

THE TWENTY-THIRD LETTER

by

Stephen Billias

And

Dennis Lanson

Part 1 of the Dexter Sinister trilogy

Part 2 -- *The 36*

Part 3 -- *The Messiah Comes*

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EXT DOME OF THE ROCK NIGHT

Figures moving in the shadows. We make out the graceful golden hemisphere of the Dome of the Rock in Old Jerusalem. Someone is shooting crude handheld video from a cell phone. The person turns the phone toward their face, a video selfie. It's a Japanese face, strangely emotionless --the face of a fanatic.

JAPANESE MAN

We do this for you, Shiyama-Sensei.

Long shot...a large group of people moving in the darkness...some of them break off from the main group and disappear...then we hear small explosions, everywhere except near the Dome...a massive wall rising in the murk behind them, which is unprotected for a few seconds. The group quickly forms a ring around the wall on the open plateau....

...they hold hands...chanting...then...a tremendous explosion! A fireball rises, flames shooting into the sky. Dust, chaos, confusion, a terrible roar that gradually subsides...an enormous crater is all that remains of the Dome of the Rock...we hear weeping and wailing, and the sound of distant police sirens... that morph into ...

CUT TO BLACK SCREEN

...a baby crying and an alarm clock going off... VERY SLOWLY, we FADE UP TO:

INT WESTSIDE NYC APARTMENT DAY

The wife, LOLA, is up getting dressed. Moving around the half-darkened room. DEXTER SINISTER, the husband, is asleep, but coming to.

He's in his late thirties or early forties, and he's got the slightly weathered handsome, craggy look of a man who's had a lot of experience. Brown hair, athletic but not buffed, square jaw, skeptical eyes. Maybe a little bit of the shyster to him.

Lola's a dark-haired beauty, but right now, frazzled. He smiles at her. She glares at him.

DEXTER

Morning, Lola.

LOLA

You snored your way through the night. I was up for half of it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER
 (looking at his groggy self in
 the mirror)
 I coulda been a contender.

DEXTER rises, heads to the shower. Lola dresses as the TV plays late-breaking news: another cult mass suicide in Japan, and a mysterious ferry full of commuters, all dead, which crashed into a pier somewhere in the Osaka area.

INT KITCHEN DAY

Dex and Lola rummage for coffee, cereal, juice.

DEXTER (V.O.)
 We have to wake Rachel. She's due at the airport in two hours.

LOLA (V.O.)
 Do you think this trip is a good idea?

DEXTER (V.O.)
 We've been over this, honey. She'll be fine. They have chaperones. Besides, it's Japan that's going crazy right now. The Middle East is fairly quiet.

LOLA (V.O.)
 Okay, wake her up.

But before Dexter can open his mouth to shout her name, a voice calls down from the next room in an exasperated voice--

RACHEL
 Got it!

Dexter shrugs.

Only at the very end of this scene, or even the beginning of the next scene, do we fully realize that neither Dexter nor Lola nor Rachel have been talking out loud. They're hearing what each other are saying, and sharing their thoughts. If it weren't so middle-class domestic and tame it would be creepy. Okay, it's creepy, but in a good-natured way.

INT HALLWAY DAY

Dexter knocks on the door of Rachel's bedroom. Now Dexter and Rachel are talking out loud...

DEXTER
 Rachel? I gotta say goodbye, I gotta go to work. Mom is taking you--

INT RACHEL'S ROOM

A HUGE EYEBALL pops open, filling the frame. Again that annoyed voice...

RACHEL

Got it!

IN THE HALLWAY

ON DEX, beginning to fume.

But then the door opens and Rachel leaps toward Dexter and gives him a big quick hug. Behind her we see a typical teen girl's room, bright colors, clothes piled everywhere, quirky trinkets and treasured items scattered about.

DEXTER

Be safe.

RACHEL

I will, Dad.

DEXTER

Don't fall in love with any Israeli soldiers.

RACHEL

Dad!

DEXTER

You have numbers to call in an emergency.

RACHEL

Got it, Dad.

DEXTER

And, uh, if you really get stuck you have that other way to get in touch--

RACHEL

Dad! I don't do that any more, remember? I'm just a normal kid.

DEXTER

Uncle Dan will meet you --

RACHEL

He's not really my uncle--

Frustrated Dex starts --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

I know, I know, but he's one of your mother's oldest and dearest --

RACHEL

I won't have much time to visit. I'm supposed to stay with my group. Gotta shower. 'Bye Dad.

She disappears, a whirlwind, into the bathroom.

Dex continues to stand at the door, bemused, looking into his daughters room.

The camera lingers on a faded clipping in a gold frame: **"Child's Letter-Writing Campaign Frees Three Whales"**, with a picture of Rachel as a child, watching from shore as the whales head out to sea...

EXT BLUE WATER DAY -- FLASHBACK

Extreme close-up of a whale's body moving slowly past the camera. We see a huge eye, a blowhole, a fin, but it's so close it's hard to make out anything. The whale's body finally passes the camera, and behind it appears a beautiful little girl of seven or eight, her face pressed to the glass of the world's largest aquarium pool.

RACHEL

He's going to roll on his back now, Daddy. He told me.

DEXTER

(off camera)
Sure, Rachel honey.

On cue, we see the whale in the background, an immense shape slowly revolving.

RACHEL

We have to get him out of there, Daddy. He doesn't like it in there.

DEXTER

If he was in the ocean you wouldn't get to see him so close, Rachel.

We get just a glimpse of "Daddy", DEXTER SINISTER as a young man. At a glance, he looks to be full of energy, but, "unformed", as the Japanese would say.

RACHEL

Yes I would. He told me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Father and daughter walk away from the strange, sun-filtered-through-water lighting of the aquarium, Rachel craning back towards the whale and waving goodbye...

...close on the whales' stunning EYE...it almost smiles!

A NERVE-JARRING SCREECH CRESCENDOS...

INT NEW YORK SUBWAY STATION DAY

..and the A train rumbles through 96th St, and grinds to a halt. Eight-thirty on a workday morning. A heaving mass of sweaty commuters of all colors, shapes, and sizes all try to push their way on at once. Trains pulling in and out, people shouting, milling about. Chaos, confusion. NOISE.

DEXTER waits across the platform for the downtown local. He's dressed in khakis and a short-sleeve shirt, and he carries a beat-up leather briefcase

DEXTER (V.O.)

Except for my daughter flying off to Israel on her Birthrights trip, it was a day like any other day. Me and a million other schlubs trying to get to our boring workaday jobs. Well, maybe mine was more interesting than most. I'm a talent agent for specialty acts. Business is good. Vaudeville and the circus are making a comeback. People are tired of computers and special effects. They want to see what real people can do to amaze them. I book acts like Chumash, the Human Regurgitator, Hammerhead Wally, the boy who pounds nails with his forehead. Hell, I can probably find some talent right here at 96 and B'way.

DEXTER glances around. The camera pans to the non-stop carnival that is New York City. Panhandlers in rags, buskers singing for spare change, commuters in suits, uptown boys in do-rags and baggy pants, the occasional flashy hooker, pickpockets working the crowd, Puerto Ricans in strappy T-shirts and tattoos, old Russian women in babushkas, dovening Hasids, a veritable parade, the human comedy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER (CONT'D)

It all started innocently enough. I hopped on the downtown local just like every morning, heading to my office in Times Square, the center of the known universe, at least if you're in my business.

We see DEXTER board the train. It pulls out of the station.

INT SUBWAY TRAIN DAY

DEXTER is seated between a black kid with a boom-box and a very average-looking New Yorker, maybe a librarian or an office worker in street clothes, reading the Post. At 72nd the normal-looking man gets off, and a RABBI in black Hasidic dress takes his place. The train lurches forward again. After a moment, the RABBI turns to DEXTER.

RABBI

So, nu, are you interested in the case?

DEXTER doesn't realize at first that the RABBI is addressing him. He ignores the initial sally, forcing the RABBI to repeat himself.

RABBI (CONT'D)

I said, will you help us?

DEXTER

(does his best Travis imitation)

You talking to me?

RABBI

You are Dexter Sinister, The Cosmic Detective, aren't you?

DEXTER (V.O.)

I should'a mentioned, in addition to my talent agency, I have a hobby. I like to investigate phony spirituality. Kinda like Harry Houdini in the twenties. I expose false prophets, defrock phony TV evangelists, bust up seance scams, that kind'a thing. Maybe it's because of that little thing in my family, where we know each other's thoughts. Makes me skeptical and annoyed when I see fakery.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

How did you know--?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The RABBI ignores DEXTER's question. The train pulls into the 59th Street station. The black kid gets up and exits. A towering TRANSGENDER PERSON of indeterminate sex, dressed in a paisley shawl, hip waders, and a Hawaiian shirt that clashes wildly with the rest of his costume, sits down next to DEXTER and begins to primp his/her hair, which is an obvious flaming red wig. DEXTER pays him no never-mind.

RABBI
The world needs you.

DEXTER
Uh, yeah.

RABBI
You will?

DEXTER (V.O.)
I should have been like Quasimodo in the belfry, I mean, my brain should have been ringing like Big Marie was clanging a millimeter from my eardrum. Nothing.

DEXTER (CONT'D)
What are you talking about?

RABBI
It all begins in stillness and silence.

We see that DEXTER is startled and fascinated by the fervor in the RABBI's kindly bearded face.

DEXTER
What?

DEXTER means "What are you talking about?" but the Rabbi responds as if he really wants to know.

RABBI
Everything. All human activity. The cosmos itself. It begins in silence, and explodes into existence. Knowing this will help you, because what you are looking for-

DEXTER shoots the RABBI a quizzical, disbelieving look--

DEXTER
What I'm looking for? I'm not-

RABBI
Do you know how many letters there are in the Hebrew alphabet?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Once again DEXTER is caught off guard by a non-sequitor. He stands up.

DEXTER

Listen, I'm not even Jewish. I have no idea, and my stop is coming up. If you want to--

The RABBI ignores him again, and continues as if he is addressing a small boy. 50th St. The crowd moves toward the door, jostling and shoving.

RABBI

There are twenty-two letters, from Aleph to Tav. However, legend has it that one letter is missing. No one knows what it is, how to pronounce it, or what wondrous words might be formed from it. When this Twenty-Third letter is found, miraculous events are promised to occur. The world will come into harmony. All will be well. I think I can say without blaspheming that this is the Holy Grail of Judaism.

DEXTER

And--you want me to find this missing letter.

RABBI

Exactly. Will you do it?

DEXTER

If this letter has been missing since the beginning of time, why the sudden urgency?

RABBI

Ah, but look at the world now. Look around you.

The camera pans over the subway car and its suffering human cargo. The TRANSGENDER PERSON winks at DEXTER.

DEXTER

Hmmm. Yeah, I see your point. But only when you're not wearing your yarmulka.

RABBI

Someone has threatened to use the missing letter for evil.

DEXTER

A different letter?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RABBI

No, the same one. As written. It's all in the sound. If the wrong person uses it, the letter will be killed, and all hope lost.

DEXTER rolls his eyes, catches the eye of the TRANSGENDER PERSON, who rolls his/her eyes too, under the plucked brows, under the glossy overdone silver eye-shadow.

DEXTER

How do you kill a letter?

The RABBI is unfazed. He answers quickly, because the train is slowing down for the 42nd Street stop.

RABBI

You extinguish its light.

DEXTER

What on earth are you talking about?

RABBI

(solemnly)

Nothing on earth. The Baal Shem Tov said: "Within each letter there are worlds, and souls, and divinities."

(with sudden passion)

These letters are alive, aflame!

DEXTER shies away from the RABBI, who's clutching his black vestments as if he's about to rip them from his body.

DEXTER

I'm getting off here.

(aside, to the TRANSGENDER PERSON)

It takes all kinds, don't it?

TRANSGENDER PERSON

It do, man, it do.

DEXTER shuffles toward the subway door with the mob of other people who are getting off at 42nd. The RABBI gets up as if to follow him, but when the doors open, he stays behind.

Suddenly, unreasonably, ALL SOUND FALLS AWAY. The #2 IRS Express races into the station on the center tracks, but NOISELESSLY. It's as if the station has suddenly been submerged in water. DEXTER reaches up to clear his ears, but it doesn't help, he's a prisoner in a mad mime's nightmare. People are shouting and shoving, trains are pulling in and out, but he can't hear anything except the RABBI'S smooth, insistent voice, from the open subway door:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

RABBI

What you are searching for is a sound.

The doors close silently. The #1 Broadway Downtown pulls out, DEXTER and the RABBI staring at each other as the RABBI disappears into the blackness of the tunnel. Sound returns, gradually, not all at once. The first noise DEXTER hears is the unearthly screeching wail of brakes as the #3 IRS uptown arrives across the platform. This sound merges with the raucous wail of a klezmer clarinet as the scene changes to..

EXT TIMES SQUARE DAY

DEXTER is walking toward his office in a shabby building above one of the ubiquitous cheap camera and electronics shops that line 42nd Street. He's still trying to pop his ears. 1`

INT DEXTER'S OUTER OFFICE DAY

DEXTER enters his office anteroom. A host of characters waits to audition. There's JUMBO JIM, the world's tallest man, as his stature and the sandwich board sign he wears like a T-shirt proudly proclaim. In one corner, a dwarf and a monkey, both in three-piece suits. In another, a pair of SIAMESE TWINS, placidly passing juggling balls to each other. Each twin has one arm, but they work together effortlessly, and manage some tricks a normal two-handed person would not imagine much less be able to do.

As DEXTER enters, they rise and drift toward him like the undead. But he ignores them all and passes through as quickly as possible toward his inner sanctum. The outer and inner offices look like a knockoff of Sam Spade's digs, except the waiting room is populated with freaks instead of beautiful women. DEXTER's secretary, a perky young brunette named SANDY, tries to flag him down but DEXTER hides behind his briefcase and tries to run the gauntlet--

SANDY

Dexter!

DEXTER

Good morning, beautiful. Hold my calls. And ask these magnificently talented people to wait, I'll be right with them. Send me in the morning line-up, will you, sugar?

SANDY

You don't have one. These are all walk-ins.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

Okay, give me a minute.

He dashes into his inner office and slams the door. SANDY sighs, pouts, and glares at the assembled, who dutifully return to their seats.

CUT TO:

INT DEXTER'S INNER OFFICE DAY

DEXTER slings his briefcase onto the desk, pops his ears a couple more times as if still remembering the incident on the subway, and heaves himself into his chair, where he proceeds to do nothing for a minute. Then moving with exaggerated deliberateness, he lifts the receiver and pushes one button--

DEXTER

All right, Sandy...

A short, silent montage to music follow, of DEXTER looking bored as he watches a variety of acts perform in front of his desk. JUMBO JIM'S lariat tricks, SIAMESE TWIN JUGGLING, perhaps one more. Punctuated by DEXTER shouting "Next" as each act troops out. Finally, there's only one more person in the waiting room.

CUT TO:

INT OUTER OFFICE DAY

LAHONSA MALOODY is seated, waiting.

DEXTER

Next!

LAHONSA MALOODY shuffles in. He's a middle-aged man, balding, wearing a coat too heavy for the warm weather; nothing special about him except he's smoking a rather large STOGIE, Cuban, with an ostentatious paper band near the tip.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

What's your name?

