

OASIS

by
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EXT. LIBYAN SAHARA DESERT - RIBIANA SAND SEA - DAY

Hot and dry, the Sea of Sands look like a corduroy pattern of eighteen karat gold.

SUPER: "LIBYAN DESERT. RIBIANA SAND SEA"

A hundred foot dune breaks the pattern.

Over the dune, at the bottom, a beautiful OASIS.

The round pool of water reflects the clear blue sky, sparkles like a diamond. Stately palms surround it.

Two NOMADS, NOMAD 1(40s), NOMAD 2(20s), kneel and drink. They wear turbans and typical desert garb. Their camels stand nearby.

The ground begins to quake. The Nomads look at one another. Their eyes grow wide.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The top of the hundred foot dune bakes in the blistering sun.

The *SOUND* of the camels pounding across the sand comes up.

A camel charges over the dune with a terrified Nomad 1 on it's back exhorting it forward in the local Taureg language.

Right on his tail, Nomad 2 on his camel. Fear twists his face. Nomad 2 suddenly breaks off, veers down in another direction.

Nomad 1 reaches the bottom and out onto the flat sands. Relentless moments of anxious riding go by.

He steals a look behind.

Nothing.

He looks toward Nomad 2. Nomad 2 disappears over the dune in a different direction. Nomad 1 returns his attention forward.

CRASH!

His camel seems to slam into an *invisible wall*.

He jettisons, tumbles head over heels across the ground. The frightened camel bolts off, leaves him to fend for himself.

He shakes off the sudden spill, pushes to his knees, swipes the head garment away from his gritty face, looks up.

The sunlight blasts him. He squints as a long large SHADOW creeps up his body, across his face, and out behind him.

The sunlight eclipsed by whatever has overtaken him, his eyes wrench wide.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Aaaauggghhhh!

A mangled SCREAM echoes across the scorched sands.

Nomad 2 hears the scream, panics even more to get the hell away from there.

NOMAD 2
(in Tuareg to his camel)
Run! Run! Go! Go!

He races his camel away on the downside of the dune. And dares not look back.

He spurs his dromedary forward, onward, wills it to go faster. *Needs it to go faster.*

Stretched out in every direction, extreme bareness. Nowhere to hide. Nowhere to escape.

The camel thunders straight ahead. But not fast enough.

The same large shadow that overtook Nomad 1 catches up to them, stretches out past them.

Nomad 2 looks skyward. His mouth drops open. Fear chokes his scream.

The shadow darkens over them.

The terrified man can do nothing...but close his eyes.

BLACK.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAY

Miles and miles of sandscape.

The sound of SHIFTING GEARS breaks the interminable silence.

A caravan of military jeeps and trucks make their way across the arid terrain. White letters on the sides of the tan vehicles -- "B D C".

The small caravan stops.

Out of the desert floor, just in front of them, an angled building emerges. A heavy metal door CREAKS open, reveals a massive metal platform. The caravan drives onto it. The door closes.

The angled protrusion sinks back into the sands.

INT. BLUE DIAMOND FACILITY (BDC) - LIFT - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "BLUE DIAMOND CORPORATION"

The caravan descends several stories below the surface of the desert.

The lift stops.

A large door on the far side of the lift opens. The caravan drives out. The door strains closed.

INT. BDC - DOCTOR AHAB'S OFFICE - SAME

Dusky.

A small stream of light from a daylight lamp shines on a single VENUS FLYTRAP in a ten-inch high, round terrarium.

A jar of flies connects to it via small plastic tube. The tiny carnivore placed on a stainless metal table in one corner like a trophy.

MAJOR QUAY (O.S.)
Doctor Ahab, the next breadcrumbs
have arrived.

DOCTOR AHAB (O.S.)
Screen on.

A large frameless viewing glass flicks on.

The sudden bluish glow floods the dim office, reveals DOCTOR LAWRENCE AHAB(60s). Pale and narrow. The eerie light gives him a gossamer appearance. Only the resonance of his voice lends him strength.

He sits at a desk. The desk encompasses him on three sides.

A glass top spans it, allows Ahab to monitor every part of the facility with a swipe of his finger or a voice command.

Ahab punches up a camera. The blue screen suspended in front of him flicks to a picture.

ON SCREEN --

A Debriefing Room inside the underground facility. The BDC trucks pull off the lift.

INT. DEBRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The cavernous room lit by daylight fluorescent. A few metal tables and chairs. Cameras peek out from corners and sides.

Several BDC personnel off-load the vehicles. Armed Security stand by.

A burly BDC security officer lets the tailgate down from one of the trucks.

A TEAM of Seven: Five MEN, two WOMEN get out.

They carry personal bags, backpacks, and gear.

INT. AHAB'S OFFICE

Ahab stares at the new team.

DOCTOR AHAB
Screen off.

The room goes dark but for the shaft of light that spots the flytrap.

DOCTOR AHAB
Abaddon.

Ahab rolls backwards away from the desk.

He has no legs mid-thighs down. Instead, a quarter inch thick titanium Z - shaped appendage is fixed to each thigh. They go back under his buttocks to form a seat. From the seat they angle forward down to the floor where large caster wheels are fixed to them.

Ahab rolls over to the small plant. He considers it for a long moment.

He slides open a plastic door on the jar. A fly enters the tube. Ahab closes the plastic door. The fly makes its way through the tube into the terrarium.

The fly zooms around, lands on the open plant. As quickly as it lands, the plant closes on it. The fly struggles momentarily, until it is completely swallowed over.

Ahab exhales. His expression says he may have enjoyed that more than the flytrap.

INT. BDC BUNK ROOM - NIGHT

The new team fast asleep.

Four security cameras, one in each corner. An LED from each emits a faint red glow.

DOCTOR AHAB (V.O.)
Departure?

INT. AHAB'S OFFICE - SAME

Ahab, at his desk, watches the team on his monitor from one of those cameras. He switches to another. Then another.

ON SCREEN -- *Picture in a Picture* --

MAJOR QUAY(50s), Ahab's automaton. Crew cut, bushy eyebrows, no neck. He wears a BDC Officer's Uniform.

MAJOR QUAY
Day after tomorrow. Morning.
O'six hundred.

Ahab taps the glass top. The sleeping team gets replaced by a satellite image of the SAHARA.

DOCTOR AHAB
Al Kufrah.

The screen *zooms* into a large section of the Libyan Desert.

MAJOR QUAY
North west, above the Ribiana Sand
Sea. Word from the natives.

DOCTOR AHAB
We've only got a small window. A
month, if that.

MAJOR QUAY

We're dropping the crumbs as close to ground zero as possible.

DOCTOR AHAB

Have they been inoculated?

MAJOR QUAY

First thing tomorrow. Then the usual briefing.

DOCTOR AHAB

This time those micromites better work.

Ahab taps the desk. The desert disappears, Quay goes full screen.

MAJOR QUAY

I believe our scientists fixed the problem.

DOCTOR AHAB

I didn't spend millions for your beliefs, Major Quay.

INT. BRIEFING CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The five men and two women sit around a conference table, watch a clear view screen. On the screen flash images of the Sahara.

MAJOR QUAY (V.O.)

The MM's will work, Doctor.

Major Quay stands by the screen and instructs the team.

MAJOR QUAY

Over twenty years of satellite imagery shows there are no set boundaries to the Sahara. It's roughly the size of the U.S. It grows. It shrinks.

FITZY(20s, male), peach fuzz young with a smart-alecky naivety borne from never having experienced the underbelly of the seediness of life.

Fitzy begins to nod off to sleep. Nobody notices.

MAJOR QUAY

A two hundred foot dune today is a shallow tomorrow.

We are concentrating on an area we believe has something no other area has.

The screen switches to a flash point demonstration of typical diamond mining. Then to the Sea of Sands with mineral data.

H.S.(20s male) and JANEY(30ish female).

H.S.

Diamonds.

Janey glances at him and smiles.

JANEY

My best friend.

H.S. Blushes.

MATU,(30s), African male. Tall, dark skinned, has an infectious demeanor, and always eager to please.

MATU

No diamonds in desert.

MAJOR QUAY

That is the popular belief. This is Matu Feetah. He's fluent in many tribal languages which may become essential to this operation. We have located an area that ten thousand years ago could have been conducive to creating an environment for producing diamonds. Obviously over that time the sands have all but erased any evidence.

BACKWOODS,(late-20s, female). A Kentucky bred fireball. Sexy, tough and smart. If she was a thoroughbred, she'd be a Triple-Crown favorite.

BACKWOODS

What tribes? Hostile?

MATU

Nomadic tribes. May never see them.

MAJOR QUAY

However, Matu should be able to communicate that we are not dangerous to them or the environment.

JANEY

What if they're violent?

MAJOR QUAY

Although we run Blue Diamond as a military facility, we are first and foremost a science corporation. Preservation of environment and local denizens are first priority.

DAVIS(PRETZEL), (20s, male). A good looking all American kid, seen action as a soldier, yet unsullied by the horrors of war.

PRETZEL

Like Star Trek. Travel to brave new worlds. But don't interfere with 'em.

MAJOR QUAY

Our weapons are stun and subdue. Everyone will be issued BDC dart guns.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT(mid-50s, male). A hulking presence, with a coarse personality carved from being a career Marine.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

You're sending me and my team out in a possible hostile environment without weapons?

MAJOR QUAY

We are on a seek and find mission. But we will not compromise our core values. Non violent excavation. We are benign.

Backwoods smirks.

BACKWOODS

His team.

MAJOR QUAY

On the ground, Captain Wainwright here is your immediate commander. You will follow his orders at all times. I will be in constant communication from HQ.

Fitzy snores as his head tips back, drool drips from his mouth.

H.S. chuckles to Janey. Backwoods shares a look of disgust with Pretzel. Matu looks nonplussed. Wainwright sneers.

EXT. DESERT - MORNING

The sky just begins to lighten. A monstrous dune looms ahead. BDC vehicles are parked. They can go no further.

The team outside the BDC vehicles gather their equipment. TWO CAMELS are led off one of the trucks.

MAJOR QUAY (V.O.)
People this is Operation Oasis.

They watch the trucks roll away as they head up towards the dune.

MAJOR QUAY (V.O.)
BDC has spent millions of dollars on satellite surveys, ground sonar, and data coalescence to determine a possible source of diamonds.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAY

The sun comes up over the dune.

MAJOR QUAY (V.O.)
Your target. Blue diamonds. This team is now boots on the ground.

A small monitor lizard stands on its two hind legs, watches something.

CRUNCH

It buries itself in the sand.

The team marches by dressed in military fatigues with BDC patches on their chests. They carry equipment, packs, and lead the two camels with the supplies on them.

SCREECH! They look up. A bird flies above, going the opposite way.

CLICK, CLICK.

FITZY (O.S.)
Looks like a turkey or peacock.

MATU
Nubian Bustard.

Fitzy snaps a few more shots of the carrion bird with his camera.

FITZY

A what?

A flock appears in the sky. Fitzy snaps away.

MATU

Nubian Bustard. Migrating.

BACKWOODS

Too early for migration. And they're not even supposed to be this far north.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

At the top of a dune, Wainwright peers through binoculars.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Davis. GPS.

Pretzel hurries to Wainwright.

The others gather around them. They stare at the scene before them.

Mesmerized.

Instead of sand dunes, an other worldly rocky terrain.

