

JONNY Quest

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SECOND DRAFT

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As the TITLE FADES from the screen, we focus on the GIANT LETTER Q... RACING through its center to find ourselves...

EXT. ARCTIC OCEAN - NIGHT

Soaring over ice floes, scattered in the frigid water like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. We speed towards a remote settlement perched at the tip of a snow-covered peninsula.

SUPER: THULE, GREENLAND.
U.S.A.F. LONG RANGE RADAR STATION.

Icicles as big as broom-handles hang from the razor fences surrounding a small cluster of hut-like STRUCTURES. One of them topped with a huge golfball-shaped RADAR DOME.

INT. RADOME - NIGHT

TWO AIR FORCE RADAR TECHS huddle in a rat's nest of electronics. One dozes while the other watches a tiny TV, an old Hanna-Barbera cartoon on screen. The picture goes snowy, fritzing in and out, so, he BANGS it with his fist.

Again. Just as he's about to bang it a third time --

-- A SIREN SHATTERS THE SILENCE -- LIGHTS FLASHING --

-- IT'S THE EARLY WARNING ALARM. Cocoa spills as the men scramble to their stations -- A BLIP on the RADAR screens.

RADAR TECH #1

Contact! Bearing three-nine-seven.
Forty-two thousand feet. Relay?

RADAR TECH #2

Relaying. Jesus, it's fast. What do you think? Satellite? ICBM?

RADAR TECH #1

Too fast. Wait -- new heading:
Two-one-one. Altitude's dropping.
This thing's coming down. Hard.

RADAR TECH #2

(realizing)
Two-one-one? That's --

-- THE FLOOR HEAVES LIKE IT'S BEEN HIT BY AN EARTHQUAKE. Shelves TOPPLE. Monitors EXPLODE in a SHOWER OF SPARKS.

The techs are THROWN out of their seats, scrambling for cover -- equipment RAINING DOWN -- until... as quickly as it started, it stops. They pick themselves up. Shaken.

RADAR TECH #2
What was that?

EXT. RADAR BASE - NIGHT

A RUT CUTS THROUGH THE SNOW, like a long ditch dug in the frozen earth. It runs straight through the torn fences. Right through one of the huts, rent in two smoking halves.

It disappears over an icy ridge, where an EERIE GLOW EMANATES. Waves of light shimmer in the sky, almost like the Aurora Borealis, but... Unsettling. Unearthly.

The techs scramble up the ridge and as they crest it, we BOOM UP to REVEAL what they find...

THE SHAPE OF A DOWNED FLYING-CRAFT

Lying in a crater of its own making. What we can see of it is like nothing we've ever seen. Sleek. Advanced. Alien.

The techs trade astonished looks, their breath coming in quick clouds of frozen fog.

RADAR TECH #1
Call it in. Now.

SMASH CUT TO:

KLEIG LIGHTS. ARMED GUARDS. HAZMAT CREWS. The mystery ship has been enclosed in a full-fledged military cordon.

Amid this chaos, a HELICOPTER touches down. Black. Unmarked. The door opens and... CORVIN steps out.

She wears no military insignia, but she is unquestionably in charge. An old-school Cold Warrior. Smart and shrewd and warm as this weather. She's met by her aide, ROBERTS.

CORVIN
What is it? Chinese? Russian?

ROBERTS
Neither, as far as we can tell.
The hull appears to be one complete piece -- we can't find a door -- can't get any readings inside either -- EM, ultrasound, X-Ray.
(swallows)
Frankly, ma'am, we don't know what this is or where it came from.
We're out of our depth.

Corvin surveys the vessel, pulsing ominously.

CORVIN

Get Quest.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARMY BASE - DAY

Ten-foot razor fences surround a desert of white-hot sand.

SUPER: WHITE SANDS PROVING GROUNDS.
 LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO.

INT. TEST HANGAR

DR. BENTON QUEST, 40s, sporting a short red beard and a rumpled lab coat, stands in a huge, closed hangar. A line of M1 ABRAMS TANKS behind him. An audience of MILITARY BRASS before him. We are in the middle of a demonstration.

Quest is -- bar none -- our country's finest scientific mind. When he speaks, everybody listens.

QUEST

Non-lethal weaponry -- truly non-lethal -- has always made sense in the abstract. The reality, however, has invariably been ineffective, inefficient, or both. So, the question remains: how do we provide able national defense, without unnecessary loss of life? The answer, gentlemen, is the latest innovation from Quest labs.

Quest's ASSISTANTS wheel a HIGH-TECH DEVICE into the light. As big as a broadcast TV camera, coiled with coolant tubes and high-voltage cables.

QUEST

The Geodide Ray. Now, directed-energy weapons aren't a novel concept. But the innovation here -- what we've spent the last three years perfecting -- isn't what this weapon destroys. It's what it doesn't. Allow me to demonstrate.

He moves to the Ray's controls, enters an ACTIVATION CODE.

QUEST

It's secured by our proprietary 512-bit cipher. Can't be operated without it. Glasses, gentlemen?

They don DARK SAFETY GLASSES while the Geodide Ray powers up, its emitter swiveling toward... one of the TANKS.

A BLINDING BEAM OF ENERGY BLASTS OUT -- a constant stream that strikes the tank and instantly BURNS A TWO-FOOT DIAMETER HOLE through its armor and straight out the back.

QUEST

Metals. Minerals. Plastics. The Geodide easily destroys these. But, by exploiting a recently discovered phase difference in the valence shells of inorganic and organic compounds... Well, let me just show you.

Quest steps calmly INTO THE PATH OF THE BEAM.

The ENERGY ARCS through his body. The buttons BURN off his shirt. His glasses MELT off his face. His security tag turns to STEAM. But, the rest of him is unscathed.

QUEST

Organic matter, biological material -- everything from skin to bone, hair to cotton, plants and animals -- as far as the Geodide is concerned, they simply don't exist.

He nods to his assistants, who power down the beam.

QUEST

With this weapon, we could destroy an enemy tank, or an entire brigade -- all without a single casualty. It is the first truly non-lethal -- and truly effective -- weapon of its kind.

The generals APPLAUD, astounded.

FOUR-STAR GENERAL

Extraordinary, Quest. I don't know how you do it.

QUEST

(checking his buttons)
Well, I go through a lot of shirts.

The men laugh, peppering him with questions and compliments. Quest leads the crowd out through a security door, and just before the door clicks closed --

A SHADOWY FIGURE SLIPS INSIDE, stealing across the hangar.

We can't see much of it. Just a FLASH of MOVEMENT as it sneaks past Quest's distracted assistants, making its way to the GEODIDE RAY. Fingers fly over the controls and --

Suddenly, the ray POWERS UP. Emitter SWIVELING -- quick, precise movements -- its BEAM BLASTING OUT, sweeping over the heads of the assistants -- who hit the deck in panic.

ALARMS WAIL -- MARINE GUARDS flood in -- surrounding the intruder -- FORCING him to the ground.

Quest hurries back in to cut the ray's power -- re-locking it with his code. He pushes through the chaos, finally coming within sight of the perpetrator...

A 12-year-old boy.

QUEST
Jonny!?

JONNY
Hi, dad.

Meet JONNY QUEST. A blond-haired hell-raiser. Even with a dozen rifles pointed at him, he somehow still manages to look more amused than afraid. We PULL BACK to reveal why --

TWO HUGE LETTERS BURNED INTO THE TANK BEHIND HIM: "JQ".

EXT. TEST HANGAR - DAY

Trying to stay composed, Quest drags Jonny out by his arm.

JONNY
Come on, I just wanted to see what the big deal was. You spend all your time on it -- I mean, it's not like I was gonna hurt anybody.

QUEST
Where's your bodyguard? He's supposed to keep you under control.

JONNY
You mean baby-sitter? "Agent Derek" quit. I told him his eyebrows would grow back, but --

Fed up, Dr. Quest EXPLODES:

QUEST
 Jonny, YOU CAN'T KEEP DOING THIS!
 Acting out like this! You're going
 to get yourself hurt! If your
 mother could see you --

JONNY
 (snaps)
But, she can't, can she?

The sound of a COUGH makes them both turn. Roberts stands in the doorway. At the sight of him, Quest instantly goes ALERT. He knows precisely what this means.

ROBERTS
 Dr. Quest, I'm sorry to intrude...

QUEST
 What's happened?

CUT TO:

EXT. TARMAC - MOMENTS LATER

Roberts ushers Quest and Jonny toward a waiting helicopter.

QUEST
 It's already being transported to
 my lab? Corvin's cleared this?

ROBERTS
 The director has instructed me to
 give you anything you need.

Quest sends his son on ahead to the chopper. As Jonny climbs in, out of earshot...

QUEST
 Tell her I need another bodyguard.
 Tell her -- this time -- I need
 someone who can handle anything.
 And I need him now.

As they step into the chopper, skids lifting off, we...

SMASH TO:

"RACE" BANNON

as an UPPERCUT snaps his head back. He sits, tied to a chair, in a dark, dingy windowless room.

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN THE UKRAINE.

With stark white hair and more scars than skin, Race looks like the kinda guy who's been everywhere. Seen everything. But, instead of pictures, he's taken punches.

RACE

I don't wanna tell you guys how to do your jobs, but have you ever heard the expression, "You get more flies with honey--"

A RIGHT CROSS CRACKS HIS JAW. THREE EASTERN BLOC THUGS are interrogating him. We'll call the big one SERGEI, the giant IVAN, and the Frankenstein monster IGOR.

RACE

(spits a tooth)
Just trying to help.

SERGEI

We know who you work for, Agent Bannon. I don't care if you're CIA, FBI, or another of your government's ridiculous acronyms.

RACE

DMV? IHOP?

SERGEI

You will tell us everything you know of our upcoming transaction.

RACE

Transaction? You mean the two stolen Soviet warheads you're auctioning on the black market? Or that shipment of used Levis you got coming in?

Ivan HITS him. A hammer-blow to the gut.

SERGEI

Do they know where the sale will take place? Do they know when?

Igor HITS him. Ivan HITS him. Igor. Ivan. Finally, fed up, Sergei jams a GUN to Race's temple --

RACE

Alright, alright! You win. They know. St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev. Next Tuesday. Midnight.

Sergei laughs, Igor and Ivan join in, guttural and phlegmy.

SERGEI

You call yourselves intelligence agents? The sale is happening as we speak, not twenty meters away.

(savoring it)

Your silly little acronym doesn't know that, do they?

Sergei PISTOL-WHIPS him -- Race's head SNAPS to the side --

And a tiny plastic nub bounces out onto the floor. A MICRO-EARPIECE. The thugs look from it... to Race. Race shrugs.

RACE

Do now.

We can almost see the gears turning as they realize -- this entire time -- they weren't interrogating him. He was interrogating them. But by the time they do --

Race has slipped his bonds -- moving like lightning -- and STRIKING like it too. With judo moves and vicious street boxing, he takes the three thugs down. Fast, brutal, easy.

Race retrieves his ear-piece from the floor and pops it in.

RACE

Rover-one, this is Fly Fisher. Do you copy that location? Rover-one?

STATIC. The ear-piece is busted. Which means it's up to him. Alone. Again. Grabbing Sergei's gun --

EXT. CONTAINER SHIP - NIGHT

-- Race BURSTS out of a 40-foot CARGO CONTAINER. One of dozens on the deck of a gargantuan container ship at dock.

Moving quickly, quietly, he makes his way through the maze of containers -- his gun at the ready -- until he comes across a small circle of light, and lying sprawled in it...

BODIES. More Eastern Bloc bad guys, their guns scattered around them. Clearly dead -- but, without a mark on them.

THE NOISE OF GRINDING GEARS makes Race look up...

... where the arm of a loading crane swings a LARGE WOODEN CRATE, stenciled with Cyrillic letters, toward the railing.

A MINI-SUB

Bobs in the water below. 30-feet of black steel. MEN IN WET-SUITS atop it. Guiding in the crate and detaching it.

Race INSTANTLY OPENS FIRE --

His shots RICOCHETING around them, sending the men scrambling for cover. He has them dead-to-rights, until --

BULLETS RIDDLE his position -- FIRED from further down the ship, at the base of the crane. Race ducks behind a container as -- TWO MORE WET-SUITED MEN pin him down with BURSTS from their Uzis. He peeks out. Far enough to see --

A THIRD WET-SUITED MAN, fixing the crane to a SECOND CRATE.

As it LIFTS into the air, swinging overhead, Race DIVES out from cover, FIRES at the crane's cable -- It FRAYS, SNAPS --

Sending the crate CRASHING onto the deck. The thieves flee back to the sub -- two of them VAULTING OFF THE SIDE into the black water below, but before the third one clears it --

RACE
HOLD IT! I-1!

Race's gun is trained on his back. He freezes. Hands up.

RACE
Turn around. NOW.

The man TURNS... We only catch a glimpse of his face in the dim light -- scarred, severe -- and, in Race's eyes, we see a glimmer of recognition.

But, before he can be sure -- A BLAST OF LIGHT BLINDS Race, a HELICOPTER soaring in, SEARCHLIGHT sweeping. He waves it off, but it's too late. The man is GONE. He runs to the railing, but... the sub's gone too. Bubbles in the water.

I-1 AGENTS repel down around him. Coming to the "rescue."

RACE
Nice timing, guys.

As Race, pissed, holsters his gun, we crane down, down...

EXT. BLACK SEA - NIGHT

... to where the mini-sub knifes through the dark waters.

INSIDE, the wet-suited thieves carefully lower the crate to the deck. Using crowbars to force it open, revealing --

A SOVIET MIRV WARHEAD. One of man's deadliest creations.

The thieves stand aside as their LEADER, the man Race held at gunpoint, kneels before the nuke, bowed in... prayer?

All we can see is the back of his head, and it is unlike anything we've ever seen. A STARBURST OF SCARS mars the crown of his shaved skull, HIGH-TECH METALLIC BRACES crisscross the skin -- fixed into the flesh with pins and screws -- acting to hold the shattered bone in one piece.

It looks like the exit-wound of some high-caliber bullet.

As he rises into the light, we see the entry-wound, a deep SCAR in the center of his forehead. Exactly where the mystical "Third Eye" is believed to lie. This is KORCHEK.

He turns toward his wet-suited men. Zeroing in on one in particular, visibly shaken by his attention.

WET-SUIT

Sir, I -- I know we've failed you.

KORCHEK

What makes you believe that?

In Korchek's hand, an AUTO-PISTOL, cutting edge in every way, except for its stock -- which is made of gold, ornately carved, like the hilt of some ceremonial dagger.

WET-SUIT

The -- the second warhead --

KORCHEK

Is inconsequential. All I require is one. And the gods -- in their infinite wisdom -- have seen fit to provide it. We should thank them.

The man relaxes... until -- from the gun's ornate stock -- Korchek pulls a GLEAMING BLADE. An ancient Indian KATAR -- a punching dagger. He PLUNGES it into the man's sternum.

KORCHEK

With a sacrifice.

Korchek squeezes the handle in a precise way, and when he withdraws the katar, its single blade has split in three.

The man slumps at his feet. Korchek turns to the others.

WET-SUIT #2

(stammers)

Sir -- that man -- he wasn't supposed to be there. He came out of nowhere.

KORCHEK

I know. His name is Bannon.

As Korchek SLAMS his crate back closed --

EXT. CONTAINER SHIP - DAWN

A HAZMAT CREW in RADIATION GEAR carefully opens the second crate. The ship is a crime scene. I-1 Agents -- local police -- the works. Race confers with the HAZMAT LEADER.

HAZMAT LEADER

The good news is the radioactive material hasn't been compromised. Bad news: there is no radioactive material. It's got the trigger, the implosion charges, everything you need for a nuclear detonation.

RACE

Except the nuclear part?

HAZMAT LEADER

And our Geigers only register background levels, so -- my guess? Neither weapon ever had a payload. But, who'd buy a bomb without the stuff that makes it go boom?

Before Race can learn anything else -- an agent waves him over, handing him what looks like a MILITARY-ISSUE iPhone.

CORVIN'S unsmiling face on-screen.

RACE

Ma'am, I can explain --

CORVIN

Explain? How you initiated an illegal operation? Allowed yourself to be captured? And lost a nuclear warhead? Is that what you're going to explain?

Beat.

RACE
Not exactly --

CORVIN
You're off this, Bannon, as of now.

RACE
You can't take me off. I -- I
recognized one of the men involved.
I know this sounds crazy, but...
it was Korchek.

CORVIN
Korchek's dead. Just like you, if
you're not on the next flight back.
I have a new assignment for you.
High-priority protection detail.

RACE
The president again?

CORVIN
Not exactly.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLORIDA KEYS - DAY

The shadow of a HELICOPTER skims across the sparkling, blue-green waters of Florida's southernmost tip.

Race sits beside the pilot, chewing Advils, either for his jet-lag or his recent beating, take your pick. On his lap, a TABLET COMPUTER displaying a DOSSIER on DR. BENTON QUEST.

Scientific accomplishments that would make Stephen Hawking jealous -- humanitarian efforts -- defense contracts -- Quest seems to be part lab-rat, part Leonardo Da Vinci.

Race's eyes are glazing over, until he reaches... CRIME-SCENE PHOTOS. NEWS CLIPPINGS. "Assassination attempt"... "unknown assailants"... "Judith Quest pronounced dead"...

The **FINAL PHOTO** catches Race's attention. **Benton Quest in the center of a swarm of FBI, police and paramedics, a SMALL BLOND BOY in his arms. Tears in both their eyes.**

Before he can read any more, the helicopter begins its descent. Race peers out the window at their destination...

PALM KEY. A tiny tropical island in the middle of nowhere. Pristine white beaches. Lush green foliage. To the untrained eye, this looks like paradise. But, not to Race.

EXT. HELIPAD - DAY

The chopper touches down just long enough for Race to hop out. Gear slung on his back, he takes in his surroundings. No welcoming committee. In fact, the only sign of life...

... is the barrel of a ROBOT SENTRY GUN protruding from the bushes, servos whirring as it swivels to aim at him. A dozen other guns cover him from every conceivable angle.

RACE

Warm welcome.

He starts down a PATH into the trees. The robot guns tracking him every step of the way...

EXT. LAGOON - DAY

The path ends at a small lagoon, fed by a ten foot waterfall. Race looks confused. Where does he go now?

A VOICE (O.S.)

This way, Agent Bannon.

He looks -- no one's there. Then, beneath his feet, TWO PARALLEL LINES OF LIGHTS appear in the sand. Outlining a PATHWAY that leads directly into the lagoon.

THE VOICE

Follow the lights, please.

RACE

You've gotta be kidding me.

THE VOICE

Follow the lights, please.

Race dips in a toe. As his foot touches the "water," it FRITZES, then returns to normal. A HOLOGRAM.

Bewildered, he strides into the holo-lagoon, following the lights until he disappears under the surface.

INT. SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

The first thing Race sees is -- A BLINDING RED LIGHT -- scanning him from head to toe. He's inside a metal-panelled chamber, the size of an ATM vestibule. ROBOTIC ARMS telescope out of the walls, poking and prodding him.

A mechanized eyeball maps his iris. A needle-tipped tentacle JABS his neck, sampling his DNA. A robotic sniffer gets a little too "friendly" with his crotch.

RACE
Whoa. Down boy.

Finally, the arms retract, the light turns GREEN, and the huge metal door before him SLIDES OPEN to REVEAL...

INT. QUEST LABS - DAY

A sleek, subterranean complex, bustling with scientists and uniformed staff, patrolled by a small army of armed guards.

LEAD GUARD
You're cleared for entry, sir. We appreciate your patience.

RACE
What, no body cavity search?

QUEST (O.S.)
Believe me, Agent Bannon. If you were hiding something, our machines would know before you did.

Benton Quest crosses the massive letter "Q" emblazoned on the floor to shake Race's hand.

RACE
Dr. Quest, I presume?

QUEST
Welcome to Palm Key.

INT. QUEST LABS - HALLWAY - DAY

Quest leads Race down a corridor lined with observation windows. In every room, inventions are being tested. SONIC PROJECTORS. NANOTECH. An assistant ZOOMS past on a JET-PACK. Despite himself, Race is amazed.

QUEST
You've been briefed on your assignment here, is that correct?

RACE
Briefly.

QUEST
Because I haven't yet had an agent last more than a month. I need to be sure you can handle this.