MALOODY

Lahonsa Maloody at your service.

DEXTER looks up.

DEXTER

Okay, what's your schtick?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Without another word, MALOODY draws a big drag from his cigar and, using the cigar like a pointer, writes a Hebrew letter in the air. Only it stays there, like a skywriter's exhaust, forming an almost solid shape. As DEXTER watches, amazed, MALOODY uses the cigar as a pointer again and the letters come alive, lining up, shifting around, never losing their shape. MALOODY works them like a pro, never touching them, but making them form patterns and spin in circles before DEXTER's eyes. DEXTER leans back in his chair. He's truly impressed.

MALOODY

Pretty good, eh? There's only one problem.

He pauses. DEXTER frowns.

DEXTER

Okay, I'll be your straight man. What is it?

MALOODY

I'm missing one. Oh, the tricks I could do then, if I only had that missing letter.

DEXTER

Lahonsa Maloody my ass. What's your real name? Why did you come here? Get out. Come back tomorrow and I'll show you how you did that trick, I swear I will.

MALOODY

There is a magician greater than all of us, and He wishes His letter returned to Him.

DEXTER

Get out, I said.

CUT TO:

INT TORAH STUDY ROOM - BROOKLYN SYNAGOGUE - DAY

The rabbi from the subway is sitting alone in a small Brooklyn synagogue's Torah study room, poring over ancient texts. He looks up, sniffs the air, sees a wreath of curling smoke, and as he's turning says--

RABBI

I'm sorry, nu, but there's no smoking in here--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then he sees who it is, and quickly prostrates himself. It's the man who calls himself Lahonsa Maloody and did cigar tricks in Dexter's office. He's puffing on a big Cuban now...

LAHONSA MALOODY

Get up, get up, schmuck!

The Rabbi scrambles to his feet but keeps his face averted from Maloody.

RABBI

My lord, my lord!

Maloody waves his cigar to silence the Rabbi. Removes a sheet of paper from the inside pocket of his jacket.

LAHONSA MALOODY

Ya screwed up. I sent ya to get Sinister.

RABBI

I did, I did!

Maloody tosses the paper at the Rabbi's feet.

LAHONSA MALOODY

Ya got the wrong one.

The Rabbi scurries to pick up the piece of paper. Reads,

RABBI

Oy! "Rachel." That "R" looked like a "D" to me.

LAHONSA MALOODY

You know what he said to me? This wrong Sinister? He said: "Lahonsa Maloody, my ass!" I've half a mind to smite him. Instead, I'm going to let him wander around over there, half a world away from where he wants to be...

RABBI

I screwed up.

LAHONSA MALOODY

Exactly. Now fix it.

RABBI

I'll fix it, I'll fix it!

He looks up, but Maloody has vanished, leaving only a single Yiddish word hanging in the air, writ in cigar smoke: PUTZ!

INT DEXTER'S OFFICE LATER

Dexter is on the phone with Lola.

DEXTER

I have no idea. Did Rachel get off okay?

LOLA (V.O.)

She's in the air now. Uncle Dan said he'd met her at the Customs exit point. Can you bring home some Chinese?

DEXTER

Yeah, sure.

(beat)

Look, when I met this rabbi something weird happened. All the sound stopped.

LOLA

Dex, baby, isn't this what you do for fun? Make fools of these fools? Just like when I was an exotic dancer, to take the pressure off my day job.

Dexter picks up a picture of Lola from his desktop. Younger and more gorgeous than we saw her nursing this morning. Clad in, well, almost nothing. Flaunting it.

DEXTER

Yeah, I'm pretty sure you were the only Wall Street trader who stripped as a hobby.

LOLA

So, forget this rabbi.

DEXTER

I guess.

LOLA

General Tso's and some Shu Mai.

DEXTER

Got it.

INT AIRPLANE NIGHT

Rachel is with her group, flying to Israel. It's late at night. Everyone has settled down to sleep on the red-eye. Some kids still have their earbuds in. Most have covered themselves up with the flimsy airline blankets. Rachel's in a window seat. Her seat-mate stirs and gets up to go to the bathroom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rachel tosses and turns trying to get comfortable, first facing the window, then turning back toward the aisle. As she does so, she realizes that it is no longer a teenage girl sitting next to her, but an elderly, bearded Rabbi! It's the Rabbi who confronted Dexter on the A train.

RABBI

Be ready.

RACHEL

What?!

RABBI

When the time comes, be ready.

This is weird! There's a flash of lightning out the window. Rachel turns quickly to look, and when she turns back, the Rabbi is gone, and her seat-mate is settling back into her seat.

Rachel is perplexed, but says nothing, merely craning her neck to see if she can see the old man anywhere in the aisle, but there's no one who looks like him. There's no one in the aisle at all. Everyone is asleep. Uncertain as to what has just happened, Rachel pulls the blanket up over her and tries to fall asleep.

EXT ON AN NYC STREET DAY

Dexter walks up to a shop with a sign announcing "Nathan's Bagels". It's got a window to the street so you don't have to go inside. NATHAN himself, a short, balding man with a friendly round face and a big smile, pops his head through the open window.

NATHAN

Dexter my man. How's the "new vaudeville" business? Any crazy acts coming your way?

DEXTER

Too many. Gimme a dozen mixed and a pound of schmear, Nathan.

NATHAN

Sure, sure.

He calls over his shoulder--

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Lenny, a sack jumbled and a tubba!

Turning back to Dex--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN (CONT'D)

How's the wife?

DEXTER

Great, Nathan. Couldn't be better.

NATHAN

And the kid?

DEXTER

Fine, fine. Listen Nathan, I got a little problem, I thought you might be able to help me out.

NATHAN

Name it, my friend.

Dexter looks uncomfortable, but continues...

DEXTER

So, tell me about the lost tribes of Israel.

NATHAN

You want the Irish ones, or the Africans, or maybe the Chinese?

DEXTER

I want the real ones. If you were a betting man--

Nathan hands over a bulky bag and takes money from Dex...

NATHAN

Dust My Broom in the sixth at Aqueduct tomorrow afternoon--

DEXTER

No, I mean, if you had to pick one that was the most likely candidate--

Nathan leans in close and collars Dex--

NATHAN

Okay, Dex, pal, this is what you're looking for, but don't say you heard it here. This is too hot for my blood...

He hold up his SmartPhone, pantomimes for Dex to do the same, and beams Dexter a file.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Now get lost, and don't forget your schmear!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DEXTER

Thanks, Nathan.

Dexter walks away, holding the bag of bagels and cream cheese in one hand, and his phone in the other. He clicks Play on the new file. Up comes a video... It's Shiyama, a tall imposing Japanese man in a ten gallon hat, spurs, chaps, and Western boots. He tips his hat cowboy-style, and starts singing...

SHIYAMA

"Bury me not on the lone prairie
Where the coyotes wail and the wind blows
free
And when I die don't bury me
Beneath the western sky on the lone
prairie"

Dexter stares at the image. In closeup we see that the image of Shiyama's face is composed of thousands of tiny letters-- Hebrew, English, Cyrillic, Hindi, Arabic, and while Dex watches the letters swirl around and re-form into the animal face of Coyote the Trickster...leering at him...

DEXTER

(recoiling)

Jesus!

INT AIRPLANE NIGHT

Dexter is on a plane heading to Japan.

DEXTER (V.O.)

It wasn't easy telling Lola I was taking off for a few days, but I had to go. Too many things were whack. Sound doesn't just stop, smoke rings don't just dance in the air, a Japanese cowboy doesn't turn into Coyote...

Dexter closes his eyes, trying to sleep on the plane ride...

EXT WESTERN DESERT DAY

FILLING THE FRAME...a turquoise medallion on the dusty black hat of a cowboy moseying across a purple sagebrush landscape, framed by the huge ball of a setting sun. It's Shiyama, the man from the cell phone video, in full regalia.

Western music plays, maybe "Home on the Range", something instantly recognizable, deep, slow, and sappy. We should feel we're in the middle of an old Marlboro Man ad.

Shiyama crests a rise and ahead of him we see:

A FIVE-STORIED PAGODA!

The music morphs to a speeded-up, tinny, five-tone...a Japanese version of the same song.

PULL BACK

...to see Shiyama riding herd on A DOZEN JAPANESE "DUDES" in various stages of Western dress, playing at being cowboys while a Japanese video camera crew records their antics for their memory treasure chests. But the purple sage landscape is a painted backdrop and the pagoda is a miniature. We're somewhere in Japan, on a movie set? Who are these people?

In the front corner of the frame stands DEXTER.

As our cowboy - SHIYAMA - dismounts, it is clear that the western-dressed employees (all Japanese) taking his horse, opening the front door, ushering him into a sacred courtyard, treat him with great deference, like the avatar he is. The further into the sanctum he walks, the clearer this becomes.

DEXTER tries to follow, but is stopped by a burly security guard. The guard holds up a finger, the universal signal: wait. The gates close behind Shiyama.

DEXTER

It wasn't hard to find him. Taro Shiyama was a celebrity in Japan, leader of a strange cult called the Shidoists, and poster-boy for the right wing. He made the writer Mishima look like a choir boy.

IN THE COURTYARD

Shiyama's people are strewing flowers in his path and chanting aloud, now outside the hearing of the weekend "cowboys." One in particular draws our attention, a beautiful young woman, YUMI, who seems to have a special place in the cult hierarchy. She assumes a place at Shiyama's right hand.

SHIYAMA's minions, who have observed these rituals, now fade away. Even YUMI is dismissed...leaving him in solitude.

IMAGE SHIFTS TO SPLIT SCREEN. ON ONE SIDE

SHIYAMA doffs his clothes, puts on phylactery and yukata, takes out his HORAGAI (conch shell). On the other side of the split screen...

INT DESERT SYNAGOGUE DAY

In a hidden synagogue carved into the rock somewhere in the Israeli wilderness...

A RABBI puts on his phylacteries and tallis shawl, takes out a Shofar (ram's horn).

SIMULTANEOUSLY, BOTH MEN BLOW THEIR RESPECTIVE INSTRUMENTS

The two sounds mingle exquisitely as both sides go to black.

:

INT TERMINAL MORNING

Rachel's group of sleepy teenagers is passing through customs with their chaperones. Rachel is looking around to see if she can spot the old man who spoke to her on the plane last night. She doesn't see him.

When she reaches the customs official we see but don't hear her asking about the Rabbi, gesturing to her face to indicate a beard and holding up her hand to indicate the Rabbi was short. The customs man shakes his head dubiously and waves her through, gesturing to the post-customs baggage area...

EXT SHIDO TEMPLE DAY

DEXTER stands alone outside the imposing gates of the temple. He knocks, he waits, he yells "Hello!" Nothing. He paces back and forth, bangs again on the gates. Finally --

The gates swing open, revealing YUMI, the young Japanese beauty and Shiyama devotee in the Shidoist uniform--modified yamabushi robe and sneakers. She bows, Dexter bows back.

DEXTER

Konichi-wa.

YUMI

(in English)

Good morning Mr. Sinister.

DEXTER

How do you know--?

YUMI

Shiyama-Sensei will see you in a few minutes. May I show you around?

Dexter follows Yumi through the heavy gate into the interior large courtyard we've just seen.

EXT COURTYARD DAY

Off to one side, in an open space, a group of 40-50 Shidoists are undergoing martial arts training under the watchful eye of a teacher. They are using real steel swords!

DEXTER
Isn't that dangerous?

Yumi shrugs.

YUMI
(this time in Japanese)
Ichi-go Ichie-e.

DEXTER
One life, one chance.

YUMI
You speak Japanese?

DEXTER
No, not really, Just a little. Before I met my wife Lola I had a relationship with a JAL stewardess. Tomoko. She used to say that phrase every time she flew.

At that moment a chilling scream comes from one of the pairs of partners attacking each other with the "naked blades"! A Shidoist has been badly cut on the arm. The teacher comes over, but instead of upbraiding the assailant, he begins yelling at the bleeding victim!

YUMI
He shouldn't have screamed. That's not allowed.

Yumi leads a shaken Dexter away from the scene on the training grounds and into the inner sanctum...

INT INSIDE THE TEMPLE DAY

..which resembles a Jewish synagogue to an amazing, alarming degree! There's a bima, and an ark behind it. Hebrew letters are stenciled in gold around on the molding.

DEXTER
Jeez, I feel like I should put on a yarmulka.

YUMI
Kipa.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

What?

YUMI

It's called a kipa, actually. Why is this so important to you? Are you Jewish?

Dexter gives her a wry smile.

DEXTER

No. I'm not. My wife is. Sort of. But a rabbi sent me.

YUMI

We are the lost tribe you are seeking.

Dexter stops in his tracks.

DEXTER

Well, that was easy! But, how did you know what I was looking for?

Yumi ignores his question. She goes to the ark, bows, opens it. Instead of a Torah, here is a single stone tablet, the size of a poster, with a single large letter carved on it.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

Is that what I think it is?!

Again, Yumi ignores his question. Facing the stone tablet, she starts to speak...

YUMI

Almost three thousand years ago, when the Kingdom of Israel was formed, certain tribes who were given no land in the new kingdom fled the country. One of these tribes traveled down the Red Sea into the Gulf of Aden, and from there into the Arabian Sea, and on into the Indian Ocean, and after long years of wandering, arrived by the East China Sea in Nihon, our country, Japan.

Yumi approaches the tablet.

YUMI (CONT'D)

Over the ages, of course, most Japanese forgot this heritage, and came to think of themselves as Japanese. But there was an inner circle of devoted priests who kept up the traditions.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YUMI (CONT'D)

Eventually they moved into the mountains and became known as the yamabushi. Shiyama-Sensei is in that lineage.

DEXTER

And the tablet?

YUMI

They brought it with them.

Dexter is still trying to assimilate all this...

DEXTER

It's not as impressive as the ten commandments, but it's--

YUMI

--Better. If we could make the sound represented by that letter, we could save the world--

SHIYAMA

--Or destroy it. That's what I hear.

EXT STREET IN OLD JERUSALEM DAY

Rachel and her group are sightseeing. An amazing, colorful cross-section of humanity streams by in the narrow alleyways of the Old City-- Ashkenazim and Sephardi Jews, Arabs, tourists from all over the world. The kids are all snapping pix on their cell phones.

We spot the Rabbi before Rachel does. He's following Rachel clumsily from a distance, an unlikely stalker. When Rachel stops to take a picture of a street vendor, he rushes up to her--

RABBI

Rachel?

RACHEL

Yes? Wait! How do you know my name?

RABBI

I made a terrible mistake.

Rachel steps back, a little afraid.

RACHEL

What are you talking about? Who are you? You were on the plane! Why are you following me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RABBI

I sent your father on a wild goose chase.

RACHEL

My father???

Now Rachel is really troubled. What the hell is going on?

RABBI

But it wasn't him, it was you. I only checked the last name. Should have looked at the first name. My bad.

RACHEL

If you don't stop following me I'm going to scream!

She starts to walk away...

RABBI

Wait! Sorry, but this is important. Very important. Cosmically important!

Intrigued despite herself, Rachel pauses in her flight...

RACHEL

Okay, okay. What is it? I have to catch up with my group.

RABBI

Oh G-d. This is so hard. It's a long story, but I'll try to be brief. Are you familiar with the legend of the missing 23rd letter of the Hebrew alphabet?

