

FADE IN:

Hold on a satellite image of a MASSIVE HURRICANE taken from space.

The white swirling convection fills the entire frame.

We move over the colossal beast until the center of circulation - THE EYEWALL - is right below us...

MATCH CUT TO:

A HEMORRHAGING BLUE EYEBALL.

Muted, heavy breathing.

Something's wrong.

The eye has too much blood in the posterior chamber.

And it isn't blinking.

EXT. DEBRIS FIELD - NIGHT

A flashlight beam illuminates a SEVERED EYEBALL.

It lies in a charred patch of dirt, all by its lonesome.

The white mask covering the RESCUE WORKER'S mouth bends in and out with his rapid breathing.

His unsteady hand tosses light over the smoldering piles of gnarled, high-impact detritus: tray tables, luggage, clothing, and --

PIECES OF HUMAN BODIES.

Still strapped into an airplane seat is the upper half of a CHARRED HUMANOID SHAPE.

A macabre blanket of molten flesh and tissue is sliding off the seat and puddling on the ground at its feet.

The Rescue Worker doubles over.

EBB (O.S.)

You can go, Private. There's  
nothing left alive here.

U.S. Army Captain SAM EBB (40s) lowers the army-issue GAS MASK covering his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

He takes in a big gulp of the foul air hovering over the glowing, hellish landscape.

Ebb places a stick of gum in his mouth and replaces the mask.

Kneeling next to the goopy viscera --

The blackened torso begins VIBRATING.

Something is GLOWING from within the blackened mass.

He thrusts a gloved hand into the crispy flesh.

What he removes is a RINGING CELLPHONE.

On the partially melted screen: A smiling photo of a middle-aged woman with golden hoop earrings - "Mom."

He stares at her face until the phone stops buzzing.

Pressing what few buttons remain --

He navigates to the "photos" folder and swipes through selfies of the phone's owner: a red-headed TEENAGE GIRL with braces and a U.S. Army cap.

The final image: she's strapped into her seat on the plane, flashing a peace sign.

INT. MOTEL - BATHROOM - DAY

Standing naked in front of the mirror --

Ebb has the overly-rounded physique of someone who's missed a decade of workouts.

A GOLD PENDANT with Arabic lettering dangles around his neck.

As if in a trance, he rubs his fingers over the black soot covering his face and holds them up to his nose.

FOOTSTEPS clip-clop from the outdoor hallway.

Through the mirror's reflection --

A bikini-clad WOMAN passes the window in a blur.

Ebb peers out through translucent white sheer drapery to the swimming pool below.

Her back to us - the Woman (AFRICAN AMERICAN, 20s/30s) lies on a tanning chair in her zebra-print bathing suit.

(CONTINUED)

As she begins lathering lotion over her slender ebony legs, Ebb remains at the window, transfixed.

INT./EXT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

Clean-cut and dressed in a crisply tailored Class B uniform, Ebb takes a deep gulp of air before entering the tent.

A RED-HEADED WOMAN (40s) is consoled by her HUSBAND.

This is the same Woman whose face appeared on the charred cellphone.

EBB  
Mr. and Mrs. Taylor?

A heavy BEAT.

EBB (CONT'D)  
My name is Sam Ebb. I'm a forensic anthropologist with the U.S. Army.

MRS. TAYLOR  
Are you the one who found Ashley?

They both have a distant, glazed look.

The look of people who have lost their souls.

MRS. TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
Will we be allowed to see her?

He meets her gaze.

INTERCUT AS  
NECESSARY:

A red bucket filled with dirt and debris is overturned onto a long table.

A gloved hand sifts through the sediment containing BONE FRAGMENTS.

EBB  
In situations like this, the process of identification is a bit different from, say, a car accident.

Ebb - clad in an ORANGE HAZMAT SUIT - is standing in front of a table full of dirt and rubble.

(CONTINUED)

With a gloved hand, he holds up a JAW FRAGMENT with three teeth still intact.

EBB (CONT'D)

The accident occurred at a very high rate of speed. About 400 miles per hour. What that means is, the people on the plane...no longer look like you and me.

END INTERCUT

MRS. TAYLOR

So what you're saying is that my daughter's body is...gone?

EBB

Not gone.

A BEAT.

EBB (CONT'D)

Different.

EXT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

Stretching his back in his orange HAZMAT suit --

Ebb watches as Mr. and Mrs. Taylor are led out of a field tent by an army psychiatrist wearing a Class B uniform.

All down the line of debris pickers, everyone is young and fresh-faced.

They look like they're straight out of the Academy.

Everyone except Ebb.

The anthropologist beside him, AMY (20s, Hispanic), removes her goggles and rubber gloves.

EBB

Cutting out early, Private?

AMY

Eleven hours is enough for me.

EBB

Do you not see how much we still have to process?

(CONTINUED)

AMY  
You don't gotta stay out here all  
night, Captain.

All around them, other Anthropologists are also removing  
their gloves.

EBB  
Looks like I might have to...

She gives him serious side-eye.

AMY  
They're saying Colonel Sutpen is  
gonna be here tomorrow. Maybe you  
can complain to him about how we're  
all a bunch of slackers.

Jaw clenched, he overturns another bucket of debris.

EXT. DEBRIS FIELD - LATER

Underneath a copse of trees --

Ebb bends down to inspect a damp patch of soil.

A drop of bright RED BLOOD splats on the arm of his suit.

LIEUTENANT (O.S.)  
Captain Ebb?

With darkness descending - Ebb cranes his neck straight up to  
the green oak trees.

LIEUTENANT (CONT'D)  
Sir, Major Lambertus would like to  
speak with you.

Ebb thrusts the red bucket into the Lieutenant's chest.

EBB  
Hold that, please.

Lowering his gas mask - he begins clambering up the nearest  
oak trunk.

From a perch up on high --

EBB (CONT'D)  
Lieutenant, set the bucket down  
right there, will you please?

Straddling a limb - Ebb reaches up with both arms.

(CONTINUED)

EBB (CONT'D)  
Now take a few steps back.

From out of the leaves, he holds up what appears to be a LONG SNAKE.

EBB (CONT'D)  
Look out below!

The SERPENTINE MASS drops from the foliage - knocking the bucket over.

The Lieutenant gags.

A SMALL INTESTINE lies coiled in the grass.

EXT. DEBRIS FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

MAJOR LAMBERTUS (50s) sits on the edge of a Humvee, sucking on a cigar.

His face looks like a cherry tomato.

Beside him is a MARINE LANCE CORPORAL (20s).

Before Ebb can say anything, Lambertus holds out a piece of yellow paper.

MAJOR LAMBERTUS  
You've been recalled.

Ebb's takes the paper, stares at it dumbly.

MAJOR LAMBERTUS (CONT'D)  
I already know what you're going to say. But it's over my head and out of my hands. You're to report to Fort Hood by 2100. Tonight.

He nods to the Marine.

MAJOR LAMBERTUS (CONT'D)  
Must be important. They even sent a chauffeur.

INT/EXT. HUMVEE - NIGHT

The sign reads:

"Welcome to III Corps & Fort Hood

"The Great Place"

(CONTINUED)

As the Humvee passes through a security gate --  
Ebb gnaws on the skin around his thumbnail.  
He's chewed it bloody and raw.

INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM - LATER

A NEEDLE penetrates pale skin.

A BLUE SUBSTANCE pushes its way through a syringe.

Removing the needle --

NURSE

Unfortunately, this won't help with  
yellow fever, but it'll work  
against malaria.

Off Ebb's look --

NURSE (CONT'D)

And when you get to the island,  
remember to keep your skin covered.

Island???

INT. MILITARY TRANSPORT PLANE - DAY

Ebb is alone amid crates of supplies.

He's sitting on a large box labeled "Koronis  
Pharmaceuticals."

He watches the morning sun peak above the eastern horizon.

15,000 feet below, a jagged shoreline inches into view.

A vast industrial port is submerged under water.

Abandoned container cranes protrude vertically out of the  
water like a family of reanimated Nessies.

As they move overland --

Pillars of black smoke rise above a teeming city.

PILOT (O.S.)

Buckle up, Captain. We're beginning  
our descent.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. PLANE - GREEN ZONE - DAY

The first thing Ebb sees from the gangway: chain-link fence topped by CONCERTINA WIRE.

Never a good sign.

Beyond that: dense primordial jungle.

He looks laughably out of place in his Class B.

As a green army jeep rumbles in his direction --

Ebb SLAPS at the back of his neck.

Between his fingers: a squished MOSQUITO, covered in blood.

Great.

As the jeep skids to a stop beside the plane --

CORPORAL LAYTON (30s) is covered head to toe in a green BUG SUIT with black mesh covering his head and face.

He bears an uncanny resemblance to Slimer.

CPL LAYTON  
Captain Ebb? Welcome to Haiti.

INT. JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

In the distance - sun glints off a group of QUONSET HUTS.

CPL LAYTON  
I know it's been a long night  
getting to our little aid mission  
here.

Off Ebb's look --

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
The colonel's plan is for you to be  
on the next outbound transport.  
Before the storm gets here.

EBB  
Yeah? When's that?

CPL LAYTON  
96 hours give or take. Oh, and if  
anyone ever asks, that cargo you  
saw on the plane is medical  
equipment.

(CONTINUED)

EBB  
Who would think to ask?

Layton keeps his eyes on the road.

CPL LAYTON  
Nobody. Most likely. I'm under orders to say that to all new arrivals.

EBB  
Huh.

INT. JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

Up ahead, near a large gate --

A group of GI's surround several large crates.

They are also clad in the green bug suits.

From the glove box - Layton produces a packaged suit and hands it to Ebb.

CPL LAYTON  
Nasty bug going around. Dengue or malaria or some shit. We're not chancing it with the mosquitoes.

At the fence --

DARK-SKINNED NATIVES are congregated en-masse.

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
Whatever it is, it's got the natives all riled up. Villagers show up at the fence every few days.

When the gate opens - natives spill through like a dark flood.

As the soldiers hand out bags of rice and bottled water --

A WOMAN (30s) with short hair and large golden HOOP EARRINGS bowls her way to the front of the line.

Her flawless ebony skin glows in the morning sunlight and her slender figure is concealed only by a thin sun dress.

Ebb can't pry his eyes away from her.

(CONTINUED)

EBB  
Where's the village?

