

Pangeae Ultima

by
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It looks like you're about to read one of my screenplays. That's great. Feel free to tell your friends all about it, and if you enjoy the story let me know about it on twitter @smroy.

If you follow movies, you might be aware a film called "After Earth" is about to be released. The film has a very similar premise to my script (Earth becomes a harsh environment), just be aware that my script was written in 2004. I've only seen the trailer for "After Earth" but it looks like one of the dreadful new creatures of Earth are large baboons. I'll think you'll find my creatures a bit more interesting, and as an added bonus, none of Will Smith's children appear anywhere in the story.

Okay, enough of my bitterness (for now). You want to read a story about cool monsters and humans rising to the challenge to fight them. Well, read on my good reader. You're in for a treat.

Oh, I'm also considering re-purposing this story into a YA novel, so let me know what you think. Consider that the price of admission.

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

In the black silence a meteor zooms between the two halves of a broken moon orbiting a brown planet.

The meteor clears the debris trail leading from the broken moon and crashes into the dingy planet's atmosphere, and the silence of space is replaced with the deafening roar of wind as the meteor falls toward the surface.

At first, the planet seems like an alien landscape, but as the meteor emerges from the yellowish clouds the broken skyscrapers of a once great city come into view. This is Earth and it's a wasteland.

The meteor crashes into the ruins and digs deep into the earth before coming to a stop, but we continue to fall through layers of ruins and sediment until we emerge in...

INT. STASIS-POD WAREHOUSE - DAY

Super Impose: THE UNDERGROUND CITY OF REFUGE: MAN'S LAST HOPE.

In a massive warehouse thousands of stasis pods are clustered tightly on the rows of scaffolding that stretch to the ceiling. The stasis pods seem like giant, titanium seeds growing on metal vines

Down rows of thousands of the stacked pods a single, open pod casts light into the dark warehouse. Open, the pod resembles a giant, metal clam lined with a gel-like material and a confusing array of machinery.

A boy of nine, wearing a blue coverall uses the light emerging from the open pod to read the text displayed on a device that resembles a high-tech version of an ancient scroll.

The white letters written across the boy's chest read OSCAR DEL MAR. Oscar's older brother, OLIVIER, stands in front of him wearing a similar coverall with a long, white coat over the top.

OLIVIER

Come on, Oscar. It's past time.

OSCAR

Just a little while longer.

Olivier rips the reading device from Oscar's hands and throws it down the dark corridor. It lands with a slap that echoes through the warehouse.

Oscar looks at his brother.

OSCAR

I wasn't done with that.

OLIVIER

You don't need to understand how the stasis pods work. Just get in. It's time.

OSCAR

Why can't I stay with you?

OLIVIER

We've been through this a thousand times. The future will need you. Besides, things are getting crazy around here. I want you safely in a pod.

OSCAR

What's the hurry? At least let me get to be a teenager before I go under.

OLIVIER

Oscar, get in the pod.

OSCAR

When I wake up, you'll be dead.

OLIVIER

When you wake up the Earth will be healed. It'll be a verdant paradise, and you'll be needed.

OSCAR

But, I want to stay with you. You're the only one smart enough to have a decent conversation with.

OLIVIER

This is bigger than you and me.

Oscar sighs. A few tears run down his face.

OLIVIER

Don't do that. Just think when you wake up you'll have twenty thousand years of advancement to keep you busy.

OSCAR

You better record everything. Not just the science, but your life. I want to know everything.

OLIVIER

It'll all be waiting on you when you wake up.

OSCAR

I'm nervous. What if I don't wake up? What if I sleep forever?

OLIVIER

Quit stalling and get in. You know some of the sleepers have been under since before the sky went black; some of the animals have been under even longer. The pods are the safest place to be.

OSCAR

Big deal, a thousand years, we'll be sleeping for twenty thousand.

OLIVIER

You could sleep twenty million. It doesn't make a difference. Now, get in the god-damn pod.

Oscar hugs Olivier tightly but briefly. He gets into the pod and curls into the fetal position.

OLIVIER

You ready?

OSCAR

Hell no.

Olivier closes the lid over Oscar. The pod makes a noise like someone sucking in air as it seals.

Olivier holds his hands against the stasis pod. His shoulders slump, and his face crinkles as tears start to flow from his eyes.

OLIVIER

Sleep well little brother.

Footsteps can be heard as someone runs down the corridor. Olivier wipes the tears from his face and stands up straight.

A soldier emerges from the shadows. The name written in white across the black armor reads: A. SALVATOR.

Salvator stops and salutes Olivier.

SALVATOR

Sir, we've got big problems. Davidson has organized a mob of civilians. They want pods of their own.

OLIVIER

God damn it. How many civilians?

SALVATOR

All of them, Sir.

OLIVIER

Should we run?

SALVATOR

Fast as we can, Sir.

Salvator leads Olivier at a sprint towards the altercation.

INT. REFUGE - DAY

In front of the double doors that lead to the stasis-pod warehouse, a small squad of the armored soldiers are all that holds back a mob of over 500 people armed with anything they can find, welding lasers, power saws, even simple pipes.

A black clad soldier throws a man back and points his high-tech weapon into the crowd.

SOLDIER ONE

Get back. I'm not telling you again.

The crowd doesn't move back. They yell and throw trash at the soldiers.

An old, gray-haired man, LARS DAVIDSON, climbs onto the top of a four wheeled vehicle.

DAVIDSON

We've got as much right to a future as any of the sleepers. Why should we suffer in this hole while they get paradise?

The crowd cheers in agreement.

The double doors slide open and Salvator and Olivier emerge. Olivier walks to front of the soldiers. The crowd grows suddenly quiet at the sight of Olivier.

OLIVIER

We're not going to suffer. We're going to flourish, but we have to stick together. We're the last humans. We can't waste our energy fighting each other.

Salvator steps to Olivier's side protectively and raises his weapon. Olivier pushes the barrel of the weapon towards the floor.

OLIVIER

We all agreed this was best. All the sleepers were chosen for their superior genetics. Now, those of us that weren't chosen will have to deal with it.

DAVIDSON

I couldn't help but notice your brother was among the chosen.

The crowd jeers.

OLIVIER

My brother may well be the smartest human that ever existed. The future will need him. Did you notice I also turned my spot in the pods away? That's because it's important there are able people to care for the sleepers. What do you people want to do? Go take people out of their pods and take their places? What's to stop them from doing to the same to you once they're awake.

Many in the crowd look down at Olivier's words.

OLIVIER

You're thinking of murdering the sleepers?

DAVIDSON

It's not murder. It's self defense. We all have to right to live.

A mother in the crowd picks up her three year old daughter.

CONCERNED MOTHER

I'm not leaving until my baby gets a pod. She deserves a life, a future.

OLIVIER

If you want her to have a life, you'll have to build her one here, in Refuge.

DAVIDSON

And what kind of life can we have living underground? Why should we live and die in this tomb while the sleepers get to see paradise? Don't you deserve more? Don't your children deserve more than to die serving the chosen ones? Even animals have pods. Are we worth less than animals?

The crowd cheers in agreement.

OLIVIER

Those animals will reseed the Earth.

One of the black clad soldiers backs away from his squad and joins the angry mob. He turns his weapon on the other soldiers.

SALVATOR

What are you doing? Get back to your post. You swore to protect the sleepers.

TRAITOR

I don't want to die in this hole. I want a chance at a life in paradise even if I have to kick someone else out.

OLIVIER

Stop this now. If we turn on each other we're as good as dead. I have ideas how we can live a better life. Don't you people understand? This is about more than our personal happiness. This is about the survival of our species.

A few more of the soldiers abandon their post.

Salvator points his weapon at the Traitors. A second soldier comes and stands at his side. The name across her chest reads: F. Salvator. The two Salvators nod at each other and push down the visors on their helmets.

OLIVIER

Stop this now, before it gets out of hand.

DAVIDSON

It's already out of your hands. Now step aside if you want to survive.

Olivier sees most of the soldiers are remaining loyal.

OLIVIER

I'm giving you all one last chance to back down. I will not tolerate such selfishness.

CONCERNED MOTHER

He's already sentenced us to death. We have nothing to lose.

The traitors point their weapons at the loyal soldiers.

OLIVIER

No. Put your weapons down. We're the last of our kind, and you want to destroy each other.

DAVIDSON

We want a chance at paradise. Now, step out of the way.

OLIVIER

This just goes to show that the genetic tests are valid. Look at your behavior. You're showing you truly are inferior.

DAVIDSON

So we should just be slaves to the chosen? We should give our lives for them? I say we take paradise.

The crowd cheers.

The Two Salvators move to step in front of Olivier, but, before they can pull him out of harms way, Davidson pulls a small handgun and fires.

A big hole appears in Olivier's coverall. Blood seeps out and darkens his coverall. He falls backward. The two Salvators return fire killing Davidson. The traitors fire at the soldiers as the crowd surges toward the double doors.

SALVATOR

Protect the sleepers!

The soldiers fire on the crowd and the traitors alike. Massive casualties are taken on both sides. Some soldiers refuse to fire into the crowd. Those have their weapons yanked away and are trampled beneath the surging crowd.

The two Salvators and a few remaining soldiers fall back to the corridor. F. Salvator slams her palm into a large button and the doors begin to slide closed. The loyal soldiers jump behind the closing doors fleeing the surging crowd. Soldier-One continues firing into the crowd until the doors seal with a metallic thud.

SOLDIER ONE

I can't fucking believe this.
Hardly any humans left and I just
killed about fifty.

SALVATOR

It doesn't matter. We have to
protect the sleepers.

FEMALE SALVATOR

Fuck'em. They asked for it, the
selfish bastards.

From behind the double doors come the sound of grinding saws. Sparks brighten the dimly lit pod room.

SALVATOR

They're going to cut through.

Salvator points at Soldier-One.

SALVATOR

Go to the back of the pod room and
protect the computer. We'll come
for you when it's clear.

Soldier-One nods and sprints into the darkness.

SALVATOR

The rest of us will stay here and
hammer them when they try to come
through the door. If they get in,
we move to the shadows.

The grinding noise stops. Something crashes into the doors with a metallic thud that echoes through the warehouse. The doors fall inward.

Salvator and the loyal soldiers fire. Flashes of light come from the end of their weapons, lighting the dim warehouse like a strobe.

Civilians are blown backward as bodies begin to pile up from the barrage. Some of the traitors use the piles of dead civilians for cover and drive the loyal soldiers back.

SALVATOR

Move! Hit the shadows.

The soldiers break up into pairs and flee into the darkness.

A stream of people run into the pod room. Some of them are picked off by hiding soldiers, but there are too many to get them all.

INT. POD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Several civilians try to force open a stasis pod. Weapons fire rapidly. The civilians' bodies gyrate with the impacts before falling to the floor. The two Salvators run by and disappear into the shadows.

INT. POD ROOM/IN FRONT OF COMPUTER - DAY

Soldier-One is on a knee with his weapon raised hiding in the shadows. Three black-clad soldiers run toward him. Soldier-One comes out of the shadows, but then he recognizes the names of the traitors. Soldier-One fires and kills one of the traitors. The others return fire. A chunk is torn out of Soldier-One's side, and he flies backward down the corridor. His armor throws up sparks as he slides across the metal floor.

The others ignore him as they examine the large computer in the wall.

TRAITOR ONE

Can you figure it out?

TRAITOR TWO

Yeah. The interface is simple enough.

Traitor-two's head explodes. Traitor-one ducks and rolls for cover.

He turns to see Soldier-One using the last of his life to defend the sleepers. Before Traitor-One can fire, he takes a bullet to the shoulder and his weapon goes flying.

Soldier-One pushes himself to his feet, groaning in pain as he does so. He moves slowly toward Traitor-One.

Traitor-One pulls a grenade off his belt with his good arm and tosses it at Soldier-One.

SOLDIER ONE

No grenades, you idiot.

The shiny grenade bounces across the floor and detonates at Soldier-One's feet.

The grenade sends a shock-wave of shrapnel in 360 degrees. Soldier-One is ripped to pieces. A small piece of shrapnel penetrates one of the pods and punctures its power source. The pod explodes with great force starting a chain reaction of explosions. Some pods are blown into the ceiling where they explode from the impact. Long fissures run across the ceiling.

The shock-wave continues down the rows of pods, throwing them forward as if they were seeds caught in a strong wind.

INT. FRONT OF THE POD ROOM - DAY

The two Salvators stand near the front of the pod room. They look up to see the shock wave coming toward them.

SALVATOR

Oh no.

The force of the shock wave picks them both up and sends them flying. Salvator is struck by a speeding pod. The female Salvator is slammed into the wall.

The explosions stops. The stasis room is in ruins. Smouldering and ruined pods litter the room. Rubble rains down from the cracked ceiling.

The female Salvator pushes herself to her feet, cradling her arm.

Debris rains down from the ceiling as Salvator lays underneath a smouldering pod. The Female Salvator runs to him. She pushes the pod off his broken body and cradles his head. She pushes off his helmet and kisses his ruined face.

FEMALE SALVATOR
(looking at the ruined
room)

This is what we deserve. We don't
deserve to make it. Stupid,
selfish, monkeys.

She pulls a handgun strapped to her thigh, puts it to her head and pulls the trigger. Her body collapses onto Salvator's, locked in death's embrace.

Moving away from the two Salvators, rising through the layers of sediment, we emerge into the ruins of mankind.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - DAY

Broken skyscrapers and corroding machines that are half-buried in silt dominate the landscape. The sun is high in the sky, but there is so much dust in the ionosphere that the once brilliant sun seems like a flashlight held behind a black sheet.

Continuing over the barren wasteland, we reach a tumultuous ocean that sways angrily beneath a film of sludge and waste.

Plunging into the depths of the contaminated sea, going deeper and deeper until there is only darkness, a tiny speck of light comes into view. The light grows in size and intensity as we continue our rapid descent.

EXT. THERMAL VENT

The ocean floor comes into view. Magma is leaking slowly from the Earth's crust creating a bubble of light in the darkness, and more importantly a bubble for life.

CLOSE ON: A simple rock near the vent. Continue to zoom until we are at a microscopic level. The rock is crawling with single-celled organisms. Something lives.

As these single-celled organisms evolve into ever more complicated organisms in a never ending battle of eat or be eaten, the Earth heals and begins to shift.

As the sky once again becomes blue and the Earth becomes green, animals evolve over the eons to fill every niche in this new ecosystem.

The continents collide forming one great land mass, PANGEAE ULTIMA. This violent tectonic shift brings several hundred of the stasis pods to the surface 250 million years after the destruction of Refuge.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - DAY

On a verdant plain populated by a vast array of herbivores, Two large herbivores smash their horned skulls into each other. In their battle for dominance, the two great beasts smash into a stasis pod sticking halfway out of the plain.

The pod bursts out of the ground and flips through the tall grass and comes to a rest. It throws off a few arcs of electricity before opening like a giant clam silting for nutrients, but the pearl this clam holds is human life.

A moan comes from the pod, and a human hand grasps the lip of the stasis pod.

EXT. ELSEWHERE ON PANGAEAE - DAY

A FLYER, a featherless, bird-like creature, soars across the verdant landscape of Pangeae-Ultima. The giant trees of the forest below the flyer seem to stretch for the sky.

The flyer soars over a plain above a variety of herbivores before circling downward.

The flyer alights on the back of a large, furry herbivore and pecks at the parasites in the thick, matted fur.

A flash of claws and fangs brings screams from the big herbivores. The flyer leaps into the air. Large bloody fangs snap closed right behind the flyer as it soars to away.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGAEAE - DAY

Humans in blue and red coveralls work busily to free their fellow humans from their long sleep. They skip over the oddly shaped animal pods that have risen to the surface.

EXT. ABOVE THE PLAINS - DAY

The flyer continues over the landscape seeming to have escaped harm, but several black flying creatures smash into it. The black things are smaller than the flyer but use their razor talons to rip the flyer apart in free-fall.

The pack of flying predators take back to the air, each carrying a chunk of flesh in their talons.

The entrails and some bones fall, landing with a wet thud onto Oscar's stasis-pod.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGAEAE - DAY

A shapely girl in a tight, red coverall jumps back as the entrails splatter onto the pod in front of her. The white letters across the girl's ample chest read: DEBRA DOUGLAS. Her red hair glows like flames in the sun as she scans the sky.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Oh, disgusting.

ELDER LARSON, 64, a thin, older man whose blue coverall doesn't fit nearly as well as Debra's, walks by.

ELDER LARSON
Don't worry about it. Just get that pod open as quickly as you can. We've a lot of work to do.

Debra nods to Elder Larson and kneels by the pod. She peels off the thick layer of lichens covering it to reveal the mirror-like metal. She slides open a panel on the top of the pod and presses a series of buttons.

The pod expels air as if it's a living thing come to life before silently opening to reveal OSCAR DEL MAR sleeping peacefully in the fetal position.

Oscar's eyelids flutter as the sun strikes his face. His eyes slowly open, and his hand moves quickly to block the sun from his eyes. Oscar murmurs.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Just take it easy. The disorientation will pass in a moment, a few moments.

OSCAR
My eyes sting. What's wrong with my eyes?

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Nothing. Your pupils just need to adjust. It's a painful few minutes, but, once you get your eyes open, it'll be worth it.

Oscar sits up and holds his hand to his forehead to shade his eyes from the sun. He stands and spins in a circle.

