

CHINA DOLL

By Jack Howland

FADE IN

EXT. JUNGLE RIVER - NIGHT

FROM THE PROW OF A SKIFF, we wind slowly through a dense swamp. Trunks of mangrove trees rise darkly from the water. Our outboard motor hums at near-idle speed. We hear men whispering. Our eyes adjust, but not entirely.

SUPERIMPOSE: Gulf of Mannar, Sri Lanka. November 21, 1996.

REVERSE ANGLE to show, in the foreground, a MAN sitting on the gunwale. Behind him are other, younger men. He could be their father. We can make out their bare feet and cigarettes. Behind them, a second, similar motorboat keeps pace.

ORIGINAL ANGLE FROM THE PROW as we navigate carefully. A beat, then a sudden, nervous, hyena-like laugh rises from the whispers.

ON THE MAN, as he turns slowly to look at the strung-out boys behind him. His eyes are bright and cold. They're instantly quiet.

HE LOOKS UP AT THE TIGHTLY FORMED STARS ABOVE, roughly navigating.

FROM THE PROW, WE APPROACH A BEND IN THE RIVER. As we close, the throttle of the outboard slowly opens up. We turn the corner to reveal the broad sea under a starry, moonless night.

As the throttle gradually opens, we move faster.

In the far corner of the horizon we see the running lights of a distant ship.

INT. BRIDGE OF SHIP - NIGHT

ANGLE ON THE RADAR, its sweeping arm churning up as many stars as were in the sky, but this is only static. Beside the radar is a cup of coffee. A hand, the CAPTAIN'S, takes it.

C/U OF THE CAPTAIN, as he looks out over his ship. He seems agreeable, sharp, concerned enough to stand his own watch.

We hear, faintly, Sinatra doing "One for My Baby."

I/E. SHIP

HIS POV AS WE SEE THE SHIP EXTEND INTO THE HORIZON. It's two and a half football fields long, scored by canyons of flatbed-style containers, stacked three, four and five high.

FROM ONE HUNDRED YARDS AHEAD OF HER we see that she is a giantess, blind and alone.

EXT. OCEAN

FROM THE PROW OF THE SKIFF we see the men now all perched like birds on the gunwales.

From the prow of the skiff we see the MAN TAKE A DRAG OF HIS CIGARETTE, then throw it over the side. At this signal, the skiff behind them peels off to starboard.

HOLD ON THE WATER as we move over it quickly, closing the distance.

START CREDITS

EXT. SHIP (TRANSOM)

MOVING WITH THE FIRST OFFICER as he rounds a corner to discover a SAILOR asleep in his chair. Unsurprised, the officer kicks him awake.

EXT. OCEAN

ON THE WATER as we move roughly in the skiff.

EXT. SHIP

We follow the First Officer around another corner and ...

INT. FIRST OFFICER'S CABIN

... into his cabin, where we he gets into bed and resumes reading.

EXT. OCEAN

ANGLE ON THE FAST-MOVING WATER.

INT. BRIDGE

A TELEX MACHINE COMES VIOLENTLY TO LIFE, drowning out the Sinatra.

INT. FIRST OFFICER'S CABIN

The First Officer turns a page and continues reading until he hears a THUMP. He pauses, thinks, and resumes reading until he hears ANOTHER THUMP. After a moment, he rises and ...

EXT. SHIP

... steps outside. He opens a door to reveal A CLUSTER OF PIPES. He adjusts a valve, then listens for the thumping to stop. It does.

He walks over to the railing and pisses off the side of the ship. He looks over as he finishes to SEE THE WATER, DEAD-STILL NOW. As he does so, a PARACHUTE FLARE BURSTS IN THE SKY over his shoulder. He zips up and turns, watching it fall. His P.O.V. becomes ...

INT. BRIDGE

... the Captain's, stepping forward from the Telex to watch the same thing. Starkly drawn shadows course over the ship.

EXT. TRANSOM

The first officer watches, then hears something behind him.

INT. BRIDGE

The Captain tries to make sense of what he's seeing as ...

EXT. TRANSOM

... the First Officer slowly rounds the same corner as before to SEE THE SAILOR, UNDER THE SHIFTING LIGHT OF THE FLARE, BEATEN AND BLOODY.

Behind the First Officer, unheard, TWO SHADOWS MOVE QUICKLY BY.

EXT. STAIRS TO BRIDGE

A HIJACKER'S P.O.V. as we climb carefully, then see through the window in the hatch the now familiar features of the bridge. The door is carefully drawn open as ...

INT. BRIDGE

... C/U ON THE CAPTAIN REALIZING WHAT MUST BE HAPPENING. He moves quickly down the console to the PA. As he moves, we switch to ...

I/E. BRIDGE OF THE AURORA

... THE HIJACKER'S P.O.V. as he comes through the door to see the Captain moving straight towards him. We keep moving as the CAPTAIN SEES US ...

THE CAPTAIN'S P.O.V. as the hijacker moves quickly toward him ...

THE HIJACKER'S P.O.V. as the Captain shouts some kind of warning in Danish.

THE CAPTAIN'S P.O.V. as the Hijacker keeps moving towards us, rising now, wild eyes in his black skull, bringing A MACHETE OVER HIS HEAD. The Hijacker's war cry blurs with the captain's crescendoing shout until THE MACHETE COMES DOWN ACROSS US WITH A BUTCHER'S STROKE. Everything is abruptly silent.

REVERSE ON THE HIJACKER, A FINE DUST OF BLOOD ON HIS CHEST AND SHIRT, HEAVING.

We listen as he heaves ...

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE SHOT: **China Doll**

EXT. AURORA

FROM ABOVE -- AS WE PULL AWAY -- WE SEE FIGURES MOVING OVER THE SHIP, the hijacking continues as night becomes morning and all is calm.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

A montage of shots shows us the ship underway. We see her original crew set adrift in an inflatable raft. As she steams, she is repainted and renamed, the China Doll becoming the AURORA and raising a Croatian jack.

CUT TO:

EXT. RANGOON (STREET) - DAY

WE TRACK BEHIND A YOUNG MAN AND BOY ON A SCOOTER, both Southeast Asian, racing through wilds of a third-world city. As they drop down a hill, we see the Aurora moored in the distance.

SUPER: Rangoon, Burma. November 25, 1996.

They stop under the high, sheer wall of her hull. The Young Man, BIG BROTHER, looks bright, hopeful. The Boy is, in every way, his LITTLE BROTHER. They set into the wild fray before the Aurora's gangway -- families, children, hustlers. Behind them, cranes haul aboard containers, swinging high in the air.

ON AN OLDER MAN, RECOGNIZING THEM. He approaches, and the Young Man hands him a small brick of cash -- this is more money than he should have.

The Older Man starts toward the gangway. We follow, then ...

PAN TO A LONGSHOREMEN'S SUPERVISOR SHOUTING with what seems exaggerated concern. We watch as his charges carefully work A CONTAINER ON A HOOK -- IT'S WHITE WITH A BLUE STRIPE, SOMETHING WE NEED TO REMEMBER. We see the longshoremen are all aware of another pair of men, observing from a distance. We watch this container lift into the air, barely clearing the crowd.

EXT. AURORA

The Older Man leads us through the maze of containers to a hidden door. We enter ...

INT. CONTAINER - DAY

... a space jammed with people, buckets and dirty mattresses. This is steerage.

The Older Man beckons us up a ladder where we discover more comfortable accommodations -- bunks, chairs, card tables, bottled water. The Older Man shows Big Brother his bunk, but now we see that Little Brother has disappeared. Big Brother completes the transaction, throws his gear on the mattress and starts out after Little Brother. As he moves, we may notice A NUMBER OF YOUNG MEN just like Big Brother.

We descend back to steerage, where we find Little Brother playing with a LITTLE GIRL, also unaccompanied. We set off to look for her parents, but her MOTHER -- pretty, thirtyish, perhaps Chinese -- finds us first. She's clearly relieved. We get the impression this isn't the first time the Little Girl has run off. It's clear that Mother and Big Brother don't speak the same language. He's nevertheless elegant and polite as he excuses himself and leads Little Brother away.

C/U ON LITTLE BROTHER AS HE LOOKS BACK OVER HIS SHOULDER AT HIS NEW FRIEND.

CUT TO:

EXT. PHUKET, THAILAND - NIGHT

SUPER: Phuket, Thailand. November 28, 1996.

WE TRACK ANOTHER, OLDER BOY RUNNING THROUGH ANOTHER BUSY THIRD WORLD STREET. We may miss THE AURORA AT ANCHOR IN THE DISTANCE.

The Older Boy, about thirteen and very dark-skinned, turns a corner to reveal a DOCKSIDE BAR. He pushes his way in ...

INT. DOCKSIDE BAR - NIGHT

... and fights through a mostly Thai crowd. This is not a place for children. A few amused looks contrast the determination in the Older Boy's face.

A HEAD-TO-TOE SHOT OF THE OLDER BOY AS HE STOPS, finding what he was looking for.

REVERSE TO SHOW THE BACK OF A SEATED MAN, CLEARLY A WESTERNER, SURROUNDED BY OTHER EX-PATS, DRINKING.

REVERSING BACK TO THE OLDER BOY, he takes a deep breath and pulls up his shirt, revealing A GUN IN HIS WAISTBAND PRESSED AGAINST HIS SUNKEN CHEST. He pulls it out and POINTS IT RIGHT AT US.

REVERSE AGAIN TO THE EX-PATS, some of whom notice the older boy and slowly stop laughing. EVERYBODY SUDDENLY SCATTERS.

A beat, and the WESTERNER TURNS IN HIS SEAT TO FACE US. This is SMITH. We see he's a little drunk. We see also that, facing a boy prepared to kill him, he seems simultaneously relieved and amused.

SMITH

Let me guess ... You want your lawn-mowing money.

He immediately starts to laugh. Others too.

REVERSE ON THE OLDER BOY who, upset and confused, PULLS THE TRIGGER, blowing a hole in the wall behind Smith.

SMITH

(Shouting and ducking)
Holy Shit!?!

The Boy levels the gun uneasily on Smith.

OLDER BOY

You kill my father!

Smith's expression tells us this very well could be true.

SMITH

Who was your father?

OLDER BOY

Tran Landoc. Tran Landoc!

SMITH

(Beat, remembering) Your father shot me first. In the back.

OLDER BOY

That not true!

The gun bounces unsteadily in the boy's tiring arms.

SMITH

I'm afraid it is. I remember it very clearly.

The Older Boy says nothing, unsure whether he wants to pull the trigger or run away.

SMITH (CONT'D)

Tran Jr. I think we should take this outside. Now I'm going to stand up ...

Smith starts to rise.

TRAN

Don't move!

SMITH

Whoa! Hey! If you don't want to kill anybody but me, then we go outside ... Okay? Now I'm on your side here ...

Smith rises, turns and grabs his drink -- making sure Tran sees and sanctions every move -- then starts out across the bar. The crowd parts for them, then follows, expecting a show. Smith staggers a little, then makes a stop at the bar, leaning over.

SMITH

Bob, I'll have a shot of bourbon before I do this.

BOB, a diminutive, weather-beaten Indonesian, serves it up and Smith downs it. Braced, Smith swats a nearby prostitute on the ass.

SMITH

Alright! C'mon Tran!

Smith heads outside with Tran right behind him. As Smith crosses from the bar light into the shadows, WE BRIEFLY LOSE HIM. In this split second, HE TURNS AND EFFORTLESSLY REMOVES THE GUN FROM TRAN'S HANDS. Tran freezes.

SMITH

What do you got here? A .22?

Smith is now a figure of shadows. He shakes out four bullets from the revolver, leaving only two. He spins the barrel.

SMITH

We have to be sportsmen about this.

He hands the gun back to Tran. Smith produces his own from somewhere, a small 9 mm. He pulls out the clip, leaving only the bullet in the chamber. He shows it to Tran Jr. then tucks it in the back of his pants.

Smith gestures to Tran to follow him into the alley. He places Tran on one end, then walks to the other. The crowd surrounds them.

SMITH

Okay! Now I'll let you go first. If you miss, then, well, I'll kill you.

Tran is bewildered.

SMITH

... Whenever you're ready ...

Onlookers try to step forward and take the gun from Tran but Smith angrily shoos them off. Again Smith approaches Tran, raises Tran's arms to shooting position, then returns to his spot.

SMITH

Ready when you are, Tran. Go ahead
and ...

TRAN SHOOTS IMMEDIATELY. Smith staggers back, then falls. People rush to him.

Several beats, then (CLOSE) SMITH'S EYES SPRING WIDE. Perhaps even he's surprised he's alive. The crowd goes utterly silent. SMITH SLOWLY GETS UP. Tran sees this and is petrified. Smith staggers across the alley to Tran, grabs him roughly by the arm. SMITH'S EYES ARE WILD. Another beat, then his lips part, revealing the SILVER HEEL OF A BULLET HELD IN HIS TEETH. He growls then shoves Tran away, who sprints off into the night.

REVERSE ON SMITH, BREATHING HEAVILY, BITTER AND ELATED AT ONCE.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCKSIDE BAR PORCH - LATER

Smith sits at a patio table, looking over the dense vegetation to the harbor, where THE AURORA SITS AT ANCHOR. From behind, Bob approaches.

BOB

You should have killed that boy.
When one kills the father, one must
also kill the sons.

SMITH

Yes, that's what mother always told
me.

BOB

Here.

Bob places a half-full bottle of whiskey on the patio table.

SMITH
What's this.

BOB
This is an ancient Thai custom. A gift from one drunk to another upon one's departure.

Smith takes it up.

SMITH
Is this half full or half empty?

BOB
Ah yes we are always so philosophical before we go to sea. This my friend is a bottle we share. I've drank my half. Now you can drink your's.

SMITH
Don't you owe me a couple thousand dollars? This is the best you could do?

BOB
You said you were coming back. I can pay you then.

They exchange a look. They both know Smith isn't coming back, and that he can't admit it. We hear some commotion downstairs, something Bob will have to attend to.

BOB (CONT'D)
It's a Thai custom.

SMITH
(beat) Yeah. Sure it is.

BOB
(a hand on Smith's shoulder)
Godspeed.

Bob leaves, and Smith turns his attention back to the Aurora. The sea glitters in the moonlight.

FROM BEHIND, WE WATCH AS SMITH SITS PERFECTLY STILL, PERHAPS SAGGING A LITTLE TO SUGGEST HE'S ASLEEP. IN A TIME ELAPSE SHOT, NIGHT TURNS TO MORNING.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTORBOAT - MORNING

C/U OF SMITH, IN SUNGLASSES, RIDING ON THE BOW OF THE BOAT. At his feet are groceries and a hockey-style duffel bag. The seaside third-world city is receding in the background.

REVERSE ANGLE TO SHOW THE AURORA RISING IN THE DISTANCE.

Smith turns to say something to the Indonesian at the tiller, and as we close, we do a SLOW LAP AROUND THE SHIP. It's over four football fields long.

EXT. TRANSOM - MORNING

Smith hands his bags up to an AFRICAN SAILOR.

INT. ELEVATOR

Smith and the African Sailor ride to the third floor of the "Wheelhouse," the five-story, steel structure at the stern containing the Bridge, Mess and Cabins. Its expressionless, rusting bulk evokes memories of Iron Curtain architecture.

INT. SMITH'S CABIN

Smith enters to see, seated at a small table, a fortyish American black guy (JONES) and, beside him, an inflatable doll. Smith looks at it and says nothing.

JONES

Well, you've really picked a winner here, Jimmy!

Smith drops his bags. He sits.

JONES (CONT'D)

This boat could probably be boarded from every angle. Did you notice the fantail?

SMITH

(Mock innocence) What fantail?

JONES

The unlit one. Yeah, all the lights are fried. Which wouldn't be as much of a problem if it didn't sit so low in the water you could practically swim aboard.

(MORE)

JONES (cont'd)
 Lucky for us we top out at 12 knots. However, having discussed this with the engine room guy -- "guy" is singular, mind you -- I've been assured that if we dope up the mixture, we can make 13 knots for as long as an hour.

SMITH
 Let's hope it doesn't come to that.

JONES
 Our friend the skipper claims he doesn't know how much is in the safe. Ironically, the entire crew does.

SMITH
 How much?

JONES
 \$15,000.

SMITH
 Tell me more about the crew.

JONES
 There's a grand total of ten of them. So, between the crew, you, myself, Neil and Buzz, I estimate we can stand watch over half the ship at all times. Provided we forego sleeping and eating and sailing the ship.

SMITH
 That's a tall order.

JONES
 (Continuing) The skipper we know
 ...

SHOT OF LAFRERE ON THE BRIDGE IN THE CAPTAIN'S CHAIR. AS JONES CONTINUES, LAFRERE CROSSES HIS LEGS TO REVEAL A BRAND NEW PAIR OF BRUNO MAGLIS.

JONES (V.O.)
 I gave him those shoes, by the way, and he lit up like a little girl. The First Mate is a sheepish, incompetent, little Malay named Burhan.

SHOT OF BURHAN SPILLING THE CAPTAIN'S COFFEE ON A MAP.

JONES (V.O.)

The Bosun's Mate is an Azerbaijani from Detroit. He's as scary as he sounds.

ON THE TRANSOM, THE BOSUN'S MATE ("SIVA") SEIZES A SAILOR BY THE BALLS AND POINTS AT A GAUGE.

JONES

The engine room guy apparently has never been seen topside.

DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF THE SHIP, WE SEE THE ENGINE ROOM GUY ("GHAZI") READING SOLEMNLY, SEATED BEFORE HIS SHRINE OF DIALS AND VALVES.

JONES (V.O.)

... claims he's Palestinian, but he's got an Afghani accent.

SMITH

Did he recognize you?

JONES

Don't think so. The six deck hands are all Filipino. Three of them seem afraid to leave one another's side, but they're happy enough together, in a Huey, Dewey and Louey sort of way ...

TOPSIDE, WE SEE SIX DECK HANDS. IN A C/U, WE PAN ACROSS FIVE, EACH MORE HALF-WITTED THAN THE NEXT, ARRIVING AT THE SIXTH, WHO'S PSYCHOPATHIC.

JONES (V.O.)

... the sixth one, however, is a kind of South Pacific Lee Harvey Oswald. Fortunately, he seems to be extremely lazy, though we should still keep an eye on him.

Smith sees that Jones has finished. He looks at the inflatable doll.

SMITH

Did you win this on your sex tour?

JONES

That was a consulting gig, not a sex tour. And Charlotte here I picked up to stand watch. Remember hearing about that Aussie team and the mannequins?

SMITH

Smart.

Smith gets up. He throws his hockey bag on the bed.

JONES

Bangkok isn't entirely a Sex Tour economy, you know. Can't I get a security consulting gig once in a while? Am I to sit idly by while the rest of the world mints money? It's the fucking nineties.

ANGLE ON THE BAG, AS IT'S RIPPED OPEN, revealing several bottles of Indonesian gin, the half-empty bottle Bob gave him, clothes, a couple books, an MP-5 machine gun wrapped in plastic, clips, grenades, other military hardware.

Jones watches philosophically as Smith unpacks.

JONES (CONT'D)

(Beat) Jimmy, they ought to call this boat the SS ROB ME.

