

**LADON**

Written By

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EXT. EAST CHINA SEA- NIGHT

EXTRA WIDE SHOT of a beached FISHING BOAT.

As we ZOOM IN, we hear two men fighting. One is tall and thin, almost unhealthily so. The other is short and fat. The TALL MAN paces around the course of the ship, which has a deep and jagged gash in it. The OTHER MAN scratches his head while flipping a paper map around and around.

MAN #1

(inspecting the damage)

Idiot, I can't believe you ran us aground.

MAN #2

(inspecting his map)

It's not my fault. There shouldn't be any ground here in the the first place.

The TALL MAN storms over to his companion and rips the map from his hands. He glares at it and tosses it back.

MAN #1

Well, you should still have been keeping your eyes open!

MAN #2

You know how many hours we have been at sea? Too many! You and your stupid dolphins. A man gets tired after all that chasing.

The TALL MAN has stopped listening. He turns his head this way and that and starts to step away.

MAN #1

(aside)

Where are we anyway?

The beach is rocky, but otherwise pristine. A TROPICAL RAINFOREST lies nearby.

MAN #1 (CONT'D)

(aside)

Can't be very big. I bet we could walk across.

(to his FRIEND)

You still know how to walk, don't you?

The SHORT MAN crosses his arms across his chest.

MAN #2

Ha, ha! Very funny. It won't be long before our food supply runs out...

(hugging his belly)

...and only I have the reserves to complete the journey.

The TALL MAN turns. He has a mischievous look in his eye.

MAN #1

Worse comes to worse, I'll just eat you then.

The TALL MAN snaps his gaunt jaws at him. His FRIEND takes a step back. The TALL MAN laughs.

His laughter is drowned out by a DISTANT SHRIEK. The SHORT MAN shivers.

MAN #2

Wh-what was that?

MAN #1

Probably just the wind. We've heard worse at sea.

MAN #2

Maybe we should just stay in the boat, wait for rescue.

MAN #1

And how will that rescue come? We can't call for help. Our instruments got fried by the wave that knocked us onto this stupid rock. C'mon, let's go!

The Tall MAN shakes his head and waves his FRIEND onward. The SHORT MAN hesitates. The TALL MAN marches toward him. Soon, he is bearing down over his FRIEND. The TALL MAN raises his hand into the air. The SHORT MAN winces.

The TALL MAN uses his raised hand to pull himself up into the BOAT.

MAN #1 (CONT'D)

Coward.

The SHORT MAN listens intently as the THIN MAN rummages through the wreckage and promptly returns out from inside it. He carries a BACKPACK full of supplies, a FLASHLIGHT, and a LARGE, METAL PIN in tow.

MAN #2

I didn't think you were actually going to hit me. I have a weak constitution, that's all.

The TALL MAN keeps on walking.

They depart from the beach and disappear into the TROPICAL RAINFOREST.

EXT. RAINFOREST- CONTINUOUS

The TWO MEN slough through the brambles, tripping over roots and rocks as they go.

The FLASHLIGHT only illuminates an THREE METER RADIUS in front of them. Beyond that, the LIGHT is lost in the hedges.

The TALL MAN use the PIN to push aside the low-hanging branches and thick foliage. The offset greens then immediately snap back and smack the OTHER MAN in the face.

MAN #2

Would you stop that?!

The TALL MAN stops.

MAN #1

What are you babbling about?

MAN #2

You keep smacking me in the face with those bushes.

The TALL MAN bows and sweeps a branch aside.

MAN #1

Oh, I'm sorry, your majesty. Shall I hold them while you pass by?

MAN #2

That would be nice.

The TALL MAN lets go. The branch in hand goes flying and smacks the SHORT MAN upside the head.

MAN #2 (CONT'D)

That's it!

The SHORT MAN lunges at his friend. They collide and drop down into the mud. Blood and dirt splash across their clothes as they roll around in the mud. Like pigs.

A SNARL sounds nearby. It is smaller and more staccato than

the ROAR before. It echoes through the trees and seems to come from all directions.

The TWO MEN pause.

MAN #2  
That's no wind.

The TALL MAN lets go of his friend and picks up the FLASHLIGHT and PIN.

MAN #1  
You may be right.

They rise to their feet, not even bothering to brush themselves off.

The SHORT MAN's knees knock together.

MAN #2  
I don't want to die here.

MAN #1  
Don't be such a baby. Just stick with me. You'll be fine.

The FLASHLIGHT BEAM moves quickly this way and that. The TALL MAN tries to follow the sound of their MYSTERIOUS COMPANY, but the sound skips around without rhyme or reason to it.

The FLASHLIGHT BEAM shakes. The TALL MAN looks down. His hand trembles. He seizes his right hand with his left one. The grip is so tight that his clenched fingers turn white.

The FOREST shifts around them. Both MEN breathe quickly, almost hyperventilating.

The SNARLING is very close now. The TWO MEN stand side by side, peering out into the darkness.

The NOISE stops.

The MEN look around. Left. Right. Left. Up. Down.

The BRANCH cracks behind them. They spin about.

The LIGHT reflects off a SKELETAL FRAME and LONG, JAGGED TEETH.

The CREATURE lunges at them. The TALL MAN raises his hands to guard his face. In doing so, he drops the flashlight.

ZOOM OUT: HORIZON

We see beyond the TOPIARY, up to the STARS. We hear the sound of SCREAMING. Then, silence.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. NAG HAMMADI DESERT- DAY

A HANDSOME, METROSEXUAL MAN, JASON CAMPBELL (40's), stands before his faithful BOOM OPERATOR and CINEMATOGRAPHER.

He fixes the collar of his TAN SHIRT and smiles for the camera.

JASON  
How do I look?

The CINEMATOGRAPHER gives him a thumbs-up.

CINEMATOGRAPHER  
Beautiful. We ready to do this thing?

JASON clears his throat.

JASON  
Just a sec. Could somebody be a dear and grab me a bottle of water? All this heat, dust, and what have you is really wreaking havoc on my vocal chords.

The BOOM OPERATOR sets down his shotgun mic and scurries off to fetch JASON water from the cooler.

He hands the man his DRINK, which JASON downs instantly.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Thanks, Jim.

BOOM OPERATOR  
Tim.

JASON  
Huh?

TIM  
My name... It's Tim.

JASON  
Of course it is. That's what I've been saying all along, haven't I?

TIM grimaces and pick his mic back up.

JASON  
Ok! All right then...  
(MORE)

JASON (CONT'D)

"Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascal ran." "Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascal ran." "Around the rugged rocks..."

He looks disapprovingly about him.

JASON (CONT'D)

So many rocks. Oh, well. Let's roll it and get back to actual civilization.

The CINEMATOGRAPHER counts down with his fingers.

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Filming in three, two, one...

JASON fixes his hair and brings his hands up, as if to hug the CAMERA.

JASON

Hello world, and welcome again to "The Mysteries of History." I am your host, Jason Campbell. We filming today in the Nag Hammadi Desert, where a treasure trove of ancient artifacts, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, have been found. We intend to dig deep into these desolate wastes in search of similar gems. What will we find? The Arc of the Covenant? Maybe even the whereabouts of the lost Garden of Eden. Wouldn't that be a delight? Join me now as we press boldly onward, intent on unlocking... "The Mysteries of the History."

JASON picks up a STRATEGICALLY-PLACED SHOVEL off the ground and plows it into the dirt without looking as where that SHOVEL is striking.

As he continues to plow into the hard earth, SOMETHING UNDERFOOT shatters.

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Cut!

The CINEMATOGRAPHER pokes his head out and away from his camera.

CINEMATOGRAPHER

What was that?

JASON looks down. He sees POTSHERDS in the rubble.

JASON

How should I know?

He leans down and starts to brush off the FIND. He spots the POTSHERDS.

JASON (CONT'D)

Sweet mercy, I think I may actually have found something...

The FILM CREW drops what they are doing and rushes over to their ILLUSTRIOUS HOST.

JASON (CONT'D)

Do we have one of those small scoopy-things?

TIM

A trowel?

All eyes turn to TIM. He shrugs.

TIM (CONT'D)

My girlfriend is really into gardening. It's all the rage on Pinterest right now.

JASON

Yes, get me one of those.

CINEMATOGRAPHER

We don't actually have one of those. You insisted on packing light, remember?

JASON

Damn. Why do you always have to do what I tell you?

TIM

Because you're the boss?

JASON

Oh, yeah. Well, I still need something to dig with. Jimmy, hand

JASON (CONT'D)

me your keys.

TIM  
It's Timmy... Tim.

JASON  
Huh?

TIM  
Whatever. What about your keys?

JASON  
My keys cost several hundred dollars to replace, whereas your keys can be coped at the nearest hardware store... wherever that is.

He gets lost in his own thought process for a moment, then reconstitutes himself.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Anyway, just hand them over.

TIM hands JASON his keys, who uses them to dig out the POTSHERDS.

Within a short while, he starts to sweat.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Jeez, it's hot. Deserts, go figure. Once in my life I'd like to dig up treasure in somewhere pleasant, like Maui.

CINEMATOGRAPHER  
My dad probably has a metal detector you can borrow.

JASON flips him off, then keeps digging.

He uncovers the lid of an EARTHEN JAR.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Look at this. This could be big. Barry, are you getting this?

BARRY slings his camera over his shoulder and carts it over JASON's way.

BARRY  
On it, Boss.

JASON waits until BARRY is right on top of him, then turns to face the camera.

When BARRY gives him the "go," JASON takes a breath and begins.

JASON

We've just made a ground-breaking discovery in the Nag Hammadi Desert. Here, buried in the coarse and blazing sand, lies a jar, which undoubtedly dates back untold millennia, before even the birth of Christ. To open it would be to pierce the veil of time and space, to connect with ancient civilization for departed from our down. Dare we bridge that gap? Yes, brave travelers, we will dare. We must. It is our duty to future generations to do so. Let's take look.

JASON opens the jar, reaches inside, and pulls out a SCROLL.

He holds it out in front of the camera.

JASON (CONT'D)

Behold! An ancient scroll, undoubtedly written in hieroglyphics, the language of the Egyptians who lived here so very long ago.

