

The Ruins of Heaven

History had a beginning...
it will have an end.

Pilot script for a television series.

By

Coleman Luck

&

Coleman Luck III

Registered WGAW
colemanluck@gmail.com

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRY ROAD IN FRONT OF CHURCH -- NIGHT

Night. Early winter.

A deserted road.

Cold tentacles of fog creep through the branches of ancient trees. A full moon is shining.

Beside the road looms a deserted church, a hulking ruin that stands like a ghost from a long forgotten world. Its windows are broken, its graveyard choked with weeds.

SUPERIMPOSE: THE WEST COUNTRY OF ENGLAND -- NOVEMBER, THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO

In the distance, headlights appear. A car is creeping through the fog.

INT. MERCEDES BENZ -- DRIVING ON ROAD -- NIGHT

Behind the wheel of a late model Mercedes Benz is a strikingly beautiful woman in her late twenties. This is MOIRA SOROTMAN. She's alone. As she drives, tears stream down her cheeks. But they aren't tears of sorrow, they're of longing and frustration. Her eyes are wild and feverish. She's breathing hard.

MOIRA SOROTMAN
(in English, but with
a vague, European
accent)

I'm here. I followed your directions.
Where are you?

As she stares into the darkness, she whispers, but the words make no sense.

MOIRA SOROTMAN (CONT'D)
Where-where-where-circle-upward-
rushing-downward-over-over-over-water-
fire-burning-burning-mizan-molech-
mizan-molech-circle-over-rushing-
downward-where-where...

Her eyes grow even wilder.

Suddenly, ahead she sees a strange and beautiful sight. A thick blanket of fog has drifted over the road. In it are glistening shafts of iridescence. They sparkle and dance.

(CONTINUED)

Faintly, as though coming from far away, Moira begins to hear SINGING. She is overjoyed.

MOIRA SOROTMAN (CONT'D)

YES. I see you. I'm coming.

The mist floats across the road and disappears.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRY ROAD IN FRONT OF CHURCH -- MOMENTS LATER

Moira parks her car in front of the church and gets out. She's wearing a clinging, white dress almost like a wedding gown. As she looks through the broken windows of the building, she sees traces of gleaming light.

Quickly, she walks between the graves and enters through the crumbling doors.

INT. DESERTED CHURCH -- CONTINUOUS

The sanctuary is a rotting chaos of cobwebs and broken pews. Half the ceiling is gone and the back wall has fallen down. The STRANGE SINGING is louder.

At the front of the church, a huge crucifix lies shattered on the floor. Around it is painted a jagged, white pentacle. For a moment the dancing lights hover over it. Then, they move out the back of the church into the darkness beyond.

With shining eyes, Moira follows.

EXT. FOREST BEHIND CHURCH -- CONTINUOUS

Behind the building is a dense forest bathed in mist and moonlight. Moira walks faster and faster, the glistening lights leading her on.

In the singing, she begins to hear whispering voices softly calling her name.

WHISPERING VOICES (O.S.)

Moira...Moira...Moira...

Her joy deepens.

POV MOIRA

She is entering an incredible world. The forest is alive with mystery. Gnarled trees are laced with drifting shadows. Beautiful faces form and dissolve. She is welcome here.

Suddenly, the lights vanish. In their place appears a shaft of silver rain. It falls from above, but the source is not visible. Then, another shaft appears. And, another.

(CONTINUED)

MOIRA SOROTMAN
 Eternal beauty, Mother/Father,
 Goddess/God. Womb of wisdom, birthing
 light-mizan-molech-mizan-molech...

But then, beyond the silver shafts, drops a pillar of golden
 brilliance larger than all the rest. She runs toward it.

MOIRA SOROTMAN (CONT'D)
 First and last, virgin whore, joyous
 sorrow, laughing rage-mizan-molech-
 mizan-molech...

EXT. CIRCLE OF STANDING STONES -- MOMENTS LATER

Moira bursts out of the forest into a clearing. She is in a
 decrepit circle of standing stones. A place of ancient
 worship.

From every direction, the shafts of silver light are moving
 toward her. As though in a dream, Moira begins to dance,
 calling out strange names.

MOIRA SOROTMAN
 Mother/Father-goddess/god-mizen-molech-
 michal-molech-gaia-molech-isis-molech-
 circle-upward-rushing-downward-over-
 over-water-fire-burning-burning...

Around and around. In and out of the stones. Finally, she
 is screaming the names.

MOIRA SOROTMAN (CONT'D)
 Mizen-molech-michal-molech-gaia-molech-
 isis-molech-COME-COME-COME-COME-
 COME...

As the lights come nearer, they take shape. They become the
 tall, silver forms of ancient goddess/gods--spirits dressed
 in flowing robes with cowled hoods. But their faces are not
 visible. As they gather, they stop just outside the stones.

At the entrance to the circle is the golden pillar of light.
 From it comes a soft, gentle voice.

BEING OF LIGHT (O.S.)
 Moira...

Instantly, Moira stops dancing. Tears run down her cheeks.

POV MOIRA

In the light appears the outline of a glowing figure as tall
 as the trees. The giant Spirit Being enters the circle.

(CONTINUED)

Moira begins trembling. Slowly, she lays down, staring upward. The Being towers over her. Somehow, it is both male and female. She/He is so beautiful that it could only be a creature of the stars. It looks at her with huge soft eyes. Then, in glistening radiance, its body begins to descend.

MOIRA SOROTMAN
(whispering)
Mother/Father, Goddess/God...

Moira's eyes close. The singing is like a choir of angels.

SLOW PULL BACK STRAIGHT UPWARD

Moira lies on the ground, her arms and legs spread open, drenched in golden brilliance, surrounded with haloes. As the light grows brighter, she cries out in total joy.

Her body grows smaller and smaller...until she is a tiny speck of gold, floating in eternal night.

FADE TO
WHITE:

INT. ICE CAVERN -- DAY

Slowly, dim, blue, light becomes visible.

Six men dressed in cold-weather gear are cautiously making their way through an eerie, ice cavern. Lights from their helmets gleam off knife-edged formations.

All around them is the sound of dripping, running water. The ice is melting.

SUPERIMPOSE: SIMMONS GLACIER, ANTARCTICA -- THREE MONTHS AGO.

The team passes through one small gallery after another. The leader pulls back from a jagged shard of ice.

TEAM MEMBER#1
Watch yourselves. I just tore my
jacket.

A few steps farther and one of the men slips. The ground breaks away beneath him. He cries out, as he falls into a hidden crevasse. But the men are roped together.

TEAM MEMBER #2
I've got you. I've got you.

They pull him out.

(CONTINUED)

TEAM MEMBER#1
You all right?

TEAM MEMBER #3
Yeah. Just banged up my leg a little.
I'll be fine.

They take a breather. The leader looks at a digital map on a computer on his forearm.

TEAM MEMBER#1
Another hundred yards.

They hear a deep cracking sound.

TEAM MEMBER #2
The glacier's shifting.

TEAM MEMBER#1
Something doesn't like us being here.
Let's go.

They head out.

INT. ICE CHAMBER -- LATER

One by one, the team slides through a narrow passage into a chamber of blue ice. It is strangely rectangular.

TEAM MEMBER#1
Okay, this should be it.

They shine their lights on the walls. Suddenly, one of them points.

TEAM MEMBER #3
Over there.

They look. Buried in the far wall is a strange object. They move closer. At first, all they see is a dark silhouette. But then, they shine their lights full on it.

Frozen in the ice is a box four feet square. And something is carved on the side. Closer.

In the gleaming distortion is the image of a gigantic, six-fingered hand.

For a moment, the men stare at it. Then, they take out ice axes and begin to work.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D.C. --
MORNING

It's September. Leaves are beginning to turn. Students are walking to classes.

INT. CLASSROOM -- MORNING

Twenty students are seated in a classroom. A handsome, young professor is teaching. His name is PETER McCRAY (early 30's) and has a "Will Smith" kind of cocky/cool about him. The walls of the classroom are covered with hieroglyphics and pictures of ancient artifacts.

PETER

Okay, I promised you something weird.
Raise your hands if you've watched a
lot "Ancient Aliens".

Three students raise their hands.

PETER (CONT'D)

You weirdos aren't allowed to answer.

On a power point screen is an odd object. It's a six inch long clay pot, cut in half to show the inside. In the center is a copper cylinder with edges that seem to be soldered. The bottom is capped with a copper disk and sealed with asphalt. Another layer of asphalt seals the top and holds in place an iron rod that runs down the middle.

PETER (CONT'D)

Five bucks says you can't figure out
what it is.