CUT TO:

EXT. AURORA - DUSK

TRACK THROUGH THE CANYONS OF CONTAINERS, THEN OFF ITS PROW TO THE OPEN STRAIT. THE MOUNTAINS OF SUMATRA TO THE EAST, JUNGLES OF MALAYSIA TO THE WEST. PULL UP TO SEE THE LIGHTS OF MANY SHIPS AHEAD OF THEM.

REVERSE ANGLE, as the sun sets on the water, the running lights of still more ships behind them becoming dimly visible.

**SUPER: Mallaca Strait, between Malaysia and Indonesia.
November 29, 1996. The most pirated waterway in the world.**

EXT. AURORA - NIGHT

WIDE ANGLE REVEALS THE SHIP LIT UP LIKE AN AUTO DEALERSHIP. Water cannons fire off the stern (water cannons and bright lights are a standard anti-piracy measure).

C/U ON THE EYES OF "NEIL," A GHURKA. PULL BACK to reveal his full person -- a dark Indian, bare-chested and powerfully built. Between his swim trunks and the night vision goggles perched on his head, he could pass for a futuristic lifeguard. Except he's carrying an MP-5 machine gun, stun grenades and zip-tie plastic cuffs. He lifts a handheld radio to his mouth, saying something ...

EXT. AURORA MIDSHIPS - NIGHT

... TO "BUZZ," ANOTHER GHURKA. Buzz looks more like a golf pro. He wears a pink polo shirt under his webbing. He carries a rifle with a scope. He answers Neil on his headset ...

INT. BRIDGE

... and we hear him from a RADIO ON A TABLE. Jones stands behind the HELMSMAN.

INT. MESS

Smith sits among the crew. A television mounted on the wall flickers in the background. Lafrere, gentile and French, works delicately with his knife and fork. Everyone else appears finished.

LAFRERE

I think we're ready now to hear
from our honored guest.

Everyone is instantly quiet.

LAFRERE (CONT'D)

This is Jimmy Smith. He and his
friends will be helping us guard
against uninvited shipmates. I'll
ask each of you to be cooperative,
as well as understanding of their
role here.

BURHAN

What I want to know is, what are we carrying that is so valuable to our betters that they'd provide us with gunmen? Certainly they aren't here to protect the crew.

LAFRERE

Certainly not.

BURHAN

So what are we carrying?

LAFRERE

I'm as ignorant as you are.

BURHAN

Alright, then, where are we going?

LAFRERE

That I can tell you. We're bound for Paredon.

BURHAN

Paredon ...

LAFRERE

Mexico. Near the Guatemalan border.

BURHAN

Mexico?

GHAZI

(To Burhan) Don't be such a fool. A straight haul from Rangoon to Mexico. With security?

BURHAN

Heroin?

GHAZI

What else could it be?

LAFRERE

My register says it's T-shirts and tennis shoes ... illegally made, of course.

SMITH

Captain?

LAFRERE

Please ...

SMITH

I'm sure we've all heard of the Petro Endeavor and Stellan Fiske. We're here to guard against anything like that happening to the Aurora.

GHAZI

And who's to guard us against you? While I won't pretend to speak for my comrades here, I know who you are. I've heard of the Endeavor and the Fiske. I've also heard of the Kamenev.

LAFRERE

(Still eating) Mr. Smith has given me his personal assurance that he will not harm us.

Dead quiet. Lafrere is still studiously eating. He looks up. He stops, his mouth still partly full.

LAFRERE (CONT'D)

Shipmates, I know this man. Yes, he was a pirate. But he is also on quite intimate terms with our employer. In fact he owes him a substantial gambling debt. Now, because he has certain talents ...

We see Smith refill his whiskey glass. Again.

GHAZI

Is drinking one of them?

Smith smiles discreetly at this.

LAFRERE

... he is aboard to repay that debt.

SMITH

And to protect the Aurora.

LAFRERE

And to protect the Aurora. Now, that should put your minds at ease and make us all feel very much safer.

Lafrere indicates with his fork for Smith to continue.

SMITH

Here's how this will work. Jones, Neil and Buzz are the other security personnel. They'll handle the night watch, as they are doing right now. I'll handle the day watch. We have only a couple rules that we'll all observe. Rule number one: If you're on deck between sunset and sunrise and you're not part of the watch, you're a pirate. We shoot pirates. Rule number two: If we're boarded, which is always a possibility, get in a cabin, lock the door and stay low to the ground
...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AURORA - NIGHT

IN MONTAGE, WE SEE NEIL PATROLLING THE DECK, THEN BUZZ DISCREETLY WATCHING SEVERAL SAILORS EMERGE FROM THE WHEELHOUSE FOR A SMOKE, AND FINALLY JONES, SEATED IN A LAWN CHAIR ON THE TRANSOM, STARING OUT OVER THE AURORA'S WAKE, WEARING HIS NIGHT VISION GOGGLES.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRIDGE DECK - MORNING

A SERIES OF SHOTS DESCRIBES THIS SHIP AT WORK. The interior: the engine room, a catwalk along the keel between the two hulls, the elevator in the wheelhouse.

ANGLE ON SMITH POURING WHISKEY INTO HIS COFFEE, THEN ON SMITH HIMSELF.

It's the Day Watch. An MP-5 hangs around Smith's neck.

AS SMITH TURNS TO LOOK BACK OVER THE STERN, we see the Strait is already alive with activity. We see dozens of fishing skiffs manned by young boys and withered old men. We see a HUGE OIL TANKER NEARLY PLOWING OVER A ROWBOAT gathering nets.

WE SEE A LONG, LOW SKIFF WITH A HUGE OUTBOARD MOTOR. It's manned by young men, looking a lot like the Sri Lankans (first scene). They make eye contact with Smith. He puts his gun on his hip and TIPS HIS BALL CAP. They motor off in a broad curve. ONE OF THE BOYS GIVES HIM THE FINGER.

EXT. AURORA MIDSHIPS - DAY

SMITH TALKS WITH HUEY, DEWEY, LOUEY, ET AL. It looks casual enough, but they also seem nervous.

CUT TO:

INT. - TV ROOM - DAY

ANGLE ON A COFFEE MACHINE BREWING. A couple other sailors watch Smith from behind. They sit at a card table and drink tea. Smith's gun hangs in the middle of his back. He takes his coffee, turns and approaches them. He sits and looks down at a mahjong game.

SMITH
You fellas playing dominos?

ON BOTH SAILORS, looking terrified.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAD (OFF BRIDGE) - DAY

ON BURHAN FROM BEHIND as he pees leisurely. Smith walks into the shot at the second urinal.

C/U ON BURHAN as he slowly turns to see who's next to him.

C/U ON SMITH smiling cordially at Burhan as he pees.

SMITH
(warmly) Hi.

CUT TO:

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DAY

A jungle of white-washed pipes, wheels, elbows, etc. It's very hot. A fan cycles air through a single vent to the outside. A row of gauges.

WE TRACK THROUGH THIS SPACE UNTIL WE SEE THE BACK OF GHAZI. He's on a stepladder, working a bolt with a wrench. We come right up to him, but he doesn't seem to notice us.

ON SMITH as he looks up curiously at the job.

ON GHAZI as he grimaces, wipes sweat from his brow.

ON SMITH again as he stands on his tiptoes for a better look. Still Ghazi is oblivious.

SMITH
Need a hand?

ON GHAZI as he jumps, the wrench falling through the piping.

SMITH (CONT.)
Whoa! Sorry. Careful now.

GHAZI
Shit! You scared me!

SMITH
I am sorry. Didn't mean to.

Ghazi watches him, disbelieving. Ghazi comes down from the ladder. Wipes his hands on a rag.

GHAZI
So it's my turn.

SMITH
The word's out, huh?

GHAZI
Yes. I would have thought you'd have come to me first.

SMITH
Where are you from?

GHAZI
Your colleague asked me that. I'm Palestinian. Is that a problem?

SMITH
No, so long as you don't blow yourself up or anything.

GHAZI
That's my prerogative, isn't it.

SMITH
I suppose so. Please don't think I'm playing favorites. I just knew how hot it would be down here.

GHAZI
What do you want to know.

SMITH

Are you now or have you ever been a member of the communist party?

GHAZI

(noticing that Smith is drunk) Very funny. You should be a comedian. You Americans are a genuinely whimsical people.

SMITH

I'd like to go through your cabin.

GHAZI

Are you asking or telling me?

SMITH

Both.

GHAZI

(handing him the key) Please.

SMITH

You're welcome to watch.

GHAZI

Thank you, no. I prefer to do my job.

SMITH

And I'll do mine.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT OF MALACCA - DUSK

We see the sun falling toward the horizon. We start to see the running lights of other ships.

EXT/INT ELEVATOR

Doors open, Smith enters and descends.

INT. THIRD FLOOR/SLEEPING QUARTERS

Smith walks down the hall. He stops at a door. He tests the handle. The door flies away from him.

C/U OF BUZZ WITH A PISTOL IN HIS HAND, pointing it at Smith's head.

Buzz's clearly a little frustrated at having been woken up. Upon seeing it's Smith, he says nothing, turns around and gets back into bed. Smith follows him in.

INT. NEIL AND BUZZ'S CABIN

They each sleep knotted up in their sheets, like teenagers. Smith rattles Buzz's cot with his foot.

SMITH

Let's go, boys. It's a school day ...
C'mon ...

The Gurkhas groan. Smith tries to rattle Neil's cot and suddenly finds himself BREATHLESS AND ON HIS STOMACH, FLIPPED BY BUZZ.

Buzz gets up and deliberately steps on Smith's back as he goes to get his kit bag.

SMITH

I thought we agreed that there
would be no more Kung Fu!

INT. MESS - LATER

The Gurkhas sip tea, half-awake. Jones cleans a pistol. Smith leans against a counter.

SMITH

Do you guys need anything?

BUZZ

Yes, we need you shut up.

NEIL

Yeah.

Smith rolls his eyes.

BUZZ

Why you always come in wake us up
like asshole?

SMITH

(exasperated) You guys would never
get up otherwise.

NEIL

We'd get up.

SMITH
I've seen you sleep for 2 ½ days.

NEIL
When?

SMITH
Last year when we went up to Subic Bay.

They have nothing to say to this.

SMITH
(massaging Buzz's shoulders) C'mon boys! This is the big game! The big dance!

BUZZ
Yeah. Big shit job!

NEIL
Yeah!

SMITH
Hey, we're going to Mexico!!

BUZZ
You're going to Mexico. We come back.

SMITH
So nobody needs anything.

No one answers.

SMITH (CONT.)
Questions? Comments?

JONES
So you're not overly concerned about the crew.

SMITH
Not "overly" concerned, no.

JONES
(a beat, then a look at Buzz) Since we have another two days in Strait, we thought we might want to send message.

BUZZ
Might help get word out.

SMITH
(looking at them carefully, then)
No.

JONES
We haven't proposed anything yet.

BUZZ
We do something like what Russians
did ...

NEIL
Yeah.

JONES
Just like the Russians.

NEIL
Yeah.

JONES
Unless you think it's a bad idea.

SMITH
It's a crazy idea.

BUZZ
Crazy worked for Russians.

JONES
And what is crazy, really? When you
think about it ...

INT. MESS - LATER

Smith dines with the officers. They eat in silence. Officers
exchange looks. Finally Burhan starts.

BURHAN
This is an unusual line of work for
an American ...

Smith looks up, a touch surprised.

SMITH
Oh I'm not so sure that's true.

SIVA
What brought you to this part of
the world?

BURHAN
We're you in the Navy before?

SMITH
No.

SIVA
The Marine Corps?

SMITH
No.

BURHAN
You understand it's so unusual to see Americans here.

LAFRERE
I think my crew is genuinely curious about you and your partner.

BURHAN
Having asked so many questions of us, is it not fair that we ask questions of you?

SMITH
That seems fair, yes.

LAFRERE
I've tried to explain that you always seem reluctant to talk about your background. For whatever reason.

SMITH
There's not much to talk about, really.

SIVA
Were you a spy?

SMITH
I can't answer that question.

BURHAN
Okay. Try us. Why did you come to Southeast Asia?

SMITH
I came with the Peace Corps. I came to help people.

BURHAN

Help people? You were a pirate,
were you not? Now you kill pirates
on behalf of a crime syndicate?

SMITH

I admit it didn't work out as I
planned.

Smith can see they have their own ideas.

SMITH (CONT'D)

Why do you think I came here?

BURHAN

I can think only of what I hear.

SMITH

Which is?

BURHAN

That you were a spy.

Smith doesn't answer.

BURHAN (CONT'D)

That you were involved in Tiannamen
Square somehow ...

SMITH

Somehow? Tiannamen Square was my
idea.

BURHAN

That later you were a traitor to
your country--you and Mr. Jones--
and that now you cannot go back.
You or Jones.

Pause. We hear only the clinking of silverware.

LAFRERE

Our First Officer is an elaborately
informed man.

After briefest pause.

SMITH

As hard as it may be to believe,
the truth is that I am ... or
rather I was a wealthy adventurer
and occasional criminal.

Lafrere either chokes or laughs behind his napkin.

SMITH (CONT'D)

What money I had I've blown over the years playing poker in Macao. I have a certain kind of military experience. I can do a job like this to pay the rent. I've got to go back to the States to get whatever money I have remaining. I'm sneaking in because I'm wanted in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for having murdered my brother ...

BURHAN

Did you murder your brother?

SMITH

Yes. I did.

GHAZI

And Jones?

SMITH

Jones can tell you his own story.

There is another, longer pause here, people resume eating until Burhan begins again.

BURHAN

You were a pirate?

EXT. AURORA - NIGHT

A WIDE ANGLE SHOT OF THE SHIP STEAMING THROUGH THE NIGHT. This time, none of her deck lights or water cannons are on. A half a dozen skiffs motor between us, miniscule compared to the size of the Aurora but still threatening, predatory. In a Spielberg-like shot, A SKIFF COMES FROM BEHIND US INTO THE FRAME, HEADING OBLIQUELY FOR THE AURORA, men perched on her gunwales.

INT. MESS

SMITH

I was.

BURHAN

And if I may ask, how would you approach a vessel like the Aurora?

Smith looks from Burhan to Lafrere.

SMITH

Well, I wouldn't take on a ship like this. A container carrier. Too hard to piece out all the cargo. You can't move containers from ship to ship the way you can kerosene or light crude. When I was in that line of work, we focused on product carriers. Maybe a little smaller than this. With a nice small crew like yours that can't stand its own watch.

BURHAN

How would you board her?

EXT. MIDSHIPS

Buzz patrols in his night vision goggles, paying careful attention to the Aurora's sides.

INT. MESS

SMITH

If she's carrying enough, if she's low enough in the water, we'd just come up right behind you, step right up onto your transom.

SIVA

What time?

SMITH

About 4:00 in the morning.

SIVA

What would you do to us?

EXT. MALACCA STRAIT

A couple skiffs cross the Aurora's wake.

INT. MESS

SMITH
 We'd round you up. Chances are
 you'd be asleep, so we'd haul you
 out of bed. Set you adrift.

SIVA
 Set us adrift ...

SMITH
 I tried not to kill anybody. We
 were the exception, you understand.

EXT. SKIFF

WE SEE A SIX OR SEVEN INDONESIANS, rocking in the wake of the Aurora. We see them close up, close enough to see the hunger in the eyes, considering her, while Smith continues ...

SMITH (V.O.)
 Most of these guys are just
 fishermen trying to make ends meet.
 They look at boat like this, no
 lights, no water cannons. They
 figure everybody's asleep. So they
 roll the dice.

EXT. PROW

ON JONES as he sits in his sniper's perch. He answers a call on his handset.

Jones?
 NEIL (V.O.)

Yes.
 JONES

Your chocolate in my peanut butter.
 NEIL (V.O.)

I'll be right down.
 JONES

INT. MESS

Smith sets down his glass.

SMITH

Really, what do they have to lose?
There's a good chance they
literally don't have a pot to piss
in ...

EXT. SKIFF

PANNING SLOWLY ACROSS THESE INDONESIAN MEN NOW, WATCHING THE
AURORA, ASKING THEMSELVES IF SHE FEELS LUCKY.

SMITH (V.O.)

... They live in tin shacks with
dirt floors. They wear second hand
NBA gear. They see a boat like this
... It's the third world watching
the first world actually pass them
by.

INT. MESS

Smith rolls the ice in his whiskey.

SMITH

They're who we're worried about ...
You should always worry about
desperate men.

EXT. SKIFF

We see them still watching the Aurora, until one of them says
something, and the motor sputters up. THEY TURN AWAY, WHILE
WE WATCH FROM ...

EXT. MIDSHIPS

... a deck on the Aurora, where Jones has joined Neil. Neil
sets down his binoculars as the skiff heads off into the
darkness.

PULL BACK TO THE EARLIER WIDE ANGLE SHOT OF THE AURORA
CONTINUING ON. IN THE FOREGROUND IS THE NIGHT TRAFFIC OF
OTHER SKIFFS CROSSING THE STRAIT, FEELING TO US LIKE SHARKS
IN THE WATER.

INT. SMITH'S CABIN - LATER

ANGLE ON A CB HANDSET. It lies on a little table, next to a glass of whiskey, the 9 mm and an issue of Sports Illustrated. Smith is sitting with his back to us, his feet up, only his finger moves, tracing the rim of his glass. A movie plays in the combo TV/VCR bolted to the bulkhead. William Holden opens a footlocker full of contraband in Stalag 17.

CLOSE ON THE TV as the POWs march around the table singing. Hold on this for awhile, picking up Wilder's timing, until Holden notices the light bulb, then ...

CUT TO:

EXT. TRANSOM

A SKIFF IDLES A FEW YARDS BEHIND THE AURORA. A man remains at her helm. The transom is empty. There are hijackers aboard.

EXT. WHEELHOUSE STAIRS

ON TWO PAIRS OF BARE FEET (HIJACKERS #1 AND #2) RUNNING UP THE STEEL STAIRS.

INTERCUT SCENES (FROM STALAG 17) OF HOLDEN AND THE SWINGING BULB.

EXT. MIDSHIPS

A PAIR OF HIJACKERS (#3 AND #4) RUN DOWN THE SIDE, having boarded on bamboo poles. The wheelhouse looms before them.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL

HIJACKER #5 enters a door at the end, different from the others we saw before, but still the very type of man Smith was describing. He moves carefully. He knows what he's doing.

EXT./INT. BRIDGE

Hijacker #1 pushes open the hatch to the bridge. He enters. He has an old M-1 rifle. As he moves, we see he's taken aback to find no one inside. #2 enters behind him, with a machete.

They look at one another. Then the LIGHTS GO OUT.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL

Hijacker #5 steps into the first cabin, but sees nothing. He steps out and comes face-to-face with the barrel of Jones's 9 MM.

JONES

Hi.

EXT. TRANSOM

The HIJACKER (#6) at the helm of the skiff hears a whisper, but doesn't see anything. He hears it again. It's more urgent, a hiss. He motors slowly up to a silhouette on the transom. As he closes, we slowly recognize Buzz with his MP-5, so close now that #6 can't get away. After a brief, whispered exchange, Buzz waits patiently as the hijacker ties up to the Aurora.