Green is everywhere, green so bright it seems more like a painting. Dark green grass that comes to the knee covers the meadow.

People in red(females) and blue coveralls(males) are busy waking people from other pods. An exotic mixture of herbivores graze in the distance. Some of the larger grazers ignore the humans. The smaller ones are careful to keep a safe distance between themselves and the newcomers.

About a hundred meters away, a massive forest rises over the meadow. The trunks of the trees are so tall and thick the people exploring the edge of the forest seem miniscule.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Are you okay?

OSCAR

I feel...okay.

Oscar spins in another circle taking in his new environment.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Told you it was beautiful.

OSCAR

Why? How?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

No one knows how we got above ground, but it's fairly obvious something went wrong.

Oscar kneels and studies the long grass of the meadow. He looks into the distance at the plethora of herbivores.

Oscar stands steadily, holding a blade of grass. He's still squinting, but it's easy to tell his disorientation is gone.

OSCAR

Speciation like this doesn't take place in a mere twenty thousand years. We've over slept, really over slept.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

How would you know?

OSCAR

I know most everything.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

You're a little young to know everything.

Oscar ignores Debra as he looks around like a detective gathering clues.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Hey, you're the first kid I've
seen.

OSCAR
I was chosen for my intellectual
abilities, not my ability to
procreate.

Debra giggles.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
You're cute, Young-blood. You
wanna help me open some pods?

Oscar follows her to the next pod sticking out of the ground.
Debra and Oscar kneel and begin stripping the layer of lichen
off the pod.

OSCAR
How many pods have been recovered?

DEBRA DOUGLAS
I heard there's about four hundred,
but some of those are animals.

OSCAR
What? There should be thousands of
us.

Debra shrugs.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
I'm just curious how we got here,
above ground I mean.

OSCAR
Erosion, the shifting of the Earth,
a process like that would take...

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Part of Refuge was found on the
other side of the hill, but it's
really just a shattered wall. It's
all covered in the lichens and
vines, looks like the ruins of some
ancient culture.

OSCAR
It is.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
I guess it is.

OSCAR
How many elders so far?

DEBRA DOUGLAS
One. Elder Larson, and he's
freaking out.

OSCAR
You aren't?

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Should I?

OSCAR
We've slept for more than we were
supposed to, much longer. We were
supposed to seed the earth with
species familiar to us, but new
ones are already here. Basically,
we have no idea what is out there.
We might as well be on an alien
planet. So, if you're not scared
shitless, at least have the decency
to be filled with wonder.

Debra giggles.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Aren't you a serious little one?

OSCAR
You see how big those herbivores
are?

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Yeah, they're big, but they don't
seem to mind us.

OSCAR
I'm not saying you should worry
about them. Worry about what has
evolved to control their
population.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
We don't know that something has.
Like you said
(mocking Oscar's high-
pitched voice)
We have no idea what's out there?

OSCAR
I know nature hates a void.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Whatever.

Oscar sighs in frustration. He points at a group of teenagers wandering around the tree-line.

OSCAR

And they shouldn't be wandering around. They have no idea what could be in that forest.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I think that's why they're looking around.

OSCAR

Yeah, well what are they going to do when they find some predators that have had a few million years to perfect their hunting skills.

Debra just rolls her eyes. Oscar clears away enough of the lichens for Debra to slide the panel up and open the pod.

The pod opens to reveal MAX, a tall, muscular young man with a chiseled face, basically a perfect human specimen.

Debra stares down at Max. A smirk forms on her face.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Jackpot!

It's Oscar turn to roll his eyes before he walks away in frustration.

EXT. THE RUINS- SUNSET

Oscar sits with his back against the lichen-covered ruins of what was once a part of Refuge. His face is already smudged with dirt.

People stream by the ruins where Oscar sits. Debra walks by on the arm of Max. Max seems even larger now that he is standing.

Debra notices Oscar sitting there alone. She pulls Max to a stop.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Hey, Youngblood. Come on. There's going to be a meeting. We can find out what the hell is going on.

Oscar jumps up and runs to Debra's side. Oscar looks up at Max. Max tries to lean over to read the front of Oscar's coverall, but Debra Douglas holds her hands over Oscar's name.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
His name's Young-blood.

MAX
Hi, Young-blood.

Oscar looks up warily at Max.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Young-blood won a spot in the pods because he's a genius, or so he keeps saying.

MAX
Then, I'm embarrassed to admit I'm here because I'm strong and can run fast.

OSCAR
Actually, your skills might be more suited for survival than mine. It's not like I can dazzle a predator with my flawless logic.

Debra and Max laugh.

MAX
True, Young-blood. But, unless it's something really big, I'll just kick it's ass.

OSCAR
Not likely.

Debra and Max laugh again. Debra looks at Max.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Told you, old man inside a cute kid. I think Young-blood here is more freaked out than Elder Larson.

MAX
Don't worry, kid. You'll be fine. Just stick close to us.

Oscar nods, but his look shows he's not convinced.

EXT. THE STAGE - NIGHT

A large, relatively flat rock juts out of the plain several feet above the tall grass. This is the STAGE. All the humans in their red and blue coveralls are gathered in front of the natural platform. Blue coveralls(males) outnumber red(females) by more than a third. Max, Debra, and Oscar stop at the back of the crowd.

As Oscar tries to find a place to stand that isn't blocked by someone taller, Elder Larson climbs onto the outcropping. A thin teenaged boy, CAMERON, is following at his side.

Several young men turn to gawk at Debra, but they turn back around when they see how big Max is.

Elder Larson holds up his hand, and the crowd goes silent.

ELDER LARSON

I know you're all hungry, but we have no idea where the food stores are. Hell, we've only found about one-percent of the stasis pods so far. Tomorrow, if we don't find the food stores, we'll have to kill some of the herbivores.

Shocked gasps go through the crowd.

One young woman with blonde hair, JULIE, in the very front of the crowd climbs onto the natural stage.

JULIE

How can you even suggest that we kill the animals. There's so much plant life here. Surely, we don't have to murder the animals that were here before us.

ELDER LARSON

We can't even be sure we're adapted to digest the flora here. It will take time to determine what we can and cannot eat. It's more likely we'll be able to digest meat from the animals.

JULIE

That's ridiculous. We have to start testing what we can and can't eat sometime. It might as well be tomorrow. People like you are the reason humanity ruined the Earth in the first place.

Some of the crowd cheers in agreement with Julie.

OSCAR

I bet most of those cheering don't
turn down any food tomorrow.

MAX

I'm sure not turning down any food.
Feels like I haven't eaten in
forever.

Max and Oscar share a smile at the joke.

ELDER LARSON

I'm not here to argue with anyone.
Tomorrow you will be given
assignments that best suit your
skills.

Elder Larson looks down at Julie.

ELDER LARSON

You're more than welcome to
organize some food foraging groups.

JULIE

Does that mean you agree to not
murder any innocent animals?

ELDER LARSON

That's not what I said at all.

Julie climbs further up onto the natural stage but before she
can argue further...

OSCAR

What about defenses? We need
defenses.

Only about half the people turn towards Oscar, but he is too
short for most people to see.

OSCAR

You people are so worried what
you're going to eat you haven't
considered what is going to eat us.

This gets the whole crowd to turn and Debra to roll her eyes.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

More with the predators.

Everyone tries to see who has yelled, but Oscar is too short.
Max lifts Oscar up and sets him on his muscular shoulder.

The crowd chuckles when they see it's a little kid. Elder Larson gives Oscar a humoring smile.

ELDER LARSON

So far, no predators of any sort have been spotted.

OSCAR

Maybe they're nocturnal; who knows. But, I do know nature hates a void. There are big herbivores. It's almost definite there are large predators that control the population. Probably one predator for every ten grazers.

Everyone just stares at Oscar.

OSCAR

Our first priority should be to build a fire. We'll eventually need one anyway. We'll stay in large groups until we can build...

ELDER LARSON

That's enough. We don't need some little kid with an overactive imagination causing hysterics. Relax tonight. Tomorrow will be a long day. We'll break into groups, and you'll all be assigned tasks. Enjoy your night.

Elder Larson stomps off the stage followed by Cameron.

OSCAR

Enjoy your night? We have so much to do and accomplish, and the person in charge of our survival says enjoy your night.

Max lowers Oscar gently to the ground.

MAX

You're right you know.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Oh, not you too.

MAX

Maybe there isn't anything out there, but would it hurt prepare for the worst?

OSCAR

At this point, I'd be happy to prepare for likely-hoods and certainties.

MAX

Alright, Young-blood, what should we do?

OSCAR

We organize into large groups. The more males the better.

Max scowls.

OSCAR

Debra, you're in charge of recruiting males. You seem to attract them well enough.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I think we found ourselves a little smart-ass.

MAX

He's cool, but don't find too many guys.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Don't worry. I know what will attract a group of guys.

MAX

That's what I'm worried about.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Great. Two smart-asses. I meant more girls will attract guys.

Debra walks off.

MAX

Well, now that you've gotten rid of my girlfriend, you have something I can do to occupy myself.

OSCAR

I need your strength to help me arrange the pods against the ruins before someone else realizes it's the most defensible position.

MAX

Lifting I can do.

OSCAR

You should find one other male to help you. The pods weigh 147.42 kilograms.

MAX

I'll be okay.

Max goes to the closest pod and scoops it up as if it weighs hardly anything.

MAX

Where do you want it?

Oscar looks amazed at Max's strength but points at a spot near the ruins.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - SHORT WHILE LATER

The vast majority of the stasis pods are littered throughout the meadow like a few hundred over-sized, white Christmas lights.

But Max and a group of people have arranged some of the pods in a semi-circle against the ruins.

Two young men, SUMNER, 19, and BROWN, 21, move a final pod into place. Both go to sit by SOPHIA 19, a beautiful girl with a smooth olive complexion, at the same time. The two young men glare at each other, but neither yields.

BROWN

Back off.

SUMNER

I don't think so.

Brown pushes Sumner hard. Sumner staggers backward to keep from falling down, but comes back fast to return the push. Brown grabs one of Sumner's arms and pushes him to the ground, locking his arm behind him and pushing his face into the grass.

SUMNER

Let go. You're breaking my arm.

BROWN

Next time I say back up, back up.

Max releases Debra's hand and gets to his feet.

MAX

That's enough. Let him go.

Brown ignores him. Max walks over to the struggling pair and puts Brown in a headlock.

MAX

I said let him go.

Brown still refuses to release Sumner. Max increases the pressure causing Brown's face to turn bright red.

Brown releases Sumner and tries futilely to pry Max's arm from around his throat.

Max drags Brown away from Sumner and releases him.

Brown rubs his neck and jaw.

BROWN

You're about to be very sorry you got involved in my business, big boy.

Brown covers the distance between him and Max quickly. He sends a round-house kick towards Max's face. The fluid grace with which Brown moves suggest this is not his first attempt at kicking someone in the head.

Max easily catches Brown by the ankle with one hand and the front of his coverall with the other. Max raises Brown high into the air and slams him hard into the tall grass.

Brown lands with a thud and just lays there, gasping to get air back into his lungs.

MAX

If you're finished making me sorry, can we get back to the girls?

BROWN

(Groaning)

Yeah, I doubt you'll meddle in my business again.

Max grabs Brown by the front of his coverall and pulls him to his feet.

MAX

We're all in a difficult situation, but let's try to be patient with each other.

Brown nods and follows Max back to the circle.

CARDELL, 19 with sandy-blond hair and a perpetual smile, sits by Sophia.

Max sits next to Debra and retakes her hand. He smiles at her softly.

CARDELL

Well, now that we know who the Alpha-male is, I a have a question. What's this little kid doing here?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

He's a genius...and a smart-ass.

CARDELL

(Looking at Oscar)

It's too bad there's no girls here your age.

OSCAR

I'll only be ten to twelve years older than most of your offspring. I should have my pick of them.

The group laughs, everyone but Oscar.

OSCAR

Some of you on the other hand will have quite a difficult time procuring a mate. I couldn't help but notice there are a lot more blue than red coveralls.

CARDELL

Lucky for me, I'm so charming.

He looks Sophia and arches his eyebrows.

SOPHIA

So far I'm not impressed.

The group starts to laugh again. The laughs stop when someone steps into the circle. It's Cameron, the boy who had been following Elder Larson. One look at Cameron and it's easy to see he wasn't chosen for his physical attributes. He's skinny and awkward.

BROWN

Get lost. We don't need anymore guys over here.

CAMERON

I'm not here for girls. I'm looking for the little boy.

CARDELL

Oh, that's sick.

Cameron ignores Cardell and the laughs of the others as he walks near Oscar.

CAMERON
Oscar Del Mar?

Oscar points at the front of coverall which of course reads: Oscar Del Mar.

CAMERON
I knew your brother. He always said you were the smart one.

OSCAR
My brother never lied.

CAMERON
Then you must be truly brilliant.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Oh, don't make his head any bigger. It's bad enough.

Cameron leans closer to Oscar.

CAMERON
We need to talk. Why don't you walk with me over here?

Max raises his head and looks concerned as Oscar stands and follows Cameron.

OSCAR
Don't worry. I won't go far.

Oscar and Cameron walk to the other side of the ruins.

OSCAR
So what is it that you didn't want the others to hear?

CAMERON
It's Elder Larson. He's not exactly a qualified leader.

OSCAR
Do you have any information I'm not already aware of?

CAMERON
I'm serious. I question his stability.

(MORE)

CAMERON (cont'd)

The only reason he was put into stasis was because he's an artisan, a builder. We may have to seek alternatives.

OSCAR

Elder Larson is the least of our worries.

Oscar looks up and stares at the stars.

CAMERON

What do you mean?

Oscar points to the stars.

OSCAR

I studied the stars from the records, but these aren't our stars.

CAMERON

Huh?

OSCAR

The stars have drifted apart significantly. I would say we've been in stasis 250 million years.

CAMERON

250 million?

OSCAR

Give or take 30 million.

Cameron stares blankly at the stars.

OSCAR

I'm not worried about some old man. He's a builder so he will build something. I'll do my best to take care of our other needs.

CAMERON

What do you think our chances are?

OSCAR

Not good.

EXT. RUINS. - MORNING

The sky is streaked with pink and orange as the sun begins to creep above the tops of the giant trees of the forest.

As all the others are mesmerized by the sunrise, Oscar busies himself taking apart a stasis pod that stored a chicken. The CHICKEN struts nearby, scratching and pecking at the grass.

Max steps to Oscar's side.

MAX

It's so beautiful. By the time they put me to sleep the sky was always gray. I've never seen anything like this. I feel like an explorer from an ancient time, a time when a man still didn't know what was over the next hill.

Oscar takes his eyes away from his work and stares up at Max.

OSCAR

You are.

Max chuckles.

MAX

Yeah, I guess you're right.

They both stare at the sun in silence as it rises higher in the sky.

MAX

Well, I guess I better go get my assignment.

OSCAR

Wait. I need your help.

MAX

With what? I don't know anything about stasis pods.

OSCAR

I can handle this mess. I need you to find some other guys and gather dry wood for a fire and find something we can make weapons out of.

MAX

Weapons?

OSCAR

Humans have never lived without them. I suggest something long and light, like a spear.

MAX

But, Elder Larson said...

OSCAR

If you and I don't prepare for the worst, who will?

MAX

Okay, you've got a point. But, hopefully we'll be wasting our time and this will be a new Eden.

OSCAR

Hope as much as you like, but do it holding a spear.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - LATER

Eight young men compete for Debra's attention. Debra smiles and tries to be patient with her suitors.

As Max nears, Debra's face lights up. Most of her suitors move off quickly as Debra runs to Max.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Where've you been, big guy?

MAX

I was talking to Young-blood. We're supposed to go get our assignments.

Everyone starts walking towards the STAGE.

Max stays behind and points to the largest guys..

MAX

Cardell, Brown, Sumner, and Dean stay with me please.

The four men stop. Debra stops as well.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

What's up?

MAX

Young-blood has a mission for us.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Can I come?

MAX

You better go with the others to get your assignment.

(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)

I don't want you with us if we come across something.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Well, if I go foraging with the others I might come across something anyway.

MAX

I know, but I'm confident you can outrun most of the other girls, but you can't outrun any of us; which means I would have to protect you and that might...

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Fine. I got it. I'm going to get my assignment. See you later.

MAX

Don't be mad.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I'm not.

DEAN, CARDELL, SUMNER, AND BROWN all wait for Max to turn away from Debra Douglas.

CARDELL

I wouldn't have left her alone for a second. Someone's going to try to move in on that.

Max gives Cardell a look that says, "Why don't you shut-up?"

Cardell shrugs.

MAX

The little genius wants to get a fire going.

SUMNER

We're not stopping him.

MAX

No, we're not. In fact we're going to build the fire for him.

SUMNER

Great. I knew I would get some job far away from the women.

MAX

The woman will come around the fire, and we'll be there.

SUMNER

Still we have to go get the wood.

CARDELL

Sumner, why don't you stop complaining long enough for us to do something.

MAX

Young-Blood also wants us to find something to make spears out of. I suggest two of us look for the spears while two of us gather the wood.

SUMNER

And what does the fifth person do?

MAX

The fifth person will be a lookout.

CARDELL

I nominate Sumner for that job. He seems good at just standing there and looking around.

Everyone chuckles.

MAX

Sounds good. Who wants to get the wood for the fire.

CARDELL

Me and Dean are on it.

Dean looks over at Cardell and gives him a dirty look.