He unfurls the scroll. On it, a map has been drawn. The map bears the image of an ANGELIC FIGURE pointing to a UNKNOWN Island. Under the FIGURE'S HAND lies an assortment of LETTERS, feverishly written down.

JASON pauses.

JASON (CONT'D)

What luck! A map.  
(holding the map up to the camera)  
But where will it lead. Join us next time to find out here on...  
"The Mysteries of History."

JASON holds a dramatic pose until BARRY calls "cut."

TIM (CONT'D)

What does it say?

JASON rolls the map back up and hands it over to TIM.

JASON

How should I know? I'm not the expert. Here, give this to one of our people back at the station. They should be able to find someone who can make something of it... A lot of something, hopefully.

He rubs his hands together.

JASON (CONT'D)

Yep, I'm seeing bonuses for all of us this year, especially for me, cuz, you know, I found the thing.

TIM takes the map and inserts it into the closest available object: a THERMOS.

JASON (CONT'D)

Good job, team. That's a wrap.

JASON looks at his hands. They are covered in dirt.

JASON (CONT'D)

Does anybody have a towel?

EXT. RAINFOREST (DREAM SEQUENCE)

POV: FIRST PERSON.

JASON sprints through the RAINFOREST. He is breathing hard and glancing frequently over his shoulder, back at the FOLIAGE, which cracks and shatters not far from where he is.

SHRIEKS sound in the distance.

The UNSEEN CREATURE close in.

He keeps running, cutting through the brambles. They scratch his face and bat at his chest. He pays them no mind.

The CREATURE draw nearer.

A COLD SWEAT forms on JASON's brow.

He looks over his shoulder again, trips over a root, and falls face-first into the mud.

THICK, ODOROUS SALIVA drips down unto his forehead. Hot breath rustles the hairs on his head. He looks up.

A hideous BEAST, vaguely silhouetted by the moonlight, towers over him.

Its massive JAWS open wide.

He sees the inside of its mouth, then nothing.

INT. PLANE- LATER

JASON wakes suddenly, sweat flowing freely down his brow.

He is on the COMPANY JET, which currently transverses the airspace between CAIRO and NEW YORK.

TIM sleeps soundly across the way. BARRY slips JASON a wary eye.

BARRY

You all right there, Boss?

JASON

Yeah, fine. Thanks. Just acid reflux again. Too much coffee.

BARRY

Lifeblood of us all.

JASON

I hear you there.

BARRY

Night boss. See ya on the other side.

JASON

Night.

JASON rests back into his chair. BARRY closes his eyes and falls asleep.

JASON is about to join them in slumber when his PHONE rings. Irritably, he checks the number. The familiar digits force him to put a big smile.

JASON

Hey Gene, what's news?

GENE (O.S.)

Hey, there J. We've got a lead on your map. One of our guys in London says he knows a guy who can help us out. I'm redirecting your flight there now, should be there in an

GENE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
hour or two

                  JASON  
London...

He makes a stink-face.

                  JASON (CONT'D)  
Can't wait.

                  GENE  
He'll meet you at the airport.

                  JASON  
Sounds great.

                  GENE  
I tell you, J, we're talking big  
money if this thing is legit.  
Ratings too. Can't forget those.

                  JASON  
Oh, never.

                  GENE  
Truth be told, J, your show...  
It's not captivating the viewers  
like it used to, but this thing...  
Well, let's just say it could get  
your nuts out of the proverbial  
vice.

                  JASON  
Glad to hear that. Really I am.  
Absolutely relieved.

                  GENE  
Let's keep in touch, okay? I want  
to be in the know 24/7.

                  JASON  
Promise. Bye, Gene.

                  GENE  
Ciao. Just remember, if you smell  
blood in the water, bite.

GENE hangs up. JASON sticks his tongue out at his phone, then  
shoves it back in his pocket.

                  JASON  
London, huh? Well, pip pip  
cheerio.

JASON shakes his head.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Honestly, the things I do for a  
fast buck.

INT. AIRPORT- EVENING

JASON steps out onto the tarmac of LONDON-HEATHROW AIRPORT. He and his crew enter into the TERMINAL.

A DAPPERLY-DRESSED MAN (50's), with PEPPERED GREY, LIGHT-BROWN HAIR and CROCHETED CARDIGAN, walks up to them.

DAPPERLY-DRESSED MAN  
Jason Campbell?

JASON turns as he walks by.

JASON  
Yes?

The DAPPERLY-DRESSED MAN extends his hand to them.

DAPPER-DRESSED MAN  
Niguel O'Bannon , at your service.

JASON shakes NIGUEL's hand.

NIGUEL  
(gesturing to TIM and BARRY)  
This must be your film crew.

JASON  
Yeah, this is Barry Summers and  
Jim-

TIM  
Tim Le Guin.

They all shake hands like buddy-buddy chums.

JASON  
So, my producer says you can  
decode my map for me.

NIGUEL  
I will most certainly try.

JASON nods to TIM, who digs the THERMOS out from his satchel.

NIGUEL grimaces at the sight of HISTORY being stored in such a way.

TIM begins to screws off the cap. NIGUEL stops him.

NIGUEL

Not here! I mean, I have scarcely the instruments here to give it a proper look.

JASON

Yeah, I suppose you're right.

NIGUEL eyes the THERMOS.

NIGUEL

May I have it? For safekeeping? Antiquities are, after all, my specialty.

JASON

Sorry, but no. Anything happens to that thing on my watch, and I'm as good as dead.

NIGUEL

Of course. We in academia have a saying... "publish or perish." This is your big break, is it not?

JASON

That's what I'm hoping you'll tell me.

NIGUEL

Trust me, I hope sincerely hoping the same... you having gone through all the trouble of coming here and all.

NIGUEL waves them onward. They follow him to the BAGGAGE CLAIM, collect their gear, and head out onto the street.

NIGUEL

Your chariot awaits.

NIGUEL points to a brand new, waxed and flawless TOWN CAR.

JASON

Nice digs for an old professor.

NIGUEL

Let's just say the people here have a higher regard for great minds, more so that they do back in the States.

JASON

And yet they persist in using  
vinegar as a condiment. Go figure.

NIGUEL

(glaring at JASON)

Yes, well, it definitely keeps the  
flies away, doesn't it?

The FILM CREW loads its LUGGAGE into the town car and enter  
the vehicle. The car takes off, making good time on the hour  
plus drive from LONDON to OXFORD.

INT. TOWN CAR- CONTINUOUS

JASON shifts uncomfortably in his leather seat.

JASON

So what you the go-to guy for this  
little project of ours.

NIGUEL

Well, Mr. Campbell, I happen to  
hold a Doctor of Divinity from  
Oxford University, and specialize  
in an ancient cultures and  
literature.

JASON

Sounds impressive.

NIGUEL

It is. The doctorate is the  
highest honor an institution can  
dote on a man such as myself.

JASON

And do you teach there?

NIGUEL

When I'm not working on my own  
research, yes.

JASON

And is this map part of that  
research?

NIGUEL

Indeed. Like yourself, I have a  
benefactor, one who has put quite  
a bit of money into finding and  
deciphering the contents of that  
map.

JASON  
And that benefactor is?

NIGUEL  
All shall be revealed in time. For  
now, let us leave it as a bit of a  
surprise.

JASON crosses his arms.

JASON  
I hate surprises. In my  
experience, they're usually bad.

NIGUEL chortles.

NIGUEL  
If this map pans out, let me  
assure you, the surprise will be  
well worth the wait. Trust me.

INT. NIGUEL'S OFFICE- LATER

They stroll into NIGUEL'S OFFICE. The walls are lined with  
FADED BOOKS and MANUSCRIPTS. A HEAVY DESK made of TEREBINTH  
TREE takes up most of the available space.

DUSKY LIGHT filters in through a SMALL, SLATED WINDOW in one  
corner of the room. A FEW CHAIRS lie scattered about.

They walk straight up to the desk.

NIGUEL puts his hand out.

NIGUEL  
The map, please.

TIM hands it over.

NIGUEL carefully removes the MAP from its THERMOS and spreads  
it out over the DESK, then swings a LARGE, MAGNIFYING LENS  
over it.

He leans in and gazes intently down at the map.

The FILM CREW crowds in around him.

NIGUEL  
(irritably)  
Do be a dear and take a step back  
from the desk. You're blocking the  
light and casting a horrid shadow  
over the parchment.

They backpedal.

JASON

So, what's the diagnosis, Doc? Do we have the Real McCoy?

NIGUEL

Well, only carbon dating can tell us that for sure; but, yes, I believe is the case.

JASON

And what is it? That writing... Is it Egyptian? Sumerian? Hebrew?

NIGUEL

Actually, Mr. Campbell, it's Chinese.

JASON scratches his head.

JASON

Chinese? What's a Chinese artifact doing in a Semitic junkheap?

NIGUEL

The short answer is... it was carried there, probably during the Han Dynasty, when trade with the West was opened. Of course, we've seen maps similar to this pop up during in the Middle Ages, especially around the 1300's. Expeditions were launched to find this very Island, but none ever found it. It makes perfect sense though. Those maps located the Island in the Canary Islands, but that is because they were anglicized copies of the original.

JASON

Cheap knockoffs.

NIGUEL

Exactly. A Chinese philosopher made mention of this Island nine hundred years before those other maps were made.

JASON

Ouch. Sooo, okay. Everybody's

JASON (CONT'D)  
 looking for it. My question is  
 "why?"

NIGUEL  
 Because, Mr. Campbell, this Island  
 plays a role in the folklore of  
 almost every single ancient  
 culture, from the Jewish midrashim  
 to the Cherokee creation myths.

JASON  
 You mean-

NIGUEL  
 Yes. This place... is the cradle  
 of life itself.

JASON  
 (aside)  
 Eden...

NIGUEL  
 In which we born and from which we  
 were driven into parts unknown.

JASON'S jaw drops.

JASON (CONT'D)  
 I was right all along.

BARRY  
 (to NIGUEL)  
 Thanks, Professor. He'll be  
 rubbing this in until the ears  
 literally fall off our faces.

NIGUEL laughs.

