

ARISEN Pilot  
"Fortress Britain"

written by

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by Glynn James & Michael Stephen Fuchs

**EXT. FIELD - DAY**

Heavy fog - swirling above and out beyond a holographic sight, the rifle beneath held in low-ready position. A curling chin mic visible above it, as well as a high-tech watch on the hand holding the weapon's vertical foregrip. Both belong to COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR (CSM) HANDON. Faint sound of his breathing, in the thick mists.

Imperceptibly at first, a face begins to appear through the soup - approaching, dead on. The rifle rises up to level.

HANDON  
(into chin mic)  
Contact, my twelve.

**NEW ANGLE - ON HANDON**

He's The Punisher - big, lean, stubbled jaw, ice-blue eyes. Weight of the world. He's tooled up in full spec-ops battle rattle - but all of it worn over a sleek black assault suit - and carrying a heavily customized assault rifle. On his shoulder, a unit patch: the word AIRBORNE above a commando knife superimposed on a red arrowhead. On his chest, a small rank patch: three chevrons, three rockers, and a star flanked by leaves. He's been around a thousand blocks, most lethal. Still - today he's worried.

**NEW ANGLE - HANDON'S POV AGAIN**

The face in the mist resolves: mouth torn, left side of the face shattered. Now the body: ragged and blood-stained shreds of clothing, hanging from a gaunt frame. Black fluid leaks out of sores that burn red with infection. Bones crack.

More dark inhuman shadows stir behind the first. All lumber directly toward Handon. They are quiet - for now.

PREDATOR (V.O.)  
(growling across channel)  
Unfriendlies, nine o'clock.  
Multiple Zulus.

**NEW ANGLE - BEHIND HANDON AND TO HIS LEFT**

Standing there like a colossus is PREDATOR - a mustachioed professional wrestler, seven feet tall and 325 pounds, carrying a heavy SOF Combat Assault Rifle (SCAR). He too is totally tooled up, but also carries a large medic pouch on the side of his tactical vest. On his left shoulder, two curving tabs: AIRBORNE and RANGER; on his right, scroll of the 75TH RANGER REGIMENT. He flips up his face shield and spits tobacco juice on the ground.

POPE (V.O.)  
Yeah, ditto on our three.

**NEW ANGLE - BEHIND PREDATOR, BEHIND/RIGHT OF HANDON**

POPE, looking over his own half-lowered rifle. African American, calm, inscrutable, classic gray man. A variety of KNIVES strapped to him in unlikely places; a CIA - SPECIAL ACTIVITIES DIVISION patch on his shoulder. Gaze up and unmoving, his hand moves to his radio, switching channels.

POPE

Hotel X from Alpha Two-Two,  
requesting ETA on extraction.  
About ready to hit the road here.

He begins slow-stepping backward, away from the legions of mist-shrouded figures closing the distance.

**NEW ANGLE - FROM ABOVE, ALL THREE MEN IN A DIAMOND**

The mists begin to come alive on three sides of the team - hundreds of staggering figures converging.

**NEW ANGLE - BUILDING BEHIND THEM, FOURTH POINT OF DIAMOND**

A large warehouse, sign above: MERCK KGaA - PHARMAZEUTIKA, letters worn, cracked, or crooked. No one is coming out of the mist-shrouded front double-doors. Stillness and silence.

**NEW ANGLE - BACK TO HANDON**

The lead creature, the one with only half a head, is on him now. The red dot of his sight settles on its chin-point. He takes the slack out of the trigger - but then hesitates. The thing looks up, wheezes a guttural roar, lunges, and accelerates to its stumbling top speed.

Handon lets the rifle fall on its single-point tactical sling, his hand blurring to the small of his back - drawing a samurai short sword (wakizashi) in a cross-draw scabbard. In the same motion as the draw, he separates what's left of the creature's head from what's left of its body. Both fall at his assault boots, the body losing all animation - but jaws still gnashing.

An indistinct ELECTRIC HUMMING NOISE swells from out of the muffling fog. The swirling of the mists becomes violent. Handon looks behind him as...

**NEW ANGLE - OVER THE BUILDING**

...their Stealth Hawk, a heavily modified UH-60 Black Hawk, looking like a sleek space-helo, appears out of the soup, dropping on top of them. When Handon faces forward again...

**NEW ANGLE - HANDON'S POV**

...the helo has blown away the mists for a quarter-mile in every direction - revealing hundreds more dead, stretching back to the treeline, oozing forward like a mass of maggots seeking healthy flesh.

**NEW ANGLE - HANDON**

His expression goes slack, as he realizes there are too many to take with sword, pistol, or rifle. Behind him, the helo flares in, rocking on its four rubber wheels, dead center in the perimeter held by his three-man team in front of the building entrance.

Handon turns and hurls himself at the helo. As his boot hits the lip of the open side hatch, the first sounds of suppressed shots chug out: Predator and Pope, defending the perimeter. He heaves himself inside, around the door-mounted GAU-17 minigun, then glances at his watch, which shows a forward-counting timer:

**INSERT WATCH FACE:**

00:29:59 (flips to →) 00:30:00

- then looks up and out the opposite (open) hatch of the helo, through which he can see...

**NEW ANGLE - FRONT OF BUILDING**

Two men rush out the doors, heads ducked against the violent rotor wash. The first, their PROCUREMENT OFFICER (PO) is lightly armored and armed - side arm only, but drawn - full rucksack over one shoulder, sagging with weight, free hand in front of his face against the dust and wind of the rotors.

The second man is his security escort, JUICE - big (though not as big as Predator; no one is), vaguely puffy, heavily bearded, reversed ballcap, lots of high-tech kit on him, including a Go-Pro cam mounted on his helmet. Two patches on his shoulder: long curved SPECIAL FORCES tab; then an eagle clutching a keyboard, below text - THE ACTIVITY. Two morale patches on his vest: SECRET above a cartoon squirrel, and MY OPS ARE BLACKER THAN YOUR OPS. He holds a pristine Swiss SIG SG553 assault rifle by the pistol grip, the other hand squeezing the shoulder of the PO, herding him forward - and keeping him close.

The PO pauses to cinch up the drawstring on the rucksack - inside, piles of computer hard drives. Finally, Juice and the PO both look up and around, at the Zulu Dawn closing in on them from three sides. Both visibly mouth, "Fuck me." Juice steps in front of the PO to protect him.

**INT. COCKPIT OF HELO - DAY**

The pilot and co-pilot tap a last few touch-screens as they complete the landing, then also look up - at army of the dead, coming straight at them, as far as the eye can see.

CO-PILOT

Fuck me.

PILOT

(hitting radio)

Yeah, hey, Alpha Two - what was the problem again with just setting down on that nice safe rooftop there?

**INT. MAIN CABIN OF HELO - DAY**

Handon's eyes go from Juice and the PO... up to the top of the building, as it's buffeted by blasting rotor wash...

**EXT. OUTSIDE THE BUILDING - DAY**

It collapses with a shuddering crash, billows of plaster dust, shouts of men in the doorway. The overhang above the entrance comes down on Juice and the PO as they race out from under it. Juice is knocked clear, but lies prone, unmoving. The PO is also face-down - the lower half of his body crushed under hundreds of pounds of concrete and rebar.

**INT. HELO CABIN - DAY**

Handon's expression says they just lost the initiative. No time to curse fate - or hesitate. He spins, seizes the minigun in the outward-facing hatch - and spins it up with an electric death hum.

**NEW ANGLE - FACING OUT OVER MINIGUN**

It whines and buzzes, sluicing out hundreds of high-velocity rounds per second, a cataract of shell casings pouring on the deck and then down onto the dirt. Handon traverses the weapon from extreme left to right, just below head height. The first dozen ranks of the dead collapse in a sprawling meat pile, stretching off into the mist. Many are turned off by destruction of their brain stems; others just too dismembered to locomote. Either method works for Handon. But he glances down to the ammo tub - worried. He's bought some breathing room - albeit at the high price of all those rounds.

**INT. HELO CABIN - DAY - CONTINUOUS**

Handon turns and hurls himself across the cabin, and out the building-facing hatch, drawing his wakizashi with his right hand and a custom Kimber .45 with the other. By the time he hits dirt, several leakers have slipped through the perimeter, and now rampage in their rear.

Wheeling and flashing with controlled, lethal, high-speed precision, Handon takes off four heads with the sword, and puts single .45 slugs into four other brainstems.

Having cleaned house, he finally comes to rest, kneeling beside the debris-pinned PO. The man is in unendurable agony - and his future looks worse. Handon throws his weight into the biggest piece of concrete pinning him. It doesn't budge.

A ravening mouth from behind chomps down on his left bicep, biting, tearing, flailing. Handon brings the pommel of the sword down into the head, crushing it. He pauses to check the result on his arm - lots of viscous gunk - so he sucks water from his hydration tube and spits it over the area, washing it clean. And revealing tooth marks in the bite-proof suit.

POPE (V.O.)  
(cool and unflappable)  
Falling back by sectors.

PREDATOR (V.O.)  
(slightly more urgent)  
Hate to rush you, man. But just  
about out of room to back up  
here.

Handon looks into the PO's eyes - and his radio earpiece. He heard all that. He can also see what's happening around them: they're being overrun. With ebbing strength, he wriggles out of the ruck - and pushes it a few inches across the dust and debris. He tries to speak, but can't draw breath.

Handon lays his palm on the man's forehead. He's winking out - but he won't be left as a human banquet. Handon uses the handgun, a single round. And they're out of time.

He stands, stabbing his sword through the face of a Zulu breaking through on the left - its rotten skull bursts, spraying black contents in an arcing spray as it falls down, taking the sword with it. Before the body hits the ground, Handon scoops up the ruck and underhand-tosses it through the hatch of the helo. Firing spaced single shots with the .45 in his left hand, destroyed undead bodies dropping all around, he pulls Juice up into a fireman's carry, yanks his sword free from the dead face on the ground, and heaves himself forward into the collapsing pinhole of escape.

As he lurches into the cabin, tossing Juice ahead of him, he sees Predator backing in the outward-facing hatch, alternately firing and stabbing the barrel of his rifle through the heads of dead nearly on top of him. Pope appears from nowhere, doing the same routine at the hatch Handon just came through. Gore splashes all around.

**EXT. THE HLZ - DAY**

The powerful twin engines of the Stealth Hawk whine and surge and it rocks off the ground, turning, climbing, and accelerating. Pope and Predator hack off a few arms clinging to the hatch edges and the fixed landing gear, armless bodies plunging into mist below.

**EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY**

The door of a stairwell access structure bangs open, two figures blasting out of it: they're the same thing as Juice and the PO, down to the hand on shoulder. However, this shepherding special operator - CAPTAIN CONNOR AINSLEY - has UK uniform and kit, a small Union flag on his shoulder. The patch on the other shows a winged dagger with ribbon: WHO DARES WINS. Beneath this, a smaller curving patch: THE INCREMENT. The three pips of a captain on his chest.

Ainsley looks up and around an oppressive sky, annoyed - where's my air? Peering over the building edge, he sees thick mists to the horizon. Anything could be out there.

AINSLEY  
 (into chin mic, English  
 accent, crisp - and posh)  
 Ali.

But before getting an answer, he looks up and sees her - a sniper emplaced out on the roof edge, belly-down and hunched over rifle - so he just dashes over.

AINSLEY  
 Sitrep.

ALI  
 (head down in scope)  
 Unchanged. Romeos in ones and  
 twos. Manageable.

She's FIRST SERGEANT ALIYAH KHAMSI (ALI) - small, slim, Somali-American, composed and unflappable. She's a pro, still and solid as cliffs behind her Accuracy International Arctic Warfare sniper rifle in .338 Lapua Magnum, with a big suppressor and huge optic. Serious hardware.