MAX

Brown, that leaves me and you on the weapon hunt.

BROWN

Can I kill Sumner after we find some?

Everyone laughs but stops when Brown doesn't join them.

MAX

Let's go.

The five of them move into the forest.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - MORNING

Debra Douglas stands in line waiting to be told what to do. The situation is very disorganized and mostly people are just standing around complaining about being hungry.

JULIE climbs onto the stage and...

JULIE

Everyone, we're not going to get to eat just standing here. I need twenty people who want to form a foraging party.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I'll go.

When the males see Debra and Julie are going, they all volunteer.

Elder Larson climbs to the stage.

ELDER LARSON

No. I need the males here to help start the shelter. The females can forage for food by themselves?

JULIE

The Elder is right.

The males seem disappointed and move off to get organized by Elder Larson.

Julie climbs off the stage and walks to Debra's side.

JULIE

You're my first volunteer. You can lead your own group, okay?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Okay, but I don't know what I'm doing.

JULIE

Who does?

Julie's strong personality soon has twenty young women organized into two groups of ten.

Julie walks to the front of the two groups.

JULIE

Stay together. We don't want anyone getting lost. We're looking for anything that could be edible so keep your eyes open.

SOPHIA

Who made this bitch queen?

ANOTHER GIRL

At least she's doing something. If it was up to Elder Larson, we'd starve to death.

Julie leads the two groups of girls into the forest of giant trees. The girls look around. The forest is both beautiful and scary. Many different sounds come from inside the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Sumner stands watch as Dean and Cardell gather up arm loads of fallen limbs.

SUMNER

Can you guys do that faster? I don't like being in this forest. The noise from these animals is giving me a headache.

CARDELL

(looking at Dean)

I got him the easiest job, and he's still complaining.

Dean nods and walks past with a towering arm load of dry limbs.

CARDELL

That guy doesn't say much.

SUMNER

Maybe you should take a lesson from him?

CARDELL

Maybe you shouldn't talk to me like that when I'm holding a stick?

Max walks up and stares at them both. They both go back to their assigned duties.

Max walks down an animal trail.

BROWN
(O.S.)
Max, Max, hurry.

Max pushes through some thick foliage to follow the sound of Brown's voice.

Max emerges from the thick growth. Brown is there smiling at him. Behind Brown is a patch of thin, tall trees that stretch high into the air.

Brown puts his hand on one of the thinner trees.

BROWN
I think we've found our spears.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - DAY

Oscar has the chicken-pod in a thousand different pieces. The pile of limbs to his side grows ever larger.

Dean comes and drops another arm load onto the pile. He looks at Oscar.

OSCAR
We have almost enough to get the fire started. Could you find some smaller sticks, dried leaves, things that will catch fire easily.

Dean nods and jogs off toward the forest.

Oscar takes the square battery from the stasis pod and finishes attaching two wires. He touches the end of the two wires together. A stream of sparks fly off. Oscar smiles.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - DAY

The flames of the large bonfire flicker and send up a column of smoke as Oscar wraps the wires of the Fire-starter around itself.

Oscar hands the fire-starter to Dean.

OSCAR
Here, you can be Prometheus.

DEAN
Who?

OSCAR
Just hold that for me please.

Dean puts the firestarter into the back pocket of his coverall.

Oscar looks past Dean to see Max and Brown carrying a bundle of long poles out of the forest. Sumner follows behind them.

Max and Brown set the bundle of spears down. Max pulls one up and holds it out to Oscar.

MAX

What do you think?

Oscar takes the long spear, and weighs it in his hands.

OSCAR

Feels light and flexible, but strong.

Oscar looks at the tip which is cut at a sharp angle making a point.

OSCAR

How?

Max holds out two short sticks attached by a thin vine.

MAX

I made a saw.

Oscar examines the vine-saw closely.

OSCAR

These thin vines are strong enough to cut this wood?

MAX

That's not a very smart question for a genius.

Max holds out his red and blistered hands.

MAX

It wasn't exactly fun though.

OSCAR

I'm very impressed.

Max looks at the blazing fire and the disassembled pod.

MAX

Looks like I'm not the only one doing his part.

Oscar takes one of the long poles and holds the tip into the fire. Max's eyes widen.

OSCAR

Don't worry. This will make the tip harder.

MAX

When you're done hand it here. I'm going to use it to get something to eat. I'm so hungry I'm getting dizzy.

Oscar pulls the burning spear out of the fire and slams it into the dirt to extinguish it.

OSCAR

Max, you lived above ground didn't you?

MAX

Yeah, I was one of the first to be put in stasis.

OSCAR

What do you know about horses?

MAX

I love horses. We were actually riding them when our fuel cells died.

OSCAR

Really, how very interesting.

MAX

Why? What are we doing now?

OSCAR

We're going to see a man about a horse.

Max looks around.

MAX

Wait. Where's Cardell?

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cardell wanders around the forest. Every direction looks the same. He starts in one direction then stops and starts off in the opposite direction.

CARDELL

Awe, man. This is bad.

Cardell pushes through some vines but doesn't find the trail.

CARDELL

Sumner, Sumner, where are you, you
lazy bastard?

A deep growl comes from behind Cardell. Cardell freezes.
His eyes widen as he turns slowly.

Behind him is FUZZY, a small, fluffy creature with black fur
and huge eyes. Fuzzy growls at Cardell. Cardell breathes a
sigh of relief when he sees the cute, little animal. He
kneels down.

CARDELL

Hey, little guy. Why are you mad
at me? Is this your forest?

At the sound of Cardell's soft voice the small, fuzzy
creature stands on it's hind legs and cocks his head
sideways, making a soft grunting noise.

CARDELL

Come here. We can be friends.

Cardell extends his hands. The creature is hesitant, but
slowly approaches Cardell and sniffs his fingers. The
creature licks Cardell's fingers. Cardell pets the black,
fuzzy creature, then picks it up cradling it. The creature
makes happy, grunting noises.

CARDELL

You're like a cute baby. Where's
your...

Cardell turns at the sound of a snapping limb. A huge black
creature, a much larger, uglier version Fuzzy, towers over
Cardell.

CARDELL

Mama?

The creature roars into Cardell's face, and swings a huge paw
at Cardell's head. Cardell barely ducks out of the way.

The creature's paw smashes into a small tree and turns it to
splinters. Cardell flees still carrying the big creature's
offspring.

The creature pursues Cardell as he weaves through the thin
trees of the SPEAR-TREE forest.

The creature is slowed because it is so wide it has to push the trees over, but still it's keeping up with Cardell.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - DAY

Max and several others use their combined strength to push the huge, rectangular horse pod upright.

Oscar opens the pod, and CHARGER, a half ton of solid black Arabian horse, staggers out, neighing and stomping it's feet nervously. Max rushes forward and grabs the horse by the bridle.

MAX

Easy fella, easy.

The horse recovers from the disorientation quickly. Max walks around Charger, studying the beautiful animal.

MAX

Now this is a great horse.

OSCAR

They don't put poor genetic stock into stasis.

MAX

Why did they put it under with a bridle and a saddle on it?

OSCAR

Why not? They put us under with clothes. I wish they would have had the forethought to put tools and weapons in our pods.

SUMNER

And food would have been nice too.

MAX

Well, they didn't give us any food, but we can take care of that ourselves.

Max leads Charger back toward the main camp, with the others following. As they near, people stop what they are doing and mill around the horse.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cardell sprints down an animal trail with Fuzzy tucked underneath his arm like a football.

The foliage thins and Cardell emerges into a strange village built against a cliff face.

Cardell looks around. The hulls of the round trees have been carved into round dwellings. A fire is still smouldering beneath a huge piece of pottery as animal hides cure in the sun. Carved into the stone of the cliff-face is the nightmarish image of some giant tentacled creature.

CARDELL

Holy shit.

The black beast roars at the edge of the forest but refuses to set foot in the village.

Strange humanoid creatures crawl out of the round dwellings. Their skin is like dry worn leather. Their eyes are thin black slits. They crawl out of their dwellings and onto the sides, clinging easily with gecko-like hands and feet. These are the TREE-DWELLERS, and most wear bone-tipped javelins strapped across their backs. The Tree-dwellers drop to the ground, and pull weapons off their backs as they march toward Cardell.

CARDELL

I don't mean any harm. I'm lost.

The Tree-dwellers click back and forth. One cocks back its javelin to launch it at Cardell, but the black beast crashes into it from behind and rips the tree-dweller almost in two. The other tree-dwellers turn and join the fight against the black beast. The black beast is able to do some serious damage to the tree-dwellers, but there are just too many tree-dwellers. They encircle the beast and stab it until it stops moving.

One of tree-dwellers turns to where Cardell had been standing. All that remains are footprints in the dirt.

The tree-dweller opens its mouth and hisses, revealing rows of needle-like teeth.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cardell sprints through the forest with FUZZY tucked underneath his arm.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - DAY

Max motions for everyone to get back and gracefully swings into Charger's saddle. He looks at down Oscar.

MAX

Can you really convert that horse-pod into an oven?

OSCAR

Of course.

MAX

Good. We're about to need it.

Max spurs Charger into a trot. He rides the horse past the fire and pulls one of the spears out of the ground. He holds the sharpened pole like a knight would hold a lance as he nudges the side of Charger with his heels. The horse speeds towards the grazing herbivores.

A crowd gathers as Max speeds toward some small herbivores.

SUMNER

He isn't?

BROWN

Oh, it looks like he is.

Max charges into a crowd of small herbivores. The two legged herbivores, The SPEEDERS, are so fast they leave Max and Charger behind with easy grace.

Max realizes it's useless to chase the bipedal Speeders. He turns his horse toward a group of small quadrupeds. They are so agile Max can never get close enough to attack.

Max turns, a little frustrated, toward the largest of the herbivores. These are larger than the horse. They don't flee. They form into a protective circle around their young.

One of the bulls charges back. Max turns Charger and flee. The big bull is faster than it looks. It catches Charger and bangs its head into the horse's ribs. Charger stumbles and goes down. Max goes flying.

Charger gets up quickly and flees, leaving Max behind. Max rolls to his feet still holding his spear. The bull stops his momentum and turns toward Max. The bull stomps its feet and huffs at Max. It scrapes its hooves against the ground throwing up big clumps of grass and dirt.

MAX

Please don't charge.

The bull charges. It's no use to run. Max holds his ground, putting the end of the spear into the ground and holding the point towards the charging animal.

The bull crashes into the spear. The great weight of the animal snaps the spear in two as Max dives out of the way.

As Max rolls to his feet, the bull runs past, trailing blood on the long grass. Max picks up his weapon and frowns at the useless, broken spear.

Something glitters in the grass at Max's feet. He tosses aside his splintered spear and pulls the twisted piece of metal from beneath some rocks and raises it defensively.

The bull stomps his foot as if it's preparing to charge again. It staggers back and forth on wobbly legs and falls over. The spear sticks out of its chest.

Max breathes a sigh of relief. Now that the danger is over, Charger comes back to Max's side.

MAX

Oh, now you come back.

Max examines the horse to make sure it isn't injured and swings into the saddle. He gallops back toward the camp.

He is greeted by a series of cheers.

OSCAR

You got lucky.

MAX

I know.

Brown pushes a bunch of guys toward Max's kill.

BROWN

Come on. Max did the hard part.
Let's go cut it up.

No one rushes to help, but Brown and Dean push people along.

Oscar looks at the twisted piece of metal in Max's hand.

OSCAR

That used to be part of a pod.

MAX

It's about to be part of my weapon.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGAE - DAY

Julie and her group of foragers march back into the camp. She sees the group of boys cutting up the big bull and runs towards them.

Julie pushes one of the unsuspecting boys away from the kill and pulls back a bloody hand.

JULIE

What the hell do you think you're doing? Why did you murder this animal?

BROWN

Relax. We have to eat something.

JULIE

We have fruit.

MAX

We can't just start eating stuff, could be poison.

JULIE

So, this is your idea?

MAX

Not just my idea. I killed it.

JULIE

Murderer.

Max points to the bull-herbivore's herd that are happily eating grass a short distance away.

MAX

They don't seem to mind as much as you.

JULIE

We'll see if you make any jokes when I tell Elder Larson about this.

Elder Larson walks up with a big chunk of cooked meat on a stick.

ELDER LARSON

(with a full mouth)

Tell me what?

Julie throws her hand up in frustration and storms away.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Debra and Sophia walk back towards her foraging group who are busy picking large blue fruit.

GIRL ONE

I was getting worried about you two. I thought I heard some screams.

SOPHIA

If it sounded like a little girl, I think I might know what you heard.

Debra pushes Sophia playfully.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

We discovered these really neat creatures.

SOPHIA

That's not true. I discovered them. They have these long legs and blend in with the trees they eat.

As Sophia continues her story the head of a tree-dweller peaks out from behind one of the thick trees to glance at the group of girls before disappearing back behind the tree.

As the girls continue to joke around noisily, at least ten of the leathery tree-dwellers cling to the back of a giant tree. One of the tree-dwellers motions silently with it's gecko-like hand. The others scamper to the edge of the great tree.

The girls have stopped picking fruit and are listening to Sophia...

SOPHIA

And then Debra jumped back and fell down...

A loud CLICKING comes from behind the tree.

SOPHIA

Did you hear something?

The Tree-dwellers appear in mass from behind the trees and launch their javelins. Some of the girls are struck in the chest with multiple javelins and fall to the forest floor.

A javelin hits Sophia with a wet thud. She stares at the spear imbedded in her chest for a second before falling backwards.

Debra moves to help her as the other girls scream and flee.

SOPHIA
(clinging to Debra's arm)
Don't leave me.

Debra tries to pick up Sophia, but Sophia screams in pain.

A treedweller creeps down the tree silently towards the two girls.

Debra looks up. The creature's head spins 180 degrees so it is face to face with Debra. The creature hisses, revealing rows of sharp needle-like teeth.

Debra pulls her arm away from Sophia and runs. Sophia reaches after her, but two tree-dwellers grab her by the ankles and pull her into the trees.

Debra sprints down the animal trail towards the camp. She easily catches the other survivors who are still screaming as they run.

As they run under a large limb, several tree-dwellers drop onto a girl and stab her repeatedly with their weapons before pulling her into the trees.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - DAY

Max sits by the fire, attaching the twisted piece of metal to a wooden handle by wrapping vines around it. Screams come from the forest. Max runs toward the tree-line with his newly completed weapon, his men following.

As they near the tree-line, Debra and a few others emerge from the forest.

MAX
What is it? What happened?

Debra runs past him. She doesn't want to be anywhere close to the forest. Max eventually pulls her to a stop.

MAX
Debra, Debra, what happened?

DEBRA DOUGLAS
I...I left her. I just let her
there.

MAX
Calm down. You're safe now. Tell
me what happened.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I shouldn't have left her. I have to go back.

Debra steps toward the forest. Max blocks her path.

MAX

No. You're not going anywhere, not until you tell me what happened.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

There are things in the forest. They killed Sophia. They killed a bunch of us.

MAX

Do you think anyone is still alive?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I'm not sure. I don't think so. They were monsters.

MAX

I'm going to look for survivors. Who's coming with me?

Dean and Brown step forward.

JULIE

Didn't you hear her? There are no survivors.

MAX

She's not sure.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I'm mostly sure. Max, don't go.

Max looks to Brown.

BROWN

I wouldn't want to be left out there.

Dean silently picks up one of the long spears.

Max nods, and the three of them run down the animal trail.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - DAY

A young man named GALT picks up a big white fruit. He looks at it hungrily and starts to raise it toward his mouth.

OSCAR

Stop!

GALT

Screw you, kid. This is mine.

Galt takes a big bite of the fruit. The juice of the fruit runs down his chin.

OSCAR

I didn't want any. I was going to suggest you let me cook it. You know, to kill any bacteria, or parasites.

A cute girl with short, brown hair, JANICE, comes up to the pile of fruit. She stares hungrily at the bounty and picks up a small, red fruit.

Oscar points at Galt.

OSCAR

Don't be like this guy. Let me cook it then you can have a nibble.

JANICE

It sounds like I'm going to be hungry for a while.

OSCAR

Hungry is better than dead.

Janice hands Oscar the red fruit. He puts it in the pod he converted into an communal oven with the cornucopia other fruits.

Debra walks up and sits down with her face in her hands.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

You were right, young-blood.

OSCAR

I wish I wouldn't have been. Are you okay?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I need something to do.

OSCAR

You can help me keep track of who eats what, and don't let anyone just start eating.

Debra nods and stands straight but her eyes are watery.

GALT

Fuck that. This white fruit is good.

Galt extends the half-eaten fruit towards Debra.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I've learned my lesson. I'm listening to Young-blood.

Galt shrugs and walks toward the river. Oscar watches him.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Is that guy pissing you off?

OSCAR

No. In fact, it's good to have him around. We can find out what's poisonous quickly, but I don't expect him to be around for long though.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Why's that?

OSCAR

Look how he just walks to the water's edge. If he doesn't poison himself, something's going to get him.

Debra runs toward the river.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Galt, be careful.

Galt just waves her away and kneels among some small herbivores and puts his mouth directly to the water.

OSCAR

Oh, good. He's testing unheated water too. I hope he lives long enough to test everything.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cardell runs with Fuzzy under his arm. The forest around him suddenly turns from the green of life to the dry brown of death. Cardell stops as he emerges from the forest.

CARDELL

Awe, man.

