

COPYRIGHT (C) 2010 THIS SCREENPLAYMAY NOT BE USED OR REPRODUCED
WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR

FOOTPRINT

ANDREW HARTLEY © 2011

andy@cinemalite.com.au

INT. WASHINGTON DC/LAST CAR OF A SUBWAY TRAIN - NIGHT

THREE WHITE MEN standing together are being eyed with hostility by the only other occupants, FOURTEEN BLACK PEOPLE. The three men have a superior air and return the other passengers stares with contempt. When the train stops at the next station the three white men casually alight.

INT SUBWAY STATION

The three white men walk from the train, then stop and look back at it. A YOUNG BLACK MAN aboard the car they just left gives them the finger. They smile in return, then at each other. One of the white men produces a remote control and flicks up a small safety cover on it to reveal a RED BUTTON. He watches as the departing car enters the tunnel and presses the red button. Satisfied, they turn and leave.

INT MOVING SUBWAY CAR

The EYES of the 14 black people start to grow wild. Confused and frightened, they stumble about blindly, some collapsing.

Under a seat, in a discarded sports bag where the white men stood, a device is delivering its deadly gas. Terrified FACES look in from the next car.

INT THE SUBWAY CAR

The gas is causing the victims to hallucinate. In the flickering light, (PASSENGER POV) the passenger's heads transform into large BLACK FLOWERS. As they fall to the floor they again mutate, this time into dark skinned CROCODILES.

INT THE NEXT STATION

The train pulls in. Only a solitary passenger, a young black woman, BETH, awaits the train near the platform edge. Confused, she watches the TERRIFIED FACES in the cars preceding the last car, which stops in front of her. As the doors open the passengers pour from the cars preceding the last and run for the exit. Beth watches mesmerized. She turns to the open doors in front of her and sees the dead bodies, eyes closed, foam drooling from their mouths. She stumbles backward, turns and stumbles a few steps before collapsing. The DRIVER, having seen the mass exodus, comes to investigate. He sees Beth, examines her, sniffs the air, stands and looks toward the open doors of the car full of dead bodies. He runs for the exit.

INT THE SAME STATION - LATER

Men in protective suits are examining the subway car. More men in similar attire are removing body bags from the train. An "FBI crime scene" tape is rigged across the platform. All the police moving about on the platform outside the tape are wearing respirators. Two men, FBI agent PETER HANSEN and his boss, special agent SEAN COLLINS are standing outside the tape and watching the proceedings with interest through the visors of their respirators. They are approached by FBI AGENT #1 in an anti-contamination suit. He removes his head gear.

AGENT #1

You can take the respirators off.

They happily remove them.

COLLINS

Thank god for that. I get claustrophobic in these things.

AGENT #1

We've tested thoroughly and there's no danger. Whatever caused this has dissipated.

COLLINS

How many?

AGENT #1

Fourteen dead. One in hospital.

HANSEN

It's a woman that they found on the platform. She's unconscious. They've got my number at the hospital if she comes out of it.

COLLINS

If?

HANSEN

They don't know anymore yet. They're doing tests but it's too early to tell.

AGENT #1

If you don't need me, I'll get the samples to the lab.

COLLINS

Okay. But before you go, what do you think caused it?

AGENT #1

I would have said nerve gas, but nothing shows up out of the ones we know of.

COLLINS

Let me know the minute you narrow it down.

AGENT #1

One thing struck me as strange, it might not be anything, but the bodies...

HANSEN

Go on.

AGENT #1

Well, they were just lying there.

COLLINS

What exactly did you expect them to be doing?

AGENT #1

I wasn't expecting them to be rap dancing but I was expecting some kind of contortion. These guys seem to have died relaxed.

HANSEN

Makes you proud to be in a society that comes up with this shit.

COLLINS

You better get back to the lab.

AGENT #1

Okay, but don't hold your breath.

AGENT #1 turns and leaves.

HANSEN

Must be a poison gas 'in' joke.

COLLINS

Yeah, very funny. What else do we know?

HANSEN

Not much.

COLLINS

What about the passengers in the other cars?

HANSEN

Long gone by the time the local cops got here.

COLLINS

Who called them in?

HANSEN
The driver.

COLLINS
Where is he?

HANSEN
Sedated.

COLLINS
Great.

Hansen consults his note pad.

HANSEN
Apparently he saw the crowd running from the train, went to investigate and found the unconscious woman. He said there was a strange, sweet smell. Thought it was a perfume she was wearing, then realized it was coming from the train. Looked over to the train, saw the bodies and ran off and raised the alarm before he faded into shock

COLLINS
I want you to talk to him and the girl as soon as you can. I'll chase up the coroner and the lab guys.

INT FBI HEADQUARTERS, COLLINS' OFFICE - MORNING

Collins sitting at his desk. The head of the department, IAN JONES comes in

JONES
I've just got in. What the hell is going on?

COLLINS
A gas attack. Fast acting, quick to dissipate, state of the art stuff. It doesn't come up as a known nerve gas. We thought it was a random attack but we've just received a call claiming responsibility, a group that calls itself the 'The Proud Order of White America'.

JONES
White supremacists, I assume. What did they say?

COLLINS
That we can expect another demonstration within ten days.

JONES

Any leads?

COLLINS

Not yet. We have two possible witnesses, both unconscious. The gas residue at the lab being analyzed and one phone call. That's about it.

JONES

Press?

COLLINS

Gas leak.

JONES

That should hold them for a while. It's strange the group claiming responsibility for the attack haven't contacted the newspapers or TV.

COLLINS

That's what I thought. If they don't want publicity, what do they want?

JONES

Money.

COLLINS

As soon as I get anything I'll let you know.

Jones turns to leave. As he reaches the door Hansen enters

COLLINS

Any luck at the hospital, Pete?

HANSEN

No sir. The girl's still out, the guard's awake, a bit groggy. Just repeats what he told the police.

JONES

You're in command on this one, Sean. I'm off to sunny Alaska. We've had a report of some stolen Russian plutonium that's making its way down from Russia through Alaska. I'm fortunate I've still got some assets in Russia from my days with the C.I.A. If it wasn't for them we wouldn't know it was coming.

HANSEN

Jesus, what a world.

JONES

I may be out of contact range for a while, but when I can I'll contact you. I'll see you when I get back. Good luck.

Jones leaves the office.

HANSEN

I didn't realize he was an ex spook.

COLLINS

Yeah, transferred over at the end of the cold war. Apparently he was the CIA's top man in Russia. More to the point, we've had a call claiming responsibility for the attack.

HANSEN

Who?

COLLINS

A group calling themselves, 'The Proud Order of White America'.

HANSEN

Never heard of them. Nice acronym, though.

COLLINS

They've threatened to strike again in ten days.

HANSEN

Imagine if they choose a hospital, or even a school. What's our next move?

COLLINS

See what the lab comes up with, and hope the girl at the hospital can tell us something.

The phone rings. Collins answers it.

COLLINS

(Into phone)

Okay, he'll be right over.

Collins puts down the phone.

COLLINS

Get to the hospital, she's coming out of it.

INT THE HOSPITAL, WARD RECEPTION - DAY

Hansen leaning on the counter top talking to nurse VICKI MORGAN, an attractive woman of around 30.

MORGAN

The doctor's still with her. You got here pretty quick.

HANSEN

It was the thought of seeing you again,
(peers at name tag)
nurse Morgan. It's also important that I speak to the witness as soon as possible.

MORGAN

I'll go and see. Wait here, agent...

HANSEN

Hansen. Peter Hansen. Pete.

Morgan smiles thoughtfully and walks off along the corridor toward a room with an AGENT sitting outside. Hansen watches her ass appreciatively. She leans into the room, reappears, and beckons to Hansen. He walks to the room, shows his badge to the agent on guard and enters.

INT HOSPITAL ROOM

Beth sits up in bed. A DOCTOR is standing by the bed. Morgan ushers in Hansen. They stand at the end of the bed.

DOCTOR

This is agent Hansen from the FBI. He'd like to ask you a few questions if you're up to it.

BETH

Okay.

HANSEN

This is very important, Beth. Can you describe what happened at the station? Were you on the train?

BETH

No.

HANSEN

I thought not. Your parents said you work near the station. I spoke to your boss, he said you worked late last night.

BETH

Yes. I just missed a train, so I walked along the platform and stood behind a column. I feel safer that way, you know. I heard the train coming so I moved toward the edge of the platform. Then I saw people's faces pressed up against the glass. They looked terrified. I guess I just froze.

HANSEN

Okay. You're doing just fine. What happened next?

BETH

The train stopped and they all started running.

HANSEN

What did you do?

BETH

I watched them run. I was sort of stunned. I was by the doors of the last car. I knew something wasn't right, but I just couldn't think.

HANSEN

I know this Isn't easy, Beth, but try and tell me exactly what happened next.

BETH

I could smell this fragrance, kind of like flowers. But it was sweet, too sweet, it smelled like, like death. Sweet, rotten sweet.

HANSEN

Can you compare this smell to anything else, to something you know, that I would know?

BETH

No, nothing.

HANSEN

Alright, Beth, what did you see on the train?

BETH

I looked in, it was horrible. They were everywhere, dead, with foam coming out of their mouths. My eyes started to blur. I started seeing things, weird things. I

started to run, everything started to spin. That's all I remember.

HANSEN
What kind of weird things, Beth?

INT LAST CAR OF SUBWAY TRAIN - NIGHT

FLASHBACK - POV BETH. A shot of the subway car's interior. Black slithering crocodiles on the floor. The heads of the people slumped in the seats are black flowers, the bloom the shape of a lily.

BETH (V.O.)
Crocodiles. Black crocodiles and weird looking people, they looked like... like black flowers.

INT HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Beth on the bed. Hansen, Morgan and the Doctor standing around it.

DOCTOR
You were hallucinating, Beth, that's all.

HANSEN
Thanks, Beth. If you think of anything else, ask nurse Morgan to call me.

DOCTOR
If that's all, agent Hansen, I think we'll let the patient rest.

INT THE HOSPITAL CORRIDOR/WARD RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

Agent Hansen, nurse Morgan and the Doctor walking toward the ward reception desk.

MORGAN
You were very gentle with her. I'm glad.

DOCTOR
Yes. I was pleasantly surprised.

At the desk, nurse Morgan goes behind it. The Doctor and Hansen stand in front of the counter.

HANSEN
I had nothing to gain by being
anything else. Besides, I'm just an
all around nice guy.

DOCTOR
I'm sure you are.

Hansen takes a card from his pocket and proceeds to write on
the card.

HANSEN
That's my home number as well.
(Looking at Morgan)
I'm available twenty four hours a
day.

Hansen exits. The doctor goes into GAY mode.

DOCTOR
If you don't phone him, give me the
card, I will. You never know your
luck.

MORGAN
I don't think that will be necessary.
I'll update him.

DOCTOR
Update, or just plain date?

INT COLLINS OFFICE

Collins, rising from his desk as Hansen enters.

COLLINS
Just in time. Come on.

HANSEN
Where are we going ?

COLLINS
The lab.

INT CORRIDOR

Collins and Hansen walk along the corridor

COLLINS
How did you get on with the girl?

HANSEN
Did well with the nurse, not so well
with the witness. The only thing of
any interest was that

she smelled something, just like the train guard did.

COLLINS
Could she identify it?

HANSEN
No.

COLLINS
Having seen what she did, it was probably coming from her underpants.

HANSEN
She described it as sweet and smelling of death.

COLLINS
That's a real help. Let's see if Jones is still here and tell him the lab might have something.

Collins knocks on the door and opens it, revealing an empty, large, very plush corner office, featuring an imposing desk and deep pile CARPET.

COLLINS
Shit! Looks like he's already gone.

HANSEN
When do I get an office like this?

COLLINS
After me.

HANSEN
Would you look at the carpet. It must be two inches deep.

COLLINS
Had it decorated himself. Now stop drooling on it and let's get down to the lab.

INT THE FBI LABORATORY

Collins and Hansen walk past busy technicians at work with high tech equipment. They approach a glass office which they enter. Inside is doctor Sid LONDHEIM.

COLLINS
Sid, this is agent Hansen. He's on the case.

LONDHEIM
Pleased to meet you, agent Hansen.

HANSEN

Nice to meet you, doctor. What have you got?

LONDHEIM

We've analyzed the gas residue and isolated two of the three elements in the compound. But it's the third member of this gang of three that's the tricky one. This third element acts as an hallucinogenic, disorienting and immobilizing the victim, thus allowing the other elements to finish the job.

HANSEN

Your man at the scene was right then, when he said he didn't think it was your average, run of the mill nerve gas.

LONDHEIM

Absolutely. This is unique because the last element is organic.

COLLINS

Organic? Do you mean living?

LONDHEIM

Not as such, but it's an extract from something living. A plant or an animal, probably a plant. This is a state of the art gas.

HANSEN

Some art.

COLLINS

What now?

SID

Well, being the genius that I am, I've isolated the DNA of the little villain. I've also sent a copy of it over to the botany department at the Smithsonian, a professor Prior. His team are trying to identify the source of the DNA.

COLLINS

You'd better get over there. Sid, can you give me a summary of your findings, I'll try the Pentagon and see if they own up to knowing anything about this shit.

LONDHEIM

It's being typed now. Sorry I couldn't tell you more. Good luck with professor Prior. He's a good man and not at all your average flower collector.

INT THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE, BOTANY DEPARTMENT.

Hansen enters a large room totally dedicated to flora. As he examines a display of particularly impressive flowers he's approached by NORA, who is a pretty young woman rehearsing for old age with cardigan, plaid skirt and sensible shoes.

NORA

Beautiful aren't they.

HANSEN

Very, but I'm looking for one that's particularly breathtaking, so to speak. I'm agent Hansen, FBI. I'm here to see professor Prior.

NORA

Oh yes. I'm Nora, professor Prior's assistant. He told me he was expecting the FBI. He hasn't been growing pot again has he?

HANSEN

Not that I know of.

NORA

You'd better follow me, it's a bit of a maze.

Nora leads him to a large, open laboratory filled with earnest SCIENTISTS hard at work poring over microscopes and other scientific equipment. They enter another room, full of computers with TECHNICIANS busily attacking keyboards and eventually reach an office.

INT PRIOR'S OFFICE

PRIOR, a big man, around sixty, sits surrounded by open books and files, a computer terminal on his desk. A knock at the door and the Assistant and Hansen enter.

NORA

Professor Prior, this is the gentlemen from the FBI you've been expecting, agent Hansen.

PRIOR

Ah, thank you, Nora. Sit down agent Hansen. An interesting little problem you've set us.

HANSEN

Any progress?

PRIOR

There won't be progress as such. We either have the DNA to match yours on file in the databank or not.

HANSEN

If not?

PRIOR

Then I'm in for a long night as I gather this is rather important.

HANSEN

A matter of life or death, Professor.

PRIOR

A matter of finding the nearest genus, actually. We'll know within two hours if we have an exact match. If not, we trace the closest plant we can find, check the geographical area that it comes from, then start checking the samples we have in stock from that area. That in itself presents some kind of logistical nightmare as the samples are stored in the cellars below the building. It seems old fashioned I know, but a great deal of our stock hasn't been DNA tested yet.

HANSEN

I know I'm going to regret asking, but how many samples have you got in stock?

PRIOR

Over two million, but it's not as hopeless as you might think. They are all catalogued by family and location, so we cross reference one with the other and we should get close.

HANSEN

If you can find them.

PRIOR

We'll find them.

INT THE SMITHSONIAN, BOTANY DISPLAY ROOM

Hansen is perusing the display, wondering which flower it could possibly be when his cell phone rings. He answers it.

HANSEN
Agent Hansen.

MORGAN (V.O.)
It's Vicki Morgan. The nurse from the hospital.

HANSEN
Oh, hi. Has she remembered something?

MORGAN (V.O.)
No, but something's been playing on my mind. That smell she couldn't remember, I could smell it on her clothes when she came in.

HANSEN
I'm pretty close, why don't we meet for a coffee. I've got a couple of hours before they'll know anything here, and I haven't eaten since yesterday morning.

MORGAN (V.O.)
Where are you?

HANSEN
At the Smithsonian, in the botany department.

MORGAN (V.O.)
There's a small park down the block, why don't we meet there. Ten minutes okay?

HANSEN
See you there.

EXT THE PARK

Hansen and Morgan leave a kiosk with food and coffee.

MORGAN
What takes you to the Smithsonian?
Is it connected to the gassing?

HANSEN
Why do you say that?

MORGAN

What she said about the strange scent. Flowers and scent go together you know. It would be hard to describe if you had never smelled anything like it before. I had to undress her when she came in, I could smell it on her clothes.

HANSEN

Can you describe it?