EXT. WHEELHOUSE STAIRS

#3 and #4 are now running up the stairs toward the bridge, both with machetes. They run hard and slam through the hatch.

INT. BRIDGE

HIJACKER #3'S P.O.V. PANS ACROSS A NOW LIGHTED BRIDGE, THEN DROPS TO #1 AND #2, NOW CAREFULLY PLACED NEXT TO ONE ANOTHER ON THE GROUND, BUT IN CONVULSIONS.

REVERSE ON THE TWO NEW ARRIVALS. SUDDENLY #4 COLLAPSES. BEHIND HIM IN THE DOORWAY IS NEIL, A STUN GUN ONE HAND, A PISTOL IN THE OTHER.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRANSOM

Neil and Buzz throw #3 and #4 into the skiff. All six are now in the boat. We see their wrists are bound with zip ties. Jones throws some plastic water jugs and food aboard. He ties a rope to the bow of the skiff.

JONES (IN ROUGH INDONESIAN)
 (To #3) Two days.

Hijacker #3 nods anxiously. Jones then hands him a broomstick with fabric wrapped around the end of it. He unfurls it in this fisherman's bound hands, revealing a crudely drawn but recognizable SKULL AND CROSSBONES FLAG. Jones helps him wave it. #3 nods some more, understanding.

JONES
 (as they wave) Yay, I'm a pirate!
 Shiver me timbers! Yeah, you get
 it. Great.

Jones lets them out about fifty yards behind them.

INT. SMITH'S CABIN

CLOSE ON THE TV as it slowly turns to snowy static. The movie has ended. Daylight now fills the room as we ...

INT. SMITH'S CABIN - MORNING

... PULL BACK TO SEE SMITH AT THE SAME TABLE, getting dressed. We catch just a glimpse of a SHOULDER TO WAIST SCAR as he pulls his shirt on. He drops a few items into his pocket, then puts the gun in the band of his pants, at the small of his back. He drapes his shirt over this and it's suddenly invisible. He puts on his sunglasses.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRAIT

The Aurora pulls the pirate skiff through morning traffic, drawing the attention of the entire sea lane. The fisherman waves his flag.

A MONTAGE HERE TO SPAN THE UTTERLY BORING HOURS AT SEA. WE WATCH JONES, SMITH, NEIL AND BUZZ CONFER IN SILENCE. WE SEE THE DAY ON THIS WORKING SHIP PASS. SMITH, IN A FAR CORNER OF THE SHIP, HIDES A BOTTLE OF BOOZE. WE SEE BUZZ (AT NIGHT) FIRE A VERY BUSINESS-LIKE BURST FROM HIS RIFLE AT SOME DISTANT SHADOW IN THE SEA. THE NEXT DAY WE SEE SMITH, JONES, NEIL AND BUZZ LAYING OUT SUN-TANNING. THAT EVENING WE WATCH SMITH PLAY CARDS (AND CON) HUEY, DEWEY AND LOUEY (WHILE LEE HARVEY BROODS FROM HIS BUNK). WE SEE SMITH FOLLOW GHAZI INTO THE ELEVATOR AGAIN. THEY RIDE UP TOGETHER, SAYING NOTHING.

EXT. AURORA - MORNING

It's a rainy dawn as we leave the South China Sea. We watch from a distance as the captured hijacker's skiff, now pulled up to the transom, is untied. We see the smoke of it's motor as it fires up. The skiff peels away. The fishermen have been freed. There are no other boats in the area. The Aurora steams off into the distance.

**SUPER: Leaving South China Sea. Entering Pacific Ocean.
December 2, 1996.**

TWO FULL DAYS OF RAIN PASS.

IN THE DISTANCE, WE SEE A **FLASH OF LIGHTNING, BLEEDING INTO A**
...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WHEELHOUSE (THIRD FLOOR) - NIGHT

... **DEAFENING THUNDERCLAP** AS WE ...

... TRACK BEHIND SMITH, DANCING DOWN THE HALL. He has a bottle in one hand, a couple glasses in the other.

ON PLAQUE ON DOOR READING "CAPTAIN." Smith opens the door with his foot. We see LAFRERE, JONES AND NEIL IN HYSTERICS. Upon seeing Smith, they stall, then laugh even harder. Buzz has passed out in his chair, sitting up like an Indian chief.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Smith dances into the room ...

LAFRERE

Ah, the wealthy international
adventurer is back. Good. Good.

... and pours the drinks. The ship pitches a little, but Smith manages to sit.

NEIL

Where you find all that liquor?

SMITH
 It's an article of faith for me
 that there's no such thing as a dry
 ship at sea.

JONES
 That rhymes, you realize.

SMITH
 (Repressing a burp, then)
 So what if it does!

Jones reels back, holding up a hand to keep Smith away.
 Everybody's clearly a little loaded.

SMITH
 So who's it to?

JONES
 It's to you, James Bond.

SMITH
 Is Buzz in?

Jones shoves all of Buzz's chips in.

JONES
 Buzz is all in.

SMITH
 Then I'm all in.

LAFRERE
 As am I.

JONES
 And I'm all out.

SMITH
 You're a class act.

NEIL
 I call.

Everyone lays down their cards. Smith looks around and sees
 that Lafrere has won. Lafrere sees so as well and stands,
 drawing the huge pot to him in two arms.

LAFRERE
 I feel so guilty. Having all of you
 on my ship then taking all your
 money. It's unseemly ...

He falls back and lights a cigarette. He considers his guests. Several beats pass, a flicker of a smile passes over his face.

SMITH
(Theatrically)
Le jou sont fait.

Lafrere concedes this with a very French, very slight nod.

LAFRERE
(A broader smile now)
So how do you plan to do it?

Neil excuses himself. He's heard enough on this topic already.

JONES
(Somewhat tiredly)
Well, there's really no secret to it, Henri. We'll find a car, drive up to the Texas border, then swim the river like everybody else. Or however one crosses over.

LAFRERE
Notwithstanding your losses here, how much money do you have?

JONES
Enough.

LAFRERE
Enough for how long.

JONES
(a beat) Eight years, maybe ten.

LAFRERE
And what will you do then?

JONES
I don't know. Pump gas.

LAFRERE
So why go back?

JONES
(A hint of frustration)
What answer do you want?

LAFRERE
If they won't have you, why go?

SMITH

I miss seeing fat people everywhere. (beat) I guess that's why I've always liked you, Henri.

LAFRERE

A little extra weight is the sign of a life well-lived.

SMITH

Or sloth.

LAFRERE

(Persevering)
I understand why you would leave the Strait and that sea of thieves. No place for the likes of you two.

SMITH

The likes of us two?

LAFRERE

My dear boys, certainly you don't take me for such a fool as to not know what sort of men you are.

SMITH

What sort of men are we?

LAFRERE

You two are true believers. All-Americans.

SMITH

Is that so?

LAFRERE

But don't you see? There's an entire world between the South China Sea and America.

JONES

We could live with you here.

LAFRERE

That's right!

SMITH

And bugger one another!

JONES

Just a ship full of good-time, fun-loving fellas sailing from port to port, bugging one another.

LAFRERE

Ah! There are worse fates! No one to answer to. No taxes. The ocean to redeem all our sins. The buggery is a small price to pay.

(a beat, then Lafrere starts again, now somewhat serious)

But why do you want to go back to America, boys? I really must know.

Neither answers.

LAFRERE

Jimmy (fixing him with a look), let's talk about you. Is it a woman?

SMITH

Isn't it always.

LAFRERE

What was her name?

SMITH

Rapunzel.

JONES

(Taking the bait)
I want to go home.

LAFRERE

(With something like paternal concern in his eyes)
My dear ebony angel. There's no such place! Home is as shapeless and impermanent a thing as the sea!

SMITH

Vraiment?

LAFRERE

The Aurora is as much your home as America is!
(an alcoholic's smile now, stomping the deck affectionately)
My sweet, rank, nameless whore!

JONES

I hate the ocean. Always have.

SMITH

(Pouring himself a drink)
Why can't you go home, Henri? Was
it a woman?

LAFRERE

(he gives Smith a flat look, but
Smith misses it)
Of course.

SMITH

What was her name?

LAFRERE

Sandrine.

SMITH

Senator's wife? Showgirl?

LAFRERE

Waitress.

SMITH

You killed her, didn't you.

Lafrere doesn't answer, but recedes into his own memories. The ship rocks gently as the conversation founders. Smith reaches across and tops of Lafrere's drink.

SMITH

You could come with us to the New
World, Henri.

LAFRERE

No I prefer it out here. My life at
sea ...

(Returning to the present with an
amiable smile)

Forgive me. I just worry that
you'll return to find nothing as
you remember it.

(Off Jones's politely dismissive
look)

Or that they'll find you.

SMITH

That's a risk we'll take.

LAFRERE

(Considering them both)
 Ah! Forgive this broken old man!
 (Raising his glass)
 Let me drink to your New World ...
 (They raise their glasses)
 May it be as you remember it.

ALL

To the New World.

A shudder of lightning and we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AURORA - DAY

THE SUN STRUGGLES IN THE MORNING HAZE.

ON LITTLE BROTHER AND LITTLE GIRL AS THEY EMERGE, WITH DIFFICULTY, FROM THE CONTAINER'S HIDDEN DOOR. She's following him, we see. Silently, with childish ceremony, he turns and tells her to stay behind, then runs around the corner. There's something like recognition in her face.

WE TRACK BEFORE HIM AS HE RUNS.

INT. BRIDGE

ON BURHAN as he routinely checks instruments. Lafrere is in the background over a logbook. Burhan looks up briefly to note the ENTRY OF A SAILOR WITH CLEANING SUPPLIES, then resumes his duties.

EXT. AURORA

TRACKING BEHIND LITTLE BROTHER as he runs toward the wheelhouse.

EXT. MIDSHIPS

ON A SHIP IN THE DISTANCE, passing in the opposite direction. This is SMITH'S P.O.V.

REVERSE TO SHOW SMITH LIFTING HIS RADIO.

SMITH

Are we tracking the tanker off our port bow?

LAFRERE (O.S.)
We are. She's the Novgorod, bound
for Saigon.

ON SMITH, THINKING, then making a call to

INT. ON NEIL'S RADIO

SMITH (O.S.)
Rise and shine, party boys. I need
a favor.

A HAND ENTERS THE FRAME AND TURNS OFF THE RADIO. PULL BACK TO
SHOW NEIL AND BUZZ TRYING TO SLEEP IT OFF.

EXT. MIDSHIPS

SMITH (CONT'D)
Boys? C'mon now, up and ...

But he stops abruptly, sensing something.

INT/EXT. DECK/HALL

TRACKING BEHIND LITTLE BROTHER as he runs, rounds a corner,
then opens a door and enters a hallway. A series of cabin
doors line the bulkhead to the left. Another door, an exit,
is a short distance away at the end of the hall.

EXT. MIDSHIPS

SMITH APPROACHES A CORNER, following something he's not sure
he heard. He turns it and sees nothing. Smith continues
forward down a TIGHT CORRIDOR between the containers.

INT. HALLWAY

ON LITTLE BROTHER as he looks closely at one doorknob, then
the next, then the third. THE THIRD HAS A MICKEY MOUSE
STICKER ON IT.

C/U OF THE BOY, showing his recognition.

HE REACHES UP to turn the knob slowly.

EXT. CORRIDOR/COURTYARD

SMITH ROUNDS THE NEXT CORNER AND FREEZES. we see the BLUE-STRIPED CONTAINER AND ... THE LITTLE GIRL. She's fifteen feet away.

SUDDENLY SHE RUNS TO HIM. Just as suddenly, Smith REACHES FOR HIS GUN, BUT SHE TAKES HIS HAND, AND HE'S PARALYZED. She pulls him into the hidden container door.

INT. HALLWAY

ON THE DOORKNOB AS LITTLE BROTHER TURNS IT, WHEN IT SUDDENLY LEAPS OPEN.

NEIL, BLEARY-EYED, IS POINTING HIS GUN RIGHT AT US, RIGHT AT THIS CHILD. He's stunned, quickly lowering the weapon. He rubs his eyes (perhaps with disbelief) and, as he does, LITTLE BROTHER THROWS SOMETHING ACROSS THE STEEL FLOOR. It slides under Buzz's cot. THE BOY LOOKS UP SOLEMNLY, invitingly, and Neil crouches down to look at ... a GRENADE. HE LUNGES FOR IT. Behind him, LITTLE BROTHER STEPS OUT and slowly starts to close the cabin door, as if trying not to wake Buzz.

INT. BRIDGE

ON BURHAN as he lifts his head to turn to the Sailor, the silence behind him having gotten his attention.

The Sailor stands erect and perfectly still, the bucket in his hand. He looks from Burhan to Savi. HE REACHES INTO HIS BUCKET.

BURHAN
(Helpfully) Do you need to clean something?

INT. CONTAINER

ON SMITH emerging to the second level and seeing MEN WITH GUNS TRAINED ON A DOZEN OR MORE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

THE LITTLE GIRL'S MOTHER CRIES OUT AT THE SIGHT OF HER DAUGHTER. With this, the MEN SEE SMITH.

INT. HALLWAY

We see the Little Brother disappear out the door at the opposite end. BEAT. FX: EXPLOSION.

INT. BRIDGE

THE BRIDGE REELS. Burhan approaches the Sailor, reaches into the bucket and draws out a gun. He checks the breech, walks up behind Savi and BLOWS HIS BRAINS ALL OVER THE INSTRUMENT PANEL.

INT. CONTAINER

Upon hearing the explosion and gunshot, Smith DROPS TWO OF THE GUNMEN IN QUICK SUCCESSION, but hears a gunshot from the third. He spins quickly to see this GUNMAN FEEL AT A HOLE IN HIS CHEST, then fall heavily to the floor, helped by a shove from behind. We now see, seated behind him, a BURMESE TEENAGER WITH A SMOKING GUN and a cowboy hat (a touch too small). The room comes alive with screaming.

Smith doesn't say a thing. He thinks quickly, then drops down the ladder and out the door where ...

EXT. COURTYARD

... he sees HUEY AND DEWEY IN THE COURTYARD, lost and confused, but armed. Smith shoots Huey through the head. Dewey panics, turns and runs back into the

EXT. TIGHT CORRIDOR

Smith follows him, then shoots him twice in the back.

INT. BRIDGE

ON LAFRERE looking at the Planesman, then stepping forward to pull his body from the chair.

LAFRERE

Maniac. His blood will short out our fucking instruments!

BURHAN

Cher Captain, he was the plant. Now if you would be so ...

Off a sound to the left, BURHAN QUICKLY TURNS HIS GUN ON ...
BIG BROTHER, entering the Bridge. Big Brother looks briefly
at Savi's body, then addresses Burhan.

BIG BROTHER (SUBTITLE)
We have a problem.

INT. HALLWAY 3

A HAND WRAPS AROUND ANOTHER MICKEY MOUSE DOORKNOB, trying it.
It doesn't open.

INT. JONES'S CABIN

JONES' CABIN DOOR RATTLES VIOLENTLY.

ON JONES ON ONE ELBOW.

JONES
Who is it?

The rattling stops.

UNKNOWN
(Beat) Explosion! Mr. Jones come
quick!

JONES
Is anyone hurt?

UNKNOWN
Yes! Yes!

JONES
I'll be right there.

JONES PRODUCES A PISTOL FROM HIS BEDSHEETS AND FIRES THROUGH
THE DOOR. HE GETS UP QUICKLY, KICKS THE DOOR OFF ITS HINGES
AND FIRES BLINDLY IN BOTH DIRECTIONS DOWN THE HALL.

Jones drags a body into his cabin, then emerges carefully
back out into the hall. He raises his handset.

INTERCUT:

JONES
Jimmy?

SMITH (O.S.)
Yes?

JONES
Clean up in aisle 7.

SMITH
Where are you?

JONES
Trying to get out of the fo'c'sle.
I just shot somebody. Is that
wrong?

SMITH
Can you get out?

JONES
That's why I'm calling you.

SMITH
You're gonna have to.

JONES
I'm going head for the merchandise
on the port side.

SMITH
Good. I'm already there. Let me get
higher. I'll cover you.

ON JONES CAREFULLY OPENING THE DOOR TO THE DECK AND SEEING A
ZODIAC BOAT APPROACHING.

JONES
Did you see the skip boat coming
our way from that tanker?

SMITH
No.

JONES
(beat) Am I going to make it to the
merchandise?

EXT. TRANSOM

A ZODIAC BOAT SKIPS UP TO THE STERN. A dozen or more men
climb up from it to the Aurora. They drop a pile of gear on
the deck.

INT/EXT. CONTAINER

ON SMITH as he tucks three guns in his belt, then climbs to the top container. The Teenager, without a word, follows him.

SMITH'S P.O.V. shows about five hijackers in and around the Fo'c'sle (at the bow of the ship, 150 yards away).

Closer, he sees ANOTHER OPENED CONTAINER, and, in it, what looks like food and supplies. We should feel overwhelmed.

SMITH
(To himself, getting ready) Jesus
Christ?!

EXT. TRANSOM

BIG BROTHER EMERGES FROM THE ELEVATOR to see nearly ten hijackers -- all Southeast Asian -- assembled on the transom. He says nothing. It's clear they consider him in charge. He steps up and pulls a ski bag off a man's shoulder. He drops it on the deck and rips it open, REVEALING WHAT LOOKS LIKE WHOLESALE HEROIN -- bricks wrapped in celophane with coded, handwritten paper labels.

BIG BROTHER IS DELIGHTED.

EXT. DECK (FORE, PORT SIDE)

JONES STICKS A GUN AROUND THE CORNER AND FIRES THREE ROUNDS BLINDLY. He does the same down the corridor he needs to cross.

INTERCUT:

JONES
... I think it's "You shoot, I run"
time.

ON SMITH, GETTING READY, laying out guns.

SMITH
Row 41. Ready?

SMITH STARTS SHOOTING AS JONES RUNS. JONES MAKES IT.

Jones climbs up through the container. We see him marvel at the beds, the running water, the people.

He gets up to the roof, where he is at first taken aback by the Teenager and his pistol. Smith wordlessly communicates that the boy's okay. Jones scrambles carefully around, assessing their position. As he does so, he whispers ...

JONES

Now I remember why I run around with you. Sometimes I forget, I admit, but now I remember. The entire Red Army over runs our job, and you somehow find us a fucking RV five stories above ground with girls and a kitchen staff.

Jones slides A SMALL METAL BRIEFCASE across the deck to Smith.

JONES

By the way, I brought you a present.

Jones lies down, taking a position. Smith sees and opens the case.

ANGLE ON DISASSEMBLED RIFLE PARTS PLACED IN FOAM INSIDE THE CASE.

INT. BRIDGE

Several hijackers enter and Burhan turns to them, cordially.

BURHAN

Friends! Welcome to the Aurora!

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

Smith assembles his rifle.

JONES

Jesus Christ.

SMITH

Yeah.

JONES

What's our plan?

SMITH

Sit on the merchandise. Don't get killed.

JONES

Ah yes, the Don't Get Killed plan.

