

UPRISING

by
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FADE IN:

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT

A U.S. aircraft carrier slices through dark seas.

INT. COMBAT DIRECTION CENTER - CARRIER - NIGHT

A comms screen goes blank. It didn't lose power, it just lost all data.

WIDER to reveal the windowless nerve-center of the carrier. Now another screen goes down. And another. And another. COMMS AND NAV OFFICERS GROAN -- this isn't the first time they've been off-line. A DUTY OFFICER snaps up a phone.

DUTY OFFICER

Chief, we just lost half our comms. Maybe you can round up a few of your best geeks, see if they can't plug me back....

The rest of the screens go down.

DUTY OFFICER (CONT'D)

Make that "all" communications.

He scratches the time in his log. "0315."

DUTY OFFICER

Stand by.
(hails a new station)
Sorry to wake you, sir....

INT. CORRIDOR - CARRIER - NIGHT

Snugging down his cap, THE OLD MAN stalks a corridor. This is a C.O. who's seen it all. Twice.

INT. BRIDGE - CARRIER - NIGHT

The Officer Of The Deck is a late-20s lieutenant. His badge says "J. STEVENS." The Old Man swings onto the bridge.

THE OLD MAN

Mr. Stevens, terminate the exercise, this evolution is over. Plot me a course back to base -- I want it done by the time I finish my morning piss.

(to YEOMAN)

How's the coffee, Burke? Better than my mood?

J. STEVENS

Love to oblige, sir, but....

The Old Man turns back. "But what?"

J. STEVENS (CONT'D)

Having trouble with our GPS-compass.
It's not locking in.

An itchy beat. First their comms and now this?

THE OLD MAN

Put it at the top of Engineering's
punch-list. Christ Almighty, can't
even navigate anymore without the
blasted satellites....

J. STEVENS

You'll correct me if I'm wrong, sir,
but...didn't the Vikings make it
halfway around the world without GPS?

He's planting a seed in The Old Man's head.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - CARRIER - NIGHT

START on the great "island" of the carrier, bristling with
antennae now useless. CRANE DOWN to include the C.O. on the
launch deck, stance wide, wind in his face.

THE OLD MAN

More right rudder, more, more,
more...

Polaris, the north star, is swinging into view on the
starboard side of the turning carrier: The Old Man is
steering his four-billion-dollar ship by eye. His orders
get relayed up to the bridge via a PHONE-TALKER.

PHONE-TALKER

"More right rudder...."

THE OLD MAN

Keep coming, keep coming...and
start trimming it off...more, more...
now rudder amidship!

(gesturing dead ahead)

Thataway to Virginia.

INT. BRIDGE - CARRIER - NIGHT

Relaying orders to a HELMSMAN:

J. STEVENS

Rudder amidship...and dog it down
right there. "Thataway to Virginia."

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - CARRIER - NIGHT

Support personnel hustle away. The Old Man and Duty Officer
zip up jackets against the North Atlantic wind. Trying to
convince themselves they're okay:

THE OLD MAN

Any second now, Chief's gonna run
down here and put a blown fuse in my
hand. 'Bout one inch long. Cost
three bucks at any True Value store --
and it just knocked the stuffin's out
of \$200 million in electronics.

DUTY OFFICER

Or tell us that someone spilled a
Mountain Dew on his keyboard.

THE OLD MAN

Sumpin' crazy like that.

DUTY OFFICER

Yeah...gotta be our end, right?
Because the more complicated these
systems get, the more they --

An ERUPTION OF WATER off the starboard beam. Jarringly
close, a huge black submarine slams back down to the surface,
completing its emergency blow.

TIME CUT TO:

A flashing light. It's a louvered signal lamp, circa WW2.

Carrier officers are squinting at the light from the sub,
jotting down possibilities, comparing notes. It's been a
long time since anyone here used Morse. And it shows.

CARRIER OFFICER #1

(with binoculars)

Ohio class. Strange configuration
though, with those dry-shelters just
behind the sail.

(MORE)

CARRIER OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
 (realizing)
 Unless.... Is that....

THE OLD MAN
 "Boat 19."

CARRIER OFFICER #1
 Never thought I'd see it.

To most here, it's like spotting Ahab's whale. But The Old Man is more interested in what that sub is saying.

THE OLD MAN
 (snapping fingers)
 The text, the text....

He gets a chill when he reads the decoded message. And it has nothing to do with the Atlantic wind.

THE OLD MAN
 "No comms with Virginia...NORAD...
 D.C. What is happening?"

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT

Launched from the carrier, a zodiac smashes through swells. A crossing party of officers holds on grimly. They're headed toward the sub, now floodlit by lights from the carrier.

INT. BRIDGE - CARRIER - NIGHT

Left behind, Lt. J. Stevens focuses on Boat 19. It means something special to him, too. He checks the time on his Luminox watch -- then flips his hand and slips down the watchband to reveal a private tattoo on the white of his wrist:

"HOME ALIVE."

INT. READY ROOM - BOAT 19 - NIGHT

A hatch opens. Carrier officers drop down inside as the SUB CAPTAIN enters. Cutting short the INTROS:

SUB CAPTAIN
 We fired a burst communication to
 Washington soon as we surfaced.
 No response.

THE OLD MAN
 Do you have anything on the L1 or L2
 channel? Any GPS at all?

SUB CAPTAIN
Precision codes, Y-codes -- it all
dropped dead at 0315. You?

DUTY OFFICER
Same thing. Same time.

A STIR goes through the compartment, mostly from the sub's
young blue-shirted crew.

SUB CAPTAIN
Adults only. Clear the room.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT

Surrounded by lonely black sea, the sub and the carrier run
side by side.

INT. READY ROOM - BOAT 19 - NIGHT

Privately now, the naval officers churn scenarios:

CARRIER OFFICER #1
..."CME," "coronal mass ejection."
Charged ions from the sun shredded
through our satellite network.

THE OLD MAN
(wanting to buy it)
Solar storms do take out power grids.

DUTY OFFICER
2003. Maine to Montreal, dark.

SUB CAPTAIN
No sunspot's gonna affect my trail
line -- that's an antenna one mile
long, immune to any electro-magnetic
pulse there is.

STEVENS (O.S.)
I think we're listening just fine.

They all turn. Standing in the shadows of the room is
TERRENCE STEVENS. He doesn't wear the Dolphin badge of
submariners. He wears the Trident of a Navy SEAL.

STEVENS (CONT'D)
Problem is, no one's talkin'. So let
me just say what we're all thinkin':
Someone hit our command-and-control.
Hard.

EXT. CONNING TOWER - BOAT 19 - NIGHT

FOUR LOOKOUTS with night-vision sweep the sky. Over the horizon, we see discharges of unnatural light. Eerie light.

INT. READY ROOM - BOAT 19 - NIGHT

SQUAWK BOX VOICE (O.S.)
Lookouts reporting..."explosion-
events," sir. Port flank, several
hundred miles out.

DUTY OFFICER
That's where our battlegroup is.

A heart-stopped beat -- then The Old Man snatches a walkie-talkie off his hip.

THE OLD MAN
Mr. Stevens, copy me?

J. STEVENS (O.S./RADIO)
Bridge go.

THE OLD MAN
You ring up battle stations and put
the interceptors on-deck. Break off
this heading, I want to come about
hard. You got that, son?

J. STEVENS (O.S./RADIO)
Copy that, but do I wait for you --

THE OLD MAN
Negative, negative, you do not wait
for anything, you just do it!

CLOSE on Terrence Stevens -- reacting to the familiar voice on the radio. His brother's voice.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT

All PROPS CHURNING, the carrier peels away from the sub. And behind the two vessels...

More of those eerie "explosion events" light up the horizon -- and then, even more chilling, they end. Whatever battle raged out there now seems over.

INT. RADAR STATION - BOAT 19 - NIGHT

As a blip appears on the radar screen.

INT. READY ROOM - BOAT 19 - NIGHT

SQUAWK BOX VOICE (O.S.)
Airborne contact, 190 miles out but
closing hard on our port flank....

SUB CAPTAIN
Identifier.

SQUAWK BOX VOICE (O.S.)
No identifier broadcast.

SUB CAPTAIN
Speed.

SQUAWK BOX VOICE (O.S.)
We show, uh...
(muffled, to someone O.S.)
Shit, is that right?

SUB CAPTAIN
Closing speed.

SQUAWK BOX VOICE (O.S.)
We show 2,400 miles an hour, sir.

Frozen faces -- "Do we have anything that fast?" -- before
The Old Man lurches for the ladder and double-times up. Sub
Captain hammers DIVE BELLS.

SUB CAPTAIN
SHOW ME 30 DEGREES ON THE BOW PLANES,
I WANNA DRILL A BIG HOLE IN THE
WATER, NOW, NOW, NOW!
(re The Old Man)
Secure him.

Stevens pounces on the ladder.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - CARRIER - NIGHT

As INTERCEPTORS SCREAM OFF the carrier.

EXT. DRY SHELTERS - BOAT 19 - NIGHT

Lookouts are scrambling to get below, passing...

The Old Man. He can see the after-burners of interceptors leaving the carrier. Desperate for a glimpse of the enemy, he snatches night-vision goggles off the last look-out. Instantly someone snatches them from him.

STEVENS

Sorry, sir, no time. Captain requests your company below.

The Old Man looks to the zodiac stored near the dry-shelters. Can he launch in time?

STEVENS (CONT'D)

And I am insisting, sir.

THE OLD MAN

That's my ship out there!

STEVENS

Trust me, I know how you feel.

THE OLD MAN

You got no goddamn idea how I feel!

Big dark swells rise all around them as the sub floods its tanks. Supremely frustrated, The Old Man drops below. But Stevens...

Stays put for a few heartbeats more, dragging on the goggles.

NIGHT-VISION POV: Jumping ahead of the interceptors. ZOOMING IN on that "airborne contact" to get our first eyes-on look. Even miles out, the thing blots out stars.

(NOTE: This is the "Hunter-Killer.")

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT

As the sub dives.

INT. CONNING TOWER - BOAT 19

Sub Captain bangs down handles and throws his face to the periscope just as...

EXT. BOAT 19 - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The whole ocean fills with an unnatural light from above. It's so bright it seems to X-ray the diving sub.

INT. CONNING TOWER - BOAT 19

That same light fills the periscope, bleeding from every crack. It blinds Sub Captain.

INT. READY ROOM - BOAT 19

THE OLD MAN

(to look-outs)

Who saw it? Huh? You? WHO SAW WHAT
IT WAS?

The look-outs wag their scared heads -- and defer to the last man down the hatch.

STEVENS

(to Old Man)

Wasn't ours. It wasn't anything like
one of ours.

The DIVE BELLS STOP. Shocked silence gives way to a new sound: COLLAPSING BULKHEADS. It's the sound of an aircraft carrier dying -- along with 5,000 good men. The AWFUL SOUNDS paralyze The Old Man with grief. But no one takes it harder than...

Terrence Stevens. He pulls down his watch-band to reveal a familiar tattoo, the one made in tandem with his kid brother.

"HOME ALIVE."

EXT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Surreally, F-14 Tomcats and F-18 Hornets are "flying" through the ocean in slow motion, spilled from the deck of...

The carrier. As it chases the planes into the depths, we realize that this is only the stern. Something vaporized the front half. And all along the sheared-off edges -- that impossible cross-section of ship -- the carrier is still burning. Whatever weapon struck it was so intense that the ship still burns even underwater.

FADE OUT

OVER BLACK, we hear HUMMING. The melody is so soulful as to be mournful, full of haunting loss -- loss of an entire way of life. The melody is AMAZING GRACE, and it carries over the images we're about to see.

FADE IN:

EXT. FREIGHT TRAIN - GREAT PLAINS - DAY

A Union Pacific train crosses the Great Plains and its fields of amber wheat. But this iconograph of American industry and bounty is shattered when we BOOM UP to the roof of the train...

And reveal the THRONG OF PEOPLE riding there, some with suitcases, some with whole families. Refugees.

EXT. RURAL CHURCH - BIBLE BELT - DAY

The church is packed. Worshipers spill out the front doors and into the parking lot, SINGING HYMNS from outside this classically steepled church. Presently...

SONIC BOOMS lift eyes. Contrails grow above the steeple. The aircraft are too far away to really see, but the contrails are strange. Unearthly. Druuben.

The parking-lot worshipers go back to their HYMN SINGING. They've seen these contrails before. Too many times.

INT. INNER CITY APARTMENT - DAY

CLOSE on a cell phone. "No Service."

Hoping today will be different, an URBAN MOTHER searches her apartment for reception. She passes a plucky URBAN SON at his PlayStation, embroiled in some hot conflict, supplying his own sound effects.

URBAN KID

I woulda smoked 'em. I woulda shot them right down in the street.

But the boy's TV screen is dark. There is no electricity in the city today. The game -- and the victory -- play out only in the boy's head.

EXT. BALCONY - INNER CITY APARTMENT - DAY

Stepping outside, Urban Mother checks again. Still no reception. We PAN OFF to reveal...

A B-52 Stratofortress on the street below. Its wings are mostly gone, shredded away in a crash-landing that reduced neighboring buildings to rubble and char.

EXT. RED SCHOOLHOUSE - NEW ENGLAND - DAY

A Chevy pickup parks at a red schoolhouse framed by green woods and a cornflower-blue sky. The motto on the license plate is "Live Free or Die."

A CHEVY MOTHER AND FATHER get out and tug-of-war over their 8-year-old SON: The father doesn't want him in school today. But the mother wins, marching her son to the front doors.

Chevy Father remains outside in protest. A TING-TING-TING lifts his eyes to the flag-pole, where he sees...

No flag today. Just a lonely cable hitting the pole.

Full of impotent rage, Chevy Father sits on the steps of the schoolhouse he probably attended 25 years ago. He can barely stand to listen to what's happening inside.

TEACHER (O.S.)

"Kwoct."

CHILDREN (O.S.)

"KWOCT."

TEACHER (O.S.)

"Fsteelma."

CHILDREN (O.S.)

"FSTEELMA."

TEACHER (O.S.)

"Droungd."

CHILDREN (O.S.)

"DROHNGD."

TEACHER (O.S.)

This letter is like a diphthong, so all vowels get pronounced. Let's try again. "Dro-ungd."

CHILDREN (O.S.)

"DRO-UNGD."

INT. HANGAR - COMMUNITY AIRPORT - DAY

A hand flips a radio dial: There is no music today, no talk radio. AM or FM, there is just PERSISTENT STATIC -- and then finally a voice. A voice as pleasant as Tokyo Rose.

TOKYO ROSE VOICE

...NYSE, NASDAC, and the NEKKEI remain inactive while undergoing evaluation. Travel bans are still in place for those of us not involved in essential services -- but the good news is that the main post office in your town or city is most likely open again for business. Please pick up your new Code of Conduct there. I'm also pleased to report that food-distribution is flowing at nearly 60-percent of Day One capacity, and basic staples can be found in most markets. You see, as more of us return to work, more services will be restored each and every day. Again, our leadership has been removed. We are the newest colony of The Great Expanse. Check here daily for more updates....

The VOICE REPEATS IN DRUBEN. The AVIATION MECHANIC snaps the radio off. Seeing a moving ground-shadow outside, he crosses to the mouth of the hangar to see...

EXT. COMMUNITY AIRPORT - DAY

A recon ship unlike any other. It makes almost no sound as it patrols the airfield, ensuring all planes are chocked, all runways are blocked by bulldozers. As the Druuben aircraft vectors away, we CRANE DOWN to include the locked gates of the airport. And a sign.

"NO FLY -- ANYTIME, ANYWHERE"

EXT. HILLY ROAD - PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

A black FARMER motors down the roadway on his John Deer. Occasionally he steers the tractor right to let a minivan or Honda Civic go by. The farmer has a grim wave for each passing car. A survivor's wave.

REARVIEW MIRROR POV: Topping a hill, something dark and hulking appears about a half-mile back. Soon it vanishes into a dip in the road.

The farmer sets his jaw. He hates these things. Hates what they represent.

ANGLES ON DRUBEN TRANSPORT: Shovel-nosed. Spiked with antennae. No windows, no wheels -- it skims the road, unseen ENGINES HOWLING. And it comes fast.

(NOTE: Call it a "Road Hog.")

CLOSE on the tractor speedometer: 22 m.p.h.

In the SAME FRAME now, the Road Hog appears behind the tractor. It's big as a locomotive and twice as menacing. But instead of staying right, the farmer actually drifts to the center of the road. It's an act of fed-up defiance. And just when we think the Road Hog will plow right through the tractor...just when the farmer regrets playing chicken...

The Road Hog slows to 22 m.p.h.

FARMER

(crowing)

That's right. Uh-huh. Forty years I drive this road. Should say "Willie Tucker Parkway" right on them signs. You travel on my road, you travel at my speed. And if you don't like it, you can kiss my old saggy ass -- from the front, you Druuben motherfu--

The tractor is shattering apart in gruesome SLOW-MOTION, BLASTED SIDEWAYS by something that Willie Tucker of Willie Tucker Memorial Parkway never saw coming.

Now we reveal the two Druuben gunships flying escort for the Road Hog.

Road clear, the convoy continues on.

EXT. DRAGON FIELDS - PENNSYLVANIA COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

AERIAL SHOTS PURSUE the alien convoy through wooded hills. Soon the woods give way to something else:

Imagine the teeth of a 1,000-foot dragon planted in the ground. Now imagine acres of these dragon teeth, all leaning "outward," away from our direction of travel. Away from something we've yet to see.

INT. ROAD HOG - DAY

It would be utterly dark inside the Road Hog if not for thin air-slats along the flanks. In slivered light, then, we make out POWs on their knees like downed cattle. They're bound together by heavy shoulder-yokes.

EXT. ROAD HOG DEPOT - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

The Road Hog slows to a stop. It joins another Road Hog already docked. Just ahead, the state highway is broken apart into huge slabs, and it would be impossible for a ground vehicle to go further. That's the point.

EXPLOSIVE BOLTS FIRE on the Road Hog. One whole side drops open and slams to the ground, exposing...

32 POWs, two rows of 16. Half-blind, they crab-step into daylight, still yoked together medievally. Among them we find...

Terrence Stevens.

Overhead, the gunships are replaced by two new Druuben aircraft, the "Dog Walkers." Hovering, the Dog Walkers each lower a cable with an articulated end. The two cables snake around like things alive, searching for...

Matching cables on the yokes of the two lead POWs. All four cables cobra-dance as they line up and...

SH-KINK, SH-KINK! Connect.

In the air, the Dog Walkers start moving.

On the ground, the POWs start walking.

EXT. DRAGON FIELDS - PENNSYLVANIA COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The Dog Walkers gain speed.

The POWs start running through the obstacle field. The two leads are Stevens and REGGIE. They try to maneuver but don't have much slack: The Dog Walkers are spreading, tightening their leashes, pulling the POWs straight for...

A big dragon tooth. Edge-on.

The two lines of POWs slam into it -- and it splits their yokes right down the mid-line. Like a human zipper unzipping, the POWs pass on each side of that killer tooth.

Now there are two chain-gangs of 16 POWs. The yokes they still wear have fore and aft hinge-points, and that creates a snakelike motion as the POWs get hauled onward. It's a hellish game of "Crack the Whip."

Soon the POWs top a hill to behold...

EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE - DRAGON FIELDS - LATE DAY

Their destination. Their fate.

It stands a half-mile ahead. The sun is low behind it, giving the POW camp a dark hulking look. Surrounding hills have been defoliated, replanted with dragon teeth and other escape obstacles.

The Dog Walkers jerk their leashes.

Stevens and Reggie run on.

EXT. DRAGON FIELDS NEAR POW CAMP - LATE DAY

REGGIE

(spotting something)

Oh, no. No, no, no, no....

Ahead is a culvert lined with smaller teeth. POWs try to put on the brakes, knowing it'll be like running through lawn-mower blades. But at the last second...

The Dog Walkers gain a few feet of elevation...

And suddenly the POWs are flying over the culvert.

They SLAM DOWN on the far bank. Almost impossibly, Stevens lands on his feet. The POWs behind him keep their balance too. But Reggie isn't so lucky: A LEG SNAPS on impact. He goes down ugly...

And his whole line goes down ugly behind him.

The downed chain-gang gets dragged by their yokes, dragged by their collective necks. The strongest try to get their feet back under them, but they can't carry the weight of the whole chain-gang. And REGGIE SCREAMS all the way.

EXT. ENERGY FENCE - POW CAMP - LATE DAY

A series of 30-foot pylons describe the outermost fence of the camp. Energy fields flow between pylons, but as the POWs approach, one field vanishes: The "front gates" of the camp are being opened for...

EXT. POW CAMP - LATE DAY

The new POWs. The first chain-gang enters the yard. They're half dead but still on their feet.

Reggie's gang enters like losers in a tug-of-war.

The Dog Walkers circle overhead, dragging the downed POWs some more, slamming them into walls and posts until finally...

It ends. The forced march is over.

WIDE ESTABLISHER. This is a Victorian prison in disrepair, abandoned by humans long ago but pressed back into service by the Druuben after being upgraded with their technology.

EXT. WATCH TOWER - POW CAMP - LATE DAY

OATES

Catch of the day.

On the walkway of a watch tower once used by prison guards, we find OATES and ERSKIN roosting over the yard. These are two of the senior POWs who run this place -- the human part of it. They wear remnants of military uniforms.

ERSKIN

Don't see that too often -- someone comin' in vertical.

OATES

I've seen it before. Once.

