

'ECHO'

Pilot

by

Matthew White

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OPEN ON:

A NEEDLE.

Rather, a PAPER CLIP bent and twisted to act as such. Blood-stained fingers are desperate to thread its make-shift eye with DENTAL FLOSS. Mint green.

The floss is lined up, the eye locked on target, when --

TURBULENCE shudders and the floss shoots askew. For we are --

INT. JETLINER TOILET - NIGHT

Thirty-five thousand feet over God-knows-where.

Those stained, hopeless fingers belong to a cadaverous **WHITE MALE**. Hard to tell how old he is under that sickly veneer. But the silver in his hair, the salt-and-pepper on his face suggest a few years south of fifty.

-- Yet not for long if he can't close this two-inch RAW GASH sliced in his gut.

Shaky fingers strive to thread that needle again... *Success*. He presses its point to his stomach, about to harpoon, when --

FRENZIED KNOCKING pummels the bathroom door.irate CANTONESE barks from the other side. But the man grits his teeth, and --

PLUNGES the needle, draws his first stitch. He goes back for number two --

The plane SHUDDERS again -- and the needle jabs DEEP.

The man howls. Cantonese crows. The plane is THRASHED.

But the man keeps sewing.

Stitch after agonizing stitch, as we SMASH TO --

INT. CHANGI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SINGAPORE - DAWN

The most PRISTINE airport on the planet.

Our haggard white man stumbles through the masses. His senses ASSAULTED as he takes the place in:

The people of all sizes and shades. The smorgasbord of dialects buzzing his ears. Whatever sizzles in the food court souring his stomach.

He's not in Kansas anymore.

Hell, he's not even in this CENTURY. By the looks of the personal devices -- or, more tellingly, *the lack thereof* --

These are the cold Dark Ages of the 1990's.

The man staggers forth, running on hemoglobin fumes. Sans suitcase, or even a carry-on.

-- Leaving a light trail of BLOOD DROPS scattered in his wake.

SUSPICIOUS HEADS turn as he passes:

The INDIAN MAN at the newspaper stand.

The woman in the BLACK BURKA, cloaked head to toe.

The pig-tailed VIETNAMESE GIRL glued to her Super Game Boy.

The man is blind to all as he seesaws along, towards

THE IMMIGRATION QUEUE

Like the Holland Tunnel on a Monday. He stakes his claim at the end of the log-jam. A maple-leafed PASSPORT in his grip.

Then mops his brow. Casts a paranoid glance about.

FROM HIS P.O.V. --

His vision blurs. He's fading fast. Yet he still makes out the

SCANDINAVIAN MAN

Queued up, three bodies back. A newspaper draped over a forearm.

Eyes meet. The Scandinavian reaches within a pants pocket, slowly removes...

A BALLPOINT PEN.

He clicks it. Fills in a few squares of his Crossword.

The man turns away, blinks. Tries to keep his shit together. Failing to notice the

BLACK BURKA. Now two lines over. Veiled gaze fixed upon him.

ACROSS THE TERMINAL

An **AIRPORT POLICE OFFICER** spots a slight BLEMISH on the floor.

He touches it. BLOOD. Another splash lies steps away.

The Cop RADIOS in Malay. Follows the trail, guiding him for --

OUR MAN

Who takes another wobbly step forward. Only a dozen folks left to go, when --

A COMMOTION spins him. Caused by --

SEVERAL **POLICEMEN**. Tracking dots of crimson across the floor.

The man clocks the small POOL at his feet. Now realizes he's been leaking. *Shit*.

The crowd is JOSTLED. People shoved aside, bodies colliding like dominoes as the police plow through --

Then halt. At a familiar puddle.

But no sign of the man.

The Cops inspect the blood. Scan the mob. Then disperse, fanning out quickly.

That first Cop enters a

SERVICE HALLWAY

Finds it vacant. Save for a tiny drop of RED making for a mens room door...

INT. MENS ROOM - INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SINGAPORE - DAWN

The Cop enters.

Three stalls line the wall, fully enclosed to the floor. FRESH BLOOD drips from the third stall's handle.

INSIDE

Our man is poised, ready to strike despite his waning might. He holds his breath, listens as --

The Cop crosses. BOOTS CLACK across the floor.

The Policeman jiggles the stall's handle. Locked. He barks in Malay, then HAMMERS it, rams it with a shoulder, when the door flies open --

And a **PETRIFIED INDIAN MAN** scurries out, pulls up his drawers.

IN THE NEXT STALL

Our guy holds his breath. Then *his* handle is jiggled. A beat. Jiggled again.

Then CLOBBERED. A boot bashes against it, craters the door. One more kick will do, when --

SOUNDS OF CHOKING interrupt. Concluding with a THUD.

The room falls silent.

A beat, then

The man pokes out a wary head. Spots the COP splayed out cold. He's about to bolt --

THUCK! -- a SYRINGE sinks into his neck.

BLACK BURKA hisses in his ear.

BLACK BURKA

The more you resist, the more it --

BAM!! -- he SLUGS her, sends her tumbling to the floor tiles as he scrambles for the exit, and --

INT. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SINGAPORE - DAWN

CAREENS through the airport. Ricocheting off travelers like a crazed, hemorrhaging pin ball.

The SOUND drops out.

A sudden, ERRATIC BEAT escalates in volume, tempo. Batters the man's ear. Scrambles his vision. The pounding of his pulse.

Less a heart beat -- than a WAR DRUM.

Here they come.

Through the fog of short-circuiting senses, he clocks **MORE POLICEMEN**. Swarming every direction. CLOSING IN.

No way out -- but one.

The man climbs upon a ledge.

BELOW HIM

The grand ARRIVAL HALL ripples with humanity. All pausing, turning to the ogle the mad man who now teeters high above.

The Police slow their advance. Creep step by step. But a rabid fire broils the man's STEEL BLUE EYES. And it's clear.

He's going to JUMP.

And it's here, off that ghastly face, the FEVERISH PULSE about to shatter his head and ours, that we --

CRASH TO BLACK:

TITLE OVER BLACK: "FOUR DAYS EARLIER."

INT. TRAILER HOME - DAY

Darkness. Silence. Then a closet door slides open. Two men's dress shoes are plucked from it. Size 11.

A brush scrapes into shoe polish, buffs with even strokes.

A white dress shirt is steamed, pressed. A striped tie knotted in a textbook Half Windsor.

Spotless, wire-framed glasses are perched atop a firm nose.

A drawer opens. A plastic name tag selected. (The POLICE BADGE next to it untouched, collecting dust)

The tag is pinned to a breast pocket. The final touch. Voila:

MARTIN MILLER
Assistant Manager
Long John Silver's

And there he is. Our harrowed soul from the opening -- though with a full tank of blood, both feet removed from the grave.

MARTIN MILLER. Late-forties. In all his managerial glory.

Yet even a polished facade can't camouflage this rugged soul. A real STEVE McQUEEN. Truly striking are the eyes. Blue-hot coals beneath a sturdy brow. Yet if you look real close, you can just catch that tell-tale glint of a soul in torment. Hints of melancholy... with a dash of madness.

Eyes of a LONE WOLF.

EXT. TRAILER HOME - DESERT - DUSK

Miller locks up his derelict MOBILE HOME. Anchored on a lifeless plot of MOJAVE DESERT dirt. The surface of the moon more inviting.

He crosses to a trusty FORD F-150 parked nearby.

The old truck turns over, sprays pebbles as he goes.

We clock the REGISTRATION STICKER on his California plates.

THIS IS 1994.

Twenty-two years after Vietnam. Three years after Gulf War #1.
Seven years before 9-11 became more than a phone number.

INT. LONG JOHN SILVER'S FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A deep fryer crackles, sapping every last iota of nutrition from some battered cod.

Miller zones out as he nukes this evening's dinner.

The place is nearly vacant, save for a few sad souls scarfing fried sole and hush puppies. Dollar Store Christmas decor dangles from the drop-ceiling. Kenny G carols play on loop.

This is depressing. This is Barstow, California.

Miller glances at the wall clock. 9:47 PM. He turns back to the fryer --

As a HUMAN FACE boils up from it.

Miller THRASHES. Scalding grease and fish bits fly. A fire erupts. He recoils, rigid. Blinks --

And the face is GONE.

He shakes off his funk, tamps out the flames, when --

A THROAT CLEAR snags his attention.

THREE THUGS stand at the register. Heads shaved. Neck tats creeping up from puffy winter coats. A barely legal **BIG-BOOTIED GIRL** clutches the Leader's arm like an accessory.

Miller scans the kitchen, but flies solo behind the counter.

He assumes the position.

MILLER

(rote)

Welcome to Long John Silver's. Home
of the Original Peg-Leg Dinner. How
may I --

LEAD THUG
By gettin' us some food, holmes.

His two sidekicks smirk. One fiddles with a crowd-control stanchion, lifting it on and off the floor tiles with an annoying, metallic *CLINK*.

MILLER
What will it be?

LEAD THUG
(reading menu)
How 'bout that Two Cod Combo. Large
coke. Three of them.

The register BEEPS as Miller strikes its keys.

LEAD THUG (CONT'D)
And one Big Catch Basket --

Beep. Beep. -- *CLINK*.

THUG SIDEKICK
I don't want that.

LEAD THUG
Then speak up, *culero*.

THUG SIDEKICK
I'll take a cheeseburger.

Beat.

MILLER
This is Long John Silver's. We just
serve fish.