Giant fungi that grow thick and tall dominate the area. The strange twists and turns of the fungi suggest God had to work through a surrealistic phase. The monochromatic forest suggest he did it with a single piece of charcoal. The wild twists of the GNARLED-FOREST form cave-like openings throughout the large growth.

CARDELL

What do you think Fuzzy? Is this a good place to hide?

Fuzzy makes a grunting noise.

CARDELL

I'm going to take that as a yes but only because my legs won't go any further.

Cardell puts Fuzzy to the ground. Fuzzy runs into the strange forest and runs up onto the top of a growth and into a dark opening. Cardell climbs to the top of the growth, but stops short of entering the small, dark opening.

The vicious growls of Fuzzy reverberate from inside the opening.

CARDELL

Fuzzy?

Fuzzy suddenly becomes silent. Cardell eases toward the opening.

CARDELL

Fuzzy?

A black shape springs out of the opening and onto Cardell. Cardell screams, grabbing the creature, and pulling it off of him. Before Cardell throws the creature off the tree, he realizes it's Fuzzy.

Fuzzy holds a strange creature in his jaws. It looks like a mixture of a grub-worm and a snake. Cardell sits up and sets Fuzzy down.

CARDELL

You scared the shit out of me.

Fuzzy carries the worm-thing to Cardell and drops the writhing creature in his lap. Cardell throws it off his lap.

CARDELL

Oh, that's gross.

The worm-thing tries to crawl back to the opening but Fuzzy stalks it, and pounces on the slow moving creature. Fuzzy crunches the thing's head with his jaws, and starts to eat it.

CARDELL

Oh, that's really gross. Couldn't you kill something that I could eat?

Fuzzy looks up from his meal, the viscous fluid of the worm-thing dripping from his jaws. He turns his head sideways at Cardell.

Cardell stands up and starts to look around.

CARDELL

There's got to be something to eat around here. I need something after carrying you all day.

Cardell pulls himself onto the next level of the twisting growth. Fuzzy climbs after him. Cardell reaches the top of the growth and pulls a large, spherical nut off the bottom of an extended lip.

CARDELL

Now this looks edible.

Cardell and Fuzzy climb down to the next level of the growth. Cardell throws the bowling-ball sized nut at the twisted growth as hard as he can in an attempt to crack it open. The nut bounces off the fungus and hits Cardell in the shin. Cardell grabs his leg and falls on his side, rolling around.

CARDELL

Oh, son of a bitch, that hurt.

Fuzzy stands on his hind legs, turns his head sideways, and stares at Cardell.

Fuzzy drags what's left of his kill and drops it near Cardell's face. Fuzzy nudges the dead worm-thing towards Cardell with his nose.

Cardell sits up, still rubbing his shin, and looks down at the nasty creature as the gel-like insides of the creature ooze across the skin of the fungus.

CARDELL

I don't know if I'm that hungry.

Fuzzy nudges it again, and growls at Cardell.

CARDELL
Oh, so you insist.

Cardell takes his finger and scoops out a small portion of the viscous fluid. He stares at the yellowish slime.

CARDELL
It looks like snot.

Cardell shrugs, and puts his finger in his mouth. At first he makes a face, then he seems deep in thought.

CARDELL
It's actually not that bad, a little sour but not that bad.

Cardell tastes a larger portion of the worm.

CARDELL
Not bad at all, kind of lemony.

Cardell picks up the worm-thing and rips it in two. He puts half in front of Fuzzy. Fuzzy starts to devour his half. Cardell starts to squeeze the gel of his half into his mouth.

Fuzzy finishes his portion quickly and runs back into the dark opening. More growling is heard. Fuzzy soon emerges dragging an even bigger worm-thing. The worm-thing is almost too big for Fuzzy to handle. Cardell helps Fuzzy pull it out of the opening and bashes it in the head with the giant nut.

CARDELL
At least it's good for something.

Fuzzy stands on his back legs and lets out a victorious roar.

CARDELL
Right, let's eat.

EXT. FOREST-ANIMAL TRAIL - DAY

Max leads Dean and Brown down the animal trail at a fast pace.

MAX
Dean, if you don't mind, your job is to keep watch.

Dean nods an acknowledgement.

BROWN
What's my job?

MAX

Kill whatever looks dangerous.

BROWN

You're an easy guy to take orders from.

MAX

I'm not giving orders. I'm asking for help.

Max stops beneath the bough of a large tree that stretches over the trail. There's a huge bloodstain on the green lichens and leaves that cover the forest floor. Max kneels, examining the stain briefly. He looks around and runs on.

They run just a short distance more and come to another bloodstain on the trail. Max kneels and sees not only blood, but also broken teeth and a clump of long brown hair still attach to a piece of scalp.

BROWN

I don't know about you guys, but I'm starting to get pissed off.

MAX

We're going to kill them all.

DEAN

Max, look out!

Max doesn't look. He dives and rolls, coming up on his feet. A javelin slams into the ground where he had been kneeling. Max looks up to see a tree-dweller clinging to the side of a tree near him. The tree-dweller hisses, displaying its needle-like teeth. Max freezes for a brief second, before charging the creature.

Before Max can get there, Brown slams his spear into the tree-dweller. The tree-dweller screeches. Brown uses his spear to pull the tree-dweller off the tree and throws it to the forest floor. The tree-dweller tries to crawl back to the trees, but Max smashes his foot into the lower spine of the creature and bashes its skull in with his weapon.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - EVENING

Janice sweats so much her short, brown hair is clinging to her face, and her red coverall is darkened with moisture beneath her arms and under her breasts. She stands and staggers back and forth as if she's drunk.

JANICE

It's so hot. Aren't you hot?

She unzips her coverall and slips out of the top, not caring she is revealing her breasts to everyone.

One of the girls moves to cover her up, but Janice falls to her knees and starts retching.

Oscar runs to her side.

OSCAR

Spit it out. Spit it out.

Janice spits out the small bit of red fruit and starts to shake. Oscar feels her skin.

OSCAR

She's burning up.

Janice collapses to the ground, shaking more and more. Oscar rolls her onto her back as she goes into full fledged convulsions, and starts foaming at the mouth.

OSCAR

Someone get me some water.

Galt runs to grab the water they had boiled, but only makes it a few steps before falling to his knees and projectile vomiting all the white fruit that he ate. Debra runs past him and brings back a container of water to Oscar.

Janice's convulsions are easing but her extremities still twitch.

OSCAR

Janice, you have to rinse out your mouth. Don't drink it. Just rinse and spit. Understand?

Janice makes no movement to let Oscar know she understands, but when Oscar brings the water to her lips she drinks as best she can while shaking so much.

OSCAR

No, don't drink it. Rinse and spit.

Janice turns her head and lets the water dribble out of her mouth.

She stops shaking and closes her eyes.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Is she dead?

Oscar puts two fingers against her neck.

OSCAR

No, but her pulse is weak. Help me get her top back on.

As some girls redress Janice, Oscar stands and looks at Galt who is still on his hands and knees dry heaving.

OSCAR

I told you not to eat the fruit.

Galt looks over his shoulder to try to say something in response but vomits again.

Oscar looks at the girls caring for Janice.

OSCAR

You should get some water and keep her wet. We have to try to cool her down. And, someone bring Galt some water. He'll probably die anyway, but let's try to keep him hydrated.

VOLUNTEER FOOD TESTER

Is all the food poison? Are we all going to die?

OSCAR

If you haven't had any ill effects, you're probably not going to. Just stay calm.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - LATER

The sun eases below the trees and paints the sky with pinks and oranges. No one cares or notices.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Cardell and Fuzzy sleep curled up together on top of the strange growth of fungi. Cardell holds Fuzzy like a Teddy bear. The remains of several of the worm-things litter the area below them.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - NIGHT

Oscar and Debra look nervously into the forest.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
They should have been back by now.

OSCAR
I knew I should have tried to talk
him out of going into the forest.

Max, Dean, and Brown emerge from the darkness of the forest.

OSCAR
Then again, I may have been right
to begin with.

Debra isn't listening. She runs to Max and hugs with such
force that he's almost tackled.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Don't go in the forest again.
Don't. Okay?

Debra jumps back when Brown walks by dragging the dead tree-
dweller. The creature's javelin is slung across Brown's
back.

OSCAR
Is that one of the creatures?

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Yeah, that's one.

OSCAR
Hmmm, it's not so big.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - MORNING

As the sun rises over the great forest, the newcomers start
to move around.

Oscar looks down in severe disappointment. Janice lays at his
feet. Her lips are blue and her eyes stare up into the sky
but see nothing.

DEBRA DOUGLAS
Is she dead?

Oscar nods.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Ah! I hate this place. I hate it.
What are we suppose to do with her?

OSCAR

Strip her and burn her.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

What?

OSCAR

It's the most practical thing to
do.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

We should bury her.

OSCAR

We don't even have the tools to
dig, and the effort it would take
to bury her should be used more
constructively.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Fine, we burn her, but not naked.

OSCAR

We'll need the material. It's not
like we can make more.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Why don't we just throw her in the
forest and let something eat her?

OSCAR

Not a bad idea, but we don't want
whatever lives in the forest to
acquire a taste for humans.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I'm not going to treat her like
some trash we're throwing out.

OSCAR

I didn't suggest you do. But, you
know what needs to be done. Do it
with as much dignity as you can,
but no one gets burned wearing
their clothes.

Debra nods sullenly.

OSCAR

Where's the other one that poisoned himself?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Galt? He's alive. He didn't look good, but I saw him walking towards the river.

OSCAR

Great, this girl dies of a nibble and that jerk survives gorging himself.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

At least no one else got sick. There's about 37 things that we can eat.

OSCAR

Now we just have to go in the forest to get it.

Debra walks away, and Oscar heads towards the watering hole.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA/RIVER - MORNING

Oscar walks over the hill to see Galt walking slowly but steadily as he nears the river.

OSCAR

Good. You made it through the night. I still have my test subject.

Galt turns and flips Oscar off.

Oscar continues towards Galt, but suddenly stops. Something is amiss. The many herbivores that usually line the water's edge avoid the river at all cost.

OSCAR

Galt, get away from the water.

Galt kneels and begins to drink directly from the river.

OSCAR

Galt, you idiot. Get away from the water.

Max and his men top the hill and stand at Oscar's side.

Galt stands and faces the gathering crowd.

GALT

See, it takes more than a little
fruit to kill Galt.

The water behind Galt becomes white with movement. A long tentacle with a barb on the end shoots out of the water and impales Galt from behind. As the barb comes out of the front of Galt's chest, spines open like an umbrella on the barb, securing it in place. The tentacle attached to the barb yanks Galt off his feet and drags him into the river. A strange creature rises to the surface of the pool and wraps more tentacles around Galt before disappearing again below the surface.

The river runs crimson for a few seconds, but soon the river washes away any sign Galt ever existed.

OSCAR

Cthulhu.

MAX

What?

OSCAR

A dark god from a Lovecraft story.

MAX

And the moral of the story?

OSCAR

Don't go near the water.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cardell pushes his way through the dense forest. Fuzzy follows at his heels. Fuzzy stops and sits down. When Cardell keeps moving, Fuzzy grunts sadly. Cardell turns.

CARDELL

Come on. We have to find the
others.

Fuzzy just turns his head sideways and grunts.

Cardell picks up Fuzzy and puts him over his shoulder.

CARDELL

Why are you so lazy Fuzzy?

They go a few more steps and Cardell stops.

CARDELL

Do you hear that?

Cardell runs through the thick forest as the sound of running water grows stronger. He emerges from the forest to find the river, and smiles.

CARDELL

All we have to do is follow the
river to find the others.

Cardell sets Fuzzy down, and he runs to the river and drinks. Cardell moves towards Fuzzy to join him for a drink but then he sees a shadowy shape rushing through the water towards Fuzzy. Cardell yanks Fuzzy away from the water's edge. Water splashes onto the bank as a creature snaps its jaws shut right where Fuzzy had been. The jaws snap with such power it sounds like the crack of lightning. The flippered creature tries to worm its way onto the bank to pursue Cardell and Fuzzy, but Cardell is too fast. The creature that looks like a mix between a seal and a crocodile uses its flippers to push itself back into the water.

Cardell breathes a sigh of relief.

CARDELL

We'll follow the river, but not too
closely.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - EVENING

As the sun hangs low over the great forest of Pangeae, many young men work on the thin walls of the shelter. Elder Larson works on an intricate joint. Several large fires burn around the area as people prepare for nightfall.

A boy of about fourteen takes time to wipe his brow.

ELDER LARSON

Come on. Keep working. Don't you
want a wall between you and this
world?

Elder Larson looks toward Max and his men.

ELDER LARSON

Come on, help us.

Max and his men ignore the Elder. The Elder shakes his head and goes back to instructing people on building the shelter.

ELDER LARSON

Those that don't work stay outside.

Max and his men move off.

BROWN
(Loud enough so Larson can
hear)
He's losing his mind.

MAX
More like lost. He doesn't pay
attention to anything but that damn
shelter.

BROWN
It's not like we can stay there.
We have to go outside sometime. We
need a better plan than hiding
behind walls made of sticks.

Brown stares at Max.

MAX
What are you looking at me for?

BROWN
Because we need a real leader.

MAX
Think I'll pass on that. Where's
the kid?

BROWN
He's on the hill, watching that
monster in the river.

MAX
What?

BROWN
Don't worry. Dean's watching to
make sure nothing eats him.

Max walks towards the river.

EXT. THE RIVER - SUNSET

The large herbivores cross the river in mass.

The monster Cthulhu rises out of the water enough to show his large eyes. Cthulhu wraps several tentacles around a big grazer. It holds the grazer out of the water as if it was a small puppy before slamming it into the water hard enough to kill it.

Oscar turns at approaching footsteps. Max and Brown stand on either side of him. Oscar waves a hand at the carnage taking place in the river.

OSCAR

What you have to ask yourself is
what could compel those big
herbivores to cross the river while
Cthulhu is in the water?

Another pair of big herbivore gets yanked below the surface by Cthulhu. Max looks around and sees the bipedal speeders still grazing on their side of the river.

MAX

If something bad was headed this
way, why wouldn't all the
herbivores cross the river?

Oscar shrugs.

OSCAR

Maybe the speeders can outrun
whatever is headed this way?

MAX

You're full of good news.

OSCAR

Maybe it's nothing? Maybe the big
grazers are just migrating. But, I
don't see any shortage of food
around here so we better assume the
worst.

MAX

(Looking at Brown and
Dean)

Get all the males together. We
need to get organized and set up a
watch. Looks like tonight there
might be a fight.

Brown and Dean run off leaving Oscar and Max alone.

OSCAR

Is Larson finished with his Camelot
of sticks?

MAX

Huh?

OSCAR

Sorry. It's a literary reference.

MAX

You'll have to remember the rest of us haven't read and memorized everything in the records.

OSCAR

An interesting story, Camelot. A king rose among men to save the realm.

MAX

From what I know of kings there's always someone behind the scenes who's really in charge.

OSCAR

Glad we understand one another.

MAX

I'm no king.

Max walks away.

OSCAR

Maybe you're not, but you're all we've got.

EXT. FOREST - SUNSET

Cardell trudges through thick mud. Sweat stains his coverall dark blue where the material isn't torn. Fuzzy lays draped across Cardell's shoulders like a chubby stole. Fuzzy snores audibly as Cardell stops to regain his wind.

Fuzzy's nose twitches and his big eyes pop open, and he squirms to be released.

Cardell lowers Fuzzy to the ground, and Fuzzy sniffs the air and looks into the forest canopy.

Cardell follows Fuzzy's eyes to see several tree-dwellers on the bough of a giant tree eating some small animal.

Fuzzy runs off the trail and Cardell follows.

EXT. CAMP - SUNSET

As the sun sets and the broken moon rises, perimeter fires burn West of the camp and at the edge of the forest to expose any approaching threats.

Max walks with Debra, Brown, and Dean at his side. Sumner and Julie hug each other and giggle at a fire close by.

BROWN

Now, that's some pair, a bitch and an asshole.

MAX

Let's try to stay focused on more important things.

Brown turns his attention away from the happy couple.

BROWN

I set two lookouts further to the West to run back and warn us about...whatever.

MAX

Dean, could you make sure the kid is okay?

Dean walks off without a word.

BROWN

I'll get our weapons together.

Max stares at Debra once they are alone.

MAX

I have to organize all these guys, but I don't know how to...shit. I don't know what to do.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I don't know what to do either, but I do know where you should do it from.

Debra glances over at Charger who grazes on the tall grass.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Charger prances proudly through the clusters of people with Max in the saddle.

As people turn to watch, Max rides onto the top of the natural STAGE.

MAX

Everyone! Everyone!

People start to form up around the stage. Charger whinnies and stomps its hooves as if demanding everyone's attention.

MAX

Quickly, I need everyone's help.

Elder Larson comes out of the shelter.

ELDER LARSON

What's going on? Everyone back to work.

Some boys sigh and go move to return to the shelter.

MAX

Stop. Everyone needs to hear this. If you want to survive, listen.

Everyone gives Max their full attention.

MAX

The big grazers crossed the river today. Cthulhu, the river monster, tore them to pieces, but they kept crossing. The kid thinks they took their chances because something worse is headed this way.

The crowd starts to murmur.

MAX

Everyone knows the kid has an annoying way of being right. I suggest we take measures to prepare.

ELDER LARSON

We are preparing. We're building a shelter.

