

Operation Coldfeet

Written By

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Based on true events

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BLACK SCREEN

SUPER:

"The battle has been fought on an exotic terrain that covers two-thirds of the globe and is in many ways as challenging and dangerous as outer space. As the Cold War unfolded, these giant undersea fleets arguably became more powerful than any weapons on land or in the air, able to destroy whole nations while escaping retaliations."

- Anonymous submariner

FADE IN:

EXT. ARCTIC OCEAN - DAY

USS Nautilus slides through dark waters, deep beneath the ice shelf. Propellers turn in counter-rotating unison.

SUPERIMPOSE: *USS NAUTILUS (SSN-571)* - ARCTIC NUCLEAR  
DETERRENT PATROL - JULY 1962

INT. SONAR ROOM - SAME

A cold gray slot machine-type handle turns.

The ship's CAPTAIN, studious in a clean khaki uniform, storms in with his EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

Two SAILORS in well-worn Navy blue coveralls and black headphones sit at large circular tubed screens.

Black wires spread like spider webs beneath their consoles. Paper strewn about the room.

CAPTAIN

Sonar. We're passive but I hear  
echo-ranging! What the hell's  
going on?

SONARMAN 1

It's not us, Captain. We're  
analyzing. Sounds like someone's  
tracking us.

CAPTAIN

Impossible. There's no one else up  
here.

SONARMAN 2

Don't know how those bastards are  
doin' it, Sir, but they are.

CAPTAIN

(to Executive Officer)

Draft a note to LANTFLT Intel. We  
have a major problem. Tell them if  
they don't figure this out soon  
we're in deep shit.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC - DAY

A dreary day. Light rain pelts a nondescript three-story  
white building. A sign in the front of the building states,  
"NAVAL INTELLIGENCE BUREAU".

INT. NAVAL INTELLIGENCE BUREAU - LUKE'S OFFICE - DAY

A submarine acoustics intelligence analyst in his  
mid-thirties, LUKE MOFFETT, fit, geeky, worn suit, sits  
behind a desk in a cramped one person room. Submarine books  
and papers litter his area.

He reaches in his inbox. Pulls out an orange-bordered  
folder with diagonally-placed words across it which read,  
"TOP SECRET - STRICT NEED TO KNOW INFORMATION".

INSERT - THE INTEL MEMO, which reads:

LUKE (V.O.)

"Apparent attempt to track USS  
Nautilus continually during Arctic  
nuclear patrol transit. Fifth such  
incident involving US Northern  
Nuclear Fleet submarines. Suspect  
Soviet tracking. Source remains  
unknown. Immediate  
countermeasure(s) imperative.  
Threat poses grave danger to Arctic  
sub ops, potentially entire fleet."

BACK TO ROOM

Luke clasps hands and puts them behind his head.

He leans back in the chair and stares at a large chart on  
the wall that shows Soviet North Point (NP) stations in the

Arctic.

A 2x3 photo of his wife and son are taped to the wall next to the map.

LUKE

They did it.

(puts his feet on the desk)

Those fuckers did it. We gotta get in there.

EXT. ARCTIC - NEAR NORTH POSITION BRAVO - DAY

A U.S. Navy Geological Survey airplane on routine patrol.

Cold. Dark gray clouds as thick as chowder. Ice shelves stretch from horizon to horizon.

INT. B-17 FLYING FORTRESS AIRPLANE - SAME

The PILOT and CO-PILOT are at the controls.

Two CREWMEN flip through creased, laminated maps.

They look through large binoculars.

They annotate the location of North Point Station BRAVO with a red grease-marker.

SUPERIMPOSE: *VP-21 BLACK JACKS* - OVER NORTH POINT POSITION BRAVO

A small building stands in the middle of a small ICE SHELF.

PILOT

(in headset)

You got what we need?

Below them waves hit against the island's shelf, precariously close to the station.

CREWMEMBER 1

Yes Sir. Accounted for. We'll notify headquarters once we get back to Resolute.

CREWMEMBER 2

First one we've seen look deserted.

CO-PILOT

Make sure you annotate that in our report.

Engines gather strength and ROAR to life.

Fuselage FLEXES as it makes a slow deliberate turn toward Resolute Bay, Alaska.

INT. NAVAL INTELLIGENCE BUREAU - BOARD ROOM - DAY

The room is panelled in dark red mahogany. Light fixtures house long fluorescent tubes that hang low from the ceiling.

A large oval table is surrounded by silver chairs. A full complement of ANALYSTS that includes Luke sit at the table. Others crowd against the walls in tightly packed chairs.

Cigarette smoke fills the room.

A tan-colored film projector sits on the far end pointed at a yellow stained screen which no doubt has sat through too many coffee, cigarette, and cigar smoke-filled meetings.

Deputy Commander In Charge of Operations, Office of Naval Intelligence ADMIRAL WHITWORTH, salt and pepper hair, physically imposing, immaculate uniform.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

Lieutenant Bowles. What else is on the agenda?

Admiral Whitworth's Executive Assistant LIEUTENANT BOWLES, young, finely ironed Navy khaki uniform, rifles through the morning operations report agenda.

LIEUTENANT BOWLES

Admiral. Mr. Moffett has a special intel topic.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

By all means.  
(to Luke)  
What do you have Luke?

Luke stands up.

Gathers several papers from his black leather folder.

Draws a pointer from his breast pocket and extends it.

Approaches the PROJECTOR SCREEN

Stands confidently next to it.

LUKE

Thank you Admiral. Numerous operational cables, most recently from USS Nautilus, suggest advanced Soviet tracking of our nuclear subs as they make their patrols in the Arctic.

He places his pointer on a red marker at the last reported position of the USS Nautilus.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Our nuclear subs have also been under active prosecution here, here, and here.

Luke's pointer slaps the projector screen at each location.

LUKE (CONT'D)

The Soviets seem to be using their geologic stations, known as North Point Stations, as acoustic intelligence gathering centers. Here are the locations of their NPs overlaid on our submarine routes.

He places an overlay that displays the location of the North Point Stations over the locations of the submarines.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

They're right on top of us. How credible?

LUKE

Very. We also received radio traffic from our B-17s that suggest NP BRAVO has recently been abandoned.

ANALYST 1

Based on what?

LUKE

From our ongoing analysis over the past year--

ANALYST 1

And your assumptions? What level of confidence do you place on this?

(MORE)

ANALYST 1 (CONT'D)

Probable or possible?  
 (smug)  
 Or whatever.

LUKE

I call it analysis. No  
 assumptions. Our level is probable.

The ANALYST is taken aback. Not expecting Luke to bite.

Director, Operational Planning Office, CAPTAIN CHRIS  
 CALDWELL, mid-forties, tall, fit, highly decorated, sits  
 elbow-to-elbow with the Admiral.

CAPTAIN CALDWELL

(to Admiral Whitworth)  
 Admiral, this could be our chance  
 to initiate Operation Coldfeet.

LUKE

Sir. I was getting to that, but  
 that would be our recommendation as  
 well.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

Lots of variables here. The  
 Soviets might still be there, for  
 one, and of course, funding.

ANALYST 2

(to Luke)

Who's going to pay for this?  
 Mobilizing aircraft, analysts,  
 multiple airbase assistance.  
 They'll all need funding...we have  
 budget constraints--

CAPTAIN CALDWELL

Admiral. We have contingency  
 dollars, enough to at least make  
 several more fly-by's. Confirm  
 it's abandoned, land, pick up their  
 gear and head home. If it follows  
 like our CONOP sessions have gone,  
 we can easily get in and get out.

LUKE

The runway looks intact, sir.

Analysts from around the room shake their heads. Jot down  
 notes. Rustle in their chairs. Tension in the room.

## ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

The amount of coordination will be difficult, no doubt. But I believe it's worth it, especially given the threat these stations pose to our sub fleet. I'll talk to Mr. Kelly and the CNO immediately. In the meantime, get our team ready Chris.

## MONTAGE - DISCUSSIONS FOR OPERATION COLDFEET

-- Military officers sit in an elaborate conference room in the Pentagon. Shake their heads. Point in disgust.

-- Analysts in an office. Rub their heads. Frustration all around.

-- Room with navigation charts. Officers in flight suits. Take off glasses. Hand wringing.

BACK TO

EXT. ARTIC - NORTH POINT STATION **BRAVO** - DAY

White powder rolls across the plains. Ice crackles.

The building trembles as frigid Arctic water SLAMS against the exterior walls.

SUPERIMPOSE: SOVIET NORTH POINT STATION BRAVO  
(70.11N/152.30W)

INT. NORTH POINT STATION **BRAVO** - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PRESSURE builds throughout. Crystal clear water OOZES from cracks in the floor.

Tables and chairs teeter. Then topple.

Walls split open to reveal the turbulent weather outside.

Harsh wind blows in the station. Papers whirl about.

LATER...

Water gushes into the air filling the room.



EXT. NORTH POINT STATION **BRAVO** - CONTINUOUS

Abruptly the station SINKS and swallowed by the loud tortuous POUNDING of the sea.

EXT. NEAR NORTH POSITION **BRAVO** - B-17 AIRPLANE - DAY

On routine patrol. U.S. Navy Geological Survey mission. The airplane propellers methodically hum.

Wind blows the clouds steadily across the sky below them.

SUPERIMPOSE: VP-23 SEAHAWKS - NEAR LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF NORTH POINT BRAVO

INT. B-17 - CONTINUOUS

The CREW look through windows. One crewman with binoculars.

The navigator checks and rechecks his charts.

Motions to a Crewman. Points to the charts. They both shake their heads as he draws an "X" on his map with a DRY-ERASE PEN.

CREWMAN

(to headset)

Sir. Looks like another one's sunk.

CREWMAN 2

It's toast.

Pulls on the control stick.

PILOT

Roger that. Let's head back home before we lose anymore daylight.

The aircraft makes a wide and deliberate starboard turn.

INT. ARCTIC - NORTH POINT STATION **SIERRA** - CONTROL ROOM - AFTERNOON

COLD grey metal room. Dim, sterile lighting. Massive computer mainframes stretch along the walls.

Circular and rectangular tubed computer screens illuminate. Russian writing adorns the panels and the computer screens.

Papers and maps on an oval table in the middle of the room.

Maps of the Arctic on the walls show submarine locations.

SUPERIMPOSE: SOVIET NORTH POINT POSITION SIERRA. TWO WEEKS LATER IN THE ARTIC (79.25N/150.44W)

Two SOVIET RESEARCHERS wear thick, dark gray stained coats.

They stumble around the room gathering and shredding paper.

One of them hits the terminal screen with a hammer.

NOTE: THE DIALOGUE IN THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN RUSSIAN AND IS SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 1  
Hit them! Destroy them all!

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2  
I'm trying. Stop yelling!  
Concentrate on shredding.

Papers FALL to the ground.

Glass SHATTERS as the hammer hits the screens.

CRACK. Shards POP in the air.

SLAM. SLAM.

The hammer breaks in two. Flies across the room.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2  
Damn it!

They are in two pieces now.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 1  
What the hell? What did you do  
that for?

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2  
I didn't mean to. Now what do I  
do?

SOVIET RESEARCHER 1  
We don't have time.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2  
Fuck it. We've done enough. Let's  
(MORE)

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2 (CONT'D)

go.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 1  
This place will sink anyway.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2  
Grab your stuff.

They snatch green duffle bags with embossed Soviet lettering that reads, "ARCTIC AND ANTARCTIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE".

INT./EXT. NORTH POINT **SIERRA**

Wind is FIERCE as the door opens.

Papers swirl off the table into the air. Fall to the floor.

EXT. NORTH POSITION **SIERRA** - CONTINUOUS

Cold, bone chilling wind blows them from side to side.

The wind forces them to lean into it forcing them to take smaller steps.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 1  
(yells)  
Don't forget to lock it.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2  
(yells)  
Got it.

It's a shoddy lock. The key slides in but doesn't turn. It remains UNLOCKED.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2  
Head for the ship.

They trudge through a consistent foot of snow.

HOWLING wind rolls through the icy floor. Each step is difficult. The blowing snow feels like sandpaper on their exposed skin.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 1  
There it is.  
(points to the ship)  
Faster.

INT. USSR LENIN - GANGPLANK - MOMENTS LATER

Chains along the plank CLANK as they swing from side-to-side. Ice has encased them breaking off as the men take each step.

SUPERIMPOSE: *SOVIET NUCLEAR-POWERED ICEBREAKER USSR LENIN*

They approach the HATCH. TURN the long silver arm handle.

INT. BRIDGE - AFTERNOON

The hatch opens to reveal several crewman at their stations. They force the hatch closed behind them stopping the wind.

HELMSMAN

It's about time. We need to get out of here. This storm is getting worse by the minute.