RACHEL

(archly)

NO.

RABBI

I thought not. Hmmm. Do you remember, when you were a little girl, being with the whales?

Now Rachel is freaked...

RACHEL

You are creepy. Go away!

She runs off. The Rabbi sits down heavily in the dust.

RABBI

Oy!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

INT SHIDOIST TAMPLE DAY

Dexter turns as SHIYAMA enters. He's changed from cowboy dress into in yukata and with phylacteries on his head and arms, carrying his horagabut is still in the room. Several armed Shidoists accompany Shiyama. One of them is another young Japanese woman, KEIKO. She's beautiful too, but harder-featured, more stern-faced than Yumi.

DEXTER

Why would you want to do that? Destroy the earth? That's insane!

SHIYAMA

We fallen angels, you know. Trouble-makers.

(Like many Japanese Shiyama has trouble with his "l"s.) Shiyama gives Dexter a sly smile, The Japanese man is charismatic, charming, with a slightly dangerous feeling. Dexter is thrown off by his presence...

DEXTER

What about your horn? Can't it make the sound?

SHIYAMA

I thought so. But maybe not.

DEXTER

Why the posse?

SHIYAMA

Posse! I like that word. Very American.

KEIKO

We don't like Americans. Too nosy.

Keiko glares at Yumi. There's some tension there. Yumi has said too much to the stranger.

SHIYAMA

There are many threats. Maybe you can help us.

DEXTER

Me?!

Shiyama turns to Yumi--

SHIYAMA

We go to Taijim now. Bring him.

Dexter smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DEXTER (V.O.)
 Taijim--I'd heard that name before...

EXT TAIJIM COVE DAY

...Scenes of slaughter of dolphins and small whales from the documentary "The Cove". Horrific thrashing, seawater turned blood-red, strange shrieking from the defenseless animals...

EXT SMALL SHIP DAY

Helicopter shot of a whaling vessel from above. Dexter, Yumi, and the ever-present entourage standing on the stern deck as the ship heads out to sea. Shiyama can be seen in the pilot house talking to the man steering the ship...

DEXTER (V.O.)
 Shiyama's brother was a whaling captain.
 That's how he'd heard about--this new
 phenomenon...

Signs of the whale hunt are everywhere--guns like small cannons with explosive-tipped harpoons mounted on deck, huge spade-like knives on poles for flensing the carcasses waiting in rows. Hoses for washing down the blood and guts at the ready...

YUMI
 You know those experiments where whales
 were mimicking human speech?

DEXTER
 Yeah, I heard about that.

YUMI
 It's gone a bit farther now.

Two crewmen are readying a small boat that is about to be lowered off the larger ship.

YUMI (CONT'D)
 At first we tried to help them. We
 conducted a secret counterinsurgency that
 crippled the U.S. Navy's new sonar
 testing temporarily. But then Shiyama-
 Sensei found out and when the whales
 refused to make the sound for him--

She glances up at the pilothouse but Shiyama is still engaged in conversation...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YUMI (CONT'D)

The first thing the whales asked researchers was not: "What's it like up there in the air?" or "Why are you polluting the sea with garbage and noise?" but "Have you heard the Song of the Creator?"

DEXTER

Rachel would love to hear that!

Shiyama, looking like a crazed Triton, moves out of the pilothouse and climbs up a small ladder onto a lookout post mounted on top of it. He places the ever-present horagai to his lips and blows a long mournful note, a magnificent sound that can be heard even over the rumble of the ship's diesel engine.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

What's he doing?

Yumi looks distraught.

YUMI

Luring the lambs to slaughter. But first we talk to them.

Yumi, Dexter, and a crewman clamber into the smaller boat, which is lowered into the sea.

DEXTER

You're telling me instead of swimming with dolphins I'm going to be talking with whales?

Yumi says nothing. The boat moves several hundred yards away from the mother ship. The crewman shuts off the motor. They drift in silence for a minute. Suddenly Dex stands up...

DEXTER (CONT'D)

I can hear them!

We can hear them too, their whistling, clicking, sonorous echoes, strangely rhythmic, filling the water around the little boat. By his face we can see that Dexter is deeply moved...

Then there is a rocking, and a huge grey whale surfaces with barely a splash, right next to them.

Yumi looks down on the great creature whose upturned eye meets hers...she turns to Dexter and says in a whisper...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YUMI

"So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good." Genesis 1, verse 21.

Dexter stares down at the great beast, amazed!

YUMI (CONT'D)

No gift needed. Wear these.

She hands him a pair of small headphones, not much more than earbuds attached to a plastic holder. Dexter puts them on, then takes them off.

YUMI (CONT'D)

They're also a transmitter. The whale doesn't have to be next to the boat.

DEXTER

How do I know this isn't a hi-tech trick, pre-recorded human speech or some guy on the ship over there speaking into a mike?

YUMI

This is real. The microphone is down there, on the head of the whale.

She points to the sea. Dexter puts on the headphones again. Looks at the whale. Hesitantly...

DEXTER

Uh, hello?

WHALE

Relax, human. We are both air-breathing mammals. We are more alike than different.

Dexter takes a deep breath, relaxes a little.

DEXTER

Why are you here? It's so dangerous for you. Why don't you just stay away from Japan?

WHALE

We are here in communion with our brothers the dolphins, who are being slaughtered.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DEXTER
Communion? You mean, like, solidarity?

WHALE
Dolphins are whales too.

Dexter tears off the headset...

DEXTER
I don't understand. How does he--

YUMI
She--

DEXTER
She?! Okay, how does she have such
vocabulary, syntax, command?

The whale waits patiently next to the small boat, maintaining her position with an occasional flick of her huge flukes.

YUMI
They are smarter than we are.

DEXTER
But--

YUMI
How did you learn Japanese? They've been
listening to us. Hearing is their primary
sense. It was an immersion program.

DEXTER
Immersion. Oh, that's a good one. You're
a real comedian.

Dexter shoves the headset back on.

DEXTER (CONT'D)
Why is this man, Shiyama, tormenting you?

WHALE
It is because we are the Chosen.

Dexter laughs in spite of himself.

DEXTER
You're Jewish?! Whales are Jewish?

The whale rolls slowly, once, and resumes its position just beneath the bowsprit of the small boat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WHALE

We are holy creatures of God. We are the original tribe.

DEXTER

Then you can help us!

WHALE

But why should we help you? All you do is kill us and eat us, and deafen us with your ships and your sonar.

DEXTER

I'm looking for a sound.

WHALE

Yes. We have it. God gave us the sound. He thought we were more worthy than humans to be its caretaker.

DEXTER

Sounds about right. No pun intended.

WHALE

The future has many paths, many possibilities. One is that we save Israel.

DEXTER

Save Israel?! From whom? How?

WHALE

From him. The madman. Shiyama. By making the sound. The sound you seek. The good sound.

Dexter looks at Yumi, who can't hear his conversation with the whale, which is coming in through the headphones.

DEXTER

Shiyama? But wait, I thought--

WHALE

He seeks to start the apocalypse. He wants us to make the other sound that is possible. The sound that would bring chaos and destruction. But we have refused. So he is killing us.

DEXTER

Oh, yeah, the other sound. The Rabbi told me. So, you'll help us?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

WHALE

Perhaps. First you must prove yourselves
worthy--your daughter--

DEXTER

What? Rachel?!

Stupefied, Dexter stares at the whale...who blinks once,
slowly and sinks under the water. Dexter and Yumi watch its
dark form vanish into the deep.

EXT US NAVAL CRUISER DAY

On the bridge, an imposing black man, LIEUTENANT RANDALL,
watches this encounter with the whales through binoculars.
As the whale vanishes underwater, he removes a headset,
through which he's been hearing the same tapped conversation.

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

(to himself)

Extraordinary.

EXT SMALL BOAT -DAY

A moment later there's an explosive blast from the nearby
ship. A cannon mounted on the foredeck gun has launched a
deadly harpoon. A whale breaches, foamy blood spurting from
its blowhole. Already workers on the ship are hurling
grappling hooks onto its dying form to bring the mortally
wounded whale alongside the vessel.

DEXTER

No! Stop them! Jesus, that isn't the one
I just --

YUMI

No. Shiyama leaves the head whale alone.
He wants its secret.

DEXTER

This is madness. Madness!

EXT SHIP DAY

Dexter scrambles up the ladder from the little boat to the
deck of the whaling ship, but as soon as he reaches the top
rung he's hauled aboard and pinioned by three of Shiyama's
minions. Shiyama gets up in his face...

DEXTER (CONT'D)

What the hell is this? Let me go! And
stop killing those whales!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shiyama glances at his watch, an expensive piece that makes a Rolex look like a Timex...

SHIYAMA

Come, there is something I must show you now.

The three guards manhandle Dexter behind Shiyama. They ascend a set of stairs and enter the ship's bridge. Dexter is deposited in a swivel chair in front of a large television. One of the guards turns it on.

SHIYAMA (CONT'D)

Showtime!

BLACKOUT

INT SHIP'S BRIDGE DAY

There's nothing on the television yet except an ordinary CNN news feed, the stock market report.

SHIYAMA

We are the life-bringers. Our deaths will usher in the final apocalypse. Be brave, be brave! Your reward awaits you in the hereafter!

DEXTER

Where? Who? What are you talking about?

As Dexter and Shiyama watch, the tranquil readout of the day's stock price is replaced by a classic CNN long shot: the skyline of Jerusalem at night. We've seen it a million times, but this time, smoke and fire are rising in the distance. The rock itself is gone along with all the Shidoists...The screen crawl screams BREAKING NEWS...

CNN NEWS ANCHOR

...We interrupt this broadcast with a special bulletin from Jerusalem, where there's been an unprecedented mass suicide bombing. As many as 200 people somehow evaded Israeli security, gathered at the Dome of the Rock and blew themselves up a few minutes ago, destroying one of the world's most important religious shrines, the Dome of the Rock. Let's go to our correspondent in Jerusalem Matthew Carter. Matt?

Dexter stares at Shiyama almost uncomprehendingly. Shiyama smiles the smile of the triumphant leader...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

You crazy motherfucker! You might have just started World War III!

SHIYAMA

I hope so.

Back on the television screen...

EXT HILL OPPOSITE EXPLOSION SITE

Reporter MATT CARTER stands on a hillside with a view across the valley similar to the one we've been seeing on the CNN shot.

CARTER

That's right, John, this was a mass attack unlike any ever seen. Instead of two or three suicide bombers, there were as many as 200, all with C4 explosives concealed under their robes. Witnesses say they overpowered Israeli guards, surrounded the Dome, and were singing, yes, singing when the explosion occurred.

CNN NEWS ANCHOR

Any idea yet who these people were?

CARTER

Yes. A Japanese group known as the Shido, led by mysterious cult figure Taro Shiyama, immediately claimed responsibility. But as to what their motives were, why they did this terrible thing, no one knows yet...

A look of frantic realization passes over Dexter's face--

DEXTER

Mu daughter! My daughter Rachel is in Israel

SHIYAMA

Too bad for her, for you. I keep killing them until they make the sound for me. And you, American spy, I keep you like I keep them. Take him below!

Dexter, yelling as he writhes trying in vain to free himself...

DEXTER

You crazy paranoid asshole!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The three guards start dragging Dexter toward the stairs to the cargo hold. Shiyama has turned his back. Yumi looks on with an impassive face. Dexter resists futilely.

INT SHIP'S HOLD DAY

Dexter is tossed roughly into a freezer container filled with giant glistening slabs of whale carcass. The door closes and all light is extinguished...

EXT STREET GAZA

A sea of people, a huge demonstration. A crowd surging with energy. Placards denouncing Israel and America. Men in checkered head-scarves carrying Kalashnikovs and RPG launchers. Intermingled with pistachio and date sellers, women and children. A gathering both angry, violent, and strangely festive.

INT. CNN NEWS DESK

CNN NEWS ANCHOR

The Arab world is in turmoil this morning. Mass protests have started already in Damascus, Tehran, Beirut, and Gaza. Arab leaders are blaming lax Israeli security for the destruction. This tragedy has inflamed Arab passions and united the Muslim world to a degree never seen before. The Israeli Defence Force has gone to full alert. An emergency meeting of the league of Arab States has been called. American President Baldwin is urging caution and restraint.

EXT STREET GAZA

From loudspeakers mounted on the back of a truck we hear the voice of RAS MOHAMED before we see him...

RAS MOHAMED

They have destroyed one of the holiest places in Islam!

He gestures to the mob overflowing the boulevard. The crowd roars. The camera zooms in on RAS MOHAMED, at the back of the truck, which is slowly crawling down Omar Mukhtar Street. Mohamed is a stocky, muscular, dignified-looking man in military mufti and a checkered head-scarf, unarmed but surrounded by a dozen or more heavily armed bodyguards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAS MOHAMED (CONT'D)

We will push them into the sea! This is the end! I, Ras Mohamed, pledge to you that we will take our revenge for the desecration of our precious Dome. We will walk streets of Tel Aviv before the week is out! And we will have what is ours, a true Palestinian state!

The crowd surges forward, threatening to topple the truck. Jubilation and a sense of imminent violence...an Israeli and American flag are burned, men jostling each other to stamp on the flaming remains.

INT HOME BAT YAM ISRAEL MORNING AFTER DOME BLOWS UP

Camera pulls back to reveal we've been watching the coverage of the explosion and the subsequent demonstration on a television in the kitchen of a home. DAN EPSTEIN is having breakfast while his wife HILLEL makes school lunches for their three children, YAEL, SHIFRA, and ZIVA, who we glimpse running around and playing in the next room.

It's a modest suburban house, nothing special, but neatly kept and homey. DAN is a thin man with a scraggly beard, glasses, and an almost perpetually bemused expression. But today his expression is one of deep concern. His wife HILLEL is even more serious-looking, a dark-haired beauty slightly past her prime but still attractive, buxom but not zaftig, busily assembling sandwiches and fruit in three lunch-boxes for the kids. HILLEL shakes her head at the scene on television and RAS MOHAMED's last statement.

HILLEL

I wish they'd stop calling it the Dome of the Rock. It's the Temple Mount.

Instead of responding directly, Dan claps his hands to his head,

DAN

You just reminded me. I'm supposed to meet Rachel at her hotel this evening. My god. I have to call the airline to see if they even let her plane land.

HILLEL

She'd have got in before this happened. Yesterday. No bravery today, though Daniel. If the sirens come, you go to the shelter.

Dan glances again at the television, see Ras's face again--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN

Hey! I know that guy! We went to a camp together. How weird!

HILLEL

Yes, how weird, that now he wants to shoot rockets onto your house, this house.

DAN

There won't be any rockets today. The IDF will be cracking down hard. But how could they have let those fanatics blow up the Temple Mount? And what happened to my young friend Rassie, that he's now a big military man?

HILL

At least you've done your military service. They won't be calling you to fight.

DAN

I'll defend my cubicle at Perisoft to the last bit, byte, and bug, Hillel, my love! But first, I've got to call Rachel's hotel.

HILLEL

Text her.

DAN

Great idea. These kids do more texting than talking.

Dan is already pounding out a text message on his Smartphone. As he does so, Dan stares at the television, which now shows a split screen, with the burning Dome on one side in the early morning light, and the protest on the other side.