The Leader smacks his cohort across the back of the head.

LEAD THUG
He'll have a Number Two, large Sprite.

THUG SIDEKICK
No Sprite. I want Slice.

The Lead raises a hand. Big Booty just smacks her gum, bored.

An ALERT chimes.

ON A TV MONITOR

A WOMAN has pulled up to the DRIVE-THRU.

Miller yells back into the kitchen.

MILLER
Anderson! Weinberg!

INSIDE THE WALK-IN FREEZER

TWO STONERS share a blunt, more baked than Betty Crocker.

AT THE REGISTER

Miller rings up the order.

MILLER (CONT'D)
\$17.43.

The Lead Thug drops a soggy pile of crumpled bills on the counter. Miller opens the drawer, counts it.

MILLER (CONT'D)
Six dollars short.

CLINK. The Thugs stare back. Unblinking.

LEAD THUG
Old man. What did you say?

FAR IN THE DISTANCE, those WAR DRUMS begin thumping. The tiniest of fissures ruptures Miller's granite.

MILLER
Seis. Dinero. Short-o.

LEAD THUG
Why don't you count that again.

Miller rifles through the money --

LEAD THUG (CONT'D)
Out loud.

CLINK.

STAND OFF. Miller and the Thug stare through each other.

Then he simply tucks the money inside the register. Slides the drawer shut. Hands over the receipt.

MILLER
My mistake.

Another ANGRY HORN BLAST from the drive-thru.

Miller crosses to the kitchen, starts assembling the order.

The Thugs whisper in Spanish. Big Booty whines --

LEAD THUG
Shut the fuck up.

-- and is elbow-jerked back into submission.

The Lead turns to his sidekicks. *Watch this...*

LEAD THUG (CONT'D)
 Hey, Señor. How's a fish place like
 this wind up in the desert?

Miller tunes him out, dunks more faux-fries into the drink.

LEAD THUG (CONT'D)
 Kinda funny when you think about
 it. The two don't really get along.
 Water, desert... hot, cold...

That irate woman squeals up to the DRIVE-THRU WINDOW, hurls unintelligible insults before peeling out.

LEAD THUG (CONT'D)
 You drive on by, it doesn't even
 register. You have to *want* to come
 here. On *purpose*.

Miller's neck hairs prick alert.

A microwave DINGS. He plucks a few oily filets from it, wraps them, chucks them inside a to-go bag.

LEAD THUG (CONT'D)
 Guess what I mean is, if life was a
 great big game of hide 'n go seek.
 This is the last place I'd ever
 fuckin' look.

Miller dumps the dinners on a plastic tray, serves it up.

MILLER
 Thank you for choosing Long John
 Silver's. Join us again soon.

The Thug leans in. Flashes his platinum GRILL. Whispers.

LEAD THUG
*I see you. I see you back there,
 papi. Behind them Clark Kent's --*

Fingers dart for Miller's glasses -- but get SNATCHED by his flying grip. Interception.

Miller has him by the wrist. War drums increase their tempo.

The sidekicks lift their jackets -- just high enough for Miller to peep the HEAT they pack.

Yet that grill still sparkles. *Taunts*, when --

The TWO STONERS tumble from the freezer. Bloodshot eyes roll as they clock the tense scene before them. And groan.

STONER #1

Again?

But Miller releases the Thug. Not tonight.

MILLER

(get out)

Join us again. Soon.

The Thugs backtrack out the exit, swipe the condiments clean as they go, sending tartar sauce soaring.

Miller turns to the Stoners. Then nods at the Thugs' mess.

STONER #1

But we --

His buddy elbows him. He shuts up as they snap to it.

That ALERT chimes again. Another car at the drive-thru.

Miller grumbles, straps on the headset --

MILLER

Welcome to Long John Silver's. Home
of the --

A CACOPHONY OF SQUEALS blasts his ear.

LEAD THUG (OVER SPEAKER)

Little pig, little pig, let me in.
Racist white fuck. No more shiny
brass shield to protect you.

EXT. DRIVE-THRU - LONG JOHN SILVER'S - NIGHT

A LOW RIDER is swung up to the drive-thru. Big Booty rides shotgun. The sidekicks buck and bray from the backseat, hollering like stuck pigs.

LEAD THUG

Every perp from Chico to Chino
wants the scalp of the "Big Bad Cop
of San Bernardino" -- and *soooooey!*
There is bacon in the air tonight!

CRASH!! -- a flying STANCHION shatters their windshield.

Miller steps onto the car's hood, reaches through the gaping glass hole, and SEIZES the Leader, yanks him through.

MILLER

No bacon. Just fish.

Big-Booty SHRIEKS as the sidekicks scramble, pistols pulled.

But Miller is faster. The Leader is TOSSED, taking out the left sidekick. A swipe of the stanchion topples the right.

Miller hops from the hood, jerks the Lead to his feet.

WHAM! -- He dashes the Thug's face against the car hood.
WHAM. Face-slam. WHAM. Again. One final slam --

But he halts.

The Leader's head lolls listlessly. His grill a mangled mess. Miller tucks a COMMENT CARD in the Thug's pocket, then drops him to the dirt.

The left sidekick regroups, retrain his gun on Miller.

IN THE KITCHEN

The Stoners ogle the MONITOR in baked wonder as their boss vaults the car, PUNTS the pistol to the sky. The Thug bolts -- but Miller POUNCES, downs him. The Stoners whoot.

BACK OUTSIDE

Big Booty's caterwaul climbs an octave. Miller dims the sidekick's lights with a nasty right hook. Then turns to her --

MILLER (CONT'D)

Señorita.
(she pauses)
Shut the fuck up.

Her shrieking promptly resumes again.

BANG! -- a bullet GRAZES Miller's shoulder, spins him.

The Lead Thug has risen, mouth gushing, handgun smoking. Miller inspects his arm. Just a flesh wound. Then calmly turns to the Thug.

And walks right for him.

MILLER (CONT'D)
 Here's the thing, hot shot. First
 rule of pot shots --

The Thug waves his gun at Miller's face. But the crazy white
 man keeps coming --

Steps right up to the pistol. Adam's Apple flush to its muzzle.

MILLER (CONT'D)
 Don't. Miss.

That rabid fire broils in Miller's gaze. The Thug trembles...
 Then PULLS THE TRIGGER --

KA-BANG! --

As Miller SLAPS the barrel askew, wrenches the gun from the
 idiot's grip.

He clutches the Leader by the throat. Then JAMS the pistol up
 under the man's chin. The now teary Thug mumbles in Spanish.
 Something about *Diablo Blanco*...

As Miller finds the trigger... slowly... squeezes...

Then HEAD-BUTTS the punk, sends us CRASH CUTTING TO --

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Miller plops on a bar stool. Totally spent.

MILLER
 The usual.

The grizzled **BARKEEP** places a bowl of ICE before Miller, who
 buries his punchin' hand up to its purple knuckles.

BARKEEP
 Won't let you alone, will they.

Miller scans the room -- a petri dish of Hepatitis A thru Z.
 REDNECKS and LOWLIFES nurse sorrows along the bar, in booths.

Two ROUGH WOMEN do a tired strip tease on a stage in the
 corner. A sad smattering of crinkled bills at their feet.

BARKEEP (CONT'D)
 Marlene's back.

The Barkeep jerks his chin towards a corner booth -- where a
HAIRSPRAYED HOOKER pouts, shaming Peggy Bundy with that coif.

BARKEEP (CONT'D)
 Doc fixed her up nice, don't ya think?
 Hardly see the stitch work.

The Hooker gives Miller "the eyes." And we CUT TO --

INT. BACK ROOM - STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Battered hands grope lopsided breasts as Miller fucks the Hooker from behind. She grunts as his thrusts gain momentum. Faster. Harder. Deeper. Then --

FROM MILLER'S P.O.V. --

WE FLASH TO A DARK VISION. A writhing mass of naked, painted flesh. Rising and falling in time with that WAR DRUM.

That quick --

We're back in the strip club. Miller thrashes, RAMS the Hooker to the wall. She MOANS, loving every moment of it. Then notices the ride has stopped.

Miller has recoiled. Reeling from his mind fuck.

The Hooker smiles with sympathetic eyes. Something tells us this isn't their first bout of coitus interruptus.

Miller shakes it off, zips his pants, cracks his wallet -- finding only a few lonely singles.

HOOKER
 Marty. On the house.

He frowns. Then tucks the wallet away.

HOOKER (CONT'D)
 How come you didn't say nothing?
 Good as gravy, don't you think?

She pops a bridge of FALSE TEETH from her mouth, revealing quite a few holes in her grin.

HOOKER (CONT'D)
 That trucker hasn't been around
 awhile. In fact, no one's seen him.

He keeps his head low as she pops her new teeth back in.

HOOKER (CONT'D)
 Wouldn't be any news to you?

His silence telling, Miller swipes his coat and is gone.

EXT/INT. MILLER'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Headlights slice through a moonless night as Miller's truck returns. He kills the engine. And sits in silence.

Eyeing his darkened trailer.

INT. MILLER'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Miller enters, shuts the door. Stands there in the dark. Behind him, we see --

The ORANGE GLOW of a cigarette being dragged.

MILLER

All these years. Those things still
smell like cat piss.

The light is flicked. A fluorescent bulb sizzles, REVEALING --

A MAN DRESSED IN BLACK

Sitting at a small kitchen table. Miller keeps his back turned.