NIGUEL  
 Occupational hazard, Mr. Summers.

JASON  
 Gene is gonna crap a brick when he  
 hears about this.

NIGUEL  
 Since we're nearly sixteen hundred  
 kilometers away, at least we have  
 no fear of being in the splash  
 zone.

NIGUEL receives a muted chuckle for his dry wit.

JASON

So, where do we go from here?

NIGUEL rolls up the map.

NIGUEL

I will talk to my benefactor.  
He'll be most insistent on seeing  
this map for himself, and meeting  
you, I'd suppose, as well.

JASON

What am I? Some kind of puppet or  
something? No way am I gonna get  
dragged around. Not before I get  
some real answers.

NIGUEL

(prim and properly)

All right, what would you like to  
know?

JASON does a double-take.

JASON

Well, for starters, who is this  
guy? And where is he taking us?

NIGUEL

His name is Chow Lin. He runs a  
rather lucrative pharmaceutical  
company out of Beijing. I'm sure  
he'll be wanting us to meet him  
there.

JASON nods.

JASON

All right... Makes sense. When do  
we leave?

NIGUEL

Almost immediate, I'd imagine. Can  
you handle that?

JASON

I'm an American. I can handle  
anything.

NIGUEL

Let's hope, for your sake, you're  
right.

NIGUEL hands TIM back the map.

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

Please do put this is something better than a Thermos. I think it deserves as much. Don't you?

INT. PLANE- LATER

The FOUR of THEM sit in a PASSENGER LINER headed towards their rendezvous with NIGUEL'S MYSTERIOUS BENEFACTOR.

As NIGUEL excuses himself to use the lavatory, the FILM CREW talks amongst itself.

TIM

What've gotten ourselves into?

JASON

I don't know, but it's big... and if it's big, it's exactly where we want to be.

TIM

But all this stuff about distant Islands and actual adventures, it all sounds like cuckoo-bananas. I mean, we get a script, we go the location, we shoot the script. End of story. This is a little beyond out comfort zone, definitely beyond mine.

BARRY

Tim is right, J. I mean, what do we know about any of this stuff? I'm just seeing this whole thing going downhill fast.

JASON rubs the bridge of his nose.

JASON

Look, I know it sounds a little sketch, but we've got to do this.

He sighs.

JASON (CONT'D)

Look, I didn't want to tell you guys this, but the execs... they're on the brink of pulling the plug on our show. We get those footage and, well, it could be a real game

JASON (CONT'D)  
changer for us.

BARRY  
(resignedly)  
There'll be other shows.

JASON  
For you guys, maybe. But me? Naw.  
I mean, who's gonna hire a hack TV  
personality?

BARRY  
Game shows?

TIM  
TMZ?

TIM snaps his fingers.

TIM (CONT'D)  
Plus, you could pop out a book or  
two. Real or fiction, doesn't  
really matter. In fact, I can  
hardly tell the difference  
anymore.

He rests his head in his hands.

JASON  
Yeah, but filming is in my blood.

BARRY  
I thought your dad was a janitor?

A beat.

JASON  
At a shoebox theater.

The GROUP grows silent. Barry nods.

BARRY  
All right, let's do it.

JASON's head rises perkily.

JASON  
Really?

BARRY  
Yeah. Why not? The industry's been  
sure shoring up recently. Too many  
mergers, too few jobs. Most  
everyone I know is scrambling even

BARRY (CONT'D)  
to get Webisode gigs. Who wants to  
compete in that mess?

JASON  
Friggin' YouTube.

TIM  
Yeah. It's the worst.

The FILMMAKERS look up... DIRECTLY INTO THE CAMERA.

INT. PENTHOUSE SUITE- LATER

The FOUR MEN stand outside a SET OF EXPANSIVE IRON DOORS.

NIGUEL  
Got the map?

TIM pulls it out. It is now encased in an AIRTIGHT, PLASTIC  
TUBE.

NIGUEL (CONT'D)  
Good. Now, please show some  
respect for the man. This isn't  
the time TO go in with guns  
blazing.

JASON  
Don't worry. We'll be cool.

NIGUEL  
Please do.

He knocks.

A DEEP, RESOUNDING VOICE sounds from within.

CHOW (O.S.)  
Enter.

TIM and BARRY push the doors open. JASON and NIGUEL walk right  
in.

Beyond the doors lies a SPACIOUS INTERIOR decorated in a  
MODERNIST STYLE. WINDOWS, taking up most of the out-facing  
wall, look out over the BEIJING CITYSCAPE.

In the center of the room stand THREE PERSONS, gathered around  
a MAN standing next to an OBSIDION GLOBE.

They are:

ANYA NABOKOV- A blond, keen-eyed pilot.

AZIZ CALGARI- A ripped and ogre-faced mercenary.

FRANCISCO POBLANO- A reserved and soft-joweled priest.

And at their center stand...

CHOW LIN- A man in a killer suit.

CHOW turns to address his new guests. The OTHERS turn with him.

CHOW

Welcome back, Dr. O'Bannon. I see you brought friends with you.

NIGUEL bows.

NIGUEL

May I present Mr. Jason Campbell, and crew.

TIM sheepishly waves "hi."

JASON bows.

CHOW

I watch your show. I must say, I find it quite amusing.

JASON

(coldly)

Glad you get a kick out it. And sorry to crash the party like this. If I'd known, I would have brought a gift.

CHOW points to the SCROLL in TIM's hand.

CHOW

I believe that is precisely what you did.

JASON looks over to the map.

JASON

Why, how thoughtful of me. That I did.

CHOW

(gesturing to the GLOBE)

May I offer you a drink first?

JASON

If this is a friendly meeting, then sure, I'd love one.

CHOW opens up the GLOBE. There is a bottle of Jägermeister inside, encircled by a set of sparkling SHOT GLASSES.

CHOW pours JASON a shot, which JASON takes and tips slightly towards NIGUEL.

JASON (CONT'D)  
To you, Sunshine.

CHOW pours himself a shot.

JASON kicks back his head and downs the shot.

CHOW  
And our future.

JASON kicks back his head and downs the shot. CHOW takes his sweet time.

CHOW (CONT'D)  
I trust Dr. O'Bannon has filled you in on why I have brought you here.

JASON  
More or less. You want the map.

CHOW  
Precisely.

JASON  
Once you have it, what are you going to do with it?

CHOW  
Find the Island, of course.

JASON  
And you have the means of doing that?

CHOW  
It's a tricky business, for sure. It is a floating Island after all. But our job was made significantly easier by two recent events: One is the finding of the map you hold in your hand. The other is a distress call placed a few days ago from a fishing vessel in the East China Sea. Between the two, I believe we can triangulate the exact whereabouts of the Island.

JASON

You sure about that?

CHOW

I am not a gambling man, Mr. Campbell. Not worth my time.

JASON

I can respect that. And who are the rest of these clowns?

CHOW

These clowns will be your traveling companions on your journey to the Island.

JASON

Who says I need company?

CHOW

I do. You must excuse me if I desire to protect my investment.

JASON

I'm more of a lone wolf, personally, but do what you gotta do. How we getting there?

CHOW

I will arrange a floatplane to take you to the location. From what Ms. Nabokov tells me, it should be about a five hour flight to the location. The Island can't be very big around, or else someone would have noticed it a long time ago. I'd say, for then, that if I send you out early enough, we could have you there and back again within a day.

JASON

Sounds too easy. You need all these people just go out on a little daytrip? What's the catch?

CHOW chews on his bottom lip. NIGUEL steps forward in his silence.

NIGUEL

Legend has it that the Island is guarded by a mythical beast. The

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

name of the beast changes from culture to culture. I'm particularly keen on its Greek name Ladon. It has a pleasant sort of ring to it, I think.

JASON

And is this Ladon guarding anything in particular?

NIGUEL

Also depends on the culture. Some would say the Gateway to Hell. Others, the Tree of Life.

JASON

Bit of a discrepancy there.

NIGUEL

Not necessarily. I've been studying this subject at length for some time. In my research, I've reduced the various myths to one common one. If you're interested, I'll tell you it to you.

JASON

If it's worth Mr. Lin's time, then I'm all yours, Cupcake.

All eyes turn to CHOW. He nods.

NIGUEL

In the beginning, God created man and coexisted with him in the place the Western world calls Eden-

CHOW

Mount Penglai in our own.

NIGUEL

Right. God and man coexisted until man rebelled against the Divine, and God was forced to expel Man from Paradise.

JASON

Sounds familiar enough.

NIGUEL

This is where it gets interesting... After God expelled

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

man from Eden, he set up a guardian to protect it so that Man would never again eat of its fruit.

JASON

Our beast?

NIGUEL

Precisely. Only it wasn't a beast at first. It was an angel, more beautiful and radiant than you could ever imagine. But, you see, when the Flood came and the people of the earth rushed back to Eden to seek shelter from certain doom, this angel, Astaroth by name, let them back into Eden, disobeying God's strict orders. As punishment, God turned him into the hideous beast, Ladon, which devoured the very men Astaroth had sworn to save. As the Deluge subsided, God took Eden and set it adrift upon the waters, with Ladon bound to it so as its unwitting protector... The souls of the departed spread out over the Earth, anywhere that water was not to be found, intent on having their revenge on God and His people.

JASON

The first demons.

NIGUEL nods.

NIGUEL

Or mogwai, yes, again depending on the culture. But that is another story entirely...

JASON

(to CHOW)

You buy all this?

CHOW

My father did, and his father before him and so on and so on. Now that I have the means to pursue it, how can I dishonor them by not testing to see if the legends are true.

JASON

And what's in it for you? You know, besides honor.

CHOW

If the beast truly exists, then so too is its keep: the fruits of Penglai, or as you would call it, the Tree of Eternal Life.

JASON

And you being the owner of a major pharmaceutical company...

CHOW

Could see extreme financial benefit in finding this fruit, breaking it down on the molecular level, and redistributing it to the masses.

JASON

And do I get a cut of it?

CHOW

Well, there are eight of us. So, it would be fair to say that you get an eight of the rewards.

JASON

Ok. And if it's a bust? I'm hanging my career on this thing. If it flops, I need a leg to stand on.

