

THE ARK & THE CRUCIBLE
Pilot episode: "Bon Voyage"

An original teleplay pilot for a series
by Michael Alberstadt

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FADE IN:

EXT. A LOGGING ROAD - AFTERNOON

A two-track slices through a thick forest. Sunlight dapples the road like an Impressionist painting.

Nothing stirs until...

... A battered SUV roars up the two-track, wheels throwing dirt. It glances off a tree, engine whining – as if Satan himself is chasing it.

VALERIE (O.S.)

My life for our wetback chauffeur!

A fork in the road looms ahead, and the SUV skids to a halt.

INT. THE SUV - CONTINUOUS

A disheveled family in couture outfits and gold jewelry.

XAVIER (40s, a swarthy, muscular man) assesses his options. Bespoke shirt, torn. A tan line where a watch once kept time.

VALERIE (40s, a pampered soccer mom) gapes at him.

VALERIE

Tell me you got a map.

XAVIER

-- I barely got this damn car. I gave up my Rolex for this shit pile!

POPPY (20, a Barbie doll of a daughter) checks for cell service. Anxiously chews a manicured nail. Checks again.

POPPY

Daddy, does *anyone* live out here?

XAVIER

I'll get us to Anchorage. They wouldn't have hit Anchorage.

VALERIE

There were helicopters. Why didn't we get a helicopter..?

XAVIER

-- Shut your pie hole and let me think! Where's the sun? Is that east?

Xavier veers the SUV onto the left fork.

LOGGING ROAD - LATER

The SUV crashes down the two-track. Suddenly, the engine coughs and the SUV rolls to a stop.

IN THE SUV - CONTINUOUS

VALERIE

You didn't fill the tank? You IDIOT!

XAVIER

The mechanic was shooting looters...
I - I ran over someone on the way
out. We'll have to walk --

POPPY

-- WALK!? Walk where? How?

XAVIER

That harpy at the rental said, "get
to the main road. You'll be safe."

Xavier shoves his door open.

LOGGING ROAD - LATER

Xavier strides down the two-track.

XAVIER

Hurry! It'll be dark soon!

The women struggle behind him with their Gucci luggage.

POPPY

Daddy, help me with this.

VALERIE

If you were a better lay, that Jackson
brat would be your sherpa now.

POPPY

God, you are SUCH A SHITTY MOTHER..!

Xavier turns back to them just as a bullet slams into Valerie's head. It explodes, spattering Poppy with viscera, and she screams as her mother's body drops where it stood.

Xavier runs to them, crouching, his eyes darting about in panic. Poppy shrieks hysterically beside Valerie's body.

ANNA SKYBEAR (50s, a stout First Nation woman) steps from the forest. Long, graying hair. A suit of denim, leather and fur. Fierce eyes. She exudes power.

Strong, well-armed Scamakounst women and unarmed men carrying heavy packs – not much more than mules – join her.

Xavier moves to shield Poppy.

XAVIER
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!? WHO..?

ANNA SKYBEAR
(pointing at Poppy)
-- Is she yours?

XAVIER
Of course... STAY BACK!

But armed warriors advance, forcing them to surrender.

XAVIER
Please, we're lost. We need to get
to the road, to Anchorage. War has --

ANNA SKYBEAR
-- Bind and bare him. He bred once,
he'll do it again.

The Scamakounst separate Xavier and Poppy. Xavier fights as they bind his hands and tear his clothing.

POPPY
DADDY, WHAT'S HAPPENING!

A warrior forces Poppy to her knees – and slits her throat.

Xavier howls in anguish. The warriors strip him like a kill. Loop a leather choker around his neck.

Anna squeezes Xavier's muscles. Assesses his genitalia.

ANNA SKYBEAR
Yes, he'll do. Take him. Search the
bags. Leave the rest for the wolves.

SUPER: TWO DAYS EARLIER

INT. VACATION CONDO KITCHEN, ORLANDO - MORNING

A soulless vacation rental. Cheap cabinets. Kitschy artwork.

A MAN (40s) in a FedEx uniform scoops yogurt into a bowl. He adds honey as he watches a news bulletin on TV.

COMMENTATOR

-- Rising tension across the globe
could boil over at any time...

A world map shows hot spots: Iran, Ukraine, the South China Sea. Footage of tank columns. Missile tests.

FedEx Man enjoys his yogurt until his cell phone buzzes. He considers the number with apprehension.

FEDEX MAN

Yes?

(he listens)

So soon?

(horror in his eyes)

-- NO! No, please - I'll make the
delivery as promised.

The call ends. Shaken, he drops the bowl of yogurt into the sink. It smashes into pieces.

CUT TO:

EXT. A CANADIAN FJORD - EARLY THAT MORNING

Granite cliffs rise from the fjord's deep water. Conifers blanket its ledges and inlets. An eagle soars overhead.

Stunning beauty in the warm light of the summer solstice.

EXT. VILLAGE STREETS - MORNING

SUPER: THE VILLAGE OF SPATSIZI

The crumbling logging town of Spatsizi sits wedged between the fjord and the Tongass temperate rain forest.

Weather-worn docks jut into the fjord. Shabby fishing boats and charters bob at anchor.

From the docks, Main Street bisects a dismal commercial district. One coffee shop. A vehicle dealer. An addiction center. Tired gift shops mix with abandoned storefronts.

Amazingly, the village bustles. A robust woman paints a fence. A proprietress plants flowers. Ladies shop. Drive. Get coffee.

MAYOR BLASHILL (60s, an ebullient gentleman) leans heavily on a cane and cheers on two girls as they hoist a banner at city hall. It reads: "WELCOME, PACIFIC SWAN."

He is the only man we've seen in town.

MAYOR BLASHILL

Lift that end! It's the first cruise
ship in decades, girls – let's not
make it the last!

He sniffs his fresh corsage and looks up the Main Street to where it ends at the only road out of town – a two-track that disappears into the labyrinthine forest.

Between the commercial district and the forest sits:

EXT. STORMY'S TAVERN & GUESTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A rambling stone-and-timber lodge with a broad front porch. Tavern on the ground floor. Rooms to let above. Brightly painted and well-kept. Serene, until...

... A smartly dressed MAN (40s) bursts from the tavern and tumbles down the stairs.

GRACE McADAMS (mid 30s, a fireball of a woman) storms after him, a hockey stick in her hand.

BAXTER McADAMS (60, weathered and feisty) hobbles on a cane after her. He yells from the top step.

BAXTER

GRACE! HE'S A CUSTOMER..!

GRACE

-- He grabbed my ass!

Grace swings for the Man's head. He scrambles to avoid her.

GRACE

(swinging)

I'm sick of rich, spoiled men groping
me like a Tokyo schoolgirl.

MAN

I didn't grope, I cupped! Where's your sense of fun?

GRACE

Scrabble is fun. Walks on the beach are fun. Getting felt up by an asshole in Hugo Boss is NOT fun! AND, you have a \$300 tab – Pa, get his wallet.

Baxter hobbles to him, but the Man quickly shoves Baxter to the ground.

Incensed, Grace raises the hockey stick to strike...

BAXTER

NOT MY SIGNED GRETZKY!

... When the Man is suddenly thrown face-down on the sidewalk.

NATALIE ABITIBI (17, a robust, athletic girl) pins his arm between his shoulder blades.

NATALIE

I play hockey, sir – 200 career penalty minutes – so just lie there.

GRACE

Pa – you okay?

BAXTER

My back...

Grace helps Baxter up. He snatches the hockey stick from her and retrieves his cane. Natalie rifles the Man's wallet.

NATALIE

Amex, VISA, Amex, Amex – what married douche carries a condom in his wallet?

MAN

Get her off me!

GRACE

Why, nut sack, too much personal contact? I'm running one of those damn cards – unless...

Grace kneels beside the man and yanks a wedding ring from his immobilized hand. She holds it up to the sun.

GRACE

Eighteen karat – your wife is either
a saint or stupid as a post.

MAN

Give that back, you thief!

SASHA (O.S.)

Charge his card and return the ring.

SASHA ABITIBI (late 40s, a saucy Russian doyenne) glares at Grace, radiating power and a Romanov flair even in her off-the-rack suit. She wields a thin knife.