MAN IN BLACK

Still taste like it, too. Though
that never did stop us.

He chucks a PACK OF CIGARETTES on the table. In faded Chinese packaging. Looks like it's been through Hell and back.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Saved you the last one.

He's a handsome man. African-American. First flecks of grey starting to sprout at the temples. On the lanky side. Dressed in crisp black Levi's and Old Navy performance fleece.

His voice is calm. Friendly, even. But Miller still can't turn.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

It's been a long time. I've missed
that ugly mug. *Martin*.

The slightest twinge of amusement at that name. Finally, Miller turns. The two men connect eyes.

A loaded beat. Then --

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

You look good. For a leaky old
asshole. Though not as good as me,
I think we'd both agree.

He motions to two bottles of PEPSI unopened on the table.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
Your favorite. If I recall.

MILLER
I hate the stuff. As you do recall.

MAN IN BLACK
(smiles, busted)
Couldn't resist.

The frost between them thaws a few degrees. The man grabs a soda bottle, attempts to pry it open with his teeth.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
I've been practicing that trick...

MILLER
And chipping your damn teeth --

Miller swipes it from him, holds it to his own mouth, bites down, and -- *PSSSSH* -- the bottle cap rolls across the table.

MAN IN BLACK
The damn teeth are golden. It's the damn *lip* that gets me. Every time.

He folds back his upper lip showing off a THIN WHITE SCAR.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
The shit we do to win over the kids.
(then)
You have --

MILLER
A boy. Who detests my very existence.

Miller cracks off the second bottle cap. Settles in the chair across from him.

MAN IN BLACK
Then I guess you did something right.

The two men raise their bottles. Then hold. The reality of this moment truly sinking in.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
To "Echo."

Miller nods. Sodas clink, and they drink. A sombre tribute.

A quiet beat. Then --

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

I looked for you. When I got back.
I really did. Then I... I assumed
the worst.

(beat)

Death Valley. All this time.

MILLER

(simply)

Never rains.

Cheers to that. Another shared swig. Another awkward quiet.

MAN IN BLACK

I got captured. Sent to the Hilton --

MILLER

I know the story. Read all about it
in Time fucking magazine.

Tension creeps in. A beat as Miller finds his words.

MILLER (CONT'D)

I never left, you know. I blink, and
I'm there. Back in that storm. I
still hear them. The screams. *Yours*.

MAN IN BLACK

You were scared. So was I.

MILLER

I made a promise.

MAN IN BLACK

You did what you had to.

MILLER

And I broke it.

MAN IN BLACK

You survived. We both did.

Miller chews on that.

MILLER

For years I thought about it.
Dreamt about what I'd do. If I
could return there. To that night.

(beat)

Then one day I opened the paper.
There you were. And I knew.

Miller reaches one hand under the kitchen table, REVEALING --

A HOMEMADE PIPE BOMB. Duct-taped beneath the table top.

MILLER (CONT'D)
My chance to save you had come.

That PULSING WAR DRUM arises in the distance. Cracks surface in Miller's resolve.

But the other man only projects concern. Love. For a brother.

MAN IN BLACK
You need help.

MILLER
I failed you.

MAN IN BLACK
You're not alone in this. Not anymore.

MILLER
I betrayed you.

MAN IN BLACK
I'm here. *Right here*.

Miller's finger finds the DETONATOR. Hovers there. Trembles.

MILLER
I'll never forgive myself.

MAN IN BLACK
Then don't.
(beat)
I forgive you.

With that, the finger falls, and Martin Miller crumbles. Decades of shackled grief finally free.

The man rises, EMBRACES him. Miller buries his face in his shoulder. The two stand there in the kitchen. Arms locked around each other. Survivors. *Brothers*. Reunited.

A tender moment, then --

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
Your taste in decor, however...
that is irredeemable.

Miller laughs. The first time in eons. He collects himself, withdraws, looks his old friend straight in the eye.

A beat as the two men smile. Then --

MILLER

So. What were you thinking?
"Heaven's Vessel"? "Harmony's Seam"?

MAN IN BLACK

I don't know. Was gonna let the
spirit move me.

A DAGGER slips from his sleeve, into his grip. Miller smirks.

MILLER

Always were an indecisive fuck --

AND THEY COLLIDE.

Clashing in a frenzy of flying fists and feet. Clearly
masters of hand-to-hand combat. This contest is skilled --
but it is UGLY. Primal. Two beasts locking horns.

Miller gives as good as he gets. But the Man in Black is a
hair sharper, more exact.

He dodges a rocketing kick, clutches Miller's leg, twists,
DRIVES him to the wall --

The thrust RICOCHETS Miller off the wall --

RIGHT INTO THE KNIFE BLADE. Sunk to its hilt. Below the ribs.

The man seizes Miller by the neck, cradles it for a moment.

MAN IN BLACK

I still forgive you.

Then thrusts the blade again with a twist.

Miller snaps into SHOCK, tumbles to the linoleum. The man
sheathes the dagger. Crosses to a nearby stove.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

I prayed for you. That you wound up
breakfast for some monster crocodile.

CRUNCH! -- he RIPS the stove from the wall. The gas line
ruptures, floods the trailer with a hiss.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

But I suppose this is more poetic.

Miller hauls himself back under the table. Lurches forth,
SLAMS the detonator --

Nothing.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
Martin. Miller.

PLUNK. PLUNK. The man drops two AAA BATTERIES from his pocket. One at a time, as a Fuck. You.

Miller slumps -- then spots a DRAWER across the kitchen.

The man flicks a ZIPPO lighter, crosses to a window, sets the curtains AFLAME.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
I get no joy in this.

Then follows the trail of SMEARED BLOOD across the floor...

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
But I'd be remiss if I didn't
remind you...

Finding Miller. Lifeless on his stomach. One hand tucked beneath him. (The half-open drawer above his head)

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
This wouldn't be happening had you
just done what I --

THUNK! Miller swings blindly -- drives a massive BUTCHER KNIFE deep into the man's lower left leg.

But the man is UNFAZED. Not the slightest flinch. Instead, he teases the Zippo's fire with a finger. Gas still hissing.

Miller rolls onto his back. Defeated. Offers one last plea.

MILLER
Richie.

A beat. Eyes lock. And hold. Connecting soul to soul.

MILLER (CONT'D)
Richie...

MAN IN BLACK
That's not my name.

IN ONE SMOOTH MOVE, the man chucks the Zippo to the stove as he leaps through the door, and --

EXT. MILLER'S TRAILER - NIGHT

The FIREBALL shatters every window.

The Man in Black strides like a nonchalant motherfucker across the desert. Backlit by the blaze -- the KNIFE still buried in his calf.

Then disappears, swallowed by the night.

INT. MILLER'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Cheap wood paneling disintegrates in the fire, REVEALING --

A FALSE WALL. Behind it -- SYMBOLS. Characters of an UNKNOWN ALPHABET are scratched into every inch of wall and ceiling. Etched by a single, manic hand.

And all quickly DEVoured by flame, as we FIND --

Miller. In a lifeless heap. About to be flambé-ed, when --

He COMES TO. Frantic fingers scrape the trailer floor. Finally landing upon -- a HIDDEN SEAM in the linoleum.

EXT. MILLER'S TRAILER - NIGHT

A TRAP DOOR swings open. Miller plummets to the dirt as the trailer IMPLodes above him.

He scrapes himself across the ground, weakening, when --

A BOOTED FOOT lands before his head.

Miller peers up at the BLURRY FIGURE. The inferno dances in the reflection of those eyes. *Emerald green*.

As it all... goes...

TO BLACK:

SOUND OVER BLACK:

WAILING. Agonized cries of women, children, even grown men.

EXPLOSIONS wallop the earth. Machine gunfire reverberates under the rumble of a HELICOPTER overhead.

We briefly FLASH IN AND OUT FROM BLACK --

Scoring glimpses of FLAMES. Licking the sky. Silhouettes of scattering **VILLAGERS**. Dropping like flies as they're mowed down by weapon spray.

A dream. Maybe a memory. It all snaps silent as WE CRASH TO --

INT. LOG CABIN - LATE AFTERNOON

MILLER'S EYES FLY OPEN.

He pants. Sweating. Shocked to somehow still be alive. He lies bare-chested atop a bed inside a rustic LOG CABIN. His stab wound neatly sewn shut.

He cranes his neck, clocking --

A FIGURE. Prostrate on the floor. Undulating in prayer.

Miller springs from the bed -- and HOWLS bloody murder, tearing a suture in his gut. The figure spins, REVEALING --

A WOMAN.

Turns out she wasn't supplicating to Mecca. Just reaching for a bejeweled EARRING that rolled under the bed.

Miller topples back to the mattress, arched in agony. The woman shakes her head, approaches.

WOMAN

Now, now, what have you done?

(he recoils from her)

If I truly aimed to harm you I certainly squandered my opportunity. Don't you think?

She looks to be sixty. Jet black hair pulled tight in a braided bun. Olive skin, just starting to crease. Most definitely foreign. Most likely from the MIDDLE-EAST.

And that Miller doesn't like one bit. But in this moment, he's too weak to resist. He submits.

She inspects his wound, "tuts tuts" disapproval. Miller cradles his throbbing head.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

The effects of the tranquilizer.

You've been asleep for two days.

Her voice is pure gravel. A raspy crackle thanks to a lifetime of nicotine.