CHOW nods.

CHOW

The United States has been begging for the opportunity to penetrate into mainland China. If you go along with this, I could very easily broker you a deal that would land you at the forefront of that media penetration, a sort of entertainment ambassador, if you would.

JASON

Okay. I'm starting to like the sound of that. Last question: why me?

CHOW

Strange as it may seem, I need you, Mr. Campbell. In order for this campaign to work, only a person of your unique... reputation could carry the torch.

JASON

Go on...

CHOW

If Dr. O'Bannon tried to prove the existence of this Island to the scientific community, he would be laughed out of the room. The same goes for if I were to do the same before my board of trustees. But you, you make a living off of your outrageous claims. You've built up a following of people that would believe you even if you said the sky were purple. For that reason, you are the final piece of the puzzle. With you and your team, I am complete. Would you be that man for me, Mr. Campbell?

JASON pauses, then lifts his empty shot glass.

JASON

Keep the shots flowing, and you've got your man.

CHOW

Excellent, then get a good rest. We leave tomorrow.

INT. PLANE- THE NEXT DAY

The GROUP sits inside a FLOATPLANE soaring over the SOUTH CHINA SEA. ANYA consults with NIGUEL at the front of the plane, as together they plot out the coordinates to head to.

The OTHERS simply laze about. All, that is, except for JASON who is visibly unsettled by the man sharpening his HUNTING KNIFE during the duration of the flight.

JASON

So, where do you come in?

AZIZ

Well, if that beast actually

AZIZ (CONT'D)  
exists, someone has to kill it.

JASON  
And you're just the man for the  
job?

AZIZ  
Its head will look nice mounted on  
my wall.

JASON  
I admire a man with a strong sense  
of interior design... Do have a  
lot of animals, you know, on that  
wall?

AZIZ  
A fair share. Even got to take  
home the brown bear I brought down  
in a cage match in the Ukraine.

JASON  
Really? Did you kill it with your  
bare hands?

AZIZ glares at JASON as he unbuttons his shirt. THREE LENGTHY  
SCARS mark the front of his hairy chest.

AZIZ  
Got this in that match. Nearly  
took my life.

JASON  
Must've hurt like a mother.

AZIZ  
Oh, it did.

JASON  
How do you think the beast on the  
Island will measure up?

AZIZ  
Don't know. Half the fun is  
finding out.

A beat.

JASON  
Man, I wish I had been there, for  
that cage match. Would have made  
for some great cinema!

AZIZ goes back to sharpening his knife.

AZIZ

That's people for you. Everybody  
wants to film the world as it  
burns to the ground.

ANYA tilts her head back toward the rear of the CABIN.

ANYA

Everyone return to their seat and  
buckle up. We should be landing  
soon.

All eyes face front.

They dive into A THICK CLOUD OF MIST.

NIGUEL checks the map.

NIGUEL

Where is it? We should be right  
there.

Just then, the PEAK OF MOUNT PENGLAI comes into view... right  
in front of them.

ANYA jerks on her steering column.

ANYA

This is not gonna be good.

The PLANE jerks to the side.

It's RIGHT WING clips the side of the MOUNTAIN, tearing a  
chunk of the wing right off.

The PLANE starts into a spin.

CHOW

What's going on?

ANYA

We hit the side of the mountain.  
Don't worry we've got this under  
control.

ANYA fights hard against her own controls. She even begins to  
get a little headway on the situation before the DAMAGED WING  
breaks off entirely.

ANYA (CONT'D)

Then again, maybe not.

The PLANE breaks into a tailspin.

ANYA (CON'D)

Hang on, everybody! This isn't  
going to be pretty landing, but  
Lord willing it will be a landing.

The PLANE plummets. The OCEAN swells upward. The PILOT jerks  
on the controls just in time to pull the NOSE of the PLANE up  
just enough so that it doesn't dive head first into the water.

The PLANE skips across the waves. Cartwheeling. Tumbling.  
Tearing apart.

Inside, bags and gear go flying. The PASSENGERS are jostled  
about, shaken like a rag doll.

The PLANE hits sand hard and skids to halt. The WINDOW GLASS  
shatters. The HULL crunches like a tin can. The ENGINE is left  
smoking, but relatively intact.

It takes a few moments for the TRAVELERS to decide whether to  
move or not, to decide if the ordeal is over. Gradually, they  
pull themselves shakily up from their seats.

CHOW

Is everyone all right?

ANYA

(from the cockpit)

Been better.

ANYA face and skin are all of cut up.

A HUNK OF METAL has pinned NIGUEL'S leg to the wall.

ANYA (CONT'D)

Dr. O'Bannon will require some  
assitance.

AZIZ

Let me give it a look.

AZIZ hurries to NIGUEL'S aide, takes hold of metal, and starts  
to pull.

NIGUEL

Bloody hell!

AZIZ

I know, right?!

(to ANYA)

You sure do know how to make an  
entrance.

ANYA

Go big or go home, right?

Further down in the CABIN, BARRY holds up his camera bag.

BARRY

Camera's probably toast. Got shaken up like dice during the crash.

JASON

Oh, no. Really. Man! Check it. That thing's our ticket to Easy Street.

BARRY

Yeah, well, we seem to have gotten off at the wrong stop.

BARRY digs into the bag. The BODY of the camera remains intact. The LENS is cracked.

BARRY

Lens is cracked. Otherwise, it's okay.

JASON

Can we still shoot?

BARRY

Yeah. I mean, the image'll look wonky, but yeah, it'll do.

JASON

Good. We can make the crack work in our favor. It'll add to the realism.

He turns to TIM.

JASON (CONT'D)

How about you, buddy boy? You doing all right?

TIM nods.

TIM

A little worse for wear, but, yeah, I'll live.

JASON

Good times. And the mic?

TIM lifts up the MIC, encased in a furry sheath.

TIM

Wind sock must've cushioned the fall. We're good to go there.

JASON

Great. All right. We're still in business!

Having heard the whole conversation, FRANCISCO shakes his head.

FRANCISCO

I can't believe you three. How can you focus on such small, insignificant things at a time like this?

JASON

Because those are the things we can control, Father. The rest, well that's in the hands of God.

NIGUEL screams. The veins in AZIZ's veins protrude out from under his skin as he removes the metal from his leg.

AZIZ

Man, it's really stuck in there. Come on you stubborn piece of...

The METAL pops out. AZIZ goes flying back.

AZIZ (CONT'D)

Sheet metal!

NIGUEL glances down at his crushed and bloodied legs.

AZIZ

Looking at it will only make it worse. Pain is mostly mental.

NIGUEL

This is far from mental, Mr. Calgari.

AZIZ

Yeah, well, we'll get you bandaged up and you'll be back in your nice, warm study before you can say "research paper."

AZIZ pats him on the shoulder.

AZIZ (CONT'D)

Just let us know if you feel like you're going to pass out, okay?

NIGUEL

Will do.

AZIZ turns ANYA.

AZIZ

You doing okay? Want to see if I  
can find some bandages for those  
wounds?

ANYA shakes her head.

ANYA

Just attend to the professor. I'll  
take care of myself.

AZIZ

Woman after my own heart.

He sticks his head into the cabin.

AZIZ (CONT'D)

All right, everyone. Let's move  
out.

EXT. BEACH- MORNING

The TRAVELERS exit the downed plane.

AZIZ helps NIGUEL out the door.

AZIZ

Easy now. Easy. We'll take this  
one step at a time.

NIGUEL

Tall order for one that doesn't  
have access to both his feet.

AZIZ

Would somebody give me a hand  
here?

FRANCISCO approaches. AZIZ hands NIGUEL down to him.

AZIZ (CONT'D)

Thank you, Father. If you could  
take this one somewhere level and  
dry, that would be most  
appreciated.

FRANCISCO

Why certainly. After all, finding  
solid ground is my specialty.

A beat.

AZIZ

Sure you're right. I'm going to check on the rest of the plane.

FRANCISCO

Go with God, my son.

AZIZ nods and turns back into the plane.

CHOW sits on one of the SEATS inside.

AZIZ

You doing all right, Mr. Lin?

CHOW lifts his head up from staring at the floor.

CHOW

Yes, fine. Quite all right. Just a little rattled. That's all.

AZIZ

Yeah, well, you might want to do your recuperating outside. I don't know how long this old girl'll hold together.

CHOW

Of course. Mr. Calgari?

AZIZ

Yes?

CHOW

Do you believe... In the legends? Do you suppose they're really true?

AZIZ

I believe whatever I'm paid to believe. The rest is just details. Right now, I'm just concerned about getting Dr. O'Bannon back into working order. After that, I can start to worry about ghost stories.

CHOW nods.

CHOW

A praise-worthy approach.

They exit the plane.

EXT. BEACH- MORNING

AZIZ wanders passed FRANCISCO as he lays NIGUEL down.

AZIZ

I'm going to go get some wood for  
the splint.

NIGUEL

Very good. I'll try not to run  
away in the meantime.

AZIZ disappears into the forest.

FRANCISCO turns to the PROFESSOR.

FRANCISCO

You're quite lucky, you know? They  
way we hit... It could have all  
turned out much worse.

NIGUEL

Yes, well the journey has only  
just begun.

JASON and his CREW walk up to to ANYA, who is nursing her  
wounds.

JASON

Mind if we do a little interview?

ANYA

Not quite looking picture perfect  
at the moment. I didn't think you  
could shoot a woman if she wasn't  
looking her best.

JASON

It's a character piece. It'll be  
fine.

JASON gestures to BARRY to roll camera.

BARRY takes out his and starts to film.

POV: CAMERA.

JASON (CONT'D)

Hello brave adventurers, we're  
here

JASON (CONT'D)

today with a very special edition  
of "Mysteries of the Sciences."

(MORE)

JASON (CONT'D)

We have followed the map found in the Nag Hammadi Desert to a mysterious Island in the East China Sea, where it is believed that the elusive Garden of Eden is said to reside...

(turning to ANYA)

With me today is Anya Nabokov, our pilot on the journey, who saved us all just recently when our plane suffered a fatal mechanical failure. Tell me Ms. Nabokov, how did you do it?

