

ALIEN SAFARI

by

Tom Firestone & Martin Meunier

Deck Link

tomfirestone@gmail.com

FADE IN:

Shadows of unseen WILDLIFE dart behind a curtain of amber fog.

SCREEN TEXT:

Man and nature belong together in their created glory, in their tragedy, and in their salvation. - Paul Tillich

A sudden BLAST OF HEAT splits an opening in the fog, exposing an unearthly marsh bathed in an orange hue with pools of gelatinous fluid resembling blood.

EXT. MARSH - DAY

Floating over the marsh is a Hover-Tank. It resembles a Humvee. Printed on the hull is: "ACKLOYD'S ARMS & AMMUNITION."

HOVER-TANK

SCARLETT and AIDEN ACKLOYD (both 30) are standing on the observation deck. They're wearing orange camouflage.

SCARLETT

I can't see a damn thing in this fog!

AIDEN

(to someone off-screen)

Yeah, man, this sucks.

Sitting at the rear of the deck, also dressed in orange camouflage, is EDDIE WESSON (30s). Eddie is a contemplative-looking man.

An embroidered COMPANY LOGO PATCH on the breast of his camo suit reads "EDDIE WESSON - GUIDE - INTERWORLD SAFARI." The LOGO is the head of a devilish GAZELLE-LIKE creature but with THREE HORNS. Crosshairs are locked on its face.

Eddie's preoccupied face suggests he's elsewhere, maybe on another planet.

EDDIE'S POV - AR-LENSES

On a VIRTUAL SCREEN, suspended in front of Eddie, a stereoscopic recording shows him WRESTLING IN THE SNOW with an animal resembling an adult WHITE-HAIRED LEOPARD with LUMINOUS BLUE EYES.

With Eddie's white uniform and the Snow Leopard's bleached hide, they resemble two ghosts in a playful dance.

To the right of the screen are THUMBNAILS of other captured memories with a multitude of extraterrestrial wildlife. Surrounding READ-OUTS display information such as the planet, species, age, natural habitat, etc.

These are AUGMENTED REALITY CONTACT LENSES.

AIDEN (O.S.)

Hey, dude. You here, or what?

Eddie HAND GESTURES, and the screen and thumbnails are minimized into icons on a virtual dock.

BACK TO SCENE:

Eddie rises slowly as if some invisible anchor were weighing him down. A modified FILM CAMERA hangs from his neck. Around Eddie's waist is a utility belt, equipped with half a dozen unfamiliar instruments.

EDDIE'S POV - AR-LENSES

Eddie HAND GESTURES and a 3D TERRAIN APPEARS. The fog turns into a POINT-CLOUD of data-pixels - "Density Analysis Underway."

3D MARKERS MATERIALIZE from the wireframe terrain displaying ground PERIMETERS and HAZARDS.

Another hand gesture...

A MOTION GRAPHICS OVERLAY assesses the surroundings.

From behind the fog, the silhouette of a CREATURE the size of an overly-sized RHINO struts, unsuspecting of its hunters.

A wireframe swiftly wraps around the silhouette, defining it in three dimensions.

The following readout types on screen:

SCREEN TEXT:

FEMALE HERBIVORE - STARHIDE RHINOX - XION SPECIES

FOG DISSIPATES IN 16 MINUTES

AIDEN (CONT'D)
RIFLE, load heavy impact round 1.3!

A red shell sinks into the ammo-casing with a *KA-CHINK*.

EDDIE
HOLD! That ammunition is prohibited for
this species!

SCARLETT
Great choice, sweetheart. But I prefer
my Nanos. RIFLE, load Nano-Bolts!

EDDIE
And Nano-Bolts are prohibited!

A yellow shell LOADS.

Husband and wife lock eyes and smile.

SCARLETT	AIDEN
TROPHY TIME!	TROPHY TIME!

EXT. MARSH - CONTINUOUS

Aiden fires off a shot first. A deafening *WHANG* sends the female Starhide Rhinox flying back through the fog, splitting an opening in the mist. It lands with a *THUD*, sending shockwaves through the fog.

HOVER-TANK

Eddie grabs Aiden's rifle and forces it down. Scarlett, backs off, holding hers tight. No one touches her guns.

An agonizing *WHINE* echoes through the marsh.

They turn to face the fog...

MARSH

The animal is on its feet already, staggering, dying. Its semi-circle plate has been blown off and it's bleeding heavily from the head.

Pitifully, the animal lurches forward in an effort to attack, but it collapses to the mud with a blood-chilling *SQUEAL*.

HOVER-TANK

Eddie's expression slumps to shame, followed by anger. He watches the Starhide Rhinox slowly sink into the swamp.

EDDIE
 Hope it was worth it. Ammunition penalties are steep.

AIDEN
 Just bag it, man!

Eddie shoots Aiden a look that forces the hunter to take a step back.

They drift over to the dead Starhide Rhinox. Scarlett's eyes go wide with joy as she admires the beauty of their trophy.

AIDEN (CONT'D)
 Happy one-year anniversary, babe.

Aiden pulls his wife close and they make out like newlyweds.

SCARLETT
 I love hunting with you.

Eddie jumps off the deck, landing with a *SPLASH*. He kneels beside the animal and closes her vacant eyes with both hands.

SCARLETT (CONT'D)
 Out with the old...

AIDEN
 ...In with the clones.

MARSH

Eddie looks at them with disgust.

The stern of the tank opens to reveal a humanoid Loader Robot holding a steel cable, FRED.

Fred's skin appears to be made of silver toothpicks that continually shift, making some inner calibration. With each shift, his skin emits a tight *RATTLE*.

Fred wraps the cable around the Starhide Rhinox's hooves and drags it into the tank's stern.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOVER-TANK - LATER

The sun has started to set, causing a forest fire-like haze to settle on the marsh. But it's exceedingly wet here.

Scarlett and Aiden sit close, his arm around her shoulder.

SCARLETT
(smiling)
We're killing it, babe.

Like the first time, a sudden *GRUNTING* is heard from behind the dense mist, this one with conviction.

A SECOND STARHIDE RHINOX appears twice the size of the first.

The Starhide Rhinox CHARGES toward the Hover-Tank.

It CONNECTS!

MARSH

Four tons of alien muscle crumple the tank's stern and PUSH it into a bank of trees. The Ackloyds are THROWN FROM THE DECK and land in the red mud.

Their trophy tumbles out of the busted cargo hold, almost crushing Eddie.

The crumpled vessel - now jammed on a near-vertical axis - is spitting blood-like mud everywhere with its hover engines. Soaked in the red muck, Aiden flounders to his feet...

Aiden locates his gun - it's now detached from the robotic arm and sticking out of the marsh like a bloody spear.

INSERT: AMMO-CASING

A RED BEATLE the size of a golf ball is stuck inside the ammo-casing, trying to escape.

BACK TO SCENE:

Aiden grabs his rifle.

The Starhide Rhinox sniffs its dead mate. Confusion turns to sorrow with an *EAR-PIERCING WAIL*.

Scarlett urgently and awkwardly makes it to her feet, weighed down by the heavy mud.

AIDEN

Are you ok?

SCARLETT

Kill it, or give me the rifle!

BACK TO SCENE:

Eddie and the Ackloyds are separated by an embankment.

EDDIE

HEAD FOR THE TREES! I'm callin' the shuttle.

Aiden steadies his weapon and LOCKS ON.

AIDEN

RIFLE, load Explo-Pierce 5.0. Six-foot penetration.

(excited)

No! Rifle! Load LIQUEFIER!

INSERT: AMMO-CASING

A blue LIQUEFIER round SINKS into the ammo-casing and butts up against the Beagle, causing an obstruction.

BACK TO SCENE:

Without hesitation, Eddie pulls out a GADGET from his utility belt. It resembles a car alarm clicker. He aims it at Aiden's rifle and *CLICKS*... Nothing. *CLICK*. Nothing.

EDDIE'S POV - AR-LENSES

Readouts appear above Aiden's rifle:

WEAPONS-BLOCK: DISABLED

TERMINATE HUNT IMMEDIATELY

BACK TO SCENE:

AIDEN

Sorry, Guide, your "Weapons-Block" is useless on our rifles.

SCARLETT

All weapons work at "Ackloyd's Arms and Ammunition."

Suddenly, a *SONIC YELP* emits from Aiden's rifle. He gives the barrel a whack and the noise is gone.

EDDIE

Don't do it.

The Starhide Rhinox lets out a *LOUD WHISTLE*. It kicks up its front legs, rearing at the trio.

Aiden's weapon emits that annoying *SONIC YELP* again and it won't stop.

Instinctively, Scarlett *REACHES OUT* to stop it somehow, but *SLIPS* and *FALLS INTO HER HUSBAND*, sending both to the swamp. Aiden's rifle drops into the thick mud.

They quickly look at each other. *Is this it?*

Eddie takes a position, unable to help them.

The Starhide Rhinox *CHARGES!* Its speed is incredible.

Aiden makes one final attempt to retrieve the *YELPING* rifle. He snatches it and erratically lines up his target.

INSERT: AMMO-CASING

The red Beetle is pinned inside, preventing the Liquifier round from sinking into the gun chamber.

BACK TO SCENE:

Aiden *FIRES!*

Instantaneously, a *SHOCKWAVE EXPLODES* into a ball of blue flames. The Ackloyds stare at the *BUBBLING FIREBALL* in fear. It's over. The couple desperately reach for each other when...

Everything within a 10ft *SPHERICAL RADIUS* of the rifle, including the Ackloyds, *LIQUEFIES*, and *EXPLODES* like a giant water balloon.

The charging Starhide Rhinox hits the brakes, but is sprayed with the Ackloyd's remains - just more mud to this animal.

It's confused by the disappearance of its prey.

The angered Starhide Rhinox GOES FOR EDDIE!

Eddie hits a button on his utility belt and RUNS FOR HIS LIFE!

As the Starhide Rhinox catches up with Eddie, Fred emerges from the drowning Hover-Tank. Covered in red mud, he looks like a skinless man.

The Starhide Rhinox TRAMPLES Fred. Sparks fly. Fred's reduced to a twisted human form as he sinks into the marsh.

The Hover-Tank EXPLODES. The blast throws Eddie to the ground.

EDDIE'S POV - AR-LENSES

The Starhide Rhinox is outlined by an inferno. It's heading straight for him - a sight from Hell itself.

BACK TO SCENE:

Eddie gets up and RUNS! THE STARHIDE RHINOX IS ON HIS TAIL.

EDDIE LEAPS, reaches out with both hands for...NOTHING.

Suddenly, the haze is split by a clear-blue HOLOGRAM LADDER. He manages to catch the last rung and it becomes SOLID.

Eddie is lifted to safety as the ladder retracts into the belly of a compact Interworld Safari Shuttle.

The Starhide Rhinox whines furiously at its escaping prey. After a beat, it turns back, vanishing into the rolling fog.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie's shuttle rips across the stars, leaving the foggy planet behind.

Eddie's shuttle approaches a large metallic TUNNEL suspended in space: An Interworld SPACE-TUNNEL.

Eddie's shuttle enters the mouth of the large tube.

INT. SPACE-TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Lights FLICKER ON, illuminating the tunnel's interior.

As the shuttle nears the end of the tunnel, a MIRROR IMAGE of its DESTINATION - light-years away - APPEARS against the blackness of space like a window reflection at night.

The shuttle vanishes into the mirror image...

CUT TO:

EXT. INTERWORLD SAFARI TERMINAL - SPACE

A giant translucent blue sphere encapsulates a gathering of small space stations.

Slowly rotating around the sphere, is a holographic sign that reads: *WELCOME TO INTERWORLD SAFARI.*

MULTIPLE DOCKING PLATFORMS are crowded with Interworld Shuttles and a small army of HUNTERS lugging their ARSENALS, some with OTHERWORLDLY TROPHIES in tow.

This is the "Grand Central Station" of Interworld Safari.

A dozen SPACE-TUNNELS create a ring around the inner wall of the sphere like spokes on a wheel.

Eddie's craft emerges from a tunnel and approaches a small space station. He lands on the roof.

INT. INTERWORLD SAFARI TERMINAL - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Caked in dried mud, appearing to be covered in dry blood, Eddie makes his way down an airport-like corridor. He draws the attention of some who look at him strangely.

Lining a stretch of the corridor are PROTESTORS wearing colorful MASKS that resemble ANIMAL FACES. Most are unrecognizable extraterrestrial animal faces.

A large HOLOGRAPHIC BANNER hovers over their heads. It reads: "THE WILD WILL WIN."

One of them steps up to Eddie and keeps pace. This member of "The Masked" wears a mask resembling a BLONDE WOLF.

BLONDE WOLF

What's wrong with the clones, Guide?

Eddie ignores him and continues on his way, entering a dimly lit corridor. Interworld commercials depicting alien worlds, incredible wildlife, and heavily armed hunters play on suspended holographic screens throughout.

A graceful voiceover echoes in the passageway:

WOMAN (V.O.)

...Preserving every planet's ecosystem is Interworld's NUMBER ONE priority. Scouts and Guides uphold the highest standards for safety and environmental balance. Our proprietary replication process enables Interworld customers the opportunity to experience these wonders of the universe FIRSTHAND and GUILT FREE, all while retaining the inhabitants' native populations with Eco-Clones.

(upbeat)

Safaris are selling out FAST, so book yours today for a chance to bring home an OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD trophy!

The commercial concludes with a graphic of the company logo - the Three-Horned Gazelle and its tagline: "INTERWORLD SAFARI: EXTINCTION IS A THING OF THE PAST."

INT. THE SWILL & GRILL - MOMENTS LATER

A DOZEN SAFARI GUIDES, all wearing Interworld Safari gear, mingle about - swapping stories - each looking entirely different. Their camo colors range from jungle green to desert red, canary yellow, sky blue, reflective, translucent, and pitch black.

Eddie enters the crowded pub. A FEMALE PATRON immediately greets him in a hurry out the door.

FEMALE PATRON

Hey stranger, your sister's been waiting for you. I have to go, but next time, I want to see your pictures, too!

In an instant, the Female Patron is gone.

The tapered bar is made of glass and doubles as a holding tank for an indigo-blue-colored spider the size of a house cat.

Behind the transparent bar, hustling to pour drinks, is a light-footed woman with spunk, EMILY WESSON (30s) - Eddie's younger sister and expert bartender. Her pleasing face lights up the second she spots Eddie.

Eddie takes a seat and removes a THIN BLACK SQUARE the size of a drink coaster from his cargo jacket and drops it on the bar.

EMILY

It's great to see you, Eddie.
 (smirking)
 It's only been a month, you know.

EDDIE

Yeah, it's been one safari after
 another. Hard to catch a breath.

Emily wipes her hands on a towel, her eyes not leaving her brother. She gently picks up the black square device and pinches a corner.

INSERT: BLACK SQUARE

Breathtaking pictures of Eddie's safaris flicker to life - vast landscapes, strange and beautiful creatures, all captured with a stunning eye for detail.

We land on the SNOW LEOPARD. Its luminous blue eyes peering into the camera stoically.

BACK TO SCENE:

EMILY

Beautiful shots. Really, Eddie.
 (curious)
 How is she? I'll never get over those eyes!

EDDIE

(absent)
 She's good.

A beat of silence hangs between them. Emily notices Eddie's distant expression; his gaze fixed on the shot glass.

EMILY

Eddie?

Staring at his shot glass.

EDDIE

These two idiots...they were out of their fucking minds.

EMILY

Eddie, I thought you were gonna quit after Scouting. That was last month. What happened? Can you go back to that? Studying ecosystems and wildlife?

EDDIE

(resigned)

Doesn't work like that. Scout contracts are one year, and then you're a Guide.

EMILY

So why haven't you quit?

EDDIE

Soon.

(beat)

There's something I have to do first.

Emily narrows her eyes, reading her brother like a book. She leans in, making sure he knows she's serious.

EMILY

I think we both know what your hang-up is, Eddie.

She holds up the black square, the image of the Snow Leopard still lingering, and waves it gently in front of him.

EMILY (CONT'D)

You love these animals.

Looking down, Eddie struggles with his emotions.

EDDIE

I just spent a year with them.

EMILY

I know. You've grown close to them. I understand.

She softens, trying to reach the heart of the matter.

EMILY (CONT'D)

But Eddie, maybe you need to let go for your own sanity.

She reaches across the bar, taking his hand in both of hers, grounding him with her touch.

EMILY (CONT'D)

(wholeheartedly)

You can't save 'em, Eddie. I know you want to...but this is torture for you. You're carrying this burden that isn't yours to bear.

Eddie looks up at her, his eyes revealing the turmoil within.

EDDIE

This is all fucked up, Em.

Emily squeezes his hand, offering what comfort she can.

EMILY

(wholehearted)

I hate to see you like this. But you
have to make peace with it. You have to
find a way to move forward.

