

THE KLINGSOR INITIATES ©

by Alec Cuddeback

FADE IN:

EXT. VIENNA/AUSTRIA - DAY

A summer afternoon in the Austrian capital. It radiates Old World charm.

SUPER: "Vienna, Austria"

EXT. HOFBURG PALACE MUSEUM - DAY

A wooded park and shopping area border an ancient palace. TOURISTS exit from the museum's main doors.

SUPER: "Hofburg Palace Museum"

The complex consists of several buildings. They connect direct or with outdoor courtyards between the structures.

INT. HOFBURG MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

An elderly SECURITY GUARD reaches the main doors and locks them from the inside.

An American FATHER, MOTHER, and 11-year-old SON head for the exit. The Father, worn-out, lags behind his family, and drags his feet.

MOTHER

C'mon honey, they're closing.

FATHER

Thank God. My feet are killing me.
Why don't they sell some of this
junk and put in an escalator?

SON

Hurry up, Dad. You promised we'd
see the horses.

The Father groans. The Guard holds the door open, and they exit. The Son turns to the Guard and gives the Nazi salute.

SON

Heil Hitler!

The door closes, and the Guard mumbles to himself.

INT. HOFBURG TREASURY ROOM - DAY

Rare and precious items on display in various glass cases.

ZIYA, 30, a giant Arab, stands nearly seven feet tall and gazes at the exhibits, along with black RON GRINSTEAD, 28. Grinstead carries a satchel.

They focus on a glass case labeled "The Spear of Longinus". An ancient iron spearhead rests on faded red velvet inside the case. It attaches to a base with metal flanges.

The museum Guard enters.

GUARD

Sirs. We close.

Grinstead and Ziya give the Guard a blank stare.

Ziya strides up to the Guard and knocks him out with a violent karate chop. The old man crumples to the floor.

Ziya and Grinstead draw guns from shoulder holsters. Break the glass with gun butts.

They reach in and transfer the spearhead into the satchel.

EXT. HOFBURG PALACE MUSEUM - DAY

Ziya and Grinstead bolt out the main entrance of the museum and dash down the steps.

A black van waits at the curb. The trio piles inside.

The van burns rubber and peels out. Disappears into the street traffic.

INT. LAB TESTING ROOM - DAY

A single light bulb hangs from the ceiling. It illuminates the all-white, sterile-looking room.

A young ARAB sits in a corner. He sweats and squirms around. An empty chair faces him.

A DOCTOR examines the young man.

At the far end of the room: KLINGSOR, 45, a tall, muscular Arab, with hypnotic eyes. The widow's peak in his hairline gives him a diabolical appearance and imposing appearance.

Klingsor cradles the ancient spearhead in his arms. Now mounted on a shaft of silver.

Two male SCIENTISTS in lab coats, one ASIAN, the other GERMAN, flank Klingsor.

GERMAN SCIENTIST

We should do more tests.

ASIAN SCIENTIST

Yes, we don't know why it responds to different light spectrum.

GERMAN SCIENTIST

And emotions. Love. Lust. Hate.

ASIAN SCIENTIST

It has remarkable psychic properties. Who knows what other powers it may possess?

KLINGSOR

I know all I need to. Proceed.

Klingsor gives them a evil stare that penetrates their souls. They flinch.

Klingsor draws close to the young Arab. Holds the spear between them, its tip points upward.

The Scientists and the Doctor maneuver behind Klingsor.

Klingsor gestures toward a light switch.

The Asian Scientist flips the switch. A blue light beam streams down from the ceiling and falls onto the spear tip.

The blue light travels down the silver shaft. Klingsor presses his forehead against the shaft. Concentrates.

The light beam bends toward the young Arab. Disappears between his eyes.

BEGIN MIND TUNNEL SEQUENCE

A tunnel with fibrous sides like microscopic close-ups of ligaments, twists and accelerates. Quick flashes of blue light punctuate the odd structure.

A black void dominates the end of the tunnel. Intense white light explodes.

The image changes. Drifts through a dull gray background. Multi-colored lights burst on and off.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

Surrender your mind to me. Feel my hate.

END MIND TUNNEL SEQUENCE

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. DESERT CAMP - NIGHT

Arab tents. Military vehicles alongside them.

INT. KLINGSOR'S TENT - NIGHT

Klingsor dresses in military fatigues and sports a thick, full beard. The huge Ziya stands beside Klingsor.

KLINGSOR

My commandos learn quickly, Ziya.

MEN YELL in the distance, O.S. Klingsor and Ziya freeze. An Arab SOLDIER bursts through the tent.

SOLDIER

Your holiness! American planes!

An EXPLOSION knocks down the trio.

EXT. DESERT CAMP - NIGHT

Bombs light the evening sky. Klingsor runs out of his tent. Sprints toward another tent.

KLINGSOR

Nareen! Son!

A bomb hits near the second tent. Klingsor stumbles to the tent entrance. Another bomb explodes in front of him.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Klingsor in bed. Bandages wrap his lower body. Beside him, an Arab PHYSICIAN.

PHYSICIAN

Your holiness. Your son was
killed. And, shrapnel exploded in
your groin. You are castrated.

A wide-eyed Klingsor screams in agony.

END FLASHBACK

INT. LAB TESTING ROOM - NIGHT

SOUNDS of Klingsor's cries in the previous scene overlap horrific screams of the young Arab.

The agitated young man shrieks and places his hands on the side of his head.

He bolts upright. Face distorts in torment.

The Scientists freeze in shock. Klingsor appears calm and watches the Arab weave around the room, terror in his eyes.

ASIAN SCIENTIST

The memory image was too strong!

GERMAN SCIENTIST

Grab him!

The two Scientists grab the young Arab and attempt to restrain him.

The young man emits a hideous wail. Throws them off with the strength of a madman.

He raves and stumbles around the room. Overturns cabinets. Screams and shivers.

The Scientists collar him from behind. The Doctor jabs the young man in the back with a hypodermic needle.

The young Arab breaks from their grasp. Runs toward Klingsor, who doesn't blink an eye.

A foot from Klingsor, he stops in his tracks. His eyes roll back. He collapses, unconscious.

EXT. BALTIMORE - DAY

The city on the Chesapeake Bay gleams in the noon-day sun.

SUPER: "Baltimore, Maryland"

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The industrial section of Baltimore. Rundown. A dirty, five-story building.

INT. WAREHOUSE GROUND FLOOR - DAY

Musty. A damp, naked floor.

NAPOLEON WILLIAMS, 30, a black man of 30, and ZACK PETERSON, 32, sit opposite each other, in cheap folding chairs.

Williams' haggard face features a small scar along the chin line. Peterson shows off an athletic build. Handsome. Brad Pitt would be jealous.

PETERSON

You used to work inside the system.
A city council member. Now, you're
a terrorist.

WILLIAMS

A revolutionary.

PETERSON

Call it whatever you like. But,
what happened?

WILLIAMS

I uncovered corruption in a fascist
state.

GREG DOBBINS, late-20s, kneels beside Peterson, a video camera strapped to his shoulder. A pudgy guy, in sloppy clothes. With a contagious grin. Bart Simpson grown-up.

Greg records the interview between Peterson and Williams.

Along with them, four young people: EMERSON MILLER, 25, black. Next to him, ROBERTA GARZA, an attractive chicana, early-30s. CHRIS LAPOINT and PAULINE PHILLIPS, mid-20s and white. A voluptuous figure makes Pauline stand out.

Miller, LaPoint, and Garza carry automatic rifles. Guns, ammo, and explosives against a wall. A small arsenal.

WILLIAMS

Then, I made the mistake of telling someone. So, the government stole my files. Framed me. Branded me a terrorist. I ran. And, I became the person they had created.

PETERSON

And, you formed the Baltimore Five.

WILLIAMS

Oppressed people have taken enough shit from the racist government.

PETERSON

So, how do you free them?

WILLIAMS

Very simple. Politics don't work. Violence does. It's time for another revolution.

GREG

Zack. I'm almost outa space.

PETERSON

Okay, Greg, shut it off.

Greg stops recording, takes a flash drive from the camera.

Williams' followers smile, hug him, and pat him on the back.

PETERSON

Greg's got to mail some flash drives.

Williams nods to Peterson.

GREG

How's come I gotta mail 'em?!

PETERSON

I don't want them on me. Not before the story hits the airwaves. You think I want to wind up like him?

Williams glares at Peterson for a moment.

GREG

You're kinda strange, Zack. I like that.

PETERSON

That's real sweet, amigo. But, you better hop to it. There's a pickup in half an hour.

GREG
You've memorized the express pickup
times around here?

PETERSON
Of course. So, hustle.

GREG
Okay, man.

Greg stuffs a flash drive into a package with two others.

WILLIAMS
Be back in ten minutes.

Greg nods. He exits through a door.

Pauline struts over to Peterson. Her tight camouflage
t-shirt accentuates her shapely body.

PAULINE
So. We're terrorists. Eh,
Peterson?

PETERSON
Pauline, let me be honest. I don't
care too much for you. Except,
maybe for your hooters.

Pauline raises an eyebrow at Peterson.

PETERSON
But, no matter what I think of your
cause, it doesn't change how I'm
going to write the story.

Pauline rolls her eyes and smirks. Garza's ears perk up at
an O.S. rustling SOUND.

GARZA
Hey! What's that?

Silence. They all listen for a few seconds.

LAPPOINT
Jesus Christ, Garza. You're always
hearing things.

Twin shotgun BLASTS shatter glass. A window at the opposite
side of the room pulverizes. Glass sprays everywhere.

POLICEMAN (V.O.)
(through bullhorn)
Police! Throw out your weapons!

Miller, LaPoint, and Garza draw guns and fire through the
window. More bullets tear into the warehouse from outside.

WILLIAMS

Miller! Take Garza and Pauline to the roof! If the fire escape's clear, take it.

GARZA

We ain't leaving!

WILLIAMS

Can't take a chance on all of us getting it. Gotta split up. Go!

Williams gives Garza a stern look, and she nods. Miller, Pauline, and Garza head up the stairway.

Williams draws a revolver. Joins in the gun battle. Peterson observes the scene.

PETERSON

I hope Greg's getting all this.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Three squad cars block the front of the building. Six OFFICERS take cover behind their vehicles. They pour gunfire into the warehouse.

Greg crouches by an adjacent building. He records the action from both sides.

One Officer gazes up at the roof.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF/STREET - DAY

Miller bursts through the rooftop security door, Garza and Pauline behind him.

Bullets whiz past Miller's head. He spots the Officer who shoots at him from below.

Miller fires his automatic weapon.

A bullet strikes Miller in the side. He screams.

Garza shoots at the Officer. The wounded Miller continues his assault. Pumps bullets from his rifle like a madman.

A Policeman joins the Officer. The pair blast their weapons at Miller.

A barrage of bullets hit Miller. He spins around like a rag doll. Falls to the rooftop floor. Dead.

Garza and Pauline back away from the edge of the roof. They turn and run to the fire escape on the opposite side.

The two women descend the fire escape.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A S.W.A.T. van squeals to a stop. Several S.W.A.T. MEMBERS pile out. They file toward the side of the warehouse.

EXT. REAR OF WAREHOUSE - DAY

Garza and Pauline jump to the pavement. A station wagon comes in and stops in the alley across from them.

Grinstead drives the wagon, the giant Ziya alongside him.

SOUNDS of a police scanner RADIO echo from the vehicle. Grinstead pokes his head out the open window.

GRINSTEAD

Yo, Homegirl!

Garza and Pauline whirl around and spot him.

GRINSTEAD

You all what's left?

No response from the women.

GRINSTEAD

Well, get yer booties in!

PAULINE

Who the fuck are you?!

GRINSTEAD

Friends, baby. Take you to a safe crib. Ain't got many choices, girl!

Garza and Pauline exchange shrugs, then climb in the back of the station wagon. It takes off down the alley.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Gunfire increases in intensity. Williams waves for LaPoint to follow him. He grabs Peterson by the arm.

WILLIAMS

C'mon, asshole! You too!

Williams forces Peterson up the stairs, with LaPoint just behind them.

EXT. REAR OF WAREHOUSE - DAY

S.W.A.T. Members wind around the corner.

They divide. Some climb the warehouse's fire escape ladder. Others head to the building next door.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A car pulls to the curb with a screech. The "Chief of Police" insignia on the door.

CHIEF GARY BABCOCK exits the vehicle. A big man, 35. With a powerful build, but very overweight. A large moustache makes him look older. A grumpy walrus.

Babcock notices that Greg records the shootout.

OFFICER #1
Chief Babcock!

Babcock ignores the Officer, scowls, and turns to Greg.

BABCOCK
(sarcastic)
Greg Dobbins. What a surprise.

GREG
Hi ya, Chief.

BABCOCK
Nice that SWAT finally shows up. I
suppose that lunatic Peterson is
here too. Where's he at?

Greg points up.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - DAY - TRAVELING

Two Policemen appear in the open doorway of the stairwell.

They shoot at LaPoint and Williams, as they run along the warehouse roof with Peterson.

S.W.A.T. Members reach the top of the fire escape ladder. They climb onto the roof and join in the gun battle.

Williams uses Peterson as a shield. Returns the fire.

Bullets ricochet off the cement floor.

LaPoint makes a dash for the edge of the roof.

Williams and Peterson run side-by-side, behind LaPoint. Gunfire nips at their heels.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Babcock and Greg try to follow Peterson's rooftop progress from the ground. Two things make it difficult. Babcock's excess girth. And Greg's video camera on his shoulder.

BABCOCK
He's gonna get killed! Doesn't he
realize this ain't the NFL?

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - DAY

Williams and Peterson run beside each other.

WILLIAMS

Pretty fast, for a white boy.

At the edge of the roof, LaPoint leaps to the next rooftop, ten feet away, like an Olympic long jumper.

He barely makes it. Twists his ankle in the jump.

Williams and Peterson jump together. Williams clears it with ease. Peterson falls inches short.

WILLIAMS

White boy can run, but can't jump!

Williams continues to run along the next rooftop.

Peterson wobbles and manages to grab the top rung of an old fire escape ladder on the side of the adjacent building.

He heaves a sigh of relief. Dangles from the ladder in a death grip.

CREAK. The ladder buckles under Peterson's weight. Bolts pull out of the brick.

PETERSON

Mommy...

The entire assembly gives way. The ladder swings back, toward the warehouse. Right into a large, glass window.

Peterson throws his arms across his face.

Peterson hits the window full-force and flies through it. A thousand shards of glass explode.

S.W.A.T. Members surround Williams and LaPoint.

Williams drops his shoulders in disgust, throws his weapon down, and surrenders. LaPoint follows his lead.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Chief Babcock, Greg, and another OFFICER wait on a bench. Babcock drums a nervous beat on the bench arm.

WENDY BABCOCK, 28, dashes down the hallway. Beautiful. Sexy. And knows it. She hurries to Babcock.

BABCOCK

Sis.

WENDY

How many killed?

BABCOCK

They got one officer. We got one
of them. Zack's in emergency.

She types onto her smartphone.

GREG

I see you're really bent outta
shape with emotion, Wendy.