ANYA

(gently)

You just keep a level head, you know? You don't give into pressure and tell yourself everything'll be fine. In my experience, if you do that, everything works out in the end.

JASON

Wise words indeed... The fact remains that we are now stranded on this Island, with only the hope of finding the Garden to compel us onward. And that is exactly what we will do, brave adventurers: we will press on... For you, for history. Nothing can detain us from unlocking "The Mysteries of the History."

BARRY waves cut.

JASON

You were great, a complete natural.

ANYA

Doesn't matter. I'm not here to win brownie points with an audience that doesn't give a rip about me.

JASON

You should care. It's all about perception. We're judged every day in the eyes of John Q. Public. That goes for whether you're a celebrity

JASON (CONT'D)  
like me or your average Joe.

ANYA  
And which of those categories do I  
fall in?

JASON  
Stick we me, baby, and you can be  
anything you want be. I can be  
your ticket to the stars.

ANYA  
If that ticket comes with a brand  
new airplane, I'll take it.  
Otherwise, buzz off.

JASON  
Your loss. Think about it.

He turns to his crew.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Come along, men. We have other  
interview to do... Hopefully with  
more appreciative people.

He wanders off.

POV: EYES in the FOREST.

They watch the TRAVELERS from a distance...

The FILM CREW doing their interviews. The FATHER carrying for  
the INJURED. The WOMAN staring out into space. The BUSINESSMAN  
pacing, pacing, pacing.

A low, menacing HISS ripples through the air.

EXT. BEACH- LATER

FRANCISCO sits next to NIGUEL.

FRANCISCO  
We should not have come here. This  
place is cursed.

NIGUEL  
You didn't have to come, you know.

FRANCISCO

The Archdiocese wasn't about to let a bunch of ne'er-do-well trump all over sacred ground without adequate

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

supervision.

NIGUEL

Yes, well, look and see how positively your presence has impacted the journey.

FRANCISCO

These are warnings. They have nothing to do with any of us directly and all to do with the fact that we are here at all. I fear that these warnings will only become graver as well press on.

NIGUEL

It is that kind of defeatist think that has kept the church back all these years.

FRANCISCO

It has also kept it alive as well, Doctor.

NIGUEL

If you want to call that living. Meanwhile, science presses forth, exploring, maturing, evolving. It will only be a matter of time before everything that is considered "sacred" and miraculous by your kind of people is categorized, stripped of its mysticism, and sold at the nearest drug store... It is therefore only fitting you and Mr. Chow are here on this journey together. He is, after all, your replacement.

FRANCISCO

And what about you? What are you in all of this?

NIGUEL

Me? I am just the facilitator.

FRANCISCO  
The Devil's handyman.

NIGUEL  
Call me what you will. It will all  
become moot in time. Just you wait

NIGUEL (CONT'D)  
and see.

FRANCISCO  
We shall see. We shall see indeed.

EXT. BEACH- LATER

AZIZ emerges from the brambles. JASON looks up from taking  
sound bytes and waves at him.

JASON  
Hey, old Stone-face is back!  
What's the news from the  
Homefront, dude?

AZIZ approaches, carrying the sticks and vines he set out to  
get, as well as a few extra goodies.

AZIZ  
There is something out there.

BARRY  
Like what?

AZIZ  
Don't know, but I heard it in the  
distance. Stirring.

JASON  
Ooh, mysterious.

Aziz glares at him.

He drops the sticks and lifts up a BLOOD-COVERED BACKPACK.

AZIZ  
I also found this.

TIM steps forward.

TIM  
Is that blood?

AZIZ  
It's not chocolate syrup, that's  
for sure. No sign of a body.

JASON  
(unfazed)  
Anything worthwhile inside?

AZIZ  
Bandages. A little bit of food.

JASON  
Good. I'm starved.

AZIZ  
We'll have ration them out. Who knows how long we'll have to survive off them with the plane gone.

JASON  
Any blankets in that mystery sack of yours?

AZIZ  
No.

JASON  
(toward ANYA)  
Guess we'll just have to huddle together for warmth then.

ANYA sticks her tongue out at him.

JASON (CONT'D)  
(to AZIZ)  
I like your toothpick, by the way. Very novelty. I'm seeing Texas roadstop.

AZIZ tightens his hold on the METAL PICK. ANYA steps in.

ANYA  
Hey, don't knock it. Things like that, they can come in handy, might even save your life.

JASON  
Right. I knew I should have flossed before I came here.

AZIZ bends down and begins to wrap NIGUEL'S wound.

AZIZ  
This should work all right. Just try keep the pressure off it as much as you can.

NIGUEL

Oh, certainly. It's not like I need it to walk or anything.

NIGUEL turns away.

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

Sorry. I don't know what came over me.

AZIZ

It's human nature. Tempers get high. People get crazy. That's all there is.

FRANCISCO

Am I really the only one here believes there are forces at work beyond those of physical nature at work here?

ANYA chimes in from a short distance away.

ANYA

I believe you, Father. I chose to believe.

NIGUEL shakes his head.

NIGUEL

That's all it is, a choice. A matter of opinion. I will rest on the bedrock of fact any day.

FRANCISCO

We all must make our bed sometime.

NIGUEL

I made mine a long time ago.

ANYA

Why are you even here then? I mean, if you're convinced that all religion is a bunch of nonsense, why go through all the effort to lead us here at all? You did the research. You made it happen. Why?

NIGUEL

Because I think even if you were to remove all the superstition from this Island, I would still find value in it.

(MORE)

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

That is what drives me crazy about organized religion: it tries to remove value from human experience if it's not tied something beyond us, outside of us. As if we weren't good enough... In

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

ancient times, people accredited droughts and thunderstorms, pestilence and tsumanis to some enraged deity. Now we know there are such a things as weather patterns and gravity. That does not diminish the power and majesty of those forces. I still stare out in wonder at the evening sky, despite the fact that I know there's nothing beyond it.

ANYA

But doesn't it frighten you to know that this is all there is?

NIGUEL

No. This is enough. Of course, it really doesn't matter what I believe or you believe, as long as we make it to the top of that mountain and each find the answers we are looking for.

AZIZ

The man has a point. We can continue this argument along the way, but we still have a long journey ahead of us.

JASON

No sense in wasting daylight.

AZIZ helps NIGUEL up and hands him the METAL PICK.

AZIZ

You'll need this. For balance.

NIGUEL takes hold of the object.

NIGUEL

Much obliged.

CHOW approaches.

CHOW  
How we looking?

The TRAVELERS look back and forth between themselves.

AZIZ  
Just about ready to leave.

JASON  
I tell you though, I sure am in  
the wrong business. I've been  
doing documentaries all this time,  
but you guys- you make me want to  
explore a whole new genre: reality  
TV!

There is a COMMUNAL GROAN.

EXT. RAINFOREST- DAY

The GROUP sloughs through the Island's uneven and sodden  
terrain.

JASON looks around.

JASON  
Wow! Would you take a look a this  
place? It's like something out of  
"Jurassic Park."

BARRY and TIM mosey along.

TIM  
I don't know about you, but I  
wouldn't mind in the least if  
there weren't some big-ass  
creature at the end.

BARRY  
Same here. I've seen enough wild  
animals in my day. You know,  
before I got hooked up with  
"Mysteries," I used to film them-  
animals- for National Geographic.  
We'd shoot stock footage for kinds  
of things, including those IMAX  
productions everyone loves.

TIM  
Why'd you stop?

BARRY shrugs.

BARRY

Dunno really. I was offered the job at "Mysteries" and that was it. No rhyme or reason to it.

TIM

Would you go back?

BARRY

Though about it... Especially with a boss like ours.

JASON

(from a distance)

I heard that!

BARRY

I was hoping you would.

A beat.

TIM

I did Public Broadcasting for this. Kids shows. Last one was "Wakey, Wakey Eggs and Bakey, with Michigan Jones."

BARRY

Michigan?

TIM

Michigan.

BARRY

That a chick or a dude?

TIM

A man.

BARRY

Poor guy... How about you? Would you ever go back?

TIM

Don't think so. All that off-tune singing. I can barely stand to hear myself sing in the shower...

BARRY laughs.

BARRY

Heck of a thing.

Up ahead, NIGUEL stumbles and falls.

TIM rushes over to him.

TIM  
Hey, you okay?

NIGUEL  
Fine, thank you.

TIM helps him up and hands the PICK back to him.

TIM  
How's the leg?

NIGUEL  
Not good.

TIM  
Need a hand?

NIGUEL  
No. What good am I if I can't even  
hold my own?

TIM  
But that's what we're for.

NIGUEL  
You're a good man.

TIM  
You're not so bad yourself.

They continue along.

TIM (CONT'D)  
What's it like, being a professor  
at a major university?

NIGUEL  
Oh, it's a lonely business. Even  
when Academics are together,  
they're always in their heads.

TIM  
Sounds horrible.

NIGUEL laughs.

NIGUEL  
It can be, but you get used to it.

TIM  
My girlfriend is studying to be a  
teacher. Any advice?

NIGUEL

Sure. Develop a thick skin.

AZIZ thrusts a fist into the air. EVERYONE stops.

He sniffs the air.

AZIZ

It's coming.

JASON

What's coming?

AZIZ

Don't know. Don't really want to find out.

The GROUP looks around.

In the distance, branches start to CRACK. Bushes RUSTLE.

A cold, sweat gathers on the Jason's brow.

JASON

What's the plan, Stan?

AZIZ

Stay together and stay calm.

JASON

A lot better than panic and freak out I guess. Any other bright ideas.

AZIZ

Look for shelter.

The SOUNDS become louder. MOVEMENT is joined by an unnerving SHRIEK.

ANYA

It's getting closer.

CHOW

We're sitting ducks if we stay here much longer.

NIGUEL

I'll stay here, serve as a distraction.

All eyes turn to the PROFESSOR.

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

It's the only logical way. That will buy you enough time to make a break for it.

AZIZ

Don't know how far we could get, especially if it's fast.

NIGUEL

Can you think of a better option?

He hands the PICK to ANYA.

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

Here you are dear. I doubt I'll be needing it much longer.

She takes possession of the PICK.