RACE

Due respect, doc, I've protected two presidents, six heads of state, and myself from more than a few angry ex-girlfriends. I can handle anything you can throw at me.

QUEST

I don't doubt your qualifications, but, this job has its... hazards.

-- WHOOSH! A JET of FIRE flares up behind one of the observation windows. Inside, two scientists are testing a new FIRE-SUPPRESSION GRENADE. It rolls into the fire and -- POW! -- Snuffs it with a BLAST of PINK FOAM.

QUEST

You know who I am? What we do?

RACE

I know people say without you -- without the things you make -- we'd all be calling each other comrade. With British accents. In Chinese.

QUEST

That may be overstating it.

RACE

I said people say it. I didn't say I do. No offense, I'm sure you got some amazing "gadgets" here...

A JANITOR ROBOT whirs past, beeping adorably.

RACE

But all the gadgets in the world can't do what one well-trained man with a gun can.

They round a corner, passing a set of STEEL BIO-SAFETY DOORS marked "RESTRICTED ACCESS." Quest's private lab. An assistant exits, and as the doors SLIDE open and shut --

We glimpse THE MYSTERIOUS FLYING CRAFT inside, behind a glass observation window, surrounded by lab equipment.

QUEST

I have matters to attend to, so I must keep this brief, but, I agree with you. I learned that lesson the hard way. Three years ago.

(MORE)

QUEST (CONT'D)

When some well-trained men with guns tried to kill me.

RACE

I'm aware of your file, Dr. Quest.

QUEST

Then, you're aware that while I survived, my wife did not. Those men -- whoever sent them -- might still be out there. I need a man who will die -- and kill -- to make sure something like that never happens again.

(intense)

Do you understand me, Agent Bannon?

RACE

Race.

QUEST

Do you understand me, Race?

RACE

You've got nothing to worry about, doc. I'll keep you safe.

Quest shakes his head, exasperated.

QUEST

Not me. Jonny.

RACE

"Jonny?"

INT. JONNY'S ROOM - DAY

Decorated with dirty laundry and adolescent angst. Jonny sprawls on his bed, playing an eyeball-melting RACING GAME on his X-Box 360. BANDIT, his black and white bulldog, lies curled up beside him. Growling at the door, where...

... Quest and Race stand. Race looks decidedly unhappy.

QUEST

Jonny? Can you turn the game off?
There's someone I want you to meet.

JONNY

(doesn't even look up)
Hi. There, we met.

Quest taps a keypad beside the door. The game's power instantly cuts out. Jonny drops the controller, annoyed.

QUEST

This is Race.

JONNY

"Race?" Man, you must've got your butt kicked constantly in school.

RACE

Cute kid. Listen, doc --

He pulls Quest aside, out of earshot.

RACE

Somebody got their wires crossed here, okay? I'm not the guy you want for this.

QUEST

Your room will be next door. When I can't be here, my son and his safety will be your responsibility.

RACE

But --

QUEST

I know this isn't your first choice. But my work -- my position -- makes my family a target. I need to know my son is safe. I've reviewed every available agent, and you are the best guarantee our government can give me. So, like it or not, as of now, your job is Jonny. Is that clear?

RACE

Yes, sir.

Race is steamed, but Quest is satisfied. He crosses to Jonny -- playing his game again -- touches his shoulder.

QUEST

I won't be able to make dinner again tonight, Jonny. I'm sorry... I have work.

Jonny just shrugs him off. Goes back to his game. Quest leads Race to the door, talking almost more to himself --

QUEST

He wasn't always like this. You have to understand, these last few years have been hard. On us both.

(utterly sincere)

Please. Watch over my boy. Keep him safe. He's all I have.

Unsure how to react to such raw emotion, Race simply nods. Quest starts to leave, then remembers --

QUEST

Oh, and he's had a habit of trying to sneak off the island lately. Don't let him.

Quest leaves. Alone now, Jonny offers Race his controller.

JONNY

You wanna get next game? I'll go easy on you.

But, Race isn't here to play games.

RACE

Listen to me, kid. Because I'm only gonna say this once. Until I get this straightened out, we're stuck together. But, I'm not here to be your friend or your babysitter. I'm not here to help with your homework or teach you to ride your bike like a big boy. I'm here to keep you alive. That's all.

Seeing him clearly taken aback, Race softens. Slightly.

RACE

You do what I say, when I say, and we'll get along just fine. Got it?

The boy nods, speechless. Race goes. But the moment he's gone, Jonny's "fear" evaporates. He gives his dog a smirk.

JONNY

How long you think this one'll last, Bandit? A week? Two, tops?

EXT. PALM KEY - SUNSET

The sun sinks behind the postcard perfect island, while...

INT. RACE'S QUARTERS

Race unpacks his stuff, wishing he were anywhere but here.

He unloads weapons, gear, passports, currency from a dozen different countries. But, nothing personal. No mementos. No photos. His life fits in one bag, and he travels light.

His stuff stowed, Race sits down on the bed. Tries to relax, but... can't. He has no off-switch.

Instead, he turns on his TABLET COMPUTER. Closing Quest's file, he logs-on to the I-1 database, quickly calling up...

ANOTHER DOSSIER

The face staring back at him now is the same face he saw on the container ship. KORCHEK, sans scars, but unmistakable.

As Race scans the file, we get a brief look at this man's background -- "KGB"... "BLACK-OPS"... "SHINING PATH"... We see hijackings in South Africa and Sydney, bombings in Belize and Cairo, arms sales in every nation in the world.

He "speaks fourteen languages"... Is "expert in all armed and unarmed combat"... "Obsessed with ancient history"...

And, according to this file, he's been DEAD for TEN YEARS.

Race stares at him, those same eyes from the ship, until --

A NOISE snaps Race out of his reverie. He hears FOOTSTEPS in the hall. A FIGURE FLASHES past his open door. Jonny?

One day on the job, and already hating it, Race follows...

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Where he finds the kid trying to hide in a shadowy corner.

RACE

You think it's that easy getting past me? Get back in your room and I'll pretend you were never this dumb. You hear me, kid?

He goes to grab Jonny's sleeve, but his HAND PASSES RIGHT THROUGH THE BOY'S ARM -- the image FRITZES -- A HOLOGRAM.

Before Race can react --

A FIRE-SUPPRESSION GRENADE rolls to a stop at his feet -- POW! Spot-welding him to the wall with STICKY PINK FOAM.

Jonny melts out of shadows behind him, a HIGH-TECH DEVICE strapped to his wrist. Part watch, part Star Trek Tricorder. He pushes a button and "Holo-Jonny" winks out.

JONNY

You like this? I call it my Quest-Watch. Made it myself from some of dad's old inventions. Don't tell.

Race TRIES to SPEAK, but the sticky foam acts like a GAG.

JONNY

Now, I'm gonna go have fun in Miami. So, when you get free... Don't wait up. Got it, "Race?"

With a grin, the boy runs off down the hall, leaving Race, pissed beyond belief, struggling to tear free of the foam.

INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bandit scampering at his heels, Jonny sprints down the corridor, rounds a corner and hurries into --

AN UNDERGROUND MARINA

High-tech nautical vessels bob in their berths. As Jonny hops aboard a next-gen JET-SKI, firing it up --

Race bursts in behind him, picking foam out of his hair. Just in time to see the jet-ski ZOOM BY, spraying water.

Race hurries to untie an unattended HYDROFOIL. ROCKETS after him. Chasing the kid down a concrete exit tunnel.

Left on the dock, Bandit whines. "Hey! You forgot me!"

EXT. PALM KEY - NIGHT

A CLIFF WALL SLIDES OPEN and Jonny speeds out of the hidden entrance, slaloming through the shallows.

Race blasts out behind him, expertly piloting his hydrofoil. He GUNS the throttle, pulling even with Jonny.

RACE

Cut the engine! You're not going anywhere!

JONNY

Yeah? Watch me!

Jonny cuts a turn, steering toward a rocky peninsula where the black mouth of a SEA CAVE looms. Speeding straight in.

Although it looks like a tight fit, Race zooms in after him. The narrow walls STRIPPING both sides of his boat.

RACE

I hate kids.

INT. SEA CAVE - NIGHT

Jonny weaves through the darkness, his headlights illuminating the jagged rocks and hairpin twists ahead.

Chancing a look back, he's shocked to see Race right behind him, scraping the walls with every turn. Jonny goes faster. Like some crazy game of chicken.

Race doesn't balk. He matches the boy's speed, pursuing him through the deadly maze. The distance closes. It looks like Jonny can't outrun the hydrofoil forever, but --

Seeing a fork up ahead -- one passage large, the other frighteningly small -- Jonny knows -- this is his chance.

He speeds for the smaller side, lies flat on his ski, and -- by millimeters -- clears the ceiling and vanishes inside.

Race has no choice but to veer toward the larger passage.

Seeing the hydrofoil turn off, Jonny lets out a whoop of triumph. He's lost this loser, just like all the others. He speeds toward where the passage opens back out onto open water, but just as his jet-ski emerges from the cave --

-- RACE'S HYDROFOIL cuts across his path, having circled around from the other side. As it BLASTS PAST, Jonny is shocked to find --

A MOORING ROPE

tossed around his waist like a LASSO, it YANKS HIM OFF HIS SEAT. Dragging him behind Race's boat like an unwilling waterskier. Hollering, gurgling, and swallowing gallons.

Once Race thinks he's learned his lesson, he kills the engine and hauls him, soaked and SPUTTERING, into the boat.

JONNY

What the... heck was... that? I could've drowned!

RACE

That was a lesson. If you didn't learn it, we can always try again.

Jonny shakes his head, beaten and knowing it.

RACE

That's what I thought. Now, let's get you back home before your dad misses you. If that's possible.

JONNY

I don't wanna go back. I hate it there.

RACE

Poor you. You live in paradise.

JONNY

More like Alcatraz. Ever since mom died, dad treats me like a prisoner. For "my own safety." I can't go anywhere. I can't do anything. You know what it's like? Having no friends, except your dog?

RACE

So take it up with him, kid. Or your dog. It's not my job to care.

JONNY

It's not his either.

As Race fires up the boat, steering back toward Palm Key...

INT. QUEST'S LAB - NIGHT

THE MYSTERY SHIP, transported here from the arctic, rests in a nest of diagnostic equipment. A THERMITE TORCH flares to life, fixed to the end of a robotic arm. SPARKS SPRAY as it begins cutting a four-foot-diameter hole in its hull.

Quest mans the torch's controls, supported by TWO ASSISTANTS. All wearing high-tech bio-containment suits.

QUEST

(on his vocal recorder:)

The exterior of the vessel seems to be comprised of a unique polycarbonate alloy. Approximately ten meters in length, triangular in shape.

(MORE)

QUEST (CONT'D)

The interior appears to be an electromagnetic black box. No readings register at any EM range.

The torch finishes its cut. Quest nods to his assistants, who move forward to attach magnetic hand-holds.

QUEST

We will now commence entry of the vessel, to determine its origin.

Carefully, they lift the torch-cut circle free. Quest moves forward, peering into the DARK OPENING... Confused.

ASSISTANT

What is it, doctor?

STRANGE CHARACTERS have been etched into the inside of the ship's hull. A language. But, not an alien one. It's --

QUEST

Sanskrit.

Now, the assistants look confused.

ASSISTANT #2

A dead language in a ship this advanced? Can you read it, doctor?

QUEST

(translating)

"Now, I am become Death...
destroyer of worlds."

We can almost see the gears turning inside Quest's head. Thinking it through. Coming to an alarming realization.

QUEST

Hit the panic button.

His assistants balk, caught off-guard.

QUEST

HIT IT! NOW!

One reaches for the EMERGENCY BUTTON on the wall, but --

A THIN METAL TENTACLE WHIPS OUT OF THE HOLE, SNAPPING around his throat like a reticulated python. CHOKING the air out of him. Its needle-like tip INJECTS him with something that causes his body to convulse and go limp.

Quest leaps into action -- trying to pull his other assistant to safety -- but the man is frozen with fear as --

A SWARM OF SPINDLY SPIDER-ROBOTS BURSTS OUT OF THE SHIP.

Balanced on six of those deadly tentacles, their RED EYES GLOWING malevolently as they scuttle across the lab, swarming the assistant. Overwhelming and injecting him.

Quest runs for the exit. One of the spiders SPRINGS into the air -- landing between him and the door. It seizes Quest by his throat, pinning him against a console, its leg choking him like a garotte-wire. His hand flails out...

... finds the joystick for the thermite-torch. Its arm swivels around -- SLICING the spider's leg from its body.

Freed, Quest RUNS. Diving through the safety door before the spiders can reach it. Legs angrily tapping the glass.

In the observation room now, he hurries to HIT a second PANIC BUTTON. But it merely flashes: "PROTOCOL DISABLED."

Quest looks back into the lab -- horrified to see the spider-bots -- no longer chasing him -- now swarming over his computer mainframe, their wire-thin legs invading its systems. Clicking and whirring as they take control.

ON SCREEN, he watches every single one of the island's defense systems SHUT DOWN. This "mystery ship" is actually an elaborate TROJAN HORSE.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Bubbles in the water... as DARK FIGURES melt out of the surf. Clutching HIGH-TECH RIFLES and clad in CAMOUFLAGE SCUBA SUITS, they look more like monsters than men.

THE SENTRY GUNS swivel toward them, but before they can open fire -- their barrels droop -- the guns power down.

The frogmen reach the lagoon unchallenged. One removes a SHAPE CHARGE from his bag and wades into the holo-water...

INT. QUEST LABS - FRONT GATE

THE DOOR EXPLODES IN A CONCUSSION OF SMOKE AND SHRAPNEL.

The guards are BLOWN BACK like rag dolls. The frogmen FLOOD INSIDE. Putting down the survivors with short BURSTS of FIRE. Fast and brutal and over in ten seconds flat.

In case you haven't noticed, this ain't Spy Kids. This is Jonny Quest. People die. Bad guys aren't cuddly, or funny, or cute. It's never graphic, but it is dangerous.

As the frogmen invade the complex -- dividing into two squads -- tracking muddy footprints across the "Q" logo...

INT. UNDERGROUND MARINA - NIGHT

Bandit yips excitedly as Race and Jonny return. Race coasts the hydrofoil in, hopping out to tie them off.

JONNY

Are you gonna tell dad about this,
'cause he's probably gonna freak --

Race CLAPS a hand over his mouth, muffling him mid-word.

RACE

Stop. Talking. You hear that?

A POP-POP-POP of gunfire. Echoing inside the complex.

Bandit BARKS SHARPLY -- Danger! -- and Race is already reacting -- tackling Jonny flat -- just seconds before --

RACE

Get down!

GRAPPLING LINES EXPLODE OUT OF THE WATER BELOW, HOOKS latching onto the rafters above. THREE FROGMEN BURST OUT behind them, reeled up by high-tech harnesses, FIRING.

Bullets RIP THE DOCK around them as Race pulls Jonny to cover behind a cement pylon. Freaking out of his mind.

JONNY

WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING!?

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Panic in Palm Key. Staff and scientists RUN for their lives. The sounds of GUNFIRE echo nearby. Quest is here -- the calm center of this storm -- urging his people to:

QUEST

Quickly, go! Help each other!

He turns a corner, reaching Jonny's room. Hurries inside.

QUEST

Jonny? Jonny, where are you!?

No sign of him. Frantic, Quest runs through the halls, searching for his son. Passing a test lab, he notices two lab-techs still inside. Pounds the observation window.

QUEST

Get out of there! It's not safe!

They turn -- CUT DOWN by a spray of bullets. Quest ducks out of view as FROGMEN swarm inside the lab.

Crossing to a corner, THEY LOAD SOMETHING THERE inside a special WATER-TIGHT CRATE. Quest can't see what from his angle, but whatever it is, it must be what they came for.

CLICK-CLACK. A gun COCKS behind him. The second squad of frogmen surrounds him. Clearly, they came for two things.

FROGMAN

(on his radio:)

We have the doctor.

They seize Quest, hauling him to his feet, while...

INT. MARINA

Race drags Jonny to another pylon, bullets whizzing past them. Two of the Frogman detach from their lines, dropping onto the dock. Surrounding them. Angling for a shot.

JONNY

What are we gonna do? Race? Race!

RACE

I need a gun!

JONNY

Does it matter what kind?

He points to a nearby boat, where a wicked SPEAR-GUN leans against the rail. Race shrugs. That'll do.

THUNK! A TWO-FOOT SPEAR hits a frogmen square in his chest, propelling him back off the dock with a SPLASH.

Race re-cocks the gun, satisfied. Jonny hands him a spear.

THUNK! THUNK! Two more spears -- fired as fast as Race can reload -- PIN a second frogman to the side of a boat.

RACE

(to Jonny)

Spear. Spear.

But Jonny -- stunned by just seeing two guys get skewered -- fumbles the spears -- and before he can pick them back up --

THUD! The third frogman lands on the dock before them.
His gun comes up to fire, but --

Race BATS it away with the spear-gun, knocking both weapons out of reach.

The Frogman pulls a KNIFE -- SLASHES at Race -- Race catches his wrist -- they struggle over it, each man trying to force the weapon toward the other.

Every muscle flexed, every tendon screaming, Race sees Jonny frozen, watching, like this is some kind of TV show.

RACE

Kid. His harness. HIT IT!

Realizing what Race means, Jonny grabs the guy's harness, fumbling until he finds the RETRACTION CONTROL. HITS IT --

And with a SCREAMING WHIR, the line YANKS the frogman off his feet, propelling him UP -- UP -- UP -- until his head smashes against the rafters with a sickening CRUNCH. His body goes limp, dangling. Jonny stares up at him, numbed.

JONNY

Race, who are these guys? What do we do?

Grabbing a frogmen's rifle, Race shoves Jonny aboard a nearby boat.

RACE

Get below deck. Stay put.

JONNY

But --

Race silences him with a look. But as Race sprints down the dock, back into the complex... Jonny follows. And Bandit, EMERGING from HIDING in an old dinghy, does too.

INT. QUEST LABS, FRONT GATE - NIGHT

The two squads of frogmen have linked back up, funneling in from two different corridors -- the water-tight crate and Quest in tow. As they drag the doctor toward the exit --

JONNY (O.S.)

DAD!

He turns -- seeing his son at the far end of a hallway --

QUEST
NO JONNY! KEEP BACK! KEEP AWAY!

The Frogmen's rifles swing toward the boy --

But, RACE comes out of nowhere, YANKING him back around the corner as BULLETS RAKE the spot he was standing.

RACE
 I told you to stay put!

JONNY
 They've got my dad!

Race peeks into the corridor. The frogmen lay down FIRE. Covering their escape. As the last retreats out the door --

Race is on his feet, rifle in hand, right on their heels.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The Frogmen drag Quest down the sand, shove a dive-mask over his face, pulling him and the crate into the churning waves. While Race exchanges FIRE with their rear-guard.

Two frogmen fall, but the others pick them up. These guys are like ghosts. They don't even leave their dead behind.

They vanish beneath the waves, taking Quest and the crate.

But, Race won't give up that easily. He TACKLES the last frogman. Wrestling him down. Pulling off the man's mask.

RACE
 Who sent you? You hear me? Who
took Quest!?

The man just smiles -- shoving a high-tech INHALER into his mouth. A WHOOSH as it discharges, his body starting to convulse. FROTHING, FOAMING, he finally goes rigid. DEAD.

JONNY (O.S.)
 Why did he do that?

The boy stands behind Race, stunned by what he's seen.

RACE
 So we can't ask him.

With a BARK, Bandit lopes down from the trees, excited to finally catch up to Jonny, but... recognizes the boy's mood. Something's wrong. The bulldog nuzzles his master.

Overcome, Jonny holds his dog as tight as he can. Not knowing how to comfort the kid, Race doesn't say a word.

Palm Key is a smoking wreck. Quest is gone. And they have no idea who did this or why.

EXT. INTELLIGENCE ONE H.Q. - DAY

Outside, it looks like a Virginia farm house, but inside...

INT. I-1 COMMAND CENTER

It puts Langley to shame. A set of doors -- emblazoned with the agency's motto: "INTELLIGENCE ONE: SECOND TO NONE" -- bursts open. Corvin, Roberts and Race striding in. Jonny trails behind, shell-shocked, leading Bandit.

CORVIN

How could this happen? That island was supposed to be secure!

RACE

Whoever they were, they were well-funded and well-trained. Pros.

CORVIN

What are we? Hobbyists?