WENDY

Hey, I'm worried about Peterson.
But, I'm a reporter, too. This is
one helluva story.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Peterson stretches out on an examination table.
Unconscious, his bloody clothes half-torn off. A team of
DOCTORS and NURSES work on him.

The line on the heart-monitoring machine flattens. Doctors
and Nurses struggle to save Peterson.

His breathing stops, and his face relaxes.

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

A surrealistic setting. Like a Dali painting. With
perspectives that vary.

Peterson walks to the edge of a cliff. Hesitates, then
leaps off.

He falls through the air, in slow-motion.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Heart stimulator machine paddles press on Peterson's chest.

A switch activates. His chest heaves with a violent jerk.
Breathing returns.

The team members celebrate with fistbumps.

INT. PETERSON'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Bandages swath Peterson's torso. An i.v. drip in his arm.
His eyes attempt to focus.

The door creaks open. Wendy creeps toward his bed.

Peterson strains to see her and cracks a smile through
bloody lips.

PETERSON

Wendy. Amiga.

WENDY

Hi, sport. They said you're out of danger. Feel like talking?

Wendy doesn't wait for a response. She takes out her smartphone and snaps photos. Peterson blinks.

She types on the smartphone.

WENDY

How was it? Dodging bullets with the Baltimore Five?

PETERSON

It was... Wait a sec. You interviewing me?

WENDY

Why shouldn't my paper get the exclusive? I don't see you doing a stand-up for Channel Eight!

PETERSON

Greg left a half hour ago. I did the lead-in from right here. He had to point me toward the camera.

WENDY

Sneaky son of a bitch. Guess I'll never beat you to a story.

PETERSON

I told you. If we get married, all stories are community property.

WENDY

Well, maybe I want my own column someday... Did you ever think you might die?

PETERSON

Yeah. Had a near-death thing.

WENDY

No shit?

PETERSON

Mind separate from body and everything. Here's the piss. Drugs wore off. I couldn't stand the pain. So, I did it again. I could control it.

Wendy raises a sceptical eyebrow.

WENDY

Maybe you just took too many shots
from football? No brain, no pain?

They laugh.

WENDY

Not much of a story there,
Peterson. Strictly feature stuff.
Back page, medical section.

Wendy rubs her neck. She arches her back and stretches.

PETERSON

Backache?

WENDY

Not much sleep lately.

PETERSON

Bed's real comfortable.

Peterson urges Wendy to join him. She smiles, turns away,
and shakes her head.

WENDY

You're not so sick.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

The Washington Monument stands tall in the nation's capital.

EXT. WASHINGTON GOLF COURSE - DAY

A flagstick identifies the 18th green. FRANKLIN MICHAELSON,
60-ish, but athletic and muscular, prepares to putt.

His golf partner, ARTHUR CONRAD, tall, handsome, and a few
years younger, tends the flagstick.

On the fairway, Ziya and Grinstead wait to make their shots
to the green.

Michaelson eyes the 20-foot putt, strokes it, and the ball
rolls into the cup. Conrad scratches his head.

CONRAD

Damn! Well, Mr. Secretary, you've
done it again.

MICHAELSON

Nice game, Arthur. Drink?

CONRAD

Sorry, no time. Some of us aren't
on vacation.

MICHAELSON

I figured being a senator meant
you're always on vacation?

CONRAD

Franklin, you sound like all
cabinet members. See you in a
week. Enjoy the camping trip.

Michaelson nods, walks toward the clubhouse. Conrad
separates and heads for the parking lot.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Michaelson sits by his locker and wipes off clubs.

Ziya and Grinstead wander in.

Grinstead stops at Michaelson's locker. Ziya disappears
down another row.

GRINSTEAD

You putt pretty good.

MICHAELSON

Thanks. Haven't seen you on the
course before.

GRINSTEAD

Oh, well --

Grinstead cackles a dumb laugh. Michaelson frowns.

MICHAELSON

I get it. You fuckers snuck on,
didn't you?

Ziya sneaks behind Michaelson and forces a gauze pad over
his nose and mouth.

Michaelson resists, and Grinstead punches him in the chest.

The big man grunts and reels backward. Ziya holds on.

Michaelson elbows Ziya hard, in the gut. The tall Arab
drops the gauze pad and sinks to his knees.

Grinstead throws another punch. Michaelson ducks and
retaliates with a tremendous uppercut.

The black man crashes against lockers. Golf clubs scatter.
Michaelson sneers and grins.

MICHAELSON

You think I'm some old lard ass? I
was captain of Yale's boxing team!

Michaelson takes on both Grinstead and the gigantic Ziya.

He throws jabs and hooks. Mops up the floor with them.

Everything goes well for Michaelson, until he trips on a golf club and stumbles to the floor.

Grinstead kicks Michaelson hard in the ribs.

Michaelson struggles to his feet. His assailants stare, open-mouthed with surprise.

Ziya hits Michaelson in the back of the head with a golf club and stuns him. Michaelson spins around.

Ziya pokes the end of the club deep into the man's midsection. Michaelson doubles over, and gasps for breath.

GRINSTEAD

Sniff on this, punk!

Grinstead retrieves the gauze and covers Michaelson's face.

Ziya holds him in a vise grip.

In seconds, Michaelson falls under the influence of the drug and collapses to the floor.

Ziya picks up Michaelson like a rag doll and straightens him up. Grinstead acts as lookout.

Ziya and Grinstead support Michaelson under each arm and half-carry him out of the locker room, like someone might assist a drunk.

GRINSTEAD

Some dudes just can't handle their gin, huh buddy?

EXT. BALTIMORE SKYLINE - NIGHT

A sultry evening. Light traffic.

INT. PETERSON'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

The apartment features a large walk-in closet. Wendy sleeps in bed, Peterson beside her. He's wide-awake.

A bare-chested Peterson crawls out of bed, careful not to disturb Wendy. He readjusts the bed sheets and covers her.

He starts out of the room. Stops.

Peterson returns to Wendy, bends down, and gives her a tender kiss on the cheek.

She moans in her sleep and in a reflex action, wipes away the kiss with her hand.

INT. PETERSON'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Peterson passes a fireplace, opens a sliding glass door, and steps onto an outside terrace.

EXT. PETERSON'S APARTMENT/TERRACE - NIGHT

City lights reveal several deep, but healed scars on Peterson's back, chest and arms.

He sits in a lotus position. Eyes closed.

Peterson shifts to deep meditation. Slow, heavy breathing.

His body relaxes, and respiration appears to stop.

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Surrealistic setting, as before. Peterson walks to the cliff edge. Jumps off. Falls slow and silent.

WENDY (V.O.)

Peterson? Hey, Zack, snap out of it!

END DREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. PETERSON'S APARTMENT/TERRACE - NIGHT

Wendy wears Peterson's shirt. She observes Peterson. Draws closer and hesitates. Her eyebrows knit with concern.

Wendy monitors Peterson's behavior. His eyelids flutter. He comes out of his trance.

WENDY

You're weird.

PETERSON

It helps me relax. Don't you ever feel like blanking out your mind?

She laughs.

WENDY

All the time. But, it's too metaphysical for me.

Peterson shrugs his shoulders.

PETERSON

No brain, no pain?

Wendy arches an eyebrow.

WENDY

Yeah, I guess so. Like I said,
you're weird. Come back to bed, I
miss you.

Peterson takes her hand.

PETERSON

I love making love with you.

WENDY

We don't make love, Peterson. We
fuck.

PETERSON

Maybe, someday you'll explain the
difference.

WENDY

Maybe, someday you'll know it.

She takes her hand away and chuckles. Retreats toward the
living room. Peterson follows.

INT. PETERSON'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Wendy turns to face Peterson.

WENDY

Why can't we keep things the way
they are now?

Peterson lowers his eyes, sulks and broods. Wendy sighs.

WENDY

Remember, only married people get
divorced. No matter what you
think, I really do care for you.

PETERSON

How come sometimes you call me
"Peterson"?

WENDY

Have to maintain my professional
objectivity.

PETERSON

Shut up and give me a kiss.

WENDY

Uh, uh. I'll be late for work.
Gotta get home and change.

PETERSON

If you moved in, you wouldn't have
that problem.

WENDY

It'd be a problem for me. My job's in D.C., Zack. I want to be something more than just your wife or girlfriend. I told you, I want my own column. Besides, there's no reason why you couldn't move to D.C. I could put in a good word for you at my paper.

PETERSON

I'm not a newspaper guy. I deal with images, not words..

Wendy responds with a cynical sneer.

PETERSON

Hey, maybe I can make my mind travel from Baltimore to D.C.?

WENDY

What makes you think it's your mind I miss?... You ought to get your ass moving, too.

She turns and strolls toward the bedroom.

PETERSON

I'd rather watch yours.

Wendy glances back and smiles. Peterson follows.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE. - DAY

The business hub of the city. Morning rush hour traffic.

EXT. BALTIMORE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Ten-story high rise. A newsstand at the curb, where a MAN sells magazines and newspapers.

Peterson and Greg walk to the newsstand. Greg carries his video equipment on his shoulder.

Peterson plunks a dollar down on the counter. Takes a newspaper from the stack.

PETERSON

How's it going, Tommy?

MAN

(mentally-challenged)

Uh hey, Mr. Peterson! Mornin'.

Peterson and Greg approach the building entrance.

GREG

Hey, man, what's with you? You buy a paper from that guy every day. We get 'em free at the station.

Peterson shrugs his shoulders in embarrassment.

GREG

And, you never even ask for change.

PETERSON

I can afford it. Besides, I like Tommy. He's a good kid.

GREG

You're just an old softie, Zack.

PETERSON

What you trying to do, Greg? Ruin my reputation?

Greg giggles. They go inside the building.

INT. HIGH RISE HALLWAY - DAY

Letters on a swinging glass door: "WBMD, Channel 8, News".

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Desks and tables, with computers, printers, cameras, televisions, and newspapers.

NEWSPEOPLE scurry around. Peterson and Greg come in.

GREG

Zack, what about this trial? Can they really put us in the slammer?

PETERSON

Nobody's going to jail, amigo.

Greg strolls off. Peterson examines a desk. Frowns.

PETERSON

What happened to my baseball?

Fifteen feet away, a REPORTER at another desk picks up an old baseball.

REPORTER

Just looking. Here!

The Reporter rifles the ball at Peterson's head.

He snatches the ball out of the air, in one swift motion. Tilts his head and sticks out his tongue.

PETERSON

Don't throw shit at me.

Applause from those in the room.

Peterson grins at the Reporter. Takes a deep, comic bow to acknowledge the ovation.

An inner office door opens. LEONARD SILVER peers out. Graying. Middle-aged.

SILVER

Zack? My office.

Zack heads for the door, which reads: "Leonard Silver - Channel 8 News Director".

INT. SILVER'S OFFICE - DAY

Silver escorts Peterson inside.

SILVER

I hear you're going to pull some shit when you testify today.

PETERSON

What do you mean?

SILVER

Those interviews with the Baltimore Five. Word is you won't turn the disks over to the D.A.

PETERSON

Hell no! Ever hear of the First Amendment, Leonard?

SILVER

Here comes the crusader again. Why help them? The Baltimore Five nearly got you killed.

PETERSON

It doesn't matter. I won't give up my material. Not until I'm through with it.

SILVER

Lots of folks don't agree with your decision. They say it's un-American.

PETERSON

Hey! I was an All-American!

SILVER

You're not on the football field now. That kind of attitude could lose advertisers, Zack.

PETERSON

Tell somebody who gives a shit!

Peterson storms out the door.

SILVER

I got a station to run, Zack!

The door slams. Silver grunts.

EXT. BALTIMORE COURTHOUSE - DAY

A four-story building in the French Renaissance style, faced in white marble. A bronze statue of Lady Justice outside the massive building.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Peterson approaches a courtroom door, while Greg, in his video outfit, exchanges heated gestures with an OFFICER.

The door pops open, and Babcock sticks his head out.

BABCOCK

What's the problem here?

OFFICER

This guy don't want to give up his camera. I told him "No video, no pictures". He won't check it.

BABCOCK

(to Greg)

Say. You take that shit into the shower with you?

GREG

I don't take showers.

BABCOCK

That's what I thought.

PETERSON

Wait a sec, Gary.

Peterson grabs Greg's camera. Pulls out the flash drive, hands it to the Officer, then returns Greg's camera.

PETERSON

Keep it. No flash drive, no recordings. And, here's my phone, too. Okay, pal?

Peterson gives his smartphone to the Officer.

BABCOCK

Go ahead, Zack. You too, Dobbins.

PETERSON

(to Babcock)

You testify already?

BABCOCK

Yeah, just finished. I gotta take off. Better get your butt in there. They've already called you.

Peterson nods. He and Greg step through the courtroom door, while Babcock ambles down the hallway.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

SPECTATORS and MEDIA fill the courtroom. Two POLICEMEN flank both sides, at the rear.

The huge Ziya wears a leg cast and sits in the back row.

Pauline observes from the front row. She carries an oversized handbag. Wendy has a spot in the second row.

The JUDGE, 60, presides over the courtroom. The defendants: Napoleon Williams and LaPoint.

The DISTRICT ATTORNEY stands before the judge, arms folded.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Your honor. Mr. Peterson was under subpoena to testify. But it appears he --

PETERSON

Right here, your honor!

Peterson and Greg appear at the rear. The crowd murmurs, and the two advance toward the judge.

Peterson locates Wendy. Guides Greg to her row. Leans in to Wendy.

PETERSON

Save me a seat, amiga.

WENDY

You're late. The judge is pissed.

He shrugs it off. Greg finds a place beside Wendy, and Peterson reaches the witness stand.

JUDGE

Mr. Peterson?

PETERSON

Sorry I'm late, your honor. Traffic was a bi--

He stops himself. Greg stifles a laugh.

PETERSON

Uh. I got caught in traffic.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Zachary Peterson?

PETERSON
You know who I am.

The D.A. raises a perturbed eyebrow. The impatient Judge waves the BAILIFF to approach.

Peterson places his hand on a bible, and the Bailiff administers the oath.

Greg sneaks another flash drive from his pocket, tries to insert it in the camera, but Wendy stops him.

Greg scowls at her. Peterson takes the witness chair.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Mr. Peterson. You're the anchorman for Channel eight news, correct?

PETERSON
Anchor person.

The D.A. scowls.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Last year, you and cameraman Greg Dobbins spent several hours with the so-called Baltimore Five?

PETERSON
We talked.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
You knew where these terrorists were. And didn't tell the police?

WILLIAMS
We're not terrorists! We're revolutionaries!

JUDGE
You'll get your chance to speak, Mr. Williams! Answer the question, Mr. Peterson.

PETERSON
No, I didn't inform the police. I don't compromise my news sources.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Mr. Peterson. Will you surrender the recordings of these interviews?

PETERSON
You'll get them after my documentary airs.

JUDGE

Mr. Peterson, this court orders you to comply. Now.

PETERSON

Your honor, this is a question of First Amendment rights. Freedom of the press.

