

THE DEATH DEALER

by

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Based on the *Maxim Magazine* article

"The Death Dealer"

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BLACK SCREEN - SUPER:

"Certainly there is no hunting like the hunting of man, and those who have hunted armed men long enough and liked it never really care for anything else thereafter."

— Ernest Hemingway

SMASH IN ON:

EXT. STORE-LINED STREET - DAWN

Windows covered with dirt and grime. Signage in Spanish. Street deserted. South of the border ghost town vibe.

Super: **Nuevo Laredo, Mexico**

A battered Toyota Corolla screeches to a halt beside a rusty 55-gallon drum. Out comes...

BASILIO -- 30s, hulking CARTEL ENFORCER. Beyond cruel, this ogre will happily beat puppies to death, then have lunch without washing the blood off his hands.

Pops the trunk, opens a STYROFOAM COOLER, removes a SEVERED HEAD and places it atop the drum.

Two more heads follow. All are male, duct tape covering their mouths. Frozen facial expressions say they died painfully.

A POLICE CAR (Federales) cruises slowly into view...

Federales clock Basilio. Basilio gives the cops a malevolent stare and they race off, tails between their legs.

Basilio grins. Lights a cigarette, takes a deep drag and admires his handiwork. He fucking runs this town.

Gets back in the car, starts to drive off when...

HADEN -- 40s, huge and shabby drunk clutching a half-empty tequila bottle -- wobbles in front of Basilio's car.

Basilio stomps the brakes.

BASILIO
Chinga tu madre!

Basilio lays on the horn, but Haden barely acknowledges. Across the street, adjacent to Basilio's car...

A gray-haired GRINGO -- 50s, soft -- wearing a TOURIST T-SHIRT (One Tequila, Two Tequila, Three Tequila, Floor!) charges out of the alley, bringing up a MINI-UZI.

Basilio's eyes go wide. Taken by surprise, he doesn't have time to react.

Gringo clamps his finger on the trigger, starts spraying rounds, raking the car front to back.

More than a few rip into Basilio, blowing him away. The guy dies like he lived.

INT. CHEAPER THAN CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Forget bedbugs, this disgusting room has bed monsters.

The Gringo -- still amped from the adrenaline rush -- hands a very sober Haden an envelope stuffed with \$100s.

GRINGO
I did well, huh?

HADEN
You did okay.

GRINGO
Thanks to you, my bucket list is complete.

HADEN
What is it with you rich guys?
Can't you just dive the Barrier
Reef or climb Everest or something?

GRINGO
I don't see you complaining.

HADEN
I didn't create the market, I just
serve it.

Haden stuffs the envelope in his pocket, starts for the door.

HADEN
Our business is done. Follow my
instructions and you're home clean.

GRINGO
And if I want to do it again?

HADEN
You know how to find me.

EXT. STATELY HIGH-RISE - CENTRAL PARK WEST - DAY

One of Manhattan's priciest locales.

SUPER: New York City - One Month Later

INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - DAY

Sweeping views of Central Park via towering floor-to-ceiling window walls. Decor reeks of serious wealth.

INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

A CENTERFOLD BLONDE slumbers in a massive bed with satin sheets until...

A SPLATTER OF \$100 BILLS hits her face. She looks up at...

JOE SINCLAIR -- 28, toned and handsome, wearing a black silk sweatsuit. He's such an arrogant prick, ARROGANT PRICK should be tattooed on his forehead.

JOE

Time for the night shift to punch out.

BLONDE

I thought we'd have breakfast?

JOE

You thought wrong.

Joe yanks off the covers.

After snatching up the cash, the blonde pulls on a tight black cocktail dress and stiletto heels - clearly the same clothes from last night.

JOE

Don't let the door hit you in the ass.

BLONDE

You're such a charmer.

JOE

I'm rich. I don't need charm.

Blonde leaves in a huff.

Joe goes to the dresser, places a gold Celtic pattern pinky ring on his finger.

INT. LAW OFFICES OF MORTIMER & CROWE - DAY

YOUNG ATTORNEYS toil in cubicles, overworked to the gills.

STEVE LAPINSKY -- 28, cherubic -- pores over a contract at his cluttered desk. On the desk, a framed photo of EMILY -- 26, his attractive wife.

One of the firm's PARTNERS (60s) walks over.

PARTNER

How's the WestCorp contract coming along, Steve?

STEVE

Almost done, sir.

PARTNER

Get it to me the moment it's ready.

STEVE

Yes, sir.

Partner walks off as Steve's phone rings. He answers...

STEVE

Lapinsky.

INT. LARGE NEWSPAPER OFFICE - SAME TIME

Bustling big city news office. In one cubicle...

TREY THOMPSON -- 28, African-American, plenty of swagger -- sits back with his feet on the desk, cellphone to his ear.

On the cubicle walls, CLIPPINGS OF INVESTIGATIVE ARTICLES he's penned... Mafia hit men, drug rings, corrupt cops. If there's danger in the research, chances are Trey wrote it.

TREY

We still on for lunch?

STEVE

Your expense account still buying?

TREY

Dumb question. See you there.

INT. TELEMARKETING OFFICE - DAY

TELEMARKETERS dial for dollars. Midway down one row --

BILLY JENSEN - 28, unshaven, three silver hoops in his left ear lobe, longish hair tied in a pony-tail.

He reads from a two-page script into his telephone headset, his voice flat, crackling with defeat.

BILLY
...And by purchasing today Mrs.
Jones you'll receive --

CLICK. Billy yanks off his headset in disgust.

BILLY
Fuck!

A MORBIDLY OBESE WOMAN -- late-30s, munching messily from a large bag of Cheetohs -- wobbles over.

MORBIDLY OBESE WOMAN
Struck out, huh?

BILLY
Biddy waits 'til the very end to
hang up. Waste of my fuckin' time.

MORBIDLY OBESE WOMAN
Until you get that big record deal
you ain't got a choice.

BILLY
It'll happen.

MORBIDLY OBESE WOMAN
Yeah, and I'll be Playmate of the
Year.

Mouth full, she laughs and wobbles off. Billy flashes her the bird, then pulls a crumpled INVITATION -- elegant, black with red lettering, previously opened -- from his pocket.

He reads it again and smiles wide.

INT. MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY - AFRICAN LION EXHIBIT - DAY

People lean against the banister, awed by the life-size model of a pride of lions.

Joe stands at one end of the banister, nobody within ten feet of him. He checks his watch, shakes his head in annoyance.

JOE
(mutters to himself)
I don't have time for this.

HADEN (O.S.)
Yeah you do.

Joe wheels around, finds himself staring up into the eyes of Haden, who towers over him. Intimidated, Joe backs up.

JOE
Haden?

HADEN
I ain't Mary fuckin' Poppins.

JOE
What's with the cloak 'n dagger
bullshit?

HADEN
You're not paying me to take you
sightseeing.

Haden passes Joe a scrap of paper with SCRIBBLED NUMBERS.

HADEN
Wire the money to this account.

JOE
What guarantee do I have that you
won't take the two million and run?

HADEN
My word's worth more than your
money.

Joe watches Haden walk away.

E./I. AQUAVIT RESTAURANT - DAY

In Park Avenue Tower, this upscale Scandinavian-themed eatery is the perfect venue for a \$500 lunch. Not a single off-the-rack suit or dress in the place except for...

THE TABLE WHERE STEVE AND TREY DINE

Steve in his \$99 "Men's Store" suit and Trey in blue jeans and a T-shirt stand out like a big dildo in a convent.

Their table is filled with delectables... Glassblower herring with caviar, duck charcuterie, truffled shrimp cocktail.

Trey waves an INVITATION, identical to the one Billy had.

TREY

Told you the trip was still on.
Yours is probably in your mailbox.

STEVE

Joe's been acting like a prick
since his dad died.

TREY

Joe's always been a prick. But he's
our prick. And even if I hated him,
I wouldn't miss the annual trip.

Steve doesn't respond, just picks at his food. Trey gives him
a disbelieving look. Steve just shrugs.

TREY

You've got to be kidding.

STEVE

The timing sucks. I've got a legit
shot at making junior partner. And
with the baby coming...

TREY

Jesus, Steve, who knows what crazy
shit Joe has planned this time?

STEVE

After last year, I promised Em. No
more.

Trey makes a WHIP-CRACKING motion and sound.

STEVE

You don't understand.

TREY

I understand perfectly. Your window
of freedom shrinks by the day.

STEVE

I don't see it that way.

TREY

Of course you don't. Who'd want to
see into your future?

Trey puts his fingers to his temples like a swami.

TREY

I see a wild night out at the
Cineplex - if you can get a sitter.

EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK - NYC - DAY

Haden sits on a bench in Tompkins Square Park, looking out on an open field where people exercise their dogs. Standing at the edge of the field...

DIRK -- 30s, bulging steroid muscles, wearing a wife-beater.

He holds a fierce PIT BULL with a studded collar on a thick leather leash.

The pit shows many scars from fights and cigarette burns, and is missing part of one ear. Clearly had a hard life.

Dirk scans the field like a predator sizing up its prey. Then he gives the pit a stinging backhand across the snout. Incensed, pit GROWLS, fangs bared.

Dirk grabs the pit by the scruff of its neck and forces its head in the direction of the other dogs. He SLAPS the pit again, antagonizing it into fight mode.

Dirk unhooks the leash and kicks the pit in the ass, sending the enraged dog speeding towards an unsuspecting Yorkie.

Pit covers the ground quickly. Innocent little Yorkie has no clue of the four-legged fury heading its way. Suddenly...

WHAM! Haden tackles the pit broadside, tumbles over with it.

Pit snarls and snaps, trying like mad to gnash Haden.

Haden jams his hand under the pit's collar and squeezes while lifting the big dog off the ground to stare into its eyes.

HADEN

You need to learn... There's always
a bigger, badder dog.

Haden squeezes the pit's neck tighter. Dog's eyes flutter. Soon its legs stop kicking, just dangle. Eyes now closed.

Haden throws the limp animal over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes, starts walking towards Dirk, who is racing at Haden with a head of steam.

DIRK

Who the fuck do you--

THWAP! Brutal open-palm shuto blow to Dirk's windpipe. Dirk drops to his knees clutching his throat, gurgling blood.

Haden continues on his way without breaking stride.

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

Lights flicker as the subway speeds through a tunnel.

Steve and a VERY PREGNANT Emily sit side by side.

STEVE

Your mom was tough on me tonight.

EMILY

You deserved it. What kind of husband goes on a mancation when his wife is eight months pregnant?

STEVE

I didn't say I was going.

EMILY

You didn't say you weren't. Besides, you said there wasn't going to be a trip this year.

Steve removes the INVITATION from his coat pocket.

STEVE

I was wrong.

EMILY

But you promised.

STEVE

I know, honey, but it's probably the last time the four of us --

EMILY

Haven't you outgrown those guys by now? They're complete adolescents.

STEVE

They're like family.

Emily takes Steve's hand, puts it on her bulging belly.

EMILY

This is family.

A look comes over Steve. His body sags.

STEVE

All right. I'm not going.

Emily smiles, rests her head on his shoulder.

INT. HADEN'S LOFT - NIGHT

Cavernous with two levels. At the far end of the bottom level, a wrought iron pen holds the growling pit bull.

Other areas include an open WEIGHT ROOM and a SHOOTING RANGE, where Haden is busy obliterating "bad guy" mannequins with a SILENCER-EQUIPPED MAC-10. When the mag is empty...

Haden walks to the KITCHEN, takes a paper bag from the fridge and heads to the pitbull's enclosure. The large dog bares its canines, growling angrily as he approaches.

HADEN

You're a bold sonofabitch, I'll
give you that.

Haden unlocks the pen's padlock, removes the chain. Pit's guttural snarls intensify, ready to attack.

HADEN

But like you, I don't scare easy.

Haden swings the door open. Man and beast now separated by nothing but air. Pit barks ferociously. Haden laughs.

Stare-down ensues, pit growling manically. After a few beats, Haden pulls a LARGE STEAK from the bag.

Pit instantly stops barking, begins licking its chops.

Haden turns his back on the dog, walks to the stove, puts the steak in the oven. Pit stands in the open doorway, drooling.

HADEN

Stubborn, too.

Haden grabs a beer from the fridge. When he closes the fridge and turns, the pit is sitting on its haunches by the oven, smacking its lips. Haden chuckles.

HADEN

We're peas in a pod. Now all you
need is a proper name.

EXT. JFK AIRPORT - PRIVATE PLANE TERMINAL - DAY

Joe waits beside the boarding ladder to his private 727, painted all black with gold 'SINCLAIR' livery.

A TAXI drives in.

Billy hops out, begins rummaging his pockets for cash.

TAXI DRIVER

Let's go. I ain't got all day.

Joe shakes his head in disgust, hands the driver a \$20.

BILLY

Thanks, Joe. I'll pay you back.

Joe rolls his eyes. That's when...

Trey races through the gates on a Ducati Monster, power-slides to a stop. He runs to Joe, gives him a big hug.

TREY

I'm sorry about your dad.