He looks over his shoulder at COLONEL TRAPPE inside the watch tower. He's plunging a coffee-press, making himself a nice cup of Yuban.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - LATE DAY

Still breathing like race horses, the new POWs struggle to free themselves of the hated yokes. Suddenly...

An ENERGY-PULSE fires down the leashes. The PULSE cracks open their yoke-collars.

Stevens and the standing chain-gang throw their yokes to the ground. The fallen chain-gang rolls out of theirs.

One newbie is COFFEY, 24, a black female dressed in ragged cammo, hair pulled back in a clumsy knot, serious eyeglasses. She's trying to deal with Reggie's wounds, gushing blood.

COFFEY

Need a belt, a rag...something to
shut down this artery 'fore we even
try to deal with the rest of his....
Stay with me now, Reggie, you stay
right here with me....

None of the long-term POWs move to help: They're watching a
BIG PLATFORM RUMBLING toward the ground, descending from the
alien billet built high over the camp.

COFFEY (CONT'D)

Can I get maybe ONE CRAPPY SHOELACE
OVER HERE?

OATES

Just leave him be.

Oates strides into the yard. He's pure Sergeant-at-Arms.

COFFEY

"Leave him...." He's gonna bleed out
right here unless we get him some
help, some real help. Where's the
infirmary at?

OATES

When they want to move him,
they'll move him. Don't interfere
when they do. And take a knee!
Everybody! Down, down, down!

All POWs in the yard double over. For the long-termers,
it's not bowing in the religious sense -- it's more what
beta-chimps do around alpha-chimps. Deference born of fear.

OATES

When you hear the order "Troondo,"
just put your left arm out like
you're gonna give blood. Do not ask
why, just do it and you might live
long enough to see why.

RAAB, a newbie, steals a look.

RAAB'S POV: The Druuben who ride the platform down are just
silhouettes against a half-set sun. We can only see that
they're tall hominids with crested helmets. Wait, are
those helmets?

TRANSLATOR #1 bumps Raab.

TRANSLATOR #1

(sotto)

Don't look -- that's "Oko-Oko," a challenge. Not unless they speak first.

Stevens too keeps his eyes down -- but trained on a rill of ground-water. In it, he sees tantalizing reflections of the coming Druuben. Gorgon Viewing 101. Oh, and one more thing we notice about Stevens:

He's squatting, not kneeling. No knee touches ground.

DRUBEN VOICE

TROONDO!

POWs push up sleeves and extend arms.

SNAPSHOT CLOSEUPS: Druuben hands -- with twin opposable thumbs. The hands speed-wrapping spiky wire around the arms of POWs, just above the elbows, cinching the wires tight and clamping them off with curious tools. POWs gasping in pain. Druuben feet -- with outriggers that spread to the sides for superior balance. The feet moving from POW to POW, all movement accompanied by a strange SEETHING SOUND.

DRUBEN VOICE

TROONDO!

The voice barks at Stevens, the one POW not extending an arm. Stevens just cobra-spits in the direction of a Druuben boot. We aren't sure whether he gets hit by a hand or a baton, but the net result is that they just...

Lay. Him. Out.

He gets the wire anyway.

INT. WATCH TOWER - POW CAMP - LATE DAY

INTERCUT Trappe up in the walkway of the watch tower. He notes Stevens -- and his attitude -- while sipping Yuban.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - LATE DAY

The only POWs who don't receive arm-wires are the fallen, the ones like Reggie who couldn't even make it to their knees. Now Druuben hands start grabbing these POWs, dragging them effortlessly across the ground and flinging them into...

A big pit.

REACTION POWs: Wanting to look but not wanting to look.

RAAB
(through teeth)
Tell me this ain't happenin'....

Beside Coffey, the semi-conscious Reggie begins sliding out of FRAME. She clings to his pantleg.

COFFEY
Don't take him, don't take, please
don't....

Her grip is broken. Reggie is taken.

CLOSE on curved metal casings, each four inches long. Druuben hands twist stem-caps, activating timers. The casings get pitched into...

The pit. Activating, the casings FLASH-BURN and spread a white-hot energy over the fallen POWs.

RAAB
What the hell...couple those guys
are still....

A BIG BLATTING SOUND. It comes from massive diaphragms hung high overhead.

COMMANDANT'S VOICE (O.S.)
KRAGAMODON INKHARATE ROGOTTUN....

Now spoken to, POWs stand and look up at the Druuben billet. As THE VOICE quakes the diaphragms, two POWs translate for newbies. The TRANSLATORS are still working out nuances of the Druuben language.

TRANSLATOR #1
(announcing to POWs)
"Your leadership has been removed.
The Great Druuben Race..."

TRANSLATOR #2
"Expanse."

TRANSLATOR #1
"...the Great Druuben 'Expanse' now
governs this land and all lands like
it. You are here because you have
challenged or threatened this fact.
In time, some of you will grow...."

TRANSLATOR #2
 "Submissive." Or "compliant."

TRANSLATOR #1
 "...and be returned to the main population. The non-compliant will remain here. Escape cannot occur."

COMMANDANT'S VOICE (O.S.)
 OHKST, KRAGAMODON INKHARATE
 ROGOTTUN...

TRANSLATOR #1
 "Again, your leadership has been removed."

COMMANDANT'S VOICE (O.S.)
 "VOSHAK-TOSHAK."

TRANSLATOR #1
 "It had to be."

POWs break formation as if coming out of a trance. The Druuben guards are gone, the platform now ascending. Even though they cleared the yard of the dead and wounded, we never got a good look at them. We never dared.

Bloody-faced, Stevens joins Coffey and others at the edge of the pit. The bottom smolders with bony ash.

BAINES
 There is no infirmary. They think of the wounded as weak.

The longer a POW has been here, the more in-grown his arm-wire is. And BAINES' wire is part of his anatomy now. It's under his skin.

Stevens' gaze turns to the "front gates" of the prison. The downed section of energy field is regenerating.

In a zombie-daze, a young newbie is walking straight for those "gates." CORPORAL DASH can see through the energy field and figures he can walk right through it, too. But the pylons are generating new "black-nasties" -- baseball-sized clots studded with hooks and barbs. And they patrol the energy fields of the perimeter fence like wasps guarding their nest.

WORTHY
 Hey. Where you goin'?

WORTHY wears the tatters of a Canadian Air Force uniform.

DASH

Home.

WORTHY

And where's "home?"

DASH

Hawaii.

WORTHY

(collaring him)

Hang on, hang on. Why don't you
just rest up little while before
you go an' try to walk --

Dash shakes loose. Worthy grabs him again. The kid
struggles even harder. Worthy decks him with a forearm,
then squats to help with the resulting nosebleed.

WORTHY

Head back, head back. You know,
someday you'll thank me for this
bloody nose.

With the energy fence up and running, the old prison doors
start CRANKING CLOSED in front of it.

OATES

Awright, little fishies, listen up!
Each POW will receive welcoming gifts
-- a cup of water and an empty bag.
Drink the water judiciously, as it is
hard to come by. In the bag, you
will place your first feces and turn
it over to the camp gardeners. No,
this is not some sick-ass joke: Your
shit may actually contain seeds or
grains that might be useful in future
plantings. So keep your mouths shut
and your bowels open and we'll all
get along just fine. You have been
assigned to Cellblock "Charlie"....

Dash rolls to his feet and runs.

WORTHY

DASH!

Dash beats the closing doors and slams headlong into...

The energy field. Instantly his body downshifts into a
FREAKY SLOW-MOTION.

That gives the black-nasties a chance to swarm and attack. And when Dash spills out the other side of the fence, back to NORMAL SPEED...

The black-nasties come with him, burrowing into his body and DISRUPTING HIM on a molecular level.

POWs watch in dull horror until the IRON GATES BOOM CLOSED.

Now the sun winks out behind those thorny hills. It brings a series of DEMANDING BLATS from the camp diaphragms.

Like Eloi heading for the cave, POWs head for cellblocks.

HOLD on Stevens as others vacate. He stares at that energy fence still visible above the old prison wall, wondering how to get over it. Or under it. Or through it.

EXT. DRAGON FIELDS - NIGHT

From a hill in the Dragon Fields, a WOLF BAYS at the moon -- our old familiar moon now crossed by unfamiliar aircraft.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

No heat. No electricity. No lights except for...

"Spud lamps." From a 50-pound sack of potatoes, POWs have crafted small potato batteries, copper pennies serving as one electrode, zinc nails as the other. Wire runs from the electrodes to bulbs salvaged from the cellblock ceiling.

All around, the dim lamps glow to life like campfires.

Stevens walks this decrepit two-tier cellblock, clocking the SOTTO CONVERSATIONS of newbies and long-termers. Outwardly, he's searching for an open cell. Inwardly, he's sizing up his blockmates, assessing the material he has to work with.

BAINES

...held some of the worst ever, this place, Capone included. And none of them ever busted out, neither. Mind you, this was before the Droogs came in with new paint and carpet.

TRANSLATOR #1

There is no "escape" in the Druuben language. Just no word for it.

We MOVE ON to Coffey. She's Army National Guard, a survivor of Iraq and the Baltimore projects. But somehow she still doesn't think of herself as good enough. Never has.

POW #1

You were trying to get from West Virginia to Baltimore in a tank?

COFFEY

Kept the radio off, drove when we could, laid low when we had to. Did good for awhile -- but only cuz the Droogs were still busy clearin' the skies. Then we hit somethin' just couldn't get around.

POW #2

Druuben check-point?

COFFEY

Washington D.C.

Overhearing, other POWs migrate closer. Stevens pauses just outside their circle of light.

COFFEY (CONT'D)

Found all these bodies with nasty wounds...people with their eyes all like Smucker's jelly...some really messed-up stuff, worse than even Iraq. Reggie said it was radiation. Talked about takin' the Abrams in closer, seein' what happened to, y'know, all our national stuff....

POW #1

But that's one of their no-go zones, right? Whole D.C. area?

Stevens starts up a staircase. Now he clocks...

POW #3

Stationed where?

WORTHY

Goose Bay, Canada. The NWS.

POW #3

Our Early Warning System.

WORTHY

Yeah. "The trip-wire that didn't trip."

POW #4

(morbidly fascinated)

What went wrong up there, Worthy?
How could they just Pearl Harbor us
like that?

WORTHY

'Tween Northern Canada and Alaska,
there are 15 long-range radar sites
that make up the Northern Shield.
As far as I can tell, they took out
all 15 at exactly the same moment in
time. Now all those sites link to a
base at North Bay. When I did a fly-
over of that base -- tryin' to find
someone still alive to give us orders
-- I found a 700-foot hole in the
ground. Deep. Y'know why? Because
the operations center for that base
was 600 feet deep. It looked like
Mt. St. Helens blew down.

POW #3

Some bunker-buster.

WORTHY

These Druuben -- they don't leave
anything to chance.

INT. STEVENS' CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

The cell is furnished with a three-legged chair, a rusted-out
cot, a rain-soaked mattress crawling with centipedes. But
what clinches the deal for Stevens is a small window in the
ceiling 12 feet overhead. It's got iron bars.

STEVENS

Sold.

TIME CUT TO:

Stevens hanging from the ceiling. He's managed to loop
electrical wire over a window bar. The ends of the wire
are wrapped around his padded hands, and he "saws" on that
bar with a punching motion -- left, right, left, right --
all the while supporting his own body-weight.

He's got to get out.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

The two ends of the cellblock are sealed off by Druuben energy "doors." Now the black-nasties inside one "door" decay away as the energy field powers down and...

Druuben shadows enter.

MAIN GUARD
ONGOTOT KUNDA.

TRANSLATOR #1
"First eight." They want the first
eight for interrogation.

EXT. LIFTING-PLATFORM - POW CAMP - NIGHT

Yoked together, eight newbies ride the platform up toward the Druuben billet. Coffey and Worthy are among them. They're scared appropriately shitless.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Sudden brightness. We're looking at the sky -- and two growing specks. Now a hand appears in CLOSEUP. The hand holds a mock-up of a Druuben ship, made out of boot leather, and it compares the mock-up to the real Druuben ships on approach.

SPOTTER
Twin engines...pulsed exhaust...
clearly sub-sonic haulers, so...
(turning to CAMERA)
Spotter calls "Pack Rats!" Inbound!

SPOTTER, small and scrappy, has a dozen mock-ups strung around his neck. Once there were train spotters and plane spotters. Now there are alien-ship spotters.

Stevens and other newbies appear in the yard -- just as the long-term POWs are clearing out. The Pack Rats hover above the camp -- and release their cargo. Heavy pallets tumble through air...

And CRASH LAND in the yard. Seals break on impact, and hundreds of small cans fly like shrapnel.

Stevens snags one out of the air. The emergency ration is stenciled "COURTESY OF U.S.A. -- FOR DISASTER ONLY."

STEVENS
Guess this qualifies.

POWs emerge and start foraging for cans. It's like some Third World Easter-egg hunt. Stevens keys open his can, fingers out some hash.

RAAB

What color you get?

STEVENS

Soylent Brown. You?

RAAB

Dog Food Red -- which makes the vegetarian in me very uncomfortable. Charles Raab, USGS cartographer. We came in together, but there was really no time for formal....

That lifting-platform is on its way down. POWs migrate closer, ready to help off...

Those First Eight newbies. They're all down on their knees and reluctant to move from that position. They've been through a night of interrogation -- Druuben interrogation -- and just what that entails can only be guessed at by their harrowed state.

RAAB

Holy crap. What happens up there?

Nearby, a POW punctures the bottom of his empty rat-can and slides it across a clothes-line, smacking it up against 88 other cans. He is THE KEEPER OF THE CLOCK.

KEEPER OF THE CLOCK

TODAY'S DATE! DAY 89!

Stevens stoops to gather more rat-cans. Now he spots...

A small "O" in the ground. It's the corroded end of an ancient pipe, flush to the ground. Intrigued, Stevens starts searching for others.

STEVENS

So how's a map guy wind up here, Raab?

RAAB

You find out, you let me know.

STEVENS

Had your maps when they picked you up?

RAAB

Good ones, too, with all my notation.
Burned 'em all up with those little...
whatchamajiggems they carry....

STEVENS

Pro'bly thought you were Resistance.

RAAB

Resistance? I keep hearin' they put
all that down. Just crushed it as
soon as it broke out.

STEVENS

Well, if that was true, Raab -- you
wouldn't think they'd go to the
trouble of building their very own
Abu Ghraib, would you?

Stevens finds another "0" pipe 15 feet away, flush to the
surface just like the last one. "Air pipes?" He lines up
the two pipes -- then extends that line in his head, sourcing
it back to...

The old prison cemetery. 20 graves are enclosed by a low
wrought-iron fence.

EXT. OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

START on a slate headstone, that of "DANNY VELINSKI." The
death-date is "1963." PULL BACK to include Stevens at the
cemetery fence.

STEVENS

Death Row inmates?

He's asking Baines, who squats nearby, brushing his teeth
with an index finger and some sandy dirt. Baines responds
with a lifeless nod.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

And who dug the graves? Prisoners or
guards?

BAINES

Who the shit cares?

STEVENS

Just askin', Baines.

BAINES

(rinsing, spitting)
My guess? Prisoners.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Stevens crosses the yard purposefully, angling for...

The watch tower. Up on the walkway, Colonel Trappe is polishing his shoes, checking the shine in sunlight.

At the base of the tower, Stevens starts up makeshift steps. He's blocked by Oates.

OATES

Where you goin', fish?

STEVENS

See the man upstairs.

OATES

See me first. Name?

STEVENS

Lt. Cmdr. Terrence Stevens, U.S. Navy.
And I wanna be tasked to whatever
break-out crew you got goin'.

OATES

Position?

STEVENS

No job too shitty. Whatever it takes
is what I'll do.

OATES

(clarifying)

What was your position in the Navy,
Stevens?

Stevens checks Oates' Army uniform. All U.S. flags have been removed by mandate, but the sergeant stripes remain.

STEVENS

Not sure about the Army, sergeant,
but in Navy we report up, not down.
Believe I saw a colonel upstairs?

OATES

"Colonel Trappe." Busy man.

Stevens backpedals and looks up. 25 feet overhead, Trappe is still buffing his shoes.

STEVENS

Okay. Maybe you don't want me
throwin' in. Got your own agenda,
want to keep it on the D.L. But
consider yourself notified, sergeant
-- I got agenda, too.

(mock salutes)

Hope we don't trip over each other on
the way out.

OATES

(catching him)

The chapel. 1600.

INT. CHAPEL - POW CAMP - LATE DAY

Peeling frescoes. Tumble-down ceiling. Weather damage.
30 POWs sit in disarrayed pews, listening to a POW MINISTER
sermonize listlessly on how "God Will Make a Way."

Colonel Trappe drops into FRAME beside a seated Stevens.
He's a big thick-necked Marine who exudes a hidebound
authority. Erskin takes a pew nearby.

TRAPPE

I'm Colonel Trappe, U.S. Marine
Corps, Aberdeen Proving Grounds,
Maryland. This is Major Erskin out
of Quantico. Now who are you?

STEVENS

Just another guy on the wrong side of
the fence, colonel. But lemme offer
up a little fresh intel on what I saw
comin' in here yester --

TRAPPE

Where were you stationed?

STEVENS

Norfolk. But comin' in, sir, I
noticed a blind-spot in that obstacle
field about 75 meters from --

TRAPPE

Norfolk was hit Day One.

STEVENS

That's right.

TRAPPE

So if you weren't on base when the
attack came, where were you?

STEVENS

Off-base.

TRAPPE

Elaborate. Minus the attitude.

STEVENS

'Scuse me, but.... We are where we are -- which is right here ridin' the pine. Faster we get back in the game, the faster --

ERSKIN

And what game is that, Stevens?

Stevens takes a beat. *"What the hell is going on here?"*

STEVENS

Hittin' these Droogs back. Any way we can.

TRAPPE

Can you detail your whereabouts over the last 12 weeks?

STEVENS

Just out there trying to survive.

TRAPPE

You seem reluctant to talk about yourself. Why is that?

ERSKIN

And what happened to your uniform?

STEVENS

Blending in is one way to survive.

TRAPPE

Is deserting another?

Stevens mirrors Trappe's stare. The meeting just U-turned into an interrogation.

ERSKIN

For the record, we don't prosecute for those things here, even if a POW did willfully --

STEVENS

For the record, you believe whatever bullshit you want.

Trappe gestures "kill it" to the minister. In turn, the minister nods to a POW seated at an old pump organ, who STARTS PLAYING with more volume than skill. We understand that Trappe wants audio cover for this next part.

TRAPPE

The problem we have, "Mr. Stevens," is that sometimes the Druuben place sympathizers among us.

STEVENS

(a beat)

'Mean "spies." Human spies.

TRAPPE

Happened once already. Fortunately we picked up inconsistencies in that POW's story.

ERSKIN

Once that we know of.

Oates takes a seat behind Stevens. Uncomfortably so.

TRAPPE

Sergeant Oates I believe you know.

ERSKIN

Why'd the Druuben pick you up, Stevens?

STEVENS

Firearm possession.

TRAPPE

Weapon violation won't land you here.

STEVENS

Well, it wasn't the weapon that they objected to...as much as the rounds I was dumpin' into a Droog's chest.

ERSKIN

You killed a Druuben?

STEVENS

Several. How many you bag?

TRAPPE

(willing to ignore)

So in all the weeks you apparently spent Kung Fu-ing your way across the Earth, did you --

STEVENS

In all the weeks you been here, how many escapes have there been?

TRAPPE

-- did you see or hear anything that would lead you to believe there is any strike capability left in the U.S. military?

STEVENS

How many attempts?

TRAPPE

Just answer my --

STEVENS

How many you approve?

TRAPPE

YOU ANSWER MY GODDAMN QUESTION!

CUT TO Jesus on the cross. Pained.

STEVENS

Be happy to, colonel -- just as soon as I determine you aren't some Druuben bitch-boy yourself.

Oates punches the back of Stevens' head.

OATES

Listen up, Kung Fu. These officers have given up a lot just to provide you fishies the basic amenities of --

Stevens plants a boot on the pew in front and piston-kicks back, overturning his own broken section of pew right onto Oates' legs, pinning the guy in place while he...

DRIVES A KNEE into his face.

STEVENS

And I gave up my only brother to these Droogs, a guy I convinced to go Navy, a kid I swore I'd look out for no matter what --

Others pile on Stevens, and soon IT'S A MELEE. Because when you can't strike at the enemy, you'll strike at your own. But abruptly...

The organist STOPS PLAYING.

POWs drop to their knees.

The fighters stop fighting, now seeing in the doorway...

The Main Guard. He stands just outside in powerful sunlight, blown out by FIVE STOPS. Behind him, more Druuben are indicated, equally ghostly.

MAIN GUARD
ONGOTOT KUNDA.

TRANSLATOR #2
"Second Eight." He wants the next eight.

EXT. LIFTING-PLATFORM - POW CAMP - SUNSET

Yoked together, eight more newbies ride the platform up toward the Druuben billet. A spooked Raab is among them.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - SUNSET

Outside now, Stevens walks the yard to track the rising platform. It docks high overhead. When the eight newbies vanish from sight, Stevens looks down -- and finds himself at the edge of the cremation pit. Trappe appears.

TRAPPE
We all lost somebody in this war,
Stevens. And I won't take more loses
in escape attempts that have no
chance of success.

STEVENS
(re the pit)
Should bury them proper....

TRAPPE
Commandant won't give that. I know
how he thinks. It won't happen.

STEVENS
Should bury them proper.

Now he's looking at the old cemetery. When the DIAPHRAGMS around camp ISSUE A SERIES OF BLATS, Stevens joins the flow of POWs heading for the cellblocks. HOLD on Trappe as Oates and Erskin join.

