

KHARGA DOOM

by

WH Clark

FADE IN:

EXT: THE OSIREION TEMPLE EXCAVATION - NIGHT

In a black and white FAUX 1900 NEWS REEL, archaeologists supervise ARAB WORKERS under the bright lights of a major archaeological dig underway on the banks of the Nile River.

A male KASE and a female J.BO (Arab accent) narrate.

SUPER: "ABYDOS, VALLEY OF THE DEAD, 1902"

J.BO (V.O.)
The Osireion at Abydos is an
ancient megalithic structure
discovered by Margaret Murray in
1902.

Right next to the dig - on the surface at ground level - is an elegant ancient Egyptian temple with a wide front, elegant proportions, and a classic façade of round columns.

KASE (V.O.)
The Osireion, or Temple to Osiris
God of the Dead, is located forty
feet underground.

Workers pull a granite slab from the top of the underground tomb. Water seeps around the edges.

J.BO (V.O.)
Murray called it "The Waterworks"
because it's located at the upper
level of the Nile River aquifer.

Pressure behind the block THROWS the granite block aside.
WATER SHOOTS upward from the gaping hole in the tomb.

KASE (V.O.)
In the whole of Antiquity - the
whole of Egypt! - there's no
architectural equivalent to its
massive block construction style.

An archaeologist, NAVILLE (beard, floppy foreign legion hat) is played by KASE (28, athletic build, short hair in a military cut). Naville, shown in full color throughout, leads a teenage boy, ARI, toward the bright lights.

An ominous DRAGON SHAPE arcs into the night sky. Ari points excitedly at the dragon as it passes through the water spray. The flying shadow fades into the canopy of stars.

SUPER: "A FEW WEEKS LATER"

Naville pulls up in a jeep at the dig site, now at the bottom of a deep crater in the desert. Ari is with him.

J.BO (V.O.)
The only structure with similar
features is the Valley Temple
Complex at the base of the Sphinx.

The excavation is dry now. Workers root around in the structure, supervised by SOLDIERS dressed in all black.

KASE (V.O.)
Naville published a paper, saying
the Osireion was ten thousand years
old. The Sphinx also. Ten thousand!

Archaeologists run SCREAMING out of the underground temple as the huge granite blocks begin to implode.

J.BO (V.O.)
No fucking way. Five thousand years
older than the earliest Egyptian
baked-mud step pyramid?

The night is alive with SCREAMS OF TERROR and sparks from continuous AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE.

KASE
Naville was ridiculed. Blacklisted.
Still call it Naville's Folly.

Naville pushes Ari toward the deep, dark desert.

J.BO (V.O.)
Heresy! He shoulda been shot by a
firing squad at dawn's first light.

As Ari scurries away, Naville strides into the open. Soldiers capture the old man and haul him toward a raging bonfire.

KASE (V.O.)
There are rumors of an eyewitness.
Ari, by name. Naville's young son.

The soldiers (Nazi SS uniforms) tie Naville to one of their vehicles, SLAPPING him around.

J.BO
Also a woman, his antiquities guide
from the Egypt Exploration Society.

Searchlights shine on a WOMAN (J.BO - 38, Arab-American, dark hair in a severe bun, gold-rim glasses) trying to escape the dig site. She's in full color, like Naville.

Soldiers capture the woman and tie her up beside Naville, RIPPING her clothes off (pointy brassiere, wide corset, heavy stockings) for some malicious entertainment.

A Nazi truck arrives. HEADLIGHTS SHINE right into the camera.

EXT. THE OSIREION - STREAMING VIDEO MOVIE SET - NIGHT

Kase and J.Bo (still in costumes) sit on a sand dune looking down on The Osireion, just as the SUN RISES, blinding them.

Surrounded by camera equipment, tripods, and stage lights - they watch a small crew of EXTRAS packing up around them.

KASE

Gives me the heebie-jeebies, faking things like this. Where are the records - who fucking has them!

J.BO

Archaeologists were the original pajama bloggers. We write everything down as soon as it happens. In excruciating detail.

KASE

Pop spent his whole life looking for Grampa Naville's diary.

J.BO

More precious than his own life.

Everybody looks up at the SOUND OF HELICOPTERS approaching. Kase and J.Bo jump into action, helping the crew pack up.

J.BO (CONT'D)

It's the Antiquities Police. Get a move on people. We're not here!

KASE

You said we have a permit.

J.BO

Permit, yes. Bribe - no!

Everybody bolts into a ratty old TOUR BUS. It pulls into the PARKING LOT of the SETI I TEMPLE on the surface above The Osirion and disappears into a small traffic jam there.

A SLEEK BLACK HELICOPTER lands above The Osireion. Several MEN IN BLACK (MiB - dark suit, shades, headphone piece wire out of one ear) step out and survey the environs.

BACK TO SCENE

A BELL RINGS.

There's a rustling of papers as shadows watching the melodrama stand up and get ready to leave the room.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - CLASSROOM - NIGHT

THE LIGHTS COME ON in a vintage, wood-paneled classroom (tall ceilings, wood chairs, black chalkboards, tall windows) looking out on ivy-covered buildings and the UT campus.

J.BO
Class dismissed. Except for - my
impudent grad student.

J.Bo poses, hands on her hips, pointing furiously at Kase. Students gather their books and hurry out of the room, favoring Kase with scandalous smirks of smugness.

Kase waits for the last undergrad to leave and eases the door closed behind them. He smiles at J.Bo.

KASE
It worked! They were fascinated -
enthralled.

J.BO
Who says history has to be boring?

Kase hurries to pack up the overhead projector while J.Bo erases the chalkboards.

J.BO (CONT'D)
Have you settled on a dissertation
topic yet? I mean, I love having
you as a grad student, but we need
to get you a real job, here.

J.Bo shoulders her backpack and waits while he rolls the overhead projection machine into a CLOSET and LOCKS it.

KASE
Roman aqueducts? Ever since I went
to boarding school in Rome -

J.BO
People have been doing papers on
aqueducts for, what, two thousand
years? Nothing new there. Sorry.

KASE
Not much work on the castellum.

Pensive, she holds the door open. They step out, and she can be seen locking the door through the glass in the door panel.

J.BO (O.S.)
 Interesting... Put together a presentation. A week from today.

KASE (O.S.)
 In your class? With rebuttals?

J.BO (O.S.)
 Naville's kin? Can't take the heat?
 I. Don't. Think. So. Folly!

LAUGHING, they step down the corridor, chatting.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Kase and J.Bo stroll down a wood-paneled hallway in a vintage ivy-league-esqe building (tall ceilings, old wood floors).

KASE
 They're gonna have a ton of questions next week. I'll take the Naville questions. You can -

J.BO
 Margaret Murray's reports are in the library. Egypt Exploration Society section. Read them!

KASE
 But my castellum research -

J.BO
 Multi-task. Drink coffee by the gallon. Cancel your social life... Or would you rather go back to working in the oilfield? Boring!

KASE
 Sometimes I wish you'd just let me rot on the drilling rig floor... But then who'd be the slave labor?

He opens the exit door for her, and they head outside.

J.BO (O.S.)
 Don't say that, Kase... Am I like that? Really? I don't - Okay... There should be some video footage on castellums in the video archives. Here's my password -

INT. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PERRY CASTANEDA LIBRARY - NIGHT

Kase (same clothes), drifts down a corridor among the public stacks, looking for a book - stops - pulls one volume out of the shelf, then a couple more.

INT. STUDENT UNION - FOOD COURT - NIGHT

Kase (same clothes) steps up to a fast-food counter at the last kiosk still open. He waits at the cash register.

CLERK
We're closing soon -

KASE
Grad student special. Please.

The female clerk looks into his face. Her eyes go wide.

CLERK
Looks to me like you need a triple
order - of sleep.

Kase pulls out his wallet, slides a card into the money machine, takes his order - an insulated LITER CANNISTER of coffee, grabs a full sugar dispenser, and heads for a chair.

An MiB slips up the counter and orders a - milk; then sits in the shadows, TEXTING a furious message, one eye on Kase.

LATER

Kase sits at a large table (alone, apparently except for the cleaning crew), pouring over EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY volumes (dusty old originals, 1900 vintage), taking notes.

Kase's SMARTPHONE rings (GLADIATOR movie clip), and he checks the message - hurries to pack the volumes in his backpack, and scoots into the night. The MiB steals out of the shadows.

EXT. STUDENT UNION - GUADALUPE STREET - NIGHT

Kase steps out of the Union, glances across Guadalupe Street - acting a little paranoid - then runs toward an ALL-NIGHT COPIES store. The MiB holds back, watching from a distance.

INT. GUADALUPE STREET - ALL-NIGHT COPIES - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Kase pulls the EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY books out of his backpack and hands them across the counter to the bored, half-asleep female grad student CLERK.

KASE
I need you to scan these. Please.

She GROANS - glances up - sees a SHADOW in the window. She's suddenly wide awake (terrified) - shoves the books back.

CLERK

Sorry. We're closed. Bye.

Stunned, Kase looks at her, the books, the "ALL NIGHT COPIES" sign flashing behind her - which promptly goes dim. The clerk disappears. The store lights go out.

Kase turns - brief glimpse of the MiB, who quickly fades away. Pensive, and somewhat paranoid, Kase hurries out.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PERRY CASTANEDA LIBRARY - NIGHT

Kase eases up to the CIRCULATION DESK, pulls his backpack off his shoulder, and sets it on the counter - pulling out the EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY BOOKS.

A male CLERK shows up on one side of the counter. And two angry CAMPUS SECURITY GUARDS materialize behind Kase.

KASE

What is this, a shakedown?

Kase shows his STUDENT ID to the CLERK.

KASE (CONT'D)

Why the hell did you people recall these books? What -

The CLERK grabs the books and disappears. The guards escort Kase to the exit.

KASE (CONT'D)

You can't make me leave. This is my university. My campus. My -

The guards shove Kase out the door and LOCK it behind him, then disappear into the belly of the beast.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - CORRIDOR - DAY

Kase is asleep in the corridor beside an office door. It's dawn outside now. A sprinkling of students moving down the corridor don't give him a second glance.

J.Bo steps up to the office door, keys in hand - glances aside - recognizes Kase. She gently taps his shoulder. He startles awake - JUMPS TO HIS FEET, furious.

KASE

How dare you!

She reels back, studying his unkempt appearance.

J.BO
Have you been up all night?

KASE
I checked out Margaret Murray's
original reports - they recalled
them - immediately!

J.Bo acts surprised. She opens the door - looking both ways,
a little paranoid herself - and ushers Kase inside

INT. J.BO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Kase (tired, angry face) slumps into a chair, watching as
J.Bo preps a small COFFEE MACHINE.

J.BO
Same here. Car broke down. Busses
stopped. Taxi never showed up.
Never even got off campus.

She pours a coffee and hands it to him. They stare at each
other across her cluttered desk, both bone tired.

J.BO (CONT'D)
Did you take any notes? Please say
you learned something in my
classes... Those books will never
see the light of day again -

KASE
All Night Copies shop on the drag?
Closed - as soon as I showed up.

Her eyes are dark, pensive - filling with outrage.

EXT: THE OSIREION TEMPLE EXCAVATION - NIGHT

Repeating the end of the FAUX 1900 NEWS REEL: Ari scurries
away, and Naville strides into the open. Soldiers capture the
old man and haul him toward a raging bonfire.

J.BO (V.O.)
I was so disappointed when we did
that streaming video. I mean The
Osireion was thrilling but - barren
as a Sacred Whore in Babylon?

The soldiers (Nazi SS uniforms) tie Naville to one of their
vehicles, slapping him around.

KASE (V.O.)
How dare the Antiquities Museum not
preserve the original Egyptian
hieroglyphics and wall writings?

Searchlights shine on a WOMAN trying to escape the dig site.

J.BO (V.O.)
Damn lucky Margaret Murray copied
everything down in those books I
checked out. Poof! Gone, too.

Soldiers capture the woman and tie her up beside Naville,
ripping her clothes off for some malicious entertainment.

KASE (V.O.)
The absence of evidence is not the
evidence of absence. Never figured
to suffer the consequences.

Two young children, a BOY and a GIRL, watch from a distance.

BACK TO SCENE

J.Bo's eyes are dull, looking into the distance... Kase
studies her face and leans closer - across the desk.

She BLINKS BACK TO REALITY - and they both reel backward.

KASE
What was that? Where were you?

She stands up, turning away from him to look out the window.

KASE (CONT'D)
Always wondered why you pulled so
many strings to get me into the
program. Exploration drilling
engineer? History hobbyist at best.

She sits back down, hands on her desk - a sad smile.

J.BO
My grandmother was Naville's Egypt
Exploration Society guide. She
disappeared when he did.

KASE
Oh, Hell. That means - you
scripted. That discussion - but...

J.BO
Nothing to do now but pretend it
never happened.

KASE

Too late for that, boss.

Fiercely animated, he jumps onto his feet and hurries out.
She YELLS through the open door after him:

J.BO

I expect your castellum paper.
Archives? The whole video spiel.

As she starts to close the door, an MiB strides by, glancing her way - wicked smile on his face.

Closing the door, J.Bo steps over and collapses at her desk, mortified.

INT. THE OSIREION - TUNNEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A map of northern Africa and the SAHARA DESERT with a DATE STAMP on the bottom shows a time-lapse topography of the Sahara from 10,000 years ago forward.

KASE (V.O.)

Ten thousand years ago, the Sahara Desert was a lush tropical paradise. Then the climate changed... Yeah, it's happened before. In spades!

The simulation stops, showing a vast desert with only a few OASES of green, scattered in a FERTILE CRESCENT shape.

KASE (V.O.)

The water table fell, leaving just a few scattered Oases where water was accessible from the surface.

Video of walking down gently-sloped steps of a 200-foot-long stone-arched tunnel from the surface, opening into a wide underground amphitheater forty feet below the desert surface.

KASE (V.O.)

The Osireion was one such well. It was a regular stop for caravans traversing the deep desert since the earliest Pharaohs.

A map of the SAHARA DESERT IN ANTIQUITY shows a series of ROMAN AQUEDUCTS - with a MONTAGE of modern touristy photos of the aqueducts - dotting the Sahara Desert in the environs of THE VALLEY OF THE DEAD in ABYDOS EGYPT.

KASE (V.O.)

Later on, the first Roman aqueducts were on the fringes of the Sahara Desert, to access groundwater that by now was far below the surface.

The simulation zeroes in on THE GRAND OASIS, SOUTH of ABYDOS, near the settlement of KHARGA, and a spider's web of underground pipes, surface aqueducts, and wells.

KASE (V.O.)

At the source of every aqueduct is a castellum - a deep well, but much more - an elaborate design engineered to maximize water flow.

An intricate diagram of a CASTELLUM, showing a series of well-penetrations all blocked in with stone and masonry.

Kase HITS THE REMOTE to stop the video, but it keeps going. It finally freezes on an embossed wall carving of a DRAGON.

THE LIGHTS COME ON.

J.Bo sets up to the projection screen, studying the DRAGON.

Kase backs up the video to a clear view of the floor and traces out THE CASTELLUM on a chalkboard shown in the image.

KASE

Flowing water is turbulent, like liquid sandpaper eroding the sides of the well. The Romans lined their wells with stone for longevity.

Kase pulls down a poster display, rolled up above the chalkboard, showing a giant MAP of ROME IN ANTIQUITY.

Prominent are the SEVEN AQUEDUCT SYSTEMS serving Rome.

KASE (CONT'D)

Each castellum had many channels to increase the volume flow. Aqueducts supplied more water to ancient Rome than the modern day. Still working!

J.Bo steps forward, CLAPPING her hands gently. The class CLAPS politely as Kase bows deeply and takes a seat.

J.BO

Any questions?

Kase raises his hand. J.Bo ignores him. He speaks up:

KASE

Where did the Romans learn to do
aqueducts? Were there any -

J.BO

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon are
the only engineered waterworks
before -

KASE

The Osireion?

J.BO

Cool? Shade! Water! In the middle
of the steaming-hot desert? What
better place to put people into a
spiritual state of mind?

Kase stands up. They square off, talking loudly:

KASE

So you concur with the historical
record, that The Osireion was part
of the Seti I Temple just above it.

J.BO

Of course, I do. The wall writings
match. Seti I's cartouche is carved
above the doorway. Obvious!

THE BELL RINGS.

Everybody hurries out. As soon as the undergrads leave the
room, Kase and J.Bo collapse into chairs, stressed out.