**NEW ANGLE - SCOPE POV OUT ONTO GROUND**

A dark figure breaks from the treeline, 300 yards out, indistinct in the misty distance. But this one is different than the Zulus we've seen so far. It's running - and running fast. Heading straight toward them. The faintest CHUG sounds. The head of the runner (Romeo) disappears, and it plows into the grass like a felled buffalo.

**NEW ANGLE - ALI'S FACE**

She pulls her eye from the optic and squints slightly over the top of it. Head down again.

**NEW ANGLE - BACK TO SNIPER-VISION**

The view is now farther out, deep inside the treeline, the reticle of the optic searching. Faintest movement, almost impossible to make out. CHUG. A headless body pitches forward, tumbling to the ground. The view blurs as the rifle pans rapidly... another Romeo out in the open, closer. CHUG. Drops. Another hurdles over the body - rifle moves to track. CHUG. This one tumbles, too. Four shots, four kills.

**EXT. ROOFTOP, STAIRWELL ACCESS STRUCTURE - DAY - CONTINUOUS**

The door bangs open again, and two more figures blast out. Each has a pistol in one hand and melee weapon in the other - cricket bat in one case, pirate boarding axe in the other, both dripping with gore - assault rifles hanging from slings. They've been in the shit.

AINSLEY (O.S.)  
Henno, talk to me.

HENNO  
(also English - but  
northern, working class)  
No dramas, boss.

Henno backs away from the stairwell, raising his rifle to cover the door. He's also in UK uniform and kit, also SOF. Same winged dagger on shoulder - but small White Rose of Yorkshire patch on his vest. He is covering...

HOMER, every inch a US Navy Team Six SEAL - trident emblem on his chest, red patch on sleeve with Indian in profile over crossed tomahawks. With a hammer, he begins nailing eight-inch spikes into the door, and frame. Seeing this is in hand, Henno lowers his rifle, turns and trots over to Ainsley and Ali at the roof edge, flipping up his face shield. Things are going to hell, but he's not too bothered.



HENNO

Heaving Romeos down there. The building's a sieve.

(gestures at Ali)

And Danger Girl there can only shoot in so many directions.

Ainsley glances to the sky again - still empty - then across to Homer, who hammers the last spike home, turns, and heads toward the others, hauling their PO by the elbow.

A loud BANGING, plus GURGLING NOISES, sounds from the opposite end of the rooftop. Ainsley's head spins toward a maintenance structure on that end - figuring out too late it also has stairwell access. More dead, in platoon strength (nearly 30) spill around both sides toward them. All are runners. They disperse out onto the rooftop, hiss, put their heads down - and charge, hauling ass directly toward the five living people in a flying wedge.

The three upright operators circle into all-round defense, the PO safe in the middle, and start firing nonstop - rapid but evenly spaced suppressed rifle shots, pivoting minutely, chugging incessantly, a fumigation cloud of precision death. As Ainsley goes dry and he drops out the empty mag, he steals a glance behind him at Ali...

...Who is switched on and wired tight, flipped onto her back and firing her side arm through raised knees. Ice cool.

Ainsley turns, finishes his reload and resumes firing. They're all making their shots count, and bodies hit the deck nonstop. But 30 is too many for 5 to take in the 5 seconds it takes the runners to reach them. They're about to be smashed into like the ranks of defenders outside Troy - with nowhere to retreat but over the roof edge.

#### **EXT. SKY ABOVE THE ROOFTOP**

It's the Stealth Hawk, with the other detached half of Alpha Team - Handon, Pope, Predator, and Juice - roaring in low and fast from out of nowhere. They fire out open hatches, pouring it into the rushing runner mob below, their shots also quiet chugs. (Every weapon in this unit is suppressed.)

#### **EXT. THE ROOFTOP ALAMO - NIGHT STARTING TO FALL**

Both Ainsley and Henno visibly mouth "Thank fuck" in unison. The fast-moving undead assault force IS decimated, though not yet defeated - plus gets reinforcements from the breached maintenance structure - so the shooting carries on.

But as the helo settles into a hover, a SPIE rope, with D-rings at three-meter intervals, uncoils out the open hatch, landing in the center of the group. The five on the rooftop execute the drill, covering, turning, and clipping in.

Ainsley is last to go, his carabiner barely clacked closed when the helo roars and rises, pulling them off the rooftop and into the air one at a time.

And then...

**EXT. BELOW THE HELO - DUSK**

As bodies twirl and dangle from the rope, Ainsley's head spins, eyes going wide. With an UNGODLY SHRIEK and inhuman leap, THE THING launches itself into the dim air, arcing wildly and powerfully over Ainsley's head - and straight toward Homer, in the number-four position on the rope.

Homer clocks it as well, his eyes also going wide - and pulls the only evasive maneuver he's got: he unclips from the rope and slides right down onto Ainsley's head.

After that, all is chaos and frantic violence and blurred motion in the near-dark. Whatever IT is - its manic motion and violence and strength an order of magnitude beyond the Romeos - grabs onto the rope, scampers upward, and latches onto the PO in the number-three (middle) position. It knocks his face shield away with violent bashing, and rakes splintered nails across his face.

It then leaps away, disappearing into the gloom and mist on the ground below, and finally... just runs away.

The hands of unseen operators pull the stunned and bleeding PO into the cabin. Ainsley watches the legs of the man disappear, followed by Homer, who has climbed up behind him.

Ainsley makes no move to follow, just clinging to the rope, twisting in the aircraft's slipstream as it soars away.

HELO PILOT (V.O.)  
Raptor One-Zero to Alpha. Uh...  
what the fuck was that? Over.

Ainsley blinks once, shakes his head, then looks up at the cockpit. He wasn't hallucinating. Whatever the hell it was, somebody else saw it, too. As he's being hauled up and inside, last in, he scans the darkness below. But It's gone.

**EXT. ABOVE THE ENGLISH CHANNEL - NIGHT**

The Stealth Hawk slides through the blackness toward the white cliffs of Dover, which glow in the moonlit distance.

**INT. MAIN CABIN - NIGHT**

Homer kneels before the mauled PO - the man's breathing shallow, sweat dotting his skin, his face a bloody mess, even with bandages laid on the deep wounds.

Homer looks up - the wind whipping in the open hatch clean and cool, wicking the sweat off his own face. A gold crucifix on a chain swings free from beneath his vest.

Behind him, Predator flips open his med kit and works on Juice, also lying on the deck, groggy but conscious. Homer removes his glove and places his palm on the PO's oven-hot forehead. Spiderweb black lines emerge from under the skin around the man's eyes, which grow rheumy.

HOMER

The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. He lets me rest in green meadows. He leads me by peaceful streams.

HENNO

Hey, Homer, mate. Why don't you ask the bloke if he wants last rites before you go charging in?

PREDATOR

Let him alone, man. The pious shit makes Homer feel better. And when Homer feels better, I feel better.

A few seconds of wind and engine noise, the enveloping cocoon of blackness. Homer looks back to Pope, slumped against the rear bulkhead in the dark, nearly invisible - waiting for him to weigh in... on the real issue. Pope finally speaks up - but to Handon, who is just coming back from the cockpit.

POPE

Okay, I'll bite. What the hell was that?

HANDON

(unconvincing, unconvinced)  
Runner?

PREDATOR

(looking up from Juice)  
Yeah, the zombie of Michael fucking Jordan, maybe. With a forty-eight-inch vertical leap.

Handon turns to see Ainsley, also returning from up front.

AINSLEY

(looking around)  
Where's your attachment?

Handon shakes his head: No

AINSLEY

Both POs. Christ. Secure the data?

Handon pats the ruck full of hard drives.

AINSLEY

Fuck sake, Sergeant Major. We can't afford these losses. What happened?

HANDON

Bad luck.  
(gestures at dying PO)  
What happened to yours?

Tension. A showdown is brewing between these two.

**EXT. ABOVE THE CHANNEL - NIGHT**

HOMER (V.O.)

Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies...

The helo zooms closer to the cliffs - rising from them, ten-foot cruciform shapes at even intervals. Worm-eaten bodies resolve, nailed to the crosses. A single unsteady figure, standing at the foot of one, looks up - forlorn.

**INT. THE OPEN HATCH OF THE HELO - NIGHT**

Ali raises her rifle, takes a bead. Through the optic, the figure resolves as a Zulu. She doesn't take the shot. Instead she looks across the cabin at Homer, who dabs the PO's forehead with his green-and-black shemagh. Their eyes lock.

**EXT. ABOVE THE CLIFFS - NIGHT**

As the helo flashes over water's edge, a single gunshot flashes in the open hatch. A body tumbles silently and peacefully toward the base of the cliffs, as the blacked-out helo disappears over land.

**INT. CHANNEL TUNNEL SECURITY STATION - NIGHT**

In a nondescript office, a lone man shifts on his hard wooden chair. CORPORAL ANDREW WESLEY, forty-ish, middle-England everyman, dark-blue jumpsuit with UKSS patch. He pulls a cigarette from a crushed pack on the desk, lights up - exhales and watches smoke swirl around the room. Glances at the clock, stubs out the fag, picks up radio from desk.

WESLEY

Addison, come in.  
(coughs, throat dry)  
Addison. Where are you two muppets?  
(puts radio down)  
Fuck sake.

He rises, shoves the radio in a belt pouch, beside a hand axe, grabs his coat from the hook by door, then hesitates - looking back at a locked cabinet against the wall. Shakes his head and goes out the door.

**EXT. TRAIN YARD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

Wesley steps outside. Ahead and below, wide and rusted sets of train tracks disappear into - not the mouth of the Channel Tunnel - but a post-apocalyptic barricade: towering piles of boxcars, cement slabs, dirt, steel from buildings - thousands of immovable tons.

HE takes a breath and begins walking down, gravel crunching underfoot. Behind him, a sign on the shack: CHANNEL TUNNEL SECURITY STATION. As he heads down into the train yard, his eyes go to the mouth of the Tunnel... then out across the Channel itself toward Calais...

**FLASHBACK MONTAGE - THE FALL OF PARIS**

- An office block. Wesley, in a different uniform, changes out of it in a locker room, then exits. Sign above the door: YORK SÉCURITÉ PRIVÉE.

- Bar in the Latin Quarter. Television above the bar: PANDEMIC SPREADS - FIRST REPORTED CASES IN EUROPE. A young woman, AMARIE - Audrey Tautou type - enters, smiles at Wesley. They embrace.

- Wesley in security uniform sitting alone at a desk in the near dark. Glances at his phone, frowns, puts it face down.

- Wesley dressing again in a dim but sun-splashed bedroom. He kisses sleeping Amarie goodbye.

- Getting into the uniform again at the office.

- Standing at the same bar alone - looking up at the television. A live news crew is taken down by swarming, ravening figures. Parted lips and silence rule the room.

- Security office, sirens wailing outside, Wes on the phone.

VOICE (V.O.)

Yeah, mate, strongly recommend  
you get your arse back here  
smart-ish. TAKE the next train -  
which may be the last train.  
Don't even go home.

Wesley rings off, dials again.

- Same bedroom, bed-table phone ringing. No one in the bed.

- Wesley running through the streets, holdall over shoulder.

Rioting, chaos. He looks up to see an elderly Frenchwoman exit a shop - grabbed by a palsied figure coming out of the alley. Wesley veers to intercept, but by the time he arrives, the figure has ripped a chunk out of the woman's neck. Locking its arm like he's done this before, Wes hurls the figure away and to the ground. He looks down to see the woman at his feet - biting into his boot. He legs it.

- Gare du Nord, Eurostar Terminal. It's heaving, thousands trying to get a train. Wesley enters the scrum, pulls his phone and checks the screen: MISSED CALL: AMARIE.

