

HIGHLANDER

by

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FADE IN:

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

New York Rangers v. Edmonton Oilers.

15,000 screaming fans leap to their feet.

Gretsky steals the puck, streaks across the ice, beats two defenders, shoots and scores.

Oilers 6, Rangers 0. Oiler fans bellow approval.

One silent SPECTATOR, in overcoat, slacks and scarf, stands out in the crowd, unmoved by the din. He is:

CONNER MACLEOD

An aura of power and charisma sets him apart. His hypnotic eyes watch Ranger defenders slam Gretsky into the wall, punching and kicking him.

SHOUTING PLAYERS storm onto the ice.

STICKS SWING in a BRUTAL FREE-FOR-ALL.

The crowd CHEERS. A DRUNK WHOOPS at the silent man.

DRUNK

Helluva fight, ain't it? Helluva fight. Lotta fun, ain't it?

Oblivious, Macleod watches the battle. In his mind, the STICK-WIELDING PLAYERS BECOME:

CUT TO:

15TH CENTURY HIGHLANDERS WIELDING BROADSWORDS

CLASHING in battle. Mountains tower over rocks and heather.

WHINNYING HORSES, agonized CRIES, RINGING steel, SKIRLING PIPES.

DRUNK (V.O.)

Let's go belt somebody, then I buy you a drink. Whaddya say?

CUT TO:

HOCKEY STICKS CLASHING IN MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

In the riot on the ice.

Concentrating, MacLeod scans the crowd. Like a predator catching a scent, he leaves swiftly. The Drunk yells after him.

DRUNK
Hey! Where ya goin'?

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Striding past rows of cars. FOOTSTEPS ECHOING in the Garden's underground garage. MacLeod senses a presence. It's very close.

Suddenly, a MAN's silhouette appears in a tunnel, blocking his path, breath steaming in the arctic air.

MAN
MacLeod.

A huge sword appears in the Man's hands. He swings. MacLeod sidesteps, drawing a weapon from inside his coat.

A Samurai sword, carved handguard, razor-sharp, feather-light.

The Man's overhead slams onto concrete, ripping up hunks of stone. MacLeod fans his blade.

MACLEOD AND THE MAN'S SWORDS

Clang in the tunnel, pulverizing cars, gouging columns in showers of brilliant sparks.

Running Feet, Shouting VOICES, distant SIRENS.

His opponent is outmatched. Surging forward:

MACLEOD

Cuts off the Man's head. A shimmering energy surges between the corpse and MacLeod. MacLeod starts to glow. The garage is crackling. Windshields EXPLODE. SIRENS closer.

VOICE (O.S.)
Over here!

Samurai sword in hand, MacLeod sprints off, swallowed by the dark. People SHOUT.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Racing through the garage. Behind him, a woman screams. Desperate, he hides his weapon in a roof duct hidden by tiles, driving it out of sight.

In the arena above, New York scores. The CROWD CHEERS.

The SOUND DISTORTS, becoming...

CUT TO:

CHEERING VILLAGERS LINING A ROAD

Loch Shiel, Scottish Highlands, 1536. Glamis castle towers over thatched huts by the shore.

A DRAWBRIDGE CRASHES down like thunder, skirling BAG-PIPES and DRUMS.

THE CLAN MACLEOD

Two hundred strong, rides out to battle, tartan cloaks, bronze shields, claymores flashing in the sun. Hatchet-faced FATHER RAINEY chants prayers.

FATHER RAINEY

God bless our brave heroes. May this year of
Our Lord 1536 bring victory to the Clan
MacLeod.

VILLAGERS

(cheering)

Death and damnation to the Fraziers! Long
live the Clan MacLeod!

Riding in the column:

CONNER MACLEOD

The ice hockey spectator, 466 years earlier. The same age but rough-hewn, not yet possessing the quiet strength of later years. Eyes alight, huge claymore sword strapped to his side.

Carved into the blade, the single word:

MACLEOD

Riding with him, two older clansmen: DUGAL, his cousin, short, arms like trees, and ANGUS, bulky and bearded. Dugal shouts over the din.

DUGAL

Are you scared, Conner?

MACLEOD

(lying)

No, cousin Dugal. I'm not.

ANGUS

(to MacLeod)

Don't talk rubbish, lad. I peed my kilt the
first time I rode to battle.

DUGAL

(to MacLeod)

Ah, Angus pees his kilt all the time.

MacLeod laughs, hiding his nervousness.

A pretty girl, KATE, races down the column holding high a bouquet.

MacLeod sweeps her up. She plants the flowers in his hat. She jumps down excitedly.

DUGAL

(continuing; to MacLeod)

A girl like that can wound a soldier more than a Frazier's sword, my friend.

KATE

Angus, you and Dugal bring him back in one piece. D'you hear?

DUGAL

We know which piece you want, lassie.

Yell from Angus. DRUMS and BAGPIPES.

CUT TO:

THE KURGAN

Standing on a hill, watching the Clan MacLeod advance into the gathering moorish fog below.

The Kurgan is a frightening hulk astride a massive black stallion. Flashing eyes and a cruel mouth.

Frazier chief MURDOCH gallops up.

KURGAN

Is the one called Conner among them?

MURDOCH

Aye.

KURGAN

Remember our pact. The boy is mine.

Murdoch nods. He fears this giant.

FROM BELOW

... can be heard the BATTLE CRIES and frenzied BAG-PIPES of the MacLeod and Frazier clans.

MURDOCH

It's begun. Death to the MacLeods!

They charge.

CUT TO:

THE BATTLE OF LOCH SHIEL, 1536

MacLeods and Frazers collide in fury. Raging carnage. Fog slowly moving in.

MacLeod, Dugal and Angus in the thick of it. MacLeod tries to engage the enemy. Each time they avoid him.

Dugal's helpless beneath three Frazers. Flying from the saddle, Angus kills two of them. The third bolts.

Gradually, the fog makes it impossible to see more than a few yards. Each man's battle is his own, hopelessly separated from the battling clansmen around them.

Wild-eyed, MacLeod leaps off his horse, hauling Dugal up.

MACLEOD

(shouting)

Nobody will fight me! They all run away!

DUGAL

(grinning)

Great, laddie. Stay by me.

Suddenly, they see:

A HULKING GIANT ON A BLACK STALLION

Thundering down on them, sword wheeling, an unstoppable juggernaut, butchering everything in his path.

It's the Kurgan

MACLEOD

(transfixed)

Mother of God!

He feels dizzy. The Kurgan knocks Dugal senseless, disintegrating MacLeod's shield.

Snarling, he vaults from his horse, driving his blade deep into MacLeod's stomach.

Mortally wounded, MacLeod drops to his knees, vainly swinging at the ghastly specter. The Kurgan swats away his sword as though it were a toothpick.

Relishing the moment, he raises his blade high, voice grating in triumph

KURGAN

There can be only one.

MacLeod is helpless. Time hangs suspended. Lost in the blackness of the Kurgan's eyes, he prepares to meet his maker.

At the last second, Dugal, Angus and others appear, pile-driving the Kurgan back over dying clansmen.

KURGAN
Another time, Highlander.

Life ebbing, MacLeod groans, staring at the sky.

CUT TO:

POLICE CRUISERS

SCREECHING to a halt outside the Garden, SIRENS DYING, blocking the exit tunnel. Cops pile out, guns drawn, GARFIELD and HAGGERTY in charge.

Headlights appear. A BMW crests the ramp at 60, sees the block, SQUEALS to a smoking stop. Cops take aim.

HAGGERTY
(shouting)
Get out of the car! Put your hands on the hood.
(nothing)
Move!

MacLeod obeys. They frisk him. Garfield finds a wallet, checks a license:

MacLeod's photo, name and address:

"RUSSELL EDWIN NASH
1182 HUDSON STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10013"

Garfield shines a light in the suspect's eyes. They seem bottomless, unafraid.

GARFIELD
Where you going in such a hurry, Mr. Nash?

Garfield grabs his arm. trying to handcuff him. Bad idea. MacLeod hurls him away. Garfield falls on his ass.

A ton of cops swamp MacLeod, slamming his face into the windshield. Enraged, Garfield staggers up, jamming his .45 into MacLeod's neck.

GARFIELD
Don't move, asshole. Don't even breathe.

Another cruiser arrives. It's DYING SIREN becomes...

CUT TO:

A LONE PIPER ON GLAMIS CASTLE TURRET

His mournful LAMENT rising to the stars bove

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Breathing his last on a trestle bed in a hut, torso bandaged.

Fire crackles in a hearth. Kate kneels by the bed. Battle-scarred, Dugal and Angus stand by.

FATHER RAINEY

In nomine patri, et filii et spiritus sancti.
Amen.

(leaving)

It is over. Other men are dying this day. I
must attend them.

Kate collapses, weeping. Dugal and Angus drag her away.

ANGUS

He's a Highlander, by God. The last sound he
hears shall not be a wailing woman.

They leave. Flickering shadows. MacLeod's abored breathing slowly
fades.

CUT TO:

LIEUTENANT FRANK MORAN, HOMICIDE

In the garage under the Garden, breathing hard. Bulky, in raincoat
and hat, six months to pension. With him:

DETECTIVE WALTER BEDSOE

Honest, tough, not a million miles deep.

At their feet, the Man's torso. Further away, the head. TV crews
jostle under lights. Fans shout behind barricades - when can they
get their goddamn cars?

BRENDA WYATT

Forensics, sexy in jeans, boots and windbreaker, shoves through the
crowd, ducking the barrier. She carries bags of equipment.

JACK LEBOWSKY

Coroner's office, wild hair, pasty-faced, takes flash shots, unfazed
by the grisly scene.

Brenda joins Moran.

BRENDA

Damn it, Frank. Forensics is supposed to be
notified the same time as Homicide.

(noticing corpse)

What a mess.

MORAN

This one came unassembled.

Lebowski laughs.

BRENDA

(to Moran)

Did you make an arrest?

MORAN

Yeah. An antique dealer named Nash on Hudson Street.

She moves away:

ANOTHER ANGLE

Frowning, she examines a row of cars, confounded by the blitzed windshields. What the hell happened?

BESIDE THE BODY

Lebowski takes final shots, winking at Bedsoe.

LEBOWSKY

(to Moran)

How come you're not asking me the cause of death, Frank?

Bedsoe chuckles.

MORAN

Cut the crap, Lebowski. What time did he buy it?

Lebowski kneels, examining the corpse, checking his watch.

LEBOWSKY

Ten. Ten-thirty. And whatever made this cut was razor-sharp.

BEDSOE

(to Moran, indicating corpse)

Frank, wasn't there something on the teletype about a guy killed in Jersey 2 nights ago, just like this?

Moran scratches his head.

BEHIND THE CORVETTE

Brenda freezes, staring down at a huge sword.

BRENDA

(shouting)

Hey, Frank. Look at this.

Moran and Lebowski join her.

BRENDA
It's a Toledo-Salamanca.

MORAN
It's a what?

She dusts the jeweled hilt for prints.

BRENDA
A sword, Frank. A very rare sword.

MORAN
Worth much?

BRENDA
Only about a million bucks.
(standing up)
Any antique dealer with a shop on Hudson
Street could tell you that.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Sitting in a room, waiting. Peeling paint, tape recorder, table and chairs.

Garfield, the cop who booked him, leans on the wall, itching to get even.

MacLeod suddenly stares at him. Garfield shivers. The guy's eyes are like lasers. The cop looks away.

MORAN AND BEDSOE

Enter, slamming the door. Moran's got a package and folder. Bedsoe joins Garfield against the wall.

Moran sits down, package by his chair. He clicks on the tape and opens a folder.

Inside: wallet, money and driver's license issued to Russell Nash.

He tosses a mug-shot of a swarthy man onto the table.

MORAN
Ever see this guy before, Nash?

MacLeod hasn't.

MORAN
Name's Osta Vazilek. Bulgarian national. Got his head chopped off two nights ago in Jersey.
(unwrapping package)
Ever get over to Jersey, Nash?

MACLEOD

Not if I can help it.

MORAN

You're an antique dealer, right?

MACLEOD

Yes.

Moran lays down the jewelled weapon.

MORAN

Okay, what's this?

MACLEOD

A sword.

MORAN

It's a...

(checks notes)

...Toledo-Salamanca broad-sword. Worth a million bucks.

MACLEOD

So?

MORAN

You wanna hear a theory?

(MacLeod shrugs)

You went down to the garage to buy this sword from some guy.

(quickly)

What was his name?

MACLEOD

I don't know. You tell me.

MORAN

His name was Iman Fasil. You fought about the price. Then you cut off his head.

MACLEOD

Wanna hear another theory?

(Moran nods)

This Fasil was so upset by the Rangers' lousy performance tonight, he went down to the garage and in a fit of depression, cut off his own head.

Bedsoe LAUGHS.

MORAN

That ain't funny, Walt Garfield can control himself no longer.

GARFIELD

You a faggot, Nash?

MACLEOD

Why? You cruising for ass?

GARFIELD

(leaning in)

I'll tell you what happened, Russell. You went down to the garage looking for a hand-job, and just didn't want to pay for it.

MACLEOD

You're sick.

Garfield swings. Kicking the table aside, MacLeod jumps up, SMASHING his fist into Garfield's sternum. Garfield goes down.

Moran's on Garfield in a flash, knee on his chest, Bedsoe struggles to restrain MacLeod.

MORAN

(shouting)

Calm down!

(to Garfield)

I mean it, damnit!

Flinging Bedsoe off him, MacLeod picks up his wallet.

MACLEOD

Am I under arrest?

(no answer)

Then we're through.

He walks to the door.

MORAN

Nash, we're just getting started.

MacLeod is gone. Moran stands up. Garfield struggles to his feet.

GARFIELD

Jesus. That guy hits like a train.

MORAN

Shut up, Rocky. I'll deal with you in a minute.

He turns to Bedsoe

MORAN

Tail him, Walt. And try and pay attention. That sucker's cool as ice.

Bedsoe leaves. Moran turns to Garfield.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

MacLeod steps out into the crisp night air.

Oblivious to traffic, his eyes scan the dark. Sensing something, he turns south, looking toward Jersey.

CUT TO:

A TAN CUTLASS ON THE NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE

Knifing through the night. Inside, behind the wheel:

THE KURGAN - A CHILLING SPECTER

Shark's eyes, short curly hair.

Like MacLeod, he hasn't aged but a hideous scar runs from ear-to ear across his throat. It affects his voice, turning it into a metallic gurgle. News on the RADIO.