JOE

I'm not.

Billy comes over, awkwardly tries to hug Joe, but ends up just clapping him on the shoulder.

BILLY

Hey man, me, too. I'm sorry.

Joe completely ignores Billy, checks his watch.

JOE

Steve's late.

TREY

He's not coming.

BILLY

What a wuss.

TREY

Shut up, Billy. Steve's got a lot going on right now.

BILLY

Like we don't.

JOE

You don't.

Billy idolizes Joe and the dig is a rusty knife in the gut.

JOE

Fuck him. His loss.

As they start to climb the 727's boarding ladder, a BEEPING HORN alerts them to an old Toyota Corolla racing through the gate. Emily at the wheel, Steve riding shotgun.

INT. STEVE'S TOYOTA COROLLA - DAY

Corolla idles...

EMILY
Sure about this?

STEVE
Doesn't mean I won't miss you.

Tender, loving kiss. Emily breaks the embrace.

EMILY
Go play with your friends.

STEVE
I love you.

Steve gets out, runs to the boarding ladder where Trey waits.

TREY
I knew you wouldn't miss this.

STEVE
Someone's gotta keep you out of
trouble.

INT. 727 - DAY

More UPSCALE MEN'S CLUB than passenger plane. Mirrored ceiling, leather love seats, marble bar and two gleaming floor-to-ceiling stripper poles.

An attractive FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT hands out cocktails.

TREY
I see you made some changes to
dad's bird.

JOE
He'd roll over in his grave if he
saw it now.
(beat)
Good thing he was cremated.

Stunned silence from the others before Joe breaks into laughter. The others follow.

STEVE
The bar, I get. But stripper poles?

JOE
There's a method to my madness.

TREY
More like a madness to your method.

JOE
(raising his glass)
I'll drink to that.

After they toast:

BILLY
So where are we headed?

JOE
This game's show, not tell. But
here's a hint. Doctor Shapiro?

Joe motions to the open hatchway where...

DR. SHAPIRO -- 50s, carrying a vintage black doctor's bag --
steps into the plane.

DR. SHAPIRO
First time I've made a plane-call.

Dr. Shapiro sets down his bag, removes four large SYRINGES,
each filled with yellow serum, which he lays out on a table.

UN-CAPS one of the syringes, readies it with a gentle press
on the plunger.

DR. SHAPIRO
Who's first?

Billy pulls up his sleeve, offering the doctor his forearm.

Shapiro shakes his head, rolls the arm over, ALCOHOL-SWABS
Billy's upper arm.

Billy cries out as Shapiro jabs the big needle home and
delivers its contents.

TREY
Do I even want to know?

JOE
Immunizations are required.

Joe goes next, then Trey. Steve balks.

STEVE
How do you know I won't have an
allergic reaction?

DR. SHAPIRO
This compound's hypo-allergenic.
What's your blood type?

STEVE
O-positive.

DR. SHAPIRO
You'll be fine.

As Steve unbuttons his shirt, Joe cracks up.

STEVE
What's so funny?

JOE
O-positive.

STEVE
Yeah, so?

JOE
Steve Lapinsky, universal donor.
You're middle of the road to the
bone.

STEVE
We don't all get silver spoons.

JOE
Fuck the spoon. I got a goblet.

BILLY
(toasting)
GOBLET!

Joe sneers and Billy drinks alone.

EXT. 727 - DAY

727 taxis down the runway, takes off.

INT. 727 - DAY - AIRBORNE

Drop-down PLASMA SCREEN shows a 'Best Of' DVD -- highlights of the guys' previous amazing annual adventures accompanied by a kickass soundtrack.

Cage-diving with great white sharks. Sky-diving. Mountain climbing in Tibet. Blasting sandrails through the desert. White water rafting. If it's high-octane, they've done it.

Meanwhile, using a short gold straw, Joe snorts a long line of coke off a mirrored tray before passing it to Steve.

Steve waves him off. Joe passes the tray to Billy.

BILLY
Cool. More for me.

Joe slaps Steve playfully on the knee.

JOE
You're getting soft in your old age, counselor.

STEVE
Gotta grow up sometime.

JOE
Bite your tongue. You're killing my buzz.

TREY
(re: video)
The music's a sweet touch. Really pulls it all together.

JOE
Between licensing and editing it cost two hundred K, but you guys are worth it.

BILLY
I would've done the music for free.

JOE
Yeah, but I wanted to enjoy it.

The guys laugh. Billy does, too - at his own expense.

DVD ends. Trey, Steve and Billy give a goofy round of applause, prompting Joe to stand, emcee-style:

JOE
Now it's time for the live show.

FOUR SMOKIN' HOT STRIPPERS in slutty lingerie enter from the rear of the plane and start busting moves on the poles.

TREY
When I die, I want to come back as Joe Sinclair.

BILLY
True that!

One of the strippers comes off the pole, takes Steve's hand and tries to pull him towards the back of the plane.

STRIPPER #1
C'mon sweetie, time to join the
Mile High Club.

STEVE
No thanks.

JOE
You crazy? This is the best ass
money can buy.

STEVE
(tapping his wedding band)
Can't do it.

JOE
We're at thirty thousand feet.
She'll never know.

STEVE
I'll know.

Stripper #1 shrugs, takes Billy's hand instead and leads him to the back of the plane. Billy calls back to Steve...

BILLY
Don't worry. I'll let you know what
you missed.

INT. 727 - DAY

Shades down. Clothing strewn throughout. Empty liquor bottles and leftover hors d'oeuvres.

The guys are sprawled to and fro, wearing only undergarments. Except Steve, who is fully clothed.

Two strippers spoon Joe, other two snuggling Trey and Billy.

Billy's face is DECORATED WITH LIPSTICK - dick drawings.
"2.5" is lipsticked on the front of his BVDs.

When the plane jerks to a stop, everyone stirs.

Flight Attendant enters the main cabin, begins pouring from a pitcher of Bloody Mary's, handing out Tylenol as well.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Brunch will be ready shortly.
Local time is eleven-thirty ay-em.

STEVE
Eleven thirty?

Steve raises his shade and sunlight spills in.

AIR ZIMBABWE PLANES on the tarmac. ALL GROUND PERSONNEL ARE BLACK; some are SOLDIERS in green & brown camo fatigues, cradling FN-FAL assault rifles.

STEVE
(nudging Trey)
You're not gonna believe this!

Trey raises his shade, eyes bulge. Billy shields his eyes from the sunlight.

BILLY
Where the fuck are we?

TREY
You tell me.

Billy stares out the window for the longest time before:

BILLY
Detroit?

STEVE
Try Africa.

BILLY
What the fuck are we gonna do in Africa? Get AIDS bangin' natives?

TREY
Spoken like a true world traveler.

BILLY
Maybe you can reconnect with your people.

TREY
You're gonna have to reconnect your head to your neck in a second.

Billy gives Trey the finger.

Trey grabs Billy, tilts his head backward so he can see his REFLECTION in the mirrored ceiling.

Billy sinks when he sees the lipstick designs.

BILLY
You guys suck.

Laughter from everyone, even Billy.

STEVE
(looking out the window)
I think the welcoming committee's
here.

EXT. 727 - DAY

A MILITARY JEEP and an old LANDROVER pull up beside the 727.

From out of the jeep comes COLONEL MOYO -- late-40s, African, reeking of authority and power, wearing a crisp Zimbabwe Army uniform -- accompanied by TWO SOLDIERS.

INT. 727 - DAY

Flight Attendant opens the door. Joe, still in silk boxers, rises to meets Col. Moyo and company.

COLONEL MOYO
Mister Sinclair?
(offers a handshake)
I'm Colonel Moyo, your liaison in
Zimbabwe.

Moyo reacts to the remains of the party, along with Billy's lipstick-marked face and BVDs.

COLONEL MOYO
I see you had an enjoyable flight.

JOE
That's how I roll.

Moyo doesn't get it. Trey and Steve roll their eyes.

COLONEL MOYO
If we can conclude our business,
you'll be on your way.

Joe opens an overhead compartment, removes a THICK ENVELOPE, hands it to Moyo. Moyo glances inside and smiles -- it's stuffed with \$100 bills.

STEVE
Jesus. I forgot my passport.

COLONEL MOYO
(re: envelope)
With a friend like Mr. Sinclair,
passports are not required.

EXT. AIDS HOSPICE - DAY

A series of low-slung buildings -- some made of wood, others little more than a scrap metal framework for mesh netting. A sign over the main entrance: **Good Hope Hospice**

INT. AIDS HOSPICE - DAY

Haden walks up to a reception desk manned by DALILA -- 30s, a pretty but exhausted African nurse.

HADEN
I'm here to see a patient. Chuma
Smithfield.

DALILA
You've come just in time. God has
tracked him.

Dalila offers Haden a facemask. Haden shakes his head "no."

DALILA
For some, it makes them feel safer.
Follow me.

Haden follows Dalila through a series of open rooms filled with emaciated Africans lying on blankets, all suffering from AIDS. Some moan, but most are silent, too weak to groan.

Dalila stops at the edge of a blanket where CHUMA -- 50s, coal black; a shell of his former self -- lies, eyes closed.

HADEN
Chuma...

Chuma's eyes flicker open. A weak smile creeps onto his face.

Dalila walks away as Haden takes a knee beside his friend.

HADEN
I heard the rumors.

CHUMA
I lay here and remember. Not the
fighting. I remember the women.

HADEN
We had some good times.

CHUMA
Many good times.

HADEN
I brought you something.

Haden takes Chuma's hand, places two small RED PILLS in his palm, closes Chuma's hand around them.

HADEN
For the pain. For the end.

CHUMA
You always had my back.

Chuma closes his eyes.

CHUMA
Remember me.

INT. AIDS HOSPICE - HALLWAY

Haden retraces his steps, finds Dalila near the front of the building smoking a cigarette. He takes a sheaf of bills from his pocket, hands it to her.

HADEN
Take this.

DALILA
That's a lot of money. I shouldn't--

Haden closes her hand around the wad of cash.

HADEN
Do what you can for them.

DALILA
Unfortunately, time has no price.

HADEN
For comfort then.

She nods, pockets the money.

DALILA
Will you be coming back?

Haden walks out the door without a response.

E./I. LANDROVER - DAY

Bouncing across the plains. Giraffe, gazelle, zebra, wildebeest and many other animals out and about.

AFRICAN DRIVER -- 20s, at the wheel. Joe rides shotgun, with Steve, Trey and Billy in the back.

BILLY

It's like the Bronx fuckin' Zoo on steroids.

JOE

Billy, you should write travel brochures.

BILLY

You think so?

JOE

No.

EXT. LARGE CLEARING - DAY

Landrover cuts a swath through tall elephant grass, soon arrives at a CAMPSITE in the center of a clearing, complete with a pair of tents, one much larger than the other.

A fire pit ringed with stones has a spit over it and five collapsible canvas chairs around it.

A small, flowing stream winds its way through camp.

DRIVER

End of the road.

Driver hops out, grabs four duffels from the back of the Rover, carries them into the larger tent.

The guys disgorge from the Rover, stretch, and take stock of their surroundings.

Joe takes out a ZIPLOC BAG, drops his iPhone in it, motions for the others to do the same.

JOE

Hand 'em over.

TREY

Seriously?

JOE

We're roughin' it. No tech.

STEVE

What if there's an emergency?

JOE
Quit being a wuss.

Trey and Steve's iPhones are reluctantly added to the bag, as is Billy's pay-as-you-go Boost Mobile.

Joe hands the bag to the DRIVER, along with some cash.

JOE
Have the clerk at the Harare Hotel
lock these in my box.

DRIVER
Yes, Mr. Joe.

Driver gets into the Rover, rumbles off.

JOE
Whattya think?

STEVE
I would've preferred poker tables
and dice pits.

BILLY
C'mon Steve, you know how it works.
First comes the risk, then we get
the reward.

STEVE
It's the risk I'm worried about.
You can get eaten out here.

TREY
What now?

HADEN (O.S.)
Now, you follow orders.

Haden steps out of the small tent dressed like a professional hunter. Resting on his shoulder, a monstrous .577 Nitro double rifle. On one hip, a massive .454 Casull revolver. On the other, a survival knife that would make Rambo jealous.

HADEN
Name's Haden. Do what I tell you,
we're solid. Stray from my
instructions, I'll eat your lunch.

TREY
(sotto)
Nice touch, Joe. No safari would be
complete without the hard-core
professional hunter.

Trey gives Haden a thumbs-up.

TREY

Hey, bwana, Out Of Africa is one of my all-time faves. What was Streep like in the sack?

Haden casually strides to Trey, gets in his grill.

HADEN

Disrespect is the same as disobedience.

With the speed of a mamba, Haden delivers an open palm strike to Trey's solar plexus, dropping him like a bag of rocks.

STEVE

Jesus Christ.

Haden stink-eyes the others.

HADEN

Anyone else?

Silence.

HADEN (CONT'D)

Good. Now kit up. We've got some acclimatizing to do.

Haden ducks back into his tent. Steve helps Trey up, then wheels on Joe.