#### **END OF FLASHBACK MONTAGE**

Coming out of his reverie, Wesley threads through prefab storage units rising up on both sides, descending into misty darkness. He pulls his radio again.

WESLEY

Addison. Chambers. I appreciate you two adolescents conducting your nightly ComicCon session outside and leaving me in peace. But your security sweep should take twenty minutes tops, and you need to stay in radio contact.

His path opens up into the rail yard before the barricade - and he startles at an indistinct CRY, like a bird, or fox. Wes freezes, cocks his head, hears it again - nope, that's a SCREAM. He takes off running.

Seconds later, he rounds a last abandoned box car, skids to a stop again. Two figures, CHAMBERS and ADDISON, both twenty-nothing, same uniform - the former leaning in over the shaking figure of the latter... blood sheeting down his arm. Wesley draws the axe and edges forward.

CHAMBERS

Thank God. Help. We got attacked.

ADDISON

(looking up - at Wesley's  
axe, and slow approach)  
I'm not infected! It didn't bite  
me. Either of us.

WESLEY

It?

CHAMBERS

Christ, it came out of nowhere.

WESLEY

Keep your voice down.

Wesley does a 360, peering into the darkness and mists. Nothing moving, no sounds. He glances again at the best-blocked-up tunnel of all time.

ADDISON  
(disbelieving)  
It was so fast. I didn't even see  
it. Just the pain in my arm...  
Christ, it's not a bite, is it?

CHAMBERS  
No, mate. Just a scratch. Same as  
me, just deeper. We'll be okay.

Wesley shakes his head minutely - naive boys. Still:

WESLEY  
We need to get you back. Now.

He leads the two, leaning on each other, back up the path.

WESLEY  
(head on a swivel, not  
looking back)  
Where did it go? Afterwards?

CHAMBERS  
Dunno. Never saw. All a blur.

WESLEY  
(finally looking back)  
I need the shotgun. I'm going to  
run for it. Follow as fast as you  
can. Shut the door behind you.

Wesley races back up toward the shack, eyes scanning the  
darkness, axe in one hand, pulling his radio with the other.

WESLEY  
Three Acres, Sierra One, come in.

He approaches the shack, hails again - still no response.

WESLEY  
(grinding jaw)  
Looks like it's just not-fucking-  
responding-to-radio-calls day...

From the elevation of the shack, he looks back over the train  
yard, out and across a big motorway - but the mist is too  
thick. He shakes his head, darts inside.

#### **INT. SECURITY STATION - NIGHT**

He stops before the lock in the cabinet, looks around  
stupidly. Sweeps the top of the shelf above the kettle, tries  
the top of the cabinet itself, then in desperation begins  
pulling open random desk drawers, knocking chairs askew.

A noise behind him, a shadow passing the window. The office  
door creaks open. He never properly shut it.

WESLEY

Quick, have either of you seen--

The words die in his throat. Addison lumbers in the door and glares at him - face drained of color, alien gray, dark lines appearing beneath. Eyes burning - with hatred. From his mouth: something bloody and dripping, staining his shirt. It hisses, the mouthful of flesh falling to the floor, lurches forward - trips over a chair and goes down.

Chambers comes in behind, similar state - except side of neck torn out, head wobbly; smashes arm through glass pane in door in eagerness to get in. Finally steps over Addison...

Somehow, the panic drains from Wesley, leaving calm and resolve. He turns, smashes the cabinet door with his axe, removes a single-barreled shotgun, turns over a box of shells, grabs the nearest. When he spins again, the two dead men are only feet away - but have to negotiate the opened drawers and obtruding chairs from Wesley's key search.

He gets a shell in, snaps the breach, and raises the weapon - its muzzle one inch from Zulu Chambers's face. BOOM. The head disappears, becoming a thick, fast-moving cloud of gore that paints the back side of the office - and its buddy. Wes steps out of the way of the falling body, reloads, and gives Zulu Addison the same treatment from a little farther away.

He reloads, fills his pockets with shells, retrieves and reseats the axe, and races out the door - shotgun in one hand, radio in the other, hailing as he hotfoots it.

WESLEY

Three Acres! Fuckers!

**EXT./INT. PARKING LOT (MOVING) - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

He skids into the parking lot, head on a swivel, zaps the lock of a sedan, throws the shotgun in, dives after it. He over-starts the engine, spins gravel, roars out - toward a roundabout leading over the motorway, the direction he'd stared at through the mist.

Steering with one hand (at unsafe speed), he brings the radio up again, opens his mouth - but doesn't speak. Something catches his eye in peripheral. He skids the car to a halt, rolls down the window, and looks back to the yard.

Movement, right by the blocked-up tunnel entrance. A breeze clears the mists just enough to see... figures moving. Lots.

WESLEY

No. It's not possible...

He faces forward again, jams the accelerator, the car blasting forward. Glancing at the radio, he twiddles channels with one palsied hand, then speaks.



WESLEY  
 CentCom, Sierra One, message  
 over... CENTCOM, message,  
 priority highest!

Shooting into the roundabout, he looks across it into the mists on the bridge: visibility zero. He accelerates anyway.

**EXT. HELO LZ, USOC COMPOUND AT HEREFORD - NIGHT**

The entire sprawling base is blacked out except for a few red combat lights. The rotors of the Stealth Hawk spin down. Standing in the dirt and dark a few feet away, Handon lights the stub of a cigar with a flaring match. When Juice hops off the bird, Handon smacks the two rucks of drives into the bearded one's chest.

HANDON  
 Check these in.  
 (blows smoke)  
 And report the loss of the POs.  
 With our respects.

Juice nods, sliding his trademark ballcap back over his matted red hair; scratches his thick trademark beard.

JUICE  
 And the other thing?

HANDON  
 That, too. Put it in an intel  
 spot report. How's your head?

JUICE  
 All squared away, Top.

Behind them, the rest of the team unasses the helo and hauls out the remains of their kit and combat load-out.

**INT. TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER - NIGHT**

A high-tech space, tiered, arena-like area, desks and computers, tactical displays on the walls - we've all seen it before. Hanging sign: USOC TOC. However - only a skeleton crew working at night. The sound of the outside door opening and closing; then the blackout curtain parts, and in comes...

Juice, with the rucks slung. He steps to the desk of the officer of the watch (OOW), who's got a radio headset hanging around his neck - he's expecting them. When he looks up, his expression says he's already gotten the bad news.

OOW  
 (British accent)  
 Outcome?

JUICE  
 (squinting into brighter  
 light of the room)  
 Mission complete. Both sites  
 scoured.  
 (drops rucks beside desk)  
 It's all in there, man.

The OOW looks up at Juice - a thousand-yard stare. The POs  
 were his guys. Two more gone, on top of billions.

JUICE  
 Sorry. Did everything we could.

OOW  
 (sigh)  
 Shit happens in the Zulu Alpha.

JUICE  
 Hey. There's something else.

The Brit arches his brows, and waits for it.

JUICE  
 We lost the second PO to a Romeo.  
 But not like one we've seen  
 before.  
 (beat)  
 It was fast.

OOW  
 (no-shit look)  
 That's kind of the point of  
 runners.

JUICE  
 No. Faster. A lot faster. Plus it  
 could jump - like a meth-head on  
 Wile E. Coyote springs. It took a  
 flying leap at your guy on the  
 SPIE rope, fucked him all up.  
 Then dropped off again... and  
 just... ran away. FO'd.

OOW  
 (very long beat)  
 Got any video?

Juice produces his GoPro cam, pulls a memory card, hands it  
 over. The other man jams it in his machine, clicks, and  
 squints at the screen.

JUICE  
 About thirty-three forty.

The OOW mouse-draws, watches - expressionless. Looks up.

OOW

We've been getting scattered and broken reports of Romeos like that. On other over-the-water ops. One border patrol. They think it might be a new kind.

JUICE

What kind of new kind?

OOW

The kind that doesn't feed.

JUICE

What the hell kind of zombie doesn't feed?

OOW

They just infect people, and move on - fast. Boffins in the Med Shack think it might be a new mutation of the virus. Now that the dead outnumber the living seven billion to fifty million... This is how it spreads itself.

(rubs fingers through  
regulation buzzcut)

Into the last corner of humanity.

JUICE

And bye bye, Fortress Britain.

OOW

(gesturing down at rucks)

Yeah. So you pipe-hitters better have something actionable in there. A working vaccine design wouldn't go amiss.

Juice shifts. He's still wearing 40 pounds of combat load.

JUICE

Got a designation for these things?

OOW

Not an official one. But the lads have been calling them... Foxtrot Novembers.

(beat)

The Fucking Nightmare.

Juice snorts, nods, and waves a vague (and ironic) salute before he turns and exits. Operators don't salute much.

**EXT. HEREFORD - NIGHT**

The exhaustion catching up to him, Juice unsteadily threads the buildings of the blacked-out base, muttering to himself.

JUICE

As if this world isn't  
nightmarish enough already...

He looks up to a digital sign above a door. It reads, "DAYS SINCE THE FALL: 729". It changes to "730" as he watches.

JUICE

Year three of the Zulu Alpha.  
(pushing through door)  
And welcome to it...

**INT. ALPHA TEAM TEAM ROOM - NIGHT**

Like a locker room - but much bigger and more secure locker cages. Predator and Juice sit on a bench in silence, squaring away weapons and kit - cleaning and lubing rifles, refilling mag and grenade pouches, replacing radio batteries, meticulously stowing everything. The cordial silence and focus of a ladies sewing circle.

Predator strokes a wire brush down the barrel of his SCAR-H. Juice pulls batteries out of devices and slots them into a wall charger: it's like the scene in Maverick before the big poker game, checking in guns - they just keep coming.

PREDATOR

Juice, brother, you carry  
anything that's not battery-  
operated?

Juice glances down at his crotch; then back up in time to see Ali - silent, dusky - sliding past the doorway.

JUICE

(peeling off clothes)  
There she goes again.

PREDATOR

(grunts, sniffs socks)  
Yeah. It's funny, man. Ordinarily  
Ali would sooner chew her own  
head off than get involved with  
anyone she's serving with.

JUICE

(grabbing towel and flip  
flops, shutting locker)  
Ordinarily, the dead wouldn't be  
walking the Earth.

PREDATOR

True. True.

Juice pauses at the doorway and looks back.

JUICE

She hook up with someone in  
Headquarters Company maybe?

PREDATOR

Doubt it. Somehow, I don't see  
her being real interested in a  
REMF.

Sound of SHOUTING floats in through the open door. The two  
huge men exchange a look, then look back at their gear cages.

**INT. BACHELOR OFFICERS QUARTERS - NIGHT**

Kit squared away, but mission grime still on him, Ainsley  
sits on the rack in his private billet, just breathing. Picks  
up a sat phone, speed dials, waits.

AINSLEY

Hello, darling. Everything  
alright?

(beat)

Fine, fine. All routine. Boys  
okay?

(beat)

I know it's tough. But the  
regular Army units are just  
trying to keep you safe.  
"Gestapo" is not a nice word. We  
all have our role to play.

(beat)

Good. That's nearly a month  
without one. Still, stay indoors  
at night.

(beat)

I'm still trying. No one's  
getting leave. But this can't  
last forever.

His door knocks, then cracks open: it's Handon.

AINSLEY

I have to go. Remember - indoors  
after dark. Bye, love.

HANDON

(usual granite face)

The Colonel wants us. Briefing.

But then his look softens - he sees Ainsley looks as if he's  
in physical pain.

HANDON

You okay?

AINSLEY

(exhales)

Just my family. I've been trying to get leave, to lay in some more provisions, fortify the house...

Handon's expression freezes back to rock - and Ainsley, looking to the blacked-out American flag on his sleeve, realizes he's misstepped. Unlike Handon, he knows whether his family is alive or dead - or that other thing.

