

"The Winds of Fate"

By

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Story By:

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FADE IN:

EXT. A SMALL HOUSE - MORNING

Smoke rises from the chimney of a small house into the gray sky. A strong winter winds whips up the snow covered residential street sending snowflakes into swirls and eddies.

A superimposed title reads: "FERNDALE, MICHIGAN - U.S.A."

INT. BASEMENT - MORNING

MIKE KELSY, a stocky, tall, well-built kid of nineteen with brown hair, is awakened by the cacophony of his brothers and sisters and Mother and Father all yelling at one another upstairs. He opens one eye and sees that it is 7:50 a.m. He looks up to the creaking ceiling above.

MIKE

(mumbling)

Go to school already . . .

Mike draws his covers tighter around his body and pulls himself into a ball. The minutes pass and suddenly there is sweet silence. Mike sighs and begins sliding back into the warm comfort of sleep . . .

FATHER

(O.S.; bellowing)

Mike! Get your Goddamn ass out of bed!

Mike's eyes snap open. It is 7:59.

MIKE
(calling out)

Why?

FATHER
Because I said so!

MIKE
But I've got a half hour to sleep.

FATHER
No you don't. Get your ass up here.

Mike sighs and shakes his head.

MIKE
No rest for the weary.

As he gets out of bed we see that he is a big dude—6'2", 190 pounds and muscular. He puts his bathrobe on over his sweat pants and shirt, dashes across the freezing basement and up the stairs.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

His FATHER sits at the kitchen table drinking coffee and smoking a Pall Mall. The TV is on with a news report about the escalating violence in Togo is mentioned. Mike's MOTHER stands at the sink doing dishes. Mike walks past them to the bathroom door, however before he can get inside his Father stops him.

FATHER
I want to talk to you.

MIKE
Let me take a shower first.

FATHER
I want to talk to you now.

Mike rolls his eyes.

MIKE

It can't wait for five minutes?

FATHER

No.

MIKE

All right. What?

FATHER

I want you to move out.

MIKE

Is that it?

FATHER

Yeah.

MIKE

Fine.

Mike's Father tucks the morning newspaper under his arm and moves out of the room without looking up. Mike looks down and sees that his hands are shaking. He turns to his Mother at the sink.

MIKE

What's the problem? I take up a small corner of the basement where no one else wants to live. I'm gone all day at work and I'm usually out in the evening until everyone's asleep.

MOTHER

Dear, you have to understand that your Father is under a lot of pressure these days.

MIKE

Yeah, but why can't I stay here? I kick in for food and rent.

MOTHER

I guess your Father feels it's time for you to move on. With six of you kids, this early retirement thing was a little unexpected.

MIKE

Where can I possibly go? He knows I don't have any money.

There is an uncomfortable silence.

MOTHER

I don't know.

She sees an envelope on the counter and hands it to Mike anything to change the subject.

MOTHER

This came for you yesterday.

(Mike looks at it numbly)

What do you want for breakfast?

Mike glances into the living room at his Father who is scowling at the newspaper. He shakes his head.

MIKE

No thanks, mom. I'll have some coffee at work.

Mike goes into the bathroom. Mike's mother turns back to the sink, sniffles and shakes her head.

DISSOLVE:

A MAP OF AFRICA:

We move slowly toward the map and into the western portion of the country. Between Ivory Coast and Nigeria are three thin little countries: Ghana, Togo and Benin. We move toward Togo, then into the city of Lome.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

A superimposed title reads: "LOME, TOGO, WESTERN AFRICA."

Rows of cardboard and tin huts bake in the blistering African sun. A dry, hot wind blows dust along a one lane dirt road. Black women wearing flowered shifts carry bundles on their heads and carry babies. Flies swarm everywhere. A number of cooking fires in this squalid area send wispy streams of smoke into the air.

A Land Rover comes driving through the little settlement and kicks up a cloud of dust.

INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Behind the wheel is JULIUS THORNSBY. He is a tall, thin man wearing round, wire-rimmed glasses. His face is tan and he is dressed in khaki pants and a white shirt.

He is listening to the car radio. The broadcast is in Togolese, a very foreign sounding guttural language, but Julius' reactions indicate that he understands what he's hearing. on the seat next to him is a well read copy of "The London Times" newspaper, slightly yellowed by the sun and a year-end financial report of a company called Commonwealth Mineral.

EXT. LOME HARBOR - DAY

Thornsby's Land Rover passes a small harbor with little wooden fishing boats and a crumbling dock. It turns right, away from the ocean, heading into town.

EXT. LOME - DAY

Downtown Lome is eight blocks long and entirely located on one street - Koronga Boulevard, although it's not a boulevard. No building in Lome is taller than three stories. The Land Rover he is forced to stop at a traffic jam.

THORNSBY

(surprised; British accent)

A traffic tie-up? In Lome?

As he inches forward, along with a number of ox carts and push wagons, he finally sees the problem.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD. - DAY

GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS, dressed in camouflage fatigues with UZI submachine guns, have A LINE OF MEN up against a wall and are frisking them.

INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Julius doesn't take the incident too seriously. He picks Up The London Times and begins reading it.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD. - DAY

Suddenly, ONE OF THE REBELS grabs one of the soldier's guns and begins spraying automatic weapon fire indiscriminately in all directions. Several soldiers drop with bullet wounds, as does an ox in front of Julius' car.

INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

SMASH!! - A bullet slams into his windshield and goes out through the roof. Julius dives to the floor of his car. From this vantage point he hears a deafening volley of automatic weapon fire, and then silence.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD. - DAY

When Thornsby is finally able to drive past, he sees the dead bodies of the rebels being dragged off.

EXT. COMMONWEALTH MINERAL OFFICE/LOME - DAY

Julius' Land Rover pulls up in front of a one-story office building. A sign out front reads "Commonwealth Mineral Togo Headquarters."

INT. COMMONWEALTH MINERAL - DAY

Julius unlocks the door to the office and tosses his things on the desk. A name plate on the desk reads "Julius Thornsby - District Manager." He immediately picks up the telephone and dials.

THORNSBY

(into telephone)

This is Julius Thornsby calling for Sir Robert
Densmore
from Lome, Togo, western Africa. I need to speak
to him
rather urgently.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON - DAY

A superimposed title reads, "LONDON, ENGLAND."

A tall, modern sky scraper looms above a number of the other tall buildings along the Thames River.

EXT. COMMONWEALTH MINERAL OFFICE/ LONDON - DAY

At the entrance of the building is a highly polished marble sign that reads: "Commonwealth Mineral - World Headquarters."

INT. COMMONWEALTH MINERAL/ LONDON - DAY

SIR ROBERT DENSMORE is the president of Commonwealth Mineral and his office is on the 30th floor. He is forty-five, is handsome with sharp features, and has streaks of gray at his temples. He punches a button on his phone and picks up the receiver.

DENSMORE

Yes, Julius, what do you need?

THORNSBY

(O.S.)

I just called to tell you that hostilities are heating up here, sir.

DENSMORE

It's always been rather hostile there, Julius. What specifically?

THORNSBY

I Just saw what I believe was a group of rebel insurgents gunned down by government troops. One of the rebels grabbed a weapon from one of the soldiers and began shooting in all directions before he himself was killed.

DENSMORE

Yes, Julius. What do you make of this?

THORNSBY

It's not that a bullet went through my windscreen, Sir Robert, it's the attitude of the rebel. He didn't seem to care if he died.

DENSMORE

(thoughtfully)

Nkrumah
he's
has been ruling for quite so I me time. Do you think
finally gotten too greedy?

THORNSBY

already has
like an
abreast
He can't get any more greedy than he is, sir, he
everything. The people are starving and he lives
ancient king. I just felt it was my duty to keep you
of the situation.

DENSMORE

effect.
assets
Perfectly right, Julius. Let's put plan Alpha into
Let's plan to get all Commonwealth Mineral liquid
out of Togo. When's the next airlift?

THORNSBY

mine
Not
Next Wednesday, sir. I'll have to go to the diamond
at Bassari, which is right near the border of Burkina.
the friendliest spot around.

DENSMORE

Do what you have to. Hopefully things should hold
till
Wednesday. Thank you for your astute observations,
Julius. I appreciate it. Cheery by.

THORNSBY

So long, Sir Robert.

Julius hangs up feeling quite good with himself.

As soon as Sir Robert hangs up with Julius, he immediately pushes
the intercom button on his phone.

DENSMORE

Get me Undersecretary Donald Wolfitt at the British Embassy in Lome, Togo, please.

SECRETARY

(O.S.)

Yes, Sir Robert.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY/ LOME - DAY

The British Embassy is located at the northern end of Koronga Blvd. in downtown Lome. It is entirely surrounded by a ten foot plaster and stone wall topped by barbed wire. At the wrought iron gates stand two short black soldiers in khaki uniforms holding M-1 carbines.

INT. BRITISH EMBASSY - WOLFITT'S OFFICE - DAY

Undersecretary DONALD WOLFITT sits at his desk doing paperwork. He is a blond, mustached man of fifty wearing a conservative three-piece suit. His phone rings and he answers it.

WOLFITT

(into telephone)

Hello, Undersecretary Wolfitt speaking.

DENSMORE

Hello, Donald. This is Sir Robert Densmore calling from London.

WOLFITT

(pleased)

Sir Robert. How nice to hear from you. What can I do for you?

DENSMORE

general condition in Togo,
summarize it?

I'm just curious about the
Donald. How would you

WOLFITT

Perfectly normal, Sir.
 Maybe a bit hotter than usual,
 but these things have to rise to the surface now
 and
 again.

DENSMORE
 But nothing to get
 concerned about?

WOLFITT
 No, not at all. A few border skirmishes don't add
 up
 to very much.

DENSMORE
 Well, thank you, Donald. Just checking, you know.

WOLFITT
 Of course, Sir Robert. Only natural.

DENSMORE
 Give my best to Sir Ian and Lady Anne, would you?

WOLFITT
 Of course.

INT. DENSMORE'S OFFICE - DAY

Sir Robert disconnects. He glances out at the heavy gray clouds
 hanging ominously over the Thames.

DENSMORE
 (to himself)
 Border skirmishes, too. it may be hotter than
 Juluis
 even thinks. Good man, that.

He pushes the intercom button and gets his secretary.

SECRETARY
 (O.S.)
 Yes, Sir Robert?

DENSMORE
 Please contact Randall Grubb in El Paso, Texas and

Leopold Bourguiba in Accra, Ghana. Inform them that Togo has gone to code Alpha. But first, please get me Captain Krasker at the airport.

CUT TO:

EXT. HEATHROW AIRPORT - DAY

Commercial jets stream in and out of Heathrow Airport. At the back of the airport, behind the commercial terminals, are the smaller business and private hangers. One of the hangers has "Commonwealth Mineral" painted on the side in blue.

INT. COMMONWEALTH MINERAL HANGER - DAY

In the hanger is a 20 passenger twin-engine jet with "Commonwealth Mineral" painted on the side in blue.

At a desk near the door sit two men in white jump suits with "Commonwealth Mineral" printed on the back. They are both drinking mugs of steaming tea and playing cards. One of the man wears a pilot's hat, smokes a long thin cigar and has bushy red hair and eyebrows. He is CAPTAIN KRASKER. The phone on the desk rings and he answers it, his eyes stay on his cards.

KRASKER

(into telephone)

Commonwealth Mineral. Captain Krasker speaking.

SECRETARY

(O.S.)

Hold for Sir Robert Densmore, please.

Krasker puts his hand of cards face down on the desk and pays attention. Densmore comes on the line.

DENSMORE

Hello, Chris.

KRASKER

Bobby? What a pleasure. What do you need?

DENSMORE

Togo's on code Alpha. Beta could be upon us at any moment. Better get the jet fueled and an inter-

esting flight plan devised.

KRASKER

Well, well, well, Bobby boy, it's been a jolly long time since we've had one of these.

DENSMORE

well

We don't have it yet, Chris, and let's just bloody hope we don't get it.

KRASKER

sitting

You can hope for it not to happen, but as for me, this is the kind of thing I wait for. All the rest is just around.

DENSMORE

Are you implying that I'm no longer a man of action?

KRASKER

(laughs)

A man of action? Bobby, you haven't moved off your bum in ten years.

DENSMORE

(indignant)

Yes, well I've made quite a lot of money for not moving off my bum!

KRASKER

moves

Indeed you have. A lot more than me. But if Togo to code Beta, whose going in? You or me?

DENSMORE

Well, we'll just see, now won't we?

KRASKER

(blowing smoke)

Indeed we will.

INT. DENSMORE'S OFFICE - DAY

Sir Robert disconnects the phone, sits back and lights a cigarette. He looks out his window at the Misty Thames River and sighs. He blows a stream of smoke against the window where it strikes the glass and curls back on itself.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Mike sits in his car in front of the house letting the engine warm up. It's an enormous gold, 1974 Chrysler New Yorker. A total rust-bucket. Mike wears a green and white Ferndale High Letter jacket.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

Mike blows on his frozen hands. It's probably zero degrees and all the car's windows are covered with two inches of snow making the interior of the car seem like a dark cave.

The blasting defroster and heater begin to warm and Mike stops shaking.

EXT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

He gets out and hastily brushes the icy snow off his windows by hand - he hasn't got a scraper.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

He hops back in and puts it in gear. It stalls. It starts right up then stalls again.

MIKE

Shit!

It starts right up again. Mike revs it hard and shifts into drive.

EXT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

The New Yorker jerks forward onto the icy street, fishtailing out of control. He hits the brakes and slides to a stop on the other side of the street.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

The dashboard lights up red. The engine has stalled again.

MIKE

The only thing that works in this crappy car is the heater, and *it* won't go off!

EXT. TEL TWELVE MALL - DAY

Tel Twelve Mall is the standardest of shopping malls. There is a K-Mart on the left side and a Montgomery Ward on the right. The mall is in the middle.

Lobby Hobby camera store is located in the very front of the mall and it faces out to the parking lot. Mike's New Yorker pulls into the lot and parks.

INT. LOBBY HOBBY CAMERA STORE - DAY

Mike steps into the warm store shivering and shaking his head.

MIKE

My car stalled four times.

The three men sitting behind the counter all laugh at him. This is their running joke. They are: ART, the manager, a short, bald-headed, bespectacled man of sixty; KEVIN, an ugly kid of twenty with bad skin, crooked yellow teeth, uncombed hair, wearing a dirty tan polyester suit, and; JAKE, a handsome, well-groomed young man of twenty-five with a short beard. He looks very yuppie in his V-neck sweater. He looks up from reading a book.

JAKE

(puffing on a cigarette)

You drive the biggest piece of junk in Michigan. Possibly in all of America.

Mike takes off his coat and goes for the coffee machine.

MIKE

It has to be blown up. Just having it crushed won't do.

Kevin steps up next to him at the Mr. coffee. Mike winces at Kevin's pungent aroma. To his deep consternation Kevin moves even closer to confide in him.