She pulls a SEWING KIT from a satchel, readies a new suture. Miller eyes it warily.

MILLER

You're a doctor?

She scolds him with a look -- *Of course I'm a doctor* -- then PLUNGES the needle.

Miller screams. She ignores it.

WOMAN

Zarasa Shaw. I've a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Oxford. Concentrating in Major and Minor Occultation in post-Muhammadian Mesopotamia.

Miller jerks upright, but Shaw shoves him back to the bed, pulling the new stitch taut as he grinds his teeth.

MILLER

You're an Iraqi.

Shaw stops sewing, spits on the floor. Officially offended.

SHAW

I am Afghani. By way of Iran.

MILLER

(dripping)

Glad I asked.

(beat)

I don't suppose you could enlighten me as to how I got here. *Professor*.

SHAW

Adjunct. Without tenure.

(then)

We've been observing your friend. As a matter of... *international* concern. I was hoping it was you who could do the illuminating.

MILLER

On?

SHAW

Why a man like him would travel three thousand miles to kill a man like you.

Miller's stung a bit by her tone.

Shaw ties off the suture, traces a finger down his torso. Then stops, barely a *hair* to the left of the gash.

She presses. HARD. Miller yelps.

SHAW (CONT'D)
 "Stomach-nine." A strike here
 ruptures the carotid artery to the
 head. You should be brain dead.

MILLER
 Guess I'm just lucky.

SHAW
 Luck would've left you burnt to a
 crisp.

She rises, crosses to an old roll-top DESK. Miller gathers himself, stands on wobbly feet.

For the first time we clock the massive spread of SCAR TISSUE spanning his back. Shoulder to shoulder, down his spine. The ugly outcome of some serious TATTOO REMOVAL.

Miller finds his shirt, quickly tugs it back on.

SHAW (CONT'D)
 We must move quickly. When your
 disappearance is noted and not your
death, it won't be --

WHAM! -- Miller SEIZES her, drills her to the wall.

SHAW (CONT'D)
 There it is. The firm grip of a
 policeman.

Miller balks a bit, then recovers, loots her pockets. Scores a ring of CAR KEYS, a wad of cash...

SHAW (CONT'D)
 You earned quite the reputation
 during your days on the force. Like
 the detective in your American films.
 (beat)
 "Dirty Harold."

MILLER
 Shut your Arab trap.

Shaw switches tactics, turning solemn. Hushed.

SHAW
 Unbridled aggression is their
 imprint upon your soul. It will
 devour you. And everything about
 you. Your health. Your home.
 (beat)
 Your *family* --

Miller flips her around, SLAMS her against her back now.

MILLER

You really don't know when to --

SOMETHING SILVER snags his eye. Dangling from her neck.

Miller stumbles backwards. Thunderstruck. As Shaw unclasps the object, REVEALING --

A MILITARY DOG TAG.

Tarnished. Worn. By its looks, long-lost and forgotten.

Shaw registers Miller's rather hostile reaction.

SHAW

I'm looking for someone. And I need your help.

She runs her thumbnail across the tag's patina. The name stamped into its plate.

"ADAM CROSS."

SHAW (CONT'D)

This man. He was a soldier. During your country's little *visit* to Vietnam.

(beat)

He vanished in 1969. In the jungle. He and his entire platoon.

Miller looks about to puke. Shaw approaches on tender feet.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Alive? Dead? No one knows what's become of him. Or rather -- what he's *become*.

(inches away now;
whispers)

Something tells me you do --

Miller EXPLODES past Shaw, stampedes for the door --

EXT. LOG CABIN - PACIFIC NORTHWEST - DUSK

-- finding himself in a SEA OF EVERGREENS. Smack dab in the midst of the Pacific Northwest.

Not what he was expecting.

A black CHEVY SUBURBAN with Canadian plates is parked there. And Miller's got the keys. He leaps behind the wheel, fires up all eight cylinders, spraying mud as he goes.

Shaw watches solemnly from a window as the Suburban disappears.

EXT/INT. CHEVY - FOREST ROAD - DUSK

Miller hurtles along a forest road. No clue where he is nor where he's going -- just as long as he's GONE.

Dark clouds above open up. Rain bursts against the windshield with gunfire-like "pops." Soon swelling to an all-out DELUGE. Wipers at full tilt barely clear the glass. Miller's knuckles go white on the wheel.

And then it begins. That haunting BEAT. Throbbing. Pulsing.

Miller's breathing turns erratic. His foot goes heavy on the pedal. The needle breaks 80... 90...

That war drum escalates in tempo, volume. Chasing him... *Gaining...*

Rain drops EXPLODE. Windshield wipers screech.

DASHED YELLOW ROAD LINES flash by faster and faster. Like TRACER GUNFIRE, shrieking past our heads, as --

That war drum THUNDERS, Miller SCREAMS, WRENCHES the wheel --

And THE WHOLE WORLD GOES TOPSY-TURVY.

The Suburban ROLLS. Once. Twice. Lands on its side. Then skids off the road, coming to rest in the mud.

A beat. Then Miller's mangled frame emerges through the windshield. Battered, but still kicking --

For now. Nearly all of Shaw's stitches have burst. Fresh blood bubbles as Miller scans his dreary surroundings --

Clocking the glow of a ROADSIDE DINER in the distance...

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - PACIFIC NORTHWEST - NIGHT

Kenny Rogers croons over blown-out speakers. A fistful of PATRONS enjoy their meals. Salisbury Steak Night.

DOOR CHIMES announce a newcomer. Heads turn to the bent, mud-caked man who now bloodies their doorstep.

They eyeball Miller. Then resume feeding. They've seen worse.

Miller staggers to the counter, plops on the nearest stool. A leathery **WAITRESS** drops off a menu. Big fan of mascara.

WAITRESS
Wanna hear the special?

MILLER
Does it come with aspirin?

WAITRESS
Fella, this ain't a Five and Dime --

Raccoon eyes go wide as he presses his napkin to his gut.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
Might have a band-aid out back...

She disappears as Miller clocks the BOXY TV SET bolted to the wall. CNN broadcasts on MUTE. **BERNARD SHAW's** manicured mustache ticks through the day's headlines.

Miller spots an **OLD TIMER** at the far end of the counter.

MILLER
Excuse me... Where are we?

OLD TIMER
Asked ma'self the very same for
eighty-six years...

The old man keeps his nose buried in his pea soup. *Some help.* Miller turns back to the muted TV.

ON THE TELEVISION

The newscast cuts LIVE to a SATELLITE FEED. Reporters jostle in a marbled hall. Parting as a MAN IN A FINE SUIT slices his way towards a microphone stand.

Miller's blood pressure goes supernova. There, on the TV, is none other than

THE MAN-IN-BLACK.

He greets the reporters, begins speaking. A LOWER-THIRD reads:

SENATOR RICHARD STONE (R-WI) ENDS THIRTEEN-HOUR FILIBUSTER

Miller's long-lost frienemy is a sitting U.S. SENATOR. (News to us, not to him.)

Miller LURCHES over the counter, swipes the remote, clicks like crazy. The volume rises as WE NOW HEAR --

STONE (ON TV)
 -- is not a thing I take lightly.
 I've sworn an oath to defend
 America against all enemies.
 Foreign and domestic.

Off Miller, we go LIVE, three thousand miles away to --

INT. THE U.S. CAPITOL - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

Flashbulbs ignite. **REPORTERS** scribble sound-bytes with *actual* pen and paper as the Senator continues his remarks.

STONE
 Spending our way into the abyss is
 antithetical to such defense. And
 while I may have been the lone
 voice speaking the last...
 (looks at his watch)
 ...umpteen hours, the words of a
 wise and prescient leader guided my
 tongue. A fellow patriot. A fellow
 veteran. A fellow Republican by the
 name of Dwight David Eisenhower.
 Perhaps you've heard of him.

Reporters ERUPT with questions, but one cuts through the din --

REPORTER #1
 Senator, the President has called
 this the "linchpin" of his plan to
 modernize our military. Is it your
 hope this bill fails the House now
 that a vote's been scheduled for
 Thursday?

STONE
 All I *hope* is that each member bends
 a knee. And prayerfully votes their
 convictions.

He's light on his feet. A natural. A black Jack Kennedy.

More questions barked, but they are lost in the din as Stone
 clocks a SPECTACLED REDHEAD standing off beside a column.

Eyes meet, and she frowns, ever so slightly, as we CUT TO --

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - PACIFIC NORTHWEST - NIGHT

ON THE TELEVISION

STONE (ON TV)

If you'll excuse me, this filibuster was sponsored by Folgers. Pots and pots of the stuff -- if you catch my drift.

Futile questions fly as the Senator disappears on the TV.

The waitress waddles back with a single measly BAND-AID.

WAITRESS

All I could muster, mister...
Mister?

But Miller is GONE. A puddle of muck and blood in his place.

INT. STONE'S OFFICE - THE U.S. CAPITOL - NIGHT

The office is dark. Devoid of staffers. Except the Redhead. Spine erect on a leather couch. Staring dead ahead.

She is **MS. FISHER**. Late-thirties. Stylish. Summer-in-the-Hamptons sophisticated. No wedding ring, for she is hitched to Stone as his CHIEF OF STAFF.

The steady stream of a draining bladder echoes from the adjoining powder room. Joined by the requisite sigh of relief.

STONE (O.S.)

Now I know why these corrupt old cocksuckers quit pulling these stunts. It's much more compelling in the movies.