She reaches under the bar, grabs two shot glasses, and places them in front of Eddie. She pours the shots slowly, deliberately, giving him time to process.

Eddie looks up from the shot glasses, not at his sister, but at a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH hanging behind her. Emily follows Eddie's eye-line to the photo.

INSERT: FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH

Dawn, outside an OLD-FASHIONED TENT, nestled in the bush of Kenya, East Africa.

Standing in front of the tent is a STOIC MAN with his arms around his two children, EDDIE (14) and EMILY (10). The trio wear safari attire. A five-year-old BEAGLE attentively sits by Eddie's side, MAX. A pride of their own. Happy.

BACK TO SCENE:

Not taking his eyes off the photo, Eddie raises his shot glass.

Emily raises her shot glass.

A sudden sadness on their faces as they look each other in the eyes and drink their shots in remembrance.

Emily pours another round.

Hearing "BREAKING NEWS," Eddie looks up.

INSERT: WIDESCREEN HOLO-ARRAY

A NEWS CORRESPONDENT stands among a crowd of The Masked.

NEWS CORRESPONDENT

We are live outside Interworld Safari's headquarters in Santa Monica as hundreds gather to protest its suspected crimes against nature.

A MASKED PROTESTOR shoves aside the News Correspondent.

MASKED PROTESTOR

The wild will win!

(chanting)

The wild will win!

(beat)

The wild will win!

The Masked Protestor runs off to rejoin his herd.

CUT TO:

A female NEWS ANCHOR is situated behind her desk. Emotionless, she shuffles through her cue sheets.

CUT TO:

An AERIAL CLIP OF PHILIPPE DELATOUR stepping out of a hovering limousine and into his beachside mansion.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

Three years after the formation of Interworld Safari, Eco-Cloner Philippe Delatour, the third wealthiest man on the planet, still struggles to convince everyone that his safaris are based on the preservation of these ecosystems and their wildlife.

CUT TO:

Hundreds of The Masked march down Santa Monica Boulevard towards the Interworld Cloneyard.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

There is a growing number who think otherwise, that these newly discovered worlds are being harmed by Interworld.

(beat)

They believe the truth about the Eco-Clones' true fate is being suppressed. They declare the tech flawed, that something is wrong with it. However, Interworld has satisfied every audit since its inception.

(beat)

(MORE)

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

With the discovery of new planets increasing, it's hard to see Interworld slowing down anytime soon. Yet, the morality of hunting for sport on these new worlds is in question.

The News Anchor pauses to listen to her earpiece.

NEWS ANCHOR

In other important news regarding Interworld Safari, two avid hunters, Scarlett and Aiden Ackloyd of "Ackloyd's Arms & Ammunition, have died in a hunting accident on Planet 8. This is the fourth time in three years that--

BACK TO SCENE:

A HAND lands on Eddie's shoulder with force. Standing behind him is NAOMI ORTIZ (30s). She has resting killer face. Naomi's wearing a black camo outfit with a rifle slung on her back and a holstered pistol.

Eddie turns. Naomi UPPERCUTS him - sending Eddie crashing into the glass bar. It *SHATTERS*. The blue spider tumbles free.

NAOMI

That's for the Ackloyds. They were REGULARS, fucknut. MY regulars! Now I'm out two hunters and their tips, which were substantial. Not that you would know. I'm sure you're a goodie two shoes who doesn't go off Territory--

Emily aims her fist at Naomi as a TRANSLUCENT SPHERE, the size of a golf ball, SPRINGS FROM A GAUNTLET around her wrist.

EMILY

Get the Hell--

All reflexes, Naomi instantly swings the rifle around her back and grips it.

NAOMI

Stunball, really?

(at Eddie)

Wesson, we don't replicate the hunters. Get that into your thick head.

NAOMI'S BOOT crushes the life out of the oversized spider.

She leans into Eddie. He's bleeding from the lip. Naomi kicks the base molding of the bar - inches from Eddie's head - and scrapes the spider's blue remains off her boot.

Naomi surveys Eddie. An awkward moment.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You're the one, huh?
(in disbelief)

Wow.

EDDIE

(confused)
The one, what?

NAOMI

You're to report to Delatour's residence in Malibu immediately.

(perplexed)
Why you? Well, that's a fucking mystery to me.

(callous)
Listen, you're a GUIDE now, Wesson. Get with it. We watch out for the "hunters," not the prey. Hunting is an entirely different animal than Scouting.

Naomi swings her rifle around and vanishes into the crowd.

Emily lifts her bleeding brother up off the floor.

EMILY

(softly)
Listen, think about what you're gonna do here. You need to make a decision.

Eddie reaches over the bar and hugs his sister goodbye. Their bond unbreakable.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MALIBU COASTLINE - HOVER-CRAFT - MORNING

The Malibu coast sunrise is obscured by a FRAME-FILLING blast of hot air as a Hover-Craft LOWERS INTO FRAME.

The flying craft darts over the ocean toward Malibu Beach. In the distance, an ULTRA-MODERN BEACHSIDE MANSION.

EXT. PHILIPPE DELATOUR'S MANSION - ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

The craft comes to a halt, lowers and lands on the roof. Eddie jumps out and hits the landing platform. He stands on a square platform that reads: "LEVEL RISER."

Eddie LOWERS OUT OF FRAME and into the mansion.

INT. PHILIPPE DELATOUR'S MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie lowers to a stop and steps out to a marble foyer.

A luxurious AUTOMATON BUTLER greets him. The butler's body is tightly upholstered with red alien skin, contrasting greatly with the white room. He's a walking, talking leather couch.

BUTLER

Welcome. This way, Mr. Wesson.

The upholstered Butler escorts Eddie to a long, pearlescent hallway. This place is devoid of any warmth whatsoever.

STUDY

Ushering Eddie into the study, the Butler returns to his post.

Looking out a ceiling-high bay window, his back to Eddie, is PHILIPPE DELATOUR (50s). Hearing Eddie's footsteps, Delatour turns. He's wearing a form-fitting blue suit with a black collared shirt and his thick black hair is perfectly fashioned for the times. It's obvious that style and prestige are important to him.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

(French accent)

Game, Wesson?

EDDIE

Pardon, sir?

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Pool. You play?

EDDIE

Yes.

Eddie follows Delatour to an adjacent balcony.

BILLIARDS BALCONY

A translucent, rainbow-colored pool table MATERIALIZES in the center of the balcony. Delatour taps the side of the table. Holographic balls APPEAR and RACK themselves. He grabs a solid white cue ball from a nearby golden ball-holder and places it on the table.

Delatour selects a stick.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

I know it's a little weird we're meeting here instead of HQ, but as you are well aware, things are chaotic down there now.

Eddie nods in agreement, knowing it's because of The Masked.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

Your break.

Eddie picks a stick. *BREAKS*. The weird thing is that the holographic surface of this table WOBBLER like a waterbed, making it exceedingly harder to play pool in the future. A stripe sinks into a pocket.

Eddie lines up his second shot. However, the ball is still moving slightly with the fluidity of the translucent surface. He aims at the moving target. Pockets another stripe.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

How about these protestors and their masks?

Eddie shoots and misses, distracted by Delatour's second reference to The Masked.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

We keep each species intact. Simple replicate and replace. I don't know what they're protesting about. There's nothing wrong with my tech. Quite the opposite in fact. It replicates genuine copies of the wildlife. Genuine.

Delatour aims and shoots. Sinks a solid.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

Just wait til' next week when our Territory Regulations are satisfied and we can finally expand into new Territories across each planet.

(MORE)

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

Our growth will be exponential with each new species we discover, and each new Territory we open. We're just getting started.

CLOSE ON EDDIE as he chalks his cue, sickened. He changes the subject for fear of revealing his true beliefs at this time - something he excels at.

EDDIE

Regarding the Ackloyds--

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Weapons-Block hack. Arms and Ammunition are already working on a patch.

(nonchalant)

Don't worry about it. Life Waivers.

Surprisingly, Delatour places his stick on the table. The surface wobbles, balls are disturbed. Game over.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

I've got a very special hunter for your next safari. That's why we're meeting personally.

(proud)

General Richard Lennox.

EDDIE

Spearheaded Operation Space-Tunnel.

Delatour looks out at the crashing Malibu Beach waves.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

That's him. Without the success of his Space-Tunnel project, we would not exist. I owe that man a great deal.

Delatour turns back to face Eddie.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

The General picked you to serve as his Guide on his next safari. That's after reviewing my entire Guide Roster.

EDDIE

Me? I thought Ulices was his Guide. He's about as seasoned as they come. Did something change?

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Yes, Ulices is dead. Hunting accident. The General was lucky to survive.

(MORE)

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

(reflecting)

He's always been lucky.

Eddie is shocked to hear this.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

I like to give the General what he wants. He's a substantial shareholder, after all, and a friend. When he makes a request, I try to fulfill it.

(beat)

He didn't tell me why you, but I'm sure he has a good reason and that he will let you know.

(beat)

For whatever reason, the General is set on you. This will be his last safari. He's retiring from the game. I have no idea why. He loves this sport, but when the General makes up his mind, it's set in stone. There's no talking to him. I've tried.

EDDIE

Sounds like a difficult hunter.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

He doesn't always follow the rules. He's a bit difficult.

EDDIE

Sounds like a real peach.

(curious)

Which planet? Been to all twelve now.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Planet 13. Brand new. Untamed. We discovered it two months ago. It's been under wraps.

EDDIE

And Scouting is finished already?

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Yes. Fast-tracked this one. It's got a special place in my heart. It will be entirely exclusive. Wait till you see the wildlife. Magnificent.

Delatour walks over to Eddie and hands him a small case resembling a large black pill. "13" is engraved on it. The AR-Lenses for this new planet.

Eddie removes the two lenses from the case and puts them on. He blinks a couple of times - still hating these things.

EDDIE'S POV - AR-LENSES

Kinetic typography reads:

INTERWORLD SAFARI - CONFIDENTIAL WILDLIFE REPORT - 12.23.2222

Eddie makes a quick hand gesture and a 3D terrain SPRINGS TO LIFE with indicators of where WILDLIFE are hiding within the landscape.

Another hand gesture.

A vast Rolodex of alien fauna flips by on the right while descriptions and DNA analysis scroll upward on the left - every animal more incredible than the previous.

Eddie makes another hand gesture and the lenses flicker off.

BACK TO SCENE:

Eddie removes the lenses and returns them to their case.

EDDIE
Magnificent, indeed.

Delatour looks at his watch.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
I've got a meeting. My butler will show you out. It was nice meeting you, Eddie.
(beat)
Have fun, but also try to keep the General in line. As I mentioned, he's a handful. But I'm sure you'll do fine.
(beat)
When you get back, let's debrief.

Before Eddie can respond, Delatour disappears down a dark hallway just as his Butler emerges from the shadows.

BUTLER
This way, Mr. Wesson.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. APARTMENT TOWERS - NIGHT

Not unlike a pitchfork, three distinct towers of an apartment complex prick the black Santa Monica sky.

INT. EDDIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The apartment is moonlit through a window that supplies a narrow view of the Santa Monica Pier. The old wooden structure is now caged between two hovering piers twice its size.

Eddie's interior is an alien greenhouse. Multi-colored plants appear to grow straight out of the walls. His habitat.

DARK ROOM

Eddie finishes developing a photograph, from actual celluloid, of the Starhide Rhinox emerging from the amber fog. He hangs it to dry.

HANGING ON THE WALL is a MASK resembling a LION.

WORK STUDIO

Mounted on the walls are photos of a multitude of species frolicking in their natural habitats.

SERIES OF INSERTS: WALL-MOUNTED PHOTOGRAPHS

A CAT-LIKE ANIMAL with scales instead of fur laps from a pond.

A PACK OF WINGED WOLVES playing in a blue-grass valley.

A SIX-LEGGED BEAST emerging from under a waterfall.

A BLACK EAGLE-LIKE BIRD perched on a red tree branch.

The SNOW LEOPARD from earlier mid-hop in the snow.

An ELEPHANT resting under a Vachellia tree in East Africa.

BACK TO SCENE:

Wires connecting an array of devices and displays snake around photography gear. On a curved display is an ONLINE FORUM. The web banner reads: UNMASKED.

Eddie enters and sits at a workbench. Propped up on the workbench is a framed photograph - same as Emily's.

Eddie picks it up, pensive...sinking into the past...

FLASHBACK:

EXT. CAMPSITE - KENYA, EAST AFRICA - DAWN

An OLD-FASHIONED TENT protected by surrounding Vachellia trees. A lantern ILLUMINATES the interior. Eager to meet the morning, a MAN of unshakeable stature steps out of the tent, holding a lantern.

He looks out to the dawning horizon with enthusiasm. This is RICK WESSON (30s). He's fit and levelheaded. A man's man. Rick inhales the morning air.

Max, Eddie's Beagle, steps out of the tent and stands next to Rick, eagerly anticipating the day ahead.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE: THAT DAY

Montage shots synced to the increased beat of *POUNDING ELEPHANT FEET* transitioned by WHITE-HOT BLASTS OF LIGHT.

Rick wakes his two children, Eddie and Emily.

Sitting up in his cot is Rick's driver, ALHAADI. They pack up the tent and head out.

Alhaadi takes THE PICTURE of Rick with his children and Max.

Alhaadi hands the film camera back to a bright-eyed Eddie.

They climb into an all-terrain vehicle and depart. Soon after, they find a herd of elephants and quietly come to a stop.

Eddie snaps photos with his camera. They move on.

Snaking through the bush, they come upon POACHERS and stop. The poachers are on top of an elephant, REMOVING ITS TUSKS.

Rick JUMPS OUT of the vehicle and aims his rifle at them.

Terrified, Eddie and Emily crouch down and fearfully watch.

Max BARKS protectively at the Poachers.

The POACHERS PULL PISTOLS. Rick fires off a shot. Hits one. A GUNFIGHT ensues and Rick is SHOT IN THE HEAD.

Covering Emily's eyes, Eddie absorbs it all.

Alhaadi TAKES OFF but is also shot. The all-terrain vehicle CRASHES into a Vachellia tree.

Max is THROWN FROM THE VEHICLE. He immediately stands and bolts for the Poachers.

EDDIE

MAX!

The Poachers open fire on the small Beagle. He takes a few bullets and tumbles to a dead stop.

CLOSE ON EDDIE - fury in his eyes.

Emily grabs Eddie's hand and they LEAP OUT OF THE VEHICLE. The young Wessons make a RUN FOR IT into the dangerous bush. A BULLET WHIPS BY EDDIE'S HEAD.

Later, dusk. Eddie and Emily hide as a LIONESS hunts.

Dirty and soaked in sweat, the siblings find a village.

Eddie looks down at his camera hanging from his neck. The camera contains the last photo of his father and Max.

Overwhelmed with pain, the fourteen-year-old CLUTCHES THE CAMERA in anger.

END FLASHBACK

Eddie places the framed photo back on the workbench, facedown.

Suddenly, a HOLOGRAPHIC NOTIFICATION appears in front of his face. It reads:

PROTEST TONIGHT. INTERWORLD CLONEYARD. AMASS: NOVABAR.

Eddie stands and snatches the LION-MASK off the wall and walks OUT OF FRAME. We are left with a perfect view of the WALL-MOUNTED ELEPHANT resting under the Vachellia tree.

EXT. APARTMENT TOWERS - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Eddie steps out to the side walk. He surveys his surroundings meticulously. He makes a left and quickly walks up the street.

FIFTY FEET ABOVE

Hovercrafts fly overhead in a well-coordinated pattern, showcasing future ingenuity by a more mature society.

Wearing an anti-gravity backpack, NAOMI HOVERS IN MID-AIR just below the traffic and fifty-feet above Eddie.

She keeps pace with him, silently gliding through the air.

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Eddie makes a quick left into a quiet side street. He looks around. All clear. He places his mask on and disappears into an adjacent dark alleyway.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Members of The Masked congregate. Their masks look eerie at night, lit merely by a flickering sign for "NOVABAR."

Eddie arrives and immediately enters.

FIFTY FEET ABOVE

Naomi has seen all she needs. With a jolt of anti-gravity, she disappears into sky traffic.

INT. NOVABAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

A dimly lit dive bar from an age long gone. It must be Monday, because the place is dead. The Bartender is wearing a BABOON-LIKE MASK.

Only one person occupies a booth at the far end of the saloon - a redheaded woman with a MASK resembling a red-striped zebra's face. Meet the leader of The Masked, RED ZEBRA (40s).

BOOTH

RED ZEBRA
So why the meet?

Eddie takes a seat at the booth.

EDDIE
I want to do more for the cause.

RED ZEBRA
What do you mean -- more?

EDDIE
More than protests, which are going
nowhere.

RED ZEBRA
So, what's your big solution?

EDDIE
I work for Interworld.