Many of the people roll their eyes.

MAX

We can't hide behind a wall of sticks. We have to make use of our numbers. Every male grab a spear. If you can't find a spear, stack rocks to throw. It's probably nothing, but if something comes, we'll be ready for a change.

Julie pushes to the front of the crowd.

JULIE

Prepare for what? If those giant grazers are running, maybe we should too.

MAX

Anyone who wants to cross the river with Julie is welcome to try.

The crowd bursts into laughter.

MAX

The rest of you follow me.

Max guides Charger off the STAGE. Everyone follows, including a reluctant Julie.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - NIGHT

Oscar sits with his back against the ruins. He uses the light from an open pod to take apart another. Wires and parts are strewn everywhere. The conglomeration of parts in Oscar's hands arcs with electricity and begins to smoulder.

Oscar stands quickly and throws the parts into the wall of the ruins, shattering the parts into many pieces.

OSCAR

Fuck!

Max walks up.

MAX

Such language for a little kid.

OSCAR

How am I supposed to build something? I don't have any tools and, even if I did, I don't have the right parts.

MAX

Why don't you try to get some sleep? You'll ruin your eyes working in this light.

OSCAR

Max, we're living on an unexplored continent surrounded by monsters. Myopia is not big on my list of concerns.

Max chuckles as he picks up the ruined parts.

MAX

What were you making?

OSCAR

Looks like a melted piece of shit to me.

MAX

Get some sleep. It looks like we'll make it through another night.

Oscar glances around the ruins at all the young men in formation.

OSCAR

You did an excellent job at organizing everyone.

MAX

I'm just glad nothing happened. But, since nothing did, they'll probably never listen to me again.

OSCAR

The night's not over yet.

MAX

It is for you.

Max closes the pod Oscar was using for light.

OSCAR

You know when I told you that you needed to become a leader I didn't mean mine.

EXT. CAMP PERIMETER - TWILIGHT

The sky is beginning to lighten to a dark blue in the East, but the stars are still bright pinpoints of light in the West. The broken moon seems huge as it hangs just above the trees.

Brown paces back and forth in front of a group of "soldiers" that are sitting next to their spears. Most have their heads bowed and are nodding off to sleep. Cameron sits at the front of the formation, looking tired and bored.

CAMERON

This is bullshit. Let's go lay down.

Brown turn towards Cameron.

BROWN
If you really want to be
unconscious, I can help you out.

Brown moves with his fist clinched toward Cameron.

CAMERON
Okay. Relax. I was just joking.

BROWN
It's our watch. We're going to
keep it. So everyone get your
heads up.

Brown kicks the feet of a sleeping soldier and turns back to the West.

The silhouette of a running man reaches the top of the hill. A much larger silhouette appears and knocks the running man to the ground. Both silhouettes vanish as the man-shaped shadow is pulled away.

CAMERON
Did anyone else just see that?

BROWN
What the hell was that?

One by one the large silhouettes of huge creatures reveal themselves on the on the summit of the hill.

CAMERON
Oh, we're fucked.

BROWN
Quiet.

Brown pulls a soldier to his feet.

BROWN
Get Max. Get everyone.

The soldier sprints away.

BROWN
Don't just sit there. Get on your
feet.

All the young men stand and pick up their weapons, but from the looks on their faces they seem as likely to run as to stand and fight.

Max rides up on Charger. Brown points in the distance.

BROWN

Whatever it is they ain't small.

CAMERON

And they're far away. They're even bigger than they seem.

The giant figures stay on the hilltop. The biggest of the figures paces back and forth, showing that it's a huge quadruped.

CAMERON

Please let them be herbivores.

MAX

Shut up. No noise. They'll pass if we hold, hold strong.

As the creatures near, they come more into view. The biggest of the gray and black striped creatures is twenty feet at the shoulder and looks like a combination of a pit-bull and a dragon, these are ULTRA-PREDATORS.

Cameron shakes with fear as he goes pale.

The Ultras near the perimeter fires. The BULL-ULTRA stops to sniff these strange new creatures. The Ultras seem to dislike the fires, but fear would be too strong a word.

Max holds his horse still. No one moves as they are awe struck by the prodigious predators.

The Bull starts to walk around the human camp. The other Ultras follow at his heels.

Elder Larson comes out of the shelter, waving frantically.

ELDER LARSON

Here! Here! Get in the shelter.

It is all the encouragement Cameron needs. He breaks for the shelter. His cowardice is infectious. Several others make a run for the shelter.

MAX

No. Hold your ground. They're going around.

The large black eyes of the Bull-ultra reflect the small individuals running toward the shelter.

The Bull stops and its pack stops with it. It turns back toward the ruins and lets out an Earth-shaking roar. The rest of the pack roar in response. The hunt is on.

Charger takes a few steps sideways as more "soldiers" flee before the roaring giants. Max pulls Charger to a stop.

MAX

No, hold the line.

Some listen. Some don't. Some are pushed back into formation by Brown and a few others with courage. When all is said and done only about half of Max's army remains.

The Ultras casually step over the perimeter fires, and begin walking toward the camp, slowly picking up speed until they are galloping. Their collective weight shakes the Earth.

Max and what remains of his army hold their formation.

MAX

Hold the formation! When I give the word, throw your spears.

Max's army raise their spears and prepare for the clash with the titans, but before Max can order the spears thrown, the Ultras turn from the large formation and give chase to the individuals running toward the shelter.

The Ultras smash the fleeing humans flat with their huge paws before gulping them down whole.

A few of the fleeing soldiers being pursued by the Bull-ultra make it inside the shelter. The bull never breaks stride. It smashes into the shelter's opening and turns the front wall into splinters. The Bull begins to pull screaming people out of the shelter one by one feasting on them.

Elder Larson runs towards the Bull, brandishing a stick..

ELDER LARSON

Get away from my house, monster.

Elder Larson whacks the Bull in its snout with his stick. The Bull seems confused at being attacked by such a small creature, but then snatches up Elder Larson in its big maw. It backs out of the shelter and tosses Elder Larson's smashed corpse toward an adolescent ultra. The young ultra catches Larson's ruined body in its jaws and crunches him up.

Max is frozen as he watches the carnage.

Screams come from the shelter.

The back of the Bull-ultra sticks out of the shelter as it continues to pull humans out of the shelter. The thatch roof collapses around the Bull-ultra.

Max turns to his army.

MAX

Hold this line.

Max spurs Charger and rides past a bonfire, snatching out a burning chunk of wood. Max weaves through the feasting Ultras toward the shelter. As he nears the shelter he throws the burning wood into the thatch around the Bull.

As the flames leap to life in the dry thatch. Max whips Charger hard, driving the horse through the wall at the back of the shelter.

INT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Charger explodes into the shelter. Broken sticks fly as those nearest the wall are knocked hard to the earth or trampled beneath the stumbling horse. The shelter begins to fill with white smoke.

MAX

To the forest. Run!

The people stream out of the hole Charger made in the wall.

EXT. SHELTER

The fire leaps from the thatch to the Bull's fur. The Bull roars and backs frantically away from the burning structure. The Bull claws at its burning fur singing its paws. It drops to the dewy grass and rolls around shrieking.

INT. SHELTER

Max scans the survivors. He sees a flash of red hair. Debra tries to run by him towards the opening, but Max pulls her into the saddle.

MAX

Hang on, baby.

Max spurs Charger hard toward the wall opposite the opening.

EXT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Charger smashes out of the shelter and speeds away from the burning structure, easily passing the people fleeing to the forest. Max pulls Charger to a stop in front of his army.

MAX

Hold the formation until everyone
is in the forest.

EXT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

The Bull rolls on the dewy grass and extinguishes its fur. It rises to its feet, angry and smouldering.

The black eyes of the bull reflect Max riding his horse along the front of the formation. Debra's red hair waves like a flag. The Bull produces a low guttural growl and springs toward Max.

Max turns his horse. His eyes grow wide as he sees the smouldering Ultra charging him.

MAX

Oh shit.

Max throws Debra roughly off the horse. She hits the ground hard as Max spurs Charger away from the others.

As Max streaks in front of the forest, the Bull pursues and closes fast. Max whips Charger with the long reins.

MAX

Go, goddamn you, go.

As the Bull nears, it lunges for Max. Max pulls Charger violently to the right. Charger barely keeps from falling as he turns down an animal trail. The Bull flies by as its claws just miss Max. The Bull falls and smashes into a row of trees, knocking even the great trees askew.

Leaves rain down around Max and Charger as they flee down the trail.

The Bull gets up and roars and chases Max down the trail. Max pulls off the main trail taking ever narrower paths until the paths get too narrow even for Charger to pass.

The Bulls huge body is unable to push through the thick foliage. It roars and stares at Max through the wall of trees, growling at Max as if saying, "We'll meet again."

The Bull backs out of the trees and runs toward the plains.

Max breathes a sigh of relief and pats Charger's neck.

MAX

Good horse.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - DAWN

Brown stands at the front of the formation. The last of the survivors stream into the forest.

BROWN

Slowly back toward the forest,
slowly.

As the formation starts to collectively move back, the adolescent ultra gulps down a human and turns toward the formation. The adolescent walks close but stops before the tight formation. It sniffs the air then turns its head sideways. The larger ultras finish their meals and step in front of the young ultra.

Brown and his group continue to walk back toward the forest.

BROWN

Very slowly. No running.

The soldiers at the back of the formation are almost to the tree-line.

The ultras seem to have satiated their hunger and just watch the humans out of curiosity.

In the distance comes the sound of a thunderous gallop. The Bull emerges over the hill sprinting toward the humans and roaring.

BROWN

Ready your spears.

The other Ultras notice the Bull's anger and take a more aggressive posture. The ultras move in toward the formation.

BROWN

Spears! Throw the spears.

The soldiers throw their spears, but for the most part the spears bounce off the thick hides of the ultras, but it's enough to give the creatures pause. Another stream of spears fly at the beasts.

A lucky shot goes into the eye of one of the Ultra's. It falls rolling on the ground and roaring as the charging Bull nears them.

BROWN
Run for the forest.

The formation breaks in every direction and it's every man for himself. The Bull arrives and swings its great forelimb into the breaking formation, sending bodies flying into the air. The other Ultras follow the Bull's lead and decimate what's left of the soldiers that don't make it to the forest.

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

Max rides Charger through the forest. He sees individuals roaming the forest in confusion.

MAX
Get together. Form up.

Max rides past one teenage boy.

TEENAGE BOY
You really saved our asses.

MAX
What happened? Did everyone make it to the forest?

The boy shakes his head.

TEENAGE BOY
Not everyone, but a lot.

Max rides down the trail as more humans are grouping together.

Brown runs to Max's side.

MAX
How'd it go?

BROWN
Not good.

MAX
Young-blood?

BROWN
I haven't seen him?

MAX
Shit.

Max looks up quickly. Red hair flashes against the green of the forest. Max spurs his horse toward Debra.

MAX

You okay?

Debra nods blankly.

MAX

I only pushed you off because...

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I know. You had to lead that thing away.

MAX

Get all these people together. I'm going to find the kid.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - MORNING

Oscar and Dean lay still against the ruins.

As the last of the ultras disappears over the top of the hill, Oscar and Dean stand and brush themselves off.

OSCAR

It would seem these Ultra-predators hunt by movement.

Dean, as usual, doesn't say anything.

Oscar turns to face Dean. Tears stream down his face. Dean looks surprised by the sudden show of emotion.

OSCAR

I miss my brother. I wanna go home.

Dean walks close to Oscar and puts his hand on his shoulder.

DEAN

I'll take care of you.

Oscar hugs Dean and cries into his stomach.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - MORNING

The adolescent-ultra bats a corpse in a red coverall into the air like a cat playing with a dead mouse. The body flips through the air like a rag-doll and lands with a splat in the mud of the riverbank. The adolescent-ultra moves to pick up it's "toy" as Cthulhu rises from the depths of the river. Cthulhu sends tentacles toward the adolescent-ultra, but before Cthulhu can ensnare the young ultra, the Bull and the other ultras appear at the adolescent's side.

The Bull stares into Cthulhu big eyes, baring his fangs and growling. Cthulhu freezes, then draws back his tentacles and disappears beneath the surface of the river.

The Bull gives a push to the adolescent ultra, and they cross the river together. Cthulhu rises to the surface near the waterfall and watches the ultras cross. The Bull and Cthulhu stare at each other the entire time.

The ultras make it to the other bank, shake off the water, and walk away casually.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - MORNING

Max rides to the ruins at a gallop. Oscar still embraces Dean as he cries.

MAX

Is he injured?

Oscar releases Dean and wipes the tears from his face.

MAX

Young-blood, you okay?

OSCAR

I'm great, fucking fantastic. Top of the morning to you.

Max just stares at Oscar.

OSCAR

The ultras are gone. You should get everyone out of the forest.

MAX

How do you know it's safe?

Oscar points to a variety of herbivores that graze casually on the tall grass.

Max turns his horse and rides toward the forest.

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

Julie, Sumner, and a few others rest in the forest.

VOICE 1

Everyone! We're going back to the plains. Everyone come on.

Sumner moves to obey, but Julie pulls him to a stop.

JULIE

Are you in such a hurry to get back?

SUMNER

It's dangerous here too.

JULIE

Let the others go first. When we know it's safe for sure, then we'll go back.

Above Julie and Sumner a tree-dweller creeps silently down a tree, getting very close to Julie. The creature's gecko-like hand pulls back its javelin as it prepares to throw.

Sumner pulls Julie out of the way, and the javelin meant for Julie slams into the middle of Sumner's chest.

As the other people flee the area, Julie grabs Sumner's spear. She slams the spear into the neck of the tree-dweller and pulls it out of the tree.

As the tree-dweller flops around on the forest floor holding its neck, Julie stabs it repeatedly. The creature stops moving. Julie looks up to see several more tree-dwellers rise out of the thick bush. One launches its javelin at Julie. Before the weapon impales her, Brown appears at her side and uses his long spear to knock the javelin away.

The other tree-dwellers raise their weapons. Before they can throw, Max and Charger break through the bush and trample a couple of them. Max smashes the skull of another with his weapon.

The remaining two tree-dwellers jump into the trees and scurry away with uncanny speed, but a javelin comes out of nowhere and skewers one of the tree-dwellers to a tree.

Max looks over his shoulder to see it was Julie who had thrown the javelin.

Max rides close to Julie and Brown.

MAX

Get Sumner out of here. I'll watch your back.

Julie tries to pull Sumner to his feet, but he screams in pain and falls back to the ground.

JULIE

You have to get up.

Brown pulls Sumner to his feet, ignoring his screams, and Julie helps drag Sumner toward the plains.

SUMNER

I don't want to die. I don't want to.

EXT. PLAINS-DAY

Brown and Julie emerge from the forest and lay Sumner gently to the thick grass. Sumner grabs the shaft of the javelin. Julie pulls his hands away.

JULIE

You'll bleed to death if you pull it out.

Sumner coughs up some blood. His breathe is raspy and wet.

SUMNER

Julie, I'm going to die.

JULIE

You won't die.

(Looking up at Brown)

Go get that kid.

(back to Sumner)

That kid knows everything. He can save you. Where's that fucking kid?

Sumner coughs up a mouthful of blood and struggles to breath but suddenly stops. Sumner smiles and points at the sky.

Julie turns to see a beautiful expanse of clouds drifting across the clear blue sky.

Sumner's arm falls to the grass causing Julie to turn back to him. Sumner's dark eyes are frozen in death, reflecting the clouds.

Julie rips the javelin out of Sumner's chest and cradles Sumner's body. Tears stream down her face.

JULIE

I'm going to kill those tree-things. I'll kill them all. They'll be sorry. I'll make them sorry.

Julie lays down Sumner's body, and picks up the javelin stained with her lover's blood and starts toward the forest.

BROWN

Where do you think you're going?

Julie keeps walking. Brown grabs her by the shoulder. She turns fast and Brown has to jump back to avoid the weapon's point.

JULIE

I don't feel like being saved.

Brown turns his back on her.

BROWN

Good hunting, bitch.

Max rides up and blocks Julie's path.

JULIE

I don't take orders from you.

Debra runs up.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Julie, we have to stick together.
What good can you do alone?

JULIE

We can't just wait here to die. We have to do something.

MAX

We're not going to do nothing, and we're not going to die. Now, put that weapon down.

JULIE

Why don't you come take it?

Max and Brown exchange glances.

MAX

She doesn't go in that forest.

Brown takes a step forward. Julie faces him and points the javelin at him.

Brown charges her. As she thrusts the javelin forward, Brown slides out of the way and grabs the shaft as he kicks her feet out from underneath her. Julie loses her grip on the weapon and falls hard.

Brown slams the javelin into the ground an inch from Julie's face. He backs away as if the fight is over, but Julie jumps up and snatches up the weapon.

BROWN

If you try to kill me again, it's really going to hurt.

Julie hesitates for just a second then swipes the javelin at him. Brown rips the weapon out of her hand and punches her in the nose, knocking her on her ass.

JULIE

You hit me.

BROWN

You did try to kill me.

Julie springs to her feet and charges him. Brown sweeps her legs out from underneath her again. She hits the ground face first. Before she can get up, Brown places his knee on her spine and yanks her head back until her neck is at the snapping point.

BROWN

Had enough yet?

Julie continues to struggle though her pain is great.

BROWN

Give up, and I'll teach you how to fight.

Julie stops struggling.