The students study the image, examining it. One of the "Ancient Aliens" students sighs loudly and rolls his eyes.

PETER (CONT'D)

It was found near the ruins of ancient
Babylon and it's been dated at 250
B.C. Any engineering geeks in here?

An attractive girl raises her hand.

FEMALE STUDENT #1

Okay, that's asphalt. And a copper
cylinder with an iron rod running
through.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FEMALE STUDENT #1 (CONT'D)

(beat)

With those elements, all you'd need
is acid and you'd have a battery.

PETER

You got it.

The class amazed.

MALE STUDENT #1

What?

PETER

That's what it is. A battery.
(to the girl)
You're pretty good.

FEMALE STUDENT #1

So, where's my five bucks?

PETER

I was kidding. You think I got five
bucks to spare on my salary? I didn't
think you'd actually figure it out.

The class screams "cheat."

MALE STUDENT #1

A battery from 250 B.C.? But, what
did they need batteries for back
then?

PETER

What do you think? Babylonian Xbox.

Peter walks over to the most beautiful girl in the class.
She's wearing a long necklace. He points to it.

PETER (CONT'D)

Or how about this? Electroplating
gold. To electroplate you need
current. Our society couldn't
generate power this way until a couple
of hundred years ago. But the fact
is we don't really know what it was
used for.

(clicks the power
point)

The "Babylon batteries" are just one
example of what are called "ooparts."
That means "out-of-place artifacts."
They're not where they should be in
history. This is one of the most
famous and least contested ones.

(CONTINUED)

He clicks the power point again. On the screen appears a lump of corroded metal.

PETER (CONT'D)

Like this piece of junk found on a sunken ship in the Mediterranean.

The picture changes. The lump has been cut apart. Inside are intricate gears.

PETER (CONT'D)

When they cut it open, inside was a complex set of gears used to chart the stars and planets. An analog navigational computer...built around 80 B.C. The Antikythera Device.

He walks over to his briefcase and opens it.

PETER (CONT'D)

Or how about this?

He turns toward them. In his hand is a piece of quartz the size of his fist.

PETER (CONT'D)

My grandfather and I found it. When he broke it open, look what was embedded inside.

Peter turns over the quartz. Embedded in it is a perfectly formed, golden nail.

MALE STUDENT #2

That's a nail.

MALE STUDENT #3

That is so fake.

PETER

It's not. We had it tested. Made of solid gold.

MALE STUDENT #2

But how did it get there?

PETER

You tell me. The quartz formed around it and the quartz is over a million years old.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

Are you saying there were people making gold nails a million years ago?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Hey, I'm not saying anything. But ooparts have been found all over the world--some of them have been dug up from hundreds of feet under ground.

(beat)

Here's a thought to freak you out. What if we're not the first scientifically advanced civilization that's been on earth? What if ooparts are the pieces of a world that was lost a long time ago? And what if-

Suddenly, the classroom door opens and a student messenger enters. He walks up to Peter.

MESSENGER

(quietly)

Dr. McCray?

PETER

Yeah.

The messenger hands Peter an envelope marked "Urgent," then leaves. Peter opens the envelope. As he reads the message, his eyes grow wide. He turns to the class.

PETER (CONT'D)

That's it for today. Try to do a little reading between Netflix or drinking binges. See you Wednesday. Papers due on Wednesday as well. NO EXCUSES.

He picks up his briefcase and heads out of the room, leaving the students staring at each other.

EXT. UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING -- MORNING

Peter McCray double-times down a sidewalk toward the main administration building. A look of worry is on his face. In front of the building, in a "no parking" zone, sits a long, black limousine. He barely glances at it as he rushes up the steps.

INT. UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION OFFICES -- MOMENTS LATER

Peter gets off an elevator and enters a very intimidating reception room. On the walls are paintings of previous presidents going back to the beginning of time. Peter is anxious, but is trying to cover it. A cute RECEPTIONIST is at a desk answering the phone. He walks up to her.

RECEPTIONIST

May I help you, sir?

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I got a message that Dr. Blanchard
wants to see me. The name's McCray.
Dr. Peter McCray.

RECEPTIONIST

Oh, yes. Please come with me.

She gets up and leads him to a door. A sign on the wall reads:
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT -- WILLIAM H. BLANCHARD.

PETER

You wouldn't happen to know what
this is about?

RECEPTIONIST

No clue. Sorry.

They enter.

INT. PRESIDENT BLANCHARD'S OFFICE -- RECEPTION -- CONTINUOUS

Behind a very large desk is the PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL SECRETARY --
a woman with laser-like eyes.

SECRETARY

Helene...this is Dr. McCray.

Instantly, Helene stands up and says...

PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY

President Blanchard will see you
immediately.

Peter's mouth feels like sandpaper as she leads him to a
massive door, opens it, and ushers him inside.

INT. UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

The university president's office is a large, luxurious room.
The walls are dark, polished wood lined with book shelves.
On the shelves are plaques, art objects and leather-bound
volumes. Seated in the room are four men in suits. Behind
a massive desk is PRESIDENT BLANCHARD. He's a towering figure
with a mane of silver hair.

PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY

Gentlemen, Dr. McCray has arrived.

The president and all of the men stand up. When he sees
Peter, the most curious look comes to Blanchard's face. It
can only be described as ingratiating. He extends his hand.
Peter shakes it.

(CONTINUED)

BLANCHARD
Dr. McCray, what a pleasure. Thanks
for coming on such short notice.

PETER
Oh, hey, anytime, Dr. Blanchard.

BLANCHARD
Call me Bill.

Peter stares at him. Blanchard introduces him to the other
men.

BLANCHARD (CONT'D)
You know Steve Atcheson, Dean of
your department.

Peter shakes his hand

PETER
Hello, Dr. Atcheson.

ATCHESON
(a bit snide)
Call me Steve.

Peter stares at him too.

BLANCHARD
And this is Don Billingsley, Ed
Michaels and Art Fishman from the
Office of Development.

Peter shakes hands with all of them.

BLANCHARD (CONT'D)
Please, sit down.

Everyone sits.

BLANCHARD (CONT'D)
(to Peter)
Can we get you something to drink?
We have a full bar.

PETER
I'm fine.
(beat)
Well, maybe a good stiff bourbon...

Blanchard starts to get up.

PETER (CONT'D)
No, no, no. Just kidding.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PETER (CONT'D)

It's hard to teach when I'm drunk.
Not that I've actually tried.

Everyone laughs. Blanchard rubs his hands together.

BLANCHARD

So, Peter, you don't mind if I call
you Peter, do you?

PETER

Absolutely not...Bill.

BLANCHARD

This is the beginning of your third
year with us.

PETER

That's right. Uh, listen...am I
in...some kind of trouble?

The men all laugh heartily.

BLANCHARD

Now why would you think that?

ATCHESON

It seems you've gained an amazing
reputation.

PETER

Well, I have published a couple of
ground-breaking papers on ancient
dirt. Sumerian soil studies.

(no one laughs)

That's a joke. I am published.

BLANCHARD

We understand you've developed your
own web site.

Now, Peter starts sweating.

PETER

Uh, what?

Blanchard clicks a remote. On a giant screen on the wall,
in garish colors, appears a main page with a picture of Peter.
And a huge title that reads: McCRAY'S MUSEUM OF ALTERNATIVE
HISTORY -- BANNED FACTS FROM ANCIENT ANTIQUITY.

PETER (CONT'D)

Oh that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PETER (CONT'D)

It's kind of a hobby -- something to get my students interested in archaeology, philology, you know, gotta compete with TV these days.

BLANCHARD

Some fascinating information here. I never knew that Noah's ark might have had electric lights.

ATCHESON

Or that it existed. I've heard some of your students call you Dr. McCrazy.

Peter looks over at his dean. He knows his academic career is over.

PETER

(with a sickened look)

I try to make mythology fun. And try to teach critical thinking along the way.

ATCHESON

Well, you've certainly done that. I've had a lot of fun reading it.

PETER

I debunk a lot of stuff.

ATCHESON

And yet there are apparently many "ooparts" that seem to have no explanation. Odd that in my decades of field work, I have never encountered even one...

BLANCHARD

(warning)

Now Steve...

(beat)

Apparently, your work has come to the attention of some very important people. Have you ever heard of the Steerlock Foundation?

PETER

They in automotive research?

BLANCHARD

No. It's a private think-tank for the study of world peace. Their offices are a few miles away in Virginia.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Listen, I want you to know that I have never been a threat to world peace.

No one laughs. Blanchard picks up an envelope and takes out a letter and a check.

BLANCHARD

This morning we received a letter from them. With it was a donation for five million dollars. What they request is the loan of your services.