KEVIN

Hey! Thank God it's Friday, huh?

Mike smiles and steps away.

MIKE

Yeah, right, Kev. Far out.

Mike steps over to Jake and sits on the stool beside him, behind the counter with the processed slides and prints in their yellow bags.

Mike takes a letter out of his pocket, but doesn't open it. Jake sees it.

JAKE

Is that from your friend in the Army?

MIKE

Air Force - yeah it is.

(nostalgically)

Did I ever tell you about Stan and I on the wrestling team?

Mike still doesn't open the letter.

JAKE

Yeah, you have. Plenty. You and he were state champs. Your big moment of glory. Christ, what it must be like to be washed up at the rip old age of nineteen? Well, let's see what he's up to. Open the letter.

Mike nods and opens the letter. It's a short note wrapped around a single color photograph.

MIKE & JAKE

(reading together)

Mike old buddy, are you freezing your ass off? It's hot here in San Antonio. You just wouldn't believe this place, I sure can't. Keep in touch, dickface. Stan.

The photograph is of Stan, a blond, square-jawed guy in a sharp looking Air Force uniform. His has his arm around a really beautiful dark-haired girl. They're both smiling and holding beers. Coronas. And they're standing out in the sun.

Mike wraps the letter back around the picture and puts it back in the envelope. This he puts in his pocket. He looks out the window at the snow-covered parking lot.

JAKE

So, how's that camera repair course coming along?

MIKE

It's all right, but why am I doing it? There's no repair department here, or in any of the Lobby Hobby stores.

JAKE

Who says you've got to work for Lobby Hobby? Run the business out of your house.

Mike shakes his head.

MIKE

I don't have a house.

JAKE

Your car's big enough, run it out of there.

They both laugh. Art cuts in.

ART

All right, enough jawing. Let's get to work. I want all those filters in that case moved to that case. Move it.

Art goes into the back room. Kevin goes over and starts taking little boxes out of a display case. Mike and Jake remain where they are. Mike sighs.

MIKE

I'm heading in the wrong direction, Jake. This is a dead end. I only went to work at Lobby Hobby because the main store is around the block from my house. I figured I could walk to work and not have to drive my piece of junk car, which sucks up every spare dollar I have. So what happens? I immed-
ately get transfered here, eleven miles away.

With that they both go over and help Kevin.

DISSOLVE:

INT. LOBBY HOBBY CAMRA STORE - DAY

Later that day, Jake and Kevin watch as Art tries to bully a LADY into buying the Nikon in his hand.

ART

The Nikon is the finest camera produced in America.

Jake and Kevin laugh behind their hands.

LADY

(skeptical)

I don't know. I feel like I've seen that same camera cheaper somewhere else.

JAKE

(whispering)

Yeah, like everywhere.

ART

That's not possible. We have the lowest price on this camera anywhere in town. Here, let me show it to you with a telephoto lens.

He takes off the 50mm lens and begins screwing in a telephoto - the wrong way. Kevin and Jake snicker. Art keeps putting it in the wrong way and of course it won't stay in place. He grows infuriated, but still won't twist the other way. The lady is losing interest quickly.

Mike steps out of the back room, watches Art for one second and immediately sees the problem.

MIKE

You're twisting it the wrong way.

Art twists it the wrong way again, lets go of the telephoto lens and it drops off the camera to the floor. The sound it -makes hitting the floor makes everyone's spine straighten. Art gets furious.

ART

Now look what you've made me do!

Mike can't believe what he's just heard.

MIKE

What *I* made you do?

ART

That's right! I was doing just fine until you told me to turn it the wrong way! Now look what's happened. well, you'll just have to pay for it.

Jake and Kevin watch with rapt interest. Mike's mouth opens with no sound coming out. His face grows quickly hot and red. He begins to shake.

MIKE

Are you insane? I'm not paying for that?

ART

Oh yes you are!

MIKE

I can't pay for the gas to get here, you want me to pay for a three hundred dollar lens that you broke? You're serious?

ART

You bet I am!

Mike looks momentarily deadly.

MIKE

Now way! Not in a million years!

Art is shaking with rage.

ART

Oh yeah? Then you're fired!

MIKE

Oh yeah? Then fuck you!

Jake and Kevin burst out laughing. Mike turns and takes a bow.

Art stomps into his office and slams the door. Jake and Kevin step over and and shake Mike's hand and slap him on the back.

JAKE

Well, buddy, ask and ye shall receive. You wanted a change in your life and you got it.

As Mike lights one of Jake's cigarettes he sees that his hand is trembling. He smiles and nods.

MIKE

I sure have.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. LOBBY HOBBY CAMERA STORE - DAY

It's a bright sunny freezing cold winter day. Mike comes walking in the store

INT. LOBBY HOBBY - DAY

Mike walks into the store with a broad smile on his face.

MIKE

Guess what guys?

Kevin guesses.

KEVIN

You got another job?

MIKE

Uh-uh.

JAKE

You got a new car?

MIKE

Nope . . . I joined the Air Force.

This brings a sincere look of shock to both Jake and Kevin's faces.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY IN LOME - DAY

Two short, dark-skinned men in khaki army uniforms stand at attention at the embassy gates.

INT. BRITISH EMBASSY COMPOUND - DAY

Two more dark-skinned soldiers in khaki uniforms step out of the embassy and cross the compound. They each carry M-1 carbines. The younger of the two is TENZING, he is twenty years old. The older man is GUENG, h is forty-eight years old. They both speak English with Indian/British accents.

TENZING

I'm very proud to be a British soldier, I just don't like standing at attention all of the time.

GUENG

But that's mostly what a Gurkha does, Tenzing, is stand at attention.

TENZING

Indeed, and I don't like it. When I joined up I thought I would be a soldier for the rest of my life just like my father, my grandfather, and Great-grandfather, and his father before him. But all of them got to see action. I just get to stand at attention at a gate.

GUENG

And all of them had to spend a lot of time standing at attention at an embassy gate before they saw any action.

TENZING

I was meant to be a warrior of another time. Say during the great wars with the British before we were incorporated. Or either of the World Wars. Even Vietnam. Anything.

My father was in the Falkland Islands just before he retired.

But since then, nothing.

GUENG

I was in the Falkland Islands, too. Your father and I are very good friends. You'll get your chance, just be patient.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

Tenzing and Gueng relieve the two Gurkhas at the gate. The moment they get to their positions they freeze at attention. Tenzing watches as thousands of people appear and line the streets. The people don't seem festive. They seem angry and disgruntled. There is a strange murmur as the crowd amasses and mills about.

Tenzing glances at his fellow Gurkha, Gueng, who glances back and raises his eyebrow. For Gueng to break attention means something is definitely up.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD. - DAY

The parade begins and the TOGOLESE ARMY comes marching past. They are all black men in American camouflage uniforms with Israeli Uzi submachines over their shoulders. There is a tension apparent in all of their faces, their hands gripping their weapons tightly.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

Both Gurkhas are startled by a horn honking behind them. Tenzing and Gueng turn to see the British Ambassador, SIR IAN CARMICHAEL and his wife, LADY ANNE, both very distinguished and in their mid-sixties, sitting in their beautiful chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royce.

The Gurkhas open the gate and snap to attention. In Tenzing's six months in Togo he had never spoken to the Ambassador. But now he feels compelled.

TENZING

Excuse me, Sir.

Gueng's eyebrows raise again. This was improper behavior for a Gurkha. Sir Ian pretends like he hears nothing, so Tenzing repeats himself.

TENZING

Excuse me, Sir Ian.

Sir Ian turns to his wife.

SIR IAN

Is that Gurkha addressing me?

LADY ANNE

I believe so dear.

Sir Ian turns to Tenzing.

SIR IAN

Yes?

Tenzing is hesitant, but has already started and now feels compelled to continue.

TENZING

recommend not leaving

I would most heartily

Sir Ian.

the Embassy compound today,

SIR IAN

And why, per chance, would you recommend that?

TENZING

There could be an outbreak of hostility, sir. It is for your safety I recommend this course of action.

SIR IAN

What brings you to this conclusion, sergeant?

TENZING

Well . . . I sense it, sir.

Sir Ian laughs.

SIR IAN

Bosh.

He motions the chauffeur forward. The Rolls drives through the gate and the Gurkhas close the wrought iron gate behind them.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

Lady Anne turns to her husband.

LADY ANNE

Who are those funny little men?

SIR IAN

Why, they're Gurkhas,
 dear. How could you not
 know that? We've been posted at seven different
 embassies over the past twenty-five years and
 Gurkhas have been at the gates of everyone of
 them.

LADY ANNE

Have they really? Well who are they?

SIR IAN

Well, Gurkhas guard the gates of all British
 Embassies
 around the world. They're from Nepal and are the
 toughest bloody fighters in the world. They're the
 only foreigners ever allowed to join the British
 Army.
 There's been a Gurkha contingent of the British
 Army
 since 1815 and they've fought in every battle with
 us
 since then.

LADY ANNE

It's really is ever so odd.

SIR IAN

It's not odd at all, my dear. That's simply the
 way
 it is.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

As Tenzing and Gueng shut the gate, Gueng actually speaks on duty,
 shaking his head in astonishment.

GUENG

Highly unusual behavior, Tenzing.

TENZING

It was for their own safety, Gueng. Isn't our duty to keep them safe and unharmed?

GUENG

Indeed it is and I respect your courage in speaking. Nevertheless, highly unusual.

Gueng goes back to attention and does not say another word. Tenzing does the same.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD. - DAY

The Rolls Royce moves slowly through a large crowd of angry Togolese with its horn honking. The people push right in on the automobile, rocking it back and forth.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

Sir Ian and Lady Anne both are white with fear. They clutch each other's hands.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

The Rolls Royce comes driving back to the embassy rather quickly. As it gets closer, the Gurkhas see that the black finish of the automobile is covered with mud and vegetables and one of the side windows is shattered.

As the Gurkhas open the gate they see the Ambassador and his wife's ashen faces. Lady Anne rolls down her window and speaks to Tenzing.

LADY ANNE

Thank you for the warning, Sergeant. I'm only sorry we didn't heed it.

The Rolls goes into the embassy compound and the Gurkhas close the gates. With an exchanged look, they both release the safety catches on their carbines, then go back to attention.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD. - DAY

GENERAL JOMO NKRUMAHA'S six car motorcade moves slowly up Koronga Blvd. The General is a 300 lb. black man wearing a bright green

military uniform with feathers in the cap. He sits in the back seat of a convertible 1980 Lincoln Continental and nods and waves to the cheering crowd. And yet, there is something hollow in their cheers.

EXT. LOME ALLEY - DAY

KOUDOUGOU BOROMA watches the parade from an alley. He is 25 years old and has a very intense face with deep lines beside his mouth and ceremonial scars on his cheeks.

Boroma reaches into his jacket and removes a pipe bomb with a timer on it. He sets the timer for one minute, puts the bomb back under his jacket and dashes up the alley to the backs of the crowd lining the street.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD. - DAY

Boroma pushes his way up to the parade just as General Nkrumah's Lincoln is passing. Boroma's timing is perfect. He pulls the bomb from his coat, tosses it under the car and yells something in Togolese.

General Nkrumah turns and waves to him just as the wheel of the Lincoln goes right over the bomb.

Boroma winces in anticipation of an enormous explosion, but instead there is nothing. He looks and sees that his bomb is crushed into the mud and now the next car of the motorcade is passing over it, then the next and the next. Koudougou Boroma stomps his feet in frustration, turns and begins to skulk back into the alley.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET - DAY

Suddenly a young man steps in front of the General's car, pulls out a pistol and fires it six times into General Nkrumah's stomach and chest. The General's driver floors the Continental and runs the young man down as pandemonium breaks out everywhere.

Masses of people surge around the rest of the cars of the motorcade and begin rocking them and tipping them over.

And then - *BOOM!!* - the pipe bomb in the mud goes off! Car parts go sailing in all directions.

EXT. UP THE STREET - DAY

The Togolese soldiers, who are much further up the street, hear the explosion. They immediately unslung their Uzi submachine guns and double-time back to the explosion.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

Tenzing and Gueng watch as a riot erupts on the street in front of them. They both get inside the embassy compound and lock the gates after them, their carbines at the ready. Four other Gurkhas come running out of the embassy with their rifles in hand to back up Tenzing and Gueng.

EXT. EMPTY LOME STREET - DAY

General Nakrumah's car screeches up an empty street and comes to a halt. The driver turns to see the General's wife sobbing, her hands covered with blood. The General turns to her with a weak smile.

NKRUMAH

It's nothing.

Upon saying this, he falls over dead.

INT. THORNSBY'S OFFICE - DAY

Julius Thornsby sits by himself in the Commonwealth Mineral office. He watches the riot in the street out the office window increase in intensity. People are mobbing the soldiers and the soldiers are spraying automatic weapon fire in all directions.

Julius picks up the telephone and dials.

THORNSBY

Sir Robert Densmore please. This is Julius Thornsby calling from Lome, Togo.

In a moment he is connected through.

DENSMORE

(O.S.)

Yes, Julius, what's the problem?

THORNSBY

We've just moved to code Beta, Sir Robert.

Bullets come tearing through the front window of Commonwealth Mineral. Julius dives to the floor.

DENSMORE

What's the situation?

THORKSBY

General rioting in the streets, Sir. There was a large explosion moments after General Nkrumah's car passed by. He may have been assassinated. I'll know for sure very soon.

DENSMORE

If the hostilities continue, Julius, get to the British Embassy. Either way I'll contact you tonight for an update and to let you know how Beta progresses.

THORNSBY

Yes, sir.

DENSMORE

Don't worry, Julius. I'll have you out of there before you know it.

THORNSBY

Right, sir. I know you will.

Thornsby hangs up. He then goes to a safe mounted in the wall, dials the combination, opens the door and takes out a large canvas deposit bag. He opens the bag and looks inside.

It is filled with diamonds - hundreds of them, maybe several thousand, of all shapes and sizes. Julius shuts the bag and locks it.

INT. DENSMORE'S OFFICE - DAY

Sir Robert dials the phone himself. Captain Krasker's voice comes through.

KRASKER

(O.S.)

Hello?

DENSMORE

Chris, we've gone to code Beta in Togo. How quickly can we move?

KRASKER

Right now if you want. We're cleared all the way to Lome. A 212 helicopter is waiting there.

DENSMORE

Good work, Chris. I'm on my way.

KRASKER

(Surprised)

You're coming along?

DENSMORE

Yes. I, as a matter of fact, I am.

KRASKER

Well, this ought to be jolly good.

CUT TO:

EXT. LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE - BEFORE DAWN

Two guards stand at attention at the main gate. It is pitch black outside.

INT. BARRACKS - BEFORE DAWN

Mike Kelsy, with very short hair, sits on his rack in his skivvies in the dark. FIFTY OTHER GUYS are all asleep in the barracks. Reveille has not yet been blown. Mike tenderly rubs Ben Gay on his aching feet.