KASE

Never thought to use plausible
deniability for nefarious ends.

She pulls a flask out of her backpack and takes a long hit.

J.BO

Seeing my short academic career
flashing before my eyes about now.

J.Bo passes him the flask but he holds his hand up, refusing.

Getting upset, Kase YELLS - pointing at his drawing of the
CASTELLUM on the chalkboard:

KASE

Too controversial... Again? I will
not - not... Wait one cotton-
picking minute... Brilliant idea!

Kase runs to the CLOSET and gets a slide projector.

He gets a stack of slides, finds one - slips it into the projector, turns it on - projects an OSIREION FLOOR PLAN image over the CASTELLUM drawing.

KASE (CONT'D)
Look! They match. The Osireion was
a castellum.

She pops his exuberant bubble:

J.BO
Nothing the least bit associated
with that place. Controversial?

KASE
Not your call. I got rights, here.

Suddenly DEAN TROTZKY (45, female, fat, stern) STORMS into the office. She SLAMS a piece of paper on J.Bo's desk, her HEAVY RING echoing a LOUD THUD.

Kase and J.Bo stare at the ring: Nazi deaths head SS emerald.

DEAN TROTZKY
Get your head on straight or forget
about teaching on our campus again.

Trotzky wheels around and, hands on hips, glares at Kase:

DEAN TROTZKY (CONT'D)
Ditto for the hired help.

Trotzky wheels around, exits - SLAMMING the door behind her.

J.Bo scans the letter, her expression becoming dark.

J.BO
Classes canceled... Sabbatical
leave of absence... Indefinite!

She stares into the distance, distraught. Kase pulls a paper out and SLAMS in on her desk.

KASE
Still got your geology?

Still numb with shock, she answers without any emotion.

J.BO
Once a geologist always a
geologist.

KASE
Just got back from the Engineering
Career Center. Found that job
notice for a gig near Abydos.

She WRINKLES the paper into a BALL and THROWS it at him.

J.BO
You were gonna bail on me? After
all we've been through?

KASE
No. Just figured if I left, they'd
leave you be.

J.BO
Been itching to do field work ever
since I got tenure. If I'd gotten
their notice a month ago, I'd be
packed and gone by now.

KASE
Talk about putting your feet in the
fire. Been there. Not doing that.

J.BO
Then find another advisor. Bye.

She pushes painfully out of her chair and heads for the door.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - CAMPUS - DAY

Kase and J.Bo step out of a classic brick building. They move
past a bench where an MiB is reading The Daily Texan, doing
his best to ignore them. Kase stares at him.

KASE
Look at that moron. Nobody reads
that stupid newspaper.

J.Bo stifles a LAUGH, grabs Kase's arm, and hauls him away.

They stroll between tree-lined paths among; well, many such
classic, ivy-covered buildings - on a fine fall day, full of
oranges and yellows, sunshine, and squirrels.

KASE (CONT'D)
Do you still get paid on
sabbatical? Will I keep getting my
T.A. fellowship money?

Kase steers her to the Student Union and they duck inside.
The sun is just setting over the BLOOD RED HORIZON.

INT. STUDENT UNION - FACULTY LOUNGE - NIGHT

Kase and J.Bo sit at a table in an elegant, sparsely occupied lounge, with a pitcher of beer and two mugs.

KASE

They'll recognize your face, your
name - back to square one.

J.BO

Every woman is a master of
disguise.

She shakes her hair out of the bun and puts her glasses away.

KASE

Arch-conservative, stuck-up
academic afraid to get dirt under
her manicured fingernails?

She unbuttons her blouse a few notches, wipes her red
lipstick off, and ties her hair in two little-girl ponytails.

J.BO

Two rowdy rednecks on shore leave
from the offshore rigs? Yes!

They CLICK their mugs in a TOAST and drain them. She stares
at him, wheels turning - head turned, dressing him out.

KASE

I'm Edouard Naville's angry,
godless, S.O.B. of a grandson.
Naïve engineering geek, rooting
around for some trouble.

J.BO

Rumors always said Naville was a no-
good reprobate with no respect for
academic standards.

KASE

Several drilling jobs around
Abydos. With crude prices so high,
it's no small wonder.

Kase digs into his backpack and pulls out several JOB NOTICE
FLYERS. She flips through them, tossing several aside.

J.BO

Too near The Osireion, they'll be
watching it for sure... That one's
in the terrorist badlands... Ouch.
Palestinian stronghold...

KASE

I forgot you're from Cairo. Yay!
Home field advantage.

J.BO

Not so much, accompanied by a
Christian angelical... Zero sense
of religion, culture - spiritual!

KASE

Just the sidekick you need so
nobody notices you. If they shoot
at you, I'll throw myself into the
line of fire... Naville's fodder?

She SLAMS one JOB NOTICE on the table. He reads it:

KASE (CONT'D)

Closes in three days. In Rome!

J.Bo downs her beer and heads for the exit. Kase drops a few
bills on the table and hurries after her.

J.BO

The U.T. Travel Office will pay our
expenses... I'll set everything up
and email you the arrangements.

They bolt out of the exit, not noticing an MiB in the shadows
watching them leave - then making a discrete phone call.

EXT: THE OSIREION TEMPLE EXCAVATION - NIGHT

Repeating the end of the NEWS REEL: The soldiers slap Naville
around. Crowley (male) and Sullivan (female), narrate:

CROWLEY (V.O.)

Two innocents witness to Nazi
atrocities. Hell of an adolescence.

Searchlights shine on a WOMAN trying to escape the dig site.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

Torn together. By horrors that
forged an inseparable bond.

Soldiers capture the woman and tie her up beside Naville,
ripping her clothes off for some malicious entertainment.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

Of me to you. And you to that
horrific - past.

Two young children, a BOY and a GIRL, watch from a distance.

EXT. MIDDLE EAST - SAHARA DESERT - FORT KHARGA - DAY

Two figures, a man and a woman (same pose as in the previous scene), study the sweeping dunes of a desolate vista - and the ruins of a hilltop fort perched on a rocky pinnacle.

They're sitting on a large blanket, having a picnic.

A rugged LAND ROVER is parked behind them. A MANSERVANT in a starched white uniform stands by the vehicle, on call.

CROWLEY

Been obsessed with the past ever since. The more distant, the higher grade of fascinating.

SULLIVAN

History is irrelevant if your biological clock stops ticking.

SULLIVAN (75, long hair with gray streaks) and Dr. CROWLEY (78, thick hair, buzz cut), both white South Africans, cover their eyes as the sun's BLOODY ORB inches above the horizon.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Beautiful place for a lake. What a positively exquisite contrast. Of life - and death. Immortality...

Between their position on a ridge and Fort Kharga is a wide, circular depression in a deep shadow.

CROWLEY

All I see is a world-class golf course. Filthy rich clients...

SULLIVAN

Your supply of - the dragon is running out, Buttons. You'll grow old and wither away, a pile of smelly ashes. Just like me.

CROWLEY

People should know better than to meddle in the past. Our past.

Crowley holds out A SMALL TIN for her.

SULLIVAN

More of that abomination crap? That shit froze my agony in the middle of menopause. How dare you! Year after year. Decades on end! No more... I just want to - die.

Crowley chuckles as he takes a pinch of snuff and throws it down his nostrils.

CROWLEY

How many times must I tell you? One last dose, and you'll transition into the final stage. Voila. Glory!

She studies her outstretched hands: flawless, unblemished.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

Look at me, Sullivan. I'm your living proof. Have I ever deceived you? Not once in, what - a hundred-plus years... Who am I?

SULLIVAN

This is the last time. Then - just let me die. Please.

Sullivan grabs a tiny pinch and puts it on her tongue - gets up from their picnic and treads along a long, curving ridge.

CROWLEY

I do so swear... But I wager you'll change your mind. Your addiction is still maturing. Your body is still adjusting. You'll pull through...

Crowley hustles alongside her, studying her:

Her face gets red. Sweat beads on her brow. She opens up her blouse and fans herself with the sheer fabric.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

Sweating buckshot. Nipples erect. Coconuts engorged with hot blood.

SULLIVAN

What did you do to me? Stop it. Now.

Crowley pauses - motions to their manservant, who double-times up to them, carrying a tray of iced refreshments. There's a PISTOL on the tray by the sweating glass carafe.

CROWLEY

Excellent! You're offended by the presence of a peon day laborer.

SULLIVAN

Offended, hell. I want to rip his guts out. Liver! Gall bladder. Small fucking intestines.

Crowley grabs the pistol off the tray and SHOOTS the man in the head. He flops down in front of her, twitching...

CROWLEY

You see how - the dragon, brings
out your inner Nazi? *Sieg Heil!*

Sullivan stops and stares. She pokes the bloody wound - jabs her finger into it... looks up as Crowley looms overhead.

Crowley pulls out a VINTAGE OIL POUR SPOUT (opens quart-sized motor oil cans) and JAMS it into the dead man's stomach. BLOOD GUSHES. He fills up two champagne glasses.

They toast, sipping the velvety warm blood. In a spasm of ecstasy, Sullivan RIPS HER BLOUSE OFF. Arms wide, triumphant:

SULLIVAN

I can feel it. The power. Glory!

LATER

They lie on the picnic blanket and stare at the rising sun - sipping dark blood, glistening in champagne glasses. She's wrapped in his shirt, and he's stripped down to his boxers.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Black and white are so dull after
ravishing life in a thousand
crimson shades of gore.

CROWLEY

Do you accept - the dragon?

Suddenly Sullivan gets up, straddling him, plump silicone breasts ogling in his face.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

You don't just find this beast in
your average crook or cranny.

Crowley gets up on his elbows, maneuvering into her clutches.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

That black howzit has to lie fallow
for three thousand years before it
gets this kind of kick.

As the BLOODY SUN rises, it illuminates the bottom of the crater in the depression below Fort Kharga:

LIGHT REFLECTS off multiple metal surfaces of a major drilling rig being set up.

SULLIVAN

But the rig operator is stalling,
scaring away all the applicants.
We'll never recover - the dragon.

They watch as the DERRICK is raised up to vertical above the DRILLING PLATFORM, and workers rush to anchor the tall metal tower to guy wires on all sides.

CROWLEY

My people found the perfect
candidates. Archaeologists just
can't resist a - mystery. Not to
worry. We shall overcome.

SULLIVAN

We're being too obvious. After all
these years in absolute secrecy?
It's too fucking risky. I won't -

CROWLEY

Relax. Billionaires have no natural
enemies. Not anymore, we don't.
(solemn oath)
Praise be - the dragon.

SULLIVAN

Praise be.

Far above, BUZZARDS CIRCLE the manservant's body on the desert ridge behind them.

INT. ROME - LEONARDO DA VINCI AIRPORT - DAY

WURMHOLTZ (60, giant of a man, thick German accent) sits near a "SULLIVAN & SULLIVAN OIL EXPLORATION - APPLY HERE" sign, studying a small group of young job seekers.

Kase and J.Bo sit at a table apart, talking quietly.
Wurmholtz motions to his secretary MICHELLE (24, cute, dyed blonde), then slips into a small room, leaving the door open.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As soon as Wurmholtz gets comfortable behind the desk, an APPLICANT enters and sits across from him. Wurmholtz puts a thick DRILLING PLAN FOLDER on the table.

WURMHOLTZ

Here's our drilling plan. Take
twenty seconds. What to do then?

The applicant scans the documents and looks up:

APPLICANT #1
Very professional. Doable. Sir.

WURMHOLTZ
Please leave your resume. Then wait
in the next room.

SERIES OF INTERVIEWS

J.Bo puts the documents back on the table. There's a look of
terror on her face. Her hands shake.

J.BO
Drilled into shallow caprock like
that once. Heavy mud like that.
Blowout! Damn near killed -
(calming down)
I want to see all the geology
records from nearby wells to
justify this so-called plan.

Applicant #2 sets the documents down, smiling big.

APPLICANT #2
I'm your man. Let's do this. Yes!

Very nervous, Kase puts the documents back on the table, his
eyes wide and afraid.

KASE
What are you drilling, mister?
Reinforced concrete? Breaking into
a bank vault? Fort fucking Knox?

Applicant #3 puts the documents down, shoulders back, sitting
tall.

APPLICANT #3
Done it a hundred times. Happy to
do it again. Tally ho!

END SERIES OF INTERVIEWS

Wurmholtz gets up, opens the side door, and steps into the
next room.

INT. SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Wurmholz waits until he has the attention of everybody. He
points to Kase and J.Bo.

WURMHOLTZ
You two stay. Then everybody else
takes off.

Disappointed faces lurk out of the room. Wurmholtz closes the door and sits at the table opposite J.Bo and Kase.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
You just return to the office after lunch and then a quickie with your hottie executive assistant.

Wurmholtz puts a stack of PINK MESSAGE SLIPS on the table. He talks directly to Kase:

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
You find this stack of pink messages on your Texas-sized desk. Then what to do?

There's a quick FLASH between Kase and J.Bo. Kase starts to -

J.BO
I throw them in the trash. If they're important enough, they'll call back.

Wurmholtz leans back in this chair, studying them.

WURMHOLTZ
Pity. I bet Michelle you two had once worked together. She wins...

Kase stands up, angry - but Wurmholtz holds up his hand.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
She watched the interviews in the spycam. Then she said you two had been involved in an almost lethal accident. Women's intuition. Wow.

Kase settles down and studies his hands, evasive... J.Bo won't make eye contact, either.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
Fear deepens the shallow brain. If not, then - you perish from the shear terror of it all.

Kase and J.Bo study his dark, serious expression.

His hands shaking, Wurmholtz studies their resumes.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
What am I to think? Experienced, from your analysis, very. Then, no cuts, scrapes, callouses, or other signs of rig working on the hands.

Kase and J.Bo take their hands off the table, hiding them.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
But honest enough not to lie to my
ugly face. Huh. Michelle wants me
to hire. Then again. It's my life
on the line here. Mine!

Kase struggles not to talk. J.Bo is calm and collected.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
That drill plan I showed you?
That's not a test. That's the real
deal, people. Swallow that. Then
digest with butterscotch schnapps.

There's a GENTLE KNOCK on the door.

Michelle steps in, hands Wurmholtz a paper, and slips back out.

Wurmholtz takes the paper and puts it between their resumes on the table - compares them, his voice grim.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
Professor Julius Ballinger Riggins,
alias J.Bo Muhammed... Mister
Khasekhemy Naville alias Kase Navy.
Spycam? F.B.I. background search
tech then ISIS terrorist types?

Kase and J.Bo share a look - and both get up to leave.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
I ask myself, what is the company
looking for? What exactly do they
expect to happen when we follow
their drilling program? Should we
then object? Change! Refuse!

Kase and J.Bo remain standing, but face him, studying him.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
I'm just the rig super. You two
will make the critical decisions. I
work for you when we are on the
site. If us three don't trust our
intuition, we have already lost.

Kase and J.Bo ease back into their chairs and inspect two copies of the DRILLING PLAN he puts on the table.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

I like that you don't say much.
Then, drilling intuition is spot
on. You have an understanding. What
I don't fathom yet is the motive.

Michelle steps into the room with a coffee service, serves
coffee all around, then sits at the table with them.

MICHELLE

The grumpy old man is my Dad.

KASE

My Grampa disappeared on the 1914
Osireion dig.

J.BO

My grandmother was Professor
Naville's explorations guide.

Michelle slides several papers across the table.

MICHELLE

Tell us something we don't know.

J.BO

Quid pro quo.

WURMHOLTZ

My grandfather was on that dig,
too. Reichsfuhrer Heinrich Himmler.

Kase grips the table with WHITE KNUCKLES. J.Bo's coffee
shakes in her hand so badly she has to set it down.

J.BO

Fascinating. I can actually see the
resemblance. In both of you.

KASE

So it wasn't the Nazis who
disappeared Grampa Edouard.

Wurmholtz leans forward, studying Kase with fierce intensity.

WURMHOLTZ

That was a remarkable conclusion on
no information whatsoever.

J.BO

What baffles me is why I'm not
running down the airport concourse
right now for the first flight back
to the states.

They all sip their coffees, eying one another.

MICHELLE

Those Men in Black characters sure
are clueless, aren't they? I mean -
really.

Kase smiles and tries to hold it back - LAUGHS. Quickly,
they're all chuckling, relaxed.