AINSLEY

(bracing up)

Who's in this briefing? And when?

HANDON

Just us. RFN.

That same shouting comes though the open door. Handon puts his hand on his side arm, turning as it grows louder.

**EXT. NCO'S MESS - NIGHT**

Just outside the entrance, more shadowed than lit, a mass of bodies grapples, grunting and swearing. One lies on the ground, getting kicked. Violent, shadowy chaos. A beam of light approaches - Handon, tactical light crossed at the wrists with pistol, keeping space between him and whatever's going on. Ainsley spreads the flank on the left.

Before either can work out the tactical situation or acquire a target, a new figure wades in, begins tossing bodies out.

THE COLONEL

(gruff, Texan)

Cut it out, you sons of bitches!

A body tumbles out and rolls up to Handon's feet, coughing.

HANDON

Sitrep.

COUGHING MAN

Just a soldier fight, Sarge.

He tries to get up. Handon's boot pins him.

COUGHING MAN

Staff clerk from H&S Company thought one of the operators from Echo Team looked dodgy. Told him to get checked. Guy's team told him to get fucked. Went south from there.

PREDATOR (O.S.)

What went south?

Handon turns to see Pred and Juice skid to a halt, assault rifles and NVGs protruding. Juice wears a towel and flip-flops. Predator is dick-and-nuts naked.

HANDON

Hey, Master Sergeant, get that cannon out of my face. And stand down. It's just a fist fight.

Ainsley steps up, lowering the hammer of his .45 - and looking away from Predator.

AINSLEY

(queasy)

I could have gone my whole life without seeing that.

The Colonel yanks the malefactors to their feet.

THE COLONEL

History lesson for you shitbirds. During the Fall, not a single British or American military installation got overrun from the outside. They all fell anyway. You dumbasses know why? Because of the military brotherhood. Guys bringing their wounded warrior buddies back inside the wire. Not believing they'd been infected, thinking they could be saved - or just not giving a damn, because they weren't leaving them behind. We carried own own doom right inside the walls with us.

He stabs his finger in the chest of a big man with arm tats.

THE COLONEL

You follow the goddamned rules. I don't give a shit if it's the soup lady who doesn't like the look of you. Drop your shit and get tested.

ECHO TEAM OPERATOR

Sir.

THE COLONEL

Now!

He leaves, to murmured approval of scrawnier, bloodier guys.

THE COLONEL

(turning)

And you rear echelon motherfuckers.

(MORE)

## THE COLONEL (CONT'D)

Next time you've got concerns about somebody's health, you take it up through channels. You're no use to me or humanity with your heads torn off and shoved up your assholes.

(to everyone)

And next time any of you dubious motherfuckers want to have a fight that doesn't involve Zulus, fucking do it outside the wire, where you can't scare anyone but the dead.

The four Alpha men, shaking heads, turn to leave. But Juice taps Pred on the shoulder and points behind them: they can just make out a shadowy figure climbing down from the tallest local structure - curly hair, rifle across her back.

## JUICE

Looks like someone got her rendezvous interrupted.

## PREDATOR

At least we weren't the only dumbasses who thought the shit was coming down in camp.

With a head nod, The Colonel rodeos Handon and Ainsley.

**EXT. THE FOLKESTONE PREMIER INN - NIGHT**

ALEISTER - dirty apron, unkempt hair and stubble - reclines against a laundry trolley and drags on his cigarette. He looks down at the MANAGER name tag on his chest, snorting. A file of three young British soldiers appears out of the darkness, ignoring him. He nods at them anyway.

## YOUNG SOLDIER 1

New orders are bollocks, mate.

## YOUNG SOLDIER 2

Told 'em I get seasick, so had to decline their kind invite.

They erupt in laughter, then enter the hotel, still ignoring Aleister. He squints at this - gathering intel. His eyes go wide, as something catches them. On the far side of the freeway, someone is running, fast, trying to get across the bridge. A white van appears and blasts toward it.

## ALEISTER

Oi! Stop!

It's pointless. The van plows into the figure at 40mph. The body bounces, rolls, tumbles to a stop, headlit on tarmac.



**INT./EXT. WESLEY'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

Shuddering out of the curving roundabout onto the bridge, Wesley sees the stopped van, appearing right in his face. He brakes and swerves to avoid it, then inches forward. From alongside the van, he can see in the open driver's side door - no driver, but in the passenger seat, a man battles his seatbelt with blood-slick hands, double-barreled shotgun in his lap. Wesley stops his car and gets out, pulling his own shotgun with him, circles in front of the van - nearly tripping on a headless body. He carefully pulls open the passenger door.

PASSENGER

Fuck, he bit me. Alex bit me. I had no choice. I had to... to...

WESLEY

It's okay. I can help.

Wesley's look says he has no idea if or how that's true.

PASSENGER

It came from out of nowhere. Thought it was a man, but it got back up after we ran it down, and rushed us. No man could get up after that. Smashed the window and took half of Alex's neck out. I tried to stop the bleeding, but he went for me in a second. He changed so quickly...

WESLEY

Where did it go? Where is it now?

PASSENGER

(delirium setting in)  
Where's what...?

WESLEY

(expression sagging as he clocks the change)  
The zombie. The one you hit.

PASSENGER

Ran off, so fast. Even the fast ones aren't that fast, right?  
(looks at tremors in his hand - realizes it himself)  
Oh, God. I... I'm...

Wesley gently removes the shotgun from his lap, pops the shell out and pockets it, lays the weapon on the ground.

WESLEY

Do you have a radio?

PASSENGER

In back. We're telecom engineers.  
Alex was my boss. Jesus, I shot  
him in the face. I never saw a  
head just...

Wesley circles the van, jerks the back door open and pulls a  
handset from a mounted radio, changes channels.

WESLEY

CentCom, Sierra One, message  
over.

CENTCOM (V.O.)

Sierra one, CentCom receiving,  
send message, over.

WESLEY

There's been an incident.  
Emergency, more like.

PASSENGER (O.S.)

Oh, fuck it. Fuck it, fuck it...

WESLEY

An incursion, out of the Tunnel.  
They're out, and people are  
dying.

CENTCOM (V.O.)

What's your location?

WESLEY

On the bridge between the Channel  
Tunnel and the Premier Inn.  
There's a stopped vehicle. I  
think it came this way - the  
driver's dead and the passenger  
infected.

CENTCOM (V.O.)

What came that way?

WESLEY

Look, it's bad. A runner got out  
of the Tunnel somehow, heading  
for Folkestone. I've already lost  
two--

A deafening BANG! Wesley's hearing rings and vision whites  
out as he ducks - head colliding with the open door. The  
radio handset drops. A trickle of blood runs into his eyes,  
and he puts his hand to it - at the same time seeing a bullet  
hole in the door, inches from his face.

CENTCOM (O.S.)

(faintly, from handset)  
Sierra One, acknowledge.

Wesley circles the van again: the passenger decided he didn't want to turn, handgun clutched in lifeless hand. Wesley gingerly retrieves it, dodging splashed blood and brain matter. Around back again, he retrieves the handset.

CENTCOM (V.O.)  
--still there? Was that gunfire?

WESLEY  
Yeah, it was. The passenger of the van just engaged himself. He lost.

CENTCOM (V.O.)  
Sierra One, be advised - the garrison at Harbour Barracks has been alerted, as well as every checkpoint in that district. You need to proceed to the base for debrief. The military is taking the outbreak. How copy?

WESLEY  
What about the civilians? There are still people in the town.

CENTCOM (V.O.)  
Units are en route. Proceed out of the infected area immediately.

WESLEY  
Acknowledged. Sierra One out.

He looks down again at the bullet hole - then out toward the town. Lights twinkle prettily in the darkness. He ducks again, this time hugging the tarmac - as every window on the top floor of the hotel explodes outward.

#### INT. THE COLONEL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The Colonel stares over his spare desk at Handon and Ainsley, who sit erect in chairs opposite.

THE COLONEL  
Everyone's getting wound too tight.  
(looks from one to other)  
Doesn't need saying we can't afford to tear ourselves apart. Few enough of us left. And anyway that's the job of the dead.

AINSLEY  
(nods once)  
Sir.

Handon just nods, silent.

THE COLONEL  
(softening)  
What happened out there?

Ainsley and Handon glance in at each other.

AINSLEY  
No excuses, Colonel.

THE COLONEL  
Just bad luck?

AINSLEY  
You could say that.

HANDON  
(leaning forward)  
But bad luck is also cumulative. These missions deeper and deeper into fallen Europe. They're getting close to the bone. Keep it up, and we're going to lose a team. Maybe two, when a QRF goes over to bail the first one out.

THE COLONEL  
Well, that's why you suicide sons of bitches get paid the big bucks. And always has it been thus. You don't like it, join a conventional unit and go scavenging for machine parts, or seeds, or some damn thing. Hell, go be a farmer, or a coal miner, God knows we need more of them. Anyway, your missions are deep because that's where the remaining pharma labs are. And whatever those guys learned in the last days, whatever meager progress they made toward a cure, we've got to have it. You wanna save the world, this is what that looks like.

(beat)  
Anyway, it's either that or hang out on this rainy island waiting for the walls to come down. And the last lights to go out.

(back to business)  
They've ghosted the drives and shot it all up to Edinburgh. With luck you'll get a new target package from the intel analysis.

AINSLEY  
(rising)  
Sir.

HANDON  
 (not rising)  
 What's this about some new type  
 of Romeo?

THE COLONEL  
 (shuffling a paper)  
 You tell me. Heard you saw one.  
 (looks up, meets Handon's  
 eye, looks down again)  
 There's been an outbreak in  
 Folkestone. Bad. Happened fast.  
 Police and regular military say  
 they have it contained.

Handon's look says "contained" usually means "catastrophe".

THE COLONEL  
 You're dismissed.

#### **EXT. PREMIER INN - NIGHT**

Wesley crab-crawls behind the van as debris from the hotel showers down and hisses across the ground. When it stops and he peeks out again, the expanse between him and the hotel is carpeted with glass, brick, plaster... and red, wet chunks.

He looks up: every window on this side of the structure is gone. Something stirs the smoke on the upper floor - and a figure leaps out, down to the ground, lands awkwardly, and begins run-limping toward the road - straight at Wesley. The man wears fatigues and carries a British Army LA85 assault rifle. More movement: shadowed figures staggering from the shattered ground-floor windows - in hot pursuit.

THE SOLDIER spins and triggers off a dozen rounds, faces forward and runs again. Spotting Wesley, he drops to one knee and sights in on him.

WESLEY  
 (gun held out to side)  
 Don't shoot!

The soldier nods, spins, and drops two dead that have closed the distance during his delay. He's engaged now - and his mag just went dry. Wesley watches him speedily changing it as more dead approach. Eyes wide, Wes braces himself - then runs forward, pointing his pistol at the nearest threat.

As he holds his breath and starts to squeeze the trigger... the mists clear... and the dead man is revealed: one arm dangles from threads of torn flesh, the other gone, only white shoulder bone jutting out, face barely recognizable as human - eyes and lower jaw gone. But he's attired exactly like the kneeling soldier: one of the man's teammates.

Overcoming his shock, Wesley fires, hitting its chest. It staggers, recovers - and reorients on a new target: Wesley. Three others follow. Now Wes is in play.

WESLEY

Oh, fuck.

He fires again, hits shoulder this time - then finally putting one through the open-wound mouth, taking out a fist-sized chunk its skull, blood spraying the one behind it as it falls. He shoots that one in the neck, still it advances. They are multiplying faster than he can drop them.

FULL AUTO FIRE erupts, sweeping heads, dropping the nearest rank. The soldier appears, reloading - limping badly.

WESLEY

(rising)

You okay?

