thanet is gesturing towards the mountain above.

THANET NATISRI

*They tell me you're the guy who
knows this mountain best?*

VILLAGE HEADMAN

Sure. I know the mountain.

THANET NATISRI

*You know the cave is flooded? There
are boys trapped in there. Even the
Navy divers can't get to them.*

VILLAGE HEADMAN

Who are you?

THANET NATISRI

*Thanet Natisri. I'm a water
engineer from Bangkok. I can really
help here.*

VILLAGE HEADMAN

The government sent for you?

THANET NATISRI

*No, I just came, like everyone else
here. There's no time for all that
official permission stuff.*

He gestures up at the rain streaming down on the mountain.

THANET NATISRI

*The rain water is flooding the
cave. It's coming from above, not
below. We have to stop it getting
in. I need to find all the
sinkholes, block them, and get the
water off the mountain.*

VILLAGE HEADMAN

Holes in the mountain?

THANET NATISRI

Right.

VILLAGE HEADMAN

*I can show you holes in the
mountain.*

*
*
*

32 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

32

The village Headman makes his way up the mountain at such speed, despite his age, that Thanet finds it hard to keep up. Thanet stops to catch his breath and look down. Far below there are rice fields. The Headman hasn't paused for breath. Thanet pushes on after him through the undergrowth, following a mountain stream. And suddenly - the stream is gone.

Thanet stands back, taking out his iPad to photograph the cleft in the rocks where the stream is draining away, as if down a giant plug hole.

33 EXT. CHIANG RAI AIRPORT - DAY

33

Out of the blur of falling rain a shape forms: a plane landing.

34 INT. CHIANG RAI AIRPORT TERMINAL - BAGGAGE CLAIM - DAY

34

Luggage rolling round on the luggage carousels. A TV is running a report on the boys trapped in the cave. An airport security guard is watching the TV: SAMAN GUNAN, 37, a powerfully-built man with a cheery face. On the TV he sees General Anupong, flanked by Captain Arnont.

GENERAL ANUPONG

A team of Navy Seals is standing by
as soon as conditions permit to go
into the cave and bring out the
boys. That means waiting for the
rain to ease off...

John Volanthen comes into the luggage area, talking on his phone as he waits for his luggage. He's wearing a 'Spartathlon' T-shirt. Saman notes him.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

(to phone)
Forget the wifi link, run a cable.
(more)

JOHN VOLANTHEN (con't)

We don't have time to trace the fault. Hook them up directly... I know, I know. Every time their system goes down, they think they've been zapped by the Death Star.

He sees one of his bags appear.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

(to phone)

Here's my bags. Have to go, Barry. Good luck.

Saman, watching, sees that John's luggage includes diving gear, and he becomes interested.

Rick Stanton comes shambling into the luggage area, looking like a tourist on a day trip. He's checking something on his phone. John offers him a custard cream from his packet.

RICK STANTON

Long way to come for nothing. That cave's been hit by a flash flood. Those kids aren't coming out.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Did you bring your inner tube?

RICK STANTON

Of course. Why wouldn't I?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Because it makes you look like a cock womble.

RICK STANTON

You're the one with the Fartathlon t-shirt.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Spartathlon.

Rick and John now have their gear on a trolley. As they pass Saman on their way out, he looks curiously at their diving gear. An officer from the Tourist Police, POLICE CAPTAIN BAS, greets them, and leads them out. Saman turns his gaze back to the TV.

GENERAL ANUPONG

The twelve boys and their young coach have now been in the cave for five days.

(more)

GENERAL ANUPONG (con't)
We have no communication with them,
and no way of knowing how they're
doing, but we're hopeful that if
they have fresh water they can
survive long enough for us to get
to them...

35 EXT. THAM LUANG - NIGHT

35

The Tourist Police minibus drives into Tham Luang. Rain falling steadily, as the day ends. Bas gets out and opens the door of the minibus, where Rick and John are sitting. As they prepare to get out -

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Love this rain.

RICK STANTON
Got any custard creams left?

John hands over the packet.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Just one, okay?

They get out of the minibus and go to the back of the vehicle to take out their gear. John checks his packet of biscuits.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Did you take two custard creams?

RICK STANTON
No.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
You did. You took two at once.
You're like a child.

RICK STANTON
I'm like a child? Listen to you.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Seriously, I don't care about
custard creams. I care about trust.
I'm disappointed. But that's okay.

They shoulder their gear and prepare to follow Bas. As they cross the site they take in for the first time the huge crowded tent-town that's grown up round the cave.

RICK STANTON
Bloody hell!

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Who are all these people?

BAS
Volunteers. Everyone wants to help.

Rick and John haul their gear through the mud and the rain. Nobody is paying them any attention, or seems to be expecting them. Police Captain Bas leads them to the Parks Building.

36 INT. UK RESCUE DIVERS ROOM - BASECAMP - NIGHT 36

Rick and John enter this bleak bare room in the Parks Building, and dump their gear. They look round.

RICK STANTON
Loved the welcome committee.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
So what do we do?

RICK STANTON
What we came here to do. Go in that cave.

CUT TO - Rick and John suiting up. They festoon themselves with hand-made gear, the fruit of their long experience. Every item has its purpose, but the effect is odd-looking - particularly the inner tube Rick wears across his back as a variable buoyancy device.

37 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT 37

Rick and John cross through the crowds in their diving gear to the cave entrance. People stare as they go by.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
See? They think you look like a cock womble.

RICK STANTON
So I'm a cock womble. You have a problem with that?

In the Navy Seals area, Kiet is tracking them.

38 INT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT 38

Rick and John enter the cave. Jay, on duty, intercepts them.

JAY

The cave is closed.

RICK STANTON

We just flew all the way from
England.

JAY

The cave is closed.

Kiet comes in to the cave.

KIET

Can I help?

RICK STANTON

I'm Rick Stanton. This is John
Volanthen. We've been flown out by
the Thai government to help.

KIET

You're British Army?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

British Cave Rescue Council. We're
volunteers.

KIET

The cave is flooded. It's closed.

Captain Arnont and Vern Unsworth arrive.

VERN UNSWORTH

Rick! John!

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Hi, Vern. There seems to be a
problem here.

RICK STANTON

They're telling us the cave's
closed.

VERN UNSWORTH

It's bad in there. They're pulling
everyone out.

(to Arnont)

These are the guys you want. I gave
the Governor their names.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

The Governor sent for them?

KIET

*They're amateurs. Look at them!
They'll never survive the currents
in the cave.*

CAPTAIN ARNONT

(to Vern)

Why did the Governor send for them?

VERN UNSWORTH

They've done cave rescues all over
the world.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We have to be on some list
somewhere.

VERN UNSWORTH

(to Arnont)

I told the Governor these are the
guys you need.

Captain Arnont stares at Rick and John, unconvinced.

VERN UNSWORTH

(to Rick and John)

Sorry about this, guys. It's just
that nobody wants foreigners dying
in the cave. Doesn't look good.

RICK STANTON

We won't die. I have zero interest
in dying. How about you, John?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Same.

Captain Arnont gives a shrug.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

The Governor sent for them. It's
his responsibility.

(to Rick and John)

Very well. Dive.

Rick and John give a nod, and head to the water. Kiet watches
them go, shaking his head.

Rick and John stride into the tunnel, through the gushing
water. Lights have been fixed in this tunnel.

RICK STANTON
Jesus! Looks like a bloody circus.

40 INT. CHAMBER 3 - NIGHT 40

Rick wades into a partially flooded chamber, the water racing all round him. John emerges by his side. They turn their heads, taking in where they've arrived. There are three PUMPING ENGINEERS scrambling to get out before it's too late.

Rick and John carry on, now wading in neck deep water.

41 INT. U-BEND CHAMBER - NIGHT 41

Rick and John, water still up to their necks, passing yet another worker, Udom, who is struggling to right a faulty pump before he leaves, shivering in the cold. Rick and John working round the U-bend against the surging water. Until they reach a point where they have to dive.

42 INT. UNDERWATER - STALACTITE TUNNEL - NIGHT 42

DIVERS POV - The blur of rock walls as they loom out of the murk. Rapid turns to avoid contact. Bare hands feeling their way. The light of a head-torch revealing high crags and sudden drops into nothing. Glimpses of hosepipes clustered on the rock floor. Short stretches of rope fixed to the side, then ending. All seen through a constantly surging churn of tea-colored water that carries debris along with it.

They skillfully negotiate a pinch-point. The sound of the divers' steady breathing. The trail of bubbles from their masks.

43 INT. T-JUNCTION - NIGHT 43

DIVER POV - Rick's glimpse of John following behind - back and round to see a water surface above - and up, to break the surface, the head-torch beaming up into open space -

Rick and John surface, and struggle to keep from being swept back. They look round to get their bearings, fighting all the time against the current. The water pours in torrents out of the channel. A sign pointing left, saying PATTAYA BEACH, is half covered.

They submerge again, thrash against the water, attempting to enter the next tunnel. Then they're above water again, looking round, to find they've got nowhere.

Suddenly a massive surge of water roars into the chamber, slamming them both back against the rock walls.

Rick makes a throat-cutting gesture to John, and John nods. They turn back the way they came, and submerge.

44

INT. U-BEND CHAMBER - NIGHT

44

Rick and John re-surface in U-Bend chamber, racing the rising water. There's Udom, frantically waving to them.

UDOM

I can't get out!

RICK STANTON

What's he doing here?

They wade over to Udom.

UDOM

The water came too fast. I was working, fixing the pump -

RICK STANTON

You speak English?

He mimes swimming.

RICK STANTON

You can swim?

Udom nods eagerly.

RICK STANTON

John. Give me your mask. I'll take him out, and come back.

John takes off his mask and oxygen cylinder. Rick fits it on Udom. He puts his arm round him.

RICK STANTON

When we're in the water, I guide you, okay? Do not try to swim ahead of me, or away from me. Stay very close.

John fits the regulator of the breathing apparatus into Udom's mouth. Rick and Udom plunge into the swirling, rising water.

45 INT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

45

RICK'S POV - Rick holds Udom close, watching to see that his breathing is working, as they push through the murky water. The powerful current drives them along rapidly, and Rick has to keep reaching out to fend off rock promontories. He sees Udom's eyes through the mask, and he looks panicked.

They dive down, are swept along. For a few moments they hurtle down the flooded tunnel, turning and turning. All the way Rick keeps close hold of Udom, as they swoop over the sudden drops, and evade the projecting rocks. Then they're heading up again, and there's light above.

Udom realizes the surface is above him, and suddenly panics, desperate to get to air. He kicks and claws the water. Rick struggles to hold him back, but he thrashes away from him, almost knocking Rick's mask from his face. His own mask comes loose, he starts gulping water. Rick drags him upwards -

46 INT. CHAMBER 3 - NIGHT

46

Udom surfaces, choking, disoriented, terrified. Rick surfaces beside him, pulling him in the right direction. As soon as they're standing waist deep, Rick strips the mask from him. Three other PUMPING ENGINEERS see them. Rick waits just long enough to see that Udom is being helped on his way, then he dives back down into the water.

Aided now by his companions, Udom sets off walking unsteadily through the waist-deep water to the bright lights of the cave entrance.

47 INT. U-BEND CHAMBER - NIGHT

47

Rick is back in U-Bend chamber. John is re-fitting his returned cylinder and mask. Rick shaking his head at the craziness.

RICK STANTON
That was exciting.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
We better get out of here. You ready?

RICK STANTON
Yeah, I'm ready.
(looking round)
You know what? This cave has my attention.

48

INT. CHAMBER 1 - NIGHT

48

The scene in the cave entrance is chaotic, as the water level rises and men and equipment are being pulled out.

Governor Narongsak, Preeya, Captain Arnont, Kiet, and Vern stand waiting.

NARONGSAK

Who let them dive?

CAPTAIN ARNONT

You sent for them, sir.

NARONGSAK

I've sent for a lot of people.

Now they see Rick and John come wading out of the cave, pulling off their masks. Not what the Governor expected.

NARONGSAK

These are the elite divers?

KIET

They haven't found the boys.

Rick and John reach the waiting group, visibly exhausted.

NARONGSAK

I am the Governor of this province.
We're grateful for your help.

RICK STANTON

We went as far as we could. Didn't
find the boys.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

(to Vern)

You were right. It's bad in there.

RICK STANTON

We got your guy out.

NARONGSAK

What guy?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

He was handling pumps. He got
trapped.

He looks round to see if he can see him. The Governor turns to Captain Arnont.

NARONGSAK

You know about this?

CAPTAIN ARNONT

No, sir.

(to Rick and John)

How far did you get?

RICK STANTON

The T-junction. We'll go further next time.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

(to the Governor)

They've not done any better than my men.

NARONGSAK

(to Arnont)

I sent for them on good advice. I'm pursuing every avenue open to me.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Yes, Governor.

(beat)

I'll let you know when the rescue operation can be resumed.

He and Kiet walk away.

NARONGSAK

(to Rick and John)

I must ask you to wait to dive again until conditions improve.

Turning to his entourage -

NARONGSAK

Have they been allocated hotel accommodation? Who's looking after our guests?

Preeya gives Police Captain Bas a nod, and he steps forward.

NARONGSAK

I'm sure you would like to rest now. This officer will look after everything. Please do not attempt to enter the cave again without my permission.

49

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT

49

Rick and John and Vern Unsworth have just come out of the cave with Police Captain Bas. A pick-up is waiting near the shrine.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

What was all that about?

VERN UNSWORTH

In theory the Governor's in charge, but Captain Arnont's the Navy chief on the ground, and he doesn't take orders from civilians. Plus the rumor is the Governor's been sacked. This was supposed to be his last week here. Now he's been ordered to stay on.

Rick gives a nod at the statue of the goddess. Buahom is there, placing an offering before the shrine.

RICK STANTON

What's that?

VERN UNSWORTH

It's a shrine to Princess Nang Non. The Sleeping Princess.

Police Captain Bas points to the mountain above.

BAS

This is her mountain. Nang Non mountain.

VERN UNSWORTH

When you see it from a distance, it's supposed to look like a Sleeping Princess.

BAS

They say her tears trap the boys, that the Sleeping Princess is angry.

RICK STANTON

Angry. What's she angry about?

BAS

I don't know. It's just what the local people say.

Rick stares at the mountain. It's like he's checking out an opponent in a contest.

Bas starts to load their gear into the back of the pick-up.
John checks out the new form of transport.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Looks like we've been downgraded.

BAS

Sorry about that. The minibus is
only used for airport pick ups.

50 EXT. RESORT HOTEL - NIGHT

50

Rick and John, drenched, in the back of the pick-up as it
pulls off the road into this modest chalet resort. The rain
still pouring down. Rick and John get out, humping their
backpacks. Bas jumps out to guide them to their quarters.

51 INT. CHALET - RESORT HOTEL - NIGHT

51

Bas opens the door into a chalet bedroom, and Rick and John
enter. The rain is loud on the corrugated iron roof. They
pull off their wet outer coats as they check out their
accommodation. There's just the one double bed.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

One bed?

BAS

Big bed.

RICK STANTON

Yeah. Okay. Thanks.

BAS

I'll come for you in the morning.

He leaves them. Rick goes to the room's patio windows and
opens them. Outside there's a small veranda. Rick looks out
at the streaming rain.

