ONE MORE RAINY DAY

by

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FADE IN:

LED-screen filtered stock footage:

TIDAL WAVES decimate cities.

MEDIEVAL WOODCUTS of the Deluge, Noah’s boat on huge waves.

INT. BOOKSHOP - DAY

The MONTAGE CONTINUES on a shiny LED SCREEN:

LIGHTNING STORMS crackle above a RAGING VOLCANO.

TRIBAL PAINTINGS of winged serpents sparking from flame.

The screen sits at the centre of a TABLE FULL OF BOOKS. A SIGN beside the table: “MARTIN WEAREY - SIGNING INSTORE TODAY”. A patient LINE of customers queue for the author.

Onscreen, SNOWSTORMS obscure the FAINT SUN.

CUSTOMERS glance occasionally at the onscreen display:

NORSE ART depicts THE WORLD TREE withering in ice.

At the queue’s HEAD, a trestle-table at which sits MARTIN himself, beside a large DUSTJACKET PHOTO of same. He’s a pudgy fellow in his LATE 60s, greying hair roughly combed.

Martin SMILES as a fan presents him with a STACK OF BOOKS.

MARTIN

Good afternoon.

He FLIPS THROUGH THE BOOKS, worn copies of his work:

“RIDING THE WINGED SERPENT”; “SEARCHING FOR THE FLOOD”;

“POSTCARDS FROM THE ABYSS”.

TRENTON, a balding, stringy-haired kook, leans in.

TRENTON

Changed my life, sir. All of ‘em.

MARTIN

Martin, please. Who shall I make these out to?

TRENTON

Trenton Morrison. I just wanted to say... I’m ready for it, Martin. Ragnarok? Age of Horror? Don’t rattle me. That’s what you’ve given me. Given all of us.

Martin GRINS warmly.
MARTIN
Well, that’s just wonderful, Trenton.

Martin inscribes the first of the books:

“ENJOY THE AGE OF HORROR -- YOUR FRIEND, MARTIN WEAREY”.

EXT. BUILDING SITE - DAY

A VISITOR PASS is inscribed: BRADLEY WEAREY.

The pass is SIGNED and PINNED to the neatly-pressed shirt of:

BRADLEY WEAREY, late 20s: pudgy like Martin, but tall, fresh-faced.

Bradley DITHERS at a row of HARDHATS of varying sizes and colours. He stops a BUILDER, Mike:

    BRADLEY
  Scuse me -- sorry -- I usually wear like a medium-sized hat, so which one of these would...

    MIKE
  One size fits all, boss.

    BRADLEY
  Well, which one’s going to protect my head if something, y’know...

He LOOKS UP to a crane swinging a HUGE LOAD OF CEMENT. Bradley CRINGES as dust spills from the load.

    MIKE
  Dead’s dead, mate. Your bosses are this way.

Bradley GRABS A HARDHAT and follows Mike to a sealed-off PLANNING ROOM.

    BRADLEY (V.O.)
  So my thinking is we can make these minor alterations with the materials we have.

INT. BUILDING SITE - DAY

Bradley has a ream of PLANS spread on a dusty TABLE for his bosses, BUTCH AND STEVE.
BRADLEY (CONT)
It’s just a couple of redistributions to your blueprint is all, Butch.

The elder of the men looks up from the plans:

BUTCH
Excellent work, Brad. How’s your plans coming?

BRADLEY
Sephira Towers? Have something for you to look at tomorrow.

BUTCH
Great stuff. See you back at the office.

Bradley NODS and grins winningly. As soon as they’re gone he nervously READJUSTS HIS HARDHAT.

ZARA (V.O.)
What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow out of this stony rubbish? Son of man, you cannot say, or guess --

INT. ZARA’S LIVING ROOM - DAY

ZARA MOSS, mid 20s: pierced face, sandy-blonde dreadlocks. She sits READING in the sun, a steaming teapot at her side. Her room is just on the good side of the messy/dirty divide. Collected TRINKETS line every available surface.

ZARA
“You know only a heap of broken images, where the sun beats and the dead tree gives no shelter”.

Props the book up: THE WASTE LAND. Zara RUBS HER EYES in frustration at the legendarily incomprehensible screed.

She gets up, PACES with the book. Looks out the window at a SUNNY DAY.

ZARA
“The sun beats, and the tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief, and the dry stone no sound of water”??

The book FLOPS TO HER SIDE. Zara SNEERS at it.

ZARA
The hell’s that supposed to mean, huh?
She MESSES ABOUT on her desktop, piled with books and papers: finds her READING LIST.

"APOCALYPSE STUDIES 300 LEVEL: PRE-COURSE READING". "THE WASTE LAND" is just one of a LONG LIST of books.

ZARA
Aw, nuts.

She FLOPS BACK ON HER COUCH and reopens the book.

ZARA
"Only there is shadow under this red rock, come in under the shadow of this red rock" --

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

COMPUTER SCREEN: a DOCUMENT headed "APOCALYPSE STUDIES 300 LEVEL: COURSE PLAN, COORDINATOR JIMMY WILT". The COMPUTER sits in the office of the course's coordinator:

JIMMY WILT, late 40s. An olive-skinned man whose face bears just the newest hints of wrinkles and a thinning hairline.

ZARA (V.O.)
I will show you something different from either your shadow at morning striding behind you or your shadow at evening rising to meet you--

Jimmy types the finishing touches on the document.

He crosses the office to a COUCH in front of a large PULL-DOWN SCREEN, which displays a flickering PAUSED IMAGE: Stock-footage of an emergent NUCLEAR EXPLOSION.

Jimmy sits back on the COUCH and hits UNPAUSE. NUCLEAR FIRE fills Jimmy’s screen; ROBERT MCNAMARA and JFK STUDYING SPY MAPS of CUBA; CASTRO in the prime of his fervour.

ZARA (V.O.)
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.

The grainy image CUTS back to the MUSHROOM CLOUD, whose harsh LIGHT flickers off Jimmy's SMILING FACE.

INT. BOOKSHOP - DAY

ON THE SCREEN, the FIRST NUKE TEST displays behind text: "I AM BECOME DEATH, THE DESTROYER OF WORLDS".

MARTIN (O.S.)
What is it I fear?
The LAST CUSTOMER, a bead-festooned woman named TRISH, eagerly awaits Martin’s ANSWER.

MARTIN
Death by water, I suppose. Or dying alone. One of the two. Or that people might stop reading my books.

TRISH
You must have conquered a lot of fear, to go all those terrible places. Mexico, and Rens-lez-shattoo, and all the Flood sites...

MARTIN
As you know, I wasn’t alone. I had my research assistants...

Trish LOOKS OVER HER BOOKS. On the back cover of one: An old B/W PHOTO of a much younger MARTIN, JIMMY and BRADLEY.

TRISH
Oh, of course. And always your son. He must be so grateful for all he’s shared with you.

Martin SMILES at her. SIGNS the last book.

MARTIN
“To Trish, may courage be yours always, your friend, Martin Wearey”.

He dumps it in her arms conclusively. Trish LEAVES, hugging the books to her bosom.

Martin STANDS, stretches, crosses to the SCREEN, displaying images of 9/11; FLICKS THE SCREEN OFF as the buildings DROP.

INT. BRADLEY’S OFFICE - NIGHT
ON A COMPUTER SCREEN, a tall, utilitarian APARTMENT BLOCK.
Bradley MASSAGES HIS TEMPLES as he clickitty-clicks his way around a DESIGN PROGRAM.

TITLE CARD: WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND - 1 WEEK REMAINING
Bradley WHEELS THE IMAGE to look upon his works and mumble.

BRADLEY
Yeop... that’s some form-followin’ function right there.
ALLISON (O.S.)
Bradley, hon?

BRADLEY
Just a second!

Onscreen the building hovers against CG BLUE SKY -- then abruptly DISSOLVES to a shutdown message.

Bradley methodically SWITCHES ALL HIS ELECTRONICS OFF, referring to a diagram on the wall:

"GREEN CHECKLIST: SAVE YOUR WORLD TODAY!"

A NEWSPAPER sits unread on the desk, the headline: "ANTARCTICA CRACKING". It is shoved in with other PAPERS as he DIVIDES the clutter of his DESKTOP into two BINS.

Then he TURNS HIS DESK LAMP OFF, and EXITS the little office;

Then SCUTTLES BACK IN and turns the main LIGHT OFF.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

ALLISON, Bradley’s wife: mid-to-late 20s, jeans, neat little glasses, bouncy energy damn near springing her out of her cross-legged position on the BED.

She looks for the dozenth time at a little white STICK. A GRIN that scarcely fits her face. HIDES THE STICK behind her back as BRADLEY walks in.

BRADLEY
Sephira Towers mock up pretty good.

ALLISON
Mhmm?

He COLLECTS CUPS from their bedside tables.

BRADLEY
Should have something for Butch on time.

ALLISON
Uhuh?

She WATCHES HIM busying himself about, enjoying the suspense.

BRADLEY
So he’ll be happy there.

ALLISON
Yup.
He goes to TAKE THEIR DISHES OUT -- pauses in the doorway.

BRADLEY
Allison, is there --

She UNVEILS THE LITTLE STICK. Tries in vain to stop GIGGLING.

The window on the stick is BRIGHT PINK.

Bradley looks at her, taking it in.

MONTAGE:

He WALKS TO HUG HER; He HUGS HER in breathing class as she PRACTICES EXHALING; She EXHALES FRANTICALLY in a HOSPITAL ROOM. A DOCTOR holds up a crying BABY: their NEW DAUGHTER BRIDGET.

The new family walk down a HOSPITAL CORRIDOR, past a man reading a newspaper: “OIL PRICES SKYROCKET”; Bradley BECKONS Bridget as she takes her FIRST STEPS; rioters RUN THROUGH THE STREETS.

Allison READS A BOOK to Bridget, with a picture of a CAMEL; an actual camel watches BOMBERS fly toward Baghdad; Bradley and his family WATCH TV: the broadcast is interrupted by news of NUCLEAR WAR.

Bridget picks DAISIES. She LOOKS UP. HER EYES ARE WIDE. A MUSHROOM CLOUD looms huge and all-conquering.

END MONTAGE

Allison is still waiting on Bradley’s RESPONSE.

BRADLEY
That is SO GREAT!

He forces a BIG GRIN and rushes to HUG HIS WIFE.

ALLISON
So this is just a preliminary thing, and I’ve got to go to the doctor and get a blood test and then we can, wow, start doing like PREGNANCY stuff --

BRADLEY
I am just so excited for you!

She stops, LOOKS at him.

BRADLEY
US. I am so excited for US. WE are going to have a baby!
ALLISON
We sure are! What do you want it to call you?

BRADLEY
Bradley, I guess?

MONTAGE:

Bradley and Allison in BREATHING CLASS; The just-born Bridget CRYING --

ALLISON (V.O.)
No, stupid. It’ll call you Dad, or Dada, or something like what REAL kids call their parents. Omigod, what are we gonna call it? What kind of clothes shall we buy it?

Bradley and Allison wave to Bridget, in a HOODY and BRIGHT SCHOOLBAG; Bridget PLAYS HOPSCOTCH with other kids; above them the SUN IS GROWING;

ALLISON (V.O.)
Do we wanna be like those parents who make their kid wear hoodies with animal ears on them so they look amusingly ridiculous?

Her outfit CHANGES ABRUPTLY to a plain jumper; A huge SNAKE circles the SUN and flies toward Earth. Bridget looks UP.

ALLISON (V.O.)
Or those ones who buy the kid hip clothes so they fit in at school, or make ‘em wear sensible clothes and be all like “fuck you, I’m a sensible child”? Of course we don’t want our child swearing until it’s of a suitable age --

Bridget SCREAMS as the SNAKE FILLS THE SKY and EVERYTHING GOES RED --

END MONTAGE

Allison STOPS, out of breath.

BRADLEY
There certainly is a lot to consider.

ALLISON
An awful lot. We’ll have to make a list.
BRADLEY
We’ll buy some books.

She KISSES him.

ALLISON
The methodical approach. This is why I’m having YOUR child instead of some guy in the street.

BRADLEY
I’m a lucky man.

ALLISON
Damn straight.

They KISS again. She LAUGHS. STRADDLES him.

MONTAGE:

They KISS DEEPLY as Bradley’s COMPUTER thrums to life; sends SIGNALS whizzing down TELEPHONE LINES.

She PULLS HIS SHIRT OFF; A BANK OF COMPUTERS FLASHES. A RED-LIGHT LENS blinks open like an EYEBALL.

Allison and Bradley LOOK INTO EACH OTHERS’ EYES; she BITES HER LIP; ELECTRICAL SIGNALS course across grids; computers in factories START TO WHIR.

BRADLEY KISSES ALLISON. She GRIPS HIS SHOULDERS. SPERM RUSH TOWARD AN EGG. TINY MACHINES RUSH FROM A PROCESSOR.

BRIDGET CRIES, newborn. A TELEVISION displays the phrase “NANOTECH CRISIS” then BLINKS TO STATIC.

Billions of TINY MACHINES COVER A CITY. The RED MACHINE EYE STARES UNBLINKING. Cars are locked on a HIGHWAY, BEEPING FRANTICALLY. They’re BLANKETED WITH THE SILVER SUBSTANCE of the tiny machines. The machines crawl over STRIPPED CAR FRAMES and HUMAN BONES.

A HOPSCOTCH COURT with THREE LITTLE SKELETONS on it.

END MONTAGE

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Bradley, WIDE AWAKE, stares at the ceiling as Allison SLEEPS peacefully beside him.

BRADLEY
Jesus.
JIMMY (V.O.)
Used to be they said every man
thought about sex every six
seconds. Nowadays you could find
guys spend that long thinking
about the End of the World.

INT. STUDY ROOM - DAY

JIMMY WILT sits at the head of a RING of students.

Behind them on a BLACKBOARD: “WHAT DO WE THINK OF
APOCALYPSE?” “HORSEMEN”; “NUKE”; “POPULATION CRISIS”.

JIMMY
Fire? Flood? Nuclear Armageddon?
Apparently it’s not REALLY the
End unless it looks like a heavy
metal album cover. The literal
definition of Apocalypse is just
“uncovering or revealing”; maybe
that’s all we’re talking.

ZARA
Surely that’s thinking too small.

JIMMY
Sorry? Zara, right?

Zara tries to contain her IRRITATION.

ZARA
Here’s what I been thinking...
Jimmy, right?

He grins and NODS: you got me.