MORGAN

When I was a kid we used to buy cheap perfume. We thought it made us grown up. One of the perfumes was called Lotus something or other. That was the smell on her clothes.

HANSEN

I'll get someone to track down a bottle. At least we'll have some idea what the gas smells like.

MORGAN

It wasn't the best, but it wasn't deadly. Say, how about dinner tonight? It sounds like you don't eat very well. I'll cook.

HANSEN

What time?

MORGAN

Eightish okay? Here's my address and phone number. If you can't make it, call me.

HANSEN

I'll try, believe me. You and a home cooked meal against a crusty old botany professor. It's a no contest.

INT THE LABORATORY

Hansen enters the laboratory and finds professor Prior peering over a technician's shoulder. They walk together.

PRIOR

The computer has found no exact match of the DNA, so we have to use the stored samples.

HANSEN

I hope your not going to use this opportunity to test all your samples at the Bureau's expense.

Prior stops and his tone changes. He is not someone to mess with, as Pete finds out.

PRIOR

Agent Hansen. I've spent my life hoping to find a plant of real benefit to mankind. I now have a chance to do it, not in the way I envisaged but, nevertheless, a chance to do something useful. So, if you have nothing useful to offer, why don't you just get the fuck out of here and leave me to it.

HANSEN

I'm sorry, frustration's getting the better of me. That was cheap. At least you're trying. The best I can come up with is a cheap perfume called Lotus.

PRIOR

Ah, the mysterious Lotus.

HANSEN

You know the perfume?

PRIOR

Not the perfume, the plant, Nelumbo nucifera. It has a mysterious and complex history. A lot of peoples and religions include the lotus in their mythology.

HANSEN

What sort of plant is it?

PRIOR

A water lily. In some legends it was said to be used by sorcerers and magicians for evil. Its secret poison was masked by its sweet scent. Usually it drove the victim mad, probably an hallucinogenic. The plant was probably a mutation as the most of Asian varieties are quite edible. A lot of people have searched for the poison variety over the centuries without success.

HANSEN

Sounds like our boy, shame it doesn't exist.

PRIOR

I didn't say it doesn't exist, I said, nobody had found it.

HANSEN
Or perhaps they have.

PRIOR
We've got to start somewhere, might
as well be water lilies, tropical
species, I think.

Prior introduces Hansen to ALAN MORROW, aged around 40, who
is looking at a computer screen.

PRIOR
Alan is our number one field
researcher now that I have to stay
here to run the place. I'd swap jobs
with him any day.

MORROW
I should be in China but we're having
visa problems.

PRIOR
Well you're not, so be a good boy
and make a start by testing tropical
water lily species, would you.

MORROW
Okay.

PRIOR
Got to keep these field people under
control. Alan's a bit of a wild one.

HANSEN
Do I detect a touch of envy,
Professor?

MORROW
They think I'm bad. He was a real
maverick. Some of the trouble he got
into is legendary.

PRIOR
Enough of that. You have work to do.

INT COLLINS' OFFICE

Collins puts down the phone as Hansen walks in.

COLLINS
That was Prior, he said it's
definitely a water lily genus,
probably a mutation. Even so,
they'll get a geographical location
of the broader species.

HANSEN
That was quick.

COLLINS
He said you helped.

HANSEN
You do what you can. What do we do
when we get a location?

COLLINS
You and a doctor Allan Morrow go
there.

HANSEN
Me! I don't know Jack shit about
flowers.

COLLINS
You don't have to, you look after
the man that does. Where the flowers
are there's a chance that our
perpetrators are.

HANSEN
I'm not traipsing around the jungle
playing nursemaid to a flower
collector. We must have people for
that.

COLLINS
We do, you. Go and get a bite to eat
and some rest, you're probably
going to need it. Throw your passport
and a few lightweight
clothes in a bag and keep it with
you.

HANSEN
Sean, I'm more use here, this is
where the attack took place.

COLLINS
There's nothing to indicate that
another attack will happen here, is
there? They could strike anywhere.
Anyway, I'm the boss and you're
going.

INT VICKI MORGAN'S APARTMENT

Morgan answers a knock at the front door. She opens the door
and admits Hansen. She's slightly awkward but happy.

MORGAN
Glad you could make it.

HANSEN

So am I.

MORGAN

Well, you're here now.

HANSEN

Here now and who knows where tomorrow. Some tropical jungle by the sounds of it.

MORGAN

The exotic life of an FBI agent. It makes my life look very dull.

He follows her into the kitchen. His cell phone rings.

HANSEN

Shit. Excuse me.

(into phone)

Hansen... already that was quick okay, will do, about fifteen minutes. Tell him I'll pick him up outside.

(finishes call)

I'm really sorry, Vicki.

MORGAN

Can't be helped. Your country needs you.

He dips a spoon into a pot she's stirring and tastes it.

HANSEN

Damn that's good. How about a rain check?

MORGAN

Call me.

Morgan shows Hansen out. Instinctively they kiss. They linger.

HANSEN

I will call you. The moment I get back from wherever the hell it is I'm going.

MORGAN

Just make sure you do.

EXT THE SMITHSONIAN - NIGHT

Allan Morrow is standing by the open door of the museum talking to a WOMAN who's face is obscured. He sees Hansen's car approach and waves as he pulls up. The woman half turns towards the car, covers her face, then turns back to Morrow, who looks

startled, then slumps to the ground. The woman makes off into the darkness of the Smithsonian interior.

Hansen jumps from the car, checks the body. He sees the patch of blood on his chest, then heads inside after the woman.

INT THE SMITHSONIAN

The inside of the building is dark, the only light coming from the exit signs and a few subdued lights. A silent bullet smacks into the wall near his head and he returns fire. He moves from display to display. In a corridor he finds a packing case on a trolley and crouches down with his back against it. The trolley rolls away, causing Hansen to overbalance and end up on his back like an upturned beetle.

HANSEN
(quietly)
Shit!

Hansen scrambles to his feet and again takes cover behind the packing case. He duck-walks down the corridor pushing the trolley in front of him. Silent bullets thud into the packing case. The corridor opens out into a display room. He enters the room behind his mobile shield but his progress is stopped by an obstacle. He gives the packing case a couple of tentative shoves followed by a larger one. The packing case moves and suddenly small round objects rain down around him. In the dimly lit room a SHRUNKEN HEAD from Papua New Guinea swings against his face. He has knocked over a display of the revolting objects. Suddenly he is illuminated by two flashlight beams operated by SECURITY GUARD #1 and SECURITY GUARD #2. The beams capture Hansen on the floor, surrounded by the grisly artefacts.

SECURITY GUARD #1
Freeze. Put the gun down real slow.

HANSEN
FBI, don't shoot. There's someone else here.

SECURITY GUARD #1
Just drop your weapon. We only heard one gun and that was yours.

The lights come on. Professor PRIOR is standing by the light switch holding an automatic pistol

PRIOR
Okay security, I know this man, he is FBI. Now what the hell is going on?

HANSEN
Alan Morrow is outside, dead. I chased the killer in here. Unfortunately I was interrupted by

the small army. She's still in the building.

PRIOR
Better call the police and an ambulance.

SECURITY GUARD #1
Yes sir, I'll get on it.
(pulls a sounding bleeper
from his belt)
Somebody's opened an emergency exit.

HANSEN
There goes our killer. One of you get outside and look after the body until the cops arrive.

The Security guards exit.

HANSEN
Someone doesn't want us to find this plant, and I guess we won't now, at least not until we find another field botanist.

PRIOR
There's only one other man for the job that I can think of.

HANSEN
Who is it?

PRIOR
Me.

HANSEN
No way, Professor, you're retired from field work. You're too old for this kind of shit. We don't know what we'll run into.

PRIOR
Not retired by choice. I work out three times a week and I could outwalk you any day. Oh, and I can still bench press 180.

HANSEN
It's too dangerous, Professor.

PRIOR
Bullshit. I've done research in some of the most dangerous and inhospitable places in the world. It's you who'll have to toughen up.

HANSEN

I think I can match it with a retired flower collector.

PRIOR

We'll see. I'll get my field kit from the office.

HANSEN

Where are we going, anyway?

PRIOR

Australia. The Northern Territory of Australia to be precise.

INT COLLINS' OFFICE

Collins is seated at his desk, in front of which are Hansen and Prior.

HANSEN

Aus-fucking-tralia. No way. I've got more chance of cracking this case if I'm here, not god knows how many thousand miles away on the other side of the planet. The place is huge, we got no chance of finding this weed. Send someone else.

COLLINS

Finished. Good. I've spoken to Jones, he says you're to accompany the Professor, so you accompany the Professor. I've also spoken to the Pentagon.

HANSEN

That's the way, bomb the fucking place.

COLLINS

They're arranging for you to join an Australian army unit called a coast patrol that's in the area you specified, Professor.

HANSEN

And how big is the area you specified, a million square miles? That should narrow it down.

Prior removes an old folder from his bag and throws it on the desk.

COLLINS

What's that?

PRIOR

Nora my assistant dug it up down in our archives. It's from an expedition to an area of the Northern Territory in 1934. It mentions a water lily that grows at an aboriginal sacred site.

(opens the file)

According to this, and I quote, "the flower is the guardian of the sacred place and those that trespass will perish at the jaws of what dwells below." A little local knowledge never hurts.

HANSEN

Jesus. I don't believe this.

EXT HELIPAD, AUSTRALIAN ARMY BASE, DARWIN - DAY

The pilot, BRODIE, is standing next to his multi colored 'Hughes 500' helicopter, which stands out amongst the larger, khaki colored army ones around it. He wears a tatty t-shirt emblazoned 'Brodie's heli-fishing tours'. Captain HAMPSHIRE is explaining to Hansen and professor Prior why the army uses this pilot.

HAMPSHIRE

We use Brodie here quite a lot. Because he's cheap, he knows his way around, and he's also lunatic enough to go where regular pilots won't.

HANSEN

Sound's ideal.

BRODIE

None of your regular army pilots could find this mob in a pink fit. I saw them yesterday at Burringee creek. They usually move on to Jiki Jiki billabong, depending on the fishing, sorry, I mean the threat of enemy invasion or whatever the hell they're supposed to look for. Anyway, I'm ready to go, so climb aboard, gents. I think we'll take the scenic route as you're overseas visitors.

Hampshire is suspicious.

EXT HELICOPTER IN FLIGHT - LATER

The helicopter is flying along steadily. The machine suddenly dives to one side. It flies through some magnificent outback

scenery, getting lower and lower. Eventually it is skimming the surface of a river that runs through a gorge.

INT HELICOPTER IN FLIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Captain Hampshire is in the passenger seat next to Brodie. Hansen and Prior are in the rear. All the passengers look nervous but the pilot is calm as he throws the machine about. In the distance a large red cliff is looming. He flies toward the cliff and it grows bigger. All the passengers stare as it fills the windscreen. At the last second Brodie pulls the helicopter into a vertical climb feet from the cliff. After clearing the top of the cliff the helicopter loses momentum and is standing on its tail. The machine falls backward and dives to one side, (a torque turn,) and flies straight and level above the top of the plateau, across acres of grass separated by an occasional fence.

HAMPSHIRE

Alright, you shithead, we know you can fly. Would you mind getting on with the job.

BRODIE

Won't be a minute. I've got to move Jim Patterson's cattle into the next paddock.

HANSEN

What are you going to do, squeeze them in the back with us?

HAMPSHIRE

He does in five minutes what it would take the farmers days to do. Just to get the men up here would take two days.

The helicopter swoops down toward a gate in a fence, hovers, slides a skid under the top bar of the gate and opens it. Then it flies off, quickly herds some of the cattle through the gate, closes it the same way as it opened it and departs.

HAMPSHIRE

This is the army's time you're in. Just remember it's me that okay's your bills.

BRODIE

I'll soon make the time up.

HANSEN

That won't be necessary.

BRODIE

I insist, mate.

The helicopter ducks and dives through gorges, over cliffs in an obvious attempt to unsettle the Americans.

HAMPSHIRE
(turning in his seat)
The coast patrol is a six man outfit.
Two full time soldiers, the rest are
volunteers, all aboriginal.

HANSEN
Aboriginal! We weren't told that.
What's their purpose?

HAMPSHIRE
They're on the lookout for illegal
immigrants, drug smugglers, animal
smugglers, that sort of thing.

HANSEN
Do they know why we're here?

HAMPSHIRE
They think you're here to study
survival techniques. They know that
professor Prior is a botanist and
they think you're his assistant. If
you think it better to tell them the
truth, please do.

HANSEN
The cover will do for now.

The pilot also turns around in his seat, further frightening his passengers as he flies at low level.

BRODIE
You can trust Steve Williams. You
won't fool him for long, he's as
sharp as a tack.

Brodie turns back to the controls.

HANSEN
Williams?

HAMPSHIRE
The patrol leader.

BRODIE
They should be just up ahead.

EXT RIVER BANK, THICK SCRUB - EVENING

Aboriginal soldiers in camouflage gear, silently putting together very technical tubular equipment, (fishing gear.) They look toward the river. A nod from the leader and they cast their lures simultaneously. One of the soldiers hooks

up, a twenty five pound barramundi jumps and shakes its mirror silver body. The others cheer. They look up at the sound of the approaching helicopter.

EXT A FLAT LANDING SITE NEAR THE SOLDIER'S CAMP

The helicopter lands. Sergeant STEVE WILLIAMS and his second in command, RALPH approach the aircraft. Ralph goes to Brodie's door, whilst Williams greets Hampshire, Prior and Hansen. Ralph walks to the luggage compartment of the chopper with Brodie. Two more soldiers, JASON and TOBY join them to unload the two Americans' equipment and some supplies of their own. A case of beer wedged between two bags of ice and several bottles of wine.

WILLIAMS
G'day sir, good trip?

HAMPSHIRE
Usual shit. This is professor Prior and his assistant, Pete Hansen. Sergeant Steve Williams.

PRIOR
Pleased to meet you Sergeant.

HANSEN
Sergeant.

WILLIAMS
You staying for dinner, sir. We just caught a nice barra. Toby's making a clam and mushroom sauce.

HAMPSHIRE
I'd love to Sergeant but I'd rather fly back while there's still some light.

HANSEN
I don't blame you, he's bad enough in daylight. God knows what he's like in the dark.

WILLIAMS
Got everything, Ralph?

RALPH
Three reds, three whites and a case of coldies, but the dickhead got Semillon instead of Chardonnay.

BRODIE
Sorry guy's, they didn't have the one you wanted.

WILLIAMS

We'll make do. You better get going if your going to make it back before dark.

HAMPSHIRE

I'll leave these two in your hands then, Sergeant. And of course, I'll forget I saw the grog.

HANSEN

Grog?

PRIOR

The hootch.

WILLIAMS

Thanks, Cap. We'll look after these blokes, no worries.

Hampshire climbs aboard and the men watch as the helicopter lifts off. Hampshire gives them a resigned roll of the eyes as the chopper roars nose down at low level along the creek.

EXT THE CAMP SITE - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

The soldiers are busy around the camp, Ralph is handing out beers, Prior and Hansen are standing with Williams. Ralph approaches.

RALPH

You blokes want a beer?

WILLIAMS

Are the Kennedy's gun shy? Thanks. Ralph. This is professor Prior and Pete Hansen. Ralph's my number two.

RALPH

Makes me sound like shit. Have a beer.

HANSEN

Thanks. I need one after the flight in.

PRIOR

I'd love one. Thanks.

RALPH

Toby says grub's up in ten minutes.

Ralph moves off toward the others, who are moving about the campsite in a casual but organized fashion. Williams, Hansen and Prior move to the nearby riverbank as the sun sets. They sit on a log overlooking the river.

HANSEN

When he says grub's up, does he mean grubs, like insect grubs?

WILLIAMS

No, but I'll get you some tomorrow if you want. Do you want them cooked or eau natural?

HANSEN

I don't think I want them at all.

PRIOR

We're here to study survival techniques, we must sample these things, Peter.

WILLIAMS

Not the kind of attitude I expected. I thought you'd be keen to try anything. When you're in the bush for a couple of weeks, you're limited to what you can carry, so you have to live off the land.

HANSEN

It seems to me you could have air lifted in some food, you managed the drink.

WILLIAMS

We only use the chopper in an emergency, and what else do you call running out of this, (beer).

PRIOR

I like your logic, Sergeant.

WILLIAMS

This is my home Prof. I know what I can do, and what I can't. I can teach you to survive in the bush, no probs, but you'll hate it. If I teach you how to survive and at the same time enjoy it.... The food we're about to eat was all gathered locally. You'll see what I mean.

PRIOR

I'm keen to try your bush cuisine. I'm sure my assistant will come around.

WILLIAMS

Come on, let's go.

HANSEN

I'm not looking forward to this meal.

WILLIAMS

No, but he's looking forward to his.