STEVE

The hell'd you get us into?

JOE

You of all people should know, some folks don't like their work trivialized.

Billy grins at Trey like the Cheshire cat.

BILLY

Ouch. That looked painful.

INT. FOUR-MAN TENT - DAY

The guys unpack their duffels. Each has an identical complement of new SAFARI CLOTHING - all still with tags.

Billy stares at a safari jacket.

BILLY
Jesus Joe, you buy out Banana
Republic?

JOE
Not everyone shops at K-Mart.

Billy frowns. Trey walks over, grinning.

TREY
Ouch. That seemed painful.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

The guys emerge from the tent in their dapper new safari ensembles. Haden looks at them with disdain.

HADEN
Get on the ground.

BILLY
These clothes are brand new.

Haden KICKS BILLY'S LEGS OUT FROM UNDER HIM, dropping him. The other guys hit the dirt.

HADEN
On your bellies.

All quickly turn over.

HADEN
Now roll.

Annoyed, Joe gets up on his elbows, about to say something, when Haden steps on his back, pushing him down flat.

HADEN
I said ROLL!

The guys ROLL like crazy, repeatedly bumping into one another, quickly becoming covered with dirt.

HADEN
That's enough. On your feet.

The guys stand. Now absolutely filthy from head to toe.

HADEN
That's more like it.

Haden hands out filled CAMELBAK HYDRATION PACKS.

HADEN

This water's clean. Make sure you stay hydrated.

He sets off on a brisk pace.

HADEN

Try to keep up.

Haden pushes through dense foliage, emerges onto a GAME TRAIL. Joe is behind Haden, then Billy, then Trey and Steve.

JOE

Don't we need guns?

HADEN

For what?

BILLY

We're here to hunt, right?

Haden stops short, whips around.

HADEN

How many different species are on this planet?

BILLY

Jeez, I don't know. Millions?

HADEN

Try two: predators and prey. Before you become a predator, you need to learn how to avoid becoming prey.

STEVE

Any advice on how we do that?

HADEN

Dangers you see pale in comparison to those you don't.

Haden QUICK-DRAWS HIS .454 CASULL, drops to one knee and takes aim at Steve - taking a piss beside a tree.

BOOM! Hand-cannon roars, sending a heavy round DEAD CENTER BETWEEN STEVE'S LEGS.

TREY

The fuck!

Steve feels the heat of the round passing below his junk, pisses on himself in fear.

STEVE
Are you crazy?!

Haden stomps over to Steve, grabs his head, turns it to face the tree he was peeing on...

A TINY SNAKE writhes and twitches, HEAD GONE, blood spewing.

HADEN
Pygmy mamba. One bite and you're
maggot chow. No antidotes.

STEVE
How the hell'd you see that?

HADEN
Because I looked. Let your guard
down for an instant and you drop a
link on the food chain.

Haden holsters his revolver.

BILLY
Speaking of food, when do we eat?

HADEN
How hungry are you?

BILLY
I could kill for a steak.

HADEN
Could you? Let's find out.

EXT. EDGE OF A CLEARING - DUSK

Concealed amid thick foliage, Haden and the guys look out on a WATERHOLE 75 yards away - a PACK OF WILD BOAR drinking.

Haden hands Billy the double rifle and points to a grizzled old boar standing away from the others.

HADEN
(whispering)
That one's old and slow. He'll be
lion chow soon. Make sure the
rifle's snug against--

BOOM! Howitzer-esque. The .577 FLIES UP violently, SLAMS Billy in the face, sends him flying backward.

The wild boar are off and running, including Billy's target, not a scratch on it.

HADEN

Figures.

Haden stands and, in one smooth motion, draws his big revolver, thumbs back the hammer, takes aim and...

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

What remains of the boar's roasted and carved carcass hangs on the spit. Haden and the guys sit around the fire, stuffed.

Billy's face is bruised, nostrils stopped with wads of bloody tissue paper.

JOE

Fancy shooting back there.

HADEN

Thanks.

JOE

I was talking to Billy.

Laughter from everyone except Billy. Joe opens an ostrich skin CIGAR CARRIER filled with fat MONTE CRISTO CIGARS.

JOE

These were rolled by Castro's personal tobacconist. Two G's a pop and worth every penny.

When the cigars get to Haden, he flings them into the woods.

JOE

What the fuck?

Haden clocks Joe with an icy stare.

HADEN

I lost friends fighting the spread of communism. One of 'em is dying in a hospice less than a hundred miles from here.

JOE

They're just cigars.

HADEN

They're symbols of oppression.

JOE

I'm sorry about your friend, but--

HADEN
Shut your fuckin' mouth!

Haden walks off, enters his tent, zips it shut.

STEVE
Where the hell did you find that
guy? He's a taco short of a combo
plate.

JOE
One of my dad's old hunting buddies
made the connection. He's an ex-
merc. The real deal.

STEVE
Which means he's a killer. For
money.

BILLY
Cool.

STEVE
More like sick.

TREY
Cool, sick... Depends on your
perspective.

JOE
I paid Haden serious coin. He's
just making sure we get our money's
worth.

Joe gets up, starts for his tent...

JOE
I'm turning in.

Billy stands.

BILLY
Me, too.

As Billy walks off, Steve pokes at the fire with a stick.

STEVE
I guess it's true what they say.
Money corrupts.

TREY
I'll take two billion worth of
corruption any day.

STEVE

Pass.

TREY

You're honestly tellin' me you
wouldn't want Joe's life.

STEVE

I'm happy with mine.

TREY

Hmm, let's see... Demanding job, a
wife that bosses you around, and a
baby on the way.

STEVE

I like coming home every night to
someone who loves me. Someone who
wants to grow old with me.

TREY

You know what I think?

STEVE

What?

TREY

I think there's some big G stogies
in the weeds right over there just
beggin' to be smoked.

STEVE

Smartest thing you've said all day.

Trey walks off into the darkness, returns a few moments later
with the cigars. He and Steve light up.

TREY

No politics. Cool?

STEVE

Trump's president. Hell has frozen
over and politics are dead forever.

TREY

Smartest thing you've said all day.

EXT. MAKESHIFT SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

Five blue bulls-eye TARGETS have been set up against a
hillside, roughly 100 yards away.

Each of the guys holds a scoped HBAR assault rifle.

Wrapping the HBAR's sling around his forearm for stability, Haden takes aim at his target. Three rapid shots, three dead-center hits. The grouping could be covered with a quarter.

The guys each take a turn. All except Steve hit the target, but none come close to Haden's marksmanship.

Haden demonstrates again. Another amazing three-shot group.

Haden
Don't jerk the trigger. Squeeze it.
Take a breath before you fire, and
slowly release it as you squeeze.

The guys go again. Much improved. Joe and Trey do the best, putting their shots inside the target's smallest circle.

BILLY
Great shooting, Joe.

Joe doesn't acknowledge the compliment, to Billy's dismay.

Steve is at least hitting the target now. Barely.

HADEN
You're flinching. Try to be smooth.

STEVE
I'm not into guns.

BILLY
It shows.

Haden makes a quick adjustment to Steve's scope, swaps the mag out and hands it back.

Haden
Now give it a try.

Steve fires two quick shots, both dead center.

STEVE
Holy shit.

HADEN
You're a natural.

Steve sneers at Billy, who turns away in disgust.

After emptying their mags, they're all given fresh ones.

Haden
Lock 'n load. Let's go hunting.

EXT. AFRICAN PLAINS - DAY

Haden and the guys emerge from a patch of tall elephant grass beside a large BOG, their clothing drenched in sweat.

Many CLOVEN TRACKS, along with PILES OF ANIMAL DUNG. Haden picks up some of the dung, smushes it between his fingers.

HADEN

Spoor's temperature will tell you
how old it is.

STEVE

That's nasty.

JOE

I read online that the smell can,
too.

Eager to impress Joe, Billy KNEELS beside a pile of dung, leans down to take a whiff and...

SMUSH! Joe SHOVES Billy's head into the dung.

Billy springs up, shit covering his face. Once again, laughter from all except Billy.

Seething, Billy walks to the edge of the bog, gets down on his knees, about to dunk his head into the water...

TREY

Billy, wait! That water's--

Billy SUBMERGES his head in the bog, thrashes it around.

TREY

Stagnant.

When Billy pulls his head out, we don't see his face...

Only the guys' reaction to it, their eyes wide as saucers.

STEVE

Jesus.

JOE

Talk about a Kodak moment.

BILLY

What?

TREY

Billy, just sit down and hold
still.

CLOSE ON BILLY'S FACE - COVERED WITH LEECHES

Billy touches his face and FREAKS OUT.

BILLY
WHAT THE FUCK?!

JOE
Talk about irony.

Billy tries desperately to pull one off but it won't let go.

HADEN
Pulling 'em makes 'em grip tighter.

Haden takes out a small cannister of weatherproof matches.

HADEN
Have to burn 'em off.

BILLY
No way! NO FUCKING WAY!

Billy starts dancing around like a boxer in a ring. Trey grabs him from behind, pinning his arms.

BILLY
Let go!

TREY
Sorry, man. It's the only way.

Steve helps Trey hold Billy.

Haden strikes a match, begins burning off the leeches. Joe laughs hysterically, enjoying the show.

When all the leeches are gone, Trey releases Billy.

JOE
Doesn't matter what happens from
here on out. That made the trip.

Billy starts for Joe, nostrils flaring like an angry bull.

JOE
Chill, Billy. I'm just fuckin' with
you.

Joe puts up his hand, offering a high-five. Billy DECKS JOE on the chin, dropping him on his ass.

STEVE
That made the whole trip.

Trey walks over to Joe, still on the ground.

TREY
You deserved that.

JOE
I think he broke my jaw.

STEVE
If you wanna sue, I'll give you a
referral because I'm representing
Billy.

Trey helps Joe up, still rubbing his bruised chin.

Haden starts off again, motions for them to follow.

HADEN
Playtime's over. Let's go.

EXT. AFRICAN FOLIAGE - NIGHT

Haden leads them along a narrow GAME TRAIL, surrounded by dense foliage. Suddenly, Haden halts, snapping the big .577 to his shoulder. But his defeated body language says it all.

HADEN
Fuck.

Suddenly, a LARGE NET made of braided hemp shoots up from the matted foliage under their feet, pulling all of them into a jumble of humanity. An instant later...

AFRICAN TRIBESMEN -- faces and bodies covered in vibrant war paint -- materialize from the darkness, menacing with spears.

BILLY
(more squeal than speak)
We shoulda gone to Vegas.

INT. NATIVE VILLAGE - NIGHT

Many HUTS. A BONFIRE rages in the village's center.

Haden and the guys are tied to thick wooden poles, arms pinned behind them.

A SHONA TRIBAL ELDER comes over, the entire tribe behind him.

TRIBAL ELDER
(Shona dialect)
Bukana mokti degodz tak!

HADEN

They're Shona, one of the fiercest tribes in the region. They see us as a bad omen, sent from another tribe's gods to kill them.

(to Tribal Elder)

Nuktar wegon dregonz medak ved!

Natives share confused looks.

TRIBAL ELDER

Ononopti ves.

TREY

What just happened?

HADEN

I demanded trial by combat. They accepted.

(beat)

The Tribal Elder will pick one of us to fight their best warrior.

STEVE

Great.

Tribal Elder motions to the "ring" just a few paces away -- a medium-sized circle ringed with large stones.

HADEN

Rules are simple. First man forced out of the circle by any means necessary loses.

BILLY

That doesn't sound so bad.

HADEN

If we lose, we die.

Tribal Elder begins scrutinizing the guys, stroking his chin during the inspection.

He feels Trey's muscular biceps. Rubs Joe's pearly white teeth. Pokes Haden's thick pecs. Moves on to Billy. Tribal Elder says something that causes the entire tribe to laugh.

BILLY

What'd he say?

HADEN

Trust me, you don't wanna know.

Tribal Elder spends a long time looking at Steve. Finally, he nods, motions to two Tribesmen, who cuts Steve's ropes and drag him towards the stone circle.

STEVE

This can't be happening!

HADEN

Buck up Steve.

TREY

C'mon man, you can do this!

JOE

We're counting on you.

BILLY

We're fucked.

Steve is placed inside the stone circle, barred from exiting by Tribesmen holding spears.

Then, a frightening NATIVE DRUM ROLL pounds out, summoning...

A HUGE TRIBAL WARRIOR -- covered in vibrant war paint -- emerges from one of the huts and runs into the stone circle. He sizes up Steve and laughs.

HUGE TRIBAL WARRIOR

Baku upto foo foo!

Entire tribe reacts. Steve looks to Haden for translation.

HADEN

He asked for permission to take a trophy after he kills you. Your genitals.

Without warning, Huge Warrior ATTACKS, begins rag-dolling Steve like a grizzly bear with a salmon.

The guys are screaming at the tops of their lungs, offering encouragement.

Somehow Steve breaks free, sets his feet and DECKS the Huge Warrior in the face. Warrior grins, spits out a bloody tooth.