MS. FISHER

Four hours.

A zipper zips, then Stone exits the bathroom, wiping his hands on his slacks.

STONE

You say something?

MS. FISHER

That's what was agreed. *Allowed.*

STONE

I got inspired.

Her lips purse tight. Spectacled eyes narrow.

STONE (CONT'D)

Four hours is no filibuster. Ask
Jimmy Stewart. I made it look good.

He collapses on the couch's opposite end, exhales in
exhausted satisfaction as he finally takes a load off.

MS. FISHER

(troubled)

"The Today Show" wants an
interview. As does "Good Morning
America." Letterman's asking for a
live Top Ten.

STONE

This is bad.

(beat)

I only have one nice suit.

Flustered, she crosses to her desk.

The Senator simply smiles. Flashes that charm.

STONE (CONT'D)

Tell the networks, thanks but no
thanks. Today was a necessary evil.
One I will be loathe to repeat, I
can promise you that.

He kicks off his right shoe. But for his *left*, he reaches up
inside his pant leg -- and UNHITCHES IT.

STONE (CONT'D)

Besides. I'm more of a Leno guy --

Another moan of relief as he withdraws the bottom half of his
left leg. Resting the PROTHESES on his lap.

MS. FISHER

I already did.

Stone smirks. Then inspects the clean slice from Miller's
butcher knife marring his leg's polyurethane hide.

STONE

Anything?

Ms. Fisher keeps her back turned. Almost hesitates.

MS. FISHER

The local paper reported the blaze.

(beat)

That was it.

The Senator rests his head against the wall.

STONE

That slippery son of a bitch.

MS. FISHER

This does not mean --

He re-straps the leg back to its stump.

STONE

Look at my week. Push what you can.

Scrap the rest.

MS. FISHER

You are not going back.

The Senator makes for the door -- but Ms. Fisher is faster, planting her heels before it.

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)

The special envoys from Slovakia and Slovenia are here for their meeting.

STONE

What meeting?

MS. FISHER

They're in your office now.

Stone smoulders. Knows she's just trapped him.

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)

They're waiting.

A trace of an ACCENT slips through when she speaks. One gone through great lengths to disguise.

Resentment flaring, Stone concedes. Makes for his office.

STONE

Reach out to your people. I want to know where he fled.

MS. FISHER

Already did.

As he opens his office door --

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)
 Richard. You're a Senator now.
 (beat)
 Remember that.

With that, his door swings shut -- but not before we glimpse the TWO BUCK NAKED WOMEN "come hithering" atop his desk.

The Special Envoys from Slovakia and Slovenia.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

The cabin door creaks open. Miller flicks on the light.

The place is empty. Wiped completely clean. Lacking any and all evidence Shaw even existed. Miller limps about in shock.

MILLER
 Shaw?! -- SHAW?!!

He SNAPS. Trashes the joint. Lamps are shattered, couch cushions disemboweled, desk overturned, when --

A desk drawer slides across the floor. Miller clocks something within it. -- His OWN FACE staring back at him.

It's a Canadian passport. With a new name: "ROBERT DRAKE."

Distant WAR DRUMS resume as he spots something else tucked inside it. An envelope. Miller opens it, WITHDRAWING --

A PLANE TICKET.

His sour puss says it all.

MILLER (CONT'D)
Fuck.

Off Miller, busted up, bruised, and mulling the rough road ahead, we MATCH DISSOLVE TO --

INT. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SINGAPORE - DAWN

Miller. Feverish, gaunt, and nearly Walking Dead.

Right where we left off at the top.

Teetering above the grand Arrival Hall. The AIRPORT POLICE have him cornered, slowly moving in...

Miller scans the options before him, vision scrambled, yet he can just make out --

The grove of INDOOR PALM TREES. Nearly within reach.

The Police clock his intentions, accelerate their advance -- Miller calculates distance, readies his jump, and --

SLIPS.

On-lookers SHRIEK as he plummets -- snags a massive SINGAPOREAN FLAG -- tears it in two, and --

CRASHES atop a passing luggage trolley. (Giving the poor Chinese Tourist pushing it a coronary event.)

Miller bounces, rolls, comes to rest in a crumpled heap.

FROM THE UPPER LEVEL

BLACK BURKA watches as he then disappears under a dog pile of SWARMING POLICE.

INT. TUNNELS - THE U.S. CAPITOL - AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON, a NOTE. Folded tight. Clutched in the grip of a pimply **CONGRESSIONAL PAGE** as he takes the cramped service tunnels at full gallop.

CHAIRMAN (V.O.)

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

INT. COMMITTEE CHAMBER - THE U.S. CAPITOL - AFTERNOON

A **DOZEN U.S. SENATORS** -- read: OLD WHITE MEN -- stifle yawns. Bored to tears in the midst of a subcommittee hearing.

SENATOR STONE mans the last seat on the dais. The lone soul not half asleep. He opens a BINDER before him, adjusts the table mic.

STONE

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, doctor, for your testimony today. Your work with blight-resistant potatoes is truly... something.

A **RESEARCHER** with a comb-over visible from orbit nods before him. A proud display of Yukon Golds spread across a table.

The rest of the peanut gallery is rather wanting of warm bodies. Hardly the hottest ticket in town.

STONE (CONT'D)

But while some of my associates may find encouragement in your words -- I find *fear*.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. TUNNELS - THE U.S. CAPITOL - AFTERNOON

That pimple-faced Page. On a tear. Weaving in and out of other hot-footing young couriers. The red blood cells of the Capitol.

STONE (V.O.)

Fear. That man is using the gift of science, not for the betterment of our species. But for the perverse thrill that comes with playing God.

The Senator flips the pages of his binder, barely glancing at the prepared remarks as he orates.

STONE

Indeed, we play God every day, don't we? Created in His image, we were granted dominion over the Earth. To be shepherds to its creatures. Stewards of its soil.

Eye-rolls from his fellow Senators. Another page flip.

STONE (CONT'D)

And yet, there were domains that were to remain off limits. Boundaries to be respected. Realms where man's feet were not to tread.

Flip.

STONE (CONT'D)

If one bite of an apple could incite the Fall of Man, I shudder to think what wrath this poison potato might wrought.

A sneak peek over his shoulder REVEALS --

Images of a NAKED WOMAN. Bound and gagged. A posse of MASKED MEN encircle her. Moments from the cum shot.

It's not written remarks he's perusing -- but PORN.

RESEARCHER

We could end famine! World hunger.
The war on poverty could be --

STONE

So it's war that you wage.

RESEARCHER

(rattled)
I don't know if I'd --

STONE

You just said so yourself.

RESEARCHER

I suppose. Yes. In so many words --

STONE

To eradicate human suffering.
(beat)
A war you can *win*.

The Researcher balks. Then offers the weakest of nods.

STONE (CONT'D)

Funny. No one ever says "no."

The curmudgeonly **COMMITTEE CHAIR** has heard enough.

CHAIRMAN

Senator --

STONE

But I want to hear you say it,
doctor. Before you embark on your
boondoggle, dragging Joe Taxpayer
along too --

CHAIRMAN

That's enough, Senator --

STONE

I want to hear you say that total
victory is ensured. And *nothing*
less will be tolerated --

CHAIRMAN

(gavels)
Senator!

Stone snaps quiet. A tad shaken by his own outburst. An awkward hush falls over the chamber. Then --

CHAIRMAN (CONT'D)

The good doctor was invited here to testify today. Not be *crucified*.

Just then, our pimply PAGE arrives. He slips behind Stone, hands over the note. Stone opens it. Frowns at a single word:

SINGAPORE.

Then spins to his Chairman, all smiles.

STONE

Mr. Chairman, I yield my time.

Stone catches the Page ogling the *bukaki* gang-bang in his binder. Then snaps it shut, CUTTING US TO --

INT. BRUMIDI CORRIDORS - THE U.S. CAPITOL - NIGHT

CLOSE ON, printed VIDEO STILLs. Taken from an airport security camera. Despite the fuzzy pixilation, there's no denying the haggard WHITE MAN running amok.

MS. FISHER

He's been detained. They have him in lockdown.

The Senator and his Chief huddle in one of the famous BRUMIDI CORRIDORS.

STONE

Singapore...

MS. FISHER

He's not on holiday.

A rowdy lot of THIRD GRADERS file by on a field trip. Then --

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)

We have an asset there.

Stone takes in the priceless FRESCO above them: Christopher Columbus. Newly ashore. Gently lifting the veil of a sad Indian Maiden. Perhaps she senses the holocaust to come...

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)

Richard.

STONE

Make the call.

With that, Stone storms from the corridor. As we CUT --

INT. RAFFLES HOTEL ROOM - SINGAPORE - MORNING

MOANS of ecstasy drown out the squeak of a mattress.

A **JAPANESE SALARYMAN** lies blindfolded, spread-eagled on his stomach. Bare-ass naked save for his dress socks. Wrists and ankles bound to the bed's four posts.

A **NAKED WOMAN** bucks atop him as if breaking a wild filly. Flowing **JET BLACK HAIR** swirls as she writhes.

We do not see her features. Nor does she make a sound. We glimpse only the creamy porcelain of a perfect feminine figure as it thrusts upon the groaning man.

For now, let's call her -- **THE WOMAN**.

A **PAGER BEEPS** across the room. The woman's gyrations cease. Delicate feet cross the floor to it as she reads its screen...