John's studying a map of the cave. He takes out his packet of
custard creams and eats one, not offering any to Rick. He
replaces the packet in his rucksack. Rick comes in. His eyes
on John's rucksack.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

No.

RICK STANTON

Just one?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
No. And I've counted them.

He pulls back the covers on the bed.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
We better top and tail.

RICK STANTON
Your feet smell.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
You snore.

RICK STANTON
This is not going to end well.

52 EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

52

DAY 7 - Friday June 29

Rain falls steadily. A hazy white sun rises over the mountain. Farmers are at work in the rice fields; among them female farmer MAE NOI.

53 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

53

Rain falls over the growing encampment by the cave mouth. Field kitchens have been set up, where motherly cook MALAI is stirring her vat of curry. A mobile coffee stall is operated by DUSIT, a hip-looking coffee guy. An eager youngster, PANIT, is sweeping the water away from the paths. As fast as he sweeps, the paths flood again.

A cluster of AUSTRALIANS are getting coffee. A recently-arrived team of CHINESE from the Beijing Peaceland Foundation are settling in.

A car arrives, and out gets Saman, the airport security guard, carrying a hold-all. He stands looking round. Captain Arnont, in the Navy Seals area, sees him, and calls out.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
Saman!

Saman waves back and gives the Seal cry, punching the air.

SAMAN
Hooyah!

He walks over to join them, looking to Captain Arnont with a hopeful smile.

SAMAN

I got tired of watching you on TV.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Good to see you, brother.

He introduces Saman to Kiet and the other Seals.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Saman served under me for ten years. We chased pirates together. He was one of our best.

SAMAN

I'm only in Chiang Rai. It's so near, I couldn't just sit there doing nothing. I'll help any way I can. Hey, I'll make the coffee.

Somboon comes up to them, and makes a 'wai'.

SOMBOON

Please, sirs. My boy is in the cave. I know this cave. Too much rain. It may be that he is dead. All I ask you, sirs. Bring me his body.

He bows again, and withdraws. A moment of silence. Saman meets Arnont's eyes.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Yeah. It's tough.

54

INT. WAR ROOM - PARKS BUILDING - BASECAMP - DAY

54

The main room in the Parks Building has been taken over as the centre of operations, and is crowded with tables and chairs, laptops and wall charts. Right now all the key players in the rescue are assembling: the Governor and Preeya, Captain Arnont and his Seals, among them Kiet and Saman, the Brits, Rick, John and Vern, some Australians, some Chinese - and new arrivals, two Americans, MAJOR CHARLIE HODGES and CAPTAIN OLIVIA TAFT, who are introducing themselves.

HODGES

Charlie Hodges, US Airforce,
Okinawa. This is Captain Olivia
Taft.

NARONGSAK

US Airforce?

A chuckle from the others.

HODGES

Yeah, I know. We were the nearest Special Operations Squad. We've got medics, comms, logistics experts. We'll do what we can to help.

NARONGSAK

Welcome to the war room. Let's get started.

He claps his hands to call the meeting to order.

NARONGSAK

Thank you, everyone. Okay.

He refers to a map of the cave, explaining partly to the newly arrived Americans.

NARONGSAK

We think the boys were heading for here. They call it Pattaya Beach. Seven days ago now. So far, with the high water levels, the low visibility, and just the difficulty of the cave itself, none of our divers have been able to reach them. So - when do we go back in? And who goes back in?

RICK STANTON

Send us in again. We'll make it.

NARONGSAK

You think you can go further into the cave than trained Navy divers?

RICK STANTON

Yes.

Kiet meets Captain Arnont's eyes with a shrug of irritation. John sees this.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

No offense, but your divers aren't trained for this. No one is. Rick and me have been doing this for twenty years.

VERN UNSWORTH

You have to have a certain kind of mindset for deep cave diving.

(more)

VERN UNSWORTH (con't)
Very focussed. Very methodical.
Like a machine.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
You're machines?

RICK STANTON
You got anything against machines?

KIET
(low)
Only old machines.

The other Seals laugh. Rick can see that they're laughing at him, and he doesn't like it.

Captain Arnont speaks, effectively taking charge.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
So here's the situation. We need
the rain to stop. Let the pumps do
their work. Then we go in.

RICK STANTON
We can go in now.

A direct challenge. Arnont meets Rick's stare.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
I'm responsible for my men. We will
wait for the conditions to improve.
As for anyone else, that's for the
Governor to decide.

He turns to the Governor. The Governor makes a holding
decision.

NARONGSAK
For now, nobody goes in. We wait
for the rain to stop.

55 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

55

Rain falling. Rick and John cross the encampment after the
meeting to their waiting pick-up.

RICK STANTON
What are we doing here? They don't
want us.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Things change.

RICK STANTON

Give me one reason why we should stay.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

How about thirteen reasons?

RICK STANTON

That's not our kids in the cave. It's their kids. We don't belong here.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

So how come the whole world's watching? It's different with kids. It's like kids belong to everyone.

RICK STANTON

Speak for yourself.

They've reached the pick-up. Rick looks up at the mountain outlined against the sky.

RICK STANTON

Do you see a Sleeping Princess?

John's getting into the pick-up.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

So that's agreed, then. We stay.

56

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

56

DAY 8 - Saturday June 30

Rain pouring down over the trees. In the distance, on a high ridge, a HEAVY-DUTY DRILL is grinding its way into the rock.

A convoy of SUVs bumps up the mountain track. Governor Narongsak and his entourage are on a tour of inspection of the teams at work. The convoy reaches a clearing where Thanet Natisri is directing a team of men diverting a stream. The village Headman is with him.

Governor Narongsak gets out of his car to join them. He looks round at the unexpected scale of the activity, and at Thanet.

PREEYA

Seems like he just showed up on his own initiative, sir. I've checked him out. He's on the Bangkok Aquifer Recovery Project.

(more)

PREEYA (con't)

The men working with him are local villagers.

The Governor goes over to Thanet.

NARONGSAK

I don't believe we've met. I'm the Governor here.

Thanet responds in Americanized English.

THANET NATISRI

I'm the water guy.

NARONGSAK

You're American?

Thanet reverts to speaking Thai.

THANET NATISRI

I live in Illinois, but I'm from Bangkok. I was in Bangkok when I heard the news. I came on over, and rounded up some volunteers, and here we are.

NARONGSAK

Doing what, exactly?

THANET NATISRI

There's a network of mountain feeder streams that carries water through all the fissures and cracks in the rock, into the cave. That's what's creating the strong currents. If we can find enough of the streams and divert them, the water level in the cave will drop.

NARONGSAK

I thought that's why we're pumping the water out of the cave below.

THANET NATISRI

No, sir. All those big pumps in the cave are useless. All the time you're sucking the water out from the bottom, it's going in at the top.

NARONGSAK

And you can stop that?

THANET NATISRI

We can try. But there is a price to pay.

57

EXT. HUT, PADDY FIELDS - DAY

57

A group of local FARMERS have gathered in the shelter of an open-fronted hut to listen to the village Headman. Thanet Natisri and Governor Narongsak stand back, watching.

VILLAGE HEADMAN

You've all been in the cave. You know how the water comes in from the mountain above. Now they want to send the water a different way, down the side of the mountain. That way the water doesn't go into the cave. It comes here. Onto your fields.

The farmers hear this in silence. The female farmer, Mae Noi, speaks up.

MAE NOI

The water will damage our crop.

VILLAGE HEADMAN

Yes.

MAE NOI

We will lose our crop.

VILLAGE HEADMAN

Yes.

MAE NOI

How long have the boys been in the cave?

THANET NATISRI

Eight days so far.

Mae Noi speaks in a low murmur to the other farmers. Then back to Thanet -

MAE NOI

This will save their lives?

THANET NATISRI

I can't promise that. But it gives them a chance.

The farmers go into a huddle and speak low among themselves. Thanet and the Governor wait in silence. Then the farmers are all giving nods of acceptance.

MAE NOI

It's agreed. For the boys.

Thanet turns to the Governor. Both men are moved.

THANET NATISRI

May we proceed, Governor?

58 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY 58

Rain falling. The water-diverting operation has begun. Water streams down the mountainside to the rice fields below.

59 EXT. HUT, PADDY FIELDS - END OF DAY 59

The farmers stand in the hut, looking out through the open front where they can see the water flowing onto their fields. They have their palms pressed together and they murmur a soft prayer.

BEYOND THE PADDY FIELDS is the mountain, and above it, the clouds are breaking up. Clear sky appearing, red with sunset.

60 SCENE DELETED 60

60A EXT. FAMILIES AREA - BASECAMP - MORNING 60A

DAY 9 - Sunday July 1

Buahom eases herself off her cot bed and gets up, after a disturbed night's sleep. She looks out at the camp. The rain has stopped.

All round the encampment people are shaking out the canopies and starting to pour gravel onto the mud.

61 EXT. TERRACE - CHALET HOTEL - MORNING 61

Rick and John come out of their room to see the early morning sunshine. John's looking at Nang Non mountain.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Suppose they're alive in there.
What's it like for them?

Rick gives a shake of his head. He doesn't want any emotional engagement with the trapped boys.

RICK STANTON
Why say that?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Just wondering.

Rick's looking at the outline of the distant mountain.

RICK STANTON
I can just about see it. There's
her head. Her nose. Her chin. Then
you get like a breast, and a belly.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
That make you feel better?

RICK STANTON
It's interesting. That's all.

62 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

62

Buahom, carrying breakfast from the food stalls to the families camp, hears the sound of gongs and chanting, and turns to look: a procession of maroon-robed monks escorting their revered elder KRUBA BOONCHUM is winding its way up the road into the camp. Others parents are staring too - Wanna, Somboon, Manop.

Buahom runs into the families camp, puts down the tray of food, and searches among her belongings. She pulls out a bunch of bead bracelets.

63 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

63

The holy man and his entourage of monks are at the water's edge, chanting prayers, burning incense. The workers in the cave, Udom and the pumping engineers, the Navy Seals, Kiet and Saman among them, are on their knees. Buahom approaches the holy man and lays a cloth on the ground. On the cloth she spreads her pile of bracelets. Krooba Boonchum blesses the bracelets.

64 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

64

As the monks emerge from the cave, Governor Narongsak, Preeya by his side, is conferring with Captain Arnont.

NARONGSAK

Rain's stopped. When can your men go in?

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Another twenty-four hours. At least.

Beyond the crowd round the monks, a car arrives. Rick and John get out.

NARONGSAK

The British divers say they're ready to go in now.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

They'd be in as much danger as my men.

NARONGSAK

They call themselves machines.

Narongsak is looking across the site at Rick and John.

NARONGSAK

We have machines pumping water. Machines drilling holes. Why not machines scouting the cave?

A ping from Preeya's phone: a message.

PREEYA

The Minister requests an update.

The Governor looks from Preeya to Captain Arnont.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

It's your decision, Governor.

65

INT. CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

65

DAY 10 - Monday July 2

Kiet stands gazing at the water in the cave. The level has dropped. He turns - and stares.

Rick and John appear, geared up for diving in their unconventional hand-made gear. The rest of the group by Kiet, Governor Narongsak, Captain Arnont, Major Hodges, Captain Taft, stare at them.

Rick examines the water level. Then he looks round and sees everyone watching him.

NARONGSAK

Please take care.

Rick nods. He and John head for the water. Kiet shakes his head, unconvinced.

66 INT. UNDERWATER - STALACTITE TUNNEL - DAY 66

John swims ahead, barely visible in the murky water, feeling the rock walls with his bare hands. He carries a bag of rope, and unwinds it as he goes, stopping to tie it to projecting rocks. Rick swims behind, checking the rope as he goes.

67 INT. STALACTITE CAVE - DAY 67

Rick and John surface for a moment, get their bearings. They pause to rest before continuing their work.

They work their way down and up, tying line, dodging sharp rocks, twisting their bodies round the tight bends.

68 INT. T-JUNCTION TUNNEL - DAY 68

UNDERWATER - The tunnel takes a sharp turn to the right. Rick checks the compass on his wrist.

A shape floating above: a dead body? Up to feel it. Surface to find - a white rice sack floating in the shallow air gap. Rick and John exchange looks, and dive again.

69 INT. T-JUNCTION - DAY 69

John and Rick emerge into the T-junction. From the right hand side clear fresh water comes pouring in to the cave complex. The sign, PATTAYA BEACH, with its arrow pointing left, is now visible again.

They check their air supplies, exchange a thumbs-up - this is where they go further than they went before. Fighting the current, they dive, down the tunnel to the left.

70 INT. PATTAYA BEACH - DAY 70

Rick and John surface into a small cavern. On one side a 'beach' rises up. They clamber out of the water and remove their masks. Both of them are exhausted by the physical toll of the dives so far.

Their flashlights scan the cave. The beam comes to rest on a home-made sign: PATTAYA BEACH.

RICK STANTON
Pattaya Beach.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
They're not here.

Rick checks his air reserves.

RICK STANTON
Turnaround time.

John looks round. There's the way they've come. And there's the way on, into yet another flooded tunnel.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Next chamber's three hundred and fifty meters away. If you say we turn back, we turn back.

Rick silently assesses the risks. He won't be beaten by this cave.

RICK STANTON
We can make it.

They reach for their masks and prepare to dive once more.

RICK STANTON
I'll stay left. Feel out for bodies.

71 INT. UNDERWATER - CHAMBER 9 TUNNEL - DAY

71

The toughest dive yet: churning waters pummel them as they wriggle round tight bends, extremely compressed, pushing on into zero visibility. Both Rick and John are starting to feel the strain, when they literally swim into a wall. Assessing the situation, they inch their way to the left.

72 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

72

Underwater with Rick and John as they emerge at last into the next cave. They lift their heads above water. Rick raises his mask and wrinkles his nose. A bad smell.

RICK STANTON
Smell that?

John nods. They lower their masks and dive. Their lights track through the dark water until they feel ground beneath their feet. Their heads emerge once more.

The beams of their head-torches sweep over the water's surface - over dripping rock walls - to land on -

GAUNT FACES - staring back in shock, high up on a slope.

RICK STANTON
They're alive!

JOHN VOLANTHEN
How many?

RICK STANTON
How've they done that?

John pulls his mask off. He calls across the water.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Hello?

Back comes the eerie reply -

BOYS
Hello!

The light from the divers' torches plays across the faces of the boys in the surrounding darkness. Team captain Arm, Prem the joker, little Chai, Coach - all thin-faced from hunger, but very much alive.

John is transformed, almost elated. Rick hangs back. He doesn't want to get too close to the boys.

John sets off wading slowly through the water towards the boys. He pulls out a GoPro camera. One of the boys, Arm, is slithering down the muddy slope towards him. He comes to a stop, staring into the flashlight.

ARM
Thank you.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
English.

ARM
English?

Rick is now slowly following John, as the rest of the boys crawl nearer. They're horribly thin, they move with difficulty, weakened by their ordeal, but their faces shine.

BOYS

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

John tracks his flashlight over each face as he films.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

How many of you?

ARM

Thirteen.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Brilliant!

Rick joins John. He's avoiding making eye contact with the boys.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

All thirteen!

Prem tugs at Arm's shirt. The flashlight beam flickers from face to face in the darkness.

PREM

Ask them if we can go soon.

ARM

Can we go outside?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

No, not today. There are just two of us. But many people are coming. It's okay. We are the first.

