

THAI GOLD

by

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EXT. NEPAL - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: HIMALAYAN MOUNTAINS NEPAL - 1959

A long line of exhausted TIBETAN REFUGEES struggles down a trail.

SUPERIMPOSE: Documentary footage of Communist Chinese troops attacking Tibet.

SUPERIMPOSE: IN 1950, A CRIMSON WAVE OF COMMUNIST CHINESE TROOPS BROKE OVER TIBET, THE WORLD'S ROOF. IN MARCH 1959 THE TIBETANS REVOLTED, CREATING A SECOND RED TSUNAMI, FORCING THE DALAI LAMA TO FLEE INTO EXILE. THE TIBETAN SPIRITUAL LEADER WAS FOLLOWED BY A FLOOD OF LOYAL SUPPORTERS WHO Poured THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN PASSES SOUTH INTO NEPAL.

EXT. SHERPA CAPITAL OF NAMCHE BAZAAR - DAY

The line of refugees threads through town but here ONE TIBETAN breaks away. He carries a ROUND BUNDLE with great care.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST PEAK - DAY

WIDEN to reveal Mt. Everest in the bg. The lone refugee walks INTO FRAME so we see his back, and disappears around a bend. After reaching the top of a hill leading to some buildings, he shuffles to a stop. We view imposing

EXT. TENGBOCHE MONASTERY - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: TENGBOCHE MONASTERY

Tantric-Buddhist CHANTING and MUSICAL ACCOMPANYMENT issues from inside. He approaches a MONK SWEEPING steps. After exchanging words, the monk leads the Tibetan inside.

INT. TENGBOCHE MONASTERY ALTAR - DAY

The Tibetan, alone with 50ish ABBOT TARCHIN, opens the bundle. Beside it is a letter with an official seal. Sunlight glistens off a golden cheek and a huge ruby eye. The abbot and Tibetan immediately prostrate.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST PEAK - DAY

Clouds over the famous peak swirl rapidly past.

EXT. TENGBOCHE MONASTERY - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER - 1984

TWO SHAN THUGS (SI FU is bald and muscular; KAYAO, a tattooed brute) in their 30s dressed as pilgrims humbly present a sack of red rice to a monk COOK outside an outbuilding, monastery in bg.

INT. OUTBUILDING COMMUNAL DINING ROOM - DAY

Dining MONKS feel the effects of a powerful knock out drug, some YAWN, others COLLAPSE.

INT. MONASTERY ALTAR - DAY

The 2 Shan with crowbars BREAK through the altar upon which is an enormous Sitting Buddha. Their flashlights illuminate the bundle, nestled in a bed like a lotus flower.

INT. COMMUNAL DINING ROOM - DAY

A shocked young MONK discovers his unconscious colleagues.

INT. MONASTERY - DAY

A CRY goes up as he rushes in. While GRAPPLING with the intruders, Si Fu's GOLD SHAN AMULET is torn from his neck and falls to the floor. The monk is stabbed, and the thieves rush out with Kayao carrying the bundle.

EXT. SHANGBOCHE DIRT AIRFIELD - DAY

It consists of a wind sock and stone hut. Kayao clambers into the passenger seat of a jungle camouflaged, single-prop plane while Si Fu jumps into the pilot's seat. It flies off the cliff and banks right down the enormous canyon.

EXT. PHILIPPINE CORDILLERA, LUZON - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: PHILIPPINE JUNGLE TWO DAYS LATER

LEE RIVERS, a professional artifact collector in his late 30s, squats and barterers with an IFUGAO CHIEF. Lee has dark hair and beard and wears a safari suit with a buck-knife on a belt.

In the bg are huts with human skulls lining the walls and Banaue's rice terraces. Behind the chief stand beautiful, bare-breasted GIRLS. ONE eyes Lee with interest as he studies a rice god. A spear and SHIELD lie between Lee and the chief.

Lee's translator is TING, a Filipino male in street clothes. Their BONTOC NATIVE PORTER stands by a huge rattan box carried by poles. Lee fans out pesos and adds one more.

LEE

Ting, tell him this is my last offer.

TING

(in Tagalog)

Yon lang, walla ng iba

When the chief shakes his head, Lee shrugs, stands, stuffs the money into his pocket and turns away, then a sly smile forms on his face. As he expects, the chief calls him back. Wiping the smile off, Lee returns and completes the deal.

Lee grins as he presses down on the box's lid, there being barely room for the rice god.

LEE

Well Ting, that wraps up the collection for the museum! Good work my friend!

INT. OPIUM WARLORD KUN SAN'S HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: OPIUM WARLORD KUN SAN'S HEADQUARTERS
KWAN MAE, THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE, BURMA

Now dressed in military fatigues and armed, Si Fu and Kayao stand by KUN SAN at a table on which the bundle lies alongside opium smoking paraphernalia and a Russian Makarov pistol. Kun San, in military fatigues, is a tough, handsome man in his 50s. An oil lamp lights the scene. They open the bundle. As a golden Buddha Head is revealed, a SERVANT enters and immediately prostrates, causing Kun San to grin.

EXT. PHILLIPINE CORDILLERA - SUNSET

While strolling by an enormous hut, Lee is enticed inside by the bare-breasted girl and her GIGGLING girlfriends as a worried Ting watches from the shadows.

EXT. PHILLIPINE CORDILLERA - MORNING

The native porter and Ting (front) carry on poles the heavy box along a path mounting the terraces while Lee leads with the spear and Shield. Below is the village. They follow a path with JUNGLE SOUNDS and BIRDS, then a narrow trail along a steep slope. Suddenly they hear BAP-BAP-BAP as leaves by Lee's head SHRED! Running after them are 6 IFUGAO WARRIORS carrying AK-47s led by the chief, who fingers off another BARRAGE of shots.

LEE

Why is he shooting at us? I thought he was happy with the deal.

TING

(Filipino accent)

He was until you spent the night in the House of the Unmarried Women with his daughter!

The terrified Bontoc porter jumps down the lower slope and slides into jungle, dropping his end of the box over the edge. But Ting, as he's pulled down the bank by the load, grabs the handle while hanging on for dear life to a root. Lee grabs Ting's wrist just as the root gives way. Bullets SLAM around them and WHIZ through the air.

LEE

Drop it Ting! Let's get the hell out of here!

Ting releases the box, spilling out the rice god, artifacts - and Lee's clothes. The root snaps, dragging them down the slope. Still hanging onto Ting, Lee manages to grab another root and pull them back on the trail. They rush around a corner to meet a WARRIOR sliding down onto the path. As he raises his AK, Lee pulls back to chuck the spear - but the AK MISFIRES. As the warrior RACKS the bolt, Lee spins the spear and chucks it, NAILING the native in the forehead with the blunt end. He tumbles down the slope before Lee

can grab his AK. A filthy Lee and Ting take off.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN TRAIL - DAY

Lee and Ting run like crazy, bullets ZAPPING around them. As they race around another bend, Lee spots Kalinga tribe hanging coffins in a canyon.

LEE

Ting! This way!

EXT. HANGING COFFIN AND BURIAL CAVE CANYON - DAY

Lee and Ting race past hundreds of hanging coffins and caves with coffins revealing skeletal and partly decomposed remains. The pursuing Ifugao stop short and mill about in fear at the canyon's entrance. Lee and Ting take cover behind a large rock, PANTING.

TING

Lee, how did you know Ifugao wouldn't enter Kalinga burial grounds?

LEE

Come on Ting! I'm an anthropologist after all!

TING

Sorry boss.

Suddenly there's a burst of GUNFIRE and bullets STRIKE the rock.

LEE

What now?

TING

It's the Kalinga! We don't have permission to enter their burial grounds!

LEE

They looked pissed. Come on Ting, let's make a run for it!

They run down the bank and disappear into the jungle.

EXT. JEEPNEY TRAVELING - DAY

Lee and Ting are in Ting's Jeepney driving through a TYPHOON along a narrow, twisting road. The vehicle has a herd of chrome horses on the hood, colored lights everywhere, and half the Catholic church hanging off it.

INT. JEEPNEY TRAVELING - DAY

On the dashboard is a statue of Christ whose eyes flash in time with Michael Jackson's BEAT IT on the radio. Lee's in the doorless passenger seat getting soaked while Ting leans forward, trying to see through the blur left by the wipers.

LEE

(yelling over storm)

Now we have a typhoon. It's not really our day, is it?

TING

(yelling back)

A little water never hurt anyone boss. But what about your collection?

LEE

(head in his hands)

The Smithsonian is out of luck.

(indicates the Shield)

This is all I have to show for it....

Lee tries to light a joint but it's soaked too, so he throws it out the door in disgust. Suddenly, a huge tree CRASHES down, blocking the road. Ting hits the brakes and they do a donut before SKIDDING to a stop. Ting grips a crucifix swinging from the mirror.

LEE (con't)

Drive around it!

Ting tries but the Jeepney slides sideways down the steep slope. He straightens but they plow through elephant grass and jungle before bouncing out onto a cart track leading them back to the "main" road.

EXT. ANGELES CITY - NIGHT

The rain has eased. Lee and Ting pass a sign, WELCOME TO

ANGELES CITY PHILIPPINES - HOME OF U.S. CLARK AIR BASE. They drive down a dark, vacant Field Street lined with shuttered bars.

Ahead looms a constellation of lights. They stop before the only bar open. The awning reads SNOW WHITE'S - 70 BEAUTIFUL WOMEN (AND 3 UGLY ONES). A sleeping MALE DWARF greeter sits under an umbrella as Lee runs to the bar using the Shield as an umbrella. A ROAR goes up and two F-18s streak over the bar, having taken off from the base. It wakes the dwarf.

LEE

(to yawning dwarf)

What's going on Sleepy? World War III?

DWARF

Nah. Night exercises.

Lee waves goodbye to Ting who drives off. Lee hurries into

INT. SNOW WHITE'S GO-GO BAR - NIGHT

It looks like a mine, complete with 6 DWARF bartenders and "gems" in the walls. A Canuck flag is bookended by hockey sticks. TEN BARGIRLS dance around chrome poles to Wham's WAKE ME UP BEFORE YOU GO-GO. Bikini bottoms are embroidered with COME HERE, MONEY? HONEY and EAGER BEAVER. TWO DRUNK PRIVATES in uniform sit at the bar drinking San Miguel beer with a FILIPINA EDITH between them.

A depressed Lee slips onto a barstool next to the privates and sets the Shield on the bar. The barkeep, SNOW WHITE, appears. Snowy's a Canuck ex-lumberjack with an enormous white beard and hair spilling over a red checkered shirt covering a huge beer belly.

SNOWY

(Canuck accent)

Well, if it ain't Indiana Jones. Welcome to civilization, eh!

LEE

Snowy, I've been in the jungle a month and I need a drink bad.

Snowy grins and takes a White Horse Scotch bottle off a glass shelf behind the bar. He pours Lee a stiff shot and

sets it down. Another ROAR goes up as a squadron takes off, SHAKING the bar and causing bottles to RATTLE. Snowy expertly catches falling bottles, but Lee's drink vibrates over the edge before he can grab it.

SNOWY

Damned jet jockeys. Fucking hosers are gonna bankrupt me, eh?

As he pours Lee another, one of the drunk privates, RANDY gets off his barstool and heads for the exit with Edith. DICK objects and a fight breaks out. A dwarf DOPEY intercedes shaking a finger.

DOPEY

No fighting in the bar!

RANDY

Fuck off Dopey. Go see Snow White.

He picks up Dopey and chucks him to Snowy who catches him, but falls back against his bottles causing an AVALANCHE. Randy then continues the fight, with dwarfs clutching their pantlegs. Randy moves back for a huge punch, knocking over Lee's drink, but decking Dick.

Livid, Lee DONGS Randy with the Shield, knocking him cold too. Lee grabs Dick and throws him out, then goes back to the bar and sits. Snowy rolls his eyes and pours Lee yet another drink.

SNOWY

350 fucking bars and thousands of bargirls and they fight over one?

Lee sips his drink as Dick bursts back into the bar SHOOTING a shotgun! The first shot misses wide but the second BLASTS a 2" hole in the Shield.

LEE

That does it!

Lee BANGS Dick on the head with the Shield knocking him out too.

The phone rings inside Snowy's office and he goes to pick it up. He comes out and motions for Lee.

SNOWY

Lee, it's for you, a call from Bangkok.

EXT. SURIWONG STREET, BANGKOK - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: BANGKOK, THAILAND - THE NEXT DAY

While Showdown's THE RODEO SONG plays, a THUNDERCLAP and MONSOON DOWNPOUR propels a hungover Lee from a three-wheeled tuk-tuk samlor into THE LION'S DEN, a bar with a swaying faded red sign covered with American flag decals. PORN SACK, Lee's corpulent driver, shuts down to wait and opens a styrofoam carton of fried rice and a bottle of Red Bull, which he's never without. Lee's still filthy and carries the Shield.

INT. THE LION'S DEN - DAY

Lee blinks reddened eyes to adjust to the gloom. The walls are covered with WWII Pacific theater paraphernalia dominated by a huge framed photo of Bataan behind the bar labeled: HOME OF THE BATTLING BASTARDS OF BATAAN! There's a phone on the bar.

Sitting behind the bar right is NOI, the bored barmaid, painting her fingernails lime green. Lee brightens as he spots the back of the white head of the only customer, sitting in the last of a row of vinyl-covered booths. WOLFGANG KRUEGER is a German in his 60s and dressed in faded casuals. As Lee is about to start towards him THE LION charges out of the back. He's a 70-year-old ex-military man with the face of a well kicked football and a gray buzzcut.

LION

Noi, bring the bloody ledger in here.

(spotting Lee)

Well! If the Rivers didn't just flow in. Noi, get him his usual. How's it going?

LEE

...Uh, you know how it is Lion - looking for old things all day and young things all night.

(hands Lion the Shield)

I brought you this.

LION
 (eyes the hole)
 Thanks! Well used I see.

Lee shrugs.

LION (con't)
 I wasted fifty years of my life in the
 fucking army while you go around
 collecting old crap, makin' a pile!

LEE
 A man's gotta make a living, Lion. It's
 a jungle out there.

Lee slaps Lion on the shoulder and continues down the bar to
 slip opposite Wolfgang in his booth. As Noi sets down 2
 drinks, a Singha beer and a schnapps, he smiles.

LEE (con't)
 Wolfgang, good to see you. You said on
 the phone you needed to see me right
 away. I came straight from the airport.
 What's up?

WOLFGANG
 (frowning, German accent)
 How long have we been doing business?
 Me feeding you leads on collections?

LEE
 Well, it's been ten years since Kwan
 Mae, as I recall. Wasn't that our first
 time?

EXT. KWAN MAE VILLAGE - FLASHBACK 1974 - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: KWAN MAE, THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE, 1974

A younger, longer-haired, bearded Lee squats before an
 ANCIENT SHAN WOMAN with betel-stained teeth at a backstrap
 loom. In the bg is a younger Wolfgang and a sad RAGAMUFFIN,
 SKINNY GIRL of twelve pausing from adjusting Lee's large
 Shan ethnological collection on mules to intensely watch
 him. Lee points to a SHAN SILVER AMULET around the woman's
 neck and fans out dollars, but she pushes the money away and

returns to looming. A disappointed Lee joins Wolfgang.

As he adjusts the load the girl secretly hurries to the old woman's side.

INT. THE LIONS DEN - DAY

LEE (VO)(con't)

You got that great story on the opium drug lord Kun San.

WOLFGANG (VO)

And I believe that the British Museum paid you handsomely for that Shan collection. We've done a lot of business since then, Lee.

(shakes his head)

Well, I have another lead for you, but for this one I unfortunately can't ask for my usual ten percent.

LEE (VO)

Why not?

INT. THE LIONS DEN - DAY

WOLFGANG

Because it comes from a third party. His name is FRANCOIS GISCARD. He--

LEE

--Francois! You know him...?

WOLFGANG

Nein. But on the telephone he mentioned the Supayalat rubies. Remember them?

LEE

Of course! The last queen of Burma's! They were forty carats each! They were flawed in a beautiful way I've never seen before. Absolutely unique.

WOLFGANG

We made damn good money from that pair. Obviously you sold them to this Francois Giscard. You must have mentioned my

name.

LEE

(frowns, sure he hadn't)

I don't think so.

WOLFGANG

Well, it's been five years.

(beat)

I have learned that Francois Giscard is one of the pre-eminent Asian antiquities dealers in the world.

LEE

I don't understand why he involved you. Why didn't he just phone and leave a message with my maid MALEE?

WOLFGANG

You can ask him that yourself. He wants to see you immediately.

Wolfgang pushes an air ticket across, which Lee flips open.

LEE

New York! Leaving in two hours! He must be joking! I'm dressed for the jungle!

WOLFGANG

(chuckling)

Then you're perfectly dressed for New York.

EXT. PATPONG ROAD - NIGHT

Lee in Pornsack's tuk-tuk ROARS past Patpong Road.

INT. PUSSIES GALORE BAR PATPONG ROAD - NIGHT

It's PACKED, with a laser light system, the energy level high, hot and horny. Dire Straits' MONEY FOR NOTHING booms. Along the spine of the island bar is the go-go stage. 14-16 chrome poles are caressed by smiling, sexy DANCERS in G-strings and black, stiletto high heels.

ONE GIRL IN A COBRA SKIN BIKINI - TYSEE - IS DROP-DEAD GORGEOUS. Spotting SOMEONE in the crowd, she smiles and

later strolls over to talk to him. He's lost in shadows. She listens to what he has to say, then her smile fades and she stalks away.