ERSKIN
Never came clean, did he?

OATES

So if you think it's a real problem,
we do it like last time -- just break
one leg, let the Druuben take care
of the rest. Bat clean-up for us.

Looking after Stevens, Trappe weighs it. He's not fond of
this option.

ERSKIN

Your call, colonel.

EXT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - SUNSET

Three lines of POWs enter three different cellblocks --
"Alpha," "Bravo," "Charlie." CAMERA FERRETS OUT...

Two rough-and-tumble guys named JOHNSON. Slyly -- when they
think they can get away with it -- the two Johnsons move from
"Bravo" line to "Charlie" line. They've queued up about 20
feet behind...

The unaware Stevens.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

The block doors close: Those black-nasties begin circulating
inside the energy fields.

Spud lamps are coming on, illuminating...

The two Johnsons, now inside "Charlie." They head for one
particular cell on the upper level.

INT. STEVENS' CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

Stevens is working with the detached leg of his cot: The
"foot" is a threaded bolt that expands or contracts as a
leveling feature. And with a little modification, Stevens
thinks he can use it on...

Those window bars overhead.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

The two Johnsons spot Stevens in his cell -- with his back
turned. After a check-off look down the block, the first
Johnson makes his move, entering the cell fast...

INT. STEVENS' CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - CONTINUOUS

...and getting taken down instantly, thrown to the floor,
a rusty shank slapped to his throat. On top of him is...

STEVENS
Of all the gin joints.

JOHNSON #1
Permission to get off my ass, sir?

Johnson #2 enters. Fierce hugs.

JOHNSON #2
Johnson and Johnson reporting for
duty.

STEVENS
Moore and McGuire?

JOHNSON #2
Out of the game. For good.

It brings a wince.

STEVENS
Billy Boy and Tanner?

JOHNSON #2
Only second-hand, but -- cross them
off the list, too.

STEVENS
Doin' this backwards. Who's still
alive?

JOHNSON #1
Operationally, I think you should
assume that of the original
platoon....

He taps three fingers against his bicep. "Three left."

JOHNSON #2
Should also assume they hear every
word we might be speaking, in any
language we might care to try.

JOHNSON #1
Some dead-spots around camp. We'll
rekkie them for you tomorrow.

STEVENS

What, you guys busy right now?

FAST SHOTS: We see the cot-leg positioned between the bars of the ceiling window. Spinning. Widening. It's being used as a bar-spreader. And soon it CRACKS THE BAR Stevens weakened with sawing.

EXT. ROOFTOPS - POW CAMP - NIGHT

Stevens and the two Johnsons run catlike over rooftops. They leap a span...

And hook onto a leg of the camp's 1940s-era water tower.

EXT. TOP OF WATER TOWER - POW CAMP - NIGHT

START on the Druuben billet erected overhead. Closer now, we can see that the lowermost level has telescope-like protrusions around its perimeter. These "telescopes" move slowly, sweeping the camp below.

JOHNSON #2 (O.S.)

That's where they listen. So long as we stay right here....

PULL BACK to include Stevens and the two Johnsons. They're lying on the top of the windswept water tower, this the tallest human structure in camp. It's a "dead spot" for the Druuben listening post.

JOHNSON #1

We can talk.

He pulls out a scrap of paper hidden behind his belt. Scrawled on it are geodetic coordinates.

JOHNSON #1 (CONT'D)

Located some decent secondary targets -- this, a weapons depot in southern Virginia...this, old air base Droogs took over outside Baltimore....

JOHNSON #2

Counted 24 Droog ships just sittin' on the tarmac. Lined up all pretty, beggin' to be taken out.

Stevens doesn't respond. He's studying the layout of the old Victorian prison with its 20-foot stone wall...inside the 30-foot energy fence...inside the endless Dragon Fields. He's already thinking ahead.

JOHNSON #1

Been workin' on a way to smuggle these coordinates out. Gonna be a bitch. But every once in a while, they do cut someone loose -- usually some small fish they throw back... some guy who showed he was no threat to them in the first --

STEVENS

Y'mean, some guy who bought his way out by doin' favors for the Droogs? Huh-uh. No way do I trust him with my coordinates.

JOHNSON #1

(piqued)

Your coordinates? For?

Now Stevens makes eye-contact -- and confirms with silence. Johnson #2 looks like he'll bust loose with a war-cry, so Stevens muzzles him. Soon a TORRENT OF HISSED QUESTIONS:

JOHNSON AND JOHNSON

You found "Gomorraah?" Where at? How far away? They're actually building it? Above ground or below? One of their no-go zones? Where?

STEVENS

(holding up hand)

Just get all up on this idea: If any coordinates are leavin' this camp? They leave in our own pockets.

The Johnsons trade dubious glances.

JOHNSON #1

That's a 30-foot Druuben energy fence out there, 'tenant. You touch it, you die cryin'.

JOHNSON #2

And that's before you hit the obstacle fields. Nobody knows what kind of ruin-your-day shit they put out there.

JOHNSON #1

And may I remind you this is Day 89? Last rendezvous was scheduled for --

STEVENS

Day 100. Which gives us one whole week to bust outta here, don't it?
 (off their looks)
 The Prime Target. That's what I got in my pocket.

And that overrides all concerns. Somewhere below them...

Trappe appears, having himself a smoke on the walkway of the old watch tower. Maybe it's just a privilege accorded the senior human officer, but for whatever reason, Trappe isn't locked down at night.

JOHNSON #1

Gonna run this by him?

STEVENS

Now when did Navy SEALS ever ask permission of a goddamn Marine?

JOHNSON #2

I assume that means "Fuggim."

STEVENS

Hooyah, Mr. Johnson. Hooyah.

JOHNSON #1

Gonna need certain liberties to pull this off. And one thing Trappe does good is get concessions from the Droogs. Don't know you can just end-run him like that.

STEVENS

Don't have to.
 (off their looks)
 I'm goin' over his head.

INT. TRANSIT GATE - POW CAMP - DAY

A work-detail is being moved from one section of yard to another. Each POW must count off as he transits an old iron gate -- count off in Druuben.

LINE OF POWS

...ong...tong...trang...onga...
 kun...kod...krod...kunda....

After "eight" the numbers cycle.

LINE OF POWS (CONT'D)

Kunda-ong...kunda-tong...kunda-
trang...kunda-onga...thirty....

A BATON WHACKS the chest of the "number-ong" POW, halting the procession.

FOLLOW Druuben feet moving past POW feet to arrive at the boots of the man in the gate -- the guy who just said "thirty." TILT UP to reveal Stevens. Now PAN OVER to include MAIN GUARD breathing hot Druuben breath in his face. We've never seen a Droog this close. We wish we hadn't:

They have no eyes, just a bony extrusion that SEETHES out electromagnetic energy. The hackles that form the sagittal crest are in constant motion, rippling and spiking in response to feedback our eyes are blind to.

MAIN GUARD

"Kunda-kun."

(reviewing)

Kunda-trang...kunda-onga...kunda...

STEVENS

(showing he understands)

"...kun."

With a HEAVING GRUNT, Main Guard motions to his seconds: They back up the POWs for another try.

LINE OF POWS

...ong...tong...trang...onga...
kun...kod...krod...kunda...
kunda-ong...kunda-tong...kunda-
trang...kunda-onga...

STEVENS

Thirty.

The BATON WHACKS Stevens across the chest, sending him a stagger-step back.

BAINES

(aside to Stevens)

Is there a method to this retardation?

Main Guard "counts" with the four digits of his right hand -- two opposable thumbs, two center-digits.

MAIN GUARD

...ong...tong...trang...onga...
(now the left hand)
...kun...kod...krod...kunda.

The tone is "What could be clearer, you fucking chimpanzee?"
The GUARDS BARK, the POWs back up for another run at it.
POWs try to square Stevens away.

POW #1

They're Base-8, okay? No "nine," no
"ten." It all repeats after eight,
after "kunda."

BAINES

Just say "kunda-kun." Okay?

Reset, the POWs try again.

LINE OF POWS

...ong...tong...trang...onga...
kun...kod...krod...kunda....
...kunda-ong...kunda-tong...kunda-
trang...kunda-onga....

Stevens nears the transit gate. Main Guard rolls the baton
in his four-fingered hand, daring him to do it again.

STEVENS

Thirty.

POWS GROAN. Main Guard grabs a translator and, speaking a
TORRENT OF DRUBEN, hauls him over to Stevens.

TRANSLATOR #1

I'm sorry...missed what you said
about.... If you just slow down a
bit...JUST SLOW DOWN AND I CAN....

Main Guard throws him to the ground. Worthless.

MAIN GUARD

(to Stevens)

Ein Druuben. Thirk-teen.

Up and down the line, POWs turn and look. Wow. It's the
first time a Druuben has spoken English. Ever.

STEVENS

(insistent)

"Thirty."

MAIN GUARD

"Thirk-teen."

STEVENS

Look, I should know. Ten, eleven, twelve, thirty, fourteen.... Been that way since grade school.

MAIN GUARD

Nay-em.

STEVENS

"Stevens." You?

The only response is a SLOW SEETHING.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

Okay, howabout we just call you... "Schultz?"

Baines snorts. And covers it instantly.

MAIN GUARD/SCHULTZ

"Schultz?" Q-why?

STEVENS

"Why?" It's a name of respect. 'Specially if we add a title to it. Like..."Sergeant Schultz."

MAIN GUARD/SCHULTZ

"Skargeant Skultz...."

STEVENS

Or "Schultzie" -- but only if we, you know, really click and wind up doin' jello-shots in Cancun, or something.

Up and down the line, POWs suppress laughter. Somehow "Schultz" knows he's being fucked with. And he doesn't like it one bit.

HARD CUT TO:

Stevens. On his back. In a yoke. Dragged by his feet across the yard toward...

EXT. BASE OF LIFTING-PLATFORM - POW CAMP - DAY

The lifting-platform, now descending. Helper POWs wait for it to dock. When it does, reveal...

The "Second Eight" group kneeling on the platform floor. Raab is here, depleted emotionally, physically, mentally. He makes eye-contact with...

Stevens. The man about to trade places with him.

RAAB

(hoarse)

Just tell him. Whatever he wants to know, you just tell him.

INT./EXT. WATCH TOWER - POW CAMP - DAY

Oates and Erskin watch the platform ascending. There's just one passenger this time.

OATES

Looks like Kung Fu himself. Lesse how hard his cock is when he steps off that platform.

ERSKIN

Whole new outlook, comin' back down. Whole new man.

Not watching, Trappe busies himself straightening ancient notices on a crumbling bulletin board -- busies himself making order out of chaos. That's what he does.

TRAPPE

No understanding with some of them... no appreciation for what it was like even 50 days ago -- fighting for blankets, killing for food, the human pack-animals we found living here. No regard for the gains we've made....

EXT. GUN GALLERY - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

150 feet above the yard, the platform docks.

An energy-pulse surges through the umbilical, cracking open Stevens' yoke. He stands but finds no guards here, no door, nothing except slabs of woven steel until...

A DOOR FLY-TRAPS OPEN right in his face.

Too dark to see inside. Stevens takes a deep breath and, hoping it's not his last, steps through.

INT. GENESIS HALL - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

Purple gasses seep from fissures in the ceiling, augmenting Earth's atmosphere. The walls, skimmed by sunlight from the still-open door, show monochromatic reliefs. These aren't

works of art -- the Druuben aren't interested in art or culture. These are testaments to their own existence. And by default, a record of their genesis. Stevens moves ahead warily, scanning the reliefs, seeing...

A pre-Druuben race. Not unlike primitive humans, they have binocular vision and hunt in packs. They're capable predators but not the most dominant species on this alien world. Then...

The Volcano Epoch: Endless volcanoes, belching ash into the sky. Eclipsing the sun. Clogging the air with ash-rain. Then...

Vegetation withering. Animals dropping. A great die-off. Then...

A bacchanalia of murder: Pre-Druuben killing their own, eliminating the weak and the small and even the infantile. Culling their own herd. Then...

Only the strongest few pre-Druuben still standing, at their feet a Vigeland tableau of death. Then...

These few strong specimens evolving. The eyes that no longer serve them vanishing...those bony ridges extruding forward...those sagittal crests growing taller...those hackles rising up to form "Romanesque" crests. Finally...

A present-day Druuben warrior, emblematic of all Druuben. Standing tall and hubristic like the apex predator he now is. Surrounded by cities and aircraft reaching for the heavens. With this world underfoot, the Druuben's face is upturned -- pondering which world to conquer next.

The entrance DOOR FLY-TRAPS SHUT behind Stevens. Now he's standing in total darkness. A beat -- and the FLOOR VANISHES beneath his feet. Stevens falls...

INT. INTERROGATION CHAMBER - DRUBEN BILLET - CONTINUOUS

And crash-lands in a circular chamber. Just indigo twilight here, whatever light seeps out of unfathomable machinery.

QUISLING (O.S.)

Not often someone gets sent up alone.
You must be special -- or especially
stupid.

STEVENS

Momma thought "special," Daddy
thought "stupid." Never did get it
settled.

A shaft of light snaps on to reveal THE QUISLING. He's a human who wears whatever parts of a Druuben uniform will fit his well-fed anatomy.

QUISLING

Do you know why you've been brought to this prison?

STEVENS

Killed a Droog.

QUISLING

Actually, no.

(off his look)

Their code of honor says it's not improper for an enemy to kill a Druuben during "Vykokando" -- the Time of Conquest. They'll actually respect you for it. What they have no tolerance for is when you try to kill a Druuben -- and fail.

STEVENS

So...I'm free to go?

The chamber starts SEETHING around him. It's like Stevens fell into a rattlesnake pit. He backpedals but...

EXPLOSIVE SHOTS: Shadows lifting Stevens off his feet. Body-slamming him to the ground. Hauling him up, jerking him sideways, locking him bodily into...

A head-and-shoulder yoke -- with teeth inside. It's the Druuben equivalent of an Iron Maiden, one of eight that dangle here. Dazed, Stevens pants hard until...

QUISLING

The only right answers will be those that he believes.

STEVENS

(dazed)

I don't see "he."

More SEETHING -- but this is a BIG AND SINGULAR SEETHING. In response, the arm-wire Stevens wears heats up, the tips of the barbs glowing.

QUISLING

"He" sees you, Mr. Stevens.

COMMANDANT'S POV: Of Stevens trying to place the sound. For the first time, we see how a Druuben "sees."

More light slivers into the chamber. It's just enough to reveal the Druuben guards that jumped Stevens. They're imposing, but nothing compared to...

The silhouette that now circles the room.

Stevens is transfixed. Even with its crest down, this thing scrapes the seven-foot mark. In a society where strength is everything, this is a bull Druuben. This is Original Stock. This is the COMMANDANT.

(NOTE: As the interrogation ensues, assume that the Commandant is originating the questions in DRUBEN TONGUE.)

QUISLING

"You are a former member of the former Navy of the former United States of America, correct?"

STEVENS

You know, his question was a lot shorter than yours. Are you askin' the same --

The COMMANDANT SEETHES. Stevens' arm-wire heats up again, stealing his breath.

QUISLING

"Yes" or "no," please.

When the pain passes...

STEVENS

Look, I know how it works -- get 'em to bite on the easy ones, then bring the hard stuff. So why don't we just get to it: "Are you a member of any group who seeks to challenge the Great Druuben Expanse?"

The Quisling rocks forward.

QUISLING

Well?

(waiting a beat)

The session will end only when you answer your own question.

STEVENS

I'll answer only when he opens this thing.

The Quisling rocks back indolently, not translating.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

Tell him. Tell this big Droog wadsucker that "the session will end" when he proves that he ain't afraid of one POW without a weapon. When he stops showing me weakness.

QUISLING

You don't want to do that.

STEVENS

I think I do.

QUISLING

To accuse a Druuben of weakness is to make an...

(leaning forward,
whispering it)

... "Okoko" -- a formal challenge.

STEVENS

'Fraid he'll kill the messenger?

The Quisling hesitates: He hadn't thought of it that way.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

Tell him. Word for word.

Reluctantly, the QUISLING BEGINS TRANSLATING. The Quisling even uses the word "wadsucker" because, not surprisingly, it has no Druuben equivalent.

The Commandant stops circling. If an eyeless being can glare, the Commandant does so now. We notice a two-headed war-scythe on the Commandant's hip, worn where a human officer might wear a cutlass. It is ceremonial, isn't it?

COMMANDANT

SHOOKSGIM.

A guard moves forward aggressively -- and stomps an actuator. The Iron Maiden opens. Stevens extricates himself.

STEVENS

(to Quisling)

Now question for you. No need to translate.

QUISLING

I do it because they will survive all others. I do it because it is my privilege to serve such a masterful civilization.

STEVENS

Actually, was gonna ask if they got
Big Junk.

QUISLING

"Big Junk?"

STEVENS

"Swinging meat." "Balls." And don't
make like you don't know.

QUISLING

They have four.

STEVENS

Good.

ROUND TWO OF EXPLOSIVE SHOTS: Stevens driving an elbow into
a guard's quadra-cles. Grabbing its head. Throwing it into
the Iron Maiden. Stomping the actuator to snap it closed.

From darkness, Droogs lurch forward with weapons glinting.
But they freeze at the sight of...

Stevens. Aiming a Druuben fist-gun at their Commandant.

QUISLING

(with dire implication)
Oh, I think Daddy was right.

STEVENS

(to Commandant)
We believe we should have the right
to dispose of our own dead. We need
to bury them, okay? Per our customs,
not yours. And by the way, this
ain't a challenge...

He drops to his haunches -- and lays down the fist-gun.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

It's a gift.

A heart-stopped beat. We note that Stevens still won't let a
knee touch ground.

The Commandant reclaims the weapon, aims it dead-bang at
Stevens...

And then BLASTS THE SPINE off the guard in the Iron Maiden.
The one who lost his weapon.

Stevens calculated that might happen. But what happens next no one could predict: The hackles on the back of the Commandant's head reorient toward...

The other guards. They break and run.

The Commandant hunts them into the dark rim of the room, turning the chamber into a kill jar, FLASHING FIST-GUNS giving glimpses of things that will haunt us for years. But amid the chaos we note this: The Commandant uses his scythe to "scalp" the guards, chopping off their sagittal crests before dispensing with them. Then abruptly...

It's over.

Stevens forces his eyes down as HEAVY FOOTFALLS approach. Druuben boots re-enter his view -- along with the war-scythe we realize is far from ceremonial.

COMMANDANT

OKO-OKO?

STEVENS

No, boss. No challenge here.

The COMMANDANT SPEAKS again.

THE QUISLING

He says "You may start with him."

A beat of confusion for both Stevens and the Quisling -- "What's that supposed to mean?" -- before the Commandant decapitates the Quisling.

Holy. Fuck.

Maybe he did kill the messenger. Or maybe it was just a grace note to the other killings. But Stevens suspects the Commandant did it to make a non-verbal statement: "*Never come this close to challenging me again. Never.*"

EXT. BASE OF LIFTING-PLATFORM - POW CAMP - SUNSET

The lifting-platform is returning to the ground. Helper POWs wait at the base, ready to teach Stevens how to walk again. But when the platform docks...

STEVENS

Drop him off at the cemetery,
will ya?

He means The Quisling, bloodying the floor of the platform. Stevens bounces off the platform -- and now spots Trappe descending the watch tower. Stevens walks right past him to reach Schultz.

STEVENS

Okay, Schultzie, new rule -- we're gonna start burying people the right way 'round here. No more pit.

SCHULTZ

"No piihht?"

STEVENS

Commandant just okayed it.

Stevens heads out, but not before dropping a contemptuous look in Trappe's direction. Johnson and Johnson fall in step -- along with other POWs who pepper Stevens with QUESTIONS, wondering how the hell he did it. Clearly, Stevens' stock is on the rise.

Oates and Erskin join Trappe. They watch Stevens and his little army moving off.

ERSKIN

Who is this guy? And how's he keep landing on his feet?

OATES

Makes you wonder.

(off Erskin's look)

Goin' up there all alone, comin' down all fresh and pretty like that.

TRAPPE

Fine line between complying and collaborating. Sometimes it's so fine it just vanishes on a man....

REVEAL Worthy nearby, picking through a pile of picked-over rat-cans. And overhearing.

ERSKIN (O.S.)

So you think he crossed that line?

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

The camp calendar: Another E-rat can slides onto the clothesline, smacking up against other cans.

KEEPER OF THE CLOCK

TODAY'S DATE! DAY 91!

EXT. OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - DAY

SCHULTZ'S POV: Three POWs work in the cemetery. We note the data-streams wafting from their arm-wires: This is how Druuben tell one human from another.

Schultz walks the top of the old masonry wall with a few of his guards. He's keeping watch on...

Stevens and the two Johnsons. They work with crude gardening tools from the greenhouse operation. Overtly, they're digging a new grave for The Quisling -- but covertly, they're loosening a ground-plaque that marks a grave. They slide it aside to discover...

A shaft. The start of an old tunnel.

JOHNSON #1
Double back tonight?

STEVENS
What, busy right now?

Johnson #1 rolls his eyes. "Stupid me."

Stevens hops the cemetery railing. Scans ground-rubble. Grabs a paint-can lid.

STEVENS
Hey!

Across the yard, POWs turn. Stevens throws the lid like a frisbee. They catch -- and hesitate. "Is this allowed?" Stevens coaxes them. "'Sokay." They throw it back.

STEVENS
Hey!

He zings it to another group of POWs. The game grows quickly, more and more POWs getting involved.

More and more Droogs stop to "watch." They have no idea what's going on. "Is this allowed?"

Stevens slips away from the game he started...