J.BO

What do you bring to the table,
Mister -

WURMHOLTZ

You will call me Rabbi. A Roman
history freak. Explored the Kharga
area all my life. Roman forts. Then
aqueducts, above ground and under.

MICHELLE

My uncle, Monsignor Henners, found
an old leather diary in the Vatican
Archives - left them a copy. Maybe
you recognize the handwriting.

Gently, Michelle pulls out an old leather-bound DIARY and
puts it on the table. Kase and J.Bo stare at it, afraid.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Les Fables Esau... Esau's Fables?

Kase's hand darts out and grabs the DIARY. He opens the pages
and studies the script.

KASE

Grampa loved Esau. Idolized him.

TEARS glisten in Kase's eyes, then start falling freely.
Wurmholtz motions to J.Bo, and they get up to leave. Michelle
exits briefly and returns with snacks on a tray.

MICHELLE

They found it at Fort Kharga,
1920-ish. There's a map inside,
where it was hidden.

Michelle is quiet as Kase pages through the diary. He pulls
out a loose page - unfolds it.

INT. LEONARDO DA VINCI AIRPORT - CONCOURSE - DAY

Wurmholtz and J.Bo power-walk down the busy concourse,
dodging heavy pedestrian traffic, talking between dodges.

J.BO
Rabbi? I don't know whether to
scream or laugh.

WURMHOLTZ
My parents gave us campy Jewish
names. I am Rabinowitz. My brother,
then is called Hennershitz. This is
so we do not forget who we are.

J.Bo stops at a glass wall to watch a JET TAKING OFF.

J.BO
Not the field work I imagined.

WURMHOLTZ
I am myself excited to work now
with a real digger lady. Wow.

She turns to face Wurmholtz, quite upset.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
Then, you wanted incognito. Be like
that... Archaeologist. Professor!
And a good looker to boot.

She gears up for a real tirade.

Wurmholtz turns quickly away to eye a shapely young
stewardess in a very minimal skirt.

J.Bo CLAPS HER HANDS.

Wurmholtz startles - checks his watch.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
Then. Michelle has four tickets -
we depart in forty minutes!

Wurmholtz RUNS AWAY - very fast! J.Bo hustles to keep up.

EXT. KHARGA - DRILLING RIG SITE - HELICOPTER - DAY

A black corporate helicopter RIPS over the metropolitan
CAIRO, heading toward the mile-wide Nile River ahead.

J.BO (V.O.)
Can you give us a close look of
Abydos - the Seti I Temple -

The logo on the fuselage is a stylized Nazi-esque eagle logo
and an "SS" over bold print, "SULLIVAN & SULLIVAN LLC."

KASE (V.O.)
 That's where Moses confronted
 Pharaoh. On those very steps in
 front of the Temple! Exactly where
 he cut loose the Ten Plagues.

The chopper veers downward, swoops across the NILE RIVER
 (classic FELUCCA sailboats), and hovers over the SETI I
 TEMPLE, a stone's throw from the river bank.

J.BO (V.O.)
 There's The Osireion, the deep
 excavation beside the Temple.

KASE (V.O.)
 Temple dedicated to Osiris, God of
 Death and the Underworld. Osiris
 trapped a primeval curse there...
 Moses - he set free the curse!

The chopper HOVERS ASIDE, caught in a THERMAL CURRENT. They
 get a good view of the HALL OF BARKS: keels of a dozen ships.

J.BO (V.O.)
 There's the Hall of Barks. The only
 structure remaining from the first
 pharaoh, Khasekahemy. Originally
 called the Hall of Butchers.

KASE (V.O.)
 Hate that name. The grief they gave
 me in grade school. Hated all these
 Antiquity places ever since.
 (quietly)
 Except for all things Roman.

The chopper swoops down and BUZZES over the HALL OF BARKS.

J.BO (V.O.)
 The priests kept the statues of the
 sacred gods used in religious
 ceremonies in those barks.

KASE (V.O.)
 Animal sacrifices. Blood. Gore!
 Hail almighty Osiris, God of death.

J.BO (V.O.)
 Slaughter a rabbit if you're a
 peon. A goat. A raging bull if
 you're rich... Warm, velvety blood
 gushing on the altar! Yumm...

The chopper VEERS to the west and heads into the desert.

KASE (V.O.)
Cut! End of Act One. Well done,
Professor Riggins...

LATER

The chopper HOVERS down to an "SS" helo pad at a rig site.

KASE (V.O.)
Finally. Civilization... God bless
the Romans.

Fort Kharga is visible out the windows as they inch downward.

EXT. KHARGA - DRILLING RIG - CROW'S NEST - DAY

Kase (well-worn jumpsuit, shades, stubby chin growth) stands at the top of the derrick, watching the "SS" helicopter LIFT OFF from the helo in a storm of BLOWING DUST AND SAND.

FOOTSTEPS grow louder, approaching from below.

KASE
The place that time forgot. Remote.
Desolate. Exactly as it was back in
the bloody, sacrificial heyday.

J.Bo (ratty old jumpsuit, hair a mess, no makeup - red face from sun) appears above the metal deck, breathing hard.

J.BO
We're getting ready to trip back in
the hole, to start drilling. Sir.

KASE
Rankles you, doesn't it? I'm the
drilling engineer. You're just a
lousy geologist mud tech.

J.BO
Foreign scum, invading our sacred
land, stealing our wealth -
corrupting our spirituality? You're
damn right I'm rankled.

Kase spots a BEDOUIN CARAVAN inching across rolling dunes far away in the desert, dwarfed by a building sandstorm.

KASE
Look at them, inching along - same
as forever ago... Why don't they
head over here for shelter? Water.

J.BO

It's the Forty Days caravan route,
the time from Egypt to Nubia. It's
still far off the beaten path. But
rich in the spiritual domain.

(ominously)

Moses' first Plague of Blood. It
originated here. Kharga Oasis...

KASE

There's physical danger. That I can
handle. Then there's existential
danger. Holy Mary mother of Blood,
help me.

They look toward THUNDER rumbling from the storm front. The
monster storm fills the entire horizon now.

J.BO

Allah doesn't like unbelievers
extorting riches from his land.

Kase points at a small grove of date palms nearby.

KASE

Not exactly how I figured an oasis
would look. Pretty lifeless. Bleak!

They stare at the vast desert and Kharga Fort on a hill.

J.BO

Lot more greenery back in the Roman
era. Trees, grass - even some
surface water. Enough to support a
whole Roman Legion. Legion X!

KASE

The most feared fighting force in
antiquity. Started by Julius Caesar
himself. They trained right here.

Right above them, the RIG HOIST picks up a section of drill
pipe to make a new connection. The whole rig SHAKES.

J.BO

Job, God, Leviathan, Moses, Satan
Himself. They're all here - out
there. Beware! Ishtar's DRAGON.

KASE

They are not. They're only fables.
Symbols. Not real. Not real at all.

J.BO

This is no warm, cozy lullaby,
Kasey. Leviathan, the Old Testament
monster? The DRAGON cartouches in
Margaret Murray's sketches?

KASE

Grampa's Fables, too. Scared the
bejeesus out of me. To see them, in
his own writing. DRAGON! Just like
at the end of the castellum reel...

J.Bo dives for the ladder and SLIDES her way down.

J.BO

Chitchatting in this rat's nest is
nuts. I'm going back down to sacred
ground.

In a sudden GUST of fierce wind, Kase grabs the railing as
the whole derrick sways dangerously, METAL WRENCHING.

J.BO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

See what happens when you take the
gods in vain?

KASE

I put my trust in science. Steel.
Structures. Nuts-and-bolts
engineering. Not vicious myths.

EXT. RIG SITE - MUD SHACK - DAY

Kase and J.Bo wait outside a beat-up old trailer just off the
rig floor. The rig all around them is BUSY WITH WORKERS. Kase
is dressed in his interview suit, a roll of drawings under
one arm. J.Bo is uncomfortable in a frumpy dress.

J.BO

Notice that weird mist around Fort
Kharga, as we were coming in on the
chopper? Moisture - in the desert?

KASE

The Muslim rig hands say it's an
ancient evil. Woke from the eons.
Lusting for blood. Moses' blood!

J.BO

Curse Moses at your own risk. He
had seven thousand warriors
slaughtered in the Wilderness -
right here! - for the simple
disobedience of God's Word.

KASE

Enough with all the religion crap.
You were so - grounded - back home,
on campus. What's got into you?

J.BO

Back at you. Surrounded by the
righteous unknown, gone is the
confident, suave Kase Naville.

(quietly)

Esau's Fables got to you, did it?

KASE

Flashing back to the blowout is
all, the rig fire... The -

They stare at the grim silhouette of Kharga Oasis in the
setting BLOOD SUN, looking like it's on fire.

J.BO

Say your prayers we don't make the
six o'clock news again, Kasey.

KASE

My name is Kase. K.A.S.E.

J.BO

Here comes trouble. Are we ready
for it - this time?

They watch a black stealth helicopter land on the helo pad.
Wurmholtz is the first one out of the chopper. He's in a near
panic, working big, red WORRY BEADS nervously.

J.BO (CONT'D)

He's afraid of flying.

KASE

He fears this place. Didn't you see
it in his eyes? Terrified.

J.BO

Desperate for a qualified crew, is
all. Somebody with the chops to
anticipate downhole pressure.
Nothing more. Save his beef!

Sullivan and Crowley exit the chopper. J.Bo and Kase wait
impatiently as the three figures climb the rig stairs up
toward the mud shack and the drilling floor.

J.Bo adjusts her bra straps, ill at ease in a frilly dress,
as Crowley, Sullivan, and Wurmholtz step into the mud shack.

J.BO (CONT'D)
 It's been a while since I wore my
 Friday prayer dress.
 (quietly)
 Archaeologists get to wear grubby
 field clothes... Serves me right
 for going Under-Cover Girl.

EXT. RIG FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

J.Bo reviews some notes at a table. Kase spots a small Koran
 in her purse.

KASE
 You're Moslem? Or is this just part
 of your mud tech act?

Crowley and Sullivan show up, followed by Wurmholtz. They set
 up a large table near the rotary gear and take seats.

CROWLEY
 I trust the rig hands have briefed
 you on all that wild rubbish about
 awakening ancient evils.
 (quiet venom)
 Demanded ten times the going wage.
 Life insurance policies. Swat that!

WURMHOLTZ
 Got a better antidote for shear -
 horror? Than death by danger?

J.Bo gives Kase a look of concern.

CROWLEY
 (to Sullivan)
 Let's hope these girls are better
 than that milking crew on our last
 job. Like, we all knew a blowout
 was coming. Crash. Boom. Fire!

KASE
 We're using the same drilling plan?
 Are you fucking serious?

J.Bo gives Kase a dark look of disapproval.

SULLIVAN
 We had this same death vigil with
 them. All the good it did.
 (blood lust)
 Now they're dead. But not buried.

Kase steps up to a whiteboard and begins his presentation.

LATER

Kase stands proudly by the whiteboard, now full of complex geology diagrams.

KASE

That's our drilling plan. We are not going to blow out. Not this time. We have Dr. Crowley's latest tech on our side.

J.BO

It's our interpretation of the data that matters, our instincts, our -

WURMHOLTZ

Spine-tingling fear of the unknown.

LATER

Kase, J.Bo, and Wurmholtz watch the helo lift off.

J.BO

I thought we all agreed. Stand up to the bastards and negotiate a rational drilling plan.

J.Bo glares at Wurmholtz, who just shrugs.

WURMHOLTZ

Apparently, they anticipated us doing just that. Then...

The three turn and wander back to the drilling floor.

KASE

Sure, I'll risk my neck for - like, ten times what most engineers earn in - a whole lifetime.

J.BO

Who, me? Retire at this tender age? Devote my life to digging.

WURMHOLTZ

Then. We got the blowout coming. We tame this bucking bronco and we're set for life. I take this risk.

J.BO

Forgot how exciting casing seat hunts were. Downhole pressure escalating. Instruments going berserk. Big-time adrenalin rush!

Wurmholtz heads over to talk to Almagest, who's collecting a water sample.

J.Bo and Kase head toward two small trailers. They stop, staring at a desert-ready FORD BRONCO (monster tires for getting traction in the sand).

J.BO (CONT'D)
If there's one thing I miss about
working out on the rigs - it's the
monster machines. Shall we?

They exchange glances, then run and hop into the Bronco.

J.Bo STARTS up the Bronco and SPINS the wheels leaving.

EXT. KHARGA FORT - DAY

The Bronco SPEEDS up the incline from the rig site, heading toward the Roman ruins on top of a rugged hill of rock - following a SHIFTING RIDGE of sand on a steady incline.

KASE (V.O.)
Remember how I showed The Osireion
might be a castellum? Right before
you got the sabbatical notice?

J.BO (V.O.)
Seemed so controversial at the
time. Now? Go for it...

The Bronco easily manages the rock and a precipitous ride (angled sideways) around to the far side of the fort.

J.BO
When are you going to let me see
Naville's Fables? I'm burning -

KASE
It's in French. I don't know
French, but Cajun is close enough.

J.BO
English? Arabic? Hieroglyphic? No
French. But - tell me. Everything!

The Bronco stops, they get out, and take a few steps - and they're inside the Roman ruins, exploring the old fort.

KASE
Grampa saw the castellum angle
right away. Damn him... That's why
he was convinced The Osireion was
ten thousand years old.

J.BO

The castellum is an engineered structure. Far more advanced than any temple made out of stone blocks set on top of each other.

Kase and J.Bo maneuver broken stone steps up to the uppermost level of the fortifications.

KASE

If The Osireion was a castellum - where's the aqueduct? That place is big enough to supply a city the size of Rome - bigger.

J.BO

Ten thousand years ago, the desert was growing - fast! - Kharga Oasis was the closest remaining green.

They reach the top and admire a panoramic view of sweeping mountains and ridges of sand in every direction:

Nary a sign of civilization as far as the eye can see.

KASE

Exactly. He came here, to Kharga, after he published the story in The London Times about The Osireion being ten thousand years old.

J.BO

Fired from the dig. Blacklisted! Archaeologists can be real Nazis protecting their status quo. Like, I should know!

KASE

Michelle said Kharga Fort is where they found Esau's Fables... In a cave, buried in a rockfall.

J.BO

So they built a giant aqueduct to keep the Kharga civilization alive?

Kase and J.Bo maneuver around a stone precipice to look down on the drilling rig below in the large depression.

KASE

Always wondered where Rome got their engineering know-how... Wait - what's that?

J.Bo pulls binoculars out of her backpack and looks down where he's pointing.

J.BO
 Since when do two billionaires
 supervise drilling operations?
 Personally - in the living flesh?

She puts the binoculars away, and they head back down the stairs for the Bronco.

EXT. KHARGA FORT - DOWNRANGE - DAY

ARAB WORKERS offload equipment from a heavy-duty cargo helicopter. The oil rig is nearby, in the background. They're at the bottom of the depression below Kharga.

Sullivan and Crowley explore a sandy valley with patches of solid rock.

CROWLEY
 Ahoy. Over here, buddy. Hurry.

Two technicians roll a "GROUND PENETRATING RADAR" rig over, holding it steady while Crowley adjusts the display.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)
 I'm getting faint readings. Heavy
 lead signature. Ancient pipes -
 from the Roman's aqueduct. Yes!

SULLIVAN
 Oh, God. I remember this place.
 When we were kids - right after,
 after - the Nazis...

Crowley points to a structure on the radar display.

CROWLEY
 Alright. Dig, baby, dig.

Slowly, workers uncover a slab carved out of solid bedrock.

Water oozes, then gushes from the excavation. A septic pool of stagnant water EXPLODES UPWARD.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)
 Nitwits. I told you to go slowly,
 carefully. You've done botched
 everything.

A bubble of dark gas BURSTS into Sullivan, drenching her from head to toe. She coughs, heaves, and falls to her knees.

SULLIVAN

Oh, Goddess. This is the stench.
When we were kids. When we found -

Her pupils get big and black.

Her eyes go wide with a look of existential horror - staring
into the temporal distance.

FLASHBACK - KHARGA FORT - DAY

A small caravan of camels inches along a ridge in the deep
desert, approaching Kharga. There are two adults (Naville and
J.Bo's grandmother) and three small children: Ari, plus a
YOUNG CROWLEY and YOUNG SULLIVAN.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

When Naville found us, wandering
around lost after the Nazis killed
the whole expedition. Mama. Papa.

They set up camp in the shadow of the fort's walls: Tents, a
long tether for their camels, and a fire pit for cooking.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

When he was running from the Nazis,
too. He was kind. She was kind.

