**CLIFFHANGER**

Written by

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**EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - HELICOPTER SHOT - DAY**

An unparalleled set of sheer mountains -- part of the Colorado

Rockies. The peaks rise a challenging half mile and more out

of the valley -- wind-whipped snow mists over the mountains

like a low fog. The tranquility is broken as a helicopter

BLASTS into view, fighting the wind as it heads for the center

of it all.

Our CREDITS fly us past and through this magnificent range.

There are sky-piercing peaks that slope up to a narrow, high

pinnacle -- and others that are steel, straight-up approaches

to large plateaus. One of the mountains has a crystal lake on

top -- with a waterfall that drains from it and exits from the

middle of a mountain wall. Nearby, an abandoned cable ladder

is bolted into the same wall, leading to the top.

**BACK IN THE HELICOPTER**

We can see a man sitting in its doorway, looking out --

**INT/EXT HELICOPTER - BINOCULAR POV**

The glasses scan systematically, slowly -- to us, it looks

like nothing more than a field of gray and white.

**FRANK (O.S.)**

Nothing yet.

**EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - LONG SHOT**

The helicopter now circles this tallest mountain -- "The

Tower", separated from a lower but equally formidable peak by

a chasm of two hundred feet -- that drops 3,500 feet below.

**INSIDE HELICOPTER - FRANK AND MAGGIE**

Spotter FRANK NEWELL (50s) scans the mountain wall. MAGGIE

DEIGHAN (30s) expertly pilots the helicopter through the storm

winds. Both wear orange jackets identifying themselves as

members of the Rocky Mountain Park Rescue Team.

**FRANK**

Wait a minute -- there's Hal.

(beat)

And his date.

**BINOCULAR POV - A LEDGE**

that's part of the smaller peak. HAL TUCKER (30s) and his

"date", SUSAN COLLINS (20s), are decked out in climbing gear.

Hal's aplomb suggests he's a veteran climber -- Susan's

worried look shows she isn't. Hal and Susan huddle together,

both cold, but okay. Hal has a makeshift splint wrapped

around his lower leg, and a slow burning flare in one hand.

**INSIDE HELICOPTER**

Frank lowers his glasses -- Maggie struggles with the wind.

**MAGGIE**

How do they look?

**BINOCULAR POV - HAL AND SUSAN**

Hal, now aware of the copter, looks towards it, smiling -- and

starts jerking off the flare.

**FRANK (O.S.)**

He's signalling "okay."

**MAGGIE (O.S.)**

Where's Gabe?

The POV dips down -- there's somebody climbing below, in an

orange rescue jacket.

**FRANK (O.S.)**

Right where he's supposed to be.

**CLOSER ON THE CLIMBER**

This is GABE WALKER (30s). In spite of the cold and the snow,

he's fearlessly, swiftly scaling the tower without safety

lines, as if he's done it a hundred times. That's because he

has done it a hundred times. This is what Gabe lives for.

**ON THE LEDGE**

Gabe, almost there, finds a fingertip-width handhold at arm's

length -- grabbing it, he pulls himself up on the ledge with a

move that's just a little tougher than chinning yourself on a

doorjamb. Winded, Gabe slumps down next to the couple, and

tries to light a cigarette. The lighter only sparks.

**HAL**

Excuse me -- I know you're my

salvation, and all -- do you think you

could rescue us before your smoke

break?

Hal pulls out a box of wooden matches and lights one Bogart

style, one-handed with a thumbnail, cupping a hand to shield

it against the wind. Gabe bends down for it -- a familiar

routine. We know in a glance they've been friends for years.

**GABE**

Maybe you could tell me why I am

rescuing you.

**HAL**

Basically -- I've fallen down, and I

can't get up...

**GABE**

(into radio)

Rescue One -- have located helpless

climber, please prepare idiot line

for transport, over --

THE HELICOPTER dips down towards the ledge -- no way can it

land there. Frank lowers a rescue wire to

**GABE**

who precariously swings out from the ledge to grab it -- the

wire is just out of reach. Hal grabs the radio.

**HAL**

Rescue One -- please remind me to tell

you about the time I hauled your hero

here down Mt. Huntington on my back,

over --

**MAGGIE (O.S.)**

(through radio)

Hal, if I hear that story one more

time, I'm making you limp down the

entire three thousand feet, over --

Gabe finally grabs the line, secures it to a heavy piton, and

hammers it into the wall.

**GABE**

(to Susan)

This guy showing you a good time?

**THE HELICOPTER**

swings over across to the facing mountain -- Maggie lands the

copter, in spite of the winds, on a small plateau. Frank gets

out to secure the wire -- there's now a lifeline spanning the

chasm.

**ON THE LEDGE**

Gabe finishes anchoring the line in the rock -- he

extinguishes his cigarette in the snow, and naturally, pockets

the butt. Hal, propped up against the wall, expertly rigs a

seat harness around his legs -- Susan helps him get part of it

around his splint, and Gabe clips it to the line.

**GABE**

Now, remember -- keep your arms and

legs within the vehicle at all

times --

**HAL**

(laughing)

Fuck you --

With that, Hal pulls himself hand-over-hand across the sloping

line -- Hal makes a point of looking down --

**HAL'S POV -- THE DROP**

is vertigo defined. Thirty five hundred feet straight down.

You could stack the World Trade Center towers on top of each

other and they'd still be shorter than this mountain is high.

However --

**HAL**

lets go of the overhead line and claps his hands to his face

in mock horror -- he quickly whizzes down the last thirty feet

of the line, where Frank catches him and pulls him out. Hal

gets out of the harness, checks every stitch of it, signals

thumbs-up, and sends it back.

**THE LEDGE**

Gabe, retrieves the harness on a small attachment line, and

gives Susan a reassuring smile, but she's still, sensibly,

very scared. Gabe recovers the harness, rigs Susan into it,

and meticulously re-checks it.

**GABE**

Ready?

(sees she's afraid)

Did he tell you about the time he

almost made it up Everest?

**SUSAN**

He said you gave him a bad oxygen mask

**--**

**GABE**

Well, if he's bored you with that

bullshit, then this has to be the best

part of a bad date. Right?

Susan nervously laughs.

**GABE**

Ready?

**SUSAN**

(scared but tough)

Okay --

Gabe starts to push her out on the line, but she grabs his arm

in a panic.

**SUSAN**

I can't --

Susan starts to tilt her head down -- Gabe gently takes hold

of her chin, turning her view up to face him.

**GABE**

Yes you can.

(reassuring)

You can do it. Don't look down. The

whole way across, don't look down.

Look at me. Just keep looking at me --

and you'll be okay.

Susan looks at Gabe -- trying to be confident -- nods.

**GABE**

Sure?

**SUSAN**

Yeah.

(beat)

I have always depended on the kindness

of Rangers.

Gabe grins and gently pushes her out. Susan tentatively pulls

herself across -- then develops a rhythm, building speed --

**GABE'S POV - SUSAN**

inching away in the harness, looking more confident now --

**SUSAN'S POV - GABE**

signalling "OK" -- "you're doing fine" --

**SUSAN - ANOTHER ANGLE**

thirty feet out, going fine --

**INSERT -- A HARNESS CLIP**

holding the strap under Susan's left leg breaks --

**GABE'S POV - SUSAN**

The harness completely unravels all at once, its strands

shoot through the clips -- what was a seat has become a trap

door in half a second -- as the harness shoots out from under

her, Susan falls but grabs the harness strand --

**HAL**

is helpless, and can only watch as

**SUSAN**

too scared to breathe, dangles on the remaining strand of what

used to be the harness -- she sways from the wind and the jerk

of her own weight, her grip loosens --

**INSERT - THE TOP CLIP**

that is supporting all of Susan's weight is being seriously

tested -- a single knot in the harness has caught there, but

it clearly won't last long --

**GABE**

moves back from the ledge.

**GABE**

(loud, in control)

Hold on. I'm coming out to get you.

Gabe gently pulls himself up on the line, crosses his ankles

on it, and clips himself on with a three foot safety line.

Gabe starts smoothly, quickly pulling himself out, but --

**SUSAN**

is in trouble -- the bobbing of the line from Gabe's weight

and the winds are making her lose her grip even more --

**GABE**

urgently pulls himself along the line faster, trying not to

shake the line. As he gets closer and closer to a terrified

Susan, his eyes lock on hers --

**GABE**

Keep looking at me. Hold on --

**WIDER ANGLE**

Gabe is only ten feet away from --

**SUSAN**

who stares at Gabe, petrified -- this focus is helping, but

her strength is just about gone --

**INSERT - THE CLIP**

The knot has worked itself halfway through -- it doesn't make

any difference how tight she holds on to the harness, the

harness itself is letting go --

**ON GABE**

who knows it and pulls himself the rest of the way, a little

faster, almost bridging the gap --

**ON SUSAN**

staring desperately at Gabe, holding on --

**INSERT - THE TOP CLIP**

that's keeping Susan alive surrenders the knot -- it passes

through, and

**SUSAN**

falls --

**GABE**

deliberately lets go of the main line and launches himself

at Susan --

**THEIR HANDS**

miss --

**ANGLE ON BOTH**

Gabe's three foot safety line pulls taut, testing the limits

of the line above as it yanks him back --

**GABE'S POV - SUSAN**

is just out of reach -- her hand is still stretched out, her

eyes still locked on

**GABE**

who can only look down, swaying helplessly on the wire as

Susan's SCREAM starts --

**ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE**

Frank and Maggie look down in horror, but neither look as

anguished as Hal --

**LONG SHOT - SUSAN**

falling -- falling -- falling -- looking very small against

the vast mountain range --

**SUSAN'S POV - FALLING**

from this height takes the longest nineteen seconds you can

imagine --

**GABE**

twists from his safety line, spinning helplessly -- he wants

to, but can't, shut his eyes --

**GABE'S POV - THE CHASM**

Susan is gone. Her SCREAM, cut short, echoes -- the "safety"

harness spirals down after her like a carefree bird --

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**INT/EXT SMALL AIRLINER - GABE'S POV OUT WINDOW - DAY**

As the plane dips to land, Gabe can see a bird circling far

below, over the same mountainous terrain.

**INT. SMALL AIRLINER - GABE**

sweating, panting, awake. It hasn't been that long since the

accident -- a year, to be exact -- but he looks older. He

looks as if he's watched Susan Collins drop at least one

hundred times. Gabe reels himself in as a STEWARDESS hands him

a glass of water.

**STEWARDESS**

Take this.

(Gabe does)

Afraid of flying?

Gabe shakes his head.

**GABE**

Falling.

**INT. TERMINAL - DAY**

Gabe, with no luggage, is at the small airport's only car

rental counter, doing the paperwork for a RENTAL AGENT.

**RENTAL AGENT**

Midsize?

**GABE**

Any size, any color, any model.

**RENTAL AGENT**

How long will you be needing it?

**GABE**

(flat)

Just under six hours.

**MAGGIE (O.S.)**

You aren't wasting any time, are you?

Gabe turns and looks at

**MAGGIE**

who is standing off to the side.

**MAGGIE**

I knew you'd be coming by. Today.

Gabe's happy to see her -- but at the same time, he isn't.

She looks too good -- and she brings up quite a mixed bag of

memories. Maggie carves on a smile.

**MAGGIE**

If you're in that much of a hurry, why

don't you ride with me?

**INT. RESCUE HELICOPTER - DAY**

Maggie pilots the copter, heading out toward the mountain

range. Gabe fiddles with some of the equipment inside. Both

grope for a way to start the conversation.

**GABE**

This is new...

**MAGGIE**

It's a thermal scope -- picks up body

heat of lost hikers --

Gabe flicks it on, looks at the total absence of heat as they

fly over the snow.

**GABE**

Still find the dead ones the old

fashioned way, I guess.

So much for small talk. Gabe is clearly uneasy watching these

mountains go by. Maggie breaks an awkward silence --

**MAGGIE**

You could have said goodbye.

**GABE**

(shakes head)

If I did, I'd have to listen to you

tell me one more time that it wasn't

my fault.

**MAGGIE**

(angry)

Today -- especially today -- you get

to hear it again. The harness clip

broke. Cold stress -- one in a

million equipment failure. You and

Hal could have checked it from then

till now and it still would have

happened.

(beat)

You did everything right --

**GABE**

-- If I did everything right, Susan

Collins would still be alive.

**THE HELICOPTER**

whizzes on to the Ranger station -- a small building by an old

country road. Not much activity outside of some ROOKIE

CLIMBERS working out on a CLIMBING PRACTICE WALL. Maggie

starts to land the copter, and as she does --

**INSIDE THE COPTER**

**GABE**

Do you really believe all that? That

it wasn't our fault?

Maggie slows the rotor, her eyes on the controls. Gabe's eyes

are locked on her.

**MAGGIE**

(turns to Gabe)

Yes. Yes, I do.

But she answered a half beat too slow. The helicopter touches

ground.

**GABE**

I'm not sure what I wish more, Maggie.

That you meant what you said, just now

-- or that it were really true then.

**EXT. RANGER STATION**

Hal, wearing Sheriff's garb, storms towards Maggie's side of

the copter as the engine shuts off and the rotor dies.

**HAL**

Maggie, where the hell have you been?

I've got two climbers out --

Gabe gets out of the copter, and Hal sees him for the first

time. Unlike the last time we saw them, neither man is glad to

see the other. Hal turns on Maggie.

**HAL**

Brett and Evan are up there again to

jump off the spur. Their wives called

twice. I want you in the air and I

want them found before the storm

system moves in.

(Maggie hesitates)

Now.

Maggie takes off as Gabe and Hal step away from the copter.

Gabe eyes Hal's uniform and almost -- not quite but almost --

laughs.

**GABE**

Christ. You're in charge of Rescue

now?

**HAL**

There was a vacancy. Maybe you heard

about it. The last guy lost his nerve

and lit out of town.

**GABE**

Well, you're a better man than I am,

Hal. Nothing rattles you.

The rookie climbers get off the practice wall to watch this

faceoff. Gabe and Hal are one crack away from beating hell out

of each other. Frank heads over to defuse the confrontation.

**FRANK**

(steering Gabe away)

Gabe! Long time, son -- why don't you

come meet some of the new guys --

**GABE**

Good idea. Say, Hal?

(beat)

Why don't you come with me so we can

show these rookies how to death-rig a

woman properly?

That tears it -- Hal rushes Gabe and they pummel each other

until Frank and the others pull them apart, panting and

bleeding. Hal throws off the men holding him back -- but

instead of going at Gabe again, Hal throws Gabe a set of car

keys.

**HAL**

Take the Bronco to where you're going.

I've already been. Then go back to

wherever it is you like to hide. And

stay there.

Hal heads back into the office -- Gabe heads for the Bronco.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. DENVER MINT - HIGH ANGLE - DAY**

The Southwest regional center for printing and distributing

currency. Hundreds of troops stand guard over the impressive

U.S. Treasury complex.

**INT. TREASURY COMPOUND - A HUGE PRINTING PRESS**

is at work -- the ROAR of its parts is deafening as it stamps

out a plate design on huge sheets of paper -- we move in on

**THE PAPER**

which is moved by mechanical arm to a SLICER that razors the

bills apart -- it's moving too fast for us to see the

denomination -- the cut bills are separated by --

**FOUR SEPARATION CHUTES**

that fire the bills down to a mechanical COUNTER that

serializes, counts, bands and stacks them faster than any

human could -- a HAND reaches to pick up a band --

**THE BILLS**

are something a banker could work a lifetime without seeing,

but are real nonetheless -- $5,000 bills, banded here in

hundreds. The band is put back in the growing stack by

**RICHARD TRAVERS**

mid-thirties, a tough, imposing Treasury agent -- he regards

the fortune piling up in front of him with only cold,

professional interest. Travers is flanked by a trio of equally

tough TREASURY AGENTS -- he turns to flunky DAVIS (20s). It's

clear who's in charge of protecting the money here, and who's

in charge of counting it.

**TRAVERS**

Tell Wright the San Francisco shipment

is ready.

**DAVID**

(phone already out)

Right away, Mr. Travers.

As Davis dials we move to --

**THE OFFICE**

of WALTER WRIGHT (50s), comptroller of currency -- his

demeanor suggests he's in control, and used to keeping it that

way.

**WRIGHT**

(into phone)

Good -- good. I'll be right down.

As Wright gets up from his desk, though, we hear in the outer

office --

**SECRETARY (O.S.)**

You can't go in there --

**MATHESON (O.S.)**

Watch me.

KURT MATHESON (30s) bursts into the office, trailed by

Wright's flustered SECRETARY.

**MATHESON**

Walter Wright?

(flashes badge)

Matheson. FBI. We need to talk.

**PRINTING COMPOUND - THE MONEY**

has now been packed into a trio of metal briefcases -- ten

thousand $5,000 bills. Travers shuts the cases in turn, and

locks each with an electronic key card, triggering a FLASHING

RED LIGHT on the locks as he does. A uniformed PILOT shows up

behind Travers as he cuffs the cases to the hands of the three

other agents.

**PILOT**

We'll be fueled and ready in ten

minutes, Mr. Travers.

**TRAVERS**

(an order)

Be ready in five.

**MATHESON (O.S.)**

Go ahead and take ten. We'll need the

time.

Travers looks up at Matheson, who has just arrived with

Wright. Travers is instantly furious at the challenge to his

authority.

**MATHESON**

(flashes badge)

Matheson. FBI.

**TRAVERS**

(looking down at it)

Your parents must be proud.

(to Wright)

What the fuck is this about?

**WRIGHT**

Small problem with the shipment,

Travers.

(to Matheson)

Tell him what you just told me.

Matheson draws out a file and hands it to Travers.

**MATHESON**

We got word that somebody's been

observing your currency shipments --

this load, the $5,000s -- over the

last three deliveries.

**TRAVERS**

(laughs)

There isn't a hell of a lot anyone can

do but observe.

(beat)

This is the most protected shipment

we've got -- and the most useless for

a thief. Those bills aren't in

circulation. You think five thousand

dollar bills are easy to pass? Who the

fuck would try?

Matheson hands Travers a folder.

**MATHESON**

This guy might.

We look over Travers' shoulder at the photos, which are all

blurry, all blown up from different surveillance pictures --

and all of them show ERIC QUALEN.

**TRAVERS**

Who is he?

**MATHERS**

(patient)

His name's Eric Qualen. One of the

East German spies who got shut out by

the reunification. The CIA issued an

inter-agency warning about him right

after the wall came down. He's got

nowhere to go and nothing to lose.

He's also got the international

connections to get rid of bills like

these -- and he's probably desperate

enough to try for them. Fifty million

bucks buys a lot of sanctuary.

**TRAVERS**

Could you get to the part where I'm

supposed to care?

**MATHESON**

(shows him more photos)

We had two agents monitoring him.

These two -- Gleason and Quinones.

Their last report said he was going to

try to take this shipment.

**TRAVERS**

(turning away)

Thanks for the tip. But I've got work

to do.

**MATHESON**

(stopping him)

Did I say "last" report? I think I

did. I mean last fucking report.

These guys have vanished.

**TRAVERS**

You have my sympathy, but --

(exasperated)

There's a reason we do things this

way, all right? Armored cars can be

hijacked. Trains can be derailed. But

nobody can get to us in flight. The

only time this is on the ground is at

the mint, or on the Presidio runway in

San Francisco. Either way, someone

would have to shoot his way past a

couple of thousand guards.

Matheson still isn't convinced.

**TRAVERS**

If you're worried about an inside job,

forget it. I checked the plane from

top to bottom an hour ago. And these

three are my best against. Even if one

of them did go skydiving, they

wouldn't get far. Each case has an

electronic tracer with a range of one

hundred miles.

Travers pulls a tracking device about the size of a watchman

out of his jacket pocket. The small screen shows three red

blips at rest -- matching the three currency cases.

**TRAVERS**

(facing down Matheson)

I haven't lost a bill in eight years.

And I'm not scrubbing this shipment

because you scare easily.

**MATHESON**

(an easy smile)

Who said anything about stopping the

shipment?

(beat)

I've been tracking Qualen for almost a

year. If he pulls something, I want to

be in on the party.

Travers, angry, turns to Wright. Wright clearly doesn't like

this either, but is resigned to it.

**WRIGHT**

This is cleared from the top, Travers.

Matheson will accompany you on the

flight to San Francisco.

(beat)

Show him every professional courtesy.

Travers turns back to a smiling Matheson, looking like he'd

rather kill him instead, as we --

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - MAGGIE'S HELICOPTER**

is being buffeted by storm winds and a light snow -- Maggie

struggles hard with the controls, but --

**INSIDE HELICOPTER**

Visibility is near zero. Maggie keys the radio.

**MAGGIE**

Rescue One to base, over.

**HAL (O.S.)**

Rescue One -- have you sighted them?

Over --

**MAGGIE**

Negative, Hal -- storm's already

moving in -- I can't see them, and

winds are too strong to stay up

here -- over --

**HAL (O.S.)**

Rescue One -- abort. They'll be all

right. Brett and Evan are dumb enough

not to log in, but they're smart

enough to have storm gear. Head back

to base.

(not unkindly)

Maybe you can catch Gabe before he

leaves. Over.

**MAGGIE**

I don't think he's planning a long

visit, Hal.

(back to business)

Rescue One heading back to base, over

and out.

**THE HELICOPTER**

banks a 180 to fly back -- we can see over the horizon that

the storm is moving in fast.

**INT. CAVE - DAY**

We can hear Maggie's helicopter flying off overhead -- camped

inside the cave are BRETT and EVAN, both 20s, both shivering,

amid their gear -- backpacks, cooking stuff -- and parachutes.

These are Colorado rock jocks -- thrillseekers who'll try

anything if the odds are strong enough they'll die in the

process.

**EVAN**

(freezing)

Way to check the weather, Brett.

**BRETT**

(shivering yet macho)

Hey. If it were easy, it wouldn't be

worth d-doing.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. TREASURY JET (DC-9) - DAY**

The DC-9 cruises over increasingly mountainous, remote

terrain.

**INT. JET - CLOSE ON TRAVERS**

who looks tense -- we MOVE AROUND the cabin and find two more

relaxed Treasury agents are dozing on the opposite side of the

plane, their arms chained to the currency cases. Matheson is

edgy. Another AGENT offers some condescending reassurance.

**AGENT**

Just enjoy the view, huh?

(Matheson says nothing)

Relax. I mean, what could happen in

the air?

Matheson turns back to his window and looks down --

**WINDOW POV - THE GROUND BELOW**

is covered with snow -- the jet's shadow moves sleekly and

plainly over it. But after a moment we see -- -- another

jet's shadow on the ground, coming up fast!