INT. COLLAPSED TUNNEL - POW CAMP - CONTINUOUS

...and drops down inside. Those vertical air-pipes create spears of light that illuminate a 40-year-old escape tunnel. Stevens hustles down to the far end -- maybe 25 yards away -- and finds...

Collapsed shoring. A cave-in.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Baines watches the frisbee game from a wary distance.

BAINES

This'll end tragically.

INT. COLLAPSED TUNNEL - POW CAMP - DAY

On his way out, Stevens notes materials stored here -- artifacts, really: Crude shovels...pillow cases...spindles of string...a transistor radio.

EXT. YARD/OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - DAY

BLAM! The FRISBEE EXPLODES into 100 pieces, hot metal fragments spraying everywhere. It was shot by...

Schultz. His LONG-GUN POWERS DOWN.

SCHULTZ

BROOOODONG!

TRANSLATOR #1

He said "Game over."

RAAB

Tell him it's called "frisbee," not "skeet." Zeesh.

Covered by the distraction, Stevens resurfaces. The shaft is quickly resealed.

STEVENS

Okay. Show me the talent.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Walking, clocking, sizing up POWs:

JOHNSON #1

Three kinds of POWs: The Brown Gerbils, the guys so deep up Trappe's ass they ain't never crawlin' out. Oates, Erskin, Ratcliff -- all these guys help Trappe keep the others in line, and they all expect to get released for it -- some day. So they're no-counts. Group Two: The

(MORE)

JOHNSON #1 (CONT'D)

Pink Cadavers, the guys who are just clockin' time till they die in here. Baines over there is spokesman for that group. Might be a few walk-ons, but I wouldn't waste any draft picks. Group Three: Your Blue Chips, the ones sick and tired of bein' caged up like monkey-boys, the guys just waitin' for some long-ball hitter to step up to the plate -- and point out his spot on the fence. Ain't many of 'em. But they'll go.

JOHNSON #2

Oh, they're dyin' to go.

STEVENS

What's his color?

He's talking about MULE KING, 35, a racial mutt and proud of it. Inside a circle of POWs, he HUSTLES AND HAWKS contraband like he was working a street corner in the Bronx.

JOHNSON #2

Few mules in camp -- they swallow stuff to keep it away from the guards. Pens, batteries, razor blades....

JOHNSON #1

Most of 'em are just guys who'd chew up a beer glass on a bet, but this one here? Swallow anything you want and return it on demand.

JOHNSON #2

From either end. Kinda like a Pez dispenser with two heads.

STEVENS

"Anything?"

JOHNSON #2

Ain't called "The Mule King" for nuthin'.

STEVENS

Sign him.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Still distant in the sky, a Druuben airship is on approach. Spotter checks it against the mock-ups on his neck.

SPOTTER

I make one heavy inbound with...
two down-firing main engines and...
four stomach bladders, so...
(announcing to POWs)
Spotter calls "Tea Bag ship!"
Inbound!

In the nearby run-off room, an EXPLOSION OF AIR blasts putrid water and pipe-scum through a huge ceiling grate. The Druuben are flushing the lines, ready to take on new water.

POWs appear with bowls, cups, upside-down hats as they gather like animals at a savannah watering hole.

Witness to all this is Stevens, the two Johnsons -- and now the Mule King.

MULE KING

"Spotter." Some guys're into hot rods, choppers, but this guy gets all freaky-wet over Droog ships.

JOHNSON #1

Range, propulsion, firepower....

JOHNSON #2

Approaches, departures....

MULE KING

Spotter knows it all.

The TEA BAG SHIP THUNDERS closer to the camp, angling for a docking platform attached to the Druuben billet. Dangling beneath the ship are water bladders that look for all the world like swollen tea bags.

STEVENS

Put a watch on this thing....

MULE KING

Alligator strap? Or black rubber?

Stevens gives him a sidelong look. "Thanks anyway." He pulls a Luminox watch out of the tongue of his boot.

NEW ANGLE on the Tea Bag ship. Hovering at an upper docking platform, umbilicals snake down from the stomach bladders, mating with couplers below. Water moves down the umbilicals in a peristalsis action -- in big eerie gulps. Some of that water finds its way to...

The run-off room. Spill-ports create "showerheads" that POWs are quick to take advantage of.

Finished off-loading, the TEA BAG SHIP LUMBERS clear of the docking platform. It never landed.

CLOSE on Stevens' Luminox. Clicking to a stop.

STEVENS

182 seconds. Hain't much.

His mind ticking on, Stevens spots Worthy hustling toward the run-off room.

STEVENS

Okay. Put Spotter and Worthy on.

JOHNSON #1

"Worthy?"

STEVENS

Right there. Canadian pilot-guy.

Stevens clears FRAME. HOLD on the two Johnsons.

JOHNSON #2

He wants a pilot-guy?

INT./EXT RUN-OFF ROOM - POW CAMP - DAY

A nude Worthy showers. Feeling eyes, he discovers Stevens, the Johnsons, Mule King -- and now Spotter. All watching him.

WORTHY

Hope this isn't what it looks like.

TIME CUT TO:

Everyone stocks up on water as Worthy dresses. He just heard the recruitment speech -- and remains unconvinced.

WORTHY

You know, I had a Druuben gunship come after me once -- and that was enough to ground anyone for life.

STEVENS

Alive to talk about it, though.

WORTHY

Don't see my crew here, do you?

JOHNSON #1

How'd that shake out?

WORTHY

I flew heavy-lifters. Sky hogs. Late on Day One, this Droog gunship closes on us fast, then scruffs some speed to start pacin' us right out my port window. Can't figure out what he's doin'. Then that gunship slews around in midair...and continues to pace me...flying backwards.

SPOTTER

360 vectoring. Sa-weet.

WORTHY

He was just messin' with us. Before he opened fire.

JOHNSON #1

You bailed out? Without your crew?

Worthy gives him a stony look.

WORTHY

What, you expect me to go down with 'em? Is that what I shoulda done? Not the definition of "loyalty," man. Not mine.

He walks away, rejecting them all.

JOHNSON #2

Twitchy.

STEVENS

Put him on Injured Reserve.

INT./EXT. GREENHOUSE - POW CAMP - DAY

Inside a greenhouse with blown-out glass, gardener POWs hustle much-needed water to their plants. Working here is the ZEN WONK. He's 55, Chinese-American, the Asian reincarnation of Donald Pleasance.

JOHNSON #1 (O.S.)

Professor of Electromagnetic Plasma Fields and Other Big Shit You Don't Understand.

JOHNSON #2 (O.S.)

MIT guy. Likes to tinker.

Stevens, the Johnsons, Mule King, Spotter. They watch the Zen Wonk from outside the greenhouse.

STEVENS

Sounds good -- next time I'm stuck on Gilligan's Island.

JOHNSON #2

If you want a wonk, take this wonk.

STEVENS

You know, when I'm crashin' through heavy terrain with Droogs on my ass, I may not want any wonk.

MULE KING

But this is "the Zen Wonk." And Zen Wonk knows how Droogs see.

TIME CUT TO:

QUICK CLOSEUPS: Hands opening a cheap ball-point pen. Extracting the spring. Cutting it. Mounting a half-spring atop a 9-volt battery. As he does this...

ZEN WONK

Best theory to date? It's like organic range-finding. That bony ridge on their brow sends, the structures on their heads and neck receive.

Stevens, the Johnsons, Mule King, Spotter. Inside the greenhouse now, they watch Zen Wonk making...something.

SPOTTER

They see radio? How good can that be?

ZEN WONK

A moonless night? No problem. Snowstorm, heavy rain? Cut right through it. Blind spot? What blind spot? They might see with the back of their heads.

MULE KING

And that sound they make...the rattlesnakey thing....

ZEN WONK

Scanning. More accurately, they're "frequency-hopping" -- turning the radio dial in their heads, finding the wavelength that will best resolve the target for them. No, no, no, just because they don't have eyes, do not make the mistake of thinking they don't see. Under certain conditions, they may "see" better than you or I.

STEVENS

And what conditions don't they see better?

ZEN WONK

(finally looking up)

Reflections. I doubt they see reflections. Can I bother someone for a nickel?

All eyes turn to Mule King.

MULE KING

Old style or new?

Nobody understands. Mule King holds up a one-sec finger... stomps the ground ritualistically...humps up like a cat with a fur-ball on the way...and plucks something from his mouth.

It's a coin with raised alien glyphs. A Druuben coin.

ZEN WONK

First I've seen....

MULE KING

Been circulatin' on the outside, few weeks now.

EXT. RETAINING WALL - POW CAMP - MINUTES LATER

CLOSE on a Druuben coin. It's mounted on the spring-loaded battery so that it touches one contact -- but not the other. Inspecting this "cricket" is...

SPOTTER

So it's like a radio transmitter?

Stevens, the Johnsons, Mule King, Spotter, Zen Wonk. They're hunkered down behind a retaining wall, lying in wait, eyeing a scrap of mirror propped up on the ground.

ZEN WONK

Push down to complete the circuit
and send a ping into the radio
environment -- a little "cricket
chirp." If Druuben are radio-centric
...if they see how I believe they
see...you'll get a reaction.

BOOTS APPROACH. They check the mirror to see Druuben guards
with a work-detail of POWs.

ZEN WONK

(offering to Mule King)
Try it.

MULE KING

Like blowin' my head off with a
fist-gun? That kinda reaction?

He hands the cricket back. As the Druuben pass their
location, Zen Wonk thumbs his cricket to send an unheard
chirp.

No reaction.

Zen Wonk thumbs it harder. Still no reaction. Stevens gives
the Johnsons a look. "I don't want Zen Wonk."

ZEN WONK

Could be the wall....

STEVENS

Gimmedat thing.

He snatches the cricket and takes off.

EXT. TUMBLE-DOWN WALL - POW CAMP - DAY

The guards escort their POWs past another work-crew that
repairs a section of tumble-down masonry wall. There are
several such spots around camp -- another one lies ahead --
but the POWs are slowly fixing them. They're slowly bricking
themselves in.

Stalking the new work-detail, Stevens notes that a trailing
guard walks differently -- with a slightly uneven gait.
Let's call him "LIMPY."

Stevens test-taps the cricket.

Limpy's head-hackles ripple. It wasn't much, not enough to
stop him, so...

Stevens lays down some suppressive fire, thumbing the cricket repeatedly, clearing out as he does.

Limpy stops. His hackles go up -- and stay up. He seems either irritated or confused.

LIMPY'S POV: Of the cricket-chirps hanging on air, spreading like electronic smoke rings. We're actually seeing radio.

EXT. RETAINING WALL - POW CAMP - DAY

Stevens does a home-base slide to rejoin the others.

STEVENS

(to Zen Wonk)

Okay. Let's talk about that fence of theirs, huh?

The Johnsons grin. He wants the Zen Wonk.

INT. BARBER SHOP - POW CAMP - DAY

Trappe is getting shaved by Erskin, who uses the lid of an E-rat can as a razor and axle grease as lubricant. Presently ORGAN MUSIC is heard. Trappe scowls.

ERSKIN

Some of the guys wanted to run their own service tonight.

TRAPPE

Which guys?

INT. CHAPEL - POW CAMP - DAY

Standing where a minister would, Stevens addresses his flock: 10 hand-picked men and women. We note Coffey and Raab here, Raab doubling as organist.

STEVENS

Three teams, three different ways:
Over the fence...under the fence...
and through the fence. Each team has
a shot-caller....

JOHNSON #1

(holding up fist)

"O" Team.

JOHNSON #2

(holding up fist)

"U" Team.

STEVENS
 (holding up fist)
 "T" Team.

COFFEY
 (under breath)
 Over, Under, Through -- O-U-T out.

JOHNSON #1
 Each team is independent. There will be no contact -- radio or otherwise -- once it all begins. You have your own odds, you make your own odds of completing the mission.

ZEN WONK
 What mission? Other than escape?

STEVENS
 Here's all I can say today: There is a way to hit these Droogs back -- but only if we bust outta here first. Only if we stop worshiping them and start working them. Stop showing our weakness -- and start exploiting theirs.

MULE KING
 And just what weakness is that?

STEVENS
 First -- so we don't ever have to hear this organ ever again -- gonna need a little code-talk. Turns out we have a linguist in camp.

He motions someone forward. This is HEPCAT, 22.

STEVENS
 "Corporal Hepcat?" Please detail the circumstances of your capture.

HEPCAT
 Ah, Lawd mi Gawd. Wull, dere wuz dis big bangarang en de sky, somewhere way up above da fallin' rain.... So mi an' da broh-brahs are like "Whappen, whappen?" Sergeant sez, "Oh, big chubble, bigole chubble comin' nuh."

POWs slide looks around. "Is this for real?"

HEPCAT (CONT'D)

Den dis fugly alien come up, im all like "Iron, Lion, Zion." But dis bullbucker, 'im smell frickin' green. Den dat loco alien chuck come on up, da Roadhog t'ing, wid wholeheap bigole uglies nuh, scary bullbuckers dey were. An' so 'ere we all came, weepin' and a-wailin'.

Stevens looks to Translator #1. "Well?"

TRANSLATOR #1

I actually understand...the Druuben better.

(to Hepcat, guessing)

Little Creole....

HEPCAT

(in perfect English)

That was an example of French Creole with some freestyle hip-hop and sprinkles of Bob Marley. It's the patois we used growing up in the Virgin Islands. I used it when they captured my unit -- tried to play dumb.

STEVENS

Earned you a cell right here, huh?

HEPCAT

Droogs didn't know what to make of it, sir.

STEVENS

Fortunately, we do.

CUT TO:

A load of dirt is dumped onto the chapel floor. In it, Johnson #1 prints the first word to be coded: "ESCAPE."

HEPCAT

"Takin' da van home."

The POWs repeat. Johnson #2 wipes that away as Johnson #1 scratches out the next phrase: "ALL GOOD."

HEPCAT

"All da fruit is ripe."

They repeat. Next word: "TROUBLE."

HEPCAT
Ooh, "chubble."

Next: "BIG TROUBLE."

HEPCAT
Ooooh, "bigole chubble."

Next word: "TUNNEL."

HEPCAT
"Da Golden Gully a' Love."

COFFEY
Aw, Jeez....

STEVENS
Repeat.

COFFEY
Repeat that sexist shit?

STEVENS
File a grievance when you're outta
here, Coffey.

COFFEY
"Da Golden Gully a' Love." And I
better not be on that team.

Next up: "ABORT ESCAPE."

HEPCAT
"Da craven dog will lose 'is bone."

MULE KING
What? How you get that outta that?

HEPCAT
C'mon, me peeps -- "Da craven dog
will lose 'is bone."

ALL POWS
"Da craven dog will lose 'is bone."

Next: "PREP FOR FINAL ESCAPE."

HEPCAT
"Put Gramma in da van -- an' lessgo,
Joe."

ALL POWS

"Put Gramma in da van -- and lessgo,
Joe."

Everyone likes that bit of code-talk. They're finally getting into it, finally cracking open the door and letting in some hope.

MULE KING

And when we expect to, uh, have
Gramma in the van?

JOHNSON #1

According to our intel...

Johnson #1 rips off the rear panel of Spotter's jacket: It was held there with Velcro. Hidden beneath, sketched onto the inner lining of the jacket, are detailed comings and goings of Druuben aircraft.

JOHNSON #1 (CONT'D)

Tea Bags come back in five days.

EXT. CHAPEL - POW CAMP - DAY

Trappe and Oates arrive as the O-U-T teams exit the chapel. Stevens brings up the rear.

TRAPPE

Didn't take you for such a keen
church-goer, Stevens.

STEVENS

Figure now's a good time to get down
with Jesus.

TRAPPE

Check with me before you hold any
more "services." Want to make sure
privileges aren't abused.

STEVENS

Hallelujah, brotherman.

A BLATTING from the diaphragms. POWs head for cellblocks. Trappe catches Stevens in a vicelike hand, jerks him back.

TRAPPE

I've been indulging you, Stevens --
up till right now. First thing to
never forget: I negotiate with the
Druuben, no one else. I've done it 10
weeks now and not without success --

(MORE)

TRAPPE (CONT'D)

men have walked out those gates, gone home, and I'll get more released provided no one contests the Druuben's ultimate authority. Now I gave my word to the Commandant about that -- about not challenging him -- and now you give me yours. Tell me you aren't planning anything stupid.

STEVENS

You gave your word? To a fuggin' Droog?

TRAPPE

They may be many things we hate, these Druuben -- but they're not uncivilized.

STEVENS

See, that's the problem, colonel. I am.

INT./EXT. ESCAPE-PREPARATIONS MONTAGE #1 - DAY/NIGHT

FAST CLOSEUP: Another day is added to the camp calendar.

KEEPER OF THE CLOCK

TODAY'S DATE? DAY 93!

"T" team: Stevens, Coffey, Zen Wonk, Raab. Down in the cremation pit. Cleaning out the bony ash, putting it into bowls and buckets.

"U" team: Johnson #2, Hepcat, STRONGBACK POW, Translator #1. Digging new graves in the cemetery. Using "crickets" to distract guards whenever they need to slip in or out of the tunnel.

"O" team: Johnson #1, Spotter, Mule King. Surveilling a gunship that docks up at the Druuben billet. Studying how it opens up, how pilots egress.

"U" team in the tunnel. Jamming stiff wire up pipe-lights, cleaning them out, letting in more light. Unspooling string to measure the length of the existing tunnel. Taking that measurement topside...

And realizing how far they still have to go.

"U" team digging out that cave-in. Picking up where prisoners left off 40 years ago.

EXT. "FRONT GATES" - POW CAMP - DAY

One section of the energy fence is down. Inactive.

With Schultz supervising, "T" team recovers the body of Corporal Dash from just beyond the energy pylons. They haul the body back inside -- and turn around to observe...

The fence coming back on-line. Black-nasties regenerate from ports in the pylons, getting pumped out until they reach full swarm. And whenever a black-nasty dies out, another is created to replace it.

ZEN WONK

(quietly to Stevens)

You see, everything is frequency with these Druuben -- even these balls of dark energy have their own native frequency. If we can find it, we can cancel it out with another frequency, one perfectly out of phase with the first: You put waves into the troughs and troughs into the waves, and you do that by building a kind of harmonic oscillator.

A beat.

STEVENS

Or....

COFFEY

(so confused)

Hopin' there was an "or."

STEVENS

Someone climbs up there, plugs up those holes so they can't pump out any more of those black-nasties. And hey, maybe that pylon blows up and takes out all the others like a bad string of Christmas lights.

ZEN WONK

May I say it seems rather...low-tech?

STEVENS

Zen Wonk, sometimes the low road takes you where the high road can't.
(slapping his back)
Get all up on it, huh?

INT./EXT. ESCAPE-PREPARATIONS MONTAGE #2 - DAY/NIGHT

Coffey and Raab. Working in the greenhouse, using wire to saw the legs off old tables, making tapered "plugs" out of them.

"U" team. In the tunnel. Filling pillow cases with dirt.

The Zen Wonk. After lockdown, he studies the black-nasties that patrol a cellblock door: When he steps back, they spread out. When he steps forward, they swarm to block him. Zen Wonk strikes a Tai Chi pose, seeing if the black-nasties will mirror him. Amazingly they do.

Spotter. He clings to the ceiling of the run-off room like a spider, running strings through the overhead grate -- "spider-lines" to be used later -- and dropping the weighted ends down to the rest of "O" team. And watching from the sidelines is...

Worthy. Again turning his back on them.

Mule King. Near the cemetery, he gives the all-clear signal to "U" team so they can exit the tunnel. Done for the day. Witness to it all is...

Stevens. Now something else catching his eye:

It's "Limpy," the guard with the uneven stride, splitting off from others to vanish between buildings. And it's rare to see Droogs do anything alone.

EXT. RESTRICTED AREA - POW CAMP - DAY

Some buildings of the old prison are restricted areas, kept off-limits by 10-foot energy fences. Limpy reaches one such fence. His hackles rise to scan the area. Satisfied, Limpy powers down a run of fence...

And steps through. He SQUEAKS OPEN a rusty gate embellished with a cross. The energy fence regenerates behind him, but before the black-nasties can appear...

Stevens slips through that same spot.

INT. PRISON INFIRMARY - POW CAMP - DAY

In an ancient corridor carpeted with dust, Stevens tracks Droog footprints -- and the occasional drop of yellow blood. Droog blood.

INT. TREATMENT ROOM - PRISON INFIRMARY - DAY

CLOSE on a Druuben fist-gun being hung on an I.V. pole.

CLOSE on Druuben leg armor unlatching, opening. Beneath, gauze seeps with yellow blood. The gauze is removed to reveal a wound inexpertly stitched up. A rusty needle still dangles at the end of stitches.

WIDER. Limpy hunts for more gauze in this old treatment room.

STEVENS (O.S.)
So how'd it happen?

Limpy whirls for his fist-gun. Stevens stands in the way.

STEVENS
Well, you conquer a world, guess
there's gonna be a few sharp edges.

Casually wheeling the I.V. pole with him -- keeping the weapon away from Limpy -- Stevens circles to get a better look at the wound. Even now, Limpy tries to hide it.

STEVENS
Probably infected. Better have a
real medic look at that before it
gets....

(snapping fingers)
Oh, that's right. Droogs don't
believe in doctors. Sign of
weakness, an' all.

LIMPY
Sheeik oonon enkinkted.

STEVENS
In English, Droog.

LIMPY
Mee kills you...you talk-t.

STEVENS
But if I talk, Commandant kills you.

An impasse. Stevens eyes a bandolier of those cremation casings across Limpy's chest.