That quick, she swipes her dress, her heels, and is out the door --

Dangling the "Do Not Disturb" sign on its knob as she goes.

The hapless Salaryman lifts his befuddled head from the bed.

JAPANESE SALARYMAN
...*Sumimasen?*

INT. ELECTRONICS SHOP - SINGAPORE - MORNING

A **FAX MACHINE** sings as an incoming signal is received.

THE WOMAN waits as the dot-matrix printer grinds trails of ink. And the image of MILLER'S FACE takes shape.

Over the fax, **ANOTHER SOUND** cuts in. The **HIGH-PITCHED TONE** of a **CRASHING MEDICAL PATIENT**, as we **SMASH TO** --

INT. INFIRMARY - INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Miller **THRASHES**. Wracked by a seizure. A respirator clogs his throat. I.V. tubes wind from his arms.

POLICE guard the door as several **DOCTORS** struggle to contain him. A pen light is shined in his eyes.

They've rolled over white. **SUDDENLY** --

The door bursts open. A swarm of **QUARANTINE OFFICERS** in full-blown **HAZMAT** getup sweep into the room.

Orders are barked in Malay. The doctors stand down as the **LEAD QUARANTINE OFFICER** approaches Miller. Face concealed behind the hood.

He parts Miller's shirt as he writhes and twists. Clocks the festering gut wound.

Through his spasms, Miller can just make out the hooded "angel" hovering before him. And the faintest trace of eyes.

The most beautiful GREEN EYES he's ever seen...

As an ENORMOUS NEEDLE stabs him in the stomach.

Doctors lurch forward in protest, wrangled back by the Quarantine crew as the needle plunges, again and again.

Miller's cries are choked out by his own respirator. Then with one last twitch, his spine arcs hard --

Then falls limp. As he FLATLINES.

The Quarantine crew wastes no time loading him onto a gurney.

But the POLICE barricade the door.

STAND OFF. Heated Malay is spat between the parties.

A loaded beat. Then the Cops stand aside.

Miller is whisked from the room, and --

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE - INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SINGAPORE - DAY

-- loaded into an AMBULANCE. The Lead Quarantine man swings into its cab, next to its **DRIVER**.

He plucks off his hood, shakes out his mane, REVEALING --

A STUNNING WOMAN.

Flowing hair, jet black. Olive skin. The most entrancing EMERALD EYES we've seen since that famed National Geographic cover. In fact, she could very much be that girl's sister.

She is **TALA**. A cocky late-twenties. But more on her later. For now, she simply turns to the driver and blurts one word.

TALA

Go!

The gas pedal meets the floor, and we CUT TO --

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE - SINGAPORE HIGHWAY - DAY

A congested highway. Snarled with mid-day traffic. An erratic Ambulance weaves between lanes.

IN THE REAR

Miller lies catatonic. Two "Quarantine" men still in Haz-mat suits ride next to him. Standing guard.

UP FRONT

Tala casts troubled glances behind them.

She barks orders in a FOREIGN TONGUE. Not Malay. Nor anything we've heard before.

The driver cranks the SIREN, peels the ambulance off the highway, down a ramp, right into --

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE - LITTLE INDIA - SINGAPORE - DAY

LITTLE INDIA. Swarms of **INDIAN MEN** mill about carefree, oblivious to the ambulance's frantic horn.

It slows to a crawl. Inches through the dense mob.

IN THE REAR

Miller's eyes suddenly fly open. He GASPS, sucks a rattling breath, then passes out cold again. The Guards share a look.

UP FRONT

The driver blasts his horn. He lurches forward, CLIPPING several Indians. The mob TURNS on the ambulance, pounds it with angry fists and feet.

IN THE REAR

The pounding reverberates. The guards eye the rear door -- when Miller stirs, MUMBLES. Barely audible.

One guard leans in closer -- and gets a HEAD-BUTT.

UP FRONT

Tala shoves the driver aside, slams her foot on the gas. The ambulance CAREENS forth, Indians parting like the sea.

She maneuvers it to a quiet side-street, pulls to the curb. Taps the INTERCOM and speaks in that exotic tongue.

Silence answers back.

She slides the hatch to the rear bay open, FINDING --

Two knocked-out guards. A dangling rear door.

And an EMPTY STRETCHER.

EXT. LITTLE INDIA ALLEYS - SINGAPORE - DAY

Miller slinks through squalid back alleys. Reeking more of Mumbai than sterile Singapore.

A fresh coat of color has returned to his face -- but he's not firing on all cylinders just yet.

THUNDER rumbles above. That quick, clouds break. Miller ducks under an overhang as an Indian stampede dashes for cover.

He collapses against a wall. Slides to the ground. Bedeviled by near-death, and now worse -- JET LAG.

Off Miller, drenched, alone, and thousands of miles from home, we CUT TO --

INT. CONGRESSIONAL GYM - THE U.S. CAPITOL - LATE NIGHT

A cavern of idle equipment. Save for a single treadmill humming in the gym's far corner, where --

SENATOR STONE grinds it out. Sony WALKMAN on full blast. "Hootie and the Blowfish" bleats through foam headphones.

ON A TELEVISION

C-SPAN broadcasts the House of Representatives in the midst of a late-night vote. The screen READS:

H.R.1701 - The American Defense and Global Preparedness Act.

Stone cranks his speed, ratchets the incline as numbers on the TV slow their tally. The "Nays" closing in on the "Yays."

The photo finish. He kicks the treadmill into ludicrous speed. The belt SCREAMS. The numbers stop. The final total is in --

The bill fails.

WHAM! -- Stone SLAMS the "emergency stop", grips the bars, flips himself up, over -- and sticks the landing on the floor.

He swipes his towel, strides for the locker room. Badass swagger in his step.

INT. POSH BAR - ORCHARD TOWERS - SINGAPORE - NIGHT

A stylish watering hole for Singapore's rich and not-famous. And then there's MILLER. Holding court at the sleek bar. Drowning his sorrows in insanely-priced seltzer. Painfully out of place. Equally under-dressed. Yet no one seems to notice nor care.

This upper crust has only one thing on its mind -- *business*.

And in this place, that business is SEX.

Miller has gravitated to a lounge in the notorious Singaporean tower known as "FOUR FLOORS OF WHORES."

A LEGGY YOUNG WOMAN drifts up to the bar, claims a stool a few seats upwind of Miller. He can't help but admire those fish-netted gams as they taper into black stilettos.

She denies eye contact as she sucks her long-stemmed cigarette. Face hidden behind a curve of luscious hair.

Jet black.

Her martini arrives. She nearly drains it in one sip.

Miller's circuits are shorting. His black cloud seems to lift. As does something *else*.

He clears his throat. Then --

MILLER

My first time in Singapore.

She keeps her face turned. Her shoulder cold.

MILLER (CONT'D)

(correcting)

That's not true. We docked here once. But... I never got off the ship.

His mind wills her -- rather, *begs* her -- to look his way. But she won't grant him that. Only another cigarette puff.

Miller gives up. Shuts down. Turns away. Then --

WOMAN

You're a sailor.

Kathleen Turner called. She wants her voice back.

MILLER
I was in the Navy. Yes.
(wryly)
Didn't do much sailing --

An **OLDER PROSTITUTE**, a case study in cosmetic surgery gone bad, slips her arm inside Miller's. Latches on tight.

OLDER PROSTITUTE
Some arms for a man your age. But
how big are you below...

Her free hand makes for his junk, but Miller swats it, peels himself loose.

MILLER
Not big enough, sister.

He spins back to that much hotter hooker --

But she's GONE. Only a stabbed-out cigarette in her place.

INT. LOBBY - ORCHARD TOWERS - NIGHT

Miller dashes into the lobby. But no sign of the woman.

Only a whiff of lingering PERFUME as an elevator slides closed.

FLOOR NUMBERS tick as the lift climbs. Then stop at floor 14.

INT. 14TH FLOOR HALLWAY - ORCHARD TOWERS - NIGHT

The elevator opens. Miller exits, following a fading trail of pock marks stabbed into the carpet.

STILETTO PRINTS.

They stop at a corner room. He's about to knock -- but grabs the door knob. Tests it. The door opens with a click.

INT. CORNER ROOM - ORCHARD TOWERS - NIGHT

THERE SHE IS. On the bed. Her porcelain back facing Miller.

WOMAN
I was afraid you wouldn't come.

She turns. And we finally glimpse that face.

Epic cheekbones. Flawless skin. Button nose above plump lips. Eyes that flirt beneath lazy lashes.

BLACK EYES. Like a doll.

Miller POUNCES. Unbuckles his belt with one hand, snaps her spaghetti straps with the other. Until she ROLLS him, straddles his torso, tears his shirt open wide. Miller is thrown for a moment. But *likes it*.

She traces the STAPLES in his stomach with a fake fingernail.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

We must be gentle.

MILLER

The fuck we do.

He seizes her, kisses her hard, on the mouth... the neck... towards those perfect breasts --

She withdraws.

WOMAN

I must be clean.

And disappears inside the bathroom.

Miller smell-checks his own pits. Not great, but tough shit. He kicks off his shoes. Strips off his pants, then --

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

No striking. No biting. Rear entry only.

She reemerges.

In only a plush, white robe. And fish nets.

MILLER

If you can handle it.

WOMAN

I was talking about you.

The robe falls. Naked breasts hang exposed and free --

Along with EIGHT INCHES of uncut cock between her legs.

Miller blanches.