**INSIDE THE DC-9 - MATHESON**

reacts this and shifts his look upward to --

**WINDOW POV - ANOTHER PLANE (GULFSTREAM)**

is flying a parallel course to the Treasury jet, and is just

one hundred yards away. Close enough to see Eric Qualen's face

in one of the windows.

**INSIDE THE PLANE**

Matheson stands -- Travers has noticed the plane by now too,

and gets out of his seat as the other agents react.

**TRAVERS**

(to other agents)

Stay put! Don't panic, goddammit!

Travers moves into

**THE COCKPIT**

where the pilot seems nervous, but oddly, not frightened.

**PILOT**

He's coming in too slow.

**TRAVERS**

(cool)

No -- we're going too fast, and we're

too high up. Push flaps forward twenty

degrees and drop to five thousand

feet.

**THE CABIN**

Matheson is out of his seat, pistol drawn. Seems a little puny

under the circumstances.

**MATHESON**

(to agent)

You got any rifles?

**AGENT**

Forward compartment -- left side --

Matheson rushes through a curtain to the area between the

cabin and the cockpit and pulls open a closet door. To his

horror, he finds inside not rifles, but

**TWO DEAD BODIES**

who we'll recognize as the missing FBI agents from the photos

Matheson showed Travers.

**MATHESON**

backs up in horror -- and he sees Travers calmly coming out of

the cockpit. Rattled, Matheson pulls his gun on Travers.

Travers looks dumbfounded -- then angry.

**TRAVERS**

What the hell are you doing --

**MATHESON**

Checked the plane from top to bottom,

huh? You fucker --

(clicks hammer back)

Put your hands behind your head! It's

over!

Travers puts his hands out and walks forward -- slowly,

backing Matheson into the cabin. Not in surrender, but as if

he's calming a nutcase. The other agents see this and don't

know which way to jump.

**TRAVERS**

Calm down -- give the gun to me --

**MATHESON**

(to other agents)

There's a couple of dead bodies in the

front compartment -- they're FBI

agents --

**TRAVERS**

He's losing it --

They now think Matheson is crazy too -- he looks nuts -- the

other agents move behind him. Matheson gets even more frantic

and point his gun at them.

**MATHESON**

Goddamn it! Don't you see what he's

doing! He's hijacking the fucking

shipment!

(back to Travers)

Don't make me shoot you!

The other two agents get behind Matheson and rapidly disarm

him. Travers pulls out his gun with a slow, leisurely move.

**TRAVERS**

Don't make me laugh.

Travers FIRES his gun three times, one for each agent's

chest -- the agents are cut down, realizing too late what's

happened. A fourth SHOT knocks Matheson over a seat as if he'd

been kicked. Travers puts his gun away and puts on a radio

headset as he goes to a window.

**TRAVERS**

(to mouthpiece)

Move into position.

**EXT. QUALEN'S JET - GULFSTREAM**

maneuvers over the DC-9 -- and holds steady above it.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. CEMETERY MARKER - COLORADO - DAY**

The stone reads "Susan Collins -- 1965 - 1991". It's

surrounded by wreaths -- one of which has an old snapshot of

her attached to it. Mementos sent on the first anniversary of

her death.

**GABE**

brushes some of the falling snow away from the marker. He lays

down his flowers and pauses for a moment -- then gets into the

Bronco and drives away.

**INT. FORD BRONCO - DAY**

Gabe looks out the window at the countryside he used to belong

in. He's wondering if he still does.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. TREASURY JET/QUALEN'S JET - FLYING**

Qualen's jet is now flying parallel to, and slightly above,

the Treasury jet. The door in Qualen's jet is open, and we get

our first good look at --

**INT/EXT. QUALEN'S JET**

-- Qualen, who is also wearing a headset radio and is wired

to a safety line in the jet. He's lowering a thick steel cable

down to the Treasury jet.

Qualen is as deadly as advertised -- 150 mph winds are tearing

at him through the open door, but he is unfazed and

unfrightened.

**TRAVERS**

is also wired to a safety line by his own jet's open door.

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

More -- more -- keep it coming --

**THE TWO PLANES**

Qualen's jet lowers the cable into the Treasury jet -- it

looks like an Air Force midair refuelling -- difficult and

dangerous. After about thirty feet of line is lowered --

**TRAVERS**

-- takes it in and clips it to a ring at the top of the jet's

doorway.

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

Locked on. Move into lateral position.

**INSIDE QUALEN'S PLANE**

The pilot, KRISTEL, is a woman. Her skill, like her hard

beauty, can be measured in a glance: she's a lot calmer than

her counterpart in the Treasury plane.

**KRISTEL**

Moving into lateral position.

**ON THE TWO PLANES**

Qualen's jet lowers itself, banking to the side -- the

Treasury jet raises itself. Both are now flying side by side,

with the cable serving as a thirty foot bridge.

**TREASURY JET CABIN**

Travers, unclipped from his safety line, cautiously goes to

the cockpit. The pilot, nervous, struggles with the controls.

**PILOT**

We're right on the edge of the

storm -- let's move it.

Travers pulls the two dead FBI agents out of the

compartment -- one is dressed in a flying suit like the pilot,

one in a suit like Travers.

**PILOT**

This isn't going to work -- Wright

will suspect something.

**TRAVERS**

So what. He'll sift though a plane

that went down in a storm --

(gestures to bodies)

-- find enough pulverized bone for six

men heroically killed in the line of

duty --

(finds three suitcases)

-- and just enough of the right kind

of ash.

Travers opens one of the cases, which is identical to the

others -- except that it's full of one dollar bills. He's

thought of everything.

**TRAVERS**

We get twenty-one gun funerals and

they write off fifty million. It's

perfect, as long as you hold the plane

steady -- so concentrate.

Travers moves back into the cabin.

**INSIDE QUALEN'S JET**

We can now see four other passengers. All are fit and armed --

HELDON and RYAN are seated, while KYNETTE and DELMER, ready to

help with the transfer, are on the opposite side of the door

from a very impatient Qualen.

**QUALEN**

(into radio)

Travers -- hurry it up.

**INSIDE TREASURY JET**

Travers, now in a harness like the one seen earlier -- uncuffs

the money cases from the agents.

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

On my way.

Travers steps back into the cockpit and flips a toggle switch

over and LED --

**THE LED**

starts counting down from 2:00 -- 1:59 -- 1:58 --

**IN THE COCKPIT**

Even in the last minute, the storm's gotten worse -- the plane

is flying right into the blackest center of it. The pilot

looks more panicked than ever.

**TRAVERS**

That charge is going to blow both

engines -- the plane'll go down like a

rock, so clip yourself on to the end

of the cable with the money as soon as

I get over.

(an afterthought)

And make sure you bring the right

cases.

Travers heads back into the cabin and hooks his harness to the

cable between the planes.

**TRAVERS**

(into the headset)

Dip the plane. I'm coming over.

**THE JETS - LONG SHOT**

Qualen's jet dips down so there's a sharp incline -- Travers

starts the slide down, zipping in seconds across into

**QUALEN'S JET**

where he's pulled in and unclipped by Qualen.

**QUALEN**

(shouting over the wind)

Why didn't you send the money over?

**TRAVERS**

(shouting too)

Somehow, I didn't think you'd have

waited for me if I'd sent it first.

Qualen smiles in reply. No. Maybe he wouldn't.

**IN THE TREASURY PLANE COCKPIT**

The pilot locks the controls and rushes back to the cabin.

**THE LED**

counts down -- 0:38 -- 0:37 -- 0:38 --

**IN THE TREASURY PLANE CABIN**

The pilot gathers the cases and uses their cuffs to attach

them to the cable -- but as he steps past the bodies of --

**THE AGENTS**

Matheson's eyes open -- he's not dead yet.

**IN THE CABIN**

The pilot clicks the last of the three cases onto the cable

and is about to put his harness on -- but behind him, Matheson

shakily crawls to his feet, draws his gun, and SHOOTS the

pilot in the back twice.

**THE PILOT**

drops out of the plane, flailing -- if he's screaming, we

can't hear it over the HOWLING of the storm --

**IN QUALEN'S JET**

Qualen and Travers are watching the whole plan unravel --

**TRAVERS**

(shouting to cockpit)

Get underneath the jet! The cases will

slide over!

**THE JETS - LONG SHOT**

Qualen's jet sharply dips down and the cases start to slide

over -- but at the same time --

**INSIDE THE TREASURY JET**

Matheson, groggy, holds onto the doorway and FIRES a full clip

from his automatic at Qualen's jet -- and

**THE LED**

counts down -- 0:02 -- 0:01 -- 0:00 -- and

**THE TREASURY JET'S ENGINES**

are destroyed as the charge DETONATES --

**THE JETS - LONG SHOT**

As promised, the Treasury jet is now plummetting as if it had

no wings at all, levelling the angle between the planes -- the

cases dangle precariously on the wire --

**INSIDE QUALEN'S JET**

**TRAVERS**

(shouting)

Lower! Get underneath it!

**INSIDE TREASURY JET**

Matheson struggles to the cockpit and gets behind the controls

-- as if that's going to do any good --

**THE JETS - LONG SHOT**

Qualen's jet is deliberately racing the disabled Treasury jet

down, but it's hopeless -- there's no way to get underneath

the falling jet long enough for the cases to slide over.

**INSIDE QUALEN'S JET - KRISTEL**

isn't quite panicked. Yet.

**KRISTEL**

It's dragging us down! Disconnect the

cable!

**INT. QUALEN'S JET - CABIN**

Heldon and Ryan try to do just that, but the cable is

taut -- there's no way to loosen the clip on the door --

**BOTH JETS**

dive down faster at an ever steeper angle, over the edge of

the Colorado mountain range --

**INSIDE THE TREASURY JET**

-- the clip on the door finally breaks --

**BOTH JETS - LONG SHOT**

-- the Treasury jet drops as Qualen's jet, trailing the cable

and the money, sharply shoots upward --

**THE TREASURY JET**

makes a one point landing nose first into the wilderness,

cartwheeling into a FIREBALL!

**INT./EXT. RANGER STATION**

The sound of the EXPLOSION, muffled in the wind, far-off, but

audible, drives Hal outside -- he's alert, but can't see

anything in the murk of the storm --

**INT. QUALEN'S JET - THE COCKPIT - KRISTEL**

levels off the plane, but it's still in trouble --

**CABIN - QUALEN AND TRAVERS**

struggle to reel in the cable, because --

**CLOSE ON THE CABLE**

The money cases are still, barely, holding on, the cuffs

caught on the broken clip at the end --

**QUALEN AND TRAVERS**

aren't even bothering with the electric winch, they're

dragging it in hand over hand -- but --

**CLOSE ON THE CABLE**

-- the cases, torn by the wind, work their way loose one at a

time and drop -- one -- two -- three -- into the snowy

mountains below!

**IN THE CABIN**

Heldon and Ryan clamp the door shut as Qualen angrily attacks

Travers --

**THE COCKPIT - KRISTEL**

tries to bring the plane up, but can't -- the fuel guage

needle is dropping fast --

**INSERT - THE WING**

is pouring out fuel through a dozen bullet holes -- one of two

engines sputters to a stop.

**THE COCKPIT - KRISTEL POV**

The plane is now just skirting the mountain tops, and is still

being battered by storm winds -- Kristel aims it for what

looks like the flattest, longest mountain top --

**THE CABIN**

Kynette and Ryan grab Qualen and Travers to separate them --

all strap in, because

**THE PLANE**

is going down -- it just tops the edge of a precipice and hits

the ground level --

**THE MOUNTAIN TOP - LONG SHOT**

-- the problem is, the ground itself isn't level, it tilts

down towards another edge five hundred yards distant -- if the

plane keeps skidding, it'll go over the edge --

**THE PLANE**

sleds down at an angle, skipping over rocks -- -- through

trees --

-- tearing off a wing --

**THE COCKPIT**

Kristel rides the stick only out of habit -- nothing she does

is going to matter now --

**INSIDE THE CABIN**

The men are jolted around -- windows IMPLODE as Kynette tries

to protect a bag of what is obviously explosives --

**THE PLANE**

rips downhill through a wooded area like a runaway train --

-- the second wing is sheared off by trees --

**COCKPIT POV - THE OPPOSITE EDGE**

is coming up fast -- but

**THE PLANE**

wrenches to a sudden halt, the fuselage intact.

**WIDER VIEW - THE PLANE**

or what's left of it has stopped several feet short of the

edge -- we can see why: the steel cable, trailing from the

cargo door, has lashed itself around a half dozen trees,

acting as a tripwire to stop the plane.

**INSIDE THE PLANE**

Quiet. All are dazed but, outside of superficial cuts,

unhurt. Kristel moves out of the cockpit, looking around.

**KRISTEL**

So much for phase one.

(to Travers)

Now what?

She speaks for all of them -- especially a still-seething

Qualen. Travers pulls out the tracer monitor for the cases.

The tracer screen shows three distinct blips -- the tracers

have survived the fall.

**TRAVERS**

Now -- we call the police.

**INT. RANGER STATION - DAY**

Hal, agitated, paces in the main office -- Frank, unconcerned,

puts a coat hanger and some aluminum foil on a little TV to

drag in the fading signal of a Broncos game.

**HAL**

Look -- I know there's a storm, but

that wasn't thunder.

**FRANK**

(unconcerned)

Hal, when you've been in this line as

long as I have --

The station's scanner radio barks to life.

**KRISTEL (O.S.)**

(panicky)

Mayday -- mayday -- downed DC-3 --

mayday --

Hal runs to the radio and keys the mike.

**HAL**

Rocky Mountain Rescue -- come in,

mayday --

**INT. COCKPIT**

Kristel is on the radio, as Travers and Qualen hang back.

Kristel's voice is panicked but she can't suppress a grin.

**KRISTEL**

Downed charter flight

alpha-charlie-niner--

(keys mike to "garble"

transmission)

-- dead, seven seriously wounded,

acknowledge --

**INT. RANGER STATION**

**HAL**

Acknowledged, mayday. What's your

position?

**KRISTEL (O.S.)**

("panicked")

Don't know -- position unknown --

landed on top of some mountain -- only

visual bearing is a facing

cylinder-type formation -- over --

**HAL**

Got to be Comb Bluff.

(keys mike)

Acknowledged, mayday. Winds are too

strong for us to get a copter up there

-- can you and your passengers make it

through the storm? Over --

**KRISTEL (O.S.**

Negative -- cockpit is on fire --

fuselage broken into three sep--

("garble")

--ed in shock. Need medical supplies,

including insulin, repeat, insulin, as

soon as po --

Dead silence. The transmission cuts off/

**HAL**

Mayday -- come in, mayday --

**INT. COCKPIT**

Kristel hangs up the radio and smiles, Travers and Qualen

standing behind her. Qualen lightly applauds.

**QUALEN**

Not bad. The insulin was a nice touch.

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY**

The Bronco wends through a winding country road, coming

finally to a cabin settled in a clearing.

**GABE**

pulls into the driveway and puts the Bronco in park. He

doesn't cut the engine, because he's not sure whether he's

going in or not. Finally -- he cuts the ignition.

**INT. CABIN - DAY**

A knock on the door brings no response -- no one inside. Gabe

opens the unlocked door -- and steps inside.

**GABE**

Maggie?

No answer. Gabe takes a look around the living room. His face

tells us, without a doubt, this used to be his home. Gabe

moves inside, pausing at a mantle. Two framed photos -- Gabe

and Maggie sleeping together in a hammock, bolted to a sheer

wall over a 2,000 foot drop. Gabe, Hal and Maggie, all

younger, all sporting drunken grins, in a mountain cave. Gabe

smiles for the first time today at this memory -- a BANGING at

the back of the cabin shakes him out of it.

**EXT. CABIN - DAY - THE BACK DOOR**

has come open and swings in the wind. Gabe steps outside and

pulls it shut. Gabe looks down and sees tracks that lead to a

small but sturdy shed a few yards away. Gabe heads over to it.

**INT. SHED - DAY**

Not a storage shed at all -- it's a small workspace that

offers solid protection from the elements, is well-lit, and

whistle-clean. Maggie, in front of a table, pulls a cover off.

**A LARGE PLASTIC CAGE**

-- inside is a bald eagle. One of maybe 2,000 left in the

country. Its uneven feathering and small, gawky size tells us

it isn't nearly full grown. A bandage on its side tells us

it's been injured. Maggie's smile tells us it's healing.

**MAGGIE**

Hey there --

The door to the shed opens -- Gabe steps in, and shuts the

door behind him. Maggie looks surprised to see him. Gabe just

looks awkward.

**GABE**

Hi.

(beat)

Could you introduce us?

**MAGGIE**

Sure. Gabe Walker -- this is A27.

A27 -- Gabe.

**GABE**

Not the tag -- what do you call

him?

**MAGGIE**

Her. I call her Lucky.

**GABE**

(bends down, eyes wound)

Poachers?

(Maggie nods)

Bastards...

**MAGGIE**

They got the mother -- and left this

one behind. Too small to make a decent

trophy, I guess.

**GABE**

About four months, right?

(Maggie nods)

Christ -- it must have been just about

his -- I mean her -- first flight --

**MAGGIE**

Time to change the dressing.

Maggie pulls on a pair of pair of cowhide gloves.

**GABE**

You can't do that alone --

**MAGGIE**

I've had to learn. She trust me --

Maggie reaches into the cage, but the eagle starts thrashing.

**GABE**

I'm making her nervous --

(beat)

You hold her, I'll do the dressing.

Gabe finds another pair of gloves, sterile cotton pads and

alcohol in a drawer -- Maggie reaches in and grabs the eagle's

beak and talons quickly but gently, and takes it out of the

cage, holding it firm. This is clearly something they've done

many times before. They move together, tight -- Gabe and

Maggie both react to this bit of close contact as they bandage

the eagle. It's getting warmer in here. Gabe reaches down and

yanks off the patch. The eagle thrashes as Gabe cleans the

wound.

**GABE**

Got some fight in her -- that's good.

(beat)

What happened to Dave?

**MAGGIE**

The usual. Flew off -- never calls,

never writes --

Gabe winces at this one as he carefully tapes the small patch

and sticks it on the eagle's side. Maggie puts the eagle back

in the cage and closes the top door. Gabe and Maggie don't

move any further apart as they pull their gloves off. Gabe

tentatively reaches for Maggie's face -- but she pushes him

hand away.

**MAGGIE**

I'm glad to see you, Gabe. But I kind

of wish you hadn't come. I was almost

used to you being gone.

(beat, quiet)

Why are you here?

**GABE**

(pauses)

I thought I came back to see if I'd

learned to live with it. Well, big

surprise. Coming back just tore me

open all over again, like it all

happened yesterday instead of a year

ago. Nothing's changed. Including the

way I feel about you.

(beat)

I didn't realize it till I saw you at

the airport. But I came back for you,

Maggie.

**MAGGIE**

Does that mean you're going to stay?

**GABE**

No. Not here.

(beat)

I want you come with me. Start over,

somewhere else.

**MAGGIE**

(incredulous)

You come back after being gone a year,

and you expect me to --

(beat)

You don't live here any more, Gabe.

Your choice, remember? But this is

my home. I'm not leaving. You can

stay with me, or you can go alone.

It's still your choice.

**HAL (O.S.)**

Now there's an easy call.

Standing in the shed's doorway is Hal. Stone faced. Grim.

**OUTSIDE SHED**

Furious, Gabe heads out after Hal.

**GABE**

What the hell do you want?

**HAL**

(beat)

I need your help. A plane's gone down

on Comb Bluff. This storm would blow

a copter all over the place -- but we

can climb up to it.

**GABE**

"We"?

(beat)

Talk to somebody who's still on the

payroll. You've got a half dozen new

guys --

**HAL**

-- who couldn't climb that wall now if

there were stairs cut into it. But

you've soloed it.

**GABE**

During the summer. On a bet.

**HAL**

This is a little more important than a

bet. Just a few injured people with

no first aid or shelter, camping in a

zero degree blizzard. They'll be ice

sculptures by tomorrow morning.

**GABE**

(shakes his head)

Maybe you missed the headlines -- but

I don't do rescues any more. They're

bad for my conscience.

(beat)

Fuck this one up on your own.

Gabe walks past Hal. Furious, Hal spins Gabe around.

**HAL**

Play it again, Gabe, about how we

killed her. I was there too, remember?

**GABE**

(hot)

Not like I was, pal -- her fingers

brushed mine on the way down --

**HAL**

(right back)

-- and I was the one who had to deal

with her family when you fucking tore

out of town.

(takes a breath)

We lost her. Whatever anybody says

about cold stress and the clip, you

and I have to live with that. But

right now, there are some more people

who need our help, and they shouldn't

die too just because you've got a

problem keeping the past in the past.

Gabe knows he's right. But he's hesitant. And scared.

**GABE**

I don't want the responsibility.

**HAL**

Walk away and you are responsible.

They'll die. I can't do this alone.

(Gabe slows but doesn't

stop)

You know what else, Gabe? You can go

anywhere you want, but if you don't do

this, now, you're going to be stuck on

that goddamn ledge for the rest of

your life.

Gabe turns. Sees Maggie in the doorway. She's heard every

word. Gabe turns to Hal -- hesitates -- and nods.

**EXT. COMB BLUFF TRAILHEAD - WIDE SHOT - DAY**

Relative to the other mountains, Comb Bluff is smaller --

about 2,500 feet high. But that's like saying the Empire State

Building is smaller than the Sears Tower. It's still a long

way up if you're climbing the stairs.

**ON THE GROUND - GABE AND HAL**

with full packs of mountaineering gear on. They've got to

climb up this beast. Gabe -- now back in his orange Sheriff's

jacket -- scrambles with Hal up the base of the mountain, the

last few yards before it turns into a sloping wall. Gabe

takes a bolt gun -- which fires rope-fastened bolts into

rock -- and hangs it from a strap on his chest.

**HAL**

(indicating gun)

That thing's dead weight. Completely

useless for an ice climb.

**GABE**

Just backup.

Gabe readies a coil of rope and starts up the wall.

**GABE**

(not a challenge)

I'll lead. I left a few bolts last

time I climbed this -- I think I can

find some of them.

Hal starts up after Gabe, easily keeping pace with him.

**HAL**

Save the rope for when it gets tough.

(beat, realizing)

That bet was for you to free climb

the wall.

**GABE**

(further up)

Tell you what, Hal -- if we're still

alive tomorrow morning, I'll give you

the twenty bucks back, okay?