The drill instructor, GUNNERY SERGEANT YABLONSKI, steps into the barracks. He's about to yell and wake everyone up when he sees Mike sitting on his rack.

YABLONSKI

What are you doing up, Kelsy?

Mike jumps off his rack and snaps to attention, a flash of pain crossing his face as his feet hit the floor.

KELSY

Sir, nothing, Sir.

Sgt. Yablonski sniffs the air.

YABLONSKI

Preparing yourself for the
12 mile march today?

KELSY

Sir, yes, Sir.

YABLONSKI

Very conscientious of you Kelsy. Or maybe you're just hurting from yesterday? What about it?

KELSY

Sir, the maggot is hurting from yesterday, Sir.

YABLONSKI

And why is it, do you think, that you're the only one smearing smelly shit all over yourself while all the other maggots are sleeping?

KELSY

Sir, the maggot doesn't know, Sir.

YABLONSKI

Well, we'll just have to find out now won't we?

KELSY

Sir, yes, Sir.

Sgt. Yablonski turns his attention to the rest of the barracks.

YABLONSKI

(Yelling)

All right you stinking little shitballs, up and at 'em!
We're gonna have fun today!

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Mike and the rest of the recruits sing a cadence as they march through the desert wearing 70 pound packs, O.D. uniforms and helmets. The all call cadence in unison:

CADENCE

I don't know but I believe/ I'll be home by
Christmas Eve . . .

Mike has a look of blinding pain on his face. Sgt. Yablonski marches along beside him, totally aware of his pain.

YABLONSKI

Whatsa matter Kelsy? You hurtin'?

KELSY

Sir, yes, sir.

YABLONSKI

What's that Kelsy? You say something?

KELSY

Sir, the maggot's said he's hurting, sir. Bad.

YABLONSKI

Aw, my heart's breakin'. Double-time maggots!

The recruits all begin marching in double time. Now Mike is in terrible pain. Lights are flashing in his eyes, his face twisting into a knot. Sgt. Yablonski is right there beside him.

YABLONSKI

Four miles to go, Kelsy. Think you can make it?

MIKE

Sir, the maggot isn't sure, sir.

YABLONSKI

I think you got a problem, Kelsy. I think you slipped something over on your recruiter, but that don't matter 'cause everything comes out in the wash here. Faster,

maggots!

Everyone speeds up to a run and chants.

CADENCE

I don't know but I've been told/ Eskimo pussy's mighty
Cold . . .

YABLONSKI

Sound off!

CADENCE

One, two.

YABLONSKI

Sound off!

CADENCE

Three, four.

Mike drops out of line and falls on his back. Sweat is pouring off his face.

YABLONSKI

Take five, maggots!

Everyone falls out and sits down. Sgt. Yablonski looms over Mike.

YABLONSKI

We were makin' good time on this march, Kelsy.
You're ruinin' my average.

MIKE

Sir, there's something wrong with the maggot's feet,
sir.

YABLONSKI

There damn well better be, Kelsy. otherwise you're
in a world of shit.

MIKE

Sir, there *really is* something wrong, sir.

YABLONSKI

Let the corpsman decide that. You ain't qualified.

INT. BASE INFIRMARY - DAY

The MEDICAL CORPSMAN looks at Mike's swollen, blistered feet. He pokes the bottom of Mike's foot with his finger.

CORPSMAN

Does this hurt?

MIKE

Sir, yes, sir.

CORPSMAN

Knock that shit off. Yes or no.

MIKE

Yes.

CORPSMAN

How about this?

Mike is reeling from the pain.

MIKE

Yes!

CORPSMAN

Guess what? You've got flat feet.

MIKE

But I got through the examination at the recruiting office.

CORPSMAN

They missed it.

MIKE

Well, what does that mean?

CORPSMAN

It means you're on your way out of the Air Force.

Mike can't believe it.

MIKE

But . . . what'll I do?

CORPSMAN
I don't know, but I'll tell you what you shouldn't
do.

MIKE
What's that?

CORPSMAN
Don't become a mailman.

INT. BASE PX - DAY

Mike is using the pay phone.

MIKE
Hello, mom?

MOTHER
(happy to hear from him)
Mike, how are you? I've missed you.

MIKE
I've missed you too, Mom. Uh . . .

MOTHER
What is it, Mikey?

MIKE
Uh . . . they kicked me out of the Air Force, Mom.

MOTHER
What? How come?

MIKE
My feet are flat.

MOTHER
Aw, honey, I'm sorry. What are you going to do
now? Come home?

MIKE
Dad said I can't, remember?

MOTHER
Mikey, this is your home too. If you want to come
back, you come back.

MIKE

1Thanks, Mom. But I don't think I Will.

MOTHER

Then what are you going to do?

MIKE

Well, I don't know. I think I'll visit Stan. He's here
in San Antonio.

MOTHER

And after that?

MIKE

And after that, we'll see . . .

MOTHER

How much money do you have?

Mike counts out his money reserves.

MIKE

Not much, but enough.

MOTHER

Don't get into trouble, Mike.

MIKE

That's what I'm in now. I'm looking to get out.
See ya, Mom.

MOTHER

I love you.

Mike is about to answer her, but TWO MEAN LOOKING RECRUITS come walking by. Mike waits for them to get out of earshot before responding.

MIKE

I love you, too, Mom. 'Bye.

MOTHER

Bye, bye.

Mike dials another number. In a moment it is answered.

VOICE

(O.S.)

Hello?

MIKE

Hello, Stan?

VOICE

(O.S./ As though Mike
can't be heard)

Hello?

MIKE

Stan? Is that you? Can you hear me?

VOICE

Sorry, I'm not here right now. Leave a message at
the tone.

The Stan's voice laughs and is cut short by the beep.

MIKE

Hello, Stan. This is Mike Kelsy. Very funny
message,
you fooled me. I'm coming over. See ya.

Mike hangs up and leaves the PX.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

Mike is all alone in the big, empty barracks as he finishes packing his duffel bag. He is wearing his green and white Ferndale High letter jacket and blue jeans. He looks and feels very out of place. Swinging the duffel bag over his shoulder he takes one last look around, then leaves.

EXT. BASE - DAY

As Mike walks toward the front gate where a taxi is waiting, Sgt. Yablonski appears and begins walking with him.

YABLONSHI

It's much better this way, Kelsy, take my word
for it.

MIKE

Oh yeah? How do you know?

YABLONSKI

What's that?

MIKE

How do you know my life's gonna be better out of the Air Force? Maybe things were a lot better for me in.

YABLONSKI

Let's face it, Kelsy, you couldn't cut it.

MIKE

People can adapt to anything. I'll get over my flat feet. I was just pushed too far too soon.

YABLONSKI

You weren't being pushed any farther than anyone else. You're just not cut out for the military. You're not a fighter.

Mike turns to face Yablonski and throws down his duffel bag.

MIKE

Oh yeah? I'll kick *your* ass right now!

Sgt. Yablonski instinctively tightens up, then relaxes and smiles.

YABLONSKI

I like you Kelsy, you're all right. Maybe you are a fighter.

Yablonski picks up Mike's duffel bag and holds out his hand.

YABLONSKI

Good luck to you out in the world.

Mike hesitates for a second, then takes his duffel bag and shakes the Sergeant's hand.

MIKE

Thanks.

YABLONSKI

You'll do okay, Kelsy, I can tell.

MIKE

(going through the gate)

I'm glad you can tell . . . 'cause I sure can't.

Mike tosses his bag in the back of the cab and gets in.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOME AIRPORT - DAY

A sign in front of the little wooden building says, "Lome Airport, Togo" in English and a half a dozen other languages.

The Commonwealth Mineral 125 company jet sets down on the runway.

EXT. JET - DAY

Sir Robert Densmore and Captain Krasker get off. They are met by a black man in a white jumpsuit with "Commonwealth Mineral" printed on the back. He is SEKOU NYERERE.

Sekou and Krasker greet each other warmly and shake hands.

KRASKER

Good to see you, Sekou.

NYERERE

(in good english)

And you, Captain Krasker.

Krasker grins and points at Densmore.

KRASKER

You'll never guess who this is. Go on, give it a try.

Densmore rolls his eyes.

DENSMORE

Oh, for goodness sake.

NYERERE

(shakes his head)

I'm sorry. I don't know.

KRASKER

(grinning)

This is *Sir Robert Densmore*. Your employer.

Sekou's eyes light up. He takes hold of Densmore's hand and shakes it profusely.

NYERERE

So good to finally meet you, Sir Robert. I have been in your employ for five years. I am Sekou Nyerere.

DENSMORE

Yes, of course. We've spoken on the telephone several times.

NYERERE

If I may be so bold, Sir Robert, what on Earth are you doing here?

DENSMORE

Yes, well . . . Overseeing the evacuation of company people and assets out of Lome, actually.

NYERERE

Then, I would suggest moving the jet to another airstrip.

KRASKER

Why is that?

Nyerere points to the nearby remains of a smoldering truck.

NYERERE

We were under fire here early this morning by rebels. Government troops repelled them, but now the government troops have all disappeared. I feel rather certain that the rebels will return to loot and destroy everything at this airport. This jet would be a prime target.

Densmore sees the logic of what he's just heard.

DENSMORE

Any suggestions?

NYERERE

North of here is an abandoned airstrip, Sir Robert. It is little known and surrounded by dense jungle. It will serve admirably, I believe, for this purpose. Have Captain Krasker fly the jet to the abandoned airstrip. I'll fly the helicopter into Lome.

Krasker looks skeptical.

KRASKER

Why should I, your superior officer, allow you to go into the thick of it while I go sit on my bum at some bloody bleeding abandoned airfield?

DENSMORE

Not to mention that Lome is a war zone right now. You'd be putting yourself into considerable danger.

NYERERE

My wife is alone in Lome right now. The danger means nothing to me. Someone must go for her.
(to Krasker)
Will you?

KRASKER

(sighs)
And how am I supposed to find this abandoned airstrip?

Nyerere hands him a map and writes the coordinates on it.

NYERERE

Fly low and do not radio in for anything. The Air Force may have already gone over to the rebels. They consider all foreigners to be the enemy. That includes my wife and I. We are from Cameroon.

Densmore and Krasker look at each other and shrug.

DENSMORE

All right, Mr. Nyerere. Let's do it your way.

Nyerere sighs and nods.

NYERERE

Thank you, Sir Robert.

DENSMORE

Yes, well, just Robert will do.

Nyerere smiles.

NYERERE

Then you may call me Sekou.

KRASKER

(impatiently)

Shall we get moving, or would you both like to see some photos of my children?

NYERERE

One more thing. Have either of you any weapons?

Densmore looks to Krasker.

KRASKER

I have a pistol hidden in the jet.

NYERERE

Come with me.

INT. COMMONWEALTH MINERAL'S HANGER/ LOME - DAY

Nyerere leads them to where the 212 helicopter is waiting. He picks up a shovel.

KRASKER

(frowning)

You're going to fight armed rebels with a shovel?

Nyerere walks to a corner of the hanger and starts digging. In a moment he unearths a wooden crate. He pries it open and reveals many Russian AK-47 assault rifles.

KRASKER

Where did you get these?

NYERERE

I bought them on the black market.

DENSMORE

Russian assault rifles? Brand new in the box?

NYERERE

Who do you think is backing the revolution?

Krasker and Densmore each take a rifle and snap in a full 30 shot banana-clip into the breach. Densmore turns to Krasker and pulls him to one side.

DENSMORE

Well, old chum, things are a bit dicier than we anticipated. Wait as long as you can for us at this airstrip, but at the first sign of real trouble get out of there.

KRASKER

And how will you get out?

DENSMORE

Call my office and say "Omega." They'll know what to do.

KRASKER

When you get to the airstrip, *I'll* be there.

Each of them takes several extra clips of bullets and stuffs them into the many pockets of their flight jackets. Densmore and Krasker shake hands, then split up.

DENSMORE

Sekou, let's get this show an the road.

Nyerere nods.

NYERERE

Yes, indeed, Robert.

INT. JET - DAY

Krasker flies very low, barely above the thick blanket of jungle trees.

EXT. JET - DAY

As the jet crosses a small river, a group of armed rebels on the shore shoot up at it. None of the bullets make contact and the jet is past them in seconds.

INT. JET - DAY

Several minutes later, Krasker spots a small opening in the jungle up ahead. He picks up the radio handset.

KRASKER

Come in, HVK this is XLM. Do you read?

EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Densmore and Nyerere are in the 212 helicopter flying very high off the ground.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Densmore takes the microphone.

DENSMORE

Roger, XLM. This is HVK. Go ahead.

KRASKER

(O.S.)

Destination in sight. Everything looks okay. I'm going in.

DENSMORE

Roger that, XLM. Keep in contact. Over.

KRASKER

(O.S.)

Roger. Out.

INT. JET - DAY

Krasker flies low over the abandoned airstrip and sees no people.

EXT. ABANDONED AIRSTRIP - DAY

The jet circles back around and lands. It taxis to the far end of the landing strip and stops.

INT. JET - DAY

Krasker goes into the back of the jet and from a storage compartment takes a large green bundle.

EXT. JET - DAY

With his AK-47 slung over his shoulder, Krasker gets out of the jet. The air is thick and sweltering, the mosquitoes are ravenous. Sounds from the dense jungle on all sides fill the air.

Krasker quickly and expertly begins covering the jet with the roll of camouflage artillery netting. His eyes constantly flick about looking for any signs of danger.

Once the jet is covered, Krasker goes into the jungle with a machete and brings back branches with big leaves and lays them over the netting. With this accomplished he slaps the mosquitoes off of him and goes back into the jet.

INT. JET - DAY

He puts a kettle of water on the butane stove, settles back in a chair with the rifle on his lap, takes a copy of "Anna Karenina" from a seat pocket, opens to where his bookmark is and begins reading.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Densmore and Nyerere watch as the land below the chopper begins to fill with huts and villages.

NYERERE

We are nearing Lome.

Sir Robert begins tuning in the radio and speaking into the microphone.

DENSMORE

Mayday, Mayday. Come in British Embassy, this

is Sir Robert Densmore.

INT. BRITISH EMBASSY RADIO ROOM - DAY

CYRIL FRANKS, a young, British Army Corporal with curly black hair and thick eyebrows, immediately picks up the mayday call from the helicopter.

FRANKS

Come in, Sir Robert. This is the British Embassy.

DENSMORE

(O.S.)

This is Sir Robert Densmore in helicopter HVK asking permission to land.

Franks sighs in relief.

FRANKS

Thank God, HVX. Let me get Undersecretary Wolfitt.

DENSMORE

(O.S.)

Roger.

Franks pushes an intercom button on the phone beside him.

WOLFITT

Yes, this is Wolfitt.