NEWSCASTER'S VOICE

Police arrested a man at the decapitation scene in Madison Square Garden. They have not released his name.

KURGAN

(turns it off)

I know his name.

His metallic gargle is even more grating.

He slams a cassette into the stereo, a high-decibel heavy-metal ROCK SONG: It's the Kurgan's anthem.

Raving singer, pounding drums, shrieking guitars. In the headlights, a sign:

"YOU ARE NOW LEAVING NEW JERSEY
THE GARDEN STATE
HOPE YOU ENJOYED YOUR STAY!"

The Kurgan smiles grotesquely.

KURGAN

I had a better time than Osta Vazilek. That is for sure.

His voice sounds like nails on a slate.

BRENDA

Sitting at a spectrograph, placing metal shards under a lens. Clamping wires to them, she starts a machine.

HUMMING sound. Crackling arc. She checks a computer, takes photos. The arc dies.

She waits. A printer starts. Data rolls. She studies it.

BRENDA

It's not possible.

Incredulous, she runs the test again. Same result.

BRENDA

Son-of-a-bitch.

Grabbing coat and bag, she heads for the door.

CUT TO:

BEDSOE

Following MacLeod along Central Park South, down Broadway to Times Square.

ANGLE

Hungry and tired, Bedsoe trudges past bums, porno-pits and neon signs.

MacLeod descends stairs to a subway. Picking up speed:

BEDSOE

Races down after him. Reaching the tracks, he can't believe his eyes.

The platform's deserted.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Driving her red Pontiac, turning south on 5th Avenue.

Late-night traffic. Lionel Ritchie on the RADIO.

AT 34TH

She turns west, arriving at Madison Square Garden. Parking on the street, she gets out, carrying a bag.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Walking through the garage, flashlight piercing the murk.

She shivers, heading for where Fasil was killed.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD'S FACE IN THE FLARE OF THE LIGHTER

In the underground garage. Reaching into the roof-duct hidden by tiles, he pulls out his Samurai sword.

Noting the chipped edge and missing pieces, he slides it into a sheath inside his coat.

FOOTSTEPS. He snuffs the lighter

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Guiding a metal-detector across the floor. Chalk outlines where Fasil's corpse used to be. Near a column, a red light blinks on her detector.

Cradling the flash, she removes SHARDS with a scalpel, dropping them into a plastic bag.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Hidden in shadows.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Hears a distant CLANK. She whirls her flashlight up the tunnel.

BRENDA

Who's there?

Silence. Something's down here. She can feel it.

Trying to control her panic, she heads for the exit. She starts running, faster and faster.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Trying to unlock her Pontiac. Heart racing, she drops her keys.

BRENDA

Goddamn it.

Retrieving them, she opens the door and ROARS off.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Entering P.J. Clarke's. Almost empty. It's late.

She takes a corner table, trying to calm down. PHIL, the waiter, appears.

PHIL

Hi, Brenda. What can I get you?

BRENDA
Vodka. Lots of it.

He leaves.

Removing the plastic bag from her purse, she opens it, tipping a metal shard into her trembling hand.

MACLEOD

Enters and looks around. Spotting her, he sits in a nearby booth. Phil re-appears with a bottle of vodka.

PHIL
Say when.

Three-quarters full.

BRENDA
When.

She drinks. Noticing MacLeod, Phil glides over, returning to Brenda.

PHIL
The guy over there wants you to join him for a drink.

BRENDA
What guy?

Leaning forward, she sees a dim profile.

BRENDA
Thank him and tell him no.

Phil delivers the message. Brenda gulps vodka, mind in turmoil.

Suddenly, MacLeod sits by her side. She jumps like a cat.

BRENDA
What do you think you're doing?

MACLEOD
Joining you. I'd like to buy you a drink.

Brenda drains her vodka, setting down the glass.

BRENDA
I don't drink

About to tell him to get lost, she looks into his eyes for the first time. Unexpectedly, she's overcome by feelings of warmth and safety.

MACLEOD
What's your name?

His voice caresses her. She's mesmerized by his gaze. Adrift, she hears herself answer.

BRENDA

Brenda.

The silence between them is electric. Phil RINGS the register. The spell is broken.

She's got to get away from this guy. Shouldering her bag, she rises, heading for the door. He doesn't move.

MACLEOD

Do you get over to Madison Square Garden much?

She freezes, heart pounding.

BRENDA

(turning)

What did you say?

MACLEOD

Madison Square Garden. Get over there much?

Eyes that were comforting 10 seconds ago are now cold, drilling into her brain.

BRENDA

Why?

MACLEOD

They've got basketball. The circus. Ice-hockey.

(a beat)

What's your last name, Brenda?

She swallows hard.

BRENDA

How come you're asking me about Madison Square Garden? Did you follow me in here?

No answer. He smiles. Her blood turns to ice.

BRENDA

Who the hell are you?

MACLEOD

(rising)

Let me walk you home, Brenda. Pretty girl, alone on the streets at night. No telling what could happen.

BRENDA

Forget it. I can take care of myself.

He shrugs, sitting down. She walks out, pausing to look back at him in the gloom. He raises his glass to her.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE BAR

Brenda waits in shadows, watching MacLeod leave. He stands for a moment, looking up and down 55th Street.

Pulling up his collar, he moves off into the night, turning down a dark alley.

Making a fateful decision, she follows him.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Walking briskly near the East River. Cold wind blowing. 4:00 a.m. Deserted.

Steam rises from vents. Cars line the curb. Cats YOWL. It's spooky.

Hearing FOOTSTEPS, he stops every few yards.

At the corner of 46th, his eyes rake the street. Nothing. Without warning, he sprints off, disappearing into:

A SHADOWY CONSTRUCTION SITE

RUNNING FOOTSTEPS. He grasps the Samurai hilt inside his coat.

A FIGURE hurtles round the corner. Springing forward, MacLeod grabs handfuls of hair.

SHOUTING in panic, Brenda fights to get free.

BRENDA

Get your hands off me!

Pumping with adrenalin, MacLeod shakes her, pulling her into the dark, against a brick wall. She SCREAMS.

A light goes on in a nearby apartment.

MACLEOD

Be quiet. I --

He breaks off, listening to the night, eyes flashing. Instinctively MacLeod ducks, yanking her with him to the dirt.

Next second:

A GLEAMING SWORD SHATTERS BRICK

Inches above their heads. He rolls away from her, struggling to avoid a slashing blade. Dumbstruck, Brenda stares up at:

A HOWLING GIANT WITH A SCAR ACROSS HIS NECK

Wielding a huge sword. It's the Kurgan.

MacLeod grabs a steel pipe, blocking the Kurgan's murderous blows. The Kurgan's so fast, MacLeod can't draw his sword.

In desperation, he side-steps and charges, tackling him. Locked together, they topple down an embankment into:

A SHALLOW PIT

Untangling himself, sword in hand, the Kurgan attacks. MacLeod defends himself with the pipe.

KURGAN

(swinging)

Good to see you again, MacLeod. 400 years is a long time.

MACLEOD

(blocking)

You slimy bastard!

SOUNDS of DISTANT SIRENS.

UP THE EMBANKMENT

Brenda peers through the murk. Straining to see what's going on, she loses her footing. CRYING OUT, she falls:

INTO THE PIT

Cannoning into MacLeod's back.

MACLEOD

Jesus Christ!

(yelling)

Get the hell out of here!

Bellowing, the giant charges again. MacLeod shoves Brenda out of the path of sudden death.

KURGAN

(rasping)

There can only be one, Highlander.

The two men battle through the skeleton of a building. The Kurgan's murderous blade misses MacLeod by inches, slicing through solid iron.

The sky ERUPTS. THRASHING ROTORS. ROARING down-blast.

Blinding clouds of dirt and debris.

IT'S A POLICE CHOPPER

Searchlight beams probe swirling dust. From the sky, an AMPLIFIED VOICE:

VOICE (V.O.)
You, on the ground! Stay where you are!

Brenda CHOKES, blinded. From nowhere, MacLeod grabs her. His arms are like steel.

KURGAN'S VOICE
(SHOUTING out of the dark)
Some other time, Highlander. There can be only one.

MacLeod hauls Brenda up the embankment, away from the light, melting into the dark. SIRENS CLOSER.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Dragging Brenda across 1st Avenue.

BRENDA
(lungs bursting)
Stop. For Christ's sake.

They halt under a street-light. She gasps for breath.

BRENDA
Who in the name of God was that? He called you Highlander. What did he mean, "There can be only one?" Only one what?

MACLEOD
Shut up!

He pulls her close, eyes like bullet-holes.

MACLEOD
Listen, lady. You almost got yourself killed.

BRENDA
I want --

He shakes her, trying to scare her away.

MACLEOD
Don't you ever follow me again.
(intensely)
Forget about what you saw tonight. You only have one life. If you value it.
(angrily)
Go home!

He strides off. A garbage can CRASHES in an alley.

Brenda jumps.

CUT TO:

KENNY, A DESK CLERK

Signing in the Kurgan. Ansonia Hotel, 73rd and Broadway.

A TV is on Derelicts litter the lobby.

KENNY, a chain-smoking greaser, checks the name the Kurgan's written in the register, handing him a key.

KENNY

Okay, Mr. Victor Kruger. Room 315. And I'm gonna hit you for 20 in advance.

The Kurgan pulls out a thick roll of bills, dropping a 20. Kenny eyes the roll greedily.

KENNY

Listen, you want anything. Broads, blow. Just dial 0.

Picking up a black, oblong case, the Kurgan heads for the elevator.

CUT TO:

THE KURGAN

On a sagging bed in Room 315. Roaches crawl on a hot-plate.

Shirtless, heavily-scarred, he munches tacos, watching Yosemite Sam on TV, digging the violence.

He opens his black case. Laid out in velvet slots:

THE COMPONENTS OF A LARGE SWORD

Meaty fingers caress quillions, pommel, hilt and blade. Getting up, he moves to the window. Below, junkies shiver in Needle Park.

KURGAN

At last... the Gathering.

He chuckles, an unnerving sound. KNOCK on the door.

A blonde HOOKER in hot-pants and boots, breasts bursting from a tight sweater, leans on the jamb, cracking gum.

HOOKER

I'm Candy.

KURGAN

Of course you are.

Dragging her in, he flings her on the bed. Fearfully, she watches him unbuckle his belt. He slams the door.

CUT TO:

DUGAL

Slamming down a tankard of ale in the Glamis tavern. Angus and Kate sit with him.

It's 1536, the day after the fight between the Frazers and MacLeods.

Angry villagers pack the place, only one thing on their minds. MacLeod's strange delivery from the jaws of death.

Kate's thrilled by all the excitement.

DUGAL

You saw the wound, Angus. He should have died.

KATE

I say he's got the devil in him.

The tavern erupts in shouting

MacLeod enters. Sudden silence. Seeing Angus, he moves to join his table.

DUGAL

(rising)

Drinking with us, are you?

MacLeod freezes. Kate's eyes sparkle. Angus avoids his gaze.

MACLEOD

What's the matter, Dugal?

DUGAL

You. Talking and breathing and this morning, all but a corpse.

(shouting)

How did you manage that, Conner MacLeod?

MACLEOD

Would you rather I was dead?

KATE

(to crowd)

It's not natural. He's in league with Lucifer.

Uproar.

MACLEOD

Don't say that, Kate.

DUGAL

I'll say it. You've got the devil in you.

MACLEOD

We've been kinsmen 15 years, cousin.

DUGAL

Conner MacLeod was my kinsman. I don't know who you are.

Kate's eyes dance. The tension is electric

ANGUS

You'd best leave, Conner.

MACLEOD

(bravely)

I'm not going anywhere.

Dugal swings at MacLeod's head, knocking him down, kicking him in the ribs.

A plowman destroys a chair on MacLeod's back. Angus shouts over the din.

ANGUS

For God's sake, stop!

A villager belts MacLeod with a jug. Struggling, he disappears under a shouting heap of clansmen.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD WITH AN OX-YOKE STRAPPED TO HIS BACK

Arms bound to it with ropes, face battered, on his knees in the dirt.

Beyond, Glamis Castle towers over Loch Shiel.

Dugal, Angus, Father Rainey and Kate stand in a circle of yelling villagers. The excitement has unhinged Kate's mind.

ANGUS

(yelling at Dugal)

He's your cousin, man.

FATHER RAINEY

Burn him. It's the only way.

VILLAGERS

(chanting)

Burn him! Burn him!

ANGUS

(over crowd)

Quiet!

The NOISE subsides.

ANGUS

There'll be no burning here today. We'll banish him.

KATE

Burn him! Burn him!

Dugal's disgusted by Kate's religious frenzy.

DUGAL

Be quiet, Kate.

The villagers shout objections. He nods to Angus and they help MacLeod to his feet. He staggers under the yoke.

ANGUS

Can you walk?

MACLEOD

I'll bloody well walk out of here.

ANGUS

Move, friend. Before they change their minds.

MACLEOD

I'll not forget you, Angus.

MacLeod is driven out. Villagers spit and curse. Wild-eyed, Kate dances round him.

KATE

Devil! Devil! Devil!

VILLAGERS

(chanting)

Devil! Devil! Devil!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Stumbling along the loch, MacLeod heads for the mountains.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Walking west on Christopher. Dim streetlights. Dogs BARKING.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD'S HOME - 1182 HUDSON STREET, SOHO

Surrounded by Irish bars, art galleries, rubble-filled lots.

MacLeod heads for a run-down shop next to a dilapidated ten-story glass-and-iron warehouse.

On the shop door: "R. NASH - ANTIQUES"

Rummaging for keys, he unlocks the door and goes inside.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD IN A RISING FREIGHT ELEVATOR

The doors open. Before him:

A HUGE, OPEN, NEW YORK LOFT

The change from drab outside to sumptuous inside is stunning. Exotic fish swim in a huge aquarium.

MacLeod descends the stairs to:

A SUNKEN LIVING ROOM

Filled with modern art. High veillings, comfortable sofas, Adam fireplace, spectacular views of the river.

Moving past speakers and TVs, he drops his keys on a table beside an intercom and answering machine.

In a silver frame on the mantle: a photo of MacLeod with a young girl, 1952. MacLeod moves through:

A GEORGIAN DINING AREA

Queen Anne table, silver candlesticks, tapestries on the wall. He enters:

AN ULTRA-MODERN KITCHEN

Loosening his tie, he fixes a drink and walks out.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Entering his silver room. Elegant and oval. Fabric walls. Sofas, tables, displays of ancient artifacts:

On one wall, like spokes of a wheel: 13 broad swords.