AZIZ hands NIGUEL his knife.

AZIZ

Perhaps you'd prefer a knife instead. I never care to leave a man behind unarmed.

NIGUEL

If you insist, though I never was one for violence.

AZIZ

You may need to be.

NIGUEL

(taking the knife)

And thus, out of necessity, we cut off our nose to spite our face.

TIM looks in tears at the PROFESSOR.

TIM

(woebegone)

Are you sure you want to do this?

NIGUEL

It's as good a path as any. At least then, I'll have served a higher purpose.

TIM

Then let me stay with you.

BARRY and JASON turn.

BARRY

Tim, no!

TIM

No one should have to die alone.

JASON

You're all talking crazy talk.  
This is no time for heroism. Get  
your butt in gear, Timothy. We've  
got a special to shoot!

TIM tears up.

TIM

You got my name right. After all  
these years.

JASON pauses.

JASON

Yeah, I guess I did.

TIM steps away from the rest of the group.

TIM

Hope the film turns out well.

JASON

(clearing his throat)  
It will.

TIM takes a seat beside NIGUEL.

AZIZ

All right, enough with the  
sentimentality. It's closing in  
fast.

The GROWLS grow louder still.

NIGUEL turns to the PRIEST.

NIGUEL

If you do in fact find God on that  
mountain, tell him I tried.

FRANCISCO

As you wish, my son.

The PRIEST flashes NIGUEL the SIGN OF THE CROSS.

The GROUP pushes farther into the FOREST.

Once they are out of sight, NIGUEL raises his knife up towards  
Heaven.

NIGUEL

Dinner is served, you damned blood  
beast!

CUT TO: THE OTHER TRAVELERS.

The TRAVELERS make it a good distance before they hear TIM  
scream.

JASON tears up a bit. CHOW sets a hand upon his shoulder.

JASON

He was a good guy, even if I never  
managed to get his name right.

CHOW

He died honorably.

JASON

(with graveyard humor)  
Now I have to add an "in memoriam"  
to the special. Always kills the  
mood.

ANYA, AZIZ, and FRANCISCO walk together.

ANYA

You know what's awful? I couldn't  
stand that O'Bannon character  
while he was here. Now, he's gone,  
I wish he were back. Could have  
told us something about what we're  
up against.

AZIZ

Cruel irony, I suppose.

ANYA

I guess.

AZIZ turns to FRANCISCO.

AZIZ

What would you use to fight a  
mythical beast, Father?

FRANCISCO

My battlefield is usually against  
the unseen forces of darkness. A  
physical manifestation of it is  
something I am unfortunately  
unfamiliar with.

AZIZ

So, if we needed to exorcise the beast, you'd be down?

FRANCISCO

Precisely... However, if I were to guess, I would say that in order to defeat a foe composed of both physical and spiritual negative matter, you would need a weapon of the same sort, only composed of good.

AZIZ

And where would one get such a weapon, I wonder?

FRANCISCO

That, Mr. Calgari, is the question I fear we will need to answer, if we are to make it off this mountain alive.

AZIZ

One of those "Mysteries of History" Mr. Campbell talks about?

FRANCISCO

Indeed. With O'Bannon gone, we might just need to keep him around.

AZIZ

Damn. He was only one I wouldn't mind feeding to the beast.

They both smile.

JASON

(from a distance)  
I heard that one too.

EXT. RAINFOREST- LATER

The group has consolidated into one massive blob.

JASON does his best to keep up with AZIZ. He struggles the whole way.

JASON

Bet you never get scared, huh, big guy?

AZIZ

No.

JASON

Must be nice. Off the record, this whole situation is starting to scare the snot out of me.

AZIZ

Truth be told, a little fear of God might be useful to keep people like us from getting into situations like this in the first place.

JASON

Valid point.

A beat.

JASON (CONT'D)

But, now that we're here, what's your life hack, your secret to fearless living.

AZIZ

There is no trick, really. I've just faced death enough times that it doesn't really faze me anymore.

JASON

So, no Tai Chi or meditation between kills?

AZIZ

Not unless you've been watching way too many kung foo movies in your spare time.

JASON

Kung foo? Funny, with all those people dying around us, I'd swear we follow solidly in the Horror genre...

They share a moment of silence.

AZIZ

You strike me as a funny man, Mr. Campbell.

JASON

Why, thank you, sir! I applaud your good taste.

AZIZ  
Want to hear a joke?

JASON  
Sure. Lay it on me.

AZIZ  
Knock, knock.

JASON  
Who's there?

AZIZ  
Shut up.

JASON makes a face.

AZIZ stops.

The OTHERS stop with him.

He motions for everyone to stop with him.

JASON  
Criminiy! What now?

AZIZ peer behind him, back into the depths of the forest.

AZIZ  
It's doubling back.

JASON  
For real.

AZIZ  
Pretty sure, and coming fast.

AZIZ snorts.

AZIZ (CONT'D)  
Run.

EVERYONE stares at him confusedly for a moment, as if he were speaking a foreign language.

AZIZ (CONT'D)  
F'in run!

THEY break into a sprint.

The branches and brambles behind them begin to snap. A TIDAL WAVE of motion and commotion sweeps towards them.

They move fast, but the CREATURE moves faster.

Soon, it is upon them. It LEAPS...

And lands right in front of them.

They stand in awe at the BEAST: BIPEDAL; WHIP-LIKE TAIL; SKELETAL FRAME; SHARP TALONS; BAT-LIKE WINGS; RAZOR SHARP FANGS.

The GREAT DRAGON, LADON, has arrived.

It SHRIEKS at them.

AZIZ  
Everyone go wide!

The GROUP scatters.

The CREATURE nips at them as they pass by. Like, the best of HUNTERS it picks out a target, separates it from the group, and goes for the kill.

It's target: THE REMAINING FILM CREW.

LADON sprints after JASON and BARRY, who dart frantically through the brambles.

It snaps at BARRY, catching his arm.

BARRY screams.

BARRY  
Jason, help me!

JASON turns.

The CREATURE jerks its neck, snapping BARRY's arm and jerking him to the ground.

JASON stands nonplussed before his friend and watches helplessly as LADON rips off BARRY's head.

JASON throws up.

JASON  
Sorry, Bare.

The CREATURE looks towards JASON. They stare into each other's eyes for a moment.

The CREATURE snarls.

JASON runs.

He rushes through the forest. The CREATURE gains on him.

He looks back and sees little more than teeth.

He trips and falls over a root.

He looks up.

LADON stands before him. It cocks its head back, ready make the kill.

JASON throws his hands in front of his face...

ANYA throws the METAL PICK into the CREATURE's head.

As LADON reels back, shrieking, ANYA steps into view and waves JASON on.

He jumps up and takes off.

The CREATURE breaks the PICK in half.

By then, JASON is making tracks with his HEROINE.

ANYA

Told you it might come in handy.

JASON

(panting)

Never been more happy to be wrong.  
Where are the others?

ANYA

Don't know. We got separated.

JASON

Guess we've to blaze our own path,  
then. You and me... Taking on the  
world.

ANYA

Heaven help us all.

In the distance, the infuriated CREATURE shrieks.

JASON (CONT'D)

When the time comes, I'm going to  
enjoy killing that thing.

ANYA

Likewise, my friend.

EXT. RAINFOREST- LATER

CHOW steps cautiously through the angry jungle.

CHOW

Mr. Calgari? Mr. Campbell?  
Anybody?

The ferns rustle in front of him. He leaps back.

FRANCISCO steps out from the glade.

FRANCISCO

Mr. Lin? It's good to see you.

CHOW

Likewise.

FRANSICO

Have you seen the others?

CHOW

No. I lost them in the chaos.

FRANCISCO

Poor souls. I hope they are all  
right.

CHOW

We'll find them. The gods are with  
us. They must be. They lead us  
here after all.

FRANCISCO

Really? I would have come to the  
opposite conclusion: that it was  
our own blind ambition that lead  
us here and we are now simply  
reaping the rewards of our  
actions.

CHOW

I know in my heart of hearts that  
great good would come out of this  
journey, should we are able to  
finish it, though my motives for  
going on it were initially... Far  
from selfless. So, I suppose the  
question is: are we to be judged  
on who we were, who we are, or on  
who we could be... one day?

FRANCISCO

I suppose, since God exists  
outside of time, it's a little bit  
of all three.

CHOW

I would love to see what He sees,

CHOW (CONT'D)

to stand stand in the presence of  
my father and all our and  
ancestors, to look down on this  
world with new eyes.

FRANCISCO

It would be glorious, indeed.

CHOW

Something to look forward to.

FRANCISCO

Yes. That it is.

ZOOM OUT: The TWO MEN walk side-by-side toward the MOUNT with  
still a long way left to go.

EXT. RAINFOREST- LATER

JASON and ANYA sit in the hollow of tree.

JASON

I can't believe it. Barry. Tim. I  
was right there, and I ran away.  
What a coward, right?

ANYA

There was nothing you could do.

JASON

Some friend. Both of them gone in  
a matter of moments. They had  
lives, families, friends,  
Pinterest boards... All thrown  
away cuz of me.

ANYA sighs.

ANYA

We all make mistakes.

JASON

Yeah, what do you know about it?

She pauses.

ANYA

A good deal actually.

She sighs.

JASON

Is this where you tell me some

JASON (CONT'D)

sob-story that makes me feel all  
good inside?

ANYA

You've got me that dialed, do you?  
Got everyone that dialed in.

JASON

It's what I do. Cut. Copy. Paste.  
The Universe reduced to a  
soundbyte. If I can't shrink it, I  
can't sell it. That's how I live.

ANYA

It's a big world out there. Maybe  
if you open your mind a little,  
you'll see it.

JASON

You know what's the sad thing?  
That's exactly why I signed up to  
do this stupid show. I wanted to  
see the world, more than just LA;  
but, the more places I went, the  
smaller the world got. After all,  
no matter what new things I see,  
I'm the same old me.

ANYA

Perhaps you need a new "you" then.

JASON

Maybe this Elixir of Life thing,  
maybe that's just what I need.

ANYA

A new life...

JASON

A new hope...

ANYA

A new love.

She kisses him, then pulls back.