Red Zebra sits back, perplexed and even a bit nervous.

RED ZEBRA
I don't know where to begin with that.
(thinking)
Why is that?

EDDIE
To see it all, and I've seen
everything, more than I wish I had.
(beat)
"How can you help?" is the question I
was hoping for.
(beat)
Listen, I have a front-row seat to
watching poachers kill these animals
and trophy them. Let me expose the
poachers for who they are.
(beat)
These animals need us NOW more than
ever...before they're all hunted down.
We can't repopulate these planets with
all Eco-Clones. That's not natural and
wrong at the deepest level.

Red Zebra leans forward, attentive.

RED ZEBRA
So, you're a Guide?

EDDIE
Yes.

RED ZEBRA
Why haven't you come to me sooner?

EDDIE
I had to become a Guide first.
(beat)
I leave for my next safari tomorrow.
(MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(beat)

And guess who my hunter is?

Eddie doesn't wait for Red Zebra to answer.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

General -- Richard -- Lennox.

This is music to Red Zebra's ears.

RED ZEBRA

Excellent. What a prime opportunity. If anyone knows anything, it's him.

EDDIE

Exactly.

Her mask conceals Red Zebra's face, but her gratitude and excitement can be felt from across the booth.

Eddie stands.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

It's time to put an end to this once and for all.

(beat)

I'll contact you when I'm back.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. INTERWORLD SAFARI TERMINAL - DOCKING PLATFORM - SPACE

Docked is a spacecraft reminiscent of a massive seaplane with a steel hull. The ship's nose, just above an algae watermark, reads: "THE HEMINGWAY."

Eddie's Interworld Safari shuttle ASCENDS INTO VIEW and lands on the platform. He disembarks wearing an official Interworld Safari jacket, sporting its emblem. Eddie's camera hangs from a strap around his neck.

THE HEMINGWAY

A monolith of a man, MITCH GILLARD (40s), exits and advances toward Eddie. Gillard has a scarred upper lip and a bulldog face. He's dressed in military fatigues, a born soldier. His every movement, a calculation, always on the ready.

GILLARD

(Australian accent)

Gillard. Follow me, bloke.

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - ANTEROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter. The walls are highly decorated in the finest colonial safari art. Very eccentric but hospitable.

TROPHY ROOM

The trophy room is a large rotunda that resembles a giant hollow gear.

Its outer walls are covered with MOUNTED ANIMAL HEADS ranging from African wildlife to alien creatures. An impressive collection of weaponry is placed amongst the trophy heads.

The recessed gear portions are occupied by a dozen dioramas of strange ALIEN CREATURES. Beautiful holographic backdrops complement each one. The scenes vary drastically; some are underwater, some desert, and some are the sky, day, night, dusk, and twilight. All the CREATURES seem alive. However, there's one EMPTY CELL awaiting its occupant.

Gillard and Eddie enter.

GILLARD

General, your Guide is here.

Gillard does an about-face and leaves.

In the hub of the trophy room are leather couches and antique coffee tables that encircle a stunning centerpiece: the beautiful mascot creature from the Interworld Safari logo. Its frame combines a muscular bear's body with horse-like legs. Three serrated horns sprout from its GAZELLE-LIKE head.

Sitting on a couch is GENERAL RICHARD LENNOX (50s). He has a rugged look about him but also appears lighthearted, like a soldier returning home. It's obvious Lennox has seen plenty of action. Today, dressed in old-fashioned safari gear and puffing away on a cigar, he looks like a king in his castle.

Cuddled beside Lennox is JOYCE LENNOX (40s). She's squeezed into a snug safari outfit that's more fitting for a night out on the town than hunting. Her beauty is something to be reckoned with and she knows it.

Lennox stands and shakes Eddie's hand. His right arm is a HOLOGRAPHIC ARTIFICIAL LIMB. Semi-transparent, it glows with a multitude of colors as strings of electricity ricochet inside.

CLOSE ON the firm handshake between the two men.

LENNOX
Welcome aboard, Wesson.

EDDIE
I'm sorry to hear about Ulices.

LENNOX
He was a great Guide.
(reflecting)
And a great man.

EDDIE
That's what I hear.

Lennox raises his holographic arm and grins.

LENNOX
A constant reminder.

EDDIE
How does it feel?

LENNOX
Well, it's only a couple of weeks now,
so the connection still needs some
getting used to. But it does the job.

Lennox gently places his true hand on Joyce's shoulder. She places her hand tenderly on his. They lock eyes.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
(at Joyce)
Meet my wife, Joyce. My good luck
charm.
(back at Eddie)
And you've already met Gillard.

EDDIE
Nice to meet you, Mrs. Lennox.
(at Lennox)
Should I address you as General?

LENNOX
Don't mind Gillard. Call me whatever
you want, as long as it's to my face.

JOYCE
"Joyce" will do. Titles are for those
who need them. I'm more interested in
results. Welcome to our world, Eddie,
let's hope you can keep up.

GILLARD (O.S.)

General, Zoe has arrived. I'll get us underway.

ZOE DUUN (20s) hastily enters. She removes her Ray Bans - Zoe has a coquettish face with breathtaking eyes that suck you in. Her attire is oddly mismatched - either she's colorblind or doesn't give a shit. She's tugging a rolling case containing her equipment. She's here to work.

ZOE

Sorry I'm late. Got caught up.

LENNOX

Zoe, this is Eddie Wesson, our new Guide.

Hearing the name "Wesson," Zoe perks up for some reason.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Eddie, meet Zoe Duun. I have Zoe come along to document my safaris.

Zoe looks Eddie over. She points at the film camera hanging from his neck.

ZOE

That relic yours? What is it 2003?

EDDIE

Early 2000s.

ZOE

And?

EDDIE

Shutterbug.

ZOE

(smiles)

Like me. And that's actual film?

EDDIE

Can't live without it.

Zoe is curious as to who this new Guide is.

Lennox slaps Eddie on the back.

LENNOX

Joyce will show you around.

Lennox leaves. Joyce steps forward and eyes Eddie with reservation - nobody can replace Ulices.

EXT. THE HEMINGWAY - INTERWORLD SAFARI TERMINAL - SAME TIME

The Hemingway ASCENDS and PIVOTS toward a Space-Tunnel.

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - TROPHY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eddie steps over to the Three-Horned Gazelle-like centerpiece.

EDDIE

Is that the one on the logo?

JOYCE

Yes, the first one. Richard's prized possession. A testament to our legacy.

On a shelf, Eddie notices a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH.

INSERT: FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH

Delatour and Lennox are standing like two proud brothers. Squeezed between them is Joyce. Lennox is dressed in jungle fatigues. Joyce and Delatour are wearing designer safari gear. Each has a foot on the ribcage of the GAZELLE-LIKE MASCOT.

BACK TO SCENE:

JOYCE

(reflecting)

The three of us go way back. We built this empire from the ground up, piece by piece. It's more than just a trophy; it's a symbol of what it means to conquer, to have the world at your feet. We've always been at the forefront, setting the standard for others to follow.

Joyce gives Eddie a measured look, her confidence potent.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

I hope you're ready to keep up, Eddie. Richard only surrounds himself with the best, and I expect nothing less.

INT. SPACE-TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

In the darkness of the tunnel The Hemingway approaches the exit - the mirror image of the DESTINATION FLICKERS INTO VIEW.

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

The cockpit - enclosed in an opaque dome - resembles an old-fashioned helmsman's post.

Eddie and Joyce arrive.

Lennox signals Gillard, who hits a button. The dome goes CLEAR - offering a 360-degree view of the Space-Tunnel interior.

LENNOX

In a moment, we will be 227,748 light-years from Earth and order. Mother Nature awaits and she is the epitome of chaos and disorder, if she chooses...

Lennox extinguishes his cigar on his holographic palm.

Zoe presses a button on her jacket. A CHROME-PLATED CAMERA APPEARS over her shoulder. It moves in sync with her eye-line.

COCKPIT DOME POV

The stern appears to connect with the end of the tunnel, jumping through space - literally in two places at once.

The view of the destination tunnel is hazy, but as the cockpit passes the threshold, the view becomes clear. The Hemingway has arrived. The destination tunnel opens to reveal...

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

A PLANET and its TWO MOONS. The planet and one of its moons are mammoth in size, while the second moon is minuscule.

SMALL MOON

The small moon has a SATURN-LIKE RING OF ROCK circling its equator. The strange thing is that the ring intersects with the larger moon and has carved an age-old JAGGED GAP in it.

LARGE MOON

The ring of rock moves through the chasm, violently SCRAPING AVALANCHES OF MOON ROCK that float off into space.

MOON RING

What's even stranger is that these moon rocks are conductive. A WEB OF ELECTRICITY connects each one.

PLANET

A tremendous STORM moves about the planet - covering the entire north hemisphere. Lightning erupts in a radiant dance.

EXT. ATMOSPHERE - MOMENTS LATER

Cradled by blue flames, the ship lowers into the atmosphere and levels out, comfortably descending into the midnight sky toward a vast ocean. In the blackness, it's impossible to distinguish anything.

THE LIGHTNING STORM moves over the horizon and out of sight.

THE HEMINGWAY

A stabilizing fin MATERIALIZES from the hull and connects with the rough sea surface. The Hemingway settles.

DECK

The cockpit dome's glass casing retracts. It is lit in a red glow emanating from the floor.

Lennox pulls out shades from his pocket and puts them on. The lenses turn BRIGHT RED.

Lennox, in predator mode, scans the coast.

LENNOX'S POV - COASTLINE

Everything is RED. Details are precise as graphical wireframes enhance the environment. He immediately notices SOMETHING LARGE move across the beach.

It slips away - into a bordering JUNGLE.

BACK TO SCENE:

LENNOX

Life!

Joyce stands, watching her husband.

JOYCE'S POV - AR-LENSES

CLOSE ON LENNOX.

MATCH CUT TO:

DELATOUR'S POV - AR-LENSES

CLOSE ON LENNOX.

Joyce's AR-Lenses are LINKED TO DELATOUR'S.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (O.S.)

Your luck is about to run out, old
friend.

Delatour hand gestures and Lennox disappears.

INT. PHILIPPE DELATOUR'S MANSION - BALCONY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Standing on his balcony, Delatour looks out at the blue ocean.

He hand gestures again.

DELATOUR'S POV - AR-LENSES

A suspended screen appears. It's a virtual call with Naomi.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

They've arrived.

NAOMI

Okay, so we're proceeding with the
General's "hunting accident," is that
correct?

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Yes. We'll leave from here tomorrow.

NAOMI

And what about Wesson?

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Oh, The Masked in my midst?

(beat)

Yes, of course, him too.

(beat)

In fact, it's perfect.

NAOMI

Perfect? Right. Another loose end for me to tie up.

(beat)

Why are you going? You'll just get in the way. Lennox doesn't need a sentimental farewell. What he needs is to be out of the picture.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

I've known Rich for over twenty years. I want to say goodbye, face-to-face.

NAOMI

Twenty years or twenty minutes, it doesn't matter. He's not the man you once knew. Emotions make you sloppy, Philippe. If you're coming, don't let them cloud your judgment.

Delatour hesitates, contemplating.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

And don't expect me to save you if things go south. This is business, nothing more.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - HANGAR - NIGHT

The hangar is located at the lower stern of The Hemingway. Dozens of portholes supply underwater views of the ocean. Zoe is filming schools of TRANSLUCENT FISH as they dart by. Flashes of electric light pulsate inside them.

A slick cargo vessel, the size of an RV, is parked in front of a khaki-colored World War II jeep. Gillard's loading equipment into the rear of the cargo vessel.

Eddie studies the old Jeep. He kicks a tire.

EDDIE

We're not going out in this antique, are we?

GILLARD

Bloke, thank your lucky stars it has a bloody hover-engine. Last safari, the General had us ride dimwitted horses.

EDDIE

Don't like animals too much, do you?

GILLARD

Bloody Hell. I like to hunt 'em, eat 'em and stuff 'em.

Eddie walks away.

GILLARD (CONT'D)

Bloke.

Eddie turns. Gillard throws him a pair of goggles.

GILLARD (CONT'D)

Night hunt. Wear 'em.

EXT. THE HEMINGWAY - NIGHT

The nose of The Hemingway DISCONNECTS, forming a sea-transport vehicle. It LIFTS OFF the sea and motors forward.

SEA-TRANSPORT

The sea-transport hovers to the beach and halts. Its face OPENS UP in World War II fashion. The Hover-Jeep and cargo-vessel spill out into mid-air above the breaking waves.

The SILENT convoy can only be identified by red dots emanating from the crew's goggles.

JUNGLE

They cruise over the jungle. Clusters of trees shake as large land-dwelling WILDLIFE flees the hovercraft's draft.

HOVER-JEEP

Lennox and Eddie are up front. Joyce and Zoe are sitting in the back seat. Lennox, looking wicked with his glowing red eyes and wide grin, turns to Eddie.

LENNOX

What do the lenses say about hunting at night on this planet?

Eddie makes a few hand gestures.

EDDIE

Nocturnal fauna. There's a savanna straight ahead. A good place to start.

EXT. SAVANNA - MOMENTS LATER

The savanna is a vast, grassy, rolling plain - invading the encompassing jungle.

The convoy DROPS INTO VIEW and lowers onto a patch of land, hiding behind a foothill.

FOOTHILL

The jeep's tires spring back as they land. They disembark.

CARGO-VESSEL

The cargo-vessel lowers to the ground and hovers above the swaying grass. Gillard opens the rear hatch and enters.

INT. CARGO-VESSEL - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the cargo-vessel is ready for a trophy. Chains and winches dangle from its ceiling.

Racks of WEAPONS, varying in size and color, take up an entire wall, while cases of ammo are stacked on the floor.

The team enters.

EDDIE

Starting a war?

Lennox approaches a glass cabinet stocked with 20th-century revolvers and elephant rifles.

Lennox eyes a "SMITH & WESSON" REVOLVER and grabs it. It's a large, engraved .44 revolver with a beautiful ivory handle.

LENNOX

"Wesson" -- any relation?

EDDIE

No.

LENNOX

(smiles)

I know.

He's got Eddie's full attention.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

I knew your father. It was quite some time ago, but nonetheless, a good man.

(sincere)

Your father understood the balance between nature and man, and, more importantly, the nature of man.

Eddie is genuinely surprised and fights back any emotion.

Hearing Lennox mention Eddie's father, Zoe perks up.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

I spent most of 2202 in East Africa.

I'm sorry what happened.

(with conviction)

I have no love for poachers.

Eddie eyes Lennox with regard, but unwilling to open up.

EDDIE

Thanks...

Lennox reaches into the cabinet. Pulls out a fistful of something. Opens his hand to Eddie. A pile of BULLETS.

Eddie takes one. Examines it.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Never seen one of these up close.

LENNOX

Keep it.

Eddie pockets the bullet.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Chemically propelled. These haven't been around for over a hundred years. When technology fails.

Lennox drops the bullets into a pocket of his hunting jacket, twirls the "Smith & Wesson" and holsters it in a "DIRTY HARRY" style UNDERARM HOLSTER - hidden from view.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

No chips, no electrons, good old-fashioned fury. Sorry, but your Weapons-Block won't work on it.

EDDIE

I guess it's just for show, then.

LENNOX

May I see it? Your Weapons-Block.

Eddie detaches the device from his belt and hands it to Lennox. The General inspects it. Drops the device to the ground and *CRUSHES IT WITH HIS BOOT*.

Zoe looks uncomfortably at Eddie.

Gillard continues to gear up, uncaring of the ongoing dispute between Hunter and Guide.

EDDIE

Well, I see you have simple ways of solving your problems, General.

LENNOX

If only everything was that simple. Listen, the one safari rule I have is that no one shuts down my weapons. For pros, it's more dangerous than helpful. I'm a little surprised Philippe didn't mention it.

Lennox slaps Eddie on the back.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Listen, kiddo...you won't need it anyway. I just want this last safari to go off without a hitch.

Eddie has no idea how to feel about this man that knew his father so well.

EXT. SAVANNA - FOOTHILL - MOMENTS LATER

Above the savanna are two pale orbs in the night sky - the electric moons. The small moon's ring of rock and lightning continues to eat through the giant moon.

Lennox climbs the foothill and takes a sniper position--

LENNOX'S POV - INFRARED

He meticulously combs the terrain from left to right - a clear view of DOZENS OF DIFFERENT EXOTIC ANIMALS - most are sleeping, huddled together in herds.

BACK TO SCENE:

Film camera ready, Eddie lies down on the hill beside Lennox.

LENNOX

What do you think?

Eddie snaps shots with his camera.

EDDIE

The stationary ones are herbivores;
anything that moves is a predator.
Night hunter. What interests you?

LENNOX

The open field of nature, Eddie. Great
explorers felt this hundreds of years
ago on Earth. There's nothing like it.

