

I N F I N I T E

by
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Based on the novel
THE REINCARNATIONIST PAPERS
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*"When you're standing at the cross-roads
that you cannot comprehend
just remember that death is not the end..."*

*...when the cities are on fire
with the burning flesh of men
just remember that death is not the end."*

--Bob Dylan

FROM DARKNESS, WE DESCEND...

...past the DOWNTOWN LA SKYLINE, conspicuously missing a few buildings... past a billboard for "GHOST", Swayze embracing Demi Moore from the beyond, love transcending death...

...as we finally land on a deserted CITY STREET.

LOS ANGELES, 1990

SCREEEE! Title's WIPED by a bullet-riddled LAMBORGHINI COUNTACH, drifting in a wave of smoke. A BARRAGE OF LAPD CAPRICES chases it, filling the night with noise & color.

POLICE SCANNER CHATTER

--Air-10, suspect heading south on
Alameda/Air-10 responding, en route--

The Lambo gains ground, WHIPS around a freeway entrance, going underneath it, toward the obscured portal of...

AN OLD BARRICADED TUNNEL HIDDEN BENEATH THE FREEWAY

BOOM! Busts through barriers, disappears into the tunnel. A beat later, COPS ROAR PAST, missing their target. Except for--

INSIDE A COP CAR: **BEALL**, a craggy LAPD lifer, WHIRLS in his seat, stunned at what he just witnessed.

BEALL

Gotta be kidding me--

Beall BURNS A SUDDEN U-TURN for the tunnel entrance -- much to the bewilderment of his **YOUNG PARTNER**.

BEALL (INTO RADIO)

Turn around now, suspect just went
in the Alameda tunnel.

(to his partner)

Bootlegger route, ain't been used
since my grandpa was on the force.
Guy's gotta be an old-timer...

INT. LAMBORGHINI, MOVING - NIGHT

Tearing through the tunnel is **HENRICH TREADWAY**: not an old timer. 40. Gladiator in a tailored suit. Ice chip eyes. Billion yard stare. Amazingly, he steers with his KNEE while his hands SPEED-SUTURE THE BULLET WOUND IN HIS LEG.

Control impeccable, he skids around rubble, scatters RATS, walls threatening to skin the car. From his EARPIECE--

ABELIN (FROM EARPIECE)
Tell me you got it.

We follow Treadway's eyes to the **BLAST-PROOF CASE** aside him.

TREADWAY
I've got it.

INT. BUGATI, MOVING - NIGHT

A silver Bugati hurtles along, 2-person EXTRACTION TEAM inside. At the wheel: **ALEXANDRE ABELIN**, Treadway's *padawan*--30, bravado covering vulnerability. Beside him, **LEONA WARRICK**: 30s, black, weary, battle-hardened.

ABELIN (INTO EARPIECE)
Gimme a location.

TREADWAY (FROM EARPIECE)
Alameda tunnel, heading south.

LEONA
(to Abelin)
Step on it. He's been shot.

ABELIN
How can you tell he's been--

LEONA
Last time I heard him breathing
like that was when he took buckshot
to the stomach back in the 'burg.

Abelin shakes his head. In awe of Leona. Maybe more.

INT. LAMBORGHINI, MOVING - NIGHT

Treadway ties off another stitch. Sees POLICE LIGHTS gaining.

LEONA (FROM EARPIECE)
Meet you at the 110 cloverleaf's 2
miles up, we'll meet you there.

VROOM! He accelerates, as--

INT. BUGATI, MOVING - NIGHT

Abelin speeds up, city assembly-lining by, tension thick...

ABELIN
 ...he's gotta make it...

LEONA
 No way the cops will catch him--

ABELIN
 Not the cops I'm worried about.

Whatever that means, it triggers a little flood of dread inside Leona. The Bugati GAINS GROUND AS WE SMASH TO--

EXT. LA STREET - CONTINUOUS

CRASH! Treadway's Lambo EXPLODES out of the tunnel, lands against traffic on a one-way street. *WHOP-WHOP!* He's blinded by a SPOTLIGHT as an **LAPD HELICOPTER** swoops in fast, as--

INT. LAPD HELICOPTER, MOVING - NIGHT

--in the chopper, the **TACTICAL FLIGHT OFFICER** trains the spotlight on the Lambo -- WHIPPING THROUGH ONCOMING TRAFFIC.

FLIGHT OFFICER
 Jesus, what is this guy, a friggin' stunt driver?

BLAM! The chopper's spotlight goes dark as a bullet NAILS IT.

PILOT
 ...and apparently a sharpshooter.

FLIGHT OFFICER
Bullshit, that was a lucky shot, ain't no way he made tha--

BLAM! SPARKS FLY! The Flight Officer's eyes go wide as he sees... there's a bullet hole in the windshield and his headset mic has been SHOT OFF HIS HELMET, dangling by a wire.

FLIGHT OFFICER
FALL BACK! FALLBACKFALLBACK!

The chopper VEERS OFF as we WHOOSH AWAY down to--

INSIDE THE LAMBO: Treadway tosses his smoking WORLD WAR 2 SNIPER RIFLE into a FOOTLOCKER in the backseat...

...which is AN ARMORY OF WEAPONS FROM DIFFERENT ERAS. Modern handguns. Old-West six-shooters. Vietnam-era hand grenades. A beat-up ROPE SLING. A fucking SAMURAI SWORD. He speeds onward--

--toward the FREEWAY CLOVERLEAF AHEAD: the 110/105 interchange, still under construction, half-built.

Only problem is the WAVES OF COP CARS roaring toward him from both sides. Treadway's three seconds from getting trapped...

TREADWAY (INTO EARPIECE)
About to get jammed in. I'm going
up the cloverleaf--

ABELIN (FROM EARPIECE)
--Treadway, listen, do not do that--

Treadway SWERVES to avoid the cop cars, smashes through a construction barricade, and goes racing up--

THE CLOVERLEAF ENTRANCE

--and as we rise, we see why Abelin was worried: the freeway has a 150-FOOT GAP where the middle should be. 20-story drop below. TALL CONSTRUCTION CRANE off to the side of the breach.

ABELIN (FROM EARPIECE)
I don't know what miracle you think
you're about to pull, but there's a
150 foot gap ahead of you!

Treadway looks to the BLAST PROOF CASE... a loaded beat...

TREADWAY
Meet me under the cloverleaf.

INT. BUGATI, MOVING - NIGHT

A look between Abelin & Leona -- *what the hell is his plan??*
They HURTLE AHEAD, *freeway cloverleaf coming into view...*

EXT. FREEWAY CLOVERLEAF - NIGHT

The Lambo's door rises, reveals Treadway: SWORD STRAPPED TO HIS BACK, the CASE CHAINED TO HIS WRIST. Hand on the wheel, on cruise control, crouched on the seat...

...as the END OF THE FREEWAY gets closer and closer, Treadway shuts his eyes, a split-second Zen trance...

PRECIPICE FLYING STRAIGHT AT US, NO MORE ROAD TO DRIVE ON...

...Treadway exhales... and RAMS THE CAR INTO THE BARRIER ALONGSIDE THE FREEWAY, LAUNCHING HIS BODY FROM THE VEHICLE...

...AND OVER THE BARRIER, OFF THE CLOVERLEAF, OUT INTO SPACE.

The Lambo RICOCHETS OFF THE LEDGE, VOMITING GLASS & DEBRIS...
...man and vehicle arcing through the air...

DOWN BELOW IN THE BUGATI

Abelin and Leona, a block away, look up at what's happening--

ABELIN
...christ...

TREADWAY SLAMS into his target: **THE ARM OF THE CRANE NEAR THE
 FREEWAY GAP**. Air woofs out of him. Ribs SNAP like celery as--

BOOOOOOM! The Lambo pancakes into the ground 150 feet below,
 erupting in mushroom of fire toward him as--

INT. BUGATI, MOVING - NIGHT

--through the smoke, Abelin and Leona are able to make out...
 Treadway, clinging to the crane above. *He stuck the landing.*

LEONA
...yes.

When all of a sudden...

BLAM! *Abelin and Leona's car gets T-BONED BY A SPEEDING SEMI.*

--SENT FLIPPING -- BOUNCING--

--SCREECHING TO A STOP NEAR THE BASE OF THE CRANE.

EXT. AT THE FOOT OF THE CRANE - CONTINUOUS

The car's a mouth with broken teeth and half-chewed humans on
 its tongue. GASOLINE flows into puddles below the wreck.

AIR RATTLES in Leona's throat. She's too fractured to move.
 Abelin slumps, drifting in and out of consciousness, as...

OVER BY THE SEMI TRUCK

SHINED SHOES step out toward the maimed Bugati. We don't see
 him in full; he's withheld from us like the shark from JAWS.

But we do see the STRANGE RIFLE in his hand: a **DETHRONER** --
 equally ancient and futuristic. Burnished wood and steel. Its
 POWER CELLS GLOW TO LIFE, let out a HIGH PITCHED TONE...

*...and it's that familiar, terrifying SOUND that makes Abelin
 wake up. Coughing from the gasoline fumes...*

...his eyes focus on the approaching figure... and widen.

Imagine you're a kid who likes to fight. Schoolyard scraps. Parking lot throw-downs. You're tough for your age.

Now imagine you have to fight prime-era MUHAMMED ALI. That's the look on Abelin's face right now. Voice trembling...

ABELIN

...Leona?...

She takes his shaking hand in hers... gives him a **ZIPPO LIGHTER**. It's clear: *better to die in flames than face what's outside*. And through all her pain and terror, she says...

LEONA

...see you around, Abelin.

They stare into each other...

...and their lips meet in a kiss.

One that's been brewing in them for a while.

A tender, wordless goodbye.

As Leona sees the DETHRONER RISE TO SHOOT...

LEONA

Now.

POP! The Dethroner SHOOTs OUT SOMETHING WRITHING AND METALLIC straight at Abelin. And just before it NAILS HIM IN THE HEAD--

--Abelin SNAPS UP THE ZIPPO'S FLAME, igniting the gas fumes--

EXT. ATOP THE CRANE ARM - NIGHT

KABOOM! The Bugati dies giving birth to a DWARF SUN. 150 feet up on the crane, Treadway's face is lit by the explosion.

TREADWAY

...no...

Agony in his ribs, rage in his heart, Treadway strains himself up onto the crane's arm. Gets a leg up. Then another.

TREADWAY

...c'mon...

...and he's now on his hands and knees. Gasping, clutching his ribcage. Hand instinctively REACHES FOR HIS SWORD... but it's resting precariously on the crane arm 10 feet away.

BZZZT! A KLAXON BUZZES. Treadway looks up and sees, 100 feet down the arm, **THE CRANE'S ELEVATOR ARRIVING AT THE TOP.**

Out steps the man in the shined shoes: **BATHURST.** 30s. Bespoke suit. Hair that looks as if it's gone unwashed for weeks. Eyes that glitter with disturbing amusement no matter what he's doing. When he speaks, there's something narcotized about his voice, almost as if he's too bored to form words...

BATHURST

Sorry about the car. Destroying that thing was like breaking a stained glass window.

As if watching an unraveling cobra, Treadway watches as Bathurst loads a **STRANGE BULLET** into his Dethroner: 1 inch long, the color of an oil slick, ringed in metallic vines.

BATHURST

Give me the case, Henrich.

TREADWAY

Nothing between us but space and opportunity.

WHOOSH-CLICK! Bathurst **SNAPS** his Dethroner into position as Treadway **HURLS THE CASE**, disconnects its chain in mid-throw, sending it at Bathurst's head with decapitating speed--

--**BAM!** Bathurst blocks it, the case **BURSTS OPEN** off his fist, revealing itself to be **EMPTY.** Bathurst's eyes turn to slits. Treadway **LUNGES FOR HIS DROPPED SWORD.** Bathurst **OPENS FIRE-**

--Treadway **SLASHES, DEFLECTS THE BULLET OFF THE BLADE--**

And now it's a blade-vs-Dethroner swordfight atop the crane. Bodies like **OVERCRANKED CLOCKWORK.** Androids don't dream of electric sheep; they dream of this level of precision.

WHOOSH! Bathurst **DODGES** the blade, but it nicks his cheek, blood blooms... and **CRACK!** Bathurst **BREAKS TREADWAY'S ARM** at the elbow. Treadway **KEENS,** drops his weapon as--

--**CRUNCH!** Bathurst fractures his face, sends him reeling. As he loads a new round into his Dethroner...

BATHURST

Enjoy eternity.

BOOM! He fires the Dethroner and **TIME SLOWS.** We **FOLLOW THE BULLET** as it spirals: metallic vines ringing it unfold, sharp ends like probes, about to latch itself to Treadway's skull--

WHOOSH! It misses as Treadway **SUICIDALLY STEPS OFF THE CRANE.**

BATHURST

NO--

Bathurst watches in dismay as his target falls to earth...

CRASH! Treadway IMPLODES A PARKED CAR'S ROOF. Dead on impact.

EXT. UNDER THE CLOVERLEAF - NIGHT

MATCH TO: the CRIME SCENE, swarming with COPS AND EMERGENCY WORKERS. Follow TWO MEN: young, polished, CIA-lookin' **SPECIAL AGENT SHIN**, and his wolfish partner **SPECIAL AGENT HARLOWE**.

They move past CORONERS by Treadway's body atop the imploded car, past the smoking remains of the Bugati where Abelin and Leona kissed goodbye, beyond the yellow tape, and--

UP TO AN UNMARKED SEDAN, WINDOWS TINTED BLACK

...where they slide into the front seats. It takes us a moment to realize... there's someone sitting behind them.

BATHURST (O.S.)

...and?

It's Bathurst. Half in shadow. They avoid his gaze (out of fear, respect, or both.) Shin hands him an EVIDENCE BAG with the Dethroner's strange "SPIDER BULLET", blackened & charred.

SHIN

We pulled it outta Abelin's skull.
Kid's off the market.

BATHURST

But not the female. Or Treadway.
And no sign of the Eggshell.

Their silence says "no." Bathurst lets out an unnerving sigh.

BATHURST

We'll hunt him. Doesn't matter how
long. Days, weeks, decades...

Bathurst fixes his eternal gaze out the windshield, and we SLOWLY PULL AWAY... traveling out of the car, into the CRIME SCENE, where CORONERS load Treadway's corpse into a body bag.

BATHURST (O.S.)

...we will find him.

We TIGHTEN on Treadway's pupils. Then BLACKNESS. TITLE CARD:

I N F I N I T E

EXT. BOSTON SKYLINE - NIGHT

BLACK OCEAN. We're flying low, toward the lights of...

BOSTON, NOW

The bars and streets alive with NEW YEARS EVE PARTYGOERS. Onward we whoosh, through the city, away from the crowds--

DOWN TO A QUIET STREET

--where sits AN ABANDONED VICTORIAN HOUSE. Looks 100 years old. Surrounded by chainlink & "NO TRESPASSING" signs. Silent and still... except for THE STRANGE MAN scaling the fence.

ETHAN McCAULEY drops into frame: 27. Junkie thin. Slept-in clothes. When Springsteen sang about ending up like "a dog that's been beat too much til ya spend half your life just covering up", he was talking about this guy.

Psych-ward stare scanning for dangers both real and imagined, he heads for the house as we CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

CRACK! Ethan pries a floorboard with a crowbar. Strangely, he's not robbing the place... not exactly. Just hammering old nails from the boards and tossing them in a duffel bag.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

HOLD IT!

A flashlight beam lands on Ethan, a handgun COCKS. He jerks his hands up, still holding the hammer.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Lose the hammer, asshole.

ETHAN

Hammer. Right. Yeah.

Ethan taps his temple with the hammer as if to say "duh", tosses it away -- KA-THUMP. Looks to the approaching SECURITY GUARD (**VADIM**): 30, slight Russian accent, muscled and mean.

VADIM (INTO HIS RADIO)

(in Russian, subtitled)

416, get in here, got a meth freak trying to steal copper wiring.

ETHAN

I'm not--

VADIM

What?

ETHAN

Not stealing copper--

VADIM

(taken aback)
--you speak Russian?

ETHAN

Speak a lotta things.

Vadim looks to Ethan's duffel bag -- which is LOADED WITH OLD IRON NAILS pried from floorboards. *What the fuck?...*

VADIM

Show me ID.

ETHAN

In the pack.

Vadim holsters his gun, goes to search Ethan's backpack.

VADIM

...wow, got a real new years party
in here...

Vadim pulls a 7-DAY PILL CASE out of his bag. Opens it to see a GALAXY OF MEDS. Gotta be \$500 worth of pills in this thing.

VADIM

What's this?

ETHAN

Nothing you want.

VADIM

Didn't ask what if I wanted it, I
asked what it is.

ETHAN

Klonopin-Clozapine-Lithium-Xanax
Vyvanse-Aripiprazole-Rohypnol-
(off his "what?" look)
It's stuff I need, okay?

Vadim smiles at Ethan... and pockets the pill case. Ethan looks at him with an ever-present feeling of helplessness.

VADIM

What now? Gonna kick my ass?

ETHAN
...I don't fight.

VADIM
Gonna call the cops?

ETHAN
Cops wouldn't care if I got ran
over in front of the precinct.

VADIM
Guess you better ask nicely then.

ETHAN
If I don't take those pills, bad
shit's gonna happen to me. So...
(beat)
...please?

Ethan's like an animal showing his belly in submission.

VADIM
(softens)
Alright, here...

Vadim holds the pill case out. Ethan reaches for it and--

--WHAM! Vadim SOCKS ETHAN ACROSS THE FACE.

Ethan FALLS BACK, eyes drifting, mouth leaking blood...

BAM! He hits the floor. Vadim hawks a loogie on him and walks
off. We slowly push in on Ethan... dazed, gazing up...

...and we go INTO HIS POV: *we're not in Boston anymore.*

We're in a **JUNGLE GROVE. TANGLES OF VINES WIND UP TREE
TRUNKS. THICK FOLIAGE SEEMS TO BREATHE. AND FROM SOMEWHERE...**

WHISPERING VOICE (O.S.)
...look inside...

**DRIP. DRIP. From the canopy above, blood drips off a leaf,
plummeting down towards us, coming in fast...**

EXT. THE COMPLEX - NIGHT

A red FIRECRACKER POPS! We're in a New Years party in the
courtyard of **THE COMPLEX**: 50% weirdos, 50% gang territory.
Walking through the celebration like an unwelcome ghost comes
Ethan McCauley -- beat up, limping, hauling his heavy bag of
stolen old nails. People chant the MIDNIGHT COUNTDOWN--

PARTYGOERS (O.S.)
TEN! NINE!

Follow Ethan **INTO HIS ROOM**: lonely little place. "Hoarders"-chic. Stacked books, wall scribblings. He pulls off his shirt-

PARTYGOERS (O.S.)
FIVE! FOUR!

--and as he lays down, we see his chest has a nasty SCAR TATTOO carved into it. Familiar words:

LOOK INSIDE

We pull away as he turns off his lights...