Layton points to the jungle.

CPL LAYTON  
About seven clicks straight through  
that shit.

A BEAT.

EBB  
Corporal?

CPL LAYTON  
Yessir?

EBB  
What am I doing here?

INT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

A Private sits behind a desk in a vacuous hut.

A clock ticks somewhere.

CPL LAYTON  
The Colonel was able to secure L  
clearance for you.

The Private hands Ebb PHOTOS of six male soldiers in full  
dress uniform.

America's finest.

Layton throws open a curtain.

Laid out on the floor in front of them --

SIX BIOHAZARD BAGS.

INT. QUONSET HUT - LATER

Scarred and charred pieces of FLESH AND BONE are laid out on  
a plastic sheet.

CPL LAYTON  
They were ambushed outside the  
village by a group of rebels. Never  
stood a chance.

(CONTINUED)

Ebb grips a DECAPITATED HEAD - its blackened mouth yawning open in final twisted agony.

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
This isn't all of it. Of them.  
There's more we couldn't recover.

Ebb gives him a look that could vaporize atoms.

EBB  
Where is the wreck?

CPL LAYTON  
Just outside of the village.

EBB  
That means the site has been  
compromised. I'll need access to  
recover what's left. If anything.

CPL LAYTON  
Sir, that's an active combat zone.  
Rebels are dug in somewhere near  
the village. They know the terrain  
better than we ever will.

EBB  
We bury our own, corporal.

CPL LAYTON  
The Colonel feels an Apache crash  
is the most advisable explanation.  
For their people back home...

Ebb lets this sink in for a BEAT.

A vein bulges on his forehead.

EBB  
I said, we bury our own.

EXT. GREEN ZONE - NIGHT

SPOTLIGHTS criss-cross the perimeter.

The place is utterly deserted.

Standing in his bug suit, Ebb looks like the last man on Earth.

(CONTINUED)

INT. BARRACKS - MOMENTS LATER

EMPTY BEDS are shrouded in mosquito netting.

Ebb is alone here.

At the far end of the hut --

A brown blanket partition hangs down like a stage curtain.

Approaching it - Ebb hears murmuring.

Pulling back the blanket --

A half dozen privates are MASTURBATING.

They all wear VR HEADSETS.

A BEAT.

Nobody knows he's there.

Clearing his throat --

EBB

I'm looking for the officers'  
barracks.

PVT RUIZ (20s) lifts his headset.

PVT RUIZ

This ain't it.

He drops the device back over his eyes.

PVT RUIZ (CONT'D)

Last hut on the left. Sir.

Turning to go --

EBB

Where can I find the Colonel?

PVT RUIZ

He's not here, sir. Off base  
hunting rebels.

EBB

Then who's in command?

Ruiz once gain lifts his headset just long enough to check  
Ebb's insignia.

(CONTINUED)

PVT RUIZ  
Looks like you are, sir.

As he moves to let the headset drop --

Ebb GRABS IT.

EBB  
In that case, I want two armored  
vehicles ready to roll at 0800.

He drops the headset over Ruiz's eyes.

INT. OFFICER'S BARRACKS - MOMENTS LATER

Another empty hut.

The half dozen beds are similarly encased in white netting.

Ebb finds an unclaimed bed. Sits. Something is very wrong here.

This whole place is wrong.

Where is everybody?

EXT. OFFICER'S BARRACKS - MOMENTS LATER

Two tent-like PORTABLE SHOWERS stand under a haphazard canopy of mosquito netting.

Zippering himself inside one of the tents --

Ebb pulls the plug on the large bladder and water sluices over his face.

Rubbing the RED WELT on the back of his neck --

He FLINCHES.

Above him, in the corner --

A giant black and brown TARANTULA leers down at him.

It takes two slow steps.

Then --

The black mass SPRINGS off the fabric onto the pooled water on the floor.

Ebb leaps out of the tent!

(CONTINUED)

Zippering it closed he stares at the door for a BEAT.

Did that really just happen?

EXT. OFFICER'S BARRACKS - DAY

Two Jeeps are lined up, ready to roll.

Ebb secures his bug suit.

Pvt Ruiz and three other pukers stand in front of the first vehicle.

EBB  
Sleep well, Private?

PVT RUIZ  
Yessir. Very well, sir.

HALL, LAKER, and PARRY (all 20s) look grim.

This is "one of those days" that every soldier trains for.

Ruiz holds out an M-16 rifle to Ebb.

INT/EXT. JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

Primordial jungle swallows the Jeeps whole as soon as they exit the wire.

Sweat and intensity drip off the younger men.

To nobody in particular --

EBB  
About the deceased. Anything I  
should know that I don't?

The men look at each other.

Crickets.

EBB (CONT'D)  
Why did they go all the way to the  
village to deliver the rice and  
water?

From the back --

PVT PARRY

We'd been keeping the locals away  
from the GZ when the Colonel and  
his men are off-site. For security.

Ebb studies Parry - the only other white guy.

EBB

You from the Midwest?

PVT PARRY

Yessir. Mitchell, South Dakota.

EBB

We're a long way from Wall Drug.

This earns half of a shit-eating grin.

PVT PARRY

Yessir, we are.

Up ahead --

A FELLED TREE blocks the dirt road.

Two grubby GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS - bundled up in rags covering  
their skin - man the makeshift roadblock.

Lowering his window - Private Hall begins conversing with  
them in French.

To Ebb --

PVT HALL

They say some rebels were spotted  
in the area last night.

PVT LAKER

That didn't take long.

PVT RUIZ

(to Ebb)

Probably the same rebel *cucarachas*  
who fraged our guys.

Ebb feels their eyeballs on him.

EBB

I need an hour. The trail vehicle  
will cover us. No surprises this  
time.

They all look away.

Not what they wanted to hear.

INT/EXT. JEEP - VILLAGE - DAY

RAGING BONFIRES ring the outside of the small village.

Old men and kids fan palm fronds over the flames, creating a smoky haze to keep the mosquitoes away.

As they pass --

Every ebony face leers at them like they're aliens.

Which they are.

EBB

These people loyal to the government?

PVT RUIZ

They'll tell you they are. I consider them hostile.

He nods up ahead to a charred, burned-out shell of an Army Jeep.

PVT RUIZ (CONT'D)

Here we go.

Over the walkie --

EBB

Standard R.O.E. We're not here to pick a fight. Everyone got that?

EXT. VILLAGE - RECOVERY SITE - MOMENTS LATER

Clad in the balky bug suits - the Americans really DO look like aliens from another planet.

Sullen natives are congregating around them.

Inside the wreck --

Everything has been picked clean.

Nothing left but ash.

HYSTERICAL SHOUTS emanate from outside.

PVT RUIZ

Hold her back, Laker!

(CONTINUED)

An old woman holds out an infant wrapped in blankets.  
It's purple and bloated. And dead.

PVT LAKER  
Jesus fuck!

Something heavy and clay-like SPLATS against his bug suit.  
It's gooey. And brown.  
The other men begin YELLING and CURSING.  
EXCREMENT begins flying through the air.  
None of them are spared.

PVT HALL  
Filthy cocksuckers!

PVT RUIZ  
Hold your positions!

As Ebb moves to join the men --  
Something CLANGS off the hull of the wreck.  
A SOLID MASS - charred - lies on the ground.  
Then --  
Another PING.  
Ebb sees the projectile skid to a stop.  
Picking it up --  
It's a HUMAN TOOTH.  
The first thing he sees is AN ARM throwing another tooth at  
him.  
It's a YOUNG GIRL (12).  
Their eyes lock for a BEAT.  
She turns and disappears into the melee.  
He leaps out in pursuit.

PVT RUIZ (CONT'D)  
Sir, no!

EXT. VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

Terrified old ladies cower as bug-suited Ebb flies past them, his rifle outstretched.

Up ahead, the Young Girl darts behind a row of thatched hovels.

He sucks for air.

Definitely getting too old for this shit.

His eyes lock on the ARABIC PENDANT jostling around his neck.

FLASH TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MIDDLE EAST - DAY

SAYED (12) grinning from ear to ear despite missing a front tooth.

His red Dr. J's are caked with desert dust.

He is standing beside his MOTHER (30s/40s) - who wears a hijab and a dress with a floral print.

The boy holds out the pendant.

SAYED  
For you, Uncle Sam.

BACK ON:

EXT. JUNGLE - PRESENT

They're in the trees now.

Ebb has gained on the girl.

The whites of her eyes bulge with terror as she looks back.

She veers toward a cluster of TIN-ROOFED SHACKS hidden in the trees.

At the threshold of the first dwelling --

Ebb LUNGES after her...

INT. SHACK - CONTINUOUS

...And CRASHES through the door.

(CONTINUED)

Staring at him in panic-stricken horror --  
The beautiful woman with the HOOP EARRINGS.

WOMAN  
The door!

He looks at her - befuddled.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Close the door!

She clambers over him and slams it shut.  
Her eyes dart every which way, searching for mosquitoes.  
In the corner of the room --

A table is stacked with painted figurines, candles, and  
bottles.

A Voodoo altar???

The Woman grabs the Young Girl by both shoulders.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Islande, Kisa ou fè????

The Young Girl says nothing as she looks at Ebb.

Her eyes are angry.

Behind Ebb --

A MUFFLED COUGH.

A SICK WOMAN (20s) lies on a cot.

She looks like a cadaver.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
That's my sister. Ester.

Her fever-crazed eyes loll at him.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
(to Ebb)  
Islande is sorry. She meant you no  
harm.

The thrill of the chase over --

Ebb removes the mesh mask and wipes the sweat from his face.

He looks at Islande.

She doesn't look sorry. Not in the least.

EBB

The dead Americans. Why did you  
take their remains?

The Woman steps in front of the Girl.

She is even more radiant up close.

A bead of perspiration runs down her neck toward the top of  
her dress.

WOMAN

You left them there. Stinking for  
flies and mosquitoes.

Ebb rubs his eyes.

That fucking idiot Layton...

WOMAN (CONT'D)

So I buried them.

A BEAT.

EBB

You what?

WOMAN

I buried them. With all the others.

He grabs her wrist.

EBB

Where?

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The Woman walks ahead of him.

A rogue sunbeam penetrating the green canopy illuminates her  
like a spotlight on a stage.