**COMB BLUFF - LONG SHOT**

Two orange specks move their way up the mountain -- it's

definitely going to be a long trip.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. COMB BLUFF - LONG SHOT - DAY - GABE AND HAL**

are now visibly two-thirds of the way up.

**CLOSER ON GABE AND HAL - THE MOUNTAIN FACE**

is not only higher, it's a lot tougher to climb. Instead of

being angular, the wall is now completely vertical -- and

coated with ice. Rough, irregular ice ledges are all Gabe and

Hal can grip -- it's a matter of grabbing what you can for a

handhold, and kicking the spikes of the steel crampons on

their boots into the ice for footholds. Gabe leads, planting

pitons into the ice, threading the rope through them as he

goes. Three steel pins between Gabe and Hal. Their only safety

net. Gabe, trailing rope behind him, goes up a difficult slab

of ice and climbs under a ledge, where he anchors the rope in

the ice with another piton.

**GABE**

(shouting down)

Anchored!

**HAL**

is beside and slightly below Gabe -- at the other end of the

fifty foot rope. Hal cautiously pulls himself along the line

to the first piton -- as is standard for a climb, he pulls out

the piton, then moves on to the second -- but up above

**HIGHER ON THE MOUNTAIN**

Ice, building in a small crevase, builds and CRACKS the

adjoining rock -- several ten-pound boulders fall, causing a

chain reaction

**ROCKSLIDE**

that bounces down the wall --

**GABE**

hugs the ice wall, making himself as flat as possible --

**GABE**

(shouting down)

Rockslide!

**HAL**

flattens too as rocks bounce past -- the second anchoring

piton LOOSENS as it is struck by a falling rock -- Hal

nervously eyes the last piton between him and Gabe --

**THE PITON - CLOSE**

also has been clipped by the still falling boulders and droops

at half mast -- no way are these going to hold in the

unreliable ice --

**HAL**

tries to stay flat, but one boulder painfully CLIPS him on the

shoulder, knocking him from his perch -- Hal falls --

**WIDER - HAL FALLING**

In falling, Hal's weight on the rope yanks out the nearest

anchor piton -- Hal tumbles in space, keeping pace with the

boulders, as --

**GABE**

who's seen everything we have, quickly reaches to the piton

he's just anchored, and removes the carabiner clip --

**HAL - FALLING**

The rope draws taut, yanking out the last piton between he and

Gabe -- nothing but a few yards of slack rope now --

**GABE**

has the bolt gun out. He rapidly hooks the rope's carabiner

clip to the chambered bolt, and FIRES it at a solid rock ledge

above him --

**INSERT - THE BOLT**

imbeds solidly in the rock --

**GABE**

lashes the rope to his shoulder, bracing for the coming impact

by lodging his feet in the ice --

**THE JOLT - WIDER SHOT**

The line pulls taut, leaving Hal suspended, the wind knocked

out of him from the impact --

**GABE**

is almost dragged down by the jolt -- he painfully takes most

of the impact in his shoulders -- the shock forces his feet

through an ice ledge -- but the rope, bolted to the rock

above, has held. Barely.

**GABE**

(shaken, voice gone)

Anchored --

(shouts this time)

Anchored!

**HAL**

now somewhat recovered, steadies himself.

**HAL**

(breathless too)

You're sure this time --

Hal climbs up the rope, finally reaching another ledge

slightly below Gabe's. Hal leans against the wall, gasping, as

Gabe clips the gun to his pack.

**HAL**

(looking up at gun)

Don't say it --

**GABE**

(wheezing too)

It's kind of hard to resist --

**GABE HAL**

It's not dead It's not dead

weight -- you weight -- I am.

are.

Hal and Gabe start howling -- that hysterical, giddy laugh

that only comes from just missing a violent end.

**WIDE SHOT ON MOUNTAIN - THE TWO LEDGES**

Hal and Gabe's friendship is starting to resurface -- their

LAUGHTER is nearly louder than the wind, as we --

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. PRECIPICE EDGE - DAY - BINOCULAR POV**

From the top of the bluff, someone is looking down through

binoculars -- Gabe and Hal's orange jackets are plainly

visible a few hundred yards below.

**RYAN**

lowers the binoculars, and keys an ear button on the headset

radio he's wearing, sending a beep.

**INSIDE THE PLANE**

Travers is wearing another headset -- the others are just

resting in the seats

**TRAVERS**

(into mouthpiece)

Have they arrived?

(two beeps in response)

Good. Return to the plane and cover

your tracks.

**QUALEN**

(to others)

Get ready.

**ON THE MOUNTAIN BELOW**

Hal and Gabe are tired, but get a second wind from the

excitement of being almost on top. Gabe stops, breathless for

a second, then goes on. Hal lags a little behind.

**GABE**

Come on -- the hard part's over.

Gabe heads up and over

**THE MOUNTAIN'S EDGE/CRASH SITE**

and helps Hal up. From here, the rest of the range looms

large. Even in the continuing snowstorm, it's a spectacular

sight -- but Gabe and Hal don't pause to enjoy it. This isn't

a trip for sport. Hal looks off into the trees, and sees the

torn tree stumps from the plane crash.

**HAL**

(grim)

That's it.

Hal and Gabe run into the wooded area and follow the

wreckage -- felled trees, a smashed wing -- and reach

**THE FUSELAGE**

which sits intact by the other edge of the precipice.

**GABE**

I thought the fuselage was broken.

That looks pretty cozy.

**HAL**

(puzzled too)

The pilot was hysterical.

**GABE**

Something's wrong here --

**HAL**

Does this look like a prank to you?

Come on --

Hal pulls open the passenger door and goes in -- Gabe, wary,

takes a look around the plane.

**INSIDE THE FUSELAGE**

It's comparatively dark in here -- Hal starts in, shining a

light -- the beam finds

**HAL'S POV - TRAVERS**

slumped down on the cabin floor, a blanket wrapped around

him -- he's shaking and is generally giving a good impression

of a shock victim. Hal rushes to him.

**HAL**

Relax -- we're here to help --

"Weak", Travers whispers as Hal gives him some water.

**HAL**

Don't try to talk --

Travers won't quit -- Hal leans down to hear.

**TRAVERS**

(hoarse whisper)

Where?

**HAL**

-- Where? What are you --

A gun barrel moves INTO VIEW as it presses against Hal's neck.

Heldon and Ryan are right behind him. Travers instantly drops

his act.

**TRAVERS**

You said "we". Where are the rest?

**GABE - OUTSIDE THE FUSELAGE**

notes footprints in the snow -- fresh ones -- and kneels down

to look at the cable wrapped around the tree. No ordinary

accident. But before he can think about this, he gets an

earful of gun barrel from Qualen, who is behind him.

**INSIDE THE FUSELAGE**

Qualen hustles Gabe inside the plane -- his hands are on his

head, and his pack has been removed. Qualen throws the pack

to Ryan and Delmer, who rifle through it, removing anything

that could be a weapon -- they quickly confiscate Gabe's bolt

gun and ice axe.

**TRAVERS**

What's for dinner?

(Kynette tosses packet)

Ugh. "Dried Beef Slices With Barbeque

Sauce."

(tosses it back)

Try and make this edible.

Travis looks at Hal's park ranger badge.

**TRAVERS**

Hal Tucker.

(to Gabe)

Where's yours?

**QUALEN**

He doesn't have one. Just a wallet.

Qualen tosses it to Travers, who glances through it.

**TRAVERS**

Gabe Walker...

(notes photo of Maggie)

Very attractive.

**GABE**

My ex.

**TRAVERS**

Too bad. Let me tell you what's on for

today. We'd like you to help settle a

wager. You see, we lost some

luggage --

Travers motions to Ryan and Qualen, who shove Gabe and Hal

forward in the cabin. Travers takes out the tracer monitor.

**TRAVERS**

(showing them the blips)

See these? Now I've bet the gentlemen

behind you that you know enough about

this mountain range to lead us to each

of these, quickly, and that you'd be

happy to do so. They bet me you

couldn't and wouldn't.

(guns are clicked)

Now tell me -- who wins?

Gabe and Hal eye each other -- no choice. Gabe nods.

**TRAVERS**

Good dog. Now let's get this

expedition started.

**EXT. FACING MOUNTAIN - WIDE SHOT**

Hal and Gabe lead the "expedition" down a steep, but passable,

descent, leading to --

**A NATURAL STONE BRIDGE**

that links Comb Bluff with the next mountain. Travers stops

Gabe and pulls out the monitor.

**TRAVERS**

Okay. Connect the dots.

Gabe pauses as he holds the monitor up against the

mountainscape.

**MOUNTAIN AND MONITOR**

The first blip is up a thousand feet -- it's a wall, and

obviously not something for a novice. Gabe pauses a little

too long -- Qualen nudges him with his gun. Gabe hands the

monitor back to Travers.

**GABE**

This way.

Gabe, with Hal right behind, leads them up the wall -- it's

not a straight climb, but there's a series of zig-zagging

natural ledges that cut up the wall. Wide enough even for an

amateur. The others follow Gabe and Hal's example.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. MOUNTAIN WALL - WIDE SHOT - DAY - HAL AND GABE**

have led the gang further up the wall, using pitons and

carabiner clips to create a guide rope. It's still just a

matter of climbing relatively easy ascending ledges. Hal and

Gabe lead them by jumping to the next ledge.

**CLOSER ON HAL AND GABE**

As Gabe hammers in a new piton, he turns to Hal.

**GABE**

(sotto)

We don't have to do this. We know

these mountains -- they don't. If we

can get ahead --

**HAL**

Can you climb faster than they can

shoot?

**GABE**

We've got to try something. Think

we'll get a finder's fee after they

get all their "luggage"?

**HAL**

Sure. All the bullets we can eat.

**GABE**

That's not what really worries me.

**HAL**

There's something else to worry

about?

**GABE**

Yeah. Once they've got what they're

after -- they're gonna need a copter

to get out of here.

**HAL**

(realizing)

Maggie.

Gabe nods grimly -- and keeps moving up. The rest keep pace.

**THE WALL**

The climbers have reached a point of comparative comfort on

the wall -- the ledge is now two feet wide. Travers takes out

the tracer monitor -- the monitor shows that the first case is

just above them.

**TRAVERS**

Hold it.

(beat)

It's up there.

**"UP THERE" - AN OVERHANG**

juts out of the wall fifty feet above their position. As the

rest of the wall above is completely sheer, it's obvious that

the case, if it is above, has landed on top of a ledge.

But this isn't easily accessible -- we MOVE DOWN from the

overhang and can see there are only the smallest of handholds

to get up there, and those are slick with ice and snow. Worse,

the rest of the mountain bulges outward in a curve, making

climbing almost impossible.

**ON THE LEDGE**

Travers holds his gun on Gabe, and motions up

**TRAVERS**

Fetch.

**GABE**

I'll need the ice axe.

**TRAVERS**

(laughs)

You've got to be kidding.

**GABE**

(sighs)

Okay. How about some tape?

Travers nods -- Kynette pulls a roll of tape out of Gabe's

confiscated pack and throws it to him.

**GABE**

Crampons too.

Travers hesitates, but nods -- Kynette throws him the iron

spikes. Gabe fastens them to his boots.

Gabe looks up -- this is going to be tough, even for him. In

spite of the cold, he takes off his gloves -- that's how small

these holds are -- and he meticulously tapes up his hands and

his fingers.

**HIGH ANGLE - GABE**

moves up the wall with some ease at first -- there are

hand-sized handholds, and decent footholds -- but twenty feet

up, there's nothing. To keep going, Gabe has to painfully

wedge his fingers into small cracks, essentially supporting

his weight only by several fingerholds at any given moment.

We can see from the angle that Gabe is at least 3,000 feet

from solid ground. We can see from his face that he's trying

not to think about it.

**ON THE LEDGE - TRAVERS AND QUALEN**

watch Gabe's slow progress.

**QUALEN**

I don't trust him.

**TRAVERS**

(indicating wall)

Where could he go?

**QUALEN**

I'd rather he didn't show us.

(beat)

We don't need two guides.

**TRAVERS**

(shrugs)

You win. Kill him when he gets down.

**GABE ON THE WALL - CLOSE**

Make that "if he comes down". Gabe is now in one of the

worst positions possible for a free climb. He is moving up

the underside of the overhang and is essentially hanging

upside down, knifing his fingers into tiny cracks for support.

It's excruciating -- both in terms of muscular effort, and the

abrasions that come from forcing fingers into ice and rock

again and again. Gabe keeps his hold with one hand and slides

the other up, hammering it into a crack wedge with ice --

some of the ice chips whistle past and down --

-- finally, Gabe gropes one hand over the edge, and pulls

himself onto

**THE OVERHANG**

Exhausted, Gabe pulls himself prone across the top. Something

hard is underneath him -- Gabe recovers and brushes the snow

off the money case that's underneath. It's battered from the

fall, but is still barely holding together. Gabe manages to

force open the trashed locks -- he looks inside the case, and

fingers a band of $5000s.

**GABE**

Jesus.

**ON THE LEDGE - TRAVERS AND QUALEN**

look up. They can see Gabe has made it -- but they can't see

him, or the case.

**TRAVERS**

(impatient, shouting)

Lower it down -- now!

**ON THE OVERHANG - GAB**

has no intention of doing this -- he snaps the case shut and

looks over at a ledge that moves off from it -- and at the ice

and snow above.

**ON THE LEDGE - TRAVERS AND QUALEN'S POV**

try to look up and locate Gabe. They can't. Until --

**GABE (O.S.)**

(shouting down)

I've got a better idea. Why don't you

come up and get it?

With the case, Gabe moves, back against the wall, on a ledge

that skirts off the overhand -- from Travers and Qualen's

point of view. Gabe can hardly be seen -- since the mountain

bulges out as it goes up. Gabe's got a slight edge of cover.

**TRAVERS**

(shouts to Heldon)

Get him!

Heldon runs along the lower ledge, FIRING up at --

**GABE**

who has to flatten against the upper ledge -- bullets howl

past at twenty per second, SPARKING against the lip of the

rock -- it's cover, but not much --

**HAL**

looks up, worried --

**HAL'S POV - ICE AND SNOW**

piled by the ton from the storm, lie further above -- the ice

holding it back already, already weakened by the sun, is being

chiselled away by bullets --

**ON THE LOWER LEDGE - QUALEN**

grabs Hal and puts the gun to his head.

**QUALEN**

(shouting)

Bring the money down, or we kill your

friend!

Travers pushes the barrel away from Hal, shaking his head.

**TRAVERS**

We can't.

(frowning)

And he knows it.

**WIDER ANGLE ON MOUNTAIN - THE PARALLEL LEDGES**

Gabe moves across his thing ledge as Heldon runs across his --

Gabe ducks back and has to flatten even more against the wall,

because his ledge is getting smaller --

**HELDON**

smiles, seeing Gabe's cover is gone -- Heldon's ledge is

getting wider, so it's easier for him to fire up. Heldon moves

out to the edge --

**GABE'S POV DOWN**

There's now nothing between Heldon and Gabe -- Heldon takes

dead aim --

**GABE**

looks up, sweating it --

**GABE**

Come on --

**THE ICE AND SNOW**

above finally give way, dropping an avalanche on

**GABE**

who drops the case and hugs the wall --

**THE AVALANCHE - WIDE VIEW ON MOUNTAIN**

Only now can we see how much snow and ice had been penned up

on the mountain top -- tons of ice and snow sweep down the

mountainside -- it SHATTERS the case against the wall as it

easily swipes a SCREAMING Heldon off the ledge --

**TRAVERS, QUALEN AND HAL**

are safe at their vantage, but stunned at the sight of --

**THE AVALANCHE**

Heldon's machine fun FIRES uselessly as he's swallowed in an

explosion of white -- as well as a flurry of green as the

bills scatter amid the snow --

-- then: quiet. The avalanche ends as abruptly as it started.

The rumble dies down to complete silence.

**TRAVERS**

apoplectic, stares at seventeen million dollars worth of snow

settling far below. He takes his gun, furious, and fires at

**THE UPPER LEDGE**

where Gabe was hugging the wall -- it's now blanketed with

snow. Travers FIRES an entire clip at where Gabe used to be.

The snow FALLS AWAY, revealing nothing but stark rock. Gabe

has been swept away.

**HAL**

reacts and attacks Travers.

**HAL**

You son of a bitch --

Travers turns and pins Hal against the wall with the gun,

ready to kill him too. But he's stopped by Qualen.

**QUALEN**

No. We need him to get the rest of the

money.

(he isn't backing down)

If he dies we lose everything

Travers, furious, takes the gun out of Hal's face.

**TRAVERS**

(to Hal)

Get us out of here.

Hal stares at Travers with absolute fury -- but he leads the

gang back along the ledge in retreat.

**EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE MOUNTAIN - DAY**

Powdery snow is settling from the avalanche. From a cave in

the rocks, Brett and Evan crawl out a little timidly.

**EVAN**

What the hell --

Evan takes a pair of overpriced binoculars and looks up --

**BINOCULAR POV - FAR UP ON LEDGE**

The figures are small, but it's clear that one is pointing a

gun at an orange-jacketed figure.

**EVAN**

lowers the binoculars.

**EVAN**

Brett -- you're not going to believe

this -- but a couple of guys are

holding a gun on Hal and forcing him

up the bluff --

**BRETT (O.S.)**

I believe it.

Evan turns to

**BRETT**

who has found both Heldon's broken body, and his gun, half

buried in snow. Evan walks over, amazed.

**EVAN**

What the fuck is going on here?

Brett picks up the gun -- this is more an adventure than he

ever dreamed of.

**BRETT**

Let's catch up and find out.

Brett and Evan grab their packs, and hurry onto a trail, as we

return to --

**THE UPPER LEDGE**

where Gabe was. Nothing is stirring. Until, there's some

movement ten feet from where Gabe was hugging the wall.

It's a crevice in the mountain, about two feet wide -- a

climber would call this a "chimney" -- and it's packed with

ice and snow. It's also packed with

**GABE**

-- his hand gropes out -- and with some difficulty, he digs

himself out, gasping and coughing. Gabe, coated with snow,

leans against the wall and rests. Alive.

**INT. RANGER STATION - DAY**

Maggie is on the phone, pacing, as Frank is slumped in front

of the radio scanner. Suddenly, the radio comes to life.

**HAL (O.S.)**

-- Come in, Rescue Unit -- over --

Maggie bolts over to the radio before Frank can react.

**MAGGIE**

(keying mike)

Rescue Unit -- what's going on,

Hall? -- over --

**EXT. MOUNTAIN - WOODED AREA - DAY**

Travers has his gun pressed to Hal's temple.

**TRAVERS**

No tricks, no procedural codes, no

personal messages -- just tell them

everything's under control and you're

taking care of the wounded.

**HAL**

(keys it)

We've reached the wreckage -- top of

Comb Bluff -- six injured, but they're

responding to treatment. Everything

A-OK. Over.

**MAGGIE (O.S.)**

Everything isn't okay, Hal -- I'm

coming up after you -- over --

**HAL**

Negative, Maggie. Winds are too

high, and the passengers' injuries are

all superficial. We're going to ride

out the storm here -- over --

Travers yanks away the radio.

**TRAVERS**

Have her come up.

**HAL**

Forget it -- downdrafts would wipe her

all over the peaks --

(Travers starts to argue)

-- Not that I expect you to give a

shit, but it's our only copter.

You'll be stuck.

Travers relents and hands the radio back.

**MAGGIE (O.S.)**

I can handle the winds --

**HAL**

(breaking in)

Forget about it, Maggie, that's an

order -- acknowledge --

**INT. RANGER STATION**

Maggie looks out the window. The station's windspeed gauge is

flying around so fast it looks like it might take off.

**MAGGIE**

Acknowledged. Let me talk to Gabe --

over --

**HAL (O.S.)**

(hesitates)

You can't. He's taking care of

passengers. Just like I should be.

Over and out.

Maggie leans back in the chair, looks out at the storm, and

tries not to worry. She fails miserably.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN - WOODED AREA - TRAVERS AND HAL**

**TRAVERS**

(snatching radio away)

Good. You might live longer than your

friend. Now --

(takes out monitor)

-- what?

Hal takes the monitor -- the next blip is above, almost

straight up. Hal motions to the wooded area ahead.

**HAL**

The next one's on top of the peak.

This'll be long, but easy -- more like

a hike than a climb.

**TRAVERS**

(suspicious)

It looks like a winding route.

**HAL**

There's a more direct route. The East

Face. But it's the wall on the other

side, and it's smooth as glass. Maybe

a dozen guys in the world could do it

in good weather. Only a psycho would

try it in a snowstorm.

Travers digests this, and motions Hal to move on as we --

**CUT TO:**

**CLOSE SHOT - GABE'S FACE**

is torn in pain. In spite of the cold and wind, he's drenched

in sweat, half exertion, half fear. We pull back to take in

**THE EAST WALL - LONG SHOT**

Envision a wall. A really big wall. A really, really big wall.

A wall that's as wide as it is high -- five thousand feet by

five thousand feet -- narrowing to a domed peak at the summit.

Now picture the same wall, checkered with ice. If this were

horizontal, you or I couldn't walk on it without falling.

Now picture the same wall with an orange dot, two-thirds of

the way up it. The orange dot is

**GABE**

and he barely has the strength to hold on, much less go up.

Gabe holds himself steady with one hand, gets a foothold, and

swings another hand up to SLAM it against the wall.

He's improvised gear -- he's tied a crampon to one hand. But

it's as awkward as it sounds. Gabe moves up only a foot or so

-- then pulls out the crampon, reaches up, and SLAMS it into

the wall, starting the painful process over again.

**CUT TO;**

**INT. DENVER MINT - WRIGHT'S OFFICE - DAY**

Wright's pacing around, trying to figure out what in his

office he should break first. Davis shows up at the door.

**WRIGHT**

(furious)

Okay -- I know it's not in San

Francisco. I know it's not here. I

know it's not in any fucking airport

from here to Montana. Where it's

not - we got that covered. Now, do

you have any ideas on where it is?

**DAVIS**

(walking to a map)

There's no radio contact, sir. At all.

We're not receiving the tracer signal

from the cockpit's flight recorder.

Radar lost it after it went low here.

He points to a huge part of Colorado. Hundreds of square

miles.

**DAVIS**

We have to assume it went down in the

storm.

**WRIGHT**

Air search?

**DAVIS**

(shakes head)

That storm hasn't quit yet. Weather

service says we've got it until

tomorrow morning at least. Even if we

could get a plane up now, it'd be

impossible to see anything on the

ground. And --

Wright slumps into a chair.