JUDGE

The court disagrees. Bailiff, place this witness in the city correctional facility, until he comes to his senses. Mr. Peterson, you are in contempt of court.

The Bailiff swaggers to the witness stand.

Spectators chatter. The Bailiff grabs Peterson by his jacket sleeve. Peterson pulls his sleeve back and breaks the man's grip.

Anger flashes in the Bailiff's face. He shoves Peterson against the side of the podium.

WENDY

Hey! Take it easy, asshole!

JUDGE

That's enough from you, young lady!

Pauline pulls two plastic guns from her oversize handbag.

PAULINE

Nap! Here!

Williams turns, and Pauline tosses him a revolver.

Ziya rips off his leg cast. A sawed-off automatic rifle hides inside. He grabs it and stands up.

BLAM! Ziya blasts a Policemen. The officer's face bursts crimson. He falls dead.

The second Policeman drops for cover and draws his weapon.

Hysterical screams from spectators. Ziya keeps the Bailiff pinned down with gunfire.

Peterson scrambles to the second row, pushes Wendy onto the floor and shields her with his body.

WENDY

Ouch. Zack, I'm not in the mood.

PETERSON

Shut up!

Greg puts the flash drive in his camera, rises, and documents the action.

PETERSON

Greg, what the hell're you doing?!

Bystanders crawl to safety. Hide under benches.

The Judge disappears below his desk. Re-emerges, armed with a pistol. He fires at Williams.

Pauline returns the fire. The Judge's skull explodes. He slumps over the bench.

Bullets fly from all angles.

The Officer outside the door bursts in and joins the battle.

Greg continues to stand and record the shootout, a wide grin on his face. He dodges an occasional bullet.

PETERSON

Greg, get down!

Peterson presses against Wendy.

WENDY

You're crushing my skirt. I just had it dry-cleaned.

PETERSON

Cut it out, Wendy.

Williams yanks Peterson out and jams a gun in his ribs.

PETERSON

Oh, crap.

Williams uses him as a shield. Wendy rises.

WENDY

Let him go, you piece of shit!

Williams backhands her. She falls down at Greg's feet.

Williams and Peterson reach the courtroom rear door with Pauline, LaPoint, and Ziya.

The Bailiff and the second court Policeman lie dead.

The wounded Officer from the hallway gets off a shot. Hits Williams in the shoulder.

The group flees the courtroom. Greg rushes past Wendy and hurries to the door.

WENDY

Greg! Wait up!

Greg trips over a dead Policeman and falls. Wendy dashes toward him.

EXT. BALTIMORE COURTHOUSE - DAY

A police van waits in front of the building. The POLICE DRIVER talks to an OFFICER on the sidewalk, through the open window. O.S. GUNSHOTS. The Driver scoffs.

DRIVER

Little early for July Fourth.

OFFICER

It's not fireworks. Car backfire.

The two men notice a beat-up van parked a few feet away. A METERMAID argues with the driver, Roberta Garza.

GARZA

Gimme a break. I'm waitin' for my boyfriend. Ain't hurtin' nothin'.

METERMAID

You're parked illegally.

GARZA

Then, gimme a ticket, bitch!

The annoyed Metermaid folds her arms and sneers. The Officer saunters to the van and grins at the Metermaid.

The five desperados burst out the courthouse entrance, weapons drawn and Peterson still held hostage.

PEDESTRIANS catch sight of this, scream and scatter.

The Officer draws his weapon and advances on the group.

The Metermaid concludes that retreat is the better part of valor. Hops into her three-wheeled vehicle and drives off.

The police Driver leaps out of the van, pistol-in-hand.

More gunfire erupts.

Peterson frees himself from Williams' grip. He falls down, and his head hits the pavement. He crumples in a daze.

Bullets fly. Napoleon Williams drops dead on the steps of the courthouse, along with the Officer.

The police Driver suffers a mortal wound. His body stretches out on the sidewalk.

Pauline runs toward Garza's van.

LaPoint pauses and stares at Williams' body.

LAPPOINT

Nap...

PAULINE

Forget it, he's dead!

The wounded police Driver fires shots into each right-side tire of Garza's van.

Ziya shoots the Driver several times and kills him.

Pauline gapes at the flat right tires.

PAULINE

Shit! Garza, you got two flats!

Garza clenches a fist, then points to the police van.

GARZA

There!

The group transfers into the police van. Peterson staggers to his feet.

Ziya fires at Peterson, who takes cover behind a parked car. The big man joins the others in the police van. It burns rubber and bolts down the street.

Garza's van engine still runs. Peterson climbs inside.

Greg, camera in hand, busts out of the courthouse. Wendy and two POLICEMEN follow him.

GREG

Zack! Wait for me, man!

Peterson puts the damaged vehicle into gear. The van takes off, and Greg pursues it.

He hops onto the rear bumper. Wendy can't reach it.

WENDY

Greg!

A short ride for Greg. He loses his balance and tumbles onto the street.

Greg continues to record the event while on his back.

A car behind him honks. Greg turns and glares at it.

GREG

Get bent! I'm a newsman!

Wendy rushes into the street. Assists Greg to his feet.

She hauls the reluctant cameraman onto the curb. They both watch the van blend into traffic and disappear.

WENDY

Damn you, Zack Peterson! You
always have all the fun! And, I
get left behind!

She stomps her foot.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS - DAY - TRAVELING

The police van with the fugitives speeds along Baltimore's
downtown district and weaves through afternoon traffic.

Peterson pilots Garza's van. It lags behind the police van.

Two flat tires make it difficult to control. Chunks of
smoking rubber fly off.

The street chews up both tires. Only bare metal remains.
Wheels scrape the hard pavement and leave a trail of sparks.

Peterson cannot steer the van. He pulls to the curb, stops
the vehicle, and abandons it.

A car horn blares, as a taxicab bears down on him. Peterson
holds his ground.

The cab squeals to a stop, a foot from Peterson's nose.

INT. TAXICAB/ EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS - DAY - TRAVELING

Peterson opens the door and slithers into the front seat,
beside the CABBIE. An elderly LADY rides in the back seat.

CABBIE

Jesus Christ! Zack Peterson!

The old Lady glares at him.

LADY

You're Zack Peterson? The football
player? The news guy?

PETERSON

Yes, ma'am.

LADY

Driver, I'm gettin' out!

She flings the door open and lumbers out of the taxi. Leans
in to Peterson. Glowers at him.

LADY

You liberal slime! I wouldn't piss
on you if you was on fire!

She slams the door shut in anger.

The taxi takes off. Tires squeal, as it makes a sharp turn
onto another street. Just misses two PEDESTRIANS.

PETERSON

(to Cabbie)

That police van up ahead. A
hundred bucks tip, if you catch it!

The cab speeds up. Snakes around cars and pedestrians.

The taxi screeches to an abrupt stop. The Cabbie points
down a side street, where the police vehicle parks.

Grinstead's station wagon waits across from it, Grinstead
behind the wheel.

The police van occupants transfer to the station wagon.

The vehicle heads back onto the main street.

EXT. HIGHWAY #395 - DAY - TRAVELING

The taxicab trails the wagon, but maintains its pace.

The two vehicles continue along the interstate.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The taxicab stops on the shoulder. On the opposite side, an
old barn is next to a small airfield.

Peterson steps out, leans through the driver's window, and
hands him several bills.

PETERSON

Go to Channel eight news. Find a
guy named Greg Dobbins. Tell him
what happened.

The Cabbie nods. Peterson sneaks up to the barn.

The taxi pulls from the shoulder, makes a u-turn, then
drives down the road.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Peterson peers through a crack between two boards.

INT. BARN - DAY

A two-engine Twin Otter plane occupies most of the barn.
The station wagon crowds against it.

A PILOT readies the craft. Grinstead loads a box of
supplies into the baggage compartment.

LaPoint, Garza and Pauline converse in the middle of the
barn. Ziya oversees operations.

LAPOINT

I don't get it. Nap's lying dead on the sidewalk. Now, you say we have to go to this Arab guy?

PAULINE

You meet him. You'll understand.

GARZA

Everything will make sense.

Grinstead loads up the plane. Turns to the others. Ziya opens the barn double doors.

EXT. BARN - DAY

When the barn doors swing open, Peterson takes cover.

Grinstead backs the station wagon out and onto the road. The vehicle drives off.

Peterson returns to the crack between the boards and peeks in the barn.

A gun butt slams onto the back of his head. He slumps to the ground.

Pauline stands behind him, with the gun and grins.

PAULINE

Hey! Look what I found!

The others join her.

GARZA

Peterson. Sticking his nose where it don't belong. Again.

LAPOINT

Now what? Kill him?

PAULINE

No. Bring him inside.

Ziya lifts Peterson's unconscious body and carries him into the barn.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The Twin Otter flies across the night sky.

EXT. DESERT COMPLEX - DAY - TRAVELING

The Twin Otter lands on a desert airstrip.

It taxis to a collection of old military buildings and a large tent.

The aircraft stops at a half-open, dilapidated front gate. An ARAB, armed with a high-powered rifle, guards it.

Passengers disembark. First Garza, then LaPoint.

A beat later, Ziya shoves a dazed Peterson out. A bandage covers the back of Peterson's head. Pauline follows them.

Ziya grasps Peterson by the collar and pushes him through the gate.

The airplane rolls away from the complex.

MEN and WOMEN in fatigues work on training exercises. OTHERS practice karate and target shooting.

A circular wooden table faces a large bungalow. Several chairs surround the table.

Klingsor emerges from the bungalow. He wears an immaculate white suit. Sits at the table. An umbrella shelters him from the sun's heat.

Garza escorts a confused-looking LaPoint into the bungalow.

Ziya brings Peterson to the table. Pauline flashes a seductive smile at Klingsor and caresses him.

Klingsor focuses his gaze on Peterson.

KLINGSOR
(to Ziya and Pauline)
Well done. Now, go.

Ziya bows. Pauline nods to Klingsor.

She and the mammoth giant back off, station themselves several yards from Klingsor, and observe.

Klingsor gestures to an empty chair opposite his.

KLINGSOR
(to Peterson)
Sit.

Peterson plops down in the chair.

Klingsor glares hard at Peterson. He reaches over and offers his hand.

KLINGSOR
Mr. Zack Peterson. It is a
pleasure to meet you.

Peterson stands up. Mistake. He winces and feels where Pauline's gun butt struck his head. Sits back down.

KLINGSOR

Oh, you are in pain. I'm sorry you were treated roughly. You are an excellent reporter, Peterson.

Peterson studies Klingsor's face for a beat.

PETERSON

Thanks, Haddam.

KLINGSOR

I am now called by another name. Klingsor. I congratulate you, knowing me without the beard.

PETERSON

I liked you better with it. Covered more of your face.

Klingsor ignores the insult and forces a smile.

PETERSON

Haven't heard much from you. Not since the raid on your commandos.

KLINGSOR

Like your famous General MacArthur, I have returned. Indeed, it may be fortunate for both of us that you were brought here.

PETERSON

Where the hell is here?

KLINGSOR

An army training base in a southwestern state.

Peterson smirks.

KLINGSOR

Once used by your government. I purchased it through a third party.

Klingsor's eyes never leave Peterson. A moment of silence.

KLINGSOR

I could use a man like you, Peterson. To document my struggle. Give it a Western perspective, for future historians to study.

PETERSON

That'll be the day. I see your stormtroopers working out. What the hell are you running here? Summer camp for terrorists?

Anger flashes in Klingsor's face.

He reaches across the table and grabs Peterson by his shirt. Gives the reporter a hypnotic gaze.

Peterson avoids Klingsor's eyes.

Klingsor sits back. Releases his granite grip.

KLINGSOR

Imagine what could be done with our money and America's resources? The U.S. would no longer be a bankrupt society. But, an extension of the Arab world. My world. Doing my will.

Peterson forces a laugh.

PETERSON

How's that gonna happen?

KLINGSOR

By using America's own citizens as instruments of change.

PETERSON

What, the Baltimore Five? There's only three of them left alive. Hey, I know these people. They don't take orders from anybody.

Klingsor chuckles to himself. Pauses. He stands and struts around the table.

KLINGSOR

The two women already follow me. There are others, there will be more. This country is ripe for change. Riots. Poverty. Crime. The foundation is here, Peterson. America's right-wing, with its religious fundamentalism. That is but a few steps from Islam. Many of your blacks are already Muslims.

PETERSON

I never thought you were religious.

KLINGSOR

What is religion, but a device to unite. Or divide.

ABU HADDAM, 20, a handsome, muscular Arab slithers to Klingsor. The two embrace.

ABU

America shall not forget this Fourth of July.

Klingsor puts a finger to his lips and gestures for silence.

KLINGSOR

Here is my only remaining son, Abu.
If I should fail in my quest, he
will carry on.

WALID HADDAM, 80, wizened and bent over, approaches Klingsor and glowers at him.

WALID

Be consumed by the fire of Allah's
rage, usurper!

Klingsor laughs. Walid turns to Peterson. Pleads for sympathy with his eyes.

PETERSON

King Haddam?

WALID

Yes. King Walid Masri al Haddam.
The rightful ruler of Haddam.

KLINGSOR

This was my father. Once a strong
man, now weak. Like an old woman.

The other Arabs laugh.

KLINGSOR

I let the old fool live. A
reminder of my country's former
weakness.

Pauline leads the old man away from Klingsor.

Walid turns and glances back at Peterson.

An automobile ENGINE rumbles, O.S. The group surveys the front gate, where an off-road dune buggy approaches.

The driver is TIM, 18, gangly, with an amiable smile. His attractive passenger, KATHY, 17, wears a tank top and tight blue jean cutoffs.

Klingsor gestures to Ziya, and they advance to the gate. Another ARAB joins them. Abu keeps an eye on Peterson.

KLINGSOR

(to the Guard at the
gate)

Let them pass.

The dune buggy stops at the gate. Tim slides out and nods a friendly greeting to Klingsor.

TIM
 (southern drawl)
 Howdy. We didn't know anyone was
 out here. This place closed up
 years ago.

KLINGSOR
 (in a sweet manner)
 Welcome, welcome. Come. Bring
 your friend, join us for tea.

TIM
 Oh... well, I don't know --

KLINGSOR
 Please. Accept my hospitality. In
 my country, it is a great insult
 not to do so.

TIM
 Well... Okay.
 (to Kathy)
 C'mon, Kathy!

Kathy appears reluctant, but joins them.

TIM
 I'm Tim. This is Kathy.

KLINGSOR
 Ah... very lovely.

KATHY
 Are you some kind of oil sheik?

Klingsor laughs. Kathy giggles in a girlish manner.

KLINGSOR
 Perhaps. But, how did you wander
 so far out here? You are lost?

TIM
 Yeah, a little. I guess.

KLINGSOR
 Your parents have no idea where you
 are?

KATHY
 Uh, we kinda ditched summer school.

KLINGSOR
 May I ask, what are your parents'
 professions?

KATHY
 Mine work at the bakery in
 Brownstown. Tim lives with his
 Mom. She don't work.

Klingsor nods. His friendly demeanor disappears.

KLINGSOR
(to the others)
We may have use for the girl. Kill
the boy.