SASHA

It's payment enough for his
indiscretion.

Grace throws the ring down Main Street. It bounces with a TINK on the pavement, then rolls out of sight.

GRACE

I heard he lost it. Anyone else?

Several in the crowd are clearly on Grace's side.

GRACE

That is payment enough. Let him go.

The man struggles free, grabs his wallet from Natalie and chases after his ring.

NATALIE

Your pub needs a better class of
class, Gracie.

GRACE

We get diamonds and dung here, Nat.
It's the dung that lingers.

SASHA

That's enough, Natalie. Back to your
baskets and trifles.

Natalie glares at Sasha.

NATALIE

Yes, Mother.

She scampers to a farm stand beside the tavern. Sasha waves her hand to dismiss the crowd.

GRACE

Is that your idea of protection?

Sasha holsters the knife in her walking stick.

SASHA

You're safe, are you not? As is your place of business.

GRACE

We have until the end of the month.

SASHA

Of course. To request payment early would be... uncharitable. I can only surmise that your house-of-ill-repute will be active?

GRACE

Why? Do you need a room?

SASHA

Charming. The McAdam's clan has always had thumbs in a great many pies.

BAXTER

Much like you Abitibis. Natalie has a more legit entrepreneurial spirit.

Sasha smiles a reptilian smile.

SASHA

My daughter won't always be around to save you.

GRACE

Spatsizi needs saving, Ms. Deputy Mayor – not us. Or is that beneath the powers-that-be?

Sasha waves to someone, dismissing Grace and Baxter.

SASHA

My hand holds the pulse of the powers-that-be... and there's Mayor Blashill now. We are inspecting the *Pacific Swan's* berth – governing, yes? I bid you good day.

And Sasha sashays away.

INT. STORMY'S TAVERN & GUESTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A rustic, timbered bar cum library. Bookshelves embrace a stone fireplace. Overstuffed armchairs crowd the hearth. Solid tables. Mismatched chairs. Comfortable and inviting.

A wide set of stairs beside the bar lead up.

Grace supports Baxter through the squeaky screen door. Helps him to a chair.

BAXTER

That viper Sasha will burn us out someday. You'll push her too far --

GRACE

-- How could you side with that rich horn-dog instead of me?

Baxter holds the hockey stick out. Indicates its proper place.

BAXTER

Because he had money. Still didn't get paid, though, did we?

Grace returns the hockey stick to a rack behind the bar.

BAXTER

Money is hard enough to come by in Spatsizi without chasing it out the door. Would it hurt to show some interest in the customers?

GRACE

I could charge, what, a buck a grope?

BAXTER

-- Not even in jest, Gracie. I won't have my daughter on her back for a few toonies.

GRACE

Putting the local lads on *their* backs keeps this tavern outta the red.

BAXTER

Selling cock was never my idea. And men are harder to find than money in this God-forsaken town. You need to embrace the good ones --

GRACE

-- There are no good ones, Dad. Men are pigs – present company excluded.

BAXTER

Gretzky is a decent guy, or was when I played with him.

(wincing)

God, today, of all days. I was feeling good, too. I...

Something troubles him. He hesitates.

BAXTER

Grace... I need you to do something.

GRACE

Dad, anything.

BAXTER

Make a pick up from customs. I'll give you the pass phrase...

GRACE

-- Pass phrase..? No. I told you --

BAXTER

-- If I drive to the dock, I'll be crippled for a week. It's a dozen boxes from one of your mother's old contacts --

GRACE

-- Through customs??

(lowering her voice)

Pa, tell me you're not bribing customs officers now...

The front door squeaks open. An imposing man with a black eye patch stands there, holding a plate of pastries. This is PATCH GORSKI (30s, a rugged Wally Cleaver type).

PATCH

Hey, I – gosh, Bax, you look rough.

BAXTER

I'm fine – just a clumsy oaf is all. Come in, come in!

PATCH

Okay, great, um... So I... I brought ya these scones, fresh from the oven.

BAXTER

That's great. Isn't that great, hon?

Grace forces a smile at Patch.

PATCH

So, the town is crazy, eh? Cruise ship comin' and all?

GRACE

(to Baxter)

What time on the dock?

BAXTER

1:00 p.m. I'll text you – it's a passage from an Arthur Miller classic.

Grace takes the scones from Patch. Pecks his cheek. And strides from the tavern.

BAXTER

Patch – sit with me a moment.

CUT TO:

EXT. CRUISE DOCK, VANCOUVER – MORNING

Frenetic activity. LONGSHOREMEN yell. Trucks unload exotic food and expensive wine. Forklifts race back and forth with containers of luggage.

Amid the chaos, a knot of hired SECURITY surrounds heavy metal pallets and tall crates concealing unknowable cargo.

LONGSHOREMAN

(bellowing)

These crates go on next!

A security guard joins the longshoreman on his forklift.

LONGSHOREMAN

Hey! There ain't room for you on...

... And then he sees the guard's machine gun. He makes room.

Above it all, the rakish bow of *PACIFIC SWAN* hangs over the dock like the sword of Damocles. Sleek balconied sides, spotless white hull – the most opulent ship on the seas.

ON THE BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON an iPhone. A black man's hand pages through photos of a lovely red-haired lass: cooking, laughing...

LENOX ARMSTRONG (30s, a sturdy, intense black man) accesses the photos. He wears the white uniform of an officer: dark epaulets, two gold bars.

CAPTAIN MICHELAKOS (O.S.)
You find something more interesting
than your job, mister?

Lenox quickly pockets the iPhone. Wipes his eyes.

LENOX
(in refined Cockney)
No sir. Just a, em - just thinkin'
on my Jenny, sir, is all...

Captain Michelakos assesses Lenox with dark, Greek eyes.

CAPTAIN MICHELAKOS
Take charge on the dock. Make sure
the corporate cargo gets on. And
that security detail needs quarters.

LENOX
Quarters, sir?

CAPTAIN MICHELAKOS
They're coming with us.

Lenox acknowledges him. Moves to leave, but:

CAPTAIN MICHELAKOS
First tour on a passenger vessel,
Mr. Armstrong - a last minute
transfer, it seems.

LENOX
I'm a bit surprised myself, sir. I
have the training --

CAPTAIN MICHELAKOS
-- Yes, I noted that. But note this,
Mr. Armstrong...

LENOX
Sir?

CAPTAIN MICHELAKOS

Memories of those passed get better
with age. Inattention to the job
does not.

EXT. CRUISE TERMINAL, VANCOUVER - LATER

The spotlight of the sun glares on the bustling activity in
front of the cruise terminal.

POLICE OFFICERS shout. Whistles shriek. PORTERS in starched
uniforms whisk away luggage like magicians. And the wealthy
arrive like Lady Gaga at the Met Ball.

Xavier and family sweep from a Rolls-Royce like royalty.
Valerie takes in the scene with distaste.

VALERIE

God, we've been dropped in Calcutta.

XAVIER

Except this crowd has money: tech
whales, crypto-moguls, even a former
Surgeon General.

He nods toward a white-haired man. Valerie could care less.

Poppy snaps a selfie, reacting to an out-of-place suburban
family behind her.

POPPY

Gawd, they let anyone on this tub.

VALERIE

Probably white-trash lottery winners.

Their Latino chauffeur unloads a mountain of Gucci bags. Xavier
pulls out a \$100... Valerie snatches it from him.

VALERIE

That beaner gets paid plenty. Come,
Poppy - maybe this dump has a bar.

They shove rudely past the suburban family: bespectacled
husband, effervescent wife (both 30s) and an androgynously
dressed teen. AMANDA, the wife, takes exception:

AMANDA

(loudly)

See, Lily? Just 'cause you're rich,
don't mean you got class - or manners.

Insulted, Valerie shoves aside SURIYA JACKSON (40s), a demure Arabic woman in a couture pantsuit and head scarf.

SURIYA
OH... excuse me.

VALERIE
Excuse yourself, Saudi trash.

Valerie pulls Poppy toward the terminal entrance.

POPPY
Mummy, didn't she model for *Vogue*..?

A robust man in Ray Bans joins Suriya. This is RUDY JACKSON (40s), a solid white guy with a military cut and the steely look of someone who has taken lives.