On her back: a LARGE TATTOO of a fierce, god-like woman.

EBB

What's your name?

She gives him nothing but a cold shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

EBB (CONT'D)

I'm Sam.

Ahead, the treeline gives way to a clearing.

EBB (CONT'D)

Look, I'm sorry about earlier. I would never have hurt Islande.

She stops. Points.

Won't go any further.

WOMAN

Can you help us?

EBB

Will you tell me your name?

A BEAT.

WOMAN

Mahalia.

EXT. CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

Ebb pulls off the netting around his face.

Directly below him --

Two dozen bloated, purple CORPSES lie in a mass grave.

Several of the bodies are small.

MAHALIA

Your people are buried over there.

She points to the far end of the pit.

Staring into the grotesqueness, he begins gnawing on the skin around his thumbnail again.

Then, as if hypnotized --

He JUMPS DOWN into the morass.

INT. PIT - CONTINUOUS

ANGUISHED FACES leer up at him.

(CONTINUED)

Flies erupt out of blackened mouths. Worms wiggle out of nasal cavities. Bloated bellies rip open from pent-up gas. Ebb breathes in this putrefaction.

All of it.

Gollum-like, he looks up from this macabre pit of despair.

Standing high above him --

Mahalia is enshrouded in a brilliant aura of sunshine.

The look she gives him is part pity. But mostly revulsion.

EXT. VILLAGE - RECOVERY SITE - DAY

The eight shit-caked privates glower at Ebb.

None of them have left the Jeeps.

As he reaches them --

Ruiz wants to say something.

EBB

I found our boys. We're coming back tomorrow.

EXT. VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Chin resting on her knees - Islande waits by the road, enveloped in a plume of smoke from the fires.

As the two Jeeps rumble past --

She points an imaginary gun at Ebb.

He points his thumb and forefinger right back at her.

Just as he pulls the imaginary trigger --

She SLAPS AT HER NECK like she'd really been shot.

Removing her hand --

A bloody MOSQUITO clings to her skin.

INT. SHOWER TENT - NIGHT

The tarantula is up in its corner.

(CONTINUED)

Ebb pulls the chord - releasing a splash of water.

The Spider begins its descent --

He leaps out and enters the other tent.

EBB  
Drink up, friend.

INT. OFFICER'S BARRACKS - MOMENTS LATER

Toweling his wet hair, Ebb stops in his tracks.

There's something in here.

From the darkness --

A BLACK SILHOUETTE is thrusting and gyrating spasmodically.

Its gesticulations are violent. Not human. Nothing on God's green earth was made to move in this way. Ebb turns on the light.

It's Layton.

VR goggles planted over his face - he's lost in some other, distant reality.

Somewhere far from here.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The underbrush is lush. Undisturbed.

A sauropod's buffet.

Then --

A MUTANT CREATURE thrashes through the prehistoric tableau.

As it clambers toward us --

We see that it is a man. Wearing a bug suit.

EXT. JUNGLE STREAM - DAY

Sunlight glistens off Mahalia's breasts as she stands in a small stream, washing clothes.

After a BEAT she senses the intensity of Ebb's male gaze.

(CONTINUED)

She regards the American sweating inside his protective gear.  
Then she looks away with a coy smile.

INT. OFFICER'S BARRACKS - NIGHT

Ebb is wide awake.

His face is damp with perspiration.

Rolling over on the cot --

He scratches at the ANGRY RED WELT on the back of his neck.

EXT. PIT - DAY

CLOSE ON: Pvt. Parry gagging.

He flails at the mesh around his face and then PROJECTILE  
VOMITS.

Curses and gags ring out from the others.

EBB  
(pointing)  
Our boys are over there. I don't  
want anything left behind.

To Ruiz --

EBB (CONT'D)  
Be ready to move out when I get  
back.

The private watches Ebb disappear up the path.

*Loco hijo de puta.*

PVT RUIZ  
Yessir.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Ebb's heart beats audibly in his chest:

THUMP...THUMP...THUMP.

He stops. Listens.

THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP...THUMP THUMP...THUMP THUMP THUMP

(CONTINUED)

THUMP... THUMP THUMP

That's not his heart.

It's a DRUM BEAT.

INT./EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - DAY

Two OLD MEN bang on bongo drums in perfect synchronicity.

Dozens of BURNING CANDLES flicker on an altar featuring drawings of strange black faces.

Mahalia is draped in white robes - strings of multi-colored BEADS hang around her neck.

Swaying to the beat, her arms rise and fall rhythmically with practiced grace.

Over the heads of the dozen villagers taking part in the ceremony --

Ebb stares through the window - his head encased in mesh.

His eyes are glued to her sinuous figure - the outline of her hips and breasts.

Something catches his eye.

A REFLECTION on the glass.

It's Islande. Standing behind him.

Watching him.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - LATER

As the villagers file out --

They all take Mahalia's hand in greeting.

Mahalia sees him. Says nothing.

EBB

I brought medicine. For your  
sister. Acetaminophen.

He holds out a bag.

EBB (CONT'D)

Don't give her aspirin. Makes the  
bleeding worse.

(CONTINUED)

Mahalia considers his offer for a BEAT.

MAHALIA

Have you come to help?

EBB

If I can convince you my country  
isn't the evil empire, I'd like to  
try.

MAHALIA

Most men wouldn't bother.

Thinking --

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Can I show you something?

INT. HOSPITAL SHACK - DAY

Rows of beds are filled with the sick.

Squalor, suffering, and death are everywhere.

The VILLAGE HEALER (FEMALE, 60s/70s) points to three young  
men lying on cots.

HEALER

Soldiers. Shot, not sick.

The others are in varying stages of misery.

Glazed white eyeballs stare past them.

As they arrive at another bed --

Three crying children sit next to their delirious mother.

The Healer shoos them aside and examines the woman.

Shaking her head --

HEALER (CONT'D)

This one won't make it.

As she moves to the next wretched patient --

Mahalia stays behind.

She produces a string of beads from her pocket.

Eyes closed, she recites a strange incantation over the dying  
woman.

(CONTINUED)

Ebb can't take his eyes off her.

INT. QUONSET HUT - NIGHT

More charred body parts are spread out on the plastic sheet.

The photos of the six slain soldiers hang from the wall.

Nestled snugly among these remains --

Ebb lies flat on his back, staring up at the ceiling.

He jolts upright with purpose.

INT. SUPPLY HUT - NIGHT

A light blinkers on, revealing --

Rows and rows of metal racks.

The first thing Ebb sees: a dozen METAL CYLINDERS stacked in a corner.

Each canister bears a "KP" logo.

He considers this for a BEAT.

He touches one and flinches.

A layer of frost surrounds the rim of each unit.

EBB  
In this heat?

A LOW THRUM emanates from one of the cylinders.

EBB (CONT'D)  
...the fuck?

Turning his attention back to the shelves, he tosses several packages of mosquito netting into a duffel bag.

Followed by bug repellent.

INT. JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

Ebb puts the key in the ignition.

As the vehicle roars to life, he looks out at the quiet desolation of the base.

(CONTINUED)

Then puts the vehicle in gear.

EXT. GREEN ZONE - GATE - MOMENTS LATER

Pvt. Hall is swiping through images of naked men when --  
HEADLIGHTS illuminate the shack.

PVT HALL

Shit.

Ebb rolls down the Jeep's window.

EBB

Morning, private.

PVT HALL

Sir...?

EBB

I'm on a special mission. Open the  
gate.

PVT HALL

Sir? I don't have any orders to let  
anyone through.

EBB

The Colonel back yet?

PVT HALL

No, sir.

Ebb offers him a shit-eating grin.

EBB

Open it.

Hall curses.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - DAY

Ebb knocks at the door.

No answer.

As he rounds the corner to the back --

A Soviet TT-30 is POINTED AT HIS FACE.

Hot rage burns in the eyes of the SOLDIER (40s) aiming it.

(CONTINUED)

HAITIAN SOLDIER  
Don't fucking move.

Shit...

HAITIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
On the ground. Now.

Ebb does as he's told.

HAITIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
How many others are there?

EBB  
I'm alone.

The Soldier gives him a jolt to the ribs.

That hurt.

HAITIAN SOLDIER  
How many, motherfucker?

Behind them --

Mahalia emerges from the trees.

MAHALIA  
No, Papa!

She grabs the soldier's arm. He backs off.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Sam, this is my father. Jameson.

Mahalia and Jameson trade heated barbs in Haitian Creole.

Finally --

JAMESON  
(to Ebb)  
Why are you here? What do you want  
with us?

Still wincing and catching his breath --

EBB  
Come with me to my Jeep and I'll  
show you.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Ebb and Jameson finish unloading a carload of supplies: medicine, nets, bug suits, food.

Old women and young cry tears of joy.

MAHALIA

(to Ebb)

They're too afraid to say thank you. But they're grateful.

She produces a small CLOTH BAG.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

This is for you.

He takes it in his hand.

Inside: a clump of purple sage, an animal tooth, and --

A POLISHED BLACK ROCK with yellow paint forming eyes, ears, and a grinning mouth.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Papa Loko. The loa of healers. He keeps us honest.

He takes it in his hand.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Sam, I want to tell you something. But I don't want you to take it the wrong way.

EBB

You can tell me anything.

MAHALIA

Your energy is very unhealthy.

She touches his un-gloved hand.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

I can feel a disturbance. It's very strong.

She grips his hand tighter.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

You must feel it, too.

EBB

I've probably got a demon or two.

(CONTINUED)

MAHALIA

Sam, you have to deal with these forces if you want to live a long, healthy life. Or a happy life.

She cuts a look to Jameson - who's glowering at them from afar.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Is it too late to apologize for my father? We're all just very tired and scared.

EBB

Are you safe here?

MAHALIA

I don't know. The war is one thing. But all of this sickness makes it hard.

EBB

I'll help in any way that I can.

MAHALIA

In return for your kindness to us, I can help you. But only if it's something you want...?

INT. JEEP - DAY

In the rearview mirror, the smoky village diminishes until it's consumed by green jungle.

Ebb holds the cloth bag to his nose.

Wants to hold her scent close.

Looking up --

He SLAMS THE BRAKES.

Jameson is standing in the middle of the road.

The TT-30 in his right hand.

He walks to the passenger door. Climbs in.

Silence for a BEAT.