ARM

What day today?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

It's Monday. You've been here ten days. You are very strong. Very strong.

Some of the kids are lifting up their t-shirts to show how thin they are, to indicate their hunger.

PREM

Tell them we're hungry.

ARM

We hungry.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I know. I know. We understand. Go back, we'll come to you.

The boys scramble back up the muddy slope.

ARM

What day you come and help me?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We hope tomorrow. The Thai Navy
will come tomorrow with food, and
doctor, and everything.

RICK STANTON

(to John, low)

Don't do this. We don't know that.

John climbs up the slippery slope onto the ledge. Rick
follows. He loses his grip and slithers back down into the
water. The boys reach out their hands to help him.

ARM

I am very happy.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We are happy too.

ARM

Thank you.

All the boys join in. They're turning on their own
flashlights.

BOYS

Thank you. Thank you. So much.
Thank you.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

You're very brave. How have you
stayed so strong?

ARM

We are a team. We help each other.
And our coach, he helps us.

John turns to Coach. Coach presses his hands together and
bows his head, trembling.

COACH

***I offer my most sincere apologies
for leading the boys into danger.***

The boys protest -

BOYS

***Coach helped us! We love our coach!
He's the best!***

John, of course, has no idea what any of them are saying.

ARM

Because of our coach, we stay strong. He teaches us to meditate.

CHAI

He tells us to pray.

ARM

We pray.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I bet you do.

ARM

And now - you come.

Rick is climbing up the back of the slope, investigating the space. Prem goes with him, pointing to what they've been doing. Rick shines his flashlight on a hole that the boys have been digging.

PREM

We dig. Dig.

RICK STANTON

This is to get out?

Prem nods. Rick shines his light into the hole, as Prem looks on with pride. It's a couple of meters long, its dead end visible. Rick stares into it, moved in spite of himself by its noble futility.

RICK STANTON

Good work.

Rick rejoins John.

RICK STANTON

John. We should get back.

John turns to the boys.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We have to go now. But we will come back.

ARM

They're going now. They say they'll come back.

As Rick and John gear up to leave, John takes one of the flashlights off his helmet and hands it to Coach.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Here. The batteries are fresh.

Rick does the same, handing over one of his helmet lights.
Coach speaks to the boys.

COACH

Let's give thanks.

The boys all put their hands together and bow. Rick and John slide back into the water. The boys all wave their hands as they go.

COACH

Save batteries, boys.

One by one the boy's flashlights are turned off, and the cave returns to darkness.

73 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

73

In the families area, the parents of the boys wait. Buahom is staring towards the cave entrance. Lek by her side.

The news crews are hovering, hoping for a development.

74 INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY

74

Kiet, Dr Karn and Pichai are waiting in Chamber 3. The water continues to enter the chamber. They see flashlights rising in the water. They run to the water's edge as Rick and John surface. John holds up the GoPro -

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We've found the boys! They're
alive!

NAVY SEALS

Hooyah!

They hurry to help Rick and John out. Kiet takes the GoPro and plugs it into the cable link.

RICK STANTON

Careful who sees that!

75 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

75

Captain Arnont picks up on a sudden flurry of activity round the cable hub. The men there send up a cheer.

NAVY SEALS

They found them!

Arnont, Saman, Hodges and Taft hurry to the group of Seals, and find the video is playing. Over their shoulders, on the screen, we see the blurry images of the boys in the cave.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

They're alive!

76 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

76

Captain Arnont's four-wheel drive vehicle screeches to a halt in front of the Parks Building. Governor Narongsak has just come out onto the terrace.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

They found the boys! All alive!

NARONGSAK

All alive!

He closes his eyes as a wave of relief pours through him.

Shouts and cries as word spreads across the crowded encampment. News teams scramble. A cheer breaks out in the families' camp. Everyone's crying. Somboon kisses Kanda, his wife. Then they turn to Buahom, who is crying and laughing. Lek is jumping up and down, doing Ronaldo's victory dance.

77 SCENE DELETED

77

78 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

78

Rick and John come out of the cave, heads down. Onlookers cheer. News crews - Thai and international - surge forward.

RICK STANTON

(low)

Shit! Everybody knows.

He sounds like he's angry about it.

NEWS CREWS

Where did you find the boys? What did they say to you?

Rick and John push on, keeping their eyes down, physically shouldering their way through the media scrum.

NEWS CREWS

What state are they in? When will
they be coming out?

PULL BACK AND BACK to see how as the news spreads more and more people in the camp are cheering and rejoicing from basecamp to the front of the cave. By the end we see just how vast this encampment has become.

79

INT. UK RESCUE DIVERS ROOM - BASECAMP - DUSK

79

Rick and John enter the room set aside for them, and collapse onto chairs, shattered by their long dives. Rick pulls off his inner tube.

Kiet appears in the doorway, with Saman behind him. John gives a wave of invitation. Kiet comes in. He doesn't speak. Instead he looks more closely at their diving gear. He touches the inner tube. He looks at Rick, but Rick's keeping his head down.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Variable buoyancy device. Rick made
it himself.

KIET

So where were they?

John shows him on the map.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Here. Two and a half kilometers in.

KIET

How many cylinders did you use?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Two cylinders, one third in, one
third out, and a third for
emergencies.

Kiet gives a slow nod: a mark of respect.

KIET

I'm Kiet.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I'm John.

KIET

You found the boys. Good.

He leaves. Saman lingers.

SAMAN

Personal question. How old are you?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I'm forty-seven. Rick's fifty-seven.

Saman responds with a big grin.

SAMAN

I'm thirty-seven. But I'm good as I
ever was. Older is better, right?
The old men found the boys.

Saman leaves. John turns to Rick. Rick still has his head
down, struggling with confused anger. Everyone's celebrating,
and he knows how it's going to end. Vern comes in.

VERN UNSWORTH

Proud of you guys.

RICK STANTON

Not you too, Vern.

John knows just what Rick is feeling, but he also knows he
needs Rick on board for the task ahead.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Rick, we just have to deal with
this, okay?

80

EXT. BASECAMP - NIGHT

80

The families are all watching a screening of the video of the
boys in the cave. They weep and laugh and reach out their
hands as they watch. Buahom has found her son Chai.

KANDA

***There he is! My little boy! Hallo,
darling! Mummy's here, waiting for
you.***

Lek waves at the screen.

LEK

Hi, Chai! Hi, little guy!

Kampang and Yod have found their son, Arm.

KAMPANG

Hi, Arm!

At the same time, Rick and John have come out of the Parks
Building. The waiting camera crews pounce on them, shining
their dazzling lights.

REPORTERS

Are you going back for the boys?
What did the boys say to you? How
are you going to get them out?

Rick and John are keeping their heads down as they push through the throng, heading for their pick-up. Police Captain Bas hurries over to try to protect them from the press. He offers his own quiet heartfelt thanks.

BAS

Thank you. You found the boys.
Thank you.

Captain Olivia Taft strides over to the media scrum, beckoning her men as she approaches.

OLIVIA TAFT

Help me here, boys.

She wades into the scrum, pulling back the newsmen.

OLIVIA TAFT

Sorry, guys. Can we do this later?
They've had a hard day, okay? Let's
give them a break.

Her men herd the news crews back, assisted by Police Captain Bas. Taft walks with Rick and John towards their pick-up.

OLIVIA TAFT

The news guys can be a pain in the
butt. You just have to handle them
right. We need them, they need us.

RICK STANTON

What do they want me to tell them?
We found the boys, now let's all
watch them die?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Okay, Rick. Take it easy.

RICK STANTON

I'm just telling it like it is. All
this water pumping, flooding
fields, praying to shrines, it's
all bullshit! I'm not having it!

John sees someone nearby with their iPhone out recording.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Are you recording? Please don't,
thank you.

OLIVIA TAFT

The Seals are going in tomorrow.
You think they won't get the boys
out?

The Governor has followed, and hears Rick's answer.

RICK STANTON

Those boys are never coming out.

He sees the Governor staring at him in shock.

NARONGSAK

Tomorrow our most experienced
divers are going...

RICK STANTON

It's not about your divers, we
brought one of your guys out and he
panicked. He almost died, and that
was just a short run! You try to
dive those boys the whole way, the
only thing you'll be bringing out
is dead bodies!

He heads on to the pick-up. The Governor stands frozen,
Olivia Taft by his side, watching the divers go. Police
Captain Bas follows Rick and John.

BAS

What you told the Governor. Is it
true?

RICK STANTON

Just don't get your hopes up.
(to John)
This is exactly what I didn't want.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

You knew we'd find them.

RICK STANTON

I didn't expect to find them alive.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Well, it's done now.

RICK STANTON

And there's you telling the poor
bastards everything's going to be
fine.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

What else could I say?

They're in the back of the pick-up now. Police Captain Bas
looks round to make sure they're in, and Rick sees his face.
He's blinking back tears. As he climbs into the cab, Rick
sees Bas brush the tears from his eyes with one fist.

Back with Governor Narongsak and Captain Olivia Taft,
watching the Brit divers drive off.

OLIVIA TAFT

He doesn't mean to be
disrespectful. He just wants us to
know the risks we're taking.

NARONGSAK

I'm the Governor. I have to tell the parents they'll get their boys back. I have to tell the newsmen the rescue's going according to plan. I have to tell the Minister everything's under control. I have to send the Navy Seals into the cave. You think I don't know the risk I'm taking?

81 EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAWN

81

DAY 11 - Tuesday July 3

Dawn of a new day. The rain still holding off. Trucks carrying pipes are grinding up the muddy hill track. Thanet Natisri is overseeing the laying of pipes to divert a mountain stream. The village men are working hard, hauling the heavy pipes, but they're straining with the effort.

The village Headman is watching the sky, following the movement of the clouds.

82 SCENE DELETED

82

83 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

83

In the Navy Seals area, Kiet and three other Seals - Jay, Pichai, and the medic Dr Karn - are suiting up for the dive, watched over by Captain Arnont. Saman is making himself useful, handing equipment to the Seals as they need it. Dr Karn shows Kiet a device.

DR KARN

Oxygen meter. We monitor the oxygen in the cave. Needle in the green zone, it's good. In the red zone, not good. Down to 20 is okay. Below that, we start to worry.

Kiet looks up. There's Rick and John. Kiet's not sure what they're about to say.

RICK STANTON

On your first dive you made it to the T-junction?

KIET

Yes.

RICK STANTON

Want a briefing on the rest of the way?

Kiet holds Rick's gaze, and gives a nod. CUT TO - Rick, John, Arnont, Kiet and Dr Karn hunkered over a cave map.

RICK STANTON

You have a 250-meter dive here with a narrow rift. Barely shoulder width to Chamber 7. Then you de-kit and lug your gear over a rock shelf to get to Pattaya Beach. Then comes the tough dive. It's a low shallow tunnel, 350 meters, no visibility, pulling against very strong current.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Yeah and no headroom... and it's got undercuts on the bends. Very dangerous.

RICK STANTON

Make sure you're on the wider side of the line or you'll get trapped. At the end of that you'll reach the boys.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

This is the hardest section?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

This and the squeeze between Chambers 3 and 4.

KIET

Yes. That's tight.

RICK STANTON

We tied the line into the roof there so you'll have to be at full stretch between the stalactites to keep hold of the line.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

And try to save two thirds of your air going in so you know you can get back.

KIET

We're ready. We'll get there.

Rick and John rise.

DR KARN

You do this as a sport?

RICK STANTON

Not exactly sport. It's just what I do. We like going place others can't. Or won't.

The Seals complete their preparations for the dive.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Best of luck.

As the Navy Seals leave, Captain Arnont turns to Rick.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
They'll do a good job. They have
to. Those are our boys in there.

RICK STANTON
I know they're tough, but... not
going to be easy.

84 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY 84

News crews film the Navy divers led by Kiet as they head for the cave entrance. The families applaud them as they go by.

85 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY 85

Almost total blackness in the cave where the boys wait to be rescued. Then we hear a low sound of one of the boys, a whimper of fear. A small light comes on - Coach's flashlight. Its glow shows Chai, biting his lip.

CHAI
Sorry.

PREM
When will they come back?

Coach plays the beam of his flashlight over the other boys. Some of the boys' flashlights come on. They all look back at him trying to be brave.

COACH
*They will come when they are ready.
When they come, we must be ready.*

He arranges himself in the meditation position. The boys all follow suit.

COACH
Clear your mind. Breathe slowly.

He draws in a long breath, and exhales slowly. The boys do likewise. The sounds of their steady breathing fills the cave. One by one the flashlights are turned off, and the cave is dark.

86 INT. CAVE - U-BEND TUNNEL - DAY 86

UNDERWATER - The sound of a different kind of breathing, fast and jerky. Kiet, Dr Karn, Jay and Pichai are battling with the current. Time and again they're spun round and struggle back, straining to make headway.

Kiet feels in the dark water for the line as he goes. He sees Pichai has got stuck. He swims to him and pulls him out of his jam in the rocks. Panicked eyes meet his through the masks.

Kiet checks his air. The team switch to their back-up bottles.

87 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - EVENING

87

The news crews get coffees from the coffee stall, and trays of food, and eat, drink and wait. Buahom and Lek are gazing towards the cave entrance. Buahom fingers the bracelet on her wrist.

Captain Arnont, Saman and the other Navy Seals wait, talking quietly among themselves. Panit is nearby, watching an iPad running the World Cup - England playing Colombia.

Rick and John unfold army cots and stretch out. Could be a long night.

88 INT. CHAMBER 9 - NIGHT

88

The starved boys and their coach are huddled up in darkness, asleep on the bank. Ripples appear on the surface of the flooded section. Flashes of light underwater.

Kiet and the other three Seals burst up out of the depths. They climb out of the water. The boys start to wake and sit up. For a few moments the Seals rest, not speaking, exhausted. Kiet checks all their air supplies: too low. He meets the eyes of the other Seals: they know they have a problem.

A flashlight clicks on. Coach is awake.

KIET
Navy Seals.

COACH
Have you come to take us out?

KIET
Soon. Not yet.

The boys' flashlights are all coming on. Kiet and the Seals look in amazement at the boys.

DR KARN
(low)
Not bad, for eleven days without food.

KIET
The boys in the North, they're tough.

This makes the boys all laugh.

Kiet takes energy bars from his bag.

KIET

*We have a little food. And some
flashlight batteries.*

Coach hands out energy bars.

COACH

Two bites each. We must save them.

Dr Karn unpacks his medical gear.

DR KARN

(to Coach)

*I'm going to check the boys. I'm a
doctor.*

The energy bars are distributed hand to hand, as Dr Karn begins his gentle examination of the boys. Kiet quietly collects oxygen bottles from his men: all of them very low.

Little Chai tracks the progress of one of the bars towards him with anguished eyes. The famished boys start to suck at the energy bars.

Dr Karn comes to Coach to run checks on his condition. As he does so, Coach speaks quietly to him.

COACH

*When the flood came, I tried to get
the boys out. I dived into the
water. It was hard.*

Arm, close by, nods eagerly.

ARM

*He was under water so long. We were
scared.*

COACH

*I couldn't see. I couldn't find a
way. But I did try. Please tell
their parents. I did try.*

DR KARN

*You've done everything you could,
Coach. Nobody's blaming you.*

Kiet reaches an energy bar to Coach. He passes it on to the boys.