The two adults, carrying shovels and brooms, explore the
ruins while the kids play, sometimes helping clear debris
with small shovels, usually not.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

When we had a few precious weeks of
childhood. Me. You. Ari.

The two adults, standing on the uppermost level, look down
into the deep depression - to see the three kids FIGHTING
AMONGST THEMSELVES!

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

When you found that evil Pandora's
Box in the hollow. Opened it!

The adults drop their tools and RUN down toward the kids.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

When that wretched, putrid smell
transformed you - into a monster.

As they approach, the two boys are having a tug-of-war over a
SMALL METAL TIN they found.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)
When I just wanted you two bots to
stop fighting.

The girl tries to pull them apart, but can't. She picks up a shovel, SCREAMING at them.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)
Stop fighting. Just - stop!

The girl swings the shovel down, just as Naville lurches forward to stop her. The shovel cuts Naville's neck. He falls to the ground, SPURTS OF BLOOD GUSHING out of his severed aorta.

BACK TO SCENE

A worker slips down in the shifting sand. Sullivan - grabs a shovel - and SLICES HIS NECK WIDE OPEN.

Blood gushes out of the severed aorta... Dead limbs twitching...

Crowley pulls her away - and motions for workers to take care of the bloody corpse.

CROWLEY
Ancient curses. Never see them
coming.

Sullivan falls to the ground, white with shock, still in the throes of her flashback:

SULLIVAN
Just stop fighting. Stop!

Sullivan tries to stand up, loses her balance - grabs Crowley for support, then shackles him around the neck, intense and angry, fighting to contain her terrible fury.

Sullivan fights back to the present, not succeeding:

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)
Stop her. She'll tell. She'll ruin
everything... Stupids. I'll do it!

CROWLEY
We found the old Roman water
system, dearest. Time to switch out
the Blowout Preventers. Yes?

She grabs Crowley by the shoulder and SHAKES HIM. SOBBING!

SULLIVAN

I just murdered - murdered my own
fucking mother!

Crowley works free of her death grip and, nonchalant, pulls
out the VINTAGE OIL POUR SPOUT and JAMS it into the deceased.

CROWLEY

Nix the Cain and Abel melodrama.
It's nothing a few million dollars
won't fix. We can even deduct it
from our taxes. Now, come...

EXT. KHARGA FORT - ENVIRONS - DAY

Kase and J.Bo hustle out of the ruins toward the Bronco.

KASE

Can we make a Roman ruins movie?

In a FAUX 1900 NEWS REEL, J.Bo rolls a video camera for short
clips of the ruins and the surrounding landscape.

KASE (V.O.)

Moses's first plague - when the
Nile River turned into blood -
started here. Right here!

J.BO (V.O.)

A red algae bloom in the water
supply caused the Nile to turn a
bloody red downstream.

Long focus on a SHALLOW CAVE with ARCHED STONEWORK supporting
the passage - which dead-ends in a wall of collapsed stones.

J.BO (V.O.)

Aaron, Moses' brother - the Bible
says he caused many other
tributaries to turn red, also.

KASE (V.O.)

All Roman aqueducts had side taps.
Why not here, too?

J.BO(V.O.)

Hardly enough surface water back
then to support an algae bloom.

KASE (V.O.)

So the algae must have been
underground - in the aquifer.

Their BOOTS MAKE A HOLLOW SOUND. The video tilts down:

FOCUS ON: A round metal circle inside a rigged steel frame, painted black - padlocked shut.

KASE (V.O.)
Aquifer, indeed.

J.BO (V.O.)
It's just a water well, covered up
to keep idiot tourists like you
from falling to their worthless
death.

The video shows Kase's hands reaching down to RATTLE THE RUSTY LOCK, breaking it loose.

He swings the RUSTY HALF-CIRCLE STEEL PANELS open - and a cloud of BLACK SMOKE gushes out.

They COUGH and WHEEZE for a few seconds.

The video ZOOMS on an ornate gold RING on Kase's finger. FREEZE and ZOOM on a DRAGON-SHAPED carving on the ring.

The CAMERA DROPS to the ground (view of their feet) and the steel panels of the well cover SLAM SHUT.

BACK TO SCENE

J.Bo stands Kase up, GRABS him by the scruff of his collar, and THROWS him against a wall so hard his breath exhales.

J.BO
Why should I trust one more
wretched foreigner disrespecting
our precious heritage?

KASE
What the hell's got into you? This
is me, Kase. Your partner in crime?

J.BO
Stealing our precious antiquities.
The goddamn antiquities ring!

J.Bo SLAMS him against the wall again. Kase eases out of her strong grip. Kase fingers the fancy dragon ring.

KASE
Steal? No way. It's been in my
family for generations. Millennia.

J.Bo gets his neck in a stranglehold.

KASE (CONT'D)
 Okay. You're assertive. I like that. You're raw. You're uncouth. You're uncivilized. You're choking me to death.

They struggle and push each other around.

KASE (CONT'D)
 Honest. That ring is why Grampa became an Egyptologist.

Kase gives her a grim smile. She backs off.

KASE (CONT'D)
 Nobody had ever heard of Egypt. Then Napoleon came. And -

J.BO
 Foreign slime. You people don't belong here, never did.

KASE
 He rooted around here. For the whole rest of his life. Obsessed.

Kase backs off, circling away from her threatening hands - hands WITH A GIANT STONE, ready to BASH HIS HEAD in.

KASE (CONT'D)
 Whoa, lady. Calm down. I don't mean you no harm. Deep breath. That's it... Easy does it.

Very carefully Kase slips the DRAGON RING off his finger and hands it to her.

KASE (CONT'D)
 Here's your ancient ring. Take it. Donate it to your Antiquities Museum in Cairo.

Still circling him, her eyes dark - J.Bo GRABS the ring and STUFFS it into her pants pocket - two hands back on the rock.

KASE (CONT'D)
 Wow! Big media event. Famous archaeologist discovers long-lost Pharaoh Khasekhemwy ring. Hurry!

She slows slightly - then LUNGES as he lowers his arms.

KASE (CONT'D)
 I don't know who's got into your
 head, but you're Professor Riggins.
 My old friend and mentor. Don't no
 curse on the planet scare her...

J.Bo blinks hard and looks at the stone - at Kase's terrified
 face. She shakes her head, trying to clear it.

J.BO
 What just happened? Why am I -

KASE
 You're the one with the bachelor's
 in psychology. You tell me.

She reaches into her pants pocket and hands the ring back.

J.BO
 It's like, my subconscious mind was
 so absolutely terrified of the
 truth, it blocked me off.
 Registered everything as a threat.

KASE
 Huh. It happened right after I
 opened this steel door.

Kase kneels at the steel well cover, hands on both doors -
 opens them wide.

A CLOUD OF BLACK SMOG jets into J.Bo's face! Horrified, Kase
 SLAMS the doors closed and LOCKS IT TIGHT... Too late.

J.Bo's staring into the distance, her eyes blank and - black.

EXT. ANCIENT ABYDOS - DAY

J.Bo is dressed as a slave, carrying a fruit basket.

SUPER: "NILE RIVER BASIN - 2700 BC"

J.Bo's in a religious procession of sorts. Several paces
 ahead of her, slaves carry a WOODEN BARK on poles - same size
 as at the HALL OF BARKS antiquities site.

A statue inside the BARK is a very large, ornate wooden
 DRAGON with GIANT RUBY RED EYES.

J.Bo stares at PHARAOH KHA SEKHEM WY (Crowley) who's on
 horseback nearby, keeping a wary eye on the procession.

An OVERSEER (Sullivan) CRACKS a whip nearby. The SNAPPING
 whip jolts J.Bo forward.

PHARAOH
Pay attention, slave.

The procession moves up a muddy incline away from the Nile.
The wooden bark is very heavy. The muddy ground is slick.

The slaves carrying the bark slip backward toward J.Bo. The
Overseer's whip CRACKS on J.Bo's back.

PHARAOH (CONT'D)
Mind your step, you.

The Overseer tosses J.Bo a wood shovel and a reed basket.

J.BO
What the damnation am I supposed to
do with these?

J.Bo looks at her new tools curiously, stumbling ahead as the
procession presses her forward.

OVERSEER
Scoop the royal poop, woman.

J.BO
How dare you. I won't -

The Overseer CRACKS the whip on J.Bo's shoulder, drawing
blood.

PHARAOH
Silence, slave.

The bark procession slows. A slave opens a sliding door on
the bottom of the DRAGON. Out comes a steaming pile of poop.

J.Bo stumbles forward and scoops up the poop and puts it in
the wooden bucket.

J.BO
Ugh. This is disgusting.

A YOUNG SLAVE (Kase) cracks open the SIDE OF THE DRAGON
statue and puts dried food inside.

A small anteater snout with a long tongue jets out of the box
and SNAPS food from the slave's hand.

The tongue darts out again. It rips off the young slave's arm
at the elbow.

SCREAMING, the slave falls into reeds beside the road, a
geyser of blood gushing from his arm.

OVERSEER

Incompetent. You better pray
Leviathan doesn't choke on your
scrawny arm.

An alligator slides off the banks of the Nile.

One last SCREAM from the injured slave and all that remains
of him is a growing pool of blood in the river.

J.BO

Leviathan? The Old Testament
monster? In that big canoe?

Commoners dressed in their finest robes line the roadway. A
PRIEST (Wurmholtz) waves incense burners.

As the BARK with the DRAGON STATUE passes, the commoners
swoon and fall to the ground in a religious fever.

J.Bo gets dizzy, too. Her vision blurs. Her knees wobble. She
starts to fall toward the box.

EXT. KHARGA FORT - DAY

J.Bo collides with a wall of loose stones, RATTLING pebbles
loose. Kase steadies her onto her feet.

J.BO

Where? Leviathan. Dragon poop. Huh,
where am I?

KASE

J.Bo? You okay?

Kase sits her down, pulls a water flask out of his back pack
and watches her drain it.

J.BO

Just a flashback - wow, it was so
real, like a past-life experience.

KASE

What did you see?

Kase pulls out a package of TRAIL MIX, sits down beside her,
and they snack - staring out at the bleak desert landscape.

J.BO

Crowley and Sullivan... Whatever it
was, they're after it now.

KASE

The two billionaires? They were in
your throwback vision? But, no -
(quietly)
Your Grandma who disappeared...

The BLOOD RED ORB of the sun drops below the horizon. The
desert is suddenly quite dark. They get up and scramble to
the Bronco, mount up, and head on out.

J.BO (V.O.)

Thank you for listening.

The Bronco (headlights on) races the penumbra of absolute
darkness as it moves across the desert sands.

J.BO (V.O.)

There's a myth about an ancient
Temple to Osiris, God of the
Underworld - death. It's deep
underground, alongside a river of
blood. Human blood. Slave's blood.

The Bronco parks between two small trailers.

Kase and J.Bo exit, each ducking into a separate trailer.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - MUD SHACK - DAY

Kase and J.Bo stand just outside the mud shack, staring out
at a BREWING STORM in the distance.

J.BO

Seeing that ring. Fort Kharga. The
mysteries. Danger! Blowout on the
horizon. All that - stress - pushed
my brain into video defense mode.

KASE

Like a waking dream? Cool.

Cloud-to-ground lightning intensifies all around the rig in
the fading light of A BLOODY SUNSET.

J.BO

When you opened those black doors,
it was like - like opening up time -
back to the primordial goo!

They study the hive of activity as workers scurry around the
rig, now in full operation: Lights. Steam. ENGINES. Gears.

KASE

Naville was after something.
Crowley and Sullivan. That shifty
Wurmholz guy. Something big.
Ancient. Something here. Under us!

J.BO

Welcome to the Archaeology Channel.

A massive LIGHTNING STRIKE hits the ground a hundred meters
away, liquefying sand into a vitreous pool. THUNDER ROLLS.

J.BO (CONT'D)

Allah is some kind of angry. We
have aroused Leviathan.

The rig lights sputter, dim, then go out altogether.

A KLAXON ALARM SOUNDS. Kase and J.Bo duck into the mud shack.

INT. MUD SHACK - NIGHT

Computer screens flicker back on, one at a time, after a
power outage.

KASE

Since when does it rain buckets in
the deep desert?

J.BO

Once every couple thousand years.

Kase studies a roll of data streaming out of a printer.

KASE

Gas is increasing. Pressure.

J.Bo YANKS off the paper and rolls it up, a NERVOUS HABIT.

DIXIE the cat is just waking up, stretching, and yawning.
Kase reaches out to scratch the large feline. Dixie backs
away, arching her back - ready to strike Kase.

J.BO

She bites unbelievers.

Kase pulls his hand away. The cat GROWLS at him, hackles up.
J.Bo smiles at Kase's consternation.

J.BO (CONT'D)

I think she likes you.

An ALARM SOUNDS on a control panel, with flashing lights.
They study the display.

KASE
Seen gas spikes before?

J.BO
Around three thousand feet, when we
hit the limestone caprock.

J.Bo rolls out a drawing. It shows the wellbore penetrating a cross-section of the geology. She points to a section marked with a red highlighter.

J.BO (CONT'D)
Right below that are super-charged
sands. Big-time pressure.

KASE
Hence the high pressure on
Wurmholtz's original drill plan.

J.BO
What we're drilling through must be
tough as reinforced concrete.

KASE
Tough enough to old back Moses's
high-pressure red-algae reservoir?

Kase picks up the red "Driller's Hot Line" phone on the wall.

KASE (CONT'D)
Raise the mud weight. Three tenths.
That'll keep the gas down... Okay.

Kase waits for an acknowledgment, nods, and hangs up.

J.BO
The wellbore won't take much more
mud weight. We could lose
circulation. Blowout!

EXT. DRILLING RIG - NIGHT

Kase and J.Bo hurry out of the mud shack.

J.BO
I say we go get it from the camel's
mouth.

KASE
Facts over fears, Grampa said.
Don't be afraid until you have all
the facts.

Kase and J.Bo climb up to the rig floor.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - ROTARY TABLE FLOOR - NIGHT

Nervous roughnecks mill around the rotary table.

Steam and drilling fluid SHOOT OUT around the stationary drill pipe. Wurmholtz exits the driller's shack to join Kase and J.Bo.

J.BO

What do your drilling parameters look like? All our computer feeds are talking nonsensical.

They step over to study a series of graphs on drum rollers.

WURMHOLTZ

Increasing rate of penetration. Then gas way up. Then wellbore cuttings curling at the edges - increasing in volume. *Verboten*. Blowout coming.

J.BO

Time to shut her in.

KASE

No. We wait for the mud weight to stabilize.

Wurmholtz grabs Kase by the arm, angry and afraid.

WURMHOLTZ

You crazy, dumb, stupid? We got drastic pressure downhole. Then haywire instruments. We're blind. This here's bad trouble - *wurst* ever.

A GAS ALARM SOUNDS. Flashing red lights come on. The rig crew hurry to plug a rash of gas leaks.

Wurmholtz, J.Bo, and Kase hold swabs of cloth over their mouths, choking sporadically as they talk.

J.BO

Gas - hydrogen sulfide. Poison. We've got to shut her in.

A GIANT VENT FAN KICKS IN. Startled, Kase jumps a foot. In the distance, a GAS FLARE blows a hundred feet into the air.

KASE

Disconnect the drill string. Close the B.O.P.s.

Roughnecks clamp giant power grips on the drill pipe to TWIST the pipe apart at a connection.

WURMHOLTZ

Evacuate the dance floor. Now.

Rig hands pull the free length of drill pipe up and away. Black drilling fluid SHOOTs OUT of the open drill pipe.

Wurmholtz opens a glass "Emergency BOP" cover. He holds a fist over a large RED KNOB.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

Closing the Blow Out Preventers.

Wurmholtz SLAMS the RED KNOB down with his clenched fist.

ON DIGITAL CONTROL PANEL

Bright red BLOW OUT PREVENTER STACK graphics come to life.

Large pneumatic rams close over the drill string, IMPLoding the steel pipe like so much papier-mache.

EXT. ROTARY TABLE FLOOR - NIGHT

Mud SPURTS ever higher out of the open-ended drill string.

WURMHOLTZ

B.O.P.s are not working. Maybe jammed! Then can't close off the drill string. She's gonna blow sky-high.

Kase motions for J.Bo to leave.

KASE

Get the F out of here. Go!