Williams points to a large saltwater crocodile that's heading towards them in a very sinister manner.

HANSEN

Shit!

EXT THE CAMP SITE - NIGHT

The men hurry toward the camp, Williams with a wry grin. Hansen and Prior sit and have a plate of food handed to them by SID then a glass of wine by JIMMY, Williams sits next to them and the others join them. The meal looks to be top restaurant standard. They tuck in.

PRIOR

This is superb.

TOBY

The fish is barramundi, the sauce is clams and a few mushrooms the fellas found, plus a few secret ingredients that I will reluctantly divulge.

HANSEN

This is bullshit.

WILLIAMS

Toby's a chef at a top Melbourne restaurant when he's not up here. Have you labelled samples of the ingredients for the Prof?

TOBY

Sure have.

JIMMY

More wine, gents? It's Semillon. We usually have Chardonnay with barramundi, but the Semillon's not bad.

PRIOR

I suppose you're a wine waiter when your not doing this.

JIMMY

No, a schoolteacher.

WILLIAMS

Jimmy does this during school holidays. Sid's a copper. He's full time with us now, courtesy of the Northern Territory police force.

He's handy to have if we catch any smugglers. He reads them their rights, not that it's worth a rat's ass out here. Jason came here courtesy of the Northern Territory police force as well, but it wasn't by choice. It was this or five years in the pokey.

HANSEN

What makes the rest of you do this shit?

WILLIAMS

Captain Hampshire is a good bloke to work for. He allows us a fair bit of leeway.

RALPH

As long as we get results he lets us do our own thing. A bit of fishing and hunting, that sort of thing, and we get paid.

HANSEN

Not bad if you like this kind of life I suppose.

WILLIAMS

It's not all beer and skittles, as you'll find out when we move out at four tomorrow morning. Is there anything you're particularly interested in Prof?

PRIOR

Are we going near any bodies of fresh water?

WILLIAMS

We're on our way to a coastal mangrove system. A boat's been spotted anchored up there. It's probably animal smugglers. We pass a couple of billabongs on the way.

HANSEN

What's a billabong ?

PRIOR

A watering hole I believe.

RALPH

Spot on, Prof. Let's have your plates.

They hand over their plates and the soldiers go about clearing up. Hansen and Prior stroll away from the camp toward the river. They converse in hushed tones.

PRIOR
Do you think we should tell Williams exactly what's going on?

HANSEN
Are we going in the right general direction?

PRIOR
As far as I can tell, yes.

HANSEN
Then I think we might just go with the flow.

PRIOR
Remember, whoever is behind this has already murdered a lot of people and, more to the point, specifically targeted poor Alan because he was coming here. We don't know what we might be leading these men into.

HANSEN
As far as I'm concerned, the whole exercise is a waste of time. I'll decide tomorrow how much to tell sergeant Williams.

EXT A HILL TOP - MORNING

Sunrise. The men are cresting a ridge. The view is breathtaking.

WILLIAMS
Let's take a break.

JASON
You better drink some water, Mr Hansen, you'll need all the fluid you can get. It'll get real hot soon.

HANSEN
Like it's not already. And call me Pete, will you?

PRIOR
Where's that smoke coming from?

WILLIAMS
Lugga-Lugga settlement. That's where we were heading. Lionel Burringji saw a boat anchored in the creek. Reckoned it looked a bit suss. He

told his sister, she told her husband's cousin, he told his boss, Jim Patterson, who mentioned it to Brodie and he told me.

HANSEN

Probably a couple of guys fishing a week ago.

WILLIAMS

We got nothing special on, except teaching you two how to stay alive up here. I'm beginning to wonder whether it's worth it.

HANSEN

I'm only saying, the information is third or fourth hand, how do you know it's reliable?

WILLIAMS

We don't. That's why we were going there, to check it out.

TOBY

That and a certain school teacher at the settlement has just got back from the big smoke and our illustrious leader would like to drop in to say, welcome back.

SID

You hoping for a present, Steve?

WILLIAMS

Piss off, you blokes. We're going there to speak to Lionel about the boat. If Tessa's back from Sydney I'll say hello and that's it.

HANSEN

Seems a long way to go for a wild goose chase.

WILLIAMS

You got somewhere you'd rather be? You sure have got a lot to say for a flower collector's offsider. Now let's get moving, if that's alright with you?

EXT TROPICAL BUSH

The men travelling through some pretty typical top end country. Prior and Hansen are walking side by side.

PRIOR

You might as well tell him why we're here. You're not a very convincing botanist.

HANSEN

I'll let the him talk to the guy, and decide then.

PRIOR

At least we're getting near the area mentioned in the old report.

HANSEN

If the guy sends Williams off on a tangent away from our target area, I'll have to tell him the reason we're here.

PRIOR

Looks like we're stopping.

HANSEN

About time, it must be a hundred and twenty degrees. My fucking feet are on fire. He's trying to kill me.

PRIOR

Personally I find it an invigorating stroll through some magnificent scenery, full of exotic and interesting specimens.

HANSEN

Spare me.

EXT A BEAUTIFUL BILLABONG.

The billabong has an abundance of water lilies. The patrol take off their packs. Hansen and Prior look out at the lilies.

WILLIAMS

Last one in makes the fire.

The men hurriedly strip and dive into the water, leaving Prior and Hansen standing on the bank. The two men look somewhat suspicious of what might lurk in the cool clear water. Prior shrugs and starts to strip.

PRIOR

Come on.

HANSEN

No way. What about crocodiles?

WILLIAMS

Sweet mate. Only little fellas here,
it's fresh water. It's the salties
you have to worry about.

Prior dives in.

PRIOR

Lord, that's good. Come on Peter,
it's wonderful.

HANSEN

Shit.

Hansen strips and dives in. The men are floating diving and laughing. Hansen and Prior are treading water side by side a little away from the others. Hansen is eying the lilies.

HANSEN

Any chance that this is the lily were
looking for?

PRIOR

I'm pretty sure this is the genus
from which our mutation comes. We're
definitely in the right
geographical zone. But finding the
exact location is not going to be
easy unless we get some local help.

HANSEN

Well, there's only one person to ask.

Both men look at a frolicking Williams. He climbs from the pool and Hansen joins him on the bank. They sit watching the others hunt for turtles.

WILLIAMS

I'm going to head into the settlement
and speak to the bloke who reckons
he saw the boat. It's not far. I won't
be long.

HANSEN

I'll come with you. Just for the
exercise you understand.

WILLIAMS

Good idea. It'll give us a chance
to have a little chat.

WILLIAMS

Righto, you blokes. I'm going into
town and I'm taking Pete along as
a chaperone. Dig up a bit of tucker
so we can eat when we get back.
Toby take the Prof under your wing,
show him a few edible plants,

preferably ones that go with turtle.
Clean the weapons, we might need them
if this checks out.

EXT LUGGA-LUGGA SETTLEMENT

Williams and Hansen approach the aboriginal settlement, which consists of a group of shacks and shelters, a main red dirt street and a whitewashed building which is the mission schoolhouse. Williams stops and looks down at the red, dusty soil in front of him.

WILLIAMS
At least Lionel's here.

HANSEN
Where?

WILLIAMS
(pointing to the ground)
His tracks, and they're fresh.

HANSEN
Where?

WILLIAMS
There.

HANSEN
I can't see any.

WILLIAMS
That's a bloody surprise, thought
you'd pick em straight away. Believe
me, he's here. I'll show you to the
school. You can talk to Tessa while
I find this bloke and ask him a few
questions.

EXT SCHOOLHOUSE VERANDAH

Williams and Hansen walk up to the open schoolroom door and peer in. TESSA, a beautiful slim, redheaded American schoolteacher is teaching a class of aboriginal children. She notices the men and looks over.

TESSA
Hi, Steve.

Tessa joins Williams and Hansen on the verandah

WILLIAMS
G'day Tessa. How was Sydney?

TESSA

Great, for a few weeks that is. I missed the kids though.

WILLIAMS

I expect they missed you. Tessa, this is Pete Hansen. He's here to study our survival techniques.

TESSA

Nice to meet you.

HANSEN

Pleased to meet you, Tessa.

WILLIAMS

Can I leave Pete here with you while I go and have a word with Lionel Burrinji. Reckons he's seen a suspicious boat moored up in the mangroves.

TESSA

Sounds like he's been on the grog again. Do you know where he is?

WILLIAMS

I'll find him.

TESSA

Yes, I suppose you will.

Williams leaves.

HANSEN

He told me he saw the guy's footprints when we came into town.

TESSA

If he said he saw them, he did.

HANSEN

But it was just a piece of trampled dirt.

TESSA

To you it was.

HANSEN

Sounds like bullshit to me.

TESSA

I was sceptical when I first heard of his tracking ability. He's a bit of a legend around these parts. One day a helicopter put down in the school yard and a mad guy called Brodie storms in.

HANSEN

We've met.

TESSA

He says he needs Steve, real urgent. A farmer's daughter was out riding. The horse came back but she didn't. They'd looked all day, Police, people from nearby towns, helicopter musterers, you name it. Anyway, Brodie decides there's only one thing for it, find Steve and he'll find the girl. Sure enough, five minutes later in walks Steve.

HANSEN

Coincidence?

TESSA

I thought so, until he said to Brodie, "you looking for me?" Brodie told him the story, by then it was dark. They stayed until an hour before dawn, then Brodie fired up that death trap of his and we flew over to the farm.

HANSEN

You went too?

TESSA

Up here, when someone's in trouble, everyone pitches in to help. When we get there, the farmer's in a pretty bad way. He goes off at Brodie about wasting valuable time. Steve says nothing and walks over to the stable. He asks which was the girl's horse and looks at its hooves, climbs on the nearest horse and goes around the perimeter of the stock yard. He must have found the tracks because he headed off. An hour and forty minutes later he radioed in that he'd found her alive but hurt. Brodie picked her up. Brodie said they wouldn't have found her for months where she was. She'd crawled under some leaves in a gully to keep warm overnight and gone into a coma.

HANSEN

A legend is born.

TESSA

You certainly chose the best when you chose Steve. There's not many as good as him when it comes to surviving in the outback.

HANSEN

You're not joking. The meal Toby cooked last night was magnificent.

TESSA

Toby's with you, is he? God he's good isn't he. I'm envious.

HANSEN

It's not really bush survival when you drag a five star chef around with you. What made you come up here, anyway? You're a long way from home.

TESSA

I was born In L.A. Did all the conventional things. I went to college, then travelled the world for three years. I came down through Asia and ended up in Aussie. I started to travel around and came to the Northern Territory, saw an ad for a teaching job at the mission school and here I am. Here comes Steve.

Williams joins Tessa and Hansen on the verandah

HANSEN

Any luck?

WILLIAMS

Yeah, no prob finding him. He still reckons there's a boat moored up in the mangroves. I know the spot. I can't think of any logical reason for it to be there unless it's either in trouble or up to no good.

HANSEN

You going to take a look?

WILLIAMS

That's what I'm paid for.

TESSA

You be careful, I don't want you damaging my countryman.

HANSEN

I'll survive.

TESSA

There's a lot of things out there that can kill you. Even Steve doesn't know them all.

WILLIAMS

Come on, let's get moving. We'll drop in on the way back as we might have a few extra heads with us. If Brodie drops in, tell him what we're up to will you, Tess.

TESSA

Will do.

The men walk off. Tessa watches their receding backs, then goes inside.

EXT THE BUSH

Williams and Hansen walking back to join the others.

WILLIAMS

She's a you beaut Sheila, eh.

HANSEN

What?

WILLIAMS

A glam.

HANSEN

A what?

WILLIAMS

Christ! She's a spunk.

HANSEN

Ah, you mean she's beautiful.

WILLIAMS

There's no flies on you, is there.

Williams drops back a little so he can see Hansen's back, which is covered with flies. A small smile crosses his face. He catches up to Hansen.

WILLIAMS

You going to tell me why you're here, because you ain't a botanist's backside, that's for sure. The Prof must have taken in every plant we've passed. You, you haven't taken the slightest interest in any of it.

HANSEN

That bad, huh?

WILLIAMS

Woeful.

HANSEN

Okay. You know the Prof asked you if we're going near any bodies of Fresh water in this area?

WILLIAMS

Yeah.

HANSEN

We're looking for a specific water dwelling species of plant that a computer and a report from the thirties has told us lives in this geographical region.

WILLIAMS

Why the big interest in this particular plant?

HANSEN

I don't think you need to know that. I just want you to find it.

WILLIAMS

You see that dot up there? Well that helicopter has been pissing about over there for a while. I don't know where it comes from, or where it goes, which up here is unusual. Chopper pilots help us if they can, because they know if they crash, we'll find them. Not that little black duck.

HANSEN

Are you going to investigate?

WILLIAMS

Why?

HANSEN

Because it's your job.

WILLIAMS

My job on this particular patrol is to teach two seppos the rudiments of bush survival Aussie style which, by the way, I can do equally well on any route I choose to my destination, which is the boat.

HANSEN

That direction.

(pointing in the
direction of the
helicopter)

Can you get to the boat that way?

WILLIAMS

Yep.

HANSEN

Is that the route you're going to take?

WILLIAMS

Nope.

HANSEN

Why the fuck not?

WILLIAMS

It's longer, and you haven't given me a good reason why I should take a longer route.

HANSEN

Listen to me, Sergeant. It could be vital.

WILLIAMS

It could be vital to you. Personally I don't give a flying fuck. Now I'm going back to camp for something to eat. If you decide to tell me what's going on, then I'll reconsider our route.

Williams walks off, Hansen stares at his retreating back.

HANSEN

Me and the Professor could head for it ourselves.

Peels of laughter from Williams as he walks away. Hansen looks about him at the inhospitable terrain with apprehension and heads off in pursuit.

EXT THE CAMP

The team plus Prior and Hansen eating.

PRIOR

Another superb meal, Toby. Many thanks.

TOBY

No probs, Prof.

HANSEN

Yeah, thanks Toby, real nice. You're very highly regarded at a certain schoolhouse not too far from here, you know.

TOBY

She mentioned me, did she.

WILLIAMS

You shouldn't tell him that. He thinks he's in with a chance.

TOBY

The same chance as you. The way to a woman's heart is through her stomach. Just leave me alone with her and a couple of juicy kangaroo steaks plus a few secret ingredients and she'll be all mine.

Hansen signals to Prior with a nod of his head to move away from the group.

HANSEN

I'm going to have to tell him why we're here. He's got me by the balls.

PRIOR

Could be for the best.

HANSEN

There's something going on in that direction. He can go that way but he won't until I tell him exactly why we're here.

PRIOR

Ralph was saying there's a lot of sacred land in that direction. Do you think that's why he doesn't want to go that way?

HANSEN

Could be. Let's find out.

Hansen signals to Williams to join them.

WILLIAMS

Got something to tell me?

HANSEN

The Prof will tell you.

WILLIAMS

Okay Prof, let's have it.

PRIOR

Back home we recently experienced a particularly vicious attack on a subway train. It involved a form of nerve gas, in which is a component

thought to come from a plant from this area of the world. It's a type of water lily, probably a mutation.

WILLIAMS

(To Hansen)

And you're part in this?

HANSEN

I work for the government. Have you heard of the FBI?

WILLIAMS

I might be an Aussie aborigine, but even we've heard of you wankers. Why didn't you just tell me this shit up front? What do you intend to do with it if you find it, this lily?

PRIOR

Take some samples.

HANSEN

Hopefully, if we can find it and get the samples back to the States, the lab people can come up with some sort of antidote.

WILLIAMS

Can't see that will do you much good unless you know where they'll strike next.

HANSEN

We've got no other leads. This is it.

WILLIAMS

So if you were to catch whoever it is in the act of collecting this stuff, it might help, correct?

HANSEN

Sure.

WILLIAMS

Right let's get this show on the road. Get your gear, we move out in ten minutes.

Williams prepares his troops to move out. He signals to Ralph to join him.

RALPH

What's the go?

WILLIAMS

Jinjutani.

RALPH

The boy's aren't going to be too keen on that. You know the stories.

WILLIAMS

You know I wouldn't ask them to go there if it wasn't important.

RALPH

I'll tell them. Is it something to do with the chopper that's been hanging around there?

WILLIAMS

Could well be.

RALPH

It's something bad if it has anything to do with that place.

EXT THE BUSH

Williams is walking with Prior and Hansen. Ralph is in the lead. The rest of the team bring up the rear.

WILLIAMS

Where we're heading is sacred land.

PRIOR

We'll respect your wishes concerning the land.

WILLIAMS

It's not that, although I appreciate the gesture, but like a lot of things in folklore, it's there for a reason. In this case, to keep people away.

HANSEN

Why?

WILLIAMS

It's a bad place. I'll explain more when we get there. But believe me, it's pure evil.