MILLER

I think there's been some confusion --

WOMAN

None at all, Mr. Miller.

She knows his name. But before he can question --

From the seams of her stockings, she slides two long, THIN
BLADES --

And ATTACKS!

Miller rolls, just missing the knives as they carve up the
mattress.

She swats again, but Miller ducks, connects a RIGHT CROSS to
her dainty chin.

She rebounds and roars back, whirling like a double-bladed
dervish. Miller snags a table lamp, wields it as a club.

She strikes, he blocks -- and the lamp SEVERES IN TWO.

Miller grabs a plush CHAISE LOUNGE instead. Knives drive for
his face -- and SINK into the chaise cushions, tips quivering
a hair from Miller's nose.

He HURLS the lounge. She volleys it with a SPIN KICK --
clipping Miller's head before it splinters at the wall.

He recovers -- just as her FLYING THIGHS wrench around his
neck, flip him off his feet, PILE-DRIVE him to the floor.

She strips a WIRE THREAD from her fish nets, lassoes Miller's
throat, twists, yanks, and RIDES him from behind.

He gags. Scrapes at the wire. Face goes purple. Tongue wags.
Eyes roll back as fingers fall slack...

BAM! -- while Miller's OTHER HAND grasps a splintered CHAISE
LEG nearby, WALLOPS her upside the head.

She tumbles, the wire releases. He sucks air, stumbles, spins
to face her again.

She simply plucks off a stiletto. Twists its HEEL, snaps it
free -- and CHUCKS it to him like a hot potato.

Miller catches it out of pure reflex. Then clocks the tiny
LED light. Flashing red.

Shit.

She DIVES into the bathroom, as Miller drops the heel, and --

INT. 14TH FLOOR HALLWAY - ORCHARD TOWERS - NIGHT

KA-BOOOOOM! That corner room door disintegrates as the blast erupts into the hallway.

Sprinklers spring to life. Alarm bells toll.

INT. CORNER ROOM - ORCHARD TOWERS - NIGHT

Smoke swirls. Debris settles.

The woman slinks from the bathroom. Sifts through the smouldering rubble --

Yet no blood nor body parts to be found.

She steps through shattered glass, out onto

THE BALCONY

Where a small CROWD can be seen below. Goggling the smoke billowing from the 14th floor --

And the PANTLESS MAN dangling for dear life below it.

The woman bolts back inside, throws open shattered closet doors, FINDING --

A massive ASSAULT RIFLE. Safe in its case.

EXT. ORCHARD TOWERS - NIGHT

Miller dangles from the rail of a lower balcony. Hauls his aching frame up over its rim --

RAT-A-TAT-A-TAT! Bullets rain from above, ricochet inches away.

Miller PLUMMETS -- snags another ledge more floors down.

The woman adjusts aim, lets more lead fly as the crowd scrambles below.

Miller swings himself to the next balcony -- just missing her spray -- drops another floor, another. Works his way down the face of the tower. Avoiding her sites.

He's nearly at the ground now. He drops the last few floors, rolls upon impact, tumbles to a stop --

As a SILVER JAGUAR rockets around a corner, gears screaming as it halts.

Its tiny TRUNK pops open. A tinted window rolls down.

BLACK BURKA

Get in!

Miller won't budge, UNTIL --

RAT-A-TAT-TAT-TAT-A-TAT!

The woman TEARS FROM THE LOBBY. The SAR-80 on blast.

Miller DIVES inside the trunk as the Jaguar peels out.

The woman pursues on foot -- like a she-male Terminator.
Then halts, giving it one last, good strafing as it goes.

INT/EXT. SILVER JAGUAR - SINGAPORE STREETS - NIGHT

The Jag runs red lights, grazes pedestrians. Black Burka a real demon behind the wheel. She taps a button on the dash.

INSIDE THE TRUNK

Miller's twisted like a pretzel, jostled about.

BLACK BURKA (OVER SPEAKER)

Most people find Singapore sterile
and dull. How do you find it, Mr.
Miller?

MILLER

Full of surprises.

BLACK BURKA (OVER SPEAKER)

May I recommend the chili crab --

RAT-A-TAT-TAT-TAT!

Fresh bullets pelt the Jag, as --

THE WOMAN closes in.

Atop a black DUCATI MOTORCYCLE.

BLACK BURKA (CONT'D)

Hang on!

Black Burka cranks the wheel as the motorbike is upon them.
The woman weaves onto the sidewalk, evades the Jag's swerves.

She pulls parallel to them, levels her gun at the trunk --

CLINK-CLINK-CLINK-CLINK! --

Shells pock mark the Jag's bullet-proof alloy.

Black Burka steers in and out of ONCOMING TRAFFIC. The woman rounds their flank, throttles up to Burka's window, unleashes more lead. But the glass won't fracture.

She TOSSES the rifle, drops back, swings the bike behind the Jag now, thumbing a button on her handlebars.

A compartment slides open, REVEALING --

An ARSENAL OF GRENADES.

She plucks one, ejects the pin, takes aim, THROWS -- just as the Jaguar SWERVES --

The grenade PLANTS in the grill of an oncoming TRUCK. Its Driver swerves, relieved to avoid the collision --

Only to be promptly BLOWN to Kingdom Come.

The woman readies grenade #2, cocks her arm --

WHAM! -- Black Burka taps her brakes, the Ducati PLOWS into her rear bumper, the grenade is dropped, and --

BOOOOM!

IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR, Black Burka clocks fiery chunks of Ducati raining down, when --

TAP, TAP, TAP! -- she looks to her sunroof, FINDING --

THE WOMAN. Clinging atop like a buck-naked Spider-Man.

One LAST GRENADE in her grip. The pin is pulled. The suicide bomb about to detonate, when --

At the same time, they both spot it.

The LOW CONCRETE WALL. Barricading the road. Dead ahead.

Black Burka HAMMERS the brakes. The Jaguar skids, sends the woman SOARING -- up, up, over the wall, and --

SPLASH! Into the SINGAPORE RIVER.

KA-BOOOOM!

River water pelts the car. Waves settle. No signs of life.

INSIDE THE TRUNK

Miller exhales, eases -- only to be JARRED again as Black Burka floors it.

And the Jag burns rubber into the Singapore night.

INT. STONE'S OFFICE - THE U.S. CAPITOL - DAY

The Senator huddles with several **STAFFERS**. Wordsmithing some upcoming remarks.

STONE

A "pandemic of profligacy?" I appreciate the alliteration, but Jesus Christ --

The door opens. Ms. Fisher stands there. Grim as the Reaper.

STONE (CONT'D)

Let's resume this in the A.M.

They don't have to be told twice. We follow the staffers as they file past Fisher. She shuts the office door.

A beat.

Then behind closed doors, STONE ERUPTS. The staff pretend not to eavesdrop.

IN HIS OFFICE

Stone rages, in the throes of a conniption fit.

MS. FISHER

Stop this. -- STOP!

She DUCKS as a soaring BUST OF LINCOLN dents the drywall.

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)

Behrokh!

INSTANTLY, he freezes.

Ms. Fisher rebukes him -- in an exotic, UNKNOWN TONGUE.

(The very same language we heard Tala use earlier)

Whatever she says, works.

The Senator disarms, looks at the FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH he was just about to hurl --

His FAMILY PORTRAIT: Frumpy, lily white WIFE. Wiry, buck-toothed sons. Sasquatch-like daughters.

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)
We should report.

CRASH! -- The portrait shatters against a bookshelf.

Stone swipes his winter coat, storms for the door --

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)
Where are you going?

-- and is GONE.

Off Fisher, as she surveys the ravaged office, we CUT TO --

INT. TRUNK - SILVER JAGUAR - NIGHT

Miller braces himself as the Jag rockets along. One last LURCH, and it skids to a complete stop.

The engine is killed. Replaced by the sound of a different motor. Miller tries to decipher what the hell is going on, when --

Silence.

A beat as Miller listens. Then WIGS the fuck out. Bucking and railing against the trunk lid.

A "CHIRP." And it pops open.

Miller's flush face pokes out, FINDING --

INT. MANSION - SINGAPORE - NIGHT

A MANSION. And he's smack dab in the middle of its grand living room. More LUXURY CARS -- a Bentley, a Lamborghini Diablo -- are lined up next to him. Each on its own elevator.

Classic Singapore.

Miller scans the place. Not a soul in sight.

He climbs from the trunk, wanders through room after magnificent room of Ming vases. Persian rugs. Medieval oils.

Finding himself in --

A WOOD-PANELED STUDY

Complete with a crackling fireplace. And a gold-trimmed AQUARIUM bubbling with fish.

SUDDENLY, the doors swing shut behind him. Locking him in.

Miller lurches for the WINDOW. Sealed tight. He tests the pane's thickness, integrity --

Then clocks the city lights glittering in the distance. FAR BELOW. Turns out, this *isn't* a mansion, but a

MASSIVE PENTHOUSE.

A castle in the sky above Singapore's western shore.

SHAW (O.S.)

Not the most inspiring of skylines,
I'm afraid. But give it time.

Shaw enters from a hidden door. She's draped in cashmere now. Oozing majesty. Like an Afghani-Iranian Judi Dench.

She holds a weathered wine bottle.

SHAW (CONT'D)

From the family vineyard in Shiraz.
The finest grapes in the world.

She pops the cork, fills a chalice with a generous pour.

MILLER

I don't drink.

SHAW

Who said this was for you?