ZARA
The Apocalypse isn’t just things
as we know ’em falling apart.
That’s just a bad day. This is
the end of the world as we know
it we’re talking about here.

JIMMY
This isn’t metaphysics, Zara.

ZARA
But what’s THERE? It’s fine to
talk about nukes and comets and
all; what happens NEXT?

Jimmy RISES to RUB OUT the scrawled eschatology on the
board.
JIMMY
Well, if you look to your programme, you’ll see that climate change and the new Ice Age is in term 3. If you’re wanting to talk about Odin being devoured by Fenrir, I’d advise you ask your friend and mine Martin Wearey.

Zara NODS, irritated. Jimmy has CLEARED THE BOARD.

JIMMY
Fantasy ahead of rational thought: the deadliest pitfall in our field. That’s assuming his latest voyage fails to yield results.

Polite LAUGHTER masks a KNOCK ON THE DOOR. Jimmy TURNS:

BRADLEY’S FACE through the window.

JIMMY
We’re sensible people: just because we talk about the End doesn’t mean we believe in it. Take five.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Jimmy EXCUSES HIMSELF to meet Bradley outside.

JIMMY
What’s up, Prodigal Son?

BRADLEY
I need to talk to my dad, Jimmy. Like urgent.

JIMMY
All I have’s his itinerary. I think Zara’s joining him in a couple days.

Jimmy NODS THROUGH THE DOOR: Zara is WRITING ON THE BOARD, almost taking over the class in his stead.

JIMMY
His latest research assistant. God knows what she’s doing on my course -- probably a plant. Keep an eye on the wayward apprentice.

BRADLEY
Jealous?
Hey. Leaving Martin’s retinue was the best thing I ever did. You?

It’s up there.

I have to get back in there before Zara steals my class. Are you around later?

Taking my wife to the doctor, then I’m without a care in the world.

There’s a bar down the road from campus. Must be downwind, cause the undergrads haven’t found it yet. I’ll buy you a beer, we can work out how you track your dad down.

Relax. Wherever he’s headed, it’s not gonna be one of those trips.

If you say so.

EXT. MAYAN VILLAGE - DAY - 1985

Tinny pan-pipe MUSIC plays over indiscreetly placed SPEAKERS. Bored native folk wear gaudy simulacra of MAYAN DRESS.

MARTIN struts about, big CAMERA around his neck. Holding his hand is little BRADLEY. At Martin’s side is a younger JIMMY.

It’s such a sadness. Thousands of years’ tradition, white people come and ruin it for everyone.

It’s all just change. Indigenous populations are there to be relegated to history, right?
MARTIN
You're wise beyond your years.

Young BRADLEY tugs on his father's hand.

BRADLEY
I'm BOORed, Dad.

MARTIN
Not much longer now, Brad.

BRADLEY
You said that HOW-urs ago!

MARTIN
I just want to try something.

Martin approaches CHAIM, an ELDERLY MAYAN MAN, who sits outside a crudely-approximated HUT.

MARTIN
Excuse me, sir?

The old man SHAKES HIS HEAD.

CHIAM
No hablo.

Jimmy steps between them.

JIMMY
Let me -- go ahead, Martin.

Martin NODS. Jimmy TRANSLATES for both of them.

MARTIN
What do your legends say about the year two thousand and twelve?

Chiam DRAWS in the dirt: a winged SNAKE, maw GAPING WIDE, encircling a small EARTH. Martin PHOTOGRAPHS furiously as the old man mumbles.

JIMMY
He says twenty-twelve's the end of their bak’tun -- um, calender.
That is when Kukulkan, Quetzalcoatl -- feathered world-serpent -- returns.

The old man, enjoying the taste of scenery, turns to the terrified BRADLEY and MUTTERS darkly.

JIMMY
Kukulkan will devour the Earth, all men will perish, the great cycle of the cosmos will begin again in, um... blood and fire.
Chiam sits back down. Jimmy NODS in thanks as Martin walks away. Delighted, Martin talks into a TAPE RECORDER.

MARTIN
Yaxcopoil was a demonstration of
a once-proud culture left unclear
even as to its own beliefs,
brought to its knees by
masochistic New Age obsession
with the twenty-twelve myth.

Young BRADLEY is QUAKING IN FEAR, STARING at Chaim.

MARTIN
I mean, how about that guy,
Jimmy? Oh, make no mistake --
scholarly cracker? He saw me
coming a mile off! Isn't this
fascinating??

Martin PUTS AN ARM ROUND JIMMY enthusiastically. The young
man is ALL SMILES -- until he's the first to notice
BRADLEY, TREMBLING AND STARTING TO CRY.

Just then the boy COLLAPSES, shaking, white like a ghost.
The two men RUSH TO PICK HIM UP.

BRADLEY
(VO)
I mean, luckily you eventually
explained it. How this wasn’t the
sort of shit anyone takes
literally.

INT. BAR - DAY

The bar is SPARSELY-PACKED; the kind of pool-tables-and-
rugby spot that even ironic students would avoid. JIMMY AND
BRADLEY have a quiet table and a couple handles of beer.

BRADLEY
But shit, Jim, this’s just
brought it all right back, man.
Bring a kid into the world, when
my whole life’s been learning
about the inevitable doom of it
all? Think about my own lack of
control in all this and I just --

He shakes his head.

JIMMY
So it's a definite deal?

BRADLEY
Just had the blood tests. Find
out in a couple days.

(MORE)
BRADLEY (CONT'D)
But man, I want her to be. Or...
I want to want it.

JIMMY
So all you need is to talk to him
about it? That’s all it’ll take?

BRADLEY
Make it sound easy. We haven’t
TALKED-talked in a while.

Jimmy SMIRKS, takes a big swig. Takes out an ENVELOPE:
unfolds a document scrawled with Martin’s chicken-scratch.

JIMMY
Your dad’s doing a book about his
formative years, which somehow
leads into his latest imminent-
apocalypse theory. Says here he’s
calling it One More Rainy Day.

Bradley DRAINS HIS GLASS. SMILES wryly.

BRADLEY
“Visible changes; it looks like
the world being born on one more
rainy day”.

JIMMY
What’s that, Yeats?

BRADLEY
Deep Purple.

He reaches for the ENVELOPE. Jimmy PULLS BACK.

JIMMY
Three questions.

BRADLEY
Shoot.

Jimmy GRINS. Puts his glass aside.

JIMMY
Tell me what you’re going to ask
him.

BRADLEY
I guess I’ll say... Martin, once
and for all, is any of this true?
How much is idle shit that I have
no cause worrying about?

JIMMY
And tell me why you think that’ll
do it.
BRADLEY
Cause I need it for my wife’s sake. And God love him, that’s one thing he did right, he was a hell of a husband to my mum until the end.

JIMMY
Okay. And tell me what you’ll do if he holds out on you.

BRADLEY
I will follow him until Judgement Day like I were the Wandering Jew.

Jimmy hands over the ENVELOPE.

JIMMY
Throw in the next round, we’ll say that’s all I came for.

Bradley takes the information.

BRADLEY
Take a raincheck, we’ll say I believe you.

Jimmy PATS HIM ON THE BACK as he leaves.
Bradley, full of second wind, investigates the MAP.

BRADLEY
Hmmm.

INT. RENTAL OFFICE - DAY
Martin is PUZZLED.

MARTIN
Hmmm.

“THIS THERMOSTAT WAS SET TO CORRECT TEMPERATURE ON 16/08/1989. PLEASE DO NOT ADJUST.”

MARTIN eyes the curious missive, which sits atop a dusty DIAL on the wall of a tiny, stuffy office, all loose paper and misplaced contracts.

TITLE CARD: PICTON, NEW ZEALAND - 6 DAYS REMAINING
He turns at the sliding of a RANCH SLIDER, heralding the return of worn old car-rental warhorse GLEN.

GLEN
Good news and bad news, mate.
MARTIN
How universal of you.

Glen EYES Martin.

GLEN
...Yep. Good news is, we’re delighted to offer you an upgrade.

Martin doesn’t get it.

EXT. CARYARD - DAY

A hopelessly decrepit 1930s RILEY KESTREL sits on THREE WHEELS AND A BLOCK, disemboweled of its rusted engine.

Martin’s MAP is slapped onto the car, which responds by parting company with another WHEEL. Martin SLAPS THE PAPER.

MARTIN
You see? The plan was I would travel down this fine island in an original Kestrel Sprite, reversing the journey I took sixty years ago. That’s the PLAN.

GLEN
She was an old car, mate. Taken her last trip a while back. Nothing I can do.

Both irascible old jerks LOCK EYES.

MARTIN
Well then, I mean, gosh, Glen.

He neatly FOLDS THE PAPER, begins walking back to the OFFICE.

MARTIN
There’s minor details, which you clearly THINK this is, and then there’s VITAL components of a PLAN. You remove those, you throw the whole thing into disarray.

Glen TROTS BRISKLY behind the rampaging Martin.

INT. RENTAL OFFICE - DAY

Glen takes out a large CATALOGUE.

GLEN
It’s just a car, mate. Let’s talk about your upgrade.
MARTIN
I’m not interested in any of this. None of it!

He BUNDLES UP HIS THINGS and stuffs them in his DUFFEL BAG.

MARTIN
You’ve lost my patronage, Glen. If I have to travel in another car, I’ll acquire it elsewhere.

GLEN
Only depot in town.

Martins is BESIDE HIMSELF with contained rage. He LASHES OUT, causing Glen to JUMP. But he’s making a beeline for the THERMOSTAT:

He forcefully ADJUSTS THE TEMPERATURE all out of wack.

GLARES defiantly at the puzzled Glen.

MARTIN
Hm!

Glen has NO RESPONSE. Martin is DEFLATED.

MARTIN
Let’s take a look at your alternatives then.

Glen opens the catalogue for a tired Martin.

MARTIN (V.O.)
The blood had been spilled and mere anarchy loosed upon the world.

INT. HONDA - DAY

Martin talks into the TAPE RECORDER he’s sat precariously on the dashboard. He SPEEDS along the empty highway.

MARTIN
I felt the plan crumbling and I chose, as ought not surprise, to embrace entropy. Desolation? Yes. Hesitation? Not on my watch.

He STEADIES THE WHEEL WITH HIS HANDS and takes out the ENVELOPE OF PLANS.

MARTIN
I knew where I was headed: the roadmap would only slow me down. (MORE)
I felt stupid for ever having bothered with such an embarrassment of forethought.

He begins THROWING THE CONFETTI out the window. Considers.

"For wisdom is the property of the dead; a something incompatible with life". Yes!

His CAR speeds off as SHREDS OF PAPER drift to the winds.

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

BRADLEY’S COMPUTER MOCKUP is printed out on a large clean SHEET OF PAPER, in middle of the large DESK in the boardroom. Atop the mockup, a slogan: “SEPHIRA TOWERS: LIFE-COMPATIBLE”.

Nothing that wasn’t geared toward an ergonomic living environment. Every decision, every step of the way, it’s all been: “how do I make this somewhere I’d want to live?”

Butch and Steve study the plans.

Very wise, Bradley. You’ve really brought this one together.

We can start marketing the ground-level arrangements here pronto.

Yep. The higher-up suites, they’ll have no trouble leasing once people get a look in. Grace and severity, like all the best draughtsmanship. It’s a work of art.

He PATS BRADLEY ON THE BACK.

Come see me first thing tomorrow, alright? There’s some higher-level stuff I’d love to get you started on right away.

Sure thing.
The two older men LEAVE.

Bradley starts to collect up his presentation.

    BRADLEY
    Right away, you say?

Bradley CROSSES TO A WALL hung with PHOTOS of all the firm’s best. A BLANK SPOT beneath Butch and Steve’s pictures.

Bradley SMILES. Then takes out and regards Jimmy’s ENVELOPE. Pauses a second;

    BRADLEY
    Fuck it.

He TEARS UP THE ITINERARY. DROPS THE TORN PAPERS into the RUBBISH BIN.

    BRADLEY
    See you in a couple weeks, Dad.

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE - DAY

A COMPLEX CHART.

    DR RALPHS
    Your test shows everything exactly as it should be.

BRADLEY AND ALLISON peer at the chart, being shown them by Allison’s DOCTOR.

    DR RALPHS
    A healthy pregnancy.
    Congratulations.

Allison BOUNCES IN HER SEAT, HUGS Bradley.

INSERT: THE SUN GROWS HUGE.

Bradley SMILES queasily.

    DR RALPHS
    Now, of course we’ve got plenty of literature we can offer you, and I’m happy to refer you to classes and the like.

INSERT: The SKY SPLITS OPEN to reveal infinite FLAME.

Bradley struggles to CONCENTRATE on the Doctor.
DR RALPHS
It’s never too soon to start thinking about questions such as vaccination; obviously as your doctor I’d recommend that, but I’m here to help you choose...

INSERT: EARTHQUAKES thrust up TREES and level MOUNTAINS.

Allison is far off as she HUGS BRADLEY.

DR RALPHS
But again, congratulations, you’re going to have a--

Bradley STUMBLES from the room, HEAVING.

INT. HOSPITAL TOILET - DAY

BURNING WORLDS and SANDSTORMS and ICE and SEAS OF BLOOD fly through Bradley’s head as he heaves into the toilet.

BRADLEY
Oh God! Oh jeez!

He HURLS AGAIN.

ALLISON (O.S.)
Honey?

She PRIES THE DOOR OPEN.

ALLISON
What happened to you?

He goes to answer -- another WAVE OF ECLIPSES and GODS AND MONSTERS and TSUNAMI --

He BENDS but recovers. He’s PANTING.

BRADLEY
I must have eaten something weird.

She STROKES HIS HEAD.

ALLISON
Bradley, your pulse is like BDDDDDD. Shall I get a doctor?

He takes a breath; sees COMETS VOLCANOES ALIEN SPACECRAFT --

BRADLEY
No. Look... I have to go away, um, work. Just a couple days.
ALLISON
That’s what’s bothering you??
Baby, I don’t start doing
pregnant-stuff for a while yet, remember?

He forces a LAUGH.

BRADLEY
Just got to tie some stuff up,
then I’m all yours.

ALLISON
You’re all mine already, sonny
Jim. But I’ll loan you out.

They share a SMILE. He wipes his mouth.

BRADLEY
I’d kiss you --

ALLISON
-- It’s fine.

BRADLEY
-- Yeah.

She strokes HAIR off his sweaty BROW.

ALLISON
So the first big baby-thing’s
probably immunisation, right?