His hands toy with a crimson silk scarf.

EXT. KENNEDY AIRPORT - DAY

A Thai Airways 747 lands.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE BY CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Snow falls as a shivering, disheveled Lee exits a cab and almost collides with a well dressed MATRON who looks him up and down.

Across the street a warmly dressed CIA SPOOK on a bench pauses from feeding pigeons and reaches into a Macy's bag for a camera with a long lens. After SNAPPING shots of Lee entering the apartment, he replaces the camera.

INT. FRANCOIS GISCARD'S PENTHOUSE - DAY

FRANCOIS GISCARD, an impeccably dressed Swiss French gentleman in his 60s warmly greets Lee at the door. Marlene Dietrich's LILI MARLENE plays quietly in the bg in this scene and next.

FRANCOIS

Entrez Monsieur Riviere!

Eying Lee's clothing, Francois leads him through his

INT. ENORMOUS LIVING ROOM - DAY

which also serves as his gallery. They pass a vast collection of Asian art, including a prominent Standing Buddha.

FRANCOIS (con't)

Alors! Sorry if I interrupted your expedition.

LEE

Nah, finished, but in three weeks I'm meeting Dingo in Singapore. He's got a hot lead on a pottery wreck.

FRANCOIS

Ah, *oui!* Your Australian treasure diving friend.

INT. FRANCOIS' STUDY - DAY

They enter the study which overlooks the park and is decorated with similar Asian antiquities as the living room. On a desk are framed photos of Francois with the rich and famous, including Abbot Tarchin. On a high shelf rests a Sitting Buddha.

Francois invites Lee to sit before a coffee table. Discretely, Francois sprays deodorant while Lee stares at the voluptuous stone breasts of a Khmer maiden. Francois pours 2 expensive cognacs.

FRANCOIS

Monsieur Riviere, if I may divert your attention from the pleasures of the Orient. I received an urgent phone call from Kathmandu from Abbot Tarchin of Tengboche Monastery. Remember? You returned those stolen *Mani Rimdu* masks to him.

LEE

Yes. Kathmandu?

FRANCOIS

You may remember there are no telephones at Tengboche. The abbot had to fly to Kathmandu to make the call.

LEE

Of course. How you recovered them so quickly still baffles me.

(raises a toast)

Not many antiquity dealers I know actually return artifacts to their rightful owners.

FRANCOIS

Oui, I do have a special love for the Nepalese.

(beat)

There's been another robbery. This time it was...the actual gold and jewel encased Head of the Lord Buddha Himself.

LEE

You're kidding! Surely you mean a statue head?

FRANCOIS

Non. We've all heard the old rumor about the existence of the real Head. Well, it's true. And it's just been stolen.

LEE

Wow...the real Lord Buddha's actual Head?

FRANCOIS

Oui. Tarchin told me that it had been placed at his monastery for safe keeping by the Dalai Lama himself.

LEE

The thieves probably have no idea the value of what they have!

FRANCOIS

Alors, it's not just about the value. If news gets out, it'll shake the religious world! Can you imagine what would happen if Christ's remains were found? It would shake Christianity to its very foundations.

LEE

Right. But in this case, the Buddhist revival in East Asia would be overwhelming.

(beat)

Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others could treat that as a threat though. They all may teach love and peace but there's nothing so intolerant or violent as most religions.

FRANCOIS

Exactly. This is why we must act now.

LEE

So you want me to track it down and return it before the situation escalates?

FRANCOIS

Oui. Lee, you scour Asia and I'll put the word out among Western dealers.

(beat)

For this I'd like to pay you \$25,000.

Lee stands, walks to the window, and shakes his head.

FRANCOIS (con't)

\$30,000 then?

Lee shakes his head again.

FRANCOIS (con't)

Mon Dieu! What do you want? More money?

LEE

No. How can you put a price on Buddha's Head?

FRANCOIS

Well, if we don't recover it, it will be sold on the black market. And that's exactly what it would be - the very blackest of markets!

LEE

Francois, I have too much respect for Buddhism to allow such a thing to happen. His is one of the few peaceful religions. What I'm saying is, if you're doing this for free, so am I.

Francois jumps to his feet and clasps Lee's hand.

LEE (con't)

Francois, one thing - how did you learn about Wolfgang? To be honest, I've kept quiet about him. He's a major source for me.

FRANCOIS

The reputation of an old Asian hand like him gets around. I heard from other sources that he was involved in the Queen Supayalat rubies. That's impressive.

LEE

Why didn't you just leave a message at my place as usual?

FRANCOIS

The day after the abbot phoned, I was paid a visit by the CIA!

LEE

CIA?

FRANCOIS

Oui! Apparently the Russians monitor all telephone calls in Kathmandu. The CIA intercepted the call from the Russian Embassy to Moscow, but were only able to decipher the part where it mentioned the robbery and my name! This agent wanted to know what it was all about. I told him that the abbot asked me to value a number of stolen artifacts, but of course I omitted to mention the Head.

LEE

Why in hell would the Russians be interested? Or the CIA?

FRANCOIS

Who knows? But he treated this with such importance I couldn't be sure that they hadn't tapped our phones. So I tracked down *Monsieur* Krueger. We need a liaison. I assume he can be trusted, *non?*

LEE

Yes, Wolfie's been a good friend for ten years. I trust him implicitly.

Francois picks up a thick envelope and passes it to Lee.

FRANCOIS

Tres Bien! This contains expense money
for *Monsieur* Krueger and through him
I'll be in touch. Good luck.
(shakes his hand)

EXT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT PARK AVENUE - DAY

As Lee hails a cab, the spook SNAPS more shots.

EXT. SURIWONG STREET BANGKOK - NIGHT

Lee, now groomed and in clean safaris with the envelope in his breast pocket, winds his way amongst pleasure seeking CROWDS squeezing between FOOD STALLS and VENDORS selling fake everything.

EXT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

American flags cover the facade and a huge banner: THE BATTLING BASTARDS OF BATAAN REUINON. Vera Lynn's WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER plays from inside. Lee walks in.

INT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Lee's Shield is next to the picture of Bataan, and the reunion rages. The aging VETS sport brown berets and crests and medals with several BLUE HAIRED WIVES. A hand yanks him into a corner.

BROCK HAGGSTROM is a DEA agent in his 40s with the shoulders of a gorilla stretching a cheap suit. He holds an unlit cigar.

LEE

Hi Brock. How's the DEA?

BROCK

Same as usual. I'm damned glad to run into you Jungle Boy. Selling you my backup pistol was the stupidest thing I've ever done.

LEE

No problem Brock, you were shitfaced. If you want it back, fine. But I'm in

the business of keeping secrets too.

BROCK

(considers)

...Ahhh, keep the Walther. I've got this.

(opens jacket to reveal

Browning Hipower 9mm)

Ex-Special Forces 'Nam.

He pats his pockets and holds up his cigar.

BROCK (con't)

Got a light?

When Lee shakes his head Brock moves off. Lee squeezes through to the bar and gets the Lion's attention by waving the envelope.

LEE

Where the hell's Wolfgang?

LION

Sorry, ain't here.

LEE

He's not answering his phone either. Can you pass this to him?

LION

Just scrawl the Kraut's name on it.

As Lee writes "FOR WOLFGANG - GONE TREKKING - LEE" on it, the Lion sets a Singha beer in front of him. Lee gives the envelope to the Lion, nails his drink, and slaps down a 50 baht note.

LEE

Thanks. Gotta go.

LION

You're leaving? These are my buddies!
The biggest battling bastards of Bataan
reunion ever!

Lee looks around the predominantly male crowd and frowns.

LION (con't)

Hokay, I know. Somewhere out there is a beautiful gal you're gonna have a serious meaningless relationship with.

LEE

I'll be back.

EXT. SURIWONG STREET - NIGHT

Jennifer Su's ONE NIGHT IN BANGKOK plays while a smiling Lee strides down the street. He reaches into his breast pocket for a roach. After a couple of quick hits, he flicks it into the gutter and turns onto

EXT. PATPONG ROAD - NIGHT

LAUGHING BARGIRLS try to pull him into their bars but he's a man on a mission.

EXT. PUSSIES GALORE - NIGHT

He looks up at the blazing neon sign with pleasure, then enters

INT. PUSSIES GALORE - NIGHT

Lee slips onto one of the only two empty barstools, near the front. A regular, a BARMAID delivers his Singha immediately. TWO SEXY BARGIRLS bookend him and he buys them drinks. Jennifer Su's ONE NIGHT segues to Michael Jackson's BILLIE JEAN. As he admires the scenery, TYSEE works her way forward. After whispering in the point dancer's ear, Tysee takes her place, in front of Lee. She dances - and how! The other dancers move down to the end and - like everyone - watch her incredible performance.

AND IT'S ALL FOR LEE who - upon realizing this - wonders what he's done to deserve it. Even his two bookends have retreated. He looks up at her in astonishment. Her eyes bury themselves into his as she moves seductively.

The song segues into the Honeydripper's SEA OF LOVE and the girls traipse off the stage. Tysee looks embarrassed, then hurries off. As the NEXT STRING of ladies rotate onto the stage, Lee is nervously guzzling his beer when from behind him....

TYSEE (OS)
You still handsome man.

Lee spins to see the beautiful dancer inches away. He's flustered, lost in her unblinking eyes.

TYSEE(con't)
(embarrassed again)
May I sit down?

LEE
Of...of course! May I buy you a drink?

TYSEE
It not necessary.

Lee signals the barmaid as Tysee slips onto the stool.

LEE
Wh...where'd you learn to dance like that?

TYSEE
Chulalongkorn University jazz dance class.

LEE
University? I've never known a Patpong girl to have more than six years of school!

TYSEE
I not same-same as other Patpong girls.
(beat)
I go to university to study anthropology also.

LEE
No kidding! I'm an anthropologist!

TYSEE
I know.

LEE
...How do you know? Do I know you from somewhere?

TYSEE

One reason I come here is to surprise certain man. But he does not recognize me.

Lee looks her up and down. He would never forget a face, a body like this. He's baffled.

LEE

Me? Are you sure you have the right guy?
My name is Lee--

TYSEE

--Rivers.

LEE

How did you know? And you?

TYSEE

Tysee. I'm not going to tell you last name. I want you to pay barfine and I go home with you.

Lee stares at her, then dumbly reaches for his wallet.

The MAMA-SAN is surprised and looks at Lee as she takes his money.

MAMA-SAN

You lucky number one man, *Khun Lee*,
Tysee work here one month and no go with
any man before...*jing jing* (truly).

In a dark corner a hand reaches for a drink, then toys with a crimson silk scarf.

EXT. GRAND PALACE - NIGHT

Pornsack's tuk-tuk with Lee and Tysee speeds by the lit up Royal Palace.

EXT. LEE'S HOME - NIGHT

The tuk-tuk pulls into a compound lit by red lanterns. Lee's home is a beautiful, traditional Thai teak house on the Chao Phraya River. Lee slips Pornsack some baht (money)

LEE

Why don't you take the night off?

Pornsack, who was about to open a carton of fried rice, grins and ROARS away, leaving Lee and Tysee outside Lee's house.

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tysee's eyes widen as they sweep the living room. Subdued lighting accents masks and artifacts, including a 6 foot Ching vase and a Buddhist shrine.

TYSEE

You have very beautiful home! May
I look around?

LEE

Please. Make yourself at home. I'll have
Malee bring us ice water.

Tysee glides around, touching this and that while Lee pulls on a long cord. Malee, an attractive 30 year old maid with similar hair and a passing resemblance to Tysee, appears wearing shocking pink lipstick. She takes Lee's order and disappears. He flicks on TRADITIONAL BURMESE HSAING MUSIC with the THEME SONG. Tysee picks up a framed photo of a smiling older couple.

TYSEE

This your mama, papa?
(seeing Lee nod)
Where you come from in America?

LEE

A small town in North Dakota.

TYSEE

Did you get interested in anthropology
there?

LEE

Yes. Dad and I used to pace fields
looking for Indian projectile points.
(laughs)
Only amateurs called them arrowheads. He

started my passion.

Malee quietly sets two glasses, with limes on the rims, on the coffee table and discretely disappears.

TYSEE

So your papa is an anthropologist too?

LEE

(embarrassed)

No, not exactly. He's a pharmacist.

(chuckles)

I tease him about being a drug pusher.

Tysee replaces the picture and moves on. Lee doesn't see that his remark made her visibly upset.

TYSEE

What about your mama?

LEE

She left dad for another man when I was a teenager. She wanted more excitement. So did I.

(sadness)

Tell me about your folks. What does your dad do?

She turns her back and when he doesn't receive a reply, he glances at her from the side. She spins away, upset.

TYSEE

My papa...he run...business.

She suddenly beams as she spots something in a cabinet. She opens it and holds the silver amulet.

EXT. FLASHBACK GOLDEN TRIANGLE JUNGLE 1974 - DAY

With mules loaded with Lee's collection and the younger Wolfgang looking on, the gawky girl shyly offers Lee a present - the silver amulet. Then she rushes away, eyes brimming.

LEE (VO)

It's Shan. I picked it up years ago in a place called Kwan Mae.

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

LEE (con't)
 (suddenly realizing)
 Wait a minute Tysee! It was you!

With the amulet in her fist, she runs into Lee's arms.

TYSEE
 I dream about this for years.

LEE
 I can't believe how you've grown! This
 is incredible! You're incredible....

She pecks Lee on the lips. The second kiss is lingering.

Lee looks deeply into Tysee's eyes and can't believe his
 luck. She is absolutey stunning.

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Subdued lighting. Large round bed. Roses in vase on night
 stand. *HSAING* THEME. A statue of a bare-breasted Khmer
 maiden like Francois'. A love making MONTAGE conveying time
 and discovery, INTERCUT with *Kama Sutra* paintings on the
 wall. MURMURING, GIGGLING, SIGHING and PANTING. Finally,
 silence and Tysee snuggling up to a wide-eyed Lee. The
 CAMERA drifts over to settle on a statuette of Shiva with
 his consort sensuously entwined around him.

LEE (OS)
 Ohhhh, you Asian women.

TYSEE (OS)
 Mmmmm, you cock...Asian (Caucasian)
 men....

They giggle and cuddle each other to sleep.

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - MORNING AFTER

Lee's been watching Tysee sleep. He takes a rose, strokes
 her back, and whispers in her ear.

LEE

Tysee...

Tysee, still with her back to Lee, pops open an eye but doesn't move. Lee looks at the rose, returns it to the vase, and lies on his back staring at the ceiling.

TYSEE

Lee, what did you want to say to me?

LEE

(hesitates)

I'm leaving for a few days. I'd like it...if you stayed.

She takes the amulet off the bedtable and presses it into his hand.

TYSEE

This will protect and return you safely to me.

Another lingering kiss as the screen goes dark.

EXT. KATHMANDU'S DURBAR SQUARE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: KATHMANDU, NEPAL

A bicycle rickshaw with Lee jiggles through Durbar Square. He fails to notice a group of SIKHS glued to NEWSPAPERS and talking agitatedly; a group of MUSLIMS listening intently to an old wooden radio at a notions stall; and Buddhist MONKS beaming. The rickshaw stops before a building with a long line of TREKKERS and a sign, KATHMANDU IMMIGRATION OFFICE - TREKKING PERMITS.

As he pays the RICKSHAW DRIVER, he spots the silver amulet in his change and smiles.

EXT. KATHMANDU AIRPORT - DAY

Beyond a KATHMANDU AIRPORT sign, Lee boards a Royal Nepal Airlines Twin Otter with TREKKERS.

EXT. SHANGBOCHE AIRFIELD - DAY

The plane lands and Lee disembarks with the trekkers. SHERPA PORTERS and 2 HIMALAYAN MUSLIMS stand on the group's edge. As Lee politely waves away a Sherpa, the Muslims eye his

pack as he swings it on - large enough to hold the Head - then they nod to each other and disappear.

EXT. STONE HUT ON EDGE OF AIRFIELD - DAY

INT. STONE HUT - DAY

VLADIMIR, a Lada SPOOK with a fur hat and great coat sits with a bottle of Stoli and sausage on butcher's paper. He raises his binocs and from his POV picks out Lee.

EXT. TENGBOCHE TRAIL SOLU-KHUMU CANYON - DAY

Lee treks alone. Ahead behind a boulder lurk the 2 Muslims. One pantomimes to hold Lee, while the other slashes his throat with his Gurkha knife. Lee strides to the boulder - but safely, obliviously, onward! But the Muslims now lie sprawled, dragged back into the pines. Each is shot in the forehead.

EXT. TENGBOCHE MONASTERY - DAY

An exhausted Lee shuffles onto the grounds. SMOKE from a cremation rises from a hill opposite; the mournful SOUND of CHANTING and MUSICAL ACCOMPANYMENT drifts over.

INT. TENGBOCHE MONASTERY - DAY

A wizened, morbidly depressed Abbot Tarchin sits. Behind him is the Sitting Buddha. Lee sits below the abbot and offers a silk scarf; the abbot accepts, blesses it, and places it around Lee's neck.

ABBOT

(Nepalese accent)

I remember you as a good man. We were all very grateful for your and Mr. Francois' help last time.

LEE

And we're happy to help you again.

ABBOT

Two pilgrims come, not Nepalese, but Asian. To gain merit, they gave our cook rice. The rice had a drug. But one of our initiates, sent to find a stray yak,

he didn't eat and discovered the robbers.

(wipes away a tear)

The men escape and flew away in plane that look like jungle colors.

He offers Lee a bowl of uncooked red rice. After a brief examination, Lee pours some into a breast pocket.

LEE

Have you contacted the Dalai Lama?