Fear flashes across the teenagers' faces. Ziya grabs Kathy. She struggles to break free from the giant.

KATHY
Run, Tim! Get help!

Tim hesitates, then runs toward his dune buggy. The Guard fires his rifle before Tim can hop inside.

Two bullets rip through Tim's body and kill him instantly.

Kathy screams. Peterson tries to rise. Abu pushes him back into his chair.

Ziya lifts Kathy into his arms with little effort and takes her away. She kicks and hollers.

The Guard drags Tim's body into the complex.

The other Arab climbs into the dune buggy, starts it, and drives the vehicle through the gate.

Klingsor returns to the table and motions to Abu.

KLINGSOR
Bring him inside... I have
something to show you, Peterson.

Abu jerks Peterson to his feet and drags him to the bungalow. Klingsor follows behind them.

INT. KLINGSOR'S OFFICE - DAY

A large desk and a set of bookshelves dominate the room.

Abu pushes Peterson inside, stands by the door, and folds his arms. Klingsor swaggers in and sits behind the desk.

Peterson checks out the room and wanders to a set of bookshelves. One section deals with black magic, witchcraft, and satanism.

PETERSON
Who's your librarian? Stephen
King?

He scans more shelves. Works concentrate on the Bible and Jesus Christ.

Peterson further examines the books. Subjects that deal with the Holy Grail and Parsifal dominate. Peterson's mental light bulb switches on.

PETERSON

Yeah, Klingsor. Now, I know the name. A character out of the Holy Grail legends. Sorcerer, right?

He turns and faces Klingsor.

PETERSON

What the hell are you up to?

Klingsor motions for Abu to leave. The young Arab bows, kisses Klingsor's hand, and exits. A beat.

Klingsor takes a key from his pocket. Unlocks and opens a long drawer in the huge desk.

He removes a long, narrow leather case. Gestures for Peterson to sit by him. Peterson complies.

Klingsor focuses his hypnotic eyes on Peterson. An eerie silence shrouds the room.

He opens the leather case with reverent care.

The case houses the ancient spearhead on the silver shaft. The Spear of Longinus.

Klingsor grasps the spear, closes his eyes, and concentrates. A tiny bead of sweat forms on his forehead.

He touches Peterson between the eyes.

KLINGSOR

I shall implant a memory in your consciousness. Take you on a journey, back nearly two millennium... Surrender your mind.

Peterson relaxes.

BEGIN MIND TUNNEL SEQUENCE

The same twisting tunnel accelerates toward the end of the spinning object. As before, spurts of blue light reveal the fibrous tunnel sides.

At the tunnel's end, a blast of white light explodes.

The background becomes dull gray. Multi-colored lights flicker. The tunnel image drifts away.

END MIND TUNNEL SEQUENCE

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. CALVARY (33 A.D.) - DAY

The Crucifixion of Christ, as depicted in the Bible. JESUS CHRIST dies on the cross.

The thieves, GESTAS and DISMAS, already dead, flank Christ.

The APOSTLES, MARY, MARY MAGDALENE, Roman SOLDIERS, and other SPECTATORS witness the event.

Mourners weep and wail. Others laugh and jeer at Christ.

GAIUS CASSIUS, a Roman centurion in his 50s, observes the scene on horseback.

A celestial CHOIR in the background. An air of mysticism.

The scene contains an ethereal, dream-like quality. A lifelike El Greco painting.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

The prophet Isaiah predicted of the Messiah, "A bone of him shall not be broken." Jewish law decreed that no man should die on the Sabbath. Pontius Pilate gave his permission, to ensure the crucified men died before sunset.

A small group of Temple GUARDSMEN approaches. A guard CAPTAIN leads them. Carries a spear above his head.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

The Temple guard went out. To show the Romans they had the authority, the Captain carried with him the spear of Herod, King of the Jews.

When the Temple Guardsmen arrive. One Guardsman strides to Gestas, at the first cross.

He clubs the already-dead thief's skull and limbs, crushes the flesh and bones. Spectators scream, moan, and flee from the gruesome sight.

The hideous display of barbarism repels Roman soldiers. They depart Calvary.

Gaius Cassius witnesses the horrific spectacle.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

The only Roman left, Gaius Cassius, the centurion. He suffered from cataracts in both eyes.

The Guards turn their attention to the thief Dismas. They bludgeon his chest.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

Cataracts prevented him from combat. He was assigned to report on political activity in Jerusalem.

Guards prepare to continue their mayhem on the body of Jesus Christ, though he also appears dead.

Gaius Cassius scowls with anger. He summons his horse forward. The thundering, roaring thuds of the horse's hoofbeats rumble and shake the ground.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

In battle, Roman soldiers would
pierce the side of a wounded enemy
to prove he was dead. Blood will
not flow from a lifeless body.

Gaius Cassius gallops toward the central cross.

The centurion grabs the spear from the Captain of the guards. His horse doesn't break its stride.

The hot breath of the horse snorts from its nostrils.

Gaius Cassius thrusts the spear into Christ's side.

The SOUND of METAL as it penetrates human flesh,
reverberates through Calvary.

A burst of blinding blue LIGHT flashes.

He pulls out the spear, and blood and water flow from the wound. It sprays into the centurion's eyes.

Gaius Cassius stops his horse. Wipes away the liquid.
Tears of joy well from his eyes.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

His sight was restored. He
converted to Christianity and
became known as Longinus. The
spear passed from one world leader
to another. Legend was, it
contained mysterious powers. And,
whoever claimed it, held the
destiny of the world.

END FLASHBACK

INT. KLINGSOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Klingsor reels backward with a deep sigh, as he recovers from his trance.

He removes the finger from Peterson's forehead.

Peterson returns to reality. Mute, agitated, and in a disturbed state. He opens his eyes. Blinks a few times.

Klingsor caresses the spear. Replaces it in the case.

KLINGSOR

When I attended school in Germany, I became fascinated with the occult. I visited the spear many times at a Vienna museum. Where I experienced the same vision Hitler had, when he first saw it in his youth. Finally, I had it taken from the museum. There were many tests. A period of intense concentration. But, finally, I learned its secrets.

Peterson tries to respond, but trauma prevents him. He sits frozen, like a helpless zombie.

KLINGSOR

As Christ died, he sent part of his essence into the mind of Longinus.

Tears well up in Peterson's eyes. Unable to control his emotions, he weeps.

KLINGSOR

The sudden burst of psychic energy charged the spear with the ability to implant thought waves.

Klingsor observes the distraught Peterson.

PETERSON

What did you... do to me?

KLINGSOR

I gave you a vision... Have you ever before seen such vivid images? As though you were witness to the actual event. Seeing part of history itself.

Beads of sweat appear on Peterson's forehead.

PETERSON

I felt another mind. In my head.

Klingsor emits a maniacal, crooked grin. Leans in to Peterson. The two face each other, nose-to-nose.

Peterson drips sweat. Scared. Filled with fright.

Klingsor's voice oozes sadistic evil.

KLINGSOR

It was my mind. I could easily insert an unpleasant memory. It caused a well-adjusted young man like yourself, to go quite insane.

Klingsor completes his intimidation of Peterson. He smiles. Turns away and leans back, satisfied.

KLINGSOR

There were months of experimenting.
How to gather the power. Which
thoughts to transfer. Then, I
began to abduct those I wanted to
initiate as my followers.

Peterson's head twitches. He tries to regain his composure.

Klingsor ignores whether Peterson follows what he says. He wrings his hands in glee, absorbed in his own power.

KLINGSOR

I transfer part of my mind to them.
The initiation itself is
undetected. Basic personality
remains. But, loyalty changes.
They are part of me. They obey me.

Peterson stops twitching, steadies himself, and forces a stare into Klingsor's diabolical eyes.

PETERSON

I will never obey you.

Klingsor cups his hands around Peterson's face. He whispers to him, like the hot, sizzling hiss of a venomous snake. Peterson trembles.

KLINGSOR

Oh, you are wrong, Peterson. For,
tomorrow, you shall undergo the
initiation. And, the process is
always final. Only death may free
the initiate.

Peterson's hands tremble. He struggles to his feet. Faints and collapses on the floor.

Klingsor's laughter roars like a madman.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A Cadillac parks on the road, alongside the old barn. The exact spot where the taxi left Peterson.

Greg, Wendy, Silver, and the Cabbie who transported Peterson to that location, stand beside the Cadillac.

Greg has his ever-present video camera strapped on.

Wendy checks out the small airfield next to the barn. She snaps several shots with her phone.

SILVER
(to Cabbie)
You're sure?

CABBIE
Believe me, it's the place. I
don't forget tips like that.

The four cross the road and walk toward the barn. Wendy searches for clues. Greg records the scene.

EXT. BARN - DAY

The Cabbie leads them to the crack between the boards.

CABBIE
When I pulled away, he was here.

Silver, Wendy, and Greg take turns and look into the barn.

SILVER
Typical. Snooping.

GREG
Hey. Get this.

He indicates a dark spot on the grass. The Cabbie bends down and feels it. Smells his hand.

CABBIE
Blood.

Wendy takes a photo. The four swing open the doors and enter the barn.

INT. BARN - DAY

A bare interior. The four scan the area.

SILVER
Not much around here.

Wendy points to tracks in the center of the barn.

WENDY
Real observant, aren't you, Silver?

Greg records it. Silver scratches his head.

SILVER
So, what about it? Looks like
tractor tracks.

WENDY
Tractor? What kind of tractor
makes marks like that? The weight
of an airplane made these.

Silver shrugs his shoulders.

WENDY

There's a damn airfield outside.
What more proof do you need?

SILVER

Now, Miss Babcock. Let's not jump
to conclusions.

Wendy scoffs at Silver with disgust.

WENDY

I'll bring my brother out here.
You know, the Chief of Police?
We'll see what he thinks.

She walks away from Silver. Greg follows.

WENDY

Zack was kidnapped... Jesus, great
story. "Baltimore Five Survivors
Kidnap Ex-NFL Player Newsman".

GREG

Kind of a long headline. Just for
the record, Wendy. Which means
more? The story? Or Zack's life?

WENDY

That's not fair, Greg. You know I
feel for Zack.

GREG

You don't even know him.

Wendy and Greg glare hard at each other. Silver joins them.

WENDY

I really miss the son-of-a-bitch.
More than I thought.

SILVER

Don't worry about Zack. He's
probably in some jerk-water town.
Interviewing what's left of the
Baltimore Five. And guzzling beer.

INT. PETERSON'S ROOM - DAY

A small bedroom. Barred windows. Peterson wakes up in the
bed, fully-clothed.

He springs out of bed and checks the door. Locked.

Peterson tries the windows. All fastened secure. He
returns to the bed and clenches his fists in frustration.

Peterson pulls a small notebook from his pocket. Writes.

O.S. SOUNDS of FOOTSTEPS. He picks up a lamp. Waits behind the door, ready to club whoever enters.

The door opens and reveals the old ex-king, Walid.

Before Peterson can speak, Walid puts a finger to his lips and signals for quiet. He motions for Peterson to follow.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Peterson and Walid head down a long, narrow hallway.

They walk a few steps. Walid stops. Opens a door. He and Peterson pass through.

INT. CHAMBER - DAY

Walid and Peterson descend a narrow set of dilapidated steps. The clack of their shoes on the stones reverberates.

Halfway down, Peterson stops. He covers his nose and gags.

PETERSON

Jesus. What stinks?

O.S. GROANS emanate from below. Peterson ignores the stench and follows Walid.

They reach the foot of the steps. A steel door with a small barred window lies at the far end of the chamber.

Walid gestures for Peterson to check inside.

INT. CELL - DAY

A prison cell holds four MEN, barely human. They dress in rags. Faces twist in bizarre expressions.

One freak is the young Arab from Klingsor's earlier unsuccessful initiation attempt. All the men possess a psychotic, wild-eyed appearance.

INT. CHAMBER - DAY

Peterson turns away and coughs several times.

WALID

Victims of my son's experiments.
Kept alive. To display the price
of failure.

PETERSON

Why show this to me?

WALID

My son is a madman. Perhaps you
can do something to stop him?

Walid leads Peterson to another set of stone stairs.

They climb the steps, and walk through a door.

EXT. DESERT COMPLEX - DAY

The door opens to the outside. Peterson and Walid arrive at an alley between the building and a warehouse.

Abu and Ziya approach the structures. Peterson and Walid step back, out-of-sight.

Secretary of the Treasury Michaelson accompanies the two Arabs. He saunters behind them.

Michaelson doesn't appear to be a prisoner. He and the Arabs laugh. He walks with a bold, purposeful strut.

The trio passes. The men stare straight ahead and don't notice Walid and Peterson in the alley.

PETERSON

Michaelson? The Secretary of the Treasury. What's he doing here?

WALID

About to be released. Come.

Walid leads Peterson to the warehouse. A padlock secures a double-door at the front. Walid opens a side entry door.

WALID

I leave you now. Good fortune.

Peterson shakes the old man's hand. He steps through the door and slips into the warehouse.

Walid waits a moment, then leaves.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Boxes and supplies occupy the building. Tim's dune buggy parks beside a row of cardboard boxes.

Peterson reaches the vehicle. Checks the ignition. No key.

He searches the floor and dashboard. Nothing.

He perspires. In desperation, he flings open the glove compartment. A set of keys lie inside.

Peterson inserts the ignition key. O.S. FOOTSTEPS cause him to postpone his actions.

The door opens. Peterson crawls underneath the dune buggy. An ARAB slinks into the warehouse.

The Arab rummages through a row of cardboard boxes, until he finds what he wants.

He sets a cardboard box down and tears off the paper lid.

The Arab's eyes light up. Candy bar packages fill the box. He stuffs some packages in his pockets. Replaces the lid.

Peterson tries to get more comfortable in his position underneath the vehicle. He squirms. Hits his head on the underframe, with a dull BOINK.

The Arab freezes for an instant. Strains his ears to detect another sound. Silence.

Peterson doesn't move a muscle. His nervous breathing echoes off the metal frame.

The Arab walks toward the dune buggy.

Peterson holds his breath. The Arab passes the hiding place. Stops, returns to Peterson's spot, and stands there.

Peterson drips sweat from his brow. He focuses on the Arab's feet, inches away.

The Arab pulls a candy bar from his pocket. Unwraps it.

He takes a bite, drops the wrapper, and exits the warehouse.

Peterson exhales. Slides out from the dune buggy.

The door re-opens. Peterson scoots back under the vehicle.

Abu enters. He drags teenager Kathy with him.

KATHY

Please, don't hurt me. I'll do whatever you want.

ABU

Yes, you will.

Abu shoves her in the front seat of the dune buggy. He rips her tank top, tears it to shreds, and exposes her chest.

KATHY

No... No!

Abu grins with malevolence and peels off her blue jean cutoffs. Kathy cries.

KATHY

Please... please, don't --

ABU

Yes, please. Please, keep weeping. And pleading. It will be much better that way.

Kathy's cutoffs hang around her ankles. Abu yanks at her lace panties.

A fist smacks him square in the nose.