Lennox notices something out of the corner of his eye.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

That's the one! Nine o'clock.

EDGE OF JUNGLE

Stepping into the moonlight: the vague outline of a very large BIZARRE CREATURE. It trots into the savanna and eyes the terrain carefully as if exploring new territory.

The creature stands on its hind legs - now level with the treetops - offering its predators a perfect view. Its torso is similar to that of a bear, but its legs are strikingly different. They resemble a hawk's - with large, clutching claws sunken into the ground. Its long upper limbs touch the ground, even while standing upright.

Its head is relatively small for its body: akin to a monkey's - but with ENORMOUS EYES. The most attractive characteristic of this particularly strange prey is a pair of THREE-FOOT-LONG HORNS sprouting from its lower jawbone in opposing crescents.

PEAK OF FOOTHILL

Lennox jumps to his feet and turns to leave.

EDDIE

Let's mark it first - get an idea of
what we're up against--

Lennox abruptly runs down the foothill to the group.

Eddie snaps a picture of the upright HORNED CREATURE as it
SNIFFS the air and retreats back into the jungle.

EDDIE'S POV - AR-LENSES

Hundreds of 3D wireframes materialize and illustrate Eddie's
entire field of view.

With a hand gesture, the jungle foliage the Horned Creature
disappeared into goes transparent. Upright, the beast stares
back at Eddie.

BACK TO SCENE:

Zoe suddenly appears.

ZOE

What's up, Eddie Wesson?

EDDIE

Checking to see if the General can hunt
this one.

ZOE

Yeah, I figured. But I was just saying
"what's up" as in "hi," "how's it
going?" You know, human stuff?

EDDIE

(apathetic)
It's going.

ZOE

Mind if I see it?

Eddie removes the camera and hands it to her. Zoe takes it,
inspecting it with genuine curiosity.

EDDIE

(slightly amused)
You've never held one.

ZOE
 (admiring the camera)
 Nope, but it's fantastic...

Zoe lifts the camera, lining up a shot directly at Eddie. She looks through the viewfinder, her tone light but observant.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 You're out of focus.

Eddie leans in, adjusting the lens with practiced precision.

EDDIE
 Tell me when.

ZOE
 (with certainty)
 When.

With her fingers, Zoe finds the trigger button and snaps a shot.

She presses the trigger button, capturing the moment. Lowering the camera, she continues to study it, but her curiosity about Eddie gets the better of her.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 (probing)
 I know we just met, but Eddie, it's like you're somewhere else entirely. And I can't quite figure out why.

Eddie is thrown by Zoe's directness, but he quickly retreats behind his guard. Zoe waits, but gets nothing.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 (persistent)
 I gotta say... you're not making much sense to me, and I'm pretty damn good at figuring people out.

EDDIE
 (deflecting)
 You're overthinking this. I'm just here to do my job, Zoe. Nothing to figure out.

EDDIE'S POV - AR-LENSES

The data-scroll stops suddenly. FLASHING IN RED are the following results:

FEMALE CARNIVORE - SPECIES UNKNOWN

REPLICATION UNDETERMINED: TERMINATE TRACKING IMMEDIATELY

BACK TO SCENE:

EDDIE

So, what's with this being Lennox's last safari? He doesn't strike me as the type to ever give this up.

Gillard arrives. He's bothered by a MOSQUITO-TYPE INSECT.

GILLARD

Let's go, fruit loops!

Gillard slaps his cheek and pulls his hand away. He squashes the twitching bug between his beefy fingers.

GILLARD (CONT'D)

Oops, can this one be cloned?

Gillard smiles sadistically as he pulverizes what's left of the mosquito with his thumb.

A tiny *SPARK* of blue electricity springs FROM THE INSECT, shocking Gillard. Like a hurt child, he jumps back and flicks it to the ground.

Zoe can't help but let out a quiet chuckle.

EDDIE

See, you better watch what you kill.

Lennox and Joyce approach from the base of the foothill.

LENNOX

What's the verdict?

EDDIE

Off-limits until they send another Scout. Let's keep look--

LENNOX

Must be a glitch. We're going to track it and see what happens. Cool? Last one, remember? Let's go.

They grab their gear and head down the foothill. Eddie reluctantly takes the lead.

INT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

The team treks through the darkness.

EDDIE

Movement, ten o'clock.

They've caught up with their prey. The team freezes. The peaceful sound of a *STREAM* and the consistent flow of a *WATERFALL* are all that's heard.

The group quietly follows Eddie to a riverbed at the edge of the jungle. Upstream is a waterfall. Like a hunter aiming his rifle, Eddie carefully positions his camera--

EDDIE'S POV - FILM CAMERA

Moonlight exposes the Horned Creature. It's standing on the edge of the waterfall, catching fish. Eddie snaps a shot.

EDGE OF JUNGLE

The team quietly hides along the jungle's edge.

Gillard lays a WOODEN GUN CASE before Lennox. He opens it. Pulls out a 1920s safari rifle. Assembles the weapon and locks in a large magazine. Finally, he attaches a scope.

Gillard stands close - ready to aid Lennox with any request.

Zoe documents.

Eddie quietly approaches Lennox.

EDDIE

It's still a no-go.

LENNOX

Eddie, we're going to make an exception to the rule today. You won't get in trouble with the boss. Trust me.

EDDIE

You kill that creature, it goes against Interworld's number one directive. If we can't replace it with an identical Eco-Clone, it can't be hunted. We'll find something else.

Lennox spots the Horned Creature moving closer to the waterfall's edge. Now in a perfect line of sight.

Lennox steps up to Eddie.

LENNOX
 (disappointed)
 Thought you'd be a bit more like your
 father...easygoing. But you're making
 this anything but.

EDDIE
 Just doin' my job.

LENNOX
 You Guides and your Eco-Clones. Does
 Interworld really dispatch clones for
 every trophy? That's the word, but who
 really knows for sure? Do they actually
 live long enough for all of this to
 make sense? Who knows? It's too early
 to tell. Things are moving too fast
 since I found that first planet. Too
 much, too fast...not good. Typical.

Lennox nudges past Eddie.

EDDIE
 General...

Eddie is taken aback by Lennox's sudden mention of Eco-Clones.

Gillard nonchalantly aims a rifle at Eddie.

GILLARD
 Bloke, you know what this is?

EDDIE
 Of course. My last hunters liquified
 themselves with one of those.

GILLARD
 I don't have the General's patience, so
 you'd better stop the shit.

TOP OF WATERFALL

Instinctively, the Horned Creature stands and looks in the
 direction of its pursuers. A frozen moment. It resumes
 fishing.

EDGE OF JUNGLE

Lennox aims his rifle. Calibrates the scope.

Joyce steps back. Gillard motions everyone to be still.

LENNOX

Light.

GILLARD

Everyone, switch your sunnies to daylight.

Gillard lifts up his gun and takes aim at the night sky. He whispers to his gun.

GILLARD (CONT'D)

Gun. Load 2K dome-flare at 100ft altitude. White halogen. Stationary.

LENNOX'S POV - RIFLE SCOPE

The creature stands and looks straight into the scope as the POV switches from RED to NORMAL LIGHT. THEY'VE BEEN SPOTTED.

BACK TO SCENE:

LENNOX

Now, damn it! NOW!

Gillard FIRES.

The flare zips upward. It IGNITES just above the waterfall in a burst of white light and FORMS INTO THE CREST OF A DOME.

The Horned Creature looks at the dome-flare in amazement. Beads of light fall like raindrops, sprinkling off the creature's monkey-like face and horns.

The flare reveals for the first time that there is no color anywhere on this planet. Everything is white - the trees, the gravel, the grass - all ALBINO in nature. It appears as if they're trapped within an overexposed BLACK AND WHITE WORLD.

Our team shields their eyes from the intense white-on-white surroundings.

CLOSE ON THE HORNED CREATURE eyeing its predators.

Under the light, the animal's skin is TRANSLUCENT, like a jellyfish, only thick and leathery. The dome-flare entirely exposes its innards. It looks ghostly.

As it takes a step forward, every muscle, vein and organ can be seen compressing and swelling.

Even with its monstrous mouth shut, its teeth are visible - well organized and massive, a terrifying sight. Its horns, also translucent, are a dense ruby-red crystal, the same color as its big probing eyes.

The creature LEAPS off the waterfall, DIRECTLY AT LENNOX.

EDGE OF JUNGLE

Lennox is just as stunned as the others.

He FIRES!

We hear ANIMALS scatter from the DETONATION.

The round *RICOCHETS* off the Horned Creature's left horn and lands heavily on the riverbank - 40ft from Lennox.

EDDIE

It's going to charge!

LENNOX'S POV - RIFLE SCOPE

Lennox easily ALIGNS his crosshairs with the creature's VISIBLE pounding heart.

BACK TO SCENE:

He FIRES!

The shot POPS a perfect hole in the Horned Creature's chest. LIGHTNING strands erupt from within the creature. It releases a *HORRIBLE SCREAM* and runs straight for them.

Eddie grabs Zoe by the arm and swings her behind him.

EDDIE

GO!

Lennox tries to follow the creature with his scope.

Lennox FIRES a rapid succession of shots. The rounds merely sink into the Horned Creature's jellyfish-like skin - igniting more lightning.

Lennox tries again, but empty *CLICKS* emit from his weapon.

Gillard tosses Lennox the gun.

The creature closes in. 20ft.

Lennox shoulders the weapon.

Everyone falls back - making a ruckus in the jungle.

LENNOX
GUN! Load shock round!

Lennox carefully aims. FIRES!

The round impacts the Horned Creature's chest with a loud DISCHARGE of energy. It stumbles back. STRINGS OF LIGHTNING race through its body. The creature SHAKES for a moment, shocked. It gets up to resume its advance - angered.

IT LUNGES FORWARD, breaking through foliage. Swings at Lennox. Misses. Lennox backpedals on the jungle floor - desperately trying to gain some distance from the translucent creature. It pursues. Fortunately, the dense jungle slows it down.

An ALIEN CACOPHONY practically cheers for the Horned Creature.

The jungle recedes back into DARKNESS as the flare dissipates.

Worried, Zoe tugs on Eddie's arm.

ZOE
(genuinely scared)
What do we do?

EDDIE
Nyctalop. A night hunter. Now GO!

Eddie RUNS TOWARDS Lennox and the creature.

Lennox shoulders his gun. The Horned Creature rips trees out of its way, its monstrous form silhouetted by the dying flare.

LENNOX
Gun, load incendiary round.

Lennox FIRES!

The projectile STRIKES the creature. Like a bursting water balloon, the round SPLASHES the monster with a shower of flames. But it shakes off the fire like a wet dog and continues to press on, unharmed.

Lennox backs up, his every step a challenge. Steadies his aim.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
Gun load piercing round.

He FIRES! Another DETONATION. The creature lights up. Its electric AURA illuminates the forest in a pale blue glow.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Damn it. Gun! Load fragmentation round.

The monster goes for Eddie. Lennox FIRES a round over Eddie's shoulder at the Horned Creature.

The frag-shell misses Eddie and showers the creature with shrapnel. Hundreds of miniature STRANDS OF ELECTRICITY fire about its internal organs, spiraling down its massive limbs. It jerks back and COLLAPSES heavily to the ground. Inert.

The jungle goes silent.

Eddie pulls a LIGHT STICK from his utility belt. Snaps it. The area brightens with an INTENSE ORANGE GLOW.

Gillard arrives on the scene.

GILLARD

Are you wounded, General?

LENNOX

No.

GILLARD

That thing was as fit as a butcher's dog.

EDDIE

(intense)

TWO O'CLOCK!

Lennox spins around. The Horned Creature rises. Before it's upright, Lennox plants his gun on its head.

LENNOX

Bolt round!

He FIRES!

Overtaken by a blue bolt of electricity - the creature drops to the jungle floor. A FLASH of electric light quickly CONSUMES its heart. The creature exhales a steamy breath.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EDGE OF JUNGLE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone steps closer for a better look when suddenly - with a horrifying *CRACKLE* - the magnificent Horned Creature is reduced to a shapeless mass of torn flesh and pulverized bone as its muscles CONTRACT, crushing its skeleton in one violent reflex.

The team eyes the smoking carcass. Shocked. Relieved.

Lennox lifts the creature's ruby horns out of its contorted skull and wipes the clear blood off them.

LENNOX

We head back to the jeep. Set camp.

(at Eddie)

Cool, Wesson?

Eddie nods yes - maybe Lennox will elaborate on his seeming gripe with Interworld?

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The group has settled in the middle of the savanna. The cargo vessel has expanded into a large tent-like camp. Lennox is adding wood to a growing bonfire. The rest sit in camping chairs getting warm.

Eddie stares into the flames.

LENNOX

Eddie.

No answer. Zoe looks over to Eddie with concern.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

What do you think daylight will hold for us? I don't like it when my trophies self-destruct.

GILLARD

And why are rounds useless?

EDDIE

Probably because this place took a fall from the evolutionary ugly tree and hit every branch on the way down.

JOYCE

Insightful. Though I'd prefer a more refined explanation.

EDDIE

These things are electrically-based,
like us, but way different.

JOYCE

Thank you, Doctor Wesson, for that
dazzling analysis.

EDDIE

When they're shot, they lose their
charge, and since electricity seems to
bind their cells, when they die, they--

GILLARD

Implode. Piece of piss, huh?

EDDIE

An aberration of nature. All of the
wildlife will most likely react the
same way. You won't be able to trophy
'em. We should leave this planet
immediately.

Joyce stands.

JOYCE

The planet is fine. We're not going
home empty-handed. That would be a
first, and frankly, it's beneath us.

LENNOX

We're here. We hunt.

Lennox walks over to Eddie.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Eddie, I don't think you realize who I
am. I made safaris possible for
Philippe. I'm not your average
billionaire hunter.

EDDIE

I know who you are.

LENNOX

Without Operation Space-Tunnel,
Interworld would not exist. Remember,
it's my military who found the first
planet after all, under my command.

EDDIE

(fed up)

So be it. You'll be judged by nature,
not me.

Eddie walks away from the flickering bonfire and vanishes into the darkness. The group watches him disappear.

Joyce, unfazed by Eddie's departure, remains composed.

JOYCE

(to the group)

I suppose someone has to be the voice
of dissent, even if it's poorly
articulated.

She pauses, adjusting her perfectly tailored jacket, then with an air of casual superiority...

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Now, if you'll excuse me. Even queens
need to piss.

Joyce steps into the surrounding jungle.

INT. JUNGLE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Quickly, Joyce finds a secluded spot behind a tree. She settles and looks over her shoulder. All clear.

JOYCE'S PUPILS TURN RED. AUGMENTED REALITY CONTACT LENSES.

She makes a few hand gestures...

JOYCE'S POV - AR-LENSES

A SPACE-TUNNEL TRANSMISSION interface materializes. A three-dimensional rendering of the Space-Tunnel above their planet lights up and the following text types on.

CONNECTION SECURE. TRANSMIT WHEN READY, MRS. LENNOX.

EXT. BASE OF WATERFALL - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Under the fading dome-flare, a YOUNGER VERSION of the dead Horned Creature steps out from behind the pounding waterfall. Then, ANOTHER, LARGER OFFSPRING emerges.

They sniff the air for a scent.

The older one releases a *WAR CRY* - its translucent skin fills with an angry lightning storm. The dome-flare finally fades out - leaving the orphaned siblings in the dark.

EXT. CAMPSITE - OUTSKIRTS - SAME TIME

Eddie sits alone at the edge of the fire's dimming light, typing on a holographic keyboard. A suspended screen hovers, casting a blue glow across his face.

Zoe arrives and drops a rolled-up sleeping bag beside him.

ZOE
Whatcha doin'?

EDDIE
My report.

With a quick hand gesture, Eddie makes the screen and keyboard disappear as Zoe sits beside him.

ZOE
(teasing)
How diligent of you.

Eddie smiles, a hint of amusement softening his usual guarded expression.

There's a moment of comfortable silence between them, the fire crackling softly, before Eddie decides to open up.

EDDIE
You know, the best part of being a Scout was that you're there, living with them. A year in, you can't help but form a connection.

ZOE
Seems like you've grown pretty attached to the prey, Eddie. Not exactly ideal for a Guide, huh?

EDDIE
Yeah... it's an issue.

Eddie changes the subject, his tone shifting as he probes into something else.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
So, what happened on that last safari with the General and Ulices? You were there, right?

Zoe's expression shifts, the memory clearly weighing on her.

ZOE

Unfortunately, yeah, I was.

Zoe goes quiet, clearly wrestling with whether she wants to relive those moments. Eddie senses her hesitation.

EDDIE

It's okay, Zoe. You can just forget--

ZOE

It was a windy day. Planet 6. You know the one. That grass...