THE SOLDIER

Knackered my ankle.

WESLEY

But you just ran--

THE SOLDIER

Yeah, funny what you can do with no choice. I'm done for now, though. That your vehicle?

Wesley nods mutely, supporting him by the shoulder.

WESLEY

Where to?

THE SOLDIER

Folkestone.

They circle the car, Wesley helping him in, then following.

**INT./EXT. THE CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

WESLEY

I was told to go to Three Acres.

THE SOLDIER

There are civilians in the town, repopulation and scavs. Families with kids. We have to warn them.

Wesley puts it in gear, tossing his head at the half-destroyed hotel to the left as they pull out.

WESLEY

Warn them about what, exactly?

THE SOLDIER

(shakes head, snorts)

They normally keep that place locked up. I was asleep.

(MORE)

THE SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Suddenly there's the fucking cleaning boy busting through the door and biting my troop sergeant's face off. Shit, we even flipped for bed nearest the window. Guess I won more than a cool breeze tonight.

Wesley steal a look as he accelerates over bridge.

THE SOLDIER

There must be fifty of them now. Reckon I took out half with that blast - but a lot had already headed out toward town. I need to radio the base at Risborough.

WESLEY

They already know. I called it in to CentCom.

THE SOLDIER

Shit, now we're fucked. Should have left it to Grews. He's gonna be pissed it's out of his hands.

WESLEY

CentCom called the barracks. He must know already.

THE SOLDIER

Hell, he knew ten minutes ago. I managed to radio him before I started chucking grenades.

The car speeds toward town. Ahead in the fog, figures move down the road - some running, some staggering... but all in the same direction.

THE SOLDIER

CentCom will unleash the kraken. We'll be quarantined in this shithole in an hour, guaranteed.  
(squints, shakes head)  
How the hell did one of those get up here? It sure didn't wash in on the tide.

WESLEY

It came through the Tunnel.

THE SOLDIER

Don't be daft. The Tunnel's been flooded and blocked up for two years.

WESLEY

Yeah, I know. It's my duty post.  
But I know what I saw.

The soldier eyes him - he believes him. Grabs his radio.

THE SOLDIER

Risborough from Echo Three Zero  
Alpha, message over.

RISBOROUGH (V.O.)

(female voice)

Echo Three Zero, send message.

THE SOLDIER

Update on the Premier Inn  
outbreak. Estimated five-zero  
Zulus headed south toward  
Folkestone, break. I've also got  
a fix on the origin: the Channel  
Tunnel is breached.

RISBOROUGH (V.O.)

Roger, all received. Will re-task  
a team to the Tunnel entrance.  
What is your intent, Echo Three  
Zero?

THE SOLDIER

Movement to contact - advancing  
to the sound of the moans, love.

RISBOROUGH

(beat)

Received. But be advised Harbour  
Barracks Division is Oscar Mike  
and sweeping toward the town.  
Check your backgrounds - and  
don't be one. The risk now is  
blue-on-blue.

THE SOLDIER

Roger that. One last thing,  
Risborough: CentCom's been  
alerted.

RISBOROUGH

Yeah, well aware. We've got  
thirty minutes to contain this.

THE SOLDIER

(eyebrow going north)

And then...?

RISBOROUGH

Hammer down. Air is on its way.

THE SOLDIER

Copy. Echo Three Zero out.



RISBOROUGH  
Be careful... Martin.

THE SOLDIER  
(to himself)  
Always.

The grill of the car plows into the back of the column of walking and running dead on the road - breaking spine of the first and sending it tumbling under the wheels.

THE SOLDIER  
One down.

He leans out the window with his rifle, opening up on two dark figures trying to break down a door across the street.

#### **EXT. HEREFORD - NIGHT**

Homer emerges from his own billet, now kitted down from the mission, looks around warily. Before he can step off:

RANDOM BRIT SOLDIER  
(voice raised)  
Homer, all right, mate?

Homer smiles and waves - but puts his head down, and heads off through the hive of the camp. He passes a stretch of the outer wire and looks out to the Herefordshire hills beyond - but they are unreachable. He's walled in with the garrison.

As he carries on, the crowd goes fuzzy, and he sees...

#### **FLASHBACK MONTAGE - PLACES OF SOLITUDE**

- The deserted forecastle of a US Navy ship in the middle of the night. Homer, wearing blue fatigues, arms around bent knees, sits alone in total silence - serene.

- The headlands overlooking a beach at dawn, a breeze blowing. Homer, wearing a wetsuit, surfboard nearby, looks up to the sky.

- A ridge in the mountains of Afghanistan, overlooking endless misty valleys, Homer in mountain warfare garb.

#### **END FLASHBACK MONTAGE**

Carrying on, Homer refocuses on another building, sign above the door: INTEL SHACK. As he passes by...

#### **FLASHBACK - FIRST DAYS AT HEREFORD**

- A briefing in a conference room.

A slide on the screen reads OP JERICHO / OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS; below - a map of North Korea, a high-tech diagram, and a nuclear materials cask. All eight Alpha operators sit around the table in irregular garb, regarding one another coolly.

**END FLASHBACK**

Homer passes another building, sign above: LEISURE CENTRE.

**FLASHBACK - FIRST NEWS OF THE PLAGUE**

Predator and Juice sprawl out on a couch with thick briefing packets, ignoring the TV on the wall. The screen shows a scene of chaos at a primitive clinic. Text scroll: MYSTERY EPIDEMIC IN HORN OF AFRICA. Homer watches from a chair.

HOMER

That doesn't look good.

JUICE

(looking up absently)

Eh. There'll always another bug emerging from that dusty shithole--

PREDATOR

(finishing his sentence)

But loose H-bombs could spell the end of reality TV as we know it.

Those two put their heads back down in briefing packets.

**END FLASHBACK**

Refocusing, Homer now passes the MED SHACK.

**FLASHBACK - PLAGUE DETAILS**

Inside an exam room, Homer gets some jabs, and chats with a medical officer, DOC BRYAN - a colonel, and surgeon.

HOMER

So is it like Ebola? Marburg?  
Should we be worried?

DOC BRYAN

I don't think it's like Ebola.

HOMER

Some other hemorrhagic fever?

DOC BRYAN  
 (not enjoying this)  
 It might be related. There are reports of some patients being brought in bleeding out. But mainly from the mouth...

Homer frowns, rubs arm.

**END FLASHBACK**

Homer finally reaches the most remote corner of the camp - the point where two walls meet in a guard tower - and retreats to the shadows beneath it. He's finally alone. He looks out into the moonlight sparkling on the hills beyond the wire. This peaceful image dissolves into...

**FLASHBACK - HOMER'S FAMILY**

The bright sun sparkling on a beach. A beautiful woman, smiling, with a young boy and tiny girl (both blonde and angelic), all playing together. This image fades as...

**END FLASHBACK**

Homer perks up fast, spins again - to face a dark figure approaching from the sodium-light shadows of the camp. His SIG P226 appears in his hand and he thumbs the hammer back.

**INT. HEREFORD DOJO - NIGHT**

Ali and Pope bow before each other in mirror image, wooden swords (boken) held before them.

ALI  
 Onegai shimasu.

Coming out of his bow, Pope hauls back and launches a powerful diagonal strike at Ali's neck, which she counters with a loud SNAP, pivoting around him like a big cat.

ALI  
 You learn to be such a sneaky bastard in Ground Branch? Or before that, in the Basic School?

Pope just smiles and lunges forward. The pair trade a half-dozen vicious high strikes - this is not mannered kendo, but training for lethal combat - then Pope tries a decapitation strike. Ali drops out from under it, and takes out his legs with a mighty side swing. They lay on the mat facing each other, banging swords at close range - but no leverage, so Ali closes to grapple. Pope rolls away and up.

ALI

(uncoiling to her feet)

Yeah, must have been the Marines.  
I always forget guarding spooks  
and rescuing hostages in the  
world's great shitholes was your  
idea of a relaxing retirement  
activity.

They close again, swinging and slashing, two dancers whirling around the room. For Ali, it's a meditation - every motion instinct and improvisation, her breathing regular, face serene, the details and shapes of the room and her opponent going out of focus, mind set free for reverie...

#### **FLASHBACK MONTAGE - THE ABORTED NORTH KOREA MISSION**

- Pope's face resolves again, now sitting across from Ali in the back of a small passenger jet, which hums.

POPE

(inscrutable half-smile)

So how do you feel about HAHO-  
jumping into the world's last  
Stalinist terror state?

ALI

Yeah, it's like Kim Jong-il read  
1984 and said, "Hey, let's see if  
we can make this work." But with  
nukes.

Predator's huge bulk lies racked out on the sofa opposite, Juice wedged in what's left of it.

PREDATOR

Yeah, HEU and atomic bombs was  
one thing. But with plutonium for  
big-boy hydrogen bombs, some  
adult supervision is now  
required.

ALI

(to Pope)

Anyway, it's just the staging  
area. Not the jump. Not yet.

POPE

Still, six months of mission  
prep, training, rehearsals. Now  
we're go.

PREDATOR

Heh. Make way for the world's  
first and only team of mixed  
Tier-1 badasses, motherfuckers.  
All-service, multi-nation...

JUICE

All fart jokes, all the time.  
Speaking of which, excuse me.

PREDATOR

Damn, dude. Fart in a plane.

Henno swivels around from the table ahead, phone in hand.

HENNO

Anyone else see this shite?

The screen shows a scene of chaos in a hospital. Text scroll reads: MYSTERY EPIDEMIC CROSSES MEDITERRANEAN: PATIENTS ATTACKING MEDICAL PERSONNEL IN GREECE AND ITALY.

PREDATOR

Huh. That doesn't look good.

JUICE

CDC and WHO'll take it. They've got their job, we've got ours.

The plane is small enough that when it banks and turns on a dime, everyone feels it. Captain Ainsley appears from the front.

AINSLEY

We're stood down.

Ali glances at Henno's phone, but...

AINSLEY

Two BA triple-sevens just went down on approach to Heathrow. One crashed into a populated area outside the capital, in Slough. The other ditched in the Channel.

None of the operators react - much.

AINSLEY

All incoming flights to the UK have been diverted, those going out cancelled. As a military flight, we're getting in under the ban. We RTB and regroup at Hereford. Don't know what the status of our mission is now. We may be re-tasked.

- The plane lands at Hereford, the Alpha commandoes entering a large mess with their personal rucks still slung. At the front a TV plays BBC News.

## ONSCREEN REPORTER

At this time, authorities believe the plot may have been against as many as half a dozen civilian aircraft. In an emergency session of COBRA, the PM has declared that the ban on all flights will continue indefinitely...

- On screens and in settings around Hereford, watched by our heroes - and also around the UK/world - headlines scroll by:

- ...TRAIN AND FERRY TRAFFIC STILL AT A TRICKLE, AS AIR TRAVEL BAN STRETCHES TO A WEEK...

- ...GLOBAL PANDEMIC AT TIPPING POINT - CITIES FALLING BEFORE CIVIL DEFENSE PREPARATIONS CAN BEGIN...

- Scenes of global chaos, rioting, panic, a TV news crew in Paris taken down live in a swarm attack.

- ...FIRST OUTBREAKS IN BRITAIN: CONTAINED...

- ...TRAVEL BAN TURNS TO OFFICIAL FULL QUARANTINE...

- ...TRAGEDY OF 11/11 ATTACKS TURNS TO BLESSING - EXTRA FEW DAYS OF WARNING ALLOWS BRITAIN TO LOCK DOWN AND PREPARE...

- Soldiers roaming the cities and villages - martial law.

- Civilians donning leather and grabbing weapons before leaving the house.

- Small packs of dead being hunted and cut down in the countryside.