PARTYGOERS (O.S.)
THREE! TWO!

...his window the only black one in a row blazing with light and humans connecting.

PARTYGOERS (O.S.)
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

INT. THE COMPLEX - GARAGE - MORNING

CLANG! A door opens. Ethan -- worse for wear after the beatdown, withdrawal symptoms nagging at him -- shambles into a garage in The Complex housing a **MAKESHIFT BLACKSMITH SHOP**.

Puts earbuds in. Cues up a song six decades too old for him, but that helps him fight off the shakes. As he works...

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
At last, my love has come along...

--WHOOSH! Ethan dumps his bag of nails into a clay oven.
--ROAR! The oven's fire melts nails down.

ETTA JAMES
My lonely days are over...

--HISS! Molten iron pours into a stone cast.
--SIZZLE! WATER POURS onto metal, hardening it.

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
And life is like a song...

From its mold, he lifts a **SAMURAI SWORD**. The music SWELLS... and is cut off by his PHONE ALARM; shows an emoji of a SMILING PILL. Shuts it off. *Gotta get paid. Re-up. Do or die.*

EXT./INT. RONNY'S PAD - NIGHT

KNOCK KNOCK. Ethan's shivering hand raps on a door. BASS MUSIC washes over us as Ethan's let in by... **RONNY**: 30, still rocking whiteboy cornrows. Prison tats. Fangs that drip honey. Unstable as nitroglycerin. What passes for a "friend" in Ethan's life. As Ronny locks MULTIPLE LOCKS on the door...

ETHAN

Those are new.

RONNY

Crew from over in Harbor Point's acting up, my New Years resolution is to not get my shit jacked.

(sees Ethan's limp)

What happen, bro? Somebody beat some act-right into you?

ETHAN

Walked into a door.

RONNY

Same door you been walking into since 10th grade.

Ronny "playfully" socks Ethan in the gut as they walk past **THE LIVING ROOM**: awash in smoke and bad vibes. Anime on TV. Gangsta-Japanophile decor. **RONNY'S CREW** packs bags of POWDER AND PILLS. Greeting Ethan like a pet that can do tricks...

CREW MEMBER

Yo Wikipedia, how you livin'?

CREW MEMBER 2

Let's see if we can stump his ass today--

CREW MEMBER 3

--got one. Name the capital of...

(thinks)

...what's a country that nobody knows shit about?

CREW MEMBER

Burkina Faso.

CREW MEMBER 2

What's the capital of Burkina Faso?

ETHAN

Ouagadougou.

CREW MEMBER
What's gunpowder made of?

ETHAN
74% potassium nitrate, 13% charcoal-

CREW MEMBER 2
(dumps PILLS onto table)
How many is that?

ETHAN
Ten to twelve years upstate.

They LAUGH and JEER, tossing shit at him as he follows Ronny **TO THE COUCH**: where pretty, bleach-blonde **SHAWNA** lays semi-comatose. Ronny roughly shoves her aside. Takes a NEWSPAPER WRAPPED PACKAGE from Ethan. Unwraps to reveal the SWORD.

ETHAN
As requested: Kimotsuki-style iron katana. Handcrafted. One of a kind.

Ronny opens a SHOEBOX full of CASH, counts out a thousand dollars onto the table. Lifts the sword, feeling its weight.

SHAWNA
(rouses from her slumber)
...whoah...

RONNY
Handiwork courtesy of my boy here.

SHAWNA
Where'd ya learn how to make that?

ETHAN
Just something you pick up.

Ronny stands, SLICES with the blade -- *WHIT!* Turns to Shawna--

RONNY
Lift your hand up for a sec.

SHAWNA
Why?

Ronny smiles at her. Shawna nervously lifts her hand up. Ronny reaches out... and touches the blade to her palm.

ETHAN
Whoah-- Ronny, hold up--

RONNY
Shhh.

Ronny intends to test the blade's sharpness on this poor gal's flesh. Shawna STIFFENS as it starts to pierce her--

ETHAN
(puts a hand on him)
Dude, stop--

And just like that, Ronny turns on him. CLANG! Drops the sword and THROWS ETHAN to his knees, twisting his arm behind his back. In the background, Shawna makes a hasty retreat.

RONNY
You think you can put hands on me.

ETHAN
(arm gets twisted harder)
--jesuschrist--

RONNY
You need some clarification, so lemme clarify: You Ain't Shit--

ETHAN
(twisted even harder)
--don't do this--

RONNY
Repeat after me, so I know you understand: "I-- Ain't--

ETHAN
(arm about to break)
--I ain't-- I ain't shit--

CREW MEMBER (O.S.)
--yo, Ronny?

Ronny looks to his Crew Member, who's pointing out the window at a BLACK SUV parked outside -- some TOUGH GANGSTER-LOOKING FUCKERS (the aforementioned Harbor Point Crew) climbing out.

RONNY
...god-dammit--

BAM! Ronny lets go of Ethan, grabs his GLOCK off a table. The Crew turns to the door, ready for battle...

...on the floor, Ethan looks to the SWORD. And the CASH BOX.

BLAM! The door gets BLASTED OPEN and the rival crew comes in, guns out. As the room turns into a NOISY MEXICAN STAND-OFF--

--Ethan GRABS the sword & cashbox, makes to run, when--

--Ronny looks, sees what's up... and BOOM! SHOOTS AT ETHAN--

--as Ethan FLINCHES, DODGING, SWORD SWINGING INVOLUNTARILY, we hear a METALLIC RICOCHET and see a flash of sparks as--

--Ethan LUNGES around a corner, SPRINTS AWAY, sword in hand, room behind him a CACOPHONY as he flees--

OUT OF THE BACK OF THE HOUSE

--into the yard, surrounded by a TEN-FOOT CONCRETE WALL. Ethan scrambles up it, and just as he gets to the top--

--he FREEZES IN GAPE-JAWED HORROR--

--because he's now on a RIDGE OVERLOOKING A STEEP, SNOWY MOUNTAIN CHUTE: 1000 feet long, ends in a MILE-HIGH CLIFF.

ETHAN

...ohgod...

Ethan's EYES GO HAZY... LOSES HIS BALANCE... FALLS...

...and **BAM!** SNAP BACK TO REALITY: Ethan LANDS HARD on a parked car. Cracks the windshield. As he lays there wheezing, we hear **POLICE SIRENS** approaching, and we travel down to...

...the SWORD, still gripped limply in his hand. And as cop cruisers come roaring up, we CUT TO--

INT. THE NERVE CENTER - NIGHT

--a pic of the sword, labeled **B.P.D./EVIDENCE**, spitting from a printer. We're in a cavernous room with slanting walls of frosted glass, ringed by SURVEILLANCE MONITORS. \$300 million worth of spy-tech in here. Call it The Nerve Center.

PORTER (O.S.)

...gotta be kiddin' me...

The pic's snatched up by **PORTER** -- the bearded, tattooed Big Brother who runs this one-man NSA. He grabs an OLD RED PHONE.

INT. MANSION, PRIVATE GYM - NIGHT

A cell phone BUZZES. We're in the private gym of this minimalist mansion, and out-of-focus in the BG, someone's doing a strange workout: krav maga-ing the shit out of a heavy bag while perched on a WIRE 20 feet above the floor

Phone BUZZES AGAIN. The figure pauses, one leg in mid-kick..

...then DISMOUNTS, drops 20 feet, and into focus strides **NORA BRIGHTMAN**: 27, heart-stopping, apex predator's gleam in her eye. Resplendent in her perch atop the food chain.

NORA

Go.

INT. THE NERVE CENTER - NIGHT

DING! Elevator doors open, Nora strides into The Nerve Center-

NORA

Talk to me.

PORTER

(hands her a mugshot)

Two hours ago, Boston PD snagged one Mr. Ethan McCauley, knockoff antiques deal went south. Cops found him with this sword--

NORA

--and?

PORTER

I ran the analysis, blade was made via a process that hasn't been used since feudal Japan-

NORA

--which gives us nothing--

PORTER

--and he claims he made it himself--

NORA

--so "nothing plus nothing" equals--

PORTER

Had the exact same thought--

He brings up the image of the sword on a monitor.

PORTER

--until I saw this.

Porter zooms in on the image... and we see it.

The sword has a BULLET STUCK TO IT.

A slug wedged into the blade's edge. From when Ronny fired at Ethan as he swung the sword. Echoes of Treadway stopping the bullet with his blade in our opening.

Her look: *Holy shit*. His look: *Yep*. Then...

NORA

...they're already coming for him.
(grabs her phone, dials)
I need a vehicle.

INT. POLICE STATION, INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Ethan sits alone in the precinct interrogation room... until the door buzzes and A UNIFORMED COP opens it...

UNIFORMED COP

Buzz when you're done.

...the door closes, shutting Ethan alone in the room with THE MAN IN A SUIT. Ethan doesn't recognize this guy. But we do...

...because it's Bathurst: now in his late 50s, greasy coal black hair going gray at the temples, but that pitiless amusement still glitters in his eyes. He's got a SCAR on his face from where Treadway's sword nicked him back in 1990.

Bathurst levels a curious, appraising stare at Ethan...

BATHURST

...interesting.

That's all he says. Sits, takes out a file, reads in silence.

ETHAN

Are you, like, FBI, or...?

BATHURST

(eyes on file)

Ethan McCauley. Diagnosed with schizophrenia at 14, after you were found carving the words "Look Inside" into your chest with a box cutter. Electroshock therapy proved unhelpful. Age 16, attempted suicide via car crash, necessitating reconstructive surgery and a steel plate in your skull. Spent the rest of your early life bouncing around psych hospitals and foster homes...

(beat)

Quite the rough ride.

ETHAN

I'm gonna write a book about it.
"Ethan And The Terrible Horrible No
Good Very Bad Life."

BATHURST

I'm curious. "Look Inside", why
those words?

ETHAN

There's something you should know
about me.

(off his "go on" look)

I don't like people knowing things
about me.

Bathurst almost smiles. Ethan notices the man's teeth: wet,
yellow, neglected. Bathurst takes out a pic of a **SMALL, EGG-
SHAPED METAL OBJECT**, lined with intricate etchings.

BATHURST

Do you know what this is?

Ethan shakes his head. Bathurst scribbles a NOTE of it in
some language Ethan doesn't recognize -- Sanskrit??

BATHURST

...I need you to pay close
attention for a second...

Bathurst puts objects on the table: an ancient rope **SLING**; a
battered **RIFLE SHELL CASING**; the **CORK** from a whiskey bottle,
stained by time; a **CHALK-DUST STAINED VELVET BAG**; a **CAR KEY**.

BATHURST

...and tell me which one of these
items is yours.

ETHAN

...the hell kinda cop are you?

Bathurst pulls a **ANTIQUE COLT REVOLVER**. Opens the chamber,
takes out bullets. Places a bullet next to each object...

BATHURST

Which... one... is... yours?

SNAP! Bathurst shuts the gun's chamber -- leaving ONE BULLET
in it. He COCKS the gun, motions to the cork: *pick it up*.
Hand shaking, Ethan reaches out and picks up the cork.

BATHURST

Is it yours?

ETHAN

--I-- I don't know--

Bathurst PULLS THE TRIGGER -- *CLICK!* Ethan LUNGES UP.
Bathurst, blink-quick, FACE-PLANTS him into the desk.

BATHURST

Every time you say "I don't know",
this trigger gets pulled.

Bathurst takes the next object -- the CAR KEY -- and puts it
in Ethan's shaking hand.

BATHURST

Is it yours?

ETHAN

--please--

BATHURST

Is it yours?

ETHAN

--I don't know--

CLICK! Bathurst pulls the trigger, hits an empty chamber.

ETHAN

--SHIT! HELP!--

BATHURST

The room's soundproof. They won't
even hear it when this gun
vaporizes your face.

Bathurst sticks the RIFLE SHELL into his hand.

BATHURST

Is it yours?

ETHAN

I-- I-- YES! OK?! Yes, it's mine!

BATHURST

Lying won't help.

CLICK! Pulls the trigger again. Ethan FLINCHES, tears
streaming. Bathurst stuffs the chalk-bag into his hand.

ETHAN

--what do you want from me, I'm
nobody, I can't give you anything--

CLICK! Bathurst pulls the trigger again, Ethan fighting back
puke when WHAM! Bathurst slams the SLING into his hand.

BATHURST

Last chance, Ethan. Is... this...

On the word yours, Ethan closes his hand around THE SLING...

...and he JOLTS IN HIS SEAT like he's stuck a metal fork in an electric socket. WE WHOOSH INTO--

ETHAN'S POV

--THE ROOM AROUND US VANISHES, REPLACED BY A JUNGLE CLEARING.

We're SWINGING THE SLING, fighting a MAYAN NATIVE. Belting out a WAR CHANT in our native tongue as--

WE SNAP BACK TO REALITY

--Ethan HITS THE FLOOR, babbling out the same Mayan words he was chanting in the hallucination.

ETHAN

...hun ka'a oox kan...

As Ethan's voice dies out, coming back to reality, he sees Bathurst, looming over him, eyes avid...

BATHURST

(dials his cell, connects)

It's him.

Through his adrenaline haze, Ethan notices two things. 1: He's still holding the SLING. 2: Bathurst is still holding his REVOLVER, the one bullet remaining inside it.

BATHURST (INTO PHONE)

We move him now. I want something impenetrable, understand?

WHOOSH! Ethan FLINGS the sling out, whip-wraps around the revolver's barrel, and SNAKES it backward into his grip--

--Ethan aims, PULLS THE TRIGGER and CLICK! The gun's empty.

BATHURST

I palmed the bullet. Little trick I picked up from you.

And right then, they HEAR SOMETHING: the rising GROWL OF A VEHICLE ENGINE. Bathurst's eyes narrow--

--and he LUNGES OUT OF THE WAY AS--

KA-BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

A CAR EXPLODES THROUGH THE CINDERBLOCK WALL INTO THE ROOM.

Like The Hulk just punched a hole in it. Blows the table out of its floor-bolts, sends it slamming into Bathurst--

--as Ethan sees **THE CAR: gunmetal gray Maserati Granturismo, outfitted with a SNOWPLOW-LIKE BATTERING RAM on the front.** And out of this strange vehicle like an avenging angel comes--

--Nora Brightman, hoisting an ASSAULT RIFLE. *BRAAAAP!* She unleashes a spray of fire into the interrogation table...

...but there's NO ONE BEHIND IT. Bathurst slipped away like the man who walks between raindrops.

NORA
 ...*goddammit...*
 (to Ethan)
 Get in. Now.

No way in hell. Ethan lunges past her, making to flee out through the busted hole in the wall, when--

--he STOPS. Because he sees, out on the street...

A MRAP

"Mine Resistant Ambush Protected", four-wheeled military hellbeast, the spawn of a hate-fuck between a tank and a Humvee. There's Bathurst, about to climb in through the top latch, when he sees Ethan and Nora staring at him...

HE SHUTS THE LATCH. *GAME ON.*

NORA
Get in!

Shoves Ethan into the passenger seat, get behind the wheel, as the MRAP makes a growling bee-line for them...

NORA
 Hang on.

VROOOM! She stomps the gas, Maserati tires liquefy rubber and she goes **BLASTING THROUGH THE DOOR TO THE INTERROGATION ROOM--**

AND INTO THE POLICE STATION

...where it's fucking PANDEMONIUM as....

VROOOOOOOOOOOOM-CRAAAAAAAAAASH! The wall behind them **DETONATES** into falling dust as the MRAP tears back into the precinct--

DEAD CENTER DOWN THE MIDDLE OF THE BULLPEN

Ladies and gentlemen, we are now in the middle of a **CAR VS MRAP CHASE THROUGH A POLICE STATION.**

Nora SWERVES through the bullpen, dodges COPS, desks demolition-derby'd aside as THE MRAP chews the place up.

INT. POLICE STATION, HOLDING CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

A sweaty, twitchy **PRISONER** in a holding cell *carefully* places a MATCHSTICK into a little structure he's making, when--

BLAM-VROOOOOM! His structure's knocked apart as outside the cell bars, Nora's car ROARS PAST down the cell block, a metal SECURITY DOOR pinned to her battering ram.

VROOOOOM! The MRAP blasts past a second later, the oversized machine RIPPING OUT WALLS AND CELL BARS as it comes--

--getting closer and closer to Nora's car, almost on them--

--when Nora's car CUTS A HARD LEFT, BLOWING OPEN THE NEXT SET OF SECURITY DOORS, tearing through the LOBBY, before--

--SMASHING THROUGH THE GLASS FRONT DOORS OF THE PRECINCT--

DOWN THE FRONT STEPS OF THE POLICE STATION

--concrete stairs going KA-DUMPH KA-DUMPH under the car--

--as **CRAAAAAAASH!** The MRAP blasts through the BUILDING'S FAR WALL and into the street, cutting off their escape route, as--

--Nora FLOORS IT, ditto the MRAP, coming at each other in a game of chicken: sports car vs 18-ton military behemoth.

NORA

Grab this. Keep it straight.

She plants Ethan's hand on the WHEEL. Then puts her body halfway out the window, takes aim at the MRAP's GUN SLOTS--

--but *TRACER FIRE* flies back at her from the slots--

--she FLATTENS herself sideways against the car, a round SIZZLING through her billowing coat, leaving fabric hanging--

--her CELL PHONE falling unnoticed from the ripped pocket--

NORA

(ducks back into her seat)

Hand me my suitcase.

(off his look)

DO IT!

Ethan grabs the suitcase, hands it to her. From it, she pulls a HOCKEY PUCK-SHAPED DEVICE (to be known as a "Particle Grenade".) Hits a button, it powers up with a RISING TONE--

NORA

Don't buckle your seatbelt.

She then reaches out the window and CHUCKS THE PARTICLE GRENADE STRAIGHT AT THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE MRAP--

--and suddenly everything slows way down.

The puck DETONATES. Turns the street in front of the MRAP INTO TINY FLYING BITS. Creates a CRATER--

--Nora swerves around it as the MRAP drives straight into it--

--SOMERSAULTS FORWARD ON IMPACT, SAILING PAST the Maserati. Ethan staring, slack-mouthed--

CRASSSSSSSSSSSHHH! The MRAP hits the street, tumbling onto its side, SKIDDING to a stop in a galaxy of sparks.

BAM! Nora flattens the gas and SPEEDS AWAY, leaving behind a demolished MRAP and a destroyed precinct building.

EXT. WRECKED MRAP - MOMENTS LATER

CLANG! The MRAP'S hatch OPENS. The **BPD-UNIFORMED DRIVER** crawls out, bloody, gasping. Behind him, Bathurst's shoes hit the pavement. Coming straight toward him.

DRIVER

...help... helpme...

CRACK! Bathurst stomps his throat, silences him. Makes for NORA'S PHONE, the one we saw fall from her coat. Picks it up, dark waters bubbling in the primordial depths of his eyes.