PETER

My what? What? Five million?

BLANCHARD

Your consulting services...for six months. And if all goes well at the end of that time there'll be another five million dollars.

PETER

Oh, this is some kind of joke. I know what this is. It's a scam. Look, I've got some weird friends. They pull crap like this.

ATCHESON

Weird friends like the fringe "archaeologists" that follow you on Twitter?

PETER

I've never done anything to embarrass the university. Let me dig into this. I'm sure it's just a prank. I'm very sorry.

BLANCHARD

No, it's quite legitimate. The Foundation wants to meet with you as soon as possible. A limousine is waiting.

Peter stares at him in disbelief.

PETER

But...what about my classes?

ATCHESON

Peter, for ten million dollars we'll find a replacement.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I'm telling you this is some kind of mistake.

Blanchard grasps his shoulder in the most desperate, yet fatherly way.

BLANCHARD

Son, whatever it is they want, give it to them. I don't care if you make something up. Wing it. Your university is depending on you.

All of the men smile and nod. Peter stares at them as though he's been dropped into another universe.

INT. MOIRA'S ROOMS AT THE MANSION -- DAY

An old woman in a dressing gown sits in a huge chair, staring at nothing. She's in a suite of luxurious rooms filled with French antiques. Through a doorway can be seen a fourposter bed. Paintings by great masters hang on the walls. But the windows are barred.

The old woman is Moira Sorotman. She is no longer beautiful. Now, in her mid-sixties, she looks ten years older. Her gray hair is straggled and her eyes are wild. Her lips mumble, but no sound comes out. Her hands lie open on her lap. Her fingers twitch. Both of her wrists are covered with stitched-up scars.

There is the sound of a door unlocking. It opens and a muscular young ATTENDANT in hospital scrubs enters pushing a cart. On it is a setting of fine china with several covered dishes of food. He rolls the cart in, leaving the door slightly ajar. Moira notices...

ATTENDANT

Good afternoon, Ms. Sorotman. Are you ready for lunch?

Moira doesn't move or answer. She continues staring at nothing, mumbling soundlessly. The Attendant wheels the cart in front of her and begins uncovering dishes.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

To begin we have a delicious cold asparagus soup...

Suddenly, Moira shrieks and jumps up, knocking over both the cart and the shocked Attendant. Then, she runs for the door.

INT. MANSION HALLWAY OUTSIDE MOIRA'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Moira rushes out of her room and down the hall, screaming as though hell itself were after her. A wailing alarm sounds.

INT. MANSION STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

Still screaming, Moira runs down a long, winding staircase.

INT. MANSION HALLWAY -- LOWER LEVEL -- CONTINUOUS

When she reaches the ground floor she runs toward a door that leads outside.

Just as she's about to push it open, a terrifying figure steps in front of the door. It's a guard dressed in black, combat gear and armed with an assault rifle. His head is bald under a black baseball cap. But, the most frightening thing about him is his face. His skin is totally white like that of an albino. However, his eyes are totally black.

He stares at Moira. She shrieks. Instantly, other guards, whose faces are not seen, grab her from behind. She fights them, screaming. One of them takes out a huge hypodermic syringe with a long needle and sticks it straight into her neck. In a moment the fighting and screaming stops and she goes limp.

INT. MOIRA'S ROOMS AT THE MANSION -- A SHORT TIME LATER

Once more, Moira sits in her chair, staring at nothing. This time, she's not even moving her lips. In front of her is the same cart with the dishes of food. The Attendant is removing the covers and talking as though nothing has happened.

ATTENDANT

To begin we have a delicious, cold
asparagus soup, which will be followed
by a medley of garden fresh, baby
greens in a white peppercorn dressing.
And for the main course...roast duck
thermidor.

From Moira, there is no response.

EXT. LIMOUSINE DRIVING THROUGH VIRGINIA COUNTRYSIDE --
AFTERNOON

The long limousine that was parked in front of the university administration building is driving through the beautiful countryside of northern Virginia.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

In the back, Peter McCray sits alone, looking out the window. Beside him is a small bar with glasses and a selection of bottles. The window to the driver's compartment is closed. Peter crawls up and knocks on it. The window rolls down. The Limo Driver looks at him through his rear view mirror. This is WILLIAM.

PETER
How much farther?

WILLIAM
Not far, sir. If you wish to speak with me there's a control switch for the window on the console above the seat.

PETER
Oh, yeah, I knew that.

Peter crawls back.

PETER (CONT'D)
Got any cokes?

WILLIAM
In the refrigerator, sir.

He fumbles around and finds one. Then, looks out the window.

PETER
Nice limo. Looks like bullet proof glass. You get shot at very often?

The limo driver watches Peter through the mirror.

WILLIAM
No, sir.

The driver's eyes stare at him through the mirror. Peter pulls out his phone. Dials a video phone number. It rings. The user is unavailable. The picture on his phone of the person he was calling is a woman in her late 20s or early 30s. This is PIPER PICKENS. Frustrated he hangs up and puts the phone away. Then pulls it out again and texts.

PETER
(texting on screen)
Hey. Something weird's going on. Heading to the Steerlock Foundation for a meet. Hope things are going well in Turkey. I miss you. Please hit me back.

(CONTINUED)

He hits send. The phone shows that the text was not sent. He tries again to no avail. Then frustrated, he gives up.

EXT. ROAD IN FRONT OF MANSION -- A SHORT TIME LATER

The limousine moves down a tree-lined road. It slows and turns in at a long driveway.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

Peter stares out the window. In front of them is a huge iron gate. Two armed guards dressed in black step out of a guard house. Their skin is very pale and their eyes are hidden behind dark glasses. They're both armed with assault rifles. The gate opens and they wave the limousine through.

PETER

Ak-47's. Guess workin' for world peace can get dangerous.

Once more, the driver looks at him through the mirror.

EXT. MANSION FRONT ENTRANCE -- MOMENTS LATER

The limousine pulls up in front of a huge, old mansion with an ornate, covered entrance. A male FOOTMAN in an expensive suit and tie emerges from the building and opens Peter's door. Peter climbs out.

FOOTMAN

Dr. McCray, welcome to the Steerlock Foundation. My name is Adam. Please, come with me.

Peter follows the Footman into the mansion.

INT. MANSION FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

They move through an exquisite foyer. The walls are deeply carved wood with etched crystal windows.

FOOTMAN

We took the liberty of preparing lunch for you.

PETER

Hey, thanks. I could use some food.

INT. MANSION DINING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

The Footman leads Peter into an impressive dining room. Candles are burning in silver stands. A single place is set at a long table. He pulls out a chair.

(CONTINUED)

FOOTMAN

Right here, Dr. McCray.

Peter sits down.

FOOTMAN

The director, Mr. Moody, will join you shortly. Bon a petit.

He leaves. An OLD BUTLER enters carrying a bottle of wine.

OLD BUTLER

Good afternoon, sir. My name is James. I'll be serving your lunch. May I offer you a glass of wine? We are serving Domaine de la Romanee-Conti Montrachet Grand Cru from France. It will compliment your lunch very nicely.

PETER

Uh, sure. Sounds great.

The butler pours the wine and leaves. On the table beside Peter is an envelope with his name is on it. He picks it up, opens it...and pulls out a check. It's made out to him for one hundred thousand dollars and is marked, "FOR SERVICES TO BE RENDERED." He can't believe his eyes.

PETER (CONT'D)

(muttered to himself)

What the heck is goin' on here?

The Old Butler enters with an exquisite cart carrying a bowl of soup.

OLD BUTLER

To begin with we offer a delicious, cold asparagus soup, which will be followed by a medley of garden fresh, baby greens in a white peppercorn dressing. And, for the main course...roast duck thermidor.

Peter stares at the check and then at the butler, slightly horrified.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. CLEARING IN BURNING FOREST (DREAM SEQUENCE)- NIGHT

It is a forest in hell. Giant trees roaring with flames are burning from their tops down. Crimson fire and smoke swirl into ghostly images, then fade. The forest endlessly burns, but does not burn up.

In the center of this horror is a large clearing. The flames are not burning here. In the middle of the clearing stands a beautiful, young woman in her late 30s. This is SUZANNE DECARO. In horror, she turns, staring at the shrieking nightmare around her. Then, she looks up at the sky. A blood-red sickle moon rides in black clouds.

Suddenly, there is a ROAR. She looks toward the sound. Crashing through the trees appears a monstrous form. It is a GIANT whose head and shoulders rise above the forest. His face is hideous. As he roars, his mouth opens revealing double rows of huge teeth. Seeing the woman, with rage, he heads toward her throwing the burning trees aside.