- Sentries on the Cliffs of Dover at night, looking out over the English Channel: stillness and silence.

**END FLASHBACK MONTAGE**

Ali's awareness and vision spool back up... and back to Pope's face, to find she's got him on the ground, pushing the edge of her boken into his throat with her full weight - a thin trickle of blood from a small wound in his forehead. But his expression is unchanged. He taps the mat.

## POPE

Your point. Nice one.

With a start, Ali withdraws her sword, rolls to her feet, and gives her brother operator a hand up - chastened. She needs to reserve her angst and rage for the dead.

**INT./EXT. HEREFORD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

Handon goes from the Colonel's briefing to the base gym, where he dresses out. In PT kit, his razor edge of fitness - lean muscle mass, no body fat - gleams; and he's not letting it flag tonight, missions and briefings be damned. He puts in earbuds, cranks up uber-heavy noughties tunes, and goes straight into bench presses - 180lb, no spotter. As he pushes them out, his eyes go long, seeing into memory.

**FLASHBACK MONTAGE - THE FALL**

- Chaos engulfing Europe, riots in the streets.
- Police legging it, ministers packing briefcases.
- Survivors/refugees pushed right up to water's edge.
- More panicked live TV broadcasts, news headline: BRITAIN KEEPS BORDERS CLOSED AFTER 11/11 ATTACKS.
- A civilian armada trying to cross the Channel: cabin cruisers, container ships, makeshift rafts...
- ...being turned away at the ports - but trying to storm them anyway, UK military defense of Dover, Hastings...
- RAF Tornados and Typhoons strafing boats on the water, setting oil slicks aflame, which light the night.
- News headline: 500 MILLION EUROPEAN REFUGEES, HOW MANY INFECTED? PM: 'WE WILL DEFEND OUR ISLAND HOME'.
- Past-Handon looks away from CNN on a huge screen in the Hereford TOC, exits, and trots across the base, threading through crowds of soldiers moving fast in all directions, back to his billet. He dials a sat phone, waits. Tense.
- In TOC at Ft. Bragg, chaos reigns. An OPS OFFICER notices a flashing light, grabs a handset, shouts to be heard.

OPS OFFICER

Handon? Command Sergeant Major?

- Past-Handon in his billet, also raising voice - as shadows of running figures pass by his windows.

HANDON

Affirmative. Be advised, our mission has been scrubbed. Requesting new tasking.

- Back in the Ft. Bragg TOC:

OPS OFFICER

Yeah, you guys just need to hang tight for now.

(MORE)

## OPS OFFICER (CONT'D)

The 101st and 82nd are being mobilized to secure the borders north and south. National Guard units called out to lock down the cities. So far JSOC is being kept in the bullpen.

- Huge formations of regular U.S. infantry being overwhelmed by surging hordes of the dead, in cities and fields.

- Small teams of elite U.S. special operators, around the globe, watching the world fall from vantages of safety - too skilled to be taken down, but too few to make a difference.

- Past-Handon steps outside. The other Americans in Alpha - Predator, Juice, Ali, Homer, and Pope - stand in an arc, silent, expectant, waiting for him. He lowers the phone.

**END FLASHBACK MONTAGE**

Handon's vision comes into focus - up at the bending bar, held a few inches above his face by trembling arms. With a last pulse of strength, he heaves it up onto the lower pegs - as a British soldier in PT kit dashes over to help him.

## SOLDIER

What the hell were you thinking?

Handon rolls out from under the bar, sits up.

## HANDON

(looks off, gaze long)

I was just thinking it took a hundred thousand years to build up all of human civilization. And a strand of RNA less than a hundred nanometers long a hundred days to bring it all down.

The soldier snorts: Tell me something I don't know.

**EXT. HEREFORD, UNDERNEATH GUARD TOWER - NIGHT**

In the mini-HDS sight on Homer's SIG, the face behind it resolves as human - and smiling: it's another SEAL.

## MIKEY

Exactly the same twitchy sumbitch as always. Stand down, brother.

## HOMER

Mikey? Good lord.

## MIKEY

At your service, Homer.

(MORE)



MIKEY (CONT'D)

They told me you might be out here. Hiding in the shadows.

They hug - heartfelt, and thorax-crushing.

HOMER

You're a long way from Coronado, and Team Three.

MIKEY

But, hey, a lot closer to the ball-busting terrain of Korengal, right? Might actually be where I last saw you, after you disappeared into the black hole of Team Six. And Dam Neck's just across that tiny ocean.

Homer's look goes inscrutable but pained. He comes out of it, pushing Mikey to arm's length, eyes locked, smiling.

HOMER

Not only alive and in the world, but here in Fortress Britain. How?

MIKEY

(long slow breath)

A few months before it all came down. I was posted to a surface vessel, with a half-platoon, eight SEALs. Doing counter-proliferation and interdiction work, along the seam of the Pacific and Indian Ocean. VBSS, that kind of thing.

HOMER

And after?

MIKEY

Man. We were like the goddamned ancient mariner.

He glances at the gold cross on Homer's chest.

MIKEY

Sorry, man. Pardon my blasphemy.

HOMER

(smile)

Hey, you're a sailor. I'd better be used to you swearing like one.

MIKEY

(grin)

Anyway, we were roaming the wide oceans, trying one overseas port after another. Just making a living as far as food and fuel. Some places we could tie up, some we couldn't. Some had been abandoned by the living - but we could fight our way into.

HOMER

And your orders?

MIKEY

At first it was just "Hold station" or "Continue patrol" or "Stand by". Then nothing, of course. Finally we heard a rumor overseas American military personnel were making their way here. By any possible means. That Britain still stood. Last flag flying.

HOMER

It's true. Almost thirty thousand of us, last time I checked.

(beat)

Why'd it take you so long?

MIKEY

(shakes head)

We had a few adventures along the way. Anyway, we've actually been docked at Southampton for three months. Had us going out on milk runs, delivering supplies from one place to another. The odd search and salvage. But it was only last week somebody figured out our boat had a fully kitted-out team of frogmen in its complement. They put two and two together - or, rather, us eight and however many badasses you've got here. Doing whatever kind of jobs you're doing.

Mikey looks a question mark at him.

HOMER

They won't have told you much yet.

MIKEY

We're getting briefed in the morning... And going out in the afternoon.

HOMER

(concerned)

What, mainland Europe? Got a sense of what you're going to be getting into out there?

MIKEY

(not worried)

That's the whole point of getting our asses kicked in BUD/S and the two-year training pipeline. So we'll be ready for the things we're not ready for. Especially them.

(cocks head)

What's your thinking, brother?

HOMER

Honestly?

MIKEY

You know how to be anything else?

HOMER

You know, when it all started, I honestly thought the Rapture was here - not some freak-show zombie apocalypse. All I could think for the longest time was: Why am I still here? I've done my bit. Why do I have to get my gun in the fight again, in the last battle between Light and Dark, while everyone else is sitting pretty in Heaven...?

Something's left unsaid, and they exchange a pained look. Mikey puts his hand on his shoulder.

HOMER

But you know what worries me most? It's not who's going to win. Or whether this will ever end. Not even what's going to happen to me, or to any of us. It's... which side am I fighting for? Is it still for the light, the defense of those too weak to defend themselves? Or am I one of the bad guys now? Did you ever consider that? That we're the enemy? And those things out there are... God's cleaners?

MIKEY

You tell anyone else this?

HOMER

No.

MIKEY

(grin)

Good. Keep that shit to yourself.

They hug again.

MIKEY

The brotherhood of team guys,  
man. The one thing stronger than  
death.

HOMER

Stronger than the end of the  
world.

**EXT. FOLKESTONE - NIGHT - CONT.**

Wesley swerves the car at the last second to avoid A GIRL, six, who tumbles backward from edge of the road in shock. The car careens into a parked convertible - sending the soldier crashing through the windshield and rolling across the pavement.

THE FATHER, loading another parked car, shouts and rushes over. The girl bounces up and runs to embrace him. THE MOTHER rushes out of the house with another daughter and armloads of can't-leave-behinds.

MOTHER

What happened!?

FATHER

Never mind, there's no time. Get  
the kids in the car.

He runs to the crashed sedan, pulling a knife from a belt sheath, and leans in the open window.

FATHER

You alive?

WESLEY

(vision swimming)

A little bit. I didn't hit  
her...?

FATHER

No. She's okay. You injured?

Wes shoves the deformed door, staggers out. Looking around, he remembers current events - reaches in for the shotgun.

WESLEY

I'm fine. You need to get out of  
here. The dead are right behind  
us.

(sees burst windshield)

Shit - where's the soldier?

THE SOLDIER (O.S.)  
I'm good... good-ish.

He climbs to his feet.

FATHER  
You flew twenty yards...

The soldier taps his helmet, bangs fist on body armor.

THE SOLDIER  
We don't hump all this for the  
cardio.

THE GIRL (O.S.)  
Daddy...

All look up the road - dark figures stumble closer through  
the shadows and mist, along with deep guttural moaning.

FATHER  
Jesus God...

WESLEY  
Are there other families?

FATHER  
Yes. We all got called to  
evacuate.

THE SOLDIER  
Go. Don't stop til you've passed  
through a skirmish line of  
squaddies. They're on the way.

Wesley looks up the street - other families exiting houses  
and loading cars. GUNFIRE erupts - close. It's the soldier,  
back on the job, firing into the advancing ranks. A KNOBBER  
bursts from the house next door, backing away from all the  
gunfire. He sees his trashed convertible.

KNOBBER  
My Jaguar...

The soldier, pausing to reload, looks over.

THE SOLDIER  
You seriously chose a soft-top  
vehicle?

The man legs it, knocking kids aside.

THE SOLDIER  
Selfish fucking knobber.

He glances at Wesley, who has his handgun out - it's an  
identical Glock 17 to the one on his own belt.

THE SOLDIER  
How many rounds you have left?

WESLEY  
About thirty, I think.

The soldier pulls two mags from a pouch and jams them directly in Wesley's waistband.

THE SOLDIER  
Make 'em count. Here they come...

Wesley nods, takes aim, pauses.

WESLEY  
Hey. If I'm gonna die standing next to you, I'd like to know your name.

THE SOLDIER  
It's Martin. Captain James Martin. Pleasure.

WESLEY  
Wesley. Andrew Wesley. And maybe not the word I'd use.

MARTIN  
Fair point.

Side by side, they take aim. It's not just fifty emerging from the mists - it's hundreds. Behind them, families are loading and leaving - but not quickly enough. The two men open fire.

MARTIN  
(shouting over roar)  
We have to hold them here!

#### **FLASHBACK MONTAGE - LEAVING AMARIE BEHIND**

- Amarie's lovely face, smiling up from that bed.
- Wesley's phone - MISSED CALL: AMARIE.
- Gare de Nord, last Eurostar train pulling away... Wes's hangdog face peering out receding window at heaving crowds.

#### **END FLASHBACK**

Refocusing, Wesley is looking over his shoulder - at the face of the little girl he almost hit, peering out the rear window of the receding family car.

WESLEY  
(quietly)  
Absolutely.

As he begins firing, his expression grows peaceful, and all the noise of the fight fades away. He's definitely going to die here; but that girl's not.

But as he fires steadily - and hopelessly - into the advancing horde... the front rank, then the one behind that, are scythed to the ground. His hearing spools back up, and it's not two firearms banging - but dozens. A mass of British soldiers advances around him and Martin. The cavalry's here.

**INT. HANDON'S BILLET - NIGHT**

POPE

Top. Wake up, man.

Handon comes awake smoothly - wordlessly follows Pope out into the dark. They thread dark alleys to the TOC.

**INT. TOC - NIGHT**

It's a full house inside now - comms, aviation desk, ops, medical, guys at every station, the joint buzzing. Handon spots Ainsley, hunched over a station with the Colonel.