Various size grey rock piles like small pyramids stretch as far as the eye can see. A striking contrast between the sea of sands they just trudged through.

PRETZEL

Looks like fossilized dino crap.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Looks like we're going through it.

Wainwright switches on the GPS.

FITZY

I don't like it. Why didn't they just copter us into the target area?

Fitzy takes more pictures.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

This *is* the target area. We're covering three hundred fifty kilometers back and forth in ten days. Maybe you should have stayed awake in the briefing.

FITZY

Long flight. Couldn't keep my eyes open.

Wainwright glances over at Fitzzy.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

I have no need for a picture snapper, so stay out of my way.

FITZY

That's photographer. Playboy photographer.

Wainwright grunts, turns back to the GPS.

JANEY

We'll keep them bunny eyes open for unusual rock samples.

FITZY

Looks like miles of unusual rock samples to me.

PRETZEL

Makes two of us.

Backwoods looks through her pair of binoculars.

BACKWOODS

A little north west, Captain Wainwright.

Wainwright looks up, follows her direction. Silhouettes of titan like rock sentinels.

Wainwright peers through his binoculars.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Stone formations. We'll head that way.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - ROCK PILES - LATER

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT (V.O.)
Should be able to make camp there
tonight.

The team makes its way in and around the piles of rocks.
They vary in size, from a couple of feet to over fifteen feet
high.

H.S.
Wild.

MATU
What?

H.S.
These piles. Why would people go
through the trouble to do something
like this?

PRETZEL
Never seen nothing like it.

Fitzy snaps a bunch of shots as they go.

FITZY
They were probably stoned. Get it?
Stoned?

MATU
Get what?

PRETZEL
Exactly.

BACKWOODS
Who knows what the ancients were
thinking.

FITZY
They were thinking, *'one day we're
gonna kill that rat king bastard
for making us pile these rocks up
all over the place.'*

SWISH! A strong, sandy wind blows across them. The team takes
cover behind a couple of large rock piles. They pull the
camels over with them.

MATU
Ghibili.

JANEY

Gibli?

MATU

Ghibili. The Tuareg call it. Sand spirit, travelling on hot wind.

FITZY

She's killing my lenses.

Fitzzy wipes the dust from his camera lens.

MATU

Must wrap.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Matu's right. Wrap everything or this powder will eat it up.

They wrap the GPS, radio, binoculars, dart guns, and all their other equipment. Pack it on the camels.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Keep moving.

They put on goggles, clad their faces and battle through it. They have to zigzag as they go. Eventually, they gather behind one unusually large rock pile, over twenty feet tall.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Davis. Make sure we're on point.

Pretzel rewraps his face, climbs the pile. The others watch. Midway, Pretzel grabs for a rock. It loosens, and bounces down the pile.

PRETZEL

Watch it!

The team scatters, the small boulder caroms away. The team regathers. Pretzel crests the top.

The wind HOWLS, the sand whips.

Pretzel can barely make out the landscape. He glances back and forth, but the powdery sand blocks visibility.

SMACK!

A SCORPION hits him in the face. Then another one. Several more fly by him.

Pretzel swipes at them, loses his balance. He snags a rock, dislodges it, and tumbles down the pile.

At the bottom, everyone takes off, except Wainwright. He readies himself to break Pretzel's fall. The rock ricochets away.

Pretzel crashes down on him. They both collapse to the ground. Pretzel slaps at himself. Wainwright throws him off, struggles up, then falls back down, dazed.

Pretzel thrashes around on the ground, swipes at himself as if the scorpions cover him.

Backwoods and H.S. dash to him, grab him.

BACKWOODS

Pretzel what is it? What happened?

Matu, Janey and Fitzzy tend to Wainwright. On his hands and knees, he regains his composure, pushes them away.

Pretzel finally calms down, they help him sit up.

PRETZEL

Something hit my face.

BACKWOODS

What?

The camels spook, and bolt off.

A SCORPION drops down next to Backwoods. A second scorpion drops. A third one lands on H.S. He slaps it sending it towards Matu.

Matu dodges it.

In a flash, a shower of scorpions fall all around them.

H.S.

Scorpions!

The team splinters in different directions to get away from them.

Janey cowers next to a pile of rocks. A scorpion crawls onto her hand. She flings it off, runs away, and collides into Matu.

They roll on the ground in pain, but not for long. Matu scrambles up, and grabs Janey's hand. She staggers away with him.

Wainwright and Backwoods crouch near one of the larger rock piles, knock the scorpions off each other as they land.

Pretzel recovers one of the camels, pulls it next to a stack of rocks, and hides under it.

H.S. stumbles and falls in front of him. Scorpions cover him.

Pretzel snatches H.S. by the back of the collar, drags him under the camel.

The camel bolts away. Pretzel whacks the scorpions off him.

As quickly as it started, the sand wind dies. The scorpion shower stops. Everything quiets down.

H.S. lies on the ground exhausted, but relieved. Pretzel helps him up.

H.S.

Thanks. That was freaky.

PRETZEL

You didn't hear the weather report? Partly sunny skies with a chance of scorpion showers.

JANEY (O.S.)

Everyone alright?

The team regathers.

PRETZEL

Looks like it. Where's the Captain?

BACKWOODS

Tracking down the camels. Where's Fitzy?

They glance around.

MATU

Fitzy.

BACKWOODS

Fitzy.

FITZY (O.S.)

Fitzy here.

Fitzy crawls out from under a large rock pile. He smiles.

FITZY

When in doubt, dig.

He tosses a small boulder out of his way, gets up, and brushes himself off.

JANEY

What the hell was all that?

BACKWOODS

Flying scorpions. Or rather gliding scorpions.

FITZY

Never heard of 'em.

BACKWOODS

Like flying squirrels. They launch themselves in the wind.

MATU

The Ghibili. The spirit carried them. Call them 'wind scorpions.'

Wainwright comes up with the camels. Hands the reins to Pretzel and H.S.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Next time guard these with your lives. Scorpions will be a slumber party compared to dehydrating out here.

Pretzel and H.S. take out the canteens, pass them around. Fitzzy reaches for his.

BACKWOODS

Fitzzy. Don't...move.

Fitzzy freezes.

FITZY

Why don't move?

Janey points towards Fitzzy's neck, indicates a creepy crawly thing. She mouths -- *Tarantula*.

The large black creature gets to Fitzzy's shoulder.

Fitzzy glances over at its long hairy legs, multiple eyes. He screams, flings off his vest, and dashes away.

Wainwright stomps the thing into the sands.

BACKWOODS

(to Wainwright)

Didn't have to kill it.

Wainwright smirks.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

What are you, one of those beetle
kissers?

Fitzy stops about thirty feet away, bends over, catches his
breath.

SWOOSH! A rock the size of a football flies past his head.

He looks up, eyes go saucer like. Fitzy turns tail, and
hotfoots it back towards the group, snatches his vest off the
ground, keeps on going.

FITZY

Run!

JANEY

It's dead.

WHACK! A large rock smacks Janey in the back, knocks her
down.

All heads swivel in the direction the rock came from.

ANUBIS BABOONS

Gathered on top of the pyramids, rocks in hand, fierce eyes
stare down at them. The largest baboon in front lets out a
blood curdling bark.

The camels take off as *WILD SHRIEKS* descend on the team.

H.S. helps Janey up.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Everyone. Slowly back away.

They do. One of the baboons flings a rock at Pretzel. It
just misses him.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Go!

The team scatters once again, escape into the stony ancient
maze.

SCREECHES and *HOOTS* echo all around them.

The Baboons shell the team, leap from rock pile to rock pile.
A vicious attack.

JANEY

Exhausted, and hurt, she stumbles and falls.

H.S. clutches at her. A rock busts him in the side. He crumbles to the ground.

A camel gallops by. Pretzel chases after it, a HOWLING baboon on his tail.

Backwoods cuts around a pile, flings a small boulder at it. *Bullseye*. The baboon tumbles away.

Backwoods snatches up another rock. A baboon jumps her back. She rolls forward, ends up with the beast on top of her.

It SHRIEKS inches from her face, saliva sprays her. She clocks it in the head with the stone.

It collapses.

OVER TO:

FITZY

He hides behind a rock pile.

A loud shrill BARK jerks his head up. A larger Anubis towers above, ready to smash him with a rock.

Fitzy snaps a picture, flashes it. The baboon drops the rock on its own head, tumbles down the pile.

FITZY

Picture snapper my ass.

He kisses his camera and kicks the sprawled out baboon.

BACK TO:

JANEY

A ferocious anubis seizes her, chomps her leg. She screams as it drags her away across the ground.

H.S. chucks a rock at it.

SMASH!

Hits it square in the face, knocks it away from Janey.

Razor sharp teeth bared, another baboon descends on H.S., lands piggy back, sinks its fangs into his shoulder. H.S. howls.

He spins, smashes it against one of the pyramids. The baboon yipes, and lets go. H.S. stumbles towards Janey. She struggles to get up. They lock hands.

Out of nowhere another Anubis pancakes H.S. He yells at Janey.

H.S.

Run!

OVER TO:

WAINWRIGHT

A baboon rages, rides his back. He throws himself in the air, comes down hard on the baboon, knocks the wind out of it.

Wainwright leaps up, snatches it by the leg and slings it at a rock pile.

The pile collapse on it.

BACK TO:

H.S.

More of the fierce primates pile on him. Janey watches helpless, tears well up.

H.S.

Run.

A rock whizzes by her head. She ducks, and wobbles off, steals a glance back.

On the ground, H.S. thrashes beneath a half dozen rampaging baboons. He whoops with every kick and punch. They howl and hoot, bite and tear.

Way too many.

They drag his body away in a whirlwind of grunts, bared razor teeth, blood and guts.

Janey cries, snot runs, leg bloodied -- Throws up.

Terrifying SHRIEKS celebrate their victory behind her as she collapses next to a rock pile. Janey wipes her mouth as she gazes up through swollen eyes.

In front of her, surrounded by large rock pyramids closely stacked together, an ancient circular temple.

In the circle sits an oasis. Its palms stand erect in the stifling, still air.

Janey pushes up, leans against the rocks she collapsed next to. The crystal clear water beckons her.

She swipes her eyes with her sleeve and stumbles forward into the prehistoric cathedral. Silence engulfs her.

She hesitates, glances around, then continues to lurch towards the serene body of water that reflects the clear blue sky above.

Just steps from the refreshing pool -- ROAR! A horrible screech echoes throughout the mysterious chamber.

A giant ANUBIS leaps from a rock pile. A maniacal look, peeled fangs, descends upon Janey.

Janey's eyes scream wide as the baboon's shadow falls across her. She squeezes them shut.

FWWWTTT!

Silence. A long moment. Dead air. Janey's teary eyes blink open.

The circular clearing empty. No baboon. No oasis. Just an empty circle of sand.

Janey crumbles. Arms wrap her. She panics, looks back. A distorted Captain Wainwright holds her up.

Janey loses consciousness.

BLACK.

INT. AHAB'S OFFICE - SAME

Ahab's silhouette faces a large tinted window on the far end of his office. A light shines from the room he stares down into.

His back to the video screen, he watches intently whatever is going on in that room below.

ON SCREEN -- Major Quay

DOCTOR AHAB
Losing a micromite is counter
productive, Major.