ABBOT

No! His emissary give me letter that says not to contact Dalai Lama.

LEE

Why's that?

ABBOT

Letter say that Tantric Buddhists believe Dalai Lama pure because He is reincarnation of Enlightened One. But Dalai Lama not be pure if He have Head, because Lord Buddha ordered all His remains to be cremated. But letter say His faithful disciple Ananda saved Lord Buddha's Head.

LEE

I understand. So you hid the Head here?

The abbot rises and shows Lee the still gaping hole, the crowbar leaning against it.

LEE (con't)

The thieves knew exactly where to look! Who else knew where the Head was?

ABBOT

Only me and emissary.

LEE

This monk who discovered them. Can he describe the men?

The abbot's reply is to turn to a window. Through it we see

smoke still rising from the hill....

ABBOT

That is his funeral pyre. But this found
on floor by altar.

The abbot offers a shadowed palm. Lee reacts and pulls the silver amulet Tysee had given him from his pocket.

CLOSE UP of both amulets. They're identical except the abbot's is gold.

LEE

...Shan....

EXT. TENGBOCHE TRAIL SOLU-KHUMU CANYON - DAY

Lee treks back past the boulder where the two Muslims had lurked but now their bodies have disappeared....

EXT. STONE HUT ON EDGE OF AIRFIELD - DAY

INT. STONE HUT - DAY

From Vladimir's POV we watch Lee board the Twin Otter with outgoing trekkers.

EXT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Pornsack's tuk-tuk drops Lee off.

INT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

There's only THREE PUNTERS, a pair and a single at the bar, besides Lee and Wolfgang in the Wolf's booth. Wolfgang scans a letter to which a small cellophane package of the red rice is stapled. The gold amulet lies on the table.

WOLFGANG

The plane the abbot described sounds like Kun San's. Now Professor Preecha has identified the rice as common in the Golden Triangle. Who lives there? My old opium warlord friend, Kun San.

A VENDOR enters the bar with a half DURIAN (a stinky Asian fruit) which he sells to a smiling Noi. As he leaves, she

eagerly digs in.

LEE (VO)

Let's pay him a visit! We can trek into Kwan Mae, you ostensibly to do another article, me to do more collecting. We'll get around to the Head somehow and he'll realize I'm the obvious man to sell it!

WOLFGANG

There is a problem....

LEE

What?

As the durian fruit's, well, shitty odor permeates the bar, Wolfgang reacts and glances at Noi, wolfing it down.

WOLFGANG

It was something I wrote in *DER SPIEGEL*. Kun San is not happy with me. If we go we'll end up on his special bamboo bed.

The single punter glances with disgust at Noi, slaps money on the bar, and leaves holding his nose.

LEE

Bamboo bed?

The other two disgusted customers fold their tents.

WOLFGANG

Yavol. Spreadeagled over sharpened bamboo shoots. They grow five inches a day. Not a comfortable sleep.

The Lion charges out of his lair, SNIFFING LOUDLY.

LION

Jesus fucking Christ! Did an elephant fart in here!

His eyes nail Noi. The Lion points to a sign - a durian surrounded by a circle with a bar.

Noi, how many fucking times to I have to

tell you not to eat bloody durian in here! It smells like shit!

Lee quietly leaves The Lion's Den and gets into Pornsack's tuk-tuk.

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's dark as he closes the door - and hears a THUMP. Grabbing a Naga spear by the door, he snaps on the light. Leaning forward in a rocking chair to pick up RAMSAY'S ANTHROPOLOGY is Tysee - a vision of Asian elegance in a slit dress, and wearing a small Buddhist amulet. Lee sets the spear aside before she sees it. Beside her is a bag of belongings and a potted flowering lotus.

TYSEE

Sorry. I fall asleep waiting for you. Malee let me in.

LEE

Tysee, I'm delighted to see you. I missed you and there's something important I have to tell you.

TYSEE

I brought you this.

She reaches for the lotus and hands it to him.

LEE

Thank you Tysee, it's beautiful. I have just the place for it.

He leads her through a door.

EXT. LEE'S PATIO ON CHAO PHRAYA RIVER - NIGHT

Lighting from tall, bamboo torches and boat lights along the exotic river is romantic. On the patio is a wire cage with a snake stick atop and a cobra that hoods as they walk in. Beside the house are 3 ceramic pots, the outer 2 containing water lilies. Lee places the lotus in the middle one, empty but for water.

LEE

It's perfect here, don't you think?

TYSEE

Yes, Lee, it is perfect there.

LEE

Tysee, Bangkok has thousands of bars. How did you know I, uh, occasionally drop into Pussies Galore for a drink?

TYSEE

Mr. Wolfgang told me!

LEE

Wolfgang? Well, I'll have to thank him for that! Come here Tysee.

She shyly slips into Lee's arms.

TYSEE

I dream about you many time. I meet other men my age but they boring.

Lee guides her down onto the chaise lounge.

LEE

I got back this morning and you weren't home. Malee told me that you had left right after I did on my trip. I was worried about you. Where have you been?

She draws away and averts her eyes.

TYSEE

You no like me anymore if I tell you.

LEE

Tysee! That's not true. I think I like you too much already. In fact I haven't stopped thinking about you.

She casts Lee a worried glance, her face screws up and sobs burst from her. She throws her arms around his neck. Lee takes tissue and dabs her eyes.

LEE(con't)

Tysee....

TYSEE

I go home to see my papa, mama in--

LEE

--Kwan Mae. I know. It's after the monsoon. It must be very beautiful now.

TYSEE

Yes, it is, but papa no beautiful though. Papa no good. Papa name...Kun San.

(seeing Lee's reaction)

See! You upset! I no tell you when I little girl. I learn then when I tell people, they scared of papa. Then in university I learn papa big Burma heroin man! That why I dance Patpong - to make him lose face for shaming me!

LEE

Tysee, Tysee. Never mind that. This can now be your home. I want to take care of you. What do you say?

(embarrassed)

I've always dreamt of having a family one day.

Lee can hardly believe what he's just said as he covers her face in kisses. She melts into his chest.

LEE (con't)

(recovering)

How was your visit home?

TYSEE

No good. Papa very angry at me for dance Patpong, and we fight all the time.

Lee pulls out the gold amulet. She reacts, takes it, and studies Burmese lettering on it.

TYSEE (con't)

Where you get this? This belong to Si Fu! He very bad man. He second in command to papa!

LEE

You know the rumor about the existence of the real Buddha's Head?

TYSEE

Yes. But I think it only an old story.

LEE

No, it's real, and the real Head has been stolen. And Si Fu's amulet was found at the crime scene.

TYSEE

Si Fu and papa no Buddhist! If they have Head, they will sell it!

LEE

Tysee, they have the real Head.

TYSEE

(touches her small amulet)

Well, I go home and take it back!

Lee

No, Tysee. It's too dangerous.

TYSEE

Well, I love Buddha number one. You come to my home, and I tell papa you my boyfriend. You reason why I stop dancing. That make him happy.

LEE

...Not a bad idea...actually it's a good plan Tysee.

TYSEE

When he remembers you there before collecting for museum, good chance papa will give you Head to sell.

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP of Lee's hands fingering the first of SIX rounds into the Walther's clip. Beside is a 1" stack of 1,000 baht notes. WIDEN and we see that the only light in the room is supplied by the bedside lamp above his hands, that Tysee's in the sack, with Lee in his sarong (she's not wearing her

Buddhist amulet) sitting on the edge of the bed continuing to load the clip. Lee's pack is on the floor by hers. Tysee takes the pistol and RACKS the slide expertly.

TYSEE

This small lady gun. Not big gun like
papa have.

He takes the pistol, SNAPS in the clip, sets the gun on the night stand and reaches for the light switch.

EXT. THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE - DAY

Tysee, dressed in a black pantsuit, leads Lee hiking barren ridge trails, traversing river by bamboo raft, and riding on elephant through jungle with JUNGLE SOUNDS before trekking into opium fields. SOLDIERS with AK-47s suddenly surround them. Tysee speaks sharply in Shan and they relax, smile and lead them to

EXT. KWAN MAE SHAN VILLAGE - NIGHT

They see little, but oil lamp light through bamboo slats of hilltribe huts and, in one, a glimpse of an OLD WOMAN with her head on a wood block smoking an opium pipe. Reaching

EXT. KUN SAN'S WALLED COMPOUND - NIGHT

enclosing more modern buildings, they're left by their escorts and pass SENTRIES who give them an oil lamp and they enter a Shan dwelling. The oil lamp, seen through the window, is blown out.

EXT. KWAN MAE - DAWN

Lee explores the large village. It's on a commanding plateau surrounded by opium fields and jungle. Roosters CROW, pigs GRUNT, the SHUFFLE of backstrap looms and PEDAL SEWING MACHINES is heard along with the POUNDING of rice in mortars. Villagers are friendly. OLD WOMEN smile at him through betel-stained teeth; frightened CHILDREN run to hide behind laughing MOTHERS. Lee enjoys them all.

Hearing the DRONE of an approaching airplane, Lee hurries to the dirt airstrip, angling down to a drop off. A flagpole flies the Shan state flag. SOLDIERS and a RECEPTION COMMITTEE eye him suspiciously. As the camo plane touches

down, Tysee joins him. She's unhappy but he doesn't notice.

LEE

That plane could be our way out.

TYSEE

You no tell me you pilot...?

Lee chuckles and pats her fanny.

LEE

I've been a bush pilot for years.

(beat)

How'd things go with papa?

TYSEE

Tonight he throwing banquet for opium
village headmen. But he say you no can
come, and tomorrow morning must leave.

As Lee reacts, the plane reaches the top of the strip where
they and the committee stand, and the ENGINE shuts down.

LEE

Well...we'll just have to move faster
then....

TYSEE

I'll talk to mama. Maybe she can change
his mind.

The bald pilot, in military fatigues, steps out, lights a
large Burmese cornhusk cheroot, and fixes his hard eyes on
the couple.

TYSEE (con't)

That Si Fu.

LEE

(focuses on the next person
disembarking)

Oh no...not him!

RICHARD HAIMES-SANDWICH A.K.A. HAM-SANDWICH, a Brit of Lee's
age, has just stepped out and spotted him. He pushes -
habitually - his Coke-bottle-thick glasses up on his nose
with fingers loaded with huge ruby and sapphire rings. He's

an insufferable, fat, arrogant prick and the other top Asian antiquities collector, Lee's rival. He woddles up to Lee with a Louis Vuitton travel case large enough to hold the Head. He wears a tweed jacket, slacks and cravat.

HAM-SANDWICH

(snooty Brit accent)

Good morning old chap, why am I not surprised to see you here? It wasn't polite of you at all to pass through Kathmandu without stopping for a cup of tea and a chat.

LEE

(taken aback)

I don't like tea.

Si Fu joins Ham-Sandwich and studies Lee suspiciously.

HAM-SANDWICH

After the word leaked out about the robbery I checked with the chappies at the Immigration Office and - *voila* - there was a trekking permit for you for the Mt. Everest region!

LEE

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

HAM-SANDWICH

No, of course not. Like you don't know that the Tengboche abbot made a phone call to Francois Giscard. The telephone system in Kathmandu is practically a party line. Within hours the story was all over town.

LEE

Really?

HAM-SANDWICH

Yes, old boy. Obviously you didn't know I knew Francois. I've been flogging stolen antiquities to him for years, including the artifacts he's returned to Nepal.

Lee is taken totally by surprise by this news.

HAM-SANDWICH (con't)

Well, if you both think you're returning this particular artifact, you can forget it, old chap. This one is much, much too valuable. Kun San has appointed me to handle the sale.

LEE

(recovering)

Speaking of Khun San, would you like to meet his daughter?

Taken by surprise himself, Ham-Sandwich smiles his condescending facsimile of a smile.

LEE (con't)

Tysee, meet Richard Ham-Sandwich. Ham-Sandwich, Tysee.

HAM-SANDWICH

That's *Haimes*-Sandwich! How many times must I tell you Rivers?

Tysee takes his hand and smiles sweetly.

TYSEE

How do you do Mr. Ham-Sandwich?

Ham-Sandwich glowers at Lee.

HAM-SANDWICH

Delighted, miss.

Ham-Sandwich shoulders Lee aside and moves off with Si Fu towards the compound.

EXT. KWAN MAE COMPOUND BANQUET - NIGHT

Torches illuminate low bench-like tables set up in two semi-circles facing each other - allowing corridors for FEMALE AKHA SERVANTS - with mats for 30 MEN in Shan dress sitting cross-legged smoking cheroots and drinking. A 10 PIECE Burmese *HSAING ENSEMBLE* PLAYS and DANCERS sway to the THEME SONG...ONE DANCER is particularly pretty....

Tysee, in Shan dress, leads a nervous Lee in. In the bg, a clothesline of cobras hang by their necks while MEN slit their lower bellies, cut out gall bladders, drain blood into glasses, add whiskey, and servants serve them.

TYSEE

It now okay. So I no lose face, mama
make papa seat you next to other
important farang, Ham-Sandwich.

In the center of one semi-circle a relaxed Kun San sits. On his left is Si Fu, smoking a big cheroot, then Kayao. On Kun San's right is Ham-Sandwich staring at the writhing snakes in horror - something Lee doesn't fail to notice....

Kun San and his 2 lieutenants nod cool welcomes to Lee as he sits next to Ham-Sandwich. As Kun San raises his bloody drink and begins a SHAN TOAST, Tysee translates for Lee.

TYSEE (con't)

Papa say toast for guest of honor Ham-Sandwich who is big heroin buyer. That just cover story. He now say cobra blood good for health, and make you want many ladies.

Kun San indicates the dancers. With all eyes on Ham-Sandwich, the guests LAUGH and nail the toast, including Lee. But not Ham-Sandwich.

HAM-SANDWICH

B...but I don't drink alcohol!

LEE

You better make an exception this time.

While Tysee disappears and the guests look on expectantly, Ham-Sandwich shakily raises his glass in a return toast.

HAM-SANDWICH

Ch...ch...cheers.

He has enormous trouble downing it, and looks like a man who has narrowly escaped death as he CLATTERS his glass down. As Tysee reappears with a rice bowl, she WHISPERS a sweet nothin' into Lee's ear that causes him to frown before she moves on dishing out rice. Servants ferry in revolting

looking food on huge trays, the bulk of which they place before Ham-Sandwich.

HAM-SANDWICH (con't)

What the bloody hell's this?

LEE (VO)

(false Brit accent)

Ew, it's not high tea at the Ritz, old boy. Those large pieces are tiger. There's crocodile, rat, bat, turtle eggs, python steaks. Those are bear paws of course--

HAM-SANDWICH

Oh dear....

LEE

--and those cockroaches are really rice beetles. And are we ever in for a treat! Here comes Ol' Yeller!

As guests CHEER, two SHAN carry in a barbecued dog on a pole with an apple in its mouth. As one HACKS it into pieces with a machete, Ham-Sandwich looks sick. At an expansive order from Kun San, the machete man lops off the head, slips it onto a banana leaf, and delivers it to Ham-Sandwich, who stares at it in utter shock. The face is set in a fried grimace. The apple rolls out leaving the tongue sticking stiffly out. A bear paw is delivered to the aghast Limey.

Lee is served a huge boiled fruit bat. He spreads one wing out, bites into the shoulder, and smiles.

LEE (con't)

Man, you're getting to live high off the dog. Bat's nowhere in the same class as Lassie there. I'm getting the cold shoulder.

A disgusted Ham-Sandwich slips the head onto Lee's plate, then shoves the bear paw aside.

HAM-SANDWICH

Rivers, if you like this disgusting stuff so much, you eat this blasted thing!

Kun San and everyone freezes. Lee, to break the tension, cuts out the tongue and happily eats a portion.

LEE

Delicious! You don't find this at Harrods, old boy.

Lee fills his plate with exotics and digs in eagerly while a sour Ham-Sandwich clumsily chopsticks rice.

It's evident from Kun San's demeanor, his eyes darting in disgust from the Limey to Lee with growing warmth, that Ham-Sandwich has lost face and Kun San's shifting allegiances. Smiling, Kun San reaches across Ham-Sandwich to offer Lee the rice bowl.

LEE (con't)

(waves hand)

I'll pass.

(pats his stomach)

Saving room for all this other delicious food.

Kun San passes the bowl to Si Fu. A smiling Si Fu offers Lee a whackin' white cheroot.

SI FU

(Shan accent)

They're Burmese, very sweet.

Lee graciously accepts. Ham-Sandwich is offered rat while the Akha bring in a variety of EXOTIC FRUIT.

HAM-SANDWICH

I...I'll wait for...dessert....

As Ham-Sandwich attempts to make conversation with a cold Kun San, Lee spots the fruit he's looking for - DURIAN. Lee waves a servant over.

LEE

Ham-Sandwich, you must have tried durian. Asians consider it the king of fruit.

As Ham-Sandwich turns to Lee, his face plows into the durian

Lee holds. The Limey's eyes bulge - and he turns to Kun San and PUKES, some landing on his Gucci loafers. Scrambling to his feet, Ham-Sandwich continues BARFING and GASPING and clawing at the goo on his face.

The reception goes cold and the MUSIC and dancing peters out. As Kun San jumps to his feet, everyone rises. He's disgusted - and orders his lieutenants in Shan to throw the gauche prick out. But Lee's secret smile doesn't last long. As Si Fu and Kayao strong arm Ham-Sandwich toward the compound door, he points at Lee.

HAM-SANDWICH

Last week that Yankee prick was at
Tengboche Monastery! He's here to take
the Head back!