A thick forearm sends Steve flying to the edge of the ring. Huge Warrior tries to throw Steve out, but Steve scrabbles along the ground, claws back to the circle's center.

Huge Warrior rushes Steve, who ducks down at the last moment and FLIPS the Warrior onto his back.

WRESTLING MATCH begins, the Huge Warrior with the clear advantage. But Steve fights like his life depends on it - which it does! - going angry chimp berserk.

They continue to roll around, grappling for control. Then, the Huge Warrior gets behind Steve, jerks him to his feet, and begins marching him to the circle's edge.

Just when it looks like Steve is going to be forced out, Steve pivots, locks his right leg and, using his body like a fulcrum, FLIPS the Huge Warrior out of the ring.

The guys go CRAZY, celebrating at the tops of their lungs.

TREY

Way to go, Steve! You did it!

Tribal Elder storms into the stone circle, screaming in his native Shona. Within moments, Tribesmen grab Steve, drag him back to the post, and bind his hands once again.

STEVE

What's going on? I won. They're supposed to free us.

HADEN

The tribal elder claims we cheated, that Steve used black magic to defeat their fiercest warrior.

TREY

Bullshit! BULL-FUCKING-SHIT!

Tribal Elder makes a throat-slitting motion, says something with an obvious finality.

BILLY

What'd he say?

HADEN

We've been sentenced to death.

Tribal Elder comes over with a wicked WAR CLUB festooned with sharpened rocks, wooden spikes and gnarled animal teeth.

Entire Shona tribe falls silent as the Tribal Elder assumes a chopping position in front of Steve.

Steve begins to cry. Trey closes his eyes, starts to pray.

TREY

Praise be to God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ...

Tribal Elder raises his club...

STEVE
 (tears streaming)
EMILY! EMILY I LOVE YOU! I'LL
ALWAYS LOVE YOU!

Billy, bawling loudly, PISSES HIMSELF. That's when we hear...
LAUGHTER.

CAMERA PULLS BACK - PICKS UP JOE AND HADEN

Standing off to the side, laughing so forcefully you worry they'll split their sides.

Tribal Elder and the entire tribe join in.

It takes a moment for Trey, Steve and Billy to catch on. When they do, it's that rare mixture of intense fury and indescribable elation. All three laugh and cry.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE - LATER

CELEBRATION FEAST winding down, with Haden and the guys the honored guests. Steve turns to Joe:

STEVE
 I don't know if I should kiss you
 or kill you.

TREY
 I vote kill. Slowly.

Joe claps Billy on the shoulder.

JOE
 Don't you feel more alive?

BILLY
 You're fucked up, Joe. Seriously
 fucked up.

JOE
 You'll thank me one day.

STEVE
 (to Haden)
 And you...

HADEN
 Hey, I'm just hired help.

Joe hefts a beer, proposes a toast.

JOE
To stone circles.

All clink and drink.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE - LATER

Haden and Joe speak in hushed tones away from the others.

HADEN
Trey is solid. Steve is solid but green. Billy's a wild card.

JOE
What about me?

HADEN
You're a prick. Pricks usually come out okay.

JOE
Works for me.

HADEN
But there's no guarantees, and that's why I'm giving you this one-time offer: back out now and I'll refund half your money.

JOE
Fuck that noise. I don't want out.

HADEN
These guys are your friends, right?

JOE
More like brothers.

HADEN
Then I urge you to reconsider.

Joe doesn't respond.

HADEN
At least tell them what's really going on.

JOE
They'll thank me when it's over.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE - PRE-DAWN

The guys are still rubbing sleep out of their eyes as Haden passes out the HBAR assault rifles.

HADEN
Nobody shoots anything unless I
okay it.

DAKARAI (O.S.)
Spoken like a true white man.

DAKARAI -- 40s, African with a triathlete's physique -- steps from the shadows, a pair of OLD BINOCULARS around his neck. He and Haden clasp hands.

HADEN
(subtitled Afrikaans)
Good to see you again, my friend.

Haden introduces Dakarai to the guys.

HADEN
Dakarai's fifth generation Zulu and
one of the finest trackers around.
(to Dakarai)
What are we looking at?

DAKARAI
Thirty clicks. If we go now, we'll
be in position by tomorrow.

HADEN
You heard the man.

EXT. AFRICA - WITH THE GROUP - DAY

Hiking through beautiful but brutal terrain.

- Thick thorn bushes that tear at their flesh.
- Steep, muddy riverbanks that suck at their feet.
- Mounds of loose, sliding, ankle-breaking rocks.

After hours of hiking they wade across a waist-high river and come to a dense thicket. Something large THRASHING about inside, bellowing in pain.

Guns up and ready, they approach cautiously...

Discover a HALF-DEAD RHINOCEROS, HORN SAWED OFF. Many small, bloody holes in the massive creature.

Dakarai spits, beyond disgusted.

DAKARAI

Poachers. Mother Africa is infested with them. They take the horns, sell them to the Orient where old men grind them into powder to restore their virility.

BILLY

Haven't they heard of Viagra?

TREY

Why didn't they kill it first?

HADEN

They use old military weapons, not proper big game rifles. Ammunition is expensive. They shoot just enough to slow the beasts down.

STEVE

We can't just leave it to suffer.

Joe shoulders his rifle, takes aim, but Dakarai presses down on the weapon's barrel.

DAKARAI

A gunshot will alert our quarry.
(draws his knife)
Use this.

Joe shakes his head, backs away.

JOE

Screw that.

Dakarai frowns at Joe, then puts the rhino out of misery with a forceful jab-and-twist to the brain.

STEVE

Alert our quarry? What's he mean?

Joe is the cat that ate the canary, pumps his eyebrows.

TREY

C'mon Joe, enough with the games.

Dakarai motions to the sun going down.

DAKARAI

Dark soon. We must hurry to make camp.

EXT. JUNGLE CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Ringed by boulders. Beyond the boulders, a stream glistens in the moonlight.

As Dakarai gets a campfire burning, Haden removes two collapsible buckets from his pack.

HADEN
Steve, give me a hand.

They walk to the stream. As Haden fills the buckets...

STEVE
So when are you gonna tell us?

Haden gives him a look.

STEVE
What we're really doing here.

HADEN
That's between you and your friend.
It's his charter.

STEVE
What's the big secret?

HADEN
I honor my contracts.

Haden picks up a filled bucket, hands the other to Steve.

STEVE
I've got a kid on the way. A boy.

HADEN
Congratulations.

STEVE
You got kids?

HADEN
I may have one or two out there.

STEVE
I want to get home safely to mine.

HADEN
That's the right attitude.

STEVE
Isn't it your job to protect us?

HADEN

No.

STEVE

Then what?

HADEN

I was hired to provide an experience, and that's exactly what I'm gonna do. But some things are beyond my control.

EXT. JUNGLE CAMPSITE - LATER

Full moon high in the night sky. The guys sit around the fire, propped up in their sleeping bags.

Dakarai sprinkles dried plants into a pot of boiling water.

DAKARAI

Sword tea. From the gladiolus. It will help you sleep.

BILLY

Can you find us some bud? You know, ganja?

DAKARAI

We call it *malawi*. And I could. But I don't need a crazy white boy with a rifle smoking *malawi*.

Billy holds out his HBAR.

BILLY

Take my gun. I'd rather have...
Whatever the hell you called it.

Dakarai dismisses Billy with a chuckle. Joe is strangely silent, seems nervous. He looks up at the full moon.

HADEN

Hunter's moon. Many think it's a sign.

JOE

I don't believe in that shit.

HADEN

You see what I've seen, you believe in anything you can.

Steve - in his sleeping bag - tries to get comfortable.

STEVE
It's gonna be a long night.

Trey reaches out a cup to Dakarai.

TREY
Hit me with that tea, my man. I'm
gonna need it.

EXT. TOP OF ROCKY MOUND - DAY

MORNING BIRDS cry as Dakarai leads them up a tall, rocky mound strewn with boulders. Despite the rising sun, it's still impossible to make out what lies in the valley below.

Haden rummages in his pack, produces SMALL WIRELESS HEADSETS, passes them out. He then positions the guys in random spots, each with good cover behind the rocks.

HADEN
Wait for my instructions.

EXT. TOP OF ROCKY MOUND - WITH EACH OF THE GUYS

Glimpses of each in position. Anxious. Nervous.

STEVE
What the hell are we doing?

TREY
Like I know?

As dawn breaks, we have a perfect view of what lies below...

EXT. POACHER'S CAMP - DAWN

Some tattered tents. ANIMAL SKINS (zebra, giraffe, gazelle, etc.) dry in the sun, stretched out on racks made from tree branches. Skinless, fly-infested CARCASSES nearby.

A rusty, bullet-riddled LANDCRUISER pulls up dragging a mortally wounded BABY ELEPHANT, writhing in pain.

FIVE POACHERS get out. Three are mid-20s.

The fourth, ATSU -- 17 and frail -- is missing a left hand.

The fifth is their leader, SANGO -- mid-30s, seasoned and fierce, wearing a necklace of lion's claws.

EIGHT POACHERS emerge from the tents, for a total of 13.

After one of the poachers dispatches the baby elephant with THREE BRUTAL MACHETE HACKS, another pull-starts a CHAINSAW and begins removing the elephant's small tusks.

Atsu vomits at the carnage.

MACHETE POACHER
(subtitled Afrikaans)
Man up, Atsu. From death comes
life.

Atsu looks at his surroundings - drying skins, fly-infested carcasses, dead baby elephant leaking blood - and shudders.

ATSU
(subtitled; sotto)
Not like this.

HADEN AND THE GUYS

Haden, holding a spotting scope, issues instructions via wireless coms.

HADEN
Joe, the one with the chainsaw.
He's yours.

JOE
Got it.

STEVE
Joe, please tell me this is a joke.

JOE
This is why we're here.

STEVE
This is murder.

HADEN
Poachers are the scum of the earth.
African governments post bounties
on their heads.

STEVE
Rationalize all you want. It's
still murder.

HADEN
Don't preach to me.
(re: Joe)
It's his hunt.

Joe, Trey and Billy crawl to Steve and Haden. Only Dakarai stays in position, watching the poachers through binoculars.

JOE

Steve, you're fucking up my mojo.

STEVE

You can have anything. Why this?

JOE

Because I can have anything.

(beat)

My life's one big been there, done that. But this is the ultimate rush. And out here, there's no consequences.

TREY

What about your conscience?

JOE

For killing a fucking poacher? I'll sleep just fine.

BILLY

Yeah, those guys deserve to die.

STEVE

What poachers do is horrible. But you don't know their situation. Their reasons.

TREY

To us it's evil. To them it's probably just putting food on the table.

JOE

I don't give a shit. I know what they are and that's enough for me.

BILLY

More than enough.

TREY

You're not helping, Billy.

BILLY

I'm not trying to help. It's Joe's money and he can do whatever the fuck he wants with it.

STEVE

Jesus Billy, this has nothing to do with money.

(to Joe)

What happened to you? Your father died and you went off the deep end.

JOE

Leave my father out of this.

STEVE

It's obvious that's--

JOE

I'm warning you, Steve. Shut your mouth.

HADEN

That's it. This hunt is over.

JOE

Not until I make my kill.

HADEN

Then do it.

STEVE

Yeah, Joe, do it. Kill a man in cold blood.

JOE

You don't think I will?

STEVE

I don't think you can.

Joe snaps the HBAR to his shoulder, puts his eye to the scope and takes aim. Billy also gets back into position. Steve and Trey cluster in beside Joe.

Haden puts the binoculars to his eyes.

HADEN

Range is five hundred yards. Hold two inches above his head.

SANGO, THE LEAD POACHER - SEEN THROUGH JOE'S SCOPE

Elephant's tusks removed, he cleans them with a bloody rag.

Joe is nervous, the scope's CROSSHAIRS DANCING all over Sango's face and body.

JOE

Sweating profusely, breathing hard, finger flirting with the trigger.

HADEN

One shot's all you get. Make it count.

But Joe can't steady the crosshairs. Hands shaking.

STEVE

(whispering in Joe's ear)
What are you waiting for? Pull the trigger.

JOE

(eye to scope)
Back off.

BILLY

Shut up, Steve.

TREY

Don't do it, Joe.

JOE

Shut up. Shut the fuck up!

SANGO - SEEN THROUGH JOE'S SCOPE

Crosshairs still dance. Can't get them centered.

JOE

Pulls away from the scope, flicks on the rifle's safety.

JOE

Go ahead, say it.

Steve claps Joe on the shoulder.

STEVE

I'm proud of you.

Definitely not what Joe expected to hear.

TREY

Thought we lost you. Welcome back.

Clearly relieved, Joe nods.

JOE
Let's go home.

BANG! All turn to see...

Billy, HBAR to his shoulder, preparing to fire again.

HADEN
No, don't-- !

BANG!BANG! Billy's shots give away their position.

THE POACHERS - SCRAMBLING FOR COVER

Sango, crouched behind the Landcruiser, a BLOODY FURROW across his scalp, points to the rock formation and yells.

Poachers OPEN FIRE.