EDDIE

(nods)

Yeah, the only habitable world in the Sirius Star System. I know the one. Sounds like you were on the outskirts of Territory 9.

ZOE

(sighs)

Yep.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. PLANET 6 - SIRIUS STAR SYSTEM - GRASSY FIELD - NIGHT

A pink moon hangs in the black sky. Below, a vast field of five foot high iridescent grass shimmers in the moonlight. Whipping winds lash the surroundings.

Cut through the colorful grass is a DIRT THROUGHWAY.

A HOLO-ARRAY hovers over the wide path like a freeway sign.

CLOSE ON THE HOVERING SIGN. It reads:

TERRITORY 9 - PERIMETER ROUTE - PROCEED WITH CAUTION

Suddenly, SOMETHING BIG tramples through the grass with a lizard-like gait, heading straight for the road.

The sound of RACING HORSE HOOVES approaches.

THROUGHWAY - PERIMETER ROUTE

General Lennox and ULICES (30s) are riding side-by-side on HORSE-LIKE ANIMALS as fast as humanly possible.

Gillard and Zoe share a horse with the documentarian in the back filming. A holographic gimbal steadies her shot.

The three Horse-like Animals huff from exhaustion, sprinting.

ULICES

One -- klick -- to -- go.

LENNOX

(enthralled)

Being -- this --- close -- to -- the --
unknown -- is--

ULICES

Dangerous.

Ulices momentarily takes his eyes off the path to look at Lennox. Lennox notices a genuine sense of fear in Ulices' eyes, which is unusual given their three-year-long safari experience together.

The General firmly nods his head in agreement with Ulices.

LENNOX

No -- more -- horses.

Suddenly, a black KOMODO DRAGON-LIKE LIZARD ten feet in length WADDLES from the colorful grass. It has a combative posture.

The three Horse-like Animals abruptly rear, throwing Ulices from his saddle. He lands heavily on the road, knocked unconscious, while Lennox manages to hold onto his reins.

In the rear, Gillard's Horse goes berserk, throwing Zoe off. She lands amid the shimmering grass.

The Komodo Dragon-Like Lizard goes for Ulices as he comes to.

Lennox quickly presses a button on his gauntlet and a HOLOGRAPHIC COMPOUND BOW materializes. He FIRES!

MISSES! The arrow hits the ground and EXPLODES!

Gillard fires his rifle. MISSES! This thing is fast. It waddles closer to Ulices.

Lennox dismounts his frenzied Horse and lands on the road. He quickly aims a second shot, but it's too late.

Ulices regains consciousness just in time for the two men to lock eyes for one last time. The General watches as his Guide and good friend is torn apart in seconds.

The large Komodo Dragon-Like Lizard eyes Lennox with Ulices's blood dripping from its huge jaws.

LENNOX CHARGES, pulling out an arrow from his quiver.

The fierce reptile CHARGES!

GILLARD (O.S.)

General!

GILLARD'S POV - RIFLE SCOPE

The General is in his line of site. No shot.

BACK TO SCENE:

The Komodo Dragon-Like Lizard and Lennox COLLIDE and tumble to the ground. Man and lizard wrestle, but the General soon realizes he's no match for the sheer strength of this thing.

It chomps down on Lennox's arm, the one holding the arrow. The Lizard's head and the General's arm EXPLODES.

Gillard runs to the General and quickly applies a metal tourniquet that clamps into his bicep. The bleeding stops.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. CAMPSITE - OUTSKIRTS - CONTINUOUS

ZOE

NEVER taking a perimeter route again.

EDDIE

Where was Joyce, his good luck charm?

ZOE

(rolling her eyes)

Met Gala. Where else? I'm surprised she's here. She's been MIA for weeks.

Zoe stands, stretching as she reflects on the day.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Ulices was like a son to the General...

She hesitates, wrestling with whether to steer the conversation into more personal territory. After a moment, she decides to go for it.

ZOE (CONT'D)

From what I can tell, your father and the General were good friends.

There's a pause as she reflects.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I bet you remind him of your father. I'm sure that's why you're here.

(sincere)

I'm sorry about your loss...

Eddie nods, his expression a mix of subdued gratitude and quiet acceptance.

EDDIE

(mutters)

That answers that.

ZOE

What does?

EDDIE

Why Lennox picked me.

Zoe leans down, placing a reassuring hand on Eddie's shoulder, her touch both comforting and grounding.

ZOE

(gently)

Night, Eddie.

She vanishes into the darkness, leaving Eddie alone with his thoughts.

Eddie lays back, resting his head on the rolled-up sleeping bag, and stares up at the electric moons above, their glow casting a soft light over his contemplative expression.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GUN RANGE - INTERWORLD SAFARI ARMORY - DAY

A HOLOGRAPHIC FOREST is enclosed in a LARGE CHAMBER. BOOTHS occupied by HUNTERS surround the chamber. Holographic DEER-LIKE animals dart between the trees.

BLAM! A Deer-like Animal is sent back 20ft from the impact.

BLAM! Another one drops.

BLAM! Another one.

The range goes quiet. All the Hunters lean out of their booths to see who the Hell is, killing all the prey single-handedly.

It's Naomi, her pistol smoking.

HUNTER (O.S.)
(Italian accent)
CHE CAZZO, PUTTANA!

Naomi, wearing a biker's jacket adorned with patches from arms dealers and each of Interworld's twelve planets, leans out of her booth.

Naomi points her gun at the Hunter. The Hunter and the others slink back into their booths.

DYLAN BLACK (30s), a slender man with a head of platinum hair arrives and steps over to Naomi's booth. He's attempting to roll a joint and not doing a good job of it.

A gleaming humanoid ROBOT stands beside Dylan like a bodyguard, TEK-2.

DYLAN
Making friends as usual, huh, Naomi?

NAOMI
Friends? These clowns wouldn't know a real shot if it bit them in the ass.

DYLAN
You know, there's a whole thing about playing nice with others.

NAOMI
And here I thought you'd be grateful I'm not shooting them instead.

DYLAN
You always did have a way of... commanding attention.

NAOMI
Let's get on with it, fucknut. Unless you want me to teach you how to roll that thing, too.

CUT TO:

EXT. PHILIPPE DELATOURE'S MANSION - ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

A Hover-Convertible DROPS INTO VIEW with Dylan at the wheel. Ten feet off the roof, Naomi hops out, hitting the surface like a panther.

Concerned, Tek-2 checks to see if she's okay. *Humans are fragile.*

Dylan lands beside a mean, shark-like craft, a BLACKSTAR X-37.

Awaiting their arrival is Delatour's red upholstered Butler.

INT. PHILIPPE DELATOURE'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room is a sleek, modern rotunda, surrounded by a panoramic pane of glass that offers an unobstructed view of the stormy Malibu Coast. Lightning periodically illuminates the scene, casting dramatic shadows on the walls.

A MAN and WOMAN IN SILHOUETTE engaged in a passionate kiss. LIGHTNING STRIKES the ocean in the BG. With the sudden flash of light, it's revealed that this is JOYCE and DELATOURE.

Delatour breaks the kiss.

PHILIPPE DELATOURE

(sincere)

I have to admit. I will miss him.

JOYCE

Darling, let's not waste time on sentiment. I'm married to the man, but he's become an obstacle to our ambitions. He's a threat to everything we've built.

(beat)

And don't get me started on Wesson. He's a thorn in my side, always poking around and complicating things.

PHILIPPE DELATOURE

(slightly amused)

I bet he is.

JOYCE

Oh? And why do you say that?

PHILIPPE DELATOURE

(contemplative)

He's with The Masked.

JOYCE

That's rather fitting. Well, if he's a nuisance, it's a good riddance.

Delatour, still mulling over the situation, gazes out at the storm. He seems to be weighing his next move carefully.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

(facetious)

To betray, or not to betray? That is the question.

JOYCE

(confident, dismissive)

Betray. It's the only option.

The Butler escorts Dylan, Tek-2 and Naomi into the wide-open living room and comes to a dead stop, like a machine.

Joyce looks at them with an air of superiority, her gaze as contemptuous as it is cutting.

BUTLER

Mr. Delatour. Your guests have arrived.

Delatour and Joyce turn away from the window, facing the assassins as the Butler retreats into the shadows.

JOYCE

See you soon, killer.

JOYCE TURNS GLASSLIKE and quickly FLICKERS OUT - A SOLID HOLOGRAM TRANSMISSION from the jungle of planet thirteen.

Delatour turns away and stares at the approaching storm, watching his morals set sail.

EXT. PHILIPPE DELATOUR'S MANSION - ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

ARMED TO THE TEETH, Delatour, Naomi, Dylan, and Tek-2 board the shark-like craft. Moments later, it LIFTS OFF THE ROOF, ROTATES, and FIRES OFF into the upper atmosphere.

EXT. EXOSPHERE ABOVE EARTH - MOMENTS LATER

The Blackstar X-37 tears ACROSS FRAME, and in the distance, a SPACE-TUNNEL looms.

INT. SPACE-TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

As the Blackstar travels through the Space-Tunnel, the mirror reflection of the destination flickers into view: the Albino World with its violent moons.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - MORNING

The rays of the morning sun unveil the campground. The dwindling YELLOW bonfire flames are a bizarre contrast to this BLACK and WHITE WORLD.

Eddie is piecing together his crushed WEAPONS-BLOCK and doing a good job of keeping it concealed.

Lennox exits the tent. Wearing nothing more than his boxers, his skin contrasts dramatically with the white world around him. He's heavily scarred. He takes a deep breath and sings, "OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNIN" from "OKLAHOMA."

Sleepy-eyed, everyone else emerges from the tent. They're all speechless as they gawk at the surroundings.

LENNOX

Good morning, NEW WORLD!

Eddie's Weapons-Block releases a low beep as he snaps it back together. He pockets the gadget.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Let's move out.

GILLARD

What do we do about the Guide?

Eddie steps over to them.

EDDIE

General, we should talk.

GILLARD

Stay back if you don't want me to beat seven shades of shit out of you.

LENNOX

We can talk later.

EDDIE

This isn't normal, animals are never this resilient. You know this--

GILLARD

For Christ's sake, cut the biology report. If you know how to kill these things and keep them intact, tell us.

Eddie shakes his head in frustration.

LENNOX

We'll have to be innovative is all.

EDDIE

How's that?

Lennox is hellbent on hunting this morning.

LENNOX

Stay put. We'll be back.

Lennox turns to Gillard.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Load with vacuum rounds.

EDDIE

That's your plan? Suffocation?

Gillard bumps into Eddie.

GILLARD

Bloke, you'd better stay put. If I see you within a klick of the hunt, I'll consider you a "jaywalker."

EDDIE

You're a real earache, man.

Zoe eyes Eddie from afar. She switches on her shoulder-cam and hops in the jeep.

Eddie watches as the jeep lifts off the ground - the red horns from Lennox's kill are now mounted to the hood.

As the cargo-vessel rises, Eddie makes a run for it. Jumps. Grabs the rear hatch. His camera dangling from his neck.

EXT. SAVANNA - MOMENTS LATER

The convoy moves over the WHITE SAVANNA 100 feet off the ground. As far as the eye can see the landscape is devoid of color and PITTED WITH METEORITE CRATERS.

THE CRATERS vary drastically in size, like our moon. Some are eroded, and others are more recent, leaving gaping pits in the surrounding jungle.

CLOSE ON EDDIE struggling to hold onto the back of the cargo-vessel.

HOVER-JEEP

Lennox spots something.

LENNOX

There!

He positions his binoculars--

LENNOX'S POV - BINOCULAR

A CREATURE LEAPS across the savanna with vitality. It's very similar in build to a lion. It's translucent - difficult to spot against the white terrain - except for a magnificent mane of white fur sprouting from its spine. Its head is a ghastly hybrid of a bull's cranium and a shark's frightening jawbone.

SAVANNA

Unaware of its pursuers in the sky, the LION-SHARK stops on the rim of a crater that borders the white jungle. It prowls into the crater, out of view...hunting something.

HOVER-JEEP

Lennox lowers his binoculars.

LENNOX

We're not the only hunters this morning. Gillard, land on the outskirts of that crater.

The Cargo-Vessel descends. Ten feet from landing, Eddie clutches his camera and DROPS.

CLOSE ON EDDIE as he hits the savanna floor and tumbles in the grass. He gets up and watches the convoy come to a halt half a mile away.

Eddie spots something out of place on the ground.

EDDIE'S POV

Two pair of FOOTPRINTS in the grass. One is obviously a robot's. *But Scouts don't have robots...*

BACK TO SCENE:

A *SNORTING* startles him. He turns.

Half a dozen HIPPO-LIKE MAMMALS are eyeing him strangely. Their translucent skin is zebra-striped with opaque white bands - perfectly camouflaged.

EDDIE

Easy guys.

Eddie steals a quick snapshot.

They resume eating grass as Eddie makes his way to the crater.

Something in the sky catches his eye.

Eddie takes his camera and aims. ZOOMS IN--

EDDIE'S POV - CAMERA

In the distance, the Blackstar X-37 can be seen descending through the atmosphere.

BACK TO SCENE:

Eddie lowers his camera, puzzled.

EXT. CRATER OUTSKIRTS - MOMENTS LATER

The convoy has settled on the outskirts - concealing themselves from the beautiful Lion-Shark. Gillard emerges from the rear of the cargo-vessel holding a rifle. He hands Lennox the gun.

GILLARD

Locked and loaded, General.

LENNOX

Once we're done here, I want you to retrieve Wesson.

GILLARD

He'll just piss on our bonfire.

LENNOX

I don't want him to get hurt. He's here because of me. Understood?

Like a good soldier, Gillard obeys the order.

GILLARD

Yes, sir. Consider it done.

CRATER

The crater is 200ft wide and 40ft deep.

The Lion-Shark cautiously moves toward a NEST the size of a swimming pool in the center of the crater. Four beautiful, crystal-clear, beach ball-sized EGGS are inside.

INSERT: EGGS

TWISTING EMBRYOS are clearly exposed as blue strands of electricity ricochet inside the embryonic fluid.

RIM OF CRATER

They lie down - in awe. Lennox steadies his aim and smiles.

LENNOX

Not this time, kitty.

Before Lennox can take a shot, SOMETHING DARTS past his POV.

CRATER NEST

A Cessna-sized, four-winged, PTERODACTYL-LIKE BIRD of prey SWOOPS overhead and starts to descend in a circular formation toward its nest. It's covered with glass-like feathers that gleam in the sunlight, giving its prey the illusion that a ball of white fire is pursuing it.

The Lion-Shark senses something from above and freezes, just as the Pterodactyl-Like Bird LANDS ON HIM, grasping its prey with massive talons.

RIM OF CRATER

Lennox holds his fire.

CRATER NEST

The big bird's dagger-like bill opens wide. It goes for the Lion-Shark's neck, but the mighty feline THRUSTS the giant bird off its back, sending it CRASHING into the nest. An EGG is knocked free and SHATTERS.

INSERT: EGG

A crystal-like BABY BIRD wobbles free of its eggshell and tries to walk, but to no avail.

BACK TO SCENE:

The Lion-Shark POUNCES on the baby bird, killing it instantly.

RIM OF CRATER

Lennox aims, waiting for a clean shot.

CRATER NEST

The mother Pterodactyl-like Bird DIVES for the Lion-Shark but misses the swift cat as it parries the bird's deadly bill.

The Lion-Shark SPRINGS FORWARD. It lands on top of the bird and tears through its thorny wings. Finally, the monstrous shark jaw finds its predator's thin neck and SEVERES IT.

The Pterodactyl-like Bird's ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE seems to be ABSORBED by the Lion-Shark. Strangely, at that moment, it TURNS OPAQUE with its natural color of YELLOW - looking beautiful against the black and white terrain.

The Lion-Shark drops the winged carcass just as its skeleton EXPLODES - grossly DEFORMING the dead bird.

The Lion-Shark turns its attention back to the eggs.

RIM OF CRATER

Lennox FIRES.

EXT. CRATER OUTSKIRTS - CONTINUOUS

Running, Eddie hears the detonation. He freezes. Too late.

EXT. CRATER NEST - SAME TIME

A BLUE SPHERE instantaneously ENCOMPASSES the Lion-Shark's head. It tries to escape, but the sphere is locked-on like a helmet. Asphyxiated, it collapses.

EXT. RIM OF CRATER - CONTINUOUS

The group runs down the wall of the crater.

EXT. CAMPSITE - SAME TIME

Cold black ashes from the dead bonfire are blowing across the white grounds.

The TWO SIBLING HORNED CREATURES quietly step into view. Sprouting from their monkey-like faces are smaller ruby-red horns than their parent.

They sniff the campsite for their prey. Their horns fill with bouncing lightning.

EXT. CRATER NEST - MOMENTS LATER

Gillard steps over the bird's remains and kicks the Lion-Shark - checking for any sign of life.

GILLARD

One round, one kill. Now that's how
it's done.