Then --

(CONTINUED)

JAMESON

My daughter will take your charity.  
Not me.

The pistol is resting on his knee.

And it's pointed casually at Ebb's gut.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

Or is it pity you're offering?

EBB

Just trying to help. That's all.

JAMESON

I should shoot you right now, you  
lying piece of shit.

Jameson pounds the dashboard.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

I've been all over the country  
since the war started. North,  
south, east, west. I've seen how  
many lives you American *baiseurs*  
have taken. How many of our women  
and children.

Before Ebb can say anything --

JAMESON (CONT'D)

I'm a doctor. I know what I've  
seen.

EBB

So am I.

Jameson stares at him.

EBB (CONT'D)

A medic. A long time ago.

JAMESON

So you're a medic and you still  
expect me to buy this good guy act?  
As my people lay dying?

EBB

Look, I've only been here a couple  
days...

The other man's Defcon level is rapidly falling.

(CONTINUED)

EBB (CONT'D)

If you're wondering why we haven't sent the W.H.O. or the Red Cross or Oxfam, I don't know what to say. My people aren't telling me anything. I don't think they know anything. That's the truth.

JAMESON

The mosquitoes. Your mosquitoes. That's what I want to know about.

Ebb meets his gaze.

Your mosquitoes???

INT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - DAY

CLOSE ON (through a MICROSCOPE): A DEAD MOSQUITO.

JAMESON (O.S.)

This is a normal mosquito. I want you to count the number of abdominal segments you see.

Ebb studies the hugely magnified insect.

EBB (O.S.)

I count seven.

JAMESON (O.S.)

Yes. Just as every human has two arms and two legs, every mosquito has seven abdominal segments.

Jameson switches out the slide.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

Now look.

CLOSE ON: A second mosquito.

It contains EIGHT abdominal segments.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

This is not a natural mosquito.

EBB

Where did you get this?

Jameson holds up a CASE full of glass slides.

(CONTINUED)

JAMESON

I collected them. After they had spread the disease.

EBB

You recovered these? From the infected?

JAMESON

Mostly from soldiers who were bitten. The rest came from civilians. In the army, we call it *fièvre blanche*.

Off Ebb's look --

JAMESON (CONT'D)

White fever.

Ebb's brain races to keep up.

EBB

You're saying these mosquitoes are, what? Genetically modified?

JAMESON

What I'm saying is...

Pointing to his collection of slides --

JAMESON (CONT'D)

...these are unnatural mosquitoes carrying a mutated bug that's killing my people. That's what I know.

A BEAT.

JAMESON

What do you know about the warehouse in SONAPI?

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

In the low light of evening, Ebb's thousand-yard stare doesn't even register the jungle blurring past.

Until he sees the GLOW of ONCOMING HEADLIGHTS.

THREE ARMY JEEPS slide to a halt in front of him.

Soldiers, in FULL COMBAT GEAR, disembark.

(CONTINUED)

EBB  
I'm all right.

Pvt Ruiz walks point, M16 outstretched.

The others surround his vehicle - weapons pointed into the jungle.

Layton cautiously lumbers up behind his escorts.

CPL LAYTON  
What's happening? Are the rebels  
back?

EBB  
No.

Layton glares at him, gobsmacked.

CPL LAYTON  
Are you injured?

EBB  
I'm unharmed. Everything is fine.

Curses ring out as weapons are lowered.

CPL LAYTON  
Jesus Christ. We thought you were  
dead.

PVT RUIZ  
Lucky we crossed paths, Cap. Lucky  
for them.

He nods toward the village.

INT. OFFICER'S BARRACKS - NIGHT

PERSPIRATION beads on Ebb's forehead as he lies on his cot  
looking at the metal ceiling.

CPL LAYTON  
You nearly caused a massive  
clusterfuck today. You know that,  
Captain?

Ebb says nothing. Owns it.

(CONTINUED)

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
Just because you're dumb enough to  
risk getting decapitated by these  
goddamn savages doesn't mean these  
boys are, too.

Ebb lets his eyelids slide shut.

FLASH TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS:

A) Islande swatting her neck -- the BLOODY MOSQUITO squished  
between her fingers.

B) CHILDREN - bound head to toe in garments - fanning the  
bonfires with palm fronds.

C) The three crying children in the hospital tent BAWLING as  
the Healer pulls a sheet over their dead mother's face.

BACK ON:

Ebb springs off the bed.

Looks around.

Nobody's here.

Where is Layton?

INT. SHOWER TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Ebb throws open the tent's flap.

Primal fear spreads across Layton's face.

CPL LAYTON  
Hey, what the fuck...

Ebb gives him a forearm shiver - dropping him to the floor.

EBB  
What's the mission here?

Layton holds up two feeble hands to protect his head.

CPL LAYTON  
Jesus! I don't know!

Ebb grabs one of his wrists and begins bending his arm back.

(CONTINUED)

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)

Fuck, man!

EBB

Look me in the eye and tell me it's  
an aid mission...

CPL LAYTON

Colonel Sutpen runs the show here!  
He and his crew are out there  
looking for rebs while we guard  
those fucking metal cylinders.  
That's it man, I swear!

EBB

What's in the cylinders?

CPL LAYTON

They don't tell us. They're not  
even on the flight manifests. We  
just guard them until the Colonel  
takes them.

After a BEAT Ebb lets him go.

Layton collapses into a pile.

EBB

Our boys stay inside the wire.  
Never come after me again. You got  
that?

INT. HOSPITAL SHACK - DAY

CLOSE ON: A VOODOO DOLL dressed in a black suit with a  
skeleton for a face. A black top hat sits on top of its  
skull.

Mahalia sets a glass next to the doll and pours two fingers  
of dark rum into it.

Beside the doll --

A deathly ill TEENAGE GIRL.

Next, Mahalia lights a cigar.

She takes a long drag and sets it next to the doll.

Behind her, in the doorway --

Ebb watches her every move from the safety of his bug suit.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. HOSPITAL SHACK - LATER

Sitting on the ground, his back against the wall of the shack, Ebb absorbs the passing glares from the villagers.

It's almost all old women and children.

Finally --

Mahalia emerges into the sunlight.

When she sees him, a look flashes across her face for a fraction of a second.

Is it dread? Or fear???

Then it's gone. Replaced with her smile.

Rising --

Ebb holds out a duffel bag full of army-issue MOSQUITO NETS.

EBB  
Grabbed as many as I could.

EXT. JUNGLE PATH - DAY

Ebb is laboring in the suit.

Mahalia walks beside him - her skin completely uncovered.

He keeps looking at her.

Wants to say something.

What he does instead is remove the mesh mask.

Finally --

EBB  
I like your rings.

She holds out her hands.

Each finger is adorned with different colored gems.

MAHALIA  
Every year for my birthday, my  
grandmother sends me a new one from  
Santo Domingo.

EBB  
Do you get to see her much?

(CONTINUED)

MAHALIA

Not since I was a little girl. My father brought Ester and me here when we were young.

Finally, something he can latch onto --

EBB

Do you miss it there?

MAHALIA

The Dominican?

He nods.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to go back. Most of our family is still there.

She smiles and shakes her head.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

But the border is too dangerous. And as the mambo of the village, my responsibilities are here now.

A BEAT.

MAHALIA

What is that around your neck?

He digs out the golden pendant with the strange engraving.

EBB

This? I got it in Libya.

MAHALIA

What does it say?

He looks down at it.

EBB

It says, 'Peace be upon you, O Prophet' in Arabic. Local kid gave it to me.

A BEAT.

EBB

Not long before I killed him.

(CONTINUED)

She looks at him for a long time.

Right into his blue eyes.

Try as he might, he cannot hold her gaze.

MAHALIA

We need to make an offering to  
Damballa.

EBB

He the one who likes cigars and  
rum?

MAHALIA

No. That was for Baron Samedi, the  
loa of the dead.

Off his look --

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Baron Samedi is naughty. I make  
offerings to him because he has the  
power to welcome the dead.

She points at him.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

But for you it's Damballa. He is  
the sky father. If we offer him  
enough, he could make the boy's  
spirit right.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - NIGHT

As Ebb and Mahalia arrive at her home --

A half dozen rusty TRUCKS and JEEPS are parked in front of  
Mahalia's shack.

A ragtag group of SOLDIERS are congregated around the  
vehicles.

They do not look like government soldiers.

Jameson - in uniform - glares at them as they approach.

First, at his daughter. Then at Ebb.

So do his comrades.

Mahalia gives Ebb a conciliatory glance and makes her way to  
the shack.

(CONTINUED)

Then --

JAMESON

(to Ebb)

It's just like an American to show  
up at the wrong time.

A cacophony of chuckles.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

You might as well stay for the  
ceremony. Maybe you'll learn  
something.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - NIGHT

A roaring bonfire illuminates the faces of the grubby  
soldiers.

But this fire is not for mosquitoes.

Their voices hush as the two old men begin pounding in  
perfect rhythm on bongo drums.

From the doorway --

Mahalia's backlit silhouette emerges.

She wears a stunning red dress.

Mesmerized, Ebb looks on as she takes an ancient-looking  
SABER from a scabbard.

She holds the iron in the fire until it glows red.

MAHALIA

Ogoun?!

Her body sways to the sound of the drums.

Finally, she thrusts the saber into the flames.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Ogoun?! Aksepté ofrann sa a!

The soldiers begin shouting into the flames.

From behind - a HAND clasps Ebb's shoulder.

JAMESON

You must think us savages.

Ebb doesn't know what to think.

(CONTINUED)

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
This is an offering to Ogoun. Our  
spirit warrior.

He clocks Ebb's focus on Mahalia.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
Ogoun's favorite color is red.

EBB  
And these soldiers? Who are they?

A loaded question.

Jameson watches as Mahalia takes a swig of white rum and  
spits it into the flames.

EBB (CONT'D)  
They killed my men. Is that what  
happens to me tonight?

JAMESON  
These men are part of the  
resistance, yes.

Jameson spits.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
It's amusing that you think it's  
your life that's in danger.

The bonfire reflects in his dark eyes.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
What happens if we kill you? Or  
what happens when you tell your CO  
what you saw here tonight?

He points to Mahalia.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
(seething)  
I want her to live. I want Islande  
to live.

EBB  
What are you saying? You think I  
would hurt them?