Beside them, a bronze shield, claymore and cloak, the black-and-yellow tartan of the Clan MacLeod.

Sipping his drink, he sinks into a sofa, eyeing a glass case lit by pin-spots. Inside:

An ancient sheepskin doll.

A 16th century catalan feathered hat.

A rusty anvil and tongs.

MacLeod stares at the anvil and tongs, remembering:

CUT TO:

RED-HOT IRON IN TONGS

Crashing onto an anvil in a sweltering blacksmith's forge. It's 1541.

Wielding a hammer, streaked with grime and sweat, MacLeod pounds out a horsehoe, plunging it into water. HISSING STEAM.

In the five years since his banishment, he's filled out although he's lost none of his wide-eyed, youthful exuberance.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Shoeing a mare outside. The forge clings to a crag. Miles down a precarious trail, the town of Jedburgh.

Up the hill, a 3-story stone house. From the house:

HEATHER MACLEOD

Appears in sheepskins, bonnet and boots, carrying a basket.

Full-breasted, lusty and apple-cheeked, she feeds geese, watching him.

HEATHER

(waving basket)

Pie and ale. D'you want it?

Dropping his hammer, he grabs her buttocks, crushing her to him, grinning.

MACLEOD

All the time.

HEATHER

(squealing)

You filthy sod. You're all muck and muscle.

MACLEOD

Aye. The way you like it.

He grins, kissing her. Stripping his apron, he dunks his torso in a rain barrel, shaking himself off like a dog.

She smiles. He's the loveliest man in the world.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD AND HEATHER

Making love on the cliff-top in the grass. Remains of a picnic.

Thunderheads soar over the mountains. A storm is coming. MacLeod kisses her. She responds

HEATHER

You can do that forever if you like, my lord.
Will you, Conner?

MACLEOD

Aye, blossom. I will.

Foreign CURSES. Startled, they sit up.

CUT TO:

JUAN RAMIREZ

Climbing the trail to the forge. Olive skin, hawk nose, twinkling eyes, flashing teeth. Flintlock pistol in his belt, crossbow across his back.

Strapped to his side, a Samurai sword, carved hand-guard, razor-sharp, feather-light.

Overheated in cloak, pantaloons, feathers and gloves, he clambers higher, swooning with fatigue.

ANGLE

Dragging himself to the top, he mops his brow.

Seeing the peasant couple before him, he bows, hat sweeping the ground.

RAMIREZ

Greetings! I am Juan Sanchez Villa-Lobos
Ramirez, Chief Metallurgist to King Philip II
of Spain.

(clicks heels)

At your service.

HEATHER

Who?

Ramirez sees stars, looking down the trail.

RAMIREZ

My God, man. That's a climb!

Breathless, he replaces his hat, adjusting frills and furbelows.

MACLEOD

What do you want?

RAMIREZ

Conner MacLeod

MACLEOD

Maybe you've found him.

RAMIREZ

The same Conner MacLeod wounded in battle and
driven from his village five years ago?

The Spaniard narrows his eyes. Something seems to seize MacLeod. He
clutches his chest, unable to breathe. Heather's alarmed.

HEATHER

Conner?

MACLEOD

(gasping)

Heather, go in the house.

(she hesitates)

Do as I say, woman

She backs up the hill and goes inside.

Ramirez flashes wall-to-wall teeth. THUNDER reverberates down the
valley.

RAMIREZ

(re: Heather)

A beautiful young woman. Is she your wife?

(MacLeod nods)

Sad.

MacLeod's temples are in a vise. Ramirez opens his tunic, tracing:

A SCAR FROM NECK TO HIP

With elegant finger.

RAMIREZ

When I was young, a cart ran over me. I
should have died. But the wound healed by
itself.

Stars explode inside MacLeod's head. The forge, the house,
everything's spinning.

RAMIREZ

The sensations you feel. It is the
Quickening.

THUNDER CRACKS overhead. The storm breaks. HOWLING WIND. Ramirez's
eyes blaze with unearthly light.

MACLEOD
(shouting)
Who are you?

RAMIREZ
(shouting)
We are the same, MacLeod. We are brothers.

Lightning etches their silhouettes against the rolling sky.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Moving through a squad-room toward:

Moran on the phone, at his desk. Walls plastered with mug-shots.
Steam pipes HISS & BANG.

Seeing Brenda, he waves her to a seat with the receiver.

SHOUTING on the line.

MORAN
(into receiver)
Listen, pal. My advice is, get a bigger one
next time. One that'll bite him.

He slams down the phone, eyeing Brenda.

MORAN
Here's what I'm dealing with. Guy calls up
Homicide. Wants to swear out a complaint. His
Vietnamese neighbor ate his dog.
(a beat)
How are things in Forensics?

BRENDA
Dull. Come on. let's have lunch.

MORAN
Who pays?

BRENDA
Me.

Moran likes it. He puts on his coat. They head for the door. Brenda stops.

BRENDA
Frank, I left my purse. Go ahead. I'll catch
you by the elevator.

Moran leaves. Brenda returns to the desk, opens a drawer, and finds what she's looking for:

A bound, blue folder containing photos of Fasil's body, the sword, a copy of an interrogation report, and:

NASH'S MUG-SHOT

It's the guy from the bar who fought the scarred giant.

BRENDA

I'll be damned. Russell Nash.

She stares at the picture. Even in the harsh photo-flash, his face is compelling. The eyes, haunting, evoking timeless mystery.

Moran's phone RINGS. She jumps.

Glancing around, she jots down Nash's address, shuts the drawer, gets her purse and heads out.

CUT TO:

YUNG DOL KIM

Alone in a rising elevator. An oriental with mahogany skin, obsidian eyes, guard's uniform and cap, carrying a huge sword.

He watches the floor numbers, stops at 40. The doors open. He creeps out into:

AN EMPTY, CARPETED HALLWAY

Silence. Gliding past silent offices, he spots:

A FIGURE WITH A SWORD IN AN ALCOVE

Swinging, he slices off the figure's head. It rolls into the light. He stares down at it. It's plastic. He has destroyed a mannequin.

Behind him, CROAKING LAUGHTER. Kim turns. The Kurgan appears with his weapon, amused by his little joke.

KURGAN

Such a brave warrior

(suddenly ice-cold)

Let's see how you can handle the real thing.

The Kurgan charges, battering Kim into:

AN OFFICE

Filled with rows of computer desks. The Kurgan goads Kim, side-stepping blows which SMASH files and phones. He's like a giant cat playing with a helpless mouse.

KURGAN

You fight like an old woman, Kim. You're disgusting.

No longer amused, the Kurgan becomes a one-man wrecking-crew. He chases Kim, blitzing the office. The brilliance of his swordsmanship is staggering. unexpectedly:

Kim drops his sword on the carpet. Behind him, through a window, the lights of Manhattan.

KURGAN
What are you doing? Pick up your sword.

KIM
Tradition, once more?

KURGAN
It is all we have?

KIM
It's no longer enough. I'm tired, Kurgan.
Four hundred years without release. Let's be
done with it. I want peace.

KURGAN
I will give you peace
(raising sword)
There can be only one.

He cuts off Kim's head. A shimmering energy flashes between the corpse and Kurgan.

He starts to glow. Computer-screens EXPLODE. From nowhere, a terrifying wind starts blowing. Pares fly. Water-coolers CRASH to the floor.

The window IMPLODES, sucking Kim's body out into space. It falls 40 floors.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD AT HOME

Sharpening his Samurai sword with a jeweler's file before a CRACKLING FIRE. He's in his sunken lounge.

On a coffee-table in front of him, a book:

"A
METALLURGICAL HISTORY
OF
ANCIENT SWORD-MAKING

BY
BRENDA J. WYATT"

He studies the smiling photo, reading the bio. The author does forensics work for the City of New York.

Above him, fish swim in the aquarium. He watches them, mind drifting back through time.

CUT TO:

RAMIREZ & MACLEOD

In a boat, heading for an island in the middle of a loch.

Resplendent in feathered hat, jewelled tunic, cape and boots, the Spaniard mans the oars.

Alarmed, MacLeod sits facing the Spaniard, white-knuckling his claymore.

MACLEOD

I don't like boats. I don't like water. I'm a man, not a fish.

RAMIREZ

You complain endlessly. I wonder if I'm wasting my time with you, brother.

MACLEOD

Stop calling me brother. You look like a woman, you stupid haggis.

RAMIREZ

Haggis? What is haggis?

MACLEOD

A sheep's stomach stuffed with meat and barley.

RAMIREZ

What do you do with it?

MACLEOD

You eat it.

RAMIREZ

How revolting

Resting the oars, he takes snuff, inhaling deeply.

LOUD SNEEZE. The boat rocks violently.

MACLEOD

(quaking)

Be still, for God's sake. You'll tip us over.

RAMIREZ

So?

MACLEOD

I can't swim you Spanish peacock.

Their angry voices carry across the lake.

RAMIREZ

I am not Spanish. I am Egyptian.

MACLEOD

You said you were from Spain. You're a liar.

RAMIREZ

You smell like a dung-heap. You have the manners of a goat. And no knowledge of your potential.

Gleefully, Ramirez starts violently rocking the boat.

MacLeod is terrified. See-sawing wildly, he grabs for an oar. Ramirez suddenly throws him overboard.

HUGE SPLASH. YELLING, MacLeod disappears, bobbing up, flailing his arms.

MACLEOD

Help me. I'm drowning.

Ramirez rows for the island.

RAMIREZ

You can't drown, you fool. You're immortal.

MacLeod sinks in bubbles. Ramirez keeps rowing.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Parking outside 1182 Hudson Street. Getting out of the car, she checks the address in her notebook. Across the street, the sign:

"R. NASH - ANTIQUES"

She heads for the door.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Staring into the fire in the sunken lounge. A flashing light distracts him. He flips a switch, hearing VOICES on the INTERCOM.

FEMALE VOICE

I'm sorry, Miss Wyatt. Mr. Nash is unavailable.

BRENDA'S VOICE

I need to talk to him now. Can I call him at home?

Glancing at Brenda Wyatt's book on the coffee table, he gets up. He pushes a button that opens a door leading to the outer office.

CUT TO:

IN THE OUTER OFFICE

RACHEL ELLENSTEIN, 52

Good-looking, business-like, in pant-suit and glasses, sits at a desk in Nash's shop, talking to Brenda. Antiques everywhere.

RACHEL
I'm afraid not.

MacLeod appears.

MACLEOD
Hi.

RACHEL
This is Brenda Wyatt, Mr. Nash.

MACLEOD
(to Brenda)
Ah, Wyatt. That's your last name.
(turning)
We've already met, Rachel.
(to Brenda)
What can I do for you.

Resolute, she takes a deep breath.

BRENDA
I'd like some advice.

MACLEOD
Are you the kind of woman who takes advice.

BRENDA
That depends.

She meets his gaze, ready for anything. He grins. Rachel enjoys the sparring.

MACLEOD
Advice about what?

BRENDA
What can you tell me about a seven-foot lunatic hacking away with a broadsword at one o'clock in the morning in New York City, 1985?

MACLEOD
Not much.

BRENDA
Then how about a Japanese sword made in 600 B.C.?
(he frowns)
The metal in the blade folded 200 times.

MacLeod shakes his head. This woman just keeps coming.

MACLEOD

I don't deal in exotic weapons.

Taking her arm, he guides her to a display-case.

MACLEOD

Can I show you something in 18th Century silver?

BRENDA

That's not why I came here, and you know it.

She looks right into his eyes. Her closeness unsettles him.

MACLEOD

Do you cook?

BRENDA

Why?

MACLEOD

I thought we might have diner

BRENDA

(provocatively)

Did you?

MACLEOD

Yes.

He finds her aggressiveness sexy. Before he can speak, the street door opens.

Bedsoe bursts in.

Seeing MacLeod and Brenda, he turns away, scrutinizing a tapestry - mermaids frolicking with sea-monsters.

By the door, Macleod pauses at Bedsoe's elbow, contemplating the garish creation.

MACLEOD

The Rape of Neptune's Daughter by the Fish Creatures.

(Bedsoe blinks at him)

Do you like fish?

BEDSOE

To eat, you mean?

MacLeod is gone.

CUT TO:

RAMIREZ

On the island, by a CRACKLING fire, back to the loch. The boat's on the beach.

Bright sunshine. Stunning scenery. He enjoys the solitude, sword at his side on the ground.

Behind him, 50 yards away, the lake surface swirls silently. Something is out there. A glowering head appears.

IT'S MACLEOD

Rising up out of the lake. Spotting Ramirez, he wades cautiously to the shore.

Covered in duck-weed and slime, he draws his claymore, creeping silently to within feet of the Spaniard's back.

Slowly he raises his sword in both hands high over Ramirez's head. He's going to cut the bastard in half.

With all his might, he brings the sword down. Something incredible happens.

Like lightning, without looking back, Ramirez grabs his Samurai, parries the blow and is up and facing him in one blind motion.

MacLeod's claymore flies from his hands.

RAMIREZ

What took you so long?

MacLeod watches his sword land on the beach 50 feet away.

MACLEOD

This can't be. It's the devil's work.

RAMIREZ

(laughing)

You numbskull! Clod! You're no better than the villagers who threw you out.

Livid, MacLeod splutters water, staring back at the loch, trying to make sense of what's happened.

RAMIREZ

You cannot die, MacLeod. Accept it.

Two fish wriggle free from the Highlander's tunic, flopping to the sand.

Scowling at the Spaniard, he wishes this cup would pass from him, suspecting in his heart it will not.

MACLEOD

(through his teeth)

I... hate... you...

RAMIREZ

Good! it's a place to start

CUT TO:

MACLEOD AND RAMIREZ SPARRING BY A WATERFALL

CLANGING steel-on-steel. Rainbows of spray span the gorge. MacLeod is strong but awkward. Ramirez's Samurai SINGS in a brilliant display of swordsmanship.

RAMIREZ

No, no, pendejo. Protect your stupid head.

MacLeod thrusts. Ramirez blocks.

RAMIREZ

Concentrate! You can survive anything but steel against your throat. If your head leaves your neck, it's over.

Bellowing, MacLeod strikes. Ramirez deflects the blow with ease.