JULIE

Okay. Okay. Let me up.

Brown gets off of her, but his guard is still up.

Julie sits up, rubbing her neck as she glares at Brown.

Brown offers his hand. Julie takes it after a moment, and Brown pulls her roughly to her feet.

BROWN

If half these guys were as mean as you, we'd have conquered the continent by now.

JULIE

Will you help me take care of Sumner?

BROWN

Sure.

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

Cardell sleeps peacefully with Fuzzy on top of his chest. Fuzzy stretches in his sleep, and a furry paw ends up in Cardell's face. Cardell's nose twitches. He comes awake quickly, sitting up, throwing Fuzzy off his chest.

Fuzzy hits the ground and looks at Cardell with big, sad eyes.

CARDELL

Oh, sorry, little guy. Come here.

Cardell hold out his hands. Fuzzy jumps into his arms happily as Cardell hugs Fuzzy and stands.

CARDELL

We have to get going. I want to get back to the plains where it's safe.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - DAY

The naked bodies of all those that were killed by the ultras lay stacked on the smouldering remains of the shelter and gathered wood.

The survivors of the previous night stand around the pyre as Max climbs to the top of the ruins and stands atop the shattered wall.

MAX

I want those who ran last night to look at these bodies. These were the men that held the line while you escaped. And, remember this too. Cowardice will be tolerated no more. If you want to be frightened of something, be afraid of what I will do to you when I catch you running. Start the fire.

Brown and Julie light the pyre and walk away. Flames engulf the naked corpses.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - CONTINUOUS

Max climbs down from the ruins. Oscar leans against the wall. Dean stands at his side.

OSCAR
Very motivational.

MAX
I told you I wasn't a leader, but I swear to whatever gods live in this age I'll kill the next man that gets someone killed because he's too much of a pussy to do his part.

OSCAR
Fair enough.

MAX
Are you here just to critique my speech?

OSCAR
We can't stay here...on the plains.

MAX
Where would you like to go exactly?

OSCAR
Cilia and Charybdis.

MAX
What? Stop with the literary references.

OSCAR
If we stay here, those ultra-predators will drive us to extinction. If we try to live in the forest, the tree-dwellers attack us.

MAX
This I know.

OSCAR
But, there's a third option. We attack.

MAX
We attack?

OSCAR
Yes, we attack the tree-dwellers.

MAX

We don't even know where to attack
or how many of them there are.

OSCAR

So we find out.

MAX

There village could be in the
treetops.

OSCAR

Then we burn it down.

MAX

You're right. It's time we brought
the fight to them.

OSCAR

I have a weapon that will help.

MAX

You've had better luck with the
pods?

OSCAR

I have, but I still need more time.
This is something much more low-
tech.

Oscar holds out a long, thin strip of metal that used to be
part of a stasis pod with a flat stone tied to middle.

MAX

Doesn't look like much?

Oscar fits one of the tree-dwellers javelins into his
contraption. He pulls back and throws. The javelin flies
faster than any little kid could throw and embeds in part of
the stone ruins. Max eyes widen at the destructive force of
the weapon.

OSCAR

Max, meet one of man's oldest
friends, the atlatl.

EXT. RUINS OF MANKIND - DAY

Cardell walks into the camp with Fuzzy draped over his
shoulder. He's filthy, and his coverall is torn to hell, but
everyone ignores him as he stands staring at the burning pyre
of naked corpses.

BROWN
(O.S.)
You!

Cardell turns to see Brown marching up with a group of soldiers behind him.

CARDELL
Brown?

Brown points at Fuzzy.

BROWN
What the fuck is that thing?

CARDELL
He's my friend.

Brown pauses with recognition.

BROWN
Cardell?

CARDELL
Yeah, it's me.

BROWN
Thought you were dead.

CARDELL
I thought that myself a couple of times. When I see that guy Sumner I'm going to punch him in the face.

Brown points to the pyre.

BROWN
Better hurry.

CARDELL
What? Oh.

BROWN
Where have you been?

CARDELL
All over. I've seen some weird shit. Guess I'm not the only one.

BROWN
Follow me. Young-blood will want to hear about everything you saw.

EXT. RUINS- DAY

Oscar, Max, Brown, and other soldiers are clustered around Cardell and Fuzzy.

OSCAR

How many tree-dwellers do you think there are?

Cardell starts to answer but gets distracted as the chicken struts by, scratching and pecking at the ground. Fuzzy charges at the chicken, but the chicken launches a noisy attack that sends Fuzzy running behind Cardell for protection.

CARDELL

Not as tough as you thought.

Fuzzy tugs at Cardell's pants and whimpers.

CARDELL

Awe, did that mean ole chicken hurt your feelings.

Cardell looks up to see everyone staring impatiently. Cardell pats Fuzzy's butt.

CARDELL

Go play.

As Fuzzy runs off...

OSCAR

It's great you're bonding with the indigenous species, but we haven't much leisure time being that we're on the brink of extinction.

CARDELL

I don't know how many of those things there are, seemed like a lot.

MAX

Fifty, a hundred?

CARDELL

More like a hundred. Why is this so important?

MAX

We're going to kill them all and take their village.

Cardell just stares not sure if it's a joke or not as Fuzzy runs by with the chicken in pursuit.

CARDELL

I better go save my animal from the chicken.

OSCAR

You better go get some rest. Tomorrow you'll guide our army to their village.

CARDELL

Our army? What are you guys talking about?

MAX

Just be ready to move before sunrise, and you might want to find something to fight with.

CARDELL

Are you serious?

Max and the other soldiers walk away.

EXT. STAGE - EVENING

All the males are in formation in front of the stage. Max climbs onto the stage and the murmuring crowd goes silent.

MAX

250 million years ago our ancestors came out of the trees. Our species fought to rise above the others. Over the eons our forefathers have defeated beasts, famine, and even the evil within themselves. They became the masters and shapers of their world, and, when the Earth was ruined, they used their minds to devise a way we might live. I don't mean the human race. I mean you and I. We...we are the result of millions of years of evolution. We are the result of all human suffering, all the struggles, and all the pain and the love. Once war almost destroyed our species, but now it's what will save us. If we want to survive, if we want our species to last, we'll have to fight, like our fathers before us.

(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)

If we allow ourselves to be destroyed, all human suffering would have been for nothing. It will be like we never existed. Some other species will rise to be masters of this world.

(Raising his weapon)

But, I say they won't. I say our fathers were no better than us. I say tomorrow is a new day. It's the day mankind takes back what's his. Tomorrow we take back the Earth.

Max's army screams and bangs their spears into the ground.

MAX

Forget who you were before you went to sleep. Forget what you wanted to be. You're soldiers now, and the fate of humanity rest with you.

Max steps down from the stage to be greeted by Julie and Debra.

JULIE

They won't let us in any of the groups.

MAX

And they're not going to.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

But we have a right to fight too?

MAX

We all have a role to play in our survival. Women are more important now. We need all that we have. Even if only a few guys survive we could still repopulate, but if we lose many more females...

CARDELL

Wow, I hope I make it back.

MAX

Shut up, Cardell.

JULIE

Well, maybe I don't feel like being one of your incubators.

MAX

Maybe I don't feel like leading men to their deaths, but I'll do what needs doing, and so will you.

Max tries to walk away, but Debra grabs his arm.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

If women don't fight, we'll never be equal. Besides, I can ride too. You could use me. I could wake one of the other horses.

MAX

We'll have to correct little injustices later. Right now we are fighting for survival. I'll make this short. If you wear blue, you fight. If you wear red, you dont.

Julie moves to argue further, but Debra pulls her back.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

We'll follow your orders exactly.

Debra pulls Julie away. Max sighs.

OSCAR

Don't feel bad for a second. We're responsible for an entire species. We can't worry about equality and hurt feelings.

MAX

Right.

EXT. RUINS-OSCAR'S SPOT - NIGHT

Oscar works with an array of pod parts. Fuzzy runs up and looks at Oscar. Oscar stops his work and stares back.

Cardell walks up and extends his arms to Fuzzy.

CARDELL

There you are?

Fuzzy runs and springs into Cardell's arms.

OSCAR

Shouldn't you be resting, scout?

CARDELL

Scout?

OSCAR

You do have to lead us to our enemies tomorrow.

CARDELL

We must really be desperate. The first guy to get lost becomes a scout.

OSCAR

The first guy to get lost and returns becomes the scout, and to answer your question we're incredibly desperate.

CARDELL

It really hasn't hit me that we're starting a war tomorrow.

OSCAR

Maybe you'll get it when a javelin slams into your chest?

CARDELL

You mean little bastard, I probably will get killed. From what I've heard those things never miss, get you right in the chest every time.

Oscar picks up a square of metal that used to be part of a pod and stares at it. Oscar smiles.

CARDELL

What are you smiling about?

OSCAR

They never miss.

EXT. TREELINE - DAWN

The young men stand in groups of ten or twelve, each with it's own leader standing to the side of the formations.

Max pulls Charger to a stop in front of his army. His eyes narrow and his ears turn pink.

Debra rides a horse towards Max's army. Julie leads a pack of six other girls at a trot along side of the mustang. All the girls wear tattered and blood-stained blue coveralls over their usual red coveralls.

Oscar tries to stifle a laugh.

Debra's squad take their place in the middle of the army.

Max rides over to Debra.

MAX

What the fuck do you think you're doing?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

(Fingering the collar of her blue coverall)

Just following orders, sir.

Oscar walks to Max's side.

OSCAR

There's only eight. That leaves more than fifty females, more than enough genetic diversity.

MAX

Stay out of this, Young-blood.

JULIE

If you don't want us to fight, you'll have to kill us.

MAX

You think I won't?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Max. You'd never allow me to go into battle by myself. Why do you ask it of me? I was a coward once already. I let a friend to die. I won't do it again.

Max seems touched and pauses in thought.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

We aren't useless. We can fight. We want to fight, and we're going to fight.

MAX

You're in the second to last formation.

The girls cheer but stop when Max looks down at them.

MAX

There's nothing to cheer about. You'll probably all die.

JULIE

We aren't worried about dying.
We're here to kill.

Max gives Debra a soft smile and rides back to the lead formation.

MAX

Show us the way, Cardell.

Cardell shrugs and runs into the forest with Fuzzy following.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS

Cardell, Brown, and Fuzzy lead the way through thick mud staying out of the thick forest.

Oscar rides with Max on Charger as Dean and some other soldiers struggle with all of Oscar's equipment.

The girls pick fruit for the soldiers as they take a brief rest.

Everyone looks exhausted trudging through the forest with evening fast approaching.

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

Brown and Cardell reach the edge of the gnarled forest and stop. Max rides up a second later.

CARDELL

It's not far now.

Max leans forward in the saddle and looks up. The sky is darkening.

MAX

It's almost nightfall.
(Looking to Brown)
What do you think?

BROWN

I don't know how well those things
can see in the dark, but I know we
can't see shit.

Max slides off of Charger and leads him into the gnarled forest.

MAX

We'll stay here tonight. It'll
give us time to rest. Tell
everyone I want absolute silence,
no fires.

Fuzzy runs into the gnarled forest with Cardell chasing
behind.

EXT. GNARLED FOREST - NIGHT

Max eats a whole worm by himself as Brown and the leaders of
the groups await his orders.

MAX

One man from each group will pair
up to watch the perimeter. We'll
leave a couple hours before dusk.
I want to hit those things as soon
as we can see.

The leaders of the groups jog off to pass the orders to their
groups.

Max and Brown lean back on the gnarled tree.

BROWN

You should go see her.

MAX

People will be depending on me
tomorrow. I need some rest, not an
argument.

BROWN

Well, I wasn't suggesting you
argue, but suit yourself.

MAX

Those girls are brave. I guess
they knew I wouldn't actually have
them killed.

BROWN

They'll probably get themselves
killed.

MAX

That's what I'm worried about.
Shit, I'm worried about everything.
How'd I end up in charge?

BROWN

You're our leader, so no more of this bullshit that you don't know what to do. If it wasn't for you, we would have fallen apart by now, and tomorrow you'll lead us to victory. Got that.

Max nods and smiles.

MAX

I've got it. Thanks.

EXT. GNARLED FOREST- NIGHT

Dean leans against a large fungus as Oscar works with parts from the pods.

OSCAR

You don't need to sit here. You can go have sex like everyone else.

DEAN

The whole imminent death thing does put one in an amorous mood.

OSCAR

That's the most I've ever heard you say. But seriously, there's guards on the perimeter. Go have fun. I can build this by myself.

DEAN

You sure you'll be okay?

OSCAR

Yes, go do your best to pass on your strong, silent genes.

EXT. GNARLED FOREST - DUSK

The broken moon rises and falls as the stars go from being bright to dim spots of light as the sky lightens to a dark blue in the East.

In the dim light patches of blue move across the monochrome background that is the gnarled forest. Max's men seems like an army of colorful ants moving toward the green of the forest.

EXT. GNARLED FOREST - MORNING

Oscar works at putting together machinery as the girls who have opted not to fight sit around looking nervous.

Dean stands near Oscar but looks off into the gnarled forest.

OSCAR

You must hate being stuck here with me?

DEAN

I feel like a coward, being here while the others are fighting. I can't even help you. I just stand here and do nothing.

OSCAR

You're following orders. Max isn't an idiot. He knows if we're going to survive long term it will be because of me, not his little army.

DEAN

You sure are full of yourself.

OSCAR

Just stating the facts.

Dean turns away from Oscar and looks into the distance again.

DEAN

Do you think they're fighting yet?

OSCAR

In this place, what else would they be doing?

EXT. EDGE OF THE GNARLED FOREST - DUSK

Max sits atop Charger as Brown and Cardell emerge from the forest with Fuzzy running after them. The two scouts drag a dead tree-dweller. They run to Max's side and throw the tree-dweller's corpse roughly to the dusty ground of the gnarled forest. Fuzzy pounces on the dead tree-dweller's chest and growls at it.

BROWN

(Whispering excitedly)

We got their lookout. Cardell's pet smelled it before we saw it.

Max looks down at Fuzzy.

MAX

If we live til tomorrow that thing's getting a treat.

BROWN

We got right to the edge of their...village. I think we outnumber them.

CARDELL

There's about four paths leading into their camp. We should take some forces around to attack from both sides.

MAX

If they had one lookout on this side, they'll have another on the other side.

Max looks at Brown. Brown shrugs.

MAX

I'll give you and Cardell a five minute head start. Mark a path for the others to follow and take out any lookouts you find. I don't want any of these things escaping. We finish this today.

Brown and Cardell start to run into the forest. Cardell stops and grabs Fuzzy off the dead tree-dweller and carries him along.

MAX

Hey. If you get spotted, scream, and we'll attack.

Cardell nods, and him and Brown disappear into the thick foliage of the forest.

Max raises his right arm without looking back. The rest of his army emerges from their hiding places in the gnarled forest. Their tattered and stained coveralls seem to glow against the monochromatic forest.

The leaders of the squad run to Max's side. Max points at three squad leaders.

MAX

Take your men around to the other side. Follow the path the scouts made.

The squad leaders make to move away.

MAX

Hey, wait five minutes.
The rest of you...

Max points into the forest and nudges Charger's sides. The formations of soldiers follow Max into the forest.

EXT. FOREST/NEAR TREEDWELLER'S VILLAGE - MORNING

Cardell and Brown stay low in the thick bushes of the forest following Fuzzy's winding path. Fuzzy stops and sniffs the air. Brown follows the path of Fuzzy's eyes and sees a tree-dweller squatting in the fork of a big tree high off the forest floor.

Brown points at the creature. Cardell nods but motions that the creature is too high and shrugs. Brown motions toward the creature and points at his own eyes. Cardell shrugs again, a confused look on his face.

Brown puts the point of his javelin under his arm and stands. He stumbles noisily through the forest then falls to the forest floor.

The tree-dweller spots Brown and jumps to the side of the tree with its weapon ready.

Cardell gets the gist of the plan. His grip tightens on the shaft of his spear until his fingers turn white.

The tree-dweller crawls slowly toward Brown. When it gets a couple of meters away, it raises its javelin to strike.

Cardell explodes out of the bush and slams his spear through the creature's ribs. Before the tree-dweller can make a sound, Brown reverses the javelin under his arm and slams the point into the creature's throat. Blood gushes out of the wound and drips all over Brown's face.

Cardell pulls out his spear. The tree-dweller falls dead to the forest floor. As Cardell breathes a sigh of relief, Brown gives him a toothy grin and raises his eyebrows. His smile seems all the brighter against his crimson-stained face.

Cardell stands up straight and smiles back. He looks around and...

A second tree-dweller is hanging off a tree less than a meter from Brown. It has its javelin pulled back and ready to strike.

CARDELL

Awe, man.

The creature slams its javelin into the center of Cardell's chest. The razor-sharp bone tip of the weapon shatters against his chest.

Cardell stands frozen. Brown pounces to his feet and throws a javelin. The tree-dweller jumps out of the way and onto a tree on the other side of the trail. It climbs out of range and starts to click and whistle loudly.

The metal plate that saved Cardell's life shines through his dingy and torn cover as Cardell holds his chest.

BROWN

Attack! Attack! One spotted us.
Fucking attack.

All around them in the forest, Brown hears his call repeated by the leaders of the other formations until every human is screaming the word attack or simply screaming in general.

EXT. TREE-DWELLER CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Many tree-dwellers are about their normal tasks, preparing food for the young, making tools. The yearlings are playfully chasing each other.