His EYES BULGE and he RUNS TO THE TOILET.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDROOM - NIGHT

Bradley on his HANDS AND KNEES.

BRADLEY
Fuck fuck fuck...

Bradley RIFLES THROUGH THE RUBBISH BIN but it’s too late.
The bin’s been emptied.

BRADLEY
CRAP!

ZARA (V.O.)
"After the event he wept”.

He rolls back onto his ass, dejected. Looks up at the
CEILING, letting his gaze fall like a meteorite... Right
onto a solitary SHRED OF PAPER, sitting under the thick
foot of the boardroom table.
ZARA (V.O.)
“He promised a new start.”

Bradley SCRAMBLES like a parched man to a bottle of Evian.

INT. ZARA’S ROOM – NIGHT
Zara sits on her BED beneath a large WYETH PRINT, still trying to read the damn Waste Land.

ZARA
“I can connect nothing with nothing. The broken fingernails of dirty hands. My people humble people who expect nothing.”

She puts the book down in frustration.

The PHONE RINGS. Her head DARTS UP.

ZARA
YES.

INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY
Zara PICKS UP THE PHONE.

ZARA
La la frickin’ la.

BRADLEY (O.S.)
Zara Moss?

ZARA
Yeah?

INT. BOARDROOM – NIGHT
Bradley SITS BACK with relief, cradling the phone.

BRADLEY
Thank God. I gotta talk to you.

ZARA (V.O.)
Okay, listen, man.

EXT. TAXI – EARLY MORNING
Bradley loads a large BACKPACK into the boot. Zara waits impatiently, scratches under her thick BRACELET.

ZARA
This is a serious job for me, okay?

(MORE)
I'm not just some twink he gets along to take notes and shit.

Bradley FORCES THE BOOT CLOSED. They get in the CAB.

BRADLEY
Nobody said you were --

ZARA
Yeah, well, good.

INT. TAXI - EARLY MORNING

The CAR pulls out, STARS out the window in the pre-dawn sky. In the awkward silence, the RADIO reads the news:

NEWSREADER (O.S.)
Cracks at the fringe of the polar region have experts suggesting that controlled detonation may be necessary --

Zara TURNS TO BRADLEY.

ZARA
I'm serious. You can't be getting in the way of my work. I have work on this trip too.

BRADLEY
I've been on his trips. I know my role, I can shut my mouth.

Zara grudgingly RELAXES.

ZARA
You best. I say Marty and I got work to do, you make yourself scarce.

BRADLEY
You won't even know I'm there.

ZARA
Hm.

She WATCHES OUT THE WINDOW as suburbia speeds by.

BUTCH (V.O.)
You have reached the office of Butch Russell, Vig and Russell Architectural Solutions. Leave your message after the beep.
INT. FERRY CAFE - EARLY MORNING

BEEP! BRADLEY sits by the window at his CELLPHONE.

BRADLEY
Hi, Butch? I’m gonna need to take a couple days out of the office. Family emergency. I’m really sorry. Talk to you soon. Okay.

TITLE CARD: INTERISLAND FERRY, COOK STRAIT - 5 DAYS REMAINING

Bradley HANGS UP as Zara brings COFFEE.

ZARA
Get that down ya. Make any sense of Martin’s itinerary?

BRADLEY
Honestly? Your number was about all I got out of it.

ZARA
Okay, thank God. Thing’s got me feeling about as smart as paint.

She takes her copy of the ENVELOPE out of her folio.

ZARA
Not high-quality paint, either. The shit they let retards draw with.

She POINTS at highlighted bits in the scrawl.

ZARA
Here, he’s got, “Land of battle, site of learning, vineyards and a secret ladder”. The hell’s that mean?

Bradley LOOKS BLANK. Zara GROANS.

ZARA
Guy says meet me where it says on the paper, turns out the paper don’t make any Goddamn sense.

BRADLEY
How long have you been working for my dad?

ZARA
Six months, mainly desk stuff. Why?

He just LOOKS at her. She shoves the PAPER under his nose.
ZARA
Fuckin’ Weareys. Work this out, so we know which bus to catch.

BRADLEY
Which...

She fiddles with her bracelet irrtably. Snappy:

ZARA
Martin told me catch a bus, meet up with him, and I figured sure, simple enough.

BRADLEY
I could’ve told you the flaw there.

ZARA
Bully for you.

She leaves, frustrated. He sifts through the papers.

BRADLEY
“Land of battle, site of learning, vineyards and a secret ladder”.

The papers are all diagrams and arcane symbols and phrases: “Eldritch horror due south”; “Always death by water”.

A frustrated Bradley massages his temples.

BRADLEY
Daaaad...

EXT. FERRY - DAY

Marlborough approaches as the boat sails into the sunrise. Zara stands on the deck and watches the hills approach. Bradley joins her.

BRADLEY
It’s like Nostradamus or something. I can rent us a car, but where do we go?

ZARA
Anyone’s going to know what the hell he’s talking about, it’s you.

BRADLEY
I’ve spent my whole life trying not to think like him.
ZARA
Well, flick the switch, man!
Fling the door open! We got nothing here!

BRADLEY
I know you dig the guy and all, but this Apocalypse shit? It’s like one of those abyss deals: you look into it, it looks back.

She leans over the rail and WATCHES THE SEA, petulant.

BRADLEY
It’s Nietzsche, y’know --

ZARA
-- yes, very clever.

HE JOINS HER looking out to sea.

BRADLEY
I just think if any of you Apocalypse-Studies types ever really got a look at that shit, you’d run a mile. Him included.

ZARA
Don’t talk to me about abysses, man.

She neatly flicks her BRACELETS into her hands, revealing two deep PINK RIBBON SCARS.

ZARA
I fuckin’ done abysses.

He SLOUCHES ON THE RAIL, trumped.

BRADLEY
Sorry.

She SHRUGS dismissively.

ZARA
Wasn’t a despair thing. Just wanting to go further.

He LOOKS AT HER. Behind her, the SEA SWELLS.

ZARA
Don’t matter. He’s got away on us now. Ain’t no going any further.

A huge WAVE picks up the BOAT and it RISES SICKENINGLY. Zara doesn’t seem to notice him WATCHING BEHIND HER IN TERROR.
The SEA is churning FAR BEHIND HER, the boat almost VERTICAL.

ZARA
Just go home, I guess.

The boat is CARRIED ON THE HUGE WAVE as it WASHES OVER THE HILLS and DROWNS TOWNS AND FLATTENS BUILDINGS.

Zara watches him, her aspect unchanged, as behind her, WATER and BODIES and DEBRIS whirl. The boat SPINS AND FLIES through the air and water.

ZARA
What??

The boat GRINDS TO A HALT on the main street of BLENHEIM, signs and shopfronts proclaiming as much.

Bradley LOOKS DUMBFOUNDED AT ZARA. She LOOKS BACK.

They’re on the DECK. The sea is CALM beneath.

BRADLEY
Blenheim. He’s going to Blenheim.

ZARA
Huh?

INT. RENTAL OFFICE - DAY

Bradley and Zara wait for Glen. Bradley gestures at the ITINERARY excitedly.

BRADLEY
Blenheim: named after the Battle of Blenheim. Martin knew that cause he went to school there.

ZARA
“Land of battle, site of learning”.

BRADLEY
But it’s mainly wine country now. Aside from the spy base.

ZARA
Vineyards... “Secret ladder”?

BRADLEY
ECHELON. French for “rung of a ladder”: the spy base. Martin went NUTS when it came out they’d installed it.
ZARA
Just write it down, Marty.

He GRINS.

BRADLEY
I just thought like Martin for a second. That was actually a bit too easy.

GLEN appears with a bunch of forms.

GLEN
Okay, mate, all we need’s your license and we’re good to go.

BRADLEY
Sure thing.

He reaches for his wallet. Looks PERPLEXED.

CUT TO:

INT. VIDEO STORE - DAY

Allison carries a VIDEO to the counter.

ALLISON
Can I get this again? We didn’t get a chance to watch it last night.

CLERK
Won’t need the ID again, love. I recognise ya.

She fishes through her PURSE for change.

ALLISON
Good thing, I gave it --

What’s this in the POCKET OF HER PURSE??

ALLISON
Aw, crap.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

BLENHEIM: the BUS pulls to a stop with a loud HISS.

Bradley and Zara elbow their way ON BOARD.
BRADLEY
I’ve got bandages. I’ve got maps and matches and non-perishable foodstuffs.

INT. BUS - DAY

Tinted windows, dark and cool, Bradley and Zara are the youngest people on the bus.

BRADLEY
I’ve got tampons, for God’s sakes. I have packed for every conceivable eventuality.

He stows his LARGE BACKPACK as she takes a seat.

ZARA
So busy packing the essentials, you forgot the stuff you needed?

He GROANS affirmatively.

ZARA
You earned some points with that code-cracking hoopla. Consider us breaking even.

DRIVER
All aboard? Now departing for Blenheim!

The BUS PULLS OUT.

EXT. WESTPORT - DAY

Martin’s CAR pulls to a stop beside the stylish old WESTPORT TOWN CLOCK.

TITLE CARD: WESTPORT, NEW ZEALAND

Martin gets out and pulls on a pair of old wire-framed adventurer SUNGLASSES.

TITLE CARD: 260 KMS WEST OF BLENHEIM

Martin takes out his trusty TAPE RECORDER.

MARTIN
Holidays in Westport were always pleasant. The town clock, still clad in the same 30s-Berlin art-deco as she was when I was a lad, takes me back to those days.

Martin, still talking, ambles into a quaint COFFEE SHOP.
INT. QUAIN T COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Martin turns the heads of locals and tourists as he peruses the trays of LAMINGTONS and PIES.

MARTIN
We could be giving time to my schooling in Blenheim... but astute scholars of my earlier book, Searching for the Flood, have already had their fill of stultifying boredom.
(to the CASHIER)
Coffee. Lamington. Pink.

The CASHIER eyes him suspiciously. Martin takes a seat by the window, a BIG TABLE all to himself in the crowded cafe.

He takes out an old PHOTO ALBUM and peruses it fondly. Looks over a bizarre chronicle: year-by-year photos of MARTIN AND BRADLEY, always posed by a BATHTUB, or POND, or DRUM OF WATER, their HAIR WET.

MARTIN
While the final destination beckons, foremost on my mind is the annual revisiting of death by water. But until then, let us trust our fate to the whim of the Norns!

BRADLEY (V.O.)
He should be here. He has to be here.

EXT. MARLBOROUGH BOYS' COLLEGE - DAY

The stark facade of the COLLEGE looms over them, the archetype of a traditional public school.

BRADLEY
I mean where does the guy go in Blenheim? It's hardly a thriving metropolis. The old house, the old school, the old milk bar?

ZARA
This is ALWAYS happening with Nostradamus.

BRADLEY
No. This isn't some bullshit spur-of-the-moment interpretation. This is where he was headed.
ZARA
Well, it’s not, cause he’s not here.

A BELL rings. Crowds of YOUNG BOYS stream from the school.

Bradley and Zara stand in the path, LOOKING uselessly to each other for ideas, as a tide of UNIFORMED BOYS trot past them.

BRADLEY (V.O.)
Okay, well, this was my dumb idea

EXT. BLENHEIM MAIN STREET - DAY

All franchises and farming-goods. The two walk listlessly on.

ZARA
-- Conceded --

BRADLEY
-- Cheers for that -- so what do you suggest?

She SHRUGS.

ZARA
Maybe this just ain’t happening. Maybe we just go back. How long can he be? What, as they say, is the worst that can happen?

She looks to Bradley - he’s NOT THERE. She casts an eye back:

He’s digging into his BAG, outside a FARMING GOODS SHOP.

ZARA
What is it, man?

BRADLEY
I know where he’ll be. And I know when he’ll be there.

He keeps DIGGING IN HIS BAG. Pulls out an old PHOTO ALBUM. Flips through it:

The same PICTURES Martin has. In all, Bradley GRUMPY, Martin GRINNING LIKE A LOON. And all dated “SEPTEMBER 1”.

BRADLEY
Every year. I can’t believe I didn’t notice this! First of September, every year, Zara!
EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

They stand on the MOTEL BALCONY, the sun SETTING, watching KIDS play on an old TRAMPOLINE below.

BRADLEY
We didn’t celebrate Martin’s birthday. Which was nice cause what do you get the guy who studies the end of everything?

ZARA
Cigars.

MONTAGE:

Wild-haired young Martin GRINS underwater. A toddler-sized Bradley SPRAWLS ON HIS HEAD, a wriggling crown.

BRADLEY (V.O.)
What we did instead was, every year, Martin would find as large a body of water as he could muster --

Wearing sideburns and a pastel blazer, Martin’s EYES BULGE as his head is held underwater -- by a YOUNG BRADLEY.

BRADLEY (V.O.)
-- And he’d make me hold him under until he damn near drowned. And then he’d tell me this story.

A teenage BRADLEY holds a thrashing MARTIN in a full BATHTUB.

BRADLEY (V.O.)
Of something that happened when he was a kid, which I probably know by heart by now.

END MONTAGE

BRADLEY
Set on September the First. At Winchwell.

Zara looks fairly DUMBSTRUCK.

ZARA
What’s Winchwell?
EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

A CARDBOARD SIGN, on which has been scrawled: “WINCHWELL”.

TITLE CARD: BLENHEIM, NEW ZEALAND - 4 DAYS REMAINING

BRADLEY waves the SIGN at cars as Zara STICKS HER THUMB OUT.

ZARA
Of course there’s no bus there.
Why would there be a bus there?

BRADLEY
Are you sure you need that big thick coat?

She shoots him a LOOK. He POINTS:

A small HONDA has pulled up to the side of the road. They heft their bags and RUN to it.

INT. SMALL HONDA - DAY

Bradley and Zara sit cramped on either side of a young kid playing Gameboy. The car’s PILED HIGH with bags.

The driver, a bearded dad named STEWART, grins at them. His WIFE sleeps in the passenger seat.

STEWART
Couldn’t have you standing there all day. We’ll still make it over the Pass before lunch, eh Dan?

The KID keeps on tappitty-tapping on his game.

STEWART
Had mates farmed this area. What’s your connection to Winchwell?

BRADLEY
Family used to run it, like fifty years ago.

STEWART
Back to the old homestead, eh?

BRADLEY
Something like that.

STEWART
How long you folks been out?
MARTIN (V.O.)
I was the youngest to leave. We moved to the city when I was ten.