HANDON

What?

AINSLEY

It's the new SEAL team.

HANDON

Who'd they go out with?

AINSLEY

Just them. Stealth Hawk crew inserted them.

Handon cocks his head at the radio traffic playing through wall-mounted speakers. He looks up to see the TOC-side mission commander (TOC JOCK) speaking into his headset mic.

TOC JOCK

Mud Snake Six, interrogative: can you update me on your casualty status, over?

SEAL COMMANDER (O.S.)

(staticky)

Hotel X, Mud Snake, wait out.

Behind even this short transmission there's the sound of rapid firing, men cursing - and the frenzied moaning of massed dead. Pope and Handon trade a look: NOT GOOD.

HANDON

Where?

AINSLEY  
(not looking up)  
Calais.

HANDON  
Mission objective?

Ainsley looks over at the Colonel, who frowns back.

THE COLONEL  
They're checking the  
fortifications at the Frog end of  
the Tunnel.

HANDON  
At night?

THE COLONEL  
It was priority highest. And  
their skipper volunteered them.  
All of them volunteered.

HANDON  
Of course they volunteered.  
They're fucking SEALs. There's no  
word for "negative" in their  
vocabulary. But they've been in  
theatre for about five minutes.

AINSLEY  
(sighing)  
They've been fighting the dead  
for two years, just like the rest  
of us.

The Colonel removes his headset, puts it on the desk.

THE COLONEL  
Or so they said.

The ambient radio chatter goes from bad to worse.

THE COLONEL  
They've been in a running battle  
for the worst part of an hour.  
Trying to fight their way to an  
extraction point. And they've  
taken casualties - dead, bit, or  
both.

HANDON  
(straightening up)  
Let me get this straight. You  
sent a bunch of FNGs out on a  
mission over the water, at night,  
by themselves. And now they're  
getting eaten and everyone's all  
surprised?



The Colonel and Ainsley look past Handon and Pope - who turn to see Homer behind them. He's kitted out and tooled up: weapons, assault suit, mags, the works.

THE COLONEL

Appreciate your initiative,  
Master Chief. But Alpha's not  
going out in that. Not now,  
anyways.

Homer doesn't speak - just gives them a look: he's going to Calais if he has to backstroke it. He turns on his heel and marches back out.

AINSELY

Half the team, Colonel - just  
four men. In and out like church  
mice.

THE COLONEL

(palm to face, wearily)  
Jesus H. Tapdancing Christ. Why  
has command become such a fluid  
concept since the world ended?  
Go. Go with God.

The four turn and jog out.

**INT. HARBOR BARRACKS TOC - NIGHT**

MAJOR GREWS, a caged cat, paces the aisles of a lower-tech TOC than at Hereford - conventional, big green Army.

GREWS

Hail him again.

The radio operator looks nervous, fingers tapping keys.

RADIO OP

I've got him, Major.

GREWS

(into headset)  
Captain Bordell? Report.

BORDELL (O.S.)

Tactical situation is stable,  
sir. A few stragglers still  
wandering around the town center,  
and being cleaned up now. But the  
main concentration has been  
destroyed. We've also  
strongpointed the Tunnel  
entrance. However the buggers got  
out, it's stopped now.

GREWS  
 (sagging, relieved)  
 Stand by.  
 (turning to radio op)  
 Stand down the air mission.

RADIO OP.  
 Sir.

GREWS  
 (back into headset)  
 Nice work, Captain. Casualties?

BORDELL (O.S.)  
 Only three of ours, sir, times  
 two civilians. But...  
 unfortunately, we lost the  
 outgoing detachment in the hotel.  
 All save one.

GREWS  
 Fuck. Who's the one beloved by  
 God?

BORDELL (O.S.)  
 Their commander, actually.  
 Martin. We've also got a plod  
 from the Tunnel security station.  
 UKSS.

GREWS  
 Okay. Clean up and continue  
 sweeps. Oh - and send me Martin  
 and the security officer. Pad  
 them out to section size with  
 your weakest links. Still have to  
 fill my quota.

BORDELL (O.S.)  
 (reluctantly)  
 Sir.

Grews turns to the radio op.

GREWS  
 Well? We make it in time? Or is  
 everyone in the area going to  
 die?

RADIO OP  
 Negative, sir. CentCom confirms  
 stand-down order--

Grews starts to turn away.

RADIO OP

But they've also instructed us to prepare for a recon in force of the entire sector - every adjacent grid square. Also... they're mobilizing an excavation team. For the Tunnel.

GREWS

What! Why? What the hell reason did they give?

Both realize that's a stupid question.

GREWS

Get me Colonel Mayes. Do it.

**INT./EXT. HEREFORD HELIPAD - NIGHT - CONT.**

Handon, Pope, Ainsley, and Homer toss heavy go-bags into the helo, climb in, and it lifts off. When it accelerates into the black night, it does so to nearly 300mph - a Sikorsky Raider, with twin coaxial main rotors, vertical stabilizers, and a pusher propeller. Fastest helo ever.

The four Alpha men sit in the near-black cabin, pulling on assault suits, load-bearing vests, radios, and helmets with mounted NVGs. Finally, they charge their weapons and wait.

Handon looks out to the horizon, which shows a tiny smudge of dark purple on black. Dawn coming. He looks to Ainsley.

HANDON

Well, if we get killed or turned, at least it's only half the team.

AINSLEY

In this job, death has always walked with us every day.

POPE

Yeah, but it's gotten kind of literal lately.

HANDON

(shakes head)

Before it was just be a price that might have to be paid. Now it's a possible escape...

He nods out the hatch - at dead, post-apocalyptic, fallen Europe, coming into view in the moonlight over the water.

POPE

Ranger on, Top. Just Ranger on...

Handon looks across at Homer, sitting apart, rubbing his gold crucifix. Untroubled as always - but more resolved.

AINSLEY

He never loses his faith, does he?

HANDON

Not so far. When faith's all you've got, doubt is lethal. I don't think the dead are the real enemy... it's loss of belief. The death of hope.

Ainsley pulls out a ruggedized tablet. Its screen shows topo maps, and live satellite and drone footage of Calais.

AINSLEY

Brace up. Since we're doing this insertion, we may as well plan it in some way that won't get us as jammed up as the SEALs. You can't help anyone if you're dead.

Handon sidles over to join him.

HANDON

And you're a positive menace when you're undead...

**INT. HEREFORD TOC - NIGHT**

The Colonel still leans over a tactical station, when a shadow completely envelops him. He looks up: Predator. The land giant's unamused look says it all: SITREP ME - NOW.

THE COLONEL

Your guys are five mikes out.

PREDATOR

What about the SEAL team?

The Colonel looks across at the TOC Jock: head shake.

THE COLONEL

No contact. Last half hour.

**EXT. CALAIS - PRE-DAWN - CONTINUOUS**

The Sikorsky flares down fast and hard into a dark and shadowed flat spot in the ruins, kisses the ground as the four commandoes slither off - then accelerates one way, drawing the dead, while the ground team goes the other.

Shoulder muscles bunched, rifles to shoulders, a single fluid organism, they sluice out of the HLZ and into the maze of ruined buildings and detritus of fallen Europe.

Homer takes point - a man on a mission.

Slinging his rifle, he draws his boarding axe and aerates three dead heads in a row without slowing - just wrong-place/wrong-time dead guys, between him and his brother SEALs.

Ainsley checks a moving-map GPS mounted on his forearm: a transponder signal blinks 200 meters from their position. It blinks out, reappears at 500 meters, then comes back and stays. Ainsley clenches his teeth and shoots an annoyed look at the sky. He touches Homer's shoulder, points a bladed hand, then finger-flashes "two" "zero" "zero". Full silence.

The team collapses from fanned-out into a taut line, slips through the entrance of a ruined building, flipping down NVGs - it's black as death inside. They execute perfectly choreographed room-clearing drills as they move to the back of the building.

Ainsley makes a HOLD gesture and they stop outside a half-collapsed wall before the last room. Noises from inside: could be whispering, or just rustling. Ainsley's arm shows the signal ten meters out. Wordlessly, the four stack up outside the door, then pour inside - splashing the area with IR spots on their weapons, lighting it like day (in NVGs).

A kitted-up SEAL kneels in the far corner, hunched over the supine form of another. Homer stops, eyes wide in hope - seeing an open med ruck lying beside the pair. The "medic" twists at the waist - emitting a hiss from blue lips.

HOMER

Mikey.

Mikey raises two handfuls of his "patient" and starts stuffing them into his mouth. Handon clenches Homer's upper arm and hauls him back outside. Ainsley and Pope stay behind - CHUGS of suppressed shots offscreen. Handon flips Homer's NVGs up - and sees the faith draining from his white face.

#### INT. HARBOUR BARRACKS TOC - NIGHT

Grews has retreated to his glass-fronted office off the TOC; grips a desk phone with white knuckles.

COLONEL MAYES (V.O.)

No choice, old man. Under orders just like you are.

GREWS

(moderating his tone)  
Opening the Tunnel is madness.

COLONEL MAYES

We didn't deal with it properly the first time. Obviously. Now we get a second chance. Which also means we can clear up... what was left behind. You of all people, Bob.

Grews blinks slowly, squints into memory.

**FLASHBACK MONTAGE - THE REFUGEES LEFT IN THE TUNNEL**

- Same TOC, but heaving with people and activity. Grews hunches over a station with multiple monitors: drone footage of full-scale rioting at Gare de Nord, trains overwhelmed, as well as at the mouth of the Tunnel in France - where steel gates drop into place, while security personnel flee the mob racing underneath them. Dim CCTV footage of figures running up the tunnel, an overweight ISR OPERATOR flipping from camera to camera, deeper and deeper inside.

GREWS

God, they've got to be nearly two miles in. What's the status of the mid-Tunnel gate?

ISR OP

It's shut. Well, shutting now.

GREWS

Show me.

The operator flips again - but that gate is also only half-closed, wedged open by a train right on the tracks.

ISR OP

Shit.

GREWS

Christ! What the hell is that?

The Op pivots to another screen, a dense text manifest.

ISR OP

(scanning lines)

When we locked down the gates and killed the power, there was still an outbound train. They left it on the tracks because there was no time to get it turned around.

GREWS

Left it right at the fucking mid-point? Any passengers?

ISR OP

Evacuated. Just freight.

Grews pivots and shakes a radio operator.

GREWS

Get me Mayes at CentCom. NOW.

(beat, into headset)

Colonel, bit of a cock-up here.

MAYES (V.O.)

We see it. Doesn't matter now.

- Outside the familiar (but not yet blocked-up) Tunnel entrance, a dozen military engineers scamper away, getting under hard cover. The Tunnel mouth goes up in an explosion that whites out the screen. Jets scream overhead.

- Same jets dive-bomb the French end of the tunnel - beyond the mobbed entrance, right at the water's edge.

- Back in the TOC: Grews leans over the station, watching nightmarish scenes of lights going out along the Tunnel, and biblical waters crashing in, rushing forward, and rising fast. The Op flips from view to view. Some show bodies - alive, dead, undead - being carried along with the flood.

GREWS

Wait - go back.

A group of thirty refugees clamber out of the rushing waters into a nearly dark - but dry - section of corridor.

GREWS

What's that?

ISR OP

(checking)

Section of maintenance tunnel.  
Dunno why it's not submerged yet.

GREWS

(awed)

Jesus. Brave sons of bitches.

ISR OP

(shrugs)

They won't last long. Even if they survive the flooding, the dead sure will, and they'll make short work of 'em. Best case... well, no food or drinkable water down there.

Grews's look from screen to Op says he prefers those guys.

Both ignore the other terminal with the train manifest, and the highlighted line of our stopped train. In the FREIGHT column: DRY GOODS, FOODSTUFFS, BULK FOOD AND BEVERAGES.