HADEN AND THE GUYS - PINNED DOWN BEHIND THE ROCKS

BULLETS RICOCHET all around them and rip above their heads.

HADEN
Back down! Hurry!

Crawling fast, Haden starts down the rise. Dakarai, lying on his stomach, continues to peer around a boulder.

HADEN
Dakarai, c'mon!

Dakarai doesn't move. Haden crawls to him...

Discovers a BULLET HOLE in Dakarai's forehead.

EXT. BOTTOM OF ROCKY MOUND - DAWN

Trey grabs Billy by the throat, slams him against the rocks.

TREY
What the fuck were you thinking?!

BILLY
Somebody needed to man up.

Billy wriggles out from under Trey, turns to Joe...

BILLY
Right, Joe? Tell him.

JOE
You don't have a clue, Billy.

BILLY
But I figured if you couldn't --

Suddenly, bullets rip into their position, forcing them to hit the ground. These shots come from...

FOUR POACHERS

Pulling up in an old jeep. They jump out, take shooting positions behind the rocks.

HADEN

RETURNS FIRE, buying them time.

BILLY
What do we do?

JOE
Offer you as a sacrifice. You got us into this shit.

BILLY
If it wasn't for--

TREY
Both of you, shut the fuck up!

Steve snaps a fast look around the rock he's hiding behind. About 50 yards of open expanse separate them from the thicker jungle, where the poachers' jeep can't follow.

STEVE
Whattya think?

HADEN
It's a crap shoot, but we're sitting ducks here.

Haden turns his icy stare on Billy.

HADEN
Your actions got a good man killed.

Haden levels his HBAR on Billy...

HADEN
And there's a price to pay.

Billy screams as Haden fires a burst...

KILLING TWO POACHERS coming over the top of the rocky mound.

HADEN
But I'll deal with you later.
(to the others)
I'm gonna draw their fire.

TREY
That's suicide.

HADEN
It's the only option. Give me a
three count then head due west.

Haden tosses Joe a GPS.

HADEN
There's a landing strip twenty
clicks from here.

Haden glances at his watch...

HADEN
Plane'll be there in six hours. If
I'm not, don't wait.

STEVE
We're not leaving without you.

HADEN
Worry about yourselves.

Haden hands the guys the binoculars.

TREY
Good luck.

Haden bolts from around the rock, FIRING as he goes.

HADEN

Legs pump like mad as bullets kick up dirt at his heels.

THE GUYS

Race for the safety of the jungle. Poachers turn their weapons on them. Shots clip leaves but none strike home.

HADEN

Reaches the safety of the jungle...

Sees the poachers' Landcruiser motor through the tall grass.

Sango leaps from the vehicle before it comes to a full stop beside the Jeep, pins Atsu in an icy stare.

SANGO

Which way?

Atsu hesitates, clearly wanting to answer.

SANGO

Atsu!

Atsu timidly points to the jungle's edge.

SANGO

Black?

ATSU

Only one black.

SANGO

Game wardens?

ATSU

I don't think so.

SANGO

Doesn't matter who they are. Find them and kill them. Kill them all.

A SMALL, ROUND METAL OBJECT flies out of the foliage, BOUNCES off the Landcruiser's hood, lands in the jeep. Sango's eyes go wide and he dives for cover...

KABOOM! GRENADE EXPLODES. Jeep becomes a flaming erector set.

Two poachers are eviscerated. One tries desperately to scoop his intestines back into his mangled body.

Sango takes a Denel Z88 pistol from his belt, casually shoots one of the mortally-wounded men in the head.

The poacher with his intestines looped around his fingers looks up at Sango.

POACHER

Please, Sango. I'm not dead yet.

Sango nods, shoots the poacher in the head anyway before surveying his remaining eight men. He chooses three.

SANGO

Go that way. We'll loop around to the savannah.

Chosen three heft their rifles and set off towards the jungle's edge - same direction Haden went.

Sango selects Atsu and two more poachers.

SANGO

Chase down the others.

ATSU

Sango, please. Let me go home.

WHACK! Sango nails Atsu with a brutal backhand, dropping him.

Sango grabs Atsu's ear. Pulls him to his feet.

SANGO

Never question me again. Now go!

Atsu and other two poachers hurry off. Sango fingers his lion claw necklace as he watches them disappear into the jungle.

EXT. AFRICA - DAY - SOME TIME LATER

The guys move as fast as possible through the jungle, the dense foliage making it arduous work.

HADEN - MOVING QUIETLY THROUGH THE BUSH

We hear the poachers behind him, getting closer.

He comes to the thicket's end where an open plain is filled with HUNDREDS OF CAPE BUFFALO.

Haden ventures out into the open expanse, flanking the buffs.

HADEN - AMIDST THE CAPE BUFFALO HERD

His presence bothers the huge beasts. They sniff, snort and paw at the ground, growing more agitated by the second.

Suddenly, three poachers emerge from the bush on foot.

Landcruiser pushes through an instant later, startling the herd, sending them running.

Haden draws his revolver, FIRES TWICE in the air, causing the stampeding herd to change direction - toward the poachers.

Poachers get off a few rounds but the freight train-like beasts TRAMPLE them flatter than Denny's pancakes.

Landcruiser gets nailed by a big buff and TIPS OVER. The two poachers inside avoid injury courtesy of the rollbars.

Meanwhile, Haden races off in the other direction.

THE GUYS - STILL RUNNING

Pushing through thick foliage, shouldering their way past clinging vines, nasty thorns and plants sporting huge leaves.

STEVE

Joe, check the GPS.

JOE

We're right on track. Just gotta keep moving.

BILLY

Let's take five. I'm bushed.

JOE

We'll rest when we're on the plane
and twenty thousand feet above
these motherfuckers.

They come to another clearing. Thick jungle waits for them across a two hundred yard expanse of open plain.

STEVE

We've gotta cross that?

JOE

(re: GPS)
Straight ahead.

STEVE

We'll be sitting ducks.

JOE

Not like we've got a choice.

TREY

Let's just do it. C'mon.

Trey sprints across the open expanse. The others follow, but Billy is dragging... Falls way behind.

Trey, Joe and Steve reach the edge, look back at Billy.

TREY
C'mon, Billy. Step it up!

BILLY
Blow me. I didn't sign up for this.

A RIFLE SHOT rings out. Billy hits the dirt screaming.

BILLY
I'm hit! I'm hit!

Trey dives behind a tree, barely big enough to hide his body.

TREY
Take cover!

Trey fires several rounds around the tree as Joe and Steve drop behind a fallen log. No return fire from the poachers.

JOE
Why aren't they shooting?

TREY
They're waiting for a target.

That target is Billy, hiding in the tall grass, screaming, crying, holding his wounded shoulder.

TREY
Billy! Crawl towards us.

BILLY
I'm gonna die!

TREY
You're not gonna die!

More cries from Billy.

STEVE
He's having a panic attack.

TREY
I don't blame him.

STEVE
We have to give him cover.

TREY
Billy, get ready. We're only gonna have one shot at this.

BILLY

Help me!

JOE

You have to help yourself,
goddamnit!

STEVE

On three!

TREY

Stay low!

STEVE

One... Two... THREE!

Steve, Trey and Joe OPEN FIRE. Billy jumps to his feet and runs for it, staying low.

Shots ring out, chasing Billy towards the jungle's edge. After 50 yards Billy goes down again, but this time doesn't make a sound.

STEVE

Billy?

Nothing.

TREY

Billy, are you hit?

Suddenly, a poacher carrying an old Enfield rifle dashes from his concealment, racing towards where Billy went down.

Trey pops around the tree, brings up his HBAR and...

Click. Gun jams.

TREY

Shit.

Joe hurriedly takes aim, firing before his target is centered, and the shot passes over the poacher's head.

Joe prepares for another shot, but bullets from the other two poachers rip through the leaves above his head, sending him diving behind the log.

Advancing poacher - now 20 yards from Billy's location - sees Billy lying prone in the grass. Shoulders his rifle and...

Steve leaps to his feet and, in one fluid motion, takes aim and FIRES, drilling the poacher in the chest.

TREY
Billy run! NOW!

Billy springs up and runs. Trey clears his gun's jam, lays down covering fire.

Poachers' rounds chase Billy the entire way, tearing into the log nanoseconds after he dives over it.

Joe and Steve pull back Billy's blood-soaked shirt to check his wound. Billy cringes, looks away.

BILLY
How bad is it? Am I gonna die?

Bullet wound is JUST A GRAZE, little more than a scratch.

BILLY
It's bad, right?

JOE
You're not gonna die, but you'll probably lose your arm.

BILLY
No!

STEVE
He's kidding, you idiot. It's nothing.

BILLY
Really?

JOE
Unfortunately for us.

Billy glares at Joe. Joe blows him a smarmy kiss.

TREY
Quit fuckin' around. Let's get to that plane. Ready?

STEVE
Ready.

Trey pops in a fresh mag, lays down blistering covering fire.

Steve, Joe and Billy race into the jungle, with Trey bringing up the rear, firing a few more rounds as he goes.

HADEN - MOVING FAST THROUGH THICK VEGETATION - DAY

Haden can barely see a foot in front of him, but that doesn't slow his pace. Barreling through dense thorns when...

SLAM! Runs smack into the trio of poachers. His HBAR goes flying. One poacher goes down hard. Haden puts his CLOSE QUARTERS BATTLE (CQB) skills to good use.

RIPS AN EAR off each of the two standing poachers. Injured poachers go down as the third poacher regains his footing.

Haden kills poacher #3 with a brutal NECK TWIST. About to dispatch the other two when he's TACKLED FROM BEHIND.

Combating steel whirlwinds... Haden's knife vs. machetes.

Bloody battle. Everyone gets cut. Haden emerges victorious.

Exhausted, Haden presses on, comes to a RIVER.

Lies on his stomach, drinks via FILTRATION STRAW. Splashes water on his face. Refreshed and invigorated, Haden turns...

THWACK! RIFLE BUTT knocks him unconscious.

THE GUYS - MOVING THROUGH TALL ELEPHANT GRASS

Pace has slowed considerably, all EXHAUSTED.

STEVE

(to Joe)

Why'd you drag us into this?

JOE

You're my closest friends. Who else would I bring?

TREY

You nearly got us killed.

JOE

I'll make it up to you when we get home. Porsches all around.

BILLY

I don't have a license.

JOE

Then I'll get you the skateboard of your dreams. I'll even throw in a new pair of Van's.

BILLY
Fuck you.

JOE
That I won't do.

TREY
(re: GPS)
Where are we?

JOE
Right on course.

STEVE
I wonder where Haden is.

TREY
Probably sitting on the plane
already, drinking a beer.

SMASH TO:

HADEN'S FACE - COVERED WITH BLOOD AND WELTS

PULL BACK --

Haden, stripped to his briefs, imprisoned in a crude STAND-UP TORTURE RACK. Body is covered with OLD BATTLE SCARS. Not a single patch of flesh untouched.

Wrists bound in front of him with rope. Rusty chains wrapped around his upper arms, waist, thighs and lower legs.

Chains looped over pulleys connected to a steering wheel on the back of the rack. Behind him...

Camouflage tents support a scout-sized group of REBEL SOLDIERS. Each carries an AK-47 and a mag pouch.

Two rebels repeatedly light CIGARETTES, extinguish them on Haden's chest. Despite the excruciating pain, Haden refuses to give his torturers any satisfaction.

ADABELE, the REBEL LEADER -- 30s, right eye disfigured from battle -- walks over, pushes the torturers away.

ADABELE
That's no way to treat our guest.

Adabele brings a cup of water to Haden's lips.

ADABELE

They hate men of your color.
Reminds them of the Americans who
supply and train our enemies.

Haden nods his understanding.

ADABELE

Who are you?

HADEN

(South African accent)
Johan Kruger, a game warden from
Tsavo. I've been looking for
poachers.

ADABELE

And the rest of your men?

HADEN

I work alone.

ADABELE

Tell me, Mister Kruger, how is it
that a game warden comes to possess
so many battle scars?

HADEN

When I was young, brave and foolish
I flew a medevac chopper in the
Border War. Got shot down more than
once.

Adabele draws his combat knife, SLICES A RECTANGULAR SLIVER
OF FLESH from Haden's arm, holds it up.

On the skin, a TATTOO... SPECIAL FORCES CREST.

ADABELE

This must also be from when you
were young, brave and foolish.

Adabele tosses the tattoo into the fire, wipes his bloody
blade on Haden's cheek, then turns to address his men.

ADABELE

Proof that all Americans are liars!

Rebels roar in agreement.

Adabele delivers a stinging BACKHAND to Haden, drawing fresh
blood from his nose and lip.

ADABELE

You will die, but not before I hear
you wail in pain and beg for mercy.

Adabele motions to one of the rebels. Rebel slings his
weapon, moves behind the rack, begins TURNING THE WHEEL.

Chain around Haden's left thigh draws tight, biting into the
flesh, growing tighter until...

CRACK! FEMUR SNAPS. COMPOUND FRACTURE.

Haden roars in agony, causing Adabele and the rebels to
laugh. After a beat, Haden passes out.