STEVENS
'Course, can be our little secret.
You know that word? "Secret?"

By way of explanation, Stevens puts his finger to his lips. "Shhhh...." He tries a couple times, seeing if Limpy will ape him. No such luck.

STEVENS

But you got the concept, right?

EXT. RESTRICTED/UNRESTRICTED AREA - POW CAMP - DAY

With a running start, Stevens leaps out of a second-floor window...

And lands clear of that 10-foot energy fence. He's back in unrestricted area. And he brought something with him.

INT./EXT. RUN-OFF ROOM - POW CAMP - LATE DAY

CLOSE on a rag being unbundled. Inside is a treasure-trove of those casings.

MULE KING

Damn. Where'dja get these at?
Nobody in camp's been able to get
their hands on these little, uh....

HEPCAT

"Chili peppers."

Stevens, Johnson #1, Coffey, and Hepcat have caught up to Mule King in the run-off room, now dry. Wanting to test the chili peppers, Stevens wires one to a pipe...twists the stem-timer...and steps back.

JOHNSON #1

(timing the timer)

One...two...three...four....

The chili pepper FLASH-BURNS right through the pipe. Impressive.

STEVENS

So when "O" team hops in the van,
they'll need these chili peppers to
get through that grate up there. So
let's stow these someplace safe, huh?

He's talking to Mule King. It takes him a beat.

MULE KING

You want me to swallow little
cremation bombs?

STEVENS

Hey. Are you or are you not "The Mule King?"

MULE KING

What I'm not is brain-dead. Must be a dozen right there.

HEPCAT

Give or take three.

MULE KING

Fifteen? I dunno, man. This is some hellified shit you're talkin' here.

STEVENS

96 hours, that's all we need. Now I'm gonna leave these chili peppers in your care. You do what you have to do.

With that, Stevens plops down a can of axle grease. It's older than anyone here.

COFFEY

Oh, that's nasty.

INT. MULE KING'S CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - DAY

START on the 15 chili peppers lined up on a table. PULL BACK to include the Mule King alone in his cell, staring at them. He's just freaking himself out.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

After lockdown.

INT. STEVENS' CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

JOHNSON #1

(sotto)

...mark this Way-Point 1...this is 2....

RAAB

Maybe Way-Point 3 here, this small airport....

Inside the cell, Stevens, Raab, and the two Johnsons are on their haunches, working in piles of dirt that Raab has shaped into a topo map of the terrain outside the camp. Soon they notice...

Worthy in the doorway. One foot in, one foot out.

WORTHY

Whaddya think flight-controls are
like for a pilot with twin thumbs?
Inside a dark ship with no canopy,
no windows?

STEVENS

What, never flown off instruments?

WORTHY

And what're instruments like when the
pilot has no eyes?

STEVENS

Not askin' you to solo the Atlantic.
Just "jump and dump," get it over
that fence and put down past those
barriers.

RAAB

Three miles east, you're into forest
and cover.

WORTHY

I'm not gonna eat that kind of risk --
not without knowing what the upside
is. You got one, Stevens? Or is the
goal to just run around out there
until everybody's captured again?
Or killed?

STEVENS

Not gonna talk about the upside,
Worthy...

WORTHY

(starting to leave)
Well, I'm not flying blind.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

...not until we got cover.

EXT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - MINUTES LATER

Hepcat. Strolling past the lower cells, HUMMING THE
CATCHIEST TUNE he knows.

Mule King. WHISTLING THE SAME TUNE past the upper cells.

Coffey. Threading her way through the POWs on main floor, DOO-WAPPIN' THE SAME DITTY, nodding encouragement whenever someone picks it up.

EXT. DRUBEN BILLET - NIGHT

FEATURE those "telescopes" -- the audio pickups -- slowly gyrating beneath the Druuben billet.

INT. LISTENING POST - DRUBEN BILLET - SAME TIME

Around the rim of this room are eight Druuben technicians, all facing outward as they steer tube-like devices -- these the other end of those "telescopes." One tube INTERCEPTS A STRANGE SOUND: It's SINGING. POWS SINGING Desmond Dekker's "Israelites."

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - SAME TIME

CHARLIE POWS
GET UP IN THE MORNING, SLAVIN' FOR
BREAD, SIR...
SO THAT-A EVERY MOUTH CAN BE FED...
POOR ME, THE ISRAELITE....

Coming from 100 dry throats, it sounds like a reggae dirge. Mission accomplished, Stevens motions the O-U-T teams into his office under the staircase. As they clear FRAME, HOLD on Baines. He's not singing.

BAINES
What is this Koombuya crap?

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

QUICK CLOSEUPS: A paper band being slipped off a cigar. The band is transferred to a man's finger for safe-keeping. A lighter flares.

STEVENS (V.O.)
There's a man we call "Romeo."
Every 10 days, Romeo appears at a
lighthouse. He's only there at
midnight and never for long -- just
long enough to smoke one cigar from
his shrinking stock of primo Havanas.

WIDE to show a bayside lighthouse. ROMEO waits up in the widow's walk, visible only when the great Fresnel lamp sweeps behind him.

INT. UNDER STAIRCASE - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

All three O-U-T teams are here, acquiring their final bit of need-to-know from...

STEVENS (CONT'D)

Romeo is hoping to make rendezvous with someone like me...someone like the Johnsons here. And when Romeo leaves, disappointed, he leaves seaward, rejoining a vessel that barely escaped on Day One -- and hasn't surfaced since. Now the Druuben aren't really sure if this sub exists or not --

SPOTTER

(daring to say it)
Boat 19?

COFFEY

What, what is that?

Stevens shoots a look to Johnson #1, then nods to Spotter.
"Run with it."

SPOTTER

(amped up)
Technically, it doesn't exist. Technically, the U.S. only had 18 SSBNs -- subs with nuclear missiles. But for years there's been a rumor that they've kept one sub out of the budget and off the books. It was so secret it had no name, just --

RAAB

"Boat 19."

SPOTTER

But it's a boomer, yeah? Is Spotter right, is Spotter right?

JOHNSON #1

36 terrain-guided Cruise missiles, and yeah...

(nodding to Spotter)

24 "Trident 2" city-killers.

Energy surges through the O-U-T teams.

SPOTTER

B-B-BOOM! Each MIRVed five times.
That's 120 nukes they could drop
right now on the Droogs' head, right
now.

STEVENS

If they knew where the head was.

FLASHBACK TO:

Romeo. Stubbing out the butt of his cigar. Time's up for
tonight.

CUT BACK TO:

JOHNSON #1

A targeting team was put ashore and
tasked with one mission....

Stevens stays him with a hand: The SINGING HAS FADED to
dangerous levels. Stevens nods to Hepcat, who swings out
from under the stairs.

HEPCAT

*Get up in the morning, slavin' for
bread, sir!
So that-a every mouth can be fed!*

CHARLIE POWS

POOR ME, THE ISRAELITE....

IT CRANKS UP again. Continuing on:

JOHNSON #1

A targeting team was put ashore and
tasked with one mission: Find the
alien command-and-control here on
Earth. We knew they were building it
because of intercepts. We coded it
simply "Gomorrhah."

COFFEY

And did you....

"Find it?"

STEVENS

Let's just say that we are eager to
make rendezvous with Mr. Romeo.

COFFEY

You did find it....

STEVENS

'Cuz if we don't hook-up by Day 100, Romeo assumes we're all dead...he doesn't return...and we lose contact with the world's last boomer. Forever.

FLASHBACK TO:

Romeo. He peels open the cigar-band he saved...licks the back for better adhesion...then sticks it to the inside of the lighthouse door. "Romeo y Juliet." It joins eight other cigar-bands there. It says, in effect, "On Day 90, I was here."

CUT BACK TO:

WORTHY

Where is this lighthouse? And how many check-points you expect us to cross to get there?

SPOTTER

That is enemy territory out there.

Stevens squats, pulls a spud-lamp closer, then uses a shank to write the answer in the dirt. "MAINE."

STEVENS

And by the way, anybody who repeats this wakes up without a tongue.

MULE KING

Actually, I was happy not knowing this part.

ZEN WONK

Well, I'm glad I know. Because in the 6,000 years of recorded human history -- there's never been a more important "van ride" than this.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

As another rat-can gets added to the camp calendar.

INT./EXT. RUN-OFF ROOM - DAY

As POWs vie for the last few drips of water.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

As Spotter stands on an old oil drum, scanning the sky, seeking out vibrations normal men are unacquainted with.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

A work-detail digs a new latrine. Some use greenhouse trowels, some use shaped sticks, some use bare hands. Stevens and Worthy are part of the detail.

STEVENS
(no eye-contact)
Spotter thinks 72 hours.

WORTHY
Uh-huh.

STEVENS
Maybe 48.

WORTHY
Uh-huh.

STEVENS
Gonna be ready?

Droog guards shadow past. Worthy uses it as an excuse to clam up.

STEVENS (CONT'D)
Fuse is burnin', Worthy. If you still don't think we got a real shot, we'll X-and-O through it one more time, tonight, right after --

WORTHY
It's not that.
(off his look)
Look, I overhead Trappe talkin' about how some of us work for the Druuben. And that just got me thinking, okay? Got me nervous.

STEVENS
About me.

WORTHY
About Trappe.

Stevens looks instinctively to the watch tower. There he is. Trappe.

WORTHY

In all those old movies? Always
some guy who sold out to the Germans.
And it was usually the one who talked
about it most.

EXT. WATCH TOWER - POW CAMP - DAY

Trappe initials a barrack-schedule for Erskin, then starts
back inside the watch tower. But he stops, seeing...

Spotter. Loitering by the cemetery.

Trappe dismisses it. Almost. Instead, he comes up with a
pair of vintage binoculars.

BINOX POV: Of a trail of dark dirt. It leads in and out of
the cemetery. Is it just left-over from the grave-digging?
Or is it fresher than that?

INT. ABANDONED TUNNEL - POW CAMP - DAY

Spud lamps now augment overhead pipe-lights. The walls and
floor of the tunnel are lined with dirt-filled pillow cases,
narrowing the tunnel claustrophobically. At the digging-end
of the tunnel, Johnson #2 makes good progress -- until he
notices...

The blade of his shovel luminescing, webbing with a strange
electrical energy. A St. Elmo's fire.

JOHNSON #2

Holy....

He speed-crawls backwards, colliding with "U" team.

HEPCAT

What?

JOHNSON #2

String. Gimme the damn string.

TIME CUT TO:

CLOSE on the spindle of string gripped in Johnson #2's hand.
As the string unspools -- as he ventures back to the spooky
end of the tunnel -- small meter-markers roll off the spindle
to reveal the distance. But now a larger marker rolls off,
this one marked...

"DROOG FENCE?"

TILT UP to Johnson's face. His hair is standing on end, rippling with that same St. Elmo's energy.

JOHNSON #2
(fear and excitement)
I think we're there.

It brings dirty grins. It brings a victory.

EXT. OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - SUNSET

The sun is setting. The big DIAPHRAGMS START BLATTING, directing POWs back to their cellblocks.

INT. ABANDONED TUNNEL - POW CAMP - SUNSET

Eager to spread their good news, "U" team is stacked on the ladder, ready to vacate the tunnel. Hepcat reaches up for...

EXT. OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - SUNSET

The "DANNY VELINSKI" grave plaque. It moves.

INT. ABANDONED TUNNEL - POW CAMP - SUNSET

HEPCAT'S POV: Through an inch-tall crack, we see a section of the yard. There's Spotter, scouting the area for us.

HEPCAT
(a la Bob Marley)
"People Get Ready Now."

Spotter gives the all-clear. Hepcat starts up and out.

HEPCAT'S POV: Unexpectedly, Spotter drops to his knees -- and gestures behind his back, trying to warn us about the two Droog guards entering VIEW.

Hepcat scrambles back down. The four members of "U" team huddle in the dark. They can hear MUFFLED DROOG VOICES APPROACHING -- and stopping right above them.

Johnson #2 motions "Be cool...be cool...."

EXT. OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - SUNSET

Two Droogs loiter at the cemetery. One uses the wrought-iron fence for a boot-scraper.

DRUUBEN POV: Of faint radio leakage: POW data-streams are swirling around graves like leaves caught in the wind.

INT. ABANDONED TUNNEL - POW CAMP - SUNSET

With a sharp glance at his arm-wire, Johnson intuits the danger. He yanks everyone away from the ladder. Back into the depths of the tunnel.

EXT. OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - SUNSET

DRUBEN POV: As the radio leaks vanish.

INT. ABANDONED TUNNEL - POW CAMP - SUNSET

TENSE CLOSEUPS of "U" team. Did they fall back in time?
Did the Droogs leave?

RAP-RAP-RAP. The sound comes from above.

RAP-RAP-RAP. It's coming closer.

EXT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - SUNSET

POWs file toward the cellblock door. Stevens senses the line different today. Shorter.

 STEVENS
 (to Mule King)
 "U" team?

 MULE KING
 Must be inside.

Stevens buys that -- for two seconds. He steps out of line and tries to backtrack. Guards push him back.

EXT. OLD PRISON CEMETERY - POW CAMP - SUNSET

A Droog has stepped into the cemetery, and he's RAPPING his baton on grave plaques, one after another, gauging how SOLID they sound.

CLOSE on the baton. Striking the "DANNY VELINSKI" plaque.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - SUNSET

The ENERGY DOOR IS POWERING UP. One POW charges through right before the black-nasties appear, tumbling to the floor inside the cellblock. It's Spotter.

SPOTTER
 (fighting off panic)
 Stuck in Golden Gully. Couldn't get
 'em out in time.

INT. STEVENS' CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

Zen Wonk uses the old transistor radio like a doctor uses a stethoscope: He's tuning into the CODED RADIO DATA that issues from Stevens' arm-wire: It sounds like a SQUEALING GEIGER COUNTER. With bits of new wire, Zen Wonk bridges the barbs of the arm-wire, nulling them out.

ZEN WONK
 Now when we actually "take the van home," I suggest we lose these altogether. But for now...since the Druuben will likely kill you if they catch you without a wire...we'll see if we can just lower the volume....

The GEIGER-COUNTER SOUNDS QUIET DOWN.

ZEN WONK (CONT'D)
 Like that.

Johnson #1 enters. He frowns when he sees Stevens preparing to go out the overhead window.

JOHNSON #1
 Hey. If I know Johnson like I know Johnson -- he's gonna burn right through the night. Just an overtime shift to him.

SPOTTER
 He was worried about gettin' enough dig-time.

MULE KING
 Might be the best thing that ever happened to them, gettin' locked out.

STEVENS
 If y'all believe that, stay right here.

Willing to try a one-man rescue mission, he starts out. Coffey rushes in.

COFFEY
 "Bigole chubble!" Comin' our way!

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - NIGHT

A forest of batons swinging.

A sea of sagittal crests rising and falling.

A landscape of Druuben feet coming. Coming heavy.

INT. MULE KING'S CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

Mule King bolts back into his cell. Grabs a hidden bundle. Spills out the 15 chili peppers. Lubes up the first one with axle grease...

MULE KING

"Oyster...oyster...oyster...."

...and pelicans it right down. Only 14 more to go.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

POWs back away from the cellblock door, some running to hide, others dropping to their knees and hoping they can survive just by cowering in submission.

The ENERGY DOOR CYCLES DOWN. Led by Schultz, 32 Druuben jackboots surge into "Charlie."

It's the Warsaw Ghetto: Any POW in their way, kneeling or not, gets whacked to the side. Any POW trying to hide in his cell gets thrown back out.

BARRAGE OF SHOTS: Druuben guards search cells, clothing, mattresses, just up-ending the cellblock. Radio-crickets are found and their owners beaten senseless, including...

Worthy. Schultz backs him into a cell and out of view. We don't see it, but we hear the SOUNDS OF AN UNHOLY BEATING. Worthy SHOUTS FOR HIS LIFE.

INT. MULE KING'S CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

A pair of Droogs enter for...

The Mule King -- reminding us of a cat with feathers still in its mouth. He gets in a final gulp before...

The Droogs eject him from the cell.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

All POWs are in the main corridor now, forced down in supplication. Everything becomes preternaturally quiet.

Pulling a drag-line, the Commandant enters. Attached to the drag-line is 700 pounds of human meat formerly known as "U" team -- Johnson #2, Hepcat, Strongback, Translator #1. All dead. All strung together like trout after a good day of fishing.

The Commandant moves to the center of the cellblock and drops his line. He SPEAKS.

TRANSLATOR #2

"No more burials."

HE SPEAKS again.

TRANSLATOR #2

"Your dead will rot where you sleep."

HE SPEAKS again.

TRANSLATOR #2

"Escape cannot occur."

COMMANDANT

(re "U" team)

VOSHAK-TOSHAK.

TRANSLATOR #2

"It had to be."

The Commandant exits. Schultz and his jackboots follow.

EXT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Just outside, we find Trappe kneeling before the Commandant. TAKING A TONGUE-LASHING IN DRUBEN. Nodding tightly. Knowing what has to be done.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Johnson pulls Stevens away from the bodies of "U" team, but Stevens' eyes keep returning to the slaughtered POWs. It just rips him up.

STEVENS

Shoulda gone...goddammit, I shoulda gone after 'em instead of waitin' around for --

JOHNSON #1

What, so you could get killed, too?

TRAPPE (O.S.)

I have devoted myself to the welfare
of the POWs of this camp!

Stevens turns. Trappe enters with Oates and Erskin. The
ENERGY DOOR POWERS UP behind them. Now the camp's two alphas
are locked in the same cage.

TRAPPE (CONT'D)

I have worked to give you at least a
chance of seeing your families again!
But for some of you, that wasn't good
enough! Instead, you chose to listen
to a newcomer! An inferior officer!

(re "U" team)

Well, these four men listened to him
-- and just look at them now.

Worthy staggers out of his cell in time to see Trappe and
Stevens heading for each other on a collision course.

TRAPPE

That should be your blood on the
floor. Not theirs.

STEVENS

Funny. Thinkin' the same about you.

TRAPPE

You didn't respect me, didn't respect
the chain-of-command. And now
that...

(stabbing a finger
at "U" team)

...IS THE COST OF YOUR DISRESPECT!

STEVENS

I respect anyone who wants to kill
Droogs. And I'll kill anybody who
wants to respect them.

TRAPPE

You're like those Japanese guys
that never came out of the jungle,
Stevens. Gotta newsflash for you --
"War's Over." Military's dismantled.
It's only about survival of the race
now.

STEVENS

Is that how you see it.

TRAPPE

Mr. Oates! Lock Mr. Stevens in one of these cells until the day -- or month -- I say otherwise.

Oates makes a move. Johnson #1 pivots in front of him, cutting him off.

JOHNSON #1

Or...we let them square this.

Erskin backs up Oates. Mule King backs up Johnson. More POWs fill in behind their chosen leaders -- even as most of the cellblock retreats to the sidelines, these the guys still too damaged to fight. But of the ones willing to rumble, it's an even split between the Cult of Trappe and the Tribe of Stevens. And that makes Trappe just a little nervous.

TRAPPE

(low to Stevens)

I run this camp. You gotta know that, you gotta show that -- first to these POWs, then the Commandant.

STEVENS

What, want me to kneel?

TRAPPE

I want you to step off my dick.

STEVENS

You don't run me.

The combustion-point is reached, and suddenly...

They're going. One bull-neck Marine, one rock-ribbed SEAL. Battling like highly trained savages. Trappe older and stronger, Stevens younger and faster. Blocking blows, countering each others' moves, playin' for blood. It's a big bruising ballet of a fight that just tears the joint up until...

Trappe goes down. Hard.

Still adrenalized, Stevens carries the fight to a new target: The whole damn cellblock.

STEVENS

You know, it must be hard to stand up when you got no spine! You call yourselves POWs, but you don't rate that. You're pretenders, all y'all. Because to be a "prisoner of war"... you gotta actually fight a war first.
(a sink-in beat)

You walk around this camp in awe of them...taking a knee, learning their language, lettin' 'em work your head. "Your leadership has been removed." Yeah, well, did they remove your balls at the same time? Don't look away from me, you gutless wonder, I'm askin' you. DID THEY?

REACTION SHOTS: Growing humiliation on some faces. Growing admiration on others.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

What are we all so scared of? Death? Hey, there are evils worse than death -- last three months is proof of that. What these Droogs did on Day One was hit us with a sucker punch, okay? One big face-breaker in the first round that was supposed to put us on our ass, on the deck, get the ref checkin' our eyes and callin' the whole fight off. Oh, yeah, they shocked-and-awed us right into submission, baby -- and maybe, maybe they did it that way 'cuz they didn't wanna go the distance with a buncha Goddamn American Operators!

Like damaged nerves starting to fire again, POWs STIR with an electric energy. Stevens is building toward a new combustion-point now, and even Oates and Erskin feel it. Even Baines feels it.

STEVENS

(re Trappe)

Here's the difference between us!
He thinks we lost this war! Me?
(like a secret revealed)
I think we ain't fought it yet.

EXT. GUN-GALLERY - DRUBEN BILLET - NIGHT

The lifting platform docks. The Commandant steps off, returning to the Druuben billet. But just before vanishing inside...

The Commandant hears a RISING SOUND. An UNPRECEDENTED SOUND. From across the camp comes the sound of CHEERING. Human beings CHEERING AT THE TOP OF THEIR LUNGS.

INT. CELLBLOCK - POW CAMP - NIGHT

The cellblock is going crazy, POWs clapping, stomping, banging in solidarity. It's heady stuff for Stevens.