**WRIGHT**

-- The roads are shut down, right?

**DAVIS**

Most of this area doesn't even have

roads.

**WRIGHT**

(rubs his eyes)

Keep two copters on full standby. And

let me know the second that storm

starts to wind down.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. THE EAST FACE - WIDE SHOT - DAY - GABE**

is clearly exhausted and freezing -- his lips are blue, his

eyebrows encrusted with snow. Wind still threatens to knock

him off the wall -- but he forces himself on.

**GABE**

(teeth chattering)

A steambath.

(spikes himself up)

A steambath -- and a bottle of

whiskey.

(new foothold)

A steambath with a bottle of

Glenlivet. And a fire.

(new handhold)

A steambath -- with a bottle of

Glenlivet -- and a steak.

(new foothold)

A steak soaked with Glenlivet, cooking

over a steambath on fire.

**WIDER ON MOUNTAIN**

Gabe finally reaches the top of the wall, where it meets an

enormous overhang of ice.

**GABE**

is right underneath where the ice flows over the wall. Gabe

takes his handheld crampon and hammers it into the ice

overhead with more force than usual. This one is going to have

to hold.

Gabe steels himself for a tough move -- with one hand gripping

that crampon, he swings out, away from the wall.

Only the crampon spikes jammed into the ice above his hand

are keeping Gabe from falling. Gabe needs the second crampon

to make the move up -- but that's not going to be easy to get.

It's attached to his boot.

As Gabe clings to the upper crampon, his body swaying, he

reaches down with his free hand to loosen the other crampon.

**GABE'S POV - DOWN**

The ground is one slip and five thousand feet away. Gabe

fumbles desperately with the buckles on the crampons -- but

both his fingers, and the buckles, are frozen stiff --

**GABE'S FACE**

shows real, solid terror for the first time --

**GABE'S POV - DOWN**

Gabe gets the first buckle off -- then the second. The crampon

is off his boot.

**GABE**

still swinging from one hand, takes the now-freed crampon and

slams it into the ice. It doesn't hold -- but the force of

Gabe's swing, pushing him away, has loosened the other

crampon. Gabe only gets one more shot at this -- he swings

the free crampon up with all his might -- it catches in the

same split second as the other dislodges.

But the hard part is over -- with the two crayons, Gabe

quickly manages to climb up over the lip of

**THE ICE OVERHANG**

This is a field of ice sloping up to the top. Gabe pulls

himself a few feet away from the edge, and puts the crampons

back on his feet where they belong. It's now pretty simple for

Gabe to run up the ice slope three hundred yards to

**THE SUMMIT**

which is a rocky, wooded area. Gabe seems to have a second

wind now -- he runs to the other side of the summit. The other

side is obviously the route Hal and the others will be

taking -- beneath the summit is a winding, well-beaten path.

Gabe finally arrives at a small shack with a sign nearby

commemorating the "DOUGLAS EXPEDITION - 1933".

**INT. THE SHACK**

is just a small "point of interest" shed for hardy tourists

who have hiked up this far -- there is a corny photo stand,

where you stick your head through a hole, so your face is put

on top of a cartoon climber hacking up a mountain. Gabe rushes

past this to a glass display case on the wall.

**THE GORDON DOUGLAS DISPLAY**

has black and white photos of a square jawed 1930s climber

with his expedition -- more important is what's beneath it.

Douglas' original climbing equipment -- a coil of rope, some

pitons, a hat, a cloth backpack, small binoculars, other odds

and ends. Gabe prepares to smash the glass -- and hesitates.

Respect.

**GABE**

(sighing)

Sorry, Gordon -- I promise I'll have

it back tomorrow.

Gabe SMASHES the glass as we move to --

**EXT. THE TRAIL - DAY**

Hal is leading Qualen, Travers and the others upward -- this

is a comparatively easy route, but still tiring. The sun goes

down beyond a facing, taller mountain. Ryan is huffing and

puffing -- the altitude and exertion are getting to him. Hal

allows himself a smile at his discomfort.

**HAL**

Come on -- tourists take this trail.

Qualen pokes Hal with the gun -- he moves on ahead.

**EXT. THE SUMMIT - DUSK**

It's getting dark rapidly -- Gabe has scaled a rock formation

so he has a view of the rest of the summit --

**GABE'S POV - SCANNING THE TREELINE**

Gabe slowly looks along the trees of the summit -- looks

pretty ordinary to us, but something must have caught Gabe's

eye, because he swings back to look at one tree. With broken

branches on top.

**GABE**

climbs down from his rock perch and rushes toward the tree.

**EXT. SUMMIT TRAIL - NIGHT**

This "expedition" reaches the top -- Hal is in the lead, with

Qualen just inches behind. Qualen shoves Hal forward.

**TRAVERS**

Is this it?

**HAL**

Yeah. This is it.

**TRAVERS**

Good. Get out of the way.

Travers takes out the tracer and starts following the blip.

**ELSEWHERE ON THE SUMMIT - GABE**

frantically rushes around, looking for the case -- he spots a

crater of snow, rushes to it and starts digging. Even below

the snow, the tracer's blinking red light is glowing and

visible. Gabe laughs as he digs it out.

**NEARBY ON THE SUMMIT - TRAVERS**

has his eyes glued to the tracer monitor, which shows the case

is nearby.

**TRAVERS**

(smiling)

This way.

Qualen shines a light -- all of them push their way through

the trees.

**TRAVERS**

is excited now -- he can't even wait for Qualen's flashlight,

he intuitively races through the trees, dividing his attention

between his surroundings and

**THE MONITOR**

which shows he's practically on top of the case -- finally

**TRAVERS**

shoves his way through some small pines -- he can see the

blinking of the red tracer light ahead through the branches.

**TRAVERS**

(calling behind)

It's over here!

Travers shoves his way through the branches, and heads for the

light -- but something's wrong -- Qualen comes up behind

Travers and shines the light on

**A SNOWMAN**

cute, if hastily constructed, stands with a five-pebble smile,

as well as Douglas' cap, in a clearing. The still blinking,

still operable tracer is now the nose of the snowman. The case

is leaned up against it.

Travers runs over to the case, furious, and opens it. It's

empty -- except for a single $5000 bill. Travers picks it

up -- scrawled on the margin is "LET'S TRADE."

**TRAVERS**

(incredulous)

He's still alive.

(furious)

He's still alive!

(to Qualen and the

others)

He can't be far away -- spread out!

Qualen, Kynette, Delmer and Krystel fan out into the woods,

each with a flashlight and a fun. Ryan, however, straps on

nightfinder goggles and runs out without a flashlight.

**TRAVERS**

(to Hal, brandishing gun)

Put your hands on your head.

**ELSEWHERE ON THE SUMMIT - GABE**

watches the chaos with a grin from a slightly elevated vantage

point -- he can see the flashlight beams, all headed in the

wrong direction. But he doesn't see

**RYAN - "NIGHTFINDER" POV**

With these goggles, light is amplified a thousandfold -- this

isn't one of those infra-red, thermo-blob jobs -- it looks

more like day for night photography. Even starlight is enough

for Ryan to run easily through the thick woods -- and he's

going in the right direction.

**GABE**

begins climbing down to level ground so he can circle closer

to where Travers is holding Hal -- before he can get far --

**"NIGHTFINDER" POV - RYAN**

looks up, and can clearly see Gabe climbing down the small

rock, twenty yards distant --

**RYAN**

smiles, looking macabre under the goggles, and opens fire --

**GABE**

is startled as the bullets impact inches over his head -- he

jumps the last ten feet to the ground and is running even as

he hits the ground -- more bullets hit where Gabe was a

split second ago --

**RYAN**

chases Gabe, easily maneuvering through the trees --

**GABE**

runs too, trying to dodge Ryan's continuing fusillades -- Gabe

knows this territory, but to him, it's still pitch dark -- he

stumbles, and rams against trees --

**RYAN**

keeps coming up behind, closing the hap, Gabe's bright form

just ahead --

**GABE**

comes out of the trees and finds he is on another part of the

summit. All that's beneath him is

**GABE'S POV**

-- a sudden, sloping plunge down a field of ice. No escape

route here -- anything that goes down this slide is going all

the way to the ground far below.

**GABE**

is driven forward by a fresh burst of bullets -- he dives to

the edge of the ice field and ducks behind a boulder -- the

sole source of cover.

**ELSEWHERE ON THE SUMMIT**

Kristel, Qualen and Kynette, having heard the gunshots, are

now rushing to Gabe's position --

**RYAN**

almost casually emerges from the woods. He can see there is

nowhere for Gabe to have gone -- except behind the boulder. He

walks toward it as if he had all the time in the world.

**GABE**

fumbles in his backpack and pulls out something from the

Douglas exhibit -- an ancient flare that looks like a can of

sterno. Gabe pulls out his lighter and tries to light it -- it

resists and looks like a dud, but finally it catches, and as

it ignites Gabe heaves it over the boulder at Ryan --

**RYAN - "NIGHTFINDER" POV - THE FLARE**

arcs over the boulder to fully ignite, turning everything

into a blinding, agonizing flash of white --

**RYAN**

SCREAMS, putting one hand over the goggles, trying to rip them

off --

**GABE**

bolts out from behind the boulder to rush him --

**RYAN**

instantly aware of what Gabe's doing, blindly shoots, fanning

out in a semi-circle as he gets the goggles off --

**GABE**

just runs straight ahead to Ryan, getting to him before the

machine gun field of fire can intersect his path -- Gabe

tackles Ryan as he manages to get the goggles off -- both men

fall to the ground, and --

The machine gun CLATTERS away, landing on the edge of the ice,

just out of reach -- Ryan, now recovered from the blinding

flash, pulls an ice axe out of a pack sheath and swings it at

Gabe -- Gabe rolls away in time, and gets to the machine gun,

grabbing it -- But Ryan dives for Gabe, slamming into him --

the force of it knocks the machine gun loose -- it skips down

the ice slope -- but the momentum of Ryan's hit also carries

both Gabe and Ryan over the edge, onto --

**THE ICE SLOPE**

Gabe and Ryan both tumble over the edge and start sliding

down, Ryan face first on his stomach, Gabe head first and on

his back -- both are in immediate agony, because

**CLOSE ON THE ICE**

-- it's covered with razor sharp, irregular ridges, both large

and small, that slice through clothing and shred skin as they

pick up speed --

**GABE'S UPSIDE-DOWN POV - THE ICE FIELD**

The edge and a five thousand foot drop are less than a hundred

yards away --

**GABE AND RYAN SLIDING**

Ryan flails and SCREAMS as the ice gashes him from

underneath -- Gabe, however, manages to flip over and to the

side -- he lunges on top of Ryan and rides him down like a

bobsled --

**GABE'S POV - END OF THE ICE SLOPS**

is coming up too fast --

**GABE**

tries to maintain his perch on Ryan, who is SCREAMING and not

yet used to the idea of being a human sled -- he isn't

remaining still enough to provide a smooth ride -- Gabe

frantically reaches behind to Ryan's wrist to get the ice axe,

trailing from a wrist strap, but Ryan's arm is thrashing away,

threatening to toss off the axe --

**ON SUMMIT**

Qualen, Kristel and Kynette arrive at the lip, and look down,

incredulous --

**QUALEN POV - GABE RIDING RYAN**

Gabe and Ryan, accelerating, have almost reached the edge --

**GABE**

finally grabs the ice axe, pulling it off Ryan's wrist -- just

as they reach the precipice edge, Gabe loops the axe to his

wrist and swings toward the ice with everything he's got --

The axe's scythe-like blade catches on the ice, right at the

lip of the precipice -- Gabe is wrenched to a painful halt,

suspended over the drop, as what's left of Ryan, still

SCREAMING, shoots over the edge --

Gabe unhooks the axe, and gets another handhold. Gabe uses the

axe to climb further down the ice to some rock -- finding

easier hand holds, he quickly disappears into the darkness.

**QUALEN, KRISTEL AND KYNETTE**

look down -- Ryan's death scream is still echoing. Qualen is

furious -- Gabe has escaped with the second case.

**QUALEN**

(to Kynette)

Follow him!

Kynette shines his flashlight below, illuminating the long,

frozen streak of blood on the ice.

**KYNETTE**

(gestures with light)

After you.

**INT. DOUGLAS TOURIST SHACK - NIGHT**

The expedition has holed up here for the night -- Travers and

Qualen look upset. Things aren't going as well as they'd

hoped. Kristel tries to get some candy out of a vending

machine that's obviously empty. Kynette saws at some camp food

with a distinctive knife -- the handle is a set of brass

knuckles. Delmer guards Hal, who is bound, and seated by the

souvenir photo stand.

**HAL**

Well -- look at the bright side.

(beat)

At least you've only got to make the

split five ways now.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN LEDGE - NIGHT**

Gabe confidently drops down onto a large ledge that juts out

from the wall -- obviously familiar territory for him. The

ledge leads to a small, enclosed cave. Gabe takes out his

penlight and shines it -- but the light looks dim. Batteries

are low. Gabe pockets it, flicks his lighter and goes in --

**THE CAVE**

in the flickering light, we can see that no one has been in

here for a while -- snow, dust, rocks -- but we should also

recognize this from the photo seen earlier as Gabe, Maggie and

Hal's hangout.

**GABE**

smiles with the memories -- then his face brightens with one

memory in particular. Gabe rushes to a corner of the cave and

opens a rock-lid to a hiding place.

**GABE**

Please still be there -- oh,

please --

Gabe reaches in the stash and finds an ancient half-full pint

of Jack Daniels. The first thing to go right all day. Gabe

uncaps it and gratefully gulps down a double shot. Peace, at

last. Gabe smiles and leans against the wall, closing his eyes

-- but he's startled instantly by a SCREECH -- Gabe's eyes

shoot open --

An aggressive rat scurries toward him on the floor.

Gabe grabs a rock and CLOBBERS the rat off-screen, ending the

screeches with one blow. Gabe's face first registers

disgust -- then an idea. Then real disgust. Sighing, Gabe

pulls out a pocket knife and opens the blade.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. THE CAVE - A LITTLE LATER - CLOSE ON GABE**

Gabe takes the now cooked rat carcass -- properly skinned and

butchered -- off his knife blade. We can see from flickering

shadows that a small fire is now burning in a cave -- we

pull back to see

**THE FIRE**

which is built out of small bundles of $5,000 bills. It's safe

to say that something like $500,000 is going up in smoke, and

the fire's dying down. Gabe tosses a fresh band of bills on

the flame. Gabe cools the knife in some snow, saws off a rat

leg, and chews unhappily.

**GABE**

(mouth full)

Mmm. Just like -- chicken.

Gabe sparingly washes the bite down with a taste of Jack

Daniel. It's going to have to last him. He has an entire rat

to get through.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. WIDE MOUNTAIN VIEW - DAWN**

The first rays of the sun start to poke through the mountains.

It's stopped snowing -- the storm seems to be letting up.

**INT. RANGER STATION**

Very quiet in here. Frank is snoring, slumped over the radio.

Maggie is wide awake and obviously hasn't slept -- her

attention is fixed out the window.

**MAGGIE'S POV - WINDSPEED GAUGE**

The gauge is still flying around, but clearly shows that the

winds are slowing.

**INT. DENVER MINT - WRIGHT'S OFFICE**

Wright is coiled at his desk, tense. Ten empty styrofoam

coffee cups -- and dark rings under Wright's eyes -- make

clear he hasn't slept. Wright's assistant bursts in.

**DAVIS**

We've got a fix on the plane, sir --

we're getting a reading on the flight

recorder tracer --

**WRIGHT**

Any visual? Any radio contact?

**DAVIS**

Not yet --

**WRIGHT**

(heading to the door)

Get the copters ready. We take off in

three minutes.

**DAVIS**

The winds are still too strong --

**WRIGHT**

Sorry to hear it. We're still going.

The plane might be intact.

Wright drags the protesting Davis out the door.

**DAVIS**

Sir --

**WRIGHT**

Shut up. That fifty million isn't

coming out of my pension.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DOUGLAS TOURIST SHACK - DAY**

Travers, Qualen and the rest of the expedition head out of the

shack, a little groggy. Odds are no one got much sleep.

Travers shoves Hal toward a sketchy "YOU ARE HERE" map of the

mountain range, and hands him the tracer monitor.

**TRAVERS**

Still interested in staying alive?

Hal matches the monitor to the map -- the blip is higher up.

**HAL**

(pointing to map)

It's up here. Somewhere on the Tower.

There's a way to cross over to the top

in about half a day.

**TRAVERS**

Show me.

Travers shoves Hal forward -- the others follow.

**ELSEWHERE ON THE MOUNTAIN/SUMMIT - BINOCULAR POV**

From about fifty yards off, someone watches Hal lead the gang

away from the shack.

**BRETT (O.S.)**

They're heading toward the opposite

edge. An easy way down.

**BRETT AND EVAN**

are crouched in the woods. Brett, gun in hand, has no idea how

far out of his league he is. Evan looks like he's having

second thoughts, but he can't hack down now.

**BRETT**

I'll cut around this side, and wind up

in front. You come up behind them --

quietly. And we've got 'em.

**EVAN**

Brett -- they've got five guns --

**BRETT**

And you can collect them all after I

get the drop on 'em. Let's get moving.

Brett, automatic held high, circles off through the woods.

Evan reluctantly lopes off toward his assignment.

**BELOW - GABE'S CAVE**

Gabe pulls his jacket on -- reversed, with the grey lining

out, so the orange won't make him so easy to spot -- and

starts out towards the facing Tower -- his route, clearly, is

going to be along the rock wall. It's relatively sheer, but

there are shelves cut into it to make walking easy.

**MOUNTAIN TOP/SUMMIT - BRETT**

races quietly through the woods in a parallel path with Hal,

who's guiding the hang. Brett circles around ahead of them,

waiting. Before he can jump out --

**HAL'S POV - ON BRETT**

hiding ahead in the trees and rocks.

**HAL**

makes eye contact with Brett, realizes what he's doing, and

shakes his head as violently as he dares -- no, don't --

**BRETT**

gives Hal a confident wink in response, then pounces in front

of the gang, gun held high.

**BRETT**

End of the line!

Travers, Delmer, Kristel and Kynette are startled, but don't

immediately comply. This throws Brett off his stride.

**BRETT**

(nervous now)

You heard me! Drop the guns!

Travers smiles and steps closer to Brett. The others walk up

in front of Hal. Travers actually laughs.

**TRAVERS**

"End of the line"? That's classic.

(beat)

You've got style. So, I'm going to

give you a three-count to figure out

how to turn the safety off.

Brett doesn't even look down -- he responds by FIRING a short

burst over Travers' head.

**BRETT**

Nice try. I've got one of these at

home. Now drop 'em.

All drop their guns -- Brett, unfortunately, realizes at the

same time we do --

**BRETT**

Hey -- where's the other guy --

**HAL**

(shouting)

Brett, behind you!

Too late -- Brett can only twist around half way before --

**QUALEN**

easily mows down Brett with his machine gun, riddling him with

at least thirty rounds at close range. Brett falls dead into

the snow. Qualen walks up to Brett's corpse, blood steaming in

the reddening snow, and kicks it over.

**BELOW ON THE WALLSIDE**

Gabe, reacting to the sound of the machine gun fire, climbs

up, but there's nothing he can do --

**TRAVERS AND QUALEN**

and the others pick up their guns.

**TRAVERS**

(turning to face Hal)

Time to --

Travers sees that Hal is gone -- he's escaped in the

confusion.

**IN THE WOODS - HAL**

runs like his ass is on fire and practically collides with

Evan, who is more panicked than ever.

**EVAN**

What are we going to do --

**HAL**

You came up here to jump the spur --

(pulls Evan's chute out

of his pack)

This'd be a great time to do it.

**EVAN**

(panicked)

But --

**HAL**

(quick)

Listen -- they don't know you're up

here -- I'll draw their fire, you've

got to make the jump and get help.

**EVAN**

I don't -- I -- uh --

**HAL**

(exasperated, grabs

chute)

Unless you want to do it the other way

around?

Evan snatches the parachute and runs off. Hal, wasting no

time, runs in the opposite direction, deliberately making as

much noise as he can, slapping branches, stomping on rocks.

**EXT. WOODS - THE BANG**

runs into the woods -- Qualen and Kristel, hearing Hal's noisy

retreat, run after him. But Travers stops for a second -- he

has spotted

**EVAN'S FOOTPRINTS**

in the snow -- not unlike a neon arrow.

**TRAVERS**

runs in the direction of the footprints and quickly closes the

gap between him and

**EVAN**

who tries to pull on the chute and run at the same time --

it's not easy. Evan closes one of the three buckles -- but

**TRAVERS**

bursts out of the woods and runs up right behind him --

**QUALEN AND KRISTEL**

in the meantime, get behind Hal in a clearing -- Kristel FIRES

over his head.

**KRISTEL**

Stop!

Hal, caught again, freezes in his tracks.

**EVAN**

is still up and running -- he dodges Travers' fire, weaving

through trees, getting the second buckle closed -- he sees the

edge, just ahead, and puts on an extra burst of speed --

**TRAVERS**

does likewise, still firing -- his clip runs out, but this

only buys Evan an extra few seconds --

**THE SPUR**

is a rock formation that just out like a diving board -- Evan

runs like hell to the edge of it --

**TRAVERS**

is right behind him, and has slapped a fresh clip in place,

but before he can shoot --

**EVAN**

dives off the edge and clasps the third buckle --

**ON THE LEDGE - GABE**

is directly below a few hundred feet -- looking up, he thinks

Evan has made it -- but

**ON THE SPUR EDGE - TRAVERS**

throws himself down, aims quickly but carefully, and FIRES

twenty rounds towards Evan's falling figure --

**EVAN - FALLING**

Evan LAUGHS -- he hasn't been hit --

**GABE - WATCHING**

**GABE**

Come on -- wait till you're out of

range -- don't pull it yet --

**LONG SHOT - EVAN FALLING**

Several seconds pass -- Evan is now several hundred feet down

and apparently out of firing range --

**TRAVERS**

stops firing -- but doesn't seem unhappy at all.

**EVAN**

LAUGHS more and pulls the D-ring -- the parachute billows

open, inflating --

**CLOSE ON THE PARACHUTE**

which has been shredded by bullets that hit the pack -- as

quickly as it inflates, it deflates through dozens of

holes -- whatever resistance is left vanishes as the canopy

collapses.