ADABELE

Wake him. He has a long day ahead.

EXT. THE AFRICAN BUSH - WITH THE GUYS - DAY

They crest a hill. Steve sees something in the distance,
snaps the binocs to his eyes.

STEVE

Oh Jesus.

STEVE'S POV THROUGH BINOCULARS

Rebels splash water on Haden, rousing him.

Blood runs down Haden's left leg, the broken femur bone
jutting forth amid shredded muscle and sinew.

THE GUYS

Take turns looking through the binoculars.

BILLY

I'm gonna be sick.

STEVE

They don't look like poachers.

TREY

Rebel soldiers, I think. This
country's full of them.

JOE

Sucks for him.

STEVE

We can't just leave him.

BILLY

The hell we can't.

TREY

Haden risked his life for us. No fuckin' way are we gonna just turn our backs on him.

JOE

Get real, Trey. Those are trained soldiers with machine guns. Besides, Haden's a merc. He knew the risks.

STEVE

That's not the point. And I'm not leaving him.

TREY

Ditto.

JOE

Then this is where we say goodbye.

BILLY

I'm with you, Joe.

STEVE

Where's your loyalty?

JOE

News flash, Steve. Haden's a pay-for-play killer. Shit like this goes with the job.

TREY

C'mon Joe, you don't--

JOE

I'm done talking about this.

Joe starts off, with Billy right beside him.

JOE

You're on your own. Good luck.

BILLY

You're gonna need it.

Joe and Billy disappear into the thick foliage.

STEVE

Billy, I expect that from. But
Joe... I thought he turned the
corner.

TREY

Can't hide your true colors
forever.

A pause as they contemplate the scenario.

TREY

Sure you wanna do this? With Em and
the baby, you might want to--

STEVE

I couldn't live with myself if I
abandoned him. Or you.

They clasp hands.

TREY

Whatever happens...

He can't finish the statement. Steve nods.

Trey takes another look through the binocs.

TREY

There's six of them. Our best bet
is to wait until dark.

STEVE

He'll never survive that long.

Trey nods in agreement. Steve takes another look through the
binocs... Scans the camp... And the RIVER behind it.

STEVE

You still swim at the Athletic
Club, right?

TREY

Three times a week. Why?

JOE AND BILLY - ON THE MOVE

Struggling through terrain of scrubby trees and muddy bogs.

JOE

I can't wait to get out of this
fucking hell hole.

BILLY
You and me both.

Joe wrinkles his nose.

JOE
Man, you gotta change your diet.
I'm upwind and I still smell you.

BILLY
That's the smell of a real man.

JOE
A real man who lives on Slim Jims
and microwave burritos.

BILLY
Why are you always fuckin' with me?

JOE
Quit being so sensitive.

Billy gets in front of Joe and stops, defiant.

BILLY
I'm serious.

JOE
Really? You wanna do this now?

Billy folds his arms.

JOE
Fine. If you don't like how I treat
you, why the hell are you here?

BILLY
Because we're friends.

JOE
Friends? You're an ass-kissing,
money-grubbing leech.

BILLY
Then why invite me every year?

JOE
Because I feel fucking sorry for
you, Billy. I always have.

Billy
I don't need your charity.

JOE

Yeah, you do. Without me, you're a
has-been on the way to a nobody.

Billy's lip quivers. Looks like he's gonna cry.

JOE

Satisfied? Can we get mov--

Billy's rage bubbles over and he TACKLES Joe, slamming him to the ground and starts raining down blows.

But Joe isn't a punching bag for long and quickly gains the upper hand, decking Billy again and again and again.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Trey crawls from the foliage, slides quietly into the water. Eyes the opposite bank where CROCODILES bask in the sun.

Trey swims down river towards the rebel camp, careful to keep the tip of his HBAR's barrel above water. Every so often Crocs slide into the river, vanish beneath the surface.

JOE AND BILLY

Joe kneels atop Billy's chest, fist poised to deliver another blow when...

He simply rolls off Billy, collapses onto his back beside him. Both are bloody and completely spent.

JOE

This is crazy.

Joe gets to his feet, reaches a helping hand down to Billy.

JOE

C'mon man. Truce.

Billy accepts the helping hand, but at the last moment, THROWS HIS WEIGHT BACKWARD AND FLIPS JOE over his head...

Sends Joe flying into a PIT OF QUICKSAND. Within moments, Joe has sunken down to his waist, his eyes bulging in terror.

JOE

Jesus Billy, help me!

Billy runs to the edge of the pit...

EXT. REBEL SOLDIERS' CAMP - DAY

Splash of water causes an unconscious Haden to stir.

Adabele delivers a vicious slap, rousing him completely.

ADABELE

Welcome back.

Haden SPITS a glob of bloody phlegm in Adabele's face.

Adabele wipes off the spit, grins malevolently.

ADABELE

You are strong, but very foolish.

Rebel behind the torture rack turns the wheel, tightening the chain against Haden's right leg.

STEVE - HIDING BEHIND A CLUMP OF TREES

75 yards of the rebel campsite, he can see what's happening to Haden through his rifle's scope.

STEVE

Sorry Trey, time's up.

Steve centers the crosshairs on the chest of the rebel standing behind the torture rack.

EXT. REBEL SOLDIERS' CAMP - DAY

Chain draws tighter against Haden's good leg, biting deep into flesh.

Rebel at the rack's wheel bout to force it further when...

BANG! Rebel goes down in a bloody mist.

Rack's wheel spins and the chain around Haden's leg loosens.

Before the rebels can react, ANOTHER GUNSHOT rings out, killing the rebel standing beside Adabele.

Rebels see where the shots came from, take up defensive positions and OPEN FIRE, driving Steve back behind the trees.

What the rebels fail to see...

Trey - crawling out of the river behind them.

HADEN

Fighting the agony, he tries cutting the rope binding his wrists by RUBBING IT against his exposed jagged femur bone.

EXT. QUICKSAND PIT - DAY

Joe has sunken to mid-chest.

Billy extends his gun to Joe...

Every time Joe reaches for it, BILLY PULLS IT AWAY.

JOE
What are you doing?!

BILLY
How much is your life worth? One
million? Two?

JOE
(up to his shoulders)
Billy!

BILLY
How much?

JOE
Anything you want! Just get me out!

BILLY
Five million. But if you try to
weasel out, I'll tell every
newspaper and TV station about your
fucked up safari.

Joe's mouth is going under.

JOE
(sputtering)
Five million! Deal!

Billy extends the HBAR by the barrel as far as he can...

Joe just manages to grab the rifle's butt. With some effort,
Billy pulls Joe to the side of the quicksand pit.

BILLY
A deal's a deal.

Billy reaches down, offering Joe a helping hand. Joe takes
Billy's hand, grips hard, and looks up into Billy's eyes.

JOE
I wanna renegotiate.

Before Billy can react, Joe CATAPULTS him over his head into the center of the pit.

BILLY
Don't do this!

JOE
Why not?

BILLY
I was just --

JOE
Just what? Just fucking with me?
The hell you were.

BILLY
Joe, please!

JOE
I've always known you were dogshit,
Billy. But I had no idea the pile
was that big.

BILLY
Please, Joe, you don't understand.

JOE
Oh, I understand perfectly.

Billy sinks deeper. Shoulders... Neck... Mouth...

BILLY
(sputtering)
Joe!

JOE
At least poachers serve a purpose.

Billy's face begins to submerge. His ears are still above the surface as Joe makes his final statement.

JOE
The world is better without you.

Billy's head disappears below the surface, his final screams becoming bubbles.

EXT. REBEL SOLDIER CAMP - DAY

Adabele and the remaining three rebels continue firing at the small cluster of trees, pinning Steve behind them.

ADABELE
Try to take him alive. I want him
to know real pain.

Steve peers around a tree...

Rebel bullets rip and bark flies, driving him back.

ADABELE
He's pinned down! Go now!

Two rebels run from behind their cover, start for the trees.

Trey rises out of the bushes behind the rebels and OPENS
FIRE, cutting the two rebels down.

Adabele and the remaining rebel spin to engage Trey, giving
Steve the opportunity to come from around the tree.

Adabele and the rebel split up and head into the bushes after
Trey, trying to pin him between them.

Steve rushes through the campsite, past Haden.

TREY - IN THE THICK BUSHES

Weapon up and ready, moving cautiously...

The rebel pops up in front of him, grabs his gun. Trey reacts
with a brutal HEAD BUTT.

Trey and the rebel struggle for control of both guns - Trey's
HBAR and the rebel's AK-47. Brutal combat with life or death
hanging in the balance.

BANG! Both men stop moving. After a beat...

Trey pushes the DEAD REBEL off him.

Exhausted, Trey staggers to his feet, only to have a PISTOL
jammed against the back of his head.

Adabele disarms Trey, marches him forward.

STEVE - A FEW FEET AWAY FROM THE BUSHES

Approaching cautiously, Steve sees the bushes rustling. Snaps the rifle to his shoulder, takes aim...

Relaxes when he sees Trey and lowers the rifle.

STEVE

Jesus, I almost...

That's when Steve realizes Adabele is marching Trey. Adabele grabs Trey around the neck, stuffs his pistol in Trey's ear. Classic hostage stance.

ADABELE

Drop the gun or your friend dies.

TREY

Shoot him, Steve. I'm dead anyway.

Steve sweats bullets - doesn't have a clean shot at Adabele.

ADABELE

I'm not going to tell you again.

TREY

Shoot!

Adabele begins taking up the trigger's slack.

ADABELE

His blood's on your hands.

Steve drops the gun. Trey's eyes sink in defeat.

EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING LANDING STRIP - DAY

Fighting the pain, Joe pushes through a nasty thornbush...

SEES THE DIRT AIRSTRIP, where a SINGLE-ENGINE CESSNA is waiting, hatch open.

JOE

I made it. I fucking made it!

Joe runs for the safety of the plane.

INT. CESSNA - DAY

Joe steps inside - immediately wishes he hadn't...

ATSU AND TWO MORE POACHERS are exiting the cockpit carrying flight instruments they ripped out. Joe unslings his rifle...

Sango, standing just inside the hatch, chops down with his machete and Joe's gun drops to the ground.

EXT. REBEL SOLDIERS' CAMP - DAY

Haden, semi-conscious, head drooping, is weak from blood loss, but the rope binding his wrists is almost severed.

Adabele, his AK-47 leveled with one hand, lifts Haden's chin with the barrel of his pistol in the other hand.

ADABELE

Your government will pay handsomely
for your safe return.

HADEN

They won't negotiate with filth
like you.

ADABELE

In that case, I won't delay.

Adabele points his pistol at Steve's face and...

Haden SEVERS the rope's final strand against his femur bone, grabs Adabele's gun hand at the last moment, forcing the muzzle skyward.

BOOM! The bullet grazes Steve's head.

Still secured in the rack, Haden slams Adabele's gun hand down, SKEWERING IT on his own jagged femur bone.

Adabele screams, drops the gun. Trey rushes in and disarms Adabele while Steve frees Haden from the torture rack.

Despite being hobbled by a gruesome injury, Haden moves on autopilot, pain a nonfactor.

Secures Adabele in the rack, looping all the rusty chains around Adabele's head, face and neck.

Haden moves behind the rack, puts both hands on the wheel.

HADEN

If you want to avoid years of
therapy I suggest you look away.

Steve and Trey immediately avert their gaze.

ADABELE
Fuck you, American.

HADEN
No. Fuck. You.

Haden puts all his might into turning the wheel.

C-R-U-N-C-H! Adabale dies badly. When Adabele's broken body finishes spasming, Haden collapses.

Steve and Trey rush to him, examine his mangled leg.

HADEN
Needs to be... set. Rope, tent
posts... Tree.

EXT. UNDER A LARGE TREE - MINUTES LATER

Haden lies flat on his back, a rope double-looped and knotted around the ankle of his broken leg. Rope continues around the tree, ends in Trey's hands.

Haden's arms extend over his head, tied to the tree.

Steve kneels beside Haden, holding four tent posts, tent fabric and more rope.

HADEN
Slow... Steady. Don't stop...
Splinted.

Steve puts a stick in Haden's mouth. Haden sucks in a deep breath through his nose, nods.

Trey starts to pull. Haden grimaces, turns beet-red, chomps the stick in half.

Trey continues to pull, using all his strength. Improvised traction slowly pulls Haden's broken femur back into his leg.

STEVE
Almost there!

Haden's teeth grind from the pain, blood trickling from the corners of his mouth.

When the broken bone has fully receded, Steve wraps the thigh with tent fabric, SPLINTS the leg with the four tent posts.

STEVE
Done!

Trey eases off the tension. The splint holds.

Haden gives a feeble thumbs-up, promptly passes out.

STEVE
Think he'll make it?

TREY
He lost a fuckton of blood.

Trey thinks for a moment, then looks at the thin VINES
snaking their way around a nearby tree.

TREY
I have an idea, but you're not
gonna like it.

Trey walks to the tree, slices off some vines.

It dawns on Steve.

STEVE
No fuckin' way.