EXT. WINCHWELL - DAY

An old wooden sign, jaunty blue paint fading: WINCHWELL FARM.

MARTIN (V.O.)
Big change for me, I tell you.

A worn old GRAVEL ROAD runs down the side of the pasture, and it's on this road that Martin’s RENTAL CAR is stopped.

MARTIN stands by the car in SUNGLASSES. Apprehension in his voice as he talks into the TAPE RECORDER.

MARTIN
No more farming chores, no sweet smell of cowshit -- never saw asphalt till I was ten.

FADED GREEN PASTURES extend for hectares around, bordered by DEEP BUSH. The landscape is dotted by OCCASIONAL DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS: An OLD SHED, a CATTLE RACE.

MARTIN
It’s the same story you hear from a good many folks who quit their farms halfway through the old C-twentieth: March of progress. You got on or got out of the way. We got out of the way.

Martin WALKS through the long grass, toward the SHEEP RUN.

MARTIN
It’s for the best, gentle reader: How do you think I would’ve cut it, down on the farm? A lamentable sight, I tell you.

Martin GRIMACES as he’s interrupted by a MOTOR sound.

MARTIN
To be continued.

He watches Stewart’s little car trundle TOWARD HIM.

MARTIN
I say sorry, this is actually private property --

He’s stunned into silence as HIS SON AND RESEARCH ASSISTANT pile out, laden with bags. He GRINS, lost for words.
As Zara bids Stewart thanks, father and son sheepishly approach one another.

**BRADLEY**
Morning, Martin.

Martin checks his watch.

**MARTIN**
It’s actually afternoon, son.

He breaks into a grin and embraces his son, who doesn’t reciprocate at all. Bradley makes impatient eyes at Zara.

Martin relinquishes his grip on Bradley as Zara pats the roof of Stewart’s departing car. She turns to Martin.

**MARTIN**
This is quite some surprise!

Zara strides up to him. He realises he’s not getting a hug.

**ZARA**
So, jackass, we tracked you down! What kind of prize do we get? I hope it’s a car!

**MARTIN**
I must say, I’m impressed. How did you --

**BRADLEY**
September First. As soon as we stopped paying attention to your itinerary, it was obvious.

**ZARA**
Yeah, about that, boss. Next time, maybe less of the cryptography, more of the “here is where I will be on the day I will be at it”?

**MARTIN**
Yet by providence you’re here. There’s not a moment to lose!

**BRADLEY**
Martin, I need to talk to you.

**MARTIN**
And talk we shall! After the tank.

**BRADLEY**
Oh, no.
EXT. FAR PADDOCK - DAY

The PADDOCK is fenced off, with one edge narrowing into a RACE culminating in a DIP TANK. The three make their way down the race. Martin hangs back, carefully SHUTTING THE GATE.

BRADLEY
Need me to keep the livestock back?

Martin LOOKS UP, caught out. He looks around uneasily.

MARTIN
Force of habit.

Zara heads for the DIP TANK.

ZARA
The hell's this, man?

MARTIN
That, young lady, is what I came to document. That was nearly my brackish grave.

The TANK is taller than Zara, rusted, black.

BRADLEY
Seriously? This actual tank?

Martin is STRIPPING OFF.

MARTIN
We used to dip sheep in it.

BRADLEY
Oh, jeez. We're not doing this.

MARTIN
We most assuredly are. September First was the day we'd start dipping, and my cousin Dick and I were along to watch --

Zara CLAMBERS UP and PEERS IN. Her VOICE rings out:

ZARA
Look at that water. It's filthy.

MARTIN
Always was. Deep and black. Son?

BRADLEY
NO, Martin.
MARTIN
Oh, don’t be such a downer. See, in those days there was a ramp for the sheep just there --

Martin BENDS ZARA OVER and gingerly steps up onto her back.

MARTIN
We were watching them all drop in. I climbed up on my cousin's back, to get a look in -- then Dick stood up! -- like a shot -- and I was catapulted in!

He holds himself up on the EDGE. NODS to Zara.

ZARA
Like this?

She STANDS. Martin SPILLS INTO THE FILthy WATER. He surfaces, splashing muck about. Holds himself up on the EDGE.

MARTIN
Exactly! I fell through the sheep, just this mass of stinky dirty seething beasts. Went under. Brad!

BRADLEY
I’m not doing it, Martin.

Martin COUGHS officiously.

MARTIN
I WENT UNDER!

Bradley SITS on the grass and fold his arms.

MARTIN
Fine. So you see, once I was in there I thought, this is it for me. Looking up, you could hardly even see light. Between the dirty black water and the writhing mass of sheep... I was done for. I thought I'd drown in this dirty black pool, looking up at the sun through this churning mass of wool, swimming, stamping --

BRADLEY
(bored)
Stamping, like savage clouds.

Martin GRINS.
MARTIN
That's right, son.

And with that the old man PLUNGEES into the tank.

Bradley WATCHES, disgusted. Looks about.

Zara PEERS at the tank. Knocks on it.

Bradley GETS UP, concern mounting, as --

Martin ARISES from the filthy water, hair straggly, GRINNING, as WATER spurts from the underside of the tank.

ZARA
FUCK!

MARTIN
(panting)
Eventually -- can't really have been long -- Dick pulled me out.

He GRUNTS as he climbs UP TO THE EDGE and clambers over. DROPS out and rolls from the SPILLING WATER.

MARTIN
Lay on the grass, spewing out black water.

He CLIMBS UP.

MARTIN
If death tastes worse than that -- just cut my wrists and be done with it. It was foul.

ZARA
That's fuckin' epic, man.

An ear-to-ear GRIN shines through the muck covering Martin's FACE. He holds up an OBJECT.

MARTIN
Our business here is concluded!

ZARA
'Zat?

Martin reverentially shows Zara what he's clutching: A worn, slimy PLUG. Zara tries to manufacture some wonder.

MARTIN
Well?

ZARA
It's a plug.
Yes! Just think, if I'd had this when I was a lad, that terrible event might never have occurred!

Bradley rubs his forehead.

BRADLEY
It's a plug, dad. IT'S A FUCKIN' PLUG, DAD.

Martin SMILES sweetly, oblivious to the exasperation flooding his orbit.

MARTIN
I wish you'd call me that more often.

He tucks the plug in his BREAST POCKET. Water drips out.

MARTIN
I need to get dry.

EXT. WINCHWELL - DAY

Bradley and Zara look back at the TANK as Martin, undressed, DRIES OFF behind the car.

BRADLEY
So what do you think?

ZARA
Apart from the insane family ritual, this place is gorgeous.

BRADLEY
I think I’m stuck with the insane family ritual.

ZARA
You can imagine we were the last people on Earth out here. Imagine you took out your phone, and there was nobody to talk to, cause they were all gone.

BRADLEY
There IS nobody to talk to, cause there’s no reception.

Zara NODS at Martin.

ZARA
There’s one person to talk to.

Bradley looks over to MARTIN, who WADDLES over to them, shirtless, pulling on a pair of jeans.
MARTIN
Now, no dawdling. We’re straight on, through Christchurch, to the main attraction: Okawa Beach!

ZARA
(glancing down)
Marty.

He BUTTONS UP.

ZARA
What’s at Okawa?

MARTIN
Valuable cultural immersion, and on to the End of the World!

BRADLEY
Or another wild goose chase.

MARTIN
I don’t do wild goose chases.

INT. RENNES LES CHATEAU - DAY

A dirty, DUSTY GOLD LIGHT permeates the ancient chapel. The WALLS are lined with SAINTS AND DEMONS.

TITLE CARD: RENNES LES CHATEAU, FRANCE: 17 YEARS REMAINING

Standing out like a wack-a-mole, teen BRADLEY slouches with his hands in the pockets of his RIPPED JEANS.

TITLE CARD: A WILD GOOSE CHASE

MARTIN pores over elaborate BAS-RELIEF WALL ART.

MARTIN
Brad. Quick now, son: where did the Knights Templar live?

BRADLEY
Over the ruins of Solomon’s Temple. I’m failing science.

MARTIN
And there they discovered...?

Bradley fiddles with a clunky DISCMAN. SHRUGS.

BRADLEY
I’unno. Ditched English too.
MARTIN
Sharp. Trick question, of course. When the Templars were abroad in the Holy Land, they stumbled upon a discovery that brought them untold wealth. Something they brought back to this very chapel.

JIMMY, a sprightly lad with the look of a mid-century ADVENTURE SERIAL STAR, slips between the LARGE DOORS.

JIMMY
Can't find anything new outside, Professor.

MARTIN
Try taking Brad with you. His eye is sharper than yours.

Jimmy goes to RETORT -- forget it. Martin beckons BRADLEY.

MARTIN
Look at this.

Both boys crowd around as Martin takes out a NOTEBOOK. Flicks through it to a picture of a SNAKE EATING ITS OWN TAIL.

MARTIN
Be on the lookout for this. It was in the Temple of Solomon: My theory is that the Templars brought back a secret that could end the world. That they were able to blackmail the leaders of Europe with that knowledge.

Jimmy is AWESTRUCK.

BRADLEY
Can I go now?

MARTIN
Certainly, son.

Martin returns to STUDYING THE WALLS. Jimmy WATCHES silently.

MARTIN
"All things began in order so shall they end..."

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

ALLISON furrows her brow at her LAPTOP.
MARTIN (V.O.)
..."So shall they begin again".

Allison perks up as she hears the computer’s MAIL CHIME. She looks down to her BELLY.

ALLISON
Look, it’s an email from Dada! Know what that means? Break time!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Allison pours TEA and reads to her BELLY from a printout of Bradley’s short missive.

ALLISON
“I hit a net cafe as soon as we saw civilisation”. Yep, that sounds like your old man. “We’re on the road to Christchurch now”.

She GRINS at her belly.

ALLISON
Your papa’s a clever fella, but do you think he knows they have architects down there already?

A KNOCKING. She sets the letter down, heads for the door.

ALLISON
To be continued. Don’t worry, I wouldn’t leave you in suspense.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Allison opens the door: It’s Jimmy!

JIMMY
Hi, Allison.

ALLISON
Long time, Jim. Since...

JIMMY
Germany. Can I come in?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

He follows her through.

JIMMY
You’re not with Bradley?

Allison sits back down.
ALLISON
Umm... no, he usually prefers to
work solo.

Jimmy instantly CLICKS.

JIMMY
Okay, do you know where he is?

ALLISON
Mm-hmm, sure do. He’s en route to
Christchurch.

Jimmy takes out a copy of the ITINERARY, looks through it.

JIMMY
Wonder if he’s worked out
something I can’t.

Allison PEERS AT THE PAPER.

ALLISON
What’s that?

Jimmy STOWS THE PAPER.

JIMMY
This is irrelevant. I know one
place they’ll have to be stopping
in Christchurch. Thanks, Al.

ALLISON
Hang on... Who’s they?

Jimmy’s been CAUGHT OUT.

MARTIN (V.O.)
The number one thing is that
Jimmy Wilt doesn’t catch up to
us.

INT. SMITH’S BOOKSHOP, UPSTAIRS - EVENING

A musty, high-piled storehouse of well-loved tomes, in
downtown Christchurch. Martin pores through the books.

MARTIN
Ever since he set up that damn
course, Jimmy’s been gunning for
me. Oust the leader in the field.
Brad, you work from “M”.

BRADLEY
And I’m after anything on
Southern maritime history?
MARTIN
Yes sir.

BRADLEY
Dad, can we talk about --

Martin WAVES HIM OFF, heads to the SHELVES.

ZARA
How exactly does a guy disprove you, Marty?

MARTIN
Well, he’d need some sort of statement from me that it was all hogwash. Good luck, friend!

Martin SNORTS with laughter. Bradley FROWNS at the books.

MARTIN
But he could still beat me to the next big discovery in end-time lore. Piggyback off my research.

Martin walks over and ELBOWS BRADLEY IN THE RIBS.

MARTIN
Like he’d ever get anything out of my itineraries - only reason I send them is to taunt him!

Bradley and Zara exchange a LOOK.

BRADLEY
Sure keep that one sewn up tight.

MARTIN
You’re damn tooting. Here it is!

He pulls out a weathered BOOK: “TANIWHA AND KRAKEN”.

MARTIN
We’ll need nothing else here. This is the premiere tome on the matter.

He RUNS DOWN THE STAIRS like a kid on Christmas morn.

BRADLEY
Hear that? Premiere tome.

ZARA
Must be a good’n.

They follow Martin DOWN THE STAIRS.
INT. SMITH’S BOOKSHOP, DOWNSTAIRS - DAY

Martin is settling up with the proprietor, BARRY. Out the window, EVENING is falling on Manchester Street.

MARTIN
Thanks, Barry. Could I trouble you for your phone?

BARRY
No trouble.

Bradley GRINS, points out to Zara a SHELF FULL of Martin’s books, flanked by Atlantis lore and New Age hokum.

ZARA
Least they’re getting read.

MARTIN
TARNATION!

He’s hurriedly PULLING ON HIS COAT.

MARTIN
Contact at the University. I don’t know how, but Jimmy Wilt is on our tail.

He BLUSTERS OUT. Bradley and Zara follow.

BARRY
Hot pursuit, huh?

Zara GRINS at him.

ZARA
Like a really nerdy Cannonball Run.

Barry excitedly watches them leave.

MARTIN (V.O.)
We’ll be pulling an all-nighter: son, you take the first shift.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MIDNIGHT

The boxy Honda is BARRELLING DOWN THE HIGHWAY, Bradley driving, Zara asleep in the back.

MARTIN
Jimmy will NOT beat me to this one.

Bradley YAWNS, blinks.
BRADLEY
Dad, can I ask you something?

MARTIN
Anything, Brad.

BRADLEY
All these trips we’ve been on.

MARTIN
I’ve enjoyed each one, son. You’ve been my constant talisman. My rudder on rough seas.

BRADLEY
Yeah. Well, I might have missed something in the reality-to-figurative divide or something.

MARTIN
You want to know the significance of our Winchwell detour? That’s my boy. Always the practical ying to my fanciful yang.

BRADLEY
It’s more of a general kind of --

MARTIN
And you deserve an explanation. It’ll clarify my thoughts also!

Bradley YAWNS deeply.

BRADLEY
No, it’s about all the other --

MARTIN
Pull over.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

The two EXIT the car. They meet in the HEADLIGHTS.

MARTIN
Here. I’ll stay awake better if I explain as we go. Here, tag --

He holds out his HAND.

MARTIN
I’m the fresh man. Tag me in.