The Arab falls backward, onto the dirt floor. Peterson stands over him.

PETERSON

You greasy camel jockey.

Abu bellows in anger. He rises, lowers his head, rams it into Peterson's mid-section, and bulldozes him into the side of the vehicle.

Peterson doubles over and gasps for breath. Abu draws a knife from his belt.

KA-BONG! Kathy smashes Abu on top of the head with a plastic thermos jug.

The blow stuns Abu long enough for Peterson to wind up and deliver a tremendous haymaker to the man's chin.

Peterson steps back and admires his work.

Abu's knees buckle, and his eyes roll back in his head. He crumbles to the ground, unconscious.

Peterson realizes Kathy remains topless. He rushes to Abu and removes the Arab's shirt.

PETERSON

See how you like it, buddy.

He tosses the shirt to Kathy, and she puts it on.

Peterson jumps into the dune buggy and starts it.

KATHY

Wait. I'll open the door.

PETERSON

Screw the door.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The dune buggy bursts through the locked double-door. Splinters fly, and the vehicle zooms past.

EXT. DESERT COMPLEX - DAY

The dune buggy speeds toward the half-open gate. A GUARD armed with an Uzi stands beside it.

The Guard stations himself between the gate and the dune buggy. He fires.

Peterson and Kathy duck. Bullets rip into the front grill and through the windshield.

The dune buggy barrels into the Guard. Hits him with a dull thud. He soars over the accelerating vehicle and lands in the dirt.

The dune buggy smashes through the gate. Heads deep into the desert.

Klingsor FOLLOWERS, Arab and American, male and female, dash out of a building. They carry various weapons.

Klingsor barks out orders. Pursuers pile into two jeeps.

The vehicles tear through the gate. Run over the lifeless body of the Guard. Disappear in a cloud of dust.

Ziya ushers Walid over to Klingsor. Walid has a guilty look on his face.

Klingsor focuses his steely gaze on the old man. Walid stares at the ground, afraid to respond to his son.

Klingsor draws a pistol from Ziya's gunbelt, points it between Walid's eyes, and fires point blank.

The old man jerks backward and falls down, dead.

Klingsor shows no emotion. Hands Ziya's gun back to him and walks away from his father's dead body.

EXT. DESERT/DUNE BUGGY - DAY

The dune buggy races along the endless desert at breakneck speed. The two jeeps dart across the sands in pursuit.

Peterson turns around. Two tiny dirt clouds chase him. He floors the accelerator.

Engines roar, and chaotic cries pierce the silent desert.

Steam flows from the radiator of the dune buggy.

INT. DUNE BUGGY - DAY

PETERSON

Damn! Radiator was hit. Engine's gonna seize up.

The two jeeps gain on them.

KATHY

Faster! Hurry!

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Pauline stands up in the jeep nearest the dune buggy. She brandishes a grenade launcher.

Pauline fires. WHOOSH!

The grenade hits the rear of the dune buggy. KA-BOOM! The vehicle explodes. Bursts into flames.

The blast throws Peterson and Kathy off the vehicle, onto the desert floor.

Peterson stumbles onto his feet, groggy.

Kathy's clothes catch fire. She staggers around and screams for help.

Peterson gasps. Runs toward Kathy.

The jeeps stop. Garza draws a pistol and puts three bullets in Kathy's back. She falls face-down in the sand.

From their jeeps, Garza and Pauline aim weapons at Peterson.

Peterson raises his arms and surrenders.

INT. KLINGSOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Klingsor leans against his desk and reads Peterson's notes.

Peterson sits in a chair. Abu and Ziya flank him. Anger builds on Klingsor's face.

KLINGSOR

(reads)

"This man Klingsor is evil.
Powerful. And, a full-fledged
maniac"

Klingsor erupts in rage. He hurls the notebook at Peterson's face.

Peterson catches the flying notebook with a quick snatch of his hand. An inch from his face.

This feat surprises everyone for a moment. Peterson puts the notebook in his pocket.

PETERSON

(calm)

Don't throw shit at me.

He tilts his head, sticks out his tongue, and laughs.

Ziya delivers a vicious slap across Peterson's face. A trickle of blood appears at the corner of his mouth.

KLINGSOR

We will see how amused you are,
after your initiation. Take him!

Abu and Ziya take Peterson out of the office.

INT. MEDICAL ROOM - DAY

Abu and Ziya shove Peterson into the room.

A medical examination table with restraining straps rests against a wall.

Alongside the table, a portable cart contains an enema kit and other medical items.

Peterson struggles, as they strap him onto the table.

Abu grabs the enema kit. Ziya flashes his teeth in a sardonic grin.

ABU

First, void body of impurities.

Abu emits a wicked laugh. Ziya takes out the enema hose.

EXT. DESERT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Still and calm in the desert. A solitary GUARD patrols through the complex.

INT. MEDICAL ROOM - NIGHT

Strapped onto the examination table and clad in a hospital gown, Peterson's eyes are covered by a blindfold.

Cotton plugs his ears and mouth, held in place with tape.

The door opens. Abu and Ziya enter. Ziya lifts the cotton gag from Peterson's mouth.

Abu removes a glass vial from his pocket. A few grains of powder line its bottom.

He fills the vial with water from the sink. Shakes it.

Ziya forces Peterson's mouth open. Abu pours the mixture down his throat, then re-inserts the gag.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

A temple in the desert. A raised, circular platform rests on a huge rug. Lush pillows cover the rug. Banks of lights hang from the tent top.

A dozen scantily-dressed FOLLOWERS lounge on the pillows and face the platform.

The group divides into six men, including Ziya and Abu, along with six women, Garza and Pauline among them.

The men and women caress each other's bodies. Emit low, unearthly moans.

Klingsor stands on the raised platform, dressed in a brief loincloth. He holds the spear in his left hand. His muscular body glistens.

A bank of overhead red lights turns on. The crimson color intensifies and adds an eerie, surrealistic illumination.

Klingsor bathes in the red glow. The moans become louder.

Klingsor sets the spear in a holder at the front of the platform, vertical to the ground. The tip points upward.

The men and women draw closer to Klingsor. They prostrate themselves at his feet. Arms and hands stretch upwards.

Moans become plaintive cries. Sounds usually made during sexual activity.

The participants sway back and forth, side-to-side. Bodies entwine, in suggestive patterns.

The glow above Klingsor focuses to a single red beam.

The light creeps down the tip of the spearhead to the base, where it attaches to the silver shaft.

The red beam intensifies. Flows out from the base and spreads toward Klingsor. Penetrates him between the eyes.

The sounds from the group grow in fervor. They become screams. Build to an uncontrolled frenzy.

The men and women thrash around, in violent spasms. Their bodies toss and jerk around like rag dolls.

Klingsor enters a trance and extends his arms.

The light gives the effect that he floats in mid-air, arms outstretched, like Christ in the Crucifixion.

The screams reach a climax. The men and women perform frenetic gyrations.

Klingsor gathers energy from the pack. His body trembles, as though he absorbs power like a huge battery cell.

The eerie light disappears. The tent plunges into darkness.

The screams stop. An uncomfortable silence.

The residual red glow between Klingsor's eyes fades away.

Blue floodlights switch on. The men and women collapse onto the rugs. Spent.

A beat later, they rise and retreat to the rear of the tent.

Arabs lead in four Americans, among them, Chris LaPoint. All with blindfolds and hospital gowns. They appear weak.

They lie on the rugs and face Klingsor's platform.

Ziya brings Peterson into the tent. His head wobbles, and he appears drugged, the blindfold still in place.

Peterson joins the other initiates. The giant Ziya stations himself near Klingsor.

Klingsor kneels on the platform. Leans forward and grabs hold of the spear in front of him. The base of the spearhead touches him between his eyes.

The spearhead tip gathers blue light from the floodlights.

A bright blue spot of light appears at the spear tip. Grows more intense.

The blue spot flows down the spearhead. It reaches the base of the spearhead and touches Klingsor between the eyes.

Soft plumes of blue emanate, shroud Klingsor's body, and create a blue aura.

The aura explodes in a brilliant burst of blue light.

A huge blue cloud forms and spreads toward the initiates.

Total silence. Time stops. Peterson grimaces.

PETERSON (V.O.)

The drugs... can't concentrate...

Have to... visualize...

The cloud encircles Peterson and the other initiates.

Separate beams of blue light enter each initiate, between their eyes.

LaPoint struggles. Peterson wheezes, and his breathing becomes labored.

BEGIN MIND TUNNEL SEQUENCE

The familiar circular tunnel. It winds around and around, and reaches the end.

Speckles of blue light appear on the sides of the tunnel. Then, a burst of white light.

The dull gray background. Multi-colored lights.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

Feel my hate. My frustration and fear.

END MIND TUNNEL SEQUENCE

PETERSON (V.O.)

His thoughts are too strong... Must separate my mind... Blank it out.

Peterson's face relaxes. He seems calm, as his irregular breathing changes to deep respiration.

His body stiffens. The blue beam enters between his eyes.

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Identical to earlier scenes. Surreal. Peterson at the edge of the cliff, pauses, and leaps off.

He falls through the air. Continues to fall.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. TENT - NIGHT

The blue light beam continues to invade Peterson. His body appears peaceful and sedate.

Klingsor slumps forward, exhausted and drained. Everything ends. The blue cloud and light disappear.

Ziya anticipates Klingsor's collapse and cradles his master.

In seconds, Klingsor regains consciousness. Ziya helps the weary leader out of the tent.

Followers smile their approval. Successful initiations.

EXT. SKY - DAY

The Twin Otter airplane zooms above the clouds.

EXT. TASTY PIE FACTORY/BALTIMORE - DAY

Late afternoon shadows shroud an old, huge, two-story building left to deteriorate.

Ten-foot-high cracked and broken letters below the roof proclaim "TASTY PIE".

A large parking lot behind the building reveals Grinstead's familiar station wagon and a van.

SUPER: "Baltimore Outskirts, July 3rd"

INT. FACTORY GROUND FLOOR - DAY

A large, gutted interior. Stocked with enough weapons and ammunition to supply a small army.

Computers, printers, and phones crowd in one corner, with two TV sets and portable radios nearby.

Grinstead relaxes in a chair and yawns. A BLOND MAN in his 40s, sits alongside him.

INT. TWIN OTTER CABIN - DAY

The plane passengers consist of Klingsor and several followers, including Peterson.

Klingsor wears an elegant light blue silk suit. The rest dress in casual sportswear and jackets.

Klingsor reads Peterson's notebook. Pauline leaves the group and steps through the cockpit door.

Garza heads into the restroom, at the rear of the plane.

Klingsor finishes reading. Nods and smiles. Hands the notebook back to Peterson.

KLINGSOR

Good, very good. Written with style and much respect.

PETERSON

Thank you, your Holiness.

Peterson bows to Klingsor. Pauline returns from the cockpit. Leans over to Klingsor.

PAULINE

We land in ten minutes.

Klingsor strokes Pauline's hair. She returns to her seat.

Peterson starts toward the restroom. The others fasten seatbelts to prepare for landing.

Peterson stops before he reaches the restroom. Approaches the airlock door.

Garza exits the restroom. Peterson unlatches the airlock door and pushes it open.

GARZA

Hey! Stop!

PETERSON

Go fuck yourself.

EXT. SKY - DAY

The Twin Otter approaches the waters of the Patapsco River and descends.

INT. TWIN OTTER CABIN - DAY

Garza and Ziya try to grab Peterson. The rush of air into the cabin blows papers and items around.

Followers yell at each other. Chaos and confusion.

A newspaper page flutters into Ziya's face and blinds him for moments.

Peterson shoves Garza aside. He kicks the built-in metal exit ladder into position.

Peterson scrambles down the ladder.

EXT. TWIN OTTER/PATAPSCO RIVER - DAY

The aircraft flies low, above the river.

Peterson hangs unto the last ladder rung, dangles, and sways in mid-air.

The Twin Otter slows. Thirty feet above the river.

Peterson releases his grip and drops, feet-first.

INT. TWIN OTTER CABIN - DAY

Panic inside the cabin. Everyone screams at once.

Klingsor stands in the middle of the aisle. He holds onto the leather case.

KLINGSOR

Silence!

Everyone obeys and focuses on Klingsor.

KLINGSOR

Ziya, secure that hatch. The rest of you, take your seats.

They follow his orders.

KLINGSOR

When we land, you will track him down. I want him alive. If possible.

EXT. PATAPSCO RIVER - DAY

Peterson swims toward the riverbank, close to shore.

Waves lap over his head. He swallows water and chokes.

EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT - DAY

Grinstead and the Blond Man slide open extra-wide double-doors that lead into the huge building.

At the O.S. SOUND of an AIRPLANE, they focus skyward.

The Twin Otter appears, lands on the asphalt, and squeals to an abrupt halt.

Grinstead opens the craft door. Passengers exit in a hurry.

KLINGSOR

Grinstead! Get the keys to those vehicles. Go with Ziya. Garza! You! LaPoint! Take the van.

Grinstead tosses a set of car keys to LaPoint and leads Ziya to the station wagon.

Ziya and Grinstead jump in the station wagon. LaPoint and Garza pile into the van.

Both vehicles tear out of the parking lot.

The Blond Man directs the plane through the double-doors. Klingsor and Pauline enter the factory ahead of it.

EXT. RIVERBANK/STREET - DAY

Peterson wades onto the shore, a narrow, rocky area. It leads to an incline and a street with light traffic.

The swim exhausts him. He stops to catch his breath. Staggered toward the street.

Peterson stands in the middle. Traffic heads toward him.

He holds out his arms and attempts to stop several vehicles. They only honk, maneuver around, and almost hit him.

Grinstead's station wagon races down the street and passes Peterson, who recognizes the vehicle, and runs from it.

The station wagon performs a quick u-turn. The van speeds toward Peterson, head on, from the opposite direction.

Both vehicles stop and sandwich Peterson. Ziya and Grinstead explode out from the wagon. LaPoint and Garza burst out the van.

The four advance. Peterson searches for an escape route.

A city bus stops on the other side of the street. PASSENGERS exit and enter.

A huge advertisement on the side of the bus displays Peterson's picture, with the caption "Trust Zack Peterson".

Peterson sprints across the street and dodges traffic. His pursuers follow.

LaPoint and Garza reach the other side of the street.

Ziya and Grinstead position themselves to guard against Peterson retracing his steps.

The bus spits out a puff of black smoke. It pulls away and emits an internal combustion growl.

LaPoint and Garza lag a few yards behind Peterson, who races to the bus and pounds on the glass door.

The bus stops. The door opens. Peterson scrambles inside.

LaPoint and Garza arrive when the door shuts again. The two bang on the door.

The bus continues on and leaves them stranded.

The groups run back to their vehicles.

INT. BUS - DAY

PASSENGERS occupy half the bus capacity.

They gawk at the gasping, drenched Peterson. Ocean water drips from his clothes.

Peterson's hair: a wet, matted mess.

He waves a weak greeting to the Passengers. Stands beside the DRIVER, who frowns at Peterson.

DRIVER

Fare?

PETERSON

Oh! Sure, sure.