Zoe films away.

Gillard kneels beside the Lion-Shark and raises its massive head - showing it off to the General.

GILLARD (CONT'D)

This trophy's a real beaut'!

LENNOX

Gillard, check for vitals.

Suddenly, the Lion-Shark's head JERKS TO LIFE. It CLAMPS DOWN on Gillard's head with its jaw, CRACKING IT. Gillard's red blood travels down the creature's translucent throat.

Before Lennox can take aim, the Lion-Shark flings Gillard's body through the air - hitting Lennox across the chest.

The creature jumps for Zoe.

OUT OF NOWHERE, Eddie LEAPS in front of the creature, knife in hand.

With its own momentum, the Lion-Shark is IMPALED.

An electrical SPARK fires into Eddie. He's tossed to the ground. The Lion-Shark lands on all fours - over Eddie. Eddie grabs onto the creature's mane, barely keeping its jaw away.

Lennox - covered in Gillard's blood - plants his weapon like a spear into the Lion-Shark's side.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Load bolt round!

He pulls the trigger. Eddie lets go and shields his eyes. The Lion-Shark LIGHTS UP like a bulb that's about to blow. The gun turns RED HOT. The weapon's holographic handle SHORTS OUT and vanishes. Lennox drops it - his hand smoking.

The gun EXPLODES.

The Lion-Shark lets out a horrible MOAN. It TURNS BLACK - as if being burned from the inside out - and COLLAPSES.

The creature TWITCHES with an electric shock and DEFORMS, leaving a Picasso-esque carcass behind.

Zoe helps Eddie up.

Joyce steps over to Lennox.

JOYCE

Are you okay?

Lennox cringes in severe pain. His hand is badly burned.

LENNOX

No.

Disoriented, Lennox walks over to Gillard's body.

Eddie steps in front of Lennox - still catching his breath.

EDDIE

We -- have -- visitors.

Without warning, Joyce shoves Eddie with surprising force, causing him to stumble backward. Her sudden aggression catches everyone off guard, especially Lennox, who now regards her with newfound wariness.

JOYCE

(commanding)

No one knows of this world but us, and
Philippe.

EDDIE

I saw a Blackstar descending. Whoever
they are, they're close. Come on, it's
an entire planet and they land HERE?

Lennox stares at Eddie, his expression inscrutable, as if
weighing the truth against his own instincts.

JOYCE

No one else is here, damn it!

(at Lennox)

He's trying everything he can to
sabotage your last safari.

She swivels back to Eddie, her gaze piercing.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Are you sure you're not one of The
Masked?

Eddie's breath catches, her words hitting him like a punch to
the gut. For a brief moment, he's exposed, his usual
confidence shaken.

Before Eddie can respond, Zoe, sensing the rising tension,
tries to intervene.

ZOE

Maybe we check to see, anyway?

Zoe's suggestion falls flat, ignored by the intensity of the
moment. Lennox, eyes now fixed on Eddie, steps closer, his
mind made up.

LENNOX

Listen, Eddie. You're underestimating
the true nature of Humankind here. The
clones, Eddie, they--

Suddenly, a voice interrupts from off-screen.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR(O.S.)

RICH!

Lennox, startled, turns towards the familiar voice, tension
thick in the air as everyone braces for what's coming next.

EXT. RIM OF CRATER - CONTINUOUS

DYLAN, TEK-2, AND NAOMI STAND ON THE CRATER'S RIM. Naomi is aiming a Winchester rifle that's clearly two hundred years in the future, while Dylan and Tek-2 hold laser pistols.

Delatour is sitting on the edge of the crater. He stands.

In the BG, the Blackstar X-37 is parked in a recessed crater.

Delatour tosses a VEST into the crater nest.

CRATER NEST

The tension is palpable as Joyce picks up the vest and presses a cold, calculated kiss to Lennox's cheek - her eyes glinting with the thrill of finally playing her hand.

JOYCE

Goodbye, Richard.

She straps on the vest casually as if this were merely another step in her well-orchestrated plan.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

It was fun while it lasted, but let's be honest, there's only one thing you care about.

She pauses, letting the words sink in, a cruel smile curling on her lips.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

(disdainful)

And that's your trophies.

Lennox's face contorts with betrayal and genuine heartbreak. This isn't just about power, it's personal.

LENNOX

Me?! How about you and your trophies?
How much is enough, huh?!

LENNOX (CONT'D)

So, you betrayed me and told Philippe what I knew about the clones and what I was planning?

Joyce's eyes gleam with triumph. She's been waiting for this moment, relishing every second.

JOYCE

We're blowing up, baby. Not leveling out.

She surveys him like a predator savoring her prey.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

You're not slowing us down, Richard.
(beat)

We say who uses the tunnels now. Our Territories will triple within months.

RIM OF CRATER

Delatour's expression goes cold as he signals his posse. He gives Naomi a deadpan look. The gun fanatic aims her Winchester at Lennox's head.

Dylan and Tek-2 aim their pistols at Eddie and Zoe.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

(flat, but sincere)

Rich, I'm sorry it has come down to this. But I know you. Once you get an idea in your head, you're hellbent.

He sighs, almost regretfully, but his decision is firm.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

(flat, but sincere)

I had no choice here, Rich.

CRATER NEST

Eddie and Zoe instinctively take a step back, sensing the gravity of the moment.

Joyce, with a cold smile, pushes a button on the vest. It HUMS ominously, a signal that the endgame has begun. As the vest hums, Joyce hovers, the power she wields now undeniable.

JOYCE

You should have left things alone.

Joyce flies off as Lennox stares at her, realizing too late the depth of her betrayal.

RIM OF CRATER

Joyce lands next to Delatour. She pecks Delatour on the cheek.

Delatour turns to Eddie.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
Masked. You're going to die like an
animal now. How about that? Where's
your mask? That would be fitting.

CRATER NEST

Lennox looks at Eddie with surprise to learn he's one of The Masked. But it also explains a lot...

EDDIE
(at Delatour)
You're just another poacher, Delatour.
That's all you are. Killing for the
sake of money.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
Spoken like a true fanatic.

Lennox looks at Delatour - fire in his eyes.

LENNOX
You'll pay for this one, Philippe.

Naomi, Dylan and Tek-2 are lined up like an execution squad.

Delatour smiles at Lennox.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
This is simply survival of the fittest,
ain't it, buddy?

LENNOX
Keep talking.

CRATER NEST

CLOSE ON EDDIE'S RIGHT HAND as he reaches for something in his pocket. Eddie nudges Lennox.

RIM OF CRATER

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
Kill 'em all and drop them in the pit.

CRATER NEST

Like a gunslinger, Eddie pulls out his repaired Weapons-Block. Hits it. All of their weapons SHUT DOWN with high-pitched *DESCENDING BEEPS*.

Lennox draws his six-shooter from his hidden holster.

RIM OF CRATER

Naomi pulls her trigger. Nothing.

LENNOX (O.S.)
Drop your weapons, now!

Dylan and Tek-2 fire. Nothing. They look at Eddie in anger.

NAOMI
You think we're scared of that antique?
What does it fire again, pebbles?

CRATER NEST

Lennox FIRES.

RIM OF CRATER

Naomi takes the bullet in the knee. She *SCREAMS*. Collapses.

NAOMI
You bastard! He just shot me with a
FUCKING ROCK!

CRATER NEST

Eddie is still aiming his Weapons-Block at them.

EDDIE
(whispering)
I'm not sure how long this thing's
gonna hold.

LENNOX
Drop 'em!

RIM OF CRATER

They reluctantly throw their weapons into the crater.

INSERT: WEAPONS-BLOCK

With a final squeak of electricity the damaged device dies.

BACK TO SCENE:

Eddie drops the dead Weapons-Block and SNATCHES UP THE WINCHESTER AND PISTOLS.

EXT. RIM OF CRATER - CONTINUOUS

Delatour's face goes white - he knows he's done for.

Joyce backs away.

CRATER NEST

Suddenly, a *HORRIFYING CRY* echoes in the crater.

Eddie and Lennox turn.

EXT. OPPOSITE RIM OF CRATER - CONTINUOUS

Looking down from the ledge are the TWO SIBLING HORNED CREATURES.

CRATER NEST

ZOE

Oh my God...

Lennox looks back up at the rim. Delatour is gone.

EDDIE

We've been tracked.

OPPOSITE RIM OF CRATER

The cubs jump into the crater.

CRATER NEST

EDDIE

We're dead meat here. To the jungle!

They race for the opposite side of the crater - adjacent to the jungle.

EXT. RIM OF CRATER - CONTINUOUS

Delatour and his cohorts have retreated away from the rim.

Naomi grabs a syringe-like tool from her jacket and holds it out to Dylan.

NAOMI

Jack me up.

Dylan grabs the device and presses it to her leg. She squints in pain. Waits. Sighs in relief.

Tek-2 kneels and places a metal hand on her wound.

CLOSE ON TEK-2'S HAND as he grips Naomi's knee. Hundreds of tiny toothpick-like strands that create his outer skin SPILL ONTO HER KNEE like a colony of ants, supplying her with a flexible compression bandage.

BACK TO SCENE:

TEK-2

*Next time, move eighteen percent faster
in the opposite direction by a minimum
of thirty-eight degrees--*

Naomi slaps Tek-2's metal cheek. He doesn't react.

DYLAN

What'd you do that for?

NAOMI

You want some, too?

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Plan B. Kill 'em all and drop 'em in the pit. This is turning into one Hell of a hunting accident.

NAOMI

I'll stop them at the beach before they reach the Hemingway.

(realization)

If those four-legged jellyfish kill them first, I'm still getting paid.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
You'll be well compensated.

EXT. RIM OF CRATER - CONTINUOUS

A trio of alloy motorcycles - lacking wheels - hover nearby. The Hover-Cycle tanks are etched with the authentic Harley-Davidson emblem. Rifle holsters are on the sides of each seat.

Naomi, Trek-2 and Dylan each mount a bike.

NAOMI
They're heading for the Hemingway. You
push 'em through the jungle. I'm taking
the beach.

Naomi revs the throttle.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
Let's hunt.

Naomi ZIPS OUT OF FRAME with a *HARLEY ROAR* as Joyce and Delatour board the Blackstar craft.

INT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Shuffling through the jagged, milky white jungle, Eddie can hear the roar of the bikes, but a thunderous *BANG* suddenly muffles them. He eyes the sky through the jungle foliage.

EDDIE'S POV

Through the dense foliage he spots an *APPROACHING STORM*. Dark clouds billow, creating a wall of blackness, contrasting greatly with the white surroundings.

Suddenly, a *STRAY MOON ROCK* with a tail of *LIGHTNING* breaks through the clouds. It energizes the already turbulent sky with violent electricity.

BACK TO SCENE:

The meteorite impacts a mile away with a *BOOM*.

EXT. JUNGLE'S EDGE - CONTINUOUS

Like two mad mountain gorillas, the *HORNED CREATURES PUNCH TREES* out of their way as they infiltrate the jungle.

SKY

Dylan and Tek-2 fly 50ft over the treetops. Electricity is in the air. They watch the creatures plow through the jungle.

DYLAN

Those things are gonna lead us straight to 'em.

EXT. JUNGLE - SAME TIME

Eddie and Zoe are running for their lives.

Lennox is out of sight.

Zoe, sprinting, panting.

ZOE

We're -- being -- hunted -- like -- animals.

Eddie, sprinting, panting. He grabs her hand, tugging Zoe to keep up.

EDDIE

(panting)

Hunters -- don't -- always -- get -- their -- prey.

SOUNDS of the JUNGLE BEING THRASHED close in.

Zoe looks back.

ZOE

We're not losing them...

EDDIE

Don't look back!

Eddie looks back.

EDDIE'S POV

ONE OF THE HORNED CREATURES is too close for comfort. Sixty feet away.

BACK TO SCENE:

Eddie stops. Zoe stops.

ZOE
What are you doing?!

The creature locks onto its prey. The race is over.

EDDIE
Trust me.

She grabs him by the arm.

ZOE
Come on!

The creature is 50ft away and closing.

EDDIE
We can't outrun it.

Eddie shoulders the Winchester. Aims.

It's 40ft away now.

Zoe paralyzed with uncertainty. Fight or flight?

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Get out of here!

After one final look of fear, Zoe runs off.

EDDIE'S POV

He has a perfect shot of the Horned Creature. He FIRES. The creature instinctively DUCKS. The laser grazes its shoulder. It *CRIES OUT* in pain.

BACK TO SCENE:

LENNOX
Give me the gun!

Eddie takes aim again.

Lennox watches as the creature gets closer.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
Never aim high on a biped. They duck.
Wait 'til it gets close.

Lennox forces Eddie to shoulder the Winchester correctly, like a father teaching his son.

30ft away.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
Squeeze the trigger till you feel
resistance, and hold.

Eddie holds, waiting for the General's order with newfound respect and compassion for the man.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
Wait--

LENNOX'S POV

THE HORNED CREATURE is literally on top of them.

BACK TO SCENE:

LENNOX
That's close enough.

Eddie FIRES. The laser tunnels right through the creature's leg. It *CRASHES* to the ground.

The creature moves erratically on the jungle floor. Its head is overrun by SPARKS.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
Finish it!

A moment of silence. Eddie looks at the Horned Creature. They're interrupted by a *LOUD CRASH*.

The other sibling is moving in on them, fast.

Eddie and Lennox look at each other. They're fucked.

They break into a sprint.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
THIS WAY! I found a river. It'll take
us to the beach. We can use the sea-
transport to make it back to the ship.

CLOSE ON THE CREATURE. It comes to a halt, standing over its wounded sibling as it slowly rises, LIMPING with its entire left side sporadically paralyzed.

They resume their hunt.

DYLAN AND TEK-2 SWOOP INTO FRAME and maneuver their Hover-Cycles into the channel cleared by the charging cubs.

EXT. JUNGLE - SAME TIME

Eddie and Lennox race through the jungle, out of breath.

LENNOX

Why -- did -- you -- hesitate?

EDDIE

What -- are -- you -- talking -- about?

LENNOX

You -- could -- have -- finished -- it.

EDDIE

I'm -- not -- like -- you.

LENNOX

Your -- father -- would -- be -- proud.

Eddie's not sure what he just heard with all the running, but he thinks he heard right.

EXT. RIVERBED - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie and Lennox arrive at a dried-up riverbed. It's concealed by a canopy of foliage, forming a tunnel through the jungle.

Zoe is there, anxiously waiting, pacing back and forth.

ZOE

Now what?

EDDIE

We can move faster down this river, but those things won't stop.

ZOE

Even if we take care of them, we'll have to deal with Delatour's goons--

LENNOX

Which are probably following those bloodhounds straight to us.

Eddie looks at them and smiles - he's got a plan. He pulls out Dylan's laser pistol.

EDDIE

Zoe, I want you to run down this river
and stop before you reach the beach.
I'm sure there's a welcome party
waiting for us.

Zoe takes the gun.

ZOE

What are you gonna do?

Eddie smiles at Zoe and turns to Lennox.

EDDIE

Ever had a hunting dog? Mine was Max.

LENNOX

Ah, so we flush them out.

Eddie grabs Lennox by his artificial arm.

EDDIE

Before we go get ourselves killed, tell
me what the Hell is going on. Is this
all about Joyce? And what about the
clones?

LENNOX

You want to talk about this now? Do I
have to remind you we got two half-ton
monsters and two idiots on our tail.

Eddie stares him down.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

Fine. What I'll tell you right now is
if Interworld isn't slowed the fuck
down, all animals will go extinct. That
was not the goal.

(eyeing Eddie)

Eddie. Man is the nastiest predator of
them all. I think you would agree.

EDDIE

(fishing)

What do you mean extinct? That's what
the clones are for.

Zoe claps. The men look at her.

ZOE

Guys! Let's go! I really need to get
the Hell off this planet. Now!

EXT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie and Lennox running TOWARD THE TWO-HORNED CREATURES.

EDDIE

Remember, circle two hundred yards out,
converging on their trail.

They run off. Eddie to the left, Lennox to the right.

THE CREATURES reach the area where they last spotted Eddie and Lennox and SPLIT UP, following their prey into the jungle.

EXT. FRESH CHANNEL - CONTINUOUS

Dylan and Tek-2 are riding their bikes down the channel made by the Horned Creature - wide enough to ride side by side.

Suddenly, a few hundred feet ahead, Lennox and Eddie simultaneously break out of the jungle on opposite sides.

Dylan goes wide-eyed.

DYLAN

SHIT!

He hits the gas - heading straight for them.

Tek-2 is left in the dust.

Eddie and Lennox stop in the middle of the channel.

Lennox looks at the incoming cycle.

LENNOX

Ready?

EDDIE

Yes! Let's go!

They turn and run away from the cycles, back down the channel.