ANYA

Sorry. That was... Improper.

He kisses her back.

They kiss again. And again. And again.

Touching lips. Touching skin. Diving deep.

They forget the world, the beast, everything... in the SOFT MOSS, the hollow of that TREE.

CUT TO: AZIZ

AZIZ lifts a bloodied head from up in the earth. He sniffs the air and smiles...

Then continues on his way.

EXT. MOUNTAIN BASE- LATER

FRANCISCO and CHOW reach the base of MOUNT PENGLAI.

FRANCISCO

Well, here we are.

CHOW

At long last. You ready?

FRANCISCO laughs.

FRANCISCO

I suppose I need to be.

CHOW

Yes, I suppose so. Let's make our ancestors proud.

A SHADOW falls upon them.

They turn.

There, standing beside them, is NIGUEL, holding a BLOOD KNIFE and a MAKESHIFT.

They each take a step back.

CHOW (CONT'D)

Dr. O'Bannon!

FRANCISCO

We were sure you died...

NIGUEL

Yes, will I nearly did. The beast was closing in fast. It nearly got me. Timothy... He... Oh, the horror!

They draw near to him, start to console him.

CHOW

But, how did you escape?

NIGUEL

Sacrifices had to be made.

He slashes CHOW'S neck. The BUSINESSMAN spits blood and falls.

FRANCISCO charges at him. NIGUEL points his blade at his chest.

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

The poor boy... He really took one for the team. You could too, if you'd like. Martyrdom is really your kind of thing.

FRANCISCO

But, why?!

NIGUEL

Easy. Whatever is up there holds the key to Man's future. With all the wars, the disease, it is only a matter of time before Man wipes himself out. Someone has to step into the gap. And that is why I brought us all together... To retrieve the prize and save humanity from extinction.

FRANCISCO

And why did good men have to die in the process. Face it, Dr. O'Bannon, the only person you're out to save is yourself.

NIGUEL smiles

NIGUEL

It is common knowledge that, in cases of emergency, that's the first person they say you have to look out for.

FRANCISCO spits at him.

FRANCISCO

You monster.

NIGUEL wipes the spittle away.

NIGUEL

No. The monster is out there,  
Father. I am only- oh, what was  
the phrase you used- the Devil's  
handyman?

He smugly grins.

NIGUEL (CONT'D)

Now, I'm going to need some  
assistance to get up that  
mountain. Are you going to help  
me, or are you going to join your  
friends?

The PRIEST pauses, then bows his head.

FRANCISCO

Lord, forgive me.

NIGUEL

You know your cries fall on deaf  
ears.

FRANCISCO kicks his foot wide, landing a hard blow into  
NIGUEL'S BAD LEG.

He yowls in pain and drops the knife.

FRANCISCO charges at him. They tumble about.

The knife finds its way into NIGUEL'S back.

With his vertebrae severed, he slumps to the ground, and  
starts to bleed out.

FRANCISCO comes beside him.

NIGUEL

I suppose you're feeling pretty high  
on the horse right now.

FRANCISCO

No. I take no delight in the death  
of my enemies.

A beat.

NIGUEL

The Light... I see....

He dies.

FRANCISCO

Goodnight, Dr. O'Bannon. May God

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

have mercy on your soul.

FRANCISCO closes NIGUEL'S eyes.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

In nomine patri et filii spiritu  
sancte.

He makes the SIGN OF THE CROSS, stands up, and continues up  
the MOUNTAIN.

EXT. RAINFOREST- SIMULTANEOUS

AZIZ pokes his head into the hollow housing the two lovers.

AZIZ

Ooh, la la!

JASON and ANYA cover themselves.

JASON

Aziz, where the heck have you  
been, man!

AZIZ

Surviving. Speaking of which, I  
brought you guys snacks.

AZIZ ducks back out of the hollow and returns again with  
rations.

AZIZ (CONT'D)

I hope you like Spam. The previous  
owner of that backpack certainly  
did.

He tosses both of them a CAN. They take hold of it uneasily.

AZIZ (CONT'D)

Never mind the blood. It's extra  
iron, if anything.

The COUPLE digs in.

JASON  
I've never been so hungry in my  
life.

AZIZ  
Eat up. You'll need your strength.

ANYA  
Do we have much farther to go?

AZIZ  
Not much, but the last stretch is  
always the longest.

JASON  
Technically, it's the same  
distance as all the others.

AZIZ glares at him.

JASON (CONT'D)  
But who cares about technicalities  
anyway?

The COUPLE finishes their meal and dresses.

ANYA  
So what's the plan?

AZIZ  
We make it up to the mountain and  
find whatever it is that should be  
up there. If anyone else is still  
alive, they will be doing the  
same.

JASON  
Sounds good to me. You know what,  
ZZ? I think you're starting to  
grow on me... Like a tumor or a  
zit, but definitely starting to  
grow on me.

AZIZ slaps him upside the head.

ANYA  
You deserved that.

JASON  
Yeah I did.

EVERYONE smiles.

AZIZ

We ship out soon. I don't want us  
climbing the mountain in the dark.

JASON

Ay, ay, Captain.

AZIZ lifts his hand up again. JASON cups his hands over his  
head.

JASON (CONT'D)

I surrender!

AZIZ removes himself from the hollow.

AZIZ

Just hurry up, all right?

JASON

(to ANYA)

You know, he has a real gentle  
bedside manner. Must be a real hit  
with the ladies.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP- EVENING

FRANCISCO reaches the top of the MOUNTAIN.

In the peak, lies a CAVE. He ventures inside.

INT. CAVE- CONTINUOUS

FRANCISCO heads down a DARK TUNNEL while guided only by a THIN  
SHAFT of LIGHT cascading down from further down the TUNNEL.

As he approaches the LIGHT, the tunnel opens up into a  
UNDERGROUND CHAMBER.

As he gazes into the CHAMBER, his mouth drops.

The light falls upon EIGHT, JADE STATUES surrounding a SINGLE  
TREE, from which grow GOLDEN APPLES.

FRANCISCO

Oh, glorious day.

EXT. MOUNTAINBASE- EARLIER

AZIZ, ANYA, and JASON approach the base of the MOUNTAIN.

ANYA  
 (pointing up to a distant  
 speck at the top of the  
 MOUNT)

Look!

She cups her hands over her mouth.

ANYA (CONT'D)  
 Hello, there! Helloworld!

She rushes forward.

It is then that she sees FRANCISCO and CHOW lying dead upon the rocks.

ANYA (CONT'D)  
 Oh my gosh!

She backpedals as the OTHERS approach.

JASON  
 What happened here?

AZIZ  
 Something not good.

AZIZ pulls his KNIFE from the PRIEST's back. He wipes the blade on his shirt, then points it towards the TOP of the MOUNT.

AZIZ (CONT'D)  
 Someone has some explaining to do.

JASON  
 Right.

They head up the mountain.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE- LATER

They head up the MOUNTAIN. JASON slips and starts to take a tumble down the MOUNTAINSIDE.

AZIZ catches him.

AZIZ  
 Careful. No fumbling at the goal  
 life.

JASON  
 I'll keep that in mind.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP- LATER

They reach the top of the MOUNTAIN. They see the CAVE.

ANYA cups her hands over her mouth.

ANYA

Hello! Father Poblano, are you  
there?

A beat.

FRANCISCO (O.S.)

Yes! It's me. I found it. Come  
quick!

They start inside.

AZIZ stops them.

AZIZ

Smells like a trap.

JASON

But a mouse still has to get his  
cheese.

AZIZ lets them go.

INT. CAVE- CONTINUOUS

They rush down the course of the cave. They approach the  
CHAMBER. They see STATUES and the TREES.

ANYA

Beautiful.

FRANCISCO waves. They start towards him.

From another side of the CHAMBER, the BEAST appears. Snarling.  
Stalking. Ready for the kill.

AZIZ

Father, watch out!

FRANCISCO turns. LADON bites him in half.

ANYA and JASON avert their eyes.

With blood on its fangs and hatred burning in its BEADY EYES,  
the CREATURE turns its attention toward the REMAINING THREE.

AZIZ raises his blade toward their foe.

AZIZ

All right, here's the plan: I'll distract it. You make a break for the Tree. Got it!

JASON & ANYA

Got it.

The CREATURE hisses.

AZIZ

Bring it on!

The CREATURE charges.

AZIZ steps forward. JASON and ANYA break to the left and right.

As the CREATURE lunges at AZIZ, he leaps and brings his blade down into the CREATURE's neck.

It shrieks and reels back.

AZIZ takes hold of its neck and goes flying into the air. MAN and BEAST wrestle in an epic duel to the death.

The COUPLE rushes toward the TREE. JASON reaches up towards its GOLDEN APPLES and plucks two from off of it.

JASON

You know, this whole situation: you, me, a serpent, a Tree. It has a certain familiar ring to it, of Biblical proportions, in fact.

ANYA

I don't remember it going so well the first time.

JASON

So, let's rewrite his history.

He wrestles the APPLE to his lips.

JASON (CONT'D)

Here's apple in your eye.

They eat of the Tree together, close their eyes, and swallow.

They open their eyes.

Nothing happens.

JASON  
You feeling anything?

ANYA  
Nope. You?

JASON  
Not a thing... Well, this sucks.

LADON shrieks behind them.

They turn.

JASON (CONT'D)  
And now to add insult to injury...

She kisses him.

ANYA  
I don't care what anyone says  
about you. You're all right.

JASON  
Nicest thing anyone's ever said to  
me.

ANYA  
See you in the afterlife.

JASON  
It's a date.

The CREATURE goes barreling into the STATUES, knocking AZIZ to the ground in the process.

He falls, stunned to the floor.

With its opponent down and buried in rubble, the CREATURE turns its attention to the COUPLE.

JASON  
Here it comes.

The CREATURE thunders toward them.

JASON takes hold of ANYA's hand.

As the CREATURE strikes, ANYA reflexively lifts a hand into the air. A BEAM OF LIGHT streams out from inside it.

The CREATURE jerks back.

AZIZ looks up from the RUBBLE.

AZIZ  
(weakly)  
The weapon....