**EVAN'S**

exhilaration turns to panic as he frantically pulls on the

chute's guide lines -- but the more he does this, the faster

the chute caves in -- he SCREAMS as the chute finally gives

way and plummets right past

**GABE ON THE LEDGE**

who is powerless to do anything but watch --

**EVAN**

falls the long, full five thousand feet, desperately,

uselessly, pulling in the lines of the tattered chute until

he's tangled in it like a shroud --

**GABE**

turns away -- he can't watch Evan hit bottom -- he grimaces

and looks up with absolute hate at

**TRAVERS**

who doesn't see Gabe -- he's laughing at Evan's desperation,

which ends as his death scream is cut off.

Hal is led over to the spur, with the other gang members

behind him. Hal looks as angry as Gabe.

**QUALEN**

Was that Walker?

**TRAVERS**

No such luck.

(to Hal, smiling)

Cheer up. Everyone should die in a

spot this beautiful.

**ON THE LEDGE BELOW - CLOSE ON GABE**

who has heard this and is shaking with fury.

**GABE**

(quietly)

Don't worry. You will.

**LONG SHOT OF MOUNTAIN**

On top, Hal reluctantly leads the gang away -- below, we can

see Gabe start out on a parallel path along the ledges.

**EXT. RANGER STATION - HELIPAD - DAY**

Winds or not, Maggie is untying the helicopter's rotor from

the bolts on the helipad. Frank, who has obviously just

awakened, rushes out of the station.

**FRANK**

Maggie -- what are you doing --

**MAGGIE**

I'm going to go nuts if I sit here one

more hour.

**FRANK**

Still a little breezy out, Mag --

Maggie gets into the helicopter and starts the rotor.

**MAGGIE**

(over engine's whine)

You coming?

Frank hesitates, but climbs in the other side. The helicopter

lifts off and heads toward the mountain range.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN - AERIAL SHOT - DAY**

The next obstacle Hal is leading the gang through is a

buttress -- a large, stark boulder formation -- that lays

between the mountain they've just come from, and the nearest

mountain to it: the Tower. This is lower down from the

summit -- it's solid and treeless.

Hal and the rest of the expedition is totally exposed as they

climb in single file up to the top. Terrain is flat enough

that the climb amount to an uphill run on all fours.

**CLOSER ON HAL AND GANG**

Hal leads the gang forward -- and keeps casting anxious

glances back at them. And beyond them. Travers notices this.

**TRAVERS**

Forget about it. He's smart, but he's

not invisible.

Hal looks back. Travers is right. There's absolutely no way

Gabe can come up behind them without being seen.

**LOWER DOWN ON BLUFF**

where the bluff meets a tree-lined plain. Gabe, in hiding,

watches Hal and the others go up. No, he can't follow them up

the bluff's side without being seen. But Gabe moves closer to

the bluff's base -- Gabe shoves through some trees to the

beginning of

**THE "CHIMNEY"**

A crevice runs the entire length and breadth of the bluff.

**GABE**

pulls out his ancient binoculars, and scans the crack.

**GABE'S POV - THE CHIMNEY**

Starting with an outside view, we can see that the crevice

runs all the way up, and through, the bluff -- but it's a

zig-zag, not a straight line.

Picture a mine shaft designed by a madman. The crack moves

upward, then erratically to the side, then straight up again.

The width of the crack is uneven, ranging from six inches to

six feet. And that's just how it looks on the outside.

There's no telling what the interior is like.

Gabe turns the binoculars to the inside of the crack. It's

hard to see much -- it's very, very dark. But it looks as if

the crack goes all the way through the bluff, as well as all

the way up it. On this route, Gabe can tunnel through the

mountain instead of going up the side.

**GABE**

puts away the binoculars and wedges himself into the crack,

starting the long process of going up -- and through -- the

mountain formation.

**EXT. COLORADO WILDERNESS - PLANE CRASH SITE - DAY**

A frenzy of activity, as several dozen Treasury agents sift

through the snow for the wreckage of the CT-39, some taking

photos, some taking videotapes, some putting the pieces into

bags for analysis. Many bags. Many small bags.

**WIDER ON CRASH SITE**

The Treasury plane has been completely pulverized by the crash

and its subsequent explosion -- there are few pieces here that

aren't charred, and fewer still that are any larger than a

paperback book.

**WRIGHT**

unhappily walks through the carnage and past agents gathering

up the plane, to a harried crash specialist from the FAA --

ROSS STUART (40s) -- who is organizing the debris.

**WRIGHT**

What can you confirm?

**STUART**

Well, sir -- it crashed. That, I can

confirm.

(condescending)

We've been here just about one hour.

These events take months to analyze.

So if you'll excuse me --

He walks away -- but Wright, pissed, spins him around.

**WRIGHT**

No, I don't think I will. The reason

the FAA pays you is to exercise your

vast, amazing knowledge of these

"events". So I expect you to come up

with some stunning insights, something

a slow-witted fuck like me hasn't

already observed.

(gesturing to wreckage)

One: it didn't blow up in mid-air,

because the debris isn't widely

dispersed. But was there a bomb on

board that could have disabled it? I

wonder.

(pointing back)

Two: There wasn't an attempted

landing. Otherwise, there'd be debris

to the east of the wreckage, where the

plane was coming from. Did it come

straight down? That's got me

scratching my head too.

(gesturing back to

wreckage)

And three: the flight recorder's

tracer led us here in the first place.

So where is the goddamn thing? That

one's got me all aflush with

curiosity.

**STUART**

(a little cowed)

You'll be the first to know.

**WRIGHT**

Oh, I believe you.

Wright storms off as agents delicately handle debris.

**EXT. TOP OF THE BLUFF/VISTA - DAY**

A vista. From this point, you can see everything else in the

mountain range. The only thing left that's taller is the

Tower, a hundred yards away. Between the two mountains lies a

drop of a mere four thousand feet.

Hal has led the rest of the gang up to the edge. Travers

approaches him, furious.

**TRAVERS**

I thought you said there was an easy

way across.

**HAL**

There is. You might not like it much.

Hal points

**FURTHER DOWN**

A steep two hundred yard downhill climb leads to a wire that

bridges the two mountains. The same wire we saw at the

beginning -- left behind from Susan Collins' botched rescue.

**TOP OF BLUFF - HAL AND TRAVERS**

**HAL**

Of course -- we'll have to do it hand

over hand. Seems I forgot my harness.

Sorry.

**TRAVERS**

Don't be. Lead on.

Hal is surprised to see Kynette pull a harness out of his pack

-- the one Travers used earlier. Disappointed, Hal leads the

downward climb, looking several hundred yards to

**THE CRACK**

running up, and through, the bluff, coming out on this side.

**HAL'S FACE**

registers a thought -- will he? -- then dismissal. Nah. He

couldn't.

**INT. THE CRACK/CHIMNEY - CLOSE ON GABE'S FACE**

Gabe is sweating, straining in the dark, climbing up -- this'd

be a good spot to pull back and take in the view, except --

**THE CHIMNEY**

-- there's nowhere to pull back to. There's about two inches

of clearance between Gabe's chest and the rock, and about the

same between his back and the rock. To the right, there is no

light. At all. To the left, there's no light. Even above,

there is no light, because the crack isn't straight -- nature

isn't that obliging -- it zig-zags up. Gabe is well within the

mountain rock. Nothing could be closer to being buried alive

Gabe snakes through a spot where the crack goes straight up --

he takes out his penlight and turns it on --

**GABE'S POV - INSIDE THE CRACK AROUND HIM**

even this dim light reveals scores of bats hanging on the

wall, surrounding him, up and down, left and right --

**GABE'S FACE**

is stuck somewhere between nausea and the realization that

he's made a big mistake.

**GABE**

I didn't need to see that. I really

didn't.

Gabe cuts the light and slithers up through the dark.

**EXT. RESCUE HELICOPTER - DAY**

Maggie and Frank are flying low and fast, over treetops and

snow -- both are intently staring down --

**THEIR VIEW**

is nothing but empty wilderness. But a BUZZER goes off --

**MAGGIE AND FRANK**

turn their attention to the helicopter's heat scope, which

shows something alive beneath them.

**FRANK**

Got 'em -- they're under the trees --

Maggie smiles and slows the copter over a clearing --

**EXT. WOODS/THE COPTER**

touches down. Maggie is out of it before the rotor has stopped

turning, running into the trees.

**MAGGIE**

Hal! Gabe!

Maggie runs into the trees, headlong into

**A PACK OF WOLVES**

that are preying on -- a body. A pair of legs are gruesomely

sticking out from the feast. One wolf turns to SNARL at Maggie

-- but Frank runs up and pulls a gun from a holster.

Frank aims high and FIRES twice to scare the pack -- the

wolves run off. Maggie goes to the body -- Frank holds her

back, but she goes ahead anyway, worried it might be Gabe --

**TIGHT ON MAGGIE**

as she examines the body --

**MAGGIE**

It's Evan.

(she stands, looks up)

Parachute failed.

**FRANK**

(not unkindly)

Damn fool. Why would anybody try that

in the middle of a storm.

**MAGGIE**

Why would anybody try at all.

(sighs)

Get the bag.

**INT. BLUFF CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe has a quick climbing rhythm now. He pulls himself up with

his hands, then braces his body with his back, and pulls

himself up again -- he's not looking up, because he can't see

anything yet anyway -- naturally, this leads to --

A head and rock collision. Gabe's head crashes against a new

part of the crack, as the passage thins out. He gropes up.

The passage is narrowing to the point that he can't get

through it. Dead end.

**GABE**

Should've taken that left turn at

Albequerque.

Gabe backs down, and starts to slide across the side. With

his back wedged against the rear wall, he uses his feet to

push against the forward wall.

**GABE'S POV - BLACK**

Zero visibility -- Gabe can't see what he's shoving toward.

There has never been light of any kind in here.

**GABE**

blindly pushes to the side, rattled by the difficulty of doing

this in the dark.

**GABE**

It's just like any other side move --

you can't see where the fuck you're

going, that's all --

Gabe stops and fishes out his penlight. Turning it on, it's

clear those batteries haven't gotten any more potent in the

last few hours. Gabe shines it to the side.

**GABE'S POV - THE LIGHT**

is fading fast. A match's last gasp is brighter.

**GABE**

exasperated, puts the penlight in his mouth and moves on.

**GABE**

(garbled)

Much better.

Gabe inches on to the side. Looks up to see if the crack has

gotten wider. It hasn't. Gabe mumbles something phonetically

near "motherfucker" around the flashlight, aiming it up --

**GABE'S POV - UP**

No opening larger than a mail slot --

**GABE**

still cursing, still looking up, still moving to the side --

he gets the opening he wants, but not where he wants it --

The crack suddenly, drastically widens as he moves to the

side -- since he's been bracing his back against the wall,

Gabe falls out of control, twisting around, face down --

Gabe bounces down the walls for several yards and catches

himself by bracing his arms and legs against the crack. It's

now five feet wide as he painfully brakes himself --

**GABE'S POV - THE PENLIGHT**

falls out of Gabe's mouth and tumbles down, ping-ponging from

one side of the crack to the other as it tumbles a long, long

way down -- even after the light is gone, we can still hear

the penlight's receding clattering against the walls --

**GABE**

is now, literally, in a jam. There are no handholds, no

ledges, and the walls are slick. All he can do is remain

braced against the crack's walls until his already sore arms

and legs give out.

**EXT. RESCUE HELICOPTER - NEAR BLUFF'S BASE - DAY**

Frank is now flying the helicopter -- a body bag is stashed in

the back, and Maggie is in the passenger seat.

**MAGGIE**

(motioning down)

Bring it down here.

**FRANK**

Maggie --

**MAGGIE**

Just do it, Frank.

**EXT. BLUFF BASE**

The copter touches down -- Frank doesn't turn it off. Maggie

jumps out with a walkie talkie. Frank makes another try.

**FRANK**

Maggie, this is dumb --

**MAGGIE**

No it isn't. I'm going to find

Brett -- I don't want to have to talk

to his widow too. Fly Evan's body

back to base -- I'll call you when

I've found Brett. Or Hal. Or Gabe.

Or anybody.

Maggie runs off into the snow as Frank lifts off. Maggie moves

quickly through the snow, and it isn't long before she spots

multiple tracks in the snow -- they lead toward, and up, the

buttress. Now she's really confused. But with nothing left to

do, she starts climbing up the side.

**EXT. WIRE CROSSING - HAL'S POV**

As we've caught Hal in mid-crossing, he's looking from whence

he came -- the opposite side of the buttress, where Travers

has a gun trained on him --

**HAL**

unhappily hangs high above the ground from the harness kindly

provided by Travers --

**HAL'S POV - ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WIRE**

Kristel is waiting, also with a gun trained on him. Hal

arrives and disengages -- the harness is pulled back.

**BUTTRESS SIDE OF WIRE**

Kynette pulls the harness back and hands it to Qualen, who's

standing next to Travers.

**KYNETTE**

(motioning up)

I'm going back.

**TRAVERS**

Look -- this part is nothing,

believe me --

**KYNETTE**

Walker should be coming up by now.

Kynette, automatic strapped to his chest, rushes back to the

buttress' summit.

**INT. BUTTRESS CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe is just as we left him. Face down, arms and legs pressing

against the five-foot gap of the tunnel walls.

Carefully, Gabe takes one hand off the wall, gets out his

lighter with the other, and ignites it for a look --

**GABE'S POV - UPWARD**

Just as the crack has widened below him -- it's wider above

him. More important, it slants at an easy enough angle to

allow him to walk up. If only he can get up there.

**GABE**

snaps the lighter shut, pockets it, and readies himself.

Gabe steadily "walks" up the vertical passage by bracing

himself with one leg and one arm -- then moving the other

leg and arm up.

Gabe repeats this until he has his hands on the curved edge

where the crack snakes into a sideways passage. But there are

no handholds that will allow Gabe to get a grip and simply

swing over and climb up.

**GABE**

(winded)

So much for the easy part.

**OVERHEAD ANGLE - THE CRACK**

Gabe takes a deep breath, readies himself, and shoves himself

away from the wall with his arms, pushes himself into a squat

against the opposite wall, hanging for a second with no

support at all, and he springs from that all into

**THE DIAGONAL PASSAGE**

Gabe lands hard but flat on the passage and immediately starts

backsliding into the drop, but he digs in with his boots and

his hands. Safe at last. Gabe carefully stands in a crouch --

and starts heading up.

**EXT. BUTTRESS TOP**

Kynette moves to the edge, lies flat, and looks down --

**KYNETTE'S POV - ON THE BUTTRESS SIDE**

Maggie is climbing up, but she's still some way down -- and

the hood of her parka has been pulled over her head. All

Kynette can see is what she's wearing: an orange parka.

**KYNETTE**

smiles and hits his headset radio.

**KYNETTE**

He's on the way up. I could hear that

jacket before I could see it.

**TRAVERS (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Then get the money, kill him and get

back here. Now.

**KYNETTE**

(into radio)

I'll wait till he comes to me.

Kynette flattens out to wait -- Maggie is coming up fast.

**INT. MOUNTAIN CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe moves up through the diagonal section -- the crack is

starting to go directly upward. Gabe looks up --

**GABE'S POV - TOP OF THE CRACK**

It's coated with snow, but not too much -- Gabe can faintly

make out light shining through up there.

**GABE**

knows the top is twenty feet away. Gabe starts up the easy

segment, his back braced against one wall.

**EXT. TOP OF BUTTRESS - KYNETTE**

is staring down intently at the climber below --

**KYNETTE'S POV - MAGGIE**

is now almost to the top -- sweating with exertion, she throws

her hood back.

**KYNETTE**

keys his headset radio again.

**KYNETTE**

(into radio)

Bulletin. The climber isn't Walker --

it's a woman.

**INT. MOUNTAIN CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe, wedged near the top of the crack, is ready to dig

through the snow -- but he hears the sound, muffled and

distant, of Kynette talking. Gabe strains to hear -- a bad

time to come up? Might be.

**EXT. BUTTRESS SIDE**

Maggie, tired, gets near the top and collapses, resting for a

moment, her arms on the edge -- Maggie looks up and is very

surprised to see Kynette, standing over her, smiling, his gun

aimed down at her.

**KYNETTE**

Rotten weather for a climb, huh?

(aims barrel)

I have two questions I'd like to

trouble you with. Ready?

Maggie stares up, frozen -- whatever she was expecting, it

wasn't this.

**KYNETTE**

This first one's easy. Do you know a

man named Gabe Walker?

**MAGGIE**

Yes.

(breathless, scared)

Where is he?

**KYNETTE**

You don't know either? I am sorry.

That was question number two.

(lowers barrel)

Thanks for your time.

As Kynette tightens his finger around the trigger --

**GABE**

appears -- he completes his run toward Kynette's back and

kicks him over the edge --

**KYNETTE**

goes flying over Maggie, his shots going wild -- but he

catches himself on the rock and comes to a painful but safe

halt after skidding down ten feet --

**GABE**

yanks Maggie to her feet and onto the top. Maggie gets a good

look at Gabe -- his clothes are slashed, he's covered with

cuts, and coated with slime and dirt from the crack. He looks

like he's just spent a week in Hell. Gabe doesn't react to her

reaction -- he just grabs her hand and runs.

**QUALEN**

chooses this moment to show up at the opposite edge -- he

fires and automatic BURST at Gabe and Maggie.

**GABE**

Come on --

**MAGGIE**

Where? --

**GABE**

Here.

Gabe jumps on a spot in the snow over the crack, caving it

in -- Gabe falls two feet into

**THE CRACK - MAGGIE'S POV**

Gabe has grabbed, and is hanging from, a rope anchored to a

piton on the edge of the rock. He's also glowering up at

Maggie a little impatiently.

**GABE**

Today, goddamit!

Gabe rappels down the rope into the darkness.

**MAGGIE**

hesitates -- she's still getting used to the idea of being

shot at --

**KYNETTE**

woozy but recovered, has climbed up -- he runs toward the

opening, FIRING his gun --

**MAGGIE**

drops into the relative safety of the crack and rappels

downward.

Maggie reaches rope's end thirty feet down, as the vertical

passage again becomes diagonal. Gabe is there waiting.

**KYNETTE**

reaches the edge of the crack and FIRES down into it --

**GABE AND MAGGIE - FURTHER DOWN**

-- bullets are RICOCHETING all over -- Gabe throws himself

over Maggie to shield her.

**KYNETTE**

can't see what he's shooting at, so he mercifully stops.

Seeing the rope, he bends down to climb after them --

**GABE AND MAGGIE - FURTHER DOWN**

Gabe reaches up and tugs gently on the rope twice --

**KYNETTE - REACHING FOR THE ROPE**

-- which is tied in a standard climber's slipknot and comes

undone with a final tug -- the rope, freed of the piton, falls

down, but Kynette firmly grabs hold of the end --

**GABE**

feels the rope go taut -- he yanks the rope down hard --

**KYNETTE**

gets more pull than he counted on and takes a head first fall

into the crack, disappearing with a scream -- Qualen has just

arrived in time to see this --

**GABE**

looks over as Kynette bounces past him, a few feet away -- the

rope goes slack in his hand as Kynette falls below.

**UP ABOVE - QUALEN**

in frustration, FIRES a burst straight down into the crack --

**GABE AND MAGGIE - IN THE CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe and Maggie move laterally through the crack -- now about

thirty feet from where they started, so ricochets are a

serious but decreasing problem.

The crack narrows from five to three feet. Gabe edges Maggie

down into it, and along a ledge moving to the side.

**GABE**

This way.

(off Maggie's look)

I like the outside of the mountain

better too, but --

Gabe and Maggie move along the ledge --

**QUALEN**

is still at the edge of the crack -- stymied. He's definitely

not climbing down after them -- he pulls back from the edge.

**IN THE CRACK/CHIMNEY - GABE AND MAGGIE**

find a comparative point of comfort -- a toe-sized ledge.

Maggie is moving ahead of Gabe.

**GABE**

Stop.

**MAGGIE**

We can't --

**GABE**

I need to stop.

Exhausted, Gabe braces himself against the wall.

**GABE**

(looks at Maggie)

I'm glad to see you -- but Christ, I

wish you hadn't come.

**EXT. WIRE CROSSING - TOWER SIDE - DAY**

Qualen whizzes across the wire on the harness, easily making

it to where Hal, Travers and Kristel are waiting.

**TRAVERS**

Don't tell me --

**QUALEN**

(disengaging)

He's still alive.

Travers takes a couple of heavy swings at the connecting bolt

with Hal's axe. Qualen grabs his arm before he can take a

third swing -- and looks at his watch.

**QUALEN**

For another two minutes.

**IN THE CRACK/CHIMNEY - GABE AND MAGGIE**

Gabe catches his breath. All this is taking its toll on him.

**MAGGIE**

It hurts just looking at you.

**GABE**

(still panting)

Try it from this side. Do you still

have your radio?

**MAGGIE**

It's not going to work in here.

**GABE**

Let's give it a try.

(she hands it to him)

I'm in bad need of a ride.

(keys it)

Come in, Rescue Unit --

**EXT. TOWER FACE - DAY**

Hal is leading the expedition upward along a ledge -- the

radio, in Travers' pack, comes to life.

**GABE (O.S.)**

(over radio)

-- Come in, Rescue One --

Travers stares daggers at Qualen. Qualen looks to his watch.

**QUALEN**

Patience.

**INT. RESCUE STATION**

The radio is reading Gabe loud, if not clear -- the

interference of solid rock is garbling it. But we can see out

the window that Frank is now between radios, carefully

hauling Evan's body from the helicopter to the station on a

collapsible gurney. No one else is in the station.

**GABE (O.S.)**

(over radio, broken up)

-- Come in, Frank --

**INT. BUTTRESS CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe, exasperated, stops for a moment.

**GABE**

Is there anybody else on the radio?

Maggie shakes her head no.

**GABE**

I take a year off and the department

goes to hell.

(keys it)

-- Come in, Rescue Unit --

**TOP OF BUTTRESS - HIGH ANGLE**

We can see there are three holes punched in the snow along the

crack's top --

**CLOSER ON ONE OF THE HOLES**

Recognizably the part of the crack Gabe and Maggie dove

into -- but perched on the edge is a block of plastic

explosive -- the detonator LED races down -- 0:20 -- 0:19 --

**A SECOND HOLE**

has been punched in the snow at the center point of the

crevice's top -- another bomb has been planted there --

**A THIRD HOLE**

at the opposite end of the crevice has a third timer tied to

a third pack of plastics --

**EXT. TOWER FACE**

Qualen is staring at his watch, but pointing the others toward

the buttress.

**GABE (O.S.)**

(via radio)

Come in, Frank -- over --

**QUALEN**

Try to get thirty million in

entertainment out of this, because he

is definitely in for thirty million

worth of pain.