RUDY
(to Suriya)
Did she hurt you?

Rudy halts the porter with the Gucci luggage in his tracks and faces Xavier.

RUDY
You need to take that bitch in hand.

XAVIER
You're talking about my wife.

RUDY
She's blazing a trail of tears while you follow behind mopping up.

XAVIER
Big mouth for a robotics nerd.

RUDY
Matches the rest of me, salsa prince.

Xavier assesses Rudy's family, his machismo enflamed but:

XAVIER
I bet your kids have eaten my salsa.

Xavier smiles amiably and moves on.

Suriya and their children – athletic TYLER (16) and his statuesque twin sister JASMINE (16) – witness this.

TYLER
 (defusing the tension)
 SO - we're here. I'll get your bags.

SURIYA
 The porters will get them, honey.

But Tyler gamely shoulders the ladies' extra bags. Suriya's pride shines from her.

Rudy spots the cart of Gucci bags sitting unattended.

RUDY
 Good man. Take them inside. I'll join you in a moment.

CUT TO:

EXT. URITSKY'S GARAGE, SPATSIZI - THAT MORNING

A shabby garage circa 1950s. Two gas pumps. Rusted sign with broken neon. No customers waiting.

INSIDE

Jammed with parts and tools. A lift. Walls plastered with vintage car ads, travel posters and Playboy centerfolds.

Legs in greasy overalls jut from beneath a late-model Chevy. A stout LOCAL WOMAN judges a buxom poster girl.

LOCAL WOMAN
 These don't belong in a place of business, Gimp.

Strapping ELIJAH "The Gimp" URITSKY (early 30s, scruffy with a goatee) slides from beneath the car.

ELIJAH
 Only rivals, misfits and malcontents call me Gimp. Which one are you?

LOCAL WOMAN
 Women tire of objectification.

Elijah slowly stands, solid muscle in overalls and a painted-on tank top. He wipes his hands on a rag, then loudly opens a trash can and drops it in.

ELIJAH

Consider your complaint filed. Repairs are two grand plus lunch.

GRACE (O.S.)

It's the frenzel valve, isn't it.

Elijah regards Grace and her plate of scones.

ELIJAH

These V-6 Chevies have the worst frenzel valves in the business.

WOMAN

I've heard the salacious things you do at her tavern, Gimp. You need my business. \$500 and a muffin.

ELIJAH

The next garage is right at the corner, 200 klicks up the two-track and another seventy to Prince George. OR, you could takes your chances at the Scamakounst reservation.

The woman blanches at his suggestion.

ELIJAH

Two grand plus lunch: salmon on rye, an old pickle - and I'll take that muffin.

The woman acquiesces and stomps out.

GRACE

Transmission..?

ELIJAH

-- Yeah, it's totally shot.

INT. URITSKY'S GARAGE, OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Elijah limps into the office. Grace follows.

ELIJAH

Close the door.

Grace does.

GRACE

I brought you these scones. Fresh
outta the oven.

ELIJAH

And me fresh out of clotted cream.

Elijah unfastens the straps of his overalls and drops them to his hips. Firm abs peek suggestively between tank top and boxers.

GRACE

Nice Hanes.

ELIJAH

Cool, cheap and roomy. Lets the boys
breath, you know?

Elijah shoves the overalls to his ankles. A prosthesis replaces his leg below his left knee. He removes it and its protective sock, revealing a smooth stump.

Grace covertly appreciates his assets as she examines the items on his desk.

GRACE

A "Boobs-a-Day" calendar? Anyone
ever suggest you need a decorator?

ELIJAH

Lately?

Elijah applies talcum powder to the stump.

ELIJAH

My old limb was on its last leg as
it were. I just got Chief here.

GRACE

Chief Abitibi must roll in his grave,
knowing you named your leg after
him.

ELIJAH

He dynamited my leg and Jake's hand
— it seemed fitting. Funny though, I
didn't even order the fuckin' thing.

GRACE

It didn't just arrive unordered.

ELIJAH

Maybe Veterans Affairs screwed up –
some Newfie in Halifax is prob'ly
whittlin' a cedar peg as we speak.

GRACE

At least it has a serial number for
your next order.

Grace touches the seven numbers on the prosthesis as he refits
it. Her fingers linger.

Elijah enjoys her attention – her closeness – but he dresses
quickly and selects a scone. Takes a big bite.

GRACE

Chief had explosives? Why?

ELIJAH

(chewing)
Men like to blow up things, right?
Damned Abitibis 'specially.

GRACE

Growing up, I always thought there
was more to Spatsizi than fishing
boats and fir trees. You?

He sidesteps the question with a burp. Grace checks a text.

GRACE

FedEx notification? Nobody sends me
a FedEx – ever.

ELIJAH

You wanna play Scrabble tonight –
late, after dinner?

GRACE

I have work for you tonight.

ELIJAH

(hoping against hope)
Shocks, struts or spark plugs?

GRACE

Tourists. Buffy and Suzie. 7:00 p.m.

ELIJAH

Huh. Okay then – guess I better
give'er to that Chevy.

He drops the scone into a trash can and heads to the garage.

EXT. SPATSIZI DOCKS - LATER

A float plane roars over Spatsizi's crumbling waterfront. It banks around, escaping the fjord toward the sea.

Fishing boats and pleasure craft crowd an ugly concrete quay, where the colorful hut of Abitibi Charters lends a shock of vibrancy. A dock juts between two Abitibi vessels.

A scruffy rogue (20) whittles with a thin filleting knife beside the hut. He clamps a piece of wood in a CLAW where his right hand should be.

He studies Sasha and the mayor as they stroll toward him, arms linked. They greet fishermen congenially.

MAYOR BLASHILL

You could have inspected the port yourself.

SASHA

And miss a walk with a charming man?
Besides, constituents long to see a leader amid the chaos of preparations.

MAYOR BLASHILL

But as my deputy --

SASHA

-- I believe the *Pacific Swan* will dock there, will it not?

MAYOR BLASHILL

Yes. That horrid freighter quay.

SASHA

A little bunting, the school band...

The Claw places a sharpening stone in his claw. The knife grates across its rough surface.

MAYOR BLASHILL (O.S.)

How did you manage to get the *Pacific Swan* to change its itinerary?

SASHA

Relationships, finesse -- what flower is in your corsage? It's lovely!

Patch wheels a hand cart up the Abitibi docks as The Claw sharpens his knife with cold, grating strokes.

PATCH

So, I... I put yer pop and grub on the counter and the two-fours on the floor, right?

The Claw acknowledges Patch's work without comment.

PATCH

So I got a client from Grace tomorrow, some rich tool from the ship. You get, you know, any work from her?

JACOB "The Claw" ABITIBI fixes his feral eyes on Patch.

JACOB

I'll have my hand full with charters. Besides, mate - it's easier for Gracie to sell a patch than a claw.

INT. POST OFFICE - LATE MORNING

A converted log cabin serves as Canada Post and bait shop. Beer coolers. Wood-burning stove. Racks of munchies and fishing lures. Tubs of bait. One counter. One CLERK.

A muted TV flickers on the wall, drawing the clerk's gaze.

Grace enters in a rush, but pauses at the TV.

GRACE

Hey, Fran. Has FedEx gone out yet?

CLERK

Sorry, Gracie. FedEx left an hour ago. Gettin' a jump on deliveries.

GRACE

Crap. I thought I'd catch her.

CLERK

It seem odd to you? *Pacific Swan's* unscheduled stop here?

GRACE

I'll be glad to see the back of her.

CLERK

You always been off in the weeds,
hon. You got something against rich
folks leaving a few loonies in
Spatsizi?

GRACE

Too many rich folks in one place is
never good for townies like us.

CLERK

Hmmph. Well, must be important to
someone. Mayor increased security on
the dock, and in town --

GRACE

-- Wait... increased security? When?
What for --

CLERK

-- Now. Today. So your rich folks
get their special privilege. I'll
take their money...

But Grace has left the building.

CLERK

Off in the weeds, that one.

EXT. WAREHOUSE, ORLANDO - THAT AFTERNOON

A FedEx MANAGER (30s, tan and solemn) greets Fedex Man beneath
a palm tree with a hand to his heart.