HANSEN

When will that be?

WILLIAMS

A couple more hours. We'll stop for a break this side of the billabong where we've got good cover in case that chopper is still about, although I haven't seen it for a while now.

EXT A POOL AT THE BASE OF A SMALL WATERFALL.

Williams, Hansen, Prior and Ralph are drinking water, Toby and Jimmy are tidying up. Jason and Sid are on watch.

WILLIAMS
Lookouts in position?

RALPH
Yep.

WILLIAMS
From now on in, this is a full on
military operation. No...

The SOUND of automatic weapons and ricocheting bullets. The men grab their weapons and take cover. Hansen pulls out a 9 mil automatic.

RALPH
It's coming from Jason's direction.

WILLIAMS
Everybody stay down. Come on Ralph.

EXT JASON'S POSITION.

Williams and Ralph crawl toward Jason's sentry post. They find Jason cowering behind a log, obviously shaken.

RALPH
You alright, Jace?

JASON
Yeah.

WILLIAMS
Did you see where it's coming from?

JASON
Did I fuck. As soon as those bullets
started coming I got my head down.

WILLIAMS
Righto, we better try and find out
where they are and how many?

JASON
Why don't we just fuck off?

RALPH
Because that's not why we're here.

JASON
I'm not here to get shot.

WILLIAMS
I reckon they're just trying to scare
us.

RALPH
Why couldn't they just jump out from
behind a tree and say boo.

Hansen crawls up beside them.

HANSEN
Sit rep?

WILLIAMS
Sit rep. Tell him Jace.

JASON
We got a bunch of pricks out there
somewhere trying to shoot the shit
out of us.

HANSEN
What are you going to do?

WILLIAMS
In a few moments I'm going to stick
my head up and have a squiz, Then,
if no one shoots it off, I'll know
I'm right in assuming that this was
just to scare us and give the rest
of them time to get away from the
billabong.

Williams lifts his head, then stands. There is no gunfire.
They all rise somewhat tentatively.

HANSEN
Where have they gone?

WILLIAMS
See that ridge? They've gone over
that to wait for the chopper.

HANSEN
How do you know that?

WILLIAMS
Because they positioned themselves
ready to get out, not to finish us
off.

A helicopter rises briefly over the ridge, banks away and
disappears. Prior, Sid, Toby and Jimmy join the others in time
to watch the helicopter disappear.

RALPH
What do you reckon, Steve?

WILLIAMS

We've got two choices. One we go to the billabong and pick up some samples, or two we head straight for the creek and assume the mystery boat is involved. That way we get a chance of catching the bastards. I take it very personal when people shoot at my men.

JASON

Why don't we just bugger off and get some help?

RALPH

Some sort of tough guy on the street you must have been. Aren't you pissed off at being shot at?

JASON

They tried to kill me. These bastards mean business.

HANSEN

Jason, there's a lot more at stake than you realize. These people have committed a terrible crime in my country and intend to do it again. If they do, a lot of innocent people will die.

JASON

It's your problem, you fix it. I don't see why we should risk our lives to save a load of yanks.

SID

Listen to me, you prick. You were offered a choice by the judge, this or jail. You chose this because you thought it was the soft option, well bad choice. You're with us, you let us down and I'll decide whether you get back to face jail or not, get me?

WILLIAMS

This is the way it is. Pete, your only real chance is to catch one of these dickheads, right?

HANSEN

Realistically, yeah.

WILLIAMS

You all know we're coming up to the billabong. I know how you feel about

the place. None of us want to go there, but these men must be taking what lives there.

JIMMY

They're welcome to it.

RALPH

It's what their using it for. We can't allow that to happen. Jinjutani has killed the innocent and unwary for thousands of years at the billabong where it lives. We can't let it be used against innocent people elsewhere in the world.

WILLIAMS

Ralph's right. We have a duty, not to the Army but to our people. We've protected them from it through myth and folklore, through tales of the evil which lives there. The people who may die unless we act, have no such protection.

SID

Let's do it.

WILLIAMS

Prof, if it gets a bit hairy when we get there, I want you to stay well back.

PRIOR

Very thoughtful, Sergeant.

WILLIAMS

Just logical. You're the botanist. If we balls it up at the creek, you're our only hope. Let's go.

EXT THE BUSH

The men on the march through the bush. There is a military attitude about them.

WILLIAMS

We'll cut off the corner and try to intercept the trail between the billabong and the creek. That should save us a lot of time.

RALPH

What if they made all the transfers by chopper?

WILLIAMS

I can't think of anywhere to land near the yacht. I reckon the chopper's just for surveillance and emergencies.

The men cross the trail. Ralph and Williams are looking at the ground, Hansen looks on, perplexed.

RALPH

You were right. They definitely transported it by land.

WILLIAMS

Jimmy, go up the track and keep a lookout. Sid, you go back toward the billabong and keep a lookout there. We'll try and figure out how many we're dealing with. Pete, you just sit down.

Hansen sits with Prior.

PRIOR

The thrill of the chase.

The air is split by an explosion, Hansen throws himself on top of Prior.

HANSEN

Jesus!

PRIOR

Get off of me, you oaf.

WILLIAMS

Jimmy! Everyone stay down. Jason, stay with these two. Safeties off.

EXT FURTHER ALONG THE TRACK.

Williams, Ralph and Toby reach the body of Jimmy, who is shredded. They assume a kneeling position around the body, facing out. Toby examines the body.

TOBY

He's dead.

WILLIAMS

Claymore mine. He hit a tripwire. Shit, I should have warned him.

RALPH

You couldn't know they'd have Claymores. That's full on military shit.

WILLIAMS

I know now. Toby go back and tell Sid the score, tell him to be careful, we'll take care of Jimmy's body. These bastards are going to pay for this. Ralph, get Jason up here. If he needed some motivation, this should do it. Jimmy was about as close to a father as he's ever had. Now Jimmy's gone, he's got no one again.

RALPH

We going to bury him here?

WILLIAMS

We've got no choice. It's only temporary. When we've taken care of these bastards, we'll take him home.

Jason, Hansen and Prior join the men standing over the body.

WILLIAMS

I'm sorry, Jace, I know how close you two were. Now you know why these men have got to be stopped.

JASON

I know I didn't ask these people to come here, the same as I didn't ask him, (Hansen,) or the Prof to come here. You know he was teaching me to read, don't you, he even arranged for me to finish school. Now he's gone.

Jason glares at Hansen.

WILLIAMS

Are you going to help us get the men who did this?

JASON

Jimmy never hurt a soul in his life. He always trusted you, Steve. What do we do next?

WILLIAMS

Were burying him here, just for a while, until we get these pricks. Do you want to give Ralph a hand.

RALPH

Come on, Jace.

JASON

Do you think we'll get them, Steve?

WILLIAMS
Or fucking die trying.

Ralph and Jason leave to dig the grave.

WILLIAMS
Right, mister FBI, you better tell me a bit more about this bunch, like where they get toys like automatic weapons, claymores and a fucking helicopter.

HANSEN
They seem to be racially motivated.

WILLIAMS
That's just what a black fellah wants to hear.

HANSEN
All the people that died in the attack were black. It was target specific. But that didn't stop them killing the white botanist who was supposed to come here. As for the hardware, we didn't know.

WILLIAMS
We know now and we'll have to be careful. Very careful.

Williams indicates the surroundings.

WILLIAMS
But we have all this on our side. This is our world.

HANSEN
Can't we call in some help?

WILLIAMS
We don't carry a radio.

HANSEN
Why the hell not?

WILLIAMS
All these hills you've been hiking over are solid iron ore. Can't get through with a lightweight set, the bigger satellite sets are too heavy and restrict our mobility.

HANSEN
I bet you wish you had one now?

WILLIAMS
I'll tell you that in a few hours
when we reach the boat.

EXT THE BUSH. FURTHER ALONG THE TRACK.

Williams is addressing Hansen, Prior and his team. The men are down on one knee in a semi circle at the edge of the track.

WILLIAMS
Around the bend is the ideal ambush
spot. It's the last chance they've
got before we reach the creek.

HANSEN
Can we go around it?

WILLIAMS
Some of us are, but you're not,
you're going through it.

HANSEN
What the hell for?

WILLIAMS
Because if they're hidden, they're
only going to stick their nasty
little heads up when they hear voices
and a Claymore going off.

HANSEN
But if I trip the wire, don't I get
blown to pieces?

JASON
Who cares.

RALPH
Shut it, Jace.

WILLIAMS
I'm going to crawl down the track
and attach this piece of fishing line
to the tripwire.

PRIOR
If they see you....

RALPH
They won't see him, Prof.

WILLIAMS
I figure they'll be up in the rocks
on the left and in the trees on the
right. Let's get into costume.

EXT UNDERGROWTH

Williams is crawling through the undergrowth, covered in grass and virtually invisible. He comes to the tripwire, connects a piece of monofilament fishing line and works his way back, feeding out the line. He stops, reaches out onto the track and lays a branch across it. He ties the fishing line to it, hesitates and then scratches a large arrow in the dirt on the path in front of it.

WILLIAMS
(whispered)
Just for the dummy.

He carries on back to the others, eventually coming out of the bush behind the group.

WILLIAMS
Righto.

Everyone except Prior swivels around, apparently having not heard him arrive. Prior has a slight smile on his face.

WILLIAMS
Surprised you didn't hear me, Ralph?

RALPH
I did, but I didn't want to spoil your fun.

WILLIAMS
Pete, I've put a branch across the track. I've marked it with an arrow on the ground so you can't miss it. Walk slowly to that point. When you reach it give it a yank. That will set off the mines, one on either side of the track. When they detonate get off the track and keep down. And make plenty of noise as you approach, so they'll know it's a person that's tripped the wire.

HANSEN
Are you sure the string's long enough?

WILLIAMS
Pretty sure.

HANSEN
Great.

WILLIAMS
Ralph, you take Toby up to the left. You should be able to get above them. Once they stick their heads up to

start pouring some fire into where the Claymore detonated, kill the bastards.

WILLIAMS

I'll take Sid. They'll probably be harder to find in the trees. Jace, you go with Pete and the Prof. It's up to you to look after them if anything goes wrong.

JASON

I'm not a nursemaid,

WILLIAMS

Just do it. Your chance to avenge Jimmy will come. Take Jimmy's gun Prof. Have you used an automatic weapon before.

PRIOR

Yes.

WILLIAMS

Jesus what sort of place is America? Even flower collectors know how to use guns. Give us ten minutes to get into position, then start walking. Let's do it.

EXT THE TRACK.

Hansen, Prior and Jason standing on the track. Hansen checks his watch.

HANSEN

I'm not keen on being the meat in this sandwich.

JASON

If Steve says it's safe, I believe him.

HANSEN

You want to pull the string? Be my guest.

JASON

It's not my people we're here to save.

PRIOR

Just pull the fucking thing, or I'll do it myself.

EXT TOP OF A ROCKY OUTCROP.

Ralph and Toby are looking over the edge of their position at the enemy below. Two men with automatic weapons lying prone and looking down toward the track. AMBUSH #1 is white, AMBUSH #2 is black. Ralph readies a grenade.

EXT HEAVY UNDERGROWTH.

Williams is crawling into position next to Sid among the trees after having been forward to locate the enemy.

WILLIAMS

If they hadn't been talking I wouldn't have spotted them. They must think their dealing with amateurs, not semi professionals.

SID

Will we get a shot from here?

WILLIAMS

They have to stick their heads up to have a shot from where they are.

SID

So do we. I hope there's no one behind us.

Both men turn to look back.

EXT THE TRACK

Hansen, Prior and Jason walking along the track and talking loudly.

PRIOR

Come on, men, move it.

HANSEN

Not far now.

EXT THE ENEMY POSITION IN THE ROCK OUTCROP

Ambush #1 and Ambush #2 hear the muffled voices of the men coming and look at each other expectantly. They flick off their safety catches.

EXT THE TRACK.

Hansen, Prior and Jason approach the stick on the track. Hansen looks at it apprehensively. He picks it up gingerly and indicates that the others get off the track. Prior and Jason take cover.

Hansen grits his teeth and heaves on the fishing line as he dives off the track. An explosion rips through the foliage further along the track.

EXT THE ENEMY POSITION IN THE ROCKY OUTCROP.

Ambush #1 and Ambush #2 rise and start pouring automatic fire into the area of the explosion.

EXT TOP OF A ROCKY OUTCROP.

Ralph looks at Toby, pulls the pin from a grenade and drops it on the men below. Both men cower as they await the explosion. A much larger explosion than expected comes from the enemy position, showering Ralph and Toby with debris.

RALPH
Strewth.

EXT THE ENEMY POSITION COVERED BY WILLIAMS.

AMBUSH #3 and AMBUSH #4 rise and start firing, offering a full view of their upper bodies. Williams and Sid each fire twice. The two enemy drop down dead.

EXT THE TRACK.

Hansen, Prior and Jason emerge from the bush and start walking toward the smoke at the scene of the explosion. As they approach the smoke, through it comes AMBUSH #5, an AK47 cradled across his chest, obviously unaware of his colleagues demise in the confusion. Hansen drops to one knee, raises his Pistol and takes a bead on the man.

HANSEN
FBI, drop your weapon.

The man looks at them stunned, suddenly Jason races by, knocking Pete over, firing and screaming, hitting the man numerous times. He carries on firing at the man when he is sanding over the body until his magazine is empty

HANSEN
Shit. We could have taken him alive.

JASON
No fucking way.

HANSEN
Do you realize...

PRIOR
Leave it, Pete.

Williams, Ralph and Toby join them at the body on the track.

WILLIAMS

I don't know where he was hiding.
But he certainly isn't going to cause
any trouble now, that's for sure.

HANSEN

I could have taken him alive.

WILLIAMS

Don't worry about it. Looking at the
tracks there's plenty more where
we're heading. You got it out of
your system now, Jace?

JASON

Yeah. I'm sorry, Steve, sorry Mr
Hansen.

HANSEN

It's okay Jason. Where's Sid?

WILLIAMS

He's checking the bodies for
anything useful. What about yours
Ralph?

RALPH

They ain't got anything useful now.
They must have had another couple
of Claymores that detonated when I
lobbed in the grenade.

Sid arrives.

WILLIAMS

Anything?

SID

No ID. A map, but no papers or radio.

SID

They had a mixture of weapons, yank
and soviet. They've been kind
enough to donate a pair of Claymores
to our humble arsenal.

HANSEN

Considering they're supposed to be
pro-American white supremacists
they're not too choosy who they get
their weapons from.

RALPH

White supremacists, my ass. One of
the guys we took out was black.

WILLIAMS

Interesting. Let's check the map.

Williams takes the map from Sid and consults it with Hansen and Ralph. We cut between the men and the map.

WILLIAMS

That's the billabong, that must be the boat. We're here.

RALPH

What's that written where the boat is?

WILLIAMS

Either it's the worst handwriting I've ever seen or it's a foreign language.

HANSEN

It's Cyrillic.

RALPH

What the fuck's that?

Prior approaches the group.

PRIOR

Russian?

WILLIAMS

I heard them speak. It certainly wasn't English. We'll have to figure it out later. We got to get moving. The boat isn't too far away. When their blokes don't turn up they'll come back in force. If we move quickly we might be able to take advantage of that to do their boat a bit of damage.

Sid grins produces a shoulder launched rocket from behind his back.

SID

This might come in useful, then.

EXT A CREEK BANK IN THE MANGROVES - EVENING

The men are all huddled on the bank of the wide creek.

WILLIAMS

The boat is about a mile downstream in the estuary. We'll cross here and announce our arrival from the other side. They won't come across after us because they'll have seen the

cross. You'd have to be mad to swim this.

HANSEN
How are we going to cross then?

WILLIAMS
Walk.

PRIOR
Off the top of my head I can only think of one person who does that.

WILLIAMS
This is more like Moses. We've got an hour to wait, then we'll cross. Watch the water level.

RALPH
You don't think they'll go looking for their mates today, then?

WILLIAMS
No. By the time they realize something's wrong it'll be dark. I can't see any of them going into the bush at night.

HANSEN
What about the chopper?

WILLIAMS
Same thing, too late. They'll go at first light. Toby, how about a brew and some tucker?

TOBY
No worries.

EXT THE CREEK BANK - NIGHT

Williams, Prior and Hansen sit together drinking tea and watching the water recede in the moonlight.

WILLIAMS
The water will soon be low enough. What do you reckon's going on?

HANSEN
I wish I knew. I was sure it was racially motivated, now we got two Ruskies and a black guy involved. Some racists.

WILLIAMS
If we can disable the boat, it should stop them getting the jinjutani out.

HANSEN

The trouble is we don't know how much they've already got in the US. I really need one of them alive who knows what's going on.