INT. NORA'S CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

VROOOOOOOM! Nora whips her Granturismo through the city like a blowdart through Amazon foliage.

ETHAN

Jesus Christ, what the hell just happened? Who are you?

NORA

I'm Nora Brightman, I'm one of the few people in the world who aren't trying to kill you right now.

ETHAN
Sure about that??

They're roaring straight at a construction barrier. A flick of Nora's wrist, and they skid sideways down the next street. Nora, seatbelt-less, is practically halfway into his seat--

ETHAN
 Gonna buckle your seatbelt???

NORA
 Don't believe in them. No seatbelt means death if you get into a high-speed wreck. Put one on, the same wreck is more likely to leave you paralyzed, which is just a hassle.

ETHAN
 Okay, you are officially the weirdest person I've ever met.

NORA
 Night's still young.
 (SWERVES by pedestrians)
 When the doctors first diagnosed you, what were your symptoms?

ETHAN
 What does that have to do with--

NORA
 Answer or you ride in the trunk.

ETHAN
 Delusional, hallucinations, couldn't tell fantasy from reality--

NORA
 What did it feel like to you?

ETHAN
Like I was a freak OHS HIT--

An SUV in front of them has stopped suddenly, brake-lights flying at them. Nora swerves, skirts death by inches.

NORA
 What are your hallucinations?

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH! They're on a high-speed obstacle course of slower cars. Ethan machine-gunning words out:

ETHAN

I hear a voice that's not there. I blink and I'm somewhere else, places I've never been--

NORA

Such as?

ETHAN

I'm in a jungle and there's blood dripping from the canopy, or I'm falling down a mountain--

NORA

--in the Himalayas?

ETHAN

I don't know, maybe, OHGOD--

They're speeding AT A METAL GATE. Ethan braces for impact... but it SLIDES OPEN and they go sailing through to...

...**THE RUNWAY OF A PRIVATE AIRFIELD**, and come to a SMOKING STOP in front of a **G-6 JET** waiting for them, stairs down.

NORA

Hop out.

ETHAN

I'm not goin' anywhere.

NORA

Then I'll have to sedate you.

ETHAN

What happens if this goes off?

She stops -- because she sees that Ethan has gotten a hold of one of the PARTICLE GRENADES from in her briefcase.

ETHAN

Gimme the keys.

NORA

It's a push-start. Also -- is your plan *actually* to escape in a stolen Maserati last seen driving through a police station?

ETHAN

Hadn't thought that far ahead.

She climbs out, Ethan gets into the driver's seat, when...

NORA

What if I told you the things you
see aren't hallucinations, but
memories?

Everything hits pause. Ethan looks over at her...

ETHAN

...memories?

POP! Ethan's got a TRANQ-DART sticking out of his neck. From the DART PISTOL Nora's quick-drawn from her case. WHUMPH! Ethan crumples into unconsciousness as we SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. ROOM - MORNING

For a few seconds, it's like we're underwater. But there's this sound... *Whirt. Whirt. Whirt. Whirt.*

B L I N K

ETHAN'S STROBING POV: we're naked in bed, in a room of glass and teak, windows overlooking on an ENDLESS MISTY PINE FOREST. That sound is an ALARM GOING OFF -- **WHIRT! WHIRT!**

B L I N K

HUMAN FORMS STORM THE ROOM. ARMED WITH HEAVY ARTILLERY and wearing KEVLAR HELMETS, getting themselves into position.

VOICES (O.S.)

--in position, GO!/Sixty seconds!

B L I N K

We're dragged across the floor, loaded into a MARBLE BATHTUB.

VOICE (O.S.)

GET HIM COVERED!

B L I N K

A YOUNG WOMAN, with blue streaks in her spiky hair, tosses a BULLETPROOF VEST onto us. Then another, and another.

B L I N K

We can barely see what's going on, but we hear everything.

VOICES (O.S.)

*--I THROW THE SIGNAL, YOU BLOW 'EM
OUTTA THE SKY--*

The HELICOPTER gets **LOUDER** and **LOUDER** until we...

SNAP TO SILENCE.

INT. SAFEHOUSE, ROOM - MORNING

WHAM! Ethan LURCHES UP, GASPING. Widen to reveal: he's got a Kevlar helmet strapped to his head, and he's laying in a marble bathtub covered in BULLETPROOF VESTS.

TRACE (O.S.)

Look who's up-and-at-'em.

Ethan looks over to **TRACE**, the young woman with blue-streaked spiky hair, doing a perfect YOGA BACK-BEND. Into her earpiece-

TRACE

He's awake.

She gracefully VAULTS to her feet as Ethan woozily tries to stand up, but is hindered by the fact that A: he's just realized he's naked, and B: he's still seeing double.

TRACE

(steadies him)

Whoah, do not fall and break your neck, we come WAY too far for that--

ETHEAN

Why-- am I--

TRACE

Naked in a tub fulla' kevlar? Cause apparently you know how to party.

(smiles)

False alarm earlier. Chopper flew by, we don't get much air-traffic here. Turned out to be some d-bags going wolf-hunting. Is it bad that I still kinda wanted to shoot them?

(off his stare)

I'm Trace, by the way. We've met before. Clothes are in the closet.

Ethan stands. Off Trace's appraisal of his body...

ETHAN

Take a picture, it'll last longer.

TRACE

Good idea.

CLICK! She snaps a phone-pic of him as he walks past.

ETHAN

How long was I out for?

TRACE

Two days. I got bored waiting for you to wake up, so I started performing experiments. You won't believe how many magnets I attached to that metal plate in your head.

(off his "what?" look)

I'm kidding. Good news is, you detoxed. You are now 100% medication-free.

ETHAN

Wait, I-- I need those pills--

TRACE

No you don't. Those dissociative flashbacks you were having? The pills were making them worse.

He opens the closet to find a PERFECTLY TAILORED SUIT. Elegant, timeless, like what Treadway wore in our opening. As Ethan fumbles into it, he looks around the room...

ETHAN

What is this place?

TRACE

Alaskan Fortress of Solitude. Blackstone National Forest. I designed the place a couple cycles ago. Got a real brutalist-Frank-Gehry thing going on, right?

(off his stare)

You don't get that? Jesus, where did you go to school?...

ETHAN

Milwaukee Spectrum, it sucks, don't ever go there. Can we skip to "what am I doing here?"

NORA (O.S.)

You know how they fought in trenches in World War 1, Ethan?

Ethan looks over to see NORA has just entered the room like a cold breeze. Kimono-clad, hair wet from the shower.

NORA
 This is our trench. One of the few
 places where we, and more
 importantly you, can be safe.

Nora can see questions piling up in his head...

NORA
 (motions)
 ...come.

INT. SAFEHOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Nora leads him down the hallway. From what we can tell, the building they're in appears to be some sort of massive COMPOUND atop a towering cliff in the wilderness.

NORA
 Do you believe in reincarnation,
 Ethan?

ETHAN
 No.

NORA
 Why not?

She leads him on into--

INT. SAFEHOUSE, NORA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

--her bedroom. Ethan looks down, sees the floor's half concrete, half GLASS: jutting out over the edge of a towering WATERFALL, H2O plummeting away beneath his feet. *Whoah.*

NORA
 Ethan?

ETHAN
 ...I don't believe in it because if
 you unpack it for five minutes, it
 sounds insane.

NORA
 Says the diagnosed schizophrenic.

ETHAN
 OK, yeah, that's a...

He looks to see Nora's in her walk-in closet, slipping out of her kimono and into her clothes. His manners battle his eyes.

ETHAN
...fair point.

He makes himself look to some FRAMED PICTURES: women of different ages and races, starting with ancient drawings, old black-and-white film, then modern color film...

...and in the very last photo in the row, we see a face that's familiar to us: LEONA, the woman from our opening.

NORA
What do you notice about the women in these images?

He studies them. Something similar in their faces. A glint in the eyes that stays the same in all the visages.

ETHAN
(quiet)
...it's impossible...

Ethan turns and sees Nora's right behind him again.

NORA
They're me, Ethan. People I once was. All of them.

And as Ethan's head starts to swim...

NORA (PRE-LAP)
You were born with a gift. The same gift as me and a miniscule number of humans: the ability for your consciousness to survive death...

INT. SAFEHOUSE, HALLWAY - DAY

Ethan and Nora, walking together through the main corridor of what we're now realizing is a PALACE-SIZED MOUNTAIN ESTATE.

NORA
The body expires, the mind transfers to a newborn host, retaining the memories of every experience you've accumulated over your lifetimes. Your recall emerges in the brain at puberty. We call it "Reawakening."

ETHAN
That's not what happened, I just went nuts and started seeing shit--

NORA

Your reawakening was diagnosed as schizophrenia. It never had the chance to fully take hold because they butchered your brain with electricity and chemicals. It's a miracle you can even remember what you had for breakfast, much less what you did five lifetimes ago.

(beat)

You may not remember who you are. But we do...

She nods, and opens a door leading into...

A GIGANTIC ROOM

...like a dojo on steroids. In a Japanese fight ring, 2 ARMORED FIGHTERS spar with katanas, sparks flying off blades, weapons moving so fast it's like reality on overdrive.

Around the space, paper walls create smaller rooms, stacked four stories high, some BUZZING WITH ACTIVITY, others strangely vacant. Ethan and Nora move through it all...

NORA

We call ourselves "The Infinite." Five hundred souls from all over the globe, all born with the ability to remember our past lives.

ETHAN

..."The Reincarnation Club."

NORA

Exactly.

They move further on, Ethan trying to look five ways at once.

NORA

When an Infinite reawakens, he remembers the location of a Hub, a gathering place such as this. You come here, your *sensei* tests you to verify identity, and you rejoin.

IN A ROOM: **MATTEO**, shaved-head 20-something, chalks quantum physics on a board, motor-mouthing to his **SENSEI** *en espanol*.

NORA

Matteo here founded quantum physics in his last cycle...

ETHAN

So you're all... geniuses?

NORA

No. We've just had lifetimes to attain excellence. Think of what you could become if you had all the time in world, Ethan. What you could master if you had endless lives to live.

She guides him onto THE NEXT ROOM...

NORA

Jinya was the greatest chess player of her generation. Looks like she hasn't lost a step...

A RAVER-CHIC KOREAN TEENAGER (**JINYA**) plays 10 chess games against 10 OPPONENTS, including her *sensei* **GARRICK**: 60s, hard-bitten cowboy who rides a WHEELCHAIR due to being paraplegic.

JINYA

(goes from table to table)
Check-mate... Check-mate... Two moves til check mate... Aaand check-mate. Is there anything I can't do?

GARRICK

"Modesty" springs to mind.

JINYA

I thought you were gonna say "stairs", but no, that's you.

GARRICK

Keep talking. Next cycle, I'm puttin' a cowboy boot in that butt. Take it to the bank.

JINYA

(moves piece on his board)
Checkmate, old man.

He gives her a middle finger, she gives it back with a grin.

NORA

They consider themselves father and daughter.

(off his look)

When you realize you're going to outlive every household you're born into, you seek out bonds with people that death can't take away.

ETHAN

...you get to choose your own family.

For someone with Ethan's background, that's a deeply appealing idea. They move to the NEXT ROOM: a **DREADLOCKED YOUNG GUY** SPEED-PAINTS a copy of Van Gogh's "Starry Night."

ETHAN

Hell of a forgery.

NORA

It's not a forgery.

ETHAN

(a beat)

Wait-- is he-- actually...

(whispers)

...is that Van Gogh?

NORA

A few cycles ago, yes, but don't call him that, he gets weirded out.

ETHAN

Whenever he's done painting that, think he'd let me put it on E-Bay?

NORA

That's funny. You're still worried about your finances...

Nora leads him into a SIDE CORRIDOR, where she PUNCHES IN a code into a keypad on the wall. And with a hiss of hydraulics, the WALL RETRACTS revealing...

A ROOM OF MONEY. Stacked on pallets. Ethan's jaw drops.

NORA

One of the perks to being in The Infinite? The trust fund.

(guides Ethan in)

Whatever you financially accumulate during a cycle, that money is waiting for you in their next life. The surviving members take temporary custody of the account.

ETHAN

This is... all of our money?

NORA

Your money. Some of it. You have stashes in Hubs all over the world.

Ethan looks around in awe. Reaches out toward a stack of cash-

KOVIC (O.S.)
(Polish accent)
Touch it and you pull back stump.

They turn to **KOVIC**: a big, scarred, bedraggled beast of a man who looks like he's spent most of his lifetimes in a cloud of vodka and cigarette smoke. Holding a hefty BLADE.

NORA
This is Kovic. He's our hub's
treasurer, accountant, all-around
beam of sunlight...

KOVIC
Try spending your last three cycles
getting born into war-zones, we'll
see who's in a bad mood.

NORA
It'll still be you.

KOVIC
(to Ethan)
Look here, I don't know who you
think you are, *Dziecko*--

NORA
Kovic--

KOVIC
--but you do not touch anything
until you've been vetted--

NORA
Kovic, it's **Treadway**.

That stops Kovic cold. Ditto everyone else in the dojo.

WHISPERS pass from room to room... "is it really him?"...

...and one by one, ALL 30 INFINITES IN THE HUB flood in, crowding Ethan like he's Jay-Z walking into a Brooklyn dive-bar. Voices overlapping, tears in people's eyes... all except Kovic, who's appraising this stringy-haired vagabond and is unimpressed. Ethan tries his best to go with the flow...

ETHAN
Hi. Hi there. Thank you. Hi.
(tiny whisper to Nora)
...who is Treadway?

Somewhere, we hear a RING--

INT. THE NERVE CENTER - NIGHT

--of the RED PHONE IN THE NERVE CENTER, in the Infinite's surveillance hub. Porter rolls chairs over to it, picks up--

PORTER
Tell me good news, Nora--

BATHURST (THROUGH PHONE)
My compliments, Mr. Porter...

Bathurst's voice. Porter recognizes it. His blood runs cold.

BATHURST (THROUGH PHONE)
...the encryption on Brightman's phone was a masterpiece. Took us almost three days to crack it.

Porter eyes THE FAR WALL, 50 FEET AWAY... where A GLASS CASE WITH A **BLACK BUTTON** is installed, wires snaking out of it...

BATHURST (THROUGH PHONE)
You're looking at the self-destruct detonator you wired to all the drives in this room.

Porter, realizing this motherfucker's already God-knows-how-many steps ahead, looks to the frosted glass windows...

BATHURST (THROUGH PHONE)
You're wondering how I can see you.

We PULL BACK through the frosted glass...

EXT. ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

...over to the ROOF across the street where we find BATHURST, INFARED GOGGLES over his eyes, flanked by ARMED MEN...

BATHURST (INTO CELL PHONE)
...and now you're realizing it doesn't matter. All that matters is that you've been found.

It's now we notice Bathurst is holding a CROSSBOW that looks like it was first used in the Crusades.

INT. THE NERVE CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The voice reverberating in Porter's ears...

BATHURST (THROUGH PHONE)
 And now you're calculating how long
 it'll take to cross the room and
 press the self-destruct button.

PORTER
 No...
 (hardens)
*...I'm wondering if you're as fast
 as you think you are, asshole.*

WHAM! Porter LUNGES OUT OF HIS CHAIR--

--a millisecond before Bathurst SENDS A CROSSBOW ARROW
 THROUGH THE FROSTED GLASS WINDOWS AND INTO PORTER'S CHAIR.

CRACK! Porter KICKS his chair up, SHATTERS THE LIGHT ABOVE as--

IN BATHURST'S INFARED POV: The Nerve Center is plunged into
 strobing darkness as Porter makes his escape across the room,
 LEAPING OVER ROWS OF MONITORS as--

--SCHWACK SCHWACK! Screens gets punctured by arrows, as--

ON THE NEIGHBORING ROOF

Bathurst loads crossbow arrows like a machine, firing them
 off with blinding speed, as--

IN THE ROOM

Porter, moving with the speed that comes with lifetimes of
 training, slides under a desk as ARROWS stab the surface--

--BURSTING to his feet, JUMPING, DODGING and TURNING through
 the incoming field of flying projectiles--

--SLASHING ONE IN HALF with a chop of his hand--

--before slamming into the wall and reaching up for--

THE SELF-DESTRUCT MODULE

--when THICKT! AN ARROW PINS PORTER'S HAND TO THE WALL.

Keening in pain, he reaches up with his other hand, and--

THICKT! A second crossbow arrow PINS HIS OTHER HAND IN PLACE.

PORTER
 GNAAAAGGGGGGHHHH!

His scream echoes out, we PULL AWAY...

EXT. ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

Bathurst lifts the goggles off his face...

BATHURST

Get in there. Find something that tells me where they took him.

Widen to reveal he's talking to AGENT SHIN and AGENT HARLOWE, the two CIA-looking spooks we met in the beginning, now twenty-five years older. As they move in...

...Bathurst sets down his crossbow and lifts his DETHRONER. Settles it on his target: Porter's twitching head.

BATHURST

(whispers)

Enjoy eternity.

POP! The Dethroner FIRES, we travel with the Spider Bullet as it UNRAVELS in midair, latching its probes into Porter's forehead, cutting him off in MID-SCREAM and we SMASH TO--

INT. DETHRONEMENT CHAMBER

A grey space. Deafening silence.

Pull back to find Porter, suspended in a fathomless void. He reaches up... and touches a TRANSPARENT SURFACE. Feeling around, he realizes...

...he's stuck inside a CLEAR, **COFFIN-SIZED CELL**. Barely room to move. Soundproof but for his own panicked breathing.

PORTER

--no-no-no-no-no--

--as he starts to THRASH AGAINST the walls of his tiny cell, we PULL AWAY, into the endless fog beyond, and finally out of--

INT. HARD DRIVE LAB - NIGHT

--the guts of a HARD DRIVE. Its digital screen scrolls numbers and a name: **#287 -- PORTER, BRYAN**. Pull back to see we're in a LAB lined with MEGA-DRIVES, each one with a NAME blinking on its digital screen. Row after row of them, like headstones in a graveyard where everyone's been buried alive.

GARRICK (PRE-LAP)

The prodigal son returns...

INT. SAFEHOUSE, UNDERGROUND AREA - NIGHT

Back at the Hub: Garrick (Jinya's wheelchair-bound *sensei*) leads Ethan & Nora into a storage facility. Hard to tell what it contains, due to the dim lighting...

GARRICK

Name's Garrick. I run the Hub's personal history database.

ETHAN

Like a hall of records?

GARRICK

Not quite.

CLICK! Garrick remotely activates the rest of the room's lights... and Ethan sees he's in **A LIBRARY OF CADAVERS SUSPENDED IN PRESERVATION TANKS**. Garrick motions down a row--

GARRICK

Take a gander.

Ethan looks at the row of bodies. Some older, some younger, different races, some with tribal markings on their skin.

GARRICK

These bodies are the vessels you once inhabited. At least some of 'em. Ain't had proper preservation tech up until the past few cycles, which is why you're not looking at more naked dead fellas right now...