Bradley sleepily SLAPS Martin’s hand.
MARTIN
There. And now I’m the fresh man,
so I’m in the ring, you see?

They get back in the CAR, which PULLS OUT.

INT. CAR - NIGHT
Martin, full of beans, DRIVES ON.

MARTIN
Now, my visit to Winchwell hinges
on matters numerous and dire.

BRADLEY
That’s not what I...

MARTIN
Hush, son. Don’t break my flow.
We are headed into what may be
the culmination of my life’s
work: the Eschaton itself. I
couldn’t go into that without
arming myself in every way
possible! But do you know what
the greatest talisman I have is?

He LOOKS OVER at his son. Bradley’s FAST ASLEEP, leaning on
the window.

Martin SMILES WARMLY at his son.

INT. SMITH’S BOOKSHOP, UPSTAIRS - NIGHT
Barry is adding up ACCOUNTS, an old TV playing unheeded:
pictures of PENGUINS frolicking on an icy landscape.

NEWSREADER (O.S.)
...The birds’ habitat will be
threatened if B23 is allowed to
drift; which is why the iceberg
needs to be destroyed, say
experts.

Barry is interrupted by a KNOCK AT THE DOOR downstairs.

INT. SMITH’S BOOKSHOP, DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT
Barry heads downstairs.

BARRY
We’re closed!

He gets the DOOR OPEN a crack. SMILES on recognition.
BARRY
Is that Martin Wearey’s young sidekick??

Jimmy SMILES dryly.

JIMMY
That’s me. Has the boss been through here?

Barry CLAMS UP.

BARRY
Mum’s the word there, James.

Jimmy smoothly PUSHES INTO the shop.

JIMMY
Sure, sure. But listen, if the big man’s been reading up on something, maybe my course could do with some study material.

Barry CONSIDERS this.

EXT. MANCHESTER STREET - NIGHT

Jimmy hefts a HUGE BANANA BOX of maritime history books.

JIMMY
Good news is, I know where he’s headed.

He RESTS THE BOX on his CAR. WHEEZES.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

ALLISON is in the passenger seat.

ALLISON
Stop off in front of the Sallies?

JIMMY
Yeah.

EXT. OKAWA BEACH - DAY

The SURF rolls in like it always has. The sky is GREY.

MARTIN trudges eagerly through the thick SAND. BRADLEY and Zara follow.

BRADLEY
Martin, listen, I just want to --
MARTIN
Okawa Beach! This is it, my friends.

ZARA
Marty, I’ve gone all through your book. What are we here for exactly?

Martin PAUSES for effect.

MARTIN
Are you familiar with HP Lovecraft?

ZARA
Who?

BRADLEY
WHAT?!

Martin digs out a ridiculously worn PAPERBACK. The cover depicts a poorly-drawn GIANT OCTOPUS that vaguely resembles Victor Mature. The title: “HP LOVECRAFT’S SPOOKY TALES”.

MARTIN
This poor soul amassed a life’s work of portended catastrophe, the central menace being a huge, malfeasant entity named Cthulhu --

Martin POINTS eagerly at the book cover. Bradley SITS.

BRADLEY
This is STORIES. It’s fiction, dad!

Martin makes Zara look through his STORYBOOK, pointing out pertinent old-time LINE-DRAWINGS.

MARTIN
Oh no! This is my breakthrough. I’ve been studying the work of Lovecraft as prognostications of an unwitting soothsayer.

They both LOOK AT HIM.

MARTIN
Predictions, you dummies! The poor man describes a demonic city of timeless evil, off this very coast! Research vessels in the area have picked up signals pointing to the imminent resurfacing of --

Zara LOOKS UP from the book.
ZARA
I gotta say, Marty, this seems... pretty silly.

Martin, losing his audience, digs out his KRAKEN BOOK.

MARTIN
It’s all confirmed here! Legends since pre-colonial times back it all up!

Bradley is almost LAUGHING. He STANDS, facing his father.

BRADLEY
Martin. You’re not serious.

MARTIN
Oh, serious as nine-eleven, my boy.

Bradley turns his back on the two of them.

He walks toward the sea. Their voices die out behind him.

ZARA
How is this not just the old-time version of Steven King?

MARTIN
Many scholars credit him strongly.

ZARA
You are the expert.

Bradley TUNES OUT. Focuses on the GREY SEA.

BRADLEY
My wife’s having a baby.

Listens to the DULL WIND.

BRADLEY
This is all bullshit. And you don’t need to tell me that because you’re a silly old man. And I’m okay.

He SMILES.

Turns around.

MARTIN IS HOLDING ZARA in an intimate fashion.

Bradley STRIDES BACK, distressed.

BRADLEY
Martin -- Dad -- Zara, what?
MARTIN
Oh, don’t look so surprised.
What, did you think I was a monk?

ZARA
I was gonna tell you, just... busy and stuff.

BRADLEY
Yeah. Right. Listen, Martin, I think there still might be --

MARTIN
Oh, still this? The rain’s already coming down!! Why bother?

Zara KISSES HIM ON THE CHEEK.

BRADLEY
Martin, I need to know. Has ANY of this EVER been true?

Martin CONSIDERS.

MARTIN
Well, since you ask, no. I mean, there were always women. Your dear mother and I, we just weren’t... a loving association.

A WAVE rolls further up the beach than usual. It extends past the waterline, sandy white SPIT rolling over Bradley’s HEELS.

BRADLEY
(looking down)
Hm.

He LOOKS DOWN THE BEACH. The SEA IS GROWING.

A HUGE BLACK SHAPE is rising from the depths, SPRAYING the assembled group as sea ROLLS OFF IT.

It LOOMS OVER THEM, obscuring the horizon, the sun.

A MOUTH AS BIG AS A MOUNTAIN surges toward the group.

Bradley hears Zara SCREAM.

MARTIN drops to his knees as BRADLEY stands defiant, the huge demonic monolith RUSHING DOWN TO SWALLOW THEM AND THE LAND AND ALL THAT IS, a deafening unearthly roar and a rush of SALTY AIR as it SURGES TOWARD THEM --

Bradley is sill just LOOKING at Martin.
MARTIN
Sorry, was that not what you meant?

Bradley COLLAPSES, shaking, white like a ghost.

The two RUSH to pick him up. He CONVULSES in the sand.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

THE TIRE OF JIMMY’S CAR FLAPS against the road.

It SLOWS TO A STOP, violently BLOWN-OUT. Allison and Jimmy exit. Cold WIND whips them as they survey the vehicle.

JIMMY
Damn it! And we’re so close.

ALLISON
Don’t stress, we’ll be moving soon.

Jimmy WALKS AWAY from the car.

JIMMY
We don’t catch them in Okawa, they might be all the way up the island before we track them down.

He takes out his PHONE. DIALS and hears no tone.

JIMMY
No signal. Of course there’s no signal.

He TURNS BACK to the car. Allison has it JACKED UP and is undoing the bolts on the WHEELS.

ALLISON
You want to fetch me the spare, Professor?

He goes for the BOOT.

JIMMY (V.O.)
So the States and Cuba are screaming mutually-assured destruction, the intelligentsia of Cuba figure this is all too heavy.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Allison is tightening bolts on the SPARE TIRE. Jimmy sits by.
ALLISON
Pass me that last nut.

He hands it to her.

JIMMY
This is what Cuba was like at the time of the Missile Crisis: the richest people in Havana were partying like there was no tomorrow, cause they figured there wasn’t.

She NODS, unengaged, gives the nuts one last CRANK. Points to the JACK. He NODS, jimmies at it awkwardly.

JIMMY
I was a Missile Crisis Baby: up for adoption as soon as my parents realised the End wasn’t nigh.

She PUSHES HIM ASIDE and LOWERS THE CAR much faster.

ALLISON
So you’ve got no parents and a grudge against the whole idea of End-time fervour, huh?

JIMMY
Well, yeah. I’m frankly offended someone’d drive all this way for something’s never gonna happen.

She BUNDLES UP the tire-change kit. He NODS as he gets back in the car.

ALLISON
Yeah. A guy like that would be a special kind of damn-fool.

INT. TEAROOMS - DAY

BRADLEY sits huddled in a blanket, weak TEA before him. It’s the chooziest place on Earth: pale tartan tablecloths, tomato-shaped sauce bottles, Devonshire Teas a specialty.

TITLE CARD: OKAWA, NEW ZEALAND: 3 DAYS REMAINING

MARTIN AND ZARA dejectedly pick at cardboardy CHIPS.

MARTIN
You get used to it. The world’s not going to end just because you got the paperwork right.
BRADLEY
I think it went perfectly.

Martin PERKS UP at his son returning to speech.

MARTIN
How’s that, son?

BRADLEY
You came here to write another book. Your existence is predicated on the repeated failure of your mission. Apparently it’s a very comfortable existence too.

Martin PECKS AT A CHIP.

MARTIN
He makes a good point.

ZARA
So what now? Back to life?

MARTIN
The slow trudge back to the world. Grinding up the gumption for next time. I hate this part.

Bradley SMILES ruefully.

ZARA
So it’s all “almost but not quite”? THAT’s your life of adventure??

MARTIN
All grind, no relief. There’s a certain Tantric rhythm to it.

ZARA
That’s stupid! It’s...

Bradley stops listening, FLOPS HIS HEAD BACK, disgusted. He watches upside-down out a WINDOW.

The sky begins to FLICKER unnaturally. Suddenly the upside-down CLOUDS are SHREDDED by YANTRA PATTERNS whose polygons RISE and RIP THE FLOATING EARTH.

THE SKY is a spinning YANTRA, geometric DESTRUCTION pulling in the whole WORLD.

BRADLEY
Oh, God.

Bradley SHUTS HIS EYES, tunes back into the conversation.
ZARA
I didn’t say I didn’t want to be part of it, I just --

MARTIN
No, dear, maybe you’re right. You can sit the next one out.

ZARA
Look, we’ll --

ALLISON (O.S.)
Bradley??

Bradley LOOKS UP: Jimmy and Allison have just walked in.

JIMMY (O.S.)
Martin. Are you ever hard to track down.

EXT. TEAROOM CARPARK - DAY

Bradley SHIVERS in his BLANKET as Allison stands over him.

ALLISON
Pretty funny idea of work you got here, mister.

BRADLEY
It’s good to see you too.

He LOOKS PAST HER. A large HILL stands on the horizon.

ALLISON
Oh, whatever, Bradley. Look, you took the trip. Nothing happened, AGAIN. What more do you need?

As she waits for his answer the hill EXPLODES, fire covering the SKY, rushing toward them, the tearoom IMMOLATED --

Bradley SINKS DOWN THE WALL.

BRADLEY
...I don’t know.

JIMMY joins them.

JIMMY
Bradley, let’s take a walk.

Allison FROWNS at Bradley.

ALLISON
We’re not done here, sunshine.
She WALKS INSIDE. Bradley LOOKS UP at Jimmy.

JIMMY (V.O.)
You want him to renounce it all.
I want to disprove it. We can work together.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Bradley and Jimmy walk slowly down Okawa’s small MAIN STREET.

JIMMY
I’m sick of being the egghead poor-man’s version of your dad, Brad. You need to hear that this is all horseshit? ME TOO.

Bradley NODS.

BRADLEY
You need him to tell it to the whole world and all his freaky-deaky readers.

JIMMY
YES. Loud. Public. Grab him by the hand, lead him to the edge, prove THERE IS NOTHING looming down there. NOTHING is imminent. It’s all just change, and we all just keep on keeping on.

Bradley STOPS, shakes his head.

BRADLEY
You just described his whole career.

JIMMY
Nonono. Cause those were all HIS edges he took us to.

BRADLEY
What edge do you have in mind?

Jimmy GRINS.

INT. TEAROOMS - DAY

The assembled group watch as Jimmy HOLDS COURT.

JIMMY
Antarctica. What we are proposing, Martin, is to get ringside for the B23 detonation.
ALLISON
This is that iceberg from the
news? The one they’re blowing up?

Jimmy SLAPS DOWN A NEWSPAPER: on the front cover, a diagram
of ICEBERG B23, the headline, “FIRE DOWN BELOW”.

JIMMY
There’s a research ship leaving
Invercargill tomorrow, the
Persephone. They’re been granted
permission to observe if they can
be make their own way to
Antarctica on time.

BRADLEY
We can be aboard that vessel,
witness the detonation firsthand.

ZARA
And why do we want to do that?

JIMMY
Because this could be our first
and, obviously, last chance to
witness pole shift.

Zara LEANS FORWARD.

MARTIN
Not buying it.

ZARA
Marty, c’mom. This is well-
documented stuff.

MARTIN
Have fun, Jim. I’ll see you back
home.

JIMMY
Wait, Martin, I’m not sure you --

Bradley LEADS HIM ASIDE. To the group:

BRADLEY
Give us a sec.

Martin is UNYIELDING.

MARTIN (V.O.)
I ache to believe in the Flood.

EXT. NORDHAFEN WHARF - DAY

The waters of the RHINE lap at a JETTY, at the end of which
stand MARTIN, JIMMY and BRADLEY.
Young BRADLEY wanders as MARTIN talks into his tape recorder.

MARTIN
But proof continued to elude me.
My assistant had promised a trove of Deluge lore, but failed to deliver.

TITLE CARD: RESEARCH TRIP: SEARCHING FOR THE FLOOD

JIMMY
Martin, turn that off. Publishers won’t send you any more money?

MARTIN
If you’re writing a book about the Flood, Jim, they want some evidence that you went where there was at least the possibility of a Flood.

Jimmy fishes out a thick screed of old TEXTS.

JIMMY
Right here, man! Did you read the area history I dug up for you?

Martin WAVES THEM OFF.

MARTIN
This is no more credible than anywhere else you’ve led us. It’s been a pilgrimage of bum steers.

Bradley WALKS BACK DOWN THE PIER.

BRADLEY
This is a hell of a last trip.

Martin SNIFFS dismissively.

MARTIN
We’ll be fine without you. You and your architecture.

Bradley doesn’t turn around as he LEAVES.

BRADLEY
See you later, guys.

Jimmy turns to FOLLOW him.
JIMMY
I’ve had an offer at the
University back home. I’m taking
it. It’s got to be better than
this.

Martin stands alone at the end of the pier.

MARTIN
University? Book-learning??
Seriously, Jim??

Jimmy turns back to FACE Martin.

JIMMY
Yes, seriously. Look how bad this
went. I’ll never be the assistant
you want anyway.

Martin WAVES A HAND.