WILLIAMS

Can't make any promises on that one. I'm more interested in keeping us alive. If that means they die so we live, they die.

PRIOR

We understand. It's not your fight.

WILLIAMS

Oh it's my fight alright, and I intend giving them the same chance of survival that they gave Jimmy - fucking zero. If one happens to survive, good on him. Listen up everyone, we move out in five minutes. Ralph, Sid, you're first.

RALPH

Isn't this the creek where Freddy lives?

WILLIAMS

Sure is.

HANSEN

Freddy?

RALPH

You know how people give animals names, id the snake, Donald Duck, that sort of thing.

HANSEN

What's Freddy then, a fish?

ALL SOLDIERS

No, a fucking big crocodile.

EXT THE CREEK - LATER

Only a trickle of water remains at their crossing point. A large pool is upstream of them. In the darkness Ralph and Sid trudge through the mud towards the far side. Ralph turns back to the others.

RALPH

If you see Freddy, use the rocket.

The two men reach the other side, and take up a position to cover the others.

WILLIAMS
You four go next.

HANSEN
What about you?

WILLIAMS
I'll keep you covered from this side,
then I'll cross.

HANSEN
I'll cross with you.

WILLIAMS
Please yourself.

The three men cross safely, leaving Hansen and Williams to follow. The two men are standing at the base of the muddy bank.

HANSEN
Come on, let's go.

The sinister shape of a huge crocodile glides toward them in the pool of muddy water upstream of where they cross.

WILLIAMS
Shit! Move it.

HANSEN
Jesus! What do we do?

WILLIAMS
Run like hell.

The two men run and splash through the mud as Freddy closes in.

WILLIAMS
Don't shoot unless you have too.

The croc's up onto the mud and starting to accelerate.

WILLIAMS
Run Pete, don't look back.

They reach the other side and are grabbed by the others and hauled up the muddy bank.

RALPH
Come on run, he ain't going to stop here.

The men crash through the undergrowth with Freddy in hot pursuit, grunting loudly. The men eventually stop when Freddy gives up and all becomes silent.

EXT HEAVY UNDERGROWTH - NIGHT

Everyone is gasping for breath.

SID

Freddy will have to get in shape.
In the old days he would have kept
going for another hundred yards.

PRIOR

He's like me, getting old.

HANSEN

How big is he?

WILLIAMS

About twenty five feet. But I'd
rather have one big one than a lot
of smaller ones, which is why we
crossed where we did. Freddy eats
the smaller ones.

RALPH

What's the plan, Steve?

WILLIAMS

We'll get ourselves in position
opposite the boat and wait for dawn.
I figure they'll send out a patrol
to see what happened to the others.
That should give a chance to do what
damage we can to the boat and put
a bit of distance between them and
us.

PRIOR

Do you think they'll pursue us?

HANSEN

You bet. We're the only people on
this earth that know what's going
on. They'll come after us alright.

WILLIAMS

Which is why I want to hit the boat
and get out. We may be able to take
one when they come after us.

HANSEN

I'd like to have a look around, if
I could.

WILLIAMS

If they've got jinjutani on board
it'll be in sealed containers, if
we damage one and allow the contents
to escape, you go inside that boat,
you're dead meat.

PRIOR
He's right, Peter.

HANSEN
I guess so.

WILLIAMS
Come on. Let's do it.

EXT DEEP COVER OVERLOOKING THE BOAT - DAWN

Prior, Hansen and the soldiers lying in cover. The boat is a yacht about seventy feet long. Armed MEN move around on the yacht and on the land adjacent.

HANSEN
How could they get the jinjutani to the States, process it and use it in ten days?

WILLIAMS
They might only use the yacht to transfer it to a faster form of transport. There's plenty of islands a short sail from here that have airstrips, then say to Indonesia or the Philippines and on to a commercial flight.

HANSEN
We know it's not the first time they've done it. We don't know how much they've got left from the first batch.

PRIOR
They might already have enough for the next attack.

HANSEN
If they do have enough for that, why do they need more?

WILLIAMS
Perhaps they're planning a big finale.

HANSEN
That makes sense. It would be much safer for them to go the whole way by yacht, and easier to get it in when they get there. In the meantime they keep up the pressure with another couple of smaller attacks.

Williams unpacks the rocket.

WILLIAMS

This might fuck up their schedule.

RALPH

They're mustering the troops for a search party

SID

There's enough of the bastards. There's three Asian guys with them.

HANSEN

Asians, Russians, a black guy. These are the most cosmopolitan, white supremacists I've ever heard of. All they need is a gay Jew.

RALPH

Six guys are heading off. That leaves six to guard the boat.

SID

There might be some on board we haven't seen.

WILLIAMS

If there is, they're in for a nasty surprise.

JASON

Yeah, fuck em.

WILLIAMS

When I let this mother go, the land based troops will open up with everything they've got. I want you to spread out fifty metres in either direction and make sure you're well protected. When they ease off, give them a couple of bursts. It might make them think there's more of us than there are.

HANSEN

It might stop them coming after us until the others get back.

WILLIAMS

Keep the bursts short. I have a feeling we're going to need every round we've got before this is over.

RALPH

We haven't seen the chopper for a while.

WILLIAMS

I know, and I don't like it.

SID
Shit! The patrol's back.

WILLIAMS
What? They couldn't have gone more
than a hundred metres.

RALPH
Listen.

HANSEN
The fucking, chopper.

WILLIAMS
Spread out. We go now. As soon as
you've let off a few bursts, get back
here. We'll make a tactical
withdrawal.

SID
Run like hell, you mean.

WILLIAMS
That's the one.

EXT THE YACHT

The sound of the helicopter gets louder. Suddenly it appears and begins its descent. A CREWMAN at the open door of the helicopter next to a heavy calibre machine gun lowers a cable with a sling on the end. In the sling is a MAN.

EXT DEEP COVER OVERLOOKING THE YACHT

Williams primes the rocket and puts it on his shoulder.

WILLIAMS
You must be the boss. Well you're
going to wish you stayed home. Have
some of this you asshole.

Williams fires the rocket and watches it head for the yacht as the helicopter nears.

EXT THE YACHT

The rocket streaks from the trees and heads for the yacht. It hits its target, triggering an explosion which throws the helicopter sideways, dragging the unfortunate man at the end of the cable through the trees. The ground troops start pouring fire in the direction the rocket came from.

EXT DEEP COVER OVERLOOKING THE YACHT

Williams is lying behind a log holding his head as the foliage around him is shredded by gun fire. Slowly the gunfire abates. Williams sticks his head up and lets off a burst, followed by the others, this is returned by the bad guys and carries on for a few more bursts. The men regroup around Williams.

WILLIAMS

As the shepherd said, lets get the flock out of here.

The men charge off through the bush.

EXT A CREEK ESTUARY MOUTH

Hansen, Prior and the soldiers, all sweating and panting for breath. The estuary mouth is about a hundred yards wide.

WILLIAMS

We swim the creek. I want to get across before the chopper crew sort themselves out. You blokes start looking for some timber to make a raft to put the gear on.

HANSEN

What about crocs?

WILLIAMS

We'll take a chance on the crocs. If we stay in a group we should be sweet. Besides you don't cross here at low tide.

HANSEN

Why not?

WILLIAMS

You'll see. Grab the Claymores Sid, let's go back up the track a bit and return them to their rightful owners. Well, the shrapnel, anyway.

EXT A CREEK ESTUARY

The men have made a makeshift raft and are standing up to their knees in the muddy water holding it when Williams and Sid return. On the raft are all the packs and weapons. Suddenly Prior screams in agony and raises his foot from the water. Holding his foot firmly in its claw is a huge MUD CRAB. Jason puts his gun to it, fires and the crab disintegrates, leaving the claw still gripping Prior's foot.

WILLIAMS

Go, we'll get it off on the other side. There's a shitload more where he came from.

The men swim the creek all holding onto the raft and keeping a wary lookout for crocs.

EXT ESTUARY FAR BANK. TREE LINE

Williams, Hansen, Ralph, Toby and Jason grab their gear from the raft and run into the treeline. Prior is limping, still with the claw attached to his foot.

RALPH

Let's have a look at your hoof, Prof.

Ralph levers the crab claw off with his knife and examines it.

RALPH

That's the worst case of crabs I've ever seen.

WILLIAMS

We'll head up there. It'll give us a chance to put a few rounds into them if they cross and gives us a chance to get away through the rainforest behind us if the chopper turns up.

The men kit up and head off.

EXT FOREST ABOVE THE ESTUARY

Hansen, Prior and the team are lying prone and looking down at the creek, which is emptying rapidly. The exposed river bed is a huge mud flat dotted with thousands of holes.

WILLIAMS

We could have done without shooting the crab.

PRIOR

It wasn't your foot.

A muffled explosion and smoke and dust rises from the trees on the other side of the creek

HANSEN

Sounds like they found those claymores they lost earlier.

WILLIAMS

Here they come.

EXT CREEK ESTUARY MOUTH

A group of fifteen BAD GUYS move to the creek edge and settle down in cover. Some are tattered, torn and bloodied.

EXT FOREST ABOVE THE ESTUARY

Williams, Hansen, Prior, Ralph, Toby, Jason and Sid, all intently watching the estuary.

HANSEN
What are they waiting for?

WILLIAMS
Air support.

RALPH
Yep. Hear it?

WILLIAMS
We won't be able to have a pop at them now without getting shot up by the chopper.

HANSEN
Shall we go?

WILLIAMS
And miss the show?

EXT THE ESTUARY, EXPOSED MUD FLATS.

The helicopter positions itself above the bank from which the men must cross, its open door and machine gun facing out over the estuary towards soldiers position. The men start to wade out through the knee deep mud, two men, then a gap and two more. As they reach the middle the huge crabs start to emerge from the holes in the mud, at first a few, then more, all converging towards the men. Eventually there are thousands. The men realize what is about to happen and try and run, but they sink deeper into the mud. They shoot at the crabs and the ones that are hit explode into fragments. The second two men, not too far out into the river turn and head back to the bank, crabs hanging off of them, Out in the middle, the two men are overwhelmed and disappear under a mound of feasting, mud crabs.

EXT FOREST ABOVE THE CREEK

Prior, Hansen and the team have all watched the scene unfold. Hansen is stunned.

WILLIAMS
That should hold them for a while.

HANSEN

Jesus.

PRIOR

Well, people eat them.

WILLIAMS

Come on, let's get out of here. It'll take them a while to ferry the men over by chopper. We'll head through the rainforest, then head for the billabong, pick up a few samples and get the hell out.

RALPH

How are we going to get the samples?

WILLIAMS

I'll figure that out when we get there. Let's go.

EXT RAINFOREST

Williams leads, followed by Hansen on his shoulder, Prior, Sid, Toby and Jason follow as they walk through the forest.

HANSEN

How far behind do you think they are?

WILLIAMS

Easy an hour. It's not the ones behind that bother me.

HANSEN

What do you mean?

WILLIAMS

If they're smart, and we have to assume they are, they'll realize we're heading for the billabong.

HANSEN

Yeah, and?

WILLIAMS

They got a helicopter. They'll leapfrog us, drop say four men in an ambush position and have the rest come from behind.

HANSEN

I haven't heard the chopper.

WILLIAMS

You won't. They've seen one rocket, I expect they're a bit wary of flying

over trees. Besides, they won't advertise what they're going to do.

HANSEN

Shit.

WILLIAMS

I was hoping Brodie might have showed up. Tessa can't have seen him to tell him we were heading for the creek. If he knew, the nosy bastard would come for a look

HANSEN

Can't say I enjoyed the last trip with him, but I sure would appreciate a ride right now.

WILLIAMS

How's the Prof holding up?

HANSEN

Better than me.

WILLIAMS

He's as fit as a mallee bull, the old bludger.

HANSEN

Yeah... right. What are we going to do? We can't keep going and walk straight into their ambush.

The men have reached a small clearing in the rainforest that contains one large tree.

WILLIAMS

I know. I've been waiting for the right place, and this is it.

HANSEN

What do you mean?

WILLIAMS

They think we're running from them.

Ralph joins the two men.

RALPH

They're not Robinson Crusoe.

WILLIAMS

They're trying to push us into a pincer movement, which means the ones following will be coming as fast as they can so the other don't have to hold us too long.

HANSEN

Yeah, so?

WILLIAMS

Why should they have all the fun setting up ambushes.

RALPH

There's a couple of blokes we met yesterday who would argue that... if they were still alive.

WILLIAMS

That's their own fault for being so unimaginative. Ralph catch as many snakes as you can in fifteen minutes and put them in two of the empty food gathering sacks.

RALPH

Fifteen minutes around here, that's a shitload of snakes.

Hansen looks around apprehensively.

WILLIAMS

The more the merrier.

Ralph, Sid, Jason and Toby walk off.

PRIOR

What makes this a good spot for an ambush. I thought cover was advisable when carrying out an ambush. This is the most open piece of ground we've encountered so far, apart from this one magnificent example of mangifera indica.

HANSEN

Right on, Prof.

WILLIAMS

It hangs over the track nicely, just right for an aerial snake attack. Give me a hand, we have a bit of digging to do.

EXT UNDERGROWTH AT THE EDGE OF THE CLEARING.

Lying in wait are Hansen, Prior and Jason. Grasped in Hansen's hand are the ends of lengths of fishing line. The fishing lines are attached to shaved twigs that secure the necks of the inverted sacks containing the squirming snakes high up in the tree.

HANSEN
I always thought fishing line was
for catching...

Voices of approaching men.

PRIOR
Quiet.

EXT THE CLEARING

EIGHT MEN come into view, walking briskly, one is Asian, the others are all white. They are armed and military in appearance and manner. They reach the tree.

EXT UNDERGROWTH AT THE EDGE OF THE CLEARING

Prior and Jason watch the men in silence. Hansen yanks the fishing line.

EXT THE CLEARING

The snakes fall on the men. There is much screaming and panicking, some men firing at the snakes that are on the ground. Suddenly the camouflaged forms of Williams, Ralph, Sid and Toby rise from where they are buried and covered with leaves close to the tree. The four men open fire and cut the snake covered men to pieces with automatic fire.

Hansen, Prior and Jason join them as they examine the bodies. One of the men is not dead, he sits up, raises a pistol and aims at Hansen's back. Jason sees this and dives at Pete. In doing so, Jason takes the bullet in the back. Prior swivels and shoots in one movement, hitting the man between the eyes.

WILLIAMS
Jason!

The men look at the prostrate form of Jason. Red fluid soaks the back of his shirt and backpack. Jason moans and rolls onto his side, before sitting up.

JASON
Fuck, that hurt.

Jason stands with a bit of assistance. Toby peers into Jason's backpack.

TOBY
Jeez Jace, you've broken the last
bottle of red.

JASON
Sorry.

TOBY

No worries, mate, I still got a bottle left in case of emergency.

WILLIAMS

Bloody hell you blokes, you know when we go into operational mode we ditch the grog.

TOBY

Sorry, Steve. I'll dump it.

WILLIAMS

Piss off. You brought it this far, next time we stop we'll share it out.

HANSEN

Thanks Jason. As they say, that one had my name on it.

WILLIAMS

And where the hell did you learn to shoot like that, Prof?

PRIOR

I was a forward scout in Vietnam.

WILLIAMS

Why didn't you tell me? I could do with all the help I can get.

PRIOR

You seem to be handling it rather well without me sticking my nose in. Local knowledge is best, ask anyone who was over there.

WILLIAMS

Let's check the bodies for anything useful and get going.

The men remove a few lingering snakes with the ends of their rifle barrels and then start searching the bodies.

HANSEN

They're pros. No ID, no letters, nothing. We need one alive, these corpses are going to tell us nothing.

SID

Notice all the sidearms are soviet. Handguns are usually a weapon of choice, whereas the assault rifles will be issued.

HANSEN

Very observant, Sid.

SID
I'm a copper, remember.

WILLIAMS
We haven't got the time to be thorough. The others probably heard the firing. They'll soon realize their mates came second again. Our last hope of getting one of these blokes alive are the ones the chopper dropped ahead of us.

HANSEN
Do you think they might bug out.

WILLIAMS
I think they'll have one last go at the billabong. We got about three hours of daylight left.

Sid is examining a body.

SID
Hey this bloke's a pom.

WILLIAMS
How do you know?

SID
His t-shirt is Lillywhites of London. He's not carrying a Russian sidearm either.

HANSEN
Check the other guys' labels.

TOBY
We got a Haines T-shirt here.

HANSEN
Could be American.

WILLIAMS
We have to move on or we'll be travelling in the dark.

HANSEN
Let's go.

WILLIAMS
Want to take point, Prof?

PRIOR
After you, Sergeant.

EXT THE RAINFOREST

Williams, Ralph and Hansen looking at the ground.

WILLIAMS

They had an ambush set up here, but they've moved out.