MANAGER

As-salaam 'alaykum.

FEDEX MAN

And you. Is the shipment ready?

INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE

A high-roof van with FedEx Express livery sits in the bare
space. FedEx Man strides to it. The Manager trails behind.

MANAGER

Let's synchronize the delivery time.

The Manager hands keys to Fedex Man. Checks his watch.

FEDEX MAN

Are you staying for the fireworks?

MANAGER

I'm getting out. I have a boat in Tampa... on my mark – three, two, one: mark.

The Manager reaches for the driver's door handle...

MANAGER

You like cigars? I have two top-shelf Montecristo Whites left...

... FedEx Man expertly slits the Manager's throat, careful to avoid the spray of blood. He eases the corpse to the floor.

FedEx Man cuts the pants from the Manager and uses them to clean the blood off the van. Satisfied, he climbs into the van, leaving the carcass in a pile.

He discovers a cigar box on the passenger seat.

FEDEX MAN

Be with Allah, my friend.

FedEx Man drives the van out of the warehouse as blood pools beneath the Manager's body.

EXT. SPATSIZI DOCKS - AFTERNOON

Grace reads a news feed on her iPhone while surreptitiously studying her surroundings. A police officer stands nearby. He winks at her.

She keeps reading.

A boat horn sounds, startling Grace. She sees an Abitibi Charter boat gliding into the fjord – and Jacob waving his claw from the wheel house.

Grace composes a quick text with the voice feature:

GRACE

Going fishing Jake question mark?

She notes a customs AGENT (50s) – a paunchy man in an official uniform – at a loaded cart. The Agent jokes with the police officer, then urges him along.

A text reply dings in. We see it scroll out on screen:

TEXT

Going to dump some chum.

The Agent approaches Grace.

TEXT

You ain't there to catch fish, are you, Gracie...

Grace quickly pockets the iPhone. Addresses the Agent.

AGENT

You are not Baxter McAdams.

GRACE

I'm his representative.

AGENT

I can't release --

GRACE

-- "There are wheels within wheels
in the village, and fires within
fires!"

The Agent gives her an appreciative once over.

AGENT

"We burn a hot fire here; it melts
down all concealment."

Grace flashes two gold coins at him. He takes them greedily.

AGENT

You the literary wit of the family?

GRACE

I'm not here to give a book report.

The agent leads her to a loaded cart.

AGENT

Have I seen you in town?

GRACE

I don't get out much.

AGENT

You're out. How about a drink?

GRACE

Let's get this over with.

They stop at the cart. She counts the crates.

AGENT
What's inside?

GRACE
Fishing lures. You're missing two.

AGENT
Really? Wha... hold on, they must be
under that tarp. Let's look.

GRACE
I'll wait here --

AGENT
-- No, help me carry them. Come on.

Grace follows him onto a fishing boat. He leads her to the wheel house. Opens the door for her.

She waits. He waits -- then he precedes her into the cabin.

INT. WHEEL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A control console, instruments, captain's chair and the wheel.
Grace moves about the space.

GRACE
You said there was a tarp..?

The agent locks the door.

GRACE
Baxter expects me back.

AGENT
That's grade-A contraband, missy. I
could take you down, or you could
enjoy a drink and a good time --

GRACE
-- Open that door.

AGENT
An agency helicopter is just a call
away, and that officer has to walk
back this way sometime. I'll catch a
smuggler or ball one -- either way
it's a win-win.

The agent sets a walkie-talkie on the console. Pulls whiskey and two coffee mugs from a cabinet.

Grace glances around desperately. No one outside. The Abitibi charter now miles away.

The agent pours two drinks. Sees her anxiety.

AGENT

So – this has happened before...

The agent hands her a mug – and she throws the whiskey into his eyes. He screams, blinded, as she grabs the bottle and breaks it over his head.

Grace fumbles with the lock. The agent smashes her head into the door, then throws her backward.

The agent stumbles toward her. Grace charges him. The door gives way as they crash into it. Both fly out:

ON THE DECK

They wrestle, but he gains advantage and straddles her. Blood runs down his face.

AGENT

Stupid bitch. You'll rot in prison...

Grace fights. Claws. Reaches for anything.

AGENT

... But first, we're finishing our business.

Her hand finds a wrench. She bashes the agent again and again until he collapses in a heap.

Grace struggles from beneath the agent. Sees the police officer and ducks below the gunwale. Watches him slowly amble past the cart and down the dock.

She assesses the fishing nets hanging above her. Locates and hits a switch – a thick net covers the agent completely.

Grace returns to the wheel house. Grabs the walkie-talkie. Tosses it and the wrench into the water.

Then dashes down the gang plank as fast as she can.

CUT TO:

INT. SWAN EMBARKATION LOUNGE, VANCOUVER - MOMENTS LATER

A spacious and opulent introduction to Swan Cruises. Pine trees and cascading water fake a deep-woods vibe. Plush seating. A vast buffet.

A bar...

VALERIE

... I said ice cold Botanist gin,
two drops of vermouth, two olives.
Do I need to make it myself?

The BARTENDER dumps the martini and makes another. He telegraphs a pained look at waiter HECTOR AQUINO (mid 20s, a dashing Filipino flirt).

Hector takes the cue and moves toward them with a tray of champagne. He flashes Poppy his megawatt smile.

POPPY

Bubbles will get me there.
(with zero subtext)
And I've never had Asian before.

HECTOR

(heard it before)
You'd best check the buffet, miss.
Try the sashimi.

Hector moves into the room, scanning the crowd like a conman looking for a mark. He serves the former Surgeon General and his wife, turns – and nearly runs into Rudy.

HECTOR

My apologies, sir...

RUDY

Watch where you're..!

They pause mid-sentence. A moment hangs between them.

RUDY

No harm done.
(eyeing the name tag)
Hector.

Suriya talks in Farsi on her iPhone. Jasmine reads *Red Badge of Courage*. Tyler plays golf on his iPad – but quickly stands as his father approaches.

Rudy hands the embarkation documents to Tyler with one ear to Suriya's conversation.

RUDY

I need to make sure my cargo was loaded. Get your mother and sister onboard ASAP.

TYLER

Can't I come with you?

RUDY

No – is she talking to her brother?

TYLER

Yes, sir. Did you know Nana is leaving Tehran? She's at the airport now.

RUDY

(containing his anger)

That idiot... Abdullah knows better than to stir up the family.

TYLER

He's worried, y'know? Iran could be bombed tomorrow.

Rudy scans the room.

RUDY

You'll be safe on board, son.

Rudy hurries off, avoiding Hector as the waiter approaches.

HECTOR

Refreshments, anyone?

JASMINE

Fruit juice for me and my mom.

Tyler slips cash to Hector, who colors some champagne with juice and hands it him. Jasmine sees their transaction.

HECTOR

This isn't your first rodeo.

TYLER

Hardly. Yours?

HECTOR

First on *Pacific Swan*, sir.

TYLER

Any idea why we're stopping at Spatsizi? It sounds like a shit hole.

HECTOR

Great hiking, wildlife, indigenous artists – or so I'm told. I'll see you on board, sir.

JASMINE

(sotto voce)

Are you drinking? Mom will kill you.

TYLER

Do your homework, bookworm. I'm here for a good time.

He wanders to the window. Examines the *Pacific Swan*. Sees his father on the dock speaking with a black man in a uniform.

Tyler studies the crowd. Sees Poppy, smiles – and she undresses him with wanton eyes. Tyler blushes.

XAVIER (O.S.)

Beautiful, isn't she?

Xavier joins Tyler. Gazes out at *Pacific Swan*.

TYLER

The ship...?

XAVIER

-- My daughter. Worldly, experienced, much like you.

TYLER

(unsure)

Sure...

Something changes in the room. The cacophony quiets. Clumps of passengers gather near TV monitors.

A "Special Report" rises over the uneasy crowd...

TV ANNOUNCER

-- The Defense Department confirms that Russia has moved troops and warplanes into Iran at the request of Tehran – within striking range of American forces in the Gulf...

TYLER

What a shitty time for a cruise.

XAVIER

Or, perhaps, the best time ever.