EXT LAKE AT CAMP DAY - FLASHBACK

Dan and Ras Mohamed are in a canoe, paddling furiously to beat four other teams racing across a small lake at a camp somewhere in New England. They cross the finish line in first place, high five each other, while a camp counselor, being interviewed by a local TV station, comments from the shore...

CAMP COUNSELOR

We teach Israeli and Palestinian children cooperation. We get them to work toward common goals.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMP COUNSELOR (CONT'D)

The friendships they make here will last a lifetime, and perhaps contribute to the bringing of peace to their troubled region...

Dan and Ras are just two boys celebrating their victory.

INT HOME BAT YAM ISRAEL - PRESENT TIME

Dan is still watching the TV news.

RAS MOHAMED

I call upon all men of honor to join me in seeking a just resolution to the conflict that has festered for almost a century, since the British unjustly and artificially divided our land--and now they are blowing up our most precious holy sites!

Dan picks up the remote and turns the sound down, then picks up his cell phone and browses on it, finds a number, calls it...

DAN

CNN? Yes, right now you're running a news feed from somewhere in the occupied territory--yes--I want to get in touch with the man who is speaking--can you help me do that?

(beat)

Okay, thank you.

Hillel has entered the room and catches the last part of Dan's conversation--

HILLEL

What did they say?

DAN

They said that Commander Mohamed can be reached at Hamas headquarters in Gaza. Like I could just phone him up.

Hillel looks at her husband diffidently

HILLEL

Why do you want to get in touch with him, husband of mine?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN

I don't know. Just to talk to him, I guess. We were close that summer. We had dreams, of peace, of living in peace.

INT CAMP CABIN NIGHT

Dan and Ras are in a corner of the cabin, with the spoils of a week in nature laid out before them. Some hawk feathers, a few rocks from the lake shore, their canoeing trophy.

DAN (CONT'D)

I'm really glad I met you, Ras.

RAS

Should we be, like, blood brothers?

DAN

Nah. But here--

Hands Ras the trophy...

DAN (CONT'D)

I want you to keep this.

RAS

Are you sure?

DAN

You earned it. You paddled way faster than me.

With the earnestness of childhood--

RAS

We did it together.

RAS (CONT'D)

(solemnly)

We must never forget each other.

DAN

Let's make peace, in our land.

INT HOME BAT YAM ISRAEL

Back in the present, Dan musing aloud...

DAN

But we did forget each other...

INT TEL AVIV HOTEL LOBBY

TSVI, the MALE CHAPERONE for the Birthright group, a curly-haired Adonis in shorts, deep tan, dimples, Russian accent, addresses the sleep-starved Birthright group as they wait for their bags in the hotel lobby. Beside him is NAOMI, a sturdy woman with a patch on her jacket signifying that she is an IDF veteran, checking names off a list.

TSVI

Taglit, as you know, is the word for discovery. Discovery of self, discovery of your Jewish identity, discovery of your connection to Jewish history and culture.

Rachel, with the zombified focus of the jet-lagged, hormones firing indiscriminately, has glommed onto TSVI.

RACHEL (V.O.)

I'd like to discover you!

TSVI

(reacting as though she'd spoken aloud)

You. What's your name?

She realizes he's speaking with her.

RACHEL

Rachel.

TSVI

Are you aware of the terrible thing that has happened today?

She shrinks a bit into herself, embarrassed.

TSVI]

All of you were supposed to have fun on this trip, but now, we don't know, we're going to take it one step at a time...

INT SHIP'S HOLD DAY

...The freezer door opens again and we see Dexter huddled, shivering, among the chunks of whale flesh. Three guards drag him out and haul him to his feet, where he sways unsteadily, groggy, blinking and rubbing his arms. Shiyama, Yumi, and Keiko are standing in the passageway.

SHIYAMA

What are we going to do with him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEIKO

Leave him in here. For the next two days,
anyway. After that it doesn't matter.

That gets Dexter attention.

DEXTER

What? Why doesn't it matter after that?

Keiko ignores his question, Instead, she says--

KEIKO

Think about your great guilt!

DEXTER

You mean, because I'm CIA, according to
his paranoid mind?

Dexter nods at Shiyama, who says something to Keiko in
Japanese. She turns back to Dexter...

KEIKO

Shiyama-Sensei says you should meditate
on the sins of the West. Jesus was first.
Shiyama Sensei is the one who comes after
his successor. Now the world will see, as
Shiyama reveals his plan for the Second
Coming.

Dexter turns to Yumi...

DEXTER

What's going on, Yumi-san? Where are you
all going?

YUMI

We are going to the end of the world.

DEXTER

What? Where is that?

Keiko elbows Yumi aside roughly.

KEIKO

Where the explosion happened today. Where
we came from. Israel.

DEXTER

Israel! Wait--what have the whales got to
do with it?

YUMI

That doesn't matter anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DEXTER

I'm going to freeze to death in here!

KEIKO

Be like mosquito attacking iron bowl,
maybe you dig your way out. But then, it
doesn't matter. All die when Shiyama-
Sensei creates the new world.

As they close the door on him, Yumi surreptitiously tosses the tiny headset from the boat onto the floor. Does Keiko see her do it? We're not sure. Dexter sees it, but doesn't acknowledge it.

Once they're gone, Dex picks up the headset, but it seems to be dead. So is his cell phone.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Lola...Lola...Lola...Are you there,
sweetheart?

He slumps to the floor, shivering and helpless...

FADE OUT AND THEN FADE UP:

INT SHIP'S HOLD DAY SAME

Dexter is squatting on the floor, still trussed up. He's pushed himself into a sitting position. He is concentrating, but has an oddly blank look on his face.

FADE TO:

EXT ISRAELI MARKET DAY

Rachel is in the crowded Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem. People selling every imaginable thing--from dates and nuts to cell-phones and tablet computers. She's traveling with her group, chaperoned by Naomi and the hunky Tsvi... They're having a great time despite the crisis, as only teenagers can. Rachel is chatting with her friends, gazing excitedly at stands full of the colorful wares, snapping pictures of the cosmopolitan mix of people in Jewish religious garb bartering with others in Arab and Western dress... but the group isn't stopping, they're pushing through to their hotel...

...when a look of distress comes over her face. She falls behind the group and finds a semi-quiet corner in a little doorway alcove...

RACHEL

Dad? Stop that, Dad!

INT SHIP'S HOLD DAY

Dexter, still looking contemplative--

DEXTER (V.O.)
 Rachel, honey , listen, I know you don't
 do this any more, but this is important.
 Please, listen!

EXT ISRAELI MARKET DAY

Rachel nodding her head vigorously...

RACHEL
 Leave me alone, Dad! It's crazy here.
 Didn't you see the bombing? If you want
 to reach me, call me on my cell-phone!

Rachel shuts her eyes and "closes the connection".

INT SHIP'S HOLD DAY

Dexter is frantic--

DEXTER
 (aloud)
 Rachel, wait, no! The whales!--

:

EXT ISRAELI MARKET DAY

Rachel leaves the alcove, rushes ahead to join her friends,
 and not two steps in front of them, Tsvi, who turns and
 dazzles her with a heart-stopping grin.

Did she hear Dexter's last words? Hard to tell...

INT SHIP'S HOLD DAY

Dexter has managed to get the bindings off his hands...

DEXTER
 Like the mosquito against the iron bowl.
 Right. What the hell chance does the
 mosquito have? Now I'm the mosquito?

He turns the headset over in his hands. Notices it's got a
 tiny transmitter attached to it.

DEXTER (CONT'D)
 This whole thing is mosquito-sized.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He fiddles with the knobs on the transmitter. A small red LED light comes on, flickering weakly. Maybe there's a little juice left in it...Hurriedly DEX puts on the headset.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

Hello? Hello?

At first he hears nothing. Then, the mournful singing cries of the whales, in their language. Finally, the sonorous tome of the head whale, speaking in English. There's an urgency in her tone that wasn't there before...

WHALE

The madman has put something bad on my head, and the heads of three others in my pod, to keep us from making the sound.

DEXTER

Oh my god! That's terrible! We've got to stop this!

WHALE

If we die, then we cannot help prevent you humans from destroying each other. Perhaps that is what is meant to happen. Perhaps you don't deserve saving.

DEXTER

They've gone to Israel. My daughter is there! The whole thing is getting primed for a huge war--

WHALE

Yes. We know.

DEXTER

I've got to get out of here!

The transmission goes dead.

INT JERUSALEM HOTEL DAY

Rachel and her group are in a large meeting room in a hotel, their luggage stacked up around them. The chaperones, TSVI and NAOMI, confer in worried tones. They stand at a window watching scenes of panic and confusion in the city below...

TSVI

The airport is closed.

NAOMI

We wouldn't want to make that trip now anyway. The situation is too fluid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TSVI

My cell-phone in-box is already full of messages from concerned parents.

NAOMI

Tell them we are protecting their children. We've never lost one yet.

TSVI

Yeah, true, but we've never been here at a time like now.

Behind the two chaperones we see Rachel checking her cell-phone, reading the text message from "Uncle" Dan. There are no voice messages, everything is shut down.

INT SHIP'S HOLD NIGHT

Dexter is looking bad--dehydrated, starving, and turning blue from the cold of the meat locker. He's lying on the ground with the headset next to him, useless now. A sound at the door attracts his attention. Someone is opening it, but Dexter is too weak to get up. The door swings open, and at first Dexter doesn't see anyone, then he looks down and sees a monkey!

DEXTER

Get away! Go away! I saw one of your kind rip the face off one of my performers once.

Dexter is slightly delirious, but the monkey is extraordinarily calm. It's a small Japanese macaque, nothing to be afraid of. It looks at Dexter with wide, guileless simian eyes.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

Wait a second. Did the whale send you? The whale sent you, didn't it? Can you talk?

Dexter grabs the headset and puts it on.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

Hello?! Hello?!

Instead of talking, the monkey reaches out a hand, pulls Dexter up, and leads him into the corridor. Dexter starts to speak again but the monkey gives him the universal finger-to-the-lips sign for silence.

EXT SHIP NIGHT

They ascend the steps to the deck. It's night. The whaling ship has docked in port. Dexter only has to walk down the gangplank and he's free! There's a guard at the top of the ramp. The monkey silently strangles him until he passes out. The monkey waves goodbye to Dexter, who stumbles down the gangway.

EXT JAPANESE VILLAGE DAY

...Dex staggers into Taijim. Japanese people shy away from him. He sees himself in a storefront window and realizes why-- he's dirty and disheveled...he passes a newsstand and catches a glimpse of the front page of the Tokyo paper, with a picture of the destroyed Dome and the word "WAR" in huge type.

DEXTER

They've done it, those crazy fools! Oh,
Rachel!

INT JAPANESE BUS DAY/LOLA IN JFK AIRPORT LOUNGE

Dexter, still looking shabby and disheveled, is riding on a bus toward Tokyo. The Japanese people on the bus are giving him a wide berth--no one sits within three rows of him. Dex is talking to Lola, aloud, who we see in split screen--

...Lola's sitting in an airport waiting area and chatting, also aloud, sharing their psychic connection.. People might think she has an earpiece in, but she doesn't!

LOLA

(faintly)
Dex? Dex?

DEXTER

Lola, thank god! I couldn't get you
before! Have you been able to reach her?

ANGLE ON THE BUS PEOPLE

Staring at DEXTER, talking to himself. He grins sheepishly, drags a dead stomped-on cell phone to his ear, and pretends to talk into it.

LOLA

Nothing. All private phone calls are cut
off. I'm at Kennedy now. My flight leaves
in a few minutes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

I'm surprised anybody is flying into Tel Aviv.

LOLA

They're not. I'm going into Istanbul and renting a car, And even to get on that flight I had to flirt heavy with a ticketing guy.

DEXTER

That's my Lola! Are you sure you should go? It's dangerous. Shiyama has busted open the biggest can of worms there is!

LOLA

Gotta go, Dex, they're calling my flight.

DEXTER

Okay, honey. Be safe. I got a plan here. It's crazy, but it might work.

CUT TO

EXT U.S. NAVAL STATION YOKOSUKA JAPAN

Dexter arrives by taxi at the guard post entrance to the U.S. Naval base. We pick up his conversation with the guard in mid

GUARD

I'm sorry, sir, I can't let you in. You'll need to call for an appointment.

Dex loses it--

DEXTER

I need to speak to your commanding officer, right now! If we don't get those whales to the Mediterranean the whole Middle East may explode!

The guard starts to back away and lowers the gate. Dex tries to run by him and is immediately seized by two MPs...

DEXTER (CONT'D)

Don't lock me up again. I can't take it! I've got a message. From the whales!

Lieutenant Randall, the Naval officer we saw observing in Taijim, is walking by and overhears the last few words of Dex's rant...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

What's going on here?

MILITARY GUARD

(winding his finger around his
ear in the universal symbol of
"this guy's nuts")

Sir, this gentleman says he's been
talking to, er, whales and, uh, needs to
report that to Commander Taft.

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

Release the gentleman into my custody.

MP #1

Yes sir, Lieutenant sir!

Lieutenant Randall takes Dexter by an arm and leads him to
one side of the busy guard gate. Looks him up and down.

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

Lieutenant Randall from CVIC.

DEXTER

Civic?

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

Carrier Intelligence Center, USS Lincoln.
You have some Mess Deck Intelligence.

DEXTER

What?

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

You know, bullshit. Rumors. What did the
whale say to you?

DEXTER

Why don't you ask her yourself?

Lieutenant Randall's eyes open just a bit in surprise, the
most his stone-faced expression will allow. He knows he's
onto something. He escorts Dex onto the base..

INT HOME BAT YAM ISRAEL DAY

Dan Epstein is watching the scene we saw before on CNN. His
wife stands beside him. They are somber, looks of concern
creasing their faces.

DAN

The IDF sure screwed up this one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILLEL

We thought the Palestinians would bring on the next crisis, but instead it's our own kind--

DAN

You call those Japanese crazies our own kind?

HILLEL

They were Jewish. It doesn't matter if they were Asian. The Temple Mount was our holy site too.

DAN

Yes, well, Mount or no Mount, Dome or no Dome, I have to go to work. We're getting ready to launch version 3 of Perisoft. Oh, hey, Rachel texted me back. They're holed up in their hotel.

Hillel frowns but says nothing as her husband gets up from the television to get ready for work. She continues to watch the images of fire and destruction...

INT HOTEL LOBBY JERUSALEM DAY

Rachel's group is still stuck at the hotel. Rachel, exhausted, is napping fitfully in a corner. We enter her dream...

EXT OCEAN TWILIGHT (DREAM)

...in which Rachel is swimming by herself far out at sea. We hear the sounds of whales calling in their own language, Rachel spins around, but can't see anything, in any direction to the horizon...the whales' call morphs into a drawn-out cry of her name--

WHALES

Rachel! Rachel!

--Rachel thrashes in the water, turning every which way for a glimpse of the whales, but doesn't see them...as she is about to cry out...

INT HOTEL DAY

...Rachel wakes up with a start, immediately grabs her backpack and heads for the hotel lobby door. The tough Israeli female chaperone stops her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NAOMI

Hey! Where do you think you are going?
You can't leave the group.

RACHEL

I have to go!

NAOMI

Why?

RACHEL

I have to find them, fight for them!

NAOMI

Who? Look, sorry, I can't let you. Don't
make me lock you in your room.