SHIP CAPTAIN

Did you take care of the things as instructed, the YEGER-416?

SOVIET RESEARCHER 1

(to Soviet Researcher 2)

Yes...I think so.

Eyes WIDE and unsure.

SOVIET RESEARCHER 2

(quickly)

Of course. Of course. All secure.

SHIP CAPTAIN

Good. I will relay to headquarters.

(to Radioman)

Tell them all crypto gear has been destroyed. Area secure. Await orders to depart. Emphasize weather deteriorating. We must depart immediately.

RADIOMAN

(to Ship Captain)

Yes Captain. Be right back, sir.

GRABS his pad and pencil. RUNS out the room.

EXT. USSR LENIN - SAME

The ship rolls from side to side from the upset sea.  
Bone chilling winds whistle through the corridors.

INT. BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

RADIOMAN hustles into the room. Sweat on his brow.

RADIOMAN  
(nervous and huffs)  
Captain. Confirmation received.  
We're approved to depart.

SHIP CAPTAIN  
Helmsman. Set course for Murmansk.

HELMSMAN  
(to Ship Captain)  
Yes, Captain.  
(to all)  
Set course for Drake Passage.

END SUBTITLES

Ship SKIDS from the ice cliff slowly as it pulls away. The hull screeches against the solid frozen ice.

The ship bobs up and down with the WAVES as ice and snow blow over each inch of the bow. This is the harshest environment on the planet.

INT. NAVAL INTELLIGENCE BUREAU - MR. KELLY'S OFFICE -  
AFTERNOON

Director, Naval Intelligence Bureau Operations, MR. THOMAS KELLY, a sophisticated, older man, glasses, a born leader in a sharp pin-striped three piece suit, sits in a large, red leather chair behind a finely etched dark-brown wooden desk.

Scattered across the desk are red, orange and blue bordered folders bearing the words TOP SECRET, SECRET and CONFIDENTIAL.

Maps of the Arctic and the Soviet Union, along with photos of

various submarines adorn the walls.

Tinted windows stretch from floor to ceiling behind him.

Huge wooden doors open letting in LIEUTENANT BOWLES who holds a red pin-striped folder.

LIEUTENANT BOWLES

Sir. Do you have a moment? We've just received some intelligence cable traffic from LANTFLEET.

MR. KELLY

Sure son. Come on in.

He walks to Kelly's desk. Opens a folder and places it centered in front of Mr. Kelly. Stands back at attention.

LIEUTENANT BOWLES

Sir. The cable comes from a very credible source stating that we now have NP SIERRA abandoned sometime late last week.

MR. KELLY

From who?

LIEUTENANT BOWLES

LANTFLT says a Kremlin source, believed to be Politburo.

MR. KELLY

North Point SIERRA? Gonna have to do better than that Lieutenant Bowles. These stations are always abandoned and quickly sink. Case in point our situation a couple months back regarding BRAVO.

LIEUTENANT BOWLES

Yes, sir. We've taken that into account, but this one is different. Its projected drift could allow us to exploit it.

MR. KELLY

Okay, I'll bite. What of the equipment? If it's smashed or burnt we have a similar problem.

LIEUTENANT BOWLES

That's the beauty, sir. They left in a hurry for some reason. Intel

(MORE)

LIEUTENANT BOWLES (CONT'D)

says it's 85 percent intact. And  
the YEGER-416 wasn't touched?

Kelly rubs his chin, intrigued.

MR. KELLY

Your information is credible?

LIEUTENANT BOWLES

From what CI tells us, its very  
credible.

MR. KELLY

Let's get the senior staff together  
as soon as possible.

He spins around in his chair. Stares out the window.

MR. KELLY

If we could get it we could  
practically hide in plain site for  
decades.

INT. BOARD ROOM - LATER

The Senior Staff sit at designated seats labeled by placards  
with yellow note pads in front of each person.

Cigarette smoke drifts lazily from several ashtrays.

Kelly walks in. Everyone sits up in their chairs. He grabs  
the top of his chair which incidentally is the tallest and  
sits down in a hurry.

MR. KELLY

(confident)

Gentlemen. As many of you know, we  
have yet another unique  
opportunity. Based on credible  
intel, it appears that the Soviets  
have left us a rather sizeable gift  
in the Arctic. I understand some  
in this room are skeptical.

(beams across room)

This one is different. For one  
this gift is a YEGER-416. Let me  
remind you that getting a 416 could  
turn the tide. Because of this I  
received permission to implement  
Operation Coldfeet...Captain

(MORE)

MR. KELLY (CONT'D)

Caldwell will run for us in close coordination with others in the community.

(to Bowles)

Lights please.

Lights fade OUT. Projector turns on displaying a map of the Arctic with the location of NP SIERRA.

MR. KELLY

Gentleman, as you can see, NP SIERRA is in a moderately accessible location. The main obstacles is that the runway is buckled and inoperable.

ANALYST 1

Sir. We could get an ice cutter in there. The USS Burton Island is our asset.

ANALYST 2

No. Won't work. It's too slow and the ice is too thick.

ANALYST 3

If we get close enough, we can drop a crew off from the nearest ship and trek in.

ANALYST 1

Way too dangerous. Assuming the minus forty degree temps don't kill 'em and they do find a perfectly intact YEGGER, there's no way to get back.

LUKE

Sir. We could parachute some men near the location and pick them up.

ANALYST 1

(sarcastically)

The runway's not available.

LUKE

I know someone who's developing a system to extract personnel in situations like this. He calls it Skyhook.

MR. KELLY

Unproven?

LUKE

To my knowledge.

MR. KELLY

Throws another wrinkle in the plan.



Kelly THUMBS through the papers in front of him.

MR. KELLY (CONT'D)

(stern)

Can you get in touch with the inventor and provide an assessment? Seems like if we want SEIRRA this is our only option.

LUKE

I'll get in touch and pay him a visit immediately.

MR. KELLY

(to all)

Any other thoughts?

(to Caldwell)

Set Coldfeet in motion.

The men around the table look at each other.

SILENCE.

INT. CONNECTICUT - DANBURY - DR. FULTON'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

A scholarly man in his 50's, DR. ROBERT FULTON sits behind a dark brown desk, leafs through papers.

Sketch drawings of airplanes and the SKYHOOK contraption attached to the nose of an aircraft line the walls.

INT. LUKE'S OFFICE - SAME

Grabs a pen and a yellow legal pad notebook.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

FULTON

Dr. Fulton.

LUKE

Sir. It's Luke Moffett from NIB.

FULTON

Well, hello Luke. What a surprise. It's been a long time. How are you?

Fulton goes from slouching to a perpendicular back.

LUKE

Good sir. I'm sorry to be so abrupt, but do you have time for a visit in the next couple of days?

Luke's throat sinks in his stomach hoping for a yes.

FULTON

Actually, Luke. I'm leaving tonight for El Centro. Can it wait until I get back?

LUKE

No sir...I don't think so.

(beat)

Maybe I should get to the point so I don't waste your time?

FULTON

Come on Luke. Out with it. What's on your mind?

Fulton knows he's about to get a gift.

LUKE

Are you still refining Skyhook?

FULTON

(laughs)

That's why I'll be in El Centro. We're running final tests. Why?

LUKE

I can't say over this line...if you understand.

FULTON

Of course. Of course. If you like you can visit and see for yourself.

LUKE

That sounds great! Let me take care of a couple things and I'll be there in a couple days. Same place?

FULTON

The same. Take care, Luke.

BACK TO OFFICE

Fulton fumbles through papers. INSERT spreadsheet that shows dollar figures in red next to equipment in black.

SECRETARY (O.C.)

Sir. Do you need any help with your phone call?

FULTON

No. I think we just got what we've been searching for.

INT. MR. KELLY'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

GAIL, 40's, a very business-like dressed woman opens Kelly's office. Walks in, striking, confident straight as an arrow.

GAIL

Mr. Kelly. Mr. Moffett would like to speak with you if you have a moment.

MR. KELLY

Thank you. Send him in.

LUKE

Sir. I spoke to Dr. Fulton, the developer of Skyhook, and he's in the process of doing trials in El Centro.

KELLY

And?

LUKE

He's open to a discussion.  
(fumbles with his papers)  
So I want to leave as soon as possible. And, I'm sure he'll need funding.

MR. KELLY

We have money. Do what you must. If this works, it will be worth every penny.

LUKE

One question though, Sir. What if the Soviets are still there?

MR. KELLY

Where? Sierra?

LUKE

Yes, sir. It's not like our guys

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

can say they made a wrong turn two thousand miles back.

Luke feels he went a slight to far with his comment.

MR. KELLY

I agree. Captain Caldwell and the Coldfeet crew are working all contingencies. Don't worry, we'll figure it out. In the meantime have the Ops Center send a message to the Canucks asking them to keep a close eye on SIERRA. You just worry about Fulton.

LUKE

I've talked to ops. They're trying but can't locate it.

MR. KELLY

Well...if they can't find it we abort.

LUKE

Yes, sir.

MR. KELLY

(beams at Luke)

Good job Luke. Keep it up...we'll get there.

EXT./INT. ARCTIC - NEAR NORTH POINT SIERRA - CANADIAN DCH-9 CARIBOU AIRPLANE - MORNING

A CREW of four fly over a huge sea of ice shelves. Dark blue water as far as the eye can see. The plane pierces through puffy white clouds.

SUPERIMPOSE: ROYAL CANDADIAN DCH-9 GOLDEN HAWKS, NEAR NORTH POINT SIERRA

PILOT

This should be it fellas. See anything?

CO-PILOT

We're looking.

CREWMAN

Sir! I see it! I see it!

The Pilot is a cool customer, even though he's lucky.

PILOT

Finally. I guess fifth time's a charm. We'll get as close as we can.

The plane glides down to within a few hundred feet overhead of the station. It ZOOMS past the station.

Wind blows snow from atop its roof. The harshest of areas.

CO-PILOT

Looks abandoned. You see that...the runway's cracked in a couple places.

A crewman grabs a pair of large binoculars and looks through the circular WINDOW.

CREWMAN

Sure is. Definitely unsuitable for landing, but the station looks good.

PILOT

Good. Report our findings back to base.

RADIOMAN

Yes Sir. Got it.

PILOT

Let's head back boys.

INT. NAVAL INTELLIGENCE BUREAU - HALLWAY - DAY

Kelly walks at a fast pace. Papers precariously constricted in his notebook.

Bowles appears from a nearby doorway and carries a red-stripped folder with "TOP SECRET" written diagonally on the cover.

BOWLES

Sir, sir. You should read this.

Bowles shows his lack of experience with his grittiness.

MR. KELLY

(slightly annoyed)

Lieutenant, you know better than I, I'm already--

BOWLES  
Sir, this is to important.

KELLY  
Read and walk. Go!

Bowles pauses for a split second. He looks over his shoulder. Flips open the folder.

INSERT - THE LETTER, which reads:

BOWLES (V.O.)  
"Canadian reconnaissance unit reports North Point Station SIERRA abandoned. Runway confirmed inoperable. Station moving westerly at two knots. Calculations suggest station will be approximately 600 miles from Thule, Greenland in two months. Canadian Air Force will provide regular reconnaissance flights of the station, weather permitting."

BACK TO HALLWAY

MR. KELLY  
Get me ops.

INT. LUKE'S HOME - EVENING

Luke opens the front door. Steps into the

HALLWAY

Places his briefcase down and turns to his left to see NATHANIEL, a joyful two year old boy with a train set in the center of the

LIVING ROOM

It's a mix of different styles and dark-brown furniture but rings of coziness.

LUKE  
Hey buddy!

NATHANIEL  
Papa!

He runs to Luke. Gives him a hug. Pulls at his hand.

SYLVIA (O.C.)  
Hi, babe. Be right there.

LUKE  
What is it Nate?

SYLVIA MOFFETT a young beautiful mother wearing a yellow apron strides in. Wrings her wet hands on a dish towel.

SYLVIA  
He's been waiting all day for you.

LUKE  
Ahhh. Sorry bud.

Nathaniel leads him to his train set.

LUKE  
Ohhh, I see.

SYLVIA  
He misses his head conductor.

Luke grabs the conductors hat on the floor. Puts it on his head.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)  
Don't you want to change?  
(to Nathaniel)  
Nate let--

Nate hands him several plastic toy people.

LUKE  
No worries babe. I'm good.

Luke pushes the train around the track as Nate jumps around him. Arms WAVES without a care in the world.

SYLVIA  
You still leavin' tomorrow?

LUKE  
Unfortunately.  
(eyes dart around Nate)  
I hate leavin' this guy.

Rubs Nate's head.

SYLVIA  
And what about me?

LUKE  
Goes without sayin' how much I'm  
(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

gonna miss you.