JAMESON  
Your Colonel is scouring the  
countryside hunting us. What do you  
think he would do if he found out  
we are here?

Ebb can't look him in the eye.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
Remember that warehouse I told you  
about in SONAPI?

He motions to a YOUNG SOLDIER (teens/20s) dancing near the  
flames.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
He can get you inside. You can see  
for yourself what's really going on  
here.

A BEAT.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
Mahalia says you're a good person  
who wants to help. If that's true,  
this how you do it.

Ebb feels the enormity of the jackpot beginning to sink in.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
Or, you're free to leave and do  
your duty. It is our lives that are  
in your hands, friend.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Ebb is wedged between two crates.

YOUNG SOLDIER  
Remember. When you hear the engine  
turn off, wait five minutes.

The last thing Ebb sees before being entombed in a green  
tarp:

Mahalia. Her hand held out in parting.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Under the tarp, Ebb's eyes are closed as the truck trundles  
along.

Then --

Brakes SQUEAK.

Ebb snaps to in a hurry.

(CONTINUED)

Daylight filters in under the tarp.

(O.S.) Men are speaking in Haitian Creole.

The truck lurches to a stop.

The engine is cut.

INT. LOADING DOCK - MOMENTS LATER

Peering out from the back of the truck --

Ebb sees a dozen other PICKUP TRUCKS lined up in neat rows.

There are no other people anywhere.

In the bed of each vehicle --

The familiar cylindrical METAL CONTAINERS bearing the "KP" logo are stacked three high.

He inspects one of them.

Sealed and completely nondescript.

At the far end of the loading dock --

A GANGWAY leads inside the building.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The walls on either side consist of haphazardly erected drywall.

It looks like a funhouse without the mirrors. And definitely without the fun.

A door featuring BIOHAZARD insignia SWINGS OPEN.

Two Caucasian Americans (30s/40s) stride through.

Ebb is a fish out of water.

SCIENTIST #1

You need some help?

EBB

Must've taken a wrong turn. I'm  
with Colonel Sutpen...

The other man eyes the name on Ebb's combat fatigues.

(CONTINUED)

SCIENTIST #2  
Captain Ebb, is it?

EBB  
Yessir.

SCIENTIST #2  
(pointing)  
Hang a right and go all the way to  
the end of the hall, Captain.

EBB  
Thanks.

Turning to go --

Ebb sneaks a peak at their white lab coats.

Embroidered into the fabric is the logo for KORONIS  
PHARMACEUTICALS.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

When the coast is clear --

Ebb doubles back to the Biohazard door.

Trying the handle --

It's LOCKED.

Jaw clenched, he stands off to the side.

Waits.

A BEAT.

Nothing.

Another BEAT.

Still nothing.

EBB  
Come on, come on...

Down the main corridor --

(O.S.) LAUGHING VOICES.

Getting closer...

(CONTINUED)

EBB (CONT'D)

Fuck.

Time to abort.

He takes one step forward when --

The door swings open!

Ebb scrambles behind the door as a Koronis Tech crosses the threshold in front of him.

Just as the door begins closing --

He slips through it...

INT. WAREHOUSE - BIOHAZARD AREA - CONTINUOUS

Another corridor.

More uneven drywall.

Directly ahead of Ebb: a BRIGHT LIGHT.

Then --

The drywall gives way to a GLASS PARTITION.

On the other side of the glass --

A shape-shifting BLACK SWARM.

Two scientists in orange HAZMAT SUITS penetrate the black mass - each raising a small net into the air.

As his eyes adjust, Ebb finally sees it.

They're collecting MOSQUITOES.

A third scientist is depositing the mosquitoes into one of the METAL CONTAINERS.

As he stares through the glass, gobsmacked --

TWO SETS OF ARMS grab hold of him.

INT. WAREHOUSE - LOADING DOCK - MOMENTS LATER

A balled fist SLAMS into Ebb's gut.

He doubles over, retching.

(CONTINUED)

Second time in as many days. He must be doing something right...

His assailant (30s) is American.

The man is unshaven and shabbily dressed in baggy street clothes.

EBB

Now it makes sense.

Ebb smiles. And spits.

EBB (CONT'D)

CIA spooks kinda stick out in places like Haiti.

SPOOK

You know, Captain, I'm less interested in how you managed to get in here than I am in figuring out what in the glorious FUCK you hoped to accomplish?

EBB

I wanna talk to Colonel Sutpen.

SPOOK

Yeah, well, I wanna cut your vocal chords out, asshole.

Behind them --

Several of the loading dock's garage doors slide open.

Uniformed AMERICAN SOLDIERS begin piling into the cabs of the trucks bearing the metal containers.

SPOOK (CONT'D)

Somebody get him out of my sight before I shoot him.

INT. ARMY JEEP - DAY

Hands and feet BOUND --

Ebb looks past the two American soldiers guarding him.

Out of the rear of the Jeep --

He sees the CONVOY OF TRUCKS spilling out onto the city street.

(CONTINUED)

INT. GREEN ZONE - BRIG - NIGHT

Private Ruiz holds open the CELL DOOR for Ebb.

It's filled with empty soda cans and beer bottles.

PVT RUIZ

Sorry, sir. Didn't think we'd ever  
need to use it.

Ebb sweeps away a clearing in the detritus.

EBB

Just get my pack from the barracks,  
will you?

PVT RUIZ

Yessir.

As Ruiz turns to leave --

EBB

What's your clearance, Private?

PVT RUIZ

L, sir.

EBB

And Layton?

PVT RUIZ

L. We're all L.

EBB

So none of you know the mission  
here?

PVT RUIZ

Only Uncle Tom's crew knows. And  
they're never here.

Ebb lies down on the concrete.

A BEAT.

He LEAPS to his feet, rubbing his arm.

A thick line of FIRE ANTS pilgrim from the window to a sticky  
can of Mountain Dew.

EBB

Jesus fuck.

Ruiz leaps out of the cell.

(CONTINUED)

EBB (CONT'D)  
Private, could you please escort me  
to the other hut? I have to finish  
my work.

Ruiz looks at him like he'd just spoken Swahili.

EBB (CONT'D)  
The caskets...?

PVT RUIZ  
Oh, right!

INT. QUONSET HUT - NIGHT

A folded AMERICAN FLAG rests atop a casket.

Ebb unfurls it, section by section, until the entire  
sarcophagus is covered.

Kneeling to eye level, he meticulously smooths every wrinkle  
and blemish in the fabric.

Behind him: five other caskets are draped in Old Glory.

Ebb finally stands, eyes drifting to a TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP  
pinned to the wall.

As he studies it --

FLASH TO:

MAHALIA  
Sometimes I wonder what it would be  
like to go back. Most of our family  
is still there.

BACK ON:

Ebb traces a finger from the Green Zone eastward - all the  
way to Santo Domingo.

EBB  
(under his breath)  
Three hundred kilometers...

CPL LAYTON (O.S.)  
Planning your escape already,  
Captain?

Layton eyes the five flag-draped caskets.

(CONTINUED)

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
The Colonel will see you now.

INT. HQ - NIGHT

The room is nearly pitch black.

Hunched in front of a small floor lamp is Colonel THOMAS  
"Uncle Tom" SUTPEN (40s, African American).

His army greens are baggy over his gaunt frame.

He has bags under his eyes and several deep creases running  
the length of his forehead.

Without looking up --

SUTPEN  
Can you make heads or tails out of  
this goddamn thing?

At his feet is a half-disassembled CUCKOO CLOCK.

Ebb gives the clock a cursory inspection.

EBB  
Both of the winding chains are  
caught on the slides. See?

Sutpen looks to where Ebb is pointing.

Ebb holds up a pair of small chains that are attached to two  
oblong objects.

EBB (CONT'D)  
When the chains get caught, these  
weights get stuck.

SUTPEN  
No cuckoo.

Sutpen watches the cuckoo lurch free - then studies Ebb.

SUTPEN (CONT'D)  
What made the great Sam Ebb start  
picking through bones for a living?

EBB  
What made the great Uncle Tom  
Sutpen start at Langley?

No comment.

(CONTINUED)

EBB (CONT'D)  
Never would've pegged you for an  
Agency man. Not in a million years.

SUTPEN  
Never would've pegged me for a  
colonel, either, I bet.

They both smile, but it doesn't last.

He places a hand on Ebb's shoulder.

SUTPEN (CONT'D)  
Still convinced you killed that  
kid?

Ebb was NOT expecting that.

SUTPEN (CONT'D)  
You still wear that chain around  
your neck? The one he gave you?

EBB  
Speaking of killing kids...  
(pointing)  
I stepped into a pit full of dead  
bodies, Sut. Smelled that shit up  
close.

Sutpen looks tired. Damn tired.

SUTPEN  
Had to go out there beyond the  
wire, didn't you? Couldn't resist  
the stench of death.

EBB  
I'm not sending those caskets home  
half empty. You should've known I  
never cut corners.

Sutpen's knees creak as he gets to his feet.

He sets the clock on his desk.

SUTPEN  
What I know is you're being  
investigated. After what happened  
today, it went straight up the  
chain.

Ebb has a hundred ways to respond.

He bites his tongue instead.

SUTPEN (CONT'D)

What the hell were you doing at that warehouse, Sammy? Can you at least tell me that?

EBB

I had to see it for myself. The mosquitoes.

He finally looks Sutpen in the eye.

EBB (CONT'D)

A part of me couldn't believe we were doing this. That you were doing this.

SUTPEN

Then you're not gonna like the next part, either. We're about to light that village the fuck up. Storm's coming and we're done chasing those fuckers. Time to draw them out of their hidey holes.

Ebb rubs a thumb over Papa Loko.

FLASH TO:

ISLANDE, in rags, using her hand to imitate firing a gun --

BACK ON:

EBB

You don't need to torch the place. I can find them.

Sutpen stares at him for a long, cold BEAT.

SUTPEN

Define 'find them.'

EBB

I can find them, Sut. I've had a couple run-ins with their leader. Or, at least I think he's their leader.

SUTPEN

You're telling me you've seen Jameson?

All Ebb can manage is a nod.

(CONTINUED)

SUTPEN (CONT'D)  
You're not sleeping with the enemy,  
are you, my boy?

EBB  
Jesus, Sut. I'm lucky to be alive.

Sweat glistens off Ebb's face.