MAJOR QUAY

We don't know what happened. The bread crumb got toasted somehow. Although Bio's on all of them reflected a highly agitated state. Could be the target.

DOCTOR AHAB

Major I'm not interested in speculation. Screen off.

The screen goes dark.

Ahab continues to stare down at whatever is happening below.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - CAVE - NIGHT

The stone formations stand like attentive gatekeepers.

A faint orange glow breathes out of the mouth of the cave.

A SHADOWY FIGURE moves in, kneels down just outside.

INT. CAVE - SAME

A fire warms with licks of oranges and blues. Darkness flickers on the edges.

A camel lies down just inside the entrance.

PRETZEL (O.S.)

Hansel to Ginger Bread House.

Wainwright cleans his dart gun.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Forget it. You've been at it an hour. We are now incommunicado.

Pretzel bangs on the radio. Fitzzy sits with him.

PRETZEL

But Major Quay said he'll be in constant contact.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Desert heat can kill batteries too.

FITZY

But this is just the second day.

PRETZEL

We've got to get Janey some help.

SHRIEK!

Wainwright swings the dart gun towards Janey. Her eyes pop open. She flails. Backwoods holds her down.

She lies next to the fire, her bloodied leg wrapped with torn pieces of cloth.

BACKWOODS

Janey, you're safe. You're safe.

Janey settles.

Wainwright grunts, continues to clean the gun.

Backwoods takes a ripped piece of clothing, soaks it with water from a canteen, pats Janey's forehead. Janey turns her head away, squeezes her eyes shut.

JANEY

He saved me.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

It was nothing.

Backwoods shoots him a disgusted look. Silence fills the cave. Tears stream across Janey's face.

Backwoods dampens the cloth again.

BACKWOODS

I'm sorry what happened to H.S.
Horrible.

Backwoods places the cloth on Janey's forehead.

BACKWOODS

She's burning up.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Easy on that water, Backwoods, or whatever hillbilly name you call yourself. Only have a couple canteens left.

BACKWOODS

Well I poured her some of my share.
Captain.

FITZY

And Matu. They must've got him too.

The lone camel snorts, gets up.

Wainwright jerks his dart gun towards the cave entrance.

Pretzel sprints to the camel, grabs the rope, steadies it.

Backwoods arms herself with a softball size rock. Fitzzy grabs a golfball sized rock, slinks behind a boulder.

A long minute. Silence. Nobody breathes.

CLOP! CLOP! CLOP!

A camel barrels into the cave. Backwoods drops her rock, dashes for the animal, snags its rope.

Pretzel snatches up a rock, stands ready, hidden behind his camel. Wainwright takes aim at the mouth of the cave.

SOMETHING dashes in.

Pretzel starts to bash it.

MATU (O.S.)

Matu here. Matu here.

Wainwright and Pretzel exhale.

PRETZEL

Matu?

Pretzel drops the rock. Pats him on the back. Backwoods comes over, hugs him.

BACKWOODS

We thought you were...

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Monkey meat.

Wainwright heads to the second camel. Backwoods glares at Wainwright.

BACKWOODS

Lost.

Wainwright ignores her, takes the supplies off the second camel, goes over to the fire. He stokes it to get more light.

Matu looks at Wainwright.

MATU

Guard camel with life.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

At least someone on this team's got camel cojones.

MATU

This is good I hope.

FITZY (O.S.)

Matu.

Fitzy comes up, gives Matu a bear hug.

MATU

Not breathing.

Fitzy laughs, lets him go.

FITZY

You Nubian bastard!

BACKWOODS

Bustard.

FITZY

Oh, yeah. Nubian Bustard. Sorry.

Wainwright holds up the GPS and four more canteens.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Daylight come and me want to go home.

MATU

Go home? What about mission?

Fitzy dashes over to the supplies, digs out another lens for his camera, pops it on.

FITZY

Just a song. Never heard of Harry Belafonte?

Matu shoots him a blank look.

Fitzy sings as he snaps pictures of the cave, the camels, the team.

FITZY

(sings)

Come Mister Tally Man, tally me bananas. Sun goin' down and me wanna go home.

In the camera flashes, painted on a back wall -- a CAVE DRAWING --

A giant cucumber like MONSTER eats a man, while ANCIENT HUNTERS stab at it with spears from the pyramid like rock piles.

The drawing goes unnoticed.

EXT. - CAVE - SAME

Fitzy's song carries outside. The white flashes from his camera light up the mouth of the cave.

A HUMAN SILHOUETTE moves next to one of the stone formations. It stops. Listens.

EXT. CAVE - MORNING

The team hikes away into the rocky desert terrain. Wainwright walks ahead, GPS in hand.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Thirty K, North West, we got water.

Backwoods leads the camel Janey slumps over. They've tied her to it.

FITZY

And why are we looking for water when the canteens are full?

PRETZEL

You seriously slept through briefing?

FITZY

Soundly, 'til they gave me that camel shot.

MATU

Inoculation.

FITZY

The needle was huge. What are they expecting out here? Tyrannavirus Rex?

Backwoods stops.

BACKWOODS

We need to go back, Captain.

Wainwright keeps moving.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
You need to concentrate on whatever
you're supposed to be doing.

BACKWOODS
Janey needs medical attention.

PRETZEL
I can't believe they didn't pack us
a med kit.

Pretzel and Matu lead the other camel behind Fitzy.

MATU
Something not right.

Backwoods turns the camel around.

BACKWOODS
I'm going back with Janey.

Wainwright charges to her, backs her against the camel.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
No one goes back.

BACKWOODS
You may be leading this group but
we ain't in the marines.

Backwoods tries to push him away. He shoves back into her.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Then throw her on your back and go.
But the camel stays with us.

He grabs the reins. Backwoods clings to them. They stare
hard at each other. Sweat streams from both their faces.

Pretzel dashes up, shoves his arm between them.

PRETZEL
Captain.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Stand down, soldier.

Pretzel doesn't move.

PRETZEL
No, sir.

Matu and Fitzzy come up on either side of Wainwright.

MATU
All are in this.

Wainwright's eyes locked on Backwood's.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Obviously, we're not.

After the tense moment, Wainwright backs off.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
I'm not giving up my payday for a
dead person.

He releases the reins, marches away.

BACKWOODS
She's not dead.

Wainwright yells back.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Seven days to rendezvous. She's
good as dead.

PRETZEL
He's right. We can go back, but
they won't be there.

Janey moans. They look at her.

MATU
Best can do. Try keep her from
death. Finish mission.

Backwoods exhales an angry sigh. She pulls the camel's rope, pushes past them, and starts behind Wainwright.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

The sun blazes. The desert starts to turn sandy again. The rocks, fewer and fewer.

A large dune looms up ahead. The team trudges on.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

The team comes down from the dune. The bleached white bones of a camel jut out of the desert floor.

Fitzy reaches it first. He stops to take some shots.

FITZY
That's encouraging.

The rest of the team march by without a glance. Only Matu and the camel he leads straggles behind.

FITZY
Isn't this the animal that can go
five hundred miles before needing a
drop of water?

Fitzy inspects the white bones even more. Matu reaches him, looks down, breaks one off.

FITZY
Oh. Don't do that.

Matu swings it down like a hammer.

MATU
Good scorpion smasher.

Matu moves on. Fitzy glances down at the skeleton.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

Fitzy has a camel bone. Pretends to sword fight.

FITZY
And I'll be the host of my own
show. *Naturally Fitzy*. Gonna go
all over the world in search of the
wild and weird.

Wainwright marches by.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Just film yourself in a mirror.

Fitzy stops, stabs the bone towards Wainwright.

The rest of the team chuckle as they trudge by.

FITZY
I'll remember that, Captain
Crotchety Draws.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

Top of the small dune. The team stops, gathers around Wainwright. He checks the GPS.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Water over the other side. Hope there's what we're looking for.

FITZY

Thought we were supposed to find unusual rocks or diamonds or something. Why are we trying to find water?

BACKWOODS

The unusual rock formations that indicate possible blue diamonds would have been cooled in or near a body of water.

PRETZEL

Find the water...

FITZY

Find the diamonds?

BACKWOODS

Or at least similar silica indices.

FITZY

Oh, of course. Definitely keep my eyes peeled for those similar silica indices.

Pretzel shoves him away.

PRETZEL

You do that.

The team crests the dune.

Halt.

They stare down the other side. At the bottom, a short valley. In the center, a large circle of green grasses and wild flowers.

Totally out of place.

FITZY

Wow. How 'bout unusual grass formations?

Fitzy takes out his camera, snaps some pictures.

BACKWOODS

That is so...

PRETZEL

Green?

Pretzel smiles. Backwoods looks at him, allows herself a smile.

EXT. GREEN VALLEY - LATER

The camels feed on the grass. Janey lies asleep on a soft bed of wild flowers. The team, spread out, dig for water.

BACKWOODS

I swear it just rained here. The ground's still damp.

PRETZEL

Like an oasis was here.

Backwoods takes one of the torn cloths, fills it with the damp cool sand. She places it on Janey's forehead.

BACKWOODS

Hang in sister.

Wainwright plants his shovel, checks the GPS again, bangs it.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Now this thing indicates the oasis is about twenty K more in that direction.

He points over the next dune. Matu taps the GPS.

MATU

Maybe we go wrong way.

Wainwright jerks the GPS away, glares at him, marches away.

Fitzy mocks Wainwright's glare to Matu. Matu pushes Fitzy away.

BACKWOODS

No way we boot out another twenty today.

Fitzy plucks a flower, puts the stem in his mouth, lies down in the grass, closes his eyes.

FITZY

I say we forget about the mission.
Just lie here in the cool green
grass, like the green, green grass
of home.

A shadow moves over him.

Wainwright.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

You ever complete anything in your
life, boy?

Fitzzy keeps his eyes closed.

FITZY

Yes. The application for this job.

Fitzzy turns over.

FITZY

Now I'm kicking myself for turning
over a new leaf.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Pitiful.

Wainwright walks away, jabs the ground with the shovel as he
goes.

FITZY

Sergeant Slaughter, can't we just
sleep here tonight?

PRETZEL

Where every poisonous creature can
crawl and slither over you in the
night?

Backwoods comes up to him.

FITZY

Mmm, hmm.

BACKWOODS

The sap of some desert flowers are
fatal.

Fitzzy hacks the flower stem out of his mouth.

CRASH!

An ARM *bursts* out of the ground, wraps around Fitzzy. Fitzzy hollers.

Everyone freezes.

Fitzzy fights to his knees, and rips his ATTACKER out of the ground.

A MAN, flesh seared, hangs on to Fitzzy for dear life. The attacker lets out an ear piercing scream. Fitzzy wrestles to get up, away from it.

The mutilated assailant hangs on, cries out in pain.

Fitzzy gets to his feet, the body of the man rips in two. The upper torso clings to him.

Fitzzy looks back at the melted face. It shrieks in his ear. Fitzzy squeals like a little girl, and takes off. He twists and turns to free himself. The half a man doesn't let go.

Fitzzy runs towards Wainwright. Wainwright swings the shovel at Fitzzy's head. Fitzzy ducks.

CLANG!

The shovel bashes the screaming skull.

THUD.

It hits the ground.

DEAD.

The team circles it.

BACKWOODS

What the hell?

PRETZEL

You gotta be shittin' me.

Fitzzy squirms. Yells at Wainwright.