AT THE LOUNGE BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Hector assesses the crowd's mood as the bartender refills his tray. A man squeezes his shoulder.

RUDY

I would love some of your champagne...
 (tapping his name tag)
 ... Hector Aquino. Is it available?

HECTOR

Day and night, sir. The news certainly
 hasn't dampened your mood.

RUDY

War is a means to an end, Hector -
 as long as you're on the right end.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEHIND STORMY'S TAVERN, SPATSIZI - AFTERNOON

A gravel alley separates the tavern from the sheer rock outcrop behind it. Dim. Private. A place for nefarious deeds.

A beat-up pickup speeds into the alley and skids to a stop on a concrete pad beside a service door.

INSIDE THE PICKUP

Grace grips the wheel. Sounds echo in her head: men laughing; glass breaking; a woman screaming. And the agent...

AGENT (V.O.)

So - this has happened before...

The thud of a wrench on bone, the feeling... and tears come.

GRACE (O.S.)

(inside her head)
 He deserved it. They all deserve it.

Grace pounds the wheel in anger. Wipes her eyes. Sees blood on her forehead in the rear view mirror.

GRACE

Damn it...

Grace ties a bandana around her head. Exits the pickup...

OUTSIDE THE PICKUP - MOMENTS LATER

PATCH (O.S.)
Heya, Gracie..!

GRACE
-- JESUS ON A CRACKER, Patch?! What
are you doing here??

PATCH
Delivering cupcakes.

He holds up a bakery box.

PATCH
Um... you said last week you wanted
them today? I saw you drive in, so --
Grace, what happened?

Patch reaches for the bandana. She backs away.

GRACE
Nothing. I, I fell --

PATCH
-- Who did this to you? I'll kill
'em with my bare hands --

GRACE
-- Just LEAVE IT, Patch!

Patch steps back, hurt, but holds his ground.

PATCH
I'm helping you unload --

GRACE
-- I can unload a damn truck --

PATCH
-- Just let me do this for you.

Patch yanks open the tailgate. Sets down the bakery box and
and pulls down the first crate.

With trepidation, Grace unlocks the back of the tavern.

GRACE
Stack them in there.

INT. TAVERN STOREROOM - LATER

Concrete floor. Exposed joists. Booze, canned goods and other staples pack rows of shelves. Stairs lead up beside a stack of furniture – and a fine breakfront hutch.

Patch sets the last crate beside a dozen others. He assesses the shelves.

PATCH

(anxious)

You gals are ready for anything.
What's in these things?

GRACE

I've got it from here, Patch. Thanks.

PATCH

Okay, um... look, you know I'm here
for ya, right? For whatever... not
just, you know, business.

GRACE

I know. I do.

Patch kicks at the cement with his boot.

GRACE

It's the solstice and all. Stop for
a drink tonight if you're not busy.

PATCH

Hell, I'm never busy. I'll do that.

Buoyed up by her invitation, Patch retrieves the bakery box.

PATCH

Where should I..?

GRACE

-- Hide them under the bar. Thanks.

PATCH

Sure, um... hope you liked the scones.
Made 'em myself...

GRACE

-- On that shelf by the cocktail
books. Thanks, Patch.

Patch accepts that and bounds up the stairs.

Grace waits, then locks the exterior door. She puts her weight against the breakfront hutch – and it slides aside, revealing stairs leading downward.

Grace snaps on a light. Drags a crate to the stairway.

INT. ABITIBI HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

A stag's head commands one end of the space. Maple cabinets carved with woodland creatures. Granite counters. A spacious, tasteful room, at once cosy and malevolent.

Sasha – in a fanciful apron – pulls steaks from a package and seasons them on a plate. Blood pools beneath them.

Natalie slices tomatoes beside Sasha, a glacial chill between them.

The telephone rings. Then, again. And again...

SASHA

Natalie, my hands are filthy.

Natalie answers the cordless phone with some attitude.

NATALIE

Hello? Oh, hi Ms. Blashill – what..?

Oh, gosh – hold on.

(covering the phone)

Mother: it's Eva Blashill. She

expected the mayor home hours ago...

Sasha rinses her hands. Takes the phone into the next room.

Jacob bursts in with a case of beer. Thuds it onto the counter. Rips it open with his claw.

JACOB

Hey, sis. I thought I had the dragon lady to myself.

NATALIE

Hockey practice is late tonight –

Jake, what is all over your shirt!?

Crimson spots stain his shirt.

JACOB

Gutting a salmon. It flopped a lot.

NATALIE

Just give it to me.

Jacob shucks it, revealing a taut torso and indigenous tattoos. She takes his shirt into the laundry room as Jacob opens a beer with his claw.

JACOB

I should skate with you tonight. You could use a man on the ice.

NATALIE (O.S.)

As if. I haven't found a man yet who could keep up with me.

JACOB

Or one who gave two shits about you.

Natalie throws a t-shirt at Jacob's face and twists his nipple.

JACOB

Ow! Don't spill the beer!

NATALIE

Two beers max if you want to skate with us. And put something on – you'll scare dinner.

Sasha enters and hangs up the phone.

SASHA

The mayor was inspecting the town's preparations, but has disappeared.

NATALIE

Did you send for the RCMP?

SASHA

Of course, but why bother? Able-bodied men vanish from this town constantly.

Jacob dons the t-shirt, careful not to snag his claw.

SASHA

He's probably at the tavern.

NATALIE

Not just men. Grace's mom went to the grocery and never returned.

SASHA

No doubt fleeing Baxter McAdams.

NATALIE

Baxter has his problems, but he's a fine man.

JACOB

Maybe she stumbled on the key to all things Spatsizi – the disappearances, the crappy weather, the ugly women – and just offed herself.

NATALIE

You know she didn't --

SASHA

-- The McAdams are greenhorns – not a founding family as we are.

JACOB

Baxter *is* third generation --

NATALIE

-- So, mother, who runs the place while the mayor is missing?

Sasha turns the steaks on the plate. Blood drips.

SASHA

Our ancestors immigrated from Russia and mixed with strong aboriginal stock. They became trappers. Lumbermen. Merchants. They built Spatsizi from nothing and will rebuild it when it becomes nothing.

NATALIE

Grace is my friend --

SASHA

-- That woman is not an Abitibi! She is not your future --

NATALIE

-- I'm gonna start the Weber. Jake – keep me company?

SASHA

Jacob: finish the salad for me.

Jacob takes a swig from his beer. Then picks up the knife with his claw and begins slicing tomatoes.

INT. TAVERN BUNKER - LATER

Grace bumps the last crate down the stairs through a steel doorway – and into a concrete bunker beneath the tavern.

It's spartan: several twin beds, a sitting area, a rudimentary toilet. Shelves fully stocked with tools, water and necessities – a survivalist space.

Grace drags the final crate beside the others. She examines their markings. One prominent stamp says, "Property of the U.S. Army."

She grabs a crowbar from a tool bench, pries the lid off one of the crates – and stares at its contents...

Two dozen semi-automatic revolvers.

This surprises her. She does a mental inventory. Examines one closely. Then loads it, tucks it beneath her shirt and exits, sealing the steel door behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. PACIFIC SWAN, THEATER - LATER

A massive crystal chandelier hangs above the stepped tiers of plush sofas and marble-topped tables.

There is a buzz of expectation as passengers participate in an evacuation drill. Lenox conducts it with the help of other CREW MEMBERS.

LENOX

Once it's around your neck, clip the front, and...

Hector adjusts young Jasmine's life vest.

JASMINE

You said this is your first time on *Pacific Swan*. Where were you before?

HECTOR

Middle East, Mediterranean – I'm an international man of mystery.

He moves to her twin brother, Tyler. Checks his life jacket.

HECTOR

Basel in the Sapphire Lounge will keep you fueled, and I can get you anything with proper motivation: alcohol, Ecstasy – a good lay...

TYLER

-- Just chocolates for my sister, bath salts for mom, and a bottle of Whistle Pig rye. Suite 720.

Tyler tries to slip Hector a \$100, but Rudy appears and takes the money from him.

RUDY

Delivery before payment, son.

TYLER

Dad! I... I'm --

RUDY

-- entitled to a good time. Help your mother, eh?