MARTIN
Can the melodrama, Jim. Just what
is it you want in a boss?

They LOOK at each other, Jimmy unable to say it.

Finally:

MARTIN
It’s been a long, strange walk,
Jim.

Jimmy LOOKS DOWN THE PIER, the end just beyond Martin’s
feet.

JIMMY
Not quite long enough.

He LEAVES. Martin SITS. It starts to RAIN. He presses
RECORD.

MARTIN
As I sat alone amid the first
drops of rain, I thought to
myself...

He PONDERs. Shuts the recorder OFF.

MARTIN
Oh, forget it.

BRADLEY (V.O.)
The Flood. The Templar secret.
The return of Kukulkan. I know
how they’re all linked.
INT. TEAROOMS - DAY

ON THE TABLE are placed Martin’s Kukulkan photos from Mexico and OUROBOROS from his notebook. Bradley taps a photo:

BRADLEY

NODS so far. Bradley moves to OUROBOROS, the circled snake.

BRADLEY
The Templars found this in the Holy Land: A warning that the snake would return. The secret they blackmailed Europe’s leaders with was the key to that return; which would of course mean the End of the World.

Martin is BESIDE HIMSELF with curiosity.

MARTIN
And what was the key??

Bradley flicks through Martin’s NOTEBOOK to a woodcut of the Ark.

BRADLEY
What the Templars worked out was that the Deluge wasn’t a literal Flood. It was a virus: one that killed the dinosaurs then floated away on the current, accumulating at world’s end.

Martin snatches his NOTEBOOK, flicks to another picture of a serpent, spiralling around a CADUCEUS.

MARTIN
A Plague! It would attack DNA itself: once it was unearthed, it would spread like wildfire!

Bradley NODS, pulls out another of Martin’s photos, CLOSER IN on the GLOBE encircled by the snake.

BRADLEY
Yup. But it was sealed in the remotest place on Earth.

He TAPS THE GLOBE: sure enough, crudely scrawled CONTINENTS line the picture. The SNAKE’S MOUTH is POISED ABOVE a clearly-recognisable ANTARCTICA.

Jimmy is AWESTRUCK. Bradley LOOKS AT MARTIN.
BRADLEY
“A frozen Continent lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms of whirlwind and dire hail, all else deep snow and ice...”

Martin STANDS.

MARTIN
...“A Universe of death, which God by curse created evil, where all life dies, death lives”.

The table is STUNNED SILENT. Martin GRINS.

MARTIN
Paradise Lost. So you think this Flood, this Kukulkan, is buried in Antarctica -- and that by detonating Iceberg B23, that virus could be unleashed on the planet once more!

Jimmy and Bradley SHARE A LOOK. They’ve got him!

BRADLEY
Exactly.

MARTIN
What are we waiting for? The old team! Three of the best!

Martin is BOUNCING in his seat. Zara looks SLIGHTED.

BRADLEY
Make some footsteps, old man, we’ll set to following in ‘em.

Martin’s GRIN lights up the room.

BRADLEY (V.O.)
Martin wants to believe in an End that justifies his research. And Martin’s a myth guy.

INT. JIMMY’S CAR - DAY

ALLISON and BRADLEY ride with Jimmy.

ALLISON
So you want to go South to disprove his life’s work, and you persuaded him by putting the Apocalypse in the right genre?

Bradley NODS, oblivious to her irritation.
ALLISON
I can’t believe I’m bringing a child into this family.

Jimmy TURNS.

JIMMY
Oh, shit. I can’t believe I forgot about this.

ALLISON
Huh?

Jimmy motions out the window: both cars PULL OVER.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

The cars are STOPPED at a BLUFF that looks out into the Pacific. The GROUP are gathered round.

JIMMY
Allison, pregnant women aren’t allowed into Antarctica.

MARTIN
Pregnant...?

ALLISON
Why the hell not?

Jimmy SHRUGS.

JIMMY
Health risk.

Martin brings the three men into a TRIANGLE. He’s ecstatic.

MARTIN
Brad, I have to say, this --

BRADLEY
Not now, Martin.

Zara is STARING DAGGERS at Martin. Beside her, Allison looks forcefully to Bradley.

ALLISON
So we’re going home then.

Bradley is LOOKING AT HER.

ALLISON (V.O.)
You’re FUCKING KIDDING.
INT. MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Thick yellowing bricks wall BRADLEY AND ALLISON in. She stands in the middle of the room, arms akimbo, GLARING.

    ALLISON
    Lie about why you’re going. Come all the way down here, and now just DECIDE you’re off to fucking ANTARCTICA. Which act of stupidity you want to defend first, Bradley? Cause they’re really stacking up!

Bradley PACES before the stationary, furious Allison.

    BRADLEY
    I didn’t TELL you cause I figured you’d just get like this!

    ALLISON
    Oh! As long as you were planning on my being pissed, it’s okay, right?? And why do you think that is, huh?

He THINKS for too long about it.

    ALLISON
    EEEHH! Time up! Here’s why I’m pissed, Bradley, is because this is a stupid obsession in the first place. What’ll you do if this trip doesn’t convince him??

He STANDS STILL, looks very earnestly INTO HER EYES.

    BRADLEY
    He’ll be convinced because I have to convince him.

She WALKS AWAY from him, exasperated.

    ALLISON
    No, you freakin’ idiot! What you need to plan for, is that he NEVER gives up waiting for the End, and you just GROW UP and stop letting it bother you!

He SINKS into a chair.

    BRADLEY
    I don’t know if I can do that.
ALLISON
Why? You can’t start your life as a father until you’re sure your dad wasted his?

BRADLEY
I won’t be long. I promise.

She WALKS BACK TO HIM.

ALLISON
No. You’re coming home and sorting this out for yourself. I am not sharing you with your neuroses, and I’d rather raise a kid alone than have ’em watch Dada go though a nervous breakdown before they’re old enough for school.

He’s STUNNED.

ALLISON
Oh, you bet I would. I love you, Bradley, but listen... If you approach this thing with imperfect courage, it will tear your soul apart. So once more for the dummies at the back, darling: come home and get the fuck over yourself.

He looks at her.

MONTAGE:
KALI’s lips drip BLOOD; LIONS surround a shadowed, enthroned QUEEN; Glowing THREADS are MEASURED AND CUT.

END MONTAGE

BRADLEY
I need some air.

He rushes OUTSIDE, past Allison.

EXT. MOTEL - EVENING
Bradley WALKS THE MOTEL GROUNDS, breathing deep. STEAM drifts by his feet.

He FOLLOWS THE STEAM. It grows THICKER, emanating from a GROVE of tightly-trimmed TREES.

MARTIN (O.S.)
Over here, son.
EXT. SPA - EVENING

MARTIN dangles his feet in a shallow SPA. He sits, shirtless and pot-bellied, on one of the ROCKS arranged by the pool.

MARTIN
Zara’s sleeping. I suspect there’s an ordeal coming.

BRADLEY
You don’t want to just let her come?

MARTIN
Oh, her heart’s not in it. Better just us three.

Bradley NODS, looks into the steam.

MARTIN
Brad, I just wanted to say... congratulations.

Bradley SITS on a rock, petulant. He waves STEAM out of his face.

BRADLEY
Yeah. Thanks.

MARTIN
You don’t sound duly overjoyed, son.

BRADLEY
I’m trying, Martin. Not as trying as you, though.

MARTIN
I’m going to take that in our playful gallows spirit.

Bradley SHRUGS. The two men WATCH the amber NIGHT LIGHTS reflected on the pool’s steamy SURFACE.

MARTIN
Another Wearey soul, trudging on.

Bradley NODS.

BRADLEY
Nice one.

Martin gets up to LEAVE. They walk toward the MOTEL.

MARTIN
Isn’t Allison’s maiden name Keye?
...Yes...

**MARTIN**
Call the kid Anne-Marie. Anne-Marie Keye is loosed upon the world.

Bradley SMILES despite himself.

**BRADLEY**
Sure, yeah.

Martin LAUGHS.

**MARTIN**
Slouching toward Berhampore.

**BRADLEY**
Okay, you're done.

They stop at their ROOMS. Martin looks his son in the eye.

**MARTIN**
Seriously though, congratulations.

**BRADLEY**
Thanks.

Martin SMILES and the two enter their ROOMS.

Bradley has just SHUT HIS DOOR when --

**MARTIN**
Brad? Brad!

Martin FLINGS HIS DOOR OPEN and begins HAMMERING on BRADLEY'S DOOR. Bradley opens the door.

**BRADLEY**
Wha--?

**MARTIN**
It's Zara.

**INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

**ZARA** is LYING ON THE BED, still. An empty PILL BOTTLE sits on the dresser beside a NOTE:

**BRADLEY**
(read)
"If you don't like it you can get on with it. Others can pick and choose if you can't.

(MORE)
I can't help it, she said, it's them pills I took to bring it off".

Martin is FROZEN in the doorway.

BRADLEY
What’s she mean?

MARTIN
Well, I think she’s saying she wants to choose her --

ALLISON
What’s going on??

Allison instantly surmises the scene, PUSHES Martin aside, and CROUCHES by the comatose Zara.

ALLISON
No pulse, throat’s clogged... How many did she take?

Bradley inspects the BOTTLE.

BRADLEY
One mil... no, hang on, that’s not... How many pills to a bottle?

Allison SNATCHES and THROWS THE BOTTLE to MARTIN.

ALLISON
Call an ambulance! Jesus!

Bradley RUSHES TO A PHONE. Martin HOVERS USELESSLY. Allison fishes PILLS out of Zara’s throat and starts CPR.

ALLISON
Martin, keep that bottle, the paramedics’ll need it. Bradley, where’s the ambulance??

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Martin, Allison, Bradley and Jimmy SIT outside Zara’s room.

ALLISON
What was on the note?

Martin eyes Jimmy.

MARTIN
Poetry. From his course list.

Allison ROLLS HER EYES.
ALLISON
Well then, I guess this is his fault.

The DOOR is opened by a NURSE.

NURSE
She’s waking up.

MARTIN
Thank God.

Bradley SQUEEZES ALLISON’S HAND.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT
Zara lies in a gown on a single old hospital BED.

ZARA
Hey Marty. Oh hey, it’s everyone.

Martin RUSHES to her, near tears.

BRADLEY
How are you feeling?

ZARA
My throat hurts.

ALLISON
They just pumped your stomach.

ZARA
That’ll do it. Okay, well, I’m alive. Let’s go.

Martin STEPS AWAY from her. Everyone’s SHOCKED.

ALLISON
You’re kidding, right? You just tried to kill yourself.

Zara weakly SITS UP.

ZARA
Don’t mean nothing.

Allison THROWS HER ARMS UP, leaving.

ALLISON
I don’t believe you guys. Seriously.

Bradley FOLLOWS HER.
ZARA
Jimmy, you remember I asked you
in class, what’s next?

JIMMY
Sure.

ZARA
That’s all I’m trying to find,
man.

(showing her bare
WRISTS)
I find it in Antarctica, I’ll
give this kid stuff up. You guys
leave me here, I’m just a keep
trying.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT
Bradley and Allison sit back down.

BRADLEY
You see? This is what she’s
picked up from Martin. All this
cleansing-through-death crap.
This is why I need to go put a
stop to.

Allison gazes at him before pacing away.

ALLISON
Wow, you’re really selfless. And
here I thought you just had some
textbook Freudian crap going on.

BRADLEY
Column a, column b.

She GROANS and throws up her arms.

ALLISON
I better be getting one hell of a
baby-daddy outta this.

He LOOKS at her.

ALLISON
YES, Bradley. I see your fucking
point, okay?

She HEADS FOR Zara’s ROOM.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT
Allison and Bradley RETURN.
ALLISON
I’ve had about all the eschatology I can take. I’m headed home soon as you guys are on the boat. Zara, you want to keep me company a few days?

But Martin’s RESOLUTE.

MARTIN
Oh no, she’s coming.

INT. CAR - NIGHT
Allison drives her and Zara.

ZARA
Martin told me you...

Allison steadfastly WATCHES THE ROAD.

ALLISON
They weren’t about to.

ZARA
Thanks.

ALLISON
Would’ve done the same for anyone.

They reach the MOTEL. In the distance, the SUN is beginning to illuminate the horizon.

ALLISON
Look, I’m sorry. I’m just still trying to get my head around this. You don’t WANT to die.

ZARA
Life’s like the best thing going, man. Just might be more of it, y’know, on the other side.

ALLISON
I hope you don’t mind my saying, that’s fucking stupid.

ZARA
Yeah, well, you and I, different worlds, apparently.

Allison PULLS INTO THE PARK. Zara UNBUCKLES.

ZARA
Rain’s coming down, man, don’t matter when you choose to go.
Allison SHAKES HER HEAD.

ALLISON
People and your damn rain.

Zara tries to think of something to say... EXITS. Allison looks at her BELLY.

ALLISON
Don’t pay any attention. She’s nuts.

She LOOKS UP, tries to think. An AFTERTHOUGHT to her belly:

ALLISON
You’ll hear that a lot from me.

EXT. WHARF - DAY

The PERSEPHONE, a small, hardy boat, is having last-minute CARGO loaded onto it.

The TWO CARS PARK and out pile our folks. ALLISON and BRADLEY hang back as JIMMY hurries to the boat, followed by MARTIN AND ZARA. Zara, still groggy, LEANS on Martin.

ALLISON
You should say something to him.

BRADLEY
“Martin, let’s you and I sort this out while your girlfriend stays home and kills herself”?

ALLISON
You’re right, this is far more sensible.

He stops, sets down all the BAGS he’s saddled with.

ALLISON
Just... Try and come back a little more sorted.

They kiss. MARTIN AND ZARA watch them. He gestures toward the GANGPLANK. She LOOKS at him.

ZARA
What you think’s gonna happen down there? Really?

MARTIN
What else, my dear? The Apocalypse!

She gives him a PECK ON THE CHEEK.
ZARA
Always the optimist.

The sounding of the boat’s loud HORN.

EXT. PERSEPHONE DECK - DAY

The ship is CASTING OFF. Sea churns beneath as the PORT shrinks behind BRADLEY AND JIMMY.

JIMMY
I meant to say, nice work.

BRADLEY
Huh?

JIMMY
He wasn’t buying my story. But you even had me going for a second. We haven’t got him rejecting his life’s work yet, but this is a good start.

Bradley FROWNS.

BRADLEY
Hang on... THAT’S why you gave me the itinerary in the first place? So I’d get him talking?