STEVENS

So who's gonna be ready?
(re "U" team)

If I ask you to fill their boots,
how many will step in? How many are
willing to walk through the Valley
of the Shadow of Death and fear no
evil...BECAUSE YOU GOT THE BIGGEST
DAMN JUNK IN THE WHOLE DAMN VALLEY?

The POWs lift the roof.

CHARLIE POWS

STEVENS...STEVENS...STEVENS....

EXT. GUN-GALLERY - DRUBEN BILLET - NIGHT

If a Druuben can look confounded, the Commandant does now. Didn't he just slap these humans down? Didn't he just kill four of them to make a point?

COMMANDANT

"STEVENS."

INT. CELLBLOCK - POW CAMP - NIGHT

Trappe knows a power-shift is happening. He just wonders if he's going to survive it.

Still amped up, Stevens scans for a finish-off weapon. Worthy pitches him a shank. "Do us all a favor." Stevens starts for Trappe. Johnson intervenes.

JOHNSON #1

Jesus Christ, what do you wanna do,
scalp him?

STEVENS

Yeah.

JOHNSON #1

Huh-uh-huh-uh-huh-uh. No way. You kill him in front of these guys, you lose whatever you gained.

Stevens lets himself be turned away -- then spins back, grabs Trappe with two fists, slings him into a ground-floor cell. He SLAMS THE OLD IRON DOOR closed.

STEVENS

Mr. Johnson! Lock this cell up -- and throw away the cell.

POWs chain the door. Roaring like an old zoo lion:

TRAPPE

I AM NOT WHAT YOU THINK I AM!

STEVENS

And the absolutely pathetic part? You may not even know what you are.

HOLD on Trappe, those words weighing on him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WATCH TOWER - POW CAMP - DAY

Stevens. Johnson #1. Raab. Spotter. They're up on the walkway of the watch tower -- Trappe's old hang-out -- each scanning a quadrant of empty sky. Tellingly, Spotter sweeps his quadrant with a water-dowsing rod.

RAAB

Wasn't this the day, Spotter?

SPOTTER

It's comin'...it's still comin'....

Unconvinced, Johnson #1 sidles up beside Stevens.

JOHNSON #1

Think he lost it?

STEVENS

Who, Spotter?

JOHNSON #1

Our "craven dog." You think he mighta lost his bone?

Translation: "Should we abort this whole thing?" Stevens doesn't respond. But he's got to be thinking the same thing.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

The bodies of "U" team have been covered.

Trappe sits miserably on the floor of his locked cell.

The cellblock is uncommonly quiet tonight.

INT. STEVENS' CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

Lying on his bare-wire cot, Stevens cocks an ear to monitor DROOG FOOTSTEPS approaching. Soon THEY STOP. He rolls over to find Schultz darkening his doorway.

STEVENS

Guess he couldn't sleep either.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

POWs fill cell doors, watching in concern as...

Stevens does a gallows walk down the center of the cellblock. He's escorted by Schultz and another guard.

Johnson #1 and others start following, ready to jump the Droogs if Stevens gives the go-ahead. More and more POWs fall in step -- and it's making Schultz uneasy.

Reaching the cellblock door, Stevens waves Johnson off: "Gonna play this one out." He's about to step outside when he spots...

Droogs rousting someone else out of bed. It's Coffey.

EXT. LIFTING-PLATFORM - POW CAMP - NIGHT

Yoked in, Stevens and Coffey ride the platform skyward. Coffey shakes with fright.

COFFEY

Sir? I don't believe I can do this again.

The platform docks. An ENERGY-PULSE disconnects their yokes. There's one Droog guard up here in the gun-gallery, and we don't know who it is until...

He lifts a finger to his lips. "Shhhh...." It's Limpy.
And even he's scared tonight.

A FLY-TRAP DOOR SNAPS OPEN. But Coffey balks at crossing the
threshold.

STEVENS

I don't think they're going to
kill you, Coffey. Not you.

He goes first. She orders her feet to follow.

INT. INTERROGATION CHAMBER - DRUUBEN BILLET - MOMENTS LATER

COFFEY

Oh, God....

Stevens and Coffey have reached the interrogation chamber.
In faint light they see Translator #2 -- looking like a dead
human marionette. Steel wires suspend him from the ceiling,
wires that attach to bolts sunk into the bones of his body.
He wears a crown of radio-barbs, and his head literally
smokes from some extravagant mode of torture.

COMMANDANT (O.S.)

REEK VOLOMO?

Stevens and Coffey whip around. The Commandant circles the
dim periphery of the chamber.

COMMANDANT

REEK VOLOMO?

TRANSLATOR #2 (O.S.)

"How many remain?"

COFFEY

(jumping)

JESUS CHRIST!

The translator is still alive. Still on the job.

COMMANDANT

REEK VOLOMO?

TRANSLATOR #2

He wants to know how many remain....

STEVENS

(to Commandant)

Why don't you tell me the answer you
wanna hear. Save us all a little
pain.

TRANSLATOR #2

"The answer is 'one.' One submarine never commissioned...never named... but still active. One remains."

Two Druuben guards clamp down on Stevens.

The Commandant approaches with a crown-of-barbs. In a perverse coronation, he presses it down over Stevens' skull -- and then SEETHES A TEST SIGNAL. In response...

The crown-of-barbs heats up and "seats" into Stevens' head. When the guards release, Stevens reels in pain.

TRANSLATOR #2

"What is the location of Boat 19?"

STEVENS

Outside my expertise.

TRANSLATOR #2

"When did you last make contact with Boat 19?"

STEVENS

Outside my expertise.

TRANSLATOR #2

"But you did serve aboard Boat 19, correct?"

STEVENS

Outside my --

Another SEETHING REPRIMAND from Commandant: The barbs glow and the pain drives Stevens down into a three-point stance. But he's still not kneeling. He's focusing on...

"HOME ALIVE." The private tattoo he shared with his brother. Stevens wants to stay angry. Wants to use anger as a shield against the pain.

COMMANDANT

REEK VOLOMO?

TRANSLATOR #2

He's asking you now.

Coffey flinches at the interrogator. "Me?"

STEVENS

You keep it shut, Coffey.

TRANSLATOR #2

"How many remain?"

STEVENS

You don't tell them shit!

Aghast, Coffey looks from Stevens to the should-be-dead translator -- the "before" and "after" picture they've provided her.

COFFEY

Oh, please don't do this to me....

The Commandant SEETHES STRONG. Stevens' head starts to smoke.

COMMANDANT

REEK VOLOMO?

STEVENS

Oh, Jesus Christ...stoppit, stoppit, stoppit, STOPPIT....

CLOSE on Coffey. She's crying now, appalled by what the Commandant is doing to the once-proud Stevens. And finally it happens:

A knee touches the floor.

Then both knees surrender. The Commandant doesn't just tower over Stevens, he lords over Stevens, SEETHING UP A STORM.

COFFEY

STOP IT!

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - NIGHT

Waiting anxiously, Spotter stands atop a human ladder, keeping watch through the cellblock windows. Across camp, he sees a platform on the move.

SPOTTER

It's comin' down!

MULE KING

Watch this. He's gonna jump right off that thing, just like before.

RAAB

Always lands on his feet, right?

MULE KING

Damn Droogs don't even know who they're messin' with.

EXT. BASE OF LIFTING-PLATFORM - POW CAMP - NIGHT

The platform docks -- and we're crushed to see Stevens nearly comatose. Coffey holds his bloody head in her lap.

Schultz waits in the yard. He has a chili pepper out, "walking" it across his four fingers like a magician "walks" a quarter. He's itchin' to use it.

Coffey gets Stevens on his feet.

COFFEY

That's right...doin' fine, doin' real fine, sir...right this way....

Literally moving his legs for him, she gets Stevens past Schultz and other Droogs. But it's like whistling past the graveyard.

INT. STEVENS' CELL - CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - NIGHT

COFFEY

(desperate)

I had to...they was gonna kill him otherwise....I had to....

Stevens languishes on his cot, face to the wall. A dozen POWs are dog-piled in the doorway, worried sick about him. Johnson questions Coffey inside the cell.

JOHNSON #1

I got that part. But what did you actually say?

COFFEY

I was just trying to save his damn life, okay?

JOHNSON #1

Coffey. I need to know exactly what was said up there.

STEVENS (O.S.)

She told 'em.

They all turn. Still facing the wall:

STEVENS

Romeo...the rendezvous.... Even when I ordered her not to, she gave up that it was a lighthouse on the coast of Maine.

Coffey is ready to curl up and die, until...

JOHNSON #1

Okay, Coffey. You did good.

COFFEY

P-pardon me?

Now Stevens rolls over -- and smiles with just his eyes. The world rearranges in Coffey's head.

COFFEY

You mean, what you told us was....
You mean, I didn't know the real....
(a change-up)
Why, you lyin' bastard, I'm gonna
kill you now....

She pounces on Stevens. But the struggle quickly turns into an embrace that brings Stevens upright.

DOORWAY POWS

He's on his feet...STEVENS IS ON
HIS FEET....

STEVENS

(to Johnson)
Tell the teams. We're still goin'.
We're goin' just as soon as Spotter
says --

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

SPOTTER

There.

A spot. It's a small dark spot in an immense David Lean sky. And only one man can tell what it is.

SPOTTER

(vindicated)
There it is!

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - POW CAMP - DAY

News races through the POWs like adrenaline through veins:

POWS #1, #2, #3
 Heavy inbound.... Spotter says
 Tea Bags inbound.... This is it....

Double-timing into the corridor, Mule King spills chili peppers onto a table.

STEVENS
 (speed-counting)
 ...8...10...12...14.

Stevens screws up his face. "14?"

MULE KING
 I know, I know, I know.

STEVENS
 You had 15.

MULE KING
 I know I'm short, I can count that high, I just can't shit that high.
 (heading out)
 Anybody got a snow-cone I can wipe my ass with?

The chili peppers get divvied up fast -- ten to Johnson, four to Stevens.

STEVENS
 Coffey! In the yard, everybody forms up on me.

COFFEY
 We puttin' Gramma in the van?

STEVENS
 She's already waitin' for us.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Stevens, Johnson, Mule King stride fast into the yard, eyes hunting as they join Spotter. Coffey vectors in with Worthy, Raab, Zen Wonk. All eight POWs stand on whatever they can to get eyes on...

EXT. AIRBORNE TEA BAG SHIP - DAY

The alien Tea Bag Ship. It LUMBERS through the sky, bladders swollen with water.

INT./EXT. RUN-OFF ROOM - POW CAMP - DAY

AIR PRESSURE BLASTS pipe-scum into the run-off room. The Druuben are flushing the lines, ready to take on new water. SNAP BACK to reveal Stevens with "O" and "T" teams nearby, Johnson #1 passing out coordinates on scraps of paper. Using the PURGE as audio cover:

STEVENS

(fast and urgent)

"Point Hope," Chesapeake Bay. That's where Romeo waits for these coordinates. It must be done human to human, face to face -- you put these coordinates in Romeo's hand by midnight tomorrow. Does anyone not understand me?

They've all got their coordinates, stuffing them in socks, shoes, belt buckles.

COFFEY

An' this is for realz now.

STEVENS

Time to start hittin' back. For realz.

JOHNSON #1

(remembering Hepcat)

"So lessgo Joe."

STEVENS

Last thing. Whatever route you take? Steer clear of D.C.

They explode apart.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

The diversion: Zen Wonk pulling look-out duty for Stevens, who cuts for the old prison water tower. Stevens planting four chili peppers on two legs of the tower.

Coffey and Raab. Scrambling over a pile of masonry blocks, this a section of unrepaired wall. Using the blocks as cover, unwrapping wooden mallets and plugs crafted from table legs. Now crouching like sprinters, ready to attack...

The 30-foot energy fence.

INT./EXT. RUN-OFF ROOM - POW CAMP - DAY

"O" team. Under the big ceiling grate that just purged, Johnson #1, Spotter, Worthy, Mule King attaching chili peppers to the spider-lines strung days ago.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Stevens. Twisting his stem-timers and clearing out fast. The CHILI PEPPERS FLASH-BURN...

But the old water tower just stands there. Zen Wonk taking a few worried steps toward it -- and now the tower weaving like a drunken giant...

And CRASHING TO THE GROUND impressively.

But Zen Wonk goes down, too. Did he stumble? Or did he get hit by shrapnel?

REACTION SHOTS of Droogs around camp: Hearing the CRASH. Hackles bristling as they orient toward the crash-site. Which means they're orienting away from...

EXT. ENERGY FENCE - POW CAMP - DAY

Coffey and Raab. Taking off. Hitting a pylon at speed. Climbing.

INT. CELLBLOCK CHARLIE - DAY

Erskin. Rushing to the cell that holds Trappe.

ERSKIN
Somethin's goin' down.

He unties the door chain.

INT./EXT. RUN-OFF ROOM - POW CAMP - DAY

"O" team. Twisting stem-timers, yanking their spider-lines, raising chili peppers like small flags until...

Each one lodging into a key joint of the overhead grate. They FLASH-BURN.

Still "hinged" on one side, the big overhead GRATE YAWNING OPEN -- but not quite reaching the ground.

JOHNSON #1
Goddammit.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Droogs. Congregating at the fallen water tower.

Stevens. Moving, getting a sight-line through the tumble-down wall, checking on...

Coffey and Raab. On the fence pylon. Hammering their wooden plugs into the ports. Working perilously close to the raw energy -- and the black-nasties that swarm there.

Stevens shooting a look to the Tea Bag ship. On close approach now.

INT./EXT. RUN-OFF ROOM - POW CAMP - DAY

Other POWs. Seeing the problem with the hanging grate and pitching in. Cupping their hands into foot-holds, offering their backs, doing anything possible to help...

"O" team. Catching hold. Using the grate as a ladder. Scampering up into the waterworks.

INT. WATERWORKS - POW CAMP - DAY

Johnson #1. Leading "O" team through slimy baffles and channels. Reaching a huge butterfly valve, muscling it open -- and getting assaulted by the THUNDERING SOUNDS of...

EXT. DOCKING PLATFORM - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

The Tea Bag Ship. Docking. Umbilicals snaking down from the stomach bladders, trying to mate with couplers below.

INT. WATERWORKS - POW CAMP - DAY

JOHNSON #1
Count off!

SPOTTER
182...181...180....

"O" team picking up the pace. Knowing they have to get through this in the next three minutes -- or die trying.

EXT. ENERGY FENCE - POW CAMP - DAY

Coffey and Raab. Clinging to a massive pylon, all ports sealed now but one. That port SPITTING OUT ONE LAST BLACK-NASTY...

That snags Coffey. Attacking like a fist-sized wasp.

Coffey crashing to the ground. Ripping off her Guard coat, tomahawking it down. The black-nasty caught up inside the thick fabric but eating its way out fast -- and Coffey going on the attack, just walloping the thing with her mallet. Not stopping until its outer shell cracks and...

The thing SHATTERING APART INTO SINE-WAVE SHARDS.

COFFEY

Hate, hate, hate those things....

EXT. DOCKING PLATFORM - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

The Tea Bag ship. The last of the COUPLERS CONNECTING. Water moving down the umbilicals in big eerie gulps.

INT. WATERWORKS - POW CAMP - DAY

"O" team. Struggling against water that comes at them in knee-high waves.

SPOTTER

140!

Bracing against a wall, Worthy realizing that the wall is convulsing like muscle: The peristalsis action happens even in here. The further they go, the stronger it gets.

EXT. YARD - POW CAMP - DAY

Trappe. Entering the yard, clocking three things fast: The downed water tower...the OFF-LOADING TEA BAG SHIP...and Stevens vaulting over the tumble-down wall. Gone.

Trappe figuring it out. Now clocking one more thing: Schultz. Riding a platform down.

EXT. DOCKING PLATFORM - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

The huge bladders of the Tea Bag Ship. Emptying fast.

INT. WATERWORKS - POW CAMP - DAY

"O" team. Water coming in BIG ROLLING GUSHES now.

SPOTTER

110!

A tag-along POW. At the trailing end, losing his footing and getting swept back.

INT./EXT. RUN-OFF ROOM - POW CAMP - DAY

Water pouring out the "showerheads" of the run-off room. Soon a head stops flowing -- and PUSHING CLOSER, we see why: A POW's face clogs the showerhead. Drowned.

INT. BASE OF LIFTING-PLATFORM - POW CAMP - DAY

DROOG BOOTS SLAMMING to the ground, outrigger-toes spreading on impact.

Schultz. In the yard.

EXT. ENERGY FENCE/TUMBLE-DOWN WALL - POW CAMP - DAY

Zen Wonk appearing. Rolling over the masonry blocks and taking cover near Stevens.

ZEN WONK
(re fence)
Is it working?

STEVENS
Where you been at?

ZEN WONK
Forgot my tools, my cutters. We'll want to get those radio-wires off as soon as we get past the....

Stevens staring at Zen Wonk's leg, wrapped, oozing blood. He did get hit.

ZEN WONK
I'm fine, I'm fine, not as bad as it looks. Won't slow anybody --

Stevens grabbing the leg, Zen Wonk gasping. Stevens knowing all he needs to know.

INT. DELUGE POINT - WATERWORKS - POW CAMP - DAY

SPOTTER
60 SECONDS!

"O" team linking hand-to-hand like paper dolls. Forging ahead through an onslaught of water. Reaching the place

where all eight umbilicals feed into the system. Somehow crossing this deluge to find...

Air. And one more grate above them they didn't anticipate. There's no way through it unless.... All eyes turn to Mule King. Doesn't he have one more chili pepper? Somewhere?

SPOTTER

45 seconds!

Mule King wants to kill him. Instead, he stamps his foot ritualistically -- and squats over an invisible toilet. His concentration is like that of Beethoven toiling over the keyboard. For this will be Mule King's greatest movement. If only he can finish it in time.

EXT. YARD/TUMBLE-DOWN WALL - POW CAMP - DAY

Schultz crossing the yard in wide strides. Trappe appearing behind him.

TRAPPE

Stop.

(getting no response)

"Gundagon!"

Schultz not slowing, closing in on the tumble-down wall. On the other side of that wall...

Stevens and "T" team. Finding key-hole views in the masonry blocks.

STEVENS' POV: Schultz coming. Trappe closing.

TRAPPE

I have something to tell you!

INT. DELUGE POINT - WATERWORKS - POW CAMP - DAY

SPOTTER

30 seconds!

It's not happening for Mule King. Too much cold. Too many stares. Too much pressure.

MULE KING

Eyes off, eyes off!

EXT. YARD/TUMBLE-DOWN WALL - POW CAMP - DAY

Stevens gripping his shank, thinking about killing Trappe. Or Schultz. Maybe both.

COFFEY
 (to Stevens)
 Lessgo, lessgo right now....

Coffey and Raab willing to hit the fence now and take their chances with the few remaining black-nasties: The ones that "die off" aren't getting replaced.

STEVENS' POV: Trappe catching up to Schultz. Both so close now that they vanish from our key-hole view.

CLOSE on the frantic faces of "T" team. What's going on? Is Trappe giving them up? Suddenly Schultz' boots landing in front of them. The boots are followed by a collapsing body. His skull is caved in.

Stevens corkscrewing up. He didn't need to kill Schultz because Trappe did it first -- and he's got the bloody rebar to prove it.

CLOSE on Trappe. His face is beset by conflicting emotions -- until relief wins out.

TRAPPE
 That may have been overdue.

EXT. DOCKING PLATFORM - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

Bladders finally empty, the Tea Bag ship uncoupling. It's starting to leave. But now...

INT. DELUGE POINT - WATERWORKS - POW CAMP - DAY

A GLEAMING CLOSEUP of a chili pepper -- the last chili pepper. Being thrust into the air like a newborn baby.

MULE KING
 (spent)
 I am the Mule God.

EXT. DOCKING PLATFORM - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

LOCK FLASH-BURNING AWAY, the last grate opening. Johnson leading Worthy, Mule King, and Spotter up onto the docking platform where they spy...

Two double-ugly Droogs. Standing between them and the Tea Bag ship threatening to depart.

With no time to think about it, Johnson attacking. Flashing close-quarters skills. Driving his shank into an armor-gap

of Droog #1. Grabbing a fist-gun, BLOWING AWAY Droog #2.
A man in his element.

EXT. YARD/TUMBLE-DOWN WALL - POW CAMP - DAY

The black-nasties. Almost gone now. Almost.

Stevens grabbing the fist-gun off Schultz' body -- and now getting one more idea. One parting fuck-you for the Commandant.

EXT. DOCKING PLATFORM - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

Johnson running. Leaping across air. Sticking a landing on the nose of the Tea Bag ship. Training the fist-gun on what he assumes is the cockpit, BLASTING OPEN a big steaming hole. Ducking his head inside...

INT. COCKPIT - TEA BAG SHIP - CONTINUOUS

...and confirming the kill.

JOHNSON #1
Bad day to be a Droog.
(over shoulder)
Worthy! You're up!

EXT. TUMBLE-DOWN WALL/ENERGY FENCE - POW CAMP - DAY

STEVENS
Go, go, go, go, GO!

Off their leash, Coffey and Raab sprinting for the energy fence now void of black-nasties. Hitting the raw energy...

...downshifting into FREAKY SLOW-MOTION...

And spitting out the other side AT NORMAL SPEED.

Other POWs seeing. Slamming headlong into the raw energy. Trappe and Oates making it through. Even Baines joining the parade of escapees.

INT. COCKPIT - TEA BAG SHIP - DAY

Worthy dropping inside the Druuben ship.

First strange thing: No seats, just bracing for stand-up piloting. Second strange thing: Control dash is a Rubik's Cube of geometric shapes that rise and fall, a kind of kinetic Braille that imparts all kinds of vital information. Worthy has no chance of understanding.