A raucous noise suddenly comes from the forest. A frantic tree-dweller pounces from a tree onto one of the sphere-shaped dwellings. It clicks and motions wildly.

The yearlings stand frozen, but the matrons run, scoop up their young, and flee into the spherical dwellings.

Max and Charger burst into the village with the soldiers on foot following. Even the warrior tree-dwellers freeze momentarily at the sight of Max. Max rides over several of them. He screams as he bashes a few others with his weapon as he rides past, turning the heads of his enemies into pink clouds of mist.

The humans begin to push the tree-dwellers back, using their longer spears and greater size to deadly effect, but the tree-dwellers quickly form ranks, and humans start to fall in the vicious battle.

A second horse emerges from the forest and crashes into the tree-dwellers' line from the side. The line is broken, but a tree-dweller leaps and carries Debra off her horse. Debra rolls to her feet as the tree-dweller slams the tip of its javelin against her chest. The tip breaks against her chest-plate.

The tree-dweller pauses in confusion giving Debra enough time to slam her own weapon into its heart. The tree-dweller goes limp, and Debra kicks the dying creature off of her spear.

As another tree-dweller sneaks up from the side, Julie runs past and slices the creature's throat with the edge of her javelin. Julie's face is splattered with blood, and her hair is matted with crimson. This isn't her first kill.

Julie and Debra share a nod and charge off shoulder to shoulder to find their next victim.

A contingent of tree-dwellers break for the forest but are cut off by Brown, Cardell, and the troops that had circled around.

The tree-dwellers see there is no escape and drop their weapons. They roll onto their backs in total submission. The humans don't care. They charge in and start slaughtering the prone beasts.

Max holds his gore-covered weapon high as he scans the village for more of his enemies. He sees that they have all submitted. He watches the slaughter for a moment, then looks around. There are hides tanning, pottery, rope, and even cloth.

MAX

Stop! Don't kill them all.

Some soldiers immediately back away from the beasts but still keep their spears ready. Others keep the slaughter up.

MAX

I said stop, damn it.

Only a few humans continue the killing.

Brown looks up at Max.

BROWN

What are you doing? We have them.

MAX

Look around. These things know how to do...stuff.

BROWN

You heard him. Stop!

All but one soldier backs away from the defeated beast. Julie walks from one creature to the next slamming her spear into their throats.

MAX

Julie! Stop it!

Julie seems not to hear. Max nods to Brown. Brown runs and knocks Julie down, ripping her weapon away. She rolls to her feet and charges back to a tree-dweller. She stomps it in the face since she doesn't have a weapon.

Brown puts her in a choke hold and drags her away.

JULIE

I have to kill them all. I have to kill them. I promised. I promised.

Brown throws her to the ground. She looks at her bloody hands and starts sobbing.

MAX

Get their weapons and round up any others that submit.

Debra swings back onto her horse and rides to Max's side.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Julie's right. We should kill them all.

MAX

Julie isn't right. She's in the fetal position. And maybe we will kill them all, but not before they teach us what they know.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

And you said you weren't fit to lead.

EXT. TREE-DWELLER CAMP - LATER

The village is littered with countless dead tree-dwellers but only a few humans lay dead or injured badly.

The female and young tree-dwellers crawl out of the spheres and join their surviving warriors in submission.

Max rides a circle around the defeated creatures and raises his club.

MAX

Victory!

The humans raise their weapons and cheer. They begin to chant.

MAX'S ARMY

Max. Max. Max. Max.

Max slides off his horse.

MAX

Alright. Cut that shit out.

His army laughs.

MAX

I want squads 3 and 4 to set up a perimeter watch. 2, 5, and 6 will watch our new prisoners. If they look like they can fight, I want them bound. The rest of us will secure the camp.

As everyone else springs into action, Max walks over to Brown and Cardell.

Brown leans against a sphere, but Cardell stands holding his weapon.

MAX

I heard you did well.

CARDELL

I almost got fucking killed.

MAX

Almost doesn't count. Follow me.

EXT. TREE-DWELLER CAMP - LATER

All the tree-dwellers have been rounded up into the middle of the village. Scores of watchful humans surround the defeated creatures. Julie has recovered from her earlier episode and paces back and forth in front of the kneeling creatures. The black eyes of the tree-dwellers follow her every move.

INT. SHERICAL DWELLING - DAY

Max stands with Brown and Cardell as they look around the strange dwelling.

MAX

This place gets weirder and weirder.

A DRAPE, a gelatinous creature that feeds on insects and small animals, hangs around the porthole-like opening of the sphere. It undulates with constant motion. As an insect flies by, the Drape's body shoots out like a chameleon's tongue and pulls the insect inside its gelatinous body. The insect can still be seen struggling beneath the surface.

CARDELL

Did you see that? That goo is alive.

Cardell reaches out slowly to touch the drape. Max grabs his wrist and pulls it back.

MAX

Bad idea.

CARDELL

These things are over every opening of these...houses. If they were mean, the tree-guys probably would have gotten rid of them.

Max releases Cardell's wrist. Cardell reaches slowly toward the undulating creature. The creature's body starts to amass near Cardell's hand.

CARDELL

See it likes me.

The drape's body shoots out and hits Cardell on his palm. Cardell yells and pulls his hand away quickly.

CARDELL

Oh, fuck.

Cardell bends over and holds his hand as blood starts to drip from his fingers.

BROWN

Let me see your hand, stupid.

Cardell stands and opens his hand. A perfect circle of flesh is missing from his palm like he's experiencing a one-handed stigmata.

CARDELL

Is it bad?

BROWN

You'll live, unfortunately.

(mocking Cardell)

It likes me. It likes me.

MAX

Yeah, likes the way you taste.

Brown and Cardell laugh.

MAX

Okay, you two quit screwing around.

We need to get this place secure

and get the kid and girls out of

the gnarled forest

BROWN

We're on it.

EXT. TREE-DWELLER VILLAGE - DAY

Oscar and the females arrive into the village. Oscar spins around taking in the strange environment and the Ultras and Cthulthu carved into the cliff-face.

MAX

What do you think of our new village?

Oscar looks over at the prisoner tree-dwellers.

OSCAR

It was your decision to take prisoners?

MAX

We've a lot to learn. Now, we have teachers.

OSCAR

I'm impressed.

Oscar looks at Dean who is carrying all the equipment. Oscar points at a spherical dwelling.

OSCAR

Just put the stuff in there please.

Oscar looks back to Max.

OSCAR

Good job. I have work to do.

Oscar follows Dean into the strange dwelling.

EXT. FOREST-OUTSIDE TREEDWELLER VILLAGE - NIGHT

Two guards keep watch in the dark. They are constantly slapping away insects. The sound of the many insects and calls of the creatures of the jungle make it hard to fall asleep.

Guard-One slaps the back of his neck.

GUARD ONE

Ah, these fucking bugs are gonna be the death of me.

Both guards are still for a moment. Then, Guard-One starts swatting around his head wildly.

GUARD TWO

Shit, man. Calm down.

GUARD ONE

The bugs. I'm going insane.

GUARD TWO

Our watch is almost up. Just try to relax.

Guard-One takes a deep breath, but still swats around his head.

The jungle grows suddenly silent. Only a few chirping insects are heard.

GUARD TWO

You hear that?

GUARD ONE

Fucking things finally shut...shit.

Guard-One picks up the torch and raises it high, casting light further into the forest.

The forest floor writhes with movement as if it has come alive.

GUARD ONE

What the...

Thousands of SLITHERS, creatures that look like a mixture of snakes and worms but have a pointy barb at the end of their tails, cover the ground.

Several spring from the mass of creatures and onto Guard-One. The slithers sink their barbs into Guard-One and squirm beneath his skin.

Guard-One screams and rips at his own flesh.

GUARD TWO
Holy shit. Help! Help!

Guard-two tries to pull Guard-One back as more slithers pounce onto him.

Guard-One falls, convulsing and spitting up blood. Guard-Two leaves him there and runs toward his camp.

Slithers swarm over Guard-One completely covering him.

As Guard-Two sprints toward the camp, Guard-Three runs to his side.

GUARD THREE
What is it?

GUARD TWO
Some creatures. We have to run.
They fucking got him.

EXT. TREE-DWELLER VILLAGE - NIGHT

The guards emerge into the camp. Others are already awake and forming ranks.

BROWN
What is it?

GUARD TWO
Some...things. We have to go.

BROWN
Are they big?

Guard-Two doesn't respond. He just looks for some place to flee.

BROWN
Hey! Is it big?

GUARD TWO
No, but there's about a fucking
billion of them.

BROWN
Get Max. Get everyone.

Brown takes Guard two's torch and walks to the edge of the forest.

BROWN
(Muttering)
Always some shit.

Cardell walks to Brown's side.

CARDELL
Did I just hear you complain?

Brown and Cardell smirk at each other.

BROWN
Hell no. Scouts don't complain.

CARDELL
Then, let's scout.

Brown and Cardell run into the forest.

As the squads begin to form ranks, Max rides to the front of the formation.

MAX
What's going on?

Blank stares are the only answers given.

Brown and Cardell come running out of the forest.

BROWN
Run! Everyone run.

MAX
What?

CARDELL
No time. We have to run.

MAX
Squad 7. Hold your line. The rest
of you...retreat.

SQUAD LEADER 6
To where?

Max pauses.

MAX

To the gnarled forest. Go now.

As everyone retreats toward the gnarled forest, Max rides to where the tree-dwellers are imprisoned.

JULIE

What do you want to do with them?

MAX

Drag all you can. Leave the rest.

Max rides over to the dwelling where Oscar was sleeping. Dean already has Oscar ready to move.

MAX

Keep a close watch on the kid.

Max turns and spots Debra on her mustang and her squad forming ranks alongside of squad 7.

Max spurs Charger towards her.

MAX

Get to the gnarled forest.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

But?

MAX

Just follow orders for a change.

Debra rides off followed by her squad of female warriors.

Brown and Cardell stand with squad seven.

BROWN

Spears are useless. Start piling anything that will burn.

The soldiers in squad Seven obey without thought. They stack piles of dried wood and anything else that will burn. Brown sets it aflame.

Max rides over to the bonfire that is expanding into a wall of fire.

MAX

Brown, what are we up against?

BROWN

Uh..some kind of worm things. So many the ground looks alive.

MAX

So?

CARDELL

So you should have seen what they did to Smith.

MAX

Brown, Cardell, I want you two scouting around the gnarled forest. If there are more of those things out there I want to know.

Brown and Cardell start to run toward the forest.

MAX

Brown, make sure the others are organized. Keep'em together.

The squad-leader from Seven looks up at Max.

7-LEADER

Max, that's your job. We've got this.

MAX

We don't know what we've got.

The bonfire is being built into a wall of flames. The fire lights the forest enough for squad-7 to get there first look at the slithers.

7-LEADER

Make the wall longer. Don't let them around.

Everyone runs to make the wall of fire longer, but the slithers aren't slow. Some men have to push them back by waving torches at their masses. As more and more slithers appear from the forest, it's obvious it's a battle that can't be won.

7-LEADER

Max, you have to tell the others to build a second wall. We'll hold them off as long as we can.

MAX

If we build another wall, you'll be on the wrong side of it.

7-Leader shrugs.

Max turns and spurs Charger towards the gnarled forest.

Squad seven goes back to fighting the slithers.

EXT. GNARLED FOREST - NIGHT

Max rides into the gnarled forest so fast that some people have to dive out of Charger's way.

MAX

I want each squad to build a fire
along this perimeter.

Everyone looks at Max with confusion.

MAX

Move! Our lives depend on it.

People start to rush to stack wood at the edge of the forest.

MAX

Not too close, but not too far. We
have to join the fire. We need a
wall of fire.

Max slides off the horse and frantically gathers wood. With everyone working together the fires are soon starting to burn. The dead forest is already starting to catch.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Seven is still back there.

MAX

I know. Get these piles joined.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

What about Seven?

Max shakes his head.

EXT. TREE-DWELLER VILLAGE - NIGHT

Flames flicker all around. Parts of the village already burn as 7-Leader and his squad swing torches at the encroaching slithers.

A few slithers pounce onto a soldier, and burrow into his flesh. He drops his torch and falls screaming into the fire.

SEVEN SOLDIER
We have to fall back, now.

7-LEADER
We have to hold this line.

The tree-dwellers that were left behind watch the humans with interest, but seem to have no fear of the slithers.

One tree-dweller stands and walks into a pile of slithers. The slithers draw back at its presence, but the tree-dweller dives into the slithers and eats several.

SEVEN SOLDIER
Did you see that?

7-LEADER
Yeah, cut them loose.

Before the soldier can follow the order, a wave of slithers overtake him.

7-leader and the last remaining soldier run into the tree-dwellers and start to cut their restraints. The freed tree-dwellers just sit there until 7-Leader pushes them toward the slithers.

The freed tree-dwellers start to feast on the slithers. The slithers try to get beneath the tree-dwellers' skin, but their hides are just too thick.

SEVEN SOLDIER
We have to go.

The slithers move around the tree-dwellers in pursuit of the last two humans.

7-LEADER
Let's go.

They run into the forest with thousands of slithers pursuing.

EXT. GNARLED FOREST - NIGHT

The wall of fire is complete. The dead forest that surrounds the gnarled forest is burning with intense heat.

MAX
Make it longer. I don't want those things flanking us.

Soldiers continue to guide the fire into a longer protective wall. The flames are so hot the living forest is beginning to catch.

7-Leader and seven-soldier appear on the other side of the flames.

MAX

Go around. You can make it.

7-Leader and soldier run along the edge of the ever expanding flames.

7-soldier runs right into a wave of slithers and goes down screaming.

7-leader pauses. He has nowhere left to run with a fire on one side of him and thousands of slithers on all other sides.

7-leader climbs to the top of a tall thin tree. He stops in the fork of the tree.

As the rest of the humans look on, the slithers start to slide up the tree after 7-leader. 7-leader climbs higher.

7-leader looks toward the crowd.

7-LEADER

Never give up. Never. Whatever comes. Fight it. Beat it.

The people watch helpless and horrified as the slithers reach 7-leader. He tries to kick away the approaching creatures. He fights hard, but, once a few slithers get inside him, he screams and falls from the tree until he smashes into the fork of the tree with a bone crushing thud.

Most in the crowd look away as the slithers swarm over him. The fire takes on a life of its own and pushes the worms and humans away from it. The entire perimeter of the gnarled forest is being consumed.

Max turns to Debra.

MAX

Did Brown and Cardell make it back?

Debra shakes her head.

Max looks obviously upset.

Just then something flies over the flames catching Max's attention. A black, fuzzy object sails over the flames and into the gnarled forest where it lands hard.

Fuzzy cries as he still smoulders from being badly singed.

Max looks up hopefully to see two flashes of blue weaving through the red and orange of the flames.

Cardell jumps a low wall of flames and rolls into the dusty forest. People rush him and throw dust onto his coverall where it has caught fire.

Brown just sprints through the flames and collapses into the dirt. Brown seems oblivious to the fact that his arm is on fire as he desperately hangs onto the slither that has its barb embedded in his shoulder.

Cardell, with his coverall still smouldering, grabs the slither with both hands and pulls it out of Brown's shoulder. Cardell squeezes the neck of the slither as it whips back and forth.

CARDELL
Die. Fucking die.

The slither stops writhing, and Cardell drops it to the dusty floor of the gnarled forest.

Oscar comes forward to study the creature, but Dean pulls him back protectively.

OSCAR
It's dead.

DEAN
When I'm sure it's dead, then you can study it.

Cardell picks up Fuzzy and holds him like a teddy-bear, cooing to him until he stops crying.

MAX
Good to see you guys. I thought I was going to have to get two more scouts.

CARDELL
You still need to. We quit.

Brown stands holding his shoulder and gives Cardell a look

CARDELL
What? I'm kidding.

MAX
Come on. Let's move back before we get cooked.

EXT. TREE-DWELLER VILLAGE - MORNING

The ground smoulders in a hard morning rain. The moisture has turned the ash into a black mud.

As Max and his soldiers inspect the smouldering village, a large group of tree-dwellers emerge from the forest. Upon seeing the humans, the tree-dwellers run to the middle of the village and drop to their knees.

Max scowls at the badly charred and destroyed dwellings.

BROWN

Couldn't stay here anyway, not with those...slithers.

MAX

Maybe the fire got them all.

OSCAR

I think they're most likely nocturnal. The way they burrow into flesh they could be right under our feet waiting for nightfall.

Everyone looks at the ground warily.

OSCAR

That's right. Can't stay here.

BROWN

Then where?

OSCAR

Back to the plains.

Everyone sighs in exasperation.

MAX

You just talked me into coming here.

OSCAR

How was I supposed to know about these slithers. Going back to the plains is our only option.

MAX

You're forgetting the ultras.

OSCAR

I'm not. We're going to kill them when they're crossing the river.

Brown laughs.

BROWN

This is our genius? Hey kid,
there's a fucking monster in the
river. We can't even get close.

OSCAR

That's why we're going to kill him
first.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGAEAE - EVENING

Cardell and Brown emerge from the forest with Fuzzy running
happily at their heels.

Cardell waves a hand at the ruined shelter and the funeral
pyre that is being picked through by small scavengers.

CARDELL

Ah, it's great to be home.

Brown studies the plain. The big herbivores move with
purpose toward the river.

BROWN

See that?