Rachel stamps her foot, but makes a show of being submissive and settles back down next to her backpack. As soon as the female chaperone turns her back, Rachel jumps up and rushes out the door!

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Hey! Stop her!

But it's too late, Rachel vanishes into the hallway, runs for the elevator and almost crashes into TSVI, who is inside, preparing to exit.

TSVI

What are you doing?!

RACHEL

I have to go. They need me. The whales.

TSVI

What whales? It's incredibly dangerous
out there!

From down the hall, Naomi shouts, starts running toward them.

NAOMI

Stop her!

Rachel puts her arms on Tsvi's waist, shoves him inside, pushes the button

He looks down at her. Electricity between them. Her hands still on his waist. He leans in and kisses her. Not an hour ago, her dream come true.

TSVI

I'll come with you. I keep hearing you.
You're like no one I've ever met.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Rachel is having a vision...

EXT MEDITERRANEAN SHORE - DAY

Tsvi with Rachel on the beach -- suddenly he's torn apart by bullets. Blood everywhere.

The elevator jolts to a halt at the ground floor, jarring Rachel out of her vision...

INT ELEVATOR - DAY

RACHEL

No, you have to stay. You take care of our group -- they need you.

The elevator door opens

INT HOTEL LOBBY JERUSALEM DAY

Rachel backs away, into the lobby...

TSVI (V.O.)

(from the elevator)

I love you!

She hears it. So he can do it too!

RACHEL

I--I've got to go.

She turns and runs, disappearing into the melee of panicked citizens, the chaos outside...

EXT ROADWAY CHECKPOINT DAY

...Dan in a small electric Renault pulls up to an Army checkpoint outside Tel Aviv. He's waved through. On the other side of a barrier is a long line of Palestinians in ancient trucks and battered cars, waiting to pass through the checkpoint. It's obviously going to be a long wait. Some of them give Dan hostile stares as he drives on.

INT ISTANBUL AIRPORT DAY

Lola, looking dazed and tired, is drinking a Turkish coffee in a little shop at the airport. We see her going into a slightly altered state, and then in split screen we see Rachel, still cooped up in the hotel lobby...a dark look of teen angst comes over Rachel's face...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOLA (V.O.)
 (in her head, trying their
 "special" means of
 communication)
 Rachel, honey, we have to talk, your
 father is--

RACHEL (V.O.)
 (responding in kind)
 You two are really bugging me! I told
 Dad, I don't do this anymore. Goodbye!

LOLA (V.O.)
 Rachel no! Don't--

But Rachel is gone, the other side of the screen drops away.

LOLA (CONT'D)
 (aloud)
 Goddammit, Rachel! Fucking teenager!

...drawing amused, intrusive glances from the people around
 her...

INT PERISOFT OFFICES DAY

The employees of Perisoft are gathered at a window facing the
 street. A massive protest march is making its way past their
 offices, waving signs, chanting slogans, shoving at the
 police presence lining the edges of the gathering. A woman on
 his right turns to Dan and says...

PERISOFT EMPLOYEE #1
 I've seen a lot of protests. This one
 feels different. Almost like they're
 saying goodbye.

DAN
 But who's leaving? And where are they
 going?

Another employee to Dan's left asks...

PERISOFT EMPLOYEE #2
 Can you read Arabic? What does that large
 banner say?

Dan squints into the sun...

DAN
 It says "We will drive you into the sea,
 and Moses will not save you."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Someone else has turned on a television mounted on a nearby wall. The scene around the still-smoldering Dome of the Rock is chaotic. A battle has broken out, running gangs of Arab youths hurling rocks and Molotov cocktails at IDF troops. New fires are raging in the area, ones not caused by the explosion, but set by the rioters.

PERISOFT EMPLOYEE #3

Thank God we're in Tel Aviv today, not Jerusalem.

DAN

It's only 57 kilometers, Shlomo.

SHLOMO

The distance between Hell and Heaven.

Someone turns up the audio on the set. We hear the newscaster droning away

NEWSCASTER

Massive protests in Damascus, Beirut, Tehran, Gaza, West Bank. An emergency meeting of the Araba League has been called into session--

There's Ras Mohamed again, urging on a crowd...

DAN

Oh, Ras!

:

EXT STREET IN JERUSALEM NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

In flashback, we see a much younger Ras Mohamed, running through the streets of the Old City. A police helicopter flies overhead, searchlight picking up and losing Ras as he dashes through stone hallways, some of which are open to the sky, others covered, ..

..runs past a much younger Dan, walking home from prayer. Their eyes meet, both are surprised.

DAN

Hey, Ras!

But Ras doesn't stop running--disappears out of sight around a corner. In the next minute three policeman barrel past, one of them looking at Dan disdainfully --

IN LINE-UP ROOM IN A POLICE STATION NIGHT

Ras is in a round-up with a dozen other Muslim men. They all look equally exhausted and disheveled, as if all had been run down after chases. There's no glass partition. Dan is standing next to two policeman, and the three of them are separated from the suspects only by a chain

POLICEMAN #1
Recognize him?

Dan looks at the group. He stares at Ras, who avoids eye contact. After a moment's hesitation--

DAN
No, sorry.

POLICEMAN #2
Take a good look. One of these men killed an Israeli citizen tonight, just out of pure hatred, for no other reason that we can tell.

Dan looks over the Muslim suspects again, searching Ras's face for an expression of recognition that he does not find--

DAN
No. It was dark. I couldn't see well.

The two policemen give him disgusted looks. The Muslim men are led away....

INT ARAB LEAGUE MEETING CAIRO

A meeting hall packed with diplomats. A scene almost as chaotic as the one on the TV screen in Jerusalem. Men, some in suits, some in robes, some in military dress, pushing and jostling each other, a din of voices in strident debate.

YOUSEF AZIZ, an Arab leader in a Western suit, is on-stage, trying to talk over the cacophony--

AZIZ
Peace, my brothers, peace. We must remain calm and level-headed in this crisis. The world is waiting to see how we will respond. We must not act irrationally--

At that moment RAS MOHAMED rushes onto the stage, in full military garb and carrying a semi-automatic weapon...seizes he microphone from Aziz...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAS MOHAMED

--They have destroyed the holiest site in Islam! This time, this time the Muslim world is going to unite and drive the Israelis out. It must be done!

Aziz has picked up another microphone and tries to debate Ras Mohamed...

AZIZ

I appreciate my brother's passion. His people have waited many years for their own land, but the Americans still have their nuclear weapons...

RAS MOHAMED

Which they will never use. They are cowards. This president is a weakling. I tell you--

Turns away from Aziz and faces the roiling crowd

RAS MOHAMED (CONT'D)

The time has finally come. There are so many more of us, and we are strong. We can overwhelm them. Even the Israelis will not be able to use their bombs when we come at them from all sides, in numbers more than they can comprehend, Islam united, fierce, unstoppable!

A great roar goes up from the crowd--

RAS MOHAMED (CONT'D)

My people are in uprising, we don't even call it the third intifada. This is WAR! Send all your troops, now! The war has already started! I call upon every leader of every Arab nation to come to our aid and crush the infidels, drive them into the sea, take back the holy places, free my people! We will build a new Dome, more resplendent than before, and we will use the bones of our enemies for mortar!

Aziz has backed away to the edge of the stage, and now swept up in the moment, he applauds Ras Mohamed's speech and gestures to the crowd...

AZIZ

You have heard him. Now go and do!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The assembly breaks up in a frenzy of activity. Leaders on their cell phones, no doubt calling their military counterparts...

EXT TURKISH-SYRIAN BORDER DAY

Lola is at the border, but there's no getting through. No one is going to cross Syria to get to Israel today. In a wordless scene we see Lola pleading with a border guard, and him firmly shaking his head. Dejected, Lola turns around the ancient and creaky rental car and is preparing to return to Istanbul, when an old man with a donkey motions to her from the side of the road...

OLD TURKISH MAN

You want go Syria?

LOLA

No. Israel.

OLD TURKISH MAN

Why?

LOLA

I'm trying to save my daughter.

She breaks into tears, unexpectedly...

OLD TURKISH MAN

You have money?

Lola nods, wiping her eyes.

OLD TURKISH MAN (CONT'D)

I take you.

LOLA

You have a car?

OLD TURKISH MAN

No.

LOLA

Are you a pilot? Do you have a plane?

The old man laughs.

OLD TURKISH MAN

I have never been in airplane. Come.
Leave car.

Lola, with nothing to lose, follows the old man, who leads his donkey away from the checkpoint.

INT WHITE HOUSE DAY

Another CNN broadcast. Visual is PRESIDENT BALDWIN at his desk in the Oval Office, with a dozen advisors sitting or standing across from him in various positions. The President is a mild-looking man, a technocrat, someone who looks like he would be more comfortable in a corporate boardroom than where he is now, leader of the country. Secretary of Defence FORBES, a silver-maned Southerner. Secretary of State CHILTON, a stocky, middle-aged Midwesterner. The NSA, the White House Chief of Staff, high-ranking Senators and House leaders, and a couple of the President's personal advisors...

CNN NEWS ANCHOR

The President is seen here discussing his options with the Cabinet and others. But the options appear to be few. On the Israeli's western flank, Egypt, long neutral, now radicalized and inflamed. On their northern flank, the chaotic mess that is Syria, with stores of chemical weapons left over from the Assad family's reign. To the east, Iraq and beyond than, Iran. And to the south, Saudi Arabia, once a friend of ours, but now in arms over the destruction of the Dome. To quote an unnamed source from the meeting "It appears there is only the sea. Only the sea."

EXT JERUSALEM STREET DAY

Rachel rushing through the crowded streets, Pandemonium. No battle yet, but soldiers in the streets and people closing stores, carrying large bundles. In her haste, Rachel bumps into people, drawing angry looks--she almost knocks over an old Russian Jew wearing a babushka--

OLD WOMAN

--Pushy American!

RACHEL

Sorry, sorry. Can you tell me, which way is the sea?

OLD WOMAN

Follow everyone. We're all going there, God help us!

Rachel rushes in the direction of the sea, swept up in the tide of humanity retreating from the battle growing ever closer, the artillery no longer a distant rumble, but loud, close, and concussive.

INT PERISOFT OFFICES TEL AVIV DAY

No one is at the large window anymore. Everyone is leaving, hurriedly, almost but not quite in a panic. Like everyone else, Dan is throwing his personal stuff into a box. He gets ready to leave, and as he passes the window he sees...

A rocket hurtle down and explode, setting several cars on the street on fire, including Dan's. Dropping the box, Dan runs for the door...

EXT TEL AVIV STREET DAY

Dan runs up to his car, just one of many ablaze in the carnage. There are wounded people lying on the ground, and as Dan watches, ambulance medics arrive and start triaging them.

Dan tries to help but they wave him off. Looks like no one on the street is dead, and only a couple minor injuries.

DAN
 (to himself)
 Oh my god, my family!

Runs down the street we saw him arrive from, in the direction of his home in Bat Yam outside the city....

INT NAVAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICE DAY

Dexter, cleaned up, shaven, looking more like his old self, is seated in front of a panel of four Naval Intelligence officers including Lieutenant Randall, who is the junior officer of the bunch, and the only black man. The oldest, a chisel-jawed Navy lifer named WARREN, is sitting in the center of his staff, looking relaxed and enjoying himself as he listens to Dexter, who is finishing up his story...

DEXTER
 ...and we have to get these whales to Israel. But it would take months for them to swim all that way. They need to be there to keep Shiyama from doing his thing. So here's what I need--four C-5A's, equipped with swimming pools. As quickly as possible!

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN
 Is that all? What do we get in this deal?

The intelligence officer eyes him skeptically...Dexter is still righteously angry...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

I'll give you the one chance you might have of saving the situation in the Middle East.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

Okay. Four planes and some water tanks. Sounds like a fair deal. If you can do all you say.

DEXTER

Not me. Them. Oh, and there's one more thing. You have to stop those sonar deployments in the Pacific, immediately, forever.

The intelligence officers smile at Dexter's brashness.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

A few big old flying geese we can get you. But that sonar is in place throughout the Pacific theater--

DEXTER

--And it's killing those whales! That's non-negotiable.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

You deliver on your promises, and we'll see what we can do.

EXT DESERT NORTH OF ISRAEL DAY

On a vast plain, an enormous army is assembling. Dust flies up from tank treads. Jets thunder overhead. A cacophony of different languages, uniforms, weapons. It's the unified but still chaotic force that the U.S. Secretary described--huge, powerful, and motivated by religious passion.

The camera zooms over the assemblage, focuses in on a contingent of Palestinians at its head, led by Ras Mohamed. He's not the leader of the force, only of his ragtag battalion, all wearing checkered head scarves and still covering their faces with cloth up to the eyes, not to keep the dust out as much as to hide their identities.

RAS MOHAMED

Forward! Forward! For Allah!

EXT SEA DAY

As before, Dexter and a crew approach the whales in a small boat launched from the larger ship.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As before, the whale rolls slightly on its side to present one large eye to Dexter.

WHALE

Time is short. I am afraid it is too late. It would take us weeks to swim from here to where we need to be.

DEXTER

We're going to fly you there. How does that sound?

WHALES

I have always wanted to fly. Breaching is so temporary.

Dexter nods to the frogmen, who enter the water.

EXT. SKY DAY

A convoy of four huge cargo planes in flight. We zoom closer to one of them...

PLANE'S CARGO BAY DAY

An enormous tank has been constructed with enough water in it to keep the whale partially submerged. Civilian attendants are swabbing the exposed portion of the whale with seawater. Dexter stands off to one side with Lieutenant Randall.

DEXTER

Ain't this something?!

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

This is the craziest fucked-up stunt I've ever been involved in. When we get there, what, EXACTLY, are these creatures going to do?

DEXTER

Make a sound. Maybe.

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

Make a sound? Maybe? And then what?

DEXTER

I don't know.

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

You don't know?! I jumped through all these hoops to get them on these planes, and you don't fuckin' know?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

I don't know what'll happen when they make the sound. I just know it's important that they do. If they will.

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

If they will.

DEXTER

They're not sure we're worth it.

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

Jumpin 'Jesus Christ.

EXT DESERT NORTH OF ISRAEL DAY

A SYRIAN GENERAL, all decked out in medals and ribbons, a camouflage uniform with red epaulets, and a hat with an absurdly large brim, stands on the running board of a military vehicle. Ras Mohamed stands to his right. Troops are gathered around,. Mostly higher-ranking colonels and majors, at the end of a final battle prep meeting...they are about to disperse to their waiting commands...

SYRIAN GENERAL

Ras Mohamed of the Palestine National Security Forces should lead the final attack, at the head of this grand army. His people have earned the right--

Cheers go up from the assembled soldiers--

SYRIAN GENERAL (CONT'D)

--The Holy City has been attacked besieged, destroyed, changed hands, so many times. Now it is within our reach again. Yes, we can win back the Holy City, Jerusalem, again.

RAS MOHAMED

Not just Jerusalem, Palestine. My people must have a homeland. Free, not bounded by fences and armed guards. Let Jerusalem be as it was in the time of Saladin, a place of worship for all religions. We don't care, as long as we have a homeland!

The Syrian general is slightly taken aback by Ras Mohamed's suggestion, which sounds like...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SYRIAN GENREAL
 Jerusalem an International city? No!
 Never again will infidels tread on our
 lands!