Ethan moves down the row... to a familiar figure:, **HENRICH TREADWAY**. Skin ghostly in the liquid. Ethan takes him in...

GARRICK (PRE-LAP)

Ethan McCauley, meet Henrich Treadway.

INT. SAFEHOUSE, AMPITHEATER - DAY

BAM-BAM! Blazingly fast fists hit a *mook yan jong* (wooden fighting post.) Widen to reveal it's **TREADWAY**... or at least 3-D HOLOGRAPHIC FOOTAGE OF HIM, in the Hub's ampitheater. Nora and Ethan watch, Garrick motions to the hologram...

NORA

Your parents christened you with that name seven cycles ago, and apparently it stuck, 'cause that's the moniker you've chosen every time you've reawakened.

ETHAN

(watches Treadway spar)
...I was fast.

GARRICK

Callin' you "fast" is like callin' a NASA computer "good at math."

He CLICKS UP 3-D images: still photos, newspaper images, film footage (both in color and old black-&-white.) Versions of Treadway over the years. Different races, different faces...

GARRICK

Over the course of 458 years, you lived with your tribesmen in the jungles of Central America, fought in battles dating back to the Siege of Drogheda in 1640, climbed every major peak on every continent, and mastered martial arts, acrobatics, marksmanship, explosives, aviation, tactical driving, wilderness survival, counterintelligence, transcendental mediation, the Kama Sutra, and my personal favorite...

New footage: BLACK & WHITE IMAGERY OF WING WALKERS ATOP A FLYING WW1 AIRPLANE, gracefully vaulting along the aircraft.

ETHAN

This one beat out "kama sutra?"--

NORA

(cuts him off cold)
You were the most gifted Infinite ever to rise from our ranks. And our best shot at winning this war.

ETHAN

...who are we at war with?

Nora nods to Garrick -- *show him*. Garrick clicks up images of our pal Bathurst, different faces in different eras...

GARRICK

Calls himself Bathurst. But he's had quite a few names before...

...the images go from photos to drawings to A CAVE PAINTING OF A DARK FIGURE LOOMING FROM A MOUNT OVER PRAYING HORDES.

GARRICK

He was the first Infinite. Been alive since the dawn of man. Lived so many cycles that it became torture to him. Eternal damnation. Drove him insane. Now all he wants is to get off the ride.

ETHAN

But... he can't. That's how it works, right? You just keep reincarnating forever?...

GARRICK

Y'heard the expression "life finds a way?"

CLICK! A new 3-D image pops up. Something we last saw in the pic Bathurst showed Ethan in jail: The Eggshell -- no bigger than a small egg, made of intricately etched black metal.

GARRICK

Death finds a way too.

WHOOSH! The digital scenery around them changes...

AND ALL OF A SUDDEN THEY'RE IN CENTRAL PARK

Blue skies. Bird-songs. New Yorkers enjoying sun. Eggshell sits on a picnic table. All part of an immersive 3-D demo.

GARRICK

In the late 20th century, Bathurst dreamed up a device known as "The Eggshell."

The Eggshell emits a *REEEEEEEEE* sound. Seems to VIBRATE.

GARRICK

It was a weapon designed to extinguish all biological life on Earth. Clear the slate. Make it so that there were no more vessels left to reincarnate into.

The sound PEAKS as the device SPLITS OPEN AND BLOWS A SHOCKWAVE ACROSS CENTRAL PARK. Overtakes a MOTHER trying to shield her KID, and they're both reduced to FLYING DUST.

GARRICK

And I ain't just talking about
human life. No, I mean... all life.

WHOOSH! THE GRASS, PLANTS AND TREES COLLAPSE TO PARTICLES.

GARRICK

Every plant, every tree, every
flower...

WHOOSH! The shockwave hits a FLOCK OF BIRDS, who become
airborne clouds of particles as it passes through them.

GARRICK

...every critter, every bug, every
microbe that ever found its way
onto a wall or window...

Beyond the park, the shockwave hits Manhattan towers.
SKYSCRAPER WINDOWS POP as BUILDINGS BECOME TOWERING SKELETAL
REMAINS, RUBBLE FALLING, AS CARS ARE STRIPPED TO HUSKS...

ETHAN

...jesus...

A 20-story APARTMENT TOWER starts to tilt on its damaged
foundation... then TUMBLES TOWARD ETHAN LIKE A FALLING TREE--

CLICK! The 3-D images VANISH, leaving Nora and a freaked-out
Ethan back in the amphitheater. The only image left is that
Eggshell, still hovering before them. Ethan, unsteady...

ETHAN

...why hasn't he set it off?

NORA

You stopped him.

CLICK! New footage: AERIAL NEWS CAM POV of Treadway in the
Lambo, making his escape through LA. Our opening scene.

NORA

Last cycle, you raided Bathurst's
lab. Stole the Eggshell before he
could detonate. Killed the
scientists who helped build it,
wiped out the bastard's entire
Manhattan Project in under 5
minutes. Made it so he couldn't
recreate the damn thing.

GARRICK

Almost got away with it, too...

CLICK! TRAFFIC CAM POV. The Bugati, Abelin and Leona inside, roaring down the road. BAM! The Bugati's T-BONED BY THE SEMI, sent FLIPPING. Nora pauses and zooms in on Abelin...

NORA

You were *sensei* to an apprentice named Alexandre Abelin. He and I came to extract you, but Bathurst got to us first.

More footage plays: Bathurst approaching the flipped Bugati, holding his Dethroner. The footage pauses.

GARRICK

That right there's the one weapon you don't wanna get shot with.

ETHAN

What is it?

NORA

It's called a Dethroner. Shoots a device that drills into your skull and downloads your consciousness. Your body dies, your mind lives on in digital solitary confinement.

GARRICK

Remember "Cool Hand Luke?" How the warden punished guys who pissed him off?

ETHAN

"Spend a night in The Box."

GARRICK

"Spend eternity in The Box." Nothing for your mind to do in there but eat itself alive.

NORA

My advice? If it comes down to a choice between death and Dethronement? Pick death.

Nora restarts the footage. In the 3-D image, Bathurst raises the Dethroner at Abelin and Leona in the Bugati...

NORA

I got lucky. I died before he could Dethrone me. Abelin...

(softens)

...Abelin wasn't so fortunate.

Bathurst shoots Abelin with the Dethroner as the car erupts. CLICK! Next image: TREADWAY'S DEAD BODY, post suicide-jump.

NORA

You did the smart thing: you hid the Eggshell and took its whereabouts to your grave.

GARRICK

Since then, Bathurst's been on the hunt, waiting for you to come back.

ETHAN

...so what now?

NORA

Rebuild your mind, find The Eggshell and destroy it. Along with the son of a bitch who commissioned it.

A strange emotion plays across Ethan's face. Fear, yes... but also, for the first time, purpose.

ETHAN

...let's make me what I was.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY

PRISTINE WHITE SNOW. We're GLIDING over it, fast. Title card:

HIMALAYAN RANGE - NEPAL

From somewhere, we hear Nora's voice.

NORA (V.O.)

The few memories you've retained from your past lives have one thing in common....

Widen to reveal, we're traveling up the STEEP HEADWALL OF A SNOWY MOUNTAIN. White peaks stabbing the azure sky.

NORA (V.O.)

...they're all moments of fear. Adrenaline. Survival. Moments that imprint on your mind forever...

TUMBLING TOWARD US down a chute: **A NEPALESE MAN IN ANCIENT CLIMBING GEAR**, trying to stop his fall with his ICE AXE.

NORA (V.O.)
*...like in 1953, when you almost
 died climbing the Himalayas.*

We glide right past him, traveling up the mountain face...

UP TO THE RIDGE ABOVE

...where we find FIGURES IN HIGH-TECH MODERN CLIMBING GEAR:
 Ethan, Nora, Trace, and Kovic, looking down...

...an ICY CHUTE 1000 feet long, ending in a MILE-HIGH CLIFF.
 (The one he "hallucinated" while escaping Ronny's place.)

ETHAN
 You gotta be kidding me--

TRACE (INTO EARPIECE)
 Picture's up!

There's a WHIR and Ethan looks over to see a CAMERA DRONE
 hovering nearby, Trace with the controller in her hands--

INT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY

Garrick, Jinya, and a crew of the other Infinites are in the
 auditorium, watching the DRONE CAMERA'S TRANSMISSION.

GARRICK (INTO HEADSET MIC)
 We got visual.

TRACE (ON SCREEN)
 Hey Ethan, how you feeling about--

--onscreen, Ethan turns away and DRY HEAVES as we CUT TO:

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Ethan's head is swimming: staring down this long, terrifying
 chute-to-nowhere. Wind PICKS UP, threatening to hurl him into
 mouth of the deathtrap, making his knees go wobbly...

ETHAN
 ...I'm supposed to trigger my
 memory by... *falling down this?*

NORA
 No -- you're supposed to remember
 how to stop yourself.

Kovic approaches with an ICE AXE, smirk on his face...

KOVIC
No big deal, yes? You've done this
before.

Kovic roughly SHOVES the axe into Ethan's pack, walks off.

ETHAN
(to Nora)
What's his problem?

NORA
He's got... reservations about you.

KOVIC (O.S.)
Reservations?

They look over to where Kovic is putting a climbing anchor into the snow nearby, not looking at them...

KOVIC
Treadway could save us. Treadway is
who we need. But instead, we have
some sad, weak shadow of him. Some
low-budget knockoff. That is my
"reservation."

Kovic finishes with his snow-anchor and storms away. Nora looks to Ethan, who's shaken by what he's just heard...

NORA
Don't listen to him. You can do
this.
(off his look)
Close your eyes.

A beat... then he shuts his eyes. Nora puts an earpiece in his ear. Turns it on. It emits a long soothing tone into his brain, like the ringing of a crystalline bowl.

And into his free ear, she whispers:

NORA
Imagine a corridor. A long one.

We tighten on Ethan as his eyes move behind their lids...

FLASH CUT: we're in Ethan's POV, inside a long, dim, derelict hallway -- like something from a housing project, stretching on for 100 feet. What we'll be calling his HALL OF MEMORIES. The crystalline tone from his earpiece still playing...

NORA (V.O.)
This is your Hall Of Memories.
Where you store past experiences.

BACK ON THE RIDGE

Nora's lips an inch from his ear...

NORA

Look at the walls. There are paintings on them. Each image representing a memory.

IN ETHAN'S HALL OF MEMORIES

We look to the walls... and PAINTINGS take shape, as if bleeding out of the wallpaper. Not a lot, just a few.

BACK ON THE RIDGE

...a whisper from Ethan:

ETHAN

I see them.

NORA

Good. Explore.

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL

We move down the hall, taking in the paintings. Each one is of a different place & time. The shady apartment complex where he resided in Boston. A squat, concrete juvenile detention facility. A featureless, padded cell.

But others are older, unfamiliar. A weed-choked country road with a Model-T Ford wrecked around a tree. An ancient Japanese fishing boat. A medieval castle, pounded by rain.

NORA (V.O.)

Do you see one that looks like the place where we are now?

Look from painting to painting... no sign of the Himalayas.

BACK ON THE RIDGE

ETHAN

I don't see it.

Off Nora's nod, Kovic steps up and says:

KOVIC

You will.

WHAM! Kovic SHOVES ETHAN OFF HIS FEET, DOWN INTO THE CHUTE.

ETHAN'S HALL OF MEMORIES: Ethan's POV sprints down the hall -- which we now reveal is one of MANY long corridors. OH SHIT.

ETHAN (O.S.)
I CAN'T FIND IT!

IN THE CHUTE: Ethan, losing his shit, opens his eyes and sees the EDGE OF THE CLIFF RUSHING AT HIM.

He SCREAMS as he goes OVER THE EDGE--

--and abruptly STOPS. Jerks back. Because as we now reveal...

...HE'S ATTACHED BY HIS PACK TO A LONG ROPE. Connected to the snow-anchor at the top of the chute with Nora and the team.

NORA
We're going again. Pull him in.

As Ethan gets YANKED BACK, we SMASH TO:

EXT. LUKLA - NIGHT

Nightfall over a small town in the mountains: shanty guest-houses, a few rowdy watering holes. Tijuana at 10,000 feet.

LUKLA -- EASTERN HIMALAYAS

INT. LUKLA BAR - NIGHT

THUNK THUNK! DARTS land in a dartboard, one bullseye after another. People cheer as we WIDEN TO Nora, taking some local **TOUGH GUYS** to school in a game of darts, engulfed in a boisterous bar crowd. Ethan, looking like he's been thrown a mountain repeatedly, fills shot glasses with Trace...

TRACE
Here's to Ethan falling down a mountain 50 times without dying.

ETHAN
(raises a glass)
To my health.

They drink. Nora tosses a dart over her shoulder and into the bullseye, gets "Ohhhs" from the crowd. Trace pours another...

TRACE
...and here's to me, taking that hot girl back to my room tonight.

Ethan follows her gaze to a **CUTE NEPALESE GIRL** at the bar, on her **BOYFRIEND**'s lap, laughing and nuzzling his neck...

ETHAN

I don't wanna judge a book by its cover, but I think she's straight.

TRACE

People change. Live a few more cycles, you'll see what I mean.

NORA

(toasts Trace's glass)
Preach.

KOVIC (O.S.)

Don't let them talk bullshit.

Kovic approaches, carrying a brown paper bag.

NORA

Your boyfriend back in the Battle Of Stalingrad didn't think it was bullshit.

KOVIC

We were under siege, did not count.

WHUMPH! He empties plastic bags out onto their table containing small piles of **NUCLEAR ORANGE CHILE PEPPERS**. As locals gather around them, excited for the contest...

KOVIC

Bhi Cholokia: "poison peppers."
Hottest in all of Asia.
(motions to sign by bar)
Whoever eats whole pile in under one minute drinks free.

ETHAN

(translates the sign)
I'm rusty on my Nepalese, but I think that says "*These peppers will turn your back passage inside out.*"

KOVIC

It doesn't hurt unless your brain lets it hurt. Treadway taught me that. Long time ago. Maybe this help you remember.

ETHAN

Or maybe you're messing with me in the most painful way imaginable--

KOVIC
 --this is not the most painful way
 imaginable.

TRACE
 Easy, Kovic, no one likes a grumpy-
 bear.

ETHAN
 Except for dudes in Stalingrad
 apparently...

Trace BUSTS UP LAUGHING, Kovic gets in Ethan's face, when--

LEAD TOUGH LOCAL
 (in Nepalese, sub'd)
 And... GO!

A stopwatch starts, and the contest is on: Ethan, Trace and Kovic popping the peppers into their mouths as fast possible, Kovic GLARING DAGGERS at Ethan as he eats. Meanwhile...

INT. LUKA SALOON, SIDE ROOM - NIGHT

...we pull away to a quiet side-room. Nora's on the phone, eyes on the furious snowstorm gathering outside the window...

NORA (INTO PHONE)
 ...hell does that mean?

INT. SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

Garrick on the other end of the call, back in the safehouse.

GARRICK
 ...we're runnin' outta time. They found The Nerve Center, took down Porter with it. Left him with arrows pinning him to the wall and a Dethroner cartridge in his skull.

BACK WITH NORA

She shuts her eyes -- *Jesus...*

NORA
 Did they find anything that might lead them to--

GARRICK (THROUGH PHONE)
 --unclear. But the big bad wolf's
 coming to blow your house down,
 Nora. It's not if, it's when.
 (beat)
 Thought about our backup plan?

Whatever that means, Nora shuts it down with a quickness.

NORA
 Not happening.

GARRICK (THROUGH PHONE)
 Might not have much choice.

NORA
 I'll get him where he needs to be.

GARRICK (THROUGH PHONE)
 How's that working out so far?

She hears something IN THE BAR... and looks out to see Kovic
 is on his hands and knees, RETCHING from the hot peppers.
 Trace is DOUSING HER MOUTH/FACE/EYES IN BEER, weeping in
 agony. And Ethan? Ethan's calmly finishing his pile.

NORA
 (a little surprised)
 ...he's progressing.

BACK WITH ETHAN

As locals shout out the final seconds of the countdown...

LOCALS
 (in Nepalese, sub'd)
 ...THREE... TWO... ONE!

Ethan eats the last pepper with a flourish... and the place
 GOES NUTS. Trace slaps him on the back. Even Kovic has to
 give him a nod of respect. As we PULL OUT THE WINDOW...

...it reminds us of Ethan's New Years Eve at The Compound --
 only this time, our hero is part of the festivities.

EXT. MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

VROOM goes a beautifully restored Porsche Spyder 550. Snakes
 along a snowy, perilous MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY in...

SWITZERLAND

We pull away as the Spyder sluices along this narrow shelf above a long, winding 1000-FOOT DEEP CANYON, whips past an auto-gate, down a PRIVATE DRIVEWAY, and up to...

A JAW-DROPPING CHATEAU HIDDEN IN THE CANYON

The place has its own AIRPLANE HANGAR, a bulky **XIAN Y-10 CARGO PLANE** overlooking the runway. The Spyder whips past, into a garage lined with CLASSIC CARS, and parks as...

INT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - LATER THAT NIGHT

...inside the chateau, HANDEL'S MESSIAH plays an Edison Cylinder Phonograph (first device ever to play recorded music.) Music echoes off the walls of the master bedroom--

--as we find BATHURST: shirtless atop a marble slab. A woman's elegant hands lay an Egyptian cotton towel over his face, as if for some kind of spa treatment, as we PAN UP TO--

ISABELLA: an Italian beauty, naked except for a GAS MASK.

ISABELLA
(in Italian subtitled)
Ready?

BATHURST
(in Italian, subtitled)
Ready.

She lifts a 5-gallon can of GASOLINE and proceeds to WATERBOARD HIM WITH IT. Douses him with little splashes of noxious liquid at first. The face beneath the towel stirs...

She pours more gas over him...

The face beneath the towel starts to LAUGH.

Every time she douses him, he laughs harder...

Over and over again. Gas FUMING off the soaked rag.

Bathurst's laughter turning into ECSTATIC WHEEZING...

When suddenly, his phone BUZZES on the table nearby. Bathurst goes quiet. Lifts a finger. Isabella pauses with the gas can.

CLOSE ON THE PHONE

It gets snatched up. Bathurst, his eyes looking demonic with bloodshot veins, reads the text message. Familiar location: **BLACKSTONE NATIONAL FOREST.**

And for the first time, a smile forms on Bathurst's face.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

CHOPPER BLADES POUND. We push through jungle, to a clearing--

BELIZE

--as A SLEEK MODERN CHOPPER touches down.

NORA (V.O.)

Next step: combat therapy.

Ethan & company climbing out. Ethan looks around...

NORA

Your vision of blood dripping from a jungle canopy? That happened here, in the Yucatan peninsula, and that blood is from your opponent.

ETHAN

My opponent in what?