Smith continues to work on his rifle, adjusting the site.

JONES (CONT'D)

Next time we should insist they tell us if they're going to put 20 or 30 armed men aboard ... I mean, it's not fair to us. You know, as professionals.

Smith puts the finishing touches on the rifle. Jones turns to see his partner, now a whole different order of lethality. There is something different about him now -- something dark and cold. All humor has drained from his face.

JONES

(looking at the rifle and understanding)
Now we sue for peace.

SMITH

We sue for peace.

JONES

Neil and Buzz?

Smith pushes a long, smooth round into the bolt, then jams it into place.

SMITH

Neil and Buzz are dead.

EXT. DECK OUTSIDE CONTAINER - NIGHT

A LONG LENS SHOT OF A HIJACKER EMERGING FROM THE WHEELHOUSE. He takes a step and is dropped immediately.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

REVERSE ANGLE SHOWS SMITH positioned near the edge with his rifle. It's clear he finds this task distasteful, but he's going to do it anyway. He pushes another round into the chamber and jams the bolt into place. He changes his aspect and takes aim.

EXT. DECK

REVERSE ON ANOTHER HIJACKER ON A LOWER LEVEL. He slumps silently to the ground.

INT. BRIDGE

SMITH (O.S. FROM HANDSET ON CONSOLE)
I just shot your two pickets.

ON BURHAN AS HE LOOKS AT THE HANDSET THEN QUICKLY TO BOTH SIDES, SEEING NOTHING. The lights are out. They are already in the shadows. These are not stupid men. Burhan picks up the handset.

INTERCUT:

BURHAN
Is this Smith?

SMITH
Yes. Who's this?

ON BURHAN as he steps forward, out of the shadows into a Spielberg-like glow.

BURHAN
(To one of the hijackers)
Turn on the light, Janeel.

JANEEL
Sir?

BURHAN
Turn on the light, if you will.

LAFRERE
(To Burhan)
They'll see ...

BURHAN
(To Lafrere)
Shut up!

Janeel turns on the light. ANGLE ON BURHAN PICKING UP HIS COFFEE SLOWLY AND SMOOTHLY. He looks straight out. He's in the cross-hairs, but seems to savor it.

C/U OF LAFRERE knowing he is now completely exposed.

C/U OF SMITH TILTING UP FROM THE RIFLE SCOPE, seeing Lafrere and not entirely surprised.

BURHAN SLOWLY RAISES THE HANDSET.

BURHAN

(To Smith) It is Burhan. You realize I control the boat now, despite your display of marksmanship.

SMITH

Well, let's talk about that. I'm sitting on top of your drugs.

BURHAN

You are ...

SMITH

Yes. Don't worry, though. We'll keep everything safe and sound.

BURHAN

... Good.

SMITH

I have an idea I'd like to run by you. To help us negotiate this impasse.

BURHAN

Alright.

SMITH

We'll stay here until we're close enough to land, but far enough away that we wouldn't be seen. Then we'll sail away in one of the lifeboats.

BURHAN

And by "we" you mean ...

SMITH

Jones, myself, maybe some of the people we have up here.

BURHAN

Hmm. Yes ...

SMITH

You could sit off-shore until you finish whatever processing you need to do.

BURHAN

There are things we need to do ...

SMITH

We'll also take four kilos off your hands.

BURHAN

Four kilos?

SMITH

Four kilos you don't have to deliver.

BURHAN

Won't your betters take offense at such an action?

SMITH

I think you've pretty much fucked us all as regards our betters, don't you think?

BURHAN

Yes, you're right.

SMITH

If you need to be further persuaded, I've got a charge attached to the outer hull, so I can sink the ship if I feel like it.

SMITH LOOKS AT JONES. IS HE LYING?

BURHAN LOOKS AT BIG BROTHER. CLEARLY HE THINKS SO.

BURHAN

You do.

SMITH

Call it Due Diligence.
(Off Burhan's silence)
We're all professional criminals here, Burhan. We just want to get out of your hair.

BURHAN
With your immigrant friends ...

SMITH
Call it a Karma thing.

BURHAN
I have another idea.

SMITH
What is it.

BURHAN
You could join our little party.

SMITH
Thank you, that's very generous,
but I think we'd prefer to do our
own thing.

BURHAN
More drugs. More money. We have
more money than you might think.

SMITH
I'm sorry but we feel very
strongly.

BURHAN
That's unfortunate ...

A beat. ON BURHAN. We can see he's decided.

BURHAN
(Now over the map)
In about six days, we'll be 175 kms
off Belize. Will that suit you?

SMITH
I think so. If it's alright with
you, we're also going to shoot
anyone who comes within fifty yards
of our position.

BURHAN
I understand. And we will go about
our business as professional
criminals, as you say, so please
don't be alarmed.

SMITH
Alright.

BURHAN

I don't have to ask you not to touch the drugs.

SMITH

No, you don't.

BURHAN

Well, then ... until Belize.

SMITH

Until Belize.

They both sign off. Burhan turns to see a pissed-off Big Brother. He takes him by the shoulders.

BURHAN

Come! We knew there would be surprises!

BIG BROTHER

(Urgent whisper) We have a timetable!

BURHAN

Would you have him shoot more of us? These men aren't completely disposable.

Burhan gives a quick, gracious smile to a nearby hijacker.

BURHAN (CONT'D)

Besides, there are other benefits to this change in circumstances.

BIG BROTHER

Such as.

BURHAN

Some of our comrades might have been tempted to indulge certain bad habits. Now that's no longer a concern.

(To Lafrere)

Captain, your register please ...

(Lafrere hands him the register)

Thank you.

BIG BROTHER

And what do we do in the meantime?

BURHAN

In the meantime ... (Turning to Big Brother fully, now with a serene, gracious smile) ... we get ready.

CUT TO:

INT. MESS

The hijackers are indeed getting ready. Several walk briskly into the mess. One drops a kit bag on the table. He rips it open to reveal SEVERAL BLOW TORCHES, COMPUTER EQUIPMENT, CAMERAS, OTHER TOOLS.

ANOTHER HIJACKER (#10) SETS UP A LAPTOP, and sits down in front of it. He invites a third hijacker to sit across from him. As the laptop starts up, he looks across at the other hijacker.

HIJACKER #10

(With cloying warmth and Apu-like accent)
Hello.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Two hijackers do a security sweep through the engine room.

INT. PROPELLER HOUSING

Another two hijackers stand watch.

EXT. TRANSOM

A hijacker shoves a couple bodies (Neil and Buzz) into the sea as the SUN SETS ON THE DAY.

CUT TO:

INT. CONTAINER

Jones is now working on the Little Girl's foot. It's clear he's had some medical training. The Mother and Little Girl watch him with matching looks of suspicion. We can feel that he absorbs all the attention in the room.

JONES (SUBTITLE MANDARIN)
 She cut it on a ladder step? You're
 lucky this isn't infected, Little
 One.

MOTHER (SUBTITLE CANTONESE)
 We're Cantonese.

JONES (SUBTITLE CANTONESE)
 Ah, my Cantonese is not as good.

MOTHER
 Most here speak English.

JONES
 Ah, good. I'll speak English then.

MOTHER (ENGLISH)
 (beat) I wonder how lucky we are.

Jones finishes the dressing, then considers this woman carefully. He will use her to talk to the others, as he's done before. He invites her to send her daughter away.

JONES (SUBTITLE CANTONESE)
 You are lucky. These men kept you
 alive only so you could walk
 outside on your own before they
 shot you. (He lets this sink in)
 I need to sleep so I can work
 later. I want you to watch over me
 and make sure no one tries to take
 my gun. I want you to tell the
 others that we'll protect them, and
 that we've made an arrangement to
 get all of us off this ship alive.

With this Jones rises, crosses the room, sits down against a wall and instantly falls asleep.

ON MOTHER AS SHE STARES. EVERYONE ELSE DOES TOO.

INT. BRIDGE - MORNING

A SHOT OF LITTLE BROTHER IN THE CAPTAIN'S CHAIR, diminutive against it.

REVERSE ANGLE to show the bridge. The blank, open sea in the distance. In the foreground, a Sailor mops blood off the windshield.

Nearby (far left), Burhan inspects a clipboard, the ship's register.

ON BURHAN, flipping through pages. Lafrere is behind him.

ANGLE ON FLIPPING SHEETS. We see city names: Guadalajara, Mexico City, Brownsville, Phoenix. We see item names: laser printers, monitors, DVD players, tennis shoes, T-shirts ...

ON BURHAN, barely restraining his delight.

BURHAN

I never realized we hauled so many individual orders.

LAFRERE

The miracle of "just-in-time" inventory management.

BURHAN

Yes, but half of our load is counterfeit.

LAFRERE

Many of these manufacturers manage their legitimate and illegitimate inventories together. It makes no sense to have two barcoding systems.

BURHAN ALLOWS HIMSELF THE GHOST OF A SMILE.

ON A LETTER AND NUMBER CODE BESIDE EACH ENTRY, MATCHING ...

EXT. DECK

... A LETTER AND NUMBER CODE ON THE DECK, IDENTIFYING THE PLACEMENT OF EACH CONTAINER.

EXT. DECK - DAY (LATER)

The hijackers are working on several of the containers as ...

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

... Smith watches.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - LATER

Smith surveys his field of fire, standing a different kind of watch now. He looks over his shoulder at the Teenager watching the other corner. This Teenager is sitting indian-style, holding the gun casually, with the slouch of a natural criminal. A C/U of HIS FACE reveals something boyish, but smart.

He looks back to see Smith looking at him. HE SURPRISES US WITH A SMILE. Smith redirects him toward his field of fire.

C/U OF SMITH turning back to his position with resignation. We see HIS HAND FLUTTER A TOUCH. He's drying out.

JONES ENTERS

SMITH

I want to keep doing four hour shifts. Let's see if we can get the boy up to speed.

Smith departs. Jones exchanges a silent, measuring look with the Teenager. Under his cowboy hat, the Teenager's face remains blank for a moment, then LIGHTS UP IN A BRIGHT SMILE, as before.

JONES

(As he settles into his position)
Nice working with you, Howdy Doody.

CUT TO:

INT. CONTAINER - NIGHT (LATER)

Smith is wide-awake. It seems obvious that he has not slept much, if at all.

Around him the immigrants are making dinner. They seem comfortable enough, even somewhat unshaken. They play mahjong under a lamp. Still, when Smith rises, all talking stops.

He approaches the improvised kitchen -- a couple hot plates and a microwave.

He doesn't seem to mind appearing like a bully as he searches the mini-fridge, then the plastic bin of cereal, noodles and tea UNTIL HE LOCKS EYES FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH THE MOTHER. There is something jarring in this, but Smith is too desperate. Finding nothing he wants, Smith charges outside
...

EXT. COURTYARD

... for a lungful of fresh air and a drink.

Eventually, he's joined by an Old Man, who offers him a cigarette.

SMITH
I don't smoke.

The Old Man shakes his pack at him insistently.

SMITH
No.

OLD MAN
You don't smoke?

SMITH
No.

OLD MAN
Why not?

SMITH
I'm a health nut.

Smith takes a slug of gin. The Old Man lights up. He has a certain Claude Reins flair.

OLD MAN
My name is Thet-Way.

SMITH
Jimmy.

THET-WAY
I've been asked to ask you a favor.

SMITH
What is it?

THET-WAY
We'd like to get out and exercise a little tomorrow. We've been in here for nearly two weeks.

SMITH
Can you keep your people within our
little row here?

THET-WAY
Yes.

SMITH
Then knock yourself out.

THET-WAY
I don't understand.

SMITH
Yes, you can do what you've asked.

THET-WAY
Thank you, Mr. Jimmy.

Thet-Way sees Smith is watching the stars.

THET-WAY (CONT.)
You know the stars?

SMITH
No.

THET-WAY
Do you know any of the Chinese
names for the constellations?

SMITH
No.

THET-WAY
Would you like me to tell you?

SMITH
No.

THET-WAY
... Ah ... well. I'll leave you
now.

Thet-Way, understanding and unoffended, leaves him. Smith
takes a hard, desperate pull of whiskey, then THROWS THE
BOTTLE VIOLENTLY AT THE SEA. He's running out of booze.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

A C/U OF JONES ON WATCH, dutiful and alert, then a LONG SHOT OVER HIS SHOULDER TO THE WHEELHOUSE, about 175 yards away. We see a light on in the mess, but can't make out anything.

INT. MESS

Under the fluorescent bulbs, a hijacker TWISTS TWO WIRES TOGETHER. We think we're watching a bomb being made, until we PULL AWAY TO REVEAL A TV BLINK TO LIFE. We see the FBI emblem and hear low laughter. The hijacker has jerry-rigged a connection between a TV and DVD player recovered from one of the containers. The credits start to role for American Pie. REVERSE THEN PAN ACROSS THE HIJACKERS, ENTHRALLED.

FLICKER THROUGH A FEW ROUGH SHOTS FROM THIS BOOTLEG DVD, THEN

CUT TO:

EXT. AFGHANISTAN (FLASHBACK)

We move roughly over a high plains road. We're sitting in the back of a Toyota pickup. We approach a village, or what remains thereof. It smolders in the distance as we near. Now WE'RE RUNNING, we stumble out of the truck and we're running. We see Smith, half attired in Afghan garb--a scarf, sunglasses, a beard. We cut to a C/U OF A VERY ATTRACTIVE AFGHAN WOMAN. Shes lying on the ground, gasping her last breaths. Only her eyes move to us, in slo-mo now.

REVERSE ON SMITH, OVER HER.

REVERSE ON HER, RECOGNIZING HIM. She smiles faintly. She's trying to tell him it's okay. Her chest heaves in quick spasms ...

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

... A C/U ON SMITH FACE (LIKE A REVERSE SHOT). It's broad daylight and he's asleep, leaning against the opposite container with the sniper rifle cradled in his arms. HE SUDDENLY JUMPS AWAKE AND REACHES OUT, SEIZING THE ARM OF THE (C/U) LITTLE GIRL. They have a long, wordless exchange. They are both mutes, just different varieties.

HER MOTHER APPEARS, exchanging stunned looks with Smith. Half-dreaming, half-terrified, Smith takes a moment to let go of the girl's arm.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - DUSK

We watch Smith relieve Jones and Howdy Doody. A few hours pass, then we see LAFRERE AND BURHAN ON THE BRIDGE. Smith observes them silently. Eventually Burhan leaves, trading a distant respectful look for whoever is watching them. Now only Lafrere remains.

Smith picks up his handset.

SMITH

They trust you enough to leave you
alone up there?

INTERCUT:

ON LAFRERE, at the helm. He picks up the radio.

LAFRERE

So it would seem. No hard feelings,
Jimmy.

SMITH

What's your arrangement?

LAFRERE

Money.

SMITH

Money ...

LAFRERE

Surely you of all people must
understand.

SMITH

... C'est la vie.

LAFRERE

C'est la vie.

SMITH

C'est la morte, aussi.

LAFRERE

Oui.

SMITH

Pour notre amis, les ghurkas.

LAFRERE

Oui.

SMITH
Your friend is quite the actor.

LAFRERE
Oui.

SMITH
Did you expect us to be on the
boat?

LAFRERE
Of course. We didn't expect you to
be sober.

SMITH
I wasn't sober.

LAFRERE
I knew that would be the case, but
these Orientals are so powerfully
impressed by the affects of
alcohol.

SMITH
You were overruled.

LAFRERE
Yes.

SMITH
What are these guys doing, Henri?

LAFRERE
They're thieves. They're doing what
thieves do.

SMITH
The heroin isn't enough?

LAFRERE
Is anything ever enough?

Smith doesn't answer.

LAFRERE (CONT'D)
... Jimmy, this was business,
nothing more ... Please know that
... I'm sorry ... If you knew ...

Smith turns off the radio, so he can watch the hijackers in
silence.

LAFRERE, FROM HIS VANTAGE POINT, WATCHES THEM TOO, with a slightly concealed distaste.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

FROM ABOVE, we watch Smith, Jones and Howdy Doody change the guard.

INT. CONTAINER - LATER

MOTHER STARES AT SMITH, sleeping fitfully, the rifle in his arms. It's late. Everyone now is asleep, as is the Little Girl. Mother rises. She starts up the ladder to the roof.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

JONES WATCHES HER SURFACE, HIS GUN READY. She's undaunted, however, now somewhat used to guns. She climbs up and sits down across from him. She gives him a stand-off look for a beat.

MOTHER

I've been asked to ask you ... *how*
will you get us off the ship?

JONES

We'll take a lifeboat. When we're
about a day off the coast of
Belize.

MOTHER

And why should we trust you?

JONES

Do you have another choice?

MOTHER

You're Americans?

JONES

Yes.

MOTHER

Soldiers?

JONES

No.

MOTHER

Spies?

JONES

Yes.

MOTHER

Oh, I see. ... What happened?

JONES

We got a little out of control.

MOTHER

Do you regret what you did?

JONES

No.

MOTHER

... Your friend is a drunk.

JONES

It doesn't affect him.

MOTHER

I worry that he will get us in trouble.

JONES

Don't.

MOTHER

And he's afraid of women and children.

JONES

Not all women and children.

MOTHER

Just us?

JONES

Yes.

MOTHER

Why?

JONES

Because you remind him of someone.
You both do.

MOTHER

...

JONES

A lot of people remind him of someone.

MOTHER

Should we be afraid of him?

JONES

You should be afraid of both of us ... You should also remember that we saved your lives.

She seems satisfied with this. She bows, then descends back down into the

INT. CONTAINER

She curls up with her daughter.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD

C/U OF SMITH watching the children play across the Courtyard. Without reaction, he watches the Little Girl watch him.

He resumes work on something with HIS HANDS. WE SEE HIM MANIPULATING A SPENT BULLET CASING, A PIN AND A PIECE OF GAUZE BANDAGE UNTIL THEY ALL DANCE OUT OF HIS SHAKING HANDS.

He gathers the material back up and continues. THE GIRL APPROACHES, CURIOUS. She watches him finish, then he hands her A KIND OF POTTED LILLY, the bandage are the petals, the casing is the flower pot.

She takes it solemnly. She looks carefully at him, then she runs away to play with her new toy.

He drops his head back to stare up at the STARRY SKY ...

... where he looks off to the south. Lightning flickers silently on the horizon, the thunder taking several seconds to arrive. He looks down at his shivering hands. A sheen of sweat lines his brow.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - LATER/MORNING

FROM A GUN FALLING FROM HIS HAND, WE PULL BACK AS SMITH ROLLS OVER, prostrate and drying out violently, the patter of light rain about him. This morning is too much like night.

Lightning flashes both within his hallucinations and across the ship. The stars seem klieg light bright, but everything is quiet. A WHITE HOT FLASH OF LIGHTNING AND WE'RE ...

INT. MESS

... securing gear under shifting fluorescent light as we ...

INT. BRIDGE

... CLOSE ON BURHAN, perfectly still in the captain's chair, serenely watching the storm with an aesthete's pleasure. Eventually, Big Brother enters.

BIG BROTHER (FROM BEHIND HIM)
The splits are sealed.
(exasperated)
It's barely raining.

BURHAN
But the swells are high.

He looks at Lafrere.