FRANKS

I have Sir Robert Densmore in helicopter HVK asking for permission to land, sir. What shall I reply?

Donald Wolfitt sighs in relief.

WOLFITT

He certainly has *my* permission to land. This is a bloody war zone!

EXT. STREETS OF LOME - DAY

There is warfare raging in the streets. Government forces have one side of the street, revolutionaries have the other. There is shooting from both roofs.

A MAN holding a machine gun on the rebel side makes a dash from one building to another. GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS appear at a second story window and the running man sprays some bullets at them, shattering the window. The government soldiers reappear at the window with an M-60 machine gun and blast the front of the buildings across the street to rubble. The revolutionary is shot to pieces.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

A crowd of TWENTY REVOLUTIONARIES push against the gate. Tenzing, Gueng and the other Gurkhas are there with their weapons in front of them, frozen at attention, ever so ready.

A helicopter descends from the clouds over the embassy and for a moment everyone's attention shifts upward - everyone except the Gurkhas, that is.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Densmore and Nyerere look down on the crowd at the gate from the chopper. They can see shooting going on two blocks up the street as well. Sir Robert cocks his weapon.

DENSMORE

We seem to be here none too soon.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

From the back of the crowd at the gate of the embassy steps Koudougou Boroma, his long face looking up at the helicopter. From under his jacket he pulls out an Uzi, aims up at the helicopter and fires off the whole clip.

EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Bullets rip across the fuselage and through the main rotor blades.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The chopper's controls at Nyerere's hands and feet go dead.

EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The chopper begins dropping from the sky.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

Now the Gurkhas glance up, their weapons still trained on the crowd. Koudougou Boroma steps forward, screams something in Togolese and runs away.

The helicopter crashes in the forecourt of the embassy beside a fountain. Everyone in the embassy comes out to look, just as the revolutionaries crash through the gate.

The six Gurkhas with their carbines become a human machine gun. Three fire, three cock their weapons, three fire, three cock their weapons . . . leaving very few of the twenty revolutionaries to get away. The Gurkhas quickly move the dead and wounded bodies out and re-lock the gate. Tenzing and Gueng both run for the helicopter.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The Gurkhas open the side door and find Sir Robert underneath some boxes, bloodied, but okay. Sekou Nyerere is really smashed up. His legs are broken and his face is cut deeply. He is quickly brought inside the embassy. Sir Robert goes to the chopper's radio.

DENSMORE

Come in XLM, this is HVK. Over.

KRASEER

(O.S.)

This is XLM. What happened?

DENSMORE

We were shot down, Chris. The chopper is totally destroyed.

KRASKER

(O.S.)

I'll come and get you.

DENSMORE

No. You haven't got a chance. Wait there. Call in "Omega."

KRASKER

(O.S.)

But how long will that take?

DENSMORE
 Forty-eight hours is what I've been told.

KRASKER
 (O.S. and skeptical)
 Forty-eight hours? I find that rather difficult to believe.

DENSMORE
 Nevertheless, I hired this fellow and that's the plan. So just do it, Chris. That's an order.

KRASKER
 (O.S.)
 Roger, that, HVK. Keep in touch. Over.

DENSMORE
 Roger. Over and out.

EXT. EMBASSY FORECOURT - DAY

Densmore climbs out of the wreckage. Donald Wolfitt, Sir Ian and Julius Thornsby are all waiting for him.

WOLFITT
 Good try, old sport.

Thornsby steps forward.

THORNSBY
 I'm Julius Thornsby, Sir Robert, It's a real pleasure to finally meet you. I didn't think you would ever actually come to Lome.

Densmore shakes Thornsby's hand.

DENSMORE
 Everything all set?

THORNSBY
 Yes, sir.

DENSMORE
 That's fine.

Sir Robert goes up and shakes Sir Ian's hand.

DENSMORE

Hello, Sir Ian.

SIR IAN

Bobby, I'm damned glad to see you. Very dramatic Entrance, I must say. Good try though. Don't see how we'll get out of here now.

Densmore turns to all of them.

DENSMORE

Oh, we'll get cut of here all right. You leave that to me.

CUT TO:

EXT. CACTUS GROVE APARTMENTS/ SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS - NIGHT

The taxi drops Mike in front of the Cactus Grove apartments, which looks just like a motel. Two floors of apartments all face in toward a pool. Mike locates his friend Stan's apartment on the second floor and knocks. No answer. Mike knocks again. Still no answer.

MIKE

(resignation)

Oh, great.

Mike drops his duffel in the doorway. He sits down on it and rests his head against the door. In one second he's asleep.

STAN

Well, if it ain't old dickface Kelsy. What're you doin' blocking my doorway?

It takes Mike a long moment to come out of his deep sleep. He looks up at the dark figure looming over him and can't place where he is or who's speaking.

MIKE

I, uh . . . Stan?

STAN

Who do you think it is? This is my apartment.

STAN reaches down and gives Mike a hand up. Stan is also a big guy. He is blond, tall and handsome.

STAN
How long have you been here?

MIKE
I don't know. What time is it?

Stan unlocks the door. Mike shakes his head.

STAN
Three.

MIKE
I don't know what time I got here.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's not badly furnished but the place is a wreck.

STAN
Wanna beer?

MIKE
Sure.

STAN
So what are you doing here?

MIKE
Well, I got kicked out of the
Air Force.

Stan laughs.

STAN
What a coincidence. So did I.

MIKE
(Shocked)
What?

STAN
Yeah. A month ago. Why did they kick you out?

MIKE
Flat feet. What about you?

STAN
They found a pound of pot in my locker.

MIKE

Wow!

STAN

Yeah, pretty stupid, huh?

MIKE

So what're you doin' now?

They crack their beers and Stan shakes his head.

STAN

Good question. I got a few irons in the fire and I'm just waiting to see what comes through. What about you?

Mike shrugs helplessly.

MIKE

I have absolutely no idea.

Stan starts laughing, walks over and socks Mike on the arm kind of hard.

STAN

Three weeks in the Air Force, that's pretty pathetic, motherfucker. You always had pretty rotten luck. I remember when Mr. Schwartz punched you? And he was the nicest teacher in school.

Mike smiles nostalgically.

MIKE

Yeah, those were the days. Or when you and I were smoking a joint under the bleachers and the wind blew the ash right into my eye just as Mr. Collinson appeared out of nowhere.

Stan keeps laughing.

STAN

You ran your right into that steel thing. You got caught and got a concussion, too.

MIKE

(grins happily)
And five stitches.

STAN
(bolting to his feet)
Let's have another beer. It's good seeing you again,
dude. I forgot how much we used to laugh together.

MIKE
I didn't.

STAN
I didn't really either. I just sorta got caught up
in
other things. Remember the state wrestling finals?
What a gas!

MIKE
Yeah. It was the greatest. Me and you were a team.
We did everything together. What happened to
that?

STAN
(shrugs)
Hey, pal, I don't know. You grow up and go your
separate ways. Nothin' lasts.

MIKE
Yeah, but some things *should* last, though. Like
friends. I've been lost since you left.

STAN
You've gotta get your own life together, Mike.
You can't depend on me.

MIKE
(sadly)
I know.

Stan turns on the phone machine as he goes to the fridge. Mike's
voice comes out of the machine.

MIKE
(V/O)
Hello, Stan. This is Mike Kelsy. Very funny

message, you fooled me. I'm coming over. See ya.

STAN

Good message, huh?

MIKE

Very funny.

Mike cracks his beer. The phone machine is still on BEEP.

GRUBB

(V/O)

Heya Wild Man, this is Randall Grubb. If you're still lookin' for a job gimme a call quick. 915-662-6775.

Stan shuts off the machine.

STAN

Well . . . I told you I had irons in the fire. I've got a job.

Mike sits up.

MIKE

You think there might be something for me, too? I'd take anything, really.

STAN

Mike, you don't know what this guy does.

MIKE

I don't care.

STAN

But you should. He's a merc.

MIKE

(confused)

What's a merc?

STAN

A mercenary soldier. He puts together armies for hire.

MIKE

(impressed)

Really? Well, that's why I joined the Air Force.

STAN

Let me give old Randall a call back and see what's coming down. After two years in the service, I'm skilled labor. You're not.

MIKE

But I could load or unload or haul shit or drive or something.

STAN

I hear you, dude.

Stan dials the phone.

STAN

You may not want to work for this guy, he's a certifiable nut. He's an ex-Special Forces, jet pilot, that's a rich Texan mega-burn-out. He went to Vegas one time and lost over seven hundred thousand dollars in a single night!

The phone is answered. Stan gets serious.

STAN

Hi, is Randall there?

(a pause)

Tex, hi, Stan Gold here.

GRUBB

(O.S.)

Heya Stan, how you be?

STAN

Great. What'dya got?

GRUBB

The real thing, partner. Are you ready, willing and able?

STAN

(uncertain)

Uh . . .

GRUBB

You said you were interested, remember? *Really* interested.

STAN

I know I did. And I am. When?

GRUBB

Now!

Stan shakes his head in disbelief.

STAN

Oh, wow, I can't believe this.

GRUBB

(serious)

Are you *really* ready, Stan?

Stan straightens up, glances at Mike and sees him pointing at himself.

STAN

Yeah, I am. I'm really ready. And I've got a friend of mine here that just left the Air Force that's also interested.

GRUBB

Do you trust him?

STAN

He's my best friend.

GRUBB

All right, it's your buddy's lucky day. Four guys Haven't called me back, and I can't wait. Both of you, leave now. TWA. Tickets'll be waiting for you at the desk. Move it.

STAN

Yes, sir.

Stan hangs up and looks at Mike.

STAN

I think you've got a job if you want it.

MIKE

I want it. What is it?

STAN

It's gonna be dangerous, Mike. That's what Randall specializes in.

MIKE

I'm ready, Stan. Let's go for it. We're back in business.

STAN

All right. Let me throw some shit in a bag and we're outta here!

Mike is up and bobbing and swaying.

MIKE

By the way, where are we going?

STAN

El Paso, Texas. Land of the free and home of the brave.

CUT TO:

EXT. EL PASO AIRPORT - NIGHT

Mike and Stan step out of the terminal at the El Paso airport and are picked up by a limousine.

EXT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

The car travels along the Rio Grande river until it comes to the entrance of a large, Texas style ranch. An arched wrought iron gate with "The Big G" passes over them as they enter the sprawling estate of Randall Grubb.

EXT. GRUBB'S RANCH - NIGHT

Mike and Stan are met at the door by a butler who takes their bags and shows them into the living room.

INT. GRUBB'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Seated and standing in the spacious room are TEN MEN of all origins.
RANDALL GRUBB strides over to meet them. He is an enormous man bear of a

GRUBB

And here come the last stragglers.

Grubb wears cowboy boots, blue jeans and a western shirt.

GRUBB

Good to see you, Stan.

Randall pumps his hand and turns to the others.

GRUBB

This is "Wild Man" Stan. He and I have partied pretty intensely.

STAN

We sure have.

GRUBB

And who's your friend, Stan?

STAN

This is Mike Kelsy. He just got booted out of the Air Force, too.

Randall shakes Mike's hand.

GRUBB

How long were ya in for, Mike?

Mike coughs. Everyone is looking at him and this is the toughest looking bunch of guys he's ever seen in his life.

MIKE

Uh, three we -

He coughs and mumbles simultaneously.

GRUBB

What was that? I couldn't hear you?

MIKE

(clearly)

Three weeks.

GRUBB
Into service? Or into basic?

Mike winces and gulps.

MIKE
Into basic.

GRUBB
(amazed)
I don't understand. What can you do to get thrown out of basic training? Did you kill the D.I. or something?

MIKE
No. I have flat feet.

Everyone laughs and Mike takes it.

GRUBB
Well, Mike, you got some idea what we're doin' here, right?

MIKE
Right.

GRUBB
Why should I take you?

MIKE
Well . . . I need a job.

GRUBB
The gas station on the corner's got an opening, try them.

MIKE
Look, I joined the Air Force hoping to see some action and I still want to.

GRUBB
So what. I still haven't heard a good reason yet. You look like some sort of a fag to me.

Mike's eyes light up, as do everyone else's.

MIKE

Excuse me? What did you say?

Randall takes in everyone in the room in his glance.

GRUBB

I said, I think you take it up the ass, sonny-boy.

Mike flushes red as everybody watches him closely.

MIKE

Oh, yeah? I'll kick *your* ass right now!

All the men smile - this was exactly what they wanted to hear. Randall steps up to Mike. He's a bit taller than Mike and easily outweighs him by fifty pounds.

GRUBB

Oh really? Then you'd best do it.

Mike doesn't hesitate. He throws his entire body at Randall Grubb. Randall loses his footing and backs into a delicate-looking vase on a pedestal. It smashes to the floor.

Mike throws himself at Grubb again and catches him in a scissors hold, easily flipping him to the floor. Mike comes around expertly with his arms and catches Randall in a full nelson, smashing his face into the carpet.

GRUBB

Good move, kid. Ya got me. Let me up.

Mike doesn't move.

MIKE

Say Uncle.

GRUBB

You're pushing your luck. Lemme up!

MIKE

Say Uncle!

Mike mashes Randall's face deeper into the carpet.

GRUBB

Ah . . . Shit! . . . *Uncle!*

Mike jumps off of him and is across the room before Grubb is on his feet. Stan slaps him five.

STAN
(whispers)
Good work, dude.

Randall stands, rubs the side of his face and turns to the others.

GRUBB
What'dya say guys, it's up to you?

They all nod and shrug. A variety of accents fill the room.

GUYS
Why not?/ Sure . . ./ He'll do . . .

Grubb steps over to Mike. He looks like he might hit him, then shakes his hand.

GRUBB
You're in, Kid. But if you mess up you're gonna be in a severe world of shit! I'll make sure of it. Flat feet or not.

INT. GRUBB'S RANCH/ GAME ROOM - LATER

Everyone stands around a cardboard model of a small city sitting on top of a pool table. It is ten blocks square, has a main street and a harbor. Randall points with an antennae with a roach clip on the end.

GRUBB
This is Lome, Togo. We're going to come in through the city of Accra in Ghana, to the west, then we'll pilot landing craft down the coast and come in through the harbor. From there, we'll take the most direct route . . .
(he points out a specific building at the end of the main street)
. . . to the British Embassy. We'll be met by a jet at an abandoned airstrip five miles outside of Lome. Any questions?
(everyone shakes their head and shrugs)

All right, let's get this show on the road. Those of
of
you with the earliest flights, head out now.

Four of the men pick up their small suitcases and head for the door. Randall stops them with one last thing.

GRUBB

And make sure you've got your passports.

The men pat their pockets and nod. Mike looks at Stan helplessly.

MIKE

Uh . . . I haven't got a passport.

GRUBB

What? Where is it?

MIKE

(shrugs)

I've never had one. I've never been anywhere.

STAN

You can apply and get it pretty fast. I got mine in two days.