THUMP! A weighted ROPE SLING lands on Ethan's shoulder. He turns to **MAXIMO**, the last Infinite climbing out of the helicopter. This is THE GUY WE SAW WIN THE KATANA FIGHTING at the Hub. Even scarier close up. Every inch a warrior.

MAXIMO

"Mambastas." Central American martial art, think Capoeira meets kung fu meets beating the shit outta each other with ropes.

NORA

Just one of the many forms of combat our friend here has spent his lifetimes mastering.

ETHAN

You're gonna be my trainer?

MAXIMO

If we had time, hell yeah. But since we don't, I'm just the guy who's gonna wail on you til you remember.

(sticks out a hand)

Maximo. Good to see you again. We go way back.

TRACE

I can already feel your periods
syncing up.

And off this, we hear a *WHOP-WHOP-WHOP--*

EXT. JUNGLE GROVE - DAY

--of Maximo's sling. He's swinging it, letting it build momentum... and there's Ethan, in the fight circle. Freaked out, armed with his own sling. Ethan, to Nora, quietly...

ETHAN

If you've got any words of
inspiration, I'd love to hear--

NORA

--we were together.

ETHAN

What?

NORA

In your last life.

ETHAN

We were, like--
(she nods, "oh yeah")
Was it good?

NORA

Let's just say you'll be glad to
have those memories back.

Ethan, sufficiently inspired, turns and--

FLINGS HIS SLING AT MAXIMO

--who dodges the close call, and sends his own sling back at Ethan. Wraps his leg, **CHUCKS HIM** into the ground.

As Ethan lays there, wheezing...

NORA

Memory hall. Now.

FLASH CUT TO ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL

Our POV travels down the hall. Paintings bleed out of the wallpaper as we rush through, looking for the right image...

BACK IN THE JUNGLE GROVE

ETHAN
 (wheezing)
 --can't move through it fast enough--

NORA (V.O.)
 Don't move through it. Make it move
for you.

POP! Maximo FLINGS his sling again, Ethan ROLLS ASIDE as the sling-tip SLAMS into the ground, taking a divot out of it as--

NORA
 --c'mon, Ethan--

--Ethan lunges to his feet and DUCKS behind a tree as Maximo's sling EXPLODES BARK off the trunk, inches from Ethan's face. Our terrified hero breathes deep, focuses--

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL

This time, instead of trying to move through the hall, we lift a hand and MAKE THE WALLS OF PAINTINGS GO ZIPPING PAST US, like we're scrolling through an iTunes movie menu.

BACK IN THE JUNGLE GROVE

Maximo, whipping his sling faster and faster, approaches the tree, stalking his prey, as...

...we find Ethan, behind the tree, eyes shut...

IN ETHAN'S HALL OF MEMORIES

...we lift a hand and WHAM! STOP THE WALLS SCROLLING PAST US: we're looking at a PAINTING OF A JUNGLE GROVE.

ETHAN (O.S.)
 Yes.

BASH! We launch ourself at the painting, 2-D becoming 3-D, exploding through leaves and foliage--

--LANDING IN THE JUNGLE GROVE, surrounded by CHANTING MAYAN NATIVES, our NATIVE OPPONENT circling us, the SLING in our hand PICKING UP SPEED...

BACK IN REALITY

Ethan's eyes snap open--

--just in time to see Maximo's sling coming at him--

--and Ethan BENDS BACKWARDS, damn near folding his body into a 90-degree angle, letting the sling SLASH OVERHEAD--

--just as Ethan HURLS his sling, wraps Maximo's arm, YANKS--
 --and sends Maximo OFF HIS FEET, TOWARD ETHAN--
 --and BAM! Ethan DECKS HIM. Drops him.

NORA
 (a whisper)
Yes.

Maximo's back on his feet -- this is a competition now.

MAXIMO
 Nice of you to show up, Treadway.

Maximo throws A SPIN KICK--

--Ethan JUMPS BACK TO AVOID IT, grabs a tree branch in mid-air, FLIPS HIMSELF UP into the limbs of the tree, as--

--Maximo follows, and we follow the fight through an OBSTACLE COURSE OF THICK LIMBS hovering above the jungle floor--

--Ethan dodging, swinging, parrying, CONNECTING--

--what we're watching is like some combination of bullwhip brawl, jungle parkour, and treetop fistfight--

--until SNAP! Maximo's sling RIPS A BRANCH OFF THE TREE--

NORA
 No--

--and SWINGS IT TOWARD ETHAN'S STOMACH, hits him dead center, KNOCKING HIM OFF HIS PERCH TO THE GROUND. And as he lays there, beaten, Maximo jumps down. Kneels by him...

MAXIMO
 Hey. Rockstar. Open your eyes.
 (taps his head)
 What's going on in there?

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL

...we've got WALLS OF PAINTINGS FLYING PAST US on both sides, like standing between parallel freight trains...

...but then the paintings stop, and we're left with BLANK WALLS SCROLLING PAST.

BACK IN THE JUNGLE GROVE

...Ethan just shakes his head. His mind a puzzle-box still locked in place. Something flickers behind Maximo's eyes. Ditto Nora's. A gut-gnawing sense of "we're fucked."

KOVIC

I told you. Just because he was
Treadway once doesn't mean he's
Treadway now.

That stings. But Maximo has the heart to front for Ethan.

MAXIMO

It's okay, amigo... it's okay, we
got this...

He helps Ethan to his feet, and we MATCH TO:

EXT. SAFEHOUSE, AMPITHEATER - DAY

A TRANSMISSION OF THE FIGHT on a screen of the ampitheater, back in the Hub -- Maximo helping Ethan to his feet. Garrick, face grim, turns off the screen. Looks to Jinya and a handful of other INFINITES in the room, all with that same look...

JINYA

Not good.

GARRICK

Still have The Artisan...

JINYA

And if that doesn't work?

No one wants to be the one to say it, when--

--WHIRT! WHIRT! WHIRT! The familiar sound of the Hub's PROXIMITY ALARM. Everyone's on alert in a heartbeat--

GARRICK

(to the screens)
Show me radar.

A screen changes to a RADAR.

JINYA

...aircraft?

GARRICK

Hold on...

Garrick spots it on the screen: a RED DOT, flying overhead.

GARRICK
 (a sigh of relief)
 Commercial. Not here for us...

We pull UP AND AWAY from them, rising through the ceiling--

RISING UP INTO THE AIR AWAY FROM THE SAFEHOUSE

GARRICK (O.S.)
 ...flying too goddamn high.

We ROCKET UPWARD, clearing 35,000 feet in 2 seconds, clouds drifting over the endless mountain landscape below, as...

BOOM! Something black and vaguely human-shaped BLASTS PAST US. Then another. And another.

And we see: these are MEN IN HIGH-ALTITUDE SKYDIVE SUITS, looking insectoid in their helmets, masks, and respirators. Riding G-forces that would break the spines of lesser beings.

INT. SAFEHOUSE, AMPITHEATER - DAY

...and on the radar screen, NOTHING APPEARS -- the incoming skydivers are basically invisible. Except...

GARRICK
 ...the hell?...

Garrick spots a TINY BLIP ON THE RADAR -- a miniscule cluster of dots approaching out of nowhere, closing in fast...

...and then they hear a **THUMP**. Like someone's dropped a paperweight onto some far-off section of the Hub's roof.

THUMP! THUMP! More impacts on the roof, getting closer. Everyone looks to the ceiling, to the GLASS SKYLIGHT above...

THUMP! A PARTICLE GRENADE lands on the skylight. Like the one we saw Nora use in Ethan's jailbreak. Emits a rising hum...

GARRICK
MOVE!

BOOM! THE GRENADE DETONATES and the amphitheater's roof gets BLOWN INTO A CLOUD OF FALLING GLASS, the Infinites below KNOCKED OFF THEIR FEET BY THE SHOCKWAVE as--

IN AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE HUB

...we see particle grenades go off one after the other -- **KABOOM! KABOOM! KABOOM!** Collapsing the hub's roof.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Through the waves of smoke and debris, we see it: all around the now-roofless safehouse, SKYDIVERS swoop in on parachutes--

--SPRAYING AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE at their targets, THE SAFEHOUSE BECOMING A SLAUGHTERHOUSE, as--

GARRICK

--hits a button on the side of his wheelchair, and POP! The arm-rests open up, revealing PISTOL GRIP MICRO-UZIS contained within. Garrick hauls the weapons out, as--

--Jinya grabs his chair and HAULS HIM TOWARD their attackers, Garrick SPRAYING 768 MPH LEAD POISONING, taking down bad guys--

--when BOOM! Another particle grenade goes off behind them and THROWS THEM BOTH FOR A LOOP, Garrick knocked from his wheelchair, guns skidding away--

--ears ringing, vision blurring, Garrick crawls toward a dropped Uzi, dragging his dead legs, almost to the gun, when--

--the gun is SNATCHED AWAY. He looks up to see...

BATHURST

Long time, Garrick.

INT. HUB - MOMENTS LATER

WHAM! A bloody and beaten Garrick gets SHOVED against the wall, slumped on his ass, legs like unstrung puppet limbs.

BATHURST (O.S.)

At the risk of keeping you in suspense...

WIDEN TO: Bathurst, submachine gun in hand, team flanking him, paces the line of men and women he's got against the wall in the main room: Garrick, Jinya, 2 REMAINING INFINITES.

BATHURST

...in the next three minutes, one of you is going to tell me where they took Ethan McCauley. Not because you're a coward. Not because you're weak. But because the fundamental difference between us is that you all still have something to live for.

(beat)

Question is... who'll break first?

Bathurst looks to Garrick. Who stares daggers at him.

BATHURST

You're already broken, I made sure of that last time. Wonder what I'll make sure of today...

GARRICK

It's funny. After I got paralyzed, people asked me why I didn't just--
 (mimes shooting himself)
 --hit the reset. Start over in a new body. Know what I told 'em?
 (low, dangerous)
I didn't wanna wait that long to destroy you.

Bathurst smiles... and goes to open a steel case on a table. Takes out his **DETHRONER**. By the reaction he gets, he may as well have just lifted a Spanish Inquisition torture tool.

BATHURST

You know where I conjured the idea for this thing?

WHAM! Bathurst RIFLE WHIPS Garrick with the Dethroner. Jinya CRIES OUT as the other Infinites REACT--

BATHURST

I thought of it in the womb.

Bathurst looms over Garrick, who's bleeding, hunched over...

BATHURST

All of you reawaken with your coming of age, but for me? I'm the first of you. I'm *different*...
 (leans in close)
 I reawaken when my brain forms. *In utero*. While I'm still trapped in a sack of amniotic fluid inside some stranger's stomach.

WHAM! He boots Garrick in the gut.

BATHURST

Imagine endless hours, days, weeks, months, spent in darkness. No room to move. No up, no down, no yesterday or tomorrow. Nothing to do but drive yourself mad.

CRUNCH! Kicks Garrick in the ribs. Garrick SEETHES in pain.

BATHURST

And that's just the first few times
you're born. By the 1000th? You
have *no conception* of the places
your mind takes you...

CLICK! Bathurst lifts the Dethroner... but he doesn't aim it
at Garrick. No, he aims it at Garrick's *padawan* -- JINYA.

BATHURST

...but she's about to.

Tears stream her face. Bathurst's finger goes to the trigger--

GARRICK

WAIT!

All eyes go to Garrick. The hardest choice of his life.

JINYA

--don't do it--

BATHURST

Three.

JINYA

GARRICK, DON'T--

BATHURST

Two.

JINYA

Please--

GARRICK

I'm sorry--

BATHURST

ONE.

EXT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, ROOFTOP - NIGHT

SPLASH! A BEAUTIFUL **YOUNG WOMAN** DIVES into shimmering blue
water. REVEAL... it's an INFINITY POOL on the roof of the Bay
Sands Hotel, 1000 feet above the circuitboard streets of:

SINGAPORE

We drop below the rooftop, down to the WINDOWS OF THE SUITES
BELOW, and pass through one, into...

INT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

PRESIDENTIAL SUITE: beyond opulent. Nora wrangles the troops--

NORA
Five minutes!

She walks past the bathroom: Maximo's in the shower (singing) and Kovic's using one of his blades to trim his beard.

NORA
You know they invented disposable razors 80 years ago, right?

KOVIC
(re: Maximo's singing)
I'm keeping my knife handy in case I am forced to kill him.

Nora moves to the NEXT ROOM: Ethan's on a massage table, Trace clinging to a ceiling beam above, walking on his back.

ETHAN
She's really good at this.

TRACE
Better be, or I wasted an entire decade in Bangkok in the 20's...

NORA
(to Trace)
Off.

Trace gracefully dismounts from Ethan. As he stands up--

ETHAN
This guy we're going to see, the-- whaddya call him?

NORA
The Artisan.

ETHAN
He can help me?

NORA
...he's our last option.

CUT TO: Ethan, dressed in an immaculate suit that reminds us of Treadway, ties his tie into a Windsor knot...

NORA
Guess that's one skill you picked up in this latest cycle.
(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

(off his look)

I only saw you fail to master a few things in your past, and amazingly, one of them was tying a tie.

ETHAN

The boys home I grew up in, uniform was black tie, pants, and a short-sleeved shirt. We looked like little Mormon missionaries.

She gets in front of him, and starts finishing off the tie's knot. Their faces close, intimate, as he realizes...

ETHAN

...you used to do this for me.

NORA

Once or twice.

ETHAN

Can I ask you something?

(off her look)

...what was I like?

NORA

Disciplined. Brilliant. Always two steps ahead of the rest of the world, waiting for them to catch up-

ETHAN

--what was I like with you?

Nora chews on it, "how to describe this?"...

NORA

My first lifetime, I was born into the Tigrinaya tribe. Spear-hunting in the Serengeti. We spent our nights looking at the stars, making up stories about them. Legends about gods and warriors...

(beat)

But to me the stars were just cold, remote things in the distance.

ETHAN

So I was... "cold and remote?"

NORA

It's not easy being present with that many lives under your belt.

ETHAN

No kidding, I can barely handle the one life I got now.

She cracks up at that, finishing his tie.

NORA

Hate to say it, but I think I might like you better these days...

For a second, they could just drop everything and kiss...

KOVIC (O.S.)

He's waiting.

EXT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, ROOFTOP POOL - NIGHT

Music BOOMS OVER A ROOFTOP POOL PARTY. Through the mass of revelers comes ETHAN, NORA, TRACE, KOVIC, MAXIMO. Dressed to the nines. Our heroes go into a BACK HALLWAY...

INT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, HALLWAY - NIGHT

...up to a steel door. GUARD with an auto-rifle. Next-gen security system. Nora scans her palm, then an eyeball. HYDRAULIC LOCKS RETRACT, the door opens to...

...**A PENTHOUSE**: like a combination of a high-end weapons lab and a posh opium den. And making tea is an **ELDERLY ASIAN GENTLEMEN**. Silk kimono. His ancient eyes look to Ethan.

ELDERLY ASIAN GENTLEMEN

Vanakaam.

ETHAN

(whispers to Nora)
...what language is that?

NORA

Malay, I think.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Tamil, actually.

Ethan looks behind to see A DWARF IN AN "APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION" T-SHIRT. Late 30s. Long hair. Exudes a riveting mix of eerie confidence and debauched *bonhomie*.

DWARF

My assistant here speaks 17 languages, but he was never a big fan of English.

(MORE)

DWARF (CONT'D)

No flow, lot of jerky-bangey sounds. It's the "teenagers-having-sex" of idioms.

(smiles)

Sorry, I'm a little loopy, been up for three days straight tuning up this thingamajig for you guys--

ETHAN

--you're The Artisan?

The Dwarf (aka **THE ARTISAN**) smiles and motions to his lab... which we now see has work-tables cluttered with CUTTING EDGE PROTOTYPES: weaponry, armor, surveillance gear.

ARTISAN

You used to be quicker on the uptake.

INT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, ARTISAN'S LAB - NIGHT

The Artisan leads them through his lab...

ARTISAN

So: you want to recover your memories, but your brain's not cooperating, which means we gotta jump-start the little bastard--

He punches in a code to a door, it hisses open, revealing room containing **A SEDAN-SIZED GLASS CAPSULE**. Hoses and wires coming out like tentacles. Monitors glowing ghostly.

ARTISAN

--with this big bastard right here.

ETHAN

What is that like a-- sensory deprivation chamber?

NORA

Little more complicated than that--

ETHAN

--I am so glad I spent all that time falling down a mountain and getting my ass kicked by Tarzan instead of just using this machine.

NORA

There are some... pros and cons involved with the device.

ETHAN

Such as?

ARTISAN

On the "pro" side: it's designed to rewire your brain's limbic system. Complete overhaul of everything that controls memory. Closest thing you'll get to 100% recall.

ETHAN

Cons?

ARTISAN

That's not a sensory deprivation chamber...

The Artisan switches on a hose, and through the glass window in the tank, we see it FILLING WITH PALE BLUE LIQUID.

ARTISAN

It's an oxygen deprivation chamber.

Ethan looks to Nora, realizing: this is the contingency plan they've been hiding from him the whole time.

ARTISAN

You look apprehensive.

(off his "Ya think?" look)

Ok -- know how they say your life flashes before your eyes when you die? This machine chemically induces that state in your brain. You go in the tank, and for 20 minutes we flood your system with in a cognition-reactive fluid while stimulating your medial temporal lobe with electricity--

ETHAN

You're gonna electrocute my brain while drowning me.

The Artisan looks to Nora...

NORA

The average person can hold their breath underwater for 2 minutes.

Treadway could hold his for 15.

(off his stare)

You can survive it. Because Treadway could've survived it.

No response from Ethan. Nora motions to the crew: *give me a minute*. Artisan switches off the water and they exit.

NORA
Ethan, listen...

He doesn't look at her. Eyes focused on the tank...

ETHAN
It's the weirdest thing... my whole life, I felt like I was drowning inside my own brain. Getting held under by waves, over and over...
(eyes on her)
Then you all showed up and it was the first time I could breathe.

Ethan goes to the controls... and **TURNS THE WATER BACK ON**.

NORA
What are you--

ETHAN
What you brought me here for.
(calls to The Artisan)
Let's do this.

ARTISAN
(enters in a hurry)
You serious? You really think you can hold your breath for that long?

ETHAN
Hell no. But I'm gonna give it my best shot.

They look at Ethan, taking him in: a man who doesn't believe he's capable of saving the day, but who's gonna die trying.

Off this, we **PULL BACK**, and the image becomes **GRAINY**...

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT

...and we seamlessly **PULL OUT OF A SECURITY MONITOR**. Showing hidden camera footage of the Artisan's lab, inside...

...this dim surveillance room, where Agent Shin and Agent Harlowe watch alongside **ARMED MEN IN TAC-GEAR**. Through the windows, the Bay Sands Hotel is visible across the street.

AGENT SHIN
What's the move?

Pan to reveal Bathurst. Wheels turning in his head.

BATHURST

Stand by.