JIMMY
Be clear, Brad: I want to bury the man professionally, by any means necessary. Are you on board?

Bradley WATCHES NEW ZEALAND SINK AWAY behind them. NODS.

JIMMY
Okay, good. Cause we might need to push him a little further yet. Got any more Armageddon in your cabesa?

Bradley SHUTS HIS EYES.

INSERT: FOUR HORSEMEN; BAYING ICEWOLF; GRINNING KALI; LOOMING ASTEROID; VOLCANO FLOOD BLOOD FIRE --

BRADLEY
Some.

JIMMY
Okay. Well, stay on message.

The ship SAILS into the open sea.
PAXTON (V.O.)
You ever hear of dead water?

INT. PERSEPHONE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Zara, looking out over the glassy open SEA, is joined by CAPTAIN PAXTON, a freckled old fellow in a thick jersey.

ZARA
Can’t says as I have.

Paxton gestures with his HANDS, one sliding under the other.

PAXTON
Get it a lot where we’re going. Currents flow off the Pole, sink beneath the surface. Water looks serene... but you have to sail twice as hard to make headway.

ZARA
Dead water.

PAXTON
Mhmm. Reckon we’ll hit it soon. Sea that calm, with the ice levels we’ve been getting? Bet on it.

He returns to his BANK OF INSTRUMENTS. She WATCHES THE SEA.

ZARA (V.O.)
“The boat responded gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar.”

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

The small CABIN shared by Martin and Zara. Everything’s magnetised and bolted down. Zara READS on a small bunk.

ZARA
“The sea was calm, your heart would have responded gaily, when invited”.

She SETS THE BOOK DOWN.

ZARA
Don’t suppose there’s much point in course reading now, huh?
MARTIN
It’s what I’ve been saying: when you’re this close, why bother?

ZARA
Why bother?

She hops off her BUNK.

ZARA
This really isn’t working, is it?

MARTIN
The job? You’d like more research?

ZARA
Yeah, that’s it. Look, I’m headed somewhere, and I think under the surface, you’re just stopping me getting there. I can’t be doing with it.

He FLOPS in a bolted-down CHAIR.

MARTIN
So you’re --

ZARA
Don’t say it. Don’t make it sound like a High School romance.

He SHRUGS dejectedly.

MARTIN
As we say: why bother?

ZARA
This close? Best prioritise.

She LEAVES. He LOOKS AT THE ROOF. The ship SHAKES.

EXT. PERSEPHONE DECK - NIGHT

The ship is CHURNING through PACK ICE. SPRAY and CHUNKS OF ICE are kicked up in front of the boat. It’s RAINING lightly.

BRADLEY stands at the ship’s front, watching the slow progress. He’s approached by MARTIN.

MARTIN
Brad, you’ve come all this way... was there anything we should address?

Bradley WATCHES THE SEA.
BRADLEY
Bit late for that, isn’t it?

MARTIN
Surely it’s never too late.

Bradley TURNS, face into the growing RAIN.

BRADLEY
It was ALWAYS too late! My whole life, Martin, it’s been too late! School? Normal kid stuff? I can’t swim, or ride a bike, cause it was always TOO LATE! Always time to chase down a feathered serpent or unearth the Last Trumpet, or...

Martin JOINS HIM at the prow, his dander up.

MARTIN
Do you know how many of my readers would’ve loved to have been on those trips?

BRADLEY
So take ‘em! I never volunteered!

Martin BRISTLES. The ship CHURNS through the heavy ice.

MARTIN
Nobody ASKS. We’re dropped in it and it’s all we can do to work out where the surface is.

BRADLEY
Oh, cut the shit! The vast majority of people cope fine. Most people seem to grasp the day-to-day business of being a functional father, or husband, or human damn being.

MARTIN
Since when did we take our cues from the vast majority?

BRADLEY
You’re right. We’re far too clever for all that. And look where it’s gotten us. I hate it, Martin. Hate all of it. Always have.

He MARCHES PAST MARTIN, thick RAIN drenching the two men. The older man WATCHES his son leave.
INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

FAR ABOVE IN THE SKY is damn near the most beautiful damn thing ever: the deep-green SOUTHERN LIGHTS.

ZARA watches, transfixed. She’s joined by JIMMY.

JIMMY
Aurora Australis. Better than a kick in the teeth, huh?

ZARA
Better than a gut full of Xanax.

He GRINS. Points to a huge looming ICEBERG.

JIMMY
There’s B23. We must be close. Captain, where are we dropping anchor?

Captain Paxton, looking somewhat PUT-UPON, talks into a MICROPHONE.

PAXTON
Full power! We’ve got to fight the current!

He LOOKS UP at them as the ship GROANS and speeds.

PAXTON
What’d I tell you, love? Dead water. We’re behind schedule, and that bomb’s not waiting.

JIMMY
It’s an automated detonation?

Paxton NODS.

PAXTON
Need to be anchored at Ross Port well ahead of time. Nearest base is about twenty Ks Southwest of us. The berg’s just offshore.

JIMMY
Couldn’t ask for a better view.

Zara looks OUT THE WINDOW.

ZARA
That’s what I’m here for.

The boat suddenly SURGES ahead. They’re both KNOCKED DOWN.
PAXTON
Whoah!
(into MIC)
Reduce power! We’re clear --
something must be blocking the --

A sickening SCREECH of rending METAL as the ship LURCHES,
KNOCKING them all over.

EXT. PERSEPHONE DECK - NIGHT

MARTIN has been KNOCKED ON HIS ASS by the lurch. He
painfully PULLS HIMSELF UP as a SIREN SOUNDS.

BRADLEY runs out.

    MARTIN
Brad, are you alright?

    BRADLEY
What the hell was that?

ZARA descends from the BRIDGE with LIFEJACKETS.

    ZARA
Martin? Take these, quick. We
have to get to a lifeboat.

They PULL ON the VESTS and make their way to a LIFEBOAT.

    BRADLEY
What happened?

    ZARA
You’re not going to believe this!

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

JIMMY rushes with PAXTON to get to a boat. B23 LOOMS behind
them.

    JIMMY
How can we have hit an iceberg?!

    PAXTON
Currents are hell around here!
You don’t know when they’re gonna
whip you into a berg!

Paxton barges in a DOORWAY on a team of panicked young
ENGINEERS.

    PAXTON
Take these and follow us! We’re
way behind time -- we really
don’t have time for a shipwreck!
**JIMMY**
This is an icebreaker! It’s DESIGNED to hit icebergs!

**PAXTON**
It’s built for pack ice! We must’ve hit a real big unit - probably calved when B23 split from the mainland!

Jimmy STOPS, panting. The hysterical ENGINEERS run past him.

**JIMMY**
Christ... this is actually a real thing, isn’t it?

Paxton STARES at him, incredulous.

**SPLASH!!!**

**EXT. LIFEBOAT - NIGHT**

**EXT. LIFEBOAT - NIGHT**

**BRADLEY, MARTIN and ZARA** join three **SCIENTISTS** in the small Zodiac, which has just **SPLASHED DOWN**. The **SCIENTISTS** scramble for position as Zara yanks at the engine’s **RIPCORD**, trying to **START** IT. Her hands **SLIP** ON THE CORD in the lashing **RAIN**.

**MARTIN**
I thought that ship was unsinkable!

Zara RIPS at the cord, frustrated.

**MARTIN**
See, it --

**BRADLEY**
Shut up, Dad! Zara, take a breath. You’re gonna pull your arm off.

She tries to be CALM as he says.

**BRADLEY**

She PULLS. The engine STARTS.

**BRADLEY**
Good. Now, look, shift over -- I’ll steer.

He and Zara awkwardly SWAP PLACES. The ship WHINES. One of the scientists, **BEAL**, starts at the noise.
BEAL

SHIT!

His movement SHAKES THE BOAT and Bradley is nearly PITCHED OVER.

BRADLEY

Whoah! Careful, man. Okay. Let’s get to shore.

He takes the ENGINE and begins steering the boat AWAY from the ship, past jutting sharp ICEBERGS, B23 rising up off the side of the boat, further up than they can see. A second scientist, ALLAN, looks back at him. She YELLS over the RAIN.

ALLAN

Hurry! We have to get to land before the berg gets blown!

Bradley GUNS THE MOTOR, the little boat SQUAWKING as he forces it to DODGE ICEBERGS and HURTLE TOWARD SHORE. He’s running on adrenaline, too FOCUSED to stop.

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

JIMMY AND PAXTON’s boat gets to shore and the ENGINEERS hurriedly hop off. The small port is little more than a JETTY and a couple of SHEDS. Jimmy HOPS OFF as Paxton watches Bradley’s boat SPEEDING FOR SHORE.

PAXTON

They’d better hurry!

Jimmy LOOKS at him, confused.

PAXTON

The ice, the current: it’s all much thicker than anyone planned for! We were meant to be safely ashore hours ago!

Jimmy PULLS PAXTON UP and watches the other BOAT.

EXT. LIFEBOAT - NIGHT

Bradley SLOWS as the boat APPROACHES THE PORT.

BRADLEY

Nearly there.

BEAL

How long’ve we got?
ALLAN
Not long!

BEAL
Hurry it up!

He LURCHES for the motor, ROCKING the boat severely.

Bradley is THROWN OFF THE BACK, into the ice-cold water. He THRASHES, GULPING.

Martin LOOKS TO HIS SON and DOWN INTO THE DARK WATER. Then TO BRADLEY.

MARTIN
Get to shore.

ZARA
What --

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

Jimmy WATCHES the small craft, sees Martin STAND, pull off his COAT and --

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Martin PLUNGE into the water. Zara is FROZEN as Allan GUNS THE MOTOR and the Zodiac SPEEDS OFF.

Martin SWIMS FRANTICALLY, GASPING for air. He sees BROWN CLOUDS and KICKING LEGS as he FIGHTS FOR AIR, clumsily SCRAMBLES for Bradley.

Bradley is KICKING and PANICKING, his head more under than above. He GASPS for a deep gulp of air and gets a mouthful of WATER.

Martin REACHES HIS SON, takes a deep BREATH and PLUNGE to GRAB Bradley.

His son is BESIDE HIMSELF with cold and panic, and he KICKS MARTIN DOWN, SCRAMBLING to CLIMB UP TO AIR. He BREATHES DEEP, YELLING and KICKING.

Martin is PUSHED DEEP UNDER and the SURFACE is faint and dim far ABOVE HIM. Martin STOPS. He FLOATS still under the water, LOOKS UP to the MOONLIGHT barely shining down. His face CALM.

Martin KICKS UP, GRABS Bradley and HOLDS HIS ARMS. SLOWS his kicking to a gentle paddle as he HOLDS THEM BOTH above the surface, GASPING, their lifejackets keeping them afloat now they’ve stopped fighting it.

Martin KICKS them slowly to SHORE.
EXT. PORT - NIGHT

Martin PULLS his son to the LADDER by the jetty. Both CLimb OUT and COLLAPSE on the ground.

Zara RUNS to Martin and Bradley. She helps them both to their feet and the three HOLD each other.

BRADLEY
Dad, you...

Martin SMILES.

Jimmy sees the two HUG. Something in him clicks: He STRIDES OVER.

JIMMY
Martin, you need to head to the base. It’s inland, Southeast. There’s a couple snowmobiles in the garage. Tell them the ship’s been sunk and we need to get back.

MARTIN
I thought we were here to watch --

JIMMY
Martin!!

Martin LOOKS AT HIS SON: bent double, Bradley PANTS, COUGHING UP WATER.

Martin NODS. RUNS OFF. Zara steadies Bradley.

ZARA
You okay?

BRADLEY
I can’t believe he did that.

They look out to the BERG.

ZARA
Not long now.

A PUTTERING ENGINE starts up: MARTIN has started the SNOWMOBILE and is HEADING OUT.

ALLAN arrives, carrying DRY CLOTHES for Bradley.

BRADLEY
Plenty more of these when we get back to base, huh?

ZARA
Oh, shit.
EXT. ANTARCTICA - NIGHT

Martin is SPEEDING AWAY on the SNOWMOBILE. He keeps an eye on the COMPASS: SOUTHEAST. Doesn’t notice the low FUEL LEVEL.

MARTIN
Just head Southeast... get the Cavalry.

ZARA (V.O.)
SouthWEST, you shit!

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

Zara has Jimmy AGAINST THE WALL of the garage.

ZARA
I heard the Captain tell you where the base was and I heard you tell Martin where it wasn’t!

JIMMY
I didn’t --

She SLAPS HIM.

ZARA
He’s soaked and freezing! How long you think he’ll last out there? You’ve sent him out to die!

Bradley RUSHES TO THEIR SIDE.

BRADLEY
What?!

Jimmy looks plaintively to Bradley.

JIMMY
I’m freeing us, Brad. Him too, in his way.

BRADLEY
What are you --

Bradley’s stunned. He toys with HITTING JIMMY -- pointless.

He WALKS AWAY FROM THEM, trying to PROCESS what he’s just heard. He DROPS to sitting, SHUTS HIS EYES, starts SHAKING.

BRADLEY
No. Not now.

He GRIPS HIS HEAD and breathes steady.
BRADLEY
You can’t panic now. Not now.

Meanwhile Zara’s IN JIMMY’S FACE.

ZARA
All an accident, is that it? You return from the trip that killed your mentor, and you’re finally number one?

JIMMY
(weakly)
It’s all just change.

She SPITS IN HIS FACE. LEAVES him there, wiping his CHIN and watching as she goes to BRADLEY.

Zara puts an ARM on Bradley’s shoulder. He STEADIES.

BRADLEY
I’m going after my dad.

ZARA
What?? How’ll you even find him?

Bradley LEANS AGAINST THE WALL. Closes his eyes.

BRADLEY
It’s really coming down now, isn’t it?

INSERT: A huge WOLF HOWLS; a gargantuan TREE SHUDDERS; icy surfaces CRACK AND SPEW WATER.

He OPENS HIS EYES.

BRADLEY
Yep, I’m going.

Heads for the GARAGE.


JIMMY
I’m going to stop it.

She TURNS.

ZARA
What?!

JIMMY
I’m going to stop the bomb.

ZARA
How’s that going to save Marty??
He LOOKS OUT AT THE ICEBERG.

JIMMY
What if I’m wrong about all this?
What difference does Martin make then?

He LOOKS AT HER. She GLARES back. He RUNS TO THE BOAT.

EXT. LABYRINTH – NIGHT

Martin’s SNOWMOBILE begins to SPUTTER. He LOOKS TO THE FUEL GAUGE: EMPTY.