CARDELL

I see that chicken is still alive.

Cardell points at the chicken scratching and pecking around
the roost it has made near the ruins.

BROWN

I'm not talking about some fucking
chicken. Look. The herbivores are
on the move again.

CARDELL

I can't believe that chicken is
still alive. Wow.

BROWN

The ultras are coming, and you're
raving about a chicken?

The rest of the humans begin to emerge from the forest.

Brown runs to Max. Oscar rides on the back of Charger.

MAX

More good news?

BROWN

Herbivores are on the move. I'm guessing the...

OSCAR

Yes, the ultras. Interesting.

CARDELL

Frightening, yes. Fucked, yes. Interesting, I don't think so.

OSCAR

To you it's not interesting, but to those of us with the ability to recognize patterns it is. If the ultras arrive in the in the morning that will make exactly 72 hours.

CARDELL

So?

OSCAR

So they're patrol predators. We can rest on the plains today, eat and plan.

MAX

And tonight?

OSCAR

We hide in the forest. Let them pass. When they come back around again, we'll be ready for them.

MAX

Brown set a look out.

BROWN

I'm on it.

EXT. FOREST-TREELINE - TWILIGHT

Brown is high in one of the giant trees at the edge of the plains keeping a close watch.

The ultras emerge over the hill and surprise a herd of large herbivores as Brown stays perfectly still in the tree.

The ultras work together to corral most of the herd and slaughter them. As the ultras start to feed, Brown slides down the tree and runs down a narrow trail.

EXT. FOREST - TWILIGHT

Max sits with Oscar and Dean. Oscar ignores everything but the machinery in his hands. A large group of humans are clustered nearby.

Brown emerges from the thick foliage. Dean jumps up, raising his spear.

Brown stops short and holds up his hands.

BROWN
Easy, big guy.

Dean lowers the spear.

BROWN
The kid was right again. The things were right on time.

OSCAR
Good we can move back to the plains soon. Then the real work will begin.

Oscar leans against Dean and closes his eyes.

OSCAR
Hope you guys aren't tired of fighting.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - MORNING

Max and his council are sitting around a fire cooking a small animal. Other fires burn openly on the plains as other clusters of humans eat and rest.

MAX
Okay, Young-blood. Let's hear your plan.

OSCAR
We know the ultras will be back in three days. They're too fast to fight on the plains, but if we attack them while they were crossing the river...

BROWN
We'd get slaughtered by Cthulhu.

OSCAR

No, we won't, because we're going to kill him first.

The council groans.

MAX

Those things will be back in three days and you wanna pick a fight with a local god?

OSCAR

The river is the only thing that will slow the ultras. We need to be on the other side.

BROWN

If we fight that thing near the water, it'll kick our ass.

OSCAR

Who said anything about fighting it near the water?

EXT- RIVER - DAY

A torn and bloodied coverall is stuffed with straw and sticks. A skull of one of the small herbivores is strapped to the shoulders by vines to form the head of the dummy.

Brown flips the dummy over and ties it to a palette of long, thin trees. The palette is connected by long ropes to harnesses wrapped around the horses.

Oscar looks on, waiting for the dummy to be completed.

MAX

Are you sure this will work?

OSCAR

Of course, I do this all the time.

BROWN

Seems easy enough, but I don't understand how the dummy's supposed to stand up at the water's edge.

Oscar just smirks at Brown.

BROWN

Oh.

MAX

I'll hold it.

BROWN

You have to ride the horse.

Brown picks up the dummy and holds it in front of him like a shield. He eases toward the water.

Cardell places a hand on his shoulder and pulls him to a stop.

CARDELL

If you pull this off, you are going to get so many girls.

BROWN

And if I don't?

CARDELL

I'll do my best to console them.

BROWN

I'll be right back to punch you in the stomach.

CARDELL

I'll be right here, way back here.

OSCAR

Can you two lovers part long enough so we can kill this monster?

Brown gives Oscar a dirty look and heads towards the water.

Brown stops two meters short of the river. He squats low behind the dummy. Nothing happens. Brown eases closer to the water. Still, the only moment is the running water.

BROWN

Come on, you fucking thing.

Nothing happens. Brown eases right to the edge of the water and makes the dummy dance.

Oscar laughs.

Max looks down sternly from Charger.

OSCAR

What? That was funny.

Brown holds the dummy loosely with one hand. He looks back and shrugs at Max. Just as Brown rises a bit, the barb of Cthulhu explodes from the tranquil river.

Brown falls back to avoid being skewered as the barb smashes through the palette. As the spikes on the barb extend, Cthulhu yanks the dummy into the river.

As Brown rolls out of the way, Max and Debra spur their horses. The horses run easily at first. Then the lines tighten and the horses struggle.

As the horses strain and struggle, Cthulhu is pulled to the surface. The monster slaps its tentacles against the surface trying to gain some leverage, but the water offers none.

Cthulhu is pulled slowly to the water's edge. Cthulhu wraps several tentacles around large rocks and pulls the horses to a stop. Cthulhu starts to pull the horses back toward the water.

OSCAR

Everyone! Grab the ropes.

People rush to the ropes and dig their feet into the ground and pull with all their collective might. Cthulhu is pulled all the way out of the water.

Cthulhu lets out an ear shattering shriek and slams his tentacles into the mud and pulls back. The humans and the horses are pulled back slightly in the tug-of-war to the death.

BROWN

For Seven!

Brown, Cardell, and a few others charge close to Cthulhu. They throw javelins as they run past.

The weapons hit home with wet thuds. Cthulhu shrieks in rage.

Brown and the others grab more javelins to make another pass. Cthulhu is ready for them this time. The monster raises several tentacles to defend itself, but when it raises the tentacles the advantage goes to the humans.

The horses and humans topple the big monster. Once Cthulhu is on the ground the horses and humans run, pulling Cthulhu quickly across the plain.

The horses build up enough speed that the humans must release the ropes.

The horses run directly toward a wall of long spears. At the last second, the horses separate and ride around the spears.

A moment later, Cthulhu slams into the spiked wall with enough impact to knock the wall over. Cthulhu shrieks then falls still and silent.

The horses are pulled to a jarring stop. Debra goes flying off the front of her horse and lands on her back hard. Charger breaks the rope and continues to run.

Cthulhu is still. Humans start to ease toward the fallen giant.

Cthulhu springs up, bloody and injured and more dangerous than ever. Cthulhu shrieks, daring the humans to fight. The humans don't back down. They come forward and throw spears, but are careful to stay out of Cthulhu's long reach.

Cthulhu grabs the wall of spears stuck in its side and yanks it out. It throws the wall at a squad of humans who have to dive out of the way to avoid being crushed.

The mustang, still attached by the rope, tries to pull away from Cthulhu, but the strength of one horse is nothing compared to Cthulhu. Cthulhu pulls the horse off its feet and wraps several tentacles around the rope. Cthulhu yanks the horse into the air and swings it into the humans with deadly effect.

Humans continue to attack, but, with Cthulhu swinging the broken body of the horse like a mace, it makes getting close enough to attack a dangerous business.

As the battle turns against them, Max guides Charger back toward the battle. Cthulhu sees him and swings the horse at him. Max slips to the side of Charger as the horse sails just over his head.

Cthulhu lets the mustang swing back around, but Max rides too close to be hit by the horse. As the rope sails over Max's head, he stands in the saddle and slices at it with the sharp edge of his weapon.

The rope snaps, and the broken body of the horse sails high and far before crashing to the ground where it rolls to a stop, it's legs flipping about like a rag doll.

Cthulhu moves in to smash Max. Max weaves in and out of the tentacles and is almost out of range when he is knocked from the saddle by a glancing blow.

Cthulhu raises a few tentacles to smash him, but the humans move in and attack in mass. Dozens of javelins slam into the monster. Cthulhu makes a run toward the water.

OSCAR

Don't let it back in the water.

People continue the attack. The battle rages all the way back to the water's edge. Cthulhu looks like a pin cushion with so many javelins embedded in its flesh. Cthulhu finally falls dead at the water's edge.

The humans cheer but keep up the attack.

Max leads the others as they grab the rope still attached to the beast and pull it back onto the plain.

The humans cheer again. The tree-dwellers click loudly and prostrate themselves before the humans. The humans have proved themselves the superior god.

Max swings into his saddle and rides around the fallen beast.

MAX

This thing used to spear and eat us. Well, we've shown it what it's like to be speared. Now, let's show it what it's like to be eaten.

Debra, holding her ribs with one hand and a spear in the other, walks onto Cthulhu and stabs it in the eye.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

That's for my horse.

Max rides closer.

MAX

You okay?

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Just pissed about my horse.

MAX

I love you. I wish you wouldn't fight.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

Fight, don't fight, I can still die here. So, don't ever ask me to let you go into battle without me by your side.

Debra smiles and walks away as Oscar runs up.

OSCAR

We have to cross the river. We have a lot to do before the ultras arrive.

MAX

First, we burn our dead. Then, we'll eat the meat of this god for strength. Then, we'll get ready for the next fight.

Oscar bows deeply.

OSCAR

As you wish, my lord.

Max just glares down at him.

OSCAR

I have work to do.

Oscar runs off.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Humans laugh and play in the river. Most are clad just in their underwear as their coveralls hang off of spears, drying in the sun.

Cardell stands at the river's edge staring and smiling at a cute blonde sunning herself on a large rock in the shallows of the river.

A short distance away Max sits with the leaders of the squads.

Dean walks up to the meeting.

MAX

Where's Young-blood?

DEAN

The kid said he needs every second to finish.

MAX

Finish what?

Dean shrugs.

MAX

Okay. We have about two and a half days before the ultras come back.

(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)

I say our goal should be to kill several and flee into the forest. If they pass every three days, eventually we can get them all, but I don't want any more casualties.

The council nods in agreement. Max draws in the dust as he discusses his plan.

MAX

We'll hide in the forest until the ultras reach the middle of the river. Our main force will attack from the front. A smaller force will attack from behind.

BROWN

It's simple and sound, but we'll need to focus our attacks. Take out one, then move to the next.

8 LEADER

Right. The trouble is we're going to lose a lot of weapons firing into the river.

MAX

You're right. Let's get everyone making darts, even those tree-dwellers.

BROWN

About the tree-dwellers, they seem to want to be a part of our...tribe. Why not give them some javelins and make them earn it?

MAX

Because I'm not sure they wouldn't use them on us.

3 LEADER

We're learning a lot from them. I don't think they would turn on us.

MAX

But, what if they turned on us while we're fighting the ultras?

The council doesn't say anything.

MAX

I'm not taking any chances. We're going to play this one on the conservative side.

3 LEADER

You're right. If we kill one or two of the ultras great. If not, we'll get them the next time.

MAX

Exactly, we hit and we run. Now, go prepare your people.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Oscar works on a small piece of machinery. He stands about to smash it against a rock, but the ever-calm Dean soothes the young genius and gets him back to work.

Human females and tree-dwellers work quickly to make darts for the atl-atls as the army practices with the new weapon.

Max and Debra ride Charger at a run. Max pulls the horse to a stop and helps Debra down. They meet face to face and start kissing. They fall to the ground and disappear into the tall grass.

Cardell uses some of the green fluid leaking out of a giant leaf to paint on a natural colored piece of cloth he stole from the tree-dwellers. Brown looks at Cardell's work and shakes his head.

Max and his council walk along the river's edge. Nearly a thousand darts line the river as they watch the squads walk through their battle plan.

Oscar falls asleep for a second while working on his contraption that is growing larger. He nods and comes awake. Slapping himself in the face several times, he goes back to work.

Cardell has the large piece of cloth tied two sticks so the cloth hangs freely toward the ground. On the cloth is drawn a chicken flying through the air with its talons extended.

As people gather around...

CARDELL

I claim this land for us.

Everyone cheers.

EXT. PLAINS OF PANGEA - NIGHT

Brown and Cardell sit at the edge of the tree-line watching the horizon. Fuzzy lays on his back at their feet, snoring peacefully.

Fuzzy sniffs the air in his sleep and comes awake. Fuzzy looks to the horizon and sniffs deeply. Fuzzy starts backing slowly toward the forest.

BROWN

Here we go.

The silhouettes of the ultras appear in the distance.

Cardell scoops up Fuzzy as the two scouts speed into the forest.

CARDELL

Man, I hate those things.

The scouts climb high into a tree. Brown touches the two ends of a fire-starter together.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF RIVER - TWILIGHT

Max sees the streaming sparks. He swings into the saddle and rides to the forest's edge.

MAX

Get ready. Just like we practiced.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

The Bull stops at the river's edge. It sniffs the air cautiously. It splashes a big paw in the water as the other ultras stop at the water's edge.

The bull grunts, and the pack starts into the river. The bull doesn't get in the water. It glances from side to side as if realizing something is not quite right.

When the other ultras are neck deep in the middle of the river, humans run out and form ranks. A few soldiers light fires at the edge of the river to light up the area.

Max rides Charger along the back of the formation.

MAX

Ready darts.

The humans fix the darts with practiced movements.

MAX

First line...Fire!

The first line sends a wave of darts whistling through the air towards the ultras. Many of the darts strike home, causing the ultras to shriek in pain and anger.

The second wave moves into position and fires. Again, the darts strike the ultras.

Max points at an ultra that's beginning to falter in the current.

MAX

That one. Focus your attack.

Another swarm of darts strike the faltering ultra.

The water around the ultra grows darker even in the dim light. It stops swimming. Its body floats to the surface as the current takes it.

The Bull roars at seeing one of his females slaughtered, but a river lies between him and those he would like to destroy.

The Bull and Max make eye contact. The bull looks from one to another of his females and readies himself to pounce.

MAX

Retreat! To the forest.

The Bull leaps to a large rock almost in the middle of the river, then it leaps onto the back of one of its females. The ultra is pushed underwater, but the Bull has enough time to jump to another female's back before making a finally leap for the shallows.

The Bull charges out of the water toward the fleeing humans. As he's about to slaughter a whole group, a large spear slams into the Bull's neck.

Max rides by trying to lure the Bull away.

MAX

Come on. Come get me.

The Bull's eyes narrow. It growls so loud it shakes the very Earth. Humans run by, but the Bull's attention is fixed on Max and Charger. It springs toward them and gives chase.

As the humans make it to the safety of the forest, Max leads the Bull away from the forest.

MAX

Come on, Charger. Faster!

Charger kicks it up a gear, but the Bull gains distance with every push of its thick, powerful legs.

Max looks over his shoulder and sees it's hopeless. The Bull is almost on them.

The Bull pounces. Max jumps off of Charger but hangs on to the reins, pulling the horse roughly to the ground.

The Bull goes flying by, barely missing Max and Charger. As the Bull crashes to the ground and tumbles across the plains, Max pulls Charger up by the reins.

MAX

Come on.

Charger doesn't need much encouragement. The horse springs to his feet as Max swings into the saddle.

MAX

Yah!

Charger springs toward the forest and it seems like they will make it easily, but one of the female ultras jump into Max's path.

Max pulls the reins and tries to ride around the ultra, but another, and then another ultra appear, boxing Max and in.

Max tries to flee in the other direction, but the Bull stalks up from behind. There is nowhere left to run.

Max pulls his weapon and raises it high. He's going to go out fighting.

MAX

For Seven!

Max spurs Charger and rides hard toward the Bull. The Bull Ultra pounces toward Max and Charger.

Right before the Bull crashes into Max, a thick stream of bright orange energy streaks across the plain and smashes into the chest of the Bull. The massive creature flies back as if it was a leaf caught in a strong wind.

Max turns in his saddle as Oscar walks out of the forest wearing a slew of machinery strapped to his back and holding what appears to be a small satellite dish with handles attached to the side.

The Bull smoulders from the blast, but it gets shakily to its feet. Oscar pushes a button on one of the handles and another stream of energy streaks out of the dish and smashes the Ultra in the face. The Bull flies into the air, coming down hard and dead.

As Max sits frozen in the saddle, Oscar turns his energy weapon on the other ultras. The powerful streams of energy tear and burn the ultras to pieces. In a matter of seconds, the ultimate predators are reduced to piles of smouldering meat.

Oscar walks through the smouldering mess towards Max. Max stares with his mouth open.

OSCAR

What's your problem?

Max laughs so hard that he almost falls out of the saddle.

Max turns Charger towards the rising sun and smiles. He didn't think he would get to see this one.

MAX

It's a new day Oscar, a new day.

Max spots Debra and the others coming out of the forest. Max spurs Charger and rides towards his girl leaving Oscar behind.

OSCAR

Umm. You're welcome.

Dean runs up to Oscar's side.

DEAN

Don't run off without me again.

Oscar waves a hand at the destruction he's caused.

OSCAR

Does it look like I can't take care
of myself?

Dean doesn't say anything. He just extends his hand and takes Oscar's equipment.

Max and Debra meet halfway. He slides off of Charger and picks Debra up and spins her around.

DEBRA DOUGLAS

I didn't think you would make it.

MAX

Oh, I knew I would make it.

Debra jumps back into Max's arms and kisses his face.

Oscar walks by with Dean carrying the energy weapon.

OSCAR

Don't get too happy. Now that the
ultras are dead, new predators will
probably move into the area.

Max looks at the humans already cutting the dead ultras into
manageable pieces of meat, and the tree-dwellers that
prostrate themselves before every human that passes.

MAX

The new predators are already here.

Oscar smiles.

OSCAR

Yeah, I guess you're right.