FITZY

You could've killed me.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Rare miss.

PRETZEL

Look.

Pretzel points at it.

PRETZEL

It's shirt.

The tattered, dirty shirt matches their's. And a "BDC" patch on the chest.

EXT. GREEN VALLEY - LATER

A small mound of dirt, a grave, near the middle of the green grass. Up the adjoining dune the team hikes away.

Fitzy stops, looks back over the valley.

FITZY

Fitzy needs a drink.

He shoots a few pictures as darkness falls. His camera shakes in his hands.

FITZY

Make that a bottle.

The others continue over the dune. Fitzy glances around, realizes he's alone.

FITZY

Hey.

Fitzy scurries after them and over the dune.

FITZY (V.O.)

I want my mommy.

A LONE NOMAD in goat skin, with a spear, appears on the top of the dune they came from.

INT. BDC - SECURITY MONITOR ROOM - DAY

A guard, TORRENCE(20s), has Quay on the screen.

TORRENCE

Sam Coles.

MAJOR QUAY

From the last drop?

TORRENCE

Yes, sir. His vitals just rebooted, then terminated.

MAJOR QUAY

Could be a glitch.

TORRENCE
Major, sir?

MAJOR QUAY
Yes?

TORRENCE
I can tell you Coles micromite
initialized when the current team
entered the area.

MAJOR QUAY
So Coles was alive? His MM must
have cross paired.

TORRENCE
At least briefly.

MAJOR QUAY
Maybe that's why the last batch
failed to transmit. Two MM's just
don't generate enough signal once
inside.

TORRENCE
Inside what?

MAJOR QUAY
What of the others?

Torrence punches up the bio's.

TORRENCE
There was a spike about the same
time Coles came on line, especially
Fitzgerald.

Torrence punches up the bio data.

TORRENCE
But they've stabilized.

MAJOR QUAY
Target Blue Diamond must've failed
to take its medicine.

Torrence looks confused.

TORRENCE
Sir?

Quay disconnects the conversation. Screen goes black.

EXT. SANDY VALLEY - DUSK

Gourds, the size of cantaloupes lay across a patch of sand on a creeper vine. The tops of several scraggly date palms peek out around them, with a few desert bushes in between.

FITZY

Melons.

Fitzy grins.

The team wanders up. Fitzy plucks one from the ground. Pretzel and Matu ease Janey down from the camel. Wainwright and Backwoods begin to set up camp.

BACKWOODS

(to Fitzy)

Gourds.

MATU

Alkhad. Tuareg call them.

Backwoods comes up.

FITZY

Meaning they're juicy? And make you forget about half skinned people?

Fitzy takes out a small pocket knife, cuts into it.

BACKWOODS

Actually.

Fitzy pauses, starts to toss it.

FITZY

I know. Poisonous.

BACKWOODS

No.

FITZY

Great.

He cuts the chunk, pops it in his mouth.

FITZY

Milky. Sappy. Not great. But wet.

He smiles, cuts another piece, stuffs his mouth.

BACKWOODS

The sap's good for scorpion stings.
So save some.

Backwoods turns back to help set up camp.

BACKWOODS

It's also a purgative.

FITZY

Purga...what?

Fitzy swallows, shoves another chunk in his mouth. Matu smiles big.

MATU

Cleans out body.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - NIGHT

The team eats under a camouflaged net around a fire.

FITZY (O.S.)

Ohhh.

Fitzy doubles over, wraps his arms around his stomach.

FITZY

Fitzy being cleaned.

He jumps up, runs behind the sand hill they camp next to.

BACKWOODS

Warned you.

They all laugh, except Wainwright. The laughter stops. An uneasy moment of quiet sits between them.

PRETZEL

Can't get that guy out of my head.
I mean, he had no skin.

MATU

He had no legs.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

He had a shovel to the skull.

Wainwright laughs.

By himself.

BACKWOODS

You're sick.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

What's your deal, sister? Why'd you travel across the world? To play Mother Theresa or fatten your calf?

BACKWOODS

I'm in it for the research and...

Wainwright throws a branch into the fire.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Bullshit.

BACKWOODS

And yes...the money.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Damn right, the money. We're all here for the money. Ain't no marshmallows at this campfire.

FITZY (O.S.)

Ohhh.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

I take that back.

INT. BDC - HUMONGOUS TANK - DAY

Larger than three football stadiums. A section of the desert has been enclosed. The ceiling, a flat thick clear Plexiglas allows for natural light.

A large PICTURE WINDOW several stories high overlooks the enormous desert tank.

Doctor Ahab peers out of it. He watches the two dozen or so BDC EMPLOYEES work on the tank itself.

The room has two great metal doors on one side, one above the other. When open, it's big enough to fit a cruise ship through.

Major Quay sits at a portable console in the center. He looks at a video screen, punches up a command for the doors to open.

An emergency siren goes off with red lights that flashes all over the room.

ON SCREEN --

An animation of the huge top door slides up into the roof.

In front of Quay the large top door creaks as it slides upward. Desert sand pours in.

All the workers stop to watch.

ON SCREEN --

An animated bottom door slides down, disappears completely.

Above, Ahab stares through the large window.

The tank's bottom door creaks as it slides down. The sand pours in even more, piles up on that side of the tank.

The top door continues to yawn open.

Major Quay allows himself a smile, until...

SCRAAAKKKK!

The bottom door grinds to a halt.

Quay glances up at the window. Ahab's silhouette remains motionless for a moment, then backs away. Anger flashes across Quay's red face. His voice resounds in the cavernous room.

MAJOR QUAY

I want those doors operational,
dammit! Now!

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF SAND HILL - NIGHT

Fitzy looks for a place to relieve himself. He stops, bends over in pain. Falls against a clay brick wall.

He whirls around, barely makes out a structure partially buried by the sand. He follows the wall to a dark entrance.

FITZY

Hello?

No answer.

FITZY

Thank you, God. Desert outhouse.

He disappears through the doorway.

INT. BRICK STRUCTURE - LATER

Dark. Quiet.

FITZY (V.O.)
Oh man. Head spinning. Stomach...

A NOISE.

FITZY (V.O.)
Pretzel? That you?

A CLICK.

FITZY (V.O.)
Captain?

Silence.

FITZY (V.O.)
Ouch.

Fitzy slurs his words.

FITZY (V.O.)
Stickin' a stick at someone while
they're droppin' a deuce is...

A torch lights up the room, reveals Fitzy. He squats, pants down, in a corner.

FITZY
...Uncivilized.

Wainwright, Matu, Backwoods, Pretzel stand in front of him.

EIGHT NOMADIC TRIBESMAN dressed in goat skin surround them. Point their spears at them.

A ninth NOMAD jabs Fitzy with the butt of his spear.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Well, Playboy, you wanted wild and
weird.

Fitzy looks up bleary eyed. The nomads appear demon like in the fire light of the torch.

Fitzy drops his head.

FITZY
Craptacular.

INT. BRICK STRUCTURE - SECOND ROOM - LATER

A torch wedged in a hole in the wall lights the room. The team scattered about.

Janey lies on the sandy floor against the wall, head in Backwoods lap, fast asleep. Backwoods sits against the wall almost asleep herself.

Fitzy, half in pain, half asleep, doubled up in a corner.

Pretzel sits in another corner, head buried between his pulled up knees.

Wainwright paces like a caged animal.

Matu's voice carries in from some other room nearby.

MATU (O.S.)
(In Tuareg Dialect)
We are peaceful. We mean no harm.

The VOICE of an excited tribesman can be heard.

TRIBESMAN (O.S.)
Waw aman! Waw aman!

Matu responds.

MATU (O.S.)
(In Toubou Dialect)
Peace. Friends. Friends.

The VOICE responds excitedly again.

TRIBESMAN (O.S.)
Waw aman!

MATU (O.S.)
(mixes Toubou and Tuareg)
We need help. Woman sick.

A jumble of strained voices respond. Then a long silence.

Wainwright, Backwoods, and Pretzel glance at one another.

FRUMPH!

Matu gets pushed in, tumbles across the floor. Wainwright and Pretzel help him sit against a wall.

Backwoods slips out from Janey, goes over to them.

In the fire light they catch his face. One eye swollen shut, mouth and nose bloodied.

BACKWOODS
What did they do to you?

Wainwright grabs him by the shoulder.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
What did they say?

Matu fights to stay conscious. Wainwright shakes him.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Matu!

Backwoods grabs Wainwright's arm.

BACKWOODS
Leave him. Can't you see he's hurt?

Wainwright jerks his arm away, glares at her. Backwoods meets it.

Matu coughs out.

MATU
All is ice.

PRETZEL
All is ice?

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
He's delirious.

Wainwright stalks away from them.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Interpreter my ass.

BACKWOODS
You mean you're cool? You're alright?

MATU
Cool.

Matu manages a chuckle.

MATU
Alright.

Wainwright starts towards the door.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
 I got a language they'll
 understand. My boot in their
 spearchucking asses.

THREE NUBIANS appear, greet him with their spears. Wainwright stops, doesn't move, defiant.

Matu coughs, clears his throat. His voice, raspy.

MATU
 Not Taureg. Not Toubou. Not even
 Hutu. Older. Maybe...Nubian.

BACKWOODS
 But there are modern day Nubians.

MATU
 Not these. Like talking to ten
 thousand year old man.

The three Nubians part the door way. A TALLER NUBIAN walks in.

WITCH DOCTOR

His face painted with streaks of white, he wears a bleached Anubis skull on his head. Covered in black feathers, various bones hang from his chest. He carries a spear wrapped with a large snake body. The head of the snake mounted just below the spear head.

He stops in front of Wainwright, shoves the snake head into his face. Wainwright knocks the spear away.

The other Nubians jump between them, jab their spears at Wainwright's throat, force him back against a wall.

Other Nubians pour into the room. No one says a word. The torch light flickers across the tense faces.

Finally, the tall Nubian speaks.

WITCH DOCTOR
 (in Nubian at Matu)
 Sorry for treatment.

MATU
 He says sorry for treatment.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
 Now you understand him?

MATU

Not here before. His Nubian more today.

WITCH DOCTOR

(in Nubian)

I look at the hurt.

PRETZEL

What is he, the chief?

MATU

Like witch doctor, but yes, chief.

WAINWRIGHT

Tell him to let us go.

MATU

He wants to look at Fitzzy and Janey.

Backwoods goes back to Janey.

BACKWOODS

Look at them or finish them off?

The Witch Doctor goes to Fitzzy. Lifts up his head. Fitzzy moans, curls up in pain.

MATU

Alkhad.

The witch doctor stands, goes to Janey. He kneels down, reaches for her face. Backwoods blocks his hand away.

BACKWOODS

Don't touch her.

A couple Nubians rush up, shove their spears in her face.

PRETZEL

Might be a good idea to let him look at her.

Backwoods relents. The Witch Doctor lifts Janey's head, checks the pulse in her neck. He checks her bloodied leg.

WITCH DOCTOR

(in Nubian)

You bring demon.

MATU

They think we brought a demon.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
A demon? He's the demon.

MATU
(in Nubian)
We bring no demon. We seek
diamonds.

The Witch Doctor stands back up. Points at Backwoods.

WITCH DOCTOR
(in Nubian)
You go.

MATU
He says you go, Backwoods.

Backwoods looks at the witch doctor.

BACKWOODS
No. I don't go without my friends.