SYLVIA

Hungry?

LUKE

Starved.

EXT. CALIFORNIA - NAVAL AIR FACILITY - EL CENTRO AIRFIELD -  
AFTERNOON

A white and gray B-17 FLYING FORTRESS airplane flies  
overhead. It's propellers beat down on the hot sand.

The bright aluminum fuselage is blinding to all below.

A long orange striped cord stretches 400 feet high attached  
to an inflatable garage-sized balloon.

SUPERIMPOSE: Naval Air Facility, El Centro Airfield,  
California

INT. FLIGHT TENT - CONTINUOUS

FULTON SCIENTISTS work under a large brown awning, just off  
the runway. Electric and other equipment strewn throughout.

Sand blows slightly across the

TARMAC

The heat cooks the thick black surface. The smell of fuel  
drifts in and out of everyone's nose.

LUKE

Doc. How are you?

FULTON

Luke, what a pleasant surprise. I  
didn't think you would get here so  
soon.

LUKE

You have time for a quick chat?

FULTON

Hmmm, it's that kind of visit?

LUKE

I believe so.



FULTON

One last test run and then we can chat.

(to scientist)

Can you get Mr. Moffett a chair?

SCIENTIST

Yes, sir.

The scientist hustles to the near-by truck. Lifts a stiff gray tarp from the bed to reveal several folding chairs.

Pulls out a folding chair. Cranks it open.

SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

Here you go, Sir.

He wipes the top of the chair with his hand.

SCIENTIST

Not the best seat, but its all we have.

LUKE

Thank you very much. It'll do just fine. One quick question.

SCIENTIST

Anything.

Points to the center of the runway.

LUKE

Is that Skyhook?

SCIENTIST

Yes, Sir. We're testing the grab mechanism.

(giddy)

Very exciting.

LUKE

Yes, it is.

EXT. B-17 AIRCRAFT - CONTINUOUS

The B-17 takes a quick turn and adjusts for it's final approach down the runway.

INT. B-17 - COCKPIT - SAME

Test pilot, TOM MCGINNIS, gray hair, experienced, wears a ball cap. He guides the plane with confidence and style.

INT. FLIGHT TENT - CONTINUOUS

A hand set attached to an Army green radio sits on a makeshift old wooden table. Assorted size papers laid out. Their corners flip up as the wind blows.

Fulton grabs the handset and a pen and pad in the other.

FULTON

(to radio handset)

Okay Tom. Bring it down to 350 feet. Make sure the guys get the J-hook properly aligned and the winch is tight and ready to grab.

TOM (V.O.)

Don't worry Doc. Just like we practiced. On your mark.

FULTON

(to scientist)

Is the balloon stabilized?

SCIENTIST

Yes, sir.

FULTON

(to radio)

We're set. Make your final approach. Good luck Tom.

TOM (V.O.)

Roger that.

INT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Dials and switches adorn the dashboard.

Tom's positioned in a slightly worn seat. Fingers tightly grip the U-shaped steering column.

TOM

(to crewman)

J-hook in place?

Tom pulls on latches and levers. Turns dials. Crewman SNAPS together the winch cables.

CREWMAN

Ready.

EXT. B-17 - CONTINUOUS

The J-hook lowers. Then guides it into place just below the aircraft's belly, like a small umbilical cord.

Wings battered by turbulence causes intermittent vibrations.

INT. COCKPIT

The altimeter decreases in altitude to 400 feet.

Sweat builds on the brows of Tom and the crewman.

TOM

(to headset)

Get ready back there. On my mark.

Five, four, three, two.

EXT. B-17

The orange striped sack jars in the wind on a beeline from the nose of the aircraft.

The B-17 flies perfectly straight and aligns just over the orange striped sack.

The J-hook SNATCHES the sack.

INT. CABIN

The winch WHINES as it snags the balloons cord.

CREWMAN

We got it!

The plane JOLTS as the winch STOPS abruptly. The mount strains and glows orange from heat.

TOM (O.C.)

Yank it up!

The WINCH MECHANICS kick into gear and turn.

The stripped colored sack becomes visible as it approaches the belly of the plane.

CREWMAN  
We got it! We got it!

The crewman grab it and haul it in.

CREWMAN  
All secure.

Places it on the floor.

TOM  
Great!  
(to Fulton)  
Doc. We got it. Smooth as silk!

INT. FLIGHT TENT - LATER

FULTON  
(smiles)  
Bring'er home Tom.

Turns around to Luke. He's excited beyond belief.

FULTON (CONT'D)  
Now we can talk.

INT. EL CENTRO AIRFIELD - FULTON'S OFFICE - LATER

The office is littered with drawings of the airfield, winch drives, J-hook attachments, B-17 schematics.

Fulton sits on an wooden backed chair behind a metal desk. Not fit for his status, but he could care less.

Luke stares at the designs in amazement.

FULTON  
So...What did you think?

LUKE  
Exciting. Very exciting. Pick up  
looked perfect. Now what?

Turns around quickly to face his reaction in hopes of something positive.

FULTON

Nothing.

LUKE

What do you mean?

FULTON

We're out of money.

LUKE

You just got here!

FULTON

We did but we only had enough for three runs. You saw the third.

LUKE

But I thought the Agency had already approved it?

FULTON

I wish. If it were I wouldn't be here sweatin' like that pig out there.

Points to the pig pen.

FULTON (CONT'D)

I helped the Agency equip a B-17 through Intermountain Aviation out of Arizona and we were set to use it to recover a pilot in Indonesia. Never panned out though. So, now I'm here.

Fulton's exuberance is like a kid at Christmas.

LUKE

If I get you money, can you make it work?

FULTON

Of course. You saw it out there. We had a perfect run. We need to get through human trials though.

LUKE

Okay. If I get you the money tomorrow, when can you begin human trials?

FULTON

I just need to run one more test.

Luke's face goes from positive to confused.

LUKE

I thought you just ran three?

FULTON

I need to make that pig out there fly.

LUKE

Why would you, never mind. I don't want to know. How long?

FULTON

I can have it ready for you by early next week...does that work?

LUKE

That works but when it works, we're gonna need to travel to DC for planning...then we head out.

Fulton is now a little squeamish.

FULTON

Where?

LUKE

Arctic.

FULTON

Pretty big place wouldn't you say. We have people up there?

Luke stares at him like a stiff politician.

FULTON (CONT'D)

Oh...I get it.

Fulton's intelligence light bulb goes off.

LUKE

I can't say just yet but I'll fill you in soon enough. All we need right now is for you to prove you can pick up two people.

EXT. EL CENTRO AIRFIELD - PIG PEN - MORNING

A full grown pig munches on slop in a makeshift cage under an awning near the operations tent. SNORTS. He rubs his

dirty, pink body against the cage.

Nasty raw sewage scents circulate around the work area. It drifts into the nearby flight tent.

INT. FLIGHT TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Fulton and five ENGINEERS pores over paperwork. Hot wind blows through intermittently.

A vehicle pulls up. Luke gets out and puts on a hat.

LUKE  
(whispers)  
Stinks! What's with the pig?

FULTON  
Our next pickup.

LUKE  
You said human trials.

FULTON  
I should've said "live" trials.  
Unless you want to volunteer before  
Doug over there give it a whirl --

LUKE  
Well--

FULTON  
(matter of fact)  
Then we need Porky.

FULTON  
Pigs have nervous systems similar  
to ours. If it works on him, then  
we know people can take the jolt.  
(to engineers)  
Get the piggy and tell Tom we're  
ready.

EXT. RUNWAY - LATER

Engineers place a harness on the pig and TIGHTEN. They open the gate and guide him to the center of the runway. The pig's clearly agitated. WIGGLES. SNORTS.

A portable helium bottle inflates a dirigible-shaped

bright-orange colored balloon. It rises to 450 feet attached to high-strength, braided nylon line.

FULTON  
Okay, boys. We're good.

INT. FLIGHT TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Fulton grabs the receiver to the radio.

FULTON  
(to radio)  
Tom. How's the wind up there?

TOM (O.C.)  
Within parameters. J-hook released. Attachment in place. We're ready.

FULTON  
(to radio)  
Make your descent and pick-up. Remind the crew it's going to be a jolt to Porky.

TOM (O.C.)  
Roger that, Doc.

EXT. B-17 - MOMENTS LATER

The B-17 adjusts, then aligns with the runway at four hundred and fifty feet. The bottom flap of the plane opens in anticipation. The J-hook WHINES as it's lowered. It locks into place.

INT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Sweat builds on the brow of Tom. He glances at the gauges. Under filthy glass the altimeters red needle gyrates at four hundred feet.

CREMAN grab handles in anticipation of the balloons grab.

EXT. B-17



The balloon enters the aircraft's SKYHOOK mechanism like a mom's arms stretched out to meet her baby.

The bright balloon is hooked and immediately deflates in a streamed line.

Everything SHUDDERS.

EXT. RUNWAY

The rope whizzes. It quickly tightens as hard as a rock.

The pig walks in a small circle, oblivious to his upcoming roller coaster ride. SNORTS. He's SNAPPED up quickly. A loud WOOFFF comes from his mouth. He squeals as he ascends upward, feet DANGLING.

The pull of the rope drives him to rotate UNCONTROLLABLY. It's disorienting and excruciatingly uncomfortable.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Crewmen eagerly wait at the belly of the plane's opening. One crewman holds the J-hook.

The pig draws closer and closer. He continues to twirl. The squeals get louder as he approaches the airplane.

CREWMAN 1

Bring him in. Careful now.

The J-hook reaches out. It snags the cord attached to the pig and drag him in.

CREWMAN 2

Be careful! Be careful!

The pig wrestles with the crew. Kicks wildly.

CREWMAN 1

(hops on the pig)

Got him. Got 'em.

CREWMAN 2

Tie him. Hurry!

They throw a net over him and pull on the ropes to subdue his violent wiggles.

CREWMAN 2

Done.

CREWMAN 1

(to radio)

Tom we got him. We need to get on the ground quick. Unless you want this pig runnin' around the cabin.

TOM (O.C.)

Roger. Down in a few.

EXT. TARMAC - MOMENTS LATER

Fulton, Luke and the SCIENTISTS run joyfully to the plane as it comes to a stop.

The engines grumble as they're cut off. Propellers slowly stop to spin. The flight crew throw yellow wooden chocks under the wheels.

The rear hatch opens hits the tarmac with a thud. Tom skips merrily out. Happy as a clam. He flips the bill of his ball cap towards Fulton.

TOM

Whatta ride!

The crew hold the pig with a leash and carefully guide him down the ramp. The pig JUMPS around like a bucking bronco. He breaks away from his restraints.

He SNARLS and makes a bee-line for the crew. His mouth is wide open and drips with saliva. Shakes his huge head.

He lunges toward a scientists leg and BITS down.

SCIENTIST 1

(releases the leash)

Shit! Shit! Oweee...Oweee.

The pig goes after another morsel. He's PISSED. The CHOMP of teeth are as loud as maracas.

SCIENTIST 1

Run! Run!

The pig sprints off down the runway.

FULTON

He's very upset.

LUKE  
Ya think?

FULTON  
(to scientists)  
Someone please wrangle him up,  
please.  
(to Luke)  
Looks like we lost one of our  
volunteer.

INT. EL CENTRO - WESTERN UNION - DAY

Luke passes a hand written piece of paper to the clerk.

LUKE  
Can you send this to this address  
as urgent?

TELLER  
Yes, Sir. That'll be sixty five  
cents.

Luke digs around in his pocket to get some coins.

TELLER  
Thank you, Sir.

INT. MR. KELLY'S OFFICE - LATER

The secretary walks into Mr. Kelly's office holding a  
folder. Hands him the folder.

He flips it open to reveal a telegram.

INSERT TELEGRAM which reads,

LUKE (V.O.)  
"Sir. Trials going as planned.  
Human trials tomorrow. Fulton  
remains confident, has pledged  
support as long as funding remains.  
Should be ready for ops planning by  
next week. Return to DC day after  
tomorrow. Respectfully, Luke"

BACK TO OFFICE

MR. KELLY

Lisa. Can you get me Admiral  
Whitworth?

INT. EL CENTRO AIRFIELD - FLIGHT TENT - DAY

First Lieutenant DOUG FREEMAN, mid-20's and athletic, stands perfectly upright in his flight suit. Elbow and kneepads are affixed to him.

Engineers attach shoulder and waist straps to him.

SCIENTIST

(tightens the strap)  
How's that?

Doug takes one step forward from being tugged.

FREEMAN

That's good.

FULTON

Balloon is ready. Gonna get Tom  
and the crew, if you're okay.

Freeman looks over and give a thumbs up.

FREEMAN

Good to go Doc.

FULTON

(to radio)  
Tom. We're set. Go ahead.