GRUBB

We haven't got two days. Which leaves you with two choices: Don't go, or we can whip you up one.

MIKE

(skeptical)

Make a passport? Here? But that's illegal.

Everyone in the room chuckles.

GRUBB

Kid, everything we're doing here is illegal. Get with the program.

MIKE

But what if I get caught at customs with a fake passport?

GRUBB

You're fucked . . .

Randall points at a bald, intense-looking guy sitting on the couch. He is KRACAUER.

GRUBB

. . . But Kracauer here's a damn good forger.

Kracauer nods humbly.

GRUBB

I've got the blanks and a polaroid. What'dya say, kid? If we're gonna do it, then we got to get on it right now.

Mike is sincerely unsure.

MIKE

Uh . . .

Kracauer looks up at him.

KRACAUER

(German accent)

I haven't used a proper passport in twenty years. I've never been caught.

Mike is convinced.

MIKE

OK. Let's do it.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Mike, Stan, Randall and Kracauer ride in the back. Mike studies his new passport.

MIKE

It looks good. It looks really good.

KRACAUER

Dunka.

MIKE

And you say you've never been caught with your fake passport, huh?

Kracauer shakes his head.

KRACAUER

Nein. But, I've got mine backed up with a false birth certificate, false German identity papers and false credit cards, as well as a false drivers license. If they ask you for more identification then you are indeed "fucked," as Herr Grubb so aptly put it.

Mike's good feelings are gone.

MIKE

Oh.

KRACAUER

And you'd better remember your new name.

MIKE

Right. I got it. George Marshman. No problem.

Kracauer frowns and shakes his head.

KRACAUER

No! George Marshall. Like the general.

MIKE

(unsure)

Oh, yeah. Him.

(he turns to Stan)

And you'll be with me, so I'll be all right.

Randall shakes his head.

GRUBB

No he won't. We're all going out an different airlines. Most of these guys are known mercenaries, we don't need the authorities making any connections before we even get where we're going.

MIKE

Oh, shit.

GRUBB

You can still back out. It's stupid of me to be taking you, anyway, but it's even stupider of you to go.

MIKE

No it's not. It makes perfect sense. I'm goin' for it.

Randall nods.

GRUBB

All right, kid. I like your attitude.

EXT. EL PASO AIRPORT - NIGHT

As they get out of the limo, Randall turns to Mike and Stan.

GRUBB

Until we get to Accra, none of us know each other. Got it?

Kracauer and Mike nod. Stan has a strange look on his face. Randall sees this.

GRUBB

What's wrong?

Stan looks at Mike, then looks down.

STAN

1-I-I'm not goin'.

Mike is totally shocked.

MIKE

What? Are you kiddin'?

STAN

No, I'm not kiddin'. I'm not goin'.

MIKE

But you said-

STAN

(angry)

-I changed my mind, okay?

MIKE

But why?

STAN

I'm not dyin' in some fuckin' little country I've never

even heard of. No thanks.

Randall sticks his finger in Stan's face.

GRUBB

You better not mention a word of this to anyone, Stan, or I'll get you. You can count on it.

STAN

I won't.

Mike looks at Stan with a pleading expression.

MIKE

But I thought we were gonna be a team again.

STAN

A team of what? Dead guys? No thanks!

Randall looks at Stan and Mike and shakes his head and sighs.

GRUBB

All right you two, get the fuck outta here.

Mike looks from Stan to Randall.

MIKE

What'dya mean, "you two"? I'm still goin'.

Randall and Stan both look at Mike in amazement.

STAN

You are?

MIKE

Hell yes. What else've I got to do?

STAN

You can hang out with me for a while.

MIKE

Fuck that. I need a job.

This is a job. I'm goin'.

STAN

You're nuts.

MIKE

Maybe I am. See ya later, Stan.

Stan looks at Mike for a long moment, then shakes his head and walks away. Mike shrugs. Randall looks Mike in the eye.

GRUBB

You sure?

MIKE

Yeah, I'm sure.

Randall grins and slaps Mike on the back.

GRUBB

You're okay, kid. Now let's get movin'.

Randall, Mike and Kracauer head into the airport. Mike glances back and sees Stan waiting at the taxi stand. They exchange a look, then Mike turns and walks away.

INT. EL PASO AIRPORT - NIGHT

In the airport they all spread out. Randall goes to the American Airlines desk, Kracauer to Northwest, Mike to TWA.

INT. TWA TICKET DESK - NIGHT

Mike checks his duffel bag. The FLIGHT ATTENDANT stamps his ticket.

ATTENDANT

Round trip to Milan, Italy connecting with Air
Africa
to Accra, Ghana. What are you going to do in Ghana?

Mike is caught unaware.

MIKE

Huh . . . ?

ATTENDANT

(repeating with a smile)

Ghana. I've never met anyone going there. What are you going to do there?

Mike is stumped.

MIKE

Uh . . . Sightsee.

ATTENDANT

In Ghana? It's one of the poorest countries in the world.

MIKE

Yes, well . . . I've been everywhere else. You get to a point where you've got to see something new, even if it's poverty.

ATTENDANT

I'll bet your passport has lots of great visas, huh?

MIKE

Passport? Visas?

Mike pats the pocket with his passport.

MIKE

Sure. Lots of Visas. Mastercards and American Express, too.

The flight attendant laughs and hands Mike his ticket.

ATTENDANT

Have a nice flight, Mr. Marshall.

MIKE

Huh? Oh, yeah. Thank you.

Mike walks away from the counter and wipes a pint of sweat from his brow.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. MILAN MALPENSA AIRPORT - NIGHT

Mike's TWA jet lands in Milan, Italy nine hours later.

INT. MALPENSA AIRPORT - NIGHT

He gets his duffel bag and steps into a long line for customs. Strangely, it is moving very fast and before he knows it he's standing in front of an Italian CUSTOMS MAN flanked by a SOLDIER with a beret and a machine-gun.

CUSTOMS MAN
(Holding out his hand)
Passport.

Mike is sweating as he hands it over. Just as the Customs Official opens it, Mike glances down at his duffel bag. On the side of it is stenciled in big white letters, "Kelsy."

CUSTOMS MAN
Do you have anything to claim, Mr. Marshall?

MIKE
No.

The Customs Man reaches for Mike's duffel.

CUSTOMS MAN
Open it, please.

Mike rolls it over so that "Kelsy" isn't showing and unties the string.

CUSTOMS MAN
Empty it, please.

Mike pulls out all of his clothes. There really isn't all that much, but as he's pulling stuff out, he spots letters from his Mother addressed to Mike Kelsy. Mike's panic increases. The Customs Man goes through the clothes rather scrupulously.

Mike glances back and see Randall Grubb at the end of another customs line. He winks at Mike and looks away.

The Customs Man picks up the letters and opens each envelope, but doesn't read anything. He finally pushes all of Mike's stuff past him. Mike inwardly sighs. The Customs Official stamps Mike's passport and holds it out to Mike, but won't let go.

CUSTOMS MAN

You must be named after the American General,
yes?

Once again Mike is caught unaware.

MIKE

Pardon me?

CUSTOMS MAN

Your name. It's the same as the American General.

MIKE

Uh, yes it is. General George . . .

(pause)

. . . Marshman.

CUSTOMS MAN

(correcting him)

Marshall.

MIKE

That's what I said.

CUSTOMS MAN

I saw him once during the war.

MINE

Did you really? That's fascinating.

CUSTOMS MAN

I was just a little boy then, but I remember it like
it
was yesterday.

Mike is dying. The guy won't let go of his passport.

MIKE

(smiling)

My Father was very impressed with General Marshall,

that's why he named me after him.

CUSTOMS MAN

Yes, he was a great General. Very good to Italy.

He lets go of the passport. Mike puts it in his pocket. It's over and he somehow got through it. He starts to stuff his clothes back in his duffel bag.

MIKE

You know my Father served in Italy during World War Two.

CUSTOMS MAN

Really. Where?

MIKE

(calm now)

Sicily.

The Customs Man suddenly grows very serious.

CUSTOMS MAN

Sicily is not Italy! Italy is Italy! Sicily is Sicily!

MIKE

What I meant was...

CUSTOMS MAN

Let me see your passport again.

Mike freezes. He blew it. He hands back his passport and breathes his last breath.

The Customs Man opens the passport, goes through the pages and stops. He closes it and hands it back.

CUSTOMS MAN

It's already stamped. Welcome to Italy.

Mike picks up his duffel, breathes deeply, turns and leaves.

MIKE

Thanks.

EXT. MALPENSA AIRPORT/ MILAN - NIGHT

When Mike gets out of the terminal into the balmy Italian air, he breathes a big sigh of relief and sits down for a second on a bench. CAB DRIVERS yell in Italian.

MIKE

What in God's name am I doing *here*?

(he looks at his watch)

Oh, shit!

Mike jumps to his feet and walks past the various terminals. At the very end is Air Africa.

INT. MALPENSA AIRPORT - AIR AFRICA DESK - NIGHT

Mike checks in with a pretty BLACK GIRL and gets a seat assignment.

Waiting in the terminal is Randall Grubb and a tall red headed guy that Mike met at Randall's house. They both glance at him, but neither makes any move toward him.

Mike sits down on a blue plastic seat and picks up a newspaper. It's in Italian, he can't read it. He looks at the pictures.

Five other people arrive in the Air Africa terminal before the flight to Accra is called. A FAT MAN in a white suit, sweating profusely and reading a German newspaper. A SHORT GUY with glasses seemingly staring at nothing.

A mean looking man with THICK EYEBROWS reads a book in God knows what language, and peers peering over the top of it at Mike. Mike starts sweating again.

MIKE

(whispering to himself)

K.G.B.

There is also a BRITISH COUPLE who just talk and talk.

INT. AIR AFRICA JET - NIGHT

On board the 30-seat French jet, Mike sits down and the man with the thick eyebrows seats himself right next to him and continues reading his book.

EXT. AIR AFRICA JET - NIGHT

The jet roars down the runway and lifts off into the sky.

INT. AIR AFRICA JET - NIGHT

The man next to Mike finally turns to him. His eyebrows are like armpits and the hair in his nose is thick. He smells like paprika on cabbage. He looks like he's going to kill Mike. He reaches into his vest pocket for his gun.

EYEBROWS

English?

MIKE

(croaks)

American.

EYEBROWS

Good. I speak good English.

He pulls out a rectangular wooden box.

EYEBROWS

You play chess?

Mike sighs in relief.

MIKE

Yeah, sure.

EYEBROWS

Good.

He opens the box and it's a little chess board.

EYEBROWS

Makes flight go by faster.

Mike nods in agreement.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICE - DAY

Sir Robert Densmore and Julius Thornsby meet in an empty office. Thornsby shows Densmore the deposit bag filled with several pounds of cut diamonds.

DENSMORE

There's certainly a lot of diamonds here. You hang on to them. And be very careful.

THORNSBY

Yes, Sir.

INT. BRITISH EMBASSY/ GUEST ROOM - DAY

Sekou Nyerere lies in bed in terrible pain as Undersecretary Donald Wolfitt administers an injection of morphine. Sir Robert steps into the room. Wolfitt sees him.

WOLFITT

Bloody nuisance not being able to bring a doctor in. Gangrene will set in soon.

DENSMORE

Isn't there anything you can do?

Wolfitt pulls the needle from Nyerere's arm.

WOLFITT

I've just done it.

Sekou sits up, the drug beginning to effect him.

NYERERE

Robert.

DENSMORE

Yes?

NYERERE

My wife. I've got to get my wife. She's in much danger.

DENSMORE

I'm afraid you're not going anywhere, Sekou. Both your legs are broken.

RYERERE

Then you must go for me. Please, Robert? Someone must go.

Densmore considers this seriously.

DENSMORE

How far away is she?

NYERERE

Not far. Less than a kilometer.

He hands Sir Robert a piece of paper with an address on it. Wolfitt looks at him.

WOLFITT

You're not going out there, Sir Robert. You'll be killed.

Densmore shakes his head.

DENSMORE

He's right, she can't be left behind. I have to go.

WOLFITT

Send the Gurkhas.

DENSMORE

They're needed here.

WOLFITT

That's true, but take at least one with you. Your chances will increase greatly.

DENSMORE

Yes, I'll do that.

NYERERE

Thank you, Robert.

Nyerere passes out.

EXT. BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

All six Gurkhas are still at the gate which is now boarded up and blocked by a Jeep. There are revolutionaries on the other side, but at the moment no one is shooting. Sir Robert steps up, his AK-47 in his hands.

DENSMORE

I need one man to go with me into town to get

someone. Will any of you volunteer?

All of the Gurkhas step forward. Gueng speaks.

GUENG

We will go, Sahib. You stay.

DENSMORE

No, no. This is my responsibility. However, if just one of you gentlemen would accompany me, I'd feel better about this whole thing.

Gueng looks at the men and points to Tenzing.

GUENG

Take him. He will serve you well.

Tenzing steps forward. Densmore offers him the AK-47.

DENSMORE

Here. Why don't you take this.

TENZING

No, no, sir. You keep it. I have my carbine. I know it well.

Tenzing and Sir Robert go into the embassy. Gueng nods approvingly. He and the Gurkhas turn back to the gate.

INT. EMBASSY FOYER - DAY

Sir Ian is waiting for Sir Robert and Tenzing.

SIR IAN

Come this way.

He leads them to a door and unbolts it.

INT. EMBASSY CELLAR - DAY

The heavy, oak door creaks open and Sir Ian leads them down a staircase.

SIR IAN

In case you're interested, there are escape routes out of all British embassies. Generally 'more than one, although this embassy only has the one.

He leads them through the dark basement to a wine rack filled with dusty bottles.

SIR IAN

We've got to move this out of the way, but be very careful, several of these bottles are quite precious.

Sir Robert and Tenzing carefully move the wine rack aside, revealing a three foot high wooden door.

SIR IAN

I haven't the foggiest where it comes out. Do be careful, Bobby. I've known you since you were born.

DENSMORE

I will, Sir Ian. Thank you.

Sir Ian turns to Tenzing.

SIR IAN

And thank you for the warning, sergeant. I'm sorry I didn't acknowledge it sooner.

Tenzing nods and goes through the door. Sir Robert follows - both have flashlights. Sir Ian shuts the door after them.

INT. EMBASSY PASSAGEWAY - DAY

The dark tunnel is tall enough for Tenzing to stand up straight, but not Densmore, who crouches. It is filled with cobwebs that immediately engulf both of them. They scurry along, trying not to think about what might be lurking ahead, or underfoot.

Suddenly Tenzing puts up his hand and stops. Densmore also stops. Tenzing aims his flashlight beam at a coiled snake on the floor. It is ready to strike. Densmore shudders. Tenzing hands Densmore his carbine.

TENZING

We shouldn't fire our weapons in here.

Tenzing pulls a knife with a foot long curved blade, called a *Kookri*, from somewhere behind his back and cautiously steps toward the hissing snake.