They halt, their conversation MUFFLED, then Si Fu waves Kun San over who also listens to Ham-Sandwich's DENOUNCEMENTS. As Lee looks desperately for Tysee, the Shan trio's eyes burn into Lee.

KUN SAN

You come here!

LEE

Oh Shit....

Lee is searched and his buck-knife and Walther seized. Then Si Fu's amulet is found!

Si Fu stares at it, then PUNCHES Lee's solar plexus, dropping him to his knees GASPING. Kayao brings an AK-47 DOWN on his head.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. JUNGLE BAMBOO GROVE - JUST BEFORE DAWN

The first thing Lee sees as he emerges from unconsciousness is a blurry, wavering white image that coalesces into a fullish moon. He tries to move, but can't. He's spreadeagled to stakes. His eyes widen as he makes out nearby a like bound skeleton arched upward because of bamboo growing right through it. Lee grimaces and turns his head; drops of his blood glisten in the moonlight on sharpened bamboo shoots beneath him. Hearing RUSTLING, he struggles. A KING COBRA

slithers through the bamboo grove. Lee freezes when he hears the NOISE coming closer. Suddenly a large CRACK causes him to wrench at his bonds.

TYSEE

Lee!

LEE

Tysee! Thank God!

She cuts his bonds with his buck-knife and checks his back. His shirt is torn and there are blood spots, but nothing serious. She gives him his gun, knife and pack. Tysee leads him to

EXT. KUN SAN'S COMPOUND - JUST BEFORE DAWN

The guests lie unconscious.

LEE

Your drugged rice got them all. Thanks for whispering me that warning.

They go through a door and enter

INT. KUN SAN'S HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Illuminated by oil lamp are a SNORING Kun San, sprawled across his desk, Si Fu and Kayao on the floor, and Ham-Sandwich lying back in an armchair, mouth agape. On the desk sits a fruit basket, a cage of live rice beetles - and the Buddha Head, lamplight glistening off a jeweled eye. Beside it is a jeweler's loop. Tysee drops to her knees and *wais* (hands in prayer-like fashion) as Lee respectfully wraps and bundles the Head into his pack.

TYSEE

(still prostrate)

My Lord Buddha.

Seeing her father's head at an awkward angle, she gets up and places a pillow behind it. Just before they leave, Lee stuffs several wriggling rice beetles into Ham-Sandwich's mouth before jamming in an apple to keep them there.

EXT. KWAN MAE COMPOUND - DAWN'S TWILIGHT

Quietly passing SNORING sentries, they hurry through

EXT. KWAN MAE TOWN - DAWN'S TWILIGHT

Tysee still leading. They emerge at the

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAWN'S TWILIGHT

The pilot's window is pulled back, open. Tysee quietly opens the passenger door.

TYSEE

(low voice)

I check already. Fuel tank full.

(seeing Lee not moving)

Well? You said you pilot.

LEE

I was joking!

TYSEE

No joke! We have no choice. Soon village get up and we in big trouble!

They clamber inside the

INT./EXT. SMALL AIRPLANE (INTERCUTTING) - DAWN

where Lee finds a high hook behind them to carefully hang his pack before scanning the unfamiliar instrument cluster.

LEE

I don't even know how to start it!

TYSEE

You don't bullshit me again. Starter there. Si Fu always pump throttle there first.

A WHIR begins and the propeller begins to rotate slowly, then faster as the engine SPUTTERS, COUGHS, SPUTTERS, COUGHS AGAIN and finally CATCHES and ROARS to life. The noise shakes THREE DRUGGED SENTRIES awake. SENTRY 1 woozily grabs his AK-47 and staggers to his feet. Lee rams the throttle forward but the cold engine COUGHS and almost dies. He eases off just in time and the engine returns to NORMAL SOUND. The other two sentries stumble to a heavy machine gun. Lee

eases the throttle forward and the plane picks up speed. Glancing out his window, he sees Sentry 1 running towards him, raising his AK-47. Lee fires ONE SHOT - but THREE SHOTS are heard and the sentry tumbles! After a glance forward, Lee looks back to see THE OTHER TWO sentries AT THE MACHINE GUN COLLAPSED! Lee glances at his Walther like it's a magic gun.

Banana trees on the edge of the airfield move as someone hurries through the grove. There is a quick glimpse of army fatigue colors in motion.

INT. KUN SAN'S HEADQUARTER'S - DAWN

A SOLDIER rushes in and shakes Kun San awake and tells him what's happening in SHAN. The others stir. Ham-Sandwich spits the apple out and SCREAMS. Seeing the Head gone, Kun San flies into a stumbling RAGE and charges out the door.

INT. SMALL AIRPLANE - DAWN

Lee grips the yoke as the drop-off at runway's end rapidly approaches. The plane hurls off the end and staggers through the beautiful dawn like an Irish drunk stumbling home.

EXT. KUN SAN'S COMPOUND - DAWN

Kun San SCREAMS as an anti-aircraft gun CREW frantically attempts to get the plane in their sights. They finally fire off a couple of BURSTS.

INT. PLANE - DAWN

Lee reacts as green tracers tear by. Tysee grabs her steering yoke, putting them out of control, but Lee regains it and they fly into clouds and safety.

LEE

Yes! Up, up and away we go....

EXT. KWAN MAE JUNGLE - DAWN

SHOUTS and CRIES draw Kun San and OTHERS into the jungle. The Pretty Dancer from the banquet is spreadeagled and naked between trees. Crimson silk scarves used to bind her wrists and ankles hang down. She's also been strangled by a scarf.

EXT. SMALL PLANE - DAY

The plane wobbles at 1,000 feet following a river. Bangkok's sprawl lies ahead.

INT./EXT. SMALL PLANE (VARIOUS SHOTS) - DAY

LEE

Bangkok. Thank God for the Chao Phraya River or I don't know how we woulda found our way--

A 747 ROARS on an upward incline past them, so close they see terrified PASSENGERS staring out windows. The small plane bounces like a rubber ball in its wake.

LEE(con't)

Holy shit!

He pushes the yoke into a dive toward the river while Tysee twists in her seat to see if the pack is okay. It is. She *wais* and turns forward.

INT. 747 WIDE-EYED CAPTAIN ON RADIO TO CONTROL TOWER - DAY

CAPTAIN

That's an affirmative. Right into our airspace. Damned near rammed us!

EXT. SMALL PLANE - DAY

It dives until "leveling" off at 500 feet above the river. They enter the city.

LEE (VO)

We were on the flight path to Bangkok airport! We can forget about trying to land there now!

INT. SMALL PLANE - DAY

TYSEE

Where we land then? Gas gauge not looking good.

INSERT gas gauge tickling the E.

LEE

There's a park on the other side of town. That's our best...uh oh....

To their left, a Thai military HUEY has pulled up parallel. The open door reveals a GUNNER manning an M-60. The PILOT holds up his mike. Lee holds his and gestures that it doesn't work. The pilot gestures to follow. Lee shoots a thumb's up. But as the Huey breaks left - Lee banks right and scud runs 100 feet above the river over rice barges and ferries. The Huey is back in a blink at a higher elevation and it's not fucking around this time.

INT. CHOPPER - DAY

COPILOT

Lum nan kong pamar! Dai anuyard ying laew!

INSERT SUBTITLE: (IT'S DEFINITELY BURMESE! WE HAVE PERMISSION TO FIRE AT WILL!)

The gunner FIRES a burst into the plane's engine.

INT. SMALL PLANE - DAY

It seizes, and oil flows up the windshield. Smoke trails.

LEE

Ohhhhh shit! We have to land now!
They'll arrest us for sure!

TYSEE

Wat.

LEE

I said - we have to land now!

INSERT altimeter. The plane has glided down to 82 feet and is losing altitude fast.

INSERT air speed indicator down to 54 knots, dropping to 48.

TYSEE

No, I mean Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn.
Go there. Buddha take care of us.

Lee glances 45 degrees to the right through a clear patch on the windshield to see Wat Arun. To its right is the temple grounds, but the "runway" is only 75 feet long! He banks toward it, hitting a nonexistent horn. As MONKS and TOURISTS flee, the undercarriage is RIPPED OFF by the stone embankment. It BELLY FLOPS and the WINGS ARE TORN AWAY by metal fencing which slows the plane. The wreck comes to a GRINDING halt inches before a huge temple demon holding its hand in a "stop" position.

LEE

Jesus Christ!

TYSEE

No! I told you *Buddha* take care of us.

Seeing flames licking from the undercarriage, and hearing the WHAP of the chopper overhead, they bail out.

EXT. WAT ARUN ESCAPE/CHASE SEQUENCE - DAY

As Lee and Tysee run out a side exit, the plane EXPLODES.

INT. CHOPPER - DAY

The pilot swears in Thai and pulls the chopper back.

EXT. PATH ESCAPE - DAY

Lee and Tysee race along an elevated plank path past teetering teak houses on stilts and onto a pier.

EXT. PIER ON A KLONG (CANAL) - DAY

Seeing a COUPLE with lampshade hats and a longtail boat finishing offloading produce, Lee shoves half his money at the man.

LEE

Suea reur na!

INSERT SUBTITLE: (I'M BUYING THE BOAT, OKAY!)

As the delighted couple leaps onto the pier and snatch the money, Lee and Tysee grab their hats. Lee, hanging onto his pack protectively, ROARS around a corner and into the Floating Market.

EXT. THE FLOATING MARKET - DAY

Ahead is a flotilla of sampans heavily laden with fruit and vegetables handled by FEMALE VENDORS. Lee's going too fast to stop! He SLALOMS between them to the other side, his wake tipping produce into the water and leaving vendors SHOUTING and shaking fists.

Letting out a SIGH of relief, Lee guns around another corner and dead ahead is an OLD LADY in a sampan piled with watermelons. Throwing the tiller to one side, he barely misses her - but forces a stubby KLONG BOAT filled with FAT GERMANS with beer steins and a sign reading GERMAN SAUSAGE CONVENTION to swerve, spilling the Krauts into the drink, though they hang onto their steins.

LEE

Prosit! Have a nice day.

They skim out onto the main river.

EXT. CHAO PHRAYA RIVER - DAY

Lee SIGHS again when their boat is half way across the river.

LEE (con't)

Open river. We're almost home free.

Lee OPENS UP the throttle, causing their hats to fly off, exposing them!

A SIREN swivels their heads.

EXT. MARINE POLICE BOAT - DAY

It's speeding towards them. A COP barks into a microphone.

COP

Yoot! Ni Ku Kamsang!

INSERT SUBTITLE: (HALT! THAT'S AN ORDER!)

EXT. CHAO PHRAYA RIVER - DAY

Lee speeds upstream alongside a long string of RICE BARGES

towed by a tug. He cuts across the long tow rope, the propeller severing it, and while the tug boat CAPTAIN CURSES and shakes his fist, the rice barges swing sideways in the current, blocking the river. The cop boat's CAPTAIN sees an opening between 2 barges and goes for it, but as he gets closer, the gap closes and there isn't time to stop! At the last moment, the COPS jump into the river, leaving their boat to slam into the barges, EXPLODING.

Attracted by the explosion, the chopper reappears, its machine gun FIRING. BULLET SPOUTS behind the longboat rapidly catch up to Lee and Tysee.

TYSEE

Under the bridge!

Lee cranks the boat under a traffic bridge, obscuring the chopper's view. He spots a church next to the bridge with an incline on the embankment. His action hidden from the chopper, Lee hits the incline, launching the boat into

INT. ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

They fly through the church's open doors, sliding to a stop at the altar. Towering above it is a statue of JC nailed. To one side FATHER JOE crosses himself.

LEE

Looks like it's JC's turn to save the day Tysee.

INT. CHURCH BACK ROOM - DAY

While Father Joe observes, and Tysee kneels and *wais*, Lee gently sets the bundled Head on its side on a dais in a slant of sunlight through a window and he removes the linens. One corner pulls back revealing a glistening, golden chin. Another an elongated ear. The third, curly hair. The final reveals a PERFECT RUBY EYE. Lee *wais*.

LEE

It's beautiful. I...I've never seen gems this size so perfect, flawless.

With Tysee *waing* continually, Lee bundles up the Head which Father Joe respectfully hides in an elevated cubbyhole behind a painting of the Last Supper.

LEE (con't)

(joking)

Are you sure you won't sell it for forty pieces of silver, Father?

FATHER JOE

Buddhism and Christianity have lived peacefully side by side in Thailand for over three hundred years. It will be safe in the house of God, my son.

Lee gives Father Joe all but one bill of his remaining money.

LEE

This should take care of the damage, Father. I'm sorry for the trouble. We've got to run now, thank you.

Sirens are heard in the distance.

EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - DAY

Chinese signs line the CROWDED street. Traffic is jammed. Horns BEEP. Motorcycles ROAR between traffic. Lee and Tysee push through the crowds.

INT. CHINATOWN TEAHOUSE BROTHEL SELECTION ROOM - DAY

An old, seedy CHINESE BROTHEL OWNER in a dirty Mao jacket leads Lee and a morally shocked Tysee through a shabby selection room filled with 25 CHINESE GIRLS.

INT. LONG NARROW RED HALLWAY - DAY

Cubicles are off either side. GRUNTING can be heard from behind closed doors. Near the end, the owner opens a door and flicks on a dim, fly-speckled bedlamp. Lee gives him his last bill, a 1,000 baht note, the pimp winks, hands Lee the key, and shuffles off.

INT. BROTHEL DELUXE BEDROOM - DAY

As Lee closes and bolts the door behind them, Tysee looks around the Presidential Suite - with five whole feet of floor space and a doorless bathroom with a squatter toilet

and tap dripping into a tin can. The linoleum floor and walls are peeling. On a wall is a cheap painting of a naked, large breasted Chinese girl. A TV PLAYS porno.

TYSEE

This disgusting. How come you know place like this?

Lee CLICKS off the TV. From next door bedsprings SQUEAK.

LEE

A, uh, friend of mine told me about it.

TYSEE

What friend?

LEE

Ah, his name is, uh...Dingo! He's from Australia. Maybe you'll meet him someday.

The neighbor reaches a GROANING finish. There's a beat, then a loud, long FART.

TYSEE

I not sure I want to. Why we come here? Why we not stay in church?

As Lee opens the shutters, the light sends a cockroach scuttling under the bed. Out the window are rusting tin roofs, starting six feet below the sill.

LEE

No one will think of looking for us in a Chinatown brothel. Until we figure out what to do, we can lie low here.

TYSEE

Well, this is certainly low....

She turns the pictures of the girl to the wall.

INT. BROTHEL DELUXE BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY

While Tysee dabs Lee's injured back, Lee CLICKS on the TV. When porno comes on, he SWITCHES to BBC. Images of BUDDHISTS celebrating before temples worldwide flash on, including

INITIATES having their heads shaved.

BBC ANCHOR (VO)

Why is the believed emergence of Buddha's Head electrifying the Buddhist world? To Buddhists, the Head is not merely the highest part of the body but it contains the soul. As such, it is held in greatest reverence. Attendance and donations at temples worldwide are soaring, founding of new temples announced, pilgrimages launched.

TV CUTS TO images of SIKHS, then MUSLIMS, then HINDUS rioting before Buddhist temples in India and Pakistan. A burned out train. Individual footage of older SIKH, MUSLIM and HINDU leaders shaking fists.

BBC ANCHOR (VO)(con't)

In regions with histories of sectarian violence, rioting has broken out. A train carrying Buddhist pilgrims to Lumpini, Buddha's Nepalese birthplace, was attacked and burned. Sikh, Muslim and Hindu leaders have all announced they want to find and destroy the Head.

TV CUTS to an image of a smiling QUEEN LIZ waving to the PEONS. Lee CLICKS off the TV.

TYSEE

Why do they want to destroy Buddha's Head! His is a peaceful religion!

LEE

I know Tysee, but we're not talking reason. We're talking religion.

Lee opens and looks into his empty wallet.

LEE (con't)

Tysee, I've got to get some money. Don't let anyone in the room, okay?

INT. CHINATOWN STREET PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

LEE

Malee! Is everything okay?

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brock Haggstrom paces in the bg.

MALEE

Oh, I so glad you call *Khun* Ree! *Khun* Wolfgang phone yesterday. He want you to go his place as soon as possible. Now *Khun* Block just come to see you.

INT. CHINATOWN STREET PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

LEE

I'll be right there.

EXT. LEE'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Lee lets himself in. He's reaching for the house door handle, but pauses when he hears a HARSH VOICE inside, then what sounds like a champagne cork POPPING. Lee creeps below a window and yanks out his Walther when he sees

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brock down, clutching his side, and Malee in HYSTERICIS. A KGB SPOOK stands over Brock, a silenced .22 pistol in hand.

KGB SPOOK

(Russian accent)

Where is Buddha Head? This is your last chance.

BROCK

You've got the wrong man, pal.

KGB SPOOK

We know who you are CIA scum. Give it to me now or I kill woman.

He aims at Malee. Her SCREAM partially covers the REPORT of Lee's Walther through the window and the CRASH of the KGB man falling. His SILENCED pistol fires, SHATTERING the tall jar.

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Lee turns from pressing a towel to Brock's side, who's now on the sofa, to calming Malee. Lee looks at the vase shards.

LEE

Oh well, it was only Ching Dynasty....

BROCK

I'll get a cleanup crew over. I sure don't regret sellin' ya that Walther now, Jungle Boy.

Leaving a calming Malee, Lee rifles through the KGB spook's pockets. There's the usual - change, condoms, keys.

LEE

What the hell's this about CIA?

BROCK

(reluctantly comes clean)

Can you think of a better cover here than DEA? We want to recover this Head before those KGB assholes. You got it, right?