J.Bo bolts for the mud shack and ducks inside - runs back out, carrying Dixie in her arms.

KASE (CONT'D)

Cut Crowley's instrument rig.

WURMHOLTZ

Achtung. That's twenty million dollars of electronics.

KASE

Cut the God damn instrument rig.

Wurmholtz grabs bolt cutters and SNAPS cables inside the drill pipe.

WURMHOLTZ

Not one nick, dent, or scratch, he
said... Or you fucking pay for it.
Zoom goes away my comfy retirement.

The drill pipe KEEPS GUSHING drilling fluids.

Kase grabs a fire ax and hurries down below the rig floor.

EXT. BOP STACK - NIGHT

Kase starts to swing the ax - stops.

He pulls a rag out of his back pocket and wipes off the giant
red shapes, reading engraved lettering.

KASE

Industrial Water Filtration?
(furious)
Where are my goddamn mother fucking
blowout preventers?

An earthquake RUMBLES. The ground shifts. The rig structure
RATTLES and SHAKES. OIL GUSHES from broken pipes.

Kase hurries away through the spraying drilling fluids.

EXT. DRILLING RIG COMPOUND - NIGHT

As Kase runs away from the rig, BOARDS POP OFF the plank-
board roadway all around him, from increased pressure in the
ground below.

J.BO

We got a blowout! Major league
pressure. Run, Kase. Run.

ANOTHER EXPLOSION.

Drilling fluid gushing above the rig gradually turns to clear
water, TINTED A GHASTLY BLOOD RED by the nascent sunrise.

EXT. DRILLING RIG COMPOUND - NIGHT

Kase, J.Bo, and Wurmholtz stand in the water spray, letting
it wash the caked mud and oil off their faces and arms.

KASE

Either of you notice anything -
unusual?

Wurmholtz points toward Fort Kharga on the hill overlooking
their location, silhouetted in contrast by the blood-red sun.

WURMHOLTZ

I see now how water could reach all
the way up to then Fort Kharga on
top of that tall hill there.

J.BO

Our Lord Osiris is said to be
joined to Ishtar the Dragon Goddess
by a highway of blood, death, and
utter despair. Think waterway.

KASE

Here comes the abomination of
desolation. All bottled up and
ready to market as Holy Water.

They look up to watch as a black company helicopter lands
nearby, BLADES WHISPERING.

J.BO

They found the source of Moses' red
algae bloom.

WURMHOLTZ

Caesar wrote never to correct your
enemy when he is making a mistake.

Kase and Wurmholtz give J.Bo the evil eye.

KASE

Mum's the word. J.Bo, that means
you.

EXT. HELO LANDING PAD - DAWN

Crowley and Sullivan exit the helicopter. They're accompanied
by ALMAGEST (55, rotund, Arab, fawning). Crowley has urgent
words with Almagest:

CROWLEY

Collect the sample. Hurry!

ALMAGEST

But, Sir Crowley - the wellspring
has only now just begun.

CROWLEY

The first gush of water always has
he highest yield. Get it!

Almagest bows obsequiously, and slinks away, clutching a
small doctor's bag to his chest. Sullivan watches him go,
cringing.

SULLIVAN

People are so afraid of wealth
these days. That unctuous little
man always makes me nostalgic for
the Nazis. They had style!

J.Bo takes one look at Almagest, turns quickly away - and
scurries into the shadows. Kase and Wurmholtz join her. They
gather close and whisper:

KASE

What's wrong, J.Bo? Who's that?

J.BO

Professor Cornelius Almagest. Zero
integrity. Works for the highest
bidder. I DESPISE that man with -

WURMHOLTZ

Follows the big boss everywhere.
Then behaves like sad house puppy.

J.BO

I called him out for fraud at a
major archaeology conference...
BLOOD BATH if he recognizes me.

WURMHOLTZ

Showed him all my Roman aqueducts
research. He stole it from me! That
was my ticket to a guilt-free,
honest life. Then it's all gone.

Several roughnecks greet Crowley and Sullivan. Crowley's loud
and obnoxious, arrogant:

CROWLEY

They knew high pressure was coming -
what, where, when, even how. Yet,
they screwed up - again.

Sullivan POPS OPEN a small, black umbrella against the
drizzle, ever the inconspicuous lady - observing all with a
keen eye for detail. Her meekness makes Crowley seem fierce.

SULLIVAN

They survived? Oh, Goddess, no. No
mangled bodies, hanging onto dear
life by a precious thread. Cut.

Crowley pulls out a tin of snuff and takes a pinch in each
nostril, SNORTING it like an angry bull.

A sudden EARTHQUAKE discombobulates Crowley. The tin flies out of his hand. A cloud of dusty snuff HITS Sullivan square in the face.

Sullivan inhales a cloud of the snuff. She wobbles, cringing with chest pain.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)
I am Pontius Pilate. Send him to
the Cross. Spear his side. Crown
his skull with laurel thorns.

Crowley gives Sullivan a handkerchief. She mops the dirty snuff off her face.

Sullivan loses her balance and grabs his arm for support. Crowley helps a disoriented Sullivan into the chopper.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)
Oh, sweet Jesus - my abs are an
orgasmic clutchplate. I'm flying.
I'm Lucifer Incarnate. My vulva is
a hungry bloody monster.

Kase runs the help Sullivan. Crowley stiff-arms him away:

CROWLEY
You! How dare you show your face
just now... Our lawyers will suck
every last drop of blood out of
your dead carcass. Ban you from the
oilfield!

Sullivan is woozy, zoning out.

SULLIVAN
Rotting. Putrid. Vultures circling.

The Bronco (now filthy with mud and dirt) does a U-turn and FISHTAILS in front of Kase. J.Bo leans out the window, yelling at Kase:

J.BO
Screw the dame, K.C. Get in.

Kase climbs into the Bronco, and J.Bo speeds away.

INT. FORD BRONCO - DAY

Kase picks Dixie off the passenger seat and puts her carefully in his lap.

J.Bo drives cautiously down a slippering, drifting dune-scape, roughly toward Fort Kharga.

Dixie grabs onto Kase for dear life with long, sharp claws.

J.BO
What an adrenalin rush. Survived
another blowout... Did I ever go
zombie apocalypse... However. I did
bring the paper drum record.

J.Bo reaches behind the seat and hands Kase a tube of rolled-up papers.

Kase flips through the drum-roll graphs.

KASE
A Muslim girl? Who knows so much
about an ancient temple to the
pagan God Osiris?

J.BO
Hey, I'm a geologist. Everything
ancient fascinates me. Everything
underground, even more so.

Beat.

J.BO (CONT'D)
Bastards back there showed up way
too early. Like they were waiting.
Expecting.

KASE
The half-baked drilling plan?

J.BO
We got them exactly what they
wanted. Kharga aquifer water -
three-thousand-year-old water.

Dixie gives a mournful CATERWAUL, staring up at the sky. J.Bo pulls off the road and stops.

J.BO (CONT'D)
Except. How did the water escape
back in Moses' time?

KASE
Grampa had the exact same question.

Kase pulls Naville's DIARY out of his backpack and gets the treasure map to where it was found.

EXT. FORD BRONCO - CONTINUOUS

Kase and J.Bo get out and study the dawn's early sky.

KASE

This map is useless. No north
arrow. No identifying features. No
nothing.

A light CLOUD OF DUST drifts across them, blown from the rig
location in the depression. They COUGH, deep and harsh.

J.Bo yanks out a handkerchief and holds it over her nose and
mouth. Excited, Kase points upward.

KASE (CONT'D)

There! One of those giant
prehistoric dragon birds. Terry
something-or-other.

Kase grabs binoculars off the dash and follows the big bird's
arc across the sky.

It's spiraling upward, following a THERMAL CURRENT rising
above Fort Kharga.

J.BO

Pterodactyl. Nobody knows where
they came from - no fossil record.
Just vague theories about hollow
bones and leathery wings.

Hand shading the sun from her eyes, J.Bo scans the horizon.

J.BO (CONT'D)

I don't see squat.

Kase hands her the binoculars. J.Bo studies the sky. She
stumbles backward, bracing herself against the pickup.

J.BO (CONT'D)

Ahh. I see now. Magical-mystery
flashback. Behold Leviathan in
Antiquity. Beady eyes in the dark
dragon statue...

J.Bo gets into the Bronco to calm down Dixie.

INT./EXT. FORD BRONCO - DAY

J.Bo drives slowly around the base of the Kharga Hill. Kase
sits in the passenger seat, scratching Dixie in his lap.

J.BO

Did you really see that - oh, damn -
why not go full spiritual here -
Ishtar's DRAGON consort. Loud and
clear? I saw only a faint outline.

KASE

Dixie was scared. She saw it. Cats don't lie... There - see that dark spot, looks like a cave entrance?
(quietly, afraid)
Shadows make it look like a DRAGON.

Kase points toward what appears to be a large cave at the base of Kharga Hill.

They're on the shadow side of the hill now, away from the sun - darker as they drive closer.

J.BO

Ishtar, the Babylonian Goddess of War and Love. The secret lover of Osiris, God of the Underworld.

KASE

Chain!

J.Bo SLAMS ON THE BRAKES.

Kase gets out and undoes a thick metal chain (with a rusty old "DANGER: DEATH TO ALL WHO ENTER" sign) across a break in the rocky hillside, then climbs back inside.

J.BO

Too late, people.

J.Bo puts the Bronco into gear and CRAWLS up the hill.

J.BO (CONT'D)

Get out Kase. You want to see this.

They approach another rusty old sign with the faint outline of a giant "SS" death-head insignia and "DANGER, STUPID!"

KASE

Double security fences? What are they protecting against?

Kase steps out to remove the chain.

They chat while he works to loosen the rusty links.

KASE (CONT'D)

We'll have to walk from here.

KASE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Chill. It's just a conniption fit. Vivid. Visual. Daydreams. Just like my father had. Ari by name.

J.BO
 You're afraid you might be
 afflicted, too? ... Have you
 considered it might be a gift?

Kase gets the chain loose, then steps over to clean off the
 opposite side of the sign. It's a NAZI EAGLE.

KASE
 It's what I saw... A NAZI EAGLE. Up
 in the air earlier. In Grampa's
Esau's Fables. In that video cave -
 (quiet, ominous)
 In Margaret Murray's sketchbook.

J.BO
 Why would the Nazis be here, too?

KASE
 Drilling for oil, most likely.
 Desperate for crude, from day one.
 Naville doubled as a geologist back
 then, after The Osireion fiasco.

J.Bo gets out and joins him, to inspect the dragon side of
 the sign. Kase stifles a violent SNEEZE.

J.BO
 It was the dust. You inhaled it by
 the lung full. I had much less, on
 account of the handkerchief.

KASE
 I saw the - NAZI EAGLE - clearly.
 You saw the - dragon? As in the
 ancient-Babylonian-curse thing?

J.BO
 Hallucinogenic dust? Carried to The
 Osireion with the red algae bloom
 that first caused the Nile to turn
 red.

KASE
 Then made people see flies - frogs -
 locusts - get boils - cause all the
 livestock to get sick. Ten plagues,
 indeed.

They reach the cave. Kase puts his smartphone in LIGHT mode
 and they duck into the deep shadows.

They reach a large ceramic pipe going vertically up into Fort
 Kharga (perched on the hill immediately above them).

KASE (CONT'D)
This is the shaft below that black
steel door we saw up there.

J.Bo KNOCKS the side of the shaft with a large rock.

J.BO
Solid. Extremely. Probably a
ceramic shell with either a
concrete or stone lining.

KASE
Doesn't look Roman. Joints are too
narrow. No mortar, either.

Kase tries to maneuver through the narrow tunnel and around
the ceramic shaft. He slips on the ROUGH GRAVEL on the floor,
sliding rapidly into a void around the shaft.

KASE (CONT'D)
Get the rope out of the Bronco.
Hurry!

J.Bo runs back down the cave, at top speed.

Kase tries to grab the shaft, but it's too slick to hold onto
- the side of the cave is beyond his reach.

Suddenly a ROPE hits his shoulders. Kase twists around, grabs
the rope, and J.Bo hauls slowly solid ground.

Just as the entire floor IMPLODES DOWNWARD, J.Bo grabs his
arm and yanks him up.

KASE (CONT'D)
Stop that. I didn't ask you to yank
me all the way out.

They stand over the rock cascading down around the shaft, a
growing vortex of sand and stone.

KASE (CONT'D)
Gotta know... Hang on. Just keep me
from falling into the abyss. Okay?

Still holding the rope, Kase leans outward, pointing his
smartphone light down.

KASE (CONT'D)
Skeleton down there. Oops. Make
that two skeletons. Adults.

The floor is moving under their feet now, literally - being
sucked into the void around the shaft perimeter.

J.BO
Mystery solved. Let's go!

They run toward the light at the end of the tunnel - only going half as fast as their feet are moving because of the shifting ground - and finally reach daylight.

They stand by the Bronco, breathing hard.

KASE
Liked the mystery better.

J.BO
Archaeology sucks.

They mount up and drive the Bronco around the base of the hill until they're looking down on the rig site.

INT. FORD BRONCO - DAY

Water continues to FOUNTAIN out of the drill site, shooting hundreds of feet into the air. A light breeze blows the mist into a giant, shifting aurora-type mirage.

J.BO
That vertical pipe - seen that joining technique before. Can't quite place it.

KASE
Speaking of vertical pipes... They replaced the Blow Out Preventers with some kind of giant water filtration machine. Industrial grade. Super high volume.

J.BO
The Osireion! The long, arched hallway leading down from the surface - shaped like - a pipeline!

They watch as a MOTORCYCLE jets out of the compound and heads toward their position, raising a CLOUD OF DUST.

KASE
The psychotic toxin that caused the Ten Plagues! They're filtering it out of the water. But why? Who's scared of a plague - after Covid.

J.BO
Remember my flashback in the museum? What if it was real? A real, live past-life experience.

J.Bo JAMS the Bronco into gear and CAREENS away.

No sooner than they're out of sight than a HARLEY (over-sized knobby wheels for the sand) pulls up.

Wurmholtz dismounts and inspects the tire indentations in the sand where the big Bronco had been.

KASE (V.O.)
We're going to investigate - your
flashback? What, at some black-
market-hallucinogenic-meth lab?

Wurmholtz scans the horizon - sees a faint column of dust heading north - grabs binoculars from a side bag: zooms in.

J.BO (V.O.)
Close enough. We're gonna go talk
to a paranormal authority.

Wurmholtz puts the binoculars away, mounts up, and pulls out a map - studying it. He shakes his fist in their direction:

WURMHOLTZ
You idiots. Survive the blowout.
Then go running into more danger.
What is your fucking problem?
(quiet, urgent)
First things then next ones...

He CRANKS up the HARLEY and heads back down the hill toward the drilling rig.

INT. SULLIVAN & SULLIVAN H.Q. - NIGHT (CAIRO)

Michelle (elegant business attire) paces in a large executive office - panoramic night view of Cairo from a penthouse skyscraper suite out a window wall.

A COMPUTER RINGER SOUNDS. She runs to a giant video screen and answers a video conference call.

Wurmholtz comes on screen (still wearing motorcycle goggles).

MICHELLE
Where have you been? I've been
worried sick. For hours. Just aged
ten years. Young years!

WURMHOLTZ
Sorry, M.J. First the rig thing.
Then those idiots bolted - big boss
blew up at me. Then -

MICHELLE

I thought for sure the rig had a
blowout. Been glued to the news
expecting the worse. Chewed my
fingernails to bloody nubs -

Wurmholtz peels the goggles off and gives her a big toothy
smile (goggles impression still on his face from the dust).

WURMHOLTZ

Daddy is fine. You can now chill
your heels please. Then dispatch an
urgent helicopter ride for me. Yes?
Special carrier for Harley.

MICHELLE

Uncle Henners called.

WURMHOLTZ

What does that blowhard want? First
I do this gig for him, then - shit,
Daddy lost ten fingers...

MICHELLE

Fingers? All ten! Oh, my God!

Wurmholtz holds up his hands and wiggles his fingers.

WURMHOLTZ

Sorry. Ten figures. *Beau coups*
money. What did that Schitz want?

MICHELLE

Blow up the rig. Orders from on
high. Pontifex himself.

Wurmholtz stares into the screen - then looks around behind
him, getting paranoid. He gets very close, whispering:

WURMHOLTZ

Please repeat. Sign language...

She SIGNS THE MESSAGE, wearing her worry face.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

That obese bitch. She owes me. Ten
fingers of flesh worth of owe.