EBB (CONT'D)  
If I can draw them out of the  
village, will you give me your word  
you won't burn it down?

Sutpen only sucks on his cigar, red embers glowing.

EXT. GREEN ZONE - NIGHT

A CONVOY of green jeeps is lined up, their motors running.

SUTPEN  
You're with me, Sammy.

Ebb nods.

SUTPEN (CONT'D)  
You all right? You don't look  
good...

EBB  
I'm fine.

Sutpen guides them to a large jeep in the middle of the pack.

INT. JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

Ebb stares out the window as the night flies past.

The other soldiers stare straight ahead like robots.

From the front seat, Sutpen looks back at Ebb and nods to the  
SOLDIER (20s) sitting beside him.

The Soldier produces a 25-cent piece in his palm and holds it  
out for Ebb.

SOLDIER  
It looks like a quarter. It's not.  
When you're ready, press it between  
your thumb and forefinger for five  
seconds. We'll find you.

(CONTINUED)

Off Ebb's look --

SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
Five seconds, no less.

Ebb stares at the coin with wonderment.

SUTPEN  
Get your bug suit on. We're gonna  
drop you right up here. You'll have  
to get your steps.

He places the coin in his pocket.

SUTPEN (CONT'D)  
Sammy, you've got 24 hours. Sun-up  
tomorrow. We clear on everything?

EBB  
We're clear.

As the jeep lurches to a stop --

SUTPEN  
Sammy, what we're doing here is no  
different from when we were two  
kids fighting Osama over in the  
sandbox. At the end of the day,  
we're still just a couple plebs  
carrying swords for Caesar.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

Ubiquitous TREES stretch as far as the eye can see, their  
tops forming a jagged line separating earth from sky.

As a crescent of blood red sun materializes above the  
treeline, ready to paint the world --

A DARK ABSTRACTION pollutes the road.

A four-wheeled shape trundles past - leaving a thick coil of  
BLACK SMOG in its wake.

Only it isn't smog.

It's moving.

SWARMING.

Emerging from the trees onto the road --

(CONTINUED)

Ebb holds out a bug-suited arm amid the ubiquitous buzzing of THOUSANDS OF MOSQUITOES.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The dark jungle pathway lies open before Ebb.

He doubles over and begins COUGHING.

Taking off his mask --

His face is pale, cheeks flushed.

Catching his breath --

There's MOVEMENT IN THE TREES.

A BEAT.

Nothing.

Spitting a hunk of phlegm into the dirt --

He fastens the mask.

EXT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

The path is narrower.

The jungle is denser.

A TWIG SNAPS in the underbrush beside Ebb.

He stops and grips his weapon.

Can't see a damn thing in here.

A BLUR OF MOTION.

With his peripheral vision he focuses on light, shadow, light, shadow, until --

He sees the WHITES OF HER EYES staring at him.

It's Islande.

Ebb lowers his weapon.

Her skin is covered in rags.

He opens his mouth to say something.

(CONTINUED)

Doesn't.

They continue along the path, traveling parallel to each other.

He can feel the weight of her watching him.

Watching him like someone might watch a massive spider hanging above them in the shower.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - DAY

When the door opens --

A GAUNT FACE stares out at Ebb.

Takes him a moment to place it.

Although the aura of sickness still hovers over her, ESTER (20s) is at least back on her own two feet.

She looks Ebb up and down.

ESTER  
She's at the temple.

Off his look --

She steps past him onto the stoop.

ESTER (CONT'D)  
(calling out)  
Islande!

But the girl is already there. Watching them from around the side of the shack.

Ester says something in Haitian Creole.

ESTER (CONT'D)  
She'll take you.

EXT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

The footpath is barely discernible as it meanders through the lush jungle.

Trudging ahead of Ebb --

Islande never once looks back at him.

Until she stops abruptly.

(CONTINUED)

Holding out an arm, she points straight ahead into the darkening forest.

The visage of Islande standing there, covered in garments, looks almost Biblical.

EXT. VODOO SHACK - MOMENTS LATER

Crudely painted MURALS of mythical ebony figures adorn the walls of the brick structure.

Ebb looks like he's been transported to a different planet.

Or at least a different epoch of this one.

When he knocks on the door, he's not quite sure who, or what, will be on the other side.

He EXHALES at the sight of Mahalia's beautiful face staring out at him.

After a BEAT --

MAHALIA

I'm glad you're here, Sam. It's  
time for you to finally meet  
Damballa.

INT. VODOO SHACK - MOMENTS LATER

Candlelight flickers off hundreds of FIGURINES and COLORFUL ORNAMENTS.

Strange HUMANOID FACES made out of clay hang from the walls.

Ebb and Mahalia are seated on the floor.

She begins lighting candles around one of the figures - a muscular man whose torso melds into a SNAKE.

She pours a dark liquid into a chalice.

MAHALIA

Drink this.

EBB

It's not goat's blood, is it?

MAHALIA

(deadpan)

Goat's blood? Why would I have you  
drink a goat's blood?

(CONTINUED)

So much for levity...

As he throws it back --

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Sam, the pain you're carrying follows you everywhere you go. I could feel it the first time I saw you.

She touches his arm.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

And that pain doesn't just affect you. It can hurt the people around you.

Message received. Loud and clear.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Damballa is one of the most powerful loa. We will make him an offering.

As she begins reciting incantations --

A thin sheen of sweat glistens on Ebb's face.

All around him, the figurines begin COMING TO LIFE.

The faces of the statues begin SMILING and FROWNING.

Dozens of VOICES whisper incoherently.

He tries speaking.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Don't fight it, Sam. Damballa is with you.

The last thing he sees: clay faces of the loa LOOMING OVER HIM like interested spectators.

Or judges in some ritualistic tribunal...

MAHALIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Go to the pain, Sam. Go to where it hurts.

(O.S.) CHILDREN GIGGLING.

SAYED (O.S.)  
Uncle Sam!

FLASH TO:

INT. ARMY BARRACKS - DAY

A PAIR OF HANDS throttle EBB (18) out of a sound sleep.

SUTPEN (O.S.)  
Sammy, wake your ass up!

Even before his eyes are fully open --

Ebb sees DUST streaming down from the ceiling.

EBB  
What happened?

SUTPEN (18) is throwing his gear together.

SUTPEN  
Some kind of ordinance went off.  
Big motherfucker. You slept  
through that?

The SQUAD LEADER bursts through the door.

SQUAD LEADER  
Masks and chem-suits! Masks and  
chem-suits!

EXT. MIDDLE EASTERN CITY - DAY

M-16's held out in front of them --

Ebb and Sutpen, clad in green CHEM-SUITS and GAS MASKS - run  
with their squad.

The chem-suits look just like bug suits.

EBB  
(sniffing)  
What is that?

SUTPEN  
Chlorine. Keep your mask on.

As they round a corner --

(CONTINUED)

An APARTMENT BUILDING is smoldering.

It's Sayed's building.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

CHARRED DEBRIS is scattered everywhere.

As Ebb and Sutpen approach --

A group of American GI's are doubled over.

One of them is retching.

Another is SOBBING hysterically.

A stream of battered and bloody residents spills out of the building.

Ebb searches their faces, one by one.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Ebb sees:

HEAVING CHESTS.

FOAMING MOUTHS.

BULGING EYES.

GLAZED EYES.

BLOOD.

BRAIN MATTER.

As his eyes finally adjust to this miasma of human annihilation --

His breath catches.

All of the arms and legs are SMALL.

The chests still heaving are BONY.

These are all women and children.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

A VACUOUS SILENCE fills Ebb's ears.

(CONTINUED)

And he can't feel his legs. It's as if he's being conveyed through hell itself on a moving airport walkway.

Then --

A HAND clamps onto his arm. Hard.

At first, Ebb doesn't even recognize her.

Her clothing is in tatters - fresh burns cover her arms.

Even her hair is singed.

She rasps something in Arabic.

Repeats it.

Then he sees what's left of her dress.

A blue and yellow FLORAL PATTERN.

Jesus...

EBB

Where is Sayed? Is he okay???

She pulls him through a damaged wall into what was once an apartment unit.

On the floor --

A pair of red Dr. J's stick out from under a blanket.

The Woman gently pulls the top of the blanket back - revealing Sayed's pale face.

His lips are blue and his body lifeless.

Then his eyes flutter open.

A look of wonder comes over his face as he stares up at Ebb.

EBB (CONT'D)

Jesus, he's alive...

As he scrambles to dig out an army-issue first aid kit --

She repeats something in Arabic. A prayer? Hands shaking, she points to the blanket.

Ebb looks at it for a BEAT.

Pulls it back.

(CONTINUED)

Replaces it quickly.

Too quickly.

He focuses on the crumbling wall to his right.

But he saw what was under the blanket.

Will never un-see it.

The Woman is still rambling about something he doesn't understand. But her eyes are PLEADING with him.

EBB (CONT'D)

I don't know what you want...

A lie.

He can't look at her. Not for another fucking second. But her monotone prayer still fills his ears.

Sayed is still looking at him.

What is the boy seeing? Darth Vader in a green chem suit? Ebb pulls the blanket over Sayed's face.

Out in the corridor, masked American soldiers walk past.

Americans. From Toledo and Bozeman and Macon.

All of them here. In a bombed-out Libyan apartment building.

Why???

Ebb presses a gloved hand down on the blanket over Sayed's face.

Presses down with all the force he can muster.

BACK ON:

INT. VOODOO SHACK - PRESENT

As Ebb's eyes pull open --

Mahalia has him embraced in a quasi-bear hug.

Her eyes are closed.

He watches her sleep for a BEAT.

She looks like a goddess.

(CONTINUED)

Sitting up --

The loa figurines are still moving. But slower now. And the carved faces are back on the wall where they belong.

SAYED (O.S.)  
Uncle Sam?

The Boy is standing behind him.

He begins speaking in Arabic. Softly at first - then increasingly animated.

When Sayed stops speaking, a wide grin spreads across his face.

He throws his arms around Ebb's neck.

Ebb reaches an arm out to reciprocate the gesture, when --

MAHALIA (O.S.)  
Sam?

Candlelight reflects in her eyes.

She grabs his hand.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
He's here now, isn't he?

A BEAT.

MAHALIA  
Damballa will show him the way home.

Behind him --

Sayed is GONE.