He does. Hector checks Rudy's life jacket.

HECTOR

It will be the best time of his young life, sir... and yours, I expect.

Rudy slips the \$100 into Hector's shirt pocket. His fingers linger there for a moment.

HECTOR

Suite 720, was it?

Hector moves to a buxom woman and Rudy watches him. He notices the bespectacled husband ogling the buxom woman – and his suburban wife Amanda watching her husband.

TYLER

She watches him watch her.

RUDY

Your situational awareness is improving.

TYLER

I saw you with that Asian waiter.

RUDY

He's Filipino. And what you saw was
a business transaction. Make contacts
wherever you go, son. You're dead
without them.

VALERIE (O.S.)

I'M NOT PUTTING ON
THAT RANCID VEST!

XAVIER (O.S.)

You're infringing on her
civil liberties...

Tyler notes Xavier and Valerie as they fight with Lenox – and then locks eyes with Poppy. She flirts openly with him. He nods to her, suddenly very warm.

Suriya hugs Tyler and Jasmine.

SURIYA

We are not those people, my loves.
Always remember that.

AT THE FIGHT

Valerie shoves the life preserver into Lenox's face.

VALERIE

I am above this charade!

Lenox rams it into her arms with force. Xavier steps forward and Lenox halts him with a gesture.

LENOX

The ocean doesn't care about you or
your bank balance or what you think
makes you better than everyone else
in this room – it will kill you.
Take my word for it.

XAVIER

I'll have you fired --

LENOX

-- I'll throw you off this ship or
into the brig. Your choice – sir.

Lenox focuses his glare on Valerie. She dons her life vest with livid revulsion.

The battle won, Lenox scans the crowd. Sees something amiss and strides to... Hector.

LENOX
Come with me, mate.

Lenox leads Hector to a crew-only area.

LENOX
Turn out your pockets.

HECTOR
Is this really necessary?

LENOX
I saw you take that money. What's
your game, eh? Favors for cash?

HECTOR
Free enterprise among the very people
who invented it.

LENOX
(surprised)
You don't even deny it?

HECTOR
I would never deny the chance, sir –
of sharing the wealth...

Hector sets a wad of cash on a counter. He raises an eyebrow
– a question – then leaves Lenox where he stands.

EXT. VANCOUVER HARBOR - LATER

Civilization falls away behind the *Pacific Swan* as it glides
beneath the Lions Gate Bridge and toward the ocean.

From the Prospect Point Lookout, a woman watches the *Pacific
Swan* through binoculars.

CUT TO:

INT. GRACE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - EVENING

Grace wipes the steamy mirror and examines the red welts on
her body – and the gash and bruise on her forehead.

She rummages a drawer for make-up. Finds a bottle of
foundation. Dabs at her wound.

EXT. TAVERN PORCH - LATER

Baxter sips whiskey in a rocker. A bottle and two glasses catch the warm solstice light on a rustic coffee table.

Grace steps from the tavern with a cupcake. A lit candle pokes from it.

She looks at her placid father, the neat porch, the idyllic view. She forces a smile...

GRACE
The longest day, eh?

BAXTER
And the long slide into oblivion.

GRACE
Winter is dark and depressing, but I wouldn't call it oblivion.

Grace sets the cupcake on the table.

GRACE
It's Black Forest. Your favorite.

BAXTER
I said no celebration.

GRACE
Okay then - let it burn.

Grace drops a wrapped gift beside the cupcake. Picks up the whiskey bottle.

GRACE
You're avoiding your birthday with a \$1,500 bottle of bourbon?

BAXTER
I'm four times older than that booze.
The symmetry appealed to me.

Grace fills their glasses. Savors the whiskey. The calm.

Baxter blows out the candle. Picks up the present.

BAXTER
Are the guests settled?

GRACE

Suite 103. They ordered a bottle of cabernet to get "right" for their assignation. The Kim sisters are playing Scrabble at the bar.

Baxter unwraps a wool scarf. Wraps it around his neck.

BAXTER

Burberry? I'll look damned studly for my next TimBits and double double.

GRACE

You could wear it to Mass.

Baxter breaks off half of the cupcake. Takes a bite.

BAXTER

This is okay. Help me with it.

Grace gamely picks up her half.

GRACE

Dad, are we going to survive this --

BAXTER

-- How'd the pick up go at the dock?

GRACE

Sorry?

BAXTER

That customs guy can be an asshole.

GRACE

I put it all in the bunker.

She picks at the cupcake.

BAXTER

Give me that before you worry it to crumbs. It was probably expensive.

Grace hands it to him. Sits on the railing. Fidgets.

Patch walks up the steps. Pressed shirt and jeans. Fresh haircut. He made an effort.

PATCH

Heya, um - great night, eh?

BAXTER

Grace just asked if we're going to survive this.

PATCH

Survive what now?

GRACE

Pour yourself a drink, Patch.

Patch fills a glass. Takes a large swallow. Tries to assess Grace's forehead – concerned – but she turns away. Adjusts her bangs in front of it.

Patch paces. Looks out at the town. Sips his whiskey. Paces.

GRACE

It's Dad's birthday today.

PATCH

Yeah? Well... geez, that's great!
Here's to many more, Bax.

Patch raises his glass. Drinks again. Paces.

BAXTER

Patch, we have chairs --

PATCH

-- Ok, look. Gracie, I, I gotta say this quick. We've know each other for years, right? Since high school and, and I talked to Baxter and...

Patch gets down on a knee. He opens a ring box.

PATCH

So, it's not the best, but I'll get you another one – eventually...

GRACE

-- Patch. I can't --

BAXTER

-- Gracie, wait --

GRACE

-- And do what, Pa? Huddle with Patch in his room above the grocery?

PATCH

Bax said we could live here --

GRACE

(laughing)

-- You sell yourself in my den of iniquity! What would be left for me once the johns and joans were done with you?

BAXTER

Grace, this lets Patch move on --

GRACE

-- Until we needed the money, right? And jumping into marriage now, with the world falling apart?

PATCH

I don't hustle 'cause I enjoy it.

GRACE

Patch, I love you. You've always been here for us. For me.

Patch slams back his whiskey.

GRACE

Patch, please understand --

PATCH

-- No, I, I get it. I'm damaged goods like every guy in this town. No prospects, a damn crater for an eye --

Patch stomps down the stairs and strides away.

BAXTER

I didn't raise you to be cruel.

GRACE

I wouldn't be on my back for money, would I -- just babies and baked goods.

Baxter pulls himself to his feet with effort. Shoves away Grace's helping hands. Turns to leave...

GRACE

We need to talk --

BAXTER

-- Someone, someday, will ignore his flaws and history and will marry him because he's a good man --

GRACE

-- I don't need some man to be happy.

BAXTER

You wanna know how we'll survive,
Gracie? Sixty years of struggle and
pain and loneliness taught me that
men will be men, women will be women,
the sun will rise and fall and the
world will burn. We'll still need to
live on this damn rock and doing it
with someone you love is better than
doing it alone --

GRACE

-- I'm living with someone I love.

Baxter pauses. He touches the Burberry scarf.

GRACE

Have you ever smuggled guns before?

BAXTER

We never needed them before.

And he shuffles into the tavern.

INT. ABITIBI HOUSE - THAT EVENING

Elijah enters the Victorian foyer. Goatee trimmed, hair slicked
back, tight dress shirt and chinos - he looks good.

He moves into the paneled dining room where Sasha, Jacob and
Natalie are just sitting for dinner.

NATALIE

Eli!

She gives Elijah a big hug that he returns warmly. Jacob toasts
the air with a beer.

JACOB

How is my favorite half-step-brother?

NATALIE

Jake, must you start...

ELIJAH

Just ducky, Jake. I'm sure you're
ready to hook, net and fillet the
monied hordes.

JACOB

I don't suppose anyone's going to leave *Pacific Swan* for a brake job.

ELIJAH

I have plenty of work --

SASHA

-- Sit. I am so glad we could share a family meal before the coming chaos.

Elijah sits across from Natalie. She urges him to behave.

NATALIE

Jake and I are skating tonight.

JACOB

You wanna join, Gimpy?