Tears gush out of her tired eyes.

MICHELLE

I can't take any more of this,
Daddy. Really I can't. Another
overdose of this and I'll - I'll...

She gnaws at her already bloody fingernails.

WURMHOLTZ

Be brave. I will call, okay? On the satellite phone. Wait! Many video cameras here - you can look, then tell me of dangers. Yes, good plan?

MICHELLE

I'll set up the video. Call me when you're ready. Call. Me.

Wurmholtz smiles big. The screen goes blank.

Michelle is a tornado of activity at the computer, setting up several live video feeds on the giant screen - gets a headset with a microphone, and - WORRY BEADS, working them furiously.

EXT. KHARGA - RIG COMPOUND - NIGHT

Lights from the oil rig are shrouded in mist drifting off an artificial water fountain spewing from the rig site.

Wurmholtz exits a trailer, wearing all black.

A black, stealth "SWISS GUARDS" HELICOPTER lands soundlessly on the helo pad. The HARLEY is parked nearby on a stand.

The pilot steps out, rolls the HARLEY to the chopper, hoists it onto a RACK - gives a THUMBS up to a video camera nearby, then climbs back in.

The chopper blades keep up a slow, STEADY WOP-WOP ROTATION. The turbulence draws a heavy mist around the helo pad from the water fountain - obscuring it in a CLOUD OF MIST.

Wurmholtz's SMARTPHONE RINGS (a solemn Gregorian chant ringtone). He answers, voice shaking.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph - you were supposed to call! You frightened me, Daddy... Again! Damn you.

WURMHOLTZ

I am ready for action, M.J. Then to skedaddle. How about you. Got your eyes in the dark web yet?

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Hacked all the cameras. They're on a thirty-minute feedback. If you're not out by then - so help, me God - I'll never forgive you.

WURMHOLTZ

(quietly)

Remember my bed stories as a little girl? We both need calm...

Wurmholtz ducks behind a trailer as FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

When Leviathan rises up, the mighty are terrified. They tremble before his thrashing.

WURMHOLTZ

Yes, I like that one most.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Okay. I just sent the fax giving you authorization... Move out!

Wurmholtz hooks up headphones to the smartphone and a microphone around his neck, adjusts everything - scoots into the night.

INT. DRILLING RIG - DRILLER'S SHACK - NIGHT

The female DRILLER pulls a fax out of a printer and reads it.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Oh, shit. The driller on duty is that hag you hit on a while back. She'll recognize you!

The driller steps out onto the rig floor, looking around. A GREEN LIGHT FLASHES behind her, a signal of some sort...

Wurmholtz stops at an oil pit, grabs a fistful of grease, and smears it over his face.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Rig hand running your way. Deck him!

Wurmholtz looks around, spots a figure running for the rig floor - grabs a giant pole, and trips him.

A swift kick to the head and the runner is out cold.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Please don't tell me you wore steel-toe boots today.

WURMHOLTZ

Standard issue for Harley Dad.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 Called in a MEDEVAC. E.T.A. twenty
 minutes. Tick. Tock.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - ROTARY TABLE FLOOR - NIGHT

The lady driller waves the fax at a passing ROUGHNECK
 (Wurmholtz, hunched over, hiding his face).

DRILLER
 Orders from H.Q. Open the Blowout
 Preventers.

Wurmholtz-the-roughneck grabs the fax and hurries away,
 whispering into his phone all this while.

WURMHOLTZ
 We just got the go-ahead. Piece of
 fucking birthday cake.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 Focus. Or they'll blow your candles
 out. Hurry! Several more workers
 coming at your nine.

Wurmholtz gets a GIANT WRENCH from a tool rack and runs down
 metal stairs to the ground level of the rig.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - BOP STACK - NIGHT

Wurmholtz stops in front of BIG RED DEVICES.

WURMHOLTZ
 Big problem. These are not
 B.O.P.s... Damn, Kase said just
 that - then I forgot all about.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 Searching the specs. Wait one. Get
 your smartphone out. I'll be
 sending you the equipment
 diagram... On your nine! Then six.

Wurmholtz wheels around to his left, SWINGING THE GIANT
 WRENCH with both hands - not seeing, just reacting.

Wurmholtz knocks the rig worker - hard! - the poor guy
 WHEEZING his last breath as he SLAMS onto the ground.

In one smooth motion, Wurmholtz swings the GIANT WRENCH
 around to the opposite side - glancing BLOW as the second
 roughneck falls down, but only to his knees.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Round the clock.

Wurmholtz - not even trying to see the roughneck, keeps swinging around with the momentum, and CLOCKS the worker as he struggles onto his feet - a LINE DRIVE, out for the count.

Heaving from the exertion, Wurmholtz gets his balance and steadies on his feet.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Here's the diagram. Pneumatic screw valve. Pressure operated. Cuts off the water flow.

Wurmholtz studies his smartphone, grabs a pneumatic line, and inserts a hydraulic fitting. Nothing happens!

WURMHOLTZ
Male went into female socket. Nada!

Wurmholtz - still HEAVING FOR BREATH - studies his smartphone - zooming.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)
Baby. We do not need water pressure. We need crude oil. Then rig catches fire. Blows.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Pneumatic oil burns... Bottom of the filter... Another female fitting. Plug in a pneumatic line... It's a flush port... Against a winter freeze.

WURMHOLTZ
Find me a pneumatic line - vision blurring. Grease into the eyes.

Water gushes from the sides of the filter - Wurmholtz steps over to clean the mud out of his eyes.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Two-inch pneumatic. On the Christmas tree. Green fitting.
(quietly)
Fuck. Pressure alarms going wild in the driller's shack. That old hag is - she's coming your way.

Wurmholtz finds a GREEN FITTING on the Christmas tree and applies a WRENCH, trying to break it free.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 She's on your six, Daddy. Just
 picked up a giant pipe wrench.

WURMHOLTZ
 No can do. You must distract her
 for me to then break line loose.

A KLAXON ALARM SOUNDS at the driller's shack. RED and WHITE
 lights flash from the drilling floor.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 She's stopped - deciding... coming
 right for you. Zero thirty!

Wurmholtz breaks the line off the GREEN FITTING and muscles
 it into a fitting on the bottom of the RED FILTER.

WURMHOLTZ
 Pneumatic line attached. Start
 pumps. Maximum through-put.

A GIANT PUMP kicks on, and the pneumatic line SNAKES AROUND
 under the extreme pressure, knocking WURMHOLTZ off his feet -
 just as the LADY DRILLER swings her wrench at his head.

PRESSURE BUILDS as the hydraulic lines vibrate.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 Pneumatic fluid online. Starting to
 come out the wellbore. Run!

Black fluid seeps from the B.O.P. fittings. The water geyser
 slowly transforms into black oil. The hydrocarbons become
 more viscous, falling in great globs.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 Ninety seconds and counting.

The LADY DRILLER comes after Wurmholtz. He runs right at her,
 takes a line dive - slides arms first across the greasy deck,
 HITS her in the legs, KNOCKING HER flat on her back.

Not missing a heartbeat, Wurmholtz gets on his feet and does
 a fifty-yard dash for the CHOPPER (now powering up to full
 speed).

The pilot holds the door open, Wurmholtz dives in - the door
 SLAMS shut, and the chopper SWEEPS away into the night.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
 The fountain is turning to fire,
 starting at the top. Edges. Working
 down... at the rig level...

A WELDER listens to MUSIC on headphones, oblivious to all the goings-on. A pool of pneumatic oil creeps toward the welder.

SPARKS from his welding torch hit the ground. FIRE!

WURMHOLTZ (V.O.)
We are now clear. Power on all
pneumatic pumps rig wide.

PUMPS all over the rig KICK ON and pneumatic lines everywhere WHIP AROUND under the extreme pressure.

THE OIL CATCHES FIRE. The fire spreads.

The whole area EXPLODES INTO FLAMES. Fire envelopes the rig!

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Firebrands stream from his mouth.
Sparks of fire shoot out. If you
lay a hand on him, you will
remember the struggle. Leviathan!

WURMHOLTZ (V.O.)
Smoke pours from his nostrils as
from a boiling pot over a fire of
reeds. No one is fierce enough to
rouse him.

Multiple views of the blaze from video cameras at all angles.

Rig hands run helter-skelter away, to escape the inferno.

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Nothing on earth is his equal, a
creature without fear. We have met
Leviathan... and he is burning out
my video feeds one by one.

WURMHOLTZ (V.O.)
He looks down on all that are
haughty. He is king over all that
are proud... Roger that, Teddy
Bear. Lighting up the night sky...

The chopper moves away from the blazing rig into the dark night, across the canopy of stars...

MICHELLE (V.O.)
Got a fix on the company's runaway
Bronco. Texting you their current
G.P.S. coordinates. Their E.T.A. to
Cairo is ninety minutes.

WURMHOLTZ (V.O.)
That is doable. Wipe all hard
drives then go home to rest. Daddy,
out.

The first twinges of dawn are peaking colors on the horizon.

LATER

The chopper sets down on a remote road along the Nile River banks. Wurmholtz hops out, WRENCHES the Harley stand down, and sets the big bike on the ground.

Wurmholtz gives a THUMBS UP to the pilot, and the chopper WHISKS into the daybreak.

Wurmholtz wheels the bike into a break in the reeds along the Nile River, hunkers down - and waits.

EXT. EGYPT - RURAL COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The FORD BRONCO speeds along a winding paved road paralleling the Nile River. The sun is just breaking over the horizon.

Wurmholtz sees THREE VEHICLES approaching at maximum velocity. He KICKS the engine started, RIPS down the tarmac, going in the same direction (ahead of the three vehicles).

There's a black sedan in front of the Bronco now, and one behind - closing the gap from both directions.

J.Bo tries to turn onto a side road, but the dirt surface is so full of ruts she has to pull back onto the blacktop.

Suddenly a HARLEY appears at the head of the THREE VEHICLES. It straddles the shoulder, throwing up so much dirt the lead sedan loses control and careens off the road.

Wurmholtz hits the brakes and pulls to one side until the Bronco passes it, then he tries to pull the same trick on the other black sedan.

While the Harley distracts the black sedan...

J.Bo swerves to miss a donkey cart in the road, SPINS OUT, and runs head-on into an abandoned shop.

The Bronco SHOOTS through the flimsy shop walls and into the sandy embankment behind. The top of the shop collapses, covering up the Bronco.

Sand gets sucked into the snorkel-type air inlet to the engine. The engine BUCKS, WHEEZES - dies.

INT. MARS CAR - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Kase and J.Bo dig out of the sand, gushing through the windows. They look up as the Harley cruises up to them and pulls to a stop.

Wurmholtz steps off, takes off his helmet, and waits as Kase and J.Bo exit the Bronco, brushing sand off their clothing.

WURMHOLTZ

Good thing for your behinds I had
appointment in town - at the
fucking insane tourist asylum. Late
already. I see you two kids later.

Kase and J.Bo stare at him - at his wheels.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

Nazis will be back. They never give
up. Get your selfs back on the road
and then burn some effing rubber.

KASE

What the Hell are you doing here?

WURMHOLTZ

Get some new wheels. These Nazis,
they mean business. No Bronco,
neither. Something not conspicuous.
Do your business. Then call me!

Wurmholtz mounts up and SPEEDS AWAY in a cloud of dust.

J.BO

Once a Nazi, always a Nazi.

KASE

Michelle is a hoot.

J.BO

Her barbarian father's not half
bad, either.

KASE

You're actually thinking of going
over to the Dark Side?

(quietly)

Yeah. Me, too.

Beat.

KASE (CONT'D)

I wonder... Maybe it would stir things up - if we threw them a curve ball?

J.BO

Can't get any worse than it already is. Michelle seems very clued in.

KASE

Something to force them into overtime - a mistake, even. A big one. Live on Studio Riggins...

Kase pulls out his smartphone to make a call...

EXT. CAIRO - GRAND COLONIAL HOTEL - NIGHT

Crowley and Sullivan exit a Land Rover in a narrow alley. Sullivan stares up at a ratty hotel entrance, cringing.

SULLIVAN

This rat trap? All those horrific memories... Two starving kids. Stumbled in off the desert. Chop-chop! Slave labor in the kitchen.

INT. CAIRO - GRAND COLONIAL HOTEL - NIGHT

They enter a grandiose 1920s lobby. Everybody is dressed in formal evening attire. Sullivan pinches her arm. Then she pinches Crowley's behind. He slaps her buttocks.

SULLIVAN

You restored the place. Kept it like this. How romantic - our first commercial enterprise. Our very first fortune! This is smashing.

Crowley scoots over to the reception desk. A TV in the hotel bar catches Sullivan's eye.

She moves closer to watch, oozing sexuality with every move. The Abydos rig fire is on A.P. News. She mulls to herself:

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

We broke every business rule in the book. Made one fortune after another, each one bigger than the last. Then along came the Nazis...

Sullivan starts at the sight of a grizzled ARAB CLERIC sitting at the bar, armed to the teeth... Smiling at her.

ARAB CLERIC

I come here to remember Nazis. We
give them oil. They give us
respect. Where are Nazis now?

Crowley steps quietly between them, grabbing her around the waist. He speaks to the Arab sheik:

CROWLEY

Fuck the Nazis. What you miss is
the stealth power behind them.
We're still here. For ours is the
power and glory forever, Amen.

Sullivan grabs Crowley and hustles him toward the foyer.

SULLIVAN

What a lovely treat, darling. The
roaring 20s gala hotel. Adoring
clientele lusting for the past. You
make me want to live - forever...

CROWLEY

We can have those days of righteous
glory again. The power. Adoration!
(sudden inspiration)
We fed the beast. Inspired the
Nazis to conquest. The world goes
to Hell. Our profits boom. Explode!

Sullivan locks her arm in Crowley's, and they step out.

INT. CAIRO - DER ZYKLON INSTITUTE - NIGHT

An ARAB COUPLE exits. The concierge rushes to show them into a Bentley. They notice Crowley and Sullivan approaching and give him a stiff Nazi salute, CLICKING THEIR HEELS:

ARAB COUPLE

Sieg Heil!

Sullivan GIGGLES uncontrollably as Crowley salutes back.

The guard hurries to usher Crowley and Sullivan into the nondescript brick building (3 stories tall, windowless, built like a fortress, covered with old ivy). Sullivan whispers hoarsely to Crowley:

SULLIVAN

Another surprise! I feel like Der
Führer himself will come and
welcome us into the Wolf's Lair.
The building - so perfect. Yes!

CROWLEY

Hitler? Who was he but a puppet, a hapless mannequin to be manipulated by our agents provocateur?

Crowley peels off thousand-dollar bills from a thick money clip and hands them to the guard. The guard bows deeply and kisses a giant SS RING on Crowley's hand.

SULLIVAN

I hate W.W. two museums. Always terrified somebody will recognize us. The evil Mossad agents. Hunting down Nazi criminals.

CROWLEY

How many times must I tell you, dear? We are not criminals. Even if they found us out, in the modern world - we would be heroes. Gods!

The guard counts the money - acts offended! Crowley offers him another few bills, then a few more.

Sullivan whispers urgently, desperate:

SULLIVAN

If this charade is to entice me into - the dragon's embrace... Well, it's working - I'm desperate for - the dragon. Urgent!

CROWLEY

You know why I liked the Nazis so much? They never haggled over money. Name your price. Just make me more fucking guns. Tanks. Ammo!

The guard is obstinate - hand going to his holster.

SULLIVAN

Please, Crowley. Give the man his due. He's bothering me - he...

(quietly)

Jesus, I want to rip his neck out. Consume his bile. Blood. Guts...

CROWLEY

The dragon. As it matures, you will soon feel that way about society. Culture! Ahh... The ease with which we consumed the Nazi enterprise.

Crowley holds out the whole money clip. The guard grabs the money clip - then follows them at a discrete distance. Sullivan speaks with a German accent hereafter.

SULLIVAN

We need cheap labor or inflation
will chase us into a depression.

CROWLEY

Okay, Adolf. We build work camps to
staff your munitions industry. *Ja?*

They stop at a map of AUSCHWITZ, with heavy lines extending outward to a hundred smaller camps, each supplying labor to a specific industry, or individual corporation.

SULLIVAN

Thank you for the free labor, but
some are old. Infirm. They cannot
output the required quotas. *Ja?*

CROWLEY

Leave us alone. We're fighting a
war for our very lives. Find the
cheapest solution. Just do it. Send
the bill to the Volks Bank.