RAMIREZ

Move your feet!

(advancing)

We must fight until only one remains. There can be only one.

(shouting)

Move your feet, I said!

(ducking a swing)

You are safe only on holy ground. None of us will violate that law.

Exhausted, MacLeod staggers. Ramirez taunts him, jabbing him in the butt.

MACLEOD

(yelling)

You over-dressed haggis. I'm going to split you in half.

Swinging his claymore, MacLeod goes berserk, missing Ramirez altogether, smashing brush, demolishing trees.

Finally, he collapses, gulping for air in the grass. Ramirez stands over him.

RAMIREZ

Get up!

MACLEOD

Go to hell. I've had enough.

The Spaniard's expression changes. Switching tack, he sits beside his young charge, watching the THUNDERING falls.

RAMIREZ

You must fight. You must learn to keep your head. On you may depend the fate of mortal men.

MACLEOD

I don't care. i don't want it.

RAMIREZ

None of us chose it.

MACLEOD

Then how did it happen, for God's sake?

RAMIREZ

How does the sun know when to come up?

Ramirez points to SQUIRRELS CHATTERING under an oak.

RAMIREZ

Those squirrels all look alike.

MacLeod frowns.

RAMIREZ

But once in a while, one is born different.
With blue eyes. And fur white as snow. Others
of its kind try to destroy it or drive it
away.

Flicking a bee off his pantaloons, he moves into the oak's shade.

The squirrels scamper away.

RAMIREZ

You must learn to conceal your special gift.
To harness your power.
(a beat)
Until the time of the Gathering.

MACLEOD

What gathering?

RAMIREZ

Questions, questions. Too much talk.

Slicing the air with his Samurai, he waves MacLeod up.

MACLEOD

I'm not moving.

RAMIREZ

Then I'll cut you where you sit.

Wearily, MacLeod rises. The Spaniard advances, pounding MacLeod backwards.

RAMIREZ

It is said that when only a few of us are
left, eons from now, we will feel an
irresistible pull to a faraway land to fight
for the Prize.

CUT TO:

MORAN

Smoking a cigar at his desk in the squad-room. Before him, a copy of the New York Times. Headline: "HEAD-HUNTER STALKS NEW YORK"

Bedsoe slumps in a chair.

MORAN
(to Bedsoe)

You're sure it was Brenda?

BEDSOE
In Nash's shop. Talking to him.

MORAN
(half-smiling)

That ballsy broad. I never know what's going on with her.

(thinking)
What did she and Nash talk about? Did he say anything?

BEDSOE
Yeah. He asked me if I liked fish.

MORAN
Fish?

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - MACLEOD AND RAMIREZ FIGHTING

Various locations and times.

Slowly, MacLeod improves, gaining control. His blows, stronger, his coordination surer.

Ramirez is pleased.

HEATHER

Bartering for a flapping chicken in Jedburgh Market. In a group of SHOUTING WOMEN.

Bright sunshine. FLAGS and BANNERS CRACK in the wind off the sea.

Farmers sell cows and sheep. Crowds mill around. Open fires, Musicians and Hawkers.

MacLeod and Ramirez watch Heather. Ramirez holds onto his hat. He buys an apple, biting into it.

Far up the valley, MacLeod's forge is a dot on the craggy mountainside.

RAMIREZ
You will have no family. We cannot have children.

A BAND PLAYS. Girls dance around a maypole. MacLeod lovingly watches Heather bag a SQUAWKING BIRD.

MACLEOD

That won't please Heather. I'll tell you that for nothing.

Ramirez shrugs. Heather holds up the sack.

HEATHER

(calling)

Here's dinner. Be off now. I fancy a new dress.

They watch a Juggler.

RAMIREZ

You must leave her, brother.

MacLeod scowls. The Juggler drops his balls in the swirling wind. The CROWD WHISTLES.

They arrive at a grassy arena. Huge men in kilts toss 40-foot cabers to the CHEERS of the crowd.

RAMIREZ

I was born 2,437 years ago. In that time, I have had three wives.

MacLeod tries to figure the man's age.

A Whore sashays past, skirts billowing, ogling Ramirez. Graciously, he bows to her.

RAMIREZ

The last was Shakiko, a Japanese princess.

(indicating Samurai)

Her father, Kamakura, a genius, made this for me in 593 B.C. It is the only one of its kind.

(remembering)

Like his daughter.

Drawing the Samurai, he tosses it to MacLeod, who catches it, testing its weight.

RAMIREZ

When Shakiko died, I was shattered. I would save you that pain. Please let Heather go.

MACLEOD

She's my wife, man. I love her.

He sees her, gaily pushing through the crowd, ablaze with colored silks.

RAMIREZ

Then you will cause yourself great anguish. I buried Shakiko with my own hands.

(emotionally)

I had to go on, never again to hear the sound of her voice, her laughter. She left behind such a silence.

Heather flies into MacLeod's arms, kissing him, showing him the cloth.

HEATHER

D'you like it? Tell me true.

MACLEOD

(eyeing Ramirez)

Aye, blossom. It's fine.

Delighted, she dances around him, entwining him in the colored cloth.

CUT TO:

WIND-WHIPPED WAVES ON THE STORMY NORTH SEA

Off the Scottish coast. Cold sun. Seagulls on the wind. Mountains against cumulus.

Suddenly, on the shore:

A GIANT STAG WITH SHINING ANTLERS

Rears up in the gorse. Head high, still, it watches:

RAMIREZ AND MACLEOD WALKING ON THE BEACH

MacLeod's freezing to death.

RAMIREZ

Now for the last of our training.

The Spaniard points to the stag, shouting above the surf.

RAMIREZ

Trust me. Let your mind feel the stag. His blood. Coursing. His heart. Beating.

The SOUNDS OF THE TWO HEARTS POUND in his brain.

MACLEOD

(enthralled)

I feel him.

RAMIREZ

It is the Quickening. We are at one with all living things.

The stag bolts.

MacLeod's perception is forever changed. The highlands, the sea, the trees. They're like old friends he'll never see the same way again.

RAMIREZ

When we first met, you felt ill. Remember?

Shivering, MacLeod nods.

RAMIREZ

Did you ever feel that way before?

MACLEOD

Yes. When the MacLeods fought the Frazers, and a black knight ran me through. Only it was different, more painful.

Hérons swoop low over the waves.

RAMIREZ

That black knight was the Kurgan. It is because of him that I sought you out.

(MacLeod blinks)

There is great power in the Quickening. But Nature has not given us equal shares. Some, like you and the Kurgan, have more.

MacLeod's ears are freezing.

RAMIREZ

And when one of us takes another's head, the victor becomes stronger.

They clamber through rocks, away from the angry sea.

CUT TO:

A DEEP-WATER POND SURROUNDED BY FERNS

Silent and old, under a dome of fir trees.

MacLeod and Ramirez sit on the bank.

Shedding his boots, yanking up his pantaloons, Ramirez steps gingerly into the pool, reacting to the cold.

MACLEOD

Who is the Kurgan? Where does he come from?

RAMIREZ

The Kurgans were an ancient people from the steppes of Russia. For amusement, they tossed children into pits with hungry dogs to fight for meat.

In the trees above, a blue jay arrives home with food for hungry mouths.

RAMIREZ

I have fought the Kurgan 3 times. In Babylon,
Greece and China.

He skips out of the water, drying his feet.

RAMIREZ

The last time, I was lucky to get away with
my head.

(replacing boots)

The Kurgan is the strongest of all immortals.
He is the perfect warrior.

MacLeod shudders.

RAMIREZ

He cares about nothing or no-one. He is
completely evil.

(intensely)

If he wins the Prize, mortal men will suffer
an eternity of darkness and slavery beneath
his boot.

MACLEOD

How do you fight such a savage?

RAMIREZ

With heart, faith and steel.

CUT TO:

RAMIREZ AND MACLEOD ON A WOODLAND PATH

Above them, sunset changes green to gold. Ramirez draws his Samurai.

RAMIREZ

Now. Let us see what kind of swordsman you
have become. On guard, pendejo.

MacLeod's already moving, claymore spinning. He feints. Ramirez
ducks.

Off-balance, the Spaniard retreats, warding off deadly thrusts.

RAMIREZ

In the end, there can be only one.

(swinging)

It is the Prize for which we all struggle.
The Kurgan must never win it. Alone, I cannot
stop him.

(retreating)

You may have a chance.

Sure-footed, MacLeod tracks him through fallen timber.

MACLEOD

If it came down to just us two, would you
take my head?

Ramirez doesn't answer. MacLeod leaps forward, claymore a WHISTLING RAZOR.

Ramirez parries, but it's no good. The student has become the master.

Losing his balance, Ramirez topples into a gully. MacLeod's on him in a second, blade against his throat.

Breath rasping, they hold each other's gaze in green twilight. An eternity passes, then:

MacLeod throws his sword away.

Reaching out.

MACLEOD

Give me your hand, brother.

Ramirez smiles. His work done. MacLeod hauls him up.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD STRIDING THROUGH CENTRAL PARK

Skaters on the ice. Kids fight with wooden swords in Sheep Meadow.

Behind him, trying to look inconspicuous, the faithful Bedsoe dogs his tracks.

Ahead in the trees. MacLeod sees:

SUNDA KASTAGIR

An elegant black African in blue-gold robes, head crowned with an ermine-trimmed cap.

Standing on a stone bridge over the lake, he feeds bread to the ducks.

MacLeod joins him, locking eyes with the African. They're both tense, ready for anything.

Unexpectedly, Kastagir grins wall-to-wall teeth, grabbing MacLeod in a huge bear-hug.

KASTAGIR

MacLeod. It's good to see you. Seems like a hundred years.

MACLEOD

(chuckling)

It has been a hundred years.

Kastagir LAUGHS, removing a flask from his robe, offering it to MacLeod.

KASTAGIR

A little something to put hair on your chest?

MACLEOD

(suspiciously)

What is it?

KASTAGIR

Boom-Boom.

MacLeod sniffs the open flask. It's a head-winder. The African appraises him critically.

KASTAGIR

You've become so strong, MacLeod. Surely,
you're not afraid of a little Boom-Boom.

(twirling eyebrows)

Do you think I'm trying to poison you?

They LAUGH. MacLeod drinks. Retrieving the flask, the African takes a long swig.

MACLEOD

You're crazy, Kastagir. You always were.

KASTAGIR

(offering flask)

Have some more.

MacLeod drinks. Kastagir feeds the ducks.

KASTAGIR

The Gathering is here. Time has almost caught
us, my friend.

MACLEOD

(grinning)

Has it? Do you think we should go on?

KASTAGIR

I think we should have a party.

They take off across the park. Bedsoe emerges from bushes, following them.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD AND KASTAGIR IN THE DUG-OUT BAR

A steel-&-neon Village hang-out. Sawdust on the floor. It's late.

They're drinking and talking, glancing over at:

Bedsoe, alone in a nearby booth, spying on them from behind a New York Post.

Unexpectedly, MacLeod and Kastagir appear at his table, sitting down.

MACLEOD
Mind if we join you?

Bedsoe folds his paper, gathering his wits.

His cover's blown, but this might just be the opportunity he's been waiting for. He decides to play along.

MACLEOD
Sundra Kastagir, meet --
(to Bedsoe)
What's your name?

BEDSOE
Bedsoe.

MACLEOD
He's a cop. He questioned me after Fasil lost his head. He's trying to pin a murder on me.
(winking)
If I'm guilty, they'll give me the death penalty.

They ROAR with laughter. Bedsoe's eyes narrow. He makes mental notes. A WAITRESS in pirate costume appears.

WAITRESS
(to Bedsoe)
Want anything?

BEDSOE
I'll have what they're having.

KASTAGIR
(booming)
Bring more.

She leaves.

MONTAGE - THE PARTY

The waitress brings endless rounds of drinks. Amidst LAUGHTER, the trio gets drunk.

Bedsoe starts having fun, finally going to work on Kastagir's flask of Boom-Boom.

MACLEOD, KASTAGIR & BEDSOE

Completely potted. Their table is a forest of bottles.

KASTAGIR
(to MacLeod)
D'you remember the night Washington lost his teeth at Valley Forge?

BEDSOE
(to Kastagir)
I was in Washington once.

MACLEOD
(answering Kastagir)
Freezing our asses off, crawling around in
the snow looking for a set of wooden
dentures.

BEDSOE
(to MacLeod)
Which Washington are we talking about?

KASTAGIR
Ever fight a duel, Bedstead?

BEDSOE
Bedsoe.

KASTAGIR
Me, neither.
(indicating MacLeod)
He has.

Bedsoe tries to focus on MacLeod.

MACLEOD
It was in 1797. I was using the name Adrian
Montagu. I insulted the wife of a pompous
Boston lawyer named Bassett. Hotchkiss, his
second, dragged me to Beacon Common. I was
very drunk.

BEDSOE
(dazed)
1797?

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Red-eyed, dishevelled and weaving.

MACLEOD (O.S.)
Bassett chose rapiers at dawn.

BASSETT, a corpulent, ferret-faced lawyer, tests blades under a
tree. Horses graze nearby.

HOTCHKISS, a tall, lantern-jawed toadt, brushes his master's coat.

HOTCHKISS
The heavier blade, Mr. Bassett, I implore
you.

BASSETT
You are my second, Hotchkiss. I am fighting
this duel. Not you.

He watches MacLeod trying to kill a bush.

BASSETT
See if the imbecile is ready.

Rocketing over the grass, Hotchkiss keeps clear of MacLeod's unpredictable thrusts.

HOTCHKISS
Mr. Bassett is waiting, sir.

MacLeod whips around, almost dislocating his neck.

MACLEOD
I'm Bontagu. Not Massett.

His wig slides over his eyes.

MACLEOD
Christ, I've gone blind.

BASSETT
(advancing)
On guard, sir.

Hotchkiss waits for the kill. MacLeod can't see.

Bassett runs him through.

Bassett sees it's finished. Hotchkiss kisses his master, escorting him to his horse.

Wound healing, head aching, MacLeod staggers up.

MACLEOD
(slurring)
Bassett. Is that you?

Dumbstruck, they wheel. He's waving at them.

HOTCHKISS
You missed him, Mr. Bassett.

BASSETT
I did not miss him, you idiot. I ran him through.

MacLeod blinks at his sword, wondering what it is.

HOTCHKISS
He is still standing, sir.

Shoving Hotchkiss aside, Bassett lunges, running MacLeod through again. MacLeod falls down.