Dylan and Tek-2 suddenly find themselves on a COLLISION COURSE with the two creatures as they EMERGE from Eddie and Lennox's exit points.

Dylan's cycle brutally connects with the first Horned Creature. The cycle rips it in half. The disemboweled creature whirls mid-air from the momentum and crashes to the ground. Dylan's cycle SPINS OUT OF CONTROL. He's THROWN from it as the bike PLUMMETS to the ground and EXPLODES.

CLOSE ON TEK-2 lagging behind, he only has time to swerve around the second creature, but it manages to SWAT TEK-2 OFF THE CYCLE.

Tek-2 crashes to the ground.

CLOSE ON DYLAN as he stumbles to his feet. Bloodied. Dazed.

He finds Tek-2.

DYLAN

Metal Head! Guard me!

CLOSE ON TEK-2 as he attempts to stand. Thousands of his toothpick-like elements pour out of his torn torso like blood.

Surprised to see its prey still alive, the Horned Creature pins Tek-2 with its foot. It grabs his metallic head and tries to rip it off in one rapid movement.

Eddie and Lennox stop to eye the chaos.

EDDIE

This should keep everyone busy.

They head back into the jungle.

With the creature preoccupied with Tek-2, Dylan limps over to Tek-2's cycle.

He pulls out a weapon from the seat holster: A HEAVY DUTY SNIPER RIFLE with a strange scope.

The creature has finished ripping Tek-2 to pieces.

It turns to Dylan.

Dylan pulls a foot-long silver DART-LIKE round from the side of the rifle and inserts it into the gun chamber.

DYLAN

(at rifle)

Slow spin penetration, on impact.

He FIRES!

The Horned Creature takes the dart in the neck.

DYLAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

How do you like that, FREAK?!

The dart SPINS, SCREWING itself into the creature's neck. Confused and in severe pain, the creature WHINES. The dart, finished with its intrusion, BEEPS.

The Horned Creature goes for Dylan.

DYLAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

DETONATE!

The creature's neck is VAPORIZED with a sharp BLAST. Its severed head falls to the ground while CRACKING into a deformed heap of nature. The body - still standing - CONTRACTS VIOLENTLY, becoming hideously disfigured and soiling the jungle with its translucent innards.

CLOSE ON DYLAN watching this horrifying sight with a grin.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

Nasty.

Dylan inserts another dart round and eyes the scope. Re-aims in the direction of our fleeing heroes.

RIFLE (V.O.)

Jungle-Dart inserted. Specify target.

DYLAN'S POV - SCOPE

DYLAN (O.S.)

Human. Running - for their lives.

DIRECTIONAL CROSS HAIRS APPEAR and aid Dylan.

RIFLE (V.O.)

Target search, estimated distance: four hundred eleven meters. Four hundred twelve meters...

BACK TO SCENE:

DYLAN

Acquire target, and fire!

The other WOUNDED SIBLING - minus its legs - uses its arms to raise itself off the jungle floor directly behind Dylan. With a final lunge, it SMACKS DYLAN'S HEAD CLEAN OFF HIS NECK.

CLOSE ON THE RIFLE as it topples to the ground.

RIFLE (V.O.)

Target acquired.

With a *THUD*, the rifle FIRES.

CLOSE ON THE DART as it pierces EVERYTHING in its path.

EXT. RIVERBED - CONTINUOUS

Zoe sprints. She stops and turns around. Hesitates. Runs. Freezes in her tracks again.

CLOSE ON ZOE with an expression of impending doom as a *WHISTLING* CLOSES IN.

THUD!

Her natural beauty is all but gone as her face contorts in pain: the dart has found its specified target.

EXT. OCEAN - SAME TIME

The Blackstar X-37 SKIMS ACROSS THE OCEAN and lands beside The Hemingway. Delatour and Joyce get out and board Lennox's ship.

EXT. RIVERBED - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie and Lennox arrive at the dried-up riverbed.

EDDIE

Where is she?

There's a trail of blood on the otherwise white ground.

Eddie tracks the blood trail. Just around the bend is Zoe. She's lying on her stomach. The dart is lodged in her back, sandwiched between two ribs. It's slowly TURNING CLOCKWISE.

Eddie and Lennox drop down beside her.

LENNOX

It's a Damocles Dart. It didn't get its final order. Hold her, Eddie.

EDDIE

What's this thing supposed to do?

LENNOX

Explode on order. If you attempt to remove it. Designed for dirty tactics.

Zoe lets out a *CRY*.

EDDIE

Hang in there, Zoe.

Zoe looks into Eddie's eyes. They share a moment of intense uncertainty. Will they live? Is this really it?

Eddie looks in his cargo jacket. He pulls out a small pen-like injection device - identical to Naomi's. Eddie injects Zoe.

LENNOX

Hold her.

With his holographic hand, Lennox grips the dart.

ZOE

Do it!

Lennox pulls the dart out of her back. She *SCREAMS*. It *EXPLODES*. A ball of fire gobbles up Lennox's holographic limb. The shock wave throws him onto Eddie.

INSERT: LENNOX'S HOLOGRAPHIC ARM

It's immediately glitches out of existence.

BACK TO SCENE:

Lennox forces the excruciating pain out of his mind.

Lennox sighs and lies on his back.

EDDIE

You okay?

LENNOX

Fine. How is she?

EDDIE

She fainted. Good news is I can't hear our pursuers anymore.

LENNOX

Let's stay put till nightfall, or we'll be sitting ducks on the beach.

Eddie leans back on a tree and watches over Zoe lying beside him recovering.

Lennox sits up and looks at Eddie.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

You want to know why this is happening, don't you? You want proof, right?

EDDIE

Yes. So what about the Eco-Clones?

LENNOX

I was planning to slow Interworld down with a shit-ton of new "Territory Freeze Regulations" until I could make a move. Without 'em, Philippe will try to expand faster than the universe. And he'll succeed. He's taken full advantage of the unique novelty, and then some. He's always been greedy.

(beat)

We're on the same team, Eddie. Believe it or not.

EDDIE

Why are you here then?

LENNOX

Buying time. Gotta pretend everything is copacetic until I can prove it.

EDDIE

Prove what, exactly?

Lennox looks up at the violent moons through the foliage.

LENNOX

For millennia, hunting exhibitions were necessary to survive. Today people call it a sport, but it's much more than that, Eddie - it's our only chance to truly be one with nature, where it all began, at the grassroots, the core of our very existence.

Lennox lowers his head - disturbed by an itching thought.

EDDIE

Go on.

LENNOX

Not only did Philippe violate centuries of hunting tradition and turn it into a trip to the mall, but he didn't mind robbing Mother Nature in the process.

EDDIE
 (unwavering)
 Is there something wrong with the clones?

Lennox looks Eddie dead in the eyes.

LENNOX
 Something wrong with the clones? Yes. They die, and NOT by hunters.

EDDIE
 The tech doesn't work, right?

LENNOX
 Tech is fine. It doesn't matter what we kill. "Replacement" is nothing more than a catchphrase Delatour made up.
 (point-blank)
 The Eco-Clones are killed by their OWN HERD within days of being dispatched. Extinction is NOT a thing of the past.
 (beat)
 Mother Nature knows a fake.
 (beat)
 It's simple. It's not working and it must be stopped. It's dishonorable to continue down this path.

Eddie is beside himself, speechless.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
 Take first watch.

EXT. BEACH - DUSK

The sounds of *BREAKING WAVES* fill the air.

Naomi is hiding behind a sand dune on the edge of the surf.

NAOMI
 (into mic)
 Come in, fucknut. I need intel here.

NAOMI'S POV

She tries to track HEAT SIGNATURES, but there's a lot of LIFE in the jungle.

NAOMI (O.S.)
 Delatour come in. I think Dylan's gone.
 His cut is mine now.

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - CORRIDOR - DAY

Delatour and Joyce walk down the ship's elaborate corridor.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
 (into mic)
 Stay on the beach, Naomi. I know the
 man. He'll wait for nightfall to
 attack. Ping me when you spot him.

NAOMI (V.O.)
 I'll ping you when he's dead.

EXT. SAVANNA - SAME TIME

The storm has grown.

Black clouds wrestle each other as the dark mass moves over
 the terrain. Lightning crawls across the storm's belly.
 Pounding *SOUNDS of THUNDER* approach.

It starts to POUR.

EXT. BEACH - EVENING

Naomi shields herself from the downpour with her jacket.

NAOMI
 Damn it, Delatour!

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Joyce looks at Delatour - frightened for the first time.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR
 Wait for me in the Blackstar.

JOYCE
 Philippe, why don't we just get the
 Hell out of here and let them all rot
 on this dump?

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

He's too resourceful for that. I need to see him dead with my own eyes. We're staying, and we're hunting.

She turns away from him.

Delatour grabs her arm and spins her around.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

Come here.

He goes to kiss her, but she pushes him away and leaves.

JOYCE (O.S.)

What a clusterfuck.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RIVERBED - NIGHT

Our trio is huddled beneath the thick cover of the forest canopy, mostly shielded from the pouring rain. Lennox is fast asleep. The sound of raindrops trickling down the leaves creates a steady rhythm.

A single drop lands on Zoe's eye, stirring her awake. She finds herself beside Eddie, who hasn't moved from her side.

ZOE

(drowsy)

Eddie...

EDDIE

(reassuring)

You're going to be fine, Zoe.

ZOE

What happened?

EDDIE

You got shot. Richard saved your life.

ZOE

(anxious)

Are we safe?

EDDIE

For now.

Zoe tries to sit up, but the pain forces her back down. She groans, resting her head on Eddie's lap.

After a pause, curiosity and apprehension mixed in her tone.

ZOE
Can I ask you a personal question?

EDDIE
(knowing smile)
Shoot.

Zoe hesitates, gathering her thoughts. After a tense beat, she finally speaks.

ZOE
So you're one of The Masked?

Eddie's expression tightens, and he breaks eye contact, confirming her suspicion.

EDDIE
Yes. It's the reason I'm still here.

ZOE
(confused)
What do you mean?

EDDIE
(with conviction)
I needed proof.

Suddenly, a flash of LIGHTNING strikes too close for comfort, illuminating the forest. The boom shakes the ground, and Lennox stirs, approaching quickly.

LENNOX
(concerned)
Zoe, you good?

Zoe stands, wincing but determined. She looks at Eddie, something in his eyes finally making sense to her.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
(firm)
Zoe?

ZOE
Let's finish this and get home.

The three of them stand together, the rain still falling as they prepare to face whatever comes next.

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - TROPHY ROOM - NIGHT

Delatour is sitting in Lennox's trophy room. He grabs a shotgun off the wall.

EXT. RIVERBED - NIGHT

The jungle is brightly illuminated by constant bursts of lightning, despite the darkness.

Eddie and Lennox prop up Zoe as they walk down the riverbed.

LENNOX

What the Hell happened to this planet?

EDDIE

The meteorites, I think. They're from the moons, superconductive rocks pummeling this planet for millions of years. They must have altered the planet's electrical balance. I think they induced magnetic storms and mutated the entire ecosystem.

ZOE

I hope I never see this place again.

Immediately after a CRACK OF LIGHTNING, Zoe points to something on the edge of the river.

Eddie and Lennox turn, trying to determine what she's pointing at. In disbelief, they spot it.

A MAN-MADE ROAD is parallel to the riverbed.

EDDIE

We're not in Kansas anymore.

EXT. MAN-MADE ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

The team is standing on the road, amazed. It's littered with marijuana roaches.

ZOE

Anyone smell that?

The stench is so foul, they cover their noses.

The road ends with a sudden drop-off to a giant crater punching a hole in the jungle.

EXT. ECO-CLONE GRAVEYARD - CONTINUOUS

The crater is the size of Dodger Stadium. Innumerable CARCASSES OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE from across the universe fill it. Multicolored hides glisten in the rain.

The three are speechless.

Eddie looks upon the lifeless bodies. Having spent a year with most of these animals, he's suddenly struck with the heavy sadness that only comes from losing a pet.

Eddie suddenly recognizes one of the dead animals. Its hide is PURE WHITE, standing out from the rest. It's one of the SNOW LEOPARD species Eddie has grown close to. Its beautiful blue eyes are open, staring back at him, void of life.

FLASHBACK:**EXT. ALIEN WORLD - MOUNTAIN PEAK - NIGHT**

A snowstorm brews into a blizzard as the sky swirls behind it with hues of green, an AURORA BOREALIS.

Eddie finishes setting up a tent. A campfire *CRACKLES* and an Interworld Scout Shuttle hovers nearby.

SCREEN TEXT:

Against a curtain of snow, the following text types on.

TWO MONTHS EARLIER

PLANET 3: EPSILON TAURI C

SCOUT DAY: 192 - DATE: 07.11.2221 - TERRITORY: 8

The text dissipates as our white SNOW LEOPARD steps out of a curtain of snow, its big blue eyes glowing in the dark. This big cat is as stoic as they come.

The white leopard acknowledges Eddie with a look of trust and lies down on the snowy surface beside him - his extraterrestrial pet, one of many.

Eddie places his hand on the back of the big cat and pets him, wiping fresh snow from its back.

They bask in the heat of the campfire, ignoring the storm.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - MOUNTAIN PEAK - MORNING

Crack of dawn. Ten degrees below zero. The morning sun shines a spotlight on Eddie's camp, bathing the area in a golden hue. Several SNOW-COVERED MOUNTAIN PEAKS can be seen in the far-off distance, glowing in the sun.

Eddie steps out of the tent and takes a deep breath, inhaling the fresh air, just as his father would do.

He then packs up and boards the shuttle.

It lifts off, VIOLENTLY BLOWING SNOW EVERYWHERE.

The Snow Leopard has returned to say goodbye.

Eddie hovers to a halt. Snow pummels the animal.

With regret for having missed saying goodbye, it *CRIES OUT*. A unique sound that can only be described as an expression of sorrow echoes through the mountaintops.

EXT. INTERWORLD SAFARI SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON EDDIE through the cockpit window. With all the snow, it's hard to see him behind the thick glass. But it's clear this saddens him.

The leopard disappears behind a blanket of snow as Eddie ascends high above the mountain peak and into the atmosphere.

LENNOX (PRE-LAP)

You alright?

END FLASHBACK

CLOSE ON EDDIE as he looks back at the mound of dead animals, eyeing the DEAD SNOW LEOPARD one last time.

EDDIE

How did you know?

LENNOX

Let's just say I crashed a few Territory closures this past year. Undetected. All the clones were dead by then and retrieved. But I didn't know where he was shipping them off to. The retrieval crafts were untraceable. And I was dumb enough to tell Joyce. She used to be on my side, you know.

(MORE)

LENNOX (CONT'D)

(realization)

I couldn't take my eyes off her, but she's got a black hole for a heart.

EDDIE

Can't argue with that. Sorry, Lennox.

Eddie fires off a series of shots from his camera. Proof. He climbs into the pit.

ZOE

Where are you going? You've got your proof now, Eddie.

Eddie smiles and grabs Zoe's hand.

EDDIE

Shortcut. Come on.

EXT. ECO-CLONE GRAVEYARD - MOMENTS LATER

They make their way over the carcasses and across the landfill, scaling the pile of dead animals to reach the jungle. The rain isn't making it any easier.

Suddenly, the dead ground MOVES. Zoe FALLS BACK. A mound of flesh BULGES between them. Eddie reaches for her, but it's too late. They're separated.

Zoe rolls over carcasses until she crashes right through a giant decomposing ribcage.

Directly in front of Eddie - from under the rising mass of flesh - erupts a massive, transparent COLUMN FILLED WITH TWISTING VERTEBRA.

EDDIE

Don't move.

Slithering out of the carcasses is an endless transparent SNAKE with the diameter of a tree trunk.

With its cobra-like head towering 20ft above Eddie and Lennox, it unveils its proper form: all its vertebrae UNFOLD OUTWARD, revealing dozens of LEGS. A CENTIPEDE-SNAKE.

Thunder resonates. The air fills with strands of electricity.

Like a lightning rod, the Centipede-Snake catches the static. Something awe-inspiring happens: it FLICKERS TO LIFE WITH ITS NATURAL COLOR OF CRIMSON. Electricity is the catalyst for this planet's hidden beauty.

LENNOX

Shoot it!

Eddie shoulders the Winchester. But hesitates.

The Centipede-Snake eyes Eddie.

EDDIE

Lennox, don't move.

Displaying almost human curiosity, it lowers its head close to Eddie's face. Eddie, frozen, stares back at it.

The serpent creature is close enough to touch. IT *EXHALES* A WET BREATH, SPRAYING EDDIE IN THE FACE.

EDDIE LUNGES FORWARD WITH A FORCEFUL, "BOO!"

Startled, the Centipede-Snake recoils in fear and SLINKS OUT OF SIGHT.

Lennox is flabbergasted.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Read about it in National Geographic.