Gabe's radio calls continue as Qualen extends his arm towards

the buttress and starts a silent hand countdown, stage manager

style -- five -- four -- three --

**INSERT - TIMER**

The LED runs down -- 0:02 -- 0:01 --

**THE BUTTRESS TOP**

is shattered by a huge blast as the first bomb detonates --

**INSIDE THE CRACK/CHIMNEY**

The walls are pulverized near the top and cave in, raining

rocks further down towards --

**GABE AND MAGGIE**

who are hit by a blast of air booming down through the

confined space -- Gabe drops the radio -- Maggie slips, but

Gabe grabs her -- both slide down the crack, out of control,

until it narrows to a three foot width -- and they stop --

Gabe shoves Maggie against the wall and tries to protect her

with his body as the rocks start to rain down --

**TOWER FACE**

Hal lunges at Qualen, but is held back by Travers.

**HAL**

You sick fuck --

**QUALEN**

Don't worry. They may still be alive.

That was the small one.

**RESCUE STATION**

Frank stops wheeling the gurney and looks up at the far-off

blast, and the smoke, amazed.

**FRANK**

Jesus -- that's some flare.

**INSIDE THE CRACK**

Rocks tumble down it, filling it in and sealing it off --

**FURTHER DOWN - GABE**

is braced over Maggie, protecting her from the first round of

falling rocks, but rolling THUNDER in the crack announces that

more is coming -- Gabe looks up as the noise gets closer --

**ABOVE IN THE CRACK**

The rockslide arrives -- the crack is filled in seconds with

rocks and dirt, packing it in -- Gabe tries to hold on, but is

shoved down by the falling rocks -- Maggie, however, is

buried in the crack as it fills --

**GABE**

is knocked down to a point where the crack narrows -- he stops

himself by jamming his body against the sides. Suddenly, it's

quiet. A little dirt whistles through, but that's all.

The cave-in has stopped, as it's filled in the crack above.

And Maggie is in the middle of it. Gabe unsheaths his ice axe

and starts hacking up to get at Maggie. Dirt and rocks fall in

his face as he digs --

**BOMB NUMBER TWO - INSERT**

Another LED is counting down from 3:00 -- 2:59 -- 2:58 --

**INSIDE THE CRACK**

Gabe frantically hacks at the ceiling of dirt -- rock and soil

tumble down, but no sign of Maggie. Gabe uncovers one of

Maggie's feet. Is it too late? Gabe digs up around her --

Maggie realizes Gabe is there -- she starts kicking.

Finally Maggie tumbles out of the cave-in -- gasping and

coughing, but alive. Gabe catches her and brushes the dirt

off her face.

**GABE**

Are you all right?

**MAGGIE**

(terrified, coughing)

Why are they doing this?

**RESCUE STATION**

Frank, having lain Evan's body to rest, runs back to the

helicopter, starts it up and takes off.

**INSIDE THE CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe is leading Maggie horizontally through the crack, fast

and furious --

**MAGGIE**

(looks up)

We might be able to get up that way --

there's an opening --

**GABE**

No -- there could be another bomb up

there -- even if there isn't, we could

get another cave-in. The only sure way

out is through the side.

**EXT. TREASURY PLANE CRASH SITE - DAY**

Treasury agents sift debris as Davis runs up to Stuart.

**DAVIS**

I've got something here.

**STUART**

Let's have it.

**DAVIS**

There's an unconfirmed report of a

distress call made from a plane that

crashed.

**STUART**

That's really, really interesting, but

**--**

(gestures around)

-- kind of old news, don't you think?

**DAVIS**

This call was supposedly made from a

plane that crash landed. After it

landed.

**STUART**

(waves it off)

Sounds like they got it wrong. Next

time you interrupt my work make sure

it's something I can use.

**INT. MOUNTAIN CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Gabe and Maggie cautiously move along a single ledge --

finally, some light can be seen, thirty feet ahead, as they

round a corner.

**GABE**

(smiling)

Come on -- we're almost out.

The crack narrows, and Gabe straddles it, putting his feet on

the opposite edge to walk faster. But before he can go on --

**A HAND**

grabs one of Gabe's ankles from below and yanks him down --

Gabe tumbles painfully, braking himself in front of

**KYNETTE**

bruised and bloody, who has survived the earlier fall and made

his way out. His look is not a forgiving one.

**KYNETTE**

Miss me?

Kynette smashes Gabe's face with a devastating, brass-knuckled

punch --

**GABE**

falls back, desperately grabbing at the walls to stop himself

from going all the way down -- as he weakly tries to get up --

**KYNETTE**

calmly opens his knife, and re-laces his fingers into its

brass-knuckle handle.

**TOWER FACE**

The gang and Hal watch the mountain top, with very different

expectations and hopes -- their vantage point keeps them from

seeing where the crack actually comes out.

**QUALEN**

(looks to Hal)

You might say a few words for your

friends -- this is the one that will

bury them.

**BOMB NUMBER TWO - INSERT**

Ready to blow -- 0:10 -- 0:09 --

**IN THE CRACK - MAGGIE**

can only look down helplessly at

**GABE AND KYNETTE**

fighting -- Gabe is on his feet, but Kynette, slashing at him

with his knife, is forcing Gabe to back up -- the crack is

getting wider, and finding footholds while crab-walking

backwards in the dark isn't east.

Gabe's in a rotten fighting position -- as he has to spread

his feet out wider as he backs up, he's always lower than

Kynette.

Gabe throws a punch at Kynette's stomach, but there's no power

to it. Kynette hits Gabe with a brutal knuckle-duster punch --

Gabe flies back several feet, somehow managing to straddle the

crack walls -- which are now four feet apart. Kynette moves in

for the kill.

**BOMB NUMBER TWO - INSERT**

The LED counts down -- 0:02 -- 0:01 -- 0:00 -- but doesn't

detonate. A green light starts flashing, but the bomb hasn't

gone off.

**IN THE CRACK/CHIMNEY**

Kynette moves in over Gabe and swings down with the knife --

But Gabe grabs his knife hand, and adding his own force to the

swing, imbeds the knife to the hilt in the rock wall,

trapping Kynette's hand in the brass-knuckle handle.

Gabe stabilizes himself on Kynette's trapped arm and gets a

little payback -- three solid roundhouse punches to Kynette's

face -- he then climbs up his pinned opponent, stepping up

on Kynette's stuck hand as if it were a piton.

**TOWER FACE**

Qualen's smirk is wiped off his face. The bomb didn't work?

**TRAVERS**

What happened?

**QUALEN**

I'm not sure -- I set the timer --

Qualen gestures helplessly, putting the radio in Hal's reach.

Hal takes advantage of this, throws off Travers, and grabs the

radio.

**HAL**

(keying radio)

Gabe, it's a dud --

But the second Hal transmits --

**BOMB NUMBER TWO**

detonates over the central part of the crevice, and as

promised, it's even bigger than the first --

**INSIDE THE CRACK**

The bomb instantly blasts tons of rock down the crevice --

**GABE AND MAGGIE**

The RUMBLE of the approaching rockslide is unmistakable --

Gabe shoves Maggie forward --

**GABE**

Move!

Maggie doesn't have to be told twice -- she and Gabe move out

the narrowed crack quickly, but under the circumstances,

this "running" looks damn slow --

**KYNETTE**

struggles with the stuck knife as the cave-in knocks him off

the wall and buries him instantly --

**GABE AND MAGGIE**

cover the last ten feet, shoved forward by an airburst from

the giant explosion -- they make it to the crack's edge at

last, but on the

**OUTSIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN**

Gabe and Maggie still have to cling desperately to the sheer

wall -- the airburst has turned the crack into a wind

tunnel -- it's as if the mountain were trying to blow them

out.

**TOWER FACE**

Hal, shocked, stares at the enormity of the explosion. Qualen

looks serenely satisfied.

**QUALEN**

When I was seventeen, I was a sentry

on the East Berlin boundary.

There was a problem, then -- too many

defectors were managing to sneak

through the wilderness to the west. A

man would take them through, every

night of every week -- a man like your

friend.

(beat)

He had quite a sense of humor. Every

time he got someone through, he'd

radio us at midnight to let us know

how many. "Five tonight." "Eight

more have been freed tonight." No one

could find the route. It made me look

bad.

(beat)

I looked day and night and finally I

found it. A tunnel. I didn't tell me

superiors. I put a charge there, with

a timer to trigger a radio receiver on

the detonator. At midnight. Our friend

made his radio report, and I heard him

say "seven" before the explosion.

(beat)

They pulled eight bodies out of the

tunnel, and I was promoted to

intelligence the next day.

Hal, stunned, looks at the radio, realizing Qualen tricked

him into detonating the bomb. Travers, grinning, takes the

radio from Hal and pats him on the back.

**TRAVERS**

Thanks. We couldn't have killed him

without you.

**GABE AND MAGGIE - ON THE WALL**

The force of the airburst, as brief as it is strong, is over.

Dust slowly swirls out -- Gabe and Maggie raise their heads.

Gabe looks back -- the crack is now sealed off. Gabe takes a

piton and hammer from his belt and hands it to Maggie along

with the rope.

**GABE**

Knock this in the side. Make it firm.

Maggie does as Gabe takes the binoculars out, and climbs out

on a slim toehold so he can look up the wall.

**GABE'S POV - UP THE WALL**

Gabe whips the binoculars up to the top edge of the wall. It's

blurry -- Gabe focuses the binoculars on -- the third

bomb, visible on the mountain's edge. The LED counts down,

but it's partly obscured. All Gabe can see is the seconds, not

the minutes, that remain -- :42 -- :41 --

**GABE (O.S.)**

Bad news. There's another bomb up

there. We've got to move quick.

Gabe scans methodically but rapidly down the rock below. All

smooth. Until -- Gabe swings the binoculars back. There's a

lip ninety feet below, leading into the wall. A cave.

**GABE (O.S.)**

Good news. There's a cave down there.

**GABE**

puts away the binoculars and swings back to Maggie -- she lets

the length of rope drop. It's thirty feet long. Not even

almost long enough to get to the shelter. Gabe leans against

the crack wall, drained. Now what?

**HELICOPTER - MOVING OVER MOUNTAINS**

Frank is in the air, heading back out toward the range,

frantically working the radio.

**FRANK**

Maggie -- come in, Maggie, this is

Rescue One --

**TOWER FACE**

Frank's call is heard on the radio. Travers takes it, and

takes charge.

**TRAVERS**

There's our ride out of here. Everyone

out of sight -- except you, Kristel.

(hands her radio)

Make the distress call. You're so good

at it.

All scramble up towards the clearing.

**INSERT - THE THIRD BOMB**

We can see what Gabe couldn't -- the timer has about two

minutes left -- 1:59 -- 1:58 --

**GABE AND MAGGIE - AT THE CRACK'S EDGE**

Gabe looks completely defeated. Can't go up. Can't go back in.

Can't go down.

**MAGGIE**

(frantic)

What are we going to do?

**GABE**

(defeated)

Die. I'm sorry, Maggie. I'm sorry you

got into this.

Gabe and Maggie fuse together in a tight embrace -- a final

embrace. But Gabe opens his eyes as the rope, still in

Maggie's hand, brushes his cheek. The end is frayed.

Gabe's eyes light up. Inspiration. Gabe breaks off the embrace

and snatches the rope from her -- he pulls at the end and

furiously starts unravelling it.

**MAGGIE**

What are you doing?

**EXT. TREASURY PLANE CRASH SITE - DAY**

Davis has just filled in Wright on the "unconfirmed" distress

call. Wright looks furious.

**WRIGHT**

He didn't think a distress call from a

crashed plane was "important"?

(Davis nods)

Get me a fucking radio! Now!

**EXT. HELICOPTER**

flying over the mountains.

**INT. HELICOPTER**

Frank is practically there, heading toward the buttress and

the facing Tower.

**FRANK**

(over radio)

Come in, Maggie, over --

**KRISTEL (O.S.)**

(over radio -- "weak")

Alpha Charlie Niner -- please --

help --

Frank recognizes the pilot's voice from the "distress call".

**FRANK**

(over radio)

I copy, Charlie Niner -- what's your

position -- over --

An aerial flare fires up, leaving a clear marker.

**FRANK**

(over radio)

Sit tight, Charlie Niner -- I'm right

on top of you.

**GABE AND MAGGIE - AT THE CRACK'S EDGE**

Gabe is still unravelling the rope fiber -- it's three

different segments wound together. The helicopter flies

overhead -- and past.

**MAGGIE**

(shouting, waving)

Frank! Down here! Frank!

**GABE**

Forget about it. He can't hear you.

(hands Maggie some rope)

Tie these together. Tight.

**MAGGIE**

(realizing)

-- Are you out of your mind --

**GABE**

This is rope from the Gordon exhibit.

The way guys climbed then, they'd tie

on three at a time -- this rope'll

take around nine hundred pounds.

**MAGGIE**

Gabe -- this rope is sixty years old

**--**

**GABE**

(misses the point)

Yeah, they made it pretty good then.

Each of these strands ought to hold

about 300 pounds before snapping.

Gabe rapidly ties the rope to the piton -- Maggie works on the

third connecting knot as she does the mental calculation of

what she and Gabe weigh together.

**MAGGIE**

(dazed)

Ought to. About.

(beat)

Will it hold?

Gabe takes the line from her and lets it drop. Ninety feet of

what looks like twine.

**GABE**

Depends on how big a breakfast you

had. You want to go first?

Maggie's stunned -- but there's no choice. She starts the

rappel down, and Gabe is close behind.

**INSERT - THE THIRD BOMB**

is ready to blow -- 0:12 -- 0:11 --

**MAGGIE AND GABE - RAPPELLING DOWN**

To make this even trickier, they have to swing over to the

side about fifteen feet to get to the cave -- meaning they

have to move down in pendulum type swings that put even more

pressure on

**THE ROPE**

which looks sorely tested at one knot -- it's coming undone --

**MAGGIE AND GABE - RAPPELLING**

They swing down lower -- twenty feet to the cave, four

thousand to the ground --

**INSERT - THE BOMB**

**-- 0:04 -- 0:03 --**

**MAGGIE AND GABE - RAPPELLING**

They reach the end of the rope -- six feet above the cave

and fifteen feet away laterally.

**GABE**

(shouting)

Swing towards it -- and drop!

Maggie nods -- they start the swing over -- as they get over

the cave's lip --

**THE ROPE**

snaps --

**MAGGIE AND GABE**

fall, landing roughly on the cave's narrow lip -- Gabe

starts to slip over, but Maggie pulls him back as --

**ABOVE ON THE WALL**

The bomb detonates and starts raining debris -- an instant,

massive rockslide --

**MAGGIE AND GABE**

dive into the small cave as the rockslide tumbles past --

exhausted, they collapse on the cave floor.

**THE HELICOPTER - OVER THE TOWER**

Frank, obviously, is surprised by the nearby explosion.

**FRANK**

What the fuck --

But he sees Kristel in a clearing. Face down in the snow.

First things first.

**EXT. TOWER/CLEARING**

Frank lands near her, and rushes over to her. Frank turns her

over and breaks a capsule under her nose. She "wakes up" with

a start and looks "terrified".

**KRISTEL**

What -- who are --

**FRANK**

Don't worry. I'm here to help.

**KRISTEL**

(recovered)

Glad to hear it.

Kristel sees the snap is off Frank's holster -- she grabs it,

spins it around, and pulls the trigger. CLICK. Frank grabs

her wrist with a move faster than you'd expect from him, and

he yanks the pistol back.

**FRANK**

Jailhouse load. First chamber's

empty --

(aims gun)

-- the rest aren't. Forgive me, but

things have been a little strange this

morning.

Nearby, the helicopter radio crackles to life. Frank backs

toward the helicopter, keeping the gun trained on Kristel.

But Frank only gets to the helicopter door before --

**DELMER**

comes out of hiding and empties a clip from his automatic into

Frank. Frank is pinned to the door by the fusillade before he

can even get a shot off. Travers runs over to Delmer and

shoves the barrel up.

**TRAVER**

Stop!

(explaining)

You'll damage the helicopter.

As if to punctuate this, Frank -- and the now ruined pilot

side door -- fall to the ground. The radio continues to squawk

as Travers grabs Frank's discarded gun.

**TRAVERS**

(to Kristel)

Answer that.

Kristel brushes the snow off her and goes over to the radio.

**STUART (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Calling Rocky Mountain Rescue -- come

in, Rocky Mountain Rescue -- over --

**KRISTEL**

(keying radio)

Rocky Mountain Rescue One, over --

**EXT. TREASURY PLANE CRASH SITE - DAY**

Wright, davis, and an irritated Stuart huddle over a radio.

**STUART**

This is Ross Stuart, Federal Aviation

Administration -- please identify --

over --

**EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY**

By now, the others have come out of hiding and up to the

helicopter. Kristel grabs some papers from a plastic packet on

the helicopter seat -- and keys the mike.

**KRISTEL**

Copy, FAA. This is Margaret Deighan,

Rocky Mountain Rescue. Over --

**STUART (O.S.)**

We have an unconfirmed report of an

air crash in your area, and a distress

call on this frequency -- can you

confirm -- over --

**KRISTEL**

(keying mike)

Copy, FAA. Distress call came at

approximately eleven hundred hours

yesterday. I investigated -- the call

turned out to be a false alarm. Over.

**EXT. TREASURY PLANE CRASH SITE - DAY**

Stuart gestures with exasperated triumph.

**STUART**

Please repeat, Rocky Mountain

Rescue -- distress call was a false

alarm? -- over --

**KRISTEL (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Repeat, distress call was a definite

false alarm -- we've had several here.

Somebody's sick idea of a joke. Do you

require further assistance -- over --

**STUART**

Not from you. Thanks, Rocky Mountain

Rescue -- over and out --

Stuart shuts off the radio with finality.

**STUART**

I don't want to say I told you so. But

I did. Can I go back to work now?

**EXT. HELICOPTER/TOWER CLEARING - DAY**

Kristel smiles and puts the radio mike back into its bracket.

**TRAVERS**

I almost believed you myself.

Travers smiles and turns, looking at

**HAL**

trembling with fury and grief, bent over Frank's body as the

last trace of vapor -- his breath -- trails from his lips.

He's gone. Hal gently closes the eyes of his friend.

**HAL**

(quiet)

Goodbye, Frank.

Travers moves up behind Hal and kicks him.

**TRAVERS**

Time for number three. Unless you want

to have a longer conversation with him

elsewhere.

**HAL**

(low)

Fuck off.

Travers kicks him in the face, knocking him into the snow.

**HAL**

I think I'll wait here. You just

murdered three of my friends. Sooner

or later, whoever's chasing you is

going to show up and return the favor,

and I'd love to watch.

Travers puts his gun at Hal's forehead and shrugs.

**TRAVERS**

Suit yourself. You see, we just had a

little interface with several branches

of the federal government -- one of

whose members I know has zero

imagination -- and I can tell you, the

cavalry just isn't going to make it by

this week.

(beat)

No, you're taking us where we want to

go. Because you want to return that

favor and you want to do more than

watch. You want to kill me -- more

than anything, even more than you want

to keep on breathing, and with a

little more time you pray you'll get

that chance.

(tightens trigger)

Am I right?

Hal's answer is a stony, loathing stare. He gets up. But --

**INSERT - HAL'S HAND**

-- we can see Hal has palmed something from Frank's body.

**INT. CAVE - GABE AND MAGGIE**

Dust from the rockslide is drifting past the cave opening, but

the worst is over. Gabe rolls Maggie over carefully.

**GABE**

Are you okay?

**MAGGIE**

My ears are ringing -- but I'm all

right. Gabe, what's going on?

**GABE**

(shows money in his pack)

This. That plane crash -- it's a half

dozen guys who were smart enough to

steal fifty million bucks, but dumb

enough to drop it all over the range.

They've got Hal as a bird dog -- and

right now they're heading for the rest

of it.

**MAGGIE**

Where?

**GABE**

It's close to the lake -- Hal's

probably leading them on the slowest

possible route down to it.

(stiffly gets up)

I can get there first -- all I have to

do is make it along the north wall to

the Bitker ladder --

**MAGGIE**

"All?" Jesus, Gabe -- what do you

expect to do then?

**GABE**

(aching)

Something -- subtle.

Gabe lurches towards the cave opening, looking more like

Quasimodo than a champion climber. Maggie stops him.

**MAGGIE**

I'm going with you.

**GABE**

No way. You're climbing back down --

try to get to the station or find some

help.

**MAGGIE**

I'm just as good a climber as you

are -- and right now, I'm definitely

in better shape.

**GABE**

(hard)

And you're definitely not going --

Maggie stares Gabe down. Guess who won all the arguments when

they were together. Gabe's face is a portrait of familiar

exasperation.

**GABE**

Okay. Come on --

As they move out of the cave together, Gabe favors one foot.

**GABE**

-- but the second you slow me down,

I'm leaving --

(slips on sore leg,

Maggie catches him)

-- I'm leaving you behind. Understood?

**MAGGIE**

(helping Gabe out)

Anything you say, Gabe.

**EXT. TREASURY PLANE CRASH SITE - ON CHUNK OF WRECKAGE**

If you have a good imagination, this corner of charcoal looks

like it could have been --

**WRIGHT (O.S.)**

One of the currency cases.

**WRIGHT AND DAVIS**

are standing over some of the wreckage. One of the suits bags

and tags the "briefcase".

**DAVIS**

We've tested the ash inside -- it's

the right paper.

**WRIGHT**

What about the men?

**DAVIS**

It's -- hard to tell. But forensics

says yes. All of them were in the

plane.

**WRIGHT**

(sags with the news)

Everything's accounted for, then --

time to head back and start making

excuses.

(beat)

Fifty million bucks up in smoke, and I

just don't give a shit. It's one more

run of the press. But we lost five

good men and they aren't so easily

replaced.

(beat)

Especially a guy like Travers.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP/TOWER - HELICOPTER - DAY**

Dedicated agent Travers leans in reasonable comfort against

the helicopter and keys his headset mike.

**TRAVERS**

Qualen. How far along are you?

**QUALEN (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Not as far as we'd be with the

helicopter.

**FURTHER DOWN ON MOUNTAIN/TOWER**

Qualen, Kristel and Delmer follow Hal's lead down the side --

it's not too steep a grade, but it's solid rock and it's

covered with ice and fresh snow -- all have to brace

themselves with their hands to keep from slipping down.