Tenzing makes a lunge toward the snake, then quickly backs away. The snake strikes, Tenzing sidesteps it, grabbing it around the jaws and expertly lops its head off with a single swipe of the blade. He tosses the head on the floor and reaches back for his carbine.

TENZING

May I?

Sir Robert is astounded. There is five feet of headless snake writhing on the floor. He hands Tenzing his Carbine.

DENSMORE

Of course.

Tenzing continues quickly up the passageway. Sir Robert hesitates, then jumps over the snake's body with a look of revulsion on his face.

When they reach the end of the tunnel, they find wooden slats covering the ceiling. Tenzing and Densmore look at the slats, then at each other.

DENSMORE

(whispering)

Who knows what's up there?

TENZING

(whispering also)

You knock out the slats. I'll cover.

Densmore nods and swings the butt of the AK-47 at the slats, breaking them right out. Tenzing shoves the barrel of his carbine through the hole and brings his face up to see what he's aiming at.

INT. HUT - DAY

Tenzing sees the interior of a sheet metal and cardboard hut. FIVE FILTHY EMACIATED CHILDREN with flies buzzing around their heads, look back at him with absolutely no sense of fear at all.

Tenzing knocks out another board and climbs through the hole. He helps Densmore out. They both look at the children. Tenzing says

something in Togolese, but the kids do not respond. He shrugs, goes to the door and peeks out.

The hut is located in a terribly poor area behind the embassy. There only seems to be children and dogs in the street. Tenzing and Densmore replace the broken boards and slide a piece of sheet metal over the damage. The kids in the hut never move or make a sound.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Tenzing and Densmore leave the hut and dash through the village back toward the embassy.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOME - DAY

They skirt the embassy, which is surrounded by many armed revolutionaries, and stay behind huts and buildings heading toward the center of town.

EXT. KORONGA BLVD - DAY

A firefight is still raging along Koronga Blvd. The government forces, still holding one side of the street, are greatly outnumbered but still put up a tough fight. Bursts of automatic weapon fire occur every few seconds. Hot lead pelts the walls and street.

EXT. BEHIND KORONGA BLVD - DAY

Tenzing ducks down behind a hut and Densmore follows suit. They can see the backs of buildings facing the boulevard. Tenzing points to a three story apartment building.

TENZING

(whispering)

This is the building.

DENSMORE

It seems to be occupied by the rebels. What should we do?

Tenzing has assessed the situation.

TENZING

We should get this woman out of there very quickly. Cover my back, please.

Densmore releases the safety on his weapon.

Tenzing stays in a crouch and dashes to the apartment building across a rutted dirt alley. Densmore is right behind him.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

They get to the back door and push themselves into the doorway. Tenzing puts his ear against the wooden door.

TENZING

Ready?

DENSMORE

Uh, I suppose.

(Tenzing looks at him)

I mean, yes.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Tenzing opens the door and steps inside. At the other end of the first floor hallway, TWO REBELS are firing out the shattered windows of the front door. As they turn to see the two intruders, Tenzing has dropped to one knee, has his carbine leveled and fires two shots in quick succession.

Densmore has himself plastered against the wall. He tries to see through the cordite smoke, but can't.

TENZING

(dashing up the hallway)

Come on.

They get to the front stairs and Densmore sees that both rebels are on the floor dead, each with a bullet hole in his head. Densmore's eyes widen. Tenzing rushes up the stairs and Densmore follows.

INT. SECOND FLOOR - DAY

They reach the second floor and pause. Tenzing nods and goes up the next flight of stairs, Densmore is right behind him.

INT. THIRD FLOOR - DAY

As they reach the third floor landing, THREE REBELS approach from behind them, coming from the second floor.

Densmore's weapon is trained right on them as they turn the corner. He pulls the trigger and sprays bullets down the stairway. All three rebels are hit and tumble back down the stairs. Densmore keeps firing and Tenzing touches his shoulder lightly.

TENZING

Save ammunition.

Sir Robert stops shooting. He blinks several times and shakes his head. The stairwell is full of blue smoke. He feels like he can't get enough air into his lungs.

Tenzing has his ear against the third floor door. He turns to Densmore.

TENZING

Please stay.

Densmore nods. Tenzing opens the door and in one fluid motion rolls into the hallway, lands on his stomach with his weapon aimed in on the window at the end of the hall. A REBEL stands waiting with his rifle aimed at the door and he fires first. The bullet is high and hits the door. Tenzing fires one shot and the rebel drops dead, a bullet in the forehead.

Tenzing is on his feet and motions Densmore to follow.

TENZING

Flat three-ten, correct?

Densmore reaches for the piece of paper, but Tenzing is already moving to apartment 310. Densmore follows and checks the paper.

DENSMORE

Yes, three-ten.

TENZING

What is her name?

DENSMORE

Uh . . . Mrs. Nyerere.

Tenzing stops next to the wall beside the door and puts out his hand for Sir Robert to not go any further. Tenzing reaches around the doorjam and knocks twice quickly, then pulls his hand away. Three bullets come ripping through the wooden door and smash into the plaster wall across the hall.

TENZING

Call to her.

DENSMORE

Mrs. Nyerere! Don't shoot! Your husband sent us!

A REBEL steps through the stairway door into the hallway. Tenzing levels his carbine at the same moment the rebel levels his weapon. Tenzing fires two shots and the rebel fires one. The rebel's bullet rips through the arm of Tenzing's shirt, grazing his bicep. Tenzing's bullets both strike the rebel in the chest, throwing him backward down the steps. Tenzing never flinches.

An eye is peering into the hallway through a bullet hole in the door of 310. The door opens a crack and a black woman's face is slightly visible. She is MRS. NYERERE.

MRS. NYERERE

Who are you?

DENSMORE

Friends of your husband.

MRS. NYERERE

Who exactly?

DENSMORE

Exactly? Well, I'm your husband's employer. I own Commonwealth Mineral.

MRS. NYERERE

(surprised)

Sir Robert Densmore?

DENSMORE

Why yes, that's me.

She opens the door and reveals a Colt .45 pistol in her hand.

MRS. NYERERE

What are you doing here? I thought you lived in England.

DENSMORE

I do. I'll explain later. Your husband is at the

British embassy. He sent us to get you.

MRS. NYERERE
Why didn't he come?

DENSMORE
He's injured. Now come quickly. Please.

She turns back inside.

MRS. NYERERE
Let me get my things.

Densmore grabs her arm and pulls her into the hallway.

DENSMORE
You've got them. Let's go.

Tenzing's eyes dart all around.

TENZING
Quickly.

They all dash for the stairs.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED AIRSTRIP - DAY

Captain Krasker is stripped to the waist and holds a machete. He tosses the machete at a tree ten feet away and it sticks with a "thwang."

KRASKER
(smiling)
Jolly good.

He pulls the machete from the tree and walks back to the jet, which is completely covered with foliage wedged into the camouflage net. Krasker admires his handiwork.

KRASKER
Yep. Looks just like a jet covered with leaves.

He picks up his AK-47 and his shirt and starts to go up the aluminum ladder into the jet when he hears something. He scans the distance at the other end of the overgrown landing strip. Through the heat

haze it is hard to see. And then through the hot wavering air appears a Jeep filled with FIVE GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS and behind that a troop truck.

KRASKER

Oh, bloody hell! No time to even get the engines started.

He cocks his weapon and throws the safety. He jumps down from the ladder and crouches behind some leaves. The Jeep and truck keep coming and coming, growing larger and more distinct. Krasker grits his teeth, his knuckles whitening around his weapon.

One hundred feet from him and the jet, the Jeep and the truck stop. FOUR MORE SOLDIERS get out of the back of the truck.

Krasker takes a deep breath. Then he hears something. A low rumble. He looks up and sees a plane approaching, still just a speck in the sky.

KRASKER

(mumbling)

C-130 cargo plane.

The soldiers are unloading boxes from the back of the truck.

The big military plane touches down at the opposite end of the airstrip. It's still going pretty fast as it passes the soldiers. It taxis directly at Krasker. His eyes widen and he gets ready to bolt as the cockpit and huge swirling props bear down on him.

Fifteen very close feet from Krasker and the jet, the cargo plane begins turning. Krasker can see the pilot clearly, a BLACK SOLDIER with headphones and sunglasses. The cockpit of the C-130 swings within five feet of the end of the jet's wing. The pilot doesn't see a thing. Krasker rolls his eyes and shakes his head.

The C-130 heads back down the airstrip to the waiting soldiers. They hastily load the boxes into the plane. Bits of colorful paper blow out of the boxes and get scattered in the wind. The soldiers then drive the Jeep up a ramp into the cargo hold of the plane, shut the door and take off. In a minute the plane is gone.

Krasker gets out of his hiding place, slings the weapon over his shoulder and jogs out to the abandoned truck. On the way he picks up some of the colorful paper - it's foreign currency. Krasker's eyes widen.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Krasker climbs up and looks into the back of the green canvas-covered troop truck. It is empty, except for scraps of colored paper coating the floor. He looks closer and sees that the colored paper is, in fact, money. He picks up a handful and it is paper money from absolutely everywhere in the world: U.S. Dollars, German Marks, Japanese Yen, Italian Lira, British Pounds, on and on. It's an inch thick across the whole bottom of the truck. Krasker's face lights up with a big smile.

KRASKER

I've hit the bloody jackpot!

He quickly begins stuffing the bills into his pockets.

CUT TO:

INT. ACCRA AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

The airport terminal in Accra is very small. It's just a single square room. Everyone from the flight from Milan, which is ten people including Mike, Randall, the tall red headed guy, the man with the bushy eyebrows, and the others, file through a line to get their passports stamped. Mike and Mr. Eyebrows are still talking.

EYEBROWS

Twenty-three times I beat you. You should pay more attention.

MIKE

I know, but I never looked at chess this way before.

The GHANA CUSTOMS MAN takes Mike's passport, stamps it and hands it back. Mike puts it in his pocket, coughs and keep moving.

Mr. Eyebrows is waiting. Randall watches from a distance.

EYEBROWS

It was good to meet on you, Mikhail Kelsy. Here.

He hands him the wooden chess board.

EYEBROWS

Learn.

MIKE

Thank you very much, Mr. Rhozdevenska. It was a pleasure meeting you.

EYEBROWS

You are a very polite young man. If you get to Zagreb, give me a call on telephone.

MIKE

Sure.

Randall Grubb grabs Mike's arm and pulls him out of the terminal.

EXT. ACCRA AIRPORT - DAY

Accra is blinding white. It's seriously oppressively hot. And there is nothing here. Mike and Randall begin walking quickly toward the end of the street where an old, dusty Mercedes Benz is waiting.

GRUBB

(while he walks)

What were you talking to that guy about?

MIKE

Chess.

GRUBB

That guy might've been KGB.

MIKE

That's what I thought, but we only talked about chess.

GRUBB

Well, why the hell did you tell him your real name?

MIKE

Oh, man! I forgot.

GRUBB

One more fuck up and you're dead meat, kiddo! Take my word for it.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

They get in and there's the tall redhead, MCDUGALL, from Ireland and LEOPOLD BOURGIUBA, a short black man with glasses, is driving. He turns to Randall.

LEOPOLD

I am Leopold Bourguiba. I work for Commonwealth mineral.

GRUBB

Jim Randall Grubb. This is Mac and this is Mike. You can straighten that out for yourself. Everything all set?

LEOPOLD

Yes, indeed.

GRUBB

Everyone else here?

LEOPOLD

Most certainly.

GRUBB

Then we're in business.

EXT. ACCRA WAREHOUSE - DUSK

The Mercedes arrives at a thatch and wood warehouse near the water just as the sun is setting.

INT. ACCRA WAREHOUSE - DUSK

They all go inside and find all the other mercenaries waiting for them in full camouflage fatigues, M-16's and black berets.

There are four 18 foot landing crafts with outboard motors and all kinds of supplies. Mike looks around impressed.

LEOPOLD

Good luck, gentlemen. I'll be at the Commonwealth Mineral office all night long in case you might need anything.

He leaves. A guy steps up and hands Randall, Mike and Mac bundled up uniforms, boots, a beret and an M-16 rifle.

GRUBB

How's everybody feelin'?

They all mumble "Aw right" and "Okay" in all their various accents.

GRUBB

What was that? Did you guys say somethin'?

GUYS

All right.

GRUBB

I said, I can't hear you!

GUYS

(yelling)

All *right!*

GRUBB

That's better! At last word, Lome is a war zone. There's been a firefight going on for three days. It's not our job to engage either side of this conflict except if they stand in the way of our objective to get our people and evacuate them safely. Nothing stands in the way of that objective. Nothing! Is that clear?

GUYS

Yes, Sir.

GRUBB

I can't hear you.

GUYS

(yelling)

Yes, Sir!

GRUBB

You're a bunch of faggots!

GUYS

YES, SIR!!

GRUBB

All right! Let's go kick some ass!

EXT. OCEAN SHORE - NIGHT

The bright moon shimmers on the Atlantic as the mercenaries lower the landing crafts into the water and climb aboard. Mike struggles with a heavy radio on his back. He realizes as he climbs into the boat that if he were to fall in the water he'd probably drown.

With three men in each craft, the electric outboard motors move them silently out to sea.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The ocean is rough and bobs them around like corks. The distance between the boats increases every moment until they can't see one another. Within an hour, clouds roll in obscuring the moon.

EXT. MIKE'S BOAT - NIGHT

A German man, WERNER, is navigating the craft Mike is in. He watches the thickening clouds.

WERNER
(mumbling)

Good.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

However, with the clouds come rougher and rougher seas. The little boats are tossed higher and higher into the air, crashing down with greater and greater force. Salt water sprays them with each descent.

EXT. MIKE'S BOAT - NIGHT

Mike's stomach is left up at the top each time as the boat drops further and further down. Soon, Mike vomits over the edge. Werner and the other mercenary, a guy from Oklahoma, BUCK, both laugh at him.

Eventually, Mike has his face pressed against the cool rubber side of the craft, no longer sick, but unable to open his eyes.

Suddenly, Werner and Buck hear something and sit up straight. Mike senses their tension, opens his eyes and sits up, looking at their alert faces. They squint as they search the vast open sea. Both of them bring their weapons to their laps. Mike does the same.

A moment later they come upon an overturned landing craft.

BUCK
(to Mike)

Grab it.

Mike grabs the rope attached to the bow and he and Buck turn the boat over. They tie it off and drag it with them.

They then hear splashing and thrashing. In a second they come upon ten dorsal fins swirling around a bloody red stain. They can see the sharks fighting over chunks of meat. A black beret floats nearby.

MIKE
(gasping)
Oh my God!

Then they all hear someone calling for help. They look in all directions and finally spot someone swimming toward them. It's the tall red headed Irishman named Mac.

BUCK
Come on, Mac! You can make it!.

Buck raises his M-16 to fire at the sharks and Werner reaches out and grabs the barrel.