Martin GUIDES THE SNOWMOBILE to a STOP.

MARTIN
Let’s have a look at where we are.

He shines the mobile’s HEADLIGHT about: he’s in the LABYRINTH. A huge maze of prehistoric HILLS that wrinkle the landscape like a BRAIN. Martin surveys the dark RIPPLES.

MARTIN
Doesn’t seem like the best place for a settlement.

EXT. SNOWMOBILE – NIGHT

Bradley SPEEDS INTO THE NIGHT. He looks down: he’s not too hot on FUEL either.

He STOPS. Looks at the COMPASS, the FUEL LEVEL.

BRADLEY
Halfway.

He looks back. Forward, into the night.

STARTS THE ENGINE.

EXT. PORT – NIGHT

Zara watches the little BOAT speed toward ICEBERG B23. BEAL rushes out.

BEAL
You’ve got to come under cover!
It’s not safe out here!

ZARA
I didn’t come down here to watch through a little window.
We don’t actually have windows --

She LOOKS AT HIM.

You’ve got to come in.

He HURRIES BACK INSIDE. Zara watches Jimmy’s little BOAT vanish behind the ICEBERG.

Damn fool...

I can do this.

Jimmy ascends a steep HILL on the edge of the iceberg, which rises above the water like a huge sheer HILL. Jimmy TRAMPS ON.

Got to be failsafes. Just shut it off. Survived the closet trip yet to the edge of the Abyss! See who’s the famous one then...

He reaches the TOP OF THE ICEBERG. It stretches FAR BEYOND HIM, a huge ISLAND OF ICE, further than his eyes can make out.

Hm.

Zara WATCHES THE ICEBERG.

Never going to make it.

Jimmy RUNS across the ice, searching frantically for anything that might be a BOMB.

Where’d they put it? Got to be huge... how can you miss it?

The MOON emerges from behind a CLOUD. The berg is LIT UP:
WIRES AND CABLES run all across the surface, way into the distance.

JIMMY

Oh.

He looks down to see the surface LIGHT UP BENEATH HIM.

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

Zara WATCHES as a huge SERIES OF DETONATIONS lights up the sky.

She’s in AWE.

So much so that she almost doesn’t see the ICE FLYING FROM THE BERG.

A bigger, deeper explosion KNOCKS HER OFF HER FEET.

She SCRAMBLES to get clear but is THROWN TO THE GROUND by more EXPLOSIONS, LIGHTING UP B23 even as it SHATTERS.

Ice CASCADES into the water and CALVES OFF IN HUGE CHUNKS and FLIES TOWARD HER.

Zara SLIPS ON HERSELF and CRAWLS FRANTICALLY and CASTS A LOOK BACK --

In time to see a SPINNING HUNK OF ICE screaming toward her.

EXT. LABYRINTH - NIGHT

Martin LOOKS ABOUT. He clutches his FOIL BLANKET.

The SKY IS BLACK. The snow and darkness STOP HIM SEEING SIX FEET IN FRONT OF HIS FACE.

A deep RUMBLING BOOM echoes about him.

MARTIN

Oh, now this isn’t good at all.

He SHIVERS as he LIES DOWN and huddles under the BLANKET.

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

ICE AND SLEET lie all around.

Zara LIES BACK, her ears RINGING, her head POUNDING. Light shines out of the WATER, a deep, unnatural ORANGE.

It reflects off the huge white MUSHROOM CLOUD growing from where B23 used to be.
It flickers across her FACE, her brow SWEATY, her eyes SCREWED SHUT to stop the pain in her head.

Zara OPENS HER EYES a fraction. The sky is FADING from ORANGE to a deep cloudless BLACK.

She SHUTS HER EYES and sets her head down.

EXT. LABYRINTH - NIGHT

Bradley REACHES MARTIN and dismounts the SNOWMOBILE.

He RUSHES TOWARD the small still bundle that is his father.

    BRADLEY
    No... You’ve got to be alive...

He reaches the bundle. SHAKES his dad. Martin slowly, groggily AWAKES. Realisation dawns on his face.

Bradley SMILES at his dad -- who responds by angrily TACKLING his son.

    MARTIN
    IDIOT!

    BRADLEY
    Dad, what?? I --

Martin STANDS OVER BRADLEY, FURIOUS.

    MARTIN
    You’re a family man now: act like it! Save me, kill me -- it doesn’t matter any more, Brad!

Bradley, confused, starts to STAND. Martin HELPS HIM UP.

    MARTIN
    Don’t you see, son? All this carry-on between us... it’s the past.

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

    MARTIN (V.O.)
    You’re not just choosing for yourself any more.

Far above Zara, ALL THE STARS of the South Pole shine down. She looks UP past the cloud’s crest, into the SKY.

She sees a SHOOTING STAR. Smiles. She relaxes, her ears still RINGING.
Another SHOOTING STAR darts across the sky. And ANOTHER, and a FOURTH, their paths CROSSING. Zara SMILES.

The stars are all COURSING now, WHITE DARTS in their dozens SHOOTING silently across the sky.

She PROPS HERSELF UP. Dimly, a million miles away, VOICES. The SKY is a CONSTANT FLURRY of pure white flickering PATHS, stars ZIPPING PAST one another and falling to the HORIZON.

ZARA

Look at 'em all!

The LIGHT is enough to illuminate her FACE, a clean WHITE.

EXT. LABYRINTH - NIGHT

The sky GLOWS behind Bradley and Martin. Martin SLUMPS.

MARTIN

It’s happening. I can’t believe I missed it.

BRADLEY

Maybe we’re surviving it.

Martin SMILES.

MARTIN

That’d never have occurred to me.

He SITS DOWN. Bradley digs in the back of his SNOWMOBILE and brings a FOIL BLANKET.

MARTIN

Don’t suppose you’ve enough fuel to get us back?

BRADLEY

I’m all out.

Bradley COVERS HIS FATHER in the BLANKET. Martin LIES DOWN.

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

The HORIZON GLOWS with stars, larger DARTS now falling LOWER AND LOWER, their PATHS lighting up then fading.

ABOVE Zara it’s as BRIGHT AS DAY. She STANDS UP, silhouetted against the WHITE RAIN OF STARS. HOLDS HER HANDS OUT like a child, mesmerised by their shape against the FLICKERING, GLOWING SKY.
She looks back to see PAXTON running to her... but she’s uninterested.

She looks STRAIGHT UP and sees the AURORA AUSTRALIS split the SKY, PARTING THE STARRY SKY like stage curtains. PURE LIGHT shines through the rain of stars.

She looks back to PAXTON and the SCIENTISTS. She can BARELY HEAR their yelling.

   PAXTON
   Get her safe!

But she’s TRANSFIXED by the bright white SKY, the constant THRUM of shooting zipping STARS, the huge glowing RIP cleared above her.

She looks AWAY FROM PAXTON and INTO THE LIGHT.

She STEPS TOWARD THE SHORELINE and CLOSES HER EYES. Casts her HEAD UP toward the beckoning rift.

HEAD UPTURNED, ready for ascension, Zara STUMBLES. Opens her eyes.

Looks down: LYING ON THE ICE, next to her BOOT, is the singed, rusted old PLUG.

Zara looks down at it.

Above her, STARS PLUMMET pure and white against the pink dawn. All around, they PLUNGE INTO THE SEA, sending up HUGE GLOWING PILLARS of water.

Zara LOOKS UP.

EXT. LABYRINTH - DAYBREAK

The SUN is beginning to pinken the HORIZON far away, illuminating the big weird LANDSCAPE.

Bradley BLINKS AND AWAKES.

MARTIN SLEEPS fitfully under the BLANKET. His EYES START TO DART under the lids.

Martin SHAKES HIS HEAD.

   MARTIN
   No... no...

   BRADLEY
   It’s okay, Dad.

Martin’s EYES OPEN.
BRADLEY

Dad?

Bradley WATCHES his father, concerned.

MARTIN
Oh... we’re here. Thank God.

BRADLEY
Huh?

MARTIN
I was having the worst dream. A dream like death.

Martin SITS UP, shakes his head, waking up.

BRADLEY
We’re not in the best of states here, Dad.

MARTIN
Oh, this was worse. This was... the death you can never see past. A true End. Next to this, everything I’ve ever thought was just a daydream.

Bradley FISHES IN THE SNOWMOBILE: a meagre tin of PROVISIONS.

BRADLEY
It must’ve been a pretty exciting one, for you to be stuck on it for thirty years.

MARTIN
Do you know, in all that time... that, just now, was the first time I’ve dreamed about the End.

BRADLEY
Well, that’s because you don’t think it’ll happen. Not really.

He hands Martin a silverwrapped BAR.

BRADLEY
I dream about it all the time.

MARTIN
You must be right, son. This was like nothing I was prepared for.

Martin looks to Bradley, who MOTIONS him go on.
MARTIN
I was walking in the valley behind the house we had when you were a child. When it was you and I and your mother.

BRADLEY
Yeah.

MARTIN
And I felt like you were in that little house, and your mother. So I felt comforted. But as I walked further out, I felt the house... cease to matter.

In the DIM DAWN, Martin is barely illuminated.

MARTIN
And then I was at Winchwell. I was walking in the sheep paddock, walking away from that tank. I didn't even want to look at it. And that's when it started raining. BIG raindrops -- seeing these huge raindrops falling everywhere. I saw them on my feet and it wasn't clear water. It was black water, deep black like in that tank. It was raining this black water that blocked out all the light and colour from the world. And I knew the rain was the absence of life. Anything that was good or light in this world, that rain was the end of it. And it was falling all around me, falling on me.

BRADLEY
What did you do?

MARTIN
Nothing. What could I do? Everything was ending. The End was falling all around me. I just watched it all become drenched and black and gone. And when it was all black, when I could see though there was nothing to see, I realised that all that I knew was being washed away too.

(MORE)
And the last thought I had, Brad — I remember vowing this — I remember feeling an immense sadness that if I was gone, that my son would be gone, and that all I knew of him would no longer be. And I remember vowing that his memory wouldn't leave my mind, as long as I could still see and think. That if everything else was gone, I wouldn't let go of the notion that I had a son.

Bradley doesn’t know what to say. Martin unwraps his bar.

Martin
Maybe we can’t do any better after all, eh?

Bradley smiles.

Bradley
Get up.

Martin bites his bar, looks up at his son. Bradley extends a hand.

Bradley
We’ll head back.

Martin takes Bradley’s hand, stands.

Martin (smiling)
We’ll never make it. Why bother?

They look out across the wasteland, lit by the dawn.

Bradley
We’re after the fact. You can’t use that excuse any more. Time to get moving.

They start to walk across the vast weird alien landscape.

Martin
Think it’s all gone?

Bradley
Huh?

Martin
Your virus theory. Do you think it happened?

Bradley laughs.
BRADLEY
That? I made it all up on the spot, Dad. We wouldn’t be here now, would we? Prevailing winds inland... we’d be the first to go.

Martin is GAZING at his son in awe.

MARTIN
You just... thought it up?

BRADLEY
Gimme some time, I can make an Apocalypse out of anything you wanna name.

Martin STANDS, SHIVERING in the dawn.

MARTIN
Anything?

BRADLEY
Go nuts.

MARTIN
That Kestrel I never got to drive.

Bradley THINKS for a second.

INSERT: OIL DRIPPING; BOMBS; SCREAMING MOUTHS; GIANT SHADOWS.

Bradley GRINS.

BRADLEY

Martin SMILES.

MARTIN
Easy one. Um... the tank at Winchwell.

INSERT: GLOWING VEINS of the world; EARTHSHAKING PULSE; a massive sharklike EYE opens.

BRADLEY
Winchwell’s on a Telluric ley-line.

(MORE)
Your accident sends shockwaves into the sleeping heart of Leviathan...

MONTAGE:

Walking the huge empty WASTELAND, Bradley tells his delighted father STORIES of the Apocalypse.

With Bradley’s gesticulations, END-TIME BEASTS roar and surge amid FIRE AND ICE;

But Bradley SMILES and Martin LAUGHS; the two WALK ON and Bradley continues SPINNING TALES.

As Bradley speaks, the planet is ECLIPSED by a GIANT OF FIRE.

But back in Antarctica, a warm SUN RISES on the two men, LEANING on each other, trading end-time YARNS.

HEROES and DEMONS and the mythic all-stars of the APOCALYPSE shred each other on the BATTLEFIELDS OF LEGEND and ALL IS ICE AND BLACKNESS AND EMPTINESS.

But Bradley and Martin walk through Gotterdammerung LAUGHING, even as there's NOTHING IN THE WORLD except them.

END MONTAGE

BRADLEY (CONT'D)
Your accident sends shockwaves into the sleeping heart of Leviathan...

BRADLEY
...But who knew it? When Voyager returns and the combined weight of millions of psychic stains finally lifts, there’s this -- um, hang on, I can make this happen...

MARTIN
Bradley, stop.

BRADLEY
No, I can make this work. So when Hubbard said he was Maitreya, he wasn’t kidding, and ...

MARTIN
No, son. Listen.

A churning MOTOR:

Emerging over a a RIDGE is a big lumbering SNOWCAT.

Bradley and Martin GRIN and PICK UP THE PACE.
INT. SNOWCAT - DAY

Zara, barely conscious, clutches Martin’s worn old talisman.

She MUMBLES to PAXTON:

ZARA
Trampled under savage clouds...
Just need to pull the plug.

PAXTON
Nearly there now.

He looks out the WINDOW:

Bradley and Martin are APPROACHING FAST.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

As the RISING SUN extends across the SEA, a RESCUE HELICOPTER flies away from VICTORIA LAND.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Zara SMILES in her sleep.

BRADLEY AND MARTIN look out the window.

MARTIN
Glad you came?

BRADLEY
Don’t push it.

Martin SMILES.

MARTIN
Only reason I ask is, I’ve got an idea for our trip next year.

BRADLEY
Martin. I’m a family man, remember?

Martin GRINS.

MARTIN
I could do with a larger research team.

He clutches his RIDICULOUS RUBBER AND IRON TROPHY.

BRADLEY
Can’t wait.
MARTIN
You’re in a fine mood.

BRADLEY
I’ve just been thinking a little clearer since the Apocalypse is all.

MARTIN
They’ll do that to you.

The HELICOPTER speeds into the open SEA.

TITLE CARD: SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

The SUN rises in the distance, huge and golden and filling the horizon.

TITLE CARD: 6 HOURS PASSED

THE END