Peterson digs in his back pocket. No wallet. The Driver's frown changes to a scowl.

PETERSON

(to the passengers)

Your attention, please! I'm Zack Peterson, Channel eight news. This is an emergency. Will somebody lend me a couple of bucks?

A few people snicker. An overweight WOMAN stands up.

WOMAN

If you're Zack Peterson, say:
"That's the news for now.
Goodnight, Baltimore."

Peterson issues a sigh of relief. He clears his throat and inhales a deep breath.

PETERSON

(newscaster voice)

That's the news for --

Peterson's voice cracks at the last word. The Woman chuckles and waves him off with a doubtful expression.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREET - DAY

Peterson slouches on the sidewalk and watches the bus pull away from the curb without him.

The vehicle blows exhaust in his face, and he coughs.

The station wagon tries to run down Peterson, but the nimble man eludes it.

He ducks into a nearby alleyway.

The van squeals to a stop, next to the wagon. Grinstead sticks his head out the window.

GRINSTEAD

(to LaPoint)

Stay here! I'll seal him off at
the other end!

Grinstead's wagon burns rubber.

LaPoint parks the van inches from the alleyway and cuts off that escape route for Peterson.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

LaPoint and Garza pile out of the van. Peterson recognizes one exit plugged and kicks the pavement in frustration.

Far ahead of Peterson, a MAN in a suit knocks on a back door. A hand-painted sign reads: "Backstage - East Avenue Community Theater - Authorized Persons Only".

The station wagon stops at the other end of the alley.

Ziya and Grinstead leave the wagon and advance on Peterson.

The backstage door opens. Peterson breaks into a run. His pursuers do the same. Grinstead leads the way.

Equidistant from the theater door, Grinstead and Peterson race toward each other.

Grinstead draws closer to the door than Peterson. He smiles, like a cat about to corner a mouse.

Peterson turns on the afterburners. Accelerates.

The Man in the suit goes through the door.

Peterson arrives at the stage door three strides ahead of Grinstead. He grabs the door just before it shuts.

The out-of-breath Grinstead reaches for the handle, but the door slams and locks. He waits for the others to catch up. They huddle together.

INT. BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE - DAY

A STAGEHAND escorts the Man in the suit through a passageway that leads to dressing room doors and the stage wings.

Peterson follows. Looks more like bum than theater-goer.

INT. STAGE WINGS/INT. STAGE - DAY

A male theater DIRECTOR, 35, paces in the wings. A female STAGE MANAGER, 25, wrings her hands.

The stage set reflects a contemporary living room. Couch, coffee table, side table, lamp, plus a door.

Actors in place portray SIDNEY, wife BETTE, and DWIGHT, a portly man.

DIRECTOR

Curtain's ten minutes late!
Where's our replacement, Jeremy's
roommate?!

STAGE MANAGER

He left five minutes ago.

DIRECTOR

I hope to God he really does know
the part.

STAGE MANAGER

Jeremy said he played it last
summer in Cleveland. Relax.

INT. BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE - DAY

Grinstead and Ziya rush through the passageway.

Peterson reaches the end of the corridor and makes his way toward the wings.

INT. STAGE WINGS - DAY

Peterson bumps into the Director and Stage Manager.

STAGE MANAGER

You must be Forrest Cassidy,
Jeremy's roommate? I see you're
already in costume.

The Director looks Peterson up-and-down, feels the wet clothes and examines his disheveled appearance.

DIRECTOR

Interesting choice.

Before Person can speak, the Stage Manager hands him a fake rubber knife.

STAGE MANAGER
 Here's your prop. Places everyone!
 Enter through that door, Forrest.

PETERSON
 But, I --

STAGE MANAGER
 (loud whisper)
 Shh! Quiet... And... curtain!

INT. STAGE - DAY

The curtain opens and reveals a small AUDIENCE.

Sidney and Dwight sit on chairs. Bette paces. Both men have British accents. Bette portrays an American.

SIDNEY
 Bette, stop moving about! You bring to mind a nervous cat.

DWIGHT
 Yes, yes. Sidney's quite right. I'm sure your brother is fine. Just hit a bit of traffic.

BETTE
 I pray you're correct, Dwight. But, Thomas is always so punctual. He's already an hour late!

A doorbell RINGS.

SIDNEY
 That's probably him right now.

Sidney opens the door. Nobody there. Sidney's eyes widen, and he looks at the other actors for help.

The Stage Manager pushes Peterson through the door. He collides with Sidney. The audience snickers.

BETTE
 Thomas!

PETERSON
 Who, me?... Oh, hi!

Dwight joins Sidney at Peterson's side.

DWIGHT
 (under his breath)
 That's not the line.

PETERSON
 What?!

Dwight and Sidney hesitate, lost for a moment.

DWIGHT

Uh... He must have had an accident!

SIDNEY

(awkward)

Yes, that's it! An accident!

DWIGHT

He doesn't look at all well.

Dwight pushes Peterson's head down, tries to make him appear injured and weak. The audience chuckles.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

(from wings)

What's going on?

DWIGHT

I'll bet he feels faint.

SIDNEY

(panics)

Yes, that's it! Faint!

Peterson pretends to be groggy and relaxes his entire body, which makes it difficult for the two actors to transport him to the couch.

DWIGHT

(to Peterson, under his
breath)

Not that faint, you oaf.

They drag him to the couch. Bette checks on him. An awkward silence.

DWIGHT

Uh... I say... He doesn't look good
at all.

SIDNEY

Does this mean he'll miss the rugby
match tomorrow?

PETERSON

Rugby?

The audience laughs again. The uneasy actors attempt to stay in character.

BETTE

Oh... Oh...

SIDNEY

(whispers a prompt)

How can you think of rugby at a
time like this?

BETTE
 (remembers)
 Right! Right! Oh, how can you
 think of rugby at a time like this?

DWIGHT
 Bette, I believe he's passed on.

PETERSON
 What?

The audience howls. Dwight leans over and puts his hand
 over Peterson's eyes.

DWIGHT
 (whispers)
 Play dead, idiot.

Peterson obeys. Bette faints and collapses to the floor.

SIDNEY
 I'll fetch smelling salts.

He heads off-stage.

DWIGHT
 Uh... Uh... I'll open the door,
 give her some air.

Dwight opens the door, but goes through, into the wings.

Peterson and Bette both pretend to be unconscious.

INT. STAGE WINGS - DAY

Dwight grits his teeth and storms to the distraught Director
 and Stage Manager.

DWIGHT
 What the devil's going on? Is the
 man on drugs?

STAGE MANAGER
 Maybe they played it different in
 Cleveland?

DWIGHT
 I'm not going back out there!

DIRECTOR
 You must! On with the show --

DWIGHT
 Oh, stuff the show!

DIRECTOR
 He's a last-minute replacement.
 Work around him. Besides, he dies
 at the end of the scene.

DWIGHT
Meanwhile, we're dying out
there!... Oh, alright.

Dwight returns to the stage.

Grinstead waits behind the Director and whispers to Ziya.

The giant winds his way to the other side of the wings and
hides his massive body behind a backdrop.

INT. STAGE - DAY

Dwight returns to Peterson at the couch.

DWIGHT
(whispers)
Open your eyes, you twit.

PETERSON
(whispers)
I thought I was dead?

The audience howls.

DWIGHT
(whispers in anger)
Not yet, stupid...
(in his stage voice)
So, when Sidney returns, you stab
him.

PETERSON
Who, me?

DWIGHT
Yes, you bloody idiot! With the
knife!

Peterson gazes into the audience. Garza and LaPoint
position themselves and block both side aisles.

Peterson's eyes widen, when he checks out the wings.

INT. STAGE WINGS - DAY

LaPoint and Grinstead wait at either side of the wings.

The Director pulls his hair in frustration. The Stage
Manager leads in FORREST CASSIDY, a man in rumped clothes.

STAGE MANAGER
This fellow says he's Forrest
Cassidy.

DIRECTOR
What?!

Cassidy shows an I.D. card to the Director.

DIRECTOR

Then, who's that onstage?

STAGE MANAGER

A mental patient?

The Director fumes. Punches numbers onto a cellphone.

INT. STAGE - DAY

Sidney re-enters with a jar of smelling salts.

DWIGHT

Wait, Sidney. I think there's a faint glimmer of life in Thomas. See if you detect a heartbeat.

Sidney approaches Peterson, who leaps off the couch, fresh as a daisy. He fakes a southern accent.

PETERSON

I've always depended on the kindness of strangers.

SIDNEY

What the bloody hell?

Bette still feigns unconsciousness. Peterson shakes her by the shoulders.

PETERSON

Auntie Emm, Auntie Emm, wake up
Auntie Emm!

Bette panics and screams. She runs off the stage. Sidney and Dwight stand by with blank stares, dumbfounded.

DWIGHT

He's crazy!

Peterson stabs himself with the rubber knife.

PETERSON

Sic semper tyrannis!

SIDNEY

Sick is right.

The audience reels with laughter.

DWIGHT

Get him off the stage!

Peterson brandishes the rubber knife, in a mock threat.

PETERSON

I warn you. One more step, and I'll rub you out with this rubber knife.

DWIGHT

Bastard!

Two POLICEMEN appear in the back of the theater. They shove Garza and LaPoint aside, swagger down the aisles, and climb up onto the stage.

PETERSON

Thank God, you're just in time!

DWIGHT

Curtain! Curtain!

PETERSON

There's no place like home!

There's no place like home!

The Policemen haul Peterson off the stage, as the curtain closes behind them.

PETERSON

Pay no attention to that man behind
the curtain!

Peterson and the Policemen stroll past the audience. Some applaud him. He bows.

PETERSON

(imitates Elvis)

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Peterson grins at Garza and LaPoint.

They gawk, powerless to do anything, while the Policemen transport Peterson out the theater. Garza gives the "finger" to Peterson.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C./SUBURB - NIGHT

An affluent neighborhood. Senator Arthur Conrad dashes out a house and heads to a black limousine at the curb.

Conrad gets into the limo, whose windows are heavily-darkened. The vehicle pulls away.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

Secretary Michaelson relaxes in back. His nose in the air gives him an air of arrogance.

MICHAELSON

Arthur, you've spoken to no one?

CONRAD

When you called, you said it was a
matter of national security.
Franklin, has the treasury system
been compromised?

The driver of the limousine turns around. Grinstead.

He draws a gun with a silencer attachment. Shoots Conrad in the forehead. Conrad slumps over. Dead.

MICHAELSON

That's not your problem, is it?

Grinstead laughs.

MICHAELSON

(to Grinstead)

Dispose of this vermin.

Grinstead puts the vehicle into gear and speeds off.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

A cell door slams shut and locks. Peterson grabs onto the bars and stares at a FEMALE GUARD.

PETERSON

I'm telling you, I've got to see Chief Babcock. Tell him it's Zack Peterson.

FEMALE GUARD

Yeah, we all heard you. But, I'm Rachel Maddow.

PETERSON

I got the right to a phone call.

FEMALE GUARD

It's late. You'll get yours after you sleep it off and sober up.

PETERSON

Hey, you can't do that! I'm not drunk! Come back!

The Guard slithers down the corridor. Peterson slams his hand on the cell bars in exasperation.

EXT. BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

American flags fly.

SUPER: "July Fourth"

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Peterson lies asleep on the cot. The cell door opens. Peterson wakes up.

Leonard Silver waits at the door with the Female Guard. He offers a crooked smile and shakes his head.

PETERSON

Leonard!

SILVER

Nice to see you in one piece, Zack.

PETERSON

Leonard, you won't believe what's happened to me.

SILVER

I'd believe any kind of mess you got yourself into.

The Female Guard unlocks the cell door.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

A police van parks in front of the station. Two POLICEMEN stand at the rear.

Greg Dobbins sits on a motorcycle, at the foot of the front steps. Still wears his camera equipment and harness.

When he spots Peterson and Silver walk out of the station, Greg jumps off his motorcycle and runs to them.

GREG

Zack! Where ya been, man?!

PETERSON

Amigo!

Greg's appearance surprises Silver, who groans. He tries to wave him away, but Greg can't be stopped.

GREG

Did ya hear?! Speaker of the House drowned last night! This A.M., Secretary Treasury Michaelson shows up. Says he just escaped from what's left of the Baltimore Five!

Peterson thinks for a second, then gasps.

PETERSON

That's it, Greg! They'll kill off the cabinet till Michaelson's President! He's Klingsor's man!

GREG

Klingsor? Who's Klingsor?

Silver gestures to the two Policemen beside the police van.

SILVER

Take 'em both.

The Policemen draw their guns at the same time and point weapons at Peterson and Greg.

GREG

Hey, man!

PETERSON

What's this?

The Policemen direct Peterson and Greg to the rear of the van. Peterson glances at Silver.

PETERSON

Don't tell me. They got to you too, huh, Leonard? You're one of them.

GREG

One of who?

Policemen #1 pushes Greg into the rear of the van.

Silver smiles at Peterson. Holds out his arms, as though presenting himself.

SILVER

Ever see a human bomb up close?

Silver cackles a wicked laugh. Policeman #2 shoves Peterson into the van. The doors slam with a clank.

INT. REAR OF VAN - DAY

Peterson and Greg feel a jolt. The van starts into motion.

PETERSON

Greg. Is Leonard gonna be at Fort McHenry today?

GREG

He's supposed to give the President a honorary news badge or something.

PETERSON

He's going to assassinate the President.

GREG

Leonard? Hey, what gives?

PETERSON

The line of presidential succession. Michaelson is Secretary Treasurer. Kill enough of the cabinet, and he takes over.

Greg screws up his face, puzzled, then shrugs his shoulders. He checks how many blank flash drives he has.

Peterson notices a small video camera that mounts at one corner of the ceiling.

PETERSON

What'd you shoot today, Greg?

INT. CAB OF VAN - DAY

Policeman #1 drives the van. Policeman #2 watches a small monitor screen in front of him and observes the captives in the rear.

He checks his smartphone and swipes through several screens. Peers back at the monitor. His jaw drops.

POLICEMAN #2

Holy shit!

The image of a roaring tiger fills the entire screen. Policeman #2 swallows hard.

POLICEMAN #2

Pull over!

EXT. BALTIMORE STREET - DAY

An industrial area. The police van rattles to a stop.

EXT. REAR OF VAN - DAY

Policeman #2 opens the rear doors a crack.

Nobody visible in the back of the van. A cable from Greg's video equipment hangs from the surveillance camera.

Policeman #1 draws his gun, swings the doors wider, and pokes his weapon through.

A foot appears from behind a door. Kicks the weapon from the hand of Policeman #1.

Policeman #2 reaches for his gun. Peterson leaps from the doorway and tackles him. They crash to the pavement.

Policeman #1 searches for his gun on the asphalt street. Greg emerges from the other rear door. Jumps onto the man's back and rides piggyback.

Policeman #1 staggers and tries to throw Greg off his back.

Peterson puts Policeman #2 in a headlock. Rams the man's head into the van and knocks him out cold.

Greg and Policeman #1 tumble onto the sidewalk.