The Witch Doctor points again at Backwoods, then Pretzel,
Matu, Fitzzy, and Wainwright.

WITCH DOCTOR
(in Nubian)
Go. Go. Go. Go. Go.

MATU
He tells us 'go.'

Pretzel stands up.

PRETZEL
Great.

The witch doctor jabs his spear down towards Janey.

WITCH DOCTOR
(in Nubian)
This one stay.

MATU
He says, 'Janey stays.'

BACKWOODS
No way. We're taking her.

Backwoods wraps her arm around Janey.

PRETZEL
And what. Maybe they can help her.

BACKWOODS
 (to Matu)
 Tell them no.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
 We take her, she dies.

BACKWOODS
 Stay out of this. You don't care
 what happens to her anyway.

PRETZEL
 Back, they might be her best
 chance.

MATU
 We get her when mission over.

The witch doctor speaks again.

PRETZEL
 What did he say?

MATU
 He will help her.

Matu and Pretzel look at Backwoods.

EXT. BRICK STRUCTURE - LATER

The team, except Janey, stand in front of the Nubians. The
 witch doctor in front of his tribe.

Pretzel and Wainwright prop up a weak, semi-conscious Fitzzy
 between them.

Backwoods moves to the witch doctor. Stares into his face.

BACKWOODS
 We're coming back for her.

WITCH DOCTOR
 (in Nubian)
 Go.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
 Matu.

Matu cleaned up but his eye still swollen, looks over at him.
 Wainwright slightly lifts Fitzzy.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
See if they want to keep Princess
Charming here, too.

EXT. LIBYAN SAHARA DESERT - MORNING

The team makes its way across the vast desert with their two camels and supplies. Matu leads the camel that carries Fitzy.

BACKWOODS
I'm sick that we left her.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Sucks to be her.

BACKWOODS
You really are a selfish prick.

WAINWRIGHT
Live with someone long enough
you're gonna smell their crap.

BACKWOODS
What if it was you?

Wainwright spins on her.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Then leave me, too. We get paid to
gather hard data for this
corporation. And we only got a few
more days to do it. You signed the
contract. No data, no pay.

BACKWOODS
Don't mean I don't regret it.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Regrets are for old folks homes,
sweetheart.

BACKWOODS
Don't call me sweetheart. It's very
condescending.

PRETZEL
We had no choice.

BACKWOODS
You're with him?

Pretzel looks away. Backwoods marches away.

Wainwright sneers.

WAINWRIGHT
I miss Desert Storm.

MATU
Matu don't get.

PRETZEL
What?

MATU
Waw aman. They keep saying waw
aman.

PRETZEL
Wawman? What's wawman?

MATU
Not know. 'Waw' maybe from 'waha'.
Can mean mouth or throat. Aman is
Berber. Water. Mouth water?

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Maybe they thought your breath
stank and you needed mouth wash.

MATU
Captain tell joke.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Who's joking?

Captain walks away. Matu puts his hand to his mouth and
breathes out.

MATU
Matu no stink. Captain joke.

Matu and Pretzel follow behind them.

PRETZEL
Wawman? The mouth? Maybe they were
saying woman. They did say we
brought a demon.

Backwoods turns and stares daggers at Pretzel.

PRETZEL
Joking.

Pretzel runs up to Backwoods.

PRETZEL

It was a joke.

He tries to take her arm. She yanks it away.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

The team plods on. The sun rises higher. The dunes golden.

Wainwright carries the GPS. Backwoods, by herself, leads the camel with supplies on it. Pretzel walks with Matu and the other camel Fitzzy lies across.

SWOOSH!

Sand gusts in their faces. They cover up, put their heads down. Wainwright wraps the GPS.

PRETZEL

Ghibili?!

MATU

I think no. Something else.

On the horizon a monstrous sand storm appears. The wind blows even harder.

PRETZEL

Now what?

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Need cover!

MATU

Where?

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Bring the camels together. Get Fitzzy down.

PRETZEL

Pull out the tents.

They quickly pull the camels together. Lay Fitzzy behind them. The wind and sand grow fierce.

They rummage through the supplies, pull the tents and sleeping bags out, throw the tents over the camels.

A tent blows off one of them. The camel with the supplies runs. Pretzel starts for it.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Forget it!

They get down behind the last camel, cover themselves. The sand storm moves across them, envelopes them.

INT. BDC - HUMONGOUS TANK - DAY

Workers in BREATHER SUITS blow the piled up sand around the tank.

DOCTOR AHAB (O.S.)

How soon will the next breadcrumbs
be ready?

INT. AHAB'S OFFICE

ON SCREEN --

Major Quay.

Ahab sits in front of the large tank window. Visibility zero.

MAJOR QUAY

Scheduled to drop in five days.

DOCTOR AHAB

I said be ready?

MAJOR QUAY

It will take several days for that
sand storm to die down.

DR. AHAB

Micromite them tonight and drop
tomorrow.

Major Quay remains silent. Ahab stares at his reflection in the window.

DOCTOR AHAB

Hear it? It taunts me.

INT. QUAY'S SMALL OFFICE - SAME

A large two way window allows Quay to look into the Debriefing Room behind him.

A NEW TEAM of six enters with all their gear. They line up against the wall. BDC guards direct. Quay glances behind him.

MAJOR QUAY
More bait arriving as we speak,
Doctor.

He turns back to the screen. The silhouetted back of Ahab
overlooks the tank.

DOCTOR AHAB
Good. What of the MM's on the
current team?

MAJOR QUAY
They've already crossed ground
zero.

DOCTOR AHAB
And?

MAJOR QUAY
Janey Mark didn't terminate but her
vitals were weak. Then she went
off line.

DOCTOR AHAB
Why?

MAJOR QUAY
She must have gotten separated from
the others. We've learned after a
certain distance these new MM's are
not strong enough to transmit apart
from each other.

INT. AHAB'S OFFICE/QUAY'S OFFICE INTERCUT AS NEEDED

Anger flashes Ahab's his eyes. His voice drips vengeance.

DOCTOR AHAB
That demon needs to be on line
before it disappears for another
seven years, Major.

MAJOR QUAY
We get these micromites in it,
it'll have nowhere to hide.

DOCTOR AHAB
I can't take that chance. Send the
bait out every thirty six hours. No
more seven day separation.

MAJOR QUAY
 Recruiting is non-stop, Doctor.
 There'll be enough crumbs to lead
 it right to our door.

Ahab closes his eyes, drifts into his far away thoughts. He mumbles.

DOCTOR AHAB
 Nina.

MAJOR QUAY
 What money we'll make.

Ahab's eyes snap open.

DOCTOR AHAB
 That won't be good enough. We must
 get it inside.

MAJOR QUAY
 Of course.

DOCTOR AHAB
 I want those people eaten.

MAJOR QUAY
 So do I.

DOCTOR AHAB
 Abaddon.

Ahab reverses, rolls to the venus flytrap.

DR. AHAB
 Screen off.

The large screen blips off. Ahab stares down at the tiny carnivore.

DOCTOR AHAB
 I will never get back what you took
 from me all those years ago.

Ahab rubs his thighs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A YOUNGER Doctor Ahab(20s), rides a camel.

NINA (O.S.)
Lawrence, I haven't had a bath in
days.

YOUNG AHAB
Nina.

NINA(20s) rides a camel next to Ahab. Behind them a pack
camel.

NINA
This is supposed to be our
honeymoon. I should have known you
were married to your research.

Nina moves past him over a dune.

NINA
You can sleep with the camels
tonight, Lawrence.

YOUNG AHAB
Nina.

Ahab follows her over. Nina has stopped.

Ahab pulls along side her. They stare down the dune. At the
bottom, sparkling blue in the desert sun --

An OASIS.

Palm trees inviting. Nina smiles.

NINA
My blue diamond.

Nina grabs Ahab's hand, gives it a squeeze.

NINA
Lawrence, it's beautiful. You are
full of surprises.

YOUNG AHAB
I didn't...

NINA
My own oasis. So romantic you are.
Why didn't you say something?

Ahab stares at her dumbfounded.

NINA
Silly, me. Of course you couldn't.

She kisses him passionately.

NINA
I'm sorry I was short my love.

Ahab relents, smiles and gestures.

YOUNG AHAB
Your bath awaits, my lady.

OASIS

Nina and Young Ahab hold each other, float in the middle of the cool clear waters. They kiss passionately.

Their clothes lie on the ground. The camels stand nearby.

YOUNG AHAB
Nina. My research is *what* I am.
You make me *who* I am.

NINA
And you, me, my dearest.

YOUNG AHAB
Without you I'd only be half a man.

Nina laughs.

NINA
Don't be silly.

They gaze at each other for a long moment. The water, like glass, reflects the blue sky.

YOUNG AHAB
The others should be along shortly.

NINA
Will you retrieve my towel?

Young Ahab starts to swim away. Nina pulls him back, kisses him one last time before he exits the water.

He gets out, goes over to their clothes, slips on his pants. He looks back at Nina. She floats naked on top of the crystal clear water.

An incredibly beautiful vision. He smiles, then goes to a camel to get a towel.

RUMBLE!

The earth quakes. The camels flee. Ahab turns back towards his love.

YOUNG AHAB

Nina.

BACK TO:

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAY

The storm has passed. No sign of the team. The landscape has changed. Large sand dunes stand where there were none before the storm.

The sun high over head.

A lizard digs itself out. First sign of life. It pauses, wanders away.

The desert eerily still.

A FIST breaks out of the sand. Then an arm. Then Fitzy blasts out.

He runs across the desert helter-skelter, sheds his clothes as he goes. He sings at the top of his lungs.

FITZY

(sings)

*Everybody's workin' for the
weekend! Everybody's searchin' for
romance. Everybody's goin' off the
deep end!*

He falls down. Takes off his shredded pants.

The others dig out.

Backwoods and Pretzel go after Fitzy. Fitzy runs up a dune in his jockey shorts and boots.

FITZY

(sings)

*You wanna piece of my heart? You
got it right from the start.*

Wainwright unwraps his dart gun.

Matu laughs.

Backwoods and Pretzel chase Fitzy up the dune. Fitzy dances on the top of it. He sings, and kicks sand all over the place.

FITZY
 (sings)
*You wanna be in the show. C'mon
 baby lets go!*

Fitzy goes over the dune. Backwoods and Pretzel go over after him.

For a long moment...Silence.

Wainwright and Matu look at each other. Matu smiles a big smile, shrugs his shoulders.

MATU
 Desert madness.

FITZY (O.S.)
 (sings)
*Everybody's workin' for the
 weekend.*

Fitzy appears at the top of the dune, he dances.

FITZY
 (sings)
*Everybody's searchin' for romance!
 Everybody's goin' off the deep end!*

Wainwright takes aim at Fitzy, starts to squeeze the trigger.

Pretzel and Backwoods come over the dune and tackle him.

Wainwright holds, watches.

Fitzy struggles to crawl away.

FITZY
 Help! Demons! Help!

Backwoods cold cocks him.

EXT. GREEN VALLEY - DAY

Several Nubians untie an unconscious Janey, lift her above their heads, start down the dune towards the green valley.

The other Nubians on top of the dune CHANT and pound their spears.

NUBIANS
 Waw aman. Waw aman. Waw aman.

They carry Janey into the green circle, lay her down, spread eagle. Janey moans, stirs.