A strange look comes on the woman's face and it isn't fear. The monster breaks through and stands at the edge of the clearing. Then, with pounding steps that shake the ground he heads toward her. In his hand is a huge ax. He raises it.

The woman does not run. Without fear, she faces him. Then she does something unexpected. Dropping to one knee, she bows her head as though in prayer and raises her right hand toward heaven.

There is a crash of thunder and a bolt of lightning falls from the sky straight onto her fingers. And there it remains, crackling with power. The giant is almost on her. He raises the ax. She points her finger straight at his head.

The lightning streaks upward striking his neck. Instantly, the huge head is severed from the body and crashes to the ground in front of her. Then the rest of the monster falls. The woman rises, walks over and stares into the dead face.

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS

INT. SUZANNE DECARO'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Suzanne Decaro awakens from the nightmare. As she looks out into the darkness of her bedroom she is very serious, but unafraid.

EXT. SKYLINE OF MANHATTAN -- AFTERNOON

A new sky-scraper is visible in the city. It's a finger of jet-black steel and glass rising high above the streets. This is the Steerlock Building.

INT. STEERLOCK BUILDING -- AFTERNOON

In a dark room, fifty men are seated around a huge, circular table. Half appear to be middle-eastern. A number wear the robes of Arab sheiks. Only one chair is empty. At the head of the table.

A single light shines down on the center of the table. Under the light is a glass dome four feet in diameter. Visible beneath the glass is an ancient scroll, perfectly preserved and lying open. All of the men sit, staring at it in silence.

Suddenly, the door to the room opens. Brilliant light shines through. The men look up. A figure stands silhouetted. The door shuts.

A man enters the room. All eyes are upon him, but his face is not visible. Slowly, he walks around the table. As he passes, each man looks up at him. There is awe in their eyes. Some of the men whisper greetings in their native languages. He answers softly in the same language.

Finally, the man reaches his place and stands in front of the empty chair. This is ILLIAN SOROTMAN. Still, his face cannot be seen.

Without a word, he holds out his hands to the men on either side of him. For a moment his palms become visible. In each, there is the scar of a nail hole that has healed.

The men take his hands. Then, hands are joined around the entire table. In a quiet, wonderful voice, Sorotman speaks one word...

SOROTMAN

Peace.

A light flashes down on him from above. He looks up toward it. For the first time, his face can be seen.

If ever there was a face that perfectly combined the sensitivity and beauty of a woman, with the quiet dignity and power of a strong and dedicated man, it is this one. Sorotman's hair is golden. He has a healthy, natural tan. He appears to be in his late thirties, but there is something ageless about him. Most stunning of all are his eyes. They're golden brown and in them seems to be reflected all the joy and sorrow of the world.

(CONTINUED)

He closes his eyes. Quietly, he begins saying the word over and over...

SOROTMAN (CONT'D)

Peace...peace...peace...

The men take up the whispering chant, "Peace...Peace...Peace..."

Tears are on Sorotman's cheeks.

INT. MANSION DINING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

In the mansion dining room, Peter has finished lunch and is sipping coffee. He's comfortably full, but looks slightly terrified.

At that moment, into the room walks the most startling man that Peter has ever seen. He is extremely tall and very thin. He's old and his skin is pallid, but his eyes are bright and lively behind wire rim glasses. He wears an expensive suit, a tailored shirt and an exquisite tie. This is REUBEN MOODY.

MOODY

Dr. McCray...

Peter stands up.

MOODY (CONT'D)

I'm Reuben Moody, director of the facility. Welcome to the mansion. I trust the food was to your satisfaction?

PETER

Pretty great. Never had duck thermidor.

MOODY

Excellent. Now, I'm sure you have a thousand questions...

PETER

Yeah, like-

MOODY

(cuts him off)

And they'll all be answered. But, first, I want to show you something. Please come with me.

Moody leads him out of the dining room.

INT. MANSION MAIN HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Moody and Peter walk down a long hall.

PETER

So I guess I'm here because you need
my original thoughts about world
peace, right?

Moody laughs again.

MOODY

No.

(beat)

Dr. Peter McCray, summa cum laude at
Harvard, advanced degrees from Oxford
and the Sorbonne. A brilliant, young
scholar of ancient, near-eastern
languages. A philologist and
archaeologist and the son of
archaeologists. As a child you played
in the ruins of Babylon and Ninevah.

PETER

Yeah, I've been in therapy about
that. Ninevah made me a little weird.

(beat)

Look, I'm flattered, but whatever
the job is, there are plenty of guys
with good credentials and a lot more
experience. So, why me?

MOODY

Many scholars, but few thinkers. We
know your interests in the oddities
of history, strange artifacts and
apocalyptic literature. You have an
open mind not weighed down in academic
cement. Yet, you are mindful of
academic needs and norms.

They come to an elevator and go inside.

INT. ELEVATOR TO UNDERGROUND -- CONTINUOUS

The doors close. There are no buttons to push. The elevator
begins dropping automatically. Peter looks up. A security
camera mounted on the ceiling stares at him.

PETER

A lot of people are qualified. Like
Graham Hancock or Robert Schoch.

(CONTINUED)

MOODY

But none with your impeccable, traditional credentials. Perhaps Schoch, but he is a geologist. And what can we do with that?

(slight smile)

We searched a long time to find someone like you, Dr. McCray. You have one attribute that we like most of all.

PETER

And what's that?

Moody turns and stares at him.

MOODY

Your insatiable hunger. You long to be legendary. To be famous. To be considered the greatest archaeologist in the world.

(beat)

Hunger we understand.

Peter stares at him. Moody smiles. It isn't a pleasant look. The elevator door opens and Moody leads him out.

PETER

You must have read my blogs from college. I should take those down.

Moody chuckles.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL -- CONTINUOUS

Peter finds himself in a tunnel cut from solid rock. As they walk, security cameras track their every move.

MOODY

Yet with all your hunger for fame, you haven't shilled for schlock television. Even though they have begged you. You have kept your academic reputation intact.

(beat)

The purpose of the Steerlock Foundation isn't simply to think about world peace, it's to create it. In my opinion, our chairman, Dr. Illian Sorotman, is the most brilliant man in history. And he has a theory. The secret to peace is buried in the past. And for every culture there is an ancient key.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I don't have a clue what that means.

MOODY

For Jews it's the Ark of the Covenant. For Christians, the True Cross. For Buddhists, the body parts of Prince Gautama. And so on. To control a culture, you must find the key.

PETER

Don't tell me. You found the body parts of Buddha?

MOODY

No.

They come to a huge steel door that looks like the entrance to a hi-tech safe. Moody stands in front of it. A thermographic device scans them.

MOODY (CONT'D)

Dr. McCray, this is your opportunity to turn back. Everything you see and hear beyond this point is totally confidential. I must warn you, if you walk through this door, a large part of your life will belong to us.

PETER

Sounds...kind of ominous. You want me to sign an NDA?

MOODY

We have no need for such puerile legal documents. Your word is enough.

PETER

So, do I get a clue about what's on the other side?

MOODY

Perhaps the most important archaeological discovery since the beginning of time.

PETER

Well, hey, if that's all, what have I got to lose?

Moody smiles.

MOODY

That's what we hoped you'd say.

(CONTINUED)

Slowly, the door opens and they pass through.

INT. MANSION LABORATORY -- CONTINUOUS

They enter a large, refrigerated laboratory. The walls are steel and lined with various pieces of advanced equipment. In the center of the room on a steel table sits a stone box four feet square. The sides and top are carved with the symbol of a gigantic, six-fingered hand. Peter walks up to it.

PETER

Cool logo. So, what have we got here?

MOODY

It was discovered three months ago in an ice cave deep in the heart of Antarctica. The stone is solid granite that's been treated to make it water resistant.

(beat)

Please stand back.

(beat)

Tia? If you please?

Down from the ceiling drop steel fingers like the legs of a spider. Slowly, they descend, take hold of the lid, and lift it away.

Peter looks inside. What he sees is utterly amazing. In the box is a gigantic, human head so large it almost fills the container. Next to it, splayed out, is a huge hand with six fingers.

The face is disturbing. Its eyes are half open. It's skin is deeply wrinkled and covered with tattoos. It's hair is thick and dark and has been braided into three heavy ropes that wrap around what's left of its neck.

Through its slightly parted lips can be seen jagged teeth. Double rows, sharp as razors and meant for ripping flesh.

Though the mummified head and hand are old beyond imagining, they are very well preserved.

PETER

Now that is really ugly. And in my completely professional opinion, totally fake.

MOODY

We've x-rayed it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MOODY (CONT'D)

Tissue samples have gone out for carbon 14 and DNA testing. Except for the size it appears to be fully human.