A mocking chant goes up from the officers--

OFFICERS
 Never again! Never again!

EXT STREET IN TEL AVIV DAY

Shiyama, in ordinary street clothes now, with Yumi and Keiko, sits in a corner cafe drinking coffee while around them a panicked citizenry is preparing for the war that looms.

SHIYAMA
 Everything going according to plan. Soon,
 the apocalypse.

KEIKO
 Then you ascend the throne!

The blind allegiance of the cultist in her voice. Yumi sits quietly, watching the chaotic street scene. The cafe owner comes over...

CAFE OWNER
 I'm sorry, we must close. The order has
 been given to evacuate the city.

YUMI
 Where will you go?

The cafe owner looks stricken.

CAFE OWNER
 I don't know. The sea.

SHIYAMA
 Don't worry, my friend. All will turn out
 well in the end.

A rocket flies in with a whistling roar and smashes in to the street a hundred yards away. Several parked cars explode into flames. The screeching wails of the wounded terrified civilians running and trying to put out the flames. Shiyama is unperturbed...

SHIYAMA (CONT'D)
 Let's go.

He rises and starts walking down the street, away from the carnage...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAFE OWNER

Hey mister! You don't want to go that way. That's the direction of the fighting. You'll be killed.

SHIYAMA

They can't kill me. I am God.

The cafe owner shakes his head and runs off. Yumi and Keiko follow Shiyama toward the battle front.

EXT BATTLE SCENE DAY

Shiyama, Keiko and Yumi have reached the edge of the desert. Scenes of struggle and death. Burning tanks, wounded men on the ground, others running and crouching, noise and smoke, the chaos of war...Shiyama strides through the conflict like one possessed, certain of his immunity to bullets. He exhorts both sides to fight, and blows the conch shell constantly... Yumi and Keiko are more wary and fearful, following behind him, flinching at the bullets buzzing around them and the shells landing nearby...

SHIYAMA

Yes, more bombs, more rockets, explode the world!

YUMI

Shiyama Sensei, shouldn't we turn back now?

SHIYAMA

No turning back! Never! And you, you free your American friend. Keiko saw it. That is disloyal. You don't believe. I saw it. You must die!

Frightened, Yumi starts to run away. Shiyama shoots her in the back! She falls...In the chaotic war zone, no one is going to notice the death of a small Japanese woman...Keiko moves closer to Shiyama, as if hoping his magical imperviousness to bullets will protect her...

SHIYAMA (CONT'D)

Come! Apocalypse is near! Rejoice!

The two of them move through the fighting like ghosts...

EXT MEDITERRANEAN SEA DAY

The C-5As fly in low, but not too low, maybe two thousand feet. Their enormous back doors open...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

You're sure this will work?

RANDALL

Hell no! We've never done anything like this before. It's a total experiment. We're improvising, man!

...From a camera trailing behind them we see the rear of the tanks come down and a cascade of water, followed by the whales, harnessed in enormous parachutes of the kind used to slow the descent of space capsules...Four sets of parachutes bloom, and soon four huge whales are floating in the sky! A sight the world has never seen...they strike the water with four huge splashes... the parachutes disengage and drift harmlessly away...

...Dexter and Randall follow in with parachutes that look tiny by comparison, and two large motorized rubber rafts also descend to the sea's surface by parachute...

CLOSE ON SAME SCENE

The whales, Randall, and Dexter have rendezvous-ed. The two humans, each in their own raft, float near the whales, who are sporting in the warm sea water, adjusting and acclimatizing from the rigors of the trip...

...Randall calls across from one raft to the other...

RANDALL (CONT'D)

Good ol' American ingenuity. Told you it would work! Now what? They do their thing, right?

DEXTER

No. I have to go.

RANDALL

What do you mean you have to go?!

DEXTER

My daughter is somewhere in Israel.

RANDALL

Your daughter? Is that what all this is about?!

DEXTER

I have to find her. I think if she was here the whales would do their thing. I'll be back in a few hours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RANDALL

You can't go there! It's a fucking war zone! And you're probably going to get killed. How the hell would you find her, anyway?

DEXTER

I don't know. Take care of my babies, my stars for me!

Dexter revs up the engine on the raft and races toward the coast. Randall stares after him, shaking his head in disbelief. Already the scene on the beach is chaotic, with civilians starting to show up in large numbers. An Israeli shore battery spots Dexter and starts firing shells at him!

DEXTER (CONT'D)

No! No!

He rips off his shirt and undershirt and waves the white T-Shirt wildly. The shells keep coming, and closer! Dex veers north, away from the crowded beach and escapes out of range.

EXT ISRAELI COUNTRYSIDE DAY

Dan Epstein is walking through the hills outside Tel Aviv. The sound of gunfire can be heard all around him, but no actual battle is visible. He's crouching as he runs, anxiously looking around. The battle sounds grow nearer. He ducks into a shallow cave, emerges a minute later...

...Keeps walk-running cross-country, scrabbles up a hillside, and when he rests the ridge looks down on...

...the smoldering ruins of his town, Bat Yam!

DAN

Oh my god! Hillel! Hillel!

Abandoning his cautious mode, Dan runs without regard to his safety, crossing open ground and trying to find his house in the flattened and devastated landscape...

...Bodies litter the street...he stops at one, examines it...

DAN (CONT'D)

Avi! Oh god! Oh god!

...Keeps running, comes to the place where before we saw his modest home...all that's left is a pile of burning rubble...

DAN (CONT'D)

Hillel! Yael! Shifra! Ziva!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

...Gets no response...he digs feverishly in the rubble for a minute, but soon realizes it's useless, there's no one and nothing to save.....runs back toward the town...on his way he meets an old woman dragging a shopping cart loaded with her possessions...

DAN (CONT'D)

Hertha. Hertha Spielman! It's me, Dan Epstein! Where is everyone? Where are you going?

Like a crone in a fantastical movie, Hertha wordlessly points toward the west, drops her head and keeps shuffling along, dragging her impossibly loaded cart like a millstone behind her...

DAN (CONT'D)

Hertha. My family. Have you seen my family?

HERTHA

If they lived, they are going where I am going. To the sea. Moses will save us.

Hertha continues to creep along at the slow pace of the elderly...Dan is torn between staying and helping Hertha along, and racing ahead to search for Hillel and his children. We see his anguish at Hertha's slow pace...finally...

DAN

I'm sorry, I must find my family.

HERTHA

Go, young man. I am in no hurry. God will protect me now, I feel it.

DAN

I'll come back for you, when I find them

HERTHA

Don't come back. In this direction there is only sadness and death.

Dan tears at his hair, but the pull of family is too strong. He runs away, the shame palpable on his face...

INT HOTEL JERUSALEM

Dexter has somehow made it to the hotel where Rachel was staying, just as the two chaperones are leading their group out the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER
You're the Birthrights group, yes?

TSVI
That's us.

DEXTER
My daughter Rachel--

NAOMI
She left.

DEXTER
What?!

NAOMI
I tried to stop her. Listen, we have to go. Right now. The city isn't safe anymore.

DEXTER
Did she say she was going?

NAOMI
She said she has to fight. But the battle is--

--the tough chaperone is overcome with emotion and unable to continue. Her country is being destroyed...

DEXTER
Which way is the fighting?

TSVI
All around. But mostly to the east still. We're going west, with everyone else. You should too.

Dexter doesn't say that he just came from there. He turns and heads at a run toward the sound of the fighting...

EXT BATTLEFIELD DAY

Shiyama and Keiko are still in the middle of the fighting...wandering a desolate landscape of blown-up trees and smashed houses, burning vehicles, dead and wounded men. There's no clear front line. They seem to be aimlessly moving through the scene, but Shiyama has a map in his hand...we see that it's a map of the historical sites of Christ's life!

SHIYAMA
Map say we very close now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEIKO

Shiyama Sensei, why do you want to go there? It's a place of death, then and now.

SHIYAMA

We tourists, come to visit the holy places, just like we said.

Keiko stops to wipe her face in the desert heat and battle dust. Shiyama walks on ahead. Suddenly there's a tremendous explosion behind him! The force of it knocks him down. When he struggles to his feet and looks back, Keiko is gone, there is literally nothing left of her except the bandanna we saw her mopping her brow with a second before...

...Shiyama has a blank look on his face. Now he is alone. No followers, no helpmates....He looks up at the sky and prays...

SHIYAMA (CONT'D)

Holy father, please protect me. I commend myself to your hands.

...He walks on alone in the desert wilderness...

EXT MEDITERRANEAN SEA DAY

Lola is sitting in a small, battered wooden sailboat, steered by the old Turkish man. They are on their way down the shoreline past Syria into Israeli waters. The old man seems unconcerned by the sounds of large artillery and jets flying overhead, that can be heard clearly over the snapping of the single sail above their heads and the clanking of the halyard.

LOLA

Aren't you afraid they'll strafe you?

OLD TURKISH MAN

Straff?

LOLA

Shoot at you?

OLD TURKISH MAN

They have done so before. But here I am!

Lola sits back, exhausted from her travels, and lets a hand drag in the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOLA
 (To herself, or to the unseen
 Dex)
 Oh, Dexter! Rachel!

CUT TO:

INT WHITE HOUSE MORNING

Another TV Broadcast. Another gathering of the core leadership of the United States. President Baldwin and his advisors, including Secretary of Defence Forbes, Secretary of State Chilton. In the room, the television is on, broadcasting scenes of panic in Tel Aviv, fighting in the suburbs...

CNN NEWS ANCHOR

Army intelligence says that the Israelis have six or eight hours at most. They've set up a defensive perimeter east of Jerusalem. Many are asking why the President has not ordered air strikes. A person close to the President says that he refuses to go down in history as the man who started World War Three. He has called for a cease-fire and peace negotiations, and Naval Command has quietly begun preparations for an evacuation that many are saying can't be done.

The news anchor's face is replaced by ceaseless coverage of the continuing fighting...

EXT NEAR THE BATTLEFIELD DAY

Dexter is on his cell phone. This time it's working. He dials a number--we go split screen, Dexter on one side, Dan Epstein on the other, both in the countryside in the midst of the chaos of war.

DEXTER

Dan? Dan Epstein? It's Dexter Sinister!
 I'm in Israel.

DAN

Dexter!

DEXTER

Do you know where my daughter is?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAN

Dex. I'm sorry, I couldn't get her at the airport. Couldn't get there. Last I heard she was at her hotel.

DEXTER

She left. I don't know where she went!

DAN

I'm looking for my family, but my house, my town, it's gone, all gone! Everyone's fleeing toward the sea. I don't know what they think will happen when they get there.

Behind Dan we see the long straggling line of refugees...

DEXTER

Where are you? Can we meet up? Maybe we can help each other.

DAN

We're on the road to Palmachin, along with half of Israel. I'm almost to the beach. I still haven't found my family yet. Oh G*d!

(beat)

Where are you?

We see Dexter looking around at a rocky hillside,

DEXTER

Hell if I know. Somewhere east of Jerusalem.

DAN

That's where the fighting is!

DEXTER

Don't I know it! I have to keep looking. The chaperone at the hotel told me Rachel came out here. If I don't find her I'll head toward you.

DAN

Okay. Be safe!

DEXTER

You too! I hope you find your family soon.

But the connection has dropped. Dexter clicks off his phone and cautiously heads toward the sound of the battle.

EXT DESERT DAY

Dan is still searching for his family. The fighting is very near. Suddenly he's rushed and surrounded by Palestinians, led by RAS MOHAMED. In his fear and anguish Dan doesn't recognize Ras, but Ras recognizes him. As one of the Palestinians raises his weapon to kill Dan, Ras intervenes at the last possible second--

RAS MOHAMED

Wait!

SOLDIER

I kill this infidel!

RAS MOHAMED

Wait, I said! Bring him to me.

Dan is forced roughly to his knees and then dragged to Ras, who stands over him.

RAS MOHAMED (CONT'D)

Get up, old friend.

DAN

Friend? Ras?

RAS MOHAMED

Look at you, a bourgeois, an apolitical secular Israeli.

DAN

--And look at you, a killer, invading my country--

RAS MOHAMED

Your country! My family was born in Palmachim, where your people are all fleeing now. There was once a beautiful Palestinian village on that shore, groves of olive trees...

DAN

--My country, killing and burning--

RAS MOHAMED

--Sixty years in the camps! We have come to take back what is ours--

DAN

For god's sake Ras, I'm just trying to find my family in this horror...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAS MOHAMED

You saved my life once, and I will save yours now. Go, and may we never meet again, Imshallah.

There is a grumble of protest from the soldiers, who are filled with bloodlust, but Ras gives orders--

RAS MOHAMED (CONT'D)

Escort this man to safety. See that he is unharmed.

DAN

You could stop this. There is still time for peace.

RAS MOHAMED

There will be peace. Find your family. Then, go where you will be safe. But not in Palmachim, or New Palestine!

The soldiers cheer raucously. Dan is led away.

EXT BEACH AT PALMACHIM DAY

Rachel has reached the shore. It's a tumultuous scene. No fighting here, just a wailing mass of people with no idea what to do next. There are few Israeli soldiers--they are all still fighting, trying to hold the perimeter. No one seems to know what to do. All eyes are on the sea, where they hope that ships will be coming to rescue them.

Rachel stands on the shore, surrounded by others. Then a voice audible only to her, comes again, the voice from her dream.

WHALE (V.O.)

Rachel!

RACHEL

(shouts aloud)

I am here!

A few people turn to look at her. Rachel ignores them. As she stares seaward, she spots what looks like a whale spout, but it's impossibly far offshore; it could have been a stray shell splashing...

EXT NEAR BEACH DAY

A scene of utter chaos. A long line of refugees fleeing the fighting, extends back to the East. Weeping, wailing, moaning, crying out. This is the nightmare scenario the Israelis never wanted to have to face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dan Epstein runs back and forth along the line, searching for his family, calling out their names--

DAN
Hillel! Yael! Shifra! Ziva!

...It seems hopeless that he will find them, but he keeps searching...shouting their names above the din of the exodus, and then...miracle of miracles...he hears a voice...

HILLEL
Dan!

DAN
Hillel!

He sees her up ahead. She has stopped walking and is staring at him. He runs to her. The children are there beside her. They all embrace...

HILLEL
I couldn't save anything--

DAN
You saved the children--you saved everything!

...They embrace again.

Dexter's crossing the line of fleeing people, heading to the north where he came ashore. He calls Dan again. In split screen again, we see Dex on one side, Dan and his family on the other.

DEXTER
Dan?

DAN
Dexter! My wife, I found her! And my children!

DEXTER
That's wonderful!

DAN
Did you find Rachel?

DEXTER
No. I'm almost to Palachim now.

DAN
Will they send boats to rescue us? The boats will come to the beach, won't they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DEXTER

The whales are sea creatures. Whatever they are going to do will be with water--

DAN

Whales? What are you talking about?

...Dan looks at his phone, wondering what Dexter is talking about, whether he's lost his mind in the craziness of the moment...

DEXTER

I've gotta go!

The connection is broken. Dexter starts off at a jog toward the beach...

EXT BEACH DAY

Dan and his family have reached the beach. It's an insane place, chaos, people milling about, no evacuation ships in sight. A few advance troops from the Arab forces are nearby too, but they are not attacking yet, just observing the madness of the retreat from a bluff above the scene...