Peterson grabs Policeman #1 by the collar. Gives him a terrific blow with his fist. The man falls like a sack of potatoes, unconscious.

Peterson and Greg haul the two Policemen into the van.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREET - DAY - LATER

Greg and Peterson step from the rear of the police van.
Both wear police uniforms.

A police motorcycle pulls up alongside them. A motorcycle
COP dismounts.

Peterson shuts the rear doors. The Cop catches a glimpse of
two unconscious men, clad in their underwear.

COP
Need any help?

GREG
Get bent, man.

PETERSON
Just a couple of exhibitionists.
It's routine... Officer, uh --

Peterson peeks at the nameplate Greg wears.

PETERSON
Officer Zandofsky and I are taking
them downtown.

Peterson and Greg climb into the cab of the van. Start the
engine and take off. The Cop scratches his head and thinks
for a beat.

COP
Hey! You're not Zandofsky!

He hops on his motorcycle and pursues the van.

EXT. BALTIMORE INNER HARBOR - DAY

Baltimore's centerpiece. Green-roofed pavilions house shops
and restaurants.

Several buildings stand out, like the odd-shaped National
Aquarium, World Trade Center and Maritime Museum.

Boats and ships of all sizes fill the piers, including the
anchored sailing vessel, the U.S. Frigate Constellation.

SPECTATORS stroll. POLICE and SECRET SERVICE patrol.

YOUNGSTERS set off sporadic firecrackers. The SOUNDS of the
minor EXPLOSIONS alarm the crowd and the Secret Service.

Gary Babcock, in uniform, positions himself beside the
Constellation. He speaks into a walkie-talkie.

BABCOCK
 (into walkie-talkie)
 No, no. Forget the fucking
 aquarium. Put those two men on top
 of the Trade Center. They can see
 the whole damn harbor from there...
 Just do it, and --

An O.S. SIREN SOUNDS and fades. Babcock watches the police
 van screech to a halt by the pier.

Peterson and Greg, in police uniforms, jump out of the van.
 Greg carries his camera and harness.

The motorcycle pulls behind them, and the Cop exits with gun
 drawn. He points it at Peterson and Greg.

COP
 Freeze!
 (to Babcock)
 They're not cops, Chief!

Babcock recognizes Peterson and Greg.

BABCOCK
 Jesus fucking Christ! Zack!
 (to the Cop)
 Put the gun away, they're okay!

The Cop obeys. Babcock throws up his hands.

BABCOCK
 Where the hell you been, Zack? Why
 are you wearing that shit?

PETERSON
 No time for that. The President is
 in danger.

Babcock presses a button on his walkie-talkie. Peterson
 grabs his arm and stops him.

PETERSON
 Don't. It's a bomb. Some cops are
 involved. We don't know who else.
 You might warn them.

BABCOCK
 Cops too? What, a conspiracy?

PETERSON
 Yeah. Including Leonard Silver.

BABCOCK
 Silver?... Jesus Christ.

Babcock puts his hand to his forehead.

BABCOCK

Zack, Wendy's over there too.

PETERSON

We've got to hurry, Gary.

BABCOCK

(to the Cop)

Come with us.

INT. INNER HARBOR PIER - DAY

Babcock, Peterson, Greg, and the Cop board a small motorboat. The boat takes off across the harbor.

EXT. FORT MCHENRY - DAY

The historic star-shaped fort features five bastions. Dry moats fortify an outer series of v-shaped ravelins. Authentic cannons line the perimeter.

A grass field outside the fort leads to a small pier that faces the Inner Harbor.

EXT. FORT MCHENRY PIER - DAY

MILITARY POLICE and one SECRET SERVICEMAN patrol the pier. An army jeep stands near.

INT. FORT MCHENRY - DAY

Fort buildings consist of soldier barracks, a powder magazine, and an archway over a sallyport. Two guardhouses flank it.

A tall flagpole on the parade grounds near the sallyport entrance flies the stars and stripes.

A temporary V.I.P. stand sets to one side of the flagpole. PRESIDENT TEMPLETON, 60, chats with his ENTOURAGE.

Leonard Silver sits at the front row.

Two persons down from Silver, Wendy Babcock covers the event and operates her smartphone.

NEWSPEOPLE, POLICE, BODYGUARDS, and SECRET SERVICE scatter throughout the area.

HONOR GUARDS dress in authentic 1812 army uniforms, carry vintage rifles, and stand at attention. A military BAND behind them positions their sheet music.

An OFFICIAL adjusts a microphone at a podium in front of the flagpole.

Red, white, and blue balloons, streamers, and American flags everywhere.

EXT. INNER HARBOR - DAY

The small motorboat ferries its occupants toward the Fort.

A larger cabin cruiser darts in front of them. The motorboat avoids a collision.

Peterson eyes the cabin cruiser, which circles around. Grinstead pilots it, spots Peterson, and scowls at him.

PETERSON

That's one of them!

Grinstead raises a rifle.

BABCOCK

No shit!

Babcock draws his gun. Grinstead fires and hits Babcock in the hand. The big man drops his weapon. A determined Greg records the scene.

BABCOCK

Damn it! Get down, Dobbins!

Peterson and Babcock hit the deck. Greg ignores the order and keeps his camera rolling.

Babcock locates an emergency kit. He takes out a flare gun, pops up, and fires with his free hand.

The flare catches Grinstead square in the chest. Grinstead catches fire and tumbles into the water.

Onlookers react. Some scream and shout. The cabin cruiser slows to a crawl. The motorboat continues on.

EXT. FORT MCHENRY PIER - DAY

Two Military Police tie off the motorboat. Peterson, Babcock, Greg, and the Cop climb out. A first-aid bandage wraps around Babcock's wounded hand.

BABCOCK

(to the Military Police)

We've got an emergency! Can you take us to the fort in that jeep?

MILITARY POLICEMAN

Have to call the C.O. first.

PETERSON

Forget it!

The Secret Serviceman hurries onto the pier. Peterson breaks into a run, passes him, and continues across the grass field toward the fort. Greg follows.

Babcock and the Cop remain at the pier. They gesture to the Military Police and Secret Serviceman.

INT. FORT MCHENRY - DAY

The Official taps the podium microphone and tests it.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
 (through P.A. system)
 Ladies and gentlemen. The
 President of the United States!

Spectators applaud, and the BAND PLAYS "Hail To The Chief".

President Templeton rises. Waves to the crowd, while they cheer. He makes his way toward the podium.

EXT. GRASS FIELD - DAY

Peterson's arms pump, as he races toward the fort, through the manicured field.

Greg struggles to keep pace with Peterson. A combination of the weight of his video equipment and Peterson's raw speed causes him to fall behind.

EXT. FORT MCHENRY PIER - DAY

Babcock, the Military Police, the Cop, and the Secret Serviceman pile into the army jeep. The vehicle bounces and rolls along the uneven elevation of the field.

INT. FORT MCHENRY - DAY

The band stops, and the applause dies down. President Templeton stands at the podium with the Official. The two men shake hands.

The Official turns to the crowd.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
 (through P.A.system)
 Before President Templeton's
 dedication, we have a special
 presentation from one of our local
 TV stations...

EXT. FORT MCHENRY ENTRANCE - DAY

Peterson's face drenches in perspiration. He sprints toward the sallyport entrance to the fort.

Two ARMY GUARDS loom in front of him, one at the sallyport, the other twenty feet closer.

EXT. GRASS FIELD - DAY

The jeep stops to pick up the exhausted Greg, then heads toward Peterson and the fort entrance.

INT. FORT MCHENRY - DAY

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
(through P.A.system)
So, ladies and gentlemen. Please
welcome the news director of
Channel Eight, Mr. Leonard Silver!

EXT. FORT MCHENRY ENTRANCE - DAY

Peterson approaches Army Guard #1, who stands in his way and tries to block him.

Peterson fakes him out, like a football running back in an open field. He speeds past.

GUARD #2 at the sallyport raises his rifle.

INT. FORT MCHENRY - DAY

Leonard Silver rises to his feet and acknowledges applause from the crowd.

He slips his hand inside his shirt, between two buttons and tugs on something.

A faint CLICK emits. Silver's hidden bomb starts to TICK.

EXT. FORT MCHENRY ENTRANCE - DAY

Army Guard #2 takes aim at Peterson.

The jeep bounds into view. Babcock points at Peterson.

BABCOCK
Let him pass! Let him pass!

Army Guard #2 lowers the rifle. He allows Peterson to dash through the sallyport into the fort parade grounds.

Moments later, the jeep follows Peterson.

INT. FORT MCHENRY - DAY

Peterson bursts onto the parade grounds.

Silver heads for the podium. President Templeton smiles and waits to greet him.

Some audience members express confusion, when they notice Peterson's furious entrance. Others continue to applaud.

The Official leaves the podium, reaches Silver and shakes his hand. Silver continues on.

The jeep bounds through the sallyport. It throws off chunks of grass and dirt.

Silver offers a handshake to Templeton.

Peterson cuts between the two men and barrels into Silver.

Templeton bodyguards react, surround the president, pull him away from the podium, and shield him. The crowd buzzes.

The jeep grinds to a halt beside the platform. The Secret Serviceman jumps out of the vehicle.

Peterson bear-hugs Silver and drags him toward a guardhouse that attaches to the sallyport.

One of the honor guards in 1812 uniforms breaks rank, lowers his vintage rifle, and aims at the President. The would-be assassin: Chris LaPoint.

LaPoint fires, but by now, Bodyguards sprawl over President Templeton, on the platform wooden floor.

LaPoint's errant shot hits a BYSTANDER in the face.

Security people open fire. A barrage of bullets rip into LaPoint's body. He falls down, dead.

Babcock sprints to Wendy and shelters her from gunfire.

Peterson forces Silver to the open guardhouse door.

Greg rushes toward Peterson and Silver and continues to video the scene.

GREG

(to the guards)

Don't shoot! He's got a bomb!

Silver struggles, but Peterson shoves him through the guardhouse doorway.

Peterson drops to the ground. The Bodyguards and Secret Servicemen surround him, with guns pointed at his head.

PETERSON

Not me, you fools. Him!

Peterson motions toward the guardhouse. An EXPLOSION erupts from the doorway. Fire and debris spray all over.

The shock of the blast sends those nearby reeling to the ground. Except Greg, whose dogged determination to document the story seems to anchor him.

GREG

Cool!

Wendy runs to Peterson. Babcock follows her.

WENDY

Damn you, Peterson. You had me worried.

She throws her arms around Peterson and kisses him.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREETS - DAY

A convoy of police cars and military vehicles speeds down the street. A military jeep leads them.

INT. JEEP - DAY

An Army COLONEL occupies the front seat alongside Babcock and listens on a cordless field phone.

He puts the phone aside, turns, and faces Greg, Peterson, and Wendy, in the back.

COLONEL

Just got word. Vice President Boulton killed in Florida. Senator Conrad, President Pro- Temp... found dead fifteen minutes ago. Security around cabinet members is tightened. Secretary Michaelson detained for questioning.

EXT. TASTY PIE FACTORY - DAY

The convoy pulls to the front of the factory. The vehicles fan out.

Babcock, Peterson, Wendy, Greg, and the Colonel exit.

PETERSON

Wendy, you should stay in the car. Might be dangerous.

WENDY

Kiss my ass, Peterson! Better get used to having me around.

She hangs onto Peterson's arm with affection. He doesn't mind a bit.

POLICE and SOLDIERS take attack positions behind vehicles.

The factory appears dark and deserted.

The Colonel motions his men to follow him. He swaggers to the front of the building.

BABCOCK

Colonel. Don't you think --

COLONEL

Chief, any fool can see this place is deserted.

(to soldiers)

C'mon, men!

The Colonel advances to within ten feet of the front doors.

CRASH! A grenade launches through the front glass window.

KA-BOOM! The grenade explodes at the Colonel's feet. His body propels into the air.

Gunfire from automatic weapons erupts from the factory. Injures more soldiers, before they find cover.

Babcock, the police, and soldiers return the fire. A gunbattle rages.

Detonations pulsate and belch from various weapons. The roaring staccato of thunder causes deafening noise.

Smoke fills the area.

Bullets generate heat fumes, which rise off the hot concrete and asphalt. Grass between sidewalk cracks ignite and cause tiny grassfires.

After several moments, no gunfire from the factory.

BABCOCK

Hold your fire!

Shooting stops. The O.S. SOUND of an airplane ENGINE breaks the silence.

PETERSON

They're getting away!

Peterson, Babcock and the others run along the side of the factory building.

EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT - DAY

The double-doors in the rear of the factory building, beside the parking lot, fling open.

The Twin Otter airplane taxis out of the factory.

The aircraft increases speed. An unidentifiable ARAB, dressed in Klingsor's blue suit, runs from the double doors toward the plane.

He carries the leather case that stores the ancient spear.

The craft's door swings open. Arab catches up to the plane. Tosses the leather case inside the cabin. And jumps aboard.

WENDY

Somebody stop them!

A SOLDIER fires a rocket launcher.

The projectile hits the rear of the Twin Otter. BLAM! The aircraft explodes.

A huge fireball envelops the plane. Flames lick the sky.

The heat of the blast drives everyone backward, and they hit the ground. Peterson blocks Wendy from the flames and flying debris.

A beat. Babcock glares at the Soldier and his launcher.

BABCOCK

What you use for mosquitos?
Fucking H-bombs?!

They watch the airplane burn.

INT. FACTORY GROUND FLOOR - DAY

Pauline, Ziya, Garza, and the Blond Man lie on the floor, bullet-ridden. Their bodies sprawl in various positions.

Empty shell casings, unused ammunition, and weapons of all kind surround them.

EXT. DESERT COMPLEX/GATE - NIGHT

Military vehicles mobilize at the entrance gate, and a fierce gunbattle breaks out.

COMMANDOS jump off the vehicles. Return the fire.

Klingsor's FOLLOWERS rush out of the structures. Use machine guns and other weapons to assault the Commandos.

An armored vehicle crashes through the gate. INFANTRY pour into the complex.

INT. BUILDING/SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Abu and an Arab GUARD fire through second story windows.

A volley of gunfire pours through the windows. Abu flees with the Guard.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT - TRAVELING

Abu and the Guard dash down the stairs. Bombs shake them.

The two reach the ground floor. Turn and head down the steep, narrow steps that lead to the subterranean area.

The Guard unlocks a steel door. He and Abu enter.

Abu shuts the door behind them. They rush through a tunnel.

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Emergency lights illuminate the tunnel.

Abu and the Guard pass another steel door. The ground trembles from explosions above.

BOOM! A bomb hits the tunnel. The blast opens a huge hole to the outside.

Debris falls on top of Abu. He's half-buried.

The desperate Guard digs Abu out.

The steel door bursts open. A psychotic Freak runs free from his cell and lumbers toward them.

The monstrosity attacks the Guard. The Arab kills him with a burst from his Uzi.

Three more Freaks advance on him.

He stuffs his gun in his belt, picks up the injured Abu and carries him through the hole to the outside.

EXT. DESERT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Less gunfire. Billows of smoke hang over the installation. The army gains control.