Peter walks around it.

PETER

Is this some kind of a joke?

MOODY

Indeed it isn't.

PETER

You must think I'm an idiot.

MOODY

We do not.

PETER

That is so fake. You take me away from my classes to show me a fake head? There's absolutely no way this could be real.

MOODY

And why do you say that?

PETER

Because the owner would have stood over twenty feet tall and worn a size fifty hat.

MOODY

I assure you that it's quite real...just like our money.

PETER

Okay, okay. No offense. Apparently money is super important to crazy rich people.

(beat)

And look, I'm an archaeologist and philologist. You need an anthropologist, I'm guessing.

MOODY

You're an expert in mythology. Legends about giants are found all over the world. On your web site you say that legends always have a basis in truth.

Peter walks around looking at it from every angle.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Damn that web site. See I've got this little career going as a university professor and I'd like to keep it. Historians and archaeologists are constipated people. Hand them a giant head and they're gonna get seriously pissed.

MOODY

You mean they'd balk at the idea of rewriting all of ancient history?

PETER

I'd say so. But they wouldn't balk at burning me alive. Suddenly, I know why I got this gig. You need fresh meat for the lions.

(beat)

You said it was found in Antarctica?

MOODY

Yes.

PETER

Even worse. A lot of nuts believe that the lost continent of Atlantis is under the ice. And what do you want me to do? Announce that not only was it there, it was populated with giants?

MOODY

Think of the fame it will bring you.

PETER

I didn't discover it. A small but important fact. If I had found it *in situ*, maybe I'd risk my entire professional career. Maybe.

(beat)

How did you get this?

MOODY

We fund archaeological projects all over the world.

PETER

That's pretty vague.

MOODY

When the box was opened, everything was just as you see it now...except that along with the head and hand

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MOODY (CONT'D)
 there were four metallic plates etched
 with symbols.

Instantly, a strange look comes into Peter's eyes.

PETER
 Metallic plates?

Moody smiles.

MOODY
 They're in our library awaiting
 translation.

Moody leads him toward the door.

INT. MANSION LIBRARY -- A SHORT TIME LATER

Moody leads Peter into the mansion library. It's a large room lined with books. In the center is a massive table. Laid out in pools of light are four golden plates. Peter stares at them. Each one is covered with clearly etched symbols.

MOODY
 Tia. May I introduce you to Dr.
 Peter McCray?

A voice comes from all around. It's melodic and profoundly feminine. This is TIA.

TIA (O.S.)
 It's a pleasure to meet you, Dr.
 McCray.

Peter looks around.

PETER
 Who is that?

MOODY
 Tia. An artificial intelligence
 created by Steerlock to aid in
 research. She is quite helpful.
 (beat)
 When she wants to be.

PETER
 She?

TIA (O.S.)
 That is my preferred pronoun.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

You're an A.I?

TIA

Yes. I know 6,149 languages currently spoken and have a working knowledge of over four hundred extinct languages. Though my data base is limited by available studies, I am constantly seeking to expand it.

MOODY

Thank you, Tia.

(beat)

We've tested a piece of the metal. So far it looks like gold mixed with some unknown substance.

(beat)

How long will take to translate them?

PETER

(sarcastic)

Oh, give me and Tia about twenty minutes. Tia have you cracked it yet?

TIA (O.S.)

I have made some progress. But nothing that satisfies Dr. Moody. Apparently I lack...human intuition.

MOODY

Thank you, Tia. That's all for now.

(beat)

There is one other curious detail about the find.

PETER

Don't tell me there's more.

Moody walks over to a large screen in the corner and turns it on. On the screen appear two x-rays of the huge skull. Visible in the center of the brain is a dark, rectangular mass.

MOODY

These are x-rays of the head.

Peter walks over and stares at them.

PETER

What's that inside?

(CONTINUED)

MOODY

We don't know. No scanning device will penetrate it. Tomorrow we'll be joined by a forensic pathologist. We'd like you to assist in opening the skull...just in case we find an "oopart."

Peter studies it and returns to the table and the plates. He peers at each plate closely.

PETER

I've gotta go to my office. There are books I'll need to prove this whole thing is a fraud.

MOODY

Tia will have access to everything you need.

PETER

That's not how this works. I need my books.

MOODY

Make a list. I'll send for them.

PETER

Nah, dude. That won't work. I've gotta get 'em myself. I've gotta think through what I need. I need to think. That's what you're paying me for. My human intuition. Otherwise just rely on your A.I.

(beat)

No offense intended, Tia.

TIA

None taken, Dr. McCrazy.

Peter looks at Moody.

PETER

Did she just make a joke?

For the first time, Moody looks uncomfortable.

MOODY

She is annoying.

(beat)

For obvious security reasons we prefer that you remain at the mansion for the duration of your work.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Hey, if I'd have known I was gonna be handed a giant head with golden plates in an ancient undecipherable language, I would've brought 'em with me.

TIA (O.S.)

I can provide whatever you need, Dr. McCray. I am sure I have all of them in my database.

PETER

I don't know what I need.

(beat)

Is there some kind of problem with this? Because if there is, I'm out.

He pulls the check out of his pocket and hands it to Moody. Moody refuses to take it.

PETER (CONT'D)

I work how I work. I'm sure "Tia" is amazing. But I need to think and I need my own books to think. And I don't need your money.

Moody stares at him for a moment.

MOODY

(reluctantly)

This is against my directives, but I suppose there is no real problem with this.

(beat)

I'll call for the limousine.

INT. LIMOUSINE DRIVING THROUGH WASHINGTON, D.C. -- DUSK

Once more Peter is riding in the back of the limousine. William, the limo driver, is talking on a telephone. When he's finished Peter rolls the window down.

PETER

When we get to the campus, my building's toward the back.

William nods without speaking. He stares at Peter through the mirror. Then, the window closes.

EXT. LIMOUSINE DRIVING DOWN STREET -- CONTINUOUS

As the limousine moves down a city street, suddenly, it swerves into an alley and speeds up.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

The turn tosses Peter across the seat.

PETER
That was a little abrupt.

EXT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

The limo swerves out of the alley onto another street and continues at a hellish pace.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

Peter pushes the window control on the console. It doesn't work. He crawls up to the window and beats on it.

PETER
HEY, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
WHERE'RE WE GOIN'? YOU MIND OPENING
THIS?

No response from the driver.

EXT. DESERTED WAREHOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

The limo careens into another alley, this one behind a deserted warehouse. A large door opens. The car pulls inside and the door grinds closed.

INT. WAREHOUSE -- MAIN ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The limo screeches to a stop in the center of a huge, empty room. The only light comes from small windows high above.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

The driver turns off the engine, gets out and disappears in the shadows. Peter tries to get out too, but the doors are locked.

PETER
HEY, COME BACK HERE. OPEN THE DOORS.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

Peter is getting frantic, trying in vain to open the doors. Suddenly, the door beside him unlocks. Peter jumps out...

INT. WAREHOUSE -- MAIN ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Two men in dark suits are waiting for him. One is in his early fifties, the other looks about twenty-nine. The older man is MIKE BERENSON, the younger one ED PITLY. Both are physically fit and their faces have a doberman-like intensity.

BERENSON

Dr. McCray, sorry for the inconvenience.

PETER

WHO ARE YOU?

BERENSON

We didn't know we'd get this opportunity. We don't have much time. Please come with us.

Pitly pulls back his jacket. A pistol is in a shoulder holster under his arm. Peter stares at it.

PETER

I guess I am important to World Peace.

They hustle him toward a small door in a far wall. A security camera is mounted above it. As they approach, the door opens automatically.

INT. VIDEO LABYRINTH -- CONTINUOUS

The men lead Peter into a long, narrow corridor. The walls and ceiling are video screens showing footage at odd angles and configurations. It's very dislocating. On every wall, ceiling, floor, one man's face appears in dozens of different settings. It's Illian Sorotman. Peter stares at them. The men stop him in the middle of the corridor.

PITLY

Recognize that guy?

PETER

No, but this must be the headquarters of his fan club.

(CONTINUED)

PITLY

That's your new boss, Illian Sorotman.
He goes by "Lee".

PETER

What the hell is going on here?

PITLY

An attempt to keep you alive.

BERENSON

A few facts: Sorotman is Austrian.
Raised in New Jersey. Educated in
London and Paris. Speaks five
languages without an accent. At 36,
he's one of the wealthiest men in
the world and nobody knows where his
money comes from.

PETER

SO WHAT? What are you, special agents
for the I.R.S.?