As Mahalia rises to her feet --

Ebb reaches for her hand and holds it.

When she does not attempt to draw it back, he gently brings it to his lips and kisses the back of it.

He runs his hand up her arm, taking in the softness of her flesh.

Their eyes meet.

His face draws toward hers.

(CONTINUED)

Their lips meet.

Then --

She opens her garments.

He takes in the utter perfection of her naked body.

Game. Over.

INT. VODOO SHACK - LATER

Ebb's index finger traces around Mahalia's nipple.

EBB

What are you going to do about the hurricane? You can't stay here.

MAHALIA

I don't know. There are shelters in the city.

EBB

What if I can get us across the border? To Santo Domingo?

A BEAT.

EBB

You could be with your grandmother. Your family.

MAHALIA

To the Dominican? But why?

EBB

Because the storm won't be as bad there. And going home isn't an option for me anymore...

MAHALIA

It's so far away. And the border is so dangerous...

Lying back, he stares up at the ceiling, when --

A FREAKISH BLACK FACE stoops over him.

It wears a TOP HAT and has glowing WHITE EYES.

Inches from Ebb's face --

(CONTINUED)

FREAKISH FACE  
Memento mori...

Then it DISAPPEARS behind him.

Ebb bolts upright.

Looking behind him, there's nobody there.

EBB  
Jesus.

He runs a hand over his face.

MAHALIA  
Are you okay?

Surveying the shrines, he spots the one with a top hat and white eyes.

EBB  
Who is that?

She looks to where he's pointing.

MAHALIA  
That's Papa Legba. Why do you ask?

EBB  
It's nothing.

MAHALIA  
(suspicious)  
Did you see him?

Back on his feet - he's wobbly.

She grabs his arm. Steadies him.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Papa Legba would be warning you of something. Usually something bad.

Ebb begins coughing and retching.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Are you sick?

Holding his head down, she spots it: a nasty RED WELT on the back of his neck.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Why didn't you tell me you'd been bitten?

(CONTINUED)

EBB  
It's all right. I just need some  
air.

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

Mahalia places a comforting hand on Ebb's back as he vomits  
into the underbrush.

MAHALIA  
Sam, you're starting to worry me.

EBB  
I'll be fine.

With a green-looking smile --

EBB (CONT'D)  
What about the Dominican? Will you  
come with me?

MAHALIA  
I couldn't go without Islande and  
Ester. You should know that.

EBB  
We'd have to go soon. Like tonight.

MAHALIA  
This is all very overwhelming.

Knees wobbly, Ebb steadies himself against a tree.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Sam?

He tries to say something, but his eyes roll to the back of  
his head and he COLLAPSES.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Sam?!

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - NIGHT

Lying on a cot, Ebb's eyes flutter open into a world of  
shadows and echoes.

More faces leer down at him.

This time it's Mahalia.

And Ester.

(CONTINUED)

And Islande.

And Jameson.

Their lips move, but he can't make out the words.

But they all look scared.

Then it's Sayed looking down at him.

He's smiling.

SAYED

Uncle Sam, follow me.

The boy beckons him to get up.

Sliding his feet off the bed, Ebb watches Sayed disappear through a sun-soaked doorway.

At the threshold, Ebb is hit by a BLINDING BRILLIANCE.

Shielding his eyes, he glimpses the same primordial jungle he's seen before - alive, breathing, eternal.

Sayed walks ahead, haloed in a DAZZLING RADIANCE that doesn't look like any color Ebb has ever seen.

Ebb moves to follow, but an invisible force holds him fast.

EBB

Sayed?

The boy turns, still smiling.

All around him, the horizon BENDS. Not with distance, but with light.

A fissure in space-time opens with a light so bright that it overwhelms Sayed's radiance.

SAYED

Peace be upon you, Uncle Sam.

He raises a hand as the light swallows him whole.

INT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - NIGHT

Ebb's eyes open. The first thing he sees: MOONLIGHT splashed across the ceiling beams.

A wet cloth is draped over his forehead.

(CONTINUED)

Sitting up --

Mahalia is seated beside him, her head resting on her chin, asleep.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - MOMENTS LATER

Sans bug suit --

Ebb pulls a metal bucket out of the well and takes a long, deep drink of water.

Settling on the ground, he looks to the dark treetops.

Although the stars are still out, an eerie wind is freshening.

Reaching into his pocket, he holds the "Coin" in his palm.

MAHALIA (O.S.)

Sam?

Startled, he pockets the device.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

I didn't hear you get up. Are you all right?

EBB

Feeling better. I think.

She clasps a steaming mug between her hands.

MAHALIA

Drink this tea. It will help with the cough and fever.

He takes a sip.

EBB

Can you feel it?

She follows his gaze upward.

EBB (CONT'D)

Barometer's falling.

MAHALIA

Everybody's scared.

He looks at her hand for a BEAT.

Takes it in his own.

(CONTINUED)

EBB  
Will you come with me?

MAHALIA  
You're not well enough to travel,  
Sam. Look at you.

EBB  
I'll make it. I have to.

He squeezes her hand.

EBB (CONT'D)  
None of you can stay here. All of  
this may be gone in two days.

MAHALIA  
I've spoken with Ester and Islande.

A BEAT.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
We'll go with you. Even my dad  
agrees.

EBB  
We have to leave before daybreak.

Off her look --

EBB (CONT'D)  
Something very bad is going to  
happen here.

Before she can say anything, he lapses into a coughing fit.

She pulls her hand back.

MAHALIA  
Let's go back inside. We still have  
a few hours before it's light. You  
need to rest.

He's once again wobbly on his feet.

What the hell was in that tea???

EBB  
We're gonna make it. I promise.

She stares into his eyes for a long time.

INT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - NIGHT

Islande lies in bed, eyes wide open.

She hears Ebb MOANING in his sleep.

He lies on a makeshift cot.

Sweat has soaked through the towel on his forehead.

There's a TAP at the window.

Sitting up, she sees Jameson standing outside.

Islande looks over to Mahalia, who nods.

INT./EXT. JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

Ebb, looking like death, is half-dragged, half-carried by two rebel soldiers.

MAHALIA

I'm sorry, Sam. I'm so sorry.

EBB

We can still make it...

He holds out a hand, but she takes a step back.

Jameson is already standing beside the Jeep.

JAMESON

Sorry, Captain America. You won't be able to play the hero today. I can't have you dying in my family's home.

In the back seat, Ebb tries sitting up but can barely move.

Soldiers pile in after him.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

Outside the window --

The first vestige of light in the East.

Ebb reaches out and clutches Jameson's jacket.

EBB

(slurring)

Turn around!

(CONTINUED)

Jameson swats his hand away like it's a bug.

JAMESON

You're sick and need to go back to your people. It's time to save yourself.

EBB

They're coming! Everyone needs to leave!

JAMESON

I raised my daughter to be polite. But c'mon, man. You really thought she'd leave the country with you?

He exchanges a glance with the other soldiers, and they all snigger.

EBB

Fuck you.

Reaching into his pocket, he produces the Coin.

He stares at it for a BEAT.

Then presses it between his fingers for five seconds.

He tries to speak again, but it's useless.

JAMESON

Just relax, Captain. We're almost there.

He tries to fight it, but the darkness finds him yet again.

INT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

There's only four of them left: Layton, Ruiz, Parry, and Laker.

A skeleton crew.

And they're all wearing VR goggles.

Their gesticulating shadows hover and dance over Ebb like evil spirits.

Layton drops to the floor, exhausted.

Pulling off the goggles, he sees Ebb watching him.

(CONTINUED)

CPL LAYTON  
Hey! You're awake!

Layton feels Ebb's forehead with the back of his hand.

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
Jesus, you're still burning up. You  
need to drink some water.

Off Ebb's look --

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
We weren't sure you were gonna make  
it, Captain. You were out cold when  
the Colonel and his men blasted  
those savage monkey fucks.

EBB  
(cotton-mouthed)  
How long?

CPL LAYTON  
You've been out for a good eight or  
nine hours.

Checking his watch --

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
We're the only ones left. Our bird  
is on its way to get us the fuck  
outta here.

He taps the VR goggles.

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
You want a few minutes with the  
ladies?

His hand pantomimes like he's jerking off.

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)  
Might be your last chance for a  
while.

But Ebb's not listening.

His thousand-yard stare penetrates the wall.

Penetrates the village.

Goes all the way to Mahalia.

EXT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

The Green Zone has VANISHED.

All the Quonset huts - save one - are gone.

The fencing and concertina wire are also gone.

CPL LAYTON

(to Ebb)

The Colonel left this morning.  
We're the last of the Mohicans.

Banks of DARK CLOUDS are rolling in as a spooky easterly breeze ruffles through the palm trees.

Parry and Laker each have Ebb by an arm.

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)

Parry, set him over there and stay  
with him.

(to the others)

We gotta move our asses.

With one eye to the sky --

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)

The outer bands are moving in.

Parry hesitates.

He keeps his distance from Ebb.

CPL LAYTON (CONT'D)

It's not Ebola, for chrissakes.  
Help him.

Parry half carries, half drags Ebb to where everyone's gear is piled.

PVT PARRY

Right here, cap.

He fashions a pillow out of a duffel bag.

PVT PARRY (CONT'D)

We'll be outta this shithole  
country in no time.

In the grip of fever --

(CONTINUED)

Ebb blinks at the gathering clouds overhead, his pupils following the gray swirls, until --

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

The gray swirls are now a dark slate color.

And large drops of rain begin pelting Ebb's mask.

His eyes are BLOODSHOT.

EBB  
Where are we?

Ebb takes in his surroundings.

PVT PARRY  
Sir?

In front of them --

Only two walls of the Quonset hut remain standing.

Somewhere far above - a PLANE ENGINE can be heard over the whistling wind.

PVT PARRY (CONT'D)  
Hear that? Plane's coming in. Let me grab us some rain gear so we don't get soaked.

As he begins rummaging through various bags --

Layton, Ruiz, and Laker DISAPPEAR behind the last remaining section of wall.

In one fluid motion --

Ebb grabs a canteen and CLOBBERS the back of Parry's head with it.

He grunts once and collapses face-first.

Slinging his duffel over his shoulder --

Ebb makes a BEELINE for the jungle.

Several hundred feet of open ground lay between him and the treeline.