MACLEOD (O.S.)
Bassett kept running me through. I'd fall down.

More frenzied attempts by Bassett, each time receiving kisses from Hotchkiss.

MACLEOD (O.S.)
Hotchkiss would embrace Bassett. They'd head
for their horses. I'd stagger up.

Eyes zooming, MacLeod rocks on his heels.

Bassett thinks it's a nightmare. Hotchkiss shoves a pistol into his hand.

HOTCHKISS
(screeching)
Shoot him! Shoot him in the head!

Finally, grasping what's happening, MacLeod raises his hand.

MACLEOD
Stop, sir. I beseech you.

Bassett tries to cock the gun, Hotchkiss urging him on.

MACLEOD
I apologize, Mr. Bassett, for calling your
wife a bloated warthog.
(unsteady)
I trust honor has been satisfied, and bid you
good day.

He staggers off into the mist. Hotchkiss tries to wrench the gun from Bassett.

HOTCHKISS
Let me do it. You botched the whole thing.

Wrestling it from him, Bassett wheels in circles, looking for someone to kill.

Suspecting it will be he, Hotchkiss flees. Bassett raises the pistol and FIRES.

CUT TO:

KASTAGIR

Howling with LAUGHTER in the Dug-Out Bar. Zooming, Bedsoe staggers up, knocking over bottles.

BEDSOE
(slurring)
I wanna thank --

He blinks at them. He can't remember anybody's name. HICCUPING, he weaves off, MUMBLING.

BEDSOE
Wonderful evening...

No one notices he's gone. The pirate-waitress looms over the table, Kastagir and MacLeod squint up at her.

Imagining they're in another century, they adopt Long John Silver voices.

KASTAGIR

Avast, ye bonny wench.

MACLEOD

Bring us two barrels of scurvy and a bucket of cleats.

WAITRESS

Okay, that's it, guys. You're history.

She's right. The party's over.

CUT TO:

KASTAGIR AND MACLEOD

On swings in a children's playground at dawn, rocking back and forth. Both men are sober.

A bitter wind tosses newspaper, swirls leaves. Skyscrapers blaze in the rising sun.

MACLEOD

There are 3 of us left. You, me and the Kurgan.

KASTAGIR

Are you suggesting we join forces against him?

MacLeod watches a JOGGER flounder by.

KASTAGIR

Ramirez filled your head with nonsense. Sooner or later, you and I would have to fight.

(beat)

Nothing personal. I've always liked you, actually.

He points a finger at MacLeod, pulling an imaginary trigger.

KASTAGIR

Boom-Boom.

MacLeod gets up and walks away. Kastagir swings in the wind.

CUT TO:

RAMIREZ AND HEATHER

Having lunch in the MacLeod home. A WOODEN STAIRCASE runs from ground to 3rd floor.

Unexpectedly, Ramirez's body jolts violently. His face contorts, voice strangled.

RAMIREZ

Run, Heather!

Suddenly, the front door EXPLODES, splintering in fragments. Sword in hand, eyes burning, the Kurgan surges in.

Heather races back. Ramirez dives for his sword on the table. The Kurgan swings, barely missing Ramirez, chopping the table in two.

Ramirez counters, his Samurai slicing the Kurgan's throat, severing his vocal chords.

GARGLING in fury, the Kurgan clutches his neck. Warding off the Spaniard's attack, he reels backward up the stairs.

CUT TO:

RAMIREZ AND THE KURGAN

Fighting on the staircase. Savage forces are unleashed. Sparks fly from CLANGING blades. Outside, THUNDER CRACKS overhead.

Despite his wound, the Kurgan fights like a mad dog. Ramirez loses ground.

The stone house is reduced to rubble. All that remains is one wall and the staircase rising to nowhere.

Outmatched, Ramirez retreats up the stairs. Unstoppable, the Kurgan follows.

HEATHER

Paralyzed with fear, crouches by a wall, watching the desperate battle, Ramirez and the wounded giant silhouetted against an electric sky.

RAMIREZ AND THE KURGAN

Hanging in space at the top of the stairs. Ramirez can retreat no further. The Kurgan runs him through. LIGHTNING sears the sky.

Gasping, the Spaniard sags to his knees, sword falling three stories to the ground. Below, Heather SCREAMS.

Ramirez tries to rise. The Kurgan grabs his hair, pulling him close.

KURGAN

The Highlander. Where is he?

Ramirez's blade has turned the Kurgan's voice to a METALLIC GARGLE.

RAMIREZ

You're too late. I have prepared him for you.

KURGAN

You waste your time. He is nothing.

(indicates Heather)

Who is the woman?

RAMIREZ

She's mine.

KURGAN

Not for much longer.

RAMIREZ

I can't hear you, Kurgan. What's wrong with your voice?

Ramirez SPITS in his face. The Kurgan goes mad, raising his weapon.

KURGAN

There can be only one.

He cuts off Ramirez's head. A SHIMMERING CLOUD engulfs him.

He kicks the corpse off the stairs. Turning, he stares down at Heather shivering by the wall. His pitiless eyes burn into her.

The next second, the remaining wall gives way, taking the staircase with it. Surprised, the Kurgan disappears under a mass of timber and stone.

Deathly stillness. Clouds cast a pall over the ruins.

Cautiously, Heather inches forward, staring down at the debris, trying to comprehend what's happened. Suddenly:

THE KURGAN'S HEAD ROCKET'S OUT OF THE RUBBLE

Grabbing her by the throat. She SCREAMS. He RISES.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

In his silver room, studying Ramirez's hat in the glass case. Rachel enters, standing behind him. MacLeod doesn't move.

MACLEOD

What are you looking at?

RACHEL

The eyes in the back of your head.

Rising, he heads for the door. Rachel follows him.

RACHEL

People are asking about you. What am I supposed to say?

MACLEOD

Tell them I'm immortal.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

In an overcoat, carrying a wrapped gift, walking through his closed antique shop, followed by Rachel.

RACHEL

Would you listen to me for one moment, please?

(he nods)

You can't hide your feelings from me. I've known you too long.

MACLEOD

What feelings?

RACHEL

How about loneliness?

He conceals his true reaction.

MACLEOD

I'm not lonely. I've got everything I need, right here.

RACHEL

No, you don't. You refuse to let anyone love you.

MACLEOD

Love is for poets. I have other things to do.

(kissing her forehead)

You're such a romantic, Rachel. You always were.

CUT TO:

BEDSOE ON STAKE-OUT

Parked outside a building in Murray Hill, still suffering from his evening in the Dug-Out Bar. His head's killing him, he's got the shakes and he needs a shave.

Balancing a cup of coffee, he tries to work an Alka-Seltzer into a container of water, inadvertently hitting the horn with his elbow. It BLARES.

Grabbing his temples, he drops the water, spilling scalding coffee into his groin.

BEDSOE

Oh, shit...

Unnoticed, MacLeod enters the building.

CUT TO:

BRENDA

In bra and panties in her bedroom.

Finishing make-up, brushing her hair. Nervous, she slips into a sexy dress and boots, studying the effect from different angles.

Adjusting her hair, she adds a lizard belt, clinching it tight around her narrow waist.

Satisfied, she walks out into:

A glass and chrome living room.

Dinner set for two. Agitated, she opens the table-drawer. Inside: A pistol.

She cracks it open. It's loaded.

Replacing it, she opens a cabinet. A hidden tape-recorder is set to go.

BUZZER. It's the front door.

Starting the recorder, she shuts the cabinet, takes a breath, and opens the door.

It's Russell Nash.

In suit, tie and overcoat, with gift-wrapped package and bottle.

MACLEOD

Good evening, Miss Wyatt.

He smiles warmly. Those eyes again, fixed on her. She forgets everything.

MACLEOD

You want to dine in the hall, or shall we step inside?

BRENDA

(blinking)

Come on in.

For a second, they're very close. Her heart pounds.

BRENDA
May I take your coat?

MACLEOD
No, thanks. I'll hold onto it.

Flushed, she can't think what to say. Impulsively, she heads for the bedroom.

MACLEOD
Where are you going?

BRENDA
I'll be right back. The glasses are over there.

Putting his gift on the coffee-table, he takes off his coat, glancing around.

IN THE BEDROOM

She stares at her rigid image in the mirror.

MACLEOD (O.S.)
I like your place, Brenda.
(a beat)
You never told me what it is you do for a living.

Her face goes white.

BRENDA
(into mirror)
Do you know what you're doing?

Mind racing, she improvises.

BRENDA
I...
(closing eyes)
I work for the Metropolitan Museum.

She tries to calm down. What has she gotten herself into?

IN THE LIVING ROOM

MacLeod spots Bedsoe through the blinds.

BRENDA (O.S.)
In Acquisitions.

Covering the room like a cat, he checks the table-drawer, sees the pistol.

MACLEOD

That explains your interest in ancient weapons.

He finds the recorder in the cabinet.

BRENDA (O.S.)

Yes. Particularly the Samurai.

Opening the bottle, he sits on the sofa.

Brenda enters, joining him, feeling more confident, smoothing her skirt over her thighs. He fills glasses, handing her one.

BRENDA

Shall we have a toast?

He thinks for a moment.

MACLEOD

Yes.

(raising glass)

To the child going to bed,
And the man on the stairs
Who climbs to his dying love
In her high room.

(she's transfixed)

And let us hope tonight
He shall find no dying,
But his love alive and warm.

BRENDA

That's beautiful. What is it?

The CLINK GLASSES.

MACLEOD

Dylan Thomas.

They drink. She blinks as it hits her throat. She likes it.

MACLEOD

Brandy. Bottled in 1783.

BRENDA

Jesus. That's old.

MACLEOD

1783 was a very good year. Mozart wrote his Great Mass. The Montgolfier brothers went up in the first hot-air balloon. And England recognized the independence of the United States.

BRENDA

Is that right?

Who is this guy who fights scarred giants, drinks 200-year-old brandy and has an antique shop on Hudson Street?

He seems to be staring into her soul, seducing her in erotic, unfamiliar ways.

She notices the package.

BRENDA
What's that?

MACLEOD
It's for you.

BRENDA
Can I open it?

MACLEOD
If you like.

She picks it up and rips off the gift-wrap, staring down at:

"A
METALURGICAL HISTORY
OF
ANCIENT SWORD-MAKING

BY
BRENDA J. WYATT"

The blood drains from her face.

BRENDA
You Bastard.

MACLEOD
Odd thing.
(indicating book)
Your bio doesn't mention the Met. It says you
work for the police in Forensics.
(she's stunned)
Are you and Moran trying to set me up?

Angry, she rises, moving away.

BRENDA
I don't work for Moran.

MACLEOD
Then why's that fat policeman sitting
outside, watching your apartment?

She peers through the blinds, seeing Bedsoe in the car.

MACLEOD
You remember him. Moran's had him tailing me.

She sits close to the table containing the pistol. He refills his glass. The silence is deadly.

BRENDA
What are you going to do?

MACLEOD

The question is, what are you going to do?

(she frowns)

Are you going to turn off the tape or are you going to shoot me with the .38?

BRENDA

You're really something.

Crossing to the recorder, she rips out the tape. Removing the pistol, she empties it, tossing it away.

BRENDA

I'm not looking for a killer. I'm looking for a sword

(pause)

The one used on Fasil. I found pieces of it under the Garden.

He stands, getting ready to leave. She blocks his way

BRENDA

I only want to see the Samurai.

MACLEOD

Why?

BRENDA

I told you. It's not supposed to exist.

Picking up the shards, she waves them in his face.

BRENDA

I dated these pieces of the blade at 600 B.C. The metal's been folded over 200 times.

(tapping shards)

The Japanese didn't start making swords that way until the Middle Ages.

Her eyes are alight.

BRENDA

So where the hell did it come from?

He glances at the shards. Her energy is uncompromising.

BRENDA

If I could verify the existence of such a weapon, it'd be like finding a 747 made a thousand years before the Wright brothers flew.

(drolly)

With a find like that, I could get on "Good Morning America".

MACLEOD

This is crazy.

Ignoring her, he heads for the door. Furious, she spins him around.

Face-to-face, he can smell her perfume. It's driving him crazy.

BRENDA

I want some straight answers, Nash.

MACLEOD

Don't you ever think about anything except what you want?

Before he can stop himself, he's got a handful of her hair, pulling her mouth onto his, kissing her passionately.

She struggles. Releasing her, he touches her cheek, then leaves.

Breathless, Brenda sits on the couch. The front door SLAMS.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Descending a rear stairwell, FOOTSTEPS ECHOING off the concrete. He stops on a landing, shutting his eyes.

MONTAGE: HEATHER GROWING OLD

MacLeod and Heather leave Jedburgh and move east, settling on a farm outside Montrose.

Years become decades. She changes. Her youth fades. MacLeod is with her constantly.

Breathing her last, she lies in his arms, clutching a sheepskin doll. She strokes his ageless cheek.

HEATHER

My beautiful man. My husband.

MACLEOD

I am that, my love.

Her eyes fill with tears. MacLeod fights for control, smoothing her hair.

HEATHER

I have never... really known.

MACLEOD

What?

HEATHER

Why you stayed.

MACLEOD

Because I love you as much now as the day I first met you.

HEATHER

And I love you.

Crying, she turns away. Tormented, he cradles her head, holding her tight.

HEATHER

I don't want to die. I want to stay with you forever.

MACLEOD

I want that, too.

HEATHER

Will you do something for me, Conner?

MACLEOD

What, blossom?

HEATHER

In years to come, will you light a candle and remember me on my birthday?

MACLEOD

Aye, love. I will.

HEATHER

I wanted to have your children.

She collapses, clinging to him.

MACLEOD

(huskily)

They would have been strong and fine.

HEATHER

(struggling)

Don't see me, Conner. Let me die in peace.

Heart breaking, he rocks her. Breathing faster, she closes her eyes.

HEATHER

Where are we?

MACLEOD

We're in the Highlands. Where else? Running down a mountain-side.

She smiles, young again.

MACLEOD

The sun's shining. It's not cold. We'll swim in the loch, maybe.

She fades.

MACLEOD

You've got your sheepskins on. And the boots I made for you.

She dies. He squeezes her tighter, blinking back tears.

MACLEOD

When I met you at the fair, you said: "You're all muck and muscle." Then you smiled. What a beauty.

Grief overwhelms him. Lowering her gently, he closes her eyes, taking the doll from her hand. He kisses her cheek.