**TRAVERS (O.S.)**

(over radio)

We have less than half a tank of fuel,

Eric -- if we burn it up treasure

hunting we'll never get off this rock.

Now -- how far away are you?

**QUALEN**

(keys radio)

It looks like two miles, but --

Qualen's foot slides out from under him -- he catches himself.

**QUALEN**

-- it'll take some time.

**TRAVERS (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Time we have -- Walker's dead,

Wright's an idiot. And our guide --

**QUALEN**

(keys radio)

What about him?

**TRAVERS (O.S.)**

(over radio)

As soon as he becomes a convenience

instead of a necessity -- kill him.

**QUALEN**

(keys radio)

Agreed.

**HAL**

can only hear Qualen's end of the conversation -- but his face

shows he can guess what they're talking about.

**CUT TO:**

**GABE'S FACE - CLOSE**

Gabe's rattled too -- but for a brand new reason -- we PULL

BACK to see Gabe at

**THE WIRE'S EDGE**

where the wire -- that wire -- links the buttress with the

facing Tower. Whipping in the wind, it looks risky -- but

that's not the problem.

Gabe stares at the other edge for a moment. Immobile.

Remembering Susan's death. Gabe shakes out of it when --

**MAGGIE**

Gabe?

(beat)

I'll go first.

**GABE**

(shakes his head)

If I don't go first, I might not go at

all.

Gabe hooks his ankles over the wire and starts dragging

himself, hand over hand, across the abyss -- no safety line

this time. As his weight pulls the line taut, the wind rocks

him back and forth. Gabe steadily drags himself out --

**GABE ON WIRE - LONG SHOT**

Fatigue stops Gabe in the middle -- a half mile up, strung

between two gigantic mountains, he looks as insignificant and

alone as a man possibly can be --

**CLOSER ON GABE**

Panting with exertion, frozen -- he can barely hold his grip

and has an elbow crooked around the wire for support. Gabe's

eyes are shut -- he looks near collapse --

**FLASHBACK - GABE'S POV**

Gabe is falling from the wire in slow motion, trailing

Susan -- she spirals out of reach as his line SNAPS him

back --

**GABE'S**

grip unconsciously relaxes -- but his eyes jolt open and he

clamps both hands shut on the wire. Gabe, drawing on some

inner fury, drags himself with long, sharp yanks --

**MAGGIE**

tensely watches Gabe's crossing --

**OVERVIEW - GABE**

is about ten feet away from the end --

**GABE'S UPSIDE-DOWN POV - THE END OF THE WIRE**

looks a lot further away than that --

**GABE**

pulls faster -- and reaches the other side. Gabe maintains his

hand grip and swings his feet onto the ledge, leaning back

against the wall to catch his breath.

**GABE**

(winded, shouting across)

Think you can beat my time?

**MAGGIE**

smiles -- this is more like the Gabe she remembers. She gets

on the wire and starts across in a fast, easy rhythm.

**GABE**

watches her, grinning. Admiration for Maggie is washing away

bad memories of Susan.

**GABE**

(to himself)

Shit -- she is in better shape.

Maggie pulls across fearlessly -- but --

**INSERT - THE BOLT**

on Gabe's side of the wire is giving where Travers had

hacked at it -- just a millimeter, but it's pulling loose --

**GABE**

doesn't notice and shouts across at Maggie, now half way.

**GABE**

(enjoying it now)

Quit sandbagging it -- I haven't got

all day --

**INSERT - THE BOLT**

is coming looser -- Maggie's quicker crossing is thrashing the

wire and straining the bolt's weakened anchoring --

**GABE - WATCHING MAGGIE**

who is now twenty feet away -- fifteen -- ten -- five --

**INSERT - THE BOLT**

pops out of the wall as if it were shot --

**THE WIRE**

which was tight as a bowstring fires out into the chasm --

Maggie, stunned and without options, lets go two feet short

of the ledge --

**GABE**

drops low just as Maggie starts to fall and swings his arm out

towards hers in one lightning-fast motion --

**THEIR HANDS**

catch --

**GABE**

maintains his grip on Maggie's hand, but her weight nearly

pulls him off the ledge -- Maggie drags him down, the window

goes out of his chest when it collides with the ledge's

bottom, but their grip holds.

All of this in a split second. Maggie hangs from Gabe's arm,

locked in terror -- but skill wins out over fear. She finds a

handhold with her free arm, and climbs up to the ledge with

Gabe's help. Maggie collapses into Gabe's arms and they fall

back against the wall, but Gabe's the one who's really holding

on tight.

**GABE**

That -- tears it.

(gasping)

You're not coming any further.

**MAGGIE**

(just as breathless)

Gabe -- you're going to get yourself

killed --

**GABE**

(breath almost back)

Maybe. But I'm not getting you

killed.

(she starts a reply)

Look, Maggie. I don't know what'll

happen when I catch up with Hal -- but

I've got to know one thing for sure --

that you're making it off this

mountain. Alive.

Gabe's eyes are pleading. Maggie hesitates. But gives in.

**MAGGIE**

Okay.

Gabe lightly kisses Maggie -- he doesn't want to turn this

into a farewell kiss, afraid that that's really what it might

be. They stand -- and separate. Gabe moves away.

**GABE**

Get on the trail and stay out of

sight.

(beat)

I'll see you on the ground.

Maggie wonders if she will as Gabe vanishes around a corner.

**EXT. TREASURY PLANE CRASH SITE - CLOSE ON BODY BAG**

as the zipper is pulled down -- before we can see anything we

mercifully reverse POV to

**WRIGHT, DAVIS AND STUART**

near a helicopter, look down with disgust. Davis turns away.

**WRIGHT**

I give up. What was it?

A SEARCH PILOT zips the bag back up.

**SEARCH PILOT**

ID says this used to be your pilot.

(beat)

And we found him seven miles east of

the wreck.

Davis and Wright look at each other, drawing the same

conclusion.

**WRIGHT**

A hijack.

(beat)

The plane was hijacked. Son of a

bitch --

**STUART**

Oh, give me a break. Your pilot lost

it when the flight started going

south, and he bailed --

**SEARCH PILOT**

Excuse me -- but there's no parachute

there. Check it yourself.

Before this can go on, a FORENSICS AGENT runs up to Stuart

carrying a recorder.

**FORENSICS AGENT**

Sir -- we found the flight recorder --

it was driven twenty feet deep into a

crater. It was demolished, but we

salvaged the recording --

**STUART**

(grabbing it away)

I've heard a thousand of these, Wright

-- whoever was at the stick is going

to begin by screeching the Lord's

Prayer and wind up screaming "Oh,

shit" at ground zero --

Stuart clicks the recorder on with a flourish, but his smug

look melts as the voice of FBI agent Matheson explains --

**MATHESON (O.S.)**

(shouting, rushed)

-- the money's been stolen -- Travers

and the pilot were in on it -- the

pilot's dead, but Travers took the

cash and made a mid-air transfer to a

jet flown by Qualen -- controls won't

respond --

(screaming)

shiiiiii--

Matheson is cut off by the sound of impact, which is followed

by silence. Wright gently turns the recorder off.

**WRIGHT**

Guess we're both right, Stuart. Thanks

for your expertise.

(turns to pilot)

Well?

(jerking a thumb back)

You'll be waiting till Groundhog's Day

for him to pull his head out of his

ass -- let's get it in the air!

Wright, Davis and the pilot scramble into a helicopter --

Stuart pauses, but goes after them.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN WALL/TOWER - HIGH ANGLE - GABE MOVING ON A**

**LEDGE**

that's a little narrower than your coffee table. It's got

irregular breaks, causing it to go up or down several feet --

and Gabe is jogging it, leaping across the ledge's gaps,

leaning toward the wall -- and away from the four thousand

foot drop.

Gabe's gotten his second wind -- he keeps jumping from ledge

to ledge with the ease that comes from skill and familiarity,

and with renewed purpose. Gabe makes the last jump to a

section of ledge near the bottom of

**THE "BITKER" LADDER**

which consists of metal rungs woven into loose steel cable

bolted into the rock, running two hundred feet to the top --

something left behind by a past expedition, now a tourist's

toy. And the bottom rung is three feet above Gabe's

outstretched arms.

**GABE**

Hasn't gotten any lower in the last

year.

(coiling for jump)

Bitker, you cheap bastard. Would

another four feet have killed you?

Gabe leaps up, grabbing the bottom rung instead of a half mile

of air, and he shoots up the ladder as we PULL BACK --

**WIDER ANGLE ON MOUNTAIN WALL**

A closer look at terrain seen earlier -- fifty yards away from

the ladder, a waterfall is spewing out of the wall, giving the

appearance that the mountain has sprung a torrential leak.

As we track Gabe up the ladder, we can see where the water's

coming from -- a whirling lake on top of the mountain. Its

constant motion keeps it from totally freezing, but the lake

is still coated with a veneer of ice, moving in thick chunks

through circular currents on the surface.

**ELSEWHERE ON MOUNTAIN SLOPE - HAL AND GANG**

are negotiating the grade, which is slippery, thanks to the

fresh, thick snow -- we can see from their relative position

to the lake that Gabe has a lead on them. A very slight one.

**TOP OF LADDER - GABE**

pulls himself over and starts running -- as he does, he

uproots a big, 3' x 3' park service sign commemorating the

"BITKER CLIMB" and takes it with him, moving ahead into a

**WOODED AREA**

where Gabe replants the sign near the top of another slope.

Gabe heads down towards some rocks -- -- and spots the third

case, which took a tough landing on one rock -- it's shattered

into halves, and the bands of $5000s are scattered around in

the snow.

Gabe rushes down behind a rock and starts gathering the

cash -- soaked by the snow, they've frozen into ice bricks. As

Gabe stuffs them into his pack, he's startled by something

coming over the rock -- Gabe whirls around to face

**A RABBIT**

that's landed in the snow and looks a lot more frightened than

Gabe was. Gabe leans back, relieved. For now.

**EXT. FURTHER UP ON SLOPE - HAL AND GANG**

are closer now -- but as they move down, Hal freezes in place

as he sees the "Bitker" sign some distance ahead. The sign is

out of place. A signal from Gabe -- he is alive. And here.

Qualen and the others check the monitor. Hal takes the

opportunity to back up to a rock formation and swiftly, subtly

wedge something into a crack behind his back --

**INSERT - THE OBJECT**

is what Hal lifted off Frank's body -- a speed load cylinder

from a revolver, with six fresh bullets in it.

**QUALEN**

checks the monitor -- the relative position shows they're --

**QUALEN**

Almost there.

-- but Qualen's grin is wiped away as he looks down at --

**THE MONITOR**

-- the tracer blip is moving -- fast -- away from their

position!

**QUALEN'S**

face shifts from incredulity to realization to rage.

All eyes are on the monitor -- Hal, at the rock formation, has

one hand behind his back.

**INSERT - HAL'S HAND**

shakes a box of matches from his sleeve -- he slides a single

wooden match halfway out of the pack -- and ignites it with

his thumbnail --

**HAL**

moves away from the rock, to draw their attention from what

he's been doing --

**HAL**

Oh, no -- you didn't lose another

one, did you?

Delmer clicks off his safety and aims at Hal -- Qualen runs

into the woods, guided by the monitor -- Kristel follows.

Delmer backs Hal up at gunpoint. Hal deliberately moves in a

semi-circle, putting Delmer's back to the rocks.

**DELMER**

What about him?

**QUALEN**

(over his shoulder)

Kill him! Now!

Delmer grins as he aims at Hal.

**DELMER**

Tell me -- where would you like the

first half dozen shots to go?

**INSERT - THE MATCH**

has burned more than halfway down to the rest of the box,

which is behind the speed load cylinder --

**HAL AND DELMER**

**HAL**

(hands up)

As long as you're taking requests --

how about -- the base of your spine?

Delmer smiles and starts to squeeze the trigger -- Hal tenses

up, it's now or never --

**INSERT - THE MATCH**

burns down to the box, igniting all the matches --

**ON DELMER**

as there is the sudden sound of six distinct, consecutive

gunshots behind him -- the fire's blasted the powder in all

the bullets. Delmer, startled, spins around and FIRES up,

FIRES down, FIRES across -- by the time he realizes no one's

there and he turns back around to find --

-- Hal is gone, vanished into the woods.

**FOLLOWING QUALEN**

through the woods -- up a slope, around a tree, down another

slope -- his eyes fixed on the screen and the blip that's

zig-zagging just ahead of him.

**QUALEN**

(tagging headset radio)

Travers. Get down here. Now.

**TRAVERS**

is trying to repair the helicopter door when the call comes.

**TRAVERS**

Have you found the money?

**QUALEN (O.S.)**

No. Walker has.

Travers, furious, flings the door aside, jumps into the copter

and starts the rotor.

**QUALEN**

is running alone, following the monitor lead -- until he sees

a band of $5000s in the snow. Sure he's on the right track,

Qualen picks it up and picks up his pace too. But we can see

that behind him and higher up --

**GABE**

who is on a rise behind a rock, watches Qualen's futile

pursuit from a distance, amused. Amused, until --

**KRISTEL**

You would have lived longer, if you

weren't such a smartass.

Gabe spins his head around -- and his temple smacks into

Kristel's gun barrel.

**KRISTEL**

You telegraphed this kind of stunt

with that joke snowman. Too bad for

you we're not all gullible.

Kristel starts to squeeze the trigger.

**GABE**

Good thing for Qualen you are.

**KRISTEL**

(pauses, wary)

What do you mean?

**GABE**

When he comes back, he's going to

shoot you and the other guy, grab the

money, and take off with Travers.

**KRISTEL**

(squeezing trigger again)

No sale. Say "night-night" --

**GABE**

(talking fast)

He already blew up one of your pals in

that crevice. And I've been in that

copter. It goes a hell of a lot

farther with two people than with

four.

(beat)

Am I wrong? Give him a buzz.

Kristel eases back with the gun.

**KRISTEL**

You've got my attention.

**GABE**

You've also got all the money. And I

can show you how to get off the

mountain with it. Right now.

**ELSEWHERE ON MOUNTAIN - HAL**

tears into a clearing, trying to put some distance between him

and Delmer -- as soon as he's out in the open, though,

**THE HELICOPTER**

thunders over Hal -- Travers FIRES down at Hal through the

doorless pilot's side. Bullets kick up tufts of snow at Hal's

heels as he runs down into a steep, sloping wooded area. The

tree cover is too thick for Travers to take good aim. Looks

like temporary refuge -- but

**INSIDE THE HELICOPTER**

Travers finds a new use for the search copter's heat

scope -- using the blip that betrays Hal's body heat as a

guide, Travers can still fire down through the trees at

**HAL**

who's still running down the grade -- he hasn't been hit yet,

but there's an awful lot of bad luck in the air --

**TRAVERS**

banks the helicopter around and up for another pass.

**EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE MOUNTAIN/TOWER WOODS - QUALEN**

is slogging uphill after his own tracer blip -- which is

turning back around and heading towards him. Qualen aims his

gun and waits, but at the top of the hill --

**THE RABBIT**

that spooked Gabe earlier sticks its head up for a curious

sniff. It has the tracer fastened to its neck with a currency

band. Furious, Qualen FIRES at the rabbit -- it safely speeds

away as Qualen smashes the useless tracer monitor and turns

around.

**EXT. TRAVERS IN HELICOPTER - TRAVERS POV**

On the heat scope. The blip that represents Hal -- vanishes.

Delmer, who has caught up, is at the edge of the tree-lined

area -- he looks up at Travers.

**TRAVERS**

(keying headset radio)

He's hiding twenty yards in -- be

careful.

**EXT. WOODS - DELMER**

"replies", beeping twice on the headset's ear button as he

moves downhill into the woods, closely following Hal's

tracks -- they lead up to the replanted "BITKER" sign. Just

big enough to hide behind. Delmer smiles, and advances toward

the sign --

-- and looks behind it. Nothing but a mound of snow. Delmer

looks again to the tracks, which lead toward

**A SMALL ROCK FORMATION**

also big enough to conceal Hal. Delmer moves toward it as --

**BEHIND THE "BITKER" SIGN**

the mound of snow shifts as Hal climbs out, silently shaking

off the cover -- the snow hid him not only from Delmer, but

from the heat scope as well --

**TRAVERS IN HELICOPTER**

hovers overhead, watching Delmer's blip on the heat scope --

but Hal's blip returns, rushing ahead --

**TRAVERS**

(keying headset radio)

He's right behind you!

**DELMER**

whirls around at the warning, his gun BLAZING, but Hal is too

fast -- he swings the sign like a club, knocking Delmer's gun

away into the snow. Before Hal can swing again, Delmer

brutally punches Hal in the face -- stunned, Hal drops the

sign --

**IN HELICOPTER - TRAVERS POV**

Travers can't do anything now but watch the heat scope as if

it were a video game -- now it's just one big blip --

**DELMER AND HAL**

thrash around in the snow, pummelling each other -- Hal's

getting the worst of it, as Delmer manages to get on top of

him and deliver a series of punishing blows to his face. Ready

to end it, Delmer tries to get the bolt gun off a clip on his

front pack strap -- but he has trouble unfastening it. Hal

rallies with a solid punch to Delmer's face. Hal gets Delmer

off of him and follows with two more.

Delmer is knocked away, landing on the sign board -- but clear

from Hal -- another chance to get the bolt gun off --

Hal quickly moves to the sign and grabs its post -- before

Delmer can move off the sign's board, Hal's running forward.

shoving the sign ahead of him with Delmer on top -- Hal lets

go, and the sign, with Delmer, sleds downhill on the hard

packed snow --

**TRAVERS IN HELICOPTER - TRAVERS**

can now see one blip moving quickly away from the other --

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

Something's moving fast down the

hill -- is it Tucker?

**HAL**

has found Delmer's fallen headset radio and put it on.

**TRAVERS (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Answer me! Is it Tucker?

Hal smiles and beeps twice -- affirmative.

**IN HELICOPTER**

Happy at last, Travers takes off after the blip, flying down

the incline and staying just above the trees, strafing an

intense fusillade at

**DELMER**

who's screaming as a storm of bullets rip through him and the

sign and the surrounding snow, keeping pace with his downhill

slide --

**TRAVERS IN HELICOPTER**

FIRES until his clip is empty -- he heads for the end of the

tree line as his target comes out, skidding to a stop in the

snow. Travers gleefully moves lower down for a closer look

but is shocked to see

**DELMER - ON "SLED"**

Delmer's highly perforated body rolls off the sign as it

finally skids to a dead halt.

**CLOSE ON TRAVERS**

who is apoplectic -- he's just shot one of his own men.

**HAL (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Thanks loads.

(beat)

I couldn't have killed him without

you.

Travers looks down at the heat scope -- blank.

**HAL**

is hiding his body "heat" under a rock formation.

**IN HELICOPTER**

Stymied, Travers furiously banks it away from the wooded area

and circles around the mountain's other side.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN - SLOPING GRADE - GABE AND KRISTEL**

Gabe, hands on his head, moves down a slope near a mountain

edge, ahead of Kristel, who's aiming her gun at his back.

**KRISTEL**

How much further?

**GABE**

(stops)

It's right over there.

Gabe nods ahead, indicating what looks like a

**A SHED**

that is partially obscured by snow, about twenty feet distant

across a snowy plateau.

**GABE AND KRISTEL**

**GABE**

It's a storage locker for the rangers.

Everything you need to get off the

mountain is in there -- skiis, food --

I'll show you --

Gabe shows a sudden burst of enthusiasm and starts quickly

moving ahead again -- Kristel suspiciously notices this --

**KRISTEL**

Don't move.

Kristel gets ahead of Gabe and walks backward, keeping her gun

trained on him as she crunches through the snow.

**KRISTEL**

Skiis, food -- and maybe guns too,

right?

(moves backward)

Keep walking. Not too close.

**GABE**

We'd make better time walking straight

ahead. Qualen's not going to be

hopping down the bunny trail too much

longer.

**KRISTEL**

(walking backward)

Right. So I'd better have one less

problem when he arrives.

**GABE**

(knowing this means him)

Don't fuck up. You still need me to

show you a route off the mountain.

**KRISTEL**

You've worn that one out, Walker --

(snaps back bolt)

-- I'll find my own way down.

Kristel solidly plants her feet firmly to shoot Gabe, but her

feet sink through the crystallized snow cover -- --

Kristel completely disappears down through the snow as it

collapses under her -- she's pulling the trigger and SHOTS

go wild as she sinks and sinks --

**ON GABE**

who's had to drop flat on his stomach to avoid the same

fate -- as he scrambles back to solid land, Kristel's SHOTS

arc up through the snow toward him, and the snow crumbles

around him -- but he bellies ahead as --

**ON THE SNOWDRIFT'S TOP**

Kristel's GUNSHOTS slow, and finally, stop, the very last of

them loosening the snow around --

**THE "SHED"**

that was obscured by snow was a tall, three-sided park service

sign shouting "WARNING -- SNOWDRIFT -- DO NOT CROSS" in eight

different languages. The rest of the snow falls away from it,

revealing a cautionary but cheesy illustration -- a

stick-figure fatally sinking into the snow.

**GABE**

bellies ahead, flat on his stomach, testing the snow with the

ice axe's staff -- only when he hits something solid with it

does he get back up to his feet. But the sound of ice-crusted

snow CRUNCHING above Gabe alerts him that --

**QUALEN**

has just hit the top of the slope and spotted him -- Qualen's

gun BLAZES down --

**GABE**

is on the run, but it's that lead-footed, slow motion stuff

that only happens in nightmares -- with every step, a foot

breaks through the icy crust and sinks into two feet of

snow -- Gabe stays just ahead of the barrage, making it into

**A THICK WOODED AREA**

which is very temporary refuge -- Qualen will be down in

seconds. Gabe looks down the slope. Running is impractical. So

he sits down.

**QUALEN**

arrives where Gabe was and looks down the slope --

**QUALEN'S POV - GABE**

is whizzing down the slope in a sitting position, using his

back and his shoes as gliders, the ice axe as a rudder.

Alpinists call this a "sitting glissade". Colorado climbers

call it "butt skiing". Some psychos do this for fun.

**GABE'S POV - THE SLIDE**

is anything but fun -- Gabe can't control his speed or

direction well at all -- Gabe barely manages to steer in and

out of trees and boulders in his path --

**QUALEN**

starts running down the slope -- he doesn't have speed, but he

does have the machine gun -- he FIRES short bursts at --

**GABE**

who tries to steer away from the line of fire -- Gabe is hit

in the shoulder -- he slides out of control, and rolls down --

-- to the slope's bottom. Gabe painfully lifts himself up and

moves through the woods, coming out of the trees to

**THE LAKE**

The bridge that spans it is ahead of Gabe -- but there is

nothing around but flat terrain. It's a beautiful sight, but

no good for hiding. And Qualen is right behind him.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN SLOPE - HAL**

rushes down to Delmer's body -- in the snow, he finds the

discarded machine gun and holds it up, but stray bullets from

Travers' fusillade have made it inoperable. Hal tosses it

aside and checks Delmer's bloody pockets for more weapons.