From somewhere, we hear FAST, HEAVY BREATHING--

INT. ARTISAN'S LAB, TANK ROOM - NIGHT

--coming from Ethan: expanding his lungs. Half-submerged in the tank, head and torso rigged with electrical sensors...

FLASH TO: ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL

...where our POV approaches a painting of a DEEP BLUE OCEAN visible off the side of a 1950s yacht. We step into the painting, 2-D BECOMES 3-D, and--

--we are now on the deck of the yacht, breathing hard and fast, filling our lungs with oxygen--

BACK IN THE ARTISAN'S LAB

Ethan SUCKS IN A DEEP BREATH, gives a nod--

--the lid shuts. WHOOSH! Tank fills with pale blue liquid.

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY

--WHOOSH! We Launch ourselves into a BACKWARDS DIVE off the yacht into PALE BLUE OCEAN--

--and we find ourselves VERTICALLY DIVING down the face of a MASSIVE CORAL REEF, taller than the cliffs of Yosemite.

We're catching up with other FREE DIVERS, wearing weight belts but no air-tanks, descending into this indigo abyss...

...and all we can hear is the steady K-DMPH of our heartbeat.

BACK IN THE ARTISAN'S LAB

Ethan floats in the capsule, eyes shut, Zen trance. Time taking on an elastic, dreamlike quality as we pull back to--

--Nora and the group, surrounding him, watching. Artisan's eyes on the monitors. Ethan's vital signs beeping along, timer ticking away, approaching **4 MINUTES...**

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT

Bathurst watches the screen -- eyes dead set on Ethan.

AGENT HARLOWE
No way he can do this.

BATHURST
(finger to his lips)
Shhh.

INT. ARTISAN'S LAB - NIGHT

The timer ticks past **7 MINUTES**. In the tank, Ethan floats in his dreamlike state... but the monitors are starting to BEEP SLIGHTLY FASTER. Stress registering on his vitals.

NORA
(whispers)
...stay with it, Ethan...

BEEP... BEEP... BEEP...

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY

*KA-DMPH. KA-MPH. KA-DMPH. Our heartrate picks up speed, as--
...we descend to catch up with ANOTHER FREE DIVER...*

...but our heartrate DOUBLES IN SPEED. We glance at our dive-watch -- 200 feet below the surface.

KA-DMPH-KA-DMPH-KA-DMPH! The sound of our heartbeat becoming like the galloping of horses. Not much more we can take...

INSIDE THE TANK

Ethan's body suddenly JERKS VIOLENTLY. Vital signs monitors going faster. The timer ticks past 10 MINUTES as--

IN ETHAN'S MEMORY

--as our heartrate becomes too loud and fast to ignore, as--

--WHOOSH! We spin a 180 and start SWIMMING TOWARD THE SURFACE. Kicking fast up the coral reef wall, making for the sunlit world hundreds of feet above, lungs screaming for air--

INSIDE THE LAB

Nora, starting to panic, looks to the Artisan--

NORA
He's losing it--

ARTISAN
Two minutes to go--

NORA
He doesn't have two minutes!

INSIDE THE TANK

Ethan starts to TWITCH AND WRITHE like a man on a torture-rack. Face turning a pale shade of not-right, as--

IN ETHAN'S MEMORY

--we go barreling toward the surface--

--our heartbeat going DUM-DUM-DUM-DUM-DUM-DUM, until--

--CRASH! We break the surface, mightily sucking in air, as--

INSIDE THE TANK

Ethan's eyes and mouth open -- he SUCKS WATER INTO HIS LUNGS. He SPASMS like a hooked fish. Eyes bulging. Lungs going into panic mode, involuntarily sucking more and more water in--

INSIDE THE LAB

Nora's already rushing for the control panel--

NORA
 GET HIM OUT!

The Artisan hits an emergency valve trigger and WHOOSH! Water PURGES OUT OF THE TANK. WHAM! Nora hauls open the lid. Maximo helps her pull Ethan's drenched, limp body out--

--laying him down on the floor, turns his head to the side, pinches his nose and starts BREATHING into his mouth.

NORA
 --c'mon--

Listens for breath. Nothing. Checks his pulse.

NORA
 --no--

She starts CPR, compressing his chest--

NORA
 --come back--
 (compressing harder)
 Come back to me--

But no matter how hard she pushes, it's no use.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - SAME

Bathurst and his team: all eyes on the monitors, watching Nora attempt to revive Ethan. In a strange way, both Bathurst & Nora are praying for the same thing: for Ethan to live.

INT. ARTISAN'S LAB - SAME

Nora, streaked with sweat and tears, pumps Ethan's chest. No response. Just lays there motionless with unseeing eyes.

ARTISAN

Nora--

She lifts a finger, shuts everyone up. They back away...

NORA

(whispers to Ethan)

...I'm sorry...

...she takes his hand, entwining fingers. Something about her touch makes his PUPILS DILATE, as we push into them and--

INT. CRASHED BUGATI - NIGHT

--SNAP TO ETHAN'S POV: a female hand takes our hand tenderly in hers, fingers entwining, as we see...

We're back in our opening sequence.

Inside the smoking wreck of the Bugati, with Abelin and Leona, in the final moments of their ill-fated attempt to rescue treadway. Leona staring into us...

LEONA

...see you around, Abelin...

IN THE ARTISAN'S LAB

Nora leans down and, as a heartbroken farewell, kisses Ethan.

IN ETHAN'S MEMORY

Leona and Abelin kiss. Their own private farewell. Then...

LEONA

Now.

POP! The Dethroner Gets fired. SNAP! Abelin sparks the Zippo lighter and EVERYTHING BURSTS INTO FLAMES AROUND US as--

INT. ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL

--the explosion KNOCKS OUR POV BACK INTO ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL.

It's different now. The hall stretches for miles. 1000'S OF PAINTINGS APPEAR, ONE AFTER ANOTHER ON THE WALLS OF THE HALL, TAKING UP ALL THE FORMERLY BLANK SPACES.

Ethan has just gotten his full memory back.

INT. ARTISAN'S LAB - NIGHT

WHAM! Ethan JERKS UP, coughing water out of his lungs. Nora, flooded with relief... until she hears:

ETHAN
...I'm not him.

NORA
What?

ETHAN
I'm not Treadway.

Pin-drop silence. Everyone in the room stares at him.

ETHAN
I saw it. My last life. The night I died in the car--

NORA
--no, no, you didn't die in a car--

ETHAN
--you were there. You put a Zippo lighter in my hand and kissed me, then everything burst into flames.

TRACE
Jesus...
(to the group)
He's not Treadway... he's Abelin.

Those last two words knock the wind out of everyone.

NORA
No. It's impossible, I saw Abelin get Dethroned--

TRACE
--but he died a second later. What if the Dethroner only downloaded some of his consciousness?

MAXIMO

It'd explain why he came back with his memory all messed up. He's a puzzle with pieces missing.

NORA

But he's got Treadway's memories.

ETHAN

Do I?

(off her look)

Treadway was Abelin's *sensei*. When did Treadway start training him?

NORA

Abelin's third cycle. 1708, Yucatan Peninsula...

FLASH TO ETHAN'S MEMORY: that same POV shot we saw in the begining. We're facing off against a MAYAN WARRIOR...

FLASH! A mambastas sling connects with our flesh. Blood flies, lands on leaves as we FALL. And as we look up, it's that familiar shot of blood dripping down from the foliage.

ETHAN (V.O.)

That fight I remembered in the jungle... it wasn't a fight...

Our Mayan opponent stands over us... offering his hand up.

ETHAN (V.O.)

...we were sparring.

And as this older Mayan pulls his YOUNG CHARGE to his feet, it hits us... we're looking at Treadway and Abelin.

BACK TO THE ARTISAN'S LAB

Nora's refusing to believe what she's hearing...

NORA

What about the The Himalayas?
Falling down the mountain??

FLASH TO THE HIMALAYAS: down an icy chute tumbles a NEPALESE MAN IN ANCIENT CLIMBING GEAR.

ETHAN (V.O.)

We both fell...

And WHAM! We're caught by the hand BY ANOTHER CLIMBER. Who's clinging to his ICE AXE, fixed to the steep slope.

ETHAN (V.O.)
...Treadway saved me.

BACK TO THE ARTISAN'S LAB

ETHAN
 That's why I failed that test. I
 couldn't stop my fall because
Abelin didn't know how to do that.

NORA
*But-- but what about your fighting
 skills? Your reflexes? The goddamn
 bullet you stopped with a sword?*

Maximo gives her the answer she doesn't want to hear:

MAXIMO
 Treadway taught him.

Nora's face goes ashen. She backs away to the windows, waves
 of unreality washing over her. Looks to Kovic...

KOVIC
 We were wrong about him. All of us.
 (quiet)
 ...even me.

NORA
 (turns to Ethan)
 Just tell me one thing: do you know
 where The Eggshell is?

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - SAME

Bathurst listens, breath caught in his throat...

ETHAN (THROUGH MONITOR)
 ...yes.

Bathurst's eyes shut -- *victory*. Behind him, the team of
 MERCS is already in motion, moving in to capture their prey.

INT. ARTISAN'S LAB - SAME

Ethan says something that ring familiar:

ETHAN
 "Look inside."
 (beat)
 (MORE)

ETHAN (CONT'D)

For the longest time, those words
would stick in my head like a
splinter, and I never knew why...

FLASH TO: *The weapons room inside the Hub, where Treadway, Abelin, and Leona are loading guns and gear into cases.*

ETHAN (V.O.)

*The night we set out to steal the
Eggshell, Treadway told me...*

As Leona exits, Treadway motions Abelin back...

TREADWAY

*If we fail... if I don't make it
out...*

(whispers)

...look inside.

And Treadway plants a hand on his own torso as we FLASH TO:

BACK IN THE ARTISAN'S LAB

ETHAN

*...we're trained to think of bodies
as unimportant. Just shells meant
to be discarded. So Treadway knew
the one place nobody would look...*

FLASH TO: *Treadway escaping up the freeway cloverleaf in his Lambo, looking to the blast-proof case, mind whirring... and then he opens it, taking out THE EGGSHELL.*

ETHAN (V.O.)

*...was inside the body he'd be
leaving behind that night.*

BACK TO THE HOTEL ROOM

NORA

*...you're telling me The Eggshell
is in Treadway's cadaver. Back in
the Hub.*

ETHAN

It's been with you the entire time.

Nora's jaw trembles -- she looks BROKEN. Unable to process what she's hearing. Trace goes to her, trying to console her--

TRACE

Nora--

BLAM! Trace stops cold.

Because there's a bullet in her back.

Everyone freezes in horror, looking to the door, with its freshly formed, smoking BULLET HOLE--

--**KABOOM!** The DOOR TO THE LAB IS BLOWN OFF ITS HINGES, as--

BATHURST'S CREW OF ARMOR-CLAD MERCS storm in, next-gen weapons SPITTING as--

ALL AT ONCE

Nora & Ethan DIVE FOR COVER, Nora's pistols spraying fire as--

MAXIMO

--grabs his mambastas sling and uses it to RIP AWAY MERC 1'S GUN, turning gouts of flying lead on the bad guys, as--

THE ARTISAN

--snatches one of his PROTOTYPE WEAPONS off a table: a SHOTGUN that UNFOLDS into a QUADRUPLE-BARRELED BEAST. Cocks it and begins BLOWING AWAY MERCS one after the other--

ARTISAN

RUN!

With the door clear, the crew breaks for it, seconds behind the Artisan, when--

--BRAAAP! Maximo's ripped to the floor by a burst of gunfire coming through the window as we WHIP PAN TO--

--**CRASH!** The windows behind them explode, and **SIX MORE MERCS** ON REPELLING LINES COME CRASHING IN--

--just as Kovic take SIX THROWING DAGGERS, clenched between his fingers like Wolverine's claws and WHOOSH! Throws them--

--and ALL 6 BLADES SLICE THROUGH ALL 6 MERCS' REPELLING LINES, SENDING THEM FALLING AWAY AS WE CUT TO--

THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE LAB

--where Nora, Ethan and Kovic BURST out of the lab door, into--

THE STAIRWELL

--where they look down to see ANOTHER CREW OF MERCS COMING UP THE STEPS, ARMED FOR BEAR.

NORA

Up! GO!

BRAAAAAAP! Automatic gunfire erupts up at them as they turn tail and sprint up the stairs, flight after flight, up to--

EXT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, ROOFTOP POOL - NIGHT

--the rooftop party is total PANDEMONIUM. Our heroes FIGHT their way through the current of onrushing people when they hear the *WHOP-WHOP* of CHOPPER BLADES. They look out to see...

A BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER

...rising up alongside the hotel. Door open. Bathurst in the cabin with a TRIPOD-MOUNTED DETHRONER ready to rain hell. Our heroes are pinned down. Nowhere to run.

KOVIC

Nora?

Nora looks to Kovic. He's speaking his final words...

KOVIC

...make it right.

POW! The Dethroner fires at Nora--

--SHUNK! The Spider-bullet UNLATCHES ITS VINES INTO FLESH--

--but then we reveal--

--it hit Kovic. Who's thrown himself in front of Nora, a human shield, Spider-bullet gripping his skull. He collapses--

NORA

KOVIC!

Bathurst takes aim again--

--but Nora's already swung her guns up and fired both--

--Bathurst steps out of the way of the first bullet--

--and the second bullet RICOCHETS off the interior, BOUNCES--

--and DRILLS THROUGH THE **PILOT**, killing him. He slumps away from the controls, as--

THE BLACKHAWK GOES HAYWIRE

--lurching into a tailspin, coming down towards the roof--

--Bathurst LEAPING OUT, crashing into the pool, as--

ETHAN AND NORA

--see the out-of-control aircraft spinning towards them as they RUN FOR THEIR LIVES--

--but it's too late. **KA-BOOM!** The helicopter HITS THE ROOF, hundreds of gallons of jet-fuel DETONATING AT ONCE--

--the fireball BLOWING ETHAN AND NORA OFF THEIR FEET, toward the edge of the hotel rooftop, the lights of Singapore spreading out 1000 feet below them--

--and just as Nora trained him to do, Ethan SHUTS HIS EYES.

FLASH TO ETHAN'S MEMORY HALL

The hall looks like a MILE-DEEP ELEVATOR SHAFT LINED WITH PAINTINGS. We're falling down it, diving toward a painting: one of an acrobat on a trapeze in the Peking Circus.

ON THE HOTEL ROOFTOP

Ethan's HANDS SHOOT OUT LIKE AN ACROBAT FOR A TRAPEZE PARTNER--

--grabs a hold of Nora, and the other GRABS THE ROPE LIGHTING ATTACHED TO THE FENCE AROUND THE ROOFTOP AS THEY SAIL OVER IT--

--PULLS IT TIGHT, ARCING AWAY FROM THE HOTEL, OVER THE CITY--

--and POP POP POP! The rope-lighting rips free from the railing, one connection at a time.

2 more connections til they rip free & fall to their deaths.

--they come swinging toward the far window of the hotel and--

THE ROPE-LIGHT IS RIPPED FROM THE CIRCUIT-BOX--

--but Ethan FEELS THE CHANGE IN TENSION ON THE ROPE, LETS GO--

--sending him and Nora flying towards the hotel windows--

INT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, HALLWAY - NIGHT

AN ELDERLY GUEST steps out of the elevator... and SEES TWO HUMAN FORMS about to crash through the hallway windows.

ELDERLY GUEST
(in Malay, subtitled)
--shit!

He steps back into the elevator as **CRASSSSH!** Ethan and Nora erupt through the windows in a ticker-tape-parade of falling glass. Hit the floor. Lay there unmoving as we **SMASH TO:**

EXT. BAY SANDS HOTEL ROOFTOP - NIGHT

CRASH! Bathurst erupts from the pool and makes a beeline for--

A SECOND BLACKHAWK

--as it descends to the rooftop. Climbs in, yells to PILOT--

BATHURST

GO.

...as it rises from the roof, Bathurst settles in. Agent Shin hands him a headset, he puts it on...

AGENT SHIN (OVER HEADSET)

All targets neutralized. We've got boots on the ground in the Hub.

INT. SAFEHOUSE, UNDERGROUND ROOM - NIGHT

CRASH! A GLASS TANK shatters from a bullet, bursts open...

AS WE WIDEN TO REVEAL

...we're in THE HUB'S UNDERGROUND ROOM, where the previous bodies of the Infinities are stored. A "preservation pod" has just been blown open, dumping its body onto the floor...

...and as a SPLINTER TEAM OF MERCS gathers around it, we see: the body is **TREADWAY**.

CLICK! **MERC 1** opens a KNIFE. Tight on his face as (off-screen) he cuts open the body. Reaches in, feels around...

...and locates what he's after.

MERC 1 (INTO EARPIECE)

It's here...

INT. BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER, MOVING - NIGHT

Bathurst hears the Merc's voice in his headset.

MERC 1 (THROUGH HEADSET)

...package secured.

BATHURST

Bring it to the compound.

And as the Blackhawk flies on, we CUT TO:

INT. BAY SANDS HOTEL, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ethan GASPS as he comes back to consciousness. Through bleary eyes, he can see Nora: worse for wear after her trip through the window... but on her feet, phone to her ear.

NORA (INTO PHONE)
(in Malay, subtitled)
...Bay Sands Hotel, we need an ambulance...

ETHAN
(tries to stand up)
...Nora...

NORA
Don't-- you're losing blood.

Ethan looks down and sees that his pantleg is soaked with blood. Shattered window glass opened him up good. As Nora uses his jacket to tourniquet the wound...

NORA (INTO PHONE)
(in Malay, subtitled)
Sixty-seventh floor, east hallway, victim's suffering from multiple lacerations. Hurry.

She ends the call. Kneels in front of Ethan.

NORA
The ambulance will be here soon.
Tell them you want Dr. Tengku at Mount Elizabeth hospital--

ETHAN
--where-- where are you going?--

She pauses. A moment of brutal honesty.

NORA
...I thought if I found Treadway, we stood a chance at survival.

Her eyes go to the shards of glass on the floor, her cracked reflection shining back at her...

NORA
...he was never the one I should've been looking for.

She takes his hand. Tender. Mournful.

And with that, she's already heading for the stairwell door--

ETHAN

NORA!

She disappears through the door. Ethan STRUGGLES to his feet, but he's weak and woozy from blood loss...

...his eyes go dreamy and WHUMPH! He collapses. SMASH TO:

INT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - NIGHT

A heavy case is set down on a desk. Temperature-sealed locks retract, the case opens, revealing the EGGSHELL. Widen to...

...BATHURST, standing over it. Breathes in deep. Like the weight of the world has been lifted off his shoulders...

BATHURST

(a whisper)

...thank you.

And as he shuts the case in our faces, we GO TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

B L I N K

Our hazy POV. Monitors beeping. Tubes dripping with liquid.

B L I N K

Reverse to Ethan: opening his eyes. He's in a hospital bed. Wounds closed by stitches. Body in a dull agony...