Monitors cover the walls, displaying satellite feeds. Radar and sonar. Potential suspects. An army of agents, crowded at computers, go quiet at the sight of Corvin.

CORVIN

It's been five hours, twelve minutes, and eight seconds since we lost the man who designed virtually every aspect of our national defense. Now, will somebody please tell me how we get him back?

A voice pipes up behind her --

JONNY

I've got some ideas.

Corvin, Race, everyone turns to look. Beat.

CORVIN

Roberts. Kid. Now.

Roberts instantly steers Jonny -- "Hey!" -- through a set of doors into a glass-enclosed OFFICE. Jonny looks to Race for help. But, Race isn't even looking in his direction.

As soon as the boy's gone, a NERDY AGENT raises his hand.

NERDY AGENT

Ma'am, we analyzed the suicide device used by the assailant Agent Bannon captured.

ON SCREEN -- a close-up of the INHALER --

NERDY AGENT

It released a fast-acting binary nerve agent that -- aside from killing him real good -- dissolved the enamel off his teeth and the prints off his fingers. Rendering him unidentifiable. Freaky stuff.

CORVIN

Did you cross-ref its description?

NERDY AGENT

Checked every criminal database from Canada to Katmandu.

CORVIN

And either you found something, or you're purposely antagonizing me.

ON SCREEN, a WORLD MAP shifts East. To INDIA.

NERDY AGENT

Kolkata, ma'am. Or, Calcutta, as it's also known.

Another AGENT, an Indian-American on the India desk, takes over, cuing up news photos on the monitors.

INDIAN AGENT

Six weeks ago, a squad of heavily-armed men raided the University Museum there. They didn't steal anything, but they did blow something up.

A MULTI-ARMED STONE SCULPTURE. Huge, ancient, and ornate.

INDIAN AGENT

A statue of Brahma. The Hindu god of creation. Carbon dating places it at around 70,000 years old -- the oldest religious artifact ever discovered.

(MORE)

INDIAN AGENT (CONT'D)

The museum was preparing to unveil it as the centerpiece of a new exhibit.

CORVIN

And they destroyed it? Why?

NERDY AGENT

No clue. But, here's the kicker. One of the men was detained by local authorities. However, before he could be questioned...

RACE

His asthma started acting up?

INDIAN AGENT

No dental records. No prints.

That's all Corvin needed to hear.

CORVIN

I want a team prepped and ready to fly in one hour. We'll coordinate with local I-1 agents on the ground and conduct a joint investigation with their office. This is the only lead we've got, people. We're gonna follow it till we find our man. Now, let's go.

The agents hop to it. Race plants himself before Corvin.

RACE

I want on that plane.

CORVIN

They took Quest right out from under your nose. Why should I believe you can bring him back?

RACE

I wasn't made to baby-sit. I don't have to tell you that. But, on the ground, I'm the best you've got. I don't have to tell you that either.

Corvin studies him. He's right, but --

CORVIN

You have your assignment. Keep the kid safe. We'll handle the rest.

Corvin goes, leaving Race staring after, steaming, while --

INT. GLASSED-IN OFFICE - DAY

-- Jonny sits, arms crossed, giving Roberts that same look.

JONNY

What do you mean I have to stay here? He's my dad. I can help.

ROBERTS

I know you're scared, Jon. But, you have to trust us on this. We're prepping a jet and sending a team right now. We'll bring your dad home. Safe and sound.

JONNY

They're flying out now? Where?

ROBERTS

I can't tell you that. But --

Suddenly, Bandit -- somehow off his leash -- JUMPS UP on Roberts, knocking him back, SCAMPERING out the door into the command center. Jonny starts to go after him, but --

ROBERTS

No. You stay here.

Roberts CHASES after the dog, and the second he's GONE --

JONNY

Good boy, Bandit...

-- Jonny is instantly at work. He moves to Corvin's desk, extends a WIRE from his Quest-Watch and plugs it into her computer. Numbers SPIN like a slot machine as it HACKS her password. Working quickly, he calls up info on the jet --

Flight manifest. Departure time. A shot of it fueling up.

JONNY

Trust them? If they're going after my dad, no way am I staying behind.

Having found all the info he needs about the jet, Jonny navigates through directories to one labeled: "FIRE PROTOCOL." He's just accessing it when -- Bandit BARKS!

Roberts returns with the bulldog in tow. He finds Jonny --

Exactly as he left him. The boy re-clips the dog's leash.

JONNY

I don't know what got into him.

Steamed, Roberts ushers them both out of the office and...

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

... Halfway down the hall, Jonny stops to tie his sneaker.

JONNY

Sorry. One sec.

Roberts waits, annoyed, while Jonny bends down, tying a perfect bow and secretly PRESSING a BUTTON on his WATCH --

LIGHTS FLASH -- KLAXONS SOUND -- PLEXIGLAS EMERGENCY DOORS SHOOT out from the walls -- SLAMMING SHUT -- six inches ahead of where Jonny stopped, separating him from Roberts.

FOOSH! FIRE SPRINKLERS GO OFF on Roberts' side, drenching him with high-pressure water. Jonny -- bone-dry -- waves.

He runs in the opposite direction, Bandit bounding after, leaving Roberts trapped. Soaked and sputtering. Furious.

EXT. INTELLIGENCE ONE H.Q. - DAY

Exiting the main building as EMERGENCY CREWS hurry in, Jonny blends into the background. Leading Bandit to...

THE I-1 HANGAR

Disguised as a big red barn. There, the I-1 JET -- a converted C17 -- sits fueling. Mechanics go through their pre-flight checks. Support personnel load equipment.

Hiding behind a crate, Jonny squats next to his dog.

JONNY

Sorry, Bandit, but I can't take you with me. Until I find dad, you gotta stay here with these guys.

(off the dog's whine)

Be good, boy. But, not too good.

Jonny gives him one last pat and steals up the luggage ramp into the plane's cargo hold. Ducking into the back as --

At the front of the jet, a NERVOUS YOUNG GUARD stops a MAN attempting to board. A man with familiar stark white hair.

NERVOUS GUARD

(checking his ID)

If you're not on the manifest, uh, "Agent Bannon?" I don't think I'm supposed to let you, um...

RACE

Son, what you're doing right now -- impeding an investigation -- it could be construed as treason. Are you aware of that?

NERVOUS GUARD

N-no, sir, I... I'm just trying --

RACE

-- To do your job. Just like I'm trying to do mine. Now, we have two choices here. I can designate you an enemy combatant. Ship your butt to Gitmo. Where you can spend the rest of your life knitting afghans with your body hair and brushing your teeth in the toilet. Never see your girl or your dog or your X-box again. Or, you can let me on that plane. It's up to you.

The guard instantly stands aside. Race smiles, easygoing.

RACE

Smart choice, son. I'll put in a good word for you. Maybe you'll just get a dishonorable discharge.

And he breezes right past, up the stairs and into the jet.

NERVOUS GUARD

Th-- thank you?

INT. JET - DAY

Race climbs aboard, stowing his gear as the jet's engines RUMBLE to life. OWENS, the I-1 TEAM LEADER, is surprised to see this late addition to his team.

OWENS

Bannon. You're on this now?

RACE

No, I disobeyed a direct order and talked my way on board. What do you think?

Owens chuckles. Good one. As he continues on, Race belts himself into an open seat. Thinking, "What the hell --

INT. CARGO HOLD

-- am I doing?" The same thing Jonny's thinking, as he uses cargo straps to secure himself in -- hidden behind some equipment crates. But there's no turning back now.

EXT. TARMAC - DAY

The jet lifts off, soaring across the Atlantic. And hopefully, one step closer to finding...

INT. SHADOWY CELL

... Benton Quest. He SNAPS AWAKE. Lying on cold stone. His head swimming. As he tries to shake out the cobwebs...

A VOICE (O.S.)

I was beginning to fear you might never wake up.

BRIGHT LIGHT BLINDS HIM. In it, a silhouette glides toward him. A MAN in a high-tech wheelchair. Meet JEREMIAH SURD.

QUEST

Surd? Is... Is that you?

SURD

It's been too long, Benton. I'd hoped we'd meet under more congenial circumstances, but... Is there anything I can get you? Water? Food?

Quest struggles to sit up.

QUEST

My son... Jeremiah, where is he? Is he alright?

SURD

We don't have him, if that's what you're asking. Though all of this would be easier if we did.

QUEST

What do you want with me?

Surd's chair glides closer.

SURD

You're too smart to play dumb, old friend. You know what I want. I want you to help complete our work.

QUEST

Our work? You can't mean...
(realizes)
You're still looking for it?

Surd simply smiles. Glides toward the door. Its ELECTROMAG LOCKS CLICKING open at his touch.

SURD

When I need you, I know where to find you.

As the door SLAMS SHUT, leaving Quest alone in the dark...

EXT. NETAJI SUBHASH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

... Tires SQUEAL as the I-1 JET touches down, a world away.

SUPER: KOLKATA, INDIA.

It taxis across the runway toward a small cluster of BLACK HUMVEES and INDIAN POLICE SERVICE (I.P.S.) VEHICLES. Local I-1 AGENTS wait beside a squad of INDIAN CONSTABLES.

INT. JET

Owens eyes Race -- still strapped in at the rear -- before turning back to the COMM-DEVICE held in his hand.

OWENS

(low)
I can confirm Bannon. The boy, I don't see. You sure he's aboard?

INTERCUT: CORVIN'S OFFICE

Where Roberts, his suit wrinkled from the sprinklers, sheepishly holds Bandit's leash. On a wall-screen behind him, SECURITY VIDEO shows Jonny slipping onto the jet.

CORVIN

We're sure. Under no circumstances are you to engage them directly. We've instructed our local agents to detain them when you disembark and place them on the next flight back. You are to proceed to the museum as planned. Is that clear?

OWENS

There might be one problem, ma'am.

REVEAL... Race is GONE.

INT. CARGO HOLD

Race moves through the mass of tied-down crates, opening some. Zipping equipment and ammo into his small satchel.

The last crate he opens --

-- is the same one Jonny's sleeping behind. The kid jolts awake, and seeing Race, instantly goes still. But, the agent doesn't see him, hurrying to the rear of the plane, to a HATCH labeled: "LANDING GEAR." As Race climbs in...

Jonny -- hearing commotion from the front -- follows him.

EXT. JET - DAY

As the local I-1 agents gather around the taxiing plane --

Race slips down the landing gear, using a passing luggage cart as cover, stealing quickly across the tarmac.

A beat later, Jonny follows, mimicking Race's every move.

EXT. AIRPORT, MAIN TERMINAL - DAY

Welcome to India. Population 1.136 billion. And only half of them seem to be travelling today. Jonny weaves through the crowd, trying to keep sight of Race amid a sea of travelers and porters. Finally, they arrive at the curb --

Just as the THREE I-1 HUMVEES zoom past, escorted by IPS cruisers, motoring out the airport gate.

Race climbs into one of the countless GYPSY TAXIS waiting curbside. Jonny OVERHEARS him tell the driver:

RACE

(Perfect Hindi)

University Museum, please.

As Race's cab putters out into traffic, Jonny hops into the next cab in line. Tries his best to REPEAT what Race said.

The INDIAN DRIVER stares at him like he's speaking Martian.

JONNY

(frustrated)

How do I just say "Follow that car?"

TAXI DRIVER
 (perfect English)
 "Follow that car."

Beat. Jonny hands him a ten.

EXT. STREETS OF KOLKATA - DAY

The other half of that 1.136 billion are evidently on the road. Cars, buses, mopeds and bicycles crowd the streets, driving fast and passing at will. A symphony of honking horns. The sidewalks are packed with vendors and locals. Stray dogs and livestock laze in the heat or nibble weeds.

It's like nothing Jonny's ever seen. But, right now, he's focused on trying to keep sight of Race's speeding taxi.

JONNY
 You're losing him. Go. Go.

The taxi lurches to a SUDDEN STOP, throwing Jonny forward.

TAXI DRIVER
 Can't go. Cow.

JONNY
 Did you say cow?

It's true. A BRAHMAN COW, its distinctive hump unmistakable, has wandered into the middle of the street. Traffic grinds to a stop to let the animal pass.

TAXI DRIVER
 The Brahman cow is sacred. It is a mortal sin to harm such an animal.

Jonny watches as it pauses to nibble at a tuft of grass.

JONNY
 Is it a mortal sin to hustle up a little? Move it, Big Mac!

Finally, the cow wanders off, and as the taxi zooms on...

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF KOLKATA MUSEUM - DAY

Race's taxi pulls up before the stately structure of Kolkata's University Museum. The Humvees and ISP cars are parked outside. As he mounts the steps and heads in --

Jonny hops out of his taxi on the far side of the street.

INT. MUSEUM - DAY

In contrast to the crowds outside, the inside is deserted. Jonny crosses the rotunda, his steps echoing on the marble floor. Hearing VOICES in the RELIGIOUS RELICS WING...

He enters a dimly lit hall lined with statues. Multi-headed DEMONS carved from black basalt. ANGELS in white sandstone adorned with lotus flowers. And at the far end --

Owens and his team. Entering a door marked: "PRIVATE."

Jonny hurries after them, but just as he reaches the door --

A MUSEUM GUARD appears from a side corridor. On patrol.

Jonny pretends to study some ancient flatware as THE GUARD -- a huge man, almost seven feet -- smiles and continues on.

The second he's gone, Jonny opens the door and slips into --

INT. MUSEUM - BACK ROOM

Antiquities are stored and restored here. Creeping among the crates, Jonny peeks around a statue of Shiva to see...

The I-1 Agents meeting with the museum's CURATOR, a pudgy Indian with an English accent.

CURATOR

... The piece was priceless. The earliest known rendering of the god Brahma -- one of the Triumti, the three ruling gods of Hindu religion. The others being Vishnu and Shiva, of course.

When he says that last name, he motions to the statue Jonny's hiding behind. Jonny ducks, hoping he isn't seen.

OWENS

So, why destroy it and not steal it? What's that get them?

CURATOR

Let me show you what we've pieced together.

He leads them toward the back, where every fragment of the exploded statue has been laid out and categorized on a large work table, like a jigsaw puzzle.

CURATOR

We've done everything we can to reconstitute the artifact. Regrettably, it's beyond repair. However, all the king's horses and all the king's men did find something amid all this debris.

(pause)

There's not enough of it. It's almost three kilos light.

On a computer, he calls up a 3D MODEL made of digital scans of the pieces. His fingers tap the keys as he talks.

CURATOR

It wasn't until we'd scanned the bits and assembled them in the computer that we discovered this:

He subtracts the pieces from the whole to reveal a NEGATIVE SPACE in the center of the statue. Roughly three feet long and narrow, like a SHORT STAFF, but gracefully curved.

CURATOR

There are stories of the gods hiding their icons -- items imbued with their essence -- inside murtis, statues like this, but... It's superstition. What we know for sure is when these men left --

OWENS

This piece left with them.

The curator nods. Leads them to an exit door at the rear.

CURATOR

Come. My office is this way. I'll show you what else we've managed to "unearth"...

The moment they're gone, Jonny slips out of hiding. Using his Quest-Watch, he SCANS the screen, DOWNLOADING the 3D reconstruction. Once it's completed, he turns and runs --

-- RIGHT INTO RACE. This is not the happiest of reunions.

RACE

You're in the wrong hemisphere, kid. What are you doing here?

JONNY
I'm here to find my dad. What are you doing here?

RACE
I'm supposed to be here.

JONNY
That why you left the plane through the landing gear?

Race GRABS Jonny by the ear. Drags him toward the exit.

JONNY
Ow -- wait! If you turn me in, you're turning us both in. They'll put us on the next flight back!

RACE
I call the aisle.

Jonny struggles, but Race throws open the door, and --

INT. SERVICE HALLWAY - DAY

-- FREEZES. The Huge Museum Guard Jonny saw earlier stands in the middle of the darkened corridor with two other GUARDS. SILENCED PISTOLS in their hands. The BODIES of the curator and the entire I-1 team dead at their feet.

Race YANKS Jonny back as -- the guard-assassins OPEN FIRE -- SILENCED SHOTS RIPPING the door off its hinges.

One BURSTS INSIDE -- but Race pulls his gun -- BLAM! BLAM!
-- BLASTING him back into the hall -- Race grabs Jonny --

-- TACKLES him over the work table, two seconds before --

The two other guards BURST IN -- FIRING -- RIDDLING the table -- relic pieces hopping like jumping beans until --

Race EXPLODES UP from beneath it -- HEAVES it onto the guards, knocking them flat, guns sliding across the floor.

The seven-foot giant grabs a HUGE WAR-HAMMER off the wall. SWINGS it at Race -- who ducks -- SMASHING a crate to kindling. ANTIQUE SWORDS spilling out onto the floor.

Race grabs one -- YANKS it out of its scabbard but --

Winds up just holding a handle. No blade attached.

Uh-oh. Race improvises. Grips the handle like brass-knuckles and -- POW! Sends the guard sprawling with a HARD RIGHT HAND. As he and the towering hulk square off...

The other guard -- a weasly little guy -- pulls out a STUN-BATON. Stalking toward Jonny. The kid backs away --

JONNY

Whoa, easy, can't we talk about --

-- ELECTRICITY CRACKLES as the baton SWIPES at him --

Jonny trips back, upending a table that CATAPULTS a BUCKET OF WATER on the guard's head. SPARKS FLY as his baton ELECTROCUTES HIM. He slumps at Jonny's feet.

JONNY

Or, that'll work.

Jonny snatches up the baton, drying it on his shirt as --

Race is SLAMMED back against a stone elephant, the hulk's hands crushing his windpipe. He fumbles at the guard's face -- TEARING a distinctive CHINESE MEDALLION from around the giant's neck. Still he won't let go, until --

ZZT! Jonny ZAPS him with the shock-baton. But instead of stunning him... it only makes the huge man MAD.

RACE

SOARS across the room -- THROWN -- SMASHING through a clay tablet. Jonny hurries to help him up. Dropping the baton.

JONNY

Sorry -- sorry -- that seemed like a good idea...

RACE

Next time, don't help.

Spotting his dropped gun lying nearby, Race grabs it and FIRES at the guard. Driving him back so they can RUN...

EXT. MUSEUM - DAY

... Out the main doors and down the steps. At the street, Race and Jonny spot the LOCAL I-1 AGENTS waiting with the Humvees. The kid starts to SHOUT for them, when --

One OPENS UP with an UZI. Race SHOVES Jonny over the railing at the side of the steps. Vaulting after him --

-- LANDING in a vendor's FRUIT STAND. The man yells obscenities as Race and Jonny leap to their feet, running -- into the street. Cars -- mopeds -- buses -- WHIZ PAST -- Missing them by inches until -- One doesn't. A SCREAM OF BRAKES. A BLUR of YELLOW and GREEN SKIDS to a STOP -- a few feet too late -- KNOCKING Race on his butt.

Luckily, what hit him ain't exactly a Mack Truck. It's an AUTO-RICKSHAW, one of the three-wheel motorcars Indians use as taxis. Half as big as a Mini Cooper with a moped motor.

Staggering to his feet, Race YANKS the driver out and throws Jonny in. Gravel flies as the little car PEELS OUT.

Followed immediately by the THREE HUMVEES, the Museum Guards and Local I-1 Agents piled inside. In pursuit.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

The auto-rickshaw ZIPS through the crowded avenues. Race steers. Jonny holds on for dear life.

JONNY

Why is everybody shooting at us?!?
Those guards, the agents -- aren't they supposed to be the good guys?

RACE

They gotta be plants. Left behind in case we came looking. In case we got too close.

JONNY

To close to what?

RACE

You wanna stop and ask 'em, I can let you out up here. Hold on!

WHAM! The lead Humvee RAMS them from behind, sending the rickshaw fishtailing. Race turns a corner, skidding into --

A NARROW ALLEY

The lead Humvee follows, while the others keep straight, speeding to head them off on the other side.

Race zips between the dumpsters. The Humvee just blasts straight through, demolishing everything in its path. One of the agents leans out the window -- SPRAYING his UZI.

JONNY
Gimmie your gun, I'll shoot back!

RACE
Yeah, okay. You're twelve.

JONNY
And I wanna live to see thirteen!
So, either let me shoot --

He flinches as the rear window SHATTERS.

JONNY
-- Or, you shoot. I'll drive.

RACE
Why don't I just shoot myself?

Steering one-handed, Race leans out to FIRE back at the Humvee. But it's hard to do both and his shots go wide.