The Guard and a hobbling Abu turn a corner. Find themselves face-to-face with three armed SOLDIERS.

Another SOLDIER sneaks behind them and traps the Arabs.

SOLDIER

Don't make things worse! Drop the
weapon and put your hands up!

The Guard raises his arms and dangles his Uzi on one finger. The Soldiers advance.

Abu grabs the Uzi from the Guard in one quick motion. BANG! The youth shoots the Guard between the eyes.

The stunned Soldiers freeze for an instant.

Abu thrusts the gun barrel into his mouth. Pulls the trigger. Blows off the back of his head.

Both Arabs crumple to the ground. The Soldiers stare in shock, open-mouthed.

Burning structures light up the complex. No survivors.

EXT. TASTY PIE FACTORY - NIGHT

The factory resembles a war zone. Walls with bullet holes, where a ferocious battle was fought. A full moon.

EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Debris remains, including aircraft wreckage.

Several cars park in the lot. A "Channel 8 News" logo labels a remote van.

Peterson stands beside the rear double-doors of the factory. He wears an earphone.

Portable lights illuminate the area.

Greg operates a mini-camera on a rolling tripod. A FLOORMAN beside the camera gives hand cues.

INT. REMOTE VAN - NIGHT

A self-contained control room, with computers, consoles, and recording machines.

A DIRECTOR, ENGINEER, and TECHNICIAN wear headsets and operate the controls.

Television monitors mount above the consoles. A shot of Peterson feeds over the airwaves.

EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Peterson speaks to the camera.

PETERSON

(into camera)

It ended here. The most bizarre plot you could imagine. Engineered by an Arab ruler, who renamed himself Klingsor. He and his followers perished on this very spot, after a shootout with police and soldier, and an explosion.

INT. UNDERGROUND SHELTER - NIGHT

A shelter carved out of dirt and rock. A bedroll, cartons of canned food, and a backpack.

Light from a portable TV illuminates the area. A rope ladder leads upward.

A shadowy figure grabs the backpack. Straps it on.

His hand reaches for something that lies on the floor. The Spear of Longinus.

The figure becomes Klingsor, who sports several days' growth of beard. He wears a filthy and rumpled brown suit.

Insane rage distorts his face. He scrambles up the ladder.

INT. FACTORY GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

A hand pushes an iron grating aside. A false bottom fits on top of the grating. Klingsor squeezes through.

EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

PETERSON
(into camera)
That's the news for now.
Goodnight, Baltimore.

The Floorman listens through his headset. A beat.

FLOORMAN
Okay, Zack. We're off.

The Floorman turns off all but one of the portable lights. Starts to pack up equipment.

The Director, Engineer, and Technician file out the remote van. Greet Peterson and congratulate him.

One-by-one, crew members head to their cars and drive off.

Greg assists the Floorman. Peterson gazes around the factory building and reflects.

INT. REMOTE VAN - NIGHT

The Floorman sets down a portable light in the van.

Greg enters with camera and tripod. Detaches the camera from the tripod. The Floorman exits the vehicle.

EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT/ROOF - NIGHT

Footsteps CLATTER on the factory roof. Peterson gazes up toward the noise.

KLINGSOR
Peterson!

The Floorman dashes into the area. Peterson hesitates for an instant, then points at the roof.

The Floorman grabs the last portable light and aims it at the roof.

The light illuminates the figure of Klingsor. He carries the spear in one hand.

PETERSON
Klingsor!

Klingsor produces a gun from his belt. Fires twice. The first shot kills the Floorman. The second shot shatters the portable light.

KLINGSOR
I have been waiting, Peterson.
Waiting to kill you!

Klingsor fires another round.

A bullet whizzes past Peterson's ear. He takes cover behind part of the plane wreckage.

Klingsor looms like a black spectre against the dark clouds of the night sky.

INT. REMOTE VAN - NIGHT

Greg holds a headset to his mouth.

GREG

Take this feed! And, get some cops
out here, man!

He straps on his portable camera outfit. Pushes buttons and turns dials on the video and audio consoles.

EXT. FACTORY PARKING LOT/ROOF - NIGHT

Muffled SOUNDS of Greg's VOICE crackle over Peterson's earphone that lies on the asphalt floor.

Peterson retrieves it and listens.

GREG (O.S.)

(from earphone)

Keep him talkin' Zack! Cops are on
the way! Your mike's live! I'm
feedin' it to the station!

Peterson spots Greg's camera, which peeks through the open door of the remote van.

He turns his attention back to Klingsor.

PETERSON

Klingsor! Give up! It's over!
You failed!

Klingsor holds the spear above his head.

KLINGSOR

This is all I need to begin again!

O.S. police SIRENS pierce the night. Two police vehicles squeal into the parking lot.

BOOM! A grenade explosion. One car bursts into flames.

The second police car swerves to avoid the fire. It stops. Two OFFICERS rush out. Klingsor shoots them dead.

More O.S. SIRENS in the distance.

Klingsor holds the spear in one hand and executes a bold leap from the roof of the two-story building.

He lands on the burning hood of the patrol car. Jumps without a pause onto the parking lot surface, unharmed.

Greg starts the remote van. Rumbles down the parking lot toward Peterson.

Klingsor slithers into the empty patrol car. More police cars enter the lot.

Klingsor's vehicle burns rubber and speeds out of the parking lot. He avoids the other patrol cars.

Greg stops the van, opens the driver's door, and picks up Peterson. Greg slides over and allows Peterson to drive.

They join the other police cars and pursue Klingsor.

INT. REMOTE VAN - NIGHT

Greg points his portable video camera out the open passenger window, while Peterson drives.

GREG

Guerilla news coverage! Love it!

EXT. BALTIMORE STREETS - NIGHT - TRAVELING

The police cars and remote van chase Klingsor.

INT. KLINGSOR'S CAR - NIGHT

Klingsor drives and fumbles through his backpack, which lies on the passenger seat. Pulls out several grenades.

The spear rests on the back seat.

EXT. HIGHWAY #395/INT. KLINGSOR'S CAR - NIGHT - TRAVELING

Klingsor's car swerves onto the interstate. The other vehicles pursue him.

Klingsor flips a grenade out his car window. One police car and the remote van race past it.

The grenade explodes. The blast causes two patrol cars to crash into each other and skid off the highway.

Klingsor throws another grenade out of the window.

The grenade detonates in front of the remaining police car.

Fire pours out the open windows of the police vehicle. Its occupants have no chance. The car piles into a concrete overpass, which demolishes the vehicle.

The wall of fire and smoke blinds the remote van, and it slows to a crawl.

Klingsor glances back and admires the fiery panorama that lights up the highway. He smiles in diabolic pleasure.

Peterson guides the van around the blazing vehicle, then accelerates and continues the pursuit.

Klingsor's car exits the interstate.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREETS - NIGHT - TRAVELING

Peterson's van catches up with Klingsor. Pulls alongside and attempts to force the car off the street.

Klingsor loses control of the vehicle for a moment. It veers into the left lane.

The remote van pulls to the right of Klingsor's car. Peterson steers into it.

The two vehicles careen out-of-control. Klingsor crashes into a parked car.

The remote van fishtails. Smashes against a telephone pole. Peterson attempts to re-start the van, but it stalls out.

Klingsor stumbles out of the patrol car. Carries the spear in one hand, a grenade in the other.

Peterson opens his door and jumps onto the street.

Klingsor hurls the grenade at the remote van.

Peterson snags the grenade and tosses it back at Klingsor in one continuous motion.

The grenade hits Klingsor's police car and explodes. Debris blows back toward Peterson. He leaps away.

Klingsor runs down an alley. O.S. police SIRENS blare.

A BICYCLIST stops to observe the spectacle.

PETERSON

Pardon me, amigo.

Peterson pushes the man off his bike. Jumps on and pedals. He uses the bicycle to pursue Klingsor into the alley.

INT. REMOTE VAN - NIGHT

Greg lies on the floor of the van. Reaches up and tries to re-start the vehicle. The engine responds.

Greg squints through the cracked windshield.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREET - NIGHT

Klingsor runs out of another alley, onto the street again. Peterson closes ground with the stolen bicycle.

The remote van chases the pair. Greg steers with one hand and uses the other hand to record with his camera.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREETCAR MUSEUM - NIGHT

A sign identifies: "Baltimore Streetcar Museum". An old-fashioned street car rests on steel rails in front of the building.

A flat, brick platform serves as a boarding area.

PARTYGOERS in the streetcar celebrate. A CONDUCTOR in front operates the controls, ready to launch the ride.

Klingsor fires shots into the air. Passengers and Conductor shout, scream, and leap off the streetcar.

All abandon the vehicle, except one tuxedo-clad DRUNK in the back, who slumps in his seat, passed out.

Klingsor jumps onto the streetcar and assumes the conductor's place.

The vehicle pulls out from the boarding platform and follows the route of the rails.

It accelerates away from Peterson's bicycle.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREETS - NIGHT - TRAVELING

Greg pilots the van alongside Peterson on the bicycle.

Peterson grabs the van's door handle. The vehicle pulls Peterson and the bike.

Peterson gestures for Greg to travel faster.

The van and Peterson's bike catch up to the streetcar.

PETERSON

Pull alongside. Hold it there!

They pull even with the streetcar.

Peterson leaps from the bike onto the streetcar. He loses his balance and slips.

He slides down the side of the streetcar, but manages to latch onto a vertical passenger railing.

His feet splay out, and the remote van threatens to dismember Peterson.

Greg steers the van away in time.

Peterson's feet scrape the ground. Smoke curls from the burning soles of his shoes.

He pulls himself up and onto the streetcar exterior.

EXT./INT. STREETCAR - NIGHT

Klingsor spots Peterson outside, in the rear of the streetcar. He draws his gun, fires at Peterson, and misses.

Peterson scrambles to the top of the streetcar and manages to maintain his balance on the streetcar roof.

Klingsor shoots through the ceiling and empties his gun.

Klingsor reloads. Turns the controller of the streetcar to "Full Speed" and opens fire into the ceiling again.

Peterson reaches the front of the streetcar, but can't keep his footing. He staggers and slips.

The vehicle travels at breakneck speed. The wheels lift off the rails and lose contact.

On a sharp curve, the streetcar dislodges from the track.

When it derails, the jolt causes Peterson to slide down the roof. He grabs onto the detached trolley pole.

EXT. BALTIMORE STREET - NIGHT

Peterson hangs onto the trolley pole for dear life. The runaway streetcar races out-of-control along the street.

EXT. REMOTE VAN - NIGHT

Greg follows the vehicle, and carries on with his attempt to cover the event with his camera. He leans out the driver's side window.

EXT. MEAT PROCESSING PLANT - NIGHT

The wayward streetcar makes a beeline for a brick-walled meat processing plant.

The vehicle smacks sideways into the building.

Peterson slides off the streetcar roof and tumbles onto the grass lawn in front of the plant entrance.

The front of the streetcar tears through the entrance doors.

The tuxedo-clad Drunk in the streetcar, who slept through the entire pandemonium, wakes up.

He rubs his eyes.

DRUNK

(slurs)

Is this the end of the line?

Peterson chases Klingsor, who disappears in the meat processing plant.

INT. MEAT PROCESSING PLANT - NIGHT

Low-level security lights inside the plant give an eerie, luminous effect.

The large room contains meat grinders, saws, and tallow bins. A heavy door leads into the refrigeration unit.

Peterson steps in and proceeds with caution.

He reaches the refrigeration unit. A gaff, used to push sides of beef, leans against the door.

A figure steps out of the shadows, into the light. Klingsor. Spear in one hand, a gun in the other.

Klingsor fires. Peterson ducks to one side.

He grabs the gaff, hooks Klingsor's gun with it, and rips the weapon from the Arab's hand.

The gun lands on the floor, several feet away.

Klingsor stabs at Peterson with the spear. They engage in a gladiator-type combat, gaff against spear.

KLINGSOR

Before I kill you, Peterson, tell me? How did you escape the initiation?

PETERSON

I separated my mind from my body. No brain, no pain.

KLINGSOR

Out-of-body travel. My congratulations.

Klingsor knocks the gaff from Peterson's grasp with a quick swipe of the spear.

The defenseless Peterson retreats. Klingsor flashes a sadistic grin.

Klingsor heaves the spear at Peterson.

Peterson pivots. Turns sideways. He catches the spear, as it whizzes past.

Klingsor's brain does a double-take. He gasps. Freezes for a moment.

Peterson tilts his head and sticks out his tongue.

PETERSON

I keep telling people. Don't throw shit at me.

Klingsor glances at his gun on the floor.

KLINGSOR

I will almost miss you.

He dives onto the floor, slides on his belly, and grabs hold of the weapon.

Klingsor rises and levels the gun at Peterson.

Peterson hurls the spear. The ancient relic drives deep into Klingsor's chest.

Klingsor's jaw drops in disbelief. Twin torrents of blood and water flow from the wound.

Klingsor falls to his knees. Peterson inches toward him.

KLINGSOR (V.O.)

Look at me. Surrender your mind.
My essence shall be your essence.

Peterson's face goes blank for an instant. His will weakens. He starts to go into a trance, then manages to snap out of it.

PETERSON

You picked the wrong guy, Klingsor!
I've got one thought in my mind.
Die, fucker! Die!

Peterson wins the strength of wills. Klingsor's eyes droop in defeat.

A blue aura encircles Klingsor's body. It dissipates into the air.

The power and life of Klingsor seep out from him. He dies.

Peterson removes the spear from Klingsor's chest. Holds the ancient artifact in his arms. He stares at it, and his forehead wrinkles in awe.

Greg bursts in, accompanied by his video camera. Chief Babcock follows him, along with two POLICEMEN. And Wendy.

Greg surveys the scene with his camera. Wendy rushes to Peterson. He continues to focus on the spear.

WENDY

You okay?

Peterson responds with a slow nod. Wendy kisses him and locks him in a long, passionate embrace.

Babcock stares at Klingsor's body, which resembles a month-old corpse.

BABCOCK
Jesus Christ.

PETERSON
Not quite.

INT. PETERSON'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

An empty bedroom.

The telephone on Peterson's nightstand RINGS. On the third ring, an answering machine activates.

PETERSON (V.O.)
(on answering machine)
Hi, Zack Peterson, channel eight news. If you've got a hot copy item, leave a message. Otherwise, why the hell are you calling?

An electronic BEEP sounds.

WENDY (V.O.)
(into answering machine)
What's cooking, Zack? Are you onto something I should know about? Miss you! Wendy.

Wendy lets out a self-conscious giggle over the telephone. Her line hangs up.

INT. PETERSON'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Relocated furniture lines the walls. The rest of the room consists of carpet and nothing else.

Peterson sits in the middle of the room, half-naked, in a lotus position. He holds the Spear of Longinus aloft.

His eyes flutter, then focus into a steely gaze. His face reflects odd expressions of awe and fascination.

Overhead, a blue light hangs. The color changes to a diffused blue hue and converges onto the speartip.

A blue aura surrounds Peterson's body and backlights it. The effect produces a strange halo that glows.

Peterson appears entranced. Total absorption on his part.

FADE OUT.

THE END