TREY
It's our only option.

STEVE
You don't even know his blood type.

TREY
Doesn't matter. I know yours.

Steve gives him a look.

TREY
Universal donor.

INT. TENT - STEVE LYING NEXT TO HADEN - SHORT TIME LATER

Haden is still unconscious. Steve wishes he was.

Trey holds a length of vine. After sucking out the contents,
he uses his knife to sharpen both ends.

STEVE
Trey--

TREY
I can do this. Native medicine men
have been doing it for ages.

STEVE

Your ancestors are from Atlanta.

Trey chuckles. Kneels between Haden and Steve, produces a bottle of whiskey.

TREY

Found this in the other tent.

Steve takes a huge swig.

TREY

Not what I had in mind.

Trey uses whiskey to STERILIZE Steve's arm, then Haden's. When he's done, Steve grabs the bottle, takes another pull.

STEVE

If something goes wrong, make sure
my kid goes to college.

TREY

Relax. I got this.

Steve looks away and braces himself as Trey jabs one end of the sharpened vine into the crook of Steve's arm, sucks hard on the opposite end, and spits.

BLOOD STARTS TO TRICKLE.

He jams the open end into the crook of Haden's arm.

STEVE

How long?

TREY

That's the only thing I'm not sure
of.

Steve's eyes bulge. Trey grins.

FADE TO:

INT. TENT - DUSK

Haden wakes, tries to sit up... Trey pushes him back down.

TREY

Easy. How do you feel?

HADEN

Like a truck hit me, then backed up
to finish the job.

Haden notices the bandage on the crook of his arm, then sees one on Steve. His eyes ask the question.

STEVE
You were a little low.

HADEN
How?

STEVE
(re: Trey)
Thank the witchdoctor. If he starts talking about shrinking heads, I'm outta here.

HADEN
I owe you guys my life.

STEVE
Get us home, we'll call it even.

HADEN
Then help me up.

Trey and Steve help Haden to his feet, give him a HOMEMADE CRUTCH made from a large branch with a V-fork.

After each grabs a rifle, they chamber rounds and move off.

EXT. AIRSTRIP CLEARING - NIGHT

It's dark by the time they reach the airstrip. They peer through the bushes...

Cessna is still there, hatch open.

HADEN
Smell that?

Steve and Trey take big whiffs, cringe.

HADEN
Someone got here before us.

All three advance, guns at the ready. When they reach the plane we hear FLIES BUZZING... Thousands of 'em.

A CHARRED BODY lies burned outside the plane.

Steve steps around the body, peers inside the plane, quickly pulls his head out and VOMITS.

Moonlight through the plane's windows tells the tale...

Blood, viscera, and body parts. Two bodies burned after they were hacked to pieces. Countless flies feasting.

HADEN
I've seen worse.

Haden prods one of the eviscerated and charred corpses with the tip of his crutch.

Trey fixes on something in the grass beside the plane. Bends down to take a closer look.

TREY
Shit.

Trey picks up what appears to be a small stick burned to a crisp. On it, a metallic object glints in the moonlight.

STEVE
Is that what I think it is?

Trey removes a gold ring from the severed, charred finger. Ring has a Celtic design flecked with many small diamonds.

TREY
This was Joe's. Belonged to his father before he died.

STEVE
That means the other guy is Billy.

Somber moment for Steve and Trey. Haden seems puzzled.

HADEN
They didn't show much regard for you two.

TREY
Doesn't matter. They were our friends. We accepted them for who they are. Were.

Trey crosses himself.

STEVE
I'm gonna miss them.

TREY
Ditto.

HADEN
Have a service when you get home. We need to get out of here.

Trey moves forward to the cockpit. Plenty of moonlight coming through the windshield.

TREY

Fuck.

All ELECTRONICS RIPPED OUT, gauges smashed and destroyed.

HADEN

I don't need instruments to fly.

STEVE

But where are we gonna go?

HADEN

You're gonna have to trust me.

Haden slides into the pilot's seat, begins flipping switches. The plane comes to life, starts powering up.

STEVE

We can't sit back there.

HADEN

Now's not the time to be squeamish.

Steve and Trey select seats with the least blood and gore.

Cessna taxis down the runway, lifts off into the night.

EXT. ZIMBABWE ROAD - PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Joe sits propped up in the back of the truck, crammed against sacks of corn. His hand is bandaged with fabric torn from his shirt. Two fingers gone.

Joe turns - we see a GHASTLY WOUND ON HIS CHEEK. Like the Batman villain, Two-Face.

Half his face is model perfect, the other is like rotten hamburger... Bullet wound compounded by a third-degree burn.

FLASHBACK - EARLIER - OUTSIDE THE CESSNA

Two poachers grab Joe's arms, immobilizing him, as Sango hefts the CHAINSAW.

SANGO

Men are just like animals. When you discover where they will run to, they are easy to catch.

JOE

Wait! I have money. I'll make you
rich.

Chainsaw roars as Sango deftly SLICES OFF two fingers from
Joe's left hand.

One of the poachers picks up the severed finger with the gold
Celtic ring. Poacher pulls the ring off, pops its in his
mouth to moisten it, then jams it onto his own pinky.

Suddenly, JOE LASHES OUT...

A blur of desperate punches and kicks. In the fusillade he
catches Sango in the temple, dropping him to the ground,
knocking the chainsaw from his grasp.

A gunshot RINGS OUT, the bullet pulverizing Joe's cheek. Joe
goes down, comes up with the chainsaw. Blood splatters as he
swings the chainsaw back and forth, Leatherface-style.

A poacher empties his pistol. One of the bullets strikes the
chainsaw's GAS TANK...

BOOM! Spraying flames everywhere.

One poacher dies screaming in the blaze while Sango and Atsu
run off, unharmed.

Joe drops and rolls, putting out the flames consuming him -
but not before his face gets horribly burned.

END FLASHBACK - BACK WITH JOE IN THE BED OF THE TRUCK

Joe, numb from pain and mental/physical exhaustion, stares
out at the night with a zombie-like gaze.

EXT. SWEEPING GRASSLAND - NIGHT

Cessna drops lower.

HERDS OF ANTELOPE can be seen in the moonlight, running from
the descending plane.

INT. CESSNA - CABIN - NIGHT

Coming in for a landing - a little too fast.

TREY

We're going down.

HADEN (O.S.)
(fading)
Someone... needs...

Trey and Steve rush into the cockpit, find Haden unconscious, blood everywhere, the dressing on his leg pulled open.

Cessna is just about to STALL when Steve jumps into the copilot's seat and takes control. Sort of.

STEVE
Em bought me Flight Simulator for X-Box.

Trey buckles his seat belt, looks up and mumbles a prayer.

EXT. CESSNA - NIGHT

Plane slams down, BOUNCES once, twice...

RIPS through bushes, loses a wing on a tree, NOSE-PLOWS into a small water hole.

INT. CESSNA - NIGHT

Steve breathes a deep sigh, kisses the plane.

TREY
You gotta work on your landings.

STEVE
First rule of flying: any landing
you walk away from is a good one.

EXT. CESSNA - NIGHT

Steve, Joe and Haden - leaning on the makeshift crutch - stand outside the crash-landed plane.

STEVE
Where the hell are we?

HADEN
Ten miles from Harare, give or
take.

TREY
Can you make it on that leg?

HADEN
I don't have much choice.

STEVE

Pretty sure I saw a road before we went down.

Haden looks up at the lightening sky.

HADEN

If there's a road, maybe we can hitch a ride.

They start for the road. Soon, the distant rumble of an approaching engine.

HADEN

Hurry. There might not be another one.

Mustering all their strength, they burst through the foliage onto a macadam road just as HEADLIGHTS appear over a rise.

Haden staggers into the middle of the road, crutch under one arm, leveling the HBAR with the other.

STEVE

I don't think you'd get away with this on the interstate back home.

HADEN

You'd be surprised.

Getting closer, vehicle is more distinct...

OLD SCHOOL BUS.

Haden aims the HBAR skyward, empties the mag. Bus screeches to a halt a few feet from where he stands.

TREY

Something tells me we're not gonna need exact change.

INT. ZIMBABWE BUS - NIGHT

Filled with LABORERS.

Steve, Trey and Haden sit in the very back.

Some of the laborers sneak quick peeks at them, then quickly avert their eyes.

Haden's breathing is ragged. Sweat beads on his forehead.

STEVE
We gotta get him to a doctor.

Haden opens his eyes.

HADEN
Pen.

Steve digs in his pocket for a pen, comes up empty.

HADEN
Never mind.

Haden sticks a finger under the bandage on his leg, comes away with a bloody fingertip, scrawls an address on his palm.

HADEN
Here.

Haden promptly passes out.

EXT. GOOD HOPE AIDS HOSPICE - DAY

Bus drives off.

Steve and Trey half-carry/half-drag Haden into the hospice.

INT. GOOD HOPE AIDS HOSPICE - DAY

Nurse Dalila - behind the check-in desk - recognizes Haden. She calls down a hallway as she races around the desk.

DALILA
Walter! Bring a gurney! QUICK!

WALTER -- 50s, African orderly -- comes running down the corridor pushing a gurney. They lay Hayden down atop it.

DALILA
Bring him to my quarters.

INT. DALILA'S QUARTERS - DAY

Sparsely furnished with little more than a bed. A well-thumbed BIBLE on the bedside table.

DALILA
Describe his injuries.

STEVE
He's fucked up.

Off Dalila's look...

TREY

Compound fracture, knife wound,
maybe an infection.

DALILA

Everyone comes here to die. I'm
going to enjoy working on someone
who has a chance to live.

INT. POACHERS' LANDCRUISER - DAY

Sango drives, Atsu slumped in the front seat. Sango's three
remaining men stand in the back, rifles slung.

ATSU

If he's still alive, he's probably
running for home.

SANGO

He cost me a jeep and eight men.
He must die.

ATSU

When does the killing end?

Sango glares at Atsu.

SANGO

It ends when I say it ends!

ATSU

But how will we find him?

SANGO

There's one man who will know.

EXT. STREETS OF HARARE - DAY

Joe stands on the sidewalk, watching the pick-up drive away.
Spots a PHARMACY SIGN, walks towards it.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

An African PHARMACIST stands behind the counter.

Joe enters, places two \$100 bills on the counter.

JOE

There's more if you'll help me.

INT. PHARMACY - BACK ROOM - DAY

Pharmacist unwraps the bandage from Joe's face and cringes.

PHARMACIST
How did this happen?

JOE
Does it matter?

PHARMACIST
I am not a surgeon.

JOE
Just patch me up the best you can.
And throw in some sweetener.

PHARMACIST
Sweetener? I don't understand.

JOE
Amphetamine, benzedrine, anything
you've got. Then call me a fucking
cab.

INT. AIDS HOSPICE/DALILA'S QUARTERS - DAY

Haden opens his eyes. He's lying on a cot, IV drip in his left arm. Dalila sleeps upright in a chair.

Haden removes the IV spike from his arm, swings his legs over the side of the bed. The hospital splint is only a minor improvement over the one they rigged in the bush.

He sees a pair of crutches in the corner. Hops over, gets a crutch under one arm. Painkillers and antibiotics on the table. Scoops 'em up, pockets them.

Haden turns to see Dalila eying him. She lights a cigarette.

DALILA
You don't have to steal from me.
Just ask.

HADEN
How long was I out?

DALILA
Three hours.

HADEN
The men who brought me...

DALILA
Still here.

HADEN
And my friend?

DALILA
He's not.

INT. AIDS HOSPICE - MEAL ROOM - DAY

Steve and Trey sit with patients in the early stages of AIDS.
Steve looks up, sees Haden and Dalila approaching.

STEVE
He's like the Terminator.

STEVE
Like? He is the Terminator.

Haden sits, points at the small bag beside Steve's plate.

HADEN
That what I think it is?

TREY
Steve cabbed into town.

STEVE
Hotel clerk didn't want to play,
but I said Joe would buy him a
house.

Trey dumps the bag's contents on the table. Out falls three
iPhones - one in an ostrich skin case - and a Boost Mobile.

TREY
I'm sure you can guess whose is
whose.

STEVE
Ragging on Billy when he's gone is
cold.

Haden picks up the iPhone in the ostrich skin case, scrolls
through the calls list.

HADEN
This is our ticket out of here.

Haden taps the phone's screen - COLONEL MOYO.

HADEN
We play this right, we'll have a
motorcade to the airport.

E./I. COLONEL MOYO'S HOME - DAY

Modest by our standards, luxurious by Zimbabwe's.

Colonel Moyo has his boots up on the coffee table, watching CNN on a small flat screen.

COLONEL MOYO
Chuki!

CHUKI -- 22, African maid in a pale blue uniform -- enters.

CHUKI
Yes, Colonel, sir?

COLONEL MOYO
Bring me a Zambezi.

Moyo watches Chuki's ass twitch as she hurries from the room. His cellphone buzzes to life.

COLONEL MOYO
Good afternoon, Mr. Sinclair.

HADEN
Mr. Sinclair is out of the picture.

COLONEL MOYO
I see. Where are you calling from?