LEE

KGB! What do the Russians want it for?

EXT. TASHKENT, USSR - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: TASHKENT, SOVIET UNION, NEAR AFGHANISTAN BORDER

A Soviet tank and SOLDIERS look on helplessly while MUSLIMS RIOT before a Buddhist temple.

BROCK (VO)

Think about how the 60,000,000 Muslims on their borders feel about their invasion of Afghanistan. The last thing the Ruskies want is a revival of another religion on their eastern flank. That Head is already causing them the same problems as in India and Pakistan. The Ruskies are atheists. They want to neutralize it before it surfaces and causes more turmoil.

Lee pulls a flip-top pack of Marlboros out of the KGB man's pocket, finds it's unusually heavy, and opens it. It reveals a full row of filters, but when Lee turns the package upside down, the glued together filters fall out with a tiny pistol into his hand.

BROCK (con't)

Well, I'll be damned, a Khokhov Special.
Runs on batteries and shoots two silent
poison bullets.

A burst of TEARS alerts both to Malee. As Lee puts his arm around a SOBBING Malee he surreptitiously slips the KGB "Marlboros" into his pocket and whispers to her.

LEE

Malee, you'll be okay, but I need to
borrow your passport, some clothes and,
uh, your lipstick? Okay? (Explains
further in Thai.)

While she nods and hurries off, Lee slips into

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

and from a wall safe behind a *Kama Sutra* picture refills his wallet with a thick wad of \$100US bills and baht, and grabs a false passport with his shaved picture but the name ALLAN JOHN MCKENZIE. He grabs jeans and a T-shirt depicting kangaroos screwing.

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.

BROCK

My boys are on their way over.

In the distance is an ambulance SIREN.

LEE

I have to go, Brock.

Lee heads for the door, grabbing the bag from Malee.

EXT. GERMAN BEER GARDEN - NIGHT

Pornsack drops Lee in front, pulls out a carton of fried

rice and happily digs in, chasing it with Red Bull.

INT. BEER GARDEN - NIGHT

Lee hurries through the crowded beer garden, filled with HOOKERS and FARANG PUNTERS, to the rear and a distance from the active part of the bar. A rusty plaque beside a door of a shack reads WOLFGANG KRUEGER - PRIVATE. When Lee knocks, it CREAKS open. Lights are on. Puzzled, he creeps in.

INT. WOLFGANG'S SHACK LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's a moldy, dusty dump, the kind of place an old bachelor lives in which discourages visitors. As Lee's fingers brush a table, dust comes away.

LEE

Wolfgang? You here?

Receiving no answer, he probes on.

INT. WOLFGANG'S SHACK KITCHEN - NIGHT

Water DRIPS onto dishes. Lee notes dust on them too.

INT. WOLFGANG'S SHACK BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bed's unmade, and when Lee shakes the sheets, dust rises. A frowning Lee fingers moth eaten clothes in the open clothes closet and is about to turn away when he spots a crack of light from the floor. It's a partially open trap door. Opening it, Lee is bathed in light. Stairs lead down.

INT. LONG PLUSH CORRIDOR - NIGHT

He sets his pack down, draws his pistol, descends and pads to the end, to a small elevator which disgorges him in

INT. WOLFGANG'S OPULENT MANSION LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lights are on everywhere and Lale Anderson's LILI MARLENE plays. Lee stares bewildered as the song ends, then begins again on a stuck 1950's turntable. The room is furnished in Louis-the-Something, with art covering the walls. Upon closer inspection he's astounded to recognize a Van Gogh sunflower, a Rembrandt self-portrait, and a Frans Hals

laughing drunken wench. In a corner is a Michelangelo sculpture of a man trying to wrestle free of the marble. Atop a grand piano are framed photographs. Lee grabs one beside a HOLSTER.

INSERT: Photo of a young, smiling Wolfgang in a Luftwaffe officer's uniform with side arm. With an arm around his shoulder is a beaming FIELD-MARSHAL HERMANN GOERING who has signed the photo.

Lee replaces the photo and fingers the holster, the one in the picture, open, but it's empty.

Lee SNIFFS, then MEOWING startles him. Setting the picture aside, Lee sees a cat SCRATCHING a door and MEOWING hungrily. As Lee opens it, the cat SCAMPERS in.

INT. WOLFGANG'S MANSION HUGE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hanging brass pots and a large island, a door on one side.

INT. WOLFGANG'S MANSION WALK-IN FREEZER - NIGHT

This door, too, is ajar. LAPPING issues from the freezer. Carefully, Lee CREAKS the heavy door open and peeks inside the darkened interior, gun at the ready. The LAPPING is louder now, from below something bulky on one wall. Lee fumbles the light switch on.

Wolfgang Krueger hangs naked but for boxers. He's spreadeagled between meat hooks - and bound by crimson silk scarves hanging down. Another has strangled him. He's been shot through the forehead, from which blood drips onto the floor. The cat looks up at Lee from lapping blood, MEOWS its thanks, then resumes, while Lee staggers backward out of the freezer, horrified.

EXT. TELEPHONE BOOTH IN STREET OUTSIDE MANSION - NIGHT

INT. TELEPHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

LEE

Francois!

FRANCOIS (VO)

(yawning, just awoken)

Oui. Why isn't our German friend

calling, like we agreed?

LEE

Our German friend is Kaput.

FRANCOIS (VO)

What!

LEE

He's been murdered. I got this big headache. I'm joining my friend on that pottery wreck expedition.

FRANCOIS (VO)

O...oui. Ph...phone me from there.

INT. BROTHEL DELUXE BEDROOM - DAY

Lee holds up Malee's open passport with Tysee beyond. Tysee's dressed like Malee. Her hair falls across the same shoulder as Malee's in the picture. The shocking pink lipstick in the photo is the same as on Tysee.

LEE

Good. Now how do I look?

Lee's hair, now blond, has been cut, he's CLEAN-SHAVEN and wearing the T-shirt and jeans.

TYSEE

Like Billy Idol.

LEE

Thanks a lot. We need to get out of the country.

INT. HUALAMPONG RAILWAY STATION - DAY

The station is filled with BACKPACKERS, VENDORS and THAIS. Lee buys a Bangkok "Nation" newspaper. On the front page are photos of the wrecked plane with Lee's bearded passport picture and the caption: "KUN SAN PLANE USED IN BUDDHA HEAD THEFT." Subtitled is: "LEE RIVERS AND TYSEE SAN SUSPECTS." Lee dumps it in a trash bin.

Now extra nervous, they buy tickets at a wicket marked "FIRST CLASS RESERVATIONS - SINGAPORE."

Turning away, Lee scans the crowd which includes TWO BLACK TURBANED SIKHS in white, one huge, one compact, and a HINDU - all also scan the assembly. Lee and Tysee head for the multi-door entrance but freeze.

Si Fu and Kayao bookend the entrance. Their eyes pass over Lee - but stop on Tysee. Si Fu grins and signals Kayao. As they push through the crowd toward them, Lee grips Tysee's hand and they break for the side exit.

EXT. RAILWAY STATION SIDE EXIT - DAY

They dive into Pornsack's tuk-tuk.

LEE

Pornsack! Let's get the fuck outta here!

Pornsack, seeing the 2 Shan running towards them pulling out sub-machineguns, tosses his rice and SQUEALS off on two wheels into Bangkok's traffic. Si Fu and Kayao jump into another tuk-tuk and a race ensues.

EXT. BANGKOK STREETS (VARIOUS) - DAY

Swerving in and out of traffic, sending FAT FARANGS and THAI PEDESTRIANS scurrying, Pornsack's tuk-tuk careens onto a quieter street. Si Fu and Kayao FIRE. Lee fumbles out his Walther and POPS off 2 SHOTS, but it's puny in comparison. Tysee SCREAMS at Pornsack, who cuts onto a footpath on either side of which are water lily jars. Si Fu and Kayao FIRE again, SHATTERING the jars. Lee and Tysee's tuk-tuk flies off the footpath and into a *soi* (small road) where a tourist bus full of JAPANESE, cameras raised, momentarily blocks Si Fu and Kayao.

Pornsack TEARS down another *soi*, then onto another footpath alongside a winding, narrow *Klong* with high concrete walls at an angle, the bottom of which is filled with shallow water. Because of Pornsack's weight, the bad guys are gaining again, but are still 100 yards back. Another BARRAGE WHIZZES by them, bullets SHATTERING the windshield. They have to get off the footpath but there are no exits. They ROAR past an opening in the *klong's* handrail.

LEE

Pornsack! Stop! Stop! Back up!

TYSEE

Are you crazy...*bah bah boh boh* (crazy)?

Pornsack SCREECHES to a stop and looks back at Lee anxiously.

LEE

(pointing back to opening)
Drive into the *klong*!

He backs up and with tires SQUEALING and BULLETS WHIZZING, flies off the footpath and SPLASHES into the *klong* where they continue the getaway. The bad guys now have had time to catch up and run parallel but higher, but they can't shoot down because of obstacles.

INT. BAD GUYS' TUK-TUK - DAY

Si Fu

(to driver)

Yoot! Yoot! Toi klublaew tham mun pai!

INSERT SUBTITLE: (STOP! STOP! BACK UP AND FOLLOW THEM!)

The driver stops and backs up to the opening of the *klong*, but adamantly shakes his head. Si Fu jams the gun to his head and SHOUTS at him but the driver still refuses. Si Fu and Kayao jump out, drag him out of the tuk-tuk and force him at gun point to help them push the tuk-tuk into the *klong* where they take off after their prey, quickly closing the gap again. As they FIRE, Pornsack sweeps his tuk-tuk up one side and then the other with the bad guys imitating like a wild ride at Disneyland. SPARKS FLY as they scrape the concrete sides and bullets RICOCHET.

Looming ahead is a low footbridge! The bridge RIPS OFF the tuk-tuk's canopy making it look like a golf cart as they shoot out the other side. The bad guys' driver stops in front of the bridge so fast he almost rolls. Ahead of Pornsack's tuk-tuk is another, higher, footbridge.

LEE

Pornsack! Slow down! Here's where we get off!

Lee crams the gun into his pocket and he and Tysee grab the

footbridge, swing up to the road, leaving Pornsack to speed off.

EXT. CHINATOWN'S NARROW LABYRINTH OF ALLEYS - DAY

Lee and Tysee run past gold shops, noodle carts and a fireworks shop whose windows SHATTER as Si Fu and Kayao, now on foot, FIRE causing a FIREWORKS EXPLOSION, temporarily blocking the frustrated pursuers. At the end of an alley they run into the

EXT. SNAKE FARM - DAY

with cobra cages stacked into a corridor, and snakes everywhere on the floor that hood, they come to a SKIDDING halt. In their midst is a cage.

LEE

Let's go!

Tysee runs and jumps onto the cage, then to the other side as agitated cobras strike. Lee follows, then grabs a bamboo pole, hooks the cage and pulls it toward him as Si Fu and Kayao appear. Lee and Tysee run around a corner and through an exit, but Si Fu and Kayao are pulled up short by hooded snakes. Si Fu gestures for Kayao to go one way and he goes the other.

EXT. CHINATOWN'S LABYRINTH - DAY

Sure they've alluded their pursuers, they slow as they round a dog-leg into a

EXT. DESERTED SECTION OF CHINATOWN ALLEY - DAY

where Lee collides with a man.

LEE

Oh, sorr--

Too late, Lee recognizes the grinning Hindu from the railway station. He is also PANTING, having been part of the chase. While Lee fumbles for his gun deep in his pocket, a pistol appears in the Hindu's hand.

HINDU

(accent, woggling head)

I am wanting the Head very much.

LEE

Sorry pal, how about a foot.

Lee snaps a roundhouse KICK, booting the gun out of his hand. Lee continues into a SPINNING BACK KICK that catches the Hindu in the mouth and sends him flying, but Lee slips and falls. The Hindu is on his feet first, pistol back in hand, SPITTING blood. Tysee bites into his gun hand. The Hindu YELPS, grabs her by the hair and throws her aside while bringing up the gun towards Lee - but Lee has his gun out and SHOTS him in the chest. Lee shoves the gun into his pocket and runs to Tysee, who's down.

LEE (con't)

You okay?

A SECOND HINDU appears. Crazed at the sight of his dead partner, he aims at Lee's back.

TYSEE

Lee!

A round hole appears in the 2nd Hindu's forehead and he collapses. The only sound has been the POP of a silenced gun. The stunned pair spin around but the alley is empty. Pulling out his gun again and grabbing Tysee's hand, they race back around the dog-leg and Lee trips over a dead Si Fu! Jumping to his feet, they follow a blood trail through

EXT. CHINATOWN LABYRINTH OF STREETS (VARIOUS SHOTS) - DAY

Intercut the pair with Kayao spotting them and looking at a way to ambush them. Kayao waits for them to round the corner in a walkway above a deserted section of alley. As they round the corner and Kayao is about to wax them, another POP issues from a darkened doorway, the bullet blowing out the front of his forehead in a spray of blood. Kayao tumbles over the railing and slams down into the alley directly in front of a shocked Lee and Tysee.

INT. CHINATOWN TEAHOUSE BROTHEL - DAY

The main floor of the teahouse is on a corner open to the streets, and filled with old marble tables occupied by CHATTERING OLD CHINAMEN. The couple trudge up stairs at the

back to the brothel when they hear tires SCREECHING.

EXT. POLICE TRUCK - DAY

A police truck disgorges POLICE while the old pimp runs up to them, brandishing a Thai newspaper. Lee and Tysee DOUBLE TIME up the stairs, past the girls in the

INT. BROTHEL SELECTION ROOM - DAY

and down the

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

to their

INT. BROTHEL DELUXE BEDROOM - DAY

Lee jams the door with the bed while Tysee stuffs their bags and Lee throws the shutters open. Heard is the approaching HAMMER of boots, then SHOUTING and POUNDING on the door. Lee and Tysee land on the tin roof with a BANG just as the door gives way with a CRASH and SPLINTERING.

EXT. CHINATOWN ROOFTOP ESCAPE - DAY

A chase ensues over the rusting, uneven roofs with SHOTS being fired at them until Lee and Tysee jump down into a backyard, scattering CLUCKING chickens. From a clothesline, Lee switches to a blue peasant shirt while Tysee pulls on a plain dress.

INT. CHURCH BACK ROOM - DAY

While Tysee waits, Lee carefully retrieves his pack.

INT. ANCIENT PEUGEOT - DAY

Father Joe drives while they crouch in the back. Lee's pack is in the high back window.

INT. RAILWAY STATION - DAY

The couple - the pack on Lee's back - push through the CROWD towards a train with the sign BUTTERWORTH, PENANG, SINGAPORE. POLICE now are everywhere, and they're stopped by a FAT, GREASY COP at a desk with a blowup of Lee's

bearded passport photo. After a tense scene showing their passports, they board the train.

INT. NEW ORIENT EXPRESS - DAY

Slipping inside their compartment, they fail to notice a trail of blood drops on the hallway floor....

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - DAY

After locking the door, Lee carefully sets the pack on a high shelf while Tysee yanks down the shades and they collapse opposite each other, Tysee facing forward. The room is right out of a Somerset Maugham story.

EXT. TRAIN (VARIOUS SHOTS) - DAY

It CLICKITY-CLACKS along through hilly jungle, a cliff trestle, past Thai ruins and a huge Buddha.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - SUNSET MAGIC HOUR

Outside their open window are passing fields with karst formations and a mosque. Inside stands a vintage, DIMINUTIVE MALAY STEWARD finishing setting the flip-up table.

STEWARD

(Malay accent)

We've just crossed into Malaysia. I'll bring your tea in one moment.

He bows and exits. At a POLITE KNOCK, Lee checks to be sure his open buck-knife, beneath a towel on the table, is handy before checking the door's peep-hole.

LEE'S POV: the steward with a tea tray.

Lee opens the door but reacts when he sees terror on the steward's face. The man is shoved forward and the two Sikhs from the railway station press into the compartment. The huge one wields a silenced .22; the shorter one is named ARAT SINGH, and grips a *kirpan* (curved dagger). Lee is searched by Arat, and the Walther and buck-knife are found, while the big Sikh shoves the shaking steward under the table. Arat sets Lee's Walther on a ledge behind him but keeps the buck-knife.

The big Sikh smiles as he spots the pack on the shelf. He lifts it off and rubs it.

BIG SIKH

(East Indian accent)

It is good luck to rub Buddha's belly.
But in this case, I suspect a Head.

Arat clears the table with a sweep of his *kirpan* and the big Sikh removes the wrapped Head from the pack and sets it on the table. Arat sits on a stool beside Lee and, using Lee's buck-knife, flicks a corner of cloth away.

The Big Sikh's gun swings toward Tysee as she reaches into her purse and produces the Marlboros. Flipping the pack open, she offers cigarettes to both Sikhs. Lee reacts.

TYSEE

I need a cigarette. Would you like one?

BIG SIKH

No, young lady, smoking causes early demise.

The joke brings rough LAUGHS from both Sikhs. Outside it's virtually dark.

INTERCUT linen layers being lifted away with Tysee searching for matches in her purse but finding none, then seeing matches in a receptacle on the table, Lee and Tysee reaching for them, their fingers touching, lingering as they share eye communication. Lee sits back, crosses his arms and looks beaten, but he's really making a hidden fist with his left hand. As the last fold is flicked away revealing the Head, Tysee reaches under the table as if to pull out a cigarette.