WERNER
No firing!

Mac starts to really kick, breast stroking toward them. A swarm of dorsal fins race toward him and engulf him. He lets out a horrifying scream that is abruptly cut off. The sharks tear him to pieces in a matter of seconds.

Mike retches with nothing left to throw up, only now he won't get near the water and huddles in the bottom of the boat. He begins to shake terribly, his teeth chattering. He begins mumbling a prayer to himself over and over again.

MIKE
Please, God, get me out of this boat. Please, God,
get me out of this boat . . .

WERNER

Shut up! Or you'll be out of this boat faster than you think!

Mike shuts up.

EXT. COAST OF TOGO - DAWN

Just before dawn, the twinkling lights of Lome can be seen. As they navigate toward them, they come upon the other two landing crafts and mercenaries waiting for them.

GRUBB

Where've you been?

Werner pulls the empty landing craft around for Randall to see.

WERNER

Towing this slowed us down.

Randall's raises his eyebrows.

GRUBB

What happened to them?

WERNER

Capsized. Sharks got them.

Randall nods stoically.

GRUBB

Is everybody ready?

Everyone but Mike nods. Randall sees this.

GRUBB

Whatsa matter, kid? You want to go home?

MIKE

(mumbling)

No, I'm fine.

Randall nods, then lashes out and grabs the front of Mike's shirt.

GRUBB

If you fuck me up, kid, I'll shoot you myself!

Mike flushes with anger.

MIKE
I said I'm ready.

GRUBB
You better be!

Mike smacks Randall's hand away from him.

MIKE
Fuck you, you redneck asshole! I kicked your ass
once and I'll do it again!

Randall backs off and everyone laughs.

GRUBB
Excuse me. Okay, guys, let's do this thing and
let's do it right.

Randall navigates his boat to the shore and the others follow.

EXT. SHORE OF TOGO - DAY

They pull the crafts into the foliage and regroup. Mike is very pleased to be on solid ground and gets in line with the heavy radio on his back.

Randall steps up behind Mike and takes the handset out of the radio and speaks into it.

GRUBB
Embassy, this is omega. Come back.

INT. EMBASSY RADIO ROOM - DAY

Cyril Franks, the radio operator, is aroused from sleep. He keys the microphone.

FRANKS
Come in, omega. This is the embassy. Over.

GRUBB
(O.S.)
What's the situation? Over.

FRANKS

Everything has gotten very quiet over the past several hours. Something's up, but we don't know what. What's your ETA?

GRUBB

(O.S.)

One hour. Be ready for us. Over.

FRANKS

Roger that. Over and out.

Cyril Franks leaves the radio room.

EXT. EMBASSY FOYER - DAY

Franks dashes to the foyer where everyone is assembled: Sir Ian, Lady Anne, Undersecretary Wolfitt, Julius Thornsby, with the canvas bag at his feet, Sekou Nyerere who lies on a couch with his Wife beside him and Sir Robert, his AK-47 on his lap. The Gurkhas are still guarding the gate.

FRANKS

Your men are here, Sir Robert.

A sigh sweeps the room.

DENSMORE

When will they be here?

FRANKS

One hour. We're to be ready for them.

LADY ANNE

Thank God.

WOLFITT

Yes. Thank God.

SIR IAN

God didn't send these men. Robert here did. Let's thank him.

Everyone turns to him and he shakes his head.

DENSMORE

Please withhold your thanks until we're out of the country. Now, let's go tell the Gurkhas we're expecting company.

EXT. LOME HARBOR - DAY

Randall and his men arrive at Lome harbor. Randall holds up his hand and they all stop and crouch behind a beached wooden boat. Randall peers over the boat and sees two armed men standing on the dock near the entrance to Koronga Blvd.

He turns and waves Werner forward. Both men unsling high-powered crossbows with scopes from their backs. They cock back the strings and load in the bolts.

GRUBB

(whispering)

Same time. One, two, three . . .

They both fire. The bolts swish through the air and accurately find their marks. Both men on the dock fall back into the water.

Randall slings the crossbow over his shoulder, picks up his M-16 and stands.

GRUBB

Let's go!

They all dash around the overturned boat, up the beach to the dock and regroup beside a boathouse. Mike sees the two men floating in the water and a fearful look crosses his face.

Randall peers around the edge of the boathouse and up Koronga Blvd. There is a massively large crowd filling the street several blocks up. They all seem to be quiet and orderly and paying attention to something.

GRUBB

Looks like the firefight is over.

This seems to be good news to Mike and he smiles in relief. Suddenly, there is a volley of gunfire from up the street. All of the mercenaries crouch lower.

GRUBB

Maybe not. Up the alley one at a time. Let's

go.

EXT. LOME ALLEY - DAY

Randall dashes to the alley that runs parallel to Koronga Blvd., behind the buildings. At one-second intervals, the mercenaries follow. Mike holds up the rear, the heavy radio slamming into his back and weighing him down terribly.

The mercenaries dash from one building to the next, past thin alleys running up to Koronga Blvd. where the crowd is visible. They, too, are visible to the people in the street, if they happened to be looking that way, which they are not.

However, at the next alley there are two men with rifles over their shoulders. Werner and Buck immediately pull their knives, grab the men around the throat and mouth and stab them to death. They drag the bodies into a doorway and everyone keeps moving. Mike keeps his eyes averted as he passes the two dead bodies.

They are now five blocks up Koronga Blvd., in the alley behind the building where Sir Robert and Tenzing saved Mrs. Nyerere. They slide along the wall and Randall peers around the corner to the boulevard.

The massive crowd in the street surrounds a truck. On the hood stands Koudougou Boroma. To his right, across the street, are FIVE OFFICERS of the government army, in khaki dress uniforms, their hands are tied and they are lined up against a wall. Before them stand ten armed men forming a firing squad. Koudougou lowers his arm and they fire. The officers all drop to the ground dead.

Werner is right beside Randall. He points at Boroma.

WERNER

(whispering)

I could drop him right now.

Randall shakes his head.

GRUBB

They're not in our way, so far. Let them keep themselves amused.

Mike is at the end of the line beside an oriental guy, MIURA, who is paying no attention to him. Mike can't seem to get the damn radio into a decent position so it's not breaking his back.

A REBEL holding a rifle steps out of the alley an arm's length from Mike. They look right into each other's surprised eyes, then the rebel takes in the whole line of mercenaries and raises his weapon. Mike is frozen with fear and indecision - is he supposed to use his M-16? No one else has.

A butterfly knife flips open beside his face and Miura sticks it into the Rebel's stomach. Mike is pushed back as the Rebel's body is pulled forward by Miura. He pulls out the knife, wipes it on the dead body, puts it away and gets back into line. He never looks at Mike.

Beside Randall and Werner is now a blonde South African man named KAARL. They are all listening to Koudougou Boroma's wild orations in Togolese as five more officers are lined up against the wall.

KAARL

(interpreting)

He says, after all of the government men are eliminated,
the foreign infidels must be eliminated. Anyone
that is
not Togolese is an enemy of Togo.

Werner turns to Randall again.

WERNER

Let me drop him, Randall. It will be doing this
country
a favor.

GRUBB

No, and shut up about it!

Randall turns to the guy behind him.

GRUBB

Radio up.

He turns to the man behind him.

MAN

Radio up.

This goes all the way down the line. Mike comes forward and Randall takes the handset.

GRUBB
Embassy. We're comin' in.

FRANKS
(O.S./ softly)
Roger.

Randall turns to the group.

GRUBB
Let's go, low crawl.

They crawl past the alley. Koudougou is waving his arms above the crowd in the background.

They come up behind a building that is across from the embassy. The crowd in the street ends just short of the embassy. Suddenly, the embassy gates open. The Gurkhas step out and form a line. Randall turns to his men.

GRUBB
That's us, let's do it!

EXT. EMBASSY - DAY

The mercenaries hustle out into the street, their weapons in both hands in front of them and run behind the Gurkhas and through the embassy gate before the crowd has a chance to do anything. The Gurkhas quickly retreat and shut the gate.

But several people in the crowd do notice this maneuver, including Koudougou Boroma on the truck hood.

INT. EMBASSY COURTYARD - DAY

Inside the embassy walls the Gurkhas pull the Jeep back in front of the gate and go back on guard.

Sir Robert and everyone else is waiting on the embassy steps. Grinning, Randall Grubb steps up to Sir Robert and they shake.

GRUBB

How ya doin', Bobby?

DENSMORE

A lot better now.

(he looks at his
wristwatch)

Forty-three hours. Very impressive.

Randall shrugs humbly. Sir Ian and Donald Wolfitt are aghast.

SIR IAN

This is all the men that are coming?

GRUBB

There were three more, but they got eaten by
sharks.

DENSMORE

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

WOLFITT

How can nine more men possibly help us?

At which point the sound of a large angry mob can be heard just outside the gate. Shots are being fired into the air and the crowd is chanting something in unison.

SIR IAN

What are they saying?

Julius Thornsby, bag in hand, steps forward.

THORNSBY

Die, foreign devils, messengers of Satan.

Sir Robert turns to Randall.

DENSMORE

So, Randy, what do you suggest?

GRUBB

I say we get our buns outta here and get to this
airstrip.

DENSMORE

How, pray tell?

Randall looks around.

GRUBB

We got any other vehicles besides that Jeep?

SIR IAN

There's my Rolls Royce.

THORNSBY

And my Land Rover.

Randall nods.

GRUBB

Let's go out the back gate.

Donald Wolfitt rolls his eyes in exasperation.

WOLFITT

There is no back gate . . .

Randall pulls a grenade off his belt.

GRUBB

Not yet, but there's gonna be in just a few minutes.

Suddenly bottles and rocks come sailing over the wall, followed by molotov cocktails.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

Into the back of the Rolls Royce piles: Sir Ian, Lady Anne, Wolfitt, Thornsby, Cyril Franks, Mrs. Nyerere and Sekou on a stretcher on the floor. In the front seat are three mercenaries and Sir Robert at the wheel.

EXT. LAND ROVER - DAY

The other six mercenaries, including Mike, pile into the Land Rover - Randall drives.

INT. EMBASSY COURTYARD - DAY

The Jeep is left for the Gurkhas.

The crowd is beginning to surge against the gates, moving the Jeep. The Gurkhas all stand in line, carbines aimed forward, waiting.

EXT. EMBASSY - DAY

Randall drives around the embassy building and the Rolls follows right behind. When they are directly behind the embassy building, Randall and three other mercenaries all lob grenades at the stone wall.

There is a huge explosion and now there's a big hole in the wall. Randall drives right into the cloud of dust, through the hole and out into the village behind.

Sir Robert guns the Rolls and bumps along behind.

INT. EMBASSY COURTYARD - DAY

The rebels burst through the embassy gate, right into a volley of gunfire from the Gurkhas. Three fire, three cock, three fire, three cock and the rebels are stopped dead. The mob retreats.

Gueng sees the chance, motions and all the Ghurkas jump into the Jeep.

EXT. EMBASSY REAR - DAY

A crowd is chasing the escaping Rolls and Land Rover. The mob is firing single shot and automatic weapons at them. The mercenaries all fire back. They hang from the windows of the Rolls firing their automatic weapons.

EXT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Mike fires his M-16 for the first time and shoots a rebel. The guy falls dead. And then the mercenary next to him, Miura, gets shot and falls off the Land Rover.

One of the mercenaries hanging out of the Rolls, Kracauer, buys it, too.

Mike is freaked out. He swings around and empties his whole clip, then slams in another.

EXT. EMBASSY REAR - DAY

The Gurkhas drive the Jeep through the hole in the wall right into the angry mob. The Gurkhas fire and fire in every direction, but are finally overrun.

As the crowd surges in on them, they drop their carbines and pull out their curved, foot-long Kookri knives and go in for hand to hand combat. The Gurkhas are the greatest hand to hand fighters in the world and take down ten opponents before one Gurkha goes down.

The angry rebels keep coming like ants as the remaining Gurkhas, now only three left, covered with blood, blades flashing, try to make it to the edge of the jungle. Now it's just Gueng and Tenzing, back to back, fighting to the death.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

Sir Robert throws a look over his shoulder.

DENSMORE

Sekou, are you conscious?

On the floor in the back, Sekou is indeed awake.

NYERERE

Yes, Robert?

DENSMORE

How far is this airstrip?

NYERERE

Very soon, at the turn off to Tsevie, you will turn right onto a dirt road. It's not much more than a kilometer or two down the road.

DENSMORE

Right-0. How are the legs, then?

NYERERE

My legs have felt better, Robert. However, I have never been in a nicer automobile.

Sir Ian smiles.

SIR IAN

Well, thanks so much. I rather like it myself.
It's a 1956 Silver Cloud.

EXT. TURN OFF - DAY

The turn off to Tsevie comes up and Sir Robert honks and pulls over. The Land Rover backs up. Sir Robert leans out the window and points at the rutted dirt road running off to the right.

DENSMORE

This way. Bring me the radio.

INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Werner slugs Mike in the arm.

WERNER

That's you.

Mike shakes his head and comes out of his daze.

MIKE

Oh, yeah.

EXT. ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

Mike runs over and hands Sir Robert the handset. He keys it, but it is not on.

DENSMORE

It's not working. Do you know how to operate this?

MIKE

Actually . . . no.

Luckily Cyril Franks does and he radios Krasker.

KRASKER

(O.S.)

It's about bloody time. I'll fire up the engines.

Cyril hands back the handset and Sir Robert turns to Mike.

DENSMORE

How did you become the radio man?

MIKE

Well . . .

Sir Robert doesn't bother to wait for the answer. He leans out the window and motions to Randall in the Land Rover.

DENSMORE

You go first!

EXT. TURN OFF - DAY

The Land Rover goes down a gully and turns onto the rutted road into the jungle.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

Sir Robert guns the car.

SIR ROBERT

Hold on.

EXT. TURN OFF - DAY

The Rolls Royce bounces down the incline and goes bombing into the jungle. Moments later, a group of trucks, Jeeps and cars drive up, filled with twenty-five shouting revolutionaries led by Koudougou Boroma. They almost go past the turn off when someone spots birds flying from the trees where the rutted road goes into the jungle. The caravan goes back and follows.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

About a half mile down, the road becomes so thin that the Rolls Royce won't go any further. Everyone climbs out and Sekou is carried to the back of the Land Rover. His Wife gets in with him. The Ambassador and his Wife also get in. Sir Ian looks back sadly at his abandoned Rolls Royce. His wife pats his shoulder.

They drive ahead and everyone else walks quickly. Shots can be heard behind them and the sound of vehicles approaching. They are really humping through the jungle and in no time, Mike has dropped to the rear.

EXT. LAND ROVER - DAY

The Land Rover gets caught in a deep mud puddle and is abandoned as well.

Sir Robert and Cyril Franks carry Nyerere on his stretcher. Everyone else walks.