ELIJAH

You want another hook, Captain?

A hit below the belt. Jacob guzzles his beer.

SASHA

Boys...

JACOB

Elijah can't join us, Nat. I bet he has a more pressing engagement.

ELIJAH

I bet you'll finish that two-four, or pass out trying...

Jacob lunges at Elijah. Their grappling knocks over chairs. Scatters china. The chandelier swings wildly.

NATALIE

Stop it - BOTH OF YOU!

Jacob tears Elijah's shirt with his claw. Elijah slams him against the wall. Raises a fist...

... Then, A CARVING KNIFE embeds into the wall between them.

SASHA

(icily calm)

I do not invite animals to my table.

She yanks the knife from the wall.

SASHA

And I never miss an easy target.
Now, *sit*.

They sit as commanded. Sasha replaces her napkin on her lap.

SASHA

We are all Abitibis by blood or marriage and we will rise up as a family. War is coming and so is *Pacific Swan* and we will feast on her, picking the bones of whomever and whatever remains.

ELIJAH

You're not the boss of me --

SASHA

-- I hold the note on your gas station, dear, and Madam McAdams has the deed on your johnson so you're not the boss of much of anything. Natalie, please say grace...

The doorbell rings. Natalie warns both Elijah and Jacob with a look and answers the door. Elijah simmers. Jacob grins smugly. Sasha sips her wine.

Natalie returns with an RCMP CONSTABLE.

CONSTABLE

Ma'am. Sorry to intrude --

SASHA

-- Any word, officer?

CONSTABLE

The mayor was last seen on the pier. We're putting divers in the water, but something else --

ELIJAH

-- More important than the mayor?

CONSTABLE

A customs agent, beaten unconscious -- and we found two crates of guns, so maybe he stumbled on some smugglers? Your charter hut is near the scene. I was wondering if anyone there saw something?

SASHA

Jacob?

Jacob shakes his head. Takes a calm swig of his beer.

SASHA

Bring the guns here. Keep the divers on land and concentrate on the customs agent. Keep me informed.

CONSTABLE

But – what about the mayor..?

SASHA

-- You know you're way out, constable.

The constable departs.

SASHA

Well, that gives us something else to pray about. Natalie?

EXT. THE FJORD - THAT EVENING

As the sun glows on the longest day of the year, the mayor's corsage rises to the surface of the fjord.

EXT. STORMY'S TAVERN & GUESTHOUSE - THAT NIGHT

Grace studies the Scrabble board on the bar. The porch door squeaks open and Elijah plods in.

GRACE

(all business)

Prompt as always. Your shirt is torn.

ELIJAH

I snagged it on a hook at Abitibi Manor.

GRACE

You need a drink?

ELIJAH

I should fluff the pillows first.

GRACE

Room 103. You're going up like that?

ELIJAH

I'll improvise – are you okay?

Gracie nods, but spells out the word "RAW" on the Scrabble board. Elijah grabs a handful of tiles from the bag and evaluates them.

ELIJAH

You have an "f" I can borrow?

She does and hands it to him. He adds a "D" to the beginning of "RAW" and spells out "DEFIANT".

ELIJAH

Triple word, Grace. Never set me up.

Elijah moves to squeeze her hand, but she yanks it away. Surprised, Elijah heads to the stairs.

GRACE

Elijah, wait...

He waits – as if world peace depends on it.

GRACE

Is respect too much to hope for?

ELIJAH

You're asking the wrong guy, Gracie.

INT. TAVERN HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Elijah stands in front of Room 103. He examines the tear Jacob made in his shirt, then rips it more. Tousles his hair.

He rolls up his left pant leg. Removes his prosthetic and drops it beside the door. Knocks...

The door flies open. A pair of rotund WOMEN gape at him.

ELIJAH

So, I'm looking for some ladies who could lay hands on an injured man?

The women squeal with delight and pull him into the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT, ORLANDO - DUSK

A FedEx van drives past a sign that reads, "Disney's Contemporary Resort" and stops at a security hut. The GUARD steps out. FedEx Man rolls down his window.

GUARD

Kinda late for deliveries.

FEDEX MAN

Just finished a rough day. Any chance
I could park for a quick breather?

GUARD

Yeah, back of the lot. Stay for the
fireworks if you have time.

FEDEX MAN

Much appreciated. Thanks.

MOMENTS LATER

FedEx Man parks at a spot facing Cinderella's Castle. Families
sit beside the lake. A Disney VENDOR hands out balloons.

FedEx Man stretches. Pulls the cigar box from the front seat.
Lights a Montecristo and savors its pungent flavor.

INT. PACIFIC SWAN, SAPPHIRE LOUNGE - DUSK

A sapphire spectacle of crystal, leather and wood. Bold flower
arrangements. Revolving dance floor. Intimate banquettes in
which to see and be seen.

Passengers preen in their finery and embrace the night with
hedonistic abandon. Champagne corks pop. Swingers flirt. And
the one-percent flaunt their wealth.

Patrons admire Suriya and Jasmine as they sip rose water from
a prominent banquette. Suriya keeps tabs on Valerie, holding
court nearby...

VALERIE

... And I said, "how can you fools
be so stupid as to drop all of our
vintage Gucci bags into the harbor?"
Damned foreigners... WAITER!

Amanda - the suburban housewife, elegant in off-the-rack -
arrives unnoticed with her gender-neutral daughter LILY (14).

VALERIE

(seeing them)
God - look at this place. Not only
camel herders but eunuchs too --

LILY
 (to Valerie)
 And twats in Donna Karan. You were
 right, mother... nothing makes a
 bigot look good.

Lily pulls Amanda to Suriya's table without a thought.

LILY
 Excuse me, but may we join you?

SURIYA
 Oh, would you, please?

Suriya makes room for Amanda. Lily and Jasmine dive into gossip like old friends.

AMANDA
 That woman is awful. Sorry to butt
 in, hon.

SURIYA
 Don't be. And I am terrible at meeting
 people. This is perfect.

AMANDA
 Is your husband out and about, too?

SURIYA
 Yes, the men are always somewhere
 else, are they not? If there is a
 casino, Rudy will be the first at
 the table. And my son, Tyler, he's
 my explorer – always checking out
 the scene... I'm talking like someone
 pulled a string from my back...

AMANDA
 No worries. I'll flap my gums plenty.
 My man's gettin' a beer and a belt
 at the bar. It's been a coon's age
 since we had a vacation – that's
 him, in the specs.

Her husband GREG (30s), in a smart dinner jacket, flirts with
 an elegant woman at the bar. She laughs, he laughs, she
 smoothes his lapel...

AMANDA
 (embarrassed)
 Sooo, is there a wine menu?

LILY
(to Jasmine)
Do you want to dance?

JASMINE
Should we? I mean...

LILY
Who cares? This is our cruise too.

They head to the dance floor, laughing.

Across the room, young Tyler – handsome in a blue velvet blazer – squeezes to the bar. The BARTENDER assesses him.

TYLER
Hector Aquino said to see you. I'm
Tyler Jackson.

BARTENDER
Indeed. Do you trust me?

TYLER
I suppose so...

The bartender serves Tyler a Manhattan and gets a good tip. Tyler watches his sister dance with Lily... his mother chat with Amanda... Poppy leer at him in a skimpy dress...

Or is she? Tyler glances over his shoulder as Poppy sidles up to him.

POPPY
Inferiority complexes are so boring.

TYLER
I don't have... I just --

Poppy whispers something in Tyler's ear, then slinks toward the exit. Tyler slams his drink and follows her.

INT. PACIFIC SWAN, CASINO - THAT NIGHT

An understated gaming floor. Mahogany and gold tables. DEALERS and SECURITY in teal uniforms. Built for high rollers.

Rudy, Xavier and other PLAYERS duel at a poker table. Rudy pushes chips across the betting line. Xavier watches calmly.

RUDY
(to Xavier)
I call. Is that tuxedo Armani?

XAVIER
Good eye. And, fortunately, not a
whiff of Vancouver Harbor on it.

Xavier lays down kings over sixes.

XAVIER
You won't beat me this time.

And, yet – Rudy does. Xavier pounds the table. Chips jump.