BURHAN (CONT.)
We're merely on the edge of the storm. Isn't that right, captain?

LAFRERE
(Absorbed by his instruments)
Sometimes the edge of the storm is the worst place to be ... Still, this isn't the thick of it. We'll likely see that in a day or two.
(To the planesman)
This should be 340. 340, dammit!
How many times must I tell you!

A shot of the wild, ethereal electric storm across the uninterrupted horizon.

BURHAN
It is beautiful, though, is it not?

A SHOT OF AN ENTHRALLED AND DETACHED BURHAN, THEN A SHOT OF LAFRERE LOOKING UP AT HIM.

INT. MESS - DAY

... THE FLASH OF A CAMERA, FOLLOWED BY A HEAD-SHOULDER/PORTRAIT SHOT OF AN AVERAGE MALAY MAN.

REVERSE ON A MAN AT A LAPTOP, THEN CLOSE ON HIS SCREEN. We're making I.D.s

MAN

Thank you, come back tomorrow.

In another corner an INSTRUCTOR FACES SEVERAL OTHER MEN. A scale is on the table in front of them. On the whiteboard behind them are metric-to-English conversion tables and a price list in US dollars.

INT. ANOTHER CONTAINER

A pair of hijackers jostle a pallet of clock radios as ...

EXT. CONTAINER

... Smith takes notes from the roof in a SMALL NOTEBOOK. He looks up and over at Howdy Doody, who now holds the sniper rifle. Smith leans over and presses the butt firmly into Howdy Doody's shoulder, showing him where it should be.

Smith returns to his NOTEBOOK. He flips back to a LIST OF LOCATIONS ON THE SHIP: Mess closet, fo'c'sle head, Blue dial housing ...

Jones arrives to change the watch. He sees Smith writing. Smith puts the book away too quickly and departs.

JONES

You on to something, Quincy?

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - NIGHT

THE ROOF IS EMPTY. No one is standing watch.

INT. SHIP

ON SMITH'S NOTEBOOK, ILLUMINATED BY AN INFRARED MAGLITE. We read: "Forward Shaft Fusebox."

SMITH WORKS HIS WAY CAREFULLY DOWNSTAIRS, into the guts of the ship.

Smith finds one of his stashes of booze. He starts topside, and that's when HE SEES THE LITTLE GIRL. He's alarmed that she's followed him down here, but recovers. He brings a finger to his lips like some horrible version of Santa Claus. He takes her in his arms and, shockingly, SHE RESTS HER HEAD ON HIS SHOULDER, AS IF HE'S HER FATHER.

He works his way stealthily back to the ...

EXT. COURTYARD

... container, then, setting her down, whispers to her in rough, but fierce Cantonese.

SMITH (SOTTO VOCCE)
 Never follow me again! You could
 get hurt. There are bad men on this
 ship! I am a bad man! Now go.

He watches her dutifully enter the container and disappear. He takes a fast pull of booze.

INT. MESS - DAY

Several of the tables in the mess are filled with hijackers. This looks like a college seminar. All talking stops when Burhan enters. He smiles as he takes a position at the front of the room.

BURHAN
 You ... what does a new television
 cost?

HIJACKER
 Tube or flat panel?

BURHAN
 Tube.

HIJACKER
 Between \$100 and \$500 American
 dollars.

BURHAN
 Why not just "dollars"?

HIJACKER
 I'm a Canadian.

BURHAN

Ah. Good. Too bad you will never see Canada. [low laughter] Who won the Stanley Cup last year?

HIJACKER

The Flyers.

BURHAN

Good. Very good. You. What's a pig?

HIJACKER

A policeman.

BURHAN

Very good. And what's this? ... You.

HIJACKER

A detonator cap ...

BURHAN

Good ...

Burhan puts on a pair of surgical gloves. Then he reaches into a duffle bag he brought with them. He pulls out a small brick of what looks like clay.

Raising it for everyone to see.

BURHAN (CONT.)

... and what do we think this is?

PAN ACROSS THESE EARNEST LOOKING MEN, THINKING HARD FOR THE RIGHT ANSWER.

BOY #1 (V.O.)

Do you like what you do, Mr. Elvin?

JONES (V.O.)

... Yes.

BOY #2 (V.O.)

Are there any cowboys left in America, Mr. Elvin?

INT. COURTYARD - DAY

JONES

I don't know. I didn't think there were any pirates left in the world and all of the sudden I was one. Would you like to be a cowboy?

BOY #2

Yes.

JONES

Well, then, go be a cowboy.

BOY #1

Can you play basketball better than Mr. Smith?

JONES

Why? Because I'm black?

BOY #1

Yes.

JONES

Yes, of course.

BOY #1

Are you a better dancer?

BOY #2

Can you get tan, Mr. Elvin?

BOY #1

Are you better sexually?

BOY #2

What are the Chinese like in America?

JONES

Like everybody else, I guess ... except they're very good at math and they can't drive. I'm not sure how that will apply to the cowboy business though.

BOY #2

I'll count cows.

JONES

Any idiot can count cows, Martin.

MARTIN

Are there cowboy schools, Mr. Elvin?

JONES

I don't know. There are clown colleges. That might be better for you.

BOY #3

Did you go to clown college, Jones?

Smith enters.

JONES

Now do I look like the kind of guy who'd go to clown college?

Jones allows the conversation to stall.

MARTIN

Did you go to clown school Mr. Smith?

Smith doesn't answer.

JONES

(to Martin, quietly) It's a sore subject. Why don't you boys get lost for a little while ...

Jones waits for the boys to clear out. They're more or less alone.

SMITH

Howdy Doody's upstairs?

JONES

Yeah.

SMITH

You think he's up to it?

JONES

Maybe ... I came topside last night at about 300 hours. You weren't here.

Smith turns to him.

SMITH

(beat) I don't check on you, and there's a motherload of Afghan junk downstairs ...

JONES

What I'm saying is, I'll cover for you if you need me to. But whatever it is you're doing, please don't get killed. We can barely turn four hour watches ...

SMITH

We can't turn them at all. We can't spell one another.

JONES

... So, as I say, don't get killed.

SMITH

Isn't it more likely that I'll get you killed, judging by my record?

JONES

Yes. If you believe in likelihoods. I believe in luck. That's why I'm with you.

SMITH

You'd call this luck? I'd call it borrowed time.

JONES

It's all borrowed time.

Smith looks off. A little drunk again, a little emotional, or at least as emotional as he can be. This doesn't surprise or alarm Jones. He follows the conversation effortlessly.

SMITH

... I tried to radio Neil and Buzz before it all started.

JONES

I wouldn't worry about it.

SMITH

Neil and Buzz ... I don't even know their real names.

JONES

Now they won't live forever.

SMITH
What's your real name?

JONES
Shaquille.

SMITH
I knew it.

JONES
What's yours.

Smith says nothing.

JONES (CONT'D)
... I won't deny I took a long look at that shit in there. They haven't thinned it out yet, so it's a pure as it gets. *Burmese*. It's junkie heaven. And I'm not going to touch it. When you found me in Karachi I was dead. I'm coming back to life. We are. We'll live again.

Smith is still quiet.

JONES (CONT'D)
We're four days from home.

SMITH
Mexico.

JONES
I'll take Mexico. Jesus, I love Mexico ... (off Smith's silence)
Four days, Jimmy ...

CUT TO:

INT. BURHAN'S CABIN - LATER

Looking studious and fatherly in his reading glasses, Burhan reviews maps and papers. There's a knock at the door.

BURHAN
Come in.

Big Brother enters. He takes a seat opposite Burhan at a small table.

BIG BROTHER

There's not much more we can do. We need to start on the heroin.

BURHAN

All in good time.

BIG BROTHER

Everything depends on the heroin.

Burhan takes off his glasses.

BURHAN

No, not everything. We have different routes. Redundant strategies. You're responsible for the heroin. That's the most important part, but it's not the only part of the plan. We have the containers. We have our friends. We have other things.

BIG BROTHER

I want to do my work.

BURHAN

Are the containers all ready?

BIG BROTHER

For the most part ...

BURHAN

For the most part. Our friends, are they ready?

BIG BROTHER

Almost.

BURHAN

Almost?

BIG BROTHER

I know I have more work to do ... but I want to work on my idea, on what I came here to do.

BURHAN

And you will get to, but patience my young friend. This is a big boat that we've stolen. We're trying to do a lot with it. We are like ... an American aircraft carrier ...

PAN ACROSS THE YOUNG MEN IN THE MESS, THE ROWS OF CONTAINERS, THE HEROIN, THE HUGE SHIP ITSELF, AS BURHAN SAYS THE FOLLOWING ...

BURHAN (V.O.)

... an aircraft carrier has planes, bombs, Marines, missiles. We have different capabilities. There's so much we need to be able to do. Only I can know everything on our ship, and not even I know everything. You understand that.

BIG BROTHER

Yes ... I'm sorry.

BURHAN

Don't be sorry. (smile) This is hard, unpredictable work, but you're doing very well. We're doing well.

Big Brother seems assuaged.

BURHAN (CONT'D)

Do you feel better now?

BIG BROTHER

Yes.

BURHAN

Alright.

Satisfied, Big Brother rises and leaves. Burhan watches him thoughtfully.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Smith watches the storm in the distance, although the weather is still fine over the ship. Thet-Way approaches.

THET-WAY

No stars to stare at right now, Mr. Smith.

SMITH

Except the Evening Star (pointing).

THET-WAY

Ah yes! You know more than you admit. The Cantonese call it the Fading Lilly.

SMITH
What do you want.

THET-WAY
What do I want? A drink, of course.

SMITH
Do I look like the kind of person
who likes to share?

THET-WAY
Not reall-

SMITH
So why ask.

THET-WAY
Why not ask?

Smith hands him the bottle grudgingly.

SMITH
What's an Old Man like you doing on
a ship like this?

Thet-Way drinks, then says

THET-WAY
I want to see America.

SMITH
Really? Time Square? Hollywood?
Grand Canyon?

THET-WAY
Yes, all of it.

SMITH
I don't think so. An old man like
you? I think you're on the run.
(Pointing) I can tell by your
tattoo that not every dollar you
made was honest.

Thet-Way is a little taken aback.

THET-WAY
... there's a saying in my father's
province: Our tattoos are like our
sins, they only get bigger and
uglier over time.

SMITH

Yes, that's very beautiful. You
through with that?

THET-WAY

Not quite. These are all ambitious
peasants and students. It's nice to
socialize again with, if you'll
forgive me, killers?

SMITH

Forgive you? Sure. Yes, it's a rare
delight for me as well.

Thet-Way smiles and hands the bottle back.

THET-WAY

(Looking off) What is that?

SMITH

That's a storm. It's getting
closer.

THET-WAY

Will it reach us?

SMITH

I think so. It's been trailing us
for days. Have you tied down your
things?

THET-WAY

No. I hadn't thought of it.

SMITH

Well do.

THET-WAY

As you can imagine, I'm no sailor,
Mr. Smith.

SMITH

I can imagine that.

THET-WAY

Would you help us?

CUT TO:

INT. CONTAINER

SMITH HELPS THE IMMIGRANTS SECURE THEIR KITCHEN AND OTHER GEAR. They're initially surprised but warm to him as he shows them how to help. Smith isn't exactly friendly, but he is trying, and it's obvious he's taught people such things before.

A PAIR OF BOYS APPROACH HIM. HE TURNS.

BOY #1
We're finished.

SMITH
You are. Good. I've got another job for you.

He crosses the room to the latrine, essentially buckets with curtains drawn around them. He hands a bucket to each boy.

SMITH
Although it might not seem like it, this is a very important job. If we don't keep these empty, one of them could spill when the storm hits. It would spread disease and ruin our food, and we'd all smell very bad. So take these out and empty them over the side of the ship. Alright?

HE SEES THAT NOW THE LITTLE GIRL'S MOTHER NEEDS HELP, and together they improvise a way to secure the bunks. There is a certain attraction between them, as suspicious as the Mother is, that WE SEE THE LITTLE GIRL RECOGNIZE.

THE TWO BOYS RE-ENTER.

PAN TO THE CONTAINER DOOR, WHICH HAS BANGED OPEN. The boys didn't secure it. RAIN AND WIND SHOW US THE STORM IS NEAR. Smith approaches and closes it, then turns.

SMITH
(For all to hear) Everyone stays inside tonight.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - NIGHT

THE STORM IS IN FULL THROTTLE. JONES, LASHED TO THE ROOF, WATCHES THE WHEELHOUSE.

He can see that they've tied everything down too and that they're also trying to ride out the storm. He decides to head down.

HE DESCENDS DANGEROUSLY TO THE

INT. CONTAINER

Some are up, seasick. MOTHER IS ONE OF THEM. Jones sees that the LITTLE GIRL IS SITTING VERY CLOSE TO SMITH. They are among other immigrants leaning against the container wall.

JONES
(To Smith) The pirates are standing
down tonight ...

Smith smiles at this.

Jones dries off, takes a seat next to Smith and pulls his hat over his head. He's asleep instantly. Smith takes a drink.

MOTHER RETURNS, looking spent. She sits opposite them, perhaps expecting to have to be sick again. She's a little uncomfortable with how closely her daughter sits to Smith, but rolls with it.

MOTHER
She likes you.

SMITH
She doesn't say much.

MOTHER
Not since her father was killed.
Lost most of her hearing too.

SMITH
I see.

MOTHER
Gun men. Like ...

SMITH
... Me?

MOTHER
I stopped myself.

She looks at the gun in hand though.

SMITH

(friendly, still) There are different kinds of gun men, as you say. I know. I've been several kinds myself.

MOTHER

... (unfriendly now) No. You're all the same. Just boys with guns. An arrested state of development.

Smith thinks about her words, smiles faintly. We can see his attitude change and that he's a little buzzed.

SMITH

These gun men who killed your husband, I've known men like that. They would not otherwise be upstanding citizens, were circumstances different. I've known other men -- men probably very much like your husband -- who've tried to stop these bad men. So you and your Little Girl could have a safe street. So policemen couldn't come to your home at night and rape you. And yet your attitude belittles these men. It makes it harder for these good men to find others to help them. It makes them wonder themselves if they are doing the right thing ...

MOTHER

(incensed) You know nothing about me or my husband ...

SMITH

(continuing) ... So my unsolicited advice to you is: Why don't you grow up? Before your little girl starts thinking like you do.

SHE RISES QUICKLY, rediscovering her strength, and grabs her daughter by the hand. She thinks for a split-second about slapping Smith, but HE READS HER MIND.

SMITH

I wouldn't hit a man with a gun. Certainly if we're all the same ...

SHE SLAPS HIM ANYWAY. He does nothing.

SMITH (CONT'D)
 (Serious now) I definitely wouldn't
 do it twice.

She pulls her daughter away from Smith to the opposite side
 of the room.

Jones lifts his hat slightly to see what's happened. He pulls
 it back down to sleep.

SMITH IS BOTH TRIUMPHANT AND PROFOUNDLY DISAPPOINTED WITH
 HIMSELF.

EXT. OCEAN

THE SHIP PITCHES IN 40 FT SWELLS.

INT. CONTAINER - LATER

THE LITTLE GIRL IS WIDE AWAKE, TERRIFIED. We can hear her
 Mother throwing up not too far away. We see the girl look at
 Smith, who is asleep or out cold, curled around his bottle.

THE GIRL THINKS ABOUT IT, THEN SLOWLY, CAREFULLY CRAWLS OVER
 TO HIM AND PULLS HIS ARM AROUND HER. He doesn't wake. She is
 quickly asleep.

THEY-WAY SEES THIS HAPPEN, THEN TRIES AGAIN TO SLEEP.

INT. CONTAINER - LATER

C/U OF SMITH SLEEPING PEACEFULLY when the report of the
 slamming container door SHOTS US AWAKE. A moment later,
 MOTHER ATTACKS SMITH WITH HER FISTS AND HE, INSTINCTIVELY
 TRIES TO SHIELD THE GIRL, TEMPORARILY MAKING MATTERS WORSE.
 Other immigrants descend on him.

SMITH
 What! Jesus?! Get off me!!

MOTHER
 Don't touch her! Stay away from Suu-
 Kiy!!

THET-WAY GRABS HER, restraining her arms with difficulty.

THET-WAY
 Enough! Enough! She was afraid. She
 crawled into his arms. He didn't
 even awake!

Smith eventually realizes what's happening, looking down, himself a little surprised to see this girl he's been defending. HE RELEASES HER TO THE CROWD.

AND NOW HE NOTICES THE SLAMMING DOOR, still slapping the frame.

He wrestles free and runs outside into the courtyard, seeing ...

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

... ONE OF THE LATRINE BUCKETS DANCING DOWN THE DECK. Then Smith sees a HAND CLINGING TO THE RAIL.

He runs to the side, barely catching the shirt of BOY #1 as he loses his grip. WE SEE SMITH LOSE HIS BOTTLE NOW AS HE LUNGES WITH HIS OTHER HAND FOR THE BOY'S BELT. He catches it and pulls him bodily back onto the ship.

They return to the container.

INT. CONTAINER

Smith pushes the boy back into the room, in front of the gawking immigrants. Mother approaches him.

MOTHER

I'm sorry -

SMITH

Sure you are.

SMITH IS ALREADY CROSSING THE ROOM, grabbing his rifle, then descending to the lower container.

INT. LOWER CONTAINER

C/U OF A PAD-LOCKED DOOR. With vicious strokes, SMITH BREAKS THE LOCK FREE AND ENTERS. In the faint light we see SEVERAL PALLETS STACKED WITH BRICKS OF HEROIN. They're wrapped and labeled very much like the hijacker's heroin.

He returns to the door, seeing A FEW OF THE APOLOGETIC IMMIGRANTS. He closes it on them. This is where he will stay now.

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER CONTAINER - DAY

A DOOR SLIDES OPEN, the daylight rushing in. A pair of hijackers enter, working quickly as ...

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

... SMITH WATCHES. We hold on him for awhile, in the bright clear sky and brisk sea wind he is very alone.

Eventually, JONES CLIMBS UP TO THE ROOF. He sits and, for several beats, says nothing.

JONES

That really felt like an authentic American domestic disturbance. I can feel us getting closer to home.

SMITH

My parents got on alright.

JONES

Not mine.

SMITH

They still around?

JONES

So far as I know. They were kind of indestructible.

SMITH

It's stupid of us to go home.

JONES

Yes, but on the scale of all the stupid things we've done, it actually looks pretty smart.

Smith gets up and starts down the ladder.

JONES

(over his shoulder) I know you dropped that bottle ...

We watch Jones settle into his watch.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - NIGHT

Now Howdy Doody mans the watch.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - NEARING DAWN

Now the ROOF IS EMPTY. This is Smith's watch. He's gone.

INT. STAIRCASE

SMITH MOVES STEALTHILY DOWN INTO THE SHIP. He rounds a corner, and descends down ...

INT. LADDER

... a ladder. He turns on his infrared Maglite and OPENS A DOOR TO THE

INT. ENGINE ROOM

He looks around then moves quickly past the turbines to the opposite wall.

ANGLE ON A METAL, CIRCUIT-BOARD-STYLE DOOR AS IT'S PULLED OPEN, revealing a half-finished bottle of gin.