They run down to Zoe and pull her from the belly of a decaying ribcage. She's covered in guts. They help her out and begin trekking up the hill again.

EDGE OF GRAVEYARD

They enter the jungle.

LENNOX

Eddie, I'm not all bad you know. That back there is horrible. That's wrong and Philippe is responsible and should pay. This is not true hunting. That's the proof I was looking for.

EDDIE

But what is with you and hunting?

Lennox attempts to answer, but Eddie sincerely asks a more pressing question.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Don't you see these animals for who they are at all? They're not just prey to trophies. They're much more than that fate.

LENNOX

I know where you're coming from, Eddie.
I do believe me. I've had similar
conversations with your father.

(beat)

This is why this safari was going to be
my last.

Lennox places a hand on Eddie's shoulder.

LENNOX (CONT'D)

A course correction, if you will.

(beat)

Plus, I have enough trophies.

EXT. BEACH - SAME TIME

Naomi continues to study the edge of the jungle with her
scope. She spots three limping HEAT SIGNATURES.

NAOMI

(into mic)

Dylan, if you're alive, you ain't
gettin' shit!

She sashes across the surf and plants herself behind a dune
facing their position.

EXT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Our trio reach the jungle's edge and hide behind a tree.

Eddie looks at Zoe.

EDDIE

Stay here, we'll be back, don't worry.

ZOE

(sarcastic)

Don't worry. Sure. Got it. Thanks.

Lennox checks his "Smith & Wesson."

LENNOX

Listen, just cover me.

EDDIE

Got it.

Eddie looks at Zoe. Her eyes reveal concern about their plan.

Lennox suddenly turns to Eddie and grabs his shoulder.

LENNOX

You're a good man, Eddie...like your father. I wish he could see you now.

This lands on Eddie hard.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. CAMPSITE - KENYA, EAST AFRICA - NIGHT

The OLD-FASHIONED TENT, but lit now by Earth's full moon rather than the waking sun, paints a peaceful picture of the Wessons' last night together as a family.

We find Eddie and his father, Rick, sitting in camping chairs around a fire. They talk in low voices to avoid waking ten-year-old Emily, who is fast asleep inside the tent.

Max is asleep by Eddie's side.

Eddie fiddles with his film camera resting on his lap.

Wrapping paper litters the ground around his camping chair.

RICK

Happy birthday, son. I know it's tomorrow, but I couldn't wait.

(loving)

Mom wanted you to have it. You're a born shutterbug like her.

Eddie gazes up from the camera he holds preciously, his eyes filled with a mix of sadness and gratitude.

EDDIE

I don't know what to say, Dad.

RICK

You don't have to say anything, Eddie.

Eddie looks down at the camera, and maybe it's the glare of moonlight, but the flash of his Mother's loving face graces the lense for a subtle moment.

RICK (CONT'D)

Your mother loved you and Em' very much. She wanted me to tell you two everyday. I'm sorry I haven't.

Always in an effort to emulate his father, Eddie remains stoic, for a fourteen-year-old, and calmly utters...

EDDIE

It's okay, Dad. I know you do.

RICK

You're a good son, Eddie.

END FLASHBACK

Lennox slaps Eddie on the back! Not knowing it, he's holding his camera in his hands and almost drops it.

LENNOX

You here, or what?

EDDIE

Yeah.

LENNOX

Thought I lost you there.

EDDIE

No, I'm here, believe me.

Eddie hands his camera to Zoe who takes it and smiles back with a "go get 'em" grin.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Lennox jumps into view.

NAOMI

The one-armed wonder.

Lennox runs in a zigzag formation across the beach.

Surprised, Naomi tries to lock on Lennox.

Catching her off guard, Eddie emerges from the jungle and FIRES at Naomi's dune. A LASER BEAM GRAZES HER FOREHEAD. Naomi stumbles back - holding her bloody head.

She turns to fire at Eddie, but at that instant Lennox FIRES. Bullets whiz by Naomi.

Lennox dives. Rolls. Hops up. Jumps behind another white dune. This is his Normandy.

Eddie does the same - mirroring Lennox - hiding behind an adjacent dune. This is his boot camp.

Everyone is being pelted by rain as barking *THUNDER* rumbles.

Lennox is about to leap over his dune - a tiger ready to pounce. He looks over to Eddie.

LENNOX
(whispering)
When I make my move, cover me!

Eddie gives him an "okay" nod.

Naomi's bleeding badly from the head now. She aims her gun at Lennox's dune.

NAOMI
Wrong move.

Naomi FIRES FOUR HEAVY ROUNDS.

The lasers penetrate the sand, MELTING IT INSTANTANEOUSLY.

A *SCREAM* is heard from behind the dune. Lennox stands. His left side is covered with DROPLETS OF MOLTEN SAND that sizzle in the rain.

EDDIE
Christ! Get down!

He hurdles the dune and sprints for Naomi, a mad look on his face. His body is SMOKING - as if he's just bolted from Hell.

Naomi can't believe her eyes. She aims her rifle again.

Eddie jumps into view and runs for his ally while firing, causing Naomi to change positions frequently.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Lennox! Get down!

Racing for Naomi, Lennox aims his revolver...

NAOMI
DIE already!

They FIRE at the SAME TIME...

A bullet strikes Naomi in the forehead, BLOWING A HOLE IN HER BLOODY SKULL.

Her laser grazes Lennox's cheek, slashing his face.

Naomi falls backward into the *CRASHING WAVES* and she's swallowed by the surf.

Lennox stumbles to his knees. Exhausted. In pain. His "Smith & Wesson" drops to the sand.

Eddie runs up to him, Winchester in hand. He looks at the General and checks to see if he's in one piece.

LENNOX
Nice work, soldier.

Eddie walks over to Naomi's Harley Hover-Cycle.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
Where you goin'?

Eddie hops on it and revs the throttle.

EDDIE
Follow my lead.

The Harley rips across the beach and races toward the violent ocean, where The Hemingway hovers.

CLOSE ON THE "SMITH & WESSON." The gun lays in the white sand. Lennox picks it up. Swings the cylinder open. EMPTY.

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - TROPHY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Delatour sits on one of the leather couches in the decorative trophy room. The laser shotgun rests on the cushion beside him. He's drinking Lennox's finest cognac from the bottle and stares at a framed picture in his hands.

INSERT: FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH

Delatour and Lennox are standing like two proud brothers. Squeezed between them is Joyce. Lennox is dressed in jungle fatigues. Joyce and Delatour are wearing designer safari gear. Each has a foot on the ribcage of the GAZELLE-LIKE MASCOT.

BACK TO SCENE:

Delatour hears something. He puts the framed picture down, takes a hefty sip of the cognac, and grabs the shotgun.

EDDIE APPEARS AT THE DOORWAY, his Winchester at the ready.

EDDIE

Put the shotgun on the floor. Slowly.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Right on time, Wesson.

Delatour points the shotgun at the coffee table, revealing a WEAPONS-BLOCK pointed at the entrance. It's FLASHING.

Eddie pulls the trigger. Nothing. He drops the Winchester.

EDDIE

I've seen the graveyard. You do realize
you're wiping out ecosystems, right?

Delatour rises from the couch and cocks the shotgun.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Plenty of ecosystems out there.

(beat)

Adios...Masked.

Eddie throws the Winchester at Delatour who bats it away with his shotgun.

Eddie DODGES!

Delatour FIRES. LASER PELLETS blaze from the barrel.

The nearest trophy diorama EXPLODES. The stuffed Creature topples out, peppered with smoking holes.

Delatour continues to fire. Shotgun blasts RIP APART each diorama as Eddie races to the ever-changing safety point.

As Eddie passes the one EMPTY TROPHY CELL, a laser pellet CATCHES HIM in the shoulder. He COLLAPSES through the glass, and into the cell...

TROPHY CELL

Delatour approaches. Aims.

LENNOX (O.S.)

Step away, Philippe.

Delatour spins around.

ON LENNOX

With his remaining arm, he stands in the doorway, aiming the empty "Smith & Wesson" at Joyce's head...

LENNOX

Drop it!

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Don't do it!

JOYCE

He doesn't have the balls.

Delatour aims his shotgun at Lennox. It's a standoff.

Eddie quietly gets up as Delatour steps closer to Lennox and Joyce. He's bleeding badly from the broken glass.

Delatour and Lennox evaluate one another. *Predator? Prey?*

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

You're bluffing -- you'd never kill
Joyce. You're not that insane. Close,
but not quite that far gone.

Before Delatour can finish, Lennox retreats behind the door. Delatour FIRES. The blast vaporizes a chunk of the door frame, hitting Joyce in the chest. She drops lifeless to the floor.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

JOYCE?!

EDDIE

Jesus, man!

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Look what you did, Rich! Look!

Eddie jumps into the open and dives behind the trophy room centerpiece: the Interworld Gazelle-like mascot with three sharp horns.

Delatour swings around - BLASTING AWAY - decapitates the mascot. It topples onto Eddie, PINS HIM...

Lennox quickly holsters his revolver and CHARGES Delatour from behind. He grabs the shotgun barrel with his only hand.

Delatour overpowers the crippled General, grabs the shotgun with both hands. He slams the butt of his gun AGAINST the General's temple, sending him crashing THROUGH a coffee table.

Eddie extricates himself from under the trophy and peers at Lennox. Now, both men, separated by the crumbled trophy, are under Delatour's gun.

PHILIPPE DELATOURE (CONT'D)

What a sorry pair you two are.

Eddie reaches into his pocket. Lennox notices.

The General slowly removes the "Smith & Wesson" from his holster and points it at Delatour. The famed Eco-Cloner laughs.

Lennox quickly tosses the revolver to Eddie, CYLINDER OPEN.

Eddie catches the .44 in mid-air. Lennox's final BULLET (the one he gave him earlier) is in his free hand. He drops it into the chamber and snaps the cylinder shut.

Delatour turns, confused.

Eddie FIRES!

CUT TO:

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - CARGO BAY - LATER

Delatour is roped to a chair. He's badly wounded and bleeding from multiple wounds. He stares at Lennox and Eddie with fury in his eyes. The two are in mid-conversation.

EDDIE

Now what?

Lennox thinks. Delatour coughs up blood as he speaks.

PHILIPPE DELATOURE

You're gonna have to kill me, that's what.

Delatour coughs up more blood.

PHILIPPE DELATOURE (CONT'D)

I will destroy you BOTH!

Delatour squirms in the chair, a vain attempt to free himself from the ropes.

For a brief moment, there's a smirk on Lennox's face.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)

You'd never kill an unarmed man, Rich.
You don't think that I know you after
all these years?

(eyes Eddie)

And you, Wesson, you're no murderer.

LENNOX

Welp, WE'RE not going to kill you.

Lennox turns to Eddie and gives him the biggest grin yet - a rare sight on the General's face.

EDDIE

What are you thinking?

EXT. THE HEMINGWAY - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The Hemingway hovers 30ft over the clone graveyard. An ELECTRIC STORM IS HEADED THEIR WAY as rolling clouds spit lightning. The powerful wind is 40mph.

The sound of a *HYDRAULIC WHINE*...

The *BOTTOM CARGO BAY DOORS* open...

Below, the mound of dead wildlife is *DIMLY LIT* by The Hemingway's underside *BLAST LIGHTS*.

INT. THE HEMINGWAY - CARGO BAY - CONTINUOUS

Lennox is standing directly behind Delatour. The wind is fierce, filling the cargo bay with its very own hurricane. Their hair blows wildly in the wind.

Through the bay doors, it looks like a steep drop.

EDDIE

I don't know how I feel about this.

LENNOX

He dug his own grave.

Delatour takes a look at the drop.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR

Go to Hell!

No word from Lennox and Eddie. Only the sound of whipping winds fills the cargo bay.

Delatour's got no more tricks or words to set him free.

PHILIPPE DELATOUR (CONT'D)
Well, let's get on with it then.

LENNOX
Yeah, let's.

Zoe enters and stops in her tracks. She knows what is about to happen and doesn't know how she feels about it either.

LENNOX (CONT'D)
You'll be judged by nature, not me.
(genuine)
Goodbye, old friend.

Lennox places his BOOT ON DELATOUR'S CHAIR and SHOVES.

EXT. ECO-CLONE GRAVEYARD - CONTINUOUS

The famed Bio-Replicator drops 30ft through the air and lands on top of the mound of carcasses. The chair BREAKS APART, freeing Delatour. He tumbles into the INNARDS of a creature the size of an ELEPHANT.

The cargo bay doors close and the ship blasts through the storm and vanishes.

The area is pelted with stinging rain.

LIGHTNING STRIKES nearby.

For the first time, Delatour is scared.

The mound of deceased animals suddenly bulges as if something underneath has been disturbed. Clones topple over, making way for something big.

The CENTIPEDE-SNAKE from earlier slithers out from under the pile. It rises high in the air, expanding its many legs.

DELATOUR TRIES TO RUN, but in an instant, the Centipede-Snake swallows him whole. This thing is as fast as lightning.

Delatour can be seen through the Centipede-Snake's translucent body as he screams and attempts to claw his way out.

Suddenly, ZAPPING STRANDS OF LIGHTNING inside the serpent DISINTEGRATES Delatour. A beat later, it spits out his bones.

DELATOUR'S SKULL rolls and STOPS, eerily looking AT CAMERA.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE SWILL & GRILL - INTERWORLD TERMINAL - SPACE

SCREEN TEXT:

ONE WEEK LATER

Unlike the last time we were here, the place is empty. Eddie and Zoe are talking to his sister, Emily. Eddie is happy, unmindful of the scrapes on his face.

EMILY

Eddie, I got you something...

Emily disappears behind the bar.

ZOE

I love your sister, Eddie. Is it just the two of you?

EDDIE

Yes.

Emily returns with a carrying case the size of a dog carrier. She places it on the bar. It is a dog-carrying case, a puppy-carrying case. Emily opens it, beaming.

A YOUNG BEAGLE bursts out, runs across the bar, and jumps into Eddie's arms. Eddie can't contain his excitement, nearly welling up. With gratitude, he looks back at his sister.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(softly)

Thank you...

Emily looks at her brother with eyes of happiness. Not another word needs to be spoken between the two.

ENTRANCE

Lennox enters, sporting a new holographic arm. He's carrying something under his actual arm.

BAR

At the bar, Emily lines up four shots.

EMILY
 (re: Lennox)
 Is that him?

Eddie glances over his shoulder at Lennox, his expression softening slightly—a stark contrast to the guarded man he once was.

EDDIE
 (smiling)
 That's him.

EMILY
 I bet Dad liked him.

EDDIE
 I bet he did.

Lennox reaches the bar and slaps Eddie on the back, his new arm humming softly against Eddie's shoulder. He sets a WOODEN BOX on the counter, sliding it towards Eddie with a grin.

LENNOX
 Got something for you, Wesson.

INSERT: WOODEN BOX

Eddie opens the box carefully, revealing a vintage "Smith & Wesson" revolver nestled in black velvet. The craftsmanship is exquisite, a relic from a different time. Six indentations meant for bullets are empty.

BACK TO SCENE:

EDDIE
 No bullets?

Lennox laughs heartily - his first genuine laugh since they met. The sound is infectious, and even Eddie can't help but chuckle.

Their moment is interrupted by something on the NEWS that catches Emily's attention. She grabs the remote, turning up the volume. All eyes shift to the wide-screen holo-display above the bar.

INSERT: WIDESCREEN HOLO-DISPLAY

A NEWS ANCHOR sits behind her desk, shuffling through cue sheets with practiced ease.

NEWS ANCHOR

It has been one week since Philippe Delatour, the CEO of the now-defunct Interworld Safari, was reported missing.

(beat)

Authorities have no leads as of the time of this broadcast.

(beat)

Now, let's go downtown, where a news conference is underway.

CUT TO:

EXT. INTERWORLD SAFARI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

At a podium, RED ZEBRA stands tall, flanked by a dozen MASKED members. The crowd of SPECTATORS and REPORTERS presses closer. Red Zebra's presence is commanding and sincere.

RED ZEBRA

Today marks a beautiful day for the universe.

Red Zebra removes her mask, revealing a face embroiled with conviction and genuine happiness, like a boxer after winning a world championship.

RED ZEBRA (CONT'D)

(impassioned)

Nature should not suffer for the sake of Human progress.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SWILL & GRILL - CONTINUOUS

Our team looks away from the display and at each other.

Emily pours four shots.

Zoe raises her glass, her eyes locking with Eddie's.

ZOE

To the wild, and those who protect it.

Eddie nods, lifting his glass in return. Lennox and Emily follow suit, the moment solidifying their shared bond.

EDDIE

To the wild!

LENNOX

To the wild!

EMILY

To the wild!

They all down their shots. Eddie's new Beagle BARKS happily, and the team shares a moment of camaraderie, their connection stronger than ever.

THE END

*