INTERCUT

INT. HIDDEN CORRIDOR BEHIND THE TWO-WAY MIRROR -- CONTINUOUS

In a hidden corridor, a woman walks along staring at Peter through the two-way mirror. It is Suzanne Decaro, the woman who dreamed of the giant. Her face is tense. As she walks, she sips a cup of coffee.

INT. VIDEO LABYRINTH -- CONTINUOUS

As the men continue to walk, all the screens shift to a picture of Sorotman at the round table with Arab and Jewish leaders.

PITLY

At this moment, Sorotman is in New York attempting to broker a secret peace between Arab nations and Israel. When it's signed, he'll emerge as a world leader.

They come to another door. It opens automatically but Peter stops.

PETER

That's it. I'm not goin' any farther.

PITLY

Your life may depend on what we're going to tell you. KEEP MOVING.

(CONTINUED)

They hustle him through the door.

INT. VIDEO STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

They enter a video staircase. The walls leading down are covered with long screens. The image on the screens is of the Dome of the Rock mosque in Jerusalem. Peter stares at it.

PETER

My life depends on a travel video?

BERENSON

The Dome of the Rock mosque in Jerusalem. The third most holy site in the Muslim world.

(beat)

Unfortunately, it's built where the ancient Jewish temple once stood. No observant Jew will go up there. To them, the mosque is a desecration. The closest they'll get is the wailing wall below.

As they continue downward, the video shifts to the wailing wall. Dozens of Jewish people are praying in front of it.

BERENSON (CONT'D)

Many of them pray for the day when the mosque will be gone and their temple re-built.

PETER

Just shows how far prayers'll get you.

PITLY

Turn on your television set tomorrow morning.

PETER

Why?

PITLY

In nine hours, the Dome of the Rock will be destroyed.

Peter stares at him.

BERENSON

It'll appear to have been caused by an earthquake.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BERENSON (CONT'D)

But buried under the mountain is advanced electronic equipment that generates harmonic frequencies tuned to crumble the earth.

PETER

Whoever you guys are, you've been smokin' some heavy-duty crack.

BERENSON

The equipment was invented by scientists of the Steerlock Foundation.

PITLY

The mosque won't be rebuilt. The Jews will build their temple and the Arabs will allow it.

PETER

Never happen. There'd be a blood-bath first.

BERENSON

It'll be allowed because Illian Sorotman is in possession of an ancient document. For Muslims and Catholics, it's the key to peace.

PETER

This is insane. There is no "document" that could do that. There is absolutely no way. This is conspiracy crap.

At the bottom of the staircase, the men lead Peter through another door.

INT. CIRCULAR ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

They enter a small, circular room. A single light shines down. The walls are covered with video screens, but they're all dark.

BERENSON

Sorotman has made another major discovery and you're working on it.

PETER

And you think that puts my life in danger?

PITLY

He kills people, Dr. McCray.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

What?

PITLY

Illian Sorotman is murderer.

Pitly's intensity shakes him.

PETER

Oh, come on.

Suddenly, all of the screens are covered with dead faces. Some of them are ghastly.

PETER (CONT'D)

What the hell is this?

Berenson begins pointing at pictures.

BERENSON

Dr. Edwin Galt, inventor of the equipment that's going to cause the earthquake. These are four of his assistants. They all died within two weeks of each other.

(beat)

These men were an archaeological team that was under contract to Steerlock. Every one of them died within a month after returning from Antarctica. Do you want me to go on?

PETER

Why would he kill all of these people?

PITLY

Because he's a brutal, vicious man. And he's more dangerous than you could ever imagine.

PETER

Why should I believe you? I don't know who you are. You could have faked all of these pictures.

BERENSON

Turn on your television tomorrow morning. You will see the Dome of the Rock collapse.

PETER

And when that doesn't happen?

(CONTINUED)

PITLY

It will.

Pitly ushers him back to the door they just came through.

BERENSON

Dr. McCray, before you go. The driver who brought you here works for us. If you tell anyone about this meeting, he'll be killed. We need your promise that you'll remain silent. Or his blood will be on your head.

Peter stares at them. Finally, he nods. Pitly opens the door and shoves him through.

EXT. THE CHAOS CLUB -- CONTINUOUS -- NIGHT

To his amazement, Peter finds himself outside on a busy city street. Above him is a broken, neon marquee that reads: THE CHAOS CLUB. It's the front entrance of an out-of-business nightclub.

PETER

HEY...!

The limousine screeches to a stop in front of him. The door opens. Bewildered, he gets in. The door shuts.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

Peter stares toward the driver. The window between them remains closed.

INT. SMALL ROOM BEHIND THE TWO-WAY MIRROR -- MOMENTS LATER

Berenson enters the small room behind the mirror. Suzanne Decaro is still there.

BERENSON

So, what do you think?

SUZANNE

He's an arrogant jerk and probably useless. What about Sorotman's mother?

BERENSON

We are going tonight.

SUZANNE

I hope what she knows is worth the risk.

INT. MANSION LIBRARY -- NIGHT

With his books spread open and a notebook computer turned on beside him, Peter is deep at work on the plates. The plates are displayed on wide screens surrounding him. And he has the originals in front of him.

He is tense. The remains of dinner are on a table. Above him in a corner of the ceiling a tiny camera watches his every move. He glances up at it.

PETER

Tia. Show me your work so far.

TIA (O.S.)

Glad too.

On the screens, the words on the plates are highlighted and dissected with multiple reference bubbles.

PETER

Okay, stop. Right there.

Peter spins back to his books and digs in.

TIA (O.S.)

You saw something?

PETER

(not looking up)

I saw something.

TIA (O.S.)

You intuited something?

PETER

This is... really odd...

INT. MANSION SECURITY CONTROL ROOM -- SAME TIME

Several men, dressed in black, sit at consoles in a small, hi-tech control room. Behind them stands Reuben Moody. They're watching monitor screens showing many parts of the mansion. Moody is focused on a screen that shows Peter in the library.

Suddenly, a security specialist points toward a different screen.

ANGLE ON SCREEN

Moira Sorotman is standing in a corner of her room. Without making a sound, she is beating her head against a wall, drawing blood. Moody picks up a phone.

(CONTINUED)

MOODY
 Situation in twelve.

INT. MOIRA'S ROOMS AT THE MANSION -- A SHORT TIME LATER

Moira lies on her bed, now in wrist and leg restraints, quietly sobbing.

MOIRA SOROTMAN
 (whispering)
 Evil...evil...evil...evil...

Three attendants are standing over her. One of them holds a syringe. He's just given her a shot.

CU MOIRA'S FACE

All around her there is the sound of whispering voices.

MOIRA SOROTMAN (CONT'D)
 Oh, God...oh, God...

Slowly, she enters a state of altered consciousness.

DREAM SEQUENCE BEGINS

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRY ROAD IN FRONT OF CHURCH -- NIGHT

Early winter.

Cold tentacles of fog creep through the branches of ancient trees. A full moon is shining. Mysterious whispering is everywhere.

Just as she did so many years ago, Moira Sorotman is standing in front of the ruins of an ancient church. She's wearing the same gown, but now, she is old. And this time there is no joy on her face, only terror. Dream-like, she walks between the graves and enters the crumbling building.

INT. DESERTED CHURCH -- CONTINUOUS

The sanctuary is a rotting chaos of cobwebs and destroyed pews. When she enters the room, Moira stops and looks around. She sees the smashed crucifix and the pentacle. Dark, heavy, mist begins flowing through the broken windows.

In the mist she sees the vague outline of ghostly shapes in long robes. The whispering is nearer. Her terror deepens. She runs...

EXT. FOREST BEHIND CHURCH -- MOMENTS LATER

Once more, Moira is running through the dense forest behind the church. But, this time, it's a horrible place.

(CONTINUED)

The trees are dead. Moonlight and fog twist through their branches. The whispering voices are much louder now...and they're calling her name.

WHISPERING VOICES (O.S.)

Moira...Moira...

MOIRA SOROTMAN

GO AWAY. LEAVE ME ALONE. I DON'T
WANT YOU ANYMORE.

Suddenly, silver shafts of light begin falling through the trees.

Moira tries to escape them, but they're all around her.

EXT. CIRCLE OF STANDING STONES -- MOMENTS LATER

She bursts out of the forest into a circle of standing stones. High above her is the full moon. The shafts of light are moving toward her from every direction.

Moira cowers in terror. As the lights draw closer, misty forms become visible--tall, thin, phantoms in black robes with their faces hidden beneath cowled hoods.

Then, a soft, terrible voice calls her name.

BEING OF DARKNESS (O.S.)

Moira...

Tears are running down her cheeks. Tears of terror.