He sits up and sees THE ARTISAN sitting by his bed.

ETHAN

...the hell?...

ARTISAN

Hi. Don't mind me, just enjoying your painkillers.

Artisan clicks a button connected to an IV BAG in his arm.

ARTISAN

Nora asked me to check on you. And since we're all gonna be dead by dinnertime anyway, I figured: dying sober is for suckers.

ETHAN

But Bathurst hasn't set off the--

ARTISAN

--stop throwing applesauce all over your highchair, ok? It's *fait accompli*. Only a matter of time.
(off his look)

The Eggshell's a masterpiece. Releases a nanotech bio-toxin powered by the energy it consumes. Everything it kills makes it faster, spreading all over the globe until there's nothing left...

ETHAN

...so he's gotta detonate it over a major power source. Whatever city's got the most population density.

ARTISAN

Tokyo, Manhattan, Sao Paulo, take your pick.

ETHAN

Once he does that, we're talking minutes before the planet goes bye-bye.

ARTISAN

For the record, this wasn't how I wanted to go either. I thought my final hours would involve me in a pile of naked women while peaking on Quaaludes and eating a cheesesteak, but *noooo*--

ETHAN

Where do I find him?

That makes The Artisan sit up in his chair...

ARTISAN

You wanna take a run at *Bathurst*?

Ethan's silence confirms it. The Artisan starts LAUGHING.

ARTISAN

Brethren, please. There's a million better ways to spend your last hours on Earth than walking face-first into a buzz-saw. Be realistic about this, ok? Compared to what you're up against... you ain't shit.

"*You ain't shit.*" Ethan's heard those words before. From his sadistic thug "friend" Ronny back home. From kids in the foster homes. From the dark depths of his wounded mind.

But now... they don't hold the same power they once had. His voice takes on a pitiless authority reminiscent of Treadway.

ETHAN

One more time, for the cheap seats... where?

A beat. The Artisan sizes him up, then...

ARTISAN

I literally never thought I'd say this but... fuck it: YOLO. Let's get you some gear.

EXT. PORT OF SINGAPORE - DAY

A BLUR OF COLOR flies past us. Reveal: **THE PORT OF SINGAPORE**, its mass of colorful shipping containers. We whoosh down--

--into the MAZE OF CARGO, and land on Ethan and the Artisan, walking up to a dirty, beat-up CONTAINER. Artisan triggers a remote, and a PANEL IN THE UNIT SLIDES OPEN.

INT. ARTISAN'S R&D LAB - CONTINUOUS

In a hollowed-out stack of containers: a sleek STORAGE UNIT the size of a ballroom -- rows of HIGH-TECH WEAPONS, ARMOR and COMBAT GEAR. What James Bond's Q has wet dreams about.

ARTISAN

Welcome to the jungle, we got fun and games...

Ethan walks through. Pulls guns and gear off racks, tosses them into his duffel bag. Then, seeing something, he stops...

ETHAN

That what I think it is?

We don't see what Ethan's pointing at. All we see is the "oh yes" look on his face, and the "oh no" look on the Artisan's.

ARTISAN

It's still in beta.

ETHAN

Does it work?

ARTISAN

It's another year of development
away from being a deathtrap.

The Artisan looks at him. Sees he won't be swayed.

ARTISAN

It works... *sometimes?*

And as our soundtrack RISES TO A DIN, WE SMASH TO:

EXT. MOUNTAINS ABOVE BATHURST'S ESTATE - MORNING

Crystalline silence. The rising sun bathes the snowy mountains in gold. For a day when every life on earth is about to end, nature's going out on a high note. We drift to--

BATHURST'S ESTATE

--past the airplane hangar, where the CARGO PLANE gets fueled up, ready to go, as we travel past--

--the SMALL ARMY OF HEAVILY ARMED GUARDS, keeping watch--

--and into the house we go--

INT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - MORNING

--where THE EGGSHELL CASE gets wheeled along by Agent Shin and Agent Harlowe, flanked by the **TEAM OF MERCS**. Harlowe breaks off from the group, we follow him--

INTO THE KITCHEN

--where Bathurst stands at the stove. Dressed in a pristine suit. Making the most perfect omelette you've ever seen.

AGENT HARLOWE

Sir?

Bathurst doesn't look up. Expertly flips his omelette onto a plate, takes a forkful, savors it. When he speaks, it's hard to tell if he's talking to Agent Harlowe or to himself.

BATHURST

Used to wonder about my last meal.
A perfect salmon from the Nushagak
River. Marbled cote de bouef from
Boucherie Polmard. Fresh taglione
with hand-churned butter...

(takes another bite)

(MORE)

BATHURST (CONT'D)

But I suppose after all this time,
I should know... there's something
to be said for simplicity.

It's only now that Bathurst looks to Agent Harlowe.

AGENT HARLOWE

Package is prepped. Once we're over
our target, we drop and detonate--

BATHURST

--shhh.

We can barely hear it -- a distant **POP**. Then a RISING HIGH
SOUND LIKE STEAM FROM A KETTLE, GETTING LOUDER--

WHAM! Bathurst SWINGS THE IRON PAN in front of his face and--

--CLANG! In super slo-mo, we see a **BULLET** SLAM INTO THE PAN,
WARPING THE IRON AS THE SLUG COMPRESSES FROM THE IMPACT--

--and with a WHOOSH, we PULL BACK--

ACROSS THE ROOM

THROUGH THE **BULLET HOLE** IN THE WINDOW

OUT BEYOND THE ESTATE AND UP TO--

EXT. TOP OF CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

--a CLIFF A HALF MILE AWAY, where we find NORA: holding a
SNIPER RIFLE ON A TRIPOD, in full combat-gear. Ready to take
all these motherfuckers to school.

BOOM! She squeezes off her next shot--

INT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - MORNING

--but Bathurst is too fast. He ROLLS out of the way as the
round STRIKES THE FLOOR, turning tile to confetti, as--

--Agent Harlowe and the team of Mercs RETURN FIRE as--

--Bathurst slams a BUTTON ON A SECURITY PAD--

--and a HIDDEN DOOR SLIDES OPEN down the hall. Bathurst
lunges for it, sniper-bullets STITCHING THE WALLS, as--

EXT. TOP OF CLIFF - MORNING

Nora peers through her scope, searching for Bathurst...

NORA
...c'mere, you bastard...

THE SCOPE'S POV settles on something--

NORA
 --shit--

INSIDE BATHURST'S ESTATE

--Bathurst emerges from the room, now strapped with a **DOUBLE BARRELED MINI-GUN** rigged to a Steadicam-style harness, trailing belts of **EXPLOSIVE TIPPED ROUNDS**.

BRAAAAAAAP! The mini-guns UNLEASH HELL.

TRACER ROUNDS SPEW OUT OF THE ESTATE AND ACROSS THE CANYON LIKE A FIERY PLAGUE. Nora barely has time to roll out of the way as her sniper rifle and its tripod get DISINTEGRATED--

SEEN FROM ABOVE

Satan's lawnmower eats the forest. Explosive rounds turn tree trunks to sawdust, sending timber falling this way and that--

--Nora DIVING to avoid collapsing pines--

--glowing tracer rounds create fireworks over her head as--

--she digs into her CLIMBING BAG -- strapped with AUTOMATIC HANDGUNS AND GEAR. She grabs a BELAY DEVICE. Forces it into a CRACKED ROCK, wedging it in tight...

NORA
...go in... go in...

CLICK! It goes in tight. She HOOKS A ROPE TO IT. Slings the bag over her shoulder. Deep breath--

--AND SPRINTS FOR THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF AS A WAVE OF BULLETS SWEEPS TOWARD HER. We follow her as she grips her belay rope--

--AND LAUNCHES HERSELF OFF THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN.

EXT. CLIFF FACE - CONTINUOUS

She's free-falling for a moment. Rope trailing behind her, arms and legs kicking, until--

--BAM! Her belay catches and her boots touch rock -- she's now RUNNING VERTICALLY DOWN THE FACE OF THE CLIFF.

Bullets chew up the world above her, hurling rock shrapnel as she bounds her way down the cliff, jumping 30 feet at a time--

--until SNAP! Gunfire SEVERS HER ROPE--

--just as Nora KICKS OFF THE CLIFF, 50 FEET FROM THE GROUND--

--FALLING THROUGH THE AIR, FLIPPING ONTO HER BACK, GUARDING HER HEAD WITH HER ARMS, in for a nasty landing and--

CRASH! She EXPLODES into the pines below, slamming through layer after layer of branches, slowing her fall, until WHUMPH! She's dumped to the ground in a heap as we SMASH TO:

INT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - MORNING

Bathurst lifts his finger from the trigger. Scans the destroyed cliff in the distance. No sign of Nora.

BATHURST

(to Harlowe)

Alpha Team, on her now. Everyone else is wheels up in three minutes.

(off his silence)

Do it.

EXT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER

VROOOM! Snowmobile engines ERUPT TO LIFE.

SCREE! Studded Humvee tires SPIT DIRT.

A 50-STRONG CREW OF ARMED MERCS roars into the forest beyond the estate, an army of lethal hounds after one fox...

EXT. FOREST BEYOND BATHURST'S ESTATE - MORNING

Nora struggles to her feet -- dazed, bloody, aching. Hears the whine of approaching engines. A LOT of engines...

Looks around for her weapons bag. Nowhere to be seen.

Engines get CLOSER AND CLOSER...

...as she conceals herself behind a tree...

...and finally, she spots it: her bag of guns, three stories above, tangled in the branches of a tree 20 feet away.

NORA

...shit...

She steps out to retrieve it, and right then-- A GUN COCKS.

RACK TO REVEAL

AGENT HARLOWE -- on foot, 20 feet behind, auto-rifle raised.

AGENT HARLOWE

Hands up. Turn around.

But then a sound stops them both.

Getting louder and LOUDER, til it sounds like a MISSILE.

Their heads turn...

...and KA-BLAM! Harlowe gets RIPPED OUT OF FRAME BY A MAN WITH A SOME KIND OF **FUTURISTIC ENGINE** HARNESSED TO HIS BACK.

Momentum carrying them off into the trees, where there's a GUT-WRENCHING *CRASH!*

Nora RUNS for the source of the sound...

THROUGH THE TREES

...and as she comes through the branches, she comes upon a most unexpected sight...

ETHAN

...rising to his feet over Agent Harlowe's body, eyes hazy with menace, pulling off an impact-dented helmet. Sporting combat gear and next-gen guns clipped on carabiners, all courtesy of the Artisan. On his back: a wrecked JETPACK.

ETHAN

...think I was really gonna let you do this alone?

She should be impressed. But all she says is:

NORA

You're on fire.

ETHAN

(looks back)
--shit.

He dumps the smoldering machine into the snow as we SMASH TO:

EXT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - MORNING

RUMBLE go the wheels of a cart over concrete, up a ramp, and into the hangar of the plane, where we reveal--

--BATHURST and his team, ready to go. Bathurst hits a button and the cargo hold door rises, shutting them in as we hear:

NORA (PRE-LAP)
We gotta get to that plane before
it takes off.

EXT. FOREST BEYOND BATHURST'S ESTATE, CLEARING - MORNING

The sound of the plane audible in the BG, competing with the drone of APPROACHING SNOWMOBILES & HUMVEES...

ETHAN
Might be a few people over there
with different plans.

NORA
Any ideas?

Ethan unslings a gun and BLAM! Fires a bullet through the pines overhead, the round severing a tree branch, and--

--the gun-bag lands at their feet. As they take weapons from it, Ethan spots a SAMURAI SWORD IN A SHEATH. Without a word, Nora hands it to him. He straps it onto his back.

NORA
Welcome back, Abelin.

And off this, an unexpected sound rises: lush, swelling, romantic STRINGS. The intro to a familiar old song.

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
At last...

EXT. FOREST BEYOND BATHURST'S ESTATE - MORNING

As the music bathes us in its warm tide, Ethan and Nora tear through the forest in DECADENT SLO-MO. Double-fisting guns, HOT LEAD SIZZLING through the trees at the INCOMING MERCs.

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
...my love has come along...

For the first time, they are a true TEAM. Two warriors stepping into the shoes they thought they'd never fill.

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
My lonely days are over...

A shot from Ethan takes a MERC right off his snowmobile, the rider-less vehicle careening toward Nora, but she RUNS UP THE HOOD AND LAUNCHES HERSELF OFF IT, ONTO THE ROOF OF A HUMVEE--

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
...and life is like a song...

--FIRING her weapons through the roof, slaying Mercs within, jumping off into the snow, tossing a grenade over her head, sending the Humvee FLYING SKYWARD IN A BURST OF FIRE.

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
At last the skies above are blue...

WHAM! The Humvee touches down, ROLLS TOWARD ETHAN IN A BALL OF WRECKAGE but he goes into a slide, snakes under it, pops back to his feet Nora seeing it, *loving this fucking guy...*

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
*...my heart was wrapped up clover
 the night I looked at you...*

Ethan UNLOADS runs out of ammo, Nora TOSSES HIM A FRESH CLIP, which he SLAMS INTO HIS GUN as he DROP-KICKS a merc--

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
*...I found a dream that I could
 speak to...*

Ethan DODGES MORTAR FIRE, explosion DISLODGING PINES, runs through a MAZE OF FALLING TREES, still shooting guns the entire time, taking down Mercs left and right, as--

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
*...you smiled, you smiled oh and
 then the spell was cast...*

--he SPRINTS TO OUTRUN THE FALLING PINES, he's about to get CRUSHED... when VRRRRRM! The sound of an engine. He looks to see NORA -- on a stolen snowmobile, speeding at him, he JUMPS ONTO THE HOOD AND SHE GUNS THE MOTOR--

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
...and here we are in Heaven...

--OUTRUNNING THE WAVE OF FALLING TREES BY A FOOT.

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
...for you are mine...

They see: 50 feet in the distance, Bathurst's estate. Plane taxiing down the runway. Almost there... when suddenly, Agent Shin steps out of the hanger, RPG LAUNCHER ON HIS SHOULDER. They SWERVE. Too late. Music goes into its big finale, as...

ETTA JAMES (ON SOUNDTRACK)
...at laaaaast.

KA-BOOM! Grenade hits the ground in front of them. Explosion sends them AIRBORNE. Bodies & vehicle twisting overhead--

--before SLAMMING HARD into the tarmac. Snowmobile BURSTING INTO RAGGED PIECES as it somersaults before--

--EATING THE PAVEMENT, ENGINE DYING OUT. **ALL GOES SILENT.**

EXT. BATHURST'S ESTATE, TARMAC - CONTINUOUS

Look down on Ethan and Nora: on the tarmac amidst wreckage of the snowmobile. Ethan looks through bleared eyes to see...

NORA

...laying there with a STEEL ROD from the snowmobile IMPALED THROUGH HER TORSO. Red spreading. Face losing color.

ETHAN
--Nora--

She doesn't make a sound, doesn't move a muscle, as...

AGENT SHIN

...approaches in the haze. Drops his spent RPG launcher, pulls a HANDGUN from his holster. Coming to finish them off.

When all of a sudden--

--Nora steels herself... and SHINK! YANKS THE METAL ROD OUT OF HER TORSO. It trembles in her unsteady hand.

Down the runway, Shin lifts his gun to shoot her--

--and Nora closes her eyes. Putting herself deep into memory--

INSIDE NORA'S MEMORY:

The Serengeti. A young AFRICAN GIRL alongside a tribal HUNTING PARTY. Nora's first life.

The girl winds back to hurl a SPEAR at an ELEPHANT....

BACK IN THE PRESENT

--the bloody steel rod in Nora's hand STOPS TREMBLING.

And *WHOOSH!* She CHUCKS HER MAKESHIFT SPEAR AT AGENT SHIN--

--sending it RIGHT INTO THE BARREL OF HIS GUN AT THE EXACT MOMENT HE PULLS THE TRIGGER.

BOOM! The gun BACKFIRES AND EXPLODES IN HIS HAND, blowing shrapnel straight through his skull.

WHUMPH! Shin collapses to the tarmac, dead.

Nora collapses too. The last of her strength, sapped. As she lays bleeding, Ethan crawls to her. But her eyes are on...

BATHURST'S AIRPLANE

...as it reaches full speed at the end of the runway...

ETHAN

...it's okay... it's okay... I'm gonna get you out of here--

NORA

--he detonates... that's it for us.

Ethan takes in the weight of her words. Her voice staccato...

NORA

...this life's over for me,
Ethan... find you in the next...
(coughs blood)
...just have to... make sure there is one...

ETHAN

...no... I need your help... I can't take him down on my own...

NORA

...you're enough, Ethan... look at me... you're enough.
(voice starts to fade)
...my last life... just before I died... I kissed you...
(voice fading farther)
...ask me why I did that... ask me why I...

And she DROPS INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS. Ethan holds her. The biggest moment of reckoning of his life.

Then... Ethan rises to his feet. Looks out to see Bathurst's plane taking off. Looks over to the AIRPLANE HANGAR... to the GARAGE OF CARS adjacent to it, wheels turning in his head.

INT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - GARAGE - MORNING

--CLICK! A cabinet door opens, revealing SETS OF CAR KEYS.
 --VROOM! Ethan fires the engine in Bathurst's Porsche Spyder.
 --SQUEAL! Ethan BLAZES RUBBER out of the garage, up the canyon road ahead, as we pass into...

HIS MEMORY

--A COASTAL HIGHWAY IN MONACO, 1960S CARS SLUICING ALONG IT--

BACK TO REALITY

VROOOM! In a blink, the Porsche tears up to 180, expertly taking sharp turns like water down a slide, as...

INT. BATHURST'S PLANE, MOVING - MORNING

Bathurst's plane slowly rises through the canyon, as...

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - MORNING

Pavement SPEEDS BENEATH US. Ethan rushes through the highway in the Porsche. Focused on the adjacent canyon, catching up with Bathurst's plane, gliding low in the corridor of cliffs. In less than a minute, car and plane will be parallel.

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY

...we're back in our first scene -- Abelin's POV, speeding towards the construction crane in the Bugati with Leona, coming to rescue Treadway, looking up to see...

...on the freeway cloverleaf above, Treadway's car SMASHES into the barrier, launching Treadway off the hood...

INSIDE BATHURST'S SPEEDING SPYDER

Ethan plants a heavy AMMO BOX on the accelerator. Takes his foot off the gas, car retaining its speed...

...as he climbs onto the hood -- one hand through the window, controlling the wheel. His hair whips. Wind brings tears to his eyes. But he holds steady, straight on his course...

INT. BATHURST'S PLANE, FLYING - MORNING

In the cockpit, the **PILOT** looks over his shoulder--

PILOT

Sir?...

Bathurst joins the pilot in the cockpit, sees what he sees: on the adjacent highway there's a familiar PORSCHE speeding along with a crazy man crouched on its hood.

BATHURST

Speed up.

WHRRRRMMM! The plane starts to go faster as...