JOHNSON #1
 All this weird shit here? Ignore it!
 Just grab these handles and pretend
 it's a PlayStation!

Worthy grabbing steering horns. Giving them a tug.

EXT. DOCKING PLATFORM - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

The TEA BAG SHIP LURCHING dangerously, SMASHING up against its berth. Spotter and Mule King riding the hull, holding on for dear life.

Tag-along POWs, seeing their ride leaving, jumping the gap, catching hold of the swinging umbilicals.

EXT. TUMBLE-DOWN WALL/ENERGY FENCE - POW CAMP - DAY

"T" team. Watching the Tea Bag ship leaving. It's the world's worst take-off, but "O" team is over the fence. Unlike Stevens and Zen Wonk.

STEVENS

Now you.

Zen Wonk starting his run. Belly-flopping.

ZEN WONK

Lemme try again....

STEVENS

Not happening, brother.

A DEEP RUMBLE from the plugged-up pylon. It can't be anything good. Fast and disjointed:

ZEN WONK

(apologetic)
 You know what they do if you're hurt.
 I just don't wanna end up like that,
 not in the pit, not like those --

STEVENS

You just cover it up good, Wonk, make sure they don't see any blood or --

ZEN WONK

I could still help you out there if --

STEVENS

Just listen! In the old section,
 some supplies in the old section,
 (MORE)

STEVENS (CONT'D)
 medical stuff, I've seen 'em myself,
 and you can get --

ZEN WONK
 But I don't think I can --

STEVENS
 Gotta try, okay? Gotta try.

Another OMINOUS RUMBLE.

COFFEY
 Stevens!

RAAB
 The fruit is ripe on this side, man!
 Let's go, let's go, let's --

The PYLON SHATTERS OPEN. Like some plague that went
 unmentioned in the Bible, all those pent-up black-nasties
 pour out en masse. And they are...

Pissed. Off.

Stevens. Remembering his mission. Lurching into action.
 BLASTING THE FIST-GUN as he charges the fence, BLOWING AWAY
 any black-nasties in his way. Hitting the energy for a quick
 trip to FREAKY WORLD. Spilling out the other side and being
 greeted by...

WEAPONS FIRE. CHURNING GROUND all around him.

Druuben guards. Massing on the old prison wall, BLAZING
 their long-guns.

COFFEY
 MOVE YOUR FREAKIN' TAILS!

40 escaping POWs running balls-out for the Dragon Fields.
 The unlucky ones -- like Oates -- getting their LEGS BLOWN
 OUT from under them. But most reaching the obstacle field
 and finding cover there.

EXT. DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

POWER SHOTS of POWs on the break, running hard, weaving
 their way through dragon's teeth. FEATURE Coffey...Raab...
 Trappe...Baines...Stevens.

EXT. GUN GALLERIES - DRUBEN BILLET - DAY

The Commandant. Moving outside. Sweeping up a ramp to gain
 elevation. And then doing something unimaginable:

His hackles rise...and rise...and rise into a towering sagittal crest. And now the hackles spread from side to side until the Commandant's head is merely a hub for a great hemisphere of organic antennae. We realize that all other Druuben we've seen are merely pea-hens to this, a male peacock in full plumage.

COMMANDANT'S ALL-WORLD SCAN: All those antennae create a 360-degree map of the camp and its surrounds. The POV TUNNELS IN on the Tea Bag Ship nearing a distant hilltop. Quickly the POV TUNNELS IN AGAIN for even greater detail, seeing escapees clinging to the hull of the ship. When the ship dips behind hills, the POV JUMPS ELSEWHERE, hunting down various data-streams coming from the arm-wires of POWs fleeing through the Dragon Fields. Among them...

EXT. SMALL CLEARING - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

Stevens. Getting a stabbing pain in his arm. Sliding to a stop, checking his wire, the barbs heating up under the Commandant's all-world scan. Stevens unrolling Zen Wonk's tool kit, making cuts in the wire.

Trappe appearing. Both their wires go off again.

STEVENS

Zeroing in....

Shockingly fast, Stevens ripping the wire out of his own arm, extracting flesh in the process. Speed-wrapping the wound to staunch the blood.

EXT. POW CAMP - DAY

Above the prison gates, Droogs pushing two oversized tubes into position. Separately, they look like alien jet engines. But slammed together, they look disturbingly like one huge double-barreled shotgun aimed at...

The Dragon Fields.

EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

Coffey and Raab. Slowing to look back, wanting a fix on Stevens. Now spotting something else.

COFFEY

What the hell is....

At the far edge of the Dragon Fields, teeth are vanishing. Shattering.

EXT. CLEARING - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

Hearing the SHATTERING, Stevens and Trappe torquing around. Seeing, over the tops of the obstacles...

Exploding shards filling the air. Coming closer.

EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

COFFEY

What is....

RAAB

It's not an obstacle field...

EXT. DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

The "shotgun" is a frequency generator BLASTING OUT ENERGY like a tenor hitting high-C, creating...

A SHOCKWAVE that rips right through the Dragon Fields.

EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

RAAB (CONT'D)

It's a mine field.

EXT. CLEARING - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

Stevens and Trappe. Moving.

SHOCKWAVE overtaking tag-along POWs. Shards ripping them up into kite-tails.

EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE - DRAGON FIELDS - DAY

Coffey and Raab. Seeing Stevens and Trappe coming fast -- and the SHOCKWAVE coming faster.

Stevens and Trappe. Hitting the last hill stride for stride, scrambling, falling, getting up, just trying to reach the other side but not getting there because the SHOCKWAVE is on them now and it's all they can do to reach the top of the hill and hit the ground and cover up and pray as...

The SHOCKWAVE OF SHATTERING DRAGON TEETH travels right over their heads. And vanishes.

EAR-RINGING SILENCE. Everyone picking up their heads and looking around.

RAAB
Line of sight....

The FREQUENCY SHOCKWAVE was line-of-sight: It climbed the hill but traveled no further. All that's left is a big shotgun-blast of destruction that stretches back to the camp a half-mile away.

Stevens scans the valley in the opposite direction. There's a strange rain falling -- all the debris of the spent shockwave -- and through it we can make out...

The Druuben depot. And one Road Hog still there.

EXT. POW CAMP - DAY

We're OVER THE SHOULDER of Schultz -- which is strange, since we thought he was dead. Now the Commandant appears, "looking" down at Schultz.

WIDER to reveal Stevens' parting shot: Schultz's body has been "staged," head and shoulders lolled back, weight propped up from behind by a length of rebar. An E-rat can lives right where you'd expect an apple in a hog's mouth. And, oh yeah -- he's on his knees.

The Commandant kicks the rebar away. The corpse falls over.

EXT. BROKEN HIGHWAYS SLABS - ROAD HOG DEPOT - DAY

Using the highway slabs as cover, Stevens works fast to get the arm-wire off Coffey and Raab. Trappe and Baines are lined up, too.

RAAB
(hoping)
Like a Band-aid, right?

STEVENS
Sure.

He tears off the wire. Raab nearly faints.

STEVENS (CONT'D)
With teeth.

Trappe is next. Stevens hesitates before doing this wire. But he does it.

Down at the depot, POWs are pushing the nose of the Road Hog around, turning it like it was on an invisible turn-table. A Droog driver lies dead on the ground.

Baines can't wait any longer. He starts down.

STEVENS
Wouldn't do that, Baines.

BAINES
We did it! You did it, you magical
bastard! And that's our ticket outta
here!

STEVENS
That's a train fulla guys still
wearin' wires.

Not listening, Baines bounds down the broken slabs. All that
repressed hope comes tumbling out as maniacal joy.

BAINES
I'M FINALLY GOIN' HOME! TO MY STAMP
COLLECTION! AND MY WIFE! KOOMBUYA!

He sprints after the Road Hog that starts down the highway
erratically. He fails to see...

Two Druuben gunships. Closing fast.

Baines catches hold just as the GUNSHIPS RAIN DESTRUCTION
on the Road Hog, circling as they attack, making sure they
kill every POW inside and out.

EXT. WOODED HILLSIDE - PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

"T" team bushwhacks up a woody hillside, forging a new trail.
Trappe is with them.

STEVENS
Rule One of escape and evasion:
Never go out the way you came in.
That's what the enemy expects, that's
what the enemy wants. Rule Two:
Never follow the "lines of drift."

RAAB
Which means....

TRAPPE
Never take the easy route when a
harder one's available.

DRUBUBEN ENGINES. A gunship prowls overhead, seen through
tree canopy. When it passes, Trappe finds Stevens staring at
him. He knows why.

TRAPPE

You tell me what to do, I'll do it.
And if that happens to involve
killin' Droogs instead of each other?
Even better.

INT. COCKPIT - AIRBORNE TEA BAG SHIP - DAY

Worthy is actually getting the hang of the controls now.
Spotter's upside-down face appears in a blasted-open
"window." Over AIR RUSH:

SPOTTER

Two Pack Rats, port side, three
miles out! Suggest we steer clear!

EXT. AIRBORNE TEA BAG SHIP - DAY

The Tea Bag ship veers starboard. Spotter and Mule King
cling onto the hull, serving as look-outs. Tag-along POWs
ride the flanks of the Tea Bag ship, some just now climbing
up from the bladders below.

INT. COCKPIT - AIRBORNE TEA BAG SHIP - DAY

JOHNSON #1

Spotter!

Spotter dangles back into view. Johnson jerks a thumb over
his shoulder.

JOHNSON #1

What's our six look like?

SPOTTER

No pursuit in sight!

JOHNSON #1

Check again for me!

SPOTTER

Spotter says our six is clear!
There is no pursuit!

Johnson thinks. Is that a good sign? Or bad?

JOHNSON #1

(to Worthy)

Let's put down, Way-Point 3!

WORTHY

Hey, I just figured this out! Kinda!

JOHNSON #1
 "Jump and dump," that was the plan!

WORTHY
 Plans change! If they're not on our
 ass, we can make it all the way to
 Chesapeake Bay in --

JOHNSON #1
 Negative! If they have Lojack in
 this thing, I will not lead the enemy
 to Romeo!

Worthy's still resisting. Is it because "flying" and
 "landing" are two different propositions?

JOHNSON #1
 Put this mofo down!

EXT. RURAL AIRPORT - PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

Druuben recon ships are circling vulture-like over...

The downed Tea Bag ship. It lies in a rut of its own making,
 evidence of Worthy's rough landing. But if the recon ships
 are looking for "O" team, they won't find them here.

The ship is abandoned.

INT. AIRPORT TRUCK - NIGHT

Sticking to back roads, Mule King drives a commandeered
 airport truck.

INT. REAR OF AIRPORT TRUCK - NIGHT

Performing surgery in the back of a bouncing truck, Johnson
 cuts Spotter's arm-wire. Spotter nearly passes out with pain
 as Johnson peels it out of his skin.

JOHNSON #1
 (re arm-wires)
 Now get those things outta here.

Worthy gathers up all four wires...

EXT. MARYLAND BACK ROAD - CONTINUOUS

...and chucks them out the back of the moving truck.

In a HIGH TRACKING SHOT, we see the truck below us. Soon a NEAR-SILENT RECON SHIP slides in and out of FRAME. We aren't sure if it was just a chance fly-over -- or if the Droog ship is stalking the truck.

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

ESTABLISH a hilltop house. Dark and isolated.

Working like thieves, "T" team swarms over a Ford pickup outside the house. They're looking for keys, popping the hood, testing the battery for spark.

COFFEY

Dead.

Stevens moves to an attached garage, peers through a side window to find a car under wraps.

He breaks the window.

INT. GARAGE - RURAL HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Inside now, Stevens throws off the cover. It's a patrol car. Coffey pops the hood, gets spark on the battery.

TRAPPE

(re patrol car)

I know the Droogs're training up their own police. They might blow this away just for target practice.

STEVENS

(to Coffey)

Swap batteries.

INT. RURAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Stevens and Raab enter the dark house. Stevens empties drawers in search of pickup keys, Raab fills a rucksack with food. Soon Raab notes...

Childish drawings. They show Druuben dragging away a man with a big star on his chest. The owner of the patrol car? The father of this house? No time to figure it out, Raab turns to leave and sees...

The COP'S DAUGHTER in a doorway, seven years old. Soon the COP'S WIFE appears. She pushes her daughter behind her and puts on a hard face for the strangers in her house.

COP'S WIFE

And I thought the looting was over.

RAAB

That's not what this is.

COP'S WIFE

Then you tell me what it is.

STEVENS

No one's gonna hurt you or your kid.
We just need a few things, including
that truck out --

A toy skitters across the floor and crashes into a wall.

Everyone stares. It's a remote-control cop car -- but nobody touched it, nobody went near any control box. Suddenly...

The GIRL JUST FREAKS OUT, shrieking as she runs to hide.

COP'S WIFE

(with dread)

Not again. Dear God, not again....

INT. GARAGE - RURAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Coffey yanks the battery out of the patrol car -- and stops abruptly when the main garage door opens by a few feet... stops....closes a bit...stops...opens a bit more....

Stevens reaches up and pulls the plug on the Genie unit.

The door freezes -- as does "T" team. "Are we being scanned?" Worst fears are confirmed by the sound of DRUUBEN ENGINES APPROACHING. And LANDING.

Trappe checks the patrol car, finds the shotgun rack empty.

SEETHING outside. Stevens goes two-dimensional beside the window. Coffey drops to her knees to look out the crack beneath the garage door.

COFFEY'S POV: Of Droog feet fanning out.

INT. RURAL HOUSE - PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

A section of WALL IMPLODES. Weapons cycling, FOUR DROOG SOLDIERS enter. They could've kicked down the front door, but these guys came through the wall beside the door.

DROOG POV: Scanning the living room. Finding it clear.

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

Outside, one more GUNSHIP LANDS. Another Druuben emerges. This one wears a collapsed war-scythe on his hip.

INT. GARAGE - ISOLATED HOUSE - NIGHT

Through the window, Stevens sees who it is.

"T" team is scrounging to arm themselves. There's only one real weapon here, and that's the fist-gun Stevens carries. Surprisingly, Stevens pitches it to Trappe...

And swings into the patrol car, grabbing a weapon the others overlooked.

STEVENS
(low to Coffey)
Battery. Back in.

INT. UPSTAIRS - RURAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Cop's Wife is on her knees. One hand covers her daughter's mouth to keep her from screaming, another hand is on the girl's head, forcing her into a submissive pose for...

The Commandant. SEETHING past as if they didn't exist.

INT. GARAGE - ISOLATED HOUSE - NIGHT

A Droog soldier enters the garage -- and stumbles: It didn't see the step-down. It's odd when Druuben are anything but sure-footed, but we understand why when...

DROOG POV: Radio waves are bouncing around the garage like popcorn inside a hot pot. The waves seem to emanate from an open window of the patrol car. Our DROOG POV can see through the glass of the car, but the interior is just a blizzard of trapped energy. A radio white-out.

Inside the car, we find Stevens prone across the front seat -- working a radar gun. He's "jamming" the Droog.

Splayed on the rear seat, Trappe has the fist-gun ready just in case Stevens doesn't know what the fuck he's doing. Coffey and Raab are kissing floorboards.

Hunting for the source of the interference, the Droog draws closer. It eases a fist-gun into the car.

DROOG POV: Of its hand vanishing into the radar snow-storm.
The Droog can't see his own hand in front of his face.

A passenger WINDOW BLOWS OUT above Stevens' head.

Like a German soldier stabbing his bayonet into a haystack,
 the Droog FIRES AGAIN before backing off. And leaving.

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

As the Druuben SHIPS LIFT AWAY.

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - PENNSYLVANIA - MINUTES LATER

The PICKUP CRANKS AND CATCHES. "T" team loads up.

RAAB (O.S.)

What is that?

Stevens turns. One hilltop over, a column of intense light
 is illuminating...something. Something not there before.
 Something awful.

STEVENS

Binox. Garage.

EXT. ONE HILLTOP OVER - PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

A Droog recon ship hovers at 50 feet. The intense light --
 visible for miles -- drills down from its underside to
 illuminate...

Zen Wonk. His body has been "staged" on a crude platform,
 weight back, an E-rat can stuffed in the broken-jawed mouth.
 And, oh yeah -- he's on his knees.

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

Stevens lowers binoculars. Trappe looks next.

TRAPPE

Okay. You flipped him off, he
 flipped you off. Now forget you ever
 saw this.

STEVENS

(wanting blood)
 Why would I go and do that?

TRAPPE

Do not let this escalate to "Oko-Oko."
You don't need that fight, and you
aren't gonna win it, either.

RAAB

Make rendezvous, Stevens. That's all
that matters now.

They have to pull Stevens back to the truck.

INT. AIRPORT TRUCK - DAY

Daylight. Driving, Mule King slows to an unanticipated stop.
He raps on the divider wall behind his head.

MULE KING

"Chubble."

EXT. BRIDGE OF DEATH - UPPER POTOMAC - DAY

It's a choke-point of abandoned vehicles. A feeding MASS OF
CROWS SCATTERS as "O" team nears on foot -- our first hint
that these cars aren't abandoned. Now we see the bodies,
slumped across seats, spilling onto the pavement.

Worthy turns one over. And winces.

WORTHY

Radiation....

"O" team moves onto a bridge that spans the upper Potomac.
And here they see something more chilling: On the horizon is
what surely must be a post-nuclear cauldron: Clouds of smoke
and dust roil high into the sky, everything underlit by fires
that still burn after all these weeks.

SPOTTER

So that's D.C.

It affects them differently. But it affects them all.

WORTHY

Wonder how many rads we're takin'.
Even this far out.

JOHNSON #1

East toward Baltimore. Stay off the
main roads, run parallel to Highway
70. Head south when we hit water.

SPOTTER

But we go around.

JOHNSON #1

We go around.

MULE KING

Oh, we definitely go 'round that.

INT. SEMI TRUCK - DAY

A hand twists an ignition. A DIESEL ENGINE COUGHS over.

EXT. BRIDGE OF DEATH - UPPER POTOMAC - DAY

Johnson is behind the wheel of a big truck, bulldozing cars aside, trying to clear a path across the bridge. The rest of "O" team rides the running boards, jumping off to move bodies and other obstacles.

Worthy appears in the passenger window -- just as the truck CB radio comes to life with faint GEIGER COUNTER SOUNDS we've heard before. Only Johnson notices.

WORTHY

Play it to the right, huh?

Worthy jumps off the running board. The CB FALLS SILENT. Johnson frowns. "What the fuck?"

JOHNSON #1

Worthy.

Worthy rejoins. The CB GOES OFF again. It's like when a cell phone gets too close to the car radio.

JOHNSON #1

(mystified)

You dumped those wires, right?

WORTHY

You saw me.

JOHNSON #1

Well, help me understand somethin'. Why is this CB actin' like you still got one?

ULTRA CLOSE on Worthy. He has no answer.

ULTRA CLOSE on Johnson. He has one now.

EXT. BRIDGE OF DEATH - UPPER POTOMAC - DAY

CROWS SCATTER again.

An hour behind "O" team, "T" team arrives. Their reaction is similarly muted -- until Coffey starts a LOW WAIL. Because she's found three more bodies here.

Spotter. And Mule King. And Johnson, still in the semi, killed by a fist-gun.

COFFEY

Jesus God, they got 'em....

RAAB

Don't see.... Where's Worthy?

COFFEY

The Droogs got "O" team, too....

RAAB

DID THEY GET WORTHY TOO?

TIME CUT TO:

Coffey and Raab continue to search for Worthy. But Stevens stands at the apex of the bridge, staring unbrokenly toward the cauldron mists of D.C. Trappe joins.

TRAPPE

So maybe it's just what it seems -- Commandant hunted them down, one guy got away by the skin of his ass.

STEVENS

I'd buy that....

TRAPPE

Except....

STEVENS

That "one guy" was the same guy throwin' suspicion your way.

It's a bone-chiller. Trappe looks at Stevens.

TRAPPE

This whole thing just blow up in our face? 'Cuz if he is workin' for the Druuben...and he does reach that lighthouse first....

STEVENS

(on the move)

Raab! What's the most direct route to the mouth of the Chesapeake?

RAAB

That'd be straight down the Potomac. But that'd also take you straight through D.C., the one place you didn't --

STEVENS

Coffey, you're the new shot-caller for "K" team. You and Raab grab a vehicle, negotiate your way east then south as fast as --

COFFEY

Just us? That's a team?

STEVENS

Need you to beat Worthy to Romeo -- in case I can't.

RAAB

"Beat Worthy?"

STEVENS

We cannot let the Droogs backtrack Romeo to the one thing they been lookin' for all along. Clear?

COFFEY

Sir, I'm just a Mechanic Fourth Class in the National Guard, ain't really set up to be a shot-call --

(brain catching up to ears)

What does "K" stand for?

Stevens gives her the fist-gun. "Exactly what you think."
A beat -- then Coffey picks up right where she left off.

COFFEY (CONT'D)

...and I only signed up for Guard cuz the vision program was better than WalMart's. I don't know if I can --

STEVENS

How many tours of Iraq?

COFFEY

Three.

STEVENS
You'll be fine, Coffey.

INT. SUV - HIGHWAY - SUNSET

Worthy is at the wheel of an SUV speeding east. On the seat beside him are two items: A Druuben fist-gun, the one he used to kill "O" team with, and...

An arm-wire. The one he didn't throw out of the truck.

EXT. MARYLAND BACKROAD - SUNSET

Reaching water, Worthy's SUV turns south.

500 feet above, that WHISPER-QUIET RECON SHIP makes the same turn. And even higher, a gunship joins, flying escort.