Jonny -- seizing the moment -- tries to seize the wheel.

RACE
Kid, I said no.

JONNY
Just for a sec! Just so you can
stop missing so bad!

Race relents. While Jonny takes the pedals and the wheel, he leans out the side. Squeezes off THREE QUICK SHOTS.

The Humvee's windshield spiderwebs. The driver slumps forward and the SUV VEERS SHARPLY TO ONE SIDE -- HITTING A DUMPSTER LIKE A JUMP -- IT VAULTS INTO THE AIR!

TWISTING, SPINNING SIDEWAYS, its HUGE SHADOW covering the tiny rickshaw as it TUMBLES down toward them --

-- LURCHING to a SUDDEN METAL SCREECHING STOP. WEDGED between the narrow walls. The vehicle suspended there. Stuck. Inches above the rickshaw's flimsy canvas roof.

As they zip out from under it, miraculously unscathed, Jonny looks at Race, mouth agape.

RACE
Some of that was luck.

He retakes the wheel as they speed out the end of the alley -- back into the crowded streets -- the two remaining Humvees instantly on their tail. BUMPING and RAMMING them.

JONNY
Can't you go faster?

RACE
If I wasn't carrying so much dead weight. Got anymore bright ideas?

JONNY
Go where they can't!

Jonny yanks the wheel, SWERVING them into --

AN OUTDOOR MARKETPLACE

Laying on the horn as they speed between the vendor's stalls. Shoppers frantically diving out of their way.

RACE
Stop grabbing the wheel.

JONNY
But, we're losing them! Look!

The two Humvees skid to a stop outside. Unable to follow. Then the doors fly open and four of the agents leap out, strapping on HIGH-TECH BACK-PACK DEVICES that look like...

RACE
Are those...

The agents BLAST OFF like missiles. ROCKETING after them.

JONNY
JETPACKS! Dad made some like that!
Never let me play with them though.

RACE
Well, here's your chance!

The jetpacks are on them in a blink. Swarming around the rickshaw like angry wasps. FIRING BURSTS from their UZIS.

JONNY
Race, who are these guys?

Race has no clue. Gunning it down a narrow aisle -- crowds parting like the Red Sea -- he FIRES BACK, but all he hits are rugs, melons, air. They're too fast to draw a bead on.

Then, CLICK. No bullets. Seeing this, an agent zips in close -- aiming his uzi point-blank -- with no ammo, Race does the only thing he can. Reaches out and PUNCHES HIM.

Stunned, the man loses control and CAREENS into a WIND CHIME SHOP. Race and Jonny WINCE as we HEAR -- but do not see -- what happens when you CRASH face-first through a hundred hanging pieces of jagged metal shrapnel.

RACE

Well, that worked.

But there's no time to celebrate as --

JONNY

Race! Help!

ANOTHER AGENT SOARS in on Jonny's side. GRABBING the boy. Pulling him out of the rickshaw. Race tries to pull the kid back in, but -- He's LIFTED OUT. CARRIED UP AND AWAY.

JONNY

RAAAAAAAACE!

RACE

Hang on, kid! Just -- hang on!

But, he's got problems of his own. The last rocketeer is on his tail, PEPPERING the rickshaw with bullets, while --

SOARING THROUGH THE AIR

Jonny struggles -- ELBOWS his abductor -- causing the man to LOSE HIS GRIP -- the boy FALLS, FALLS, FALLS...

OOMP! Landing ten feet below on the top of a FIVE-STORY BUILDING. In the process of being built, it's little more than cement, girders, an elevator, and bamboo scaffolding.

RACE

sees the kid crash down. Speeds toward the building as --

ON THE ROOF

Jonny stumbles to his feet. The jetpack-jockey landing before him. He stalks toward the boy. Backing him to the edge of the roof. Just when it looks like he has Jonny --

DING! The elevator opens and Race's rickshaw SPEEDS OUT.

The rocketeer has just enough time to look surprised before -- WHUMP! -- the car HITS him. Flipping him over the hood to land on the cement roof in a crumpled, unconscious heap.

Race stumbles out of the battered little car.

RACE

You see that? He jumped right out
in front of me.

JONNY

Is that all of them?

-- BULLETS RAKE the roof between them -- the last jet-
packer soaring in, UZI FIRING.

Jonny dives behind some lumber, but Race is caught in the
open. Chased to the edge of the roof, where he LEAPS OFF --

-- GRABS THE BAMBOO SCAFFOLD TEN FEET BELOW. Holding on
for dear life, he dangles four stories above the streets.

Out of bullets, the rocketeer tosses his Uzi. He hovers
above Race. Using the WHITE-HOT EXHAUST from his jetpack
to BURN Race's fingers. Trying to force him to let go.

Jonny watches from the roof above -- powerless to help.

JONNY

Hang on, Race! Hang on!

But Race can't hang on for long. The skin on his knuckles
is starting to turn black. His grip is starting to fail.

With only seconds remaining, Race lets go with one hand,
pulling his last AMMO CLIP out of his pocket. He clicks a
half-dozen bullets into his palm and HEAVES THEM -- UP --

-- Past the rocketeer... rising to their apex and...
falling... three of them landing... PLINK-PLINK-PLINK --

-- in the jetpack's AIR INTAKE. In a blink -- POW! POW!
POW! The bullets go off, BLASTING THREE HOLES out of the
pack's metal hull. Fuel SPURTS OUT in three different
directions -- IGNITING -- spinning the jetpack like a top.

The rocketeer pinwheels out of control. Plummeting to the
to the streets below. Race did it. But... too late.

His grip slips. He FALLS --

JONNY

Grab my leg!

-- BUT JONNY SOARS IN FROM ABOVE, strapped into the second
rocketeer's pack. Race GRABS the kid's leg, holding on as
they rocket across the rooftops. The boy beams.

JONNY

Told you dad built one like these!
I figured -- how hard could it be?

RACE

Good. Great. Now get me down!

JONNY

Down?

Jonny fiddles the controls but -- SNAP! -- the joystick --
damaged by the rickshaw -- BREAKS OFF in his hand. He
can't steer. Or stop. A STONE TEMPLE looms dead ahead...

JONNY

Uh, hang on!

INT. TEMPLE - SAME TIME

A statue of Ganesha, the elephant-head god, stares down at
the HINDU BOY kneeling before it. His name is HADJI SINGH,
12, as devout and poor as they come. But not only Ganesha
watches him. The PANDIT, the temple priest, does as well.

PANDIT

(Hindi, subtitled)
Here again, Hadji? Morning, noon
and night. You are here almost
more often than I am. What do you
hope Ganesha will finally grant
you? Wisdom? Fortune?

HADJI

(Hindi, subtitled)
Purpose.

PANDIT

(laughs)
Purpose? What do you think, a sign
if just going to fall out of the --

-- CRASH! Race and Jonny SMASH IN through one window, ZOOM
across the temple, and SMASH OUT through the opposite one --

PANDIT

-- heavens?

Hadji and the Pandit trade looks. As the boy runs out the
door after them, the holy man begs Ganesha for forgiveness.

EXT. TEMPLE

Having landed in a pile of trash, Race and Jonny find themselves in a walled-in cul-de-sac. LOCALS gather, having seen the crash. As the two struggle to stand --

The two Humvees SKID to a stop at the end of the street, blocking them in. Agents emerge, led by the huge guard.

JONNY

What do we do now?

RACE

Pray for a miracle?

Hadji watches from the temple steps as the assassins aim their guns. It looks Race and Jonny are dead meat, until --

JONNY

Cows!

A HERD OF BRAHMAN COWS emerges from a gate, driven out by their owner, crossing right between them and the assassins.

All the locals -- pedestrians, bicyclists -- stop for the sacred animals to pass. But the assassins just OPEN FIRE. Shooting at their hooves. Trying to get them to disperse.

Hadji and the other Hindus are SHOCKED by this sacrilegious act, but they can only watch as the cows RUN. STAMPEDING.

Cattle and bullets whizzing past, Race and Jonny take cover behind a vegetable cart. Seeing a spindly-legged CALF caught in the open -- separated from its mother -- mewling in fear as bullets ricochet around it, Jonny darts back out and pulls it to safety. Telling the little cow to --

JONNY

Stay down!

SEEING THIS, Hadji knows exactly what he has to do.

HADJI

This way! Quickly! Come! Come!

He WAVES to Race and Jonny. With no other options -- and the assassins stuck amid the cattle -- they sprint across the street -- following Hadji through an archway and into --

A HIGH-WALLED COURTYARD. Another dead-end.

But, the Hindu boy pulls a coil of ROPE from his knapsack. Closing his eyes for a moment, he seems to CONCENTRATE.

Focusing. He heaves the rope up the wall, where it WINDS around a stone outcropping, seemingly of its own accord.

In a blink, he scurries up it and vanishes over the wall. Jonny and Race exchange a look. Impressed.

JONNY

How do we know we can trust him?

RACE

We don't. Go.

As Jonny grabs the rope, scrambling up --

-- The assassins BURST into the courtyard. Finding it... EMPTY. ON the giant Guard, eyes BURNING with rage, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KOLKATA SLUMS - SUNSET

The sun sinks below the skyline. Rain patters down as Hadji leads Race and Jonny through a maze of shacks and shanties. The poorest of India's poor live here.

HADJI

This way. You will be safe here.

JONNY

(to Race, low)

Why's he helping us? You think he's working for them?

Hadji pulls aside a tattered curtain, revealing a doorway.

JONNY

You think it's a trap?

INT. HADJI'S HOME - NIGHT

At the sight of the tiny hovel Hadji calls home, Jonny feels awful for even thinking that. It's decorated with an old cot, a small shrine, and little else. Yet, despite his poverty, Hadji welcomes them with warmth.

HADJI

Come in, please. The men who are looking for you will not find you here. Not soon.

JONNY

You live here?

(realizing how that sounded)

Sorry, I didn't --

HADJI

Do not apologize. It isn't much,
no, but it does keep out the rain.

A leak drizzles on Race's head.

HADJI

Mostly. My name is Hadji Singh.
You are welcome to my home and any
help I can give you.

JONNY

I'm Jonny. That's Race. You saved
our lives back there, Hadji.

HADJI

Namaste, Jonny. *Namaste*, Race. It
was my honor. Those men seemed
quite dangerous.

JONNY

So why'd you do it? They could've
come after you too.

HADJI

Karma.

(off Jonny's confused look)
If we sow goodness, we shall reap
goodness. Those men committed a
grave sin in harming our sacred
Brahman. Yet you risked your life
to save one. I could not stand by
and do nothing to help save you.

Jonny's never heard a kid his age talk like this.
Especially one with so little. He's amazed. And shamed.

JONNY

Well... thanks.

HADJI

Thank the gods for putting me on
your path. Now, is there anything
else you need?

Race finally speaks up, emptying his satchel on the floor.

RACE

I need light. Tools. And whatever
aluminum foil you can find.

INT. HADJI'S HOME - LATER

By the light of an old oil lamp, Race has all his electronic equipment spread out on the floor -- sat-phone, earwig, etc. -- in various states of disassembly.

Using a butter-knife, Race pops a CHIP out of the circuit board of his tablet PC. Places it inside a scrap of aluminum foil, several other chips already wrapped inside.

He picks up a cast-iron skillet and BASHES the foil flat.

RACE

(holding out a hand to Jonny)
Gimme your watch.

JONNY

Are you kidding? I'm not letting your skillet near my stuff.

RACE

We gotta go dark, kid. GPS, cellular, radio, we gotta remove and disable anything that might give away our location. It's the first thing they'll sweep for.

Reluctantly, he hands it over. Race pops the watch open.

JONNY

But if we "go dark," how's I-1 gonna find us?

RACE

They aren't. If our local agents are in on this -- and based on them trying to kill us, I'd say that's a possibility -- we can't be sure the entire agency hasn't been compromised.

JONNY

So, we're gonna have to find my dad ourselves?

RACE

"We"? No. There is no "we".

JONNY

But, you just said I-1 might be compromised. The only place I'll be safe is with --

RACE
I said "no."

JONNY
He's my dad. I'm not gonna just
sit here and... do nothing! I'M
NOT GONNA LET THEM TAKE HIM TOO!

Jonny didn't mean for all that to come out. Not to Race. Embarrassed, he moves to the window. Stares at the rain.

JONNY
He's the only family I have left.

Race is just as uncomfortable. He wasn't trained for this.

RACE
Kid, I know this has to be hard for
you, but... You're twelve.

JONNY
I was nine when I lost mom.

*GLASS SHATTERS -- THE WINDOW EXPLODES IN -- but, we're not
in Hadji's hovel anymore, we're...*

INT. QUEST HOME - THREE YEARS AGO

*An idyllic home, shattered as ARMED MEN IN BLACK GEAR and
BALACLAVAS KICK in the doors -- CRASH through the windows --*

*NINE-YEAR-OLD JONNY -- looking so much younger and smaller
than now -- snaps awake in bed. GUNFIRE SPRAYS his bedroom
door -- a dozen holes of light blasting in --*

*Then the door flies open and a BLONDE WOMAN appears. We
can instantly tell -- from the fear and love in her eyes --
this is Jonny's MOTHER. BENTON QUEST is right behind her,
helping her scoop up their son. The three of them run --*

*Out a side-door -- down the back stairs -- black clad men
chasing them, FIRING -- they race for the back door, but...*

Not all of them make it.

*Looking over Quest's shoulder as he's carried away, Jonny
sees his mom lying on the tile. Still. He CRIES OUT --*

-- SNAPPING OUT OF HIS REVERIE. Shaken. Blinking tears.

JONNY

I couldn't save her then. I
couldn't do anything to stop it.
But... I'm not nine anymore.

Race sympathizes -- he sincerely does --

RACE

But, you're still just a kid.

JONNY

A kid who saved your butt with that
jetpack. I can help, Race. I can
do stuff. Look -- look what I took
from the museum.

He grabs back his Quest-Watch. Uses it to project a
HOLOGRAM of the ARTIFACT PIECE in the air before them. Up
close, they can see it's covered with ancient Hindu script.

RACE

Now, if you can just tell me what
that is, I'll really be impressed.

Jonny can't, but --

HADJI (O.S.)

It is the Bow of Brahma.

Hadji stands in the doorway, a bundle of clothing in his
arms. How long has he been there? The Hindu turns red.

HADJI

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to
eavesdrop. I've found the clothes
I promised to help you blend in --

JONNY

Wait, you know what this is? How?

HADJI

I've spent my life studying the
ancient scriptures. It is one of
the four icons of Brahma. The
others being the arrow. The lotus.
And the scepter. I'll show you.

Hadji pulls a bundle of dusty scrolls from beneath his cot.
Unrolling one, he shows them an ancient depiction of BRAHMA
holding A BOW, identical in curvature and size to the
hologram of the artifact piece. His three other hands hold
an arrow, a scepter, and a lotus flower.

HADJI

It is written in the Vedas -- our oldest and most sacred texts -- that these four icons may be used in conjunction to commune with the gods, and even to "set free their power." Precisely what that means, I can't say. I don't know. But...

(looking up)

The men who took this, they took your father too?

Jonny nods.

HADJI

Then I have been put on your path for a reason. I am meant to help you. To go with you. Why else would the gods bring us together?

The two boys look at Race. Race does not look happy.

RACE

No. No way. I am not taking one kid, and I am definitely, absolutely not taking two.

CUT TO:

EXT. KOLKATA HARBOR - NIGHT

Race, disguised in the clothes Hadji found, makes his way along the docks. He still does not look happy. Behind him, we see the reason... Jonny and Hadji hurrying after.

JONNY

So, where are we going?

Race tosses him a CHAIN. The same chain he yanked off the massive Museum Guard. Dangling with its CHINESE MEDALLION.

RACE

It's called a "life-bet." Basically, it's a bet you make on yourself, wagering you'll be alive, one year later, to collect. You die, they don't pay. And most of the time, they don't pay. I pulled it off that giant guard. Only one place in the world you can get one.

HADJI

What kind of place would accept
such a wager?

RACE

It ain't Disneyland.

A BARNACLE-CRUSTED SUPPLY SHIP is moored at the end of the pier. Race approaches a CHINESE SAILOR. Slips him money.

RACE

(Cantonese, subtitled)
One adult. Two kids.

The sailor nods, and as the three start up the gangplank...

Race hits a key on his I-1-Phone. It flashes TRANSMISSION SENT. He throws it as far as he can. SPLASH.

INT. INTELLIGENCE ONE - CORVIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Corvin is on the warpath. Roberts winces with every word.

CORVIN

An entire field office hit! Our
best team wiped out! Now, we've
lost two Quests for the price of
one! And we can't find either?

The door opens, the Nerdy Agent entering.

ROBERTS

God, I hope this is good news.

NERDY AGENT

Ma'am, we just received a flash
transmission from one of our
listening posts in Nepal. On the
encrypted emergency channel.

He passes her a SLATE PC. She scans --

CORVIN

Bannon's alive. And the kid.

ROBERTS

Where? When are they coming in?

She hands him the slate. As Roberts reads it, his face FALLS. He quickly ushers the Nerdy Agent out, leaving Corvin alone to brood. After a beat, she hears a WHINE...

... It's Bandit. His leash tied to the leg of her desk.

CORVIN

What do you want, you little mutt?

Bandit nuzzles her hand. Despite herself, Corvin softens.

CORVIN

(a sigh)

I know, boy... I just want them
home safe, too.

INT. QUEST'S CELL - DAY? / NIGHT?

A FOOD TRAY lies on the floor -- the food untouched -- but, the steel plate, the cup, the utensils -- they've all been bent, broken, taken apart to create...

TOOLS. SPARKS FLASH as Quest uses his makeshift pliers to short-circuit the electro-mag lock. The door CLICKS open.

INT. CORRIDOR

Quest peers into the passage. Deserted. Pipes dripping onto cracked cement. He sneaks out, rounds a corner and --

-- DUCKS BACK. Barely avoiding being seen by TWO GUARDS, stationed outside a LARGE DOOR.

Thinking fast, he moves to a nearby FUSE BOX. Using his tools to do some quick rewiring.

AROUND THE CORNER, a LIGHT BULB -- further down the hall -- suddenly GLOWS BRIGHTER. BRIGHTER. Too much current running into it, until it EXPLODES in a shower of sparks.

As the guards investigate... Quest slips through the large door and into --

INT. SURD'S LAB

A laboratory to rival even Palm Key. Quest moves quickly to a bank of computers. Fingers flying over the keys, he tries to access an outside connection, but the screen FLASHES RED: "ERROR: No outside connection available."

Quest is about to move on, when he notices -- every one of the workstations is running the same program. A BRUTE-FORCE ENCRYPTION CRACKER, columns of numbers spinning like slot-machine wheels... trying to solve a 512-bit cipher.

Curious, he follows their hard-lines to...

... that same WATER-TIGHT CRATE he saw the frogmen use on Palm Key. It's open now, and inside it...

HIS GEODIDE RAY. That's what they took from Palm Key. That's the code they're trying to crack. And beyond it, in the path of its emitter, Quest discovers...

A VACUUM CONTAINMENT BOX. Like a high-tech coffin made from steel and Plexiglas. Humming ominously. We don't see what lies inside it -- just a glimpse of STONE and BONE, but whatever it is... it makes Dr. Quest's eyes GO WIDE...

Before he can learn anything else -- the lab door opens --

SURD

Contain him!

-- Surd. Flanked by his guards. Quest FLEES through the lab tables -- pausing to grab -- one, two chemical bottles from the shelves. He pours one bottle into the other and --

SMOKE ERUPTS OUT -- engulfing Quest and the guards in a SMOKE SCREEN... Using it for cover, Benton dashes past --

INT. CORRIDOR

-- back into the hall -- ALARMS WAILING behind him, Quest RUNS -- sprints around a corner -- sees ahead -- A DOOR --

Quest yanks it open, blinded by DAYLIGHT. Runs through --

Right into the barrel of an AUTO-PISTOL aimed by KORCHEK.

SMASH TO:

QUEST -- thrown back into his cell -- landing hard on the cement. Korchek strides in next. Surd gliding in behind.

SURD

It was a momentary lapse. I assure you, I have him under control.

He may be caught, but Benton Quest is hardly under control.

QUEST

Whatever you need the Geodide for, you'll never get it. You can run your computers a hundred years, you will never break the cipher.