EXT. BATHURST'S PORSCHE SPYDER, MOVING - MORNING

Ethan sees the PLANE RISING. Seconds from ascending from the canyon and leaving him behind. Ethan adjusts the wheel to AIM FOR THE CONCRETE BARRIER 500 FEET AHEAD. COLLISION COURSE.

BARRIER SPEEDING TOWARDS US. 100 FEET. 50 FEET.

Ethan shuts his eyes. BARRIER FILLING THE FRAME.

CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASSSSHHHHH!

The car WRECKS INTO THE WALL--

--but Ethan has already launched himself off the hood.

FROM ABOVE: A tableau of almost hallucinatory splendor.

--*The crashed Porsche Spyder, FRONT-FLIPPING OVER THE BARRIER--*

--*just behind Ethan's body: flung free above the canyon's abyss, arms and legs splayed over the void...*

...about to intercept the roof of the rising airplane...

A slow-motion ballet of car, plane and human...

INT. BATHURST'S PLANE, FLYING - SAME

The Pilot's mouth drops open as he sees, through the windshield, Ethan sailing towards his plane...

PILOT

--holyshit--

They pass under him and... KA-DUMPH! Something hits the roof. Half-second jolt. The freaked out pilot looks to Bathurst...

BATHURST
Climb higher.

PILOT
Guy's splattered all over the
canyon floor by now--

KABOOM! An explosion ROCKS THE PLANE, and the CONTROL PANEL GOES NUTS, as the captain looks to see--

--on the wing, one of the plane's engines has been blown to flaming wreckage. We WHOOSH UP TO--

EXT. BATHURST'S PLANE, FLYING - CONTINUOUS

--ETHAN: clinging to the roof of the plane. Wind threatening to blow him off. Hanging on with one hand, he reaches into his bag, pulls out a PARTICLE GRENADE...

...primes, gets ready to chuck it into another engine...

INT. AIRPLANE COCKPIT, FLYING - CONTINUOUS

Bathurst, face going dark, looks to the pilot.

BATHURST
Speed up.

PILOT
Can't without that engine!

Bathurst thinks... then straps himself into the seat next to the captain, takes the co-pilot controls.

PILOT
Hell are you doing?--

Bathurst JERKS THE CONTROLS, the aircraft BUCKS SIDEWAYS as--

UP ON TOP OF THE PLANE

--and Ethan STARTS FALLING DOWN THE SIDEWAYS BANKING PLANE.

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY

A familiar sight: earlier versions of Treadway & Abelin, WING-WALKING ALONG a WW1 AIRPLANE, jumping from perch to perch--

BACK ATOP THE PLANE

BAM! Ethan catches the END OF THE WING, GRABS HOLD, body dangling over the fathomless gorge, wind battering him as--

INSIDE THE PLANE

Bathurst YANKS the controls in the opposite direction as we PULL BACK WIDE TO REVEAL--

--Ethan, using his acrobatic and wing-walking talents to LEAP, JUMP, and SCAMPER ALL OVER THE PLANE AS IT ROLLS IN THE AIR, HELL-BENT ON THROWING HIM OFF, until--

--the aircraft TILTS SKYWARD, and Ethan SLIDES down it, out of control, seconds away from FLYING OFF THE BACK--

INSIDE ETHAN'S MEMORY

A memory from earlier this week: Ethan falling down the chute in the Himalayas, trying to get his ice axe into the snow--

BACK ATOP THE PLANE

Ethan PULLS THE SWORD from his sheath, and just before he can go sliding off into oblivion... CRACK! He STABS THE TAIL RUDDER ICE AXE-STYLE, arresting his fall. Holds on tight as--

--VRRRRRM! The plane ARCS DOWNWARD, goes into a NOSE-DIVE--

--and instead of dangling from the rudder over the chasm below, Ethan's now dangling above the CLOSED CARGO HOLD DOOR AT THE REAR OF THE PLANE. Strains to hold on...

ETHAN

...c'mon... c'mon...

Hanging on with one hand to the sword handle, he frees a PARTICLE GRENADE... and DROPS IT AT THE CARGO HOLD DOOR.

INSIDE THE PLANE

BOOM! Explosion JOLTS the plane. Alarms sound in the cockpit. Pilot stares incredulously at the flashing warnings...

PILOT

...Jesus, little bastard just blew open the cargo hold...

ATOP THE PLANE

Ethan KICKS OFF THE TAIL, frees his sword, and DROPS DOWN TOWARD THE BLOWN-OPEN CARGO HOLD BELOW. We follow him--

INTO THE PLANE'S CARGO HOLD

--where he goes SLIDING DOWN THE NEARLY-VERTICAL FLOOR, finally slamming into the DOOR AT THE FAR END OF THE HOLD.

INSIDE THE COCKPIT

BAM! Bathurst and the pilot hear the IMPACT behind them. Bathurst PULLS THE PLANE OUT OF ITS NOSE-DIVE. Unbuckles his harness, stands up from the co-pilot's chair.

BATHURST

Keep it steady.

With that, he walks out, through the passenger area. Pulls his DETHRONER from a case. Makes for the CARGO HOLD ENTRANCE--

INSIDE THE CARGO HOLD

...and sees across the hold, there sits Ethan McCauley -- aka Alexandre Abelin, protege to the greatest Infinite ever to walk the Earth. He's sitting Buddha-style, his sword across his legs, atop something: **THE CASE CONTAINING THE EGGSHELL.**

BATHURST

So that's how it's going to be.

Bathurst is surprised to hear Ethan's tone... empathy.

ETHAN

You wanna set this thing off because you're in pain. I know what that's like. Believe me. I know.

(beat)

But you can still find a reason to open your eyes in the morning. It's there if you look for it.

Flickers of buried emotion behind Bathurst's eyes...

BATHURST

This life of yours... someday it'll be a curse. Someday you'll wonder when all your experiences started to feel the same. Someday you'll be praying for deliverance that won't ever come.

(beat)

Someday you'll be me.

ETHAN

...not today.

Bathurst knows the sound a fight-bell when he hears one.

BATHURST

Henrich Treadway was the only one
who ever stood a chance against me.
And you're not him.

ETHAN

You're right. I'm the guy Treadway
spent lifetimes training to destroy
you. And that's enough.

And with that, the kicked dog that was once Ethan McCauley is gone forever. Replaced with the man Bathurst sees before him.

ETHAN

Nothing between us but space and
opportunity.

BOOM! Bathurst swings up the Dethroner and FIRES.

--CRACK! Ethan draws his sword and slices the "spider-bullet" in half as he LUNGES OFF THE CASE, FLYING TOWARD BATHURST--

--and it's just like we saw in the opening on the crane: a sword-vs-Dethroner battle. Bodies moving like overcranked clockwork. So fast the camera can barely keep up, as--

IN ETHAN'S MEMORY

--we're in a room, in our last life, Practicing a VICIOUS SWORD FIGHT with our sensei. The walls are mirrors, and in the reflection we see: us (Abelin) sparring with Treadway.

TREADWAY

...c'mon... c'mon, Abelin...

BACK INSIDE THE CARGO HOLD

CLANG CLANG! Ethan and Bathurst go strike-for-strike with their weapons. The fight going from the floor, up the stacks of crates, swinging across the webs of CARGO NETTING--

--just as the plane HITS TURBULENCE and KNOCKS THEM TO THE FLOOR, their weapons SKIDDING AWAY.

Bathurst rises. Ditto Ethan. WHAM! A MULTI-CULTURAL assault: Kung Fu, Krav Maga, Capoeira, Pencak Silat, and some form of fighting (Scottish?) that primarily involves HEAD-BUTTING.

CRACK! Ethan's face fractures from a blow. He staggers back as Bathurst TAKES HIM DOWN WITH A FLYING TACKLE. And as they head for the ground, Ethan SHUTS HIS EYES...

ETHAN'S MEMORY

An ANCIENT JAPANESE DOJO, a JUDO MATCH in progress, we're heading for the ground with our OPPONENT as--

BACK IN THE PLANE

--WHAM! Ethan slams into the floor and ROLLS WITH THE IMPACT--
THROWING BATHURST OFF HIM AND ACROSS THE CABIN, JUDO-STYLE.
BAM! Bathurst BASHES into the far wall. Bleeding, trying to
hide his astonishment, he LUNGES BACK AT ETHAN--

--who's on his feet, cool as a cucumber.

IN ETHAN'S MEMORY

A 19th century Irish Pub with a BARE KNUCKLE BOXING MATCH going on. We're one of the brawlers -- our fists up, dancing, about to take down the HAIRY BRUISER before us as--

INT. BATHURST'S PLANE - NIGHT

--BAM-POW-CRACK! Ethan launches a VOLLEY OF BARE-KNUCKLE
BOXER PUNCHES at Bathurst, DESTROYING this sonofabitch as
they move across the cargo hold. It's fucking majestic--

--until the plane hits AN AIR POCKET, the men are FLUNG like
toys, and as they hit the floor, Bathurst is on Ethan.

TEN QUICKSILVER PUNCHES. Breaks Ethan's ribs. Loosens teeth.
Explodes the blood vessels in one of his eyes. Damn near
knocks him out of the plane. Ethan, wheezing, staggers...

...and stops cold as he sees it: **Bathurst has grabbed the
Dethroner off the floor.**

POP! Bathurst SHOOTS ETHAN IN THE HEAD. The spider-bullet
UNFURLS IN MID-AIR AND *LATCHES INTO ETHAN'S SKULL.*

WHUMPH! Ethan COLLAPSES. A cut-string marionette.

Bathurst, winded, steps forward... and spits blood on him
Then walks to the CRATE CONTAINING THE EGGSHELL. Opens it.
Sees the device is inside, untouched.

Then he notices something odd...

...a SHADOW moving across the floor like the hands on a
doomsday clock. His face loses color as he turns to see...

ETHAN

...rising, a phantom of biblical reckoning. Pulling the
spider-Bullet from his forehead, probes tinged with blood...
somehow, 100% alive. Lifts a RATCHET STRAP off the floor.

BATHURST

No...

ETHAN

16. Car crash. Steel plate.

(beat)

Quite the rough ride, remember?

Bathurst SLAMS ANOTHER ROUND into his Dethroner, just as--
CRACK! Ethan swings the ratchet strap like a sling, wraps it
around the Dethroner and YANKS IT AWAY FROM BATHURST. Ethan
plucks it from the air, turns the weapon on its master, and--

ETHAN

Enjoy eternity.

BOOM! Ethan plugs a round into Bathurst's head. Probes
driving into his skull.

Bathurst ROCKS BACK. Eyes cauterized. A whisper...

BATHURST

...it's so quiet in here...

--and tumbles backwards, OUT OF THE CARGO HOLD. Arcing away
through the atmosphere, into the canyon 3000 feet below.

Ethan stands there. Somehow still upright. Throbbing with
pain, adrenaline, triumph... then he feels it: the
vertiginous gut-churn of the PLANE TILTING DOWNWARD.

ETHAN

--shit--

As the plane goes into a nosedive, causing CRATES OF LOOSE
GEAR to slide down the cargo hold, Ethan runs for-

INT. BATHURST'S PLANE, PASSENGER CABIN - CONTINUOUS

--the passenger cabin, where Ethan sees something odd: the
passenger cabin's escape hatch is OPEN, wind HOWLING IN.
Ethan looks out through the hatch to see, thousands of feet
below, **A MAN drifting away from the plane via PARACHUTE.**

ETHAN

...no...

Dread rising in his gut, Ethan stumbles down the tilting
cabin floor, makes it to the COCKPIT--

--throws the door open and sees no one's flying the plane.
That guy he just saw parachuting away was the *FUCKING PILOT.*

As the plane RATTLES, Ethan sees it through the windscreen: he's on a nosedive collision-course with the canyon floor. Ethan straps himself into the pilot's seat, shuts his eyes--

ETHAN'S MEMORY

--we're in a British WW1 fighter plane -- Armstrong Whitworth F.K.5. Our plane's on fire and we're going down fast as our hands desperately work the 100-year-old controls--

BACK IN THE PRESENT

--Ethan opens his eyes, looks at the controls... and, of course, they're COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM HIS WW1 PLANE.

ETHAN

("I'm so fucked")
...okay then...

Tries to pull the plane up, the aircraft starting to SCREAM with stressed-out metal as it flies TOWARD A CLIFF FACE.

--ETHAN'S HANDS: grip the controls, forcing the plane up.
--THE CLIFF WALL: gets closer and closer.
--THE COCKPIT: fills with the sound of ALARMS.
--THE MOUNTAIN TOP: comes at us like the fist of God...

...but there's an INCH OF BLUE SKY VISIBLE above it, coin toss to see if we'll make it over as... THE ALARMS **CRESCENDO.**

EXT. CLIFF FACE - DAY

A MOUNTAIN GOAT minds its own business. Chews some greenery along a path on a CLIFF FACE. Suddenly it looks up as...
VROOOOOOOM! Bathurst's plane SOARS DIRECTLY AT IT--

--THEN PASSES OVERHEAD, AS WE RISE TO REVEAL the plane coming in for a ROUGH LANDING **back at Bathurst's estate.**

EXT. BATHURST'S ESTATE, RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

BLAM! Its wheels touch down and INSTANTLY BLOW OUT, sending the plane swerving, skidding, SMOKING TO A STOP.

ON THE TARMAC: Ethan comes limping out of the half-destroyed plane, catching his breath -- *holy shit.*

VOICE (O.S.)

Not that I'm judging, but was that your first time landing a plane?

Ethan looks to see the last person he was expecting: The Artisan, walking from the estate to tarmac. Ethan smiles...

ETHAN

Been about 100 years. Does it show?

ARTISAN

Second shittiest landing I've ever seen. First was in 1902, got tanked on absinthe, crashed my airship into the Champs Elysees. Good thing I died, papers woulda had a field day-

ETHAN

You followed me here.

ARTISAN

What, I was supposed to let you take out a \$20 million dollar prototype rocket-pack unsupervised? What if you broke it?
(off his look)
You broke it, didn't you.

ETHAN

What are you doing here?

Off The Artisan's "come and see" look...

EXT. BATHURST'S ESTATE - DAY

Ethan follows the Artisan into the house... and sees...

...on a stretcher, surrounded by Bathurst's high-tech med-gear, is NORA. Alive, breathing, stomach-wound bandaged.

ETHAN

How-- how did you--

ARTISAN

Don't tell anybody I saved her ass. Can't have my reputation getting sullied with salacious rumors of do-goodery. What happened to Bathurst?

Ethan pulls out Bathurst's DETHRONER from his bag and drops it on the table like a rapper dropping the mic.

ARTISAN

Ok-- how long does a guy have to be dead before you can raid his scotch collection? Asking for a friend.

NORA

I think we've got slightly more pressing issues to attend to.

Ethan hands **THE EGGSHELL** to the Artisan.

ETHAN

You know what to do with that.

A nod, and he exits. Leaving Ethan and Nora alone. A beat...

ETHAN

Did I mention you look amazing?

NORA

Flattery will get you a long ways with me right now.

ETHAN

You don't look a day over 900.

She'd laugh, but it hurts. Takes his hand...

NORA

...what now?

ETHAN

We get you healed up. Back on your feet. And we go find Treadway.

She ponders that for a second...

NORA

He spent lifetimes testing you... maybe this was his final test.

ETHAN

(beat)

...you're not him, right?

NORA

No.

ETHAN

Good.

He leans in and kisses her. A kiss for the ages. Then...

ARTISAN

Sorry to interrupt, but...

(motions to a stairwell)

...you should probably see this.

INT. BATHURST'S ESTATE, BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

DING! Elevator doors open, and the Artisan steps out, Ethan helping Nora hobble along, as they enter... A FAMILIAR ROOM, lined with ROWS OF MEGA-DRIVES, their lights blinking neon.

ETHAN

Is that...

NORA

(approaches the drives)
...it's them.

We see it: the drives are labeled with NAMES. **GARRICK O'NEIL. JINYA SONG. PAWEL KOVIC. TRACE CONNORS. BRIAN PORTER.**

NORA

Every Infinite who was ever
Dethroned.

They take it in: all these Infinities, trapped in their blinking digital prisons. Humans reduced to code.

ARTISAN

...what do we do?

EXT. BATHURST'S ESTATE, HALL OUTSIDE UNDERGROUND ROOM

GLORIOUS SLO-MO: our heros exiting the estate, moving as one, Ethan holding Nora up as she limps. Tight on Ethan's hand: he's holding a **DETONATOR**. He presses the button and--

INSIDE THE SUBTERRANEAN ROOM

--we see the hard drives have been **RIGGED WITH EXPLOSIVES**, as **KA-BOOOOOOOM!** The first hard drive, marked "GARRICK O'NEIL", erupts in a CONCUSSIVE FIREBALL. But the sound is overtaken by something unexpected: the crying of a baby...

INT. HOSPITAL, DELIVERY ROOM - MORNING

...specifically, a **NEWBORN INFANT**, swaddled in the arms of his mother, opening his eyes for the first time in a clean, modern delivery room. Garrick's next cycle starting anew, as--

BACK IN THE UNDERGROUND ROOM

--where the explosion sets off a CHAIN REACTION: each hard drive **DETONATING INTO BURSTS OF AIRBORNE CINDERS**, and as each one goes off, we INTERCUT with a newborn opening its eyes.

BOOM! Jinya's hard drive gets obliterated... and a **FEMALE INFANT** takes her first breath, inside a Navajo Indian reservation hospital, tribal doctors at work...

BOOM! Kovic's hard drive dies in a blooming combustion...

...and a **MALE NEWBORN** cries out, having been just born in the backseat of a taxi in a traffic-jammed Beijing freeway.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! The whole room of hard drives explodes into sublime chaos as *WE SLAM TO BLACKNESS.*

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Pull out of A BASS SPEAKER in RONNY'S PAD -- Ethan's scummy dealer friend from Act 1. There's Ronny, out on bail and hanging with his crew, when *BOOM!* The door gets KICKED OPEN.

RONNY

Yo, what the--

He stops as he sees ETHAN: looking like a million bucks in his suit. Miles away from the cowering junkie of yore. Nora follows, leaves TWO UNCONSCIOUS CRONIES on the ground.

ETHAN

You have something of mine.

Ethan points to a SAMURAI SWORD hanging on the wall. The one he made for Ronny in the beginning. The crew's freaked by the force of nature that just swept in, but Ronny fronts like:

RONNY

Guess you best try to take it.

ETHAN

Well then, Ronny...

We PUSH IN ON ETHAN... **WHOOSHING INTO HIS MEMORY HALL: reveal it's ONE OF THOUSANDS OF HALLWAYS in a CASTLE, 500 feet high. His Memory Hall is now a MEMORY PALACE. WHOOSH BACK TO...**

ETHAN INSIDE RONNY'S HOUSE

...as a carnivorous smile crosses his face.

ETHAN

Allow me to introduce myself.

And we **SMASH TO BLACK.** *