COACH

I'll wait.

Dr Karn takes out the oxygen meter to check the reading. He sees Coach staring at what he's doing.

DR KARN

Just a routine check.

As the boys suck slowly and gratefully on the energy bars, Kiet is handing the air bottles to Jay, speaking low.

KIET

We only have enough air left for one of us to get back. Take it, and return to base.

Jay gets himself ready to dive. Dr Karn now has his reading.

DR KARN

Report the meter reading: 'Close to red zone.'

JAY

Close to red zone.

KIET

(to Jay)

Take it slowly. Report our situation.

Jay gives a nod, and re-enters the water. Kiet raises a clenched fist, which Jay returns. Then he's gone.

Kiet turns to Pichai, speaks low.

KIET

You understand the situation?

Pichai nods, exhausted.

KIET

We're staying.

89

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

89

DAY 12 - Wednesday July 4

Morning. Sunlight filtering through the trees.

Rick and John wait. Captain Arnont returns from the cave entrance. They look up, hoping for news.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

No word of them yet.

Rick and John exchange glances. Arnont nods at an empty chair.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

May I?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Sure.

Arnont sits down with them. He nods at John's 'Spartathlon' t-shirt.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

What's this Spartathlon?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

It's an ultra-marathon. Hundred and fifty miles.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

You run for a hundred and fifty miles without stopping?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Yes.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

How do you do that?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

It's like anything. You don't think you're running a hundred and fifty miles. You think, one more mile. I can do that. And then one more. I can do that.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

You stay in the present moment.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Something like that.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Don't regret the past. Don't fear the future.

Rick and John share a look. This is getting strange.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

What is it you want from us, Captain?

CAPTAIN ARNONT

I don't know yet. All I know is,
we're all here, each of us has a
part to play. I have to find my
way. You have to find your way.

RICK STANTON

There is no way.

Arnont looks at him. Holds the look.

RICK STANTON

What?

CAPTAIN ARNONT

There's always a way.

RICK STANTON

The only way we could bring those
boys out is if they were already
dead.

As he says this we see a new idea enter his head.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I've done that. More than once. But
never kids.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Have you ever got anyone out of a
cave alive?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Rick has.

They both look at Rick. He's not listening. Arnont turns back
to John.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Maybe it's your turn now.

90

INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

90

A light at the far end of the cave. Out comes Navy Seal Jay.
He collapses onto dry land.

His team mates rush to him and help him up and out. They get
his mask off. A brief glimpse of Jay's traumatized face.

91 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

91

Captain Arnont reports back to Governor Narongsak. Hodges, Taft, Rick, John, Vern and others are round the table.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

The team ran out of air. Three are staying with the boys. One has returned. We have an oxygen reading for the cave. It's going down fast.

This is the worst possible news, as the Governor knows.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We can dive extra bottles in to them. That way at least the Seals can come out.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

No. They'll want to stay with the boys.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

But surely -

Arnont raises one hand to cut him off.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

It's better they stay with the boys.

The Governor gives a nod of approval.

92 EXT. TERRACE - PARKS BUILDING - BASECAMP - DAY

92

Parents and volunteer workers are gathering round the Parks Building to be told what's going on. The Governor and Captain Arnont come out onto the terrace. The Governor lights up a cigarette, his hand shaking. He speaks low to Arnont.

NARONGSAK

***Now you see why the Minister left
me in post.***

He turns to the waiting crowd, Buahom and the parents among them, and summons up an air of confidence as he addresses them.

NARONGSAK

*Navy Seals have reached the boys.
They're with them now, supporting
them, as we prepare the next stage
of the rescue. I make you this
promise. The boys are coming out!*

Applause from the crowd. Buahom doesn't applaud: she's not convinced.

93 SCENE DELETED

93

93A INT. WAR ROOM - PARKS BUILDING - BASECAMP - NIGHT

93A

Governor Narongsak, Captain Arnont, Thanet Natisri, Hodges, Taft, Rick, John and Vern are round the table. Narongsak is talking them through the options for a rescue, referring to a whiteboard list.

NARONGSAK

Option one. Wait for the end of monsoon season.

THANET NATISRI

The monsoon proper hasn't begun yet. When it comes, the cave will flood. All of it. They won't survive that.

The Governor nods, looking round the room. A grim reminder.

NARONGSAK

Option two. Find alternative entrances to the cave. We believe there are none.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

If there were, we'd feel wind through the cave.

NARONGSAK

Three. Drill an escape shaft.

HODGES

Ask the engineers. They'll tell you, nine hundred meters of rock, nine months.

NARONGSAK

Four. Teach the boys to dive. But they panic coming out, and they die.

A glance at Rick and John. They nod.

NARONGSAK

Five. Escape pod. This is the mini-submarine.

The Brits and the Americans all nod their heads.

RICK STANTON

It's a rigid pod. No way we could get it round the tunnel bends.

NARONGSAK

Six. Escape tunnel. The big plastic tube idea.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

You'll never drag a big plastic tube all that way underwater.

NARONGSAK

And even if you could, I understand they'd suffocate inside it. Which brings us to seven. Sponges.

They all stare at him.

NARONGSAK

Just giving you everything that's been suggested. Giant sponges, to soak up the flood water.

Captain Arnont is the first to laugh. Then they're all laughing. Then the laughter dies. The Governor looks at Captain Arnont: they're both in this together now.

NARONGSAK

Our first priority is to keep them alive. We can take them food, can't we?

Arnont turns to Rick and John. John nods.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We can do that.

94

EXT. BASECAMP - NIGHT

94

Rick and John are by the camp kitchens, Malai serving them sticky rice and pork.

RICK STANTON

Take them food. Then what?

His eyes are on Governor Narongsak, who's with Captain Olivia Taft and Preeya, also getting food. Then he sees Buahom making for the Governor. Preeya heads her off.

BUAHOM
Governor, Governor.

PREEYA
Can I help?

BUAHOM
**Please. Some of the boys are Shan.
My boy is Shan. Will they bring
them out of the cave too?**

Olivia Taft has joined them. Preeya explains to her.

PREEYA
She's afraid her boy won't be
rescued. They're Shan, from
Myanmar, just over the border.
Stateless.
(to Buahom)
**Your son will be rescued with all
the others. You mustn't worry. Your
son is very brave.**

Buahom's eyes fill with tears.

BUAHOM
**My son has been twelve days in cold
and darkness, with no food. How can
he be brave?**

The Governor now comes over. Buahom turns to him, unable to hold herself back.

NARONGSAK
What's going on?

BUAHOM
**Everyone drinking tea - eating rice
- my boy starving - and nothing
happening!**

NARONGSAK
I understand -

BUAHOM
**How can you understand? Is your son
going to die?**

John is watching Buahom's tearful face, and though he doesn't know what she's saying, he can see and share what she's feeling.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Somebody's going to have to come up
with something.

Rick says nothing. He's preoccupied with his own thoughts.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

And if that's us, we could use a couple more divers who can handle rescue work. I was thinking Jason, if he's not too pissed that he hasn't been asked already. And maybe Chris Jewell. You think Chris is up to it?

Still Rick says nothing.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

And anyway, what's the plan? We run food in to them for a few days, then the monsoon comes.

He focusses on Rick's silence.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Rick?

Rick turns to look at him.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I know that face.

RICK STANTON

Just a crazy idea.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

So tell me.

Rick gives a shrug.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We have nothing, Rick. Crazy's better than nothing.

Rick draws a long breath. He looks away as he speaks.

RICK STANTON

It's what I said to Captain Arnont. How the only way we can bring those boys out is if they're dead.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

That's your idea? We wait for them to die?

RICK STANTON

Not exactly. We bring in Harry.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Harry!

He gets it. Stares at Rick.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

That is brilliant!

RICK STANTON

Or insane.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Or both.

RICK STANTON

You think he'd do it?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

No. But he'd come out if he thought it was just to lend a hand.

RICK STANTON

He would. Harry's a good diver.

He and John share a look. Are they really going to do this?

RICK STANTON

No one's ever done it before. What if it doesn't work?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

It's not working now. What have we got to lose?

95 SCENE DELETED

95

96 INT. CHIANG RAI AIRPORT ARRIVALS TERMINAL - DAY

96

DAY 13 - Thursday July 5

JASON MALLINSON, 50, and CHRIS JEWELL, 35, are greeted in the terminal by Rick and John. All unemotional men, who meet as if it's no big deal.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Hey, Jason.

JASON MALLINSON

John. Rick. Been too long.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Chris.

CHRIS JEWELL

John. How's it going?

As they head on out, Jason walks beside Rick.

JASON MALLINSON

I knew you'd need me. What took you so long?

RICK STANTON

Didn't like to bother you, Jason.
Not now you're a stay-at-home dad.

JASON MALLINSON

I'm always on the end of a phone,
Rick. Oh, I forgot.
(to Chris)
Rick doesn't make calls.

Rick turns to Chris.

RICK STANTON

I heard you did a great job in Mexico.

CHRIS JEWELL

Sistema Huautla. Deepest cave in the Americas.

RICK STANTON

Cheve's tougher.

JASON MALLINSON

I'm the only one's ever been all the way down Cheve.

CHRIS JEWELL

How's this one?

RICK STANTON

You'll see.

JASON MALLINSON

So how long have you been out here, Rick?

RICK STANTON

Seven days.

JASON MALLINSON

And you still haven't got the boys out of the cave?

RICK STANTON
Waiting for you, Jason.

Rick and Jason emerge from the airport building to where the minibus is waiting for them right outside. Chris and John, still in the airport building, are following behind.

CHRIS JEWELL
Rick and Jason always like this?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Goes back years. They're both prickly bastards.

CHRIS JEWELL
So what's the plan? How soon do we dive?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
We're thinking you and Jason do a food run to the boys, first thing in the morning. Get you familiar with the terrain. You up for that?

CHRIS JEWELL
Me? Sure. Why wouldn't I be?

They emerge to join the others loading gear into the minibus. Jason is by the back of the bus, loading. Rick by the front.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Chris is good for the food run.

RICK STANTON
Great.

Chris picks up the hint of uncertainty.

CHRIS JEWELL
What is this? You're not sure I can do it?

RICK STANTON
You've not done this sort of rescue before, that's all.

CHRIS JEWELL
I can handle it.

RICK STANTON

So long as you know - when it's
time to quit, we head for home.
That's how we're still alive.

Jason has rejoined them.

JASON MALLINSON

Rick giving you his no hero shit
speech?

CHRIS JEWELL

It's okay, I get it. No hero shit.

They all climb into the bus.

97 EXT. MOUNTAIN - EVENING

97

Thanet's team is hard at work building walls for the water
diversion system. The village Headman is watching the low
clouds forming far off in the sky. Thanet comes over to him.
He's been checking the forecast on his phone.

THANET NATISRI

Six days.

VILLAGE HEADMAN

Sooner.

97A SCENE DELETED

97A

98 SCENE DELETED

98

99 SCENE DELETED

99

100 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

100

DAY 14 - Friday July 6

Morning. The parents are all writing letters to be taken in to the boys. Buahom is now a close member of the group.

101 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

101

Chris is running checks on his dive suit, nervous, not wanting to show it. John and Jason, by his side, ready to dive, are taking on MRE rations in aluminum tubes delivered by Saman. The cave is busy with the coming and going of international teams. The sound of drills and hammering from within the tunnel. A Chinese team is fixing a high wire to speed the evacuation.

SAMAN

You're carrying one meal a day for
one week for everyone in the cave.

Rick, who isn't diving, helps attach the tubes to the divers. Captain Arnont arrives with a plastic wallet to give John.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Letters from the parents. The
sealed one is from me, for
Lieutenant Kiet's eyes only.

John nods to show he understands, takes the wallet and tucks it into his pack. Turns to Chris and Jason.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

You ready?

CHRIS JEWELL

Ready.

Jason gives a nod. As they head for the water, Rick speaks low to Jason.

RICK STANTON

You think Chris'll be okay?

JASON MALLINSON

Sure. He's young.
(a grin at Rick)
Remember young, Rick?

102 INT. UNDERWATER - U-BEND - DAY 102

CHRIS'S POV - Following John and Jason through the brown water, holding the line with one hand, dragging his load.

103 INT. CHAMBER 5 - DAY 103

Chris surfaces and follows John and Jason over rocks and back into waist deep water. He sees the big stacks of oxygen canisters stored on the side of the chamber. And back underwater.

104 INT. UNDERWATER - T-JUNCTION - DAY 104

CHRIS'S POV as he negotiates the twists and turns of the flooded tunnels.

John checks back with Chris. Chris gives him a thumbs-up. They feel their way round the T-junction, bare-handed.

105 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY 105

Brown water swirling, giving way to wider space, and up - into the final chamber.

Chris rises slowly out of the water. There in the tiny pools of light from flashlights are the trapped group: the boys and the Navy Seals. They're waving.

Chris looks. It's almost too much. Those skinny figures in the darkness. John, Jason and Chris take off their masks and wade towards the boys. The Seals help them up out onto the shelf. Kiet grasps John's hand and meets his eyes as he pulls him out of the water.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We have food.

He and Jason start to open up the tubes that contains the packs of rations. The boys are spreading the news.

BOYS

Food! They have food!

COACH

Slowly, boys. Stay calm.

Chris is looking from boy to boy in awe. They're pinched with starvation, but so well behaved. Chris himself is exhausted, but he's trying not to show it.

The Seals and Coach carefully share out the rations.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

There's meals for one week.

COACH

We will eat half, each day.

(to the boys)

**Slowly, boys. Very slowly. And
drink as you eat.**

The boys start to eat. Chai eats carefully, reverently, relishing each small bite. Then he moves to a place where water is dripping from the rocks above, cups his hands, and drinks. Chris watches, feeling the boy's slow return to life.

John reaches into his pack.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

(to Coach)

We have letters for you and the boys.

He hands a pack of letters to Coach.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

(to Kiet)

And one for you, from your chief.

He hands over the sealed letter to Kiet.

The boys take their letters and settle down to read them as they eat. Coach reads his letter, blinking back tears.

COACH

**They thank me for taking care of
their children. I thought they
would blame me.**

DR KARN

No one blames you, Coach.

Jason is taking out a pack of pad and pencils. He hands them to Dr Karn.

JASON MALLINSON

The kids might like to write back to their parents.

DR KARN

Yes. Good.

John is surprised and touched that Jason's thought of this.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Nice idea, Jason.

Kiet has now read his letter. He hands it to his comrades.

KIET

(to John)

Please say, the order is received.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

(low)

Let me guess. You stay with the boys, whatever happens.

For a moment, Kiet doesn't answer. Then -

KIET

We will be the last out.

Chris realizes that little Chai is gazing at him, having just read his letter.

CHRIS JEWELL

From your mum?

Chai nods. He's trying not to weep.

106 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

106

John, Jason and Chris emerge from the tunnel. Rick, Saman, other Seals are waiting to help them out and off with their gear. Jason pulls out the notepad.

JASON MALLINSON

Somebody get these to the parents.
Notes from the boys.

SAMAN

I can do that.

He takes the notepad and leaves.

As John, Jason and Chris shed their gear -

CHRIS JEWELL

Did I pass?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

You did great.

RICK STANTON

So how was it?

JASON MALLINSON

That's one hell of a dive. One question. How exactly do you think we're going to get those kids out?