HADEN
Close enough to be on a jet within the hour, assuming you don't want any headaches.

COLONEL MOYO
Your assumption is correct. What is it you want?

HADEN
An escort to Harare airport. Get us on Sinclair's jet.

EXT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

Dilapidated sheet metal building gripped by weeds at the edge of a dirt parking lot filled with empty 55-gallon drums and other assorted trash.

COLONEL MOYO (V.O.)
There's an abandoned Quonset hut a
mile down the road. Meet me there.

Dalila, at the wheel of a rusty yellow Volvo station wagon,
drops off Haden, Steve and Trey.

DALILA
I can stay if you'd like.

HADEN
Absolutely not.

STEVE
Thank you. For everything.

DALILA
Have a safe journey home.

Dalila puts the Volvo in reverse, backs into the road. Before
long she disappears from view.

TREY
Should be any minute now.

Moments later Steve points at a white Mitsubishi Outlander
speeding towards them.

Mitsu stops in the middle of the road, in front of the
Quonset hut. Back passenger window lowers and Colonel Moyo
motions them towards the car.

STEVE
We're going home!

Steve and Trey jog towards the Mitsubishi. But Haden proceeds
slowly, his limp assisting his wary approach, hand tight on
the pistol grip of his HBAR.

TREY
You're a sight for sore eyes,
Colonel.

Moyo smirks. Suddenly, his Mitsu races off.

TREY
The fuck was that all about?

The GUNNING OF AN ENGINE alerts them to the poachers'
Landcruiser rounding a curve at speed, bearing down on them.

Sango at the wheel, Atsu riding shotgun.

The three poachers in the back OPEN FIRE. Bullets bite into the dust around the guys.

Haden, HBAR up and ready, unleashes an answering burst.

HADEN

Fall back!

Steve turns to run...

A bullet nicks his hand, sends his gun flying.

Bullets chase Trey towards the cover of the Quonset hut.

Haden hobbles as fast as he can, intent on reaching cover.

More gunfire from the poachers.

Steve makes it to thick foliage by the side of the road.

Trey reaches the shelter of the hut, darts left to a peeled up part of the wall at ground level, unslings his HBAR and flattens out in a prone sniper position.

Haden takes cover behind a rusty oil drum.

Landcruiser brakes and all five poachers jump out, open fire.

Haden lays down a BURST OF GUNFIRE that rips through one poacher's shoulders. Poacher stumbles away from the Landcruiser and Haden stitches him top to bottom.

Trey makes two perfect headshots, killing two poachers.

Now only Sango and Atsu remain.

As Sango trades fire with Haden and Trey...

Atsu - rifle slung - remains curled in the fetal position, trying to cover his head with his only hand.

Soon, Haden runs out of ammo.

Steve - unarmed - huddles in the bushes with a clear view of the poachers. He sees Sango rip a grenade from his belt, pull the pin and toss it towards the Quonset hut.

EXPLOSION rips out the front of the building in a cloud of smoke and dirt. Roof collapses.

Moments later, Trey crawls out into the open, stunned.

Steve sees Sango reach for a second grenade, pull the pin, and is about to lob it at his best friend when...

Steve leaps to his feet screaming, creating a distraction.

STEVE
MOTHERFUCKER!

Sango stops mid-throw, turns toward Steve, and smiles when he sees Steve is unarmed. About to throw the grenade...

BANG! A single shot rings out, drilling Sango in the neck.

He falls flat, atop his own live grenade...

KABOOM! Disappears in a bloody mist. When the dust clears...

Dalila is standing there, smoke curling from the barrel of an old .22 camp rifle. She swings her gun onto Atsu.

ATSU
Please! Please! Don't kill me!

Atsu falls to his knees, tosses his weapon away, and raises his lone hand in supplication.

ATSU
Spare me and I will never kill
another living thing so long as I
live. Please! I beg you!

DALILA
Consider yourself lucky I have seen
enough death to last a hundred
lifetimes.

HADEN
(re: road)
Go.

Atsu stands, starts running down the road.

Dalila tends to Steve's wounded hand, using supplies from the satchel at her feet.

Haden picks up two of the poacher's rifles, walks to Dalila.

HADEN
What brought you back?

Dalila reaches into her satchel, comes up with a small porcelain jar plugged with a cork stopper.

DALILA
There was no next of kin to take
possession of Chuma's ashes. You're
the closest thing he had to family.

Dalila extends the container to Haden.

Dalila lights a cigarette, then offers one to Steve, who welcomes it.

After a hearty drag, Dalila chuckles.

STEVE

This is funny?

DALILA

As a teenager I talked many times with my *harwa*, my priest, about life and death. How they were so closely related. When I became a nurse, the things I saw... They made me question this relationship. Made me question the very existence of God. But after today, I have no more questions. I understand now.

Dalila smiles, touches Steve lightly on the shoulder.

DALILA

You are alive.

Dalila motions to what little remains of Sango.

DALILA

He is dead. The right man still draws breath.

Dalila walks to her station wagon. She gives the guys a wave goodbye before getting behind the wheel and driving off.

EXT. HARARE AIRPORT - JOE'S 727 - DAY

A FUEL TRUCK fuels the 727.

Steve, Trey and Haden hustle across the tarmac to the plane.

TREY

Watching ESPN and drinking a PBR...
Sounds fuckin' golden to me.

STEVE

I just wanna home to Em.

Fuel truck drives off, immediately followed by...

GUNSHOTS!

Moyo's Mitsubishi Outlander races towards them, military jeeps behind, soldiers firing.

The guys race up the boarding ladder.

Steve and Trey duck inside as Haden covers them, FIRING two of the poachers' weapons at the same time, one in each hand.

When the mags are empty, Haden hops into the plane.

INT. 727 - DAY

Steve rushes in, yells toward the cockpit:

STEVE
Get this bird in the air!

PILOT #2
We need authorization.

Haden pops into the cockpit, points his guns at the pilot.

PILOT #1
That works!

727 begins rolling down the runway.

EXT. RUNWAY - DAY

A game of chicken between the 727 and a few jeeps. Plane wins when the jeeps veer off at the last moment.

A soldier is about to fire at the fleeing plane but a hand slaps the barrel down at the last second...

Colonel Moyo's hand.

COLONEL MOYO
The last thing we need is an
international incident.

All watch as the 727 lifts off and flies away.

INT. 727 - DAY

STEVE
I'm burning my passport. I don't
ever want to leave the States
again.

HADEN

You can find trouble anywhere.
Sometimes just outside your front
door.

STEVE

I'll take my front door over a tent
in Africa any day.

TREY

Where's your sense of adventure?

STEVE

Dead, with my friends.

HADEN

Then live your life well. Not just
for you... For them.

Trey grabs three beers from the 'fridge, hands one to Steve,
one to Haden. Steve proposes a toast.

STEVE

To Joe and Billy... They're in a
better place.

Just as they're about to drink...

JOE (O.S.)

Nah. I'm still stuck with you two.

The guys nearly spit out their beer as Joe walks from the
back of the plane.

Clothes soiled and torn. Face bandaged. Drinking vodka from
the bottle, semi-drunk.

STEVE

Joe?!

TREY

How the fuck?!

JOE

I waited for you, but you fuckers
just piled on and powered up.

TREY

What did you expect? We thought--

STEVE

And the soldiers! They were gonna--

JOE
Relax. I get it.

Haden, taking it all in, eases back into his seat.

HADEN
That's a pretty good Houdini.

STEVE
Please tell me Billy's back there.

JOE
I wish.

Long, somber beat. Joe takes out a vial of pills, washes a few down with vodka.

JOE
I'm sorry.

TREY
For what? Leaving us?

JOE
For everything.

Steve claps a hand on Joe's shoulder.

STEVE
We're friends, Joe. Friends forgive each other.

Joe looks like he's gonna cry. Doesn't.

TREY
Billy... How'd he...?

A long beat as Joe ponders his response. Then:

JOE
Billy saved my life.

STEVE
He idolized you, Joe. And I'm sure he'd do it again, even if he knew the result would be the same.

Joe looks out the window. In his one good eye we can just make out an evil glimmer.

TREY
Hey, almost forgot. I've got something for you.

Trey reaches into his pocket, takes out the Celtic ring recovered from the Cessna, places it on Joe's drink table.

Joe picks up the ring with his good hand, twirls it in his fingers. Soon, his eye flickers. Once, twice...

And then he's out, the ring dropping onto the drink table.

Realizing Joe's out...

HADEN
You believe him?

Steve and Trey share confused looks.

HADEN
Billy's death.

STEVE
Why would he lie?

Haden shrugs.

HADEN
I don't know. But in my line of work, survival depends on knowing when someone's telling the truth.

TREY
That's just Joe.

HADEN
Doesn't matter to me, but in most cases we already know the answers. We just don't want to accept them.

STEVE
(to Trey)
What do you think?

TREY
Shit man, I don't know. I don't know what to think anymore.

Haden settles back into his seat, closes his eyes.

HADEN
Remember what I told you... Only two species on this planet:
predators and prey.

EXT. JFK AIRPORT - PRIVATE PLANE TERMINAL - NIGHT

Emily anxiously rises off her Corolla's front bumper as Joe's 727 taxis to a stop and the boarding ladder is wheeled over.

As soon as the plane's door opens, Steve runs out, bounds down the ladder and throws his arms around his pregnant wife.

STEVE

I missed you so much!

EMILY

I missed you, too, honey.

As their embrace continues, Emily watches Trey exit the plane, then Joe with his bandaged face, followed by Haden.

EMILY

What happened to Joe? Where's Billy?

Steve, on the verge of losing it, motions to the car.

STEVE

Let's go home. I want to go home.

EXT. NYC - UPPER WEST SIDE - GRAY'S PAPAYA - DAY

SUPER: ONE MONTH LATER

Typical day in NYC. New Yorkers hurrying to and fro. Gray's Papaya, iconic NY hot-doggery, doing brisk business. Standing just outside the entrance...

A PANHANDLER -- late-teens, wears a cardboard sign:
Homeless n Hungry - Please help! God bless you!

A sad frailness to him. Looks a bit like Atsu. Trey emerges a moment later carrying two hotdogs and a drink, hands them to the panhandler.

PANHANDLER

God bless you, brother.

Trey takes out his wallet and gives him every bill in it. Panhandler is overwhelmed by the gesture.

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM

Emily has just given birth to a BOY.

As the DOCTOR holds the blood- and placenta-covered newborn, UMBILICAL CORD still attached...

NURSE offers Steve - in scrubs - blunted scissors.

NURSE
Would you like to cut the cord?

Steve readily accepts.

STEVE
Absolutely.

Steve cuts the cord like a pro.

NURSE
I'm impressed. A lot of guys
couldn't handle this.

Steve looks different now. He's got that 1,000-yard stare.

STEVE
I've seen worse.

INT. JOE'S PENTHOUSE - DUSK

Joe sits on the couch in his silk bathrobe, scruffy and disheveled. Eyes puffy and bloodshot. Hasn't slept in weeks. Still resembles Batman villain Two-Face.

On the table in front of him, a near-empty vodka bottle and an uncapped vial of Xanax.

Joe holds a FRAMED PHOTO - group shot of the guys. From left to right: Trey, Steve, Billy, Joe. Billy has his arm around Joe's shoulder, wears an ear-to-ear smile.

Joe touches the image of Billy's face as tears roll.

Still clutching the photo, Joe stands, walks out onto his wraparound balcony and stares out at the city below, resplendent in the fading sunlight.

He clambers atop the elegant baluster and, after a long beat, closes his eyes and steps out into nothingness.

EXT. MONTAUK POINT, LONG ISLAND - DUSK

Haden - only the slightest trace of a limp - and the big pit bull walk down a path to the lighthouse.

No leash on the pit, matching Haden stride for stride.

At the end of the path, a strand of chain link separates them from jagged rocks jutting into the Atlantic Ocean.

Haden ducks under the chain. Pit bull follows. They stop on a large rock, surf lapping at its base.

Haden reaches into the satchel slung over his shoulder, removes the porcelain jar Dalila gave him.

HADEN

Helluva view. I think you'd approve.

Using a pocket knife, Haden breaks the cork stopper's wax seal, pulls the plug free, and pours the jar's content's - Chuma's ashes - into the surf.

Ashes mix with the brine... Carried away in a swirl of foam.

HADEN

Goodbye, my friend. I'll see you again someday. With any luck, not for a while.

Haden cocks his arm, about to chuck the porcelain jar into the sea, when the pit bull gives a single bark.

Haden halts the throw, looks at the dog standing beside him.

HADEN

What is it, Chuma?

Pit glances at the jar before returning its attention to Haden. Haden seems to understand the gesture.

HADEN

For us?

Pit bull barks again. Haden grins, replaces the cork stopper in the empty jar, puts it back in his satchel.

HADEN

Okay, we'll save it for ours.

Haden sits on the rock. Pit bull drops down beside him.

Haden pats the big dog lovingly on the head as the pair look out at the ocean, admiring the ceaseless flow of the tide.

FADE OUT.

THE END