Arat, grinning nefariously, raises the buck-knife - and plunges the tip ONE INCH into the Head ABOVE THE RIGHT EYE. Tysee, anger flashing to her face, brings her hand up with the KGB gun and SPITS a bullet into the Big Sikh's chest and he collapses into CONVULSIONS. Simultaneously, Lee BACKFISTS Arat in the face, causing the KNIFE BLADE TO SNAP at the base. Arat goes flying but recovers and comes at Lee with the *kirpan*. Tysee can't shoot because Lee's between her and the Sikh. Lee parries Arat's slash and brings up the stool and SMASHES him in the face, sending him reeling backward,

BANGING his head against the wall, knocking him out. Tysee eyes the stab mark in horror.

TYSEE

(*wailing*)

Forgive me Lord Buddha!

Lee quickly *wais* before grabbing his Walther.

LEE

How did you know they wouldn't take a cigarette!

TYSEE

Sikhs no smoke, you know that.

Hearing a WHIMPER, they remember the steward. Lee bundles the Head, slips it back into his pack and back onto the ledge before dragging the terrified man out and dropping the table into its rest position. Lee then trusses, gags and locks him in the toilet.

LEE

(to steward)

Sorry.

As the TRAIN WHISTLE BLOWS Lee looks ahead out the window to see

EXT. TRAIN - NIGHT

the BUTTERWORTH sign. The train slows as it pulls into the railyard.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

LEE

(whispering)

It won't be long before all hell breaks loose. We better stop here and take the ferry to Penang. We can hide among the tourists.

EXT. BUTTERWORTH STATION - NIGHT

The train LURCHES to a stop and PASSENGERS of all descriptions disembark, including Lee and Tysee. The herd

follows the cattle chute from the station onto the

EXT. PENANG FERRY - NIGHT

As they reach the high bow, the ferry SHUDDERS away. Ahead lie the lights of Penang Island. Lee looks desperate.

LEE

This is a mistake. The steward heard everything. Penang's an island. We'll be trapped--

BLASTS of the ferry whistle interrupt and the vessel SHUDDERS into reverse, barely missing cutting a yacht in half, its running light out. A FIGURE in a yellow Hawaiian shirt, R.M. Williams white slacks and an Aussi Acubura hat in the cockpit seems to wave; a bottle of beer SMASHES against the side of the steel ferry. It's followed by a drunken BELLOW in Aussi.

DINGO

Hey! Why don' you watch where yere goin', ya fuckin' wankers! Jesus Christ!

LEE

My God! It's...Dingo!

EXT. CHINESE BACKPACKER'S HOTEL - NIGHT

A tri-shaw drops Lee and Tysee off before a colorful, tumbledown hotel. Lee pays the DRIVER and he leaves.

LEE

We'll crash here tonight. Tomorrow we'll head to Batu Ferringi.

TYSEE

Your friend Dingo, he almost crash into boat today...he *mau mak mak*...very drunk.

LEE

Yep, that's my buddy Dingo!

Tysee looks suspiciously at Lee as they saunter into the hotel.

EXT. PENANG STREETS (VARIOUS SHOTS) - EARLY MORNING

Leaving the hotel, they hurry down the just awakening streets until they find a cab, a '56 Austin.

EXT. BATU FERRINGI BEACH - LATER IN THE MORNING

TYSEE

Is that him? Big man coming in little rowboat?

Lee and Tysee stand on the beach. Rowing towards them, flying the Aussi flag, is Dingo. Behind him, at anchor among other yachts, is his 60-foot yacht, *Passing Wind*. Dingo is one of those tall, good-looking Aussis with a tousle of sun-bleached hair under his hat.

Lee and Tysee wade out to meet him, with their gear. Dingo's bloodshot eyes widen when he recognizes Lee. He takes a cigarillo from his mouth.

DINGO

Well, I'll be goosed by a cross-eyed kangaroo! No wonder the whole bloody world can't recognize you, mate.

LEE

We were supposed to meet in Singapore.

DINGO

I was on my way there but was running out of beer so I pulled in here to restock.

(eyes Tysee)

So this is the sheila in all the news?

LEE

Tysee, this is Dingo, the Aussi I told you about.

The gregarious Dingo takes her hand, she reluctant.

DINGO

(aside to Lee)

Bit skinny, but a good looker.

TYSEE

(coldly)
Lee tell me some things about you and a
Chinatown teahouse.

DINGO
(studying her, then Lee)
I'm sure I can tell you all kinds of
yarns about him as well.

LEE
(uncomfortable)
Dingo, we have to get out of here fast.
I'll explain on the way to Singapore.

DINGO
Singapore? I told you, we gotta pick up
some beers first! I'm down to me last
few dozen.
(seeing Lee's reaction)
Okay, get in. But I'll be bloody pissed
off if we run dry.

EXT. BAMBOO BEACH HUT - DAY

BINOCULAR POV of Lee, Dingo and Tysee climbing into the
dingy and Dingo rowing towards the *Passing Wind*.

EXT. *Passing Wind* - DAY

Pulling alongside the yacht, Lee scrambles aboard and
reaches back for Tysee. Unfamiliar with boats, she stands
and loses her balance. Just before she plunges in, Dingo
sweeps her up.

DINGO
Hey, take it easy li'l Dragon Lady. You
never been on a boat before?

Tysee shakes her head and hangs onto his arm. She looks up
at Dingo with new found respect and admiration.

EXT. *PASSING WIND* INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

The gorgeous yacht cuts through sparkling seas.

EXT. RAFFLES HOTEL SINGAPORE - NIGHT

A taxi pulls up to the RAFFLES HOTEL - SINGAPORE as the sign says, and a cautious Lee steps out of the passenger seat. The back seat is stacked to the roof with Singapore Tiger beer and packages of meat pies and sausages. While the cab waits, Lee passes a DOORMAN and enters the

INT. RAFFLES FOYER AND SHORT HALL - NIGHT

He hurries down before turning left into the

INT. RAFFLES LONG BAR - NIGHT

Lee sits in a remote corner and a WAITER approaches.

LEE

Singapore Sling please. And may I have a telephone?

WAITER

Yes, sir.

The famous bar is HALF FULL, with all eyes glued to a TV broadcasting scenes of rioting, a UN meeting, the old steward and the Dalai Lama.

BBC ANCHOR (VO)

Sectarian violence worldwide continues to escalate at an alarming rate causing an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council. The Dalai Lama refuses to comment, saying to do so would only fan the flames....

WAITER

Your Singapore Sling, sir.

BBC ANCHOR (VO)

And news just in, an anonymous source has offered a one million dollar US reward for the return of the Buddha Head....

Lee reacts and frantically dials.

FRANCOIS (VO)

(sleepily)

'allo?

LEE

I'm there.

FRANCOIS (VO)

(instantly awake)

Oh, thank God!

LEE

Francois! What's happening? Did someone just offer one million dollars for the Head?

FRANCOIS

This situation has gotten so out of hand. Go to the land of the dwarfs. The number 69 has special significance.

EXT. RAFFLES - NIGHT

As Lee climbs into his taxi, he notices 3 SHADOWY FIGURES exit the hotel and jump into a dark Mercedes.

EXT. BACK STREETS SINGAPORE (VARIOUS) - NIGHT

Seeing them following, Lee slips a \$100 note onto the dash.

LEE

Get rid of them.

The driver grabs it and speeds past the Singapore Lion statue into old Singapore, Chinatown, Little India and Arab and Bugis Streets attempting to allude them, but they stick like pasties. After SQUEALING around a corner on 2 wheels, the TIGER BALM GARDENS is ahead. Lee slaps down 3 big bills.

LEE (con't)

Drop me off here and pick me up at the north entrance in one hour and there'll be 3 more!

The cab speeds off and Lee jumps the fence into

EXT./INT. TIGER BALM GARDENS (VARIOUS SHOTS) - NIGHT

Lee hears car doors SLAMMING behind him. The chase continues

amongst the gaudy statues (he second takes one of an old Oriental sucking a well endowed woman's breast) and through the caves until he reaches the 10 Courts of Hell. Lee is trapped - and the shadowy trio, guns in hand, are closing in. The Goddess of Mercy seems to indicate which way to go. He finds a side door to the factory and in it a bubbling balm vat with Chinese and English lettering: SLOW REDUCER. The smell almost knocks him out. Below lettering on a small red bottle on a bracket is EMERGENCY OXYGEN. At the SOUND of the men barging in, he grabs the bottle and jumps into a water tank behind the vat. The bad guys look everywhere, including an eye-burning glance into the vat. They also glance into the water tank, and an instant after they turn away Lee's bubbles pop to the surface, but they fail to see this. They run out the back. Lee emerges, dripping.

CHANGI YACHT CLUB - NIGHT

The cab passes the CHANGI YACHT CLUB sign and stops at the pier. Dr. Hook's WHEN YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN ("...watch your back...everybody wants her...") plays. While the cab waits, Lee hurries to the *Passing Wind*. He hears LAUGHTER, faintly at first, then loudest as he reaches the gunwale. Through a porthole, a grinning Dingo holds Tysee's hand across the table, reading her palm, while she throws her head back, LAUGHING. There's beers on the table and numerous empty bottles.

The laughter stops as Lee's feet HIT the deck and he opens the companionway door. Both are now sober, apart, looking as if caught with their hands in the sugar cane jar.

LEE

(tightly, to Dingo)

Your beer and pies are in the cab.
That should do you til Manila.

DINGO

Manila?

(beat)

And what the fuck happened to you?

EXT. PASSING WIND'S COCKPIT SOUTH CHINA SEA - SUNSET

Lee mans the helm. His face tightens when UNINTELLIGIBLE WORDS from Dingo are followed by female LAUGHTER. The door swings open and a LAUGHING Dingo emerges, two beers in hand.

DINGO

It's my shift.

Dingo spots Lee's sour look as he hands him a beer.

DINGO (con't)

Here, cheers, big ears.

Lee grabs the beer and gives over the helm.

DINGO (con't)

What's up mate? This ain't the Lee Rivers I've come to know and be disgusted with. You...jealous mate? Well, I suppose I can't blame you. Fair suck of the sav, I normally like mine with more meat on 'em, like me pies, so they don't rattle apart when I give 'em a good pounding, but I gotta admit, she's a damned pretty sheila. I'm damned fond of her. Lots of fun to be with.

LEE

Ha Fucking Ha.

While Dingo CHUCKLES, Lee slips down the companionway into

INT. *PASSING WIND'S* SALOON - DAY

On a high shelf, the Head has been battened down. Tysee is wearing her cobra skin bikini and doubled over in LAUGHTER.

LEE

What's so funny? Did that kangaroo show you his duck-billed platypus?

TYSEE

No, he told me when you first meet on Palawan Island, where Tabon Man found. I think he say Tampon Man!

She collapses against him with the GIGGLES. Even Lee sees this is pretty funny and loosens up.

LEE

You want to see Java Man?

Tysee nods. Lee exchanges his beer for a coffee pot and a cup and GRUNTS like a Neanderthal. Tysee launches into another scream of LAUGHTER.

TYSEE

Hey! You want see Peking Woman?

She flips one bikini flap down, then back up. They collapse into each other's arms. As the mood changes, grows hotter, Lee reaches over and locks the door.

LEE

Hmmm. How about if I show you Homo Erectus. You can be Lucy and I'll jump on your bones.

They drift down onto the sofa, out of sight.

INT. HAM-SANDWICH'S HOUSE - KATHMANDU

Ham-sandwich is on the phone and he's excited.

HAM-SANDWICH

No kidding! You can get it back! I can? That's bloody great. I'll be there as soon as I can! Thanks!

Ham-Sandwich slams down the phone and shouts to his NEPALESE HOUSEKEEPER SHARMA.

HAM-SANDWICH (con't)

Sharma! Pack my things and get me a ticket on the first plane to Manila!

INT. *PASSING WIND'S* SALOON LATER - DAY

Sailing is going beautifully. THRILLER is on the radio. Tysee is cooking while Lee washes dishes. Dingo calls though the companionway.

DINGO

Hey, you can come up now.

EXT. *PASSING WIND'S* COCKPIT - DAY

As Lee and Tysee join Dingo, beer in hand, behind the yacht a freighter with a hammer and sickle on its stern recedes.

EXT. *PASSING WIND* - LATER IN THE DAY

While Lee and Tysee sunbathe, Dingo shouts.

DINGO

Lee! Get your ear hole around this!

Lee and Tysee hurry to the cockpit. A perplexed Dingo, beer and cigarillo in hand, indicates the CRACKLING ship-to-shore radio.

DINGO (con't)

It's the Singapore Marine Police.

RADIO

To repeat this bulletin, all boats be on the lookout for the yacht *Passing Wind*. Three people are believed to be aboard, Australian Rodney Cook, American Lee Rivers and a Burmese national, Tysee San. Please report any sightings.

All three are left slackjawed.

TYSEE

(looking at Dingo)

You Rodney Cook?

DINGO

Right. That's me real name.

(beat)

Thank God we're in Philippine waters! Every journalist worth his salt monitors police radio. The news'll be out faster than a rat up a drainpipe.

EXT. *PASSING WIND* OFF MINDORO ISLAND - DAY

The yacht is at anchor on a placid sea. Lee is geared up to dive. In front of him is Tysee, her eyes on a round, watertight bag which Dingo holds.

TYSEE

You sure World War Two boat down there?

DINGO

Yeah. Lee and I found the wreck a couple of years ago off this point. I'm bloody positive.

LEE

We better stash the guns with the Head too. We're going to be discovered sooner than later, and that'll just add to the shit we're in.

Dingo nods and slips the Walther and Marlboros in with the bundled Head and closes the bag. Lee hands Tysee his Shan amulet, spits in his mask, swirls it in a pail of water, then fits the mask and mouthpiece. Dingo carefully hands the bundle to Lee while Tysee *wais*. At a half-wave from Tysee, Lee SPLASHES over backwards.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Lee fins FOR SOME TIME past coral and fish, his BREATHING slow and even. He finally comes into view of the upright

EXT. WORLD WAR TWO NAVAL SHIPWRECK - DAY

As Lee fins over the wreck to the other side, he looks straight down a vertical drop-off into the dark depths. Releasing air from his vest with a BUBBLY SOUND, he sinks toward a gaping hole in the hull.

EXT. *PASSING WIND* OFF MINDORO - DAY

A side view of the yacht, though there's no crew visible. It EXPLODES into a million pieces.

EXT. WORLD WAR TWO NAVAL SHIPWRECK - DAY

Just as Lee reaches the gaping hole, the EXPLOSION tumbles him. Terrified fish dart in all directions. Silt is kicked up everywhere. Surprised and wide-eyed, Lee cautiously heads for the surface while a wok and cups and saucers, their radio, Dingo's beer - anything that won't float - sinks towards the bottom like rain.

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - DAY

Breaking the surface, Lee comes face to face with a surprised NATIVE, fishing spear raised, in a *banca* (canoe). Dingo and Tysee are MIA. Litter bobs everywhere. A WHAP-WHAP is heard and Lee corkscrews to see a helicopter bank and head away.

EXT. BANCA - DAY

While a traumatized Lee sits in the *banca* with his dive gear holding the Head bag, the native gleefully SCOOPS up dead fish with a hand net. One scoop brings up a strange object which the native starts to throw overboard, but Lee comes to life and grabs it. It's Tysee's bikini bottoms.

EXT. BANCA - SUNSET

Lee, holding the bag, and the native PADDLE towards civilization.

EXT. MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Ham-Sandwich, bag in hand, steps out onto the sidewalk and looks around. A HAND waves from a car. He hurries over, climbs into the back, and the car speeds away.

EXT. FISHING VILLAGE PHILIPPINES - NIGHT

Lee bargains with the OWNER of a dilapidated marine gas station, selling his dive gear.

EXT. MANILA'S ERMITA RED LIGHT DISTRICT - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: ERMITA, MANILA'S RED LIGHT DISTRICT

A door opens below a grubby sign reading MACARTHUR HOTEL and Lee steps out in shorts and a Filipino *barong* shirt.

EXT. CLOUD 69 BAR - DAY

A neon sign of a cloud with feet strategically placed.

INT. CLOUD 69 BAR - DAY

A sexy, disinterested BARGIRL in black stiletto heels with COME IN PLEASE embroidered on the back of her bikini bottoms leads Lee through the near empty bar. 2 PUNTERS with San Miguels, sitting apart, turn from watching 2 BORED DANCERS,

shuffling to Cyndi Lauper's GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN, to eye Lee. Lee's led to a door where she KNOCKS, then pushes it open.

INT. DINGY CRAMPED OFFICE - DAY

On the walls are a large photo of a group of New Zealand Maori rugby players doing the *haka* (sticking tongues out) and pinups of beautiful naked Filipinas. Bar bills are stacked everywhere. A man in a high backed swivel chair with his back to Lee is watching Kiwi rugby on TV. As he begins to turn around, Lee begins to speak.

LEE

KIWI...Brock!

A bandage shows between the bulging buttons of Brock's shirt. He smokes a cigar and indicates the TV.

BROCK

Mabuhay Jungle Boy. They call this football?

LEE

What the fuck are you doing here Mr. CIA?

BROCK

Partly to tell you I know who blew up your boat -- the Ruskies. We monitor their transmissions. And they have your friends.

LEE

Thank God they're alive!

BROCK

For the time being.

(beat)

Also, Francois Giscard wants you to give up the Head to the CIA.

LEE

Why didn't he tell me that on the phone in Singapore?

BROCK

He had to check first with the abbot at Tingbotchy. He told you to come here because this bar is a CIA front.

LEE

Can your CIA get Tysee and Dingo back?

BROCK

I'll see what I can do.

Kiwi, a tough, tattooed Maori, walks in, glances at the TV, from which issues SOUNDS of cheering.