INT. B-17 - COCKPIT - LATER

TOM

(to crew)  
Strap in. This is it.

Tom turns dials and pulls levers. Suddenly the propellers spin. The airplane shakes and sputters.

EXT. RUNWAY - LATER

Doug sits, feet spread, in the center of the sandy runway.

Balloon SWAYS above him deployed.

The rope attached to his suit sweeps above him from the light wind that blows across the runway.

FULTON  
How ya feel Doug?

The wind kicks up, blowing sand in his face.

Doug slides a few inches backward. Small pebbles kick out from under him. He puts his hands down to stop him from moving any further.

FREEMAN  
Good. Wind isn't our friend here.  
(laughs)  
Hopefully my ride will better than Porky.

SCIENTIST (O.C.)  
We got that fixed.

Fulton is matter-of-fact. Confident.

FULTON  
Just like we practiced. Extend your arms as soon as you ascend. Should prevent you from spinning.

SCIENTIST  
Okay.  
(pats him on the shoulder)  
Here comes Tom.

They run to the side of the runway as Tom approaches.

EXT. RUNWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Doug is as stiff as a statue as the plane approaches. He looks up as the aircraft engines gets louder and louder.

Wind blows and moves the BALLOON.

Doug slides another six inches on the hot concrete.

The B-17 zooms eerily close overhead. The propellers forcefully push down more hot air onto this body.

The balloon is snagged by SKYHOOK.

FREEMAN

Woaahhh!

He's snagged abruptly. His legs wobble like a baby doll.  
Stretches out his arms.

A sudden SNAP. The cable goes limp. Then falls like a dead  
snake to the ground.

INT. COCKPIT - MOMENTS LATER

CREWMAN 1

(stares out the opening)

Shit.

TOM

(into radio)

What? What happened?

CREWMAN 1

Rope snapped.

TOM

God dammit!

EXT. RUNWAY - LATER

Doug, Tom and the crew step out of the plane. DEFEATED.

FREEMAN

That's a bummer.

FULTON

What happened up there?

Fulton's words are quick and terse.

TOM

Napped the J-hook in half.

FULTON

(hands to his side)

Shit.

FREEMAN

How long to get it fixed, Doc?

LUKE

We haven't the time. We need to

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

get to DC.

INT. NAVAL INTELLIGENCE BUREAU - OPERATIONS PLANNING CELL -  
AFTERNOON

The room is packed. Smoke billows from lavender ashtrays.

The large oval table overflows with paperwork marked with different classification types, maps, and charts of the Arctic and schematics of airplanes, a North Point SIERRA conceptual control station drawing and jump-master charts.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

Capt. Caldwell, please. Take it away.

CAPTAIN CALDWELL

Yes Sir. Our agenda. NP SIERRA status, logistics, Skyhook, and finally, personnel. I'll have Luke lead off.

MR. KELLY

Fine.

LUKE

Sir. All indications are that NP SIERRA remains afloat and in excellent condition. Both the Canadians and our planes have tracked it on a fairly consistent basis.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

Fairly consistent? So you don't have continuous track?

LUKE MOFFETT

No Sir. The weather poses many problems--

U.S Geological Service meteorologist, CAPTAIN MARKS. TV anchorman appearance and presence.

CAPTAIN MARKS

It's almost impossible to predict the weather up there. We could see it one day and lose it the next. Literally the harshest environment on the planet.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

And it's moving.

FULTON

Sir, the pure grayness of the area is extreme as well. Just making out the horizon can be a challenge but we intend to immediately switch to instruments once the balloon is deployed to avoid vertigo. I'll describe that more in my section of the briefing.

Room feels more tense. Every word hangs in the air.

LUKE

HUMINT and SIGINT sources confirm that it's abandoned; however, we are unsure if the higher levels of the Soviet Navy to include Fleet Admiral Sergey Gorshkov know what equipment remains. We believe with moderate confidence that the YEGER-416 is there and fully intact. Our intent is to acquire the hard drives and any SOPs they might have left behind.

MR. KELLY

It's functioning though, you think?

LUKE

Ummm...416, Sir? I believe so and we intend to show our jumpers how to turn it on and take pictures of the screens.

MR. KELLY

Can either of them speak or read Russian?

LUKE

Sir--

Caldwell moves in his seat uncomfortably.

CALDWELL

Neither of them do.

Kelly grunts. Shakes his head.



MR. KELLY

Thanks Luke.

CALDWELL

On to logistics.

(to Bowles)

Map please.

(to all)

We will support base ops from Resolute, Alaska. Fulton's crew. Ops/Intel planners. Two B-17s and the Nautilus. The USS Farragut and Bainbridge will also be as near as they can be. They'll have Sea Knights to provide additional support...Dr. Fulton.

FULTON

Sir, our two subjects--

Kelly's cackles go up. He's not impressed.

MR. KELLY

Doc, let me interrupt you for a second. Let's not refer to them as subjects. Makes it sound like a science experiment. I prefer to think of them as simply a team.

FULTON

(uncomfortably clears throat)

Yes, sir. Our team will be equipped with their own pick up balloon, helium bottle and tools to quickly deploy Skyhook--

CAPTAIN CALDWELL

--we'll also drop another package that will carry the contents for NP SIERRA as well as two days of rations.

FULTON

Once we obtain our objective, our crew will follow these procedures. Chart please, Lieutenant Bowles.

The Skyhook drawing flash onto the projector screen. Instruction boxes numbered one through six show step-by-step operations of SKYHOOK.

FULTON (O.C.)  
Both men have been trained;  
however, timing prevented our final  
test.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH  
Timing?

FULTON  
We ran into technical issues.

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH  
How are you making up the gap?

CAPTAIN CALWELL  
Personnel, sir. Our Agency for  
hire pilots, Tom McGinnis, a crew  
of four, Fulton, our jumpers,  
Captain Doug Freeman, call sign  
"STOKE" and Brian Musgrave, call  
sign "WEASEL". STOKE remains at  
the test site.

Kelly turns to Tom and CAPTAIN BRIAN MUSGRAVE, a lean,  
athletic, chiseled jaw military man.

MUSGRAVE AND TOM  
(nod)  
Sir.

MR. KELLY  
I want to go back to our discussion  
about the YEGER and the contents  
inside SIERRA for a minute.

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
Sir? We grab what we can and get  
out--

MR. KELLY  
Your not following me. Please  
indulge me. If what our analysts  
have said is true, this could be  
our last and only opportunity to  
ever get inside. If that's the  
case, I want everything. I want us  
to turn it on.

LUKE  
Turn it on, Sir?

MR. KELLY

Yes Luke. Turn it on and make some commands from the terminal. I want us to ping and track a sub if at all possible.

(to Luke)

Would you assume they have an SOP?

LUKE

Yes. Yes. A standard operating procedure is for sure. I had one when I worked at our TF-2 site.

MR. KELLY

416 is a similar design to our TF-2 system, which you operated? Only their controls are in Russian?

LUKE

I believe so.

MR. KELLY

(to Admiral)

We need someone who can understand Russian, has operated an Arctic station, and can figure out a YEGER.

Luke starts to blush. Beads of sweat roll down his temple.

MR. KELLY

(to the Admiral)

Would you agree?

ADMIRAL WHITWORTH

I would.

MR. KELLY

(to Luke)

Can you do it?

LUKE

Ummm...With all do respect, sir.  
I--I'm at a loss--

MR. KELLY

Luke, it's not something I wouldn't ask of anyone else with your quals.

LUKE

Sir, I agree but I'm still not jump qual'd--

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
 (stern)  
 Or Skyhook--

Kelly realizes he needs to put Caldwell in his place.

MR. KELLY  
 Don't you agree it's easier to  
 teach someone how to jump out of a  
 plane than it is to learn Russian  
 and operate a survey ice station?

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
 But, Sir we have--

MR. KELLY  
 It's settled Chris. How long to  
 get Luke jump qualified and Skyhook  
 ready?

Fulton's shocked, knowing what is about to happen to Luke.

FULTON  
 A day or two. He would need to  
 experience it once, preferably  
 twice.

MR. KELLY  
 We're set then. Any issues Luke?

LUKE  
 (jokes)  
 Uhhh...I don't have a call sign,  
 doesn't everyone else?

MR. KELLY  
 (laughs)  
 Good point. Your call sign is "NO  
 SIGN". Good enough?

Luke nods slowly.

Kelly pushes back from the table. He gets up hastily. Shuts  
 his briefing folder and leaves the ROOM. The Admiral and  
 Bowles follow Kelly closely.

Luke is left stunned. Stares at his papers.

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
 Luke, a moment in my office please.  
 (to Brian)  
 You too.

INT. CAPTAIN CALDWELL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sunlight streams through the large windows. Navy A-6 bomber aircraft memorabilia adorns the office. A-6 tailhook mounted on the wall. It's decorated more than a military pawn shop.

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
What the fuck!

Throws papers on his desk. Pens, papers, and a stapler fall to the carpet.

Luke and Brian move slowly. Stare in silence at his violent reaction.

CAPTAIN CALDWELL (CONT'D)  
What the hell happened in there,  
Luke?

LUKE  
I don't know. It certainly wasn't  
the plan.

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
Wasn't it?

LUKE  
You think I want to go up there?  
You're crazier than you look right  
now Chris.

Adjusts himself in between the two of them. Caldwell flashes him the evil eye.

BRIAN  
Sir. I'll make this work.  
(points to Luke)  
I can teach anyone to jump, even  
this desk jockey--

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
And Skyhook?

BRIAN  
And Skyhook. Simple. Doc's a  
professional. We'll get it done--

CAPTAIN CALDWELL  
We better cause this is our only  
shot. We've been waiting five  
years to get this and I'll be  
(MORE)

CAPTAIN CALDWELL (CONT'D)

damned if this shit is going to  
sink our plans.

(to Luke)

COLDFEET can work...with the right  
crew.

BRIAN

I'll get him ready whether he likes  
it or not.

Luke walks to Caldwell. Confident. Intent to calm the  
situation.

Gets face to face. Puts his hand on his shoulder.

LUKE

Chris, I can't guarantee anything,  
but Kelly is right. When I get  
there--

BRIAN

(laughs)

If you get there!

LUKE

Not only can I grab the YEGER, but  
I can turn it on.

Caldwell checks his watch.

CALDWELL

Shit.

He grabs his notebook.

CALDWELL

You two figure it out.

Caldwell breezes past Luke. Slightly brushes Luke's  
shoulder. SLAMS the door.

Brian turns to Luke. Approaches him. Points his finger  
millimeters from his chest.

BRIAN

Don't fuck this up boy.

LUKE

Calm down.

BRIAN

If we get out there and you drop  
the ball, there'll only be one of

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
us comin' back.

LUKE  
Well, it's up to you to train me  
then.

BRIAN  
Ohhh, don't worry little man. I'm  
puttin' you through the ringer.  
Got that?

Luke gets the same feeling he had in High School.

LUKE  
Fine.  
(turns around)  
Where's this jump training anyway?

BRIAN  
(smiles)  
Only the greatest place on  
earth...New Jersey!

SLAPS Luke on the back. Luke steps forward to keep from  
falling as Brian rushes out the room.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - NATHANIEL'S ROOM - EVENING

Toys are strewn everywhere. Posters of FELIX THE CAT,  
GUMBY, and SNAGGLEPUSS taped to the walls.

Luke's elbows rest on the side of Nathaniel's top bunk.

Sylvia tip toes into the room. She slowly places her arms  
around Luke and rests her head on his shoulder. Luke lets  
out a long sigh. Closes his eyes. The stress is  
tremendous.

SYLVIA  
Don't worry...it'll all be okay.  
You do what you need to do.

Luke moves his hand to touch her head. Rubs his fingers  
through her hair.

INT. NEW JERSEY - LAKEHURST NAVAL STATION - JUMP TRAINING  
CENTER - CLASSROOM - MORNING

They sit on scratched, worn metal chairs. Chalkboards line

the walls. Pictures of soldiers jumping from airplanes litter areas where there's space. Tech. Sargent SEARS, country boy, expert jump trainer stands near them.

SUPERIMPOSE: LAKEHURST NAVAL STATION, NEW JERSEY -  
JUMPMaster TRAINING CENTER

BRIAN

So, listen. Normally this takes  
anywhere from three to four weeks.

Luke shakes his head in disgust.

LUKE

Weeks?

BRIAN

I know. I know. We don't have  
that much time but we have Sears  
and any other instructor we want  
'round here to get you ready.

LUKE

Is that long enough?

Luke feeling of uneasiness grows with every word.

BRIAN

For you? Doubt it--

SEARS

Sir, it'll be fine. You're not  
trying to begin a new career here.  
You work out?

LUKE

No...not really. My workout is  
chasing a two year old round the  
house.