They stop at a display of AUSCHWITZ, and a proud YOUNG SULLIVAN and YOUNG CROWLEY standing in a DEATH CHAMBER.

SULLIVAN

I remember that photo. We had just
made our first billion dollars.
What a rush! *Ja?* You wanted to
celebrate with our workforce...

CROWLEY

I was craven, desperate for the
blood then, like you - now. Perfect
cover for the bloodlust.

Crowley is awkwardly desperate, distraught.

SULLIVAN

How could they not know about The
Korporat? *Ja?* The Nazis kept such
careful records... So many times, I
was afraid they would find us out.

CROWLEY

The Korporat made their Final
Solution Above Top Secret. No
government officials had clearance,
only permanent civil servants.

They stop at a display of signs and logos of MODERN CORPORATIONS WITH NAZI ROOTS.

SUPER: "AUDI, BMW, IBM, VW, FORD, MERCEDES, SHELL, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS"

SULLIVAN

The idea of a vast Deep State of unknown, invisible billionaires pulling government strings was unfathomable a hundred years ago.

CROWLEY

Stupid Nazis assumed that hidden power was the Jews. We had only to feed that prejudice - inflame it!

Sullivan stares at a full-color display of BLOODY GORE, a Nazi execution squad standing over a mass grave.

SULLIVAN

Emotions were so strong. *Ja?* Hot-blooded people. Death. Agony!

Sullivan licks her lips, eyes bulging. She grabs Crowley, desperate, depraved - he manages to escape her clutches. They stop at a display showing heavy lines connecting Nazi corporations to their counterparts in the United States.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

All the trips to America. Building out our network. That first billion dollars - gone - bribes! *Ja?* Every level of industry and government.

CROWLEY

No other way to keep the allies from bombing the rails connecting all our work camps. Thousands of miles - untouched!

SULLIVAN

The Reichsbahn. *Ja?* Made by popular fiat. Thousands died building it.

With each passing display, she's getting more desperate. The full-color images cause tremors. She grits her teeth to see them - biting her lower lip, sucking the blood that flows.

CROWLEY

The only person to even suspect The Korporat was George C. Patton... We got rid of him as soon as the war ended. Later, Eisenhower...

SULLIVAN

Worse day of my life, when Ike baby
warned the world about our military-
industrial complex. All the kinky
sex we had, us two? How could he?

Sullivan has him cornered. She moves in for the kill...
Crowley circles away from her. She toys with him like a feral
cat and a wounded mouse.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Then the next day, the Associated
Press ripped him to pieces! I do so
adore sex after a catfight. *Jaaa...*

CROWLEY

Why do you think I spent our second
billion dollars buying the press?

SULLIVAN

We were Gods then. Society icons.
Courtied by generals. Politicians.
Every night a different flavor - of
gory war news. Victories. Defeats.

Crowley backs away from her. He thinks hard. Decides -
CRASHES his fists into one glass case.

He CRASHES another glass case. Another CRASH. The guard comes
running around the corner, pistol drawn.

CROWLEY

Bon Appetit, knockers.

Sullivan darts out of the shadows and SAVAGES the guard with
razor-sharp fingernails - teeth.

Crowley pulls out the VINTAGE OIL POUR SPOUT, shines it up...

EXT. CAIRO - NIGHT

A Mars car (three wheels, only one door - in the front) TEARS
through heavy traffic, with three black sedans hot on their
tail. The little car RIPS between two lanes of traffic at one
intersection, losing one black sedan.

The Mars car drives down a very narrow street (SCRAPING THE
SIDES), going the wrong way, losing a second black sedan. The
little car pulls up at the entrance to a "PYRAMIDS COMPLEX"
gate.

EXT. CAIRO - PYRAMIDS - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

J.Bo hands across an ID card at the security gate.

J.BO
 Egypt Exploration Society. Visiting
 professor. The University of Texas.

The guard waves and J.Bo pulls the Mars car into the complex.

KASE
 I know Naville thought this place
 was as old as The Osireon - but...
 why are we here?

Seconds later, a black sedan pulls up at the guard shack. The driver thrusts a PISTOL out the window at the guard.

J.BO (V.O.)
 They have the best security in the
 whole world.

The guard pulls out a MACHINE GUN. Several other guards show up around the black sedan with more MACHINE GUNS.

The black sedan slowly backs away from the guard shack, turns, and disappears into light traffic.

The Mars car exits a rear gate and disappears in traffic.

INT. SULLIVAN & SULLIVAN H.Q. - NIGHT (CAIRO)

Crowley and Sullivan enter an elegant wood-paneled office.

SULLIVAN
 You sure know how to show a lady a
 a good time. How. Ever.

CROWLEY
 The blood lust fades, dear. Soon
 you'll have the money lust. Power!

They stop at AN ASSOCIATED PRESS VIDEO FEED and watch a newscast (on mute) showing the Kharga rig fire.

SULLIVAN
 Seeing that rig fire - I so wanted
 to be there. All those fresh bodies
 - to ease their way to the
 afterlife.

CROWLEY
 That fire was no accident.

Crowley pulls out drill-well graphs and other data, then inserts a disc into a DVD player. He fast-forwards through a video record of the rig disaster.

SULLIVAN

More scenes of blood and guts? What if I go full-metal vampire on you - demand to go to the rig site - savage the survivors.

CROWLEY

Our night at the museum - the flashbacks to my own blood-lust stage. Truly, I empathize with the agony ripping your soul.

INSERT - TV MONITOR - SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE

(Video, no sound.) As Kase starts to swing the ax - he stops.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

Fuck! He severed the filters. No filters no - dragon dust...

Kase pulls a large rag out of his back pocket and wipes off giant red shapes, reading engraved lettering.

An earthquake rumbles. The ground shifts. The rig structure rattles and shakes. OIL GUSHES from broken pipes.

Kase hurries away through the spraying drilling fluids.

SULLIVAN (V.O.)

My heart's in my throat. Christ, was that ever close.

BACK TO SCENE

Michelle barges in, carrying a document. She takes one look at the video - FREEZES briefly - recovers with a brave smile.

MICHELLE

You wanted to be kept current on all goings-on at the rig. Sir.

Sullivan grabs the document, reading.

SULLIVAN

This is a work order, signed by K.C. Naville the rig engineer. We fired him already. But -

MICHELLE

All rig operations documents are copied here, per your request.

CROWLEY

What's it for? This document is a day old.

Sullivan is furious at Michelle, stalking her.

SULLIVAN

It - it's to reconnect the B.O.P.'s hydraulic pressure control lines.

CROWLEY

Oh, God. That's why the rig caught on fire... Terrorists.

Crowley grabs Michelle by the elbow, fiercely.

He maneuvers Michelle away from Sullivan, pushing her toward the door.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

Tell our people to find the rig engineer, Kase. Dead or alive.

Sullivan slips between them and GRABS Michelle by the shoulders, SHAKING her.

SULLIVAN

I want him alive. Alive and kicking. Hot-blooded alive.

Absolutely terrified, Michelle hurries out.

Sullivan struggles with sudden depression.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

I want her, too. Young blood. Hot blood. Laced with fear - terror!

Sullivan POUNDS Crowley with her fists.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

I hate you. My life was perfectly fine before. Now. Now? Now - you made me into a God damn serial killer. Where do I even go?

Crowley sits her down, forcibly. He's calm, smooth.

CROWLEY

Calm down. Deep breath. Let the lust wash over you. Fade away.

Gently, he wipes bloody tears gushing from her eyes.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)
It's not as easy to find - victims
these days. We must be prudent.
Plan first. Then execute. Yes?

Desperate, Sullivan rifles through cabinets and finds a
bottle of Irish whiskey.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)
I'm glad you want to embrace - the
dragon now. We'll get through this.

Sullivan talks to an exotic seductress on the label of the
whiskey bottle.

SULLIVAN
Now I know why all those Roman
senators stabbed Julius Caesar to
death on the Ides of March.

Sullivan pours a small shot and a large mug. She gulps the
mug right down and hands the shot glass to Crowley.

CROWLEY
Caesar went full-metal barbarian.
Terrible heresy, to worship
Cleopatra as Isis Incarnate.

SULLIVAN
You don't just punch my black and
white keys. You hit the whole damn
harpsichord with that one.

Sullivan breaks out in a ripe sweat. She rips open her gown
and fans her naked, sweaty torso. Crowley briefly stares -
wanting her - steps away from her, looking for an exit.

CROWLEY
I see Salome in your eyes. Give me
the head of John the Baptist. On a
silver platter.

Sullivan moves seductively toward him.

SULLIVAN
Head. Platter. Now.

CROWLEY
My friend at the University - let's
go and visit. Almagest. You met him
on the Kharga rig... Solitary,
rotund - vegetarian! HMMMMM...
(quietly)
You can - have him - after... Yes?

Sullivan licks her lips and flexes her sharp fingernails.

SULLIVAN

I need. Blood. Now. Yours. Hers.
Doesn't matter. Blood.

Crowley panics, hustling to stay at arm's length. He reaches the desk and HITS an intercom button - talks into it:

CROWLEY

Michelle? The rig contract. Now!

Michelle comes running into the room with a thick folder. She takes one look at Sullivan (bloody tears, biting her lower lip, and sucking on the blood) and backs away.

MICHELLE

Oops. Wrong folder. Wait one!

Michelle smiles, makes a little curtsy, and scoots away, yelling into the office next door:

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

Gaby? Where's the Kharga file?

A YOUNG SECRETARY runs into the room with a folder - sees Sullivan, and turns to leave - but...

Sullivan grabs the secretary and hauls her into the room.

Crowley slips to the door, closes, and LOCKS it - nods to Sullivan, who POUNCES like a ravenous tiger. The young girl SCREAMS as Sullivan RIPS her limb from limb.

Whistling softly, Crowley pulls out the VINTAGE OIL SPOUT, shines it with a handkerchief - grabs a couple of mugs.

EXT. STREETS OF CAIRO - DAY

The Mars car screams through busy intersections, crowds of pedestrians, and crazy traffic.

KASE

Yes. I can see how you grew up in
Cairo.

A BLACK SUV starts following the Mars car a few lengths back.

J.BO

No way. How could they do that?

A SECOND BLACK SUV manages to get in front of the Mars car, a few lengths ahead. A THIRD BLACK SUV holds back, on station far behind the others (ready for anything).

KASE
Video surveillance on every street
corner? Big Brother watching?

The SUVs maneuver in the traffic, so now there is a black SUV directly in front of the Mars car and one directly behind the Mars car.

J.BO
Infinitely worse since the War on
Terror.

KASE
Were they after cheap oil? Or an
excuse to max out the surveillance
state. My money's on the latter.

Shadows in both black SUVs hoist guns and aim them at the Mars car.

J.BO
I learned this in Evelyn Wood's
School of Defensive Driving.

J.Bo yanks the wheel to one side, and they CAREEN down a narrow side street. The alley is too narrow for two of the black SUVs.

The Mars car reaches a small circular intersection. J.Bo steers into the innermost lane and punches it - steering around the inner circle like a racing-car driver.

The Mars car outpaces the last black sedan, now two lanes away on the outermost circle. The black sedan sees a break in the traffic - does a hard left to get into the Mars car's lane.

J.Bo does a HARD RIGHT - the Mars car going onto just one wheel - and BOLTS out of the circle and into a tiny side street.

KASE (V.O.)
I can see why NASCAR doesn't have
any fans over here.

The black sedan is trapped in the inner circle, unable to follow them.

J.Bo's smartphone RINGS.

She answers it, holding the phone with one hand and driving - shifting! - with the other, through chaotic traffic.

Kase watches her free hand, absolutely terrified.

J.BO
 Hey, Mom ... They did - what? ...
 Crowley and Sullivan, the
 billionaires? ... It's all on the
 security cameras? ... That's
 disgusting ...

J.Bo hangs up and puts two hands on the wheel.

J.BO (CONT'D)
 Family drama. Back to the same old,
 same old...

KASE
 Family drama in Cairo, Egypt
 suddenly takes on a whole new
 light.

Beat.

KASE (CONT'D)
 Wait. Did I hear right? Crowley and
 Sullivan? Our billionaires?

J.BO
 Oh, God. Why were they even the
 Holocaust museum...

She SPINS and TEARS across three lanes of traffic to an exit.

INT. CAIRO UNIVERSITY - ASTROPHYSICS DEPARTMENT - DAY

A female lab assistant shows Crowley and Sullivan past a
 colorful "NILE AQUIFER" display.

INT. ASTROPHYSICS DEPT. - HOLOGRAPHIC THEATER - DAY

A round amphitheater is surrounded by a dozen optical
 projectors, all focused at a central stage. Almagest hustles
 out of the projection room toward Crowley and Sullivan.

ALMAGEST
 This must be the ravishing
 Sullivan, whose divine qualities
 you extol in the ruby throes of
 drunkenness.

Almagest takes Sullivan's hand gently and kisses it as if she
 were royalty. Her eyes flash - bloodlust.

SULLIVAN
 You're welcome in my sacred temple
 any old day.

CROWLEY

Excuse the bloodred peacock, Al...
We're here about Kharga. Give her
the whole traffic circle. Please.

Behind them, Michelle darts into the room with a stack of
folders in her arms. She stops, talking. Very. Slowly.

MICHELLE

Dr. Crowley, you wanted - every
damn thing we had on that fucking
cunt who murdered my - friend...
And who's standing right here?
(quietly)
Okay. I think I need to lock myself
in the ladies' room. Back in a
second...

Michelle turns on heel and zips out of the room.

Almagest turns on the projector array, to generate a 3D
holograph of the Sahara Desert, as it changed over time.

ALMAGEST

My lady, you will know that ten
thousand years ago the Sahara
Desert was a sanguine tropical
paradise. Glorious tropics, all.

Almagest uses a small control pad to advance the simulation
quickly through geological time.

A digital date shows in one corner, starting at 15,000 B.C.
(Sullivan gets more and more aroused with each bloody
metaphor as they converse.)

ALMAGEST (CONT'D)

Then the climate changed.
Everything turned into an arid,
lifeless desert apocalypse...
Kharga was the last grand Oasis...

A string of green oases remains behind briefly, as the desert
gobbles up the continent.

SULLIVAN

From a lush paradise into deep
desert - overnight. Think of all
the people who died of hunger -
thirst. What a sacrilege.

ALMAGEST

What it reminds most - normal -
people of is... Global warming?

Three man-made structures appear just at the edges of the dark green continent as it starts turning into a brown desert. Almagest zooms in on one of the man-made objects.

CROWLEY

They called it Kharga Doom back in the day. As in grizzled, cursed.

Almagest zooms in on Kharga Oasis. As time advances, a city at Kharga shrinks, smaller.

The Romans build Fort Kharga. Then. A spider's web of lines spreads across the desert - all the way to The Osireion.

ALMAGEST

Sir Naville had a theory. He put a purple dye in The Osireion water, then scurried down to Kharga Oasis.

Sullivan tries hard to control herself from attacking Almagest. But the harder she struggles, the more she sweats from an unbearable, hellish internal heat.

SULLIVAN

Could use some water right now. I'm fucking steaming my silicone boobs off...

Almagest can't take his eyes off her buxom chest, showing more sweaty flesh by the second, her luscious body language.

ALMAGEST

Sight unseen, the dye showed up - at Kharga Oasis. Talk about engineering *par excellence*.
(quietly)

Except it wasn't Roman engineering. Older - five thousand years older!

SULLIVAN

No wonder the Nazi's archaeologists ran away from that place, terrified out of their bleeding skin.

ALMAGEST

If you think it's a gory fright now - imagine back then. A veritable crimson tide.

They watch the simulation on a loop: Lush green continent - desert - lush green continent - deep red, desert...

CROWLEY

I hate engineers. All of them!

SULLIVAN
 Ten millennia? So much time... It's
 - intoxicating me!

All this time, Almagest keeps a roving eye on Sullivan (and vice-versa), thinking her attentions are sexually motivated.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)
 Ishtar, Angel of Death. I'm the
 Goddess Isis. Ertai! I'm the bloody
 Sphinx Incarnate.

Crowley sees the chemistry between them - feeds it!

CROWLEY
 Caesar helped Cleopatra, didn't he?
 He sacrificed himself in the Forum
 so she could escape. Blood
 everywhere... Gory as hell.

Almagest speaks up in a quiet voice (as Sullivan slowly stalks him).