RALPH

Look at the place, all the broken foliage.

WILLIAMS

Yeah, chopper alright.

HANSEN

What do you think?

WILLIAMS

They'll be waiting for us this side of the billabong. It'll be dark when we get there and these pricks will have had plenty of time to set up. Not nice.

HANSEN

We need the samples, Steve.

WILLIAMS

I know. We haven't been through all this to go back empty handed. The trouble is, when we exit the rainforest there's about two hundred metres of exposed ground. They'll be in the rocks with a perfect field of fire.

RALPH

Looks like it's you and me in the dark.

WILLIAMS

Looks like it. We'll send the others on to the mission school. They can tell Tessa what's going on and she can call up some help on the school radio.

RALPH

Sid can lead them in through the night. They'll be there by dawn.

HANSEN

I'm not letting you guys do all my dirty work. I'm staying.

WILLIAMS
You don't know anything about this kind of thing. It's not like in the films.

PRIOR
No, but I do.

HANSEN
No way, Professor.

PRIOR
Cutting someone's throat is not something I recommend for a first timer at infiltration.

HANSEN
I'm staying.

WILLIAMS
You fuck up, you die.

HANSEN
I accept that.

RALPH
If they got night vision we all die.

WILLIAMS
The others weren't carrying any. Let's get the others underway and get a couple of knives for these two.

PRIOR
I don't need one, I have my own.

Prior produces a vicious looking knife from within his shirt.

EXT THE RAIN FOREST - EVENING

Williams and Ralph have explained the plan to Sid, Toby and Jason are not happy about leaving.

SID
I don't like this one bit.

RALPH
It's the only way. This way we double our options. If we don't make it at least you blokes know the story.

SID
I don't like leaving you like this. But what you say goes.

WILLIAMS

We'll meet you at the school tomorrow at about midday with any luck. If we don't turn up, don't come looking for us, wait for the troops. They'll need you to lead them in. And make sure Toby keeps his hands off Tessa.

TOBY

It's just the chance I've been waiting for, you sucker.

SID

Good luck.

There are various farewells and Sid, Toby and Jason head off into the forest.

EXT THE RAINFOREST - NIGHT

Hansen, Ralph, Williams and Prior sit around a small camp fire. Prior is slowly and deliberately sharpening his knife. Ralph takes a swig from a wine bottle and passes it to Hansen.

RALPH

Nice of Toby to leave us the wine.

HANSEN

I need something if I'm going to get some sleep.

Hansen passes the bottle to Williams who takes a swig and passes it to Prior.

WILLIAMS

You seem very calm about all this.

PRIOR

I swore when the war was over I would never hurt another living soul. I took up the most harmless and placid occupation I could think of, botany, flower collecting. Now it's the very thing that's forcing me to kill again.

HANSEN

You don't have to do this with us tonight.

PRIOR

The last time I did it was because I believed it was the right thing to do. I'm doing it for the same reason now.

EXT EDGE OF THE RAINFOREST

Williams, Ralph, Hansen and Prior are blacked up. Each is armed only with a pistol and a knife.

WILLIAMS

I'm handing over command to the Prof.

PRIOR

Thank you, Sergeant. We go around them and come from behind. Use the knives and only use the handgun if you have to. Don't use the knife like you see in the films. It's in through the side of the neck and out through the throat.

HANSEN

I'm not sure about this.

WILLIAMS

It's them or us.

PRIOR

Correct. If anyone doesn't think they can do it, say so now... Good. Let's do it.

EXT. ENEMY POSITION

The four men are crawling. Prior stops and points at the shape of a man asleep in a hollow, Williams nods. Prior despatches the sleeping man. Ralph finds another and follows Prior's instructions. Williams finds one sitting up smoking a cigarette. He uses his newly learned skill.

WILLIAMS

(whispered)

You should have read the warnings on the packet, mate.

Hansen finds his man. He follows his instructions. He grabs the man, pulls his head back then hesitates with the coup de grace. The man is no amateur. He pulls down Hansen's hand and bites it, whilst gripping Hansen's knife wrist with the other. Hansen is suddenly fighting for his life with an expert in unarmed combat. Hansen is rolling around on the ground with his opponent, who is starting to gain the upper hand. Eventually Hansen is pinned to the ground by his larger and more proficient opponent. Hansen is struggling to hold the knife hand which is getting nearer to his throat, his opponent starts to smile, knowing he is about to finish off the man on the ground. His smile freezes as he hears the close range cocking of automatic pistols. He looks up at the three handguns inches from his head. He is now their PRISONER.

HANSEN
I wanted him alive.

PRIOR
A shame he didn't share that view
regarding you.

HANSEN
Did we get the rest?

PRIOR
All we could find.

HANSEN
We'll tie this guy up. Get the
samples and get back to the mission
school and see what we can get out
of this dude. See what yo can find
Ralph.

Ralph walks away. A camouflaged trap door opens and an Asian man emerges. He fires three rounds at point blank range into Ralph's back. Hansen is the first to see it and react. Before the Asian can turn, Hansen has gripped him across the eyes, pulled his head back and stabbed him in the neck.

WILLIAMS
Ralph!

The men crowd around Ralph's body. He's dead. Williams is on his knees by the body, his head bowed. When he looks up there is rage in his eyes.

WILLIAMS
Let's get the jinjutani and get out
of here. Keep the other bloke out
of my sight.

HANSEN
What about Ralph?

WILLIAMS
Temporary grave, the same as Jimmy.
It's all we can do.

HANSEN
I'll help.

WILLIAMS
Thanks.

PRIOR
I'll go back and pick up our kit.

EXT THE JINJUTANI BILLABONG

The billabong is a small body of water covered in water lilies with sinister black blooms. Williams, Prior, Hansen and the Prisoner are situated about thirty yards away from it in the tropical foliage that rings it. The thirty yards to the water is open ground, covered in lush grass.

WILLIAMS

That's it.

HANSEN

Spooky. Let's get some samples and get out of here.

WILLIAMS

It's not quite as easy as that.

PRIOR

Remember why we're here. This stuff kills.

WILLIAMS

The lilies give off some kind of scent which disorients anything that approaches the water.

HANSEN

Surely I can run in, gather a few handfuls and get out before it takes effect.

WILLIAMS

The jinjutani has its protectors.

HANSEN

We haven't got time for this mumbo jumbo.

WILLIAMS

The story is, the water lures the animal in, the jinjutani renders the animal helpless, then the crocs that live in the billabong eat the animal. The jinjutani live off of the blood that's released into the water.

HANSEN

Friendly little critters.

PRIOR

A symbiotic relationship. One helps the other and vice versa.

WILLIAMS

By the way, you think Freddy was big, wait till you see these.

PRIOR

I suppose the crocs have a constant supply of food.

WILLIAMS

That's why they don't fight amongst themselves, they just get bigger and bigger. Also they've never been threatened, so they don't know fear.

HANSEN

What are we going to do?

WILLIAMS

Send in buggerlugs over there?

PRIOR

They must have had a method.

HANSEN

Let's ask our friend.

They ask the prisoner how they harvested the jinjutani.

HANSEN

How did you get the lilies?

The prisoner does not speak.

WILLIAMS

Listen friend, If you don't tell us how to do it we'll have to experiment, starting with you.

PRISONER

(Russian accent)

I drive boat, not get flowers.

WILLIAMS

Typical, we get the one bloke that stays with the boat. I'll have a look about.

HANSEN

(To Prisoner)

Sit down, we'll have a little chat later.

Williams moves a little distance away, looking at the ground. He goes down on one knee to inspect the ground more closely. He calls over Hansen.

WILLIAMS

We got trouble. This is where the boss man stood when he told his troops to bug out. He was here and they were in a group over there.

HANSEN
Very interesting, but where's our
problem.

WILLIAMS
You see these small prints here, next
to the big boss.

HANSEN
Yeah. Sort of.

WILLIAMS
They belong to Tessa.

HANSEN
You got to be mistaken. Couldn't it
be one of the Asian guys?

WILLIAMS
I'm not mistaken. That explains how
they knew we were coming.

HANSEN
Oh no. What about the others, they've
gone to the mission school.

WILLIAMS
We got to get the samples and get
to the school, fast.

Hansen and Williams join Prior and the Prisoner.

HANSEN
You and the Prof cover me. I'm going
to go down there and pick a
few flowers.

PRIOR
I'm the botanist in this outfit, it's
my job and I'll do it.

HANSEN
No way, Professor.

PRIOR
When the samples are gathered my job
is finished. You still have to
catch these people.

HANSEN
Okay, Prof. How close do you think
we can get without getting affected?

PRIOR
We can get pretty close. The plant
affects animals that are there to
drink. If it affected them too far

away it wouldn't be much use to their underwater buddies, would it.

WILLIAMS

That's a fair assumption.

HANSEN

We go down together. At ten yards Steve and me stop and move left and right, so we have a clear field of fire. You run down Prof, grab a few samples, then get the hell out.

PRIOR

Let's do it.

They approach the billabong. At ten yards from the water they stop. Hansen and Williams move to either side, kneel and bring their weapons up to their shoulders. Hansen nods to Professor Prior, who is holding a plastic bag in one hand and his knife in the other. He takes a breath and runs down to the water's edge. He wades in. The black lilies in the distance start to move as the creatures below sense a meal is nearby and move towards the Professor in anticipation of more easy prey.

WILLIAMS

Hurry Prof, they're on the move.

The Professor bends to his task, reaching below the surface of the water and using his knife to dislodge the plant's roots. He's forced to take a breath. The lilies closer to the Professor start to move.

HANSEN

That's it, Prof. Get out.

He pulls several of the plants free. The Professor looks at the men, he has determination but his eyes start to glaze.

WILLIAMS

Come on, Prof.

The Professor stands, obviously affected by the jinjutani.

HANSEN

Run Prof, run!

The lilies twenty yards from the Professor move. Prior is in a trance, he starts to walk from the water towards the men, slowly, too slowly, like a robot.

WILLIAMS

Shit! Come on.

The two men run toward the water. Prior is clear of the water. The lilies directly behind the Professor move. The Professor lumbers blindly toward the men. Hansen and Williams reach him. Each loop an arm around the Professor's arms, still facing

the water. The men watch as the water explodes and a HUGE CROCODILE comes out. The men fire from the hip as they move backward. Another croc comes out, then another. The men are dragging the Professor, firing as they go. A croc grabs the Professor's calf. The men fire into its head at point blank range and it lets go. They keep going until they reach a safe distance and the crocs stop. They slump to the ground. The Professor is still clutching the plants and his knife. The surviving crocs slither back into the water.

HANSEN

Shit.

WILLIAMS

I think I have?

HANSEN

You okay, Prof?

PRIOR

(groggily)

I think so.

WILLIAMS

Let's have a look at his leg.

They cut open the Professor's trouser leg, exposing several large puncture wounds.

HANSEN

Nasty.

WILLIAMS

Lucky he was anaesthetized. I'll put a field dressing on it and let's get out of here

EXT LUGGA-LUGGA SETTLEMENT/MISSION SCHOOLHOUSE.

Hansen and Williams approach the school building. Behind them are Prior, who is walking with the aid of a stick, and the Prisoner.

HANSEN

It's quiet. Where is everyone?

WILLIAMS

They've gone walkabout. Something has happened to scare them.

INT MISSION SCHOOL

Williams and Hansen cautiously enter the shadowy school room, followed by Prior and the Prisoner. On the floor are Toby, Sid, and Jason - all are dead.

WILLIAMS
The murdering bitch.

The sound of a helicopter.

HANSEN
Take cover, it's coming in to land.

Hansen hides to the side of the door and the others behind desks as the helicopter lands in the school yard. The sound of footsteps on the veranda. A man is silhouetted by the bright sunlight outside. Hansen puts a gun against the man's head. It's Brodie. Williams rises from his position behind the teacher's desk, his weapon still trained at the door.

BRODIE
Easy!

WILLIAMS
Sorry, Brodie.

BRODIE
What the fuck is going on?

EXT MISSION SCHOOL VERANDAH

Hansen, Williams, Prior, Brodie and the Prisoner.

BRODIE
Where's Tessa?

WILLIAMS
We've got to get out of here. I'll explain later. Come on, get Boris and let's get going.

INT HELICOPTER IN FLIGHT.

Brodie is at the controls. Prior is in the copilot's seat, with Hansen behind him. Next to him is Williams. The Prisoner is seated by a back door

BRODIE
Where we headed?

WILLIAMS
Back to base, via the jinjutani billabong.

BRODIE
What do you want to go to that place for?

WILLIAMS

I just want to ask Boris here a few questions.

INT HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

Hovering a 100 feet above the billabong. Williams leans over and opens the door next to the Prisoner.

WILLIAMS

Right, my friend, there are a few questions we need answered.

The Prisoner looks down at the crocs in and around the water below and nods. Before the interrogation can start, the other helicopter roars in, machine gun blazing. Brodie throws the helicopter to one side to avoid the gunfire and exit one prisoner.

WILLIAMS

Shit!

BRODIE

Sorry, was he important?

HANSEN

Yes, but let's worry about the problem in hand.

BRODIE

What, this dickhead? He ain't much of a driver, just caught me by surprise. Hang on.

Brodie takes them on a low level ride through valleys and gorges, over hills and along rivers. All the time the other helicopter hangs on. Hansen is craning his neck to watch the other chopper.

HANSEN

I thought you said he wasn't much of a driver?

BRODIE

No worries.

Brodie takes the chopper into even more death defying manoeuvres. They dive down over a waterfall, then have to pull up to get over a cliff face. Brodie manages to get behind the pursuing helicopter, enabling him to clip its tail rotor with his skid. Prior's view through the floor glass is terrifying. The other helicopter spins out of control before crashing.

WILLIAMS

Nice one.

BRODIE

I told you he wasn't much of a driver.
Do you want to go back and look for
your mate?

WILLIAMS

A bit late for that, I reckon.

INT HAMPSHIRE'S OFFICE. DARWIN - NIGHT

In the office are Williams, Hansen and Captain Hampshire.

HAMPSHIRE

I've just come from the hospital and
Professor Prior will be fine. I'm
just sorry that a gentle soul like
that should meet with such an
accident. He's probably never done
anything more savage than cutting
the head off a flower in his life.

Hansen and Williams exchange glances behind Hampshire.

HAMPSHIRE

You're booked on tomorrow's flight
to Washington via L.A. I booked a
seat for the Professor. Do you think
he'll be alright to fly?

HANSEN

He'll be okay. I'm really sorry about
what happened out there. We just
didn't realize the group's military
capability

HAMPSHIRE

You have the samples, that's what
matters.

WILLIAMS

The samples on their own aren't the
answer. I want to go with him.

HANSEN

No way. I know what you're feeling.
You'd be out of your depth. Steve.

WILLIAMS

They were my men, my friends. They're
all dead. I owe them and I owe that
bitch.

HAMPSHIRE.

I know how you feel, Sergeant.

WILLIAMS

Do you?

HANSEN

It just wouldn't work.

WILLIAMS

I'm going, and you can't stop me.
I'll go on my own if I have to.

HAMPSHIRE

Steve, think about it. We know you're
angry, we all are.

WILLIAMS

I'm asking you one last time to take
me with you. Don't make
me go alone.

INT SEAN COLLINS OFFICE - DAY

Hansen facing Collins across his desk.

COLLINS

You, fucking what! Have you lost your
fucking mind. You brought an
Australian aborigine back with you!
You been in the Aussie sun too
long.... Mate.

HANSEN

It's the army patrol leader, Steve
Williams. He wants to help.

COLLINS

How the hell exactly does mister
Williams think he can help?

HANSEN

Any way he can. We owe him, Sean.

COLLINS

When Jones hears this one we're in
deep shit. He's been in a foul mood
ever since he got back from Alaska.
Things didn't go well apparently.
Any chance we can hide Williams for
a while till he cools down? Where
is he?

HANSEN

Outside.

COLLINS

That's inconspicuous. I suppose
he's wearing a loincloth and
carrying a boomerang. I expect Jones
has heard already the way things
spread through this place.

HANSEN
I'll bring him in.

COLLINS
Great.

Hansen goes to the door and brings in Williams

HANSEN
Agent Sean Collins, this is Sergeant
Steve Williams.

COLLINS
Pleased to meet you Sergeant. I'm
sorry about your colleagues.

WILLIAMS
They were good men.

COLLINS
Do you really think you can help,
Sergeant?

WILLIAMS
I don't know, but I know I have to
try. The people that did this are
here, so this is where I have to be.
I'll keep out of the way.

HANSEN
Steve knows the girl, the
schoolteacher. I've only seen her
once.

COLLINS
Your completely out of your element,
Sergeant.

The telephone rings and Collins picks up.