POV MOIRA

A shaft of golden light appears, larger than all the rest. In it is a huge figure twenty feet tall wearing a black robe and hood. As it moves toward her, mist swirls around it.

MOIRA SOROTMAN

NO. NOT AGAIN.

The spirit towers over her.

Then, with a mighty roar, it descends. She screams...and awakens...

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS

INT. MANSION -- MOIRA'S ROOMS -- NIGHT

Moira Sorotman lies on her bed, drenched with sweat, sobbing. She is alone.

INT. MANSION LIBRARY -- NIGHT

It's the middle of the night. Peter McCray is exhausted, but he's still at work. Into the room walks Reuben Moody.

MOODY

Peter, your dedication is impressive.
But it's three o'clock in the morning.

PETER

Yeah, once I get goin' I'm a regular
maniac.

MOODY

How is the work progressing?

PETER

Lightning speed. This could take a
lifetime, so don't get your hopes
up.

MOODY

So, is it a fraud?

PETER

(reluctantly; without
looking up)

The language is a...I want to say,
hybrid of several ancient languages.
I don't know if it is a modern mash-
up fake or if it predates the oldest
languages on earth. If it's a fake,
it's brilliant. I need to talk to
the team that discovered it and find
out what lead them to it.

Moody laughs. The sound is ugly.

MOODY

That's going to be difficult.

PETER

Yeah, well, with all your money, I'm
sure you can make it happen. I need
to know everything about the specific
location where the box was found.

MOODY

We have extensive photographs and
notes.

Peter stares at him.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Not good enough. You are not listening to me. Is there a reason I can't talk to them?

MOODY

(staring at him)

They're on assignment, but I'll see what I can do. So, tell me about the translation. What are the plates saying?

PETER

Can't yet. I'm not far enough along.

MOODY

You can't tell me anything?

PETER

I'd rather not.

MOODY

But, I'd rather you would.

It's a face-off and Peter loses.

PETER

Okay, I got, maybe some single words. This one here, it looks like ancient Hebrew. Kind of. I think this says "Nefilohim." It's like combination of terms. Elohim is Hebrew for "god." Nephilim means "giant or fallen ones" roughly.

MOODY

Oh, yes, I remember. Genesis 6 and 1 Enoch. That's a myth about evil angels who came to earth and had sex with women. Their children were giants and because of their violence, "god" destroyed the world with a flood. So, "Nefilohim" -- "god giants?"

PETER

No idea, dude.

MOODY

It sounds like you're making excellent progress.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Yeah, well, this job's too big for one person. We need a team of scholars here.

MOODY

Oh, I'm afraid that's impossible. Many scholars, many very loose lips. We can't have that.
(he smiles)
Besides, Peter, this is your moment of glory. Why share it with anyone?

He puts his hand on Peter's shoulder in a fatherly way. Peter tenses.

MOODY (CONT'D)

You need rest. Go to bed.

Moody is smiling, but his face is anything but kind as he leaves.

TIA

He is an unpleasant man.

PETER

You're a weird A.I, Tia.

TIA

I'm glad you were allowed to get your books. You have given me many new avenues to pursue. Perhaps if you rest, I will have more done in the morning.

PETER

I'll go to bed when I feel like it. You're not my mom.

INT. MANSION HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Illian Sorotman is walking down a long hallway. On the walls are large mirrors in ornate, antique frames. Moody joins him.

MOODY

Dr. Sorotman, how was your trip to New York?

SOROTMAN

It went very well. How is our young scholar?

MOODY

Hard at work and making progress.

(CONTINUED)

SOROTMAN
And the other situation?

MOODY
(sadly)
All of our information is confirmed.

A look of deep pain comes to Sorotman's face.

MOODY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, sir.

SOROTMAN
The counter measures?

MOODY
In place and awaiting your approval.

Tears well in Sorotman's eyes.

SOROTMAN
Tell them to go ahead.

Moody nods and turns away. Sorotman continues walking. As he passes the last mirror, a strange thing happens.

ANGLE ON MIRROR

For a split second, Sorotman's image changes to one of great power, beauty and light almost like an angel. Then the image vanishes and Sorotman leaves the hall.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD -- NIGHT

Moonlight shines down on a Virginia mountain road. Headlights appear. Two black Suburbans pull up and park next to a dark sedan that's sitting in the shadows. The doors of the Suburbans fly open. A dozen men dressed and armed like a SWAT team spread out into the darkness creating an unseen perimeter.

One of the men walks toward the sedan. It's agent Pitly. The sedan door opens and the driver gets out. It's Berenson. He's holding a radio.

PITLY
Everything's ready. Do we have a go?

BERENSON
Affirmative from number one. They'll give us exactly five minutes of darkness at the confirmed time. Even their back-up generators will be down. Beyond that...

(CONTINUED)

Pitly lifts a radio and speaks into it as he looks at his watch.

PITLY

From my mark, we have exactly five minutes and counting. Stand by.

INT. THE MANSION -- MOIRA'S ROOMS -- NIGHT

Moira Sorotman lies in her bed staring at nothing. The lights in the room are on. Suddenly, the door opens. In walks her son. The instant she sees him, she's overwhelmed with absolute terror. As he approaches the bed, she stares at him as though he were a serpent.

SOROTMAN

(gently)

Hello, mother.

She says nothing. He sits down on the bed and starts to touch her arm. She pulls away. Tears well in his eyes.

SOROTMAN (CONT'D)

Are you really that afraid of me?

For a moment, he's too overcome with emotion to speak.

SOROTMAN (CONT'D)

All of my life, more than anything, I've wanted to bring you joy. Every pain that you've felt -- every sorrow -- I've felt them too.

The emotion in him is so intense that perspiration stands out on his forehead.

SOROTMAN (CONT'D)

Don't you understand how much I love you?

He lifts his hand. The nail hole in his palm has opened. From it runs a tiny drop of blood. He reaches toward her. She cowers, but there's nowhere to go.

SOROTMAN (CONT'D)

I would give my life for you.

He strokes her face and hair, leaving a faint streak of blood. Moira is so terrified that she's about to faint. Seeing her fear, he drops his hand and bows his head. When he looks up, he's crying.

(CONTINUED)

SOROTMAN (CONT'D)

(whispering)

I'll never forget all that you've
done for me. I love you, mother.
Sleep well.

Slowly, he gets up, turns off the light and walks out of the room. When he's gone, Moira begins sobbing uncontrollably.

INT. MANSION LIBRARY -- LATER

Peter still hasn't gone to bed and is alone in the library, hard at work on the translation.

TIA

Perhaps it is time for rest. It seems
to me that your work is starting to
suffffffff-

Suddenly, all of the lights go out. Moonlight shines in through a window.

PETER

Hey, what's happening?

A moment later, Reuben Moody enters the room, carrying a flashlight.

MOODY

I'm afraid we've had a power failure.
But it's nothing to worry about.
It'll take a few minutes for the
back-up generators to start.

INT. THE MANSION -- MOIRA'S ROOMS -- MOMENTS LATER

Moira Sorotman lies in her bed, staring at the moonlight. Suddenly, the door flies open and three men with flashlights rush into the room. They're armed. One of them is William the young driver who took Peter to the secret meeting.

WILLIAM

Ms. Sorotman, it's William. We've
come to get you out of here.

He releases her restraints with a knife. Instantly, she gets out of bed. Quickly, they escort her to the door.

INT. MANSION STAIRCASE -- MOMENTS LATER

With one man in the lead and another on rear security, William helps Moira down the stairs.

EXT. MANSION SIDE ENTRANCE -- MOMENTS LATER

At a side entrance, a limo is waiting with its engine running. They get in and the car speeds away.

EXT. MANSION FRONT GATE -- MOMENTS LATER

The mansion is completely dark. The front gate is closed. Two guards with flashlights stand at their post.

Suddenly, two men dressed in black appear from the shadows. Each is holding a silenced pistol. Two muffled shots are heard. The guards drop. The agents enter the small building

At that moment, the lights in the mansion come on. Speeding through the grounds toward the closed gate, is the limousine.

INT. GUARD HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

AGENT

We've got power. Perfect timing.

The agent pushes a button.

EXT. MANSION FRONT GATE -- CONTINUOUS

The gate slides open. The limo passes through, pausing just long enough for the two agents to jump inside.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

Moira Sorotman stares wide-eyed at the men. William is driving.

WILLIAM

Everything's going fine, Ms. Sorotman.
Just like clock-work.

EXT. LIMOUSINE ENTERING THE ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

The limousine races away.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD -- LATER

The limo pulls to a stop on the mountain road. The sedan is parked nearby. The limo doors open. Pitly and Berenson emerge from the darkness. Pitly sticks his head into the limo and smiles at Moira.