ALMAGEST
 Dare I ask why you two galivants
 were so extremely desperate to
 drill at Kharga? Please, gore an
 old bull for my stubbornness.

Almagest takes a step back from them, watching her growing blood lust... slowly becoming afraid for his life...

SULLIVAN
 Sacrificed? Caesar? The poor guy
 bleeding out from a dozen dagger
 wounds? From the senators. Brutus.

Crowley grabs Sullivan and THROWS HER AGAINST A TABLE, ripping off her clothes. He whispers in her ear:

CROWLEY
 Fucking engineers. They do things.
 Time... Immemorial... Don't you -

Sullivan swoons and melts into him.

SULLIVAN
 That's why they invented - death.

ALMAGEST
 Excuse, please? I am here? Me,
 Professor Almagest, esteemed expert
 Egyptologist extraordinaire...

They circle Almagest, baiting him - watching him sweat.

CROWLEY

But, Lady Sullivan. I thought you wanted to pass gently away and push up the daisies thereafter.

SULLIVAN

Fuck that. I'll triple our fortune. I'll be the first trillionaire.

Breaking out in a cold sweat, Almagest watches them thrall in an escalating violence of sexual frenzy. Slowly, carefully, Almagest cat walks toward the exit.

CROWLEY

You? Run - The Korporate? MY Korporat! ALL MINE!

SULLIVAN

I'll rip out the beating heart of civilization itself.

CROWLEY

Cheeky couple. That's us.

Almagest says quietly, with a little wave goodbye:

ALMAGEST

I'll just put my bill in the mail and - leave you young bucks to the abattoir. Cheerio, now...

Sullivan, eyes full of craven lust - stalks toward Almagest... THROWS him against the wall, ASSAULTING him.

Almagest SCREAMS as her sharp fingernails rip his neck and shred his aorta. BLOOD GUSHES EVERYWHERE.

Crowley pulls out the VINTAGE OIL SPIGOT and JAMS it into Almagest's side - cups his hands to gulp down the gushing blood (as Sullivan consumes flesh from Almagest's still live body - SCREAMING BLOODY HELL).

INT. CAIRO - DER ZYKLON INSTITUTE - LIBRARY - DAY

An elegant colonial-era library is full of patrons. Kase and J.Bo stare at a video screen. The video ends.

KASE

Always wondered why the Goddamn allies never bombed the living crap out of the Concentration Camps - the rail network feeding them!

J.BO

That lady ripped a man's guts out.
While he was still alive. And
that's what you see - tech? That's
the man - oh, God - the stench...

J.Bo struggles not to up chug as police officers haul away
the guard bribed by Crowley. He's on a gurney, dead - his
clothes soaked with blood, his arms ripped open to the bone.

J.BO (CONT'D)

But. Mom said they - she edited the
video. Showed them having ravenous
sex. Right in front of Almagest.
Oh, God - what a head rush...

J.Bo is distraught. Her shaking hand points toward MOM (65,
thin, intense), who hovers nearby at a research desk. Mom
looks up and gives them a little wave. They whisper.

KASE

Wait one. Your Mom works in a
holocaust denial museum?

J.BO

Then that sweet little old lady -
eviscerated Almagest. I hate that
man more than - than... Ate his
flesh - his Johnson, like a hot
dog! God, how I wanted to -

KASE

And there I was, afraid you were -
disgusted... So not.

A craven lust in her eyes, J.Bo dusts Kase off - tidies his
hair - sizing him up... Kase pushes her rudely away.

KASE (CONT'D)

Leave me alone. I'm fine. Stop
that... I'm not a slab of beef.

J.BO

Mom asked what the future holds,
with work - life - you know...
(quietly)
Supervised first date - with
religion?

Kase grabs J.Bo by the shoulders and SHAKES her gently.

KASE

It's okay, J.Bo. I'm okay. You're
okay. We're okay. Deep breath...

J.BO

M - Mom knows all about prophesy.
Big fan of Edgar Cayce, the river-
of-consciousness prophet?

Mom hustles over and sits down between them, opening up
illustrations in a very old volume.

MOM

I found Madelaine Murray's hand
notes on The Osireion... All the
glyphs on the original tomb? They
seem to allude Moses was there.

KASE

M'am? Can we do something a little
more - CURRENT? Dr. Riggins is in a
- state, right now... Yes?

MOM

About how Prescott Bush, patriarch
of the Bush U.S. president family,
made his fortune on investments in
Nazi Germany? He was a director at
Crowley and Sullivan, in N.Y.C.

J.Bo manages a forced smile.

MOM (CONT'D)

It's written that Leviathan's power
isn't physical but a magic that
relieves people of all their guilt.

Kase nods... waits for J.Bo to nod, too.

MOM (CONT'D)

The soul needs release. That's what
religion is all about. The dragon
is only a symbol, of sins departing
from your tormented psyche.

KASE

How does that happen? Don't you
need some kind of trigger to
dislodge the - torments?

J.BO AND MOM

Fear!

J.Bo stares at Kase, very afraid.

KASE

What happens when all your sins
pile up inside, nowhere to go?

J.BO
 John the Baptist's head on Salome's
 silver platter?

Mom stares from one to the other, nodding her agreement.

MOM
 You lazy Americans. You do not know
 the fear.
 (to J.Bo)
 This is the gruff barbarian you
 told me about? He seems a - bad
 fit.

They gang up on Kase, boxing him in - close.

J.BO
 The Fear of Isaac, as Moses' knife
 thrust for his beating heart.

MOM
 Esau's hairy blade at his mother's
 jugular. Curse God and die!

Kase SLAMS the book closed and hurries for the exit. J.Bo's
 not far behind. Mom yells after them:

MOM (CONT'D)
 Keep your knife sharp and your arm
 ready to throw.

The sun arcs into the room. It shines just right to highlight
 a giant SCARAB BEETLE etched in colorful relief on the floor.

EXT. CAIRO - DER ZYKLON INSTITUTE - DAY

J.Bo and Kase hurry across the parking lot to the Mars car.

KASE
 Speaking of ancient mysteries.

J.BO
 Working for the enemy? What better
 way to get the inside scoop?

KASE
 I was referring to the first date
 thing.

J.BO
 Oh, you know mothers. Always
 thinking of the future.

Kase manages a painful smile.

INT. CAIRO UNIVERSITY - ASTROPHYSICS DEPARTMENT - DAY

Dressed in loud golf attire, Wurmholtz steps away from a security desk at the entrance to the lab building.

He steps down a hallway, opens a door, and eases inside. He gets more tense with each passing step.

INT. ASTROPHYSICS DEPT - HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION THEATER - DAY

Wurmholtz steps into the center stage, from a dark corner of the room. The room is empty. The SPIKES on his shoes ECHO.

WURMHOLTZ

Professor Al? It's me, Rabbi. We talked at the Kharga rig. Then you wanted to help me and publish my Roman aqueduct researches.

Wurmholtz spots a serving tray of whisky on a table at the front of the room. Quickly, he throws back a shot of whiskey, gulping hard. He speaks loudly, into the amphitheater.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

You have forgotten our golf date?
Hello? The front desk said you have been here all day. Then I came.

Wurmholtz stalks carefully around, eyeing the Sahara simulation - scattered clothing on the floor. Deeply concerned, now. He SNIFFS the air - HOLDING his nose.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

I can smell their musky hormones.

Wurmholtz spots a golf bag and pulls out a driver, wielding it like a club for protection...

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

It is not every day twitters like us can hit the de-lux links. Come on. I will give you the good handicap. Al? Are you here?
(disgusting smell)
The whole place reeks of bad sex.

Wurmholtz freezes - stares at a puddle of blood on the floor.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

You were full of regrets. Then wanted to do the right thing. This gave me hope. Thank you?

Wurmholtz follows the blood trail - ending with a heap of flesh and bones, indistinguishable as Almagest.

Wurmholtz pulls Almagest's signature bow tie out of the raw flesh. Wurmholtz JUMPS when his SMARTPHONE RINGS. He answers.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Daddy. Stay away! Fuck the goddamn golf game at Club Zyklon. Just -

WURMHOLTZ

I am at the Space Institute. Blood everywhere. Dead ex-golf partner.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

Call me when the cops get there.

The line goes blank. Wurmholtz stares at the display - puts the smartphone away - pulls big red WORRY BEADS out.

WURMHOLTZ

I should never have gotten you involved. Then you insisted to go undercover, to work for Korporat.

He mangles the beads, staring at the pile of flesh and bones. He pulls out his smartphone, dialing...

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

You go against The Korporat - then this happens. First Patton. Then Admiral James Vincent Forrestal. J.F.K. Then Bobby F.K.

EXT. CAIRO - DAY

The Mars car rips through intersections and heavy traffic, J.Bo driving like she was at the wheel of a Formula One racing car.

KASE

I used to think you were such a sober, respectable person.

The traffic doesn't impede their progress, not road construction, closed lanes, or even red lights.

KASE (CONT'D)

Your Mom seems very - spiritual.

J.BO

After Grandma disappeared. Mom
thought she was abandoned - found
solace in spirituality - black,
white, green magic - she's tried
them all. Raised me to be a hippy.

KASE

Are we going somewhere?

J.BO

Not really. Driving always makes me
relax.

Kase grabs on with both fists as she SCREAMS THROUGH traffic,
breaking every law on the books - enjoying every second of
her wild mayhem.

Her SMARTPHONE RINGS. She pulls it out - Kase GRABS it from
her and answers.

KASE

What! Go away. We're fleeing from
the scene of a bloody gore.

WURMHOLTZ (V.O.)

Tell Dr. Riggins that Almagest is
that way, too. Come to this
institute. Texting address.

The line goes blank. Kase shows her a text message.

KASE

Almagest. Gory murder. Go! No, wait
- no hurries... Please?

Kase hangs on as she does a U-turn through rush hour traffic,
and screams across town...

INT. ASTROPHYSICS DEPT - HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION THEATER - DAY

Wurmholtz sits, dejected - working the WORRY BEADS - as a
dozen police officers investigate the crime scene.

Kase and J.Bo run into the room. Police officers block them.
Wurmholtz goes to join them and they exit.

INT. ASTROPHYSICS DEPARTMENT - CORRIDOR - DAY

Kase, Wurmholtz, and J.Bo enter the corridor and hurry toward
the nearest exit. Wurmholtz fades back, making a phone call.

WURMHOLTZ

Teddy bear? This is Daddy. Come in,
please. All is clear.

Beat.

MICHELLE (V.O.)

The cops are there? You got the
Harley ready to roll? Extra helmet?

WURMHOLTZ

Affirmative on all counts, over.
North exit. Handicap parking.

The line goes blank. He talks into the void, almost crying.

WURMHOLTZ (CONT'D)

You can come out of the safe place,
now. Then I am here for you.

Wurmholtz collapses on a bench and works his WORRY BEADS.

Michelle BOLTS out of a door and RUNS for the NORTH EXIT.

Wurmholtz hears FOOTSTEPS, turns - kicks up his heels and
RUNS after her.

EXT. SPHINX PLATEAU - VALLEY TEMPLE COMPLEX - NIGHT

In a FAUX 1900 NEWS REEL, NAVILLE (Kase) and his antiquities
GUIDE (J.Bo), carrying torches, weave through a series of
dark passages.

J.BO (V.O.)

In 1900, the idea of a civilization
five thousand years old terrified
folks - even archaeologists. Who,
I'm told are just normal people.

Fleeting images of BLOODY GHOULS (Wurmholtz and Michelle) in
the shadows, hot on their trail.

KASE (V.O.)

As soon as Naville saw The
Osireion, he recognized the same
massive-block construction as at
the Temple Valley Complex at the
foot of the Sphinx plateau.

The GUIDE slips around a flimsy plywood security barrier and
follows a narrow trail, inclining steeply downward, that
leads parallel alongside the huge monolith of the Sphinx.

J.BO (V.O.)
 A civilization TEN THOUSAND YEARS
 OLD? Holy shit! This guy must be
 stark raving mad. Older than Egypt -
 by fucking FIVE THOUSAND YEARS?

The BLOODY GHOULS gain on them - blood glistening in
 reflected torchlight - only a few steps behind them!

KASE (V.O.)
 Naville knew The Osireion wasn't
 just a temple but an engineered
 structure, a castellum, the source
 of a massive aqueduct system.

NAVILLE slips, grabs the GUIDE's shoulder - glances down, and
 sees that he's inches from a deep crevasse.

J.BO (V.O.)
 An ENGINEERED structure, that's
 FIVE THOUSAND YEARS older than the
 earliest crude step pyramids made
 out of backed mud bricks? Crazy!

They stare into the abyss: Gruesome GHOUL FACES stare back!

KASE (V.O.)
 The Waterworks served the land from
 the Book of Job that disappeared
 when the Sahara turned into a
 desert, The Angelic Civilization.

They inch along, every wary, then pause in a cavern to rest.

There's a NOISE behind them. They look back: BLOODY GHOULS,
 blood glistening in the torchlight - freeze like deer caught
 in the headlights - and dart into a side cavern.

J.BO (V.O.)
 Antediluvian worlds? Atlantis? Get
 the F out of here. Hit up the
 Student Health Center for
 psychoactive meds! Go. Away.

The GUIDE shines her light on the limestone walls. NAVILLE
 fingers the long, deep streaks in the limestone.

KASE (V.O.)
 News flash: Modern geological
 investigation proves the Sphinx and
 the Osireion are both ten thousand
 years old, just as Naville said.

They look back - the BLOODY GHOULS are right there - BLOODY HANDS at their throats. They try to climb up the ratty old wooden ladder - but the rung breaks!

J.BO (V.O.)
What's geology? Plus or minus a
million years?

The GHOULS attach the camera: Bloody gore bleeds the lens to a crimson close. Darkness. SCREAMS OF TERROR. Echoing...

KASE (V.O.)
A special thanks to our new grad
student, Michelle. Yay! Somebody to
help me grade papers.

A bloody Michelle is taking a bite out of NAVILLE'S NECK. Michelle sees the camera light on her and throws NAVILLE into the abyss... (SCREAM echoing as he falls away).

Michelle SMILES at the camera - morsels of PUTRID FLESH in her teeth. Smooths her bloody hair back, trying to look pretty.

J.BO (V.O.)
And to our new YouTube channel
coordinator, Rabbi Wurmholtz.

A bloody Wurmholtz LUNGES out of pitch blackness and WRENCHES a BEATING HEART out of the GUIDE'S CHEST.

The camera light gets in Wurmholtz's eyes. He's furious! Wurmholtz throws the GUIDE into the abyss (another ECHOING SCREAM as she falls away), turns - and LURCHES at the camera.

Beat. The room remains pitch black. Nobody moves.

WURMHOLTZ (V.O.)
I don't get it. This is where they
are supposed to run away scared out
of their young wits.

STUDENT (V.O.)
Sorry, Dr. Z. We've soon too many
horror flicks to -

DARK RED LIGHTS STROBE from all sides. A BEATING HEART THROBS out of giant BASE SPEAKERS.

WURMHOLTZ and MICHELLE lunge out of the pitch back at the class, SCREAMING, DRIPPING BLOOD...

All the students SCREAM BLOODY HELL and BOLT out the door.

Michelle has a SEVERED LIMB in her hands. She GNAWS a big bite off the limb.

Wurmholz lunges for her:

WURMHOLTZ (V.O.)
You. Gimme some of that love.

Dean Trotzky steps into the room and stares at Michelle - at Wurmholz, her expression going from ghastly to gruesome.

WURMHOLTZ
Auntie Heimlick! So good to see
your ugly jowls today.

Wurmholz goes to give the Dean a hug with his bloody arms.

The Dean backs away, hands Michelle a paper - then RUNS OUT OF THE ROOM, mortified. Licking the savory blood off her fingers, Michelle scans the document:

MICHELLE
Auntie Puke just gave you a full
stipend, Daddy. Visiting professor!

Wurmholz gets J.Bo's eye - winks at her... Pretending to be outraged, J.Bo GRABS the document and reads it.

J.BO
I won the Holocaust Chair! Dr. Z?
You're to work under my supervision
- investigating that museum. Where.
She - she... That Sullivan lady -

WURMHOLTZ
Isn't Auntie Heimlich the fattest
little wonderful?

Wurmholz goes to hug J.Bo. She runs away from his bloody arms, SCREAMING.

Michelle gets Kase in her sights, and runs after him - Kase SCREAMS...

FADE OUT.

THE END