The COUPLE looks in astonishment at ANYA'S HAND.

JASON  
Where did that come from?

ANAYA  
I have no clue.

JASON  
Well, do it again!

The CREATURE strikes. She blows it back again.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Woohoo! Now together y'all.

It lashes out a third time. They jointly counterattack. The CREATURE teeters, then falls.

JASON  
Is it dead?

ANYA  
You wanna stick your head in its  
mouth and find out?

JASON  
That's okay. I'll pass.

AZIZ calls out from under the rubble.

AZIZ  
A little help here.

They rush to his aide.

AZIZ (CONT'D)  
Nice work.

JASON  
Somebody has tow the line.

AZIZ slugs him in arm.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Hey!

AZIZ  
So, you guys immortal now or  
something?

ANYA

Yeah. Guess so. It's actually pretty sweet.

JASON

You want an apple? There's plenty.

AZIZ shakes his head.

AZIZ

No thanks. I prefer to play the game free of cheat codes, if it's all the same to you. Besides, I feel like spending an eternity with the two of you would not be my idea

AZIZ (CONT'D)

of Paradise. Kind of the opposite actually.

ANYA

Suit yourself... mortal.

JASON sets his hands dramatically upon his waist.

JASON

Wow. Action. Horror. Supernatural Thriller. Man, I gotta say, this would make a pretty kick-ass movie.

ANYA

Don't forget the romance.

JASON

Oh, yes. Never forget the romance. Chicks dig it.

AZIZ playfully looks around.

AZIZ

Where's that ice pick? I feel like I should be falling on it about now.

The GROUND begins to shake violently under them.

They nearly topple over as the FIRST TREMOR hits.

JASON

What was that?

ANYA

I don't know, but I've got a bad feeling about it.

They rush outside.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP- CONTINUOUS

They look out. LARGE CHUNKS OF ROCK begin to fall from MOUNT PENGLAI into the sea.

ANYA

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the Island is falling apart.

ANYA

We've got to get out of here.

JASON

But where do we go? Our plane got

JASON (CONT'D)

totalled, remember?

They scan the perimeter. They see the BEACHED BOAT in the distance.

AZIZ

(pointing)

There. A boat. I think that might be our ticket out of here.

ANYA

Definitely worth a try.

AZIZ

All right. Go team.

They rush down the mountain while boulders tumble around them.

A falling rock strikes ANYA on the side. She goes barreling down the mountain.

JASON

Anya, no!

AZIZ

Uh, dude. She's immortal. Remember?

JASON

Oh, yeah.

He shrugs it off and makes his merry way down the mountain.

EXT. MOUNTAIN BASE- CONTINUOUS

They make it to the base of the mountain and find ANYA waiting.

ANYA

What took you so long?

JASON

Yeah, well considering the effects of gravity on the Sun... Or whatnot... You okay?

ANYA

Yeah, feel fine. This immortal things is actually working for me.

JASON

I know, right?!

The ISLAND rumbles again.

AZIZ

Well, immortal or not, you're not gonna want to spend the rest of your days at the bottom of the ocean, right? That's exactly where we'll be if we don't hightail it out of here.

JASON

A valid point. Onward and upward, my friends!

EXT. RAINFOREST- CONTINUOUS

Trees fall all around them. They make like HURDLE JUMPERS through the glade.

EXT. BEACH- LATER

They reach the boat. ANYA hops inside.

JASON

Okay, Anya. What are we looking at?

She jumps into the boat and starts to dig.

ANYA

Well, obviously, she won't float. I'm hoping that the radio is working, or I can at least get it that way.

AZIZ  
How long will that take?

ANYA  
Never time myself before.  
Hopefully not long.

AZIZ looks back upon the crumbling Island.

AZIZ  
Let's take that "hopefully" out of  
it, shall we?

ANYA  
Men. Goodness. So impatient.

AZIZ begins tear material off of the boat.

JASON  
Now what are you doing?

AZIZ  
Building a raft. Even if we get  
the signal going, we're still  
going to need a way to stay afloat  
when the Island submerges.

JASON  
Need help?

AZIZ  
Sure. Why not? The whole Island's  
broken, so what harm can you do.

JASON  
Thanks for the vote of confidence.

AZIZ  
Anytime.

JASON scurries over to a waterlogged-plank and lifts it up  
with great effort.

JASON  
Heavy son-of-a-gun.

AZIZ  
Having a problem there, o Great  
One?.

JASON  
Whatever.

The MEN get the RAFT put together while ANYA gets the radio  
online.

A short while later, ANYA claps hands together, then raises her fists into the air.

ANYA  
Ha, ha! Got it!

The RADIO beeps as the distress signal starts getting pumped into the AIRWAVES.

JASON  
We're almost good to go here too.

They make the final adjustments to the RAFT and step back.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Got it.

AZIZ looks back as MOUNT PENGLAI falls into the ocean.

The rest of the Island follows suit, caving inwardly as if caught a black hole.

AZIZ  
Hang on to something.

A FLOOD of rock, water, and debris comes barreling their way. They grab hold of the raft for the raft, but the current is too strong. They are thrown into the water and set at the mercy of the waves.

EXT. OCEAN- LATER

The Island disappears into the sea. The waters calm.

ANYA emerges from depths of the ocean. She gasps, then swims over to the raft and flops herself up onto it.

JASON then pops out of the water while frantically splashing about. He carries AZIZ in tow.

ANYA waves them over.

ANYA  
Jason! Over here!

He swims to the raft and helps AZIZ onboard. Next, he heaves himself on up.

AZIZ talks the HUNTER's pulse and sets an ear on his chest.

ANYA (CONT'D)  
He's not breathing.

JASON

Poor guy probably took on too much sea water. Told him he should have taken the apple.

He rolls up his sleeves.

JASON (CONT'D)

I suppose I could save his life right now or something.

ANYA

If it's not too inconvenient.

JASON

Yeah, I might have an opening in my schedule.

ANYA

My hero.

He pumps AZIZ's chest, then reluctantly give him mouth to mouth.

JASON (CONT'D)

Come on. Come on! You stupid, stubborn...

AZIZ coughs up the water from his lungs.

JASON leans back.

ANYA

You did it!

JASON

Was there ever any doubt?

AZIZ takes hold of JASON's throat.

JASON (CONT'D)

Glad to see you too.

AZIZ

(through gritted teeth)  
Two words: breath... mint.

AZIZ releases his vice-like grip from JASON's trachea.

JASON (CONT'D)

Jeez, you would think a guy would appreciate a little brotherly love and affection now and again. But no.

AZIZ glares at him. His glare soon turns into a grin.

AZIZ  
When in Hollywood....

JASON  
When in freakin ' Hollywood.

JASON drums his fingers on the RAFT's splintered wood.

JASON (CONT'D)  
So, Anya, you think that radio  
signal worked?

ANYA  
If not, we'll be out here for a  
loooong time.

JASON  
Great. I was wondering how many

JASON (CONT'D)  
times I could repeat the  
"Gilligan's Island" theme song  
before Aziz cuts me a new one...  
Let's find out.

He takes a deep breath.

AZIZ gives him a look.

AZIZ  
You know, a man can suffer an  
intense amount of pain before he  
actually dies.

JASON blows him a raspberry.

JASON  
Oh, you're no fun.

A beat.

ANYA  
You know, people pay big money for  
this kind of tropical getaway.  
You, me. The open ocean. The  
stars. No distractions. No cell  
phones.

JASON's phone buzzes.

JASON  
Hey, I've got reception!

He picks up the phone.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Gene, buddy, have I got a pitch  
for you!

ANYA splashes him with water.

JASON (CONT'D)  
What? I'm working here.

AZIZ takes his phone.

JASON (CONT'D)  
Hey. Hey!

AZIZ cocks his arm back.

ANYA  
First the windup...

AZIZ lets 'er fly.

ANYA  
Then the pitch...

The PHONE flies through the air and sinks like a stone.

JASON cups his hands over his mouth.

JASON  
Let's do lunch!

INT. HONG KONG UNITED BOAT DOCKYARD

A WELL-DRESSED REPORTER stands with mic ready in front of a  
waterlogged TRAVELERS.

POV: CAMERA

REPORTER  
We are here with a group of  
international adventurers,  
including American TV show  
personality, Jason Campbell, who  
has just been found and rescued  
from the East China Sea. Mr.  
Campbell, any words for us? What  
were you doing out there?

JASON  
(leaning in)  
This is Jason Campbell of  
"Mysteries of History"  
(MORE)

JASON (CONT'D)

(aside)

Check your local listing for  
showtimes...

He winks to the camera.

JASON (CONT'D)

My crew and I have just concluded  
our bold search for the elusive  
Garden of Eden. I am glad to say  
we did not come up empty-handed.

REPORTER

And do you have any proof this?

JASON

Well, I'm immortal now, as is my  
insanely hot girlfriend, Anya  
Nabokov.

ANYA playfully pushes him aside.

ANYA

I don't know him.

JASON

She's such a kidder, folks. But,  
yeah, totally found the Island  
where the Garden of Eden was  
set... at the beginning of time.

REPORTER

And where is this Island? Can we  
go see it.

JASON rubs his neck.

JASON

Yeah, well, the thing is... It's  
at the bottom the ocean right now,  
but we've got a crack team of  
experts on it right now, believe  
you me.

JASON points to the CAMERA.

JASON (CONT'D)

So, stay tuned!

REPORTER

(to AZIZ)

And you, sir, do you have any  
words for our audience?

AZIZ

This man is a crazy person... and  
also a ham... And also... my  
friend... Other than that, no  
comment.

The REPORTER blinks confusedly, then takes FRONT STAGE CENTER  
once again

REPORTER

There you have it, folks: An old-  
fashioned mystery on the Seven  
Seas, and you heard it all here  
first. This is Susan Chan, signing  
out.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EAST CHINA SEA- NIGHT

The OCEAN WATERS ripple and churn. SEA BIRDS rise up into  
flight.

The GREAT DRAGON, LADON, rises up from the waves and up into  
the sky... propelled by BAT-LIKE WINGS.

Levitating between heaven and earth, the CREATURE cocks its  
head back and lets out a long and piercing SHRIEK.