The ROAR of the C-130 cargo plane is deafening.

(CONTINUED)

Still another hundred feet to go!

Sneaking a look over his shoulder --

The three men are now plainly visible.

But they're all looking toward the runway where the ENORMOUS PLANE erupts out of the low clouds - its tires screeching on the tarmac.

EXT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Layton and Ruiz thrash through the underbrush.

They look like giant slugs as their bug suits flap in the quickening wind.

CPL LAYTON

Captain, you're sick! We can't wait any longer! The hurricane is coming.

PVT RUIZ

Yo, cap, don't worry about Parry. He's cool. Just a bump on the head. You're gonna die out here.

All Ruiz can do is shrug his shoulders.

CPL LAYTON

Fuck him, we gotta go. I'm not dying out here, too.

EXT. JUNGLE - CONTINUOUS

Emerging from behind an upturned tree --

Ebb is shaking convulsively.

And then he bends over, RETCHING. Ropes of vomit dangle off his mask.

His breathing comes in wet, raspy sobs.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The C-130 SCREAMS PAST overhead.

Ebb's bloodshot eyes follow it.

(CONTINUED)

Then it disappears in the low-hanging clouds.

To the east: an ominous tower of BLACKISH/PURPLE CLOUDS blots out the horizon.

It looks like some Old Testament shit.

Collapsing onto the ground, he begins coughing spasmodically.

Wiping a glove across his mouth - it's slick with blood.

Propped up against a tree, he watches the apocalypse rolling in.

If this is the end of the line he's got a front row seat.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - DAY

Trees are already bending in the downpour.

Jameson, bloodied and limping, emerges from the treeline.

He scans the roadway in every direction.

In the doorway --

Islande is sandwiched between Mahalia and Ester.

Running to him --

ISLANDE

Papi! Papi!

He scoops her up and kisses her on the forehead.

Mahalia - emotional - wraps her arms around him.

MAHALIA

(in Haitian Creole)

You're hurt!

JAMESON

Don't worry, my child. We didn't all manage to make it, but I'm here.

He nuzzles her cheek.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

He's gone.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - NIGHT

FRAMED IN THE FRONT WINDOW --

Jameson and Mahalia in candlelight.

Her eyes move to the window until she's looking DIRECTLY AT US.

She SCREAMS in terror.

INT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - CONTINUOUS

JAMESON

What is it?

Still catching her breath - she squints into the raging storm outside.

A BEAT.

Shaking her head --

MAHALIA

I thought I saw something.

JAMESON

I told you he's gone. Do not worry.

He kisses the top of her head again.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

We must go.

By the front door --

Ester is arranging a stack of suitcases.

Throwing open the door, Jameson shakes his head at the deterioration outside.

His truck is barely visible.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

I'll take the bags.

Islande throws her arms around him.

ISLANDE

No, Papi.

He runs a hand over her head.

(CONTINUED)

Grabbing two suitcases, he darts out into the squall.

Mahalia sets a basket of food by the door.

ISLANDE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(to Mahalia)  
Auntie?

The girl is peering outside.

The driver's side door of Jameson's truck is slamming open and closed in the wind.

ESTER  
Papa?

Nothing.

Just rain, wind, and the slamming truck door.

Islande looks to the two adults, her eyes bulging.

Finally --

MAHALIA  
I'll go help him.

Mahalia gives her niece a reassuring smile.

It's not much.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Holding a rain slicker over her head --

Mahalia reaches the truck.

The two suitcases are on the seat.

She looks around at the suffocating dark.

MAHALIA  
Papa?

Squinting, she can barely make out a DARK SHAPE looming in the road.

It isn't moving.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Jameson?

As she edges closer, LIGHTNING FLASHES.

(CONTINUED)

The first thing she sees: A GAS MASK.

Then, just before everything goes black again --

A GREEN BUG SUIT.

She GASPS.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Sam?

He doesn't respond to her voice.

Doesn't even move.

More lightning.

This time, she sees the RED PUDDLE he's standing in.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

What's wrong? Are you hurt?

Looking around again --

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

Where is Jameson?

Lightning yet again.

In his left hand --

A piece of something FLESHY and BLACK.

His fingers hold it by a grip of KNAPPY, BLACK HAIR.

Mahalia's knees go weak.

She holds a hand over her mouth to stifle a scream.

As she takes a step toward the shack --

He finally moves.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)

No....

Throwing off her rain slicker, she sobs and beats a retreat.

She hears him issue a wet, croupy COUGH behind her.

At the doorway --

Ester and Islande stare at her, eyes like saucers.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
Get inside!

INT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Slamming the door --

Mahalia flies around the room, blowing out all the candles.

Islande is hysterical.

ISLANDE  
Mamma???

ESTER  
Shhhhh, baby!!!

She huddles them together in the middle of the room.

Mahalia's eyes never leave the door.

INT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - LATER

All of the windows are covered by blankets.

Islande has finally calmed down, her head resting on Ester's lap.

Growing impatient, Ester rises.

She moves toward the kitchen window.

MAHALIA  
Sit!

Ignoring her --

Ester slips aside a sliver of the blanket to see out.

ESTER'S POV: Windblown rain smacks the glass.

MOVEMENT catches her eye.

MAHALIA (CONT'D)  
What is it?

As Ester leans closer to the glass --

A giant WIND GUST slams the shack - shaking the walls.

Then a deafening RIPPING SOUND.

(CONTINUED)

ISLANDE

Mamma!

The corrugated roof over their heads buckles once and BLOWS OFF into the night!

Hell's fury is thrust upon them.

Tables and furniture slam against the walls.

A deluge of rain cascades down on their heads.

Momentarily stunned --

Mahalia pulls Islande to the door.

EXT. MAHALIA'S SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Felled trees are everywhere, blocking the road.

Too loud to speak or hear --

Mahalia grabs Ester and Islande by the hand.

It takes all of their strength to remain upright.

INT./EXT. VODOO SHACK - NIGHT

The shack is still standing. And it has a roof. Mahalia uses her weight to shove the door open.

Inside --

They huddle together, shaking and crying.

ISLANDE

(to Ester)

I'm cold.

At one of the shrines, Ester strikes a match.

From that tiny halo of light --

A DARK OUTLINE materializes out of the blackness.

As she lights a taper --

The Shape is right behind her!

Bloodshot eyes peer out over the gas mask.

Ester is THRUST UPRIGHT, eyes wide.

(CONTINUED)

Near the door --

Mahalia watches in disbelief as her sister's intestines PLOP against the wet floor.

Islande's mouth is bent into a GUTTURAL SCREAM.

MAHALIA

Please, Sam. Please...

He wheezes and coughs through the mask.

Raising the bloody combat knife over his shoulder --

CLOSE ON: His dead and unrecognizing eyes.

Amid PLEADING SCREAMS and AGONIZING GASPS --

The knife THRUSTS down.

Then up.

Then down again.

Over and over.

Blood spatters his bug suit until there is no green left.

The moaning and gurgling subsides to nothing.

Then there is only the sound of wind and rain.

INT. VODOO SHACK - LATER

His blood-spattered pant legs splayed out in front of him --

Ebb sits motionless.

The gas mask hangs around his neck.

Blood not of his body runs down his face in rivulets - coming to rest in his eyes and in his mouth.

We pan around until he is STARING STRAIGHT AT US.

Oddly content. As if justice had been done.

He coughs once.

Sitting on the floor directly across from him: Papa Legba.

The loa's eyes burn red and his face is painted white.

(CONTINUED)

PAPA LEGBA  
(female voice)  
Sam?

He coughs a second time.

Then he's consumed by a violent fit of SPASMODIC COUGHING.

PAPA LEGBA (CONT'D)  
Sam?

CUT TO:

EXT. QUONSET HUT - DAY

GLOVED HANDS inspect the charred remains of a HUMAN LEG. Or is it an arm?

PULLING BACK --

Ebb, in his orange HAZMAT SUIT, stands at his table.

Still sorting bones.

An endless pile of fragments.

AMY (O.S.)  
(stern)  
Sam???

EBB  
Hmmm?

She's staring at him, incredulous.

AMY  
Are you all right?

EBB  
I'm fine. Why?

AMY  
You actually stayed out here all night?

All he can do is offer his patented shit-eating grin.

AMY (CONT'D)  
I can't believe it. How do you do it?

(CONTINUED)

EBB  
Daydreaming about my next tropical  
vacation.

AMY  
(sarcastic)  
Eres una maquina.

Stepping away from his table, he looks around the site as if  
seeing it for the first time.

A flurry of young anthropologists are back to work.

AMY (CONT'D)  
I just saw Colonel Sutpen! He's  
actually here! Have you ever met  
him?

EBB  
Can't say that I have.

EXT. CRASH SITE - MOMENTS LATER

In the queue waiting to board the bus --

Ebb watches as Colonel Sutpen makes his way down the line,  
shaking hands.

Tall and muscular - Sutpen exudes an air of authority.

A true leader.

When he offers his hand, Ebb shakes it.

Looking at Ebb's uniform --

SUTPEN  
Thank you for your service,  
Captain. I know this is difficult  
work.

EBB  
Thank you, sir.

As the bus's door pulls open --

Ebb is the last to climb the steps - just another grunt in a  
line of tired grunts.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Pressing a button --

A bottle of soda drops out of a vending machine.

Ebb steps around a maid's trolley full of used linens.

Reaching the stairs, he takes one step up and retreats down.

Descending the steps is the Woman in the zebra-striped bathing suit.

It's MAHALIA. Or whatever her real name is.

She offers him a disinterested half smile as he makes room.

WOMAN

Thanks.

ISLANDE is right on her heels.

Despite Ebb's friendly nod, the Little Girl looks at him like he's Jeffrey Dahmer.

EXT. POOL AREA - MOMENTS LATER

As the Woman stakes out her tanning chair, the Little Girl does a CANNONBALL into the pool.

WOMAN

Stay in the shallow end, please.

LITTLE GIRL

Mommy, look how long I can hold my  
breath!

She submerges herself under water, holding a hand above the surface, counting out the seconds with her fingers.

Unseen by either of them --

A MAN leers down at them from a second-floor window.

His silhouette is barely discernible through sheer curtains.

Even from here, his gaze burns with intensity.

Even from here, his gaze reeks of cowardice.

FADE OUT

(CONTINUED)