KORCHEK

(to Surd)

No more half measures, doctor. No more delays. If you can't break the cipher, break him.

Korchek goes. Leaving Surd and Quest alone.

SURD

I never wanted it to come to this,
Benton. But, you've left me little
choice. Now, you will either give
me that code...

TWO ASSISTANTS enter, wheeling in a grisly DEVICE studded
with blades, syringes, and electrodes. A TORTURE MACHINE.

SURD

Or, I will have to persuade you.

But Benton Quest is unafraid.

QUEST

I saw it, Jeremiah. I know you
aren't "still looking for it."
You've found it, haven't you?
You've found The Brahmastra, and
now you're trying to set it free.
(hard as steel)
I will die before I help you.

SURD

Old friend, I sincerely hope not.

As the machine wheels closer, its arms WHIRRING to life...

EXT. SOUTH CHINA SEA - NIGHT

The supply ship motors through ten-foot swells. Gripping
the rail, Jonny spots a shape amid the waves. An OIL RIG.

SUPER: 13 MILES OFF THE COAST OF HONG KONG.
JUST INSIDE INTERNATIONAL WATERS.

INT. OIL RIG - NIGHT

The sound of music echoes. Music and mayhem. Jonny and
Hadji follow Race along a dark, dank catwalk.

JONNY

There's someone here who can help
us? You're sure?

RACE

Help us or kill us. That much I'm
sure of.

Ahead, they see a MASSIVE DOOR. But, the ASIAN BOUNCER
next to it is even more massive. Seeing Race, he grins.

RACE

Long time, Fung. Hong-Wei not working tonight?

BOUNCER

He was.

He nods toward two men, dumping a BODY over the railing into the sea below. Jonny and Hadji trade shocked looks.

BOUNCER

These two with you?

Race sighs. Nods.

RACE

She already know I'm here?

The Bouncer gives him a look: "What do you think?" He opens the doors, admitting them into...

INT. THE SEEDIEST BAR ON THE SEVEN SEAS

Crawling with killers, pirates, and prostitutes. They see faro games. Scorpion fights. Opium pipes. It's dark enough to be dangerous. Loud enough to drown out a scream.

HADJI

My goodness, this place is...

JONNY

... The awesomest place ever.

Race sits the kids down on some stools.

RACE

Now, don't talk to anyone. Don't even make eye-contact. If I'm not back in ten minutes... Well, let's hope I'm back in ten minutes.

JONNY

Who's this "she" you're meeting?
Is that her?

An albino prostitute, draped with an albino python, flicks her tongue at them. Race turns Jonny's head back --

RACE

Stay here and stay outta trouble.

He goes. Hadji eyes the insanity around them, concerned.

HADJI
How, precisely?

AT THE FAR SIDE OF THE BAR

Race makes his way through the crowd to a secluded corner cloaked in shadows, where... A WOMAN sits at a table lit by candle nubs. Pitch black hair and emerald green eyes.

Race slides into a seat, wearing his most charming smile.

RACE
You look good, Jade. It's been --

JADE
"Too long?" The day after the day you died wouldn't be "too long."

Even angry, JADE is nothing short of spectacular. She wears leather and not much of it, but the most striking thing about her is around her neck. She wears not one, but NINE life-bet medallions. Clearly, Jade is a survivor.

RACE
Listen, I know how we left things wasn't... ideal.

JADE
Things? You left me. With no papers. No gun. And half the Cuban Army kicking in the door!

RACE
Whoa, hold on. I left you? You left me! With no bullets. And the other half of the Cuban Army --

THUCK! She stabs a TEN-INCH BOWIE KNIFE into the table.

JADE
Let's cut the pleasantries.

RACE
Those were pleasantries?

JADE
Why are you here?

BACK AT THE OTHER CORNER

A ONE-EYED WAITRESS stares down Jonny and Hadji.

JONNY

What do you mean, you "have to see
our I.D.'s?" Have you seen where
you work?

She leaves, rolling her eye. Jonny's frustrated. Hadji,
on the other hand, is keeping a nervous lookout for Race.

HADJI

What do you think is keeping him?
Should we go look?

JONNY

No way. Every time I don't stay
where Race tells me to, bad stuff
happens. This time -- no matter
what -- I am staying right here.

A GLEAMING HOOK taps his shoulder. Charles Manson's twin
brother looms over him. Teeth filed down to knife-points.

NIGHTMARE JOE

You're on my stool.

BACK WITH RACE AND JADE

The huge guard's medallion lies on the table between them.

JADE

I might know who you're looking
for. I might even be able to take
you to them. But you still haven't
given me one good reason I should.

JONNY (O.S.)

RAAAAAAAAAACE!!!

RACE

(sighs)
How about two?

JONNY AND HADJI SCREAM --

THROWN THROUGH THE AIR -- Jonny LANDS in the middle of a
faro game -- Hadji PLUMMETS into the SCORPION FIGHT PIT --
his face landing inches from the Mike Tyson of arthropods.

It HISSES -- Hadji SHRIEKS -- scrambling for safety as --

-- Jonny backs away from the angry gamblers. Apologizing.

JONNY

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry...

Accidentally BUMPING into a guy about to throw a dart --
 -- his throw goes wide -- STICKING into a SAILOR'S tattooed
 arm -- causing the man to SPIT whiskey at -- -- a man
LIGHTING a CIGAR, whose shirt instantly BURSTS into FLAMES.

And that's when things get bad. You've heard of bar
 fights? This turns into a BAR WAR. Guns. Knives. Bombs.

Jonny and Hadji are stuck in the middle of the chaos
 they've created -- until Race GRABS them both by the ears.

JONNY

This was almost not our fault!

Irate, Race starts to lead them out when --

-- NIGHTMARE JOE comes out of nowhere, flanked by two of
 his UGLIER FLUNKIES. Surrounding them. Joe's HOOK
 SLASHING -- Race reaches for his gun, but he's too slow --

THUNK! A BOWIE KNIFE SPEARS JOE SQUARE IN THE SHOULDER.

A BLUR of CURVES and LEATHER FLASHES out of the shadows,
 blasting the thugs with fast, brutal KICKS -- most of them
 to the groin. As the three men crumple around her, Jade
 bends down and yanks out her knife. We hear Joe WHIMPER.

JADE

Walk it off, sissy.

And she's gone. Jonny and Hadji's chins are on the floor.

HADJI

Who was that?

JADE (O.S.)

You coming or not, Roger?

JONNY

"Roger?"

Race gives him a look -- don't -- and they hurry off to...

EXT. OIL RIG - NIGHT

Jade storms down some rusty stairs, heading for sea-level.

JADE

Nothing changes. I'm with you two
 minutes and trouble finds me.
 Whatever you're into, count me out.

RACE

If this were just about me, Jade, I wouldn't ask. You know that.

She looks back at the boys. Jonny meets her eyes, earnest.

JONNY

These guys took my dad. If you can help us find them, we'll do anything. Please.

Jade considers.

JADE

Anything?

EXT. JADE'S JUNK - NIGHT

A rusty, ragged old ship in the Chinese tradition cuts through the waves. But inside the ancient exterior --

INT. JADE'S JUNK - HELM

-- beats the heart of a speed demon. Decked out with the latest black market gear, this boat has it where it counts.

Jade steers with expert ease, alone at the wheel, while...

IN THE GALLEY BELOW DECK

... Jonny stares, slack-jawed, at the tallest, filthiest heap of DIRTY DISHES we've ever seen.

JONNY

You've gotta be kidding me.

RACE

Jade is many things. A good homemaker ain't one of them.
(rolling up his sleeves)
Come on, I'll wash, you two dry.

They set to work. Jonny very reluctantly.

JONNY

What's the deal with you and her, anyway? Is she your girlfriend? Uh-oh, I think "Roger's" blushi--

A wet towel HITS Jonny right in the kisser. But, Race knows the kid isn't going to let this drop.

RACE

All I'm gonna say is... sometimes
love hurts.

He shows them an OLD, NASTY SCAR at the nape of his neck.

RACE

Sometimes love uses a paring knife.

Jonny and Hadji exchange a look -- adults are insane --
then quietly, awkwardly return to dish drying.

EXT. OPEN OCEAN - NIGHT

A BUOY reads: DANGER! RESTRICTED ZONE! It bobs on the
wake from Jade's junk as it glides silently past, toward...

MOY TU

A tiny tropical island, thick with dark forbidding jungle.

INT. JUNK HELM - NIGHT

Race, Jonny and Hadji stand beside Jade, peering out at it.

JONNY

This is it? It looks deserted.

JADE

If they haven't moved on, the men
you want are here. Somewhere.

Race pulls Jade aside.

RACE

One last favor. Watch these two
while I go ashore? Check it out?

JONNY

What? No -- I'm going with you --

But, Race holds up a hand to silence him. Jade nods.

JADE

But if you're not back by dawn, I
throw the Hardy Boys overboard.

RACE

That's more than fair.

Jonny is apoplectic -- "Hey! Wait! Guys?" -- but they
ignore him, heading up onto deck. Jonny turns to Hadji.

JONNY
 You believe this, Hadji? We've
 gotta stay here with her?

HADJI
 (deeply smitten)
 I can't believe our luck.

EXT. JADE'S JUNK - ON DECK - NIGHT

Race zips up his wetsuit, checks his gear -- dive knife,
 flares, walkie-talkie... He's clearly done this before.

Jade studies him. Clearly, she's done that before, too.

JADE
 I hate to set feminism back fifty
 years, but... be careful out
 there, okay? From what I've heard
 about this island, it's inhabited.

RACE
 That's what I'm counting on.

JADE
 I don't mean the men you're looking
 for, Roger. Watch your back.

He will. As she sashays back inside, he tips back over the
 rail and SPLASHES into the water below.

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Humid ferns sway eerily in the breeze. Race makes his way
 through the underbrush, quiet as a ghost. Eyes scanning.

He spots some TRACKS in the mud. Human, but small.
Barefoot. Before he can figure out what they mean... A
 SOUND makes him freeze.

A HUM. Growing nearer, louder. Race hits the deck as --

A HOVERCRAFT

zooms out of the trees, skimming across the jungle. It's
 some kind of next-gen anti-grav setup. TWO MEN inside --
 pilot, gunner -- anonymous in their night-vision headsets.

Watching it zip past, Race hastens after it, arriving at...

THE EDGE OF A CLEARING

... Where he finds MEN. Six or seven. ARMED with high-tech rifles. Patrolling the mouth of an OLD MINE. As the hovercraft disappears inside... Race quickly slips away.

INT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Away from the mine, Race moves fast, on his WALKIE-TALKIE:

RACE

A half-dozen men outside. No way to tell inside. Gear, guns -- all cutting edge. Whoever's funding these guys has some deep pockets.

(STATIC on the walkie)

Jade? You get that? Do you copy?

STATIC answers back. Race jiggles the thing, peeved.

RACE

They get a hovercraft, I get this piece of --

He stops, mid-word, as a SPEAR pokes out of the brush, pointed directly at his crotch. The man holding it is four feet tall and tattooed. A PO-HO. One of the island's natives. He smiles at Race. Flanked by ten brothers.

RACE

-- Crap.

As Race slowly -- carefully -- puts up his hands...

EXT. JUNGLE PATH - NIGHT

Chattering in Po-Ho-ese, the natives shove Race along a path, stripped of his gear and gun. One keeps jabbing him with a spear and Race just smiles back at him. Jovial.

RACE

Stick me with that thing one more time, little buddy, and I'll stick it where the sun don't shine.

The native giggles, then jabs him again. They lead Race through a grove of banyan trees, into...

THE PO-HO VILLAGE

A small cluster of thatched huts, hung with animal skins.

The warriors force Race to his knees before the PO-HO CHIEF. A chubby native with a toothy grin.

They dump his gear in the mud between them, and Race -- seeing one of his FLARES roll out of his dive bag -- seizes his chance --

He SNATCHES it, holding the flare up as the Po-Ho surround him, shouting excitedly, waving their spears.

RACE

You see this? Yeah? You watching?

He swipes the flare on the chief's throne and -- FOOSH! -- it BLAZES to life, illuminating the village with its glow.

RACE

(VOICE BOOMING)

I AM A GREAT AND POWERFUL GOD. I
MAKE FIRE FROM NOTHING. IF YOU
DISPLEASE ME, I SHALL STRIKE YOU --

The chief pulls a ZIPPO out of his loincloth and flicks it on. He laughs. The other Po-Ho laugh. Even Race laughs.

SMASH CUT TO:

RACE, arms flailing, falling through space to land -- SPLASH! At the bottom of a TWENTY-FOOT PIT. His flare fizzles out as it sinks into the fetid muck.

He's surprised to see... Jonny, Hadji and Jade. They've been here a while. Jonny holds up a dead flare.

JONNY

You try the god thing, too?

INT. PIT - LATER

Race and Jade square off in the mud, yelling at each other.

RACE

I told you to stay on the boat.
Not get captured by a bunch of
tattooed Tattoos!

JADE

I'm not alone in this pit, pal!

While they continue to fight, Jonny and Hadji are studying the walls. Trying to find a way out. It's a natural pit, the walls made of mud and mossy stone. Too slick to climb.

JONNY

There's gotta be a way outta here.

He feels the wall for hand-holds. Hadji watches him, until, the kid puts his weight on a mossy section and --
-- abruptly VANISHES.

JONNY (O.S.)
I think I found something.

At the spot where he vanished, Hadji finds... A BOY-SHAPED HOLE, overgrown with moss. A PASSAGE. Jonny pops out.

JONNY
I think it goes pretty far. Come on, it might lead out.

HADJI
Shouldn't we tell them?

But, Jonny's already gone. As Hadji ducks in after him...

RACE
Keep an eye on the kids, that's all you had to do. How hard is that?

He notices he and Jade are alone in the pit.

JADE
You were saying?

INT. PIT - PASSAGE - NIGHT

Lighting the path with his Quest-Watch, Jonny and Hadji follow the passage into a LARGE CAVE. The floor is covered with heaps of stones, the remains of a rock slide, and fifteen feet up the wall, LIGHT FILTERS IN from an OPENING.

A WAY OUT. But there's no way to reach it. Jonny starts piling stones, trying to make a heap high enough to climb.

JONNY
Help me, Hadj. If we pile enough, maybe we can -- UGH! -- climb out.

But Hadji isn't listening. Focused instead on the wall of the cave. He moves to it -- drawn to it -- a faraway look in his eyes. His hands tearing away the moss to REVEAL...

SYMBOLS. Carved into the stone. SANSKRIT.

HADJI
(softly)
Sim...

As he speaks the first word, a strange feeling washes over him. An unnatural stillness. Like some kind of trance. His breathing slows. His heartbeat slows. Total focus.

HADJI

Sim... sim...

WIND STIRS around him, lifting his hair. The mud around his ankles starts to RIPPLE and RETREAT. As if by magic.

HADJI

Sim... sim... sala bim...

His feet suddenly rise off the ground. His body lifts by some invisible force. One foot. Two feet. His concentration profound, Hadji RISES HIGHER. And HIGHER...

JONNY

You gonna help me? Hadji?

Jonny turns to look. A heavy stone falling from his hands.

HADJI HOVERS -- LEVITATES -- FIFTEEN FEET ABOVE THE GROUND.

JONNY

HADJI!

Jonny's voice SNAPS him out of his trance and -- Hadji starts to FALL -- GRABBING the ledge, he PULLS himself to safety. His heart pounding. Just as SHOCKED as Jonny.

JONNY

How did you... Did you *just*...

RACE (O.S.)

How'd you get up there?

They turn to see Race and Jade emerging from the passage. Hadji looks into Jonny's eyes -- begging him not to tell. He can't understand why, but this is a secret.

JONNY

(covering)

I... gave him a boost. Let's just find a way to get us up there too.

HADJI

I've found something that may help.

A ROPE UNCOILS from above. Again, Race, Jade, impressed.

JADE

Where'd he get --

JONNY

Don't ask. Climb.

As she shimmies up the rope...

... JONNY PULLS HIMSELF ONTO THE LEDGE. The last one up. He joins the others in a TUNNEL reinforced with wooden beams. Old pickaxes and pushcart tracks line the ground.

The ledge has led them INSIDE THE MINE.

The light they saw from below wasn't sunlight... It's coming from further along the tunnel. As Race and Jade go to investigate, Jonny holds Hadji back, out of earshot.

JONNY

How did you do that? I've never seen anything like that before!

HADJI

I don't know. I swear. I've never done anything like that before.

But, it's obvious that Hadji is holding something back. He decides to trust Jonny -- the first person he ever has.

HADJI

My grandfather was... a kind of priest. A scholar of the old ways. He told me stories of men -- of gurus -- who could do astonishing things. Impossible things.

JONNY

More impossible than that?

HADJI

I thought they were just stories. Until, I spied on him during his meditation one day. I saw him in a trance. Floating six centimeters above the floor.

(quick, getting it all out)

When he grew ill, he passed his knowledge on to me. Through meditation -- focus -- he taught me to unlock the potential hidden in all of us. To do things that seem impossible. I've spent my life practicing. But all I've ever been able to do are... Little things. Lifting a pebble. Coiling a rope.

JONNY

Like you did back in Calcutta?

HADJI

This time, it was different. I can't explain it, but somehow... for a moment... It's like the door to my mind was thrown wide open.

The boy is clearly unnerved by this. And he's not alone.

JONNY

What does that mean?

HADJI

I think there's something of great power down here, Jonny. Something we were never meant to find.

Spooked, the kids hurry to where the tunnel opens into a larger one, strung with FLUORESCENT LIGHTS. Race and Jade have found some EMPTY CRATES for modern mining equipment.

JADE

Must belong to the guys you saw up top. What do you think they were digging for down here?

Suddenly... A HIGH-PITCHED HUM. Everybody HIDES as --

A HOVERCRAFT hurtles past, zooming deeper into the mine.

RACE

Only one way to find out.

INT. CATHEDRAL CAVERN

The tunnel opens onto a ledge, overlooking an enormous natural cave. And far, far below...

They see Kleig lights. Generators. Machinery. The abandoned remains of an ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG SITE. At the far wall, a TOWERING STONE STRUCTURE has been partially excavated from the rock. The entrance to an ancient Hindu CAVE TEMPLE, every inch covered with intricate carvings.

The sheer scale is breathtaking. But, all they can see from here is the exterior.

RACE

Come on. Let's get a closer look.

INT. DIG SITE - MOMENTS LATER

Skirting the edge of the light, Race, Jonny, Jade and Hadji steal across the cavern floor.

A LONE GUARD stands stationed on the temple steps. But he seems far more wary of the temple itself than anything outside it. Which allows Race to GRAB HIM in a Judo-choke and quietly drag his unconscious body into the shadows.

Taking his rifle, Race leads the team up the steps into...

INT. TEMPLE

Hewn in its entirety from the cavern wall, the interior of this sacred structure is dark as a cave and quiet as a tomb. Lights have been set-up to illuminate some of the intricately carved walls. But otherwise, it is deserted.

JONNY

What is this place? A tomb? A temple?

He treads further, through a curtain of cobwebs, to find --

A VISION OF HORROR. A GROTESQUE MAN, four arms and four heads. Hands grasping, mouths twisted in SILENT SCREAMS.

Jonny almost jumps out of his skin, until he realizes it's a RELIEF carved into the stone wall. He's stumbled into...

HALL OF LOST SOULS

Every inch of it covered with these figures, HUNDREDS of them. Bodies intertwined, like some macabre version of the Kama Sutra. Eerie in the flickering, fluorescent lights.

JADE

What are they?

HADJI

Rakshasas. Demons born from the foot of the god Brahma. They're used for protection.

RACE

From what?

HADJI

Death. But, I've never seen so many in one place before.

Unnerved, Jonny keeps a close eye on the stone demons as they squeeze past, emerging into...

SANCTUM SANCTORUM

The temple's inner-most chamber, a cavernous vault. Its walls covered with intricate carvings, draped in cobwebs.

TWO MASSIVE STONE STATUES -- *murtis* -- of the gods Shiva and Vishnu flank the entrance. In the center sits an equally massive STATUE of BRAHMA made entirely from GOLD.

At his feet rests an ORNATELY CARVED GOLDEN SARCOPHAGUS. Its lid removed, it is empty inside. Archeological tools littered around it. Curious, Jonny reaches out to it --

HADJI
DON'T TOUCH THAT.

Jonny yanks his hand back like he almost touched hot lava.