REVERSE ON SMITH, taking up the bottle, seeing it's half-full, confused.

SMITH TURNS TO SEE A GUN POINTED STRAIGHT AT HIM. BEHIND IT, GHAZI.

GAZI

It's an old Thai custom.

He takes Smith's gun.

GAZI (CONT'D)

A gesture of friendship.

SMITH

But you've got a gun in my face.
I'm confused by these mixed
signals.

GAZI

Please don't try anything. I mean
you no harm.
(Looking at him more critically)
You really don't remember me, do
you?

SMITH

Don't be hurt. I don't remember a
lot of people.

GAZI

We fought together once. With
Kalamed. Near Fantij.

SMITH

I don't know what you're talking
about.

GAZI

I saved your life.

SMITH

...

GAZI

You were drunk then, too.

SMITH

I don't know what you're ...

GAZI

I knew your wife.

SMITH

...

GAZI

We were related actually.
Distantly.

A long pause, then Ghazi slowly lowers his gun.

GAZI

My regrets, Mr. Smith.

From nowhere SMITH PRODUCES A SECOND GUN OF HIS OWN, pressing
it hard up under Ghazi's jaw. He smiles with fury.

SMITH

What do you want?

GAZI
I want to join you.

SMITH
You want to join us.

GAZI
I haven't eaten in four days.

SMITH
Yeah, well you're really missing out. It's like a tailgate party upstairs.

GAZI
A what?

SMITH
Where'd you get the gun?

GAZI
It's my own.

SMITH
How many do you have?

GAZI
One more. Four clips.

SMITH
Any food? Any water?

GAZI
No.

SMITH
Two guns, four clips, no food, no water. Next time you'll want those things.

GAZI
I gave my food and water to the Little Girl.

Smith looks at Ghazi's filthy clothes and face. He looks at his bleeding feet. He eventually lowers his gun.

SMITH
Jesus Christ, she's like a cat burglar.

Smith looks at his half-empty bottle.

SMITH (CONT'D)
I ought to shoot you just for this alone.

GHAZI
(Beat) You didn't ask me if I had any booze.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - LATER

SMITH TOPS OFF GHAZI'S COFFEE CUP WITH A FRESH BOTTLE. He pours a little for himself. They are drinking solemnly -- not talking -- not yet drunk.

GHAZI
(Smiling charitably)
I have no idea where we are or when we'll make land.

It takes Smith a while to realize that this is a question.

SMITH
Two days. Actually, the day after tomorrow.

GHAZI
Is it night now?

SMITH
The wee small hours of the morning.

GHAZI
And where are we going? Still Mexico?

SMITH
(Beat) Yes. Paredon.

GHAZI
Ah, good.

SMITH
May I ask how you wound up here, in the belly of the whale?

INT. CONTAINER

Mother rolls over in her sleep to feel for her daughter.
SHE'S GONE.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

GAZI

I've been the engineer on this ship for three years. In that time, she's changed names seven times. She was the Aurora, the Gorky, the Princess Irani, the Summer Breeze ...

SMITH

The Summer Breeze? Really?

GAZI

Really. Horrible.

SMITH

Sounds like a floating whorehouse.

GAZI

You watch your mouth around my China Doll.

SMITH

That's her real name?

GAZI

Yes. She's protected me for a long time. Given me work to help me forget.

SMITH

She's a good ship.

GAZI

She is. She just has bad taste in men.

Smith pours him some more.

SMITH

You fought with Kalamed?

ON GHAZI, remembering.

GAZI

Yes.

INT. CONTAINER

MOTHER SEARCHES THE CONTAINER ANXIOUSLY for her girl, calling her name in a throaty whisper.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

GAZI (CONT'D)

Of course he's long since dead. All those brave men.

SMITH

Were you with him when he rolled into Kandahar?

GAZI

I was. My home. (beat) Victory in war is such a rare and beautiful thing. I saw people I knew, old friends. How thin and happy they looked ...

INT. CONTAINER

MOTHER IS ALMOST HELPLESSLY PANICKED NOW.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Smith watches GHAZI, LOST IN HIS MEMORIES. He gives him a moment before rising.

SMITH

Well, wanna meet the other guests?

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

CLOSE ON JONES as he listens to the Mother, understanding as she does not just what she's asking.

MOTHER

Mr. Jimmy is gone, too. *Please*, Mr. Elvin. Something will happen to her. I know it.

JONES

They're not together. She followed him ...

He looks at his watch, then the thin line of dawn on the horizon.

INT. SHIP

Ghazi follows Smith through the passageway in the ship. Together, they're careful and quiet as they make their way back.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

Jones looks out OVER THE DECK. Nothing is out of the ordinary. He's decided. Howdy Doody arrives. Jones hands his radio to him.

JONES

It's your watch now. Understand?

Jones crosses the roof and descends into the

INT. CONTAINER

Some of the other immigrants are starting to rise, sensing something wrong. Jones looks around quickly to see that Smith is definitely gone. He grabs a flashlight from his bag, then steps out into the

EXT. COURTYARD

Guessing at where the Girl might have gone, Jones checks both rows running the length of the ship. (beat) Then he hears THE FAINT SNORING OF THE DISTANT HIJACKER SENTRY. He smiles to himself -- he now knows how the girl got/gets away.

Jones checks the BREECH OF HIS GUN.

INT. SHIP

Ghazi covers Smith as he moves around a corner. They both start up a barely visible set of stairs.

EXT. DECK (NO MAN'S LAND)

CLOSE ON THE SENTRY as he snores, then REVERSE ON JONES, right in front of him. JONES SNAPS HIS FINGERS and the sentry awakes with a start. JONES BUZZES HIM WITH THE STUN GUN.

Rising, Jones moves quickly and elegantly away. He looks down one alley between the containers, then another, then another.

He's getting uncomfortably close to the wheelhouse when he looks down a fourth alley and sees ...

EXT. ALLEY

... AN OPEN CONTAINER DOOR. He approaches it and enters. He whispers her name.

INT. BURHAN'S CABIN

A BUTTON ON A HANDSET IN THE FOREGROUND turns on and beeps. REFOCUS ON BURHAN IN THE BACKGROUND glaring at it.

INT. CONTAINER #2

Jones moves carefully within. There are narrow alleys between the pallets, alleys within alleys. The pirates have clearly been in here working. Jones hears something move.

JONES
(Whispering in Cantonese)
Little One. We must go now.

He shoves a pallet a few inches to get further back. He steps forward. He turns on his flashlight to see ...

THE BARED TEETH OF A LARGE RAT. It hisses viciously. Jones, unimpressed, CRUSHES IT UNDER HIS BOOT. He's given up on this container. He starts to move out, then freezes. He turns his flashlight on a TRIGGERED BOMB CLOCK.

INT. CONTAINER - NIGHT

Smith enters with Ghazi in tow, causing a general stir.

SMITH
Illegal immigrants, this is Ghazi.
Ghazi, illegal immigrants. There's
water over there. There's some
cereal in the mini fridge. Don't
eat too much or they'll freak out
...

Only now does Smith tune into the anxiety in the room. He sees the Girl is gone. It comes together quickly for him.

INT. WHEELHOUSE

Men ascend and exit carefully through a door.

INT. CONTAINER #2

Jones crouches over the triggering device. It's motion-based, we can or cannot tell. Most importantly, there is a no attached explosive; we see DANGLING, UNCONNECTED WIRES. He looks again and finds a small, detached charge, like a wad of chewing gum. It's plugged into one of the hijackers' bricks of heroin. Jones considers it quickly. Is this plastique? That's what he thinks at first ... then we see A LOOK OF COLD RECOGNITION CROSS HIS FACE. This isn't plastique, and it isn't heroin.

He thinks briefly, drops the detonator and charge in his pocket, then refocuses on finding the girl. He's about to emerge when a DARK FIGURE RUNS QUICKLY PAST THE OPEN CONTAINER DOOR. It's like something extremely dangerous you only catch in the corner of your eye.

Jones knows now he's in trouble.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

SMITH ASCENDS BRISKLY to find a SURPRISED HOWDY-DOODY, dutifully standing his watch. Smith sees and grabs the RADIO (trying to reach Jones).

SMITH

(Whispering, in code)
Let's check this frequency. How's
it reading.
(He waits. Then tries again)
Are you picking up anything?

Nothing. He clamors down back into the

INT. CONTAINER

He goes directly to the Mother.

SMITH

Where's the girl? He went after
her?

She can't answer. He grabs the woman by her upper arm.

SMITH

(Shouting)
He went after her!

MOTHER

Yes!

Smith grabs the sniper rifle and disappears topside, again. Ghazi, with two of his pistols, follows.

EXT. DECK

Along the portside row, the Little Girl moves carefully and swiftly back.

BEHIND HER, ONE BY ONE, THE DECKLIGHTS TURN ON sequentially, from aft to fore, catching up to her as she runs.

In the brightness now, she passes the PASSED OUT SENTRY.

She rounds the corner as ...

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

SMITH HEARS SOMETHING, ROLLS AND TRAINS HIS GUN OVER THE EDGE toward the container entrance, SEEING THE LITTLE GIRL IN HIS SITES AS SHE ENTERS THE CONTAINER. He curses and turns back to his sniper position.

INT. CONTAINER

The Little Girl runs into her Mother's arms.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

SMITH

Burhan, this is Smith. Burhan!

BURHAN

Yes?

SMITH

We just lost a young girl. Jones went after her. She's back now, and he should be back soon. There's nothing to be concerned about.

BURHAN

I'm to believe that? I thought we had an agreement.

Smith realizing this isn't getting better.

SMITH

Let's not let this get out of hand.

BURHAN

I can't reach a few of my men on the radio. It seems this already is out of hand.

SMITH

(Almost losing his temper)
I'll blow up your product. Don't tempt me!

BURHAN

And immolate yourself and all your party guests?

GHAZI

(Interrupting)
Let's shoot the lights.

SMITH

(Turning, exasperated)
What?!

GHAZI

(Quickly)
It's no good, my friend. Let's shoot the lights.

Ghazi raises his pistol and SHOTS OUT THE LIGHT right above them. Smith drops the radio and raises his rifle, shooting out lights one by one. SPARKS SHOWER THE DECK.

CLOSE ON SMITH AS HE STEPS UP.

SMITH

(Yelling)
The girl is back! She's safe! It's just you!

INT. CONTAINER #2

SMITH (O.S., ECHOING)

It's just you!!

Jones says a wordless prayer. (Beat) He turns on his flashlight and slides fifty feet ACROSS THE DECK, STOPPING NEAR SEVERAL HIJACKERS.

JONES RUNS THE OTHER WAY.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

SMITH'S P.O.V. as he picks up the light. He sees multiple silhouettes, but can only shoot one.

INT. CONTAINER

The Little Girl runs to the doorway to hear the action (The Searchers shot), dawn arriving more fully.

EXT. DECK

JONES ROUNDS A CORNER, now moving quickly and carefully along the wall of containers. Behind him, a handful of silhouettes run by. The odds are clearly overwhelming.

HE ROUNDS ANOTHER CORNER, AND HE'S SPOTTED. He takes a bullet in the leg. As he's falling, he spins and FIRES OFF A FLURRY OF SHOTS, driving these other men back.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

Smith hears this exchanges as he scrambles to the other side and lays down suppressing fire. He knows now it's a disaster.

EXT. DECK

BULLETS DANCE OFF THE METAL LIKE FIREFLIES. Jones stumbles around another corner. He fires at more men at the end of the corridor, then drags himself through a narrow alley. It seems to go on a ways. It seems like a break. Jones sees that his gun is empty.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

Smith jams another clip in the rifle.

EXT/INT. NARROW ALLEY

Jones scurries across an open corridor and back into the narrow alley. It feels like he's getting close.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF

Smith and Ghazi lay down fire at both ends.

EXT/INT. NARROW ALLEY

Jones looks both ways then tries to cross. He suddenly SPINS AROUND WITH HIS UNLOADED PISTOL. He's in a MEXICAN STAND-OFF with a terrified hijacker. Somehow he missed this guy.

JONES
 (In Cantonese, then
 Arabic, then English)
 Give me your gun!

Terrified, the hijacker does so, and JONES SHOOTS HIM WITH IT. THEN HE'S SHOT FROM BEHIND. Jones turns, shooting as he falls. He's immobilized. He empties his clip carefully, then passes out.

EXT. DECK - A LITTLE LATER

ON SMITH LISTENING. He's stopped shooting. GHAZI sees this and lowers his gun. Smith knows what's happened, but doesn't want to admit it yet.

SMITH
 (in the radio) Burhan.

INT. BRIDGE

ON BURHAN

BURHAN
 Mr. Smith, what happened to our arrangement? I thought we were going to bide our time, as shipmates?

SMITH (O.S.)
 Our little girl ... a little girl got away from us.

BURHAN
 Did you think we wouldn't have returned her?

SMITH
 ...

BURHAN (CONT.)

As it happened, we concluded you were trying to undermine our position. We thought you were attacking us.

SMITH (O.S.)

I'm going to come get him.

BURHAN

Now why wouldn't I shoot you? Why wouldn't I think the same thing was happening again.

SMITH (O.S.)

Because I'll blow up the boat.

BURHAN

Ah yes, with the charges you've attached to our hull, isn't that it? Do you take me for such a fool?

SMITH (O.S.)

I'm coming to get him. I'm giving you fair warning.

EXT. DECK - DAWN

Smith walks across the deck, having taken up Ghazi's bottle.

INT. BRIDGE

Burhan returns the handset to its cradle, smiling.

BURHAN

Jamil? Get your rifle.

LAFRERE

He's done it before, you know.

Burhan turns with us to (CLOSE ON) LAFRERE.

LAFRERE (CONT.)

On two of my boats.

BURHAN

And I should believe you as well?

LAFRERE

That's what they tell him to do.

BURHAN

And why would you tell the truth?

LAFRERE

Because I want my money.

EXT - DECK - DAWN

There is a hairline of sun on the horizon. A few sparks still fall from the shot-out lights. Smith finds Jones, barely alive. Smith reaches for him, but JONES GRABS HIM FIRST. He PRESSES THE DETONATOR INTO SMITH'S FIST. HE TRIES TO SPEAK, but is almost unintelligible.

JONES

Burnt ... browning ... brunt ...

SMITH

I can't, I don't understand ...

JONES DIES.

Smith takes him up awkwardly. He walks back. Jones is folded up like a child. They both seem of the same race now, made of grime and blood.

INT. BRIDGE

CLOSE ON BURHAN AS HE WATCHES.

LAFRERE

(Behind him)
In two days, they leave. If you shoot them, you'll just have more to clean up ... Just two days.

BURHAN'S EXPRESSION DOESN'T CHANGE.

EXT. DECK

Smith makes it back to their little courtyard, trips and SPILLS HIMSELF AND JONES ACROSS THE DECK. The immigrants rush to help, but Smith clutches Jones closer to him with one hand. With the other, HE LEVELS HIS GUN AT THE IMMIGRANTS.

SMITH

(Crescendo)
Get away! Get away FROM US! GET BACK!!! GET AWAY FROM US!!!

The immigrants slowly recede.

ON SMITH WITH HIS FRIEND IN HIS ARMS. Smith takes a drink from his bottle. Together they almost look like drunken sailors.

EXT. ROOF - LATER

GHAZI'S P.O.V. as he looks down from the roof at SMITH AND JONES, still in the same place.

GHAZI RESUMES HIS POSITION. Now he's standing watch.

EXT. CONTAINER COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

Howdy Doody approaches. Smith awakes and sees him coming. Howdy Doody brings him something to eat, then squats beside him. Time elapses.

HOWDY DOODY (IN ROUGH ENGLISH)
They want you eat.

CUT TO:

INT. CONTAINER - EVENING

Smith enters as the immigrants finish dinner. They stop. No one speaks. Smith heads up the ladder.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - NIGHT

WORK LAMPS ILLUMINATE A FEW SPOTS ON THE DECK NOW. For the first time the hijackers are working at night. Working round the clock, in fact. Smith climbs up and relieves Ghazi. Ghazi clearly has thoughts on what's happening, but won't share them now. Once Ghazi is gone, SMITH ROLLS ON HIS BACK AND STARES AT THE STARS.

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

SMITH SITS AGAINST THE WALL. The children are again out and playing in the sunshine. Everything seems as it was before, somehow. But Smith is catatonic. THET-WAY APPROACHES SMITH, wordlessly offering him a cigarette. Smith takes it. Thet-Way sits and lights them up.

THET-WAY

I was a boy during the Cultural Revolution. Do you know what I'm talking about?

Smith doesn't answer. He smokes.

THET-WAY (CONT'D)

One night in the summer, I was having dinner with my father, mother and sister. I was mad at my mother because she had forbidden me from seeing my friends that afternoon. I remember looking at my father and thinking how much it would hurt her to have him taken away. We children quickly understood the power we had then. We knew that people disappeared. The next day I reported him to the commissar at school. Nothing happened that day. Or the next. But on the third day, I saw my father in the morning, on his way to work, then never saw him again.

Seeing Smith won't respond, he gets to his point.

THET-WAY

Since that day I've lived a bad life, a vengeful life. I was never caught or punished for the many things I did. That only made me worse.

SMITH

So you bought a ticket out for all these people. Is that right?

THET-WAY

Yes.

SMITH

Have you been redeemed?

THET-WAY

I'll never be. But that changes nothing.

SMITH

(beat) I'm glad we had this talk.

This line is sardonic, but lost on Thet-Way, who eventually gets up, handing Smith his pack of Marlboros.

SMITH (CONT'D)
 You can tell your flock that
 nothing's changed. We'll leave
 tomorrow morning.

Thet-Way leaves.

ON THE LITTLE GIRL, watching them.

EXT. CONTAINER ROOF - NIGHT

ON SMITH AS HE LIGHTS UP, then ON SMITH AND GHAZI SITTING
 OPPOSITE ONE ANOTHER, standing watch. We get the feeling
 they've been up here awhile without speaking. Smith has
 relieved Ghazi, but Ghazi's stayed here.

SMITH LOOKS UP AT THE STARS AGAIN, then speaks, slowly and
 carefully.

SMITH
 Do you know the stars?
 (Now looking at Ghazi) No? That
 cluster there (pointing), those are
 the Cypriot Twins.

GHAZI
 Ah.

SMITH
 The reward of so many idle hours at
 sea. (Beat).

Smith produces something from the his shirt pocket now. He
 hands it to Ghazi. It's the DETONATOR JONES FOUND IN
 CONTAINER #2.

GHAZI
 This is a charge, I think. And a
 detonator.

SMITH
 You couldn't even blow a lock with
 that. It's like a stun or a smoke
 grenade charge.

GHAZI
 Where did you find it?

SMITH

Jones gave it to me.

Ghazi hands it back.

SMITH (CONT'D)

(Looking up again) This time of year the Cypriot Twins don't appear above the equator. They don't appear, in fact, above Mexico City.

GHAZI

... Where are we going.

SMITH

We're bound for Long Beach.

GHAZI

Long Beach?

SMITH

Los Angeles.