RICK STANTON

We're working on that.

107 SCENE DELETED

107

108 EXT. BASECAMP - NIGHT

108

Rick and John are waiting as Police Captain Bas's car pulls in. Out gets HARRY HARRIS, an Australian doctor.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Harry! You made it!

HARRY

Would have been here sooner. Takes for bloody ever getting all the permits.

He looks round at the crowded and busy site in amazement.

HARRY

I see you got yourselves some back-up.

RICK STANTON

Want to see the cave?

HARRY

That's what I'm here for.

As they head for the cave they pass the group of parents, all huddled together reading the letters received from their boys, laughing and crying.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

That's the families, been here since day one, we were able to bring them letters from the kids.

Harry looks on, moved.

HARRY

Can you imagine what they're going through?

109

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT

109

Rick and John take Harry into the cave. Harry stands there, gazing in awe at the huge brilliantly lit space. Rick points.

RICK STANTON

In there. Keep on for two and a half kilometers. There they are.

HARRY

So who've you got here?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

There's divers coming in from all over. And Jason Mallinson's with us. And Chris Jewell.

HARRY

The Awesome Foursome. I'm not in the same league as you guys.

RICK STANTON

But you do have a skill none of the rest of us have, Harry.

HARRY

I do?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We're talking about your professional skill.

HARRY

I'm an anesthetist.

He comes to a stop. Looks at their faces.

HARRY

No. Oh, no. No, no, no.

RICK STANTON

It's their only chance.

HARRY

I'm out of here! You're insane. It's unethical, it's illegal, and it won't work.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

You don't know that. No one's ever done it before.

HARRY

You'll kill them.

RICK STANTON
They're going to die anyway.

HARRY
I didn't come here to kill kids. I
came here to help you save them.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Okay. You're right. It's a stupid
idea.

RICK STANTON
It's the only idea.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Leave it, Rick. Harry's the expert.
If he says it can't be done, then
it can't be done.

They continue walking.

HARRY
Anything else I can do, I'll do.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Sure. We keep exploring. Good to
have you on board, Harry.

110 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

110

DAY 15 - Saturday July 7

Workmen in orange overalls form a human chain to unspool
coils of air hose from the truck that has delivered the hose,
all the way into the cave. News teams film the process.

In the Navy Seals area Saman is pulling on a dive suit, among
other divers also getting ready. Volunteer helpers are
lugging oxygen canisters from a truck. Another helper is
packing wetsuits into a bag. Saman takes hold of the bag,
testing its weight.

He looks up and sees Captain Arnont watching him.

SAMAN
Good to be back in harness.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
Not chasing pirates any more.

Saman grins.

SAMAN

*Malacca Straits. Andaman Islands.
Those were the days. Now here I am,
just grateful to be humping gear.*

111 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

111

Navy Seals drag the hose to the water's edge, where others are already set to dive, pulling the hose with them. Three more Navy Seals are getting into the water laden with oxygen cylinders. Saman hauls his bag of wet suits. He's determined to show he can keep up with the younger guys.

112 INT. UNDERWATER - U-BEND - DAY

112

Through the brown water, glimpses of the Navy Seals as they struggle to tug the hose through the flooded cave. The hose snags on rocks, stretches and resists. The sheer friction against the rough rock sides makes it impossible to pull the hose through.

Saman swims underwater with the bag of wet suits. It's buoyant and resists, forcing him to put constant extra effort into dragging it after him.

113 INT. U-BEND CHAMBER - DAY

113

Two Navy Seals surface and stack the extra oxygen cylinders they carry on the shelf of rock above the water line.

Saman surfaces and looks round, breathing hard. He still has his bag of wet suits. The third Seal surfaces and gestures to his companions that he'll go on to the next chamber. Saman sees him go, and follows.

114 INT. UNDERWATER - STALACTITE TUNNEL - DAY

114

Dark water. Saman is swimming around stalactites against the current, dragging his load of wet suits. It's tough work and now he's breathing rapidly. As he feels his way round the twists and turns of the tunnel his regulator tube hooks on a stalactite, air comes bubbling out. He reaches for it, and finds himself trapped in the narrow space.

A glimpse of his face, contorted with lack of air, struggling with his air feed. Panic on his face. He lets go of the heavy bag, and turns to swim back.

The Seal who has gone ahead looks back and sees Saman swimming erratically, crashing into the jagged sides. He turns back to help, but Saman has already lost control. ON SAMAN - Through his dive mask: he's blacking out...

115 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY 115

The three Navy Seals appear from deep in the cave, striding through the thigh deep water, carrying Saman's body between them. Colleagues at the cave mouth see, and run in to help. One of them gets on his radio.

114A EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/SEALS TENT - DAY 114A

Captain Arnont sitting at his desk when he gets a radio call.

SEAL (OVER RADIO)
Captain, Saman is unconscious in Chamber One.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
Ok, I'm going now.

He rushes off toward the Cave Entrance.

115 Saman's body is carried onto dry land and laid down. Medics move in at once. Captain Arnont appears, running in from outside. He comes to a stop and stands, looking on in shock.

116 INT. WAR ROOM - PARKS BUILDING - BASECAMP - DAY 116

Governor Narongsak has just been given the news by Captain Arnont.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
We don't know how it happened. It looks like he ran out of air.

Narongsak absorbs the tragedy.

NARONGSAK
His family must be told, before they hear it on the news.

CAPTAIN ARNONT
He was my friend.

NARONGSAK
Be proud of him, Captain. He came to help. He gave all he had to give. That makes him a hero.

117 SCENE DELETED 117

118 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY 118

Rick, Jason, Chris, Vern and Harry are with the Americans, processing the shock news.

John has moved away to the trees on the edge of the camp, talking on his phone.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Matthew? It's Dad.

MATTHEW'S PHONE VOICE
Dad! You coming home?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Not for a few days yet.

MATTHEW'S PHONE VOICE
We heard someone died out there.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Yeah. One of the Thai divers. It's bad. But I'm okay. You're not to worry.

MATTHEW'S PHONE VOICE
Are you going to get the boys out?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
We will if we can. It may not work out. How are things your end? You okay?

MATTHEW'S PHONE VOICE
Same as always.

A pause. Neither of them knows what to say.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Look after yourself, won't you?

MATTHEW'S PHONE VOICE
You too, Dad.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
And look after your Mum.

MATTHEW'S PHONE VOICE
Okay, Dad. Mum's fine.

John ends the call. He stands gazing across the camp towards the cave entrance. Could be his own boy trapped in there.

119 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

119

Governor Narongsak and Captain Arnont, side by side addressing the mission leaders. Rick, John and Harry stand at the back.

NARONGSAK

There will be no more Navy divers
going beyond Chamber 3 until
further notice.

120 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

120

Captain Arnont joins Rick, John and Harry as the meeting
breaks up. They stand there, saying nothing. It's like
they've reached the end of the road.

Across the site a group of parents are gathered round the
shrine, Buahom with them. They've placed a photograph of
Saman by the shrine, and kneel to lay flowers round it.
Buahom remains standing. She turns, to look back towards the
Divers Camp.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

What now?

CAPTAIN ARNONT

We must not allow this tragedy to
make us afraid.

RICK STANTON

I'm not afraid.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

I am. I'm afraid my friend died for
nothing.

RICK STANTON

It happens.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

If you have any suggestions, now's
the time.

Rick sees Buahom's haunted face staring at them. He turns to
look at Harry. Harry too sees Buahom.

Then Harry's phone rings. He moves away, answering it.

HARRY

Yeah?

121 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

121

Rick and Harry stand at the mouth, looking into the water-
filled cave. The great space is bustling with the coming and
going of pumping engineers, wire-laying teams, and support
workers.

After a few moments -

HARRY

I just heard my dad's been taken into hospital. Some kind of check-up. His heart's never been great.

RICK STANTON

I'm sorry.

HARRY

He's tough. He's made it to eighty-eight.

A moment of silence. Rick says nothing, guessing at the process going on in Harry. Then -

HARRY

If we had enough back-up - maybe - just maybe - one, or two, or three of those kids - just might make it through. You're talking five hours. They'd have to have top-up shots along the way. And you've got the saliva problem. Don't want them choking. Christ, mate, I don't even know why I'm saying this. It's insanity.

RICK STANTON

Because a man's already died. Because those kids don't have much time left.

HARRY

You want to have a kid die in your arms?

RICK STANTON

I don't want any of this. I get asked to do rescue work, I do it.

Silence again.

RICK STANTON

Come on, Harry. What choice do we have? We do nothing, we'll be bringing them out dead for sure. This way, if they die while we're bringing them out - at least we'll have tried.

He waits. And Harry gets there.

HARRY

Okay. But they'll never buy it.

122 INT. WAR ROOM - PARKS BUILDING - BASECAMP - DAY

122

Governor Narongsak, Captain Arnont, Major Hodges, Captain Taft, all looking across the table at Rick, John, Jason, Chris, Vern - and Harry. The Governor waits for his staff to draw down the window blinds. Then -

NARONGSAK

Sedated. How sedated?

HARRY

Fully unconscious.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

It's the only way we can dive them out.

RICK STANTON

They have to be motionless. Totally inert. We take them like parcels.

NARONGSAK

(to Harry)

You're an anesthetist?

HARRY

Yes.

NARONGSAK

How safe is this procedure?

HARRY

I can't answer that. I've never done it before. Nobody has. We're talking about administering anesthetics under conditions where we can't monitor the effects. Too much and respiration shuts down. Too little and they wake under water and - and they drown.

NARONGSAK

So you expect casualties?

HARRY

Yes. I expect casualties.

123 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

123

Governor Narongsak crosses the encampment, moving slowly, seeing little as he goes, deep in his own thoughts. Preeya, accompanying him, picks up a coffee from Dusit at the coffee stall. She gives the coffee to the Governor. He takes it, hardly aware that he's doing so.

PREEYA

The Minister's on his way, sir.

124 EXT. BASECAMP - EVENING

124

A small convoy sweeps into the encampment: the Minister has arrived. General Anupong strides from his car to the Parks Building as Governor Narongsak steps out to greet him.

Over in the families area, Buahom and the parents watch the two men enter the building.

125 EXT. BASECAMP - EVENING

125

Rick, John, Harry, Jason and Chris, as well as Hodges and Taft, are with Arnont in the Navy Seals area, waiting.

General Anupong comes out of the Parks Building, accompanied by Governor Narongsak. The Minister strides over to the divers. Governor Narongsak follows more slowly.

BAS

The Minister's coming.

(in English)

The Minister's coming.

Captain Arnont stands, ready to receive the coming order.

GENERAL ANUPONG

You will proceed.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Yes, Minister.

The Minister turns his gaze on the British divers.

GENERAL ANUPONG

You carry the hopes of our nation.
May you be successful.

He returns to his car.

A moment of silence. Now it's real.

Governor Narongsak speaks low to the divers.

NARONGSAK

No one is to know about the - the
method you propose.

(more)

NARONGSAK (con't)
Not even the parents. Do your best.
If we fail, the failure is mine
alone.

126 SCENE DELETED 126

127 EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY 127

DAY 16 - Sunday July 8

Early morning. Up the mountain track through the mist come two buses, to pull up by the water diversion operation. Thanet Natisri is there to greet them, with the village Headman by his side.

Out stream fifty rumpled-looking STUDENTS, both male and female. The village Headman is unimpressed.

Thanet greets the newcomers.

THANET NATISRI
*Welcome to Nang Non mountain! We
need you! We need every one of you.
The more water we can divert before
the monsoon comes, the more time we
can buy for the boys in the cave.*

128 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY 128

Early morning. The big camp waking up. Malai stirring her vat of curry. Panit sweeping his favorite path past the kitchens.

An announcement sounds over loudspeakers in Thai, then in English.

ANNOUNCER
For those in the media and anyone
not involved in the operation, we
politely ask that you leave this
area.

129 EXT/INT. MINIBUS - BASECAMP TRACK - DAY 129

The minibus carrying the Brit divers, driven by Police Captain Bas, makes its way back to Tham Luang. Past it, in the opposite direction, comes a long procession of TV news trucks and cars.

The divers see the passing vehicles.

CHRIS JEWELL

What's going on?

BAS

The TV guys - the news guys - all sent away.

CHRIS JEWELL

Why?

JASON MALLINSON

So they don't see the bodies come out.

130 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

130

The once-bustling area is quiet. Buahom and Lek are waiting for the divers' minibus as it drives in. Buahom approaches the divers as they climb out, holding a basket containing the bracelets blessed by the holy man.

BUAHOM

Please take these with you into the cave. For the boys. And for you.

LEK

For you. For the boys. From Chai's mom, Buahom. Blessed by the holy man.

John takes the basket. The other divers are heading towards their base. As he catches up with the others, John gives Rick a bracelet.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

For protection.

Rick stuffs the bracelet in a pocket.

RICK STANTON

Unnecessary weight.

131 SCENE DELETED

131

132 INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY

132

Oxygen bottles are being transported via cables where divers are stacking them. Chamber 3 is being transformed into the 'basecamp' of the operation.

133 INT. UK RESCUE DIVERS ROOM - BASECAMP - DAY

133

The Brit divers, now in their diving gear, are clustered round Harry as he demonstrates the procedure for assembling the syringe and needle, and injecting the sedative into the boys, using a plastic water bottle.

HARRY

You'll be having to give repeat hits of ketamine.

JASON MALLINSON

We're giving them ket?

HARRY

It goes through the wet suit, into the muscle. Don't let the needle go right through the muscle.

The divers practice injecting needles into water bottles. Jason's syringe and needle come apart.

JASON MALLINSON

Damn it!

RICK STANTON

Nice one, Jason.

134 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

134

The cave entrance is brightly lit as always, and is now set up for the rescue: a Chinese team stands by the high wire that disappears into the cave, and Thai and American medics are in place with stretchers.

The four Brits and Harry enter the cave, heavily laden with five oxygen cylinders each, wet suits for the boys, masks, hoods, cable ties and bungee ropes.

Captain Arnont is here to see them off.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Good luck.

Rick just nods. A shared moment, one professional to another.

The divers make their final checks, give each other thumbs-up signs, and head into the water. As they go, one by one, they're followed at intervals by support divers CONNOR ROE and JOSH BRATCHLEY, as well as the Thai support divers who are to man the chambers along the way.

135 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY 135

In the families area, the parents are praying. Buahom prays with her eyes closed.

135A INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY 135A

The divers make their final checks, give each other thumbs-up signs, and head into the water. As they go, one by one, they're followed at intervals by support divers JAY, CONNOR ROE and JOSH BRATCHLEY, as well as the Thai support divers who are to man the chambers along the way.

136 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY 136

In the cave, the trapped boys, their coach, and Kiet and his Navy Seals are sitting, eyes closed, meditating.

137 SCENE DELETED 137

138 INT. CHAMBER 5 - DAY 138

The lead divers haul their gear over jagged rocks into Chamber 5. Behind them Connor and Josh arrive, and take up their positions in the chamber. The lead divers put on their fins, check their regulators and submerge again.

139 INT. PATTAYA BEACH - DAY 139

The lead divers - Rick, John, Jason, Chris, and Harry - surface one by one at Pattaya Beach. There are no support divers this deep in, and no stashed cylinders.

They unhook the spare cylinders they're carrying, and park them by the side.