HADJI
You were right, Jonny. I didn't recognize it at first, but this is a tomb. And a temple. Look...

He leads them to the wall, pulling down some of the cobwebs so they can see the reliefs. The GODS, giant and aloof, stand surrounded by SMALLER FIGURES gathered at their feet.

HADJI
The Vedas tell us that, long ago, the gods used to involve themselves in man's affairs. They taught him their worship. Their secrets. Even gave him gifts. The most prized of these were their weapons. And the most powerful of all was the one bestowed by Brahma.
(a whisper)
The Brahmastra.

In the next carving, the god of the golden statue passes a LIGHTNING BOLT to a TINY MAN. Arrayed around them are the FOUR ICONS. The lotus. The scepter. The arrow. The bow.

JONNY
The Bow? And the other icons? Is this Brahma-thing the "power of the gods" you said they could set free?

HADJI

I'd always believed it was only a legend, but... It must be, Jonny.

He leads them to the next relief, where this man is shown unleashing the lightning bolt. It arcs across the skies.

HADJI

It is said the Brahmastra was used only once. And where it struck -- "light shone, brighter than a thousand suns shining together. And from it, there arose a majestic cloud of light and dust that swept across the land. Where it passed, there survived no plant, no animal, no man. It blackened the skies. Boiled the oceans. Plunged the world into thirty years of famine."

RACE

Every culture has hocus-pocus crap like that. How's this any different?

Hadji pulls down the last of the webs to reveal a startling image, carved thousands of years ago, but still unmistakable: **AN ANCIENT DEPICTION OF A NUCLEAR DETONATION.**

The distinctive mushroom-shaped cloud of smoke rising. And beneath it, nothing but destruction. Devastation. Death.

JONNY

It's some ancient nuclear weapon?

HADJI

More powerful than all our nuclear weapons put together. So powerful, it was hidden away to ensure it would never be used again.

JADE

Wait, you're saying this weapon was hidden... here? Then where is it?

All of their eyes turn toward the empty sarcophagus. But, before anyone can speak -- SHADOWS flicker from the entrance. VOICES. Everyone quickly hides where they can --

Race and Jade duck behind the Shiva statue at the back of the chamber. But Jonny and Hadji are caught in the open. Forced to hunker down next to the golden Brahma. Just as --

ARMED GUARDS ENTER, and striding amid them...

THEIR LEADER. He wears ceremonial robes, his head hooded, a CURVED LENGTH of PETRIFIED WOOD in his hand.

JONNY
(whispers)
The bow!

THE BOW OF BRAHMA. As they watch, three guards approach the golden statue. Bowing, each places a single item atop one of Brahma's outstretched palms. Like an offering.

A SILVER LOTUS. A JEWELLED SCEPTER. A STONE ARROW. The hooded man sets the final item -- THE BOW -- atop Brahma's last hand. Inches away from where Jonny and Hadji hide.

Kneeling before the statue, he begins to CHANT in Hindi.

JONNY
(whispers)
Hadji, what's he doing?

HADJI
Praying. He's using the icons to ask Brahma for "the last thing he needs to do god's will."

JONNY
But, you said there's only four icons? What else do they need?

A SQUAWK OF STATIC breaks the silence. One of the guards is on his RADIO, clearly agitated by what he's being told. From their hiding place, Jade gives Race a concerned look.

JADE
(whispers)
You think they found the boat?

RACE
I think that's the least of our problems. Look.

The guard has crossed the chamber to give the radio to the hooded man. As he snatches it -- furious at the interruption -- his FACE comes into the light for the first time. Revealing his unmistakable Third-Eye scar.

JADE
(disbelief)
Korchek?

She knows him too. For the first time, we see her afraid.
 Knowing he has to act now, Race seizes on their momentary distraction, motioning for Jonny and Hadji to come to them.
 Keeping to the shadows at the perimeter of the room, Hadji hurries to their spot. Jonny arrives a few seconds later.
 Just in time, too, because Korchek and his men seem to be preparing to leave. Quickly moving to retrieve the icons.

RACE

OK. Looks like they're leaving.
 We are too. Once they're gone --

JONNY

We might not wanna wait for that.

Race knows exactly what that means. Trouble.

RACE

Jonny. What did you do?

Guards grab the lotus, the scepter, the arrow. But, when Korchek reaches out for the bow --

HIS HAND PASSES RIGHT THROUGH IT. A HOLOGRAM. Strapped to the idol's massive wrist, the QUEST-WATCH is projecting the fake image. THE REAL BOW is in Jonny's hands.

JONNY

It was right there. I thought we could trade it for dad. I didn't --

-- Race YANKS him down as BULLETS STRAFE THEIR POSITION --
 From the center of the room, Korchek FIRES his auto-pistol.

Race FIRES BACK. Drags Jonny to his feet. All of them DASH for the entrance. We hear Korchek shouting, the alarm sounding, men running, guns cocking. In short... CHAOS.

INT. CATHEDRAL CAVERN - DAY

Race, Jade, Hadji, and Jonny run for their lives. Bursting out of the temple, Race lays down a spray of cover fire.

RACE

Go, go! I'll cover you!

He BLASTS a generator -- plunging the cave into DARKNESS, broken only by the MUZZLE FLASHES of the pursuing guards.

MINE TUNNEL

They tear down the corridor. Race firing behind. It looks like they might actually make it out of this alive, when --

JADE

Look out!

-- A HOVERCRAFT ROCKETS out of a side tunnel. The pilot veering toward them. The gunner's machine-gun coming up --

-- Race and Jade tackle the boys as BULLETS RAKE the dirt -- the hovercraft screams past, missing them by mere inches.

They get up and RUN as the craft pivots, hurtling back for another pass. Bullet-hits chasing them down the passage.

JONNY

What do we do? Race? RACE!

RACE

I'm thinking!

They dash around the next bend, momentarily safe from the gunner. Race scans for something, anything, to save them.

Suddenly... inspiration.

The hover-pilot banks his craft around the bend, zooming --

-- right into the FLAT of a SHOVEL. Race SMACKS him in the face, sending him toppling off the back -- the craft -- pilotless -- digs its nose into the dirt and LURCHES to a stop, catapulting the gunner -- THUD! -- into a wood post.

JONNY

Good thinking.

Race tosses down the shovel, hurrying to the empty vehicle, just as the HUM of approaching hovercraft FILLS the tunnel. Rounding the bend... Three of them... Their guns BLAZING.

RACE

Get in!

As Race mans the controls, and the hovercraft lifts off...

INT. MINE TUNNEL - DAY

We're BLASTING through the mines, rock walls BLURRING past at incredible speed. This is our Hover Chase, ladies and gentlemen, and if there was ever a time to push IMAX 3D to its absolute friggin' limit, this is it.

Race pilots the craft for all it's worth. The rest of the team hanging on for dear life. Buffeted by screaming wind.

JONNY

How do we get outta here!?

RACE

I dunno, it's a mine. Up?

The THREE HOVERCRAFT speed behind them, their gunners FIRING. BLASTING holes in the hull inches from Hadji.

HADJI

Wherever we're going, may we please go faster?

The tunnel jogs left -- right -- left again. Race swerves with it, but so do their pursuers. Can't shake 'em.

RACE

Jade? Wanna get these guys off me?

CA-CHUK! She pops up with the fallen gunner's RIFLE.

JADE

Well, if you can't handle it.

She OPENS FIRE on their pursuers, ripping HOLES across the lead craft's nose. It swerves to one side, smoke billowing. Veers into another tunnel and disappears.

The other two fall back, just out of Jade's range.

Ahead, the tunnel curves into a HAIRPIN TURN. Race turns with it -- a little late -- Jonny's side scraping the stone wall -- SPRAYING SPARKS and SHARDS of rock and metal.

RACE

Watch your fingers.

JONNY

Watch where you're going!

RACE

I am watching where I'm -- Uh-oh.

Appearing in their headlights -- and on them in a blink --

A COLLAPSED BEAM lies across the passage at a 45 degree angle. Race PULLS UP HARD, threading their craft through the small clearance space above it --

The instant they're through, ANOTHER BEAM LOOMS, at another angle -- this whole section is collapsed. Strewn with rocks and leaning beams.

Race DIVES under this one -- almost taking off their heads.

Up. Down. To one side. To the other. The beams keep coming, and Race keeps threading the needle. He's almost getting cocky... until he sees something up ahead that makes his face go as white as his hair.

TWO BEAMS CRISSCROSS THE PASSAGE, blocking their way like a GIANT "X." No time to stop.

RACE
Everybody hold on!

Jonny, Jade hold onto anything that's bolted down -- Hadji holds onto Jade -- Race sends them into a ROLL, aiming for a spot that looks too small...

And is. Their undercarriage GLANCES OFF the beam, obliterating the wood, rocking everybody -- struggling to ride it out -- and when the debris clears --

They're THROUGH. Alive. Intact. But Race is... GONE.

Jonny leaps to seize the controls -- keeping them from veering into the wall -- All they see behind is dust settling over a heap of broken beams. No sign of Race.

JONNY
RACE!

As their hovercraft disappears around the next bend...

One of the heavy beams STIRS. A HAND fumbles out. Battered and bruised, Race struggles to pull himself free. He's still gathering his senses when --

THE PURSUIT CRAFT zoom past -- almost taking his head off.

Spotting him, one of the pilots slows and cuts a turn, while the other continues after Jonny, Jade and Hadji.

Race climbs to his feet. Across the long, dark tunnel, he sees the gunner draw a bead on him --

-- But, the pilot shoves the man's rifle up, causing it to DISCHARGE into the ceiling. The pilot peels off his high-tech headset, revealing the Giant Guard from Kolkata. His face still bearing a BRUISE in the shape of a sword handle.

He GUNS the hovercraft's engine, speeding towards Race, who stands there like a matador facing down a bull -- while...

BACK WITH THE OTHERS

Jonny white-knuckles the controls. Steering through a slalom of outcropping rocks. Bullets buzz past like bees. Exchanging fire with their pursuer, Jade shouts to him:

JADE

You sure you can handle this thing?

JONNY

Sure! Race lets me drive all the time! I'm good. Great. *I hope...*

(to Hadji)

Hadj, see if you can figure out where we are. We gotta find a way to circle back for Race.

Hadji has found a BLUEPRINT of the MINE TUNNELS on the hovercraft's computer. Struggling to make sense of it.

HADJI

This map is harder to read than Sanskrit. I can't find anything.

JONNY

I'd help, but I'm a little busy...

Suddenly, ahead -- HEADLIGHTS -- far down the tunnel. The missing third hovercraft. Screaming straight towards them.

JONNY

Oh this is bad. This is really --

BACK WITH RACE

RACE

-- really bad.

The hovercraft hurtles toward him. Fifty feet. Twenty. Ten. Race doesn't move an inch as it BLASTS RIGHT OVER HIM. Plowing him under its grill.

The Guard laughs. His gunner laughs. Even Race laughs --

-- as he SWINGS UP from where he's been CLINGING to the undercarriage, SURPRISING them -- landing a HAYMAKER to the Big Guard's jaw. Sending him tumbling out of his seat.

Race and the Gunner wrestle over the controls, the craft ricocheting off the rock walls like a pinball -- while --

JONNY, HADJI, AND JADE

zoom toward a head-on collision. The other craft's right behind them. Boxing them in. No turns. No way out. They are going to HIT HEAD-FIRST, if they don't act RIGHT NOW.

HADJI
Up, Jonny. Up!

JONNY
There's no tunnel up -- is there
one on the map?

There's nothing. But, somehow, Hadji is utterly certain.

HADJI
I can feel it. Trust me. GO UP!

Jonny YANKS the stick -- the g-forces pinning them to their seats as the hovercraft ROCKETS INTO A CLIMB -- missing the oncoming craft by inches -- BURSTING straight through the BOARDED-UP OPENING of a HIDDEN MINE SHAFT. Directly above.

IN THE SHAFT, the hovercraft goes vertical, the speed astonishing, everyone struggling to hang on. Beneath them, the two pursuit craft COLLIDE. EXPLODING INTO FLAMES.

JONNY
This... is... the greatest moment
of my life!

RACE, HOWEVER

couldn't disagree more. Fighting for his life, Race drives an elbow in the Gunner's face -- sending him tumbling -- painfully -- off the back. Race regains the controls --

Too late. The craft CLIPS the wall, SPINNING like a top until it digs into the dirt, grinding to a dizzying STOP.

Race staggers out, happy to be on firm ground again, when --

The Giant Guard TACKLES HIM -- the two of them rolling across the dirt floor -- into...

AN OLD FREIGHT ELEVATOR

A steel cage used to transport mining gear. Race SLAMS back against the controls -- the lift lurching into motion, rusty gears grinding as it starts to RISE.

TWO PICKAXES SLICE through the air -- the guard wielding one in each hand -- Race ducking, dodging -- barely avoiding the whizzing steel. As one SLASHES his shirt -- RACE grabs the cage roof -- SWINGS -- KICKS him back into -- A DUSTY OLD BOX labeled "TNT" which topples...

... spilling sticks of DYNAMITE across the floor.

At the same time, one of the pickaxes flies out of his hand, bouncing into the GEARBOX at the side of the elevator -- its metal pick getting wedged in the gears -- the metal-on-metal grinding SPRAYS A SHOWER OF SPARKS...

Onto the T.N.T. Instantly, A DOZEN FUSES FLARE TO LIFE.

Race and the Guard look at each other. A beat.

They both SCRAMBLE out the cage door -- SCURRYING up the sides -- trying to reach the cable above and climb to safety... before the dynamite burns down and goes boom.

The Big Man makes it first -- kicking Race back -- then SWINGING the other pickaxe -- WAILING on the BRACKET that connects the steel cable to the elevator.

It starts to give... the metal SHEARING...

The Guard grabs hold of the cable -- grinning victoriously at Race as -- the bracket RIPS FREE of its housing --

-- Only now realizing that, in the excitement, his boot has gotten WEDGED in the cage roof. Stuck there. The cable breaks free, and for one brief moment, the massive Guard is still holding onto it -- tethering it to the heavy cage...

And that's all the time Race needs to SCRAMBLE up his body and SEIZE hold of the cable...

Before it YANKS out of the guard's hands, and he -- and the cage -- and the T.N.T. -- plummet into the darkness.

As the counterweight drops, and Race ROCKETS up, up, up --

A titanic EXPLOSION ignites far below.

INT. MINE TUNNEL - DAY

Somehow, someway, Race pulls himself to safety at the top of the shaft. So exhausted, he barely reacts when he sees ANOTHER HOVERCRAFT hurtling toward him. Luckily, he recognizes the pilot...

JONNY

Race! Where were you? We've been looking everywhere!

RACE

I took the elevator.

Jonny and Hadji hop out to help him up. But as they do --

LASER SIGHTS crisscross the dusty air. TWENTY of KORCHEK'S SOLDIERS flood the tunnel. Cutting off all hope of escape.

They're cornered. Weaponless. But Race, Jonny, even Hadji, they're not going down without a fight. This is it. The last stand. But, before the bullets start flying...

A SQUEAL of STATIC breaks the silence. They turn to see Jade on the hovercraft RADIO. She has the Bow in one hand and her gun in the other. Aimed straight at their backs.

JADE

(into radio:)

Korchek. This is Jade. Tell your men to stand down. I have a proposition for you.

She and Race lock eyes. He knows what she's doing. Her finger tightens on the trigger.

JADE

Roger, don't make me.

(into radio:)

You let me walk out of here. I give you Bannon and the boys alive, and The Bow. Intact.

JONNY

Jade, what are you doing?

JADE

What I do best. Surviving.

For a moment, her eyes seem to apologize. But, only for a moment. Then, her radio SQUAWKS and we -- SMASH CUT TO:

A GUT KICK drives Race to his knees. Hands force Jonny and Hadji down beside him, gun barrels digging into their backs. The mercs stand aside as Korchek arrives, doffing his ceremonial robes. His camouflage fatigues underneath.

Jade eyes him -- still armed. Her insurance.

KORCHEK

If I wanted you dead, I assure you,
that wouldn't dissuade me.

He's not joking. She lowers her gun. Hands over The Bow.

KORCHEK

You'll be escorted back to your
ship. Once you're clear of the
island, you'll forget you were ever
here. Do that, and I will too.

Jade looks toward Race --

JADE

Can I give him something first?

KORCHEK

A farewell kiss?

She takes Race's chin in her hand, leans in close and --

JADE

Something to remember me by.

JAMS HER BOWIE KNIFE into his shoulder. She TWISTS it.
Yanks it out. Then... she's gone. Marching off, flanked
by two of Korchek's men. Korchek watches her. Wistful.

KORCHEK

Magnificent woman. I can't imagine
what she sees in you.

RACE

(wincing)
A pin-cushion, apparently.

Korchek laughs. A reedy ugly sound.

KORCHEK

It's good to see you, Bannon. But,
you must be disappointed to see me?

RACE

Actually, I'm tickled pink. Now I
get to kill you twice.

One of the guards moves to bash Race with his rifle butt,
but Korchek holds up a hand, stopping him.

KORCHEK

I bear you no ill will, do you know
that? What you did to me...

(MORE)

KORCHEK (CONT'D)
 it set me free. You're the reason
 I've become the man you see before
 you. Resurrected. Reborn.

RACE
 With a shiny new hat.

Korchek runs a hand over the braces bolted to his skull.

KORCHEK
 Do you know what it feels like to
 be shot in the head? I shouldn't
 have survived. No man should've.

He kneels before Race. Eye to eye.

KORCHEK
 Yet, after seven weeks of surgery.
 After being pronounced dead three
 times. I came back. I was chosen
 to live on. And do you know why?
 (a smile)
 The gods still have plans for me.

Korchek yanks the KATAR out of its gun-handle sheath. Its
 three BLADES SPRINGING OPEN, inches beneath Race's throat.

KORCHEK
 Too bad they don't feel the same
 about you.

JONNY
 Leave him alone!

His gaze shifts to Jonny... trying so hard to look tough.

RACE
 Kid, don't help.

But, Korchek is already moving toward the boy.

KORCHEK
 And this must be young Jonny? You
 know, it's rude to take things that
 don't belong to you. Didn't your
dead mother teach you any manners?

JONNY
 Don't talk about my mom!

Enraged, Jonny LAUNCHES himself at Korchek, but --

With one effortless hand, the man grabs the boy, HEAVES him against the wall like a sack of potatoes. Jonny SLAMS into the rock -- CRASHES onto his back -- GASPING for air.

Restrained by the guards, there's nothing Race can do.

KORCHEK

You're lucky my bow wasn't damaged, boy. You have no idea what your grubby little hands have sullied.

RACE

You can't actually believe that crap about a "weapon of the gods," can you, Korchek? How much of your brain did that bullet miss?

KORCHEK

I believe the world is full of things mindless thugs like you can't begin to understand.

RACE

So, enlighten me. Speak slow. This "spiritual reawakening" might have your men fooled, but I know you. You don't take a piss unless you see a profit in it.

(quiet, just for Korchek)

Level with me. For old time's sake. What's this really about?

Korchek leans in closer. Just for Race.

KORCHEK

The world pays a fortune for weapons made by men. Imagine what they'll pay for one made by a god.

A beat. Race BURSTS OUT LAUGHING -- right in his face.

RACE

You believe that, I got a bridge to sell you. In Candy-Land.

-- A RIFLE-BUTT KNOCKS HIM OUT COLD. Korchek stares down at his unconscious body. Stewing. Finally, he decides --

KORCHEK

Bring them. All of them.

SMASH CUT TO:

HOVERCRAFTS ZOOM THROUGH THE TUNNELS

Jonny and Hadji ride in the back of one, bound in high-tech shackles. Race SNAPS AWAKE beside them. Shackled too. His shoulder and head screaming in pain.

RACE

Tell me this is a hangover. Where are they taking us?

But there's no need to answer. Ahead, the passage dead-ends at a MASSIVE BUNKER DOOR. Grinding open to REVEAL...

KORCHEK'S COMPOUND

The ruins of an ancient Hindu monastery -- its rooms cut from the solid rock -- has been converted into a high-tech SUBTERRANEAN BASE. Sentry guns and supercomputers stand beside hand-carved marble statues and pillars that would put the Taj Mahal to shame. The old world meets the new.

JONNY

Who is this guy? "Korchek"?

RACE

Arms dealer. Terrorist for hire. Ex-black ops, for the other team. His specialty was covert snatch and grab. He's made more people disappear than David Copperfield.