NYERERE
(gritting his teeth)
It's very close now.

EXT. ABANDONED ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

Koudougou Boroma is in the cab of the truck that pulls up behind the Rolls Royce. Many vehicles pull up behind him.

The truck pushes the Rolls, but it is stuck too deep to get pushed out of the way. Koudougou jumps out of the truck and runs around the Rolls in pursuit. At least FIFTY REVOLUTIONARIES follow him.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

Randall and Werner lead the way, followed by Wolfitt, Thornsby, with Sir Robert and Cyril carrying Sekou. The other two mercenaries are helping Mrs. Nyerere, Sir Ian and his Wife.

Mike brings up the rear. The radio is breaking his stinking back. A gunshot rings out in the jungle behind. Mike looks back, then hurriedly yells ahead.

MIKE
(yelling)
Hey! They're gettin' pretty close back here. I can
here 'em.

But no one can hear Mike because he's so far back.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Everyone arrives at the airstrip. All except Mike, that is.

INT. JET - DAY

Krasker sits in the cockpit and sees the people at the opposite end of the airfield. He begins taxiing down the landing strip.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

Mike is running as fast as he can with the stupid radio weighing him down. He can hear the revolutionaries screams and gunshots behind him getting closer. He's starting to panic badly.

MIKE
(yelling)
Hey! Wait for me!

But no one can hear him.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Mike leaves the jungle, arriving at the landing strip. He sees everyone running toward the jet which is coming toward them. He is way behind everyone except one straggler who seems to be losing ground - it is Julius Thornsby struggling with the heavy canvas deposit bag he's carrying.

Suddenly the air all around him is split open by bullets whizzing past. Mike glances back over his shoulder and sees twenty revolutionaries coming out of the jungle with their weapons blazing.

EXT. JET - DAY

The jet is two-thirds of the way down the field and is beginning to turn back around and stops. Randall arrives at the open door and turns back to yell.

GRUBB
Come on! Move!

Sir Robert and Cyril arrive with Sekou and they hustle the stretcher into the jet. Next, the other two mercenaries arrive nearly carrying the Ambassador and his Wife. They put these folks on the jet, then help in Mrs. Nyerere.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Mike is still quite a ways from the jet and is catching up with Thornsby. There are ten of the faster revolutionaries coming up behind them, all firing their weapons, led by Koudougou.

Several bullets hit Thornsby in the back and he falls to the ground, the heavy deposit bag still clutched in his hands. Several more bullets hit the radio in Mike's back. It begins sparking and burning. Mike screams as he runs, trying to get the burning radio off of him.

MIKE

Oh, shit!

The radio drops off as Mike is coming up on Thornsby who is holding up the deposit bag, blood oozing from his mouth.

THORNSBY

(gasping)

Take this.

He dies. Mike never stops running and takes the bag like a hand-off in a football game.

EXT. JET - DAY

The jet is beginning to taxi away down the airstrip. Everybody on board is watching from the open doorway.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Mike is twenty yards from the jet and the revolutionaries are thirty yards behind him. Mike is weaving and ducking, the deposit bag wedged in his arms like a football. Bullets whiz past him on all sides.

INT. JET - DAY

Randall and the others crowd the doorway watching.

RANDALL

Move it! Move it! Move it!

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Koudougou Boroma is way ahead of the other revolutionaries and is really hauling up behind Mike. As he is almost within reach of Mike, Koudougou aims his Uzi at Mike's back.

Mike suddenly swirls around with the heavy deposit bag out in front of him. He knocks the weapon right out of Koudougou's hands.

INT. JET - DAY

Everyone starts screaming.

EVERYONE

Come on!/ Keep running!/ Don't slow down!

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Mike keeps running, but so does Koudougou. He comes right up behind Mike and throws himself on Mike's back, knocking him down.

EXT. JET - DAY

A giant groan is emitted by everyone watching from the jet doorway.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Koudougou is on top of Mike pounding on the back of his head.

INT. JET - DAY

Werner turns to Randall, his M-16 in his hands.

WERNER

I'm gonna drop him!

Randall grabs the barrel of the M-16 and yanks it down.

GRUBB

You'll hit the kid!

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

The rest of the revolutionaries are 25 yards behind Mike and Koudougou and are gaining on them. They have stopped firing so as not to hit Koudougou.

Mike's face is smashed into the ground. Koudougou's fists are pounding on him.

MIKE

(growling)

All right, you Motherfucker! You've had it!

Mike reaches back, hooks his arm through Koudougou's and flips him onto his back. Mike climbs on top of him and brings his knee down hard on Koudougou's throat, momentarily incapacitating him. Mike slugs him as hard as he can in the nose, then rolls off.

INT. JET - DAY

Everyone is cheering wildly.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Mike picks up the Uzi, rolls behind the abandoned truck and begins spraying bullets at the revolutionaries from a prone position. Many revolutionaries go down.

INT. JET - DAY

Randall screams to Krasker.

GRUBB

Come back around!

KRASKER

There's no time.

WERNER

Forget him. He's dead.

GRUBB

I said come back around!

DENSMORE

Do it!

Krasker begins turning the jet back around.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Mike has a crazed look on his face as he keeps firing at the approaching mob. And then he's out of bullets. Mike crawls over to Koudougou's moaning body. He punches him again in the face, pulls another clip of bullets from his belt and reloads. He turns and keeps firing.

Suddenly - *BOOM!!* - an explosion occurs right in the midst of the revolutionaries, sending several of them sailing through the air and causing them all to turn around.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Coming out of the jungle behind them is Tenzing, covered with blood, screaming with fury and firing an automatic weapon. He stops firing long enough to throw another grenade.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Mike jumps to his feet, screams a wild war cry and attacks. He and Tenzing are now catching the confused revolutionaries in a crossfire.

INT. JET - DAY

Randall turns to Sir Robert.

GRUBB

This kid is Great! He reminds me of me.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

The revolutionaries scatter to the right and left. Mike and Tenzing meet in the middle, then turn back toward the approaching jet. They both run as fast as they can, Tenzing quickly moving ahead.

As Mike passes Koudougou, who is sitting up, he scoops up the deposit bag and smacks Koudougou in the face with it for good measure. Tenzing is now covering him.

INT. JET - DAY

Sir Robert, in the cockpit, sees the bag in Mike's hand.

DENSMORE

Good Boy!

EXT. JET - DAY

Tenzing gets to the door of the jet and Randall and Werner reach down and hoist him in.

The revolutionaries are regrouping and firing at the jet.

INT. JET - DAY

Krasker turns back from the cockpit.

KRASKER

I've got to turn it around and get out of here!

EXT. JET - DAY

The craft begins to swing around. Mike is running for all he's worth, the deposit bag in his hands. Bullets whiz all around him.

GRUBB

C'mon, Kid! You can make it!

WERNER

Schnell! Schnell!

TENZING

Faster!

Mike is beside the jet running at about the same speed that the jet is taxiing. He tosses the deposit bag up and Randall catches it.

GRUBB

C'mon, kid! Faster!

MIKE

(wheezing)

I can't go any faster!

Randall, Werner and Tenzing are all hanging out the door, their hands outstretched. Mike raises his hand and is several feet away.

MIKE

I can't make it!

GRUBB

Yes you can!

TENZING

(to Randall and Werner)

Hold my legs.

They take hold of his legs and he hangs out the door, upside down. He swings out and grabs one of Mike's hands with both of his. Mike

is yanked off his feet and dragged. One of his combat boots goes bouncing off.

Randall, Werner and the two other mercenaries pull on Tenzing's legs, dragging him back into the jet. The jet is building speed and leaving the revolutionaries behind.

Mike is dangling in the air by one arm, but Tenzing won't let go.

MIKE
(screaming)
My arm is breaking!

They get Tenzing back in and Randall and Werner reach down and take hold of Mike's shirt. With a mighty pull, Mike is yanked into the jet.

LADY ANNE
Thank God! He's in!

Krasker slams the throttle to full and the jet lurches forward. He shakes his head as he eases back the stick. The jungle is zooming at them.

KRASKER
We'll never make it!

DENSMORE
Oh yes we will!

The jungle is coming at them way too fast and the jet is still on the ground.

KRASKER
Come on, you son of a whore! Come on . . .

EXT. JET - DAY

The wheels leave the ground.

INT. JET - DAY

Krasker yanks the stick all the way back. The tops of the trees come at them at 200 miles per hour.

EXT. JET - DAY

The jet bursts through the foliage unscathed and shoots into the air. In one second, the revolutionaries on the airfield are the size of ants, the muzzle flashes from their weapons still visible. In another second, the airstrip is gone.

INT. JET - DAY

Everybody cheers and applauds. Krasker pulls a wad of colorful money out of his pocket.

KRASKER

When we land, the drinks are on me.

Randall sits Mike up against the bulkhead. He is wheezing and gasping, sweat pouring off of him. Everyone crowds around to congratulate him.

GRUBB

Well, kid, you done good. Flat feet and all.

Mike looks at all of them, smiles weakly, then his eyes roll into the back of his skull and he passes out.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. HEATHROW AIRPORT DAY

A limousine pulls up outside the terminals at Heathrow Airport. Out of it steps Sir Robert, Krasker and Mrs. Nyerere. The chauffeur takes a wheelchair out of the trunk and unfolds it. Denmore and Krasker help Sekou out of the car and into the wheelchair. Both of his legs are in casts.

NYERERE

I can never thank you enough, Robert.

DENSMORE

No need, my friend.

KYERERE

Oh yes there is. You saved my wife's life. We will both always be grateful.

Mrs. Nyerere kisses Denmore on the cheek. Krasker looks on.

KRASKER

What about me? I saved both of your lives.

Mrs. Nyerere smiles and kisses him, too. Densmore turns to Sekou.

DENSMORE

And once you're fit, Sekou, let me know. Your job is always waiting.

NYERERE

Thank you, Robert. Goodbye.

Mrs. Nyerere pushes Sekou in the wheelchair into the terminal.

A moment later another limousine pulls up. Out of it steps Randall, Werner, Kaarl, Mike and Tenzing. Mike's arm is in a cast and sling. Randall hands both Mike and Tenzing business cards.

GRUBB

As General Patton said, "I'd be proud to lead you two into battle anytime, anywhere," just give me a call. These ops come through a couple of times a year.

MIKE

(shakes his head)

No thanks. Not me. That's as much action as I ever care to see in my whole life.

TENZING

Me as well. I've just left the army. I'm finished with military life.

GRUBB

Well, you never know which way the winds of fate'll blow. If you lose the cards and you end up in El Paso, just ask anyone where the Big 'G' ranch is? They'll tell you.

MIKE

Right. And thanks for the chance.

GRUBB

Anytime, kid. See ya 'round.

MIKE

See ya.

They all shake hands. Densmore and Krasker step up.

DENSMORE

(to Randall)

Damn fine job, Tex. You delivered everything that you said you would.

GRUBB

Keep that in mind when the bill for the final payment comes. All bonuses'll be gratefully accepted.

Krasker hands Randall several colorful bills of foreign currency.

KRASKER

Here's a hundred thousand Lire. Go have a good time.

GRUBB

How much, is this worth in American money?

KRASKER

I don't know exactly. Ten
American dollars. Maybe
less.

Randall puts the money in his pocket.

GRUBB

My motto is - never turn down anything. Catch ya on the flip-flop, good buddies.

Randall Grubb departs. Densmore and Krasker look at each other, confused.

DENSMORE

Flip-flop?

KRASKER

It must be some mercenary expression.

Densmore turns to Mike and Tenzing.

DENSMORE

Well, gentlemen. I hope you'll both consider my offer of employment. Commonwealth Mineral needs bright, daring young men like you two.

TENZING

I will consider it, Sir Robert. And thank you.

MIKE

I will, too. Thanks.

DENSMORE

(to Mike)

And you are still undecided as to where you're going?

(Mike nods)

You don't have to go anywhere. You can stay here.

MIKE

No. I'm going somewhere. I'll have to check out my choices on the flight board.

DENSMORE

Good luck, gentlemen. Wherever you decide to go, just charge your ticket to Commonwealth Mineral.

They all shake hands. Densmore and Krasker get back into the limousine and drive away.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

Krasker turns to Densmore.

KRASKER

Well, Bobby. Tell me that show wasn't worth the price of admission?

DENSMORE

A lot of people lost their lives.

KRASKER

But not you and me. And we saved a few lives, too.

DENSMORE

Yes, we did. And I feel ten years younger, too.

KRASKER

Feel like dropping ten more?

DENSMORE

What do you mean?

KRASKER

I've got an equipment evac coming up in Kuwait. It could get a bit dicey. What say you, grand and glorious leader?

DENSMORE

Call me before you leave. I'll let you know.

KRASKER

Indeed I will, Bobby-boy. Indeed I will.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

Mike and Tenzing walk through the airport.

MIKE

So, where do you live in Nepal?

TENZING

My family lives fifty kilometers from Katmandu. That's the capitol.

MIKE

Really? I've heard the song and never knew where it was. What's Nepal like?

TENZING

It's the most beautiful place on Earth, Michael. The Himalayas are the home of the God's. You've never seen anything like it. It's truly magical. You ought to see it.

MIKE

It sounds great.

TENZING

You are more than welcome to stay with me and my family. You'll have to listen to my father tell war stories, but at least we have our own stories to tell back now.

MIKE

We sure do.

(he thinks)

Yeah. I'd like to go to Nepal. If you're really serious about this invitation, I'll take you up on it.

TENZING

(smiles)

I'm so glad. We'll have a very good time.

MIKE

Terrific! I'll go get a ticket.

INT. AIR INDIA DESK - DAY

Mike and Tenzing step up to the desk. Tenzing checks in and Mike purchases a ticket. The CLERK behind the desk asks . . .

CLERK

Your passport, please?

Mike grimaces and starts to sweat. He hands over his bogus passport. The clerk looks through it, stops and looks closer. Mike is panicked.

CLERK

What's this?

MIKE

What's what?

CLERK

It's a visa from Ghana. I've never seen one. What is it like?

MIKE

(sighs)

It's no place to sightsee that's for sure.

He gets his ticket and passport back. He and Tenzing proceed toward the gate.

MIKE

(shakes his head)

I've got to get a new passport. A real one. So,

now that you're not in the army anymore, what're you going to do after you visit your family?

TENZING

I don't know. I really haven't any idea at all. What about you?

MIKE

I don't have any idea, either. None. You like cameras?

TENZING

(lighting up)

Oh, yes. I have an old Hasselblad in Nepal but it's broken.

MIKE

I used to work in a camera store. I took some camera repair courses. Maybe I can fix it.

TENZING

Oh, I hope so. It used to take very fine pictures.

They step into line to get on the plane.

MIKE

Do you play chess?

TENZING

Why yes, I do.

Mike takes out his little wooden chessboard.

MIKE

Good. It makes the flight go by a lot faster.

They disappear into the boarding chute.

FADE OUT:

THE END