Nothing. Just a couple of machine gun clips, and the bolt gun.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - MAGGIE**

is wending her way down a hiking trail on the opposite side of

the mountain. In plain view,

**TRAVERS IN HELICOPTER**

is circling the mountain -- he spots Maggie from on high and

moves down after her.

**MAGGIE**

hears the helicopter, and turns around -- she has no way of

knowing it isn't Frank, so she takes off her jacket and waves

it as a signal --

**MAGGIE**

Frank! Down here!

The helicopter moves down until Maggie can see --

**TRAVERS**

is at the controls.

**MAGGIE**

starts running, but it's useless. Nowhere to hide. Travers

hovers over her, FIRING ahead of her, FIRING behind her, not

to kill, just to make a point. He's in charge.

**EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL**

Maggie finally stops -- Travers lands the copter and opens the

passenger door, keeping his gun trained on her.

**TRAVERS**

Hop in. I know someone who'd like to

see you again before he dies.

**EXT. BOTTOM OF THE SLOPE - QUALEN**

moves down to the slope's edge, noting with pleasure the blood

in the snow. Gabe is wounded, and he's left a trail as a

bonus.

Qualen moves out lakeside -- nothing visible but the thick,

flat ice chunks circling in the currents. But Gabe's

footprints and blood lead straight ahead to the bridge.

Qualen starts to run across the bridge, but stares down --

**QUALEN'S POV - THE BRIDGE'S PLANKS**

The blood -- and slush from Gabe's boots -- end halfway

across.

**QUALEN**

Smiles and shakes his head. Too obvious. Gabe is hiding

underneath the bridge, in the three foot deep network of steel

supports. Qualen slows his pace, staring down through the

thin, but visible cracks between the planks.

**TIGHT CLOSE-UP - GABE'S FACE**

grimacing, shivering, ashen from his wound and exertion --

lined shadows on his face confirm he is under the bridge.

**QUALEN (O.S.)**

You've come a long way to die.

**QUALEN**

enjoying himself, slams a fresh clip into his machine gun.

**QUALEN**

If you were smart, you'd have left

your friend behind. I would have.

There's no shame in staying alive.

Qualen stops, staring down. Through the gaps, Gabe's parka is

visible. Right where the blood trail ends.

**QUALEN**

(aims down)

But you're not smart. And now you're

going to die from an overdose of

heroism.

Qualen BLAZES the gun into the planks --

**UNDER THE BRIDGE - GABE**

is clinging to the steel supports of the small bridge,

several feet ahead of where his empty parka is being

shredded by the FUSILLADE -- without the parka, Gabe is

freezing, and too many bullets are coming too close for

comfort as they RICOCHET on the bridge's supports --

**QUALEN**

stops firing and kicks away the planks, which are a tangle of

toothpicks at this point -- Qualen bends down --

-- and sees there's nothing in the parka except for Gabe's

back. Qualen's face registers anger and surprise as -- -- Gabe

appears at the edge of the hole -- before Qualen can react,

Gabe swings up with his ice axe, hooking it around the

shoulder strap of Qualen's machine gun -- Gabe yanks down,

and Qualen falls head first

**UNDER THE BRIDGE**

with Gabe -- Qualen catches himself by hooking an arm and a

leg on one of the steel supports -- but both

**THE ICE AXE AND THE GUN**

fall, landing on separate chunks of ice floating underneath

the bridge --

**IN THE SUPPORTS**

Gabe pulls himself through the girders to Qualen and punches

him with his good arm, but Qualen is unfazed -- neither are in

good position, it's like a fistfight on a jungle gym -- --

Qualen steadies himself to savagely punch Gabe in his

shoulder wound -- Gabe YELLS in pain and tries to block the

next one, but Qualen punches him again, and Gabe lets go of

the support, falling -- -- on the way down, Gabe grabs

Qualen's leg with his good hand -- too low to grab the bridge,

Gabe dangles just over the water, raising his legs above it as

Qualen tries to kick him off -- -- Gabe holds onto Qualen's

leg, and swings on it like a pendulum -- Gabe twists the leg

-- Qualen loses his grip on the icy steel and lets go --

both

**QUALEN AND GABE**

fall -- they land hard, not in the water, but on a

raft-sized chunk of ice driven under the bridge by the

current. Their weight teeter-totters the ice as they get up --

they're in danger not just from each other, but from

**THE FAST APPROACHING WHIRLPOOL**

where the ice chunks are drawn into the fiercely swirling

vortex that drains into the waterfall --

**ON THE ICE RAFT**

Qualen and Gabe circle each other like cautious boxers, as the

ice itself swirls in the current -- if either makes the wrong

move, they'll both go over. Gabe swings at Qualen, but Qualen

throws a leg under Gabe and stiff-arms him down -- Gabe hits

the ice hard, his chest hanging over the side -- Qualen moves

in to shove him off -- but their combined weight on the same

side of the ice starts to tip it over -- Gabe viciously

kicks Qualen back, gashing his face with his boot's crampon as

Qualen grabs the ice raft's opposite side, levelling it.

**QUALEN**

(wiping the gash)

Stalemate, isn't it?

**GABE**

(winded)

Not any more.

Gabe, still prone, reaches out -- the chunk of ice with

Qualen's machine gun is floating by. Gabe snatches up the gun

and pulls the trigger. Nothing but an empty CLICK.

**QUALEN**

Far more intimidating when it's

loaded.

The chunk of ice with Gabe's ice axe floats by Gabe -- Gabe

grabs for it, but misses -- as the ice raft spins around,

Qualen manages to snatch it up -- Qualen scythes it down at

Gabe, slamming the blade into the ice as Gabe rolls away --

**WIDER VIEW - THE ICE RAFT**

is nearing the center of the whirlpool -- the current is

faster and stronger here -- if it doesn't swallow the ice

raft, it will definitely upend it --

**QUALEN AND GABE**

stay on opposite sides of the ice raft for balance -- Qualen

swings out at Gabe with the axe. Gabe ducks and tries to go

low to hit Qualen with the gun, but Qualen swings the axe down

again, whizzing right past Gabe as it sinks into --

**THE CENTER OF THE ICE RAFT**

-- a crack spiderwebs through the ice around the blade --

**GABE**

quickly reacts, jumping onto another bed-sized chunk of ice

floating by, landing on his stomach and braking himself by

digging his crampons in -- just as --

**QUALEN**

realizing what deep shit he's in, looks for another chunk of

ice to make the same move -- to sees one just out of reach.

Qualen pulls the ice axe out of the raft's center to drag the

other chunk closer in -- -- as he does, the entire raft

disintegrates under him -- Qualen plunges into the water, and

tries to maintain a slippery grip on what ice is left --

-- but now at the center of the whirlpool, Qualen is drawn

into the vortex --

**GABE**

struggles to his feet and looks down, wincing --

**GABE'S POV - QUALEN GOING DOWN**

Qualen's inaudible scream is just a burst of rising bubbles as

he shoots down to the bottom of the lake -- and beyond --

**QUALEN'S POV - UNDERWATER**

Qualen is shoved with incredible force and speed through the

lake's tunnel drain --

**ON THE MOUNTAIN WALL - THE WATERFALL**

BLASTS OUT full force, hurling a still thrashing Qualen a

half a mile to the ground below!

**GABE**

has no time to celebrate -- the chunk of ice he's on leaves

him moments from the same fate. One more time around, and

it's down the drain. Gabe takes a deep breath. No choice. He

leaps --

**WIDER VIEW - THE ICE - GABE LEAPING**

-- from one chunk of ice to the other, running the way you

would across stones in a stream, zig-zagging to catch the ones

big enough to support him -- only his crampons keep him from

sliding off, only his momentum keeps him from capsizing the

ice chunks, which shoots away from him in his wake --

**GABE**

lands on an ice raft floating towards the bridge. No choice --

Gabe lunges off the ice raft and reaches for one of the bridge

supports -- his hand catches -- but it's slippery and he's

weakened -- Gabe slides off, but --

**A HAND**

reaches down and grabs him --

**HAL**

pulls Gabe the rest of the way onto the bridge. Gabe's

surprise gives way to a grin almost as big as Hal's.

**HAL**

(eyeing Gabe's ruined

shirt)

Nice outfit.

(hands him his parka)

I know you never liked the orange, but

**--**

**GABE**

Didn't care for the Smokey The Bear

hats, either. That's why I quit.

(pulls on parka)

You all right?

**HAL**

I feel better than you look. I can

live with that.

Gabe looks down at the parka -- it's completely full of

bullet holes.

**GABE**

Hardly seems worth zipping, huh?

(serious now)

Frank?

Hal sobers -- shakes his head no. A cloud passes over Gabe's

face.

**HAL**

It's not over, Gabe. Travers took the

helicopter.

**INSIDE HELICOPTER - FLYING ELSEWHERE OVER MOUNTAIN**

Maggie's hands are cuffed to a bar on the helicopter's roof.

Travers keys his headset radio while piloting the copter.

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

Qualen -- Kristel -- come in --

**HAL AND GABE ON BRIDGE**

Gabe hears Hal's borrowed headset radio crackling -- he holds

his hand out to Hal.

**GABE**

May I?

(dons it, keys it)

They can't talk right now, Travers.

Kristel's busy making snow angels --

and I'm not sure, but I think Qualen

is still falling.

(radio silence)

Any messages?

A moment's silence -- then --

**MAGGIE (O.S.)**

(over radio)

Gabe?

**GABE**

(keying it)

Maggie --

**INSIDE COPTER - TRAVERS**

yanks the radio off Maggie and puts it back on --

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

You wanted to make a trade earlier,

Walker -- still interested?

**GABE (O.S.)**

(pause)

I've got the money. Fly to the lake.

And if you touch her --

Travers cuts off the radio, smiles, and banks the helicopter

down around the mountain wall.

**GABE AND HAL ON BRIDGE**

**HAL**

Now what?

**GABE**

I have no fucking idea.

(holds Qualen's gun)

Empty.

**HAL**

(smiling)

Not for long.

Hal fishes into his pockets and pulls out one of the ammo

clips he took from Delmer, Gabe tries to force it into the

gun's stock -- but it's the wrong size.

**GABE**

(sagging against rail)

Why can't anything be easy?

**THE HELICOPTER**

thunders around the mountain wall, getting closer --

**HAL AND GABE**

have crossed the bridge, near the mountain edge -- Gabe, now

wearing his pack again, nods over to the wooded area.

**GABE**

Stay over there --

**HAL**

Look -- let me --

**GABE**

-- what, throw snowballs at him?

Just -- whatever happens -- get Maggie

out of here.

**HAL**

(relenting)

Count on it.

(beat)

And Gabe? Thanks for tagging along.

**GABE**

(smiles)

Thanks for asking. I forgot how much I

enjoyed rescue work.

Gabe limps toward the mountain's edge as Hal runs into the

woods.

**THE HELICOPTER**

blasts along the wall towards the lake -- the waterfall and

the ladder are just ahead. The copter radio crackles --

**WRIGHT (O.S.)**

(from radio)

Come in, Rocky Mountain Rescue --

urgent -- come in --

Travers recognizes the voice -- frowning, he snaps off the

radio and banks the helicopter up over the top --

**TRAVERS IN HELICOPTER - TRAVERS POV**

tops the precipice, revealing Gabe, standing on the end of a

narrow spur -- it just out from the edge like a diving board.

Gabe has his pack on one arm -- the money is visible. Gabe

levels Qualen's emptied gun on Travers and the copter -- this

bluff is all he has left.

**GABE**

(over radio)

Remember that bet you made? About

whether I could find the money for you

or not?

(holds pack over drop)

You won.

Travers helplessly flies in low, tight circles over Gabe and

the spur -- if he shoots Gabe, the money falls too, Travers

presses his gun at Maggie.

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

I'll kill her --

**GABE**

(over radio)

You do, and the spring thaw's going to

be worth thirty million bucks.

(pause)

No rush. I'm sure you've got lots of

time.

**TRAVERS**

(into radio)

All right. Drop the gun first.

**GABE**

(into radio)

When she's safe on the ground.

**EXT. SPUR/COPTER**

Travers has no choice but to give in -- he gives Maggie the

handcuff key, and she frees herself as he flies away from the

spur, touching the copter down on the mountain top.

**TRAVERS**

(to Maggie)

Get out.

Maggie moves out the door and stares uncertainly at Gabe.

**GABE**

(shouting)

Run!

(she doesn't)

Run!

Maggie runs for the trees. When Gabe is sure she's safe, he

throws the gun away -- but keeps the pack suspended over the

edge.

**GABE**

(into radio)

Now come and get it. My arm's getting

tired.

**EXT. HELICOPTER**

Travers flies the copter up and over, until he and it are five

feet away from Gabe's position on the spur. Gabe is buffeted

by the copter's wind, but stands firm. Travers levels his gun

at Gabe through the open passenger door as Gabe heaves the

pack in. Travers doesn't even look down -- he just stares at

Gabe with hate as he prepares to shoot.

**GABE**

(shouting)

Don't you want to count it?

Puzzled, Travers takes his gun hand and rips open

**THE PACK**

The $5000s are there -- but they've been shredded by

Qualen's earlier blast of gunfire. Few, if any, of the bills

are passable.

**TRAVERS**

stares down, incredulous -- as he does --

**GABE**

rips open a perforated section of parka and yanks his bolt

gun from his waist --

Travers looks up and raises his gun at Gabe -- but Gabe fires

first -- the bolt imbeds itself high in Travers' chest.

Gasping, Travers drops his gun -- it falls over the pack and

out the open door -- Travers clutches at his chest --

**GABE**

Don't spend it all in one place, you

son of a bitch.

Travers falls back in his seat and loses control of the

helicopter -- it spins around, and Gabe has to instantly

flatten to avoid the tail when it swings at him -- Gabe looks

down as --

**THE HELICOPTER**

quickly begins to spiral down in wide, aimless circles --

Travers has clearly lost control --

**GABE**

stares down coldly, waiting for the crash -- but --

**INSIDE THE COPTER - TRAVERS**

won't give up -- sweating, bleeding, he sits forward and

grabs the stick, seizing control of the helicopter again --

**GABE'S POV - THE HELICOPTER**

stops its uncontrolled descent and begins to rise up and

up -- with clear purpose --

**CLOSE ON GABE**

eyes widening with realization. Gabe gets up from the spur and

starts running back towards the woods -- several hundred yards

from safety -- before he can get very far --

**THE HELICOPTER**

tops the precipice edge and, sweeping low over the snow, it

gets between Gabe and the trees, cutting him off --

**WOODED AREA - HAL AND MAGGIE**

watch, powerless --

**HAL**

He's going to run Gabe down --

**TRAVERS IN HELICOPTER**

Ashen, hyperventilating, he's running on pure adrenalin and

fury as he drives the stick forward --

**TRAVERS POV - GABE**

is stiff-legging it toward the edge of the mountain -- but

he's too banged up to run fast through the thick snow --

**THE HELICOPTER**

with its skids skipping just over the snow overtakes --

**GABE**

as he throws himself flat into the snow -- the front of the

skid misses Gabe by inches as it blasts over him --

**THE HELICOPTER**

moves out over the precipice edge -- Travers banks it wide to

circle back around for another run --

**GABE**

gets back up as the helicopter swings back behind him --

**IN A WOODED AREA**

Hal rips the lining out of one of his pockets and stuffs it

into one of the ammo clips -- Maggie stays back as he runs for

all he's worth out into the clearing --

**THE HELICOPTER**

has circled back around, stopping at a hover far back in the

clearing -- Travers intends to not just run Gabe over, but to

run him off the edge as well --

**GABE**

lumbers as fast as he can towards the edge --

**TRAVERS**

knows he has Gabe nailed -- he shoves the stick forward --

**THE HELICOPTER**

flies forward, skids just inches over the snow --

**HAL**

runs out to where Travers is heading -- he lights the cloth

in the ammo clip -- as

**THE HELICOPTER**

flies past

**IN THE CLEARING**

Hal hurls the clip, with its cloth "fuse" burning down, into

the doorless side of the copter --

**INSIDE THE HELICOPTER**

-- the makeshift bomb bounces to the floor of the cockpit --

Travers sees it and looks down, but --

**THE "FUSE"**

sputters out -- nothing but glowing embers in the cloth --

**TRAVERS**

smiles -- nothing to worry about -- he speeds ahead --

**CLOSE ON THE HELICOPTER'S SKIDS**

as they slice through the top of the snow towards --

**GABE**

as he runs toward the mountain's edge -- it's just a couple of

feet ahead, but the copter is a couple of feet behind --

-- as the copter overtakes Gabe, dipping even lower into the

snow, he dives off the edge --

**FOLLOWING GABE - FALLING**

Gabe is at the ladder -- he falls the first twenty feet of the

long drop, then grabs a rung on the cable ladder, very

painfully stopping his fall -- but in the same split second --

**THE HELICOPTER**

skid meant to impale Gabe catches the top two rungs of the

cable ladder --

**WIDE SHOT - THE HELICOPTER**

-- caught in the rungs of the cable ladder, the helicopter

keeps flying out over the abyss, but as it pulls the cable

ladder, it pops out the bolts that hold the ladder in place,

rung by rung -- -- still going full tilt, the copter strains

against the ladder -- thirty feet of it tethers the copter

to the wall -- -- and Gabe is dangling from the center of

it.

**ON THE LADDER - GABE**

has one arm hooked around a rung, hanging on for his life as

the copter thrashes the ladder up and down --

**INSIDE THE COPTER**

Travers is disoriented by the jolt, and tries to maintain

control -- he doesn't see --

-- that the cloth fuse on the ammo clip has reignited -- it

burns down to the clip, and fifty rounds explode like a

string of firecrackers --

-- Travers tries to shield himself as he is struck by airborne

lead. Shrapnel blasts into the instrument panel --

**THE HELICOPTER**

still strains against the cable ladder but the engine goes

dead -- the rotor blades slow --

**GABE ON LADDER**

Gabe stares in horror at the stalling rotor -- if it were

possible for him to grip the ladder tighter, he'd do it now --

**ON THE HELICOPTER**

-- as the rotor WHOPS to a dead halt the copter arcs down

and slams against the mountain wall -- the skids are still

caught in the ladder, and it holds --

**GABE**

is shaken off by the massive impact -- he falls -- --

landing on the helicopter, half in and half out of the

cockpit! As Gabe scrambles for a solid hold --

**INT. HELICOPTER**

-- Travers, who has been shaken to the opposite side of the

copter, reaches into his jacket and pulls out the pistol he

took from Frank -- he aims at Gabe --

**INSERT - THE HELICOPTER SKID**

One of the two rungs holding the copter up bursts --

**THE HELICOPTER**

slips, now hanging from just a single rung -- -- and the

impact of the slip makes Travers drop the gun -- it falls out

the open passenger door. Travers scrambles up through the

cabin to go after -- -- Gabe, who is trying to get off the

helicopter and onto a solid part of the ladder before the

whole thing goes down -- Gabe jumps for the wall as

Travers scrambles behind him and --

**CLOSE ON THE HELICOPTER SKID**

-- as the last rung supporting the copter snaps in two --

**GABE**

grabs hold of the ladder as

**THE HELICOPTER**

plummets down -- but as it starts its fall --

**TRAVERS**

leaps from the falling copter and grabs Gabe's leg -- Gabe

struggles to support both of them, but Travers, weakened from

his wound, loses his grip on Gabe's leg -- he stares up in

terror at Gabe as he clutches Gabe's snow-slick boot --

**GABE**

Cheer up. It's a beautiful spot to

die.

Travers slides off and away --

**THE FALL - LONG SHOT**

Travers SCREAMING as he free falls, trailing behind the

helicopter -- we follow the entire four thousand foot drop --

-- until the helicopter explodes when it hits the ground far

below, and the fireball engulfs Travers just before he

impacts into the explosion!

**GABE**

looks down at the burning wreck and clings to the ladder,

closing his eyes for a moment in exhaustion. But the WHOPPING

of another helicopter makes him look up --

**THE TREASURY HELICOPTER**

has shown up, a little too late to be of any help.

**INSIDE THE TREASURY COPTER**

Wright, Davis and Stuart look at the billowing flames of the

wreck -- even from here, the burning money is visible,

drifting up in the smoke. Wright turns to Stuart.

**WRIGHT**

I'm no expert -- but what do you make

of that "event"?

**GABE**

is drained -- from somewhere, he finds the strength to lift

his head up --

**GABE'S POV - THE WALL**

The section of ladder above him, of course, is gone -- he has

to cover the fifty feet of wall above him by free climbing.

There are holds that look easy enough for him, but --

**GABE**

leans back, gripping the ladder, too tired to move. Just the

thought of one more climb drains him.

**GABE**

(mumbling)

Forget it. No fucking way. I'm staying

right here. I've spent the night on

walls before -- some of the best

nights of my life have been spent

lashed to walls --

Before Gabe can take this any farther -- a loop tied to the

end of a rope falls to a stop next to him. Gabe looks up --

**ON THE EDGE - HAL**

has thrown the line down. Maggie is by his side.

**HAL**

Remember -- keep your arms and legs in

the vehicle at all times --

**GABE**

puts the loop around himself and tightens it by rote -- even

this action aches.

**GABE**

(too tired to shout)

Fuck you --

Hal and Maggie draw Gabe up -- Gabe pulls some of his weight

by using hand and foot holds, but when he reaches

**THE PRECIPICE EDGE**

Hal and Maggie are both winded from the effort as they haul

Gabe onto the top. Gabe unties himself, and collapses into

Maggie's lap.

**HAL**

(winded, coiling the

rope)

Jesus Christ -- you think you could

have put a little less effort into

that climb? I mean, what have you done

for me -- lately?

Hal ends his harrangue and looks over -- Gabe has apparently

revived, because he and Maggie are locked in the kiss of their

lives. Hal stands, and smiles -- he walks toward the Treasury

agents, who are scrambling out of the helicopter. Hal starts

an explanation that's going to take a long, long time as --

**GABE AND MAGGIE**

break off their kiss.

**MAGGIE**

Does this mean you're staying?

Off Gabe's answering smile, we --

**FADE OUT.**