MACLEOD

Good night, my bonnie Heather. You were always beautiful to me.

He sobs.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Laying Heather to rest at sunset on a hill above the farm. His horse stands under a tree.

Drawing his claymore, he sinks it deep into the earth, marking Heather's grave.

He buckles on Ramirez's Samurai, eyes raking the heavens.

MACLEOD

You were right, haggis. There will never be another.

Grimly, he leads his horse down the mountain.

Left behind, his claymore. Carved into the blade, glowing in the dying sun, the name: "MACLEOD"

CUT TO:

MACLEOD IN HIS NEW YORK LOFT

Surrounded by his past. Everywhere he looks, objects remind him of distant places and times, intensifying his painful isolation.

VOICES and SOUNDS scramble his brain, gathering in volume:

OVERLAPPING VOICES

My beautiful man. My husband.

(cheering crowd)

Lotta fun, ain't it?

(cannon-fire)

Devil! Devil!

(police sirens)

Head chopped off two nights ago.

(horns blaring)

600 B.C. It's not supposed to exist.

(a baby crying)

Tell them I'm immortal.

(pipes and drums)

There can be only one!

The pressure's too much. BELLOWING, MacLeod erupts.

Picking up a vase, he spins round in fury, flinging it against a wall. It SHATTERS in a million pieces.

MONTAGE

The same frustration vented backward through the centuries. The vast today, marble statue in 1880, a wine bottle at a French castle wall, the beer glass at his attackers in the Scottish tavern.

GLASS FRAGMENTS RING IN THE STILLNESS

Falling to the floor. MacLeod struggles to control his feelings. Sitting down on a couch, he stares out of the window. His hands are shaking.

CUT TO:

MORAN AND BEDSOE MUNCHING BURGERS AT TONY'S

A stand at 59th & Lexington. Around them, crowds, traffic jams, BLARING HORNS.

TONY, the huge owner, in apron and baseball cap, eats coleslaw, checking the News headline: "HEAD HUNTER 3 - COPS ZERO"

TONY

Hey, Moran. Have you read what it says here?

MORAN

Come on, Tony. You know cops can't read.

TONY

(checks story)

What does "incompetent" mean?

Tony cackles. Moran chews burger, eyeing Bedsoe.

MORAN

The damn Mayor's calling my apartment at two in the morning.

Bedsoe sympathizes. They finish up, getting into a green Dodge. Bedsoe FIRES THE ENGINE.

TONY

(re: paper)

Hey, Moran. What does "baffled" mean?

The Dodge PEELS OFF into traffic.

CUT TO:

MORAN

Talking to Rachel in the antique shop.

She's at her desk. He strolls about, looking things over. He makes her nervous.

MORAN

You do see him every once in a while?

RACHEL

Rarely.

MORAN

How do you reach him?

RACHEL

I don't.

He sits across from her.

MORAN

He kind-of keeps you in the dark, right?

(a beat)

Alright, Miss - or is it Mrs.?

RACHEL

Miss. Rachel Ellenstein. Why?

MORAN

Just curious. I'm a bachelor myself.

(rising)

If you see Nash, have him call me, okay?

RACHEL

Okay, Sergeant.

MORAN

(smiles)

Lieutenant.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

BRENDA READING "CERTIFICATES OF BIRTH, 1941-48"

In the Hall of Records. She finds a photostat:

"RUSSELL EDWIN NASH
BORN: 11.17 A.M. OCTOBER 22nd, 1945
MERCY HOSPITAL, SYRACUSE, NEW YORK
TO: KAREN JOAN NASH
ATTENDING PHYSICIAN:
DR. W.B. KADELL"

CUT TO:

DR. WILLIS KADELL

82, thumbing through files in his cluttered study. Brenda sits on a sofa. He's never seen legs like hers.

KADELL
(finds file)

Here we go. Karen Joan Nash.
(reading)

Yes, I remember this one. I was practicing in Syracuse. Didn't get many of these.

BRENDA

What?

KADELL

Unwed mothers.
(checks her legs again)
Nowadays that's no big deal. Back then in Syracuse it was a stoning offense.

He CHUCKLES, spinning his eyebrows.

BRENDA

What happened?

KADELL

She had the baby. Then she died.

BRENDA

So Nash was illegitimate?

KADELL

Yeah, he was illegitimate. For about a minute-and-a-half. He died right after she did.

BRENDA
(stunned)

He died?

CUT TO:

BRENDA

Getting out of a cab at 42nd and 5th, dressed in coat, fur hat, gloves and scarf.

Moving through lunchtime crowds, she walks up the steps to the Public Library.

CUT TO:

ERIK POWELL

Seated at his computer-console. He's the Chief Archivist, New York State.

Macho, gay, short-hair, moustache and tattoos. Before him, two display screens.

Brenda perches on a stool at his elbow, coat, hat and scarf over her arm.

ERIK

I did what you asked, Brenda. And do I have something weird.

BRENDA

What?

ERIK

The computer will display certain documents on micro-film.

(indicating 2nd screen)

They'll pop up there.

BRENDA

Erik, what's weird?

ERIK

(punches data)

This guy Nash's signature. He's the legal owner of the property on Hudson Street.

BRENDA

I know that.

ERIK

(touchy)

He could have been renting. Or leasing. You don't know.

Brenda sighs. Talking to Erik is a pain in the ass.

A document appears on the 2nd screen.

ERIK

Okay, here we go. This is the original deed to the Hudson Street property. Dated 1796. Look at that signature.

On screen, a dramatic scrawl: "ADRIAN MONTAGU"

BRENDA

Who's Adrian Montagu?

ERIK

The first owner of Hudon Street.
(checks print-out)
An English immigrant.

Freezing, Brenda puts her coat back on.

BRENDA

Can we cut to the chase, Erik?

ERIK
(ruffled)
I'm taking you through a process here,
Brenda. I spent hours on this. Okay?

Brenda shivers in the cold.

ERIK
Adrian Montagu left his property to Hamilton
Kopp.
(cracking knuckles)
Even in the old days, if somebody left you
something, you had to sign a receipt.

New program. On the 2nd screen, a receipt signed: "HAMILTON KOPP"

ERIK
This shows that Kopp actually received
Montagu's inheritance.
(enjoying himself)
Check out Kopp's signature. Familiar?

BRENDA
It looks a little like the first guy's
Montagu.

ERIK
Brilliant.

He returns to the console.

ERIK
The next thing I did was see if I could find
a Hamilton Kopp who died at birth some time
before the receipt was signed by Montagu.

BRENDA
Why?

ERIK
Logical minds search for connections.
(taps forehead)
I've got a logical mind. The Nash kid died at
birth, right?

She nods. On screen, a DEATH CERTIFICATE for HAMILTON KOPP.

ERIK
Here we go. Hamilton Kopp. Born, January
16th, 1819. Died at birth. 20 years before he
allegedly signed the receipt inheriting
Hudson Street from Montagu.

BRENDA
It's a coincidence. It's got to be a
different Kopp.

ERIK
(grinning)
Thin so? Watch this.
(programs new stuff)
Kopp died and left his wordly goods to one
Alfred Burgess.

On-screen, a receipt signed: "ALFRED BURGESS"

ERIK
Burgess left his possessions to Wallingford
Benoit.

On-screen, a receipt signed: "WALLINGTON BENOIT"

ERIK
And Benoit left his stuff to your guy.
Russell Nash.

On-screen, a receipt signed "RUSSELL NASH". Erik swivels in his
chair. Brenda puts on her gloves.

ERIK
In all five instances, Montagu through Nash,
I found a death certificate for a kid with
the same name, who died at birth years before
he pretended to sign for his inheritance.
(eyeing her)
Still think it's a coincidence?

She replaces her fur hat. She's never been so cold.

BRENDA
Erik, isn't there any heat in here?

ERIK
No. Heat's bad for the circuits.
(taps more keys)
And now, just in case there's any doubt.

On-screen, Brenda examines five magnified signatures.

"ADRIAN MONTAGU
HAMILTON KOPP
ALFRED BURGESS
WALLINGFORD BENOIT
RUSSELL NASH"

Erik runs another program, overlaying individual letters from the
combined signatures, T's on T's, N's over N's, etc.

They're identical.

Dramatically, he spins around on his chair.

ERIK

So what you got here, Brenda is a guy who's been creeping around since at least 1700. Pretending to croak every once in a while, leaving all his possessions to kids who've been corpses for years and assuming their identities.

BRENDA

It's not possible.

CUT TO:

KENNY WATCHING TV NEWS

In the Ansonia lobby. Derelicts snore in harmony.

NEWSCASTER

Public outrage mounts this hour as New York's finest seem powerless to stop the Head-Hunter. The Kurgan leaves the elevator. Carrying his oblong case, crossing the lobby. It's late.

KENNY

(seeing him)

Hey Rockefeller. How did you like Candy? She said you were kinda kinky.

The Kurgan stops, staring at him.

KENNY

You watch your ass out there.

(cackling)

Don't let the Head-Hunter getcha!

The Kurgan walks up to him, inches from his face. Kenny stares into eyes that are a vision of Hell.

THE KURGAN

(rasping)

Don't speak to me.

KENNY

I didn't mean --

THE KURGAN

Don't ever speak to me. Do you understand?

He understands. The Kurgan leaves, Kenny staring after him.

KENNY

Hope you get your head chopped off, asshole.

CUT TO:

KIRK MATUNAS

Driving 23rd in a souped-up Mustang.

He's wiry, in fatigues, T-shirt, forage-cap and boots. Headlights reflect in his sunglasses.

Gun magazines on the seat, assault weapons in the back, Uzi machine-pistol on the dash. Nobody's gonna mug this sucker.

MATUNAS
(singing)

Oh, she jumped in bed, And she covered her
head, Bet I couldn't find her.

He turns down 2nd Avenue, gathering speed.

MATUNAS
(continuing; singing)

Oh, her titties were pink as a red rooster's.

He brakes suddenly, revving back, fishtailing to a halt, staring down an alley.

A black guy and a white guy battle with swords.

Matunas grabs the Uzi, springing into action.

CUT TO:

THE KURGAN AND KASTAGIR IN THE ALLEY

Fighting savegely. Matunas appears, thunderstruck.

MATUNAS
(shouting)

What the hell's going on?

They continue hammering at each other. Matunas slams a clip into the Uzi, taking aim.

Horrified, he sees the white guy decapitate the black guy.

Matunas starts FIRING.

Five slugs tear into the white guy's chest, flinging him against a fence. He falls. Matunas disappears down the alley.

CUT TO:

A SMALL CROWD GATHERS

On 2nd Avenue. A vintage Chevy pulls up at the curb, ENGINE RUNNING. Inside, an OLD COUPLE try to see what's going on.

MATUNAS

Creeps down the dark alley. He checks the black guy. He's a goner.

Suddenly, the white guy he shot lunges with a sword, driving the blade into Matuna's stomach. SCREAMING, he falls, dropping his Uzi.

Ignoring him, the Kurgan hunches over Kastagir's body. Matunas sees weird things happen:

CUT TO:

THE CROWD

On 2nd Avenue freaks. STREET-LIGHTS DIM. WINDOWS EXPLODE in buildings. NEON SIGNS ERUPT. MANHOLE COVERS BLAST skyward.

Riddled with bullet-holes, the Kurgan staggers out of the alley, CURSING, wielding his sword. The crowd scatters in terror.

Hearing distant SIRENS, the Kurgan looks for a ride, spotting the Chevy on the curb.

Bellowing, he charges, sword swinging, opening the Chevy's roof like a tin can.

Prying it open with his bare hands, he sees the old couple staring up at what used to be their roof. The next second, they're airborne, hurled to the sidewalk.

Leaping inside, the Kurgan takes off. Tires SHRIEKING, roof flapping, he hurtles away down 2nd Avenue.

MORAN AND BEDSOE ENTERING BELLEVUE HOSPITAL

Shoving REPORTERS aside.

REPORTERS (V.O)
(shouting)

Did he see the Head-Hunter? What's the victim's name? Come on, Moran!

CUT TO:

MORAN AND BEDSOE IN AN ASCENDING ELEVATOR

Watching floor numbers.

BEDSOE

Frank, I saw the corpse. The black guy was the same dude who was with Nash. I spent the night with them, for Christ's sake.

MORAN

Right. Drunk out of your skull.

Embarrassed, Bedsoe checks his shoes. Moran gets a cigar going.

MORAN

20 people were there and nobody saw a goddamn thing.

(a beat)

That's New York for you.

(lights cigar)

So tell me about this guy Matunas. Is he on drugs?

BEDSOE

No. Some kind of survival nut.

MORAN

Survival nut?

BEDSOE

Yeah. Into guns. Former Marine. Vietnam. I checked with his ex-CO. Slightly paranoid, but definitely reliable.

CUT TO:

MATUNAS

Propped up in bed, abdomen bandaged.

Tube in his arm. Moran and Bedsoe enter.

MORAN

How're you doing, kid?

MATUNAS

Okay, I guess for a guy who got three feet of steel crammed up his ass. How're you doin', old man?

MORAN

Walt says you got a look at the guy who stuck you, right?

MATUNAS

Are you kiddin', man?

Moran shows him a shot of MacLeod.

MORAN

This him?

MATUNAS

Nope.

MORAN

Come on, Matunas. It was dark in that alley.

MATUNAS

(screeching)

The freak was stabbing me to death. I'll never forget his face. He had a scar right across his throat.

(re: photo)

And that ain't him.

Moran sags onto the bed.

MATUNAS

Depressed?

Moran shrugs.

MATUNAS

You don't know grunt about depressed.

(sits up painfully)

I got me a .357, a trunkful of shotguns, three big-bore battle rifles and ammo out the ass. I can't protect myself.

(shouting)

I ain't safe!

(wincing)

That weirdo with the sword, man. He got up and stabbed me after I put enough lead in him to drop a rhino.

(collapsing)

Don't talk to me about depressed.

Moran rises wearily.

MORAN

Could you work with an artist and come up with a picture of the guy?

MATUNAS

Sure.

Moran and Bedsoe head for the door.

MATUNAS

Hey, cop.

Moran turns.

MATUNAS

I know you think I'm nuts. But there's something else I gotta tell you.

CUT TO:

MORAN AND BEDSOE HEADING FOR THE EXIT

Reporters clamor outside.

MORAN

(seeing pres)

Just say we got an eyewitness. That's it.
Nothing about sword-fights in the 20th
Century.