RICK STANTON
I'll stop here. Once the first
boy's through the long dive, I'll
swim back to you and report. If
it's not working, we need to know
before we bring any more out.

The others look back at him as they prepare to dive. He can feel the tension.

CHRIS JEWELL
What then?

RICK STANTON
We do what we've come to do.
They're packages. We're just the
delivery guys.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Delivery guys. Right.

They drop into the water. Rick watches them go.

140

INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

140

DIVER POV UNDERWATER - Round the sharp twists of the flooded tunnel, keeping hold of the line all the way -

- and up into the chamber where the boys and the three Navy Seals are waiting.

The boys give a cheer.

The divers clamber out onto the shelf. They haul up their loads, and start to unpack them.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
Today's the day. We're taking you
out. We can take four.

KIET
(*translating*)
**They are taking us out today. But
they can only take four.**

The boys cheer again. John pulls out the bundle of bracelets - he's brought them after all - and hands them to Coach.

JOHN VOLANTHEN
I was asked to give you these.

As Coach hands out the bracelets to the boys, Harry sits down to brief Dr Karn.

HARRY
Dr Karn? I'm a medic. You need to
know what we're proposing here...

The boys are putting on their bracelets. Chai catches John's eyes. John holds up his wrist. There's his bracelet.

We see Dr Karn's eyebrows shoot up as he learns the plan from Harry.

JASON MALLINSON
So who's going first?

KIET
(*translating*)
Who's going first?

The boys look at each other. No one wants to be first.

KIET
Coach, you must choose.

Coach thinks for a moment.

COACH

Chai, Arm, Aat, Poom. Chai, you go first.

Chai hurries joyfully forward. John studies him.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Not sure we've got a mask that'll fit you.

He tries on the smallest mask they have. Harry checks it with him.

HARRY

No way.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

We'll get you a better mask.

DR KARN

They have to find a mask to fit you.

CHAI

Today?

DR KARN

I think they have to bring it tomorrow.

Chai's face falls. He moves back up the slope to allow others to come forward.

COACH

Decha. You go.

Decha comes forward. Jason picks him out a wet suit and hands it to him.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Jason.

Jason nods.

JASON MALLINSON

Yeah I'll go first.

Harry prepares the drugs. Chris picks out a mask to fit Decha. When Decha has his wet suit on, Dr Karn gives him a tablet, and the boy swallows it. Everything proceeds in a careful silence, each person focussed on their task. Jason gets fully geared up to go.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Everyone else, up to the top of the slope.

(whispers to Kiet)

Don't let them watch.

Kiet relays the instruction, and the boys and the Seals all shuffle up the slope to the back. John speaks low to the others -

JOHN VOLANTHEN

No need to scare them with the needles.

Chris guides Decha, now getting woozy, onto Harry's lap. Harry, his syringe ready, finds a spot on his leg. He speaks soothingly to the boy as he works.

HARRY

You've got Jason taking you out.
He's a star. Just look up there, at the roof. Are you a fan of the World Cup? Brazil's out. That was a surprise...

He injects him with ketamine. Very quickly, Decha is unconscious. Working with speed, the others then assist in fitting the hood, packing it with foam, placing the mask on his face and checking the seal, attaching the gas bottle with bungee ropes to his body, and tying his wrists and ankles.

Then Harry and Chris lower the unconscious boy into the water, dip his head under, to test that the mask is working. For a long moment, nothing happens. Then they see bubbles coming out. They look into his face. They exchange nods: it's good.

Jason completes his own checks. Then the others help him take the unconscious boy in his arms. He holds him close to his chest, with his face towards him so he can check his breathing, and swims out into the deep water. Then as the others look on, he dives.

141

INT. UNDERWATER - CHAMBER 9 TUNNEL - DAY

141

Jason keeps one arm round Decha, the other on the line, as he swims and pulls his way down the twisting tunnel. He keeps checking to see that the boy is breathing. He uses his own body as a buffer to make sure the boy never hits the rock sides. This cradling method of carrying the boys looks tender, almost paternal.

We hear Jason's steady even breathing, and the quieter breaths of the boy, both leaving a trail of bubbles.

142 SCENE DELETED 142

143 INT. PATTAYA BEACH - DAY 143

Rick is waiting, watching the tunnel through which the first boy will come. Then there he is - Jason pushing through the water, the boy in his grasp, and coming to the surface.

Rick hurries to help. He takes the boy and carries him to the side.

JASON MALLINSON
He's been breathing okay.

Rick hears this with intense relief. Up to this moment he had no idea if the whole plan was going to work.

RICK STANTON
Fucking brilliant.

He changes the boy's oxygen bottle.

JASON MALLINSON
You didn't think it would work?

Rick gives a shake of his head.

JASON MALLINSON
Me neither.

They exchange a quick grin.

RICK STANTON
Not there yet. Just getting started.

Jason prepares to receive the unconscious boy back in the water. He takes him carefully into his grasp, and they both submerge.

144 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY 144

Back with the boys, Arm is now on Harry's lap, in a wet suit. He whispers to Harry.

ARM
Please take our Coach soon.

Harry glances across at Coach. Coach is sitting very still, eyes closed, conserving his strength. Harry gives Arm a nod of understanding.

John prepares himself for his dive.

Harry speaks soothingly to Arm as he sedates him.

HARRY

There we go. Looks like you've got John. You're lucky. He's the best. Did you hear about the World Cup? Belgium knocked out Brazil. That was a shocker...

The rest of the boys, high up the slope, are now openly watching, but they make no sound. Little Chai stares wide-eyed as Arm drops unconscious. He sees how his wrists and ankles are tied.

John and Arm are ready to go.

CHRIS JEWELL

Aren't we supposed to wait for Rick?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I don't want my boy waking up.

He takes Arm a little way out into the water, and looks into his face to reassure himself that he's breathing.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Anyone know my boy's name?

KIET

Arm. He's the team captain.

On the slope, Dr Karn is helping to prepare the next boy.

Rick now enters the chamber and surfaces, and gives a thumbs-up.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Okay, Arm. Here goes.

He pulls his own mask into place. He dives, carrying his boy with him. Rick comes out of the water.

RICK STANTON

It's working.

HARRY

Thank Christ for that.

Rick meets Kiet's eyes. They exchange a brief nod.

145 INT. T-JUNCTION - DAY

145

UNDERWATER - Jason swims with his boy under his arm, his other hand on the guide line. He checks Decha's sedated face in the mask, listens for his breathing. Feels his way round a tight bend in the tunnel.

He comes up in a stretch where there's air space, and he can walk, carrying the boy. He feels Decha start to move, then a sudden jerk.

Jason reaches for a syringe from the pack, holding the boy still against the rock wall with his knee. He fumbles with the syringe kit and drops it.

JASON MALLINSON

Shit!

He has to submerge and feel in the dark water for the kit. Decha's eyes and hands are twitching. Jason feels round more urgently. At last his fingers close on the kit. He pulls it out of the water.

Decha is coming round. Jason takes out a syringe, fits the needle, reaches down to the boy's leg. He can't see underwater, so he turns the boy round to get the leg out of the water.

In goes the needle. Decha subsides into sedated stillness. Jason bows his head, breathing hard, feeling the strain.

A few moments to recover, then he reorganizes his load with the boy, drops back into the water, and heads on down the tunnel.

Underwater again, Jason stares into Decha's face to hear the breathing. There's the trail of bubbles.

He swims on.

146 INT. CHAMBER 5 - DAY

146

Now there's light above water again. Jason emerges in Chamber 5, where Connor and Josh are waiting. They hurry to help Jason with Decha, to check the boy's mask and vital signs, and to replace his air cylinders.

CONNOR

You good?

Jason nods. He's exhausted.

JOSH

The boy's good.

Together they begin to now carry the boy over a stretch of jagged rocks before they reach water again.

147 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

147

Chris is preparing to take Poom, who Harry has just sedated. Chai looks on wistfully as Chris receives Poom in his arms, and dips him underwater. Chris sees the bubbles rising and draws a breath to calm himself. He's very nervous, but he's controlling it.

148 INT. CHAMBER 5 - DAY

148

John surfaces in Chamber 5 with Arm, and Connor and Josh bring him and the boy out for checks.

John takes off his mask.

CONNOR

Jason's through. You're good.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

New cylinder.

They get Arm's mask off, and change the cylinder.

JOSH

We give him another dose?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Sure.

Josh injects Arm. They fit his mask back on. John's back in the water, ready to receive him. He ducks Arm underwater, checking the mask. No bubbles.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

He's not breathing.

They pull the boy out of the water, and take his mask off. John gets him in the recovery position, tilts his head back to clear his airways. Holds his cheek close to Arm's mouth, listening.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

He's breathing.

Relief on their faces. Once again the mask goes back on. Arm is lowered into the water. John receives him, dips him under.

No bubbles.

Suddenly John's scared.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Fuck!

Out with the boy again. Mask off, back in the recovery position, this time in Josh's arms, John by his side.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Breathe, you fucker! Breathe!

He hears breathing.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

He's breathing. But as soon as I get him under water, he stops.

JOSH

Try again.

They get the mask back on to Arm.

John is sitting head bowed, shattered.

JOSH

You okay?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

I'm okay. Just give me a moment.

He wipes his eyes.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Is he still breathing?

CONNOR

Yes.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Okay. Let's do this.

He gets into the water. The others lower Arm into the water. John takes him and lowers him beneath the water.

A long moment. Then bubbles appear.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Arm. You're going to make it, okay?

John looks back to the others.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Here goes.

Off he goes, the boy in his arms.

149 INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY

149

Jason's holding his boy close as he surfaces into Chamber 3, the well-manned and well-lit base, where the big water pumps are still booming away. The waiting Thai Navy Seals help him out and take the boy from him. Decha is fitted into a stretcher even as medics are checking his condition. Everyone's moving fast. They clap Jason on the back, as he regains his breath after the long dive.

The stretcher carrying Decha is slung from the overhead wire and pulleyed down the long rocky cave, guided by Navy Seals.

150 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

150

Rick is now taking the sedated Aat in his arms, into the water. Harry is packing up his gear.

HARRY

If this works, we'll take five
tomorrow, the rest the day after.

Kiet relays this to the waiting boys. They nod in silence. Harry speaks low to Dr Karn.

HARRY

Keep an eye on the Coach.

DR KARN

He won't eat. He gives it to the
boys.

HARRY

Try to get him to eat something.
And look after yourselves, okay?

Rick is checking that his boy is breathing well. Then he gives a wave, and dives.

KIET

Two more days.

HARRY

That's the plan.

KIET

When all the boys are out, we go.

151 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY 151

Navy Seals appear out of the tunnel into the great entrance cave, carrying the stretcher holding Decha. The news ripples through the many rescue workers in the cave and cheers go up.

Governor Narongsak comes hurrying into the cave, followed by Preeya. He's just heard the news, and looks on, trying not to hope too much. Across the great space he sees Captain Arnont. The two men's eyes meet. They share a brief moment of relief.

152 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY 152

Buahom and the other parents are waiting, torn between hope and dread. Out of the cave comes Decha's stretcher, but it's concealed under three big umbrellas as it's rushed to a waiting ambulance.

They have no way of knowing which boy has been saved. Their eyes follow the ambulance as it roars away.

153 INT. UNDERWATER - CHAMBER 3 TUNNEL - DAY 153

John swims with Arm through the twisting tunnels, holding him tight, watching his masked face, seeing the trail of bubbles, feeling his way along the line.

He surfaces in Chamber 3 and hands over Arm to the Seals. Within moments the boy is on a stretcher and swinging down the high wire.

John collapses, drained by the tension.

154 EXT. THAM LUANG - HELIPAD - DAY 154

A stretch of jungle has been cleared to make a helipad.

The ambulance pulls up and the stretchered Decha is transferred to the chopper at speed. The chopper takes off into the sky.

155 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY 155

Jason comes out of the tunnel into the big cave entrance, to be greeted with cheers and claps on the back. He's shattered, and can hardly respond. He walks through the cave and out.

Behind him John's boy, Arm, is appearing, carried by Seals on the stretcher from the high wire. The medics move in and take over.

155A INT. STALACTITE TUNNEL - DAY 155A

Rick is swimming Aat through the murky water. The boy's leg snags on a rock, jerking them to a stop. Rick turns and tugs the boy's trailing leg out of the cleft in the rocks, and swims on.

156 EXT. BASECAMP TRACK - DAY 156

The news teams have been relocated in a line of tents by the roadside. Cameras are set up, watching as an ambulance passes on its way to the helipad.

157 INT. UNDERWATER - CHAMBER 3 TUNNEL - DAY 157

Chris swims steadily underwater, watching his boy's face as he goes.

He emerges into Chamber 3 and hands Poom over. As the boy is checked before being hoisted into a stretcher one of the Thai medics checks Chris.

THAI MEDIC
You did well.

CHRIS JEWELL
Is the boy okay?

THAI MEDIC
He's good.

158 SCENE DELETED 158

159 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - LATE DAY 159

Once again the stretcher (holding Arm) comes out concealed beneath open umbrellas. The waiting parents look on, desperate to know the fate of their boys.

As the ambulance pulls away, Governor Narongsak comes out of the cave, accompanied by Preeya. He sees the parents, and murmurs instructions to Preeya. Preeya goes over to them.

PREEYA
*The Governor asks me to tell you
the rescue is going well so far.*

Buahom is now the accepted spokesman for the parents.

BUAHOM

*Why can't we have names? At least
tell us how many have come out.*

PREEYA

*I'm afraid we can't release any
details of the operation at
present. I know how hard it must be
for you. As soon as the operation
is complete, you'll be the first to
know.*

Across the encampment, the helicopter roars up into the air.

159A EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DUSK 159A

The third stretcher comes out of the tunnel. The boy - Poom - is hurried to an ambulance.

159B EXT. BASECAMP - NIGHT 159B

John and Chris, just out of the cave, are ferried by vehicle in exhausted silence across the camp site to the Divers Room. As they climb out, Captain Olivia Taft is there to greet them.

OLIVIA TAFT

Awesome work! Three out, and in
good shape. We're winning!

John just nods, and heads in.

OLIVIA TAFT

You all right?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Ask me in two days time.

160 INT. UK RESCUE DIVERS ROOM - BASECAMP - NIGHT 160

John and Chris enter the divers room, where Jason is sitting, recovering from the dive. From the cave entrance they hear a cheer go up. Jason can see that Chris looks shattered.

JASON MALLINSON

You okay?

CHRIS JEWELL

Yeah. Tough.

John sits himself down, and shuts his eyes.

CHRIS JEWELL

You okay, John?

John opens his eyes, tries to smile, the strain showing.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

My boy was called Arm. I thought
he'd died. But he made it.

From outside, the sounds of another cheer.

161 INT. CHAMBER 1 - NIGHT

161

Rick comes out of the water. The fourth boy, Aat, is swung down the overhead line on a stretcher. A cheer as he's carried away.

Rick stands motionless, eyes closed, recovering after the punishing dive. When he opens his eyes, there's Captain Arnont.

RICK STANTON

Somebody tell them it's too soon to
cheer.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

One more life saved. Let them
cheer.

162 EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

162

A helicopter with Aat aboard roars through the night sky. It passes over Thanet, and the village Headman, and their team of students. They're all covered in mud, Thanet most of all. Thanet watches the helicopter pass, then turns back to his team. They carry on hauling sections of pipe into place.