KIWI

Who's winning?

BROCK

How the fuck would I know? I don't understand your silly way of playing football.

KIWI

You're the ones in the leotards and poofter helmets.

Lee disappears.

INT. BAR 69 - DAY

Passing through, Lee notes the 2 punters pushing their bottles aside and swinging around to follow.

EXT. MANILA STREETS - DAY

INTERCUT Lee with the spooks. Lee jumps into a Jeepney. After several jeepney changes around Rizal Park, Fort Santiago and by the old Spanish cathedral, Lee loses the obvious two - and a THIRD spook not so obvious.

EXT. STREET OPEN TELEPHONE BOOTH - DAY

Lee, his finger on a telephone book page, DIALS.

RUSSIAN VOICE (VO)

(accent)

Embassy of Soviet Socialist Republic.

LEE

Tell your ambassador Lee Rivers is on the phone.

RUSSIAN VOICE (VO)

One moment.

INT. RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE - DAY

RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR

(accent)

This Ambassador Skibinsky. What can I do for you Mr. Rivers?

EXT. LEE'S TELEPHONE BOOTH - DAY

LEE

Are you a literate man, Ambassador?

RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR (VO)

Well, I've been known to read Tolstoy.

LEE

E. M. Forster wrote that if he had to choose between his country and his friend, he hoped he'd have the guts to choose his friend. You have what I want and I have what you want.

RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR (VO)

I do not know what you're talking about? Perhaps if we could meet--

LEE

--No way. I trust you as far as I can throw Lenin's tomb. Listen Rasputin, check with the Big Babushkas in the Kremlin and I'll call you back in an hour.

Lee SLAMS down the phone.

EXT. MACARTHUR HOTEL MANILA - DAY

Lee pushes through the door.

INT. MACARTHUR HOTEL MANILA - DAY

The foyer is threadbare with a peeling counter, a plastic covered red sofa, behind which is a framed photo of General MacArthur "returning," and a SCANDINAVIAN BACKPACKER reading the "*Manila Bulletin*." No sooner is Lee inside than he's accosted by the hag MANAGERESS ranting at him in Tagalog and shaking her scrawny arms and fists.

LEE

I'm sorry ma'am, but I don't understand Tagalog.

She continues RAVING, now pointing down the hall which gets Lee's attention.

BACKPACKER

(Scandinavian accent)

I understand Tagalog a little. She says that a policeman from the drug...how you say?

LEE

Policeman!

BACKPACKER

Ya, drug police searched your room. She wants you to leav--

Lee races down the worn, curling carpet of the

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Leaving the woman RANTING behind. Lee stares at the door to his room. It's splintered and hangs by the bottom hinge.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Lee throws the closet doors open. Inside is his knapsack on the shelf where he left it. But it's empty, the Head gone!

EXT. MABINI STREET MANILA - DAY

Lee wanders in a daze through light PEDESTRIAN traffic. Ahead he sees a familiar figure. Snow White carries 4 boxes marked SAN MIGUEL BEER. Lee waves.

LEE

Snowy! Snowy!

SNOWY

(struggling to recognize)

Lee? You been in the sun?

LEE

I'm in disguise. I need a place to go to the mattresses.

SNOWY

Mattresses! I got plenty! Take your pick, eh!

They approach a car wreck stenciled on the side with SNOW WHITE'S ANGELES CITY - FREE TRANSPORTATION TO A GOOD TIME. Four dwarfs sit in the front seat licking different flavored ice cream cones.

SNOWY (con't)

Here's the Dwarfmobile!

Leaning to one side and spewing smoke, it pulls out into Manila's traffic, loosing a hubcap. A dwarf's head bobs in the rear window.

EXT. SNOW WHITE'S BAR - DAY

The car RATTLES to a stop before Snow White's bar. Sleepy jerks awake.

INT. SNOW WHITE'S BAR - DAY

Richie Valens' LA BAMBA booms as Lee follows Snowy CLOMPING up a side wooden staircase to

EXT. SNOW WHITE'S BAR FLAT ROOF - DAY

It's barren but for a pile of old iron water pipes and a few bar tables and chairs, a failed attempt at a patio. Built across the roof from the stairs is a square structure. Snowy throws the door open, revealing

INT. ROOFTOP SHORT-TIME ROOM - DAY

an unmade bed, a table with dead plants, a RUNNING floor fan and a dangling lightbulb. Ripped open condom packages are

everywhere. A ROAR goes up as an F-18 takes off.

EXT. ROOFTOP SHORT-TIME ROOM - DAY

SNOW WHITE (VO)

(shouting over roar)

You can stay here. I'll tell the hosers to take the girls out to the other short-time room. Just don't piss off the roof like some of these assholes do, eh? Makes me mad as a grizzly.

He turns and waddles to the stairs.

INT. ROOFTOP SHORT-TIME ROOM - DAY

David Bowie's CHINA GIRL plays downstairs. Lee locks the door and pulls the Walther out of his pocket. Tysee's bikini bottom falls to the floor. He lovingly folds it and puts it in his breast pocket.

After checking the gun, he sticks it back in his pocket. He lies staring up at a gecko CHIRPING on the ceiling, and listening to the fan HUM.

INT. SNOW WHITE'S MESSY OFFICE - DAY

A shirtless Lee listens to the phone CLICKING as it transfers. He's trying to bluff he doesn't know what.

INT. RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE - DAY

RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR

Mr. Rivers?

INT. SNOW WHITE'S OFFICE - DAY

LEE

Yes sir. Have you heard from Moscow?

INT. KGB QUARTERS RUSSIAN EMBASSY - DAY

TWO TECHNICIANS with headphones concentrate before sophisticated communication equipment.

RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR (VO)

Yes. And I note new tone of respect.

That is good. But steps are being taken to ensure both parties get what they want.

(TECHIE 1 thumbs up)

We will contact you.

A CLICK as he hangs up.

LEE (VO)(con't)

Wait!

Techie 2 grins, stands, and sticks a red pin at Lee's location on a large wall map of the Philippines.

INT. ROOFTOP SHORT-TIME ROOM - LATER IN THE DAY

The condoms are swept into a corner. Lee sits head in hands, and jumps at a BANGING on the door. Drawing his gun, he opens the door to find an agitated Snowy. Lee sticks the gun back in his pocket.

SNOW WHITE

We gotta get you outta here--

Lee grabs the Marlboro package on a table and stuffs it in his pocket just as the POUNDING of boots is heard on the staircase.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Lee steps outside. RUNNING towards him and Snowy and pulling out silenced weapons are the 3 heavies from Singapore, now revealed to be KGB agents, with 2 more. Lee draws his Walther, but he's too late and they disarm him. While KGB 1 keeps guard on Snowy, 2 pulls out a pair of handcuffs while the others stand guard. Lee resists.

KGB HEAVY 3

(Russian accent)

Is no use to resist. Give us your wrists.

Two heavies move in to force Lee. In the meantime 2, seeing everything's under control, hurries to the edge of the roof and unzips his fly. Snow White turns red and, damn the torpedoes, picks up a 7 foot length of bent pipe that looks like a hockey stick.

SNOW WHITE

How many times do I have to tell you
assholes - no pissing off the roof, eh!

Snowy's about to knock 2 right off the roof when 1 swings around to shoot him, but Lee snaps a punch at him, throwing his aim off. 1's gun PTTEWS and misses Snowy who charges in, pipe swinging. Lee gives 3 a roundhouse kick and follows through with a spinning back kick to another, and it's a full out saloon brawl with the KGB superior numbers getting the edge - then a WHISTLE blows and 6 US MP'S DOUBLE TIME toward them, followed by Brock and several dwarfs rolling up their sleeves. 2 swings around to shoot but is CUT DOWN by M-16 fire. In the fighting, SHOOTING and confusion Lee is PUSHED off the roof, and CRASHES through the awning, which slows his fall, to the sidewalk.

EXT. STREET LEVEL - DAY

Brock, Snowy and a herd of dwarfs hurry to Lee's side. Brock checks his vital signs while Snowy studies Brock suspiciously. Did Brock push Lee off? Brock's expression reveals nothing.

INT. MANILA HAM-SANDWICH'S FIVE STAR HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Ham-Sandwich stubbornly shakes his head to someone off camera as he sits at a small table in his room. On it are two San Miguel beers. He suddenly puts his hand to his chest, GASPS, and sinks to the floor.

INT. CLARK AIR BASE HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Lee is unconscious in an ICU hospital bed with a bandage around his head, one eye blackened from striking something, and tubes stick out of him.

NURSE CRATCHIT adjusts a drip as Tysee and Dingo, followed by Brock, walk in. Tysee is distressed to see Lee and falls into Dingo's arms, seeking solace. Pulling away and wiping her eyes, she gently places an ENVELOPE on the table next to his bed.

TYSEE

I wanted to tell him myself, but this
will be the first thing he sees
when...if...he awakens.

NURSE

I'm afraid you won't be able to stay.

They nod and leave.

Fade to BLACK.

INT. CLARK AIR BASE HOSPITAL ROOM LATER - DAY

Black opens to gray, and Lee's having an unclear dream/nightmare about Brock pushing him off the roof, and a struggle of sorts with Russians/Snowy/Brock/Dwarfs and LA BAMBA playing. Then everything coalesces into the end of his hospital bed, with Brock sitting to one side smiling. Nurse Cratchit, monitoring Lee's machines, reacts to Lee's emerging from unconsciousness.

BROCK

Well, it's Rip Van Rivers! Do you remember me trying to grab you before you went over the side?

LEE

...Wha...?

BROCK

Forget it. Just dropped in again before taking your precious Head off to the U.S. Ambassador.

Brock opens an aluminum suitcase to reveal the Buddha Head recessed in foam.

LEE

Wha...? How...?

BROCK

Your buddy Haimes-Sandwich got a tip that you and the Head were here. He didn't know that as a principal we had his phone tapped. We followed him as he broke into your room and stole the Head.
(holds up a bag of beer)
Bought you a few beers.

NURSE

I don't think Mr. Rivers is in any

condition to consume alcohol sir.

BROCK

Hey, Nurse Cratchit, this boy needs his medicine regularly.

LEE

Tysee...? Dingo...?

BROCK

I've got good news there. Though I wish I could say the same about Haimes-Sandwich. We were having a beer together and he just keeled over. Croaked. I had been trying to coax his source out of him the good cop way, treating him.

LEE

Ham-Sandwich...beer? Dead? Tysee? Dingo?

BROCK

That's the good news. When we caught their KGB spooks redhanded trying to nab you, we had them by the short ones. Until now both sides have scrupulously kept civilians out of our clandestine wars. To avoid an international incident, they readily agreed to a quiet exchange.

LEE

Th...they're okay! Wh...where are they!

While the nurse's back is turned, Brock winks and slips a San Miguel beer under the sheets.

BROCK

She probably says in that envelope she left.

Lee fumbles it open and tries to read but can't focus.

BROCK (con't)

Here, lemme read it for you.

(takes letter, scans it)

Hmmm. I was wrong. Not good. "Dear Lee,

We hate to do this to you but Dingo and I decide if we get out of this alive, we go away together. Lee, please, please forgive us." It's signed, "Affectionately, Tysee."

Lee reacts.

BROCK (con't)

You okay, Jungle Boy? You have to take care of yourself now. There are still some pretty angry people out there. I've left your Walther for you at Security.

NURSE

I think you should go now sir, and take your beer. Mr. Rivers needs rest.

After Brock leaves with the beers and the suitcase, the nurse, while straightening Lee's bed, discovers the beer bottle and pours it down the sink. Tysee's letter lies at the foot of Lee's bed.

EXT. CLARK AIR BASE PHILIPPINES - DAY

Wearing a disheveled USAF uniform, we see a depressed Lee with a military haircut dyed black and a 2-inch Band-Aid on the side of his forehead. He boards a military plane. Nazareth's LOVE HURTS plays over the entire sequence.

EXT. DON MAUNG AIRPORT BANGKOK - DAY

The jet lands. The Don Maung Airport sign is in the bg.

EXT. DON MAUNG AIRPORT ENTRANCE - DAY

Lee climbs into one of 40 cabs, which pulls away.

INT. THE RAILWAY HOTEL (SOFITEL) HUA HIN QUIET RESORT - DAY

QUICK CUTS of a downcast Lee walking in, checking in, and being ushered into his vintage room. He hangs Tysee's bikini bottom on a photo stand of the beach atop the TV.

INT. RAILWAY HOTEL ROOM - DAY

ROOM SERVICE brings White Horse Scotch and a Bangkok *Post*

which sits unread on a vestibule.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A depressed Lee eats alone and pokes at his food.

EXT. HUA HIN BEACH - DAY

An unshaven, unkempt Lee wanders along the beach, kicking at the sand. The Band-Aid is now gone.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

3 unread newspapers. Lee's facial stubble is longer. The room's a mess.

EXT. HUA HIN BEACH - SUNRISE

A GROUP OF MONKS carrying black bowls walk by Lee passed-out under palms, 2 empty White Horse bottles at his feet.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lee stares at a blank TV screen, his hand clutching a bottle atop a pile of 6 unread newspapers. His stubble is now a blotchy beard. Hearing LAUGHTER outside, he staggers to his feet.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Lee stumbles drunkenly along the shore when he sees a FEMALE FIGURE ahead in the moonlight. Lee screws up his eyes and tries to focus. From the back it looks just like Tysee!

LEE

Tysee!

Lee catches up and touches her on the shoulder. She turns. It's a very masculine Lady Boy.

LEE (con't)

I'm...I'm sorry, I thought that you were someone else.

Lee turns to go but the Lady Boy grabs ahold of his arm.

LADY BOY

(deep voice)

I can be somebody else...I go with you?

LEE

No thanks.

LADY BOY

In Bangkok, many man want me! I best dancer in all of Patpong!

LEE

...Patpong....

Striding away, Lee takes the bikini bottom, looks at it, and drops it into a municipal waste basket.

EXT. PATPONG ROAD - NIGHT

Lee, clean shaven and in jeans and a Hawaiian shirt, strides down the strip. Murray Head's ONE NIGHT IN BANGKOK booms. Stopping before Pussies Galore, he squares his shoulders and heads inside.

INT. PUSSIES GALORE - NIGHT

The place seems darker. Slipping onto his familiar barstool, the same 2 sexy Bargirls bookend him. He orders 3 drinks. They're delivered immediately. He drinks as a cockroach scuttles between the glasses. As Murray Head's SONG'S SARCASTIC LYRICS play on, Lee now sees, as if for the first time, the often PATHETIC MEN drawn to these bars.

He looks at the beautiful smile of the one bookend and it morphs briefly into shark's teeth. The other's radiant, smiling face morphs into a skull. Lee bolts for the door.

EXT. BANGKOK STREETS - NIGHT

Head down, Lee strides off Patpong and onto Suriwong.

INT. LION'S OFFICE - NIGHT

It's a mess. On the wall is a 1X2 foot framed b/w picture of a smiling Lion and his WWII buddies - WITH A UNIQUE GEOLOGICAL FORMATION IN BG. The RATTLE of Lee opening the bead curtain wakes Lion napping in his chair. On his desk sits a package wrapped in brown paper.

LION

Hey buddy, the fucking bar's out there!

LEE

It's me, Lion.

LION

(on a second take brightens)

Rivers, found any good Heads lately?

(laughs)

LEE

What's so funny?

LION

(picks up *Time* mag with Head
on cover)

Where the hell you been? The whole thing
was a hoax! That Buddha Head of yours
was only 400 years old!

LEE

Can't be! Buddha lived over 2,500 years
ago!

LION

Christ, you really don't know. You're a
fucking hero! That abbot says you were
returning it! Damn! Our Wolfgang - he
was behind the whole thing!

LEE

Wolfgang!

LION

He placed the fake Head there in '59 so
that it looked like it came from the
Dalai Lama. Wolfgang's plan was to have
Kun San's men steal it, then, after all
the publicity, Wolf would sell it on the
black market at an enormous price! But
once Kun San had the Head, he cut
Wolfgang out!

LEE

Why would Kun San blab to the media?

LION

He wants the heat off because he's surrounded by Buddhist countries.

LEE

Wolfie's dead.

LION

He was recently found. Kun San denies murdering him though. And another of your friends died under strange circumstances.

LEE

Who?

LION

(holds up *Time*)

That Haines-Sandwich fellow. The autopsy found beer in his stomach but his friends insist he was a non-drinker.

LEE

Yeah, Brock told me he'd croaked.

LION

Oh yeah, by the way, Brock left this package for you a few days ago. He keeps calling to see if you came by.

Lion passes the package on his desk to Lee. Lee feels the contents and smiles.

LEE

Where's the Head now?

LION

At the National Museum.

Lee stands and begins to leave

LION (con't)

Before you go off half cocked, there's a lotta them raghead asshole bandits dropping in looking for you. Be a good idea to get a gun, boy.

Lee opens the package and CLUNKS the Walther onto the Lion's desk.

LEE

I've got this six shooter. I forgot it at Clark Base Hospital.

The Lion looks from the gun to Lee and frowns.

LION

That ain't no six shooter.

LEE

What do you mean? There it is!

LION

There's no such thing as a *six*-shot Walther PP, Lee. They hold eight. See this German eagle? The gun's World War Two vintage. This is holster wear here. They were commonly used by German officers.

LEE

Well, I can only get six into mine.

The Lion expertly slips out the clip and thumbs out the six rounds. After squinting into the clip, he BANGS it several times on his desk.

A COMPACT JUMBLE OF ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS falls out. They stare at them.

LION

I've had enough DEA and spooks around here to know what this is. It's a fucking tracking device! Who sold you this gun?