XAVIER
GOD DAMN YOU! You're cheating. The
casino must be helping you!

Rudy shrugs. A security officer urges Xavier from his seat.

RUDY
Big mouth for a poor player. You
should cool off in your suite.

Checking his temper, Xavier raises his hands in surrender.

XAVIER
We're not playing Poker, are we?

RUDY
Life imitates business. One move
begets another. Stakes increase,
positions become tenuous. The best
men withdraw when they're losing --

XAVIER
-- Oh... I still have assets in play.

Security escorts Xavier from the casino. Rudy nods to a WAITER.

RUDY
Talisker, neat – and send a bottle
of Dom Perignon to the Calderon's
suite with my regrets.

PATRON
Hold on... you were cheating?

RUDY

He dishonored me and my family, so revenge was my best recourse. I could have killed him.

(off their horror)

Kidding. You folks, however – I won \$4.8 million from you that I will reimburse to your accounts. I suggest you spend it quickly.

PATRON

What's the hurry?

RUDY

Tomorrow is gonna suck on Wall Street.

EXT. PACIFIC SWAN, SPA DECK - THAT NIGHT

An oasis of hot tubs, cabanas and fountains. Poppy shimmies around a barricade.

TYLER

You're going in there?

POPPY

Don't be such a pussy.

Tyler follows her. She kisses him hungrily and claws open his shirt. He struggles away from her.

TYLER

Wait... I – I've never...

Poppy shrugs off her dress. It drops to her feet.

POPPY

You want this – believe me.

Tyler wants it badly, but hesitates. She pulls him to a day bed. Opens his pants as she kisses him.

A DECK ATTENDANT stands in the shadows. He quietly turns on an iPhone.

TYLER (O.S.)

Stop it... HOLD ON, would you? I need to...

The Deck Attendant focuses on Tyler as Poppy wraps her legs around him. Urges him on with hand and mouth.

TYLER

Wait, I - I got a rubber in my --

POPPY

-- You're safe with me, baby. No one will ever know.

Tyler shucks his blazer and shirt. She squeals victoriously as he takes her. The Deck Attendant smirks.

CUT TO:

EXT. TAVERN PORCH - EVENING

Grace steps to the railing, holding her bourbon close. She takes in the solstice sun, still high in the sky. Pensive.

She notes a fire on the cliff above the city. She shields her eyes for a better look.

ABOVE THE FJORD

Tribeswomen perform a ritual dance around a bonfire. The men watch from the darkness.

Anna Skybear looks down at Spatsizi. A Scamakounst WOMAN (20s) joins her.

WOMAN

Another of the breed stock died today. We only have a half dozen left.

ANNA SKYBEAR

Ease your mind, maiden. A great harvest is nigh.

INT. PACIFIC SWAN, BRIDGE - THAT NIGHT

Lenox scans the horizon with a pair of binoculars. A PILOT and JUNIOR OFFICERS watch their instruments.

LENOX

Steady as you go, mister.

Lenox sips a cup of tea. Hears something he can't identify. Listening, he approaches one of the juniors.

LENOX

Bloody hell, what is that?

JUNIOR OFFICER

Sorry, sir. It's just -- the news
isn't good --

LENOX

-- We're in the Inside Passage, mate.
Put that away and pay attention.

The Junior Officer pockets an iPhone. Lenox stares out the window. Chews on his lip.

LENOX

What's new in the news, mister?

JUNIOR OFFICER

America is scrambling its submarines.
China is testing the U.S. Pacific
Fleet with drones.

LENOX

Men being men -- not having learned
shite about anything.

He pulls a small metal amulet on a chain from beneath his shirt and rubs it between his fingers.

LENOX

Whatever happens, our first priority
is the safety of the 1,000 souls on
this ship. I know you mates all have
family. I did...
(remembering)
Once. For now, we're all we've got.

CUT TO:

INT. STORMY'S TAVERN - THAT NIGHT

Grace lowers shades and double-checks door locks. She pauses to look at the solstice glow... and sees a police car cruise slowly past the tavern.

She watches it. Then carefully pulls down the shade.

INT. TAVERN HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Grace stops outside Room 103. Listens to the rhythmic creak of a bed, the grunts and giggles -- Elijah at work.

She picks up Elijah's prosthetic and gently leans it against the wall before continuing to:

INT. GRACE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Grace shuffles into her studio apartment, warmly furnished with local art and family photos. An Eames chair and ottoman sit by the wood-burning stove. A replica of Calder's "Flamingo" sculpture sits on a book shelf.

She walks past a large photo of the Chicago skyline and drops her keys on the kitchenette's butcher block countertop.

Grace pulls the gun from beneath her shirt, sets it on the nightstand beside the queen bed – and sees it:

A FedEx envelope, sitting on the bed's indigenous quilt.

Grace picks it up... feather light. Reads the label.

GRACE

Vancouver?

She opens it and removes a single postcard: a photo of the Lions Gate Bridge in Vancouver. She turns it over.

CLOSE ON the card – no note, no postal cancellation. Just an alphanumeric string in permanent marker: III 42403.

GRACE

What the hell?

She runs her finger over the Swan Cruises logo in the corner.

INT. TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

Grace hurries down the stairs to the main tavern room. To the door leading to the cellar. She opens it...

A light is on. Someone is down there.

INT. TAVERN STOREROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grace creeps down the stairs. She grabs a broom at the landing and brandishes it as she jumps into the light.

The breakfront hutch stands wide open – and Baxter stands in front of it, leaning on his cane.

BAXTER

You handle that broom as well as you handled Gretzky's stick.

GRACE

Pa, what are you doing? Your back --

BAXTER

-- I discovered this months ago,
Gracie. You're very thorough.

A topographic map fills the back of the hutch. Red marks cover it and various index cards, polaroids, Post-Its and other notes surround it.

BAXTER

It all makes sense now.

GRACE

You know something. Tell me.

BAXTER

Millie said there would be a time
when Spatsizi drew people to it like
pirates to buried treasure.

GRACE

It's just pieces. Symbols,
petroglyphs, coincidences...

Grace pins the postcard beneath a piece of cardboard box with "Swan Industries" stamped on it.

BAXTER

That came today, of all days?

Grace nods. Touches a photo of a woman, taped to one of the breakfront's doors. Wear on the photo suggests she's done this many times.

GRACE

Mom didn't just run away, like you've
told me all these years.

BAXTER

No, she did not.

He takes Grace's hand, and they stare at the puzzle together.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTEMPORARY RESORT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

FedEx Man types a text message.

TEXT

Death to the infidels. Praise to our
Russian allies. God is Great.

He sends it. Checks his watch: a two minute countdown. He places the watch and his iPhone in the cigar box.

A BOY runs past with a Mickey Mouse balloon.

CUT TO:

INT. AN OPULENT HOTEL ROOM - EARLIER THAT MORNING

A flurry of activity. Jasmine packs her books. Tyler slips condoms into his toiletries kit. Suriya directs a VALET.

Rudy sips coffee as he admires Vancouver, stretching to the mountains in front of him. He makes a call.

FEDEX MAN (O.S.)

Yes?

RUDY

Abdullah. It's time.

FEDEX MAN (O.S.)

So soon?

RUDY

I could leave your sister here to survive on whatever's left...

FEDEX MAN (O.S.)

-- NO! No, please - I'll make the delivery as promised.

RUDY

Send the message. Then enjoy your heavenly rewards.

Rudy hangs up. Finishes his coffee.

SURIYA

The limo is outside. Who was that?

RUDY

Nobody important. Let's get to that ship, eh?

INT. VACATION CONDO, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Shaken, the FedEx Man drops the bowl of yogurt in the sink and quickly exits the condo.

CLOSE ON:

The broken bowl and the yogurt oozing toward the drain, then on a framed photo on the counter: Suriya Jackson and her twins, Tyler and Jasmine.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTEMPORARY RESORT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

FedEx Man places his prayer rug beside the van. He kneels and begins to pray.

INSIDE THE VAN

A digital timer counts down on a large mechanical device: eight, seven, six...

Fireworks light up Cinderella's Castle, and the boy lets go of his balloon in his excitement.

He cries out - moments before the blast of a nuclear explosion sears him to ashes.

FADE OUT