HADJI

And you did that to him? His scar?

RACE

That's why mom always told me to use two bullets. He was crazy about this religious stuff even back then. Now, he's just crazy.

Silence... until Jonny asks what's really on his mind:

JONNY

What does all this have to do with my dad?

Race doesn't know. As the hovercraft comes in to land...

INT. QUEST'S CELL - NIGHT

The doctor shields his eyes as the door opens. Face sallow. Eyes sunken. He's been through hell in the last few days. Surd glides in, trailed by his assistants.

SURD

You've been surprisingly resilient,
Benton. Most men would've broken
under far less duress.

QUEST

(hoarse)

You can do what you want to me,
Jeremiah. Kill me, I don't care.
I will never give you the code.

SURD

Never say never, old friend.

The assistants drag Quest out the door, where he sees...

JONNY led in by Korchek's guards. Quest's eyes go wide.

QUEST

Jonny?

Quest tries to go to him, but his legs buckle. He falls.

JONNY

Dad! Let me go. Let me help him!

Korchek nods to his men. They release Jonny. He sprints
to his father's side. Expecting to see joy in Quest's
eyes. Love. Something. Instead, all he finds is ANGER.

QUEST

How could you do this, Jonny? Put
yourself in danger like this? What
were you thinking?

JONNY

(taken aback)

I -- we were just --

Quest wheels on Race, too:

QUEST

How could you let him?

Race gives no answer. Has none. Surd glides in closer.

SURD

Your father's just worried, Jonny.
He's worried what happened to your
mother might have to happen to you
too. None of us wants that.

Quest looks toward Surd. He will do whatever they want.

JONNY

Dad, what's he talking about?
What's this have to do with mom?

Benton can't bring himself to answer. The guards haul him to his feet, marching him and the others down the hall --

INT. SURD'S LABORATORY - NIGHT

Surd leads them down a hallway lined with observation windows. Forced along by Korchek and his armed thugs.

SURD

If he won't tell you, Jonny, I will. You deserve to know the truth. Twenty years ago, your father and I were colleagues. Spearheading our country's research in weapons of mass destruction.

Behind the windows, we see test labs. Inside, spider-bot prototypes. Torture machines. A dark version of Palm Key.

SURD

We studied everything. Cutting-edge science. Viruses. Even the occult. It was that which led us to the legend of the Brahmastra...

Behind the last window, an ANTIQUITIES LAB, its tables covered with scrolls, maps, and tablets from every era.

SURD

At first, we dismissed it as myth. Until we discovered traces of an extinction level event in samples taken from India. Real evidence this "weapon of the gods" actually existed. But, where your father could only see its potential for destruction, I saw... Possibility.

He pivots toward them. His eyes aflame.

SURD

Imagine if such a weapon could be controlled. Like we've harnessed the atomic bomb. It could provide the world with limitless energy. Usher in a golden age for mankind!

JONNY

What's this have to do with my mom?

SURD

Patience, my boy. Something I learned a good deal about when your father had our project shut down. He didn't believe in my vision.

QUEST

What I believed, Surd, is what I still believe. Something so powerful can never be controlled. It's hubris -- madness to try.

SURD

The difference between madness and genius is measured only by success.

Surd looks toward Korchek. His inscrutable silent partner.

SURD

Luckily, some men understand that.

RACE

So, you two are partners? You make his high-tech toys, and when you get this magic weapon, he's gonna let you use it to save the world?
(shakes his head)

I can't tell which of you is crazier. Him for believing you, or you for believing him.

A GUN-STOCK RAMS Race's stomach. Korchek smiles serenely.

KORCHEK

Soon even you'll see the light.

Surd leads them into his main laboratory. Assistants swarm everywhere. In the center of it all lies the VACUUM BOX Quest saw during his escape attempt. And inside it lies...

... The FOSSILIZED REMAINS of a HUMAN BEING. Man or woman, it's impossible to tell. But, one thing is clear. They died in extraordinary pain. Jaw locked in a silent scream.

JONNY

It's a person?

SURD

The last soul touched by the weapon. Within its flesh lies the Brahmastra, waiting to be set free.

His assistants move in. Prepping a HIGH-TECH MICROSCOPE setup. Focusing its massive lens on the fossilized form.

SURD

Jonny, do you know what happens to living flesh after eons of time?

JONNY

It fossilizes.

SURD

Precisely. Metals and minerals become indivisible parts of it. If the Brahmastra is truly sealed in this form, the only way to free it would be to reverse that process.

ON SCREEN: the sharp crystalline structure of rock and metal, intertwined with more spherical biological cells.

SURD

A problem I've struggled with since we found this island, ten long years ago. A problem, as fate would have it, your father solved for me. By inventing the answer to our prayers.

His assistants wheel THE GEODIDE RAY into view.

SURD

Which brings us to your mother, Jonny. Three years ago, when we heard he'd begun work on a prototype, we chose to act.

Jonny looks to his father -- confused -- "Is he saying what I think he's saying?" Benton can't even meet his eyes.

SURD

We only meant to take your father. To help us. To finish our work. No one was supposed to get hurt.

A FLASH -- of NINE-YEAR-OLD JONNY -- the sequence we saw before... Quest and his wife running -- GUNS BLAZING --

Again, Jonny's mother falls, but this time... we SEE the FACE of the man who shot her. Through the slit of his black mask. Scarred and severe. His eyes unmistakable.

... KORCHEK.

Jonny reels. Unable to process this. He looks to his father -- sees tears in Quest's eyes.

SURD

We've all made sacrifices. You.
Me. Your mother. But soon, you'll
thank me. Soon, you'll see why.

One of Surd's assistants forces Quest toward the Ray's control console. He enters the 512-bit encryption key.

And instantly -- the RAY POWERS UP -- A BEAM OF ENERGY arcing into the fossilized form -- the stone receding, leaving only flesh and bone behind. ON SCREEN, we see the mineral structures EVAPORATE. Living cells RECONSTITUTING.

As Surd uses a robotic arm to carefully extract one of the cells, Jonny and the others are led through a door into...

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM

Consoles and video screens surrounding a huge OBSERVATION WINDOW made from six-inch safety glass. Currently covered with a steel screen. Quest, Jonny, Hadji and Race are forced into seats. Restraints clamp shut on their wrists.

Quest looks drained. Dead.

QUEST

I'm sorry, Jonny. Your mother...
(barely gets the words out)
It was my fault.

The boy is furious, but -- for once -- not at his father.

JONNY

No, dad, you didn't make this happen. They did.

SURD and KORCHEK enter, swept up in the headiness of this.

QUEST

You don't have to do this,
Jeremiah. There's still time --

SURD

Still time? I'm on the verge of
the greatest discovery in history.
And you want me to throw it away?

HADJI

What you're doing is wrong. The gods never intended this weapon to be used again.

KORCHEK

Then may they strike us down for our sacrilege.

(smiles)

See? The gods want to know what'll happen just as much as we do.

Surd hits a switch, the steel screen rising up to REVEAL...

A vault-like BIO-SAFETY LAB. The type of chamber where scientists work with the most dangerous materials our world has ever known -- Ebola virus. Anthrax. VX nerve gas.

And now... A single cell... containing the Brahmastra.

They watch as two of Surd's assistants enter. Followed by four of Korchek's soldiers. Each carries one of the four icons. All of them in fully-encapsulated Bio-Safety suits.

On monitors, we watch Surd's assistants insert the cell -- contained in a tiny glass vial -- into the vacuum valve of a Plexiglas "cage." Several COCKROACHES scuttling inside.

Then, the assistants leave. Korchek's men move to the four corners of the room, waiting for their leader to say:

KORCHEK (ON INTERCOM)

Begin.

The men begin to CHANT -- an ancient Hindu Mantra -- emanating from the speakers -- over and over, their voices pitched in unison. Jonny looks to Hadji...

JONNY

Hadji, this thing, this weapon -- what is it really?

HADJI

(simply)

The wrath of god.

At first, nothing happens... Then, one of the men CRIES OUT. Dropping the Bow of Brahma as it BURSTS INTO FLAME.

Like a chain-reaction, the stone arrow instantly CRUMBLES TO DUST. The silver lotus MELTS. The jeweled scepter SHATTERS LIKE GLASS. The men have stopped chanting, but...

Somehow, the rhythm of it persists. A SOUND -- like buzzing bees -- rises over the intercom... louder and louder, until THE SPEAKERS BLOWOUT. And, suddenly...

A tiny SPARK -- like a microscopic firefly -- flits around the inside of the cockroach cage -- circling until...

KORCHEK

Let there be light.

IT STRIKES. Like TEN THOUSAND ARROWS MADE OF LIGHTNING.

Blindingly brilliant, moving faster than fast, it BLASTS the roaches away -- blowing them apart -- atom by atom -- it's beautiful and horrific. And it doesn't stop there.

The cockroach cage EXPLODES into jagged shards -- the arrows of light SWEEPING ACROSS THE BIO-SAFETY LAB -- obliterating everything. Equipment melts, test tubes liquefy -- Korchek's bio-suited men flee for the exit --

But, the Brahmastra expands like the shock-wave of a nuclear holocaust, tiny glowing arrowheads piercing their suits -- turning their bodies to ASH -- still inside.

Their screams are silent behind the safety glass. It all happens in one brief moment. So bright it's hard to watch, but impossible to look away. Then, a heart-beat later --

The light fades... All that's left are fluttering ashes.

KORCHEK

Congratulations, doctor. You've done it.

Surd is beside himself. Unprepared for what he witnessed.

SURD

There's still much to do. I promise you, this power -- it can be harnessed. I just need the time to study it. To, to...

A SHOT rings out. Confusion clouds Surd's face -- just for a moment -- Then he collapses out of his wheelchair. Dead.

Korchek holsters his gun. Steps over Surd to the intercom:

KORCHEK (ON INTERCOM)

Begin stage two.

Outside the observation room, in the main lab, Korchek's men OPEN FIRE. EXECUTING every one of Surd's assistants.

Then, quickly -- and carefully -- they transfer all the rest of the Brahmastra cells -- pulsing with life now -- into a high-tech portable containment unit.

QUEST

You never intended to let him complete his research, did you? You never wanted this weapon harnessed for the "good of man."

KORCHEK

A weapon's purpose is destruction, Dr. Quest. If the gods created this, that is how they intended it to be used. I am merely a servant of their will.

RACE

Yeah, you're a regular saint.

JONNY

What are you gonna do with it?

Outside the lab, they can see Korchek's men carrying the Brahmastra to a side door -- Korchek hits a few keys and on monitors, a very familiar image appears. A MIRV warhead.

The same warhead Race let him escape with in the Ukraine.

KORCHEK

The problem with the world today isn't a lack of faith. It is a lack of fear. True fear. Of power beyond our feeble guns. Our piddling bombs. Of power divine.

Korchek's men insert the container into the weapon load of the warhead. Locking it in place. Then, a mechanical arm seizes the MIRV, transporting it down a cement tunnel to...

... An INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE.

Prepped and ready to fly. The warhead is deposited into a mechanical elevator, which rises quickly to the top. Where its Brahmastra payload will be loaded. Korchek's built a MISSILE SILO into this ancient rock-cut monastery. And in his hand, he holds a REMOTE LAUNCH CONTROL.

KORCHEK

Now, I have that power.

HADJI

You're going to use it? On people?

KORCHEK

Once I release the footage of that test, I won't have to. Every country in the world will empty its coffers to buy its safety. Think of it. Armed with the weapon of the gods, I will accomplish what no man ever has. I will become the world's first one-man super-power. As is my destiny. As I was chosen.

JONNY

You're nuts.

KORCHEK

Was Napoleon? Was Genghis Khan? Alexander the Great? And even they never dreamed of power like this!

SUDDENLY, WARNING LIGHTS FLASH on the control console. An alarm BEEPS, insistent. Annoyed, Korchek turns to his men.

KORCHEK

What is that?

They don't need to answer. Inside the Bio-Safety lab, the air is stirring, CRACKLING with light, like the inside of a lightning storm, an electron buzzing around an atom...

Korchek throws one of his men aside, studying the read-outs. Internal pressure is rising into the RED. Korchek swivels his gun toward Quest --

KORCHEK

What's happening?

QUEST

This power, it can't be controlled. It can't be contained. Not by Surd, and certainly not by you.

The CONTAINMENT ALARM starts to WAIL -- we can see hairline cracks appearing across the safety glass. Korchek closes the steel screen -- but it begins to blossom out. Giving.

RACE

I think what he's trying to say is: you screwed with something you shouldn't have screwed with. Now, you're screwed.

With a CONCUSSIVE BLAST, a DEAFENING WAIL -- the door to the containment lab -- leading back into the main lab --

BLASTS OFF ITS HINGES. The Brahmastra SWEEPS OUT into the main complex. Moving across it like death made manifest.

Korchek's men try to run, but they're blasted apart before our eyes -- BLOWN TO ASHES. Even their screams swallowed.

Seeing this from inside the observation room, Korchek's face goes pale. Afraid. His gun goes to Jonny's head.

KORCHEK
(to Quest)
FIX THIS. NOW!

And that's when Race moves -- a blinding blur, his foot KICKING OUT -- knocking the pistol out of Korchek's hand.

Korchek's guards go for their rifles -- but, Race is too fast -- he takes them down. Wheels on Korchek -- but --

Korchek is GONE... sprinting out an escape hatch. A steel door SLAMMING SHUT behind him. Eletromag locks sealing it.

Race moves quickly, working at Jonny's restraints first.

He uses a tiny, high-tech LOCK-PICK. Oddly, caked with rust-colored GUNK. Jonny's shackles instantly pop open.

JONNY
Where'd you get that?

Race pulls back his collar, shows the wound where Jade stabbed him. We can tell that's where he extracted it.

HADJI
From Jade?

RACE
She knew it was the only place they wouldn't search.

JONNY
Man, you guys have a messed up relationship.

RACE
Tell me about it.

He moves on to Hadji, Quest, freeing them too. Quest quickly moves to the door Korchek disappeared through --

HADJI
I don't suppose Jade's device will work on that too?

QUEST

It's magnetically locked. I opened one before. Took me twelve hours.

RACE

Doc, we barely got twelve seconds.

The Brahmastra swirls behind the door to the lab -- tendrils of the light seeping through cracks in the steel.

JONNY

What do we do?

It looks like they're done for, until --

-- KORCHEK'S ESCAPE DOOR SUDDENLY UNLOCKS AND SLIDES OPEN.

SURD clings to the console, his finger on the code pad. It seems to be taking all his strength to hold himself steady.

Not one to look a gift-horse in the mouth, Race grabs one of the guard's guns. Hurries Jonny and Hadji to the door.

RACE

Come on. Go. We gotta leave now.

But, Quest is waiting for Surd. The man killed his wife, but, his innate goodness won't let him leave Surd behind.

QUEST

Jeremiah. Come with us. Please.

Surd shakes his head, a splotch of blood wetting his lips.

SURD

The door can only be sealed from inside. It'll buy you more time.

QUEST

Jeremiah --

SURD

I'm sorry. I know it doesn't make up for what I've done. But... I pray that you can.

Race grabs Quest's shoulder --

RACE

We don't go now, doc, we don't go.

Quest nods. He and Race hurry through the door as Surd seals it behind them.

The last thing they see -- as the door slams shut -- is the Brahmastra BURST through the safety glass. Reducing Surd's body to a cloud of ashes.

INT. KORCHEK'S COMPOUND - CORRIDOR - DAY

Jonny, Hadji, Quest and Race sprint down the hall. Behind them, the door to the observation room balloons out, steel buckling as the pressure inside continues to grow...

RACE

Korchek must have an escape route somewhere. We've gotta find it.

JONNY

How?

They round a corner -- a BARRAGE OF BULLETS RICOCHETING all around them. They dive back just in time.

HADJI

I'd guess we go in the direction they don't want us to?

RACE

Good guess.

AROUND THE CORNER, a pair of Korchek's soldiers have taken up firing positions next to a sealed door. Race peeks his head out -- ducks back as more SHOTS FIRE.

JONNY

How?

Deep breath -- Race bursts around the corner, gun BLAZING. Taken by surprise, the guards try to fire back -- but Race drops them with a headshot each.

RACE

That's how. Let's go. Go.

The team races toward the door, sliding open to reveal...

A THIRD GUARD. His sidearm aimed straight at Race's face.

Race doesn't even have time to blink when --

BLAM! The guard drops like a broken doll. Smoke curls from the barrel of a gun, held in the hands of... JADE.

RACE

You're late.

JADE
I'm never late. You just get in
trouble too early.
(re: behind her)
Come on. Korchek went this way.

As they run, Jonny and Hadji stare at Jade, amazed looks...

JONNY
You came back for us?

JADE
I never left. Handing you over was
the only way to save your lives. I
took out Korchek's guards, and I've
been looking for you ever since.

HADJI
(in love)
I knew you would never betray us.

RACE
I had my doubts.

She runs next to Race, notes the blood on his shoulder.

JADE
So you found my little present?

RACE
Yeah. Remind me to return the
favor. When we get outta here.

Behind them, they hear the observation room door BLAST
OPEN. The moan of the Brahmastra shrieking into the hall.

RACE
If we get outta here.

JADE
What was that?

RACE
Tell you on the way. Run!

Another door ahead. They dive through, sealing it seconds
before the tendrils of the Brahmastra can reach it. As the
metal instantly begins to smoke, and melt, and give way...

INT. AN UNDERGROUND HANGAR

The Quest team finds themselves in a massive subterranean hangar, crowded with the latest in high-tech vehicles, in various states of completion. Part garage. Part lab. This was where Surd perfected his inventions for Korchek.

QUEST

Surd must have something here we can use to escape.

They see hovercraft prototypes, jetpack precursors, and...

A HYPER-MODERN JET

Sleek. Like nothing we've seen before. Clearly this is the prototype / inspiration for Surd's Trojan Horse ship.

It's a VERTOL JET, VERTical Take-Off and Landing -- like a Harrier and -- at the moment -- it's powering up.

KORCHEK stands at a control console. Hits a few keys as -- overhead -- a set of HUGE HANGAR DOORS starts to open.

He sees them just as they see him -- FIRING his auto-pistol -- backing toward the jet's cargo ramp.

QUEST

That jet's our only way out.

RACE

Then we're gonna be on it. When I say run...

KA-CHUNK! Race slams in a clip -- OPENS FIRE on Korchek, pinning him down, keeping him away from the ramp.

RACE

Run!

The Quest team makes a break for it, dodging through the hangar, sprinting toward the jet's access ramp...

Korchek tries to draw a bead on them, but -- A BARRAGE from Race forces him to take cover behind a helicopter chassis.

By the time he comes up to fire again -- Race has closed the gap between them. RUSHING HIM. Race BROAD TACKLES Korchek -- sending their weapons skittering out of reach.

They roll across the hangar floor -- until Korchek flips Race over his shoulder. They both regain their feet at the same time. Squaring off. Mano-a-mano.

The two men join in full-on, balls-out, one-on-one combat. No guns. No gadgets. This is a battle, up close and personal, waged by two men trained -- and born -- to kill.

WHILE, INSIDE THE JET --

Quest, Jade, and Hadji hustle aboard. Jonny hesitates...

JONNY
What about Race?

JADE
Race can take care of himself.

Quest moves toward the cockpit. Manning the controls.

QUEST
I'll have us ready for lift-off in one minute.

JONNY
Race better take care of himself quick.

A HUGE WRENCH SMASHES DOWN ON RACE'S ARM --

Raised just in time to block it from bashing his head. Probably broke some bones, but Race fights on, twisting the wrench out of Korchek's hand. Breaking a few fingers.

Behind them, the plane's engines start to POWER UP...

JET-WASH blasting out the back, whipping their clothes and hair, buffeting the two men as they continue to fight.

Korchek aims a kick at Race's head -- but, Race ducks -- GRABS his leg and SWINGS HIM, like a sack of potatoes --

WHAM! Into the side of a mini-sub. Korchek lands in a heap. Gasping. Wind knocked out of him.

RACE
That was for the kid.

But, Korchek climbs back up... the ICBM REMOTE in hand.

KORCHEK
Listen to me. Either you let me on that jet or I launch --

AN UPPERCUT SNAPS HIS HEAD BACK. Race didn't even wait for him to finish. The remote SKIPS across the hangar floor...