COLLINS
Yes sir - that's right - right away.
(hangs up))
Guess who?

HANSEN
Jones? That was quick.

COLLINS
He wants to see you and, as he puts
it, your new friend.

HANSEN
Are you coming?

COLLINS
No way. But good luck. Whatever he
says, Sergeant, you did a good job

over there. You got the samples we needed. The Professor is limping about down in the lab with Sid Londheim now. They seem confident they can find an antidote. It's a great pity the cost was so high.

INT FBI BUILDING CORRIDOR

Hansen and Williams walking to Jones' office.

WILLIAMS

Sorry to make trouble for you.

HANSEN

It's not much compared to the trouble I've caused you.

WILLIAMS

I should have come alone.

HANSEN

We're in this together. I owe you. If Jones chews me out, keep cool, I can handle it.

WILLIAMS

Who is this Jones bloke?

HANSEN

He's the head of department. Tough guy. An ex spy... Here we are, mind you don't get lost in the carpet.

WILLIAMS

Steve, I don't get lost.

INT JONES' OFFICE.

Hansen knocks and they enter. Jones is sat behind his large desk. Jones has some cuts and bruising on his face. Williams looks down at the thick carpet.

JONES

Ah, welcome back. You must be Sergeant Williams. A pleasure to meet you, Sergeant. I heard what happened. I want the pair of you to take a few of days off and rest up. You've been through hell by the sound of it.

HANSEN

Sir, we'd rather carry on with the investigation.

JONES

I want you rested before you get back on the job. At least take a few days off. Show the Sergeant around. Use your credit card and give me the bill.

HANSEN

Are you sure?

JONES

Yes. Come and see me when you're ready to start back. Enjoy your stay Sergeant, and I'm very sorry about your men. We obviously underrated these people.

Williams is staring at the CARPET. A look of puzzlement on his face.

HANSEN

A few days won't hurt I suppose.

WILLIAMS

Yeah. Thanks, mister Jones. I guess I am a bit tired.

They leave the office.

INT FBI BUILDING CORRIDOR

Hansen closes the door to Jones' office and turns to Williams. Williams is distracted and deep in thought.

HANSEN

Well, that went a lot better than I expected.

WILLIAMS

Yeah.

Hansen notices something is wrong.

HANSEN

Are you okay?

WILLIAMS

Let's get out of here.

INT HANSEN'S CAR.

Hansen at the wheel with Williams staring out the window and deep in thought.

WILLIAMS

When we were in Aus, at the
billabong.

HANSEN

Yes.

WILLIAMS

Remember when I spotted that bitch
of a schoolteacher's footprints. I
said she was standing next to someone
that I reckoned was the boss.

HANSEN

Of course I do.

WILLIAMS

Well the same prints were on the
carpet in that office. They belong
to the man behind the desk.

HANSEN

Jones! You're crazy.

WILLIAMS

I'd know them anywhere, Pete.

HANSEN

It can't be. He was in Alaska when
we were in Australia.

WILLIAMS

He was at the billabong. He want's
us out of the way.

HANSEN

He's just trying to thank you.

Williams shakes his head solemnly.

HANSEN

You really that sure?

WILLIAMS

Yes.

HANSEN

Then we do it together.

WILLIAMS

How do you want to do this?

HANSEN

We have to appear to be doing what
he told us to do. And a credit card
is the secret to that. The FBI has
access to all electronic banking.
If he's taking an interest in our

whereabouts, that should convince him we're out enjoying ourselves.

Hansen makes a call on his mobile phone.

HANSEN

Nurse Morgan please - hi Vicki it's Pete - fine and you? - good, could we meet for lunch? - great, how about the same park - half an hour - see you there, bye.

(finishes call)

If anyone can use a credit card it's a woman. The park's near the Smithsonian over there.

WILLIAMS

That's where the Professor's from, isn't it?

HANSEN

That's right. Alan Morrow was murdered right there on the steps of the building.

WILLIAMS

You said by a woman. Slim, red hair?

HANSEN

Jesus, do you mean..

WILLIAMS

Got the murdering bitch's name all over it.

HANSEN

I caught a glimpse of her, same build, same hair color.

WILLIAMS

Same person. She wasn't in Sydney Australia, she was in Washington DC, just like your mister Jones wasn't in Alaska.

EXT THE PARK

Vicki Morgan waits in the park. Hansen And Williams join her.

MORGAN

So the intrepid explorer returns. Did you have fun?

HANSEN

Vicki, this is Steve Williams.

WILLIAMS
G'day Vicki, nice to meet you.

MORGAN
What brings you to Washington,
Steve?

WILLIAMS
I'm looking for a woman.

MORGAN
I'm sure you'll find one.

HANSEN
This is a particular woman.

WILLIAMS
You can't miss her. She's very
beautiful. She's a schoolteacher
and her hobbies include deception
and multiple murder.

MORGAN
Sounds like a nice girl.

HANSEN
We need your help, Vicki. I want you
to go and spend up big on my credit
card.

MORGAN
Sounds good but what about the
signature.

Pete gets out his credit card and scribbles the PIN on the
back of a business card.

HANSEN
Go to automatic tellers and withdraw
cash. Here's the PIN. Buy something
over the phone. Try a small
restaurant on the edge of town. They
probably won't even check.

MORGAN
I suppose this is illegal.

HANSEN
Absolutely, but it's all in a good
cause.

MORGAN
Okay, why not. When do you want me
to start?

WILLIAMS
Right now, and don't hold back.

MORGAN

I've got a friend who works at a restaurant. She'll help me. When do I stop?

HANSEN

I'll be in touch. We got to go.

MORGAN

I've heard of men giving a girl their wristwatch to reassure them of their intentions, but a credit card, this must be serious. I hope you find who your looking for... I think.

Hansen and Vicki Morgan kiss. He looks her in the eyes and walks away.

INT HANSEN'S CAR

The car is parked outside the FBI building. Hansen and Williams are watching the building.

HANSEN

Keep an eye out for Jones. I'm going to the lab to have a word with the Professor. He's about the only man in Washington I trust at the moment.

WILLIAMS

They don't get any better.

INT THE FBI LAB

Prior and Sid Londheim are staring at a computer screen when Hansen walks in.

PRIOR

We seem to be making progress.

HANSEN

Could I have a word with you in private, Professor?

LONDHEIM

Use my office.

PRIOR

Thanks, Sid.

INT LONDHEIM'S OFFICE

Prior sits in Londheim's chair and massages his calf. Hansen sits on the desk.

PRIOR

Well?

HANSEN

Would you gamble your career on Steve's tracking ability?

PRIOR

You'd better explain.

HANSEN

He reckons that Jones, the head of my department, is involved in this.

PRIOR

How? In what way?

HANSEN

Footprints. He say's the ones in Jones' office, his prints, match the ones at the billabong.

PRIOR

What are you going to do?

HANSEN

I believe him. I need someone I can trust that I can keep informed if anything happens. Someone not directly linked to the Bureau.

PRIOR

What do you want me to do?

HANSEN

We need a third party who can relay messages to you. It's too dangerous for me to call you direct. Any ideas?

PRIOR

Nora, my assistant at the Smithsonian. She's completely trustworthy, and I might add, devoted to me. Here's her home number.

HANSEN

Thanks, Prof.

PRIOR

Jones has been down here twice today personally checking on our progress. Sid has never seen him down here before, ever.

INT HANSEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Williams and Hansen are watching the front of the FBI building. Jones leaves the building carrying a large sports bag and hails a cab.

WILLIAMS

Follow that cab. Let's see what the American taxpayer got for their money when you went to FBI school.

They follow the cab.

WILLIAMS

Seems simple enough, you sort of follow the car in front. Money well spent if you ask me.

They pass an airport sign and both look at it.

HANSEN

He's heading for the airport.

WILLIAMS

Well done. Those FBI teachers are shit hot. But how the hell do you follow an aeroplane, hotshot?

HANSEN

Well, smartass, I would usually inquire at the ticket counter what the subject's destination and flight number is and then call the local FBI office at the other end to carry on the surveillance.

WILLIAMS

Yeah. So what do we do now?

HANSEN

We can't get on the same plane, can we.

WILLIAMS

What if we go with another airline?

HANSEN

Even if it arrives ten minutes after him it'll be too late to pick him up.

WILLIAMS

What if we hire a private plane and fly ourselves to wherever he's going. It's slower in the air but he's got to wait for the flight, then pick up his bags at the other end.

HANSEN
Unfortunately the FBI didn't teach
me to fly.

WILLIAMS
No, but Brodie taught me to.

INT THE AIRPORT.

Jones checks in his baggage. Hansen and Williams wait for him to depart then approach the desk. Hansen shows his badge to the CHECK-IN GIRL.

HANSEN
Agent Hansen FBI, where's that man
going?

CHECK-IN GIRL
Atlanta.

HANSEN
What's the flight time?

CHECK-IN GIRL
One hour forty.

EXT HANSEN'S CAR, AIRPORT LIGHT AIRCRAFT SECTION

Williams and Hansen enter the light aircraft section of the airport.

HANSEN
Will we make it in time?

WILLIAMS
I won't know until I see some charts.
Stop! We'll take that one.

HANSEN
We can't just take it.

WILLIAMS
By the time we pissball about hiring
one, we'll be too late. It's going
to be touch and go as it is.

HANSEN
I'm an FBI agent, I can't steal an
airplane.

WILLIAMS
You don't have to, I'll do it.

HANSEN
I'll still be an accessory.

WILLIAMS

Listen to me you dickhead. Jones and that slut are responsible for a lot of deaths, including five of my friends, and they're going to kill a lot more unless we stop them....

(a resigned sigh)

Give me your gun.

HANSEN

Why?

WILLIAMS

I'll force you into the aircraft at gunpoint if it makes you feel better.

A look from Hansen is enough.

INT LIGHT AIRCRAFT ON THE GROUND

Williams finds some charts. He hands them to Hansen.

WILLIAMS

Find Atlanta for me.

HANSEN

What about a key to start it?

WILLIAMS

Don't need one.

Williams starts the engines.

INT THE AIRCRAFT IN FLIGHT.

Williams looking at a map with Hansen next to him.

WILLIAMS

South it is. I'm glad the owner keeps this baby fuelled up.

HANSEN

Will we make it in time?

WILLIAMS

We got a maximum cruising speed of three fifty in this. His flight time is one hour forty minutes. He has to board with a few hundred others and the plane has to get a slot. At the other end he has to get off and pick up his bag along with all the other passengers. It'll be a close run thing.

HANSEN
Keep your foot down, buddy.

WILLIAMS
Get on that mobile trumpet of yours
and tee up a hire car at the other
end.

HANSEN
Good idea. Give me your credit card.

WILLIAMS
Piss off. I hired the plane, you get
the car.

HANSEN
My card is being hammered all over
Washington at the moment, remember.
Just give me the card.

Williams rolls his eyes.

EXT ATLANTA AIRPORT, HIRE CAR OFFICE

Hansen and Williams by a car outside a hire car office.

HANSEN
Come on let's move it.

WILLIAMS
Not a bad landing, eh.

HANSEN
Oh, shut up.

WILLIAMS
Just remember, I said I could fly,
not that I had a license.

INT THE HIRE CAR, AIRPORT - NIGHT

Hansen and Williams sat in the car waiting for Jones to appear.
Jones appears and is picked up by a 4x4.

WILLIAMS
There's the prick.

HANSEN
Got him.

Hansen starts the car.

EXT A MOTEL.

Jones' 4x4 pulls into a motel, the car park of which is filled with 4x4s towing bass boats.

INT THE CAR.

Hansen and Williams watch Jones go into the motel reception. They look around.

HANSEN
We'll book into the motel over there
so we can keep an eye on him.

WILLIAMS
What's he up to?

HANSEN
If he's going fishing, I'll kill you
with my bare hands.

INT HANSEN AND WILLIAMS MOTEL ROOM.

Hansen and Williams are peering out the window at JONES' MOTEL ROOM. Jones steps outside into the well lit carpark, dressed in jeans and a jacket that blends in with what the others are wearing, and talks to a MAN that has just pulled up in the same 4x4 that picked him up from the airport, now with a bass boat on a trailer attached to the back.

HANSEN
He is going fishing. Are you sure
about those footprints?

WILLIAMS
I'm sure. It was him alright.

HANSEN
Looks like the other guy's booking
in. They won't be going anywhere
now, but we better get ready for an
early start. If they are fishing,
or at least want to look like they
are, they're going to be up early.

WILLIAMS
We better get some clothes that make
us blend in. You stand out like dog's
balls in that shithouse suit of
yours.

HANSEN
Yeah, we better find a sports store.
I'll call Nora and tell her where
we are.

EXT JONES MOTEL CARPARK - DAY

Most of the cars and boats have gone. Jones leaves his motel room and speaks briefly with the other man. They get into the 4x4 and exit the motel towing the bass boat.

INT HANSEN'S HIRE CAR

Hansen and Williams prepare to follow. Both men are dressed in their newly acquired outdoor/fishing clothing. They follow.

HANSEN

He is going fishing, I don't believe it.

WILLIAMS

Bullshit he is. It's way too late. Just follow him.

HANSEN

We stole an aircraft to watch a guy go fishing.

WILLIAMS

He's our man.

HANSEN

My career in the FBI is finished. When we get out of prison for grand theft aero, or what ever the fuck it's called, sometime in the next century, do you think we can go fishing? I like fishing.

WILLIAMS

If that fish on the wall of the sports store is the best you can do around here, I wouldn't bother.

HANSEN

That was a good fish.

WILLIAMS

We'd use it for bait where I come from.

HANSEN

Bullshit, that..

WILLIAMS

They're turning off.

HANSEN

Look at that signpost, there's a boat ramp down there.

WILLIAMS

What did FBI school teach you about following a boat?

Hansen grabs a MAP and studies it.

HANSEN

Look at this map. The river snakes its way along, crossing under this road every couple of miles or so. If we wait at each bridge until they pass, we can keep an eye on them. If they don't pass under a bridge we'll know they've stopped somewhere between that one and the last one.

WILLIAMS

There's bang for your tax payers' buck. Let's go.

EXT COUNTRY ROAD NEARING A BRIDGE

Williams and Hansen park the car a safe distance from the bridge and make their way on foot to a position from which they can watch the river without being seen from the boat.

HANSEN

Where are they?

WILLIAMS

Be patient.

HANSEN

They're probably fishing.

WILLIAMS

Here they come.

The boat passes beneath the bridge at speed.

HANSEN

Come on.

Viewed through BINOCULARS, Hansen and Williams run to the car and drive off. POV THE DRIVER of an as yet unseen car that is following them.

I/E HIRE CAR/COUNTRY ROAD

Hansen driving, Williams reading the map.

HANSEN

Here comes another bridge.

WILLIAMS

Don't stop. The main river goes on by. It's just a kind of billabong connected to the main river by a narrow channel.

They drive over the bridge. Williams looks out at the STILL WATER in the small lake that is covered in WATER LILIES. They approach another bridge.

HANSEN

How about this one?

WILLIAMS

Yeah, they should pass under this one.

The boat passes at high speed before the men get out of the car.

HANSEN

Shit, that was quick.

WILLIAMS

Some you beaut fishing boat. It must be doing fifty miles an hour. Hit the gas or we'll lose them.

They take off at high speed toward the next bridge. The car screeches to a halt a hundred metres from the bridge.

Williams exits the car and runs along the road toward the bridge and lies on the ground. The boat passes. He stands and waves to Hansen. We see him through the binoculars of the unseen driver's POV. Hansen picks him up.

WILLIAMS

Let's go.

They take off for the next bridge. Hansen pulls up short of the bridge.

EXT THE BRIDGE.

Williams runs to the bridge and hides.

WILLIAMS

Come on you prick, where are you?

Hansen joins him.

HANSEN

No sign?

WILLIAMS

Nothing yet.

HANSEN

They'd be here by now if they were coming.

WILLIAMS

Yeah. So they're somewhere between here and the last bridge.

HANSEN

Let's go and see whether there's any tracks leading off the road.

INT HANSEN' HIRE CAR

Hansen and Williams drive back along the road between the two bridges looking for a road or track leading into the woods.

WILLIAMS

Stop. Look over there - those bushes. There's some tire marks leading into the bushes but the bushes are undamaged

HANSEN

Are you sure it's not just where a car swerved off the road or something?

WILLIAMS

That's a definite attempt to conceal an entrance. They just didn't expect a fair dinkum Aussie tracker to be passing, did they.

EXT WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Hansen and Williams have hidden the car amongst some trees, and head off on foot through the woods. They trek through the trees, and reach the river. Williams stops abruptly and points at the ground.

HANSEN

What is it?

WILLIAMS

They've got a sentry patrolling the perimeter.

HANSEN

Where?

WILLIAMS

You see these prints. He's walked up and down this track a lot over the last few days.