LEE

Brock!

INT. NATIONAL MUSEUM - NEXT MORNING

A LONG LINE OF THAIS file into the Grand Hall where the Head is displayed on a pedestal, flanked by TWO GUARDS. When it's Lee's turn, he *wais*, then frowns as he studies the

knife gouge. Straining to look closer at the gems he pulls out a jeweler's loop (magnifying glass) and leans in...and a look of astonishment fills his face....

EXT. FLASHBACK YOUNGER LEE AT FRANCOIS' - DAY

A long-haired Lee excitedly shows a delighted younger Francois the gems. Marlene Dietrich's LILI MARLENE plays in the bg and into the next scene.

LEE (VO)

They were flawed in a beautiful way I've never seen before. Absolutely unique.

WOLFGANG (VO)

We made damn good money from that pair. Obviously you sold them to this Francois Giscard. You must have mentioned my name.

INT. NATIONAL MUSEUM TOILET - DAY

While dropping his pants, Lee's Walther CLUNKS onto the tiled floor. Dietrich segues into Lali Anderson's GERMAN VERSION as Lee studies the gun....

INT. FLASHBACK WOLFGANG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Anderson SINGS as Lee replaces the photo on the grand piano and fingers the holster open, but it's empty.

LION (VO)

The gun's World War Two vintage. This is holster wear here. They were commonly used by German officers.

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

While Lee stuffs his travel bag, the phone rings. Lee picks it up and listens.

LEE

Francois? Where are you?

INT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Francois is using the phone at the bar.

FRANCOIS

I'm in Bangkok. I just flew in and I'm at The Lion's Den. *Alors!* Where have you been? I need to see you immediately.

INT. LEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

LEE

You have some explaining to do. I'll be right over.

Lee hangs up and tosses the bag he was packing into a corner. Malee knocks on his bedroom door.

MALEE

Khun Brock at door.

Lee looks up with a sardonic expression.

MALEE (con't)

I go visit my sister now, okay?

INT. LEE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brock stands smiling at the door holding a bag from which he lifts 2 large Singha beers. He then extends his hand.

BROCK

No hard feelings? Just doing my job.

Lee ignores it but waves him in.

EXT. LEE'S PATIO ON CHAO PHRAYA RIVER - NIGHT

They sit opposite at the teak table, the cobra cage behind Brock. Lee sets glasses on the table. Brock POPS the tops off the 2 beers and passes one to Lee. They each fill their own glass. Brock toasts Lee and downs half of his while Lee remains motionless.

BROCK

What? Not drinking? You?

Lee pulls out the Walther and sets it on the table.

LEE

Brock, did you know that a Walther PP normally holds eight shells?

BROCK

(chuckling)

Man, did you leave me hanging when you forgot it at the hospital.

Brock tops up his glass then reaches for it - but instead smoothly sweeps up the Walther. He slips out the clip and checks to be sure a shell isn't chambered. Satisfied, he TOSSES the pistol back on the table and holds up the clip.

BROCK (con't)

Pretty neat of those lab guys of ours, eh?

LEE

You've been following me everywhere. You were my Guardian Angel who whacked those Shan soldiers when Tysee and I stole Kun San's plane. And that Hindu and Si Fu and Kayao in Chinatown.

BROCK

(shrugs modestly)

There's a couple in Nepal you don't even know about.

LEE

I guess I should be grateful. You saved my life. But why didn't you stop the Sikhs on the train?

BROCK

(pulls out a cigar)

After running all over Bangkok saving your ass, my wound started to bleed. I was out of it all the way to Penang. Lucky for you you were able to take care of yourself.

Brock pats his pockets looking for a light, then holds his cigar up. Lee points at the torch behind him. While Brock stands with his back to Lee lighting his cigar, Lee raises his glass to have a sip, but pauses....

INT. FLASHBACK CLARK AIR BASE HOSPITAL SCENE - DAY

BROCK

...Though I wish I could say the same about Haimes-Sandwich. We were having a beer together and he just keeled over. Croaked.

EXT. LEE'S PATIO - NIGHT

The Walther sits on the table but Brock, his back still to Lee, has the clip. Lee switches beer glasses a moment before Brock drops back into his chair.

BROCK (con't)

And you, my friend, zapped that KGB spook right here and saved my life.

(hoists a toast)

So we're even. Down the hatch.

Lee cautiously raises his glass and drinks it to the bottom at the same rate as Brock. An exuberant Brock SLAMS his glass down with a satisfied SIGH and smiles.

LEE

But you weren't always on official CIA business. You were also looking out for me for Wolfgang and Francois.

BROCK takes a noncommittal drag on his cigar.

LEE (con't)

There's been a hoax alright, but not the one the world's hearing about. That's not the same Head at the National Museum Tysee and I had. The gems in that one are the Queen Supayalat pair I sold to Francois Giscard.

(beat)

Another thing, the stab mark is above the wrong eye.

BROCK

(chuckles)

Yeah, I fucked up on that with the duplicate you saw at the museum. The head you had all along I sent to

Francois in N...New York.

Brock's smile catches as the drug takes affect. His right hand goes to his chest. Realizing he's been tricked, he fights to stand, KNOCKING his chair over to the side. His hand reaches for his Browning as he COLLAPSES onto the patio, HITTING the cobra cage, KNOCKING the cage door ajar. The cobra hoods. GASPING, Brock gets the pistol out but Lee KICKS it into the river with a SPLASH. Lee sweeps up his clip, SLAPS it into the Walther, and RACKS the chamber.

BROCK (con't)
 (breathing heavily)
 You win, Jungle Boy.

Lee sits with the table obscuring Brock's right side from Lee's sight.

INTERCUT SHOTS of Brock, slowly slipping that hand into his jacket pocket and slipping out the Marlboros, thumbing the lid open and the false filters out, trying to slip the Khokhov Special out...but it's wedged. However, he frees it. The pistol slips out, his hand inches toward it...and finally closes around it....

LEE
 So, you worked for Francois and Wolfgang who financed the whole hoax and then you got greedy, right?

BROCK
 (struggling)
 It took a ton of money. Francois and Wolfgang set the whole thing up, a long term caper. Wolfgang was one of Goering's art collectors, gutting Europe's museums. He smuggled loads of stolen art to Francois. Among the treasures was this 2,500 year old Buddha Head that he turned up in a dusty corner of a museum.

LEE
 The real Buddha Head?

BROCK
 Nah. There was n...no proof it was the

actual Buddha's.

LEE

But it could be promoted to appear so?

Brock

You got it, Jungle Boy.

LEE

They had Kun San steal it. I was to recover it with Wolfgang's so-called help, but before I could return it, they'd throw obstacles in my way until they could make it international news.

BROCK

Right. Francois leaked everything to the media, and offered the million dollar reward.

LEE

And Kun San?

BROCK

They offered him a measly 12.5%. After he found out Francois and Wolfgang were getting 25% each, he decided to keep the Head for himself. He kicked Wolfgang out. It's just a good thing Tysee had this crush on you. Her appearance saved the day.

LEE

And you?

BROCK

I was given a lousy 12.5% too for risking my ass!

(pained smile)

But we had agreed that if anyone croaked, his share would be split evenly.

LEE

You murdered Ham-Sandwich. Why?

BROCK

He would have spotted the fake Head,
like you did. I lured him to Manila,
letting him think that I'd let him sell
the one you had.

LEE

And Tysee? Dingo? They could too!

BROCK

Too bad about her. She was something
else. Special, such a waste.

LEE

You fucker! Where is she?

BROCK

I had her just for me. And now I've got
something special for you.

As Brock raises the Khokhov Special, his hand passes the cage's ajar door - and the cobra nails his hand. He YELPS but still swings the pistol up with the snake attached. The silent bullet THUDS into the wall behind Lee's head. Lee FIRES a shot into Brock. Using the snake stick, Lee returns the cobra to its cage. Lee lifts Brock's body and drags it towards the river. He puts his hand inside Brock's jacket pocket and finds a passport case, spilling out a color Polaroid. Lee picks it up.

LEE'S POV: Shot of a naked lady that looks like Tysee spreadeagled and bound with crimson silk scarves. Her head lies on her left shoulder. A crimson scarf is tied around her neck.

Fast FLASHBACK of WOLFGANG'S MURDER SCENE with identical silk scarves.

LEE

Brock, you sick motherfucker!

Lee shoots him once between the eyes, then BOOTS him into the river, tossing the Walther after him with a SPLASH. While picking up the KGB gun, Lee notices other photos.

LEE'S POV: Quick look at several pictures of a seemingly dead Tysee spread-eagled in a cave with rusting bars in the bg, taken by an obvious sick obsessive. He throws the gun

and Marlboros IN THE RIVER, but pockets the photos.

INT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

A pissed Lee slams open the door. Spotting him, Francois slips off his barstool.

LEE

Giscard, come with me. Lion, I need to borrow your office.

INT. LION'S OFFICE - NIGHT

No sooner are they in than Lee slams Francois up against the wall.

LEE

You cocksucker! You used me to drive up the black market price of your phony Head!

FRANCOIS

You know! But you have it all wrong! You have been a full partner all along! But you're such an honest man we had to keep you in the dark so you would respond genuinely!

LEE

Yeah, sure...*merci* and fuck you!

FRANCOIS

Listen to me Lee! I sold our Head to the Saudi Royal Family for...one...billion...dollars!
(beat to let it sink in)

LEE

What the hell do the Saudis want with it?

EXT. HIMALAYAN SAUDI SEQUENCE (VARIOUS SHOTS) - DAY

SIX SHEIKS stand before a funeral pyre. Faintly visible in it is not a corpse...but rather something...round....

A LEAR JET with Arabic markings flies over Mt. Everest.

A PORT HOLE opens and ashes are scattered over the peak.

INT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

FRANCOIS (VO)

They respect all prophets but the Head was destabilizing, so they cremated it and scattered the ashes over Mt. Everest. They believed it was real because it carbon dated correctly.

Francois holds up a bankcard with numbers written on it.

FRANCOIS (con't)

Your share in a Cayman Island account - almost a half a billion dollars! Same as mine!

Lee grabs the card and glares at it.

LEE

Blood money, you prick. This doesn't bring Tysee and Dingo back!

FRANCOIS

Alors, I know nothing of your friends? Where are they?

Lee takes out the photos. Francois is shocked.

FRANCOIS (con't)

I am so sorry my friend. Who did this terrible thing?

LEE

Brock.

FRANCOIS

Mon Dieu! That's what I was afraid of. That's why I flew here to find you to warn you! He was paid handsomely for protecting you Lee but he got so greedy! He left a trail of death...my old friend Wolfgang...Haines-Sandwich....

LEE

You don't have to worry. He's dead.

FRANCOIS

Oh, thank God!

(beat)

Eh? What is this?

POV OF PICTURE FRANCOIS HOLDS OF A SEEMINGLY DEAD TYSEE WITH SCARVES IN THE FOREGROUND AND IN BG OUT CAVE MOUTH IS A DISTINCTIVE GEOLOGICAL FEATURE. CAMERA PANS UP TO PICTURE ON THE WALL OF LION AND SOLDIER BUDDIES CIRCA 1940 - WITH THE SAME FORMATION!

Lee grabs the photo and the picture off the wall and charges out to

INT. THE LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Lion looks up. Behind him is the Bataan poster.

LEE

Lion!

EXT. BATAAN - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: BATAAN, PHILIPPINES

Ting's jeepney drives up, and the Lion and Lee climb out. Ting joins them with a metal detector.

LION

I lost a lot of friends on the Death March. This spooks me.

EXT. BATAAN CLIFF FACE - DAY

The trio, with packs, body bags, and rope, enter a cave mouth.

INT. CAVE ONE - DAY

World War Two paraphernalia is scattered about. They search by flashlight to no avail, Ting always ahead waving the detector.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

They push through heavy elephant grass, exhausted.

EXT. BATAAN MOUNTAIN RIDGE - SUNSET

Lee and Ting set up camp while the Lion rests, head down.

EXT. BATAAN MOUNTAIN RIDGE - SUNRISE

LION

(pointing)

Memory is funny. I remember that formation, that's where we had our HQ.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

They push through thick jungle. The unique geological formation becomes visible.

LEE

Lion! You beauty! This is it!

EXT. CAVE TWO - DAY

Ting squats, looking at the ground. Lee's flashlight shines on bars.

LION

The Japanese made a prison out of it. Figures. Let's look around.

INT. CAVE TWO DEEPER - DAY

By flashlight they pass a line of empty cells, then a series of underground "tiger cages" which causes the detector to SQUEAL. Suddenly:

DINGO (VO)

Hey!

INT. TIGER CAGE - DAY

Lee shines his flashlight down through the barred trapdoor. A figure crouches in shadows. Lee's flashlight focuses on Dingo who raises his arm against the light. He's filthy, stubbled and surrounded by empty food tins and water bottles.

LEE

Dingo!

DINGO

Bloody hell! Lee!

LEE (VO)

A dingo in a hole?

DINGO

More like a bloody mole. Speaking of moles, wait til I get my hands on that fucking bastard Brock. Get me outta this shithole!

INT. CAVE TWO - DAY

They drag Dingo out by rope. He speaks before he's fully out.

DINGO

(recognizing the Lion)

Lion, you can't serve up a beer by any chance? I'm as dry as a dead dingo's donger.

LEE

(offers canteen)

Sorry, Dingo, just water.

DINGO

Come on Lee? Water? Fish fuck in it.

LEE

Seriously Dingo, where's Tysee?

DINGO

She saved my life, that little sheila. When we first came here, we thought Brock was taking us to a safe house, but it turned out that he had the screaming hots for your Tysee. She told Brock that she'd do anything he wanted as long as he didn't kill me.

LEE

Well, where is she then?

DINGO

I think he took her deeper into the cave.

(seeing body bags)
What the hell are they for?

Lee tosses one aside and ignores him.

LEE

Let's go.

INT. CAVE TWO DEEPER - DAY

The cave hallway eventually opens into another cavern, daylight spills in. Hanging near the entrance way is a ragdoll figure with her back to us, bound with red silk. Polaroid discards litter the floor.

LEE

Tysee!

Lee rushes to her and spins the body around to reveal a DEAD FILIPINA'S partially decomposing face.

Lee VOMITS, then sits on a rock, head in his hands. Ting moves across the floor with the detector.

DINGO

What the fuck's he doing?

LION

Making sure we don't step on old grenades or mortars.

The detector's BUZZING startles them. Lion scoops up something that glints. It's Lee's Shan amulet! Lee grabs the detector and feverishly works the floor until it SCREAMS. He sweeps dirt away to reveal a metal trapdoor. Lee slides back the bolt and peers down into the gloom.

INT. UNDERGROUND CELL TWO - DAY

A crack of light from below provides air. There's RUSTLING.

LEE

Tysee?

TYSEE

Oh, thank Buddha! Lee! I drank the last water bottle one day ago!

Lee shines his light down. She runs into the beam, looking up, filthy. Water bottles and empty cans are everywhere. Tysee drinks from Lee's canteen.

EXT. MANILA HOTEL MACARTHUR SUITE BALCONY - SUNSET IN BG

Dr. Hooks YEARS FROM NOW plays in this scene and the next. Lee's wearing his Shan amulet.

LEE

You're sure you're okay?

TYSEE

I'm fine. He didn't hurt me like the others because he said he was saving me for something special.

LEE

Oh Tysee, come here....

They embrace, he picks her up and carries her inside.

INT. MACARTHUR SUITE - SUNSET

He gently lays her on the 4-poster bed and closes the mosquito net. With sunset visible through windows, through the vaseline-like gauze of the net, we see them kissing tenderly.

EXT. MANILA HOTEL GARDEN - MORNING

Lee, Tysee and Dingo are having breakfast: Lee, bacon and eggs; Tysee, rice; Dingo, a San Miguel.

LEE

So what are you going to do now, Dingo?

DINGO

I got no boat, no future, no money. What the fuck can I do? I'll have to go back to Australia and live with me old mum.

LEE

Dingo, I promise to keep you in yachts
and beer for the rest of your unnatural
life.

DINGO
(perks right up)
Hey! That's a lotta beer, sport!

Lee looks pensive. Dingo glances at a radiant Tysee.

DINGO (con't)
Everything okay with you, mate?

LEE
I was just thinking how half the world
was chasing something fake and I have
everything real I need right here.

DINGO
You'd be right there, mate! Cheers!

The three friends clink their glasses.

EXT. TENGBOCHY MONASTERY - NIGHT

Soft oil lamp light illuminates the windows. CHANTING and
TANTRIC MUSICAL ACCOMPANYMENT issues from the monastery.

INT. MONASTERY PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

To the CHANTING and MUSIC, a BEAMING Abbot Tarchin carries
a candle and one of the rice pots (used in the opening
drugging scene) with a cloth over it down a gloomy passage
to a large door. With a huge key, he UNLOCKS the enormous
monastery lock and CREAKS the door open onto a private

INT. MEDITATION ROOM - NIGHT

The room is small and jam-packed with small Buddhas, but is
dominated by a large Standing Buddha. All is illuminated by
dozens of candles.

Gently setting the pot aside, he lifts out a heavy flagstone
at the large Buddha's feet revealing a hole. From the pot,
he carefully removes something - we can't see what it is,
it's lost in shadows - and places it in the hole. We see
his hands replacing the flagstone, and as we HEAR him

receding, pulling the CREAKING door shut behind him, the lock being CLUNKED, and his receding FOOTSTEPS, the CAMERA steadily works its way up the Buddha's legs, along His middle until it glides to a stop on His face.

It seems to hold a secret smile....

END CREDITS