**END FLASHBACK MONTAGE**

COLONEL MAYES (O.S.)

Sappers arrive at dawn. Be ready.

Grews puts down the phone. Stares at ghosts in the dark.

**INT. HEREFORD BRIEFING ROOM - DAY**

All eight members of Alpha team sit in two ranks - Ainsley, Handon, Homer, and Ali up front; Pope, Predator, Juice, and Henno jostling for space in the rear. The Colonel stands before a screen up front. Handon gives him a dark look.

HANDON (V.O.)  
(echo from yesterday)  
Keep it up and we're going to  
lose a team. Maybe two...

THE COLONEL  
(ignoring the look)  
We're calling this Secunda  
Mortem.  
(scans faces)  
And it might be the big one.

He picks up a sheaf of papers from the table and puts his narrow ass in its place.

THE COLONEL  
The pointy heads up north have  
sifted through the data you  
pulled out of Germany. The bad  
news is, Merck had no  
breakthroughs. Nothing promising  
in either therapeutics or vaccine  
prototypes. Dick, basically.

PREDATOR  
Dick doesn't sound too  
actionable.

The Colonel grimaces, flips open papers to an inside sheet.

THE COLONEL  
What they did have is some email  
that makes for a hell of a read.  
As you know, all the research  
labs and biotechs were  
collaborating like crazy sons of  
bitches before the Fall. Guess IP  
protection goes out the window  
with all our asses on the line.  
So, one of the scientists at  
Merck had some incoming mail -  
from an outfit that wasn't even  
on our radar before today.

He pauses to un-shirt a pair of reading glasses.



THE COLONEL

(reading)

Neuradyne Neurosciences was, and I quote, a specialty biopharmaceutical company focused on the development, manufacturing, sales, and marketing of bespoke biopharmalogics, as well as game-changing neuroscientific research.

(looking back to room)

Big on brain drugs. Breakthrough fourth-gen antidepressants. Alzheimers. Behavioral genetics, molecular and cellular neuroscience.

Juice raises a ham-sized ham.

JUICE

Why hadn't we heard of them before?

THE COLONEL

Biggest names got attention first. And this is like fifteen guys in a white room. Boutique outfit.

AINSLEY

(impatient)

What does the email say?

THE COLONEL

(flipping papers)

Says the team there had worked out a method of dsRNA interference... one that suppresses a critical gene in a double-stranded virus of this type. And as a result selectively induces apoptosis in any cells containing the viral RNA.

JUICE

Apoptosis. Cell suicide.

THE COLONEL

An ice cream cone for the big bearded man. They also claim it kills infected cells without harming healthy ones.

HANDON

We've heard this kind of big talk before. Does their drug work?

THE COLONEL

They claim it had a demonstrated therapeutic effect in multi-celled bacteria, mice... and chimps.

A few respectful nods and whistles.

JUICE

Chimps share ninety-eight percent of human DNA.

AINSLEY

So we're looking at a cure.

THE COLONEL

No. Only for those the virus hasn't killed yet. Maybe a serum - if you administer it quick enough. But useless on the turned. Too late after it's killed you.

ALI

As J.B. Watson said, When you're dead, you're all dead.

PREDATOR

(snort)

J.B. Watson's walking around out there somewhere right now. Whoever the fuck he is.

ALI

Touché.

THE COLONEL

(annoyed at his polymath commandoes)

But much more fucking importantly, they claim their dsRNA-i technique can also be used in vaccine dev.

(beat)

And they were close to making it work. Maybe real close.

Respectful silence in the room.

JUICE

A serum would mean hope for the infected. But a working vaccine--

AINSLEY

Would be a way back. For humanity.

HANDON

So we go get it. Where?

The Colonel lays the folder lightly on the desk.

**INT. ALPHA READY ROOM - DAY**

POPE  
Fugly Chi-town.

JUICE  
(goofy voice)  
Da bears.

Everyone in Alpha but command (Handon and Ainsley) look forlornly off into dark corners of the room.

PREDATOR  
Fucking Chicago? Seriously?

HENNO  
As in Chicago, Illinois, USA?

Ali shoots him an annoyed look.

HENNO  
Aye, I've heard of it. Just don't believe it.

POPE  
A North America mission would be a huge stretch of our capabilities and logistics.

HENNO  
Bloody suicide mission, more like.

PREDATOR  
You lose it out there, you're in a world of hurt.

JUICE  
No QRF on that continent. No humans.

ALI  
We don't know that. Not for sure.

JUICE  
Oh, yeah? What's the latest episode of Queer Eye you've streamed?

ALI  
Point taken.  
(sags)  
And it's not just in the middle of the continent. It's also in a city of three million people. Dead ones.

PREDATOR

Fucking urban ops, man. Aleppo, Sadr City, Fallujah. Back to Mogadishu. Hell, all the way back to Beirut...

JUICE

Yep. Ammo, radio batteries, water, time, personnel... cities just burn through everything. Fast.

ALI

Remember all those urban set-piece battles during the Fall? Living on dead, living on living... And if there are pockets of survivors--

PREDATOR

Yeah, anybody who lasted this long pretty much did it by shooting first and asking questions never.

POPE

Not to mention it's the perfect setting for industrial accidents, fires, toxic spills, navigational disasters--

PREDATOR

Fucking Mogadishu. The Lost Convoy.

ALI

And even just the damned population density - we're guaranteed a full-tilt rollicking zombie festival on arrival.

PREDATOR

Yep. And lose your mobility or initiative, get bogged down--

JUICE

You end up barricaded in some large structure. And then it's siege. The moans of the besiegers bringing more - forever.

ALI

The classic Zulu Singularity - until it's every dead guy on the fucking continent. And however good or high your barricades--

JUICE

They just keeping climbing on top of each other until they've surmounted it. And even if you somehow keep them out--

PREDATOR

Then maybe a fire breaks out. Enjoy the fire drill. Your rendezvous and evac point is down there - on the corner of Dead Guy Ave and You're Fucked Street.

An even more grim silence descends.

PREDATOR

(looking up)

And, hey, what the fuck is up with this op name? Secunda Mortem? I opted out of Latin at Ranger School, but I'm pretty sure Mortem means death.

Homer looks up, speaking for the first time - quietly.

HOMER

Secunda Mortem - the second death.

(stares down at crucifix)

It's a biblical reference, Christian resurrection theology. "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such, the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God, and will reign with him for a thousand years." Revelations, verse twenty, chapter six.

PREDATOR

(snorting and standing)

I gotta take a shit.

JUICE

(rising and following)

Sounds like a plan.

**INT. THE COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY**

The Colonel, Handon, and Ainsley sit and peer into tablets.

THE COLONEL

High-level options. For infil.

AINSLEY

We could insert by air - direct from here.

THE COLONEL

Yeah. We could just about pull off the logistics of the flight and the refueling. The problem is support.

AINSLEY

Sir?

THE COLONEL

Once you arrive in theater, you haven't got any. Not a sweet rat's. Totally on your own. Now I know you Tier-1 guys have got a major hard-on for mass suicide. But being air-dropped, eight guys alone, into the middle of Zulu City USA might be too much even for you dubious sons of bitches.

HANDON

So then it's an ocean voyage. But on what? Frigate? Destroyer?  
(no answer from Colonel)  
Catamaran?

THE COLONEL

(tapping his pen)  
Nuclear supercarrier.

HANDON

Come on.

THE COLONEL

Carrier Strike Group Six. The USS John F. Kennedy.

HANDON

(squinting in disbelief)  
The Kennedy's still floating.

THE COLONEL

It's been need-to-know up til now. Basically, some people thought it might become Noah's freaking Ark - the last bastion of the living on Earth. Hasn't come to that yet. But she'll make a hell of a transatlantic cruise liner. Not to mention forward operating base for your mission. About half her support ship's are floating, too.

AINSLEY

Miracles never cease.

THE COLONEL

Just so. This whole thing may prove to be an impossible tasking. Not one of you hard cases may be coming back. But we've got no choice but run it. Not if there's any chance of a working vaccine.

AINSLEY

(calm)

If there's a vaccine, and we can transmit the design back... then it doesn't matter much whether any of us come back.

The Colonel spins his tablet around on the desk, stands, leans over it.

THE COLONEL

Okay. Even from the Atlantic coast to Chicago is too long a stretch for a helo insertion - and we don't need you going in there all noisy and waking the dead anyway.

HANDON

HAHO jump.

THE COLONEL

Yeah. Fixed-wing aircraft won't even need to overfly the city. You just glide in on the prevailing winds off Lake Michigan and land--

(pokes at tablet)

here. This is just an early high-level concept. I'm gonna get us all in a room with the joint mission planning staff. Together, we'll figure out a way in for your team.

HANDON

And maybe even a way out.

AINSLEY

(looking up)

A way out for everyone.

**EXT. PORTSMOUTH NAVAL BASE - DUSK**

A sprawling dock city, hulking warships of the Royal Navy looming in the mists of the huge piers. All eight commandos of Alpha stand at the edge of the water - heaping pallets of combat kit piled on the deck or on carts behind them.

POPE

The largest empire the world has ever seen was pretty much conquered and ruled from out of here.

HENNO

Hardy seafaring nation. Half these hulls were laid down in the north.

AINSLEY

But Britannia rules the waves no more.

A low hissing sound emerges from out of the mists - massive quantities of air and water being displaced.

PREDATOR

(breathily)

Big son of a bitch.

A Brobdingnagian gray shape begins to resolve - blotting out the setting sun behind it.

HOMER

Only the second of her class. And almost certainly the last.

POPE

Never say never.

The USS JOHN F. KENNEDY heaves into view, dominating the horizon like an ocean-going ice shelf. It dwarfs every vessel in Her Majesty's fleet, like the God of the entire race of warships. Her crew begins the elaborate process of docking and tying up.

THE COLONEL (V.O.)

She's second of the new Ford-class of nuclear supercarriers, replacing the old Nimitz-class boats that went into service in seventy-five. Floated out of Newport News a year ahead of schedule - so just ahead of the collapse of civilization that halted shipbuilding, along with pretty much all other kinds of building, for the duration.

MONTAGE DURING V.O. - ASPECTS OF THE CARRIER

THE COLONEL (V.O.)

She houses an 85-plane air wing and a full-strength complement of five thousand crew.

(MORE)



THE COLONEL (V.O) (CONT'D)

Stretches the length of the Empire State Building laid on its side, with five acres of flight deck, and the island [shown: control tower] looming five stories over it all. She's fully electric, with twin A1B nuclear reactors that can power the whole operation for fifteen to twenty years at sea. She has her own onboard desalination plant, capable of turning 600,000 gallons of salt water into drinkable fresh water every day. A nearly totally self-sufficient floating city. And thus did she survive two years afloat after the fall of man.

The Kennedy's 50-meter gangway hits the dock.

HANDON

Grab your gear. Let's move.

He eyes the torso-thick ropes and chains disappearing into the mists of the water as they all ruck up.

THE COLONEL (V.O.)

She won't stay tied up long. One submersible dead guy crawling up your mooring lines can turn your floating sanctuary into a self-consuming charnel house. An outbreak belowdecks ain't pretty.

As the operators mount the gangway, a half-dozen support ships - destroyers, guided missile cruiser, sub, oiler and supply ship - also emerge from out of the mists.

THE COLONEL (V.O.)

Back in the world, it was said a carrier strike group could single-handedly win a war against any other nation on Earth. Now they're your goddamned water taxi service. And also... humanity's last best hope of salvation, from the Hell we've gotten ourselves into. Go. Fix this. Get it done.

Humping or rolling their kit up the ramp, Alpha disappears into the mists - and the looming shadow of the Kennedy.