The Nubians pound stakes into the ground, tie Janey's wrists and ankles to them, then bolt back up the dune as fast as they can.

NUBIANS

Waw aman. Waw aman. Waw aman.

The Nubians rev up their chant.

The witch doctor steps forward, hands in the air. He lets out a shrill cry. The tribe stops their chant. Their spears continue a hypnotic drumming.

The witch doctor yells again.

Spears stop.

SILENCE.

All eyes focus on Janey.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DUSK

The team sits next to the supplies. They go through what little they have left. Everything full of sand.

Fitzy still out, but dressed.

Pretzel throws a shovel full of sand on a medium sized pile.

PRETZEL

One Camel dead. The other one took off with our food and water. Probably dead.

Matu bangs and shakes the GPS.

MATU

GPS dead.

Backwoods holds the stun gun.

BACKWOODS

Everything is ruined. One stun gun.

Wainwright holds up a canteen, shakes it.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

We have a canteen. We have water.

Fitzzy snores.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
And one nut job.

MATU
Finished.

Matu tosses the GPS onto the salvaged pile of sleeping bags and the last of the gear.

MATU
Not enough water to keep five people alive.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
But we are alive. That oasis was...

MATU
There is no oasis.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
The GPS indicated....

BACKWOODS
The GPS was wrong.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Well, we have to keep moving, finish the mission.

MATU
The mission. The mission. What can diamonds do for us if we cannot drink?

Pretzel finishes covering the camel, stabs the shovel in the ground.

PRETZEL
I don't even know what the hell we're doing out here. I was so caught up in our big pay day.

Wainwright grabs his sleeping bag, shakes it out.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
I'm going to complete this mission.

Backwoods gets up.

BACKWOODS

There's nothing to complete. This whole mission was a...a ruse...or something.

PRETZEL

But why? Why lie to us? Why go to all this trouble, fly us in, send us out, pay all this money.

MATU

I get no money.

BACKWOODS

Something stinks. I can't figure it. What about that guy that attacked Fitzzy wearing the same shirt as us. What was his story?

Silence.

BACKWOODS

And those baboons. The Anubis.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

So?

BACKWOODS

They're hundreds of miles from their natural habitat. They don't even belong on this side of the Libyan.

PRETZEL

Maybe they migrated.

BACKWOODS

Anubis rarely migrate. And what were they defending?

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

They weren't defending. They were attacking.

BACKWOODS

Even worse. Anubis don't attack unless they're provoked or feel threatened.

PRETZEL

We weren't threatening.

BACKWOODS

That's just it. Something scared them enough to leave their home and trek across the desert. And they were still so stirred up, they attacked us.

MATU

Not everything is as it seems.

BACKWOODS

Whatever.

Backwoods kicks at the ruined supplies. Walks away.

PRETZEL

Let's just get some sleep and...

Backwoods spins on him.

BACKWOODS

And what? Wake up tomorrow hungry, thirsty? Lost?

MATU

Dead?

PRETZEL

No one's dying, but, Captain is right.

BACKWOODS

Oh, yeah. I forgot. You're the good soldier. Captain is always right.

She turns away.

BACKWOODS

You just run along and follow his orders now.

Pretzel goes to her.

PRETZEL

Back. He's right. We're alive. We have a canteen. Some water.

He places his hand on her shoulder, turns her. She looks up at him, tears in her eyes.

BACKWOODS

All I wanted was to get my dad out of debt. Open my own lab.

PRETZEL
You can still do that.

She forces a nod.

PRETZEL
Maybe there is an oasis close by.

He pulls her in for a hug.

PRETZEL
Let's get some sleep. Look for it
in the morning.

They remain quiet as the darkness closes in on them.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - NIGHT

A campfire burns down.

Matu, Wainwright, and Fitzzy sleep apart next to the fire in their sleeping bags.

PRETZEL (O.S.)
So what's with the nickname?

Backwoods and Pretzel, share a sleeping bag, stare up at the stars.

BACKWOODS
You kidding? Hillbilly girl from Kentucky. Those Harvard stuck ups wouldn't let me forget where I came from. Especially when I finished top of the class.

PRETZEL
Why'd you keep it?

BACKWOODS
So I don't forget where I came from. All my life I always heard nothin' good comes from my home town. I wanted to be the first.

PRETZEL
I'd say you made it.

BACKWOODS
Yeah, on a one way ticket to the Libyan.

Silence takes up some space between them.

BACKWOODS

What about you? What's with Pretzel? Cause you're twisted?

PRETZEL

Ha! Nothing that interesting. When I was a kid, all my friends liked candy. Not me. I liked...

BACKWOODS

Pretzels.

PRETZEL

Told you it was boring.

BACKWOODS

Right about now I'll take a lot more boring.

Pretzel turns towards her.

PRETZEL

Boring is what I do best.

They cuddle closer.

EXT. GREEN VALLEY - DAY

Janey remains tied in the center of the valley. Eyes closed.

The Nubians stand stone still. Stare down at her. The ground quakes.

On the edges of the green grass, palm trees emerge. Crystal clear water fills the circle. The ropes on the stakes extend long enough to allow her to drift upwards. The water rises.

An OASIS emerges.

The sun glitters off the water. The ground quits shaking. The breeze dies.

The Witch Doctor holds up his spear. The other Nubians don't even blink.

For what seems like forever, Janey floats peacefully in the center, like she's in a backyard pool. Her body drifts around.

BUMP!

The skinned torso of Cole buried earlier, pops up against Janey. Her eyes jerk open, face to face with the corpse.

She shrieks and goes under. Thrashes against her bonds. Back up, she gasps.

The palms shift upwards, rise out of the ground, sand pours off of them. They close over her.

Janey's eyes bug wide.

She tries to wrench herself free, goes under again. Comes back up, gags.

Her last gasp.

The palms clasp across one another, cover Janey and Cole's dead torso. Blood, water, sand spill out the ends.

BLINK!

The flytrap like creature folds up like a flower.

ZIP!

It disappears from whence it came. No sign it was there, but for the swamped green valley. Even that soaks in quickly.

The Witch Doctor turns to his tribe, spear raised in triumph.

WITCH DOCTOR

Waw aman!

He lets out a high pitched yodel. The Nubians return his shout with their own.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAWN

Matu jerks awake, looks around.

MATU

Fitzy gone.

Matu jumps up. The others wake with a start.

MATU

Fitzy gone!

BACKWOODS

Fitzy?

They scan the horizon.

MATU

Fitzy!

Pretzel points across the desert.

PRETZEL
Tracks lead up that dune.

Wainwright jumps up, looks through the sleeping bags.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Son of a bitch made off with the
canteen.

MATU
What?

Wainwright wraps up his sleeping bag, stuffs the stun gun in
his belt.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
It's not here.

BACKWOODS
He wouldn't have just left us here
with no water.

PRETZEL
Maybe he didn't know it was our
last canteen. He was whacked.

MATU
(sarcastic)
Maybe.

PRETZEL
What?

MATU
I don't know him. I don't know
you.

Pretzel climbs out of his bag.

PRETZEL
What the hell are you talking
about?

They glare at one another. Wainwright follows after the
tracks.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
I'm gonna shove that camera so far
down his throat he'll win a
Pulitzer every time he shits.

The others wrap their own bags and chase after him.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

The sun starts to peak.

A sleeping bag has been dropped along the trail.

Farther up, another one. Still another close by. Finally, the forth one abandoned.

The team straggle out, one behind another. Their mouths dried, cracked. Faces badly sunburned, they barely move forward.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

The sun past its peak.

Pretzel struggles to the top of a short dune first. He stops, looks down to the bottom, drops to his knees.

He rasps.

PRETZEL

Fitzy.

The others join him. They can hardly stand, dehydrated, suffer from heat exhaustion. They look at what Pretzel sees.

Fitzy's boot prints end at the bottom.

Matu breaks down the dune, tumbles, staggers back up, continues to where the tracks end. He looks around, falls to his knees.

MATU

No. Fitzy must be here.

Matu presses his head in the dirt, lifts up.

MATU

Ground wet.

Matu looks around. He grabs a handful of sand, lifts it to the others.

MATU

Ground wet.

Matu digs.

Backwoods slumps next to Pretzel. Wainwright scans the horizon. Dunes in every direction.

WAINWRIGHT

Fitzzy!

His gravely voice echoes across the unforgiving sands.

Wainwright starts down towards Matu. Matu continues to dig.

THUMP!

He hits something. Digs faster.

A STRAP appears. Matu yanks it.

The canteen!

MATU

Ha!

He lifts the trophy high above his head.

Matu brings it back, wrenches it open, and starts to gulp down the water. Wainwright charges over to Matu, snatches the canteen, and swigs.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

The four huddle together, exhausted, but refreshed. The canteen between them.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Canteen was almost empty last night.

BACKWOODS

But where's Fitz? He just fills the canteen and disappears?

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Must be at the oasis. And he left that here to let us know. Keep us going.

MATU

But no more tracks.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

The wind could have erased them.

No one speaks for a long moment.

PRETZEL

Look. We know there's no oasis back the way we came.

If we split up, each take a dune,
one of us will spot it.

BACKWOODS
Or at least, Fitzzy.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAY

Each one climbs a dune. The canteen lies in the sand where they left it to come back to later.

DUSK

Each reaches the top of their dune. Nothing but more dunes.

No oasis.

No Fitzzy.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - NIGHT

Wainwright and Pretzel sit across from each other in the light of a full moon. The canteen between them.

Wainwright slips the stun gun out of his belt, wipes it with his shirt.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Four tours of Iraq. The first
desert storm, then the second Shock
and Awe campaign. What did I get?

He sets the gun next to the canteen.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
A bullet and a kick in the ass by
Uncle Sam.

PRETZEL
You took lead?

Matu stumbles up, collapses. Pretzel helps him get a drink.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Twice. Shoulder both times. I
could've bowed out, but hell, I
don't know what else to do but war.

BACKWOODS (O.S.)
How 'bout helping your fellow man,
instead of killing them.

Backwoods comes up, drops next to Pretzel.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Everyone deserves death.

Pretzel hands her the canteen.

BACKWOODS
Compassionate perspective.

She takes a gulp, closes it, tosses it next to the stun gun.

BACKWOODS
Guess we all saw the same thing.

MATU
I saw nothing.

Backwoods lies back.

BACKWOODS
Like I said.

MATU
My people have ancient saying. You cannot squeeze coconut milk from an orangutans butt.

BACKWOODS
I fail to see the connection.

PRETZEL
I did a tour in Afghanistan. Army.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
I wanted to go there, but they denied me. Screw 'em.

He lays back.

PRETZEL
Shoot. I was glad to get home in one piece. They asked me to re-enlist. I said *hells no*.

Pretzel picks up the stun gun, wipes it with his shirt.

PRETZEL
Then I saw the ad for this job. Figured this would be Disney compared to over there. And get rich, too? I said, *hells yeah!*

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

I'll finally get my just retirement
with this deal, buy a boat and
waste away in Miami. No more
deserts, just sky blue oceans.

BACKWOODS

Wonderful. Now you can kill the
manatee.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Ha! Guess as long as I get to kill
something.

Matu pushes himself up.

MATU

I will return home with the money.
Start a school for the children in
my village. Education will teach
them from poverty.

BACKWOODS

Now that's compassionate.

Wainwright feigns a cough.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Bullshit.