BRIAN

(laughs)

He's a little on the small side?

Mike ignores the jabs.

MIKE

His brains will make up for it.  
The longer we wait SIERRA continues  
to move.

BRIAN

(hits him on the arm)

(MORE)



BRIAN (CONT'D)

Were'd you go to school anyway?

LUKE

Brown.

Brian the goes into his bully mode.

BRIAN

Owww...an Ivy league boy. Good for you.

MIKE

Okay sir...we don't have much time.

LUKE

Let's push, we're wasting time.

MIKE

Okay. Turn your attention to the board.

INT. OFFICER LIVING QUARTERS - EVENING

Luke sits at the desk. A picture of family lays against the alarm clock. It's the only thing that keeps him going.

Swing Leader Trainer, "MASTER THE MASS EXIT" procedures, jump-master and parachute books lay on the bed, table and the floor.

He moves from each area of the room to the other. Like a final exam he stuffs as much information into his brain as possible. He's in his element.

INT. OFFICER LIVING QUARTERS - LATER

Luke lays on the bed. The phone cord is crinkled. He loops the cord around his finger while he talks.

INT. SYLVIA'S KITCHEN - SAME

Sylvia paces from one side to the other.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

LUKE MOFFETT

Hi babe. How goes it?

SYLVIA

He's missin' you. Asks for you every ten minutes.

(laughs)

He doesn't have his loyal train conductor to help him.

LUKE

I know. I miss him. Just tell him I'll be home soon.

SYLVIA

I will. Sooo...how goes the training?

LUKE

It's not complicated but I can't lie. It's a little scary.

SYLVIA

To be expected, babe.

LUKE

I start jumping the day after tomorrow.

SYLVIA

Already!?

LUKE

Not from an airplane.

SYLVIA

You scared me for a second.

Sylvia looks for comfort by looking at their wedding photo.

LUKE

(laughs)

I go to a thirty foot platform. Then 250 and then the plane.

Nathaniel runs into the

KITCHEN

NATHANIEL (O.C.)

Papa! Papa!

SYLVIA

Can you hear him?

LUKE  
Yeah...my little buddy.

Luke can hardly keep from crying through his smile.

SYLVIA  
I gotta get him a bath and ready  
for bed.  
(to Nathaniel)  
Say hi to papa.

She bends down to put the phone to him. He just stares.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)  
Say hi silly.

NATHANIEL  
Papa!

He pushes back and runs. As a train in full motion.

LUKE  
Okay. I miss you. This is crazy.

SYLVIA  
Don't worry. You're doin' the  
right thing. We'll be here waitin'  
for ya when you get back. I love  
you.

LUKE  
Love ya too. Bye baby.

EXT. JUMP TOWER - MORNING

Luke uncomfortable in loose fitting camouflage clothing,  
stares up at the tower. It's tall and intimidating.

A mass of wooden pylons with one makeshift wooden ladder  
leads to the platform.

Ropes hang down like jungle vines from underneath the  
platform. They sway in the wind.

LUKE  
So that's what 34 feet looks like  
huh?

MIKE  
Sure is. Can't wait for yah to see  
the 250 foot tower before we do our  
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

final jump.

LUKE

Yeah. Can't wait.

BRIAN

Come on let's do this.

EXT. SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Luke jumps unsure and awkwardly from the 34 foot tower. Fear in his eyes. Brian laughs as an observer. Intent on making him uncomfortable.

-- Luke prepares and moves to the 100 foot tower. He is more scared then ever. He jumps attached to the gear. Clumsily unhooks his gear. He is clearly out of his element.

INT. FLIGHT READY ROOM - DAY

Brian and Luke don army-green colored flight suits. Parachute gear hang from pegs on the wall. Helmets and gloves in drawers neatly stacked.

Mike checks his book. Rechecks gear.

BRIAN

(overly exuberant)

Can't wait to get out there.

MIKE

Wish I was goin' with yah two.

Luke struggles with his straps.

LUKE

Damn. This isn't working.

Mike walks up. Grabs his straps and tightens them.

LUKE

Thanks.

BRIAN

(to Mike)

He's gonna need more than that to keep from becoming a splatter mark

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
on the runway.

MIKE  
Come on Bri. Give him a break.

BRIAN  
Your right. Poor little guy.

Luke gawks at his bully partner Brian in amazement.

LUKE  
Let's just do this already.

BRIAN  
Ooh...little guys gettin' some balls.

MIKE  
Grab the rest of your stuff. Let's go.

INT. FLIGHT WAITING AREA - LATER

Mike, Luke and Brian sit reading magazines. Pace. They are bored as they wait for their ride.

Heroic posters of jumpers litter the walls. It's enough to give anyone courage to jump from a perfectly good airplane.

FLIGHT DIRECTOR  
(clipboard in hand)  
Sorry fellas. Not going to happen.

BRIAN  
What the hell.

LUKE  
What's going on?

FLIGHT DIRECTOR  
Plane's broke.

Turns to walk out the door.

LUKE  
But I have to get this in today.  
What's the problem?

FLIGHT DIRECTOR  
Cyclones is out.

BRIAN  
What the hells a cyclone?

FLIGHT DIRECTOR  
(annoyed)  
An engine. You need them to fly  
geniuses.

LUKE  
Well, how long will that take?

FLIGHT DIRECTOR  
At least a couple days.

LUKE  
We're screwed.  
(to Mike)  
What do we do now?

MIKE  
Well...looks like you're goin' to  
the Arctic without a full jump.  
Could be worse, you could be shot  
at on your way down.

LUKE  
Jesus.

INT. SOVIET NAVAL AFFAIRS OFFICE - FOYER - AFTERNOON

Polished mahogany wooden accents throughout. Its mostly  
bare except for large portraits of FORMER SOVIET ADMIRALS.

Soviet Researcher 1 from NP SIERRA sits on a hard wooden  
chair. He attempts to sit still but WIGGLES while wringing  
his hands. It's useless. He knows his fate. Sweat builds  
on his forehead. His glasses are partially fogged.

SUPERIMPOSE: SOVIET NAVAL AFFAIRS - Vice Admiral Vladamir  
Ivanov, Commander-in-Chief Assistant Soviet Naval Affairs

INT. VICE ADMIRAL IVANOV OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

IVANOV adjacent to a map of the Soviet Northern Fleet  
operating areas on the other side of his large desk.

A door KNOCK.

NOTE: THE DIALOGUE IN THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN RUSSIAN AND IS

SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH.

IVANOV

Come.

CAPTAIN NICOLAI, Commandant of the Soviet Northern Fleet Operations, pale white, and tall walks in carrying a brown leather tattered briefcase.

IVANOV

Sit.

Nicolai sits at attention in a chair perfectly placed in front of Ivanov's expansive desk.

IVANOV

We understand that NP SIERRA and a YEGER-416 remain vulnerable.

NICOLAI

How can that be? It's--

IVANOV

It places our ability to track the American boomers in jeopardy...something I will not tolerate.

NICOLAI

Sir. What would you have me do?

Ivanov grabs a cut crystal glass from the edge of his desk and takes a sip.

IVANOV

You're asking me?

NICOLAI

Well, I--

Ivanov SLAMS his fist on the table.

IVANOV

Diffuse the situation. Find. Investigate. Destroy the station.

A large drop of sweat FALLS on the lens of his GLASSES.

NICOLAI

I'll scramble the BEAR's from Fedotovo and get the LENIN to depart from Murmansk. What of the Americans?

IVANOV

That is for you to figure out.  
I've notified KGB. They will  
assist.

NICOLAI

We don't need them, Sir.

IVANOV

It was not a suggestion.

EXT. RUSSIA - KOLA PENNINSULA - FEDOTOVO NAVAL  
RECONNAISSANCE AIRBASE - TARMAC - MORNING

Two Soviet Tupolov Tu-142 BEAR aerial reconnaissance  
aircraft prepare for flight.

Umbilical cord like fuel lines connect to the BEARs. Ground  
support equipment surround them.

SUPERIMPOSE: 392nd Independent Long-Range Reconnaissance  
Aviation Regiment, Fedotovo Naval Reconnaissance Airbase,  
Russia

The BEARs engines roar to life simultaneously. The  
thunderous beat of propellers shake the ground. It's an  
impressive demonstration of Soviet air power.

EXT. RUNWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Both BEARs rumble down the runway. Airplane exhaust billows  
from behind all four engines leaving a black and gray  
exhaust disturbs the air behind them making the sky ripple.  
They slowly begin to lift off the ground.

EXT. RUSSIA - MURMANSK NAVAL BASE - USSR LENIN - DAY

Long, thick, mooring lines are attached to the ship from an  
old dilapidated pier. Dirty ice forms on the lines and  
along the ship.

Sailors whisk back and forth from the pier to the ship.

SUPERIMPOSE: *USSR LENIN* (RP-8) - NORTHERN FLEET - MURMANSK  
NAVAL BASE



INT. SHIPS BRIDGE - SAME

The bridge bustles with activity. Crewman sift through maps and charts while turn dials and levers on the navy gray terminals.

SHIP CAPTAIN

How are the preparations?

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Sir. We should be ready within the hour.

SHIP CAPTAIN

(to Comms officer)

Send a message to Moscow. Let them know we leave immediately.

EXT. NEAR NORTH POINT SIERRA - BEAR AIRCRAFT

The plane searches as it flies through a mess of thick bright white cloud layers. Fat rain drops pelt the aircraft as if rocks were hitting the fuselage.

TURBULANCE shoves the plane around with ease. Visibility is less than twenty five percent.

INT. COCKPIT - AFTERNOON

Frustration is clearly on the PILOTS face.

The CREW SHAKE their heads as they peek through windows all along the fuselage. They check and recheck maps and roll some and snap rubber bands on the useless ones.

PILOT

Heading back. This is impossible.

INT. VICE ADMIRAL IVANOV OFFICE

Ivanov sifts through messages placed in his inbox on his desk. One message is titled, "FEDOTOVO NAVAL RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS CENTER".

INSERT LETTER, which says.

"North Point Station SIERRA remains  
(MORE)

unlocated. Daily BEAR patrols.  
 USSR LENIN dispatched today.  
 Soviet Air Force currently in the  
 process of widening search."

BACK TO OFFICE

Steam billows from his white etched tea cup.

He takes a sip. Spins around in his CHAIR and leans back to  
 stares at the map.

IVANOV

If we can't find it, it is  
 impossible that they could find it.

END OF RUSSIAN DIALOGUE

EXT. ARCTIC - MORNING

Two B-17 aircraft fly in formation. The hum of engines is  
 constant.

The sky is clear. On the horizon are clouds; an impending  
 storm approaches.

SUPERIMPOSE: NEAR NORTH POINT SIERRA (81.38N/152.19W)

INT. B-17 - CABIN

Fulton talks to the crew. His worn folder overflows with  
 loosely crinkled papers. They check and recheck schematics.

Brian adjusts his gear. He loosens the flight suits front  
 breast pocket. Unknowingly reveals a small caliber pistol.

LUKE

(shocked)

What did you bring that for?

BRIAN

Waddaya mean, what did I bring this  
 for? What if there's some Ruskies  
 still there?

(puts his thumb out)

Like you said we can't stroll on  
 up and say "Hey fellas, we took a  
 wrong turn 2000 miles back that  
 way. Mind if we use your phone a

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

cab?"

LUKE

Are you authorized to have that?

BRIAN

Who cares.

LUKE

And what if the Ruskies are armed?

BRIAN

Then you better get behind me. But just so ya know, I'll be movin' quick.

Luke's face turns stone cold as Brian goes back to adjust his suit.

Luke moves down the cabin. Grabs Fulton by the arm.

LUKE

Doc. Did you know he would be packin'?

FULTON

(stares at him intently)  
I had a pretty good idea.  
(points to Brian)  
Look at 'em.

Brian tugs at his harness to check his 9MM. Places it back in his holster. He's obviously comfortable handling weapons.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

A crewman grabs the outer, long, silver, door HATCH.

CREWMAN

(looks back)  
Get ready to get cold.

LUKE

I'm already cold.

The handle slams down. The door slides open allowing a hurricane force gush of air fills the cabin. Loose flaps flutter.

CREWMAN

You ready, Brian?

BRIAN

Hell yeah!

CREWMAN

Shuffle on over. Just like we planned. We'll drop you, then Luke...once clear we'll drop the gear.

TOM (O.C.)

(over intercom)

Drop in 30 seconds.

BRIAN

(to Luke)

This is where it gets good.

LUKE

(down and out)

For you maybe.

(to Fulton)

If anyone's there I'm gonna --

Luke looks at his family picture one last time. Then stuffs it in his flight suit.