On Rachel.....her phone rings...a catchy pop tune...she pulls it out...

RACHEL

Hi, Uncle Dan! I'm at the beach. On the north end, I guess, where there's not so many people...

DAN

We're here too. Stay where you are!

RACHEL

No, I have to go. They're calling me...

DAN

Who? Who is calling you? Rachel?

But Rachel has hung up. Dan shouts at his wife Hillel--

DAN (CONT'D)

For the love of G*d, stay here! And keep the children close!

--He runs up the beach...Searching, searching, spots Rachel, who has just started to wade into the water--

DAN (CONT'D)

Rachel! Stop!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rachel turns and looks at Dan, but she seems distracted, almost oblivious to him. Dan splashes into the water, they embrace, but Rachel is still gazing seaward--

DAN (CONT'D)

Where do you think you're going? Come, Hillel and the kids are just down the beach. They'd love to see you, we just never thought it would be here--

Dan gestures around at the tragically confused scene--

RACHEL

No, you don't understand. They need me.

DAN

They who? What are you talking about? Have you gone mad?

RACHEL

The whales!

DAN

What whales? Your father, on the phone, he said the same thing...Come!

Dan starts to pull Rachel out of the water. She resists. They have a slightly comic struggle for a moment, then Rachel shouts--

RACHEL

I love you Uncle Dan, but you can help me, and everyone here, best by letting me go. It's going to be okay, but don't stop me.

Dan still thinks he's dealing with an emotionally overwrought teen--

DAN

It must have been traumatic, but it's okay now, you're with us--

RACHEL

No!

Rachel places her hands on Dan's cheeks, and in a moment of revelation, she lets him see her power, only for an instant-- but it's enough!

What Dan sees is an image of the whales, and Rachel with them,..astride one. It's like a hallucination, but he knows she's caused it, and he lets go of her and steps back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAN

Okay. Go! G*d be with you.

RACHEL

He is. I know that now.

...Rachel moves purposefully into the water, wading until she loses her footing in the depth and begins to swim...Dan watching intently from the shore, half-crazed with the thought of her heading out there...

...Rachel swims determinedly toward the spot she imagined she saw the spout...Dan watches from shore, his heart breaking...

...she keeps swimming, more and more slowly...the shore is far behind her, and before only open sea...soon it's obvious, she's going to drown...her strokes become labored,...she's floundering...her head sinks below the surface, rises again, she's flailing but there's no one around...she's "going down for the third time"...Dan starts toward her, swimming madly, but she's too far out, it's too late...

...when suddenly she's lifted out of the water and finds herself on the back of the chief whale...she scrambles to a stable position behind the whale's blowhole, on her hands and knees, patting the whale, stroking its skin...

WHALE (V.O.)

Rachel. You came! If you had not come, we would not, could not, have done what needs to be done

RACHEL (V.O.)

I'm here!

The whale does a 360 spin for sheer joy, making a loud RASPING SOUND, an amplified slow motion finger on a chalkboard. Rachel rides atop his head, laughing...

Dan, in disbelief, jumps up and down in the water and waves...Rachel waves back...then Dan splashes back to shore and runs off to rejoin his family...

FADE TO:

EXT BATTLEFIELD DAY

Dexter in a small village behind Israeli lines. The fighting is very close. He runs from one building to another, encounters a group Israeli soldiers huddled behind a building...they raise their rifles at him--

DEXTER

Don't shoot. I'm an American!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER #1

What the hell are you doing here?! We're cut off. You shouldn't be here. We can't guarantee your safety.

DEXTER

That's okay. I'm here at my own risk.

SOLDIER #2

Are you a journalist?

DEXTER

No. I'm looking for my daughter--

SOLDIER #3

God help you. You'd be better off to take a gun and fight with us!

One of the soldiers offers Dex a rifle but Dex throws up his hands.

DEXTER

Uh, how is the fight going?

The soldiers hang their heads slightly and don't answer. Finally Soldier #1 responds.

SOLDIER #1

The country is only nine miles wide at some points. That's not a very big buffer against an army the size of the one we are fighting.

Soldier #1 draws his service revolver from his holster and offers it to Dexter.

SOLDIER #1 (CONT'D)

Here. You can't go into no man's land unarmed.

Dexter puts up a hand.

DEXTER

I wouldn't even know how to use it.

SOLDIER #1

It's like a digital camera. Just undo the safety, here, then point and shoot.

Dexter takes the weapon, fumbles with a place to put it, stuffs it in his light jacket pocket.

DEXTER

Thanks! I guess I'd better get going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SOLDIER #1

Good luck! I hope you find her.

The soldiers watch him go, running crazily between buildings as gunfire and incoming artillery resume.

SOLDIER #2

His daughter's dead for sure, and he'll be dead before sunset.

SOLDIER #3

Probably. But so will we.

EXT ELSEWHERE ON THE BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Shiyama stops to talk to an old man huddled by the side of the path.

SHIYAMA

What you doing here? Why you not go?

OLD MAN

Where would I go? This is Eretz Israel.

The old man examines Shiyama carefully.

OLD MAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

What's that you carry?

SHIYAMA

Japanese shofar. It called a horagai.
Listen.

Shiyama unslings the horagai and blows a long, sustained note

OLD MAN

Nice sound. But shellfish is tref.

SHIYAMA

Tref? You mean, unclean?

OLD MAN

It's okay for you. You're from an island in the ocean. For desert people like us, it's tref.

SHIYAMA

I bet you from Poland or somewhere.

OLD MAN

True. Bialystock. But this is my home now. I will die here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SHIYAMA

What if I tell you I am the Messiah, and we are all going to Paradise soon?

The old man laughs, a cackle that makes Shiyama grimace.

OLD MAN

A false messiah from Japan. Ha ha! Go away from me, you tref thing.

SHIYAMA

Okay. I go away. First I grant your wish.

He looks around, sees no one, takes out a pistol and shoots the old man!

EXT ISRAELI BATTLE LINES DAY

The IDF line is ragged and thin. In this part of the wide-ranging battlefield, they are pinned down under a heavy artillery barrage. A frantic LIEUTENANT is racing back and forth behind the line, shouting (in Hebrew)--

LIEUTENANT

Pull back! Pull back!

He meets a SERGEANT who is busy trying to fortify an emplacement with a detachment of fifty harried-looking soldiers...

SERGEANT

Pull back? To where, sir? There's no place to pull back to!

LIEUTENANT

We'll make a stand at the Tran-Israel. If we can hold the turnpike we can save Tel Aviv.

The SERGEANT looks skeptical but automatically follows orders.

SERGEANT

All right, everyone, prepare to fall back!

A shell crashes onto the group, killing several. Groans, shrieks, dust and smoke fill the air. The SERGEANT and LIEUTENANT are unharmed.

LIEUTENANT

It was never supposed to be like this! Where is our air cover?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SERGEANT

I heard they're just out numbered--like we are on the ground. Where are the damn Americans?

LIEUTENANT

I never counted on them. But I thought we--

...his words are drowned out by a new round of artillery fire...we lose sight of them in the swirling miasma of battle...

FADE TO:

EXT DESERT DAY

Dexter walks in the rocky hills outside Jerusalem. His situation seems hopeless. How could he possibly find Rachel in this devastated battleground? Coming around a turn in the trail he encounters Shiyama!

DEXTER

You! You let your followers kill themselves, and you live?

SHIYAMA

Soon all will die. The war is spreading. The American and the Russians soon go nuclear. Then the New World begins.

DEXTER

You're mad!

Shiyama peers at Dexter closely.

SHIYAMA

Do you like the world we live in? The drugs, the sex, the cheapness, the violence?

DEXTER

It's all we've got. You're an egotistical fool and a hopeless dreamer.

SHIYAMA

Blowing up Dome, was that dream? War I started. Was that dream? I leave them nothing to fight over.

Dexter lunges for Shiyama, who dances back. Around them, the fight is coming closer. Bullets are beginning to ricochet off the rocky terrain. They can't stay here much longer or they'll both be killed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dexter takes out the gun the soldier gave him, holds it amateurishly pointing at Shiyama.

DEXTER
I wasn't looking for you. I'm looking
for my daughter.

SHIYAMA
Ah so. Your daughter. The real Sinister.
That Rabbi, he confused. He looking for
her, not you. See this?

Shiyama pulls out a small device from within his robe.

DEXTER
That's the transmitter you use to talk to
the whales.

SHIYAMA
Not just transmitter. GPS, and bomb
trigger. Bombs. In their heads. I just
waiting for your daughter to find them.
She at the beach now.

DEXTER
How do you know?

SHIYAMA
I psychic. Like her. Not like you. Your
power is weak. Ours is strong. When I
blow them up, she dies too! You way out
here, can do nothing.

DEXTER
You bastard! Give me that transmitter!

...Without releasing the transmitter, Shiyama reaches across his body and pulls out his gun. He twirls it expertly, bringing to mind the opening scene where we saw him dressed as a a cowboy...

SHIYAMA
In my country I am famous quick-draw
artist. But forget gun. I throw mine
away, you do same. We fight freehand.

Shiyama puts the gun and the transmitter on a nearby rock.

DEXTER
Okay, asshole!

Dexter charges at him, is met with a swift sidestep and punch that sends him to the ground!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

...Dexter hauls himself to his feet, runs at Shiyama again, receives a kick to the stomach that doubles him over, followed by a strike to the neck that sends him to the ground again...

...Dexter stands up, bleeding from the mouth. He turns his back on Shiyama, pretends to be fumbling for something in his waistband.

SHIYAMA

No weapons, or I get the gun again.

Dexter addresses Shiyama without turning around...

DEXTER

No weapons. I was just remembering something one of my clients taught me, The Amazing Blackmun, a magician. He said...

Intrigued, Shiyama comes closer...When Shiyama has come close enough, Dexter spins around and smashes him in the face with a fist. He knocks out Shiyama with one punch!

DEXTER (CONT'D)

..."Never take your eyes off the magician."

Dexter moves quickly to seize the transmitter and the gun, and runs off toward the sea, leaving Shiyama to regain consciousness slowly...

EXT BEACH DAY

Dexter runs stumbling down an embankment toward the beach where he'd left his motorized raft. It's gone! Behind him much farther to the south, we see from a distance that the beach is a Dunkirk-like scene of chaos, refugees milling around, the Israeli army trying to set up a defensive line to protect them, planes and helicopters flying overhead...The advance guard of the Arab force is approaching from the north ...We hear yelling and gunfire! Dexter's being chased, we don't know by whom...He been through a terrible ordeal-- covered in dust and sweat, some of Shiyama's blood spattered on him...

..Looking around desperately for Rachel, calling her name...

DEXTER (CONT'D)

Rachel! Rachel!

But his daughter is nowhere in sight...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

...He reaches inside his torn jacket for the shofar, pulls out a broken fragment--it's useless...

..with enemies coming up behind him, it looks bad for Dexter...

...armed figures burst onto the beach from the north and begin firing at him. They're still a few hundred yards away.

Just then, from behind a dune, the same monkey that helped Dex in Japan pops up, takes him by the hand, and runs with him in a zigzag pattern across the wide beach, toward the shore.

DEXTER (CONT'D)

Who are you? Who sent you?

Bullets skip around them. The monkey again raises his finger to his lips, the universal symbol, tackles an astonished Arab soldier rushing them with a bayonet, and, as they wrestle together on the ground...

VOICE (O.S.)

Over here, Sinister!

It's Lieutenant Randall, with the other motorized raft...but instead of being happy that he is about to be rescued, Dexter yells--

DEXTER

What about the whales!? Why did you leave them?!

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

She told me to.

DEXTER

Who? Who?!

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

The whale. She said "Go!" I went. Now get in!

DEXTER

What about the monkey?

LIEUTENANT RANDALL

What monkey?

Dexter jumps into the motorized raft...

...as they are leaving the shore they see a small boat foundering in the surf...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LIEUTENANT RANDALL (CONT'D)

That old guy's not going to make it.
Wonder why they're trying to put in in
the middle of a war zone--

..when suddenly Dexter hears Lola's voice in his head--

LOLA

Dexter!

DEXTER

(aloud)
Lola? Lola!
(to Randall)
That's my wife! We've got to save her!

Randall spins the motorized craft around expertly and races to the small boat, which is about to capsize in the waves near shore...mortar rounds are landing all around them...semi-automatic weapons fire...it's a hot fire zone! Randall and Dexter crouch to avoid incoming and haul the old man and Lola into the raft...which zooms away...within seconds an RPG blows up the wooden boat in a shower of splinters and flaming debris...

OLD MAN

Allahu Akbar!

He collapses in the bottom of the raft, then raises himself up and peers at the remains of his boat, which are floating on the waves,..while Arab soldiers shoot at the raft futilely as it pulls away from shore....

LOLA

Dex! Where is she?

DEXTER

I don't know.

RACHEL

(in their two heads)
I'm here already, parent people!

Dex and Lola look around, see nothing,..then, far off, in the direction of the open water, they see a stick figure...balancing on a whale!...and waving her arms...

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT MEDITERRANEAN SEA DAY

A Sinister family reunion on the chief whale's back...much hugging and kissing, talking over each other...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RACHEL

(laughing)

--I ran away from the chaperones--one of them told me he loved me!

LOLA

--The Syrian border guard looked at me like I was crazy--

DEXTER

--I cold-cocked Shiyama!--

RACHEL

I met Uncle Dan on the beach. He found his family!

...while Randall and the old Turkish man, the odd couple out, sit in the raft, the old man exchanging deep, meaningful looks with the eye of the second whale, as if they were communing in a silent language...

...It's the old man who first notices the buzzing sound and the distant speck on the horizon, approaching from the far-off shore...he raises an arm and points...

...the whales grow restive as the noisy craft approaches. It's a jet-ski, throwing up a rooster-tail plume as it races toward them...astride it is Shiyama!

He stops within hailing distance. Shuts off the engine, restoring the silence of the sea...and calls across the gap separating them from the group that includes the whales, Dexter, Lola, Rachel, Randall, and the old Turkish man...

SHIYAMA

You think you get rid of me, but here I am!

...Dexter has positioned himself on the whale's back between Shiyama and Lola and Rachel, whom he keeps behind him...

DEXTER

I have the transmitter. What can you do, you crazy fool?

SHIYAMA

End time is near. I don't need device. I can do with my mind.

DEXTER

What are you talking about?
(to the chief whale)
What is he talking about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

..but it is Rachel who answers...

RACHEL

He can do it, Dad. I can feel it. He can
set off the bomb with his mind. I can't
let him do that!

Rachel pushes past her father, who slips on the whales back
and almost falls into the sea. He scrambles to his knees as
Rachel confronts Shiyama...

SHIYAMA

Clever girl You think you can stop me.
With your mind. Your power. But you
can't!

Rachel is davening, moving her body in a strange trance
dance, and Shiyama, standing on the seat of his jetski, is
doing the same...and between them the waters of the
Mediterranean are beginning to swirl and roil. Powerful
energetic forces are stirring them...It's a psychic battle...

...Dexter tries to intervene but his daughter waves him away
with one hand while staying focused on Shiyama...

RACHEL

I won't let them die!

SHIYAMA

Oh, very good. You could be Japanese. We
believe in sacrifice. You want be
kamikaze?

RACHEL

I won't let them die!