Backwoods shoots a disgusted look at Wainwright, puts her
hand on Matu's shoulder.

BACKWOODS

Hope you get that chance, Matu.

Matu nods, lays back. Pretzel puts the gun next to the
canteen and lies down.

PRETZEL

I don't know. Maybe I should'a
gone back to Afghanistan.

They go silent.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

The four sleep with their feet facing each other. Pretzel
opens his eyes, stares at the star filled sky.

A meteor streaks by. He points skyward.

PRETZEL
(whispers)
Meteor.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAWN

Matu stirs, wakes. He rolls to his knees, grabs the canteen. Shakes it, opens it, takes a small sip, recaps it.

He looks at the others, rubs his head, bends over, presses his forehead into the sand.

He pounds his fist, scrambles up, takes the canteen, the stun gun, and stumbles away.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - MORNING

The sun just up over the dunes.

Pretzel stirs awake, opens his eyes. The glare of the sun blinds him for a moment. He raises his head, puts his hand over his eyes, looks around at the others.

Backwoods and Wainwright still out. He looks over at Matu.

Mumbles.

PRETZEL
Matu?

Pretzel turns over, scans the dunes. He spots Matu half way up one of them. Then notices the canteen missing.

Pretzel jumps up.

PRETZEL
Son of a bitch.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

Matu continues to climb. He nears the top of the dune, stops, takes a swig from the canteen.

WHACK!

Pretzel tackles him. The canteen goes flying.

PRETZEL
Goin' somewhere?!

The water spills out of the canteen into the sand. Matu tries to crawl after it.

MATU
Matu try to help!

Pretzel slams Matu's head into the sand.

PRETZEL
Tries to help himself.

Matu turns over with Pretzel on top of him.

MATU
No!

Matu pulls the dart gun. Pretzel knocks it away, over the dune. Punches Matu in the face.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - SAME

Wainwright wakes up, only sees Backwoods. He looks around, spots Pretzel and Matu. They wrestle at the top of the dune.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
What the?

That wakes up Backwoods.

BACKWOODS
What?

Wainwright stumbles off.

BACKWOODS
What?

Backwoods jumps up, chases behind him.

EXT. TOP OF DUNE - CONTINUOUS

Matu, nose bleeding, flips Pretzel over the dune. Charges after him.

MATU
Matu try to...

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF DUNE

Matu halts. A surprised look crosses his face.

MATU

...Help.

Pretzel lies upside down on his back, faces up the dune. Matu looks past Pretzel down to the bottom of the dune.

Pretzel points the stun gun at Matu. Fires.

The dart lands in Matu's neck. He lurches forward, reaches out.

Pretzel keeps the gun aimed at him. Matu stops, collapses, tumbles. Pretzel rolls out of the way as Matu rolls past him.

Matu winds up sprawled out, positioned so he can see the bottom of the dune. The drug has paralyzed him. He can only move his eyes.

Pretzel staggers up, turns to look at Matu. His eyes grow wide. Now he sees what Matu was pointing at.

PRETZEL

Target Blue Diamond.

At the bottom of the dune, sits a beautiful oasis, perfectly round. The water stunningly blue, reflects the cloudless sky.

Stately palms with their rich green fronds sway in the breeze, beckoning. It sparkles like a blue diamond in a sea of eighteen carat golden sands.

Pretzel drops the dart gun, steps towards the oasis. He steps again. Quickens his pace, stumbles past Matu.

Wainwright crests the dune with the canteen in his hand. He shakes the last drops into his mouth.

Backwoods comes up behind him.

Wainwright looks down, drops the canteen to his side. Backwoods greedily grabs it. Wainwright releases it, mesmerized by the sight before him.

Pretzel reaches the oasis.

Wainwright starts down towards it.

Backwoods tries to work the last drops of water into her mouth. Nothing comes out. She tosses the canteen to the side. Barely able to stay stand, her eyes heavy, she looks down.

Blinks. Looks again. She pitches forward. As if hypnotized, Backwoods goes right past Matu without a glance.

Matu follows her with begging eyes.

Pretzel, on his hands and knees, gulps down the crystal clear water, douses his head and face.

Wainwright lunges past him, and right in. He goes under, comes back up.

Backwoods breaks into a run, dives in. She comes back up, takes a deep gulp, spins around. She throws her head back, lets out a refreshing gasp.

Pretzel dives in next to her. He comes up, faces her. She wraps her arms around his neck. They stare at each other, float there for a long moment.

They smile. Kiss.

Wainwright back strokes by them, spews water out like a fountain.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
How do you like my oasis?

They look at him.

PRETZEL
He was right.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
What was that?

Backwoods looks over at him.

BACKWOODS
Okay, you were right.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Hoo Ahh.

She turns back to Pretzel.

BACKWOODS
You know we can still finish the mission.

PRETZEL
How?

WAINWRIGHT
Oh, now you want to finish the mission.

Backwoods ignores him.

BACKWOODS

The Sahara is one of the most meteorite bombarded places on the earth.

PRETZEL

I saw one last night.

BACKWOODS

Ever hear of Libyan desert glass?

PRETZEL

Um...no.

BACKWOODS

It's a natural glass composed of nearly pure silica. Its unusual composition is a mystery.

PRETZEL

Like this whole mission.

BACKWOODS

Listen. Chemical analyses shows it is locally enriched in meteoritic elements, with typical chondritic proportions.

PRETZEL

Times out. Can you give me the simple dumb soldier version?

BACKWOODS

The only explanation for Libyan desert glass is that it results from a meteor crashing onto a silica-rich target.

Pretzel stares at her with a blank look. Captain Wainwright swims back by.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

She's trying to tell you camel hump, the heat from a meteorite crashing into the desert sands creates a glass found nowhere else in the world.

PRETZEL

Okay. Meteor...hyper chondrite... something or other.

BACKWOODS

Listen. The same way the desert glass is formed, diamonds are formed.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Pressure and heat.

Wainwright dives under.

BACKWOODS

But unlike the glass, diamonds are graphite, pure carbon.

Pretzel tries to follow, has a blank expression.

PRETZEL

Graphite. Carbon.

He ducks under the water. Backwoods yanks him back up by the hair.

BACKWOODS

Stay with me here.

Pretzel cozies up to her.

PRETZEL

I'm here, baby. I'm here.

She thumps him on the forehead.

BACKWOODS

Here. Stay with me here.

She thumps him again. He jerks back.

PRETZEL

Alright.

Wainwright comes back up.

BACKWOODS

Now, it's possible there may have been a large graphite deposit in our target area. If so...

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

(finishes the thought)

...the heat and impact from a meteor could've formed the graphite into...

He pauses.

PRETZEL BACKWOODS
Diamonds. Diamonds.

Wainwright swims up to them.

WAINWRIGHT
Blue Diamonds. The hottest part of
a flame is blue.

Backwoods nods.

BACKWOODS
Just like the desert glass being
singular in its chemical and
physical characteristics, the
diamonds formed by a meteor would
also be singular.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
Throw in instant cooling from a
subterranean water system.

PRETZEL
Or an oasis like this one? Which is
what they had us looking for.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
The boy just might be worth saving.

BACKWOODS
And it makes them the rarest gem
stones on the planet.

PRETZEL
Okay. So, let's say these blue
diamonds exist. How do we gather
the evidence having no equipment or
anything?

BACKWOODS
We look for graphite fragments.
Libyan desert glass fragments.

PRETZEL
Libyan desert glass.

BACKWOODS
Something to tell them a meteor hit
in this vicinity. Graphite
fragments would tell them diamond
formation could have happened.

PRETZEL

Even if...we can't get back, I mean...we can't make the journey back on one canteen.

WAINWRIGHT

We don't go back. We stay here next to the water, dig around for this evidence. After a few days, they may send out a search party.

PRETZEL

May. That's the operative word.

BACKWOODS

What happened to Private 'we're alive, we have water'?

Pretzel eyes her. Nods.

PRETZEL

Okay. What do we do?

WAINWRIGHT

Like your lady said, finish this mission.

Pretzel looks back and forth between them, unsure. Then ducks under.

Wainwright and Backwoods share a knowing smile for the first time. After a few seconds, Pretzel reemerges.

PRETZEL

Let's do it.

WAINWRIGHT

And if we find one of them blue diamonds, we keep it ourselves.

They look at each other for a long moment, nod and smile.

Backwoods glances at Matu, sprawled out on the side of the dune. He stares down at them. She loses her smile.

BACKWOODS

We should get him.

Pretzel follows her stare.

PRETZEL

He was just going to let us die.

BACKWOODS

I can't believe that. He was going home to help children for God's sake.

PRETZEL

Why did he sneak off with the canteen and the gun?

BACKWOODS

I don't know, but we can't let him lay there and die.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Where do you want him to die?

Backwoods rolls her eyes, starts to leave. Pretzel pulls her back.

PRETZEL

Okay. We'll get him. But let him sweat.

Wainwright swims away.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

Let him sweat.

Backwoods looks at Matu, then back at Pretzel.

PRETZEL

Twenty minutes.

Wainwright snorts.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

He's only temporarily paralyzed anyway.

PRETZEL

Besides, he knew this oasis was here.

BACKWOODS

How?

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT

That's the dune he climbed last night. He saw it and didn't tell us.

Backwoods glances at Matu, then back at Pretzel. She thinks a moment.

BACKWOODS

I climbed that dune last night.

Wainwright stops swimming. They float there for a moment, stare at one another with blank faces.

Then a realization.

BACKWOODS

This...oasis...wasn't here last night.

All at once the ground begins to shake. The water begins to ripple. The shadows of the palms slide across them.

Up the dune Matu's eyes grow wide.

Wainwright swims to the side and manages to fling himself out, but his arm gets stuck to a gooey type substance on the inside lip of the Oasis.

He struggles mightily, but can't break free.

Pretzel and Backwoods swim to the sides. Too late. Forced back into the middle, they get closed over. Grab each other.

SCREAM!

Matu watches in horror as the oasis folds over them like a large venus flytrap.

Backwoods and Pretzel disappear as the water gets sucked down.

Swallowed whole.

The palm trees clasp together. Water, blood and sand spill out.

Wainwright dangles outside the oasis' mouth, tries to wrench free. He lets out a horrible scream as his arm gets seared off.

He falls to the ground, rolls over and watches as the giant, other worldly creature towers above him. In great pain, he grips his jagged stub of an arm, instantly cauterized between his shoulder and elbow.

Wainwright forces himself up, careens away up a small dune. He stumbles, disappears over it.

The Oasis, stretched twenty feet in the air, withdraws backwards in a flash under the sands without a trace.

Matu lies helpless. Sweat pours down his face. His eyes squeezed tight, as if in desperate prayer.

For a few minutes everything goes quiet, until the ground begins to shift under him. His eyes scream wide with terror.

Out of the sands lift the palms. Up and up they go, line both sides of Matu. As they rise out of the desert floor, crystal clear water rushes in.

Matu begins to float. His paralyzed body turns slowly in the clear water.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF DUNE - CONTINUOUS

Wainwright pitches down the dune, falls, tumbles, scrambles back up. He sprints full speed away from certain death.

Adrenaline and fear push his pain away. He chugs across a wide open flat sandy plain.

EXT. BACK SIDE OF DUNE

The mouth of the Oasis closes over Matu. Water spills out, Matu goes with it. He barely escapes the closing palm like mandibles.