EXT. GREAT FALLS PARK - UPPER POTOMAC - SUNSET

The river is strewn with flotsam.

Swimming, Stevens catches onto a wooden skiff and rights it. Trappe struggles aboard with him. There are no paddles, so they use whatever the waters offer up. Stevens pulls out his Luminox. "1845."

STEVENS
Five hours and change.
(to Trappe, some heavy
shit ahead)
Guess I just assumed you'd be takin'
the hard way too.

TRAPPE
You assumed right.

Paddling hard, they start down the Potomac.

INT. TRACTOR-TRAILER CAB - NIGHT

Coffey and Raab. Grim determination on faces. HOWLING down the highway in a tractor-trailer cab, no load to slow them.

EXT. RAPIDS - UPPER POTOMAC - NIGHT

Stevens and Trappe. Fighting their way down rapids by night, just trying to stay upright in a boat never meant for this.

EXT. "HEART OF DARKNESS" - POTOMAC - NIGHT

They clear the rapids to reach slower water. Here, all foliage is denuded, the air heavy with dust and ash. Soon DRUBEN ENGINES APPROACH, forcing them under an arbor of dead trees. A SQUADRON OF PACHYDERMS appears, heavy-lifters with payload beneath. Waiting them out, Trappe notes...

Crows in the trees, framed against a full moon.

TRAPPE
(hissing)
Still alive. Crows.

STEVENS
I know.

When the Pachyderms retreat, Stevens and Trappe start paddling again.

Ahead, the fires of D.C. burn ever brighter.

INT. TRACTOR-TRAILER CAB - NIGHT

Coffey brakes hard at the top of a rise. In the valley beyond are two long lines of tail-lights. There must be 100 cars here, all stopped by...

EXT. DRUBEN CHECK-POINT - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A hovering gunship that blocks the road. Droog soldiers are checking drivers and vehicles.

INT. TRACTOR-TRAILER CAB - NIGHT

Coffey GRINDS into reverse. Fast.

RAAB
Wai', wai' wait. May not be lookin'
for us -- could be one of their
travel check-points.

She looks again. Some motorists are outside cars, commiserating nervously. Most wear barbed radio-bracelets -- civilian versions of the in-skin wire used on POWs.

COFFEY
Well, we still don't got time to get
stuck here. Better find another --

RAAB

But what if he's stuck here?

Coffey shuts down the engine -- and picks up the fist-gun.

EXT. DRUUBEN CHECK-POINT - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

In an SUV near the front of the line, we find a nervous Worthy: Will his POW wire get him through? Or will it get him killed? He checks his mirrors, considering turning around and taking another route. But now he spies...

Coffey. On foot. Searching cars. Fist-gun at low guard.

Worthy slides down in his seat -- and slips a hand inside his own fist-gun.

CLOSE on the SUV's side mirror. Moving. Tracking her.

Inside, Worthy raises his fist-gun, anticipating Coffey on his passenger side. And just as she does enter view...just as Worthy squeezes the trigger-grip...

The DRIVER'S WINDOW IMPLODES.

It's Raab with a tire-iron. He found him first.

Worthy FIRES REFLEXIVELY in Raab's direction.

The Droog soldiers alert.

With a KAMIKAZE CRY, Coffey UNLOADS with her fist-gun.

Half the SUV ROOF MELTS AWAY. Worthy drops down and smashes the accelerator with his hand.

Running the check-point, the SUV low-bridges the Droog soldiers, cartwheeling them over the top. The SUV SMASHES into the gunship, glances off, accelerates past.

The gunship pivots weapons and OPENS FIRE on the fleeing SUV. But insanely, that GUNSHIP TAKES FIRE from...

Worthy's airborne escort. Like dragons doing battle, the two DRUUBEN GUNSHIPS BLAZE away at each other.

Chaos: Cars are peeling off to the sides, SCREECHING away. Some people just bail out and run off into the dark, everyone fleeing the area.

The check-point gunship is reduced to PHOSPHOROUS CHUNKS. We assume the airborne gunship won the battle until...

It SLAMS down right in front of us, a smoking molten mass. They killed each other.

EXT. THE ROAD AHEAD - NIGHT

As Worthy drives on alone.

EXT. DRUBEN CHECK-POINT - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Everything is eerily quiet when Coffey rolls out from under an abandoned car. She's the only thing alive here because Raab is dead, newest victim of Worthy. On any other night, she'd take the time to mourn him. But tonight...

Coffey grabs a new car and presses on.

EXT. KEY BRIDGE - POTOMAC RIVER - NIGHT

Rounding a river bend, Stevens and Trappe see...

The Francis Scott Key Bridge. It's partially collapsed. But on still-standing spans is a cordon of Droogs, armed silhouettes that stretch the breadth of the river. Indians on the ridge.

Stevens signals "out," then rolls the skiff as they slip into the water...

INT. OVERTURNED BOAT - POTOMAC - CONTINUOUS

...and reappear under the skiff. In the air-pocket.

TRAPPE

'Sposed to be a no-go zone, for them
and us. How the hell do --

Stevens motions "Quiet." He knows.

EXT. UNDERWATER - POTOMAC - NIGHT

Just their feet. Still kicking. Still moving forward.

EXT. KEY BRIDGE - POTOMAC RIVER - NIGHT

The overturned skiff reaches the Key Bridge -- and drifts right under. To the Droogs above, it's just more flotsam.

INT. OVERTURNED BOAT - POTOMAC - NIGHT

No words. Only BREATHING. Only the STRAIN of keeping the skiff moving. The water around them seems to light up now, taking on a fiery hue.

They BUMP to a stop.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

The skiff has grounded on a shipwreck in the Potomac. Salamandering out of the water, Stevens and Trappe climb onto the hull. And look.

D.C. is blown away to its foundations, our great monuments toppled. But alien architecture is rising in their stead. Pachyderms and other heavy-lifters ferry payloads to construction platforms. And the fires? They aren't from burning buildings -- they're from forges that burn in support of this colossal construction campaign. The Druuben are erecting their capitol on the ruins of ours.

TRAPPE
(overwhelmed)
This what I think it is?

STEVENS
"Gomorrah."

TRAPPE
An' all those people...with radiation
burns....

STEVENS
Scarecrows. To keep us out.

TRAPPE
It's like...like Istanbul building
on the ruins of Constantinople...
after it was built on the foundations
of another city....

STEVENS
It's them pissing on our grave.
That's what it's like.

He pulls Trappe back to the boat.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

Wet boots trudge up a spiral staircase.

EXT. WIDOW'S WALK - LIGHTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The lighthouse stands at the confluence of the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. Taking up position in the widow's walk, a lone man is revealed by the great Fresnel lamp that sweeps behind him.

He opens a tin and removes his last cigar. The paper band gets put on a finger for safekeeping. A lighter strikes. The cigar is lit.

ROMEO

C'mon, Stevens.

EXT. LOWER POTOMAC - POTOMAC - NIGHT

Stevens checks his Luminox. "2400." Midnight.

TRAPPE

How long?

The fires of D.C. are behind them. Vegetation has reappeared on the river banks. The skiff is upright again, moving under the combined strength of Stevens and Trappe. They make good time, but still....

TRAPPE (CONT'D)

How long will your man wait?

EXT. WIDOW'S WALK - LIGHTHOUSE - NIGHT

Romeo nearly burns his lips on the cigar: He waited until the last possible second. With regret that aches, he tamps out the butt.

INT. COFFEY'S CAR - NIGHT

We're OVER COFFEY'S SHOULDER as she drives suicidally fast, seeing what she sees in headlights: Dark winding road. Then a flash of a sign: "Point Hope State Park." Soon...

Our headlights find the lighthouse.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

Clutching the fist-gun, Coffey whips open the door.

COFFEY

(a quick probe)

Romeo?

Ground floor of the lighthouse holds a nautical museum, an admiral's dress uniform among the displayed items. Coffey reaches the big spiral staircase and looks up.

COFFEY

ROMEO?

Only her ECHO answers. She closes the entrance door to check the backside.

COFFEY

(a punch in the gut)

Ten....

There are 10 "Romeo Y Juliete" cigar bands stuck to the back of the door. Romeo has come and gone. She rakes them away in frustration, swings the door back open but a cold .45 touches the rear of her skull. GO DESPERATELY CLOSE on Coffey. "Is it Worthy?"

ROMEO (O.S.)

Drop the weapon.

COFFEY

(flooding with relief)

Stevens sent me. He's still alive, and he sent me here to warn --

ROMEO (O.S.)

Drop the weapon or die.

She complies. It gets kicked clear.

COFFEY

He sent me ahead to tell you, warn you about a guy named "Worthy."

ROMEO (O.S.)

What about 'im?

COFFEY

He may work for the Droogs, sir. An' he may be backtrackin' you to Boat 19. But here...if I can just... right in my side pocket, got some coordinates here that --

ROMEO (O.S.)

How you know Boat 19, Coffey?

A heart-stopped beat.

COFFEY

How you know my name?

ROMEO (O.S.)

Because everything you just said?
He said you'd say.

She turns around. Behind Romeo is Worthy.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

VERY WIDE on the lighthouse. We're eye-level with the Fresnel lamp. Its beam catches OUR LENS a few times -- before briefly catching and outlining a recon ship that circles the lighthouse from afar.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

COFFEY

(to Romeo, pleading)

It's him, it's him, it's Worthy....
Please, you gotta trust me now. The Droogs put him in that camp just so's they could get to you...just to get him here...right here, right now....

Romeo slides a look at...

WORTHY

Who came in here carrying a Droog weapon? Her or me?

COFFEY

Stevens gave it to me. He gave it to me so I could WHACK HIS ASS WHEN I FOUND HIM!

WORTHY

Just tell us why, Coffey.

COFFEY

Why what?

WORTHY

Why you'd would give up like that.
Why you'd sell out.

COFFEY

Oh, don't you even start with that --

He shoves her hard, and before she can recover, Worthy slings her into a display case.

WORTHY

C'mon, let's hear the rational,
Coffey. And make it good, huh?

He's trying to work up enough righteous indignation to justify killing her right now. He snatches up a fallen sword, part of the admiral's dress uniform.

WORTHY

TELL US WHY!

COFFEY

(to Romeo)

If you listen to him --

WORTHY

If you listen to her you're playin' right in their hands. Now these are the targeting coordinates as vetted by Stevens himself.

COFFEY

Here...lookit mine...I bet they're different than what he's --

WORTHY

I bet they are -- since she already changed 'em. Now these are the real coordinates, expressed in geodetic longitude and latitude. Stevens himself told me to put this targeting information in your hands and your hands alone. So take them. Take them back.

Romeo deliberates. Who to believe? Who to kill?

ROMEO

Y'know, maybe Stevens should settle this.

WORTHY

Oh, I'd love him to -- but what if he didn't make it? What if he never shows? Sir, every minute you delay is another minute they can track us to this very....

Romeo pitches his .45 across the room. Hearing it CAUGHT, Worthy has an oh-fuck moment before turning.

STEVENS

(closing in)

"A" -- they've got your family.

"B" -- they've got your crew, the one you said you had to bail out on.

"C" -- well, you tell us why, Worthy.

Surrounded, Worthy clams up. Coffey loosens him up with a vicious right-cross.

COFFEY

"And make it good, huh?"

WORTHY

Y'know what? There's a lot more guys like me out there than you think, guys smart enough to know we ain't goin' back to the way it was. Hey, you wanna die for some country that no longer exists? Fine, you do that, Stevens -- but that's not the definition of loyalty, not mine. All you people think --

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

GUNSHOT. Muzzle-flash in windows.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

STEVENS

"C" -- you were just a dick.

He squats to search Worthy's body. Trappe appears in the doorway, drawn by the gunshot. Stevens finds Worthy's hidden arm-wire.

STEVENS

(to Trappe)

Take his clothes, take his car -- and then take this damn thing far away from here as you can. Should draw off that recon ship circlin' the area and buy us enough time...to....

Faintly, A SHORT-WAVE RADIO HISSES to life and dies. Just some anomaly? Stevens looks down at...

The wire heating up in his hand.

COFFEY

Get rid of it.

STEVENS
Move out. Everybody.

COFFEY
You know what that means? Just get
rid of the damn thing 'fore --

STEVENS
(with bedrock)
I said "go."

He knows what it means.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - CHESAPEAKE BAY - 60 SECONDS LATER

The DOOR GROANS open.

Two Droog boots cross the bloody floor of the lighthouse.
They find no humans on this level. Not even Worthy.

DRUBEN POV: Orienting upward. Catching a data-stream at
the top of the spiral staircase.

The boots take the stairs three at a time. And they bend the
iron steps.

EXT. WIDOW'S WALK/LAMP ROOM - LIGHTHOUSE - NIGHT

The great Fresnel light sweeps inside in the lamp room.
On the walkway that encircles the lamp room, the Commandant
appears suddenly in a sweep of light.

COMMANDANT'S POV: Of the data-stream, stronger now. It
emanates from a pair of legs -- Worthy's body -- lying on the
walkway 20 feet ahead.

Now reveal Stevens. Hunkered down on the other side of the
lamp house. .45 gripped in hand. Eyes trained on...

A small mirror cocked just so. In it, he sees the reflection
of the Commandant.

COMMANDANT'S POV OF MIRROR: No reflections in DRUBEN POV.
He can't see Stevens.

Stevens waits for the big Droog to enter his kill-zone.
Each sweep of the light gives a new snapshot of the
Commandant approaching. But now he stops. Hackles bristle.
Does he smell an ambush? Or is he alerting to something
else?

COMMANDANT'S POV: Of a car leaving the area.

INT. COFFEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Coffey. Speeding away.

EXT. WIDOW'S WALK/LAMP ROOM - LIGHTHOUSE - NIGHT

COMMANDANT'S POV: Of the shoreline. Two figures running.

EXT. WHARF - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

Romeo and Trappe are charging down a wharf. Diving into dark water. Swimming to reach...

An SPWS ("Surface Planing Wet Submersible"). Rising dramatically from the water is a next-generation Special Op delivery craft. It's a speedboat that can operate above water or below. FOUR NAVY SEALS in wet-gear man the craft.

EXT. WIDOW'S WALK/LAMP HOUSE - LIGHTHOUSE - NIGHT

Stevens realizes he can't wait any longer. He corkscrews up and FIRES SIX TIMES IN TWO SECONDS at...

Nothing. The Commandant moved away between light-sweeps.

Speed over caution, Stevens pushes through the lamp-house door...

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...and sees the reaching the base of the spiral stairs. Stevens SPENDS FOUR MORE ROUNDS before clicking dry.

The big Droog TAKES TWO to the shoulders -- and his only reaction is to pause and look up. Right now it would take the Commandant 10 seconds to climb the stairs and finish Stevens off...

But he doesn't. He bulls outside.

STEVENS

Hey. HEY!

EXT. WHARF - CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

Romeo and Trappe pull on masks and air-tanks. The SEALS fire up a NEAR-SILENT INBOARD MOTOR on the SPWS -- and get moving.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE/TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

The Commandant. Pounding toward low cliffs. Bleeding from shoulder wounds but not seeming to notice. SEETHING with a predatory excitement as he scans the waters in front of him.

EXT. SPWS - OCEAN - NIGHT

Graining speed, Romeo and his team bite down on regulators. The pilot throws levers. The SPWS starts free-flooding.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE/TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

COMMANDANT'S POV: Catching the last of the SPWS as it slips underwater. And getting his fix.

EXT. SPWS - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

As the SEAL pilot switches to battery power and keeps going.

EXT. TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

Stopping at cliff's edge, the Commandant extends his hackles and holds them there, uplinking to...

EXT. OVER THE OCEAN - NIGHT

The Druuben Hunter-Killer. This is the "airborne contact" we only glimpsed in the opening of the movie -- the massive thing that took out a carrier and its whole battlegroup.

Ominously, the Hunter-Killer comes about.

EXT. TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

The Commandant communes with the unseen Hunter-Killer, feeding it directions.

STEVENS

OKO-OKO!

Half of the Commandant's hackles do a sudden about-face, reorienting on...

Stevens. He holds the admiral's sword. Brazenly.

STEVENS

You heard me. I said "Oko-Oko."

More hackles "look" at Stevens -- through the Commandant continues to face seaward, torn by pride and duty. But when Stevens charges him...

That war-scythe opens switchblade quick.

Stevens dives, drags his sword along the big Droog's knee, tumbles clear. Now he's got the Commandant's full attention.

COMMANDANT

Voshak-Toshak.

"It had to be."

The Commandant goes for a quick decapitation. Stevens drops, rolls, springs clear, needing to draw this out as long as possible -- needing to give Romeo time to escape. He lands a series of slashing blows to the Commandant's lower body. But somehow he reminds us of a south-paw setting up his opponent with a bunch of right-jabs. Is something bigger coming?

EXT. SPWS - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The SPWS augurs through water. Far away, the OCEAN LIGHTS UP eerily. Again and again.

EXT. OVER THE OCEAN - NIGHT

The Hunter-Killer approaches fast. From its belly, studded cubes are plunging into the ocean...

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

...and detonating with PITCHFORK EXPLOSIONS a mile long. It's overkill -- like fishing with dynamite -- but overkill is a Druuben specialty.

EXT. TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

Stevens attacks again. But this time he feints low -- and swings the sword high.

100 hackles hit the ground, dancing there.

Now reveal the Commandant -- with a brand-new haircut. . . Stevens did to him what the Commandant once did to his own guards.

COMMANDANT'S POV: Blurry. Hazy. Seeing Stevens only as a ghost in a ghost world.

The Commandant goes on a reckless offensive, sweeping his war-scythe like a punch-drunk fighter, now just trying to land anything on Stevens.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

MORE PITCHFORK EXPLOSIONS, more intense. Unsure of the exact location of the sub, the Druuben are carpet-bombing the whole damn ocean. The DETONATIONS spike ever closer to...

The SPWS. Romeo checks his watch, compass, speed -- and signals for the SEAL pilot to CUT ENGINES. Dead-reckoning tells him the sub should be here. Somewhere. Now a new EXPLOSION illuminates...

Boat 19. Right below them.

Romeo and his team abandon the SPWS. They swim hard for the dry-shelters on the deck of the sub.

EXT. TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

The sword swings again...

And CONNECTS with something soft behind the big Droog's leg. Finally it happens: The Commandant's knee touches ground.

STEVENS

So how's it feel.

The Commandant staggers back up. If he spoke English, he'd be saying "Fuckin' lucky punch." The big Droog snatches up his war-scythe -- and goes after Stevens with new fury.

INT. READY ROOM - SUB 19

The escape trunk purges. A hatch opens. In a cascade of water, Romeo and Trappe drop aboard the sub.

Faces greet them -- haggard and unshaven faces but still recognizable as Sub Captain...The Old Man from the destroyed carrier...others we may remember.

THE OLD MAN

What is it? What the hell is happening out there?

SUB CAPTAIN

Did you have coordinates? DID THEY FIND IT?

A BONE-SHAKING BARRAGE from the Hunter-Killer.

ROMEO

Sir, let me suggest you assume firing depth now.

Needing no more prompting, the Sub Captain grabs his lead WEAPONS OFFICER.

SUB CAPTAIN

Launch codes.

EXT. BOAT 19 - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

It's the most portentous image of our age: Missile hatches opening on the deck of a ballistic submarine.

INT. WEAPONS ROOM - BOAT 19

Weapons officers are "spinning up" their missiles, feeding coordinates into computers.

WEAPONS OFFICER #1

Pressurize Tubes 1-4!

WEAPONS OFFICER #2

Pressurizing Tubes 1-4, aye, sir.

WEAPONS OFFICER #1

Stand by for fire order!

WEAPONS OFFICER #2

Standing by for fire order....

EXT. TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

Again Stevens swings the sword...

And connects with the Commandant's other leg. Yellow blood sprays. Now both knees hit the ground.

INT. CONNING TOWER - BOAT 19

WEAPONS OFFICER #1 (SQUAWK BOX)

Standing by for fire order, sir....

Sub Captain is hesitating, burdened by the thought of hitting D.C. He turns to Romeo and Trappe.

SUB CAPTAIN

How good are these coordinates?

ROMEO

Sir, they come from Lieutenant
Commander Terrence Stevens....

TRAPPE

And that's as good as it gets.

Sub Captain hammers the intercom like it was the launch
switch itself.

SUB CAPTAIN

PERMISSION TO FIRE!

EXT. BOAT 19 - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

IGNITION: The missile's protective SHROUD SPLINTERS away.
The first Trident II rises out of its tube.

INT. WEAPONS ROOM - BOAT 19

WEAPONS OFFICER #1

MISSILE ONE AWAY!

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The MISSILE ROARS out of the ocean riding a pillar of fire.
It's the first Horseman of the Apocalypse, and the three
other horses are right behind. By night especially, it is a
vision of spectacular horror.

EXT. TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

The Commandant is kneeling. Depleted. Dismantled. And now
-- as the war-scythe is booted out of his grasp -- disarmed.

Stevens rears back his sword, poised for a final blow when...

FOUR LUMINOUS ARCS appear overhead.

EXT. COASTAL ROAD - NIGHT

Coffey brakes when she sees the missile trails.

COFFEY

Go baby, go baby, go baby go....

EXT. TOP OF CLIFFS - NIGHT

An unseen detonation RUMBLES THE WORLD.

The Commandant senses a new frequency in the air, something that irritates the stubs of his sagittal crest. Something that confuses him.

COMMANDANT'S POV: Still ghostly, we see a growing hemisphere of energy on the western horizon.

STEVENS

That's right. "Your leadership...

He swings hard, aiming to decapitate.

CHOP TO BLACK

STEVENS (O.S.)

...has been removed."