... coming to stop next to Korchek's gun. He scrambles after it, hands and knees. Race is about to give chase --

JONNY

RACE!

He sees Jonny on the jet's ramp, the engines shifting down into VERTOL mode, the plane lifting shakily off the ground.

JONNY

Come on! There's no time!

He's right. Fissures of light are blossoming on the door to the hangar. The unstoppable Brahmastra BLASTING INSIDE.

Race runs -- jumps -- grabs hold of the cargo ramp just as the jet lifts off...

The blast from its engines pushing the Brahmastra back...

KORCHEK -- seeing his chance to escape soaring toward the roof -- climbs up a scaffold -- makes a desperate leap --

-- While Jonny hurries to help Race, clinging to the ramp as the jet continues to rise higher.

JONNY

Race! Here, take my hand!

Race seizes it. Hadji, Jade hurry to help pull him in...

And just as he makes it, he finds --

THE BARREL OF AN AUTO-PISTOL in his face. Korchek, gun in one hand, remote in the other. He's made it into the jet.

KORCHEK

You couldn't kill me then. You can't kill me now. I told you. I was chosen. Chosen to survive!

He places the pistol to Race's forehead. Finger squeezing.

RACE

If you believe that, Korchek...

Race -- lightning quick -- GRABS the stock of the pistol, YANKS OUT the KATAR and -- PLUNGES it in Korchek's chest.

RACE

... Let's see you do it again.

A look of confusion comes over Korchek's face as he topples back off the ramp... Plummeting down... down... down...

... into the gathering lightning storm of the Brahmastra.

The massive, malevolent cloud seems to "catch" him in mid-air, its tendrils invading his nostrils, his eyes, the pores on his skin, devouring his body from the inside out.

As his body is consumed, the last thing that remains is HIS HAND. Still gripping the ICBM remote. Perhaps by some random muscle twitch, or perhaps by intention, his finger tightens on the trigger. The remote's light turns GREEN...

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

The jet rockets out of the hangar doors. The flames from its afterburners BLASTING DOWN on the escaping Brahmastra, the heat so intense it burns up the cloud, vaporizing it.

They made it, they did it, but before they can celebrate --

A CIRCULAR BUNKER OPENS from the mountainside beneath them.

THE ICBM -- armed with the Brahmastra -- ROCKETS OUT, BLASTING PAST THEM -- heading for the blue sky above.

INT. JET - DAY

Stunned silence, as they watch the missile's contrail streaking into the sky. Race and Quest trade a look.

RACE

This thing got a radio?

INT. INTELLIGENCE ONE H.Q. - DAY

Corvin is feeding Bandit a doggy snack, making kissy-faces, when Roberts bursts in the door. One look, and Corvin can tell this is important. She follows Roberts out into --

COMMAND CONTROL

-- Where her agents wait at their stations, eerily silent.

CORVIN

Bannon's broadcasting? What is it?

INDIAN AGENT

It's bad, ma'am.

CORVIN

How bad?

NERDY AGENT

"Holy crap, it's the end of the world" bad, ma'am.

Bandit whines.

INT. JET - DAY

Race -- listening intently to the earphones -- pulls off the headset. Turns toward the others.

RACE

They've analyzed the ICBM's trajectory. It'll detonate over the eastern seaboard of the United States in twenty-seven minutes. They're scrambling missile defenses, but...

JONNY

They won't make it in time?

Race shakes his head. Not even close.

HADJI

There is nothing we can do?

QUEST

That may not be entirely true.

He looks up from the jet's control panel --

QUEST

This jet, its propulsion technology is similar to what Surd used in his Trojan Horse, but... beyond even that. The potential thrust is off the charts. Jeremiah always had a brilliant mind for aeronautics.

JADE

What's that mean?

QUEST

It means we might have a chance.

He looks to Race. Race nods.

RACE

Everyone. Strap in.

Quest's fingers fly over the controls, and as they do --

The jet starts to TRANSFORM. In mid-air, it shifts into hyper-speed mode, louvered panels sliding aside to reveal... A ROCKET WITH WINGS.

Race slips into the control seat beside Quest. Checks to make sure everybody is strapped in behind him.

RACE

Let's see what this baby can do.

A NEW THROTTLE rises out of the console. He eases it back.

EXT. JET - DAY

Blink and the JET IS GONE. Dwindling into the sky. Forget super-sonic, this thing's almost faster than light.

INT. COCKPIT

Jonny's cheeks flap in the mind-blowing G forces...

JONNY

This. Is. Awesome!

The ICBM appears as a blip on a 3D RADAR DISPLAY, arcing through the skies. Nearing the apex of its trajectory.

QUEST

If my calculations are correct,
we'll intercept the ICBM in
nineteen minutes, twelve seconds.
Here, on its downward trajectory,
three miles off the coast.

HADJI

What do we do when we intercept it?

JADE

Doesn't this thing have any
weapons? Guns?

QUEST

(scanning the systems)
Not installed.

RACE

Then you've got...
(checks the clock)
... Eighteen minutes to come up
with a better plan than us stopping
that missile by flying into it.
Good luck, doc. I mean it.

Quest unstraps, hurries across the cabin -- vibrating with the strain of their speed -- heading toward the cargo hold.

QUEST
(to Jade)
If you'll assist me, madam?

JADE
Finally, someone who knows how to talk to a lady.

She unstraps and follows. Only Jonny and Hadji are left.

JONNY
What should we do?

RACE
Pray.

Hadji already is.

INT. CARGO HOLD

Apparently, this was some kind of mobile workshop for Surd. Crates are stacked everywhere -- random pieces of electronics, wires, circuit boards spilling out. Jade stares at all of this -- it's too much to even process.

JADE
Where do we start?

But, creating order from chaos, seeing solutions where others can't, that's Benton Quest's gift.

His eyes take in a tank of CO2. A disassembled computer. One of Surd's spider robots, lying on a worktable. And a half dozen other things. Lightning quick.

QUEST
(pointing)
Get me that. That. One of those.
A soldering iron. And as much
strong rope as you can find.

As Jade springs into action...

INT. COCKPIT

Quest sits with Race, talking quietly. Jonny struggles to eavesdrop. But the roar of the engines makes it difficult.

QUEST

It's dangerous. Bordering on
insane.

RACE

So what's the problem?

QUEST

It'll take all of us to pull it
off. You, Jade, me. There will be
no one left to fly the plane.

RACE

Autopilot?

QUEST

Probably scheduled to go in with
the guns.

As they contemplate -- a voice PIPES UP...

JONNY

I'll fly it.

They both turn to look at him. He's intimidated with their
eyes on him, but Jonny screws up his courage.

JONNY

You said you need someone to fly
the jet. I'll do it. I can do it.

QUEST

Absolutely not.

JONNY

But, dad --

QUEST

This isn't a game, Jonny. Lives
are at stake. You could get hurt.

JONNY

Dad, I could get hurt either way.

But Quest won't budge. Jonny looks to Race... pleading.

RACE

I say we give the kid a shot. I
think he's the best chance we have.

Quest is surprised to hear this. But still not convinced.

RACE

Over the last few days, I've seen
Jonny pilot just about everything
that drives, floats, or flies. If
I'm better than him, it's damn
close. I'd trust your son without
a moment's hesitation.

Benton looks from Race to Jonny. Inscrutable. Finally...

QUEST

Then you'd better show my son the
controls.

He goes, placing a hand on Jonny's shoulder as he does.
The look between them, it conveys a lot. Trust. Love.
But, it only lasts a moment. That's all there's time for.

Quest heads to the rear and Jonny takes the driver's seat.

HADJI

What should I do?

JONNY

Pray harder, Hadji. Pray as hard
as you can.

EXT. ICBM - DAY

The missile streaks through the upper atmosphere. As it
reaches its apex and begins its descent, we notice
something strange. Its nose cone seems to GLOW, slivers of
light blossoming from the metal... forming IMAGES. FACES,
like the Hindu cave carvings. Frozen in silent screams.

As the missile plummets toward the coast of Florida, the
sound of its boosters becoming an eerie, unearthly HOWL...

INT. JET - DAY

... Jonny can just make it out -- bright as a shooting star
-- blazing across the sky. He pushes the jet for all it's
worth. White-knuckling the stick.

JONNY

(into headset)
You guys ready back there? Dad?

CARGO HOLD

Sparks fly as Quest wields his soldering iron, putting the
finishing touches on something we can't see.

QUEST

I need two minutes.

JONNY (ON RADIO)

No problem. I'll tell the missile to slow down. Race? You ready?

Jade straps Race into a HARNESS -- one of the harnesses the frogmen used on Palm Key -- attached to a coil of ROPE.

RACE

As long as nobody reminds me what I'm about to do.

Quest waves Race over. The solder's still hot on the DEVICE he's building, but it's as ready as it'll ever be.

QUEST

I was able to splice in the targeting system from one of Surd's robots -- it should lock on, but you'll still have to get it close, keep it steady, and fire manually.

RACE

Just show me which button to push.

Quest and Jade strap the device to Race's shoulder, a tangle of wires blossoming from a CO2 cannister. It looks like a CANNON, a targeting monitor fixed to the barrel.

JADE

Try not to screw this up.

RACE

Thanks for the pep talk.

SUDDENLY, WIND RUSHES IN as -- the REAR CARGO RAMP begins to OPEN, Quest manning the controls.

QUEST

(into headset)

We're ready back here. Now get us in range. You can do it, Jonny.

EXT. JET - DAY

The jet screams across the water, its afterburners cutting a wake through the waves.

IN THE COCKPIT

Jonny is the picture of focus, not about to let them down. This is the most frightening -- and exhilarating -- moment of his life. But, it's a lot to handle.

JONNY

Please, God, let me do this right.
Or gods. Or, whoever's listening.

The only one there is Hadji -- his eyes shut -- his lips silently muttering... *sim... sim sala... sim sala bim...*

As he chants, a WIND rises around him, stirring his clothes, surrounding him in a haze of FAINT GLOWING LIGHT.

EXT. ICBM - DAY

The missile dives toward the ocean, nosing up at the last second, zeroing in on its target... MIAMI.

The Jet follows -- the burn from its engines as brilliant as a supernova...

JONNY

mans the stick like it's part of him. Squeezing every ounce of speed out of the aircraft...

THE JET pulls into the missile's contrail -- its smoke billowing past them -- enveloping the windshield -- then --

Jonny veers to one side, pulling even with it, but, as he does -- A CRUISE SHIP APPEARS OUT OF NOWHERE. DEAD AHEAD.

Jonny JERKS the stick -- banking just in time -- the belly of the jet skimming two feet above the ship's deck -- blowing a stunned shuffleboarder's hat right off his head.

Sweating bullets, Jonny recovers. Pulls the jet ahead of the missile. Now, he's leading it. Speeding low above the water, straight for the skyscraper skyline of Miami beach.

JONNY

(into headset:)
In position! Race, you're up!

IN THE CARGO HOLD

The ramp is now open and the rush of wind is amazing. Deafening. We can see the nose of the missile, rocketing about a hundred yards behind them --

A brief look of "What the hell am I doing?" crosses Race's face, then he slings the makeshift cannon onto his shoulder and steps away from the wall --

The WIND instantly seizes him, pulling him toward the open ramp. Luckily --

-- THE ROPE goes TAUT, the harness around his waist keeping him from flying out the back. Its other end is tethered near Jade, who carefully lets out slack as Race makes his way toward the end of the ramp... Step by step. While...

IN THE COCKPIT

Miami nears... you can almost see the bikinis from here.

RACE

reaches the end of his rope. His toes hanging ten off the ramp. He swings up the weapon's barrel, struggling to aim.

The targeting display swims before him. He tries to put the reticle on the missile, but the display keeps flashing:

NO LOCK. NO LOCK. NO LOCK.

RACE

(into headset)

It's not locking on! I can't get a lock!

IN THE COCKPIT

They're coming up on Miami. Speeding toward the beach.

JONNY

Try harder! We're running out of ocean here! Fifteen seconds out!

Behind him, Hadji HOVERS above his seat. His GLOW has intensified. Spreading across the cockpit. Jonny is too focused on flying to notice it...

CARGO HOLD

But, it's spreading here, too. Faintly. Creeping across the walls, the floor, stretching out from the front of the plane to the back... to Race...

JONNY (ON RADIO)

Ten seconds!

Race struggles to aim. He holds the weapon as still as he can. The glow surrounds Race, almost invisible in the rushing wind and, suddenly --

JONNY (ON RADIO)

FIVE!

LOCK! LOCK! LOCK!

RACE

I got lock!

He pulls the trigger -- KA-FOOSH! The cannon FIRES, spewing a cloud of frozen CO2 -- a PROJECTILE EXPLODES out of the barrel, arcing across the sky -- in mid-air --

BLOSSOMING WITH SIX SPINDLY METAL LEGS.

One leg LATCHES onto the ICBM's nose cone -- allowing the SPIDER-BOT to pull itself onto the speeding missile. As its thread-thin legs snake into the rocket's circuitry --

IN THE CARGO HOLD, Quest's fingers fly over the keys of his computer, remotely controlling the spider, using it to OVERRIDE THE ICBM's GUIDANCE CONTROL -- REDIRECTING IT --

QUEST

Got it! Jonny, get us out of here!

JONNY yanks the stick -- peeling the jet away, just as --

EXT. MIAMI BEACH - DAY

Sunbathers stare, point, as the ICBM SCREAMS toward them --

Changing course at the last possible second -- ROCKETING UP, UP, UP... Where it EXPLODES in the upper atmosphere.

LIGHT as BRIGHT as a thousand suns fills the sky. And in the cloud of smoke and coruscating dust that expands in its aftermath, we can see something hidden... beautiful and terrible... so quick, we think we might have imagined it.

We see the face of god. And then, in a blink, it's GONE.

All that's left is a SHOCK WAVE, rippling across the sky.

INT. JET - VARIOUS - DAY

The Quest team watches through the open cargo door -- through the windshield -- Ecstatic. They did it! Jonny lets out a whoop! Hadji opens his eyes, dropping six inches back into his seat. Exhausted. But beaming.

Quest powers the ramp shut. Jade reels Race back in. She grabs his harness, yanking him in close for a kiss, when --

THE SHOCK WAVE hits them like a MACK TRUCK --

IN THE COCKPIT, WARNING ALARMS WAIL. The DIALS GO DARK. Jonny wrestles with stick, but... he's lost all control.

Race RUNS through the cabin -- tailed by Jade and Quest -- leaps into the copilot seat -- seizing the second stick --

JONNY

I... I can't -- it's not responding. The engines are dead!

RACE

We're too heavy. We'll never pull outta this dive without the engines. Doc, can you get 'em up?

Quest hops on the console -- fingers flying, but --

QUEST

Not responding. The circuits are fried... wait. There's something here -- an emergency fail-safe -- But, I can't tell what it does.

RACE

Well, it can't make things worse. Everybody, strap in. I'm gonna try to set us down. Someplace close.

(to Jonny)

I'm gonna need your help on this, kid. Do what I say when I say --

JONNY

-- and we'll get along just fine?

Race grins. Damn it, but he likes this kid.

RACE

Everyone in? Then let's see what that button does. Punch it, doc!

Quest activates the fail-safe. A SHUDDER ROCKS the cabin as -- BOLTS EXPLODE OUT OF THE FUSELAGE -- POPPING OUT LIKE CHAMPAGNE CORKS. Then... nothing seems to happen. The ocean looms closer -- blasting toward them at incredible speed -- they can see the tiny islands of Florida's keys --

Knowing this might be the last chance he gets, Jonny calls:

JONNY

Dad? I'm sorry. For...
everything. I love you.

QUEST

I love you too, Jonny.

A moment as their eyes connect -- father and son -- then --

RACE

PULL UP, JONNY! PULL UP!

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Only the nose of the jet -- shuddering in the wind -- seems to angle up -- DETACHING ITSELF from the rest of the plane.

New, smaller WINGS fold out of its sides, allowing the new, lighter aircraft to pull out of the dive. That's what the fail-safe did... It transformed the cockpit into a GLIDER.

As the heavy tail section CRASHES into the ocean, the nosecone-cum-glider pulls up -- just enough to hit the water like a thrown stone. SKIPPING ACROSS THE WAVES.

IN THE COCKPIT

Race wrestles the controls -- Jonny too -- the windshield SHATTERS IN -- water hitting them like a firehose -- there's little they can do now but hold on and hope.

THE GLIDER CAREENS through the water -- clipping rocks and reefs -- RIPPING GAPING HOLES in the cabin walls --

Sand SPRAYS IN as they skew sideways -- ROLLING -- end over end -- then TREES -- PALM TREES -- snapping under its weight -- and finally, after what seems like an eternity...

The aircraft grinds to a slow, shuddering STOP.

RACE'S HAND appears from the hole where the windshield was. Pulls himself out. And what he sees outside...

Are white sand beaches. Lush green foliage. Paradise.

PALM KEY. They made it. They're alive. They're home.

Race looks back to make sure everyone's okay. A little worse for wear, but everyone seems fine. With one noticeable exception...

Jonny. He's GONE. A GIANT HOLE GAPING beside his seat.

QUEST

JONNY!

EXT. PALM KEY - DAY

An I-1 HELICOPTER sets down on the helipad. Corvin and Roberts step out, followed by Bandit. The second the dog hits the sand, he perks up. Sensing something.

He dashes out ahead of them, hurrying toward THE CRASH SITE, where Quest, Race, Hadji and Jade frantically search for Jonny. Calling out for him, but fearing the worst.

Bandit scampers into the waves. Emerging with something clenched in his teeth...

Jonny's collar. With Jonny attached. Soaked, but alive.

Quest runs to his son, grabs him in a bear hug, holding on for dear life. Jonny hugs him back. Dazed from the crash.

JONNY

I think I broke the plane, dad.

QUEST

(laughs)

Don't worry. We'll fix it.

Bandit licks Jonny's face. As he wrestles with his dog, Jonny sees Hadji watching. Feeling out of place. Jonny leads his dad and his dog over to him.

JONNY

Dad? This is Hadji. Hadji, this is my dad. Hadji's gonna come stay with us a while, okay?

QUEST

(he bows to the boy)

Namaste, Hadji. You can stay with us as long as you like.

As if to make it official, Bandit leaps on the Hindu boy, licking his face. As Hadji laughs, feeling like he truly belongs. For the first time in a long time...

Race watches from the beach. Grinning, despite himself.

JADE

I never thought I'd see the day.
Race Bannon goes soft. And over a kid, no less.

RACE

I hate kids.

She laughs. He turns. Earnest, maybe for the first time.

RACE

You know -- this probably sounds crazy -- but... why couldn't we go soft together? Here. We got sand. Surf. Flaming wreckage. What more could we want?

For a moment, she seems to be considering it, but, then...

JADE

It's tempting, I admit, but... The only kids I could stand being around would be my own, Roger.

(leans closer, whispers)

When I'm ready for that, I'll know where to find you.

He pulls her into a KISS, breathtaking against the pink hue of the setting sun. Then... as they come up for air...

She turns and goes. To where, we don't know... but, we know we'll see her again. After all, Jade is a survivor.

Finally, Corvin and Roberts make their way down the beach, flanked by agents. They hurry over to Quest and Race, shaking hands, congratulating.

CORVIN

You did it, Bannon. Dr. Quest. The country -- the world owes you both a debt of gratitude.

RACE

Not just us. We had some help.

Quest couldn't agree more. Jonny and Hadji exchange a look. Proud. But, the congratulations are short lived.

There's something else on the agents' minds:

ROBERTS

We realize the timing isn't ideal --

CORVIN

(brushes her lackey aside)

Look, we've found... well, we're not sure what it is.

(MORE)

CORVIN (CONT'D)

But, we need you to examine it
immediately. If you're up to it.

Quest considers, then nods.

QUEST

I'll need a team.

ROBERTS

You'll have the best. I-1. CIA.
NSA. Military. Whatever you need.

As Quest looks toward Jonny, Hadji, Race, and Bandit, we...

SMASH CUT TO:

THE QUEST TEAM

strapped into the cockpit of the refurbished jet. Race
yanks the throttle. The aircraft ROCKETS at incredible
speed. Taking off from an underground runway, emerging --

EXT. PALM KEY - DAY

From a hangar hidden in the side of a cliff. The sleek,
shining hull of their new QUEST JET flashing past,
emblazoned with a giant letter "Q".

And as they skim low across the water, dwindling off into
the sunset, we...

FADE OUT. ... For now.