Matu crashes to the desert floor, sprawled out, still paralyzed from the dart...but...*ALIVE!*

He lies chest down in the sand, face sideways, he stares up at the primeval monster. He clings to consciousness, watches the impossible beast go up, up, up, eclipsing the sun.

The behemoth stretches high over the desert floor, reveals a long glistening white body.

Four to five stories it rises. All at once it U-turns down towards the ground at an incredible speed.

Matu squeezes his eyes shut as it bears down on him.

FWWETTHHHHH!

With almost no sound, the oasis looking creature twists its head, screw like, bores into the golden sands, hardly kicks up a cloud of dust.

Like lightning, it disappears without a trace.

Matu opens his eyes. An eerie stillness pervades the desert.

Matu...

...Loses...

.....Consciousness.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF DUNE - CONTINUOUS

Wainwright continues to chug like an out of control locomotive. Thirty, forty, fifty yards from the small dune that stands between him and the ancient leviathan.

Wainwright dares not look back. His mouth gapes open, lungs scream for oxygen, he gasps for air.

CRASH!

The creature EXPLODES through the small dune and dives down into the sands.

Two quick powerful leaps in and out of the golden powder, effortless as a dolphin leaps through the water, the freak of nature easily makes up the distance between them.

Wainwright strains forward. The long dark shadow crawls past him.

His legs, like lead, no longer able to churn. He falls, flips onto his back, flails backwards with his one good arm.

Finally, his good arm gives out and he kicks futilely in the sand, going nowhere.

The giant mouth of the creature opens wide, multiple rows of serrated teeth disappear down it's deep dark cavernous throat.

Wainwright quits. Stares up. Beaten.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT
I deserve this.

Oasis descends on him, gulps him down, disappears into the sands.

EXT. LIBYAN SAHARA DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Matu lies unconscious.

MAJOR QUAY (V.O.)
Doctor. The MM's have returned new patterns.

A partially buried canteen and dart gun lie nearby. The desert wind blows the fine sand, covers them.

EXT. BLUE DIAMOND FACILITY - DAY

Out of the desert floor a small angular building emerges.

DOCTOR AHAB (V.O.)

Yes?

A three vehicle convoy drives out while a second convoy drives in.

INT. BLUE DIAMOND FACILITY - DEBRIEFING ROOM - SAME

The caravan drives off the lift.

MAJOR QUAY (V.O.)

Two are unaccounted for, but three are successfully integrated.

BDC Guards stand by.

DOCTOR AHAB (V.O.)

Are you sure? So many failures before.

INT. AHAB'S OFFICE - SAME

Quay on SCREEN.

MAJOR QUAY

It's confirmed. A full Bio scan should be on line shortly.

Ahab sits silent for a moment. Quay waits.

DOCTOR AHAB

Open tank window.

CREAK. A large metal wall retracts. The outside light blares into the room. Ahab squints.

DOCTOR AHAB

Dim down.

The thick plexiglass window darkens, dims the light. Ahab opens his eyes. He holds the small venus flytrap on his lap, in its terrarium.

DOCTOR AHAB
I have worked many years for this.

MAJOR QUAY
Yes, Doctor.

Ahab looks down into the large tank.

DOCTOR AHAB
The tank is on schedule?

MAJOR QUAY
Yes, sir.

DOCTOR AHAB
Be sure those doors close securely.
Once we lure it in, we can't afford
any escape.

MAJOR QUAY
That creature's not getting out.
You can be sure.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

DOCTOR AHAB (V.O.)
I am only sure of one thing.

Nina, in the midst of the Oasis, panicked, reaches out
towards Young Ahab.

NINA
Lawrence!

The palms rise out of the ground.

Ahab rushes back to the closing oasis, dives in to save her.

Nina SCREAMS as the Oasis clasps over them. Water rushes out
of the mouth. Ahab spills out with it. He grabs one of the
palms, keeps himself from falling out altogether.

His legs get stuck on the lip of the creature's mouth.

The Oasis rises up out of the sands.

Ahab ROARS in pain. His legs get seared off, he dangles from
the palm.

YOUNG AHAB
Nina.

He loses his grip, falls to the desert floor as the ivory titan continues to rise above him.

Ahab lays splayed on the ground, helpless. His legs cauterized by the acid from the creatures mouth.

He writhes in the shadow of the ancient beast.

YOUNG AHAB

Take me!

The creature opens its mouth, revealing his beloved Nina, stuck to one side of it. Her skin burned off her body. She lets out a torturous scream.

The creature twists its head into a cone, nose dives down, and bypasses Ahab into the fine powdery sands.

Creature gone. Nina gone.

Pain screws Young Ahab's face. He sputters.

YOUNG AHAB

Take me.

Then passes out.

Several NOMADS on camels rush over the dune.

BACK TO:

INT. AHAB'S OFFICE - PRESENT

Ahab opens his eyes. They are teary and red. Rage flashes. He peers down at the little flytrap.

DOCTOR AHAB

Oh, the simple pleasure I will take...

He pinches one side of the flytrap leaf, gently tears it apart from the stem.

DOCTOR AHAB

Finding out...

He rips the plant out of the soil, puts it to his ear, twists the life out of it.

DOCTOR AHAB

If you can *scream*.

Ahab smashes the mangled plant against the window with his palm, crushes it back and forth.

He notices himself in the window reflection. Allows a vengeful smile.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAY

A beetle makes its way across the golden sands. Gets blasted out of the way when a white bone breaks through the desert floor.

The bone disappears. Then reappears with a flurry of chisel movements. Sand scatters in every direction.

A head pokes through the hole.

FITZY!

He spits out dirt, blinks in the sunlight.

FITZY
When in doubt....dig.

He looks around.

FITZY
Hello? Anyone?

He waits a moment. No answer.

FITZY
They've abandoned Fitzzy.

He thrusts his hand out of the sands, holds up a large bluish uncut diamond. The sun barely shines through it.

FITZY
Target Blue Diamond!

He smiles a victorious smile.

FHLAAAP!

A stream of brown sludge descends onto the diamond, covers it, runs down his arm.

The BDC camel that bolted away with the water and food tied to it before the sand storm stands over him.

It just took a dump. Fitzzy takes a whiff.

FITZY
Craptacular.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - LATER

Fitzy rides across the desert on the camel. He tucks the blue diamond in his waist band.

Up ahead Fitzy spots a dark object partially covered by the sands. He cautiously approaches, then recognizes it.

Fitzy climbs off the camel, grabs a canteen and hurries over.

FITZY
Matu you Nubian...

His voice trails off. Matu still unconscious. Fitzy turns him over, checks his pulse.

He pours water in his hand and splashes Matu's head and face. Matu jerks awake, knocks Fitzy back, lets out a loud scream.

MATU
Waw aman!

FITZY
Matu, easy. It's Fitzy.

Matu gathers himself, looks around in disbelief.

MATU
Waw aman...Matu not dead?

FITZY
Not that I can see.

MATU
Matu not dead!

Matu grabs Fitzy in. Bear hugs him.

MATU
Fitzy, bastard.

FITZY
Not breathing.

INT. BDC MONITOR ROOM - DAY

Torrence looks at the monitor. Three lights pop up on the screen.

A map charts where they come from, along with a read out of Fitzzy, Matu, and the camel's BIO's.

TORRENCE
Major Quay.

Major Quay PIPs up on the screen.

MAJOR QUAY
Report.

TORRENCE
Fitzgerald, Feetah, and a camel
just came on line, sir.

MAJOR QUAY
Readings?

TORRENCE
Normal.

MAJOR QUAY
Where?

TORRENCE
Twenty kilometers North of Al
Kufrah.

INT. MAJOR QUAY'S ROOM - SAME

Major Quay goes to a locker, takes out a BDC vest with ammunition attached. He snags a gun from the shelf.

MAJOR QUAY
Prep a copter.

TORRENCE (O.S.)
Yes, Major.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DAY

Fitzzy and Matu on the camel. Matu sits behind him, sips from a canteen.

FITZY
The show will be called, *Naturally
Fitzzy*.

The camel responds with a raspberry.

FITZY
Was I talkin' to you? See this?

Fitzy takes the bone out from his belt, flashes it a couple of times towards the camel.

FITZY

I did that to your cousin when he gave me attitude. It's his ass bone. You don't want to be whacked with your cousin's bleached ass bone, I know. And I was goin' to use you in my first episode. 'In Search of the Man Eating Oasis of the Libyan Sahara.'

Fitzy holds the bone up for Matu to see.

FITZY

(imitates Matu)

Make good scorpion smasher.

Fitzy swings it down. Matu laughs, nods.

MATU

And good digger.

Fitzy laughs.

EXT. LIBYAN DESERT - DUSK

Fitzy and Matu continue across the desert. Matu hands him the canteen. He takes a gulp.

As the sun goes down, the silhouette of a small TOWN appears in the distance. Matu spots it, points. Fitzy wipes his mouth.

FITZY

Oh, yeah.

Fitzy turns the camel around, yells.

FITZY

Get this, Oasis, cucumber monster!
Matu, and Fitzy shall return!

MATU

We shall?

FITZY

We're a team now Matu. That thing ate our friends. It almost ate us. It's gotta pay.

Fitzy turns the camel back towards the town.

FITZY
Are you in?

MATU
That's a very, very bad cucumber.

Fitzzy chuckles, urges the camel towards the town.

FITZY
Besides. We have to go back and
get Janey. Let's get to that town,
call BDC and tell them where we're
at.

He starts singing as he rides into nightfall.

FITZY
(sings)
*Come Mister Tally Man, tally me
Bananas! Sun goin' down and me
wanna go home!*

The camel grunts in protest.

FITZY
(sings louder)
*Dayo! Daaayo! Daylight come and me
wanna go home.*

EXT. LIBYAN SAHARA DESERT - RIBIANA SAND SEA - DAY

Across the desert, from high above, the sand looks like a
corduroy pattern of eighteen karat gold.

The beat of a helicopter accompanied by its shadow flies by.

EXT. LIBYAN SAHARA DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

A BDC helicopter makes its way in the bright blue desert sky.
A small town on the horizon in front of it.

MAJOR QUAY (O.S.)
Approaching Al Kufrah. Touchdown
in ten minutes.

INT. COPTER - MOVING

Quay a passenger in the craft.

MAJOR QUAY
Prepare to initiate Operation...

He pops a clip in a pistol.

MAJOR QUAY
...Toasted breadcrumbs.

EXT. DESERT

The Copter flies on towards the town.

Below, a lonely fox, a Fenec, makes its way just over a dune.

At the bottom of the dune, a small beautiful shimmering oasis, about the size of a child's plastic pool. Short palms stand guard in the stifling air.

The Fenec stops, spots the round body of water. Pads down and over to drink. It vigorously laps up the clear cool water.

SNAP!

A mere blink, the palms close, swallow the small critter. The baby oasis disappears under the sands.

A moment passes.

A slight breeze blows the surface sand, covers where the fenec and oasis just were.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. FRATERNITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A bunch of GUYS lounge around studying.

GUY 1 (O.S.)
Hey!

They all look up. GUY 1 stands at the doorway, holds out a paper.

GUY 1
Figured out how we're getting the money for our renovation.

He pauses. Smiles.

GUY 1
We're going to the Libyan Sahara for spring break.

CUT TO BLACK.