163 SCENE DELETED

163

164 INT. CHALET - RESORT HOTEL - NIGHT

164

Rick is in the bathroom, putting antiseptic cream on the cuts on his hands. John already in his cot bed. The room TV is on.

REPORTER ON TV

The rescue operation is shrouded in
secrecy, but we understand that a
team of elite divers is attempting
to guide the boys in their toughest
test yet -

Rick comes in to the bedroom.

REPORTER ON TV
- a three kilometer underwater swim
to safety.

Rick turns off the TV.

RICK STANTON
Swim to safety. I like that.

He gets into bed.

RICK STANTON
Got any custard creams?

JOHN VOLANTHEN
I ate them all.

RICK STANTON
Why do I even ask?

Rick turns out the light, speaks out of the darkness.

RICK STANTON
Yesterday they told us if we got
one boy out alive we'd be heroes.
Now if we bring one boy out dead,
we'll be villains.

165 EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAWN

165

DAY 17 - Monday July 9

Clouds sweep over the mountains, dropping flurries of rain.
Light is breaking to the east.

166 EXT. BASECAMP/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

166

The site is strangely quiet as the second day of rescue begins. A brief flurry of rain, then it passes. Suda by her lines of washing looks up nervously at the sky. Then down to see the line of Brit divers passing, in their diving gear, heading for the cave. They move steadily, purposefully, but they're tired, and it shows.

167 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

167

Harry accepts a suited up Wit on his knee.

Coach selects which boys are to go.

COACH

Nop, Tul, Chai. You go.

Chai hurries joyfully forward.

RICK STANTON

Sorry we don't have a mask for you yet.

Chai's face falls. Kiet puts an arm round him, speaks low.

KIET

We don't have a mask for you. You're like me. The brave ones go last. Like Ronaldo was last on the pitch.

Chai raises his head at this. Feels proud.

CHAI

We go last.

COACH

Rit, you go.

HARRY

No need to be scared because you've got the best rescue diver.

Dew, pulling on a wet suit to go next, talks in his limited English with Rick. Rick avoids eye contact. Jason helps.

RICK STANTON

Hey Jason we can bungee these to their feet to keep them from dragging.

JASON MALLINSON

Bouyancy, good idea.

DEW

I am Dew.

RICK STANTON

I'm Rick.

DEW

Will I sleep for long time?

RICK STANTON

Just long enough to get you out.

DEW

You are a good man, Rick.

RICK STANTON
If you say so.

168 SCENE DELETED 168

169 INT. UNDERWATER/INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY 169

Rick swims into view, holding Dew. This time we see that between Dew's tied ankles there's the plastic water bottle, floating his legs and stopping them dragging.

Jason swimming through the murky water with Tul. Jason passes off Tul to one of the support divers and heads back in the direction he came. Chris following with Rit, anxiously checking his face to see if he's breathing.

Jason arrives back into Chamber Nine to collect Nop.

JASON MALLINSON
I'm ready for number five.

HARRY
Jason's back, ready for Nop.

170 EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY 170

The village Headman looking up at the sky, feeling the beginning of rain. Thanet Natisri's team of students are laying a section of pipe, with a long way still to go. He looks round, and sees only one pipe left.

THANET NATISRI
Is that the last of the pipe?

STUDENT
They've sent to Bangkok. More coming tomorrow.

THANET NATISRI
Tomorrow!

VILLAGE HEADMAN
You want pipe?

171 SCENE DELETED 171

172 INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY 172

Tul is stretchered out by the high line. Rit follows.

173 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY 173

Wit is carried out. The operation has become slick. Dew is carried out.

174 EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

174

Under dark massing clouds, the village Headman swings his machete and cuts down a big bamboo stalk. He splits it down the middle, forming two natural gutters.

VILLAGE HEADMAN

Pipe.

175 EXT. BASECAMP - DAY

175

The waiting parents look up as the helicopter roars into the sky, carrying Nop. Nearby a NEWSMAN is filing a report.

NEWSMAN

We're hearing that five boys have
been brought out of the cave
today...

Buahom is standing beside Somboon as the chopper disappears from view.

SOMBOON

Could be your boy.

(beat)

Could be mine.

Suddenly Somboon can't take any more. He bows his head and sobs. His wife Kanda takes him in her arms.

175A EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT

175A

The Brit divers are sitting eating food, silent, exhausted by their dives.

Police Captain Bas comes to them with the carton of masks.

BAS

Masks. Flown in from Bangkok.

HARRY

At last.

He takes the carton and pulls out the smallest mask.

RICK STANTON

You think it'll fit?

HARRY

Better do.

BAS

Only four boys left in the cave.
Tomorrow they all come out.

A flurry of rain drops. Rick looks up at the sky, then at Bas. He's tired, and it's starting to rain.

RICK STANTON

Yeah, Bas. Hope so.

176 EXT. MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

176

Cloudburst over the mountains. Heavy rain starts falling. Thanet's pipe system is suddenly frothing with water. Thanet looks on anxiously as the bamboo gutters overflow, but most of the water is being successfully channelled to the fields below.

He looks round, meets the eyes of the watching students and the village Headman. The monsoon has started.

177 SCENE DELETED

177

178 INT. CHALET - RESORT HOTEL - NIGHT

178

Beyond the glass doors to the terrace the rain is hammering down on the tin roof, making watery shadows in the night-dark room.

Rick and John in bed. Rick lies on his back, eyes open.

RICK STANTON

You asleep?

JOHN VOLANTHEN

No.

RICK STANTON

That's a lot of water.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Yeah.

179 SCENE DELETED

179

180 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT

180

Captain Arnont sits alone in the silent camp, unable to sleep, watching the rain.

181 EXT. TERRACE - PARKS BUILDING - BASECAMP - NIGHT 181

Governor Narongsak, also alone, gazing out at the rain, unable to sleep.

182 EXT. FAMILIES AREA - BASECAMP - NIGHT 182

Buahom lying on a cot bed as the rain streams over the canopy above. She's looking at pictures of Chai on her phone.

Lek lies open-eyed nearby.

183 EXT. PADDY FIELDS - DAY 183

DAY 18 - Tuesday July 10

A white sun rising through the pouring rain. Water from the mountain cascading through the system of pipes down onto the fields. They're now fully flooded.

184 EXT. BASECAMP TRACK - DAY 184

Rain still falling hard. The news teams are on the roadside snatching the little they can get - shots of vehicles coming and going, the odd ambulance.

185 INT. UK RESCUE DIVERS ROOM - BASECAMP - DAY 185

Rick, John, Jason, Chris, Harry putting on their gear, running all the usual checks. The rain falls outside.

John's ready first. He goes and stands in the doorway, watching the rain. Chris comes to John's side.

CHRIS JEWELL

Water level'll be rising.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

For sure.

CHRIS JEWELL

But we'll still be able to get through, right?

John hesitates. Jason answers for him.

JASON MALLINSON

We dive and we find out.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Depends. Me and Rick have been in there when it's flooded.

JASON MALLINSON

Come on. We're not stopping now.

RICK STANTON

You die in the cave if you want to, Jason. Me, if I'm not sure of coming out, I'm not going in.

186 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY

186

Rain falling. The lead divers cross towards the cave entrance. The parents stand and bow as they pass, Buahom among them. The divers make no eye contact.

187 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY

187

Rick examines the water level with slow care, watched in silence by the other divers. Everyone knows this is crunch time. The pumps roar and gush. The sound of flowing water everywhere.

Hodges and Taft are standing there, with Governor Narongsak and Captain Arnont.

Rick looks at John. John's look says: whatever you say.

RICK STANTON

Okay. We can do it. But we better move fast.

John gives a nod. He trusts Rick's instincts.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

That's it. Let's go.

The divers stride into the water, on foot.

188 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

188

The boys and the Navy Seals in Chamber 9 are waiting patiently, watching the water. The level has risen. Dr Karn is keeping their spirits up.

DR KARN

What do you want to eat when you get home?

DON

Crispy pork with dipping sauce.

CHAI

Me too.

Kiet has been watching the water.

PICHAI

They're coming.

The water ripples, and out comes Rick. Chai turns to Kiet, his partner in courage.

CHAI

Do we go today?

KIET

Yes. We all go today.

Rick is carrying extra oxygen bottles, which he hoists up onto the ledge.

Harry is now coming out of the water after him. Then Jason, and Chris, and John.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Everyone leaves today, boys. We do this fast as we can, okay?

KIET

You have a small enough mask?

HARRY

Yup. Let's check it.

Kiet nudges Chai forward. Harry takes out the mask, and tries it on Chai's face. Rick and Jason work with him. They don't say it aloud, but it's clear from their looks that they're not happy with it.

RICK STANTON

Okay, let's get the others out. Then we'll deal with this.

John meets Harry's eyes, worried about the mask for Chai. Jason takes over.

JASON MALLINSON

Okay. I've got this.

Dr Karn speaks low to Rick.

DR KARN

Please take the coach. He's very weak.

KIET

He won't go till all the boys have gone.

Rick looks over to the Coach. He'd do the same in his position. He gives a nod.

RICK STANTON

So who's next?

Coach is beckoning Don forward.

RICK STANTON

We have to do this as fast as we can.

John takes Don in his arms. As Harry injects Don, and fits his mask, Chai looks on, struggling to hide his disappointment.

189 EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY 189

Rain pours down on Thanet and his student team as they race to complete a run of pipe. Thanet releases a new barrier and the water surges into the pipes, and on down the mountain side to the rice fields below. The students cheer.

190 EXT. BASECAMP/DIVERS CAMP - DAY 190

Under their makeshift canopies the volunteers are all waiting, as the rain falls. Dusit waits by his coffee machine. Malai and the other cooks wait by their pots. Buahom and Somboon and Lek and all the parents are waiting.

191 INT. CHAMBER 1 - DAY 191

The stretcher carrying Don comes rattling down the high line out of the tunnel into the main cave entrance, accompanied by Thai Navy Seals.

The stretcher is rushed through the cave to the ambulance waiting in the rain.

192

INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

192

Now it's the turn of Prem to be readied for the dive. Chris stands ready to receive him. Chai moves closer to Coach and speaks low.

CHAI

We're the ones who go last.

COACH

That's right.

HARRY

(to Prem)

So who are you?

KIET

He's called Prem.

HARRY

Okay, Prem. You're going with Chris. Chris is the Number One rescue diver in the world.

Prem grins.

CHRIS JEWELL

That's me!

Rick meets Chris's eyes. Chris shoots him a grin.

RICK STANTON

You good?

CHRIS JEWELL

I'm good.

CLOSE ON Chris in the water, receiving the sedated boy in his arms. He dips him under the water to check his breathing, and gives a thumbs-up. Then he dives.

Now at last it's Chai's turn. He scampers down the slope to Harry and Jason. Harry takes him on his lap. Chai's seen it all before, and he snuggles down happily. He accepts the tranquilizer, and swallows it at once. Then he offers his leg for the injection.

HARRY

You're an old pro, I can see that.
We'll have no problems with you.

ON CHAI'S FACE as he's injected - he wants to see - wants to be brave - then the ketamine hits, and he slips rapidly into unconsciousness.

Jason begins the process of fitting the mask. He speaks low to Rick and Harry.

JASON MALLINSON

It's the best we can do. If I pull it too tight I'll collapse the seal.

RICK STANTON

We can't pack it out.

HARRY

I still think it's a little loose.

JASON MALLINSON

We don't have time. The water's rising. If he doesn't come out now, he doesn't come out. I'll keep it from bumping, I can hold it when I have to.

HARRY

It's your call.

Jason gets the mask as tight as he can.

JASON MALLINSON

I'll be going slow, so give me space before you follow.

RICK STANTON

Sure take your time.

They turn Chai over and Jason ducks under to check that the seal is holding and he's breathing.

JASON MALLINSON

It's holding.

RICK STANTON

He's a lucky boy. He's got the best.

Then Jason gives one look back, and dives.

193 INT. UNDERWATER - CHAMBER 9 TUNNEL - DAY 193

Jason goes through a stretch that is so compressed that he has to flatten out and move Chai to his left, swimming parallel with him, while holding the boy's small mask in place. Jason's head scrapes along the rock ceiling.

194 EXT. BASECAMP/DIVERS CAMP - DAY 194

The rain is creating streams and pools all over the camp. One of the giant pumps is stuttering, unable to take the strain. Udom is struggling to keep it going.

195 INT. UNDERWATER - STALACTITE TUNNEL - DAY 195

CHRIS'S POV - Diving through the murky churning water, Prem tight under one arm, his other hand following the line. This is a tricky section, where the tunnel closes in and twists round. Chris navigates it carefully, protecting his boy's head and mask from collisions as he goes. We can hear Chris's breathing speeding up. Then at last he's through the worst of it, and can calm his breathing. He can just make out a straight section ahead.

He turns his boy's face towards him to check him through his mask. All looks good. He turns back to continue - and the line slips out of his hand.

A look of panic. He slows himself down, calms himself, and starts to feel in the brown water for the lost line.

We follow his hand as it circles the rocks and at last comes to grips with the line - except it's not the line, it's an electric cable. Chris doesn't realize this. He swims along, following this new line -

196 INT. STALACTITE CAVE - DAY 196

And surfaces somewhere he's never seen before. He's in the stalactite cave, Chamber 4, but he's entered by a different route, and he's disoriented. He looks at the line he's been following, and sees it's not the line, it's a power cable.

He pulls himself out of the water onto rocks, the sedated Prem in his arms, and looks round. He realizes he's lost. He takes off his mask. Doesn't recognize anything.

CHRIS JEWELL

Where am I?

197 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

197

Coach is pulling on a wet suit.

COACH

*The boys have all come out of the
cave safely?*

KIET

We hope so. Your turn now, Coach.

Coach settles into Rick's arms.

RICK STANTON

(low)

He's no heavier than the kids.

Harry sedates the Coach. Kiet helps to fit his mask.

RICK STANTON

Last one.

He lifts him into the water.

HARRY

We'll be right behind you.

RICK STANTON

Not too close.

He dives.

198 INT. UNDERWATER - STALACTITE TUNNEL - DAY

198

With Jason as he swims little Chai down the long tunnel. He's going very slowly, holding the boy's mask to his face, constantly ducking and diving to make sure the mask isn't hit by any protruding rocks. The roar of the water as the cave fills up.

199 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

199

Harry turns to Kiet, Dr Karn and Pichai.

HARRY

I guess it's our turn now.

KIET

You go. We'll follow.

The Navy Seals are preparing for the dive, readying the full bottles of oxygen.

HARRY

Current's stronger than it was.

Kiet nods. He knows.

HARRY

Okay. I'll see you on the outside.

He prepares himself for his dive.

200

INT. STALACTITE CAVE - DAY

200

Chris has wrapped his sedated boy in a space blanket, and he's folded himself round him to keep him warm. He feels Prem starting to move, and he cuddles him tight, murmuring to him.

CHRIS JEWELL

We'll be okay. We'll be okay.

He's deeply panicked, and is trying to reassure himself. Watching the water rise.

Then he sees movement in the water from deeper into the cave, and Jason appears, carrying Chai. Chris is bewildered. He thought he was in a totally new chamber.

CHRIS JEWELL

Jason?