The sky is darkening, heavy clouds lowering over the boiling
sea, The wind is howling. Whitecaps are creating heavy chop.
The whales, who have aligned themselves in a row of three
with the chief whale in the middle, are being forced apart by
the tumult of the waves.

SHIYAMA

The letter is mine, They will make the
sound and bring the Apocalypse, or I will
kill them!

RACHEL

No!

Before Dexter can stop her, Rachel leaps off the whale's back
into the sea and starts swimming toward Shiyama...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DEXTER

Rachel! Get back here, girl!

Rachel ignores him and continues swimming, Shiyama is dancing with evil joy on the jetski. Dexter jumps into the water after her. Lola drops to her hands and knees and shrieks--

LOLA

I can't swim! Rachel, honey, I can't swim!

Rachel reaches Shiyama, He withdraws a wicked-looking wakizashi from his robe and raises an arm to stab Rachel with it...when suddenly the jetski and Shiyama are lifted out of the water and flipped into the air...one of the whales had submerged unnoticed and breached beneath the jetski...

...Shiyama thrashes furiously, trying to get back onto his jetski... The whales surround him...

WHALE

Our tormentor.

SHIYAMA

I never meant you any harm.

WHALE

You lie.

SHIYAMA

Why you make the sound for her but not for me?

...the whales are crowding Shiyama between them, lifting him up out of the water with their flukes and letting him fall back in...their movements are delicate, almost tender, but their intent is unmistakable...they are toying with him...

WHALE

You sought glory, at our expense.

SHIYAMA

Some have to die to bring in new world...

But his boasting sounds empty now, and he is frightened...he knows he has lost...

WHALE

They say a drowning thing will go down and rise up again twice before going down forever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SHIYAMA
(screams)
Nooooo!

WHALE
This is for all those who died by your
hand at Taijim!

...The whales's playfulness suddenly turns violent. Shiyama is thrown high into the air and smashed to the surface, repeatedly...his body disappears into the deep...

...Dexter and Rachel swim to the raft and Lieutenant Randall hauls them up into it....Lola slides down the whale's body and tumbles into the raft...they all look with amazement at what has just happened...

WHALE (CONT'D)
Don't make us saints. We are complex,
flawed mortals, like humans. We take
pleasure in revenge! Now, the time has
come!

The whales line up in a circle, and begin to swim around, faster and faster, creating a vortex...the sky overhead mirrors their movements, a ragged circle of clouds spinning like a cyclone...

...Lieutenant Randall backs the raft away from the whales, whose movements become ecstatic, leaping and breaching accompanying the circular rotation...the Sinister family, Dexter, Lola, and Rachel, and the old Turkish man watching silently in awe, and then...

**...THE WHALES MAKE THE
SOUND OF THE TWENTY-THIRD
LETTER!...**

...The sound is like no other. It starts like an OM, with a low sonorous rumbling, but soon encompasses a whole host of other sounds--waterfalls, the buzzing of bees, Tibetan and Inuit throat singing, with overtones of didgideroo and rain sticks...and it keeps getting louder and louder, until the sound wave reaches the shore and moves inland like a sonic boom...

...soldiers stop fighting, their eyes raised in wonder to the sky...

FADE TO:

EXT WEST BANK DAY

...On the West Bank, right at the site of the destruction of the Dome, a fissure appears in a street, sending local residents running. The fissure soon erupts into a very small volcanic cone, that grows quickly until it is the size of a small house, then a large house, then an apartment building...

...It is growing at a pace that allows the terrified citizens of the West Bank to gather their belongings and begin to flee, Jews toward the west and the shore, Muslims toward Jordan to the East...the cone slowly builds...by the time the volcano finishes erupting the whole city is gone...destroyed.

..at the same time...

FADE TO:

EXT DAY ISRAEL

...a second, bigger! Cataclysmic geological event starts with a crack in the earth where the Shiqma River flows into the sea just north of Gaza. The crack widens and speeds eastward and southward to the bottom (southern end) of the Dead Sea...simultaneously another crack opens where the Qarn River enters the sea north of Gesher Haziv near the border with Lebanon...

..This fissure also extends east and south to the top end of the Lake Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee)... Then the crack hurtles south down the length of the Jordan River, widening and separating, connecting the two seas, and forming an island...

...Everywhere the Mediterranean waters enter the previous dry valleys, we see people fleeing the sudden unexpected flooding...

...Long overhead shots, some from satellites in space, some from the height of surveillance aircraft or drones, portray the rapid changes being wrought...accompanied by the constant thrumming of the whale's vocalization, which passes through several shades of deep bass, a rolling round sound that is never quite the same, always transmuting into some new dirge-like chant, solemn and profound, yet not sad but somehow joyful...

...This whole series of events should be a continuous montage of geological change, like something out of a nature film, except initiated and accompanied by the mystical sound of the twenty-third letter as vocalized by the whales...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

...When the ring is completed, Israel is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, a barrier three miles wide...like the moment after the apocryphal Flood, a silence settles over the whole land, as the sloshing waters gradually calm down...

...and while this cataclysmic event is occurring, also we get a montage of an invisible harmonizing wave spreading across the world, its effects rippling subtly into and through everyone. We see faces lightened of care, an instant of bliss, not permanent, a taste of paradise on everyone's lips... An old man smiles, a middle-aged woman utters a sigh of contentment, a young child shouts in joy. The wave passes but it is a glimpse of what is possible, it is not forgotten by all who experience it.

EXT BATTLEFIELD NEAR JERUSALEM DAY

Ras Mohamed and a large contingent of troops are nearing the outer wall of Old City of Jerusalem when the volcano erupts. Some soldiers stare into the sky, others raise their weapons as if to defend themselves from an unseen enemy. Soon a stream of Arab refugees comes toward them... the cone of the volcano is now visible above the wall and growing, a black plume of smoke billowing upward to a great height...and that's not all...

...Ras's radioman comes running up to him...

RADIOMAN

Sir, sir!

...hands him the earphones...

RAS MOHAMED

What? Water? What?

Ras Mohamed rips off the earphones, looks at them as if they were evil things...

RAS MOHAMED (CONT'D)

The Israeli devils have somehow unleashed a flood. We have to pull back. Pull back!--We mustn't get trapped on this side of the waters! Pull back!

--He shouts to his troops--another officer comes running up to him--

ARAB OFFICER

The Israelis are falling back too, toward the west. I heard their radio chatter--they don't know what's happening either. It is Allah!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAB OFFICER (CONT'D)

Allah is changing the shape of the land.
Volcano! Flood! It can only be Allah!

Nearby troops, in the midst of their retreat, hear the man's report to Ras Mohamed and begin to cheer

TROOPS

Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar!

Instead of a retreat, the withdrawal becomes a joyous march.

BACK ON

EXT SEA DAY

...Dexter, with a look of bliss, is with his family in the raft, except for Rachel who is now astride the chief whale...in the distance a small flotilla of boats is racing toward him...a bunch of high-ranking officers including Intelligence Officer Warren from the Navy base in Japan...and some scuba-clad divers...

..As they draw near, Dexter can see that Warren is shouting...but Dex's hearing is impaired from being so close to the source of the sound...he can't understand anything until Warren is right beside him...

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

You did it, you crazy motherfucker!

DEXTER

No, not me. My daughter.

He points to Rachel, atop the whale...

DEXTER (CONT'D)

What happened?

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

What happened? Don't you know? Didn't she tell you?

Warren gestures toward a column of smoke rising from the east...

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN (CONT'D)

It's a fuckin' miracle! There's a volcano growing where Jerusalem used to be. They'll never fight over who controls the Holy City again because it's gone, man, gone! And there's a ring of water around the whole of Israel! Christ, you almost started WWIII!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN (CONT'D)

The top brass thought it was some secret Chinese or Iranian weapon, and they went to launch ready, but pretty soon they saw what was happening...

Dexter is still in a blissful, dazed state...

DEXTER

Is it over, then? The fighting between the Israelis and, everybody else?

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

Yes, yes man! It's over! The Arabs are pulling back across the moat, or whatever you want to call it, and there's a big reshuffle under way, Palestinians leaving the island, Israelis crossing over to it. You got the trigger?

DEXTER

Yes, I have it.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

And Shiyama?

DEXTER

Dead.

Warren looks at Dexter questioningly, then moves on...

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

Awright! Now we just gotta disarm these bombs on the heads of these babies...

...Warren gestures to the divers, who leap into the water...

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN (CONT'D)

--And then we're going to have the biggest party the world has ever seen! They're gonna give you a ticker tape parade down Broadway, man! Nobel Prize!

DEXTER

No, no. It wasn't me. It was them. The whales. And my daughter.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WARREN

Whatever! You've solved the problem that's been plaguing the world for a hundred years. Hell, two thousand years!

EXT BEACH DAY

We see Dan and his family, along with thousands of others, leaving the beach where they had fled, heading back toward their towns and villages, or what remains of them.

HILLEL
It's a miracle!

DAN
But where will we live? Our home is destroyed.

HILLEL
G*d will provide. After what He did today, anything is possible.

Dan doesn't look too sure, but he's filled with relief that his family is safe.

DAN
Our niece Rachel had something to do with all this.

Hillel looks at Dan quizzically, but says nothing. Dan looks back at the sea, shakes his head in wonderment...

EXT EDGE OF THE MOAT - EVENING

Ras Mohamed is standing on the edge of the moat, gazing across at the island that used to be part of the Middle East. Next to him is another grizzled battle veteran, IBRAHIM AL MASUR.

AL MASUR
Our rockets and missiles can still reach them.

RAS MOHAMED
But what for? Why? No, we are done with them. Let them have their island. They are no longer part of Arabia. It is God's will, Imshallah!

AL MASUR
Imshallah! We must make sure that a full mutual repatriation takes place--all Muslims off the island, any Jews who ended up on the wrong side of the split returned.

Ras Mohamed has been gazing across at the smoldering mountain that never existed before. He turns to his comrade...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAS MOHAMED

No, Ibrahim. Some may want to stay where they are. Let them. The lines are clear now. And the Holy City is gone. We must build a new one, greater than ever, on the land that has become ours, and is ours alone!

AL MASUR

But whose miracle was it, Ras Mohamed? Allah's or their Jehovah's?

RAS MOHAMED

What does it matter now, my friend? Whoever's God it was, He has made His wishes known. He wants us to live in peace. We must respect that, forever, Imshallah! Perhaps I will visit my friend Daniel some day. In peace.

FADE TO:

INT HOTEL ROOM DAY

Dexter is seated on a hotel bed with Lola beside him...he's just finishing recounting the part of the story that Lola didn't know

DEXTER

So that's why I couldn't call you then, until a monkey sent by a whale freed me-- actually he showed up again on the beach, just before all this happened..

Dexter leans back, while we hear Lola's voice--

LOLA (V.O.)

--If I have to choose between believing *that* story and you running around the world with some Japanese Hello Kitty, I guess I'll take that one--

DEXTER

It's true, honey, every word.

LOLA

Our daughter is something else, isn't she?

DEXTER

You know it. Where is she now, by the way?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOLA
With her best friends.

EXT SEA DAY

...Rachel, astride the chief whale like a modern female Ahab, cruising near the shore, and beside her is her Israeli boyfriend Tsvi! The two of them and the whales taking a leisurely circumnavigation of the new island Israel...

FADE TO:

EXT TEL AVIV - DAY

Dexter is walking on the street in Tel Aviv. Life is slowly returning to the new normal. He stops at a news-stand and picks up a copy of the International Herald Tribune. The headline reads: DIVINE INTERVENTION? With the subhead: SPECTACULAR UNEXPLAINED NATURAL EVENTS END MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. A separate headline reads: U.S NAVY ESTABLISHES SONAR-FREE ZONE FOR WHALES IN PACIFIC. UNPRECEDENTED WHALE-HUMAN COOPERATION...Dexter reads a few paragraphs and then folds the paper under one arm and keeps walking. Shopkeepers are straightening up their stores after the massive jolting that came with the huge displacement of the waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I never saw the whales again. I assume they swam back to their Pacific waters, where they are still targets of Japanese whalers, but at least not that crazy Shiyama. And no sonar. But there was one person I did see again, when I got back to the Big Apple...

FADE TO:

INT SUBWAY - DAY

Dexter riding the subway in New York, as at the beginning of the film. Out of the corner of an eye he spots the Rabbi who had sent him on this crazy adventure...

DEXTER (V.O.)
I knew I'd see him again, It was just a matter of time.

The rabbi sits down beside Dex...

RABBI
Good shabbas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEXTER

I almost got killed, half a dozen times at least.

RABBI

Good job! You did better than I could have imagined. Israel an island, and safe, no longer threatened. Peace in the Middle East. Wonderful!

DEXTER

Wait a minute. You said the sound would make everything resolve into harmony. That didn't happen!"

The rabbi scratches his beard meditatively...

RABBI

Israel saved, a little bit of universal love spread across the planet. You take what you can get, nu?

DEXTER

We'll see how long it lasts. Anyway, it wasn't me, It was--

RABBI

--Yes, I know. My cetacean brothers. But you and your daughter helped them, and they thank you too!

DEXTER

There's just one thing--I can't get that sound out of my ears.

RABBI

You should have worn earplugs. But you are blessed, Many seek to hear that sound. Few are chosen. Your daughter Rachel--

DEXTER

Yeah, you had that all wrong. It wasn't me you were sent to find, it was her. Leave her and Lola out of it now.

...the rabbi shrugs...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RABBI

"When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened."

That's from the book in the Bible about a man swallowed by a whale!

DEXTER

This is my stop. I have to get off now.

He reaches down for his bag. When he looks up, the rabbi is gone! Dexter shrugs...

...The camera follows Dexter as he ascends the stairs and emerges out of the subway into Times Square...the dazzling, cacophonous mix of colors, voices, sounds, sights, smells, crowds jostling and surging through the streets, the rich and chaotic tapestry of humanity...

FADE TO:

INT TORAH STUDY ROOM - BROOKLYN SYNAGOGUE - DAY

Under the credits, in a coda, we see the rabbi from the subway sitting alone again in the Brooklyn Torah study room, immersed in a passage from the midrash. This time he sniffs the visible cigar smoke and prostrates himself quickly without turning around.

RABBI

My lord!

LAHONSA MALOODY

Get up, schmegeggie!

The rabbi stands slowly, leaning on the table to help himself up. We see Lahonsa Maloody only from the back, the cigar held at a jaunty angle in one hand.

RABBI

Miracles upon miracles! What those whales did was wonderful!

LAHONSA MALOODY

Ya lucked out, shmendrik. Your boy Dexter and his daughter just barely pulled it off.

RABBI

I know, I know. I think--

LAHONSA MALOODY

Don't believe everything you think.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RABBI

Right! Of course. Yes my lord!

LAHONSA MALOODY

And like you told the girl, be ready!

RABBI

What? Oh no, my lord, please, no, I
couldn't take any more. My heart!

The rabbi grabs at his chest like old Redd Foxx...Lahonsa
Maloody is unmoved...

LAHONSA MALOODY

Be ready!

Daring a little glance, the rabbi turns halfway around, but
Lahonsa Maloody is gone. The rabbi shrugs, sits down at the
table again, holds his hand to his heart, shrugs again, and
resumes his studies, murmuring to himself, the ancient words
from the ancient text...

THE END