She plucks an ice-cold PEPSI bottle from a small fridge, offers it up.

A beat. Then Miller SWATS it, shattering it against a Monet.

SHAW (CONT'D)

You prefer diet then.

TALA bolts inside, but Shaw halts her with a hand.

Tala protests in that bizarre language, but one look from Shaw shuts her down.

She exits, reluctant. Mad-dogging Miller as she goes.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Tala. My daughter. She has my
mother's eyes. And my husband's
hard head.

MILLER

For an Afghani by way of Iran, you
sure don't speak farsi.

SHAW

For a white man from America, you
have a most astute ear.

MILLER

Who are you? Really.

Shaw sips more wine. Eyes twinkling over her chalice.

SHAW

Who are you is the riddle.

She crosses to the fish tank. Scatters some pellets on the
surface. The fish go nuts for the stuff.

Then Shaw slips the military DOG TAG from her robe.

SHAW (CONT'D)

It was found in Cambodia. Deep in
its jungle.

She holds it out for Miller to take. This time he accepts it.

SHAW (CONT'D)

We are few, but we are resourceful.
We gained access to your military.
But any trace of this man, his
platoon has been expunged. Wiped
clean.

(then)

Fortunately, your free press is not
so readily redacted.

She strikes a button on the fireplace.

Bookshelves part, REVEALING --

A SCREEN.

A slide is projected upon it. A photograph from the page of
an old magazine. "Life." Its colors are muted. The focus,
uneven. But its contents are clear enough:

THIRTEEN MEN. Barely that in mind and body. Dressed in ragged
fatigues. Playing football in the jungle mud. With a coconut.

The caption beneath it reads:

*"The men of E. Platoon, 'Echo', enjoy some rare fun amidst
the mid-day rain."*

Miller looks as if he's seen a ghost. Thirteen of them.

Shaw clocks his reaction. Advances to another image:

TWO MEN. Arms draped around each other. Howling in victory.

"Lts. Adam Cross and Richard Stone celebrate their game-winning score."

SHAW (CONT'D)

You were there. With him. You were part of his platoon.

Miller stares through that photo. There's no mistaking the younger black man. But Cross's face is obscured by mud.

SHAW (CONT'D)

But you *escaped*.

Miller's silence is confirming.

Shaw approaches from behind.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Your secret is too burdensome for one man alone to carry. I can help you. If you let me.

(then)

What happened in that jungle?

A dreadful beat as she lets that hover. Then --

SHAW (CONT'D)

What did you do?

Miller's fingers close around the tag. His rage boils over.

MILLER

(at screen)

Why? Why all *this*? What's it to you?

SHAW

Something is coming. A reckoning. A... *rebirth*.

(beat)

And I intend to stop it.

She ZOOMS IN on that photo --

SHAW (CONT'D)

What began in that jungle has now crept into shadows far across the globe.

-- zeroing in on Cross's mud-splashed face.

SHAW (CONT'D)
I believe this man, Adam Cross, to
be its key.

Miller studies Cross's eyes.

MILLER
What makes you think I can find him?

SHAW
You won't.
(off his look)
He'll find you.

A beat as Miller digests that one. When --

A BRIGHT LIGHT floods the room. Washing over his face.

The first rays of DAWN. Breaching the horizon.

Shaw smiles, realizes Miller's still pantless under his robe.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Let's find you some clothes. It's
time you see the rest of your new
home.

MILLER
My new home.

SHAW
(gestures; simply)
"Eagle's Nest."

Shaw crosses for the door. But Miller stays put.

MILLER
Hitler had an Eagle's Nest.

SHAW
(over her shoulder)
Adolf was a petulant thief.

With that, Shaw is gone. Leaving Miller to mull that last
quip alone, as we CUT TO --

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - WASHINGTON D.C. - DUSK

The waning sun hangs low, impotent against the winter gloom.
Senator Stone trudges against the wind. His collar popped.

Then stops. Finds something in a pocket.

That pack of CHINESE CIGARETTES. The last one still remaining.

What the hell. Stone shields it from the gust, lights it, sucks a nice long drag, when --

Something OFF SCREEN snags his eye.

He changes course. Makes for a long, sleek structure jutting from the earth.

The VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL.

Stone walks along the glassy wall. Puffs that cigarette. Passing name after name. Of ultimate sacrifices.

Then he pauses.

Stone lingers there. Before that hallowed wall. And all that it represents --

And STABS OUT his cigarette against it. Twists it. Drills it into a NAME immortalized in rock.

Then, he simply flicks the butt aside. And marches off toward the glowing CAPITOL DOME. As he goes --

WE PAN TO THE WALL. To that name now caked with ashes.

"ADAM CROSS."

EXT. GARDEN TERRACE - EAGLE'S NEST - DAWN

Sunrise over Singapore. Miller stands on a GARDEN TERRACE. Overlooking the island city-state as it wakes.

He's clad in street clothes now. Crisp jeans, black tee, leather boots.

TALA (O.S.)

The most beautiful prison in the world.

TALA joins him, taking in the incredible vista.

MILLER

That was you. Outside my trailer. In the airport. The car...

She stays tight-lipped. Won't confirm nor deny.

MILLER (CONT'D)
Next time you save my life... little
easier on that clutch.

TALA
My mother. She trusts you.

MILLER
And you?

TALA
I think you're old.

Miller smirks, clocks a TIDAL POOL far below. Nearly filled.
Forming a moat around the tower.

TALA (CONT'D)
Those men. In your platoon. They're
still out there.

MILLER
I know.

TALA
Then you'll help us.

We see the DOG TAG turning in Miller's grip. He feels every
dent, every scratch.

And nods.

Then HURLS the tag as far as his arm can throw.

MILLER
But first I keep a promise.

Miller leaps onto the terrace ledge. Peers into the morning
mist below. Cocky Tala is suddenly shaken.

TALA
Listen to me. Every mercenary,
every bounty hunter worth his blade
has your face now --

MILLER
Them, I can handle.

He turns to her, wolf eyes alive.

MILLER (CONT'D)
It's the *women* who scare me.

With that, Miller JUMPS.

Plummets... plummets... and --

SPLASH! -- cannonballs into the tidal pool below.

Tala watches Miller resurface, kick for the opposite shore.

TALA
(bothered)
Your little worm is dancing on his
hook.

SHAW emerges from the shadows behind her.

SHAW
Have faith, my daughter. We don't
yet know of what he's capable.

They watch as Miller trudges ashore, disappears into the
jungle scrub.

SHAW (CONT'D)
And yet, neither does he.

EXT. UNDEVELOPED JUNGLE - WESTERN SINGAPORE - DAWN

Miller tumbles through the brush, gathering steam as he goes --
faster -- faster --

Until he's RACING. Undaunted. In full blown BEAST MODE.

And it's here, off our hero. A MAN ON FIRE. And with a
purpose, renewed, we MATCH DISSOLVE TO --

EXT. THE JUNGLE - NIGHT (1969)

TWO FIGURES race like Hell through the jungle -- in the midst
of a raging MONSOON.

Fit, trim, they dart through dense foliage with agility.
Grace. Like young jungle SAVAGES, when --

KA-BOOOOM! -- a LAND MINE explodes. Taking out the rear man.

The Leader halts, returns to his friend.

We've seen those wolf eyes before.

YOUNG MILLER inspects his partner's leg -- what's *left*.
Nothing but a pulpy stump of gushing blood, splintered bone.
The limb of a familiar black male. Barely twenty. **YOUNG STONE.**

YOUNG STONE

Do it...

Miller grips Stone by the arm, hoists him up over his shoulder. He takes off -- and SLIPS. Both men tumble.

IN THE DISTANCE, an UGLY HORN bellows. Deep. Guttural. Primal.

Young Miller and Stone share a knowing look.

YOUNG STONE (CONT'D)

Do it. You gotta do it.

(beat)

Kill me.

Miller ignores him, peers behind them, into the jungle...

YOUNG STONE (CONT'D)

Kill me. *Please.*

LIGHTNING ignites the sky like several flash bombs --

Illuminating the small army of SHADOWS. Slinking between trees.

They're coming.

Stone clutches Miller's forearm, nails digging in.

YOUNG STONE (CONT'D)

Don't let him take me. *Jahangir...*

YOUNG MILLER

That's not my name.

He digs within a pouch in Stone's ragged linens. Withdraws something SILVER. Tucks it in Stone's hand. Tight.

YOUNG MILLER (CONT'D)

Don't forget *yours*.

Miller pries himself free. Stone's nails rake his flesh.

YOUNG STONE

No. Please, please, no --

YOUNG MILLER

I'll come back for you.

YOUNG STONE

Don't let him take me again.

Miller kisses his forehead --

YOUNG MILLER
I promise you. I'll come back.

-- and BOLTS. Flees. Vanishes into the monsoon.

Stone watches his brother disappear. His sorrowful CRY cuts through wind, rain, and thunder.

YOUNG STONE
ADAM!!!

THROUGH THE MAELSTROM --

Young Miller scrambles. Rain pummels his face, mixes with tears. Jungle branches snag his linens, ensnare him. He claws himself free, plows on, soon swallowed by darkness --

Leaving a SILVER OBJECT dangling behind. Polished and gleaming.

It falls, quickly devoured by pooling rain, jungle mud. We gain one last glimpse of the DOG TAG before it is lost.

And those fateful letters stamped into its plate.

"ADAM CROSS."

CRASH TO BLACK:

END OF PILOT