HANSEN

Could just be a track to a cabin.

WILLIAMS

Could be I suppose. Let's carry on then. But keep your eyes peeled...
Shit!

Williams grabs Hansen and pulls him over the river bank and into the water. They hide under the overhanging bank. They see the REFLECTION on the water of MAN #1 carrying an AK47 assault rifle as he leans forward to see what caused the ripples that are emanating from the bank. Williams indicates to Hansen that he needs a boost, and with his help leaps up and grabs the man's weapon and jacket and pulls him into the water. They force him against the bank, but he's strong and pulls a pistol below the surface and in the struggle the pistol discharges below the surface and he is dead. A quick search of the body reveals an earpiece and a small microphone. They scramble from the water. They look back to examine their handiwork.

HANSEN

I wonder when he was due to check in?

A southern drawl from behind them as MAN #2, with a Southern drawl, covers them with an assault rifle.

MAN #2

About now. Put your hands on your head and kneel down, real slow. Hands on your heads.

(into a mike)
yeah, I got them - Okay, I'll wait for them.

Williams and Hansen drop to their knees with resignation.

MAN #2

Now don't you two move, especially you.

Man #2 pushes the tip of his weapon into Williams' back to illustrate his point. POV from behind Man #2.

A large tree branch smashes into the side of Man #2's head and he drops, revealing Professor Prior.

PRIOR

I can't leave you two alone for two minutes, can I.

HANSEN

What the hell are you doing here?

PRIOR

I'll explain later, let's get out of here.

EXT WOODS, AWAY FROM THE RIVER

Prior, Williams and Hansen flop down behind a fallen tree.

HANSEN

I thought the idea was that you stay in Washington in case we get into trouble.

PRIOR

I wouldn't have been much use to you just then if I had, would I?

WILLIAMS

True.

PRIOR

I flew down last night after you called Nora with your location. Then I followed you this morning. You were so intent on following Jones, you didn't realize that you were being followed by me. Nora has instructions to go to the police with what information she has if she doesn't hear from me.

HANSEN

She only has the location of the motel.

PRIOR

Call her now.

Hansen pulls the dripping mobile phone from his pocket. Prior pulls out his cell phone. It's dead.

PRIOR

In my rush, I forgot the charger.

HANSEN

You're going to have to go back to town, Prof. We got to let the police know what's going on.

PRIOR

I'll go, but wait for me to get back before you do anything.

HANSEN

We have to get into a position to stop them leaving in case they're about to strike again.

WILLIAMS

We'll have to get close. They can leave by land or water.

PRIOR
Alright, I'll fetch the troops. You
keep the bastards here if they try
to leave. Good luck.

Prior departs. Williams and Hansen head off into the trees.

EXT THE WOODS, OVERLOOKING A FISHING LODGE

Hansen and Williams are lying down watching the lodge, which has a large storage shed at the rear. A van is parked nearby and the bass boat is tied up at a small jetty.

HANSEN
A fishing lodge. It's the ideal
location. Isolated yet accessible
by water or land.

WILLIAMS
Look at the writing on the side of
the van. Medical gases.

HANSEN
I suppose we watch and wait. We
should have brought a picnic, I'm
starving.

WILLIAMS
That reminds me. Here, chew these.

Williams takes a bag from his pocket and hands him some leaves.

HANSEN
What are they?

WILLIAMS
My dad told me about it. Eat it, it'll
be good for you

HANSEN
Tastes like shit.

WILLIAMS
Stop whingeing. It just might save
your life.

HANSEN
Look, it's Jones. He's going into
the outbuilding.

EXT THE WOODS, HANSENS CAR

Prior reaches his car that is parked next to Hansen's hire car and puts the key in the door. POV MAN #3 hidden nearby. Man #3, with an evil grin, shoots Prior in the back with a silenced pistol. Grinning, he walks up to Prior's body and

rolls it over with his foot. Prior's arm snakes out and rams his knife into the man's groin. The man drops to the ground, clutching at his wound and screaming. Prior is badly wounded but still has the strength to pull himself on top of the man and cover his mouth. Prior plunges the knife up to the hilt into the man's heart. He struggles into the car and reverses clumsily onto the deserted road.

INT/EXT HANSEN'S HIRE CAR

The car hurtles drunkenly along the road and over the bridges.

EXT THE FISHING LODGE

Jones emerges from the storage shed accompanied by Tessa, who is wearing a lab coat. They look up toward Williams and Hansen's position and motion for the two men to join them.

EXT THE WOODS OVERLOOKING THE LODGE

Hansen and Williams lying prone and watching.

HANSEN
What the fuck...?

Rifle barrels are poked into the back of their heads. The rifles are being held by GUARD #1 and GUARD #2. Both guards are wearing headsets.

GUARD #1
(English accent)
I think Mr Jones has caught the two
fish he wants.

WILLIAMS
Shit.

GUARD #2
(Soviet accent)
Come.

EXT THE FISHING LODGE, OUTSIDE THE STORAGE SHED

Jones and Tessa are standing outside the large shed. They are full of confidence. They are joined by Williams and Hansen. Guard #1 and Guard #2 hold guns at their backs.

JONES
Ah, glad you could join us.

TESSA
You're a long way from home, Steve.

WILLIAMS

I was hoping I'd run into you.

JONES

Well, now you're here, I suppose we should show you around our little facility. We're really quite proud of it.

WILLIAMS

How did you know we were here?

JONES

We have infra red sensors, plus surveillance cameras in the tops of the trees. A little too sophisticated for your primitive ways, Sergeant.

WILLIAMS

Some times the old ways are best.

HANSEN

So is this where you make the gas?

JONES

Yes, come inside.

INT THE STORAGE SHED

Jones and Tessa lead Hansen and Williams into the spacious shed, followed by GUARD #1 and GUARD #2. The inside of the building looks like a normal fishing lodge store. There are numerous old bass fishing punts, a large bench with fishing equipment on it, nets hanging from the rafters with oars stored on top of them in the space created by the pitched roof. At the end of the barn, a punt leans up against the wall. Jones walks up to it and pulls it away from the wall. It opens easily on hinges. Behind it, almost invisible, is a door. Jones opens the door. Stairs lead down to one side in the gap provided by a false wall. They walk down.

INT THE LABORATORY

Hansen and Williams enter, followed by Tessa, Jones, and the Guards. The laboratory is filled with scientific paraphernalia. TECHNICIANS #1 and #2 sit at a console looking through a glass panel into an airtight room. Inside the room TECHNICIAN #3 in a protective suit is at work.

HANSEN

What's the goon in the fancy dress up to?

TESSA

He's extracting the toxin from the plants prior to mixing it with the other components. If he didn't wear the suit he'd be dead in a few minutes. In a confined space the plant itself is lethal.

WILLIAMS

How did you get involved in this?
. The kids at the school love you.

TESSA

I loved being there. Working with the kids was great. I'll miss them.

WILLIAMS

What about the three good men you shot in the back. Do you miss them?

TESSA

They endangered the operation.

HANSEN

How can you change from a caring schoolteacher to a murdering bitch like that? (snaps his fingers).

JONES

I suppose I'd better explain to you and Jungle boy here exactly what's going on, as you'll be in there experiencing it first hand, soon enough.

WILLIAMS

Thanks, I wouldn't like to die wondering.

JONES

Tessa's a sleeper. A Soviet mole. I'm afraid the end of the cold war forced us into this desperate action. Do you really think I want to work for your two bit outfit. We're highly trained personnel. Tessa, tell them.

TESSA

My training started when I was six years old. I was taken from my parents because I was highly intelligent, attractive, and my father had committed a crime that carried a death sentence. He was offered a simple choice, his daughter in return for his life. Not as bad as it sounds. Life in Russia

with no father was a death sentence
in old days, anyway.

HANSEN
Shame he didn't say no.

JONES
Tessa was trained very thoroughly,
science, languages, field craft,
sex, assassination.

WILLIAMS
Nice.

JONES
I had a call from Tessa's control.
He said he had a gas formula I might
be interested in buying. I did buy
it, and not for the good old US of
A. A couple of demonstrations that
the government could pass off as
racist, then a demand for some cold
hard cash.

TESSA
A lot of cash. We have to accelerate
the program now because
of you two fools. It was your own
people that told me about the
jinjutani

JONES
How did you know it was me? I was
in the chopper a few times,
but you wouldn't have seen me. You
nearly killed me when you blew
up the yacht.

HANSEN
Was that you on the wire? That had
to hurt.

JONES
You've had your turn, now it's mine.
Only yours will be painless. Get him
out and put these two in.

TESSA
(To Guard#1)
Ten minutes will be enough, then take
the bodies upstairs and stash them
until we get back and decide what
to do with them.

Jones checks his watch.

JONES

It'll be dark in a few minutes. Time to leave so we can make a delivery to some under privileged black school kids tomorrow morning.

TESSA

I just love working with kids.

WILLIAMS

Hey, Tessa. They pointed the bone at you back home. You know what that means.

JONES

What's that, some pagan mumbo jumbo?

Williams and Hansen are bundled into the chamber by Guard #1 and Guard #2.

WILLIAMS

You know what it means, Tessa, you know what it can do.

TESSA HAS A MENTAL FLASH OF ELDERLY ABORIGINES AROUND A FIRE AT NIGHT, THEIR FACES PAINTED LIKE SKULLS, DANCING, CHANTING AND POINTING BONES AT HER AS CHILDREN LOOK ON IN FEAR.

TESSA

Let's get out of here.

EXT OUTSIDE THE STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

Jones and Tessa walk to the van.

JONES

What was that bone bullshit about?

TESSA

Exactly that, bullshit. I've seen aboriginal people over there who believe in the spirits so terrified that they've literally died of fear.

JONES

Well it's time to start dishing out some death and fear of our own. All in a good cause of course - ours.

They open the back doors of the van. Inside are various gas bottles in racks and two uniforms, which they take out.

TESSA

Why are we taking so much gas?

JONES

You'll see.

INT THE LABORATORY/GLASS ROOM/AIR LOCK

Williams and Hansen wait as the inner door is about to open.

WILLIAMS

(quietly)

When the door opens go a bit dopey,
then close your eyes and play dead.
According to Dad, those leaves we
ate earlier will make us immune to
the effects of the jinjutani.

HANSEN

Has he ever tried it?

WILLIAMS

Piss off. He might be old but he isn't
senile.

The door opens, they step inside. They start to appear groggy, they sit, their heads lolling, their eyes rolling. The guards and technicians watch and grin.

INT THE STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

Guard #1 and Guard #2, dressed in protective suits are carrying Williams' body from the door that leads to the lab. They deposit the inert form of Williams in an old boat. They return to the lab. Williams sits up.

WILLIAMS

Thanks, dad, I owe you one.

Williams climbs from the boat and looks around for a hiding place. He looks up and smiles.

The guards come out of the lab door carrying Hansen. They walk side by side with Hansen's body slung between them. As they reach the boat and are about to throw the body in, they notice the first one is missing, they look at each other, puzzled. They hear a thump as Williams drops from the rafters. They drop Hansen and turn to Williams. He head butts Guard #2. Blood splatters the inside of the clear plastic panel in his hood and he drops. Williams elbows Guard #1 in the face with a similar result. Guard #2 starts to rise and is pounced on by Hansen, who punches him several times in the face, adding to the blood covering his visor. Guard #1 is swinging wildly, unable to see through the blood splattered, plastic panel. One wild punch catches William and sends him sprawling. Guard #1 stops swinging and tries frantically to undo his suit. Williams has picked up an oar and moved behind him as he manages to undo his suit and throws back the hood. He reaches inside and produces a pistol. He takes a bead on Hansen's back as he is sitting on Guard #2, pounding his face.

GUARD #2

I'll make sure your dead this time.

Williams, smashes the oar across the back of the guard's head.
Hansen looks around from the inert form Guard #1

WILLIAMS

Wrong.

HANSEN

Let's sort out the others.

They drag the heavy bench over to the lab door.

HANSEN

That should hold them until we get
back. If we can't catch Jones, they
might know something.

Hansen picks up Guard #1's pistol and they go outside.

EXT OUTSIDE THE STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

The sun is going down. Hansen and Williams standing outside
the shed looking about. The storage shed explodes, bowling
them over and showering them with debris.

INT THE MEDICAL GAS VAN - NIGHT

Jones is holding a remote control. They are parked just off
the road behind the disguised track entrance. Tessa, at the
wheel, smiles.

TESSA

So that's why we brought all the gas.
You're so ruthless. I love that in
a man.

Jones smiles and they kiss.

EXT OUTSIDE THE STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

Williams and Hansen climb to their feet.

HANSEN

Jones trimming his wage bill, which
means he's not far away.

WILLIAMS

The boat. We'll catch them on the
bridges.

HANSEN

Let's go.

They run to the boat, jump in, cast off and roar away.

EXT THE BASS BOAT - NIGHT

It's getting dark. Williams and Hansen are hurtling along the river. Hansen is driving. Williams is searching through the storage compartments. He withdraws a tube of white zinc sunblock and looks at it thoughtfully. They sight the van through the trees.

HANSEN
There they are. Anything useful in there?

WILLIAMS
Might be. I've got an idea.

Williams, removes the net from a landing net pole and throws it over the side. He tapes a fishing knife to the pole to make a spear.

The boat goes under the first bridge behind the van.

HANSEN
We should be getting close by the next bridge.

WILLIAMS
Remember one of these bridges leads to a dead end.

They go under another bridge. Williams starts to undress.

HANSEN
What are you doing?

WILLIAMS
Just keep your eyes on the road.

They go under another bridge, catching a glimpse of the rear of the van.

HANSEN
We go at the next bridge. Gun it.

EXT THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Williams is on the bridge. He is naked but for a loin cloth. His face and body painted as a white skeleton. He stands on one leg, the other is bent with the sole of his foot against the inside of his other knee. He's holding the makeshift spear in the vertical position, its butt end on the ground. He is facing the oncoming van.

INT THE VAN.

Tessa is driving, Jones is in the passenger seat. She stops the van when she sees Williams. Tessa again gets a FLASH OF THE ABORIGINES AROUND THE FIRE.

JONES
What the fuck's that?

TESSA
It's him, Williams.

JONES
Bullshit. He's dead.

TESSA
I know.

JONES
Run him down, go on. What's wrong?
Kill him.

TESSA
He's already dead. I'm...

Jones pulls Tessa from the driving seat and gets behind the wheel himself and edges the van forward.

JONES
If he isn't, he soon will be.

Jones floors it and accelerates toward Williams.

EXT THE BRIDGE

On the bridge, Hansen is up behind Williams, mimicking Williams' stance exactly. The van accelerates toward them, as it's about to mount the bridge, Williams ducks revealing Hansen, who pulls a pistol from his waistband, and aiming with both hands, fires at the van, holing the windscreen. Jones is hit in the face. He loses control of the van which veers to one side and goes off the side of the bridge. The van lands in the small lake full of white water lilies they had passed earlier in the day. It sinks below the surface.

Hansen and Williams watch from the bridge. Pete turns away.

HANSEN
Well that...

Tessa surfaces and takes a bead on Hansen's back with a pistol. Williams sees her and pushes Hansen over as she fires. Before she can aim at Williams he has thrown his makeshift spear and she is dead, floating amongst the white water lilies.

EXT OUTSIDE THE DEMOLISHED STORAGE SHED - DAY

FBI agents and police are milling about. Hansen and Williams are standing with Collins.

COLLINS
You guys deserve a vacation.

WILLIAMS
We've heard that one before.

COLLINS
You got a nice boat, why don't you take a couple of weeks off and do a bit of fishing. It's supposed to be good around here.

HANSEN
What about the report?

COLLINS
There won't be a report. The Bureau would not survive if this became public knowledge. You're on a month's convalescence, make the most of it.

WILLIAMS
Don't argue with the man. Jones did tell you to show me a good time.

EXT THE BASS BOAT - DAY

Williams and Hansen are fishing. Williams is playing a bass and gets it to the boat. Hansen lifts the bass from the water for him and holds it up. The fish weighs about four pounds.

HANSEN
Nice fish.

Williams takes the fish from him, derisively holding it by its mouth he looks at it unimpressed. He looks across the fish at Hansen and raises an eyebrow. They smile knowingly.

EXT A RIVER, NORTHER AUSTRALIA - DAY

An stationary aluminium punt with Williams at the helm. Hansen is standing and battling a large fish. The barramundi fish jumps. It's about forty pounds. The sun glints on its shiny silver body. We hear a cheer and pan around to the river bank, where Professor Prior lies on a sun bed with a beer in his hand whilst having his leg wound dressed by nurse Vicki Morgan.

FADE OUT.

Footprint
By
Andrew Hartley

andy@cinemalite.com.au

61 403499011