FULTON

Your gonna do what I would do...run! To where I haven't a clue. What a great story to tell the grandkids someday, but you might not be able to!

LUKE

What?

FULTON

Ahhh, I'm just kiddin'.

LUKE

Well, knock it off, would you? That goddamn contraption of yours better work.

FULTON

It did for the pig.

(smiles)

You two weigh about the same.

LUKE

That's all you got? We weigh about the same!

TOM (O.C.)  
 Okay boys. Five, four, three, two,  
 one.

In a micro-second, Brian leaps out. Straight as an arrow.

BRIAN  
 Whoohoo!

His parachute deploys in seconds. All good.

CREWMAN 1  
 Luke, let's go! Let's go! Just  
 like Jersey.

Luke stumbles to the edge. Nervous. Unsure.

FULTON  
 You got this. Go! Go!

Luke pulls back awkwardly. Shuts his eyes. LUNGES forward  
 into the open abyss.

LUKE  
 (screams)  
 Shit! Oh god! Oh god!

His gray parachute deploys. He floats down through the gray  
 cloudy sky.

EXT. NEAR NORTH POINT SIERRA - MOMENTS LATER

Luke hits the ground and rolls onto this back. He creates a  
 snow crater. Relieved and petrified at the same time.

The plane buzzes overhead.

Brian hustles over to Luke. He easily manages the harsh  
 conditions. Smiles from ear to ear.

SUPERIMPOSE: 2 MILES SOUTH OF NORTH POINT STATION SIERRA  
 (81.55N/153.12W)

EACH CHARACTERS BREATH IS OBSERVED FROM THIS POINT.

BRIAN  
 What a rush, huh?

LUKE  
 I guess you could say that.

BRIAN  
Who would have thought two months  
ago you would be on top of the  
world...literally.

Luke scans the area. Nothing but white rolling hills. He  
begins to roll up his parachute.

BRIAN  
(waves his right hand)  
Forget that. We have mine. Need  
to get movin' before it gets dark.

LUKE  
We close?

Brian whips out his map and compass.

Flips open the cover of the compass with one swift motion.

BRIAN  
(points east)  
Just a couple clicks that way.

EXT. NEAR NORTH POSITION SIERRA - LATER

They trudge through the snow at a brisk pace manageable for  
Luke. Thankfully the winds are calm for the moment.

SIERRA station can be seen visible on the horizon. Luke  
gets a sinking feeling that someone might be there.

LUKE  
Looks deserted.

BRIAN  
Can't be so sure.

Pats his chest for reassurance of his pistol.

EXT. NORTH POINT SIERRA - LATER

They both kneel in wait just one hundred meters from the  
station. Their eyes scan the area intently as if to pounce.

Brian pulls a set of binoculars from his pack and uses them.

LUKE  
How's it look?

BRIAN  
Nothin'.

LUKE  
We need to get moving. They can't  
make the supply drop until we get  
there.

BRIAN  
That storm is gettin' closer.

EXT. NORTH POINT SIERRA

Brian takes the lead. Pistol in hand. Confident. He's  
looking to pick a fight.

Luke moves in unison with Brian. Occasionally places his  
hand on Brian's shoulder. He is nervous.

The wind kicks up as they get closer.

EXT. CONTROL ROOM

The buildings creaks with every gust of wind. Each sound  
makes every second nerve wracking.

They stealthily approach the door.

BRIAN  
(whispers)  
Stay behind me. When I move you  
move.

Luke nods his head. Brian faces the door. He slowly grabs  
the latch and pushes it down slowly.

BRIAN  
(whispers)  
It's open. 3, 2, 1.

They he rushes in. Gun drawn.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The door slams open, hits the wall. It comes back at Brian  
and hits his arm.

A whoosh of cold air engulfs the room while a bottle on the far end of the room FALLS and crashes to the GROUND.

Brian's gun immediately goes to the crash. The hammer of the gun cocks.

LUKE  
Wait! Wait! It's a bottle.

BRIAN  
Damn it. I was a second away.

LUKE  
From what?

BRIAN  
Lightin' this place up.

LUKE  
From a bottle falling?

BRIAN  
Stay here. I'm gonna scope out the other rooms.

He reaches in his backpack to grab a walkie-talkie.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Raider 1. All clear. Drop at your ready.

TOM (V.O.)  
Roger that.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Luke stands in the entrance as if he's just landed on the moon. Hands on his hips. Breathes heavily.

LUKE  
Okay. Let me see here.

He inspects all four corners of the room.

BRIAN  
They sure left in a hurry.

He approaches the large COMPUTER PANELS. Glass CRACKS with each step from his boot.

BRIAN  
(points)  
(MORE)



BRIAN (CONT'D)

Looks like the only thing they  
really broke were these two  
screens.

Brian swats at the glass shards on the control panels.

He bends down. Picks up the broken metal HAMMER head.

BRIAN

(laughs)

I give 'em an "F" for effort.

Holds up the hammer for Luke to see.

LUKE

(points to broken  
screens)

Let's hope we don't need them. We  
need power or we're gonna freeze.  
Any chance you can kick on the  
generator?

BRIAN

Sure. After I throw the flare for  
the guys.

LUKE

Sounds good.

BRIAN

Just don't ask me to run  
diagnostics on those terminals,  
cause my talents are limited.

He grabs his backpack. Slings it over his back and hustles  
out of the control room.

EXT. NORTH POINT STATION SIERRA

The hard wind slaps him in the face. It's brutally cold.

Brian clears a path from the control building.

BRIAN

(shakes his head)

Shit. Why can't I be the smart one?

EXT. GENERATOR SHED - MOMENTS LATER

Snow drifts two feet high hug the entirety of the building. It's obvious there hasn't been a soul here in months.

He grabs the large SILVER HANDLES. They screech as he attempts to turn them.

BRIAN

Damn it.

The doors feels glued together. He yanks hard and the door pops open slightly.

One foot at a time. The snow gets higher against the door as it swings open but enough for him to squeeze in.

Wind and powdered snow blows into the room.

INT. GENERATOR SHED - CONTINUOUS

The door SLAMS behind him.

The room is small and crowded with gasoline and oil cans. Tools and frozen greasy rags are scattered around. The tools are in usable condition.

BRIAN

(rubs his hands together  
for warmth)

Looks clean.

He moves to inspect the large black generator. It has a large crank at the bottom and a large red switch annotated in Russian for ON and OFF.

BRIAN

Please tell me there's gas in this  
puppy.

He spins the gas cap. Leans over and peaks inside.

BRIAN

Yes! Thank you Lord.

He jumps back down. Approaches the switch and flips it.

He grabs the crank handle. Winds it in a clockwise motion.

BRIAN

Come on baby.

He cranks harder.

The generator suddenly shakes and shudders. The motor turns and then ROARS to life.

Smoke spits out of the exhaust. It steadily rumbles.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The radio, lights, and areas of the control panel light up.

LUKE

He did it!

(jumps up from his chair)

Let's see what this sucker can do.

He drops to his knees in front of the computer bank. FLIPS on his back. Crawls under the console.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - LATER

The door breaks open wildly. Brian enters along with a gut wrenching cold draft.

He dusts off the snow from his body. Stomps his feet in the entrance. He's freezing but in good spirits.

BRIAN

You owe me.

LUKE (O.C.)

Sure do.

Luke lays under the largest part of the control station.

BRIAN

What are you doin'?

LUKE

Trying to get this started.

CLANKING of metal. Wires flop down exposed.

LUKE

Here goes nothin'.

His wrist turns. Then he lets go.

Bulbs of all shapes ignite on the fat monitors. A small metal fan begins to spin.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
How's it look?

Rectangular and circular screens now reflect RUSSIAN LETTERS and GRAPHICS.

BRIAN  
Like it's on.

EXT. NORTH POINT STATION SIERRA - CONTINUOUS

The radar transmitter on the top of the station begins to turn. Slowly at first. Then steady.

A yellow power light flickers, then stays on permanently.

INT. SOVIET ARCTIC AND ATLANTIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE - OPERATIONS CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Depressed cold gray room. Arctic drawings litter the walls. Manuals strewn on each table. Filing cabinets overflow.

SUPERIMPOSE: Arctic and Atlantic Research Institute Operations Center, Saint Petersburg, Russia

Two SOVIET SCIENTISTS in white dingy robes sit behind computer screens. One takes off his glasses and rubs his eyes. The other flips through a large two-inch binders.

Lights BLINK from monitors showing North Point Station.

A dot matrix printer flips on. The printers arm slam from left to right. The paper tray accelerates to keep up. Spits out uniformed folded paper on the tile floor.

NOTE: THE DIALOGUE IN THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN RUSSIAN AND IS SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH.

SOVIET SCIENTIST 1  
(hastily puts on his  
glasses)  
What the--

Taps the screen with his middle finger while holding his CIGARETTE.

SOVIET SCIENTIST 2  
What is it?

SOVIET SCIENTIST 1  
 (confused)  
 NP Sierra...just kicked on.

SOVIET SCIENTIST 2  
 Impossible. Didn't we abandon it  
 over a month ago?

SOVIET SCIENTIST 1  
 I thought so. Maybe not...They  
 don't tell me anything.

END RUSSIAN DIALOGUE

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Luke scans the interface. His hands float over the blinking knobs and dials. He pulls a small note pad from his pocket.

LUKE  
 (scribbles on the pad)  
 It's more intricate than I thought.  
 (to Brian)  
 Take pictures of the console would  
 ya?

BRIAN  
 Sure, sure. Let me get the gear.

Brian rustles around in his bag and pulls out a camera. He SNAPS the bulb into place for the flash.

LUKE  
 Make sure you get tight on some of  
 those displays.

FLASH.

BRIAN  
 No prob. I'm glad you know how to  
 read this stuff, cause I don't have  
 a clue.

FLASH.

LUKE  
 Check this out.  
 (points)  
 This board over here shows the  
 tracking of our boomers. It's  
 scanning below us...performing  
 (MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)  
 diagnostics.

Luke's eyes dart back and forth in amazement.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
 That's the type of  
 sub...fascinating.

BRIAN  
 And that's a good thing?

LUKE  
 More than good. Unbelievable. Had  
 no idea...no one did actually.  
 Can't wait for the Nautilus to get  
 below us.

BRIAN  
 When are they coming?

LUKE  
 What time is it?

BRIAN  
 (flips his wrist over)  
 1300.

LUKE  
 Damn. About an hour. Doesn't give  
 me much time.

INT. SOVIET NAVAL AFFAIRS - VICE ADMIRAL IVANOV OFFICE

Ivanov stares out the window as snow flakes drift down to  
 the cold stale ground.

The door slightly opens. His secretary pokes her head in.

NOTE: THE DIALOGUE IN THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN RUSSIAN AND IS  
 SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH.

SECRETARY  
 Sir. A message for you.

She walks to his desk. He extends and grabs the paper.

INSERT LETTER, which reads.

IVANOV (V.O.)  
 "North Point Station SIERRA active.  
 As of 1257Z SIERRA has begun to  
 (MORE)

IVANOV (V.O.) (CONT'D)

transmit. Current location is triangulated to be 600 miles from Thule, Greenland. Remains unclear behind it's activation. Request further guidance."

BACK TO ROOM

He drops the paper in amazement. Looks up angrily.

IVANOV

I need to speak with the Ministers. Get Nicolai as well. I want a full report.

INT. VICE ADMIRAL IVANOV OFFICE - EVENING

Ten distinguished older men in dark perfectly tailored suits sit at an immaculate table. Similar in mannerisms, look, and feel. Almost a perfect set of cookie cutter Commies.

Finely etched pitchers of water and clear crystal glasses are at each seat. No one drinks.

IVANOV

Report.

NICOLAI

Our BEAR's have yet to find SIERRA. Lenin departed port along with ECHO subs K-29 and K-35 the day before yesterday.

IVANOV

Damn it. What of YEGER-416?

NICOLAI

It appears active. We are gathering all available resources.

IVANOV

I want a crew ready as soon as possible to parachute in once we find it.

NICOLAI

But sir, we can not extract them. The runway remains inoperable.

IVANOV

Do not worry about incidentals.

NICOLAI

And what of the Americans? What if they are there as we assess?

Ivanov leans forward on his elbows.

IVANOV

They are unlawfully on Soviet sovereign territory. Ensure they are dealt with in an appropriate fashion.

NICOLAI

(unsure)

Sir, I don't follow. What if they're armed? What would we do with them?

IVANOV

(very pointed)

Disarm them. Forcefully, if need be. Capture, kill, detain...makes no difference.

NICOLAI

Uhhh, but sir--

IVANOV

I am clear.

END OF RUSSIAN DIALOGUE

Ivanov takes his cigar and blows smoke harshly into the air.