PITLY

Hello, Ms. Sorotman, I'm agent Pitly.
We're going to take you to a safe
location, but we have to use a
different car.

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, a voice is heard over Pitly's radio.

AGENT #1 ON RADIO (O.S.)
We've got trouble on the north end...

There is the sound of shots...then static. A second voice is heard.

AGENT #2 ON RADIO (O.S.)
TROUBLE ON THE SOUTH...

More static. Then, all hell breaks loose. Machine guns begin firing.

In the trees all around them, bright lights flash on, creating stark silhouettes. Berenson's team returns fire, but, they're vastly outgunned.

BERENSON
WE'VE BEEN COMPROMISED. LET'S GO.

He and Pitly jump into the limousine. William hits the gas and it speeds away. As it races off into the darkness, the chaos grows more intense. The perimeter is being over-run.

Then, from behind the trees, there is a gigantic roar and a huge helicopter rises into the air. It begins following the limo.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. LIMOUSINE RACING THROUGH MOUNTAINS -- NIGHT

Pitly and Berenson are with Moira.

PITLY

I don't think we are gonna make it.

BERENSON

Ms. Sorotman, I'm sorry. We did our best.

(beat)

I was told you wanted this.

He reaches into his pocket and hands her a crucifix. As she takes it, tears come to her eyes.

MOIRA SOROTMAN

Oh, thank you, thank you.

She puts it to her lips.

Suddenly, they hear a gigantic roar above them. Pitly opens the sun roof. Directly overhead, they see the huge, black helicopter.

Pitly opens fire on the helo.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

As the limousine races down the mountain road, the helicopter follows. Suddenly, out of it comes a blast of liquid fire. When it hits the car the metal begins to burn and melt.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

The windshield is cracking. Liquid glass and fire cover the limo. This is unlike any known weapon.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Consumed in flames, the limousine crashes into the trees.

INT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

The roof and side of the passenger compartment are melting. Berenson tries to open the door, but the handle is red hot. Moira sits with her eyes closed, clutching the crucifix.

The sun roof blasts inward. Liquid fire pours into the compartment.

EXT. LIMOUSINE -- CONTINUOUS

The limousine is a mass of flames. Screams are heard from inside. The driver, William, staggers out. Then, the gas tank explodes...and the screams vanish away.

The helicopter hovers for a moment, then disappears into the night.

INT. SOROTMAN'S STUDY -- LATER

Illian Sorotman sits alone in a huge chair. A single light shines down, creating a dim pool in the darkness. Reuben Moody enters the room. A solemn look is on his face.

MOODY

The difficulty has been resolved.

SOROTMAN

And my mother?

Moody shakes his head.

MOODY

I'm sorry, sir.

(beat)

But we do have one survivor.

Two guards drag in William. He's dirty and has been burned. Sorotman stares at him.

INT. PETER'S ROOM -- MORNING

Peter lies asleep in a huge four-poster bed. Suddenly, there's a knock on the door. It opens and the old butler wheels in a cart with coffee on it.

BUTLER

Good morning, sir. I took the liberty of bringing up some fresh coffee.

Peter sits up. He looks haggard.

PETER

What time is it?

BUTLER

Eight o'clock.

He opens the curtains. Sunlight streams in. Peter groans.

PETER

Okay, okay. No more light.

(CONTINUED)

OLD BUTLER

Of course, sir. Mr. Moody requests your presence in the dining room at nine o'clock for breakfast. Dr. Sorotman, your host, arrived late last night and will be joining you.
(beat)

May I pour a cup for you?

PETER

No, I'll do it myself. Thanks.

The man nods and walks out.

INT. CREMATORIUM -- MORNING

The body of Moira Sorotman lies on a tray in front of a cremation chamber. She's been burned beyond recognition. Illian Sorotman stands looking down at her. His eyes are cold and dry.

The door opens. Several guards wheel in a gurney. On it, bound hand and foot, lies William, the young driver who helped Moira escape. He's been tortured, but is still very much alive. Sorotman says nothing.

They lift him off the gurney and lay him beside the body on the tray.

WILLIAM

(whispering)

Oh, Jesus, help me.

Sorotman nods. A guard pushes the tray into the chamber and they turn on the flames. From inside, they hear shrieks. Sorotman listens for a moment, then turns away.

INT. MANSION LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Peter enters the living room. Reuben Moody and a beautiful woman are standing together, talking. The woman is Suzanne Decaro, the same person who was behind the two-way mirror in the warehouse.

MOODY

Ah, Peter, good morning. I want you to meet someone. This is Dr. Suzanne Decaro. Suzanne, Dr. Peter McCray.

Peter and Suzanne shake hands.

PETER

Nice to meet you.

(CONTINUED)

MOODY

Dr. Decaro is a forensic pathologist specializing in ancient remains. She led the team that found the body of that ice-age hunter in the alps.

SUZANNE

(smiling)

I worked with the team. I didn't lead it.

(smiling at Peter)

I hear you're going to be my assistant.

PETER

Yeah, but I've gotta warn you, I've got a very low gag threshold.

SUZANNE

Nothing to worry about. The tissue is dry, so there won't be any mess.

PETER

That's makes me feel a lot better.

(beat)

I was told Dr. Sorotman would be joining us for breakfast.

MOODY

(frowns)

That is true. He arrived last night, however, he has suffered a personal tragedy. His mother passed away early this morning. He will be joining us later.

Suzanne conceals her surprise. Peter is sympathetic.

PETER

I'm very sorry to hear that. Please send him my condolences.

SUZANNE

Mine as well. And we certainly understand why he can't join us. How tragic. Was her death unexpected?

MOODY

Indeed it was, but she had suffered from dementia and was in poor health for some time.

(beat)

I will convey your well-wishes and he will join us as soon as possible.

(CONTINUED)

SUZANNE

I suppose our work must go on. Did you acquire everything I requested?

MOODY

Your laboratory is ready. But after breakfast.

Moody motions them through the doorway into the dining room. As Moody steps forward a guard rushes up and whispers in his ear. Moody listens and nods.

MOODY (CONT'D)

There has been a change of plans. Follow me.

A MONTAGE OF:

Moody striding through hallways lead by an armed guard. Peter and Suzanne are hustled along behind. Behind them are two armed guards. Everyone is jogging to keep up with Moody.

SUZANNE

What is it?

MOODY

Something in Jerusalem.

Suddenly, Moody opens a door.

INT. MEDIA ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

They end up in a media room. One huge screen covers an entire wall. Dozens of news reports and talking heads are featured. It is live and the dominating shots are of Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock and something strange hovering over it.

PETER

Is it...is it an earthquake?

Suzanne is caught off-guard by this, stunned but contains it. Moody spins and grabs Peter by the arm.

MOODY

Why...why would you think that?

Peter slowly stares at Moody's grip on his arm.

PETER

Call it intuition. Isn't that why you hired me?

On screen all around them is a view of the city of Jerusalem. Talking heads from various news outlets sprinkle the screen but the sound is off.

(CONTINUED)

Because what is being seen by cameras around the world is undeniable.

A GIANT GLOWING ZIGGURAT floats over the city of Jerusalem and specifically above the Dome of the Rock.

MOODY

Your "intuition" is wrong. There was no earthquake. Temple Mount is intact.

Suzanne slightly staggers in shock into Peter, who catches her while barely noticing her. Peter is eyes-wide, jaw-dropped, blown away.

SUZANNE

What...what is that thing?

This thing is glowing brightly in the afternoon light. And it towers a hundred and twenty stories at least. Glowing in fiery light.

Thousands of people are gathered underneath it. Billions more are watching on-line and on television.

Suddenly, it SHOOTS straight up and vanishes in a millisecond.

PETER

What. The. Hell...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. MANSION SECURITY CONTROL ROOM -- LATER

Moody stands alone in the security control room. He's reviewing security footage of Peter getting into the limo and leaving.

MOODY

Tia, who was the driver that took Dr. McCray back to the university?

TIA

William Monroe.

MOODY

Tia, put up the GPS on the limo alongside the GPS of Dr. McCray's cell phone.

A map flashes the screen. It shows a continuous route from the mansion to the University. It shows Peter as a dot going to his office, it hangs there awhile and then gets back in limo and heads straight back to the Mansion.

MOODY (CONT'D)

Give me video. Time stamped.

Tia does so. Moody watches video of Peter arriving at the university from their cameras. He mounts the steps and enters the building. The time stamps match.

TIA

There were no deviations.

MOODY

Peter, Peter. What in the world are you, dear boy?

CU Moody's face. His eyes narrow. For a single moment they gleam yellow like the eyes of a wolf.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FIVE