(jabs Bedsoe's chest)

Guys glowing in the dark. Or soldiers
crawling around in the snow at Valley Forge,
looking for Washington's wooden teeth. Got
it, Walt?

They walk into the uproar.

CUT TO:

A NEWS VENDOR AT 57TH AND 7TH

Rush-hour crowds buy The Post. A composite of the Kurgan is front
page.

NEWS VENDOR

(shouting)

Extra! Cops release Head-Hunter picture.
Head-Hunter revealed.

Headline: "HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN?"

CUT TO:

MACLEOD

Lighting candles in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Beside the altar. Soaring columns, stained-glass windows. People
pray. Priests glide about.

MACLEOD

(1st candle)

For you, my bonnie Heather. Happy birthday.

(lights 2nd)

And you, Juan Ramirez.

(remembering)

Take care of her, you overdressed haggis.

Moving to an empty pew, he sits silently, lost in the past.

In front of him, the candles blur. The ceiling starts to spin.
Turning, MacLeod see the Kurgan beside him in the pew.

He's become a punk-rocker, straightened his hair, dyed it orange,
and put on make-up.

A line of safety-pins dangle from the scar across his throat. His
mocking eyes roam the church.

KURGAN

Kastagir is gone. Only you and I remain.
Chatting together here on holy ground.

He leers.

MACLEOD

You're revolting. What d'you think this is,
Hallowe'en?

KURGAN

I am disguised. This way people will not
recognize me.

MACLEOD

What do you want?

KURGAN

Your head.

MacLeod is a coiled spring. TWO MATRONS cross themselves, heading
down the aisle.

KURGAN

And the Prize.
(the matrons pass by)
Happy Hallowe'en ladies!

Scared witless, they leave.

KURGAN

It was destined that the board would be
cleared for the real players.

MACLEOD

I feel something coming from you. You're
trying to conceal it from me. What is it?

KURGAN

I conceal nothing.

MacLeod's glittering eyes fix on the Kurgan's safety-pinned
throat-scar.

MACLEOD

Ramirez's blade did not cut deeply enough. He
was right about you. You're slime.

KURGAN

(harshly)

Ramirez was an effete snob. He died on his
knees.

Gloating, he remembers:

CUT TO:

THE KURGAN

Clutching Heather's neck, rising up from the ruins of MacLeod's
16th century stone house. SCREAMING, she tries to break free of
his grip. It's hopeless.

KURGAN (V.O.)

I took his head and raped his woman before
his body was even cold.

Throwing Heather down, he rips off her clothes. She CRIES OUT
brokenly. There's no one to hear.

CUT TO:

THE KURGAN

Eyeballing MacLeod's stricken face in St. Patrick's.

Understanding dawns in his lurid eyes.

KURGAN

I see. Ramirez lied. The woman was not his.
She was yours.

(leering)

And she never told you. I wonder why. Perhaps
I gave her something you never could, and
secretly she yearned for my return.

On his feet, MacLeod shakes with fury.

MACLEOD

You sick bastard!

He lunges for the sword inside his coat. The Kurgan's hands fly up
in mock-horror.

KURGAN

Holy ground, Highlander. Remember what
Ramirez taught you.

MACLEOD

You can't stay in here forever.

KURGAN

(smiling)

You're weak, Highlander. You will always be
weaker than I.

MACLEOD

I'll be out front. Waiting.

MacLeod leaves by the front doors. Metallic laughter rings through
the church. Worshipers are outraged.

A bald PRIEST confronts the Kurgan.

PRIEST

This is the house of God. People are trying
to pray. You're disturbing them.

The Kurgan kisses the Priest's hand noisily, dropping to his
knees.

KURGAN

Forgive me, father. I am a worm.

Patting the Priest's head for luck, the Kurgan boogies down the aisle in hobnail boots.

Safety-pins jangling at his throat, he heads for the back exit.

He leaps out into the night. The DOOR BANGS. The Priest crosses himself.

CUT TO:

BRENDA GRILLING RACHEL IN NASH'S ANTIQUE SHOP

BRENDA

I want to see him, goddamnit.

RACHEL

I'm afraid that's impossible. Mr. Nash.

BRENDA

Nash is dead. He died at birth. Didn't he, Miss Ellenstein.

MACLEOD

Suddenly SLAMS open the door, seeing Brenda.

MACLEOD

What are you doing here?

BRENDA

Looking for a dead guy named Nash. He died at birth in Syracuse.

MacLeod looks at Brenda. She's done her homework, and she's not going to leave. He makes a decision.

MACLEOD

Come on.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD AND BRENDA ENTERING HIS PRIVATE APARTMENT

She's dumbfounded staring at the opulent surroundings. He moves to the bar.

MACLEOD

Do you want a scotch?

BRENDA

Is is Old?

MACLEOD

It's 12 years old. Do you want some or not?

She nods. He pours drinks, handing her one. Taking her arm, he leads her down a hall.

MACLEOD AND BRENDA ENTER HIS SILVER ROOM

Her expression changes to awe.

The room is filled with suits of armor, Italian statuettes, Persian fetishes, and a thousand other oddities from a hundred eras.

The sight is overwhelming.

BRENDA

My God.

Astonished, she strolls around, touching artifacts. He watches her.

BRENDA

(continuing; pointing)

Is that claymore real?

He lets go. Years of isolation melt in the sound of her voice.

MACLEOD

Yes.

Brenda runs her hand along the delicate weaving of a Carolingian tapestry.

She turns and faces him.

MACLEOD

I have been alive for four and a half centuries. And I cannot die.

BRENDA

(nervously)

Right. And I'm an Amazon princess sent by Martians to save the world.

He's caressing her with his eyes, confusing her again.

Crossing to a glass table, he picks up an ornate stiletto.

BRENDA

(continuing; alarmed)

What are you going to do with that?

He offers her the hilt.

MACLEOD

Take it.

Reluctantly, her fingers close over the handle.

Suddenly, MacLeod kneels before her, tearing open his shirt, exposing his chest.

In one blurred move, he grabs her fist. She tries to drop the dagger, but his grip is like steel.

MACLEOD

I am Conner MacLeod of the Clan MacLeod. I was born in 1518, in the village of Glamis, on the shores of Loch Shiel.

(tightening his grip)

And I am immortal.

In a flash, he pulls her fist forward:

Plunging the stiletto into his heart.

Letting go, she screams. He collapses, moaning.

Freaking out, Brenda watches:

MacLeod pulls the dagger out of his heart.

The wound heals. He stands up. Brenda is lost.

CUT TO:

BRENDA AND MACLEOD AT THE DINNER TABLE

She's flushed, excited in the presence of living history. MacLeod pours brandy, getting comfortable. Brenda watches him draw on his cigar.

BRENDA

I've got a million questions. I don't know what to ask first.

MACLEOD

I have all the time in the world.

BRENDA

You were with Napoleon at Waterloo.

(he nods)

What was he like?

MACLEOD

Short. French. Wore his hat sideways.

She spots the silver-frame photo of MacLeod with a 12-year-old girl.

BRENDA

Is this your daughter?

MACLEOD

Yes.

BRENDA

What's her name?

MACLEOD

Rachel.

Brenda frowns. Slowly realizing, she points.

BRENDA
You mean that Rachel?

MACLEOD
(nodding)
Yes. She was an orphan. I can't have
children. I adopted her.
(drolly)
Over the years, our relationship has gone
through quite a few changes.

BRENDA
She's old enough to be your mother.

MACLEOD
Sometimes she thinks she is.

Rising, he takes the Samurai from the sheath in his coat, laying
it before her.

MACLEOD
This was forged in 593 B.C. Metal folded over
200 times.

He enjoys her amazement.

MACLEOD
(continuing gently)
Like finding a 747 a thousand years before
the Wright Brothers flew. Right?

She runs her fingers over the blade.

BRENDA
This belonged to Ramirez?

MACLEOD
Yes.

Reality hits her like a bolt. She's alone with an immortal,
holding a sword forged half-a-century before Christ.

BRENDA
How many men have you killed with this?

MACLEOD
Too many. They're all gone. Except for one.

He kisses her.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD AND BRENDA MAKING PASSIONATE LOVE

She grips his scar-covered back. He tastes her face and neck.

CUT TO:

HEATHER DYING IN THE 16TH CENTURY

CUT TO:

MACLEOD AND BRENDA IN BED

Head on his chest, she feels his breathing, stroking his muscular chest.

BRENDA

You're like the sun, going on for ever and ever.

MACLEOD

The sun will burn out in ten billion years.

BRENDA

Then what'll you do? Walk around in the dark?

He kisses her. She touches his cheek.

BRENDA

Tell me more about Heather.

He frowns, sitting up.

BRENDA

In all these years, she was the only one you really loved, right?

He bounces out of bed stark naked, deciding to go into the bathroom. She SHOUTS after him.

BRENDA

And losing her was too painful to bear, was that it?

(silence)

Come on. In every relationship, somebody has to die first.

MACLEOD (O.S.)

Yes, but the survivor doesn't have to go on forever.

He turns on the SHOWER, FULL-BLAST.

BRENDA

It's not just your body that's covered in scars. D'you know that?

The shower STOPS. Towel around his waist, he marches out of the bathroom.

MACLEOD

I don't want to talk about this.

BRENDA

I wouldn't want you to spend 10,000 years in a hair shirt if I was Heather.

Doing his best to ignore her, he stacks magazines.

BRENDA

I heard Christiaan Barnard on TV one time.

MACLEOD

Who?

BRENDA

Heart guy. He did the first transplant.

MACLEOD

I don't have heart trouble.

BRENDA

Oh, yes, you do.

(a beat)

Anyway, Barnard's patients always wanted to live longer. That's why they came to him. For new hearts. But he wouldn't give any guarantees. All he could promise them was freedom from pain.

MACLEOD

What is your point?

BRENDA

My point is, Ramirez was wrong. Just one year of love. though it ends in death, is better than an eternity alone.

MACLEOD

Are you making a proposal?

Seductively, she pulls the sheet around her.

BRENDA

Not me. Besides, we've only just met.

(pause)

Come here a minute.

MACLEOD

Why?

BRENDA

I want to check your pulse.

He's on her in a flash.

CUT TO:

MORAN AND BRENDA WALKING DOWN A HALLWAY

She's pissed.

BRENDA

Frank, call off Bedsoe. I don't need any protection.

MORAN

You saw Nash at least twice. Why?

They descend stairs in a wave of milling cops.

BRENDA

I was looking for something.

MORAN

Did you find it?

BRENDA

Maybe.

Moran jams his cigar in his mouth. They arrive at Brenda's office.

MORAN

Brenda, there's stuff going on in this Head-Hunter case you wouldn't believe. Nash is involved somehow. I don't want you hurt.

BRENDA

I'm okay. I promise.

She smiles, unlocking her office, going inside.

CUT TO:

BRENDA AND MACLEOD TOURING THE BRONX ZOO

Eating popcorn. They pause at:

THE GIRAFFE ENCLOSURE

He's pensive. She's energized

BRENDA

I had it all laid out. Forensics. In 3 years, a lectureship at Columbia. Tenure. Husband, couple of kids.

He nods distractedly, eyes riveted on:

A LONE WOLF IN A CAGE

Staring at him. The connection between man and beast is timeless. Their heartbeats and breathing become one.

In his mind, Ramirez's VOICE ECHOES down 400 years:

RAMIREZ'S VOICE

I had to go on, never again to hear the sound of her voice, her laughter. She left behind such a silence.

The wolf turns away. MacLeod's mind reels.

BRENDA
You're not, listening.

MACLEOD
Brenda, this isn't going to work. I can't get involved with someone. Not again.

BRENDA
(quickly)
Who said anything about being involved?

Hiding her feelings, she moves to:

BIRDS IN AN AVIARY

Parrots SCREECH. He joins her.

BRENDA
If all you want's an occasional night together, that's fine with me.

All around the zoo, wild-life starts to act strangely. Tigers claw their cages. Monkeys go crazy. Hyenas attack one another.

Bears try to climb out of their pit. The hairs on the back of MacLeod's neck stand up. His mind reels.

MACLEOD
(looking around)
It's not that simple.

BRENDA
You think I'm going to turn you in to Moran.

From every direction, SHRIEKS, GROWLS, TRUMPETINGS.

Visitors think it's feeding time, but MacLeod knows different. His eyes are everywhere, searching for the Kurgan.

MACLEOD
No, I don't think you'll do that.

He reaches for her hand. She pulls it away.

BRENDA
There's something I want to say.

A happy-faced CLOWN wanders past, selling balloons.

MacLeod's hand is under the shoulder of his coat, gripping his sword, scanning every passing face, searching for his mortal enemy.

BRENDA
I love you.
(a beat)
But you're locked away in your own private world of memories. No future. Unable to care. Afraid.

THE KURGAN IN THE CHILDREN'S ENCLOSURE

Surrounded by kids petting sweet, furry things. He peers through the trees.

AT THE PENGUIN-POOL

Excited kids jostle and SHOUT. MacLeod is in turmoil.

BRENDA

You know what's kind of weird? Most people are afraid to die. That's not your problem. You're afraid to live.

(rises)

Take care of yourself.

(kisses him)

Don't lose your head.

She turns and walks for the exit.

CUT TO:

THE KURGAN

Watches Brenda leave. A KID hands him a rabbit. He strokes it. It struggles, biting him hard. Flinging it from him, he takes off.

BRENDA GETS OUT OF HER APARTMENT ELEVATOR

It's dark and late. The building's empty.

Jostling an armful of books, she starts down the corridor.

Turning a corner she suddenly FREEZES.

The books tumble out of her arms onto the floor.

Standing at the end of the corridor, smiling, is the Kurgan, in black leather, buckles and stomping-boots. His hair is shaved into an orange mohawk.

KURGAN

Hello, pretty.

The Kurgan starts for her, carrying a huge, broadsword.

Brenda screams and runs for her apartment.

The Kurgan is in no hurry.

Brenda looks back at the Kurgan. Crying in fear, she frantically tries to get her keys into the lock of her apartment.

The Kurgan is nearly upon her.

Brenda throws open the door, runs inside, and locks it.

Beat.

CRASH!!

The Kurgan hammers his sword deep into the wood of the door.

BRENDA
(crying)
Oh, God...

He strikes again. And again. Splinters smack everywhere.

BRENDA
Go away! Oh, God, go away!

Hysterical, Brenda sinks to the floor against her desk.

The Kurgan stands back and gives the door a last two-fisted swing.