INT. NORTH POINT STATION SIERRA - CONTROL ROOM

The computer panels start to BLINK and BEEP. Paper feeds into the printer. It makes notations of the *USS Nautilus*.

LUKE

Look.

(points to the paper)

Speed. Location. Type.

He slides in the chair from each side of the control panels.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Let me see if I can ping them.

Luke flips open one of the manuals. His fingers follow Russian lettering. He mumbles to himself as he grabs a knob



and turns. Pulls on several levers.

LUKE

That should do it. Let's see what happens now.

INT. USS NAUTILUS - SONAR ROOM - SAME

A loud ping rings in the SONARMAN's headset. He grabs his ear muffs and lifts them from his head in irritation.

SONARMAN

Damn, Captain. They have us...loud pings.

The Captain smiles. He knows now that the team's arrived above them. Now comes the time for counter-measures.

CAPTAIN

Didn't think they could do it, but they did. Run as many diagnostics as you can.

(to Executive Officer)

Notify LANTFLT and tell NAV we leave in four hours.

INT. NORTH POINT STATION SIERRA - CONTROL ROOM - MORNING

They sit on blankets against the wall next to a heater enjoying a much needed break.

Luke reaches into his breast pocket and pulls out a beautiful picture of Sylvia and Nathaniel.

BRIAN

Why the hell are you?

LUKE

You were there...not like I could've said no.

BRIAN

Sure you could.

LUKE

Easy for you to say. You didn't have a dozen eyes on you when you were volun-"told".

BRIAN

Ahhh, don't give me that shit.  
Everyone understands your family  
situation.

LUKE

Highly doubt that. If it's not  
your wife and kid does anybody  
really give a shit?

Luke bites back, gaining some gusto.

BRIAN

But still--

LUKE

Bri...the weight of those eyes in  
that conference room is a powerful  
thing. In those seconds there was  
no way in hell I could've said no.

BRIAN

You could have later.

LUKE

Really? No way. The most  
important thing for anyone is  
reputation. It's everything. I  
couldn't chance giving that up.  
What if we get off this block of  
ice and get this shit home. We're  
heros. Great! We move on and  
people forget sometime down the  
road about this great escapade.

BRIAN

Gotta--

Luke's has Brian in a corner where he knows he's the boss.

LUKE

But, and that's a big but, if this  
op failed and I wasn't here after  
being--

(air quotes)

Voluntold...my reputation would be  
ruined. So when you think about  
it, I didn't have a choice.

BRIAN

Wow...you thought this thing  
through.

LUKE  
Every night since that conference  
room--

BRIAN  
...and now your here. 3,000 miles  
from home in the middle of an ice  
island. Congrats.

The radio crackles. Intermittent STATIC with varying sound.  
In unison they turn towards look at the speaker.

RADIO (V.O.)  
(in Russian)  
North Point Station SIERRA. North  
Point Station SIERRA.

BRIAN  
What are they sayin'?

RADIO (V.O.)  
(in Russian)  
Acknowledge North Point Station  
SIERRA. This is ARII.

LUKE  
(confused)  
They're calling the station.

BRIAN  
This one?

LUKE  
Yes.

Luke sits up as if to salute the radio and places his  
picture on the top of a four-drawer FILING CABINET.

BRIAN  
What the hell for?

RADIO  
(in Russian)  
Sergei, are you there?

LUKE  
(shaken)  
Should I answer?

Brian snaps to his feet.

BRIAN  
 Fuck, I don't know.

Luke grabs the handset.

LUKE  
 Shit.

BRIAN  
 Just do it.

RADIO (V.O.)  
 (in Russian)  
 Again. This is AARI. Have you  
 arrived?

Luke turns his head. Clears his throat.

LUKE  
 (in perfect Russian)  
 This is Sergei, over.

RADIO (V.O.)  
 (in Russian)  
 Sergei, very good. We have  
 confirmation of system activation.

LUKE  
 (in Russian)  
 Yes. Yes.

RADIO (V.O.)  
 (in Russian)  
 Has either team arrived--

Static fills the speaker.

LUKE  
 (in Russian)  
 Say again, station.

RADIO (V.O.)  
 (in Russian)  
 --has...members--

The radio goes silent. Luke hits the handset.

LUKE  
 (in Russian)  
 AARI acknowledge, over.

SILENCE. They stare in shock at the radio.

BRIAN  
What did they say?

LUKE  
He asked if the rest have  
arrived...I think.

BRIAN  
What? Why the fuck would they come  
back?

LUKE  
Shit...they know we're here.

BRIAN  
But how?.

Brian looks to the ground to gain his composure.

LUKE  
Someone must have told them.

Luke is more angry at the thought of a spy.

BRIAN  
We kept this quiet.

LUKE  
I guess. When things automatically  
get turned on and start  
processing...

BRIAN  
But--

LUKE  
What? A polar bear got the  
generator going? How do we get a  
hold of the guys at Resolute? We  
need to get the hell out of here.

BRIAN  
We don't.

INT. ARCTIC AND ATLANTIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE - OPERATIONS  
CENTER - LATER

Two scientists sip coffee. Smoke skinny cigarettes. They  
flip through Soviet magazines. Bored as hell.

A MAN walks past the clear glass double doors to the room.

NOTE: THE DIALOGUE IN THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN RUSSIAN AND IS SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH.

SCIENTIST 1  
(spits out his coffee)  
What? Sergei!

SCIENTIST 2  
Sergei's at Sierra you idiot.

SCIENTIST 1  
(yells)  
Sergei!

Sergei pushes open the door. Cigarette in hand.

SERGEI  
What's with all the yelling?

END OF RUSSIAN DIALOGUE

SCIENTIST 2 stumbles for the phone. Punches the keys wildly.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Luke makes final preparations for their departure. Stuffs hard-drives and electrodes in an Army canvas duffle bag.

BRIAN  
It's that time, and the weather  
looks horrible.

Brian stares out the small window. Wind blows snow like a sand storm in the Sahara. It's fierce.

LUKE  
That bad?

BRIAN  
Thick as soup. You can't see 100  
yards. Gonna be impossible for  
them to find us.

LUKE  
(fast)  
But the Soviets, they said they're  
on their way.

BRIAN  
If our guys can't find us, they  
can't either.

LUKE  
What about the beacon?

BRIAN  
You crazy? I'm not deploying that  
until we absolutely have to. Then  
it's just a matter of time who  
finds us first.

Luke shakes his head.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
You stay here. I don't need both  
of us out in that shit.

Brian opens the door. A rush of cold swoops into the room.

EXT. RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

Brian looks up as pellets of snow hit him in the face. Puts  
his hand just above his eyebrows. Surveys the horizon.

BRIAN  
Damn.

He drags the duffle bag with the gear to the runway.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
I'm not deploying this thing in  
this mess.

Pulls his radio off his belt. Puts his back to the wind.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Raider 1. Over.

He stands there intently waiting.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Raider, over. You guys out there,  
over?

SILENCE.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Brian comes back into the room disheveled.

LUKE  
Anything?

BRIAN  
Nope. Terrible out there.

LUKE  
What are we gonna do?

BRIAN  
(paces back and forth)  
We can't stay here. I'm gonna  
deploy the beacon.

LUKE  
Knew you were going to say that.

BRIAN  
They're out there somewhere. Let's  
just hope they're closer than the  
other guys.

INT. B-17 - LATER

Crewman study the map. It's futile. A storm blankets a  
hundred miles wide sheet over the ice shelf.

TOM  
Raider 2. Nothing. Anything on  
your end?

PILOT (O.C.)  
Nothing Tom. If we don't see them  
or get a signal in the next 30  
minutes, we'll have to head back.

TOM  
Agree...fuel.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - LATER

Luke stands and throws papers across the table.

LUKE  
Damn it!

BRIAN  
Well...we have no choice. We need  
to get the fuck out of here.

LUKE  
Just do it.



BRIAN  
Roger that.

Brian angrily grabs the bright orange beacon on the shelf.

BRIAN  
(pissed)  
Be right back.

INT. SOVIET BEAR AIRCRAFT - COMMUNICATIONS CABIN - LATER

A circular green tube begins to flash in the top right corner. A bell RINGS.

The RADARMAN's eyes widen. He quickly grabs his headphones and microphone.

SONORMAN  
(in Russian)  
Captain! Captain! We have a  
beacon transmission due west.  
Approximately 40 minutes out.

PILOT  
(in Russian)  
Roger that. Comms, relay to  
headquarters, LENIN and the ECHOs.

INT. SOVIET BEAR AIRCRAFT - LATER

The pilots are more determined then ever. They know just up ahead is their greatest enemy.

Spetnaz paratroopers prepare to jump as a red light blinks and then sounds off.

The JUMPMASTER waves his hand in a circular motion.

JUMPMASTER  
(yells in Russian)  
Prepare for the drop.

They do last second checks of their straps. Some Ak-47s while others holster Tokarev pistols.

They get up one by one. Line up in formation.

INT. B-17 - COCKPIT

The dashboard lights flash.

CO-PILOT

Tom. We gott'em. 10 mics out.

TOM

Raider 2. You see that?

FULTON

Crew. Make preps for Skyhook.

Crewman jump into action. One trots over to the J-hook while the others take their positions.

TOM

Get on the radio. See if you can reach them.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

BRIAN

(smiles)

We'll we've done it.

(slams the door)

We're officially fucked!

LUKE

We have the Commies below us and now maybe on top of us.

BRIAN

Always the optimist. I'll get the hard drive bags and manuals if you can get the cameras.

LUKE

Got it.

BRIAN

Wait.

(puts his hand across  
Luke's chest)

Below us?

LUKE

I didn't tell you?

BRIAN

Uhhh. No.

Brian not liking any surprises at this point.

LUKE

Right before I pulled out the 416  
it picked up another sub.

BRIAN

Huh...another? Ours right?

LUKE

Nope. Soviet ECHO-class.

BRIAN

Christ, I didn't bring enough  
bullets!

LUKE

Now who's the optimist?

INT. RAIDER TWO - SAME

The crew intently look at the radar screens.

Four large red bulbs flash at first. Then continuous.

RADIOMAN

Sir, we have a problem, over.

CAPTAIN

What is it?

RADIOMAN

Four unidentified aircraft  
approaching, thirty mics out.

CAPTAIN

Say again?

RADIOMAN

Four aircraft approaching due east.

CAPTAIN

(to all)

Raider 1. Four aircraft  
approaching. Thirty mics to the  
east. Non-friendlies. Repeat  
non-friendlies.

INT. RAIDER ONE - COCKPIT - SAME

TOM

What?

FULTON

(snaps his head to Tom)

Did I hear them correctly?

TOM

I think so.

(to radio)

Raider 2, over. Did you say non-friendlies?

RAIDER 2 PILOT (O.C.)

Roger, that. Make it quick. It's no welcoming party.

TOM

My Fair Lady. Three minutes out.

FULTON

He's still not answering.

TOM

There's something wrong.

FULTON

(points out the window)

I see the balloon.

TOM

Yeah. So do I. It's really movin'.

EXT. RUNWAY - LATER

Brian and Luke strap down the duffle bags full of stolen Soviet gear to the balloon harness.

The air pump breathes life into the balloon. It rises from the icy floor.

BRIAN

This is it, bro. Just like we practiced. Help me strap it down.

The wind is strong but manageable. Gusts pick-up in spirits.

LUKE

Winds okay?

BRIAN  
Does it matter? Our guys are  
comin'.

LUKE  
(laughs)  
Suddenly the most popular place on  
the planet right now.

They both grab a bag.

BRIAN  
You're laughing? Who would've  
thought. Love it!

Grabs the silver hooks and straps them together.

BRIAN  
Throw the markers. They should be  
just over the horizon.

Luke holds the markers like grenades. Pulls the pins.

He chucks them toward the center of the runway.

The bright orange balloon stands out in stark contrast to  
the all white surroundings. Higher and higher it goes.

BRIAN  
They better get here.

On the horizon the hum of engines becomes apparent.

LUKE  
(points)  
There they are! Thank god!

Luke feels a rush of energy. Steam from his breath becomes  
prominent. Almost to a point of hyperventilating.

EXT. B-17 - CONTINUOUS

On the horizon two aircraft approach in formation.

SUPERIMPOSE: B-17 FLYING FORTRESS RAIDER 1 (SKYHOOK) AND  
RAIDER 2 (THE LOOKOUT).

Brian pulls the radio from his pocket. Grips it tight.

BRIAN  
(to radio)  
MY FAIR LADY to RAIDER over.

LUKE  
My fair lady?

BRIAN  
(puts hand over the  
speaker)  
It's my favorite movie.

Luke stares at him.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
I'm eccentric!  
(to radio)  
Raiders. First article is deployed  
and ready.

A huge gust of wind pushes them from behind, forcing the bags slide a couple feet down the runway. Luke jumps out of the way.