Jason comes to a stop in the water, holding tight to Chai. He lifts his mask.

JASON MALLINSON

Chris? You okay?

CHRIS JEWELL

I lost the line. I don't know where I am.

Jason can see that Chris is scared.

JASON MALLINSON

Okay. You're in Chamber Four. It'll be fine. Rick's right behind me, and Harry. I've got a dodgy mask on my boy. I have to keep moving.

CHRIS JEWELL

Sure. You go on. I'm good.

Jason dives out of sight. Chris holds the sedated Prem close and presses his body against him.

CHRIS JEWELL
Chamber Four. We're in Chamber
Four.

201 INT. UNDERWATER - U-BEND TUNNEL - DAY 201

With Jason as he dives Chai down the flooded U-bend. Jason proceeds slowly, but even so he hits rocks. The jolt shakes the mask on Chai's face. Jason clamps the mask tight with his hand, and looks into the boy's doped face. For a moment it looks like he's not breathing. Then the bubbles come.

202 INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY 202

Jason swims up, and at last sees the light from Chamber 3.

He surfaces with Chai, and hands him over to the waiting team. Shattered, he sits down and takes deep steady breaths.

203 INT. STALACTITE CAVE - DAY 203

UNDERWATER, moving with Rick, as he carries Coach through the flooded tunnel. Then he's rising up in Chamber Four, and there's Chris with Prem in his arms.

RICK STANTON
Chris? Is he alive?

Chris nods his head, shivering. Rick realizes at once that Chris is having a panic attack.

RICK STANTON
Okay. Good to take a rest. Smart
move. Keep the kid topped up.

Chris nods.

RICK STANTON
I've got the Coach here. I have to
keep going. But Harry's right
behind me. Get him to check your
boy before you go on, okay?

CHRIS JEWELL
Okay.

Coach twitches and groans.

RICK STANTON
Oh, no, you don't.

He pulls out his needle and re-injects the Coach with ketamine. Once he's sure he's still again, he turns back to Chris.

RICK STANTON

Chris. Your only duty is to that boy. You do whatever Harry says is best. Got that?

CHRIS JEWELL

Got it.

RICK STANTON

Okay. See you on the other side.

He dives, with the Coach in his arms.

204 INT. CHAMBER 9 - DAY

204

Pichai enters the water, then Dr Karn. Kiet is now alone in the cave. He stares at the water. He draws a long breath. With no one to see, he allows his fear to show. Then he nerves himself to dive - and the chamber is empty. All that remains on the mud shelf is some litter from the packed meals and abandoned space blankets.

205 INT. STALACTITE CAVE - DAY

205

Harry surfaces in the stalactite cave and sees Chris lying on the rocks by his sedated boy.

HARRY

Chris!

Chris unwraps himself from Prem. His voice is unsteady.

CHRIS JEWELL

Yeah. Hi.

HARRY

What happened?

CHRIS JEWELL

I lost the line.

HARRY

Is your boy okay?

CHRIS JEWELL

Yes. I think so.

Harry gets out and checks the boy.

HARRY

Let's give him another hit.

He injects the sleeping Prem. Then he gets a proper look at Chris.

HARRY

You want me to take him from here?

CHRIS JEWELL

I should do it.

HARRY

It's the U-bend.

Chris nods. He hesitates.

CHRIS JEWELL

Rick said to do what you say.

Harry gets it. Rick knew Chris would need help.

HARRY

Sure. You've done the hardest part.
How about I do the last bit? That
way, I can say I was a rescuer too.

CHRIS JEWELL

Rick said to do what's best for my
boy.

HARRY

This is what's best.

CHRIS JEWELL

Okay.

Harry moves up to take Prem.

HARRY

You follow me. If I get into
trouble, I want you right behind
me.

Together they pick Prem up and Harry arranges himself to carry him.

CHRIS JEWELL

Sure you're okay with this?

HARRY

It's the shortest section. I'll be
fine.

He dives, holding Prem. Chris waits a few moments, then follows.

206 INT. CHAMBER 3 - DAY 206

Rick surfaces with Coach. Coach is whisked away by the waiting team. Rick joins John and Jason.

JASON MALLINSON
Where's Chris?

RICK STANTON
He's coming.

Pump engineers behind them are having trouble with one of the pumps.

207 INT. CHAMBER 1 - NIGHT 207

The stretcher team brings little Chai out of the tunnel and into the big cave. He's carried across the cave under umbrella cover to the ambulance.

208 EXT. BASECAMP - NIGHT 208

All the volunteers are straining to see the ambulance as it roars past (with Chai). A laptop playing the World Cup match - France beating Belgium in the semi-finals - goes unwatched.

209 INT. CHAMBER 3 - NIGHT 209

Jason, Rick and John are waiting in Chamber 3, looking towards the tunnel where the next to arrive will emerge. The rest of the rescue team are also waiting and watching. The water's rising fast, becoming more turbulent all the time.

RICK STANTON
(to himself)
Come on, Chris. Come on.

Then he sees the water moving. The Thai team all come forward. Out of the water comes Harry, with Prem. Harry's found the short dive carrying a sedated boy very tough.

RICK STANTON
Harry! Is the boy good?

HARRY
He's good.

RICK STANTON
How about Chris?

HARRY
Right behind me.

Now Chris surfaces. Rick goes to him. The waiting team takes Prem and stretchers him out of the cave.

RICK STANTON
You're good. You're good.

He puts an arm round Chris in his relief. Chris can't speak.

JASON MALLINSON
We bloody did it!

RICK STANTON
Not all out yet.

210 INT. T-JUNCTION - NIGHT 210

Dr Karn and Pichai emerge into the maelstrom of churning water that is the T-Junction. Then Kiet bursts out, flailing, out of control. The water pouring from the right-hand side is now overwhelming. Within seconds they're under water again and being hurled through the tunnels in the rush of water -

211 SCENE DELETED 211

212 SCENE DELETED 212

213 INT. CHAMBER 1 - NIGHT 213

Captain Arnont and the remaining Navy Seal support divers are anxiously waiting for Kiet, Pichai and Dr Karn. Rick, John, Jason, Chris and Harry are there behind them, also watching and waiting.

BANG! The malfunctioning pump explodes, gushing water into the air - the support workers make a rush for the way out as the water level rises terrifyingly fast -

Dr Karn and Pichai pop up out of the tunnel, and are swirled away with the sudden torrent over the rocks and into the cave.

At last - Kiet is thrown up, the very last out, as the water is rising to critical levels. All five Brit divers are there to help him struggle to his feet.

Captain Arnont wades towards his colleagues to help pull them out.

Kiet is on land: last of the last. Shaken - almost broken - but alive.

Captain Arnont closes his eyes in silent thanks.

214 INT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT 214

The team of divers - Rick, John, Jason, Chris, Harry, Kiet, Dr Karn and Pichai - come out of the cave together.

THEIR POV - NO SOUND - SLO-MO - The HUGE CROWD of the rescue team starts a wave of applause, faces beaming, fists pumping, Hodges and Taft, Governor Narongsak, Navy Seals, Vern, Bas -

215 EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT 215

Thanet Natisri, almost unrecognizable under his coating of mud, has just had a text with the news.

THANET NATISRI

All the boys are out!

The students round him, all mud-coated, leap for joy and hug each other. The village Headman grins through the rain.

216 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT 216

As the divers descend the steps the applause builds and builds - the crowds of volunteers hold up their phones - Malai, Dusit, Panit, Suda and a beaming Police Captain Bas - lights shining, like candles of celebration and thanks. The divers give a nod to the goddess as they pass the shrine. Newsmen press forward, shouting questions -

REPORTERS

All the boys out safe! How does it
feel? How does it feel to be
heroes?

Rick hears this last shout and turns his weary gaze onto the reporter. It looks like he's going to say something, but then he just shakes his head and keeps moving.

PULL BACK WIDER AND WIDER to see the thousands upon thousands of glowing lights filling the vast encampment.

217 INT. UK RESCUE DIVERS ROOM - BASECAMP - NIGHT

217

Jason, Chris, Harry, Rick, John: for a long silent moment they just stare at each other. Then they all start to laugh with nervous release. As Chris laughs, he starts to shake, on the edge of tears.

CHRIS JEWELL

I couldn't do it. I lost it.

John reaches out his arms. Chris starts to cry.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

So what? So did I. But we got them out. Alive.

He embraces Chris in a long hug.

Then there's Captain Arnont, standing gazing at them.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Good.

Rick looks up, meets his eyes. Professional to professional.

RICK STANTON

All good.

218 EXT. BASECAMP - NIGHT

218

The parents have formed a waiting crowd in the rain by the divers area. Buahom is between Kampang and Yod, their arms linked. The divers come out, looking awkward, and the parents push forward, calling out their thanks.

Rick and John and Jason and Chris nod and smile and don't understand anything and don't know what to say. Harry has his phone out, and has moved aside to make a call.

Buahom steps forward to speak for all the parents.

BUAHOM

Thank you for giving us back our sons. We will never forget.

Somboon has red eyes from weeping.

BUAHOM

My son Chai, all I ever wanted was for him to have a new life, grow up and be strong and happy.

Lek is weeping as he translates.

LEK

Her son is alive, and she is happy.
He is my friend. I am happy.

RICK STANTON

(to John)

Say something.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Me?

RICK STANTON

You're the daddy here.

John speaks to the parents.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

The boys were very brave. They were
a team. They helped each other.
They never lost hope. You should be
very proud of them.

Lek translates. The parents nod and smile.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

As for us -

He looks round at the other divers. Here's where he should
come up with something that lives up to the moment. Instead -

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Like Rick says, we're just the
delivery guys.

The parents all make the 'wai' gesture. Then Buahom leads a
move forward to hug the divers. Rick and Jason find this
awkward. Chris and John hug more fully.

Rick and Jason escape. Jason joins Harry as he comes off his
call. Harry's saying something to Jason as Rick comes up.

RICK STANTON

Hey, Harry. I knew you could do it.

HARRY

Bullshit. We got lucky.

He gives Rick a tired smile, and walks away.

JASON MALLINSON

He just got word his dad died.

Rick looks after Harry, shaking his head. Win a life, lose a
life.

219 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - NIGHT

219

Governor Narongsak is speaking to TV cameras in front of the cave entrance to the crowd of jubilant rain-drenched support workers. By his side stand Captain Arnont and Preeya. Nearby, Thanet Natisri, now in spotlessly clean clothes; and the farmers.

NARONGSAK

You have come from all over our country. You have come from countries all over the world. You have given your time - your expertise - even your rice crops - and asked for nothing in return. But you have not done this for nothing. You have done it for love. This is a victory of love!

Applause. As the gathering disperses -

CAPTAIN ARNONT

Good words.

NARONGSAK

For once in my whole political life, it might even be the truth.

220 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

220

DAY 19 - Wednesday July 20

The twelve boys and the Coach rescued from the cave are in hospital beds in an isolation ward, with white hospital masks over their mouths and noses, behind a glass screen. They're all waving and smiling.

On the other side of the glass screen stand their parents, also waving and smiling.

Buahom presses her face to the glass, waving and smiling at little Chai, tears streaming down her face and smearing the glass. Lek is by her side, also waving.

Chai beckons to a NURSE in the ward.

CHAI

Please tell my Mum to stop crying.

221 EXT/INT. MINIBUS - ROAD TO AIRPORT - DAY 221

Police Captain Bas drives the minibus down the road to Chiang Mai. The mountain looms behind in the rain.

IN MINIBUS - Rick and John, Jason and Chris. Rick is twisted round, looking back at the mountain. He pulls out his phone and takes a picture.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

'Thank you, John. Thank you for making me come even though I'm such a miserable bugger I didn't want to.'

Rick settles back in his seat.

RICK STANTON

Nine times out of ten you bring out dead bodies, you hand them over to the families, they cry, and nobody else in the whole world gives a monkey's fart. What happened here'll never happen again.

He's looking at the picture of the mountain on his phone. He's not going to say it, but what's happened here has changed him.

222 SCENE DELETED 222

223 EXT. BASECAMP/CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP - DAY 223

Tents and stalls are being dismantled in the rain. Trucks are rolling out of the site. Dusit loads his coffee machine into the back of a pick-up. Panit helps Malai carry her big pans to a truck.

The platoon of Navy Seals has packed up, their buses ready to go. Captain Arnont stands by the bus door, looking round at the site where he's lived through so much.

As Kiet climbs aboard -

KIET

That's everyone, sir.

Captain Arnont gazes towards the cave entrance.

CAPTAIN ARNONT

All but one...

He pauses, thinking of his friend Saman. Then he follows Kiet onto the bus. The buses pull out.

224 INT. WAR ROOM - PARKS BUILDING - BASECAMP - DAY 224

Governor Narongsak and Preeya gather up their belongings - a laptop, some notebooks. The Governor stands looking round. He unpins a map of the cave from the wall to take as a souvenir. Then turns to Preeya.

NARONGSAK

I'm relieved of my duties as of today. My new posting is to be Phayao Province. Very remote. Very quiet.

PREEYA

They say the lakes are very beautiful.

Narongsak meets her look with a smile.

NARONGSAK

I shall miss you.

225 EXT. HUT, PADDY FIELDS - ROAD - DAY 225

Rain falling. The village Headman, Mae Noi, and the farmers are sheltering in the hut by the flooded rice fields as a steady stream of vehicles leaving Tham Luang passes them down the road. They wave as the vehicles go by.

From inside his car, Thanet Natisri looks out and gives a returning wave.

226 INT. RICK STANTON'S HOUSE - COVENTRY, ENGLAND - DAY 226

The main room still in its chaos of kayaks and dive equipment. The sound of a taxi pulling away outside. The street door opens and Rick enters, lugging his bags. He dumps them in a corner, and looks round. Heads over to the kitchen, puts on a kettle, washes out a dirty mug, spoons in some instant coffee.

He stands sipping his coffee, looking round the cluttered room. Takes something out of his pocket, looks at it, puts it down on the table by his laptop. The holy bracelet.

227 INT. JOHN VOLANTHEN'S HOUSE - LONG ASHTON, ENGLAND - DAY 227

John is dragging his gear into the house, also just returned home. There's his son Matthew, standing waiting for him. He drops his bags. Looks at his son.

JOHN VOLANTHEN

Come here.

Matthew comes into John's arms. John holds him tight.

228 INT. FAMILY HOUSE - MAE SAI - DAY 228

The birthday cake is bright with sixteen candles shining on the frosting picture of SpongeBob SquarePants. Prem blows out the candles. All round him his fellow team members of the Wild Boars cheer - Lek, Arm, little Chai, Coach, and the others. Behind them stand their beaming parents - Buahom, Manop, Wanna, Somboon, Kanda, and the rest.

Prem cuts the cake. Another cheer. Buahom puts her arms round Chai from behind and hugs him, her face beaming.

229 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE/DIVERS CAMP/BASECAMP - DAY 229

Rain falling. Park Ranger Saisor stands by his pick-up looking round, making final checks. Then he gets in and starts the engine.

TRACK BACK AND BACK as the pick-up makes its way down the track and out of sight. The wide trampled clearing round the cave entrance is now empty. The pumps, the tents, the trucks, all gone, leaving only the mud and the forest and the endless rain.

AND UP TO SEE the mountain looming overhead, and the cloud-filled sky.

END CREDITS