(Even more slowly now)
I have this fantasy ... I just can't shake it ... that this isn't heroin. Or that the heroin is disguising something else. Something substantial like heroin that would need drug channels to get into the country. That's the only way it could get in. Something heavy. Something big and clumsy.

Ghazi starts to understand.

SMITH (CONT'D)

Something that you would want to put on the backs of a bunch of guys you've smuggled in. Or that you'd want to put into these containers to crisscross the country, then (holding up the detonator) blow up into a little cloud a minute or two after the container is opened and the pallets have all been dragged out.

ON GHAZI, fully alert now.

GHAZI

That's your fantasy.

SMITH

Yes.

GHAZI

(Beat) We all have fantasies.

SMITH

Yes.

Ghazi says nothing now.

SMITH (CONT'D)

In a previous professional life, Jones and I hunted for Soviet memorabilia -- like certain varieties of chemical and biological weapons. They went through a phase where everything they made was portable, it could fit in your overhead compartment. Or they could bring it in like drugs, some of the stuff was that malleable. The drug scenario we called a "brownout." I think that's what Jones said when he gave this thing to me.

GHAZI

You think.

SMITH

...

GHAZI

And why wouldn't this (pointing to the detonator) just be their unpleasant way of saying "Don't try to steal our heroin"?

SMITH

It could be that.

GHAZI

Do you realize the kind of money they'll make? If they already have a buyer in the U.S.A.?

SMITH

Yes.

GHAZI

(urgent whisper) Hundreds of millions of dollars.

Smith says nothing.

GAZI

I was on the Nereid. We had a crew of 25. A tanker. VLCC. They boarded us by helicopter. Former Spetznaz. I remember these Russian murderers from Afghanistan. They killed our entire crew. They raped the captain's daughter. I hid. I alone survived. Three weeks and 25 pounds later, I escaped in Dusseldorf. This why I go to sea prepared now, as you've seen. (Beat) We went halfway round the world.

Smith says nothing.

GAZI

They had as many men and were better equipped. (Beat) I look at these men and I see thieves.

Smith still says nothing.

GAZI

(Whispering)
Are you willing to die for a fantasy?

SMITH

I'm not.

GAZI

Neither am I.

Eventually, Smith says,

SMITH

California ...

GAZI

Is that your home?

SMITH

It's close enough.

Again, Smith is quiet.

GAZI

When we are fighting, we see so many things that aren't there.

SMITH

Yes.

GHAZI

My fight is over ...

SMITH

...

GHAZI

I used to imagine i saw children
running through our fields of fire
... with wings sometimes. Or forked
tongues or eight arms.

SMITH

I heard voices sometimes.

GHAZI

I think they will let us go
tomorrow.

SMITH

I think you're right.

GHAZI

And you'll be home. That won't be a
fantasy.

SMITH

God, I hope so.

GHAZI

Los Angeles ...

SMITH

Los Angeles.

EXT. THE STERNJIN SVEIT - EARLY MORNING

A HELICOPTER SHOT reveals a small liquid gas tanker in
distress.

SUPER:

The liquid gas tanker Sternjin Sveit.

December 3, 1996. 4:21:00 am PST

60 miles SW of San Francisco USA

It's crew scrambles over its deck under the stark deck lights. Suddenly we hear the snap and see the flash of automatic weapons fire.

PILOT
Sternjin Sveit, do you read
Still nothing, Skip.

A REVERSE SHOT REVEALS A US COAST GUARD SIKORSKY HELICOPTER MOVING AHEAD OF A USCG CUTTER, THE SAM WINTERS.

EXT. DECK, PORT SIDE (SVEIT)

TWO MEN OF SIMILAR ETHNICITY TO THE AURORA'S HIJACKERS MOVE BRISKLY TOWARD THE BRIDGE. We see there is some kind of gunfight on the other side.

EXT. DECK, STARBOARD SIDE

PILOT
Some sort of dust up on the deck
... She's Russian?

SAM WINTERS (O.S.)
Yep. Out of Vladivostok. Probably
ran out of Stoli and got into the
gas ...

INT. SVEIT

A PAIR OF HIJACKERS PUSH OPEN THE DOOR to the captain's quarters and are temporarily blinded by the naked bulbs of several lamps (the CAPTAIN has torn off the shades and put them close to the door). In their blindness, we hear two shots and the sound of the hijackers collapsing. We now see THE CAPTAIN, WEARING SUNGLASSES to protect (and ease adjustment) of his eyes. He emerges and shoots another hijacker at another door. He now goes to that door, taking guns along the way.

CAPTAIN
(a harsh whisper)
Yuri!

YURI emerges and the Captain gives him a gun. They move out of the door ...

EXT. STAIRWAY TO BRIDGE

... up the stairs and onto the

INT. BRIDGE

Yuri shoots another hijacker. They see THE BLOODIED MESS OF THE FIRST OFFICER AND THE SMASHED RADIO. They see the distress signal has been triggered.

The Captain's eyes go wide as he sees TWO MEN ON THE DECK WITH AN RPG AIMED AT THE APPROACHING ...

INT. HELICOPTER

We're moving low and fast across the water. FROM THE PILOT'S PERSPECTIVE NOW, we see the Captain on the stairs to the Bridge. He's pointing his pistol at the TWO MEN WITH THE RPG AIMED RIGHT AT US, THE ROCKET LAUNCHING.

REVERSE ON THE PILOT.

PILOT
Oh Jesus ...

EXT. DECK

FROM BEHIND WE SEE THE ROCKET LAUNCH and the deck simultaneously explode, the ROCKET IGNITING THE GAS.

INT. BRIDGE (SAM WINTERS)

We see the HELICOPTER TRIP INTO A WALL OF FLAME, then an enormous explosion. We don't see the men with the RPG.

ON THE SKIPPER, his face lit with the glow of the explosion.

SKIPPER
(Shouting) Right full rudder!

CUT TO:

EXT. BOW (AURORA) - MORNING

SMITH WATCHES A LURID GOLDEN SUNRISE. Somewhere just over the horizon, he knows, is California.

INT. BRIDGE

Lafrere enters to see Burhan and Big Brother regarding the radar with self-satisfaction.

CLOSE ON THE RADAR, where we see multiple ships converging off San Francisco.

Lafrere sees the reading.

LAFRERE

My God, that's half the U.S. Coast Guard. Those three are Navy destroyers. What happened?

BURHAN

(Focused on the radar still)
Some kind of accident.

EXT. COURTYARD - LATER IN THE MORNING

THE IMMIGRANTS HAVE GATHERED WITH THEIR BELONGINGS, READY TO LEAVE. Smith picks up his handset.

INTERCUT:

SMITH

Burhan?

BURHAN

Yes?

SMITH

We're ready.

BURHAN

Splendid! Please take the lifeboat on the port side. We will approach the shipment from the starboard. If everything is satisfactory, we won't speak again. Will that suit you?

SMITH

Yes. It will.

EXT. DECK - PORT SIDE

Smith and Ghazi escort the move to the lifeboat. They're surprised to see no hijackers watching them. THEY SHARE A LOOK.

SMITH

They're out there somewhere.

EXT. DECK - STARBOARD SIDE

The hijackers simultaneously move to the heroin shipment. We see Big Brother, among them, LOOK DOWN A LONG AISLE BETWEEN THE CONTAINERS AND SEE THE IMMIGRANTS MOVING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. He turns to Burhan, who smiles.

BURHAN

What would you think, if you were them? And we have too much to do and only so much time to do it. And they want to leave.

EXT. DECK - PORT SIDE

SMITH STANDS BESIDE THE LIFEBOAT, helping in the immigrants, perplexed by the lack of a hijacker guard.

EXT. DECK - STARBOARD

Burhan, Big Brother and the others round the corner to see the BLUE-STRIPED CONTAINER.

EXT. DECK

Smith and Ghazi help the Thet-Way up and into the lifeboat; he's the last immigrant to board. Even he's taken aback at how alone they are.

Ghazi looks at Smith, inviting him up into the lifeboat. Smith doesn't move. Ghazi turns back to LOOK WITH HIM, UP AT THE WHEELHOUSE.

GHAZI

It's practically there for the taking ...

They hear shouting down near the blue-striped container. SMITH LOOKS AT THE LITTLE GIRL, seeming so helpless in her lifeboat.

Eventually, SMITH TURNS TO GHAZI.

SMITH
I can't go.

GHAZI LOOKS AT SMITH, then up at THE BEAUTIFUL SKY.

GHAZI
(long beat) We must be damned men
or fools to die on such a day ...

SMITH
You don't have to join me.

GHAZI LOOKS BACK AT SMITH.

GHAZI
Yes I do.

GHAZI GRABS THE BOW RELEASE LINE. SMITH GRABS THE STERN RELEASE LINE. They kick the chocks free and now the boat swings drastically in the rising wind. On a count, they each give their lines a pull. Ghazi's come free, as expected, but Smith's doesn't budge. THE LIFEBOAT'S STERN DROPS THREE FEET before Ghazi stops the line. It 30% off its keel as the immigrants scream. As Smith wrestles to free his line, we see that first Howdy Doody, then the Little Girl, have discerned that Smith and Ghazi are staying. The LITTLE GIRL REACHES FOR SMITH AND NEARLY LOSES HER HAND BETWEEN THE SWINGING LIFEBOAT AND THE AURORA.

INT./EXT. LOWER CONTAINER

Burhan, Big Brother and Little Brother stand before the BLUE-STRIPED CONTAINER as a couple of hijackers SLIDE THE MAIN DOORS OPEN. We see the pallets of heroin. Burhan and a couple others step inside as BIG BROTHER'S FACE LIGHTS UP RAPTUROUSLY.

REVERSE ON A PAIR OF HIJACKERS WHEELING UP TWO PALLETS OF THEIR OWN "HEROIN."

EXT. DECK

As the PENDULUM SWING OF THE LIFEBOAT AGAIN BRINGS IT CLOSE, Howdy Doody hops off. He gestures insouciantly to Smith to give him a gun.

Smith thinks for just a split second, then hands him the Beretta. The Little Girl still tries to leap back aboard the Aurora, her Mother crying as she fights her. Smith shouts in Cantonese to get back, to stay with her Mother.

Suddenly we hear the sound of broken glass. We spin to see Howdy Doody, the gun in his waistband, PULLING OUT A FIRE AXE. He approaches Smith swiftly, RAISES THE AXE AND BRINGS IT DOWN HARD ON THE LINE just above Smith's hands.

(FROM SMITH'S PERSPECTIVE,) WE SEE THE LIFEBOAT DROP LIKE BULLET TO THE SEA. WE LOSE IT IN THE WASH ALONG THE SIDE OF THE AURORA. A BEAT, THEN WE SEE IT REAPPEAR, BOUNDING OUT OF THE SPRAY. THEY'VE MADE IT.

Smith staggers back, inspecting his hands.

WE REFOCUS BEHIND HIS HANDS TO SEE THE LITTLE GIRL ON THE DECK AND HER MOTHER STRUGGLING TO GET BACK ABOARD THE SHIP.

INT. LOWER CONTAINER

Hijackers work carefully and quickly separating heroin from another kind of wrapped material.

C/U OF HIJACKER #7 AS STOPS, A BRICK OF THE MATERIAL IN HIS HANDS, AND STARES. This is his fate.

EXT. DECK

Simultaneous with Smith's discovery of the Little Girl and her Mother, GHAZI DIVES AT THE MOTHER'S WRIST. With strength we didn't know he had, HE PULLS HER UP. He turns to Smith, who's aghast at yet again having his life at the mercy of innocents. Ghazi's eyes dance around for a moment, then seize on a door.

GAZI

We'll put them in the generator closet. (Now turning to the Little Girl and Her Mother, dragging them as he speaks) You'll stay here until we come for you.

MOTHER

But we'll ...

GAZI

Don't argue! You were stupid enough to get out of the lifeboat. Now you can be stupid enough to trust us.

With keys on his belt he unlocks and opens the closet door, carefully but forcefully ushering them in.

MOTHER
Give me a weapon.

She looks at Smith first, then Ghazi. Ghazi, with a trace of hesitation, hands her his pistol.

GHAZI
The safety is off. You understand?
You just pull the trigger.

C/U OF THE LITTER GIRL AND MOTHER LOOKING AT THE GUN, THE UP AT GHAZI. THE MOTHER NODS.

Without another word ...

REVERSE ANGLE ON GHAZI AS HE SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT. IN DARKNESS WE LISTEN AS HE LOCKS IT. THEN WE HEAR NOTHING.

INT./EXT. ANOTHER CONTAINER

FROM THE BLACKNESS INSIDE THIS CONTAINER, IT'S DOOR SWINGS OPEN. Hijackers move inside, bricks of the material in hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. STAIRS TO BRIDGE

Smith moves quickly but silently. Ghazi is behind him.

INT./EXT. BRIDGE

SMITH STEPS THROUGH THE DOOR, quickly scanning the room with his rifle and finding only Lafrere.

LAFRERE
What the hell do you think you're doing?

SMITH
Well, Henri, I'm turning this ship out to sea and then I'm going to sink her.

LAFRERE
Why?! In God's name?!

SMITH
What's in these containers?

LAFRERE
How the hell should I know?

SMITH
That's right.

Ghazi, with consummate knowledge of this ship, throws a trigger that ...

INT. SHIP

... SLAMS SHUT ALL THE WATER-TIGHT DOORS.

INT. BRIDGE

GHAZI STRIPS THE KEYS FROM LAFRERE'S BELT and disappears back down the stairs. Smith takes a step to Lafrere.

SMITH
Turn her around.

LAFRERE
Don't be mad, Jimmy!

SMITH STEPS TO THE HELM AND PULLS THE WHEEL HARD RIGHT. He steps back, about to shoot the panel, hoping it will seize up. At that moment, a toilet flushes and A PIRATE EMERGES FROM THE SMALL HEAD OFF THE BRIDGE. Smith spins, DROPS HIM and turning back, finds LAFRERE WITH A GUN IN HIS HAND, leveled at Smith.

Lafrere speaks with difficulty.

LAFRERE
Gone mad! Simply mad!!

SMITH
Henri ...

A door opens behind him. Smith's eyes move toward the door.

REVERSE ON LAFRERE, WHO TWITCHES, THEN PULLS THE TRIGGER.

ON SMITH FLINCHING AS IF SHOT. He spins to see that Lafrere has actually shot a HIJACKER COMING ONTO THE BRIDGE.

ON LAFRERE, HIS EYES NOW DANCING AROUND THE CONSOLE. He hits a number of buttons.

LAFRERE
The autopilot lock ... see ... they've
locked everything up ...

He checks a few more gauges. Then he looks at Smith. He takes a couple quick breaths.

LAFRERE
Everything.

SMITH
Henri ...

LAFRERE
They'll need me ...

A beat. Is this beginning of his statement or his statement in its entirety? He doesn't finish. LAFRERE PUTS THE GUN IN HIS MOUTH.

SMITH
Henri!!

FROM OUTSIDE THE BRIDGE WE SEE THE WINDSHIELD INSTANTLY TURN A DEEPER HUE OF GRAY.

INT. CONTAINER

At the sound of the gunshot, BURHAN SPINS BACK TO LOOK UP TOWARD THE WHEELHOUSE. He sees that there's a fight for the bridge. He thinks: Smith.

BURHAN
Fucking cowboys ...

Thinking quickly, then turning to Big Brother.

BURHAN
See if you can come up from underneath! We'll approach on the deck from the starboard! (To the others) Keep working!

BIG BROTHER IMMEDIATELY TAKES OFF. Burhan rips a gun from the hands of another hijacker, swapping it with a brick of the chemical.

INT. SHIP

GHAZI SLIDES EXPERTLY DOWN A NARROW STAIRWELL, bangs through a door, then slides down a ladder. We hear the metallic echo of his landing bound down the cavernous inside of the hull. We're deep in the bowels, as close to the bottom of this ship as we can be. There's no one down here, if anyone knows about it at all.

EXT. DECK

Burhan moves toward the wheelhouse, a couple other hijackers in tow.

INT. BRIDGE

Smith works quickly to be able to defend the bridge from the starboard side. Seeing men approaching, HE STICKS A GUN OUT AND FIRES SEVERAL PREVENTATIVE BURSTS.

EXT. DECK

BURHAN AND THE OTHERS THROW THEMSELVES BACK AGAINST THE WALL to avoid the ricocheting bullets. Another hijacker runs up from behind.

HIJACKER #8 (PHARSEE)

All the hatches are locked. We
can't get through.

Burhan listens to this and licks his teeth. He quickly moves around to another corner to look up at the wheelhouse. It's unapproachable. He curses ...

... then sees the LONG YELLOW CORD STRETCHING FROM CONTAINER TO CONTAINER, providing electricity for the worklights.

EXT. DECK

Big Brother looks for another approach to the bridge, but only finding sealed, watertight hatches. As he does so, he notices THE DOOR GHAZI TOOK TO GET BELOW DECKS. It leads to the front of the ship and shouldn't concern him, except IT'S AJAR.

EXT. DECK (PORT SIDE)

TWO HIJACKERS ROUND A CORNER. The port-side stairs come into view. SO DOES HOWDY DOODY. They freeze. He steps directly into their path, a pair of guns tucked in his dirty pants. THIS IS A SHOWDOWN. One of the hijackers smirks at this child. THEY BOTH START SHOOTING, BULLETS POPPING OFF THE DECK TOWARDS HOWDY DOODY, WHO'S ALREADY DRAWN AND DROPPED THEM BOTH.

He throws out both guns on his fingers, spins them and drops them back in belt.

... THEN HE WILTS SLIGHTLY. HE SEES AND TOUCHES AT SPREADING BLOOD ON HIS INNER THIGH.

HE COLLAPSES.

EXT. DECK (BOW)

Hijacker #7, with brisk efficiency, sets the timed charge in a container at the front of the ship, steps back and slams it shut. He moves on to the next container, and we pull back to see others working just like him, all near the bow, where they didn't have access before.

We cut to another hijacker, who STUMBLES AND SNEEZES, clearly affected in some way by the chemical.

INT. BRIDGE

On the starboard side, SMITH TAKES CAREFUL AIM WITH HIS RIFLE. The first person to step forward he drops.

INT. SHIP

GHAZI HAND FEELS AROUND IN A SMALL TIGHT SPACE FOR A GRENADE, until it touches it ... and sends it further out of his reach.

INT. SHIP

BIG BROTHER DROPS SOUNDLESSLY TO THE FLOOR GHAZI IS ON. He starts forward.

INT. BRIDGE

Smith watches both approaches carefully. Nothing is happening. HE RISES FROM HIS RIFLE, CONFUSED AND WARY.

EXT. DECK

Burhan wraps cord around his legs and waist. He's surrounded by other hijackers, who are a little frightened by what's going on. Burhan looks up, pauses and smiles.

BURHAN
As the infidels say, "Oh ye of
little faith!"

He looks to A MAN WITH A KALISHNIKOV RIFLE ON THE PORT SIDE.

BURHAN (YELLING)
Now, Tadjik!!

The man LAYS DOWN SUPPRESSING FIRE that we see ...

INT. BRIDGE

... SPLINTER ACROSS THE GLASS WINDOWS OF THE BRIDGE.

SMITH DIVES FOR COVER.