Brenda screams.

The door collapses.

The hellish figure stands over her in the doorway.

BRENDA
For God's sake...

KURGAN
There is no God. Only me.

CUT TO:

A SPEEDING CAR RACES THROUGH THE CITY

The Kurgan takes a cassette from his pocket, slotting it in.
DEAFENING MUSIC fills the car:

It's the KURGAN'S ANTHEM.

Brenda is trying to get her bearings.

MUSIC SHRIEKS, her ears burst. Cars rocket past like bullets.
Speedometer 90 and climbing.

Brenda stares at the Mohawk abortion with his foot to the floor.

BRENDA
(shouting)
Stop. Please, stop.

The Kurgan erupts in maniacal laughter.

Brenda hangs on for dear life. Everything's a blur. Any second,
she's going to die.

Engine WHINING, MUSIC POUNDING, eyeballing his captive:

The Kurgan runs chicken down the avenue, not stopping for red lights.

Flat-out, stopping for nothing, getting his rocks off, shrieking like a banshee.

In his wake, a maelstrom of wreckage and terror.

ANTHEM BLARING, he flings the Cutlass into the dark mouth of the Mid-Town Tunnel.

Brenda screams.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD SLUMPED ON A COUCH IN HIS LIVING ROOM

Replaying a RECORDED message:

KURGAN'S VOICE

She gave me your number. She didn't want to at first. Listen.

Brenda sobs.

KURGAN

She's hot, Highlander. I think she wants me. What part of her shall I cut off first?

More CRYING. MacLeod shuts it off. Rachel at the door.

RACHEL

The endless killing has driven him mad.

Rising, he puts on his coat and checks his Samurai, holding her face in his hands.

MACLEOD

Rachel, there are some instructions in the desk drawer. I want you to follow them. There's a power-of-attorney for you. You'll have everything you need.

RACHEL

(realizing)

You're not coming back.

Silence.

RACHEL

Even if you kill him, you're not coming back. Are you?

He sits her down, holding her hands.

MACLEOD
(gently)
Sweet Rachel, you always knew this would
happen.
(a beat)
Russell Nash dies tonight. One way or the
other. It's time.

RACHEL
(crying)
There's no one in my life but you.

MacLeod gives her a handkerchief.

MACLEOD
You still have a lot of life to live.

RACHEL
I'm afraid.

MACLEOD
A beautiful woman like you need never be
alone or afraid.

He stands up, smiling down at her.

RACHEL
What about Brenda?

MACLEOD
He's given me an hour.

RACHEL
I understand.

He kisses her, hugging her tight.

MACLEOD
Goodbye, dearest Rachel. My daughter. My good
friend.

He leaves. Long silence. Tears roll down her cheeks.

RACHEL
(whispering)
Goodbye, Russell Nash.

CUT TO:

CONEY ISLAND AMUSEMENT PARK AT NIGHT

Bitter cold. A sign reads:

"CLOSED
NO ADMITTANCE"

Breakers pound the beach. WIND HOWLS through the park.

The roller-coaster's a prehistoric monster. Light flickers from a merry-go-round pavilion.

CUT TO:

THE KURGAN ASSEMBLING HIS SWORD

Inside the pavilion, slotting the blade into place.

Sprawled in sawdust, Brenda stares at carved wooden horses. Shivering, she sits up, trying to figure out where she is.

The Kurgan looms over her, blade gleaming.

KURGAN

A nice sleep, yes?

She tries to rise. He sets his sword-point at her throat.

KURGAN

One move, whore, and I'll slice you to bits.

He forces her back. She's freezing and terrified.

BRENDA

You're an animal.

KURGAN

I am Kurgan. Warrior eternal. I have carved my name in the flesh of Venetian princes, raped the daughters of Attila the Hun, and set ablaze the seven hills of Rome.

(grating)

You are nothing. Born and dead in the blink of my eye.

(a beat)

You are my slave, and will give me whatever pleasure I demand.

BRENDA

You puffed-up turd. You don't have the equipment.

She spits at him. He glares in fury.

BRENDA

Come on. Kill me. You're going to do it anyway.

(a beat)

What's the matter? No balls?

The Kurgan smiles. She's clever, this bitch.

KURGAN

I see. You try to anger me, so I kill you before you lover arrives. Then I have no advantage.

BRENDA

(staggers up)

I'm nothing to him. Just a roll in the hay.

Breath billowing, mohawk trembling, he wonders if that's true. Suddenly he freezes, staring out into the dark.

KURGAN

He cares for you. More than you think. I can feel his approach.

(a beat)

My advantage is real.

Grabbing a hammer, she hurls it at him. He bats it away with his sword, slapping her across the face.

MacLeod appears, samurai in hand.

The Kurgan drags Brenda up by the hair, hand over her mouth, blade resting across her neck. MacLeod starts forward.

KURGAN

Stop, or I'll cut her.

Tense as a cobra, MacLeod stops.

MACLEOD

Let her go.

KURGAN

I don't think so.

He yanks her head farther back, eyes on the Highlander.

KURGAN

If you care what happens to her. put down your sword and walk away.

(pointing)

Over there.

Brenda fights to break his grip. The Kurgan chokes her. MacLeod puts down his sword.

KURGAN

Very good. Now move.

MacLeod moves.

KURGAN

Kneel down, neck exposed.

MACLEOD

Let her go first.

KURGAN

Do you think thousands of years have made me an idiot?

(barking)

Kneel!

Boiling, he obeys.

Hurling Brenda away from him, the Kurgan swings murderously at MacLeod's exposed neck.

Like a panther, MacLeod rolls, grabs his samurai, and meets the ROARING BLADE with a THUNDEROUS CLANG and a shower of sparks.

MacLeod leaps to his feet.

KURGAN

So now it ends. Generation upon generation.
Millions of miles.

Wielding his sword like a scythe, MacLeod attacks, driving the kurgan back in showers of sparks. BLADES CLANG in the gloom.

The Kurgan blocks his parries brilliantly. They lock sword-hilts, face to face.

BRENDA

Kill him! Kill him!

The Kurgan hurls him across the pavilion. He lands on his back, winded.

Yelling, the Kurgan charges, driving MacLeod out into the night. Brenda follows fearfully.

CUT TO:

A SAVAGE BATTLE RAGING THROUGH THE PARK

Between the reptilian day-glo nightmare and the 466-year-old Highlander.

Roller-coaster pilings are severed and collapse. Arcades demolished, ferris-wheel chairs hacked to bits. Energy crackles all around them.

They battle beneath a huge red wooden fruit. Painted on it in lurid colors:

FUN IN THE BIG APPLE

Circling, MacLeod's eyes burn into his ancient enemy.

MACLEOD

I can sense it again. What I felt in the church. What are you hiding?

KURGAN

Nothing.

They grapple like primordial beasts, sweat pouring off their bodies.

MACLEOD

(realizing)

It's fear. That's what I feel. You're afraid of me. Kurgan, you're afraid of me.

(hurling him back)

That's why you needed the woman. You didn't think you could take me.

KURGAN

(hoarsely)

Lies!

His rabid eyes can't hide the truth. MacLeod charges again, wielding Ramirez's sword full-strength.

The Kurgan's arms feel like lead. Gasping, he retreats to:

The icy beach.

MacLeod beating him back.

MACLEOD

All these years, I thought I was running from you. But it was myself.

(contempuously)

You're not the perfect warrior. You're a coward.

MacLeod batters him relentlessly. Each blocked blow saps Kurgan further.

Beaten, he stands, gulping for air. MacLeod faces him, samurai poised for another blow.

The Kurgan can't get it up. Brenda's rooted to the spot.

MACLEOD

(continuing, to the Kurgan)

For Heather, Ramirez, Kastagir and all the others I never knew. And last, for the Highlander MacLeod of the Clan MacLeod.

He raises his Samurai.

MACLEOD

There can be only one.

Blade a WHISTLING blur:

He cuts off the Kurgan's head.

Transfixed, Brenda watches a sparkling energy leave the corpse and engulf MacLeod. Standing up:

MacLeod glows all hues of the rainbow.

His hair stands on end. Color erupts from his eyes. He's like a roman candle against the waves. The WIND HOWLS.

MACLEOD
(continuing; screaming)
Mother of God!

Terrified, she tries to touch him. It's like his skin's on fire.

BRENDA
(shouting)
What is it?

Glowing, he falls to his knees in the sand.

MACLEOD
The Prize. It is the Prize.

Suddenly, everything's still. His eyes probe the darkness. There's a TERRIFYING EXPLOSION.

Brenda watches MacLeod's body transform into many different people. His voice ECHOES over the surf.

MACLEOD
Everything's alive. The Quickening overpowers me.
(becoming Ramirez)
All resistance is gone. I am generations being born and dying.
(becoming Fasil)
I am night air, breathing.
(becoming unknown people)
The life-force smothers me.
(becoming the Kurgan)
I am all of them.
(becoming himself)
I can feel everything

She's terrified. His form shifts and changes before her. Waves CRASH on the beach.

MACLEOD
I can feel your love. The blood in your veins.

He reaches out to her.

MACLEOD
Your fear of me.

CUT TO:

FIRE TRUCK

Converging on MacLeod's antique shop.

SIRENS SCREAMING. It's a blazing inferno. Cops hold back crowds. Firemen direct hoses. Tears in her eyes:

Rachel moves through the crowd.

She's carrying the silver-framed 1952 photo of herself with Nash.
Beams split in cascades of sparks.

CUT TO:

MORAN

Stands on the sidewalk. TV crews film the blaze. Cops hold back
gawkers behind barriers. Seeing Rachel, Moran takes her arm.

MORAN

I'm sorry. We couldn't get him out.

RACHEL

I know.

MORAN

(eyeing her)

The Head-Hunter got another one tonight.

RACHEL

(anxiously)

What was his name?

MORAN

Some guy named Kruger.

Relieved, she closes her eyes for a moment. MacLeod has won.

MORAN

Why d'you ask, Miss Ellenstein?

RACHEL

You can call me Rachel if you want.

MORAN

Rachel's a nice name

(seeing photo)

What's that?

She shows it him.

MORAN

Nash.

(she nods)

Who's the pretty young girl?

RACHEL

(smiling)

Would you like to get some coffee?

Puzzled, he looks at the photo, then at her. Taking his arm, she
walks him off down the street.

Behind them, the inferno RAGES.

CUT TO:

THREE UPS GUYS

Unloading MacLeod's aquarium off a truck.

Reeling under its weight, they stagger up the steps of a brownstone, ringing the bell repeatedly.

After an eternity, Bedsoe appears in striped pajamas, rubbing his eyes.

UPS GUY

You Bedsoe?

BEDSOE

Yeah.

UPS GUY

Delivery. Fish. Heavy. Get out of the way.

Pushing past him with the tank, they disappear inside.

UPS GUY'S VOICE

Where d'you want it?

BEDSOE

Wait a minute. There must be some mistake. I didn't order any fish.

CUT TO:

MACLEOD ON THE FAN-TAIL OF A LINER, ALONE

Bright sun, gulls astern. Passengers bask by a pool. Waiters serve drinks.

He stares at the rolling ocean. Everything is different. There's a power and growing confidence in his eyes.

Brenda appears in a summer dress, carrying glasses and an open bottle. She joins him, setting them on the rail, watching him in silence.

MACLEOD

A man named Armando Rafael Garcia, right now, is planning a military coup in Honduras. Many people may die.

BRENDA

How do you know?

MACLEOD

(searching for words)

I can't explain it. I just do.

BRENDA

You mean like when the phone rings sometimes, and before you answer, you know who's calling?

MACLEOD

Something like that. I'm just learning about it.

(pause)

In Paris, Jean-Robert Tousche and Sylvie Arnaud live in adjoining houses.

(turning to her)

They're deeply in love, but they never speak to each other.

The breeze stirs her hair. The implications of what he's saying astound her.

BRENDA

What are you going to do with all this power?

MACLEOD

I don't know. I think I can help the people in Honduras, the lovers in Paris.

(shakes his head)

I'm not sure how yet. I don't fully grasp it.

Gulls hang on the wind. Changing mood, Brenda grins, digging him in the ribs.

BRENDA

Before you start saving lives in Honduras and lovers in Paris, will you do something for me?

He blinks, focusing on her. His eyes are still magic. She loves him to death.

MACLEOD

Yes. What would you like?

BRENDA

Will you take me to Scotland? I want to see where you were born.

MacLeod is pleased. After all the years he's lived, the miles he's travelled, the thought of returning to the place where it all started moves him.

MACLEOD

(embracing her)

Are you sure this is what you want?

BRENDA

I'm sure.

He strokes her face.

MACLEOD

Will you call me Conner MacLeod? It's my real name. I long to hear it again.

She tries not to cry. He holds her tight, looking into her eyes. He knows what she's thinking.

MACLEOD

Ramirez was wrong. Just one year of love is better than an eternity alone.

Composure regained, she grins.

BRENDA

Right. Now it's time for the ceremony.

MACLEOD

What ceremony?

She fills the glasses, handing him one.

MACLEOD

What's that?

BRENDA

Plum brandy. 1976.

MACLEOD

1976?

BRENDA

It was all I could find. Listen, 1976 was a very good year.

(reciting)

America celebrated its 200th year of independence from England. One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest won five Academy Awards. And Pittsburgh beat Dallas in the Super Bowl.

MACLEOD

Is that right?

BRENDA

Yes. 21 to 17.

He cracks up, kissing her eyes, mouth, hair. She pushes him away.

BRENDA

Wait. I'm not finished. I want to make a toast.

He smiles, remembering the night at her apartment.

BRENDA

To Time.

They raise their glasses. She forgets her lines.

MACLEOD

How long do we have to stand like this?

BRENDA

Hold it a second. I'm trying to remember.

Next second, she's ready. He wonders what's coming. She looks at him lovingly.

BRENDA

In the sun that is young once only Time lets
me hail and climb Golden in the heyday of his
eyes.

He blinks.

BRENDA

In the moon that is always rising
Time holds me green and dying
Though i sing in my chains
Like the sea.
They clink glasses.

BRENDA

Dylan Thomas.

Moved, he drinks. Putting down her glass, she flings her arms
around his neck, kissing him. He responds passionately.

MACLEOD

You're quite a woman, Brenda Wyatt. I love
you with all my heart

BRENDA

And I love you.
(touching his face.)
My Conner MacLeod.

The liner moves away.

FADE OUT

THE END