BRIAN  
God damn wind.

Brian dives on the bags to keep them from moving further.

TOM (O.C.)  
Good to see you LADY. Article in  
sight. Pick up in 45 seconds.

BRIAN  
(to radio)  
Better hurry the fuck up. Winds  
are gettin' worse.

The SKYHOOK apparatus is like a giant mouth waiting to eat its prey.

They back up slowly from the packages.

The plane zooms overhead. The propellers beat down.

The plane hooks the balloon. The rope slaps to attention. It's straight as an arrow.

The bags SNAP and slides two feet. Then ascends as the airplane flies away. A perfect snap and grab. Its straps flap as their lifted off up to the white sky.

BRIAN  
One down, two to go. You ready?

LUKE  
I'm ready but you first.

The wind kicks up. Sways the both of them.

BRIAN

What?

LUKE

I want to be the last one off this rock.

Brian stares at him intently.

Luke's eyes are filled with the courage of a lion. Brian has seen this before. It's one of determination. He never expected it from someone like Luke but he understands.

BRIAN

(solemn. pats him on the shoulder)

You got it, brother.

He begins to inflate his balloon. It's a quick operation.

Wind pulls it down wind slightly inch by inch.

BRIAN

(to radio)

My fair lady article two ready.

TOM (O.C.)

Roger that. 2 minutes.

The wind picks up. Brian leans into the wind to maintain his balance and keep from sliding backwards.

BRIAN

Proud to be here with ya.

LUKE

Thanks. Means a lot.

BRIAN

We did something good here.

LUKE

Couldn't have done it without your guidance.

Brian reaches for his BREAST POCKET.

BRIAN

Shit. I almost forgot.

He takes out his pistol.

Swings it over to Luke. Handle first.

BRIAN

Take it.

LUKE

(waves his hands)

No...for what?

BRIAN

If you don't get off this rock,  
you'll need it.

LUKE

Doesn't sound very encouraging.

BRIAN

Luke, here. Take it. You never  
know.

Luke reluctantly reaches out for it and grabs it awkwardly.

LUKE

If it makes you feel better.

BRIAN

It does. Remember, Come on, Dover!  
Come on, Dover! Move your bloomin'  
arse!

TOM (O.C.)

Thirty seconds.

LUKE

Really? Again with the My Fair  
Lady.

(nods)

You're just weird.

BRIAN

Trust me. If the Soviets get here  
and you get the opportunity to meet  
'em, think about what I said.

LUKE

I hope I don't get that chance.

The airplane zooms right over them. Any closer and Tom  
could have given them a high-five.

Luke takes a couple quick steps back as Brian is suddenly  
jerked up.



BRIAN  
 (laughs)  
 Helluva ride Luke Moffett. See yah  
 on the flip...ohhh!

Luke looks up.

BRIAN  
 (yells)  
 Yehaaa!

LUKE  
 Side.

Luke follows him with his eyes intently.

INT./EXT. RAIDER 1 - CABIN

Brian slides up the rope. The winch GRINDS as it pulls him closer. The crewman reach for him with the J-hook.

Brian's body is slammed against the fuselage. The crew finally grab his shoulder. Turn him around and YANK him in.

BRIAN  
 (excited)  
 What a ride!

He removes his helmet and mask. Throws it into the cabin.

CREWMAN  
 Brian? You left Luke down there on  
 his own?

BRIAN  
 He wanted to be the last one.

CREWMAN  
 Shit.  
 (to radio)  
 Tom, Luke is the last pick-up.

TOM (O.C.)  
 Say again?

CREWMAN  
 Luke's the only one left.

TOM (O.C.)  
 Why the hell did Brian leave him  
 down there?

CREWMAN  
You'll have to ask him.

He hands the headset over to Brian.

CREWMAN  
Here. Tom wants to talk to you.

Brian grabs them. Places them over his head.

BRIAN  
This is Bri.

TOM (O.C.)  
Why'd you leave him down there?

BRIAN  
He insisted.

TOM (O.C.)  
And you let him?

BRIAN  
If you saw the look on his face you  
woulda done the same.

EXT./INT. BEAR AIRCRAFT - MOMENTS LATER

Spetnaz paratroopers one by one hurl out of the side door.  
Immediately their gray and white parachutes deploy.

EXT. RUNWAY - SAME

Luke bends down and unzips the duffel bag. Drags the  
balloon out from the bag. Unfurls the launch cord. Hooks  
up the compressor to inflate the balloon.

He looks up to notice an airplane on the horizon. He  
immediately knows it's not American.

LUKE  
Their here.

A rush of fear overcomes him. He's frozen where he stands.

TOM (O.C.)  
My Fair Lady. You out there?

SILIENCE.

TOM (O.C.)  
My Fair Lady. Come in.

Luke comes to. He's shaken. Grabs his radio.

LUKE  
(to radio)  
This is her, over.

TOM (O.C.)  
So you decided to stay?

LUKE  
(to radio)  
Raider. Question for you.

TOM (O.C.)  
Keep our line clean.

LUKE  
Rodger. Are we not alone?

TOM (O.C.)  
Affirmative. Let's get this over  
with. Two minutes to catch.

LUKE  
(to radio)  
Roger. Balloon up. Do you see it?

TOM (O.C.)  
Yes.

Luke grabs the hook. Snaps it to his harness. A surprise gust of wind hits his body.

He STUMBLES. Then falls to the ice. Slides five feet and stops at a small crack in the ice.

LUKE  
(to radio)  
Raider 1. The winds are kicking up  
on me.

The wind gusts are now in constant 10 second spurts.

TOM (O.C.)  
Lady, you're breaking up. Sixty  
seconds.

LUKE  
Damn it.

Pushes himself to his feet. He grips the rope even tighter.

The wind pushes him down again further down the runway.

The radio dislodges from his belt and slides on the slick ice and out of reach.

The balloon moves further down the runway. It's no longer straight overhead. It's hundreds of feet ahead of Luke.

He begins to slide again. He's totally off track.

INT. RAIDER 1 - COCKPIT

TOM

Damn it. That balloon keeps movin' around.

FULTON

Don't hook it wrong. If we snap it we have no way of getting him.

TOM

I know. I know. Took us two days to find this damn place again.

FULTON

Or the Soviets. That beacon is just begging the Soviets to find him.

The balloon is moving ten feet to either side.

TOM

We need to make another pass. This isn't gonna work.

(to radio)

My Fair Lady. We need to come back around...Lady, over?

Fulton looks concerned.

EXT. RAIDER TWO - SAME

PILOT

(to radio)

Get him out quick. Those paratroopers are runnin' at him at a good clip.

EXT. RUNWAY

Luke's body is dragged slightly along the icy runway. He looks up and sees the B-17 take a hard left.

LUKE  
(yells)  
Where you guys going?

His stomach drops. He's rethinking his decision now.

The wind grabs the balloon again but harder and makes him slide more quickly and farther.

Luke's body is being dragged violently, bumping along the runway hitting him like a PRIZE FIGHTER.

LUKE  
Owww. Damn it!

EXT. RUNWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Luke gathers himself. Steady as possible. Gets to his feet.

LUKE  
Get here already!

The airplane is again on the horizon. Makes an approach.

Luke can see the plane for a quick moment as he struggles to stay in line with the balloon.

He slides ten more feet toward a wider crack and falls on his back.

LUKE  
Shit!

He's dragged feet first toward the crack at a high speed.

LUKE  
Ooofff!

He slams into the crack. He manages to wedge his feet in front of him. Implants his feet in the crack.

He fights the fierce wind to keep from being blown over and out of the crevasse in the ice.

The balloon tugs fiercely at him.

LUKE  
 (yells)  
 You're not going anywhere.

The airplane gets louder and louder.

In the distance he sees movement. The paratroopers.  
 They're far enough away but getting closer.

LUKE  
 Holy shit!

EXT. RUNWAY PERIMETER - SAME

Soviet paratroopers with Ak-47's slog through the dense snow. Fat backpacks show the visit could be a long one.

INT. B-17 - RAIDER 1

The balloon sways from side to side. It's going to be a tight fit in the jaws of Skyhook.

Fulton peers through binoculars.

FULTON  
 Damn. That balloon must've dragged  
 him a hundred feet.

Fulton moves the binoculars down the runway. He sees paratroopers as they head toward Luke.

FULTON (CONT'D)  
 Ohhh, my god.

He sees Luke as he struggles to remain upright. His arms move from side to side with the sway of the cord.

TOM  
 Steady...steady.

Tom struggles with the flight joystick. The wings flop at the tips like bird wings.

The crew bump against the fuselage and gear.

FULTON  
 He's holding on. We can't miss.

The turbulence forces the airplane downward.

TOM

I got 'em.

RAIDER 2 PILOT (O.C)

Raider 1. Soviets on the ground!

FULTON

Come on Luke.

EXT. RUNWAY

The hum of the engines give Luke renewed strength. He leans his head back to see the plane.

The plane roars right over him.

LUKE

Please work.

He feels better saying it out loud.

The balloon swoops to the right of the hook and then slides to the center.

The rope takes hold then stiffens but at its end. The balloon is so far from Luke.

He's yanked from the icy crack and thrown to the ground onto his stomach. Now he's being dragged.

INT. B-17 - RAIDER 1

Crewman hang partially out of the hatch watching Luke struggle below.

CREWMAN

Tom. Pull up! Pull up! Luke...I mean Lady is being dragged.

TOM

Hold on everyone.

Tom grabs the handles of the joystick and yanks them back.

The plane takes a sharp upward movement, then a move to starboard. Everyone's stomachs moves into their throats.

EXT. RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

Luke's legs kick wildly as he's dragged with increasing speed. His face-shield slams the ice, burning his cheek and bloodies his nose.

LUKE

Owww!

The plane's engine moans loudly like a dying whale.

Luke is yanked upward like a sack of potatoes. The front part of his helmet hits the ice like a hammer blow.

A two inch CRACK appears in his helmet. The hit bloodies his nose even more.

Luke BLACKS OUT for a second.

Eyes blink uncontrollably. He sees the runway underneath him get smaller and smaller as he's pulled upward towards the plane.

He comes to his senses. He stretches his arms out quickly to keep from spinning.

The Soviet paratroopers are closer than ever. They raise their weapons.

BANG. BANG.

INT/EXT. RAIDER 1

CREWMAN 1

Their shooting!

CREWMAN 2 (O.C.)

(to radio)

He's on his way.

TOM

(pants)

Leveling off. Doc, can you go back there and check on him?

FULTON

Just going.

He unhooks his straps. Jumps to head back.

TOM

Raider 2. Get the hell out of here!



Luke is guided in by the crew.

Fulton pushes the crewman aside to help with retrieving Luke. He wants to see him first.

Fulton grabs him. YANKS him in.

Luke stumbles onboard. Lands on his back. He pants profusely.

Fulton practically jumps on top of him to give him the biggest hug. Grabs his shoulders.

FULTON

What were you thinkin'?

LUKE

(pants)

For once...in my life...

(laughs)

I wasn't.

Fulton and Brian break out in laughter.

CREWMAN

(to radio)

He got 'em.

INT. B-17 CABIN - LATER

Luke stares out the small, circular window. Clouds pass by in spurts. It's cramped. Gear stacked floor to ceiling. NP SIERRA equipment stuffed everywhere.

Crewman SCRAMBLE about making adjustments.

Suddenly Luke grabs his pocket. Frantically he looks through his coat and pant pockets.

Grabs his bag. Rifles through it. His notebook, pen, and a scarf drop to the FLOOR.

LUKE MOFFETT

Shit! Shit!

His face turns white.

CREWMAN

Sir. You ok?

INT. NORTH POINT STATION SIERRA - CONTROL ROOM - LATER

Spetnaz paratroopers and a KGB OFFICER barge in. Guns drawn.

A look of disbelief at the condition of the room.

They forcefully search the rooms. Push chairs and anything not nailed down to the ground.

Equipment is clearly missing from computer racks.

Slots empty. Wires dangle from underneath the CONSOLES.

Books with ripped out papers are on the table. Left over food wrappers on the floor.

A small 2x3 photograph lays on the filing cabinet.

A soldier reaches to pick it up.

SPETNAZ PARATROOPER

(in Russian)

Who's this?

Hands it to the agent.

SOVIET KGB AGENT

(in perfect English)

I guess we'll find out.

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER:

"Fulton's Skyhook was continually used by many government agencies as late as 1996 on various aircraft platforms. It also became a movie action scene favorite and has been featured in such films as *The Dark Knight*, James Bond *Thunderball* and in several video games, most recently the popular *Metal Gear Solid* series.

As for the Soviet top secret crypto gear...we'll probably never know."

FADE OUT

END FILM.