EXT. DECK

With this diversion, Burhan parts the small crowd then TAKES A RUNNING LEAP OVER THE SIDE OF THE SHIP and ...

EXT. OCEAN (UNDERWATER)

... PLUNGES INTO THE SALTWATER. He bobs up and gasps for breath. After struggling for awhile, he starts to unravel the cord about him, letting out slack, GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER TO THE TRANSOM.

INT. SHIP

Big Brother works his way toward the front of the ship. He is perfectly, naturally silent. He's taken off his shoes.

INT. BRIDGE

Smith moves quickly to check the port side. Still no activity. He knows something must be up as ...

EXT. TRANSOM

... Burhan pulls himself athletically onto the low transom deck. UP FROM HIS DRIPPING FEET TO CLOSE ON HIS BRIGHT FACE. His expression says, "I can't believe that worked. Now what?" He looks thoughtful, even happy, as he surveys the back of the ship for his next move. HE STABS AT THE ELEVATOR BUTTON, but we know that he knows it won't work.

INT. SHIP

ON GHAZI'S FINGERS STRAINING for the grenade when, suddenly, he senses something.

He jumps to the floor quickly.

ON BIG BROTHER, HEARING THIS. He steps around a bulkhead in the direction of the noise and FIRES THREE QUICK ROUNDS at GHAZI, ALREADY DISAPPEARING AROUND A CORNER. The bullets ricochet dumbly and dangerously down the thin inside wall of the hull.

EXT. DECK NEAR BRIDGE

Howdy Doody drags himself to a hiding place.

INT. SHIP

ON GHAZI, yelling:

GHAZI
Careful! You'll kill both of us and
sink the ship too!

Big Brother ignores this, moving carefully forward.

BIG BROTHER
So step forward. We can both go
topside. I'll kill you there.

ON GHAZI, facetiously considering the offer as he checks his rusty Beretta knock-off.

GAZI
That's ... That's very kind of you.

EXT. TRANSOM

Burhan is trying doors, getting very close, then suddenly HE'S AT THE DOOR MOTHER AND DAUGHTER ARE HUDDLING BEHIND. He works at the handle viciously, with strength we didn't know he had.

Then we hear a (SFX) ping.

BURHAN SPINS to see the ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN.

INT. SHIP

GAZI TUCKS THE GUN IN THE BACK OF HIS PANTS. It's just not reliable enough. He's about to make a run for it, when he looks up to see AN EXPOSED BOLT in nearby bulkhead wall. He looks back down at the grenade in his hand.

 GAZI
I've got a grenade.

 BIG BROTHER
Yes, you and Smith and your endless supply of explosive.

 GAZI
I'll show it to you. Don't shoot!
I'll hold it up!

 BIG BROTHER
Yes. Certainly.

GAZI HOLDS UP THE GRENADE, just quickly enough for Big Brother to see.

 BIG BROTHER (ADMITTEDLY SURPRISED)
You've got a grenade.

 GAZI (SOTTO VOCCE)
That's right, shithead.

INT. ELEVATOR

THE DOORS PART AND BURHAN STEPS OUT TO THE THIRD FLOOR. He pulls down a drop-door in the ceiling and a ladder falls out. We had no idea.

In the elevator, he hits the button for the bridge level, holding the doors open until he's most of the way up the ladder. He pulls his foot out, letting the doors part, then disappears up the ladder, pulling it up behind him.

INT. SHIP

GHAZI SLOWLY RAISES THE GRENADE TO THE EXPOSED BOLT, THEN LOOPS ITS PIN AROUND IT. HE WRAPS HIS FINGERS AROUND IT TIGHT.

GHAZI (OVER HIS SHOULDER)
I'm going to step forward. I've rigged the grenade so that if you shoot me, I'll pull the pin out when I fall.

GHAZI TAKES A DEEP BREATH AND STEPS INTO THE OPEN.

GHAZI (CONT.)
I don't have a gun. Just this. (He gestures with the grenade.)

BIG BROTHER STEPS FORWARD, GUN LEVELED. He steps to within about ten feet, then stops. His eyes move quickly between the grenade and Ghazi.

BIG BROTHER
So what do we do now, Old Man?

GHAZI (A HINT OF A SMILE)
Now we talk money.

INT. BRIDGE

Smith doesn't see the blinking elevator light on the console, but HE HEARS THE PING (SFX) of the elevator arriving and is SUDDENLY BEHIND A DOOR, ONLY PARTLY VISIBLE, his gun leveled at AN EMPTY ELEVATOR.

The elevator doors close without ceremony. Smith slowly, reluctantly lowers his gun.

INT. SHIP

Big Brother half smiles, half sneers.

BIG BROTHER
Of course. I should have known.

GAZI

And what do you mean by that?

BIG BROTHER

You? A Bedouin carpet thief? I recognize your accent, Old Man.

A pause. Big Brother is trying to get into Ghazi's head. He takes a step forward.

BIG BROTHER (CONT.)

... Of course you would extort a mujhedin.

Ghazi listens, twitches. He jerks the grenade authoritatively.

GAZI

Not another step. [a ruthless smile] Perhaps I've spent too much time with my American shipmates. I'm now in touch with my emotions. You should know that I feel you've deliberately hurt my feelings. Very deeply ... I hope you're happy. [Now working his own psychology] Do you know what it's like to die underwater? In what is, effectively, a sinking submarine? (CLOSE SLOWLY ON GHAZI). It's the water pressure, you may know. At a hundred feet down, your body has to hold off a thousands tons of it. First you feel bubbles in your blood. Another hundred feet, your eardrums burst. Another ten, you're lungs collapse. Then your skull. Do you know when your skull collapses, it starts at your temples (pointing)? That's how you and I will go. Perhaps the last thing you'll see is my eyes popping out of my head? ... Can you see I have nothing to lose? Now run to your betters, boy, and (shouting) *get me my dollars before I put us all at the bottom of the bloody ocean!*

EXT. WHEELHOUSE ROOF

BURHAN'S POV AS HE WATCHES SMITH UPSIDE DOWN. He's looking through the shattered glass of the windshield.

He pivots back up. With perfect silence, he wraps a fire hose around his feet. He crawls to the corner of the roof over the open starboard side door.

INT. SHIP

Clearly Big Brother was a little affected by the Ghazi's speech, but he also sees that giving him some money may fix the situation. Give him the money, he thinks, then kill him.

BIG BROTHER
Alright. I'll be back.

Big Brother starts backward, lowering his gun, then turning to head back up. In the background WE SEE GHAZI MOVE.

We see HIS HAND LEAVE THE GRENADE, WHICH HANGS EASILY ON THE BOLT.

GHAZI DRAWS THE GUN FROM BEHIND HIS BACK. He steps quickly after Big Brother until he's at close range and, from his POV, FIRES THREE QUICK SHOTS INTO HIS BACK.

Ghazi briskly approaches Big Brother's limp body.

HE SHOOTS HIM AGAIN FOR GOOD MEASURE, squarely in the middle of the back.

INT. BRIDGE

Smith looks quickly over the instrumentation then quickly at both doors. He runs to the port side to check that approach to the deck.

EXT. WHEELHOUSE ROOF

Burhan pushes his waist to the edge, so HIS CHEST HOVERS IN THE AIR OVER THE STARBOARD ENTRANCE to the bridge. We see the hose is taught. He can swing down upside down, see and shoot Smith. HE BOUNCES SLIGHTLY AND CATCHES A GLIMPSE OF SMITH, enough to know where to shoot when he makes his move.

INT. SHIP

GHAZI DRAGS BIG BROTHER'S BODY up close to the hull wall.

GHAZI
You'll hold my grenade in place.

C/U ON THE FACE OF BIG BROTHER AS GHAZI PULLS HIS JAWS OPEN AND SETS THE GRENADE IN IT, LIKE SETTING A FOOTBALL ON TEE. It positions the explosive neatly against the wall, without allowing blow-back in the direction Ghazi will run.

GHAZI (CONT.)

I shouldn't think your virgins will mind if your head doesn't make the trip with you? My mujehedin friend?

INT. BRIDGE

Smith knows he's in a tight spot, but he can't leave the bridge. HE SLOWLY LOOKS UP AT THE ROOF, for some reason this occurs to him now as an approach but ...

EXT. WHEELHOUSE ROOF

... it's too late. Burhan bounces slightly, getting a feel, then swinging down. FROM HIS POV WE SEE HIM SHOOT SMITH UPSIDE DOWN. SMITH STUMBLES AND FALLS OUT THE PORT SIDE DOOR AND DOWN THE STAIRS.

INT. SHIP

We can't hear any of this down here, as GHAZI LOOPS A FINGER THROUGH THE GRENADE PIN. He takes a shaky, deep breath.

He grimaces and PULLS THE PIN.

FROM THE FAR END OF HALL GHAZI RUNS STRAIGHT AT US. Five beats and the GRENADE EXPLODES BEHIND HIM. We hear the moan of the hull as a thick beam of water breaks through.

GHAZI SPRINTS PAST US, UP THE LADDER, UP THE STAIRS.

EXT. BRIDGE STAIRS - PORT SIDE

SMITH HEARS THIS, his gun trained on the door to the bridge above. He's been shot in the shoulder and abdomen. He stands slowly, watching the deck and door alternately.

EXT. OCEAN

THE NOSE OF THE SHIP BOWS EVER SO SLIGHTLY INTO THE OCEAN.

EXT. WHEELHOUSE ROOF

Burhan unwraps himself from the hose and stands.

BURHAN (INTO THE RADIO)
Hiraz! HIRAZ!

HIRAZ
Yes, yes I'm here! The ship
sinking!

BURHAN
That's very observant of you. Keep
working! A ship like such as this
doesn't

ON HIRAZ, who looks at the others, also listening.

HIRAZ
Yes, absolutely, Burhan. [beat] We
will blow them.

He LOCKS A LOOK WITH SEVERAL OF THE OTHERS, some of whom have both detonator and chemical agent in hand. They brace themselves slightly, as the ship's level changes. We hear the buckling of steel.

ANOTHER HIJACKER
I say we vote on it.

INT. SHIP

THE SOUND OF BUCKLING STEEL IS SUDDENLY DEAFENING (SFX). We also hear the ROAR OF WATER, as GHAZI CLIMBS HIS WAY TOPSIDE. We see his feet lift away from the ladder as the ship lists.

EXT. OCEAN

A WIDE SHOT OF THE SHIP TILTING BOW-FIRST INTO THE OCEAN. It doesn't seem like it's going to down, though.

INT. CLOSET

Mother panics in this black box, the ship leaning. SHE WORKS AT THE STEEL DOOR FRANTICALLY.

EXT. DECK

ON BURHAN SLIDING DOWN STAIR RAILS THEN KICKING THROUGH A DOOR TO EXIT THE WHEELHOUSE.

EXT. CONTAINER

ON HIRAZ FUMBLING WITH HIS DETONATOR, then, to another hijacker (one of the ones who'd had a detonator and brick) now running aft with others for a lifejacket.

HIRAZ
FERAT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING!?

INT. CLOSET

Mother works at the door, when suddenly it leaps out of her hands. We stare at TWO HIJACKERS, who stare back hungrily. They lunge ... for the Mother and Daughter's life jackets, wrenching them off. The door bounces shut.

THEY TRY THEM ON, then smile desperately at one another once they seem to fit. THEY SLIDE A MOP HANDLE THROUGH THE DOOR, BARRING IT SHUT.

INT. CLOSET

The Mother rattles helplessly at the door.

EXT. CLOSET

WE'RE BEHIND THE TWO HIJACKERS. one turns to us, and his face goes ashen. the other turns.

REVERSE ON SMITH, A BLOODY MESS AND LARGELY INCAPACITATED BUT WITH HIS GUN RAISED.

He doesn't say anything, only gives them an impatient look. THEY PROMPTLY START TO STRIP OFF THE JACKETS. Once finished, Smith says ...

SMITH (IN MALAY)
Now help them out of the closet and
put the jackets on them.

EXT. DECK

BURHAN MOVES QUICKLY BACK DOWN THE SHIP, on a decline, as hijackers course past him. He's taken aback.

BURHAN

Men? Where are we all going?

HE SUDDENLY SHOOTS ONE who was running past him. THE REST FREEZE.

BURHAN (TURNING BACK TO FACE THEM)

We can't lose sight of our objective, my brothers! You see! Allah has stopped the boat from sinking. And ... AND!

With dramatic flair he runs to the top of an angled over container to point into the distance. We see he's on top of the blue-striped container. WE FOLLOW HIM UP TO SEE A FAINT BROWN LINE OF COAST.

BURHAN

I give you ... California!

HEADS TURN. They follow him up to look for themselves. PAN ACROSS THESE DESPERATE MEN.

BURHAN DROPS DOWN INTO THE CONTAINER.

EXT. SEA

A SHOT OF THE AURORA, HER NOSE NODDING INTO THE WATER AT ABOUT A 20 DEGREE ANGLE, BUT SEEMINGLY, UNEASILY STOPPED.

EXT. TRANSOM

THE TWO HIJACKERS DUTIFULLY TIGHTEN THE LIFE JACKETS ON MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

SMITH (IN MALAY)

That's great, now jump overboard.

They hesitate, and Smith clips one of their ears with a gunshot. THEY JUMP. Smith nearly crumbles. Mother runs to him.

GHAZI NOW ARRIVES. He quickly assesses the situation, then looks off into the distance and sees AN APPROACHING SHIP. SMITH SEES THIS TOO.

GHAZI

Are those friends or enemies?

SMITH

It doesn't matter.

GAZI
Yes, you're right.

Ghazi moves to a control panel and unlocks it with Lafrere's keys, revealing a cluster of switches and cut-offs.

SMITH LOOKS AT THE MOTHER AND SEES SHE'S LOOKING AT HIM.

MOTHER (TO SMITH)
Are you alright?

SMITH
Yes. Thank you.

Smith looks at the girl now, but she's looking away. Ghazi returns.

GAZI
When this happens, it will happen fast.

SMITH
Yes.

GAZI
I'll do it. You go with them.

SMITH
I'm going to find Burhan. You go.

GAZI
Smith ...

SMITH
Someone must protect these two. I can't do that. Someone's got to get them in, then keep others out of your little raft.

GAZI
And how will you get down there?

SMITH
Gravity will get me half way there.

GAZI
I ...

SMITH
I can't swim, my friend. I can barely walk.

Ghazi smiles wanly at this.

SMITH
 Alright?

GHAZI
 Yes.

Mother understands what's happening. She turns to Smith, clearly struggling for something to say. She can't find the words. He smiles.

The Daughter looks up at him, and he runs his hand over her head. He directs them towards Ghazi, who stands at the risen edge of the transom, a yellow bundle (the life raft) under his arm. As the mother and daughter approach, Ghazi explains.

GHAZI
 We're going into the water. You two will go first ...

The Little Girl looks over her shoulder at Smith.

GHAZI (CONT.)
 ... You will hold hands so you don't lose one another, then I will come after you. This will inflate in about 5 seconds. I'll pull you into it. ...

The Little Girl rummages through her rags.

GHAZI (CONT.)
 ... No one else will be allowed in. There isn't room. There's barely room for us.

THE LITTLE GIRL BREAKS AWAY, running quickly to Smith, even before her Mother can call out she reaches up and touches Smith's arm. She lifts her hand, opens it to REVEAL THE BULLET CASING FLOWER POT. She gives it to him, touches his arm quickly, then runs back to her mother.

Smith looks at all three of them and smiles.

INT. CONTAINER

BURHAN PULLS A LEGAL STYLE BRIEFCASE from the tumble of things against the container wall. He climbs back out of the container. In front of about five men, HE OPENS THE TOP, REVEALING DIALS AND A STEEL CASING WITHIN.

He looks up at them triumphantly, slapping the case.

BURHAN

The suitcase nuclear weapon. In the Louis Vuitton bag. Originally not intended for debut until December 2003, but certainly better now than never.

HIJACKER (POINTING INTO THE DISTANCE)

Burhan! Another ship!

Burhan looks up and out, seeing the ship bearing down on us, perhaps a half mile away.

BURHAN

Ah, excellent!

He starts to work the dials. Gulls circle above. They're that close to shore.

EXT. TRANSOM

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER JUMP INTO THE OCEAN.

GHAZI THROWS THE SWITCH, OPENING THE WATERTIGHT DOORS, THEN JUMPS IN AFTER THEM.

EXT. OCEAN

Slowly, the AURORA NODS FURTHER INTO THE SEA.

EXT. DECK

Smith staggers around the wheelhouse, trailing a smear of blood, the deck lifting underfoot. He gets to the first container. At the base are STEEL BUCKLES SECURING THE CONTAINER TO THE DECK. He throws one, then the other, then the next, we hear it start to give. He throws the last. Still it won't budge. He runs up its side, pressing his weight against the container, trying to free it. That's when HE SEES BURHAN, ABOUT 30 CONTAINERS DOWN.

A hijacker sees Smith, pointing him out to Burhan. Another raises his rifle but Burhan stops him. He hands the suitcase to the hijacker, who blanches. Burhan stands, turns and waves.

BURHAN

Smith!

Smith looks up, a strong breeze snapping over them both.

BURHAN (CONT.)

This is a moment all will remember,
my friend!

Smith doesn't answer. He looks across the ocean to California.

BURHAN (CONT.)

And what a beautiful morning!

Smith isn't going to say anything, then does, perhaps to his own surprise.

SMITH

Every morning ...

He doesn't finish. Burhan half smiles at the moment, then turns asking again for the briefcase. We hear the Coast Guard PA system call out to us, but it's not entirely intelligible.

SMITH

Burhan!

BURHAN TURNS, still waiting for the bomb to be handed back up.

SMITH (CONT.)

I think I was born to kill you!

Smith is smiling now, and Burhan can see this. Burhan smiles back amused, feeling a little fellowship with another lunatic. He turns to receive the briefcase, saying

BURHAN

Okay, please. Shoot him now ...

BUT BURHAN'S SHOT FROM CLOSE-RANGE, falling into the container.

REVERSE ON THE CRUMPLED FORM OF HOWDY-DOODY, WHO'S INSTANTLY RIDDLED WITH BULLETS.

The hijackers now notice that the ship is starting to sink again.

SMITH FEELS THE CONTAINER GIVE WAY UNDER HIS FEET, GIVING IT A SHOVE TO HELP OUT.

EXT. OCEAN

The ship starts to gain momentum, ITS BOW DIPPING INTO THE WATER AT A 50 DEGREE ANGLE.

CONTAINERS GIVE WAY, TUMBLING OVER ONE ANOTHER.

EXT. DECK

WE'RE WITHIN THE CONTAINERS, an incredible volume of noise building to a deafening crescendo as we crash into the water, where instantly, all is silent. THIS IS SMITH'S P.O.V.

WE REVERSE ON HIM, willfully dying now, falling through the blue deep that becomes a kind of dream sequence, a flicker of images of his wife and daughter that eventually recedes.

EXT. OCEAN

ON GHAZI, MOTHER AND THE LITTLE GIRL IN THE RAFT, watching the screws of the ship rush into the water, then turning to the thin line of California coast and a new life.

Start Credits over Sinatra's "Wee Small Hours."